# Kerala Society Papers

VOLUME II SERIES 9

PUBLISHED

BY

THE KERALA SOCIETY

TRIVANDRUM

1932

CITY PRESS, TRIVANDRUM.

PRICE RS. 2-

# Kerala Society Papers, Vol. II, Ser. 9

## CONTENTS


| | | Pages |
|---|---|---|
| 1. | Tirukkurumkudi Bell Inscription of 1468—9 A. D. ... ... — (H. H. Rama Varma's translation of 1873) | Opposite 171 |
| 2. | Castes of Malabar. ... ... ... ... —Dr L. A. Ravi Varma, M. B. & C. M. D., O. M. S. | 171—204 |
| 3. | Three St. Thomas Documents .... .... .... —Rev. Fr. Carmel Iturriotz, D. C. | .... 205—224 |


## ERRATA

| Page | Col. | ... |
|---|---|---|
| 173 | 2. | Sall : read Saal |
| 174 | 2. | Srutis which : Smritis which |
| 175 | 1. | Fisherman : Fisherwoman |
| 181 | 2. | Aryans do not : Asyans do not |
| 190 | 1. | ഒഴുത്തട : ഒഴുത്തട |
| 205 | 2. | ever the Holy : over the Holy |
| 206 | 1. | how it was : how it [8] was |
| 206 | 1. | Note 7. sesceded : descended |
| 208 | 1. | Fras Fr's : Bras Fr's |
| 208 | 1. | Dom Durate : Dom Duarte |

# A Bell Inscription of 644 M. E. (1468-9 A.D.)

## At Tirukkurumkudi in Tinnevelly

*A. Sanskrit sloka in Grantha characters.*

1. ശ്രീമൽ കൊളംബവഷ്ടെ ഭവതി ഗുണമണി
2. രേണി രാജിതൃവമ്മാ വഖീപാലൊ വിശാഖ
3. പ്രഭ രഖിലകലാവല്ലഃ പൃഥ്വധനാൽ ഭവാ
4. രാലംകാരഷണ്ണാ ന്തിലകിതജയസിംഹാനപായഃ
5. ശ്രീകരംഗപ്രൊദ്ധാമ്നൊ മുരാരെ രധിഗത പി
6. രൈവായ മാന്ധലെന്ദ്രൊ നരെന്ദ്രഃ ഗുരുമസൂ

*B. Tamil verse in Tamil characters.*

1. செயதுங்கநாட்டு சிறவாய்மன்
2. ஞகித்தன் தென்வஞ்சியான் வியலோ
3. ன்றசிலகலேயாளன் கன்னிஷாதகம்
4. வந்தோன் னயமொன்று கோல்லமறு
5. நூற்றுநற்பத்துநாலிணன்பால்
6. அயனுப் பணிய மணியளித்தா னம்பிக் க
7. ன்பு கொண்டே

*C. English translation by*

### H. H. RAMA VARMA, FIRST PRINCE OF TRAVANCORE, 1873 A. D.

"In the year *Bhavati* (644) of the Kolamba era, king Adityavarma, the ruler of Vanchi, born in *Visakha*, who is a string of gems of virtues, and a master of all arts (*kala*), who adorns the Jayasinha dynasty, and who has attained the sovereignty of Chiravaya Mandalam (kingdom), hung up the bell which adorns the gate of Murari (Vishnu) enshrined in the Srikuranga (Tirukurangudi) temple."

This translation of the above Sanskrit sloka is from H. H.'s article on the inscription published in *The Indian Antiquary*, Vol. II, 1873, p. 360. The Tamil portion was not dealt with in the above article.

അധിഗത ചിറൈവായ് മണ്ഡലേന്ദ്രഃ and சிறவாய் மன் represent the title சிறவாயி முதவர் (Head of Chiravay) used even today. The Tamil translation speaks of தென்வஞ்சி, i. e. *Southern* Vanchi. Northern Vanchi was probably the Kerala Perumal's capital in Cranganore. It gives also the additional information that the donor of the bell ("about 3 feet in diameter at the base") was born in the month Kanni.

—T. K. Joseph

30 MAR 1933

Kerala Society Papers

VOLUME II, SERIES 9

1932

# CASTES OF MALABAR

(By Dr. L. A. Ravi Varma)

Before any serious attempt is made to study the caste system as seen today, it is essential to understand the 'varna' classification and its original import. This however is not easy, as the available evidences are scattered in a voluminous literature and hence very difficult to collect and arrange for easy reference. Even when so collected, they will, as a rule, be found to be silent on the very points we wish to be informed, or they may even be misleading or dubious, while annotators either give only a mere word for word interpretation or pass on without any comment. The studies of orientalists of the Western School, though critical, often miss the essential trend of Indian mentality and thought, a factor which is quite foreign to their culture. This tends to detract a good deal of value from their otherwise useful labours.

In ancient Indian literature of the type of Srutis, Smritis, Itihasas and Puranas one often meets with extremely subtle and high ideas and sentiments intimately mixed up with what apparently looks like the most childish gibberish imaginable. The Western student simply ignores them or considers them to be latterday interpolations and utilises only such texts as appeal to him as sensible. No positive science will ever countenance such attempts to brush aside any findings however much they may appear to be silly or against accepted canons. It is the business of the student to take cognizance of all observed facts and explain them if needed, after even modifying the original conclusions. To the student who wants to reconstruct unrecorded history all utterences found in accredited works are 'observed facts', and he ought to deal with them as such. If he has positive proof of any text being of the nature of an interpolation he is, of course, justified in discarding it; but he should not do so on mere surmises and probabilities. To discard a text simply because its apparent meaning is not in agreement with what precedes and follows is wrong, and to consider it as an interpolation on that basis is equivalent to taking that the author might have been out of his senses at the time of writing that portion.

How then are we to reconcile the high and abstract thoughts and the apparent nonsenses we find intermixed? These childish looking utterances when analysed in the way they ought to be with the aid of keys handed down to the initiates in the 'Sampradaya forms', will be found to be teachings of a higher order than even the highest open teachings. These hidden teachings are often of a nature that can effecti-

vely destory the child-like simple religious faith of the uncultured man in the street. These teachings are, therefore, a source of great danger to the average man though they may be of supreme importance to the cultured seekers after truth. Hence it became necessary for ancient writers to veil such teachings with apparent gibberish unintelligible to the masses. The Sampradaya keys are unwritten rules and meanings protected from the uninitiated even as the Masonic teachings and secrets are. If one is to get the true import of ancient Indian teachings as contained in the sacred writings, it becomes imperative to follow this line of approach without discarding the apparent nonsenses. Initiated on one's solemn oath one is not at liberty to divulge the key though one can without cause for reproach explain many of the teachings thus veiled.

To the Hindu Sruti means not only the Samhita proper or Hymns, but also the Upanishads, Brahmanas etc. as well. Smritis are authorised interpretations of Sruti rules and regulations by eminent teachers in the light of customs and usages prevailing at the time and place of the teacher who composed them. To the Hindu, therefore, Smritis are not valid and inviolable rules for all times or places. All rules of Smritis can be classed as Vidhi, or obligatory, Anuvada, or permissive, and Nishedha or prohibitory. In the Anuvada group are included 'Apaddharmas' or rules permitting omission and commission of Vidhis and Nishedhas under certain well defined conditions. All the three groups and more especially the Anuvada group is strongly coloured by custom or 'sishtacara' of the place and period. Hence to find out the original and 'Sanatana' factor underlying the rule it becomes essential to discard the indeterminate sishtacara factor from it. Due to sishtachara accretions of centuries some of the present-day customs have turned out to be the very opposite of Sruti injunctions. With these preliminary remarks we shall now proceed to study the varna classification of ancient India.

The earliest reference to this subject in Vedic literature is recognised to be the well known Purusha Sookta or Hymn on the Virat-form of God concieved as Macrocosm in the shape and form of man, the microcosm. The tenth mantra of this hymn is a series of questions : "What is His head, what are His arms, what are said to be His thighs and feet, etc". (മുഖം കിമസ്യാസീൽ, കൗബാഹൂ, കാവൂരുപാദാവുച്യതേ ..) To this comes the reply "Brahmana is His face, arms are made of Kshatriyas, who are Vaisyas are His thighs, Sudras are born from His feet etc ". (ബ്രാഹ്മണോസ്യ മുഖമാസീൽ ബാഹൂ രാജന്യഃ കൃതഃ ഊരുതദസ്യയദ്വൈശ്യഃ പദ്ഭ്യാംശൂദ്രോഅജായത). It should be noted that these are specific answers to specific questions as to what each of the different parts of the Personified Macrocosm is. Annotators including Sayana—and these are modern comparatively—interpret the answers to mean that the brahmana is born from the face of God and so forth. That neither the context nor the language used warrants such interpretation is plain enough.

It is a universally accepted symbolism to depict knowledge as head or face, and power as arms. Thigh is here represented as wealth, probably from the Indian merchant's posture, viz. squatting. The text viewed in the light of this symbolism would mean that the Personified Macrocosm has for its head or face the intelligentsia or more simply the faculty of intellect, for arms physical prowess or military and governing power, and

for thighs wealth or capital power or resources. Sudra is depicted as born from His feet. Sudra represents labour and service as is quite evident from the functions assigned to him. The former three factors, knowledge, prowess and wealth depend mostly on oneself, whereas service to oneself should every time come from outside, and has to be 'created' or made. Hence this one factor alone is expressed as being 'born' from His feet. Thus the whole description pictures the Virat or Personified Macrocosm as having for its head personified knowledge, arms military and governing power, thighs wealth or economic factor, and labour or service as being derived from its feet. This interpretion will be found to be in tune with the subsequent mantras where His nabhi is described as the antariksha, etc. This representation is not only apt and poetic to depict Personified Macrocosm, but the classification of man into intelligentia, governing power, capitalists and labour is eternal and universal.

Now this very hymn presupposes knowledge of this four-fold classification based on functions of man in any ordered society as well as their names, in those who sang it. In other words the Aryans ought to have had this classification among them long before the hymn was composed. It is to avoid this unavoidable inference that some Orientalists take this hymn as a latter-day interpolation. The inference from the hymn is however well corroborated by the existence of an identical four-fold division of man among the Iranean Aryans as seen from the Avesta. The Avesta mentions four classes, 'Atharva' Rathae stao; 'Vastriafshyas' and 'Huitos'. The Atharva was the priest. It is noteworthy that the Sanskrit word 'Atharvan' meant a priest who had to deal with Soma and Agni; and the word according to M. Williams is probably derived from an obsolete term 'Ather'=Agni. Rathaestao was the warrior class of the Iraneans. This word again appears to be allied to the Sanskrit word Ratheshtha occuring in the Vedas and meaning a warrior fighting from his chariot. (M. W.). Vastriafshyas was the cultivator and one can detect the Sanskrit equivalent of 'Vastu' = ground (cf. vastavika=gardener) in the word. Huitos was the slave or the servant class. In Pahlavi 'Hutosh' meant workman. Now it is well known that 'H' of Pahlavi and, as a matter of fact, of several other Aryan tongues, is equivalent to 'S' of Sanskrit. ( Cf. Ahura = Asura; Hall=Sall – sala). Hence the Sanskrit equaivalent of the Iranen word according to philological rules should be 'Sutash' or 'Sutaksh'. Now we meet with a Vedic term 'Sutashta' – good worker, from su = good and twasht or twaksh, a worker or maker. Further it will be noted that the origin of the word Sudra is not clear and the lexicographers' derivation from "suc" is unconvincing. Again it will be noted that the Huitos and Sudras have the same function. Thus it will be seen that the four classes according to function are identifiable in both Iranean and Indo-Aryan groups, and three of the class nomenclature are identifiable as similar.

This is proof to show that the four-fold classification of man based on primary social functions was not made by the Indo-Aryans after coming to India, but must have been in existence before the two branches separated. Further it will be noted that such a system of classification was something which could be expected in any ordered society.

This original classification based on

functions has little to do with the air-tight caste system of afterdays. The well known Gita stanza "Chaturvarnyam maya srushtam....." by a peculiar and punning arrangement of words means to say that the four-fold classification is based on functions and aptitudes and in that sense I, God am its creator, in other words it means that the classification is natural; but I am not the creator of the classification known as the caste-system. In other words Krishna is made to say that the classification based on primary functions is natural, whereas the hereditary caste system as seen at the time of the Mahabharata is an artificial product of man. The same work Mahabharata on another occasion says "there was only one varna or class in ancient days and the subsequent four-fold classification came into being as a result of functional differences. (ഏകവർണ്ണമിദം പൂർവ്വം വിശ്വമാസിദ്യുധിഷ്ഠിര, വർണ്ണ ക്രിയാവിശേഷണ ചാതുർവർണ്യം പ്രതിഷ്ഠിതം).

Orientalists are unanimous in thinking that there was no caste system, at any rate as it exists now, in the early days. Rig Veda I—112—3 says "I am an artisan, my father a doctor, mother grinds (corn) on stone....." (കാരുരഹം തതോഭിഷ ഇവല പ്രക്ഷിണിനാന, നാനാ ധിയോവസ്യവോ നാഗാഇവ,.....). This means that there were no hereditary castes at that time as we see today. There are several stories in Srutis to show that a change from one class to another was possible in those days. The Aitareya Brahmana has a story of one Kavasha, afterwards the kudastha guru of Kausheetakas, where the advancement of a born Sudra to the fullest status of a Brahmin is related. The Rishis finding Kavasha to be of low birth first refuse to admit him to be initiated in such terms as "How can this rouge of a non-Brahmin, the son of a slave (or son of a prositute ?) be permitted among us and initiated....." (ദാസ്യാ; പുത്ര; കിതവോബ്രഹ്മണ്ട കഥം നോ മധ്യേ ദിക്ഷിഷ്യതി.....). This man is described as "ഏതദ്ധാസ്യൈതദ്വിചാനാഹമഹിദാസ ഐത രേയ:". Sankara annotates it as....."മഹിദാ സോനാമേതഇതരേയാ അപത്യമൈതരേയ:", Itara means low, expelled from society etc. in vedic language. Finally we find him exalted to Brahmin-hood and as a great man. Similar is the story of Jabala Satyakama the son of a servant maid who did not know the father of her child. The boy on enquiring of its mother about his gotra to get admission into a gurukula is told by the mother "I do not know to which gotra you belong; in my youth I was wandering as a maid and I got you, that is all I know; my name is Jabala and your name is Satyakama; hence say that you are Satyakama of Jabala". (നാഹമേത ദ്വേദ,താത,യദ'ഗോത്രസ്ത്വമസി. ബഹ്വഹം ചരന്തീ പരിചരിണീ യൗവനേതപാമലേ; സാഹമേതന്നവേദ യദ'ഗോത്രസ്ത്വമസി, ജബാലൊനാമാഹമസ്മിസത്യകാ മോനാമേതപമസി). This boy was initiated on his words and we find him afterwards as a Rishi himself.

Srutis which are latter-day productions reproducing the existing conditions of the times also contemplate such and similar change of castes. Manu says that a Brahmin who neglects vedic studies and takes to other pursuits becomes a Sudra together with his descendants. (യോനധീത്യദ്വിജോവേദം അന്യത്രകുരുതേശ്രമം സജീവന്നേവശൂദ്രതപ മാശു ഗച്ഛതി സാന്വയം). Manu corroborates this statement in several places. The reverse is also contemplated. for he says that by continued marriages with Brahmins a Sudra family can attain Brahmin-hood by the seventh generation. (ശ്രുദ്ധയാം ബ്രാഹ്മണാജ്ജാത: ശ്രേയസാചേൽ പ്രജായതേ, അശ്രേയാന്ധേ"യസീംജാതിം ഗമത്യാ സപ്തമാദ്യുഗാൽ). Kulluka annotates the last word as " ഏസപ്തമാദ്യുഗാജിത്യുഭിധാനാൽ സപ്ത

മേജന്മനി ബ്രാഹ്മണ:സമ്പദ്യതേജന്മനി:". Similar examples could be multipled as almost all dharmasastras speak in this vein.

The Puranas and Ithihasas abound in examples and stories pointing to change of castes besides explicit statements to the same effect. Bhagavata after enumerating the characteristics of different varnas goes on to say that one should be deemed to belong to that varna whose characteristics one bears even if one is born in a different varna. (യസ്യയല്ലക്ഷണം പ്രോക്തം പുംസോവർണാ ഭിവ്യഞ്ജകം യദന്യത്രാപി ദൃശ്യേത തത്തേനൈവവി നിർദിശേൽ). Again Vysampayana tells Yudhishthira that "not by family tradition nor by birth but by samskaras and vrithi (culture and conduct) one becomes a Brahmin; one even of a Chandala class is a Brahmin if of good conduct. (ന കുലേന നജാ ത്യാവാ ക്രിയാഭിർ ബ്രാഹ്മണോ ഭവേൽ ചണ്ഡാലോപി ഹിവൃത്തസ്ഥോ ബ്രാഹ്മണ: സ ഇയധിഷ്ഠിത). The great Vyasa, the compiler of the vedas and author of Mahabharatam, is described as the son of a fisherman and an illegitimate one to boot. Parasara is the son of a Chandala, and so on. Speaking of the son of a prostitute becoming a Brahmin, Mahabharata says "that the great Muni Vasishtha is the son of a prostitute, and Samskara or culture is the sole factor in the matter of social advancement. (ഗണികാഗർഭസംഭൂതോ വസിഷ്ഠ ശ്ചമഹാമുനി: തപസ്യാബ്രാഹ്മണോജാത: സംസ്കാ ര സ്തുകാരണം.) Mahabharatha, Santi parva speaks of several examples of Kshatrias who have become Brahmins such as Devapi and others. Parasurama reckoned as a Brahmin and an avatara is the son of a Brahmin by a Kshatriya woman, Renuka the sister of Visvamitra. Vayupurana speaks of cases of all four castes in one and the same family, and all becoming Brahmins as a result of samskaras. (ചതുർണ്ണാമപ്യേകസ്യൈവ കുടുംബസ്യ ബ്രാഹ്മണക്ഷത്രിയാദയശ്ചൈവ വൈശ്യാ, ശൂദ്രാസ്തഥൈവച ഏതസ്യവംശസംഭൂതാ: വിചിത്രാകർമഭിർദ്വിജാ:). The interpretations of the passages are not coloured by any modern trend of thought. This will be evidenced by the annotations of men of great eminence as Sankara, Sayana, Kulluka, etc.

There is evidence to show that none of the four classes were absolutely excluded from the study of vedas. If it was otherwise we would never have got a Kavasha, or a Satyakama initiated into the Brahmin fold. Mahabharata Santi parva says. (ധർമാ യജ്ഞ ക്രിയാശേഷാം നിത്യം നപ്രതിഷിദ്ധ്യതേ, ഇത്യുതചപു രേ, വർണാ യേഷാം ബ്രഹ്മീസമ്പ്രതി വിഹിതപ്ര ഹ്മണപൂവ്വം മോഭേതാജ്ഞാനേതരാഗതേ:).

From the above considerations the following inferences appear to be legitimate. (a) The four-fold classification or Chathur-Varnyam existed even before the Indo- and Iranean Aryans separated; (b) the said classification was based on aptitude and function and was not of a purely hereditary character; (c) change from one to another was permitted under certain conditions; (d) the present day restrictions were not present then and (e) Sudras were one of the Aryan class itself and not derived from the aboriginal tribes of India or Dasyus, or at any rate *there was a purely Aryan Sudra* in those days.

