

FOUR LONG POEMS FROM SANGAM TAMIL



உலகத் தமிழாராய்ச்சி நிறுவனம்

INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE OF TAMIL STUDIES

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FOREWORD

An Idyll is a genre of poetry which portrays a beautiful, happy and peaceful scene of life usually of a country-side. The Idylls of Sangam age in Tamil are an answer to this description in a significantly broad sense. All the ten Idylls in Tamil, ascribed to Sangam or post-sangam age, are descriptively narrative in their structure and theme and highly reflective of the literary spirit rather than of mere conventions of the day. A direct and straight forward appeal to life in tune with nature in all its aspects, a love for the simple delights of day-to-day spectrum of human existence, an honest depiction of real events, a rare discipline of artistic organisation of the theme, dignity of structure and naturalness of presentation are the abiding qualities of Sangam works.

It is true that they were guided by certain norms of creative organization and poetic conventions, but they do not in any way suffer from any kind of superficial rhetorical extravaganza born of self-inspired ornamentation. The Idylls are a standing testimony to creative beauty and excellence. If they celebrate heroes, it is a matter of mere convention and not a matter of their subject.

What the English poetry achieves as late as the second half of the 18th Century and the first quarter of the 19th century under the influence of the Romantic Movement was already part of the Tamil literary consciousness and tradition, which had stood the test of time for about two thousand years. The Idylls offer pure and excellent poetry, suffused with a Wordsworthian aesthetic tranquility and a Keatsman melody of sensuous perception.

On the ten Idylls, translated into English by four gifted men of letters of their time, are carried in this new edition along with the two

scholarly essays by two scholar-critics. The brief critique by P. Sundaram Pillai deals appropriately with the chronology of theme and organization of the material, drawing our pointed attention to the content of Tirumurukarruppaṭai and Neṭunalvāṭai, while T.A. Ramalingam Chettiar in his essay makes a valid attempt at deciding the age of these Idylls, taking into a careful, logical consideration all the aspects that relate to the times, the chronological order of the arrangement of the entire gamut of Sangam and Post-Sangam works - right from Pattupattu, Eṭṭutokai and the five major epics in Tamil.

This edition by the International Institute of Tamil Studies, Chennai, of the four Idylls-1 Porunararruppaṭai, 2 Kurinṇipattu, 3 Ciṟupāṇarruppaṭai and 4 Maturaikaṇci is a timely addition to the series of its publications. We are indebted to the Journals, R.A.S. (Ceylon), 'Tamil Culture' (Vol. V. No. 1, Jan. 1956 : Vol.V. No. 3 & 4, Vol. VI. No. 1, Jan. 1957) and also to the 'Tamilian Antiquary' Vol. 1 No. 5 & Vol. No. XI). It surely fills up a gap long-felt. It is bound to be of not small help to the native as well as non-native scholars and students of Tamil all over the world.

Our sincere thanks are also due to the Hon'ble Minister for Tamil Official Language, Culture and Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowments. Dr. M. Thamilkudimagan and to Thiru. S. Ramakrishnan, I.A.S., Secretary to Government, Tamil Development - Culture and Religious Endowments Department. They have evinced perennial interest in the qualitative improvement of this Institute and have rendered help in all possible ways.

My sincere thanks to United Bind Graphics for printing the book neatly.

DIRECTOR

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THE Ten Tamil Idyls

BY

The Late Prof. P. SUNDARAM PILLAI, M.A.

AMONG the ancient Tamil classics, if we exclude works that are more or less distinctly grammatical or ethical the 'Ten Idyls' and the 'Five Epics' deserve the most prominent mention. The Idyls are, as the name implies, richly wrought descriptive poems in the most finished style. They are charming portraits of Nature in some of her pleasant and striking moods, and for soberness of thought and accuracy of representation they will bear comparison with anything in the whole realm of literature. In them critics will seek in vain for that idle accumulation of hyperbolical conceits which characterizes the Tamil poems of more modern times. It is to be hoped that as these immortal works of antiquity become better known and appreciated, that childish delight in riotous imagination which now passes for poetic taste will give way to a more soberminded and judicious estimate of the true functions of poesy.

The Idyls as approved and compiled by the ancient Madura College are ten in number, and they are as follows:-

1. *Thiru Murugattuppadai*, by Nakkirar, dedicated to Muruga, the war god.
2. *Porunarattuppadai*, by Mudattama Kanniar, dedicated to Karikala Chola.
3. *Panarattuppadai* (Minor), by Nattattanar, dedicated to Nalliyakodan.
4. *Panarattuppadai* (Major), by Uruttiram Kannanar, dedicated to Ilamtirayan.

5. *Mullaippaddu*, by Napputanar.*
6. *Madurai Kanji*, by Mamkudi Marutanar, dedicated to Nedum Cheliyan.
7. *Nedunal Vadai*, by Nakkirar, dedicated to Nedum Cheliyan.
8. *Kurinchippaddu*, by Kapilar, dedicated to Pirakattan, an Aryan king.
9. *Paddina Palai*, by Uruttiram Kannanar, dedicated to Karikala Chola.
10. *Malaipadukadam*, by Perum Kausiganar, dedicated to Nannan.

These are the names of the Ten Idyls, their authors, and the persons in whose honour they were composed; and they will probably all alike sound strange to modern ears. But the Tamil student will recognize among the authors named a few of the most celebrated poets of the Madura College. Of the eight authors mentioned, five are among those who are said to have conducted the famous sessions of that College when the immortal *Kural* was approved and accepted. These five are:- Nakkirar, Nattattanar, Uruttiram Kannanar, Mamkudi Marutanar and Kapilar.

But the names of the kings whose memory these princes of letters sought to embalm in their sweet verses are not, with perhaps a single exception, equally well-known to fame. The name of Karikala Chola, in whose honour two of the Ten Idyls are written, is of frequent occurrence in Tamil literature. It appears more than four times in *Kalingattu Parani*, a work that professes to celebrate a victory of Pallava Cholas over the Kalingas, whose dominions seem to have stretched all along the eastern coast from Madras to the mouth of the Mahanady. Reference to Karikala is found in the Skantham which is subsequent only to the *Periya Puranam*. Flattering mention is also made of him in *Pala Moli*. He is again the subject of adulation in many verses cited as illustrations in *Tandi* and other grammatical treatises. Though his praises are thus widely sung, his coins and inscriptions, which would have been of greater service in modern researches, do not appear to have been equally numerous. At any rate epigraphists and numismatologists have not yet succeeded in fixing his age. Various and conflicting conjectures have, however, been started regarding it. Mr. Wilson assumes that he was the father of

* [Pandit R.S.Vedachalam Pillai asserts that *Mullai-paddu* is dedicated to Nedumcheliyan, the hero of the succeeding two Idyls, viz. *Madurai Kanji* and *Nedunal-vadai*. Vide his short but excellent "Criticism on Mullaippaddu," in Tamil. Ed.]

Mangaiarkkarasi, the famous queen of Kun Pandia and the patroness of Sambanthar, but that apostle of Caiva has not a word to say of Karikala, from whose territories he must have come, if the hypothesis advanced has any truth in it. Mr Taylor preresents Karikala as the last of the Cholas and a mere protege of the contemporary Pandia;- a character utterly inconsistent with the hero whose victories are so uniformly chanted by the poets of his age. Others charge him with the persecutions that Ramanuja Achariar suffered about the year 1117, while Dr. Caldwell with equal confidence places him in the thirteenth century. Inquiring into the age of the *Kural* and connecting it with the traditional account of its acceptance by the College Board at Madura, the venerable author observes, "If any weight could be attached to this tradition, it would bring down the *Kural* considerably, for other traditions connect Nakkirar (who is always represented as the President of the College) with the reign of Karikala Chola who seems to have lived in the thirteenth century." We are not aware of any tradition that directly connects Nakkirar with Karikala Chola, but however that may be, it is simply preposterous to assign the thirteenth century to Nakkirar, after placing Kamban in the twelfth, with the chance of being shifted to the tenth in accordance with the well-known stanza prefixed to his *Ramayana*. This is not the place for entering into any of the controversies to which these several conjectures have given rise. But we may nevertheless be permitted to make the remark that the discussion seems mainly to owe its origin to the fact of there having been, in more recent times, several Chola princes who ruled under the honoured name of Karikala--a source of confusion so common in Indian chronology. My friend Mr. Venkayya, the assistant epigraphist, (now *Epigraphist to the Government of India*,) tells me that he has heard of three Karikala Cholas, though nothing has yet been done to fix the age of any of them. This is just what one might expect. The first having been a remarkable warrior and administrator his name, or rather his nickname, (for the name Karikala was given him only because he burned his foot through an accident) acted as a charm upon the people, and was assumed in consequence by several of his admiring successors.**

Since the names of the princes with whom the Idyls are associated

*Dr. Caldwell's *Comparative Dravidian Grammar*, p.131.

** [The date of Karikala is fully discussed by Mr. S. Krishnaswamy Aiyengar, M.A., in the preceding article, "The Augustan Age of Tamil Literature." pp.34, et seq. Ed.]

afford no clue to determine their age, we have for the present to be content with such flickering rays of light as literature and purely literary traditions may throw on the subject. Taking then the best known of the eight authors of the Ten Idyls, *Viz.*, Nakkirar, let us see what literary traditions have to say about his age. In the first place, the orthodox pundits have no hesitation in placing him long before the age of Sambandhar, the great apostle of Caiva. In support of this universal impression of Tamil scholars such considerations as the following may be urged:-- (1) There is such a difference in the style and the vocabulary of the two authors that scarcely any doubt can be entertained as to the long interval that must have separated the age of Nakkirar from that of Sambandhar. (2) Nakkirar is best known as the President of the Madura College, of which scarcely any trace seems to have existed at the time Sambandhar visited that ancient seat of learning. (3) Sambandhar's name is universally associated with the final downfall and disappearance of the Jains, while we find them flourishing in the days of Nakkirar and his fellow pundits, who make very prominent mention, as we shall see further on, of their churches and associations. (4) Sundara, the last of the apostles of Caiva, who is generally taken to have lived not long after Sambandhar, wrote a famous song entitled 'The Poets of true Piety', and all his expounders, from Nambi Andar Nambi downwards, agree in thinking that Nakkirar is the poet chiefly referred to in that well-known hymn. (5) It is interesting to note that Nachinarkiniyar, the learned Caiva commentator, quotes not a line from Sambandhar in any of his elaborate annotations, while he scruples not to enforce his remarks by apt citations from Manikkavacagar, who, too, seems to have lived after the Madura College had become extinct. It is obvious, therefore, that in the days of Nachinarkiniyar, Sambandhar's usage had not become sufficiently old to be authoritative. (6) The *Madura Stala Purana*,* which though not strictly historical, cannot be said to be purely fictitious, mentions as many as twenty-six Pandiyas, between Vamsha Segara, in whose reign Nakkirar is said to have flourished, and Kun Pandiya, whom Sambandhar is claimed to have converted from Buddhism. This would leave an interval of at least four centuries, if we allow an average of fifteen years for each of the twenty-six Pandiyas.

