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TAMIL CULTURE

A Quarterly Review dedicated to the study of Tamiliana

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Reader's Forum

"I have found *Tamil Culture* of great interest, and so venture to write to congratulate you on it and express the hope that a venture so well begun may continue, even though it may be difficult to keep up so high a standard in all following issues.

I am personally interested, as a research worker, in the pre-Aryan cultures of this region as evidences of the spread of the earliest beginnings of civilization.

Also may I put forward two suggestions. First that a map of the *distribution of the Tamil-speaking people of today* would make an excellent frontispiece. It would distinguish the areas in which Tamils are (*a*) the majority, and (*b*) a considerable minority . . . .

Second a map of the megalithic monuments in South India and Ceylon would be of great value as evidence of the early spread of that culture. The article on *The Dolmens of Pudukottai State* is incomplete without such a map for that area. Of course the production of such a map for each such part of Tamilnad, to build up into one for the whole region, is a work demanding considerable research. But to ask workers on such a topic to put their results in the form of an accurate map is to stimulate them to do more accurate work."

C. B. FAWCETT,
Emeritius Professor of Geography in the University of London.

"I have been greatly impressed by your quarterly. It opens up new horizons."

J. W. COTRELL,
Librarian, Harvard University.

"At a time when so many reviews of poor quality are printed, it is a pleasure to see *Tamil Culture* which is sedately edited and superbly printed.'

—*Illustrated Weekly of India.*

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"The printing and get-up of the Review leave nothing to be desired."

E.N.D.R. in *The Sunday Indian Express.*

"Allow me to congratulate you on the high spiritual and scientific level of the Quarterly. I am looking forward to receiving the following numbers."

PROF. GIUSEPPE TUCCI,
Instituto Italiano Per il
Medio Ed Estremo Oriente, Rome.

"A new journal makes its bow to the many students and well-wishers of Tamil literature and Tamil culture. It sets out to serve a real need, felt particularly since the demise of the excellent *Tamil Antiquarian* . . . .

But in future, the journal should serve more than its avowed purpose. In giving publicity to the present position of Tamil studies, in recording the progress of research and in suggesting lines along which it could proceed, the journal acts as a guide to Tamil scholars. In short the journal should be welcomed by a variety of readers."

S. M. in *Ceylon Daily News.*

The Magazine is really excellent reading. The Tamils of India and Ceylon should be grateful to you for your great efforts in reviving interest in Tamiliana.

R. MUTTU-RAMALINGAM, J.P.,
Advocate & Solicitor,
Kuala Pilah, Negri Sembilan, Malaya.

"We are especially happy that the Tamil Literature Society (52, New Colony, Tuticorin, South India) has sponsored so excellent a journal in English, the language for the international as well as the inter-regional exchange of ideas and thought. The editor, by way of introduction presents an able brief for the value of the ancient Tamil heritage and explains that the launching of *Tamil Culture* is in response to a wide spread demand for closer contact with the Tamil world, whose present literary activities bear witness to the persisting virility of its culture.

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We wish the new journal high success and hope that the example set by this attempt to spread appreciation, through the English medium, of one of the important elements in the composite culture of India will be emulated by qualified enthusiasts of other language groups. *"Tamil Culture" represents an important contribution to national prestige abroad as well as to better mutual understanding with the country and between all peoples. We hope that it will have a wide circulation."*

—*The Indian P. E. N.*

"La revue est tout à fait interessante et à encourager. Il est, en effet, essentiel de défendre—sans polémiques steriles—les lettres tamoules et les études dravidiennes.

Le premier numéro est presque trop riche; il est á prévoir, je pense, que dans les suivants, on s'attachera à sérver les questions et à se concentrer sur des problémes de mieux en mieux précisés de philologie ou d'histoire."

PROF. PIERRE MEILE,
Ecole des Langues Orientales, Paris.

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TAMIL CULTURE

A Quarterly Review dedicated to the study of Tamiliana

Render unto Tamil the things that are Tamil

THE EDITOR

A newspaper report that occasioned a number of letters to the Editors of English dailies of South India and Ceylon was a paragraph concerning the paper read by Dr. Christoph von Fürer-Haimendorf on "New *aspects of the Dravidian problem", at the fourth session of the International Congress* for Anthropology and Ethnology held in Veinna last September. Dr. Fürer-Haimendorf who is the Professor of Asian Anthropology in the University of London, is reported to have concluded that the Dravidians arrived in South India about 300 B.C. If his lecture has been correctly reported, it would seem that he has taken no notice of archaeological finds outside of Mysore State and that he has not taken into account the antiquity of the earliest Tamil literature that has reached us. However, without seeing the complete text of his lecture, it is impossible to evaluate the new theory.

The concluding remark by the correspondent who reported the Vienna lecture is very relevant to the progress of Tamil studies. "It was unfortunate," says the correspondent, "that none of our South Indian scholars was present at this important Congress which brought home to all present the inadequacy of our research work in South India and the importance of the problem". That research work concerning South India is inadequate is very true. If it is to be ever adequate, the Universities, Cultural institutes and Government should realise its importance and collaborate for this end.

The High Commissioner for India in London has pointed out recently that it was an encouraging sign that of the three

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thousand Indian students in the United Kingdom, only less than one hundred and sixty were being educated by Government, the rest being supported by private means. But Tamil scholarship has never been an open door to financial well being and no lecturer employed in the Tamil Department of a South Indian University may ever hope to save enough money to go abroad for a period of observation and study.

The High Commissioner for India in London also pointed out that the vast majority of Indian students were in technological and engineering colleges and that very few were engaged in the study of humanities. While it is understandable that India needs to encourage her youth to specializing in the sciences, she cannot afford to neglect the humanities which have been responsible for making her the intellectual aristocrat among the nations. Of the three thousand students in the United Kingdom, most likely there is not even one who is specializing in studies connected in any way with Tamil. It is the duty of the State Government to offer help to promising scholars. Prizes of a thousand rupees cum shawls, or an honorarium paid to court-poets can hardly be termed a satisfactory discharging of the State's responsibility towards the promotion of Tamil scholarship.

The Central Government has not been liberal either, in its outlook and in its attitude towards the study of the cultural heritage of the South. Its interest in these matters somehow halts with Sanscrit and Hindi and Hyderabad. As for the Archaeological Department, it may be non-existent so far as Tamil Nad is concerned. The former Director-General of Archaeology, the late K. N. Dikshit, wrote: "The entire field of paleolithic, neolithic, and megalithic as well as iron age cultures in Southern India is so vast, and transcends in interests investigation relating to historic periods, *that it is likely to form a major preoccupation for several years.*" The present Director and his regional subordinates would seem to think otherwise. They do not find opportunities for exercising their talent and their interest in Virampattinam, Adicheynallur, Korkai, Kayil and other historic places in the extreme South.

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Another reason for the inadequacy of research work in the Universities of the South, is the lack of a plan to train scholars of outstanding merit. The University of Ceylon, for instance, offers its assistant lecturers opportunities to qualify also abroad for two or three years, but no such opportunity is afforded by the South Indian Universities. It is not sufficient for Tamil scholars to be familiar just with their own language and literature ; it is also necessary that as many of them as possible spend two or three years abroad at Universities that have faculties or departments of Oriental Learning such as Hamburg, Bonn, Paris and London. It is not that they will have better opportunities abroad for the learning of Tamil literature and language. No, but they will have better opportunities to acquaint themselves with modern methods of research and observe the lines along which modern western languages progress. This neglect has resulted in our having few Tamils who are authorities on Tamil Archaeology or Tamil History, or Tamil Linguistics and Comparative Philology. We hear of foreign scholars who travel all the way to India to study *in situ* the Dravidian speech of people like the Khotas or the Brahuis, or the script and characteristics of the Indus valley civilization, but we hear of no University scholars of the South engaged in research of this kind. If North Indian Universities can provide facilities for scholars and scholarship and establish permanent contacts abroad, why should the providing of equal facilities be less feasible to Universities which claim to be centres of Tamil learning ?

The aloofness and retiring dispositions cultivated by Tamil scholars where international gatherings and comparative studies are concerned have created a psychological complex among both scholars and students of Tamil. It happens that in our Universities, even students who take to the specialized study of Tamil develop an attitude that tends to react against all modernization. Often they form a separated group all by themselves, and are in places considered the ante-diluvian element on the campus. Designations such as Faculty of Oriental learning and Department of Oriental studies, and awarding degrees such as Bachelor or Master of Oriental learning-the nomenclature itself is not helpful in making them healthily modern. No English University terms its faculty of

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English as the Faculty of Western Learning. European languages in a Western University are grouped under "Modern languages", whereas we pride in a terminology that is geographically irrelevant to us and club ourselves as Orientalists. It is understandable for a University in Europe or America to have a faculty of Oriental studies as it would be understandable for India to have faculties of Occidental studies, but designations like B. O. L. and M. O. L. only tend to relegate Tamil students in popular immagination to an unreal distance both in time and space. If Tamil is to become more and more a medium of modern thought and expression, that will depend not only on the adaptability and inherent powers of the Tamil language, but also on the awareness, outlook, and *weltanshauung* of Tamil students, Tamil writers and Tamil scholars.

The inadequacy of research is not a little due to the inadequate equipment of those engaged in research and in University teaching. There is little attraction in Universities for the best talent since remuneration is so poor. Therefore, even if a University post is accepted in South India, it often serves for young lecturers as a spring-board for bettering their prospects. Competent lecturers who remain in Universities in spite of difficulties, are so heavily burdened with hours of lecturing that they can hardly find the time to devote themselves to study and research.

How necessary it is that a few in each University be masters of at least the English language and be well equipped in scholarship so as to be the interpreters of Tamil Culture to the East and to the West, is shown by the remarks of a Western critic regarding a book published recently by a University Professor. Marjorie Sykes in her review of the book, says: "A further factor which is detrimental to the book, both as a popular introduction and as a scholarly statement of the results of research, is the weakness of its expository style. It is wordy and tautological. It abounds in such phrases as "it goes without saying," "it is crystal clear", "mention may be made," "taking a bird's eye view," "we must not fail to note," etc. etc., most of which are unnecessary and many quite unsuited to their context, from which, after several readings one fails to extract any satisfactory meaning.

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All original work done by Indian scholars in the vast field of Indian history is to be welcomed and encouraged. *It is for the Universities concerned to see that the highest standards of scholarship are maintained, and that the results of their work are presented in such a way that both historical science, and historical understanding may be effectively advanced."*[1]

Is it because of the inadequacy of Tamil studies, and the *lack of a sufficient number of Tamil scholars with an All India* reputation — let alone international recognition — that even in 1952 South India and Tamiliana receive such scant notice in books and periodicals that profess to interpret what the *Indian Constitution* has termed *"the composite culture of India"*? It is difficult to understand what other reason the editors of "The History and Culture of the Indian People" had, to be so negligent of the South in the two volumes of history that they have so far published.

This historical series is a conscious attempt to rewrite history and to rectify the distorted pictures that foreigners have drawn of India. It is prepared under the directions of the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan's President, His Excellency, Dr. K. M. Munshi, who in his foreward says : "In the course of my studies I had long felt the inadequacy of our so-called histories of India. For many years, therefore I was planning an elaborate history of India in order not only that India's past might be described by her sons, but also that the world might catch a glimpse of her soul." The first two volumes, we regret to state, are disproportionately emphatic on the contribution of the Aryans and grossly laconic about the non-Aryan peoples that form the basis of the earliest Indian history and Indian culture.

The first volume is entitled "The Vedic Age." The Aryan problem and Sanscrit literature form the subject of most of the studies, while the Pre-Vedic and the non-Aryan aspects of the Vedic age are very insufficiently treated. A. D. Pusalker deals with the "Indus Valley Civilization" in one chapter, but with the dexterity of a lawyer than of a scholar, attempts to meet at every turn the arguments for the Dravidian origin

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[1] *The Aryan Path*, October, 1952, p. 462.

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of the Indus Valley Civilization. S. K. Chatterji, however, in his study on "Race Movements and Pre-historic Culture" seeks to do justice to Pre-Aryan and non-Aryan India. He says with reason : "When the hypothesis of an Aryan invasion and occupation of India was first proposed some four generations ago, it was believed that the white-skinned blue-eyed, and golden-haired, Aryans, like their kinsmen of Northern Europe, entered India from the plateau of Central Asia, which was then a land of romantic mystery, came to this land of the black-skinned non-Aryans, made an easy and matter-of-course conquest of them, and imposed upon an inferior race or races their superior religion, culture, and language. It was believed that all the better elements in Hindu religion and culture — its deeper philosophy, its finer literature, its more reasonable organization, everything, in fact which was great and good and noble in it — came from the Aryans as a superior white race ; and whatever was dark and lowly and superstitious in Hindu religion and civilization represented only an expression of the suppressed non-Aryan mentality. This view is now being gradually abandoned."[2]

The second volume entitled "The Age of Imperial Unity" adds insult to the injury caused by the first volume. There is a study of Saivaism by Prof. T. M. P. Mahadevan of the University of Madras. But while the history of the Northern kingdoms is treated in hundreds of pages, South India and Ceylon are dismissed in twenty-two pages said to be from the pen of a scholar long gone to his reward, the late Dewan Bahadur S. Krishnaswamy Iyengar. What seems most ludicrous is that the chapter on Tamil language and literature is written by a Professor of English of the Andhra University, K. R. Srinivasa Iyengar.[3] The Professor, judging by the chapter, does not seem to have had a first hand knowledge of the ancient literature of the Tamils. He has merely summarised some out-dated books written in English on Tamil literature. Of the fifteen pages that have been alloted to him, he devotes not a few paragraphs to narrating the legends con-

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[2] *The Vedic Age*, p. 157.

[3] The Chapter is actually entitled "Dravidian Languages and Literature" but no other Dravidian literature is studied in the chapter though there is a brief reference to other Dravidian languages.

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nected with Agastya and the three Sangams. Sentences like the following are extremely enigmatic : "The Kural is one of the few Tamil works that form a constituent of the popular culture of the Tamils." It is passing strange that the General Editor was unable to find a Tamil Scholar to supply this chapter on ancient Tamil literature.

Mr. R. C. Majumdar, ex Vice-Chancellor of the Dacca University and General Editor of this series has recently published a book *Ancient India* in which he says : "There is a general belief that all the best elements in Hindu religion and culture are derived from the Aryans, and whatever is lowly, degrading, or superstitious in it represents the primitive non-Aryan element mixed up with it. This view is certainly wrong, and we must admit that the Aryan religion, thoughts and beliefs have been profoundly modified by those of the Proto-Australoids and Dravidians with whom they came into contact in India. Though the extent of their influence is not yet fully known, there is no doubt that they underlie the whole texture of Hindu culture and civilisation and their contribution to it is by no means either mean or negligible. In some respects, particularly in material civilization, the Dravidian speaking peoples excelled the Aryans in building up the great structure known as Hinduism ".[4]

Mr. Majumdar had a golden opportunity to rectify the false reading of Ancient Indian history which he and others have had reason to deplore. The errors of foreign historians are being corrected, but it is important that in this rewriting of history, the different regions of India are given their due place and importance. No linguistic chauvinism or regional patriotism or attachment to a mythical Aryan superiority should falsify the new history. Let not the error of the foreigner give place to the error of the compatriot.

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[4] *Ancient India*, p. 24.

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Quotable Quotes

As an Andhra, I envy Tamil its possession of two such poems as *Silapadikaram* and *Manimekalai*, for which I can find no equivalents in Telugu literature. Even in translation they dominate the soul like a charm. What must they be like in the original?

—C. R. Reddy in *Dravidian India*.

"Tamil and Sanskrit in spite of some analogies of words have no connection whatever. Their grammatical systems so widely differ that they certainly proceed from quite different origins. They are only to one another what a cocoa tree would be to a carrot plant."

—Julien Vinson in *The Siddhanta Dipika*, Vol. 5. p. 31.

"Tamil is the only vernacular literature in India which has not been content with imitating the Sanskrit but has honourably attempted to emulate and outshine it. In one department at least, that of ethical epigrams, it is generally maintained, and I think it must be admitted, that the Sanskrit has been outdone by the Tamil."

—Dr. Caldwell in *Comparative Grammar of the Dravidian Languages*.

"It is possible to write a simple sentence in pure native Tamil and then to express the same meaning in words almost wholly of Sanskrit derivation; the differences in the two cases being something like the differences in the English style of Swift and Johnson."

—W. Taylor in Introduction to Rottler's Dictionary.

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"Rank and station are provided for by the use of various pronouns extending to several degrees of honorific expression. The language teams with words expressive of the different degrees of affinity. Where in European languages a long periphrasis would be required, Tamil presents the thing in its own single term. And this fecundity extends to all the ramifications of the family tree. If I speak of a sister I may either take a word, that gives the relationship subsisting between us or I may select one that will indicate our relative ages. Measures and divisions of time are equally minute and expressive. *The language thus specific gives to the mind a readiness and clearness of conception whilst its terseness and philosophic idiom afford equal means of lucid utterance.*"

—Rev. Perceval in *The Land of the Veda.*

"The invasion and conquest of these flourishing tribes by the Aryans was part of that ancient process whereby, periodically, the north has swept down violently upon the settled and pacified south ; this has been one of the main streams of history, on which civilizations have risen and fallen like epochal undulations. The Aryans poured down upon the Dravidians, the Achaeans and Dorians upon the Cretans and Aegeans, the Germans upon the Romans, the Lombards upon the Italians, the English upon the World. *Forever the north produces rulers and warriors, the south produces* artists and saints and the meek inherit heaven.

—Will Durant in "*Our Oriental Heritage*".

"When Deenabandhu C. F. Andrews stayed in our Ashram he told me how deeply impressed he was by the natural beauties of the Tamil Nad with its hills and valleys spread all over the land. He gave us one address on this very subject at our Sandhya time. He told me he saw nothing like this in North India. The great chain of the mountains that lie on the West and the East (Western and Eastern Ghats) linked by the gentler connecting hills that run across the country from East to West (The Javadi, Shervaroys, Anamalai and other hills) with their lovely water-falls as at

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Courtallam and Papanasam make the landscape very picturesque and beautiful. The rivers that run from West to East and the vast fertile plains and green fields add to the picture. The great ocean surrounds the land on almost all three sides, and the point at Cape Comorin where the three seas meet is a charming spot. These gifts of nature have influenced the Tamil people in their long and ancient historical development."

—Dr. S. Jesudason in "*The History of the Tamils*".

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Mohenjo-daro

SIR MORTIMER WHEELER

BETWEEN THE years 2500 and 1500 B. C. it would have been possible to travel from remote Sutkagen-dor, near the shores of the Arabian Sea over 300 miles west of Karachi, to the village of Rupar at the foot of the Simla Hills — a distance of 1,000 miles — and to see on all sides men living in various degrees the same mode of life, making the same kind of pots and tools and ornaments, and possibly administrated by the same government. There was a widespread unity, widespread alike in time and in space. This unity is emphasized and partly explained when our travels take us past two great cities of a kind hitheto unparallelled in these parts. One of them lies beside the Indus 200 miles north-east of Karachi, at a spot which came to be known later as Mohenjo-daro, the Hill of the dead; the other 400 miles further on, stands near the little Punjab town of Harappa, beside a former course of the Ravi, tributary of the Indus. Here the art of living in cities, in other words *Civilization* had come into being and had co-ordinatel human effort on a geographical scale unapproached in prehistoric times. Since its discovery in 1921, the now-famous Indus Civilization has rightly ranked amongst the great civilizations of the ancient world.

Almost all the known remains of this civilization lie within the limits of West Pakistan. That is a circumstance of which the new Dominion may be proud. It gives, indeed, a sort of basic unity to Pakistan itself in our historic consciousness. At the same time it presents the Pakistan Government with a special responsibility, of which it is well aware, as the custodian of the relics of an outstanding epoch of human endeavour. Mohenjo-daro is today one of the most spectacular

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Sir Mortimer Wheeler was formerly Director-General of Archaeology in India, and Anchaeological Adviser to the Government of Pakistan. He is now Secretary of the British Academy, London. It is by his courtesy that this description is reproduced.

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of all excavated cities, and well repays the arduous journey, to its site. Let us, in imagination, make that journey when the city was still standing in its prime, some 4,000 years ago, before time and the Indus floods had bitten into it.

Instead of approaching the city, as we do today, amidst sand and dusty tamarisk-bushes, we may suppose that we are passing through irrigated fields which, in their season, bear crops of wheat and barley, sesamum and field-peas, and a species of *rai*. Even a cotton-plantation may lend variety to the busy scene; at any rate, cotton is certainly known to the Indus citizens. As we draw near to the suburbs, we pass the cemetery where (on the analogy of Harappa) slight oblong mounds, ranged north and south like those of a Muslim graveyard, indicate the resting-place of the city forefathers. Beside and beyond them, smoking kilns begin to meet the eye, some for the baking of pottery, others for firing the millions of baked bricks used in the construction and reconstruction of the city's buildings and defences. And so we come at last to the great city itself, with its close-set houses and teeming streets.

We find that the city falls into two somewhat distinct parts, a lower and an upper. The latter, towards the western outskirts, is an oblong mound, 400 yards from north to south and 200 yards from east to west, and massively fortified. If, for the present purpose, we transfer to Mohenjo-daro the better-known details of the equivalent mound at Harappa, we shall see that the fortifications of this citadel — for thus it may be described — stand upon a bank or *bund* designed to protect the base of the defences from the floods which we know to have broken through occasionally into the town. Merchants from the distant city of Ur in Mesopotamia could tell us that their own native city-walls stood in part upon a similar protective foundation. On the Harappa-Mohenjo-daro *bund* rises a thick wall of mud-brick, 40 feet wide but tapering upwards to a height of 30 or 40 feet, and faced on the outside by a skin of baked brick to protect it from the monsoon-rains. At intervals along it, rectangular towers project, and the corners in particular are heavily reinforced in this manner. In the northern end the walls turn inward to flank a long approach up into the interior, and (at Harappa,

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at any rate) other gates on the western side give access to external terraces, designed for ceremonial.

Within the walls, the building-level of the citadel is raised 30 feet above the plain by an artificial platform or infilling of earth and mud-brick ; and on this platform, amongst buildings of a more normal sort, stands a series of remarkable structures which we assume to be connected with the civic administration — whether secular or religious or both. One of these buildings contains a well-built tank which probably serves a ritual function. Another, with solid construction and cloistered court, is seemingly the residence of a high official, possibly the high priest himself, or perhaps rather a college of priests. Yet another is a large pillared hall, designed obviously for ceremony or conference. It is clear enough that this assemblage of unique and monumental structures, frowning from its pedestal upon the town below, represents the stern, masterful rule of which the "lower city" also constantly reminds us.

Before descending from the citadel, however, let us climb upon the eastern battlements and survey the lower city from above. At our feet, we see the houses and shops stretching for a mile towards the broad Indus, where another *bund* seeks to ward off the river that at the same time serves the city and threatens it. From beneath the two ends of the citadel, parallel streets, some 30 feet broad, stretch away from us and are crossed by other straight streets which divide the town-plan into great oblong blocks, each 400 yards in length and 200 or 300 yards in width. Within these blocks, purposeful lanes subdivide the groups of buildings and maintain the general rectangularity of the plan. It is clear that the city is no chance-growth. It is drilled and regimented by a civic architect whose will is law.

Even from where we stand, we can see that the streets are lined with a remarkable system of brick-covered drains. In the nearer distance one of these is being cleaned out by a uniformed municipal sanitary-squad, at a point where a man-hole has been built for the purpose. (2,000 years later, archaeologists will find the heap of debris still lying beside the man-hole). But it is the "hour of cow-dust," when the children are driving in the humped cattle and the short-horns

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and the buffaloes from the countryside for the night, along streets which, though well-drained, are unpaved ; and the dust from the herds and from the solid wheeled "Sindhi" carts and on occasional elephant that wend amongst them rises high amongst the houses and obscures detail. We can just see that many of the houses are of normal oriental countryard-plan, the rooms grouped round two or more sides of a court or light-well ; and here and there we can catch a glimpse of a brick stair-case leading up to a flat roof or an upper storey. For the rest, we must descend into the streets themselves.

