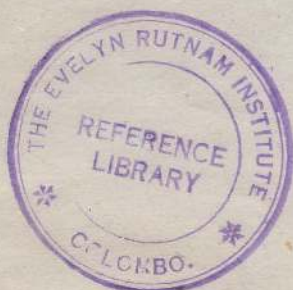


THE CEYLON
CHETTY
COMMUNITY

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James J. Rutledge



THE CEYLON CHETTY COMMUNITY

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTION.

"That natural feeling which makes a man love his kindred, his country and his nation, is a God given instinct. The Catholic Church recognises it as such, and fosters it in the hearts of her children."

'Catholics and Nationalism' by Revd. S. G. Perera, S. J.

'The brave man seeks not popular applause

'Nor o'erpowered by arms, deserts his cause,

'Unabashed, though foiled, he does the best he can,

'Force is of brutes, but honour is of man.'

In an age like the present when the old order of things is changing—though it must be admitted that change does not always mean progress, for it is often associated with decay—when ancient customs and traditions, old standards of thought and modes of living, ideals that men have lived and died for, and social institutions are all as it were being tried in the furnace, some melting away like dross, and others coming out as burnished gold purified seven times in the fire, when conflicts of all sorts, religious and political, are influencing men's minds, and when powerful combinations are being formed to impose their wills on numerically weaker brethren, one with a knowledge of the horribly devastating results of the Great World War of 1914-1918 fresh in his mind, with the experience as it were of centuries, gained within a decade or two, consequent on the marvellous and rapid discoveries of science, such as aerial navigation, wireless telegraphy, life in plants, television, etc. is of opinion that each community should, in the interests of history, and for the preservation of their high traditions, record the process of transition which connects its past with the future.

Another valid reason, and an opportune occasion for the production of a book of this nature, is the presence in our midst by Divine Decree of a wise, able and righteous Governor of Ceylon, like His Excellency Sir Herbert James Stanley, K.C.M.G., who has come for the first time to this Island, and who would himself very naturally like to know, as much as possible of the various communities over whom he rules, and who comprise the total population of this beautiful sea-girt land of Lanka.

The accusation has frequently and very rightly been laid at the door of the Ceylonese by some European gentlemen of great learning and distinction, evidently with the best of intentions, that little or no interest is taken by the people of Ceylon in their own past history, and doubtless many a son of Lanka would, in the privacy of his chamber, conscious of his sin of omission, have smitten his breast with cries of 'Peccavi' 'Peccavi'. But that is no reason why the members of a community who in almost every field of thought and endeavour distinguished themselves and shed lustre on the land of their birth, "played an important part in the history of this Island", "enriched the Bench, the Bar, the State, Medicine and commerce by worthy representatives", "been a great force for good in the country", "among the pioneers of trade in Ceylon" and also among the "pioneers of Christian civilization" (Vide Appendix A.) should hide their heads with shame, merely because they are small in numbers, and belong to a 'minority' community, although in respect of literacy, the Ceylon Chetty Community may well be classed among the most cultured communities in Europe and Asia.

To satisfy the pertinent curiosity of my readers, I would briefly allude here only to a *few* who have passed away from us, and ask those who may be further interested in the persons mentioned, to refer to other parts of this book for additional information:—

1. **Simon de Melho**—A very opulent and influential Mudaliyar of the Governor's Gate (Rasa Vasal), and Adigar, as well as 'Head of the Protestant Chetties' who was attached to the personal staff of no less than *ten* Dutch Governors, including the wicked Governor Peter Vuyst and the good Governor and great scholar Baron Von Imhoff. He died at Colombo in October, 1756 and was buried with honours at the Pettah Burial ground.

2. **Michael Jurie Ondache (Ondaatjie)** A celebrated Physician of the Palace at Tanjore who was invited by the first Dutch Governor of Ceylon to cure his Lady of a very serious ailment. His success made the Governor his friend, and in appreciation of his marvellous and rapid cure, 'Ondache' (Ondaatjie) was appointed First Doctor of the Town of Colombo. He became a convert to Christianity, and was the Founder of the Ceylonese family which bears that name. He died in Colombo in 1714, leaving considerable property which he received as 'accommedesans' from the Dutch Government.

3. **Tandava M. P. Aserappa**.—An original Chetty settler in Ceylon, who arrived from Negapatam, India, in his *own* vessel. He was the Founder of the Aserappa family in Ceylon (1665). Sir Roper Lethbridge describes him as a "wealthy merchant and ship owner." Among his descendants were the late Proctors John de M. and Solomon L. Aserappa of Colombo.

4. **Gaspar Kasi-setty.**—(Caspar Casiechetty) Founder of the well known family of Casiechettys in Ceylon. He came over from Alvar Tinnevely in S. India to Ceylon about 1620. His descendants have held various responsible offices under Government, and have also been successful business men.

5. **Abraham Rodrigo Devanasa Moottookistna.**—A worthy scion of a noble family—who was the first Tamil Mudaliyar of the Governor's Gate at Jaffna under British Rule. He was Adigar, and 'Head of the Protestant Chetties' in the Northern Province about 1816, and first Warden of the then newly built Church of St. Thomas', Colombo, to which His Excellency Lieutenant General Sir Robert Brownrigg, Governor of Ceylon presented the sacred Vessels and in connection with which Church Lady Brownrigg at her *own* expense built a commodious school-room for the girls of this special community. Among his descendants was the late Christopher Muttukistna, Interpreter Modeliar, Kandy.

6. **Revd. Philip de Melho.**—A celebrated Divine, Biblical Translator, Linguist and Poet, and the *first* Ceylonese who was admitted to the Christian Ministry and that at a very early age. His great learning and indefatigable work in the cause of religious education and civilization earned for him the titles of "*Rabbi de Melho*" and "*the Great Labourer*". He was educated in the Dutch Seminary at Colombo, where he had a most brilliant career and afterwards became the Rector of that Seminary. He was licensed to preach before attaining the age of 21, and officiated in Dutch, Portuguese and Tamil. He was author of several books, and among his principal works are Tamil versions of nearly the whole of the Old Testament from the original Hebrew and the New Testament from the original. He was born in Colombo on 23rd April 1723, and died on 10th August, 1790.

(*Vide 'Tamil Plutarch' by District Judge Simon Casiechetty, Beeton's Biographical Dictionary, &c.*)

7. **Revd. William Juriaan Ondaatjie.**—An eminent clergyman who during the Dutch period baptized about 1600 inhabitants in the Northern Province during one Parochial tour. He was a fellow student of the Dutch Governor Imam Falck at Utrecht University, and was later Rector of the Dutch Seminary in Colombo. On his return from Holland to Colombo, with his wife, Hermina Quint of Amsterdam, he was stationed in Colombo, where on June 18th 1758 his son Dr. Peter Juriaan Quint Ondaatjie, of European fame, was born.

8. **Revd. Manuel Mergappa.**—I. U. D. (Leyden). A distinguished Divine and Linguist who held responsible posts

during the Dutch period and was Presbyterian Chaplain at Jaffna at one time. On retirement from active service he drew a pension from the East India Company (1796). He is said to have had a conversation with Governor North in Latin on one occasion. He was a descendant of Christopher Morgappa, a merchant who had permanently settled in Ceylon over 200 years ago.

9. **Dr. Peter Philip Juriaan Quint Ondaatjie.**—A. L. M., J. U. D., Ph. D. (Utrecht and Leyden).—A lineal descendant of Michael Jurie Ondache of Ceylon, who was Physician to the first Dutch Governor. Dr. Quint Ondaatjie had a most brilliant and very distinguished scholastic career, and obtained the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy and of the Liberal Sciences at the early age of nineteen. He was an eminent, patriotic Reformer, warrior, statesman and orator, as well as author. In 1811 Napoleon I. nominated him member of the Imperial Council of Prizes, and in 1814 under the auspices of William I. he was named a member of the High Court of Justice of the Netherlands. He was the *first Asiatic* who figured in European history. Some of his descendants are now permanently settled in Batavia, Java, and Sowerabaya. Born June 18th 1758 in Colombo. Died in the Netherlands on 20th April, 1818.

(*Vide Memorials of Dr. Peter Quint Juriaan Ondaatjie by Mrs. Davies. See also 'Leisure Hour' for March, 1867.*)

10. **Anthony Pieris Aserappa.**—An extensive landed proprietor and merchant, who had agencies in Negapatam, Bombay and Calcutta, during Dutch Rule. Several of his descendants have distinguished themselves in the Learned Professions and also in various other walks of life. He died on 9th October, 1813.

11. **Simon de Rosairo.**—Adigar and principal landholder in the Calpenty District who wielded very great influence. He is said to have handed over the keys of the Fort at Calpenty to the British General under orders from the Dutch Government. He was a contemporary of Major du Capelli who first introduced the grape vine into Calpenty. Adigar de Rosairo was buried in the Dutch Reformed Church now known as St. Peter's, Kalpitiya.

12. **Major Peter Philip Christian Oortmaan Ondaatjie.**—Received his early education in France and arrived with his parents in Batavia in 1816. He was appointed Major of the Engineers on 10th October, 1839 and was created *Knight of the Military Order* of Prince William of Orange on 20th February 1840, in appreciation of his signal services in the East. He built the fortifications in Java, and a statue was erected to his memory in a very prominent place there. Born at Utrecht 18th January 1804, and died at Sowerabaya on 6th November, 1841.

"TWO CEYLON FAMILIES OF NOTE."
(vide Editorial "Ceylon Examiner" 10th October, 1894.)

1915



**Advocate Arthur Louis
Reginald Ascrappa, B. A.**
A brilliant Scholar eminent Lawyer,
orator and Linguist.

(vide ps. 10, 80, 83 &c., &c.)

1815



**Dr. Peter Phillip Jurian Quint
Ondaatje, A.L.M., J.U.D., Ph. D.**
(Utrecht & Leyden.)

Statesman, Patriot, Orator, Scientist,
Author and Warrior.

The first Asiatic who figured in European
history.

(vide ps. 41, 21, 25, 75 &c.)

13. **M. A. Rodrigo Pullenayagem.**—Like Johan Christotel Fernando Pulle Chettiar who owned extensive lands at Jampettah (John's-petai) in Colombo,—was a chief of the Tamil inhabitants of Colombo about 1770. Among his descendants were Bastian Rodrigo Pullenayagem, Kacheri Mudaliyar of Puttalam, Solomon R. Pullenayagem, (Registrar) and Peter R. Pullenayagem (Municipal Inspector).

14. **Simon Casiechetty.**—C. C. S., District Judge of Chilaw and Calpenty, was the author of several books, and a celebrated Oriental Scholar, whose History of the Tamil Queen Alliarasani, published prior to the Coronation of Her Most Gracious Majesty Queen Victoria and presented to her, elicited considerable admiration and comment at the time. He was the *first* Ceylonese who fought for the employment of natives of Ceylon in the higher grades of the service. He entertained their Lordships Chief Justice W. O. Carr and Dr. James Chapman, D. D. first Lord Bishop of Colombo, on the occasion of their official visit to Calpenty in 1848, and while District Judge of Chilaw, laid the foundation stone (blessed by Very Revd. Father Oruna) of the present substantial and imposing sacred edifice of St. Mary's, Chilaw, which faces the sea. He was the *first* Ceylonese Civil Servant and about 1843 was Member of the Legislative Council of Ceylon representing the Tamils and the Moors. Born 21st March 1807, died on 20th November 1860. He was buried near his mother within St. Mary's Church, Kalpitiya. Three sons viz. Aloysius, Forbes and Isidore, besides several daughters survived him. The late Manuel Casiechitty, landed Proprietor, Kandy was a son-in-law of his and Mrs. Abraham Morgappa of Calpenty was his sister-in-law.

15. **Revd. Christian David.**—Born 17th August 1771. Died 8th May 1852. Who was a disciple of Frederick Schwartz, was the *first* Tamil ordained *Anglican* Minister. He was a pious priest and celebrated preacher, *first* Tamil Colonial Chaplain of Jaffna, and Superintendent of about forty seven schools in the Northern Province. By his marriage with Miss Muttukistna he had several children one of whom was Revd. Solomon David, born 14th April 1798, who rendered useful service to Government during the Rebellion of 1848, and who died in 1862. Revd. Christian David of Kotahena, Colombo who faithfully served in the Church of England very many years, was his grandson.

16. **Henry Francis Muttukistna.**—*First* Tamil Barrister in Asia (1849) was educated both in Ceylon and at Calcutta in early life, and afterwards entered Oriel College Oxford. He was apprenticed under Sir Anthony Oliphant (afterwards Chief Justice), and was a very brilliant lawyer, orator, and scholar, and was a valuable member of the Committee for revising the Thesalamai Laws of Jaffna. He was at various times Deputy Queen's

Advocate, and Member of the Legislative Council, and practised his profession with very great success both in Ceylon and at Madura in South India. He was presented to His Majesty in England, and on his retirement from active service, resided in England with his wife, and died there without issue, leaving a large fortune. His portrait adorns the walls of the Town Library in Jaffna.

17. **Revd. Jan Franciscus.**—was a convert to Christianity, and eventually became a Predikant during early Dutch Rule. He published a Church Catechism in 1778 and was known to some as 'Francis Swami.' Among his descendants were William Franciscus, at first Presbyterian Chaplain at Jaffna, afterwards an Anglican Proponent at St. Thomas' Church, Colombo, and Barrister J. W. Franciscus who practised his profession in Ceylon, and afterwards resided at Bangalore in South India.

18. **Tironander Francis Nonis Malleappa.**—1750—1816. was a learned and pious Proponent during Dutch Rule and ancestor of the Ceylonese family of Malleappas, most of whom were engaged in religious and educational work; one of them, at first a teacher at Colombo viz. Charles Malleappah was afterwards a Maniagar in the Puttlam District. Wilmot Horton Malleappa to whose memory there is a brass tablet on a wall at St. Thomas' Church Colombo, and was connected with that Church as a Catechist, for half a century was another of his lineal descendants.

19. **Domingo Benedict Anandappa.**—An Ayurvedic Physician of the Dutch period and ancestor of the Roman Catholic Chetty families of that name, among whom were a 'Head of the Chetties' at Calpentyne (1825), the *first* Cashier of the Post Office Colombo (D. B. Anandappa) during the Postmaster Generalship of Louis Sansoni, a Doctor, and several Brokers and Shroffs.

20. **Revd. Johan Jurgen Ondaatjie.**—who was a clerk at St. Thomas' Church Colombo, and Translator and Interpreter in the Supreme Court (1817) successively, was eventually the *first Colonial Chaplain* at St. Thomas' Church, Colombo 1835—1847. He was also an Ex-officio member of the Ceylon Central School Commission. It was during his Chaplaincy that on his petition Rt. Revd. Dr. George Trevor Spencer (Bishop of Madras) consecrated St. Thomas' Church, Colombo.

21. **Gabriel Casiechetty.**—Born 1779. Gate Mudaliyar and District Mudaliyar of Calpentyne who discovered Pearl banks off Carradivoe, in the vicinity of his District, in consequence of which a Fishery was held in March 1832 which brought a considerable income to the Ceylon Government.

22. **Don Simon de Melho Wannigerkoon.**—The last male descendant of the distinguished Chetty family of De Melhos, was

Chief Tamil Mudaliyar of the Governor's Gate, 'Head' of the Protestant Chetties in Colombo, and Chief Shroff of the Metropolitan Kacheri, in which responsible office he served the Ceylon Government efficiently, honourably and faithfully for *forty two years*. He died, deeply lamented by all who knew him, on 11th June 1840, at Hill Street, Colombo, and was buried at the Pettah Burial Ground in the family vault.

23. **John Elaardus Jurgen Ondaatjie** eldest son of Dr. Quint Ondaatjie. He was a resident of Borneo, and acquired much fame as the discoverer of valuable coal mines there, and in Java.

24. **Canon Gabriel Rodrigo Muttukistna** was educated at C. M. S. Institute, Cotta, at St. Thomas' School, Colombo, and at Bishop's College, Calcutta. He possessed the rare distinction of being a Canon of the Cathedral in Ceylon. He was for sometime the Head-master of St. Thomas' School, and also Examining Chaplain to the Bishop of Colombo, and Member of the Tamil Bible Revision Committee. He was responsible for several important improvements to St. Thomas' Church, Colombo during his chaplaincy there. He resided at Muttukistna Street (now known as Pickering's Road, Kotahena) Colombo, and died on 19th November, 1861 at Hill Street, Colombo and was buried near his mother in the churchyard at St. Thomas' Church, Colombo.

25. **The Revd. Gabriel Jurgen Ondaatjie.**—A very zealous, able and devoted Preacher who during the latter period of Dutch Rule frequently ministered with very great acceptance at the Presbyterian Church at Wolfendahl, and since the erection of St. Thomas' Church, became its *first* Proponent and Colonial Chaplain. Among his distinguished descendants was Mr. Frank Ondaatjie a very godly and learned Baptist Missionary of sterling integrity and independence, who laboured in the Lord's vineyard at Madampe, Ratnapura and Colpetty. He was also a fully qualified Surveyor.

26. **John Rodrigo Moothiah** C. C. S.—Of the Pullenayagam family, was a very distinguished scholar and Linguist, and was District Judge of Kayts, and Sub-Collector of Customs. Died 5th October, 1844.

(*Vide Jaffna 'Morning Star.'*)

27. **Matthew P. Jurgen Ondaatjie.**—A lineal descendant of the original settler in Ceylon, Michael Jurie Ondache. Matthew Ondaatjie was a senior Officer of the Colonial Secretary's Office in charge of the Financial and Military Department about 1850. He supplied Mrs. Davies and Simon Casiechitty, C. C. S. with considerable information for the publication of the Memorials and Times of Dr. Quint Ondaatjie, and sketch of the life of Rev. P. de

Me ho in the Tamil Plutarch, respectively." On retirement from service in Ceylon, he resided in London, where he died, leaving no issue.

28. **John de Melho Aserappa.**—Son of Pedro Pieris Aserappa (who died in December, 1844.) was a wealthy landed proprietor, Proctor of the Supreme Court, and for sometime Police Magistrate at Avisawella. He was a great supporter of the work of the Church Missionary Society in Ceylon. Some of his descendants have now permanently settled in London. Died 29th December, 1890.

29. **The Revd. G. N. Canjemanaden, O. S. B.**—The *first* Ceylon Chetty who entered the Roman Catholic Priesthood—was ordained in Rome on 11th April, 1868. He led a most austere and devoted life and died in Colombo on 8th February, 1878 and was buried at St. Mary's Church at Chekku St. Colombo.

30. **The Revd. Father Jerome Masillamony**, who abandoned a lucrative secular career, and joined the Catholic Mission was another zealous Minister, who was for some time in charge of the Parish at Kotahena, Colombo, and after a life of great usefulness and service died in 1895.

31. **Dr. Simon Rodrigo Muttukistna.**—M. D. (Edin.) one of the earliest in Ceylon who obtained that Degree in a British University. He was for some time Port Surgeon in Colombo.

32. **Dr. William Charles Ondaatjie.**—M. S. A. An alumnus of the Medical College Calcutta, *first* Ceylonese Director of the Botanical Gardens, who was also at one time in charge of the Government Civil Hospital Colombo (1862.) His 'observations on the vegetable products of Ceylon' (1850) elicited considerable admiration. His introduction of the Olive plant into Ceylon, and the use of the Madder, for dyeing various articles which resulted in considerable profit to Government about 1844, gained considerable celebrity for him.

33. **Dr. Simon de Melho Aserappa.**—M. D. (Edin.) The *first* Ceylonese who obtained the Degree of Doctor of Medicine of a British University, and the *first* Chief Medical Officer of Health of the Colombo Municipality, on whose suggestion the incinerator for burning refuse, was adopted in Ceylon and elsewhere.

34. **Advocate Philip de Melho Jurgen Ondaatjie.**—An eminent lawyer and scholar, who was the *first* Tamil Crown Counsel for the Island. He was for a time Member of the Legislative Council of Ceylon, representing both Tamils and Moors. Among his descendants are distinguished Lawyers, who have also proved an acquisition to the Bench.

35. **John Paul Casiechitty.**—Son of Caspar Casiechitty Shroff Mudaliyar of Seven Korles. A highly efficient and intrepid officer who while Mudaliyar at Kurunegala, wielded considerable influence, and worked at great risk to life, property and office in unison with His Excellency Lord Torrington, Governor of Ceylon, Government Agent Mr. Layard, and others, in quelling the Kurunegala Rebellion of 1848. Among his sons were Mudaliyar Spencer S. Casiechitty, Interpreter Mudaliyar, H. M. Casiechitty, and Municipal Inspector E. A. Casiechitty.

36. **Emmanuel F. de Rosairo.**—J. P., U. P. M., District Mudaliyar of Calpentyn, Salt Superintendent and Deputy Fiscal—A lineal descendant of Adigar Simon de Rosairo, and son-in-law of Abraham Morgappa, Sub-Collector of Customs Calpentyn, and close relative of J. M. de Rosairo, Secretary District Court Puttalam, and Shroff Mudaliyar Anthony de Rosairo also of Puttalam. He administered his District very capably and honourably, and maintained the dignity of his office, till his death in 1909.

37. **The Revd. Simon Dederick Jurgen Ondaatjie.**—Born 12th May, 1817. Died 16th August 1885. Son of Revd. Johan Jurgen Ondaatjie, was the last *Tamil Colonial Chaplain* of Ceylon. He received his early education at the C. M. S. Institution at Cotta, the Colombo Academy (now known as the Royal College, Colombo,) where he distinguished himself, and completed his education at Bishop's College, Calcutta. He was ordained on 6th September, 1840 at Madras. He was not only a great scholar, but a very independent and fearless speaker, and a very able preacher. He was also an Examiner of Civil Servants in Tamil, Secretary and Treasurer of the Jansetjee Jeejibhoj's Scholarship Fund, Examining Chaplain to the Bishop of Colombo and served on various important Committees.

38. **S. L. Aserappa.**—Proctor, Colombo, was one of the Foundation Students of St. Thomas' College, Colombo, and was later on, apprenticed under the distinguished Advocate Charles Ambrose Lorensz, and practised his profession for *forty years* in the *Metropolis*. He was a Senior Member of the Bar at the time of his death. His portrait adorns the walls of the Law Chambers in Colombo. Born 7th January 1837. Died 31st August, 1902.

38. **William Jurgen Ondaatjie.**—Mudaliyar of the Governor's Gate, and the *First Shroff* of the *First Bank* in Ceylon (1847). He was a trusted and trustworthy officer, and in recognition of his services received a gold medal from the Bank Manager and staff in 1850, and on entering Government Service, was rewarded with a Gate Mudaliyarship in appreciation of his long and faithful service. He died without issue, leaving considerable wealth.

39. **Charles Piers Aserappa.**—Under-graduate of the Calcutta University, and Tutor at St. Thomas' College, Colombo.

A bright scholar who won prizes and distinctions in Mathematics, Theology and Classics, and led a most exemplary life. He was a son of Proctor S. L. Aserappa. He died as the result of a cycle accident in the prime of his life. Born 1st Dec. 1871, died 9th June 1894. He was buried in the family grave at the General Cemetery at Kanatte (Borella,) Colombo.

40. **John J. Casiechetty**.—C.C.S., B.A., B.C.L. *First University Scholar* in Ceylon, and *First Bachelor of Civil Laws* in Asia, a great Scholar, Linguist and Author. He was at various times District Judge of Kayts, Matara, and Panadura. His son Edward Casiechetty was President of Village Tribunals in the Eastern Province the duties of which office he discharged admirably and in the course of which he met with an untimely end.

41. **Dr. Philip Brito**.—M.B.C.M ; Born at Madampe 7th April 1856. An able Physician, Lecturer and Examiner in the Ceylon Medical College. He was a brother of Advocate Christopher Brito, B. A., and grandson of Valaide Pulle Gurunatha Pulle of Mampury, a wealthy landed proprietor of the Calpentyne District.

42. **W. B. Paulickpulle** a relative of C. B. Paulickpulle, Maniagar of Puttalam (1837) was a landed proprietor at Chilaw, and one of the earliest to have been licensed to practise as a Proctor in that District (about 1842). Among his descendants are a retired Secretary of the District Court and a Proctor, Doctor and Schoolmaster.

43. **Aloysius Mt. Carmel Casiechetty B.** 1853.—Proctor and Notary of Puttalam, son of District Judge Simon Casiechetty of Calpentyne. He was a successful lawyer and wealthy landed proprietor as well. He had no surviving male issue.

44. **Adam Muttukumar**—was a Proctor who practised his profession at Puttalam with great success. He was a close relative of the late Dr. Philip Muttukumar, M.B.C.M., who was a very successful Medical Practitioner, and who later in life resided at Nuwara-Eliya till his death. They were the descendants of Adam Caderavail Pulle who was buried in the Dutch Reformed Church now known as St. Peter's Church, Kalpitiya.

45. **Arthur L. R. Aserappa**, B.A.—Advocate, Colombo, was a brilliant Scholar, Linguist, and Lawyer, who won high scholastic distinctions at an early age. He was the *first* Ceylonese who won the Cambridge Junior Exhibition. He was also Jamsetjee Jejeebhoy Scholar at the Medical College at Calcutta, and obtained the Degree of Bachelor of Arts at the age of 19. He was at various times appointed Examiner in Law, Crown Counsel for the Island, Police Magistrate, Commissioner of Requests and District Judge Colombo. His name appeared on the panels of St. Thomas' College during the time of Warden Miller. A portrait of him adorns the walls of the Colombo Law Library. Born 17th August, 1867, Died 12th January, 1921.

46. **James Chitty**.—A very able and well known Advocate of the Metropolitan Bar, who often acted as Crown Counsel for the Island. He was the son of Mr. C. Suppramanian Chitty who jointly with his brother Abraham Puvinaiyagam presented a Bell to St. Thomas' Church, Colombo. One of his brothers is now an Advocate in Colombo.

47. **W. N. S. Aserappa** C. C. S.—Advocate, who often acted as Crown Counsel for the Island, Municipal Magistrate Colombo Deputy Fiscal Colombo, and was Police Magistrate and Additional, District Judge Negombo. He was also nominated at one time as Member of the Legislative Council of Ceylon. Born 21st December, 1864, died 8th August, 1928.

Besides the above mentioned are several descendants of Christian Chetty ancestors either on the maternal or paternal side, who have shed lustre on the land of their birth, among whom may be mentioned Rai Bahadur Justice Muttunayagam who was for many years Senior Puisne Justice of Travancore, one of whose ancestors was Magdalene Jurgen Ondaatjie. Another such descendant was Rev. G. A. H. Arndt, M. A. who was at one time acting Warden of St. Thomas' College Colombo, whose ancestors were Johan Charles Arndt and Antonella de Melho daughter of Rev. P. de Melho of the Christian Chetty Community. Gate Mudaliyar Edmund Gooneratne of the Southern Province who for some time acted as Maha Mudaliyar of Ceylon, whose ancestors were Mudaliyar Don Juan Illangakoon of Talpe Pattu and Susanna de Melho, daughter of Gate Mudaliyar Simon de Melho (Adigar) of the Ceylon Chetty Community, was another. The wealthy and distinguished Doctor W. P. Rogers, J.P., F.R.G.S., presently of Ceylon, son of the respected Mudaliyar Rogers Arasaratnam, (Secretary of the District Court of Jaffna) and his wife Thangaratnam Rogers, *nee* Miss Muttukistna of the Christian Chetty Community is also another instance. According to the diary of Sir John Doyle, Bart, the gallant and distinguished Mudaliyar Don Adrian Wijesinghe Jayawardene 1805 is also of Chetty descent, some of whose descendants have adorned not only the Bench and Bar, but are among the most honoured and distinguished Military Officers in the Island.

Strange to say that no census was taken of the *Ceylon* Chetties nor even of the *Colombo* Christian Chetties who are *not* governed by the Thesewalamai Laws of Jaffna, but the reference in the Ceylon Gazette of 26th July 1815 to the presence of about 250 Protestant Chetties at the *first service* held at a Church, in Colombo, well over a century ago, is some evidence that there must have been many *other* Chetties, some Protestants who did not attend that particular Service, as well as Roman Catholic and Heathen Ceylon Chetties in Colombo itself, not to speak of the Chetties who inhabited other parts of the Island such as Galle,

Jaffna, Chilaw, Calpentyn, &c. &c. We learn further from 'The Ceylon Gazetteer' published about 1833 that the *Tamils* resident in Colombo were *mostly Chetties*, which clearly indicates that the large influx of Tamils into Colombo from various other parts of Ceylon, and India, is of recent date and later than 1833. But whatever the result of a mere counting of heads' may be in this progressive age, it cannot be denied that the *true worth* of a community, nation or even army, does not depend on size or numbers, but upon the part they played in the past history of Ceylon, in proportion to their numbers, the impress they left for good, and their present worth and loyalty to the Government which safe guards their interests. That mere numbers should not be made the criterion of worth or wisdom has been exemplified frequently since the time of Our Lord, when the *large multitude* cried out with a loud voice 'Crucify Him, Crucify Him'. That worth does not depend on numbers is evident from what the Most Revd. the Metropolitan of India and Ceylon and Lord Bishop of Calcutta Dr. Reginald Stephen Copleston, D. D., D. Lit; D. C. L., &c. &c. says in his estimable work on 'Buddhism' which we may well lay to heart:—

'Truth is not measured nor even is significance by *numbers*. The *small* nation for instance of Jews, the *little* cities of Greece and Rome, while she was still confined to Italy—these have made contributions to the development of mankind, compared with which what has hitherto been done by the *multitudes* of India or of China is as nothing.'

Stimulated by a sense of national consciousness and legitimate communal pride, during this period of political reforms and social reconstruction, with a patriotism in no way diminished by a very firm belief in Christianity, with a strict watch on himself lest subtly the judgment of things becomes deflected by the egoistic motive, and despite the opposition in certain quarters, and the criticisms the writer was threatened with, he entered upon this self imposed task, involving considerable time and labour, subjecting the information he obtained both oral and documentary, by every honest means in his power, to the rays of scrutiny and verification, not ascending very lofty heights where mists of antiquity obscure the truth, nor expatiating on circumstances embalmed in tradition; relying on those scholars who may care to peruse this little brochure for that indulgence, which the writer knows is very readily accorded by the learned, such as they are, to men like him, who can lay no claim to that very honourable title.

