

Saiva Paripalana Sabhai Publication No. 55.

**THE ELEMENTS OF
SAIVA SIDDHANTAM**

(By a Science Graduate)

SECOND EDITION

(Revised and adopted for use in Schools)

WITH
INTRODUCTORY NOTES

(By Some Leading Educationists)

Printed At
THE SAIVA PRAKASA PRESS, JAFFNA

1955

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SAIVA SIDDHANTAM

BEING
AN INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY OF
SIVA GNANA SIDDHIYAR

(BY A SCIENCE GRADUATE)

SECOND EDITION

(Revised and adapted for the use of
Students in Senior Secondary Schools)

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PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION

THE talented author of "The Elements of Saiva Siddhantam" has not only made a deep study of the the Saiva religion but has also taught it for several years, and his eminent scholarship is equalled only by his will to conform his life to the knowledge he acquires. A book on Saivism from his pen must, therefore, be a boon to all of us.

The first half of the book gives a lucid exposition of the Saiva religion and the second half forms a complete guide to the study of Siva-Gnana-Siddhar. Throughout the book, every opportunity is seized to meet the attacks made on Saivism by innocent foreigners, ignorant critics, and interested politicians. Max Muller never had any opportunity of knowing the value of Onkara, and if he calls it chaff we cannot blame him. He is as innocent as the infant which wallows on its own evacuation.

* * * * *

The Saivite leaders of the non-Brahmin movement have run amok on the Vedas and Agamas on the ground that they are in Sanskrit, which, according to them, was the language of the Brahmins. To find a parallel to this we must go to Admiral Rhozhdovensky, who (if my memory is not treacherous) some forty years ago destroyed a fleet of trawlers in the English Channel, mistaking it for the Japanese Navy. First of all, Sanskrit was never a spoken language. It was the language of the shastras throughout India, and the spoken language corresponding to it was the Prakrit. Secondly even if Sanskrit had been the language of a country, it would have been spoken by all classes of people including the Panchamas. The ostensible reasons given by the non-Brahmin leaders for disowning the Vedas are that they offer

worship not to God but to such beings as Indra, Mitra, and Varuna, that they advocate flesh-eating and animal sacrifice, and that they give no knowledge which cannot be acquired by ordinary mortals. But the very first Mandalam of Rig Veda (1-22-164) says, "He is one; but the wise call Him by different names such as Indra, Mitra, Varuna, Agni, Divya" Swami Dayanand Saraswati gives a list of one hundred such names, and shows that etymologically they denote God. As regards flesh-eating and animal sacrifice, it is only according to Sayana and men like him that they find a place in some of the Vedas. Swami Dayanand has shown the hollowness of their interpretation and has conclusively proved that the Vedas condemn flesh-eating. Even according to Sayana, the horse of the Aswamedha is not slaughtered but is let loose without any injury.

In the first part of the book dealing with the fundamentals of Saivism, the author draws special attention to certain aspects of it to which previous writers have not given the importance they deserve. One of these is the sisterly attitude of Saivism to all other religions. Just as in a school, all the classes are good for those who are placed in them, so, the various religions are good for those qualified for them and form the rungs of a ladder which takes one to the highest Truth and Bliss. In dealing with advaitam he puts an end to the controversy that has been raging over it by concluding that it could be comprehended only at the stage of realisation. Just as the relation between x and y cannot be known if they are themselves unknown, so the relation between God and soul cannot be understood by us at our present stage as we have no true knowledge of God and soul. In the chapter on sadanas, the author shows the indispensableness of images for worship and contemplation (except to Gnanis) and the absurdity of a worshipper of one kind of image ridiculing a worshipper of another kind of image.

There is only one point on which I am unable to agree with the learned author. This is where he descends from the Shastras into the Bible and the Puranas, to find parallels

to Saivism in Christianity. I will mention one of them as sample †

* * * * *

The second part of the book is invaluable. There are two introductory chapters, the first one on the Siddhanta Shastras and other sacred books, and the second on Siddhiar and its author. The latter chapter gives such a charming account of Siddhiar that no one who reads it can resist the desire to make a deep study of it. The subsequent chapters give an exhaustive summary of Alavai and Parapaksbam, and a detailed analysis of Supakkam along with the corresponding Sootrams of Shivagnanabodham. The Parapakkam is supplemented by the author's own account of the heterodoxies, which are not included in it.

The Saiva world ought to be congratulated on the appearance in their midst of this illuminating study of Saiva Siddhanta, which is likely to be read even by followers of some sister religions.

S. SHIVAPADASUNDARAM,

Kandavanam

Chitrabhanu, Ani 24th.



† A good deal of controversial matter including the paragraphs referred to by the learned preface-writer has been left out in the new edition.

PUBLISHER'S NOTE ON THE SECOND EDITION

The contents of this book originally appeared as a series of articles in the columns of the "Hindu Organ" about fifteen years ago and were then reprinted in book form. The reprints being all sold out and there being an increasing demand for copies, it has become necessary to issue a reprint. The opportunity has been taken to revise the book and adapt it for the use of students in the higher classes of our English Schools, who desire to have an idea of the Saiva religion. With a view to this end much controversial matter including references especially critical references to other creeds and systems of philosophy, has been left out as being ill-suited for inclusion in a school book. It is only where it appeared to be essential for preserving the continuity of the subject-matter or to explain the fundamental concepts of the Saiva System that such references have been retained.

It was intended at one stage of the revision to delete chapters XI and XII indicating the principal features of other systems altogether from this edition, but on second thoughts it was decided to retain them as their omission would tend to detract from the comprehensive character of the publication. Foreign creeds (not indigenous to India) have not however been similarly summarised for obvious reasons. The author of Siddhiyar too, it will be noted, has not touched on them.

The main points dealt with in this publication have been indicated at the top of the respective paragraphs or groups of paragraphs and an alphabetically arranged index thereof appended to the book to facilitate reference.

The author has not reserved the copy-right or any other rights in the book. The articles were written with no mercenary motives but as a labour of love, an attempt to discharge a sacred duty which a man an elder brother owes to his fellowmen his younger brothers and sisters. Any religious or philanthropically-inclined individual, society

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or other institution is at full liberty to reprint this and other publications from his pen or portions therefrom for purposes of propoganda by free distribution or sale at nominal prices not exceeding cost price.

The author wishes to acknowledge his indebtedness to the late lamented Srimat S. Shivapadasundaram the well known Saiva Scholar of Jaffna, Sriman P. Vythialingam retired District Judge of Batticaloa and other interested readers for comments and suggestions, which proved very useful in the course of the revision. Any further representations received after the issue of the present edition will be similarly considered if and when it becomes necessary to issue a third edition.

Navalar Ashram,
Jaffna, May, 1955,

M. MYLVAGANAM,
Propaganda Officer,
Saiva Paripalana Sabha.



THE ELEMENTS OF SAIVA SIDDHANTAM

(By a Science Graduate)

The "Elements of Saiva Siddhantam" originally appeared in the Columns of the *Hindu Organ* in the form of a series of articles, which were then reprinted in book form and sold at a nominal price of 50 cents per copy (cost price). The reprints being all sold out and there being a demand for more copies, it became necessary to make a fresh reprint. The opportunity was taken to get the book revised by the author and adapt it for the use of students in the higher classes of our English schools, who desire to have an idea of the elementary principles of their ancestral faith. The second edition is now ready for issue. The following introductory notes written by some of our leading educationists are published here for general information:



INTRODUCTORY NOTES

by some leading Educationists

I

Preface to the 2nd Edition of the "Elements of Saiva Siddhantam" written by Sri M. Gnanaprasadam, B. A., B. Sc. the well-known Saiva Scholar and Educationist, of Parameshwara College, Jaffna:

Mere material possessions and intellectual attainments have failed to give us happiness. Even the very pursuits of our lives convey no meaning to

us. We have no hopes to inspire us and no faith to live by. A reborn living faith is the deepest need of our times.

It is true that we are all Saiva Siddhantins. We believe in a Supreme Being. We believe in the vision of it. We believe in controlling and shaping our lives in the light of that vision. But, Alas! Our belief is only verbal. It expresses itself neither in our inner conduct nor in our outer lives.

The Arumuga Navalar era in Jaffna was one full of life, activity and history. The one that followed it was a period of stagnation in all spheres of activity. The present one is full of hope. Of recent years, there has been a growing general interest in the study of our Saiva religion. There are men, although a limited number, pious, earnest and balanced souls, trying to bring back to us the vision of Saiva Siddhanta—the message of Sri Panchakshara.

The author of this book is a pioneer in this field. He has been a profound student of Saiva Siddhanta throughout his life. His clarity of presentation, and his scrupulous care to avoid non-essential technicalities are clear indications of his sound scholarship and of the religious humility of his life. A vast mass of Saiva Literature has been distilled and the quintessence is given in the work for the beginner who desires to be introduced into the subject. We recommend this revised edition as a Saiva religious book admirably suited for the

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use of our students in the G. C. E. and H. S. C forms of our Saiva English Schools.

II

Note by Sri Vijayam M. Asaipillai, B. Sc., Principal, Jaffna Hindu College, Jaffna.

This book, written in simple English, will be welcomed by those who are interested in Saiva Siddhantha Philosophy, particularly those whose knowledge of Tamil is not good enough to enable them to read Siva Gnana Bhotham, Sivagnana Sithiyar etc. in the original. The author, who has written this book as a labour of love, deserves the thanks of all students of Philosophy.

III

Note by Sri S. Ambikaipakan, B. A., Principal, Vaidyeshwara Vidyalayam, Jaffna.

I read the "Elements of Saiva Siddhantam" when it first appeared in book form and was greatly profited by it. The author has devoted a me-time to the study of the Hindu Scriptures with special reference to Saiva Siddhanta. What is more, he has taught the Saiva Siddhanta Texts to many keen students for several years. The Author, therefore, is well-qualified to write a book on Saiva Siddhanta.

The value of the present edition to our schools has been enhanced as it has been revised to suit the needs of our teachers and students. I recommend this book to all those who want to get acquainted with the essentials of Saiva Siddhanta.

-I have one suggestion to make about this book. Since, in the changed educational set-up, Tamil is coming to its own, a Tamil edition of this book will be very useful. I hope the Publishers will take steps to see that this book is brought out in Tamil at an early date.

IV

Note by Sri A. Thiagaraja, M. A., Principal, Karainagar Hindu College, Karainagar.

The author is a life-long student of Saivism and is pre-eminently fitted to write a book on the subject, which has been vividly and lucidly expounded in this publication of his. The younger generation should carry the torch forward and uphold the catholicity and veracity of our Religion. All school authorities will therefore do well to prescribe the book for the G. C. E. and H. S. C. classes and reap the benefit of its comprehensive completeness.

V

Foreword by Sri S. Subramaniam, B. A., Principal, Victoria College, Chulipuram.

All students of Saiva Siddhantam who have not had the opportunity of studying Siva Gnana Siddhiar in the original text should indeed be grateful to the author of this work for presenting in a nutshell the great truths underlying the philosophy and practice of Saivism. The vast majority of the English-educated men and women of today have neither the ability nor the patience to master the sacred works which have kept the

light of "Sanatana Dharma" burning in the hearts of generations of Saivaites throughout centuries of foreign domination—political, intellectual, cultural and spiritual. A handbook of this nature should be regarded as a great boon by Saivaites who are anxious to master the tenets of their religion and to follow its precepts.

The author has in these pages, tried to examine the heterodox views of allied and alien religions. He has also critically examined some recent views of neo-Saivaites based on the social and political prejudices of the times, and not on fundamental truths as understood by our ancients. He has, at every turn, tried to reaffirm the principles of "Sanatana Dharma" in all their purity.

Chapters I and II are introductory. Chapters III to VII embody the essence of the Theory and Practice of Saiva Siddhantam. In Chapter VIII he has attempted to explore the basic scriptures of the Saiva religion, their relative importance and their relationship to one another. In Chapter IX he traces the history of the author of Siddhiar. In Chapters X to XIV he expounds the contents of Siddhiar. Chapter XV embodies his concluding remarks, including some notes of a personal nature.

We should also acknowledge our debt of gratitude to the author for his lucid exposition of some of the basic concepts of Saiva Siddhantam e.g. the Thri-Padarthas, Advaitam, Sri Panchadcharam, Bhakti, Divine Grace, Moksha, Karma

Thiruneeru, Image worship, the Four Paths, Guru-Linga-Sangama Servai, etc.

As a teacher of Saivism for public examinations, I have found this manual very helpful. This is suitable for study in the Upper forms of Secondary Schools, particularly in the G. C. E. and H. S. C. classes.

This should also rouse the interest of all students of Eastern Philosophy, even though they do not profess the Saivaite faith.

The Elements Of Saiva Siddhantam

An Introduction to the Study of Siva Gnana Siddhiyar

HOMAGE TO PILLAIYAR

*Praise and glory to Pillaiyar,
Prince of Gods with Pranav' Face,
Fountain source of Favour and Grace,
T'erring mortals that men are.*

To the Teachers

MEYKANDA DEVAR

*Oh, when shall we be fit reach sure
The feet of him our Lord Truth Seer,
Who saw the truth Advaitam pure,
Not seen by men deluded here.*

ARULNANDI DEVAR

*Oh, when shall we approach and praise
The golden feet of Nandi of Grace
Who told the Truth in half a verse
And proved the world a phantom curse.*

CHAPTER I

Prefatory Remarks

THESE lines are written on the orders of the Secretary (now Propaganda Officer) of the Saiva Paripalana Sabhai, as he considers that a short compendium in the English language explaining the elementary principles of our religion may be of some use to our English-educated young men.

The Study of Tamil

In this modern age, western education is a 'sine qua non' for all practical purposes, we mean so far as worldly affairs are concerned. It is English education that pays nowadays, and it is English-educated men that are looked up to as leaders. And hence the general tendency to send our boys to English schools before they get a good grounding in Tamil. The struggle for existence and worldly advancement is so great and the competition so keen that the cry in this country for several generations has been 'English, more English, better English' so much so that our boys do not have the opportunity even to read and write their mother-tongue fluently. And Tamil being not a compulsory subject in English schools, and even where it is taken up as an optional subject the time allotted to it being very limited* and the boys, more often than not, treating the time allotted to it as a sort of leisure period, it is no wonder that Tamil scholarship has lost ground gradually and it is little more than a spoken language with most of our present day young men. Man being a creature of his environment and training and the education imparted in our schools being one-sided and materialistic, it is but natural that some of our young men, especially those whose home-training does not put a curb to the materialistic tendencies of the present system of education, have their heads turned and become agnostics and materialists and call themselves Saivites only in name. And when they happen to be educated in alien schools, the transformation is even still more noticeable.

*It is gratifying to note that there is a change for the better since these words were written as after the grant of independence to Ceylon there is a marked tendency to switch over from English towards the Swabasha.

Disinclination to read our Shastras or to hear them read and expounded follows as a natural corollary to the system of education that now prevails in our midst.

“~~The~~ system of Hindu Philosophy which is expounded in the following pages and its name will be altogether new to many an English-educated Hindu who is content to learn his religion and philosophy from English books and translations and from such scraps as turn up in newspapers and magazines”, thus begins Nallaswamipillai his introduction to the Siva-Gnana Bodham. And yet “it is the philosophy of the religion in which at least every Tamil-speaking Hindu is more or less brought up and the one philosophy which obtains predominance in the Tamil Language.” Judging from personal observation and what some of our friends have often told us, we regret to have to admit that these words are almost as true today as when they were written about half a century ago. What a shame is this? What a tar-brush to paint us with? Altogether new? Not to know our religion? Can it be? Oh, impossible!—and yet how true! How many of us do know what and what treasures, gems of thought, are to be found in the Devarams and Tiruvachakam, in Tirumantiram and Tirukkural, in Siva Gnana Bodham and Siva Gnana Siddhi, in Thayumanavar and the thousand and one other poems and writings known to exist in the vast and hoary Tamil? How many of us do know even the elementary principles of Saiva Siddhantam, the Tamilian creed, what the Tripadarthas are, what the relation between them is, why such an entity as Pathi should be postulated, what are Pasu and Pasam, Bantham and Veedu. Sadana and Payan? What a large number of us there are who ignorantly believe that the Saiva Religion is nothing but a form of idolatry consisting merely of a mass of meaningless rituals, which has had its day and become out of date and obsolete and should now make room for other and easier systems to practise? How many of us there are who can explain what these Kriyas and images really mean and what grand principles they are meant to illustrate? How many of us do know what Tiruneeru is and Sri Panchadcharam, why Nadesar should be represented as standing on one foot with so many hands each in a different posture, or why the image of Pillaiyar should be provided with an elephant head and trunk? Unpleasant questions these

are to answer. But it is a fact that very few of us Tamilians know much of either our language or religion. It is indeed too true that most of us know more of other peoples' languages and religions than of our own. We do not, of course, mean to say that we should boycott everything foreign. Far from it. Let us by all means learn whatever others have to teach us. But, what we mean to say is, let us devote at least as much care and attention to our own mother-tongue and mother-religion. Let us not be like undutiful sons who pander to the delight of others whilst their own mother at home is starving. We have too long been following the wrong path. Let us now cry 'halt' and return to our mother. Surely the Tamil has riches enough to claim at least a portion of the time of her sons, sweetness enough to deserve being tasted.

Is it Difficult?—Its beauty

The most oft-repeated objection to the study of Tamil is that it is difficult to understand. There has been some awakening in recent years and there are young men,—a small minority though they are,—who are anxious to know something of their national heritage by learning our language, our literature and our Shastras. But they labour under the handicap that they have had no graduated foundation in Tamil language and grammar to be able to read and understand them. If it is found necessary to spend a period of ten or twelve years to get a tolerably decent education in English, it is idle to expect that Tamil can be mastered immediately we open a book in that language. Not that Tamil is more difficult than English, but the fault lies in our expecting the impossible. No man in his senses expects a young man who has learnt English up to the fourth or fifth standard only to be able to understand the classical English of Chaucer or Milton or the intricacies of the binomial theorem or logarithms, but that is exactly what people who speak of the difficulty of Tamil expect to find with literature in that language. If only we would devote to the study of our mother-tongue a fraction of the time we spend in learning the foreign language, if we would divert a portion at least of the time we now waste in diverse ways, towards the acquisition of a fair knowledge of the Tamil, there would surely be no occasion

to say that Tamil is difficult to understand. If our English-educated young men work hard and toil at it for at least a couple of years and begin to appreciate it, there would be no turning away from it, so sweet it is, so grand, so beautiful, melodious to the ear and enchanting to the mind. The more one tastes it the more he would relish it.

Some cheap sneers—Apology

Another handicap that willing students labour under is the cheap sneer which we are told is sometimes flung at them by unbelievers. We can only smile and pity the ignorance of those who use such expressions as fossilised archaic stuff of the Tamilians, their "lower" conception of God, &c. We need waste no powder and shot with such so-called educated but ignorant critics. Our path has been well set for us by our Lord Meykandan:

தம்மை உணர்ந்து தமை உடைய தன் உணர்வார்
எம்மை உடைமை எமை இகழார்.—தம்மை
உணரார் உணரார், உடங்கு இயைந்து தம்மிற்
புணராமை கேளாம் புறன்.

Whoso know themselves know their Lord,
Our masters, they despise us not;
Whoso know not themselves know nought,
They wrangle, we heed not their word.

Will it pay test

Yet another complaint that is often trotted out by sceptics against the study of our mother-tongue is that it does not pay nowadays. Alas! has all sense of duty vanished? has our national standard of patriotism and morality so deteriorated, have we really sunk so low that we would weigh everything by the rupees and cents it could produce? Is there no such thing as duty? Is there no such thing as love,—love for love's own sake and nothing else? Why do we love our mother? Is it because it is productive of something in gold or silver? Surely, there is a higher phase of learning. It is the lower phase of it that is concerned with mercenary motives. Knowledge or wisdom (Gnanam) should be considered as an end by itself, and the higher or real object of all

learning is to attain Gnanam, which is described as the feet of Him who is the Atman of all atmans, the Soul of souls, the Life of lives. கற்றதனால் ஆயபலன் என்கொல் வாலறிவன், நற்றூள் தொழாரெனின், says Tiruvalluvar. What good is there for men in learning, if it gives them for God no yearning?

Siddhiyar Classes,—They Serve a Double Purpose

The object of this book is not so much to give any comprehensive idea of the eternal Truths enunciated in the Saiva-Siddhanta Philosophy and Religion as to rouse in a few at least of our English-educated young men a real interest in what is contained in the Tamil Shastras and to induce in them a desire to undertake their study. Speaking from personal experience we may state that classes were often inaugurated at various places for the study of Siva Gnana Siddhiyar and other Shastras, and it was indeed very disappointing to find that many of us did not see our way to benefit ourselves and our brethren by them. No doubt we were not able to maintain regular teachers always, but the little a few of us could do we did. And it cannot be denied that by associating with one another and inter-changing views, by every member of a class coming out with his difficulties and trying to explain his fellow members', a good deal of progress can be made. Of course, we may not be able to understand all the intricate points, there may be difficulties here and there which we may not be able to thoroughly grasp without the aid of a competent teacher, but that is no reason why we should not try and do whatever we can, without waiting with folded hands till we are able to procure a competent teacher, so that when the teacher becomes available we may the better understand the knotty points. This is the method which the members of some of the classes referred to had to follow. It is a source of great satisfaction to observe that a few at least of the members of such classes,—very few they were though,—attended the classes, regularly and benefitted thereby. The object of this book as stated above is to rouse in the minds of our young men a longing to acquaint themselves with the grand truths contained in our national religion and philosophy while at the same time gaining a fairly good

knowledge of our language; for, these shastras are written in dignified style and are really good specimens of what a book ought to be, viewed from a purely literary point of view. Thus the study of these Shastras serves a double purpose, bringing down two birds with one stone as they say, அரிசிப் பொதியோடு திருவாரூர், says the Tamil proverb. We learn language and literature along with religion and philosophy at the same time. If one speaks of the literary beauties of Siddhiyar, it is to tell even the unbeliever what a literary intellectual treat there is in store for him if he makes a careful study of that treatise. And a careful study of the book for the enjoyment of its literary beauties will have the additional effect of imbuing the reader's mind with the ideas permeating that piece of literature.

As an incentive to our English-educated young men,—and to old r men too, for the matter of that,—to inaugurate classes for the study of Siddhiyar and other Shastras and to benefit by them in large numbers, even without the help of teachers, it is proposed to give a brief resume of the teachings therein contained, as faithfully as possible. And, considering the bulk of the work and the vastness of the truths therein taught, it would be presumptuous on our part to attempt even a bare outline of the work in a few lessons. All that is attempted here is an introduction or something like it, and we would crave of our readers to take our words in good part and pardon any shortcomings that may be noticeable. We may here say once for all that we claim no originality for our words or ideas. We have freely borrowed, translated or copied verbatim wherever we considered it advantageous to do so, but we have not thought fit to tax the reader with the allusions except where it seemed distinctly useful to name the authorities, the object being not so much to compose an essay, nice and elegant, as to present in a compact form something valuable and distinctly helpful to the beginner.

CHAPTER II

Siddhantam,—its Pre-eminence and Catholicity**Siddhantam and Purvapakshams**

THE word "Siddhantam" means conclusion, the final result arrived at logically. It means the proposition or theory proved as distinguished from theories refuted, which latter are known as 'Purvapaksham'. The Saiva Siddhanta Philosophy is so called as it establishes the final Truth, all other systems being Purvapakshams when viewed side by side with it. Here by the way we may parse to consider what knowledge is. Huxley mentions three ways of acquiring knowledge, to wit; observation, experiment and reasoning. We too mention three ways, Pratiyaksham (or perception) Anumanam (or inference) and Agamam (or revelation). Under Pratiyaksham we include observation and experiment. Anumanam is reasoning, and we add a third method of proof called Agaman or Sruti. We may see for ourselves directly that a certain thing is such and such, or we may reason out its existence from facts already known and conclude that it must be such and such, or again we may not have access to either of these processes but may accept that it is such and such on the authority of Sruti or, for the matter of that, some reliable source. Now we have it on the authority of the Sruti that "Siddhantam itself is Siddhantam, all else is Purvapaksham". Direct perception by itself does not take us far enough. From the known we have to find out the unknown. This is called Anumanam, the method of reasoning or logic, and here it is that all the different schools of philosophy find themselves at loggerheads with one another. What do we find in the world? We see a lot of things, a lot of phenomena,—coming and staying, staying and going, ever changing from moment to moment,—happiness and misery, wealth and poverty, virtue and vice, love and hatred &c. &c. But we find nothing definite as to what these are, whence they come, whither they go or why they are. If we leave Sruti aside, we find that we are unable to answer these and similar questions without resorting to what is called Anumanam or reasoning.

Now let us take the case of the ordinary scientist. Take Heat for instance. What do we find? Heat is found to possess certain characteristics, and a large number of phenomena are observed in connection with it. All these have to be explained. How? Some gifted genius comes out with an ingenious theory,—the theory of Emission. Well, grant the theory, and we have an explanation of the multitudinous (and some apparently conflicting) phenomena. This was the theory which obtained in Europe in the 17th and 18th centuries, and Sir Isaac Newton the greatest English philosopher, who discovered and explained the law of gravitation to the modern world (—though it may here be noted parenthetically that Vedic researches have clearly shown that this law was known to the Hindus thousands of years ago—) was one of the staunchest supporters of this theory. But there were many phenomena which this theory was not able to explain, and the list of them was gradually accumulating. What was to be done? No better theory was possible, and the theory of emission had to be clung to in spite of its drawbacks for want of a better theory. At last, a new genius was born and he promulgated what is known as the theory of Undulation or Wave theory. This new theory was better able to explain the phenomena of Heat and eventually supplanted the older theory. The Wave theory has itself got its own drawbacks, but as the best in hand and being sufficient for all practical purposes, it holds the day for the present. At least it was the accepted theory when we were at school.

Similarly it is with the science of Metaphysics (we mean speaking apart from the Sruti). The innumerable phenomena that we see around us, the passions the joys, the sorrows, &c. the whence and whither and what and why of them,—it is in explaining these that the different schools of philosophy are engaged. It is because of comparatively the best explanation it gives to these and similar queries and to the aim and object of creation, that the philosophy of the Saiva Religion is called Siddhantam (or theory proved) in contradistinction to other systems of philosophy which are all Purvapakshams (or theories refuted) when compared to it.

Siddhantam is all inclusive

And it is the peculiar pride of the Tamilian that he is never exclusive. He is ever all-inclusive. He takes quite a commonsense view of things. He knows and readily grants that there are very varying grades and conditions of existence. He knows perfectly well that all men are not of the same spiritual development. The same coat cannot fit both Raman and Velan, Sathan and Kottan. Each must be served according to his growth and dimensions. As in the physical, so in the mental and spiritual planes. We read in Siddhiyar :

ஒது சமயங்கள் பொருள் உணரும் நூல்கள்
 ஒன்றோடு ஒன்று ஒவ்வாமல் உளபலவும், இவற்றுள்
 யாது சமயம் பொருள் நூல் யாது இங்கு என்னில்
 இது ஆகும் அது அல்லது எனும் பீணக்கது இன்றி,
 நீதியினால் இவை எல்லாம் ஒர் இடத்தே காண
 நின்றது யாது ஒரு சமயம் அது சமயம் பொருள் நூல்,
 ஆதலினால் இவை எல்லாம் அநாமறை ஆகமத்தே
 அடங்கி யீடும், அவை இரண்டும் அரன் அடிக்கீழ் அடக்கும்.

Religions and religious books there are many which contradict one another. If it is asked which is the one religion and what its sacred book, listen: that is the universal religion which without taking sides reconciles their differences and embraces them all in its broad folds and its books are the books without peers. As all the religious lore of all religions finds a place in the Vedas and Agamas, these are the (incomparable) Books and they find refuge under Hari's Feet.

In another verse, Arulnandi Devar describes the different religions of the world as constituting different steps in the ladder of spiritual progress, thus emphasising the usefulness of every religion and philosophy in its own place.

The Tamilian is ever ready to take up and assimilate whatever is good and valuable, no matter from what source it is derived. He is never tied down by absurd reverence to whatever is old, regardless of truth. He is ever ready to own the truth even if it should be found to clash with long-cherished ideas. Very orthodox and conservative indeed

he is, but he will never sacrifice scientific truth and honest conviction to absurd prejudice. It is true that he loves his country and his people, his language and his religion, but at the same time he will not be blind to whatever is good in the character of other nations and other religions. அன்னி நூலின் விதி அவிரோதமேல், உன்னெல் பழுதென்றுளத்து (Shun not the truth even if it should be found in an alien book). எம்மதத்தோர் எவ்வகை நீட்டை சொல்லினும், சம்மதமே எமக்கு உந்திபற, தற்போதம் மாய்க்கு மேல் உந்திபற (In whatever way different religionists may describe God-realisation, it is all acceptable to us provided it tends to destroy "I-making"). தொன்மையவாம் எனும்-எவையும் நன்றாகா இன்று தோன்றிய நூல் எனும் எவையும் தீதாகா (Everything old is not necessarily good, neither is everything new necessarily bad).

Vedas and Agamas

The fountain source of Saiva Siddhantam is the Sivagamam. The Vedas and Agamas, the Tamilian holds, are identical in meaning, though different in form. "I perceive no difference between the Vedam and the Sivagamam. The Vedam itself is the Sivagamam" says SriKantar, the earliest known commentator of the Vedanta-Sutras.

வேதமொடு ஆகயம் மெய்யாம் இறைவன் நூல்,
ஒதும் பொதுவும் சிறப்பும் என்று உன்னுக,
நாதன் உரை இவை, நாடில் இரண்டு அந்தம்
பேதம் அது என்னில் பெரியோர்க்கு அபேதமே

says Tirumoolar. Both the Vedam and the Agamam are true Revelation, the one being a general treatise and the other a special one. Both are the word of God. If the ordinary student sees some difference between them, the wise see no such difference.

.....அனாதி அமலன் தரும் நூல் இரண்டும்,
ஆரண நூல் பொது, சைவம் அரும் சிறப்பு நூலாம்.....

says Arulnandi Devar. Both are the word of the Nirmala Being, the Vedam being a treatise in general terms and the Agamam in more precise form. That is to say, the former is capable of interpretation in diverse ways, which the latter

is not. And well does Siva Gnana Muniver, the famous author of the Dravida-Maha-Bhashyam, compare them to the Sutram and the Bhashyam, the text and the commentary, respectively. வேதம் பசு அதன் பால் மெய் ஆகமம், says another author, The Vedam is like the cow and the Agamam like its milk. வேதாந்தத் தெளிவாம் சைவசித்தாந்தம் says Umapathiyar, Saiva Siddhantam, the cream of the Vedantam. It is because the Vedam is capable of interpretation in different ways that we find so many different schools and sects in India, each with its own interpretation of the Vedas and Vedantas, (—and these schools have their own legitimate purpose to serve, each in its own place, as was remarked before,—) while the Saiva Religion, possessing as it does this authoritative commentary known as the Sivagamam, is quite content to look on unconcernedly on these would-be world-religionists and framers of Universal Faiths. Says Kumara Guru Parar :

.....நல் அருட்டிறத்தால் நம்பி நீயே
 பல்உயிர்த் தொகுதியும் பயன் கொண்டு உய்கெனைக்
 குடிலை என்னும் தடவயல் நாப்பண்
 அருள் வித்து இட்டுக் கருணைநீர் பாய்ச்சி
 வேதம் என்னும் பாதபம் வளர்த்தனை.
 பாதபம் அதனிற் படுபயன் பலவே, அவற்றுள்,
 இலைகொண்டு உவந்தனர் பலரே, இலைஒரீ இத்
 தளிர்கொண்டு உவந்தனர் பலரே, தளிர்ஒரீ இ
 அரும்பொடு மலர்பிஞ்சு அருங்காய் என்றிவை
 விரும்பினர் கொண்டுகொண்டு உவந்தனர் பலரே,
 அவ்வாறு உறுப்பும் இவ்வாறு பயப்ப
 ஓரும் வேதாந்தம் என்று உச்சியிற்பழுத்த
 ஆரா இன்ப அருங்கனி பிழிந்து
 சாரம் கொண்ட சைவசித் தாந்தத்
 தேன் அமுது அருந்தினர் சிலரே.....

Oh! Lord, out of the abundance of Thy Grace, with a view to the salvation of the multitudinous souls, thou didst in the middle of the vast field of Kudilai (Suddha Maya) plant the seed of Arul (Grace), irrigate it with the water of Karunai (Divine Pity) and rear the tree of the Vedam. The products of this tree are many and varied and are useful in diverse ways. Many people take delight in its leaves; others relish the tender shoots; others still there

are who prefer to have, some the bud, some the flowers, some the tender unripe fruit and some the more mature but yet unripe fruit. While these products are thus useful each in its own way, there is still another product, the best and noblest, the real fruit at the top of the tree, well matured and fully ripe, known as Vedantam; and of this delicious fruit, the essence extracted is the honeyed nectar of Saiva Siddhantam, of which a few have drunk.....

The Vedantam of the Upanishads

The Saiva Siddhanta Philosophy, because of its acceptance of both the Vedas and the Agamas as authoritative, is also variously styled as Vedanta philosophy, Vedanta-Siddhanta philosophy, Vaidika Saiva philosophy, &c. Of course by the term 'Vedantam' as herein used is to be understood not the Vedantam of Sankarar and Sayanar but the Vedantam of the Upanishads,—of the original texts in their pristine purity,—of the Vedantas in the light of whose direct import the earliest extant commentary on the Brahma-Sutras of Vyasār was written by Sri Kantar. Of the teachings of these Sutras themselves and of Sankara's commentary thereon, it would be interesting to note what an outside critic has to say. Professor George Thibaut, the famous Oriental scholar, the colleague who ultimately converted Professor Max Muller to his view, says in his introduction to the translation of the Sutras: "I must give it as my opinion that they (i. e., the Sutras) do not set forth the distinction of a higher and lower knowledge of Brahman, that they do not acknowledge the distinction of Brahman and Iswara in Sankara's sense, that they do not hold the doctrine of the unreality of the world, that they do not (with Sankarar) proclaim the absolute identity of the individual and the highest Self". In another place he says: "The 8th Brahmana (the whole of 3rd Adhyaya indeed of the Brahadaranyaka) for instance is said to convey the doctrine of the highest non-related Brahman, while the preceding Brahmanas had treated only of Iswara in his various aspects. But as a matter of fact Brahmana 8, after having in section 8 represented Brahman as destitute of all qualities proceeds in the next section to describe that very same Brahman as the ruler of the world, 'By the command of that Imperishable,

sun and moon stand apart, &c', a clear indication that the author of the Upanishad does not distinguish a higher and lower Brahman in Sankara's sense".

SriKantar and Sankarar

As remarked above, SriKantar* has written a commentary on the Vedanta Su ras in the light of the direct import of the original Upanishads and of the Sâiva Agamas, and a translation of the commentary in the English language has been brought out recently by A. Mahadeva Sastri of Mysore (the translator of the Bhagavat Gita and of some of the Upanishads with Sankara's commentaries) A Tamil rendering by SriKasivasi Senthinatha Aiyer is also now available in print. This commentary, unlike those of Sankarar, Ramanujar and Madhwar, is not a long one; and a commentary on this commentary was afterwards written by the famous Appaiya Dikshitar who lived in or about the sixteenth century. Of the many Bhashiyams on the Vedanta Sutras now extant, that of SriKantar is considered to be the earliest. SriKantar (or TiruNilakanta Sivachariyar, as he is better known to the Tamil student) is said to have been a friend and contemporary of Govinda Yogi, the guru of Sankara. chariyar; so that, it appears that Sankarar was a junior contemporary of SriKantar. Sankarar as is well known, was a philosopher and dialectician of no mean order. His was a master-mind, consummate abilities he possessed, and his controversial powers were insurpassable. He has written a large number of commentaries, on many of the more important Upanishads, on the Vedanta Sutras and on the Bhagavat Gita. A great part of his life (—he was still young when he departed this world—) was spent in the preaching of religion and in putting down the malpractices that prevailed

*The reader is cautioned not to mistake SriKantar's system of philosophy for the Saiva Siddhantam, with which it has much in common but postulates what is known as the Parinama Vadam (பரிணாமவாதம்) or transformation theory ascribing change to the Chit Sakti of the Lord. It is placed a step below the Saiva Siddhantam and counted as one of the six Orthodox creeds (ஆசைச்சமயங்கள்), while the Vivarta Vadam (விவர்த்தவாதம்) or delusion theory of Sankarar is generally placed in the Heterodox group (ஹேதேச்சமயங்கள்). Vide chapters XI and XII of this book.

in India in his time. He is said to have toured the country from North to South and East to West, preaching and teaching, ever debating and ever vanquishing. In fact his tours seem to have been nothing short of triumphal processions. SriKantar on the other hand seems to have been a recluse leading a life of sanctity and devotion and imbuing the minds of such disciples as were drawn to him by his sanctity and holy living with such thoughts as he deemed fit. Now, a story is told that these two great men once met each other. Sankarar in one of his tours, appears to have come near the Ashrama of SriKantar and, hearing of the greatness and holy living of the old man (and perhaps of the fact that he had composed a commentary on the Vedanta Sutras), to have gone in to challenge and overthrow him face to face. But, alas! it was not to be. The youthful enthusiast is said to have ultimately found out the inferiority of his theories and, being ripe to receive the Truth, he is said to have fallen down at the feet of the veteran sage and to have besought him to initiate him in the path of true Gnanam. Under SriKanta's inspiration, Sri Sankarar is said to have composed the Sountariya Lahari and other devotional works. This is how the 'Nilakanta Vijayam' is said to describe their meeting. On the contrary, the "Sankara Vijayam" which describes the life and exploits of Sankarar (a translation of which we had the good fortune to see some time back) holds that it was Sankarar who came out victorious in the philosophical contest. Presumably the followers of either, or perhaps both philosophers who wrote the respective works in praise of their masters have magnified something, more or less. Be that as it may, it is certain that the two philosophers were contemporaries, that they met each other and that in his later days Sri Sankarar became a great Bhaktan and composed the devotional works above alluded to. In one of these works he refers in most adoring terms to the great Tiru Gnana Sampanther and speaks of him as 'the Tamil child' (Dravida Sisu). In Sivananda Lahari he refers to Kannapper, the Veddah Saint, and says: "Foot-wear used in paths becomes a bunch of holy grass to the person of Pasupathi (—note the use of the term "Pasu-Pathi"—), washing by spitting a mouthful of water a holy bath, the remnants of half-eaten flesh a fresh oblation, and a woodman

the-greatest of Bhaktas. What is there impossible for Bhakti?' And in Siva Poosankam he refers reverently to the unworldly deeds of the saints Iyatpakayar, Sirutthondar and Sandeesar and says: "Oh! Lord of the Mountain, Thou didst shew Thy Holy Presence before those who wronged a wife, a son and a father, respectively. I am incapable of harming anybody. I do not know how Thou wouldst do any favour to me.'

CHAPTER III.

