

General Editor

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THE
ELEPHANT IN THE TAMIL LAND

BY

E. S. VARADARAJAIYER, B. A.

(Lecturer in Tamil.)



ANNAMALAI UNIVERSITY

ANNAMALAINAGAR

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THE
TRICHINOPOLY UNITED PRINTERS, LIMITED,
TRICHINOPOLY
TY.2-7-11-1945-500 Copies

FOREWORD

BY

M. RUTHNASWAMY M.A., (Cantab) Bar-at-Law C.I.E.

Vice-chancellor, Annamalai University.

THESE are the fruits of research in Tamil Research Department of the Annamalai University. According to the scheme of research prepared some time ago, Mr. Varadaraja Iyer has produced these two theses on the “Elephant in Tamil Literature” and on “Social Life in Tolkappiyam.” The classics of Tamil literature have been dug for reference to the Elephant and we must acknowledge that he has brought up varied and interesting information which go to prove the large and important place filled by the elephant in ancient Tamil literature and life. The exhaustiveness of the search for references to the elephant in Tamil literature is the distinguishing feature of this work.

Similarly how an ancient treatise on Grammar can be made to yield information on the social life of the ancient Tamils has been the object of his treatment of Tolkappiyam. These two samples of research produced by the Tamil Research Department of the Annamalai University I have great pleasure in introducing to the notice of the world of Tamil learning. Their publication in English may make them known beyond the confines of the Tamil country.

Annamalainagar, }
8—11—1945. }

M. RUTHNASWAMY

FOREWORD

BY

Tiru. T. P. MINAKSHISUNDARAM M.A., B.L., M.O.L.

Professor of Tamil, Annamalai University.

“**T**HE Flora and the Fauna of the Sangam Age” have attracted the attention of many a Tamil Research Student. Tiru Anantaramaiyer the editor of Kalithogai, no longer with us, collected the various references but his research lies buried in the footnotes closely printed in almost invisible types. This was also one of the subjects chosen by a research student of the Madras University and the index prepared must be lying in a pigeon hole of the research department. Tiru K. Kandasamy Pillai, the secretary of the Karantai Tamil Sangam, with his fertile imagination proposed to open a museum and a herbarium exhibiting the Sangam Fauna and Flora, in commemoration of the Silver Jubilee celebration of that Sangam. Though this ambition has taken no shape or form, it has set scholars like Tiru Maha Vidwan R. Raghava Iyengar on collecting informations on animals. Therefore no apology is needed for a work of this kind. Tiru E. S. Varadaraja Iyer is to be congratulated on his successful attempt at presenting his collected material in a popular narrative form. But my fear was that the book may lose its referential value for want of suitable headings to guide that curious species of humanity the reference hunter; but the author has allayed all such fears by appending an index.

The Elephant in war has a history of its own. These animals played a decisive part in the sieges of

the Sangam Age. Its importance in this sphere could have been more clearly brought out. Coming from the scene to the pitched battle the Elephant trampled over the enemy. The man who killed the Elephants came to be looked upon as the warrior of warriors. Poets kept this ideal of heroism in their peculiar literary composition Parani, ever afresh and electrified therewith the hearts of many a generation of young men. Once, however, the trick of frightening the mammoths were learnt they were easily made to trample over their own heroes. Thus was lost one of the great battles of India. Long before the decisive battle the Sangam Poets had sung of their successes and failures.

Lord Lytton speaks of the Pandits and Elephants as two imposing sights in India. Here is a book on Elephant by a Pandit but fortunately not of a size as imposing as either. The reader may take consolation in the thought that the book is not exhaustive; for though the author has not forgotten the Encyclopaedias, neither the later day literature with its fable and mythologies so very well illustrated in a rare manuscript collected by Sarfoji of Tanjore, nor the Tamil commentaries which speak of the birth places of the Elephants and such other interesting facts, have been laid under contribution to any appreciable extent. "Elephant in the Sangam Literature, therefore, might have been a more fitting title for this book.

PREFACE

The late Sir K. V. Reddi Naidu, the Vice-Chancellor of this University between 1940-42 asked me to select some topics from ancient Tamil Literature, gather materials and write a series of essays on them. One of the topics was the Fauna of the ancient Tamil land. As the elephant had been in the Tamil land for hundreds of years and profuse references to them are found in the ancient Tamil Classics, I chose this huge quadruped for a detailed treatment. The learned poets of the Tamil land with their keen insight into nature, have closely observed the manners and the ways of living of this big animal and as a result of their observation we have several interesting facts respecting this huge mammal. An earnest attempt has been made to collate all such details, and the present essay will, it is hoped, give the reader a clear idea as to the history of this gregarious animal in all its aspects. The reader will find in the course of this monograph some classical pieces translated, which contain many references to the manifold activities of this big being. It will be interesting to see how perfectly acquainted the ancient poets were with this animal from the apt metaphors and similes they had ably drawn from the habits and customs of this mammoth creature. Every detail about this animal has been carefully selected and it is hoped that this book which contains much interesting information about this huge tropical animal will be read with interest.

I am deeply indebted to M. Rutnasami, M. A. (Cantab), Bar-at-Law, C. I. E., the Vice-Chancellor of this University and the syndicate for having permitted the publication of this book by the University. My thanks are due to the members of the Tamil Research Committee and Mahamahopadyaya Pandithamani M. Kathiresa Chettiar, Adviser of Tamil Research and Vidvan T. P. Minakshisundaram Pillai M.A. B.L., Professor of Tamil Annamalai University in particular; for recommending the publication of this book. My thanks are also due the United Printers, Trichinopoly for having printed this without delay.

Annamalai University, {
3-10-1945. }

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Kalithogai	.. கலித்
Kaḷaviyal	.. களவி
Kambarāmāyaṇam	.. கம்பரா
Kuṟiṇṇipāṭṭu	.. குறிஞ்சிப்
Kuruntokai	.. குறுந்
Maduraikkāṇṇi	.. மதுரைக்
Malaipaḍukaḍām	.. மலைபடு
Maṇimēkalai	.. மணி
Muḍamōciar	..
Muduveṇkaṇṇaṇār	..
Mullaippāṭṭu	.. முல்லைப்
Murugārūppaḍai	.. முருகு
Muthollāyiram	.. முத்தொன்
Nachiṇārkkīṇiyar	..
Nakkīrar	..
Narriṇai	.. நற்
Nattattaṇār	..
Nālaḍiyar	.. நாலடி
Nītinūl	..
Paripāḍal	.. பரி
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Pāṇḍiaṇ Arivuḍainambi	..
Periyapurāṇam	..
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THE ELEPHANT IN THE TAMIL LAND

This huge quadruped, the biggest and the largest of the terrestrial animals is mainly a tropical one. The existing elephants inhabit respectively the forest lands of India, Burma and Malaya Peninsula, Ceylon, Cochin China, Sumatra and the continent of Africa South of the Sahara. The Encyclopaedia Britannica gives the following account of this wonderful animal.

“The Asiatic animal lives in small herds moving about in forests in the neighbourhood of water. It has a dislike of bright sunlight and hence during the hot season keeps to the denser parts of the forest. Its food consists chiefly of grass, leaves, the young shoots of trees, bamboos and fruits.

The height of the male Indian Elephant when full grown is usually between 8 and 10 feet, the Calf when born has a height of about 3 feet. The period of gestation is not accurately known but is about 18 months and the animal lives to about 45 to 60 years. One Calf is usually produced at birth but twins are known. The Asiatic animal has long been captured and domesticated and is used as a transport animal in India, Burma and Siam.”

The late Surgeon—General Edward Balfour in his Indian Encyclopaedia writes as follows :—

“The elephant is the largest of the terrestrial mammals. The elephant is mentioned but two or three times in the Rigveda by the name *Mrigo-hasti*”.

In the ancient Tamil literature frequent mention is made of this huge animal, its habitat, its customs and habits, the uses to which it was put and similar other things. An attempt is made here to deal exhaustively with all things that have been said of this animal. Many interesting things have been said of this big animal by poets of eminence in the Tamil land. The following are the several names pertaining to the animal as they are found in the Nigandu or the old poetical Lexicon.

Tumbi (தும்பி), Kariṇi (கரிணி), Tōl (தோல்), Cuṇ-ḍāli (சுண்டாளி), Kumbi (கும்பி), Karaiyaḍi (கறையடி), Kunjaram (குஞ்சரம்), Pakadu (பகடு), Kaḷiru (கலிறு), Pūtkai (பூத்கை), Kari (கரி), Mātangam (மாதங்கம்), Vazhuvai (வழுவை), Vēlam (வேழம்), Vāraṇam (வாரணம்), Moy (மொய்), Umbal (உம்பல்), Eṟumbi (ஏறும்பி), Uvā (உவா), Pongaḍi (பொங்கடி), Taṇṭi (தந்தி), Atti (அத்தி), Kaḍivai (கடிவை), Kayam (கயம்), Nākam (நாகம்), Sinduram (சிந்துரம்), Tūṅkal (துங்கல்), Nirumatam (நிருமதம்), Puḷaikkai (புழைக்கை), Valvilangu (வல்விலங்கு), Nālvāy (நால்வாய்), Pugarmukam (புகர்முகம்), Matāvaḷam (மதாவளம்), Dantāvaḷam (தந்தாவளம்), Maruṇmā (மருண்மா), Kaimmā (கைம்மா), Perumā (பெருமா), Matamā (மதமா), Vayamā (வயமா), Mandamā (மந்தமா), Matakayam (மதகயம்), Āmbal (ஆம்பல்), Ipam (இபம்), Potakam (போதகம்), Kaḷapam (களபம்).

The following are the names of the female elephants. Attīni (அத்தினி), Kariṇi (கரிணி), Vaḍavai (வடவை), Piṭi (பிடி).

The young ones are called Kayantalai (கடந்தலை), Potakam (போதகம்), Tudiyaḍi (துடியடி), Kalabham (களபம்), and Kayamuni (கயமுனி).

Specific names have been given to the different parts of an elephant. Its forehead is named Matakam, Kumbham and Mattakam. Its trunk or the proboscis as the Tondai, Tonḍalam, Cuṇḍai and tudikkai. The tip of the trunk as the Puṭkaram, its eye-extremity as the Nīrāyāṇam, its tusk as the Danta, Eyīru, Kōḍu and Maruppu; the middle of the tusk as the Birudumānam. Its foreleg is called gātram and the hindleg aparam. Its back is styled Manjū. Its Mattākam is called Tōrkaḍam and its tail as the tālavaṭṭam. The edge or end of its tail is known as the Vēcakam. Its end as the Kaṇṇam or tālam and so on.

The scrupulous way in which the different parts of the animal have been named suggests an intimate knowledge of the animal possessed by the ancient Tamilians. It will be seen that some portions of South India have long been the habitat of elephants. Tonḍaināḍu especially the Vengadam hills, the borders of the Palni hills, the modern Travancore and Ceylon were the places where the elephants roamed in ancient times in very large numbers. The following quotations from the Tamil classics will bear out the above statement.

The tall Vēngadam hills ruled over by Pulli the war-minded and brave who possessed very huge elephants.¹

The Vengadam hills which belonged to Tirayan who wielded the victorious javelin and who possessed

1. மா அல் யாஜீன மறப் போர்ப் புல்வி
காப்புடை ஓடுவரை வேங்கடம்.

huge elephants with white tusks, which were born in and around Vengadam, the modern Tirupati hills.² That the Tondaiyar had a good number of this huge animal will be borne out by the following line.³

Tondaiyar distinguished in valorous fights and possessing elephants which were expert performers of heroic deeds. Many minor chieftains of the ancient Tamil land have been praised by bards as having owned quite a good number of this huge beast.

Andiraṇ, Anji, Muḍiyaṇ, Adigaṇ, Naḷli, Āy Eyinaṇ, Agudai, Nannaṇ, Vēmbi of Mucuṇḍai, Sēdan, Kuṭṭuvaṇ, Mignili and a host of other minor chieftains have been praised by the poets as having owned elephants in very large numbers.

“ யாணை மிகவுடைய வாமா னஞ்சி ” (Agam 115)

“ ஓவாதீயு மாரி வண்கைக்

கடும்பகட்டி யாணை நெடுந்தோஞ்சி ” (Kurum 91)

“ கடா அ யாணைக் கலிமான் பேகன் ” (Puraṁ 141, 145)

“ கடா அ யாணைக் கழற்காற் பேகன் ” (Puraṁ 142)

“ இழையணியாணை யிரப்போர்க்கீயும் பேகன் ” (Puraṁ 153)

Pēhan the petty liberal chieftain who possessed ruttish elephants.

Again, Naḷli, the petty chief who lavished away elephants along with chariots to those who approached him for alms.⁴

2. வேங்கடம் பயந்த வெண் கோட்டியாணை
வெண் வேற்றிரையன் வேங்கட நெடுவரை.

3. வினை நவியாணை விற்றப்போர்த் தொண்டையர்.

4. இரப்போர்க் கிழையணி நெடுந்தோர்க் களிற்றெடென்று
மழை சுரந்தன்ன வீகை வண்மகிழ்க்
கழறொடித் தடக்கைக் கலிமானள்ளி

(Agam 238)

Āy Eyinaṇ who gave away as presents to the singing bards and minstrels high-class white-tusked elephants.⁵

Agudai the local chief who gave away broad-footed elephants to the bards.⁶

Āy of the Velir line and the king of the hilly-parts who used to give away as presents elephants with their young ones.⁷

The hill known as the Pali in the range known as the Ezhiṇeḍunarai in the S. W. Malabar which was once ruled over by Nannan, who was the chief of Pāram, who lavished away elephants as prizes and who was distinguished for his great liberality.⁸

In the forest that belonged to Āy who liberally gave away elephants as present.⁹

Parambunāḍu owned by the illustrious chief Pāri, distinguished for his indiscriminate munificence.¹⁰

5. துண் கோலகவுநர் வேண்டின் வெண்ணோட்
டண்ணல் யானை யீயம் வண்மகிழ்
வெளியன் வேண்மா னாஅயெயினன் (Agam 208)
6. பாவடி யானை பரிசிலர்க் கருகாச்
சீர்கெழு நோன்றாஃதை
7. மன்றுபடு பரிசிலர்க்காணிற் கன்றொடு
இரியல்போக்கு மலைகெழுநாட்ன் மாவேள் ஆய் (Puram 134)
8. இசைநல் லீகைக களிறு வீச வண்மகிழ்ப்
பாரத்துத் தலைவ னா னென்ன
ஏழினெடுவரைப் பாழிச் சிலம்பு (Agam 152)
9. நிறைய வீச மாஅல்யானை, ஆ அய்கானத்து (Agam 152)
10. வரைபுரை களிற்றொடு நன்கலனீயும்
உரைசால் வண்புகழ்ப்பாரி பறம்பு (Agam 303)

Vēmbi of mucuṇḍai the wielder of the javelin, who used to give away elephants as present to the bards.¹¹

The hilly tract that belongs to the Tonḍaiyar with the big chariots drawn by high class elephants that will devour the realms of the adversaries.¹²

Seṇḍan with elephants having big and upraised tusks.¹³

Kuttuvan who owned herds of elephants¹⁴ Gnamali with chariots drawn by bedecked elephants.¹⁵

The liberal chief Oymānāṭṭu Nalliakkōḍan the hero of Sirupāṇārruppaḍai has been eulogised by the poet Nallur Nattattanār as follows :—

The hero with hands which shower elephant presents on bards and with beautiful feet wearing anklets and possessing the scars produced while riding male elephants.¹⁶ The hero of Perumpāṇārruppaḍai too has been praised by the poet Kaḍiyalur Uruthirankanṇanār as one who gave away elephants as present.¹⁷

11. நெடுந்தேர் களிற்றொடு சுரக்கும் கொடும்பூட்
பல்வேல் முசுண்டை வேம்பி.

12. பொருவார்
மண்ணெடுத்த துண்ணும் அண்ணல் யானை
வண்டேர்த் தொண்டையர் வழைமலி யடுக்கம்

13. ஏந்து கோட்டி யானைச் சேந்தன்

14. கடும்பகட் டியானை நெடுந்தேர்க் குட்டுவன்.

15. இழையணி யானை யியறேர் ஞமலி (Agam 208)

16. களிற்றுத் தழும்பிருந்த கழறயங்கு திருவடி
பிடிக்கணஞ் சிதறும் பெயன்மழைத் தடக்கை

(Sirupāṇ 123—24)

17. வாலுனைப் புரவியொடு வயக்களிறு முகந்துகொண்
டியா மவணின்றும் வருதும்

(Perumpāṇ 27—28)

The pāṇan says here:—"I am just returning from my liberal patron after receiving gifts of huge elephants :

The above quotations will suffice to show that elephants abounded in the various parts of the Ancient Tamilakam, that the chiefs who ruled over the place owned them in abundance, that elephant presents were very common and that they were employed for various services in the fighting campaigns etc.

It will now be worth our while to speak of the several references to the Indian elephants that abound in the books which treat of the ancient Indian Commerce. In his useful and learned book "The Commerce between the Roman Empire and India Mr. E. H. Warrington has many things to say of this big and useful animal.

In the early centuries before Christ, he speaks of a Pandian Embassy and the presents offered to the Greek King, the elephants being one of them. In p. 40 he writes "At the beginning of the Augustan Empire much merchandise of Indian origin was being paid for and one of the objects of the above merchandise was the elephant. In p. 77 he says "It is true that the Romans sometimes employed Hindus to teach their elephants and these people were slaves" In another place he writes, "Among the products of Ceylon, Ptolemy has mentioned elephants, the breeding ground being the South East of Malaya mountain group including Adam's Peak. Again in p. 128 he writes.

“The Golden Country Burma with numbers of silver and gold mines, tigers and elephants. The author styles the elephant as a large thick-skinned ungulate (p. 150) and adds that with Indian elephants there went Hindu trainers (p. 145).

Later on commenting on the warring elephant Mr. Warrington observes as follows :—

“The Indian elephant, which was used frequently in war after Alexander’s conquests, was first introduced to the Romans when Pyrrhos transported some from Epiros to Italy in 281 B. C. Hasdrubal at Panormus in 251, used elephants driven by Indians ; so did Hanuibal and Hasdrubal during the 2nd Punic War with Rome. Centuries later than this Cosmos shows that elephants destined for use in war were bred chiefly in *Ceylon*. The Greeks and Romans always thought wrongly that Ceylon and India produced larger elephants than Africa. It is interesting to note that the white albino variety of elephant, a favourite beast of Indian princes, and not uncommon now in Burma and Siam, and that is mentioned in the folk-lore of Kashmir, was known to Megasthenes and was a special attraction at Rome in the time of Augustus who had large numbers of elephants killed. Generally however, under the Roman Empire elephants were used not for exhibitions, but as literature, coins and gems show quite clearly, for drawing ceremonial cars of the emperors and occasionally for heavy loads.”

Next he speaks of the ivory trade and observes as follows :—(p. 162).

“ We now come to one of the most important of the articles which formed Rome’s eastern trade—namely ivory which has been used for ornament and for decoration from the earliest times and the supply in historical times came from Africa and India, being tusks of the African and the Indian elephant respectively. Down to the end of the epoch before Christ Africa had been a natural source for supplies of the best ivory ; but the early rise of the Babylonian and Persian civilisations across the land-routes between India and the west created a more extensive trade in Indian than in African ivory ”, He then speaks of the probable derivation of the Latin word for the elephant viz Ebur from Ibha the Sanskrit term for the animal. He then writes “ The Greeks at the height of their culture used Indian as well as Ethiopian ivory for the exposed parts of the body in statues and we have Indian ivory mentioned frequently as soon as the Empire begins. That the Roman Commerce in ivory was enormous is shown by the large number of uses to which it was put—the references in ancient writers being very common and the surviving articles in ivory endless. In literature alone we find it used for statues, chairs, beds, sceptres, hilts, scabbards, chariots, carriages, tablets, book-covers, table-legs, doors, flutes, lyres, combs, brooches, pins, scrapers, boxes, bird-cages, floors and so on. It is no wonder that Lucian makes a man’s riches consist of gold, raiment, slaves and ivory. Indian supplies came of course partly by the land-routes, but the sea-route received much also. Orissa produced the best Indian ivory.