There, if we come from some of the ancient cities of the West, we are at once struck with the uniformity and monotony of the street-architecture, with the absence of monumental sculpture or other divertisement. At the best, the severe brick walls are coated with a mud plaster. In the main streets there are few doors and fewer windows ; most of the houses are entered from the side-lanes, where pie-dogs lurk and chase occasional cats, and children play with marbles and with the little terracotta carts and dolls. Through the doors of some of the better houses a glimpse can be obtained of furniture enlivened by inlay of shell or green-blue faience but of no great elaboration. Here and there a chute in an outside wall discharges waste and sewage into a brick-built soil-tank or into a large jar, pending the attentions of the busy sanitary-squad. Meanwhile, at the shop beside us, another municipal squad — the Inspectors of Weights and Measures — is sternly checking the shopkeeper's cubic stone weights against a standard set. All is orderly and regulated. At the same time, all is a trifle dull, a trifle lacking in the stimulus of individuality. The almost unvarying character of the city as a whole from century to century is reflected in this absence of suppression of personality in its details from street to street.

This sense of regimentation reaches its climax in a quarter where there are sixteen small, identical, two-roomed cottages for the housing of slaves or conscripts, reminding us of the coolie-quarter which lies between the citadel and the ancient river-bed at Harappa. We are further reminded that at Harappa, behind the two rows of coolie-cottages are serried lines of circular brick platforms for the pounding of grain in

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central mortars, and behind these in turn, significantly near to the river and its shipping, lie parallel lines of granaries upon a brick-faced pedestal. At both cities we seem to see, as in Mesopotamia, the secular arm of an administration strengthened and straitened by religious sanction ; a civic discipline rigidly enforced by a king-god or his priesthood.

That being so, the more regrettable is it that in our tour of the city we have not found a single building which can, with certainty, be described as a temple. It may be that the dust has obscured, as oday a much later Buddhist stupa obscures, the highest point of the citadel, where the chief temple might be expected. Nor can we make good the omission later on at Harappa, since there a still more recent obstruction (a cemetery) will baffle the archaeologist. For the religion and ritual of these cities we must console ourselves with lesser relics. Thus terracotta figurines of women seem to show that a Mother-goddess played some part at least in domestic ritual, and there are suggestions of a form of phallus-worship. Seal-representations of a three-faced and horned male god squatting with legs bent double and surrounded, on one seal, by an elephant, a tiger, a rhinoceros and a buffalo, suggest a forerunner of the Hindu Siva. There are also many indications on seals and pottery that trees, particularly the *pipal* or sacred fig-tree were worshiped, as widely in India today. Animals, notably the bull, which is sometimes accompanied by a so-called "sacred brazier" or manger, were apparently objects of veneration, and composite animals, such as one with a human face, an elephant's trunk, the forequarters of a bull and the hindquarters of a tiger, presumably represent a synthesis of animal-cults. Snakes may also have been worshipped, and here again many parallels may be found in modern India. Altogether it is likely that the region of the Indus Civilization anticipated *certain of the non-Aryan elements* in the Hinduism of a long-subsequent age.

But we have not yet left the busy street, with its seething population. The dress of the local citizen is notably scanty but, so far as it goes ornamental. The women wear a short skirt held by a girdle which may be adorned with beads. Above the waist, the body is bare save for extensive necklaces which are usually of clay or stone beads but are sometimes of blue faience or green jadeite or even gold. The most re-

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markable feature, however, is the fanshaped headdress worn with grave, ceremonious mien by an occasional lady of rank and fashion. At the sides of the headdress are pannier-like cloth extensions, carefully stiffened and balanced and of grotesque aspect to the foreign eye. Of the men, less is to be said. The poorer classes wear a loin-cloth, a few, particularly the priests and high officials, are wrapped in embroidered cloaks. Many of them are bearded, but the seniors sometimes shave the upper lip in accordance with a hieratic fashion more at home in the neighbouring civilization of Sumer.

Let us peer at the passers-by more closely. We find that about half of them are of medium height and slender build, with olive complexion, dark hair, long head and fine features. Similar men and women of this attractive appearance might be found in many places, from the western Meditterranean to southern Arabia and India. Amongst them are a few of smaller stature, dark, with curly black hair and pronounced lips, of an aspect recalling that of some of the "aboriginals" of the Indian peninsula. An occasional passenger has a broad head with regular but rugged features. Of mixed type is a priest with beard and shaven lip and a woven fillet round his hair, whose advent is received with obsequiousness by all within range. And striding amongst them in his Turkoman boots is an almond-eyed Mongolian who came in this morning after a moonlight trek with a camel-caravan which has brought a mixed cargo of dried fruits and the blue lapis lazuli and turquoise from Afghanistan and Iran. In brief, the human scene is as cosmopolitan as such scenes are wont to be.

One perennial feature of our surroundings continues to evade us : the language which many of these folk are speaking and which is indicated by clearly rendered but unintelligible characters upon goods in the shops and even on some of the pottery at the well. We nevertheless glance frequently at the seals and sealings bearing these unread characters, for they also bear vivid and superbly engraved representations of animals — cattle of various kinds, tiger, rhinoceros, elephant, crocodile — and, as already remarked, the shapes of gods. Only ordinary mankind, it seems is passed over as of no account. Once more, we find that the individual is of no great interest to this efficient but curiously detached society.

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Before continuing our description, we may pause to consider for a moment certain aspects of these cities and their civilization on a more abstract plane. We have observed the astonishing *sameness* of that civilization, both from place to place within its 1,000 mile stretch and from age to age within its 1,000 — year span. Another quality of it is its *isolation*. Only in a general way is it linked with the smaller cultures of the last chapter. Its distinctive pottery — deep red with black pattern of scales or interesting circles of *pipal* leaves or peacocks or fish — its seals, some of its inlays and ornaments are peculiar to itself. We know not the circumstances of their origin. Its commercial intercourse with the outside world was of the slightest, at any rate in non-perishable goods; what trade there may have been in perishable commodities such as spices, unguents, cloth and slaves, we cannot of course tell in the absence of an intelligible record. Most of the tools in daily use were still of stone, long chert blades in particular being employed as knives and for other purposes ; but simple axes, knives, arrow-heads, spears and other implements were also made from copper or its alloy bronze, and these metals, together with silver, were sometimes used for vessels or figurines. For these purposes copper was probably brought from Rajputana, not necessary beyond the jurisdiction of the Indus State. Iron was, of course, still unknown at this remote date. A little lapis lazuli was, as we have seen, imported from north-eastern Afghanistan. Occasionally a stone or alabaster unguent box may have come from South-Baluchistan or Southern Persia, a bronze socketed axe-head or rare gold disc-beads from Mesopotamia, a bronze pin from Northern Persia or Asia Minor, a fragment of amazonite from South India. Amongst exports, a few distinctive products such as seals, inlays, and pottery found their way from the Indus to Ur and other cities of Mesopotamia at a time which Mesopotamia archaeologists can identify as about 2300 B. C. But, considering that Mohenjo-daro lived through upwords of nine rebuildings, the total volume of this trade on either side is insignificant.

How then did the Indus cities come into being ? In spite of their difference and detachment from the contemporary (and older) cities of Mesopotamia, it is unlikely that the civic idea was an absolutely independent invention of the

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Indus folk. And here it is perhaps possible to find a useful analogy in the fully historical period. When Islam came to Pakistan and India from the West, it brought with it the *idea* of mosque and tomb, the *ideas* of the rhythmic triple *iwan*, the emphatic dome, the minaret. But India, whilst adopting these ideas adapted them to her traditions. She accepted but transmuted. And for a demonstration of this process, we have only to compare the Isfahan of *Skah Abbas* with the almost contemporary Fathepur Sikri of Akbar the Great: the one completely and soberly Persian, the other touched with the fantasy of the jungle. So also, we may suppose, in the third millennium B. C. India (Pakistan) received from Mesopotamia the already- established *idea* of city-life or civilization, but transmuted that idea into a mode substantially new and congenial to her. Above all, she developed her civilization, as at more than one later period, along ambitious imperial lines. Whether the outstanding cities of Mohenjo-daro and Harappa represent one empire or two, we cannot know ; if the latter, we may recall that in the ninth century A. D. two Arab principalities divided the Indus between them in somewhat similar fashion, with capitals at Multan in the Punjab and Mansurah in Sind. It does not greatly matter. But the immensely vaster size of these two cities (each of them three or more miles in circumference), when compared with the other sites of the same culture, once again emphasizes that intense *centralization* which we have recognized at all stages of the Civilization. Sameness, isolation, centralization are its abstract qualities : it was a civilization wihin an Iron Curtain which preserved it marvellously intact for a thousand years, more or less. And then, about 1500 B. C., something happened to it.

We are once again on the eastern fortifications of the citadel of Mohenjo-daro. Before us lie the familiar straight streets, stretching for away towards the Indus. But otherwise the scene is a very different one from the peaceful evening homecoming which we witnessed before. Now volumes of smoke and flame are rising from several of the houses below us. Led by a gesticulating man in an outlandish chariot drawn by two small ponies which are stretched at a fast canter, a horde of howling swordsmen is rushing down one of the main streets. By the chariot-pole crouches the charioteer, and

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every now and then the swaying figure beside him fits an arrow to a short, stocky bow and discharges it into the panic-stricken groups of fleeing citizens. As we watch, a gang of desperadoes turns into one of the side-lanes where half-a-dozen wretched creatures, including a small child, have just emerged from a house and are seeking escape. In a moment their bodies are sprawling in the dust and their cries cease. A little further on, a rash refugee has returned for some treasured knick-knack, and he shares the same fate. At another spot a pathetic group of eight or nine figures, half of them children, are emerging heavily laden from the Quarter of the Ivory Workers. They are surrounded: their screams reach a brief crescendo and die away. Their treasures have been transferred to other hands, and the looters are thrusting upon their way. Elsewhere again, we look down on one of the public well-rooms, in which local house-folk were drawing water when death came to their city. For a time they have cowered beside the well as the screams and the shouting draw steadily nearer. Now they can bear the suspense no longer. Two of them are climbing the stairs, have reached the street, when the invading mob closes upon them. They drop, and are instantly trampled into the sand. A burly fellow with raised sword turns on to the well-house stairs and cuts down the cowering woman who is struggling up them. She falls backwards across the steps, and her companion, still beside the well, is struck down instantly. Laden with plunder, the ravening horde sweeps on. A part of it is already streaming up the long stairway into the citadel on which we stand. It is high time for us to take flight into the future, through thirty-four centuries during which the poor bones of the massacred will lie there in the derelict streets and lanes until twentieth century archeologists shall dig and find them, where they, with their age-long Civilization, perished within the hour.

It remains to expand this story a little in the colder light of science and literature. Recent revisions of all the related evidence make it clear that the Indus Civilization was still living in the early centuries of the second millennium B. C. It was succeeded by a variety of (materially) inferior cultures, in some cases after a phase of violence. *Into this picture it is difficult not to bring the evidence of the earliest literature of India, the* Rigveda, *which is agreed to represent, from the*

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Aryan point of view and in the vague way of a hieratic hymnal, the conditions of the invasion of the Punjab by the Aryans at a date which, on archaeological and other grounds, is now commonly ascribed to the fifteenth century B.C. The vedic hymns make it clear that the mobile, city-less invaders differed at every point from the long-static citizens whom they invaded. The term used for the cities of the aborigines is *pur,* meaning a "fort" or "stronghold." One of these embattled cities is called "broad" and "wide." Sometimes they are referred to metaphorically as "of metal." "Autumanal" forts are also named, perhaps with reference to the capacity of a *bund,* like that on which the Harappa defences stood, to withhold the autumn inundations. Forts "with a hundred walls" are mentioned. The citadel may be of stone or of mud-brick ("raw", "unbaked"). Indra, the Aryan war-god, is *puramdara,* "fort-destroyer." He shatters "ninety forts" for his Aryan protégé, Divodasa. The same forts are doubtless referred to where in other hymns he demolishes variously ninetynine and a hundred "ancient castles" of the aboriginal leader Sambara. In brief, he "rends forts as age consumes a garment."

Where are — or were — these native citadels ? It has in the past been supposed that they were mythical or, at the best, mere palisaded refuges. But, since the discovery of fortifications at Harappa and Mohenjo-daro in 1944, we know too, that at least the administrative nucleus of these great cities was stronglyfortified. We know too, that lesser sites of the same Civilization, such as Ali Murad and Kohtras in Western Sind and Sutkagen-dor in Makran, could boast defensive walls of stone, stone-and-mud, or brick. The general showing, then, is that of a highly evolved "aboriginal" civilization of *essentially non-Aryan type,* now known to have employed massive fortifications and known also to have dominated the river-system of Pakistan at a time not distant from the likely period of the earlier Aryan invasions of that region. What destroyed this firmly settled civilization ? Climatic, economic, political deterioration may have weakened it, but its ultimate extinction is more likely to have been completed by deliberate and large-scale destruction. On circumstantial evidence, Indra and his Aryans stand accused. If we reject this evidence, then we have to assume that, in

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the short interval which can at he most, have intervened between the end of the Indus Civilization and the first Aryan invasions, an unidentified but formidable civilization arose in the same region and presented an extensive fortified front to the invaders. The assumption is a wilful and unlikely one. *It is now, therefore, generally accepted that the Indus cities were, in fact, those referred to in the* Rigveda, *and that they were destroyed by Aryan invaders in or about the fifteenth century B.C.* (*See Five thousand years of Pakistan*, by R. E. M. Wheeler, p. 24ff.)

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The Tamil Script Reform

T. P. MINAKSHI SUNDARAN, M.A.; M.O.L.; B.L.

INDIA has celebrated her fifth anniversary of the day she achieved Independence. She is a federation of States in one of which an ancient language continues to be current even in this Twentieth Century. The Tamilians are therefore both to look backward to the past for preserving their classical heritage and to look forward to the future for achieving progress in science and the modern arts. That is their peculiar problem at present because of their unique position in History. If language is the expression of a nationality, the Tamil language should become capable of performing this cultural duty.

Man stands up with his gaze towards heaven, looks and marches towards the horizon. The hands become freed and develop into the miraculous tools of the brain, its very embodiment, creating and shaping, as they wish, the world and the machines which are but his extended arms. Man finds that his most materialistic organ of eating creates music moving other hearts and utters words symbolising his innermost thoughts. Man thinks aloud ; thought is no more inaccessible. This is a discovery and a revolution. Society is knit together in this union of voices and communism of thoughts. The miracle is that it is the incarnation of thought in audible sounds. Society preserves this through its tradition. But after all, the audible sound, as an audible sensation, is ephemeral. When man's scribling hands give permanence to these

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The Government of Madras appointed in the year 1950 a Committee for the purpose of making recommendations for the simplification of the Tamil Script so as to serve better the needs of modern printing machinery and discard the illogical accretions in the development of the Script. Six months ago the Government of Madras stated that because of strong opposition to the reform of the script, it was leaving it to the public to effect the changes it might deem necessary. T. P. Meenakshi Sundaran, who was a member of the Government Committee, here discusses the need for adopting the recommendations of the Committee.

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thoughts through written symbols, another revolution is effected. Man's thoughts conquer time and space. Aristotle and Tiruvalluvar, Homer and Kambar speak to us through the ages. Our friends in foreign countries of the West through their letters, conquering space, speak to us as did the Letters of the Kings carried through their embassises in ancient times. Books are thus born.

Once written down these books of great men cease to be individual possessions and become the common property of society. They can be copied and multiplied but there is a limit to human power. Man, however, overcomes this difficulty by inventing machines. If man is a thinking and a social animal, the books, the embodiments of men's thoughts, are *the heritage of every man — not only of the learned few.* The age of the Common man starts. The Printing press and its modern *developments of lino-type, mono-type etc.,* have ushered in this age of universal literacy as the very basis of the Democracy of our country. The Printing press though nothing but matter, yet as the embodiment of the social urge of Man's spirit thus introduces the third great revolution in the domain of thought.

The common man — the ordinary labourer working the ever renewing machines has to keep himself in touch with their modern developments if he is to keep the wolf from his doors. The invention of mechanical devices and improvements are flashed through the wireless and the tele-type writer all through the world, to be printed in the evening papers, giving the latest news. The Tamil language and its scripts have to serve not only the poets and philosophers but also the motor driver and the electrician speaking and writing a peculiar Tamil jargon almost foreign to the learned, though popular among their own comrades. The democractic and practical need of the age should not be lost sight of in our preoccupation with our own classics. This supplies us with a guiding principle. The adult coming to the community Centre to receive his social education is to a little extent like the child familiar to us in our school. We shall therefore study the familiar child to throw new light on this problem.

Society it is that makes culture immortal, passing it on

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from one generation to another by actual social contact and habits. Therefore, the greatest problem is to prepare the younger generation — the future citizens — for the necessities of the modern world. This is the era of the Child as a poetess of the West has sung. The Child is the father of the man and this ought to serve as our starting point. A Common Error Note-book of a higher form of a City High School reveals to us the difficulties the children are experiencing in our educational institutions, where their difficulties honest toil and first trials at creative expression, are condemned as errors by a tyrannical adult world of teachers, in their attempt at mechanising and standardising the human talent of the morrow. The longer ka and other syllabic letters ending in long ā, are with a few exceptions, written with the consonants *followed by what in Tamil is called* a *kal* of the form ா. (கா, சா *etc.*) The exceptions ணா, றா, னா are a source of confusion to the children believing in the uniformity of Nature, which is the basis of all our sciences. These unsophisticated ones more often than not write these exceptional letters also with a kāl as றா, னா and ணா. The history of the Tamil script justifies their mistakes as the most ancient and correct forms. The exceptions have been introduced in the middle ages to avoid confusion in the running script. We, therefore, ought to be thankful to these new-comers to our world, teaching us good sense through their racial memory of the ancient forms.

There is another place where this fundamental feeling of uniformity of nature receives a rude shock. Whilst ordinarily we write the syllabic letters ending in āi with a double kombu (ை) preceding the consonant the letters nai, nai, lai, lai are not written according to this ordinary rule as ைண, ைன, ைல and ைள but instead are written as exceptions having the forms ணை, னை, லை and ளை, so as to avoid the confusion of the double kombu with ள *etc.* in the running script. Here also the good sense of the children condemned as a mistake by their teachers, puts us on our guard to understand and appreciate the ancient history of these letters which surprisingly justifies their socalled aberrations.

There is one other instance of this breach of uniformity more dangerous to the development of science and logic because of its occurrence almost at the second step of the child

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in its progress in writing. அ and ஆ, the first two letters are related in form, even as they are related in sound. The long and short vowels and syllabic letters in the alphabet are uniformly thus related. But at the very second step, come the short *i* and the long *i* which have no similarity in form when they are written as இ and ஈ. The connected forms இ and இீ are not of ancient history and there is no meaning in persisting to use the grantha form of the long *i* when there is an ancient form still continuing to be current. That great friend of the children the late lamented Tiru C. R. Namasivaya Mudaliar re-introduced uniformity to this extent in his Readers.

These are some of the recommendations of the Committee appointed by the government of Madras for reforming the script — recommendations approved by the learned bodies of Tamil land. These are neither revolutionary nor heterodox ; they, in an orthodox way go back to the pristine purity of ancient usage.

The next source of confusion is between the sign of au (ஔ) in the syllabic letters and the letter *l* (ள). ஔ is *au* but nothing prevents any one reading it as ola; and this remark is not hypercritical. The compound ollalal (ஒள்ளழல்) by elision of the medial consonant ள் can become ஔழல் (olālal) in poetry, according to the best usage of the grammarians. Vau (வெள) is liable to be read as vela. Arunagirinathar of Tiruppukal fame uses the word "vellari" (வெள்ளரி) the cucumber in its unusual form velari, where the *l* medial or ள் has been elided. How is one to distinguish velari from vauri (வெளரி)? If the children get confused and read the word ஔவை as olavai according to a standing joke of the schools, who is to be blamed ? Who is to be slapped ? Certainly not the children who in their simplicity, yearn for a firm hold on the uniformity of Nature. The Grantha script avoids this confusion by having two different symbols, for otherwise it would have been impossible to read sanskrit in that script, because of the frequency of the sound *au* occuring in that language. It is the rarity of this sound *au* in Tamil which more often than not was written except in Grammar, in the more ancient way as 'av' (Avvai, navvi) that has not brought to the forefront its confusion with la. There is a suggestion to remove

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au from the alphabet itself — a most revolutionary change which when adopted will make it impossible to print the ancient grammars or to transliterate foreign words where this *au* occurs. Nobody is compelled to write au instead of *av*: but in this age of freedom, we cannot compel a phonetician to write *av* when he feels he is hearing the sound *au*. For the purpose of differentiating these sounds in the scripts — for there is no confusion in pronunciation — the old form ள is retained for *l* whilst the same form with a slight difference — a line is drawn to the left from its perpendicular line as we draw in ர & ள to differentiate them from ர and ள respectively. The new form for the *au* in syllabic letters is ள — (கௌ=kau).

A reference has been here made to the democratic and practical demands of the modern world, necessitating the printing of newspapers for the benefit of the labourers and the public. If Tamil were to become the language of our Government and courts, its scripts must lend themselves to be easily and neatly arranged in the type board so as to be operated upon, without much difficulty or waste of time. A language like the Chinese with its two thousand scripts is impossible for a typewriter and for the lino type board of the printing machine. We have in Tamil 12 vowels, 18 consonants, 1 Aytam, 216 combinations of vowels and consonants, as syllabic letters, making in all 247 letters, a number equally impossible for the typewriter and the lino. But fortunately the early printers of the Tamil country have now for centuries analysed these scripts into a few letter-forms which by permutation and combination give all the required 247 letters of the Tamil alphabet. ஔ in print is not one letter as in script, but a combination of two leads ஒ and ள ; no new form is required for ஔ accorling to the usage of printers. (But in our recommendation [illegible] will be a new lead.) The long syllabic letters கா, சா *etc* ending in ஆ have been analysed into the dotless consonant and the kāl so much so that instead of having 18 new forms for these, the forms for the short syllabic letters க, ச *etc.*, are themselves used along with one new lead the kal (ா) thereby effecting a saving of 17 new letter faces. The recommendation to delete the exceptional forms றா ணா and ஞு is helpful here as well.

The old printers have analysed கெ series into kombu and க etc. with the result that with one more new lead face for

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the kombu and the old forms for க *etc.*, they can print all 18 syllabic letters ending in ள. So have they analysed கெ series into ெ and க *etc.*, கை series into க and ை *etc.* With one additional sign alone for each one of these series, all the eighteen letters in each of the series can thus be printed. When these operators come to the syllabic letters ending in ஒ and ஓ and ஔ, the கொ series, the கோ series, and the கௌ series they need no new signs. By the combination of the kombu, the க etc., and the kal or la, they succeed in managing to give us these three series, without any difficulty. They have not gone against ancient usage by introducing these mechanical devises of economy. — the கு series.

There only remains the four series, the long *u* and the short *u* the long "*i*" and the short "*i*" the கி series in which this analysis has not been carried to its logical end. These letters in these series on account of their inseparable unity of forms refuse any such easy analysis. The typewriter board however analyses them into comon bits of letters. The hooks of the short and long *i* are separated from the main syllabic form ; the board also separates the latter portions of the letters பு பூ கு கூ *etc.* But there is a technical difficulty. If the board were to be moving, there will be a space appearing in between these parts : to avoid this, the type board must be stopped from moving till both the parts of one and the same letter are typed. One hand has to be on the stop key almost paralysed for the time being. This impedes the speed of the typing. Red-tape-ism will thrive on this waste of time and efficiency engendered by this method. Some other method of analysis is therefore necessary.

As far as கி series and கீ series are concerned, there is a wonderful uniformity in their forms ; the hook denotes short *i* ; the hook with a circle at the right end denotes the long *i*. They are attached as it were, to the main consonant in the way in which they are cast now. A reference to the Malayalam scripts will make it abundantly clear that they need not be so rolled into one form. The hook can be separated and juxtaposed. Analysed this way there is no revolutionary change introduced. Instead of introducing 36 new letters, the trick can be worked with the original க *etc.* and two additional symbols, the simple hook and the rounded hook, thereby effecting a saving of 34 new lead faces.

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The கு and கூ series as they stand at present, defy any such analysis. The gordian knot, as has been suggested, can be cut by introducing new symbols for the short *u* and the long *u*, thus saving another 34 new letter faces. There are already the symbols in use for some of the Grantha letters included in the new alphabetical list of the Twentieth century such as ஜு ஜூ ஷு ஷூ ஸு & ஸூ. These symbols are ு and ூ used in ஷு, ஜூ *etc.* Therefore, there is no necessity for going in for any new letter face at all, and nothing except prejulice prevents the editors and authors using these forms uniformly for all the letters.