The Tri-Padharthas & 'Satkariya Vadam'

The Law of the 'Conservation of Matter',—Maya

ONE important characteristic of Siddhantam consists in its clear enunciation of, and staunch adherence to, what is called சற்காரிய வாதம் (Sat Kariya Vadam). Nothing that exists can ever be destroyed, neither can anything new ever be created. (Sat=existence, Kariyam=product, Vadam=doctrine). உள்ளதே தோற்றம், so we read in Siva Gnana Botham. This is the very same principle that is known to the modern scientist as the principle of 'the conservation of matter'. When a thing is said to be newly produced all that is actually done is simply to take up some substance that is already in existence and shape it into a new form. When the world (Prapancham) is said to be destroyed at the time of Pralayam (deluge), what really takes place is not its annihilation or reduction to nothing, but merely its resolution into its component elements and dissolution into its ultimate cause. And again, the world is said to be created when all these diverse forms are reproduced from this same primordial something into which they were dissolved at the time of the last Pralayam. This something it is that is known under the name of 'Maya', and this Maya the Siddhanti holds is something which really exists and is not a non-entity. Just as the terms 'Vedantam' which we have already discussed and 'Adwaitham' which we shall discuss shortly, so this term 'Maya' it should carefully be understood carries quite a different meaning to the 'Maya' of other schools. Between this 'Maya' and the 'Maya' of Sankarar for instance there is as much difference as exists between a man or a log of wood and a ghost or an apparition. Umapathiyar gives the following short definition of Maya in his Sivaprakasam :

உருவாதி சதர்வீதமாய் ஒன்றொன்றெவ்வா
உண்மையதாய் நித்தமாய் ஒன்றாய் என்றும்
அருவாகிக் கன்மாந்தம் அணுக்கள் யார்க்கும்
ஆவாரமாய் அசித்தாய் அசலமாகி

விரிவாய தன்செயலின் விரிபியாய் எல்லாம்.
 விரிந்த வகை புரிந்தடைவின் மேனி அவை ஒடுங்க
 வருகாலம் உயிர்க ளெல்லாம் மருவிடமாய் மலமாய்
 மன்னி இடும் அரன் அருளால் மாயைதானே.

Maya becomes manifested as the four-fold Prapancham of bodies, organs, worlds and objects of enjoyment, which differ very much one from another, and is one, eternal and formless; it engrosses the soul in objects till Karmam becomes 'exhausted', it is insentient, immovable and pervading all its evolutes; it is the resting place of souls at the time of involution and is a Malam giving the soul wrong notions. And it acts with the help of the Sakti of the Lord.

Cause and Effect,—the Law of Karmam

This principle of Satkariya Vadam naturally leads us to 'the theory of Karmam'. There can be no effect without a cause, and every cause must have an effect. One person is found to be happy and another is miserable. Why should this be so? It must be due to the difference in their previous "Karmam" or actions. The happy man must have done 'Punnyam' or good deeds before, either in this or in a previous birth, while the unhappy creature must have done 'Pabam' or bad deeds. This leads to its corollary that if a man accumulates good Karmam now in this birth he will enjoy hereafter the fruits thereof, while he who does evil will have to suffer for it. As thou sowest, so shalt thou reap. The following is a short definition of Karmam:

நண்ணியிடும் உருவதனுக்கு ஏதுவாகி
 நானுபோகங்களாய் நாசோற்பத்தி
 பண்ணிவரும் ஆதலால் அநாதி ஆகிப்
 பல ஆகி அனுக்கள் தொறும் படர்வதாகி
 எண்ணிவரும் மனவாச கன்மத்தால் இயற்றும்
 இயல்பினதாய் மதிக்கமாய் இருபயனும் பாவ
 புண்ணியம் ஆய்ப் புலர் காலை மாயை மேனிப்
 பொருந்தும், இது கன்ம மலம் புகலுமாதே.

Karmam is the cause (hetu) of rebirths and appears as enjoyments of various kinds; it is beginningless like flood

water as in the process of eating up of the fruits of one Karmam (Praraphtham) another is produced (Akamiyam); it is of diverse kinds and accompanies the soul in 'Sookshma' (subtle) form at the time of creation; it is produced by thoughts and words as well as by deeds and is divided into 'Punniyam' and 'Pabam'. In the corporeal stage it rests in the 'tatwam' called, 'Buddhi,' and at the time of dissolution it rests in Maya. This is how Karma Malam is described.

The Supreme Energiser—Pati (God)

But, what is Karmam? Does it not consist of actions and their results? and as such is not Karmam insentient, what cannot do anything by itself without being acted upon by some force other than itself? And again, what is the world (with its innumerable forms of matter) and that which is said to be its ultimate cause, Maya? Are not these equally insentient? And if so, how can Maya give rise to the world without being acted upon by some intelligent force?—Well. This force, the Being that supplies the requisite force or energy, whose handiwork all this Universe is, is God (Pati). God it is that evolves all this manifested universe of matter and force out of Maya, and God it is that resolves everything again into Maya, God it is that induces our good and bad Karmam, and God it is that makes our good and bad Karmam yield the fruits thereof. Umapathiyar describes Pati as follows:

.....பதி பரமே, அதுதான்
 நிலவும் அரு உரு அன்றிக் குணம்குறிகள் இன்றி
 நின்மலமாய் ஏகமாய் நித்தம் ஆகி
 அலகில் உயிர்க்கு உணர்வாகி அசலமாகி
 அகண்டிதமாய் ஆனந்த உருவாய் அன்றிச்
 செலவு அரிதாய்ச் செல்கதியாய்ச் சிறிதாகிப் பெரிதாய்த்
 துகழ்வது, தற் சிவம் என்பர் தெளிந்துளோரே.

Pati is the Supreme (above Pasu and Pasam); it cannot definitely be said to be endowed with a particular form, nor can we say it is formless; it has no attributes and no marks; it is pure, one and eternal, Soul of souls, unruffled, indivisible; it is Bliss Itself, unattainable except through Gnanam,

-the final goal, Smallest of the small, Greatest of the great.
This, the wise say is Sivam.

God is changeless

Here a new question may crop up. If it is God that acts upon these insentient substances and brings about all these changes, will not He Himself be liable to change? The answer is simple. He remains unruffled. In the presence of Him (or His Kriya-Sakti in more philosophic language), all these changes take place, just as the lotus opens and closes in the presence of the Sun. If not for the Sun the lotus will not open, yet the Sun undergoes no change by the opening of the lotus. வள்ளலாற் போன்வான் அலர் சோகம் செய் கமலத்து ஆம் thus we read in the Siva Gnana Botham, and Umapathiyar follows suit and expands it as follows: எல்லாம் வருஷிப்பன் விகாரங்கள் மருவான் வாவில, முந்து இரவி எதிர் முளரி அலர்வுறும் ஒன்று அலர்வான் முகையாம் ஒன்று ஒன்று உலரும் முறையின் ஆமே All these changes take place in His presence, சன்னிதிக்கே ஐந்து தொழிலாம்.

The helpless patient—Pasu (soul)

It may be granted that Maya and Karmam are insentient (jadam) and cannot produce any effect by themselves. But still, it may be asked, could not we choose our own Karmam and eat the fruits thereof? And why not we manipulate with Maya and produce our own bodies and internal and external organs and all this outside world and objects of enjoyment?—Very good. There can be no harm if we could do it. But the fact of it is, we have not the necessary power. It would be something like a patient suffering with a dire malady and lying in a state of coma or half-conscious condition attempting to prescribe and compound his own medicine and cure his disease without the help of anybody else. It is the physician that ministers to his wants and cures the helpless patient of his disease. And similarly is it in the case of the Divine Physician. It is God that moulds our bodies and organs and worlds and objects of enjoyment out of Maya, and it is owing to Him (and the help of His Arul) that we are able to do whatever we do and eat the fruits of past Karmam. And all this He does, not for any benefit

of Himself but it all proceeds out of the abundance of His Arul (Grace) for no other end than that of making us whole and landing us in the peaceful haven known as Moasham or Veedu (liberation).

The Grace of God

The curious may ask, why! why all this misery? Why subject us to all these sufferings? Can the infliction of pain and misery be said to constitute Arul? Is it not on the other hand the very opposite of Arul?—No, it is not. Let us take some ordinary examples (of the world). What does the doctor do, for instance? He cures some diseases with medicines that are very sweet to take, others he cures with medicines so bitter that we sometimes even prefer the disease to the remedy, while there are still other diseases such as ulcers and boils which have to be operated on with knives and other instruments. The king punishes the thief and the robber, and the father beats the wayward child. All these are done not with any evil motive, the intention in every case being to better the patient and reform the miscreant. In the Siva Gnana Siddhi we read:

மண்ணுளே சிலவியாதி மருத்துவன் அருத்தியோடும்
 சின்னமாய் அறுத்துக் கீறித் தீர்த்திடும், சிலநோய் எல்லாம்
 கண்ணிய கட்டி பாலும் கலந் துடன் கொடுத்துத் தீர்ப்பன்,
 அண்ணலும் இன்பத் தன்பம் அருத்தியே வினை அறுப்பன்.

ஆணையால் அவனி மன்னன் அருமறை முறை செய்யாரை
 ஆணையிற் தண்டம் செய்தும் அரும் சிறை இட்டும் வைப்பன்,
 ஆணையின் வழிசெய்வோருக்கு அரும்பதி செல்வம் நல்கி
 ஆணையும் வைப்பன், எங்கும் ஆணையே ஆணையே காண்.

தந்தை தாய் பெற்ற தத்தம் புதல்வர்கள் தம் சொலாற்றின்
 வந்திடா விடில் உறுக்கி வளாரினால் அடித்துத் தீய
 பந்தமும் இடுவர், எல்லாம் பார்த்திடிற் பரிவே ஆகும்,
 இந்த கீர் முறைமை அன்றோ ஈசனார் முனிவும் என்றும்.

Some diseases in the world the doctor cures by cutting and the performance of successful operations. Other diseases he cures by giving medicines sweetened with milk and sugar. Even so does the Divine physician cure

us of our Karmas by helping us to enjoy pleasure and pain.

By the exercise of his royal prerogative the earthly king punishes and imprisons law-breakers, while the law-abiding he rewards with lands and riches and even clothes them with legal authority. Similar are the actions of the Heavenly King.

Parents chastise recalcitrant children and even tie them up. Just as all this is the outcome of love, even so is the Lord's anger and punishment of evil-doers).

Creation is not purposeless.

Umaphathiyar very beautifully and at the same time succinctly explains what the real purpose of Creation is, what the Pancha-Kritiyas really are and how all this is the outcome of pure unadulterated Arul and Arul alone and nothing else :

ஏற்ற இவை அரன் அருளின் திருவினையாட்டாக
 இயம்புவர்கள், அணுக்கள் இடர்க்கடல் நின்றும் எடுத்தே
 ஊற்றம் மிக அருள் புரிதல் ஏதுவாக
 உரை செய்வர், ஒடுக்கம் இளைப்பு ஒழித்தல், மற்றைத்
 தோற்றம் மலபாகம் வரக், காத்தல் போகம்
 துய்ப்பித்தல், திரோதாயி கிறுத்தல் ஆகும்,
 போற்றல் அரும் அருள் அருளே, அன்றி மற்றுப்
 புகன்றவையும் அருள் ஒழியப் புகல ஒணுதே.

These (five fold acts) the wise say are God's play, intended for the salvation of souls. Dissolution is for giving them rest, creation is for mellowing Anava Malam, preservation is for making them eat the fruits of their Karmam, immersion or Tirothayi (literally, concealment) is for giving them a taste for enjoyment when eating such fruits, and salvation is Arul or Grace) Itself. Though thus distinguished they (the Pancha Kritiyas) are all Arul (Grace) only and nothing else.

The root cause of misery—Anavam

Now, what is all the misery and suffering we see in the world due to? We see it as a matter of fact that we are

subject to a great many privations and hardships. The misery of birth, the misery of youth, the misery of middle life, the misery of old age, the misery of death and the misery of the life beyond,—what are all these due to? We see that we are constantly 'whirling, round and round as it were, in the ocean of Samsara. Why should this be so? Is not purity, is not Chaitaniyam, Gnanam pure and unalloyed, is not Anandam (supreme happiness) the essential characteristic of the Atman? And, why should this perfect and pure being be subject to all this pain and misery?—Well, We see all these effects and, as explained above, there can be no effect without a cause. So that, there must be some cause, some defect, some imperfection, some pollution, some veil, some impurity or some such thing, which stands at the root of all this trouble. This something it is that is known to the Siddhanti under the name of 'Anava malam'. This Anavam is not a mere illusion but a real fact, really existing, and is taken as such by the Siddhanti. Conjunction with this Anavam, i. e. being under its power or influence, is called 'Bandham' or bondage and getting free from it is 'Veedu' or liberation. All our efforts and all our struggles, all evolution in fact, are directed towards this one end, namely, the breaking off of these shackles, these bonds of Anavam.

The Siddhanti is a great optimist, a believer in the law of universal progression. He firmly believes that there is such a thing as Moksham or Veedu, complete liberation from the trammels of the ocean of Samsara. And, he knows perfectly well that once you attain this state of complete liberation known as Veedu or Moksham or Mukti or Heaven or Nirvanam or perfection or Brahmanhood or Sutta Chaitaniyam or perfect Gnanam or Supreme Bliss or Samathi or whatever else you may call it—once you attain this state, there is no return, no coming back to the woes of Samsara. For, what cause is there so to lead you back? Therefore it is that the Sruties cry out with one accord; 'Peace for ever!'. 'That from which there is no return' 'மீளாது உலைவில் அரன் பாதத்தை உற்று' (Will reach the endless Feet of Haran and never return).

It has no beginning.

Here one may ask, when did Anava Malam bind the soul? The answer is not far to seek. Anavam did not at a

particular point of time or place take hold of and tackle the soul within its broad folds. Indeed, no time can be imagined, however remote, when such bondage took place, for, were it possible to think of such a time, it would naturally follow that before that the soul was free, and there is no reason why the free being should have got into thralldom. Besides, if this latter contingency (of the free being ever becoming fettered) were possible, it would be equally possible for the liberated soul (that which has attained Moksham) to be re-entangled in the snares of Anavam, and there could be no such thing as Moksham worth speaking of and spoken of above as 'that from which there is no return', Umapathiyar puts this view most beautifully in the couplet :

ஆசு ஆதியேல் அனைவ காரணம் என், முத்திலிலை
பேசாது அகவும் பிணி, -Tiruvartupayan)

If impurity has a beginning, what is it due to? Besides it would surreptitiously creep in even in Mukti.

Therefore it is that the Siddhanti denies the original freedom of 'Pasu' (soul) and says that the soul did not get bound with 'Pasam' at any particular point of time. In other words, the Mala-bandham of Pasu is Anadi (without beginning.)

Anavam defined

ஏகமாய்த் தங்கால எல்லைகளில் மீளும்
எண்ணரிய சத்தியதாய் இருள் ஒளிர் இருண்ட
மோகமாயச் செம்பில் உறு களிம்பு ஏய்ந்து நித்த
மூல மலமாய் அறிவு முழுதினையும் மறைக்கும்.....

Anavam is one and eternal, but possessed of innumerable 'powers' (sakties) which move away at their proper time, and so confoundingly dark that even darkness may be called light in comparison with it. It is the chief or root Malam which completely shrouds the intelligence of Pasu, even as rust tarnishes the brightness of copper...

Pasu (soul) defined

எண்ண அரிதாய் நித்தமாய் இருள் மலத்தில் அழுந்தி
இருவினையின் தன்மைகளுக்கு ஈடான யாக்கை

அண்ணல் அருளால் நண்ணி அவை அவராய் அதனால்
 அலகு இல் நிகழ் போகங்கள் அருந்தும் ஆற்றால்
 புண்ணிய பாவம் புரிந்து போக்கு வரவு உடைத்தாய்ப்
 புணரும் இருள் மலபாகம் பொருத்தியக்கால் அருளால்
 உள் சிலவும் ஒளியதனால் இருள் அகற்றிப் பாதம்
 உற்றிடும் நற் பீசுவர்க்கம் என உரைப்பர் உணர்ந்தே.

Souls are innumerable, eternal and subject to Anavamalam. They put on bodies of diverse kinds differentiated by the terms he, she and it, through the Lord's Grace in accordance with their Karmam, do good and evil deeds in eating the fruits of previous Karmam and are subject to birth and death. And when by these processes the Anavam holding them in bondage becomes 'ripened', they get rid of it through Divine Grace, Grace which stood concealed within them all the time, and attain the Feet of the Lord. So say the great who know.

Such in brief are the definitions of Anavam and Pasu given in Sivaprakasam.

In this connection, we cannot resist the temptation to indulge in rather a long quotation from Nallaswamipillai's notes on the 2nd Sutram of Siva Gnana Botham. The subject is so important that we feel reluctant to leave it at this stage.

'That man is ignorant in knowledge (சிற்றறிவு) and is imprudent in his actions (சிறுதொழில்) is a fact and is taken as a fact by the Siddhanti and is not converted into a myth or Athyasam by a process of verbal jugglery. The explanation offered by..... is no explanation at all, as after all the explanations offered, the final fact to be accounted for still remains unexplained, namely, ignorance or Agnanam or Aviddhai, the cause of all evil, of all pain. We can explain a joint effect by assigning the laws of the separate causes, or we may explain an antecedent and consequent by discovering the intermediate links, or the explanation may consist in reducing several laws into one more general Law. None of these modes are adopted by the latter school but the explanation attempted falls

clearly within one or other modes of fallacious or illusory explanations; and, as Dr. Bain points out, the greatest fallacy of all is the supposition that something is to be desired beyond the most generalized conjunction or sequences of phenomena.....When we arrive at a final fact, it is absurd to attempt a further explanation. What I have therefore treated of as an assumption (that man in his original state is ignorant or imperfect or is enshrouded by Agnamam or Anavam) is no assumption at all, but a final fact of our nature. Our nature as it is, is imperfect or, adopting the language of the text, is enshrouded in impurity, Malam, Anava Malam. Law of universal Progression or Progress is another law of nature; and Evolution is readily provided; and for bringing about this evolution or births we require an Omniscient, Perfect, Nirjala Being. In the whole chain of argument, this last is the only thing assumed or inferred. But see the argument on the other side. There is one Brahm. Iswara is generated from the Brahm. Mulaprakriti is produced between them. Light or energy proceeds from Iswara and a particle of this light becomes evolved into a man, or an ass, or a worm. All these are assumptions pure and simple, mere hypotheses it is admitted. Does this hypothesis stand to reason? Does it furnish us with any satisfactory reasons for all this evolution from Brahm to man or brute. Mr. after stating that the First Cause which is omnipresent and eternal is subject to periods of activity (Srishti) and passivity (Sanharam) observes: 'But even the real reason for this activity and passivity is unintelligible to our minds'. Or as a learned...more explicitly and honestly puts it: 'Why should the Free, Perfect and Pure Being be thus under the thralldom of matter? How can the Perfect Soul be deluded into the belief that he is imperfect? How can the Perfect become the quasi-perfect? How can the Pure, the Absolute, change even a microscopically small part of its nature? The answer is: "I do not know."

• "You assume that evil or impurity is produced out of good or purity and then parade your honesty and admit that you don't know why it is so. Don't you think that the fallacy lies more in your assumption than in any difficulty?"

Why should you assume that evil is produced out of good? The thing is impossible. You must take things as they are. You find good and evil together. Man is impure and weak. It is just possible there is a Being who is pure and strong enough to lift him from the bottomless pit, and here is the real reason, மலத்து உளதாம், as the Text says. God is active or passive as it is necessary for man to be set on the wheel of evolution or to rest. Neither will it do to assume that God created man at a particular moment and that he committed sin, and sin came into the world after the creation of man and the world. Man committed sin, because he had not the understanding to see that his good lay in obeying God's words and he had not the free knowledge or intelligence to foresee all the evil he was to bring upon the earth by his disobedient act. That is to say, he, as created, was an imperfect being. Laws are made as man is weak and erring. And we cannot impute to God the defects of a bad mechanic, want of knowledge and skill. Man's reason does not accept the other explanation (no explanation at all—merely a confession of ignorance) that God's ways are mysterious. Why say at all that God made such a bad job?.....In what sense God is the creator is clearly explained in this book and is consistent with modern science. We cannot therefore say that man has an 'Adi' (beginning). We simply deny that and say he is "Anadi" (அநாத்); without beginning, eternal, or, more simply, that he exists. His existence is taken as a fact and admitting of no other explanation. So his imperfection 'Anava Malam' and other 'Mala Bandhams' in union with him are also 'Anadi', without beginning, and the illustrations give some very apt analogies showing such mutual relationship and union."

Pati-Pasu-Pasam (God, soul and bondage).

Thus then we see that we exist, subject to Samsara, and some free Being helps us to get rid of this Samsara. We are the souls (Pasu), Samsara is Pasam (Anavam, Maya and Karmam), and the free Being is God (Pati). These (Pati, Pasu and Pasam) are the three Padarthas or entities postulated in Saiva Siddhantam. These are not in any way peculiar to the Siddhanti. They are recognised all the world over

in some form or other, whether as Brahman, Jiva and Jagat, or as God, mind and body, or under some other names :

பலகலை ஆகமம் வேதம் யாவையினும் கருத்துப் பதி பசு பாசம்
தெரித்தல்..... (Sivapragasam)

The object of the Vedas, the Agamas and all other books is to explain Pati, Pasu and Pasam.

சுருதிகள் சொல் பல்சமயத் துணிவும் அப்
பரசீவ பந்தமென்று உந்திபற
பகர்நாமம் வேறு வேறு உந்திபற, (Avirothavunthi)

The teaching of all Sruties and religions is Param, Jivan and Bandham. They are called by various names.

Pati, for instance, is known as Kadavul, God, Isan, Brahman, Vishnu, Rudran, Devan, Devi, Deivam, &c. Some describe Him as 'Rupi' (having a form), others say He is 'Arupi' (formless), others again consider him as 'Ruparupi' (both endowed with form and formless) and still others there are who say that He has neither form nor is He formless. Most of them ascribe to Him the great qualities of omniscience, omnipotence, omnipresence, &c., though some ascribe to Him actions which mar His August Personality and paint Him as capricious, wanting in foresight, weak or mischievous. Similarly Pasu is known as Atma, Jiva, soul, mind, &c, and is described variously as pure, sinful, intelligent, ignorant, &c; while Pasam has the appellations Jagat, Jadam, matter, Avidya, ignorance and illusion. Some no doubt deny the existence or eternity of one or other and even all of these, but in so doing they unwittingly commit themselves to the enunciation of their existence. Some would deny God, but in so doing they raise themselves (Pasu) to His high pedestal, while those who deny soul lower down the Supreme Brahman from His Sublimity and those who deny Pasam deny the

world and have to engage in all sorts of verbal jugglery to explain their position*.

As stated above, the Tri.Padarthas (Pati, Pasu and Pasam) are recognised by all religionists in some form or other, but it is the Siddhanti that goes deeply into the subject and examines it minutely. And herein lies all the difference. Here may be cited a stanza in which the Tamil poet most ingeniously proves the existence of these three Padarthas from the word 'Veedu' or liberation:

வீடென்று அறைதரு சொற்குப் பொருளோ விடுதலை ஆதலினால்
வீக்குண்டோனும் கட்டுண்டோனும் விளங்கும் திடமாகப்,
பீடுறு கட்டுத் தானாய் விட்டுப் பெயராது, இது சடமாம்,
பிணிபட்டோன் அசுதந்தரனாகும், பிணிபெயரச் செய்வோன்

*The stand taken by the Siddhanti in this matter receives additional and sometimes unexpected support from the ideas given expression to by various teachers of various creeds for various purposes. We find, for instance, that Ekanma Vadam (literally one-soul argument or one-soul theory) clearly recognizes a marked distinction between God, the world and the individualized soul. And in the case of the soul the distinction continues to exist even after the soul has become disembodied. The distinction between God and soul is generally explained as being apparent only and not real, the analogy often cited being the apparent distinction between the Akas (space) within a pot and the vast expanse of space outside the pot. With the destruction of the pot the distinction between the Akas in the pot and the Akas out of the pot ceases. It is not so however in the case of the disembodied soul. At the time of Pralayam (destruction or involution or reabsorption) of the world, the elements are not absolutely merged in God but only in such a way as to continue to exist in a seminal condition. "Otherwise", says the accredited spokesman of this school, "the limiting adjuncts of every soul would, at the time of death, be absorbed and the soul would enter into absolute union with Brahman: which would render all scriptural injunction and scriptural doctrine equally purposeless. Moreover bondage, which is due to wrong knowledge, cannot be dissolved but through perfect knowledge. Hence, although Brahman is the causal substance of those elements, they are at the time of death,—as in the case of deep sleep and a Prayam of the world,—merged in it only in such a way as to continue to exist in a seminal condition." These are most unexceptionable words and their import is practically the same as the Siddhanta conception of Pati-Pasu-Pasam.

நீடு சுதந்தரம் உண்டாம் ஒருவன், எனும் இவ்வேதுவினால்
 நிகழ் பதி பசு பாசம் என மூப்பொருள் நிச்சயம் என்று அருளி,
 வேடனை வெல்லும் குருவாய் எனையாள் மெய்ப்பொருள் நீயன்றே,
 வேதகிரிப் பவரோக வயிததய வேணிமுடிச் சனியே.

The word 'Veedu' or liberation implies the existence of something (Pasu) to be liberated from something else (Pasam) by which it was bound up, and this Bandham being Achit or insentient will not get off of itself, and the person bound being under bondage is powerless to get away from it; so that, there must be somebody (Pati) who is free and who is powerful enough to loosen the 'knot'. Thus the very word 'Veedu' implies the existence of the three entities, Pati, Pasu and Pasam.....

CHAPTER IV

'Adwaitham' and God's Omnipresence

பொய் கண்டார் காணும் புனிதமெனும் அக் துவித
மெய் கண்ட நாநன் அடிமேவும் நாள் எந்நாளோ

Adwaitham, a relationship

THE Saiva Siddhanta Philosophy is often spoken of as the 'Adwaitha' Philosophy and the master who gave the Siva-Gnana Botham to the Tamil world, as Adwaitha-Meikandan, he who saw the truth of Adwaitham or non-duality. It is also referred to as Suddha-Adwaitham (or pure Adwaitham) to distinguish it from other schools which also claim to teach Adwaitham. This is a very important term to understand and a knowledge of the system is impossible without a clear grasp of the true import of this term. It denotes the particular relationship which exists between God and soul. This relationship is such that while there is a difference in substance, there is at the same time perceived a sort of complete identity. It is a sort of inseparateness and various are the analogies by which it is sought to explain it. In Siva Gnana Siddhi we read: இந்தனத்தின் எரி பாலில் நெய் பழத்தின் இரதம் எள்ளின்கண் உண்ணெயும் போல் எங்கும் உள்ள இறைவன். (As fire in wood, as ghee in milk, as juice in fruit and as oil in gingelly, God is immanent in everything) In Devaram we have: விநகிற் தீயினன் பாலிற் படுநெய்போல் மறைய நின்றான். (He stands concealed like fire in fuel and ghee in milk) It may be likened to the relation that exists between mind and body, or life and body, or mind and the sense of sight, or the light of the sun and the light of the eye or the flower and its fragrance or the vowel 'a' and the consonants, பண் இசை, வெம்பரிதி மதி, துல தயிலம், தீ இருப்பு, பாணிஉப்பு, வீண் அனிலம், உடல் உயிர், நீர் நிழல், உச்சிப்பளிங்கு, பகல்விளக்குப், பால்நீர், கண்இரவி, உணர்வு ஒளி போல் பிரிவு அரிய அத்துவிதம், says Siva Gnana Muniver. Adwaitham is inseparability similar to the relationship between music and tune, sun and moon, gingelly and oil, fire and iron, water and salt, air and space, life and body, water and shadow, sun and crystal, sunlight and lamplight, water

and milk, sunlight and eyesight, feeling and knowledge. But it is not a relation similar to that between gold and jewels made out of it, these latter being identical with gold in substance though different in outward appearance; nor is it something similar to the relation between light and darkness which are mutually exclusive of each other. Perhaps, the particular relationship herein intended can be better imagined than described. God is all but all is not God. He is therefore all and not all (எல்லாமாய் அல்லவுமாய்). He is immanent in everything. He soaks everything through and through, but still He is above everything. உலகெலாமாகி வேறாய் உடனுமாய், says Siva Grana Siddhi.

Adwaitham, the Siddhanti holds, is not Ekam (ஏகம்) or monism. We read in Siva Gnana Botham: அத்துவிதமென்ற சொல்லாலே ஏகமென்னில் ஏகமென்று சுட்டுவதுண்மையில் அத்துவிதமென்ற சொல்லே அன்றிய நாதத்தியை உணர்த்தும் ஆயிட்டு and Siva Gnana Muniver explains this passage as follows: அத்துவிதமென்ற சொல்லின் நகரம் இன்மை அன்மை மறுதலை என்ற முய் பொருளுணர்த்து மன்றே. அவற்றுள் இன்மைப் பொருள்பற்றி அத்துவிதமென்ற மொழிமாத்திரையானே ஒரு பொருளென்றல் பொருத்தமுடைத் தெனின்—தானே தன்னை ஒன்றெனக் கருதல் வேண்டாமையின் அவ்வாறு கருதும் பொருள் வேறுண்டென்பது பெறப்படுதலானும், எண்ணுப்பெயர் மேல் வந்த நகரம் அன்மைப் பொருள் மாத்திரையே உணர்த்திப் பொதுமையில் நிற்பதன்றி ஏனைச் சொற்களின்மேல் வந்த நகரம்போல் இன்மை மறுதலைப் பொருள் களை உணர்த்துதல் வழக்கின் கண் இன்மையின் அத்துவிதமென்கிற மொழிதானே பிறிதுகாரணம் வேண்டாது வேறின்மையை உணர்த்தி நிற்கும் ஆதலாலும், சண்டிவ்வான்மாக்கள் பலவும் முதல்வந்தானே யாய் நிற்குமென மேற்கொண்டது என்க. The word Adwaitham cannot mean Ekam or oneness as, without a second, no one can think of himself as one, and as the very thought implies two things. The word simply denies the separate existence and separability of the two. In this sense it is said that the souls exist as one with the Lord. The prefix 'a' has more than one meaning. In such words as Appirakam (அப்பிரகாசம்) or Amalam (அமலம்) it has the இன்மை or இல்லை (negative) meaning and denotes the absence of Pirakam and Malam. In such words as Aneethi (அநீதி) or Adbarmam (அதர்மம்) it is used in what is called the மறுதலை

(antonymous) sense and means the opposite of Neethi and Dharmam. In the word Appiramanan (அப்பிராமணன்) it does not negative the existence of the Piramanan, nor does it mean Kshatriyan or Vysian, &c, who are non-brahmins, but means a man devoid of the attributes of a brahmin though he is a brahmin by birth.

Different Schools of Adwaitham & Dwaitham

Ekanmavadam or Kevala-adwaitham as it is called to distinguish it from other schools of Adwaitham takes the first meaning of இன்மை or அபாவம் or இல்லை (negative) sense and denies the existence of Pasu and Pasam and says there is only one entity Brahm, Visishdadwaitham (Ramanuja's school) also adopts the negative interpretation but adds that, while God is all-pervasive, soul and Pasam are included in God or in other words they form part and parcel thereof. Madhwa's school (Dwaitham) has recourse to the மறுதலை (or antonymous) interpretation and argues that, just as when one speaks of Adharmam he implies the existence of its opposite Dharmam at the same time, the word Adwaitham connotes the existence of the One (Brahm) which is other than and quite separate from the second (soul).

Suddha Adwaitham

Saiva Siddhantam or Adwaitham proper (Suddha-Adwaitham) rejects all these interpretations and holds that the prefix 'a' in Adwaitham does not negative the positive existence of one or other of the two (Dwaitham) for, if it were to negative the existence of the 'one', it would equally well negative the existence of the 'other' and both being negated we shall be landed in Nihilism. Again, if we can take it as meaning Ekam (or monism) we might equally well take it as meaning more than two. The word Anekam (அநேகம்), for instance, does not mean 'none' but indicates 'many' (more than one). The other view of மறுதலை (antonymous sense) is equally untenable as if the one (God) and the second (soul) are entirely separate it would be derogatory to God's all-pervasiveness and we shall be predicating சுதந்திரம் (independence) to the soul, which is contrary to both Sruti and Anubhavam (Revelation and experience). The fact is, we have it on the authority

of a no mean scholar of Tamil and Sanskrit (—we mean Siva Gnana Muniver—) that when the negative particle is prefixed to the numeral in common language it does not mean இன்மை or அபாவம் (negative sense), neither does it mean மறுதலை (antonymous sense), but it is used in what is called the அன்மைப் பொருள் or அல்ல (nondual) sense. In Irupah Irupathu, this is spoken of as ஒன்றாகாமல் இரண்டாகாமல் ஒன்றுமிரண்டும் இன்றாகாமல் (not one nor two nor neither). From this it is not to be understood that it is something 'Anirvachaniyam' (அகிர்வசனியம்). Not at all. All this language is used to shew that the relation is such that it could not be easily postulated in words. As we stated above, the relationship can perhaps be better imagined than described. And in these realms of Metaphysics, unless and until it comes to a matter of realization, we cannot expect much more than a clear conception, with the mind's eye, of these abstruse points. If there is only One Absolute, the very idea of duality is impossible. The word Adwaitham implies the existence of two things and does not negative the reality or existence of one of the two. It simply postulates a relationship between the two.

In this connection, we might as well compare the definition of another word having the same prefix 'a' given by some philosophers who will not accept any meaning of 'Adwaitham' other than 'Ekam' or absolute Oneness (monism). In discussing the term 'Avidya' they say: "It is not a mere negative of 'Vidya', since the mere absence of Vidya cannot act as the veil of the self. The negative prefix 'a' in Avidya implies only that the thing denoted by the word is something opposed to or other than Vidya,—as in 'Amitra' (non-friend) and 'Adharma' (demerit),—not that it is the mere absence of Vidya".

Tatanmiyam and Adwaitham

Siva Gnana Muniver differentiates between two kinds of relationship. One is the relationship between a substance and its attribute (Guni and Gunam). Here there is no difference whatever in substance between the two. This is called 'Tatatmiya' union (தாதாத்தமிய சம்பந்தம்). The other is a relationship between two things which though different in substance are so united that a sort of complete identity is perceived between the two. This is what is called 'Adwaitha'

union (அத்துவித சம்பந்தம்). The relationship between Sivam and Sakti is Tatanmiyam while that between Sivam and Atma (soul) is Adwaitham.

God's infinity—in place—in time.

God we say is omnipresent or all-pervasive (சர்வ வியாபகம்). He is infinite in space. The objective phenomena around us we find have a limited existence in space. They have a certain length and breadth and are bounded by other things. Unlike these God has no limit either longitudinally or latitudinally or in any other way and is unbounded. He soaks through and through everything and all space. Similarly He is infinite in time. He is Anadi (or beginningless) and Anantham (or endless). He is eternal (நித்தம்) as opposed to the world which is not eternal in as much as it undergoes change. It is an axiomatic truth that whatever changes cannot be eternal, though the basic principle underlying it may be so. The thing itself is not eternal for, we find that it is produced at one moment, exists for a time and then it is found to decay or disappear. Unlike 'Prapancham', the Supreme One is without a beginning or end. He exists for all time. Thus we see that God is infinite both in place and in time.

Pasu and Pasam not identical with Pati

Some people however are not content with this infinity thus predicated of Brahman. They would predicate of Him infinity in a third respect, namely in respect of things. Their spokesman argues that He is infinite in respect of things in as much as He is inseparable from them all and He is inseparable from them all because He is the cause of all. The cause cannot be said to be limited by the effect, because the things spoken of as effects have only a momentary existence and are unreal. Apart from the cause there is no such thing as an effect really existing, at which the idea of the cause may terminate. He would thus admit the existence of 'Brahman' or Pati only and deny Pasu and Pasam saying that they are evolutes of Brahman. If then there is no such entity as Pasu other than God and if it is God that appears as Pasu and Pasam and is identical with them, it is reasonable to ask:—

Some fallacies.

What is all this pain and misery we see in the world due to? Why should we the perfect and free Being be subject to bondage? Why should we suffer so much? Why should there be evil? Our friend says "It is due to 'Avidya' (ignorance)." But then, who is ignorant? Is it the Omniscient God or our own selves who are identical with Him? Our friend answers "Avidya inheres in the organ and not in the self, it does not pertain to the self but to the state of bondage". Whose state of bondage? and what is the organ? Is it something sentient or insentient? and, is it something identical with or different from God? "It is all a delusion," our friend retorts, "like the snake in the rope and is due to Maya." But, hold. Who is thus deluded? Is it God or anybody else? And, what is Maya? Is it something identical with or apart from God? "It is something 'Anirvachaniyam' (which cannot be postulated in words). something indescribable, something wonderful!"—Really!

Our friend begins with God only and denies everything else. Then finding himself in a tight corner, he has recourse to a second thing called Avidya and then to a third called Maya. Nor are his difficulties ended here. What, we ask, is evolution? What is it due to and intended for? What is the purpose of creation? Is it purposeless? Is God a lunatic to do it for nothing! Or is it intended for self glorification? Our friend is simply dumbfounded. He is unable to answer it. He says: "It is not right to ask or answer the question 'what is the purpose of creation?' We cannot say that it is meant for the enjoyment of the Supreme; for the Supreme really enjoys nothing. It is pure consciousness, a mere witness. And there is no other enjoyer, for there is no other conscious entity. The Iswara is one only, and what is not conscious cannot enjoy. Nor is creation intended for 'Moksha', because it is opposed to Moksha. Thus neither the question nor an answer is possible; and there is no occasion for it, as creation is due to the Maya of the Supreme". A fine answer, indeed! But it does not occur to our friend that all this difficulty is of his own making, due to his wrong hypothesis, and that it all vanishes into thin air if he admit a second entity (Pasu) for whom all this is intended. For

then there is no necessity to indulge in all sorts of verbal jugglery and to beg the question over and over again. Then there is no necessity for him to take the company of the 'Lokayatan' (materialist) and deny Moksham. Then there is no necessity to deny the scriptural injunctions and all the various teachings of all the Agamas and the Vedas. For, if there is no soul different from God, in other words if our friend himself is God and not anything else, he may do as he pleases. He need not observe any laws, religious, moral or other, if he be so inclined, he may rob his neighbour or commit murder with impunity and indulge in all sorts of vices without hesitating in the least, as he need not fear any suffering therefor. And he need not be righteous or good or lawabiding, there being no necessity to be so. The Lokayatan (materialist) has at least the restraint that whatever misdemeanours he commits he should not be caught by the king (earthly king) as he fears corporeal punishment by the king. But even this fear is absent in the case of the Aham-Brahma.Vadi, 'I am Brahm' doctrinaire.

'Ekam' explained, God is One only

If then Adwaitham does not mean Ekam, why do the Vedas repeatedly cry out One, One, Ekam, Ekam, Ekamevadhitham?—True. This truth is not confined to any particular sect or creed. All the Agamas, all the Shastras, all religions in fact, are loud in the proclamation of this one Grand Truth. The third Adhikaranam (proposition) of the first Sutrām of the Siva Gnana Bodham is exclusively devoted to the proof of this Truth. There is but one God (Pati). There cannot be a plurality of Gods. இறுதியாம் காலம் தன்னில் ஒருவனே. It is the one God that appears in various forms. யாது ஒரு தெய்வம் கொண்டார் அத்தெய்வமாகி ஆங்கே மாதொரு பாகனார் தாம் வருவர். The mistake which some people commit consists in their misapplication of the word. They would apply it not to God but to all the universe and their own selves. They want themselves to be regarded as God. And, to them, the Divine Seer (Meykanda Devar) answers :

ஒன்று என்றது ஒன்றேகான், ஒன்றேபதி, பசுவாம்
ஒன்று என்ற நீ, பாசத்தோடு உளைகான்,—ஒன்று இன்றால்

அக்கரங்கள் இன்றும் அகர உயிர் இன்றேல்
இக்கிரமத்து என்னும் இருக்கு.