I confess I am a man of limited abilities; and I am also fully conscious of my many short-comings. But what say those thoroughly qualified to express opinions about me?

The Right Reverend Dr. E. A. Copleston, D. D., Lord Bishop of Colombo, who was nearly fifty years in Ceylon, and for

quarter of a century administered the Diocese of Colombo with conspicuous ability, writing under date 22. 1. 24. says :—

“I have much pleasure in testifying to the respectable birth and ancestry of Mr. Antony F. Aserappa, and to the good social status of the family to which he belongs.

He himself studied at St. Thomas' College and at Bishop's College, Calcutta.”

That great scholar, strict disciplinarian, and successful educationist, the Ven'ble E. F. Miller, M. A. Warden of St. Thomas' College and Archdeacon of Colombo, some years ago, wrote as follows :—

“As regards his moral character, it would be impossible to speak too highly. His conduct was always in the truest sense of the word exemplary.....and his thorough trustworthiness, his courteous manners and his steady behaviour will make him a desirable addition ” &c. &c.

The Most Revd. Dr. R. S. Copleston, D. D., D. LIT., D. C. L., &c. &c. who as Lord Bishop of Colombo for half a century administered the Diocese in Ceylon with great wisdom and remarkable success, and was afterwards translated to Calcutta as Metropolitan of India and Ceylon, and Lord Bishop of Calcutta, writing from the Palace at Calcutta (through his Chaplain) said:—

“It is pleasant to him to read Warden Miller's testimonial, though it was not needed, since the Bishop is already quite convinced of the facts which it states ”.

The Right Revd. Dr. Mark Carpenter Garnier D. D., the present zealous and pious Lord Bishop of Colombo writes :—

“I am deeply conscious of the services you have rendered to former Bishops of this Diocese, and I trust I may be allowed to look to you for any help you may be able to give me from time to time as I require it.”

The Ven'ble F. H. de Winton, M. A., Fellow of Jesus College Oxford, who for very many years was Archdeacon of Colombo, and acted as Commissary to the Metropolitan of India, and also to the Lord Bishop of Colombo, writes :—

“He belongs to a well known and very respectable family and is a thoroughly reliable man and a sincere Christian.”

The Ven'ble F. L. Beven, M. A., the learned and devout Archdeacon of Jaffna, in his preface to a short history of the Church of St. Paul's Pettah says :—“I must thank Mr. C. David and Mr. A. F. Aserappa for notes which they sent me from authorities to which I have not had access.”

The Revd. C. Henry, Bishop's Chaplain and Incumbent of St. Thomas' Church Colombo, in his 'Centenary Record of St. Thomas' Church Colombo' p. 29. says :—

"Mr. Arndt...founded the St. Thomas' Union, an association for the mental, moral and spiritual culture of the young men, and of which he was President and Mr. Antony F. Aserappa, Secretary and Treasurer. The Lectures, Entertainments and outings in connection with these are a pleasant and happy recollection to many a young man that has now entered middle age".

Mr. E. Reimers the distinguished Government Archivist of Ceylon says:—

"Mr. Aserappa's able and exhaustive articles on the Chetty Community of Ceylon, have to a certain extent, rescued from obscurity a Community who have played an important part in the history of the Island".

The Hon'ble Sir S. C. Obeyesekere Knight, who for very many years was the respected representative of the Low Country Sinhalese Community in the Legislative Council of Ceylon, wrote as follows:—

Dear Mr. Aserappa

.....It is most distressing to us to feel that there are none of the members of Muttukistna, Ondaatjie and Casiechetty families occupying prominent positions in the Public Service, as they did till recently. Even of the Aserappa family except 3 or 4 of you, where are the rest?

The remedy is to be found in inspiring those that remain with feelings like yours, getting them adequately to value 'character,' and helping them to properly educate themselves. You all should act in unity and for the common cause without forgetting that other communities of the same plane as yours, are your best friends.

With kind regards,

Yours sincerely,

S. C. OBEYESEKERE.

With credentials such as these, and unwilling in the slightest degree to wound the tender susceptibilities of any of his fellow-men, the writer has endeavoured to produce a history of the Ceylon Chetty Community, without intentionally omitting facts redounding to the credit of any person, and well aware that the fable of the miller and the ass most eloquently admonishes him as to the impracticability of pleasing every body. Albeit, he has not hid facts worthy of mention, even such as "we have heard and known, and such as our fathers have told us," from the children of the generations to come, "that their posterity might know it, to the intent that when they came up, they might shew their children the same."

It is well however that the writer should state that owing to the absence of family records, due in some cases to the terrible ravages of white ants, and various other causes, his references to some members and families would be somewhat meagre, for he admits that he did not arrogate the privilege of bestowing pedigrees, attributing notable events or making any rash statements. However, in spite of all his honest efforts and caution, errors are detected—and *perfection* we know can never be found on this side of the grave—he trusts they would be merely *clerical* and not *cardinal*.

Gladly indeed would he have sat with humble docility at the feet of some Gamaliel who delved into this special subject and was a master of it, if indeed he could have found such a one, instead of himself venturing to speak with authority, but since that effort proved abortive, he thought he should never shrink from discharging any duty because of its difficulty, nor be deterred by opposition.

He regrets that this work has been greatly delayed, owing to the numerous difficulties he had to contend with, and incidents well nigh intolerable, which so pained the ear and sickened the heart, that he preferred, whenever possible, to repair to some vast wilderness, some boundless contiguity of shade where rumours of oppression and deceit would never reach him, and where away from 'civilized' towns, and the 'madding crowd's ignoble strife' he could find some little rest and solace. The place which tallied somewhat with these conditions, and to which he could have had access, was no other than *Kalpitiya* (formerly known as Calpentyne) situated a hundred miles and more away from the Metropolis of the Island. *There* has he often sat, literally as well as metaphorically, like the children of Israel of old as recorded in Holy writ, in time of rest and peace, 'under our own vine,' and under our mango tree, with the fruit of Canaan the pomegranate, within easy reach, very frequently on summer days, enjoying 'grateful coolness in the heat.' That ancient Town, which is not connected by Railway, Telegraph or Telephone with the rest of the Island, where no English School, Reading Room or Library exists, but which during Portuguese Rule possessed a Catholic Seminary, and was a recognised seat of learning, is the place where *to-day* no Latin accents reach our ears, nor Greek's sublimer sounds, where all is dreary all is dull, all one long monotony, but 'where wealth accumulates, while men decay.' However, there still stand as remnants of pristine glory, the bare stone walls of the old Dutch Fort of 1749 with its interior structures totally demolished, and the sacred and historic edifice known as S. Peter's Church, now in a dilapidated condition, where long years ago, were sheltered within its walls, the celebrated Robert Knox and his fellow captives; within which hallowed precincts,

and in the yard around, are now resting peacefully in long neglected graves both distinguished Europeans, and eminent sons and daughters of Lanka, whom neither storied urn nor animated bust could call back to their mansions, though the very mention of some names even at this distant period, would revive fond memories of the past. (Vide 'Calpentyn Past and Present' by Antonius' in the Ceylon Daily News of December 16, 1925.) In that Town once lived and prospered during the Portuguese and Dutch periods, and even during early British rule, Europeans, Burghers and Christian Chetty families, as well as others, and there too were born both Indian and Ceylon Civil Servants, including the compiler of the 'Ceylon Gazetteer'; and it is while staying *there*, and in Colombo, the place of his birth, that he has written the pages of this book, which he bequeaths as his legacy to the youth of Ceylon of to-day, and to the generations yet unborn, not with a view to foster proud notions in the minds of the younger generation, nor as compensating for their deficiencies or demerits, but as an incentive to noble deeds, to encourage firm loyalty to one's own Religion and the State, to aid in the preservation of the high traditions of the best families, and for the imitation of the good examples of those who lived useful and honourable lives, and

'When they died, had left a lofty name

'A light, a landmark, on the cliffs of fame.'

And this book does he now bequeath in the spirit which animated that distinguished son of a distinguished Ceylon Tamil, Doctor Peter Philip Jurgen Quint Ondaatje, of European fame, who was born on 18th June 1758 in Colombo, and who in presenting his map of the Republic to the National Assembly composed of his fellow Citizens in Batavia, over a hundred and forty years ago wrote thus:—

'Citizen Representatives! Silver or gold for immortalizing remarkable events by memorials, I possess not. But that which my own invention and industry has produced, that which was designed in silence to be offered to you on the first auspicious occasion for the service and use of my countrymen..... Receive, Citizen Representatives, *this work of mine*, as an offering presented on the Altar of Liberty, to our meritorious heroes.'

Your approbation is a sufficient reward for my zeal. Greeting and respect" !!

I desire at the outset, to inform my readers that I have no prejudice against any class or community in the Island, and that the Chetty Community *as a whole*, has for centuries past, maintained very friendly relations with *all* communities in Ceylon, and in vain would one look for any record of any friction having occurred at any time throughout the long history of this ancient isle of Lanka, in which this community figured, though they always maintained their own high traditions, and

never sold their birthright for 'a mess of pottage.' But in this age of ours, when some people evince a tendency to ignore, or speak contemptuously of, their immediate ancestors, forgetting the good work done by them in the past, and when one hears of 'minority' communities sometimes referred to with scant respect, it is necessary to exercise that natural feeling, (in defence of those dead and gone, and in the cause of the few and weak) which makes a man love his country, and his kindred, which is a God-given instinct, and which the Catholic Church fosters in our hearts. As for the young 'moderns' of both sexes in all parts of the world, whose very existence and *present* condition, is due, in many cases, to *their* ancestors from whom they have inherited large fortunes, beautiful estates, palatial houses, antique furniture, rare and valuable books, physical characteristics, virtues, etc., it is hardly necessary to remind them, that they may have their 'equals' in the next century, speaking disparagingly. (probably with even greater force and emphasis than the 'moderns' of to-day) of *their* ancestors, of the *present* generation.

Personally speaking, I stand for *progress*; nor am I a blind and unreasoning opponent of all change, but I must confess that I have a veneration for the past, the glories of which modern excavations often reveal, that I value education, and regard 'character' and 'spirituality' as of far greater importance than mere *wealth* and *rank*.

Though born of Christian Chetty parents, descended from Christian Chetty grand-parents and great-grand parents both on the paternal and maternal sides, nursed on the lap of a Christian mother, bred in a Christian home, educated in Christian Colleges both in Colombo and at Calcutta by Christian teachers, encompassed by Christian literature, living in a country administered by a Christian Governor (and a Council of various religionists) and having had the privilege of the ennobling influences of Christian Prelates in the Metropolis of Lanka, and in the 'City of Palaces' in India, for well over quarter of a century, I must by no means suppress the expression of the fact, that there are some things beautiful and true which I have learnt, and some qualities which I have inherited from my Saivite ancestors, who have had a civilization of three thousand years or more; while I dare not deny that some of the precepts of Buddhist philosophy promulgated before the birth of Christ, are to me bereft of grandeur; nor should I fail to confess that I sincerely admire in Islamism the duty of open and unabashed acknowledgement of God and His authority, in every department of life, while it gives to us a wholesome example of zeal in the propagation of the faith which they believe, and the necessity of inculcating abstinence.

At the commencement of this Chapter I stated that we were passing through a period of transition, such as justified the

production of a book of this nature. An examination of the condition of affairs that exist in India and Ceylon would enlighten the reader as regards this matter. A distinguished Professor of Philosophy in an Indian Government College who some months ago delivered a lecture at the Y. M. C. A. Colombo presided over by Rt. Rev. Dr. Mark Carpenter Garnier, D.D., Lord Bishop of Colombo, speaking with personal experience of over forty years in the every day life of India thus summed up (as reported in a local newspaper) the situation in India. He said 'it was marked by the most extreme tension—communal, social, religious tension—caste against caste, suspicion on every side, parochialism of an extremely pronounced type, every Province against every other Province, all India looking with suspicion upon the European Government and non-official Europeans, Hindus regarding with grave suspicion the Mohamedans, and Mohamedans the Hindus; Hindus within themselves, Brahmins against non-Brahmins Hindu Moslem feeling was never more tense or bitter than it was in India to-day. There then arose in the Madras Presidency what was called the non-Brahmin movement. Hindu Society was divided against itself..... Each section of the community felt that it had some particular right to be where it was, which was not recognized by other communities, nay more, each section of the people felt that they were true children of the soil, and had a prior right to existence in the Indian Continent than any one else, and they resented bitterly what seemed to them, the unfair intrusion by undesirable aliens, whose entry into Indian history caused all the conditions which they felt modern India was faced with.'

Such, said that distinguished Professor of Philosophy, (Mr. Raju) is the present situation in India.

It is different, in little Ceylon. Here the Tamils for several centuries, though not continuously, exercised considerable influence over Sinhalese national life, and at one period the Hindus and Sinhalese became mingled with the population of the island; and during the last three or four hundred years, constant contact and familiarity with European nations benefitted both Sinhalese and Tamils, with the result that racial prejudice and communal ill-feeling are not so strong here as in India, though the struggle for seats in the present Reformed Council, during the last elections, afforded some evidence of their existence. In Ceylon at present, speaking of the Christians of to-day, whatever their nationality, they do not consider it a sin to violate the rules of that ancient institution known as Caste, which was a scientific classification of labour, originally based on mutual co-operation and good will, and which as an element of social order, withstood the onslaught of ages, though in course of time it was prostituted to suit selfish ends.

Here, at present with the growth of so-called Democracy, only a small minority of 200,000 voters elect representatives to shape the political destiny and control the affairs of a very large majority of 4,500,000 inhabitants.

It is perhaps open to question whether in Ceylon to-day there exists no thirst for power, no desire for self aggrandisement, no disregard for the welfare of the poor labourer, no yearning to establish an 'aristocracy' of wealth, no domineering spirit which prevents others from enjoying the liberties that some value for themselves, and no powerful combinations bereft of spirituality, to impose their wills on numerically weaker brethren; but the unmistakable evidence afforded, as reported in local newspapers, of acts of violence and grave misdeeds, want of sincerity and truthfulness, testify to the great need of deterrent punishment, and a high standard of moral righteousness. Albeit, in Ceylon at present, speculation is rife as regards the vast possibilities for good in the power of the Special Commissioners on the Constitution, and the permanent benefit to Ceylon by the visit of the saintly Reformer Mahatma Ghandi: while all Lanka hails with pleasure the presence in our midst of a wise and able Governor as Sir Herbert James Stanley K. C. M. G., who on the very day of his arrival in Colombo, with equal justice to 'majority' and 'minority' communities, as individual loyal subjects of His most Gracious Majesty the King Emperor, expressed the hope of 'a united Ceylon, all happily pulling together.'

History teaches us that no community in the world, large or small can boast of an idealistic state of society, or claim exemption from vicissitudes and defects which all flesh is heir to. It behoves each community therefore to endeavour to remedy the wrongs and defects they deplore, regarding the regrets of the past as their guardian angels for the future, with a view to reform themselves, in this age of ours, so as to leave the world a little better than we found it.

And in this connection, I would respectfully submit for the sober reflection of the members of various communities, large and small, inhabiting this Island, and more especially of the Ceylon Chetty Community, the wise counsel embodied in the language of Demosthenes:—

"If in the past, O men of Athens, you had done everything that was right and had come to this predicament, the prospect would be gloomy indeed!! Just because I have shown you how wrong you have gone in the past, you may look at your present troubles as something curable."

Truth demands the admission that the Ceylon Chetty Community which had produced a galaxy of eminent Ceylonese, is a 'minority' community as compared numerically with some

other communities, and that members of it are scattered throughout the Island, but in an age such as this, regarded as one of love and sacrifice, when the strong should help the weak, the rich should befriend the poor, and majorities should even make concessions to minorities, the true worth of a community, or individual, is not to be judged by *size* or *numbers*, nor even by pounds *sterling* or pounds *avoirdupois*. The Right Hon'ble Lord Curzon (late Viceroy of India) writing in the 'Review of Reviews' in 1908 said.

"The Empire was not acquired in a fit of absence of mind. It was the result of three centuries of effort. The test of its worth was not *size*, but the *work done*, the bad things wiped out, the general impress left on the *well being* of mankind."

The erudite scholar and historian Mr. L. E. Blaze, M. A. in the course of a lecture delivered in the Dutch Burgher Union Hall, in November 1926 on the subject 'Holland among the Nations' said as follows :

"The true greatness of a nation was *not* to be measured by such externals as size, population or wealth, just as a man's greatness did not depend on the bulk of his body, or his purse or his social position. A man is to be judged by his influence on the progress of the world."

And is it not reasonable to ask whether the small band of *Christian Martyrs* whose blood was the seed of the Church, who worked unaggressively and loyally, during the régime of pagan Emperors, have not done *more* for mankind, than the vast Roman Empire, viewed in the light of modern religious history ?

What the Divine destiny of each Community in Ceylon is, no man can predict, or how each would appear centuries after, in the perspective of Ceylon History, none can say, but the mere fact that a community or nation is at present numerically weak, or that its members are scattered in various parts, should not be considered a bar to its future progress and prosperity, nor to its solidarity either, though some faint hearts may think that they stand in jeopardy every hour. But in this age of ours when we see the scattered members of the children of Israel, the descendants of the ancient Jews, fulfilling the purposes of God for which they were preserved through the ages, by their return to their own land, and the strengthening of their national solidarity, how can we doubt that if it be God's will, a little one can become a thousand, and a small people a great nation ?

Some three hundred years ago, through the efforts of a chivalrous and noble spirit like Shivaji, there rose a mighty and resplendent nation, the Great Mahratta Empire, from a race that had long seemed dead, while within the last one hundred and fifty years, the oppressed Burghers of Utrecht found in the noble

spirit of Doctor Peter Philip Quint Jurgen Ondaatjie, the son of a distinguished Ceylon Christian Chetty Divine, the fearless champion of their liberties who fought "with his tongue, his pen, and his sword."

I referred earlier to the friendliness which existed between the Chetties and other communities in the Island. Many of these Chetties had the benefit of comradeship with the best families of various communities in it, and lived in a spirit of sober fellowship, and not in a spirit of selflove, for the Chetties of old knew that the great and permanent things of the spirit have been founded on love and sympathetic understanding, and not built on hate. They always endeavoured to foster cordial ties of sympathy and trust, refraining from interference in other peoples internal concerns, and were always ready to serve in each other's wider interests, as indeed they are to-day, *not* by cutting themselves off from their ancient heritage and traditions, their social accumulations, their intellectual gains, their characteristic advantages of hereditary Christianity, but by contributing of their diversity to the common cause, the welfare of "a united Ceylon, all happily pulling together."

With respect to the pleasant relations that existed between the Chetties and high-class Colombo families of other communities we have the letter published elsewhere of the late Hon. Sir S. C. Obeyesekere where he says that 'other communities of the same plane as yours, are your *best friends*.'

The Rev. S. G. Perera S. J. in his address on 'Catholics and Nationalism' said:—"The Singhalese and the Ceylon Tamils have been so intimately associated in history and have been subjected to the same influences, and for so long a time, that the bonds which bind them together cannot be severed by such petty things as the allocation of Council seats."

The late Mohotti Mudaliyar Mr. F. E. Gooneratne, Thombu Holder of the Galle District, for thirty years, and author of the 'Lhandesi Kalei' or Dutch times, in a letter dated 31st March 1920 says. "Beyond doubt the respectable Sinhalese families and Burghers respected the Chetty gentry of the olden times. At the weddings and funerals of the high class Sinhalese families, invariably the high class Chetties were invited."

The following extract from a speech delivered by a distinguished Colonial Chaplain of the Christian Chetty Community, at a meeting of the Anglican Diocese held in Colombo so long ago as 1865 illustrates the good feeling that existed between the Chetty Community and the European Community in Ceylon. He said: "All were eager for material improvements—such as roads, bridges, railways and docks—and he was glad indeed to see the Island being so benefitted by *European* Capital and enterprise, and *Western* Science being so diffused amongst

Eastern peoples—all this was good and necessary, &c. On the other hand, a highly distinguished *European* member of Parliament, Right Hon'ble W. E. Thompson Sharpe, who for very many years was Government Agent in Ceylon, and knew the various communities very well, addressing a letter to a member of the Ceylon Chetty Community, Advocate Aserappa, expressive of his kindly feelings towards the Chetties, says "I hope to have still better accounts in the future...of the Chetty race... I believe they have a great future before them, and shall be indeed thankful if anything I have been able to do, to show sympathy with them in the common Brotherhood of our common Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, helps to that end."

Reference is made elsewhere in this book to the benefits, conferred on Ceylon and the Ceylonese, by individual members of the European Community, but as affording one instance of the very kindly feeling which some members of the European Community engaged in secular work entertained towards Ceylonese in general, I would quote a letter addressed to the Secretary of the Post and Telegraph Union by that learned and highly distinguished Director General of Ceylon Telegraphs, and Patron of the Union, Mr. Ernest O. Walker, Companion of the Indian Empire, and Author of a 'Romance of Ceylon.' The letter speaks for itself.....

General Post Office

23rd December 1894.

Dear Mr. Aserappa

I am glad to think that I shall be kindly remembered, and the fact that you have referred to in your address, that our relations have always been cordial is, you may be sure, to me, a source of particular satisfaction.

Sympathy in your difficulties I have always felt, and separated although I shall be from your environment in this lovely island, be certain that your welfare will always be of interest to me, and that I shall always retain a kindly feeling for you all.

I am
very truly yours,
E. O. WALKER.

(See also 'Interesting facts about ancient families' by 'Francisco' in the 'Ceylon Independent' of May 9th 1923; 'Collections and Re-collections' by Mark Antony in the Ceylon Independent of July 2, 1925-26.)

But apart from the general kindly feeling which existed between members of the Chetty Community and the other communities, Christian Chetties have been also the recipients of

Gubernatorial kindness and special favour, during the Dutch and early British period, while worth and merit were also duly recognised.

We quote a very few instances in proof of our statement, such as,

The appointment of Michael Jurie Ondaatche as first Doctor of the Town of Colombo and Chief Surgeon of the Hospital, by the first Dutch Governor of Colombo, in recognition of his special abilities, and marvellous cures.

The concession granted in 1749 by the Dutch Governor Van Gollennesse who recognised Philippus de Melho's exceptionally brilliant scholastic career, and permitted his ordination in *Ceylon*, as a special exception to the general rule then in vogue that candidates should be ordained in Holland only, and not locally.

The recognition in 1756 by the Dutch Governor Schreuder of Rev. P. de Melho's worth, and request that he should undertake the translation of the New Testament from the original Greek into Tamil.

The nomination of Doctor Peter Quint Jurgen Ondaatjie as the Leader of the Burgbers of Utrecht, and the bestowal of the 'Freedom of the City' on him: and the creation of Major Philip Christian Oortmann Ondaatjie as Knight of the Military Order of Prince William of Orange.

The grant in 1760 by their Despatch of 5th August of the Supreme Government of the Netherlands Council to Revd. P. de Melho "the unsolicited extraordinary augmentation from eighty to one hundred florins a month, as an evident token how readily on our part we reward faithful services."

The fact that in 1815 His Excellency Sir Robert Brownrigg laid the foundation stone, and built St. Thomas' Church Colombo, and also presented sacred vessels to the Church; and Lady Brownrigg mainly at her own expense, erected a commodious School on the premises for the use of the children belonging to this community.

The honour conferred in 1816 by the King of Holland, formerly Prince of Orange, who donated seven hundred florins and an allowance of one hundred florins a month to Doctor Peter Philip Quint J. Ondaatjie in recognition of his very distinguished services.

The appointment of Doctor Simon de Melho Aserappa, *first* Ceylonese Doctor of Medicine of a British University, as the first *Chief* Medical Officer of Health of the Town of Colombo.

The nomination in 1833 by H. E. Sir Robt. Wilmot Horton, Governor of Ceylon, of Simon Casiechetty of Calpentyn, as Member of the Legislative Ceylon, in appreciation of his book

entitled the "Ceylon Gazetteer." And the fact that His Excellency's son-in-law and Private Secretary, Hon. Mr. Tufnell also assured Mr. Casie Chitty of "the utmost encouragement and assistance which might be in his power to afford." The circumstance that the latter also received the thanks of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland, and of H. E. General Sir Edward Barnes Commander-in-Chief of India, for his Essay on the manners and customs of the different Castes, and was also given a donation of eighty guineas.

Among various other instances of personal kindness on the part of Governors, Government Agents, and other distinguished Europeans towards members of the Christian Chetty Community, may be mentioned the presence of H. E. Sir Robert Brownrigg and his distinguished friends at the opening Service of S. Thomas' Church Colombo, His Excellency's special regard for the Tamil Colonial Chaplain of Jaffna (Revd. C. David); the presence of His Excellency Sir Robert Wilmot Horton, Governor of Ceylon and several of *his* guests, at a Fancy Dress Ball given by members of the Ceylon Chetty Community, at Chetties' Quarters' Colombo in 1833, the great friendship which existed between Captain and Mrs. Isaac Foster, (Commandant of Ceylon Rifles) and District Judge Simon Casie Chitty of Calpentyn, and that of Government Agents C. P. Layard, and J. N. Mooyart and John Paul Casiechitty District Mudaliyar of Hapitigam, about the period of the Administration of H. E. Lord Torrington Governor of Ceylon, besides many other similar instances. The presentation of gold medals, and bestowal of titles, e. g., Gate Mudaliyar, and Mudaliyar, to Messrs. Gabriel Casiechitty (1802), Devanasa Rodrigo Muttukistna (1816), Nicholas Jurgen Ondaatjie (1848), William Jurgen Ondaatjie, (both by the Manager of the Bank in 1850, and also by Government afterwards), John Casiechitty of Calpentyn, David de Rosairo, Spencer S. Casiechitty and others who have departed this life, may also be quoted as instances on record, of honour conferred by various Governors to members of the Ceylon Christian Chetty Community long years ago.

Some would perhaps regard this little history as a very belated attempt to write an account of the Ceylon Chetty Community, who as Tamilians are the inheritors of a civilization and culture of at least three thousand years, and who even as a distinct 'Ceylon Chetty Community' are by no means of mushroom growth, for their intellectual and social status was not acquired in a decade or two, nor even in fifty or a hundred years, but has survived centuries. And it is well long years should lapse before the production of a correct history of any nation or community, for not only would time have revealed falsehoods and fictions, for truth is strong and would prevail, (and facts too are very stubborn things,) but also because common experience teaches us, that we cannot gauge the

full height of a lofty tower, or a pompons edifice, by standing in too close proximity to it. To have a right perspective, we must stand some good distance away. Those Ceylonese of old were like great mountains and high towers, and to form a correct estimate of them, it is necessary that some distance of time should precede the narration of the history of the community to which they belong. Herodotus we are told wrote the History of the Greeks a thousand years after the epoch inscribed upon marbles of Paros, and it was not till five hundred and forty years after the foundation of Rome, and not till the second Carthaginian War, did Fabius Pictor write the History of Rome.

This work may well be regarded as merely a compilation of facts obtained from various sources. I must not however here omit to render special thanks to those few friends who encouraged me in the progress of this work for the good of the Community, and for the general upliftment of Ceylonese youth; nor can I fail to mention with feelings of deep gratitude the valuable assistance I obtained at various times, from the highly competent and eminent Government Archivist of Ceylon, Mr. Edmund Reimers, whose travels in Europe and elsewhere, and opportunities for research, combined with vast local experience, have been and are, of immense benefit to this Colony. I am also deeply indebted to the learned and distinguished Professor Dr. E. C. Godee Molsbergen of the Landsarchivaris, Batavia, and to his assistant Mr. P. C. Bloys Van Tresbong Prius for the information they kindly gave me, gleaned from the important collection known as 'Personalia.'

Finally, let me indulge in the hope that this period of political unrest and discord in Ceylon, would soon terminate, that the era of moral righteousness would speedily dawn on us, and now that there has come in the person of His Excellency Sir Herbert James Stanley, K. C. M. G., a Governor of Ceylon, who would solve all our problems and rule us with righteousness and equity, this lovely isle, this fatherland of mine, would enjoy uninterrupted peace and abundant prosperity during his administration, and that the Representatives in Council of the various Communities would be enabled to proclaim to their respective constituents, as did Dr. Peter Quint Ondaatjie of European fame on 7th March 1785 to the oppressed Citizens of Utrecht:—

"Go quietly and cheerfully to your homes, tell it to your wives and children, and impress it on your children's children, that harmony between such honest Governors and Citizens can accomplish anything."



CHAPTER II.

THE ORIGIN OF THE CEYLON CHETTIES—THEIR ANCIENT STATUS—AND PERMANENT SETTLEMENTS—THEIR HOUSES—DRESS AND DOMESTIC HABITS, & C & C.

"Men will seldom be found to cherish reminiscences in which they or their predecessors have appeared to disadvantage, or in which they themselves have been unfortunate, unless there is a preponderance of great men and great actions, to outweigh at some period of the history, while they will nevertheless carefully and proudly perpetuate everything in any degree soever administering to their honour. Hence all history."

'Ceylon and its dependencies' by Charles Pridham

"History like charity should begin at home."

His Excellency Sir Herbert James Stanley, K. C. M. G., Governor of Ceylon; address at a Ceylon College, on his first visit to it.

The Ceylon Chetties who are the descendants of ancient settlers, and have permanent and abiding interests in this Island, and are composed of Christians who possess the characteristics of hereditary Christianity, as well as Hindus, are a branch of the Tamil race, and according to the ancient classification of the social institution in Ceylon as described by eminent scholars like Revd. Father Beschi, Revd. Philip de Melho, Simon Casiechetty C. C. S. District Judge of Chilaw and Calpenty, Selkirk, and others, belong to the grade known as 'Tana Vaisyas.' As Tamilians, they belong to the Dravidian stock, as at present understood, though it is well to confess that the culture and civilization of both Aryans and Dravidians, which have been complementary one to the other, is their *common* heritage, while the two races have been so intermingled since the dawn of history, that it would require a person of most extraordinary abilities to prove beyond all manner of doubt that a Ceylonese is a *pure* Aryan or *pure* Dravidian both by *blood* and *culture*.