The last inference is against the view of most Orientalists and hence would demand some evidence. One such is the omission itself of the term Dasyu in connection with the classification of man in the virat personification. It is well known that the Dasyus were considered as enemies of the Aryans and the vedic literature has scarcely a good word about them. The Aryans were always praying to God to simply annihilate the Dasyus. Rig. 1—33—4. prays to Indra to kill the Dasyus. (വധിർഹിദസ്യും ധനിനം ധനാ

ന ഏകശ്ചരൻപാരാകേദിവിഗ യാനാധിവിഷ്ണ
ക്തേവൃഷന്നയജചനാ: സനകാപ്രേതിമിദ്ധ:=Indra
with your bow and helpers kill the rich Dasyu moving alone. Let the bad men, thieves and robbers meet with death by your bow.) When speaking of Sudras the tone is different and they seem to consider Sudras as one among themselves. Yajus XVIII—48 says " Give us love for Brahmins, love for Kshatrias, love for Vysyas, and love for Sudras, give us mutual love. (ത്വചനോധേഹി ബ്രാഹ്മണേഷു, ത്വചം രാജസു നസ്കൃധി ത്വചം വിശ്യേ ഷു ശൂദ്രേഷുമയിധേഹി ത്വചത്വം). A similar passage occurs in Atharva XIX—32—8 which reads " God, make me loving to Brahmins, Kshatrias, Sudras and Vysyas; make me loving to all that I see. (പ്രിയം മാദേവേഷു പ്രിയം രാജസുമാം പ്രിയം ശൂദ്രയചാര്യേഷുമയിപ്രിയമുതാരയേഷു സർവേഷു സമാനസ'മവഹിപ്രിയതേ). The difference with which they viewed Dasyus and Sudras will be clearly seen from the above passages. The Aryans were even in those days trying to bring the Dasyu under their control and sway, for we read in Rig. V—34—6. " The terrible Arya leader, well armed, able to defeat foes in battle, opposed to the unsacrificing, upholder of the sacrificing, civiliser of all, gradually brings the Dasyu under his control. (വിതച്ചന്നഃ സുതഃ ചകൃമാസുജാസുസ്വതവിക്ഷണസ്യതപതാ വൃധ ഇ ന്ദ്രോവിശ്വേഷുദഭിതവിഭീഷണോയഥാവശന്നൊയതി ദസ്യുമാവ്രധ:). By such process of subjugation and gradual assimilation Dasyus as such vanished in course of time. Naturally in the course of absorption the Dasyu converts got into the lowest status of an Aryan, viz. that of a Sudra and was recognised as a servant or slave. Even here though he has become a Sudra it is probable that he was not given all the privileges of an Aryan Sudra. Modern history of Christian conversions of aboriginies gives an undeniable parallel to this probability. In course of time, the conversions and absorption of Dasyus into the Sudra group created a sense of identity between these two groups. It is possible that it is this non-aryan admixture to the last class that tended to keep them off vedic studies and samskaras in later times.

During Budhistic days we find the principal trades and crafts organised into 'Srenyas' or guilds, and in cities at any rate workmen following a particular occupation living together in a street by themselves. The natural outcome of this tendency aided by an idea of importance of one's own occuption and the consequent slighting of all others, is the elaborate and exclusive caste system of modern India. The primary factor, a recognition of function as the basis of caste, is still perceivable when properly analysed though the primary function is to-day non-operative in many cases. Geographical distribution has as well produced new castes but they remain as a subordinate subdivision of the functional castes.

With these general remarks we shall now try to study the caste system of Malabar. Malabar was protected on all sides by almost insurmountable barriers and hence was practically unmolested by foreign aggressions and influences and was therefore in a position to retain forms and usages in a comparatively better state of purity then any other part of India.

Smritis derive the various castes other than the primary varnas as the result of 'sankara' or exogamy between the primary castes. (Manu X—8 *et seq.* ബ്രാഹ്മണാദൈ ശ്യകന്യായാം അംബഷ്ഠോനാമജായതേസുതഃ). Note that he himself has said in the same chapter, stanza 4, that there is no fifth caste. (ചതു ർത്ഥ ഏകജാതിസ്തു ശൂദ്രോനാസ്തിതു പഞ്ചമഃ). Read together it would and could only mean that

the various sankara castes were to be classed as the sub-division of one or other of the four principal castes. Though different functions are assigned to these sub-divisions they are explicitly stated as resulting from class exogamy. By instituting a compulsory code of endogamy in respect of each varna and sub-varna and assigning to the product of each exogamic relation a seperate status and a name a means is opened up for an endless possibility of new castes arising in the land. The desire to marry in one's own fold and to exclude marriages from other folds is a universal trait that can even to-day be seen in practically any country in spite of all modern ideas of no differences and civil marriages. It is well known that a European marrying a Negress is looked down upon by both the communities. As to that even the marriage between, say, an English and a Portuguese will not be so acceptable as that between an English and English. In Vedic times rules of endogamy relating to varnas were, even if existing never so strict as they were afterwards. This is probably so because all the four varnas in earlier days considered themselves only as Aryans and not as specific groups. Later on when the idea that each Varna was a seperate and specific group with functions and traditional differences got established rules of endogamy began to be strict. In earlier Smritis we find endogamy encouraged and class exogamy strongly discouraged though it was not prohibited as in still latter days. (Manu X. 64&65 read with Kulluka's annotation.) Even today exogamy is not completely tabooed as will be evidenced by the custom in Malabar, where Brahmins marry Kshatrias in full religious form, Kshatrias marry Samanthas and even certain high class Nairs in regular sacremental fashion. Class exogamy is strictly prohibited in Malabar only in case of 'pratiloma' forms.

That even here some margin was allowed is evident from the custom of pratiloma marriages between Nambudiri women and Elayatu males, a set of patita Brahmins with whom Brahmins observe touch pollution normally. Besides this pratiloma exclusion in respect of castes there is also an unwritten code of mutual exclusion in respect of Geographical differences among the same castes. Till recently this exclusion was the rule and even now it has not completely gone out of vogue. Northern and Southern Nambudiris do not mutually marry on the score that they will not cross a rivulet, Korampuzha; Northern and Southern Ezhavas do not intermarry. And so are several other classes. Not only in marriage is this geographical exclusion seen; different geograptical units generally observe mutual exclusion in all socio-religious functions. Two equally high class Nambudiris one a northerner and the other a southerner though of equal Brahminic rights and status, as a rule observe mutual exclusion in socio-religious matters. It should be noted that geographical differences manifest in the form of mutual exclusion, whereas in cases of functional caste differences there is always a sense of high and low and the exclusion is onesided. Interdining is not a criterion to differentiate castes in Malabar, though in the case of women the rules about interdining are stricter than among men. Brahmins of all descriptions, provided they belong to the Pancha-Dravida classes, freely interdine. (Pancha-Dravida is the generic name which includes Malayalis, Tamilians, Telugus, Canarese and Maharashtras). Malabar Brahmins, and Pancha-Dravida group as a whole interdine freely

with Malabar Kshatrias. Brahmins, Kshatrias, Samanthas, (a few of the ampalavasis under certain restricted conditions), and certain families of Nairs dine together in the same hall open to each other's view though they may not all dine in the same line (pankti-bhojana). Thus it may be noted that exclusion or inclusion in respect of marriages, eating food prepared by a class, or dining together cannot be used as a criterion to differentiate castes. In fact there is no single infallible criterion. The nearest one is the traditional function of the class, though that function might have long ceased to be operative. This could only mean that function and caste are indissolubly linked together in the Indian mind. All other criteria,, severally and in combination, may be found to fail in some cases. Some of the Western students, for example Emile Senart, have fallen into serious errors by recognising intermarriage and interdining as the basic criteria to distinguish castes. This mistake has caused them to undestand caste differently from what is visualised by the Indian mind.

We shall now try to get a glimpse into the past of Malabar. Acceptable evidence of a documentary character is practicaly absent. The tradition is that the Numbudiris are immigrants from some other part of India, and most students accept this. Nairs are supposed to be Dravidians and the original inhabitants of Malabar. Whatever might have been the origin of Nairs and Nambudiris, today, as a result of centuries of anuloma marriages between these two classes they cannot easily be distinguished on ethnic grounds. The strong temptation to imitate the Nambudiri has resulted in making the manners and customs of Nairs aproximate as much as possible to those of Numbudiris. The real Malayali population has so far aryanised that a Bengal group and a Malabar group looks identical in respect of physiognomy, whereas the physiognomy of the neighbouring classes as the Tamil or Kanarese are acutely different from that of Malayalis. This observation has been corroborated by many people, Bengalis who have visited Malabar and Malayalis who have visited Bengal. The extremely shut out Geographical position and the high conservative spirit of the Nambudiris have together tended to preserve the social and religious customs of Malabar without much change, so that, one may expect to find some internal evidence in them pointing to their original home.

The story of the Nambudiri immigration is that they were brought by Parasurama, the warrior Brahmin. Now Parasurama was an Aryan Brahmin of North India. It is quite probable that Aryan Brahmins of the North migrated to the south under the leader-ship of such an adventurous Brahmin as Parasurama. On analysing the existing customs in Malabar we shall be struck by the resemb'ances they bear to those of Bengal. We shell cite just a few out of many.

(a) Yatra and Yatra-brahmins— Yatra, known also as Swasti, etc, is the earliest religious performance in Malabar. It is a purely Brahmin institution and is not enacted anywhere except in Brahmin or equivalent houses. It is performed by a set of low class Brahmins dressed in military fashion with sword shield, etc. A similar play and of the same name was current in Bengal and was the earliest form of dramatic entertainment in India. This was enacted by a set of Brahmins below in rank to the Kulins. (Encycl. Brit. under Drama).

(b). The religious mode of wearing cloth is alike in principle for the Nambudiri

and the Bengali. Both dress in right handed fashion, the frill falling in front and to the left, and the right hand end going between the thighs, whereas the neighbouring Tamil and Kanarese dress in the reverse manner.

(c). The most important and unavoidable ornaments of a married woman among Malabar Brahmins are the mangalya-sutra and the metal bangles, (other than gold) known as'loha-vala', which should always be multiple and unequal on both hands. This is the same with Bengal Brahmins, whereas the bangle has no such importance to the neighbours of Malabar.

(d). On the death of husbands it is only the mangalya-sutra and the loha bangles that are discarded as obligatory among Malayalis. Other ornaments, or the hair are not removed. They however do not use kumkum on their forehead. This in very nearly the same in Bengal while Tamilians etc. nearly mutilate the poor widow.

(e). Coloured cloth is the rule in South India for sumangalis; but in Bengal and Malabar white cloth with a coloured border is the rule. It should here be noted that the Malabar Brahmin, male or female, does not use plain, mull-like cloth for religious wear: only cloth with a border even though it be as small as a 'tortu' (bath-towel) will ever be used. Brahmin women do not use mull-like pieces even for daily wear.

(f). Malabar and Bengal Brahmin ladies are strictly ghosha, while our neighbours are not. Those who ascribe the ghosha system to Muhammadan influence should bear in mind that Malabar was not subject to any such influence worth mentioning. The influence of Tippu and Hyder were confined only to small and definite areas and the ancient Arabic influence if any was similarly limited. Further it should be noted that the ghosha system is found only among Brahmins, and if it was due to extraneous influence on the country it ought to have affected all classes in the country.

(g). Vedic names of men and women are common in Bengal and Malabar such as, Vishnugupta, Mathrdatta, Upendra Sarma, Savitri, Droupadi, Atreyi, etc. Such names are unknown among Tamilians and other neighbours.

(h). Villa housing, i e, single houses in separate compounds is the rule in Malabar and rural Bengal as against the universal village system of Tamil-nad.

(i). The ashtamangalya or tala containing the 8 auspicious things is an important factor in all social functions both for the Malayali and the Bengali, while it is either of no importance or absent in Tamil parts.

(j). So is 'ulu ulu sabda' or mangaladhwani (kurava). It is very important in Bengal and Malabar and almost unknown in Tamil areas.

(k). The 'Vrata' period of the 'Vatu' extends to some four years among Malabar Brahmins as well as Bengal Brahmins (kulins). With Tamil, Telugu, Kanarese etc. Brahmins it may be said to extend till marriage. In other words our neighbours have no snatakas among them while Malayalis and Bengalis have.

(l). The Bengali and Malayali tie their sacred thread in 'Pavitra' fashion while Tamilians etc. do it in 'Brahma' fashion.

(m). The Tantrika form of worship (not necessarily the vama) is the only form of worship in Malabar temples whereas it, including the use of mudras and beejas, are of rare occurrence in Tamil parts. This form is very common in Bengal. Even the Vama

form, though Brahmins do not use generally, is current in Malabar. It is done by certain classes of ampalavasis as the 'Kurukkal' and 'Adikal'. Still in some of the temples where this form is used Brahmins perform the other form on the same idol, often without any purificatory rites as at Cranganore, which means that the Brahmins, though they do not perform it, approve of it. Such conditions will not be met with in Tamilnad.

(n). In Malabar among certain sutrakaras there is a certain ceremony in connection with marriage where a Brahmacharin is presented with a fish. Note that Brahmins eat fish in Bengal.

(o). The anuloma practice of Kulin brahmins marrying any number of non-kulin brahmin girls where such wives remain under the roof of their parents permanently is, or rather was, common in Bengal. Compare this with the practice in Malabar of brahmins marrying any number of girls from non-brahmins where the girls remain with their parents. Such customs are unknown in Tamil areas.

Many more such examples are available showing similarity between Malabar and Bengal customs. All these points cited above are as well points of difference between the Malayali Brahmin and his neighbours. Such striking similarities in socio-religious and other important matters point to a very probable relation between these two people. Most of these, especially those connected with rites and ceremonies directly apply only to the brahmins, and it may be argued that the Nairs might have adopted them from the Nambudiris in the course of imitating them.

If that is so who are Nairs? They are now considered Sudras and Dravidians. The generic term Nair covers a wide field and on careful examination we will find included under that term classes like 'Velakkathala Nair' (barber) for whom other Nairs observe even touch pollution. It should also be noted that one sect among Nairs is specifically called 'Sudra Nair' whose function is certain socio-religious menial service to Brahmins and Kshatrias. (This class is the north Malabar equivalent of Illakkars). Six or seven of the 18 classes into which nairs are divided occupy a distinctly higher status than that of Sudras of other parts of India. The higher classes have access to Yaga sala etc. even. Some of them have to hear Veda expressly recited to them in the course of certain ceremonies. Brahmins of other parts of India do not marry Sudras, nor would sudras give their girls to Brahmins in marriage. Smritis are against Brahmins marrying Sudras, in fact, even casual connection is strongly disapproved of even by the special Smriti for Malabar. Manu says: ശൂദ്രാം ശയനമാരോപ്യ ബ്രാഹ്മണോ യാത്യധോഗതിം, ജനയിത്വാസുതം തസ്യാം ബ്രാഹ്മണ്യാദേവ ഹീയതേ, and Sankara Smriti has: വിപ്രോ വിപ്രകുലാൽ പന്നാം ധർമ്മൽപതിണ്ടേചപ്പും, കാമേനക്ഷത്രിയാം വൈശ്യാം, നതു ശൂദ്രാം കഥഞ്ചന. And ശൂദ്രാം നാദ്ധ്യൽ വിപ്രോവാ രാജാവാ വൈശ്യ ഏവ വാ, വൃഷലീം രമമാണോ യരകോരുണസാധയേൽ തൽ ക്ഷണാദ്ധ്യാഗ് ജപന്നിത്യം ത്രിർരവ്യഹ്നാനമാചരേൽ.

In Malabar we see marriages between higher class Nair women and Brahmins as the rule, and there is not the least degradation attached to these marriages, If these higher class Nairs were Sudras this could not have happened. Again it may be noted that a Brahmin cannot marry all who style as Nair, say, for example velakkathala nair (barber) or velutheda nair (washerman) without degradation. In the face of the

aforequoted strict and plain rules one cannot expect the most conservative human being, the Nambudiri, to have started marriages with Nairs if they were Sudras. Again in no part of India there is interdining between Brahmins and others. In Malabar Brahmins and Kshatrias freely interdine as well as eat food prepared by Kshatrias. Brahmins eat with Samantas, and even certain Nairs as Kavalappara moopil nair, etc. in the same room. With one Nair, who after all need not even belong to any special family, Thachudaya kymal of Iringalakkuda temple Brahmins eat in the same line even. If it is contended that he is a sanyasin it makes matters worse, for Sankara smriti allows sanyasa only to high class Brahmins. (സന്ന്യസേന്മർഹന്തി സന്ന്യാസം കണ്ഡംപിപ്രകലാഗ്നിഃ
രനപേനോഭിജനോ വിപ്രോ നാമജനോരുജാപിവാ)
These peculiar customs when viewed together point only to one possibility, viz. that the high class Nairs are not Sudras in any sense of the term.

It may be urged that the increased privileges that the high class Nairs and Samantas enjoyed in Malabar are the result of their wealth and position in the land. If so one would expect to find similar conditions in other parts of India as well, which of course we do not find. Again in Malabar itself we meet with many cases where the social position and wealth, etc. were quite disproportionate. The Zamorin of Calicut the biggest king in olden days had a distinctly lower status than that of petty chiefs like the Beypore and Parappanad families, or small kings like those of Cochin. It should also be remembered that the Brahmins of Malabar were never pennyless dependants of kings but were the landed aristocracy of Malabar. Many of them, the Adhyas for instance, had sovereign rights and such as had sovereign rights even though first class Brahmins really, only suffered a social deterioration as will be evidenced by the fact that these have no agnihotra rights, and that high grade Aryans do not use them for their socio-religious functions. On the other hand we note a definite relation between the higher status of non-Brahmins and their functions (traditional) and vrithi or conduct. It should be noted that the higher classes of Nairs were a military class and were never the menial servant class or field labourers. They were also landed proprietors and landlords. Even to-day though poor a Nair as a rule refuses to work in paddy fields or take to artisanship. All these tend to show that Nairs (the higher classes) were not Sudras as ordinarily understood in India but were something higher. Then who are they? The traditional function of the Sudra is menial service and artisanship (dasya vritti and silpa vidya). Though the last of the higher denominations, viz, Sudra Nair of the north or the Illakkars of the south of Kerala had dasya vrithi of the Brahmins and Kshatriyas, none of the higher groups took to silpa vidya. Again it is interesting to note that those who took to dasya vrithi had the specific appellation 'sudra' added on to their name in Malabar proper. If all Nairs were sudras this is superfluous and meaningless.

Now turning to Manu we read that the descendants of Kshatriyas by their non-performance of samskaras and karmas became Sudras in course of time, and Dravidas are one such example. (Manu X-43 രനേകസ്തു ക്രിയാലോപാ ദിമാഃ ക്ഷത്രിയജാതയഃ വൃഷലത്വം ഗതാലോകേ ബ്രഹ്മണാദർശനേന ച. പൗണ്ഡ്രകാശ്ചൗഡ്രദ്രവിഡാഃ.....Kulluka in his

annotation says മഹാണ്ഡാരിപ്രഭൃതയഃ: സന്തഃ ക്ഷത്രിയാചാരാദിനാ ശൂദ്രതുല്യാഃ സന്തഃ;) The probability that can be inferred from these evidences is that the higher classes of Nairs at any rate are Kshatriyas who have lost their original status by omission of vedic studies and samskaras. This helps us well to understand how they came to be considered as Sudras by the Brahmins. In other words high class Nairs are vratya kshatrias. In ancient days we learn that vratyas were readmitted into their original status after vratyasthoma prayaschitha rites. Apastamba the authority for Deccan says they regain *status quo ante*(തത്തുല്യത്വം പ്രാപ്നുയാൽ), after prayaschitta. The annotator of this passage says (ത സന്തി ദേശാനവളുപേത: തേഷാമാചാരപരിത്യാഗം ദേശാനം മ വർത്തയൽ ആപദ്യപി ന കസ്യാ ചിത്തയ: തേഷാം സ്വയമവ പ്രായശ്ചിത്താനന്തര ഉപനയനം.....) Prof. Bhandarkar says that there are many instances of readmissions into Hinduism and even to Brahminhood as evidenced by lithic records. Malabar Brahmins however did not very much countenance vratyastoma readmissions as is evident from their own smriti "വ്രാത്യസ്തു മഹിധാനന സംബന്ധ: പ്രത്യവായം നാരോത്തു ഇത്യനാചാരാം രാമേണ തു ജഗി സ്മരിതം. This, it will be noted, did not absolutely shut out the possibility of readmissions in selected cases as will be evident from even recent admissions into society after prayaschita of people who suffered social degradation during the Mappila riots. That this is not the result of modern mentality will be evidenced by the fact that many families were taken back after similar incidents during Tippu's invasion. a branch of the Parappanad Kshatria family being one of them, and on their demise their heirs did all aparakriya as usual. Apart from this, continued marriages with Brahmins also tended to raise the status of Nairs, etc (Manu X-64 quoted before). But on account of specific prohibitory customs only very few perhaps were admitted back into Kshatriahood. We shall say more about this when considering Nairs and Kshatrias.

We shall now take each class and subclass (only purely Malabar classes will be considered here) and study them with a view to find out the basis of the classification.