What the Vedas say is one is 'indeed one. 'Pati' is one only. But you who say all is one are 'Pasu' and are bound in 'Pasam'. The Vedas say that nothing can exist without Him, just in the same way that the letters of the alphabet cannot have their being without the opening vowel 'a'.

Siva Gnana Siddhi expresses the same truth in almost identical words :

ஒன்றென மறைகள் எல்லாம் உரைத்திட, உயிர்கள் ஒன்றி
நின்றனன் என்று பன்மை நிகழ்த்துவது என்னை என்னில்,
அன்று அவை பதிதான் ஒன்றென்று அறையும், அக்கரங்கள்தோறும்
சென்றிடும் அகரம்போல நின்றனன் சிவனும் சேர்ந்தே

It is the same relationship that is referred to by Tiruvalluvar in the 1st Kural அகர முதல எழுத்தெல்லாம் ஆதி, பகவன் முதற்றே உலகு, and by Umāpathiyar in the 1st couplet of Tiruvarut-payan அகர உயிர்போல் அறிவாகி எங்கும், நிகரில் இறை நிற்கும் நிறைந்து.

CHAPTER V

'Atu-Atu-Athal' (அது அது ஆதல்) or the Assimilative Character and Lack of Independence of the Soul

ONE great distinction between God and man is that God is independent, Swatantiran (தன் வயததன், சுதந்திரன்), which man is not. The soul is a swatantiran or para-tantiran, not independent or dependent on others. In the 'bandha' or bounden state it is bound by, or dependent on, or partaking of the nature of Pasam and is hence called Pasu and, being bound by or under the influence of Pasam and helpless to extricate itself from its fetters, it stands in need of the help of the free Being, Pati or God's Grace. பிணிபட்டோன் அசுதந்திரன் ஆகும் பிணிபெயரச் செய்வோன் நீடு சுதந்திரம் உண்டாம் ஒருவன், so we are told by the commentator of Olivilodukkam. The fettered soul is incapable of acting without the help or energising presence of God who alone is independent. இறைவன் தன் சன்னிதிக்கண் உலகின்தன் சேட்டை என்னும் மறைகளும் மறந்தாய், says Siddhiyar, You have forgotten what the Vedas say, that the world gets into action in the presence of God. In Kanda Puranam we read:

செம்மாந்து தற்புகழும் தேவர் குழுவும் மருள,
எம்மான் பிறன்போல் இருந்து, ஓர் துகும்பு நிறீஇ,
அம்மா தன் செய்கை அனைத்தும் எனக் காட்டினனே,
நம்மாலும் முற்றும் சில என்கை நாண் அன்றே.

The gods (Devas) were self-conceited and bragged, every one proclaiming his own prowess; but got disillusioned when our Lord appeared in the garb of a stranger and proved by putting up a trifle straw that all actions are energised by Him. It is idle to boast that we too can act independently.

An Upanishad story

The allusion here is to the story told in Kena Upanishad (vide Chapter III of our Vedanta Moola Saram) where the Devas Agni, Varunan, Vayu, &c., had a dispute as to which of them was the strongest. When it was apparent

that they could not settle the dispute among themselves, there appeared in the vicinity a fair damsel (Uma Haimavadi) whom they approached and begged to arbitrate. Uma Deviyar directed them to Siva who appeared at a distance disguised as a Yaksha (இயக்கள்). The Yaksha planted a straw in front of Him and said that whoever destroyed that straw was the strongest. The Fire-god burnt with all his fury but the straw was unharmed. The Wind-god blew with all his might but the straw remained unmoved where it stood. Similarly the other gods too had their try, but with no better success. Then it was that the Truth dawned on them that they were powerless by themselves and that any powers they had were derived from the Supreme Energiser.

A Puranic story

Every one is aware of the Puranic story of the fight between Brahma (the Creator) and Vishnu (the Preserver) as to which of them was the Supreme God and the appearance in their midst of Siva Peruman in the form of a huge column of Fire whose top and bottom the disputants were unable to find out in spite of their best efforts. This event is celebrated to this day by the lighting of bonfires at Tiruvannamalai and other temples not only in India but also in Ceylon including even Vishnu temples, (— we do not really know what significance the Vai-shnavas attach to this festival, —) and even in our homes in the festival of lights (விளக்கிடு) observed on the night of the Tiru-Karthikey day in the month of Karthikey (November—December) every year.

These Puranic and Upanishadic stories are meant to illustrate not only the proposition that there is only one Supreme Being and that the other so-called gods are souls (Pasu), but also the fact that souls are dependent beings, not independent like God, and that where they exercise any powers it is all borrowed authority derived from the One God, similar to the authority exercised by ministers, judges and other officials by virtue of the powers delegated to them by the earthly sovereign authority. விரைக் கமலத்தோன் மாலும் ஏவலால் மேவினோர்கள் புரைத்த அதிகார சத்தி புண்ணியம் நண்ணலாலே. They derive their authority by the command of the Lord as a result of their good Karmam.

Soul's dependence on God even in Mukti

It may be conceded that the soul is incapable of standing on its own legs in the 'bandha' or fettered state, but can the same incapacity be predicated of it in the Moksha or freed state? And if so, is there such a state as Moksham worth speaking about? Our Lord Meykandan is quite definite on the point. பல வாதேற தொழும் பாகும் அங்கு, The soul serves God (or is subordinate to Him or is dependent on Him) in various ways even in Moksham, for if the contrary doctrine that the soul is independent of God in the Moksha state were to be seriously entertained, it would only mean a second and enlarged edition of the story of the Brahma-Vishnu battle, with the difference that instead of there being two contestants only for supremacy there would be a whole host of such contestants, every one of the crowd independent of the rest, and there would be pandemonium, and we shall be landed in Aneka-Iswara-Vadam (அநேகேச்சுர வாதம்) or Polytheism. Therefore it is that the Siddhanti denies the independence of the soul whether in the fettered or freed state and says that God alone is independent and that the soul is dependent. It may be likened to a creeper which cannot stand by itself but flourishes by clinging to whatever it catches on to. Or it is like a crystal which assumes the colour of whatever object it is placed near. The most favourite simile with our writers is the eye. இருளில் இருளாகி எல் இடத்தில் எல் ஆம், பொருள்கள் இலதோ புனி, says Umapathiyar. Is there no such thing in the world that appears dark in darkness and shines in the light? Such things are the eye, the crystal, &c. The eye has the capacity to see just in the same way that the soul has the capacity to know, but when there is no light and it is placed in darkness (Anava Malam) it is dark and unable to see (know), but when it dawns and the sun (God) rises the eye (soul) partakes of the light (Gnanam) and sees (knows.) Just as continued contact with light is essential for the eye to see, contact with God (or His Grace) is essential for the soul to remain in the freed (or Moksha) state. Hence it is that we state that the soul is dependent on God even in the state of Moksham.

Its assimilative nature - the three Avastas

It is this particular characteristic of the soul, its capacity of assimilating the qualities of whatever it is attached to,

that is known to the Siddhanti as சார்ந்ததன் வண்ணமாதல் or அது அது ஆதல் (literally 'that-that becoming') in the words of Meykandan. There is no getting away from this basic teaching of Saiva Siddhantam as regards the nature of the soul in whatever state it is. The soul undergoes many Avasthas (அவத்தைகள்) or states of existence. Three elementary Avasthas may be noticed here. (1) Kevalam (கேவலம்) or lonely state when it is in an undeveloped condition enshrouded in Anavamalam, (2) Sakalam (சகலம்) or bodily state where it is provided with bodies, organs, worlds and objects of enjoyment and (3) Suddham (சுத்தம்) or purified state. We have the following slightly expanded definitions of these Avasthas in Siddhiyar :

அறிவிலன் அழர்த்தன் நித்தன் அராகாதி குணங்களோடும்
செறிவிலன் கலாதியோடும் சேர்வுஇலன் செயல்கள் இல்லான்
குறிஇலன் கருத்தா அல்லன் போகத்தில் கொள்கை இல்லான்
பிறிவுஇலன் மலத்தினோடும் வியாபி கேவலத்தில் ஆன்மா

Now-intelligent, bodiless, imperishable, not possessed with even the innermost of the internal organs, actionless, desire-less, not a self-agent, not possessed of the appetite for enjoyment, united to and co-existent with Anava Malam, such is the soul in its Kevala state.

உருவினைக் கொண்டு போக போக்கியத்து உன்னல் செப்பல்
வருசெயல் மருவிச் சத்தம் ஆதியாம் விடயம் தன்னில்
புரிவதம் செய்து இங்கு எல்லாயோனியும் புக்கு உஎன்று
திரிதரும் சகலமான அவத்தையில் சேவன் சென்றே

Endowed with a body and internal and external organs and the faculties of desire, knowledge and action, possessed with the appetite for enjoyment, subject to births and deaths, in localized pervasiveness or co-pervasive with the products of Maya, such is the soul in its Sakala state.

இருவினைச் செயல்கள் ஒப்பில் ஈசன்தன் சத்தி தோயக்
குருஅருள் பெற்று ஞானயோகத்தைக் குறுகி முன்னைத்
திரிமலம் அறுத்துப் பண்டைச் சிற்றறிவு ஒழிந்து ஞானம்
பெருகி நாயகன்தன் பாதம் பெறுவது சுத்தம் ஆமே

When the stage of eyeing good and evil equally is reached and the Lord's Grace descends on the soul, it gets the

Guru's blessing, practices Gnaṇa Sadana, gets rid of the three Malas and of its localized knowledge, becomes omniscient and reaches the Feet of the Lord. Such is the *Suddha* state of the soul.

Why man should associate with the good—and avoid the wicked and unclean

The soul then, whether it be in its primitive or earthly or heavenly state, is a dependent being and partakes of the qualities of its predominant partner. ஆணவத்தோடு அத்துவிதம் ஆனது போல் மெய்ஞ்ஞானத், தாணுவினோடு அத்துவிதம் ஆகும் நாள் எந்நாளோ, says St. Thayumanavar. Oh! for the day when I shall be in Adwaitha union with the immutable Lord, the Embodiment of true Gnanam, even as I am now in Adwaitha union with Anava Maṇam. The idea underlying the 12th Sūtram of both Siva Gnaṇa Bodham and Siva Gnaṇa Siddhi is the same. This Sūtram runs as follows:

செம்மலர் நோன்றான் சேரல் ஓட்டா
அம்மலம் கழிஇ, அன்பரோடு மரிஇ,
மால் அற நேயம் மலிந்தவர் வேடமும்
ஆலயம் தானும் அரன் எனத்தொழுமே

Wash away the Malas which prevent you from clinging to the lotus-like Feet of the Lord, associate with His Devotees and worship them in their corporeal bodies, which abound with Love, after dispelling all darkness, as well as God's Temples as God Himself.

Commenting on the second part of this verse 'associate with God's Devotees' St. Maykandan says: அல்லாதார் அஞ்ஞானத்தை உணர்த்துவர் ஆகலான், because others (i. e., those who are not Siva Bhaktas) would only impart wrong knowledge. If we associate with Godly men and God, we imbibe their qualities and become Godly or Godlike while, on the other hand, if we keep company with the wicked or the impure we ourselves tend to become wicked or impure. This doctrine again is not peculiar to the Siddhanti only but is recognised the world over by almost all religionists and even by the most worldly-minded people, but it is the

Siddhanti that takes it to its logical conclusion and makes a basic principle of it. Says the grand old poetess Auvaiyar:

நல்லாரைக் காண்பதுவும் நன்றே நலம் மிக்க
நல்லார் சொற்கேட்பதுவும் நன்றே—நல்லார்
குணங்கள் உரைப்பதுவும் நன்றே அவரோடு
இணங்கி இருப்பதுவும் நன்று

Desirable it is to see the good, desirable it is to hear their words, desirable it is to expatiate on their qualities and desirable it is to associate with them.

On the other hand:

தீயாரைக் காண்பதுவும் தீதே திரு அற்ற
தீயார் சொற்கேட்பதுவும் தீதே—தீயார்
குணங்கள் உரைப்பதுவும் தீதே அவரோடு
இணங்கி இருப்பதுவும் தீது

It is most undesirable to see or hear or speak of or associate with the wicked.

c. f. the proverb: பன்றி ஓடு கூடிய கன்றும்...தின்னும், the cow-calf that follows the pig will also learn to eat filth.

The *raison d'etre* of untouchability

Herein lies the *raison d'etre* underlying the practice of untouchability and other social customs. We have no desire to discuss this most controversial question here, but content ourselves with stating that it has a most scientific, hygienic and spiritual background behind it but has degenerated in practice and assumed a cast iron form and that it requires mending (but not ending). We say "but not ending" advisedly, as even those who are loudest in denouncing the custom as a social evil practice it unwittingly in their everyday lives, more or less. We happened to be present once at a gathering of some Jaffna folk in an outstation town some twenty-five years ago when Jaffna was highly excited with the question of equal seating and interdining of children in Government and grant-in-aid schools. It was night time and time was hanging heavily on us. Various topics ranging from the most serious to the most trifling were talked about

and discussed, and some one started the equal seating and interdining question. There was a learned doctor, a highly cultured and most amiable gentleman, who waxed eloquent over the evils of untouchability. It was found however that his children were sent daily to a distant school. When asked why the little ones were not sent to a Tamil school situated much nearer to his house, he explained that that school was attended by the riffraff of the locality and he did not want his children to be spoiled by keeping bad company. —Herein then lies the secret that forms the substratum for the practical observance of untouchability even by those who denounce it in theory, and therefore it is that we say that it requires mending and not ending.

St. Thiruvalluvar gives a world of advice to mankind in the following couplets:

பற்றுக்க பற்றற்றான் பற்றினை அப்பற்றைப்
பற்றுக்க பற்று விடற்கு

சார்பு உணர்ந்து சார்பு கெட ஒழுகின் மற்றழித்துச்
சார்தரா சார்தரு ம் நோய்,

Desire the desire of Him who is desireless. Desire that Desire so that all (evil) desires may leave you.

If you learn to discard your (false) friend (impurity) and know your (true) friend (God), such action will destroy the adhering disease (Piraraptham and Sanchitam) and no other disease (Akamiyam) would adhere to you.

Tirukkallittupadiyar expands this latter couplet as follows:

சார்பு உணர்ந்து சார்புகெட ஒழுகில் என்றமையால்
சார்பு உணர்தல் தானே தியானமும் ஆம்—சார்பு
கெட ஒழுகில் நல்ல சமாதியும் ஆம் கேதப்
பட வருவதில்லை வினைப்பற்று.

As it is laid down that one should discard his (false) friend and know his (true) Friend, such knowledge (or union with Gnanam) is contemplation on the Deity and (steadfastness in) the discard of the false friend would result in real Samadhi (God-realisation). Then there will

be no occasion for the performance of (Akamiya) Karmam and the resultant suffering (of new births.)

Why propaganda succeeds.—Books

If it were not for this particular characteristic of the soul of benefiting by instruction and adapting itself to its environments (bodily, mental or spiritual), books will be of no use, Sadanas or performance of religious practices) become purposeless and there can be no such thing as Moksham or Veedu (liberation from suffering). In fact, Umapathiyar uses the fact of the existence of the Vedas and other books (பலகலை உலகில் நிலவுதலாலும்) as one of the reasons for proving the existence of a separate entity called Pasu, other than Pati who is omniscient and hence requires no books for his edification, and other than Pasam which is insentient and cannot therefore learn and derive any benefit from them. Propaganda, whether educational or otherwise, is effective because of this characteristic of man. Trade propaganda, in which the British and comparatively recently the Japanese are adepts, political propaganda, like that of Goebbels of Germany who seems to be an expert in this branch of Statecraft, religious propaganda, like that of the Missionaries, whether open propaganda by direct preaching and making conversions or overt and indirect propaganda through the instrumentality of schools or propaganda of any other variety, it all has the tremendous effect which we find it possesses because of this particular characteristic of man. Our leaders urge the education of our children in Hindu schools in a Hindu atmosphere for the same reason. But even in Hindu schools if adverse elements like Lokayatam predominate the children imbibe views of a similar nature, while if beef-eaters or drunkards or those who associate with beef-eaters or drunkards be in the ascendant, God save the children who attend such schools! Material gain, the acquisition of a few rupees, nay, of all the riches of the world, is no criterion, no compensation for the moral and spiritual loss, the temptation and the evil example set before the children. "What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" says Jesus the Christ, one of the noblest teachers the world ever produced whose teachings, alas! have been misinterpreted and misunderstood even as the Vedas are often misinterpreted and mistranslated.

Materialists

Why should the Lokayatan (materialist) reject all testimony other than Pratiyaksham or direct perception, accept the existence of the four grossest 'tatwas' or elements of earth, water, fire and air only, deny God and condemn all religion?

Why should some young men of imature age visiting communist countries (or associating with communists) themselves become full fledged communists in course of time?

Proselytizers

Why should the sincere follower of every religion have so much faith as he has in the teachings of his own religion? Why should some religionists deny re-birth and assert that those who do not believe in their teachings (—even though it be for the simple reason that they did not have the good fortune either to be born in or to be converted into their religion—) would be condemned to eternal damnation and suffer the horrors of hell for all time? Why should the good old dames of America and Europe pity the 'Indian heathens' and contribute liberally for the conversion of those heathens?

Why should children attending schools conducted by alien agencies or coming under the influence of teachers with materialistic tendencies gradually lose faith in their own religion and some of them go to the extent of disowning and despising it?

Politicians

Why should some of the white rulers in Africa be so inhuman and unjust as they are to their coloured subjects and grudge to allow them even the most elementary rights as human beings?

Why should some Ceylon politicians suggest to the Indian Tamils settled in Ceylon to marry Sinhalese girls and become Sinhalese (forsaking their sweet mother-tongue and their manners and customs as Tamils)?

Why should Indian Congress politicians including some prominent Tamils try to force Hindi down the throats of the Tamils?

Brahmins and non-brahmins

Again, why should the caste-brahmin of South India be so arrogant as he is towards his brother-men of the other castes? And why should the non-brahmin hate the brahmin in return? Why should the non-brahmin acting under the leadership of a quondam Mission School Pundit push the hatred to the extreme extent of disowning the Vedas and other Shastras which are the common heritage of both the brahmins and the non-brahmins, though the brahmins happen to be their custodians for the time being? And why should the Pundit's followers out-herod Herod himself and despise the Vedas and fabricate stories of the existence and loss of other Vedas in ancient Tamilakam to the south of Cape Comorin which was swallowed up by the sea eons ago? It may be that the brahmins love Sanscrit and Sanscritic writings more than Tamil and it may be that the majority of brahmins are Smarthas and monists and that they assign quite a secondary place to the Tamil Shastras and sacred Hymns, but that is no reason why others should in their love and over-enthusiasm for Tamil, disown the Vedas and Vedantas.

And then, why should an advanced school of these Tamil isolationists go one better than their tutors and make bonfires of highly cherished Tamil classics like the Periya Puranam and Kambar-Ramayanam? They say they are self-respecting Tamils, but seem to have little respect even for Tamil, let alone Sanscrit.

And finally,—and this is the most stupid act of all,—why should this Brahmino-phobia of these self-respecters be carried to the absurd extent of a crusade against God and the destruction of God's images in and out of temples, outdoing the worst acts of desecration and vandalism of the Portuguese fanatics of some four centuries ago?

Man a creature of his environments

The answer to all these questions when carefully analysed will be found to be the same. It is all due to association and environment, the respective environments of the parties concerned and the obvious reactions to those environments, the mental atmosphere they breathe, the kind of literature they read and the example set before them by their elders and others looked up to by them as leaders, wise men and learned men. Habit they say is second nature and is the result of one's environment and training, and where the training starts from the cradle it is extremely difficult to eradicate it. இளமையில் கல்வி சிகையில் எழுத்து, instruction received in one's infancy is as ineffaceable as a rock inscription.

The law of Association and Assimilation.

Several western writers have stated that man is a creature of his environments, not man only but all creatures including beasts, birds and even insects. Some ascribe this to a law of nature while others say that it is a providential dispensation intended for the protection of the creatures themselves. We say that it is the essential nature of the soul to imbibe the qualities of whatever it is attached to or associated with. Call it by whatever name, law of nature or God's Ordinance or the soul's characteristic, the fact remains that man, his thought, word and deed are all very greatly influenced by his environment and his association. If you frequent holy places you imbibe the holy atmosphere therein and gradually become holy, while if you pass frequently by a house of ill fame or a tavern you become immoral or a drunkard in course of time.

Temple worship.

Temple worship and the worship of Gnanies are intended not so much to please God or the Gnanies but to transform our innate nature from bad to good, from good to better, from better to best, from darkness to light, from ignorance to enlightenment. Not that God or His Devotees are such vain-glorious fools that they like to be praised or adored. By constant association with God and His Devotees in tem-

ples and other holy places we assimilate their qualities and our nature gradually approximates to theirs and we finally identify ourselves with God and He with us. Association then with God and godly men in God's temples and holy places is the first desideratum to erring man, and this, if persisted in to the exclusion of worldly thoughts, will in the long run lead to the succeeding stages of assimilation, approximation and identification with Godhead. More of this anon.

CHAPTER VI.

'Sadanas' or Religious Practices

All religions and religious practices lead to the same goal.

புறச் சமய நெறிநின்றும் அகச்சமயம் புக்கும்
புகல் மிருதி வழி உழன்றும் புகலும் ஆச்சிரம
அறத் துறைகள் அவை அடைந்தும் அரும் தவங்கள் புரிந்தும்
அரும் கலைகள் பல தெரிந்தும் ஆரணங்கள் படித்தும்
சிதப்பு உடைய புராணங்கள் உணர்ந்தும் வேத
சிரப் பொருளை மிகத் தெளிந்தும் சென்றால், சைவத்
திறந்து அடைவர். இதில் சரியை கிரியா யோகம்
செலுத்திய பின் ஞானத்தால் சிவன் அடியைச் சேர்வர்.

By following the teachings of alien (heterodox) religions, by entering the fold of the orthodox faiths, by practising the dharma laid down in the Smirties, by acting up to the tenets prescribed for the different Asramas (Brahmachariyam, &c), performing Tapas (religious austerities), learning the various Kalas (arts & sciences), the Puranas and the Vedas and understanding well the teachings of the Vedantas (Upanishads), if one passes through and completes all these stages successfully (in his innumerable births), he will reach the heights of the Saiva Religion and, after practising the paths of Saria, Kriya and Yogam, he will get to Gnana-Margam and through it reach the Feet of Siva Peruman.

Having described some of the most essential characteristics of Pati, Pasu and Pasam, we now proceed to the discussion of some of the Sadanas (or religious practices or exercises) prescribed for the attainment of Moksham or Veedu (liberation). Now, what is the way to escape from the ocean of Samsara in which we find that we are being tossed about hither and thither? How are we to break through the bonds of Anava Malam? What is the best means of attaining Moksham or Veedu? All evolution is a means to this end. All suffering is a means to this end. All enjoyment is a means to this end. All religion is a means to this end. All the various religions of the world, with all their contradictions and controversies, are means to this end. In other words, all the religions are to be regarded as so

many paths towards this one goal. It may be that one path is more direct and another more crooked or more circuitous than another, or again one path may lead into another as a cross road leads into a main road. But still each is a path. By constant practice of the 'Dharma' enjoined by the tenets of his particular religion, a man approaches nearer and nearer towards God, step by step. This as clearly stated in the verse from the Siva Gnana Siddhi quoted at the top of this chapter is the sane common-sense view the Siddhanti takes. In Vaidika Saivism itself, a man is not considered to be as it were rushed into what is called Moksham. Here too there are a large number of grades and a good many paths. First of all there is the broad division into the states of the Brahmachariyan (bachelor), the Grihastan (house holder), the Vanaprasthan (forest-dweller) and the Sannyasi (hermit who has totally renounced the world) Every one of these has got his duties to perform, and they have their intergrades. Siddhantam, again, speaks of four paths in the main wherewith to attain Veedu. These are: Sariya-margam, Kriya-margam, Yoga-margam and Gnana-margam. These again may be divided into a number of grades. For instance, there is the ordinary Sariya, to begin with; higher than this is what is known as Siva Sariya. Then there is the sub-division into Sariya in Sariya, Kriya in Sariya, Yogam in Sariya, &c. ending with Gnagam in Gnanam. All these are called 'Sadanas' or religious exercises, means to an end. They are not the end itself.

Do good and refrain from evil-doing.

One of the most elementary Sadanas or steps to attain liberation is to do good and to refrain from doing evil to our fellow creatures. If men realize that all living creatures are the temples of God (எவ்வயிரும் பராபரன் சந்திதியதாகும்), they will not even dream of harming, let alone killing and eating the carcasses of other beings. St. Pattinathar puts non-killing and refraining from eating the flesh of what is killed in the forefront of all virtues. Says he:

கொல்லாமல் கொன்றதைத் தின்னாமல் குத்திரம் கோள் களவு
கல்லாமல் கைதவரோடு இணக்காமல் கனவிலும் பொய்
சொல்லாமல் சொற்களைக்கேளாமல் தோகையர் மாயையிலே
செல்லாமல் செல்வந்தருவாய் சிதம்பரதேசிகளே.

Oh! Preceptor of Wisdom Infinite, grant us the boon not to kill or eat (the carcass of) what is killed, not to practise trickery or carry tales or steal, not to associate with the wicked, never to tell lies or listen to what is false and not to succumb to the wiles of prostitutes.

Put in positive form, these and cognate virtues are briefly told in the following verse in Siddhiyar :

ஓழக்கம் அன்பு அருள் ஆசாரம் உபசாரம் உறவு சீவம்
வழுக்கிலாத்தவம் தானங்கள் வந்தித்தல் வணக்கல் வாய்மை
அழுக்கிலாத்தறவு அடக்கம் அறிவஓடு அர்ச்சித்தல் ஆதி
ஓழக்கிலா அறங்கள் ஆனால் இரங்குவான் பணி அறங்கள்.

Good conduct, love, pity, purity, courtesy, friendliness, good temper, austerity, charity, respect, reverence, truthfulness, renunciation, humility, discriminating between good and evil, worship and cognate virtues, these constitute Punniyam and they are the command of the Gracious Lord.

Punniyam and Pabam

Punniyam (புண்ணியம்) or good Karmam may be briefly defined as the performance of acts which give pleasure to living beings (உயிர்க்கு இதம் செய்தல்) or are conducive to their welfare (உயிர்க்கு உறுதி செய்தல்), while Pabam (பாவம்) or sin is its opposite, injuring living beings, performance of acts which give them pain (உயிர்க்கு அதம் செய்தல்). And these are not confined to bodily actions alone but include those done in all the three ways of thought, word and deed (மனம், வாக்கு, காயம்).

The worship of God with all the Tri-Karanas (திரிகரணங்கள், literally the three instruments) thought, word and bodily action is enjoined. We read in Siddhiyar :

மனம் அது நினைய வாக்கு வழத்த மந்திரங்கள் சொல்ல
இனமலர் கையிற் கொண்டு அங்கு இச்சித்த தெய்வம் போற்றிச்
சினம் முதல் அகற்றி வாழும் செயல் அறமானால் யார்க்கும்
முனம் ஒரு தெய்வம் வந்து செயற்கு முன்னிலையாம் அன்றே.

Contemplating intently with the mind, praising and chanting Mantras with the tongue and offering flowers

with the hand, if you worship your favourite Deity, shunning all anger and other vices, and continue steadfast in such worship, the One God who existed before all will appear and recompense you for your worship.

Worship of one's favourite Deity,—Tolerance of other Creeds is not Polytheism.

Here we may draw the attention of our readers to the words இச்சித்த தெய்வம் போற்றி (worshipping your favourite Deity), as misunderstandings die hard and hence it is never too redundant to point out and reemphasise the catholicity and tolerance towards other creeds and the all-inclusive nature of the Saiva Siddhantam. The worship of God is never unproductive, in whatever form you worship Him and by whatever name you call Him. This aspect of our religion given expression to by our teachers long long ago cannot but be a source of pride and joy to every Tamilian, whatever his present creed in these days of boasted toleration and claim of other creeds to be universal faiths. This assertion of the Saiva teachers that the worship of one's favourite Deity is not without its reward should not on the other hand lead one to the conclusion that our religion is polytheistic. If there is one religion in this mundane world that is not polytheistic and that emphasises this point more than others it is the Saiva Siddhantam. Hence it is that our author who freely grants that the worship of one's favourite Deity whoever he may be is productive of its due reward hastens in the last line to add: யார்க்கும் முனம் ஒரு தெய்வம்வந்து.....(the one ancient-most God will appear.....). And the reason for the beginningless God appearing and granting boons is not far to seek. There being only one Supreme Being who is birthless and deathless (பிறப்பிலி இறப்பிலி) and all other so-called gods being souls (Pasu) bound by Pasam (fetters) and subject to births and deaths and it being a truism that one fettered person (பிணிபட்டோன்) cannot possibly remove the fetters of another fettered person (—as this would be something like the blind leading the blind or the sick man in a delirious or half-conscious state prescribing medicines and attempting to cure another sick man,—) it follows that it is the Ever-Free and All-powerful Being that has to step into the shoes of the favourite Deity

and do the needful. And this is essential as every action (or cause) must have its effect (—this is Sat.Kariya Vadam—) and the worship of the favourite Deity in all humility and pure love must have its reward.

Bhakti (or Love)

One of the safest and surest means of attaining Godhead is Bhakti or Anpu the practice of Love,—love to God, love to His devotees and love to His creatures. Indeed, none of the innumerable Sadanas or religious practices prescribed in the different religions will be of any avail unless accompanied with Love. No amount of penance, self-torture or asceticism will be of any use if it is not accompanied with Bhakti or Love We read in Tirumantiram :

என்பே வீறகாய் இறைச்சி அறுத்திட்டுப்
பொன்போற் கனலிற் பொரிய வறுப்பினும்
அன்போடு குகி அகம் குழை வார்த்தகன்றி
என்பொன் மணியினை எய்த ஒண்ணுதே.

Even if people practice religious austerities to the extent of offering slices of their own flesh as oblation and roast and fry the same in fire with their bones as fuel, it is impossible to reach our precious Gem (Siva Peruman) except to those whose hearts are mellowed and melt with Love.

Now what is this Bhakti or Love? Navalar in his Saiva-Vinavidai written for the use of small children gives a very simple definition: அன்பாவது :—ஒருவருக்குத் தம்மோடு தொடர்ச்சி உடையராய்த் தமக்கு இனியராய் உள்ளவரிடத்தே நிகழும் உள்ள நெகிழ்ச்சியாம். (Anpu or Love is the affection or softening of the heart towards those who are near and dear to one). He then proceeds to shew how God is the nearest and dearest friend that we possess, a greater benefactor to us than our own selves, not to speak of father, mother or anybody else. Here it would be as well to bear in mind the Devara hymn :

என்னில் யாரும் எனக்கு இனியார் இல்லை
என்னிலும் இனியான் ஒருவன் உள்
என்னுள்ளே உயிர்ப்பாய்ப் புறம்போந்து புக்கு
என்னுள்ளே நிற்கும் இன்னம்பர் நசனே.

Dearer to me than I there's none,
 Dearer to me than I there's One,
 Like breath in me in out moves He,
 Innumber's Lord, He dwells in me.

How to foster up this Love in thus described in Saiva-Vinavidai: பசுக்களாகிய நம்முடைய இலக்கணங்களையும், நம்மைப் பந்தித்த பாசங்களின் இலக்கணங்களையும், பசுபதியாகிய சிவபெருமானுடைய இலக்கணங்களையும், எத்துணையும் பெரிய சிவபெருமான் எத்துணையும் சிறிய நமக்கெல்லாம் இரங்கி எளி வந்து ஓயாது என்றும் உபகரிக்கும் பெரும் கருணையையும், இவ்வியல்பின் அனந்த கோடியில் ஒரு கூறியினும் உடையவர் பிறர் ஒருவரும் நமக்கு இல்லாமையையும் இடையறாது சிந்திக்கச் சிந்திக்க நமக்கு அச்சிவபெருமானிடத்தில் அன்பு விளையும். An easy way to keep up this constant thought of the Lord consists in repeatedly singing the sacred songs of Devaram and Tiruvachagam with rapt attention. திருவாசகத்தில் உருகாதார் ஒருவாசகத்தும் உருகார், so goes the popular saying. Even the hardest hearts must inevitably melt in the long run when these sacred hymns are properly uttered.

Kannapper—the Vedda Saint.

The quality of Love is such that the lover becomes completely merged in the beloved. When you love another, when the love is very intense, you completely lose all sense of yourself and the world around you and think of nothing else but the object of your love; for all intents and purposes, the world has ceased to exist before you; you yourself have ceased to exist; nay, you have become one with the object of your love. When the child is sick, what privations and hardships the mother undergoes! She will not consent to move even an inch away from her child, she will not eat, she will not sleep, she cares not for hunger or thirst or any of her bodily wants, she cares not for life itself. Such is the power of love. If such is terrestrial love, how much more grand must be this heavenly Love or Bhakti that we are speaking of! Every one knows the life of Kannappar, the Vedda Saint. Oh! what a type of Bhakti he evinced! What an example of love for us idle twaddlers to follow! Uncivilised and illiterate jungler that he was, how his heart sank to think that his God lived in a lonely forest in the midst of

wild beasts without any one to protect or help Him or give Him food! And when he first saw Kudumit Devar, how spontaneously he ran up and hugged his Lord to his bosom, just in the same way that a young mother would hug her child! He ate not, he slept not, he watched. He could not recognise either his companions or his aged father or mother and, what is more, he could not feel any pain in plucking out his own eye. The fact is he had lost himself. He had lost his individuality, his ego. He had become transformed into Love itself. He had become absorbed into Godhead. Here, it would be as well to recall the words of Tirumoolar :

அன்பும் சிவமும் இரண்டு என்பர் அறிவிலார்,
அன்பே சிவமாவது யாரும் அறிகிலர்,
அன்பே சிவமாவது யாரும் அறிவரேல்
அன்பே சிவமாய் அமர்ந்து இருப்பாரே.

Love and God are, fools say, not one,
Love and God they know not are one,
Love and God when men know are one,
As Love they merge in God as one.

The greatness of the Bhakti of Kannappar has been conveyed to the world by the words of Kudumit Devar: சிலலு கண்ணப்ப! சிலலு கண்ணப்ப! என் அன்புடைத் தோன்றல் சிலலு கண்ணப்ப! as Nakkirar says. (Wait Kannappa, wait Kannappa, my darling child, wait Kannappa!) The great Manikkavachagar refers to his Bhakti and says: கண்ணப்பன் ஒப்பது ஓர் அன்பு இன்மை கண்டபின், என்னப்பன் உன் ஒப்பில் என்னையும் ஆட்கொண்டருளி.....(after finding that there was no one to equal Kannappar in love, my Father enslaved me also,—me than whom there is no one more undeserving.....). Uyyavantha Devar quotes this in his Tirukkalittu Padiyar and says :

கண்ணப்பன் ஒப்பது ஓர் அன்பு இன்மை என்றமையால்
கண்ணப்பன் ஒப்பது ஓர் அன்பு அதனைக்—கண்ணப்பர்
தாம் அறிதல் காளத்தியார் அறிதல் அல்லது மற்று
ஆர் அறியும் அன்பு அன்று அது.

As Manikkavachagar has stated that there is none to equal Kannappar's love, such love can only be known to

Kannappar and to the Lord of Kalatti and to nobody else.

His previous birth—Arjunan

The curious may ask how it was that Kannappar, illiterate woodman that he was and unacquainted with the Shastras, attained to such a high state of Godliness without due preparation in the lower rungs of the spiritual ladder. The reply lies in the Law of Karma and rebirths. Says Arulnandi Devar in his preface to the Siva Gnana Siddhi;

பண்டை நற்றவத்தால் தோன்றிப் பரமனைப் பத்திபண்ணும்
தொண்டரைத் தானே தூய கதியினில் தொகுப்பன், மார்க்கர்
கண்ட நூல் ஒதி வீடு காதலிப்பவர்கட்கு ஈசன்
புண்டரிகத்தான் சேரும் பரிசினைப் புகலல் உற்றும்.

Saints born God-loving through deeds of yore
Are blessed by God with God's realms pure,
For men, for books for God with yearning,
The way to God that leads we sing.

Kannappar then must have passed all the lower stages in his previous births. In Tiru-Kalatti-Puranam we are told that Kannappar in his previous birth was no other than the great devotee Arjunan. The great Sangam poet Nakkirar too alludes to his former birth in one of his poems. Says he:

வாமான்றேர் வல்ல வயப்போர் விசயனைப்போல்
ஆர் தாம் உலகிற் றவம் உடையார்—தாம் ஆர்க்கும்
காண்டற்கு அரியராய்க் காளத்தி ஆழ்வரைத்
தீண்டத்தான் பெற்றமையாற் சென்று.

Who is there equal in Tapas to Arjunan the warrior with the car? He had the rare privilege to touch the person of the Lord of Kalatti whom it is difficult for others to know.

Readers of the Maha Bharatam know what sort of a person Arjunan was. A model Kshatriyan he was, a model protector of his people, a model warrior; a model father he was, a

model husband, a model brother and a model friend; a model disciple he was and true, a real Bhaktan, a great Gnani. The story goes that when Arjunan was engaged in deep meditation on the Lord, performing Tapas, a Dhanavan, on the instigation of Dhuriyodanan, appeared on the scene in the guise of a wild boar intent on killing Arjunan. Seeing this, the Lord, the Friend of the meek and the humble and the Servant of His servants, hastened to the rescue of His devotee in the guise of a Veddah (hunter) with his retinue. The boar was shot dead, but not until Arjunan had been disturbed from his Tapas (by the clamour of the hunters, the barking of their dogs and the snorting of the boar) and had aimed an arrow himself. A wordy warfare ensued as to who killed the animal, which ultimately led to blows. Having received a severe thrashing with the bow and engaged in a hand to hand fight, the Krathan (hunter) hurled the king up into the air. Nothing discomfited by the fall, Arjunan returned to the fray, when, lo! there was no Krathan to be seen. All was quiet and there was not a soul stirring in the wilderness. The Lord is then said to have revealed himself to Arjunan, who asked for the boon of Moksham. But it was not to be. Arjuna's time had not yet come. Here on Earth, unrighteousness was reigning supreme and virtue was hiding its head in caves and forests. Arjunan must live on earth to see the Great War through. So, it was decreed that he should for the time being be satisfied with lesser boons and that in his next birth, that of a Veddah (he having despised and chastised the Lord in the garb of a Veddah), he should be received into Bliss without much ado.

