CHAPTER THREE.

THE SRINGEI MATHA.
THE SRINGERI MATHA

Introduction:

We have already referred to the activities of the Kalāmukha ācharyas in the previous pages. Śankara who appeared on the religious field in that period, revived the Hindu monastic order. He converted the matha into a polysemistic personality. Of his four mathas, the Śringeri matha is included in our study, as it is the mother of Hindu mathas in Karnataka. Śankara, who preached Advaita philosophy, did not distinguish between the worship of Śiva and Vishnu. For him, both were manifestations of the absolute reality, i.e., Parabrahman. Yet, this matha forms part of our study, as it is more inclined towards Saivism. Many Saiva traditions are followed by the pontiffs of this matha even today. It had also maintained cordial relations with other Saiva sects, particularly with Virasaivism. The Chandramaulīsvara linga has been the chief deity in the matha. The above reason must have prompted the
Virasaiva dynasties to show devotion and respect to this matha.

The continuous history of this matha, from Sankara to the present period, is unbroken. It has ever since been headed by a galaxy of pontiffs. These have been great scholars, saints, philosophers, yogis and religious leaders. The Sringeri matha being, one of the prime foundations of Sankara, we felt that it deserves to be included in our study.

To understand the history of the matha and the contributions of the acharyas to Indian culture, it is necessary to make a survey of the source material. We get a number of epigraphs, as well as literary and other sources to reconstruct the history of the matha in detail.

The functions and the contributions of this matha are a model for others to follow. Hence a detailed history of the matha is given in the following pages.
Sources:

The known and available source material may be classified as follows:

I. Inscriptions:

Stone inscriptions and copper-plate grants are the original source-material for reconstructing the history of the Sringeri matha. There are a number of inscriptions recording grants of land, concessions and honours to the acharyas of the Sringeri matha by the dynasties of Karnataka and different other parts of the country. The information contained in these inscriptions is corroborated by literary sources. These can be found in the volumes of the Epigraphia Indica, the Epigraphia Carnatica, the Mysore Archaeological reports as well as in some historical journals. A book published by the Government of Mysore, 'Selections from the Sringeri Records', is also a useful source.
II. Literary Works:

A. Sanskrit:

(i) Sankara Vijaya

The author of this work was Madhava. It is said that he was a contemporary of Sankara's disciple in direct succession, Suresvaracharya. But there are more than one Sankara Vijayas, and so it is not yet possible for scholars to say which is the original. The victorious religious tour and the achievement of Sankara is recorded in this work.

(ii) Sankara Vijaya Vilasa

The author of this work is Chidvilasa. Prachina Sankara Vijaya by Mukha Sankara of Kanchi Sankara matha, 'Punya-Slok-Manjari' by Sarvajna Sadasivabhoda, and 'Sankara Vijaya Katha' are a few Sanskrit works which throw light on the life and activities of Sankara.
(iii) **Gadyavallari**

Rajendra Lal Mitra has brought to light a manuscript of considerable interest from Sitamarhi in the Muzaffarpur district of Bihar, called *Gadyavallari*. It is a treatise on Sri Vidya dealing with Sadhana, such as Nyāsa and Japa, and also enumerates a guruparampara. Thus it gives the genealogy of the Śringeri ācharyas from Sankara to Vidyāranya, and also the genealogy of a branch matha started by Sri Malayananda Tirtha Sarasvati along with the Ananda Chitpratibimba, the guru of the author, Sri Nijatma Prakasananda Nath Mallikarjuna Yogendra.3

(iv) **Purushottama Bhārati Charitra**

It is a manuscript belonging to the 15th century in twelve chapters, available in the library of the Śringeri matha. The author, Vishnu, is said have been patronised by the matha. It gives an account of four ācharyas who succeeded Vidyāranya. The first three chapters contain a brief account of the ācharyas, from Vidyāranya to Chandrasekhara Bhārati II, and the remaining nine

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chapters deal with Purushottama Bhārati until his assumption of the pontificate at Hampi and taking over of the matha administration in Sringeri.

(v) **Yatindra Charitra**

This manuscript of the 15th century is in the matha library. It deals with the life and work of Narasimha Bhārati.

(vi) *Sivatatva Ratnākara* (c. 1709 A.D.)

It is an encyclopaedia written by Basavappa Nayaka of Keladi about 1709 A.D. It gives the history of the rulers and their patronage of the Sringeri matha. Incidentally, it gives the names of the acharyas.

(vii) *Vidyāranya Kalajñana* (c. 1600 A.D.)

This work is composed in the form of prophecies, a common feature in the historical accounts found in the Purānas. It gives an account of the Vijayanagara rulers down to the reign of Venkata I of Keladi.
(viii) *Guruvasa Kavya* (c. 1730 A.D.)

This is a rare and valuable manuscript in the library of the Sringeri matha. It deals with the history of the matha and also gives a brief biographical sketch of the successive ācharyas, from Sankara to Sacchidananda Bhārati (1705–41 A.D.). Its author was Kāsi Lakshamana Sastri. He was an āsthana vidwan of Sacchidananda Bhārati. Lakshmana Sastri was a very good Sanskrit scholar. It is said that he composed the Kavya by order of the ācharya who was then head of the matha. Hence, it is most likely that he faithfully utilised all the available traditional material about the ācharyas of the matha. But though the information recorded by him about the earlier ācharyas is legendary, his narration of the story of the later ācharyas, contemporary with the Keladi chiefs, seems to contain reliable historical data.

B. Kannada :

(1) *Keladi Nripa Vijaya* (1763 A.D.)

This is a Champu written in 1763 by Liṅganna as a historical work. The historical facts in the work are
found in the Śivatatvaratnaśākara and in epigraphs. It narrates the history of the Keladi chiefs. It also gives valuable information about the patronage of the Sringeri matha by the Keladi rulers, along with the genealogy of the ācharyas up to 1739 A.D.

III. Sanads.

The matha has nearly 200 Sanads, ranging in date from 1629 to 1867 A.D., many of which are of considerable interest and importance from an historical and social point of view. Of these, 26 relate to the rulers of Ikkeri, 2 to the rulers of Coorg, 2 to the rulers of Jagali, 1 to the ruler of Belur, 1 to the Peshva Baji Rao, 2 to the Nizam of Hyderabad, 1 to the ruler of Indore, 1 to the ruler of Dewas, 1 to the East India Company, and 148 to the rulers of Mysore. The Sanads testify to the high esteem in which the ācharyas of the matha were held by various rulers and chiefs. Most of them record grants on land or concessions made to the matha by the rulers. Several of them recognise the full powers of the Swami to order enquiries into the conduct
of the disciples and to punish the deliquents, to call upon local officers to afford facilities to the representatives of the matha in carrying on this work. Special interest attaches to the letters addressed to the Swamis by Haidar and Ranadulla Khan of Bijapur.

Thus, the Sanads testify to the high esteem in which the Acharyas of the matha were held by various rulers and chiefs.

IV. Kaditas.

There are several Kaditas, nearly 200 years old, stored in two or three big rooms. A Kadita is covered with charcoal paste, folded in the form of a book and written on with a pencil of pot-stone. Most of the Kaditas contain accounts of the matha, while a few that have been closely examined show that they contain copies of stone and copper-plate inscriptions, as well as several matters of importance relating to the matha and its Acharyas. A list of the Acharyas of the matha, with
a few dates here and there, is also found in one of them. A careful examination of these Kaditas is likely to reveal several interesting facts with regard to the history of the matha. 6

V. The Library of The Matha:

The library of the matha consists of about 500 palmleaf manuscripts and a large number of printed books. The manuscripts appear to contain a good number of unpublished works. A brief and cursory examination of these manuscripts has brought to light several unpublished works in the form of poems, biographies, philosophical, religious and grammatical treatises, and commentaries. Of these, mention may be made of the poems, Ramaniyaraghava and Sadhanakavya, and the biographies of Purushottama-Bharati Charitra and Ramachandra Mahodhaya. Most of the manuscripts are written in Nāgari characters. The collection as a whole awaits closer examination at the hands of specialists. 7
Early Life of Sankara:

Sankara was born of Śivaguru and Aryāmba at Kalady, on the Northern bank of the river Pūrṇa, in the Kerala country. Śivaguru was a Nambudri Brahmin. Sankara lost his father in his third year. The Upanayana took place when he was only five years old. Within a short period, he went through his Vedic studies and obtained mastery over several branches of ancient literature. He took Sanyāsa Āśrama after convincing his mother. He then met Gōvinda Bhagavatpada on the banks of Narmada. Satisfied with his account, Gōvinda accepted Sankara as his disciple with pleasure, and, having made him go through his formation, made him a full sanyāsi. He taught Sankara the philosophy that he had himself learnt from Gaudapada.

Date of Sankara:

The earlier biographies of the saint have not mentioned the date of his birth. The date of Sankara, as suggested by scholars, varies from the 4th century A.D. to
beginning of the ninth. The late Justice Telang brought together a number of important points and concluded his study by placing Sankara between 552 and 590 A.D. T.R. Chintamani discusses the subject on the basis of independent facts and, after giving due consideration to those already relied upon by Telang, finally concludes that Sankara must have flourished between 655 and 689 A.D. But the most accepted date is 788-820 A.D. The astronomical details of Sankara in a later work, Guruvamsakāvya, would suggest 805 A.D., in which year alone, in the ninth century, the given combination of planets is possible. An inscription of Jayavarman II (878-887 A.D.), of Cambodia, mentions the royal guru Sivasoma, who had learned all the sastras from Bhagavat Sankara. Considering all these factors the date 788-820 A.D., is now generally accepted on the strength of tradition as well as the authority of the majority of later biographers.