## I. BRAHMINS.

1. This group is divided into two major classes, (1) the Nampoori and (2) the Potti, the former representing what is known as the true Malabar Brahmin, and the latter Brahmins of Tulu extraction who have taken to Malabar customs and manners The word as used now, viz. Nampoothiri is only an improved form of Nampoori; 'thiri' a term of courtesy is added to many words Cf. empranthiri, adithiri, Samoothiri, etc. where 'thiri' seems to be derived from, Sanskrit root 'Drng'= 'Adare' Again it will be seen that a class of good Malabar Brahmins go by the name of Nampidi in North Malabar. Variants derived from the same root are seen in the forms Nampi. Nampyathi. etc. as well The word Nampidi can be philologically equated with 'Nampiri' which appears to be the correct original form; this then changed itself into Nampoori. Taken thus the word will be derived from two Dravidian terms 'nam'=our and piri. a variant of piran=master or lord, the whole meaning our lord. This derivation will be found to be justifiable when we see similar words like Empran used for Tulu Brahmins (sometimes even for domiciled Tulu Brahmins) where the word is 'Em'= our, or En = my, and piran= lord; and Thampuran for Chieftains, both Brahmin and Kshatria.

from 'tham=their, and piran a lord. The term is not met with in literature as applied themselves by Nampoories. In documents we meet with only expressions as for example say, 'Sankaran Sankaran, Malayala-brahmanan, swasthom, muppatharu vayassu' etc. only. Further, Nampoories and Kshatrias address Adhyans alone as Nampoori, our lord, others being addressed by their house name only, such as Elayadam. These are referred to in the same manner. It should also be borne in mind that Adhyans are addressed and referred to by Nairs etc. as Thampurans which would show some relation between the two terms Nampoori and thampuran. When viewed in this light the terms Nampoori, thampuran and Empran are only honorific titles pointing to wealth or position and not to any Brahminical condition *per se*. The priesthood among all classes are given an equivalent status to that of the wealthy as will be seen from expressions like 'His Lordship' as applied to Christian Bishops etc. If the Malayalies were using the term in that sense one will have to explain why the Tamil Brahmins etc. were never addressed or referred to by that term.[1] The Nampoories are classified into:

(a) *Adhyas*. This Sanskrit term clearly indicates a status due to wealth. This class is supposed to be the highest among Nampoories. But certain significant facts tend to show that they are not really the highest. These have no Agnihotra rights, nor do they have the right of Sanyasa, nor again are they employed by high class Asya-brahmins to officiate for their socio-religious needs. These are now generally explained away by saying that they are so pure that they do not require Yaga or Sanyasa. This explanation is on the very face of it futile and Hinduism contemplates none so high as may not require Sanyasa. Again all these Adhyas possessed sovereign rights as will be seen from historical facts as well as the present day remnants of their past temporal Power in the shape of sword and shield-bearers to accompany them whenever they get out. On account of this Kshatria status they enjoyed they have sustained a slight degradation in their Brahminicial status as evidenced by the loss of two or three of the most coveted Brahminical rights.

(b) *Asyas*. From 'asya'=face; denoting their full, Brahminical character, the term being derived from the legend in Purusha-

1. The terms Nampoori and Empran are by others usually derived from two different words nampi and piran. Nampoori = nampi + thiri = nampi + Skt. sri. Nampi occurs also in the Malayalam words നമ്പിയാർ, നമ്പിയാതി, നമ്പിയാതിരി, നമ്പിയച്ചൻ, നമ്പിയടി, നമ്പിഷ്ടതിരി, നമ്പിച്ചി, നമ്പിപ്പോറ്റി, നമ്പി വേട്ടവൻ, പൂനമ്പി, പാനമ്പി, വാൾനമ്പി, കാനമ്പി, കുച്ചേലിനമ്പി, ചട്ടമ്പി (ചട്ടനമ്പി).

It is found in Tamil also as *நம்பி, நம்பியான், நம்பியாண்டார் நம்பி*. In these instances nampi appears to be a term of respect. I too am inclined to take it to be a corrupt form of nam + piran. The change may be represented thus.

നം പിതാൻ—(നം പാൻ and) നംപി

Cf. 1 എം പിതാൻ—(എം പാൻ, and എം പി)

2. തം പിതാൻ—തംപാൻ and തം പി

The forms in brackets are not found in use in Tamil or Malayalam. നം, എം and തം are forms of Dravidian *நான், என்* and *தான்*. which latter is itself used as a title of honour or respect in വലിയതൻ, ഉണ്ണിതൻ, തിരുവാഴിതൻ, കമ്പിതൻ (കവേ" + നമ്പി + തൻ). I take പിതാൻ to be a corruption of Sanskrit പ്രധാന, an old title of honour or distinction.

പ്രധാന: *பிரதானன், பிரானன், பிரான்*, പ്രഭാൻ.

—*T. K. Joseph.*

sookta. These have all Brahminical rights in full. Formerly only the high class Nampoories used this term to describe themselves though now it is often being indiscriminately used. Their occupation is even today purely sacerdotal. Among them there are distinctions based on geographical distribution appearing in the form of mutual exclusion in marriages and in officiating for socio-religious functions of importance. As said once before wherever one meets with mutual exclusion while belonging to the same class one may be sure of finding a difference in geographical distribution either past or present, but in such cases there will be no sense of high and low between them.

C. *Ordinary*. These have all the rights except Yaga.

D. *Namamatrakas*. These are Brahmins only in name as the nomenclature itself would reveal. There are many sub-classes among them. The women of the first three classes (a, b, c) do not eat the food prepared by these and the next group (e). The sub-classes of (d) are (i) *Yatra* Nampooris whose function as the name suggests is to enact Yatra performance in military dress and paraphernalia. Their degradation is due to this military function. (ii) *Ashtavydyas*. These are the traditional doctors of the land. Here also degradation is due to their function (iii) *Gramani*. These were petty chiefs of villages as the name denotes, and they too were degraded on account of their function as village officers

E. *Saptas*. These are Brahmins who lost status for some sinful act of theirs which was rewarded with curse (sapa) from others in the form of loss of status. They are (i) *Panniyur gramam*, a whole village or group who permitted Tamilians to enter Malabar, for which they were degraded. (ii) *Uril-parisha-mooss* is another class. The term denotes literally 'first among the people of a village'. (iii) Another class of a saptas are the descendants of those who received danam or gift of land, and (iv) the last of this group is the Payyannore village. There is a special peculiarity with this last class as they are the only Brahmins who follow the line of female descent or full marumakkathayam (matriarchal) system, the curse being for accepting the maternal system of inheritance.

Groups (d) and (e) have not even right to the study of Vedas.

II. The other major class or *Potties* are Brahmins of Tulu extraction who have adopted Malabar customs and manners. They are also divided into sub-classes. The foremost among them are the Tiruvalla-desis, (=those of Tiruvalla village), a name designating geographical distribution. They are Brahmins with full sacerdotal rights as the good Asyans. There are, however, certain differences between Asyans and these in ornaments, etc. pointing to their different origin, but none of any importance whatever, so much so that many of these potties have surreptitiously taken the title of Nampoory. In matters of intermarriage and socio-religious officiating they are mutually exclusive as will be expected. (See *Kerala Society Papers*, Series 2: Annals & Antiquities of Tiruvalla.)

Below them we get potty brahmins enjoying varying degrees of Brahminical rights, some even having no right to study Vedas. Some of these occupy positions of temporal chieftainship and are what the Gramanies are among the Nampoories. Besides these there are many who are classed as 'Ottais' or singles where there

are a few houses of the same group. Some of these are recent Tulu domiciles as will be evident from their surnames such as 'Hegde' etc. These may be cosidered as transition forms. Some of the 'singles' are supposed to be originally Elayathus or a sect of people who function as the priests of Nairs.

In ordinary life the males of all Brahmins of the 'Pancha-Dravida' group, viz. Malabar Brahmins of all denominations, Tamil, Telugu, Canarese and Maharashtra Brahmins freely interdine though their females may not interdine or eat food prepared by those considered as low. For example a Tamil Brahmin woman will eat the food prepared by a Nampoori woman, but not *vice versa*. Among the Malabar Brahmin groups even females of the first three classes (a, b, c) freely interdine and eat of each other's preparation. Intermarriages among these three subclasses are common but not with the rest, though pratiloma marriages, where a higher girl is given to a man of lower status is permitted under exceptional circumstances. But on such marriages the girl loses her former status and takes her husband's status.

There is one other class known as Elayatu, Nampyati or Nampyatiri, who may be considered as patita Brahmins. He is the purohita of Nairs, and his fall is attributed to that function of his. There are cases where nampyatis are given girls from high class nampoory houses, which tends to show that he is really a patita brahmin. Brahmins and Kshatrias do not dine even in the same room with them, and they even observe touch pollution. Malabar brahmins observe touch pollution for all but Pancha-dravida brahmins even in ordinary life, and for religious purposes they observe for all except the three upper sub-classes among them.

## II. KSHATRIAS

A possibility of these having arisen from Nairs by purification by rites or by continued anuloma marriages of Brahmins should not be lost sight of. It is noteworthy that the Varma appellation peculiar to Kshatrias is found in Malabar among those recognised as Kshatrias, among Samanthas, and recently even among Nairs though very rarely. The name of a recent famous poet Ravi Varman Tampy, a Nair, is one such example of the name among Nairs. Among those recognised as Kshatrias there are sub-divisions based on geographical considerations, such as the Panthalom group and the Poonjar-Cranganore group, who are said to have come from Madura, and belong to the old Madura royal house of the Tamil country. One group near Kasergode even now has Tulu characteristics. Then there are the Beypore-Parappanad group, Kottayam group, Cochin group, besides many Thampans and Thirumulpads scattered throughout Malabar. All these are related to Brahmins in the same way. As intermarriages between Kshatrias are not done in Malabar, and as Kshatrias do not officiate in socio-religious functions there is no variety of exclusion among them. Finally there is the Kolaswaroopam group, whose relations towards Nampori Brahmins are slightly different from that of the other Kshatrias. Kolaswaroopam women are married by the other Kshatrias mentioned above. Other Kshatrias have been, till recently, observing exclusion of Kolaswaroopam members in respect of religious functions. All these Kshatrias have one or other of the following class designation added to their real names, such as Kovil-adhikari, Koil-pandala, Thampan, Thirumulpad, or Thampuram (Raja). But a difference

in designation does not mean that they are of different classes. All these designations are those pointing to their temporal power as kings, or chiefs and has nothing to do with class division. For example a house related to the Cochin royal family (Vellarapally) take the designation of Thampan, whereas the royal house takes the designation of Thampuran or Raja, though the old designation appears to be Kovil-adhikari. The selfsame appellations are also used by Samanthas and aristocratic Nair houses. For example Kuthiravattathu Nairs style themselves as Thampans, and the Nilampur chiefs style themselves as Thirumulpads. Most of the Samanthas now style themselves as Rajas. Designations are so much intermingled that they are of no use to determine the social class of the individual. Samanthas are described by Manu, Yajnavalkya and others as feudatory chiefs. The Kshatrias of Malabar have as a rule 11 days' pollution after births and deaths, and among Samanthas there are some having 11 days, some 12, others 13 and and yet others 14. The Nairs have 15 as a rule. Kshatrias have the sacred thread. Most Samanthas have not, while some put it on during certain religious functions. The Kshatrias have all mantra-samskaras, while Samanthas and Nairs have some of the samskaras generally without mantras. But for these differences above mentioned, Kshatrias, Samanthas and Nairs are absolutely alike. The Kshatrias of Malabar do not enjoy the right of Vedic studies, of yagas, etc. enjoined in Smritis for Kshatrias. The Kshatria females are married only to Brahmins. The religious rite of marriage is only a mock affair, the bridegrooms being lower class Brahmins such as Yatra-brahmins or Aryappattars. Remarriages are freely permitted and as a rule only high class Brahmins become the real husbands. If a high class Brahmin condescends to be bridegroom in the religious mock marriage of the Kshatrias he suffers a loss of status and his former equals will not permit him to take part in their socio-religious functions.

The Samantha is next to Kshatria in social status and we have already noted many things about him. Some of the Samanthas, e. g. Kuthiravattathu Thampan and certain Kartha families in North Travancore are even considered Nairs and their old designation appears to be that. Every one of them however can trace their origin to some chiefdom or other, and this tradition is in most cases borne out by the existence of political pension from Governments. Their habits of life are like those of Nampoories; they do not eat meat, do not eat with Nairs and even observe touch pollution for Nairs. They marry their girls either to Brahmins or to those of their own class. Most of these enjoy the right of eating with Brahmins in the same room. Some of these, e. g. Pandalai, Eradi, Vallodi, etc. enjoy this right in the North, but not in the South. Brahmins observe touch pollution for most of the Samantha classes. By function all these at one time or other were petty chiefs and are now with rare exceptions landlords or political pensioners. Many of the class names of samanthas point to geographical factors. The term 'Ati' means feet and is of the same import as 'Thiruvati' = pooiyapada of Sanskrit. We sometimes find either ati or thiruvati used indescriminately in old records as for example, Venattu Mootha Thiruvatikal or Venattu Mootha Atikal, to mean the same thing, Erati meant the atikal of Ernad, Valloti the atikal or prince of Valluvanad, Nedungadi of Nedunganad

and so on. There is nosense of high and low between these groups as will be expected in cases of geographical distinctions, but some amount of mutual exclusion in matters of religious importance are even now noticeable. The fine gradations from Nair to Kshatriaj together with the fact that certain true Nairs (e. g. Kavalappara moopil nair) enjoy the right of sala-bhojana with Brahmins, the general similarity in customs and manners between all these gradations, and the very probable fact that Nairs are 'vratya kshatrias' point to the possibility of both Samanthas and Kshatrias having arisen from the Nairs.

One other point is also noteworthy Malabar brahmins do no 'anjali' bowing to any but God; they, whenever they have to show respect to man, do 'abhivadyam' by touching the feet of the honoured. Kshatrias do this during religious rites, and at other times they do the anjali bow (thozhuka) with folded hands when they meet their uncles, elder brothers, mother, etc. for the first time on a day. Before doing this they pull down the sacred thread from off the left shoulder on the plea that with the sacred thread in position one ought not to bow to any but God. If this means anything it could mean only that either they had originally no sacred thread, or they began tozhuka (bowing) only recently. It is not likely that bowing came second, for if bowing is not permissible with sacred thread on, and if they had sacred thread from the beginning bowing would not have crept in and they would have got on as the Nampoories do. The chances are that bowing, the essentially Malabar form of it (with hands brought together), was prevalent among them at first, and the thread came in later on, which means that originally they were without thread, or in other words they were Nairs.

Another factor we have to consider is in relation to those high class Kshatrias who trace their line from the Tamil kings of Madura. Note that they, though foreigners, are classed as first class Kshatrias now. We have still on the eastern side of the Ghats many Zemindars who trace their descent from the selfsame kings. But they do not enjoy equal previleges with their counterparts now in Malabar. Though they style themselves as Kshatrias the Malayali treats them on almost the same level as the Nairs only.

## III. AMPALAVASIS.

According to the Brahmins the next class is the Ampalavasi or temple-residing class, though it must be admitted that Brahmins have no sort of interdining with ampalavasis whereas they have some with certain Nairs as shown before. The Ampalavasis are all by function temple servants each class having a different principal function. Some of the Samanthas and Ampalavasis dine together in the same room. Among Ampalavasis some have sacred thread while others have not. The highest among this class is the Moothathu = elder as the name itself implies. He is Brahmin like in customs and manners, but has neither rights of interdining with Brahmins nor of learning the Vedas. These are, even those having a sacred thread, considered by high class Nairs as below them. Though there is plenty of local differences as a rule Nair women of high classes do not eat food touched by Ampalavasis. Neither do they marry them. Some of the Ampalavasies are decidedly patitas (degenerates) from Brahmins, e. g. the Chakkiar and Nampiar. They are the children of Brahmin women formally convicted of adultery, the children

however being born to the legitimate father. This system of recruiting Chakiars and Nampiars are still current. As the classification of Ampalavasies is based on differences in function there is a strong sense of high and low among them. Some of them as the Pisharodi are believed to be Buddhist or Jaina sanyasins who have returned to the Hindu fold during the decline of those religions. They are supposed to be the old "Battarakas or bhattaraka tiruvadikal" of the Buddhists. Some of their customs and manners point to such a possibility. Some others as Kurukkal (Gurukkal = preceptors), Adikal, etc. appear to be the remnants of the old vamachara form of tantrism as their present functions themselves would show.

In fact the Ampalavasis or Antarala (middling) group is a motley group derived from many sources and having different primary occupations. Except the Moothathu all others generally dine together in the same room. Being temple servants and often residing in close proximity to temples, they had greater chances of intimate associations with Brahmins, with the result that they cultivated a general characteristic of imitating the Brahmin in all their manners and customs and knowledge of Sanskrit language and literature, of medicine, etc. This was helped by the free anuloma marriages with Brahmins which arose out of their close contact with Brahmins every day. Most of them permitted Brahmin marriages in their homes. Besides the close intimacy with the Brahmins these people had plenty of leisure during noon time as their work was usually confined to morning and evening hours, and this helped them to take to Sanskrit education. They were as a rule well educated in Sanskrit. On account of all these Brahmins gave them a higher status than the Nairs though the Nairs do not recognise this generally. Some of the groups are still further divided on geographical basis as in the case of Variers. Here of course there in no sense of high and low but only mutual exclusion.

## IV. NAIRS.

Next come the Nairs. They are considered Sudras by Brahmins, but their social status is higher than that of Sudras of many other parts of India. They may broadly be classed as the high class group and the lower classes. The difference between some of the higher classes and the Samanthas is practically nil as shown before. Some of them (Kavalappara Nair and Kuthiravattathu Nair) enjoy the right of interdining with Brahmins as do the Samantas. We have elsewhere come to the irresistible conclusion that the higher class of Nairs must have been 'vratya kshatrias' in the beginning.

There are 18 sects among them. The nomenclature differs in different parts of Malabar, and in some cases there is confusion of status and function. The sub-divisions are:—

1. Kiriyam (കിരിയം). From 'griha' = house; these are landlords and every way equal to Samanthas. Some of them have sala-bhojana with Brahmins, and all have the right to enter a yaga-sala.
2. Tharakan (തരകൻ). Originally merchants by function; now mostly landlords. Derived from 'tharaku' (തരക" = tariff)
3. Ravarikal (രാവാരികൾ). Just as no. 2, derived from Vyapari (വ്യാപാരി) a merchant.

These three form the highest group and they can intermarry.

From the functions of the second and third

it will be noted that they ought to fall into the vysya class. It should be noted that there is no vysya class among pure Malayalees.

4. Purathucharnna nair (പുറത്തുചാന്നായർ) Purathu=out, and charnna=attached, joined. These were the militia attached to the different States or Swaroopams. Hence they are also called Swaroopakkars. By function these are then equal to Kshatrias of varna classification.

5. Akathucharna nair. (അകത്തുചാന്നായർ). Akathu=in, and charnna=attached, joined. These are servants other than the military, attached to kings. In Travancore these and no. 4 fall together in the same class as Swaroopakkars. The subdivision is current only in British Malabar where no. 4 is taken as of a higher status than no. 5.

6. Sudra nair (ശൂദ്രനായർ). Function, service of Brahmins. Equal to Illakkars of Travancore and other southern parts. This is the last class of good Nairs in the North, though in Travancore etc. these have come to be classed as higher than nos. 4 and 5 (Swaroopakkars).

Numbers 4, 5 and 6 are classed as middle class Nairs in the North and high class Nairs in the South where the first three classes are wanting. The 12 classes following are considered low.

7. Padamangalom (പാടമംഗലം). } Function
8. Pallichan (പള്ളിച്ചൻ) } cannot be identified now. [2]

9. Anthooran (ആന്തൂരൻ). Palanquin bearers from 'Andola' palanquin. [3]

10. Kulangara nair (കുളങ്ങരനായർ). These are bards who sing in certain temples like 'Ayyappan-kavu', 'Bhadrakali-kavu', 'Vettakaruvan-kavu', etc. The classes known as Kuruppu, Maran, (കുറുപ്പ്, മാരാൻ) etc. of Travancore fall into this group. Note that Maran and Kuruppu are the same. (There is a status Kurup which is a military distinction; that has nothing to do with caste. Such military distinctions are found among other castes as well as among non-Hindus. E. g. there are houses eojoying 'Panikkar' status both among Nampoories as well as among Syrian Christians and Mohemedans.)