For these reasons, we do not hesitate to conclude that Nakkirar lived long prior to Sambandhar; and we shall probably be not far wrong if we estimate the interval between the two authors at three or four centuries.

* See also Taylor's Historical manuscript's, Vol. I. p.23

Now if we can by any means ascertain the age of Sambandhar, that of Nakkirar may be relatively fixed. It is well-known that Sambandhar converted Kun Pandia from Buddhism, and so contributed to the final overthrow of that religion in Southern India. The question then is, when did Kun Pandiya reign; and when was Buddhism finally over-thrown? To neither of these questions, has archaeology as yet given a satisfactory answer. Dr. Caldwell identifies Kun Pandiya with Sundara Pandia of certain inscriptions, and seeks to make out that Sundara Pandiya is none else than the Sender Bendi of Marco Polo, who flourished about the end of the thirteenth century. Mr. Nelson questions this conclusion, and rightly points out that as several princes ruled in Madura under the name of Sundara Pandiya subsequent to the days of Kun Pandiya, more cogent reasons than those adduced by the author would be needed to support the identification of Kun Pandiya with Marco Polo's Sender Bendi. For his own part, Mr. Nelson prefers to assign Kun Pandiya to the latter half of the eleventh century. "Supposing therefore," he says, "that Ramanuja was persecuted by Karikala, and that Mangaiarkarasi was the daughter of the latter, as alleged, it is very possible that Kun Pandiya reigned in the latter half of the eleventh century."* We cannot but admire the caution with which this sentence is written, but we must nevertheless demur to the conclusion, based, as it is, upon highly questionable assumptions.

Turning then once more to literary traditions, we find Sankara Achariar, whose period Sanskrit scholars are now pretty nearly agreed in fixing in the eighth century, has a *sloka* in his *Soundarya Lahari*, in honour of Sambandhar, or the "Dravidian Infant of Parvathi," as he there calls him. This would indicate not only that Sambandhar flourished long before Sankara, but also that the interval of time that separated the two was sufficient to surround the memory of the former with a halo of divinity. Even allowing for the abnormal rapidity with which apotheosis develops in tropical India, we cannot accept any interval less than two or three centuries as enough for a philosopher of Sankara's wide experience and well-known acuteness, to be led to its acceptance. It must be further remembered that Sankara differed largely from Sambandhar in his ultimate religious views, and was really a stranger to the Tamil people, since he won his fame chiefly in Upper India, and by writings that are entirely in Sanskrit.

Now if *Soundarya lahari* is accepted as a genuine production of

* Nelson's Manual of the Madura Country, Part III. Chapter ii. p.65.

Sankara Achariar, and it must be so assumed until very substantial reasons are shown to the contrary, the age of Sambandhar cannot but be earlier than the period of Sankara. The Hon'ble Mr. Justice Telang* adduces certain sound reasons for placing that period in the sixth century; but for our purposes, it is enough to assume the age usually assigned to him, viz., the eighth century. Allowing, then, an interval of two centuries, we arrive at the sixth century as the probable era of Sambandhar. That we are not claiming too high an antiquity for Sambandhar, and that if there be any error at all, the error is on the other side, will be evident from such facts as the following. In the first place, the pious Buddhist traveller, Hiuen Tsiang, who spent nearly sixteen years, from 629 to 645 A.D., in visiting all the provinces of India, and in studying the prospects of his religion in its birth-place, does not give any flattering report of Buddhism in the Tamil countries. Neither in Chola nor in Malakuta, which Dr. Burnell identifies with the delta of the Kavery river, does he note any remarkable Buddhist institution. To him the people of the former land "are dissolute and cruel," while those of the latter are "not fond of learning but wholly given to commercial pursuits." Hiuen Tsiang does not appear to have visited Madura at all, -- an omission altogether unaccountable, had it been still the stronghold of Buddhism that it was before the days of Sambandhar. In all probability, the Chinese traveller came into the Tamil province only after Caivism under Sambandhar had triumphantly overthrown the religion of Buddha."

* See the Indian Antiquary, Vol.xiii, p.95. According to Mr. J.F. Fleet, Sankara lived about 630-655 A.D. Ibid., Vol. xvi. p.41.

**[Tradition as well as the Stala-puranas of Madura say that Kun Pandian was converted from Jainism and the state religion was then Jainism and not Buddhism. It is also said that after the conversion of Pandian to Caivism, Sambandha caused the death of 8000 Jains who were persistent in their faith. Thus Jainism was rooted out from the Pandia country in the 7th cent. A.D. and this is pointed out by Sundaram Pillai himself when he says "Sambandhar's name is universally associated with the final down-fall and disappearance of the Jains;" but he, in subsequent pages, confounds Jainism with Buddhism. Buddhism was introduced into South India and Ceylon by Asoka in the 3rd cent. B.C. We see its ascendancy in the Tamil land, from the post-Sangam works, in the early centuries of the Christian era. About the 4th cent. A.D. Buddhism was overthrown by the great Caiva saint Manikkavacagar and it began to decline. In the 5th cent. Fa Hian, the Chinese traveller in India, saw the signs of the declension of his religion in the South. Two centuries subsequent when Hiuen Tsiang visited India, he went as far as Kanji but returned from there as he saw that Buddhism had already been swept away from the Pandia and Chola countries. Thus it will be seen that the religious struggle in the 7th cent. was not between Buddhism and Caivism but between Caivism and Jainism. Ed.]

Again Sundara-- the author of the hymn which celebrates the sixty-three Caiva saints, including Sambandhar-- was the companion of that Cheraman Perumal who is said to have so mysteriously disappeared from his country. Though the orthodox pundits are adverse to any identification of this pious Cheraman with the last of the Perumals, yet the similarity in the accounts given of the two is too strong to be accidental. But if there be any error at all in this identification, it would be once more only an error on the side of moderation. Assuming then that the Chera friend of Sundara was the last of the Perumals, we cannot but suppose that Sundara lived in the early part of the eighth century, the age usually claimed for the last of the Perumals. This accords well also with the local tradition in Malabar, which connects the *Kollam* era, with the destruction of a port called Kollam, subsequent to the flight of the last of the Perumals. That Sundara belonged to the earlier part of the century may be further inferred from the fact that, while he names several minor contemporary saints in his famous hymn, he has not a word to say of Sankara, who so thoroughly revolutionized the religion of his country. Now if Sundara lived in the early years of the eighth century, we have to assign to Sambandhar a period two or three centuries earlier. Such an interval alone can account for the reverence with which the former names the latter, and for the fact, that while Sambandhar's career met everywhere with stout opposition from the Buddhists, not one single anecdote has come down to us of such resistance to Sundara.

The third circumstance we would mention would settle the era of Sambandhar beyond all question, if only its truth could be fully ascertained. The present honoured head of the *Sambandha Muttam* at Madura claims to be the 114th in succession from the original apostle,* and if this assertion is true, we should reach very close to the fifth century, even allowing but twelve years for each of the deceased 113 representatives of the monastery.

On these grounds, we think it not unreasonable to assume that Sambandhar lived about the fifth century. At any rate, with the evidence before us, it is impossible to assign to him a period later than the seventh century.** We may therefore take the fifth and seventh centuries as

* Damodaram Pillai's *Viracholiam*, p.17. According to Mr. Nelson the present head is the 277th hereditary manager. Evidently the records of the *Muttam* must be imperfect when two such different results can be derived from them.

** [Prof. Sundaram Pillai has, on further research, assigned the opening of the 7th

marking the limits of his probable age. Now if Nakkirar, as already shown, lived two or three centuries before Sambanthar, it would follow that the age of our poet cannot be later than the fifth century, while it is quite possible that he lived two or three centuries earlier.

But the age of Nakkirar is not the age of all the Ten Idyls. Probably most of them were in existence in his days. The allegorical use he makes of the form of poetic composition, known as *attuppadaï*, would itself argue the later origin of his work. His *attuppadaï*, is most likely the last of the kind, and the collection of the Ten Idyls was perhaps made in his own time. We may therefore *tentatively* place the composition of the book of Idyls about the beginning of the Christian era.

Now passing to the poems themselves, we may note that five of the Idyls are of that form of poetic composition called *attuppadaï*, which, under the pretext of guiding a needy traveller to an open-handed and bountiful prince, describes in flattering terms the provinces and cities of the latter, and his prowess and position. It is generally put as if addressed by a minstrel, songster, or actor, who returns well loaded with presents from a generous prince, to a fellow minstrel, songster, or actor in search of a patron. Except the first, which is dedicated to the war god Muruga, the remaining four literally fulfil this description. The first named, 'The Guide to Muruga,' adopts this usual form of address to chant the praise of that god and to direct the pious-minded to his worship. This figurative and curious use of the original convention is noteworthy, as it helps to indicate the relative age of the works under consideration. Nakkirar could not have thought of making an allegorical use of this form of address, if he had not had several instances of the literal kind before him; and it is possible that some of the very works here grouped with his may have been the models from which he copied. Of the remaining five Idyls, four are erotic, viz., the 5th, 7th, 8th, and 9th; while the central idea of the sixth, or *Maduraikkanchi* is to direct attention to a world beyond the present.

But as in the case of all Idyls, it is not so much the central idea or

cent. A.D. as the date to Sambandha, in his work entitled "Some mile-stones in the History of Tamil Literature." And Rai bahadur V. Venkayya, in his *Introduction* to the Professor's work, suggests that, as the destruction of Vadapi took place probably in A.D.642, the middle of the century might be the date. See the *Tamilian Antiquary*, No.3. Ed.]

purpose that is of interest, as the imagery in which it is set, and the description of nature for which it serves as an occasion. 'The Guide to Muruga', the first of the Idyls, is certainly not the best, though it happens to be the only one now generally known to the public. In the general wreck of letters that followed the extinction of the Madura College, Muruga's name seems to have served as a life-boat to this work of Nakkirar and to have saved it from that underserved oblivion which overwhelmed its more illustrious compeers. It forms along with nine other minor works of Nakkirar a portion of the Eleventh Collection of the sacred hymns of the Caivas, and with the devotees of Muruga, it is a part of their daily liturgy. A miraculous story is told of the occasion that gave birth to this work. It is said that a certain giant was in the habit of dining upon one thousand men at a time, and that on a particular day, as only nine hundred and ninety nine were ready, Nakkirar was caught and added to the lot to make up the requisite number. But the mathematical giant was also somewhat puritanical, and so, after completing the number, instead of sitting down at once to breakfast, he foolishly went to perform his daily ablutions and thus afforded time for Nakkirar to compose the poem in praise of Muruga, who, moved by its pathos, appeared, at once on the spot, killed the fastidious giant and released the poet and his nine hundred and ninety-nine fellow prisoners.