Sankara's Activities:

At an early age, Sankara went out on a long pilgrimage and visited almost all the sacred places of
northern India. According to Sankara Vijaya and a few other works, he covered all the important places of India, from Kāḍāra to Rāmāswara; that, in that tour, he came into contact with many saints and scholars, cannot be doubted. When he was at Vāraṇāsi, it is said, he got a vision of Vyāsa and composed bhāṣyās on the Brahma sutrās, the Upanisads and the Bhagavadgīta. He converted and initiated Padmapāda, Kumārila, Mandanamīśra, Hastāmalaka and Totaka, who became his close disciples.

Thus, he visited all important places of the land, refuting false doctrines, purifying several practices and establishing the truth of the Vedic religion. He fought back the evils of obscurantism and senseless religious practices. He purged the religious life of India of the many superstitions of the day. Hence, by his religious tours, he gave a new sense of national unity and common consciousness. In the words of Nehru, "He functioned on the intellectual, philosophical and religious plane and tried to bring about a greater unity of thought all over the country.... By locating his four great monasteries in the North, South, East and West, he evidently wanted to encourage the conception of a
Thus, he founded four mathas at the four corners of India—Puri-Jaganatha in the east, Dvarake in the west, Badri in the north, and Sringeri in the south. In each case, he selected a place of natural beauty. At Sringeri, he built a temple which he dedicated to the Goddess of learning, whose image he had brought from Kashmir; and also founded the spiritual throne which has been occupied down to the present day by a succession as the Pope's chair. Sankara placed the Sringeri matha under one of his learned disciples, Sureśvaracharya. Thus, his activities were not confined to a single place. He moved from place to place, transmitting knowledge and strengthening faith wherever he went.

Sankara's Contribution:

With the versatility of his genius, the contribution he made to the fields of religion, literature, philosophy were very great. India has been the meeting-ground of different races and cultures. Naturally, it was not an easy task for him to bring people of culturally united India.
heterogeneous nature within the fold of one religion. Hinduism had fallen on evil days. In such circumstances, Sankara achieved what would seem to be almost impossible. He gave the people a simple religion, with the stress on Bhakti in place of polytheism, Tantricism with its bloody sacrifices, and the Animism of the tribals. He introduced a simple mode of worship, consisting of prayers and hymns composed in simple language. Another notable contribution of Sankara's was the reformation of Hindu monasteries. It was he who laid the firm foundations of the matha, which ultimately stabilised Hinduism. He made this institution a dynamic one and gave it a new orientation. The organisation, of the monasteries, all over India, as spiritual light-houses, is an eloquent and enduring proof of his masterful personality and efficiency. Almost at the same time, the Kālāmukhas had fully developed this institution. We have no definite evidence whether they got their inspiration from Sankara or he from them. The success of this Hindu monastic movement was an incentive to other Hindu acharyas. Thus Sankara's contribution to monasticism is very significant.

In the field of literature, his contribution is
is also remarkable. A new gospel required a new bible. Hence, he composed Bhāsyas and devotional songs. All his works are in simple Sanskrit. His devotional lyrics are, generally, beautiful in expression and in depth of feeling. His works have served as a model to later writers in their treatment of classical themes. Soundarya Lahari and Ananda Lahari are not only popular, but also command high respect from all. These reveal Sankara as a scholar, a poet, and a passionate devotee. He blended, in these devotional works, lofty thoughts with passionate lyrical feelings, couched in rhythmic and ornate language. We can sum up his contributions as follows:

1. He clearly and boldly established the unity of Godhead and revived Hinduism.

2. He successfully fought against the traditional ugly rituals and replaced them with simple religious practices.

3. He stressed the need of desireless devotion in place of religious observances actuated by desires.
4. He preached the equality of all classes at the spiritual level.

5. He shared in a period of literary revival and cultural renaissance. The philosophico-literary activity initiated by Sankara went on increasing for several centuries.

6. He laid the firm foundations of the Hindu monastery, which subsequently ministered to the spiritual, cultural and even economic needs of the people so much.

Conclusion:

Sankara was a symbol of the integration in India. It has been recorded that no genius, before or after him, had his scholarship and learning. As a saint, as a reformer, as a Yogi, Sankara was one of the greatest saints the world has produced. He is the epitome of India. As a preacher, he was most outstanding. As an evangelist, he was unique. As a commentator on religious and philosophical works, he is the most authoritative as well as the most prolific. As an organiser, reformer and man of action, Sankara was unparalleled. Sankara gave a new life and status to Hinduism. Rulers have come and gone, and their kingdoms have perished in the dust; but Sankara's status and work endures.
The scholars who are interested in the history of Śringeri matha, believe that there has been no break in the line of succession to the Śringeri peetha, from Śankara to the present day. The period between Suresvaracharya, the successor of Śankara, to the foundation of Vijayanagara, poses certain problems to the scholars, as there is lack of authentic historical records furnishing information about the Śringeri matha. The dates of Suresvaracharya and his successors till the accession of Sri Nṛsimha Tīrtha cannot be fixed with certainty.

Genealogy:

The following account gives a brief genealogical account of the Śringeri matha from Suresvarācharya to Nṛsimha Tīrtha, during which period the main function of the Gurus was to perform penance. In this period, this matha was not closely connected with any royal dynasty,
as during the Vijayanagara period, as the gurus and the matha lived in seclusion.

The following genealogical account of the acharyas, from Sankara to Nrsimha Tirtha, of the Sringeri matha is based on traditional accounts available in the matha and later literary works like Guruvamsa Kavya, Sivatattvaratnakara and Keladinripavijaya.

1. Adi Sankara (788-820 A.D.)
2. Suresvaracharya.
3. Nityabhodha Jnana acharya
4. Jnanaghana acharya
5. Jnanottamasivacharya
6. Jnanagiri
7. Simhagiri
8. Isvara Tirtha
9. Nrsimha Tirtha (up to 1229 A.D.)

With the accession of Sri Vidya Sankara Tirtha (1229-1333) to the holy peetha, a new chapter opens in the history of the Sringeri matha. The beginning of 14th century witnessed the destruction of four Hindu
kingdoms of South India—the Yadavas of Devagiri, the Kakatiyas of Warangal the Pandyas of Madurai and the Hoysalas of Dwarasamudra. The challenge to the survival of Hinduism in Southern India was counter-challenged by the foundation of the Vijayanagara empire, which stood as a bulwark. That the Vijayanagara founders were closely associated with the gurus of Sringeri matha is testified to by epigraphic records. The matha was endowed with grants of land and wealth by the Vijayanagara rulers, which came to be rightly called a samsthanam. The gurus of the matha thus became royal preceptors.

Before going into the further history of the Sringeri matha, and the relations between the matha and different dynasties, we should like to give a genealogical list of the pontiffs of the matha, from Vidyasankara Tirtha onwards to the present day. This list is based on the records of the matha and the epigraphs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pontiff</th>
<th>Years</th>
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<tr>
<td>Vidya Sankara (or Vidya Tirtha) Swami</td>
<td>1228 - 1333</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bhārati Krishna Tirtha</td>
<td>1328 - 1386</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vidyāranya</td>
<td>1331 - 1386</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chandra Sekhara Bhārati</td>
<td>1368 - 1389</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Period</td>
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<tr>
<td>---------------------------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Narasimha Bharati</td>
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<tr>
<td>Purushottama Bharati</td>
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<td>Sankarananda Bharati</td>
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<td>Abhinava Vidya Tirtha</td>
<td>1954</td>
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</table>
THE SRINGERI MATHA AND THE VIJAYANAGARA RULERS

As we have seen, the history and genealogy of the Sringeri matha up to the beginning of the 14th century is legendary, based on 16th century works. But from the reign of Vidyasankara (1229-1333), the history of the Sringeri matha took a new turn. His two disciples and successors, Bharathi Krishna Tirtha and Vidyaranya, did memorable service to the matha as well as to the society. In their regime, the matha got grants and landed property, and attained royal recognition. Until then, it was only a place of penance and the chief duty of an acharya was promoting learning. They had no Jahagirs. With the emergence of the Hindu kingdom, it acquired a different look.

We know how Vidyaranya, with his penances and scholarship, helped the five Saṅgama brothers to found the Vijayanagara empire to protect religion and culture. Without going into details, we can conclude that the part played by Vidyaranya is noteworthy. It is rightly commented that the times of Bharathi Krishna Tirtha and
Vidyaranya witnessed the conversion of Sringeri, hitherto a cluster of hermitages, into an 'imperium in imperio'. The significance of the Sringeri matha under Vijayanagara shows the reverence in which it was held by the emperors.

Why should the ācharyas of Sringeri have associated themselves with this movement? Two reasons have been suggested: one, the fear of Muslims; and the other, the popularity of Viirasaiva ācharyas and their monasteries. Whatever may be the other causes, it is well known that the statemanship and political foresight of Vidyaranya was assisted by his friendship with the leaders of other religious schools of thought, and his high influence at the court of Vijayanagara was of great help in the accomplishment of this remarkable undertaking.