11. Itacherry (ഇടച്ചേരി). heards-men by function, Derivation clear, ഇടയ+ചേരി.

12. Otathu nair (ഓടത്തുനായർ). [4] These are boatmen (from Otam boat)

13. Vattakkatan or Chakkala (വട്ടക്കാടൻ. ചക്കാലനായർ). Oil pressers by function as the name implies. [5]

2. According to Thurston *Castes and Tribes of Southern India*, s. v. Nayar, Padamangalam's occupation is 'temple service such as sweeping, carrying lamps during processions, etc.', and Pallichchans (പള്ളിച്ചൻ) ഗിക്കയാൻ) are "bearers of palanquins for Brahmans and Malabar chieftains. They are also employed as their attendants to carry their sword and shield before them". (*Loc. cit.*, pp. 298, 299.)

T. K. J.

3. Gundert's Dictionary has' "ആന്തൂരം, ആന്തൂർ.....N. pr. Fief under Calicut, from which are derived the ആന്തൂര നായന്മാർ potters also ആന്തൂർ KU. കലം ഉണ്ടാക്കുന്ന ആന്തിയന്മാർ T R.', ആന്തൂരൻ (anthooran) means a man of the village called Anthoor.

—T. K. J.

4. Thurston has in *op. cit.*, Vol. V, p. 399 thus: 'Otatu, also called Kusa. Their occupation is to tile or thatch temples and Brahman houses''. There are some ഓടൻ-s ഓടത്തുനായർ-s in Trivandrum. Their ancestors' *metier* was making roofing tiles (ഓട") of clay.

—T. K J.

5. The first name Vattakkadan means a man of the place called Vattakkadu; the second means a Nair of the 'oil-press-house'. Gundert has recorded also the name കുഴിനായർ for him.

—T. K. J.

14. Ezhuthachan (എഴുത്തച്ഛൻ). Primary teachers or teachers of alphabets as the name implies.

15. Athikurichi (അത്തിക്കുറിച്ചി). Function at cremation and last services of Nairs. (from asthi=bone) [6]

16. Urali nairs (ഊരാളിനായർ). These were village menials and were sub-divided into many such as, kolayan (കൊല്ലയൻ) the blacksmith, azhuthan (അഴുത്തൻ) the carpenter, muvvari മുവ്വാരി the sweeper, eruman (ഏറുമാൻ) the climber, etc. [7]

17. Veluthada nair (വെളുത്തേടനായർ). The washerman caste from veluthe=white or clean. [8]

18. Velakkathala nair. (വെളക്കത്തലനായർ). the barber from 'velakka'=to clean and thala, head. [9]

The last three groups are not considered by Nairs as nairs at all, and other Nairs observe touch pollution with them Class no. 16 is not seen in Travancore. The classes from no. 6 downwards appear to be real Sudras by their function. Brahmins and Kshatrias observe touch pollution in respect of all Nairs, all Ampalavasis, Samanthas, and Pathitha Brahmins such as Ilayathu. As such the question of touch pollution is no criterion to determine the true class to which the higher class Nairs belong. Brahmins marry in the houses of nos. 1 to 8, 10 and 11 though only the first 6 are considered to be fit & proper

Below is given an alphabetical list of the main castes among pure Malabarians denoting their traditional function and explaining the terms as far as possible.

*An alphabetically arranged list* of castes of Malabar showing function. (Names culled from the last Census Report of Travancore. Only true Malabar castes are considered here).

1. Alhavan also known as uppalhavan (അളവൻ.ഉപ്പളവൻ). The salt manufacturing caste; from 'alham'=salt-pan and 'an'=doer.

2. Ampalavasi (അമ്പലവാസി). A generic name for several classes whose general function is service in temples; for subdivisions *vide* text.

3. Ampattan (അമ്പട്ടൻ). Barber caste in South Travancore, &c. from Ambashtha (Skt.) one of the samkara Varnas whose function was surgery. His other names are kshawrakkaran, kshuraka, from kshur, a lancet, pointing to the surgical function, Pranopakari, helper of life, Pandita, learned etc. Originally barbers and surgeons were the same

6. Aththikkurichchi looks like the name of a village, meaning literally the bonehill-village or the fig-tree hill-village. This class of Nairs seems to be known also as അസ്ഥിവാരി, i.e. bone-gatherer.

—T. K. J.

7. Gundert says in his Dictionary. "ഊരാളി..... 1. lower Sudra caste (എരുമാൻ, കല്ലുവിനായർ No.) their work മൺപണി, കല്ലണി." Some non-Sudra castes too are known as ഊരാളി (ooru-li) in different parts of Kerala. Ooruli=the village-man.

—T. K. J.

8. Veluththadam the white place, is used to designate the house of a Malayali washerman in some parts of Central Travancore. According to Gundert it means "the washing turf." There is Karuththedam (black place) also used as a house name in Travancore.

9. വിളക്കത്തവൻ, വിളക്കത്തലയൻ, &c. are difficult to interpret. Could വിളക്കത്തറ or.....തല be the name of a village? Could it have any possible connection with parashistes the barber and mummy embalmer of old Egypt? In Kerala barbers are supposed to have a knowledge of medicine and surgery too. They are called also Vaidyas (physicians) in some place, Barber women act as midwives.

—T. K. J.

all over the world as is evident from the terms used (cf. Chirurgeon=Skt. kshuraka=surgeon). Instead of calling him a barber, out of respect for his profession he was called by the name of his more useful function to society. (Ambashthanam chikitsitam'. Manu X-47)

4. Arayan (അരയൻ), a class of fishermen. (See 44).
5. Asari (ആശാരി), carpenter.
6. Atikal (അടികൾ). A class of ampalavasis. (*vide* text for derivation).
7. Atiyoti (അടിയോടി). A class of samanthas. (According to Gundert there is a class of Nairs of this name in Kadathanad in British Malabar. See also Thurston, Vol. V, p. 300 —T. K. J.)
8. Brahmin. See text.
9. Chakkala, see under Nairs.
10. Chakkiar (ചാക്കിയർ). One of the ampalavasis, whose function is to enact. His name in some Tamil works is 'koothachchakkaian'. (koothu=dance).
11. Chavalhakkaran (ചവളക്കാരൻ). A fisherman class. (A low Nayar tribe, according to Bailey's Dictionary, 1846.— T. K J.
12. Chayakkaran (ചായക്കാരൻ). Dyer caste (chayam= dye). (A low-caste washerman in some parts of Travancore. See 45 for another.—T. K. J.
13. Chayakurup (ചായക്കുറുപ്പ്) A class of workers in lacquer (kurup stands for teacher or master worker)
14. Chempukotty (ചെമ്പുകൊട്ടി) Coppersmith.

14 a Chetty (ചെട്ടി). A generic name for vysyas (Non-Malayali, from sreshti= chief merchant. Sett is also derived from this).

15. Cholavan (ചോളവൻ) A class of weavers
16. Daivampadi, also called Brahmani (ദൈവംപാടി, ബ്രാഹ്മണി) A class of ampalavasis whose women sing in temples (Daivam=God, & padi=singer). (Vathis of South Travancore, a Nair sub-caste, are also called Daivampadis probably because they 'sing songs about God' to the accompaniment of nanthuni, a kind of guitar—T. K. J.)
17. Ilavanian (ഇലവാണിയൻ). A class of petty traders (ila=leaf & vanian from vanija, trader) (Originally seller of betel leaf or perhaps plantain leaf T. K. J.)
18. Ilayathu (ഇളയത്) The purohitha of Nairs. (Term means the junior, the lesser Brahmin. The other names for them are 'nampyathi' or nampyathiri, a dimunitive form of nampoory. (See 49).
19. Itayan (ഇടയൻ) Herdsman class
20. Izhava (ഈഴവൻ) The liquor making class of Malabar. Name geographical, from Izham—Ceylon. These were, it is said, originally Budhists who have come from Ceylon. Some of their customs are in favour of the tradition They are now Hindus, but excluded from higher society on account of their profession. In British Malabar these are known as Theeyas, & in Travancore and cochin chilanthis (=Ceylon theeyas), chovas etc. It is said that in some parts of Malabar Theeyas have no distance pollution. (It is the Izhavas living among Syrian Christians that are called chovans —T. K. J.
21. Izhavathi or Vathi (ഈഴവാത്തി-വാത്തി) The barbers and purohithas of Ezhavas (Vathy from vadhyan, a purohitha or teacher). (For a Nair Vathi see 16— T. K. J.)

22. Kallan (കല്ലൻ). Mason caste, a sub-division of Kammalas (Kal—stone)

23. Kammala (കമ്മാളർ), generic name for all artisan classes, especially five classes (from Sk. Karmakara—artisan (Or, karma alan, കർമ്മ ആളൻ—T. K. J.)

24. Kanikkaran (കാണിക്കാരൻ) A forest tribe

25. Kaniyan (കണിയാൻ) Astrologer caste from Sk. 'Gan' to compute, cf. Ganaka, Gani)

26. Karuvan (കരുവാൻ). A worker in brass or bronze (Karu—mould (Gundert: കരുമാൻ, കരുവാൻ=blacksmith of low caste—T. K. J.

27. Kattasan (കാട്ടാശാൻ). A hill tribe who makes baskets etc. (Kat=forest, and asan=a teacher).

28. Kollan (കൊല്ലൻ). Blacksmith class (see 26, and 23).

29. Krishnan vaka (കൃഷ്ണൻ വക) A pastoral sect of Sudras in S. Travancore, Non-Malabar class) Name derived from the traditional life of Sreekrishna).

30. Kashtria, see text, name denotes protector.

31. Kumbhi (കുംഭി) A potter class. (Kumbha pot - (See 36 and 86).

32. Kuravan (കുറവൻ, കൊറവൻ). An agricultural labourer.

33. Kurukkal (കുരുക്കൾ), See text.

34. Kurup (കുറുപ്പ്). As a caste name applied to certain Nair classes who sing at certain temples. (vide text). Also a title. (See 93)

35. Koothati or Kampathel-koothati (കൂത്താടി. കമ്പത്തേൽ കൂത്താടി. A class of rope dancers (Kampam=pole., Koothati=dancer.)

36. Kusavan (കുശവൻ). Potter Non-malabar (See 31 and 86) (Called കോലായർ in some places—T. K. J.

37. Malanair (മലനായർ). A hill tribe doing agricultural work on hills. N. B. All words beginning with 'Mala' denote a forest class.

38. Malamkuti (മലങ്കുടി). A hill tribe.

39. Malampantaram (മലമ്പണ്ടാരം). A class among hill tribes. (cf. Pantaram, a saivite sanyasin of Tamil nad.) See 61.

40. Malavelan (മലവേലൻ). A hill tribe of sorcerers. See 'Velan', 85.

41. Malavetan (മലവേടൻ). A hill tribe of hunters. (vetan=hunter).

42 Malaullatan (മലഉള്ളാടൻ). A hill tribe dwelling in the interior of forests.

43. Malayan (മലയൻ). A generic name for all hilltribes.

44. Mala-arayan (മലഅരയൻ). A hill tribe.

45. Mannan (മണ്ണാൻ). Now these are tree climbers and washermen. The word is a variant of Tamil Vannan. Even today mannan is the religious washerman of Malayalees., for 'mannante mattu' or 'mannathy mattu', or cloth washed by mannan is essential for religious purification. Mattu, change of cloth. Thus traditionally he is the washerman. (Tamil மண்ணு, Mannu=to wash.—T. K. J.)

46. Marakkan (മരയ്ക്കാൻ). One of the fishermen class, specially applied to sea-fishing class. From maru or marre, an arabic term for the sea. Cf. words like 'fathemari' etc.

47. Maran (മരാൻ). A drummer caste. (See 16 and 34).

48. Mukkuvan (മുക്കുവൻ). A fisherman caste (Mung or Muk=to dive).

49. Moothathu (മൂത്തത്). One of the ampala-vasi castes He is the highest among them. (See 18).

50. Nampiti (നമ്പിടി). A dimunitive form of nampoori ?. There are several differ-

ent classes having that name. It appears to be a generic name depicting position of honour.

51. Nampiyathi (നമ്പ്യാതി). Same as Ilayathu, No. 18.

52. Nampiar (നമ്പ്യാർ). A class of ampalavasis akin to Chakkiars. The pure children of a Nampoory woman covicted of adultery become nampiars if they have not yet undergone upanayanam; if they have they become Chakkiars. It will be noted that a Chakkiar and a Nampiar may be direct brothers, and yet belong to two castes. There is also a mere title nampiyar which is not a caste. (A Nair class in British Malabar is called Nampiyar.—T. K. J.)

53. Nampoothiri. See text.

54. Nattuvan (നട്ടുവൻ) Conductor of dancing. (Nat=to dance)

55. Nayar (നായർ) Esentially the martial class of Malabar. Nayar=leader, or respectable man cf. Naidu, Naickan, etc. Sk. Nayaka=leader).

56. Nayati (നായാടി). Hill tribe of hunters. (nayattu=hunting, from nay=dog)

57. Ochchan (ഓച്ചൻ). A name given to marans or drummers and musicians in Tamil areas of Malabar. (See 47).

58. Pallan (പള്ളൻ). A Tamil class of agriculturists (pallam=slope or valley of a hill.)

59. Panan (പാണൻ). A class of musicians cf. phrases as 'panan pattu'. They do needle work also.

60. Panikkan (പണിക്കൻ). A generic name for many classes such as carpenters etc. Also used as a title (Panikkar) to denote proficiency in military training. In this sense it is applied to different castes and even non-Hindus. There are Panikkar title-holders among nampoories, Syrian Christians & Nairs.

61. Pantaram (പണ്ടാരം). Tamil class of professional mendicants.

62. Paravan (പറവൻ). A class of fishermen, who collect certain bivalve shells, and make lime frem thom.

63. Paraiah (പറയൻ). The caste equated with Chandala of old. They are the lowest class in Malabar.

Pilappally (പുലപ്പള്ളി) A small community of ampalavasis in Ampalapuzha taluq in Travancore.

65. Psharoty (പിഷാരടി) An ampalavasi sect. See text.

65. Pontan (പോണ്ടൻ) Palanquin carrier

67. Potty (പോറ്റി) A class of Malabar Brahmins (Pottu, to protect). Such a term of respect is perfectly understandable when applied to priestly classes.

68. Pothuval (പൊതുവാൾ) a class of ampalavasis. (Common man or a man of general service).

69. Pulayan (പുലയൻ) A corrupt derivative of pulkasa as is evidenced from Sankara Smrithi etc. He is the worker in paddy fields. In the north he is known as Cheruman. (Known as മുളയൻ in some parts of Cochin. Cheruman has recently been converted into Cheraman, ചേരമൻ. Pulayan=man of pollution.

—T. K. J.

70. Pulluvan (പുള്ളുവൻ) A caste whose work is to sing in serpent groves (Pulinda, name of a Nagakanyaka. Pulinda means a barbarous tribe of forest dwellers)

71. Pushpakan (പുഷ്പകൻ) An Ampalavasi class who supplies flowers for worship (pushpa=flower)

72 Chalian (ചാലിയൻ) weaver class.

73. Samanthan (സാമന്തൻ) A generic name

for petty chiefs. *Vide* text.

74. Thalhavan (തളവൻ) Another name for Maravars (thala=ankle-t., from the ankle-t.-like rope they put on their legs to help as a support in climbing palms. Maravan itself is from mara=a tree)

75. Thantan (തണ്ടാൻ). A sect of palm climbers.

76. Theeyattunni (Theyyattunni തിയ്യാട്ടുന്നി-തെയ്യാട്ടുന്നി) An ampalavasi sect who performs a dance in honour of Devi (Devi, and attam). (Gundert distinguishes തിയാട്ട from തെയ്യാട്ട. One is തീ ആട്ട, the other ദേവി ആട്ട—T. K. J.)

77. Ullatan (ഉള്ളാടൻ). A hunting caste found in low countries

78. Uppara (ഉപ്പാറ) A salt making class (uppu=salt) (See 1)

79. Urali (ഉരാളി) A semi-hill tribe of hunters and watchmen. They are village watchmen

80. Valan (വാലൻ) A class of fishermen

81. Valhan (വാളൻ A sawyer caste (Valh =saw)

82. Variyan (വാണിയൻ) Now oil pressers and traders Skt. Vanija=trader

83. Vannan (വണ്ണാൻ). See Mannan. Washerman caste. (Tamil mannu means to wash—T. K. J.)

84. Varier (വാരിയർ), An ampalavasi class whose occupation is to sweep and clean the inside of temples, especially the Balikkal, the stone altar in front of the god in a temple. (From 'var' to collect cf. expression atichuvaruka, toothuvarauka etc.). (Variyam is used in Malabar inscriptions as denoting a high office. The holder of that office is a Variyan. Could it be a corruption of "തൊഴുവ ആരിയൻ", head of an assembly or council? തൊഴുവ=സഭ—T. K. J.)

85. Velan (വേലൻ). A caste of mantravadis or sorcerers.

86. Velhan (വേളൻ). Potter class. (See 31 and 35).

87. Vellala (വെള്ളാളൻ) Tamil term for agricultural class. (Velh=perhaps agricultural land. Originally Velh=olh= Light, and hence open place outside, hence garden or cultivable land. Cf. words like velhi etc. വെൾ-ഒൾ-ഒളി-വെളി

88. Veluthetan, വെളുത്തേടൻ. See text. Veluthata nair. Washerman

89. Vettuvan (വേട്ടുവൻ) A low caste of predial slaves

90. Vilkuruppu or Villasan( വിൽകുറുപ്പ്-വില്ലാളൻ One of the Kammalar caste (See 23) who acts as their priests, formerly maker of bows

A few non-Malabar classes are as well included in the list when they are found to be so common as to be considered as domiciled in some part of Malabar. It will be noted that the vast majority of the names point to the traditional function the caste is expected to do. Thus it will be evident that caste distinction is practically based on function. When the distinction is a purely geographical factor either no differences will be noticed as between Valloties, Eraties, etc. or there is a sense of mutual exclusiveness as in the case of Nampoories of the North and the South. It will be noted that evidence has been adduced to show that change from one caste or class into another was practicable in ancient India and even in comparatively recent times. In many cases such conversions might have taken generations but still it was possible. In course of time this change came to be completely lost as a result of a common human desire to keep one's hearth untainted

by anything the least supposed to be lower than one's own. This mentality together with the ignorance of the real basis of the Dharmasastra injunctions tended to crystallize each occupational unit into a separate caste, and hence the large number and variety. Among the large number cited in this paper not more than some two or three can be classed as having derived by 'Samkara' intermarriage process. The existing fact that many of the castes of today are engaged in other occupations than their traditional function is of no importance. Exigencies of modern times necessitated the change, but the original function is at any rate discernible in the name. In as much as purely Malabar castes are concerned it may be said that some members at least among each class have even today to do the traditional functions.

—L. A. Ravi Varma

## APPENDIX I

## The Pre-Aryan People in Kerala

(T. K. J.)

Who were the people whom the Aryans—the ancestors of the Nambudiri Brahmins—saw in Kerala when they entered it for the first time, say about 2500 years ago? They were, I imagine, Dravidians from the Indus Valley and perhaps direct from Mesopotamia (Sumer), who had already settled down in Kerala and the rest of the West Coast strip. They too, like the Aryans, were foreigners, and were closely related, as modern ethnologists say, to the ancient Cretans and the Sumerians of Mesopotamia. Perhaps there might have been also at that time in Kerala a few Negritos of the Palaeolithic Age and a few Kolians of the first wave of Austric immigration in the Neolithic Age. These two races were more ancient than the Dravidians.

When the Aryans first came to Kerala there was, I think, no caste distinction among the Kerala Dravidians, the ancestors of the present day Nairs, Pillais, and of some other non-Aryan castes of Kerala. A few of them were kings or chiefs, many others were land-owners and cultivators, others were hunters or fishermen, others cultivators without ownership of land, some others were workers in clay, stone, wood, copper, iron & some other metals, a few were boatmen or navigators, a few acted as barbers, washermen, priests, physicians, sorcerers, & c. and all males alike, to my mind, were fighters, so much so that Manu in whose days they were called Sudras (Vrushalas) in Aryan terminology, regarded the Dravidians as having been previously Kshatriyas (Manu X. 43—between 200 B C. & 200 A. D.).

They never burned their dead, but buried them in oblong or round coffins with their ornaments and weapons, and also offerings of food, as their ancestors had done and their Dravidian contemporaries were doing on the East Coast & in other parts of India and in regions to the west of India.

They must have observed no sort of contact pollution or distance pollution. Their language was the then form of Tamil & Malayalam, which form had, I think, several features of the Sumero—Accadian language of their ancestors. Their word for king or chief was neither raja, nor tampuran, nor arachan, nor kaimal, nor kartha found in modern Tamil and Malayalam, but it was *ko* which still survives and has a corresponding word *go* meaning noble in Sumerian. The Kerala Dravidians must have had inter-

communication by land and sea with the East Coast Dravidians, and by sea with the regions west of India.