Whatever may be its supernatural virtues, 'The Guide to muruga' is from a literary point of view inferior to many of its companion Idyls, and decidedly so to Nakkirar's own *Nedunavadaï*. It begins with a description of the delicate mountain fairies that go about dancing and singing in praise of Muruga's victories, and the fantastic furies, that with ears large enough for owls and serpents to sleep in, take delight in plucking out and eating the eyeballs of those slain in his battles. The poet then goes on to direct those who wish to abstract their attention from worldly concerns and to fix it on Muruga, to seek him in certain favoured places. The first of these is Thirupparamkunram, the hill in the vicinity of Madura,—the next railway station in fact on the way from Madura to Tinnelvely. It is described by the poet as west of Madura, though the hill is really to the south-west of the modern town. Madura is alluded to in glorious words, and reference is made to the ancient manner of indicating an impregnable fortress. "At the gates of Madura," says the poet, "is hoisted the flag of victory, and by its side sleeps the image of a girl with a leather-ball in her hands." The image was hung up to represent the enemies and as a challenge to them to approach the fortress. The place next mentioned is Thiruchiralavay, which is now

identified with Thiruchentoor. In this connection, the six faces and the twelve hands of Muruga with their occupations are described in vivid terms. The third place mentioned is Thiruvavin Nan Kudi. The commentator remarks that this is the ancient name of the place, which in the days of Avvaiyar came to be called Chittanvalvu,--a testimony of great value as showing the long interval that must have elapsed between Nakkirar and Avvaiyar, who is reckoned by Dr. Caldwell himself as a contemporary of Kamban, and is placed therefore in the twelfth century.* Here Muruga is said to hold a levee of all the gods and saints, which we may suspect to indicate a procession on ceremonial occasions. At any rate, the description of the emaciated saints with their saffron-coloured cloths and deer skins is suggestive of an earthly rather than of a heavenly scene. Avvaiyar also alludes to the place as a village remarkable for Brahmin piety. The place next noticed, viz., Thiruveragam, seems to have been an equally famous Brahmin colony. The Brahmins are described as uttering their prayers after their ablutions, and with wet cloths on their bodies, -- a habit still noticeable in villages on the banks of the Kavery and the Tambrapuran. Of course, no example of the rule, here extolled, of devoting the first forty-eight years of one's life to the study of the Vedas, can be now anywhere found. Thiruveragam** is generally identified with a village near Kumbaconam, though the commentator speaks of it as a village in the hilly districts, --a description not in the least applicable to the country about Kumbaconam. The poet then speaks of Muruga as taking a part in the festive dances of the mountaineers, clad in the green leaves of the forests. No particular place is here specified, but every hill is mentioned as the scene of such joyous mingling of gods and men.

But the concluding passage of the work is, perhaps, the best. It reveals some of the curious habits of the people of those ancient times, which are not yet altogether extinct. The sacrifice of goats on festive occasions, the hypnotic dances which accompany such festivities, the

* [There were two poetesses known by the name of Avvaiyar. The first was the Avvaiyar of the Sangam age who was brought up by a Pana family and who claimed a brotherhood with the sage Tiruvalluvar. Her poems are found in the "Eight Collections" of the last Sangam. The Second one was--the woman who did-- a self made woman unmarried, belonging to a Vaniya family of Urair, who came forward in her older age and was honoured by the name of Avvai. She was the contemporary of Kamban -the poet. Ed.] ** [Eragam is a place in the Western Ghats in the District of Madura. Ed.]

sacred groves and junctions of three or four streets, the spreading tree under which the village elders meet for transacting public business, the stones planted in pastures for cows to rub themselves against, are all mentioned as tempting situations for meeting Muruga; and most of these are still matters of interest in the out-of-the-way villages. The scene of the sacrifice is painted in detail, and it requires but little effort to identify many of the particulars with those which occur even to this day in remote rustic parts. A shed is put up with garlands of equal length hanging on all sides. A flag is hoisted with the head of a man and the body of a bird to frighten off unwelcome devils. The officiating priest wears a double set of cloths, mutters mantras, and begins the ceremonies with bending and raising the upper part of his body a certain number of times, having his hands so crossed as to touch his ears. He has a thread tied round his wrist, scatters flowers and fried paddy on all sides, kills a bull (according to the annotator it is only a goat,) and then, mingling with its blood rice and a little turmeric powder, offers the morsel with sweetmeats of different preparations to Muruga. With the burning of incense, an awful devil dance ensues, in the course of which the priest (or rather the priestess as it happens to be in this particular case) declares to the worshippers an indemnity from famine, epidemics, and war. In the hilly tracts of Travancore, such scenes are not at all rare, and the class of people who officiate at these ceremonies are still called Velan,—the very term used in the text. The poem closes by assuring the pious traveller of the favour of the deity, if the seeker after Muruga goes to any one of these places and duly worships him. There is nothing in the text or in the commentary to show that the hills described in the closing lines of the poem are the Pulney hills, though popularly supposed to be so, in order to make up the six camps of the war god, as they are enumerated at present. The poem, however, names only four particular spots sacred to that deity.

Such is the outline of the first of the Idyls, which is by no means the best of them. A glance at the poem will show how antiquated the style is. We will just mention but one or two of the archaisms with which the work abounds. One of the suffixes for forming the past participle from a verb is 'pu'; but it is so seldom used that even Kamban, in the very preface to his immortal *Ramayana* makes a blunder with it, using it as an infinitive instead of as the past participle. 'Nakkupu' means 'having licked' and not 'to lick' as Kamban would have it to mean. Now in Nakkirar's poem under notice, which contains but 317 lines in all, this suffix is used eleven times, and that in connections where there is not

the least difficulty, metrical or other, to justify the use of this rare form. Again, the repetition and elongation of the final vowel sound of a verb, called *alapedai*, to indicate the past participle, is but rarely resorted to in modern literature: but in the 317 lines of this poem it occurs thirty times. I shall not, however, try the patience of the general reader by going into such grammatical details. Turning then to the vocabulary of the poem, we find but thirty Sanskrit words even counting such common words as தாமரை (lotus), மனம் (mind), and மீன் (fish), as well as words so far altered and Dravidianized as முத்து (pearl), and உலகம் (world). Taking each line to have an average of five words the 317 lines of the poem do not show two percent of Sanskrit words. It may be interesting also to notice that even the ancient commentator, Nachinarkkiniyar, finds it necessary to point out different readings in the poem, in three or four connections, showing how long the work must have existed even before his days. The Puranic account of the birth of Muruga, as given by the commentator, differs in certain important particulars from the account now generally accepted. It seems not altogether impossible that Muruga was originally a Dravidian deity; and that in the course of time, when Aryan civilization found it expedient to adopt the cult of the independent nations over which it came to exercise its influence, a place in the Puranic mythology was found for the war god of the Tamils, as transformed and embellished by Aryan genius, just as in more recent times, Buddhistic institutions and even Buddha himself, under the name of Sasta,* came to be absorbed into Brahminism.

But we have tarried too long over the first of the Idyls, which as we have more than once remarked, is certainly not the best of the collection. We therefore pass at once to the *Nedunalvadai* of Nakkirar, the seventh in the collection of Idyls, promising to return to the intermediate ones in due course. Unlike 'The Guide to Muruga', *Nedunalvadai* or 'The Dreary Winter' is confined to purely mundane matters. It is written in honour of a king of Madura who passed under the name of Neduncheliyan, the hero of Thalaialanganam. Nothing is now positively known of this Pandia or of the victory with which his name is associated. His name does not find a place in any known list of Pandiyas, Puranic or other. At first sight it may be doubted whether it is a proper name at all. Cheliyan is but one of the many synonyms of Pandiyas, meaning literally the prosperous, and Nedu, meaning tall or great, seems to be but a honorific prefix. Probably the poets at the court of this Prince

* Sasta means literally a teacher, and according to Amara, the word is but a synonym of Buddha.

familiarly spoke of him by this soubriquet, exactly as the courtiers of Edward I knew him as Longshanks. According to the *Stala Purana* of Madura, the Pandiyan who reigned in the time of Nakkirar was one *Vamsa Segara*. But no recollection of his military glories seems to have survived at the time when that Purana was composed. But as the function of the *Stala Purans* is to relate only such occurrences as illustrate the *Lilas*, or the sacred amusements of the presiding deity of the city, no conclusion can be drawn from its silence on this point. Among the eulogies pronounced on the *Kural* when it was accepted by the College Board, there is a stanza attributed to *Ukkira Peru Valutiyar*, presumably the then king of Madura. May not Peru Valutiyar, be the same as Neduchelician? Both names convey the same idea-- the great Pandiya. But we leave such speculations to those who have the leisure and means for conducting them.*

Confining ourselves to the work in hand, we have every reason to believe that the patron of Nakkirar, whoever he was, was a powerful sovereign in his day, who by his indefatigable energy and indomitable valour won undying laurels for himself, and honour for his country. *Far and near, he was a terror to his enemies*. Vana viral Vel was dispossessed of his capital,--the flourishing town of Alumbil--because he was slow to acknowledge his allegiance to Nedunchelian. The thriving ports of Muthuvillil and Nellore ** were captured in no time. The princess of Kuttanad--a portion of Travancore east of the modern town of Alleppey--were among those who felt his prowess and wisely owned his sway to escape destruction. But it is his glorious victory at Thalai Alanganam that is universally associated with his name. If we are to believe Nachinarkkiniyar this victory was won against great odds. Two sovereigns like himself, Chera and Chola, and five feudatory princes, named Thitian, Eluni, Erumaiyuran, Inumgovonman, and Porunan, seem to have made a

* [Mr. S. Krishnaswamy Aiyengar adduces proofs to identify Neduchelian with Ugra-Pandiyan. Vide his article on the "Augustan age of Tamil Literature" pp.40 & 41. We accept this and are further of opinion that this Nedunchelician who was a very powerful warrior and was known as the 'terror to his enemies' is the "Kadum-Kon" of the last Sangam. Kadum-Kon and Ugra Pandian are synonymous terms. Ed.]

** Can this be the modern town Nelloor? The commentator is inclined to identify it with Saliyur a town of his own times. [Sali is synonymous to nel=paddy.]

combined effort to crush this Napoleon of ancient Madura, but all in vain. "Even their drums," says the author of Madurai Kanji, "were captured in this field of military Yaga or sacrifice to the Gods." A glorious description of this battle is found also in *Purrappattu* a rare classical work of great antiquity. It is impossible to doubt, with these facts before us, that Thalai Alaganam was the scene of a decisive victory, which at once raised the prestige of the Madura Country and stirred up the literary activity of its people. In all probability, Alaganam bore the same relation to the age of Nakkirar and his College, that the defeat of the Armada bore to the Elizabethan era of English letters. When more of the real history of these ancient times comes to be known, Alamkanam and the Madura College will be found to afford but another illustration of the well established induction that links the literary progress of a nation with its political pre-eminence. But whether more of the history of the age is likely to be known or not, this much is beyond question, that the hero of Alamganam was a restless warrior of the times, and that he had certainly more stern duties to perform than offering prizes for poems on the tresses of his lady-love, as the *Stala Purana* would have it. The poem of Nakkirar under notice itself bears ample testimony in this respect. It is in fact a prayer for the king's safe and quick return to the bosom of his queen, who passes restless nights in silent tears, because of the absence of her lord on the battle field.