In a world which is now gradually being regarded as *one* country, and in which God has made of one blood all nations, who from *our* standpoint, would finally be in one fold and under one Shepherd (a not far-off event towards which religionists by dropping off accretions, superstitions, erroneous views, &c., seem to be moving), I deem it foreign to my purpose, to accentuate differences between the two races, by expatiating on the glories of either Aryans or Dravidians, though I shall have to make some reference to them in the interests of historical truth.

Sir John Hewitt in his book on the 'Prehistoric Ruling Races' says that the Dravidians were of all the great races of

antiquity the first to systematise agriculture, and archæology confirms it. There is also conclusive proof of the artistic development of the Dravidian races in prehistoric times. The Adrichanallur remains of bronze figures of a variety of domestic animals, and of fillets of gold beaten very thin confirm it'. Dr. Maclean says with regard to Dravidian Astronomy that the fishermen of the South dependent on the moon's phases for their operations, early developed a primitive lunar computation.' Hon. Mr. K. Balasingham, M. L. C.—in the course of a lecture delivered some years ago on 'Our place in the civilization of the ancient world' (vide pamphlet) said that it was in purely Dravidian surroundings that Indian Philosophy was developed, and that to Krishna who was a Dravidian god is ascribed the Bhagavad Gita where said the Lecturer, he teaches the highest philosophy of duty.' Some scholars assert that Indian teak was found in the ruins of 'Ur of the Chaldees,' a matter of about four thousand years ago, and the belief that the mummies in the Pyramids of Egypt were shrouded in Indian muslins, afford evidence of the antiquity of *Dravidian* commerce. That distinguished Professor of Philosophy in an Indian Government College, (Mr. Raju) said in the course of a lecture delivered in the Y. M. C. A. at Colombo, some months ago "You could imagine how poverty stricken India would have been, if the millions of *Dravidian* people who were now her children had no part or lot in India,' and referring to the *Aryans* he said, "If they looked back into the perspective of history, it would be noticed that India's religion, its philosophy, its culture, its literature, its art, had been so much the contribution of *Aryans*."

The Aryans are said to have entered India through the North-West Passes, traversing the Punjab, and to have settled down North of the Venkatta Hills, while the Dravidians (including the ancient Tamilians) who are supposed to have inhabited India prior to the Aryans, and who Professor Slater of the Madras University thinks are a Mediterranean people, are described by some writers to have entered India in pre-historic times, traversing Baluchistan—which probably accounts for the survival of a Dravidian language there. It should further be noted that the recent discoveries at Harappa and Mohenjodaro afford indications as to the resemblance of the Sumerian ethnic type and the Dravidians. Other scholars are of opinion that the Dravidians entered India from the South, traversing part of the now submerged Oriental continent which extended from Africa to India including Ceylon, and on to Australia, depicted in ancient Roman maps and known as 'Limurike' or 'Damurika.' The caravan trade between Egypt and the South of India across Arabia, during the time of the Hebrew Patriarchs, Joseph, Benjamin and others, in all probability, was carried on by the use of this overland route.

The large Oriental Continent which connected Egypt and Australia with Ceylon, and thereby the Northern parts of India, including Allahabad, (prior to the notable Deluges of 2300 B. C., and 250 B. C., respectively, which were responsible for gradually reducing Ceylon to an Island), afforded scope for extensive overland travelling, and it is therefore not surprising to hear that the aborigines of Australia are said to be associated with the Dravidians of India.

Simon Casiechetty, District Judge of Chilaw and Calpentyn writing about a century ago, says that "from inscriptions discovered in the Malabar Districts, and resemblance of characters to those on the pillar at Allahabad (vide Asiatic Researches Vol. vii., p. 14) a conclusion is drawn that the aboriginal inhabitants of Ceylon and those of Allahabad are of one and the same stock" and adds that some of the characters exhibit a striking similarity to the Cadmean letters, and that it is probable therefore that either Allahabad or Ceylon received their original population from Greece or Ionia (Ceylon Gazetteer p. 51.)

With regard to the geographical position of Ceylon the land of our fathers and forefathers Mons. Burnard in a memoir inserted in the "Asiatic Journal" of May 1821, says that this Island formerly comprehended a greater extent of territory than it now does, and that a considerable portion has been engulfed by some violent convulsion of nature'. The compiler of the "Ceylon Gazetteer" supported this view by stating that 'not only is it so by the general appearance of the coast, but that the traditions current among the natives during his time, place the citadel of Rawana where the Basses are situated, and give the Island a dimension of 700 yojanas in the remotest period', and adds further that Deluges may have gradually reduced Ceylon to an Island, and been responsible for cutting off the aborigines of Ceylon from Allahabad, and confining the Sinhalese as a separate nation within Ceylon.

It may here be mentioned for the benefit of young readers of this little book that 'Dravida' was the name by which the country occupied by the ancient Tamilians and others South of the Venkatta Hills, (which included the portions under the old Cheran, Cholan and Pandyan Kings,) was known, and that eminent scholars are of opinion that the ancient Tamilians were a race allied to the Accadians and Chaldeans of old.

The name by which this Community is known, viz., 'Chetty', possibly identical with the term 'Setti' or 'Sheti' an honorific appellation for the Parsee and Borah, is applied usually to those of the trading castes, which according to the classification made by the ancient Lawgiver Manu ranks third in that social system, and falls under the main division commonly known as 'Vaisyas' or more correctly Tana-Vaisyas, the word 'Vaisiya' meaning 'give and take' or 'buy and sell'. v p/62-3

The word 'Chetty' a social distinctive term applied to the Vaisiya caste, in Tamil 'Setti' as in 'Setti-talamai' Head of the Chetties, 'Setti-chena', 'Cheddi-kulam', and in Sinhalese 'Hetti' as in 'Hetti-varuge' of Chetty descent, which appear in names such as Aadi-hetty', 'Hetti-arachchi', and places like 'Hettimulla', &c., indicates some sort of association with members of this community. Ancient writers tell us that the term 'Sati' was used in speaking of rich merchants in China, that the merchants in the Coromandel coasts so long ago as 1210 were known by the Chinese and others as 'Chitties', and that the word 'Situ' meaning a wealthy person seems akin to it. At any rate it may safely be inferred that the word 'Chetties' involved the ideas of trade and wealth.

The earliest record where mention is made of Chetties, is we believe what is found in the Mahawansa Vol. III. p. 238 (collection of Buddhist tracts edited by Edward Upham, and collected by Sir Edward Johnstone) where we read that the seven sons of King Mallawa of Mallawa Rata, enquired of the way to come to this Island of Ceylon from seven different castes of Malabar Chetties, and that some of them also accompanied them to Ceylon, all with suitable presents to the then King of Ceylon, which when duly and ceremoniously presented, the donors of the said gifts obtained titles such as Rajah-Wanniah, Rajahguru Mūdianse, Mallawa Bandara, Hetti-Bandara, &c. &c., and in addition received grants engraven on slabs from the King who bestowed as gifts, villages such as Kelanya, Toppu, Ballagala, Botalla, Hettimulla, &c., marked out and granted free from duties "to remain as long as the sun and moon endure".

Among those who came from India with presents to the King of Ceylon were Epologama Hetti Bandara, Modattawa Chetty and others.

That there were men of very great consequence among the ancient Chetties who permanently settled in Ceylon is evident from the fact that so far back as 1205 A. D., there was the name of 'Kulunda-Hetti' a Minister of very great influence, inscribed on a rock at Pollonaruwa.

Instances are not wanting where men who belonged to the merchant or trading caste were made Kings and appointed to very high dignities in the state; for it is stated in Upham's 'Mahawansa' p. 361, that since the time of Prakrama Bahu Raja, that 'Maelindoo' of the merchant caste was made King in the country called Sagala Newera, belonging to Jambu-dwipa, and that 'Maha-Demala' also of the merchant caste was made King, and reigned in the city called Indepet Newera, in the country called Casroo Rata. Mention is made in later times (vide R. A. S. Journal No. 38 of 1889) of another Chetty 'Matta-magoday' who was selected as a trustworthy person to have been

sent to the Dutch Governor of Jaffna from Kandy on a special and very important mission, during the régime of the Dutch Governor Pyl.

The compiler of the 'Ceylon Gazetteer' refers to *Ramanatha Chetty* Dissawe of Puttalam who received King Narendra Singhe on his way to Nawakadu to assume the sword of state, and Barrister Donald Obeyesekere M. A., L. L. D. in his 'History of Ceylon' refers to another Chetty Nicholas *Hetti* Raala of Sitawaka; while the author of the 'Yalpana Vaipava Malei' App I., p. xxxii., speaks of a Chetty named *Vira Rasen* who with his wealth was driven to the shores of Ceylon by stress of weather, and built cities at Kudiramalei Chilaw, &c., during the time of Alliarasani, the daughter of the King of Pandi, and who afterwards moved to Cheddikulani in the Adangapattu.

It is not improbable that some of the earliest ancestors of the Ceylon Chetties originally inhabited the Northern and North-Western parts of India in the vicinity of the Gursoppa Falls, Coorg, Benares, &c., and on the conquest of some parts of the country by Mohamed of Ghazni who overthrew the temple of Somnath, many rich Hindu nobles preferred to migrate to South India and settle down there in various places such as Negapatam, Tanjore, Tinnevely, &c., rather than live in subjection to, or even in the neighbourhood of those conquerors. However it was during their residence in the Malabar and Coromandel coasts that they engaged in commerce with Ceylon and very frequently visited this Island for purposes of trade during pre-Portuguese times.

At a later period during Portuguese rule in Ceylon, there arose great political unrest in South India. The oppression of the Nawab Mulla Sahib, who following the intolerant policy of Aurangzeeb, treated the rich Hindu nobles with great cruelty, the endeavour to enforce their religion on the Hindus, and the revolts in several tributary Hindu States, were among the immediate causes which influenced the early ancestors of the Ceylon Chetties to leave their ancestral home, as did the Pilgrim Fathers who in 1620 left by the 'May-flower' and settled in America. It was about the period that the European nations were striving to secure the monopoly of commerce with India. An eminent writer describing the condition of India at that period says that 'it was such as to afford abundant scope for the activity of military adventurers of all races. The Mogul power was tottering under the disintegrating influences of internecine warfare. Over all was the sinister shadow of the Mahratta menace with its fell manifestations of rapine and destruction. The redoubtable Sivaji now in the full tide of his career as a guerilla leader was sweeping through the land like a merciless torrent. (Vide early History of Southern India by Arnold Wright). Another distinguished writer says with reference to Southern India about that period. 'The last

vestige of Vizayanagar's sovereignty was swept away by the King of Golconda, who occupied the Carnatic and all the territory of the ancient Hindu State as far as the Coast. The East India Company's Agents sought and obtained from their new overlord the confirmation of a grant (given in October 1645) from Rajah Sri Ranga empowering the Company to administer justice and assigning new territory. Within seven years of the making of the original concession the English power was firmly seated on the East Coast, but a formidable new source of anxiety arose in the occurrence of a terrible famine. . . . Indeed for generations afterwards memories of this frightful time lingered in the country.'

Such were the political conditions in India when the ancestors of the Ceylon Christian and Hindu Chetties—who like Wijayo and his followers, though at a much later period, and in different capacities—emigrated from the neighbouring continent of India, and permanently settled in *this* country, and whose descendants in course of time and very naturally regarded this beautiful sea-girt land of Lanka as their fatherland.

The earliest ancestors of the Ceylon Chetties who originally settled in this island did not come as ruthless invaders who despoiled ancient architecture, nor as blood thirsty warriors with brutal and predatory instincts, but as men of peace and goodwill, possessed of strong religious zeal and commercial proclivities, with a high sense of integrity in their nature, (the hereditary characteristic of the Tana Vaisiya caste), as worthy inheritors of rich traditions of three thousand years or more of culture, common to both Aryans and Dravidans, who undoubtedly earned money in their day, for virtue is its own reward, and what is praiseworthy, spent that money in and for the benefit of this Island.

When some of the early ancestors of the Ceylon Chetties of the Coromandal coast were trading with Ceylon, and later came over from the neighbouring continent of India to settle *permanently* in this Island, Colombo was very different from what it is to-day. Colombo was then a port of trade, inhabited by Moors, and is said to have been a stretch of unoccupied land with hill tops like Wolfendahl, Hultsdorf, St. Sebastian, with a branch of the Kelani river entering the sea through the land where Gas Works Street now is. At that period within the Portuguese Fort of Colombo, there were two Parish Churches, one dedicated to the Virgin and the other to S. Lawrence, while outside the Fort were the Churches of S. Thomas' where the present S. Thomas' Church stands, and those of S. Sebastian, S. Francis, S. Cruz, S. John, S. Stephen, the Church at Agoa de Lupo (Adiluppu Thera) where the present Wolfendahl Church built in 1749 by the Dutch Governor Van Gollennesse now stands, and the Chapel of the Misericordia, where the present S. Peter's Church Fort now is.

There were also about half-a-dozen Converts among which were those of the Cordeliers, the Augustinians, the Dominicans, and the Capuschins, besides the imposing structure, the Jesuit College, near the present Consistory Buildings. These were practically the only Christian Institutions in and near the Portuguese town of Colombo. In fact throughout the whole island there were only about seven or eight Missionary Stations of which Calpetty (Kalpitiya) was one, with four or five Churches, in charge of which there were first two Fathers, and later on, one who resided at Tatai. The other Missionary Stations or Seminaries in Ceylon were at Caimel (Chilaw), Galle, Jaffna, Monacerans (Munneseram) Morotto, Navacarre and Malwana. With regard to the general condition of things Christoph Schweitzers in his 'Account of Ceylon' 1676-1682 (Vide Cey. Lit. Register Nov. 1889 p 126) says that "all the chief officers lodge with in the Fort with their wives.....and a man that goes to market with four or five farthings may buy provisions to serve a common family two days for his money. I met here says he with an acquaintance of mine a Physician who was Chief Surgeon to the Dutch Hospital and Physician to Min Heer Laurent Piel, the Governor, who was much esteemed among the natives of the country for his abilities and the great cures he performed.' (The Physician here referred to, is supposed by some to have been Michael Jurie Ondaatjie) Long years after, at the close of the Dutch period and during the earliest years of British Administration--when the Ceylon Chetty Community had received official recognition as a distinct Community--(vide Ceylon Gazette of Feb. 1814) and considerable improvements were effected, the town or Pettah of Colombo was divided into fifteen streets of which eight run east and west and the others cross them at right angles...the houses were built of cabook and neatly whitewashed with chuum; some of them had two stories, and all were lofty and presented rather a good appearance. In 1814 the number of tiled houses within the Gravets, was estimated at 2645.....Among the public buildings were the Supreme Court House, the offices of the Provincial Judge, Magistrate and Fiscal, a jail and a Catcherry where the collector of the District transacted business. There was a Library belonging to the Burghers, a small pox Hospital, a Masonic Hall, two theatres, and a number of religious edifices, including the Wolfendahl Dutch Church erected by the Dutch Governor Van Gollennesse in 1749, the Tamil Auglican Church of S. Thomas' at Chetties' quarters, Checku Street, facing the sea, built by His Excellency Sir Robert Brownrigg, Governor of Ceylon, to which was added at the expense of the pious Lady Brownrigg, a commodious school room, and the Anglican Church of S. Paul's at Kayman's Gate, Pettah, intended for the Portuguese Protestants, built by subscription, chiefly through the zeal of the Archdeacon Hon'ble and Ven'ble Dr. J. J. Twistleton, D. D., which stood

long as a landmark, but was demolished so recently as last year. The principal Chapel for the Roman Catholics was S. Lucia's at Kotabena, (now the Cathedral,) where many members of the Ceylon Roman Catholic Chetty Community were buried, and where now lie the mortal remains of their Graces the Archbishops Dr. Melizan and Dr. Antony Condert. There was also the Wesleyan Chapel at Pettah, built in the form of an amphitheatre, after the model of the Brunswick Chapel at Liverpool, which was opened for service on 22nd December, 1816. According to a table published in the Colombo Journal in 1832, the population of Colombo about that period, it is interesting to note, was only 31,519.

The original permanent Chetty settlers did not all come to Ceylon at the same period, nor from the same place either, nor did they even settle down in one and the same locality, though they all spoke the same language, observed the customs, and maintained the traditions of their respective ancestors. Some came as wealthy merchants in their own ships, others as very eminent physicians invited by the Dutch Governor of Ceylon, a few with appointments to responsible offices in the State, others as pearl merchants, and traders in various commodities, & during the administrations of the Portuguese and Dutch Governors Diego de Melho, Antoine de Souza Coutinho (during whose regime Colombo was surrendered to the Dutch) Rykloff Van Goens, Jacob Van Hustaar and at later periods. Some of these Chetties elected to reside in Colombo, others in Galle, Calpentyn, Mampuri, Puttalam, Chilaw, Negombo, Toppu, Pallegoda, Kandy, Kurunegala, Hettipola, and at Navaly, Colombo—thurai, Poonaryn, Araly, Vaddukoddai, in the Jaffna District, and in Batticaloa, Trincomalee, and other places in the Eastern Province. Among the Chetties who during the Dutch period settled in Provinces other than the Western, may be mentioned Mangattan Chettiar a very wealthy and respectable merchant among whose descendants were Gate Mudaliyar Somanader and Revd. Daniel Somanader, Revd. Hannah Casinader, and Revd. Newton Sethukavaler, M. A. Another descendant a great grandson of the Chettiyar was Arnold Allegacone, members of which family have adorned the Bench, the Bar and the Civil Service. There were also other Chetties of rank and distinction, besides those mentioned such as Muttoo Veloe Chettiar, Swaminather Chettiar (vide Pavalar Charitra Theebagam by J. R. Arnold) among whose descendants were distinguished Tamil educationists. Another was Vaithilinga Chettiar who built a temple at Vannarponnai, and was also Patron of the distinguished Tamil poet Kulangeiyar Tambiran of Kangipuram (who dedicated some of his Epics to the learned Christian Chetty Divine Revd. Phillipus de Melho). There were also Kandiliappa Chetty

who resided in the Gangaboda Pattu, and cultivated fields which he obtained from Government as 'accommedesans', Christian M. Morgappa who married Salome de Rosairo both of whom were buried in the old Dutch Church at Calpentyn, now known as St. Peter's, Kalpitiya; Sri Ramachandra Perumal whose descendant is said to have been a Major in the Dutch Army, and who resided at Maligatenne in Hetti-weediya; Joseph Alles who married Miss de Rosairo of Galle, and whose descendants have adorned the Ecclesiastical and Medical Professions, besides very many others who are referred to elsewhere in this book. To publish the names of the Ceylon Chetties who lived even at a special period would be a formidable task, but those interested will find the 'Enumeration List' published in 1789 A.D. of great use to them.

While admitting that God has made of one blood all nations of the earth, we cannot deny the fact that man as a social being has a tendency to form divisions and groups, the differences being based on physical characteristics, climatic conditions, geographical situation, &c., and that *Communities* are founded on classification of labour, religion, customs, language, culture, matrimonial alliances, and social settlements. Thus it is that these combined influences, gradually tended to make 'communities' which varied from the old stock and branched out along the most divergent lines, just as slips from the same stock under varied conditions develop into very different trees. Thus it was with the warlike Assyrian, the commercial Phoenician, the nomadic Arab and the modern Jew, sons of a common father, who dwelt in a common tent, and who eventually developed widely different characteristics. Similarly some Tamils as stated in the 'Ceylon Gazette' of 9 February 1814, united by firm attachment to religion, by frequent intermarriages, vicinity of their dwellings, &c., &c., formed a *distinct* community.

In respect of social settlements and in accordance with the classification of communities during the Dutch period and early British Rule, the Burghers had as their residential quarters the Pettah; the Colombo Chetties occupied what was then known as Chetties' Quarters, Mudaliyar Street, now known as Chekku Street, in the vicinity of the present St. Thomas' Church, also Kotahena, Hill Street, Muttukistna Street, now known as Pickering's Road, Jampettah and New Chetty Street; the Ceylon Moors were confined to Old Moor and New Moor Streets, the Coast Moors or Hambarkaraos were allotted "Samancodu" or Hambanweediya, the Barbers lived in Barber Street, the Silversmiths in Silversmith Street, the Dhobies in what was known as Washermen's quarters, and the Malays in Malay Street, while slaves whom many Ceylon Chetties at one time possessed, for the most part, were confined to what is now known as Slave Island, which

is thus referred to by Captain Anderson in his poem known as the "Wanderer" which he wrote when he visited Ceylon very many years ago:—

" Here let the eye a circuit take,
Where gently sloping to the lake
A smiling, lively scene appears,
A verdant isle its bosom rears
With many a lovely villa grac'd,
Amid embow'ring cocoas placed.
Here once to all but interest blind,
The Colonists their *slaves* confined,
But now the name alone remains,
Gone are the scourges, racks and chains !

* * * *

Yet here the African remains,
Though broken are his slavish chains.

These allotments of residential quarters to various communities appear to have been an arrangement not restricted to the Metropolis, for the existence of streets, such as Chetty Street, Mudaliyar Street, Malay Street, Barber Street, Paravar Street, Silversmith Street, Slave Street, &c., in so distant a place as Calpentyn (Kalpitiya) testifies to the fact that this system was prevalent in almost every Town, but as a result of the Constitutional changes of 1832 in Ceylon, when this Island became a Crown Colony, among other things, this system of allotments of residential quarters to various communities, was abolished, and people were allowed to live wherever they pleased.

That immigration has very often contributed to the growth and progress of countries, will doubtless be admitted by many. Routes of commerce are routes of thought. Those who emigrate bring with them ideas, culture, civilization, business acumen, designs, &c. There have been many such. Among those who at various times and for various reasons left their ancestral homes and settled elsewhere, may be mentioned, Phoenicians, Arabs, Greeks, Romans, Persians, and Abyssinians, who traded with, and settled in the Western ports of India, the first body of Parsees who migrated from Persia to the Bombay coast about 73 A. D., the foreign tribes of Nagar and Chitpavan Brahmins who settled in India, various races who made Guzerat their home, emigrants who went from the valley of the Ganges and from the Pallava country in the North of India, and settled in Sumatra, Java, Borneo, Siam and Cambodia, and introduced a new civilization, religion and art, the Arab Hashim and his family described by Denham in his 'Census of Ceylon' as having settled in this Island somewhere about the ninth century, having been constrained to leave Arabia by reason of the tyranny of the Caliph Abdul Melek Benmerwen, the ancient Hindus who went to

Armenia, where they had been from the 2nd century to the beginning of the 4th century A. D., and built colonies at Veeshap and at Kharkh, whose descendants were converted to Christianity by S. Gregory and became merged in the native Christian population, (vide 'Armenian History' by Zenob, and 'Hindus in Armenia' by M. J. Seth); the 'Pilgrim Fathers' who in 1620 went by the 'Mayflower' and settled in America; and coming to later times, the Jewish emigrants of Baron Hirsch who colonized Argentine, improved the tone and conditions of that place, and by their indomitable perseverance, business qualities, energy, and sober and thrifty habits, left an impress for good in that country. In like manner did the ancestors of the Ceylon Chetties, whatever their reasons may have been, elect to settle permanently in Ceylon; and while it proves that man to a limited extent, may be regarded as a creature of circumstances, shows clearly that he is overruled by Divine destiny; for we see in the light of subsequent events, that not only did the seed sown in the hearts and minds of a few Christian converts by Missionaries, centuries ago, produce a thousandfold, but also, that the Chetties were the medium of spreading education, were a great force for good in the country, and 'furnished examples worthy of imitation.' (Vide appendix A)

Before proceeding further, it is well to mention that the indiscriminate use of words in by-gone days, some of which may still be found in old documents and among inscriptions on tombstones &c., are likely to cause confusion in the minds of the youthful readers of this little brochure, and I need offer no apology for a brief explanation of them. I refer to words such as 'Malabar,' and 'Pulle,' the former to describe Tamils including Chetties, and the latter as a suffix used in Ceylon after the surnames of some Chetties.

We find the word 'Malabar' very freely and indiscriminately used not only by old historians, and in Acts of appointments, to describe Chetties, but even the late Justice Walter Pereira in his 'Laws of Ceylon' (Vol. I p. 4) refers to the 'Thesawalamai' that "they are the customs of the *Malabar* inhabitants of the Province of Jaffna", and elsewhere says that the Thesawalamai Laws of the Jaffnese were submitted to a Committee of *Malabar* Modeliars of Jaffna for comments and approval. The fact is that the Portuguese who came in contact with the Malabars in South India, and some few who temporarily resided in Ceylon at that time, whose customs and language resembled the Tamils, did not appreciate the actual differences between the two races, and so classified *all* under the general term 'Malabars,' with the result that other European Governments who succeeded them, unquestioningly adopted the term 'Malabars' to describe all Ceylon Tamils, including 'Chetties'. Happily the ability

and keen intellect of, the Author of the 'Ceylon Gazetteer' detected the error, and for the benefit of all Ceylon Tamils, brought it to light some ninety odd years ago, for says he on p. 54 of his book 'The 'Malabars' resident at Colombo, who are mostly 'Chetties' are gradually approximating to Europeans in their costume and their domestic manners' &c., and again on p. 227 of that same book he writes as follows:—"The *Tamils* (or as commonly though *improperly* denominated by Europeans, *Malabars*) are" &c., &c. This should suffice to explain the reason why in old histories, and in old Official documents, e. g. Acts of Appointments &c., the word 'Malabar' was used synonymously for Tamils.

As regards the suffix 'Pulle' indiscriminately latched on to the surnames of Ceylon Chetties in days gone by, much importance need not be attached to it, for it seems to have been tolerated by some Chetties who desired to maintain friendly relations with Vellala folks by showing some sort of community of interests, but old Dutch records and ancient inscriptions prove beyond all manner of doubt that not only those who retained that suffix. e. g. Morgappa Pulle, Ondachea Pulle, Marudappa Pulle &c., &c., but also those Ceylon Tamils who possessed Portuguese names such as De Melho, Rodrigo, Pieris, Gomes, Perera, Rosairo, Brito, Costa, Corea, Fernando, Casimir, and Silva, were Christian Chetties, those names of Portuguese sponsors having been adopted by the Chetty converts at their Baptism, a circumstance affording ample evidence of a relic of Portuguese Rule. We would quote just a few extracts from that interesting and instructive 'Report on Dutch Records' published by that distinguished and respected antiquarian Mr. R. G. Anthonisz late Govt. Archivist of Ceylon, in support of our statement. On p. 16. of the afore-mentioned book is the following:—

DEED OF SALE

We, William Adriaan Burguis and Frederick Peter de Rook, members of the Honourable the Raad Van Justitia (Court of Justice) of this Castle, testify and make known that before us came and appeared the 'Chetty' and resident of this place Thomme Moergappa who acknowledged and declared to have sold, ceded, and transferred, as is done by these presents to the like Chetty Jurie Ondaatje, a premises situate beyond Kayman's Gate at Wolvendahl, &c., &c.

Sgd. THOMAS MOERGAPPA

In our presence

In my cognizance

WM. AN. BERGHUIS,
F. P. DE ROOK.J. KRICKENBECK
Sworn Clerk.

Again on p. 48 of the 'Report on Dutch Records' appears the following, which proves not only that some Ceylon Tamils with *Portuguese names* were 'Chetties,' and engaged in various speculations, but also establishes incidentally the antiquity of the *Chetty Community* in Ceylon:—

"In 1751. On Monday 25 January. This day was also sold the rent of the Chank fishery along the shores of *Calpetty* up to the Cape Carredivoie, and Northward of Munnar, for one year: and the rent which formerly fetched 8000 rix-dollars was purchased by the *Chetty Simon De Melho* for 7200 rix dollars."

Dr. Paul E. Pieris C. C. S., M. A., L. L. D., D. Lit. &c., &c., in Volume XXI. No. 65 of the Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society (Ceylon) records the fact that he noticed a Tamil inscription at S. Thomas' Church, Colombo, in memory of a member of the *Chetty Community*, the daughter of Pransisko *Maradappa 'Pulle'* dated 1704.

Another matter which needs elucidation, is the title of 'Don' which was prefixed to the names of some Chetties, in days gone by e.g. Don Simon de Melho Wannigerkoon, Don William Francisco Marudappa &c. This was a title conferred during Portuguese and Dutch rule on meritorious Ceylonese by the tying of a 'Nalalpata' which was a thin silver plate, or piece of silk ribbon, with the name of the recipient inscribed on it, and was fixed on to his forehead by the Governor or other authorised official. Wolff in his autobiography says that the Portuguese sold the title for a few hundred dollars, and a very distinguished Ceylonese author records that the Dutch resorted to this device on discovering the craving of weak minded Ceylonese for official honours at that period, and sold it for 50, 25 and even 10 dollars. It is a matter for congratulation however that wealthy and independent Christian Chetties of that period who were possessed of keen intellect and strong commercial proclivities, who knew then that 'rank was but a guinea stamp, and that a man was a man for a' that, and estimated things at their true worth, were not very easily beguiled, though we have no doubt that as the result of sheer merit, the title was conferred on some deserving officers.