The above lengthy extracts have been quoted to show the large number of elephants that were and

continue to be even now in some parts of India, and the valuable ivory that was exported to foreign lands in by gone-days. In the far south the Cera country was famous for its elephants. The poetess Avvayar says

“வேழமுடைத்து மலை நாடு”.

The Cera or the hill-country has elephants in abundance. A poet in praising Anḍiran a local Tamil chieftain has sung as follows :—

“Did this beautiful hill praise Anḍiran who wields the sharp sword and wears the wreath of curapunnai? How is it this hilly forest is full of male elephants? . This it will be seen is an indirect but effective way of praising the great munificence of the chief Anḍiran, who lavished elephant presents on those who eulogised him. Here the hill that was full of elephants is ably described as having eulogised the chief who held sway over it. Innumerable were the presents the minstrels both male and female familiarly known as the Pāṇar and Viṛāliar, received at the hands of liberal patrons and most of them have sung of the elephants they received as presents. The following quotations will bear out this statement.

“குன்றத் தன்னதோர் பெருங்குன்று நல்கியோனே”
(புறம். 140).

You, who gave as present elephant as huge as a hill.

ஆடியல் யானை பாடு நர்க்கருகா (புறம். 165).

Having given elephants as presents to the professional dancers and kūttars.

“சிறுகண்யாணை வெண்கோடு பயந்த
ஒளிதிகழ் முத்தம் விறலியர்க்கீத்து (புறம். 170)

Having made a gift of the sparkling pearls that were obtained from the white tusks of the small-eyed elephant.

“பாடிப் பெற்ற பொன்னணி யானை” (புறம். 177)

Elephant that was received as present after eulogising the patron.

“வரை மருள் முகவைக்கு வந்தனன் பெரும” (புறம். 370)

Oh Lord, I have come here for receiving as present elephants which resemble hills.

It is further known from the Tamil classics that the ancient rulers used to take possession of the face ornament of the elephant and adorn the heads of the eulogising bards with jewels made of the gold contained in it. Incidentally we learn from these descriptive lines that pearls are obtained from the tusks of elephants.

“முத்துப்பட முற்றிய வயர் மருப்பு” (புறம். 161)

The upraised tusk ripe enough to have pearls in it.”

“சிறுகண்யாணை வெண்கோடு பயந்த ஒளிதிகழ் முத்தம்” (புறம். 170)

The shining pearl got from the white tusk of the small-eyed elephant. Here the phrase “முத்துப்பட முற்றிய” suggests that it was only in the tusks of old or ripe elephants that pearls were found and not in others.

The elephant like the bull and the horse engenders in spring, when the females emit breath thro' the

sporacles beside their temple which open at that season. The period of gestation is at shortest 16 months and never exceeds 18. The birth is single as in the case of the horse and the young one is suckled till it reaches its 18th year. The elephants that live longest attain an age of 200 yrs. Diseases of the eyes are cured by pouring cow's milk into them and other distempers by administering draughts of black wine; while their wounds are cured by the application of roasted pork. (Ind. Ant. Vol. V. p. 93.) This animal does not cover the female in a peculiar way as some affirm but like horses and other quadrupeds.

A special feature of the Sangam poets was their extra-ordinary capacity to observe Nature and its environs in all their varied aspects and to give excellent pen-portraits of men and things that came within their observation. Similes and Comparisons have been ably drawn out from Nature and their aptness astonishes us. Owing to its large size the elephant has been likened to a hill or small mountain.

- “ வரை புரையு மழுகளிறு ” (புறம். 38)
 “ நின்யானையு மலையிற் றோன்றும் ” (புறம். 42)
 “ குன்றத்தன்ன களிறுபெயர் ” (புறம். 125)
 “ வரை மருணைன்படு ” (புறம். 161)
 “ வரை மருள் வேழம் ” (மலைபடு. 572)
 (மதுரைக். 46-7); (புறம். 17)

In Malaipadukadām one of ten tens of Sangam Literature the mountain is likened to the elephant and the noise produced by the stream that runs down the same is compared to the sound produced by the flow of rut on the temples of elephants. Again the size, the valour and the unshakeable resolve perhaps tempted the poets to compare these elephants

to Bhima, the strongest and the biggest among the Pandavas and to Ravana the great ruler of Ilangaimanagar." In the fighting fronts the elephant was always a conspicuous figure in ancient times and in point of valour, powers of destruction, determined resistance, huge and threatening size, not to speak of its enormous strength of body, it has been aptly compared to Death, the great destroyer and leveller. The following lines of Purāṇam may be cited in point.

“ உயிருண்ணுங் கூற்றுப் போன்றன ” (புறம். 4)

Like Death the consumer of lives.

“ மறவியன்ன சுளிற்று மிசையோனே ” (புறம். 13)

Seated on the back of the Death-like elephant.

“ சுடுங்கண்ண கொல்களிறு ” (புறம். 14)

The murderous elephant with wild fiery eyes. In stanza 182 of Nārṇinai one of Ettuttokai of the Sangam period, the hero who repairs alone to the abode of his lady-love is compared to the elephant that roams solitarily in the forest. The black colour of the elephant has elicited many a comparison from the Sangam poets. The sleeping she-elephant is likened to the black hill or rock.

“ பிடி மடிந்தன்ன கன்மிசை ” (அகம். 178)

“ சிடி மடிந்தன்ன குறம்பொறை ” (அகம். 269)

The stone which looked like a she-elephant in the lying pose. The black cloud has been compared to the black she-elephant.

The clouds that gather in different parts are like the elephants which move in groups to the forest side. In Agam 187, we find the elephant likened to a boat anchored near the fishermen's quarters.²⁰

Apart from these we find the poets draw comparison to the various parts or limbs of the elephant from things in nature. These comparisons bespeak much worldly experience, keen and accurate observation and immense knowledge of men and things in general. Not confined to the four walls of an educational institution, these poets had the rare opportunity to live amidst nature and observe closely whatever they happened to see. Oftentimes the morals they deduce, the lessons they draw out, and the impressions they create are really marvellous. While the ordinary wayfarer simply passes by a natural object leaving it absolutely unnoticed the gifted poet pries into its various aspects and brings out many rare things which were never even thought of before. Just as Shakespeare has said, the poets found "books in brooks sermons in stones, tongues in trees and good in everything. The following quotations will be found interesting as elucidating the above remark. The trunk that distinguishes the animal and differentiates it from other animals is compared to the braided hair of a maiden.²¹ The same has been compared to the ear of millet or *tiṇai*. The aptness of the comparison will be well appreciated only on actually seeing the ripe millet in the millet-field. Here are some lines in illustration of this.

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20. "பனை வெளிற்றருந்து பைங்கண் யானை
பாதவர் வைகுகட லம்பியிற் றேன்றும் (அகம். 187)
21. பிடிக்கையின்ன பின்னுலீழ் சிறுபுறத்து உழவர்தங்கை
(சிறுபாண் 190-1)

“The long ear of the millet with the head bent down like the trunk of the mating elephant.”²²

The big field where the dark ears of the millet grew fertile like the big trunk of the she-elephant.²³

The red millet with green rinds that hung down like the big trunk of the black-she-elephant.²⁴

Another comparison produced by the poets' fancy relates to the same trunk. The thigh or upper part of a lady's leg is often compared to the trunk of an elephant which is broad and big at the base and gradually narrows down towards the knee.²⁵ In stanza 228 of Narrinai the elephants' proboscis has been compared to the black backside of a forest hunter.

In Puram 19 we find that the trunk of the elephant severed in fight and lying on the ground is

22. நீடிஞ் சிலம்பிற் பிடியொடு புணர்ந்த
பூம்பொறி யொருத்த லேந்துகை கடுப்பத்
தோடுதலை வாங்கிய நீடு குரற்பைந்தினை (அகம். 317)

23. மணியேர் தோட்ட மையாரேனல்
இரும்பிடித் தடக்கையிற் றடைஇய பெரும்புனம்
(அகம். 344)

24. முறஞ்செவி யானைத் தடக்கையிற் றடைஇ
யிறைஞ்சிய குரல பைந்தாட் செந்தினை (நற். 376)

25. இரும்பிடித் தடக்கையிற் செறிந்துதிநன் குறங்கு
(பொரு. 3-40)

சிறுபிடித் தடக்கையிற் செறிவொடு புணர்ந்து
கண்புலீற்றிருந்த நலத்தகு குறங்கின் (பெருங். 3; 5, 12; 4)

‘கரிக்கைக்கவான்’ (யா- கா); மால்யானைக் கைபோலக்

கொல்லத்திரண்ட குறங்கினுள் (விக்கிர. உலா)

compared to a plough-share.²⁶ In stanza 35 of the same work the elephant cut into pieces and lying on the battle-field is compared to the severed pieces of the palmyra-trunk.²⁷ The elephant's proboscis has also been compared to a palmyra trunk.²⁸

The tusk of the elephant is the most valuable part of the animal. There is an old Tamil proverb.

“ யானை இருந்தா லும் ஆயிரம் பொன் இறந்தா லும் ஆயிரம் பொன் ”

The elephant whether living or dead is worth 1000 pounds. It is the tusk that is so highly valued. The poet in his fancy has compared this tusk to various objects in nature. In *Narriṇai* 294 it is compared to the *Kaṇṭaḷ* flower.²⁹ In one place it has been compared to a hill-stream on account of its whiteness.³⁰ In stanza 225 of *Narriṇai* we have the bloody tusk of the elephant that killed a tiger likened to the plantain-flower probably owing to its size.³¹ In stanza 19 of the same work it has been compared to the bud or flower of the fragrant screw-

26. தூம்புடைத் தடக்கை வாயொடு துமிந்து
நாஞ்சிலொப்ப நிலமிசைப் புரள (புறம். 19)
27. வெளிற்றுப் பனந்துணியின் வீற்றுவீற்றுக் கிடப்பக்
களிற்றுக் கணம்பொருத கண்ணகன் பறந்தலை (புறம். 35)
28. பனைமருடடக்கை (புறம். 161); பனைத்திரளன்ன
பரோருறழ்தடக்கை (அகம். 148)
29. கொன்றயானைக் கோடுகண்டன்ன, செம்புடைக்
கொழுமுனை யலிழந்த காந்தள் (நற். 294)
30. தடவுநிலையொரு கோட்டன்ன, வொளிறிலங்கருவி (நற். 18)
31. பொருதயானை வெண்கோடுகடுப்ப, வாழையின்றவையேந்து
கொழுமுனை.

pine³² and in stanza 39 the slightly reddened eyes of the lady-love have been compared to the budding tusk of an elephant slightly tinged red in the edge.³³

The milk-white tusk of the elephant was used as the cross-stick with weights on either end and generally borne on the shoulders.

“ பொருது தொலையாணைக் கோடு சீராகத்
துவொடு மலிந்த காய கானவர் ” (மலைபடு. 154-5)

The foresters who bore on their shoulders the tusks of the elephants that died fighting one another, as a cross-stick with weights on its ends.

The foot of the elephant on account of its big size and round appearance is often compared to the musical instrument called matalam.

“ வேறுநாட்டு விழவுப்படர் மள்ளரின்
முழுவெடுத்துயரி (அகம். 189)

The mortar is also one of the objects generally compared to the feet of an elephant.

‘ கறையடியாணை ’ (புறம். 39; 323)
உல்போலடியவுடம்புயங்கியாணை (கலித். 13)
உல்புரை பாவடி (கலித். 21)
முளையெயிற்பிறும்பிடி முழந்தாளேய்க்கும்
துளையரைச் சீறுரல் (பெரும்பாண். 53, 4)

32. முன்னிலைத்தாழை, பெருங்களிற்று மருப்பினன்ன வரும்பு
முதிர்வு (நற். 19)

33. வேழத்தின், தலைமருப்பேய்ப்ப க் கடைமணி சிவந்தநின்
கண்ணை (நற். 39)

34. “ சிலம்பிற் சேம்பி னலங்கல் வள்ளிலை
பெருங்களிற்றுச் செவியின் மான, (குறுந். 76)

Again the broad ears of an elephant have been compared to various objects in nature. The leaf of the cembu³⁴ (*Colacasia Indica*), the winnow³⁵ and the Pācaḍai³⁶ (the broad green leaf) are some of them.

The dark hue of the common elephant has elicited some comparisons from ancient poets. In Maduraikanji darkness has been described as resembling the black colour of the outer skin of the she-elephant.³⁷ Black rock has been compared to the elephant in many a place in the Sangam classics.³⁸ The black rock well-washed by a heavy down pour of rain has been aptly likened to an elephant well-washed.³⁹ In Aingurūnūru a male-elephant is described as embracing a black-rock taking it to be a she-elephant.⁴⁰ The elephant drenched in heavy-rains is compared also to the black cloud. In Paṭṭinappālai the architectural buildings well-painted and adorned but covered by dust have been likened to the elephant covered with dust.⁴¹ In point of huge size and height

35. முறஞ் செவி யானை வேந்தர் (புறம். 339)
 முறஞ் செவி யானைத் தடக்கையிற்றடைஇ (நற். 376)
 முறஞ் செவி வாரணமுன் சம முருக்கிய
 புறஞ் சிறை வாரணம் புக்கனர் (சிலப். 10, 247-8)
36. களிற்றுச் செவியன்ன பாசடை (அகம் 176 ; குறுந். 246)
37. இரும்பிடி மேளந் தோலன்ன விருள் சேர்பு (மதுரைக். 634)
38. துறுகல்
 துகள்கூழ் யானையிற் பொலியத் தோன்றும் (குறுந். 279)
39. பொருத யானைப் புகர் முகங்கடுப்ப
 மன்றத்துறுகண் மீமிசை (குறுந். 284)
40. வேழம்
 இரும்பிணர்த் துறுகற் பிடி செத்துத் தழுஉம் (ஐங்குறு, 239)
41. நீறுடியகளிறு போல வேறுபட்ட வினையோவம் (பட். 48-9)

the elephant is sometimes compared to huge paddy granaries and its broad feet to the grinding mill-stone.⁴²

In the Kārnarpadu one of the 18 Tamil minor classics, the black cloud that drifts slowly has been aptly compared to the elephant well-anointed with oil. (கார். நாற்பது 12)⁴³

Besides these, many other characteristics of the elephant have been ably pointed out by means of apt comparisons by the learned poets of the Sangam period. The majestic gait of the elephant has been the basis for many such comparisons. The slow and dignified walk of the Pandian King in the field of battle has been likened to the gait of the elephant.

“கனிற்றி னியலி வெம்போர்ச் செழியனும் வந்தனன்”
(புறம் 79)

In one of the stanzas in Kambaramayanam the hero in order to relieve the ennui of his wife Sita caused by the walk in the rough path full of pebbles, tells Sita many interesting anecdotes and points out many attractive scenes in nature. The hero who beheld a swan stepping aside smiled on observing the gait of his wife when the latter who saw an young elephant which returned after quenching its thirst in a pond smiled on observing the gait of her husband. Of course the intention in either case is clear. Rama's

42 பிடிக்கணத்தன்ன குதிருடை முன்றிற்
கனிற்றுத் தான்புரையுந் திரிமரப்பந்தர் (பெரும்பாண். 186-7)

43 நெய்யணி குஞ்சரம் போல விருங்கொண்மூ
அவதலு மேரும் வலம் (கார். நாற். 128)

smile indicates the loveliness of his wife's gait which excelled the swan's gait and as a result of which the swan stepped aside in shame.

The roar of the elephant has been variously described in the ancient Tamil books. The sounding breath of the sleeping elephant is said to resemble the sound produced by the Tumburu (a wind instrument resembling the horn).

“நீர் நசைக் கூக்கிய வுயவல்யானை
யிரம்புணர் தூம்பினுயிர்க்கு மத்தம்” (மலைபடு. 9)

The rough path where the elephant athirst for water breathes hard like the musical horn.

“ஓய்களி நெடுத்த நோயுடை நெடுங்கை. (அகம். 111)
தொகுசொற் கோடியர் தூம்பினுயிர்க்கும்”

Where the ailing elephant quite exhausted by thirst breathed like the wind instrument of the dancing minstrels.

“செறிநடைப் பிடியொடு களிறு புணர்ந்தென்னைக்
குறநெடுந் தூம்பொடு முழவு புணர்ந்திசைப்ப”
(அகம். 301.)

From the last illustration it is clear that the poet institutes a comparison between the roar of the she and the he elephants and sounds of the Tumburu and the Mattalam respectively. The poet's keen sense of observation and hearing is here to be appreciated. At times the deep sighs of the lonely hero or heroine are compared to the hot gasping breath of elephants asleep.

“புள்ளுப் பதிசேசரினும் புணர்ந்தோர்க் காணினும்
பள்ளி யானையின் வெய்ய வுயிரினை”

You breathe hard and hot like an elephant asleep whenever you see the birds resorting to their nests or men and women in happy union. In Puram 81 the roar of the elephant has been compared to the peal of thunder.

The elephant has been classed by the ancient grammarians as a *Karupporul* that belongs to the Kurinji land or the mountainous region though occasionally it is found in the Pālai tract also. Hence we find descriptions of this animal mostly in the Kurinji and to a lesser extent in the Pālai poems. Vēngai (East Indian Kino) is a tree that belongs to the Kurinji land and the flowers that fall on the elephants' head have been likened to the tiger-skin.

“கடாஅ யானைக் கவுண் மருங் குறழ்
வாமூர் பிழிதரு காமர் சென்னிப்
புலியதள் கடுப்பக் கவிசிறந்து
நாட்டூ வேங்கை நறுமலருதிர.” (அகம். 205)

Here apart from the resemblance, the mention of the word Vēngai and the tiger's skin reminds us of the native enmity between the elephant and the Vēngai (Panther). The line சென்னிப் புலியதள் கடுப்ப ” is likely to suggest to the reader the fact that the tiger usually pounced from the back and sat on the elephant's head, before its tore open it head. In Perumpāṇāruppāḍai Tirumāl lying on the Serpent Couch has been compared to an elephant lying among the Kāṇḍal (Gloriosa Superba) flowers.⁴⁴ In stanza 302 of Agam the plantain-leaves moved by the wind

44. நீடுகலைக், காந்தளஞ் சிலம்பிற் களிற்று படிந்தாங்கு
பாம்பினைப் பள்ளியமர்ந் தோனங்கண்.

(பெரும்பாண். 372-5)

have been depicted as touching gently the elephant at sleep.⁴⁵ In 162 of Narṇai the aerial roots of the Itti tree are described as weltering on the back of the she-elephant⁴⁶ and in 125 of the same work the elephant has been represented as rousing the foresters (குறவர்) to wage war.⁴⁷

It was already observed that the elephant was greatly valued for its tusks. In a very few cases we are told, that the flesh of this animal also was tasted in those days. Here are some instances in support of this statement.

“An elephant dies of the shock caused by the thunder-bolt to the great bereavement and grief of the she-elephant. At once the hill-men remove the ivory in the body and its flesh was cooked for being eaten to the great eclat of the village folk.”⁴⁸

45. சிலம்பிற் போகிய செம்முக வாழை
யலங்க லந்தோ டசைவளி யுறுதொறும்
பள்ளியாணைப் பருஉப் புறந்தைவரு
நல்வரை நாடன். (அகம். 302)
46. வேலினிற்றித் தோயா நெடுவீழ்
வழிநாளுசலிற் கோடைநாக்கு தொறுந்
துஞ்சு பிடிவருடு மத்தம்
வல்லையாழு தலொல்லுமோ நினக்கே,
47. நெடும் போர் புரிமார்
துஞ்சுகளி நெழுப்பும். (நற். 125)
48. உருமினல்லேறு
பாம்புகலினழிக்கு மோங்குவரை பொத்தி
மையின் மடப்பிடி யினையக்
கையூன்று பிழிதரு களிநெறிந்து
கெண்கோடுகொண்டு வியலறைவைப்பவும்
பச்சுன் கெண்டி வள்ளுகிர் முணக்கவும்
மறுகுதொறு புலாவஞ் சிறுருடி யாவம். (நற். 114)

In another poem in the Sangam⁴⁹ classics we find reference to the eating of the elephants' flesh. Here the salt-dealers or Umanars are said to have put in the melting pot the remnants of the elephant flesh that stuck up to the iron-rod that belonged to the Malavar or warriors and cooked it in the boiling pot with the help of the flint or the firē-stone. In the hilly-parts the hill-men used to hunt elephants and with the tusks they get from them construct a strong fence for their forest-abode.

