



The Late Mr. Sellathurai Varathalingam

He was born at Velanai East on 25-09-1929 and later lived at Puliyanakoodal, a neighbour village of Velanai. He was perhaps one of the very first old students of our College during the founder principal, Late Mr. A. K. Kandiah's period.

He was selected to Palaly Teachers Training College in 1952 and was one of the two persons selected from Velanai. This was similar to entering University that time. After having served at Manipay Hindu College with distinction and dedication, he joined as a teacher at our school in 1970 and later served as one of the Vice Principals of the College till 1978 and then he served as the Principal of the Saiva Piragasa

Vidyasalai of Velanai. The primary school which is located beside our College.

He was a smiling pleasant man attired in white national dress. Mr. Varathar as he was popularly known would walk into the school several minutes before the bell and leave the premises late in the evening. I still remember his advent to Velanai Central College. An active and strong personality, the very embodiment of vigour and vitality, bubbling with extra energy, ever willing to take part in any curricular and extra-curricular activity. He was an ardent Scout leader and rose to the post of District Scouts Commissioner in the later years. It is difficult to think of a set of teachers who spent nearly twelve hours a day with the children and fellow teachers, not as recluses or hermits, but as men in a hilarious mood of attracting and moulding future citizens. **It is no exaggeration to say that our legend teacher Mr. Varathalingam was one of them.**

He knew his students and his subjects. Never did he hesitate to help the help-less. He left no stone unturned to up lift the College. He was one of the few teachers, who won the confidence of the pupils, his fellow-teachers, the Principal and the parents. These rare traits won him the applause of the staff, students, and parents. This itself is sufficient enough to establish the fact that he was a teacher par excellence. He was the key-man and live-wire of every executive committee, that was striving hard towards the progress of Velanai and its surrounding areas.

Then all of the sudden, there came the shocking news of his tragic end in May 12, 1990. That fateful evening on the Mankumban road, a single-eyed lorry dealt a shattering blow to tell us all that premature death of a selfless worker. When I went to pay him my last respects, I was astonished at the vast crowd that had assembled at his home. Believe it or not-it was with the utmost difficulty, I threaded my way, to have a last glimpse at the flower covered body. People of all ages mourned deeply and sincerely. The light that illuminated their lives had gone off. Really and truly Varathalingam master had captured the hearts of not only his native land but the entire Jaffna district. His demise had left a void ---difficult to fill. His memory will ever linger around them for he lived for them.

By: S. Elancheliyan