The house of a Ceylon Chetty in olden times did not differ materially in point of structure from that of a member of any other community during that period; perhaps in the case of the former a higher parapet wall or caljan fence round the house, according to the means of the owner, may have been erected to ensure greater privacy and security. In general the houses had rooms which may be described as quiet, with a 'walawe' or garden attached to it. There was the 'estopu' or outer verandah, the 'visita kambara' or reception room, the dining hall, private rooms, outhouses, kitchen, well and lavatory. But though in some of the most highly civilized countries during the early

Victorian period and even prior to it, some 'lived above the foulest drains and inhaled unwholesome air, and had their yearly tinge of gout, though little did they care,' the sense of cleanliness among the 'higher classes' of the descendants of Saivite ancestors whose religious practices and domestic customs were closely blended, proved a great blessing in that respect, and the houses were kept scrupulously clean. The furniture in the house of an ancient Ceylon Chetty of considerable means was of ebony, calamander, jakwood, &c; he had sitting chairs, easy chairs, settees, ottomans, large wooden beds, teapoys, round tables, huge coffers, almirahs, etc ; the walls of the reception room were covered with pictures, engravings and paintings of historical scenes, artistic sketches of distinguished persons, members of the family, close relatives and friends, and these were generally encased in massive carved ebony, calamander, or jakwood frames ; there were also the betel tray, arecanut cutter, rose water sprinkler, spittoon, and such like paraphernalia required for chewing and smoking. Visitors were treated with sweets, fruits, tea, and coffee. In almost every Christian house were also sacred pictures, and a big sized Bible which served as a Thombu or family register, containing particulars of births, marriages and deaths of the various members of the family. The servants in the house were of both sexes ; besides these, were the domestic slaves who on occasions of display swelled the train of their Ceylon Chetty retainers. These slaves were a swarthy, woolly haired, thick lipped race of men and women, the former clad in pantaloons, jackets, and waist cloths, and the latter in skirts, jackets and ear-rings, and all of whom were barefooted. Some of the slaves were of African descent, and others from South India.

In those days electricity was unknown in Ceylon ; there were no trains, tram cars, motor cars or aeroplanes, but the cumbrous bullock cart, fitted up with nice curtains, cushions, and soft pillows to their elbows, and the antiquated and uncouthly shaped palanquins, carried on the shoulders of four men of a particular low grade of society, served as the common mode of conveyance. One method of enlivening society in those days and driving out dull care and dreary monotony, besides social functions held on *terra firma*, was by going on picnics, with provisions and music, in padda boats in the river, which is perhaps still in vogue among Ceylonese, at outstations. In course of time, with the progress of Western civilization, the Ceylon Chetties like some of the Sinhalese of the educated classes, 'approximated the Europeans' as stated by the author of the 'Ceylon Gazetteer' in 1833, "in their dress and domestic habits," and it is said of the Colombo Chetties as corroborated by Barrows in "Ceylon Past and Present" that they frequently gave Fancy Dress Balls, at one of which at least, held on 10th February 1833 at Chetties Quarters, Checku Street, Colombo, it is recorded that His Excellency Sir

Robert Wilmot Horton, Governor of Ceylon, Lady Horton and family and many other very distinguished guests viz. Hon. Robert Boyd, and Hon. W. Granville were present, as also several others of the Civil and military services. Indeed, vast improvements were effected in respect of structures and domestic habits by the Ceylon Chetties during the last two centuries, and much of what the most Revd. Dr. Reginald Stephen Copleston, D. D. Lord Bishop of Calcutta, said in his book on 'Buddhism' p. 249 with reference to the Sinhalese is applicable in some measure to the Ceylon Chetties as well, for, says he, "the national literature is rapidly being forgotten, not many can even read it, and only a few old people now, can say by heart the favourite old stanzas which once were household words. Of the great monuments of architecture, some, it is true, are being repaired, but by repair they are disenchanting, and the modern Sinhalese prefers an 'upstairs house on an English model' to all the Palaces of all the Prakramas."

Among the changes in social life which have occurred since the permanent settlement in Ceylon of Christian Chetties, centuries ago, is the matter of dress. It is generally known that about 150 years ago, the costumes of members of some other communities too were different from what they are at present. Sir Algernon West, G. C. B. tells us that about 1850, a gentleman of fashion was seen in a pair of dove coloured trousers, with two fluted stripes down the sides, buttoned under the foot with broad straps of the same material, that Wellington boots was a *sine qua non*, that his coat was high in the collar, that the back of the hat rested on it, that the hat had a crescent of cloth on the back of the brim, to prevent the rubbing of the beaver of which the hat was made, that the scarf never folded less than twice round the neck, and that it bulged out from a double breasted waistcoat cut very low, &c., while the evening dress was a blue coat with tight sleeves, brass buttons and a waistcoat of flowered or brocaded silk. The Dutchman of old too with his long hair, underwent a change in dress and fashion, and one never sees a Dutchman here now attired in ancient style. The Ceylon Chetty was no exception. John Capper in his "sketches of old Ceylon" described the dress of some of the Ceylon Chetties who appeared in peak cornered hats, rings in their ears, short jackets, cloth and slippers or jutas; and L. P. Liesching, C. C. S. in his 'Account of Ceylon' describes the educated classes of Tamils, of olden times, who were mostly employed in Government offices, as wearing a neat and tasteful dress consisting of a curiously folded turban of white cloth, a short bodied and full skirted white coat and white trousers, with a silk handkerchief or a scarf round their necks, with shoes and socks. This was their ordinary costume, though on important occasions, they appeared in gold trimmed turbans and shawls and very rich material for their suits.

In olden times, the Ceylon Chetties were for the most part engaged in merchandize, and like the ancient German merchants known as Easterlings whence the word 'sterling' is derived, were noted for their strict integrity. Besides these, many were members of the Learned Professions, and Educationists, who shed lustre on the land of their birth, Civil Servants, landed proprietors, Bank Shroffs, Government Officers of considerable status, &c. The Chetty ladies of ancient times, illustrations of whose costumes are given elsewhere, were very conservative in their habits, and were gracefully clad without exposing their limbs, and compared very favourably with Ceylonese ladies of other communities, whether in the study of national literature, fancy work, or even in the culinary art, and it may be said of some even now, that their right hands have not lost their cunning. In those days young ladies never ventured to go anywhere alone, or even to receive young gentlemen in their homes, in the absence of their older relatives. *Sed tempora mutantur, et nos mutamur in illis.*

As affording some evidence of the value placed on education, character and spirituality by Ceylon Chetty ladies of those days, may be mentioned among others the cases of a grand-daughter of Rev. P. de Melho, and a daughter of Dr. Quint Ondaatjie who were married to an Archdeacon of Colombo and a Dutch Civil Servant, whose deaths are referred to, in Appendix C. of this book.

Whether higher education and 'modern' civilization are a guarantee of domestic felicity, under existing conditions among ladies in Ceylon, is a matter open to doubt. In olden days, when our good mothers of the Chetty Community, true and affectionate, were little girls, and were satisfied with what God and nature endow-ed them with, it must have been an age of loving kindness, and pure, noble womanhood, so unlike some girls of these days who wear short skirts and sleeveless dresses, dye their hair, and paint their faces, whose delight seems to be the avoidance of legitimate home duties, and the usurpation of men's rights.

While we appreciate progress of both sexes on right lines, we cannot be blind to what occurs around us, whether the defect may be in the system of education, or the neglect of character, and spirituality. In the State of Connecticut in America, whose public school system was considered the most thorough and perfect, we are informed that in 1875 there were 4385 marriages and 466 divorces, and that during 15 years there were 5391, while in the State of Ohio for the year ending June 1874 there were 1742 applications presented for divorce. *O tempora, o mores!!*



CHAPTER III.

RELIGION.

HINDUISM AND CONVERSION TO CHRISTIANITY.

"We Ceylonese Catholics are not of yesterday: our history covers upward of three centuries of the most eventful period in the past of this Colony. We cannot but wish to hear of our forefathers, of their struggles, their trials, of their triumphs; for in Christ Jesus they 'have begotten us through the Gospel.'" (*Ceylon Catholic Messenger, June 1872*)—*Dr. Christopher E. Bonjean D. D., O. M. I., First Archbishop of Colombo.*

In point of religion, all the earliest ancestors of the Ceylon Chetties—like the ancient Britons who worshipped Odin and Thor—were heathen, and worshipped deities like Kottavi or Aye, a war god like Marugan, a fish god like Ea of the Chaldees, a goddess named Minadchy, &c. In course of time they came to regard about three score or more persons as Tiru Tondar or Saints among whom Cheraman Perumal Nayanar was supposed to be one. Some are of opinion that he is identical with the pious king Perumal whom a legend referred to by the Portuguese historian Joao de Barros describes as having gone from "Ceilon" in a ship with two other Kings to adore Our Lord at His birth at Bethlehem. It may *en passant* be mentioned that there was a Temple at Negapatam dedicated to Perumal, and a street named Perumal Kovil Theru in that once celebrated sea port town.

But though the early ancestors of the Ceylon Chetties were heathen (Hindus), it must not be assumed that they were less deserving of respect, on the ground of religion; neither should we now discard the language of our forefathers (Tamil), nor refuse to accept what is beneficial in their customs and literature, although from our standpoint, we now possess the advantages of *hereditary* Christianity, consequent on the wise and fateful decision of our early Chetty converts, whereby we have the tradition of particular ways of thinking about things, particular standards of conduct which came to us when we were children, and shaped our thoughts and moulded our characters, all under the influence of a Society, of which CHRIST is the Life. Albeit I make bold to say that our Hindu (heathen) ancestors were not necessarily wrong, in everything because we know that the Word of God of whom S. John speaks, worked in the hearts of the old heathen also, and taught them many things beautiful and true, which their Christian descendants have every right to draw unto themselves, because they all originally came from the same well-spring in Him, who is the Light and Life of men.

Though considerable differences—whatever their nature may be—do exist in religions, there is no reason for a man to be ashamed of honest convictions, whether held by men of the present day or by those of the past. In respect of *heathen* ancestors, and without any sense of degradation, Rt. Revd. Dr. James Chapman, D.D., first Lord Bishop of Colombo, in the course of a sermon preached in 1852 on behalf of the Orphanage Asylum connected with S. Thomas' College, Colombo, said, "At this Epiphany season of special blessing to our *heathen* forefathers, and to *ourselves their posterity*, I invite you all to join me in a work of kindred blessing to the heathen around us, to the homeless, friendless, orphan child," &c., &c.

We are told not only by non-Christian writers as in the 'Rajavalia', but also by others, that many of the early conversions to Christianity in Ceylon were due to seduction by Offices under Government, and material advantages, as in the case of so called '*Anduway Agankaraos*' or 'Government Christians.' Truth demands the confession that in some cases it was so, and we could even quote instances in support of that view. The following report of the 'proceedings of a case in a 'Landraad' or Court of Justice held on 13th May 1802, in connection with which the following interrogatories were to be put, proves the sincerity and knowledge of some of those 'Government Christians':—

1. Whether all witnesses are Christians or heathen ?
2. If the witnesses are *real Christians* why did they go to the temple on 26th January 1802, and remain during Pinkama ?
3. Whether they believe there is more than one God, and whether such belief is consistent with Buddhist or Christian Doctrines ?
4. Whether they know *what* that God commands in the 9th Commandment ?
5. Whether the 9th Commandment prohibits us from giving false evidence ?
6. Whether they as sincere Christians will offend against that law, for the sake of a relation, friend, or for gain ?
7. Whether they know what punishments are appointed for the offenders of God's Law ?
8. Whether they will be prepared to answer such questions as shall be put them in such a manner as not to incur God's wrath and bring down his punishment. (vide 'Ceylon Diocesan Gazette' 1878.)

We also learn from Digby's Life of Sir Richard Morgan that the knowledge of Christianity possessed by some about a century

and more ago, was by no means sound, as the following conversation between the Hon'ble Frederick North, first British Governor of Ceylon and a Christian Headman whom he wished to examine on oath, clearly shows :

The Governor. Of what religion are you ?

Singhalese Headman. A Christian.

The Governor. Of what sect ?

S. Headman. A Dutch Christian.

The Governor. Then you believe in Buddha ?

S. Headman. Yes, certainly.

This 'Government Christian' it is stated was not sworn on the Bible.

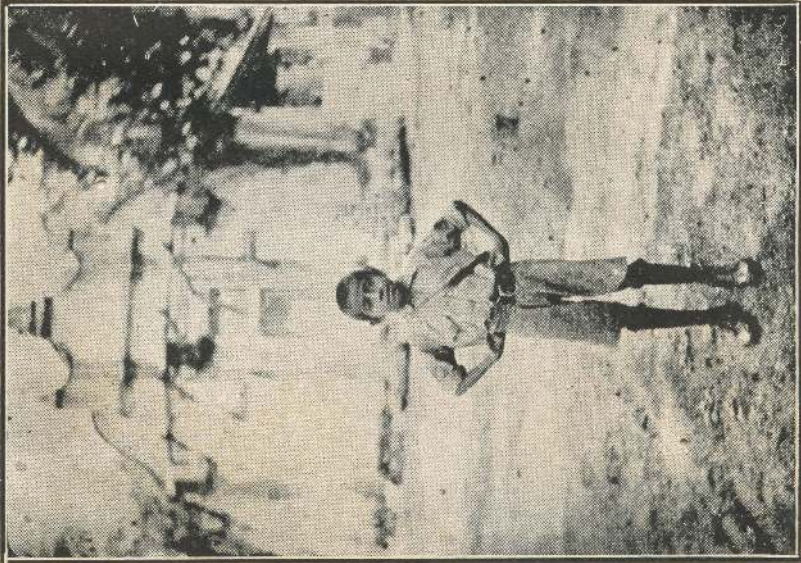
That during the early period of British Rule, some did not possess a correct knowledge of Christianity is evident from what follows :—

" Among the records of Government there is to be found a petition from the inhabitants of a village not far from Colombo setting forth as follows :—That they had willingly consented in former days as requested by Government to become Christians, but had always understood that this did not involve any departure from their national customs, whereas there had lately come a Chaplain who required them to give up attendance at Buddhist temples and to abandon all heathen ceremonies. Against this they protested and looked with confidence to the Government for redress. (Vide Historical Sketches 'Ceylon.' Missionary series. No. XIV of 1890).

Though we are loath to adjudicate on matters which concern a man's conscience and his God, it seems clear from the passages quoted above that there had been many instances of *unreal* conversion to Christianity, but says Sir J. E. Tennent in his 'History of Christianity in Ceylon' that there is the testimony of Baldaens and Valentyn to show that they were *not all* unreal professors, and Valentyn declares that amongst the *native Christians* there were many 'whose conduct and life might put Europeans to the blush,' while Cordiner the first Colonial Chaplain 1799--1804 in his description of Ceylon (Vol. I. p. 100) states that 'although religious knowledge was not perfectly conveyed to the *lower orders* of the natives, many of the higher ranks became as *true believers* in its Doctrines, and as *conscientious performers* of the duties of Christianity, as those *who adorn the most enlightened regions*'; and with special reference to Roman Catholicism, adds that "it was adhered to by large bodies of Sinhalese and Tamils whom neither corruption nor coercion could induce to abjure it."



A Roman Catholic Chetty
Bank Shroff.



The ancient Dutch Church at Calpentyne now known as
St. Peter's Church, Kalpitiya, and the youngest Christian
Chetty in that District on 1st April, 1899

In the Historical sketch of 'Ceylon' No. xiv. of 1890 quoted above, there appears also the following passage which in some measure at least goes to prove that not only was the victory gained by the ancestors of the Ceylon Chetties who embraced Christianity centuries ago, a glorious achievement, and that they did not live or die in vain, but that the wise and fateful decision of the Sinhalese and Tamils who were converted to Christianity as the result of *honest* conviction, was productive of good influences in Ceylon, for, says the learned and pious writer, "Not a few are descended from the families of those who became Christians under the Dutch, and remained *faithful*. A much steadier influence is exerted by those whose *Christianity* is *hereditary*.....A further element of strength which we may not despise is this, that among our Sinhalese and Tamil church people are included a large proportion of the people of the *rank, wealth and education* in those races.....We have in Ceylon the weight of *social influence*, not only English and Burgher, but Sinhalese and *Tamil* also, upon our side, with the exception of the Kandyan or hill country aristocracy, who are mostly Buddhists still."

Philaethes in his 'History of Ceylon' p. 191 says: "In the year 1801 the number of native inhabitants who professed the Protestant profession of the Christian Faith was calculated to exceed 342,000 while those of the Romish Communion were reckoned to be still more numerous. Christianity is professed by natives of Colombo of the *highest rank*."

History teaches us that in France in the Middle Ages as an instance of religious zeal having been carried to painful extremities we have the cases of 'Floire', the hero son of a heathen prince who became a convert to Christianity, and further compelled all his subjects to follow his example, and the compulsory baptism of the Saxons by Charlemagne.

Among notable conversions in Ceylon during the early Portuguese period may be mentioned that of King Jayaweera of Kandy who was baptised as Don Philip, and Donna Catherina who became a Christian in 1701, the wife of the King of Jaffna who lived at Goa. (and was executed about 1617), nor could we forget the fact that when the Kingdom of Jaffna fell into the hands of the Portuguese, all the members of the Royal household, the nobility and the chiefs became Christians.

But whatever may have been the motives which led others to embrace Christianity centuries ago—the earliest Ceylon Christian Chetties need not have been influenced by any sordid motives, as they were for the most part *wealthy* traders who sought no office at that time under Government, (though some were invited by Government to accept offices like Michael Jurie Ondaatjie and Simon de Melho) and who could have easily purchased titles of

honour for a few Rixdollars, if they so desired. On the contrary some of these ancient Ceylon Chetty settlers actually *forfeited ancestral lands in India*, and in accordance with Hindu customs in vogue at that time, were cut off from their kith and kin, purely and solely as the result of *honest conviction, and conversion to Christianity* as was the case with Narayan Tilak of India in 1820. No stronger evidence of the genuineness of the religious zeal and tenacity of the descendants of those early Ceylon Christian Chetties could be adduced than the lives and writings of Ceylon Chetty scholars and authors like Revd. Philip de Melho, Dr. Quint Jurgen Ondaatjie, Simon Casiechitty, District Judge of Chilaw and Calpentyn, besides others, referred to elsewhere in this book,

But it was not in Ceylon alone that the introduction of Christianity resulted in the conversion of some of the highest and noblest natives of the place.

Though there may be in Ceylon, Chetties who possess the advantages of hereditary Christianity of nearly *three* centuries, there have been notable converts to Christianity in India too, of a century and more ago, as the result of the efforts of Christian Missionaries from Europe. Among these distinguished Indian converts may be mentioned Revd. Doctor Krishna Mohan Bannerjee L. L. D. who belonged to a highly respectable family of Kulin Brahmins in Bengal, who was a great scholar and Author, and was Professor (and for some time Principal) of Bishop's College, Calcutta 1851-1868, (with a member of whose family the compiler of this book had the pleasure of friendship). There were also other Indian converts of ability and distinction who embraced Christianity as the result of honest conviction and not seduced by material gain, some of whom forfeited ancestral properties in India like some of the original Ceylon Chetty Christian settlers. Under these circumstances we venture to think it would not be a profitless task—though a digression—to examine the causes that led the Ceylon Chetties of old to embrace Christianity. The knowledge of facts, such as the martyrdom and burial of St. Thomas the Apostle at Mylapore near Madras, the conversion of Syrians to Christianity during the first century, and reports of legends like that of King Perumal going with two others to adore Our Lord at Bethlehem, the methods that the fanatical Afghans employed in proclaiming Islamism with sword, fire and devastation, the progressive occidental methods of the Moguls with Genghiskhan as their leader, in proclaiming the worship of the *one true God*—all these must no doubt have left an impression on the calm and philosophic minds of those Tamil (Chetty) ancestors, who at that period were Saivite pantheists. As men of peace and of mild temperament they disliked tyranny, oppression and conversion by persecution, at the point of the sword. The genius of their mind was susceptible to the gentle

and noble influences of that period. The 'good ground' in the language of the Parable of the Sower was ready, and it only remained for the Sower to sow the seed at the opportune time, and in a befitting manner, to produce a rich harvest, which could yield a hundred fold, yea, a thousand fold. Here was an opportunity and a glorious one, for the Christian Missionaries. The fervent religious zeal and remarkable personal magnetism of Priests like St. Francis Xavier and Father Joseph Vaz in Ceylon, must have been factors they reckoned with. There were also other Christian Missionaries like Father Costanzo Guiseppe Beschi (or Constantino Joseph Beschi) of the Society of Jesus, who was known by the names Vira-maha-muni, Dairiya natha Swami, and Ismati Sannyasi; Father de Nobili, who was known as Tattuva Podagher (the perfect preacher): Bl. John de Britto, who was known as Arulanandam (infinite grace), Revd. Father Buttari who was known as Periya Paranjodinader, and Father Bouchet who was known as Periya Sanchivinader, all of whom adapted themselves to the mode of living, manners and customs of the Sannyasis and Gurus, carefully avoiding superstition, and in respect of food and drink, avoiding meat, fish, eggs, and fermented liquor. They were clothed in oriental garb, and in their habits resembled Hindus, but without violating the law of God. The presentation by such Missionaries to our heathen Chetty ancestors, of an *Asiatic* Christ, according to the Hindu system of teaching religion, and expanding Faith by means of song and music, as was in vogue in South India centuries ago, depicting Our Lord as an *oriental* Christ, clothed in flowing garments like an *Eastern* yogi, whose native land was *nearer to India than England*, whose Apostles and followers were akin to *Indian* nationality, while the references in Our Lord's teachings to the lilly, the sparrow, and the well of *Eastern* countries, with dress and feature altogether *oriental*; his habit of going to the mountains like the *yogis* and *sadhus* to offer *solitary* prayers, his uprising and downsitting all so familiar to *Hindus*, and the endeavour of Priests to convert *not* by fire or sword, but as messengers of peace, must no doubt have appealed to the hearts and minds of our philosophic and un-aggressive Saivite ancestors.

But what must have been most convincing to their minds, was perhaps Our Lord's prayers and loving communion with His Father, 'I and my Father are one,' besides the Doctrine of Divine humanity, and other points emphasizing the *sublime* and *marvellous ethics* of Christ. What wonder is it then, if our Saivite ancestors embraced Christianity as the result of *honest conviction*, despite the sordid motives that may have attracted others of a very different mental calibre?

As an instance of the trend of thought which influenced

Some Hindus, about the time of the incursion of the Mohamedans into the Deccan, synchronising with the permanent settlement of some Chetties in Ceylon, I would quote a few lines from a poem written by an eminent philosopher and author, Sivavakiyar who was at one time a Hindu, (heathen) the stanzas having been rendered into English by Mr. Ellis. He says:—

'Formerly how many flowers have I gathered and scattered ?

'How many prayers have I repeated in vain worship ?

'While yet in the prime of life, how much water have I poured out.

'And moreover how often have I encompassed the holy places of Siven ?

This have I *left off*, for the wise who know the *true* God,
the Lord of heavenly beings,

Believe not the idol of the temples, apparent to the eyes, to
be God, nor lift up to it their hands.

Think on the root, think on the seed, and on the benefit arising from that seed.

'When you are *thus able to think*, 'You may approach the feet of GOD.'

It is highly probable therefore that the early Chetty converts not only thoroughly understood the inner spirit of Hinduism like Revd. Dr. K. M. Baunerji L. L. D. of Calcutta and other notable Indian converts, but so strong was the Faith professed by even the descendants of those Christian Chetty converts that many have proved by their lives and writings the sincerity of their convictions. The views of some highly educated and saintly Indian Reformers of *today*, like Mahatma Ghandi, with respect to the teachings and precepts of Christ, as embodied in the Sermon on the Mount, known to the present generation, and those of no less distinguished an Indian than Raja Rammohan Roy of over a century ago, tend to confirm our statements. The latter is reported to have said in reply to a series of questions addressed to him in 1824 by Rev. Henry Ware, Unitarian Minister of Harvard College Cambridge U. S. A. "I presume to think that Christianity if properly inculcated has a greater tendency to improve the moral, social, and political state of mankind than any other known religious system," and again in 1828 writing to Dr. Tuckerman he said, "I fully agree with you that there is nothing so sublime as the precepts taught by Jesus Christ, and that there is nothing equal to the doctrines He inculcated" (vide Miss Collets 'Life of Raja Rammohum Roy' Chapters IV. & VI). It is well however to state before concluding our observations on this topic, that although consequent on the introduction of Christianity into Ceylon by the Portuguese

Government, many Ceylon Chetties embraced Roman Catholicism, with the Ceremonies and Rites that attach to it, there were not a few Chetties who adopted those Forms of Christian Faith, as in the Reformed Church during the Dutch period, or in the Anglican Church under British Rule, as *appealed to their individual reason and conscience*; with regard to which we deem it improper for us to adjudicate, though what mattered most with respect to the conversion of the Thana Vaisya Chetties of Ceylon, was the belief in *One True GOD* and salvation through Him.

As it is not our intention to accentuate differences, but rather to reconcile, we cannot do better than quote the words of Lord Balfour who, addressing a vast and distinguished audience at Jerusalem on 1st April, 1925, on the occasion of the opening of a College, said with reference to Jewish culture and religion: "A few minutes ago, I was reminded by friends that from where you are sitting, you can see the very spot where the children of Israel first entered the promised land, and that it was from this very hill that the Roman destroyers of Jerusalem conducted their siege which brought to an end that great chapter of the Jewish people.....Well, a new epoch has begun. The great effort in Palestine which came to an end so many hundreds of years ago, that aspect is going to be resumed in the ancient home of the people.....To look at the spires and domes and endless ecclesiastical monuments of Jerusalem, is an almost startling reminder how far *religious* differences can divide mankind. If people would look *sufficiently deep*, they should find there are fundamental principles and aspirations in which all agree".

In a spirit of love and comradeship, and wishing others the benefit that we ourselves enjoy, we would suggest the use of the following prayer among the present members of the Christian Chetty community.

PRAYER.

O Lord, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob, and the God also of *our* forefathers, we thank Thee for the wise decision of our ancestors who embraced Christianity centuries ago, and for the manifold mercies and blessings which Thou hast vouchsafed to successive generations, whereby we of to-day possess the characteristic advantages of hereditary Christianity. We pray that whilst we prize and honour the memory of our ancestors, we may emulate their deeds of faith and charity, and that the good work which Thou hast begun in them, may be made perfect unto the day of Jesus Christ, and that their spirit may live on in us, and in the generations

(7)

to come. Draw all men unto Thee, and one to another, that putting away unhappy divisions, we may be joined together in unity of spirit, and in the bond of peace, by the bonds of Thy love, constituting a sacred Brotherhood.

Finally, we beseech Thee to restore whatever is wanting to make Thy Church *one*, that we may all with one heart, and with one mind glorify Thee the God and Father of us all, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

If the Ceylon Chetties, prospered and flourished at some special period, it was not due to any other reason, but purely and solely as the result of the innate desire of the Ceylon Chetties to *improve* the talents which God endowed them with, and the facilities afforded by Government then and now, to those who try to help themselves, enabled the Chetties to be 'a great force for good in the country' and 'furnish examples worthy of imitation' (vide Appendix A.) There may be divergent opinions with regard to the religion of a Government influencing the intellectual, social and moral progress of the inhabitants of that country, and perhaps one might adduce the case of some Eastern countries with many Christians of light and leading which have made very great progress. We have also the authority of no less distinguished a Prelate than Right Revd. Doctor James Chapman, D. D., first Lord Bishop of Colombo who in the course of a sermon preached in 1856 at S. Paul's Church Colombo, said :—"Once, brethren, Christian England was in the same dark condition, even darker than Ceylon is now. Others in a foreign land more favoured and blessed of God saw the fair captives of heathen Britain sold as slaves in the market place of Rome, and some generous hearts were moved towards those poor prisoners in compassion of the dark state of their distant country. As good stewards of the manifold grace of God, they sent faithful men to preach the Gospel there. England thus became Christian. From *that time her advancement as a nation had been progressive.*"

Though there have been Heathen Chetties who have distinguished themselves, like Ugandachea of old who is reputed to have been the architect of the Madura Meenatchi Amman Hindu Temple in South India and manager of a large industrial Establishment, there does not appear to have been much progress made by them in Ceylon, generally, during the Dutch period and under very early British Rule.

Albeit we note with pleasure among members of the general Hindu community in Ceylon, under British Rule, since 1830, the good works of Sir Muttu Coomaraswamy, who was more of a Politician than a Lawyer, of the illustrious brothers Hon. P. Coomaraswamy, M. L. C., Hon. Sir Ponnambalam Ramanathan K. C., C. M. G., and Sir Ponnambalam Arunachelam, who were born in *Colombo at Chetties' Quarters*, Checku Street, in the

vicinity of St. Thomas' Church, of Sir Ambalavanar Kanagasabai, and Hon. Mr. K. Balasingham M. L. C., of Jaffna, not to mention others.

Among the products of *Christian* civilization, as far as the Chetty Community is concerned, may be mentioned the following during the Dutch period, and under British Rule :—

Knight. Major Peter Philip Christian Oortmann Ondaatjie, Knight of the Military Order of Prince William of Orange.

Merchants and Landed Proprietors. Gaspar Kasi-setty (1620), Tandava R. P. Aserappa (1665), Adigar Simon de Melho (1750), Matthew de Rosairo, Opperkoop, Calpentyn (1780), Michael Jurie Ondaatjie (1710) who received lands as 'accommedesans', Antony Pieris Aserappa, (1769) who had branch offices in Calcutta, Bombay and Negapatam, Adigar Simon de Rosairo (1790) Chief landholder in Calpentyn, Peter J. Thomas Ondaatjie (1825) Colombo, Jeronimus de Rosairo (1826) Calpentyn, John P. Aserappa (1840) vide report of land sales over 500 acres; Matthes de Rosairo (Merchant), Abraham Morgappa (1845) Calpentyn; Cecil Jurgen Ondaatjie, Madras; J. J. Aserappa, Belgium, Abraham Pullenayagem, Chilaw; Nicholas Morgappa, Kotahena, Colombo; Manuel Casiechetty (Kandy). P. B. Anandappa, (1840) Merchant, York Street, Fort, Colombo, Francis Wannappa, Merchant, Wines and Spirits; Joseph Rodrigo Candappa, Merchant, Christopher Rodrigo Munieram Perumal, Wine Merchant; Peter Jurgen Ondaatjie, Colombo; C. S. Chitty, Chilaw, W. B. Paulickpulle, Chilaw; P. Brito Babapulle, Simon Costa Weerappa, A. P. Casiechetty, Landed Proprietor and Merchant; W. Muttucumaru (Puttalam), G. Edwin Muttukistna (Kandy), A. Ernest Aserappa Chilaw and Negombo, C. Brito Babapulle and others.