The first land grant was made, in 1346, to Bhārathi Tirtha (1333-1380) by Harihara, with his brothers and relations. This grant, known as the Sringapura grant, is inscribed on a stone slab. Besides Harihara's name, the names of his four brothers, Kampannodeyar,
Bukkannodeyar, Marappodeyar and Muddappodeyar, and of two others, viz., his son-in-law, Ballappa Dandanayaka, and prince Sovannodeyar, in all seven, are mentioned in it as donors. His brother Marappodeyar and his son-in-law, Ballappa Dandanayaka, went over to Sringeri under his orders and there presented the grant to the then ācharya, Bhārathi Tīrtha. It conveys in free gift, for the undisturbed performance of the ācharya’s penance and the support of his 40 Brāhmaṇa attendants including his disciples etc., 9 villages, as described in the grant, belonging to Kelanad in Santaligenād, after making the necessary deductions for cultivation and taxes.17

A record, inscribed on a stone, to the north of the Ganapathi Vāgīśvari temple, dated 1356 A.D., opens with a homage to Vidyātīrtha and records a gift of land yielding three hundred gadyānas.

Out of these two gifts of a total nine hundred and twenty-eight gadyānas, Bhārati Tīrtha marked out lands yielding six hundred pagodas and divided them into one hundred and twenty vṛttiś of five pagodas each, some of which he gave away to learned Brāhmanas, and set
apart the rest for worship in the Vidyasankara and other temples, for the maintenance of his disciples, lay or monastic, śrōtriyaś, somayājīś and attendants.

A subsequent land grant pertains to the reign of Bukka, of the value of two hundred and twenty-two-and-a-half pagodas, in Kikundanadu, to which was added a grant by Chikka Raya (afterwards Harihara II), of land in Kikuanade and Kodanadu. These grants were utilised for the maintenance of the ascetics, disciples and servants.

Harihara II’s devotion towards the Sringeri ācharyas was no less zealous than that of his predecessors, his father and uncle. In the year 1380-81 A.D., he presented a consolidated grant to Vidyāranya, recounting and ratifying all the previous grants and making his own addition to it. In 1386-87, after Vidyāranya had attained Videhamukti, the same emperor made a grant of land near Sringeri, divided into 100 vrittis of 5 pagodas each, and distributed them, 4 to temples and the rest among 106 competent Brāhmaṇas in Sringeri. Again, in 1389-90 A.D., he paid a visit to Sringeri and made an assignment of 30 vrittis in
Kelanad of Santhaliṣṭenaḍ. The total value of all these lands was three thousand and three pagodas, and this he gave to Śringeri Murusavira Sime. Further, in 1392 A.D., the emperor founded an agrahara at Hariharapura, about twelve miles from Śringeri, and Ramachandra Sarasvathi was the first ācharya of the matha to be established there.

Other grants outside Śringeri include two by Bukka I (1375 A.D.), to the shrines of Vidyātīrtha and Vidyāranya, and one by Harihara II (1384 A.D.), to Vidyāranya.

Thus, in the reign of these three ācharyas, the eminence and influence of the Śringeri matha reached its zenith. The following tributes to these ācharyas reveal the greatness of these saints:

'The swan Bukka sports happily near the lotus Bharati Tīrtha, which, having sprung from Vidyatīrtha, possesses the fragrance of joy from a knowledge of non-dualism and expands by the rays of Vidyāranya.'
'May the wonderful glances of Vidyāranya, which resemble showers of camphor dust, garlands of kalhara flowers, rays of the moon, sandal paste and waves of the milk-ocean, and which shower the nectar of compassion, bring you happiness'.

'Can he be Brahma? We do not see four faces. Can he be Visnu? He has not got four arms. Can he be Śiva? No oddness of the eye is observed. Having thus argued for a long time, the learned have come to the conclusion that Vidyāranya is the Supreme Light incarnate'.

What must have been the next grant is mentioned in a very much later inscription from Śringeri, of 1652 A.D., which records that two agrahāras, called Śringapura and Vidyārenyapura, were constructed and given to learned Brāhmanas, and in gratitude for Vidyāranya's services, Harihara established the matha at Śringeri. It says, 'Harihara maharaya made a petition at the feet of Vidyāranya, representing that in Śringapura, in (connection with) the dharmaapitha established by Śankarācharya, there must be a matha and agrahāra for the worship of the god Mallikārjuna, Vidyāsankarāsvāmi and
Sāradamma in the matha, and for the performance of the religious duties of the vedas and 'sastras he set apart landed property, established the agraharas of Śrīnagapur and Vidyāranyapur and, forming 150 shares, made them over to the feet of Vidyāranya Bharatiswami'.

Devaraya II (1432 A.D.), granted the village Nanugani in the Honnavara kingdom, and the village Kelagundani and Kaigai in the Goa kingdom.

The Conjeevaram plates of Krishnadevaraya record the grant of two villages. In 1521 A.D., the emperor granted Krishnarayapuram to Chandrachuda Sarasvati, disciple of Mahadeva Sarasvati. The same king granted to the Śringeri matha Huyyuru in the Barakur rajya and the attached hamlets, and also ordered the immediate restoration to Śringeri of Gavaturu, Gājanuru, Mandali, Harakera, Shimoga and Sollebyle, formerly enjoyed by the matha but later gone out of its hands.

A grant in 1573 A.D., by Range Raya I, who ruled from Penukonda, expressly states that it was made when Narasimha Bhārati occupied the throne of Dharma in Śringeri,
fostering the six darsanas.

The full titles of the ācharyas as described in inscriptions run as follows: - Srimat paramahamsa parivarājākācharyya-varya (The chief ācharya of the paramahamsa sanyasis); pada-vakyapramāṇa-paravara parīna (who has seen to the farthest point of grammar, philosophy and logic); devoted to yama, niyama and others, the eight branches of yoga, establisher of the pure Vaidi-advaita-siddhānta; establisher of the six darsanas; disciple of the succession of gurus descended from the holy feet of Sankarācharya; (or) disciple in regular succession from Vidyāranya. And the ācharyas are said to be seated on the yoga throne, or to be ruling the yoga kingdom.

The matha performed two important functions, namely, propagation of the advaita philosophy of Sankara, and popularisation of education. It was the undisputed owner of its wealth and spent it as it thought fit without outside interference. For example, an inscription of 1418 A.D., records the granting of land to one Mallanna at Svotraguttige. In 1524 A.D., Ramachandra Bhārati Odeyar granted a share of the Kela Bellur village free of tax.
The Sringeri matha, as a propagator of religion and as an educational institution, played an important part in the Vijayanagara empire.

Conclusion:

'The blessed message that emanated from the lotus-like face of Sambu got diversified a thousandfold in the expositions of the ācharyas who came after him even as the Ganga stream gets variegated while flowing over different lands'. It was the task of Bhārati Tīrtha and Vidyāranya to link these variegated streams, and canalise them through several monastic establishments. And their successors added to the number of these monasteries, the heads of which were disciples of the ācharyas of Sringeri or derived their inspiration and guidance from them. To these monasteries, as to Sringeri, flocked ascetics and scholars for contemplation, study and the elucidation of the truth of Advaita in its manifold aspects and refutation of the arguments of rival schools. These mathas had also shrines and feeding houses attached to them.
SRINGERI-KELADI RELATIONS

Keladi was one of the chief feudatory states of Vijayanagara. After the decline of this glorious empire, the Nayakas of Keladi acquired hegemony over parts of Karnataka. They preserved and promoted Hindu culture and the Hindu way of life. Though they were Vīrāsaivas, they restored and respected the gurus of the Śaiva and Vaishnava systems and gave liberal grants to all religious institutions, including mosques and churches. In general, they continued the noble traditions of the Vijayanagara kings. Almost all the Keladi kings had very cordial relations with the ācharyas of Śringeri. The following factors might have influenced the Nayakas to be so cordial to this matha.

(i) The policy of religious tolerance of the Keladi Nayakas was inherited from their suzerain authority, Vijayanagara. The emperors of Vijayanagara made liberal gifts and showed great reverence towards this matha because it was through the blessings of the Śringeri Ācharyas that this empire was founded and strengthened. This was an
incentive for the Keladi Nāyakas to follow the same policy towards the Śringeri mātha.

(ii) Saivism was the popular cult in the Keladi kingdom. Besides the Virasaivas, the Advaitins also fostered Śiva worship. The Keladi rulers, themselves Virasaivas by faith, showed a liberal attitude towards the other major Śaiva group.

(iii) The Nāyakas gave much encouragement to literary men. Many of the court poets of the Keladi Nāyakas were followers of the Śringeri mātha, and they might have influenced the Nāyakas to be liberal towards their mātha.

(iv) The Liṅga of Chandramouleśvara, which is still worshipped as the chief deity by the ācharyas of the Śringeri mātha, is said to have been granted to Adi Śankara by Renukāchārya, one of the traditional founders of Virasaivism. According to another version, this liṅga was granted to Vidyaranya by his guru in direct succession Revanasiddha—one of the earliest Virasaiva ācharyas. Since there is a long interval between Revanasiddha and Vidyāranya, the liṅga may have been presented by one
of his successors to Vidyāranya. The Keladi chiefs, though
followers of the Viṣṇava religion, were devoted adherents
of the Śringeri Sankarācharya matha, perhaps for the
same reason that the Śankarācharyas were followers of
the Revanasiddha sampradāya. This explains, perhaps, why
in the Advaita matha of Śringeri there is still a greater
bias towards Śaivism and Śiva worship than towards
Vaishnavism and Krishna worship, though its founder, the
great Śankarācharya, was no respector of creeds nor of
any distinction between Śiva and Vishnu. 31

(v) The Śringeri ācharyas and the Nayakas of Keladi had
a common reverence for God Mahābaleswara at Gokarna and
Devi Mukāmbika of Kollur. One of the Nayakas accompanied
the Śringeri ācharyas to Mukāmbika. Sacchidananda Bhārati
sang a hymn of exquisite beauty in praise of the Goddess
Mukāmbika to invoke Her blessings on the Nayaka.

