CHAPTER V

A brief History of the Tirumala - Tirupati Devasthanams with reference to the Act XIX of 1933
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It is well known throughout India that the holy
shrine of Sri Venkateswara or Balaji is one of the most
famous places of worship and accordingly it is resorted to
by the entire Hindu population of the land. It is situated
in Tirupati in the Chittoor District in Andhra Pradesh. Its
celebrity and attractiveness are so great that even foreigners
take interest in paying a visit to it.

This temple is mentioned in several Puranas like Varsha
Purana, Bhavishyottara Purana, Brahma Purana etc. It is
said that the temple was built in Krita-yuga by a king named
Sankha of the solar race.¹ Some say it was built by a king
called Tondaman who was the younger brother of Akasa Raja of
the Lunar Race.² It was also said to have been built at the
commencement of the Kaliyuga or B.C. 3100, when it was
prophesied that worship would continue for only 500 years
and the end would be foreshadowed by a gradual decrease in
the receipts from votaries.³ This temple, at present, is
surrounded by forty smaller temples dedicated to other

² Ibid. P. 230
³ Madras District Manuals - North Arcot,.compiled by Cox,
vaishnava deities. Many rulers of South India had richly
dowed this temple and royal patronage particularly
during the reign of Krishnadevaraya, contributed to the
popularity and richness of the temple complex. Many
festivals like Brahmotsavam, Pavitrotsavam, Vasantotsavam
etc. were introduced by rulers and other men of rank, to
augment the grandeur and attraction of the temple. For
the convenience of the pilgrims, boarding and lodging
facilities were provided. Apart from Kings, the common
people themselves were ready to render service to the
temple as exhibited by the promptness with which the Devadana
villages (Villages granted to the temple) took upon themselves
the burden of pecuniary contribution towards the revival
of the Vedaprayanam (recitation of vedas) in the presence
of Sri Venkatesa in Saka 1355 during the reign of
Devaraya II.

The services and charities instituted during the time
of Vizianagaram Kings were in the form of nitya-naivedyams
(daily food offerings), Tirunala (festivals) Nanda Vanams
(flowor gardens), Ramanuja Kutams (feeding houses) etc.,
which necessitated adequate provision being made for their
regular and permanent conduct and preservation. The only
means by which that could be affected was through an

5. Ibid. P. 96.
endowment of land. This formed not only a permanent
property but also a permanent annual income through
which the objects of the donors could be fulfilled.
Hence the Kings endowed the temple with lands and
villages. This double permanency could not be shaken so
long as the Hindu Kings were strong enough to maintain
their power. A semblance of it they maintained down to
the seventeenth century. Till that time the temple was
in full undisturbed possession and enjoyment of its
property in land. Later on, the temple came to be slowly
dispossessed of it because of the Mohammedan occupation of
the Southern country; and completely during the British
rule in the early years of the nineteenth century. The
temple of Tirumala was taken over by the English East
India Company to enable it to recoup its expenditure incurred
as a loan to the Nawab of Arcot. Although the temple
along with the Paragana of Tirupati was nominally the
property of Nawab of Arcot, the revenues of the temple
were assigned by him to the East India Company. Even this
fiction disappeared in 1801 when the East India Company
dispossessed the Nawab and assumed direct administration of
the temple. The main interest of the East India Company
was the income of the temple only. From the days of the
Nawab of Arcot the net income of the temple was appreciated
by the secular authorities for their own functioning.6 At

6. Ramesan, N. op. cit., p. 477
present the temple possesses nothing out of the old endowments, so far as the landed property is concerned. It was deprived of those lands by the non-Hindu rulers either through self aggrandisement or through alienation to certain hereditary servants of the temple, probably, with a view to ensure permanency of service in the temple.

With the establishment of Board of Revenue in 1789, the relations of the English towards the Tirupati temple became closer as its duty was to collect revenue. When they had actually taken over the management of Tirupati temple from Nawab of Arcot in 1801, their main concern was to organise the income of the temple so that they could be assured of a fixed revenue per year. The whole revenue of the temple, from whatever source derived, was brought under the management of and appropriated by the Sircar or Government. Since many instances of misappropriation and mismanagement of Tirupathi temple funds were brought to the notice of the Board from 1805 - 1816, the East India Company passed the Regulation VII of 1817 to check the abuses. Though the Regulation provided that the duty of the Board was only "general superintendence and not detailed management", the Board interfered in almost all
aspects of the administration of the Tirupati Temple. Mr. Bruce, the then Commissioner of the District formulated a Code containing 42 provisions, known as 'Bruce's Code' for the guidance of the Tirupati Temple administration. This interference continued till the Court of Directors in England strongly resented the participation of the Company's Officers and men in the idolatry conducted in Hindu temples by reason of its management of these religious institutions and ordered its relinquishment of their administration of religious endowments. It came into effect in 1842-43 A.D., in the early years of the reign of Queen Victoria.