Statesmen and Politicians. Dr. Peter Philip Quint Jurgen Ondaatjie, A. L. M., Ph. D., J. U. D., (Utrecht and Leyden). Member of the Imperial Court of Prizes, Councillor of the Supreme Court of Batavia. The first Asiatic who figured in European History 1817.

Simon Casiechitty C. C. S., Member of the Legislative Council of Ceylon, 1846.

Advocate Henry Francis Muttukistna, Member of the Legislative Council of Ceylon.

Advocate Philip de M. J. Ondaatjie, Member of the Legislative Council of Ceylon.

Advocate W. N. Aserappa, Member of the Legislative Council of Ceylon.

Judges and Magistrates. (Permanent and Acting). **Simon Casiechitty**, (Chilaw and Calpentyn). **John Rodrigo Moothiah**, (Kayts) **John J. Casiechetty**, M. A., B. C. L., (Panadure, Matara),

Proctor Aelian J. Ondaatjie, (Kegalle) **Advocate Arthur L. R. Aserappa**, B. A., (Colombo). **Advocate W. N. Aserappa**, (Negombo). **N. W. Morgappa**, B. A. (London.) (Kalutara)

Barristers and Advocates. **Henry Francis Mootookistna** (1849). **John William Franciscus**, **Peter Percy Muttukistna** (1855). **John J. Casiechitty**, **Philip de M. J. Ondaatjie**, **Christopher Brito**, **Philip Francis Ondaatjie**, **Arthur Louis Reginald Aserappa**, **Walter N. Aserappa**, **James Chitty**, **Victor de Rosairo**, **Edward Chitty**, **P. Canjemanaden**.

Proctors. **Anthony de M. Aserappa** (Batticaloa). **P. de M. J. Ondaatjie**, (1856), **John de M. Aserappa**, (1857), **Solomon Louis Aserappa**, (1859), Colombo, **Louis de Rosairo**, (Galle 1833), **C. B. Paulickpulle** (Chilaw 1842), **John Robert J. Ondaatjie**, (1866), **Nathaniel Frank Ondaatjie**, **Aloysius Mt. Carmel Casiechitty** (Chilaw, Pattalam and Calpentyne, 1877), **Alfred Ernest Aserappa**, (Negombo), **Basil O. Pullenayagem** (Colombo), **Austin de Rosairo**, (Puttalam and Colombo), **C. M. Brito**, **P. M. Corea**, (Colombo), **C. B. Paulickpulle**, (Chilaw), **Adam Muthucumaroe**, (Puttalam). **Emil Casiechitty**, (Kandy), **T. Gurunatha Brito**, (Colombo). **Wilfred Muthucumaroe**, (Puttalam.)

Engineers. **Major Crististian Oortman Ondaatjie** who built the fortifications in Java, and was created Knight of the Military Order in 1840 in appreciation of his signal services in the East. **Richard H. Aserappa**, Fellow of Cooper's Hill, Manager of Railways and Engineer in chief, Gondal, India, who was presented to His Majesty the King Emperor when in England, and was the first Ceylonese to lunch with His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, during his recent visit to the East. **C. H. Muttukistna** Assistant Engineer, (Colombo.) **Charles de Rosairo**, Assistant Engineer, (Glasgow.)

Scientists and Discoverers. **Dr. Peter Philip Quint Jurgen Ondaatjie** who in his 24th year wrote a Thesis on Perception, Memory, connection between mind and matter, the nature of the ideas conveyed to the mind by sensation, the laws of gravity, the difference of the movement of the pendulum at the Equator and at the Poles, the motion of the heavenly bodies according to Kepler's law etc., in appreciation of all which, the Degree of Doctor in Philosophy and the Liberal Sciences was conferred on him.

Gabriel Casiechitty, Mudaliyar of the Governor's Gate and District Mudaliyar of Calpentyne, who discovered pearl banks off Carradivoe, in consequence of which a Pearl Fishery took place in March 1832.

Johannes Elaardus Ondaatjie, Eldest son of **Dr. Quint Ondaatjie** who discovered very valuable tin mines in Java and Borneo.

Dr. William C. Ondaatjie, M. S. A. Director of the Botanical Gardens, who was mainly instrumental in the introduction of the olive plant into Ceylon, and discovered the use for dyeing textile fabrics in an infusion of the madder, which proved a profitable source of income to the Ceylon Government. (Vide observations on Vegetable Products, 1848.)

Dr. Simon de M. Aserappa, M. D., (Edin) whose invention for the treatment and disposal of sewage by coir dust and incineration (in 1888) was eventually adopted in Ceylon and elsewhere, with success; and whose valuable suggestions regarding Public Health were highly appreciated by Dr. Chalmers (vide Report).

Poets, Authors and Scholars. Revd. Philip de Melho, Poet, Author, Linguist, Biblical Translator, and eminent Divine, who was Rector of the Dutch Seminary, and was known as 'Rabbi' de Melho, and 'The Great Labourer' (see the 'Tamil Plutarch,' and Cassels Biographical Dictionary.) Dr. Peter Philip Jurgen Quint Ondaatjie A. L. M., Ph. D., J. U. D., (Utrecht and Leyden) vide Memorials and Times of Dr. Quint Ondaatjie by Mrs. Davies, a Preface to which is written by Professor Vreede of the Utrecht University. Rev. William Juriaan Ondaatjie, J. U. D., (Scholar and Author.) Rev. Manuel Morgappa, J. U. D., (Scholar.) John Rodrigo Moothiah, C. C. S. (Scholar and Linguist) Simon Casiechitty Esq., C. C. S., (Scholar and Author.) Henry Francis Muttukistna, (Barrister) (Scholar and Author.) B. A., L. L. B. (Lincoln's Inn.) John Casiechitty Esq., C. C. S., M. A., B. C. L. (Scholar and Author.) Robert Brownrigg Muttukistna (Poet.) Dr. Simon Muttukistna, M. D. (Edin) Scholar. Rev. Johan Jurgen Ondaatjie (Colonial Chaplain Scholar and Author.) Dr. William C. Ondaatjie, M. S. A., (Scholar.) Canon Gabriel Rodrigo Muttukistna (Scholar.) Philip Canjemanaden (Author.) Dr. Simon de M. Aserappa, M. D. (Edin) Scholar. Rev. Simon Dedrick Jurgen Ondaatjie (Scholar and Author.) Advocate Christopher Brito, B. A., (Scholar and Author.) Advocate Arthur L. Reginald Aserappa, B. A. (Scholar and Linguist.) Richard H. Aserappa, F.C.H. (Scholar.) C. H. Christie David, F. V. C. A., (London) F. R. C. I., F. R. S. A., F. V. C. M. (London) F. R. C. I. (London) &c. (Author.) N. W. Morgappa, C. C. S., B. A., L. L. B. (Scholar.) Laurie Montague Byrde Muthukrishna, F.C.I., F. I. P. L., F. N. S. A., F. N. S. T., F. B. T., F. L. A. A. &c. (Scholar.) C. Brito Babapulle B. Sc. (London.) (Scholar.) John Melho Bunney Aserappa, Engineering Institute (London.)

Doctors. Michael Jurie Ondaatjie, First Doctor of the Town of Colombo, 1710.

Matthew Jurgen Ondaatjie (Physician) Dutch Period.

Dr. Simon de Melho Aserappa, M. D., (Edin) 1880 *First Chief Medical Officer of Health of the Colombo Municipality under British Rule.*

Dr. C. V. Aserappa, M. R. C. S., M. R. C. P. (London); D. T. H. (Oxford), D. T. M. and H. (Cambridge) *Chief* Medical Officer of Health of the Colombo Municipality, 1928.

Provincial Surgeons and other Medical Officers. Dr. William Charles Ondaatje, M. S. A. (*First* Ceylonese Director of the Botanical Gardens) Surgeon in charge Civil Hospital Colombo, 1843. Dr. Edward P. Aserappa M. B. C. M., Provincial Surgeon, W. P., Colombo. Dr. F. R. Alles L. R. C. P. & S. (Edin.) L. F. P. & S. (Glas.) M. C. B. R. A. S. Fellow of the Royal Empire Society Provincial Surgeon W. P., Colombo. Assistant Director of Medical and Sanitary Services. Dr. Simon Peter Muttukistna M. D. (Edin) Port Surgeon, Colombo. Dr. Philip Brito, M. B. C. M. Lecturer, Medical College Colombo. Dr. Charles Muttukistna, L. M. S. Colombo. Dr. E. C. Alles, M. R. C. S., (Eng.) O. R. C. P., (London) F. R. C. S., (Eng.) Surgeon, General Hospital. Dr. Adrian Pullenayagam L. M. S. Colombo. Dr. C. Brito Baba Pulle, M. B. C. M., (Edin.) Dr. Philip Muthucumaroe, M. B. C. M., (Edin) Dr. C. Paulickpulle, L. R. C. P. and S. (London.) Dr. J. M. de Rosairo, L. M. S. (Colombo.) Dr. C. A. Anaudappa, L. M. S. (Colombo.) Dr. A. F. S. Casiechitty L. R. C. P. and S. & C. & C. (London) Dr. F. Pullenayagam, L.M.S. (Colombo.) Dr. M. de Costa, M.R.C.S. (Eng.) L.R.C.P. (London) D.P.H. (Cantab) C. L. S. T. M., L.M. (Dublin) Capt. C. M. Corps.

Christian Ministers and Preachers.

1744. Revd. Philip de Melho. *First* Ceylonese who was ordained Christian Minister. Biblical Translator and Rector of the Dutch Seminary.
1773. Revd. William Juriaan Ondaatjie. V. D. M., who baptized over a thousand five hundred converts during one parochial tour in the Northern Province.
1780. Revd. Manuel Jurgen Ondaatjie (Mannar.)
1789. „ Matthew Jurgen Ondaatjie (Batavia and Tnticorin.)
- „ Peter Jurgen Ondaatjie (Jaffna.)
- „ Christopher Jurgen Ondaatjie (Negapatam.)
1796. Revd. Manuel Morgappa J. U. D. a zealous Divine and Classical Scholar, who conversed with Governor North in Latin.

Proponents.

Gabriel Jurgen Ondaatjie, Philip Jurgen Ondaatjie, John Jurgen Ondaatjie, Jan Francisus (1775). Francis Nonis Malleappa, 1793 Abraham Jurgen Ondaatjie, William Francisus.

Canon of the Cathedral (Colombo.)

Revd. Gabriel Rodrigo Mootookistna.

Colonial Chaplains.

Revd. Johan Jurgen Ondaatjie (Colombo), Revd. Christian David (Jaffna), Revd. Gabriel Jurgen Ondaatjie, Revd. William Franciscus (Colombo), Revd. Gabriel Rodrigo Mootookistna (Colombo), Revd. Simon Dedrick Jurgen Ondaatjie. (Colombo.)

Other Anglican Ministers and Catechists.

Revds. Solomon David and Christian David, Rodrigo Tambichetty, A. L. Aserappa (C. M. S. Galle Face Church,) Philip Jurgen Ondaatjie (Calpentyne and Colombo) and Wilmot Horton Malleappah. (Colombo).

Among the Chetties of Ceylon who laboured in the *Roman Catholic* Mission may be mentioned the following :—

1870. Revd. Father William Canjemanaden.
 „ „ Gabriel Canjemanaden O. S. B.
 (Negombo.)
 „ „ Lewis Canjemanaden.
 „ „ Jerome Masillamony.

Very Revd. Father P. M. Alles, O. M. I., who is at present engaged in active Service in the Western Province.

Educationists.

Revd. Philip de Melho, Rector of the Dutch Seminary Revd. Matthew Jurgen Ondaatjie Rector of the Dutch, Seminary, 1744. Revd. Manuel de Melho, Master of the Tamil School at Negombo, 1704, (Vide Ceylon Literary Register Vol. IV. p. 3.) M. Rodrigo Chetty, Tamil Tutor Seminary, 1825, William Franciscus (St. Thomas' School, Colombo), 1825, Abraham Nonis Malleappa (Maradana Boys' School), 1825, Francis Malleappa, (Boys' School Chilaw), 1825, Frank J. Ondaatjie (Madampe and Kollupitiya Boys' Schools.) Abraham Jurgen Ondaatjie (St. Thomas' Church School Colombo.) 1838, Charles Maleappa (St. Thomas' Church School Colombo) 1840, A. L. P. Aserappa (C. M. S. Galle Face School, Colombo), during the Principalship of Revd. Pargiter and Rowlands, 1840, J. R. Pullenayagem (Boys' School Putlam 1861), Philip E. Morgappa (Government School, Matara), 1840, Robert Brownrigg Mootookistna (School master Jaffna.) J. Candappa, Boys' School Slave Island, 1847, Colonial Chaplain Simon D. J. Ondaatjie (Matara and Colombo), 1847, Canon G. R. Mootookistna, (St. Thomas' College, Colombo), 1847, Henry Morris Casiechitty (St. Thomas' College, Colombo), 1877. Charles Piers Aserappa, Undergraduate of the Calcutta University, (St. Thomas. College, Colombo), 1893, Basil O. Pullenayagem, Undergraduate of the Calcutta University (Wesley College, Colombo),

Clement Christie David (St. Thomas' College, Colombo), 1893, Philip Puvénayagem, (St. Thomas' College, Colombo), 1893, Laurie Montague Byrde Muthukrishna F. C. I., F. I. P. S., F. N. S. T., F. B. T., F. L. A. A., (Principal Polytechnic Institute, Colombo.)

Among ladies of Chetty descent who were educationists during the Dutch period are the following, viz. Magdaléné Schrader, (grand daughter of Rev. Philip de Melho) who married Ven'ble G. J. Schrader L. L. D. first Ceylonese Archdeacon of Colombo; Maria Steenkelder (daughter of Dr. Peter Juriaan Quint Ondaatjie) who married Matthew Steenkelder of the Dutch Civil Service. Mrs. A. de Costa Weerappa (St. Thomas' Girls' School, Colombo.) 1820. Mrs. Franciscus (Tambichetty) (Girls' School, Colpetty.) 1825. Mrs. E. Ondaatjie (Girls' School, Matara.) 1840. Under early British Rule, among others, may be mentioned :—

Journalists.

Dr. Peter Quint Jurgen Ondaatjie, Editor of *Courier de Calais*, 1787, Simon Casiechitty C. C. S. (Calpentyu) who edited the first Tamil newspaper in Ceylon under British Rule, and also often sent contributions to English Journals, 1853. Philip E. Morgappa who was for some time Editor of the *Ceylon Diocesan Gazette*. Laurie Montague Muttukistna who was Editor of the 'Ceylonese' and the 'People,' B. Reggie J. Ondaatjie F. R. C. I.—Sub-Editor of the *Ceylon Independent* at one time, and now connected with the *Daily News* and Frank Ondaatjie who is on the staff of a well known Journal in Ceylon at present.

Civil Servants.

Simon Casiechitty, District Judge, Chilaw and Calpentyu, 1858, John Rodrigo Moothia, D. J. (Kayts N. P.) Richard H. Aserappa of the Indian Service, Manager of Railway and Engineer in Chief, John J. Casiechitty, B. A., B. C. L. (Oxford.) Kayts Panadura and Matara, 1893, W. N. S. Aserappa, Police Magistrate Negombo, N. W. Moragappa, J. P., M. B. E., who acted as Registrar General of Ceylon, E. F. Ondaatjie 1899, N. W. Morgappa, B. A. (London), Police Magistrate Kalutara 1929.

Adigars.

Don Simon de Melho, Chief Tamil Mudaliyar of the Governor's Gate, (Rasa Vasul.) Head of the Protestant Chetties, who was attached to the personal staff of ten Dutch Governors. D. 1758. Simon de Rosairo, Administrator of Public affairs, who on instructions from the Dutch Government handed over the keys of the Fort at Calpentyu to the British Colonel, 1796. Abraham Rodrigo Devanasa (Muttukistna) Mudaliyar of the Governor's Gate, and Head of the Protestant Chetties and also Adikaram, 1837. (vide *Ceylon Almanac*.) Mannel Morgappa Wanigeratne. Mudaliyar of the Governor's Gate and Adikaram.

Mudaliyars of the Governor's Gate.

1715. Don Simon de Melho, (Colombo),
 1779 Gabriel Rodrigo Mootookistna.
 1816. Abraham Rodrigo Devanasa, (Muttukistna), Jaffna.
 1838. Don Simon de Melho (Wannigerkoon), Colombo.
 1843. Manuel Morgappa, (Wannigeratne), Colombo.
 1847. Solomon Rodrigo Mootookistna.
 1855. Nicholas Jurgen Ondaatjie, Colombo.
 1857. Raja Sri Manuel Rodrigo Abraham Mootookistna,
 Colombo.
 1860. John Casiechitty, (Calpenty.)
 1883. William Jurgen Ondaatjie, (Colombo.)

Mudaliyars of Districts.

1800. John de Rosairo, (Calpenty and Puttalam.)
 Simon Casiechetty, (Colombo.)
 1816. Abraham Rodrigo Devanasa Muttukistna Mudaliyar
 over several Districts in the Northern Province,
 (Jaffna.)
 Abraham Casiechetty, (Kandy.)
 1820. Jeronimus de Rosairo, (Calpenty.)
 1829. Raja Sri Simon Rodrigo Mootookistna, (Calpenty
 and Puttalam, D. 28 March, 1844.)
 Gabriel Casiechitty, (Calpenty.)
 1838. Simon Rodrigo Muttukitna.
 1843. John Casiechetty, (Calpenty and Puttalam.)
 1850. John Paul Casiechetty, (Hapitigam Corle.)
 1862. David M. de Rosairo (Calpenty.)
 1871. Christoffel Brito Paulick Pulle (Pitigal Korle.)
 1898. Emmanuel F. de Rosairo, (Calpenty.)
 1928. Frank de Costa, (Puttalam Pattu.)

Kachcheri Mudaliyars.

1830. Philip Rodrigo Mootookistna, (First Kachcheri
 Mudaliyar of Jaffna.)
 1853. Bastian Rodrigo Pullenayagem, (Puttalam.)

Titular Mudaliyars.

1838. Louis de Rosairo, (Galle.)
 1895. William Jurgen Ondaatjie, (Colombo.)
 1900. Spencer Sparling Casiechetty, (Colombo.)

Maniagars.

1820. David de Rosairo, (Putlam), 1844 Joseph Brito Paulick Pulle, (Puttalam). 1848 Solomon Robert Rodrigo Mootookistna, (Puttalam), 1850 John Charles Malleappah, (Puttalam.) Simom Rodrigo Muttukistna, Puttalam.

Shroffs (Mudaliyars.)

1763. Michael Jurie Ondaatjie, Customs, 1820 Adrian Rodrigo Chetty, Chilaw, 1825 Don Simon de Melho Wannigerkoon, Collectorship of Colombo, 1825 J. Benedict Anandappa, Post office, Colombo, 1825 W. C. A. Fernando Chetty, Revenue Commissioner's Office, Kandy, 1838 Caspar Casiechetty, Shroff of Seven Korles, (Kandy and Kurunegala.) 1829, J. Adaman Chetty, Kandy, 1829 William Muttukistna, Customs, Kayts, Jaffna, 1829 Matthew (Gomes) Amaiyappa, Colombo. 1829, Gabriel Canjemanaden, Customs, Colombo, 1832 Simon Rodrigo Chinnaiya Muttukistna, Cinnamon Plantation Dept. Maradana, 1835 Philip Brito Pulle, Chilaw. 1838 J. F. Pedro Pulle Chetty, Colombo, 1838 M. J. Ondaatjie, Shroff, Ruanwella 1840 Pedro Pieris Aserappa, Negombo, 1840 Antony de Rosairo, Puttalam, 1840 Louis Pieris Aserappa, Colombo, 1840 T. Superamanian Chetty, Trincomalee, 1840 Gabriel Fernando Chetty, Uva and Bintenne, 1848 P. L. Ramanaden, Customs, Colombo, 1840 E. de Rosairo, Customs, Galle, 1848 William, Jurgen Ondaatjie, P. W. D., Colombo, 1849 John Casiechetty, Fiscals Office, Colombo, 1849 P. Canjemanaden, Colombo, 1849 C. N. Adaman, G. A's. Office, Saffragam, 1849 P. F. Mattheisz Chetty, Customs, Colombo, 1863 Francis Sales Pieris Tandeveraya, Colombo, 1863 Caspar Casiechetty, Kacheri, Kegalle. 1863 C. B. Paulick Pulle, Puttalam, 1863 Joseph Rodrigo Monieram Perumal, Loan Board, Colombo, 1870 Philip Canjemanaden, Customs, Colombo.

Bank Shroffs.

1847. William Jurgen Ondaatjie, *First Shroff of the first Bank* in Ceylon.
 1871. Nicholas Philip Candappa, O. B. C., Kandy.
 1919. Francis Alles, (Chartered Bank.)
 P. Masillamony, (Mercantile Bank.)
 Patrick Anandappa, Mercantile Bank, Galle.

Interpreters. (Mudaliyars.)

1720. Philip Jurgen Ondaatjie, Hoffvan Justitia (or Supreme Court of Justice), Colombo, 1780 Simon de Rosairo, Interpreter to Opperkoop and also to Landraad, Calpentyn, 1780 Johan Jurgen Ondaatjie, Interpreter to the Dutch Commander, Galle, 1805 Abraham de Rosairo, Chief Interpreter to Opperkoop, 1815 Adrian Rodrigo Chetty, Chief Secretary's Office,

- 1816 William Jurgen Ondaatjie, Interpreter to the Seminary and Recorder, 1816 C. Rodrigo Muttukistna, Jaffna, 1820 P. Jurgen Ondaatjie, Sitting Magistrate's Court, Calpenty, 1820 Manuel Morgappa Portugese and Tamil Interpreter, C. S. O., Colombo, 1829, Daniel Rodrigo Pullenayagem, Provincial Court, Colombo, 1825 Philip Rodrigo Mootookistna, Interpreter Collector's Office, Jaffna, 1825 Solomon Jurgen Ondaatjie, Dutch and Tamil Interpreter, 1826 Simon Casiechetty, Interpreter, D. C., Calpenty, 1826 Philip A. Ondatchie, Provincial Court, Northern Circuit, 1838 Abraham Rodrigo Muttukistna, Waddamaratchi, 1843 Abraham Casiechetty, Court of Requests, Kandy.
1847. Nicholas Jurgen Ondaatjie, Queen's Advocates Office, Colombo 1847 Solomon Costa Weerappa, Police Court Colombo, 1847 F. S. L. Ramenaden, Supreme Court, Colombo, 1849 C. Brito Panlick Palle, District Court, Chilaw, 1862 C.A.J. Ondaatjie, D.C., Kalutara, Abraham Casiechetty, Courts, Gampola 1870 Christopher Joseph Muttukistna, D. C., Kandy 1870 Henry A. David, Police Court, Colombo, 1870 Peter Thomas Jurgen Ondaatjie, D.C., Kalutara, 1870 Manuel Abraham Rodrigo Muttukistna, C. S. O., Colombo, 1880 P. X. Monieram Perumal, D. C., Colombo, 1880 George Muttukistna, Supreme Court, Durban, South Africa, 1896, M. Simon Rodrigo Muttukistna, Court, Colombo, 1925 Henry Morris Casiechetty, District Court, Colombo.

President. (Village Tribunals.)

Edward J. Casiechetty, Trincomalee.

Udaiyars of Districts.

Willie de Rosairo, (Puttalam District.)

Christie de Rosairo, (Kattakadu.)

L. de Rosairo, (Calpenty.)

Registrar General, Registrars and Thombu holders.

1920. N. W. Morgappa, C. C. S., M. B. E., J. P., Assistant Registrar General of Ceylon (who also acted as Registrar General.)

1828. Bastian Rodrigo Chetty, (Thombu Holder Colombo.)

1846. S. Franciscus, Thombu Holder Tamil Register.

1862. M. J. Ondaatjie, Clerk for Tamil Registries.

1916. David de Rosairo, Registrar, Calpenty.

1920. Sol. Rodrigo Pullenayagem, Registrar, Colombo.

1928. J. L. L. de Rosairo, do Calpenty.

Notaries. Christian M. Morgappa, (1830) Calpentyn; M. Chetty Candappa Chetty (Calpentyn); Philip Brito Pulle, (1839) Mampury; Saviel Wannappa, (1850) Colombo; Andre Nonis Chetty, (1848) Colombo; Soose Ramenaden; Fransiscus Pieris Chetty; Pedro Pieris Chetty; Robert Rodrigo Mootookistna, (1848) Calpentyn, besides many others.

Justices of the Peace, (Permanent.)

1850. Simon Casiechetty, C. C. S., for the North Western Province.
 1928. N. W. Morgappa, C. C. S., M. B. E., for the Western Province.

Coroners and Deputy Coroners.

1848. Simon Casiechetty, District of Chilaw.
 John Paul Casiechetty Dist. Modliar Hapitigam Korle.
 1850. J. Charles Malleappa, (Puttalam.)
 John Casiechetty, Puttalam and Calpentyn.
 1850. Robert Rodrigo Muttukistna, Puttalam & Calpentyn.

Fiscals & Deputy Fiscals, (Permanent and acting.)

1855. John Casiechetty, Calpentyn.
 1829. N. J. Pieris, (Taverayen Chetty), Chilaw.
 1840. Simon Casiechetty, (Chilaw and Calpentyn.)
 1928. R. Muttukistna, (Puttalam.)
 1890. E. F. de Rosairo, Calpentyn.
 1900. W. N. S. Aserappa, Colombo.
 1919. E. Ondaatjie, Colombo.

Brokers, Commission Agents &c. &c.,

Peter Jurgen Ondaatjie (Messrs. J. P. Green & Co.) 1862, Antony Alles (Messrs. Fryer Schultz & Co.), Caitan Anandappa (Messrs. Alston Scott & Co.), Philip Alles (Messrs. J. P. Green & Co.), Francis Xavier Anandappa (Messrs. Rogers & Co.), Marian Alles (Messrs. Vanderspar & Co.), John de M. Aserappa, John Jeremy Aserappa (Brokers and Commission Agents), Christopher Rodrigo Bavapulle (Messrs. Darley Butler & Co.), J. R. Candappa (Paleagoda) Dominick Benedict Anandappa (Messrs. Alston Scott & Co.), John Silva Pedropulle (Messrs. Darley Butler & Co.), Xavier Anandappa (Messrs. Durham Grindrod & Co.) Solomon Adaman, (Messrs. Baker & Hall), Felix Candappa (Broker).

Among Christian Chetties engaged at various times in other activities may be mentioned Michael Jurgen Ondaatjie, Customs, Colombo (1763) Adrian Casiechetty, Modely, Customs, Colombo (1763) Thomas Jurgen Ondaatjie, Writer, Provincial Courts, Kayts (1810) Adrian Rodrigo Chetty, Chief Secretary's Office, Colombo (1815) Peter Jurgen Ondaatjie Accountant Trincomalie (1815) J. Gomes Amaiyappa Chetty, Government Agent's

Office, Colombo (1825) D. D. Tissera, Government Agent's Office, Uva (1829), N. J. Piefis (Taverayan Chetty) Government Agent's Office, Colombo 1825. Simon Costa Weerappa, Accountant's Department, Colombo (1838) J. S. de Fonseka Chetty, Treasury Colombo (1839) S. N. Savielpulle Customs, Colombo (1846) L. Fernandopulle, Treasury, Colombo (1846) S. Morgappa, Appraiser, Customs, Colombo (1847) F. N. Candappa, Storekeeper, Commisariat, Kandy (1847) P. R. Monieram Perumal, Loan Board Office, Colombo 1847 Francis Salis Pieris Tandaveraya, Customs, Colombo, Anthony Laty Ramenaden, Customs, Colombo, Louis Nicholas Morgappa, Customs, Colombo, (1870) Pedro Soesa Settembellatapulle, Tamil Translator Court of Requests, Colombo, John Christoffel Fernandopulle, Assessment Department, Colombo, (1870) Peter Louis Aserappa, Assistant Examiner of Estimates P. W. D. Colombo, Abraham Morgappa, Sub-Collector, Calpenty, John Manuel de Rosairo, Secretary, District Court, Puttalam Matthew P. Jurgen Ondaatjie Financial and Military Department Colonial Secretary's Office (1853) Spencer S. Casiechetty, Mudaliyar, Station Master (C.G.R.) Philip Justin Pullenayagam, General Post Office, Colombo, E. A. Casiechetty, Municipal Inspector Colombo, Peter Pullenayagam (Municipal Inspector) Manuel Casiechetty, P. W. D. Contractor Kandy, John Malleappah (Inspector), Kandy G. S. Casiechetty, Chief Clerk, Forest Department and others.

(For additional list of names vide Appendix D.)



CHAPTER IV.

SOCIAL INSTITUTIONS OF CASTE AND SLAVERY.

"The unity of great Britain is not due to any *suppression* of the characteristics and customs of its component races, but to these supplementing and fulfilling each other in the advancement of the national destiny."

(*Report of Donoughmore Commission on the Constitution of Ceylon vide 'Ceylon Daily News' July, 18, 1928 page 5.*)

"Blame not before thou understandest, first hear, and then rebuke" (The Holy Bible.)