The temples erected at Ikkeri and Bidnur by the
Nayakas, such as those of Ramesvara, Aghoresvara and
Viṣabhadra, were visited and sanctified by the Śringeri
ācharyas, all of whom never failed to worship in them and
make valuable offerings during their visits to the
capital.
From the beginning, the gifts were not held by the gurus of any matha as their personal property but as a trust intended for the preservation and spread of the ideas of our culture. The actual beneficiaries were ascetics, scholars, places of worship and houses of learning. Hence it was the duty of the state to donate liberally to such institutions. The Keladi Nayakas were no exception to this.

Religion and state, it was felt, should go side by side. Without a sound religious background, there would be no stability to good government. Patronage of religious institutions by political authorities was necessary. Hence the Keladi rulers, by patronising the Shringeri matha, received the blessings of the Acharyas.

We shall now see how intimate were the relations between the Keladi rulers and the Shringeri matha. After the battle of Talikota (Rakkasa Tangadi), wars among the former feudatories of Vijayanagara and invasions of the Muslim rulers spread chaos and confusion all over South India. The Shringeri matha lost the gifted villages, which fell into the hands of adventurers and unscrupulous
persons. In this critical period, the Nayakas of Keladi gave the matha a new lease of life.

Though the association of the Nayakas of Keladi with the Sringeri matha began in the time of Sadasiya Nayaka, substantial help to this matha began to be given only from the reign of Venkatappa Nayaka I (1586 - 1629). Then followed a period of consolidation of the holdings that the matha was able to retain or retrieve. Venkatappa restored the matha at Sringeri for the accommodation of the revered acharya, presented an agrahara to the Brahmans, granted land in Mukkarnad, and earned the title of "Re-establisher of Sringeri". He invited Sri Abhinava Narasimha Bharati I (1599-1622) to his court at Ikkeri and presented him with his own green flag as a badge of honour. In 1622, the acharya impressed all the scholars assembled in the court of Venkatappa I by his masterly discourses in Tarka, Mimansa and Vedanta. Sacchidananda Bharati I visited Ikkeri once again at the request of Venkatappa. From there, accompanied by the Nayaka, the acharya went to Kollur to worship Shri Mukambika. Hence the patronage of Venkatappa to the Sringeri matha, and the liberal grants he made, won for him the title "Visuddhadvaita"
Pratisthapan Durandhara".

On the occasion of his visit to Sringeri in 1680, as the guru's guest, Virabhadra Nāyaka (1629-45) granted lands in the village Candisetti Koppa in Pattuguppe Sime and remitted the local customs duties on arecanut and pepper grown in the village. A complaint was made by the authorities of the Sringeri matha to Virabhadra Nāyaka about the Tirthahalli Odeyar using unauthorised insignia. He readily enquired into the complaint and redressed their grievances. In a letter to the ācharya, Virabhadra wrote that the Sringeri ācharya had authority to enforce obedience from all the other Sanyāsins without having to appeal to the ruler. He also restored to the Sringeri matha some villages which the branch matha at Kuili had secured through the influence of the Bijapur authorities.

In his time, Bhairava, chief of Kalasa, invaded the Keladi territory and captured Sringeri, before the Keladi forces drove him away. Bhairava besieged Sringeri thrice and looted the property of the matha. At last, Bhairava was defeated by the army of Virabhadra. Ācharya is said to have composed, in memory of the victory, his three minor works called, Guru Śataka, Minākṣī Śataka, and
Kavida 'sataka, and a kāvya called Rāmachandra-mahodaya.

The services of Sivappa Nāyaka (1645-60) to the matha were as numerous as they were materially important. He restored to the matha lands that had been usurped by others and particularly the villages that had gone unlawfully into the possession of the Kudli matha. He repaired the irrigation works, re-surveyed the lands and effected a settlement. Sacchidananda Bharati visited Bidnur in the time of Sivappa Nāyak, and was received with due honours. The Vidyāranyapura agrahāra had fallen into decay and been converted into areca gardens. The Nāyaka restored the agrahāra to the matha after compensating the affected parties.

Bhadrappa Nāyaka (1662-64) restored to the matha the villages of Kerehalli and Gavaturu, the aggregate value of which was about four hundred and sixty pagodas, which had previously lapsed to the state.

Somasekhara Nāyaka I (1664-75) confirmed the grant of lands, of the value of three hundred pagodas, in the Elehalli village, to be utilised for the worship of
Sri Chandramaulisvara. Another nirupa of 1667, addressed to Mallanna, directed him to utilise 100 varahas for carrying out repairs to the Mallikārjuna temple at Sringeri.

Narasimha Bharati V (1663-1705) visited Bidnur at the request of Rāni Chennammāji (1671-96). Her minister provided an 'Utsava Vigraha' for the Sri Sringleśvara temple in Kiglia. When the Rāni heard that duties were being collected from the sarvamānya villages in Mukkarnad, she issued orders cancelling them as irregular collections and instructed her officers not to collect duties on articles brought for the use of the matha.

Basavappa (1696-1714), successor of Rāni Chennamaji, also had a high regard for the ācharya of Sringeri. Sacchidānanda Bharati II (1705-41) was greatly honoured by Basavappa. At the invitation of the Nāyaka, the ācharya visited Bidnur and returned to Sringeri with honours. His nirupas to his officers directed them to help the Sringeri authorities in their enquiries regarding 'āchara' and in the collection of dues in Barakur-sime, Arvattagrahara-sime, Kumbla-sime etc.
The next ruler, Somasekhara Nayaka II (1743-39), gave further assistance in getting the orders of the matha carried out in distant villages. He remitted some more duties, while his mother made an endowment for lamps in the temples. He also made an enquiry into the conduct of some servants in it, and advised Sacchidananda Bharati II to dismiss the men who were guilty. Further, at the request of the Nayaka, the ōcharya visited Bidnur and was given a hearty reception by the Nayaka. Somaśekhara II liquidated the debts of the matha and visited Sringeri. After his return to his capital, his minister established two Virasaiva mathas in Sringeri; but the Nayaka issued orders for the removal of these mathas.

Basavappa Nayaka II (1739-55), like his predecessors, took interest in the welfare of the Sringeri matha. Sacchidananda Bharati II, in his last letter to Basavappa II, written in 1739, conveyed the news of his illness and his eagerness to nominate a suitable successor. Basavappa II agreed to the nomination of the successor to the pontifical seat of Sringeri. This reveals that the king's consent was necessary in selecting the successor to the matha. Abhinava Sacchidananda Bharati I was
selected as successor to Sacchidananda Bharati I with the knowledge of the Nāyaka.

Rani Virammaji (1757-63) continued the traditional friendship with the Śringeri matha. It is said that she invited to her capital, in 1758, Abhinava Sacchidananda Bharati I (1741-67), and after giving him a warm reception, presented him with a crystal image of Śiva (spathika liṅga) and an image of Gopalakrishna set in rubies, together with the gift of a piece of land. She also endowed the matha with another rent-free piece of land valued at 300 varahas and arranged for the liquidation of its debts.53

The account given above shows that the Nāyakas had very intimate relations with the Śringeri matha. Almost all the Nāyakas made munificent gifts to it for its maintenance and support. The Nāyakas not only prevented usurpation of the matha property by unscrupulous people, but also helped it in the collection of revenues. They remitted several dues to the state from the matha and invariably enforced the matha's decision relating to spiritual matters.
Nothing better illustrates the powerful influence of the teachings of the acharyas of Sringeri than the advice of Rani Chennammaji to her adopted son Basavappa: 'Don't change the words you once utter and do not neglect your duty anywhere.... Tread not an unworthy path. Avoid acts of sin, practise noble deeds and meditate upon the feet of god. Be merciful and protect those that seek refuge.... Fear not in adversity and exult not in prosperity. Meditate upon the basic principles of Dharma and realise the truth of Advaita. Honour those who are proficient in the Vedic lore. Regard life as but a dream and reflect on the question who am I.... propitiate Siva to enjoy eternal bliss.'
THE SRINGERI MATHA AND THE MYSORE RULERS

The kingdom of Mysore emerged as a distinct power after the battle of Talikota (Rakkas Tangadi). But the Wodeyars of Mysore continued to profess formal allegiance to the shadow empire of Vijayanagara. Like the emperors of Vijayanagara, and the Nāyakas of Keladi, the rulers of Mysore, too, had very good relations with the Sringeri matha.