As much valuable work was done by the British in systematising the administration of the Tirupati Temple in all its branches, the proposal of severing their connection with the temple was opposed in the most decided manner. This did not deter the decision of the Court of Directors. It appears that there were several factions among the Brahmins who held religious sway in the Temple. As there were internecene quarrels among them, the East India Company decided to invest some disinterested person, quite unconnected with any of the factions, with the administrative power of the temple. Hence, they handed over
Sri Venkateswara's temple in Tirumala together with the auxiliary temples of Sri Govindaraja, Sri Kodanda Rama and Sri Kapileswara in Tirupati and of Sri Padmavati in Tiruchanur in September, 1843 A.D. to the charge of the then Mahant Sri Sevadoss of Sri Hathiramji Matha in Tirupati, designated as the Vicharanakarta (administrator) of the temples, after the execution of Muchchilka (agreement) dated 21.4.1843 A.D. to carry on the management through successor disciples. The rule of the Mahants, who were six in number, continued up to 1933. The Mahants after they became Vicharanakartas in succession to the East India Company failed to claim the tasdix amounts from the Government or failed to credit these amounts to the account of each temple. Thus, a permanent and valuable source of income of the temple had been lost forever. Even the balance of amount of nearly 45 lakhs was also not given to the Mahant. He was asked to run the administration without any balance. Since then the temple is depending on the voluntary contributions of the devotees who visit the temple. These facts make one to doubt the very integrity of the English in handing over the temple to a Byragee.

The administration of the Tirumala Temple by the Mahants was on the whole satisfactory as there was all round
improvement in the repairs and renovation work of the temple and in the facilities offered to the pilgrims. But the entry of Mahants caused a continuous struggle between them and the vested interests in the temple resulting in an unending chain of civil and criminal cases. Charges of misappropriation and misapplication of the funds and breach of trust were the chief objects of these litigations. The narrowmindedness of both the parties not only dragged the ancient shrine before Courts but also resulted in a colossal waste of temple funds, as the final Courts of appeal had invariably ordered the payment of costs of both the parties from the temple funds. Thus the administration of the Tirupati temple by Mahants proved to be a record of waste and embezzlement.

The temple inscriptions refer to a few services rendered by the three Mahants out of six Mahants. The first Mahant to take charge of the temples was Seva Doss (1843 A.D.) and the succession had been as follows: 8

1. Seva Doss (1843 - 64)
2. Dharma Doss (1864 - 80)
3. Bhagavan Doss (1880 - 90)
4. Mahabir Doss (1890 - 94)
5. Ram Kishore Doss (1895 - 1900)
6. Prayag Doss (1900 - 1933)

First Vicharana Karta Mahant Seva Doss: The management of the Tirupati Temple with its auxiliary temples was handed over by the English to Seva Doss, the head of a Math called Hathiramji Math in 1843. He was in-charge of the temple up to 1864. He did much of the spade work in bringing the confused state of affairs to a system and order. This period was the only spell during which the temple affairs were not taken before Courts. He undertook the renovation work of the Temples and other ancient structures. No.350 - T.T. records such a renovation of the Swami Pushkarani stated to contain nine Tirthas in it by Sri Seva Doss in Saka 1771 (1849 A.D.) and his renewing the Jalakelimaantapam. He also renewed the float festival for Srinivasa and Almelmanga together.

Second Vicharanakarta Mahant Dharma Doss: Sri Mahant Dharma Doss was the disciple of Sri Mahant Seva Doss and assumed charge as Vicharanakarta in 1864. His tenure lasted up to 1880 A.D. During his tenure of office everything was systematised. He is said to have renovated the Pushkarini known as Kapilatirtham. He repaired and converted the thousand pillared mantapam and parts of the prakara walls. A decree was passed against him directing him to make good to the temple a sum of ₹2,25,457-14-0 from his personal property on charges of misappropriation.