But, as matters stand at present, feelings run very high, whenever there is a suspicion, however baseless it may be, that Sanskrit usage is being forced on Tamil. The very idea of a reform of the script is resisted from all sides in other countries; but fortunately for the first time, in the history of Asian countries, such a reform has been tolerated and welcomed in this Tamil country. It is not prudence to jeopardise the possibility of its success of this reform, by rubbing the opponents on the wrong side, merely on theoretical grounds. The experts in Lino-type and Typewriter from a practical point of view, do not insist on this further economy for the efficient working of their machines.

Here is a question of human psychology and not of dry logic. The practical world is never the clear cut dream of the theorist. It is full of compromises. If the idea of the reform of the script were to take root, it would indeed be a great revolution. It will make posssible further reforms in the future, if necessary, once the nation becomes accustomed to the notion of change. To spoil the good effect of this agreed reforms, on non-controversial points by insisting on doubtful symmetryand system, is to court defeat for all times to come. Discretion is the better part of valour.

The dotted consonant க் *etc.*, could have been analysed into க *etc.* and the dot, but the dot thus separated will be confused with the sign denoting "degrees" in the measurement of temperature and angles. One may wait for a correct analysis of this series.

Therefore, these recommendations are not the last word on this subject. Children get confused when they come to

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syllabic letters ending in *e* and *au*, the கெ series, the கே series & the கை series, because the vowel signs here instead of coming after the consonant as kal or hook as heretofore, precede it. In syllabic letters ending *o* and *au* in the கொ series கோ series and கௌ series the confusion is worst confounded, for the vowel signs get split up and a part of them the kombu precedes whilst another part the kāl, follows the syllabic consonant. But any remedy will be only worse than the disease; because there is the great danger of making the handful of our literates in Tamil, illiterates, by introducing revolutionary changes. It is this overpowering consideration that stands on the threshold of our enquiry preventing the acceptance of the Roman alphabet.

There is nothing revolutionary in the recommendations. They hark back to ancient times. A few misguided devotees of Tamil are labouring under the fallacy that the present scripts came from Siva or Agastya fully formed like Minerva from the head of Zeus. They forget the gradual changes the scripts have undergone all through the ages. Ka, (க) for instances was originally like a plus sign (+). Writing on palmyra leaf, the straight lines tearing the leaf, have to be avoided and written as curves. The commentators like Naccinarkkiniyar point out the changes of the dots or pullis and kotus or lines into kombu and kal. Has not Rev. Beschi as late as the 18 century introdlced changes in vowels எ ஏ ஒ ஓ and in syllabic letters of the கெ கே கொ கோ series. If there is any well established tradition about our scripts in Tamil land, it is a tradition of gradual change to meet the exigencies of times; and the recommendations of the Committee are, therefore, on the lines of the best tradition of this hoary land and its ancient language.

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The Evolution of the Tamil Script

V. I. SUBRAMONIAM, B. A. (HONS.)

THE Tamil scripts to attain the present form have undergone evolutionary changes, from the days of the Thirunatharkuntru Inscription — which is the earliest known Tamil inscripion of the 3rd century A. D. — down to the days of Father Beschi. The very word Tamil during the time of the Thirunatharkuntru Inscription should have been written as [illegible], in the time of the early Pallavas of the 7th century A. D. as [illegible], in the 8th century during the time of Nandi II as [illegible], in the 10th century during the time of Rajaraja the great, as [illegible], and during the rule of the later pandyas of the 13th century as [illegible]. Attempts to alter the scripts to make them perfect, easy and uniform have not ceased even in our days. Since printing has established them any major reform is discredited and decried.

Among the Dravidian languages, only Tamil, Malayalam, Telugu and Kannada have characters of their own. Tulu was written in Malayalam scripts and later in Kannada. The Ku language uses Oriya scripts. The other Dravidian dialects do not have an independent alphabet. The Kannada and Telugu characters which were derived from the Devanagari, have little difference between them. Modern Malayalam scripts have evolved out of Tamil Grantha characters. It is commonly believed by the Malayalis that it took place during the time of Euluthaccan of the 16th century, when the influence of Sanskrit was enormous. Before that, Vatteluttu script was commonly used for all purposes as in the adjacent Tamilnad up to the 16th century. The Mapalas of Malabar adopted until very recent times for their documents the Koleluttu script which is another form of Vatteluttu.

In the Tamil country the early Inscriptions were written in three kinds of scripts, (1) The Vatteluttu script (2) The

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Grantha script (3) the Tamil Grantha script called Tamil. The Grantha script was only for writing the Sanskrit words. Mostly no unit of Sanskrit, shorter than a word, or a word compound, or a phrase, was written in Grantha. The body of the Inscription was either written in Vatteluttu script or in Tamil. The available Inscriptions having Grantha and Tamil scripts date back to the 7th century A. D. and the Vatteluttu Inscriptions, except the Thirunatharkuntru Inscription, from the 8th century. There is evidence to show that the Vatteluttu was in vogue throughout Tamil-nad. When the Pallavas dominated the Tamil country they popularised the Tamil script. Later, when the Pallava supremacy was displaced by that of the Cholas they also adopted the same characters as the Pallavas. As a result of it, the Vateluttu script became popular only in the limited area of the Pandya and Chera countries. After a few centuries of precarious existence, the Vatteluttu script fell into disuse even in the Pandya territory. When the Malayalis began to use the modern Aryayeluthu script, Vatteluttu was finally discarded in Malabar. The difficulty in reading the Vatteluttu and the failure of political powers to back its usage, were the immediate causes for its disuse.

The arrangement of the alphabet in the Dravidian languages including Tamil, resembles exactly the arrangement of the alphabet in Sanskrit ; but, Tamil limits its vowels to twelve and the consonants to eighteen leaving out the soft consonants of the *varga,* aspirates and sibilants of Sanskrit. On the other hand Telugu, Kannada and Malayalam have adopted the sibilants aspirates and soft consonants of Sanskrit along with the peculiar Dravidian sounds like short *e(எ), o(ஒ)* and *l(ழ) r(ற)* etc. In these *l (ழ)* and *r(ற)*, have gone out of use now in Telugu and Kannada but early inscriptions bear evidence to the fact that in the early days they both had *l*(ழ) and *r*(ற).

The origin of the Dravidian scripts was a favourite theme for research during the later half of the 19th century: and as many as a dozen illustrious scholars have put forth different theories. Among the three scripts mentioned above, Grantha and Tamil scripts, are accepted to have been derived from Brahmi. The origin of Vatteluttu alone is disputed. Many derive Vatteluttu from the Asokan Brahmi and a few

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tate it as of indigenous origin. According to Burnell, it is of Phoenecian and Aramic origin. Buhler thinks it to be a cursive script of Tamil. In the opinion of Gopinatha Rao, like all the other alphabets of India it is derived from the Brahmi variety of the Asokan script. An individual analysis of these letters will clearly prove that Vatteluttu has originated from Brahmi.

If the Dravidian alphabets like all other alphabets of India were derived from Brahmi, why should they be entirely different from other Indian scripts ? The causes for the difference in the scripts are many. Though, differences in the writing material is the major cause in shaping the script, both in the North and South India the same material was used for writing from the beginning of writing. Different social circumstances influence very much the choice and character of the scripts. The most important cause is the range of sounds which a speech community habitually uses at the time when it gets its script, and the range of sound represented by the parent alphabet. The law of indolence that is, straight lines becoming curves and curves becoming straight lines propounded by Gobinatha Rao can have remarkable influence in changing the scripts. The high cultural antiquity as a cause of differentiation in scripts cited by Caldwell, deserves consideration. The innate tendency of the Tamilian to change every thing to suit the genius of his language and culture may also be an important cause for the difference in the script.

Scholars are equally divided in their opinion about the origin of Brahmi : Buhler and Weber trace it from the Phoenecian alphabet ; Isaac Taylor, from the predecessor of the Sabean and Deacke from the Cuneiform syllabary of Assyria and Babylonia. The British Encyclopaedia also states "the north Semitic as the mother of Brahmi." At the outset it must be made clear that these scholars did not take into consideration the Mohenjodaro script, for this buried civilization was discovered only in 1926. The light hat Mohenjodaro sheds when tracing the history of scripts is important and far-reaching. Hence the older opinions of scholars need revision. Professor S. Langdon who specialized in this field discards the earlier theories of Phoenecian origin and states that the Brahmi has originated from the Mohenjodaro script.

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Long before him, Sir Cunningham, the first Director of the Indian Archaelogical Department supposed the existance of an indigenous pictographic script in India. But paucity of evidence made Buhler reject this supposition. Dr. G. R. Hunter in his thesis "The Script of Mohenjodaro" has come to the conclusion that the entire Brahmi alphabet is derived from the script of Mohenjodaro" and says "those scholars were not mistaken who connected Brahmi with the semitic and Phoenecian scripts for there is much evidence to show that these also were derived from the very same scripts of Mohenjodaro." Though the disappearance of this ancient civilization was neither felt nor recorded in India yet its religious and cultural influences on the Hindus are without doubt admitted by all scholars. Hence the knowledge of the script could have been in all probability and possibility passed on to the neighbouring inhabitants who were definitely non-Aryans-be they Dravidian or Mundas.

Now we should note an important epigraphical evidence, that the earliest Brahmi Inscriptions which are considered by epigraphists to belong to pre-Asokan period are found in considerable numbers in Southern India. In these Brahmi inscriptions there are some peculiarities worth noticing. According to K. V. Subramonia Iyer they have characters for all the sounds peculiar to the Dravidian languages such as *l*(ழ) *r*(ற) *n*(ன) and only two consonants for each varga — the surd and the sonant, and not four as in Sanskrit. The sonants were used in writing the Sanskrit words only. If his reading is true, then it clearly shows that Brahmi was first devised by the Dravidians because all the peculiar Dravidian sounds have characters in these early Inscriptions and later, extended and modified to suit the needs of Sanskrit. Foreign evidence also lends support to this inference. Megasthenes the ambassdor of Seleukos, had noted that the Indians did not have any written book nor a script. We should know that Megasthenes did not come down to South India and his knowledge about the South was little and second-hand, and even the information he has given about North India is to be taken with extreme caution. But Nearchus who preceded Megasthenes had taken note of the written letters on clothes. So it may be inferred that during the time of Nearchus and Megasthenes (about 302 B.C.) though writing was known

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it was not widely used in the North. On the other hand in the South it was extensively used. So during the time of Asoka when a necessity to publish his laws of Dharma arose he would have accepted and modified the prevalent script of the South to suit his purpose. Thus the early suggestion of Ellis and Edward Thomas that the Aryans got their scripts from the early Dravidians, in the light of these facts, seems very probable. From the Mohenjodaro Pictographic script the neighbouring inhabitants would have derived their characters, and from those characters southern Brahmi would have been devised.

Hitherto the history of Tamil script has been traced from the earliest stage. Though the manner and material for writing were the same throughout, yet there were changes in the shape of letters, in the formation of conjunct consonants and in marking the pulli or virama, from time to time. In no two centuries were they constant. Even after printing was introduced in this country in the 16th century, the tendency to change did not cease. A few major changes have been introduced by Fr. Beschi the renowned Epic poet and Grammarian. It was he who introduced the modern form of (எ̇ & ஒ̇) to distinguish clearly between short *e* (எ) and *o* (ஒ) from long *e* (ஏ) & *o* (ஓ). Formerly long *e* (ஏ) and *o* (ஓ) were written simply as *e* (எ) & *o* (ஒ) and the short as எ̇ and ஒ̇ with a dot on. To suit modern needs and to keep pace with other developed languages, the shape of Tamil characters, why the alphabet itself, need revision.

There are many irregularities in the Tamil script; while long *ka* (கா) is written as கா long na (ணா) is written as ணா instead of ணா. Same is the case with *ai* (ஐ) — sign also as in கை and லை. If one and the same sign is used for denoting the lengthening and marking *ai* for all the vowels and consonants it would be simple for typing and printing.

Grammatically a vocalic consonant should be written, first the consonant, and second, the vowel. So the vocalic consonant *kai* (கை) to be written gramatically should be க ை the opposite of the present practice. The modern method of writing is also not phonetic. A few other Indian languages too have this defect.

Though no alphabetic system is phonetic in the true

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sense yet it should be enough to express at least the most vital sounds. The Tamil alphabet is only just enough to express the indigenous sounds. Due to the increase of contact with other speech communities — both European and Indian, Tamil has been enriched by borrowing many words from them. But the present alphabet cannot express important sounds of those languages. So a few additions to our alphabet are necessary and the present difficulty in writing foreign technical terms due to the lack of alphabets, can be solved if these additions are made.

After Fr. Beschi the necessity to reform the Tamil script was felt by scholars and a few gave very good suggestions. In 1921 Dr. Gilbert Slater went so far as to suggest a common script for all the Dravidian languages for the cultural revival of the south, but was turned down by the then Legislative council of which he was a nominated member. The proposed improvement in the Tamil script by the Madras Government is another attempt. Let us hope that competent cultural associations will address themselves to this task which is an immediate necessity for the growth and development of the Tamil language.

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The Genius of Tamil Music

A. A. VARAGUNAPANDIAN

UNTIL recently Tamil Music was a lost art even in the land of its birth. The Tamils were told and taught and even made to believe that compositions in their mother tongue could not be even set to music. There are even today in the heart of Tamil Nad exponents of music, who pride in passing over the claims of Tamil lyrics at public performances and private entertainments.

The system of music native to South India is known as Carnatic music and is distinct from Hindustani Music, the system in use in North India. Carnatic is the name given by the European traders in the 18th century to the region of South India between the Western Ghats and the Coromandal coast, that is exactly the land made up of the old Pandya and Chola kingdoms which with the Chera or Kerala made up the whole of the ancient Tamil-Aham (The Home land of the Tamils). From about the 10th century A. D. Kerala was lost to Tamil Nad because of the development of a new language called Malayalam formed by a greater admixture of Sanscrit with the old Tamil. It is a strange phenomenon in the history of words that the music of the Tamils should be called Carnatic. For, it is also synonymous with Kannadam, the language of the people who mostly inhabit Mysore and the West Coast between Goa and Malabar. Tamil Music has been known as Carnatic Music for at least two centuries and hence the term has come to stay.

This is after all a small matter. A far more serious observation is that Carnatic Music disowns its parent tongue and is completely dominated by Telugu and Sanscrit. The reason is political and social. From the 15th century up to the 18th century, Tamil Nad was governed by Telugu Gene-

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rals of the Vijayanagar Empire who ruled at Madurai, Tiruchirapalli, Tanjore, and Ginji. During their reign, Telugu adventurers carved out Zamindary estates all over the country and installed a number of petty-courts. Learned Brahmins from Andhra Desa were imported and granted Inams (gifts of lands). The Nayak princes, Zamindars and Inamdars cultivated quite naturally their own mother-tongue Telugu. Thanks to the influence of the Brahmins with the landed aristocracy and at the princely courts, Sanscrit also received great patronage. The Marathas who supplanted the Nayaks at Tanjore in the 17th century were great votaries of Sanscrit learning and culture. They established the famous Saraswathi Mahal Library at Tanjore, the treasure house of Sanscrit and Telugu manuscripts. At the same time, Travancore rulers equally patronised Sanscrit. Both Tanjore and Travandrum became thus the centres of Sanscrit culture and Carnatic music with Sanscrit and Telugu Sahityams (words). Tamil was driven into the background and languished for want of royal or aristocratic patronage. In the 19th century in the peace and security of British rule, Thiagaraja, Swathi-Tirunal, Muthuswami Dikshitar and Pattinam Subramania Iyer composed exquisite lyrics in Sanscrit and Telugu and thrilled the South Indian aristocracy of learning and wealth with the heights to which they raised Carnatic music. The fame of Carnatic music spread far and wide. Tamil songs were excluded from public and private entertainments. The Saivite mutts (monasteries) of Thiruvavaduthurai, Dharmapuram, and Thirupanandal were the only places where Tamil songs, lyrics, and devotional hymns were cultivated.

At the end of the 19th century, Dr. V. Swaminatha Iyer, himself a product of Thiruvavaduthurai Adhinam, searched for old manuscripts of Tamil classics in nooks and corners of Tamil Nad and brought to light a number of books usually called Cankam Literature and carefully edited them. One of these books is the celebrated *Silappadikaram*, an epic poem in Tamil written by a Kerala prince, whose brother had his capital about the the 2nd century A. D. at Vanchi very near Cochin. Along with the epic poem, an old commentary on it by one Adiyarkunallar was discovered. Probably he belongs to about the 11th or 12th century. An earlier annotation of the same epic was also brought to light. The

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text, the commentary and the annotation are most valuable for research scholars, particularly for the light they throw on Tamil music. They give us a glimpse of the practice of the art of music as well as its technique as understood in those early times. My late revered father M. Abraham Pandither of Tanjore, made extensive researches and reconstructed the musical edifice of Tamilaham which appears in his teatise called "Karnamrutha -Saharam" (கருணாமிர்த சாகரம்). I have myself made some research regarding the musical instruments in use in those days, namely the "Yal." My book is called "Pahnar Kaivazhi yenappadum Yal Nul" (பாணர் கைவழி எனப்படும் யாழ் நூல்.) *I have shown therein with abundant evidence that the old Tamil Yal is the modern Veena. This substitution of names is explained by all the Tamil musical terms being substituted by Sanscrit names in later days.*

The old Tamils called their language Muthamil (literally meaning three kinds of Tamil) indicating the three great divisions of the language namely (1) (இயல், literature ; mostly poetry), (2) Isai (இசை, Music), (3) Koothu (கூத்து Drama and Dance). Koothu is also known as Natakam (நாடகம்) when confined to Drama. The books on Music, Drama and Dance referred to in ancient commentaries are not available now. Even the few that are said to be available have not yet been printed.

Prosody which is one of the sub-divisions of Iyal Tamil, shows that letters, (எழுத்து), syllables (அசை), Seer (சீர்), Thalai (தளை), Adi (அடி), Thodai (தொடை) Koon (கூன்), Ethugai (எதுகை), Monai (மோனை) are so arranged as to satisfy the rules of music. The Pun (பண்) the musical mode and Thalam (தாளம், Time) are so arranged that sweet notes of the melodies may not sound out of place and time, and that the coherance of the subject may not be lost. The result of these has been the production of different kinds of Pah (பா, poetry) such as Venba (வெண்பா), Achiriyapa (ஆசிரியப்பா), Kalipa (கலிப்பா), and Vanchipa (வஞ்சிப்பா), and their varieties namely Thalisai (தாழிசை), Thurai (துறை), and Virutham (விருத்தம்). Tamil poetry was so composed as to be sung, and there was thus an intimate link between poetry and music.

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The productions based upon prosody and music are capable of being easily learnt by heart, are easily explainable to others and are best protected from the admixture of foreign elements. The Pahs (பாக்கள், Poetry) which are chief parts of the Iyal Tamil become Puns (Songs) when sung to music of Isai Tamil. Though the term Pun (பண்) is a common name for Ragams (modes and notes) it means Pahs (words) sung to music. The Puns and Pahs when used with their respective Abinayams (gestures) become Nataka-Tamil (Drama). It was only after Pahs were made that the Isai-Tamil or music which accompanied their recitations came into existence. Pahs and puns were followed by Abinayam or gestures which brought out the meaning of the poetical compositions set to music. Abinayam, because of dancing and gestures developed into Natakam (Drama). This explains why our ancesters saw unity in the three divisions of the Tamil language and called it Muthamil (Triple Tamil).

It is worth while to remember what a foreign student of the Tamil language says about the quality of its poetry. "It is not perhaps extravagant to say that *in its poetic form*, the Tamil is more polished and exact than the Greek and in both dialects with its borrowed treasures, more copious than Latin. In its fulness and power, it more resembles English and German than any other living language." —*Winslow.*

Tamil Music being part and parcel of the language developed along with it and attained early a high degree of perfection. It is testified to by the epic *Sillapathikaram* with its commentary and notes. It was highly scientific in its fundamentals.

Unfortunately the later imitators of it in the North lost its fundamentals and its scientific character. Modern artists and scientific students of Carnatic Music follow the Sanscrit treatise on music called *Sangitha Ratnakaram* by Sarangadeva, a Cashmiri Brahmin of the 13th century at the court of Deogiri in Maharashtra, but are unable to explain the fundamental basis of that music.

The confusion created regarding sruthi by North Indian authors explains how they lost the scientific tradition of the Tamils. Captain Day in his book on " The music and musical instruments of Southern India" (p. 15) says ;- "The exact

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definition of what constituted *Sruthi* is difficult to determine, but it is thus vaguely given by the *Sangitha Ratnakaram.*

"A Sruthi is formed by the smallest intervals of sound and is perceivable by the ear ; it is of 22 kinds ; also every distinct audible sound is a sruthi ; it is a sruthi because it is to be heard by the ear."

"Doubts however exist as to whether the intervals of the sruthis were equal or not."

The following stanzas cited by the Commentator Adiyarkunallar shows some of the fundamentals of the ancient Tamil Music.

> "சரிகமபதநியென் றேழெழுத்தாற் றானம்
> வரிபரந்த கண்ணினாய் வைத்துத் — தெரிவரிய
> வேழிசையுந் தோன்று மிவற்றுள்ளே பண்பிறக்குஞ்
> சூழ்முதலாஞ் சுத்தத் துளை"

"ச, ரி, க, ம, ப, த, நி, யென்னு மெழுவகைப்பட்ட எழுத்தடியாகப் பிறக்கும் குரல் முதலாகிய ஏழும்"

In the above lines he points out how the seven Swarams (Notes) Kural (குரல்), Thutham (துத்தம்), Kaikkilai (கைக்கிளை), Ulai (உழை), Ili (இளி), Vilary (விளரி), Tharam (தாரம்), (Do, Re, Mi, Fa, Sol, La, Si, the corresponding names of notes in the Western system of Music) proceed from the seven letters Sa, Ri, Ga, Ma, Pa, Dha Ni (C, D, E, F, G, A, B, the seven letters of the C major scale of Western music).

Again in the following lines he proceeds to give the system of by which the twelve frets which are required for an octave, on a Yal (Veena) may be correctly fixed to the true pitches (tones) of Sa, Ri, Ga, Ma, Pa, Dha, Ni, and their five sharps.

Silappadikaram : Arangetrukathai :—

> "ஏற்றிய குரலிளி யென்றிரு நரம்பி
> னொப்பக் கேட்டு முணர்வினை ஞகி
> வண்ணப் பட்டடை யாழ்மேல் வைத்தாங்கு"

Commentary and annotation :—

"என்பது, குரல் நரம்பு இரட்டிக்க வரும் பாலையையும், இளி நரம்பு இரட்டிக்க வரும் பாலையையும், இவைபோல் அல்லாத பாலையையும் இசை நூல் வழக்காலே இணை நரம்பு தொடுத்துப்பாடும் அறிவினை யுடையனாய்"

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"பட்டடை நரம்புகளின் இளிக்குப் பெயர், என்னை? எல்லாப் பண்ணிற்கு மடி மணை யாதலின் — வண்ணம் திறம் — இதனை யாழ் மேல் வைத்தென்க. இளிக்கிரமத்தாலே பண்களை யாழ் மேல் வைத்தென்க".

He says in these lines that each of the twelve frets, which produce the twelve pitches of the seven notes must be fixed on the Yal, so that they might harmonise with their respective Pahs (Sols or fifths) just as Kural with Ili (Do with Sol or C with G). We know by experience that Ili or pa (G) perfectly harmonises with Kural or Sa (C). The sweetness of the concord will be in proportion to the harmony of this Pa with Sa (G with C). He does not say here that this pa. (G) sounds at $^{2}/_{3}$ of the whole length of the wire which produces Sa (C) of a Yal. But he says emphatically that the one who fixes the frets on the Yal, must have such a cultivated sense of ear as to appreciate the concord of the notes Kural and Ili or Sa and Pa.