Raja Wodeyar (1578-1617) requested the ācharya Abhinava Narasimha Bhārati I to appoint one of his disciples as guru of a matha in the close proximity of his kingdom. The ācharya nominated one of his learned disciples, Sankara Bhārati, as guru of the branch matha at Sivaganga in 1615 A.D. 55

Kanthirava Narasaraja Wodeyar (1638-1659 A.D.), presented to Sacchidānanda Bhārati I, costly images of Gods and Goddesses carved in precious stones. 56

Krisnarendra Wodeyar II (1734-66), sent elephants, silk cloth and other offerings to the ācharya, whom he
described as 'the ruler of the yoga empire seated on the jewelled throne of Sringapura'. His officers in Belur made further offerings. The king invited the āchārya, Sacchidananda Bhārati I, to his capital, Srimangapattana, in the sure belief that the āchārya's presence in his state would bring in the much-needed rains for the country, and gifted, to him Belavadi and its hamlets, all worth twelve hundred pagodas a year, in 1760 A.D.

The king also issued a rahadāri directing his officers to provide a proper escort and provisions to the āchārya during his pilgrimage to Rameswaram. His government rendered all necessary assistance to the matha in levying its usual perquisites in respect of āchāra and vichāra from its disciples; in collecting the revenues from its tenants in the several villages belonging to it; and, above all, in maintaining order in those villages whenever the people showed a tendency to set at naught the matha authority...Lands granted to the matha by private parties were also ordered to be treated as sarvamānyam. It may be noted that the king's letters to the āchārya were illuminated with gold.
Chamaraja Wodeyar (1770-76 A.D.), made valuable offerings, including an elephant, to Saradāmba for daily worship. 60

Haidar Ali (1761-1782):

We next find that the period which saw Haidar Ali and Tippu as actual rulers of the kingdom forms a sort of interregnum. Both showed the greatest respect for the āchārya. "You are a great and holy personage. It is but meet that all should desire to pay respect to you". This was written when the āchārya was on his way to Poona at the invitation of Raghunatha Rao. He also paid the āchārya Rs. 10,500 for his expenses and furnished him with an escort consisting of an elephant, five horses, a palanquin and five camels, besides presents of gold and silver garments and shawls. He deputed his officers to Sringeri during the absence of the āchārya Narasimha Bhārati II (1770-1814 A.D.), to see to the proper maintenance of the charities and the matha lands. 62 Later, he issued nirupas to his officers directing them to render all the assistance that the matha might require. 63
Tippu, (1782 - 1799)

Tippu, who succeeded Haidar, had also cordial relations with the ācharyas of Sringeri. From his letters, it appears that he felt, to a much greater extent than his father, that political strength and military prowess were not enough to secure peace and prosperity in the country and that divine help was indispensable. He, therefore, repeatedly asked the ācharya of Sringeri to offer prayers to God and to send his own holy blessings so that the armies of the enemies, who were molesting the country, might meet with condign punishment. When he learnt that the Maratha army had plundered Sringeri and laid the temples in ruins, that Brāhmin priests had been killed in the affray, he wrote a letter to the ācharya:

'People who sin against such a holy place will at no distant date suffer consequences of their misdeeds. People do evil smiling, but will suffer the penalty in torments of agony; this adage will be fulfilled. Treachery to gurus will lead to all-round ruin, destruction of all wealth and the ruins of the family'. He made a grant of 400 rahatis for the restoration of the temple and the reinstallation of the idol of Saradāmba. On several other
occasions, Tippu solicited the blessings of the ācharyas. Subsequently, he made a present of a palanquin and some money to the ācharya, requesting him at the same time to be so kind as to offer prayers to God for the complete destruction of the enemy and for the success of his own army, and for his own prosperity as well as that of the state. He requested the ācharya to perform the 'Sahasrachandi Japa', saying, 'I have written to the asaf of Nagar to supply you all the materials required for the great yajna, and the officials will camp at Śringeri to see to the necessary supplies of vessels, cloth, images etc. Kindly see that rituals are performed according to the prescribed rules, give liberal cash presents to Brahmans and feed them in thousands for forty days.' In a subsequent letter, Tippu acknowledged the miraculous effects of the puja—how he was successful in his enterprise, and how rains fell and the land yielded rich harvests.

Tippu even permitted the matha to take cognizance of, and punish in accordance with the sāstras, such offences as theft of gold and drunkenness, when committed by Brahmīn public servants, though such offences could
be tried under the law only by the state.

The loss that the matha sustained in consequence of the depredations of some lawless brigands from the north, having amounted to about 60 lakhs, and the whereabouts of these spoilers not having been traced, the āchārya decided to make a personal representation to the Peshwa in Poona, whose help he sought. When he set out with this object in 1792-93, the Sultan invited him to make a halt on his way at the capital, Śrīrangapattana. Not having heard from the āchārya for a long time, he sent a rahādārī with money for the return journey, and in his letter expressed his conviction that, wherever a godly personage like The āchārya stayed, there it rained in plenty, the harvest was bountiful, and every prosperity attended the people. He, therefore, most eagerly urged the āchārya to return to Mysore as early as possible. He reiterates, in one of his letters, his conviction that his strength and hope were reared upon three sources of strength, God's grace, the holy āchārya's blessings, and the prowess of the arms of the realm. He even desired to make a pilgrimage to Śringeri at an early date, but this desire was not fulfilled. Every one of his letters is full of the high regard he had for the āchārya of Śringeri.
Purnaiya: (1799-1811 A.D.)

Krishna Raja Wodeyar III succeeded Tippu. That during his minority, Purnaiya carried on the administration as Regent and did not lag behind others in his services to the Sringeri matha, is found in his thirty-eight letters on record. 70

He strictly enforced on his officers the duty of seeing that the rights and privileges of the acharya and the matha were respected. They were told to apprehend ryots and servants of the matha, guilty of misdemeanour, and send them back to Sringeri for punishment. An officious amildar of Koppa, who interfered in the affairs of the matha, was curtly ordered 'not to have anything to do with the ryots of Sringeri and to return to his taluk at once'. 71 Haidar and Tippu had conceded to the matha authorities the right to take cognizance of, and punish in accordance with the smriti codes, Brahmans guilty of such offences as theft of gold and drunkenness. This and other powers of the matha were scrupulously protected.
Purnaiya settled the differences between the Sringeri and other mathas. He held that no other ācharya could ride in adda palakī (Cross palanquin) and sent through the amildar of Koppa a stern warning (1807 A.D.) to a wealthy merchant, Huccha Timmayya, against instigating the ādhyātra of the Hariharapura matha to be carried in an adda palakī or assume any insignia he was not entitled to. He also insisted on his officers that the rights and privileges of the Sringeri matha should be respected,* and that the Sivaganga matha should always come after the Sringeri matha in receiving perquisites from disciples.73

The Puttige Swami at Tirthahalli meddled with the affairs of the Haiga matha, which resulted in the death of the agent of the latter. Purnaiya issued suitable instructions to the amildar at Kavaledurga, pointing out the illegality, and intimating that, in regard to a matha subordinate to Sringeri, it is the Sringeri ācharyas that should issue the necessary orders.74

Krishnaraja Wodeyar III (1799-1868)

A large number of records referred to under this head make this period a memorable one in the annals of the
Sringeri matha. Krishnaraja Wodeyar took charge from Purnaiya in 1811 A.D., and lost no time in extending a respectful invitation to the āchārya to visit the palace. The most cordial relations subsisted between the āchāryas and their loyal disciple, whose devotion was an inspiring one. Most of the records contain an exceedingly sympathetic reaffirmation, together with a clear definition of the time-honoured privileges and rights enjoyed by the matha.

There are two interesting decisions of the Maharaja in regard to inter-matha disputes in the period. While in Mysore, the āchārya of Sringeri desired to go to Nanjangud to worship Śrikantheswara. But the āchārya of the Sumatiṇḍra matha, who was camping there, objected to the Sringeri āchārya passing in front of his residence. The Maharaja, with a view to avoiding a conflict, tactfully invited the āchārya of the Sumatiṇḍra matha to Mysore, and the Sringeri āchārya visited the Nanjangud temple without obstruction. The Maharaja ordered that the mathas of Rāmachandrāpur, Honnali, Thirthahalli, Harihara- puram and such others as were subordinate to Sringeri, should not carry the insignia of 'Śvetachattra'.

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'Makarathorena', etc., and that they should be guided by the instructions issued to them by the Sringeri matha.

The acharya was invited to Mysore in 1828, and in honour of the event the Maharaja renewed the sanad of the grant of Belavadi, which had been formerly ceded in 1760 but had not come into the possession of the matha. To this village he added Sirakaradi, in the Koppa taluka, and Andavalli in the Chandragutti taluka, altogether fourteen villages with eight hamlets attached to them. The matha was authorised to cut and carry sandalwood trees from the areas belonging to the matha, free of all duties; however, the merchants purchasing such wood were, even while passing through the state, obliged to pay the same. The Maharaja also issued several orders to amildars to exempt articles brought to the matha from taxes and to enforce any disciplinary action taken by the matha against wrongdoers. Even palace servants were brought under the jurisdiction of the matha taxes in the matter of achara, vichara etc. The Maharaja confirmed the claim of the matha to the property of such disciples as died without any heirs. If such property was worthless than a thousand rupees, the matha could take action itself, whereas, if it exceeded...
that amount in value, orders of Government were to be sought. 79

An order dated 1826 A.D., modified the prevailing practice of including fallen women of the families of disciples among items of special carādeya of the Government and directed that these unfortunate women should be handed-over to the matha to be reclaimed and reformed so that they might henceforth lead decent lives. 80

Another record confirms the old practice of referring to the matha, for its decision, certain civil disputes, such as those relating to partition of property, among the matha's disciples. This is an event of tremendous social importance. 81

Another record states that an exemption was granted, as in the days of old, from payment of duties on articles taken to Śringeri, including cloth for the puja during Navarātri or Dasara. 82 Other communications from the Maharaja refer to presents of costly jewels, silver and gold vessels, golden palanquins to the deities of Śringeri, and a car for the Śarada temple. The Maharaja got
initiated by the ācharya into the study of Śivagīta, when, as a mark of his deep gratitude to the ācharya, the Maharaja made him a grant of Rs. 12,000/- a year.83

The Maharaja’s great solicitude for the well-being of the ācharya of Sringeri is revealed by his despatch of a Birādari, or silledara, to guard the Sringeri matha during the troubles of 1830-31 A.D. He expressed, in a letter to the ācharya in 1834, the poignancy of his feelings at the turn of affairs. He wrote several letters to the ācharya’s camp in the North, requesting his return to Mysore and offering to defray the expenses of the return journey. He kept the ācharya informed of several suspicious events in the palace.