It is one of these nights that the poet here undertakes to depict. The scene is laid in the bed-chambers of the palace; but the poet approaches it from the far off rural parts, to which the shepherds have removed their cattle with the first appearance of the monsoon. It is now the end of November, and the heavy clouds, having exhausted their first fury, are now practising, as the poet puts it, the gentler art of drizzling. But the weather continues cold, and the howling north winds are all the more fierce. The monkey on the tree shivers and contracts its limbs, and having given up its arboreal marches and depredations, now looks small indeed! The birds over-borne by the winds drop down in their flights : but they still make way as best as they can, to the shoals and shallow parts of the rivers, to which the fishes, unable to withstand the unusually strong currents, repair in crowds; and once there, the winged visitors make but short work of their aquatic friends. The milch cows shivering with cold forget their motherly affections, and instead of welcoming their calves, drive them off with a kick. The shepherds fare even worse. This is not the time for them to gather their favourite flowers or to indulge in their other pastoral amusements. They are now far from their

homes, and the nights are specially trying to them. Exposed to the moaning piercing winds, they collect in small companies of twos and threes, and light up their fires, which make but darkness visible, exactly as their small companies make their solitude all the more impressive and pronounced. They warm the palms of their hands at these fires, and applying them to their cheeks, seek to persuade their teeth from chattering and 'drumming' (as the saying in Tamil runs) against each other. From these rural parts the poet leads us to the city through fertile paddy-fields, elegant arecanut groves, and orchards adorned with different flowers. The ripening paddy ears bow in prayer; the elongated tender arecanuts are becoming rounder with the ingathering of the fragrant catechu for which they are prized, and the boughs of the orchard trees, dripping occasional tear drops, kiss one another over head.

It is evening when we enter the town; and passing through the streets which are as broad as rivers, we meet with strong-bodied, sinewy, Mlachas, clad in loose garments, moving to and fro, full-drunk, and therefore unmindful of rain and winds. We should like to become better acquainted with these drunken foreigners, --particularly with regard to their nationality--but the poet vouchsafes no further information. Meantime the fair ladies of the houses on both sides of the streets, inferring the advent of night from the opening of the *pichi* (jasmine) buds in their flower-baskets, light up their iron lamps, and scattering paddy and flowers on all sides perform their evening worship. The domesticated pigeons, however, have no such means of inference, and failing to distinguish day from night, they simply alter their posture and exchange seats with their lovely mates, in the way of relieving the monotony of their enforced idleness. The menials, we observe, are engaged in grinding and preparing musk perfumes on small stones "as hard and polished as the surface of gram." For sandal paste, so unsuitable for the cold season, is nowhere in demand. For the same reason, garlands are also not in favour. The small-mouthed cold water jugs are not now in use. The exquisitely wrought fan, again, hangs in a corner, covered with cobwebs. The fire-pan and the smoke-pan are, on the contrary, everywhere in requisition. To the ordinary incenses burned in the latter a small quantity of molasses is added in conformity with medical directions to keep off cold and catarrh. As we pass, we notice that the windows are all closed against the wind, and the airy bed-chambers in the second storey are almost forsaken. Women given to dancing now take to singing, and to keep the strings of their harps at a proper temperature, they rub them frequently against their warm bosoms.

By this time we have reached the tower gates of the palace, which look like tunnels, worked through mountains, but are yet high enough not to obstruct the royal standard carried erect on the royal elephant's back. The strong doors are models of architectural skill and beauty, and are so well fitted that not even smoke can pass through. But through the favour of the poet we succeed in finding a passage, and are now in the courtyard of the palace. It is thickly strewn with white sand, and is intended for the mirth-ful sports of the musk-deer and other rare animals brought up in the royal residence. But just now melancholy silence reigns there, broken only by the occasional neighing of the overfed and underworked horses in the stables, the monotonous flow of rain water from the catchpipes of the terraces of the palace, and the infrequent but awful cawing of the peacock in the royal aviary. Entering the palace, we pass through long corridors lit up by lamps borne by images of Yavana manufacture. Of these Yavanas, too, we are curious to know some particulars, but the poet hurries us through several spacious and well-lighted rooms to the zenanas, which he stays minutely to describe. These buildings are as high as mountains, and the flags that adorn them are as varied in colour as the rainbow. Into this unapproachable compartment, -unapproachable, it is said, to every male human being except the king-- the poet fearlessly leads us, and takes us direct to the royal bedroom.

There is in that bedroom an ivory cot, well curtained, painted and ornamented and cushioned ; but to reproduce in English the poet's minute description of it would require Sir Walter Scott's command of descriptive terminology and his genius for details. As moreover this notice is intended to invite and not to supersede a careful study of the original, we may pass over such minutiae. Well; the poet then points to us a lady lying on that cot, with eyes wide open, but so absorbed in melancholy reflection that probably she would not note our presence in that forbidden place even if we were bodily there. No ornaments now adorn her natural beauty ; not even a pearl necklace is there to keep company with the sacred marriage thread loosely lying on her bosom. A pair of tiny earrings now does duty for the wonted priceless ear-pendants. On her forearms we notice the mark left by golden bracelets, but their place is now occupied by poor conchshell wristlets. A solitary *mudakka* or *nalivu* (as it is now generally called) guards the slender fingers that usually wear but the finest of rings. Her angelic form is now clad, not in silk, but in ordinary cotton fabrics. Thus like an outline picture waiting to be coloured, lies the queen, sleepless and careworn; and it must be remembered that it was midnight when we entered the royal bedchamber.

As she rolls her eyes in thoughtless abstraction, she notices on the curtains of the cot a picture of the heavenly bodies; and the scene recalls to her the preferential love that the moon so notoriously entertains for Rohini,* and all further vision is obstructed by the flow of tears. In such distress, then lies the queen. But where is the king?

In answer to this question the poet takes us a long way out of the country. The king is in foreign lands, wintering in his camp for the rainy season. But is he there sleeping in a snug corner of his camp in the dead of this self same night? No! Is he also love sick and restless? Far from it! He is too busy for that! If we follow our poet and go into the camp, we may see him this very hour, moving from quarter to quarter, visiting the wounded and comforting the sick. Lo! you see him walking under an umbrella and behind a torch, whose light is flaming at right angles to its handle, because of the steady northern wind, so fierce and piercing. By his side is the general of his forces, pointing out one by one the heroes of previous day's skirmish, and also the wounds that mark their valour. There, as he passes by the stables, you may note how the horses, standing day and night saddled and ready for battle, neigh and shake off the water drops from their sturdy sides, as if indicating their preparedness for immediate action. Nor is the king less prepared. For, behold his royal sword is carried by his trusted *aide-de-camp*, on whose broad shoulders the king familiarly reposes his right hand! Warriors know no distinction among mankind, but that of the brave and the coward! Well! we have now seen how the king and his queen spend this dreary rainy night; and having witnessed the two scenes, who termination to the war and a speedy return of the monarch to the bosom of his beloved wife?

Such is the outline of Nakkirar's *Nedunalyadai*; and I would request the reader to study it in the original, and then to say whether the author does not deserve to be placed among the very best of the poets of any country. The extreme simplicity of the central conception, the natural ease with which it is developed, the pleasing but in every way true and accurate portraits of nature amid which it is set, and the taste and tact with which every line is made to subserve the one single artistic effect that the whole piece is intended to produce, are simply admirable. It is only after carefully studying this remarkable production of Nakkirar that one is able to understand and appreciate the universal voice of

* Rohini is a group of stars in Taurus, said to be the favourite queen of the moon, and on that account an object of jealousy with every other of the 7 groups of stars.

antiquity that declares Nakkirar the prince and president of the Madura College of Pundits. It is only then, that the old story of Nakkirar's venturesome criticism on the verse of Civa, the terrible deity of Madura, reveals any meaning. The story, I hope, is well known to the general reader. The reigning Pandia of Madura, having discovered a natural fragrance in the tresses of his queen, promised a rich reward--a lump of gold--to any poet that would tell him what thought he had in his mind. The poets of the College essayed in turn, but none succeeded in solving this Rosicrucian puzzle. A poor ignorant Brahmin devotee of Civa saw in the juncture a fine opportunity for pocketing the gold, and completing the matrimonial arrangements he had then in contemplation. He appeared accordingly before the local deity and prayed to be put in possession of the valuable information. The deity, who of course knew what queen thought had passed in the mind of the prince, granted the supplication, and favoured his dependent with a stanza praising the natural fragrance of the queen's hair. On the production of the lines, the gold was at once ordered to be awarded; but the jealous pundits, writhing under discomfiture, interposed. The stanza was produced before the president of their College, our Nakkirar, who at once condemned it on the score of the fantastic idea it conveyed. No human hair, whether queen's or king's, said our poet, could have any odour that was not artificial or accidental. The Brahmin ignoramus was, of course, unable to reply to the criticism; and he therefore ran again for help to his deity, who now felt himself in honour bound to defend his production. He appeared accordingly in the guise of an old Brahmin, and attempted a defence; but being soon driven into a corner, the deity sought to ensure his adversary by 'special pleadings', and asked him whether his proposition would apply to the hair of the goddess of Madura, of whom the poet was a special devotee. All undaunted, Nakkirar would admit no exception to his proposition; and it proved too much for the patience of the god. Already irritated by opposition, he was now touched to the quick by the insult offered to the goddess, his better half. Off went his disguise, and with his third eye that opens only to burn up the universe, fast simmering and smouldering with fire, and angry deity commanded Nakkirar to retract the offensive criticism. But neither for god nor for man would our poet flinch from truth; and though death stared him in the face, he declined to countenance the unnatural conceit conveyed by the poem. The terrible third eye of Civa was now opened in full, and to escape the fierce fire that ensued, Nakkirar and his College of fellow Pundits, the

story concludes,* had to take refuge in the Lotus Tank within the local temple. So did might triumph over right! But what is the meaning of this tradition,--almost the only one that has come down to us of Nakkirar? Does it not point to the extreme realism in his style? Does it not show that the poet's love of truth, love of nature, was so strong, so unswerving that he would defy all authorities, human and divine, for the sake of maintaining accuracy of representation, truthfulness of thought, even in poetic composition? I take the whole story as the best panegyric that can be pronounced on the poet's love of nature and his unconquerable hatred of all kinds of extravagance in thought or expression: and no praise in that line will be ever found too much for the author of Nedunalvadaï.

P. SUNDARAM PILLAY

* Sivaprakasara slightly tempers with this story to suit his own purposes. See his *Kalatti Purana; Nakkira-Charukam*.

THE AGE OF PATTUPATTU

BY

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Pattupattu or the "Ten Idylls" is, as name denotes, a collection of ten exquisite Tamil Poems. They are among the best in the Tamil Literature and can bear comparison with any ten poems in any language. Of their high literary merit, the keen insight shown by their authors into human feelings, and the very fine portraiture of incidents in human life and natural scenery, I will write another time.