—T. K. Joseph

## APPENDIX II

## Malabar Low Castes, about 1700 A. D.

(T. K. J.)

Sloane MS. 2743 A, British Museum, London. Portuguese text by the Vicar of the Ernakulam Church (Cochin), dated 1676 A. D. or after, with six lines of notes in Dutch, has the following passage about Malabar (Kerala) castes: —

"Besides these Gentio (Hindu) Kings, Princes, and Nobles who are found in this people of the kingdom of Mallavar, there are other sects and castes also of Gentios, but common, vile, and low. They are the following:—

1. AIARI, which means carpenters.
2. MUJARE, which means metal-smelters.
3. COLLEN, blacksmiths.
4. TATEN, goldsmiths.

These four castes of Gentios recognise no superior, judge, or lord of theirs other than the Christians of St. Thomas, and that means the Fathers Cacanares (Syrian priests).

Other castes, also low, are the following: — [Fol. 5 r]

5. CHECON, or Irhaven: those who cut palm-trees for wine or *sura*.
6. CANACAS, otherwise called Codumguelur Canacas: they are merchants and people of trade and traffic.
7. BETAVA CANAÇA: the work of these is to fish, plant hedges (*e marcar cebs*) in the fields, row *manchuas* (boats), and make *chunambo* (lime)-kilns.
8. AREL: these fish in rivers, not in the sea.
9. MUCUAS: these are of lower caste, and fish in the sea.
10. HERAVALEM: these make mud-wall fences [*vallados*] and enclosures [*cercas*].
11. TACEN: these are workmen, handling stone and mud.
12. MAHEN: these live in the mountains and Serras and are workmen who deal in honey and wax; they are also *varreiros* [cultivators of rice-fields].
13. UL ADDA: these cut wood and perform country work [*orbas rusticanas*].
14. PULIAS: these are *varjeiros* [cultivators o rice-fields] and land cultivators, and they are the lowest and basest caste of people.
15. PAREAS: these make baskets and mats, and they are obliged to eat the flesh of all kinds of unclean dead animals and to skin them; and, if they do not do so, they are punished by the Gentio Kings
16. NADDI: they are a caste of hunters, and have no other occupation: and they go about with their bows and arrows, and are obliged to accompany the Naire, Gentio and Christian hunters.
17. BELLEN, or Mannan: the work of these is to wash soiled clothes, and not other things.
18. PAAVEN: these do the work of tailors [Fol. 5 v ]
19. PARAVEN: these practice the diabolic art, form a pact with the devil, and are sorcerers. Others who go in for the same misdeed of sorcery are the Polias, Paanan, Bellen, Pareas and Naddi.

20. CHOROAS: the occupation of these is to sell *chunambo* [lime], and they also are sorcerers by caste.

All these low castes of Gentios contain a very large number of families and persons. Only the Mucuas have their huts near the sea, being fishermen. None of these castes has a king of its own; but they are subject, each of them, to the King of the lands where they are, or the said King appoints one of them as chief.

21. GURIPU: which means fencing-master, and though he be of low caste, he is esteemed more than the rest.

22. PUDDIJA COLLE: they make shields and rodels for soldiers, and do all other kinds of work in hides.

Among the Naires and nobles there are also found some more or less noble, chiefly:—

23. BELACA TALEA; that is barbers; though Naires, they are among those of low caste, but under the patronage of our Christians.

24. BATTECATTE NAIRE: though Naires, they are a low caste for their work consists in making oil from gerzelim, *marolle*, and coco-nuts.

25. CHIRAGUE PATTE: these also are of Naire caste, but of low blood; they do the work of merchants.

26. CHETTIAR: they do the same work, but are of very low Naire blood.

27. BELLETHEREN: they are also of low Naire blood; they wash clothes.

28. CHALIA BELLETHEREN: also a *mainato* [washermen] caste, but lower than the above one.

Among all these castes and diversities of Gentios, whether noble or common, whether high or low, there are still among these castes many more different castes, as they say: more than seventy; but those here noted suffice for the moment.

The Naires are in very great number, and also the Chegos or Poleas. The other castes of Gentios are not in such quantity and number".

## Notes by T. K. Joseph

[References are to the numbers given above]

Nos. 1 to 4 are four of the five Kammala [artisan] castes of Kerala. They are ആരാരി, മൂരാരി, കൊല്ലൻ, തട്ടാൻ correctly described by the author of the document. The fifth Kammala caste is ചെമ്പുകൊട്ടി, copper smith. See my *Malabar Christian Copperplates* [in Malayalam], 1925 p. 84, *sub voce* ചെമ്പകമള്ളർ. They are now called also Viswa Brahmanas [See No. 14 below].

The MS. says that the above four castes [1 to 4] and the Vilakkittalava [barber] caste [No. 23] are under the St. Thomas Christians. In fact there were eighteen [or 17 according to some authorities] low castes in Malabar who had been from very ancient days put under the protection of the Syrian Christians of Malabar. See the above book pp 41 to 44 for a discussion of this topic.

No. 5 is ചേകോൻ, ഇഴവൻ known also as ചോവാൻ. Chekon or Chovan [=sevakan, one in military service under the Syrian Christians as mentioned above] is the Izhava caste's name, only in places where they live among the Syrian Christians. In other places they are called

Izhavas or Teeyas or Chilantis [=Simhaladwipa people, Ceylonese immigrants] See Barbosa's description of this and other castes in Stanley's translation, 1866, pp. 121-148.

No. 6, കണക്കൻ, കൊട്ടുപ്പുൽ കണക്കൻ. Kanakkan in Parur is coconut tree climber by occupation.

No. 7, വേട്ടുവക്കണക്കൻ. Kanakkan in these words and in others like കണക്കെഴുത്തച്ഛൻ is a title of distinction, and has nothing to do with the *kanakku*, account or arithmetic.

Nos. 6 and 7 are instances of titles or terms of respect originally conferred upon distinguished individuals or headmem of certain castes, becoming caste names in course of time. Nayar [nayakar=leader, or respectable gentleman], Arayan [=raja, king], Chetti [=sreshthi, nobleman]. Nampi [=our lord], Empran [=my or our lord], Tampi [=his lordship], Maran [=marayan maharajan, great lord], Moopan [elder], Moothathu [elder], Thandan [a man wielding the staff of authority], Potti [nourisher], Nayikkan [leader]. Pathiyan [leader or chief], Velaan [uncrowned king now the potter caste], Pandaram [lord, officer of the treasury or store-house], Menon [one of superior rank or status], Raja [=Raja]. Raju [Raja] are other instances.

See Nos 22 and 24 for two other origins of caste names.

No. 8 is അരയൻ and No. 9, മുക്കുവൻ.

No. 10 may be ഉവവാളൻ, but he is of the scabbard or sword sheath making caste, also called ഉവവാൻ or കിടാരൻ. His is one of the 18 castes under the protection of the Syrian Christians [See No. 1—4 above]

Is it perhaps Manavalan (നവാളൻ) a caste of bricklayers? It may not be Karuvelam-(Nair) found in South Travancore.

No. 11 is തച്ചൻ. The author means കൽത്തച്ചൻ or പുഴിത്തച്ചൻ. There are other kinds of തച്ചൻ-s also.

No. 12 ought to be MALEN, മലയൻ. Portuguese Serra means mountain chain. Cf. Spanish Sierra Morena, Sierra Nevada, & Sierra Leone, names of mountain ranges.

No. 13 is ഉള്ളാടൻ.

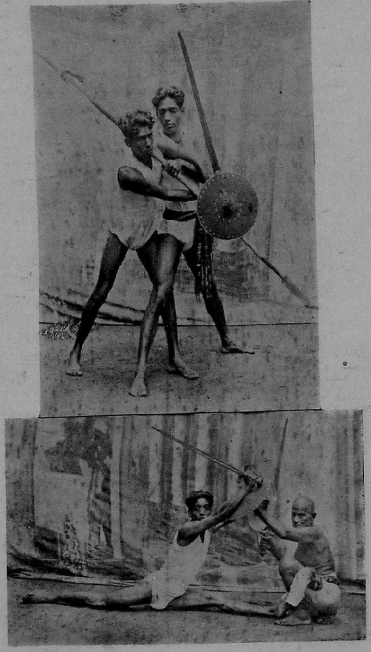
No. 14, പുലയൻ known as ചെറുമൻ, ചെറുമൻ, മൂലൻ in other parts of Kerala. Cheruman was about a dozen years ago converted into Cheraman (ചേരമൻ) which is intended to be connected with Cheraman, the Chera King. Adi-dravida is another new name. Such changes of caste names owing to a sense of self-respect engendered by the influence of English education have been usual in recent years in Kerala.

No. 15, പറയൻ which name has been changed to Sambavan or Panchaman.

No, 16, നായാടി, a very low caste.

No. 17 is വേലൻ, മണ്ണാൻ (വണ്ണാൻ). It is the Vela woman who washes very dirty and unclean cloths especially of women of some higher castes. Mannan is from Tamil mannutal മണ്ണുതൽ, washing.

Flooring an antagonist by locking his slashing sword and shield with the spear



(The author and his GURU, about 86 years old)

A sudden low sweep of the sword parried with the sword and shield by grounding instantly.

No. 18 ought to be PAANEN, പാണൻ.

No. 19 is പരവൻ. His new name is Bharatavan. Paravan is from paravai, the sea. Most Paravas are sea-coast castes of fishermen and mussel shell calciners.

No. 20, കുറവൻ, may be from കുറവ്, low status. Some ancient Jaina nuns (ഇണനാങ്കിക്കുറത്തികൾ, കുറത്തിയടികൾ) were known as Kurathi, the feminine form of Kuravan. In this case Kuravan must perhaps be the Tamil form of Sanskrit plural guravah (masters, respectable men).

No. 21 is കുരുപ്പ്, perhaps derived from Sanskrit guru, master. Descriptions of Kurups and their *kalaries* [fencing schools] are found in many Portuguese and Dutch documents. കുരുക്കൾ, കുരുപ്പ് and കുറവൻ may be from the same Skt. word guru.

No. 22 is പരിചക്കാല്ലൻ, a caste name derived from the name of an occupation or *metier*. [See Nos. 7 and 24.]

No. 23 is വിളക്കിത്തലവൻ. See Nos. 1 to 4 above. A caste name derived from a title. (See 7 & 22).

No. 24 വടയ്ക്കുള്ളനെയർ. Gerzelim=gingili, sesame (Sesamum Indicum). Marotte [മരോട്ടി], Hydnocarpus, tree, producing an oil seed. (From place name).

No. 25, കുട്ടപ്പട്ടൻ ?

Nos. 26 to 28. ചെട്ടിയാർ, വെളുത്തേടൻ, ചാലിയ വേളുത്തേടൻ. "Mainato" is മൈനാത്തൻ, a caste name for washerman in some places. He is called Pandi [പാണ്ടി, Pandya] in some other places. See No. 12.

The author of the MS. wrote from "Angicaimal" i. e. Ernakulam in Cochin. "In this land is my Church of Our Lady of Mount Carmel", says the author, and he does not seem to have had information about castes in North Malabar and Travancore. The caste names and corresponding occupations in one locality are quite different in different parts of Kerala, so that no single investigator can possibly study the castes of Kerala in his lifetime. Such a comprehensive survey and study of Kerala castes has to be undertaken immediately as caste names and *metier* are rapidly changing. The lower classes of Nairs, like Syrian Christians and Ampalavasis, took to English education earlier than other Nairs and Nambudiris, and have more men and women occupying high positions in Government service.

—T. K. J.

## Notes by Dr. L. A. Ravi Varma

No. 10. Heravalem. There is an aboriginal tribe 'Cheruvalan' whose work is making baskets, fences etc. (Malabar Gazetteer).

No. 12. 'Mahen'. May be 'Mavilons (മാവിലാൻ), whose occupation and habitat tally with the description.

No. 25. None of Nair caste who do the work of merchants are known by this or a similar name. If chiragupatte really belongs to Nair caste there is only one class ending in 'patten' which is 'katuppattan.' They are not however merchants. Taking into consideration the fact that the author lived at Ernakulam where there was a large section of Konkana people, together with the Konkana-like termination 'patten' one is led to suspect some lower orders of Konkanas, whose general occupation is that of merchants in some form or other.

—L. A. R. V.

## APPENDIX III.

### Two Syrian Christian Sects

The author of the above MS. deals also with the Northists and Southists (വടക്കംപാവർ, തക്കംപാവർ.....പാകർ .....ഭാഗർ), two mutually exclusive, endogamous sects or castes into which the ancient St. Thomas Christians of Malabar are divided. The Southists are very small in number. He says:—

"This King Sacara vittia gave a woman, a native of this kingdom, as interpreter (*lingoa e interpretz*) and took to the said Canai Thomas, and they say that this person was a woman whose occupation was that of *mainatto* (washer-woman) and washing clothes, and consequently of servile and low caste. And the children of this woman, instructed by the said Canai Thomas, in the faith of Our Lord Jesus Christ, were the progenitors and founders of the Christians of St. Thomas who are called of the South,...

"All these are Churches of the South, I mean of Christians of St. Thomas of low blood and of such fashion that those of the South do not marry with people of the North, nor do those of the North marry with those of the South although good and obedient [*obedecidos*].

"Considering what was said above, and what was said of the first Church which the holy man Canai Thomas built at Cranganore, and considering the three hundred royal houses and families which remained of those who were obedient—although they suffered prosecutions from the above-said magician [and] minister of the devil—it follows accordingly that all the places in the neighbourhood of Cranganore are of the nobler Christians, of those of higher and more royal blood".

## NOTES

1. Sacara vittia is Chakravarti, emperor.
2. Canai Thomas was a foreign merchant who came to Cranganore and settled down there along with a large number [about 400] of lay immigrants from perhaps Bagdad, Nineveh and other places, and Bishop Mar Joseph of Edessa, several priests and deacons. He obtained from the Chera King the famous copperplate charter of [traditionally] 345 A. D., missing or lost since some time after 1544 A. D.
3. Mainatto = മണ്ണാത്തി, washerwoman.
4. Instances of intermarriage between Northist and Southist Syrian Christians have occurred recently.
5. The 300 houses [the number differs in different accounts] are those that were not reconverted to Hinduism by Manikka Vachakar called in the MS. "magician and minister of the devil". According to a Malabar Christian document Manikka Vachakar came to Travancore in 315 A. D.

—T. K. J.

## APPENDIX IV

### Kshatriyas in Kerala

The MS. quoted above says:—

"Besides these three Kings of Cochim, Sammorim and Travancor, there is the King of Tanor, whose Kingdom is surrounded by the King of Saomorim; and, when the King of Saomorim must get himself crowned as such, this King of Tanor is he who must crown him, and he is true and lawful King of Cochim, of blood royal and noble".... ..

"The Kings who wear the crowns are the following: the King of Cochim, the King of Thanor", (and seven others).

"The Kings who do not wear a crown are the following:—the King of Samorim... ...the King of Trivancotti"....(6 in all).

"These Kings, all of them, have no constant wives, and of their own, as in the case of the Bramane Kings, otherwise called Nanbures",.....

"The Kings who are equal in blood are the following:—

1. The King of Cochim.
2. The King of Upper Cranganore,
3. The king of Bellangu.

The kings of lower blood and less noble are the following:—

1. The King of Tanor.
2. The king of Parapur.
3. The king of Charapalicura.
4. The king of Trychul choile.

The kings of lesser blood and less noble are the following:—

1. The king of Samorim.
2. The king of Thecancur, or Cotteti.
3. The king of Baddecancur, or Carturti.
4. The king of Cheraillon.
5. The King of Nanbaddi.
6. The king of Mangate.
7. The king of Ballanate Nanbiatari .....

"Besides all these Kings and Caimals, there is also a king of Pall[a]cathechere, .... ...and of a very proud race, though he be of low blood and pedigree"... ...

"Having now treated of the Mallavar Kings, Caimals, &c., we must at present deal with their rites and customs. The kings who wear the cords crossed from the right shoulder to the left side, are the following:—

1. The King of Cochim" [Fol. 4 r] and 9 others.

"These Kings, all of them, may not eat flesh meat, or fish, nor drink wine of any kind, and, if they do the contrary, they do not lose their nobility and pre-eminence, except the following kings":—(the Nambur] kings of Porakkad, Idappalli, and Parur)....

"These Branmane Kings marry their wife only once, and their sons are their heirs and successors. And the other kings, who are not Branmanes, marry one wife and may have intercourse with many; and, though they marry many, they do not withal contract any kindred, not even with the children of their own wives;"—(He describes the marumakkathayam—matriarchal—system of inheritance).

"Besides these kings who wear the cord crossed in token of their nobility and estate, there are other kings who are only of Nayre caste and race, I mean of noble race, gentlemen (cavalleres), and men of arms. They are the following:—

1. The king of Samorim.
2. The king of Thecancur, or Cotteti
3. The King of Baddacancur, or Carturte.
4. The king of Mangate Mutta Tirimul para,
5. The king of Cheraillan,

and other kings with Caimals, named above, Nanbures" (Nampidis?) "and Elledos". (ഇല്ലം, perhaps, or ഇല്ലോം. The Helledus of Churupupalli and Pallicare are mentioned in the MS. as among the Kaimals and Nambures [Nampidis or Nampiyars? subject to the king of Cochin.] See also Kerala Society Papers, Series 3, pp.

136-40 for notes on Kerala Kshatrias, Samantas and Sudra chiefs.

Did no Aryan Kshatriyas [or Vysyas or Sudras] immigrate to Kerala as the Aryan Brahmins did [at different times and from different places in N. and S. India]? Yes, some Aryan Kshatriyas perhaps did come if the tradition *be true* that the king of Purali [Northern Kottayam] and others are descended from Harischandra and other great heroes of the Puranas.

## Notes by Dr. L. A. Ravi Varma

1. "When the king of Zamorin must get himself crowned as such, this king of Tanur is he who must crown him . ..."

2. "Kings who wear the crowns." "Kings who do not wear a crown,"

*Note.* This difference did exist. The tradition is that Cochin etc. are the direct descendants of Cheraman Perumal by the female line (marumakkathayam) and hence the recognised descendants of Perumal in Malabar where inheritance is in the female line, whereas Zamorin and most others trace their descent from Perumal through the male line. Though this is the tradition one fact stands out prominent, viz. that it is the socially higher class kings who had the crown, and those of lower orders had not had the privilege of wearing a crown. These sometimes assumed a crown after certain ceremonies.

3 "These kings, all of them, have no constant wives, and of their own as in the case of Brahmana kings"

*Note.* Among Namburies, king or otherwise, the system of marriage was one of irrevocable sacrament as it is even to-day. Hence they cannot divorce a wife. In this sense they had a permanent wife, whereas the Kshatria kings following marumakkathayam were engaging in marriage only in 'Sambandhom' fashion, and hence these wives were liable to be divorced and re-married, thus making those marriages almost equivalent to concubinage. This is so even today in Malabar and in Travancore and Cochin though the advent of the Nair regulation is changing the old order.

4(a). Poracad king is the same as Ampalappuzha king. Edappally still exists as an 'Edavaka' and the descendants of the other two are also existent. They are political pensioners of Travancore and are all the three, Namburies.

(b). "Kings of equal blood" probably means that these were socially equal. Cochin traces their line to Perumals, and Cranganore to Madura kings, both Tamil kings. In this sense also the equality may be construed. Socially the next two classes are on the same level, hence the difference in level should be taken to mean difference of pedigree.

(c). Charapalicura=Cherupulacherry(?) and Trychur choille=the persent 'Chazhiur (?) a family related to Cochin House by some adoption in bygone days.

This group does not trace descent from Perumals etc, and are essentially Malayalies.

(Practically none of the North Malabar Kings are included by the author in these 3 categories.)

(d). Yes. Tradition and even modern practice point to Palghat kings as of low origin, in fact the lowest of all Malabar chiefs.

(e). Zamorin, Thekkumkur etc. fall into one class, kings having no sacred thread. They are classed as Samanthas and are usually considered as of equal social status.

The classification, it will be seen, is thus fairly correct.

5. The description of the 'cord' is wrong. All Hindus authorised to wear the sacred thread wear it *over the left shoulder and under the right arm*, and never the other way round except when engaged in ceremonies connected with the departed.