The four paths: Sariya, Kriya, Yogam and Gnanam

The four main Margas or paths of Sariya, Kriya, Yogam and Gnanam are briefly explained in beautiful and at the same time easy language by Kadavul Maha Munivar in his Tiru Vathavur Adigal Puranam. The description occurs where Dhakshinamoorthy the Divine Guru who taught the Truth to the Vedic Rishis, Sanakar, Sananthanar, Sanathar and Sanat-kumarar, is depicted as initiating ManikaVachager into the Truth and instructing him with the philosophy of the Siva Gnana Bodham. We read from the Puranam;

ஆவலால் எமக்கு ஆம் மலர் மரங்கள்
 ஆக்கல், அம்மலர் பறித்தல், அம்மலரால்
 தா இலாவகை தார்பல சமைத்தல்,
 தண்ப்பில் எம்புகழ் சாற்றல், அன்புடன் நாம்
 மேவும் ஆலயம் அலகிடல், மெழுகல்,
 விளங்க நல்விளக்கு இடுதல், எம் அடியார்க்கு
 ஏவல் ஆனவை செய்தல், இச் சரியை
 இயற்ற வல்லவர்க்கு எம் உலகு அளிப்போம்.

Planting and rearing flower plants with religious fervour, culling their flowers and making garlands of various kinds for Us, chanting Our praises, clearing and washing Our temples and lighting them and obeying the commands of Our devotees. These form Sariya and those who perform them We admit to Our Kingdom.

கந்த வார்க்கமும் கிளர் மணப் புகையும்
 கனின் கொள் தீபமும் புனித மஞ்சனமும்
 கொந்து அவிழ்ந்த நல் மலரும் மற்று உளவும்
 கொண்டு, மாயையின் குணங்கள் ஒன்று இலராய்,
 ஐந்து சுத்தி செய்து, அகம் புறம் இறைஞ்சி,
 அங்கியின் கடன் கழித்து, அருள் வழி கின்று,
 இந்த நல் பெரும் கிரியை அன்புடனே
 இயற்ற வல்லவர் எம் அருகு இருப்பார்.

Gathering sweet-smelling substances, Dupam (frankincense), Deepam (lamps), Manchanam (holy water), freshly opened flowers and other necessary accessories, with pure mind, doing the five Suddhies (acts of purification) and worshipping Us both internally and externally and fulfilling the duties of Agni Kariyam (literally fire acts) without egotism, those who thus perform Kriya as laid down in the Agamas with true love sit by Our side.

மூக்குணம் புலன் ஐந்துடன் அடக்கி,
 மூலவாயுவை எழுப்பு இரு வழியைச்
 சிக்கெனும்படி அடைத்து, ஒருவழியைச்
 திறந்து, தாண்டவச் சில்ம்பு ஒலி உடன் போய்த்,
 தக்க அஞ்சு எழுத்து ஓர் எழுத்து உருவாம்
 தன்மை கண்டு, அருள் தரும் பெரு வெளிக்கே
 புக்கு அழுந்தினர் எமது உருப் பெறுவர்,
 புவியில் வேட்டுவன் எடுத்த மென் புழுப்போல்

Controlling the mind and the senses, stopping the inward and outward breath and carrying it upwards along the Sushumna (spine) with the Music of Divine Motion, fixing the mind steadfastly and contemplating on the Sri Panchaksharam (five letters) and realizing their mergence into one and getting immersed in the enjoyment of Divine Space (Chidambaram), Such is Yogam and those who practise this Sadana are transformed into Our Image, like the worm becoming the wasp.

பரந்த வான்கலை முழுதும் ஆகம நூல்
 பகுதியும் பல சமய சாத்திரமும்
 தெரிந்து தேர்ந்து, அதில் வாய்ந்த முப்பொருளின்
 செய்தியே பொருள் என மனம் தெளிந்து,
 புரிந்து போந்து உள சிற்றறிவு அனைத்தும்
 போக்கி, அவ்வறிவு எனச் சிவ போதம்
 விரிந்து தோன்றும் நெஞ்சு உடைய வித்தகரே
 மேன்மை ஆன நம் மெய்ப் பதம் பெறுவார்.

Learning the expansive Kalas (sciences) and Agamas and various religious books and rating them all at their proper worth after mature consideration and realizing the truth of the Tri Padarthas and getting rid of egotistic knowledge and attaining Siva Gnanam. Such (in brief) is Gnana Sadana and those blessed souls who thus realize Siva Gnanam attain to Our Sacred Feet (Sayujjiyam or final Beatitude).

Contemplation on the Sri Panchaksharam is another important Sadana, a *sine qua non* to the seeker after spirituality. We shall dilate on this in another chapter.

Image worship, what it means

We shall conclude this chapter with a few words regarding image worship, in condemnation of which a good deal has been said by a large number of Western writers and not a few of our own countrymen. This form of worship, is recommended by our teachers and, like all Sadanas, this is only a Sadana and no more, only a means to an end and not the end itself. The image is a form used to represent the Lord. It is not the Lord Himself, who is nameless and formless (ஒரு நாமம் ஓர் உருவம் ஒன்றும் இல்லான்) and who is beyond

the reach of thought, word and the corporeal senses (சொற்பதங் கடந்த தொல்லோன், உள்ளத்து உணர்ச்சியிற் கொள்ளவும் படான், கண்முதற் புலனற் காட்சியும் இல்லோன்).

We read in one of the rare hymns of Ammaiyar (our Mother of Karaikkal):

அன்றும் திரு உருவம் காணுதே ஆட்பட்டேன்
இன்றும் திரு உருவம் காண்கிலேன்—என்றும் தான்
எவ்வுருவோ நும்பிரான். என்பார்கட்கு என் உரைப்பேன்
எவ்வுருவோ நின் உருவம் ஏது.

Then when I became Thy slave, I saw not Thy Holy Form.
Neither have I ever seen It since then even today.

What shall I say to those who ask 'what, Oh! is your Lord's
Form'?

What form is that, my Lord, Thy Holy Form? Oh! what?
please say.

All worship is idolatrous, more or less

The fact is, the Lord's Form cannot be seen objectively. It has to be realized through what is known as 'Pati-Gnanam' (அவன் அருளே கண்ணாகக் காணல்), of which we shall speak at greater length on a future occasion. We shall content ourselves with stating here that all Sadanas and all worship, as practised by all religionists, resolve into forms of idolatry in some form or other. Says our Lord Meykandan:

பாவகமேல் தான் அசத்தாம், பாவநாதிதம் எனில்
பாவகம் ஆம், அன்று என்னில் பாழ்து ஆம்,—பாவகத்தைப்
பாவித்தல் தான் என்னில் பாவகம் ஆம், தன் அருளால்
பாவிப்பது பரம், இல் பாழ்.

If God can be contemplated with the mind, He becomes Asat (or destroyable, as all objects seen by the senses whether external or internal are destroyable). If he is beyond contemplation, He is a sham only (and of no benefit to us.) If He is neither thinkable nor unthinkable He becomes a non-entity. If (you say that) you meditate on the unknowable by assuming (the same as being possessed of certain) attributes, then too He is no more than

a sham. Know that the Supreme Lord is realizable with His Arul (Grace) and hence is not a non entity.

Here we prefer to quote the words of the learned writer we quoted in a previous chapter. Nallaswamipillai comments on this venba and says: "This verse discusses the various conceptions of God by the Yogis, and they are reduced to either mere idols of the human mind or fiction or non-entity, in all which cases the meditation of God will bring us no profit whatever. When the highest conceptions of God in the Yoga philosophy are thus declared to be mere material idols or myths, it need not be pointed out that any representation of the Unknown and Inconceivable by either the eye or the ear or any other human senses will be equally material conceptions and fruitless. This then is our real reason for the objection taken to all forms of idolatry. The religions ordinarily professing hatred of idolatry are based on such narrow philosophic foundations that they simply object to the idols of the eye, namely pictures and statues, &c, but their ordinary conceptions of God conveyed by the language and sound are equally gross and idolatrous. If you object to a male representation of God in gold or marble as your Father and to a worship of the same, why do you call Him 'Our Father' and 'Our Lord' and repeat other names which are mere idols of the ear? and what benefit would it bring you the worship of these mere names? If you object to locate the picture of the eye in a temple, why do you build Him a temple in words and in your mind and say 'Our Father' which art in Heaven? This heaven of your mind is as unreal a representation of God's abode as the temple of the earth. A prayer is a mere word or sound worship, and all our Mantras fall within this category. God can only be and is therefore represented by means of all the human senses, and the mental conceptions simply follow from the sensory conceptions. Of all these, however, the eye and the ear, standing foremost among the most intellectual of the five gateways of knowledge, the symbolic forms of these two senses are deservedly most popular." Here follows an extract from M. Barths' Religions of India: "Sacrifice is only an act of preparation, it is the best of acts but it is

an act and its fruits consequently perishable. Accordingly although whole sections of these treatises (Upanishads) are taken up exclusively with speculations on the rites, what they teach may be summed up in the words of Mundaka Upanishad 'Know the Atman only and away with everything else; it alone is the bridge to immortality.' The Veda itself and the whole circle of sacred science are quite as sweepingly consigned to the second place. The Veda is not the true Brahm, it is only its reflection. And the science of this imperfect Brahm, this Sabda Brahm or Brahm in words is only a science of a lower order. The true science is that which has the true Brahm, the Para Brahm, for its subject."

CHAPTER VII.

'Sri Panchaksharam' and 'Sivohambavana'

Guru and disciple

ONE of the most important 'Sadanas' or means of liberation is what is usually spoken of as 'Sohambavana' or 'Sivohambavana', meditation on the Lord within one's self, Gnana-Yogam. We often see it resorted to by the teacher in imparting wisdom (Gnanam) to his disciple. As is well-known, a disciple is always expected to look upon his Guru as the Lord Himself. Arulnandi Devar for instance refers to his Guru in his Irupah Irupahtu as follows:

கண் நுதலும் கண்டக் கறையும் கரந்தருளி
மண்ணிடையில் மாக்கள் மலம் அகற்றும்—வெண்ணெய் நல்லூர்
மெய்கண்டான் என்று ஒருகால் மேவுவரால் வேறின்மை
கை கண்டார் உள்ளத்திற் கண்.

Concealing the upper eye and jet-black throat the Lord appeared at Tiruvennai Nallur to drive away the (darkness of) Malam from (the hearts of) men. If one contemplates but once on the name of Meykandan he would immediately realize the inseparate Lord within.

The disciple should not even so much as think of the Guru as an ordinary mortal. And a real Guru is expected to be not a make-believe Guru but one who has really seen something of the Light and who has so mastered himself as to be able, for the time being at least, to identify himself with the Deity. This sadana is not an easy thing to practise and is not intended for ordinary people. Only those who are very far advanced in spirituality can successfully practise it and, among others, it is prescribed to no less a personage than a Jivan-Muktan. These Jivan-Muktas are persons who have known the Truth but are still in their bodies owing to the remnants of past Karmam (Piraraptam) not being eaten up, and this Sadana of Sivohambavana is prescribed for them so that they may not be affected by Pasam until the time for complete liberation arrives for, owing to the long association of the soul with Anavam, there still lingers about them what is

called Mala-vasana, similar to the smell that lingers in a pot in which asafetida (பெருங்காயம்) was kept and removed.

Sivohambavana, its underlying principle

Though this Sadana is difficult for us to practise at our present stage, the principle underlying it may be easily comprehended. It consists in thinking of ourselves as Godly by constantly repeating within ourselves 'I am Sivam', 'I am That'. When we suffer from a severe headache for example, by constantly thinking 'Oh, I am all right, I am all right' we actually find that we really get rid of the pain little by little. When a patient is suffering with a severe malady, the physician and our elders would not allow talkative old ladies to speak of the disease as anything serious in the patient's hearing lest the patient be terrified and the malady increase in vigour. "The mind is its own place and in itself can make a heaven of hell, a hell of heaven", what noble words are these which the English poet puts into the mouth of Satan! Every one knows the story of the man who imagined that he had swallowed a frog and would not get cured of his disease. So then the principle of Sivohambavana may thus be in a way conceived.

We read in Siva Gnana Siddhiyar:

கண்ட இவை அல்லேன் நான் என்று அகன்று, காணாக்
கழிபரமும் நான் அல்லேன் எனக் கருதிக், கசிந்த
தொண்டினெடும் உளத்து அவன் தான் நின்ற கலப்பாலே
சோகம் எனப் பாவிக்கத் தோன்றுவன் வேறு இன்றி,
விண் அகலும் மலங்கள் எல்லாம், கருடதிரயானத்தால்
விடம் ஒழியும் அது போல, விமலதையும் அடையும்,
பண்டை மறைகளும் அது நான் ஆனேன் என்று
பாவிக்கச் சொல்லுவது இப் பாவகத்தைக் காணே.

Dissociating himself from the seen world as being not himself and pondering over the fact that he is not the unseen Supreme Para Brahm, if the loving and faithful devotee meditates on Him losing himself in Him and identifying himself with Him in all humility and pure love, the Lord who is ever present with him being in Adwaitha relation reveals Himself and removes the Malam

and makes him pure ; just as the snake - charmer contemplates on Garuda and removes the poison of snake - bite. This Sadana it is which the hoary Vedas teach in the words 'Aham Brahm Asmi' (I am Brahm), &c.

The Divine Seer (Moykanda Devar) speaking about Advaitam incidentally remarks on this point, saying :

அரக்கொடு சேர்த்து அணைத்த அக்கல் போல்
உருக்கி உடங்கு இயைந்து நின்று—பிரிப்பின்றித்
தானே உலகாம தமிழேன் உளம் புகுதல்
யானே உலகு ஈன்பன் இன்று.

Like gold - dust mixed with melted wax, God mixes up with souls and is inseparate from them though different in substance. When He enters within me in my freed state I (identify myself with Him and) say I am the world.

Siva Gnana Muniver explains and comments on the above Venba as follows: அரக்கை உருக்கி அதனோடு சேர்த்து அணைத்த கற்பொடி அவ்வரக்கினோடு ஒன்றாய் ஒருங்கு இயைந்து நீக்கமின்றி நின்றும் போல, முதல்வன் உயிர்களின் ஒருங்கு கூடி நின்று நீக்கமின்றி உடனாகலால், தானேயாம், உலகேயாம், தானே உலகேயாம், அற்றேல் வாமதேவ முனிவன் முதலியோர் யானே உலகெல்லாம் ஆயினேன் எனக் கூறுதலானும், சர்வஞ்ஞானோத்தரத்தில் யானே எல்லாமாய் அல்லனுமாய் உடனுமாய் நின்றேன் என்று உயிர்கள் மேல் வைத்து ஓததலானும், உயிர்களும் இவ்விலக்கணத்தன ஆவான் செல்லும் போலும் எனின்; அம்முதல்வன் பாசக்கூட்டத்தில் நீங்கித் தனியாய் நின்ற என் அகத்துச் சோகம்பாவனையாற் புகுந்து வேற்றுமை இன்றித் தோன்றலால் யானே உலகெல்லாம் என்பேன் ஆயினேன் இம் முத்திகாலத்து, ஆதலின், அதுபற்றி உயிர்களும் அவ்வாறாவான் சேறல் இன்று என்க இவ் வொற்றுமை பற்றி அன்றே அருச்சுனற்குக் கீதை நூல் செவி அறிவுறுத்த கண்ணன் யானே உலகெல்லாம் ஆயினேன் என்றதூஉம், முதல்வனது விசக்வரூபத்தைத் தான் காட்டியதூஉம் ஏனைய வற்றைக் கைவிட்டு என்னையே வழிபடுக என்றதூஉம், அதனை உறுதியாகக் கொண்ட அருச்சுனன் அவன் கூறிய கருத்து நோக்கிச் சாங்காரும் சிவபூசை செய்ததூஉம், கண்ணன் மேல் இட்ட டோதுகள் முதல்வன் திருமுடிமேற் கண்டதூஉம் என்க, கண்ணன் உபமன்னிய முனிபால் சிவநீக்கை உற்றுத் தன்னையும் தலைவனையும் உணர்ந்தோன் ஆதலின் சிவோகம் பாவனையைத் தலைப்

பட்டோன் ஆதல் அறிக. What an example of a Bhaktan here was! and what a Guru! a Bhaktan of Bhaktas Arjunan was, a great devotee of Siva. And yet, when Sri Krishnan told him that he was one with the Lord and bade him perform Siva Puja unto him, how firmly and readily he believed him and acted accordingly! How many such disciples do we find nowadays? How many Gurus?

Sri Krishnan and Arjunan

The allusion of Arjunan performing Siva-puja unto Krishnan refers to the story narrated in Drona Parvam of the Mahabharatam. As is well-known to students of that epic, on the thirteenth day of the battle between the Kurus and the Pandavas, Abimaniyu the valiant and youthful son of Arjunan was slain by a most vile stratagem by Jayatiratan the brother-in-law of Duriyodanan. Arjunan having taken a vow to avenge his son's death by slaying Jayatiratan before sunset the following day, Sri Krishnan at the earnest entreaty of Yuthistiran the righteous, went up that night along with Arjunan to pray to the Lord in His mountain abode and obtain His Blessing. On the way Arjunan fainted through grief, hunger and thirst. His cousin took him up and after restoring him to his senses asked him to eat something. This Arjunan would not do as he had not yet performed Siva-puja as was his wont, and he could not do it now in the middle of the forest as he had not his Sivalingam with him. So he told his comrade (பாவை பங்கள் மேற் புரிந்திலன் இன்னமும் பூசை என்றான்) and Sri Krishnan, who was an adept in Yoga-sadana, finding that his friend could not proceed any further in that state of exhaustion, had recourse to Sivohambavana and told Arjunan that he was one with Siva-peruman and bade him perform Siva-Puja at his feet saying that he would prove that he was one with Siva on reaching Kailasam. Arjunan bathed in an adjoining forest stream and with the flowers of the forest worshipped at the feet of his master, chanting the mantras of the Sivagamam (மாயன் மேல் மனம் ஒன்றியே சிவாகம உரையிற் சாத்தினான்). Then he tasted of the dainties presented by his friend and the two great souls are said to have gone their way. And when they saw the Lord at Sri Kailasam, lo! and behold! there were the

flowers at the Feet of Siva, exactly as Arjunan had placed them at the feet of his Guru.

Siva - Dikshai

From the last sentence of the long extract given above from Siva Gnana Muniver's commentary on Siva Gnana Bodham we learn that Sivohambavana is possible only to those who have received Siva - Diksha, i. e., who have got intiated into the Truth at the hands of a competent Guru and know both themselves and the Lord. The story of Sri Krishnan receiving Siva - Diksha is told in Kurma Puranam. Krishnan as is well - known was a great Bhakten. He it was that in a former birth, finding one day that there was one flower short and that he was in the predicament of breaking his vow to worship the Lord with a thousand flowers daily, plucked out one of his lotus flower - resembling eyes and performed Puja with it. Well, this Krishnan it appears had failed to get himself initiated in due course, but had established a Sivalingam and was performing Puja daily. One day the disciples of the great Rishi Upamaniya Munivar went and told him that flowers were scarce. He directed them to the place where the flowers used by Krishnan were dumped. These were fetched and with them the Rishi performed his Puja. Now this went on for some time, the prince procuring flowers from distant parts of his realm and using them in his worship and the Rishi then getting these flowers fetched and using them anew in his devotions. After a time, having noticed what was going on, Krishna's servants went and told their master. Krishnan felt his vanity wounded and went to the Rishi to demand an explanation for the insult, for, it is a Shastric rule that flowers once used in worship could not be used again. But, once he got into the sacred presence of the Rishi, his vanity fled. The Rishi calmly told him how his puja was no Puja, he not having received Siva - Diksha from a competent Guru and his flowers could not therefore be considered as having been once used. Krishnan is then said to have begged for and obtained initiation into the Truth from Upamaniyu Muniver. Sri Krishnan then began Siva-puja anew and, later on, became the Guru and Master of his cousin and companion Arjunan. This story is briefly told in a slightly modified

form in the Vayu-Samhita. It is also found in Anusasanika Parvam of the Mahabharatam. And Sekklar Nayanar refers to Upamaniya Maha Muniver in his Periya-Puranam as யாதவன் துவரைக்கு இறையாகிய மாதவன் முடிமேல் அடிவைத்தவன், he who placed his feet on the head of Madhavan, the Yathava chief of Duwarakai.

Sri Panchaksharam

The Mantiram imparted by the Guru to the disciple at the time of Siva Dikshai or initiation into the Truth is Sri Panchaksharam (literally the Five Sacred Letters), the central Mantiram of the Vedas. What these letters are and how to contemplate on them have to be learnt from the Guru in the prescribed manner. We may however state for the benefit of our readers, to enable them to form a rough idea as to their import, that they represent (1) God, (2) Sakti (or God's Grace), (3) Soul, (4) Tirotai (or God's concealing power which helps the Malas to act) and (5) Malam.....
 ஈசன் அருள் ஆனி எனில் ஆர்திரோதம் மலம், ஆசில் எழுத்து அஞ்சின் அடைவாம் thus we read in Unmai Vilakkam, and in Tiru Arut Payan ஊனநடனம் ஒருபால் ஒரு பாலாம், ஞானநடம் தான நடுவே நாடு (Know that the soul stands in the centre with Malam and Tirotai which cause births on one side and Sivam and Sakti who grant enlightenment on the other). Steadfast contemplation on the Sri Panchaksharam would result in the shedding of the ensnaring Malam and Tirotai in due course. The five letters then become three and the soul is gradually led by Sakti into Sivam. The Mahavakias 'Tat Twam Asi', &c. are identical in meaning with the Sri Panchaksharam reduced to three letters. 'Tat' stands for God, 'Twam' is the soul and 'asi' is the connecting link or Sakti. Contemplation on the Sri Panchaksharam is thus found to be identical with the practice of Sivohambavana described earlier in this chapter.

The Central Mantiram of the Vedas

Further elaboration of the subject is impossible before initiation under the guidance of a competent Guru, but we may add a few words to enable sincere and earnest seekers after truth to silence scoffers who are in the ascendant

nowadays. Before attempting this we may repeat as a prelude that the Sri Panchaksharam forms the central Mantiram of the Vedas, being found just in the middle of the Yajur Vedam;

மும்மறையுள் நடுமறையில் முனிவில் எழு காண்டத்தில்
செம்மை தரும் நடுக்காண்டம் சேர்ந்த எழு சங்கிதையில்
அம்ம நடுச்சங்கிதையில் ஆதி ஈறு ஒழித்து நடுப்
பொம்மல் உற அமர் மனுவின் பொருள் ஆவான் எவன் மைந்த.

Who, 'oh! son, is He that is indicated in the Mantiram nicely seated in the centre of the central Samhita out of the seven Samhitas of the central Kandam out of the seven Kandas of the central Vedam of the three Vedas!

Samasti and Viyasti Pranavam

These five letters are generally described as synonymous with the 'Viyasti Pranavam' (or manifested Pravanam), the mystic syllable Omkaram, which is always uttered before and after every Mantiram, being known as the 'Samasti Pranavam' (or unmanifested Pranavam). This Omkaram is of the form of 'Natham' (literally sound), the prime or first product evolved in the process of creation or (we should rather say) evolution. This mystic syllable is generally expanded into the letters A, U, M, Vinthu (th ir form) and Natham (their sound) and these represent respectively (1) the soul, (2) Tirotai, (3) Malam, (4) Sakti and (5) Sivam. இறை சத்தி பாசம் எழில் மாயை ஆவி, உறகிற்கும் ஓங்காரத்துள், so we read in Tiru Arut Payan. The mystic Omkaram thus analysed is known as the 'Viyasti Pranavam' and it will be seen that its significance as thus analysed is identical with the import of the Sri Panchaksharam, only the order of the letters is different, 'Sivam' standing at the top, 'soul' in the middle and 'Malam' at the end in the Sri Panchaksharam. It seems unnecessary to tax the minds of our readers by dilating here at greater length on the functions of these letters in relation to the Antakaranas (mind, &c), their presiding Deities, &c.

Some Scoffers

Professor Max Muller the famous oriental scholar who has done more than any other single European scholar to

popularise the teachings of the Vedas and Vedantas in the West by his voluminous publications (—though it is mostly the Ekanmavada phase of them,—) speaks very highly of the truths therein taught. He says that there are nuggets of gold in these Hindu Shastras which would amply repay persual but that in the midst of so much corn there is also much chaff and instances the great prominence given to the Omkara syllable in these Shastras as a glaring example in proof of his qualifying statement. No wonder then that some of our English-educated young men who depend on English translations and other writings of these scholars for their knowledge of Vedic Hinduism are so sceptic as they are and scoff at these Mantras. These oriental scholars with all their learning of, and admiration for, these Sanscrit works are still in their heart of hearts the adherents of an alien religion with preconceived ideas and, if we bear in mind that peculiar characteristic of the soul which we dealt with in a previous chapter (அது அது ஆதல் or சார்ந்ததன் வண்ணமாதல்) which makes it difficult for it to get away from its prepossessions, we can easily understand their inability to appreciate the secret behind these Mantras. We have ample evidence of the efficacy of certain Mantras in curing physical and mental ills of some varieties and we should not reject the efficacy of this Prince of Mantras known as Pranavam or Sri Panchaksharam on such hearsay evidence of foreigners. We should rather prefer to trust to the evidence of our own saints and teachers who saw something of the real Truth than to the opinions of these aliens till we ourselves become capable of understanding them both by learning and by actual practice after due initiation into the Truth (Siva-Dikshai).

What the Saints say

Our Tamil Tiru-Murais (sacred books) simply teem with praises of this Mantiram. We would just give one or two quotations only and proceed :

காதலாகிக் கசிந்து கண்ணீர் மல்கி
ஓதுவார் தமை நல் நெறிக்கு உய்ப்பதும்
வேதம் நான்கினும் மெய்ப்பொருள் ஆவதும்
நாதன் நாமம் நமச்சிவாயவே. (Devaram)

With melted hearts and eyes in tears
Who utters it it leads to heav'n,
The Truth proclaimed in all four Ved's
That's NaMaSiV&Ya Lord's name.

அஞ்செழுத்தால் ஐந்து பூதம் படைத்தனன்
அஞ்செழுத்தாற் பல யோனி படைத்தனன்
அஞ்செழுத்தால் இவ் அகல் இடம் தாங்கினன்
அஞ்செழுத்தாலே அமர்ந்து நின்றானே, (Tirumantiram)

With the Five Letters did He create the Pancha Bhutas,
With the Five Letters did He create the diff'rent Yonies,
With the Five Letters did He support the wide world,
With the Five Letters did the Lord stand firm.

அஞ்செழுத்தே ஆகமமும் அண்ணல் அருமறையும்
அஞ்செழுத்தே ஆதி புராணம் அனைத்தும்—அஞ்செழுத்தே
ஆனந்த தாண்டவமும் அப்பாலைக்கு அப்பாலாம்
மோனந்த மாமுத்தியும். (Unmai Vilakkam)

The Five Letters form th' Agamas and Vedas rare,
The Five Letters form the Puranas all of yore,
The Five Letters form Siva's Dance of Ecstasy
And th' far far off unceasing calm called Mukti Free.

These quotations are made by way of example. The whole of our Saiva literature in Tamil, Devaram, Tiruvachagam, Tiru-Isaippa, &c., simply resounds with praises of the Sri Panchaksharam, not to speak of the literature in the Sanscrit to which Max Muller himself has borne testimony. The great Manicka Vachagar commences his Tiruvachagam with this Mantiram: நமச்சிவாய வாழ்க..... (Blessed be the Namasivaya). Meykandan says in the 9th Sutram of Siva Gnana Bodham:விதி எண்ணும் அஞ்செழுத்தே and expands this brief injunction thus: இனி இவ்விடத்து ஸ்ரீ பஞ்சாக்கரத்தை விதிப்படி உச்சரிக்க என்றது (contemplate on the Sri Panchaksharam in the prescribed manner). And in Siddhiyar we read:.....பின்னும், ஓசைதரும் அஞ்செழுத்தை விதிப்படி உச்சரிக்க உள்ளத்தே புகுந்து அளிப்பன் ஊனம் எலாம் ஓட (If again you contemplate on the Five Letters as laid down, the Lord will enter your heart and drive away all your impurities).

Reply to scoffers

It seems unnecessary to labour the point further. We would just quote one stanza from Kanda Puranam and conclude:

தாமரைக் கெலாம் ஆதியும் அந்தமும் சொல்லும்
 ஓம் எனப்படும் ஓரெழுத்து உண்மையை உணரான்
 மாமலர்ப்பெரும் கடவுளும் மயங்கினான் என்றால்
 நாம் இனிச்சில அறிந்தனம் என்பது நகையே,

If the great Brahma himself who dwells on the lotus got confused being unable to fathom the secret of the incomparable syllable 'Aum' which is uttered at the beginning and at the end of all the Vedas, it is indeed a (huge) joke to pretend that we too know something (of it).

We refrain from dilating on the connected Puranic story here, Suffice it to say and state the moral that it would indeed be a wonder of wonders if Max Muller and others of his ilk understood or appreciated the Pranava symbol at its true worth or stated that it was anything else than chaff, empty husk devoid of any grain of truth within it. Where Brahma (the Creative Agent) himself got confused, we cannot expect lesser mortals to understand.

Mahavakias meant for Sadana

From what we have said above some idea as to what the contemplation of Sri Panchaksharam or Sivohambavana is can be formed. It is one of the means of attaining liberation and though it is never too early to make a start with it in true earnest, successful practice is only possible to the more advanced student. The great mistake which some people commit consists in this: When they see such words as 'Tattwamasi', 'Ahambrahmasmi', &c. they at once jump into the conclusion that it is the absolute truth that is therein taught and nothing else. They fail to realise that the same words or sets of words do not always convey exactly the same ideas. Words have to be interpreted and understood according to the context. Otherwise there is always the possibility of our seeing red everywhere and finding contradictions in the Sruties where as a matter of fact there are

no contradictions. We have always to be on the alert and guard against mistaking what is taught as a Sadana as constituting an item of proof. If in actuality thou are That, what is this teaching intended for? Who is it that teaches it? And to whom does the teacher teach it? In short, what is the purpose which the Vedas (and all the Shastras) serve? As we had occasion to say in a previous chapter these are awkward questions to answer. But the difficulty vanishes the moment you take them in their proper light. C. f. the contemplation of the Pancha Koshas (Annamaya Kosha, Pranamaya Kosha, Mano-maya Kosha, Vignanamaya Kosha, and Ananda-maya Kosha) taught in the Taittiriya Upanishad. No student of the Upanishads would assert that the Upanishad really teaches that the soul is the body itself or that it is the breath or the mind, &c. These are all meant as Sadana, as means to an end. They are not the end itself. Even so is the contemplation on the Sri Panchaksharam or Sivohambavana taught in the Mahavakias*. These Mahavakias are meant for Sadana, Sadana only and nothing else.



*For further notes on the Aumkaram and the Mahavakias the reader is referred to Saiva Paripalana Sabha Publication No. 56 (Vedanta Moolasaram, Chapters IV, Atharva Sikha Upanishad, V, Mandukya Upanishad, XXI Chandogya Upanishad, Sixth Adhyayam, &c.)

CHAPTER VIII.

The Siddhanta Shastras and Other Sacred Books

In the Sanscrit,—Vedas, Agamas, &c.

THE Saiva Siddhantam, as we have seen, is based on the Saiva Agamas as well as the Vedas. There is a large number of works subsidiary to these in the Sanscrit. The Vedas are four in number and include, of course, the Upanishads which are also known as Vedantas. Then there are the Puranas, whose number is given as 18; the Itihikasas, of which there are three; and the Smiritis, of which 18 are mentioned; besides a large number of other treatises on religion, philosophy, ethics, &c. The Sivagamas are numbered 28 and there are 207 Upagamas subsidiary to them. Many of these works are considered to be lost; at least for all intents and purposes at the present day they may be so considered, being not available. A good many of them, provided they are not moth-eaten or destroyed by white ants, may be found hidden amongst the hoardings of the more longstanding families of our priesthood. A very large number of them may be found in the famous Athinams (or Mutts) at Tiruvavaduturai, Tarumapuram and other places. A few have appeared in print with Tamil renderings. Amongst these are Mrigendra Agamam and Poushkara Agamam, both Upagamas and both most useful books which would amply repay perusal. On the latter of these, an excellent commentary is said to have been composed by Umapathiyar, but the one published is with a Tamil summary of a commentary by Guanapragasar of Jaffna.

In the Tamil,—Devaram, Tiruvachakam, &c.

In the Tamil, corresponding to the Vedas, are the Devaram and Tiruvachagam, also called the Tamil Vedas, which are the sacred utterances of the four great Masters of Religion TiruGnanaSampanthar, Appar, Sundarar and ManickaVachagar. Into the lives and works of these great Masters, we cannot enter here, as they by themselves would form sufficient material for a number of lessons like this. Suffice it to say here, such is the fervour and inspiration they instil in our hearts when sung that even persons of other schools and creeds

view them with respect and reverence. But it is to the Saiva Siddhanti that they specially appeal. So great is his veneration for them that even if he were to question the Word of the Lord he will not dare to find fault with the words of these great Masters of Religion. A large number of Devarams is now lost. The original number of Pathigams is said to have been 102,000. Of these, what remain to us now are only 797.

The Saiva Tiru-Murais

With the Devaram and Tiruvachagam should be mentioned the other sacred books contained in the twelve Saiva-Tiru-Murais (சைவத்திருமுறைகள்) or canonised Sacred Books of the Saivas. The Devarams constitute the first seven of these books. The Tiruvachagam and Tiru-Kovaiyar of Manikka-Vachagar form the eighth book. The Tiru-Isaippa and Tiru-Pallandu of nine different saints (Tiru-Malikai-Devar and others) constitute the ninth book. The tenth book is the Tiru-Mantiram, the 3,000 stanzas of which Tirumoolar is said to have given out to the world in 3,000 years as a result of actual realization, being engaged in deep meditation and Yogam and uttering one stanza every time he woke up from his Samadhi which (waking up) he did once in a year. The eleventh book consists of the Tiru-Mukap-Pasuram of Tiru-Alavai-Udayar and poems by Karaikkal Ammaiyar, Aiyadigal Kadavarkone, Seraman Perumal, Nakkirar, Kallader, Kapilar, Paranan, Ilam-Peruman-Adigal, Athira-Adigal, Pattinattu-Adigal and Nampi-Andar Nampi, the last mentioned of whom it was that compiled these eleven books in their present order. The Periya Puranam of Seklar was afterwards added to make up the twelfth book, and it is very useful to the student of Siddhanta philosophy as furnishing him with clear illustrations of the various truths he comes across in the persons of the great devotees and saints whose lives it depicts in clear and beautiful language. These poems are all very fascinating and are calculated to inspire feelings of love and veneration in the heart of the loving devotee, besides presenting pearls of Truth to the enquiring student.

The Siddhanta Shastras

Corresponding to the Saiva Agamas are the fourteen Siddhanta Shastras. Of these the Siva Gnana Bodham is the

most important. It consists of twelve Sutras, and the original is in the Sanscrit. It is to be found in the Pasa Vimosana Padalam of the Raurava Agamam. This, the Divine Seer, Meykanda Devar of Tiru-Vennai-Nallur, gave to the Tamil world with his own commentary, dividing every Sutram into separate theses or propositions (Atikarānas) and adding illustrations in verses of Venba metre. On this work of the Divine Seer, the famous Siva Gnana Muniver of Tiruvavadaturai Athinam wrote two commentaries, one of which is short and the other, known as the Dravida Maha Bhashiyam, is a voluminous and most valuable work and was till recently kept unpublished in the Athinam. This Bhashiyam (or at least the grater part of it) is now available in print. Next in importance and authority to the Siva Gnana Bodham is the Siva Gnana Siddhi, composed by Arulnandi Devar of Tirutturaiyur, the foremost of the disciples of the great Meykanda Devar. This work which we have taken up for study we shall dilate on at some length shortly. Arulnandi Devar also composed another treatise called Irupah-Irupahtu, which consists of 20 verses in two different metres and in which the author addresses certain very abstruse questions on our philosophy and religion to his master in such a style that the answers are quite apparent. Manavasakam Kadanthar of Tiruvathikai, a co-disciple of Arulnandi Devar, composed Unmaivilakkam, in which the various Tatwas are very vividly explained. Arulnandi Devar had a disciple by the name of Marai Gnana Sampanthar of Tirukkadantai whose disciple Umapathi Devar of Kottavan Kudi became the author, amongst much else, of the eight works Sivaprakasam, Tiruvarudpayan, Vinavenba, Pottipahrodai, Kodikkavi, Nenchuviduthoothu, Unmaineri Vilakkam and Sankatpa Nirakaranam, the first mentioned of which (Sivaprakasam) is the most important. This treatise follows practically the same plan of work as its predecessors, the Siva Gnana Bodham and Siva Gnana Siddhi, and may very well be put down as a supplement to the study of those two works. The two remaining works Tiru Unthiyar and Tiru-Kalitu-Padiyar stand rather apart. They are both anterior in date to the Tamil Siva Gnana Bodham. Tiru-Unthiyar is by Uyyavantha Devar of Tiruviyalur who is said to have come from the north. The author of Tiru-Kalittu Padiyar is Uyyavantha Devar of TiruKadavur,

the disciple of the author of the preceding work (or, the disciple of Aludaya Devar who was the disciple of the author of Tiru - Unthiyar, as some say). The relation of Tiru - Kalittu - Padiyar to Tiru - Unthiyar is similar to that of Siddhiyar to Siva Gnana Bōdham.

Based on the Vedas and Agamas

These fourteen Siddhanta Shastras together with the twelve Saiva - Tiru - Murais abovementioned form the rock - bed of Saiva Siddhantam in the Tamil language, and they are based on the Vedas and the Agamas which are in Sanscrit. This is the orthodox view accepted by all without question till about half a century ago, when a new socio - political upheaval known as the non - brahmin movement made its appearance in South India. This as we hinted in a previous chapter was the natural outcome of the overbearing attitude of the majority of the brahmins towards the bulk of the Tamil population of South India. Almost contemporaneously with this non - brahmin movement or shortly afterwards there started a parallel religio - literary movement (headed by an esteemed Tamil scholar who was formerly a Mission school teacher) This latter movement was no doubt prompted primarily by hatred of the brahmins and love for the Tamil language, but it was also fanned on by Missionary and other anti - Hindu influences. Without wasting time by dilating further on the genesis of these movements we may straight - away mention that this new school of thought repudiated all Sanscritic authority.*

Vedanta Sutras, — Bhagavat - Gita

We should not omit to touch here on two more Sanscrit works of some note, to wit:—the Vedanta Sutras and the Bhagavat Gita. Veda Viyasar, who like Sri Krishnar and Gautama Buddhar is generally reputed to be an - Avatar (அவதாரம், incarnation) of Vishnu and who rearranged the four Vedas in their present form, composed among others the Vedanta Sutras as a sort of compendium of the Upanishads.

* Readers who desire to pursue the matter further are referred to the Sabhai Publication No. 57 (The Genesis of the Siva Gnana Bodham).

He is also the author of the Maha Bharatham, towards the middle of which great epic is placed the dialogue between Sri Krishnan and Arjunan known as the Bhagavat Gita. We have already had occasion to say something regarding the greatness of these two great souls. The Gita happened to be the first great Sanscritic work we studied. Of course it was not in the original but in English translations that we read it like any other ordinary English-educated Tamilian. The burden of Sri Krishna's song that one should do his duty without looking to the fruits thereof made a great impression on us and was the guiding star of our official life extending to a period of close on forty years. This teaching is practically the same as St. Appar's maxim *என் கடன் பணி செய்து கிடப்பதே* and the Irai Pani Nitral (*இறை பணி நிற்றல்*) of the Siva Gnana Bodham.