9. Tirupati Devasthanams Epigraphical Report, p.325
10. Ibid.
He provided gold kiritam (crown) and coverings for the hands, golden foot coverings, two necklaces of gold coins, prepared the big makarakanthi of gold embedded with gems, a round tablet set with diamonds and rubies around a big emerald of the size of the palm fixed in the kiritam and covered the door - jambs and the wooden doors with the Dasavatara (ten incarnations) figures with gilded copper plate. Hence it is known as the Bangaru vakili (golden doorway). He remade the Kalikuturavu (attached to the coronet) belonging to the jewels presented by Raghoji Bhonsle, made a new gold-plated makaratoranam with Gandharvas on either side, a sarvabhupala vahanam covered with gold plate, a suryaprabha vehicle with silver plate, the bigger and smaller garuda seshu, Hanumanta, Hamsa, horse, Kalpavriksha Vahanams and also Bhogiteru (car used for procession on the day of Bhogi festival in January for Govindaraja with Andal).

In Tiruchanur, he built the prakaram and the gopuram, excavated and constructed the Pushkarani, performed Jadi - bandhanam for the goddess Padmavati, prepared a gemset kiritam and plated hair, and gold coverings for their hands with gold lotuses. He also constructed the shrine for Suryanarayana and installed him in it.
In Sri Rama temple, he performed the Jadi-bandhanam (implanting firmly) of the three main idols, set up the dwajastambham (flag staff) with gilded round plates; made gilded silver Kiritams (coronets) for Sri Rama, Sitamma and Lakshmanaswami and for Senadjipati together with dhanurbanams (bows and arrows) and constructed gold plated Dwajastambha. For all these works he will be ever remembered.

Third Vicharana Karta - Mahant Bhagavandoss: After the death of Dharmadoss in 1880 A.D., his disciple Sri Mahant Bhagavandoss became the Vicharana Karta. In Tirumala he set up the dwajastambham, repaired some of the mantapams, and jewels, installed a telephone to the temple from the Tirupati office, repaired the fresh water tank, laid down underground pipes to get water to the street taps, and built the bungalow to the south of the tank for the sojourn of the Governor and high officials. In Tirupati he built rooms in the Pushpa tota (flower garden), constructed the High School building, established the sanskrita patasala (Sanskrit School) and arranged for distribution of the prasadam to the pilgrims. He lent some lakhs of rupees, in addition to the loan made by his guru Dharmadosa to the Raja (chief) of Karvetinagar Zamindari on the usufructuary mortgage of the Tiruttani Taluk and also to the Raja of Sri Kalahasti
on similar usufructuary mortgage of the Kachchinadu Taluk. In Tirupati he prepared a gilded Makaratoram for the processional image of Sri Rama, and two bajibandu (covering of arms) inset with a diamonds, one Kalki Turayi and gold belt imbeded with gems, one gemset makarakanti (ornament for fixing the neck), two gemsets pendants, one getset rakadi (ornament for fixing in hair at the back of the head), and two chains of mohars (gold coins) preserved in the treasury, for decorating the Deities in Tirupati and Tiruchanur. He made a Surya Prabha vehicle covered with silver plate and Sarvabhupala vahanam in Tirupati. In Tiruchanur he constructed mantapams around the dwajastambham, the shrine of Sundararaja swami, and the nirali-mantapam with the vimanam crowned with a gilded Kalasam (vase) and inaugurated the teppotsavam (float festival) in it. He was prosecuted for removing gold coins and precious stones buried during the consecration by former Kings, under the Dwajatambham (flagstaff) on the pretext of refixing it. He was found guilty of having misappropriated the temple funds to the extent of 15 lakhs. He was convicted and sentenced to undergo rigorous imprisonment for three years. On appeals it was reduced to eighteen months.\footnote{Ramesan, N., cop.cite., p.552.}
Fourth Vicharana Karta: Mahant Mahabir.doss: The administration Sri Mahant Mahabir.doss, the disciple and successor of Sri Mahant Bhagavandoss from 1980-94, is devoid of any interest.