Chāmarāja Wodeyar X (1881-1894)

The Maharaja invited the ācharya, Satchidananda Sivābinava Narashimha Bhārati, to Mysore in 1901. Sabhās of Pandits were held in the presence of the ācharya. The Maharaja also participated in the religious discourses. The news of the demise of the Maharaja, which the ācharya
learned when he was touring in the Madras presidency, distressed him so much that he considerably cut down the rest of the tour and hastened to Mysore to console the family. The āchārya prayed to Sarada Devi to bless the two noble sons of Chāmarāja, and the verses in which his prayer was couched were ordered to be sung daily in the Sarada temple.

Krishnaraja Wodeyar IV (1902-1940)

The Maharaja, with his brother and his English tutor Fraser, came to Sringeri in 1898 and got the āchārya's blessings. The maharaja's munificence and the efforts of his dewan, V.P. Madhava Rao, to provide the matha with an extensive plot in the heart of Bangalore were generous. This plot was named Sankarapuram, where the āchārya built a magnificent matha and consecrated a shrine to Sankara in 1907. In 1910, the Maharaja visited Kalady, to worship in the newly built shrines there and pay his respects to the āchārya, and a college of Higher Sanskrit studies - The Bhāratiya Girvāna Praudha VidyabhiWardhini—
was instituted in the Sankar matha at Bangalore, in the presence of the Maharaja and his principal officers.

In all the administrative and land reform activities and in the welfare activities that the achar ya introduced, he had the unstinting support of the Maharaja's government and the matha authorities, and the Sringeri Jagir was complimented as being as progressive as any of the more progressive states in India. Again, when at the achar ya's request the Mysore Government enacted the Sringeri Jagir Inam Settlement Regulation of 1897, the rules and notifications bear testimony to the anxiety of the Mysore and India Governments not to impair in any way the rights and privileges of the matha.

The proclamation in the Mysore Gazette dated April 11, 1912, announcing the Videhamukti of this great achar ya, eloquent as it is, is but a faint echo of the real feelings of the noble Maharaja. The proclamation runs as follows:

"His Highness the Maharaja of Mysore has learnt with great regret the demise of His Holiness Shri
Satchidananda Sivábhivana Narasimha Bhārathi Swamy of Śringeri mutt. His Holiness had, by his profound scholarship, deep piety and an unbroken holy life of forty-six years as the head of this revered institution, won the love and admiration not only of his disciples throughout India, but of all who had in any way come into contact with him, and His Highness the Maharaja feels that the loss to the Hindu world and religion is irreparable...

The next ācharya, Sri Chandrasekhara Bharati III, had the Kumbhābhishekam of the renovated temple of Sarada and of the shrine erected over the samādhi of his guru performed in 1916. The Maharaja was present. In 1924, the Maharaja received the new ācharya in his palace at Mysore with all tokens of devotion. The Maharaja had such deep affection for the ācharya that he deputed his personal medical attendant to Śringeri to report to him about the ācharya's health. Among the private papers of His Holiness has been found a stotra to Sharada Devi, composed by him, praying for the prosperity of the Maharaja. This guru-sishya bhāva is something unique.

At the desire of the ācharya, the Maharaja's government appointed a senior officer of their administrative
service to look after the revenues of the matha in consultation with the ācharya.

Whenever the Śringeri ācharyas visited Mysore or Bangalore, they were received with royal honours and a salute of 21 guns.

Reference has been made rather frequently, in the course of this brief review, to the steps which the Mysore rulers took to uphold the primacy and high privileges of the Śringeri matha. In doing so, they only perpetuated the tradition set up by the Vijayanagara emperors.

The minor mathas within Mysore continued to make representations and even filed lawsuits claiming the privileges accorded to the Śringeri matha, but they were all turned down. The Kudli matha took up the claim to the British Resident, who also rejected it. The request of the Kumbakonam matha to display saptakalasa ambāri on an elephant and addapalaki in processions as Śringeri Jagadgurus do, was also rejected (1928). The Mysore Government, in their Muzarā department, published a "Manual of Birudas and other honours enjoyed by the
Muttadhipathis in and outside Mysore" (1933), which establishes beyond doubt the primacy of the Śrīneri maṭha.

Jaya Chēmarāja Wodeyar (1940) had his first darsan of the present ācharyya at Ootacamund (January, 1959). Two years later, the Maharaja devoutly and lavishly entertained the ācharyya in his palace at Mysore, and presented to him valuable offerings. The ācharyya was taken to the palace in a golden palanquin and offered pādāpuja according to the ancient custom of the palace. The ācharyya, in his turn, blessed the Maharaja and all the members of the royal family. In March, 1963, the Maharaja attended the Kumbhābhishekam of the Sarada temple in Śrīneri, which had been provided with a gopuraṃ over the entrance, of the shrine erected over the samadhi of Chandrasekhara Bhārati, and the shrine of Śankara, and the Sahasrachandi homa. Again, in February, 1964, the Maharaja visited Śrīneri with his family and attended the Kotinamārohana to Sarada Devi and the homas. In April, the Maharaja had darsan of the ācharyya at Mysore, and again, before going to Madras to take over the Governorship of that State. Soon after assuming charge, having come to Bangalore, he conveyed his respects to the
In August 1964, the Maharaja, along with the royal family, had darshan of the acharya at Courtallam, and arranged for conducting the Sathachandi Yajna under the guidance of the acharya.

At Salem, during the Chāthurmāsyā of 1965, the Maharaja replied to the address of the Salem disciples in the presence of the acharya.

When the Sahasrachandi and Athirudram were conducted during the Navarathri celebrations at Navapuja, in Madras, under the guidance of the acharya, the Maharaja made frequent visits and conveyed his respects to the present acharya of the Śringeri Śārada peetham.

Thus, the unbroken bond of devotion on one side and affection and benediction on the other has been perpetuated.
Santebennur Chiefs: Santebennur lies to the north-east of Shimoga, near Basavapatana. The Pallegars of this place had also very good relations with the ācharyas of the Sringeri matha.

In 1625-26, Pallegar Hanumappa Nāyaka ordered that the village of Devapur, which had previously been granted for the maintenance of the charities of the Srinveri Hirematha, should be continued unobstructed, as in the case of another village named Dandur. It is interesting to note that the word Hirematha (or Hosamatha) is used for the Sringeri matha.

In 1785-86, Pallegar Basavappa Nāyaka, son of Somasekhara Nāyaka, with a view to making his State prosperous, granted a village called Basavapura in Kottur Sarvamanya to the then ācharya of the Sringeri matha Sacchidananda Bhārati Swami, for the perpetual maintenance of its temple services.
Maratha State:

As we have seen, the acharyas of the Sringeri matha were not only held in great reverence by all classes of people of Karnataka, but even the Marathas had the same degree of respect towards the matha. The acharyas often visited the Maharashtra country. Everywhere, people received them with the highest marks of respect, and eagerly sought their blessings.

The active association of the Maratha ruling houses with the Sringeri matha began during the reign of Sacchidananda Bharati II (1705-41 A.D.) Raja Ram's Sivaji II, sent valuable presents to the acharya. Another record, dated 1738-9, of Sambhu Chatrapati of the Kolhapur line, sanctioned a State grant of two hundred benas a year to the matha.

In 1739-40, Balaji Rao Ballal directed that certain socio-religious honours should be shown to the acharyas of Sringeri. Between the years 1760 and 1772 the Peshwa Madhava Rao Ballal Pradhan raised the State grant of Rs. 200 to Rs. 1,500 a year. In response to an
invitation from the Peshwa's Uncle, Ragunatha Rao, the acharya went to Poona in 1760-61. On that occasion, Haidar Ali wrote to the acharya: "You are a great and holy personage. It is but meet that all should desire to pay respects to you; and I am happy you are responding to Ragunatha Rao's invitation." With further expression of respect and esteem, Haidar sent the acharya an escort of an elephant, five horses, a palanquin and five camels, together with presents of gold and silk cloth, shawls, besides ten thousand five hundred rupees for the expenses of the journey. From Poona, the acharya went to Nāsik, where he attained his Viieha Mukti. Peshwa Madhava Rao liquidated the debts that the acharya had incurred during his stay at Nāsik for fourteen years.

Grants dated 1782-83, of 100 movings a year and of a village named Thimmanhalli, respectively, were made by two well-known disciples, Hindu Rao Ghorpade and Daulat Rao Hindu Rao Ghorpade.