Gita and Tamilakam

But unlike the Vedanta Sutras which have a Saiva Bhashiyam as we had occasion to say in a previous chapter the Gita has no such commentary (—if any exist, we have not had the good fortune to see it—) and it has only had a mixed reception in Tamilakam. There are two widely divergent opinions regarding its message and the occasion on which it was delivered. Sri Krishnan, the great Yogi and saint that he was, was also a great politician and diplomat, a greater diplomat than any other the world has seen, ancient or modern, to judge from his achievements. Sri Krishnan had a set purpose to achieve: *நீ பாரத அமரில் யாவரையும் நிரூக்கிப், பூ பாரம் தீர்க்கப் புரிந்தாய் புயல் வண்ணு.....* so we read in the Mahabharatam, also..... *பூதல மாது இடர் தீர அரும்சமர் புரிதொழில் முற்றிய பின், சீதர கின்பதம் மேவுக என்று அருள் செய்து விடுத்தனனே.* And he did not scruple to deviate from what to others appeared to be the straight path when the need arose. He did not scruple to suggest that Arjunan was a coward—Arjunan who was filled with real pity and remorse at the thought of the carnage he was to cause including the slaughter of some of his highly respected and venerable elders, not to speak of other near and dear relatives and friends. He did not scruple to handle his favourite discus (*சக்கரம்*) during the war treating his promise to Duriyodhanan (that

he would not touch any weapon) in scrap-of-paper-like fashion. He did not scruple to prevail upon Yudhistiran the embodiment of virtue, truth and patience to tell a half-truth though the latter protested (பொய்யினால் ஆள்வது இந்தப் புவி கொலோ என்று நக்கான்). He did not scruple to suggest to Bhiman to hit Duriyodhanan below the belt to gain his object. We shall say no more. It is no wonder if the Pandavas themselves with all their love and reverence for Sri Krishnan were forced to exclaim that no one could equal the subtleties of gods like him (இமையோர்கள் வல்ல விரகு யார் வல்லாரே), and it is no wonder certainly if some Siddhanta writers felt and gave expression to their conviction that the sermon on the battlefield was intended to deceive the brave but saintly warrior Arjunan, and placed it on a par with or only a little higher than the Buddha's teachings as adumbrated in the Tri-Pitakas (which have a background not acceptable to the Saivas though they contain some excellent teachings at the same time.) The verdict may be a correct one or it may be an incorrect verdict like that of St. Viranmindar against St. Sundarar or, better still, like that of St. Kalikkamer (ஏயர் கோள் கலிக்காம நாயனார்) who felt that St. Sundarar had done an improper thing in employing his God (the Servant of his servants) as an errand boy and preferred to die rather than have anything to do with "the sinner" Sundarar.* Our teachers have never shrunk from giving expression to their convictions in unmistakable terms and calling a spade a spade if the occasion demanded it, though they were in the vanguard of the torch-bearers of the ideas of unity in variety and toler-

* We hope we shall not be misunderstood. We are not here condemning the actions either of Sundarar or of Krishnar. All that we mean to say is that there is an "another side" to the picture in both cases and that the critics acted bona-fide and as a result of their honest and sincere conviction looking at their actions from that "another side".

Our esteem and regard for Sri Krishnar will be quite apparent even to the most casual reader from the references made to him and his teachings elsewhere in this book and in our "Notes on the Bhagavat Gita".

As regards the apparent incongruities in the life of St. Sundarar our readers will find the matter discussed at some length in our "Study of the Svetavatara Upanishad".

ance towards other creeds which they considered to be but different paths towards the same goal.

Other works in Tamil.—Tiru-Kural

As we have already stated, the fourteen Siddhanta Shastras together with the twelve Saiva-Tiru-Mursis form the rock-bed of Saiva Siddhantam in the Tamil language, and they are based on the Vedas and Agamas which are in Sanscrit. Besides these there is a large number of other works such as Saiva Samaya Neri, Olivilodukkam, Gnanamirtham, Sivatharumoththiram, Kanda Puranam, Koyil Puranam, the works of Arunagirinathar, KumaraGuru Parar, Thayumanavar, &c, &c, which are all very instructive. Then there are the many ethical treatises beginning with the simple aphoristic sayings of Auvvaiyar and ending with the Muppai of Tiru-Valluvar,—the famous Tiru-Kural, in speaking of which Dr. Pope says: "In this great and ancient language there exists, amongst much else that is interesting and valuable, an ethical treatise not surpassed (as far as I know) by anything of the kind in any literature."

CHAPTER IX

Siddhiyar and its Author

அறுவகைச் சமயத்தோர்க்கும் அவ்வவர் பொருளாய், வேறும் குறியது உடைத்தாய், வேதா கமங்களின் குறி இறந்து, அங்கு அறிவினில் அருளால் மன்னி, அம்மையோடு அப்பன் ஆகிச், செறிவு ஒழியாது நின்ற சிவன் அடி. சென்னி வைப்பாம்,

The beauties of Siddhiyar

THE Siva Gnana Siddhi commences with the usual invocation to Pillaiyar. The second verse which we have quoted above is in praise of Siva Peruman and is a fitting preface to the treatise as it gives a brief indication of the subject matter of the whole book. The first line shews its catholicity or spirit of toleration towards other creeds or, shall we say, its all-comprehensive nature. The next line வேறும் குறியது உடைத்தாய் வேதாகமங்களின் குறி இறந்து shews its transcendence over all and the incomprehensibility of the Supreme Lord through Pasa Gnanam or worldly knowledge. The last two lines tell us of His immanence in all nature, both animate (Pasu) and inanimate (Pasam), His Arul or Grace and His Fatherhood and Motherhood of the world, implying the Pancha kritiyas or fivefold acts of the Lord (Pati) designed for the salvation of souls (Pasu). Siva Gnana Munivar dives deeper and shews how the subject matter of Parapaksham (other creeds), the Pothu or Thadatha Lakshanam, பொது அல்லது தடத்தலக்கணம், relative nature of the Tri-Padarthas (Pati, Pasu Pasam) described in the first five Sutras of Supaksham, the Siva Sorupa Lakshnam of the sixth Sutram, the Atma Sorupa Lakshnam of the seventh Sutram, the Gnana Dharsanam (literally knowledge-vision) of the eighth Sutram, the knowledge (Gnanam) the knower (Gnathru) and the known (Gneyam) of the ninth Sutram, the Irai Pani Nittal (இறை பணி நின்றல், action without attachment) of the tenth Sutram, the attainment of the Goal of the eleventh Sutram and the nature of the Sanctified of the twelfth Sutram are implied in the phraseology of this verse. He also reads into it the six (or eight) Divine attributes of Omnipotence, Omniscience, &c.

We may here mention, by the way, that Siddhiyar is the most numerously annotated book in Tamil. There are six

recognised commentaries which have appeared in print. The earliest commentary extant is by Marai Gnana Desikar. Sivagra Yogi's is a long and learned commentary with copious quotations from the Agamas and other Shastras. The commentaries of Gnanapragasar (of Jaffna), Nirambavalagiyar and Siva Gnana Munnivar are comparatively shorter. Subramaniya Desigar's commentary is a word for word one (பதவுரை) closely following Siva Gnana Munnivar. Several publications of Siddhiyar have appeared in recent years with commentaries by learned scholars, but these follow Siva Gnana Munnivar more or less and add their own notes, some of which are very copious indeed and a help to the student in understanding the sublime truths contained in the text. There is also an English translation of Siddhiyar with notes by Nallaswami-pillai.

Its logical methods and systematic planning

After a few more prefatory verses, in which amongst much else, our author states that this book is not intended for those spiritually advanced souls who happen to be reborn in this world for particular purposes nor for the indolent and the ignorant (and, shall we add, the indifferent and the perverse), but for the benefit of the enquiring student anxious to know the Truth and reach the Goal, there follows a chapter on Alavai (அளவை) or different kinds of proof, logical methods, Siddhiyar is a logically arranged treatise employing strictly logical proofs to establish the sublime truths that it preaches, and Arulnandi Devar does not want to take things for granted, even in the matter of the methods of proof he adopts. So, he gives a synopsis of these as a preliminary to the study of his main work. Siddhiyar stands almost unique in this respect, as indeed it does in many others, in Tamil literature, and has but few parallels even in the Sanscrit or, for the matter of that, in any other language.

Parapaksham and Supaksham,—Tolerance towards other creeds

Siddhiyar is broadly divisible into two parts, Parapaksham (the other side) and Supaksham (our own side, and to these is prefixed the chapter on Alavai referred to above. Parapaksham contains a critical review of 14 systems of philosophy begin-

ning with Lokayatam and ending with Pancharatiram, and may very well be put down as a fitting introduction to the main work, Supaksham, which contains a detailed account of the Saiva Siddhanta religion and philosophy. And herein lies another great beauty of Siddhiyar. There is no book on the face of the Earth but it has some statements to make and others to condemn, opinions to advance and prejudices to combat, righteousness to uphold and malpractices to put down, truths to declare and deception to denounce, &c. Writers generally prefer the more easy-going process. They are content to meet objections casually as they occur and in a half-hearted manner. Our author, on the other hand, is more systematic. He displays more method. He employs a better plan. To begin with, he deals with his antagonists one by one. First he takes up Lokayatam. He first states the Lokayata's case in a succinct form, as he knew him in his day. Then he takes up his (the Lokayata's) arguments and refutes them one by one regularly. Having disposed of the Lokayatan, he ascends a step higher and takes up the Chautthrantika's (Buddhist) case and deals with it similarly. and so on, till the end. From our author's severe criticism of these schools of philosophy, it should not for a moment be supposed that he would have them swept off the face of the Earth. Far from it. They may not be of use to him, but there are hosts of others who may be in need of them. And our author knows this only too well. For, is it not he that says:

ஓது சமயங்கள் பொருள் உணரும் நூல்கள்
ஒன்றோடு ஒன்று ஒவ்வாமல் உள பலவும், இவற்றுள்
யாது சமயம் பொருள் நூல் யாது இங்கு என்னில்,
இது ஆகும் அது அல்லது எனும் பிணக்கது இன்றி
நீதியினால் இவை எல்லாம் ஓர் இடத்தே காண
நின்றது யாது ஒரு சமயம் அது சமயம்.....?

Religions and religious books there are many in this world differing from one another. The peerless religion is that which reconciles their differences and comprises all and every faith in its broad folds. What higher ideal could there be of toleration and religious freedom!

A garland of praises

Great is the adoration with which the Siva Gnana Siddhi, 'the bulkiest and most learned of the Tamil Shastras,' has been hailed by the wise. வள்ளுவர் நூல் அன்பர்மொழி வாசகம் தொல்காப்பியமே, தென்னு பரிமேலழகன் செய்த உரை — ஒள்ளிய சீர்த், தொண்டர் புராணம் தொகு சித்தி ஓராறும், தண்டமிழின் மேலாம் தரம் says Umapathiyar, placing it side by side with such standard works as Tiruvachagam, Tirukkural, &c. பார் விரித்த நூலெல்லாம் பார்த்தறியச் சித்திதனின், ஓர் விருத்தப் பாதி போதும் says Gnana Sampanther the founder of Tharumapura Athinum in his Sivabhogasaram. (Half a stanza of Siddhiyar is enough to understand all the vast lore of this world). And following him, says Thayumanavar: பாதி விருத்தத்தால் இப்பார் விருத்தமாக உண்மை, சாதித்தார் பொன்னடியைத் தான் பணிவது எந்நாளோ. There is another well-known saying சிவனுக்குமேற் றெய்வாரில்லைச், சித்திக்கு மேற் சாத்திரம் இல்லை (Just as there is no God superior to Sivan, so there is no Shastram greater than the Shiddhi). Nirambavalagier calls it மைகண்டம் மேவும் பெருமான் அடியை மருளி அருள், கைகண்டு உணரும் சிவஞான சித்திக்கடல் (the sea of Siva Gnana Siddhi to be understood with the Divine Grace of the Lord with the jet-black throat). அருமறை ஆதிகள் அனைத்தும் அன்பத் தொன்றும் அக்கரத்துள் அடங்கிய வாரும் அது என்னத், தரு விதை யுள் அடங்கியது ஓர் தன்மை என்னச் சாற்று சிவாகாபப் பொருள் கள் தன்னை எல்லாம், திரு முனிவர் சிவஞான சித்தி என்றே செப் பினர் says Sivagra Yogi the commentator. (In the same way that the Vedas are comprised under the 51 aksharas (letters) and as the tree is contained in the seed, even so is the gist of all the Agamas brought out by the excellent teacher in the Siva Gnana Siddhi).

And well are these praises merited. Siddhiyar as Nalla-swamipillai observes 'stands as the bulkiest and most learned contribution in the field of philosophy in the vast Tamil, and will bear comparison in that respect with the best production in Sanscrit,' Siddhiyar and its predecessor Siva Gnana Bodham are 'two works which have been rarely paralleled even in Sanscrit'. They have their source in the Agamas, the original Sanscrit, but the mode of handling of the subject is indeed truly original. Well has it been said

of Tamil writers that "though they have borrowed largely from Sanscrit, the subject receives altogether an independent and original treatment... No doubt gold from Sanscrit source is taken but before it becomes current coin it receives the stamp or impress of the Tamil writers' genius." In short, the Tamilian never copies but he adapts. And to no work could these words be said to apply with more appropriateness than to Siddhiyar. The lucidity of expression, the elaborate treatment of the subject, the closeness of reasoning and the vastness of erudition displayed herein by our author are indeed something marvellous. The careful student will notice how intricate and often ingenious are the points raised and how nice and to the point are the replies given. Innumerable are the puzzling questions in the problem of life which our author has solved for us. And to the opponent, he is indeed a terror and a scourge. In short, as an ordinary treatise, speaking from a purely logical and literary point of view, Siddhiyar may safely be said to have but few equals. And spiritually, to the sincere and sympathetic it is a source of the greatest solace. The definitions given, the proofs, and the descriptions, the paths described and Sadanas unfolded, the Goal aimed at and those that reach it, all these and else must be duly learnt, carefully thought over and truly understood. To such indeed the Goal is by.

Sakala-Agama-Panditar, the high caste Brahmin

The author of Siddhiyar is the second of the Saiva Santana Achariyas (Hereditary Teachers of the Saivas). He lived at Tirutthuraiyur in that part of Tamilakam known as Nadu.Nadu (or middle country) where once appeared the Great Masters Appar and Sundarar. He was a Brahmin of the highest order, an Adi-Saivan. A great philosopher he was and the terror of his day. Deeply learned he was in the Vedas and other Shastras, and the number of his students and disciples was very large. So great indeed were his attainments in philosophic and religious lore that he was known as Sakala-Agama-Panditar (most learned in all the Agamas).

Meykanda-Devar, the Vellala Child.

Now, there lived in the same country in the village of Tiruppennakadam, a family disciple (Seeshan) of this great Brahmin, a Vellalan by the name of Atchutan (or Atchuta Kalappalar) who had settled down as a householder. Atchutan was blessed with all sorts of worldly requirements, he had wealth in abundance, and lands, and cattle, and friends, &c; but there was one thing wanting to make his home happy. He was childless. Greatly aggrieved at his misfortune, he approached his family Guru (Purohitar) Sakalagama Panditar and related to him his miserable plight for want of a son. Sakalagama Panditar having considered the matter ever very carefully is said to have comforted his disciple, reading out a Davaram from the sacred utterances of the Divine Child (TiruGnana Sampanthar) and explaining the purport to him. Atchuta Kalappalar having returned home is said to have gone with his family on a pilgrimage to the Shrine at Tiruvenkadu, otherwise known as Swethavanam. By the Grace of the Lord, he was blessed with a son, whom he named Swethavanan. The Child's maternal uncle who had heard of the joyous tidings fetched him to his home at Thiruvennai-Nalloor,—the same place where the great Sundarar had begun to pour forth to the world his sacred Devarams,—and was bringing him up. When the child reached his second year, such was the bent of his mind that his very play consisted in making Sivalingam of sand and worshipping the most High with flowers, &c. One day the great Rishi Paranjoti Maha Muniver who happened to pass that way saw this and observing the advanced spiritual condition of the child initiated him into the Truth, giving him the name of Meykanda Devar (he who saw the Truth) and imparting to him the Divine Philosophy of Siva Gnana Bodham. This Paranjoti Muniver was a disciple of Satthiya Guana Darisanigal who received the Truth at the hands of Sanatkumarar who in his turn received it from Tirunandi Devar, the first Teacher, who of course learnt it at the Feet of the Lord Himself.

Their meeting and the enlightenment of Arulnandi Devar

Meykanda Devar who was dumb from his birth continued so till his fifth year, taking lessons in the meantime at the

Feet of Polla Pillaiyar, the God with the Pranava Face. Then he began to speak out, and having brought out the Siva Gnana Bodham in Tamil with a short commentary and illustrations, taught the Truth contained therein to such disciples as came to him being ripe to receive the same. Sakalagama Panditar, who had probably heard of the greatness of the child-sage, came to Tiruvennai Nallur and finding that his young family disciple (disciple's son) did not come to see and pay his respects to him and also, it is said, that his own followers were gradually deserting him being attracted by the teachings of Meykanda Devar, he seems to have got enraged and to have gone over to the child's place of abode intending to meet and vanquish him face to face. The young Teacher was then discoursing to his disciples on the Tri-Padarthas, Pati, Pasu and Pasam and, just as the great philosopher Sakalagama Panditar was entering the hall a disciple, who did not exactly grasp what Anavam was, seems to have raised a query, in reply to which the child-teacher pointed with a smile to the majestically entering massive figure of the Panditar. No sooner did the great Brahmin notice this than he saw and felt the Holy Presence of the Divine Seer, off went his sash and shawl and all vanity therewith, and he found himself at the feet of the young Sage begging of him for relief and enlightenment.

The prayers of Sakalagama Panditar were granted and, from that day forth, he became the foremost of Meykanda Deva's disciples. The name conferred on our author on his being initiated into the Truth was Arulnandi Devar. It was under Meykanda Deva's inspiration and direction that Arulnandi Devar composed the Siva Gnana Siddhi* (as an authorised commentary expounding the truths contained in the Siva Gnana Bodham) and another work called Irupah Irupathu. The date at which these teachers appeared has with more or less accuracy been fixed at between 1,200 and 1,250 A. C.

Some reflections thereon.

The life story of these saints affords us some food for thought. First and foremost we find that Arulnandi Devar, a brahmin of brahmins, occupying a high position even among

the high caste brahmins did not consider it below his dignity to worship Meykanda Devar, a vellalan, and that too the foundling child of a vellalan as some writers allege, though in the immature worldly stage of his career he felt his vanity wounded when he found that the vellala boy did not pay him due respect. We note at the same time that our saint's fall (or we should rather say rise) at the feet of his Master when he discovered the holy look and pointed finger of the Divine Seer was not voluntary or premeditated, neither was it forced on him by any outside authority. It was a spontaneous act performed quite involuntarily as a result of the mellowing of his Anavamalam (Malaparipakam) and the descent of Divine Grace (Saktinipadam). He did not transgress his Varna-asrama-dharmam (or the prescribed rules of conduct pertaining to a person of his rank or position in society) as long as he was a worldly man possessed of his Pasubodham (பசுபோதம்) or Thatbodham (தற்போதம், or, shall be say, egotism, but transcended them (—not transgressed them—) immediately he became ripe to receive the Truth. There is no question of the exercise of any coercion here, the conversion was not a forced conversion imposed on him from outside as some of our modern day critics of the Hindu code of Varna-asrama-dharmam would have it, neither was it falsely assumed by him by the exercise of his own egotism as is done by some Ashadapoothies (ஆசாடபூதிகள்) or hypocrites some of whom put on yellow robes with particular motives and do not hesitate to indulge in all sorts of vices, explaining their actions away by asserting that they have renounced the world and no sin could therefore attach to them.

Meykandan, a born Saint

Another point worth noting here is that Meykandan was a born saint while Arulnandi Devar was a "made" saint if we may use such an expression. Meykandan belonged to that superior class of souls known as Punnya Purushas (புண்ணிய புருஷர்) or Samusiddhar (சாமுசித்தர்), the போதம் மிகுத்தோர் and பண்டை நற்றவத்தாற் றேன்றிப் பரமனைப்பத்தி பண்ணும் தொண்டர் of Siddhiyar, great souls that had attained to a high state of spirituality by their 'Tapas' in previous births, who require no book-learning for their salvation and who sometimes happen

to be reborn in this world for particular purposes, it may be to complete the process of their own purification, it may be to re-reveal the truth and reform mankind, to uphold righteousness or punish evil-doers, or it may be for some other noble purpose. In other words he was an Avatara-Purushan (அவதார புருஷன்), a great soul reborn here for a particular purpose. He did not belong to that inferior class called Prakritar (பிராகிருதர்) the ignorant, indolent, indifferent and perverse, the தொகுத்த பேதமைக்கே பொருந்தினார் of Siddhiyar, who are incapable of learning anything or do not care to learn or are obstinate and unwilling to learn or learn with perverse motives. Neither did he belong to that middle class called Vainakar (வைணகர்), not Avatara Purushas but intelligent men eager to learn and know the truth, the கதிப் பார் செல்ல ஏது நெறி எனும் அவர் and மார்க்கர் கண்ட நூல் ஒதி வீடு காதலிப்பவர் of Siddhiyar. Arulnandi Devar belonged to this middle class till he came under the influence of the Divine Seer. That is why we find him with cartloads of books, ever studying, ever disputing with and vanquishing his antagonists and being surnamed Sakala-Agama-Pandithar in the earlier part of his life.

A note on Avataras

Meykanda Devar then was an Avatara-Purushan. And we may here add a few words regarding the Saiva conception of Avataras (அவதாரங்கள்) or re-incarnations. We hold that God can never be born in the flesh. The Supreme Brahman is immaculate, the embodiment of Supreme Wisdom and pure Bliss, eternal, beyond the clutches of Anavam, Karmam and Maya and as such not subject to the miseries of birth and death. It is sheer blasphemy even to suggest that Siva Peruman can be imprisoned within the four walls of a prison-house by being encased in a mother's womb or subjected to the pangs of birth or the horrors of death. It is souls (Pasus) that are subject to births and deaths and that whirl round and round as it were in the ocean of Samsara till they attain beatitude. The Saivas hold that even souls cannot be born in the flesh after they realize final beatitude (Sayujiam or Para-muki) as they become merged in Sivam, the Haven from which there is no return to Samsara. It is Punniya Purushas or great souls that have attained to a high stage of existence

but have not realized Siva.-Sayujiam that are reborn in the world for particular purposes as indicated above and it is the rebirth of such great souls including so called gods (Devas) that is referred to as Avataras in Puranic and allied literature. It may be that the Avatara Purushan possesses all his previous powers in his new birth or it may be that he displays only some of his powers according to the necessities of the case. Vishnu for instance was born as Sri Raman who displayed all the strength (or Kriya-Sakti) of Vishnu and as Sri Krishnan who had not the same strength or physical prowess but was possessed of unrivalled mental or intellectual powers (Gnana-Sakti). Varunan is said to have been born as Bhishman, Yaman as Viduran, Kuberan as St. Pattinathar, Alala Sundarar as St. Sundarar, Vakisa Rishi as St. Appar, the Rishis Naran and Narayanan as Arjunan and Krishnan, Saraswati as Auvvayar &c.

God is birthless and deathless

The Supreme Lord Himself is birthless and deathless as stated before. He is the Aja (unborn) of the Vedas. Tamil literature teems with references to this unique character of Siva Peruman, one of the most pre-eminent characteristics which distinguish Him from other co-called gods (Devas). We quote here a few of such references by way of example:

பிறவா நெறியானே (Devaram)

Oh! Lord, of Birthless Nature.

மூவாய் பிறவாய் இறவாய் போற்றி (ibid)

obaisance to Thee that agest not nor art born nor diest.

யாவர்க்கும் தந்தைதாய் தம்பிரான் தனக்கஃதிலான்

(Tiruvachagam)

Father, Mother and Lord of all, but to Himself has no father or mother or lord.

போக்கும் வரவும் புணர்வும் இலாப் புண்ணியன் (ibid)

The Blessed One that does not pass away nor comes into being nor changes.

திறம்பிய பிறவிச் சிலதெய்வ நெறிக்கே

திகைக்கின்றேன் தனைத்திகையாமே,

நிறம்பொன்னும் மின்னும் நிறைந்த சேவடிக்கீழ்

நிகழ்வித்த நிகரிலாமணியே.

(Tiru - Isaippa)

Oh! peerless Gem that placed me under Thy bright golden Feet rescuing me from the confounding paths of petty gods subject to endless births.

சில்லாண்டிற் சிதையும்சிலதேவர் சிறுநெறிசேராமே.....
பல்லாண்டென்னும்பதம் கடந்தானுக்கே பல்லாண்டுகூறுதுமே,
(Tiru - Pallandu)

We chant blessings to Him who is beyond all time, so as to escape the narrow paths of petty gods that die in a few years.

பிறப்பிலி நாதன் (Tirumantiram)

The Birthless Lord.

பிறப்பிலி பிஞ்சுகள் பேரருளாளன்,
இறப்பிலி, யாவார்க்கும் இன்பம் அருளும் (ibid)

Birthless, with dressed Head and infinite Grace, Deathless, He bestows bliss on all.

பிறவாதே தோன்றினான் (Seraman)

Unborn, He appeared.

தோற்றுவதெல்லாம் தின்னிடைத் தோற்றித்
தோற்றம் பிறிதினிற் றேற்றிச் சுடர்முனை (Pattinathar)

Oh! Bright Effulgence! From Thee everything appeared but Thou didst not originate from anything else.

மாண்டிடல் பிறப்பிலான் (Kanda Puranam)

He who does not die nor is born.

சாதிகுலம் பிறப்பிறப்புப் பந்தம்முத்தி
அருஉருவத் தன்மை நாமம்
ஏதும் இன்றி, எப்பொருட்கும் எவ்விடத்தும்
பிரிவு அறநின்று இயக்கம் செய்யும்
சோதி..... (Thayumanavar)

Caste, lineage, birth, death, bondage, liberation, form, non-form and name, without any of these, the Light that energises everything everywhere, being inseparate from them.

பிறப்பிலி இறப்பிலி, பிறங்கல் அரசன்
தன்மகளார் நாதன் (Mahabharatam)

Birthless, Deathless, the Lord of the mountain king's Daughter.

மண்ணினிற் பிறந்திறந்து மாளும் தெய்வங்களோடு
எண்ணப்படா அருளை ஈசன்..... (Arunagiri Antati)

The Lord of Arunachalam who is not to be reckoned on a par with gods that are born on earth and die.

பிறப்பதம் இறப்பதம்...பிறவும் சூழ்கலாச்
சிறப்புடை அரன்

Haran who has the distinguishing characteristic of not being subject to birth and death and other limitations.

Kalamegam, the prince of satirists of Tamil literature, pokes a little fun at the expense of the god of Kannapuram saying:

கன்னபுரமாலே கடவுளிலும் நீ அதிகம்,
உன்னிலுமோ யான் அதிகம், ஓதக்கேள்—முன்னில்
உன்பிறப்போ பத்து, உயர் சிவனுக்கு ஒன்றும்இல்லை,
என்பிறப்போ எண்ணத் தோலையாதே.

Oh! Mal of Kannapuram, you are greater than the great God, but I am greater than you. If you want to know the reason why, please listen. You have ten births while the Supreme Sivan has none but my births are incapable of being counted.

St. Sankarer who became a great Siva Bhaktan after his encounter with Sri Kantar refers to this same trait of the Lord in one of his devotional works. Here is a verse found in the Tamil redaction of his Sountariya Lahari:

வேதரஞ்சுகன் மால்புரந்தரன்
வேகசண்ட குபேரனோடு
ஆதிஎன் திசைபாலர் பொன்றவும்
ஆதிஅந்தம் இலாததோர்
நாதர்பொன்றிலர், ஏதுன்மங்கல
நாண்உறும் திரம், ஆதலால்
நீதனைந்தது யோகம், அம்பிகை,
நீளிஎன்பது பாவமே.

Brahma and Vishnu and the presiding Deities of the eight quarters beginning with Indran, even when all these die the Beginningless and Endless Lord dies not. How firm, Oh! Ambikai, Auspicious Lady, is Thy nuptial cord!.....

Not only in Saiva literature but in literature of other creeds too we find this transcendent nature of Siva Peruman fully conceded, consciously or unconsciously. Ilankovadigal, a Jain

Sanniyasin, for instance, describes a Sivan Temple in his great epic Silappadikaram as

பிறவா யாக்கைப் பெரியோன் கோயில்

The temple of the Great One with unborn body. And Kamba Nad-Alvar, the prince of epic poets, a Vaishnavite, uses such epithets as the following in his Ramayanam:

ஈறிலான் கயிலை

Kayilasam of the Endless One.

முதல் இடை ஈறின்றாகிப் பண்டைநான்.

மறைக்கும் எட்டாப் பரஞ்சுடர்

The Supreme Flaming One that has no beginning, middle or end and is beyond the reach of the four Vedas of old.

Guhai Namasivayar puts the whole matter in a nut-shell in beautiful and at the same time easy language in the following verse:

எல்லார் பிறப்பும் இறப்பும் இயற்பாவலர்தம்
சொல்லாற் றெளிந்தோம், நம் சோனேசா—இல்லில்
பிறந்தகலையும் கேளோம், பேருலகில் வாழ்ந்தண்டு
இறந்தகலையும் கேட்டிலோம். (அருணகிரி அந்தாதி)

We have heard poets sing of the birth and death of all others but never heard that our Lord of Sornai was ever born in any house or that He died after living and prospering in the world for a time.

And in Siddhiyar we read:

யாதொரு தெய்வம் கொண்டார்
அத்தெய்வம் ஆகி ஆங்கே
மாதொரு பாகனார் தாம்
வருவர், மற்றத் தெய்வங்கள்
வேதனைப்படும் இறக்கும்
பிறக்கும் மேல்வீனையும் செய்யும்,
ஆதலால் இவை இவ்வாதான்
அறிந்து அருள்செய்வன் அன்றே.

Whatever god you worship, as such would the Lord whose half is the Gracious Lady appear. The other (so-called) gods suffer pain, are subject to birth and death and perform Karmam. Hence He who is not subject to these limitations would appreciate your worship and recompense you according to your deserts.

CHAPTER X.

'Alavai' (அளவை) or Methods of Proof (Logic)

அளவை காண்டல் கருதல் உரை
 அபாவம் பொருள் ஒப்பு ஆறு என்பர்,
 அளவை மேலும் ஒழிபு உண்மை
 ஐதிகத்தோடு இயல்பு என நான்கு
 அளவை காண்பர், அவை யிற்றின்
 மேலும் அறைவர், அவை எல்லாம்
 அளவை, காண்டல் கருதல் உரை
 என்று இம்முன்றில் அடங்கிடுமே,

Different kinds of proof

SIX kinds of 'Alavai' (literally measure) or proof are mentioned by some writers, to wit: (1. Kandal, Anubhavam or Pratiyaksham (காண்டல், அனுபவம் அல்லது பிரத்தியட்சம்), direct or sensuous perception, (2) Karutal, Yukti or Anumanam (கருதல், யுக்தி அல்லது அனுமானம்), inference, (3) Urai, Sruti or Agamam (உரை, சுருதி அல்லது ஆகமம்), revelation, (4) Abhavam or Inmai (அபாவம் அல்லது இன்மை), negation or non-existence, (5) Porul or Aruthapatti (பொருள் அல்லது அருத்தாபத்தி), deduction or presumption and (6) Oppu or Upamanam (ஒப்பு அல்லது உபமானம்), analogy or comparison. Others add four more varieties: (7) Olipu or Parisesham (ஒழிபு அல்லது பாரிசேடம்), residue, (8) Unmai or Sambavam (உண்மை அல்லது சம்பவம்), co-existence or probability (9) Aithikam (ஐதிகம்), tradition and (10) Iyalpu or Sahasam (இயல்பு அல்லது சகசம்), nature. Yet others there are who increase the number further. But all these can be comprised under the three main divisions of Kandal, Karutal and Urai. These are the three methods ordinarily known as Sruti, Yukti and Anubavam (in inverse order).

Four stages of perception

Four stages are noticed in the process of acquiring the knowledge of anything, namely: Nirvikatpam (நிருவிகற்பம்). Aiyam (ஐயம்), Tirivu (திரிவு) and Savikatpam (சவிகற்பம்) which may be translated as undifferentiating, doubtful, erroneous and discriminative perception, respectively. Thus, when we see a rope before us, the first stage is the knowledge that

there is something before us without cognising what the functions and attributes of the object are or its species or name, the next stage is to recognise some of these qualities, &c, and doubt what the thing can be, the third stage consists in wrongly thinking that it is a snake and the final stage is the full comprehension of the object in all its aspects and arrival at the right conclusion that it is a rope.

Kandal (or direct perception)

The first kind of proof (Kandal) is divided into four subdivisions. The first subdivision is termed Indriya or Vayitkadchi (இந்திரிய அல்லது வாயிற் காட்சி) and is the bare sensory perception of a thing (Nirvikatpam) without reaching the stages of doubt, error or discrimination. Next comes Manasakadchi (மானசக்காட்சி) or discriminatory perception (Savikatpam) where all the stages of nondifferentiation, doubt, error and discrimination are completed. Then comes Thanvedanaikadchi (தன்வேதனைக் காட்சி), knowledge by actual experience of pleasure and pain. The fourth kind of direct perception is called Yogakadchi (யோகக்காட்சி) where the spiritually advanced devotee has recourse to Yoga practice and thus overcomes his Malabandham (மலபந்தம்) and sees things distant in time and place remaining where he is.

Karutal or Anumanam (inference)

Anumanam is the inference of things not directly perceived from known data and is divided into inference for oneself and inference for others. The terms Pakkam (பக்கம்), Hetu (ஐது), &c. used in this mode of proof are best explained by an example. Smoke is observed over the top of a hill and though we do not actually see any fire there (this being hidden by rank vegetation, &c), we conclude that there must be fire as we had invariably observed fire and smoke as cause and effect in the kitchen, while neither fire nor smoke was found in the tank. Here the hill is the Pakkam or place where the thing to be proved lies, the kitchen is the Sapakkam or analogous place where the thing in question is already proved or known to exist and the tank is the Vipakkam or place where the thing in question is known never to exist. There are thus three kinds of Pakkam, the first two of which

are locations for affirmative proof while the last is used for negative proof. The inference that there must be fire because there is smoke is the Hetu or reason. This is known as Kariya Hetu (காரிய ஏது) or reasoning from causal relation or succession. Two other kinds of Hetu are mentioned: Anupalatthi, (அநுபலத்தி ஏது) and Iyalpu or Sakasa Hetu. Anupalatthi is inference from non-existences as when we infer the non-existence of dew from the absence of cold. Sakasa Hetu or natural cause is the inherent power of a word where we gather its meaning from the context as in the expressions "the Tamil race" and "they ran a race." Inference for oneself is drawn from these Pakkam & Hetu.

The five parts of an argument

Inference for others consists in explaining one's own inference to others by the use of language, and the words used are of two kinds: Anuvayam (அன்னுவயம்) or positive statement and Vetirekam (வெதிரேகம்) or negative statement. The words used for an argument are divisible into five parts (though the last two are not essential), to wit: (1) Metkole or Pratigna (மேற்கோள் அல்லது பிரதிஞ்சை), the enunciation of the proposition or assertion, (2) Hetu, the reason adduced for proving it, (3) Utharanam (உதாரணம்), the citing of similar instances or analogies in support of the proof, (4) Upanayam (உபநயம்), application, and (5) Nigamanam (நிகமனம்) conclusion. These are best explained by illustrations. The following is an Anuvaya statement: There is fire on the hill (Pratigna), because there is smoke there (Hetu). Where there is smoke there is fire, as in the case of the kitchen (Udaranam). Similarly there is smoke on the hill (Upanayam). Therefore there is fire on the hill (Nigamanam). It will be noticed here that Upanayam is practically the application of the Hetu to the Pakkam in the Pratigna, or its repetition with special reference to the Udaranam and that Nigamanam repeats the Pratigna with some emphasis as the conclusion (முடிந்தது முடித்தல்), the Q. E. D. (quod erat demonstrandum = which was to be proved) of Euclid. An example of a Vetireka statement would run as follows: There is fire on the hill (Pratigna), because there is smoke there (Hetu). Where there is no fire there is no smoke, as in the case of

the tank (Udaranam). The hill is not without smoke (Upa-
nayam). Therefore the hill is not without fire (Nigamanam).

There is a further subdivision of Anumanam on a different basis as follows: (1) Purvakadchi Anumanam (பூர்வக்காட்சி யனுமானம்) as where the existence of a particular flower is inferred from a particular smell as a result of previous obser-
vation, (2) Karuthal Anumanam (கருதலனுமானம்) as where a man's intelligence and erudition are inferred from his words and (3) Agamic Anumanam (ஆகமவனுமானம்) as where we infer that a man's present actions will bear their fruit later on from the statement in the Agamas that our present experiences of pleasure and pain are the result of previous Karmam.

There are said to be 65 varieties of specious argumentation or fallacious inference made up of four kinds of wrong pro-
position (பக்கப்போலி), three of plausible reasoning (ஏதுப்போலி) which may be subdivided into 21 kinds, 18 of incorrect analogy (உவமைப்போலி) and two of defeatist attitude (தோல்வித்தானம்) which are subdivided into 22 kinds.

Urai or Agamam (Revelation)

The third kind of proof, Urai or Agamam, by which we perceive things which are incapable of perception by direct observation or inference, is divided into Tantra, Mantra and Upadesa words (தந்திரம், மந்திரம், உபதேசம்). These are the words of the Nirjala All-Knower and deal, the Tantra por-
tion with rituals (Sariya and parts of Kriyai), Mantra with the contemplation of God by controlling the mind, &c., (Kriyai and Yogam) and Upadesa with the nature of the beginningless and endless One (Gnanapatham).

Pothu Iyalpu and Sirappu Iyalpu

The nature of the objects (Prameyam, பிரமேயம்) known with the aid of these different kinds of Alavai (Pramanam, பிரமானம்) is of two kinds, Pothu (பொது) and Sirappu (சிறப்பு). Pothu Iyalpu consists of the features common to all things of any class but not to things of other classes while Sirappiyalpu means the special characteristics of any

particular thing or group of things (species) which distinguish it from other things or groups of the same class (genus) as well as other classes.

The Import of these terms in Agamic Literature.