It is not easy to indicate a sweet sound which can be minutely appreciated by the cultivated ear, by means of wire and calculations by the leveling rod. The internal ear as well as the nerve which differentiates auditory impressions are very subtle. The appreciation of sounds must be in proportion to the subtility of the auditory organ. The first sound Sa (Do) should be so appreciated and the Pah (Sol) to it should be determined. Then if this Pa is made the Sa and if we proceed by the same process of fifths, we obtain the twelve musical pitches or tones of an octave. These twelve pitches of the seven notes are a gradually ascending series and are as concordant with one another as Sa is to Pa (Do to Sol). Even in "Bharatham" which is supposed to be the earliest Sanscrit work which treats about Music and dance, we find no clue as to how the twelve pitches may be derived in an octave. So we conclude from the above that even at an early age (from the commencement of the First Tamil Cangam, several centuries before Christ) the ancient Tamilians have had their singing with these twelve pitches derived from Sa-Pa system.

In Europe there was a good deal of controversy and doubt as regards these twelve pitches of an octave and these came to an end only about 125 years ago. These were first used by Hwydon (1732 - 1809) and Mozart. As the twelve

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pitches of the octave were equally divided and pianos consstructed accordingly, modulation in all the keys become possible. This modulation was brought to perfection by the celebrated Beethovan (1770 - 1827) about 125 years ago. This arrangement of pitches is called Equal Temperament. So Equal Temperament was introduced as recently as 125 years ago. Captain C. R. Day in his book named " The Music and the Musical Instruments of South India " page 29, says as follows :

> " The following table kindly sent me by Mr. Ellis shows the results obtained from a most minute and careful examination made by him and by Mr. A. J. Hipkims of a beautiful old Veena in perfect condi tion now in my possession. This instrument is between two or three hundred years old and is from the collection in the Tanjore palace. The results as will be seen tend to prove that the frets were purposely arranged for something like Equal Temperament. We see therefore that in India much the same results have been independently arrived at by the native musicians as have been attained by subsequent science in Europe " Cited in *Karunamrutha Saharam*

at p. 141.

In the above, he gives a few important particulars about the Yal (Veena) that was taken to England from Tanjore (South India). This instrument appears to have been from the collection at the Tanjore palace Museum, and the frets in it seem to have been arranged so as to produce the twelve pitches of the seven Swarams (notes) in accordance with Equal Temperament. He says that on examination of it by Mr. Ellis and Mr. A. J. Hipkims, it was found that the frets were arranged not in conformity with the Diatonic scale used in Europe for 2,000 years but in accordance with Equal Temperament used for the purposes of modulation for the past century or two, and that the South Indian musicians had arrived at this system independently before it was ever discovered by the Europeans.

Captain Day after laborious research, discovered the fact that the twelve frets of the Yal were in accordance with the

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Equal Temperament and mentioned the truth that this system was known in South India from remotest time. A little deeper research in the field would certainly convince all earnest students of music that we can conclude from what we find in the *Silappadikaram* written eighteen centuries ago that the Sa - Pa system (Do - Sol) is referred to in the ancient music of the Tamil country and that it has been always in vogue among the Tamils even to the present day.

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The First Tragedy in Kamban

E. T. RAJESWARI, M.A., L.T.

PART III

I

KAMBAN'S work is sometimes called Kamba-natakam and therefore, one may expect here the dramatic element to predominate. His work is not a drama in the sense in which we now understand that term. It does not consist merely of the speeches of his dramatis personae. It is an epic, not a natural epic like that of Homer or Valmiki, but an artificial or learned epic like Virgil's or Milton's. Why it is called a drama is that, like a stage play, it is full of dramatic situations. This usage is justified in Indian poetry by the famous example of Maha Nataka called a drama, though it is not. Perhaps Kamban's work is a masterpiece of art unlike the patchwork of Maha Nataka, full of digressions, conceits, quibbs and discussions. It is because of this characteristic feauture of concentrating on dramatic situations, following in the illustrious footsteps of Ilango and his Cilappatikaram, which is again famous as a drama of threefold Tamil, that this Kamba Natakam lends itself so fittingly to Pavaikuttu or shadow plays in Malabar and other places from very ancient times.

II

Kamban does not therefore believe in the elaborate narrative conversation so naturally and beautifully handled by Valmiki. But Valmiki's influence has become so very great in India, that Kamban or for that matter any poet cannot help following his ancient lead, at least to the extent of referring to all that Valmiki has said. The following table shows the correspondence between Valmiki and Kamban :

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Kamban	Valmiki	Kamban	Valmiki
1	23. 10 *etc.*	41	
2	23. 13, 14	42	24. 27, 29, 30
3		43	
4	23. 22	44	
5		45	
6		46	26. 7, 8
7		47	
8		48	
9		49	
10		50	24. 27 26. 10
11		51	
12		52	
13		53	26. 12
14		54	
15		55	
16		56	25. 16
17	22. 11 to 20	57	
18	,, ,,	58	
19		59	25. 21
20	24. 15	60	25. 20
21	24. 25	61	25. 22
22	25. 5	62	25. 17
23	25. 6	63	
24	25. 7	64	
25	25. 7	65	25. 22
26	25. 8	66	26. 1 to 5
27		67	
28	25. 9	68	
29	24. 9	69	
30		70	26. 17
31	25. 10	71	26. 25
32	25. 10	72	
33	25. 12	73	

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Kamban	Valmiki	Kamban	Valmiki
34	25. 13	74	
35	25. 14	75	
36		76	26. 27 to 31
37		77	
38	24. 29 to 30	78	
39		79	
40		80	

It must not be assumed that there is a word for word translation or a direct borrowing. Even if there is an idea, it has been listed here. A comparison thus shows that Kamban proceeds in his own way. The life size portrait of Tataka is attempted by Kamban in the most graphic manner. The battle between Tataka and Rama is really the first battle Rama fights. Therefore it assumes a great importance in Kamban's eyes. It ceases to be a teasing of a worm ; such a teasing Kamban reserves for Curpanaka. The poet describes the battle here in all its seriousness.

III

We may examine the stories in detail. Kamban starts with the story about Kama's ashrama, but the whole story is dismissed in a single verse. The next verse explains the connected term Angadesa. The third verse is a dramatic explanation of the story. Even this, as was hinted already, is by subsequent reference by Rama made a prelude to the story of Tataka. Kamban takes us straight to the haunt of Tataka without digressing on the gurgling waters etc. The story of Kama itself is given in Valmiki before the princes cross the river. Kamban is not anywhere clear about geography, but in any case here it is clear, he makes his narrative more dramatic, by giving the history of the place only when the princes are actually inside that grove, whilst it suits Valmiki's story-telling to give this explanation as soon as the ashrama is sighted at a very great distance.

Opening the drama of Tataka on the burning desert is itself dramatic. Teaching the Mantras to the princes in the midst of its burning heat so as to immediately produce a

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supernatural effect is another instance of Kamban's dramatic art. There is again the rushing in of Tataka, just at the moment when Rama enquires of the sage of her whereabouts. Rama standing as a great satyagrahi even when the demoness is ready to hurl her fatal trident at him, creates a dramatic situation more telling than all possible verbal descriptions. The opening of the story with a description of the wanton destruction by Tataka suggests at the very outset, that the world cannot be saved as long as she lives. The poet in this way has created a favourable situation a magic casement where the reader under this enchantment believes that Tataka should be killed. The progress of the story and the final outcome are thus made almost inevitable. The speeches of Rama and Visvamitra will be, in what follows, shown as equally dramatic.

IV

There is the question of the construction of the plot. What position has this byeplot of Tataka in the main plot of Ramayana? This is important in view of our description of Kamban's work as Kamba Natakam. The story-teller, true to his art, multiplies his anecdotes and he is satisfied even if they hang loosely about the main story. The dramatic poet, however, has to give us a well knit plot. It has already been hinted how the story of Kamashrama itself leads on to the description of Tataka's habitat.

Ramayana is said to consist of three different strands — the story of Rama's exile, the story of Ravana's adventure and the story of Hanuman's valour. Sita brings together Rama and Ravana while the monkeys join the fray as Rama's allies. The stories of Rama and Ravana are attempted to be unified by Kamban in this very story of Tataka. It is Rama's first conflict with the Rakshasas of Ravana's ilk. Marica the son of Tataka is to come as the golden deer, paving the way for Sita's abduction by Ravana.

Kamban has made this connection more patent and explicit. Whereas in Valmiki Marica alone is the son of Tataka and Sunda, while Suvahu is according to some manuscripts the son of Upasunda, Kamban makes both Marica and Suvahu

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the children of Tataka. After their fall, they become the adopted sons of Sumali. Kamban brings out the implication by explaining that they thus become the maternal uncles of Ravana. Kamban further affirms that Tataka is in the service of Ravana. Therefore the attack on her is the first onslaught on Ravana's forces, and true to this, when Tataka falls down, Kamban exclaims it is the ominous breaking down of Ravana's victorious banner and flagstaff.

In narrating the story of Rama, Kamban begins from the very beginning and proceeds step by step chronologically in the good old Indian way. In giving us the story of Tataka, the poet like Homer and Milton plunges straight into the middle of the story for working up a climax. We meet Tataka ; and the climax is soon reached though the past is also explained. Here we have the three unities of place, time and action as demanded by the disciples of Aristotle. Kamban's greatness is revealed by his superiority in handling thus the dramatic art, and the epic art of the so-called art of the East and the West with no slavish bias against or for any one of these.

V

The difference between Valmiki's treatment of the story and Kamban's handling of the same plot is clear even to one who reads them as he runs, as is usually done by most of the readers of modern times. There is the conversation between Visvamitra and Rama both in Valmiki and Kamban. If one may use a half truth while Valmiki's Visvamitra reminds us of a grandmother and his Rama of a school boy, Kamban's Visvamitra reminds of a great Guru and Kamban's Rama reminds us of a jnani and it is no wonder he marries the daughter of the great Brahmajnani Janaka. Kamban comes after the Rama of Gnana Vasishta has become popular in this country. The conversation in Kamban is therefore turned to a higher pitch more serious, more condensed and therefore more dramatic.

Kamban's Rama has ceased to be a school boy and is now a fully developed man of high ideals of heroism and Dharma — not in any case the playful Rama of Valmiki

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which we described. Perhaps it will be nearer the truth to say that Kamban has sublimated the idea of play suggested by Valmiki. The opening verse of Kamban's epic speaks of the never ending play of God. "*Alakilavilaiyattutaiyan*" The conception of Leela or play of God is a favourite idea of the poets and philosophers of the Tamil land, for emphasising His metaphysical detachment and purity. True gnani behaves like the actor on a stage always conscious of his true reality even whilst he plays his assumed role. Rama is true to this ideal. There is the famous passage in Kamban's where Rama is said to be extremely happy at the thought of his exile, his face beaming with joy more glorious than thousand blooming lotuses (Ayodya Kandam — Kaikeeiculvinipatalam — verse 108) Again after the first encounter with Rama, Ravana returns home crestfallen ; he reports to his grandfather the heroic acts of Rama where the latter seemed to be unperturbed by any anger, aiming his arrows at Ravana even as Rama has aimed them in his youth at the hunchback of his wet nurse (Uttakandam — Kumbakarnan Vadaippadalam, verse 17).

VI

True to his art of dramatic condensation, Kamban has avoided all the unnecessary details about the genealogy and the past history of Tataka. What is more, there is something of modernity in Kamban. Valmiki's Visvamitra artfully leads on his Rama to the desired end of killing Tataka. He mentions as a story-teller various examples from past history suggesting that Rama should follow his valuable precedents. Since Kamban has pitched his story at a higher level as the story of an ethical dilemma, he is not satisfied with these stories of ancient folklore, as they can carry no conviction to Rama as conceived by Kamban, even as they will not to any man of the modern world, especially in the crude way in which they are referred to in Valmiki, without any attempt at poetic sublimation. If Rama is not satisfied with Visvamitra's advice, he is not going to be satisfied with the stories he is going to tell. These stories may serve as raw materials for Kamban's art, but he refuses to give them in their crude form.

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Valmiki reminds us of a natural state of society where customs, precedents and ancient history form the very embodiments of Dharma — the beacon lights, as it were, for ever guiding man on the righteous path. Kamban suggests a new era, where the basis of old society are re-examined afresh with a critical eye, to suit the changing times and expanding society to face new ideas, strange men and fresh problems. It is from this point of view he is reinterpreting Valmiki to the rising generation of the Tamilians of his day. Unless the stories referred to are also reinterpreted in a similar way, a casual reference to these old stories cannot carry conviction to the critical mind. The question of following the precedent and of obedience to the great is still there even in Kamban. But this problem takes a universal significance in the form in which Kamban describes them.

But in spite of this we find in certain manuscripts four verses beginning respectively with the phrases, "Mannar Mannavan" (58), "Piruku ennum" (59), "Vanakamtanil" (60) and "Atalal" (61) giving us in the most prosaic of verses the stories of Kavyamata and Mantara as told in Valmiki — evidently the work of an untrained hand bent upon introducing into Kamban what all is found in Valmiki. Even a casual reference to these verses will convince any critic that they do not show any trace of Kamban's art of dramatisation or versification.

VII

At this point reference may be made to other verses which we have till now refused to consider. There is a verse beginning with the phrase "Kannavil" which is found in a few manuscripts. As it simply repeats the ideas found in the verse "Enralum Iramanai" (21) it could not have proceeded from the pen of Kamban. This new verse must have formed an introduction to the 17 verses describing the life history of Tataka which are not found however in a few manuscripts. Though they are found in most of the manuscripts, they do not fit into the scheme of things we have been trying to explain. Unlike the four verses we have rejected which appear to be later day additions as is proved by their absence from most of the manuscripts, these 17 verses must have

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been introduced into Kamban's work very early in history either by Kamban himself, as an after-thought, or by some other old poet of great merit, as is clearly proved by their inclusion in many of the manuscripts now available.

Valmiki's Tataka is humanised in this version of the story and it is because of this we are tempted to believe that these 17 verses come from the pen of a poet of Kamban's stature. The story as given in Valmiki with all its repetition and dim revelation does not amount to much. Tataka's father performs tapas for being blessed with a daughter, and the creator endows him only with a daughter but of a strength equal to thousand elephants. She is married and begets a child Marica. Her husband is killed by Agasthiya. Tataka with her son flies against the Rishi to wreak their vengeance only to be cursed as Rakshasa. From that moment she devastates the fertile land. No further explanation is given probably because Visvamitra does not want to emphasise the older and brighter side of Tataka or explain why she is invitably metamorphosed into a Rakshasi. For, such a development of the story of Tataka will give additional strength and force to Rama's objection to kill a woman. It is this very reason which prompts us to conclude that these verses, in spite of the dramatic excellence, do not fit in within Kamban's scheme of presenting the story as an ethical dilemma. These verses might have come after the description of Tataka's death. But if so, some inartistic hand has mangled this part, for pressing it into the previous part itself. Even if it had come at the end, there may not be that dramatic cohesion, being after all a digression, though it is possible to take this part of the story as a separate unit by itself. But it is futile to argue on these lines in the absence of any clue about its original position in the story .

VIII

These verses first introduce us to the father of Tataka. The situation is made very concrete. We are given the name of her father Sukethu. He is of a wonderful prowess — wonderful to the whole world. The name of his father is also given as Sarcharan, an unnecessary detail in this short nar-

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rative. (22) Valmiki gives this as the name of the father of Tataka's husband, though in some editions the latter name appears in the form Jambu. In passing we may note here alone another mistake by the composer of the four spurious verses. The name is Mantara as given in Valmiki; but this is by a slip of the hand written as Kumati in all the manuscripts in which these four verses occur illustrating the unnatural pedantic passion for names which have not been correctly remembered. Passing on to the story of Tataka the poets refer to the fiery anger of her grandfather — a characteristic trait which Tataka unfortunately inherits. Sukethu feels very much for his childless state and performs a tapas for a long time. (23) The creator appears before him in answer to his prayers but regrets that the devotee can have no son, though the Lord blesses him with a daughter (24). She is to be possessed, more than any possible son, with the strength of thousand elephants (25). She grows up into womanhood as beautiful as Lakshmi herself. The father makes a careful search for a husband and finally gives her away in marriage to Sunda. (26). The married couple live a happy life of passionate attachment like Kama and Rathi of old, drowned as it were in the ocean of 'happiness — loving' intoxication (27). After a long time this damsel of divine beauty brings forth two sons Marica and Suvaku (28). They so excelled all others in magic tactics and in strength that even their mother can never fathom their greatness (29). The father is further intoxicated with the power of the children. It is very significant that the poet uses the word intoxication "Kalippu" and repeats it too.

The poet thus develops the story slowly emphasising the good in Tataka and then showing how the deterioration has been brought upon herself by her own wickedness. It is not for nothing that she is the grand-daughter of an easily irritable and clear-headed Sarcara and the daughter of the pure-hearted Suketu (22). Instead of running a happy home and making the world around her resonate with her ever expanding love and happiness, she seems to have developed by slow degrees into a nuisance to her neighbours — a thorn in their flesh.

Beauty, wealth, happiness and power intoxicate and

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corrupt man. Man becomes too much self-centred when blest with this kind of giant-like superiority. Consideration for others never arises there. Man indulges in vain acts — purposeless acts — merely to give vent to his feeling of intoxicating strength. Slowly he comes to indulge in wanton destruction and to revel in vandalism. Sunda also is thus going down the inclined plane. He uproots and throws out all the innocent trees and plants in Agasthiya's grove (30) so kindly reared and brought up and so lovingly nursed by the good old Rishi. It is a wanton act of desolation — a sure and certain sign of his intoxication. He is like the children playfully throwing stones at the heads of poor frogs in a pond. This power intoxicated Sunda finding no more plants to uproot kills the deer, the loving pairs of deer so dear to the merciful tapasvins. Agasthiya is unable to bear the sight of this cruel death of his foster children — the immobile plants and dumb animals. The very look of his reduces our Sunda to ashes (31).

What a fall for Tataka, now almost at the height of all that happiness, nature and God can bless her with ! This misfortune does not strike her dead. Her sea of intoxication is churned afresh to its very depths and gorges forth the poison of an anger. We are naturally reminded of Kannaki, but Kannaki's cause was right. Where however is the time for this intoxicated woman to think of the right or wrong of it ? She rushes with her children to make an end of Agasthiya, (32) the cause of her unending misery, even as Kannaki rushed against the king and Madura. What can be more miserable to a woman than the death and that an unnatural death of her husband whose form also has not been left for her to see and weep on ?

The whole universe shudders at their movements and reverberates with the thunder of her challenge to the Rishi (33). The poet is trying to picture forth the fight between the super-natural powers of evil and good represented by Tataka and Agasthiya. In thus visualising the supernatural agencies the poet has no other recourse but to indulge in what appears to moderners as inexcusable exaggerations and hyperboles. If the description of this supernatural person is

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accepted, the description of their acts and their effects follow as corrollaries.

The Rishi who has given us a limitless ocean of Tamil raises a threatening noise to put an end to her evil acts. The curse follows as night follows day. For after all even if he curses, the curse can only be an outcome — a fruition of their own acts. They have been acting as destructive agencies. What else do Rakshasas do? Rakshasas are not mere seekers after pleasure, but are in addition embodiments of hatred and jealousy bent on destroying all that is good — and therefore all that is against them. What else did Sunda, Tataka and their children do? Therefore says Agasthiya "Go down as Rakshasas" (34) and his words come true. (35) Powerless against his greatness, her children take refuge under Sumali, the leader of the Rakshasas, and they are accepted by him as his adopted sons (36), they thus becoming the maternal uncles of Ravana (37). Thus separated even from her own children she remains isolated — her heart ever burning at the thought of the Rishi's ire. She enters the desert now so full of burning fire on all sides — a befitting rendezvous for her (38). The metamorphosis is complete. This is Tataka (39).

The poet, whoever he may be, has shown the brighter and more human side of this woman — the beautiful and beloved daughter — the beloved wife and the beloved mother. It is true that the stroke of misfortune is of her own making. It is indeed a cruel stroke enough to disturb suddenly the mental equilibrium of any one, much more so of this blessed woman of all happiness, inheriting anger for two generations. No wonder she becomes an incarnation of hatred — another name for what in the language of the curses of Agasthiya is Rakshasa. It is not for nothing that she has been blessed with the strength of one thousand elephants by a conspiring nature. She is transformed from a happy woman into a self-centred dame, indulging in wanton destruction of plants and beasts and finally into the force of sheer destruction, wreaking vengeance on the whole world now pitted against her.

Under different circumstances she might have grown and died as a happy woman. We understand her fall. It is a

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great tragic fall of all that is good in her. What a great tragic waste simply because of her fault of self-centred power intoxication! This is the very root of her tragedy making her a misanthrope. Here is again an intoxication of hatred and anger but can she not complain of the conspiracy of circumstances? The poet has made Tataka more human and therefore more lovable. The tragedy of personality stands fully revealed in this version of the story.

IX

It is not this which appeals to the reader as the central tragedy of our story. This central tragedy has now to be studied. Ramayana may be looked upon as a series of tragedies. A number of people are killed or die broken-hearted. There is here therefore ample food for thought on the basic principles of tragedy, or rather of life and its problems.

Tragedy involves such a great tremendous waste of life and nature, and then wonderful achievements. Ravana — what a wonderful personality is his! — how great are his achievements! — yet all these come to nought. They are destroyed in the end; not to speak of all the counter move and energy raised and developed only for the purpose of this destruction. Could not Rama's energies have been turned to better and more constructive purpose but for this tragedy? Everyone realises these implications. At Ravana's death there is the heart-breaking wail of Mandodari. But all the readers along with her experience the very same tragic consummation. Kamban seems to be expressing himself through Mandodari.

The question of questions arises, "Why all this in this world — rather in the story," There can be no two different opinions about the sublime tragic seriousness of the story of Ravana's fall. There are however other stories in Ramayana where it is not so very clear, but at every step our mind keeps on asking "Why should it be this way?"

The very first tragedy in Ramayana is that of Tataka. The seventeen verses humanising the story of Tataka explain in a way this tragedy. It is a tragedy of personality, a little tilted towards the self-centred human weakness. But what

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tragic consequences flow from it till we come to a stage where we feel, that but for her death, the world cannot be saved. The poet has no time to develop the life of Tataka in all its tragic seriousness. His dramatic way of handling the story, as already been hinted, makes us demand her death. In that way indeed the end is satisfactory. This is however a poetic legerdemain, not a real grappling with the tragic problem. The tragedy of the enormous waste of all that went to make up Tataka is not emphasised as is emphasised in the case of Ravana, except by the author of the seventeen verses.

There are two sides to a tragedy — the destruction of the personality of the so-called villain on the one hand, and the destruction of the energy of the hero and others in bringing about this fall. In this tragedy of Tataka, Kamban skips over the first problem of waste very tactfully hypnotising us all into the belief that Tataka should die — the sooner the better.

X

But it is the other side of the hero that has become a great problem with Kamban. Rama is actually shaped into a great personality in the white heat of the tragedies of the Ramayana. Can there be a sculpture but for the resisting stones ? There is also the internal struggle going on corresponding to the external conflict. This is very well brought out in this first tragedy. Rama has his own conception of honour and valour. That is why in this story Kamban does not treat him as an adolescent boy. The hero is here a grown up young man ready for marriage and other serious and onerous duties of life. The prince has always a feeling of reverence for woman — thanks to his maternal influence. One who insults womanhood deserves in his judgement nothing but death. It is because of this Ravana has to be killed, and every one understands this situation. The death of Vali is not so clear. Once, however, this ideal conception of womanhood nourished in his heart of hearts by Rama is understood, Vali's death creates no problem to any reader of Kamban.

This regard for womanhood can never easily acquiesce in the voluntary woman slaughter. Valmiki himself senses the impropriety of a hero killing a woman. Strihatti is a great

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sin. Valmiki's Visvamitra anticipates also such an objection. His Rama says that he does not feel enthusiastic about killing Tataka because of her female form, thus, feeling it beneath his dignity to fight with a woman. But Kamban's reverence for woman is something higher and nobler, and it is this that lies at the root of the tragic situation in the story of Tataka, It is this Rama of the high ideal in the very prime of his youth, before any doubts could have been cast on his ideal, that is faced with a situation where the killing of a woman seems to be the only possible duty. Hence arises an internal conflict between his sense of honour refusing to kill a woman and his sense of the inevitable situation into which he has been led. This is the ethical dilemma.