In 1793-94, His Highness Mahadaji Sindhia made a grant of the village Pingala to the matha. In the middle of the nineteenth century, Jayāji Rao Sīndhia,
of Gwalior, and Tukkoji Rao Holkar of Indore, sanctioned, respectively, State grants of Rs. 500 and Rs. 200 a year. Shahaji Raja Bhosale of Akkalkot made a yearly contribution of Rs. 150 in 1854-55. In 1850-1852, Yasavant Rao Pawar and Hybat Rao Pawar, both of the ruling family of Dhar, made an annual gift of Rs. 50 each. Bhaskar Rao Dadaji, of Nargund, and Lakshman Narasing Rao Sithole Dashrunk of Poona also made valuable gifts. The chief of Jamkhandi, in 1887-88, made the munificent grant of Rs. 1,000 a year to the Acharya, Sacchidananda Abhinava Bharati, on his visit to Jamkhandi.

An important question of precedence was decided, in 1894-95, by the government of Gwalior, whose Secretary says that, in Gwalior, the Sringeri matha should be given precedence over the Sankeswar matha.

Many rulers of other petty dynasties of Karnataka also made grants to the matha. The rulers of Kalasa-Karkala, and a Muslim general of Bijapur, Ranadula Khan, were among them.
SRINGERI MATHA UNDER BRITISH RULE

In 1831, Governor-General Bentinck placed Mysore under the administration of British Commissioners. The Commissioner, however, took a very helpful and sympathetic interest in the affairs of the Sringeri matha, like the other rulers of the South.

Mark Cubbon declared, in 1837-38, that no appeal would lie to Government against the decisions of the matha in regard to levy of fines or orders of excommunication passed in matters of śākara and vīchāra. Records dated 1839-40 state that the revenue returns need not be submitted to Government by the authorities of the samsthanem, which could freely exercise its time-honoured privileges, such as exemptions from taxes, enforcement of law and order within its limits, and the right to inquire into civil suits.

An official memorandum, dated Nandidoorg, 18/19 April, 1872, of the Chief Commissioner, after stating that the inmates of the Sringeri matha consist of (I) The Sringeri
Cusbeh and dependent villages and hamlets, known as the Sringeri Magani, (II) Some villages in other taluka, and (III) minor inams in Government villages, records that the Chief Commissioner has informed the Agent (of the matha) (1) that No. III must be surveyed, and treated like the Government lands around them; (2) that it is very desirable that No. II should be surveyed, but that the measure would not involve any interference with the existing rates of assessment therein, and that it would not, however, be put into execution without the guru's consent, which the Chief Commissioner trusts will be given to its adoption; and (3) that No. I will not in any way be interfered with except as regards the laying down of the outer boundary of the Magani which must be done in surveying the adjoining villages. In communicating the above, the undersigned is directed to convey the assurance of the Chief Commissioner's sincere wish to consult, and if possible, meet the wishes of the Venerable guru in this and all other matters connected with the property of the matha. 108

The Government of Madras had also recognised the position of the Sringeri Abharya, and issued orders for
the proper reception of His Holiness at places visited by him in Southern India. The Chief Commissioner used to sanction a special military escort to accompany the śācharya in his South Indian tour. 109

His Excellency the Viceroy and Governor General's recognition of the Śringeri śācharya's public estates well sums up all that had been set forth in the preceding chapters in this regard. The attitude of the European administrators towards the śācharya is also best indicated in the letters quoted above. 110

Though only a selected number of the existing documents has been published here, yet they are enough to indicate how the solitary hermitage set up by Śri Śankarācharya in a wilderness grew to be powerful all over India. In spite of the series of misfortunes that overtook it at one time, which seemed to shake it to its very foundations, it has survived the malignities of time, m nay, it has struck deeper roots. Its present position is best described in the plain language of an Official Communication of the Commissioner, which runs thus:
"The Sringeri guru is the acknowledged Spiritual Director not only of the greater proportion of the Hindus of Southern India, but also of those leading Maharatta Houses, such as Holkar and the former Peshwas. It may be said that his influence is far greater than that of any Hindu Spiritual Guide in India, and I presume it is for this reason that he is regarded with such unlimited respect... He has in his possession Sunmuds of great antiquity from the Nizam, the Peshwas, the Mysore Rajah, Holkar and others, all enjoining the utmost respect to be paid to him".

Writing about the Advaitic Muttas, particularly the Mutt at Sringeri, another European, a well-known scholar, says:-

"The great organisation founded by Sankara has withstood unshaken the conquering armies...and when we consider the great learning and high philosophical training of its living followers we may be confident that this closely knit association will in no way be weakened or changed by contact with Western thought...".
"No reader of these records can fail to notice the historical fact that the fortunes of Sringeri have been inseparably bound up with those of the renowned Karnataka Throne and the Royal House of Mysore. True to its famous traditions, every one of its Rulers has been deeply imbued with the spirit of the great - Shanmatasthāpanācharya, who gave his support to every school of religion of his day based on morality. It is a matter of which the Mysore House may be justly proud, that it has sheltered under its wings religious institutions of every complexion. Here are the mathas not only of the followers of Sankara but also of the Rāmānujists, the Mādhwās, the Lingāyats and the Jains. Nay, the Mahomedans and the Christians also have received the most sympathetic and generous support of the Royal House in building their mosques and churches in the State. Thus have the teachings of Sri Sankarācharya borne noble fruit in the action of the sovereigns of Mysore, who to this day of the epoch-making reign of His Highness Maharaja Sri Krishnaraja Wodeyar Bahadur IV are universally known as true friends of every faith in the land and who look upon the followers of all creeds, with an 'equal eye' for, what exists is the One Atman, which is this All.
May this illustrious House of the great Yadava Race flourish for ever, under the blessings of the Jagadgurus of Sringeri, of whom Sri Chandrasekhara Bharati Swami is the living representative of Sri Sankara Bhagavat Padacharya.  

Contribution of The Sringeri Acharyas To Learning, Philosophy And Literature.

The influence of Sankara and his philosophy in the post-Sankara age on the theistic schools in one form or other is noteworthy. His doctrine alone 'can accommodate all, placing each in its proper place in the panorama of world thought, leading all to the ultimate reality of oneness'. It is this spirit of accommodation and synthesis that places the Vedanta on a glorious pedestal and claims for it the status of the world philosophy of the future.

Sankara's works comprise the 

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bhasyas on the ten principal Upanishads and on the Svetasvatara and Nrsimha-tapini Upanishads, the Bhagavadgita and the Brähma Sutras; the commentaries on Hasta-malakiyam, Sanatsujātiyam,
Vishnusahasranama and Lalita Trisati prakaranas; minor philosophical works and Parapanehasara, a work on Mantrasāstra, is also attributed to him. For sweetness and elegance of diction, clarity and cogency of reasoning and sublimity of thought, Śaṅkara's writings can hardly be rivalled, much less surpassed.

Suresvarāchārya was a profound Vedic scholar and expert in Purva Mimāṃsa. His independent work is the Naishkarmyasiddhi, a succinct presentation of the fundamental teachings of Śaṅkara. He also wrote the vārtikas (elucidation) of the Master's bhāṣyās on the Brahadrāṇyā and Taittiriya Upanisads, and is hence known as the Vārtikakāra. His other works include a commentary on Śaṅkara's Dakshināmurti stotra, called Manasollasa and another on Panchikaranam.

Nityabodhaghana Ācharya (834–838) was the author of Samkshepa Sarirakam. In the introductory verse of Tattvasuddhi, Jñānahana, disciple and successor of Bodhaghana, sums up: 'Resting like a cloud on the lofty summit of self-realisation, his dialectics dispel all opposition, even as a lion's roar drive away elephants.'
His teaching, like the life-giving showers, fertilise the minds of his worthy disciples. Bodhaghana and his successors shed the lustre of their exalted mood, instilling in their disciples true bhakti by conducting the daily worship of Śārada and Chandramaulīśvara and by their precepts leading them to the path of righteousness.112

The next pontiff, Jñānaghana (848-910), was the author of Tattvasuddhi. Appayya Dikshitar holds this work in high esteem.

Jñānottama Śiva Ācharya (910-954 A.D.), wrote Vidyasri, a sub-commentary on the Brahmasutra bhāṣya.

Jñanagiri (954-1038 A.D.), Simhagiri (1038-1098), Īśvara Tīrtha (1098-1146), Nṛsimha Tīrtha (1146-1229) were other ācharyas of the Śringeri matha. All of them were great polemists.

With the reign of Vidyatīrtha (1229-1333 A.D.), the history of Śringeri matha turns a new page. There are a number of inscriptions which tell of the greatness of this ācharya and his two disciples and successors to the matha,
as great scholars in Sanskrit. They composed many scholarly works. Among them, Vidyāranya shines as a star in the Advaita philosophical firmament. His place in the history of Indian monism is very high. His exposition of Advaita philosophy is neat, forcible and clear. Advaitas accept his exposition as authentic and authoritative.

Bhārati Tīrtha, Vidyāranya's guru, wrote the Vaiyāsikaratnamala, also called Ādikaranaratnamāla, which is a paraphrase of the Brāhma sutras. It is in four chapters. The contents of each ādhikaraṇa are epitomized and presented in simple stanzas, with a commentary in prose called 'Vistāra'.