“ விரிமலர் மராதும் பொருந்திக் கோடுறெறிந்து
வரிதுதல் யானை யருகிறத் தழுத்தி
யிகலடு முன்டின் வெண்கோடு கொண்டதன்
புல்வேய் குரம்பை புலச ளுன்றி
முன்றினீடியு முழவுறழ் பலவின் ” (அகம். 172)

The hill-man or the Kurava hides himself behind the Kadamba tree with blossomed flowers and directs the unerring missile or arrow on the elephants' chest, plucks the tusks of the elephant and plants them as a sort of fencing to his small abode in front of which there stood Jack trees, the trunks of which resembled the musical instrument known as the Mattalam. In the wild-stage the elephants used to fight among themselves and the river or lake banks are said to gradually disappear because of such encounters.

“ கனிறுபொரக் கரைந்த கயவாய்க் குண்டுசுனைக்
கருங்கற் கான்யாறு ”

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49. புலிதொலைத்துணீஇய பெருங்களிற் றெழியூன்
கலிகெழு மழவர் காழ்கோத் தொழிந்ததை
ஞெலிகோற் சிறுதீ மாட்டி யொலிநிரைக்
கடல்வினை யமிழ்தின் கணஞ்சாலுமணர்
சுனைகொடிநீர்ச் சோற்றுலைக் கூட்டும், (அகம். 114)

The food of the elephant was mainly the branches of trees, fruits and the like. It is generally said to be a vegetarian animal. Oftentimes those that reside or roam about the desert tract or the pālai region used to suffer largely for want of proper food and in the stanzas descriptive of the Pālai tract, the poets tell us of the huge sufferings these animals underwent for want of it. In Agam 91 the green-eyed elephant is said to have searched a number of mountain pools and failing to find water to drink, fed upon the moss that lay on the sides of the same.⁵⁰ In stanza 187 of Agam, the animal is described as preying upon the inner-portion of the palmyra-wood⁵¹ and in stanza 167, as eating the branches and leaves of the Murungai tree (Horse-radish tree)⁵². Atirarkodi was also eaten by the elephant at times⁵³. Atiral is identified with Kattumalligai or Jungle Jasmine. The favourite food of the elephant as it is gathered from Sangam poems, was the bamboo. The tender shoots of the bamboo were invariably consumed by the animal.

“The bamboos rendered short by being bitten by the elephant.”⁵⁴

50. “சூர்ச்சனை துழைஇ நீர்ப்பயங் காணாது
பாசிதின்ற பைங்கண் யானே” (அகம். 91)
51. வேனில் வெற்பிற் கானலங்காய
முனை யெழுந்தோடிய கெடுநாட்டாரிடைப்
பனை வெளிற்றந்து பைங்கண்யானே. (அகம். 187)
52. முருங்கை மேய்ந்த பெருங்கையானே. (அகம். 167)
53. எல்லி மலர்ந்த பைங்கொடி யதிரல்
பெரும்புலர் வைகறையரும் பொடுவாங்கிக்
கானயானே கவளங் கொள்ளும். (அகம். 157)
54. பேதையானே சுவைத்த, கூழைமூங்கில். (குறுந். 179)

“Just like the strong bamboo stump which hits the legs of the bamboo-eating elephant.”⁵⁵ The point stressed here is that the stump that hits or hinders the elephants’ passage is likely to be dashed by the elephant till it is uprooted. In Agam 85 this animal is said to eat the tender shoots of the bamboo. The purport of the stanza is as follows :—

The Vengadam hill ruled over by Tirayan with the white Vēl or Javelin, where the green-eyed elephant used to feed the she elephant and its young one with the unripe shoots of the bamboo.⁵⁶ Other instances are.

“The hilly grove where the elephant which eats the bamboo, wanders about.”⁵⁷

Where the she elephant in the advanced state of pregnancy eats the tender shoots of the tall bamboo.”⁵⁸

It is also learnt from the Sangam poems that the embryo is destroyed and abortion is the result when the elephant big with the cub eats the tender shoots of the bamboo-tree.⁵⁹ The elephant bending both the sides of the bamboo is finely described in Puram 80.⁶⁰

55. கழைதின் யானைக் காலகப்பட்ட, வன்றிணி நீண்முனைபோல.

(புறம். 73)

56. ஈன்று நாளுலந்த மென்னடை மடப்பிடி

கன்றுபசி களைஇய பைங்கண்யானை

முற்ற மூங்கில் முளைதரு பூட்டும்

வென்வேற்றிரையன் வேங்கட நெடுவரை. (அகம். 85)

57. சோலை, முளைமேய் பெருங்களிறு வழங்குமாவை (அகம் 148)

58. “இரு வெதிரீன்ற வேற்றிலைக் கொழுமுனை

சூன்முதிர் மடப்பிடி. நான்மேய வாரும்” (நற். 116)

59. வழுவப் பிண்ட மடப் பிடிக்கொழு முளையாரும் (நற். 116)

60. பசித்துப்பணை முயலங் யானைபோல, இருதலை யொசிய

வொற்றி (புறம் 80)

In many places we see the elephant feeding upon grass like Eruvai and branches of trees like the Vetpālai⁶¹ and Omai⁶². (The Ivory-tree; The tooth-brush tree).

Tinai was the chief product of the Kūrinji tract and the elephants were invariably the terrible destroyers of the Tinai fields. It was customary in those days for young girls of the Kūrinji tract to keep guard over the Tinai crops till they were ripe and the delectable experiences of a king or hero who passes for a hunter and who on seeing the maiden who keeps guard over the Tinai field dares to approach her with feigned queries and asks her whether an elephant pierced by his arrows happened to pass by that place the replies to the query and the rejoinders have been narrated in the Tamil prabandam called Kovai. This tūrai or the sub-themē has been termed “Yānai Vinādal”. Thus the tinaippuṇam, it will be seen, was frequented by this animal. In this connection the reader is reminded of the story how the maid Valli kept guard over the Tinai field, how Lord Muruga went there in the guise of a hunter with intent to marry her and how ultimately she got married to the Lord by the intervention of the elephant.

In Agam 348 we have a description of how the hunter his son and his retinue drank too much of the toddy as strong and powerful as the serpent sting

61. வள்ளுகிர்ப்பிடி பினந்திட்ட நூரில், வெண்ணோட்டிடுக்
கொடினுபோல் காய வாலணர்ப் பாலை (நற். 107)
62. சுயந்தலை மடப்பிடி யுயங்குபசி களைஇய
பெருவுளியு தொலைத்த முடத்தா னோமை. (நற். 137)

and forgot all about the Tinai fields, how taking advantage of their stupor, the elephants destroyed the products and how on seeing the ravages, the hunters old and young ran in groups with bows and arrows to drive them away.⁶³

Sugar cane was another delicious food much liked by this animal. In Kurinjikkali we find the following

“The elephant in order to feed its mate which was big with young bent and broke the sugar-cane.⁶⁴

In dry and waterless places the elephant used to suffer much and this suffering has been graphically depicted in the ancient poems. In Kalithogai (13) we have the following lines :—

“ உண் கயங் காணாது

சேறுசுவைத்துத் தம் செல்லுயிர் தாங்கும்

புயறுளி மாறிய போக்கரு வெஞ்சரம் ” (கலித். 13)

The hot and parched up desert, rain forsaken and well-nigh impassable, where the thirsty elephants which do not come across drinking water to quench their thirst, taste the watery mud and preserve their lives. In Agam 333 we have the following lines :—

63. பாப்புக் கடுப்பன்ன தோப்பி மாந்தி

யடுகலேன விரும்புன மறந்துழி

யானை வவ்வின தினையென நோனா

தினையரு முதியருங் கினையொடு குழீஇச்

சிலை யாய்ந்து திரிதருஉ நாடன்.

(அகம் 348)

64. ஒடுங்கா வெழில்வேழம் வீழ்பிடிக்குற்ற

கடுஞ்சூல் வயாவிற் கமர்ந்து நெடுஞ்சினத்

திங்கட் கரும்பின் கழை வாங்கும்

“

கோடையிற்

குருத்தி றுபுக்க வநுக்கஞ் சொலாது
 தூம்புடைத் துய்த்தலை கூப்புதிர்வகிய
 வெளில் வெளிற்றுப் பனைபோலக் கையெடுத்தி
 யானைப் பெருகிலா வானகம் பயிரும்மலை” (அகம் 333)

The elephants with the pith or the brain matter practically dried up because of the scorching summer heat and without the means to assuage the pain or grief, raised up their proboscis which resembled the palmyra-trunk and began to cry as if inviting the heavenly regions to send forth showers.

Some elephants failing to get drinking water used to take hold of the small springs dug out by the cow-herds grazing the cattle.⁶⁵

The thirsting animals were often deceived by the mirage.

“வேனிலுழந்த வறிதுயங் கோய்களிறு
 வானீர் குவைப்பின் வாழ்க்காரீர்த் தேர்த்தவாம் காணம்”
 (கலித். 7)

The dry forest which never knew any rain for years together, where the elephant emaciated by the excess of summer heat approached the mirage mistaking it for a water-course. Many instances where animals like the elephant and the deer were deceived by the mirage can be cited from these

65. “வெயில் வெய்துற்ற பாலவ லொதுக்கிற்
 கணிச்சியிற் குழித்த கூவனண்ணி
 ஆன்வழிப் படுநர் தோண்டிய பத்தல்
 யானை யினதிரை வெளவும்
 கானந்திண்ணிய மலைபோன்றிசினே”

(நற். 249)

classics. The intense suffering caused by the heat in the desert has been well described in them. In stanza 11 of Pālaikkali we have the following lines.

“அடிதாங்கு மளவின் றி யழலன்ன வெம்மையாற்
கடியவே கனங்குழாய் காடென்றார் அக்காட்டுள்
துடியடி சுயந்தலை கலந்திய சின்னீயா
முன்னாட்டிப் பின்னுண்ணுங் களிதெனவு

(மரையத்தனோ)

The heroine is love-sick being separated from her lover, when the lady-companion tries to soothe her, incidentally commenting upon the hard-hearted nature of the hero who had left her pining for union. This was rather too much for the lady love to brook. At once she spoke the above lines to the maid.

“Oh! My dear maid it was a fact that my hero told me that the forest was a very hot and fiery place, in fact so hot as one could scarcely place the foot on the ground for fear of being scorched; but at the same time he informed me that the tusker, which approached the small muddy pool with very little water in it in company with its mate and its young one, used to feed the she-elephant with the water already rendered muddy by the young cubs which plunged into it and then try to quench its own thirst. The situation here, it must be admitted, has been well imagined by the poet. A parched up desert and only one small pool with very little water in it. Even this water got muddled by the young elephants getting into it. At this stage the tusker already thirsty never cared to quench or alleviate its thirst first, but on the other hand preferred to feed the she-elephant first and then satisfy itself. Thus the love and affection the tusker had for its mate and its young

ones have been well-pointed out; Nay, the heroine proceeds even further and reminds us of the possibility of the hero's return in the near future by the above words. What the heroine imagines here is as follows:—The hero, though he might have been indifferent all along could not afford to be so any longer, after witnessing the above loving act of the elephant as he too will be desirous of returning home in order to please his lady love by granting her desire. Suggestive instances like this abound in Tamil poems and it will be a source of uninterrupted pleasure to those who try to read the poems treating of Agam. The love and affection bestowed by the tusker on its mate and young one have been detailed in many places in the Sangam classics and elsewhere. These innumerable instances will prove also the abundance of elephants in the Tamil land and the keen observation the Tamil poets had of nature and its environs.

“The bent or curved Omai tree which was rooted out by the male-elephant, in order to appease the pinching hunger of its mate” ⁶⁶

“The parched up desert tract where the male elephant carries water in its long trunk and runs towards its mate lest it should faint for want of drinking water.” ⁶⁷

The tall hill or mountain where the he-elephant embraces its mate and affectionately feeds her with

66. மடப்பிடி யுயங்குபசி கூளைஇயர்
பெருங்களிறு தொலைத்த முடத்தாளோமை

67. இரும் பிணர்த் தடக்கை நீட்டி நீர்நொண்டும்
பெருங்கை யானைபிடி யெதிரோடும்
கானம் வெம்பிய வறங்கூர் கடம்.

mouthfuls or morsels of food which are as red as the Vēngai flowers, thus scaring away the flies that hover round it.⁶⁸

In another place the lady-love separated from her hero accosts her maid as follows:—

“Oh my dear maid, my hero is full of affection for me; he may bestow his affection and grace on me. For in the path he is now frequenting he will surely witness the he-elephant breaking the branches of the Yā tree in order to remove the hunger of its mate”.⁶⁹

In stanza 307 of Kuruntogai the heroine asks her maid whether the hero who had left her pining for union had forgotten the dreary forest where the male elephant unable to put up with the suffering of its mate dashes against the Yā tree with its trunk, pierces through its fibres and not finding any water to quench the thirst of its mate and its own self roars in agony.⁷⁰

68. மடப்பிடி தழீஇய தடக்கை வேழந்
தேன்செய் பெருங்கிளை யிரிய வேங்கைப்
பொன்புரை கவழம் புறந்தரு பூட்டு மாமலை (நற். 202)

69. நசை பெரிதுடையர் நல்கினு நல்குவர்
பிடிபசி களைஇய பெருங்கை வேழம்
மென்சினை யா அம்பினக்கும்
அன்பினை தோழியவர் சென்றவாரே. (குறுந். 37)

70. “மறங்கனர் கொல்லோதாமே களிமுதன்
உயங்கு நடைமடப்பிடி வருத்த நோனது
நிலையுயர் மாஅத் துலையக குத்தி
வேண்ணூர் கொண்டு கைசுவைத் தண்ணூர்
தழுங்க னெஞ்சுமொடு முழங்கும்
அத்தநீளிரிடை யழப்பிரிந் தோரே.” (குறுந். 307)

The male elephant which went near a pool in the company of its mate and young ones and got disappointed on seeing there only mud and mire and not any drinkable water.⁷¹

In the dry forest where the he-elephant pierces the Mārāmaram till its trunk gave way and in a frenzy tries to feed its mate with the branches of that dried-up tree thereby appeasing its hunger.⁷²

The languished state of the he-elephant which refused or declined to take the food offered to it being awfully worried by the separation of its mate in the forest.⁷³

“Having observed the pleasing way in which the green-eyed tusker which stole the red millet, took in its hand some honey obtained from the hills, scared away the flies that hovered round its mate which was big with young, and poured it in its mouth.”⁷⁴

71. “தொடுகுழி மருங்கிற் றுவ்வாக் கலங்கல்
கன்றுடை மடப்பிழக் கயந்தலை மண்ணிச்
சேறு கொண்டாடிய வேறுபடு வயக்களிறு.”

72. “யானைதன்
கொன்மருப் பொடியக் குத்திச் சினஞ்சிறந்
தின்னுவேனி லின்றுணையார
முனிசினை மராலுத்துப் பொளிபிளந்திட்ட.”

73. “வீழ்ப்பிடி கெடுத்த வெண்கோட்டி யானை
யுண்குளகு மறுத்த வயக்கத்தன்ன.”

74. செந்தினை கவரந்த டைங்கண் வேழம்
கருவரைப் பிரசங் கையின் வாங்கு
யியின் மிரியவீசி வயவுப்பிடியின்
வாயுறக் கொடுத்த செவ்வீ நோக்கி.

In another place the lady-love is suffering from unspeakable grief when her maid soothes her as follows :—

“Oh my dear lady, do not cross your Lord. I am sure he would not depart leaving you to mope and pine for union, to the dreary and parched up forest where the beautiful male elephant carries the small quantity of water to be had in the muddled hill-pool in order to pour it over the head of the she-elephant which lay quite exhausted by the fiery heat. Reading further into the stanza we see that the maid suggests to the lady the possibility of the lord returning to her at an early date even in case he repairs to the sun-dried forest path; for it is certain that he would not stay away even a single minute after witnessing the above loving sight.”⁷⁵

“The hot and burning forest where the big elephants embrace the young ones and thereby protect them from the scorching heat, bearing it themselves”,⁷⁶

Instances like the above proving the affection of the male-elephant to its mate and vice versa can be multiplied and even books of a later period have given us fine descriptions of the same.

75. விலக்கல் விளங்கிழாய் செல்வாரோ வல்லர்
அழற்பட்டசைந்தபிடியை—யெழிற்களிறு
கற்சுணைச் சேற்றிடைச் சின்னீரைக் கையிற்கொண்
டுச்சியொழுக்குஞ் சுரம். (ஐந்திணையம். 32)

76. குழவிப்பிடி குஞ்சர மாழ்குமெனத்
தழுவிச்சடு வெவ்வழல் பிரங்குவன

“வெயிறின் வருந்திய நீமேருப் பொருத்தல்
 பிணரழி பெருங்கை புரண்ட கூவற்
 மெண்ட னுவரிக் குறைக்குட முகவை
 யறனிலாளன் றேண்ட வெய்துயிர்த்துப்
 பிறைநுதல் வியர்ப்ப வுண்டனள் கொல்லோ.”

This is a fine stanza where the foster-mother of the lady-love laments the departure of the lady-love with the hero to the dry water-less desert. She imagines that the lady-love will have to take in only that small quantity of water obtained by digging the well where the elephant with the long trunk suffering from excessive heat fell and rolled to and fro to mitigate the heat.

Kurinjī or the hilly part was ever the favourite abode of this gregarious animal. These animals were always hunted after for the valuable tusks in them and oftentimes, the residents of the hill-tract stole or carried away the young cubs to the immense grief of the older elephants.

“கறையடி மடப்பிடி கானத்தலறக்
 களிற்றுக்கன் றெளித்த வுவுகையர்” (அகம் 83)

The hill-men who amused themselves by stealing the young elephant cubs and hearing the piteous cry of the she-elephant with legs like the mortar. Pulli once the chief of the Vengadam hills and his-men, have been described as having amused themselves in the above manner. The elephants roamed about at will in the forest and were used to bathē in the hill-streams with their mates and young ones. At times, the jungle stream used to carry away many an elephant and it was more or less a daily sight in the hilly forests.

“என்றாழுலந்த புன்றலை மடப்பிடி
கைம்மாய் நீத்தம் களிற்றொடு படிபுயர்.” (அகம் 43)

The she-elephant that suffered from the prickly heat bathed in the company of the he-elephant in the stream that was deep enough to drown them and even the outstretched proboscis or trunk.

Another special feature of the elephant very often described - by the poets is its inveterate almost native enmity to the tiger or lion. Many facts come to light from the descriptions of these poets respecting the life and habits of these animals. The tiger used to trace the track or the foot-steps of the elephant in order to pounce on it and maul its head. Here are some instances in point:—

“Just like the tiger or the cheetah which hides itself and tracks the foot steps of the elephant in order to get at the elephant's flesh.”⁷⁷

“The hill-side where the tiger with the big red eyes and with stripes on its body attacks the elephant so that it trembled as a result of it”.⁷⁸

“The highly angry tiger which attacked and killed the musty elephant in order to feed its mate the pregnant she-elephant and dragged the dead body of the animal in the light emitted by the gem that

77. களிற்றிறை தரீஇய பார்வலொதுக்கின்
ஒளித்திலங்கு மரபின் வயப்புலிபோவ (அகம் 22)

78. குஞ்சர நடுங்கத் தாக்கிக் கொடுவரிச்
செங்கணிரும்புலி குழுமுஞ் சாரல் (அகம் 92)

came out of the serpent's head.⁷⁹ It is an old belief and it still exists that a serpent can produce a gem from its head and that it was very valuable. It was already remarked that the tusks of the ripe elephant can bring forth pearls but the story still remains a fiction of the poets' imagination and nobody seems to have seen any pearl emanating from the tusk. The gem story must be classed along with this fiction.

