

OBITUARY.

Dewan Bahadur Dr. L. K. Ananthakrishna Iyer.

DEWAN BAHADUR DR. L. K. ANANTHAKRISHNA IYER, who died on the 26th February last in his native village of Lakshminarayanapuram, Palghat, at the age of 75, was one of a small band of distinguished Indians who did pioneer work on Indian anthropology. He was for several years the Curator of the Museum at Trichur and Superintendent of Ethnography of the Cochin State. His first important work on the Cochin Tribes and Castes was published in 1909 in two volumes which immediately attracted the attention of European and American scholars. He followed this up with his monograph on the Syrian Christians and was entrusted in 1924 with the task of completing and editing the great ethnographic survey of Mysore begun by the late Dewan Bahadur H. V. Nanjundayya in 1903. The large mass of materials on the 34 tribes and castes of Mysore collected by Dewan Bahadur Nanjundayya was carefully sifted and edited by Dr. Iyer who made also large additions and published the work in four sumptuous volumes.

Dr. Iyer's great reputation as an anthropologist led to his being invited by the late Sir Ashutosh Mukherjee to organise the Department of Anthropology in the Calcutta University of which he remained the Senior Lecturer and Head of the Department till his retirement in 1932. During his tenure in the Calcutta University he successfully conducted several field trips with advanced students of anthropology and published many important papers on the social and religious institutions of the peoples of India.

Dr. Iyer visited Europe in 1934 when he was given the degree of Hon. Doc. of Medicine of the Breslau University and was elected as an Honorary Member of the International Congress of Anthropology and also one of the Vice-Chairmen of the Sections on Ethnography and Sociology. During this trip Dr. Iyer visited Italy, France and Germany besides England and delivered several lectures before learned societies in these countries. After his return from Europe, he was associated with Prof. Cipriani of Italy in carrying out important anthropological investigations among the Coorgs.

Dr. Iyer was a Corresponding Member of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland, the American Bureau of Ethnology and the Anthropological Societies of Florence and Vienna. He was also a Foundation Fellow of the National Institute of Sciences of India, the Indian Academy of Sciences of Bangalore and Vice-President of the newly founded Indian Institute of Anthropology.

In his private life the late Dewan Bahadur was very amiable and charming in his manners and his habits were those of a simple orthodox Brahmin.

By his death India has lost a distinguished Indian who made important contributions to our knowledge of the habits and customs of the primitive tribes of India and on some of which he was the acknowledged authority.

B. S. G.