Fifth Vicharanakarta - Mahant Ramakishoredoss:
Sri Mahant Rama Kishoredoss took charge of the Devasthanams in 1895. He made the gemset Sankha (Chank) and Chakra (disc) for the provisional image of Venkateswara, and hand coverings and gemset belts for his two consorts, and gold coverings with small bells and anklets for Andal or Godadevi in Tirupati. He adopted Prayagdoss as his disciple and had chosen him as his successor Mahant in 1900 A.D. He was also prosecuted for misappropriation of fifty thousand rupees. Before his dismissal, he was murdered. 13

Six Vicharanakarta - Mahant Prayagdoss: Sri Mahant Prayagdoss succeeded to the office of the Manager and was brought on the record as a legal representative of Ramakishore in 1900 A.D. Prayagdoss Guru was the most enlightened Mahant and carried out several useful measures of permanent benefit to the temple. His long regime gave ample opportunities for making improvements in every desirable line. Under him the institution was covered by the Privy Council’s Scheme which

13. Ibid.
had immediate control over all matters of the temple. 14

Sri Mahant Prayagdoss constructed *Nirali Mantapam* afresh and reconstructed the dilapidated Sri Varahaswami's shrine at the north-west corner of the *Swamipushkarani*. He gilded the Hamsa and *Garuda Vahanams*, repaired the *Gopurams*, *mantapams* and the flooring of the *Sampangi Pradakshnam* in Venkateswara's temple. He made a silver *Tiruchi*, constructed *satrams* (choultries) for the resting of pilgrims, established a dispensary, enclosed the *Dwarapalakas* in the temple with lattice covered with silver plate, cast a tiny gold image of Sri Padmavati and had it consecrated and suspended on the chest of Venkateswara, gold plated the *Sankha* and *Chakra* and made a gold covering for the hands of Sri Rama, Sita and Lakshmana.

In 1908, Ramalakshmanadoss a brother disciple of Sri Mahant Prayagdoss, fixed the *Kanaka Kalasa* (golden vase) over the *Vimana* of Sri Venkateswara's shrine. 15

In Tirupati Sri Mahant Prayagdoss provided silver covering for the idol of Govindaraja and his consorts, a big diamond set *patakam* (Pendant) and gold ear-coverings for his processional image, a gemset belt and a chain of

sovereigns for Sudikodutta Nancharu. He made the lion and elephant vehicles and makaratoranam covered with silver plate. He performed Jedi-bandhanam twice to Govindaraja and paved the floor of the sanctum, the mukhamantapam, the Kalyanamantapam, the circumambulatory passage upto the front watch-gate with granite slabs. He constructed the Vimanam over the sanctum and fixed gilded kalasam over it.

In Sri Rama's temple, he got repaired the silver Kavacham (covering) of Sri Rama, prepared new silver Kavachams for Sita and Lakshmana and gold hand and feet coverings, gold bow with a small bell and arrows for processional images. He also paved the floor of the temple.

In Tiruchanur, he built the Vimanam over the sanctum of Goddess Padmavati and fixed a gilded kalasam on it. He also installed Sundarajaswami idol, gilded the dwajastambham and constructed a satram to the south of the temple.

In the Kapileswara temple, he reinstalled Kapileswaraswami, performed Kumbhabhishekam (ablutions with water from big vessels) and prepared gold Kiritams, the hasta kamalams and foot coverings for the processional images.
He had organised the Devasthanams services after the system of various departments in the Government and introduced its procedure even to minute details. He constructed the Devasthanams office building, the treasury building with a safe vault and converted the old extensive granary mantapam into compartments for office work, keeping records, stores and other purposes. In Tirupati he constructed the first extensive satram for the pilgrims near the Railway Station. He invested five lakhs of rupees of the Devasthanams in Bombay Development loan and derived an annual interest of Rs.54,500/-.

He purchased from P.Orr and Sons, Madras, a Jadasadu with Kuchchulu (plaited hair with three pendant tufts of silk) covered with gold tablets inlaid with diamonds, rubies and sapphires for Rs.14,000/- for the decoration of one of the two consorts of Lord Malayappa in Sri Vankateswara temple.

The Dowager Rani Sri Adilakshmi Devamagaru of the Gadwal samsthana paid a visit to the temple of Sri Venkateswara in January, 1931 and presented certain gold jewels, gold and silver coins amounting in all to Rs.20,000/- in value and requested Sri Mahant Vicharanakarta Prayagdoss to make ratnakiritam out of them for Sri

Malayappaswami, the procession-1 image of Sri Venkateswaraswami. It was completed in 1932 and the finished one was used to decorate the Malayappawami on October, 1, 1932, the first day of the Brahmostsavam of Venkateswara.

The last Vicharanakarta Sri Prayagadoss contemplated the manufacture of a gold Kiritam embedded with four kinds of gems for Mulamurthi Venkateswara, and got an estimate and a blue print prepared for it. When the work was in full swing, it was suddenly stopped and all the articles were consigned to the Devasthanams treasury. With him the rule of the Mahants came to an end in 1933.