“The tiger which watches the weak or vulnerable moment of the elephant.”⁸⁰

“To keep watch over the millet-farm seated on the loft made of the hide of the tiger which never quails before the elephants' might.”⁸¹

The 34th poem in Nārṇai gives us an interesting glimpse of the hill-men and women who, mistaking the roar of the tiger which killed the elephant thereby reddening the hill-side with its blood, for the thunder, begin to gather the drying millet to take the same into their houses. Here we see that it was usual for the hill-men to spread the millets in house fronts for being dried.⁸²

79. “சுருயிர்ப்பிணவின் வயவுப் பசிகளை இய
விருங்களி றட்ட பெருஞ்சின வுழுவை
நாமநல்லராக் கதிர்பட வழிழ்ந்த
மேய்மணி விளக்கிற் புலரவீர்க்கும்.” (அகம். 72)

80. கொடிபிணங்கரில் விருள்கொணுகம்
மடிபதம் பார்க்கும் வயமான் றுப்பின். (அகம். 73)

81. வேங்கையங் குவட்டிடைச் சாந்திற்செய்த
களிற்றுத்துப்பஞ்சாப் புலியதளதணத்துச், சிறுதினை
வியன்புனம் காப்ப. (நற். 351)

82. பெருங்கல் விடாகஞ்சிவப்ப விரும்புலி
களிறுதொலைத் தூறுங்கடியிடி மழைசெத்துச்
செந்தினை யுணங்க றொகுக்குமின் கலியாணர்த்து. (நற். 34)

It will be interesting here to know that the elephants used to fight the tiger and win over it. The tough fights between the elephants and the tigers have been graphically described and in many an encounter, the elephants are said to have got the better of their opponents. The following lines from the Tamil classics will illustrate the above statement.

“Like the bold elephant that attacked the panther.”⁸³

“The forest cooled by snow where the elephant with the bright up-raised tusk roars, after killing the valiant tiger in order to appease the hunger of its mate with the blood of the vanquished animal.”⁸⁶

“The hilly part where the acunam⁸⁵ enjoyed the hum of the bees that hover round the rut that trickled down the temples of the elephant with the big trunk which killed the big tiger, taking that sound to be the one produced by the Yāzh or the lyre.”⁸⁴

83. வரிவயம் பொருத வயக்களிறுபோல. (புறம். 100)

84. “குன்றத்
தீரும்புலி தொலைத்த பெருங் கையானைக்
கவுண்மலி பிழிதருங் காமர்கடாஅ
மிருஞ்சிறைத் தொழுதியார்ப்ப யாழ்செத்
திருங்கல் விடானை யசுனைமோர்க்கும்.” (அகம். 88)

85. Acunam is a fabulous creature believed to be so susceptible to harmony that, when it is fascinated by the notes of Music, a sudden loud beat of the harsh drum causes its instantaneous death.

86. ஈன்றணி வயவுப்பிடி பசித்தென மறப்புலி
ஒளிநேந்து மருப்பிற களிற்ஊக் குழுமும்
பனியிருஞ் சோலை.” (அகம். 112)

The elephant with several wounds that overcame its adversary the tiger to the immense joy of its mate and young ones.”⁸⁷

“The tiger when it encounters the elephant, leaps upon the head of the elephant and strangles it with ease. It is the elephant in India that carries royalty. (Ind. Ant. Vol. 5, p. 93)

The grove full of teak wood trees where the bold tiger which narrowly escaped from being devoured by the elephant with the spotless white tusk hard by the rock adjoining the silver-white hill-stream, exhausted its wrath by dashing on the ground and sought the protection of its kith and kin.”⁸⁸

“The elephant with the long trunk which killed the big tiger.”⁸⁹

The forest track full of pebbles where the elephant with mighty arms which win over the tiger resting its proboscis on the tusk which shone like the moon, lay with its mate in the grove hard by, with rut or must flowing in its temples.⁹⁰

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87. கயந்தலை மடப்பிடி யினனே மார்ப்பப்
புலிப்பகை வென்ற புண்கூர்யானே. (அகம். 202)
88. இலங்குவெள் ளருலிய வறைவா யும்பர்
மாசில் வெண்கோட் டண்ணல்யானே
வாயுட் டப்பிய வருங்கேழ் வயப்புலி
மானில் நெளியக் குத்திப் புகலொடு
காப்பில் வைகுந் தேக்கமல் சோலை. (அகம். 251)
89. இரும்புலி தொலைத்த பெருங்கை வேழம். (அகம். 272)
90. நிலவுநிற மருங்கிற் பெருங்கை சேர்த்தி
வேங்கை வென்ற வெருவரு பணைத்தோ
ளோங்கல் யானே யுயங்கிமதந் தேம்பிப்
பன்மர வொருசிறைப் பிடியொடு வதியும்,
கல்லுடை யதரகானம். (அகம். 295)



“In the paths of the big forest where the huge mountain—like elephant with wrath unabated even after killing its adversary the tiger, and with rancour undiminished even after having won over it, roams to and fro with rut flowing in its temples without mixing with its female mate.⁹¹

“The broad and extensive forest full of porcupines where the tall stately elephant which suppressed the might of the panther, brimful of rut began to assault and kill the passers-by.⁹²

Just like the she-elephant well-protected by the male one, which pounced upon the valiant tiger.⁹³

In Agam 332, we have the following:—“Oh ! Lord of the hilly tract where the elephant which ate the branches of the bamboo with its kith and kin vanquished the tiger with true fighting spirit which lay in wait to attack the elephant near the water-pool, and after wiping out the blood in its tusk, walked slowly and magnanimously and full of pride in having overcome its adversary, got united with its

91. கொன்றுசினந் தணியாது வென்றுமுரண் சாம்பா
திரும்பிடித் தொழுதியி னினந்தலை மயங்காது
பெரும்பெயர்க் கடாம் செருக்கி வனமலை
யிருங்களி றியல்வரும் பெருங்காட்டியவின் (அகம். 298)

92. வேங்கை யடுமுரண் டொலைத்த நெடுநல் யானை
மைய லங்கடாம் செருக்கிமதஞ் சிறந்,
தியங்குநர்ச் செருக்கு மினம்படு நனந்தலை. (அகம். 307)

93. கன்றரைப் பட்ட கயந்தலை மடப்பிடி
வலிக்கு வரம்பாகிய கணவ னோம்பலின்,
ஓண்டேழ் வயப்புலி பாய்ந்தேன.

mate and lay asleep with the humming bees hovering round it⁹⁴ in the hill full of plantain trees.

In Nārṇai 116, we have the following lines which tell us that the she-elephant's embryo is likely to be destroyed by eating the tender leafless shoots of the bamboo.

“வழுவப் பிண்ட நாப்ப ணேமுற்
றிருவெதி ரீன்ற வேற்றிலைக் கொழுமுளை
சூன்முதிர் மடப்பிடி நாண்மேய லாரும்
மலைகெழு நாடன்”

“The elephant with ears like the winnow, which killed the tiger.”⁹⁵

The pestles fashioned out of the long tusks of the spotted elephant which vanquished a tiger as well as from the sandal-wood tree where the bees were humming.⁹⁶

94. முளைவளர் முதல மூங்கின் முருக்கிக்
கிளையொடு மேய்ந்த கேழ்கிளர் யானை
கீர்நசை மருங்கி னிறம்பார்த் தொடுங்கிய
பொருமுர ணுமுனைவதொலைச்சிக் கூர்நுனைக்
குருதிச் செங்கோட் டழிதுளி கழா அக்
கன்முனை யடுக்கத்து மென்மெல வியலிச்
செறுபகை வாட்டிய செம்மலொ டறுகால்
யாழிசைப் பறவை யிரப்பிடி புணர்ந்து
வாழையஞ் சிலம்பிற் றஞ்சுநாட். (அகம். 332)
95. மறங்கொ னிரும்புலி பொருமுரண் டொலைத்த
முறஞ்செவி வாரணம் (கலித். 42)
96. வேங்கை தொலைத்த வெறிபொறி வாரணத்-
தேந்து மருப்பி னினவண் டிமிர்பூதம்
சாந்த மரத்தி னியன்ற வுலக்கை

The unapproachable or unfrequented grove where the big elephant with small eyes suppressed the traditional valour of the wild tiger.⁹⁷

From the profuse instances quoted above one can see the might of both the tiger and the elephant. The Victory or defeat of course depended upon the circumstances as well as the comparative strength and endurance of the contending parties. In Agam 347, we have the following description.

“In the rain—forsaken rocky sides of the hill encircled by tall trees where the she-elephant frightened out of its wits on hearing the roar of the male-elephant which sighted a tiger, ran away leaving alone the young cub and subsequently searched for it with the trunk on its forehead and the filial tenderness of a mother who had lost or missed her child in a promiscuous crowd.”⁹⁸

Just like the young lion-cub that pounced upon the elephant, wanted to take hold of its Mastaka or the forehead balls.

In an erotic Tamil work known as the Viralividu-tūtu we come across the following lines.

97. சிறுகட் பெருங்களிறு வயப்புலி தாக்கித்
தொன்முரண் கொல்லுந் துன்னருஞ்சோலை (குறுந். 88)

98. மழைகரந் தொளித்த கழைதிரங் கடுக்கத்
தொண்டேழ் வயப்புலி பாய்ந்தெனக் குவவடி
வெண்கோட் டியானை முழக்கிடை வெரீஇக்
கன்றொழித் தோடிய புன்றலை மடப்பிடி
கைதலை வைத்த மையல் விதுப்பொடு
கெடுமகப் பெண் டிரிற் றேரும்
நெடுமர மருங்கின் மலை (அகம். 347)

“சீவகனுக் கன்றொருபெண் சிங்க மொருநன்றீனும்
 பாவனை போலே யெழுதிப் பக்கத்தில்
 ஓவியக் காரனை யொன் றெழுதிக்காட்ட வரிக்கன்று
 துள்ளிப்
 ‘போராடிப் பாய்ந்த கதை பொய்யலவே’”

Jivakan is the hero of the Tamil major Kavyam Jivakachintomony, and he is famous for his valour. Here the poet tells us that a woman artist drew the picture of a lion giving birth to a young one and at the same time drew another picture of a black elephant and that at sight of the latter, the cub pounced upon the elephant. It will be seen from the above lines that the lion, why even a young cub of a lion was inherently capable of overcoming the big elephant.

Another interesting information that we find in the classics is that the tiger would not deign to eat the flesh of the elephant if while falling down quite vanquished it fell down on its left side.

“The tiger which would not eat the flesh of the elephant which falls on its left, even when subjected to the utmost pangs of hunger.” 99

Again in the classics we come across another animal by name Yāli. This is regarded by some as a fabulous animal having a proboscis like the elephant. Some others have identified it with the lion. Any way it appears that it was dreaded by the elephant as will be seen from the following quotations.

99. “தொடங்குவினை தவிரா வசைவி னோன்றாட்
 கிடந்துயிர் மறுகுவ தாயினு மிடம்படின்
 வீழ்ஃளிம மிசைராப் புலி”

(அகந். 29)

“The hilly or the rocky side where the valiant male elephant with spotted face dreads the Yāḷi and embraces its pregnant mate with its rough proboscis to the great consternation of the latter.” ¹⁰⁰

‘Just like the young Yāḷi which even while in its teens and while it remained unweaned went about in quest of prey and killed an elephant even in its maiden hunt.’ ¹⁰¹

“Where the Yāḷi pounced upon the head of the elephant and tried to pull out its tusks.” ¹⁰²

“In that dreary place where the Yāḷi the chief of its gang dashed against the elephant, plucked its tusk and ate the pith of its brain.” ¹⁰³

“We would not say that the enemy is mighty and that his adversary who wields the javelin is

100. நனந்தலை கானத் தாளி யஞ்சி, யினந்தலைத் தருஉ
மெழ்கினர் முன்பின்
வரினியிரார்க்கும் வாய்புகு கடரத்துப் பொறி துதற்
பொலிந்த வயக்களிறொருத்தல்
இருப்பினர்த் தடக்கையி னேமுறத் தழுவக்
கடுஞ்சூன் மடப்பிடி நடுங்குஞ் சாரல். (அகம். 78)
101. ஆளி நன்மா னணங் குடைக்குருளை
மீளி மொயம்பின் மிகுவலி செருக்கி
முலைக்கோள் விடா மாத்திரை ஞெரோரெனத்
தலைக்கோள் வேட்டம் களிற்ட்டாங்கு. (பொருந. 139-42)
102. ஆளி
யுயர் துதல்யானை புகர்முகத் தொற்றி
வெண்கோடு புய்க்கும். (அகம். 252)
103. ஆளி நன்மா னணங்குடை யொருத்தல்
மீளிவேழத்து நெடுந்தகை புலம்ப
வேந்தல் வெண்கோடுவாங்கிக் குருத்தருந்து
மஞ்சவரத் தருநவாங்கண். (அகம். 381)

young. Even the young Yāli which is bent upon capturing its rival will pluck the tusk of the huge elephant.”¹⁰⁴

In one of the stanzas in Kalithogai we meet with the following description.

“ வீயகம் புலம்ப வேட்டம் போகிய
மா அலஞ் சிறை மணிநிறத் தும்பி
வாயிழி கடாத்த வான்மருப் பொருத்தலோ
டாய்பொறி யுழுவை தாக்கிய பொழுதின்
வேங்கை யஞ்சினையென விற்றபுலி முற்றியும்
பூம்பொறி யானைப் புகர் முகங்குறுகியும்
வலிமிகு வெகுளியான் வாளுற்ற மன்னரை
நயனாடி நட்பாக்கும் வினைவர்போன் மறிதரு
மயமிழி யருவிய வணிமலை நன்னாட. (கலித். 46)

Oh lord of the beautiful hills with hill-streams flowing into pools and lakes, where the bees that forsake the flowers they once sat on, for another set of flowers and that possessed the colour of the blue gem, approached the spot, where the tiger and the elephant fought against each other and acted the part of a mediator between two warring kings, now approaching the tiger taking it to be the branch of a Vengai tree and now the elephant in order to effect a rapprochement or peace between the two—

Another observation of the ancient poets respecting the elephant was its mistaking the Vengai flowers

104. வேண்டார் பெரியோர் விறல்வெய்யோன் றுணினையன்
பூண்டான் பொழில்காவ லென் றுரையா—மீண்டு
மருளன்மின் கோள்கருது மால்வரை யாளிக்
குருளையுங் கொல் களிற்றின் கோடு.

(பு. வெ. மா. பொதுவியல். 6)

for tiger itself because of the identity of colour. This will be seen in the following.

“The elephant with spotted face which dreaded the Vengai flower heaps mistaking the same for the tiger.” ¹⁰⁵

“The impassable forest path where the very strong elephant, the leader of the gang which pounced on the Vengai tree with gold-like flowers, which resembled a tiger, weltered in the red dust and roared like the wrestlers getting ready for the fight in the arena.” ¹⁰⁶

The grotto where the she-elephant flees in fear with gaped mouth on seeing the bright red flowers of the Vēngai tree that grew on the hills, which looked like the tiger.

The places in the hills where the trunk placed on the forehead by the elephant which swallowed fiery flowers of the black-legged Vēngai appeared like the snake crawling on a black stone or rock. The fear entertained by the elephant towards the Vēngai flower which after all resembled the tiger in appearance, is bound to be greater on seeing the actual tiger and the fear is so great that even the roar of thunder will

105. வேங்கை தாஅய தேம்பாய் தோற்றம்
புலிசெத்து வெரீஇய புகர்முக வேழம். (அகம். 12)

106. புலிக்கேழ் வேங்கைப் பூஞ்சினை புலம்ப
முதல் பாயந்திட்ட முழுவலி யொருத்தல்
செந்நிலப் படுநீருடிச் செருமலைந்து
களங்கொண் மள்ளரின் முழங்குமத்தம். (அகம். 227)

be construed by it as the roar of its adversary ¹⁰⁷. In stanza 198 of Naladiyar, the magnanimity and pride of the lion, the king of animals and the proverbial enemy of the elephant has been well pointed out. It is as follows :—

“நானமா யில்விருந் தின்றி விளியினும்
 மானந் தலைவருவ் செய்பவோ—யாணை
 வரிமுகம் புண்படுக்கும் வன்னுகிர் நோன்றாள்
 அரிமா மதுகையவர்.” (நாலடி. 198)

Even when in the extreme pangs of hunger and driven to death, those who possess the strength of will and the magnanimity of the lion will not stoop to perform base and ignoble acts that least become them, just as the lion will ever think of vanquishing its traditional foe the elephant only and not stoop to kill any other smaller animal even when in the pangs of pinching hunger.

The elephant is said to have regarded the flowers that dropped from the Kadamba tree as the rain drizzle.

Having dealt with the traditional enmity in land between the elephant and the lion or tiger, let me now speak of the crocodile, the biggest animal in pure water, which alone can kill the mighty elephant.

107. மழைமுழங் காவங்கேட்ட கழைதின்
 மாஅல் யாணை புலி செத்துவெரீஇ
 யிருங்கல் விடாகஞ் சிலம்பப் பெயரும்
 பெருங்களுடன்.

Instances abound in the classics and some of them are quoted here below :—

“Like the expert dragger the crocodile which can destroy an elephant.” ¹⁰⁸

“The crocodile which can devour a strong elephant.” ¹⁰⁹

In Tirukkural 495 we have the following :—

“நெடும் புனலுள் வெல்லு முதலை
யடும்புனலி, னீங்கினதனைப்பிற.”

This couplet occurs under the chapter “Ida-narital” ¹¹⁰ i.e., knowing the proper place of action which alone would be conducive to unqualified success. The crocodile an aquatic animal is strong in its own element while the elephant is strong in land. The former can over come any animal when in water but the moment when it is away from its element it will be killed even by an animal which is far less strong than itself. In a later work we have the following :—

“Will the crocodile which dragged with very little effort the elephant into water make bold to proceed and catch a cat on the banks of a lake or river.” ¹¹¹

ஊர்க்குறுமாக்களாடக் கலங்குந், தாட்படு சின்னீரிற் களிறட்டு
வீழ்க்குமீர்ப் புடைக்கராத்தன்ன. (புறம். 104)

108. களிறட்டு வீழ்க்கு மீர்ப்புடைக் கராத்தன்ன (புறம். 104)

109. உரவுக்களிறு காக்கு மிடங்கர் (மலைபடு. 211)

110. இடனறிதல்

111. யானையைச் சலந்தனி லிழுத்த வக்கரா

புனையைக் கரைதனிற் பிடிக்கப் பேர்குமா

(வீவேக.)

Just like the dragging crocodile which can kill an elephant even while in a small lake with water only ankle deep which could get muddled even by children at play.

Another creature this time a reptile which could kill an elephant is the Rock snake or the Python. In Narṇinai we have the following :—

“In the dead of night when the fiery Python caught hold of the elephant and dragged it to and fro fastening it to a tree.”¹¹²

Apart from these enemies the elephants in the wild stage in the hilly forest were often the victims of big floods that occur suddenly in jungle streams.

“The terrible freshes which washed away the elephants ”³

It was observed in the course of this article that the elephant was generally hunted for its valuable tusk. The hill-men or the foresters used to direct their arrows on the elephants when they roamed alone in the millet farms.