It would be idle to assume that any history of the Sinhalese or Tamil Community in Ceylon could be regarded as complete, without some reference to their ancient social institutions with which they were intimately connected. In an age like the present when there seems to be a good deal of misunderstanding in some quarters, it is necessary at the very outset to emphasize the fact that the institution known as Caste, regarded as a scientific classification of labour, was originally based on peace and goodwill and for mutual cooperation, and not to create hatred, or disunion, although we feel bound to admit that in course of time this institution like many good things which have been spoilt by use, had been prostituted to suit selfish ends. The fault is really not in the system which has already withstood the onslaught of ages, but in those who misconstrued the original ideals. A brief investigation into its origin would we trust tend to remove any doubts that may still be lingering in the minds of some. We learn from the Mahawansa collection of Buddhist tracts, edited by Edward Upham, (collected by Sir Alexander Johnstone) p. 338 that in the early ages of the world, all men were equal, in consequence of which many contentions arose among them, and in order to prevent or appease their strifes, they elected a chief to govern them. To this chief they all submitted, and for his support they gave the one tenth of all the produce of their lands, and hence came the name of Khathriya, or landlord, and as he endeavoured to *satisfy* the people, they gave him the name of 'Rajah', which is derived from the word 'ranjite', to satisfy, and hence came the word 'Rajah' which is considered as equivalent to 'King'.

The meaning of the word 'Brahmin' is 'to put away sin,' and in the first ages of the world, such men as refrained from sin, were called Brahmanayo or Brahmins, and known among the Sinhalese as 'Bamino' which means precisely the same.

The meaning of the word 'Waysiya' is 'give and take' 'buy and sell', make merchandise. These had three modes of employment,

first, dealing or merchandising, carried on by the Tana Vaisiyas, known among the Sinhalese as 'Welindoo' and referred to as such by Philalethes in his Account of Ceylon; the *second*, mode of employment was tending cattle Ko-Vaisiyas; and the *third*, tilling the ground, resorted to by the Poo-Vaisiyas known among the Sinhalese as Goiyas. Thus sprang the four main classes of labour, known as Raja, Bamino, Welindoo, and Goiya each discharging its respective obligations to society. Those who did not belong to these four main grades of society were known as *Kshudrayo*, who too had various duties to perform, in the service of the Town, or in the houses, known among the Tamils as Kudimakkal, among the Sinhalese as Nagarkara, for all recognised in a true democratic spirit, the dignity of labour; though of different sorts. The Burgher community in Ceylon too, differentiated between the Europeest, Castiz, Purstis, and Mistis. Referring to the past of various civilized countries, it cannot be denied that in England, in olden times, there were class divisions *e.g.* gentry, farmer, peasants, labourers, village tradesmen &c. (Vide 'Social England' by H. D. Traill;) even in ancient Sparta regarded by some as an *ideal* State, perfect equality was not to be found; and Dean Inge states that in America the men who drew up the Declaration of Independence, and asserted that all men are naturally equal, did not mean that their slaves were equal to themselves. In England during the 15th, 16th and 17th centuries we are told that Heralds held their visitations periodically, and noted down in Registers, like the Thombo holders of Ceylon who noted in Thombos, the pedigrees of families, dividing them into classes such as Gentry Farmer, Peasant, Labourer, Serf, Village Tradesmen and Freemen, affording evidence that social distinctions existed even then. In the county of Devon visitations were held by Heralds in 1531, 1564, 1572, and 1620; and in the lists which appear in 1620, we are told by S. Baring Gould in 'Old country life' p. 18 that in South Devon among the names mentioned in the Parish Register as being of *gentle* families and *good* blood, are Edgecumbes, Hillerdons, Collings, Fowells, Fords, Coplestons, Prideaux, Savery, Reynolds, Kempthornes and others. Even in modern England, social distinctions which depend on wealth and education exist, as the respected and distinguished Editor of 'The Epiphany' (published at Calcutta) states in the issue of May 14, 1927, though they must be regarded as 'fluid.'

Whether as the learned historian Revd. Father S. Gnanapragasam O. M. I., states, Caste system was introduced by the Aryans among the Dravidians (vide Historical Aspect of Christianity and Buddhism p. 11) or even vice versa, J. E. Tennent in his 'History of Ceylon' says that after the arrival of Wijaya and his followers, the system in all its minute subdivisions, and Slavery both domestic and praedial, prevailed throughout the

Island'. That many crimes were committed owing to misunderstanding of *original* ideals, by men in the past, is evident from the statement of a very distinguished Ceylonese scholar and historian, that a man who ventured to cover his house with tiles, without being entitled to that distinction, had it pulled down to the ground by order of his superior, and that a poor tailor whose love of finery led him to be married in a scarlet jacket, was nearly killed at the Church door. Barrister Donald Obeyesekere, M. A., L. L. D., in his 'Outlines of Ceylon History' ps. 18 and 19 says that it was not till the year 1802 that a Priest of a lower caste than the Goigama, was permitted to enter the high order known as Upasampada, and that till then, men of the *low* castes had to remain in the lower order of the Priesthood known as Samanera, however learned some of them may have been. The author of the 'Ceylon Gazetteer' actually refers to a practice confined chiefly to the inferior classes of the Tamils, where one of a *lower* class wishes to equalize with, and sit and eat with one of a *higher* class, which is done by signifying his intentions to the Chiefs and leaders of his caste, raising and decorating a pandal with white cloth, inviting those necessary to be present at the ceremony of shaving and wearing the head gear, entertaining the guests to a sumptuous feast, making suitable presents, and donating a sum of money to the temple. Students of history are aware that in different countries and at different periods, and even in the same country at various times, there have been various customs, ordinances, standards of right and wrong and also various standards of respectability. Many things considered legal and proper at one time, like Polygamy and Slavery are now condemned as wrong. So stringent were the regulations regarding slavery in Ceylon during Dutch Rule, when many Ceylon Chetties too possessed slaves, that a slave who ran away from his master was sentenced to be hanged; and those masters who endeavoured to emancipate their slaves, were threatened with punishment (Vide Legislative Enactments of 1656). Religion too at one time was under the domain of force, such that Parliament in 1648 provided that those who were found guilty of eight errors in Doctrine were sentenced to death, and those who disobeyed the Church in respect of sixteen others, were sentenced to indefinite imprisonment; and religious wars were carried on in the past, which today are regarded as a disgrace to humanity. Some fifty years ago, Religion and Science were at conflict with each other, and some thought it the fashion to follow agnostics like Huxley (vide Nineteenth Century and after, March 1927). About 1711, during the regime of His Excellency the Dutch Governor Hendrik Becker, demon worship and idolatry were prohibited in Ceylon, and those who led a life of duplicity in religion were punished by the law of the land, while the observance of Sunday was enforced. Such was the standard of integrity, and such the

value placed on various commodities in days gone by, that in 1659 in Ceylon, theft of cinnamon and even the purchasing and selling of it, was punishable with death, while about 1770 theft of about five shillings worth of goods from a shop was similarly punished; and we are told that a girl of 22 was hanged for receiving a piece of woollen stuff from the man who had stolen it. About that period, debt was punished with what often was imprisonment for life, and duelling was the recognised mode of settling all personal disputes, and no attempt was made to treat even the killing of a man in a duel as wilful murder.

With respect to social changes, Buckle in his 'History of Civilization' says that in Scotland after 1748, the interests of civilization, that is the interests of knowledge, of liberty, and of wealth assumed the upper hand, and reduced men like the Highlanders to utter insignificance, and that the traders and inhabitants of towns became prominent. At another time when a mercantile and money making spirit was diffused, men were valued for their wealth, as well for their birth, and thus a *new* standard was set up.

In Ceylon, over a hundred years ago, the God-given heritage of birth—the product of successive generations of holy matrimonial alliances, cultural traditions and high ideals, and not the mere accumulation of wealth, seems to have been the standard of respectability, for, says Philaetbes in his 'Account of Ceylon' "Riches are *not* here valued, nor make *any* the more honourable, for many of the lower sorts do far exceed these 'Hamedrewos' (aristocrats) in estates, but it is the birth and parentage that ennobleth." Indeed so much importance was attached to this standard of respectability during the Dutch period, and even in early British times, that many resorted to the device of assuming *respectable* surnames, (as judged by the above mentioned standard) with the result that Ordinances had to be passed forbidding it.

In olden times when standards of judgment were different from the present, the Ceylon Chetties were, it must be admitted, rigid observers of various customs. They opposed by stringent rules the intermingling of lower grades with the higher, as was the custom among Sinhalese too at that period, and were very fastidious with respect to their matrimonial alliances, and in many respects resembled the ancient Jews, who reprimanded Our Lord for sitting and eating with publicans and sinners. Indeed the Ceylon Chetties were very keen in those days about the avoidance of the evil effects of base associations, and vicious company, for they knew too well that evil communications could corrupt good manners, and that a man was generally known by the company he kept. According to the ancient social institution in Ceylon known as Caste, those performing the functions of a domestic servant, known among the Tamils as "Kudimakkel", or Town servants, and known among the Sinhalese as "Nagarkaras", by reason of the disadvantage of the lack of opportunities of good

education and breeding, culture and training, were *not* considered as being in a position to associate on equal terms, or be in the company of the Ceylon Chetties and other respectable folk, whether Dutch Burghers, or Tamils of the North and East, or Kandyan, of olden times. Similar distinctions then existed among the low country Sinhalese too, who were particular as to the company with whom they wined and dined, so much so, that on one occasion some Sinhalese aristocrats actually refused to sit with some other folk at a Governor's banquet, presumably as a man was known by the company he kept; for as a very distinguished oriental poet—Sadi, a Persian, has said (as rendered in English by Arnold):—

“ Pass by the *merchant's* fragrant wares,
Thy robes the scent of amber bears.
Go where the *smith* his trade pursues,
Thy mantle's folds have dusky hues.”

It is interesting to note that among points of similarity between the Ceylon Chetties and ancient Hebrews, was the appointment of a “Chief” of every tribe, designated among the Hebrews as the “Prince” of the tribe or “Head” of thousands, corresponding to the “Setti—Talamai” or “Head” of the Chetties. Indeed it was the duty of this “Head” of the Chetties, among other things, to look to the maintenance of the social status and respectability of the Chetty Community, by eliminating from any social function, with the aid of a barber who carried out his orders, any persons of inferior grades of society, to preclude possibilities of social deterioration or downward tendency. Thus each community was like a police to itself, and in those days there were no abductions, divorce cases, nor any question of women's rights and men's wrongs. Appointments as “Heads” of Chetties were generally confined to Government servants. The following were among those who at various times were appointed “Heads” of Chetties, both Christian and Heathen:—

HEADS OF CHRISTIAN CHETTIES.

1750. Simon de Melho—Chief Tamil Mudaliyar of the Gate—(Rasa Vasul) who was attached to the personal staff of *ten* Dutch Governors. Head of the Protestant Chetties.
1763. Christoffel Fernando Marudappa—Head of the Roman Catholic Chetties.
1780. Juan Fernando Pulle Chettiar—Protector of the Tamil inhabitants and Head of the Chetties.
1785. John Jurgen Ondaatjie—Interpreter to the Dutch Commander—Head of the Chetties at Galle.
1803. John de Rosairo—son of Matthew de Rosairo—Head of Chetties at Galle.
1816. Abraham Rodrigo Devanasa (Mootpokistna)—Mudaliyar of the Governor's Gate. Head of the Protestant Chetties.

1816. Saviel Rodrigo Pulle—Head of the Chetties at Palleagoda.
1825. Don Simon de Melho Wannigerkoon—Chief Tamil Mudaliyar of the Governor's Gate and Head of the Protestant Chetties in Colombo.
1825. Don William Francisco Vander Poogalen Marudappa—Head of the Roman Catholic Chetties (Walawity Corle).
1825. W. C. A. Fernando Pulle—Head of the Christian Chetties (Kandy).
1825. P. Anandappa Chetty—Head of the Christian Chetties (Kalpentyn).
1833. Louis de Rosairo—Mudaliyar—Head of the Chetties at Galle.
1835. Baja Sri Abraham Rodrigo Mootookistna—Modeliyar of the Governor's Gate and Head of the Protestant Chetties.
1844. Manuel Morgappa Wanigeratne—Mudaliyar of the Governor's Gate and Head of the Protestant Chetties.
1847. Solomon Rodrigo Mootookistna—Mudaliyar of the Governor's Gate and Head of the Protestant Chetties.
1857. Manuel Abraham Rodrigo Mootookistna—Mudaliyar of the Governor's Gate and Head of the Protestant Chetties.

HEADS OF HEATHEN CHETTIES

1821. Muttoo Ambalawanar Chetty—(Treasury Shroff).
1825. Wytheanadhen Odear—Head of the Heathen Chetties at Calpentyn.
1825. Swaminathen Edirmanasingham—Head of the Heathen Chetties, Colombo.
1850. Muttu Coomaraswamy—Gate Mudaliyar. Head of the Heathen Chetties.

Other communities too had their own "Heads" or "Chiefs," e. g. Head Moorman, Head of the Silversmiths, Head of the Goldsmiths, Head of the Barbers, Head of the Washermen, Head of the Fishers, &c., &c.

The Ceylon Chetty Community included in the term 'vaisiyas', or more correctly 'Tana Vaisiyas' of the Waniger or Merchant class (e. g. Waniger-koon, Wanigeratne) by reason of the culture, training, and business qualities during several successive generations, came to be characterized by special hereditary tendencies, and distinctive traits.

Selkirk in his 'Recollections of Ceylon' says that the tribe called 'Vaisyas' who constitute the nobility, are divided into (1) Tana Vaisyas commonly called *Chetties*, the most *honourable, industrious, and enterprising* race of men in the Island. Right Hon. W. E. Thompson Sharpe, Member of Parliament for North Kensington, writes that 'the *Chetty* race are the *flower* of the Tamil people in India and Ceylon', the Government Archivist of Ceylon, Mr. E. Reimers says that 'this community have identified themselves with commercial activities . . . and their *reputed*

integrity in these transactions has never been questioned', &c., &c. (Vide Appendix A). Such were the *distinctive* characteristics which during successive generations of learning, culture, and training, the Ceylon Chetties developed. So was it among other communities also. Handicrafts and mechanical arts, among those engaged in such service, vastly improved. The secrets of trades were handed down from father to son, and the experience of centuries were concentrated on each. The Indian workman did not have his equal in many arts. An Officer of the Ceylon Rifles in his 'History of Ceylon' p. 283 says, "Look at the exquisite buildings in India, look at their carvings, their Trichnopoly chains which an European workman cannot make, their carpets, shawls, &c. their steel made on perfectly scientific and chemical principles; two thousand years since, England cannot surpass; in proof, Sheffield manufacturers stamp their often inferior goods, 'Indian steel' to enhance their value.' Thus each class or community, recognising the dignity of various sorts of labour, and possessed of hereditary traits, continued to develop distinctive qualities, and worked harmoniously for the common good; and the best type of each was to be found.

As regards the idea that there is benefit accruing from *successive generations of special training*, even the Turf affords ample evidence, for does not the classification of Race horses, and the weeding out of undesirables, depend on pedigree? Were we in need of a great religious Teacher or Reformer, we should naturally look for one such, *not* from among a community who has given dazzling evidence of material civilization, but from among those who by generations of intellectual, moral, and spiritual culture, have already produced world teachers and Reformers. In the realm of politics to-day, we realize the fact that Britishers, are by reason of their experience through *successive generations*, regarded as the most competent to govern countries composed of various nationalities, and it is no vain compliment to say that the British Government is the most *humane* of all Governments that have hitherto existed in Ceylon. We do not however deny that God has made of one blood all nations of the earth, and that despite all discrimination of race and colour, it would not be possible, if equal opportunities were assured, for men of learning, ability, spirituality and integrity of character, like the post Tiruvalluvar of old who belonged to an inferior social grade, to rise to prominence even if caste prejudice was very strong. Such men could even qualify themselves *in course of time* in the art of good Government, for reformation never came in a flood; nor do we venture to state that individuals whether of majority or minority communities, whatever their social grade may be, provided they have ability and character, and are devoid of prejudice, are incapable of discharging the duties of the most exalted offices in this Island.

Indeed there have been many cases when men of genius of inferior grades, have shone very brilliantly, and common experience teaches us that when we are dazzled by the brilliancy of a diamond, we never care to dive into the history of its origin.

Students of history are aware that great social changes generally follow important political events such as Wars, Revolutions, &c. and in this progressive age, members of various communities however conservative they may have been in the past, must be prepared for social reconstruction within reasonable limits, and without detriment to noble ideals. Talleyrand tells us that the life of the French aristocracy was very pleasant before the Revolution, but since the disappearance of the Feudal spirit, conditions were transformed. In England too, about that period, barriers between ranks and classes were to a large extent broken down. That radical changes often cause grief to some, is evident from the fact that when the Reform Bill of 1832 received the Royal Assent, the Lord Bathurst of the period who had been a member of the Duke of Wellington's Cabinet, solemnly cut off his pigtail saying 'Ichabod', for "*the glory has departed.*" Among the results of the Constitutional Reforms introduced into Ceylon in 1832, the system of allotment of separate residential quarters for various communities was abolished, and people irrespective of caste or creed, were allowed to reside wherever they pleased. Dean Inge in an article contributed to the Morning Post on 'Racialism and Christianity' remarked some time ago, that social systems in some Western countries, have crumbled in a *few centuries*, and Lord Ronaldshay who presided at a meeting of the East India Association, not very long ago, is reported to have observed that it is not advisable to procure a revolution in India's social system which had *suited them so long*. In view of these statements, we await with keen anxiety the results of the introduction of the Donoughmore Reforms, in our little Island of Ceylon, and its effect on various communities. It is apparent to the keen observer, however, that beneath the manifold diversity of physical and social type, language, customs, and religions, which differentiate communities, that from Point Pedro in the North to Point-de-Galle in the South, and from the Metropolitan City of Colombo in the West to distant Batticaloa in the East, now connected by train, there is an underlying uniformity of life, and that there are even now not a few men, imbued with that spirit of love, sympathy, and service, which breathe through the New Testament, who regard labour and wealth as of equal worth in the service of humanity; and we foresee that in the new era *about to dawn*, it would be found that all Ceylonese would regard education as the medium of moulding character, and not merely as a passport to high office, and the securing of large salaries, that Laws would not grind the poor, while rich men rule the Law; that Might would not trample down Right; that action would be consistent with speech, that women, with distinctive feminine

qualities, and not as undeveloped men, would aim at higher ideals of social life than at present, that mothers would spend more time and energy in training their children to be healthy and good citizens, while childless and unmarried women would effect reforms for the general good, avoiding many sins of society which contaminate modern life, and that new standards of worth and judgment, based on spirituality, noble ideals, and high character, would be set up. Then, Aristocrats, Plutocrats, Conservatives, Liberals, Tana Vaisyas, Ratamahatmayas and Hamuduruvos, would join hand in hand with all others, whatever their race or colour or creed may be, and acclaim in joyful strain, with one accord,

‘What care I for race or creed?
It is the deed, it is the deed.
What for class, or what for clan?
It is *the man*, it is *the man*.
Heirs of love and joy and woe,
Who is high, and who is low?
Mountain, valley, sky and sea,
Are for *all humanity*.’

Another social institution which existed from the time of the ancient Hebrew Patriarchs, with which the Ceylon Chetties were also associated in olden days, was the system of Slavery. This system which at one time was legally established in England, was largely prevalent in this Island, and some idea may be formed from the fact that about 1839 the number of slaves exclusive of the Seven Korles, amounted to 27,397, though the population of Ceylon at that time, is alleged to have been only about 1,350,611.

During the Dutch period and under early British Rule, many Ceylon Chetties too possessed slaves, some of whom, on special occasions, were requisitioned by their owners to swell their retinue by way of adding to the pomp and splendour of various functions, (See also Chap. II. Domestic habits) The Ceylon Chetties not only regarded the slaves as forming part of the household, and treated them well, but also bestowed lands and various gifts, as may be discovered from old Last Wills and Title Deeds. As a specific instance of slaves forming part of the moveable property of Ceylon Chetties, may be mentioned the fact that Gate Mudaliyar and Adigar Simon de Melho, gave on the occasion of the marriage of his daughter Susanna with Mudaliyar Don Juan Illangakoon of the Southern Province, as dowry, not only her weight in gold, and extensive landed property, but also twenty five male and female *slaves* as well. Indeed, so affectionate were some slaves to their Ceylon Chetty owners, that even after the Proclamation of the Abolition of Slavery by that kind and humane Governor Sir Robert Wilmot Horton, many slaves though emancipated, were loath to leave their owners. That system, be it said to the credit of the benign and humane British Christian Government, has now ceased to exist in Ceylon, and no form of slavery of any kind, is now practised by Ceylon Chetties. (Vide Appendix B for Certificates, Notices, &c., regarding slaves).

CHAPTER V.

LANGUAGE, LITERATURE AND EDUCATION.

As regards the Tamil language, which is the mother tongue of the Ceylon Chetties, and which is the oldest of all languages spoken in South India, Taylor in his Preface to Dr. Retler's Tamil English Dictionary part IV, says that *Tamil* means 'sweet' and is 'copious, refined, and polished'. Few nations have so many poets as the Tamils. 'Poetry seems to have been the first fixed form of language amongst them, all ancient books even those on Medicine, are in Poetry' says Simon Casiechetty C. C. S. Author of the 'Tamil Plutarch'. Pandyan kings of Madura from 9th century B. C. to 14th century AD. offered liberal inducements to poets, and would have honoured the Court of Augustus. Like the Royal Academy of Sciences founded by Louis XIV at Paris, the Pandyan kings at Madura had their different Sangams or Colleges, for promoting literature and preserving the purity and integrity of the language. From all parts of South India, Poets crowded into Sanga Mandapam, to recite compositions, and Royal favour, and presentations of purses of gold, elephants and horses, lands and money, were made by distinguished men, in appreciation of literary merit. Tamil Literature was flourishing, till during the early part of the 14th century, when Mahomedan hordes poured into South India, and Prakrama Pandiyan was led away captive to Delhi, the Tamils lost all their literature; for all the genius reared for ages, were confined to the flames; but since the occupation of Ceylon by the British, Tamil literature revived.

It is also asserted by some writers that the Edicts of Asoka were proclaimed in Tamil, and that there is mention made in the Lalita Vistara, a Biography of Buddha in Sanscrit, which is said to have been translated into the Chinese language in the first century, that Buddha seems to have studied Tamil, which proves incidentally the antiquity of the Tamil language; while the similarity of words such as 'mukta' the Sanscrit name for 'Pearl', in Tamil 'mutthu', the Greek name for 'rice' 'orizza' like the Tamil 'Arisi', the Greek name 'Peperi' like the Dravidian 'Pippali' long pepper &c; &c afford linguistic proof of Dravidian element, in connection with commerce with ancient Greece.

In days gone by, Tamils of high social status, and respectability, including many Ceylon Chetties, not only appreciated the value of learning, and were many of them skilled in both Tamil and foreign literature, but also encouraged the growth and progress of civilization and culture in others, for we learn from the 'Tamil Plutarch' published in 1859, that a distinguished Poet of Southern India, Kulangei Tambiran of the sacred city

of Kanjipuram, a descendant of the ancient family of Adondai Chakravarti, who was a great Sanscrit and Tamil Scholar, and whose Epic poems were remarkable for their elegant and harmonious versification, dedicated several of his Epic poems to the celebrated Linguist and eminent Divine Rev. Philip de Melho of the Chetty Community, as a tribute of respect to his great worth and literary abilities. Such was De Melho's ability, that during the time of the Dutch Governor Schreuder, he was commonly styled 'Rabbi de Melho' and sometimes as 'the Great Labourer.'

The following stanza from the second canto of the Epics of Kulangei Tambiran, rendered into English, would afford some evidence of the intellectual abilities of the pious Divine, and the respect in which he was held :—

"The clouds darted lightnings, bright as the light of wisdom, in the mind of the learned teacher Philip de Melho, sounded as the words of instruction proceeding from his mouth, and poured down rain with a benevolence like his to promote the happiness of mankind."

The fourth stanza runs thus :—

"Gladdening the inhabitants of the earth, the rains poured down incessantly, and it seemed as if they were bathing the mount Zion whereon the holy name of our God, the God of gods, is peculiarly distinguished."

As additional instances of the encouragement of learning and literature, may be mentioned the case of Arunachala Kavirayer of Vellala caste, who in 1754 on his way to Pondicherry, sang the 'Rama Nadagam,' which he composed, before Manoli Muttukrishna Modeliar, beginning thus :—

'Hail, O Muttukrishna, thou skilled in all languages !....., I am coming to wait on thee with the sacred Ramayana to obtain thy favour. I shall explain its meaning, and it is for thee to hear it. I am the Nymphaea flower which expands all night, and thou art the moon, I am the corn, and thou art the reigning cloud, I am the lotus flower, and thou art the sun' &c. &c.

On hearing the song Muttu Krishna loaded Arunachala Kavirayer with gifts, whereupon the poet concluded thus :—

'He gave me gold, and heaped riches upon me, he gave me the products of the different countries, he gave me encouragement, he gave me a wreath to be worn on the head, he gave me honour by seating me on the poetic throne, he gave me the history of Rama to all' &c. &c. closing with the line.

"So gave Manoli Muttu Krishna who cherishes the world."

One more instance of the encouragement of learning was that of Ananda Bharati Aiyengar, son of Srinavasa Iyengar, who was

born in 1786 near Tanjore, who in his 13th year composed a drama of exquisite beauty, which so pleased Asyarappa, a very wealthy citizen, that he honoured the Poet with the gift of a house and garden, conferring on him the title of 'Kaviraja Swami.'

As yet another instance of the appreciation of literary merit among members of the Chetty community, was the dedication of some didactic poems of a high order, to District Judge Simon Casiechitty of Calpenty, (who was himself skilled in Tamil and foreign literature), by the distinguished composer Vedhagiri Mudaliyar, who was born in 1795 of a Tuluva Velala family at Kulatur in the Carnatic, a peculiarity of which composition was the fact that almost every stanza ended with the name 'Casiechitty.' Among poet Vedhagiri Mudaliyar's compositions are Manunidi Sadagam, Manvikijana Sadagam, Nitichintamani, and Sanmagasaram, of which the first three contain 100 stanzas each, and the last 110.

It is also said of a well known Tamil Poet Inbakavi whose Christian names were Xavier Henrie Leam, of about a hundred years ago, that on a visit to the *first* Kacheri Mudaliyar of Jaffna, Philip-Rodrigo Muttukistna of the Ceylon Chetty Community, he was challenged to improvise a stanza, which should begin with the word 'Mai' (black paint), and end with the word 'Mai-ir' (hair). The visitor very readily gave a beautiful impromptu, connecting the Mudaliyar's son, Abraham Muttukistna with the colour of the 'hair' of his fiancé, and later on wrote a drama called 'Kuravanjei' in honour of the Mudaliyar, which elicited great admiration for its musical cadence and vivid colouring, for which he appears to have been amply compensated.

The members of the Ceylon Chetty Community of over half a century ago received their education during the Portuguese period in Tamil Schools, or through private instructors, in their homes and in the seven or eight Portuguese Colleges and Seminaries which existed in various parts of the Island; and by visits to the different Singams in South India. These Portuguese Colleges and Seminaries were situated in Colombo, Mutwal, Negombo, Namagamawa, Cotta, Chilaw, Calpenty, Galle, Jaffna, etc., and were under the supervision of Franciscan Friars, Dominicans, Capuchins and Jesuit Priests, and including various schools numbered over a hundred. These Institutions where education was imparted free of charge, were intended chiefly for "Religious Instruction, Reading, Writing, Singing, Latin and good customs." In the Jesuit College at Colombo which stood near the present Consistory Buildings at Pettah, we are told by a very competent authority that there was a Secondary Department of lessons in the Humanities and Rhetoric and also a superior course of Moral Philosophy. With respect to the natural abilities of the students of this College, Revd. S. G. Perera, S. J. states

that Tavernier observed that they were "so quick and intelligent that they learnt in six months more Latin, Philosophy, and other sciences than Europeans acquire in one year, and that they questioned the Revd. Fathers with such subtlety and so deeply that he was amazed." Similar amazement was expressed with regard to the intellectual abilities of Lauka's sons by a Dutch Governor many years later, to which we refer below. During the Dutch period, the system of education was founded on a sound basis and was admitted to be very satisfactory, and with the growth and progress of European civilization, some of the ancient Ceylon Chetties were educated in the suburban Parish Schools, where Tamil and Sinhalese were also taught, which were under the management of the Scholarchal Commission whose duty it was to see, among other things, to the preparation of the School Thombos or Registers, which contained details regarding each student, the names of his parents, their family history, dates of birth, baptisms, marriages, deaths, their educational qualifications, what offspring they had, &c. In those days attendance at School was compulsory and by no means expensive.

It is interesting to note that the School Thombo Holder of that period was regarded as a man of some consequence, unlike many village school-masters of a few years ago, and such was the regard for the School-master of the Metropolitan School at Wolfendahl Colombo, that the Head Teacher (Palliya Maha Gurnnase) was at one time appointed Mahamudaliyar by the Dutch Government.

Very often Junior teachers themselves were examined as to their qualification, and reports were sent to the Dutch Government. In October 1704, the Predikanten G. de Aude and P. Synjen and the Scholarch (School Inspector) G. de Costa visited the schools, and in their Report to the Dutch Governor Simons, *inter alia*, say that Manuel de Melho, master of the Negombo Malabar School "had learnt three Malabar Catechisms and on being examined gave ready answers." (Vide Cey. Lit. Register 1829. p. 53.)