The rule now obtaining that none of these kings or their kindreds, irrespective of possession of sacred thread, eat meat or fish, or drink liquor under any pretence, on pain of social degradation. Tradition too points to the same thing at any rate during 18th cent. The MS. as it stands gives the idea that only the Brahmin kings were absolutely prohibited from meat and wine though the others also generally abstained from the use of fish, meat and wine. I am afraid there is some confusion of idea in the author's statement.

6. "Branmane kings marry only once" This means that among Brahmins, king or otherwise, widow marriage was prohibited as now, and that they followed inheritance in the male line or Makkathayam. Non-Brahmin kings (those other than kings as well) may marry one wife—Neythyar-amma and may have also at the same time as many concubines as they please. As these Non-brahmin kings (including kshatrias, samantas etc.) never enjoyed the privilege of marrying from their own communities, as is even to-day the case, had to be content with sambandhom marriages with those below them in social rank (anuloma form). Hence their children by these wives were of a lower order than that of their father and hence had not even the privilege of considering themselves as real kindreds with their father. This is even now the case.

7. Nairs of the highest classes such as 'Kiriyam' preferred only Brahmin husbands for their girls. Nairs below the highest classes sometimes gave their girls to Kshatrias of the 2nd and 3rd group mentioned above, i. e. high class Kshatrias. Other Kshatrias and Samantha kings had to get their wives from Nairs of lower orders. This has been the custom, if not today, in my own memory.

8. These kings who possess no sacred thread are essentially Nairs, perhaps even those *with* sacred threads. But most of them style themselves as Samanthas. Some of these such as Kuthiravattathu Nair, Mannar-

kat Nair, etc. even today style themselves as Nairs.

'Nambures' in the last list apparently is 'Nampidi' as the section deals with kings having no sacred thread.

No 'Elayathu' kings are known. Must be 'Elayadom' a surname very common and applied to vassal chieftains.

—L. A. R. V.

## APPENDIX V

The following custom among the ancient Romans exhibits a parallel to the Malabar Hindu custom of kings not contracting "any kindred, not even with the children of their own wives".

"Roman matrimonial custom sanctioned two usages; there was, of course, the *justæ nuptiæ* or real legal marriage; but besides this there was an inferior state, the marriage according to the natural law, then [P. 95] commonly called concubinage, but in reality corresponding with that we now term a morganatic marriage; marriage relations between unmarried folk went by the name of *stuprum*. A woman united to a man by the second species of union was described as *concubina, amica, convictrix*; she did not bear the name of matron, nor did she share her husband's titles; he was hers only *quoad mensam et thorum*[1]. There was no settlement to protect the fortune of the woman, nor was there any written agreement. The child of such a union, *nothus*, was a natural child, and though his father was known, he had no right of succession. This concubinage was recognised and tolerated by the law, and implied no slur on a woman's character[2].

"The law of the Twelve Tables forbade marriage between patricians and plebeians. This prohibition had indeed fallen by the Canuleia enactment; but public feeling was stronger than the letter of the law, and allowed of no infringements. Hence concubinage was popular. It was in the interests of plebeian women that they should accept this *modus vivendi*, which allowed of their being united with the noblemen they loved.

"Had Roman law forbidden divorce, then indeed between the state of legal marriage and concubinage there would have been a vast difference; but we must remember that separation of the spouses could occur in both states, and that the only distinction made between the two forms of union was that, whilst a matron could only be dismissed by the presentation of the *libellum repudii*, duly registered by the public [P. 96] notary, a simple concubine could be dismissed without any such formality".—Louis de Combes: *The Finding of the Cross*, trans. by Luigi Cappadelta, New York, 1907, pp. 94—96.

—T. K. Joseph.

1. Troplong, *Influences de christianisme sur le droit romain*, pp. 238—240,

2. Paul. i, 144. *De verb. signific.*

## APPENDIX VI

Vilakkittalavan appears to have been like Nayar, Pillai, Mappilai, Arayan, Kanakku, Panikkar, Chempakaraman, Asari, Moothasari, Maran, Thandan, Kuruppu, Tala Mannan, Tampi, Tankachi, Ammachi, Nayathiyar Amma Velaan, Valiya Yejamanan, Menon, Mudaliar, &c., a title. Even so recently as 30th Kanni 1025 M.E. (1849 A. D.) the Travancore King conferred the title of 'Vilakkuttalayan' on hi barber of Thottathil house in Puthuppalli near Kayamkulam in Travancore No titles of any kind are now given in Travancore.

The true form of the title, which has become a caste name, seems to be Vilakkittalavan (വിളക്കിത്തലവൻ) meaning the head or chief of vilakkis. Vilakki (വിളക്കി) is തലവിളക്കി or മെനിവിളക്കി, i e. one who makes the head or the whole body shine. കൊട്ടി (one who beats the drum, Maran), വാഴ്ത്തി and കൊവപാടി (one who sings songs about God), നായാടി (hunter) are other noun words for caste *metier*, identical with the past tense forms of verbs.

My footnote No. 9 *ante* has to be modified in the light of this note. — T. K. J.

# Three St. Thomas Documents

## I. ST. THOMAS'S TOMB AND RELICS AT MYLAPORE 1517—43 A. D.

*(Translated by the Rev. Fr. Carmel Iturriotz, D. C.)*

Document of information that the Fr. Vicar Gaspar Coelho[1] arriving in this land took from Diogo Fernandez,[2] married and living here, about things concerning the Apostle St. Thomas[3].

In the year of the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ 1543, on the 22nd of the month of May ,there arrived in this land Fr. Gaspar Coelho as Vicar; and 20 days later which was the 10th of June of the same year he thought it reasonable that Diogo Fernandez, old Christian, virtuous and of good life, Portuguese, deposed the truth about the following things of the Apostle which he know; which things he declared under oath ever the Holy Gospels before me and the notary mentioned below.

In the first place, says Diogo Fernandez under the oath he took, that in the year 1517[4] he arrived in San Thome in the month of March coming from Malacca in the company of other men called Bastiao Fernandez and Coge-Scandal, an Armenian, and many other Armenians who brought him to this land to show him the house (Caza) of the Apostle St. Thomas, and he says that when he arrived here the church (igreia) was encircled by a very high wall, and the body of the said church was razed to the ground, and it had seventeen cubits of length by eleven of breadth, and the sanctuary (o curicheo) which is the chapel (capella) that St. Thomas built (which like the wall is very high) was extant as it is now, and the tomb and sepulchre (o jazigo e sepultura) of the Apostle which is on the Gospel side on the outer border was also extant.[5] On the Epistle side there was another chapel (capella) where lay a king of the land that became Christian, and this chapel where the king lay was excavated inside. And all the body of the church was in the same way. And we found there a Moor[6] that had been blind and had recovered sight and health from the Apostle

1. Vicar of San Thome of Mylapore, with whom took lodging St. Francis Xavier, when in 1545 he "made up his mind to visit the land and town of Mylapore, where the bones of the Apostle St. Thomas were buried, that God by the intercession of the Holy Apostle, Partron of these Christianities, might show him his holy will about passing on to farther Eastern lands." (Or. Conq., I. p. 151).

—Editor, *Esplendores da Religiao*.

2. One of the first Portuguese who having been informed by an Armenian on board of the ship that was bringing them from Malacca, came in pilgrimage to visit the tomb of the Apostle St. Thomas, and carried to Goa the tradition of the martyrdom of the saint and the existence of his tomb in Mylapore.

—Editor, *Esplendores*.

3. It is on this document that must be based Fr. John de Lucena, S. J. (*Vida de St. Francis Xavier*), Faria y Souza (*Asia Portuguesa*) and Fr. Francis de Souza (*Or. Conq.*), where they narrate the discovery of the tomb of the Apostle St. Thomas in Mylapore. In our days we have Fr. A. Vath, S. J., basing his narration on this document (*St. Thomas the Apostle of India*).

—Editor, *Esplendores*.

4. See note 1 at the end of this document.

5. See notes 5, 6 at the end of this document.

6. See note 6 at the end of this document.

a short time back, which Moor told us that he had been Moor till two years before, and that first he had been a gentile, and seemed to be sixty years of age, and that his fathers and grandfathers had been gentiles. And he told us that he had the charge of lighting the house (caza) of the Apostle and he gave us to understand that he belonged[7] to the Christians of St. Thomas. This Moor (mouro) showed us the place where lay (o lugar onde jazia) the Apostle and told us how it was brought (como o trouxerao) from a distance of a league from this his house (caza), and showed us one foot-print of his engraved on a stone and marked so distinctly that it was in the same stone as fresh as if that same hour a foot had been put on a piece of clay. Which foot-print I, Diogo Frs. saw, and it appeared to have been made by a real foot and not by pike or by hand of man. And he showed us also in the same stone one knee-mark of the apostle made by his knees when he fell and was murdered:[8] [10].

7. Q'Elle procedia dos Christaos de S. Thome-That he seceded or came down from-belonged to or was of the Christians of St. Thomas.

—Rev. Fr. D. I. Carmel, D. C., Translator.

8. "It" seems to be the foot-print of St. Thomas.

9. There is said to be a foot print of St. Thomas on a rock in Ulavoor, Travancore and on Adam's Peak in Ceylon. Adam, Ieu, Siva, Buddha, and the Eunuch of Queen Candace are believed to have left their foot-prints on Adam's Peak in Ceylon. Christ is believed to have left marks of both His feet on a square stone on which he stood while being questioned by Pilate, and the imprint of His left foot on the Mount of Olives when He ascended to heaven. Buddha's foot-prints are said to exist even in places where he never had been. Muhammad is said to have left foot-prints at Jerusalem.

—T. K. J.

10. The stone or rock with St. Thomas's foot-print and knee-mark and "the place where he by the Apostle" might all have been in San Thome itself and close to the tomb of St. Thomas. The Moor was most probably aware of the San Thome legend of his days which said which foot-print or knee-mark was pulled out with a pike two years after our arrival and carried to India [to Malabar, or Goa, or the East Indies ?—T. K. J.] by Antonio Lobo and Joao Moreno and Manoel Falcao and by other persons that were here with them at that time; the witness says however that he does not know which of the things mentioned was carried, and that (as already said) the church was all excavated at that time; and the chapel where lay the Christian king (was excavated) by the people of the land because they suspected some other treasure to lie there, and that as to the chapel of the Apostle they never meddled with it for fear or reverence they had for him as they themselves told them.

The witness says further that the said Moor went to show them a small chapel or sepulchre (capelinha e-sepultura) of one of the diciples of St. Thomas, which tomb lay at the main door of the church [probably *inside* the nave—T. K. J.] of the Apostle at the left side. He showed us also another chapel or sepulchre (capella e-sepultura) where lay another disciple of St. Thomas apart from the house of the Apostle, that is where a small chapel called St. Antonio stands now [1543 ?—T. K. J.]. It lay where the new big church was built later on-[When ? Which church? The first cathedral? —T. K. J.]. So also says the witness that the that St. Thomas in the form of a peacock having been shot by a hunter on St. Thomas Mount flew up into the air "and turned into the body of a man. And this hunter stood looking until he saw the body of the said apostle fall (in the Mount, or in San Thome?—T. K. J.) And he went to the city (Mylapore—T. K. J.) where he related that miracle to the governors, who came to see it & they found that it was indeed the body of St. Thomas," ..... (Barbosa, p. 175.) Barbosa says also that "they brought the stone upon which he left the said footmarks, and they placed it close to his grave."

—T. K. J.

same Moor showed them another chapel and tomb (capela e jazigo) of another disciple of the Apostle which lay (apart) from the house of the Apostle...from the southern door where a church called S. Joao stands now, in which place said he there lay also buried a pilgrim called Domyngo (he was a Hungarian) who came in pilgrimage to this holy House. And he ordered to bury him in the same place of the pilgrims; he was buried six months before our arrival[11]. The witness says that at this juncture he went to Paleacate [Pulicat—T. K. J.] seven leagues from the House of the Apostle, with his companions and thence they sailed for India, [West coast of India, or East Indies?—T. K. J.] and in the year 1522 [Fernandes was not an eyewitness of the events from this point—T. K. J.] Manoel de Faria came as administrator and captain of the Fishery, this Coromandel coast, and brought with him one Father called Penteado (Alvaro Penteado who was coming as administrator of the kingdom). And this Father and Manoel de Faria had a friction as to what the said Manoel de Faria had to give him to build the said church or house, for which reason Father went to his kingdom and left in the house as chaplain an old Father by name Po. Fr's (=Pero Fernandes) and one Portuguese called Diogo F.co (=Francisco?).

The next year Manoel de Faria returned to this land and brought with him Visente Fr's (=Fernandes), mason, to build the said House of which work he gave charge to Fr. Antonio Gil. And afterwards he wanted to ornament and embellish from outside, the chapel and the sanctuary that the apostle built. And he opened a ditch on the Epistle side to build a sacristy (sanchristia) in which ditch they found on one side the skeleton [it lay a pistol-shot away from St. Thomas's chapel, says Correa—T. K. J.] of the same king that St. Thomas made Christian who is said to have been called Tane Modeliar which in our tongue means Thomas, Servant of God;[12] this king had over his cave (cova) a stone which is kept now in the small chapel of the sepulchre, with an inscription in the tongue of the land: which said that he gave in alms tithes of all the goods by sea and land, one per ten; and that the same tithes were to be given by other kings that succeeded him, under the penalty of incurring the greatest punishments and cursings he could sanction. And this alms, said the inscription, was to last as long as the sun, the moon and the stars lasted.[13] The skeleton (esta ossada) was deposited in a China copper-box (cofre de China) and the following month which was the second of July of 152. (1523?) it was necessary to meddle with the cave (Cova) of the Apostle S. Thomas to lay the foundation that had to adorn (farrar) (form?) the sanctuary. At this juncture Fr. Antonio Gil and the architect (mestre) of the work went to Paleacate to tell Manoel de Faria that nothing could prevent to interfere with the sepulchre of the Apostle and the said Manoel de Faria ordered them to do what they thought just. Therefore Fr. Antonio Gil and the architect of the work returned to the House of the Apostle and called Fr. P° Fr's (=Pero Fernandes) who at the time was

11. Nicholas of Pistoia was lying buried there since about 1292. The Moor says nothing about it. Many Armenian & Persian Christians too must have had their tombs there from even before Nicholas.

—T. K. Joseph.

12. Tane Madeliar can never mean Thomas, Servant of God. It may mean Head of the Christians.

—T. K. Joseph.

13. See note 13 at the end of this document.

about seventy years of age a virtuous man. [From here onwards Fernandes again speaks as eyewitness—T. K. J.]. They ordered also the witness to return here with them and called Fras Fr's and Diogo Fs whom Fr. Antonio Gil requested in the name of the Apostle and of the King our Lord and in the name of the Governor who at the time was Dom Durate (requested, I say, me the witness and the others mentioned) to come to help to dig and search the cave of the Apostle, and the witness told him that he would never do such a thing, and Father answered that he would do it with the black-men (Negros) of the land, as he really began to attempt it. And when the witness and the others saw this they asked him to hear them in confession, and the confession over, being already one hour after noon one Saturday of the said month of July, says the witness, they began to open the cave (=tomb) of the Apostle (Cova do Apostolo).

First they dug ten palms (palmos) deep and they found the walls of the cave (or tomb) very well protected around with bricks and mortar and lime (argamassa e-Cal). And having pulled it down they found a layer of bricks and lime well protected, which was about two palms thick; and after having removed this layer they found another layer of bricks like the former, where they stopped and kept quiet thinking that the cave (or tomb) ended there. However the witness told them to open the said layer of bricks and they found under it another layer of loose earth three palms thick, and after having removed this earth they found another layer of mortar (Capa de argamassa) so strong that the iron bars (alavancas) could not break it, which was two palms thick. After having removed this mortar, says the witness, they found two tombstones chained to each other (encadeadas hua comoutra), which now are kept in the chapel of the Apostle. They filled all the extension of the cave and had no writing on them, and having taken them out they found still much loose earth, having found no bones (ossos). And it was already about midnight. And therefore worn out with fatigue they retired to rest till the next day; then Sunday morning they returned to the task and began to dig about four palms of loose earth, the cave being protected below as it was above. At this point the cave was of flat stone (louza) of sixteen palms [or *at* (a depth of) 16 palms? louza de dezasseiseis palmos—T.K.J.] where they soon began to find some sand and fresh lime in powder, and afterwards they began to find some bones of the head and then of ribs and of the whole body (depois das costas e de todo o corpo). The witness says besides that they found an earthen vessel that would keep one *almude* [about 1/12th of an English bushel—Trans.] and it was full of earth and it lay at the foot of the cave (or tomb). And a little further on they found one of the thighs of the legs, one iron of lance (ferro de lanca) of the shape of Malabar palm leaf,[14] and inside the concave handle it had a small wooden piece. Lastly says the witness that they took out all the bones which were much worn out.[15] And the said Fr. Antonio Gil put them inside a small box and they did not even fill it. And the rest of the bones and of the cave (=tomb) lay under the foundation of the sanctuary[16]. And Fr. ordered to call Monsel de Faria who was at Paleacate who came at once, and brought a China

14. Coconut-palm leaf, like a feather.
—T. K. Joseph.
15. See note 15 at end of this document.
16. See note 16 at end of this document.

coffer with two silver padlocks and Fr. put the bones inside the smallest cavity of the trunk with solemn procession. And he left it closed with a key. Inside the other bigger cavity he put the bones of the king [Tane Modeliar—T. K. J.] mentioned before and also other bones of another disciple of St. Thomas that lay at the main door to the left hand. There lay also there other bones that seemed to be of children which might have been laid there apart from the disciple after he had been buried. So all was fastened close, and the keys were taken by Manuel de Faria to be given to Dom Duarte. Two years later Fr. Penteado came from the kingdom, and said that the bones were not well where they lay. And he broke the locks and inside an old wooden box hid the bones in a place no one knew except a man called Rodrigo Luis, and in the year 1525 Miguel Fr.a came as captain of this coast of Coromandel, at a time when Nuno da Cunha governed India in which time Fr.F.co Nicolao was chaplain of this House (Caza). And the witness told him to ask Miguel Fr.a to search for these bones that were inside the box in which Fr. Penteado closed them, for surely they must have been decaying. They examined the said Rodrigo Luis and exacted an oath from him who declared in the presence of the witness that they were under the altar of the Apostle, where they dug and found the box much decayed, and enclosed the bones of the Apostle alone in a small coffer of half a palm high by one long. And the other bones they enclosed in a big coffer, and the small coffer of the Apostle inside the big coffer, and the key of this big (coffer) was taken by Miguel Fr.a. And the coffer with the relics was placed inside in the chapel of the Apostle and the key of the chapel was given to the vicar.[17] And the bones are there till to-day, that is 15th of October[18] in which the said Diogo Fr. gave evidence by order of the king. And this is the same evidence that the same Diogo Frs. gave at that time, and the same question that he was asked.

(Translated from *Esplendores da Religiao* for April 1930, Goa, pp. 152—156).

## NOTES

### (By T. K. Joseph, B. A., L. T.)

*Note 4.* (See p. 205, col. 2).

Diogo Fernandes's visit of *1517* was not the first visit to the Mylapore tomb of St. Thomas by a European since the coming of the Portuguese in 1498 A. D.

In 1504 according to the letter of four Nestorian Bishops in Malabar "some Christian men have gone into it (the monastery of St. Thomas), have inhabited it, and are now busy restoring it." It is difficult to say whether these were Portuguese or other Europeans or Armenians. We may note, however that Danvers in his *Report on the Portuguese Records*, 1892, mentions 1504 as the year in which the Portuguese settlement of San Thome was founded. He cites no authority. Did he base this statement on

17. Is will not be difficult to understand now that it was of these Relics of the H. Apostle that St. Francis obtained and brought in his reliquary together with an autograph of St. Ignatius and the profession of solemn vows written by his own hand.

—Editor, *Esplendores*.

18. 15th October 1541. But 10th June 1541 is given at the beginning of this document. Probably Fernandes give evidence on two occasions. No notary figures in this document.

—T. K. Joseph.

the Nestorian Bishops' letter of 1504 already mentioned?

In *1507* Dom Francisco de Almeida, Viceroy at Goa, heard (according to Gaspar Correa's (1512—1561 A. D. in India) *Lendas da India* Vol. I, 739, II, 722-787, III,419—424. and IV, 112 summarised in Love's *Vestiges of Old Madras*, Vol. I, pp. 287—89) from some Malabar Christians that the house or chapel (*casa*) of St. Thomas still existed on the Coromandel Coast, and sent four men round by sea to make enquiries. Two of them died, but the survivors brought back a report which was transmitted to the King of Portugal.