“Oh Lord of the Kuṛinji tract, where the Kuravas the residents of the place raised a strong promiscuous cry with arrows, small drums and slings in their hands and whistle in their mouths, on seeing the approach of the elephant with fiery eyes, alone and

112.

யாமத்துக்

கனிதகப்படுத்த பெருஞ்சின மாசுணம்

வெளிறில்காழ் மரப்பிணித்து நனிமிளிர்க்கும். (நற். 261)

113.

மராஅயாணை மறந்தப வொற்றி

யுரா வீர்க்கு முட்டுவரு நீத்தம்.

(அகம். 18)

separated from its mate.¹¹⁴ The young children of these kuravas entertained no fear for this huge beast as will be seen from the following lines :—

பும்பொறி யுழுவைப் பேழ்வா யேற்றை
தேங்கமழ் சிலம்பிற் களிற்றொடு பொரினே
துறுகன் மீமிசை யுறுக ணஞ்சாக்
குறக்குறு மாக்கள்.

The young Kurava children stood on the rocks fearlessly watching the course of the fight between the beautifully spotted tiger with gaping mouth and the elephant on the hill-side full of sweet-smelling honey, while the elder ones went about hunting the beasts.

“The foresters with the strong bow and the quiver full of arrows who went about hunting the elephant in the big mountain-side.¹¹⁵

Here it will not be out of place if I refer to the mode of catching and taming the wild elephant which seems to have been in vogue in ancient times. The following lines will be found interesting.

“ நீடுகுழி யகப்பட்ட கோடுமுற்றிய கொல் கன்று
நிலைகலங்கக் குழிகொன்று திளைபுகலத்தலைக்

கூடியாங்கு. (புறம். 17)

114. துணைவிற் தீர்ந்த கருங்கண் யானை
யணையக் கண்ட வங்குடிக் குறவர்
கணையர் கிணையர் கைபடு வணர்
விளியர் புறக்குடி யார்க்குநாட.

(நற். 108)

115. பெருமலைச் சிலம்பின் வேட்டம் போகிய
செறிமலை யம்மின் வல்விற் காணவர்.

(அகம். 282)

“Just as the murderous elephant with ripe tusks that was caught in the big pit specially dug for it, filled up with earth the above pit and rejoined its kith and kin.’

“The path full of big rock where the elephant herd mistook the pit dug by the well-diggers for getting water, for the snare pit usually dug by those who wanted to capture them, filled the pit with earth and other rubbish.”¹¹⁶

‘The red-mouthed yali-cub that ran away in fear on hearing the male elephant roar on seeing the she-elephant fall in the ditch.’¹¹⁷

‘The herd of elephants consisting of the old and the young that were caught in the ditch.’¹¹⁸

At times the male elephant will be caught in the ditch when its mate the she-elephant will raise a piteous cry.

“வாழை யோங்கிய தாழ்க ணசம்பிற்
படுகடுங் களிற்றின் வருத்தஞ் சொலிய
படியடி முறுக்கிய பெருமரப் பூசல். (அகம். 8)

116. வெண்கோடு நயந்த வன்பில் கானவர்
இகழ்ந்திலங் கியவினகழ்ந்த குழிசெத்
திருங்களிற் றின ரிரை தூர்க்கும்
பெருங்க லத்தம். (அகம். 21)

117. கயந்தலை மடப்பிடி பயம்பிற் பட்டெனக்
களிறு விளிப்படுத்த கம்பலை வெரீஉ
ஒய்யென வெழுந்த செவ்வாய்க் குழவி.”

118. குழியிற்கொண்ட கன்றுடைப் பெருநிரை, (அகம். 211)

The huge uproar caused by the breaking of branches attempted by the she-elephant in order to extricate its mate the male elephant, which got entangled in the deep pit, where the plantain shot up very high, by offering the branches as step or hold to get out of the ditch.'

As to the mode of catching elephants we have the following account in the *Encyclopædia India*.

"A herd is driven through a funnel-shaped palisade into a small enclosure; individuals are then cut out from the herd by tame elephants and some learn to obey their mahout."

The following account found in the '*Indian Antiquary*' Vol. VI, p. 239 will also be found pertinent to the occasion.

"The hunters having selected a level tract of arid ground, dig a trench all round enclosing as much space as would suffice to encamp a huge army. The earth which they throw out in the process of digging, they heap up in mounds on both edges of the trench and use it as a wall. Then they make huts for themselves by excavating the wall on the outer edge of the trench and in these they leave loop-holes, both to admit light and to enable them to see when their prey approaches and enters the enclosure. They next station some three or four of their best-trained she-elephants within the trap to which they leave only a single passage by means of a bridge thrown across the trench, the frame work of which they cover over with earth and a great quantity of straw, to conceal the bridge as much as possible from the wild animals which might also suspect treachery. The

hunters then go out of the way retiring to their cells which they had made in the earthen-wall. Now the wild elephant does not go near the inhabited places in the day-time but during the night they wander about everywhere and feed in herds, following as leader the one who is biggest and boldest, just as cows follow the bulls. As soon as they approach the enclosure and hear the cry and catch scent of the females, they rush at full speed in the direction of the fenced ground and being crossed by the trench, move round its edge until they fall in with the bridge along which they force their way into the enclosure. The elephants are then famished and caught. They are then cajoled by the music of drums and cymbals, for the elephant of all brutes is the most intelligent. Some of these for instance have taken up their riders when slain in battle and carried them away for burial.

It will be observed here that after all it was through these tamed elephants that these wild elephants were caught. This method has been utilised by the sage-poet Tiruvalluvar to institute a fine comparison. He says

வினையால் வினையாக்குக் கோடல் நனைவுகள்
யானையால் யானையாத் தற்று.”

“To accomplish a thing through the medium of some other act conducive or helpful to the same is like capturing elephants through other elephants.”

The services that this intelligent animal renders are manifold. It was already noted that it was used as a transport animal for carrying weighty things. It was very serviceable in fights and fighting camps. In Puram 25, we are told how the elephant carried firewood.

“கான யானை தந்த விறகில்.” (புறம். 251)

The firewood brought by the wild elephants of the forest.

In the Perumpānāruppaḍai (498—500) we have the following lines which tell us that the sages bent upon the worship of fire, performed sacrifices with the firewood brought by the elephants.¹¹⁹

Any elephant in the wild stage can be tamed and domesticated in course of time. The mahout employs much skill and exerts much effort initially to get it tamed. But instances are not wanting where the mahout himself was chased and killed by the enraged or the ruttish elephant. Hence the sane warning issued by the poet in Naladiyar which runs as follows :—

“One should avoid or discard the friendship of persons who resemble elephants in size and wrath and should espouse or acquire the friendship of those that resemble dogs; for the elephant, in spite of its long intimācy will kill the māhout while the dog with the wagging tail will approach the very person who aimed a dart at it, with the very dart that pierced it, fixed in its body.¹²⁰ It is well-known that dogs are ever noted for their gratitude and love to their masters. Though the elephants prove treacherous and unreliable at times, the mahout invariably loves the animal and in Puram 220 we are referred to a lament of his in the following strain.

119. — “செந்திப்பேணிய முனிவர் வெண்கோட்டுக்
கனிந்துரு விறகின் வேட்கும்.”

120. நாலடி. 213.

“பெருஞ்சோறு பயந்து பல்லாண்டு புரந்த
பெருங்களிறிழந்த பைதற்பாகன்
அதுசேர்ந்தல் கியவழுங்கலாலை
வெளில் பாழாகக் கண்டுநுழந்தாங்கு.” (புறம். 220)

Just like the sorrowing mahout or rider who lost his elephant, the one he nurtured for years by providing sumptuous meals and who lamented heavily on seeing the stake or post to which the elephant was tethered, rendered vacant or empty. The mahout usually had a stock of select words which he made use of while training elephants.

“மொழிபி னுணர்த்துஞ் சிறுவரையல்லது”

Sometimes some Sanskrit words and sometimes Hindustani words were employed in taming them ^{120-A} In Jivaka Chintāmony we are told how the hero Jivakan controlled and rode the wild elephant named Valaya-sundaram. Stanza 1834, tells us how the hero managed to control it. The stanza is as follows :—

“அங்கயந் தலத்தினு லப்பு தாதையெனக்
கொங்கலர் கண்ணியான் கொம்மைதான் கொட்டலும்
பொங்கி யவுவகையிற் பொலிந்துமாக் களிறவன்
தங்கிய பயிர் த்தொழிறடக்கையாற் செய்ததே.”

As soon as Jivakan who wore the sweet-smelling flower garland patted on the back of the animal pronouncing the words Apputu Apputu, Ātu Ātu, and Ai, Ai, the male elephant full of joy rendered obedience to him as per his directions. The words used then were Paripari etc.

The comparatively quiet and docile nature of this big terrific animal has been well-commented upon by an old Tamil bard in Purāṇ 94. The poem runs thus.

“ஊர்க்குறு மாக்கள் வெண்கோடு கழா அலின்
நீர்த்துறைப் படியும் பெருங்களிறுபோல
வினியை பெரும வெமக்கே மற்றதன்
துன்னருங் கடாம்போல
இன்னாய் பெருமரின் நென்னோதோற்கே.”

The poetess Avvayār praises here the easy accessibility and affability of her patron Adhigamān Nedumān Anji. She says. Oh Lord! You are dear to me and very easily accessible just like the big elephant which easily lends itself to be washed even by the urchins of the village and unpalatable to your enemies like the rut that flows over its temples rendering the animal restive and turbulent.

Wild elephant in the Kurinji and the Palai regions were used to waylay persons passing through the thickets. In Kalithogai we have the following line :—

“இனம்பிரி யொருத்த லாறுகடிகொள்ளும்.” (கலித். 20)

‘The place where the leader of the gang gets separated from its kith and kin and lies in ambush in the roadside in order to get at passers by.

Here it may be observed that these gregarious animals went in groups, wherever they went, following their leader. It is also said that they were never without a leader and that when one leader died another took his place. Of course the strongest and

the boldest only can aspire for that dignity. The leader was usually named *oruttal*. In Narrinai 126, an elephant leader is said to have spent its wrath in not having come across any wayfarer to kill, by dashing on the stump of a palmyra tree.¹²¹ In Agam. 249 occurs the following “The place in the Pālai tract where the murderous elephant lay in ambush or guarded the passage with intent to kill the passers by.”¹²²

The elephant is generally regarded as a cunning and deceitful animal, full of rancour. It could not brook the slightest mischief played on it. In Puram 30 an ancient bard praises his patron thus.

“களிறு கவுளுடுத்த வெறிகற்போல
ஒளித்த தூப்பினை.”

Your rancour lies concealed as the piece of stone in the elephants' cheek taken in by the animal for hitting its offender. Who does not know the story of the juvenile mischief-monger who pretended to give some eatable to an elephant but actually put a stone instead, when the animal eagerly stretched its trunk and who was hit by the elephant by the very same stone, when a suitable opportunity presented itself for taking vengeance on the offender. The story of

121.

“ஒருத்தல்

ஆட்பெற னகைஇ நாட்சரம் விலங்கித்
துனைதரும் வம்பலர்க் காணாதச் சினம்
பனைக் கான்றூறும் பாழ்நாட் டத்தம்.”

(கற். 126)

122. ஆட்பார்த்துக் கொலைவல் யானைசுரங் கடிக்கொள்ளும்.

(அகம். 249)

the tailors' son, whose mischief in having pricked the elephant which went to the river with a pin or nail, resulted in the complete damage of the valuable cloths, that were stocked in the sewing hall, by the water that was stored in the trunk by the afflicted animal, is too familiar to even youngsters. In Pazhamozhi we have the following idea.

“If we think of instituting a comparison to those ignorant persons, who simply irritate with their words persons of high learning and patience, we have to choose only the lame man who cannot walk and who depends upon the crutch for his movement, making bold to mēddle with the elephant.” ¹²³

The slings were freely used to drive or scare away these elephants which often did havoc in the millet or the sugar-cane fields.

“The stones that fly fast from the slings of the foresters, who in order to disperse the herds or flocks of elephants that hover round to destroy the millet-fields, throw from the lofts constructed at a considerable height so that they might be immune from the attacks of wild animals.” ¹²⁴

123. ‘கற்றூற்றுவாரைக் கறுப்பித்துக் கல்லாதார்
சொற்றூற்றுக் கொண்டு சுனைத்தெழுதல்—எற்றெனின்
தானுநடவான் முடவன் பிடிப்பூணி
யானையோடாடல் உறவு.’ (பழமொழி. 16)

124. புனஞ்சூழ் குறவர்
உயர்நிலை யிதணமேறிக் கைபுடையு
அகன்மலை யிறும்பிற் றுவன்றிய யானைப்
பகனிலை தளர்க்குங் கவணுமிழ் கடுங்கல்.

“In the farms where the hill-men who chase the elephants with the bright tusk and whose sling-stones scatter the flowers in the adjoining trees.” ¹²⁵

In ll. 7—16 of the 41st stanza of Kalithogai the learned poet Kapilar has indulged in a stretch of fine imagination. He says here that the forester who heard the sound of the foot-steps of the elephant and its mate passing by the side mounted up the loft constructed on the top of the Jack tree and threw the sling-stone and that the stone which was hurled fast with the utmost speed first scattered the bright red flowers of the Vengai tree, struck and pulled down the well-ripened fruits of the Ācini (a kind of Jakh tree), pierced the honey-comb, struck against the tender shoots of the Mango-tree, tore open the petals of the plantain flower and ultimately, quite exhausted, lay inside a Jack-fruit.” ¹²⁶

In the Eengoimalai ezhupatu of the Sangam celebrity Nakkirar, we meet with the following description.

125. இலங்கொளி மருப்பிற் கைம்மா வுலம்புநர்
புலங்கடி கவுணையிற் பூஞ்சினை யுதிர்க்கும்.

126. பிடியொடு மேயுஞ் செய்புன்பானை
அடியொதுங் கியக்கங் கேட்ட கானவன்
நெடுவரை யாசினிப் பணவையேறி க
கடுவிசைக் கவுணையிற் கல்லை விடுதலின்
இறுவரை வேங்கையி னொள்வீ சிதறி
யாசினி மென்பழ மளிந்தவை யுதிராத்
தேன்செயிருஅல் துளைபடப் போக்கி
நறுவடி மாலினறுந்துண ருழக்கிக்
குலையுடைவாழைக் கொழுமடல் கிழியாய்
பலவின் பழத்துட் டங்குமலை.

(கலித். 41)

“Eengoi hill where the sling-stone hurled on the elephants that ate the millet in the millet-farms planted itself on the bamboo firmly and the pearls of the ripe bamboo dropped down as a result of the shock.” 127

The undesirability of meddling with this seemingly quiet but dreadful animal has been well-portrayed by the poet in Pazhamoli in the following manner:—

“மானமு நாணு மறியார் மகிமயங்கி
ஞான மறிவா ரிடைப்புக்குத்—தாமிருந்து
ஞானம் வினாபுரைத்தல் நகை யாகும்
யானைப் பலகாண்பான் பகல்.” (பழமொழி. 22)

The foolish act of those shameless persons, who in their ignorance thrust themselves in the circle of wise men and without stopping there, mix up in their talks of an advanced and learned character, will be simply laughed at as resembling the act of looking at the elephant's teeth in broad-day light when it is wide-awake.

It was already remarked that the elephant was much in demand during the ancient wars in the Tamil land. For carrying weighty articles, for attacking and destroying citadels and fort-gates and even for actual fighting in the midst of serried ranks, the elephants were very largely used and Yānai-maram or the valour of the elephant is one of the many themes in Purapporu! Ilakkaṇam. Of the four-fold divisions of the army in ancient times known

127. இடதினை தின்னேழங் கடியக் குறவர்
வெடிபடு வெங்கவண் கலூன்றி—நெடுநெடென
நீண்ட கழை முத்துதிர்க்கு மீங்கோயே. (சங்கோய் எழுபது 7)

as the Elephantry, the cavalry, the chariot and the infantry, it was the infantry or the foot-soldiers that went in the Van or the fore-front, because of their passionate fervour to get into the thick of the fight either to win or die with honour, the elephantry behind them because of the rut and the consequent fury they could exhibit in the struggle, and the cavalry behind it owing to the absence of rut and lesser fury. The chariot being a heavy one incapable of moving of its own accord was placed last¹²⁸. This four-fold classification of a king's army has been referred to in several stanzas of *Puranānūru* and other classics^{128-a}. It will therefore be clear that a conspicuous place was occupied by the elephant in those days in the military campaigns. Many were the extraordinary feats of strength performed by these elephants and they have been delectably described by the learned poets. Here are some stanzas from *Muthollayiram*, an old but incomplete work supposed to have originally consisted of 2700 stanzas, 900 stanzas each for the three proverbial ruling kings of *Tamilakam*, which have been classified as *Yāṇaimaram*. The poet's powers of imagination and description are really very astonishing.

Owing to the experience it has had in removing or throwing away the white royal parasol during its encounters with the enemy columns, the angry elephant

128. Thol. Nachi.

128. a. கடுஞ்சினத்த கொல்களிறும்

கதழ்பரிய கலிமாவும்

கெடுக்கொடிய நிமிர்தேரும்

கெஞ்சுடைய புகன்மறவரும்.

(புறம். 55)

of the Cēra King with the red eyes stretched its hand to the moon, apparently regarding it as another parasol. Here it may be noted that the white royal parasol, one of the indispensable insignia of a crowned King is often likened to the round white moon.¹²⁹

The valiant elephant of the Cōḷa monarch who will ever frown on his adversaries with his javelin, pounced upon the fort-gate and lifted the door way in its tusks and in the attempt, resembled the boat with its sails wide-spread ready to set sail in the cool sea. It will be evident here that the elephant is the Nāvāy and the door the sail.¹³⁰

The elephant of the Pāndyan King, who wields the victorious javelin, will write with its tusks on the chests of the enemy kings that the whole world belongs to it and its king alone. The tusk is the writing instrument and the chest of the adversary is the Cadjan leaf to write on.¹³¹

129. “வீறுசான் மன்னர் விரிதாம வெண்குடையைப்
பாற வெறிந்த பரிசயத்தால்—தேருது
செங்கண் மாக்கோதை சினவெய் களியனை
திங்கண் மேனீட்டுந் தன்கை. (முத்தொள். 16)

130. “அயிற்கதவம் பாய்ந்துழங்கி யாற்றல்சான் மன்ன
ரெயிற்கதவம் கோத்தெடுத்த கோட்டாற் — பணிக்கடலுட்
பாய்தோய்ந்த நாவாய்போற் றோன்றுமே யெங்கோமான்
காய்சின வேற்கிள்ளி களிறு. (ஊ. 17)

131. “மருப்பூசி யாக மறங்கனல்வேன் மன்ன
ருருத்தகு மார்போலை யாகத்—திருத்தக்க
வையக மெல்லா மெமதென் றெழுதுமே
மொய்யிலை வேன்மாறன் களிறு. (ஊ. 18)

In another poem the two things accomplished by the two tusks of the warring elephant have been detailed. One tusk of the elephant will tear open the chest of the enemy while the other will break open or dash against the ramparts of the enemy's citadel.¹³²

In yet another stanza the Cōḷa's elephant has been described as follows :—

“The he-elephant of the Cōḷa with stone-like arms stood aside with a sense of shame reluctant to face the she-elephant its mate, because of its disfigured tusk which was broken while it dashed against the ramparts on which floated the enemy's flag and the nails that got worn out while they hit the crowns of fallen kings. From the above description we find the lofty imaginative faculty and descriptive skill of the poet. At the same time we realise the heroic fervour of the elephant, which in its turn reminds us of the extraordinary fighting ability of the king who owned such a splendid animal.”¹³³

Here is another stanza descriptive of the valour of the elephant of the Cōḷa King. The conquest of the Cōḷa King of the Pallava, Cōḷa and the Ceylon capitals has been ably described here. The Cōḷa's

132. உருவத்தார்த் தென்னவ னேங்கெழில் வேழத்
திருகோடுஞ் செய்தொழி லெண்ணி—லொருகோடு
வேற்றூ ரகல முழுமே யொருகோடு
மாற்றூர் மதி றிறக்குமால்.