The collection consists of:-

1. திருமுருகாற்றுப்படை	Tirumurugattupadai.
2. பொருநராற்றுப்படை	Porunarattupadai.
3. சிறுபாணாற்றுப்படை	Panattupadai (Minor)
4. பெரும்பாணாற்றுப்படை	Panattupadai (Major)
5. முல்லைப்பாட்டு	Mullai-pattu.
6. மதுரைக்காஞ்சி	Madurai-Kanji.
7. நெடுநல்வாடை	Nedunal-Vadai.
8. குறிஞ்சிப்பாட்டு	Kurinji-pattu.
9. பட்டினப்பாலை	Pattina-palai.
and 10. மலைபடுகடாம்.	Malaipadu-kadam

Of these the 1st is the work of the well known Nakkirar (நக்கிரர்). In it he speaks of the greatness of Muruga and his own experiences as a devotee. It is in the form of instructions given to a pilgrim going in search of *moksha* or heavenly bliss.

2nd, 3rd, 4th and 10th are respectively productions of Mudattamakkanniyar, (முடத்தாமக்கண்ணியார்) Nattattananar (நத்தத்தனார்), Uruttirangannanar (உருத்திரங்கண்ணனார்) and Perun kousikanar (பெருங்கௌசிகனார்). They are in form of instructions given to poor musicians and bards to find out the whereabouts of their (author's) patrons and be relieved of their poverty and want. In them the high birth, the prowess in war, the great wealth, and generosity of the patrons are well depicted, as also the way in which they were themselves treated. The patrons referred to are the great Karikala-chola (கரிகாலச்சோழன்),

Nalliyakodan (நல்லியக்கோடன்) of Erumanadu, Thondaiman Ilanthiryan, தொண்டைமான் இளந்திரையன்) and Nannan (நன்னன்) son of Nannan of Palkunrakottam, respectively.

Maduraikanji is in praise of Nedunjelian, the victor at Thalalayanganam. In it Mangudimaruthanar (மாங்குடிமருதனார்) after describing the high estate of his patron gently hints at his worldliness and the transitoriness of this worldly life and directs him towards spiritual life. Hence the poem has been very happily called "The Gentle Hint."

The other four poems treat of love. In *Mullaipattu*, Napputhanar describes the queen separated from royal consort and languishing for his return, and his arrival after victory gained in war and wealth acquired. In *Nedunal-vadai*, "The Dreary Winter," Nakkirar gives a picture of the princess waiting for the return of her lord until the time appointed by him and the sorrow in which she was immersed when he did not come then. He attendants resort to all means to console her but to no purpose. Her plight is inconsolable indeed! In *Kurinjipattu* the poet Kapilar describes the anxiety of a lady who met a prince in a forest and becoming enamoured of him secretly married him, but whose marriage was not looked upon with favour by her parents, and had therefore to meet her husband secretly; the husband having to pass dense wood infested with wild beasts and vermin and to cross brooks and ponds. In *Pattinapalai*, Uruttirangannanar who was poor and who, to better his position, wanted to go to the court of Karikala is unwilling to part from his wife. He describes the difficulties that he will have to undergo if he took his wife with him and so decides not to take her with him. His unenviable plight is well described in the poem.

Before saying anything about these poems, it would be necessary to investigate when these were written and when they were collected together under the name of "Pattupattu." But before entering into these questions we ought to see whether all the ten poems were written about the same time or at different times. We have seen that *Tirumurugattupadai* and *Nedunal-vadai* are both the works of Nakkirar. The patron referred to in *Nedunalvadai* was also the patron of Mangudimaruthanar and he is the person to whom *Maduraikanji* is dedicated. It is also believed generally that *Mullaipattu* refers to Nedunjelian, the victor of Thalalayanganam, and the patron of Nakkirar and Mangudimaruthanar. So these four poems ought to have been written about the same time, i.e., during the reign of Nedunjelian. Another of the poets patronised by the said Nedunjelian, Mangudi-kilar

(*Puram*, 24, 26, 372) was also patronised by Eliniyathan of Vattaru (*Puram*.396). Arisil-kilar, another poet patronised by that Elini (*Puram*.230), has addressed verse 146 of *Puram*. to Perum-Pegan, a petty king and a great patron of letters. Among his proteges was Paranan (*Puram*.141, 142, 144 and 145). The same Paranan was a contemporary of Uruvaphrer Ilanjed-Chenni, father of Karikala (*Puram*.4). So Karikala Chola ought to have been a contemporary of Nedunjeliyan, the victor of Thalaylanganam or he ought to have lived a short time after him. Therefore *Porunarattupadai* and *Pattina-palai* which are in praise of Karikala ought to have been written at the same time as the 4 poems above mentioned, (i.e. *Murugattupadai*, *Nedunalvadai*, *Madurai kanji* and *Mullaipattu*), or a little after. The author of *Pattina-palai* is also the author of *Panattu-padai* (major). So *Panattu-padai* (major) also ought to have been written in the time of Nedunjeliyan, or a little after. Kapilar, the author of *Kurunji-pattu*, was also one of the poets patronised by Perum-Pegan (*Puram*.143). So *Kurunji-pattu* also ought to have been written at the same time as *Pattina-palai*, *Porunarattu-padai* and *Panattu-padai* major. In *Panattu-palai* minor Nalliyakodan is described to be more generous than Chenkuttuvan, the Chera, (line 48-50,) and the reference clearly shows that Chenkuttuvan was a contemporary of Nalliyakodan. From *Chilappathikaram* we learn that Chen-kuttuvan Chera and Karikala Chola were contemporaries. So *Panattupadai* minor ought to have been written during the reign of Karikala i.e., at the same time as *Tirumurugattupadai*, *Nedunal-vadai*, *Madurai-kanji* and *Mullai-pattu*. This is also supported by the statement in *Panattu-padai* minor (lines 84-115) that Nalliyakodan lived after the seven last patrons and that he was doing the work done by them; we know from *Puram*. that the seven last patrons were all contemporaries. Therefore Nalliyakodan the patron referred to in *Panattupadai* minor and Nattattanan, the author of it, ought to have lived a little after Perum-Pegan above referred to and probably in the reign of Karikala. From *Puram*.151 we find that Nannan, the patron referred to in *Malaipadukadam*, was the ancestor of Ilavachchirako mentioned therein; also from the words used viz. "பொலந்தேர் நன்னன் மருகனன்றியும் நீயும் முயங்கற்கொத்தனை," it seems Nannan lived within a short time of Ilavachchirako. Peruntalai Chattanan has also addressed a verse *Puram*. 169 to Kumanan, the patron of Perunchittiranan (*Puram*. 158 and the following verses). In *Puram*. 158, Perunchittiiranan, praises Kumanan as the patron who has taken over the work of the last seven patrons after their death. So Perunchittiiranan, Kumanan, Peruntalai-Chattanan and

Ilavachcirako ought to have lived immediately after the last seven patrons, i.e., after Karikala. So Nannan the ancestor of Ilavachchirako ought to have lived during the reign of Karikala or a little before. Therefore *Malaipadukadam*, the last of the "Ten Idylls," ought to have been written about the same time as *Tirumurugattu-padai*. Thus we see that all the ten poems comprised in the *Pattupattu* were written during the reign of Karikala or within a short time immediately before or after him. It might have taken about a century between the writing of the earliest and that of the latest of them. It will now be our aim to fix as far as possible to which is the century that gave birth to these poems.

With the help of *Chilappathikaram*, *Manimekalai* and *Ettu-Togai*, "the Eight Collections," that have come down to us from ancient times, we can make a list of a few Cholas, Pandyas and Cheras who lived before and after Karikala, Nedunjeliyan and Chen-kuttuvan. I append a tentative list of the Cheras, Cholas and Pandyas, I made from my intermittent study of Tamil Literature. It is likely it may require changes hereafter. I feel from the way in which I had to prepare it, it will require many changes and I offer it only as a basis for further work. A reference to the list will show that we know 8 Cholas, 6 Pandyas and 9 Cheras and we also know more or less their sequence. They might have taken among them about 2 centuries allowing 25 years per reign. Now we find that *Chilappathikaram*, *Manimekalai*, "the Ten Idylls" and most of the stanzas contained in "Eight Collections" (எட்டுத்தொகை) belong to this period. These are most important portions of the Tamil literature that has come down to us from ancient times. Practically there is little of real value before these except *Tol-kappiyam* (தொல்காப்பியம்) and *Tiru-kural* (திருக்குறள்). Hence the great importance of fixing the age of *Pattupattu* "The Ten Tamil Idylls."

The earliest prince known to Tamil literature is Perumchotu Uthiyan Cheral. This Chera is said to have fed the armies of the Pandavas and Kauravas during the great fratricidal war. He was a great warrior and had extended the limits of his kingdom a great deal. He was also a great patron of letters (*Puram. 1**). Nothing else is known about him, his ancestors, or his immediate successors. The poet Mudinagar (முடிநாகர்) who sang his praise is said to have been a member of the 1st Tamil Academy. This verse is probably all that is left to us of that otherwise

* The ode to the Uthiyan Cheral is the first in the collection excluding the prefixed lyric by Perum-Thevanar in praise of god Civa.

Mythical Sangam. Long after him lived the Pandya palyagasalai-Mudu-Kudumi-Peruvaludi (பல்யாகசாலை முதுகுடுமிப்பெருவமுதி). He was an ancestor of the victor at Thalayalanganam. He was great in war and a just and kind ruler in peace. There is nothing to show how long before Nedun-chelian Palyagasalai-Mudukudumi-Peruvaludi lived. In the interval between him and the kings whose list is here appended ought to have been written *Tol-kappiyam* and *Tiru-Kural*. *Tol-Kappiyam* is said to be a work of the second Tamil Academy. When that Sangam existed, there is no material to find out. The few names given of the poets of the 1st and 2nd Tamil Academies are not all found in the literature that has come down to us. We find the names of Vanmigar, Kauthamar and one or two others. We cannot now say whether these were the poets of the same name who are said to have adorned the two Academies. The shrewd guess of Pandit M. Raghava Aiyangar of Ramnad, that Vanmigar of Tamil literature might be the same as the author of the Ramayana is very ingenious and does not bear any improbability*, but we cannot with the knowledge we have got at present be sure of the identity. *Tiru-Kural* was written before *Chilappathikaram* and *Manimegalai* as the latter distinctly makes a reference (vers.22;59-61) to it, and quotes a stanza. But as it is not given among the Second Academy works it ought have been written after it.