In or about *1514* Barbosa who was in the Indian Ocean sixteen years must have visited the San Thome tomb. In his book he mentions "the church where he now is", his grave, etc. See Note 5.

Then, again, in *1516* six months before March 1517, there was buried at San Thome, according to Diogo Fernandes's report printed above, a Hungarian pilgrim Domyngo by name. See *supra* p. 207, col 1).

In *1517* Diogo Fernandes and Bastiao Fernandes from Malacca visited the tomb as seen from the document under consideration. These two according to Correa, *op. cit.*, returned to Malacca ("for India" says the present document), but visiting India again (presumably San Thome and the tomb) in *1521*, they reported their observations to Governor Diogo Lopes de Sequeira. The Governor, who was about to sail for Portugal, transferred the matter to his sucessor Dom Duarte de Menezes.

Meanwhile, on Corpus Christi Day, *1521*, soon after Diogo's second visit of 1521, Gaspar Correa himself, in company with Pero Lopes de Sampayo and a party of fifteen, started from Pulicat (north of San Thome) to visit the chapel of St. Thomas at San Thome. They came, they saw; and more than that, *made excavations* (for the first time since the original burial *and discovered* Tani Mudolyar's remains and his stone inscription mentioned also in the present document (*supra* p. 207, col. 2). Correa and his companions executed *repairs* and made some *additions* to the chapel (for the first time since the coming of the Portuguese).

Then, in *1522*, according to both Correa's *Lendas* and our present document No. I, Padre Alvaro Penteado visited the tomb. He wanted to build a monastery (church or house according to the present document No. I) at San Thome, but not having been allowed to do so by Manuel de Frias (= Faria), Agent on theCoromandel Coast, he proceeded to Goa and thence to Portugal to gain the ear of the King. So there was no monastery at San Thome in 1522, although the four Bishops' letter of 1504 speaks of a monastery, which some translators of the Syriac letter call 'house'.

By the 2nd of July *1522 or 1523* Diogo Fernandes our witness of 1517 is again at the San Thome tomb in company with Pero Lopes de Sampayo, Vincente Fernandes (mason), Fr. Antonio Gil, an aged priest Fr. Pero Fernandes (chaplain according to our document No. I), and Diogo Lourenco.

In 1524 (?) Manuel de Frias, having been at the instance of Fr. Alvaro Penteado commanded by the king of Portugal to make a strict enquiry, visited the tomb and found there Fr. Antonio Gil, Fr. Pero Fernandes and a third priest together with Vincente Fernandes, and our Diogo Fernandes, and others. Money was provided this time, *repairs* to the building effected and *chapels*

*built*. *Excavations* were made and a broken lance discovered. This was held to have been the instrument of St. Thomas's death.

In the same year Fr. A. Penteado returned from Portugal, became vicar, and took charge of the relics (of St. Thomas, Tani Mudolyar, and others).

Correa's *Lendas* and our document No. I do not, it will be seen, agree as to the date and discoverer of Tani Mudaliyar's relics and inscription. Correa the actual discoverer is reliable in this case.

Is Tani Mudaliyar's valuable inscription lost for ever? It could not have been of the time of St. Thomas, i. e. of the first century A. D,, for there is no probability or possibility for the existence of a Tamil inscription in that century or even in the next four or five centuries. None such have yet been discovered.

— T. K. Joseph

* * *

*Note 5.* (See p. 205, col. 2).

What were the buildings, tombs, etc. in San Thome that Diogo Fernandes saw in 1517? Fernandes saw (according to his own statement)—

1. A church (*igreia*) 17 cubits × 11 cubits.
2. A very high wall surrounding the church.
3. A high-walled sanctuary which is the chapel (*o-curicheo q'he a capella*) that St. Thomas built.

   It was still standing in 1543, the date of document No. I and in 1600 as described in document II. It was standing east and west, and was only 6 palms broad inside.

4. The tomb and sepulchre (*o-jazigo e sepultura*) of St. Thomas, on the gospel (north) side, on the outer border.
5. Another chapel (*capella*) on the epistle (south) side, which contained the tomb of Tani Mudaliyar, the king converted by St. Thomas.
6. A foot-print of St. Thomas on a stone.
7. A knee-mark of St. Thomas on the same stone.
8. A small chapel or sepulchre or tomb (*capelinha e-sepultura, jazigo*) at the main door of the church of St. Thomas on the left side. This tomb was of one of the disciples of St. Thomas.
9. Another chapel or sepulchre (*capella e-sepultura*) wherein lay another disciple of St. Thomas, apart from the House (*caza*) of St. Thomas, i. e. the church (No. I above).
10. Another chapel and tomb (*capela e jazigo*) of another disciple of St. Thomas, which also lay apart from the House (or Church) of St. Thomas.

* * *

Gaspar Correa who was in India from 1512 to 1561, and so was our witness Diogo Fernandes's contemporary, gives an account of what the latter saw at San Thome in 1517 These are the buildings, chapels, etc. that Fernandes saw—

1. A very ancient edifice, constructed like a church with nave and aisles and having timber pillars and roof. Its length was 12 cubits.

This must be No. 1, the church, in the previous list. But why does Correa speak of timber pillars and roof when Fernandes who actually saw it says that "the body of the said church was razed to the ground", and "all the body of the church" "was excavated inside"?

Correa gives the length of the church, i. e. the nave, as 12 cubits, and the length of "a sacristy beyond", i. e. the chancel, as I take it, to be 5 cubits. So the total length of the whole church will be 17 cubits, which is the length given by Fernandes.

2. A sacristy beyond five cubits long, which "had a dome surmounted by a dwarf spire rising to a height of thirty cubits. Crosses and peacocks in plaster constituted the decoration. "This stucture" says Correa, "was believed to be the sepulchre of the saint."

This, I think, was the chancel of the church, i. e. No. 3 in the previous list. We may infer that this was originally 'the chapel that St. Thomas built' and that the subsequent addition of a nave 12 cubits × 11 cubits made the chapel of St. Thomas a chancel (a sanctuary, a sacristy).

Perhaps it was this domed edifice that stood until 1892 (or 1893?), when the old Cathedral was demolished. A photo of it and the old Cathedral is in the collection of the Bishop of Mylapore.

3. St. Thomas's sepulchre, the same as No. 4 in the previous list.

4. A smaller chapel, a pistol-shot away, said to mark the grave of a native prince who had been converted to Christianity, viz. Tani Mudaliyar. This is No. 5 of the previous list See Note 6.

*
* *

Duarte Barbosa who, in or about 1514, must have visited San Thome, almost uninhabited, mentions the following antiquarian objects there connected with St. Thomas.

1. A small, much-deteriorated church near the sea. This is the same as No. 1 of Fernandes, and No. 1 of Correa Barbosa says that St. Thomas's body was buried in this church, which, was built (not by St. Thomas, but) by "theChristians his disciples and companions" from Quilon in Travancore. All round the church there was much brushwood. (No surrounding wall is mentioned).
2. The domed house of St. Thomas, with a great wooden cross and peacocks on the dome. This is Fernandes's No. 3, and Correa's No. 2.
3. St. Thomas's grave, (Fernandes's 4, Correa's 3).
4. A stone upon which St. Thomas left his two foot-marks. This stone was brought from a mountain (presumably St. Thomas Mount) and placed close to his grave. For this stone see Nos. 6 and 7 of Fernandes.
5. A perpetual lamp "which still continues burning."
6. "Some little pellets of earth of the tomb of this blessed apostle" which the Christians of India going there as pilgrims carry away as relics. (Marco Polo mentions the red "earth from the place where the Saint was killed" which Christian pilgrims take away and use as a miraculous medicine.

—T. K. Joseph

*
* *

*Note 6.* (See p. 205, col. 2.)

In Marco Polo's days (1293 A. D.) too Moors were to be found there. He says:—

"Both Christians and Saracens, however, greatly frequent it" (the town in Maabar where the body of Messer St. Thomas lies, viz. Mylapore) "in pilgrimage. For the Saracens also do hold the Saint in great reverence, and say that he was one of their own Saracens and a great prophet, giving him the little of *Avarian*, which is as much to say 'Holy Man'.— Yule and Cordier, *Marco Polo*, II, p. 353 (1903).

Marco speaks also of a church with outhouses, miracles and residentChristians there, "Other great miracles do often come to pass there, such as the healing of those who are sick or deformed, or the like" (the Moor of 1517, we note, had been blind and had recovered sight and health from St. Thomas) "especially such as be Christians". "The Christians who have charge of the church have a great number of Indian Nut trees, whereby they get their living;"—*Ibid.* p. 354. There must have been Moors and Hindus too resident there besides indigenous Christians, some of old Syrian rite and others of newly introduced Latin rite—and perhaps Persian or Armenian Christians. There might have been other Italians and Chinese too visiting that town in Polo's days.

In 1280 or later a Musilm Chamalating (Jamaluddin) was sent to the Mongol Court as envoy. (*Marco Polo*, 1903, p. 337.)

About the time that Marco Polo heard of the Mylapore church with outhouses round it and of the Christians there, Friar John of Monte Corvino (A. D. 1292-93) was probably living at that church and gaining converts to the Latin rite introduced by him, and his companion Friar Nicholas of Pistoia was lying buried at the same church where a European (presumably an Italian) traveller had visited the two missionaries.

About this very church Blessed Oderic of Pordenone says some 30 years later (A.D. 1324—25) that (St. Thomas) "His church is filled with idols" (perhaps pictures and statues introduced by Armenian or Persian Christians, and not by Friars John and Nicholas in 1292-93), "and beside it are some fifteen houses of the Nestorians, that is to say, Christians but vile and pestilent heretics."

This church, again, and another at the same town (both said to have been bult by St. Thomas and therefore 1300 years old if tradition be true) Bishop John de Marignolli visited in 1349, (In *circa* 1340 Amr' son of Mathew speaks of a St.Thomas *monastery*, not church, containing St. Thomas's tomb.)

By 1425—1430 A. D this church seems to have been rebuilt by the Nestorians there who in about a century and a half increased in numbers from some 15 houses to about 1000 individuals if the Latin record of Nicolo de' Conti's verbal report in perhaps Italian narrated from memory after many years, could be relied upon. He says: "Here the body of Saint thomas lies honourably buried in a large and beautiful church; and it is worshipped by heretics, who are called Nestorians, and inhabit this city to the number of a thousand. These Nestorians are scattered over all India, as the Jews among us".

The Nestorians here mentioned must have been mainly indigenous Christians of the Syrian rite in *South* India, but Armenian or Persian Christians in other parts of India. In the above century about, 1443, the King of Vijayanagar had according to Abdar

Razak, a *Christian* minister Nimeh Pezir by name. He was probably a foreign Nestorian, not a Malayali or Tamil Christian.

But there seems to have been Malayali Christians in Belgaum, N. E. of Goa in the 13th century, just a few decades after Marco Polo's journey. For according to an inscription the mercantile community of Belgaum "had already at the beginning of the 13th century included foreign settlers from Lala, *i. e.*, Lata (Gujarat) and the Malayalam country". (See Archaeological Survey of India, *Annual Report* 1916-17, part I, p. 19). St. Thomas Christians have been from very ancient times the mercantile co mmunity *par excellence* of the Malayalam country.

"The large and beautiful church" visited by Conti in 1425-30 A. D. appears to have been deserted for some time after that, for a report of 1504 A. D. by some Nestorian Bishops in Malabar says: As to the monastery of St. Thomas the Apostle, some Christian men have gone into it, have inhabited it, and are now busy restoring it." What Amr (circa 1340) and these 4 bishops call the monastery in their languages (Semitic) seems to be the church or House (*Casa*) of St. Thomas mentioned by European writers.

The account translated here by Rev. Fr. Carmel does not at all refer to the above Christians or to their restoration of the church! On the other hand it says that "the body of the church was razed to the ground," and was 17 cubits × 11 cubits, (See Note 5). Could a church of these dimensions have been described by Conti a hundred years before as a large church? Perhaps yes. What was the cause of the destruction of the body of it? Perhaps some Muhammadan invasion in the reign of the ferocious Ahmed Shah (1422-35 A.D.), who or whose men, we may suppose, did not know that a person venerated by Muhammadans also was lying buried there.

Barbosa (about 1515) speaks of the Moor and the perpetual lamp at St. Thomas's sepulchre in these words: —

"So he (St. Thomas) remains in that hermitage, very humbly, and lighted up by the grace of God, because the Moors and Gentiles light him up, each one saying that he is something belonging to them. And the house and church [St. Thomas's house or sanctuary and the nave seen by Fernandes in 1517 — T. K. J.] are ordered in our fashion, with crosses on the altar, and at the top of the vault [dome in Correa—T. K J.] a great wooden cross, and peacocks for a device: this church is much deteriorated. All round it there is much burshwood, and a poor Moor takes care of that building and begs alms for it, and for the lamp, which still continues burning."—Barbosa's *East Africa and Malabar*, Stanlye's translation, p. 176.

—T. K. Joseph

* * *

*Note 13.* (See p. 207, col.2).

This summary of the Tamil inscription has the characteristics of the ancient grant-deeds. Is the stone bearing the inscription lost for ever?

It must have been a grant-deed by which the (Mudaliar) headman made a gift to the church of St. Thomas for ever, and, as usual in such documents requested his successors in office to see that the gift (generally in the form of an annually recurring revenue from a piece of land made over) was continued without default, and called down the curse

of God upon those who tried to discontinue it. In the present instance the grant took the form of "tithes of all the goods of sea and land," i. e. the Christian headman's share of the customs duty due to the king of the land. This share is called 'patavaram' (=tithe) in the Malabar Christian copper-plates of the 9th century, where the Christian headman figures as master of the steel-yard and weights and seal. Marignolli (A.D.1349) speaks of St. Thomas, i. e. really some Christian headman of the East Coast, as being master of the steel-yard.

There was perhaps another inscription by which this headman was granted land by the King for his church, "as much land as he could ride round upon his ass."—Yule's *Cathay*, pp, 375, 377. The Quilon copper-plates record a similar grant in the 9th century.

Tane Modeliar cannot be a royal title. Mudaliar is a title conferred upon the leaders or heads of some Hindu mercantile castes, & of some non-Hindu mercantile communities such as the Jews and Muslims. 'Tane' may be the Tamil *tani* from Sanskrit *sthani*, meaning an officer. 'Mudaliar' or 'Mudalali' means the first man, a secular primus or primate as it were. Neither tani nor Mudaliar is applied to kings. The head of the Quilon Christians, we know, had a similar title Mudalali.

Some say that the St. Thomas Christians of Malabar and the Coromandel Coast were in olden times called Tanevi. If that be so the name may be Tanevi Mudaliar, meaning head of the Christians. The Coromandel Parava Christians even now have their formally appointed headman called Talavemor, which is the Tamil *Talavan*, headman, with the Portuguese suffix *mor*. (See note 7).

—T. K. Joseph

* * *

*Note 15.* (See text, p. 208, col. 2)

The relics found in and taken out of a portion of the tomb by the Portuguese were, according to Fernandes, only—

1. Some bones of the head (from the northern end of the tomb).
2. Some ribs.
3. Some other bones of the body.
4. One thigh bone.
5. A feather-shaped lance. (See Document II, last para.)
6. A bit of its wooden shaft.
7. An earthen vessel full of earth. (See Document II, last para).

The bones below the thigh were under the foundation of the sanctuary, and were not taken out. The bones actually collected were much worn out, and did not fill even a small box. Even this much of the bones was left undecayed because the body was originally covered with "sand and fresh lime in powder". (See Document II also for the subsequent history of these objects.) Lance, sword and other weapons of the dead man, and also vessels are usually found in old South Indian stone cists and burial jars.

The St. Thomas relics now existing in a reliquary in the San Thome Cathedral are the following:—

1. A lance (*Lança com que foi morto S. Thome*).
2. Relic of the lance (*Reliquia da lança com que foi morto S. Thome*).
3. Fragment of the lance (*Fragmento da lança com que foi morto S.Thome*).
4. Relic of the bones (*Reliquia dos ossos de S. Thome*).
5. Fragment of the lance (*Fragmento a lança com que foi morto S. Thome.*)

From Document II we see that the iron of the lance was, in 1600 A. D., "not whole but

turned to pieces due to time and to rust." In that year the St, Thomas relics were in the chapel of St. Thomas's Sepulchre. See last para of Document II.

—T. K. Joseph

*Note 16.* (See text, p. 203, col. 2)

The grave of St. Thomas appears to have been very deeply dug and the contents preserved and made secure with extraordinary care. Since Diogo Fernandes was an eye-witness to the opening of the tomb his description of it may be taken to be fairly accurate. Of course due allowance has to be made for the fact that in 1543 he was recalling the details of the excavation that took place about 20 years before.

The tomb had strong brick and mortar walls, and the top of the tomb lay 10 palms i. e. 6 feet 8 inches below the northern ground level outside the St. Thomas chapel or sanctuary. Fernandes, we remember, has already told us that the tomb of St. Thomas was on the gospel side, i. e. the north side, and "on the outer border" of the chapel. We can infer from the words "to ornament and embellish from outside", and "the foundation that had to adorn (form?) the sanctuary" that the digging was done outside the walls of the chapel. So, at least a portion of the tomb was outside the northern wall of the chapel. Further down in the document we find it stated that "the rest of the bones and of the cave (=tomb) lay under the foundation of the sanctuary." That shows that a portion of the tomb was under the northern wall, & perhaps also under the adjacent floor of the chapel. Now, the grave of St. Thomas now inside the Mylapore Cathedral lies in a north and south direction. So at the time of Fernandes's excavation too it must have been lying in the same direction, more than half of its length being outside the northern wall of the chapel and 6 ft. 8 in. below the northern ground level. Originally the top M of the tomb must have been at least some inches above the then ground level, and in the course of years several feet of earth accumulated over it by some cause or other. Now, since the bones of the skull were found first, and then the ribs, and finally a thigh bone, it is clear that the head was in the north and the feet in the south, which is exactly opposite to the relative positions of the head and feet of the dead body as laid by the Hindus, viz. with the eyes turned in the direction opposite to the quarter of Yama the god of death. St Thomas, according to tradition, was the first Christian to be buried in Mylapore, and those who buried him perhaps thought that to counteract the Hindu superstition, his body should be laid so that his eyes were directed towards Yama's quarter. Malabar Christians—and perhaps all Christians—have been, however, long following the custom of burying their dead in the east and west direction, with the eyes of the dead bodies looking to the east, the quarter from which Christ is believed to appear again at his second coming. It is not known when this practice came into vogue among South Indian Christians.

We have seen that the southern part of the tomb was "under the foundation of the sanctuary". That leads to the conclusion that the sanctuary or chapel was built only *after* St. Thomas had been dead and buried in the tomb. So Fernandes's statement, and the current belief, that St. Thomas built the sanctuary or chapel cannot be true.

Now it is the common belief among the Malabar Christians that St. Thomas's tomb

had never been opened and his bones never disturbed or taken away to another place before the Portuguese did so in 1524. (Is this date correct?). The Loma MS., Goa, 31, fols. 29 r, 29 v, or 23 r, 23 v says: "This impression of the foot, the witness" (our Diogo Fernandes) "says he saw it in his holy house, as I said already above. And the blessed, being in meditation, called those who killed him" (St. Thomas), "who, having fallen, lay on the ground, and then, they say, he told them to have no fear, and to go to his house, and to call his treasurer and his disciples" (telling them) "to come to him and to take and place him in the chapel which he had made. And they did so, and placed him in his house, in the chapel of which I already spoke above. Thence, say and swear(? *se affirmao*) those of the country, his relics were never taken or disturbed, except in the manner I have already said above" (i. e. by the Portuguese excavators). (The above translation was kindly supplied to me by the Rev. Fr. H. Hosten, S. J., and published by me in *The Young Man of India* (Calcutta) for December 1927, p. 732.

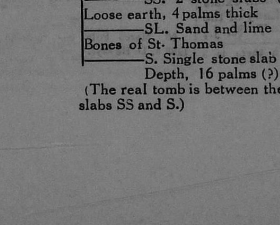
Diogo Fernandes's present report (Document No.1) confirms the above affirmation of the Mylaporeans that St, Thomas's relics were never taken or disturbed before the Portuguese excavation. The sepulchre was found intact when the Portuguese opened it. The brick and mortar walls, the tompost layer of bricks and lime about 2 palms thick, the layer of bricks next below that, the next layer of mortar two palms thick and so strong that even iron crowbars could not break it, the two granite slabs below completely covering the real grave, or the (single ?) granite slab at a depth of 16 palms—none of these was found to have been tampered with. So no portion of the bones was ever removed from this tomb before.