133. கொடிமதில் பாய்ந்திற்ற கோடு மாசர்
முடியிடறித் தேய்ந்த நகமும்—பிடிமுன்பு
பொல்லாமை நாணிப் புறங்கடை நின்றதே
கல்லார் தோட்குள்ளி களிறு.

elephant is said to have trampled on Kachi with one of its legs, Unjai (Ujjain) with another and the city of Ceylon with yet another.¹³⁴

In another poem the cola elephant is said to return victoriously, accompanied by the promiscuous cries of the kites and eagles, by the howling of the jackals and the rude and uncouth dances of demons and female spirits. Of course the intention of the poet is clear. His victory ought to have caused a number of deaths and the cries of the kites and eagles ought to have arisen from the sumptuous feast offered to them by the winning hero. The howling of jackals on seeing such a repast is but natural and the rude dances at the prospect of a promising feast, by the demons and female spirits, indicate the magnitude of the loss sustained by the antagonist and the consummate victory attained by the victor. It was a general belief that demons and spirits usually hovered round a bloody encounter between rival kings.¹³⁵

Again the following stanza will tell us the extraordinary fury and valour of the Pandyan elephant.¹³⁶

134. கச்சி யொருகான் மிதியா வொருகாலாற்
 றத்துநீர்த் தண்ணுஞ்சை தான்மிதியாப்—பிற்றையு
 மீழ மொருகான் மிதியா வருமேநங்
 கோழியர் கோன்கிள்ளி களிறு..
135. பாற்றின மார்ப்பப் பருந்து வழிப்படா
 நாற்றிசையு மோடி நிகதிப்ப—வாற்ற
 வலங்கலம் பேய்மகளி ராடவருமே
 யிலங்கிலை வேற்கிள்ளி களிறு. (முத்தொன். 22)
136. தோற்ற மலைட்டலோசை புயல்கடாங்
 காற்றினிமிர்ந்த செலவிற்றாய்க்—கூற்றுங்
 குறியெதிர்ப்பை கொள்ளுந் தகைமைத் தேயெங்கோ
 னெதிகதிர் வேன் மாறன் களிறு. (ஷை 23)

“The elephant huge as the hill, with the roar resembling the roar of the sea, with rut flowing like rain and fleet footed as the gale or wind, is full of valour and it appears that even death can borrow from it murderous instincts and learn from it the art of murder. Evidently what the poet wants to bring home to the reader here, is that once they determine to fight, the elephants were uncontrollable. In another poem the Pandyan elephant quite ashamed to present itself before its mate with its broken tusk, tried to hide the same with the royal umbrella it had caught from the enemy king whom it over threw. Here apart from the consummate victory of the one and the ignoble fall of the other, we can see the extraordinary might of the elephant as well as its loving tenderness to its mate. Display of valour in the fighting field and exhibition of tenderness and loving instincts at home when moving with the wife, have been specially marked out by the poets as the indispensable requisites of a genuine hero, and we may find that we are reminded of the above requisites by the above acts of the warring elephant.¹³⁷

The warring elephant has been thus described in ancient Tamil literature. The elephants that lay bleeding in the battle-field with trunks cut and body severed, pierced by sharp and pointed missiles, which looked like a number of birds that hover round a hill.

137. அடுமதில் பாய் வழிந்தன கோட்டைப்

பிடிமுன் பழகழித னுணி—முடியுடை

மன்னர் குடையான் மறைக்குமே செங்கனல்வேற்

றென்னவர் கோமான் களிறு.

(முத்தொன். 24)

In Puram 19, we have the following lines.

“குன்றத் திறத்த குரீஇயினம் போல,
வம்புசென் றிறுத்த வரும் புண்யாணை.” (புறம். 19)

The kings of the Tamil land had very large array of elephants in their war camps.

“ஏந்து கோட்டியாணை வேந்தன் பாசறை. (அகம். 394)

The war camp of the king who owned elephants with upraised tusks.

“மதவலி யாணை மறவிய பாசறை
யிடியுமிழ் முரசம் பொருகனத் தியம்ப’ (அகம். 354)

The war camp, where the ruttish elephants fought with one another, resounded like the fighting field when the war-drum sounded like the thunder bolt. It may be noted here that the roar of the elephant is often compared to the beat of a war-drum.

“பசும்பூட் பாண்டியன் வினைவலதிகள்
களிஞ்ஞெட்டா ன்றை” (குறுந். 393)

At the time when Adhigan the capable ally and subordinate of the Pandya who wore bright jewels of gold fell in the battle-field with his elephantry. In Puram 26 the warlike elephant has been well-compared to the sweeping and furious gale which sinks a ship.

“நளிகட விருங் குட்டத்து
வளிபுடைத்த கலம் போலக்
களிறுசென்று களான கற்றவும்”

The male elephant worked havoc in the battle-field like the storm that destroyed the ship that sailed in the sea.

The elephant was usually tied to the guardian tree of the adversary as a preliminary to the fight. It would be of interest to know here that every king or chief had his own guardian tree, the safe guarding of which was one of his main duties. Failure to guard it or allowing it to be felled by the opponent was a sign of defeat or discomfiture and hence it was in fact a religious duty enjoined on the owner. The quotations refer to the guardian tree and the need for protecting it.

“மந்நொறும் பிணித்த களிற்றி னிராயினும்”

(புறம். 109)

Though you are possessed of elephants each one tied to a guardian tree.

களிற்று கடிமாஞ் சேரா

(புறம். 336)

The elephant will not be tied to the guardian tree.

களிற்றனைப்பக் கலங்கினகா அ

(புறம். 345)

The people in the groves were frightened out of their wits when the elephants were fastened to the tree.

“கடிமாம் வருந்தத் தந்தியாம் பிணித்த

நெடுநல் யானை யெம்பரிசில்”

(புறம். 162)

The defeated or vanquished enemy was put to shame and ignominy and many were the atrocities that were perpetrated by the Victor. For instance elephants were bathed and were allowed to wade through the drinking water-tanks, thereby depriving the natives of the place of one of their main objects of sustenance.

The following will bear this out:—

“ஒளிது மருப்பிற் களிதவர, காப்புடைய கயம்படியினை”
(புறம் 15)

You had-the elephants with the bright tusks,
bathed in the guarded tanks.

“கடிதுறை நீர்க்களிது படி” (புறம். 16)

“களிதுபடிந் துண்டெனக் கலங்கியதுறை” (புறம். 23)

Having bathed the elephants in the water-tanks
well guarded.

Incidentally we may gather from these quotations
that there were generally in each village or town,
drinking-water tanks well guarded. Even now in
places where water is scarce and hard to get, this
system is in vogue.

The services of the elephant during the war were
manifold. The elephant usually bore the flag or
pennon as will be seen from the quotations that
follow:—

“கொடி துடங்கியானை நெடுமா வளவன்.” (புறம். 228)

The illustrious cola with the elephant on which
waved the royal flag with the tiger emblem.

“கொல் களிற்று மீமிசைக் கொடி விசம்பு நிழற்றும்.”
(புறம். 9)

The flag borne by the male-elephant with mur-
derous instincts throwing its shadow in the sky.

வரைபுரை யுமழ களிற்றின்மிசை

வான்றுடைக்கும் வகையபோல

விரவுருவின கொடி துடங்கும்.

(புறம். 38)

The flags borne aloft by the young male-elephants which looked like so many hills, moving to and fro, as if cleaning or brushing the sky or the heavenly region.

அரசு யானைகொண்ட துகிற்கொடிபோல. (அகம். 111)

Like the cloth-flag borne or carried by the state-elephant.

It will be seen here that it was the royal or the state-elephant that usually bore this flag and every king had his own state-elephant. In the thick of the fight the elephant had its own part to play as will be inferred from the following lines :—

“எயிறு படையாக வெயிற் கதவிடா.” (புறம். 3)

Having rent asunder the rampart or the fort-gate with its tusk as its weapon.

“கனிறு, கதவெறியாச் சிவந்துராய்,
துதிமழுங்கிய வெண்கோட்டான்
உயிருண்ணுங் கூற்றுப் போன்றன.” (புறம். 4)

The elephants with their white tusks blunted by their furious dash against the fort-gate, resembled death the devourer of the lives of earthly kings.

அடர்புகர்ச்
சிறுகண் யானை செவ்விதி னேவிப்
பாசவற் படப்பை யாரெயில் பலதந்து. (புறம். 6)

Having won or acquired by sheer prowess many forts with green verdant fields with the help of the small-eyed elephant properly directed.

கடுங்கண்ண கொல் களிற்றூற் காப்புடை யெழுமுருக்கி
(புறம். 14)

Having destroyed the well fortified fort-gate and its cross-beam with the aid of the murderous elephant with wild fiery eyes.

ஹதிமுக மழுங்க மண்டி யொன்றார்
கடிமதிற் பாயுநின் களிதடங்கலவே. (புறம். 31)

Your elephant continues to be uncontrollable which pounced upon the guarded fort-walls of the foe so that the tusks got blunted in the edge.

“களிதே, எழுத்தாங்கிய கதவு மலைத்தவர்
குழுக்களிற்றுக் குறும்புடைத்தலிற்
பருஉப்பிணிய தொடிகழிந்தனவே.” (புறம். 97)

The elephant dashed against the fort-gates fastened on strong iron-beams and demolished the fort and in the process lost the ring or the edge-cover of its tusks.

Instances like these that depict the prowess of the he-elephant can be multiplied and it ought to have been an wonderful and at the same time an awe-inspiring sight to see this huge and ponderous animal exhibit its fiery valour, and skill in the onslaught against the advancing enemy.

SOME KNOWN FACTS ABOUT THE ELEPHANT

The elephant is said to have a keen ear for music and enjoy good songs. This fact has been mentioned in a number of classical works. In Agam 102 we have the following interesting lines :—

“ஒலியல் வார்மயி றுளறினள் கொடிச்சி
பெருவரை மருங்கிற் குறிஞ்சி பாடக்
குரலுங் கொள்ளாது நிலையினும் பெயராது
படாப் பைங்கண் பாடுபெற் றெய்யென,
மறம்புகல் மழுகளி றுறங்கு நாடன்.”

The Lord of the country, where,* on hearing the huntress who was drying her hair tresses sing the Kurinjippan, the war-loving young he-elephant stood motinless without eating the corn-sheaves, closed its eyes which rarely slept, and fell fast asleep. In Kalithogai (2) we have the following lines :—

“வன்புற்றுக்
காழ்வரை நில்லாக் கடுங்களிற் றெருத்தல்
யாழ்வரைத் தங்கி யாங்கு.”

Just as the turbulent elephant leader that evades and does not mind the iron-hook of the mahout voluntarily submits itself to the sweet sound of the lyre. Who does not know the story of the elephant which actually became a slave to the lyre of Udayana and came to his rescue when he was in danger. ?¹³⁸

138. வலிகெழு நோன்றாள் வத்தவ ரிறைவன்
யானை வணக்கும் வீணை வித்தகன். (பெருங். மகத. 21, 33-4)
மத்த யானை வணக்கு நல்வியாழ்
வித்தக வீ. („ „ 22, 102-3)
யானை வணக்கு மைங்கதி யருவினை
வீணை வித்தகத் தவன். („ „ 15, 12-3)

The caparisoned elephant was used in royal processions. Even now the Maharajas of Mysore mount the well-decked elephant during Dasara festivities with howdahs before them. Big temples invariably have them and during religious festivals they come in the forefront of the procession. Several Saiva, Vaishnava and other religious mutts also possess one or two elephants. The elephant is one of the vehicles or vahanam of the deities enshrined in temples and in the Saiva temples we can see the deity mounting the elephant on the 6th day of the festival. In Śrīraṅgam, the famous Vaishnava shrine we have, during the Chitrā Pūrṇami, i.e., in the full moon of the Chitrai or the April month what is known as the Gajendra Mōksham. The story goes that a certain Gandarva Hūhū by name while playing in a river, caught hold of a Rishi Tevalan by name by his legs and that on seeing that wanton mischief the sage cursed him to be born as a crocodile. At the same time a King who was cursed by the angry sage Dhurvāsa, to be born as an elephant, took the animal's shape and got into the river for drinking water. When the crocodile caught hold of it, both struggled hard for years together, each being powerful in its own element, when the elephant, unable to bear the strain, called out Ātimūlam. Vishnu heard it and at once proceeded to the spot with lightning speed and rendered succour to the elephant.

A reference can now be made to the elephant faced God of the Hindu pantheon Lord Gaṇēsa. When the worship actually began here in the Tamil land is not yet clearly known. There is absolutely no mention of this God in the Sangam classics. We hear of the name Vināyaka only after the advent of

the Pallava regime. History tells us that it was Mahēndra Varmaṇ I or Guṇabhāra who built the Ganesa temple on the top of the rock at Trichinopoly and installed the image or statue of Viṇāyaka. His son Narasimha Varmaṇ invaded the land of the Chālukyās and in the fight at Vatapi, the Chalukyan capital, in 642 A. D. defeated the Chālukyās and destroyed the capital. His generallissimo or the chief commander was Parañjōti the famous Siruthoṇḍa Nāyaṇār of Periyapurāṇam and in commemoration of his having performed the most difficult feat of killing his own son in order to feast a Śaiva devotee, the festival even now takes place in Thiruchēṅgāttangudi. An elephant with a human face is said to be seen even now in the temple. Further every learned musician in the Tamil land used to sing as the first song, the invocation to Ganesa, which begins with "Vatapi Ganapathi". It is therefore surmised by some that Vinayaka worship was imported into the Tamil land during Pallava period from perhaps the Bombay Presidency. For Vinayaka worship is very popular and his festivals are celebrated with great eclat in the above Presidency. This theory is still to be investigated ; for the hold possessed by this God in Southern India is quite unique. In every street corner of villages one may find an image of this God and he is considered greater than all the other Gods. In the invocation song by the author of Viṇāyakapurāṇam, we find the following in praise of this God.

"Who is he that authorises Brahma to do the act of creation, Viṣṇu that of protection and Siva that of destruction, Vāyu or wind that of blowing, sun

that of wandering, his greatness could not be realised by the atheists and unbelievers in the existence of the almighty."

Elephant fights were conducted regularly during the regime of the ancient Rajahs in the Tamil land and elephant riding was one of the exercises learnt by the princes in their early days. Reference to these elephant fights will be seen in the Periyapurāṇam, where the life of Sēramāṇ Perumāḷ is depicted. Even now elephant fights are regularly conducted during festivities like the king's birth day, the Durbar Day etc. in the State of Baroda.

In Puṟapporuḷ Venbā Mālai we find under Peruntinaiappadalam, the following noted as Yānai Venṟi.

"The murderous elephant which won over the one which swallowed morsels of liquorice, broke the cross-rod that was put up as a guard and keeping awake even during night, got angry on seeing its own shadow and trampled on it."¹³⁹

Here then we see that elephants were trained to fight and such spectacular fight afforded immense amusement to the populace in times of yore.

The elephant was usually decorated and the bells on both sides of it ringed alternately as it trudged along.

139. "கஞ்சுகம் வாய்த்த கவளந்தன் கைக்கொண்ட
குஞ்சரம் வென்ற கொலைவழம்—துஞ்சா
துழலையும் பாய்ந்திறுத் தோடாது தான்
னிழலையும் தான் சுனிக்கு சின்று."

(பு. வெ. மா.)

- “கயிறு பிணிக்கொண்ட கவிழ்மணி மருங்கில்.” (புறம். 3)
 “உறழ் மணியா னுயர் மருப்பின.” (புறம். 22)
 “படுமணி யிரட்டும் பாவடிப் பணைத்தாள்.” (புறம். 72)
 “மருங்கின படுமணி யிரட்ட.” (புறம். 161)
 “தாடாழ் படுமணி யிரட்டும் பூதுதல்.” (புறம். 165)
 “படுமணி மருங்கிற் பணைத்தாள் யானை.” (புறம். 351)

This bell has been so closely associated with the animal that it has given birth to a common proverb viz. “யானை வரும் பின்னே மணியோசை வரும் முன்னே” This proverb suggests the aberration in the mind before the advent of the actual end.

The jewel that usually adorns the forehead of an elephant is known as the *ōḍai* otherwise called also *chūḷi*. In *Purapporul*—*Venbamalai* (65) we are told that the celestials were used to welcome and offer feast to those who died after killing the elephant in the battle-field, as it was considered a marvellous feat by itself. In *Tirukkural* we have the following couplets.

- “கைவேல் களிற்றொடும் போக்கி வருபவன்
 மெய்வேல் பறியா நகும்.”
 “ஒருகை புடைய தெறிவலோ யானு
 மிருகை சுமந்து வாழ்வேன்.”

The purport of the stanzas is follows :—

The hero or the valiant fighter who threw his javelin on an elephant, having been rendered empty handed and finding no spare arms, plucked the javelin that pierced his chest and started again for the attack.

“Will I stoop to hurl my javelin on the elephant which has only one hand (meaning the trunk). I, who

am gifted with two hands. The word “சுமந்து” here is very expressive and full of import. It bespeaks the uselessness of the hands which lie idle and prove a mere burden, the hands that do not find a proper adversary to fight against.

Kings and rich men were used to be seated on the back of elephants and riding was considered very noble and dignified. In Purānānūru (3) we have the following line.

“பெருங்கையானை யரும் பிடர்த்தலை யிருந்து.”

‘Being seated on the neck of the elephant with the big trunk.’

The vaishnava saint Tirumangaiālar in one of his stanzas despises the sovereignty when he says.

“மத்தமதயானைக் கழுத்தகத்தின் மேலிருந்து.”

This will show that the elephant ride was often associated with the possessor of the highest wealth in the land. In Naladiyar we have the following.

“Those who led the army as the chief generalissimo in the front line of fight, seated on the backs of elephants and sheltered by the regal parasol, thg very moment the effect of their good deeds or the past good karma is exhausted, will beg for alms beine deprived even of their wives by their adversaries.” 140

140. யானை யெருத்தம் பெரலியக் குடைகிழற்கீழ்
சேனைத் தலைவராய்ச் சென்றோரும்—ஏனை
வினையுலப்ப வேறாகி வீழ்வர் தாம்கொண்ட
மனையானை மாற்றார் கொள.

It was further usual in those days to cover the edge of the tusk with metal covers or Pūn.

இருப்புமுகஞ் செறித்த வேந்தெழில் மருப்பிற்
கருங்கை யாணை (புறம். 350)

The elephant with the strong black trunk and upraised tusk with the iron-cover.

இருப்புமுகஞ் செறித்த வேந்தெழின் மருப்பின்
வரைமருள் முகவைக்கு வந்தனன் பெரும (புறம். 370)

“Oh Lord! I have come here for receiving as present the animal which resembles a hill and which has a lofty and beautiful tusk covered with an iron ring or cover.

The jewel that adorned the face of the elephant was called odai.

“பொன் னோடை புகராணி நுதல். (புறம். 3)

“ஒளிதிகழோடை பொலிய.” (புறம். 161)

“அண்ணல் யாணை யணிந்தபொன் செயோடை.”
(புறம். 326)

The must or rut of the elephant is often spoken of in literature as a special feature of the animal

“துன்னருந் திறற் கமழ் கடாம்.” (புறம். 3)

With the sweet-smelling rut and unapproachable valour.

“தேன்சுதைந்த வரைபோல மிஞ்ஞுர்க்குங் கமழ்கடாம்”
(புறம். 22)

The sweet-smelling rut where the honey comb got disturbed.

“வரிஞ்ஞுர்க்கும் வாய்புகு கடாம்.” (புறம். 93)

The rut that flows into the mouth and that is being infested with humming flies.

The women of the hilly-parts used to pound millet and other grains with the pestles fashioned out of elephant's tusks.

