



Late Mr. J. S. Ariyaratnam (1967-1971)

‘A Rare Gem’ as his very name verily was, Mr. J. S. Ariyaratnam, belonged to a distinguished galaxy of eminent school masters who was in character, in style, and in manner supreme yet simple. Always sober, kindly but strict, his name still remains green and fresh in the minds of his pupils who adorn various walks of life in the country and overseas and in the institutions he had served as Head with a rare dedication.

Mr. Ariyaratnam and those of his mould are a rare find of that time. Inimitable, he was a trail blazer, an enlightened educator. Joining Jaffna Central College as a Science Master, he rose to be its Deputy and with the take-over of schools he was elevated to the grade of Principals and served at **Government Central College, Velanai** and then at Government Stanley Central College, Jaffna, winning the admiration of all, even of his critics, and lived up to the highest expectations of the college communities within and without. Mr. Ariyaratnam was not merely an able administrator; he was a very successful Science Master in the University Entrance classes. At one time he was the kingpin of the then Northern Province Science Masters’ Association. He was an innovator and was in the thick of all its activities that gave an impetus to the teaching and learning of the Biological Science through regular seminars and exhibitions.

He was from an accomplished family of a bygone era of doctors and teachers. He was a practicing Christian, whose breathe of vision extended beyond the narrow confines of race, language, and religion. His wife too was an accomplished lady, a teacher of English and they are blessed with two children, both sons who are now in the limelight in the medical profession continuing the family saga.

It is no wonder that his educational thought and practice is very much akin to the current educational reforms in which respect he was far ahead of our times – a pioneer! Men of his mould and worth are fast disappearing or have disappeared. But they live in their handi-work and continue to inspire us. Mr. Ariyaratnam made arrangements to conduct the ‘Silver Jubilee’ celebration, unfortunately it was unsuccessful due to the political problems prevailing at the time.

We cherish his memory. May this great soul abide in Shanthi in the Mansion of His Maker!

By: S. Elancheliyan