To start with, Rama is true to his principles. He like a true satyagrahi, refuses to move his little finger against Tataka even when his death is imminent at her hands. Rama has thus won a victory, but it is a victory of a theorist. The practical world, however is no sweet dream of a theorist. This is what Visvamitra at this tragic moment teaches Rama through an actual life situation. Things of the world are not watertight compartments as theorists are prone to argue. Woman for instance should be honoured ; she should not be killed. This is a platitude worthy of a Polonius. But the practical question arises Who is a woman ? This is indeed a very simple question which a theorist fondly hopes a child can answer. In this very story a situation arises, where no such simple answer could be given to the seemingly simplest of the questions. Is Tataka a woman in the sense Rama reveres that word ? Who is the devil if she is not ?

XI

Is Visvamitra equivocating ? No such doubt can arise in the present context. The seer, with all the moral seriousness at his command, opens out his heart with a cry, " I am not inspired by anger." This is not a theoretical protestation. Where is the necessity for making such a statement ? Can the readers ever believe that Rama is not at that juncture convinced of the mystic detachment of Visvamitra ? Even as a dying confession has a value of its own, this protestation

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of a suffering heart carries for more weight than all the possible intellectual affirmations. It is the feeling of sincerity and human sympathy, not an intellectual gymnastics, that appeals to any heart. Inner communion of feeling is here brought about.

What is the personal interest of the sage? It is the common weal that demands everybody's service. Is there not something of an egotism in the feeling of theoretical honour refusing to see the practical aspect of the situation, especially for the son of a king who has to go to the succour of the millions of lives entrusted to his care? It is this villain of an egotism that meets with a fall in this internal conflict, but the wonder of it is Rama grows in moral stature.

Rama has a great teacher and preceptor in Visvamitra. Has he not himself realised the magical effects of the Mantras, the seer has bestowed on him? The moral seriousness of the sage, his absolute selflessness, his concern for the world at large — all these must have made a very great impression on Rama. The desert and desolation, her diabolical form and act, her attempt to kill them all — all these must have convinced him of the inevitable necessity. Only her feminine form has been standing in the way. But Rama stands converted in the end. His sense of honour, truly a false sense of honour, yields of course very grudgingly. His final conclusion is indeed sublime and majestic — a revelation of all the internal struggle and its final outcome.

It may be, there are occasions when doing something other than Dharma becomes a necessity. But should one do the non-moral act? "Things may be out of joint but am I born to set it right?" Does not this question itself involve a moral cowardice? Why shift the blame on other shoulders? Rama realises that he must perform even a seemingly non-moral act. Seeing all his arts of persuasion fail, a reliable leader of greater experience of the world and its ethical problems, moved by no feelings of blinding anger, or private prejudice, or mean lucre, is, because of the imminent danger to all, forced to command Rama in dangerous haste to kill Tataka. Is not what at first sight appears to be a non-moral act from a theoretical point of view, really an all compelling moral act under these circumstances?

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Valmiki's Visvamitra wants ancient precedents to be followed, and he repeats many a time "obey my command and kill her." Kamban's Visvamitra does not say so; for he is not talking to a school boy to necessitate the issue of such orders or instructions. The sage is not in a mood to command. Obedience, outward conformity and passive discipline have no intrinsic moral value. But at the most dangerous moment, when Tataka is about to hurl her trident at Rama, the sage is so overpowered with the tragic sense of the situation, that he almost exclaims "kill her." It is, therefore, no order. It is the cry of a broken heart, standing on the brink of death and destruction of the whole world — the cry of the broken heart of a majestic and divinely powerful Rishi, bent upon saving the world. Rama realises the situation. Moved by the very anguish of this bleeding heart he stands converted. To do as bid by such a true and knowing and loving heart is indeed Dharma.

The conclusion of the story is the same in both Valmiki and Kamban, but what a world of change do we find when the feelings excited are taken into consideration. Perhaps the very same words are always used — "command" etc. But these become surcharged with emotion in Kamban. In the natural society of Valmiki there is an atmosphere of sincerity, where words have not yet become dead verbal shells. There, even an outward conformity is not a mere show. Kamban's society has become much more complex with more of divorce than of union between thought and action. Mere outward conformity and passive obedience remind Kamban, as they remind us, of military discipline — nothing more than a physical habit. Therefore, our moral sense demands an inner communion of minds and an active mental discipline vivifying all outward acts. It is this mental discipline which makes Rama say later on, on seeing Sita "I love her. My mind can never fall in love with a married woman; so she must be a virgin" (Balakandam 714) Mind itself becomes a moral guide, thanks to his association, and heart to heart contact with great souls. What is wanted is an active sympathy of a discerning heart which can understand the language of the true heart of the great seers, leading us on to a conversion of the heart and moral development. Kamban makes these

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ideals concrete in his Rama. His interpretation of Valmiki, because of this, has still a value to the coming generation.

The question arises, "Is this the final answer?" But may not one raise a counter question? Is there except in death and theory such a thing as finality? Life is a continuous march from truth to a higher truth. Is that not the very moral of the story? Abstractions alone have a ring of finality about them. In this story we have a first attempt at a tragedy and at a solution of the problem of life. But Kamban gets so many opportunities for further attempts all through his epic, and he does attempt at an examination and explanation of these tragic situations, suggesting in his own inevitable way the resolution of these life mysteries to our great satisfaction, at least as long as we are under the magic spell of his higher poetry. A study of his method of handling these situations is sure to reveal to us the gradual growth of his conception of tragedy and life.

XII

A tragedy from the pen of a great poet leaves in us an impression of a satisfying resolution of the complications of life — a feeling of poetic justice — an experience of suffused light and quiet joy. In this tragedy of Tataka there is the satisfaction and a feeling of justice. Kamban is playing on the surface of life; he hypnotises all by what is called a poetic legerdemain, as far as Tataka is concerned. As far as Rama is concerned, however, he takes a leap into the dark, reaches the very rock bottom of life, making it all glow with moral grandeur and beauty. Here is no legerdemain but a successful grappling with the tragic situation, a sufficient compensation for his superficial treatment elsewhere.

It is the final feeling that is important. What are the final words in this tragedy? The description of the blessings of the Devas is something external, unless it be a confirmation of our feeling of poetic justice. The final words even now ringing in our ears are those which describe the arrow piercing through the adamantine chest of the lady of darkness. The whole tragedy is, a tragedy of the life of darkness and ignorance redeemed by no light or culture — a life of passivity

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and passion rolling down the precipice — a darkness and a passivity unable to withstand the piercing arrow of light, truth and goodness — those higher ideals of great souls serving the common weal — those ideals expressed by the unfailing words themselves, of the great man. This is the idea of the last verse of the tragedy.

The last line has a more permanent effect on our mind, "Pullarkku nallor conna porul ena-p-poyirranre." It is indeed acting like a magical formula tactfully introduced by way of a simile, for giving us the final verdict — another example of Kamban's infusion of a moral spirit into the story. The world is there with all its defects as an unknown chain of cause and effect in that eternally moving wheel of life. The good men and their influences as teachers and guides are there to save the souls, but there must be people to hear them. It requires a certain amount of culture. The seed cannot grow on a barren field. The world — the ever-moving world — does change people, but it is only a few who are chiselled into a beautiful shape. This is real education for life from birth to death. But all are not blessed with this kind of education. Here is also a system of education following the method of monitors. But there are students of lower class in this school of life, too low to pass the higher examination, or to be benefited by monitors. There are many who are impervious to higher knowledge and nobler influence and who remain passive, and who, therefore, are drawn round and round the wheel of death, dashing their heads against the wheel in foolishness. Only a few resist this passivity, and actively get shaped into a significant form of any human worth. These are the good, the blessed souls reaping the benefit of the guides. They actively intervene to serve, becoming guides in their turn.

Rama is one such cultivated soul where the words of the sage bring a wonderful yield. But the words and efforts of sages and of God himself fail especially with those who have not been on the way to get a form and shape and significance. The sun rises at dawn, but all the lotus buds do not blossom, only those ready for bloom open into flowers ; others continue to be closed within themselves. The Sun is not futile even with reference to these ; for, they are even there worked up for blossoming in time. What is more curious is that the

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dead flowers dry up in this very Sun, for becoming manure for those yet to be born. The Good therefore do not die ; their words do not die. They may not be patently effective in all cases. The instruction enters through one ear and leaves by the other ear — that is the proverb. One who received the instruction like Tataka may die, but the words do not stick on to her to die with her. It escapes to become eternal, to be eternally saving others in time. By destruction itself, it will mould the whole world to salvation one day or other. Tataka has to be shaped into Rama. It is the eternal play of the Lord.

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Barathi at the Crossroads

F. MORAIS S. J., M. LITT.

SUBRAMANYA BHARATHI is a name dear to every Tamil heart. The songs of Bharathi are heard in every corner of the Tamil country - in musical concerts and political meetings, railway compartments and village fairs. They are better known than the works of any other poet ancient or modern. Most of the Tamil journals go to Bharathi for their mottoes. On Bharathi day, meetings are held in many places, his songs are sung, and lectures are broadcast. Articles on Bharathi are frequent in Tamil journals. His collected works have gone through a third and a fourth edition. All of which point to the popularity this poet enjoys with the Tamil people.

A large measure of this vogue can be traced to his patriotism and devoted service in the cause of the country. The patriotic nature of his poetry overshadows its literary value. As literature his songs do not rank very high with the pundits. He is quickly disposed of by them as one who introduced into Tamil poetry a simple diction and a few easy metres. Mr. K. Subramanya Pillai, the author of a fair-sized volume on Tamil literature devotes just half a page to Bharathi ! Though the poet died nearly a quarter of a century ago a full life and estimate has yet to appear. His importance in the development of modern Tamil literature is hardly realised, much less established. It will not be, then, quite unprofitable to consider the place of Bharathi in the development of Tamil poetry.

I

To place Bharathi in modern Tamil literature it is necessary to glance back a little. For the past three centuries the Tamil Muse was singularly unproductive. There appeared but two or three poets of any lasting value, and one

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of them a foreigner, the Italian Jesuit, Fr. Beschi. Not that there was any dearth of literary activity of a sort. Accomplished versification continued unabated, and Mr. K. Subramanya Pillai's history lists a few dozen names of "poets" belonging to this period. A typical instance is that of Mr. Minakshi Sundaram Pillai hailed about the end of last century as a great poet. His name has become immortalised by a life written by the late Dr. Swaminatha Aiyar. His poetry however awaits readers.

Criticism — what criticism Tamil can boast of — has attempted to enquire into the reasons for this extinction of inspired poetry. Various causes have been suggested. Dr. Pope, the great Tamil scholar, wrote at the beginning of this century: "Many reasons may be assigned for this comparative failure (of Tamil literature to enter into the hearts and minds of the people), — if the fact of failure be conceded. Among these we venture, very humbly as foreigners, to express our opinion that Tamil verse, with all its incomparable ingenuity and elegance, generally fails in simplicity, intelligibility and adaptation... Whether simplicity of diction, limitation of sandhi, separation of words, a freer system of rhythm, and a general adaptation of thought are possible to the Tamil poets is not for us to say." (i) Bharathi, in the Introduction to his "The Oath of Panjali" says: "The poet who writes an epic poem in simple style and an easily intelligible rhythm will alone give a new life to our mother tongue." An undue stress on external form, a vocabulary, exclusive, diffuse and often obscure, intricate schemes of metre and rhyme, the repetition of jaded sentiments and an extravagant fancy have all contributed their share. An extreme artificiality of form and matter has stifled poetry at the very source.

The diagnosis given above is true to a great extent. But does it go far enough? Extremely stylised form and lack of originality are the manifestations, not the causes, of decadent poetry. The origin of the evil must be traced further back. Neither the adoption of new forms and a popular diction, nor the expression of simple sentiments will by themselves effect the genuine poetic touch. A combination of

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(1) *Tamil Sonnets*: Suryanarayana Sastry, Preface by Dr. Pope, p. XII.

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these elements may result in what may be passed for true poetry. But the unmistakeable note of genuine poetic vision will be lacking, — that perfect blending of thought and music in such a way as to inspire life.

To illustrate the point. *Manonmanyam*, the drama written by Sundaram Pillai, was an attempt to vivify Tamil literature with western form. Though the language is heavily influenced by the classics, there is a brave attempt to introduce prose rhythm and easy rhyming, and the spirit is modern. Yet on the whole the drama is a failure. The note of real poetry, absent from the drama proper, is, curiously enough, more traceable in the digressive anecdotes written in the traditional style. *The Story of Sivagami* in the third act, and Vani's prayer in the fifth breaths more of true poetry than any other part of the drama.

And again, take Suryanarayana Sastry. His sonnets, which appeared in 1901, were hailed by Dr. Pope as "a clear indication of a new departure in Tamil poetry." And yet, even after a most sympathetic perusal, they fail to inspire, though his stray verses, dispersed through the novel *Mathivanan*, written in a most tradional vein, leave a better impression. For instance, the poem beginning with the lines,

> "*Knowing the nature of Him who forever exists,*
> *Come, friend, let us dance every day without fail,*
> *Come, friend, let us sing with love in sweet Tamil.*"

To restate the case. These two pioneers of modern Tamil poetry realised the required change, and were well equipped from the point of technique to effect it. Withal they failed to strike gold whenever they attempted anything new, but met with a relative success when they followed tradition. We are not unaware of the inherent difficulties of introducing a radical change in a field where conservatism reigns supreme. But these do not account for the entire failure. For, two decades later appears another poet, even less prepared than either of them, makes the same effort, meets with much the same difficulties, — but succeeds so well that his poetry had become the lasting heritage of his people. An attempt to answer this question may reveal interesting points.

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II

Born towards the end of 1882 in Ettiyapuram, Subramanya Bharathi was early initiated in Tamil classics by his father Mr. Chinnasamy Aiyar. After his marriage at the age of fifteen, he joined the Hindu College, Tirunelveli, and studied till the fifth form. He continued his studies in Benares, and passed first in the Allahabad Entrance examination. He had to discontinue his studies after one year of the old F. A. course as the Madras University would not recognize the Allahabad Entrance examination. After serving three years in Ettyapuram Zamin, he became a Tamil Pundit at the Sethupathy High School, Madura—which post he threw up in three months to become in 1904 an assistant editor of the Tamil daily *Swadesamitran*. With this appointment begins his literary career.

Even the role of an assistant editor of a national daily did not furnish enough outlet for his ardent nationalism. He started his own organ, the weekly *India,* and the fiery articles and poems which appeared in it regularly brought his name to front ranks of Tamil nationalism. The political situation of 1908 drove him to take refuge in Pondicherry, and till 1918 he remained there in self -imposed exile. These were years of constant worry and abject misery. Yet they form the longest and the most fruitful period of his literary career. His undaunted spirit, breaking through all external fetters, asserted itself in some of the most eloquent and moving poetry Tamil had witnessed for centuries.

Bharathi returned in 1918 to Kadayam his ancestral village in the Tirunelveli district. Two years later his services were once again enlisted in editing the *Swadesamitran*. But he was not to live long. In September 1921 he met with an unfortunate accident and passed away soon at the early age of thirty nine.

The main theme of most of Bharathi's poems, as may be expected, is an ardent patriotism which manifests itself in love for his motherland, admiration for her natural beauty and cultural heritage, and devotedness in her service.

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" Honey to our ears are the words :
The land of Sweet Tamil ;
When we hear, it is the land of our fathers,
A sakthi *is born in us."* (p. 4)[1]

" This the land our fathers and mothers lived in happy wedlock ;
Where their forefathers lived for countless ages ;
A land made dear by a thousand remembrances,
— Shall I not cherish it in my heart.
And praise it in my words ?
Shall I not bow my head uttering 'Vande Matharam'?

This the land that bore and brought us up ;
Where our mothers uttered their first prattling sounds ;
Where as young maidens they played in moon-lit nights,
And bathed in streams in merry sport,
—Shall I not bow my head uttering 'Vande Matharam' ? (p. 4.)

Bharathi like every true patriot longs for the freedom of his country, political, cultural and economic.

" The land we dwell in, we know, is ours ;
We know we have every right over it ;
We will not serve henceforth and on earth
But Him who is all perfection.

Everywhere the cry for Freedom is gone forth,
That all are equal has been established ;
We shall sound the conch of victory,
We shall announce this triumph to all the world."
(P. 67)

National liberty has as its counterpart individual liberty, the suppression of all tyranny of class and caste. Personal freedom and the fundamental equality of all men finds reiterated expression in his verses.

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1 The numbers refer to the second edition of his collected works. I Vol. 1937.

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" *There will be neither poor nor rich,*
Nor low-born among India's millions ;
But prospering in knowledge and wealth,
In happy union we will live as equals." (p. 72)

All are of the same race, all of the same caste,
For all are India's children ;
All are of the same weight, all of the same price,
All together are the rulers of this land —
We all are the rulers of this land —
Aye, all are the rulers of this land." (p. 74)

Passionate is his appeal to drown all division and discord, and unite in one national consciousness.

" *If we unite we shall live*
Disunion but leads to lowliness ;
This we must realise, if this wisdom
We attain to, we need nothing else. . . . .
If we rise, we thirty crores, shall rise ;
If we fall, all the thirty crores shall fall. (p. 1)

Bharathi's love of his people did not blind him to their short-comings — their ignorance and disunion, superstition and cowardice.

My heart doth not bear
To think of the sad lot of my people ;
Through fear they die a thousand deaths,
In constant dread their days are spent.
They see demons in tree and tank. . .
The sight of the sepoy sets them trembling,
The policeman's arrival strikes terror in their hearts...
(p. 74)

Who has ever read without tears Bharathi's description of the sufferings of Tamil coolies in the plantations overseas?

" *Even a demon would be moved to pity,*
They say, at the words it is a woman. —
Hast thou last all pity, O God ?

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Shall their tears run to waste on sand ?
Among the southern seas, in a blind island,
'Midst lonely forests, our women writhe in agony

Do they remember their country ? Do they hope
Some distant day to visit their ancestral homes ?
Thou wilt have heard their sobs, O Wind —
Wilt thou not repeat to us the words
Of our women when they cried in helpless sorrow ?
They have lost strength
Even to weep away their sorrows. (p. 80)

Bharathi's poetry divides itself into two broad groups : national poems, and poems of religion and philosophy. The former are concerned with the revival of the nation in all spheres. But Bharathi was not content to sing of the new forces that have been awakened in the life of the people. He sought their inspiration and mainstay in the past. He interpreted them in terms of the traditional culture and religious philosophy of the country. Her gods and goddesses, legends and Philosophies became instinct with new meaning. They became the symbols of the nation's revival, the embodiment of the new forces that were agitating her.

His songs on Krishna are some of the most beautiful he ever wrote. Like the religious poets of an earlier age he sings of Krishna under different forms — as his mother and father, king and slave, master and disciple, lover and beloved.

"*When thou comest running towards me,*
Kannamma, my heart warms up ;
When I see you playing,
My heart goes out to embrace thee.
By thy childish prattle, Kannamma,
Thou wilt remove my sorrows ;
By thy Mullai-*like laughter,*
Thou wilt vanquish my anger."

— Kannamma My Child — p. 307.

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The manifestation of *parasakthi* in every form and being of the universe fires his poetic ardour.

> *" The sight of the morning sun*
> *Is a sparkle of her eyes ;*
> *In the blue heaven, at night,*
> *She reigns as an ocean of light.* AP. 201.)

Bharathi's most ambitious effort was " The Oath of Panjali ", a short epic running to a little more than 2500 lines. It elaborates a single episode of the Mahabharatha as a symbol of the nation's struggle for freedom. He adopts the same simple language and metres as in the shorter poems. Though we may not subscribe to the opinion of a critic who calls it " a great modern epic ", we cannot deny its real poetic merit. It abounds in short descriptive passages that are modern and true to life. It presses into service the work-a-day idiom for poetic purpose. Its vigorous lilt carries you forward in bated breath. If as an epic poem it is not much of a success, the blame is not all Bharathi's.

Bharathi died in 1921. Though his poems were already the cherished possession of the people, and were heard throughout the land, his literary greatness remained in an unsettled condition. Conservative pundits would have nothing to do with this upstart, who had scant respect for time-hallowed traditions. Others, more benevolent, thought that Bharathi's poems, treating of ephemeral themes, would prove of little lasting value. The absence of literary criticism in Tamil did not help Bharathi's cause. But from the beginning the *vox populi* was on his side. Forced by it, opinion of late has been veering round in his favour even in the most conservative circles.

Bharathi's real achievement is not that he has employed a more intelligible and popular diction, or metres considered till now below the dignity of the Tamil muse to woo. He has had forerunners in the field in both the aspects. Ramachandra Kavirayer and Vedanayagam Pillai, Sundaram Pillai and Suryanarayana Sastry have attempted innovations in both the directions.

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Poetic technique can have little meaning when considered by itself. Language and imagery, rhyme and rhythm are not the external garb of a poet's sentiments, which he may discard at will. They are essential to the poetic vision, form so intimately one with it that their differences are to be traced ultimately to the nature of the poet's experience. In other words external communication is indispensable to realise and complete the inner experience.

The matter with Tamil literature for the last three centuries or so was not that the poets did not adapt their technique to the needs of the time, but that they had no experience to communicate. Poetic experience is of the real and concrete, and the real and concrete changes with the lapse of time. The poet feels and interprets the culture and ideals, hopes and longing of a people. He is, as has been said, at the conscious point of the age. His vision gets modified as these ideals and aspirations tend to change. During the last three centuries Tamil poets clung to a technique long past its usefulness, because they had no genuine vision to recapture, no personal experience to convey. They reproduced slavishly the melody and sentiment of the past because they themselves were living on an experience, social and religious, borrowed secondhand from literature, not felt by them directly.

Bharathi realised that poetic techniques are of value only so far as they are born of an inner experience, the very outcome and completion of a poetic experience. Hence he had no difficulty in discarding a particular rhythm or diction when it came in the way of his experience. Or rather he had to adapt them as he did, as that was the only way of expressing and completing his inspiration. Literature, he knew, springs from life ; and to life he went for his inspiration. He felt with his countrymen the new forces that were coming into their lives ; only he felt it more fully, more compellingly. In so far as his vision was real concrete and compelling, it found the very language and rhythm that were its only adequate expression.

But Bharathi's " reach was beyond his grasp." He sought to integrate the present forces into the nation's past. He would see the people's present ideals and aspirations as the

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legitimate outcome of their traditional culture and religion and philosophy. Pantheisn was the emotive force behind his appeal for universal brotherhood, the cult of *parasakthi* behind the national struggle for freedom. His epic "The Oath of Panjali", we said, was a failure; but it was a significant failure. Has the nation's past heritage by itself sufficient force to energise the people, or have we to seek its completion and complement elsewhere? To resolve this would have required a greater poetic vision and synthesis than was vouchsafed to Bharathi.

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A Naturalists Similes in Cankam Literature

P. LOURDUSWAMY, B. Sc.

THE ANCIENT Tamil poets divided the land into five conventional regions and the flora and fauna pertaining to those regions were closely studied. Some of these regions are not conventional as they seem to be but are really typical special habitats such as the seashore with its swamps and lagoons and ponds and rivers with irrigated and cultivated lands. There is also the dry semi-desert regions and the regions with forests and small mountain. Every student of Botany knows that plants group themselves according to habitats into definite types. The ancient Tamil poet-naturalists have studied the association of plants in their special environments and they are never tired of describing the fauna and flora associated with these regions. Thus we come across many apt and happy similes used in describing the various parts of plants. The similes have not only aesthetic beauty but often have scientific interest.

The roots of plants have given rise to a few apt similes. The following is a simile very common in Cankam and later poetry. Here is a free translation of the relevant passage from Purananuru :—

"As the prop root supports the banyan tree when the main trunk is eaten away so also even when the elders died, he supported the family like a prop." This simile has passed on to common usage in the shape of a proverb. Neville Cardus in his recently published book "Second Innings" speaks of 'a family tree branching like banyan'.

The flattened, whitish aerial root of a species of Ficus called "Irri" spreading on the rocks in described as looking like shallow rivulets running over rocks.

"Pullvīzh irri kallivar velvēr
Varaiyizhi aruviyil thōnru nādan"

— Kurunthogai 109.

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The roots become flattened because they cannot pierce the hard rock. The fibrous roots of a species of bamboo are said to appear like the thick hairs of a wild boar.[1]

The outer surface of the trunk in plants forms the subject of similes in many poems. The patches of white and brown black caused by the cracking and falling of barks on the trunk of the tree Elephant Apple, looks like the skin of "Udumbu", a reptile belonging to the lizard family.