A word here as to the terms Pothu or Thadatta Lakshanam (தடத்தலக்கணம்) and Sirappu or Unmai (உண்மை) or Sorupa (சொருபம்) Lakshanam used in Agamic literature before we proceed further. The words generally used in translating these words into English are *general* or *common* or *relative* and *special* or *real* or *absolute*, respectively, though these words do not exactly convey what is intended in the original. The words *general* or *common* and *special* as used ordinarily have reference to the attributes of genus and species, or classes and subclasses or individuals in the ordinary logical sense as above. The word *real* again would appear to connote *unreality* in the other camp, which is not the case. The words *lower* and *higher* used by other schools of philosophy in describing the two states or aspects of the Supreme (Brahm) do not find favour in our philosophy. The words *relative* and *absolute* would seem to be the nearest approach, the Thadatta state of a thing being its nature in relation to other things and its Sorupa state being its nature by itself without any reference to anything else. Thus the Thadatta definition of God (Pathi) is His existence in Adwaitha (non-dual) relation with the world (உலகெலாமாகி வேறாய் உடனுமாய் in the words of Siddhiyar) and the Sorupa nature is Ekam (aloneness) or Satchitanandam (existence, knowledge and bliss) or better still we should say His being beyond the reach of word and thought (வாக்குமனத்தினாய் நின்றல்), being incomprehensible through Pasa Gnanam and Pasu Gnanam. In other words His Sorupa state can only be comprehended through Pathi Gnanam (அவனருளே கண்ணாகக் காணல்). We can know something of His Pothu Iyalpu by reading and investigation (ஆராய்ச்சியறிவு), while His Sorupa Iyalpu can only be comprehended by actual realization (அனுபவ ஞானம்) with the aid of His Sakti or Arul (Grace).

CHAPTEE XI

'Parapaksham' or the Other Side

The common source of all religions.

அருமறை ஆகமம் முதல் நூல் அனைத்தும் உரைக்கையினால்,
 அளப்பரிதாம் அப்பொருளை அரன் அருளால் அணுக்கள்
 தருவர்கள் பின் தனித்தனியே தாம் அறிந்த அளவில்
 தர்க்கமொடு உத்தரங்களினால் சமயம் சாதித்து,
 மிருதி புராணம் கலைகள் மற்றும் எல்லாம்
 மெய்நூலின் வழி, புடையாம் அங்கம் வேதாங்கம்,
 சுருதி சிவாகமம் ஒழிபச் சொல்லுவது ஒன்று இல்லை,
 சொல்லுவார் தமக்கு அறையோ சொல்ல ஒணாதே.

The Vedas and Agamas are the 'Muthal-nool' or original books which form the fountain-source of all Gnanam, parts of which are taken up by individuals who make investigations to the best of their lights by the Grace of God and bring out various religious and philosophical treatises. The Smritis, Puranas and other Shastras are called "Vali-nool" or guide books based on the Vedas and Agamas. The Angas and Vedangas are 'Sarpu-nool' or subsidiary books. There are no books not indebted to the Vedas and Agamas, but it is impossible to convince those that assert otherwise,

முதல் ஒன்றும் ஆனை, முதுகுடன் வால் உந்து
 இதம் உறு கொம்பு செவி துதிக்கை கால்
 மதி உடன் அந்தகர் வகைவகை பார்த்தே,
 அது கூறல் ஒக்கும் ஆறுசமயமே,

The elephant is one only. The blind describe it variously after seeing (feeling by the hand) its different limbs, some the back, some the tail, some the tusks, some the ears, some the trunk and some the legs. Even so are the six forms of religion preached.

Religious Groups,—basis of classification.

The religions (and philosophies) of India are generally divided by Siddhanta writers into two main classes, the orthodox or inner circle (அகச்சமயம்) and the heterodox or

outer circle (புறச்சமயம்). Each of these is again sub-divided into two groups, and in each group are included six distinct creeds or schools of philosophy. To the last or fourth group, the out and out or extreme heterodox or heretical (புறப் புறம்), belong Lokayatam or materialism, the four sects of Bouddham or Buddhism, viz; Sauttharanticam, Yokacharam; Mathiyamikam and Vypashikam, and Aruhstam or Jainism. These are all atheistic and condemn both the Vedas and the Agamas. Though extremely heretical, these have books of their own and certain principles and settled modes of reasoning and, as such, are deemed worthy to be taken notice of by our teachers. The next higher or third group, the heterodox (புறம்) consist of (1) Tharukkam, which may be sub-divided into the Vyseshika and Nyayika systems, (2) Mimamsai, including Battachariya's and Prabahara's systems, (3) Ekanavadam, in which there are several subsects, (4) Sankhyam, (5) Yogam and (6) Pancharatthram or Vaishnavaism. These accept the Vedas generally, either wholly or in part, each in its own peculiar way, some have got their own special authoritative treatises, and all reject the Sivagamas. The next or 2nd group, அகப்புறம் (the inner heterodox or orthodoxo-heterodox, if we may use such a term), is reckoned superior to the last in as much as it generally accepts both the Vedam and the Sivagamam, though most of the systems of this group, Pasupatham (or Sankirantha Sama Vadam), Maviratham (or Utpatthi Sama Vadam), Kapalam (or Avesa Sama Vadam), Vamam and Vairavam, have also their own special books. These systems beginning with Pasupatham along with Aikkiya-Vada-Saivam, constitute this group, and they all agree in denying the existence of Anava Malam. There are six kinds of Saivam, viz; Pashanavadam, Bethavadam, Sivasamavadam, Sankiranthavadam, Iswara Avikara Vadam and Sivadwaitham (or Nimitta Karana Parinama Vadam). These go to form the first or orthodox group (அகம்) and have a good deal in common with Saiva Siddhantam, the difference consisting in the delineation of the general and special characteristics of the Tri.padarthas and in matters of minor detail. On the top of these 4x6 (or 24) systems, (அகம், அகப்புறம், புறம் and புறப்புறம்), and covering all in its broad folds, stands Saiva Siddhantam, the system proved and finally upheld.

The extreme Heterodox Group,—Lokayatam.

Of these various systems, those taken up for examination in the Parapaksham of Siddhiyar are included in the third and fourth groups, the heterodox and extreme heterodox systems. Our author begins with the outermost system, the Lokayatam of Brihaspaṭi, who would accept no proof other than Pratthiyaksham or direct perception and whose goal (or heaven or, shall we say, God) is naught but carnal and worldly pleasures. The Lokayatan also known as Charvakan (சர்வாகன்) recognises no God, soul or Karmam, there are only four *tatwas* or states of matter (earth, water, fire and air), and according to him life is nothing but a combination of these. There are several subsets of Lokyatas, such as Theka-Anma Vadi (தேகான்மவாதி) Indriya-Anma-Vadi (இந்திரியான்மவாதி) Prana-Anma-Vadi (பிராணான்மவாதி) and Andakarana-Anma-Vadi (அந்தக்காணான்மவாதி), who believe in no soul other than the body, the external senses, (ear, eye, &c), the life-breath and the internal senses (mind, &c), respectively. Without wasting more time with the teachings of this school in its various phases we shall proceed further, but one general remark we may here make is that Lokayatam has more votaries owing allegiance to it than any other school of thought including a goodly number of people who nominally pass as adherents of other creeds.

Buddhism, four sects.

After refuting the arguments of the Lokayatan, the author ascends a step higher and deals with the Buddhists with their ideas of momentary existence (Kana-Banga Vadam, கணபங்கவாதம்) and final annihilation, first enumerating and then combating the views and arguments of each of the four sects of Buddhists. The Buddhist admits two kinds of Pramanam (proof), viz: Pratthiaksham (or direct perception) and Anu-manam or inference. He admits Karmam also, but ignores the existence of God or souls. Though in theory he recognizes no God, in practice he deifies his original teacher the Buddha, whose teachings are embodied in the Tri-Pitakas. The Sauttharantican (literally he who goes to the end of the Sutras), sometimes called the Buddhist Realist, postulates

two Samuthayas (சமுதாயங்கள்) or aggregates: the internal or subjective including the mind and its vikaras (changes), and the external or objective. The latter are formed by the combination of the Paramanus (or ultimate atoms) of earth, water, fire and air, while the former are produced from the Skandas (or groups) which are five fold (பஞ்சகந்தங்கள்): (1) Rupam (forms), including sound, &c, perceived through the mind, (2) Gnanam, knowledge of these, (3) Vedana (feeling), pleasure and pain resulting therefrom, (4) Kuri or Samgna, names and (5) Bhavanai or Vasanai, (tendencies). Nirvanam (or Mukti) consists in total annihilation when all the Skandas cease to exist. The Yokacharan (literally, he that concurs and raises supplementary questions), also known as Buddhist Idealist, has much in common with the Saut-thrantican but while admitting intelligence, knowledge derived through the senses, he denies the world and says it is all a dream. The Matthiyamican (literally, he who belongs to a middle class) or Buddhist Nihilist or Suniya Vadi denies intelligence too, as there can be no knowledge when there is nothing to be known. The Vypashikas (literally, adverse critics) who are also a sect of Realists differ from these and hold that the world appears as a result of the conjunction of intelligence and the objects thereof.

Aruhatam,—two subsects.

Two sects of Jains, Nikandavadi and Ajivakan, are next discussed, and the list of the extreme heterodox systems is thus disposed of. The Jains, usually known to the Tamil student as Samanae (சமணர்) and Aruhatas (ஆருகதர்), are rigid non-killers as are also the Buddhists to a great extent, though the latter would freely eat the carcass of what is killed by others. Their Lord is Aruhan, the original preceptor, also known as Anadi Siddhan (அனாதிசித்தன்) who is possessed of eight supreme attributes and is free from all bad qualities. The eight supreme attributes or virtues are: Ananta - Gnanam and Ananta - Darsanam (both of which may perhaps be taken as included in the one word Omniscience), Ananta Viriam (அநந்தவீரியம்) or Omnipotence, Ananta - Sukam (அநந்தசுகம்) or infinite Bliss, Nir - namam (நிர்நாமம்) or namelessness, Nir - Gotram (நிர்கோத்திரம்) Nir - Ayushiyam (நிர்ஆயுஷி

யம்) or agelessness and Sammiyata - Apavam (சம்மியதாபாவம்) or Alivinmai (அழிவின்மை) or endlessness. Nir-Gotram is said to be sectlessness, but it may perhaps be castelessness or it may, even be birthlessness (having no ancestor). If the latter, the last three attributes would appear to be included in the one word Anadi Nitthiyatuvam (அநாதிதித்தியத்துவம்) or Eternality. Among the bad qualities or impurities or defects are Gnana - Avarniyam (ஞானாவர்ணியம்) or ignorance, Darsana - Avarniyam (தரிசனாவர்ணியம்) or defective vision, Vedanceyam (வேதநியம்) or belief in the Vedas, lust, envy, fear, pride, birth, disease, death, &c.

The term 'Nikanda Vadi' seems to refer to an ecclesiastical order as adherents of this sect are said to be celibates. They are said to wear no clothes (—Nikanda=clothless—) but put on mats and carry peacock feathers with which it is sometimes stated that they gently remove ants and other insects on their way to avoid trampling them under their feet. Though they are ascetics shunning family life, they are said to eat as well as anybody else. They postulate various Padarthas, such as Jivas or souls which are many and which pervade their respective bodies and are conditioned by the different states of the bodies they fill; Kalam (time); Akasam (space); Putkalam (substances having forms made up of Paramanus or ultimate atoms) including earth, water, fire, air and embodied living creatures both static (like trees, grass, &c.) and moving (like insects, birds animals, &c); Punniyam or good deeds which produce Dharma - Adikayam or virtuous bodies; Pabam or evil deeds which produce Adharma - Adikayam or vicious bodies; Bandham (bondage); and Veedu (liberation). Bandham consists in being subject to the various bad qualities like lust, &c, and Veedu is liberation from these after eating up the fruits of all Punniyam and Pabam and the acquisition of the eight supreme virtues of Ananta-Gnanam, &c.

The Ajeevakas assert five kinds of Anu (atoms), earth, water, fire, air and Jiva, which are all eternal. With these may be added Punniyam and Pabam (good and bad Karmam, Jivas are formless and intelligent and are born in accordance with their Karmas into bodies made up of the other four

kinds of atoms and partake of the nature of such bodies. Unlike Nikandavadies, the Ajeevakas do not seem to have any aversion to clothing, though they vie with the former in the prescription and practice of the utmost compassion to all living creatures and of the severest austerities (Nirjaram) like the plucking of one's own hair from the head, &c.

The Jains are sometimes known by the name of Anekanta Vadies (அநேகாந்த வாதிகள்). When a question such as the following is asked: 'Does the Jiva exist before being born in the body? they would reply that in a sense it is in existence, it may also be said that it is not, it is and is not, it is indefinable (i. e., it neither is nor is not), it is and yet indefinable, it is not and yet indefinable, it is and is not and yet indefinable. (—This mode of reasoning is known as Sapatabanginiyayam சப்தபங்குநியாயம்—) The nature of a thing may be described in any one of these ways or it may not. Such is Anekanta Vadam and the system which postulates it is considered superior to all others in as much as it includes within itself all the various views which may be entertained of anything.

The Heterodox group

Having thus formed a rough idea of the extreme heterodox systems (புறப்புறம்), we now proceed to the examination of the heterodox systems (புறம்) which are more moderate and which accept more or less the authority of the Vedas, though some of them sometimes give forced interpretations to their scriptural quotations, and adapt them to suit their doctrines. Of the heterodox systems, Tharukkam and Yogam are not touched upon by our author in his Parapaksham.

Mimamsai—two subjects

The two sects of Mimamsakas, Battachariyan (பட்டாச்சாரியன்) and Prabakaran (பிரபாகரன்) are first dealt with. The Mimamsaka system is generally referred to as Purva (or earlier) Mimamsai (பூர்வமீமாஞ்சை) to distinguish it from Ekanma Vadam which is sometimes called Uttara (or later) Mimamsai (உத்தர மீமாஞ்சை). The word Mimamsai literally means investigation or critical examination. The Purva Mimamsakas deny God and hold that

the Vedas are Swayambu (சுயம்பு) or self-existent and eternal as is also the world. Souls are many, eternal, intelligent, Vibhu (or pervasive) and subject to birth and death, and they perform Karmam and eat the fruits thereof. This system admits only the Karma Kanda (கர்ம காண்டம்) of the Vedas enjoining the performance of sacrifices, &c, as authoritative, other parts being considered subsidiary and of less or no importance. Battachariyan holds that Karmam itself yields its fruits and that Mukti consists in Anandam (ஆனந்தம், bliss), the pleasures of Swargam (சுவர்க்கம்) or Indra's abode. Prabakaran thinks that on the annihilation of Karmam a subtle form known as Apurvam (அபூர்வம், literally unusual or miraculous) is produced and that this Apurvam yields us the fruits, and also that Mukti consists in being feelingless (like a stone).

Ekamavadam,—four subjects

After combating the doctrines of these godless sects, our teacher proceeds a step higher and examines the views of the Ekamna Vadies or Monists who are also sometimes referred to in modern times as Pantheists and Hindu Idealists. Three sects are noticed. The Sabda Brahma Vadi (சத்தப்பிரமவாதி) thinks that Brahman the cause of everything will be found to exist in the form of Sabdam (sound) in the end and to know that this is so and that there can be no other entity not caused by Sabdam is Mukti.

A second subject, the sect of Sri Sankarar, holds that Brahman alone is real, that all else is unreal being perceived through Avidiya (ignorance) like the illusory appearance of the silver in the mother-of-pearl, the snake in the rope, &c, that Jivas (souls) are but reflections of Brahman in various bodies like those of the sun in different pots of water, that evolution is due to the Maya of the Supreme, that Maya is Anirvachaniyam (அநிர்வசனியம், indescribable) being neither existent nor non-existent, that Bandham consists in identifying one's self with the body and its organs both internal and external and that Moksham consists in the right knowledge that 'I am Brahman' (Aham Brahm Asmi).

The third subject of Ekamna Vadies dealt with in Siddhiyar are called Patkariyar (பாற்கரியர்). They are of opinion that Brahman becomes transformed into the world of sentient

and insentient beings and that Bandham consists in not knowing this. When one understands this aright he merges in Brahman and this is Mukti.

Commentators notice a fourth subset of this school of thought called Krida Brahma Vadies கிரீடாப் பிரம் வாதிகள்) who identify the Ego with Brahman, which they say plays in diverse ways identifying itself with various substances which are subject to change. To understand this correctly is Mukti.

Sankhiyam

Having disposed of these sects of Ekanma Vadam one by one, we meet with the Niriochhara-Sankhiyan (நிர்ச்சுரா சாங்கியன்) or atheistic Sankhiyan —so called to distinguish him from the Yogin who is sometimes referred to as Sesa-wara-Sankhiyan, as the latter acknowledges the existence of an Iswaran or God,—) whose teachings are very briefly touched upon. The Sankhiyas postulate two entities, Purushan (புருஷன்) and Prakriti (பிரகிருதி), Prakriti in which the three Gunas Satvikam (சாத்துவிகம்) Rajasam (இராசதம்) and Tamasam (தாமதம்), generally translated though rather inaccurately as goodness or serenity, passion or activity and badness or dullness, respectively, are equipoised, is eternal, insentient and formless, and from it emanate the 23 tatwas (or elemental principles of mind and matter) from Buddhi to Earth, Prakriti itself being the 24th tatwam and Purushan the 25th. Purushas are many, formless, pure and eternal and are of the nature of intelligence. They are neither the cause nor the effect of anything and are changeless. Ignorance (Avidya) or non discrimination Avivekam, அவிவேகம்), the result of conjunction with Buddhi and other products of Mula-Prakriti (மூலப்பிரகிருதி), constitutes bondage, and liberation consists in right knowledge (Vivekam, differentiating between Mula-Prakriti and Purushan. Unlike some Ekanma vadies who propound the illusion theory (Vivarta Vadam விவர்த்தவாதம்) the Sankhiyas are pre-eminent for their enunciation of the doctrine of Sat Kariya Vadam (சற்காரியவாதம்) known to the modern scientist as the law of the conservation of matter.

Pancharatram

After examining this, the system of Kapilar, we alight upon Pancharatthram (பாஞ்சராத்திரம்) or Vaishnavam which

stands at the top of the heterodox systems. This system is so called as Vishnu is said to have revealed the shastras in five nights (—Pancha—five, and Ratri—night,—) According to this creed, Mayan (மாயன்) or Vishnu is the original, formless, omnipresent Being whose nature is pure Intelligence. He stands at the top of the 24 tatwas and assumes forms out of His own free will. He is the God of gods who first begot Brahma to create the world, Himself assumed the role of Protector and had Han created to fill the office of Destroyer. There are ten Avatars or incarnations ascribed to Him, all intended for the protection of the world, for upholding righteousness and destroying evil. As a Fish He bore the seven seas on His gills, as a Tortoise He supported on His back the mountain that was used for the churning of the ocean to get ambrosia for the gods, as a Boar He lifted up the Earth at the time of the deluge, as a Man-lion (நரசிங்கம்) He killed the Asuran (demon Hiraniyan, as a Dwarf He measured up the three worlds and chastened the emperor Mahabali, as the three Ramas (பரசுராமன், மூராமன், பவராமன்) He punished evil-doers and became king of kings and as Krishnan He manoeuvred to free the world of the burden of the wicked. His tenth incarnation in the form of a Horse for protecting the world is yet to come. From His manifestations proceeds all the Universe of sentient and insentient beings, which he pervades. Mayan Himself is of the form of Maya, which fetters the soul and this bondage cannot be got rid of except with His help. If one conforms himself to the teachings of the Pancharatra Shastras and worships Vishnu to the exclusion of all other gods with true devotion, he would get rid of his Maya and become pure and reach Vaiguntam the abode of Vishnu.

With the refutation of the Pancharatthri's system the Parapaksham of Siddhiyar comes to a close. We have not here entered into the criticism of these systems but merely attempted to give a skeleton idea of their teachings to the best of our knowledge for the benefit of our readers, the object of this book being, as stated before, that it is to serve as a sort of introduction only to the study of Siddhiyar and not as a substitute for the study of that master-piece of Saiva literature in the Tamil language.

CHAPTER XII.

More 'Purvapakshams' or Prior Sides

There is generally more than one view to every question, and this is particularly so in the realms of philosophy and religion. There is generally an original side, the view taken at first sight or after the bestowal of some thought to it, but on more mature consideration after the exercise of one's powers of observation and reasoning the first view is often found to be wrong and discarded and a better view follows. This is quite natural, man being limited in his intelligence but always striving after something better. This is indeed the method of the modern scientist, but it is only the everlasting method resorted to by man from the earliest times, which the modern scientist has adopted to advantage. The first or original view that is subsequently refuted is known as Purvapaksham (literally the previous or first side) and the view finally proved and upheld is known as Siddhantam as we said in a previous chapter. A large number of Purvapaksha views of the riddle of life dealt with in the Parapaksham of Siddhiyar were briefly explained in the last chapter and we proceed now to give a rough idea of other Purvapaksha views which we meet with in Saiva literature.

Tharukkam,—Vyseshikam

Of the heterodox systems, which are not reviewed in Parapaksham, Tharukkam has two subdivisions: Vyseshikam and Naiyayikam. The Vyseshikas postulate seven Padarthas: Draviyam (substance), Gunam (quality), Karmam (action), Jathi (common nature), Visesham (special nature), Samavayam (the inseparable relation between a thing and its constituents or qualities) and Apavam or Inmai (non-being). Draviyam is of nine kinds: Earth, Water, Fire, Air, Akasam, Kalam (time), Thisai (place or direction), Atma (soul) and Manas (mind). The first four of these are transient. Their Paramanus (or ultimate atoms) with Akasam and the rest are eternal. Akasam is one and pervading as are also Kalam and Thisai. Atmas are pervading and of two kinds, Paramatma (God) who is one, omniscient and omnipotent and Jivatmas (souls) which are many and subject to pleasure and pain and which

have no knowledge except when in conjunction with Manas. Manas is atomic and separate in each Atma. Gunas are of 24 kinds: shape (Rupam), taste, smell, intelligence (Buddhi), &c., ending with tendencies (Vasanai), being qualities of substances (Draviyam). Karmam is said to be of five kinds: Contracting, expanding and proceeding in upward, downward and horizontal directions, Apavam is of four kinds: prior non-being, later non-being, ever non-being and non-being of one in another. When these various Padarthas, their general, special and distinctive characteristics, &c. are clearly understood, the nature of Atma which is different from the body, &c. will be duly perceived, false notions will disappear, and with them all action and the results thereof. Birth and death cease to be, there is no suffering of misery and, there being no reason (ஏது) to associate with the mind, the soul lies (dormant) like a stone. This is the state of Mukti (liberation).

Naiyayikam

According to the Naiyayikas there is Anandam (bliss) in Mukti. They postulate 16 Padarthas: Pramanam (proof), Prameyam (objects proved), Aiyam (ஐயம், doubt), Prayosanam (பிரயோசனம், result or produce), Drishtantham (திருட்டாந்தம், example), Siddhantam (conclusion), Avayavam (அவயவம், members or premises), Tharukkam (reasoning and disproving the existence of a Vyapaka or pervader by disproving the existence of Vyapyas or what are to be pervaded.) Nirnamam (நீர்ணயம், ascertainment) Vadam (வாதம், argumentation with a view to arrive at the truth), Setpam (செற்பம், sophistical wrangling or argumentation for the mere pleasure of winning when really satisfied that the opponent's view is correct), Vitandai (விதண்டை cavilling or purposeless disputation), Hetupoli (ஏதுப்போலி, plausible reasoning), Salam (சலம், quibbling or equivocation), Jati (சாதி, plausible reply) and Tholvitthanam (தோல்வித்தானம், defeatist attitude). A formidable array of Padarthas indeed this is, a motley crowd of real substances and empty words of rhetorical warfare. They are certainly not all of them Padarthas in the ordinarily accepted sense of the word.

As we have remarked more than once, no word should be taken as having an inflexible cast-iron significance only, immutable like the laws of the Medes and the Persians. Every word (and expression) has to be understood and interpreted according to the context. When for instance the Purva-pakshin and the Siddhanti both speak of the impermanency of the world using the same sets of words ஞாலம் பேய்த்தேர் போல அகித்தியம் (the world is transient like a mirage) or saying that it is the result of Maya, the former (a Vivarta Vadi, விவர்த்தவாதி) means that it is all an illusion or illusory appearance while the idea which the latter (a Sat Kariya Vadi, சற்காரியவாதி) means to convey is that it lasts in its present form for a time only and then disappears being resolved into its primordial cause which itself is eternal, in other words that the world in its manifested form is non-etern l. Similarly this word Padartha (literally the idea conveyed by words, from Pada=word, and Artha=meaning) as used by the Naiyayikas seems to indicate the various Vishayas (விஷயங்கள்) or topics of discussion or subject headings of the contents of the book, and not entities or categories as understood in the Saiva Siddhantam and other systems of philosophy.

Thus then we find that there are 16 Padarthas or subjects discussed in Niyaya Shastram. It seems unnecessary to tax the minds of our readers with detailed explanations of all these Padarthas, though the principles of reasoning of the Tharkikas are of very great use generally in philosophical argumentation. We content ourselves here with just touching on one or two points only. Pramanam (or proof) is of four kinds: Pratthiyaksham (or direct perception), Anumanam (or inference), Upamanam (or analogy) and Sabdam or Apta Vakkiyam (ஆத்தவாக்கியம், the word of God or of a trustworthy person). These we have dealt with at some length in a previous chapter. Prameyas or objects of knowledge are said to be of 12 kinds beginning with Atma (or soul), body, &c. and ending with Apavargam (or Veedu, liberation). Aiyam (or doubt) is said to be of three kinds, Avayavam of five, and so on.

Yogam

The Yoga system of Patanjali has much in common with Sankhiyam, its chief distinguishing features being the acknow-

ledgment of an Iswaran (or God) in addition to Prakriti and Purushan and the elaboration of the spiritual exercises known as the eight-stepped Yoga practices (அட்டாங்கயோகம், Astanga-yogam). The 25 tatwas of Kapila's system (Sankhiyam) are readily admitted and over and above these is Iswaran forming the 26th tatwam. Iswaran is omniscient, reveals Shastras and imparts Gnanam (knowledge) to souls, being different from them. The eight steps prescribed for the practice of Yogam are: Iyamam (இயமம், abstention from killing, stealing and other vices), Niyamam (நியமம், observance of virtues like purity, contentment, 'Tapas' or austerities, learning the Shastras, &c), Asanam (ஆசனம், postures or modes of sitting), Pranayamam (பிராணாயாமம், regulation of the breath), Pratiyakaram (பிரத்தியாகாரம், abstraction of the mind, restraining it from roaming about with the external senses), Dharanai (தாரணை, fixing the mind firmly in one place), Dhiyanam (தீயானம், concentration of the mind or contemplation on the Deity to the exclusion of all other thoughts) and Samadhi (சமாதி, perfect rest or absorption into the Deity). The goal of Yogam is Samadhi or Kaivaliyam (கைவலியம், literally, aloneness). This completes the list of the heterodox systems.

The inner Heterodox group,—six sects

Proceeding to the next group, the inner heterodox (அகப் புறம்), we may observe that according to Pasupatham, Maviratham and Kapalam souls are many, eternal and pervading. They enjoy pleasure and pain, being under the bondage of Pasam, which is of two kinds, Maya and Karmam. When abhorrence of these appears and Dikshai in accordance with the Shastras is obtained, the Pasupathas hold, Isan imports Gnanam and, like the father who transfers all his worldly responsibilities to his son and retires into the forest, He imparts all His powers to the Muktan. Maviratham enjoins Dikshai and the performance of Sariyas such as the wearing of garlands of bones, &c, to attain Mukti. In Muktas arise all the attributes ascribed to God. The follower of Kapalam, gets Dikshai in due course, eats of Pikshai (offerings) received in human skulls and is 'mad', being possessed with the Lord, all whose attributes he imbibes. Pasupatham is said to be a very ancient Saiva sect prevailing in some parts of Bombay,

and some people assert, on what grounds we do not know, that it is one of the parents of Saiva Siddhantam which, these wiseacres aver or rather theorize, is of very recent origin. The wish perhaps is father to the thought.

Vamam, like Patkariyam, postulates the transformation theory (Parinama Vadam). According to this sect, all the world of sentient and insentient beings is a transformation of Sakti, and Mukti consists in merging into Sakti by living in the manner prescribed in Vama Shastiram. This creed in its practical aspects seems to have much in common with the pleasure-loving Lokayatam, but seems to be placed here in the inner heterodox group (அகப்பற்றம்) as, unlike Lokayatam, it accepts the existence of God, souls and Karmam in addition to the material world, which alone is accepted by the Lokayatan. Vairavam has much in common with Vamam and its Lord is Vairavan.

Aikkiyavada-Saivam, which completes this group (அகப்பற்றம்) postulates Pathi (God) who is Ekam (one), Pasu (soul) which is Anekam (many) and Pasam (bond) which is of two kinds: Maya and Karmam. God endues the soul with a body, &c, fashioned out of Maya, in accordance with its previous good and bad Karmam. And the soul is enshrouded by these like the Sun hidden by clouds. Iruvinai Oppu and Saktinipadam lead on to Mukti, in which there is complete union with God like the mixing of water in water.

The Sankatpa - Nirakaranam

One of the subjects of Ekanmavadam (heterodox group), Aikkiyavadam (inner heterodox group) and the six sects of the orthodox group (அகம்) together with Saiva Vadam are reviewed in the last of the 14 Siddhanta Shastras known as Sankatpa - Nirakaranam. This is a very useful treatise and may very properly be regarded as a fit supplement to the Parapaksham of Siddhiyar. In this work, Umapathiyar the fourth of the Santana Achariyas versifies the proceedings of a religio-philosophical conference that is said to have taken place at a meeting of learned men at Chidambaram. It was in the year 1235 of the Saka Era (corresponding to the Christian year 1313) in the month of Ani (June-July) on the sixth day of the

annual Grand Ani Festival of the Temple. The meeting was held in the car-stand hall. There were ten speakers at the meeting. An enquiring student, a seeker after truth, ascends the stage and sets the ball rolling by greeting the learned savants, and asking for enlightenment regarding the nature of God and His mysterious ways. The exponent of the Ekanmavada subject gets up immediately and delivers a discourse on his system of thought. The Aikkiya Vadi then comes forth criticising the first speaker's system and his arguments in detail and making a statement of his own case. The Pashana-vadi follows, criticising his predecessor and stating his case, and so on till the end, Saiva Vadam being examined by the Saiva Siddhanti, for whose teaching, the proved conclusion, the student is referred to the Sivaprakasam.

The work begins in characteristic vein with the following lines:

பெரும் கடல் உதவும் கரும் கடு வாங்கிக்
கந்தரத்து அமைத்த அந்தம் இல் கடவுள்,
பாலரை உணர்த்தும் மேலவர் போலக்,
கேட்போர் அளவைக் கோட்படு பொருளால்
அருளிய கலைகள் அலகு இல ஆல், அவை
பலபல சமயப் பான்மைத்து அன்றே.....

Like teachers who teach children different sets of books in the different classes to suit their varying degrees of maturity, the Endless Lord with the Poison-throat caused innumerable Shastras to be brought out with teachings varying according to the varying standpoints of different people, and hence religions are of many many kinds.

The substance of the lectures of the first two speakers at the conference referred to above, we have already given when speaking of the heterodox and the inner heterodox systems. And it remains for us to give a brief resume of the teachings of the remaining eight speakers only, who are all treated as "orthodox."

The Orthodox Group,—six sects.

The Pashana Vadi, unlike the Aikkia Vadi, postulates such an entity as Anava-malam, which necessitates birth in a

body, thus acknowledging the full complement of Padarthas enunciated in the Saiva Siddhantam. God gives the souls bodies in accordance with their previous Karmas. The souls thus undergo births and deaths repeatedly, reaping and sowing, experiencing pleasure and pain. This is the state of bondage. In Mukti, like the Vaiseshikan and the Prabhakaran, the Pashanavada-Saivan holds that the soul lies (dormant) like a stone, the senses and objects of knowledge and all enjoyment, whether of happiness or misery, ceasing to exist.

The Betha Vadi has much in common with his predecessor, but differs from him in his conception of Mukti. Just as the rust in copper is destroyed by the alchemist and the copper is turned into pure gold, even so he says are the three kinds of Pasam annihilated by God's Grace and Mukti pure and eternal is attained.

According to the Sivasama Vadi, there are three kinds of Gnanam corresponding to the three Padarthas, Pathi, Pasu and Pasam. The sensations derived through the senses form Pasa-Gnanam, and these are perceived and enjoyed by Pasu-Gnanam. In the absence of these two kinds of Gnanam, the soul resembles red-hot fuel without the flame and lies dormant knowing nothing. This soul, the Lord takes up as does the wasp the worm, and the soul, meditating on Him, is clothed with powers similar to His, becomes omniscient and enters the assemblage of Muktas.

The Sankirantha Vadi holds that the soul, though sentient, has no objective consciousness. In its presence Pranavayu works the body in the same manner that the iron moves in the presence of the magnet, the five senses (external organs) receive the sensations, and the Antakkaranas (internal organs) perceive them. In the absence of the Antakkaranas the five senses do not act, and when Pranavayu disappears the body lies motionless. When the time for liberation comes, God's Grace alights on the soul and then, like the fuel in the fire and the grass in the salt-field, the identity of the soul is lost, Pasu-karanam turns into Siva-karanam, one-ness is reached, and "I" and "mine" cease to exist.

The Iswaravavikara Vadi thinks that the soul is sentient and resides in a body with various gateways like a lamp in a pot with many holes, and through the gateways called the senses it enjoys their respective objects. On the advent of Malaparipakam the soul obtains through Divine Grace the light of Gnanam wherewith to dispel the darkness of Anavam and reaches the feet of the changeless Lord, who may be compared to a stream of cold water or a large and shady tree in the middle of a dreary wilderness giving relief and shelter to a way-worn, weary traveller in the midday heat of the tropical sun.

The Nimitthakarana-parinama Vadam (also known as Sivadvaitam, the sect of Sri Kantar) holds, as the name implies, that all the world is a form of Sivaperuman, though it accepts, with some reservations, the Tripadarthas, the five Avasthas, the 36 tatwas, &c, of the Saiva Siddhantam. Duality should give place to unity, and this is Sayujjiam. Until this is attained through right understanding, one should act righteously as he thinks best and dedicate everything to the Lord. The state of Thuriyathitham, when all tatwas are extinct and there is no manifestation of intelligence is known as Kevalam. When through Divine Grace the tatwas appear, the power of Anavam is reduced and there is limited intelligence displayed. This is Sakalam. When in Sakram (waking state) where the 36 tatwas are present, Thuriyathitham is simultaneously attained, such state is Sutta-Avastha and, when permanent, constitutes Mukti. This completes the list of the orthodox systems.

The Saiva Vadam (also called Suddha Saivam) is generally included under the Saiva Siddhantam, from which it differs only in so far as it is unable to realise the most mystic concepts. The Saiva Vadi affirms that the soul in its essential nature is sentient, though in Kevalam there is no display of intelligence, the soul being in communion with Anavam: God provides the soul with the necessary instruments wherewith to think, know and act, in the shape of the tatwas which serve like a lamp to one in darkness. With these, Prarapatha-Karmam is eaten up, and in such act is sown what is called Akamiya-Karmam. In this way

innumerable births are undergone, and many and varied are the bodies assumed and deserted. Iruvinayoppu (the state in which likes and dislikes disappear, when happiness and misery are looked at equally), Malaparipakam (the mellowing of Anava Malam when it is fit as it were to be plucked), and Saktinipatham (the implanting of Divine Grace), when at last the time arrives for these to grow one after another the Lord appears as Guru and after instructing the student in Sariya, Kriya and Yogam imparts Gnanam, Gnanam which was ever present in him though latent,—putting an end to Sakalam and Kevalam. Then when the soul perceives true Gnanam, all differentiation of Gnathru knower, Gnanam (knowledge) and Gneyam the known disappears, the soul unites with Sivam and oneness is reached, no difference being perceived between the enjoyer and the enjoyed. And this is Sayujiam.

Thus have we tried to form a general idea,—very meagre and superficial it has been though, of the 24 systems of religion noticed by Siddhanta writers. Seventeen of these together with a few subsects are noticed and critically examined in the Parapaksham of Siddhiyar and the Sankatpa Nirakaranam, 14 systems all told being reviewed in the former work and 9 in the latter, one of the subsects of Ekanmavadam receiving attention in both works. We have not here entered into the criticisms as we said before but merely attempted a very bare outline of the systems themselves.

Some misconceptions,—religion, philosophy and logic

Before proceeding to Supaksham, it seems desirable to clear certain misconceptions regarding the Siddhantic view of Purvapakshams and their classification. We have sometimes heard it said that the Saiva Siddhantam confuses religion with philosophy and philosophy with logic, over-emphasises the necessity for philosophy to be logical, makes very fine and hair-splitting distinctions and is too punctilious in its classification of other systems and their nomenclature. It is even suggested that logic has more to do with theology than with philosophy. Some of our critics seem to be obsessed

with the idea that philosophy and religion should be kept apart in water tight compartments, the one having nothing to do with the other as in the West. Well have some oriental scholars remarked that if the word "philosophy" is taken in the European sense there would be nothing corresponding to it in India. The Indian conception of philosophy is quite different. Religion and philosophy are so much intertwined here, one with the other, that it is impossible to separate them. As regards logical exactitude, if it is a crime for a philosopher to be logical, the Saiva Siddhanti has to plead guilty to the charge. He has no loophole to escape. And after sentence is pronounced against him, one can only plead for the exercise of the sovereign's prerogative of mercy. But once the royal clemency is exercised and the sentence set aside he would return to the charge. He is such a stickler to logical consistency and hates hypocrisy.

Basis of classification repeated

The question is sometimes asked as to why some at least of the heterodox creeds, especially the Yoga system, should be classed by Siddhanta writers as heterodox and not as orthodox. These are relative terms and what from one point of view appears to be orthodox would be heterodox when viewed from another angle. It is something like our saying that the Shrine of Chidambaram is at a great distance from Jaffna, but this Shrine is close by as compared with the holy city of Benares which we say is at a very great distance. The criterion adopted by our writers in making their classification is, as we stated in a previous chapter, the degree of recognition accorded by the different systems to Vedic and Agamic authority. Lokayatam and other creeds which repudiate the Vedas and Agamas in toto are classed as extreme heterodox, those that appeal to the Vedas only either wholly or in part and reject the Agamas are treated as nearer to our system of philosophy and classed as heterodox, while those that accept both the Vedas and Agamas are classed as inner heterodox or orthodox according to the degree of sanctity they assign to these books, which are treated as Sruti or revelation. Yogam and Pancharatram are placed at the head of the outer groups in the ascending scale as, unlike most of the other systems included therein which are more or less atheistic,

these two systems are distinctly theistic. Tharukkam, though theistic, has some affinity to the Buddhistic and Jaina systems in that it promulgates what is called Paramanu Vadam (பரமணுவாதம்) or theory of ultimate atoms and is hence placed just above them but in the higher group as, unlike them, it appeals to the authority of the Vedas here and there. The Tharkikas share yet another feature in common with the Baudddhas as they entertain the ideas of momentary existence and decay though to a small extent only and are therefore sometimes dubbed with the appellation of Atta (or semi) Kana Banga Vadies (அத்தகணபங்கவாதிகள்)

No man of religion to be dispised

Our classification of the Purvapaksha creeds is assailed on yet another, and that a novel ground, to wit: the ground of expediency. Diplomacy and expediency and other doubtful virtues may have their use in political and other mundane affairs. But they certainly can have no place in religion. It is seriously urged that all creeds that look up to the Vedas as authoritative should be classed as orthodox and should be united so as to present a common front to the enemy from outside, the reference obviously being to Christianity and other creeds of foreign origin, not indigenous to India. Common front indeed! And common enemy! No man of religion is considered an enemy by the Saiva Siddhanti. Every religion in its place is a necessity and serves its clientele in its own way according to their capacity and their environments, as we have repeatedly stated. All truth is one whether it originated (or rather, we should say, found expression) in India or elsewhere. Even granting for the sake of argument that the foreigner is our enemy, an open enemy from outside is to be preferred to a secret enemy from within. A live lion is less to be dreaded than a wolf in sheep's clothing. A godly man who believes in God though not in the Vadas is certainly to be preferred to an atheist or one who blasphemes God and drags Him down from His high pedestal and places Him on a par with erring souls, even though these latter may profess to believe in the Vedas. We shall say no more. Now to proceed to the main work that we have taken up for study, the Supaksham of Siddhiyar.