The next period we know of is the age of *Pattuppattu* we are speaking about. As I have stated, the age might have covered about two centuries. This was the period of the greatest literary activity in the Tamil land and has therefore been very happily named the "Augustan age of Tamil Literature." With the help of Tamil works we can construct a fairly accurate account of this period. For sometime after this period there is a gap. Then we hear of the Chola Ko-Chenkannan (கோச்செங்கண்ணன்) and the Chera Kanaikal-Irumporai (கணைக்காலிரும்பொறை) who were contemporaries (*Puram*. 74). This Ko-Chen-kannan and Karikalan are mentioned as the ancestors of the Chola Vijayalaya and his ancestors in inscriptions. By the untiring and praiseworthy work of Rao Bahadur V. Venkayya, Dr. Hultchz and other ephigraphists we have a complete list of the Chola kings, who reigned after Vijayalaya. In that list no Ko-Chengannan and Karikalan appear and Vijayalaya lived in the middle of the 9th century. So Ko-Chengannan ought to have lived before Vijayalaya i.e., before the middle of the 9th century. We also learn from inscriptions and copper plates that for 2 or

* Vide "Sri Valmiki and South India" *Tamilian Antiquary* No.7.

3 centuries before Vijayalaya the Chola kingdom was under the rule of the Pallavas. The Cholas were then in a very poor state and there is no room for a powerful king like Ko-Chengannan. Then saint Jnana Sambandhar refers to Ko-Chengannan in several of his hymns. The late lamented Sundaram Pillai has fixed once for all the age of Tiru-Jnana-Sambandar to be the early part of the 7th century. This is also accepted by Rao Bahadur V. Venkayya. So Ko-Chengannan ought to have lived in the 4th or 5th century. Now in the list of Cholas appended herewith, there are 4 Cholas after Karikala and at the rate of 25 years per king they might have reigned a hundred years among them. As we saw before there is a gap between the last of these and Ko-Chengannan and this we might take to have occupied about another hundred years. Karikala would then have lived and reigned in the 2nd century A.D.

Mr. V. Kanakasabai Pillai, whose untimely death we are still lamenting, has, in his book 'The Tamils, 1800 Years Ago,' given the middle of the 2nd century as the age of *Chilappathikaram* and *Manimekalai*. In *Chilappathikaram* which was written almost at the same time as the incidents described therein, one Kajabahu of Ceylon is said to have come and worshipped in the shrine of Kannaki. The *Mahavamsa* of Ceylon gives a list of Ceylon Kings. In that list two Kajabahus are found, of whom the 1st lived in the 2nd century and the 2nd in the 12th century A.D. I believe the late Hon. Mr. Coomaraswami of Ceylon was the first to apply the knowledge of Ceylon History to fix the time of Tamil works. It was he who drew attention to the Kajabahus. Mr. Kanakasabai Pillai has elaborately discussed the matter and come to the conclusion that the Kajabahu referred to in *Chilappathikaram* ought to be the 1st Kajabahu mentioned in the *Mahavamsa*. The same conclusion is arrived at by another scholar Mr. S. Krishnaswami Aiyengar of Mysore. But still there are not men wanting who would prefer to identify the Kajabahu of *Chilappathikaram* with the 2nd Kajabahu of *Mahavamsa*. It is a pity that Mr. Innes, lately a Judge of the Madras High Court, should be one of them. The facts I have mentioned above would, I believe, change the attitude of such men whose only difficulty seems to be due to their reluctance to admit antiquity to Tamil works. The following facts will also show the untenability of their position.

Raja Keseri Varman otherwise known as Anabayan and Kulothunga reigned between 1063 and 1112 A.D. He was the hero of the Tamil poem *Kalingathuparani*. In *Kalingathuparani* there is a reference to

Pattinapalai, one of the "Ten Tamil Idylls." by name:-

"தழுவு
செந்தமிழ்ப் பரி சுவாணர் பொன்
பத்தொடாறு நூறாயிரம் பெற
பண்டுபட்டினப்பாலை கொண்டதும்."

Periya-puranam also was written during the reign of the same prince. The Saiva Bible (சைவத்திருமுறை) was collected and divided into several divisions in the tenth century. Sundara Murthi Swamigal lived in the 8th century. Tiru-Jnana-Sambandha Swamigal and his contemporary Appar Swamigal lived at the beginning of the 7th century. Arrangements were made for the singing of the Tevaram hymns in temples in the 10th century. Several of the Vaishnava Alvars lived in the 8th and 9th centuries. From the beginning of the 11th century arrangements were made for the singing of the Vaishnava Vedas (நாலாயிரப்பிரபந்தம்) in the Vaishnava temples. Manikkavacagar refers to a Varaguna. We find a Varaguna Pandiya about the latter half of the 9th century. It is but a guess that the Varaguna of Manikkavacagar might be the same as the Varaguna who lived in the latter half of the 9th century. But still as it is believed that jackals were turned into *Ponies* for Manikkavacagar by the God of Madura and there is a reference in the hymns of Appar to a transformation of jackals into *ponies*, and it is believed that the reference is to the transformation made for Manikkavacagar, we cannot be sure of it. There is also the difficulty that we cannot give any reason for the non-inclusion of Manikkavacagar's name in the *Tiru-tonda-togai* of Sundaramurty Swamigal, if the former had lived before Appar Swamigal. So, we are in a regular mesh when we try to find out the period of Manikkavacagar's spiritual activity. But at any rate, he ought to have lived before the 10th century when the Caiva Bible was fixed.*

* [The date of Manikkavacagar again attracts our attention here; the question has come to the front once before. After all, is there any doubt of Manikkavacagar preceding the Tevaram hymnists? We find references to Manikkavacagar, at least in two places, in the hymns of Appar, the earliest of them. In one place the hymnist alludes to the transformation of jackals into *ponies* (see திருவாரூர் பதிகம் II) as referred to above; and in another place, he mentions Manikkavacagar by his name with an allusion to the well known story of Nandi Thevar, the drummer of the Paradise of Civa, incarnating as Manikkavacagar. The lines in the hymn, (vide திருத்தாண்டகம், பதிகம் XI), run thus:-

"குராமலரோ டராமதியஞ் சடைமேற் கொண்டார்
குடமுழ நந் தீசனை வாசகனாக் கொண்டார்."

We find from the *Tevarams*, *Tiruvacakam* and *Nalayiraprabandam* that, at the time they were composed, all through Southern India, Caivism and Vaishnavism, as we know them, were the popular religions and the Caiva and the Vaishnava temples were almost as numerous as they are now. But, when we look into the works of the period we are now considering, we find the popular religion was Buddhism or Jainism. The Hinduism, as we find it in these works is the worship of Indra, long forgotten, and Kumara not so popular in these days. Caivism, as described in சமயக்கணக்கர் தந்திறமுரைத்தகாதை of *Manimekalai* does not occupy much space and does not seem to have been a popular religion. It stands to reason that Buddhism and Jainism declined only after the appearance and the phenominal activity of the Caiva saints and the Vaishnava Alwars. Also from the inscriptions and the copperplates obtained by the Epigraphical department of the Madras Government, it is clear that Buddhism and Jainism have ceased to be the popular religions from before the 7th century. The last grant to a Buddhist temple was in 1005 A.D. and that is a solitary instance of a grant to a Buddhist Shrine.

The transformation of jackals into ponies is traditionally believed by the Tamils to have been effected by God CIVA for Manikavacagar's sake ; and the other reference clearly indicates Manikavacagar as the hymnist himself mentions him by name. The story of Nandi Thevar of the paradise of CIVA coming to this world as an incarnation of Manikavacagar, to root out Buddhism, is well known to the Tamil public. The story is also corroborated by the Sanskrit *Puranas*. Mahamahopadyaya, Pandit Swaminatha Iyer in the Introduction (P.67), to his edition of Nambiyar's *Tiruvilaiyadal*, says that the Sanscrit *Purans* (i.e.) the *Adikailasa Mahatmya* (chap.XXXIX) and the *Manivakya Charitra* (Chap.VI) contain the story. It is not necessary to state that the Tamil *Puranam* of Perumdurai narrates also this story in connection with Majikavacagar's birth. These facts, beyond all doubt, determine the date of Manikavacagar as being anterior to that of Appar Swamigal of the 7th century, the elder contemporary of Jnanasambanda.

The Tamilians have always accepted as an axiomatic truth that Manikavacagar lived long before the Thevaram Hymnists. This is not a mere illusion. But some who pull him down to a period later than that of a Varaguna of the 9th century speak much of the omission of Manikavacagar's name by Sundarar, the last of the hymnists, in his *Tiru-Tondai-Togai*. Manikavacagar cannot be held responsible for the omission of his name by a later poet, reasons for which may be various. But thus much is certain that Sundarar had at his disposal only a very limited time and space. As we are told, his song was an ex-tempore one and even that, he proposed to compose in the form of a *Pathigam*. A *Pathigam* is a set of 10 verses. Sundara confined himself to the general rule and began to recite his salutation poems, rather his *Litany*, naming the Caiva saints individually as his memory served him then. He could have named only about 60 saints or so, when his *Pathigam* came to a close, and in the last of the ten stanzas, he very aptly made a salutation in generic terms, using expression broad enough to embrace all devotees that may possess any claim to be considered as Caiva saints. This is the simple reason for the omission, if at all, of Manikavacagar's name, as also the names of many other Caiva saints, for instance, Markandeyar, Sivakosariar, in his short *Pathigam*—Editor, T.A.]

So the heyday of Buddhism portrayed in *Chilappathikaram* and *Manimekalai* cannot be brought down to the twelfth century.

After *Pattupattu* and *Ettuthogai*, ought to have been written *Jivaka Chindamani*, the last in chronological order of the *Panchakaviyams*, "The Five Epics." The minor *Panchakaviyams* were written later and *Virasoliyam* later still. The patron of Buddha mitran was Vira Rajendra Chola who reigned between 1064 and 1070. He was the victor at the battles fought at Kopam and Kudalsangamam. In the commentary said to be written by a disciple of the author, Virarajendran is referred to as the victor at these two battles. In the commentary, the verses in *Pattupattu* and *Ettutogai* are very freely quoted for illustration. So, these works ought to have been held in high repute in those days.

From *Purananuru*, *Pathiru-pattu*, "the Ten Tens," and other works we find there were many powerful independent princes at the time. Perum-Pegan is but one of them. He was fully the equal of any Chera, Chola or Pandiya prince of his time. Poets were found more often in his Court. Further the Cheras were, in those days, at least the equals of Pandiyas and Cholas. Imayavaramban Nedum Cheralatan, the father of Chen-kuttuvan, advanced victorious to the very foot of the Himalayas as his name would show. Chen-kuttuvan himself invaded north and defeated several Arya kings and brought Ganges water and sacred stone for the Goddess Kannaki. They were also great patrons of Tamil literature and their generosity is perpetuated by the separate collection of the "Ten Tens" consisting of poems in praise of Cheras alone. Such collections we do not find in the case of Pandiyas or Cholas. The Cheras soon lost ground, and in the 8th and 9th centuries we find no mention of them in the inscriptions. Their lands were encroached upon by Cholas and several small princes who came later. In latter days, we find mention only of small chiefs claiming to be the descendants of the once great Cheras. For instance, Adigaman of the family of Elini reigning at Thagadur claimed to be a Chera prince. In the *Purananuru* and the "Ten Tens" we find Thagadur of Adigaman destroyed by the Chera Peruncheral Irumborai. So we may even doubt whether the Elinis could have belonged to the Chera royal family. As regards Cholas up to the time of Vijayalaya, who lived in the 9th century, the Chola territories were mostly in the occupation of the Pallavas and the Pandyas; and the Cholas played but a subordinate part. It is Vijayalaya and his successors who defeated the Pallavas and drove them north. Then begins the decadence of the Pallava and the Pandya kingdoms. The Chola kingdom reached its zenith in the

time of Kulothunga who reigned between 1063 and 1112. In the 11th century, a portion of the Pandya country was ruled by the Chola Pandyas, a branch of the Chola ruling family. But from the latter part of the 12th century, the Cholas also show signs of decline and the Pandyas, like a meteor, rise and shine for a time and then fall to their old *lithargic* position. The Mohammadans and the Vijianagar kings enter the field and begin the rule of the south through their viceroys. This is the story of Southern India as we know it from the inscriptions and the copper-plates.