Vidyaranya wrote Jeevanmukti-viveka and was perhaps joint author, with Bhārati Tīrtha, in the production of the Panchadāsī. On the basis of the textual evidence, it might be inferred that the work was the product of two hands. The Panchadāsī lucidly sets forth the tenets of Advaita in fifteen chapters. The Jeevanmukti-viveka is a disquisition on one of the topics of Advaita, namely Jeevanmukti. Incidentally, Sanyasa and Videhamukti are also discussed. In the Brahadāranyavartikasara, Vidyāranya summarises Suresvara's work.
Adhikaranaratnamala, also called Vaiyasikaratnamala, by Sri Bharati Tirtha, is a metrical summary of the adhikaranas of the Brahmasutra giving the purvapaksha and the siddhanta. It has a commentary written by the author himself. This work is sometimes attributed to Sri Vidyāranya, but Appayya Dikshita attributes it to Sri Bharati Tirtha. It is a standard work of considerable value to Advaita dialectics. Another important work on Advaita is the Panchadāsī, so called because of its division into fifteen chapters, dealing with topics of metaphysical and spiritual importance. It is believed to be the joint work of the two ācharyas. In the Brhadaranyavartikāsāra, Sri Vidyāranya summarises Sri Suresvara’s work. Dipikas on the Aitareya and Taittirya Upanishads and Sri Śamkara’s Aparokshanubhuti and Anubhutiprakasika, a metrical summary of the twelve principal Upanishads, are also attributed to Sri Vidyāranya. Drgdrṣyaśiveka also seems to have been written by both the ācharyas. Sri Vidyāranya pays homage to both Śamkarāṇanda and Sri Vidyā Tīrtha. The works of these two Jagadgurus are among the greatest treatises in post-Sankara Advaita literature. Both of them occupy a unique place in the history of religion. Sri Vidyāranya’s powers of exposition
are stated to be 'more wonderful than those of Brahma; he can make (by his dialectics) the eloquent dumb and (by his instructions) the dumb the most eloquent.'

Sri Bhārati Tīrtha 'was the refuter of the doctrines of Bhatta (Kumarila), Buddha, Jina, Guru (Prabhākara), the Logicians and the Chārvākas, and the establisher of the Advaita doctrine'. His 'impressive and dignified discourses resemble the uninterrupted flow of Ganga from the Himalayan slopes'. And all this greatness came to them through the blessings of Sri Vidyasamkara.

The works of these two ācharyas are among the greatest treatises in the post-Sankara Advaita literature. Both occupy a unique place in the history of religion.

Abhinava Nṛsimha Bhārati I (1599-1622) wrote a commentary on the Śiva Gīta. It is an outstanding work.

Sacchidananda Bhārati I (1622-63) composed a kavya, Rāmachandra-Mahodava and three minor works—Guru Śateka, Minakshi Satakā and Kovida Satakā.

Sacchidananda Bhrātṛī II (1705-41) wrote stotras on Mōkāmbika and Sārada.
There are a number of other small works attributed to the ācharyas of Śringeri. It is a fact that Śankara and Vidyāranya are two outstanding personalities in the literary field, who inspired the later generations.

**Conclusion:**

The noble traditions, the great heritage and the history of Śringeri matha are still a living force in the religious life of the Hindus. The matha has played a significant part since its inception. Rulers and the ruled, out of deep devotion and in quest of spiritual merit, invested the ācharyas with secular powers and divine honours which they meticulously fostered. In return the ācharyas showered benediction upon them. They were not only great scholars, but they patronised the intellectuals. Thus their contributions in the fields of religion, literature, education & of vital importance.
# The Four Mathas of Śankara

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>West: Dvaraka</th>
<th>North: Badarikasrama</th>
<th>East: Jagannatha</th>
<th>South: Sringeri (Asrama of Rṣhya-sṛnga, Ramakshetra or Ramesvaram) Sarada matha.</th>
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<tr>
<td>Kalika matha</td>
<td>Jyotir matha</td>
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<td>Sri Suresvara, particularly, Sarasvati, Puri, Bharati, Aranya Tirtha, Girip Arasrama.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>DIVINITIES:</strong> Siddhesvara</td>
<td>Narayana</td>
<td>Jagannatha (Purusottama, Sakti-Vrsala Vimala)</td>
<td>Malahanikara linga; Vareha, Sakti-Sarada.</td>
</tr>
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<td>Sakti-Bhadra</td>
<td>Sakti-</td>
<td>Sri Hastamalaka</td>
<td>Sri Suresvara</td>
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<td>kali.</td>
<td>Furnagiri</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>ACHARYA:</strong></td>
<td>Sri Padmapada</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>TIRTHA:</strong></td>
<td>River Gomati</td>
<td>River Alakananda</td>
<td>Mahodadhi (Bay of Bengal) The Tungabadhra</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>VEDA:</strong></td>
<td>Sama</td>
<td>Atharvana</td>
<td>Yajur</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SAMPRADAYA:</strong></td>
<td>Kitavala</td>
<td>Nandavala</td>
<td>Bhogavala Bhurivala</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>MAHAVAKYA:</strong></td>
<td>Tattvamasi</td>
<td>Ayamatma Brahman</td>
<td>Prajnanam Aham Brahmasmi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TITLES</strong></td>
<td>Tirtha, Asrama</td>
<td>Girl, Parvata, Sagara</td>
<td>Aranya, Vana</td>
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<td>All the titles, particularly, Sarasvati, Puri, Bharati, Aranya Tirtha, Girip Arasrama.</td>
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NOTES

1. Ed. Rama Rau, *Siva tattva ratnakara*, p. 10
3. 'Notices of Sanskrit Manuscripts, VII, No. 2261' Published by the Govt. of Bengal, quoted in 'The Throne of Transcendental Wisdom', by K.R. Venkataraman, p. 42.
4. A manuscript of about 300 pages in the Mysore Oriental Manuscripts Library. It is in three parts or 'books'.
7. Ibid., p. 1194.
8. 9A, XIII, p. 95.
11. GVK, Canto II, V. 59.
14. Details regarding these four mathas are given in a table affixed at the end of the chapter.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td>17.</td>
<td>Sg.R., 1 and ECVI, Sg.1.</td>
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<td>18.</td>
<td>MAR, 1916, p.56.</td>
</tr>
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<td>19.</td>
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</tr>
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<td>20.</td>
<td>Sg. R., 4.</td>
</tr>
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<td>22.</td>
<td>EC, VI, Kp.49.</td>
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<td>23.</td>
<td>ARSI, 1929, pp.44-45.</td>
</tr>
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<td>24.</td>
<td>EC, VI, Sg.11.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28.</td>
<td>Sg.R., 8, 9.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30.</td>
<td>GVK, Sarga 3, Sloka 33.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32.</td>
<td>KNV, II.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33.</td>
<td>EC, VI, Sg. 5, MAR, 1928, pp.15 ff &amp; Sg. R. 11.</td>
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<td>34.</td>
<td>MAR, 1928, p.18.</td>
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<td>35.</td>
<td>Ibid., p.18.</td>
</tr>
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<td>36.</td>
<td>Ibid., p.18.</td>
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<td>37.</td>
<td>MAR, 1933, No.28</td>
</tr>
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<td>38.</td>
<td>MAR, 1916, p.65.</td>
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<td>39.</td>
<td>Ibid., p.65.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40.</td>
<td>MAR, 1928, p.19.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
41. SKR, 15.
42. Ibid., 12.
43. MAR, 1925, No. 35.
44. MAR, 1916, p. 67, & SKR. 16.
45. MAR, 1916, p. 67, & SKR. 18.
46. MAR, 1916, p. 67.
47. MAR, 1916, p. 67, & SKR. 18.
48. SKR, 20 and 25.
49. MAR, 1916, p. 68.
50. MAR, 1928, p. 20.
51. GV, XVII, vv. 38, 45 & 48.
52. QJMS, VIII, p. 28.
53. KN, XII.
54. STR, VIII, 8.
56. Ibid., p. 51.
57. MAR, 1916, pp. 69-70.
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59. MAR, 1916, p. 72 and SKR. 32, 39 and 40.
60. SKR, 41.
61. Ibid., 42.
62. Ibid., 43.
63. Ibid., 45.
70. MAR, 1916, pp. 76 ff; *Sg.R.*, 92-108.
76. MAR, 1916, p. 79 and *Sg.R.*, 136-38.
77. *Sg.R.*, 139.
78. *Sg.R.*, 142.
80. *Sg.R.*, 129 Caradaya is income from the sale of unowned living creatures.
81. *Sg.R.*, 130.
82. *Sg.R.*, 141.
87. Ibid., p. 8.
88. Ibid., pp. 8-9.
89. Sg.R., 30.
90. Sg.R., 31.
91. GVK, XII, vv. 4-8.
92. Sg.R., 67.
93. Sg.R., 68.
94. Sg.R., 70-73.
95. MAR, 1916, p. 73.
96. Sg.R., 76, 77.
97. Sg.R., 78.
98. Ibid., 82, 83.
99. Ibid., 86.
100. Ibid., 87-88.
101. Ibid., 84-85.
102. Ibid., 80.
103. Ibid., 89.
104. Sg.R., 90.
105. Ibid., 91.
106. Ibid., 179.
107. Ibid., 181 & 182.
109. Sg.R., 185.
110. Sg. R., 187-188.

111. Sg. R., pp. lxxxiv - lxxxvi.

112. GV K, IV, V. 7, 8.