

Rama Krishana Shastri 'Avyaya'

□ *Dr. S.P. Srivatsa*

HAVING surname as 'Avyaya' which means unspent Rama Krishana Shastri 'Avyaya' at last expired on June 24, 1993. With his death an era of a scholar who devoted his intellect for enriching the literature of Sanskrit, Hindi and Dogri ended. Whereas, he had to fight with poverty from his early childhood, he fought with his fatal disease from his youthhood. Thus he had to fight at both the fronts, but never gave in and also never stopped contributing towards the enrichment of Sanskrit, Hindi and Dogri literature. And, at last he left the mortal world leaving behind a rich legacy of about one hundred works comprising Sanskrit, Hindi and Dogri (published and unpublished).

A solitary writer as he was, he never thought of having a wife and children and also other worldly comforts and lust.

He was born in September, 1925 in Jammu. His father Pt. Parashu Ram Shastri was a great Vedic scholar and therefore, was known and respected throughout the State. In order to maintain age old tradition of learning Sanskrit in his family Rama Krishana's father got his son admitted in Sh. Raghunath Sanskrit Mahavidyalaya, Jammu, where he studied up to the Shastri standard. Soon after that he was sent to Varanasi for higher studies in Sanskrit. The congenial atmosphere for Sanskrit studies in Varanasi proved favourable for him. He was rather inspired in Varanasi to study Sanskrit more vigorously. His intelligence sharpened thereto an astonishing extent, with the result he again passed Shastri examination and then the first part of two years course of Samavedacharya examination with distinction, due to which he was honoured with gold medal by the authorities of the Banaras Hindu University. But unfortunately he fell ill there, and therefore, could not pass the IInd part of the Samavedacharya.

On return from Varanasi he was appointed as librarian in Ranbir Sanskrit Research Library, Shri Raghunath Ji Temple, Jammu during 1944. After some time he was sent to Utervahini to teach Sanskrit in a Sanskrit Pathshala being run by the Jammu and Kashmir Dharmarth Trust.

He remained there for a long period of ten years. He was again appointed as librarian in Ranbir Sanskrit Research Library, Jammu where he worked till his retirement.

On account of his poor health and spiritual bent of mind he did not opt for married life and thus remained a bachelor throughout his life. Out of 100 books which he wrote, only 18 books were published so far. The rest are still in the form of manuscripts.

He used to say that he had sent his 25 manuscripts to one of the great Sanskrit lovers as well as to Rashtirya Sanskrit Sansthan, New Delhi and he was hopeful that all would be published, but none of them could be published so far. This was really very shocking for him. Moreover, one of the difficult translation works of a Sanskrit drama which he shared with one of the Dogri scholars in Jammu could not get any credit for him. Though the work was awarded by Sahitya Akademi but he was not given the due share of the amount of ten thousands. It was further serious blow on his already deteriorating health. He could not forget the agony of such type of deception till end.

Some of the outstanding books of Mr. Rama Krishana 'Avyaya' have already been appreciated by the scholarly world far and wide in the country. Despite his deteriorating health and adverse financial position he was carrying on his writing work with same zeal and vigour and thereby serving all the three languages. Out of a meagre amount of his monthly pension Rs. 300/- he used to save something and with that saving he got some of his books published. Was he less than an ancient 'Rishi' ? It however, goes to the credit of some of his sympathisers that with their help he used to get some financial help from the Academy of Art, Culture and Languages and the Central Government. In spite of being so constrained he always remained cheerful. Whenever anybody approached him he used to meet him politely.

Prof. Ram Nath Shastri recently informed that Avyaya has written more than 30 radio plays in all the three languages.

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