Ancient Ceylon Chetty youths, barring those who attended Suburban Schools &c., were educated in the Dutch Seminary in Colombo which was opened in 1696, and intended solely for training youths of good family. Among such were William Juriaan Ondaatjie, Philip de Melho (who afterwards became Rector of the Seminary), Philip Jurgen Ondaatjie and Henricus Philipsz Wijekoon Panditteratne. At this Institution were taught Hebrew, Greek, Latin, Mathematics, Moral Science, &c. &c. and it is stated that on one occasion when the Dutch Governor Van Imhoff visited the Institution he was delighted to see the dusky youths talking in Latin and poring over Greek. And such was the honour and dignity which

attached to the Teaching Profession at that period that the responsible Clergy refused to hold the Examination on one occasion, because the Governor's carriage had not been sent to convey them. (Vide 'Ceylon and the Hollanders' by Dr. Paul E. Peiris, C. C. S., M. A., D. Lit.) After completing their course at the Dutch Seminary in Ceylon, some Chetty youths, who were selected by the Dutch Government for their brilliancy, and also others who could have afforded it, proceeded to Utrecht or Leyden University to complete their course, like Revd. William Juriaan Ondaatjie J. U. D. who was a fellow student of the Dutch Governor Inam Falck; Dr. Peter Quint Ondaatjie, J. U. D. who was a fellow student of the Poet Bellamy; Revd. Manuel Morgappa, J. U. D. and others. In some cases owing to distance, risks of a long voyage (of nearly six months in those days) and the anxiety of mothers, Chetty youths of exceptional brilliancy, though selected as qualified students to be sent to the Leyden University by the Dutch Government, like Revd. Philip de Melho, who refused the honour and privilege, and others who also could have afforded the expense, were loath to leave Ceylon.

About the end of the 17th century, with the growth of civilization and Christianity, and the introduction of the Printing Press in 1739 by the Dutch Governor Van Imhoff, rapid progress was made by Ceylon Chetties. Revd. E. B. Swalier in a paper entitled 'The activity of our fathers in regard to the progress of Christian civilization' says that 'Colombo at *that time* was a centre of civilization, and Ceylon was also in that respect a precious gem in the Crown of Holland'!! The system of education was during this period not merely bi-lingual but multi-lingual, if we may say so. [For list of publications by Ceylon Chetties and others, compiled by Mr. Matthew P. Jurgen Ondaatjie (at onetime Senior officer of the Colonial Office, Colombo) vide Cey. Lit. Register Vol. II. ps. 100 and 108. and also elsewhere in this book.] It must be said to the credit of the ancient Chetties that many of them were masters of their mother tongue (Tamil), and of foreign languages as well, and also published many books in those languages. In continuation of an instance already given, we would mention the case of Revd. Philip de Melho who about 1778 delivered a discourse on Tamil philology at Jaffna, in the presence of the Dutch Commandeur, at which was specially invited to be present the Revd. Mr. Klein who was then regarded as the best Tamil Scholar among the Danish Missionaries then residing at Tranquebar. After hearing the Discourse, the Revd. Mr. Klein is said to have exclaimed with astonishment '*Quantum est quod nescimus*' and further added 'I thought, I understood the Tamil language, but I must now confess that I am yet a common learner, and wish my circumstances permitted me to remain some time longer to learn from brother De Melho something more of that language, and requested De Melho to give his

brother Missionaries and himself, some instructions in the Tamil language by means of correspondence, and to correct their writings, with which request De Melho cheerfully complied. (Vide 'Tamil Plutarch')

The following extract from a Despatch sent to the Company's Directors by the Dutch Governor dated 5th August 1760, would afford further evidence as to Revd. De Melho's linguistic ability, and also incidentally throw some light with regard to past Ecclesiastical History in Ceylon.

"To hear of the regular performance of Divine Service at Colombo by the Revd. Messrs. Bronsveld, Zybrands and Meyer, and at Wolfendahl by the Revd. Messrs. Ondaatjie and Philipsz, as also at Jaffna by the Revd. Messrs. De Melho and Jansz, at Galle by the Revd. Messrs. Schoultz and Smith, and at Trincomalie by the Revd. Mr. de Zelun, and that the Revd. Peter Cornelius who has recently arrived there is about to be employed by you to the no small benefit of the Church of God, has not been less agreeable to us, than that the translation of the New Testament into the Tamil language, has at length by the praise-worthy labours of the Revd. Mr. de Melho, fully attained its object, as appears from the copies thereof which reached us, and this being now completed, we hope and wish that the blind heathen may be more and more enlightened and conducted to the true knowledge of our Rational Religion. As the only object we have in view in this respect is the promotion of true sanctifying faith, so is it likewise to manifest to that *Great Labourer*, our particular satisfaction, that we have at the day of our sitting granted his Reverence, our unsolicited extraordinary augmentation from 80 to 100 florins a month, as an evident token how readily on our part we reward faithful services, as we in like manner, on the same day, and for the same reasons granted 100 florins to the Rector of the Seminary Dr. Meyer, in the expectation that they would henceforth redouble their zeal." This proves the fact, that at that period there was neither a sense of *national* consciousness, nor racial and colour discrimination between Europeans and Asiatics of culture, and respectability of birth. Under early British Rule, during the Administration of Governor North, English was substituted for Dutch in the Parish Schools, the supervision of which was for many years under the capable management of clergymen like Rev. James Cordiner, first Anglican Colonial Chaplain (who wrote a History of Ceylon) and Hon. and Ven'ble Dr. T. J. Twistleton D.D. first Anglican Arch-deacon of Colombo, who was said to have been extremely sympathetic and courteous. The Reports of the Central School Commission testifying during that period, regarding some Ceylon Chetty Students, say of Philip Rodrigo MoStookisna (afterwards first Chief Kacheri Mudaliyar of Jaffna) a student in the first *English* School in Ceylon, that "at eleven years of age he

was regarded as the smartest and most attentive student." Referring to another Ceylon Chetty youth some years later viz. Henry Francis Muttakistna (afterwards *first* Tamil Barrister in Asia, of Oriel College Oxford) the Report states that "he had retentive powers and a fine style of composition, and that he was in the first class, and carried off the First Prize."

In Parish Schools like the Normal Training Institute of which Dr. Andrew Kessen was Principal, the Normal School in Galle, and Private Institutions like Mrs. Taylor's School, George Staples Academy, Thomas Rae's English School at Kalutara, the Native Normal Institution which was remodelled in 1848, the Mission School established in April 1812 by Revd. and Mrs. Charter, the Wesleyan Schools in Colombo, Jaffna, Batticaloa which about 1815 were under the supervision of educationists like Lynch, Sqaunce, Ault, Erskine, Clough, Harvard, and in more recent times by Nicholson, Otfley Rhodes, Strutt and Philips, the American Mission Schools which about 1816 were managed by Messrs. Richards, Warren, Bardwell, Wincox: Baptist Mission Schools at Grandpass, Pettah, Madampe, Ratnapura, where F. Ondaatjie was one of the Tutors, Church Mission Schools which since 1818 were supervised by men like Knight, Ward, Mayor, Lambrick, Browning, Rowlands, and the Educational Institution at Calpenty, which was under the able superintendence of Wesleyan Missionaries like Revd. Benjamin Ward, Spence Hardy, Clough and Freear, many Ceylonese, including Ceylon Chetties, who rose to prominence in later life, received their education. In the last mentioned Institution (at Calpenty) was educated Simon Casiechitty (afterwards at various times District Judge, and Member of the Legislative Council, who was the Author of several literary works, and whose translation of 'Turnour's Epitome of Ceylon' was the text book for Civil Servants), of whom His Excellency Right Hon. Sir Robert Wilmot Horton, in the course of a speech nominating him to a seat in the Legislative Council, and His Grace Most Revd. Dr. Bonjean, D. D. first Archbishop of Colombo, and His Lordship Right Revd. Dr. James Chapman, D. D. first Anglican Bishop of Colombo, have all spoken in highly eulogistic terms. At the Institution at Calpenty was also educated his first born son Schwartz Horton Templer Casiechitty, whose bright career was cut short in consequence of an accident he met with at Crystal Palace, London. In those days, when innocence, respect for elders, pure loving kindness, and simplicity, were more in evidence among young people of both sexes than they are today, there were many mixed Schools like Mrs. Long's School at Mutwal, Colombo, Revd. S. D. J. Ondaatjies School where boys and girls of respectable families were educated. In the first named Institution were several Ceylon Chetty lasses such as Mary Anne Casiechitty, daughter of District Mudaliyar John

Paul Casiechitty, Maria Aserappa, (afterwards Mrs. Von Possner and others and lads like John L. Perera of Kuruwe Walauwa) Colombo, Solomon Christopher Obeyesekere, Hector Van Cuylenberg, and others every one of whom was a pride to the community, and a source of inspiration to younger folk, but in these days when things are very different, it is very doubtful whether co-education of boys and girls, and mixed schools, would prove a blessing or otherwise.

At the Colombo Academy which was started in 1835 with Revd. Mr. Marsh as Principal, intended for a high class of education, many distinguished Ceylon Chetties were educated viz. Simon Dedrick Jurgen Ondaatjie (afterwards Colonial Chaplain and Examiner of Civil Servants in Tamil) among whose classmates were James Stewart and Richard Morgan, and who in his nineteenth year was the Senior Student. This Institution afterwards known as the Royal College produced many eminent Ceylon Chetties including John J. Casie Chitty C. C. S., B. A., B. C. L. (Oxon) first winner in Ceylon of the University Prize, during the Principalship of George Todd, first Bachelor of Civil Laws, in Asia, District Judge and Author; Christopher Brito B. A. who in 1860 carried off the Turmour Prize and was also winner of a University Prize, afterwards Advocate and Author; Philip de M. Jurgen Ondaatjie, who at the Divinity Examination held in 1847 by Bishop Chapman was *proxime accessit* to the winner, was Crown Counsel and was for a time member of the Legislative Council in Ceylon, Dr. Philip Brito M. B. C. M. who was Lecturer at the Medical College; Robert Ondaatjie, whose recital of a passage from Henry VI., 'Gloucester to the Nobles,' at an examination held on 20th February, 1845, elicited the admiration of a large number of ladies and gentlemen; Barrister Philip Francis Ondaatjie, Richard H. Aserappa winner of a University Prize, Fellow of Cooper's Hill, Manager of Railways and Engineer in Chief (Gondol) India; Alfred Ernest Aserappa, who won College Prizes and a Law Student's Scholarship, and is now a leading lawyer and wealthy landowner in Negombo, who has often acted as Crown Counsel, Police Magistrate and District Judge, Dr. C. V. Aserappa Chief Medical Officer of Health of the Colombo Municipality; N. W. Morgappa, C.C.S., B.A., L.L.B, who swept the board of prizes in 1918 during his college career, passed first in English in the Civil Service Examination held in England, and is now the Police Magistrate at Kalutara; Aelian J. Ondaatjie of Kegalle, a distinguished and wealthy Proctor who very frequently acted as District Judge with great acceptance, Dr. F. R. Alles M. B. C. M. Provincial Surgeon W. P., Assistant Director of Sanitary and Medical Services who has now retired after many years of arduous and faithful service, are among the *alumni* of the Royal College:

while among Tamils born in the Northern Province also educated in that College may be mentioned Samuel W. Allegacone who won the Turnour Prize in 1870, and was afterwards a very brilliant and successful Advocate in Jaffna, and Ponnambalam Arunachalam (Knight), C. C. S., M. A., who also won the Turnour Prize, Ponnambalam Ramanatham (Knight) M.L.C., K.C., C.M.G. who were both born in Colombo, and Antony P. Savundranayagam, M. A., L.L.D., London, who won the Turnour Prize in 1898, and is now a Barrister practising in Colombo.

The Christian Institute at Cotta which was opened in 1828 with eleven Sinhalese and five Tamils, specially intended for a select number distinguished for their piety and good capacity, where from 1831—1834 Rev. Joseph Marsh was Tutor, was also responsible for the training of some Ceylon Chetties like ¹Simon D. Jurgen Ondaatjie, ²John de Melho Aserappa, ³Simon de Melho Aserappa, M.D.(Edin.) and others, very many years ago. Here were taught Hebrew, Greek, Latin, English, Mathematics and Theology. It may interest readers to know, that some Dutch and British Governors in the past, like His Excellency Sir Herbert J. Stanley, K. C. M. G., of to-day, took a very great interest in education. It is said of the Dutch Governor Van Imhoff that he visited the Dutch Seminary on one occasion and was amazed and delighted to see Ceylonese youth talking in Latin and poring over Greek. Their Excellencies Sir Robert Wilmot Horton, Governor of Ceylon and his beautiful consort Lady Horton, with other distinguished persons also, proceeded to the Institution at Cotta in December 1831 and 1832, and were present at the annual public examination, and even questioned the students on various subjects.

At the Mission School of S. Thomas' at Mutwal, Colombo, founded by His Lordship Rt. Revd. Dr. James Chapman, the first Bishop of the Diocese of Colombo, which started work on 3rd February, 1851 and later developed into S. Thomas' College of first rate importance, were educated some of the most eminent Ceylonese of various communities like, Dr. Paul E. Peiris, C.C.S., M.A. D. Lit., Sir Solomon Dias Bandaranaiake first Ceylonese K. C. M. G. and others. Among members of the Ceylon Chetty Community were Dr. Simon de Melho Aserappa, the first Asiatic who afterwards obtained the Degree of Doctor of Medicine of a British University, and was the *first* Chief Sanitary Officer of Colombo, under British Rule, Revd. Gabriel Rodrigo Muttukistna, the only Tamil Canon of the Cathedral in Ceylon, and Colonial Chaplain; Dr. Simon Rodrigo Muttukistna who was also one of the earliest Asiatic Doctors of Medicine of the British University of Edinburgh. Proctor John de M. Aserappa, at one time Police

1 Colonial Chaplain. 2 Proctor. 3 Doctor.

Magistrate at Avissawella, Proctor Solomon Louis Aserappa who was apprenticed under that distinguished Advocate Charles Ambrose Lorensz, and who for nearly forty years practised his profession at the Metropolitan Bar, G. Edwin Muttukistna Chief Clerk of the Kandy Municipality and landed proprietor, Proctor Aloysius Mt. Carmel Casiechetty a wealthy landed proprietor and Notary of Puttalam, James E. Muttukistna, Chief Cashier Colombo Apothecaries Coy., the Revd. Christian David who for a very long period ministered with acceptance at S. James' Church, Kotahena, Philip Jurgen Ondaatjee who laboured in the Lord's Vineyard at Calpenty and Colombo for many years with great zeal and devotion; Advocate Arthur L. Reginald Aserappa who at the unprecedentedly early age of eleven, won the Cambridge Junior Local Scholarship, and during successive years passed the Calcutta Entrance Examination, Senior Cambridge, London Matriculation, obtained the Degree of Bachelor of Arts at the age of nineteen, was a Senior Student of the Medical College at Calcutta, and having changed his career, passed out as an Advocate and was at various times Crown Counsel, Police Magistrate, Examiner in Law, Commissioner of Requests and District Judge of Colombo. Among other Chetty *alumni* of S. Thomas' College were Peter Rodrigo Pullenayagem, (Municipal Inspector,) Solomon Rodrigo Pullenayagem, (Registrar) Henry Morris Casiechitty, (Interpreter Mudaliyar,) Philip E. Morgappa, W. H. Malleappa, Charles Piers Aserappa, (Tutor at S. Thomas' College). Dr. Philip Muttucumaru, Advocate E. Chetty, C. H. Christie David (Tutor S. Thomas' College,) Dr. E. P. Aserappa (Provincial Surgeon W. P.), besides several others, too numerous to mention here. (See Appendix D.)

The Wesley College at Colombo (originally situated at Dam Street, Pettah, and now at Borella) which for very many years was under the able superintendence of Revd. Mr. Highfield has also been responsible for the Education and training of Ceylon Chetties. Among such may be mentioned Mr. Nicholas Wilfred Morgappa C. C. S., J. P., M. B. E. who was for a considerable time acting as Registrar General of Ceylon with exceptional ability; Advocate James Chitty who was Crown Counsel for the Island, and Proctor Basil O. Pullenayagem, to mention but a few. S. Benedict's College at Kotahena under the guidance and direction of able and zealous Christian Brothers, have also benefited a very large number of Ceylon Chetty youths, not to speak of those of other communities, and among the former are many who have done credit to themselves and the community to which they belong *e.g.* Dr. Philip Brito Babapulle, M. B. C. M., a wealthy and well known Doctor of Colombo, Abraham P. Casiechitty, a very wealthy merchant and landed proprietor, Advocate Caniemenaden, a Scholar and a lawyer who is well known in the Metropolis, William P. Casiechitty, wine merchant and wealthy land owner, Dr.

Clement Anandappa, Very Revd. Father P. M. Alles, O. M. I., Councillor, Victor Casiechitty, (Manager of Messrs. Casiechitty and Co.,) Proctor A. M. Corea, Patrick Anandappa, P. Masillamani and Francis Alles (Bank Shroffs) M. L. Ramenadan Chief Shroff, Colombo Customs, and wealthy landed proprietor, and many members of the Wannappa, Candappa, De Costa, Perumal, Munieram, Fernando Palle, Muttucumaroe, Lingappa, and other families. Institutions like S. Aloysius' College, Galle, which produced men like Dr. F. R. Alles, M.B.C.M., Provincial Surgeon W. P., and Assistant Director of Medical and Sanitary Services, and B. R. J. Ondaatjie, F. R. C. I., a highly competent and popular Journalist; Trinity College Kandy, under the distinguished superintendence of Revds. Messrs. A. G. Fraser and Campbell, and St. Joseph's College, Colombo under the very able supervision of Very Revd. Fathers Le Goc and Le Jeune, are even now training and educating Chetty youths, who we trust would do honour to the community and country to which they belong. (See also Appendix D).

Besides the Local Educational Institutions already referred to, and the ancient and historic seats of learning like Utrecht and Leyden, which may well regard several Ceylon Chetties as among their distinguished *alumni*, there were over half a century ago, and even in more recent times, Ceylon Chetties who were worthy products of the time honoured Universities of Oxford, renowned for Classics and cultural traditions, Cambridge, esteemed for Science and Mathematics, London, regarded as an ideal Examination centre, Edinburgh, as a medium for disseminating Western Medical Science among Eastern peoples, and Cooper's Hill, unsurpassed throughout Great Britain for Engineering. Among such may be mentioned Henry Francis Muttukistna of Oriel College, Oxford who about 1849 ranked as the *first* Tamil Barrister in the world, who was eminently successful in his profession; Barrister John J. Casiechetty, M.A. LL.D., also of Oxford, the second if not the first Asiatic who obtained the rare Degree of Bachelor of Civil Laws; Dr. Simon de Melho Aserappa and Dr. Simon Rodrigo Muttukistna both of whom ranked as the earliest Doctors of Medicine of Edinburgh University, in Asia, Richard H. Aserappa who stood *first* in his day in the Engineering Examination at Cooper's Hill, and was elected a Fellow; now Manager of Railways and Engineer-in-Chief Gondal, India. N. W. Morgappa (Junior) B.A., London now Police Magistrate Kalutara, who came *first* in English in the Civil Service Examination held in England; Dr. C. V. Aserappa who achieved great success in his Examinations in London, Edinburgh, Oxford, and Cambridge, and worthily fills the office in Colombo to-day as Chief Medical Officer of Health, Dr. E. P. Aserappa, M.B.C.M., (Edin.) Provincial Surgeon W. P., Dr. F. R. Alles, M.B.C.M., (Edin.) Assistant Director of Medical and Sanitary Services and very many others. (Vide Appendix D.)

Besides these ancient and historic seats of learning in Europe, are the time honoured Indian Universities and Colleges, e. g. Bishop's College, Calcutta, and Medical College, Calcutta, which have also done much for Ceylonese including Ceylon Chetties. The former, (Bishop's College) a very important Missionary Institution in India, originally situated on the right bank of the Hooghly about four miles below Calcutta, and now at Circular Road, Ballygunge, Calcutta, was founded on 15th December 1820, and was erected in 1824 by Right Revd. Dr. Thomas Fanshawe Middleton, First Anglican Bishop of Calcutta, under sanction of the Supreme Government and the S. P. G. for instructing students in the principles and discipline of the United Church of England and Ireland, especially for missionary work; and the voices of its *alumni* are even now heard in various parts of India and Ceylon. The system of instruction in that College included an English Collegiate Education, with modifications to suit missionary students *viz.*, Theology, Hebrew, Greek, Latin, History, Ancient and Modern, Ecclesiastical and Civil, Elements of Philosophical and Mathematical knowledge, while the teaching of Sanscrit, Bengali, Hindoostani, Persian, Arabic, Tamil, and Singhalese was entrusted to various learned Pundits attached to the College, under the Superintendance of one of the Professors. The following inscription was on the brass plate which was deposited under the Foundation Stone, over a century ago: "*Christi non sine numine laeta haec fuisse primordia credant, agnoscant posterii. Amen.*"

In 1857 this College was affiliated to the University of Calcutta. Nineteen Scholarships were founded for Theological Students, one of which was restricted to Ceylon. Among its Principals were William Hodge Mill, D.D. (1821) Geo. Udney Withers, D.D. (1841) William Kay, D.D. (1849), K. M. Bannerjee, L.L.D., C.I.E., and in later years, Revd. P. L. Nanson, (brother-in-law of Chief Justice Sir Winfield Bonsor, K.C. late of Ceylon) Revd. Richard Gee, M.A. a close relative of the distinguished Canon Scott of classical fame, and son-in-law of the Most Revd. Dr. Reginald Stephen Copleston D.D., &c. &c. Metropolitan of India. This Institution is at present under the very able supervision of the distinguished Prelate Rt. Revd. Dr. Pakenham Walsh, D.D. Among its *alumni* since 1824, past and present, including members of the Ceylon Chetty Community, are D. Jones, J. C. Thompson, A. Godfrey, A. Garstin, J. Bowyer, C. E. Drieberg of Ceylon. (Priest Barripore Mission), T. S. Simpson, A. F. Cramer, Samuel W. Dias. (afterwards Canon of the Colombo Cathedral and Singhalese Colonial Chaplain) C. D. Horst, J. D. Koombes, C. S. Kohlhoff, H. Moore, M. C. Ghose, Krishna Mohan Bannerjee. (afterwards L.L.D., C.I.E. and a distinguished Divine) W. B. Smith, J. J. Jeremiah, B. Ghose, J. G. Dutt, F. W. B. Drieberg of Ceylon (Catechist Barrapore) D. Bannerjee, B. M. Moozoomdar, G. C. Mittra, (Natt Fellow) Simon Dedrick Jurgen

Ondaatjie (Ceylon Chetty) afterwards Colonial Chaplain, E. C. La Brooy of Ceylon (1845), Samuel L. Nicholas of Ceylon (1846), W. H. Gomes of Ceylon (1856), afterwards Priests, Abraham Dias (1857) afterwards Priest in Ceylon, William Charles Ondaatjie of the Ceylon Chetty Community, afterwards Doctor and M. S. A; J. B. Frank of Cawnpore, Lovell Gathpow of Assam, both of whom are now Priests, in India J. Stark, T. Van Griegen, A. F. Aserappa (afterwards Bishop E. A. Copleston's Secretary, Ceylon) J. C. Roome, T. N. Nathaniel, (B. Sc. Tutor St. Thomas' College, Colombo) J. E. Silva, C. H. Vandenberg, B.A. (both Priests in Ceylon, and several others.

Many Ceylones, also owe a debt of gratitude to their *Alma Mater* the Medical College at Calcutta, which was founded in 1834 by Lord William Bentinck, and which was a means for diffusing Western Medical Science among Eastern people. Among its *alumni*, including Ceylon Chetties, may be mentioned P. D. Anthonisz (afterwards M. L. C. & C. M. G. of Ceylon), H. Dickman, (Ceylon) J. Wambeck, (Ceylon) Wm. Chas. Ondaatjie (afterwards M. S. A., Director Botanical Gardens, & Colonial Surgeon in Ceylon), J. Loos, (Ceylon) H. Toussaint, (Ceylon) C. A. Kriekenbeck, (Ceylon) J. Hollowell, L. Wijesinghe, (Ceylon), C. P. Markus, (Ceylon) S. Forbes, T. F. Garvin, (Ceylon) M. Covington, (Batticaloa, Ceylon) J. W. Brechman, J. W. Margenout, R. Andree, (Ceylon) Solomon Fernando, (Ceylon) Arthur L. R. Aserappa, B. A., of Ceylon (Secretary Calcutta Medical Students' Union), Fenn Vethecan, (Ceylon) W. Fernand, (Ceylon) D. John, Calcutta, S. Somasundram, (Ceylon) and W. S. Ratnavale, (Judicial Medical Officer, Colombo), besides others.



CHAPTER VI.

MARRIAGE CUSTOMS AND MARRIAGES.

"I loved the woman: he that doth not, lives
'A drowning life, besotted in sweet self,
'Or pines in sad experience worse than death,
'Or keeps his winged affections clipt with crime."

TENNYSON.

"Nationality is more than a creed or a doctrine or a code of conduct; it is an instinctive attachment: it recalls an atmosphere of precious memories, of vanished parents and friends, of *old customs*, of reverence, of home, and a sense of the brief span of human life as a link between generations."

('Nationality and Government' by PROFESSOR ZIMMERN.)

Marriage laws and customs, as most of us are aware, differ in many respects, in various countries and communities. The Ceylon Chetties of olden times, who were very fastidious in their matrimonial alliances, considered the celebration of marriage and funeral ceremonies as of great importance, and resembled the Celtic nations who regarded 'feasting' as a *sine qua non*, the word 'kalyanam' commonly used for *marriage*, signifying 'conviviality' affording evidence of it, though of course the classical Tamil word is 'Vivaham.' It is noteworthy that in respect of the arrangement of marriages, the Ceylon Chetties of olden times resembled the ancient French, in as much as the absolute responsibility of the arrangement of marriages, devolved on the parents or guardians on both sides, who were credited with a far better acquaintance with the characters of their children, than can belong to any others, or even the young couple themselves; while there was the instinctive confidence felt by the children in the desire and ability of the parents to do what is best for them; and the parents realised that they were able to know what would prove a happy union for both parties.

The social status, moral worth, respectability, &c. of the parties, among the Ceylon Chetties, (as well as in the case of high class Sinhalese and Burghers in olden times,) were matters of the utmost importance. Some idea may be formed of the importance attached to this aspect of marriage among the Sinhalese Royalty from the incident that Prince Sati the only son of King Dutugemunu who married a girl of the inferior Chandala caste, was actually debarred from succession to the throne.

We take it that in respect of marriages, character, spirituality, social status, sufficient means and intellectual sympathy, should be important considerations, and that where these are disregarded many excellent people become hopelessly estranged; for when one discovers that the other is not an adequate compensation for the loss of things he or she cared for, the headstrong impulse at

the time of marriage—whether one is bent on the acquisition of wealth, or effort to rise to a higher social status, or even blindly set on personal gratification, is deservedly though terribly punished, by a sour life and domestic unhappiness.

With respect to inter-racial marriages of Ceylonese, including Ceylon Chetties, we learn that when the Portuguese held sway over some parts of India and Ceylon, it was their policy to establish an affinity between Portugal and her Dependencies, and to achieve this object distinguished Portuguese Generals, and others of high position, stood as sponsors to Sinhalese and Tamil Christian converts, and also conferred their own names, which 'honorifics' were often added on to the ancient 'Patronymics' of the Ceylonese converts, which to this day in very many cases afford evidence of the relic of Portuguese Rule, e.g. *Dias Bandaranayake*, *Pieris Siriwardena*, *Gomes Abeysinghe*, *Rodrigo Muttukistna*, *Pieris Tavereyen*, *Gomes Amaiyappa*, *Rodrigo Pullenayagem*, *Costa Weerappa*, *Silva Wijeynayagar*, *Perera Pulle*, *Fonseka Chetty*, *Casimir Arasaratnam*, &c. &c. (See also p. 37.). In some cases Sinhalese and Tamils adopted the Portuguese style of dress and even spoke the Portuguese language. But the Portuguese, in order to establish more firmly the affinity between Portugal and her Dependencies intermarried among the natives under her sway. As evidence of this, we would quote the cases of Sebastio Gonsalves who in 1609 married the daughter of Anapooran (Mang Phaloung), brother of the Prince of Arakan, as stated by Bocarro (vide History of the Portuguese in Bengal by J. Campos). Dr. Paul E. Pieris C. C. S., D. Lit. &c. &c., in one of his learned contributions to the Asiatic Journal (C. B.) states that perhaps the first case in Ceylon was that of the father of Gaspar de Figueyra who led the mutinous Portuguese Army from Tanque Salgado, and whose mother was a Sinhalese. We have also the case of the mixed marriage of Simao Pinhao, of a noble Portuguese family who in 1592 married the Sinhalese Princess Dona Maria Pereira, heiress of Rajah Sinha I, and also the marriage of the cousin of the King of Cotta, Dom Joao (who was baptized at Goa, died, and was buried there, in the Church of San Francisco) with a Portuguese lady, the daughter of an honourable cavalier.

In Digby's 'Life of Sir Richard Morgau' Portuguese inter-marriages are said to have taken place mainly with Singhalese women, the Tamils then having formed a small proportion of population of the Western coast, but says Dr. P. E. Pieris in his book entitled 'The Portuguese Era,' "three hundred years ago the Portuguese tried to create a new race by intermarrying with the Singhalese, but they never succeeded in their venture. The experiment was tried by a few of the highest and by a large number of the lowest among the people, but the results were so disappointing that the complacency of the Sinhalese soon gave way to the passionate dislike which still dominates their feeling."

The marriage of the grandfather of Mahinda and Sanghamitta

with the daughter of a Greek; of Wijaya whose wife was the daughter of the King of Pandya, (he himself having been connected by maternal descent with the King of Kalinga, now known as the Northern Circars); the case of King Sottistheno A.D. 432. who had a Damilo Queen; the marriage of Queen Annulla of Ceylon A.D. 47 who according to Turnour in his 'Epitome of Ceylon' p. 19. met with no opposition in raising one of her Malabar husbands to the throne; and the mixed alliances alluded to in the Mahawansa Chap. XXXVIII. p. 253, where the queens are described as the 'Damilo' Consorts of their Sovereigns, are additional instances of inter-racial marriages.

During the Dutch period, and under British Rule, such were the friendly relations which existed between Sinhalese, Ceylon Chetties, and European Communities, and such the spirit of internationalism which animated some of them, with due regard to the social and intellectual status of the relative parties, that many inter-racial marriages took place, affording ample evidence of the fact that

'Black hair, black eyes, and brown complexion,

'Cannot forfeit nature's claim.

'Skins may differ, but affection

'Dwells in white and brown the same.