In the latter part of the 12th century, there is a quarrel between the two princes of the Pandyan royal family, one of whom seeks the help of Parakramabaku of Ceylon and the other is supported by the Chola. In the beginning, the Ceyloness army is victorious but is defeated at the end. But if the "Ten Idylls," the "TenTens," the "400 Lyrics" and other contemporaneous works were written in the 12th century there ought to be mention of these matters in them; but we find none. Further, what difference is there between the political history of the time portrayed in these works with sturdy independence and inter-national commerce bringing in untold wealth, and the political history of the twelfth century as we know it?

One objection Mr. Innes and others cannot get over, is the absence of the names of the great poets like Tiruvalluvar and Nakkirar in the *Tiru-Tonda-Togai* of Sundaramurthy Swamigal. Those who urge this objection forget that the *Tiru-Tonda-Togai* does not include poets as poets. It is a list of saints and even among them only Caiva saints. The religion of Tiruvalluvar is even at this present moment hotly contested. There are people to claim him even for a Christian. Under these circumstances, how can we expect to find his name in the *Tiru-Tonda-Togai*. As regards Nakkirar, he was a devotee of Kumara. No doubt, at the present moment, there might be found Caivites not wholly particular, who will admit the devotees of Kumara as Caivites. But in the days of Sundarar, as we have seen, there was a great Caivite and Vaishnavite activity which drifted away from the faiths then prevalent in Southern India. Kumara or Muruga is a purely Dravidian God and the activity against Buddhism was directed mostly by those who took their inspiration from Aryan sources. Even the Aryan God Indra, who came south probably with the earliest Aryan immigrants, was put aside and very soon forgotten. Further Nakkirar lived in a liberal age and rubbed shoulders with Buddhists and Jains. The Caivism as known to Sundarar, ought to have been of a later growth and mostly borrowed from Sanskrit sources. Under these circumstances how can we expect Nakkirar and other poets of his type to gain entrance

into the exclusive sect of Caiva saints mentioned in the *Tiru-Tonda-Togai*. In later days, the hatred of the Buddhists and the Jains ceased with their disappearance and Nakkirar, who rubbed shoulders with the Buddhists, was not looked askance at and therefore his *Tirumurugattupadai* found a place in the Caiva Bible. From the works of the period we are considering, we find the temples erected in those days were for Indra and Kumara and the festivals held were all in connection with the same deities. After the time of the Caiva saints and the Vaishnava Alvars, the temples built were all for Civa and Vishnu, and the festivals held are all in their honour. Of the saints mentioned in the *Tiru Tonda Togai*, very few, including Kannappa Nayanar, belonged to the period anterior to Tirujnanasambandar. These are colourless men and it is the depth of their belief in God and devotion to Him that got them admission into the sacred list. These facts would clearly show that there is absolutely no room for *Chilappadikaram*, *Manimegalai* and *Pattupattu* after the time of Tirujnanasambandar, and that the absence of Tiruvalluvar and Nakkirar, in the *Tiru-tonda-togai*, is by no means an insuperable objection.

Considering all things, we cannot but admit the time fixed by Mr. Kanagasabai Pillai for *Chilapadikaram* is very near the mark. As we saw already, Chera Chenkuttuvan, Pandyan Nedun Chelian and Cholan Karikalan were the kings who lived at the time of *Chilapadikaram*. Now we know from the list of kings appended herewith, of three Cholas before Karikala and four Cholas after him. If we take the beginning of the 2nd century* as the time of Karikala, Ko-Perunarkilli's time ought to have been about the middle of the first century, and that of Rajasuyam Vetta Perunarkilli, about the beginning of the 3rd century. So we will not be far wrong if we fix the Augustan age of Tamil literature as the two centuries from 50 A.D. to 250 A.D. That is also the time when "The Ten Idyls" (பத்துப்பாட்டு) were written.

The ancient Tamil works are generally called Sangam works, and *Pattupattu* and other works, written at the same time as that, are believed to be works of the poets of the 3rd Sangam. The first mention we have of Sangams is in the commentary to *Irayanar Agaporul*. The commentary is said to be the work of the great Nakkirar himself. But admittedly the present form of the commentary is due not to Nakkir,

* [The date assigned to Karikala by the learned author of the "Tamil 1800 years ago" is A.D. 55 to 95; and we think it is accurate. Editor, T.A.]

but to Nilakandandar of Muziri.* In the account that is given of the commentary itself in its early portion, it ought to have passed through eight intermediaries before it reached Nilakandandar. Computing 25 years for a generation, there ought to have been an interval of 2 centuries between Nakkirar and Nilakandandar, and no more. When the commentary assumed its present form the names of the so-called members of the 3rd Sangam ought to have been still fresh in the memory of the people. Now in the account given of these Sangams in the commentary, what is stated about the 1st and 2nd Sangams is very little. Of even that very little, a very large portion is, without doubt, mythical. Of the works said to have been produced by the poets of the 1st Academy, we have got nothing but the single Stanza of Mudinagar referred to before. Of the 2nd academy, we know a little more. We are sure there was an *Agathiyam* and there ought to have been an Agathiyar. Only some *Sutrams* of *Agathiam* have reached us. But we have got the whole of *Tol-kappiyam*, it being still the best grammar in Tamil. We have also heard of some of the other works said to have been produced during the age of the 2nd Academy. The extent of time and the number of Pandya kings and that of the poets given for these two Sangams are on the face of them very much exaggerated. With regard to the 3rd Sangam called also the last Sangam, we are on much surer ground. The poets who have sung the praise of *Kural* and whose poems are preserved in *Tiruvalluvamalai* could not have been all members of any Academy. Some of the stanzas are on the face of them, by mythical personages. The verses by persons like Perun-Tevanar, the author of *Bharatam*, belong to a later age. Of the others, all were not contemporaries. For instance, Perum Chitiranar who was the contemporary of Kumanan who lived after Karikala could not have been a contemporary of Parinar who was bard in the Court of Uruvappahrer Ilan Ched Chenni (உருவப்பஹேர் இளஞ்சேட்சென்னி), the father of Karilala. Ugra Peruvaludi (உக்கிரப்பெருவழுதி) is, as a reference to the list of the Pandyas given

* [Muziri was another important seat of Tamil learning in the Chera country ; and professor Nilakandandar of this ancient city is well known to the Tamil literati by his excellent commentary of Irayanar Agaporal which is the first start in Tamil prose-composition and surpasses all subsequent prose works in literary beauty and excellence. It has already been pointed out in a previous note that the two most important epics of the Panchakaviam were produced at Vanjikalam, the capital of the Chera country. While Vanji stood higher up on the banks of river Periyar. Muziri was situated near its mouth, and it was one of the famous emporiums on the western coast of Tamilagam. It was the first commercial station on the Arabian sea, and was frequented by Yavana (the Egyptian-Greek and Roman) merchants. From Pentingerian Tables (225 A.D.) we learn that the Romans had, in this city now extinct, a force of about 2,000 men to protect their trade, and a temple erected in honour of Augustus. According to Christian traditions it was the landing place of St. Thomas, the Apostle.

will show, the last of the Pandyas in the list. We find in the *Tiruvalluvalalai* a verse attributed to him. At the same time we find a verse attributed to Nakkirar, the contemporary of Nanmaran who died in battle at Ilavandi Palli, and another to Karikannanar of Kaveri-Pum pattinam, the contemporary of Peruvaludi who died at Velli-Ambalam. It is not likely that all these lived at the same time. All that seems to be certain is that there was an Academy at Madura, and probably many of those mentioned in *Tiruvalluvamalai* were members of it at different times. The information is given by a person who lived too near the time to easily ignore it. He does not give a list of all the poets who lived together at any time and he does not say that the Sangam met and dissolved within a generation. On the other hand, he says that the Sangam sat through the reign of a number of kings. Of course, the number given by him is exaggerated. But about the fact of the Sangam there can be no doubt.

It is generally said that *Tirukural* was the last work produced in the third Sangam. We have seen above that a verse of the *Tirukural* is actually quoted in *Manimegalai*. Chathanar, the author of *Manimegalai*, actually lived when the incidents mentioned in *Manimegalai* took place. The kings, who lived at the time the incident took place, were, according to *Chilapadikaram*, Chera Chen-kuttuvan, Pandiyan Nedunjelian and Cholan karikalan. We know of four Cholas after Karikalan, the last being Rajasuyam Vetta Peru Narkilli who was a contemporary of Ugra peru valudi, the last Pandiya, in whose time the Sangam met. So, the Sangam that existed for at least four reigns after *Manimegalai* could not have ceased to exist before *Manimegalai* was written.

The next question we have to discuss is, when were the ten poems collected together under the name of *Pattupattu* or Ten Idylls? Here again we have got no materials to fix definitely the time. But we may

This once famous city gradually lost its commercial importance owing to the constant attacks of pirates and the existence of the *Alimugam* the Pseudostomos of the Greeks which means "false face" and 'is a correct translation of the Tamil word *alimugam*, by which the mouth of Periyar below Cranganur (Kodungolur) is known even now.' Its place was taken by Vakkalai (Ptolemy's Bakare) on the mouth of the Pali (Ptolemy's Baris) near Kottayam. It traded chiefly in pepper which was brought to it from Nilkuntam, a place even now famous for its excellent pepper, situated at a distance of six miles inland. This province of Nilkuntam including Vakkalai was, according to the Periplus (80 A.D.), under the sway of the Pandiyan kings and we know that it was under the same regime in the days of Manikkavacagar, the prime minister of Pandiyan, who went to Perun-turai, "the Great Port", of the Pandiyas, in the west, to purchase horses for the state. Messrs. T. Ponnambalam Pillai and K.G. Sesha Aiyar have fixed the date of Manikkavacagar (properly Mani-vacagar) to be the third century A.D. Vide *Tamilian Antiquary*, No. 4.—Editor, T.A.]

take it that these were collected together about the time when the other collections of the poems of the period were being written. These other collections eight in number were composed until the reign of Kochenkannan. These are

"நற்றிணை, நல்ல குறுந்தொகை, ஐங்குறுநூறு,
ஒத்த பதிற்றுப்பத்து, ஒங்கு பரிபாடல்,
கற்றறிந்தார் ஏத்துங்கலியோடு அகம், புறமென்று
இத்திறத்த எட்டுத் தொகை."