“The women of the hills invite their fellow-women to pound bamboo rice with the tusk of the murderous elephant, chanting or singing the Vallaipāṭṭu, which was a song in praise of a hero, sung by a woman while husking or hulling grain.¹⁴¹ In Tiruvalluvar-mālai we have a verse the purport of which is as follows:—

“Oh Lord of the fertile land where the domesticated house hen sleeps listening to the Vallaip-
pāṭṭu.¹⁴²

In Kurinjikkali we have the following description:

“Come on maid, we shall sing the Vallaipāṭṭu, put the bamboo rice in the mortar improvised from the rock and pound the same with the elephant's tusk as the pestle and the leaves of the sembu¹⁴³ as the sieve or winnow.¹⁴⁴

141. “அவன்றிறங்
கொல்யானைக் கோட்டால் வெதிர்நெற் குறுவாயாம்
வள்ளையகவு வம்வா.” (கலித். 42)

142. மனையளகு வள்ளைக் குறங்கும் வள்ளாட.
(திருவள்ளுவ மாலை.)

143. Colacasia Indica.

144. கோடுலக்கை யாக நற்சேம்பினிலை சுளகா
ஆடுகழை நெல்லை யறையுலிற் பெய்திருவாம்
பாடுகம் வாவாழி தோழி.

Another fact about the elephant is that it usually brings forth only one cub at a time every four years, In Puram 130 we have the line.

“நின்னாட் டிளம்பிடி யொருசூல் பத்தீனுமோ.”

The poet Muḍamociar eulogises his patron Āy in the above line. He asks him here “how is it there is an abundance of elephants in your kingdom. Is it because every elephant in your land gives birth to ten cubs at a time.” Of course we see the hint that elephants bring forth only one at a time. In a stray stanza in Nītinūl, we find the following idea.

“It is better to bring forth a wise and intelligent son instead of a number of foolish or ignorant children. What avails the pig giving birth to many at a time? Can it ever hope to equal the elephant cub?”

A very instructive stanza appears in Puram which runs as follows :—

“காய்நெல் லறுத்துக் கவளங் கொளினே
மாரிறை வில்லதும் பன்னாட் காகும்
நூறுசெறு வாயினும் தமிழ்த்துப்புக் குணினே
வாய்ப்பு வதனினும் கால்பெரிது கடுக்கும்
அறிவுடை வேந்த னெறியறிந்து கொளினே
கோடியாத்து நாடுபெரிது நந்தும்
மெல்லியன் கிழவனாகி வைகலும்
வரிசை யறியாக் கல்லென் சுற்றமொடு
பரிவுதப வெடுக்கும் பிண்ட நச்சின்
யானைபுக்க புலம் போலத்
தானுமுண்ணான் உலகமுங் கெடுமே.” (புறம். 184)

This fine stanza in which Pisirandayar advises his royal friend Pāndian Arivudainambi tells us as follows :—

If the paddy is taken in morsels, even the crop or produce of land less in extent than a mā ($\frac{1}{4}$ of a kāṇi) will feed the elephant for a number of days; but if the animal grazes of its own accord, even if it be 100 acres, the paddy grains trampled by the legs will be greater than those that actually get into the animal's stomach. In the same way if the king is thoroughly conversant with the proper way of collecting the revenue, his country will earn for him crores and crores and itself prosper. If, however the king allows himself to be encircled by ministers and others who will simply bow to the king's will, without asserting themselves by giving him proper and timely advice and proceeds to collect revenue in an unscrupulous and unrighteous way, neither he nor the land under his sway will benefit from his action and his thoughtless act will resemble the act of the elephant.

It was already observed in the course of this essay that the elephant had been classed as a Karupporul of the Kurinji or the hilly tract. The ancient grammarians have specified a certain Uripporul to each of the five land-divisions viz. Mullai, Kurinji, Palai, Marudam and Neydal and the Uripporul or distinctive erotic mood or act in love appropriate to the Kurinji land is Puṇardal and Puṇardal nimittam, i. e. Sexual union and all that leads to it. A king or prince unrivalled in wealth and beauty goes a-hunting and in the course of the hunt comes across a beautiful young girl, the paragon of her sex well endowed with all things. Both gaze at each other, love each other and providentially unite according to the Gandharva form of marriage. The hunting prince used to accost her under the pretext of having let slip an elephant with the words "Oh Damsel! Did

you see any elephant with an -arrow sticking to its body, passing by this side. Of course this will elicit a reply from the lady-love or her maid and other things will be described in Agapporul Ilakkanam." Hence Yānai Viṇādal or Vēlam Viṇādal is one of the several turais or sub-themes of the Kovai prabandam.

“உருவ வல்விற் பற்றி யம்பு தெரிந்து
செருச்செய் யானை சென் னெறிவினாய்ப்
புலக்குர லேனற் புழையுடை யொருசிறை
மலர்தார் மார்ப னின் றோற் கண்டோர். (அகம். 82)

These are the words of the lady-love who confides everything concerning her love for the hero to her bosom-friend the maid, Those who behold the hero with the flower wreath in his chest standing on a portion of the millet field, holding a beautiful and strong bow with choice arrows and making enquiries about an elephant which might have passed that way. The query here will be found quite appropriate as the elephant was the Karupporul of the Kuriñji land.

In Kuruntogai (100) the foresters or the hill-men are said to sell tusks of elephants that they have caught in order to make their living. The purport is as follows :—

“The lofty hill of the Kolli range that is under the rule of Ori with the strong bow, where the famished families of hilly parts full of Kāndal flowers, sustain themselves by selling the tusks of the fiery-eyed elephant.”¹⁴⁵ Thus it will be seen that the tusks

145. “காந்தளஞ் சிலம்பிற் சிறுகுடி பசிப்பிற்
கடுங்கண் வேழத்துக் கோடு நொடுத்தாண்னும்
வல்வில் லோரிக் கொல்லி நெடுவரை. (குறுந். 100)

were generally sold by the hill-men. In Perumpāṇāruppāḍai we have the following lines re-the elephants' mode of eating.¹⁴⁶

The male elephants that expend their wrath by trying to extricate themselves from the pillars on which they have been enchained and the female ones with long trunks touching the ground, drop out the mouthfuls or morsels of food seasoned with ghee, when the female monkeys big with young try to steal them during the unguarded moments of the mahouts. It will be seen here that the food scattered by the elephant while eating will be quite sufficient to feed a number of monkeys. Of course the elephant may not care for it for as the lines say,

“வாங்குங் கவள த்தொருசிறிது வாய்தப்பின்
தூங்குங் களிஞ்ஞ துயருறு—ஆங்கதுகொண்
டுரு மெறும்பிங் கொருகோடி யுய்யுமால்
ஆருங்கிளை யோடயின்று.” (நீதிநெறி. 38)

The he-elephant that never stands still but ever moves to and fro when tethered to a pole will not care or feel sorry if a mouthful or morsel of food served to it, slips or falls on the floor; but the scattered food will be quite sufficient to feed the mouths of millions of ants with their kith and kin.

Again from the Perumpāṇ we learn that the covers or Pūṇ for the tusks of elephants were made in those days by the iron-smith.

146. ‘காழோ ரிகழ்பத நோக்கித் தீழ்
நெடுங் கையானை நெய்ம்மிதி கவளம்
கடுஞ்சூன் மந்தி கவருங், காவிற்
களிறு கதனடக்கிய வெளிறில் கந்தின்.

(பெரும்பாண். 393-96)

“பெருங்கை யானைக் கொடுத்தோடி படுக்கும் கருங்கைக்
கொல்லன்” (பெரும்பாண். 436-7)

In Kurunthogai we find the following fine description.

The lady-love is love-sick and desires an immediate marriage alliance with the hero. The occasion is being delayed and she is restless when the lady-companion intervenes and pacifies her by passing some remarks on the conduct and behaviour of the hero.

“The young calf of the elephant with the big ankle which once used to play with the kurava urchins with small elbows and which afforded them amusement, now feeds upon the millet that is being guarded by them. Similarly the fond embraces of the hero have now begun to give the reverse effect and they are no longer enjoyable.

Here we see that the young children of the hill-tract used to play with the young elephant calves.

On the religious side also we see the elephant play a conspicuous part. It was already observed that every temple or religious mutt invariably possessed elephants and that during religious or royal processions, the elephant used to lead in the fore-front with Pūrṇakumbham or the howda as the case may be. During the Brahmōtsavam or the main festival in the Saiva temples, the deity of the place used to come on the back of the elephant vehicle through the main streets. The elephant is also one of the vehicles of Lord Muruga. Though the peacock

is generally said to be his vehicle the elephant by name Piṇimukham is also cited as another vehicle. In Tirumugāṛṛuppadai we have the following line:

“ ஓடாப் பூட்கைப் பிணிமுகம் வாழ்த்தி.” (திருமுரு. 247)

Having eulogised the Piṇimukam which knows no retreat in fight. In the foot-notes the commentator says :

“ பிணிமுக மென்பது பிள்ளையார் பவனிவரும் யானை.”

Piṇimukam is the elephant on which Murūga rides while going round in Pavani or procession.

In Paripādal and Silāppatikāram we have the following lines :

“ பிணிமுக மூர்ந்த வெல்போ றிறைவ ” (பரி. 5, 2, 17, 49.)

“ பிணிமுக மேற்கொண்டு ” (சிலப். 24)

In Tirumugāṛṛuppadai we have the following lines also :

“ வைந்துதி பொருத வடுவாழ் திருநதல்
வாடா மாலை யோடையொடு துயல்வரப்
படுமணி யிரட்டு மருங்கிற் கடுநடைக்
கூற்றத் தன்ன மாற்றரு மொய்ம்பிற்
கால்கிளர்ந் தன்ன வேழமேற் கொண்டு.”

Mounted on the elephant which hurries fast like the sweeping hurricane, and which is so powerful and strong as not to be checked or controlled even by those who are endowed with the strength of the God of Death himself and on the sides of which hang the bells which rang alternately as the animal passed along and on whose head which bore the stamp of the elephant hook, shone the golden wreaths.

In Maduraikkāñji we have the following fine description of an elephant

“ விழுச் சூழிய விளங் கோடைய
கடுஞ் சினத்த கமழ் கடாஅத்
தளறு பட்ட நறுஞ் சென்னிய.”

“The elephant is the vehicle of Indra and is specially worshipped on the Dasara day. It is also believed that there are eight sacred elephants posted at the eight cardinal directions (Ind. Ant. 44, p. 83). The names of these are E. Iravatham, S. E. Pundarikam, S. Vāmanam, S. W. Kumudam, W. Anjanam, N. W. Putpatantam, N. Sārvābaumam, N. E. Supra, dipam. Their mates are respectively. Appramin, Kapilai, Pingalai, Anupamai, Tāmraparaṇi, Sudanti, Anjanai and Anjanavati.

வரை மருளுமுயர் தோன்றல
வினை நவின்ற போர்யாளை
சினஞ்சிறந்து களனுழக்கவும்.

(மதுரைக். 43-48)

The elephant with the face-band or ornament and the gold plate, full of fury and with the head filled with mire formed by the incessant flow of rut and well-trained in the art of warfare, kills many a hero in the battle-field rendered red by the blood of those who fell in it.

In the same work we have the following lines:

“ இருபேராயமொடு, இலங்கு மருப்பிற்
களிறுகொடுத்தும்.”

Lavishing elephant gifts in herds, cubs, she-elephants and also male elephants with bright shining tusks.

“ களிற்று மாய்க்குங் கதிர்க்கழனி.”

The fields in which the paddy or the corn growth was so tall as to hide elephants grazing in them.

The Mullaippattu another poem in the anthology known as the Pattuppattu has the following description, the purport of which is as follows :—¹⁴⁷

The elephant is considered divine because it is the Vehicle of Indra and because its head was fixed on the head of Ganapati. At the time of celebrating a coronation ceremony an elephant is worshipped. There is a tradition that in ancient times the coronation waters were poured over the king by a she-elephant. (Ind. Ant. 46, p. 150).

In the street lined regularly by thatched roofs there stood the elephant in the village square with rut overflowing its face as a guard. It did not eat the sugar-cane mixed with other edibles but on the other hand wiped its face with them and deposited them on its trunk, when the youthful mahouts pricked them with their iron-hooks goading them to action, pronouncing some Sanskrit words. It will be seen from this, that in important squares or crossways in towns, elephant guards were located in ancient times. The reader may be reminded here that the Puranas and the Kavyams often refer to the elephant guards

147. உவலைக் கூரை ஒழுகிய தெருவிற்ப்

கவலை முற்றங் காவனின்ற

தேம்படுகவுள சிறுகண் யானே

யோங்குநிலைக் கரும்பொடு கதிர்மிடைந் தியாத்த

வயல்விளையின் குளகுண்ணுது நுதறுடைத்

தயினுனை மருப்பிற்பற் கையிடைக் கொண்டெனக்

கவைமுட் கருவியின் வடமொழி பயிற்றிக்

கல்லாவினே ஞர்கவளங் கைப்ப.”

(முல்லைப். 29-36)

of the cardinal directions of the world and that Ravana the King of Lanka had once a very tough fight with them in the course of his Dig Vijayam.

In the Malaipadukadām another poem included in the Pattuppāṭṭu we have the following idea.

“The huge uproar of the mahouts who tried to soothe the elephants with their stray Jargon, the elephants which got entangled in the eddies of the jungle-stream and tie them in the posts intended for them.”¹⁴⁸

In Agananuru we have the following description. “The clouds that became barren by showering water just like the elephant, sleepless, broad-footed and bigmouthed which with the diminution of rut became less furious and less useful,”¹⁴⁹

A reference was already made to the extraordinary ability of the Sangam bards in drawing metaphors and similies from nature and its environs. The keen observation of the ancient Tamil poet will be seen in the following lines :—¹⁵⁰

148. “நெடுஞ்சுழிப்பட்ட கடுங்கண் வேழத்
தூவுச் சினந்தணித்து
பெருவெளிப் பிணிமார் விரவுமொழி பயிற்றும் பாகர்.”
(மலைபடு. 326)
149. “படாஅப் பைங்கட் பாவடிக்கய வாய்க்
கடாஅ மாறிய யானைபோலப்
பெய்துவறிதாகிய பொங்குசொற் கொண்மூ.” (அகம். 125)
150. நெடுவிளிக் கோவலர் கூவற் றோண்டிய
கோடுவாய்ப் பத்தல் வார்ந்துகு சிறுகுழி
நீர்காய் வருத்தமொடு சேர்விடம் பெருது
பெருங்களிறு மிதித்தவடி யகத்திரும் புலி
யொதுங் குவன கழிந்த செதும்ப லீர்வழி
செயிர்தீர் நாவின் வயிரியர் பின்றை
மண்ணூர் முழுவின் கண்ணகத் தசைத்த
விரலூன்று வடுவிற் றோன்றும்.
(அகம்.)

The lady love who stood separated from the hero talks as follows to her maid.

“Let him who affectionately dressed my dark hair telling me that a life absolutely spotless and one spent without begging of others could be effected only by wealth, accomplish his mission successfully though it is my lot to suffer. In the parched up desert which the hero is soon to cross or trāverse, where the cow-herds used to dig in the sand and where on the foot-steps of the big elēphant which could not find water to quench its thirst, the tiger places its foot, so that the spot looked exactly like the finger impression seen on the sides of a Mridangam, which is used as an accompaniment to the vocal music of the singing pāṇan or bard.

The blowing of the wind on the bamboo trees has been compared to the breathing sound of the elephant while asleep.¹⁵¹

The elephant lying down with its trunk stuck in the ground has been likened to the ploughshare.¹⁵²

In Perumpānāṟruppāḍai we have the elephant in the lying posture likened to Viṣṇu in the recumbent pose.

“நீடுகுலைக்

காந்ஊஞ் சிலம்பிற் களிற்றுபடிந் தாங்கு
பாம்பணைப் பள்ளி யமர்ந் தோனாந் கண்”

(பெரும்பாண். 372-5)

151. வேர்ப்ணி வெதிரத்துக் கால்பொரு நாலிசை

கந்து பிணியானை யயர்வு யிர்த்தன்ன

வென்றாழ் நீடிய வேய்பிறங் கழுவம்.

(நற், 92)

152. வறனுறு காஞ்சில் வேழம்போல் மருப்பூன்றி நிலஞ்சேர

விறன்மலை வெம்பிய போக்கரு வெஞ்சரம்.

(கலித். 8)

Here the recumbent posture of Viṣṇu on his serpent couch has been compared to the elephant lying on the hill side full of Kāṇḍal flowers.

The following description of an elephant in rut appears in Maduraikkāñji.

“The ruttish elephant which, infuriated on hearing the sound of the conch, murders the man with the hitting rod, throws aside the mahout or the rider, breaks the fetters that enchain the legs, just like the ship that whirls round and round in the eddy, struggling against the anchor iron, blown up by the fierce gale or storm, tearing up the mast and the sails.”¹⁵³

This animal, perhaps on account of its big size and its frequent tendency to move to and fro even while tethered to a pole, has been compared to the Nāvay or the boat; we find the following in Naṛṇai.

“The boat fully equipped, launched on the sea, is compared to the elephant with those who goad it on its sides.”¹⁵⁴

153. பனைமீன் வழங்கும் வளைமேய் பரப்பினை
வீங்குபுணி நோன்கயிறீஇ யிதை புடையூக்
கூம்புமுதன் முருங்க வெற்றிக் காய்ந்துடன்
கடுங்காற் றெடுப்பக் கல்பொரு துரைஇ
நெடுஞ் சுழிப்பட்ட நாவாய் போல
விருதலைப் பணில மார்ப்பச் சினஞ்சிறந்து
கோலோர்க் கொன்று மேலோர் வீசி
மென்பிணி வன்றோடர் பேணாது காழ்சாய்த்துக்
கந்துநீத் துழிதருங் கடாஅ யானையும்
154. சிறையப்பெய்த வம்பிகாழோர்
சிறைபருங் களிற்றிற் பரதவ ரொய்யும்.

Similar to the above we have a description in Manimekalai.

Just as the elephant named, Kālavegam grew ruttish throwing away the goaders as well as the riders and ran helter-skelter like the boat or the vessel which had its mast-broken and ropes and riggings rent by the fierce gale.¹⁵⁵

In the Jivāka Chintāmony we find the following. "The boat sailed fast accompanied by the sound of the conches destroying in its passage the coral creepers, like the elephant that runs to the accompaniment of drums."¹⁵⁶

In the same work we have another description also akin to the above :—

Just as the boats dashed against one another, the ropes that fastened them to the anchor-stone or iron being cut, the elephants in war fought against one another so that their tusks clashed and emitted fire.¹⁵⁷

155. கூம்பு முதன்முறிய வீங்குபிணி யவிழ்ந்து
கயிறு கால்பரிய
மயங்கு காலெடுத்த வங்கம் போலக்
காழோர் கையற மேலோரின்றி
ஒருவழித் தங்காது
பாகும்பணையும் பருந்தின் பந்தரும் விளிப்பக்
காலவேகங் களிமயக் குற்றென. (மணி. 4, 30 etc.)
156. ஆடுகொடி யுச்சியணி கூம்பி னுயர்பாய்மூன்
றீடுபடச் செய்தினையரேத்த விமிழ்முநீர்க்
கோடுபறையார்ப்பக் கொழுந்தாட் பவழங்கொல்லா
ஒடுகளிறொப்ப வினிதோடி யதையன்மே. (சீவக. 501)
157. மாக்கடற் பெருங்கலங் காலின் மாறுபட்
டாக்கிய கயிறிரிந்தோடி யெங்கணும்
போக்கறப் பொருவன போன்று தீப்படத்
தாக்கின வாசுவாத் தம்முனென்பவ். (சீவக. 2231)

In another place in the same work we have the following line :—

“ பண்ணூர் களிதேபோல் பாயோங்குயர் நாவாய்.”
(சிறுந். 2793)

The vessel with the sails which resembled the well-decked or caparisoned elephant.