The Tirupati temple was handed over to Hathiramji Matha in 1843 with the view that the Mahants were men of religious devotion, high character, good education and training, little attached to material concerns and always engaged in religious work. But their history was otherwise. Their lives were spent in anything but religious meditation or service and they were not men with any education. In spite of all their shortcomings, it must be stated to their credit that they strictly upheld the traditions of the temple as an institution common to all denominations of the Hindus.
The Mahant used the money given by pilgrims out of devotion and faith to the temple more or less as one sole heir who was entitled to dispose of the money as he liked. Things came to such a pass that the Government were forced to interfere.

The Tirumala-Tirupathi Devasthanams Bill was introduced in the Madras Legislative Council as a private measure to provide for the better administration and governance of the Tirupati temple and its allied institutions during the year 1931-32. This temple was the most important of the temples coming under the jurisdiction of the Hindu Religious Endowments Board, created by the Act II of 1927, and had been managed under a scheme settled by the Privy Council. The Board having found in its experience that the application of Madras Act II of 1927, subject to the provisions of this scheme, was not adequate for ensuring proper supervision over the administration of this temple, expressed the opinion that a special enactment was really called for to remedy this defect and to place its management on a satisfactory footing. The Bill received the assent of the Excellencies the Governor and the Governor-general and became Law with effect from 6th June, 1933.

Act No. XIX of 1933 or the Tirumala-Tirupati Devasthanams Act of 1932 was passed "to provide for the better administration and governance of the Tirumala-Tirupati Devasthanams .... for the proper utilisation of the funds of the said Devasthanams, not required for the usual and ordinary purposes thereof."  

It was applicable to all the temples, endowments and educational institutions of Tirumala-Tirupati Devasthanams.

On the coming into force of this Act, the arrangement made by the Local Government in 1843 for the management of Tirumala-Tirupati Devasthanams, the scheme settled by the Privy Council in Appeal No. 6 of 1906, together with the rules framed thereunder, the provisions of the Madras Hindu Religious Endowments Act, 1926 except Section 44-A and the Tirupati Devasthanams School Act, 1914 had ceased to exist.

The Act vested the administration of the Devasthanams in a committee called the Tirumala-Tirupati Devasthanams Committee. It was a corporate body, having perpetual succession, a common seal and could sue and be sued by the said name. The Committee consisted of seven members appointed by the Local Government of whom the Mahant, if willing to serve, was one among them. Every member held office for a

18. Fort St. George Gazette, Part IV, 6th June, 1933., p.79.
19. Ibid.
period of three years. Any member including the Mahant could resign his office by giving a notice in writing to the Commissioner. A person who was not a Hindu, of unsound mind, a deaf-mute, suffering from impotency, insolvent, an office holder or a servant or contractor of the Devasthanams was not eligible for appointment as a member of the committee. If the Local Government felt that any member, including the Mahant, had failed in his duties or unable to attend the office for three months, the Local Government was empowered to declare his office as vacant. Similarly, if the Local Government felt that a Committee failed to perform its duties or abused its powers, it could dissolve the committee on the recommendation of the Board and could reconstitute another committee in accordance with the provisions of this Act. In the meantime, the Commissioner was to perform the functions of the committee. The quorum for a meeting of the committee was three. The members of the committee were to elect a President among themselves. If Mahant agreed, he was elected as the President. Every meeting was presided over by a President and in his absence by a member chosen by the meeting to preside for the occasion. Issues were decided by a majority of the votes of the members present. In case of a tie, the President or the person presiding was given a
casting vote. Members of the committee were not paid any remuneration from the funds of Devasthanams except travelling or halting allowance. According to the provisions of this Act, the Committee was empowered to manage the properties and affairs of the Devasthanams and arrange for the conduct of the daily worship and ceremonies and festivals according to its usage.

The Local Government was given the power to appoint a Commissioner who can hold office for three years. He must profess Hindu religion. The Commissioner was a whole time officer of the Devasthanams and he was paid out of the funds of Devasthanams. His salary was fixed by the Local Government from time to time and it should not exceed Rs.1200/- per mensum. If the Commissioner is a Civil or Military Officer in the service of the Government, the Devasthanams should bear the expenses towards his leave allowances, pension and Provident Fund. He was the Chief Executive Officer of the Devasthanams and was given the general power to carry out the other provisions of this Act, subject to the control of the Board. He was responsible for the custody of all the records and properties of the Devasthanams and should arrange for the proper collection of the offerings made in the temples. He could lease out