We give below a few instances of inter-racial marriages Ceylon Chetties included :—

Jan Christoffel Scharff of Sangerhausen to Elizabeth de Saram.

Revd. Henricus Philipsz Wijeykoon Panditteratne to Susanna, daughter of Lieutenant Ian Scharff on 4th November 1759.

Adolf Martin Heyman of Luweersteent to Cornelia Henrietta, daughter of Rev. Philipsz and Susanna Scharff on July 26th 1789.

Revd. William Juriaan Ondaatjie, J.U.D. to Hermina Quint of Amsterdam in 1757.

Dr. Peter Philip Jurgen Quint Ondaatjie, A.L.M., J.U.D., Ph.D., Member of the Imperial Court of Prizes, to Christina Hesse, daughter of Adrian Hoevenar of Utrecht, a relative of the great Statesman de Witt, on May 7th 1794.

Major Waller to Miss Ondaatjie (youngest daughter of Dr. Quint Ondaatjie, who with their children visited Ceylon in 1862.

Captain Tighe to Miss Waller (grand-daughter of Dr. Quint Ondaatjie.

Captain Parsons to another grand-daughter of Dr. Quint Ondaatjie.

Captain Staples to yet another grand-daughter of Dr. Quint Ondaatjie.

Matthew Hendrick Steenkelder of the Dutch Civil Service to Maria Magdalene Elizabeth daughter of the celebrated Chetty Divine and Biblical Translator Revd. Philip de Melho, on 6th April, 1786.

Johan Carl Arndt of Westerhausen, resident of Pt. Pedro, to Antonella Victoria de Melho, daughter of Revd. Philip de Melho of the Ceylon Chetty Community in 1762.

Mr. Achensbeek to Miss Ondaatjie, daughter of Major Philip Christian Oortman Ondaatjie, Knight of the Military Order of Prince William of Orange.

Ven'ble T. J. Schrader, L. L. D., Archdeacon of Colombo, to Miss Magdalene Elizabeth Arndt, (grand-daughter of Revd. P. de Melho and Magdalene Jurgen Ondaatjie.) on 2nd December, 1798.

Revd. J. Henricus de Saram, M. A., who, when in England, married a lady there, and brought her to Colombo where according to Bishop Heber, as stated in his Journal they lived very happily together.

Mohottay Mudaliyar Don Simon Illangakoon of Matara to Miss Susanna de Melho, daughter of Adigar Simon de Melho, on 28th June, 1749.

Dr. Simon de Melho Aserappa, M. D., (Edin) to Miss Julia Emily Wake, niece of an Anglican Bishop of Bath and Wells, on 27th July, 1858, in England, Sir Richard Morgan Kt. and Sir Harry Dias Kt. both of whom were afterwards acting Chief Justices in Ceylon, having acted as groomsmen.

Barrister Henry Francis Muttukistna (of Lincoln's Inn) to Miss Elizabeth Pole, daughter of Revd. Reginald Pole a close relative of the well-known family of Pole-Carew, on April 9th 1865.

Advocate Philip de Melho Jurgen Ondaatjie to Miss Fannie Morgan, niece of Sir Richard Morgan, who at one time acted as Chief Justice in Ceylon.

Philip Jurgen Ondaatjie for some time Minister at Jaffna, to Nathalia, sister of Maha-Mudaliyar Samarakoon, in January 1830.

James Henry Potger to Miss Anne Jurgen Ondaatjie at Colombo, on 27th August, 1838, the marriage having been solemnized by Rev. S. O. Glenie.

Dr. William Charles Ondaatjie, M. S. A., to Miss Eliza Cowell, on 10th June, 1847, the marriage having been solemnized by Revd. J. Horsford.

Proctor H. L. Dassanaike to Miss Mary Muttukistna, sister of Canon Gabriel Rodrigo Muttukistna of Colombo.

Proctor John de M. Aserappa to Miss Sabina Pereira.

Arthur Von Possner to Miss Maria Aserappa, daughter of John Pieris Aserappa of Hill Street, Colombo, and his wife Wilhelmina.

Revd. S. D. J. Ondaatjie, Tamil Colonial Chaplain, Colombo to Miss Poultridge, Head mistress of Pettah Girls' School.

Mr. Alfred Tocke, at one time on the Tutorial Staff of St. Thomas College, Colombo to Miss Ellen Ondaatjie.

Mr. John Jurgen Ondaatjie of Galle to the daughter of Mudaliyar Don Bastian Abeykoon Wannigesekere, also of Galle.

Proctor De Vos of Galle to Miss Ondaatjie, daughter of Dr. W. C. Ondaatjie, M. S. A.

Mr. J. Gerhard of Jampettah St. Colombo to the daughter of Mr. Jurgen Ondaatjie.

Mr. John Cowell Superintendent Upland Mills, Mutwal, to Miss Ellen Aserappa.

Mr. Robert J. Smith of The 'Times of Ceylon' to Miss Anne Aserappa, daughter of John Pieris Aserappa, of Hill Street, Colombo, and his wife Wilhelmina.

As marriages among the Protestant Chetties were conducted more or less in accordance with European customs, we would venture to narrate as of some interest to our readers—imperfectly though it may be—the customs and ceremonies observed in olden times by Roman Catholic Chetties, with regard to their marriages. The first step was the employment of an intermediary, a sort of marriage broker, one of their own kinsfolk generally, who is requisitioned, in order to prevent the possible humiliation of a direct unfavourable reply from either party, and for various other reasons. Unlike the system of marriages in days of old, when a Rama of Herculean strength carried off his Sita by bending a bow which others could not, or the chivalry in the eleventh century when almost everything was settled by duelling, and ladies considered it a glory to arm and disarm champions, it was customary among the Ceylon Chetties, for the bride's relatives

to look out for a young man of means endowed with Christian virtues and of good social status, while the bridegroom's kinsmen ascertained besides status and beauty, what the worth of the bride was, in pounds sterling, and lands, as well as jewels. A couple with these qualifications was considered eligible in the matrimonial market, and all parties being satisfied, a day was fixed for the betrothal and signing of the contract. When the young man and woman were duly informed of the decision of their seniors (the parents or guardians, and interested relatives), although the couple may not have previously set eyes on each other, in the whole course of their existence up to that time, they begin to feel that the fears of a possible repulse have given place to the vivid gladness of assured possession, and thereafter are manifested in the bridegroom the maiden passion for a maid, and viceversa, the outward and visible signs of inward happiness. A pandal in front of the house was generally erected—the number of poles required for the roof of it, in the case of distinguished families being twenty one, and the house itself was illuminated and decorated for the betrothal ceremony, which was usually fixed on a day considered to be lucky and auspicious. The invited relatives assemble, and the contract, somewhat in the following fashion was read aloud in the presence of the guests:—

A marriage is to be solemnised between Mr.....and Miss.....and for the affection and love the former bears towards the latter, the bride-elect's father promises to give as dowry to Mr.....the sum of Rupees.....in cash, Rupees.....in personal effects and property; and in the event of either of the parties refusing to marry the other, the sum of Rupees.....shall be claimed as liquidated damages'. The young man then signs the bond associated with two other respectable names as witnesses or sureties. Thereupon the father or guardian of the young man presents the young lady with a ring, silk cloth and other suitable articles of personal adornment, in ratification of the betrothal. The invited guests then repair to the residence of the bridegroom elect, and after the customary congratulations of relations, partaking of light refreshments and hospitalities are ended, the ladies of the house, or others set apart for the purpose, engage in the vigorous exercise of playing various tunes on a circular drum or tom-tom known as 'Rabbasia' the most favourite tune and considered essential being 'Engeda Mapala, Nalla Mapala' (our bridegroom is a good bridegroom). Now really commences the golden month of the golden youth of the man and woman, but good and beautiful as the past has been, the best is yet in front. Another necessary preliminary is the consent of the Priest (*Utharau vanguthal*.)

On an auspicious Sunday previously fixed upon, the relations and friends of the would-be couple are invited. The bridegroom elect dressed in his national costume, with head dress (a gold or tinselled turban) known as Thalappah and gold embroidered or glittering shawl to match, with white silk or satin coat and trousers,

(or with peaked hat known as 'Combu Thopi' ear-rings, and cloth) proceeds with his party to Church, while the bride-elect too, decked in her national costume, in white and glittering brocade, with heavy gold jewellery follows suit, each party quite apart from the other. On arrival at Church the Priest puts the usual questions with regard to the willingness of the parties to be married to each other, and this is followed by the publication of Banns by the Church Warden or Annavi. This Church ceremony over, congratulations are offered and the parties repair to the home of the bride-elect, where a sumptuous feast is partaken of.

The next event looked forward to, especially by the would-be couple, is the *wedding* itself. A lucky day is decided upon, and also an auspicious hour, as was the case in most countries in days gone by, (vide 'Iphigenia in Aulide' one of the plays of Euripides)—June and August being preferred to other months for marriages.

When the invitation list is prepared, after great deliberation and caution, in accordance with their social status, as an adequate safeguard against the shameful expulsion of any of inferior grades of society, by the Barber of the 'Setti—Talamai' or 'Head of the Chetties,' the list is entrusted to an aratchi, trustworthy servant, or some responsible person, who with a tray of lime and betel leaves, is accompanied by a barber, clad in unspotted white, who informs the party whose name is on the list, of the joyous event, or presents an *ola* invitation, when simultaneously lime and betel leaf is tendered for acceptance, as a token of regard—for in those days no printed invitations were issued, nor was even communication by telegraph or telephone possible. As the auspicious wedding day approaches, the close female relatives of the would-be couple, frequently visit the homes of the bride and bridegroom elect, and help in preparations for the forthcoming feast in various ways. But a ceremony also involving *feasting*, known as the '*Meesai vattum kalyanam*, when the young bridegroom elect for the *first* time in his life shaves his beard, was generally fixed to take place some days before the wedding. To this event too, friends and relations are invited, and the bridegroom-elect is shaved in their presence by the barber, who has been in the service of the family for years. A receptacle full of milk is placed near the bridegroom-elect into which generally gold coins are dropped after the event, and which money is considered to be the property of the barber. Prior to the actual shaving, the barber steps forward, with his arms folded across his breast, and after a bow profound almost down to the ground, by way of obtaining the approval of and as a mark of obeisance to the guests assembled, sets about his business. After the shave, the bridegroom-elect is dressed in a long white robe, adorned with gold trimmings, with a richly embroidered cloth of gold round his waist, with large circular ear-rings, known as 'kadukun'

and a long gold chain with a valuable pendant round his neck. He is then conducted to a specially prepared dais, beneath a richly ornamented canopy, generally within sight or close to which is his father or guardian. With this ceremony is closely associated the tying of the head gear, known as "*Thalai Cheelai Kattuthal*." For this purpose a strip of bleached white cloth is placed on a silver salver, sprinkled over with rose water and rose petals, and passed round to be touched by the assembled guests as a mark of respect, after which the cloth is duly tied round the head of the would-be bridegroom, and a ring put in his finger, by the father or guardian, who after tenderly embracing and kissing him, moves away. The guests, then, with uncovered heads, bow their respects and make their presentations, amidst the din of musical instruments, and after a rich repast repair to their respective homes.

After the lapse of a day or two comes the wedding day itself, with all its paraphernalia and excitement, its wasteful expenditure,* and intense fatigue, for whatever the individual views of the bride and bridegroom may have been, with regard to their dress and convenience, the general society of those days would never let them dress as they pleased, on that occasion. For one reason out of many, womenfolk would have felt that it would be robbing them of a public occasion, full of manifold if inexplicable satisfaction, in all that chiefly touches their claims and affects their dignity, and that on the day of her life's victory, she would be forfeiting the glory of her coronation. So the bride has tamely to submit to the ordeal. The ladies responsible see that her hair is decently tied in a knot behind, bedecked with very beautiful sprigs of artificial flowers made of gold, set with precious stones, while slender gold wires shaped like arrows, and a number of star pattern hair pins, beads of silver, chains of gold, strings of pearls etc, contribute to the adornment of the hair knot. On her ears are about four gold ear drops, two in each, one in the upper and another in the lower lobe of each ear known as 'Thodu.' Her neck was weighed down with the burden of seven gold chains and pendant known as 'Pathakum', milky white strings of pearls, and other jewellery. On her arms were bangles and bracelets, while she had also a dozen or more rings on her fingers, and tinkling silver ornaments (Pathasaram) adorned her ankles and toes. Her dress consisted of a white silk jacket embroidered with gold, and silk cloth beautifully trimmed also with gold lace, and both jacket and cloth adorned with tiny gold flowers, and a thin rich veil on her head, complete her bridal trosseau.

The bride and bridegroom gorgeously arrayed as depicted above, proceed to Church, the former in a palanquin or carriage (for there were no motor cars then) attended by maids and the

*Though large sums of money were in those days expended on weddings, in progressive and changing Ceylon *to-day*, some Ceylon Chetties have no exception at all, even on their wedding day.

latter accompanied by two groomsmen, with his relatives and friends, forming two *distinct* parties. Sometimes the bridegroom, preceded by native musicians, wended his way to Church walking on white cloth spread on the ground, known as *pavada*, under a canopy held over his head by persons set apart for the purpose. On arriving at Church the Parish Priest duly solemnises the marriage, delivers a suitable Homily to the new couple, praying that the bride may be endowed with charity and peace, and please her husband, like as Rebecca was to Issac, that she would be faithful like Sarah, and that the couple may have many children, happiness, long life, &c. &c. Mass and Blessing is followed by the withdrawal into the Vestry and signing of the Register, congratulations, and procession to the bride's house, where immediately on arrival a ceremony known as 'Corouchi' is performed, as an emblem of the bride's virginity. It is the pinning on to the hair knot of the bride of a thin silver or gold pin, surmounted by a delicately worked sprig of flowers brought on a little cushion or tray, by a little child, while one or more with baskets of flower petals follow her. Simultaneously with this pin prick—if I may so describe it—all the musical instruments produce a jargon of sounds, which is followed by a sprinkling of rose water. After cake and wine, toasting &c., all the guests or at least those specially requested, partake of a wedding breakfast, at which are served delicious dishes, such as '*virundu sor* and *attu kodal curry*,' mutton and chicken curries, sathey, karuman achie, cutlets, numerous vegetable preparations, milk curds, sweets, cakes, broders, plantains and other fruits, all served at the table in proper order, with light refreshments. At this midday wedding meal, there is usually an odd mixture of smiles and tears, feeble and rich jokes, heavy compliments, partaking of indigestible food, making of congratulatory orations, &c. &c. When the sacrifice to conventionalism is over, and the best of the day spent, the guests are favoured with a '*sandanam pottu*' (a finger print on the forehead with a preparation of rosewater and sandalwood), and after this all gradually disperse.

In the night, another ceremony known as the tying of the '*Thali*' is performed, for which the guests arrive by invitation. The Thali—which is a necklace with a pendant generally in the form of a dove, symbolical of innocence, and connected with the incident at Our Lord's baptism at the river Jordan—which a woman wears from the time of her marriage, till the death of her husband, is generally conveyed in a box, which also contains the Koora (a valuable cloth) silk jacket, garland of flowers &c. and which affords another occasion for conviviality or feasting. These articles which are the gift of the bridegroom to the bride, a presentation similar to the '*Morgen gifer*' among the Celts, which continued to Anglo-Saxon times, and which gift was reckoned as the wife's peculiar property—were generally conveyed at night in procession, to the bride's residence with torchlight and

fireworks. In the forefront of the procession was the bridegroom, with two male attendants, and his closest female relatives escorting the female who was conveying the Thali box or tray on her head. It is noteworthy that in this procession all widows were to be at the back. While this party walking on 'Pawada' or white cloth, all along the street, the bridegroom under a special canopy, accompanied by music and fireworks, approach the bride's residence, the bride's father or guardian and other male relatives of the bride, and party of especially invited guests, go forward also with fireworks and music in procession to meet, greet, and escort the bridegroom's party. (Behold the bridegroom cometh, let us go forth to meet him.) This ceremony is known as 'Ethir kondu alaikuthal' like the ten virgins in Scripture, going forth to meet the bridegroom. When both parties have entered the bride's residence, a close female relative of the bridegroom opens the box, and taking out the *Thali* places it on a salver of gold or silver, sprinkles rose water on it and takes it round to be touched by the chief guests as a mark of honour.* The bridegroom is then conducted to the *Mana Vara* or dais where the bride is seated, and the former fastens the Thali on to the neck of the bride, assisted by a prosperous mother of many children, amidst the din of all manner of musical instruments, the guests standing with uncovered heads, as a token of respect. The relatives and friends then present rings, &c. to the bride and bridegroom, after which refreshments are served.

This is very often made the occasion for the invocation of blessings on the new couple known as '*valthuthal*', which kind office is discharged generally by the select friends of the new couple armed, with violins, timbrels, and well tuned cymbals. Then follows the substitution of the gold chain in place of the garland of flowers removed from the bride's neck and a sumptuous dinner and conviviality terminates the marriage ceremony. The bridegroom then carries off his spoil, to the special bridal chamber, accompanied, as was the custom among the ancient Celts, with every joyous demonstration of music.

"When crowned with blessing, she doth rise
To take her latest leave of home,
And hopes and light regrets that come,
Make April of her tender eyes;
And doubtful joys the father move,
And tears are on the mother's face,
As parting with a long embrace,
She enters other realms of love."

The following morning, at early dawn a little boy signals to the bridegroom to open the door, and the bridegroom is present-

*The tying of the Thali is now done in Church, after the ornament is blessed by the Priest.

ed with a suit of clothes (the present of the bride), which he dons, and goes back to his own home, coming forth out of his chamber as a giant refreshed with wine.

On a previously appointed day, following this event, the grooms-men and a party of ladies and gentlemen specially invited visit the bride's house, and after another feast known as 'Thingal Kilamai Virundu' (or Monday repast), a select party of ladies, exclusive of the bride's relatives, conduct the bride to the residence of the bridegroom, the former leaving her father's home amidst showers of blessings, fond kisses, regrets, tears, and tender farewells, for her new home. Thus ended the wedding ceremony of ancient Roman Catholic Chetties.

It may here be mentioned that among the Anglicans in days gone by, some marriages were performed at private residences, under special circumstances e.g.

John Pieris Aserappa to Wilhelmina Jurgen Ondaatjie at the residence of Mudaliyar Don Simon de Melho Wannigerkoon by Hon'ble and Ven'ble Archdeacon T. J. Twistleton D. D. on October 19, 1837.

Bastian Rodrigo Pullenayagem, Mudaliyar, Puttalam, to Johanna Jurgen Ondaatjie, at the residence of Solomon Jurgen Ondaatjie, Mudaliyar of the Governor's Gate, on January 31, 1842.

John Rodrigo Tambichetty to Maria Jurgen Ondaatjie, at the house of the Rev. Johan Jurgen Ondaatjie, Tamil Colonial Chaplain of St. Thomas' Church, Colombo, on November 6, 1845.

Among similar marriages in other communities both in England and Ceylon in olden times, may be quoted the marriages in the house of The Earl of Wemyss in London, in the presence of the King and Queen, when James Duke of Monmouth married Countess Anne. The marriage in Ceylon on 23rd June 1842 of Don John Dias Bandaranayake, Mohandiram to Gertrude Angenita Philipsz at the house of the bride's father Johannes Godfried Philipsz Wijekoon Panditteratne, 3rd Maha Mudaliyar and, that of Johannes Jacobus de Saram Wijesekere Abeyratne Modeliar of the Gate, on 29th June 1842 to Wilhelmina Henrietta Philipsz at the house of the bride's father.

With respect to marriages within one's own community, contracted with the object of preserving the purity of the community, and strengthening the bonds of amity, Hamilton Fyfe in an article in 'Peoples of all Nations' referring to Wales, says that the Welsh though a small race have steadily endeavoured to reproduce exclusively one particular national type, and are careful to marry within their own racial limits. In Ceylon, among small communities the Kandyan aristocracy, including Adigars and Ratemahatmayas have, if we mistake not, also endeavoured to maintain their national identity.

Among the Low country Sinhalese Aristocracy too, a large majority, including the following, during Dutch Rule, married within their own community, viz.

Don Conrad Peter Dias Bandaranaiake, Maha Mudaliyar to *Louisa Jeronimus*, daughter of K. D. P. Jeronimus Wijesiriwardene, Attapattu.

Maha Mudaliyar *Samarakoon* to *Dona Helena*, daughter of Philip Philipz Panditteratne, Maha Mudaliyar.

Maha Mudaliyar *Leander de Saram* (son of Anthonian de Saram) to *Johanna Maria*, daughter of Don Louis Perera Samaraweera Goonewardene Basnayake Mohandiram on June 4th 1754.

Among members of the same community who married under British Administration are :

Fredrick de Livera, District Judge of Matara to *Cornelia Henrietta de Saram* at Wolfendhal Church, Colombo on May 11th 1839

Don John Dias Bandaranaike Muhandiram to *Gertrude Angenita Philipz* at the house of the bride's father Johannes Godfried Philipz Wijakoon Panditteratne (3rd Maha Mudaliyar) by license of the Archdeacon, the officiating Clergyman having been Revd. John Henricus de Saram, M. A., on 23rd June 1842.

Hon. Sir S. C. Obeyesekera, M. L. C., son of D. D. F. Obeyesekera, Mudaliyar of Talpe Pattu, who in 1872 married *Egline Maria* daughter of the late Hon. Mr. James de Alwis, M. L. C.

Sir Solomon Dias Bandaranayake, first Ceylonese K. C. M. G., late Maha Mudaliyar and A. D. C. to His Excellency the Governor, who married *Daisy Egline Obeyesekere*, daughter of Hon. Sir S. C. and Lady Obeyesekere.

Hon. Mr. Felix Reginald Dias, son of Canon Samuel W. Dias, and nephew of Sir Harry Dias, Kt. (who acted as Chief Justice of Ceylon) who married *Annie Lucy*, third daughter of Hon. Mr. James de Alwis, M. L. C.

Walter de Livera J. P. son of Mr. Franciscus de Livera, Mudaliyar of the Governor's Gate, who married *Eliza Dias Bandaranayake*, daughter of D. O. H. Dias Bandaranayaka, Mudaliyar of the Governor's Gate, and Mudaliyar of Siyane Korle.

Francis Ernest Gooneratne, Mohotti Mudaliyar of the Attapattu of Galle, son of Don David Gooneratne, Attapattu Mudaliyar who married *Caroli na Dias Abeysinghe*, daughter of N. D. Abeysinghe, Mudaliyar of the Governor's Gate and Attapattu of Galle.

Barrister *Donald Obeyesekere*, M. A., L. L. D., son of the late Hon. Mr. J. P. Obeyesekere, M. L. C., who married *Edith Perera* daughter of the late Proctor John Henry Perera, of Kuruwe Walauwa, Colombo.

Dr. *Paul E. Pieris*, C. C. S., M. A., D. Litt. son of J. M. P. Samarasinghe Siriwardene, Mudaliyar of the Governor's Gate who married *Hilda Obeyesekere* daughter of Hon. and Mrs. J. P. Obeyesekere.

Maha Mudaliyar and Barrister *J. P. Obeyesekere*, M. A., L. L. D., who married the daughter of *Walter Dias Bandaranaiake*, Mudaliyar of the Governor's Gate, of Green Street, Colombo.

Among members of the Ceylon Chetty Community who have, in the past married within their own community, are the following :—

1744, August 2nd, Colombo, *Revd. Philip de Melho*, son of Adigar Simon de Melho, Modeliar of the Governor's Gate (Rasa Vasal) who was attached to the personal staff of ten Dutch Governors, to *Magdalene Jurgen Ondaatjie*, aunt of Dr. Peter Quint Ondaatjie, A. L. M. Ph. D. J. U. D. the first Asiatic who figured in European History.

Pedro Pieris Aserappa Shroff Mudaliyar of Negombo, and a wealthy landed proprietor, to *Anna Juliana de Melho* daughter of Don Simon de Melho Wannigerkoon, Mudaliyar of the Governor's Gate.

1814, October 13th, *Revd. Johan Jurgen Ondaatjie*, Colonial Chaplain, St. Thomas' Church, Colombo, to *Jacoba Magdalene de Melho*.

Adigar Simon de Rosairo chief Land owner of Calpentyn to *Martha Dewanasa Muttukistna*, daughter of Gate Mudaliyar Abraham Rodrigo Muttukistna of Jaffna.

1822, July 6th, Colombo *Manuel Morgappa Wannigeratne*, Mudaliyar of the Governor's Gate to Miss *Rodrigo Muttukistna*.

Anthony Pieris Aserappa a wealthy merchant and landed proprietor to *Johanna Rodrigo Tambichetty* of a highly respected and distinguished family.

Don William Christoffel Marudappa (Head of the Roman Catholic Chetties in Colombo) to *Magdalene Leti Ramanaden* in 1738.

John Paul Casiechitty, Mudaliyar of Halpitigam Korle son of Gaspar Casiechitty, Shroff Mudaliyar of seven Korles to *Maria de Rosairo*, niece of Adigar Simon de Rosairo of Calpentyn.

Nicholas Jurgen Ondaatjie, Mudaliyar of the Governor's Gate to *Magdalene Muttukistna*, daughter of Philip Rodrigo Muttukistna first Kacheri Mudaliyar of Jaffna, under British rule.

Louis Pieris Aserappa, a wealthy landed proprietor, son of Anthony Pieris Aserappa, to *Magdalene Jurgen Ondaatjie*.

Simon Casiechitty, c.o.s., District Judge of Chilaw and Calpentyn, to *Sophia Swaminathen*, sister-in-law of Abraham Morgappa, Sub-Collector Customs, Calpentyn.

1824, September 2nd, *Abraham Jurgen Ondaatjie*, brother of Gate Mudaliyar Nicholas Jurgen Ondaatjie to *Christina Pieris Aserappa*.

1828, November 12th, *John C. Malleappa* to *Anne Barbara Christian David*.

1827 July 2nd *John Rodrigo Moothiah* (Chetty) c.o.s., District Judge of Kayts to *Anna Pieris Aserappa*.

Taverayen Joseph Philip Casiechitty to *Savina Pieris*.

Abraham Rodrigo Muttukistna, Modeliyar of the Governor's Gate to *Elizabeth S. Christian David*.

John Christoffel Fernando Pulle, son of Jan Fernando Pulle, Chief of the Tamil inhabitants to *Magdalene Aserappa*.

1849, August 8th, *John Paul Casiechitty*, Mudaliyar of Hapitigam Korle (2nd time) to *Cecilia Rodrigo Muttukistna* sister of Barrister Henry Francis Muttukistna and Canon Gabriel Rodrigo Muttukistna.

Barrister *John J. Casiechitty* c.o.s., B.A., B.C.L. son of Abraham Casiechitty (Mudaliyar) Kandy to, *Emma Rodrigo Muttukistna*, daughter of Gate Mudaliyar Abraham Rodrigo Muttukistna of Hill Street, Colombo.

1859, January 10th, *Peter Rodrigo Pullenayagem* (Municipal Inspector) to *Anna Julia Paulick Pulle*.

1859, November 2nd *Louis Nicholas Morgappa* of the Colombo Customs to *Anna Christina Pullenayagem*.

1859, August 7th, *Pasqual Rodrigo Pullenayagem* to *Magdalene Fernando Pulle*.

1861, October 14, *Philip Michael Jurgen Ondaatjie* to *Anna Eliza* daughter of Gate Mudaliyar John Casiechitty, District Modeliar of Calpentyn.

Anthony de Rosairo, Shroff Mudaliyar Pattalam to *Mary Casiechitty* daughter of District Judge Simon Casiechitty, c.o.s., (Chilaw and Calpentyn.)

1865, May 29th, at Hill Street, Colombo—Proctor *Solomon Louis Aserappa*, son of Louis P. Aserappa to *Marianne Casiechetty*, daughter of District Mudaliyar John Paul Casiechitty and his wife Mary; the marriage having been solemnized by Colonial Chaplain Revd. Simon Dedrick Jurgen Ondaatjie at St. Thomas' Church, Colombo.

Christian M. Morgappa, Notary and landed proprietor to *Salome de Rosairo*, daughter of Abraham de Rosairo (Opperkoop) of Calpentyn.

Louis Anandappa to *Johanna*, daughter of David Marian de Rosairo, District Mudaliyar of Calpentyn, at St. Mary's Church, Kalpitiya (Calpentyn.)

1845, October 6th, *Peter Jurgen Ondaatjie* a wealthy landed proprietor of Jampettah Street to *Maria Magdalene Jurgen Ondaatjie* daughter of *Thomas J. Ondaatjie* and sister of *Gate Mudaliyar Nicholas Jurgen Ondaatjie*.

Joseph Alles to *Martha de Rosairo* of Galle.

1810. Proctor *Louis de Rosairo*, (Titular Modeliar) Head of the Roman Catholic Chetties at Galle, to *Saveria de Costa* (of Galle.)

1853, February 7th, *Henry A. David* to *Annie Malleappah* of Kotahena, Colombo.

1835, February 11th, Kotahena, Colombo *Gabriel Casiechetty* to *Magdalene P. Ramenaden*.

Christopher Brito Paulick Pulle to *Antonette Jane Malleappa*.

Anthony Rodrigo Babapulle to *Magdalene Paulickpulle*.

Manuel Casiechetty of Kandy, (son of *Gaspar Casiechetty Shroff Mudaliyar* of seven Korles) to *Cecily*, daughter of *Simon Casiechitty, o. c. s.* District Judge of Chilaw and Calpentyne at St. Mary's Church, Kalpitiya.

1846, May 26th, at Colombo, *William Jurgen Ondaatjie* Mudaliyar of the Governor's Gate, (son of *Abraham Jurgen Ondaatjie* and *Christina Peiris*, nee *Aserappa*, and nephew of *Gate Mudaliyar Nicholas Jurgen Ondaatjie*) to *Julia*, both of whom celebrated their golden wedding at Jampettah Street, Colombo on 26th May, 1896.

(See also Appendix 'Domestic occurrences.')