"Pārpada vīzhnda verudai vizhukkōttu
Udumbadainthu anna nedumbori vilavin"

— Narrinai.

The trunk of the tree is said to look like a trunk full of the reptiles attaching themselves to it. The reptile "Udumbu" has got a skin mottled with yellow and black patches. Alan Butterworth speaks about the bark of the tree 'as dark brown or black, longitudinally cracked or channelled'. It also falls leaving light yellow or white patches.

The surface of the tree 'Omai' with its channelled, irregular bark is described as looking like the black, scaly surface of the crocodile.[2] The smooth surface of the coconut tree having slightly ridged scars is compared to the smooth wrinkled skin of the elephant.[3]

The scaly surfaces of Screwpine and also the Turmeric are spoken of as having the appearance of the scaly prawn.[4] The comparisons here are about the shape, the surface and the colour.

The red stem of the black gram is said to look like the feet of the sandgrouse. The few branch roots coming out of the earth and going inwards are said to be like the toes of the bird.

"Pūzhkkāl anna sengāl uzhundin
Uzhppadu muthukai uzhaiyinam kavarum".

— Kurunthogai 98.

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[1] Agananuru 397
[2] Agam
[3] Perumpānārruppadai 352-3.
[4] Narrinai 19 and 101.

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One should have seen both the objects of comparison in order to get a true appreciation of this simile.

The description of the leaves and the similes employed for them are often very apt. *Ipomea biloba* is a creeper found near the seashore. It has got a bilobed leaf. This leaf is compared to the footprint left by the deer. In English it is called goat's feet.

"Mānadi anna kavattilai adumbin" — Agananuru 80.

The cleft, the shape and size of the leaf are clearly brought out by means of the simile.

The leaves of water plants are often broad and dark. The leaf of the lotus is said to be like the broad swinging ear of the elephant.

"Kalirruch cheviyanna pāsadai thayanga"

— Narrinai 310.

The smoothness, the broadness and the shape are the comparisons there.

Another clever simile is about the undersurface of the leaf in Water Lily. The undersurface of the leaf has got prominent veins and is also darker than the upper surface in order to absorb heat. The leaf with its protruding veins, starting from the base is compared to the dark ribbed wings of the bat.

"Nedunīr āmbal adaippurathu anna
Kodumen ciraiya kūrugirp paravai

— Kurunthogai 352.

The description of the veins are also one of the comparisons here.

The leaf of screwpine has sharp thorns on its sides. It is said to look like a double edged saw and like the elongated daggerlike nose of the shark with teeth on the sides.

"Aravuvāl vāya mullilaith thāzhai" —Narrinai 237.
"Suravukkōttu anna mullilaithu thāzhai" —Narrinai 19.

The sharp thorns of Hygrophila spinosa (Mundakam) are described as looking like the sharp teeth of the squirrel[5] and of the sharp spiny vertebrae of the fish.[6] Again the curved

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[5] Agam 26

[6] Kurunthogai 49

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spines of the Rattan are said to be just like the curved sharp teeth of the snake.[7]

The greatest number of similes are used in describing flowers. The descriptions are often scientific. The different similes used for different flowers often bring out the dissimilarity among them.

The buds of the plants 'Pida' and scarlet ixora (vetchi) look as the thorn-like back toe of the fighting game partridge.[8] The slender long bud of Webera korymbosa (Kura) looks similar to the poison fangs of the snake.

> "*Araveyirru anna arumbumuthir kuravin*"
>
> — Agananuru 237.

The bud of the plants 'Paganrai' with its twisted and overlapping petals is said to resemble the twisted squeezed wet cloth in the hands of the washerman.

> "*Nīrir piriyāp paruthiri kadukkum*
> *Pērilaip paganrai pothiyavizh vānpu*"
>
> — Kurunthogai 330.

The bud also looks like the front portion of the conch-shell.[9]

The long bud of the white waterlily looks like the beak of a crow.

> " - - - - - - - - - *-Ambal*
> *Chiruven kākkai Avithu anna*
> *Veliya viriyum* - - - - - "
>
> — Narrinai 345.

The buds of 'Athiral'[10] and 'Thalavu'[11] look like the beaks of the cuckoo and the blue kingfisher. The slightly opened bud of Indian laburnam is said to be just like a jewel called 'Kingini'.[12] One should have seen the bud and the jewel in order to appreciate the beauty of the simile.

The long curved blood red buds of *Butea Frondosa* is described as looking like blood dripping nails of the tiger.

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[7] Agam 96
[8] Agam 23
[9] Agam 24.
[10] Puram 269
[11] Narrinai 61.
[12] Agam 146.

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" Uthiram thuvariya vengai ugirpōl
Ethiri Murukkarumba............"

— Einthinai Eimbathu.

Alan Butterworth says that it looks like a lobster's claw.

The scarlet flowers of plants are often described as flames of fire. The flowers of the lotus. *Bomba Malabaricum*, Coral tree, and Indian Laburnam are often said to resemble leaping tongues of fire. Tennyson also describes the laburnam as " Laburnams, dropping well of fire." The inflorescence (Group of flowers) of screwpine is variously described as looking like the elongated conchshell,[13] the tusk of the elephant,[14] the heron sitting on it[15] and the " Kudamuzha,"[16] a musical instrument.

The inflorescence of *memecylon Edue* with its clusters of bright blue flowers is said to look like the violet neck of the peacock.[17] The blue white veined flowers in the dark green leaves of the creeper *clitoria Ternata* is compared to that of the eyes of a peacock on its feathery train.

" Thanpunak karuvilai kanpōn māmalar
Ādumayil Pīliyin vādaiyōdu thuyalvara"

—Narrinai 262.

This is a very beautiful simile. The long green prominent stamens of Albizzia lebeck look like the crest of the peacock.

Kumari vāgaik kōludai naruvee
Madamāth thōgai kudumiyil thōnrum"

—Kurunthogai 347.

The flower of goat's feet resembles the bell[18] attached to the neck of the horse. The flower is almost bellshaped. In botany it is termed as ' companulate '. The flower of Mimusops Elenghi (vagulam) is said to look like a wheel.[19] The front part of the flower of Bassia longifolia is described as resembling the head of the prawn and also the feet of the

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[13] Narrinai 203.
[14] Narrinai 19.
[15] Karunthogai.
[16] Mathurai Kanchi 114-5.
[17] Kurunthogai 183.
[18] Agam 80.
[19] Chintamani 1650.

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wild cat. The recently opened flower of Calophyllum Inophyllum is said to look like the broken egg of the house sparrow. The golden pollen in the milkwhite petals look like the yellow in the white of the egg. The petals look like the broken white shell of the egg.

> *"Ullūrk kurīk karuvudaithu anna*
> *Perumpōthu avizhnda karunthāl punnai"*
> — Narrinai

The flower of Malabar glory lily[20] is said to be just like the upturned fingers of the palm. The petals here also are facing upwards. The flower of Coomb teak[21] (Kumizh) is said to look like the human nose. The shape of the flower when it is placed upside down looks exactly like the nose even to the side lobes. The flower of Coral tree[22] looks like the red crest of the cock.

The flower of "Nara" is said to resemble the white conch-shell with red lines drawn over it by means of red lac.

> *"Avvalai verinin arakkīrthu anna*
> *Sevvari ithazha senāru naravin"* — Narranai 25.

The black beetle emerging from that flower, smeared with golden pollen resembles the touchstone with streaks of gold on it.

> *"Narunthāthu ādiya thumbi pasumkēzhp*
> *Ponnuraik kallin nanniram perum"* — Narrinai 25.

This is also a very striking simile. It also describes the external process of pollination.

The flowers of *pterocarpus Indicus* (Vengai) are found in bright yellow clusters. These vivid bright yellow flowers are often compared to the tongues of fire or sparks flying from the anvil. The leaves of this tree are dark green. The cluster of bright yellow flowers on the dark back ground of green leaves is said to resemble young tiger Cubs or tigers with their "black and gold hides"[23]. A strange incident about the elephant is often mentioned in many poems. An

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[20] Sirupanarruppadai 167. [21] Manimekalai 20 : 48.
[22] Puram 326.
[23] Narrinai 389, Agam 228, Kurunthogai 47, Kalithogai 46.

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elephant was sleeping soundly and it was disturbed all of a sudden. It awoke and charged the fully blossomed 'Vengai' tree thinking it to be the tiger with which it had a fierce encounter on the previous day.

> "*Koduvari thākki venra varuthamodu*
> *Neduvarai marungil thunjum yānai*
> *Nanavil thanseythathu āgalin*
> *Kanavil kandu kathumena verīp*
> *Puthuvathāga malernda vengaiyai*
> *Athuvena unarnthathan aninalam murukki"*

— Kalithogai 38.

The scientists say that elephants have long memory. They nurse grievances and never lose a chance of taking revenge. They even dream. In the above instance the elephant was dreaming about the tiger. Even among scientists there is a difference of opinion about the function of the tigers' hide.

The older school of Scientists thought that the stripes of colours on the tiger's coat is for duping the animals by hiding its identity in their surroundings. In another Tamil poem[24] it is mentioned that the shadow of the tree with spots of sunlight playing under the tree looked like the hide of the tiger. Some modern scientists think that "it is not the stripes but daring contrast of white and fulvous red on a tiger's coat that makes it burn so bright." Though the Tamil poets have mentioned the stripes of tigers, yet they very often speak of the patches of bright yellow or red on the tiger's coat. The incident about the elephant also shows that the Tamil Poets considered the colour of the tiger's coat as a warning one at least as far as the elephant is concerned. They have noted that elephants associate bright yellow patches of colour on a dark background with that of the tiger's coat. It is also significant that the Tamils called the tiger as well as the elephant by one and the same name "Vengai."

A creeper is said to possess a flower resembling the hood of the Cobra. This fact is mentioned only in three Poems.[25]

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[24] Narrinai 391, [25] Agam 288, 309.

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"Venkottu yānai vilipada thuzhavum
Agalvāy pāndhal padār.............."

—Agam 68.

These plants are said to exist in mountains. The elephants and monkeys are said to mistake them for snakes. This kind of mimicry in plants is mentioned by some Botanists "For instance there are certain Aroids which resemble multi-coloured and variously spotted snakes . . . . In another Aroid called snake plant (Arisaema) common in Shillong, the spathe is greenish purple in colour and expand over the spadix like the hood of a Cobra — Duita.

The Screwpine is pollinated by means of wind. In the Cankam Poems also the dispersal of the pollen of the Screwpine by wind is mentioned,[26] but the pollination by wind is not mentioned.

The spiked inflorescence of the grass 'ūgam' is said to look like the tail of the squirrel.

"Venal variyanil vālathu anna
Kana ūgin kazhandrugu muthuvee" — Puram 307.

The pink fruit of *Emblica officinalis* (Nelli) is aptly described as looking like the eyes of the hare.[28] The pink fruit of *Abrus Precatoris* is sometimes used as an artificial eye for small animals and birds in museums. This fruit is described as looking like the eyes of the white rat.[29] In the above instances the size, the shape and the colour are aptly compared. In English *Abrus Precatoris* is called Crab's eye but the crustacean's stalked eye is usually compared in Cankam Poems to the Neem's stalked small flower.[30] The long black curved pod of 'Palas'[31] is described as looking like the fingers of the devil.

The red face of a species of monkey is compared to the red fruit of the fig.[32] The fruit of *Melia Indica* (Neem) is said to resemble the Globular Golden Coin that was in use at that time.[33] The grey flat pod of *Acacia Arabica* (Vagai)

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[26] Narrinai 266.
[27]
[28] Agam 284.
[29] Agam 133.
[30] Agam 176.
[31]
[32] Narrinai 95.
[33] Kurunthogai 67.

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breaks into bits and each bit has a round seen and there is a little space between the two compartments. Any two compartments taken together with the embedded shining black seeds look like the two eyes of the Cuckoo.[34] The fruit of Bowstring Hemp (Maral) is compared to the bud of the "Punnai"[35] and the bubble on the water.[36]

The fruit of *Wrightia Tinctoria* (Palai) is a very peculiar one. Alan Butterworth[37] says that 'the distinguishing feature of the tree is the curious fruit.' He compares it to a narrow horse collar. The Cankam Poet has compared it to the tongs used in tinning copper vessels.

"*Kodiru pōl kaya vālinarp pālai*" — Narrinai 107.

The fruit has two follicles joined at the tips and bears white protrubences at the end. The comparison is not only about the shape and the length but also about the tip. The little white protrubences at the end look like the white mettallic tinge of tin at the tip of the used iron tongs.

The long leaf sheath of the bamboo resembles the ear of the deer.[38] The paleness of the girl pining over her lover in the far off country is compared to the etiolated plant.

"*Nīnizhal thalirpōl ūzhththal arivēnum*"
— Kalithogai 20.

Even in English a person who is pale due to ill-health is said to be 'etiolated.'

The innumerable similes used in Cankam literature form a very stimulating study. They are all the more interesting when we look into the scientific basis of most of the similes. A study of the similes and descriptions of the fauna and flora in Cankam literature shows that those Poets were not only poets but were naturalists as well.

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34 Agam 293.
35 Narrinai
36 Porunar Arruppadai.
37 'Some Madras Trees.'
38 Kalithogai 43.

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Linguistic Evidence for the Common Origin of the Dravidians and Indo-Europeans

NALLUR SWAMI S. GNANA PRAKASAR O. M I.

When a copy of the first issue of "Tamil Culture" was sent to His Lordship, Dr. Edmund Piries O. M. I., Bishop of Chilaw, Ceylon, he has very gracious in thanking the editor with the gift of this unpublished study written by the late Swami Gnana Prakasar. His Lordship wrote saying : "The enclosed article is by the late Nallur Swami Gnana Prakasar. It was prepared by him in 1945 and sent to the Royal Asiatic Society (Ceylon Branch) to be read at its annual general meeting of 1946. As the theories expounded in it are open to violent controversy, the Society wished to be present in order to answer any criticism. Unfortunately, at the time he was ill and was not able to go to Colombo. So, the paper was not read. During one of my visits to him, he showed it to me. I undertook to go over the article carefully and after that discuss every controvertible point with him, and, thus armed, to read it myself at a meeting of the society. But a month before the date arranged for us to meet, he died."

This article represents the basis on which the great scholar compiled his "*Etymological and Comparative Lexicon of the Tamil Language.*" No student of Tamil can read this article to the end without feeling that the science of Comparative Philology would stand to profit if the author's line of research were continued. Only a few fascicles of the Lexicon have been published. It is regrettable that so far the Government of Ceylon and the University of Ceylon have taken no steps to see that the Lexicon is completed

Editor.

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SINCE THE time of Bishop Caldwell, who published the first edition of his scholarly "Comparative Grammar of the Dravidian Languages" in 1856, the people who have spoken Tamil, Kanarese, Telugu, Malayalam, Tulu and other less cultivated South Indian tongues from prehistoric times, are known as Dravidians. It was Franz Bopp who, for the first time (1833-35), drew attention to the members of the Indo-European (then spoken of as Indo-Germanic) family of people whose ancestors used languages derived from the same primeval stock. He first pointed out the original speakers of Sanskrit, Zend, Greek, Latin, Lithuanian, Old Slavonic, Gothic and Old German as belonging to one and the same family, and later added the aboriginal users of Celtic and Russian, Albanian and Armenian to the number. But the two language groups, Dravidian and Indo-European, were then considered poles apart. There was nothing found common between them in vocabulary or syntax. Also the two families of people who spoke them were taken to be without any point of contact. The Dravidians and Indo-Europeans were so widely different in customs, habits and colour that it was deemed a fruitless task to search for any connection between them. There was especially the conclusion brought about by language. Although it is admitted that language cannot be a test of race in all cases, the fact that the Dravidians had been speaking, from the very beginning, a language which had no affinity whatever with that spoken by the Indo-Europeans forced the conclusion on our pioneer philologists that the two peoples were as different racially as they were linguistically.

This was the general opinion of European scholars in the nineteenth century till H. Gundert and F. Kittel entered the field of Comparative Philology and made researches in Dravidian, the former taking his stand on Malayalam and the latter on Kanarese. They were the first to point out that if the Dravidian languages had, at a late period, borrowed a large number of terms mostly technical, from Sanskrit, this Aryan tongue also was indebted to the former for many words even in the vedic period. Kittel published, in his Kanarese-English Dictionary, a tentative list of more than four hundred Sanskrit loan-words from Dravidian. This fact of mutual borrowing, even in very early times, would indeed

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testify to the two peoples having had inter-communication at a given time and leave the matter there. But Caldwell, who worked independently and made his own additions to the list, perceived a new ray of light that opened to him a far away vista, and he thought he was justified in saying that "the Dravidian idioms exhibit traces of an ancient deep-seated connexion with Prae-Sanskrit—the assumed archaic mother tongue of the Indo-European family"[1]. In Caldwell's time Sanskrit was supposed to be the mother tongue of Greek, Latin &c., but later investigations showed that the former was only an elder sister of the others. His remarks, therefore, should apply to a more primitive and elementary form of speech than the most archaic form of Sanskrit. He had a light dawning on him but in his days, facilities were not offered him to pursue that light. The "ancient deep-seated connexion" suspected by him could be discovered only among the most elementary forms or roots of the two language-groups, Dravidian and Indo-European, now seemingly so far apart. For, during the course of ages words have undergone bewildering changes both in form anl in sense: changes induced by phonetic laws *i.e.*, by the transformation of sound in the mouth of different individuals; changes brought on by accretions of formative elements such as suffixes, prefixes and infixes; changes through corruption of word-forms inevitable in the long run and changes due to the operation of semantic laws making the original sense of a word to fluctuate even to its contrary. We have, in other words, to find "the ancient deep-seated connexion" mainly in the roots of the two linguistic families.

ELEMENTARY WORD-FORMS

These roots had to identified, then, for both Indo-European and Dravidian. In the case of the former, the work of patiently comparing the various linguistic forms within the family and artificially constructing roots for them had been started by Bopp himself and was continued vigorously with the result that we have now comparative word-books for several Indo-European languages. To cite some of them only: C. C. Uhlenbeck's "Etymologisches Wörterbuch der alti-

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1 "Comparative Grammar of the Dravidian Languages," 3rd Ed. p. 565

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dischen Sprache" for Sanskrit; E. Boisacq's "Dictionaire Etymologique de la Langue Greque" for Greek; A Walde's "Lateinisches etymologisches Wörterbuch" for Latin; F. Kluge's "Etymologisches Wörterbuch der deutschen Sprache" for German; Franck's "Etymologisch Woordenbuek der Nederlandische Taal" for Dutch; W. W. Skeat's "Etymological Dictionary" for English &c. More comprehensive and valuable than all the above is the "Vergleichendes Wörterbuch der Indo-germanishchen Sprachen" of A. Walde edited by J. Pokorny in three volumes. This work presents artificially constructed roots from all common forms in the many languages of the Indo-European family. Add to these the new light thrown on linguistic studies by Sumerian in such works as P. A. Deimel's "Sumerisches Lexikon," and by Hittite in E. H. Sturtevant's "Hittite Glossary and Comparative Grammar." There have been also various up-to-date dictionaries published, like the Pali Text Society's Pali Dictionary, the new edition of Liddel and Scott's Greek-English Lexicon &c.

Similar studies for the Dravidian languages were needed. The Dravidian elementary forms had first to be ascertained if one wanted to institute a comparison between them and the "roots" of Indo-European languages. Happily this work is now in progress and the results of it are being made known to the public through the annual instalments of the "Etymological and Comparative Lexicon of the Tamil Language" [2] a work subsidized by the Government of Ceylon. Taking Tamil as the most representative branch of the Dravidian group, this work traces Tamil words back to their most elementary forms with the help of the variations found in the other branches of the group the chief of which are Kanarese, Telugu, Malayalam and Tulu. Thanks to the remarkably conservative nature of Tamil, and its perspicuity as regards etymology, the formative elements of its words were separated easily enough, when, the residue revealed the roots common to all the branches of the group. These roots had by no means to be artificially constructed, but were there, as the most ancient word-types representing very

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[2] By Rev. S. Gnana Prakasar O. M. I. Nallur, Jaffna. (The work on the Lexicon has been suspended after Father Gnana Prakasar's death.)

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elementary sensuous ideas. One could clearly see how this handful of word-types, originally signifying undefined material notions, began to multiply, first with the help of one another functioning as formative elements, then, with that of vowel gradation and other devices — and ended by differentiating their sense gradually up to the most spiritual and metaphysical ideas.

The roots of Dravidian were found to be real elementary word-types, some of which are in daily use as separate words to the present day, while others are, of course, imbedded in the vocabulary, to be discerned by those who endeavour to seek them in the correct way. On the other hand, the "roots" of Indo-European, which philologists have constructed with the aid of interlinguistic comparison, are not found as words in any of the languages compared. They are only fictitious or hypothetical "roots". But one remarkable fact showing how scientifically correct European philologists were, on the whole, is, that a good number of "roots" presented in Walde-Pokorny, for instance, are very near approaches to Dravidian root-words and are phonetically identical. (This will be found abundantly in the "Etymological and Comparative Tamil Lexicon" above referred to). In Indo-European they are meaningless abstractions, but in Dravidian they are embodiments of unmistakable, if unspecified, ideas, indicating the trend of the sense of fully developed words of which they are as it were the living germs. They threw a flood of light on and infuse life into the gloomy and meaningless jumble of sounds which Indo-European "roots" would continue to be without them.

LINGUISTIC PALAEONTOLOGY

Now, how shall we account for the fact that two linguistic groups, seemingly poles apart in vocabulary and syntax, are found to show an intimate affinity as regards the roots which represent their earliest stage of development. What we find for Dravidian and Indo-European others have found for other groups of languages. We may instance the modern advocates of monogenism in language who were headed, in his life-time, by the Italian savant, Alfredo Trombetti. Such being the case, an increasing volume of scholarly opinion is agreed that the peoples now inhabiting the world must have,

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in pro-ethnic times, lived together somewhere. The Dravidians and Indo-Europeans, at any rate, seem to have had once a common abode and to have started from a central point in their emigrations east and west. With the modern scientific theory that those of the early mankind who went to live near the arctic regions became permanently "albinoised"[3], it would seem that the ancestors of the white Indo-Europeans had lived together somewhere in the north for a good long time before they were differentiated into various races.

The idea of the separation of the white races from a common abode in Asia was started with the discovery of Sanskrit by Europeans through Roman Catholic Missionaries, who first pointed out a resemblance between it and Greek and Latin. It was especially the work of Frater Paulinus a S. Bartholomew published in 1798, which made European scholarship consider the possible affinity of the principal white nations of east and west. Joham Christoph Adelung's work perhaps was the first (1806 - 1816) which boldly argued from linguistic affinity to that of the European races such as the Iberians, Celts, Teutons, Thracians (including Greeks and the Latin races) Finns and Slavs. He also practically included in his enumeration the northern Sanskrit-speaking people of India and Persia, together with those who speak Hebrew, Syriac and Turkish, by bringing their languages into comparison with Sanskrit. Others who followed him, made further research into the subject — Fr Bopp, A. Kuhn and especially, J. Grimm who laid the foundations for a methodical investigation of Indo-European antiquities by means of comparative philology. Among other eminent scholars who worked in the same field we may mention J. H. Mommsen, W. Jones, Max Müller, V. Hehn, A. Fick and Th. Benfy.

This new science, which some have named Linguistic Palaeontology, seeks to reconstruct the ancient history of the undivided Indo-European family at a period when they had their home in some part of Asia — in Mesopotamia, according to some, or in central Asia, according to others — and the stages of the civilization of the various members of the family, by a diligent study of the original stock of native words they

[3] A. H. Sayce: "Races of the Old Testament," p. 41.

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had for various objects. The life of a people is indeed disclosed by its language which is a true mirror of its vicissitudes. Other monuments of a nation may crumble and fall but its language persists as a living, imperishable monument. Scientific investigation can yet discover its earliest forms even under the incrustations of countless ages.

By comparing the earliest words of the Indo-European group representing archaic civilization, such as words for the then known metals, weapons, domesticated animals, the more common objects of daily use and words for expressing fundamental kinship, it has been ascertained that the peoples who possessed common native words for them had once had a common home from which they radiated to distant lands and became crystallized into various nations. Now that the Dravidian languages may be presumed to have had some early connection with the Indo-European ones, can it be shown, by means of a similar investigation, that the original speakers of the former languages had once a common home with those who spoke the latter ?