CHAPTER XIII

'Supaksham' or Our Side: Pothu Atikaram . Proofs and Descriptions

Plan of the Work

THE 'Supaksham' (சுபக்கம்) of Siddhiyar, following its predecessor the Siva Gnana Bodham, is divided into two parts Pothu Atikaram (பொது அதிகாரம்) and Unmai Atikaram (உண்மை அதிகாரம்). These parts are again sub-divided into two chapters each, and each chapter contains three Sutras or groups of propositions. Thus there are twelve Sutras in all, the first three of which form the first chapter entitled Pramaṇa Iyal (பிரமாண இயல்) or chapter on Proofs, establishing by logical arguments the existence of the Tripadarthas or three entities Pati or God (1st Sūtram), Pasam or bondage (2nd Sūtram) and Pasu or soul (3rd Sūtram). The second chapter called Lakshana Iyal (இலக்கண இயல்) or chapter of attributes deals with the further attributes (—some of the essential attributes having found a place in the first chapter when proving the existence of these entities—) of Pasu (4th Sūtram), Pasam (5th Sūtram) and Pati (6th Sūtram). The next chapter is known as Sadana Iyal (சாதனை இயல்) or chapter on religious practices (7th, 8th and 9th Sutras) and the concluding chapter is designated Payan Iyal (பயன் இயல்) or chapter dealing with the result of these Sadanas or, in other words, the Goal (10th, 11th and 12th Sutras). Each Sūtram contains several Atikaranas (அதிகாரணங்கள்) or propositions, which are grouped together as being inter-related and on the same subject, and some of these propositions are further divisible into sub-propositions. The first verse of every Sūtram of Siddhiyar is practically a paraphrase or reproduction in a slightly expanded form of the corresponding Sūtram of Siva Gnana Bodham and briefly states all the propositions constituting that Sūtram, which are dealt with in greater detail in the succeeding verses.

The changing world and the Change-Producer,—God,—One only

Thus there are three propositions in the first Sūtram, which are briefly stated in the first verse and elaborated in

69. subsequent verses. These propositions are as follows. We give them here first in the words of the Siva Gnana Bodham and Siddhiyar duly analysed, and then in English.

- I. (1) அவன் அவன் அது எனும் அவை மூவினைமையின்,
 (2) தோற்றிய திதியே ஒடுக்கி (மலத்து) உளதாம்,
 (3) அந்தம் ஆதி என்மனார் புலவர். (Siva Gnana Bodham)

(1) ஒருவனோடு ஒருத்தி ஒன்று என்று உரைத்திடும் உலகம் எல்லாம்—வரும்முறை வந்து நின்று போவதும் ஆதலாலே—தருபவன் ஒருவன் வேண்டும், (3) தான்முதல, (2) ஈறும் ஆகி—மருவிடும் அநாதி முத்த சித்தரு மன்னி நின்றே, (Siddhiyar)

(1) As the world is subject to the threefold changes of appearance, endurance and disappearance, it must have a Maker (or change-producer).

(2) The eternal, free, intelligent Being that forms the End produces it.

(3) He alone is the Prime Being.

It will here be seen that the Siva Gnana Bodham deals with the subject in very concise language. It is the terse Sutram of three lines of the Bodham quoted above together with our Lord Meykandan's short commentary in prose giving each proposition in the form of Pratigna or Metkole (பிரதிஞ்சை அல்லது மேற்கோள், enunciation of the proposition) and Hetu (ஏது), the reason therefor, along with Utharanam (உதாரணம்) in five verses of Venba metre, that is elaborated in seventy verses of Viruttham metre in Siddhiyar and it will be seen that the first of these seventy verses which we have quoted above is nothing but a paraphrase of the original Sutram. It will also be seen that the first three propositions as given by us are but a free rendering or reproduction in English of the same terse and concise Sutram. Similar remarks apply to the second and following Sutras, the opening verses of which we give below preceded by the Siva Gnana Bodha Sutras and followed by their purport in English.

It will also be seen that the first of the above propositions in the first Sutram of Siddhiyar is a complex

proposition made up of the two simpler propositions (a) that the world is subject to change and (b) that it has a Maker. In fact it is the first part of this proposition that is given as the first proposition in Siva Gnana Botham and the second part is tacked on to the second proposition. However, we shall here follow the division as in Siddhiyar, whose author seems to make such slight deviations for convenience of treatment.

That the world is subject to change is a truth arrived at by direct observation and inference. First of all we note that the world consists of three categories of objects which are denoted by the words he (masculine gender), she (feminine gender), and it (neuter gender). The second phase of the changes referred to above (endurance or existence) is a matter of direct observation (Pratiaksham). The first and third phases (appearance or beginning and disappearance or end) are also observed in individual objects or classes of objects of each of the categories he, she and it. We note that Raman is born at one point of time and dies later on. We note the same with Gopalan, Kandan, Velan, &c, and with Ramasi, Annam, Pooranam, &c. We also note that objects denoted by the word it, both animate and inanimate, appear and disappear. From these known data, by applying the method of logic called inductive reasoning we arrive at the general conclusion that every one of these categories is subject to all these changes. And it follows as a matter of course that the composite whole which is known as the world is subject to these changes. How beautifully our author logically refutes the arguments of those who make such assertions as that the world is eternal or, though subject to change, that the changes are natural, &c, and establishes the necessity of a Maker can only be realized, appreciated and enjoyed by a careful and detailed study of the text in the original Tamil with its commentaries. These remarks apply with equal force to the other propositions too, not only of this Sutram but of the other Sutras as well,

Adwaitam,—Karmam,—Maya,—God's Omnipresence,—
Anava Malam

After establishing the existence of God (Pati) and proving His oneness (Ekam), refuting among others the doctrine of a

plurality of Gods as all other so-called gods are subject to birth and death like any of us mortals and referring incidentally to the existence of cosmic matter (Maya) out of which the world is brought into being, Arulnandi Devar proceeds in the next Sutrām to describe God's relation to the world and by way of explaining how the world is reproduced after dissolution, establishes the existence of the different forms of bondage (Pasam). There are five propositions in the second Sutrām, briefly told in one stanza and elaborated in 95 additional stanzas. These propositions are:

II. (1) அவையே தானே ஆய் (2) இகுவீணையின்,
(3) போக்கு வரவு புரிய, (4) ஆணையின்
நீக்கம் இன்றி நிற்கும் அன்றே. (Siva Gnana Bodham)

(1) உலகு எலாம் ஆகி வேறு ஆய் உடனும் ஆய், (4) ஒளியாய்
ஒங்கி),—(2) அலகிலா உயிர்கள் கன்மத்து ஆணையின், (3) அமர்ந்து
செல்லத்—தலைவன் ஆய், (5) இவற்றின் தன்மை தனக்கு எய்தல்
இன்றித் தானே—நிலவுசீர் அமலன் ஆகி, (4) நின்றனன் நீங்
காது எங்கும். (Siddhiyar)

Our readers will notice here that there are only four propositions in the second Sutrām of Siva Gnana Bodham but that we have divided the Siddhiyar verse into five. Commentators generally prefer to call our last proposition an *Olipu* (ஒழிபு) or residue proposition as it is not found in the original. As we said before when speaking of the first and second propositions of the first Sutrām, our author makes slight deviations from the original in his method of treatment of the subject here and there, and this additional proposition here is one of such deviations.

The 4th and 5th propositions in Siddhiyar are: (4) எங்கும்
ஒளியாய் ஒங்கி நீங்காது நின்றனன், (5) இவற்றின் தன்மை தனக்கு
எய்தலின்றித் தானே நிலவுசீர் அமலன் ஆகி (நின்றனன்)

Rendered in English the five propositions are:

(1) God is all the world and different from it and in association with it (Ananniyam or Adwaitam),

(2) Actions (Karmam) yield their fruits with the aid of God's Sakti (or Power).

(3) Souls (which are innumerable) are subject to birth and death, i. e., they take on and leave bodies formed of cosmic matter (Maya).

(4) God is omnipresent and one with His Sakti (Tatanmiya relation).

(5) God is Amalan, i. e., free and pure unlike souls (Pasu) which are subject to Anava Malam (pristine impurity).

The theory of Karmam, receives most expert treatment in the second proposition and we are told how even such acts of the Fountain of all Mercy and Grace which appear cruel are acts of Grace really, meant for the reformation of erring souls, the similes of the parent chastising the wayward child, the king punishing the criminal and the physician administering bitter and caustic remedies to the patient being most appropriate. Good and meritorious acts are mentioned and we hear how the birthless and deathless All-Knower bestows blessings on devotees in the guise of their favourite deities. So beautiful and appealing to both the head and the heart are the ideas and the form of language used to give expression to them that the recital and contemplation of some of these verses in times of adversity would be a real solace and source of comfort to the afflicted and the dying.

We have a definition of Maya, the material cause of the Universe, in the next proposition where the order of evolution of the various Tatwas (products of Maya) ending with the gross elements (Bhutas), Akasam, air, fire, water and earth is briefly described. The different manifestations of the Supreme are briefly told in the next proposition and last we have a definition and proof of the existence of Anava Malam, quite distinct and separate from Maya Malam. The Sutram concludes with a sort of peroration dwelling on the rarity (அருமை great value) or the extremely remote possibility

of being born in human form avoiding the hundreds of thousands of other orders of creation (Yonies, யோனிகள்) which souls are born into, and exhorting on the reader the necessity of profiting by this birth by making use of it to do the right thing and reach the goal of Moksham or liberation from bondage. A careful study of the first and second Sutras of Siddhiyar gives us a clear understanding as to the purpose and object of creation or evolution, a most rational explanation quite foreign to some plausible systems of philosophy which beat about the bush and dismiss such questions as inadmissible.

The soul,—not a non-antity,—not the body, &c.

The third and fourth Sutras treat about the soul (Pasu). The former of these consists of one long proposition with one subject and seven predicates which are in refutation of seven different theories regarding the soul and may therefore be regarded as seven simple propositions or statements. These are

III. (1) உளது இலது என்றலின், (2) எனது உடல் என்றலின், (3) & (4) ஐம்புலன், ஒடுக்கம், அறிதலின், (5) கண்படிவ் உண்டி வினை இன்மையின், (6) உணர்த்த உணர்த்தலின், (7) மாயா இயந்திர தனுவினுள், ஆன்மா. (Siva Cuana Bodham)

உயிர் எனப்படுவது (2. இந்த உடலின்) வேறு (1) உளதாய், (2) உற்றுச்—செயிர் உறும், (3) இச்சா ஞானச் செய்திகள் உடையது ஆகிப்,—(4) பயில்வு உறும்) (5) இன்பத் துன்பப் பயன்களும் நுகரும் பார்க்கில்,—(4) துயில் ஓடும், (6) அஞ்ச அவத்தைப் படும், (7) உண்மை துரியாதீதம். (Siddhiyar)

The word அறிதலின் should be repeated twice first with the word ஐம்புலன் and then with the word ஒடுக்கம் in the original Sutram. The 3rd and 4th statements will thus be: (3) ஐம்புலன் அறிதலின் ஆன்மா உளது. (4) ஒடுக்கம் அறிதலின் ஆன்மா உளது. In the Siddhiyar verse, the 2nd and 4th statements are: (2) இந்த உடலின் உற்றுச் செயிர் உறு(தலால்) உயிர் எனப்படுவது வேறு, (4) துயில் ஓடும் பயில் வுறு(தலால்) உயிர் எனப்படுவது வேறு, The words ஒடுக்கம் and துயில் in these Sutras stand for the dreaming state செரிப்பனம் and not for deep sleep சுழுத்தி. The seven statements made in this Sutram are:

(1) The soul exists. This is in refutation of the theory that it is a negation of everything (சூனியம், Suniyam), as there is a subconscious reality which denies or rejects everything else as not being the soul.

(2) It joins the body and gets egotistic, saying this is my body, &c. Hence it is different from the body, which is inert in deep sleep or when it becomes a corpse.

(3) It has the faculties of Ichchai, Gnanam and Kriyai (volition notion and action), as distinct from the five senses which are organs of knowledge only.

(4) It cogitates over dreams. This is in repudiation of the theory that the soul is identical with the Sukshuma Sariram (சூக்கும சரீரம்) or subtle body, the vehicle assumed by the soul in the dream state with which it roams about and undergoes varying experiences in rapid succession. The argument is that if the Sukshuma Sariram were the principal it should clearly recollect everything that took place during dreams in the subsequent waking state, which is not the case. However much one may try, he is able to recollect fragmentary bits only of his dream experiences and forgets much of it, though the waking state follows within a view moments after the experiences.

(5) It experiences pleasure and pain in the waking state but not in deep sleep. This is to shew that the soul is different from Prana-Vayu (life-breath) which is fully active in both states.

(6) It is subject to the five Avastas (அவத்கைதகள்) or states of existence ranging from utter

inertia (தூரியாதீதம், Turiyatitam) to full wakefulness (சாக்கிரம், Sakram). This is in proof of the fact that the soul is not God, who is self-luminous and not subject to any limitations of knowledge or inertia at any time.

(7) It exists even in the Turiyatita condition where the senses and other bodily organs including Chittam (சித்தம்) and Prana-Vayu (பிராணவாயு) do not function. This is in answer to those who assert that the soul is nothing but a conglomeration of the bodily senses and organs.

It is not the mind, &c,—its conjunction with Anava Malam,—its Avasthas.

There are three propositions in the fourth Sutam, namely:

IV. (1) அந்தக் கரணம் அவற்றின் ஒன்று அன்று, (2) அவை சந்தித்தது ஆன்மா சகசமலத்து உணராது.

(3) அமைச்சு அரசு ஏய்ப்ப நின்று அஞ்சு அவத்தைத்தே.

(Siva Gnana Bodham)

(1) உணர்வன கரணம் என்னில் ஒன்றைஒன்று உணரா, (2) வெவ்வேறு—அணைதரும் செயல்கள் நான்கும் அறிந்து அவை அடக்கி ஆக்கிப்—புணரும் உட்கருவி ஆக்கிப் புறக்கருவியினும் போக்கி, - (2) இணைதரும் (1. இவற்றின் வேறும்) யான் எனது என்பது. ஆன்மா.

(Siddhiyar)

The analysis of the Siddhiyar verse into three propositions will read as follows: (1) உணர்வன கரணம் என்னில் ஒன்றை ஒன்று உணரா (ஆகலால்) ஆன்மா இவற்றின் வேறு, (2) யான் எனது என்பது இணைதரும், (3) செயல்கள் நான்கும் அறிந்து அவை அடக்கி ஆக்கிப் புணரும் உட்கருவியாக்கிப் புறக்கருவியினும் போக்கி வெவ்வேறு அணைதரும். We shall now repeat these three propositions in English.

(1) The soul is different from the Antakkaranas (அந்தக்கரணங்கள்) or inner senses of Chittam, Manas, Akankaram and Buddhi.

2) It is in conjunction with Anava Malam which is the cause of self-concept.

(3) It undergoes different Avastas by contracting and expanding its bodily organs.

These ten propositions (seven in the third and three in the fourth Sutram) are briefly told in two verses as above and elaborated in 42 additional verses in Siddhiyar. It should be noted here that the 6th and 7th propositions of the 3rd Sutram and the 3rd proposition of the 4th Sutram are not repetitions though they appear similar. The former two occur in Pramana Iyal and are intended as proof of the existence of the soul as distinct from God and the bodily organs, respectively, while the last appears in Lakshana Iyal and gives some of the further attributes or qualities of the soul.

Tirohana Sakti, the motive power behind the soul

The next Sutram describes the manner in which the Lord's Sakti acts and enables the fettered souls and the fetters themselves (Pasam) to act. This Sakti is called Tirohana Sakti (திரோதான சக்தி, literally Hiding or Hidden Power) and is reckoned along with Anavam, Karmam, Maya and Mayeyam (or products of Maya) as one of the PanchaMalas (five-fold varieties of bondage), as it forms a sort of veil and lets the soul get immersed in the pleasures (and pains) of the world. This, of course, is with a view to the poisoning of likes and dislikes (eyeing them equally, இருவகை யொப்பு) and the mellowing of Anava Malam (மலபரிபாகம்) and, when this mature stage is reached, the Tirohana Sakti so called at the earlier stage of the soul's progress becomes the Arul Sakti (Grace) which illumines the soul and leads it to Salvation. There are two propositions in this, the fifth Sutram, and three propositions in the following, the sixth Sutram, which deals with the special characteristics of Sivam. They are as follows:

V. (1) விளம்பிய உள்ளத்து மெய் வாய் கண் மூக்கு
அளந்து அறிந்து அறியா, (2) ஆங்கு அவை போலத்
தாம் தம் உணர்வின் தமிழ் அருள்,
கார்தம் கண்ட பதாசத்து அனையேயே. (Siva Gnana Bodham)

(1) பொறி புலன் கரணம் எல்லாம் புருடனூல் அறிந்து ஆன்மாவை—அறிதரா, (2) அவையே போல ஆன்மாக்கள் அனைத்தும் எங்கும்—செறிதரும் சிவன்தனாலே அறிந்திடும் சிவனைக்காணு,—அறிதரும் சிவனே எல்லாம் அறிந்து அறிவித்து நிற்பன்-
(Siddhiyar)

The words அளந்து அறிந்து அறியா in the second line of the original Sutam should be repeated at the end of the third line also. The second proposition then will read thus: ஆங்கு அவை போலத் தாம் தம் உணர்வின் தமிழ் அருள் (ஆல், அளந்து அறிந்து அறியா.

V. (1) The senses can only know with the aid of the soul, but they cannot know the soul.

(2) Similarly, the soul can only know with the aid of God (His Tirohana Sakti) and it is the all-knowing Sivan that knows and makes the souls to know.

'Sat' and 'Asat',—their incompatibility

VI. 1) உணர்-உரு அசத்து எனின் உணராத இன்மையின்,
(2) இரு திறன் அல்லது சிவசத்து ஆம் என இரண்டு வகையின் இசைக்கும் மன் உலகே. (Siva Gnana Bodham)
அறிவுறும் பொருளோ ஈசன் அறிவுருதவனோ என்னில்,—
(1) அறிபொருள் அசித்து அசத்து ஆம், (2) அறியாதது இன்றும், (3) எங்கும்—செறி சிவம் இரண்டும் இன்றிச் சித் தொடு சத்தாம் நிற்கும்,—நெறிதரு சத்தின் முன்னர் அசத்து எலாம் நின்றிடாவே. (Siddhiyar)

VI. (1) Whatever we perceive is Achit (அசித்து, insentient) and Asat* (அசத்து, unstable.)

*The reader should carefully note the difference between 'Asat' and இன்மை or இன்ற (non-existence). Just as in the case of the words Adwaitam, Avidya, &c, which we discussed in a previous chapter, the prefix 'a' in 'Asat' does not signify இன்மை or அபவம், absolute negation, but is used in the அன்ன (or 'other than') sense. It might perhaps be thought that we are harping on this point ad nauseam, but misconceptions die hard and such points should be emphasised at every possible opportunity if deep-rooted erroneous ideas are to be eradicated. These repetitions are intended to serve the same purpose as the one intended in the Brihad-Aranyaka Upanishad where God's relationship to the world, to wit: that He is in the world that He is different from it, that He pulls it from within, &c. is repeated twenty-one times in identical words in regard to different constituents thereof (earth, water, fire, air, Akas, Sun, Moon, soul, &c). Vide Sabhai Publication No. 56. Chapter XVII. Br. Up: III 7. 1—23.

(2) Whatever cannot be known in any way is non-existent.

(3) The all pervading Sivam is neither the one nor the other but is Chit (சித்து, pure Intelligence) and Sat (சத்து, Existence).

Here again (in the 6th Sutram) there is a slight difference in the division of the Sutram into propositions. The first proposition in the original (உணர் உரு அசத்து எனின் உணராது இன்மையில்) is subdivisible into two and it is so divided in Siddhiyar, and the Sutram is taken as consisting of three main propositions and dealt with accordingly by our author so as to dispel any doubts that may lurk in the minds of comparatively less advanced students.

The last of these propositions though inserted here really belongs to the second part of the Supaksham of Siddhiyar, Unmai Atikaram, as it describes the Sorupa Lakshanam of the Supreme Being. This is perhaps the reason why it is placed at the very end of Pothu Atikaram and serves as a sort of prelude to what follows. After enumerating and expatiating on these propositions in 18 verses, our Achariyar proceeds to give us an idea of the Sadanas prescribed for the attainment of the goal of Moksham or liberation.

CHAPTER XIV.

'Supaksham' (Continued): Unmai Atikaram The Means and the End ('Sadana' and 'Payan')

Satasat—it enjoys both Sat and Asat—its capacity to profit by Sadanas

SADANAI Iyal commences with a brief exposition of that peculiar characteristic of the Atma which enables it to profit by instruction and by the practice of Sadanas, to wit: its capacity of assimilating the qualities of whatever it is attached to, even as a crystal assumes the colours of adjacent objects, (யாதொன்று பற்றின் அதன் இயல்பாய் நிற்கும் பளிங்கு அணய சித்து) or அது அது ஆதல் in the words of our Lord Meykandan, which we discussed at some length in a previous chapter. It is essential that this distinguishing nature of the soul should be clearly understood at the very beginning before one is instructed to start with Sadanas or religious practices and thus attempt to reach the Goal (or Payan) of Moksham as, if the Sadakan (சாதகன், practiser) were Brahman or God Himself as some Purvapakshins assert, there would be no need to practise Sadanas or attempt to attain Brahmanhood. If on the other hand the Sadakan were identical with insentient matter or merely the product of various forms of such matter mingling together in different proportions of permutations and combinations as some other Purvapakshins assert, then too the practice of Sadanas becomes meaningless. Too far west they say is east and it is nothing to be wondered at if these two extreme views meet on common ground as the logical conclusion in either case is that the prescription of even the most elementary Sadanas like abstention from evil doing and adherence to righteousness is purposeless, let alone the more advanced forms of Sadana' like the contemplation of the Mahavakias 'Aham-Brahm-Asmi', &c, or Sivohambhavanai.

The view taken by the Siddhanti is the middle path, the judicious and balanced view that the soul occupies a middle position being neither God who is Sat Chit Anandam, pure Existence, Intelligence and Bliss, nor impure inert

matter which too is existence but of a lower order (அசத்து, Asat) and is bliss too but here again of a lower transitory nature (கிற்றின்பம், limited pleasure) in which pleasure and pain are mingled together. Though it is neither God nor matter, the soul's distinguishing feature is its assimilative character. In the temporal plane it is so much immersed in worldly affairs that it practically identifies itself with the world, and the various Sadanas prescribed to be practised by the seeker after truth are intended to wean it of its worldly tendencies and make it to acquire godly qualities and ultimately attain Brahmanhood or pure unalloyed Bliss. We have said all this and more before, but the point we wish to drive home into the minds of our readers is so important that it has to be alluded to in every possible context.

The seventh Sutam contains three propositions told in four verses only in Siddhiyar, but the whole of Unmai Atikaram teems with reverberations of this central doctrine of Saiva Siddhantam which, by the way, seems to be purposely placed here towards the middle of the book in the same manner that the Sri Panchaksharam is placed in the middle of the central Vedam. These propositions are:

- VII (1) யாவையும் குனியம் சத்து எதிர் ஆதலின்
சத்தே அறியாது, (2) அசத்து இலது அறியாது,
(3) இருதிறன் அறிவுளது இரண்டு அலா ஆன்மா.
(Siva Gnana Bodham)

- (1) அனைத்தும் சத்து என்னில் ஒன்றை அறிந்திடாது அசத்தால என்னில் முனைத்திடாது அசத்துச் சத்தின்முன் இருள் இரவிமுன் போல்,
(2) நினைப்பது இங்கு அசத்தே என்னில் சத்தின்முன் நிலாமையானும் தனைக்கொடு ஒன்று உணர் தலானும் தான் அசத்து உணராதன்றே.
(Siddhiyar).

(1) Sat (Sivam) does not know (objectively) and enjoy Asat (Pasam), because the latter cannot protrude itself before the former even as darkness cannot stand before light.

(2) Asat which is insentient and non-apparent in the presence of Sat cannot know or enjoy Sat.

(3) Atma which is neither the one nor the other identifies itself with Sat and Asat and enjoys them and is hence called Satasat (சதசத்து).

Our readers may notice that the third proposition here is not expressly stated in the Siddhiyar verse quoted above, but it is implied there and follows as a sort of corollary to the first two propositions which are expressly stated therein and is so deduced by the method of reasoning called Olipu (ஒழிபு) or Parisesham (பாரிசேடம்) or residue. And our author expands it in subsequent verses. We should also caution our readers against interpreting the words குனியம் (Suniyam) and அசத்து (Asat) here as nothingness or non-existence, complete negation of all existence. As we have often stated and as our readers are aware, words have more than one meaning, more often than not, and they have to be understood according to the context. Here these words merely mean non-apparent or non-findable or non-luminous (அப்பிரகாசமாய் நின்றல்), and Arulnandhi Devar makes this quite clear when he uses the words முனைத்திடாது அசத்துச் சத்தின்முன் (Asat cannot protrude itself before Sat). Yet another word regarding whose use we should caution our readers is the word Arivu (அறிவு) or knowledge. The word as used here refers to heartfelt knowledge or knowledge by enjoyment or actual experience or realization (அனுபவ அறிவு) and not to mere intellection or intellectual knowledge.

The advent of the Guru,—Gnana Dharsanam

There are four propositions in the eighth Sūtram.

VIII. (3) ஐம்புல வேடரின் அயர்ந்தனை வளர்ந்து எனத்
(2) தம்முதல் குருவும் ஆய்த் (1) தவத்தினில் உணர்த்த (4) விட்டு
அன்னியம் இன்மையின் அரன் கழல் செலுமே
(Siva Gnana Bodham)

(3) மன்னவன் தன் மகன் வேடர் இடத்தே தங்கி
வளர்ந்து அவனை அறியாது மயங்கி நிற்பப்)
(4, பின் அவனும் என் மகன் நீ என்று அவரிற் பிரித்துப்
பெருமை ஒடும் தான் ஆக்கிப் பேணுமா போல்)

- (3) துன்னிய ஐம்புல வேடர் சுழலிற் பட்டுத்
 துணைவனையும் அறியாது துயர் உறும் தொல் உயிரை
 (2) மன்னும் அருள் (1) குரு ஆகி வந்து (4) அவரில் நீக்கி
 மலம் அகற்றித் தான் ஆக்கி மலர் அடிகழை வைப்பன்,
 (Siddhiyar)

(1) It is Sivan that appears in the garb of the Guru and imparts true knowledge to the soul.

(2) The soul attains true knowledge as a result of the practice of religious austerities (Tapas).

(3) The soul suffers when it is in association with the senses, &c, not knowing (its true nature or) its Lord, even as a prince (kidnapped by woodmen in his infancy and) brought up by woodmen (considers himself to be one of them and) does not know (his true nature or) his father.

(4) Like the king who separates the prince from the woodmen, tells him that he is his (the king's) son, brings him up with all kingly dignity and makes him as majestic as himself, God separates the soul from the senses, &c, removes the Malam, and takes it under (the protection of) His Gracious Feet, making it indistinguishable from Himself (Ananniyam or Adwaitham).

It will be noticed that the order of the first and second propositions shown in the original Sutram and in the Siddhiyar verse is interchanged. This is done to conform to the order of their treatment in the two books. The words மன்னும் அருள் appearing in the Siddhiyar verse, literally abiding Grace, which follows as a necessary sequence or result of prior austerities or Tapas, is taken as indicating Tapas, thus conforming with the words தவத்தினில் உணர்த்த (to instruct in accordance with or as a result of the practice of religious austerities, appearing in the original Sutram. The language used by our author to enunciate these two propositions is the very soul or acme

of brevity, being briefer even than the words in the original. But the next two propositions would appear to be rather lavishly worded. It should be noted however that fully one-half of the verse elaborates an analogy and that too a most beautiful analogy. The latter propositions read thus: (3) மன்னவன் தன் மகன் வேடர் இடத்தே தங்கி வளர்ந்து அவனை அறியாது மயங்கி கிற்ப(துபோல்), துன்னிய ஐம்புல வேடர் சுழலிற் பட்டுத் துணைவனையும் அறியாது துயர் உறும் தொல் உயிர், (4) பின் அவனும் என் மகன் நீ என்று அவரிற் பிரித்துப் பெருமை ஓடும் தான் ஆக்கிப் பேணுமா போல், அவரில் நீக்கி மலம் அகற்றித் தான் ஆக்கி மலர் அடிக்கிழ் வைப்பன். The words ஐம்புல வேடர் denote the five senses (ஐம்பொறிகள்) and these are particularly mentioned as they are the most prominent and easily recognised of the foes that drag man into the mire of misery. The words may be taken as implying the inclusion of the other Tatwas and products of Maya known as Mayeyam (மாயேயம்) and the other forms of Pasam as well.

This Sutam is very important and should be carefully studied as it gives us a general idea of the different forms of Dikshai (தீக்கை, initiation into the Truth) by which the Divine Guru cleanses the soul of its impurities, and of the principal Sadanas prescribed for the soul's salvation. Here occurs our Acharya's definition of what a true religion and philosophy should be. The exquisite ladder of spiritual progress pictured by him in sweet melodious language, in which all religions and religious practices (beginning from the most heretical Lokayatam or materialism and ending with the most orthodox Saivism) and a long array of religious and ethical literature find a place, is something very unique indeed. Here too occurs the famous verse, of which the author of Sivabhogasaram says one-half only is enough to equal the teachings contained in all the literature of all the world (பார் விரித்த ஞால் எல்லாம் பார்த்து அறியச் சித்தி தனின், ஓர் விருத்தப் பாதி போதும்) and which Thayumanaver says sets out the Truth whereby he lost all the delusive world (பாதி விருத்தத் தத்தால் இப்பார் விருத்தமாக உண்மை, சாதித்தார் பொன் அடியைத் தான் பணிவது எந்நாளோ.) No greater testimony is needed to impress on the mind of the reader the invaluable nature of the treasures, gems of thought, inculcated herein and it is needless to add that it is the writer's firm conviction

that a careful study of this and the following Sutras of Siddhiyar and their reading and re-reading with rapt attention and in the proper spirit is certain to give the enquiring student occasional glimpses at least of the Shining Light.

The four paths

The principal Sadanas prescribed to a Siddhanti are four in number viz: Sariya, Kriya, Yogam and Gnanam. There are sub-divisions of these and several intermediate grades and a host of preliminary stages. Sariya as explained in a previous chapter consists mainly of temple worship with personal services to God and His devotees and is generally referred to as Dasa-margam (தாசமார்த்தம் literally servant's path), the relationship to God at this stage being similar to that of a servant to his master. In Kriya which is also called Satputira-margam (சம்புத்திரமார்த்தம் or son's path) there is in addition the performance of Pujas with the aid of Mantras, flowers, &c. Yogam is meditation and internal worship without external work, controlling the breath, senses, mind, &c and is also styled Saha-margam (சகமார்த்தம் or friend's path). Gnanam or San-margam (சன்மார்த்தம் literally the good or right path) is the knowledge-path which culminates in God-realization. Sariya is directed towards God in His Rupa or Sakala (சகல) or Saguna (சகுண) or personal aspect, Yogam aims at His Arupa or Nishkala (நில்கல) or Nirguna (நிரக்குண) or formless aspect, the intermediate path of Kriya has reference to His intermediate aspect of Rupa-rupam (ரூபரூபம்), while Gnanam deals with His Supreme nature which is beyond all these three aspects. The goal of Gnana patham (ஞானபாதம்) is Sayujjiam (சாயுச்சியம்) or Para Mukti (பரமுத்தி) Supreme Bliss, from which there is no return to births and deaths. The votaries of the other paths Sariya, Kriya and Yogam reach what are called Apra or Pada-Mukties (அபர அல்லது பத முத்திகள், literally lower or regional heavens), Salokam, Sameepam and Sarupam (literally God's world, God's proximity and God's likeness, respectively), and are ultimately led into Sayujjiam either direct or after one more birth in which the stage of Gnana-patham is gone through.

Seven stages of Gnanam or enlightenment are noticed, to wit: (1) Othal (ஓதல்) reading the Gnana-Nool or sacred books

(2) Othuvitthal (ஒதுவித்தல்), learning them from one's elders, (3) Kertpitthal (கேட்பித்தல்) teaching and explaining their meaning to one's juniors, (4) Kertal (கேட்டல்), hearing Gnana-Upadesam (ஞானஉபதேசம்) from the Gnana Guru, (5) Sinthritthal (சின்திரித்தல்), pondering over what is so heard, (6) Thelithal (தெளிதல்), clearly understanding what is so heard and pondered over and (7) Nishdai or Samadhi (நிட்டை அல்லது சமாதி), attainment of final peace, becoming one with God, or God-realization (from which there is no return to births).

After giving a general idea of the different Sadanas and expatiating at some length on Gnana Margam in the eighth Sutram in 39 verses, our author proceeds in the next Sutram to explain how one should perform his Sadana. Not that this (the eighth) Sutram is silent as regards the *Modus Operandi*. The subject matter not only of the ninth Sutram but of the subsequent Sutras as well which form the last chapter or Peyan Iyal is all anticipated here. But it is all done rather briefly, and it is expressly stated that those who conform to the instructions herein given and take refuge with all humility and true love under the Gracious Feet of the All-Bestower will remain there in peace, while the waverers will be tossed about hither and thither owing to the remnants of Pasam (Vasana Malam வாசனா மலம்) being still there, and it is for these latter that the subsequent detailed instructions are given.

Siva Darsanam and Atma Suddhi,—renunciation and Sohambhavanai

The ninth Sutram which completes the chapter on Sadanas may be said to be supplementary to the eighth Sutram as it puts the coping stone as it were, if we may say so, to the huge edifice of Sadanas built up in that Sutram. There are three kinds of Gnanam: (1) Pasa-Gnanam (பாச ஞானம்) knowledge acquired with the help of Pasa or worldly agencies, books of knowledge, the senses, &c, (2) Pasu-Gnanam (பசு ஞானம்) or Aham-Brahma-Gnanam (அகம் பிரம ஞானம்), egotistic knowledge which springs forth suddenly when one discovers that Pasam and its products are inferior to him and of no use, and (3) Pati-Gnanam (பதி ஞானம்), or Godly knowledge, realization through Divine Grace (அவனருளாலே

காணல்). There are three propositions in the ninth Sutrām, which are briefly told in one verse and explained in more detail in 11 subsequent verses:

IX (1) ஊனக்கண் பாசம் உணராப் பதியை
 ஞானக் கண்ணிவில் சிந்தைநாடி,
 (2) உராத் துனைத் தேர்த்து எனப் பாசம் ஒருவத்
 தன் நிழலாம் பதி, (3) விதி எண்ணும் அஞ்சு எழுத்தே.
 (Siva Gnana Bodham)

(1) பாச ஞானத்தாலும் பசு ஞானத்தாலும்
 பரர்ப்பரிய பரம்பரனைப் பதிஞானத்தாலே
 நேசம் ஓடும் உள்ளத்தே நாடிப் பாத
 நீழற் கீழ் (2) நிலலாதே நீங்கிப் போதின்
 ஆசை தரும் உலகம் எல்லாம் அலகைத் தேராம் என்று
 அறிந்து அகல அந்நிலையே ஆகும் (3) பின்னும்
 ஓசை தரும் அஞ்சு எழுத்தை விதிப்படி உச்சரிக்க
 உள்ளத்தே புகுந்து அளிப்பன் ஊனம் எலாம் ஓட.
 Siddhiyar)

(1) Know with Pati-Gnanam the Supreme Lord inaccessible to Pasu and Pasa-Gnanam.

(2) Relinquish the world which is of a transitory nature like a mirage.

(3) Contemplate with the Sri Panchaksharam in the prescribed manner.

Science and religion

We have sometimes heard it said that science clashes with religion and religion with science. Science is a religion and religion a science. Physical science, mental science, moral science, every one of them is good and useful in its own way. The specialist who dives deep into any particular branch of knowledge exults over it and enjoys it to the full. The soul's nature is that. It becomes that to which it is attached (சார்ந்ததன்வண்ணமா மியல்புடைத்து). The achievements of modern science, physical science, the science of nature in its external aspects, are very great indeed and its discoveries and inventions are of the greatest use to man where

they are put to their proper use. But put them into the hands of the cynic, the gangster and the barbarian. They become the deadliest scourge to man when used in hitlerian fashion, more to be cursed and shunned than the worst form of plague or cholera. As in the physical so in the mental and spiritual planes. Psychic powers manifest themselves in the course of Yoga practice for instance, most miraculous powers, which when not controlled or properly used prove themselves to be even worse calamities than hydrogen or atomic bombs, magnetic mines and poison gas, not only to one's adversaries, but also to the doer himself and to the world at large.

It is not modern-day scientists and their admirers only that gloat and glory over their intellectual attainments in the realms of Pasu and Pasa-Gnanam. This self-satisfaction is there and has been there throughout the ages dating from the earliest pre-historic times, and the Saiva Siddhanti is as loud in its praise as anybody else. If there is one system of philosophy or religion that is scientific or logical in its concepts and teachings it is the Saiva Siddhantam, as we have already seen. What more scientific conception can there be for instance than the principle of Sat.Kariya-Vadam? But the Siddhanti takes quite a sane, comprehensive, all-round view of things. He gives every system of thought and every concept its due. That he does not despise Pasa-Gnanam will be self-evident to even the most casual observer, who notes with what veneration he looks up to the Vedas and Agamas. But Pasa-Gnanam is clearly inferior to Pati-Gnanam, and when he comes to speak of the latter in its proper place the Siddhanti does not mince words when he speaks of the Vedas and other Shastras as Pasa-Gnanam in this Sutram and sweeps them aside as of secondary importance, let alone the materialistic sciences and arts, ancient or modern.

Pati-Gnanam alone is Para-Gnanam, supreme knowledge; even the highest knowledge which falls short of it including all Vedic and Agamic lore is Aparā-Gnanam, knowledge of a lower order. A word of caution here before we proceed further. No word, no phrase, no clause, no sentence, no

passage from such observations as the above should be taken out of their context and turned and twisted into absolute or unqualified statements. All knowledge, of whatever kind it may be, all science, all art, all philosophy, all religion, all the different religions of the world have their use. C. f. the ladder of the pilgrim's progress pictured by our author in the last (eighth) Sūtram. If all these are useful as preparatory stages, how much more useful is Vedic learning, though it is termed Aparā-Gnanam when viewed from the highest pinnacle of Pati-Gnanam!