20 Ibid. pp. 79-91
for one year the lands and buildings of the Devasthanams. He was given the power to call for tenders for works or supplies and accept tenders, if the value does not exceed Rs. 5,000/-. In case of emergency, he had power to direct the execution of any work or the doing of any act not included in the budget for the year, if it was necessary for the preservation of the properties of the Devasthanams or for the safety of the pilgrims. This expenditure was paid out of the funds of the Devasthanams. He had to set forth the designations and grades of the officers of the Devasthanams, fix the salaries and allowances payable to them with the approval of the Committee. Any new appointment carrying a salary of Rs. 200/- per mensum required the previous sanction of the Board. He was given the power to appoint all Officers and servants of the Devasthanams with salary below Rs. 200/- per mensum and fine, reduce, suspend, remove or dismiss any non-hereditary officer or servant of the Devasthanams for neglect of duty, carelessness or misconduct etc. But they could appeal to the Committee if their salary was above Rs. 25/- per mensum. The Committee was empowered to fine, reduce, suspend, remove or dismiss any Officer or servant of the Devasthanams for neglect of duty, misconduct etc. The order of the Committee
was subject to an appeal to the Board which was final.
Subject to the provisions of the Act, the Committee was
to make regulations regarding recruitment, conditions of
service, pay and allowances, discipline and conduct of the
Officers and servants constituting the establishment of
the Devasthanams. 21

The Act provided an Advisory Council consisting of
the representatives of the jiyengars, the archakas, the
acharyapurushas and other mirasidars of the Devasthanams
for advising the committee in the administration of the
religious affairs of the Devasthanams and another Advisory
Council consisting of the representatives of the ryots of
the Devasthanams for advising the Committee in the manage-
ment of the estates of the Devasthanams. The Local Govern-
ment was empowered to make rules for the appointment of a
Chairman for each of the Councils. 22

The Board was empowered to call any information and
accounts to know whether the Devasthanams and its endowments
were properly maintained and their funds duly appropriated
for the purposes for which they were founded. The Local
Government was given the power to appoint an auditor annually
to audit the accounts of the Devasthanams. He was paid out of

22. Ibid. p. 86.
the funds of the Devasthanams. The auditor had to send a copy of his report to the Local Government. Three months after the close of each fasli year, the Committee had to submit to the Board a report of the administration of the affairs of the Devasthanams in such form fixed by the Local Government. The Board was empowered to make bye-laws for the maintenance of the records, accounts of receipts and expenditure, registers relating to the Devasthanams, the custody of the records and documents of the Devasthanams and the investment of the funds of the Devasthanams. The President of the Board or any Commissioner of the Board deputed by him was to inspect movable or immovable property belonging to and all records, plans, accounts and other documents relating to the Devasthanams. The Committee had to pay to the Board out of the funds of the Devasthanams a contribution of one and a half percent of their income.  

The Act specifically laid down the purposes for which the funds of the Devasthanams were to be utilised. They must be spent for the administration and management of the Devasthanams, the maintenance of the educational institutions, the foundation and maintenance of hospitals and dispensaries for pilgrims, construction and maintenance of

\[23\] Ibid P.87.
Choultries and rest houses for pilgrims, water supply and sanitary arrangements, construction and maintenance of roads and communications and lighting for the convenience of pilgrims and worshippers, the training of Archakas to perform the religious worship and ceremonies in the Devasthanams, and the training of Adhyapakas and Vedaparayanikas. The Committee with the previous sanction of the Board, was empowered to utilize the surplus funds of the Devasthanams for the establishment of a University or College with special provision for the study of Hindu religion, philosophy and Sastras and for promoting the cultivation of Indian arts and architecture, promoting the study of Sanskrit and the Indian Vernaculars and any charitable religious or educational purpose not inconsistent with the objects of the Devasthanams.

The Committee was competent to delegate to the Commissioner certain prescribed powers, duties or functions. Only with the sanction of the Board a sale, mortgage or lease for more than five years of any immovable property of the Devasthanams was made by the committee. The Local Government was empowered to make rules to carry out any of the purposes of the Act. The Board or any other person having interest had the power to institute a suit in the Court to safeguard the interests of the Devasthanams.

24. Ibid. pp. 88-89
The Committee was entitled to take and be in possession of all the institutions, properties, jewels, records and documents of the Devasthanams. The costs of suits incurred by the Board or the Committee in the interests of the Devasthanams was to be paid out of the funds of the Devasthanams. The Trustee of a specific endowment attached to any temple was to perform the service or charity subject to the general superintendence of the Committee. He had to submit to the Commissioner all accounts, registers and returns as required by the Committee. The accounts were audited by an auditor appointed by the Committee and he will be paid out of the funds of such endowment as fixed by the Committee.