AN EARLY WORD FOR COPPER

It is one of the well established conclusions of Palaeontology that copper was the first metal known to the people of Europe and Asia. This metal was often found in a pure state and attracted notice by its red colour. The Sumerians named it *urudu,* a name written with an uncompounded single ideogram and thereby indicating great antiquity. *Urudu* is very probably connected with the Tamil *eri* (Kanarese *uri*), 'fire', and the Dravidian derivatives *arattam, irattam &c.* Compare Latin *raudus,* 'copper'. The Sanskrit *lōha,* from the same root as that of the Tamil *eri* originally designated copper. It is noteworthy that there is an old Tamil word *eruvai* for this metal, presumably akin to *urudu,* which has an Akkadian equivalent *eru.* Basque has *urraida* for copper, whereas the Armenian for brass is *aroir.*

We thus see that only some languages have retained the name for copper used by the Sumerians. There was another name for it among the Sumero-Akkadians representing it, again, by its red colour. This was *Zabar,* probably for bronze, a mixture of tin and copper. This word became *siparru* in

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Assyrian in early times and, later, *zift* in Arabic. What connection *zabar* has with the Egyptian *chomt* does not appear. At any rate, *zabar, siparru* and **keppu*, the original of the Tamil *cembu*, seem to refer to the same "shining fiery red" metal. It is hardly necessary to state here that in Dravidian, as in all other languages, the palatalized *k*, i.e. the sound of *c*, is a later development. Greek does not posses this sound. Latin introduced it in later times. Among Dravidian languages, Kanarese still retains the initial *k* in many words, Tamil only in some. So, for red, *kem* is the form mostly used in Kanarese. *Kembu* is redness, ruby. Tamil also has *kembu* in the sense of ruby. For copper Kanarese has *cembu*, like the Tamil *cembu*. *Cembige* is a copper or brass vessel for drinking from. Another form of it is *tambige* where *c* has changed into *t*. So too *tambala*, Tamil *tampalam*, which means scarlet moth and red spittle caused by chewing betel. The latter has become *tāmbūlam* in Sanskrit for betel and arecanut. The transition from original *k* to *t* through *c* is seen well in the Tamil *kevuli* (*kem* + *ilanir*) which became *cevvilai* and in Sinhalese *tämbili*, 'yellow-red kind of coconut' commonly called king-coconut. The Sinhalese for *cembu* likewise is *tamba*. The phonetic law of *k* becoming *c* and *c* becoming *t* will explain how the Dravidian *cembu* became *tāmram* in post-vedic Sanskrit. The Aryans, on coming to India, seem to have used the name *ayas* (Latin *aes*, Gothic *aiz*, Old High German *er*. Cf. Tamil *ehku*) for any metal, and to have got their distinctive name for copper from the Dravidians. *Tām-ra* has no other derivation but *cem*, 'red' with the suffix *-ra*. Another name in Sanskrit for it is *mlēccha-mukham*, 'face of the foreigner' i.e. the brown complexion of the Dravidians — which hints at the source from which the Aryans got the red metal.

Zabar=siparru=keppu this equation suggests Greek *kupros*, Latin *cuprum*, Anglo-Saxon *copor*, German *kupfer*, Dutch *koper*, Danish *cobber*, Irish *copar*, French *cuivre*, English copper. It has been asserted that the names *kupros* &c were derived from the name of the island of Cyprus which was the chief source of copper for Europe, and that the island's name had come from the cypresses (Greek, *kuparissos*) abounding in it. But how did the name *kuparissos* come? *-ssos*, or *-issos* is a termination in Greek, and when that is

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removed, we have *kupar=kupros,* the name for the metal. It is, therefore, more likely that the island's name originated from the copper obtained there, and the cypresses received their name from the island. The name of the metal found already in the equation *zabar-siparru-keppu* is certainly not due to the island but the other way about. *Keppu,* now *cempu,* seems to have been the original name for copper among the Dravidians as *zabar-siparru* was among the people with whom they had lived in primeval times. They were able to retain the name when they emigrated to India, as copper was easily found there in many localities. On the contrary, the Indo-Europeans who had started from the same common home and had gone into regions where the metal was not readily met with, lost the name at first, and began to use the derivatives of *aes* for any metal they came later in contact with, till some of the wandering nations obtained the metal and its original name from the island which became famous for it and had got its own name from it.

OFFENSIVE WEAPONS

The weapon most in use in primitive times for offensive purposes was the bow and arrow. An ancient word in Dravidian for arrow is the Tamil *ey* ; Kanarese *ey, eyya* ; Malayalam, *eyya* ; Tulu, *ezi*. Telugu has *ēdu,* Kanarese *ēdu* for porcupine, a name derived from *ey,* the arrow-like spine peculiar to the animal. In Tamil *ey* also means porcupine. This word is here in its root form, being composed of the deictic *e* and formative *y*. All Dravidian primary roots, it might be noted here, are thus composed of one of the four deictics (*a, u, i* and *e*) 'pointing out' spatial relation, and a consonant as the differentiating element.[4] Words that begin with a consonant are not primary but secondary roots, the consonants having been prefixed as a further differentiating element. Such are termed Initial intensive consonants. *Ey,* being a primary root, is in its most ancient form.

[4] "Once we grant that all knowledge begins by distinguishing things, it follows that this distinguishing of objects one from another, or according to their qualities in themselves, resolves itself into the act of noting whether a thing is far or near, above or beneath another thing ; or again, whether a thing is long or short, straight or crooked, high or low, hard or soft &c., &c. This is what we call Spatial Re-

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Now, to turn to Indo-European, the earliest word for arrow in Sanskrit is *ishus,* with its equivalent in Zend *ishu* and in Greek *ios.* As these words do not look like loans of a later period, it is presumable that this name for arrow was in use among the Dravidians and at least a section of the Indo-Europeans before they separated. It is noteworthy at least that the porcupine is named from the root *ey* in some of the Indo-European languages as in Dravidian. Thus Greek *echinos* ; Old High German *igil* ; Lithuanian *ezys* ; Armenian *ozni,* etc.

There is also a similarity of names for the bow-string in both the language groups. Tamil has *nān* or *nan* akin to *nār,* 'string'. Sanskrit *jyā,* Zend *jya,* Greek *bios.* Also, with a prothetic sibilant, Sanskrit has *snāvan,* Zend *snāvare.* Compare Greek *neuron* with Tamil *nār* (and *narampu,* a later formation), 'nerve'.

The original name for the bow seems to have been a derivative from the secondary root *val* (primary *ul*) 'to bend' like the Dravidian *vil,* 'bow'. The English *bow* itself (Anglo-Saxon *boga*) is derived from a hypothetical root **bheug,* true root *ul,* through the Dravidian derivative *vanku,* 'what is bent'. In Sumerian the bow was *pan* (= *van,* as in the Tamil *van-ai, van-ar, van-anku,* 'to bend') 'the thing that

lation. Spiritual and metaphysical distinctions themselves follow the analogy of material and sensible things. Now, early man could have easily signified to his fellows the distinction of one object from another, or its relative dimensions, by gesticulations, just as we see people doing in a pantomime. We know that gesticulations are demonstrative or pointing-out signs, made by various movements of the limbs, the face &c. But by his superior intelligence, man was able to devise a more perfect medium for pointing out the distinctions in things, than his limbs would have furnished him with. This was articulate voice. He adopted his voice to the marking of the different aspects of things, and this resulted in the use of the four deictics or demonstrative vowels : a, u, i and e for representing Proximity, Remoteness, Depth and Height and the correlated ideas, respectively. The Deictics, however, were too vague by themselves, and therefore other sounds, more emphatic because of their various degrees of obstruction in the organs of speech, were dexterously harnessed. These were the consonants which served to render those vague vowel sounds more definite, thus forming the first words of language. This, in brief, is the theory of Dravidian primary roots." See "Anthropos" Band XXXIV for 1939.

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is bent'. The pictograph for it was a clear arch-like thing. Compare Latin *pando*, 'to bend' and Tamil *pan-i*, 'to bow'. In Tamil also we have *pan-i* 'what coils up, snake' (for which Sanskrit has the form *phanin*), *paniyal*, 'worship' and *pan-ilam*, 'what is spiral, conch'. The Sumerian *pan* (ban, van)[5] is possibly found in the second member of the Sanskrit compound *dhan-van*, Zend *than-vare*, 'bow of fir' as suggested by O. Schrader.[6] The same is seen in the Sanskrit *bānas* or *vānas* and Tamil *pānam* and *vāli* meaning not the bow but an arrow. It is a well known fact that the names for bow and arrow have been interchanged in many cases. For instance, the Latin *arcus* originally meaning 'arrow' (root *ar*, akin to Gothic *arhvazna*, Ango-Saxon *earh*, and English *arrow*) later became the names for the bow. On the contrary, the Greek *belos*, Middle High German *vliz*, *flitsch*, Low German *flitz*, French *fleche*, etc., probably designated the bow at first as counterparts of the Dravidian *vil*, and, by transition of sense, came later to signify the arrow.

Another ancient weapon used, also as a missile, is known in Tamil as *pārai*, Kanarese *hāre*, Malayalam *pāra* and Tulu *pārengi*. Originally this is the same as the Sanskrit *parasus* or *parsus*. In Greek it is *pelekus* (battle axe). All these forms are very probably from the Sumerian *balag* which gave Assyrian the form *pilaggu*. Some think that this is a loan word in Indo-European languages. For Dravidian this may not be the case, as the word *pārai* as compared with its cognate *pālai*, 'what splits, a spathe' which is from the secondary root *pil-a* 'to split.'[7] The Sanskrit *phal*, 'to burst' cannot be maintained, as it is seen to have been invented to furnish an etymology for the noun *phalam-palam* 'fruit', a Dravidian word. Hence we may presume that the Dravidian *pārai* and Sumerian *balag* belong to the primeval times. Inter-borrowing of cultural terms cannot be easily established in the case of intimately related languages such as these two seem to be.

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5 This *pan* for the bow occurs also "in a multitude of Austro-oceanic dialects ("Anthropos": XXX, 722)

6 "Prehistoric Antiquities of the Aryan Peoples," p. 232.

7 See "Anthropos" ibid. p. 719.

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According to savants like C. Autran[8] Indo-European itself is not unrelated to Sumerian.

The *balag-parasu-pārai* was probably of stone in the early ages and was wielded habitually at close quarters. For hurling stone at a distance the sling was devised. The Dravidian word for it is : Tamil *kavan, kavanai* ; Kanarese, Tulu, *kavane* ; Malayalam, *kavana*. In Sumerian the sling is known as *ir, irru*. The Egyptian *ayr* means the same. These may be connected with the Dravidian root word *er*, 'to throw, fasten'. The Sumerian pictograph for *ir*, 'sling' is probably that of the central part of it without the strings.[9] It would seem that the sling began to be known by what is thrown, *i.e.*, a stone, instead of the act of throwing. We have probably an equation of the Dravidian *kavan* in Slavonic *kameni* 'stone' with which Old Norse *hamarr*, Anglo-Saxon *hamor*, Old High German *hamar* are said to be connected. Some adduce also the Greek *akmōn* and Sanskrit *asman*.

We know that the earliest weapons were of stone and wood. If *kavan* was a stone weapon we have *katai*, originally a wooden as well as stone one. The Sanskrit *gadā* is of doubtful origin. In Sumerian *khat* was a club or mace and battle axe. Perhaps it was connected with our *kaddai*, 'piece of wood'. Compare also *tandam* or *tadi*, synonyms for it which mean 'stick'. Sanskrit has taken over the Dravidian *tandam* as *dandam*. But when axes began to be made of bronze and later, of iron, there was an evolution of this word and of its meaning in Indo-European. The Iranians made of it *kareta* while the Indo-Aryans called its *kritti* from which the Dravidians got their *katti*, 'knife'. The Iranian word took several forms in other languages, e.g. New Persian, *kard* ; Ossetic, *khard* ; Servian, *korda* ; Lithuanian, *kardas* ; Polish *kord* ; Albanian *kordu*, etc., meaning surgical knife, dagger, etc.[10]

Another ancient weapon is in Tamil *iddi* or *īddi*, 'spear' Malayalam *itti*, Kanarese *ītti, īti* ; Tulu *itti*, Telugu *īte* ; Sinhalese *isatiya, ītiya* all probably from the root *id*, 'to dislodge, attack'. The Vedic Sanskrit *rishti*, 'spear' in Zend

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[8] "Sumerien et Indo European," Paul Geuthner 1925.

[9] Barton : Origin and Development of Babylonian Writing No. 229.

[10] Schrader, op. cit. p. 224.

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arshti, may be compared with this. Also Sanskrit *yashtis*, 'mace, club'.

DOMESTICATED ANIMALS

It is a fact recognized by historians that, in earliest days of antiquity, the dwellers of the fertile plain between the Euphrates and the Tigris (now called Mesopotamia, 'between the rivers') and those of the valley of the Nile were in possession of domesticated animals such as cow, sheep and goat. The Sumerians had named the cow or ox *gud* (contracted into *gu*) from the fact of its having prominent horns, as will be seen from the pictograph of the word which is "clearly the head and horns of an ox."[11] This original name is seen used in its contracted form among many races of the Indo-European stock. Thus Sanskrit has *gō*, Zend *gav*, Armenian *kow*, German *kuh*, Anglo-Saxon *cu*, English cow, Greek *bous*, Latin *bos*. The ancient Dravidian name for the cow is *kud-am*. That this should phonetically approach the Sumerian *gud* nearest is only to be expected, since modern research tends to show that the Dravidians of old were with the ancestors of the Sumerians in Mesopotamia and had spread East and West from there. Etymologically the Tamil *kud-am* means 'anything bent, spherical', then 'horn' (=*kōdu*), and hence a horned animal, particularly the cow or ox. Compare the Malayalam *kompi*, 'horned animal' a name for the cow. Similarly in Tamil *kampan* means any horned animal. The original *kudam* has become *kodi*, 'cow or ox' in Kui, a Dravidian dialect, and *gonā*, 'ox' in Sinhalese. It may be remarked in passing that Sinhalese, holding a very old Tamil element as its background, furnishes excellent side-lights on the evolution of Dravidian. A form similar to the Sinhalese *gona* was taken over by Pali as *gōna*, 'an ox' and was given to Sanskrit. In Kanarese *kōna* is a male buffalo, *gōna*, an ox.

But in Tamil the original *kudam* as a name for cow became obsolete and is now found only in the nighantus. Its other sense of (a spherical thing) 'pot', however, is in popular use. Hence commentators have mistaken the real sense of the word as found in some comparatively late classics

[11] Barton, op. cit. No. 259.

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(Kalittokai 109, 3,—Purapporul-venpā-mālai I, 18) which also seem to have used this word ambiguously. The expression is *kudam-cuddu-inam,* "the kind (of animals) known by the name of *kudam*". But commentators would render it cows "which are known by the number of pots of milk they yield". They were obsessed with the idea that *kudam* meant only pot. They might have compared the expression *makkad-cuddu* for 'mankind' in Tolkāppiyam (Col. 1) where *cuddu* means 'what is pointed out as'.

The equation *gud=kudam=gonā*=cow, etc., takes us back to a time when the Sumerians, Dravidians and Indo-Europeans lived together and possessed the cow as their chief wealth. As it would be travelling too far afield to go into the many other old words connected with the cow, we now pass on to sheep and goat, also domesticated by man in the earliest period.

The Tamil word *eli* means 'rat' in modern speech ; but, as found in some old writings in connection with *eli-mayir-pōrvai,* 'cloak made of the hair of *eli'* it has puzzled commentators not a little. How could any sort of garment be woven of hair which the rat has not ? A recent writer referring to this sort of textile says: "rats have no hair and therefore the reference cannot be to the hair of Indian rats."[12] Another suggested that the Indian rat referred to was a sort of beaver.[13] But the fact is that in ancient Dravidian the word *eli* meant 'a white animal'—the white kind of sheep or goat. In Tamil *vellai,* a derivative of this, is still a name for goat. The same name *eli* was applied to another little white animal, rat, a species of which is still known as *vel-eli,* 'the white rat.' Some Dravidian dialects have differentiated the name *eli* into other forms for denoting the rat : *e.g.,* Telugu, *elika* ; Kui, *ōdri* and Sinhalese *undurā,* Sanskrit also having adopted this form as *unduras,* etc. Others, on the contrary, have kept *eli* for rat and differentiated that form in various ways for denoting sheep. This will be seen presently with the many variations the word has undergone in Dravidian and Indo-European.

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12 "The Silappadikaram," Engl. Trans. by V. R. R. Dikshitur M. A.
13 Devanesan in "Studies in Comparative Philology" (Tamil) p. 62.

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Turning now to Sumerian, we find that the oldest name it had for sheep is *elim*, for. the picture-writing for this word is doubtless the figure of the head of a ram.[14] *Elim* is evidently from *el*, 'white.' The Semites who succeeded the Sumerians in Mesopotamia also adopted the same name. They called sheep *eyal*. In Sumerian there is another name for this animal, *udu* (*us*) which may have been derived from the original *elim* as the sequel will show. A remarkable thing here is that most of the Dravidian and Indo-European terms denoting sheep, goat and similar quadrupeds, by transference are modifications of *eli* or *elim*. Thus : Telugu has *ēta*, *ēdika* (differentiating into *elika* for rat) ; Kurukh, *ērā* ; Malto, *ēre* ; Kui, *ōda* (which has the differentiated form *ōdri* for rat) ; Tulu, *yēdu* ; Gondi, yēti, 'the she-goat' ; Brahui *hēt* ; Malayalam and Tamil *ādu* which is the present name for sheep and goat. Sinhalese kept the original form more faithfully as *elu-vā*, 'goat', and *ela* both 'goat' and 'white'.

For the many transformations *eli* underwent in Indo-European we may first notice the Greek *ellos*, *elaphos* in the transferred sense of 'hind' with which, according to Boisacq,[15] the Gothic and English *lamb* are connected. The same is to be said of the Old High German *elaho*, Latin alces, Greek *alkē*, English *elk*. The Sanskrit *risyas*, 'antelope' and Latin *aries*, 'ram' are other forms. By the side of the Telugu *ēdika*, formed from the original *eli*, we have Pali *ēlaka*, Sanskrit *ēlakas*, *ēdakas ēdas*, 'sheep' and *ēnakas ēnas*, 'a kind of deer'. The names *kambalas*, 'a sort of deer' and *kambalam*, 'a woolen blanket' are also from *eli* compounded with *kem*, 'red', and refer to a red kind of sheep. The modern Tamil word for sheep, *cemmari*, is but a transformation *kem-eli*. The author of Cintāmani, who was doubtful, like all moderns, in regard to the word *eli* meaning sheep interprets *kampalam* as made "with the fiery red hair of the red *eli* (cev-eli) which feeds on fibre" (2686). Had he said *kem-eli* instead of *cev-eli* he would have hit the mark. *Kampalam* in fact is *kem-eli* with the epenthetic *p infixed*. In another place (1898) he tries to guess what the *eli* which gave the red shining hair for

[14] Barton ibid. No. 374.

[15] "Dictionaire Etymologique de la Langue Grecque."

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textiles was like, and says they were bigger things than wild cats and roamed about hill tops.

Udu another Tamil name for sheep, which has its equivalent in Sumerian as *udu* and *us*, is probably another form of *eli* through Kui *ōda*. Sanskrit has *hudus* for ram referring back to the Tamil *udu*. With this we may compare the Latin *haedrus* and the Tulu *yēdu*. In Tamil *udu* has become *utal*, *'ram'* and also has the forms *uru* and *oruvu* for sheep. With them we may compare the Latin *ovis*, Greek *ois*, Lithuanian *awis*, Gothic *avi*, Old High German *ouwi*, English *ewe*. The Sanskrit *avis* 'sheep, rat' is also connected.[16]

The earliest clothing next to hides of animals seems to have been made of wool, first by felting and later by planting or weaving. That the ancestors of the Indo-Europeans had knowledge of wool before they left their common abode is evidenced by the name for wool in all the chief languages of the family being phonetically identical with the Dravidian *vellai*, 'sheep or goat', a derivative from *eli*. Thus the Latin *vellus lana* for *vl(i)na* ; Greek *lanos* ; Gothic *oulos*, *vulla* ; Lithuanian *wilna* ; Old Slavonic *vluna* ; Sanskrit *ūrnā* ; Armenian *gelman* ; Old High German *wolla* ; English wool. The Dravidians have not kept any single word for wool in their dialects for the very plausible reason that, on arriving in India, they soon began to use *pancu* or *koddai* for their clothing. The word *pancu* was taken over by Sanskrit as *panji* and *picu*, and *koddai* went to all the countries of Europe in the form of *cotton*, etc.[17]

LIGHT, AIR, WATER, OIL

Having seen the primeval agreement of names in respect of two of the most useful animals domesticated by man, let us briefly examine if there be any similar connection between words used for the elements most necessary to him. The generality of words for light among Indo-Europeans and among the Dravidians is found to be variations of *el*. This word is regularly derived from the root *el-u*, (Sumerian *elamu* = Tamil *elu-mpu*), 'to rise'. In Dravidian it originally denoted the sun as the daily riser—*oriens*. From the sun, the brightest

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[16] Cf. Schrader op. cit. p. 332.

[17] See "Hobson—Jobson" s. v. Cotton.

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heavenly body, the name was transferred to God. Sumerian *el* is the moon-goddess.[18] For the Semitics it was the name for the Supreme God : *El* in Hebrew, *Ilah, Allah* in Arabic. The Sumerian or Akkadian *ilu*, as a name for God, might be, according to Prince,[19] a Semitic loan. It might as well be a form of the primitive *el* common to most languages.

El, as the orb of day, has given rise to such Indo-European forms as the Greek *ēlis* or *hēlios*, Latin *sol*, Breton Gothic *sauil*, Lithuanian *saule*, English *sun*, Sanskrit svar, *surah*, *sūrya*, etc. Some analyse these forms as *sau-el suv-el*, etc., in which the original root-element *el* is made a stem-suffix.[20] This is an error due to not considering the vowel gradations or ablaut which the deictic *e* of *el* undergoes in its development. Thus, in Dravidian *el* becomes *ul, ol, kel, tel, col, pol*, etc., as in *ul-ar* 'to be dried', *ol-i* 'to be white', *kel-u*, 'bright colour' *tel-i* 'to become clear', *col-i* 'to be resplendent', *pol-i*, 'to shine'. Viewed in connection with these transmutations, the initial *s* in the Indo-European forms given above is seen to be an instance of the many sibilated collateral forms in those languages, and the transformed vowels to be instances of vowel gradation. Brugmann[21] is more correct in postulating a hypothetical **sauel* or *sauol* as the root which the true root *el* could have become by prothesis and ablaut.

In Tamil *el* has lost its primitive sense of sun and God, and we find ony the secondary meaning 'light' in classical literature. In this sense alone the sun is termed *ellavan*, 'the source of light' and gods *ellār*, 'those who dwell in the light'. Indo-European has, in addition to the above forms of *el* designating the sun, a large number of words derived from it to denote light and brightness. Thus Latin *lux*, lumen, 'light'; Greek *Leukos*, 'brilliant'; Sanskrit *rocate* 'to shine'; Latin and Old Slavonic *luna*, 'moon'; Lithuanian *lauks*; Irish *lauch*; German *licht, blitz*; English *light, blaze, bleak*, etc. In *lux* etc. the initial *e* is elided and what should be *elux* is found as *lux* etc. In *blitz* etc. an additional consonant is

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18 Barton, op. cit. No. 507.
19 "Materials for a Sumerian Lexicon" by J. D. Prince.
20 Walde Pokorny II 446.
21 "Vergl. Gramm. der Indogerm. Spr." I p. 318.

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found prefixed. This will be explained by the Dravidian *veliccam*, 'light', a development from *el* by prefixing *v* and suffixing *-ccam* (=*kk-am*). Most words in modern Tamil are similar derivatives but Sinhalese, which is a repository of early Dravidian forms, has *eliya, eli, alu*, etc., for light.

