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## **A HUMBLE HOMAGE TO A SCHOLAR PAR EXCELLENCE**

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A Scholar par excellence, a competent, reputed and eminent teacher, an able and meticulous administrator and above all, a humorous and delightful conversationalist, Sri Yalavarti Rosayya richly deserves encomiums and commendations. I was his direct student and disciple in letter and spirit. We cannot pay tributes to such an unfathomable litterateur in any form except by emulating and imbibing his lofty ideals and sublime aspirations.

His tenure of principalship from 1968 to 1976 was a golden period of renaissance and qualitative education in the annals of Jagarlamudi Kuppaswamy Chowdary College, Guntur (A.P.), assessed and analysed by any standards. The selection of Sri.Y.Rosayya as Principal of the College speaks volumes of the mellowness, maturity, expertise and discretionary powers of the members of the then J.K.C. College governing body.

As long as Sri. Y.R (popularly called "Mana Rosayya garu") was at the helm of affairs, all spheres and aspects of teaching and

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administration were immaculate as he was an embodiment of all virtues and literary activities. He was a man of punctuality, honesty, cooperation, affection and uncompromising standards in the field of education. He loved both the literatures of Telugu and English in which he was an expert. Of course, he loved grammatical (grandhika) Telugu. He adored Chinnaya Suri, admired Panuganti, patted Tummala Sitaramamurthy, and loved Duvvuri Venkata Ramana Sastry.

In English literature, he had all praise for John Milton, John Ruskin and Matthew Arnold, detested William Shakespeare for his materialist attitude, lack of originality and love for quibbles and puns.

Sri YR commended Sri Tripuraneni Ramaswamy Chowdary for his rational outlook and social reforms, admired Sri Anna Dorai, Sri Bezwada Ramachandra Reddy and Sri E.V.Ramaswami Nayakar for their revolutionary political ideas and ideals. His concept of politics was unique. Perhaps he had nothing but contempt for dishonest and unscrupulous politicians. "Politics is the last resort of a scoundrel" always lurked in his mind and so he never generally talked of politics. Whenever he did, it was only ironical, satirical and sarcastic and very few people understood his quizzic utterances. Being a man of purity, honesty, piety and punctuality, he expected the same from the politicians, teachers, students, lawyers and social leaders. He liked Prof. N.G.Ranga only for his immaculate English of correct accent, perfect modulation and accurate pronunciation. He himself was an admirable stalwart in communicative skills.

In this connection, I would be failing in my duty, if I don't mention his ardent love for pronouncing words correctly either in Telugu or in English. He was a great man who pursued learning as a Medieval knight pursued adventure-for the sheer delight of it, for the pure glory of it and for the mere love of it. Orthodox is his boundless love of traditional

classical Telugu and its eloquent exponent Chinnaya Suri. Sri YR is legendary in his adoration of Milton among English poets, he refused to scale down to a considerate compromise with the lighter trends of our times. When traditional Grandhika was being belittled at academic forums, he rushed to her rescue unlike many avowedly orthodox pundits.

He was an erudite teacher, a humorist and a delightful conversationalist. His class room lectures always had the ease of intimate conversation and the unique quality of enthusing students to learn more and more. His random remarks, quotable quotes, precepts, proverbs, axioms and pithy sayings enlightened generations of students. He loved only standard books as far as syllabus was concerned. His anecdotal conversations imparted more enlightenment and inspiration than any commonplace class-room discourse. His love of classicism extended beyond literature into the realm of music to an enjoyment of Thyagaraja in the full-throated rendition of Musiri and Ariyakkudi. His bias for classicism never made him too solemn and solitary.

A childlike laughter shone even through wrinkles of age. Brisk gait belied his age. In his presence, a sense of awe used to give way to warm endearment in no time. If you allow me to use a simile here, I am James Boswell and he is my Dr. Samuel Johnson. Even now Boswells are there, but Johnsons are rare. Sri Rosayya's genial laughter, his intimate enquiries, his giving away chocolates, and his affectionate pat on our backs-all we miss now. But he has left an indelible impression on the mind and heart of everyone he has taught. He was our Founder-Principal, patriarch of letters and our genuine well-wisher. When the then Secretary and Correspondent of J.K.C.College sent him a letter (or a slip) regarding the admission of a candidate, pat came the reply from the scholar, "Letters of recommending candidates for admission into J.K.C.College are not prescription slips". Can

you imagine any principal of any un-aided(in his early years) college speaking thus? Even the President of the then governing body dare not approach him for admission of his granddaughter into Intermediate course.

These are some of his unique commendable qualities of head and heart. He rose to eminence by dint of diligence, ceaseless learning, love for knowledge and limitless passion for setting up high standards of quality and excellence in the field of education. Where can we find such a scholar in Telugu and English with correct accent, accurate pronunciation and exact modulation? But, wrapped in our lasting remembrance, Sri Rosayya lives on and on-inspiring us in passion for learning and living.



Sri Rosaiah with Family, 1986