The Tirumala-Tirupati Devasthanams Bill was opposed by many sanatanists (Believers in the established order) and a memorial was sent to His Excellency the Governor to withhold his assent. A public meeting of the sanatanists of Madras presided over by His Holiness Goswami Brijratanlalji Maharaj of Surat, was held on 26.10.1932. The meeting was flooded with great enthusiasm and sincerity of purpose. His Holiness Brijratan Lalji explained to the audience the danger ahead to Hindu Shrines of all India sacredness by Legislative interference. He further said "it is a deliberate outrage on our religious liberty."

25. Ibid. P. 91
A memorial was sent by A. Sreenivasachari, Advocate, Madras to His Excellency. He pointed out that the Tirumala-Tirupati Devasthanams Bill was not only ultra-vires of the powers of the Legislation, but also an unjust trespass on the rights and privileges of the Mahant. He opined that Legislative interference in matters affecting the religious affairs is intolerable and the proposed body of management will be more of the nature of debating society unfavourable to the temple and worshippers. He argued that the right of the Mahant under the sanad granted by the sovereign was a Civil Right of a subject to property granted by the Sovereign which should be protected by the sovereign like any other right. It was the fundamental principle of British justice and jurisprudence that for the allegiance of the subject to the Crown, the Crown protected the subject in the enjoyment of his rights to the property. The powers of the Indian Legislature and of the local legislatures as defined in Government of India Act, were subject to this limitation, viz. it should not affect "any part of the unwritten laws or constitution of the British Empire whereon may depend in any degree the allegiance of any person to the Crown. Hence it was opposed not only to justice but also to the fundamental principles of British Constitution itself." 29

27. Tirumala Sri Venkateswara Journal, Parts 6-10, pp. 571-73
The Tirumala-Tirupati Devasthanams Act XIX of 1933 specially enacted for the better management of the Devasthanams came into effect on 7.6.1933 and remained till 29.9.1951, for eighteen years. The period saw six Commissioners in succession along with six committees that managed the affairs. During this period attempts were made to provide amenities for the pilgrim public, like the construction of cement quarters at Tirumala, renovation work of gold gilding of the Dwajastambham of Sri Govindarajaswamy temple and Balipeeta in Sreevani temple at Tirumala. Thanks to the starting of anti-malarial operations on the Hill in 1934 and its continuance, malaria had been eradicated. Ameliorative measures for the benefit of the employees, such as framing of service conditions, opening of T.T.D. Employees Bank, Stores, Association etc. were undertaken. A scheme prepared for the starting of the Oriental Institute from the surplus funds. The Tirumala area was constituted into a Panchayat vesting the administration in the Commissioner of the Devasthanams as the President for exercising greater control over sanitation and public health. A Ghat Road to Tirupati - Tirumala was laid, a Home for lepers was constructed and an orphanage was built from surplus funds. A first grade college was started in 1945 and All India Oriental Conference was held. To spread Bhakti and culture of Srinivasa, a
Department had been created in the Oriental Institute for printing Books on Srinivasa. This all-round development was possible on account of the complete harmony and co-operation between the Commissioner, the Committee and most of the staff.

Though the Tirumala-Tirupati Devasthanams Act of 1933 was passed for its better management, the Act itself was limited in its scope. The framers were concerned more with the idea of using the funds for secular objects, than with the investigation of the origin of these revenues and purposes for which the original donors of the funds and lands intended them to be used.

In 1943, the Tirumala-Tirupati Devasthanams Committee resolved to establish a First Grade College at Tirupati and requested Government, to amend the Act so that expenditure from the funds of the Devasthanams on the First Grade Arts College might be permissible. A First Grade Arts College did not find specific mention under Section 36 and 37 of the Act but possibly the object could have been held to come under Section 37 (i), (vi) - "any charitable, religious and educational purposes not inconsistent with the objects of the Devasthanams". The Government were, however, advised

28. Ibid.
29. The inspection notes of the President, HRE Board, communicated in G.O.(Ms) No.1054, Rural Welfare Department, dated 5th October, 1951.
that as the matter was not free from doubt, it was
desirable to legislate specifically on the subject, if
it was desired that the expenditure on a First Grade Arts
College should be incurred from the funds of the
Devasthanams. Accordingly, a new clause (clause (a)
under Section 36 of the Act was inserted by creating the
Tirumala-Tirupati Devasthanams (Amendment) Act, 1944
(Madras Act XIII of 1944). This was opposed by a
section of public on the ground that there should be no
diversion of religious funds for secular education and
that non-Hindus should not get the benefit of the institu-
tions founded or established from the contributions made
by the Hindus.