With regard to prefixing consonants to original root-words it will be opportune to give an explanation here. An important law of language, not so far animadverted to by European philologists, I believe, is the one of initial intensive consonants. Primary roots, which always begin with a vowel, become secondary by prefixing a consonant which serves generally to emphasize and thus differentiate their sense. As an example, we may take the already cited word *vellai*, 'white' or 'a white thing', from *el*, with *v* prefixed. The final *ai* is, of course, a stem-suffix. *El* with *v* prefixed becomes also *vil* by ablaut, as in *vil-ar, vil-anku*, 'to shine'. With a new initial intensive *m* we have *mil-ir* which becomes *min*, 'to glitter' as the former becomes also *vin* and *vān*, the shining 'sky'. From *min* there is a further derivative *mīn* 'the glittering thing, star or fish' (Compare with this the Sumerian *mul* or *mulu*, 'star'). Akin to the Tamil *mīn* is the Greek *mēn, mēnē*, 'the moon' another name for which is *selēnē* from the original *el* by a different line of development. Compare the Latin *luna*, 'moon', Armenian *lusin*, where the initial *e* is elided whereas in *selēnē* it is retained and sibilated as *se*. In Gothic the orb of the night is *mena*, Lithuanian *menu*, Old High German *mano*, Anglo-Saxon *mona*, English *moon*, Sanskrit *mas*, 'a month', but originally meaning moon as in the pleonastic *candra-mas*. The Latin *mensis*, 'belonging to the moon' contains the element *men*, 'moon'.

The equation *mīn=mēn=moon* is presented here for pointing out that the true root of the Indo-European equivalents is not *mā*, 'to measure' as has been generally supposed. The history of the Tamil *mīn* and the analogy of the names of the sun, etc., show that the moon has been named from its brilliancy. This is the most obvious way names were given to objects in primitive times. To consider the luminary of the night as 'the measure of time' can only occur in the second place, after the object had been named. This is of a piece

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with "the idyllic interpretation" of the word '*mātri*, 'mother' as 'measurer of food' to her children, about which later. The idea of this luminary marking time as "the golden hand in the dark dial of heaven" would have been suggested only in course of time by observing the phases of the moon.

But does not the Dravidian *mīn* indicate a star while the Indo-European *mēn*, etc., denote the moon? Such transference of sense is by no means an unfamiliar feature in the history of language and is not therefore a serious objection. An instance in point is the word *tinkal* from *tikal* ∠ *teli* < *el* which designates the moon in Tamil. The same word in Sumerian is *dingir* which originally meant a star as its pictograph of a star clearly demonstrates.[22] Later, it was applied to God, king, etc., and was also used as a determinative before names of gods. Compare also Gothic *tuggl*, Anglo-Saxon *tungel*, *tungol*, 'star'. But Old Norse has *tungl*, 'moon'.

There is, however, an ancient Tamil word for moon that has come down in popular speech from the earliest times although not clearly found in literature,—which offers an equation with the Indo-European names of the luminary. It is *am-puli-mān*, a designation for the moon in a nursery song of every Tamil household. The first two members of this compound are *am*, 'beautiful' and *puli* (for *pulli*), 'spots' and the last member *mān*, 'moon' (in Dutch *maan*). The derivation of *mān* from the secondary root *min*, 'to shine', is not phonetically impossible since we have *vān*, 'the shining thing: sky' from the same root, as already indicated. The whole compound means 'the beautiful moon with spots'. There is a literary word *mān-kalankam* which properly means 'spots of the moon' and not "spot on the moon fancied to resemble a deer" as the Madras Laxicon has it, by taking *mān* to designate deer only.

Now, to proceed to examine words for air, considered as something which blows. It was known in ancient Dravidian as *ūtai* (originally *ūta*) from the verb *ūt-u*, 'to blow' (root *unt*, earlier *ut*, 'to push'). This *ūtai* with the initial intensive *k* becomes *kūtai* and has the same sense intensified. With

22 Barton, op. cit. No. 13.

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a new suffix *-al* it becomes *kūtal* and means 'chill'; and *kūtir*, with still another suffix *-ir*, stands for the cold wind or cold season. This group of words, offering a good illustration of secondary word-formation, is purely Dravidian and we have also the root form *ūtu* in all its chief dialects. The cognates of *ūtai* (=*ūta*) can be easily recognized in the Sanskrit *vātas*, Persian *bād*, Latin *ventus*, Old High German *wint*, Icelandic *vindr*, English *wind*. Compare Russian *vieter*, 'wind', *and vieiate*, 'to blow', Greek *aētēs*. All these forms will be seen to be akin when we bear in mind the phonetic law of *ū* being often changed into *vā*. Again, in Sanskrit the stem *vā*, contracted from *vāta*, is treated as a denominative verb from which are derived *vāyus*, 'wind' and other forms. European philologists constructed for these words an artificial "root" **wento* (Uhlenbeck), but the true root is *unt-u, or ūt-u* which are real words in Dravidian, meaning 'to push, to blow'. It may, therefore, be concluded that all the above forms among the Indo-Europeans for wind hark back to a time when their ancestors were one with those of the Dravidians and named that element by its conspicuous quality of being in motion.

For water also there was a common word among the Dravidians and Indo-Europeans. It has already been remarked that Tamil has, as a rule, preserved very early forms of words intact. And such is the case with *ōt-am* the ancient Dravidian name for water. It is as transparent, so to say, as the element of which it is the name. Its etymology is easily traced from the primitive root *ul*, 'far away, hidden from view, inside' from which comes *ullu*, 'to get inside', and from this, *ōdu*, 'to flow into a hole, to run'. From *ōdu*, 'to run', three derivatives are differentiated by means of suffixes in two cases and in one by modification of the formative. Thus *ōd-ai* is the canal through which water runs ; *ōd-am*, 'the thing on which people run over a canal', *i.e.*, a bark ; and *ōt-am*, 'the running thing' *i.e.*, water. The last word is now used only in the sense of inundation, wave and sea, while *nīr*, also meaning 'a running thing' (and taken over by Sanskrit as *nīram* and *nāram*) is the ordinary word for water. But in Indo-European it is the cognates of *ōtam* that are mostly in use. Thus Sanskrit *udan*, *udam*, *udakam* ; Gothic *wato* ; Anglo-Saxon *waeter* ; Greek *hudōr* ; German *wasser*, Latin

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unda ; Lithuanian *wandu,* etc. The main phonetic laws of all languages have so much in common that Sinhalese has turned the original *ōtam* into *watura* in line with the Anglo-Saxon *waeer* !

There is another old name for water, sea, etc., which is common to many languages. The Sumerian form of it is *ab, abba.* Vedic Sanskrit has *ap,* later *āpas* in the plural. Zend *afs,* singular ; New Persian *ab* ; Greek *apos,* 'sap' ; Lithuanian *upe,* 'water' ; Old Prussian *ape* 'river' ; Greek *aphros,* 'scum' ; Sanskrit *abhram,* 'cloud' ; Greek *ombros* ; Latin *imber,* 'rain', *amnis,* 'river' ; Sanskrit *ambu.* All these forms seem to be explained by the Dravidian root *am,* 'to immerse', and their original would be *ammu* which became *ampu* taking an epenthetic *p* as infix. Possibly the Sanskrit form *ambu* (*for abhmas*) is a loan from Dravidian, for Telugu, Kanarese and Malayalam have *ambu* and Tamil *ampu.* The Dravidian dialect Kurukh seems to possess the original *amm* for water.

A common name for oil among the ancients is another patent fact. The English word *oil* comes from the Latin *oleum* through Old French *oile.* But it goes further back into pro-ethnic times Sumerian had *li* for it, represented in pictograph by what is interpreted as an oil-lamp.[23] The etymology for this word is offered by the Dravidian *ilu,* 'to be sticky', which is an extended form of the root *il* 'to pull down'. From this root Dravidian has *ilutu,* 'any sticky liquid' fat, grease, ghee, and *el* the name for oil and the oil-plant sesame. *Iluppai,* the name of the oil tree, the South Indian mahua, comes from the same. *El* is now not used alone for oil in Tamil, but combined with another word *ney,* meaning 'unctuous substance' (from *neku,* 'to melt') as *el-ney.* Another name for it is *tailam,* borrowed from Sanskrit which derives it from *tilas,* sesame. This looks suspiciously like the Dravidian *el* with the initial intensive consonant *t.* The name for sesame in Pali and all Prakrits is the same but none has an explanation to offer. Nor has *tilas* any Indo-European parallels (so Uhlenbeck). The inference that Sanskrit borrowed it from Dravidian, even from Vedic times, may therefore be entertained.

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[23] Barton, op. cit. No. 228.

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The Greek *elaion* for oil is radically one with *el* and the name in that language for the oil-tree is *elaia*. The Latin *aliva*, 'the oil-tree'. and *oleum* (for olevum) are akin to this: Boisacq correctly gives the more original form of *elaia* as *elei(F)a* which falls in so well with the Dravidian *iluppai*. Sanskrit has a curious word *ilpas*, 'a wonderful tree in the other world'. Does it represent the Dravidian *iluppai*? This form indeed explains the other Greek names of the oil-tree, *viz.*, *elpos*, *elphos*, etc. Also *olpe*, 'oil-flask', *lipos*, 'grease'. Hittite has *lip*, 'to smear'. With these compare Sanskrit *sarpis*, 'ghee'; Albanian *gulpe* 'butter'; Anglo-Saxon *sealf*; Old High German *salba*; Gothic *salbon*, English *salve*, etc. There is no doubt that the oldest names for oil bring the Dravidians and Indo-Europeans together in a remarkable way.

NAMES OF KINSHIP

We should expect to find traces of pro-ethnic connection also in names of kinship between the two families of peoples we have been so far considering. But, on the hypothesis that the Dravidians and Indo-Europeans separated very early, and each family developed the primitive language in its own way, we should be satisfied with the names of the most prominent relationship, as father, mother and child. As regards Indo-European names of parents it is admitted on all hands that Sanskrit *pitri*, *mātri*, Greek *patēr*, *mētēr*, English *father*, *mother*, Armenian *hair*, *mair*, French *pēre*, *mēre*, etc., are variants, in the different languages of the group, of the same pair of words. Has Dravidian to show any connection with these sets of words? Some European philologists of the last generation like Max Müller and A. Fick imagined, indeed, that they could draw pictures of archaic civilization from an equation of these words making the word *pitri* come from a root *pā*, 'to protect', hence meaning one who protects the family and *mātri* from *mā*, 'to measure', hence the managing house-wife, etc. All this is beautiful but not consonant with facts. On the one hand, forms like *pā* and *mā* cannot be called primitive roots, *i.e.*, most elementary word-forms, for such roots are always composed of one of the deictics and a consonant, as already stated in an earlier part of this paper. Even

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as secondary roots, *pā* and *mā* are mere abstractions conveying no meaning by themselves, whereas a real root has its own meaning although in a general, unspecified way. On the other hand, we find the sounds *pā* and *mā* as second member in words for father and mother in all ancient languages. Thus : for father Sumerian has *ab, ap, abba* ; Akkadian, *abu* ; Syriac, *abba ;* Hebrew, *ab ;* Greek, *appa, apha, pappa* ; Gothic, *aba* ; Middle English, *abbod*. With this compare the Tamil *appan,* Brahui *aba,* Sinhalese *appā* ; Prakrit *appa*. For mother, Sumerian, Hittite, Basque and Old High German have *ama,* Sanskrit *ambā* ; Greek *mamma,* 'grand mother'. With these compare the forms *amma, ammā* in all Dravidian languages. It seems probable therefore that the later *pātri* and *mātri* were corrupted or developed, if you will, from forms like *appā* and *ammā* by eliding the unstressed first syllable—a frequent phenomenon in word-building, and adding *tri, -tēr,* or *-tār* as in *dhā-tri, gno-tēr, pak-tār,* etc. Schrader, commenting on this, rightly observes : "If one takes into consideration the probability that names for father and mother existed in all stages of language, and reflects on the extraordinary accordance of the sonorous and significant Indo-Germanic *p(e)tēr* and *mā*-ter with the more onomatopoetic *papa* and *mama* of nearly every language of the globe, it is hard to suppress the suspicion that the Indo-Germanic words are only fuller and more developed forms of immeasureably earlier names for father and mother." [24] We may not follow the learned author where he speaks of *papa* and *mama* as "more onomatopoetic". They have something of that character indeed as child language had so rendered *appā* and *ammā,* but these original forms are words full of sense duly derived from the roots *ap* and *am* meaning 'to be near'.

This will appear more clearly from another set of words which is represented by *attan, accan ajje,* etc. *in* Dravidian. These words are certainly not onomatopoetic but are derived from the root *at,* also 'to be near'. Thus we have the Sumerian *ad, at, adda.* 'father' also 'mother' ; Hittite *attas* ; Etruscan *attume,* 'relationship' ; Greek, Latin, Gothic, *atta,* 'father' ; Albanian *at, tate* ; Greek *tata, tetta* Sanskrit *tāta,* 'father, child, dear one', Lithuanian *teta, tētis,* Old High German *toto,* English *dad* etc. So, mother represented as a dear one is *annai* (from root *an* 'to be near'). For this

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Hittite has *annas* ; Hungarian *anya* ; Turkish *ana* ; Persian *nana* ; Sanskrit *nanā* 'mother' ; Albanian *nene* ; Greek *nanna nenna*, 'aunt'; Latin *nonna*, '*nun*', *anus*, 'old woman'. Compare also the root *av* 'to be near, dear' from which Dravidian has *avvai* 'mother, old woman' and from which also the Latin *avia*, 'grand mother' and *avus*, *avunculus*, 'grandfather", etc., were very likely derived.[24]

There are some common names for offspring too in ancient Dravidian and Indo-European languages. The Tamil *pill-ai* (properly *pull-ai*), 'what bursts out' (from primary root *ul*) is a name for a child male or female also for the offspring of fauna as *anil-pillai* 'young squirrel', *kili-pillai*, 'young parrot' and of flora as *tennam-pillai*, 'young coconut plant'. We may compare with this the Latin *pullus*, *puer*, *puella* ; Greek *pōlos*, 'young of an animal, little boy or girl', etc. ; Gothic *fula* ; Old High German *folo* ; English foal ; French *poulain*, 'a young horse,' etc.

From the same primitive root *ul* there is a secondary root *put* (from *pud*) which gives such Dravidian forms as *potti*, 'sheath of grains, etc., as shooting forth', *pōttu*, 'young shoot of a tree, sapling, male of animals and some of birds', *pōtu* 'flower', etc. Compare Sanskrit *pōtas* 'young tree, animal ; Lithuanian *pautas* 'egg, testicle' ; Sanskrit *putras*, Zend *puthro*, 'son, child' ; Latin *putus*, *putillus*, 'boy' ; Old Slavonic *puta*, *putica*, 'bird' ; Lithuanian *putytis* 'young bird or animal, etc.

Maka is another word in Dravidian for young of animals, son or daughter. Its primary root is *ak*(*al*) 'to separate, to get out, increase'. This root has taken the initial intensive consonant *m*. I is akin to Sumerian *mah* or *mag* 'elevated, great', Greek *megas* ; *Sanskrit mahā* ; Latin *magnus* ; Gothic *mikils* ; English *much*, etc. The Dravidian *maka* becomes *makan* for masculine and *makal* for feminine. Now, we find this *maka* as *mac*, 'son', in Gaelic. In Gothic *magus*, 'boy' Icelandic *mogr*. For the *feminine* we have Gothic *magaths*, *mawi*, German *magd*, Dutch *maagd* ; Old English *may*, English *maid*.

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[24] See Etymological and Comparative Lexicon of the Tamil Language s.v. *attan* and *avvai*. Schrader op. cit. p. 379.

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Many more parallesims could be adduced, but what we have briefly seen above is enough to show a doubtless pro-ethnic connection between the Dravidians and Indo-Europeans. The question examined here in terms of Linguistic Paleontology would be only doubtfully solved if Archaeology and Anthropology did not point to the same conclusion. For we are not absolutely certain that all the equations given above deal with original native words of the several peoples, and that some of them at least may not be loans made by one people from another at a later period. But recent study of archaeological material brought out by excavations in the various old sites of ancient civilization in Western Asia and in India, as well as the study of archaic races by eminent scholars tend more and more to support the view that the progenitors of the Sumerians, Dravidians and Indo-Europeans were one and the same stock of mankind with a common early culture and a common primitive language.

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TAMILIANA–NEWS & NOTES

ORIGIN OF THE DRAVIDIANS

VIENNA, Sept. 20.

At the IVth Session of the International Congress for Anthropology and Ethnology held in Vienna between September 1 and 8, Dr. Furer-Haimendorf of the Royal Anthropological Institute, London, spoke to the Congress on "New Aspects of the Dravidian Problems".

In his interesting lecture, based on recent archaeological finds in the Mysore State, Dr. Furer-Haimendorf indicated that (1) the Dravidians, a highly cultured people, brought the iron age to South India from Central Iran ; (2) they travelled by land from Iran through Baluchistan and along the West Coast till they came to the Mysore Plateau, and (3) to the period of Dravidian arrival in South India should be approximately 300 B.C. and not much earlier.

Nearly 800 delegates from all parts of the world attended the Congress. There were six from India, *viz.,* Prof. Chattopadyaya of Calcutta, Prof. Biswas of Delhi, Prof. Dubey and Dr. Sachchidananda of Lucknow, Dr. Fuchs and Mr. P. G. Shah of Bombay. Prince Peter of Greece also attended and spoke on Polyandry in Tibet, Ceylon and South India.

In the discussions which followed, well-known archaeologists including Prof. Childe supported Dr. Furer-Haimendorf's hypothesis. Dr. K. V. Ramaswamy, who participated in the discussions as a special delegate suggested that it would be necessary to take into consideration the results of research conducted by South Indian scholars, particularly–on internal evidence in ancient Tamil literature before the hypothesis could be accepted. Though no definite conclusions have been reached in regard to the period of the Second Sangam, *Tholkappiyam* and *Thirukkural* belonged to the pre-Christian era and the development of the literature of that period showed a high level of civilization in South India. It would, there-

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fore, be rash to consider, he argued, that the Dravidians came to South India only about 300 B.C. Prof. Heine-Geldern, who was in the Chair, expressed the view that the claim of the Tamil scholars was exaggerated and that he was disposed to agree with Dr. Furer-Haimendorf.

It was unfortunate that none of our South Indian scholars was present at this important Congress, which brought home to all present the inadequacy of our research work in South India and the importance of the problem.

GLORY OF TAMIL CULTURE

RAMNAD, Sept. 18.

Presiding over the anniversary of the Raja's High School Old Boys' Association, Ramnad on September 15, the Raja of Ramnad said that associations of this nature should engage themselves more in cultural activities promoting the renaissance of Tamil Culture and learning than in mere sports.

In the course of his address, he said that there was no use abusing the language of the North as was done by some so-called reformists here in the South, while being ignorant of their own Tamil Culture and learning. The Rajah Sahib deplored that beautiful Tamil names of several sacred places in Tamilnad were appearing in Government records and Railway guides with mutilated versions and assured the gathering that he would do everything constructive in his power to propagate Tamil learning.

Mr. R. P. Sethu Pillai, Professor of Tamil, Madras University, unveiled a portrait of Mr. P. Pandithuraiswami Thevar, founder of the Fourth Tamil Academy in Madurai and of the Pandyan Secondary School, the nucleus of the present Rajah's High School. He said that it was a privilege for him to be asked to unveil the portrait of a scion of the Sethupathy family, who had done yeoman service to the growth of ancient Tamil literature in Pandyanad. Pandithuraiswami Thevar was a good scholar and able speaker in Tamil. Mr. Sethu Pillai still remembered his presidential

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addresses for three consecutive years at the Saiva Sidhantha Samajam in Palamcottah, which were a lucid exposition of the spiritual value of Tamil literature.

Tamil literary erudition had, he continued, preserved the memory of the three Sanghams which flourished in the Tamil Country and patronised Tamil learning and culture. It was the special glory of the Pandya Kings to be associated with the Sanghams. The Tamil language became rich on account of these Academies. After the Pandya power ceased to exist, there was naturally a lull in the activity of the Sangham. Pandithuraiswami Thever, the Zamindar of Palavanatham, a scion of the Ramnad family revived the Tamil Academy in Madurai which led to a renaissance of Tamil classical learning. His patronage of Tamil poets and scholars and his scholarship earned for him the grateful praise of the Tamil country. The Sangham started by him was rightly styled the Fourth Tamil Sangham and attracted a galaxy of scholars from all over the Tamil country.

The circumstances that led to the starting of the Sangham in Madurai was that Mr. Pandithuraiswami Thever, while engaged in a literary discussion on the excellence of Kamban's poetry at Madurai, asked his friends to get for him a copy of Kamba Ramayanam for reference. None was available at time. Mr. Thever was greatly shocked to find that the famous seat of Tamil learning was devoid of a work like 'Kamba Ramayanam'. A thought struck him that a literary association with a fully equipped library should be instituted in Madurai. He contributed a large sum of money for the purchase of old manuscripts and classical books and brought into existence the Sangham which was hailed as the Fourth Tamil Sangham in Madurai.

A research journal called "Senthamil" was started under its auspices, and valuable contributions were made to it by the eminent scholars of the last century. The Sangham still continued to exist at Madurai, and its services were well known to all lovers of Tamil. It was appropriate, he said, that the Rajah's High School in Ramnad with which Pandithuraiswami Thever—the illustrious patron of learning was

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associated, should perpetuate his memory by having his portrait in the institution.

He was sure that the portrait would serve as an inspiration to the successive generations of students to devote themselves to the study of Tamil language and literature and serve the country by following his noble example.

The speaker appealed to the Madras Government through the Rajah of Ramnad, to take immediate steps to see that the beautiful Tamil names of several sacred places in Tamilnad appearing in Government records and Railway guides with mutilated versions, were restored to the original.

CONCORDANCE OF TIRUKURAL

MADRAS, Sept. 29.

A function to mark the publication of the book, *Tirukural Concordance,* written by Mr. Velayudham Pillai, a retired teacher came off last evening at Rajaji Hall before a large gathering. Mr. C. Subramaniam, Finance Minister, presided.

Mr. T. V. Kalyanasundara Mudaliar said though the Tirukural was a great and immortal work his own feeling was it was not being sufficiently honoured. After quoting Mr. C. Rajagopalachari's reference at a recent function to the need for a curriculam to deal with the science of happiness in the home, Mr. Kalyanasundara Mudaliar said the best literature they had on the subject was the Kural. There should be a separate library in the University for the works relating to the Kural just as they had one in England for Shakespeare's works. He regretted that such valuable works as that written by Mr. Velayudham Pillai were not being published by the Universities.

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ANTI-HINDI AGITATION

MADRAS, Oct. 10.

Mr. Nehru, addressing a public meeting on the Island grounds, referred to the talk in the South about North Indian imperialism and presumed that the chief element of it was that the Hindi language was being "forced down your throats" If they went to Delhi, they would hear of the invasion of the North by the South because a vast number of senior and junior Secretariat officers came from the South.

The need for a common language for India had been recognised long ago, and the only possible common tie that could be suggested was Hindi. It had nothing to do with any kind of domination.

"For my part, I should like to make one or the other Southern languages compulsory in the North Indian Universities, so that there should be more of the understanding between each other. Any how, I referred to this because there seems to be a lot of misunderstanding about it here."

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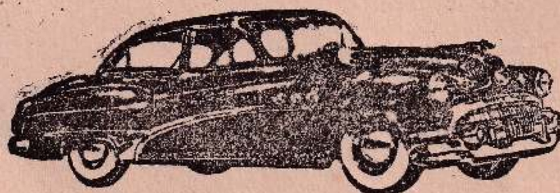

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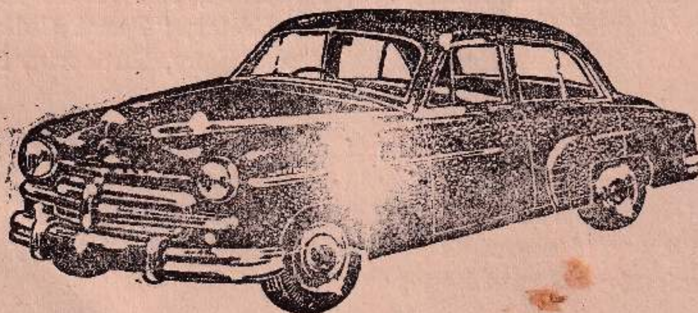

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