

## Preface on 1<sup>st</sup> August 1961

**EXTRACT FROM THE BOOK 'KOIL OLUGU' WRITTEN BY SRI. V.N.HARI RAO,  
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In the year Rutrotkari arose the dispute between the Tenkalais and Vadakalais and for three months paccai (offering of cereals from a dead man's house.) the recitation of the Tiruvaimoli, and Srichurnaparipalanam (an item of ceremonial obsequies performed after death and conducted by Tenkai priests) had stopped in Srirangam. All the Stalattar gathered in the Garuda mandapa to find a way out. Then Wallace issued an order stating that the custom of the last two years of the Company's rule should be strictly followed and also commanded Velappa Mudali of the Devasthanam to send him a weekly report. This was announced by 'tom tom' in the town. Still the Vadagalais were creating troubles in opposition to Wallace's order. Then Wallace summoned both the Stallathar and the Vadagalais to Court. The Vadagalais represented the following as their case: "We are 500 householders here, while the Tenkalais have only 200 houses. The Tenkalais have newly installed an idol of Manavala Mahmuni on the gopura above the gateway of His shrine. They have begun reciting the 'Sri Sailesa daya patram' within the Aryabhatal gateway only recently. We too had joined in the Prabandic recitations, which we are now prohibited from. Lastly the Stalattar have newly added the 'padam' to the 'tiruman' at the entrance of the Vedancharyar shrine (i.e. they have converted a Vadakalai namam into a Tenkai one). If these four points were properly settled we would be satisfied." The Stalattar represented their case as follows: "The administration of this shrine is exercised solely by the Tenkalais. The Vadakalais have nothing to do with it. The houses of Tenkalais outnumber those of the Vadakalais. The idol of Manavala Mahamuni is immemorial and not new. Arayar, Vedavysa Bhattar, Tirupanni-Saivar, Pullacci Vadyar and Amudanar, ---these five have been reciting the 'Sri Sailesa daya patram' on all festive occasions within the third enclosure for a long time past. In the Prabandic recitations the Vadakalais had joined as the disciples of Tenkalais preceptors and not in the capacity of Vadakalais. Since the 'tiruman' of the Vedantacharyar shrine was newly drawn we added the 'padam' to it as is the case everywhere

else in the temple.” Writer Gajendra Rayar said that everything could be ascertained from his ‘book’ in which had been entered the accounts, etc. of the Stalattar of the temple. Referring to it he said that Sri Ranganatha was a Tenkalai God. Then Wallace asked the Vadakalais themselves to which creed belonged the following: Vedavyasa Bhattar, Vaduladesikar, Parasara Bhattar, Periyambai Aiyangar, Kandai Aiyangar, Balur Aiyangar, Embar Aiyangar, and the other Acharyapurushas, the Sattu Srivaishnavas, Kandadai Ramanujan, Uthamanambi, the adyapakas (or the reciters), the arcakas, the Bhandari, the Stanikas, the Tirupanni saivar, Amudanar and the Sattadaval (the non-brahmin Srivaishnavas servants). The Vadakalais said that each in turn was a Tenkalai. Ultimately Wallace declared that when the entire temple was manned by the Tenkalais the Vadakalais could not claim any connection with it. He said laid down that according to ‘mamul’ the ceremonies of paccai, the recitation of the Tiruvaimoli, and the Srichurnaparipalanam etc. should henceforwards be conducted by the Tenkalais in the houses of Vadakalais who should pay them their customary dues. Whoever went against the ‘mamul’ was to be severely punished in the chief court and exiled out of the shrine. At the same time he punished two such offenders.

This is the account of affairs up to the month of Aippasi of S.1725 (Rutrotkari 1803). Velappa Mudaliar brought to the notice of Wallace all the Olugus that existed in the town and at the desire of the latter had the Olugus rewritten along with the events up to the days of Wallace and placed a copy of the same bearing the seal of the five (Stalattars) in the ‘Terku Kallarai’ (Southern stone room) of the temple.

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**EXTRACT OF CRITICAL NOTES TO 'KOIL OLUGU' WRITTEN BY  
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This decision was not accepted as final and the dispute was revived frequently by enthusiastic adherents of the sects entailing law suits, sometimes carried up to the highest court available on appeal. The Adaulat courts as a rule, upheld the Tenkalai side and the offences against their ceremonial and custom were very severely dealt with. One Ranga Aiyangar who put the Vadakalai namam over the entrance to the Nathamuni shrine was fined a 1,000 rupees in 1863 by W.Nisbet, the Head Assistant Magistrate of Trichinopoly. The case was heard on appeal next year by J.T.Prere and Holloway of the Madras High Court. They upheld the decision of the lower court and in the course of their judgment declared, "The act in the place in which it was done, precisely resembles the act of a zealous protestant who should be rash or wicked enough to scrawl 'no popery' in a Roman Catholic church, situate in the midst of the excitable and not highly instructed population of an Irish country".