The Act of 1933 was superceded by the Madras Hindu
Religious and Charitable Endowment Act of 1951 which placed
the administration of Tirumala-Tirupati Devasthanams in the
hands of a Board of Trustees consisting of the five members
appointed by the State Government. It also provided for the
appointment of an Executive Officer to manage the properties,
records etc. of the Devasthanams and laid down the purpose
for which the Devasthanams funds may be used. This Act of
1951 was replaced by the Act (Act No.17 of 1966) called the
Andhra Pradesh Charitable and Hindu Religious Institutions

30. G.O.No.360, Firca Development, dated 17th June, 1948;
31. Fort St. George Gazette, Madras, dated 28th August 1951,
and Endowments Act. Under this Act the Board of Trustees consisted of not more than eleven persons to be appointed by the Government, three of whom were to be members of the State Legislature, one person from Scheduled Castes and another to be a woman. They held office for three years. It laid down the purposes for which the Devasthanams funds were to be used.33

Thus the Act of 1966 placed the Tirumala temple on par with all other religious institutions and charitable endowments in the State and placed it completely under the control of the Endowments Department of the State Government which was a retro-grade step. The State Government realising the mistake passed the new Tirumala-Tirupati Devasthanams Act of 1979.34 It vested the administration in a small committee of management consisting of a Chairman to be nominated by the Government, and two other members also to be nominated by the Government, and in the Commissioner of Endowments Department and the Executive Officer of the Tirumala-Tirupati Devasthanams who were made ex-officio members for the first time. It also provided for a Financial Advisor and Chief Accounts Officer to advise on the financial matters of the temple.35

34. Ramesan, N., op. cit., p. 569.
35. Ibid.
This Act provided for the continuation of the "Hindu Dharma Pratisthanam" and had envisaged the establishment of "Sri Venkateswara Sishtachara Vidya Samastha" to be in complete charge of vedic learning, vedic schools, vedic research etc., to promote good old religious spirit among the masses and to save them from many a danger.

It is commendable indeed that this Devasthanams had been utilising its resources for the spiritual and cultural advancement of the people and it is a matter of pride and satisfaction that those in charge of the administration of this Devasthanams are guided by a high sense of devotion to the Lord and to his devotees. They are actuated by the ideal that service to the devotee is a higher form of service to the Lord itself. The establishment of many institutions under the auspices of the Devasthanams for promoting knowledge in ancient core and custom and the provision of several civic and health amenities to the innumerable pilgrims visiting this place are themselves evidence of their devotion to serve the cause of the people.

Lord Srinivasa is worshipped by the Hindus from the Himalayas to Cape Comorin. It is the Deity that commands the homage of a large section of the people of this country.

36. Ibid.
and all people of different views of Hindu religion
put faith in Lord Venkateswara and offer their worship
to him. Scarcity, famine, drought, economic slumps,
inflation and deflation have not affected Lord Srinivasa
or his Domain.

Every Hindu who is fortunate enough to be born in
this holy and hoary land of Bharata should not miss to
witness the grand and sacred Brahmostsavam of Sri Venkatesa
at Tirumala as the upanshads declare "वे कु ञ देवां समझे देवो न भूले त भक्तिते" (there is no God on earth greater than Venkatesa) and this
would confer untold bliss on the devotee - (as a matter of
fact any day of the year is sacred to Him) The Chief
Minister of Andhra Pradesh, Sri. N.T.Rama Rao wants to
develop Tirupati on the lines of the Vatican in Rome. A
Rs.5 crore ultra modern hospital with super speciality depart-
ments, a six crore by-pass road to relieve the traffic
congestion in the temple town, a three crore underground
drainage scheme, a centre for the handicapped, and blood bank
are some of the important schemes. To Sri. N.T.Rama Rao, the
idea behind the Vatican city concept is to check haphazard
growth and provide a complete religious atmosphere in Tirupati
and Tirumala through a single channel, making proper use of
Tirumala Tirupathi Devasthanams funds. "If the Vatican is the religious Centre for (Catholic) Christians, Tirupati should be for Hindus all over the world" he said. 37

37. 'The Hindu' dated 23rd April, 1984.