In this Sūtram too appears the true import of the famous Maha-Vakyas Tat-tvam-asi (That thou art), Aham-Brahm-Asmi (I am Brahm), &c, and of the principle of Sivoham-bhavanai. These are meant for Sadanai only, religious practices, means to an end, and are not the end itself, the Payan or Goal as some Purvapakshins would have it.

Śiva Yogam,—Action without attachment & disappearance of Pasam

The tenth and eleventh Sūtras which deal, respectively, with Pasa-Neekam (பாசநீக்கம்) and Sivapperu (சிவப்பேறு), removal of dirt and attainment of Sivahood or Supreme Bliss, contain five propositions told in 18 verses,

X. (1) அவனே தானே ஆகிய அந்நெறி
ஏகன் ஆகி (2) இறைபணி நிற்க
மலம் மாயை தன்னோடு வல்வினை இன்றே,
(Śiva Gnana Bodham)

(2) இவன் உலகில் இதம் அகிதம் செய்த எல்லாம்
இதம் அகிதம் இவனுக்குச் செய்தார் பால் இசையும்)

(1) அவன் இவனாய் நின்றமுறை ஏகனாகி

(2) ஆரன் பணியில் நின்றிடவும் (3) அகலும் குற்றம்,

(1. சிவனும் இவன் செய்தி எல்லாம் என்செய்தி என்றும்)

(2) செய்தது எனக்கு இவனுக்குச் செய்தது என்றும்

பவம் அசுவ உடன் ஆகி நின்று கொள்வன் பரிவால்

பாதகத்தைச் செய்திடினும் பணிஆக்கி வீடுமே),

(Siddhiyar)

X. (1) Identify yourself with God. If you so identify yourself even as God identifies Himself with

you (Adwaitha relation). He will father all your actions.

(2) Dedicate all your actions to Him. If you do so (i. e. do your duty without attachment). God will act as joint or substitute recipient of everything that others do unto you and retribute them adding the effects of your bodily actions, good and bad, to theirs.

(3) All impurities (the remnants of Anavam, Karmam and Maya) will then vanish.

It will be noticed that the 2nd proposition of the original 10th Sutram as given in Siva Gnana Bodham is divisible into two parts இறை பணி நிற்க and மலம் மாயை தன்னோடு வல்வீனை இன்றே, and we have so divided it following the division of the Siddhiyar verse. The three propositions as given in Siddhiyar are: (1) அவன் இவனாய் நின்ற முறை ஏகனாகி (நின்றிடவும்) சிவனும் இவன் செய்தி எல்லாம் என் செய்தி என்று (கொள்வன்), (2) அரன் பணியில் நின்றிடவும் இவனுக்குச் செய்தது எனக்குச் செய்தது என்று பவம் அகல உடனாகி நின்று கொள்வன், பரிவால் பாதகத்தைச் செய்திடும் பணி ஆக்கி விடுமே, உலகில் இவனுக்கு இதம் அகிதம் செய்தார் பால் இவன் செய்த இதம் அகிதம் எல்லாம் இசையும், (3) அகலும் குற்றம் This third proposition of the Siddhiyar verse அகலும் குற்றம் is re-emphasised in the words காயம் ஒழிந்தால் சுத்தனாகி, அந்நிலைமை இந்நிலையில் அடைந்த முறையாலே மாயம் எலாம் நீங்கி in the first verse of the 11th Sutram and expanded by Arulnandi Devar in five verses before dealing with the two main propositions of that Sutram.

Manifestation of Divine Grace,—Siva-Bhogam

The eleventh Sutram reads as follows:

- XI, (1) காணும் கண்ணுக்குக் காட்டும் உளம்போல்
காண உள்ளத்தைக் கண்டு காட்டலீன்
(2) அயரா அன்பின் அரன் கழல் செலுமே.

(Siva Gnana Bodham)

(காயம் ஒழிந்தால் சுத்தனாகி) (1) ஆன்மா
 காட்டக் கண்டிடும் தன்மை உடைய கண்ணுக்கு
 ஏயும் உயிர் காட்டிக் கண்டிடும் போல
 ஈசன் உயிர்க்குக் காட்டிக் கண்டிடுவன், (2) இத்தை
 ஆயும் அறிவு உடையனாய் அன்பு செய்ய
 (அந்நிலைமை இந்நிலையில் அடைந்த முறையாலே
 ஈசன் எலாம் நீங்கி) அரன் மலர் அடிக்கீழ் இருப்பன்
 மாருத சிவ அனுபவம் மருவிக் கொண்டே.

(Siddhiyar)

XI. (1) When the soul is so purified, God leads and knows (enjoys in Adwaita relation with the soul) so that the soul may know (enjoy) in the same manner that the soul sees and enables the eye to see.

(2) Unceasing knowledge (realization) of such gracious action of the Lord as above generates undying love, which leads the soul to the enjoyment of endless Supreme Bliss described as Siva's lotus-like Feet.

Tirotana Sakti and Arul Sakti

It might appear at first sight that the first proposition in the 11th Sutram is practically the same as the second proposition of the 5th Sutram. But a reference to the context in which the respective propositions appear would show that they are not identical. The indispensability of God's energising Power to enable the soul to function (அவனை இன்றி ஓரணுவும் அசையாது) is clearly brought out in both places, but it is God's Tirotana Sakti (or Hiding Power) that acts in the earlier fettered state of the soul, while it is the Arul Sakti (or Grace) that acts in the later purified state. In the one case the soul protrudes itself with its egotism and ignoring God's help it presumes that it itself knows, while in the other all vanity has vanished and the soul has resigned itself completely into the hands of God and it is God that leads, knows, feels and acts for the sake of the soul. உன்னைத் தொண்டனேன் நினையுமா நினைவே (Think so that I Thy servant

may think of Thee), விளம்புமா விளம்பே (Praise so that I may praise Thee), நுகருமா நுகரே (Enjoy so that I may enjoy), thus we read in Tiruvisaippa (St. Thirumalikāi Devar). Here the soul does not pull in a wrong direction. There is co-operation with God, but it is co-operation founded on subordination as an enlightened Christian divine would put it. என் கடன் பணி செய்து கிடப்பதே, my duty is to carry out Thine Will (Devaram).

A retrospect

A hurried perusal of the different propositions in the 8th to 11th Sutras would seem to indicate that they all relate practically to one and the same subject.—In the 8th Sūtram itself the final goal of finding refuge under the Lord's Feet is reached, and even in the 11th Sūtram there are the Sadanas of unceasing knowledge and undying love to be practised.—This observation (that the four Sutras relate to the same subject) is certainly true to some extent. The whole book of Siva Gnana Siddhiyar deals with one subject only and the division of the book into four chapters does not mean that the chapters are to be treated as watertight compartments, every one of which is wholly independent of the rest. The first chapter Piramana Iyal for instance is primarily devoted to the proof of the existence of the Tripadarthas, but some of the most essential attributes of these Padarthas which should properly find a place in the 2nd chapter Lakshana Iyal are incidentally mentioned in the first chapter. No proof is possible without mention of attributes to a certain extent. Some items of proof again are to be found in the second chapter. Similarly in giving us a general idea of the different Sadanas and the method of performing them in the 8th and 9th Sutras which occur in Sadana Iyal, mention is incidentally made of the Payan or Goal as no amount of exhortation to perform Sadanas will be of any avail unless we have at least a rough idea of the Goal aimed at to serve as an incentive during the earlier stages at least of the performance of Sadanas. The goal which is broadly divisible into removal of Malam and attainment of Supreme Bliss is described in greater detail in the 10th and 11th Sutras which are

classified under Payan Iyal along with the 12th Sutrām which deals with the nature of the Sanctified.

Mention has already been made of seven stages of Gnanam or enlightenment beginning with 'Othal' or reading the Gnana Sbastras and ending with 'Nishdal' or God-realization. The first three of these stages, reading, learning from one's elders and teaching to one's juniors, are preliminary stages that occur prior to the advent of the Gnana-Guru. The 8th Sutrām primarily deals with the advent of the Gnana-Guru and hearing Gnana-Upadesam (literally teaching of Gnanam) from Him (கேட்டல்), though the earlier and later stages are also mentioned. The later stages of pondering over what is heard (சிந்தித்தல்), understanding the same clearly (தெளிதல்) and God realization (நிட்டை) are generally taken as receiving detailed treatment in the 9th, 10th and 11th Sutrās, respectively. These latter stages follow the hearing of Gnana Upadesam in rapid succession as a matter of course in the case of souls that have reached the highest stage of Sakti-Nipatam (literally the descent of God's Grace), but there are others in whose case the pace from one stage to the next is comparatively slow and it is for the benefit of these that the detailed instructions are given.

Commentators draw a line of distinction between these four Sutrās in yet another way, by stating that they deal respectively with Siva-Rupam (சிவரூபம்), Siva Darsanam (சிவ தரிசனம்), Siva-Yogam (சிவயோகம்), and Siva-Bhogam (சிவ போகம்), (literally God-form, God-vision, God-union and God-enjoyment, respectively). Meikānda Deva's own exposition is that the 8th Sutrām deals with Gnana-Darsanam (ஞானதரிசனம், literally knowledge-vision). With the dawn of Gnanam, the soul gets faint glimpses of Godhead and this roughly is what is called Siva-Rupam. Simultaneously with Siva Rupam occurs Atma-Darsanam (ஆன்ம தரிசனம், soul vision). Fondering over what is heard from the Gnana-Guru brings in Siva-Darsanam (God-vision) and along with it Atma-Suddhi (ஆன்ம சுத்தி, soul purification). These are dealt with in the 9th Sutrām. Then follows Siva Yogam, God-union, ஏகனுகி நின்றல், described in the 10th Sutrām, and the process of Atma Suddhi (soul-purification or removal of Pasam) commenced in the previ-

ous Sutram is completed here. The final stage of Siva-Bhagam or God-realization, enjoyment of infinite Bliss with unceasing knowledge and undying love, is then reached and this forms the subject-matter of the 11th Sutram.

The nature of the Sanctified (Jivan-Muktas)

The attainment of the final Goal of Siva Bhogam is reached even when one is still in the flesh, and some time may often lapse before he casts off his mortal coils. The Muktan (liberated soul) who is still in his earthly body is called a Jivan-Muktan (சிவன்-முத்தன்). The nature of such Jivan-Muktas or sanctified souls is described in the twelfth Sutram in seven verses. There are three propositions here:

XII. (1) செம்மலர் நோன்றான் சேரல் ஓட்டா
அம்மலம் கழீஇ. (2) அன்பரோடு மரீஇ
(3) மால் அற நேயம் மலிந்தவர் வேடமும்
ஆலயம் தானும் அரன் எனத் தொழுமே.
(Siva Gnana Bodham)

(1) செம் கமலத் தான் இளைகள் சேரல் ஓட்டாத்
திரிமலங்கள் அறுத்து, (2) ஈசன் நேசரோடும் செறிந்திட்டு,

(1) அங்கு அவர்தம் திருவேடம் ஆலயங்கள் எல்லாம்
அரன் எனவே தொழுது இறைஞ்சி ஆடிப் பாடி
எங்கும் யாம் ஒருவர்க்கும் எளியோம் அல்லோம்
யாவர்க்கும் மேல் ஆனோம் என்று இறுமாப்பு எய்தித்
திங்கள் முடியார் அடியார் அடியோம் என்று
திரிந்து இடுவர் சிவஞானச் செய்தி உடையோரே.

(Siddhiyar)

(1) Siva-Gnannies (சிவஞானிகள்) uproot the three Malas which tend to keep them away from the Lord's Feet.

(2) They associate with Siva-Bhaktas (சிவபத்தர்கள் அல்லது சிவனடியார்கள், literally God-lovers or God's Servants).

(3) They worship the holy forms of Siva-Bhaktas and Temples as God Himself, sing and

dance in joy, fear no mortals and roam about saying that they are the servants of God's servants.

These propositions are put in narrative form and not as injunctions as they relate matter-of-fact observation of what Jivan Muktas do as a matter of course without effort on their part. Put in injunctive form (in the imperative mood), they would read:

(1) Uproot the Malas.

(2) Associate with Siva - Bhaktas.

(3) Worship Siva - Bhaktas and Temples as Sivan Himself.

(4) Worship the Gnana - Guru as Sivan Himself.

This last proposition is added here as it is elaborated in the three concluding verses of Siddhiyar, though it is not expressly stated in the opening verse of the Sutram.

The Malas referred to here are the last vestiges of the remnants of Karmam, Maya and Anavam which subsist as long as the body lasts, though without affecting the Jivan.Muktan in any way, but lurking and lying in wait as it were, looking for an opportunity to re-invest the soul in case it should falter in its steadfastness in clinging to the Lord's Feet with unceasing knowledge and undying love; for, is it not the soul's nature that it becomes that to which it is attached (சார்ந்ததன் வண்ணமாதல்)? We have already had occasion to write at some length on this characteristic of the soul in previous chapters and it is unnecessary to dilate on it here again. The 3rd and 4th propositions here follow the second almost as corollaries, as intense association with our betters (or those whom we regard as our betters) in the right spirit generally ripens from respect to reverence and finally into worship. These propositions are often referred to briefly as Guru-Linga-Sangama-Servai (குரு லிங்க சங்கம சேவை), service to the Teacher, the Temple and the Siva-Bhaktas.

Periya Puranam.

It is the idea underlying these propositions that is elaborated at very great length in the Periya Puranam. Here

we are told in most incisive language, which is exceedingly beautiful and at the same time convincing, solemn and love inspiring, what Jivan-Muktas do in actual practice and the description is put in such a way that it excites in us a desire to emulate their example and do as they do, which after all is nothing very difficult if only we make up our minds to do so. The very sight of a temple tower or the outward symbol of a Siva-Bhaktan finds them prostrate on the ground spontaneously. What, for instance, did the King-Saint Seraman do when he saw a washerman drenched in white? He could discern in that appearance nothing else but the holy form of a godly man besmeared with Tiru-Neeru (திருநீறு, literally holy ashes),

Tiru-Neeru

Tiru-Neeru* as is well-known is the ash obtained by burning cow dung (or Pasu-Malam, பசுமலம்) and is worn by all Saivas as emblematic of the destruction (or burning) of the Malam (that binds the soul Pasu) by the Grace of God. Westerners, particularly the women-folk, and—following them, —many of our own people of the present day, the comparatively richer folk especially, use toilet powders to adorn their faces and to keep away such small ailments as a cold from their children after a bath, &c. Our friends little realize that such powders are but a costly imitation of our age-old Tiru-Neeru used by our ancestors from time immemorial both as a preventive and as a healing remedy against diseases, whether bodily, mental or spiritual. Without taking up too much of the time of our readers by expatiating on this theme, we shall merely remind them here of the holy Tiru-Neeru Patigam (திருநீற்றுப்பதிகம்) in the Devaram beginning with the words மந்திரம் ஆவது நீறு chanted by the great Child-Saint Sambander to cure the Pandyan King of his deadly disease, and proceed.

*For fuller notes on the significance of the Tiru-Neeru the reader is referred to Sabhai Publication No. 56, Chapter VI, Kalagni-Rudra Upanishad-References to the wearing of these Ashes, otherwise known as Bhasmam (பசுமம்), Bhuti or Vibhuti (விபுதி), &c. (விபுதிநசித்தல்) are also to be found in the Isa, Bhasma-Jabala, Atharva-Sira, Taittiriya, Mundaka, Brihad Araniyaka, Svetasvatara and other Upanishads.

What the appearance of a godly man is and what feelings of love and reverence they inspire in our hearts cannot be said in better language than those of our Lord Sekklar in his Periya Puranam. The following verses among others describe the first meeting between the divine Child-Saint Sambander and the venerable old Saint Appar:

சின்தை இடையறு அன்பும் திருமேனி தனில் அசைவும்
கந்தை மிகையாம் கிருத்தும் கை உழவாரப் படையும்
வந்து இழி கண்ணீர் மழையும் வடிவீற் பொலி திருநீறும்
அந்தம் இலாத் திருவேடத்து அரசும் எதிர் வந்து அணைய.

கண்ட கவுணியக் கன்றும் கருத்திற் பரவு மெய்க்காதற்
தொண்டர் திருவேடம் நேரே தோன்றியது என்று தொழுதே,
அண்டரும் போற்ற அணைந்து அங்கு அரசும் எதிர் வந்து இறைஞ்ச,
மண்டிய ஆர்வம் பெருக மதுர மொழி அருள் செய்தார்.

How beautiful and true to nature is the picture of the Godly Appar painted here in words by Sekklar who had never seen him in the flesh, even as accurate and true to original as the thought-picture drawn in the mind of the Godly Child who too had not seen him before. We would rather refrain from translating such verses as these into English as we fear we cannot reproduce in another language even a fraction of the feelings of love and reverence which the chanting of the verses in the original Tamil would produce. But as this book is primarily intended for the benefit of readers with not much knowledge of Tamil literature, we give below their substance in English.

When there appeared in front of him the lord of unfathomable saintly form (Tiru-Navuk-Araser), unceasing love in the heart, majestic motion of the body, thought of the superfluity (even) of rags (his only worldly possession), grass-scraper in the hand, rain of tears rolling down the eyes and sacred ashes sparkling all over the body,—the Gouniya child (Tiru.Gnana.Sambander), who saw him realized that he had come face to face with the sacred personality of the Saint of true love, whose image he had been reverently picturing in his mind, and worshipped him.....

Elsewhere we read :

நாய வெண் நீறு ததைந்த பொன்மேனியும் தாழ்வடமும்
நாயகன் சேவடி தைவருஞ் சிந்தையும் கைந்து உருகிப்
பாய்வது பேரல் அன்பு நீர் பொழி கண்ணும் பதிகச் செஞ்சொல்
மேய செவ்வாயும் உடையார் புகுந்தனர் வீதி உள்ளே

(Periya Puranam)

There entered the courtyard (of the Temple) the master possessed with the tawny body besmeared with pure white ashes, hanging beads, mind constantly massaging (concentrated on) the Sacred Feet of the Lord, eyes shedding tears of love as if his whole body was melting and streaming down and ruddy lips ever muttering words of praise of ory. talline purity (Devaram) to the Lord.

இடைஅருப் பேரன்பும் மழைவாரும் இணைவீழியும் உழவாரத்தின்
படைஅருத் திருக்கரமும் சிவபெருமான் திருஅடிக்கே பதித்த

நெஞ்சும்

நடைஅருப் பெருந்திறவும் வாகீசப் பெரும் தகைதன் ஞானப்பாடற்
தொடைஅருச் செவ்வாயும் சிவவேடப் பொலிவு அழகும் துதித்து
வாழ்வாம்,

(Kanchi Puranam)

Let us prosper by praising the unceasing great love, the pair of eyes raining down tears, the sacred hand ever grasping the formidable grass-scraping weapon, the heart fixed on the Sacred Feet of Sivaperuman, the never-failing great asceticism, the ruddy lips incessantly weaving garlands of hymns of wisdom and the resplendent beauty of the Godly personality of the great Vakeesar.

Guru-Linga-Sangama Servai

As we said on a previous occasion, the Gnana-Guru is to be regarded and worshipped as no other than the Lord Himself. We have seen how Arul Nandi Devar regarded Meikanda Devar and how Arjunar regarded Krishnar and how both worshipped their Gurus as Sivaperuman Himself. We shall just quote one other instance before proceeding further. The following lines of exquisite beauty appear in the Potripahrodai of Umapathi Sivachariar :

.....பூவலயம்

தன்னின்று நீங்காச் சகலர்க்கு அவர் போல
முன்னின்று மும்மலம் தீர்த்து ஆட்கொள்கை—அன்னவனுக்கு
ஆதி குணம் ஆனதினால், ஆடும் திருத் தொழிலும்,
சோதி மணி மிடற்றுச் சுந்தரமும்,—பாதியாம்
பச்சை இடமும், பவளத் திருச்சடைமேல்
வைச்ச நதியும் மதிக் கொழுந்தும்,—அச்சம்அற
ஆடும் அரவும், அழகு ஆர் திரு நுதல் மேல்
நீடு உருவ வன்னி நெடுங் கண்ணும்,—கேடில் வயம்
கூட்டும் தமருகமும்—கோல எரி அகலும்,
பூட்டு அரவக் கச்சம் புலி அதளும்,—வீட்டு இன்ப
வேள்ளத்து அழுத்திவிடும் தாளினும் அடியார்
உள்ளத்தினும் பிரியா ஒன்சிலம்பும்,—எள்ளவினை
வேன்று பிறப்பு அறுக்கச் சாத்திய வீரக் கழலும்,
ஒன்றும் உருத் தோன்றாமல் உள் அடக்கி,—என்றும்
இறவாத இன்பத்து எமை இருத்த வேண்டிப்,
பிறவா முதல்வன் பிறந்து,—நறவு ஆரும்
தார் உலாவும் புயத்துச் சம்பந்த நாதன் என்று
பேர் இலா நாதன் ஒரு பேர் புனைந்து,—பாரோர்தம்
உண்டி உறக்கம் பயம் இன்பம் ஒத்து ஒழுக்கி
கொண்டு மகிழ்ந்த குணம் போற்றி.

As it is His Gracious Nature to grant salvation by appearing like them and removing the three kinds of impurity from souls of the Sakala (சகலர்) class in this world, He hid with n Himself His sacred Dance, the resplendent beauty of His Throat, His green left Half (Umai), the river and the crescent moon in His braided Hair, (the garland of) the fearless hooded snake, the elongated Eye of uprising Fire on the Forehead, the sounding Damarukam (drum) and the pot of fire (in the Hands), the securely tied snake and tiger skin worn (round the Waist), the tinkling Silampu - rings adorning His Gracious Feet as well as the hearts of His devotees, His knee - ornament indicative of His war against all evil,—hiding all these without allowing any trace of them to be seen, the Birthless One appeared on earth to implant us in immortal Bliss, the nameless Lord assumed the name of Sambandanadhan whose shoulders are bedecked with garlands of fragrant flowers and conformed to the ways of the world by eating,

sleeping and enjoying pleasure and pain,— praise be to His Gracious Nature thus displayed!

Temple Worship

This chapter has grown to unwieldy proportions and we refrain from dilating on temple worship here. We shall only say this, that we have sometimes heard it remarked that temple worship is intended for the ignorant and illiterate masses only. If Jivan-Muktas, souls that have reached the highest stage of liberation short only of the throwing off of their earthly bodies, find it necessary and if the holy sains beginning with the great Tiru-Gnana Sambander did not consider it *infra dig* to attend temples and worship therein, (—pilgrimages and temple worship were practically their only hobby with many of them,—) how presumptuous it is on the part of us poor erring souls to imagine that we are past that stage? Temple worship and association with holy men therefore are the most elementary Sadanas that can be prescribed for practice by the beginner, they form the first course in the menu of the spiritual dinner-table, they form essential ingredients in the second course, the third course, &c, and they form the last course as well.

We would therefore repeat and re-emphasise the golden rules:

- (1) Extirpate all impurities (and avoid association with the impure),
- (2) Associate with the pure, and
- (3) Worship God as represented in the Guru-Linga-Sangamam (குருலிங்க சங்கமம்), the Teacher, the Temple and the Siva-Bhaktas.

CHAPTER XV

Concluding Remarks

Apology

WE have so far dwelt on some of the main features of our most precious national heritage known as the Saiva Siddhanta philosophy to the best of our lights, and if we have gone wrong in our interpretation or if our views on any particular point run counter to the views of any of our readers we beg of them to forgive us. It is not and it never was our intention to force our views on anybody else. We are only too aware of our limitations and incompetence and of the futility of engaging in controversy on religious and philosophical subjects with our present limited knowledge. One of the triplets of the earliest of the 14 Siddhanta Shastras teaches us:

பழக்கம் தவிரப் பழகுவது அன்றி
உழப்புவது என்பெணை உந்தீபற.....

What use is there, Oh! Sister, in noisy talk if we do not practise (or act in such a way as) to shed our (evil) practices?

The study of Tamil emphasised

We commenced this book with an appeal to such of our English-educated young men as have not had the opportunity to learn Tamil in their boyhood to do so now at least and to acquire a working knowledge of their language and literature both literary and religious, and we conclude it with the same appeal. Our words are addressed to them not in a carping or fault finding spirit but as a friend and brother addressing his friends and brothers in a spirit of humility and pure love. We made it quite clear from the very start that some of our young men, especially those whose home-training does not put a spoke on the material tendencies of the present age, are a victim of circumstances for which the present system of education imparted in our schools is mainly responsible. We are glad that our words have not altogether fallen on deaf ears and that a few at

least of our co-religionists have been set athinking and there is a little stir in the matter.

Some misunderstandings cleared

On the other hand, there has also been some misunderstanding of the position we took up. One question that has been raised is why we should address some of the English-educated young men particularly and not all our young men, whether English-educated or otherwise. The reply is obvious. Young men educated in Tamil only cannot obviously be reached by books written in English, while those not literate in any language have to be reached by direct oral preaching and not through written lessons in any language. As we said at the very start it is English-education that pays nowadays and it is English-educated men that are looked up to as leaders, and hence the suggestion made to and adopted by us to try and reach our English-educated brethren. மன்னன் எப்படி மன்னுயிர் அப்படி is an old Tamil proverb. As is the King so are the subjects or, put in more modern language, as are the leaders so are the rank and file. Our appeal to our English-educated brethren therefore should be regarded more as (and actually is) a compliment to them than anything derogatory. We too have had a little education in English and can claim to be counted amongst their number and there need be no suspicion that we have any feeling of disrespect to others educated in that language. All that we plead for is that we should give our grey-haired mother-tongue and mother-religion also a chance to live. We cannot expect other people to nourish or respect our mother if we do not do so ourselves. Our appeal is to the national, racial and religious instinct of our brethren to allow our mother also a chance to occupy a corner of their hearts. Once this is done in the true spirit we feel certain that she would reassert her parental affection and authority, captivate her children's thoughts and regain her rightful place in a central position in their minds and in their hearts dethroning all usurpers.

Another misconception, and that a most unwarranted one, is that we expect our young men to eschew everything non-

Tamil. No one who has actually read this book would accuse us of being exclusive or trying to dictate to our young men as to what and what books they may read and what they should not. It is unnecessary to repeat here what we have said over and over again quoting chapter and verse to prove our contention that the Tamilian as a rule is never exclusive but is ever all-inclusive.

It is idle to pretend that general reading of diverse books setting forth views of various shades and schools of thought does not expand one's mental outlook. Man as he is is an imperfect being. Unless and until it comes to a matter of actual realization of the Truth (Pati-Gnanam), his vision is circumscribed and he is possessed of limited or what is called localized knowledge only. (ஏக தேச அறிவு) and this localized knowledge is increased and broadened by extensive reading and hearing from others. The basic concept of the Siddhanta teaching of Tri-Padarthas for instance is to be found in the Rig Veda Mantiram regarding two birds seated on a tree, of which one eats the fruits while the other merely looks on without eating.* No one will say that the study of this Mantiram alone or of the Sri Panchakshara Mantiram or even of the whole Sata Rudriyam which appears about the centre of the central (or Yajur) Vedam is enough for our spiritual uplift. All the fundamental principles of the Saiva Siddhanta system of religion and philosophy again are to be found in a nutshell in the twelve short Sutras of Siva Gnana Bodham, which occupies a central position in the Agamas. A study of these no doubt forms an intellectual and spiritual treat to the enquiring student, but no Siddhanti would say that their study alone is sufficient and that the Siva Gnana Siddhi (which was written on the express instructions of Meykandan) and other Shastras or, for the matter of that, any other books are redundant. Siddhiyar itself gives on the whole a more detailed idea of the same teachings as are taught in

* Reference may also be made in this connection to Sabhai Publication No. 56, Chapter XVIII, Mundaka Upanishad III, 1.1 & 2, as also to the Tirumantiram of Tiru Moolar VII 23 (1 & 2) where the reference to the two birds is repeated. The Tirumantiram calls them two swans (அகலம் இரண்டு). See also the Svetasvatara Upanishad, IV:6 & 7.

the Siva Gnana Bodham together with brief codified accounts of various Purvap-ksha (i. e. non-Siddhantic) systems of religion and philosophy as known to Arulnandi Devar in his day, commencing from Lokayatam or materialism and different sects of Buddhism and ending with different phases of Ekamnavadam, Sankhyam and Pancharatram. This again is no reason for any one to presume that the reading of other books whether they be in Tamil or Sanskrit or English or in any other language is of no use.

An eminent Jurist's views and a personal note

An eminent jurist who was the first Editor of the "Hindu Organ" and a *quondam* President of the Saiva Paripalana Sabha which owned the Hindu College also during its infancy and boyhood (—perhaps we should say girlhood,—) used to advocate the teaching of all the principal religions of the world including Buddhism and even Christianity and Mohamedanism to our children in the Hindu College, his only proviso being that our own Saiva form of religion and philosophy should be taught first from their infancy and that the rest should follow when the children grew a bit older and reached a comparatively more discriminatory stage in their intellectual development. His idea was that it was then only that the children could understand and appreciate the excellence of their own national heritage. His judicially weighed words giving expression to his well-balanced views on this question from the presidential chair at the mammoth gathering that assembled in the Hindu College premises to greet Swami Vivekananda on his way back from America in the last quinquennium of the last century made a deep impression on the minds of the audience, in which we too had the good fortune to be present, and which had already been roused to rapturous heights by the impassioned address of the illustrious Swamiji. And we can endorse that great man's advocacy by actual personal practical experience. We have made a careful study of the Bhagavat Gita with the commentaries of Sankarar and Ramanujar (in English translations of course) and of some of the Upanishads clothed in Sankara-Sayana garb (in English again), having been a regular member of classes held, or rather groups of students that met together regularly, for the study of

these works as well as of Siva Gnana Siddhiyar and other Shastras at the Colombo Vivekananda Society rooms and elsewhere long ago. We have also read lectures and writings of Swami Vivekananda, Prof Max Muller and others on the one hand and of Swami Vedachalam and others at the other extreme end, besides the reading at intervals of the Bible and other Christian and other literature. We had the good fortune however of having the necessary home training in a Saiva atmosphere first into the practical and then the theoretical aspects of the Saiva system of religion and philosophy during our infancy and boyhood. We had read some of the simple prose works of the great Navalar written in elegant and chaste and at the same time easy Tamil for the use of beginners, his first, second and third readers, his first and second Saiva catechisms and his Periya Purana Vachanam among others, and we were a regular reader from almost its very inception of the Indu-Sadanam which contained illuminating articles on religion and philosophy from the pen of its first Editor and other Tamil scholars. All this stood us in good stead in later years and all our later reading of various books both in Tamil and English only confirmed us in our conviction regarding the excellence and pre-eminent position of our own Saiva Siddhanta system of religion and philosophy. (—We are sorry we have had to indulge in this personal note but the reference was unavoidable for our purpose).

Saiva Siddantam,—the quintessence of all philosophy

Before concluding we would reiterate once again the all-inclusive nature of the Saiva Siddhantam. Just as in speaking of God we say that he is all the world (Visvarupi, விசுவரூபி) and still above all (Visvadhikan, விசுவாதிகன்), even so may we say of the Saiva Siddhantam that though it transcends by far the various systems expounded by various teachers, yet it embraces them all underneath its spreading wings. All that is best and noblest, wherever it may be found, we may be sure of finding it in the Saiva Siddhantam in some form or other,—only it may appear in a better or more improved (or we should rather say, undeteriorated) form. And we may well take to heart the dicta already

quoted. (It seems unnecessary to repeat the quotations here.) Hence it is that many scholars of the present day, both Indian and Western,—and some of them but little disposed to speak of Indian philosophy with much regard,—have pronounced the Siddhanta philosophy to be an eclectic system, one formed by selecting and adopting from various systems of philosophy and religion whatever is good and valuable in them. Of such intrinsic value it is and its position so unassailable that they are unable to account for its existence in any other way. And well may they say so. In the Sankhiyam for instance, the best trait that can be noticed is the principle of Sat Kariya-Vadam; and nowhere is this principle more emphatically declared than in the Saiva Siddhantam. The modern scientist is simply stricken with awe to find that his much vaunted discovery of the laws of 'conservation of energy' and 'conservation of matter' was anticipated by these Indian philosophers thousands of years ago. The spirit of independence of the Lokayatan insisting on the production of conclusive evidence in proof of the truth of any fact before he could accept it, the ideals of the annihilation of egoism (Nirvanam) of the Buddha and of compassion to all living creatures (Ahimsa) of the Jains, the principles of reasoning of the Tarkikas and Mimamsakas, the doctrines of the realization of Brahmanhood and oneness in bliss of the Ekannavadies, the conception of Sat-Kariya-Vadam (உள்ளதே தோற்றும்) and spirit of research and investigation into the tatwas (elemental principles of mind and matter) of the Sankhiyas, the eight-stepped Yogam of Patanjali's system and the tenets of monotheism and devotion to God of the Vaishnavas, not to speak of the notions of the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man of the foreign (not indigenous to this country) creeds of Christianity and Islam, and a host of other features of these and other systems and creeds,—all find a place in the Saiva Siddhantam.

Not an eclectic system, but the original "Common fund"
of philosophical ideas

As for the contention, however, that the Saiva Siddhantam is an eclectic system and therefore new, we have no desire

to discuss the matter here.* Suffice it to say that it is a system as old as the Himalayas. Nay, it is older yet. It is eternal, immeasurable in time. Well does Professor Max Muller say in his "Six systems of Indian Philosophy" in respect of certain so-called later systems that "it is difficult to decide whether such ideas were actually borrowed from these systems in their finished state or whether they were originally common property which in later times only had become restricted to one or the other of the six systems." And again "it cannot be urged too strongly that there existed in India a large common fund of philosophical thought which, like language, belonged to no one in particular but was like the air breathed by every living and thinking man. Thus only can it be explained that we find a number of ideas in all, or nearly all, the systems of Indian philosophy which all philosophers seem to take simply for granted, and which belong to no one school in particular." These words from the pen of a European scholar who had no knowledge of Tamil and who certainly had not read the Siva Guna Siddhi seem to be but faint echoes of the following and other words of Arul Nandi Devar: அருமறை ஆகமம் முதல்நூல் அனைத்தும் உரைக்கையினால், அளப்பரிதாம் அப்பொருளை அரன் அருளால் அணுக்கள் தருவர்கள் பின்தனித்தனியே தாம் அறிந்த அளவில் தருக்கம் ஒடு உத்தரங்களினால் சமயம் சாதித்து..... (The Vedas and Agamas are the prime books as they form the substratum of all knowledge, from which immeasurable source men morsel out portions and formulate religious and philosophical theories by making investigations to the best of their ability by the Grace of God...) To say that the Saiva Siddhantam, the system of Nandi Devar, Sanakar and Sanatkumarar, of Agastiyar and Upamaniyar, of Krishnar and Arjunar, of Tiru Gnana Sampandar, Appar, Sundarar and Manickavachagar,—to say that it is a concoction of today or yesterday or that it was invented in the Tamil country in the thirteenth century or that it drifted to our land from Cashmere or Bombay or from Mysore after

*The matter will be found discussed at some length in a note on Vedantam and Siddhantam appended to the present writer's "Study of the Svetasvatara Upanishad".

the ninth, tenth or eleventh century of the Christian era, is but to make an exhibition of one's own ignorance. It is the one system which is finally upheld in all the Shastras, the Agamas and the Vedas, forming as it does the cream of the Vedantam (வேதாந்தத்தெளிவாம் சைவசித்தாந்தம்), and it has come down to us in a most perfect and concise form from the earliest times in the Siva Gnana Bodham and the Swetasvatara Upanishad.

Praise be to Sivaperuman,
Praise Uma, Ganaraja,
Praise Suddha-Brahman-Iya,
Praise all, praise Aum.

Blessed be the Ved'Veantas,
Blessed be the Ag'mas holy,
Blessed Adwaitha Siddhantam,
Blessed aM, blessed Aum.

Prosper mother-Tam'l and Saivam,
Prosper T'ru Murais and Shastras,
Prosper Readers and Jivas all,
Prosper all, prosper Aum.

PRAISE BE TO THE BLESSED NAME
OF OUR LORD ARUL NANDI SIVAM.



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ERRATA

[The errors are of a minor nature, but there are numerous cases of individual letters, brackets, punctuation marks, &c, not clear to the naked eye and even invisible, due either to the types being not properly set or their being partly worn out, rusted or otherwise defective. The more important of such defects are included in the following list of errors and corrections].

Page	Line	Error or other defect, &c	Correct reading
4	37	a (not clear)	learning
5	10	o "	sometimes
	26	a "	complaint
7	12	e "	treatise
	13	n "	enjoyment
	17	e "	older
	20	e "	teachers
	29	originality	originality
10	21	e (not clear)	there
	27	i "	religions
	39	v "	conservative
11	3	j "	prejudice
	11	i "	religionists
13	27	knowldge	knowledge
14	34	a (not clear)	Siddhantam
	35	ப "	பரிணாம
	36	r "	theory
	39	ம் "	வாதம்
	39	l "	generally.
15	4	i "	vanquishing
17	11	ls	is
20	15	sult	suit
	24	n (not clear)	not
23	1	32	23
	32	e (not clear)	perfect
26	17	B "	But
	31	n "	under
27	37	r "	free
29	7	minutely	minutely

Page	Line	Error or other defect, &c.	Correct reading
29	16	r (not clear)	support
	19	s „	distinction
	34	e „	render
	39	l „	Pralayam
33	30	Nihilism	Nihilism
34	38	h (not clear)	which
39	26	e „	conceited
44	29	practice	practise
6	18	characteristle	characteristic
59	38	dipicted	depicted
66	3	பெருங்காயம்	பெருங்காயம்
67	32	ஆயினேள்	ஆயினேன்
69	8	intiated	initiated
71	16	Pravanam	Pranavam
75	20	hlse	else
76	15	a (not clear)	least
79	25	i „	wasting
80	9	t „	other
82	6	Mureis	Murais
83	11	flitting	fitting
84	10	speared	appeared
86	17	சிவனுக்கு	சிவனுக்கு
87	21	difinitions	definitions
88	14	Davaram	Devaram
91	10	பேதமைக்கே	பேதமைக்கே
92	23	co - called	so - called
95	15	s nut - shell	a nut - shell
96	16	parception	perception
97	30	fiire	fire
	31	vegitarian	vegetation
99	3	a (not clear)	Nigamanam
101	2	CHAPTEE	CHAPTER
108	26	r (inverted)	Purushas
112	17	a (not clear)	eternal
113	29	k „	Dikshai
114	14	c „	existence
117	10	e „	tree
119	3	t „	watertight
	13	againgt	against

Page	Line	Error or other defect, &c.	Correct reading
119	29	g (not clear)	degree
120	13	dispised	despised
	18	o (not clear)	religion
	35	Vadas	Vedas
121	29	first	fi st
126	13	non - antity	non - entity
127	2	refu'ation	refutation
129	3	conceipt	conceit
	4	diferent	different
	8	r (not clear)	verses
	12	a „	Pramana
130	13	eonnot	cannot
133	35	defore	before
134	22	werd	word
136	27	c (not clear)	practices
138	15	e „	silent
	18	a (inverted)	Payan
146	4	v (not clear)	love
	11	(„	(சீவன்முத்தன்)
148	11	h „	drenched
151	33	e „	Feet
159	5	e „	respect



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