But we know from ancient writers that St. Thomas's bones were removed to Edessa from somewhere in "India" of olden days. How could we reconcile these two facts except by supposing that the San Thome tomb is not St. Thomas's tomb?

T. K. Joseph

* * *

## SECTION OF ST. THOMAS'S TOMB




(The real tomb is between the stone slabs SS and S.)

T. K. Joseph

## II. ST. THOMAS RELICS AT MYLAPORE.

### 1559-1601 A. D.

*(Translated by the Rev. Fr. Carmel Iturriotz, D. C.)*

Information that the Bishop of Cochin, Dom Frey Andre took, having come to this land, and what happened to the Relics of the Apostle St. Thomas.

1. Bishop of Cochin, Dom Frey Andre visiting this Diocese came to this town of St. Thomas in the year of the Lord 1589 in the month of July, and again a second time in the year 1591 in the month of June, and later a third time in the year 98 in the month of August, and again a fourth time in the year 600 in the beginning of the month of October. And inquiring these times I came here, of persons of long residence in this town [was Diogo Fernandes alive in 1589, 1591, 1598 or 1600?—T. K. J.] what else happened to the relics of the glorious Apostle, I found by information of these persons, and as a tradition that in the year 1559, Dom Constantino being Vice-Roy of India, there came to this town the three brothers that at the time were kings of Bisnaga, and on account of some troubles they had from the inhabitants of the said town they took prisoners thirty one of the principals of the land and put them in Chandagari [Chandragiri—T.K.J.]the main town of their kingdom and though they did not meddle with the belongings of the inhabitants of the land, yet the kings took with them the coffer of the relics and the bones of the Apostle St. Thomas. [See Document I, last paragraph,—T.K. J ]. They took also a picture of Our Lady three palms long by two broad which exists even to-day in the House of Our Lady of the Mount,[19] one league [no, more—T. K. J.] from this town. When this Picture arrived in the Court with the coffer of the bones of the saint, there is a general belief and tradition that the Queen mother of the chief of the brothers called Rama Raju was frightened [20] in dreams with the apparition of the Virgin in such a way that she compelled the king to return to their place the relics and the Picture he took with him, and so by order of the king the Picture was brought to this town on a planquin, and the coffer of the relics of St. Thomas was given to a principal man among those that were detained there called Gil Vaz Palha, married and living here; and there is a person in this town who remembers that the said Gil Vaz

19 In the St. Thomas Mount church there is a picture of St. Mary with Infant Jesus in her arms. About 1726 Fr. Ippolito Desideri, S. J., wrote about it thus: "In addition to the said Cross there is in that Church another lovely monument, that is, a most impressive representation of the Holy virgin. There is a continuous tradition that such a picture was painted by the Evangelist St. Luke, and that S. Thomas brought it here with him. It is a fixed tradition that it was rediscovered along with the Cross and relics of that glorious Apostle on the very spot of his martyrdom. Not only the Christians have a great devotion for it but the very idolaters themselves hold it in great veneration."

It may be blasphemy to question the veracity of the above tradition and call for evidence.

T. K. J.

20. Marco Polo has recorded a similar miracle of 1288 A. D. He says:

Palha entered this town riding an ox[Marignolli heard that St. Thomas had once ridden an ass there—T.K. J.] when he brought with him the said relics.

It is said by the gentiles of the land that on account of the sin committed against St. Thomas in carrying away his relics, they were defeated and rooted out by the Moors a few days later in a great battle, [Talikota? —T. K. J.] wnere two of the brothers died and the third one received a knife-wound in the face. And they lost the great town of Bisnaga [Vijayanagar, destroyed after the battle of Talikota, 1565—T. K. J.] and so much of their kingdom that never more they could raise their head. And so never more the kings that succeeded them dared to enter this town or to come to it, having their Court as a rule in Chandegari which is less than three journeys away from here. And from this fact and others that God wrought through the merits of His Holy Apostle the gentiles of this country come to the conclusion that St. Thomas is much offended.

At the time that the relics of the Apostle arrived here brought by Gil Vaz Palha there lived in this town a Religious of the order of St. Francis called Fr. Lopo dalmada whom I knew well: who knowing and seeing that theVice-Roy Dom Constantino ordered the land to be cleared of Portuguese that dwelt in it on account of past affront inflicted on them when they were taken prisoners, tried to get half of the said relics [2 1]of the Apostle and the iron of the lance with which he was killed. And this seems to have been with the intention of putting the said relics in the House of St. Thomas that the said Vice-Roy was building in the Field of St Lazaro, where he wanted to shift the inhabitants of this land. But seeing afterwards that the clearing of this town did not take place he gave the Relics to the Bishop at that time in Cochin Dom Jorge Temudo, and they are to-day in the See of the said Cochin with the iron of the lance with which the Apostle was killed, which is not now whole but turned to pieces due to time and to rust. When I arrive in Cochin with the help of God I hope to send here those Relics that are kept there that this town may not be deprived of this treasure of its great patron. (*In the margin we read*: This April of 601 I sent these

"A very fine miracle occured there in the year of Christ, 1288, as I will now relate.

"A certain Baron of that country, having great store of a certain kind of corn that is called *rice*, had fill'd up with it all the houses that belonged to the church, and stood round about it. The Christian people in charge of the church were much distressed by his having thus stuffed their houses with his rice; the pilgrims too had nowhere to lay their heads; and they often begged the pagan Baron to remove his grain, but he would do nothing of the kind. So one night the Saint himself appeared with a fork in his hand, which he set at the Baron's throat, saying: "If thou void not my houses, that my pilgrims may have room, thou shalt die an evil death," and therewithal the Saint pressed him so hard with the fork that he thought himself a dead man. And when morning came he caused all the houses to be voided of his rice, and told everybody what had befallen him at the Saint's hands. So the Christians were greatly rejoiced at this grand miracle, and rendered thanks to God and to the blessed St. Thomas. Other great miracles do often come to pass there, such as the healing of those who are sick or deformed, or the like, especially such as be Christians."

T. K. J.

21. St. Francis Xavier had already got a portion of the bones in 1545. He "wore until his death the text of his solemn vows in a reliquary, wherein were also found the autograph of St. Ignatius and *a relic of St. Thomas*, which he had received from his friend Gaspar Coelho, Vicar of the Church of Mylapore." *Cf. Monumenta Xaveriana*, I, p. 404, *Epist. Mixt.*, I, p. 198.

—T. K. Joseph.

Relics and the iron to San Thome and they are already there with the other ones.)

From the evidence [is it Document I?—T. K. J.] given above by Diogo Fras' it cannot be inferred or understood where the relics of the Christian king that the Portuguese found buried in the place where the old sacristy was raised later on were; neither is it inferred where the bones of the other disciples of St. Thomas that were also found lay, but from the information of old persons I took, and from what I saw this last time [1600 A. D.—T. K. J.], I find that all those bones were inside a small sepulchre of stone which was inside the wall of the Gospel side in a small chapel of the old church [built in 1523 according to Document III.—T. K. J.] called the Chapel of the Kings, because old people of this land told me that they heard always that the same king [Tani Mudaliyar—T. K. J.] that St. Thomas made Christian was buried there, and it seems that it was on account of this, called the Chapel of the Kings; because there is there no picture of the kings—Magi, nor is the feast celebrated on the day of the kings, neither is there any other reason for that chapel to be called after the kings if it be not because that king is buried there. [22] The same is held by Nuno Luis de Faria in his papers. [Where are these papers?—T. K. J.]. And that the bones of the disciples of St. Thomas were also in that sepulchre seems to be clear for (as Diogo Frs' assures in his evidence) they were all lying together in those coffers. And so it seems that the Portuguese put them there together with those of the king; this is confirmed by the fact that myself ordering to open that sepulchre the last month, October, [1600 A. D.—T. K. J.] I found inside it a small box of white wood that looked like pine-wood, two palms long. And it had this same length by one of breadth: [23] which box was full of small pieces of bones, very clean & put in order without mixture of earth with them, which clearly showed that they must have been taken and put there from somewhere else. And over the box there was a cloth, blue or green, of the length and breadth of the same box stitched all round in the form of a pillow, also full of bones that must have been of some other saint, and all this was covered with the stone of the sepulchre. And it was clearly seen that in the wooden box there were bones of more than one person. Therefore I believe that in that sepulchre there are bones not only of the king [24] but also of the disciples of St. Thomas which the Portuguese found here first.

22 We know, however, that *The Acts of Judas Thomas*, written about 200 A.D. says: "And they raised golden garments and many linen cloths, and buried Judas *in the sepulchre in which the ancient kings were buried*."

Tani Mudaliar alone was buried there. Why then was it called the Chapel of the kings (plural)?

According to the first document the relics were "inside the chapel *of the Apostle*" on 15th October 1548. According to the second document they were in the chapel *of the Kings* in 1600 A.D. Part of St. Thomas's relics was taken out and given to St. Xavier in 1545.

T. K. J.

23. Is this box 2 palms long and 1 palm broad, the big coffer mentioned towards the close of the first document?

T. K. J.

24. Maffei (*Historiarum Indicarum*, libri XVI, Florentiae, 1588, pp. 159—160) says that St. Thomas's bones were recognised by the fact that they were *white* while those of Sagamus the Indian king, and the Indian disciples were *black*. So, according to Maffei, black people have black bones and white people white bones! The Italian Nicholas of Pistoia (see note 11), the Hunga-

The Relics that Fr. Lobo did not take—when I came here the first time [1589—T. K. J.] I found that they were in the small Chapel of the sepulchre of the Holy Apostle in a corner of it on the eastern side, inside a very small altar which altar had but 6palms of length, because its length was the breadth of the small Chapel of the sepulchre, which was no more than 6 palms in breadth. These Relics were in a small coffer of moresque (Moorish, *mourisco*) [25] brass of less than one palm in length which was inside another bigger coffer in the hollow space of the altar under a brazen grade, [*grade* in the original—T. K. J.] with its lock, and of another small wooden door with its lock. And all this was situated under the altar-stone (a square stone in the centre of the altar-table). I found besides in the same small chapel of the sepulchre, at the western side, a jug buried in the ground with the mouth at the surface of the ground, which jug had much earth inside, which must have been the earth found in the vessel that was discovered in the sepulchre of the saint, and also that which was mixed with the bones of the saint when they dug up his sepulchre because some small bones were found in it. Now as I saw that such a holy place was kept with little reverence because black and white people entered it whenever they liked, and they were walking about over the place of the sepulchre, and even would put their hand inside the jug and take from it whatever they liked, I ordered the earth of the jug to be taken out and put it inside a big coffer and ordered the small altar to be destroyed because it was so small that the mass could not be said well on it; and I ordered another altar to be erected lengthwise of the small chapel which occupies almost all the space of the sepulchre. And under this big altar I placed the big coffer with the earth that was in the jug. And in the middle of the altar I placed the Relics of the Holy Apostle as they were before in the former altar, and now they are in the same way there, except that the small coffer of moresque brass where the Holy Relics are kept is inside another bigger coffer of gilt silver. And I have ordered under pain of excommunication that no one enter there unless he be a cleric with Holy Orders, and that the Vicar of the church be the sacristan of it for sweeping and cleaning it.

(Translated from *Esplendores da Religiao* for April 1930, Goa, pp. 157–159).

—T. K. Joseph

rian Dominge, and some Armenians, and perhaps Persians also had been buried there before the excavation by the Portuguese (1521-2 A. D.) in King John's time. Were not the white bones of some of these white people also dug up by the Portuguese?

—T. K. Joseph

25. In describing the jogues(yogis) or Zoames(Swamis) i. e. naked gosains of the kingdom of Daly (Delhi,) Barbosa says "It must be said, that they wear belts of Moorish brass of pieces fitted together, and four fingers in breadth,"...Stanley's translation, 1866, p. 99.

T. K. Joseph

# III. THE MOUNT CROSS OF ST. THOMAS

## AND ITS PAHLAVI INSCRIPTION, 1547-62 A. D.

*(Translated by the Rev. Fr. Carmel Iturriotz, D. C.)*

Information that the Bishop took about the Big Mount and the stone of it, from elderly people as well as from the writings of Nuno Luis and from others.

The Mount that some call Our Lady's and others the Big Mount (to distinguish it from another one called the small) is a good league away [about 8 miles —T. K. J.] from the town of S. Thome. This mount was always venerated and visited by the Christians and the pilgrims that came to visit the House (Caza) of the Apostle because they believed that the Apostle prayed often on it and that he was murdered there by a Brahmin as it is said in the inscription on that Holy stone which is kept as the frame of the altar. [The inscription says nothing of the kind—T. K. J.]. When the Portuguese came to this land there was no building on that mount; there were only some foundation walls that rose above the ground about one cubit stretching from east to west, which seemed to have been of some very small oratory, on which foundation (as Nuno Luis de Faria says in his papers) was raised by Diogo Frs. [Diogo Fernandes of Documents I and II —T. K. J.] living here and one of the first Portuguese that arrived here, an oratory in the year 523 (which was the year in which the old church of St. Thomas was built). This oratory was arched, dedicated to the Mother of God, and so small that it could not hold eight persons. After this, pilgrimages and devotion to the holy Mount and to the chapel of the Mother of God increasing, the inhabitants of this town determined to build another chapel bigger than that, and gathered about two hundred pardaos (ducats) for the starting of the work which they wanted to begin in the year 547 towards the month of March, Gaspar Coelho being Vicar here and Gabriel detaide (d'Ataide ?) captain. And settling to build the new church round the old one, the architect laid his strings and measures, and beginning after this to dig the foundation on Tuesday, twenty-third of the same month of March [1547 A. D. — T. K. J.] they met with another foundation of which no one knew a word, also from east to west, and where it seems there had been another older church; and going on digging along it, and having deepened three cubits they met with the Holy stone which is kept to-day [first set up in 1551—T. K. J.] in the altar-frame of the church of Our Lady. This stone is of the size of a mill-stone [3 ft. 4 in. square—T. K. J.] and it had the cross engraved on it turned downward and with the back upward, and as the contour of the stone was rough and not polished it looked like a wild rock that lay there. Those who opened the foundation were for not minding it; nevertheless moved by God they turned it up and they found on it that beautiful Cross that was engraved with the inscription around it; of the form of which I do not speak, for it is known to all those that see it

The stone had at one side of the Cross a stain of blood that looked as fresh as if it had been shed there that same hour: which blood, though with time is being effaced and also with the sweat and water that the stone sheds when the miracle is wrought, and though some rub out, nevertheless some mark of its existence there can be distinguished even now; it being fifty years since it was found and placed there for altar-frame [1551+50=1601 A. D.—T. K. J.]. The inscription was read in the year 561 as it appears from the declaration that the Vicar Gaspar Coelho ordered to be taken, and the interpretation of it was sent to the Bishop of that time in Cochin, Dom Jorge Temudo, who the next year 562 sent it to the kingdom to the cardinal Dom Anrique as an authentic instrument [26] as it is related by the Bishop of Algarve, Dom Hieronimo Ozorio in the third book of de Rebus Emmanuelis, at the end of it; where (after describing the shape of the cross and the miracle of the sweat that took place in that year 61) he says that the Captain and the Vicar wishing to know the meaning of the inscription round the cross ordered to call an old Brahmin who was considered the greatest literary man in the whole kingdom of Bisnaga that he might read it. The Brahmin came and being asked whether he could read that writing, he answered that the characters were old ones, of those used by the ancient sages, and that by neglect of men the knowledge of them was lost: and also that the language in which they were written was known by few only. They told the Brahmin to climb up the altar that from there he might read the writing better. He refused to do it saying that it was a great sin to trample with feet upon a place where mass was said. Still having been insisted upon to climb up and

26. There are numerous versions of the Kanara Brahmin's 'interpretation' in old books of the Portuguese period. For some of them see *Journal and Proceedings of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, New Series, Vol. 21, pp. 507-48. For other wrong interpretations and the latest by Prof. C. P. T. Winckworth see my *Malabar Christians*, 1929, pp. 25—28.

Hand sketches of the Mount cross and its Pahlavi inscription occur in some old Portuguese books. One such sketch of 1579 A.D. by Fr. Monserrate is reproduced in the above book of mine, opposite p. 11. A sketch of the cross was sent to the Council of Trent along with the Brahmin's interpretation, as Maffei says. "And, lest there should be any doubt in such a big matter, the bishop of Cochin sent to Europe at the beginning" (no. towards the close) "of the Council of Trent" (13th December 1545 to 4th Dec. 1563), "the whole series of the facts, attested by public letters and a representation of the work carefully copied from the stone itself (operis effigiem e lapide ipso diligeter expressam)"—*Op. cit* in note 13, pp. 252-3 (translation by Rev. Fr. H. Hosten, S. J.).

Many stone copies & paintings of the cross & inscription were found by Gouvea in Malabar about 1600 A. D. Only five of those stone copies (those at Kottayam: 2, Kadamattam, Muttuchira and Alangad) have yet been discovered. A plaster-cast replica of the Mount cross is at the Vatican now. Similar stone cross-slabs without any inscription are found in China and Ceylon. The Mount cross too must have had no inscription before the ninth century, according to the latest interpretion of its inscription.

—T. K. Joseph

read, he read the writing and he said that each character had the significance of ten and of fifteen and twenty characters of ours and that the meaning of the writing was this: *That in the time of the sacred law (lei sagamo)* [27] *Thomas a man of God was sent by the Son of God (whose disciple he was) to those parts to bring the people of the nation to the knowledge of God, and that he built there a temple and wrought great miracles and that finally praying he knelt before that cross & was transfixed with a lance by a Brahmin; and that that cross remained stained with the blood of the saint for everlasting remembrance.*[28]

And this was the meaning of the writing, said the Brahmin. This is corroborated by the fact that another one, also very old and learned, having been called upon, he gave the same interpretation to the writing. Thus far the Bishop of Algarve. Of the miracles that often take place in this stone on the Day of Our Lady before Christmas[29] it is not necessary to speak, because they are known by all.—(*From the archives of the Society of Jesus,* [30] Translated from *Esplendores da Religião* for April 1930, pp. 160—162.)

27. The word *sagamo* is unknown to me. I have translated it *sacred*, thinking that it may be a modification of *sagrado*. I am confirmed in this belief by the account given of this fact by Harricus. (See note 28).

—Rev. Fr. D. I. Carnel, D. C

28. Sagamo, which appears as Sagad, Xaga, Sagamus, etc. in other Portuguese writers, does not occur in the Kanara Brahmin's reading of the Pahlavi inscription. What actually occurs there, in the first line, can be read as segartan or jegartan (the second letter is not quite legible in the original; it may be a,e, i, o, or u) in Fr. Monserrate's transcript of 1579 in Spanish characters of the Brahmin's reading. Some other transcripts or this one of Fr. Monserrate's must have been misread as Sagamo, Sagad, etc. It is in fact *jesugartan* minus *je* which was read with the previous word. *Jesugartan* in Tamil (இயேசு கர்தர்) means the Lord Jesus, which by misreading became Sagamo and a number of other curious names. So, we should say 'in the time of the Lord Jesus,' and not 'in the time of Sagamo,' etc. Sagamo can never be found in any document prior to 1561, to be sure.

29. We read on page 155 of Vol.1 of *Oriente Conquistado*: "The inhabitants therefore wishing to celebrate the Feast of the Lady on the 18th of December, the day of her Expectation, at the very moment that the Deacon began to sing the first words of the Gospel: Missus est Angelus Gabriel, the cross began to change in colour and to sweat drops of blood till its natural colour returned".

Immediately he gives an account of how the Miracle takes place in alternate years but "the date of the miracle is never changed and always takes place on the 18th of December."

—Editor, *Esplendores*

30. The Editor of *Esplendores da Religião* says in his introduction to the above three remarkable documents thus: "Devemo-los a gentileza do erudito e paciente investigador das antiguidades, Rev. Niceno de Figueiredo, que os possui em copia fotografica tirada do original que se encontra nos arquivos da Companhia de Jesus em Roma." (*Ibid.* for April, p. 151.) The original MSS. are in the archives of the Society of Jesus in Rome. It was the Rev. Fr. Niceno de Figueiredo that supplied the Editor with photographs of them.

—T. K. Joseph