



May 15th 1909

THE HINDU. SATUR

My Musical Tour Through Southern India.

Professor Imaayat Khan writes to us:—

HYDERABAD (DECCAN.)

I was in Hyderabad for a long period and that made me more familiar with their music. The original music of Hyderabad is Telugu and it is practised by the Hindu, dancing girls and their companions. It is also taught in a few respectable Mudaliyar families. In their districts it is performed in a savage form. The style of Hyderabad Telugu music is similar to that of Hindustani which is due to the effect of a large Mohammedan population. Annapurna (the dancing girl, in Hyderabad) is a good Telugu singer, and Mr. Chinanna is a most graceful violin player in Secunderabad. There are several Parsis interested in music. Dadia Bonaji and Miss P. B. Chinai are amongst the several receivers of musical training under me. Many Hindustani musicians are attached to the Court of Hyderabad. The kanwali (the philosophical music) is performed more generally than the classical music, the former being performed on the Darghas (tombs of Holy men), on the nrus ceremonies and also in the assembly of the soofys (the people are generally interested in soofism and I have a luck of seeing greatly advanced people). The dancing parties are held in Hyderabad nobilities, a row of six or seven dancing girls stand with staff at the time of performance who generally sing Gazal and Thumries with limited dancing expression (Abhinayas) Bhukanjan is the popular dancing girl and Vamauram is the master Tabb player in Hyderabad. I had more than once the honour of performing music before H. H. the Nizam in the presence of almost all the leading members there and had also a conversation with His Highness on music and was very highly appreciated and awarded. I have found His Highness very keenly interested in music and possessing such a kind heart can which he melted and impressed very much with an effective music. Besides he is a gifted poet and a musical composer, H. E. the Maharaja Krishan Prosad Bahadur, Nizamurjang and Sardaryurjang are amongst those who can well appreciate music. Music is very rarely studied but excessively enjoyed in general, because it is taken by them more as an amusement than as an important branch of the science and art. Sometimes the street boys also hold crowd by Ganzal singing. In short, the people in general are musically inclined and jolly.

MYSORE.

I was an invited guest at the late installation of Mysore and second time during the Dasara in 1907. Carnatic is only the common music there but also Kanari javalies are sung very frequently. The late Professor Moula Bux (my grandfather) was the first musician from North who entered in Southern India about half a century ago and introduced Hindustani music and jeltwang in the South. He visited almost all the important Native States and towns of the South where he has made a great name and fame. He was rewarded with the honour of Kalagi, tripech, chathi, chamur, etc., the old distinctions by the great Maharaj Krishnaraj of Mysore. He made a very long stay in Mysore. Afterwards since the late Maharaja Cham Rajendra time Mysore is very often visited by Hindustani musicians which has made the Mysore music more mixed up with the Hindustani. Their music has Hindustani grace which makes it more melodious. Vainic Sikamani Seshanna is the excellent Veena player (whom I have much appreciated while playing a pallavi with an accompaniment of ghada) Gayaka Shikamani Kristappa is also a very good singer. In the Dasara festival music is performed in the Durbar. H. H. the Maharaja of Mysore is himself well interested in music and his subjects also well appreciate the same. I was patronised by H. H. the Maharaja for more than once and was presented with a gold medal and an address by the public of Mysore in appreciation of my musical talents. During my visit to Mysore I had the pleasure of performing music before Mr. Keir-Hardie, M. P., and had a long discussion on Hindu system of music with him and he was well satisfied with my explanation. Though music is much regarded and patronised in Mysore, no music school is to be found there.

NEGAPATAM.

Owing to the visits of several musicians at the Dargah of Nagore the public have become at any rate somewhat familiar with the music. They can appreciate Hindustani as well as Carnatic music. I was not only well appreciated but was called an incarnation of Maha Vaidyanada Aiyer by many of my admirers. I had the pleasure of hearing Rangaswami Iyengar's *the varam* which I liked much. I had more than once entertained the public I remember a true lover of music there named Mr. C. G. Ramaraju.

TANJORE.

Tanjore is well-known as a centre of Carnatic music. It is a pity that she has lost almost all her musicians.

Tanjore was also left by many of the musicians owing to the need of support. This recalls to my mind a saying in Hindustani which means that a seated elephant is still taller than a standing horse. The public there are no doubt musically inclined and can appreciate it better than many others. Sitaram, the mridangam player and fiddler Parameswar (sic) Bhagavata are experts in their profession. Radhabai is a good dancing girl there. I was invited at the palace where I had the pleasure of performing music before the old Maharani and the Prince by whom I was rewarded. I visited the Palace Library which contains several autographs on music written in Sanskrit. My visit to Tanjore made me recollect the old India.

TRICHINOPOLY.

In Trichinopoly music is performed, studied and appreciated very little. I think there might be some taste for the Hindustani music during the Walaja's time. But it seems that it has completely disappeared now. I had once pleased the audience at the Railway Hall with my musical performance.

MADURA.

The leading members of Madura seem to be interested in music. I successfully performed at the Union Club. I visited the Girls' School under the Theosophical Society where they had recently introduced music.

COIMBATORE.

The leading public of the place is no doubt somewhat interested in music. I was pleased to see Rai Bahadur Nagoji Rao who is much interested in the theory of music, I was presented with a gold medal and an address by the Mahomedan public on H. M. the Sultan's 33rd years' Coronation and the opening of Hedjaz Railway.

COCHIN.

I had the pleasure of performing music very successfully before the public of Ernakulam, Trichur and Cochin. The people though quite unfamiliar with the Hindustani music can at least enjoy it for the sake of curiosity. There are many Carnatic knowing people and also several female singers in Trichur. I was much pleased with the music of Parbati Amma, one of the female singers. Mr. Doraswami Aiyer is also an authority on music there.

TRAVANCORE.

It being a Native State music has been long ago introduced there by the Tamilians. The old Maharaja of Travancore was a great lover and composer of music. Even now his songs are sung with great affection. Under his patronage several musicians reside in Travancore which makes it excel all the other parts of Malabar in music. Music is studied by the Nambadri Brahmins. There is also a peculiar sort of music called Soparam (a corrupted form of Carnatic music) which is generally sung in the temples. I think there is similarity between the Maharashtra and the Malabar style of music. In my opinion it might be owing to the connection of one part of Malabar with Maharashtra. I had the pleasure of an interview with H. H. the Maharaja of Travancore who loves music. My performance was much appreciated by Diwan Bahadur Raja gopalachar Avergal who is very fond of music and the public in the Jubilee Town Hall presented me with a gold medal. I was pleased to see Mr. T. Lakshan Pillay well-trained in music. (Left Travancore for Ceylon on 10th October 1908).