In the Tolkappiam we have the following quotation :—

“ களிறுங் கந்தும் போல நளிகடற்
கூம்புங் கலனுந் தோன்றும்.”
(தொல். உவமம். 37 உரை)

The vessel and its mast appeared like the elephant and its tether.

In Kurunthogai 54, we find a fine natural description that delights our hearts.

“ The green bamboo-branch let loose by the wild elephant, frightened out of its wits on hearing the humming sound of the sling, whirled by those who guarded the millet-farm, rising or rebounding abruptly like the angling-rod.” ¹⁵⁸

In the same work we have the line

“ அதவத்து
எழு களிறு மிதித்த வெருபழம் போல.” (குறுந். 24)

As a fig trampled upon by seven elephants- The point of comparison here is the depression of the

158. “ ஏனல் காவலர் கவனெலி வெரீஇக்
கானயானை கைவிடு பசங்குழை
மீனெறி துண்டிலி னிவக்கும்.”

(குறுந். 54)

mental spirits and the deterioration of the physique observable in the lady-love who felt awfully worried at the overstay of her lover in the place of his errand. The fruit trampled on by seven elephants is sure to be changed beyond recognition. Here we find the change in the lady-love also.

In stanza 112 of the same work we have the following description.

“The pleasure that my lover derived from me resembles the branch which was broken by the elephant but which hung on through its fibres to the tree without falling a ground.” 159

In Kalithogai we have the following lines spoken by the lady-love to her male-child :—

“ பவழம் புனைந்த பருதி சுமப்பக்
கவழமறியா நின்னைபுனை வேழம்
புரிபுனை பூங்கயிற்றிற் பையவாங்கி
யரிபுனை புட்டிலி னாக்கணீர்த் தீங்கே
வருக வெம்பாக மகன்.” (கலித். 80)

“Oh child! the elephant you are now dragging knows not any morsel of food, nor will it pounce upon the well-guarded fortwalls of the enemy. The elephant referred to here is simply the play things intended to amuse the child and keep him in delightful spirits.

159. “ பெருங்களிறு வாங்க முறிந்து நிலம்படாஅ
நாருடை யொசியலற்றே
கண்டிசிறோழியவ ருண்ட வென்னலனே.” (குறுங். 112)

In Agam 162 the flag floated on the back of an elephant has been compared to a hill-stream,

“கறிறணி வென்கொடி கடுப்பக் காண்வா

வொளிறுவன விழிநரு முயர்ந்து தோன்றருவி.”

(அகம். 162)

The hill-stream seen at a height shining like the Victory flag floated on the elephant's back.

The narrow path up the hill has been aptly compared to the scar or cicatrice formed by the rope tied on the elephant's back.

“யானைக் கயிற்றுப் புறத்தன்ன கன்மிசைச் சிறுநெறி.”

(அகம். 128)

In the hilly tracts it was a usual sight to see young elephants thirsting for water entering the village along with the grazing flock of bulls and cows.

“நீர்நசைக் கூக்கிய வயவல் யானை

வேணிற் குன்றத்து வெவ்வரைக் கவான்

ஊரான் கன்றெடு புஞ்சுநாடன்.”

(நற். 171)

It was a practice in those days to fill tubs with water and cover them with lids fitted with a mechanical device, for the use of cattle. The elephants however, feeling thirsty used to approach these troughs and drink the water stored in it after pushing aside the above lid.¹⁶⁰ Mention was made in the

160. வறன் பொருந்து குன்றத் துச்சிக்கவான்

வேட்டச் சிறூர் அகன்கட் கேணிப்

பயநீர்க் கொடுத்த மணிநீர்ப் பத்தர்

புன்றலை மடப்பிடி கன்றோடார

வில்லடிந் தூட்டின பெயரும்

கொல்களிற் நெருத்தல்.

(நற். 42)

previous pages that although the elephant has been classified as a Karupporul of the Kuriñji or the hill tract it was not unusual to find some of them in the pālai or the waterless tract adjoining the hill side. We have the following description in Aganānūru.

“In the pālai or the desert tract, the chief of the bold youngsters, not finding toddy for sale in the places occupied by the wives of the toddy-drawers, tried to pacify their children by showing them the white tusk of the wild ruttish elephant that they secured from their forest-hunt and comb or dress their hair.” From this we may infer that the children too of the above tract got addicted to drink like their parents and hence arose the need to appease them when no toddy was to be had. The white tusk was shown to them perhaps to assure them, that the moment toddy was to be had, no time would be lost to get it by exchanging the same for the tusk in their possession. It was observed in the previous pages that toddy was procured in exchange for the tusks of elephants.¹⁶¹

In Agam 212 we find the following description.

“அணங்குசா லரிவையை நசைஇப் பெருங்களிற்
றினம்படி நீறிற் கலங்கிப் பொழுதில்.” (அகம். 212)

When the hero due to his passionate love for that enticing wench got embroiled as the water of the lake where elephants bathe.

161. “அரியலாட் டியால்கு மணவரைப்பில்
மகிழ்நொடை பொருஅராகி நனைகவுட்
கானயானை வெண்கோடு சுட்டி மன்னெடு
புதல்வன் புன்றலை நீவும்.”

(அகம். 246)

In Kurunthogai we find the following interesting information regarding the elephant's taste.

“குளகு மென்றான் மதம் போலப்
பாணியு முடைத்தது காணுநர்ப் பெறினே” (குறுந். 136)

The hero addresses his friend who found fault with him for having been enamoured of a girl and tells him, that passion is likely to be roused on seeing things that excite it, just like the rut of the elephant which enhances by eating the liquorice leaves.

This same idea finds its echo in Jivakachintāmaṇi also.

While the poet sings the unequalled and unsurpassed valour of the hero Jivakan, he compares him to an elephant which has got hold of liquorice leaves; of course the liquorice here is the beautiful girl Gandharvadattai his bride.

The stanza runs thus :

“நாறுமும் மதத்தினாலே நாகத்தை யிரிக்குநாக
மாறிய சினத்ததன்றி யதிங்கத்தின் கவளங்கொண்டால்
வேறுநீர் நினைந்துகாணீர் யாவர்க்கும் விடுக்கலாகா
தூறிக் தேனெழுஞ் சோதைநம்பிக்கு மன்னென்றான்”

An elephant capable of vanquishing many of its own kind by its valour when possessed of the liquorice leaves and while in its fury, is not easily accessible and no one could wrest from it the above leaves. Similarly, the girl is the liquorice leaf and no other mortal on earth can dare extricate or wrest her from the strong hand of Jivaka.

In Perumpāṇ, the cocoanut is said to resemble in respect of its rough surface the body of the elephant

which resembles a hillock in its huge size and has legs like the mortar.¹⁶²

In another stanza we find the following description :—

“ பல்லோர் துஞ்சும் நள்ளென் யாமத்
தூவுக் களிற்றுபோல் வந்திரவுக் கதவமுயறல்
கேளே மல்லேம் கேட்டனம் பெரும.”

The lady-love's maid encounters the hero and tells him of the strict vigilance to which the lady-love is subjected and adds that she really heard the rap of the door during midnight, the rap that resembled the one usually made by the wild elephants, but that she purposely stayed away from approaching him because of the strict guard.

The domesticated elephant often wears bells on either side of it.

“ கவிற்று பிணிக்கொண்ட கவிழ்மணி மருங்கு ” (புறம். 3)
“ உறழ்மணியா னுயர் மருப்பின ” (புறம். 22)
“ படுமணி யிரட்டும் பாவடிப் பணைத்தாள். ” (புறம். 72)
“ மருங்கிற் படுமணி யிரட்ட. ” (புறம். 161)

The elephant was usually tied to a strong pole or tether. The following illustrative stanza is from *Puraṇānūru*.

The elephant with the oscillating or the waying trunk, with the head upright, bells the rings of which alternate, long tusks, face-ornament in the shape of

162.

“ கறையடிச்

குன்றுறழ் யானை மருங்கு லேய்க்கும்

வண்டோட்டுத் தெங்கின் வாடுமடல் வேய்ந்த

மஞ்சள் முன்றின் மணநாறு பட ப்பை ” (பெரும்பாண் 351-4)

the crescent moon, fierce look, broad feet, swollen neck, with rut hovered in by flies flowing down as the honey in the hills, and with pure water dropping down from the big heads, very strong and young, tethered to a strong pole, moving to and fro.¹⁶³

The elephant's tendency is often to move to and fro or on the sides when tied to a pole. Hence the proverb “யானை அசைந்து நின்னும் வீடு அசையாமல் தின்னுட”. The elephant will consume food moving to and fro while the house will consume money and materials without moving.

The rut or must of the elephant is said to be smelling and hence hovered in by flies.

“வரிவண்டார்க்கும் வாய்பு தகடாம்.”

The rut that flows into the elephant's mouth and hovered in by the coloured flies.

பூநாறு கடாஞ் செருக்கி.

(மணி. 19—22)

The overflowing rut sweet—smelling like a flower.

“புணர் மருப்பி யானையின் புயல்கொண் ழும்மத

மணமகள் கழிப்பென நாறும்.”

(சீவக. 1621)

The rut flowing from three parts of the elephant's body, with double tusks, which smells like the tresses of a bride-filled with fragrant flowers.

163. தூங்குகையா னேங்குநடைய

ஷுழ்மணியா னுயர்மருப்பின .

பிறைறுதலாற் செறனேக்கின

பாவடியாற் பணையெருத்தின

தேன்சிறைந்த வரைபோல

மிஞிரூர்க்குங் கமழ்கடாத்

தயறுசோரு மிருஞ்சென்னிய

மைந்துமலிந்த மழகளிறு

கந்துசேர்பு நிலைஇவழங்க.

(புறம். 22)

In a stanza in *Kambaramayanam* we find the following description :—

An elephant in rut smelling or scenting the flowers of the *Ezhilaippalai* which emitted a smell like its own rut, discarded the iron-hook and trampled on the leaves tearing them to pieces. It will be interesting to note here that the leaves of the *Ezhilaippalai* used to smell like the elephants' rut.¹⁶⁴

In *Perumpāṇārrupadai* we find the following description.

“The elephant which exhausted its wrath on the pole to which it was tied was supplied with mouthfuls of rice; the monkeys big with young for the first time, stole them away taking the mahouts unawares.”¹⁶⁵

The intimacy or affection of the tusker to the she-elephant was already noticed.

“வாழையோங்கிய வழையமை சிலம்பிற்
றுஞ்சுபடி மருங்கின் மஞ்சுபடக் காணாது
பெருங்களிறு பிளிறுஞ் சோலை.” (நற். 222)

164. பார்த்த யானையிற் பதங்களிற் படுமதநாறக்
காத்த வங்குசு நிமிர்ந்திடக் கால்பிடித்தோடிப்
பூத்த வேழிலைப் பாலையைப் பொடிப்பொடியாகக்
காத்தி ரங்களாற் றலத்தொடும் தேய்த்ததோர் களிறு.
(கம்பரா. வரை. 7)

165. காழோ ரிகழ்பத நோக்கிக் கீழ்
நெடுங்கையான நெய்ம்மிதி கவளம்
கடுஞ்சூன் மந்திகவருங் காவிற்
களிறு கதனடக்கிய வெளிறில் கந்திற்
றிண்டேர் குழித்த குண்டுநெடுந் தெருவில்.
(பெரும்பாண். 393-7)

The grove or the grotto where the huge male-elephant not finding its mate because of the intervening snow or frost that concealed it from view, roars aloud in the hills, overgrown with plantains and curapunnai (long leaved two-repalled gāmboge).

The following stanza in Narṇinai by Mutuvēnkannanar, will be found very interesting. The hero visits his lady-love clandestinely during day time. Already this visit was commented upon by the people. Hence the maid of the lady-love told the hero that it would be better if he turned up there under cover of night and that if he was willing to do so he should give as an assurance the garland he wore, incidentally expressing her disapproval of that act and finally exhorting him to get her lady-love married at the earliest opportunity as such secret visits had become the subject of unfair comments. The subtle way in which the maid effects this is seen below.¹⁶⁶

“Oh! chief of the hilly tract, where, on the banks of the mountain-pool, small-eyed elephants of both sexes had their hearty union and discarding or disliking the hill-plaintain, ate the sweet jack-fruits of the red-bottomed jack trees, causing the natives of the tiny village with bamboo fences, to raise a huge uproar.

166. “சிறுகண் யானைப் பெருங்கை யீரினம்

குளவித் தண்கயங் குழையத் தீண்டிச்

சோலை வாழை முனைஇ யயலது

வோல்வேலிச் சிறுகுடி யலறச்

செங்காற் பலவின் தீம்பழ மிசையும்

மாமலை நாட. தாம நல் கென

வேண்டுதும் வாழிய வெந்தை வேங்கை

வீயுக விரிந்த முன்றிற்

உல்கெழு பாக்கத் தல்கினை செலினே.”

(நற். 232)

The inner meaning of these lines is here worth noting. The maid says that the hero and the heroine represented by the male and the female elephants had their cherished union through the Gāndharva form, that the heroine, owing to the censures that were budding then, hated or condemned the kaḷavu or the clandestine form and checked the censures that were gradually passed by the neighbours and that under the circumstances, the only proper way left to the hero was to wed the lady-love in open wedding. The last two lines of the stanza will indicate that the time was quite opportune to celebrate the wedding as the Vēngai tree had blossomed forth. Here it may be noted that the season when the Vēngai sprouts forth flowers was the very period when marriages were celebrated in those days.

Similar inner meanings abound in the stanzas composed by the Sangam poets and it will prove an unfailing source of perennial pleasure for scholars to read into these stanzas and catch the underlying meaning or import.

In the foregoing pages, an attempt has been made to give all available facts respecting the elephant. Reference was also made to the puranic legend relating to the eight elephants at the end of the cardinal directions of the world. The chief of them is Airāvataṁ, the animal vehicle of Indra, the Lord of the East. Indra was worshipped regularly in the old Tamil land and we find references to it in Silappadikāram and the Maṇimēkalai. He had temples erected to him as well as to his vehicle the white elephant. The latter was known as the Airāvatakkōttam.

“வால்வெண் களிற்றரசு வயங்கிய கோட்டத்து”

(சிலப். 5, 143)

“அமர்தருக் கோட்டம் வெய்யானைக் கோட்டம்”

(சிலப். 9, 9)

But the worship no longer continues and it appears to have discontinued at a very early date. Nowadays we find simply effigies of the elephant put up by devotees by way of fulfilling their vows, in the front of the Sasta temple or the temple dedicated to the minor deity in the Tamil land known as the Aiyānār.

It was also observed that the elephant played a conspicuous part in the fights in olden times. Paraṇi is one of the 96 kinds of minor Prabhandams in Tamil literature. The Tamil grammar expressly states that this work was usually composed to celebrate the signal victory of a king or chief who proved his prowess by killing not less than one-thousand elephants in the fighting field.¹⁶⁷ Kalingattupparaṇi eulogising the daring feats of Karuṇākara Tondamān the generallisimo of Kulōttunga I and Takkyākappaṇi are instances of war or heroic ballads.

The huge size of the elephant as well as the appearance of its different limbs or parts have given rise to many words that are even now current in the Tamil land. Some plants have been named after this animal as for instance; Yāṇaikkarṇālai (century plant), Yāṇai-c-cīrakam (Chinese Anise பெருஞ்சீரகம்), Yāṇaittipali (Elephant pepper), Yāṇaiṇerīnji (பெரு

167. யானையாயிர மமரிடை வென்ற
மானவனுக்கு வகுப்பது பாணி.”

நெருஞ்சி), Yāṇaivālai, Yāṇai mañcaḷ etc. A big type of fish goes by the name of Yāṇaimīṇ and Yāṇai-mukavōṭam is a boat with an elephant-shaped prow. The course of the elephant or the rook in a game of chess is known as the Yāṇaiyaḍi and the large-sized square brick, used in flooring is known as the Yāṇaiyāḍikkal, Nay, Yāṇaippuḷukan is the name given to a great and deliberate liar. The name Yāṇaimalai, one of the famous ranges in the western ghats, derives its name from the fact that it looks like an elephant in the lying posture.

Some diseases that affect animals and things have been named after this quadruped. Yāṇaikkaṇ generally refers to the eyes, small in proportion to the size of the body, as those of an elephant, and a Cēra king of the Sangam period went by the name of யானைக்கட் மாந்தராஞ் சேரனும்பொறை. But it denotes also a disease that goes by that name causing spots on leaves and fruits. Next Yāṇaikkay is a filarial disease in which the hand gets swollen. Elephantiasis or Yāṇaikkāl is a disease quite familiar in South India. We further hear of a terrible disease known as the Yāṇaittī (யானைத்தி) ¹⁶⁸, which causes insatiable hunger. In Maṇimēkalai we read of a woman named Kayachandikai who suffered from this dire disease and who ultimately got cured of it by Maṇimēkalai with her Amudasurabhi or the never-failing bowl.

Here a reference may be made to the Vēlam which has been generally construed as a disease that affects trees especially the wood-apple tree. When once the fruits are affected by this malady, the pulp

or the content gets dried up, even though the fruit for all outward appearances appears whole and intact. A false tradition has however originated from this and we find in Tamil works the phrase “வேழமுண்ட விளங்கனி.” This has been taken to mean that the elephant used to take in this wood-apple, swallow or digest its contents and cast aside the outer cover alone without even the slightest scratch. The commentator Nachinārkiṇiyar in his commentary on the 232nd stanza of Jivakachintāmaṇi has given a corrective to this fancied notion.

“வேழமுண்ட விளங்கனி” (சீவக. 1122)

“வேழமுண்ட வெள்ளில்” (சீவக. 1024)

Next, Yāṇai-c-cori is a kind of persistent itch or pry tetter, a scaly eruption.

The tooth of the elephant was already referred to. It is big and fairly round or oblong. Generally the elephants have six teeth, three below and three above on either side and it is said by experts that two sets actually work at a time while the third remains at rest. It is said that it has medicinal properties and that the most irksome headache known as the “மண்டைபிடி” vanishes by applying the paste obtained by rubbing the tooth in milk or water, to the affected part.

Yāṇaikaṛupam is the name given to the unduly long period of gestation in women.

We further hear that the prince poet Athivira-rama Pandyan was an expert in matters connected with the elephants and especially with regard to the

diseases that affect them. His work is perhaps still in the manuscript stage, and has not seen the light of day.

It is pleasant to recall here the observation or rather admonition of a Sangam bard who by way of explaining the inscrutability of Fate or Destiny, has given us the memorable lines.

“ யானே வேட்டுவன் யானையும் பெறுமே
குறும்புழ் வேட்டுவன் வெறுங்கையும் வருமே.”

The purport of the lines is as follows :—

“One who went for the elephant hunt may return with a good game of elephants while one who went after a very insignificant bird like the partridge may return empty-handed. What the poet wanted to lay stress here and bring home to the reader is very clear. One can get somehow what he is destined to get, however big the thing he wanted to have, and one cannot have the thing he wanted, however small it may be, if he is not destined to have it.

In the same strain we have some old proverbs that teach us practical wisdom. Some of them are “யானேக்கும் அடி சறுக்கும்”, “யானேமீதிருப்பவனைச் சுண்ணாம்பு கேட்பதுபோல்”, “வெண்கலக் கடையில் யானே புகுந் தாற்போல”, etc.

It would interest us here to note that in ancient times, the royal elephant was let loose in order to find a suitable occupant or successor for a throne rendered vacant by the death of a king who died without a heir. The story goes that Karikala Cola was elected king in the above manner.

In fine it will be seen that this huge animal lived in herds in the ancient Tamil land, that it was a very familiar one to the Tamilians, and that profuse references in all possible ways have been made to this quadruped by the ancient poets and bards. The fact, however, that this elephant lived gregariously in Southern India and also Africa, may lead one to the supposition that both these continents might have once been connected by land as the Lemurian theory will lead us to suppose, and that owing to the deluge that land portion known as Lemuria got submerged in the sea.

THE END



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