Of these, *Kalitogai* is said to have been collected together by Nallanduvar, a poet of the sangam period itself. Of the other collections, we can only be sure that they were made before the time of Perunthevanar, the author of *Bharatam*, because we find him supplying several of the collections with an additional devotional song. As a devotional verse of his appears also in *Purananuru* and *Puranamuru* contains a verse of the time of Kochenkannan, and we have seen that Kochenkannan ought to have lived in the 4th or 5th century A.D., we can be sure that Perunthevanar lived in or after the 5th century. Perumthevanar refers to a Nandi Pottarayar, the victor at Thellaru. Now we find from the inscriptions that one Nandivarman Pallava of the time of Vikramaditya II who reigned between 733 and 746, gained a victory at Thellaru. If this Nandivarman Pallava is the same as the Nandi Pottarayar of Perunthevanar, as Mr. Venkayya suggests, then Perumthevanar ought to have lived in the middle of the 8th century. In that case the collections of *Pattupattu* and *Ettutogai* ought to have been made before the 8th century. More than that we cannot say.

I also append herewith a chronological list of the Tamil works I have been able to prepare with the help of the Epigraphical reports of the Madras Party and my study of Tamil Literature. The time mentioned for each is, as in the case of the other list I append, only tentative. My object in giving this list is more to induce enquiry and final decision in these matters. In the lists of the Cheras, Cholas and Pandiyas, the list of the Chera kings is a genealogical tree. The relationship among the Cheras mentioned here, is what is given in the பதிற்றுப் பத்து, "Ten Tens." The relationship among the Cholas and Pandiyas cannot be found. So I give their names one after another as they reigned in succession.

The period when these lived was the time when the Tamils reached the zenith of their prosperity and civilisation. In their civilisation there

is a lot we can learn with advantage to ourselves. They were great mariners, and their trade extended even to distant Rome. Burma, Java and the Islands in the Indian Ocean were well known to them, as the existence of Tamil inscriptions in those far-off places would prove. It was the merchant who had foreign trade that was held in those days in high esteem. There was nothing of the churlish prohibition of foreign travel. The king himself was considered one of the people though the first among them. What wealth of speculation can be hung on the two following lines in "Mangalvalthu Padalam" of *Cilappadikaram*:-

"பெருநில முழுதாளும் பெருமகன் றலைவைத்த
ஒரு தனிக் குடிகளோ டியர்ந்தோங்கு செல்வத்தான்"!

This will also show the happy relationship that existed between the king and his subjects. Education was universal. The number of poets, whose names have come down to us from the age of *Pattupattu* above mentioned, i.e., from 50 A.D. and 250 A.D., is very large amounting very nearly to 200. If there could at any time have lived 200 poets whose verses can survive 18 centuries, what should we think of the education and the civilisation of the people who lived then? Not only this, the poets belong to all classes of society from the highest to the lowest. Even more important there were poetesses belonging to all classes. The verses of Adimandiyar, daughter of the great Karikala, of Koperumpendu, the wife of Puda-Pandiyar and of the daughters of Pari, a mountain chief, are well-known. Auvai was behind no poet in literary capacity. She was also a philosopher. Vellividiyar and Nachechellaiyar are also poetesses of no mean order; the latter of them is said to have been richly rewarded by a Chera and provided with a seat in his court. We have got verses of even a potter woman and of kurava women. This would show the extent of female education in those days. When there were so many poets and poetesses of all classes, does it not necessarily follow that there ought to have been universal education amongst the people or something very near it, so that they may at least understand and appreciate their poets and poetesses? As we have seen before, this period was the Augustan age of Tamil literature. The poets of the period like Mangudi-Marudanar, Nakkirar, Kapilar, Parinar, Chathanar, Ilanko and Tiruvalluvar are far above to any later Tamil poet. Their originality, the wealth of their imagination and accurate description surpass anything else in later Tamil literature. It is their greatness which enslaved their successors and made them mere copyists, with this difference that they very soon degenerated into exaggeration and false comparisons. The kings and

chiefs of those times patronised these poets and treated them very generously. The presents given to men like Kapilar still make the mouths of the present day poets water. The chiefs like the seven last patrons of whom Perum Pegan was probably the foremost were still powerful. They treated the poets as their friends and very often the interference of a poet settled amicably an ugly quarrel in their families. There was no rigid caste system in those days. We find an attempt in *Tolkappiyam* to force the Aryan classification on the Tamils ; but it failed as other attempts in the same direction. But unfortunately distinctions arose in later days and the Tamils began to have their own classification and gradation of castes. The so-called Sudra of the Aryan classification (Vellala) now occupied the highest place among the Tamils; and no Brahmin supremacy was ever heard. We see in the ancient period we are talking about, all castes ate together and probably took meat. The sexual relationship was as rigid as in these days, and the community exerted a wholesome influence in insisting on the constancy of women. A woman who went astray was thrown out. But immorality in man was not looked down upon with the same stringency. Sati was in practice ; but it was not forced on the widow. On the other hand we find people dissuading a widow from entering the funeral pile of her husband. Others continued widows and led a life of self-restraint and self sacrifice. It is possible that there was widow-marriage in those days, and the following lines lend colour to it.

"காதல நிறப்பிற் கனையெரி பொத்து
 ஊதுலைக் குறுகின் உயிர்த்தகத் தடங்காது
 இன்னுயி ரெய்வர் எய்யா ராயின்
 நன்னீர்ப்பொய்கையின் நளியெரி'புகுவர்
 நளியெரி புகாஅ ராயின் அன்பரோடு
 உடனுறை வாழ்க்கைக் காற்றுடம்படுவர்
 பத்தினிப்பெண்டிர்" (ஊரலருரைத்தகாதை.)

The fact that widowhood and *sati* are spoken of so highly in the above lines gives room for a guess that there might have been widow-marriages in those days ; but even then they were not looked upon with favour.

The institution of dancing women dates from before the Christian era and we see that most of the fine arts including painting and music were left to their keeping. There was no polyandry in those days and we do not find any remains of it even though the Ethnologist would say that the Tamils were polyandrists once. Polygamy there was, and the one instance of it I find in ancient Tamil Literature has relation to a

brahmin from the north Kauniyan Vinnandayan, கவுணியன்
விண்ணந்தாயன் (Purananuru 166).

As I have said before, Buddhism and the worship of Indra and Kumara were the prevailing religions of those days. The mysticism which has captived and has to a large extent made us dreamers has not yet invaded the South. The Tamils of those days were still men. They took a serious view of their life, they did their duty and they enjoyed themselves likemen. They had parks near their towns, their women partook of their enjoyments and went with them to the parks, to their sea-beach and other places of enjoyment. There was no Gosha system of the Mahomedans, nor the half Gosha of high class Hindus of the present day. The Tamils of those days were not dreamers. They have been men of action. They did not speculate as to what a thing might be, but actually went and looked for themselves and said what the thing was. Their life is a standing example as to what we Tamils can do and what we ought to do as their descendants. So it is the duty of every Tamilian to study the ancient Tamil Literature and brushing aside all later habits which have brought us to the mire, follow the beautiful and elevating example of our ancestors.

APPENDIX I

(a) List of the Cholas

Uthiyar Cheralathan: = *Velmal-Nalini, daughter of Velman-Valiyan

Nedun-Cheralathan Imaya-Varamban :
married Paduman Thevi, daughter of
Velman Avikko, and reigned 58 years.**

Palyanai Chelkelu-Kuttuvan
reigned 25 years.

Mudi-Cheral-Adan *alias* Vana-varamban
or Chelva-Kadunko: married Manakilli
alias Chonai, daughter of Karikala Chola,
and reigned 25 years.

Adukolpattu-Cheral Adan:
reigned 38 years.

Chenkuttuvan, who crossed the sea:
married Perun Thevi, sister of Velman
Anthuvan, and ruled 55 years. He was a
great warrior: captured Vijalur, the capital
of Ilanko-Vel: attacked Mogoar of Palayan
Maran, in the Pandiya Kingdom : conducted
an expedition by the sea to the banks of the
Ganges and conquered the Aryan Kings :defeated the nine Chola princes who rebelled
against his cousin Killivalavan, the grandson of Karikala: at his fiftieth age he performed the
Raja suya-yagam. The period of his reign is probably between A.D. 90-130.

Ilanko-Adigal (the author ; of the
great epic Chilappathikaram.

Chelva Kadunko *alias* Yanaikkad-Chey "the elephant eyed": married a countess belonged to
the family of Velman-Aviko and reigned 25 years; he was a contemporary of *andiyan
Nedunchliyan II.

Perum Cheral-Irumporai : married Velmal-Chellai, daughter of Velman Anthuvan of Maiyur
: besieged Thagadur and ruled 17 years.

Kudakko-Ilancheral-Irumborai : Perum Kuntrur Kilar was his Court poet : ruled 16 years.

Cheraman Mavenko: his contemporaries were Pandian Ugra Peruvuludi
and Cholan Raja suyam vetta Peru Narkilli.

* Velmal (வெள்ளமாள்) = a countess: feminine of Velman

(வேள்மாள்) = a count or an

earl belonging to the Vellala caste.

** The period of reign assigned to each king in the list is according to the "Ten Tens."
(பத்தற்றுப்பத்து).

(b) List of the Cholas

1. Ko-Peru Narkilli (முடித்தலைக் கோ பெருநற்கிள்ளி)
2. Vel pahradakkai-Peru Viral Killi (வேற்பஹ்டக்கைப் பெரு விறற்கிள்ளி) : Killed in battle with Neduncheralathan.
3. Uruva pahrer-Ilanjed Chenni (உருவப் பஹேர் இளஞ் சேட் சென்னி): married the daughter of Alunthur Vel. His son:
4. Karikala the Great, *alias* Peru ma-valattan (கரிகாலன் பெருமாவளத்தான்) : married the daughter of Nankur Vel. (His daughter Chonai *alias* Manakkilli was the mother of the Chera Chenkuttuvan.) His sons:
5. Ched Chenni-Nalam-Killi (சேட்சென்னி நலங்கிள்ளி) and Mavalathan-Nedun-Killi (மாவளத்தான் நெடுங்கிள்ளி)
6. Killivalavan, who died at Kulamurtam (குளமுற்றத்துத் துஞ்சிய கிள்ளி வளவன்)
7. Perum-tiru-valavan, who died at Kurappalli (குராப்பள்ளித் துஞ்சிய பெருந்திரு வளவன்.)
8. Rajasuyam-Vetta Perunar-Killi (இராஜசூயம் வேட்ட பெருநற்கிள்ளி): was a friend of Cheran-Mavenko and of Pandiyan Ugra Peruvaludi: and killed a Chera by name Mantharam-Cheral-Irumporai, a different person from Yanaikad Chey-Mantharam-Cheral, son of Chenkuttuvan.

(c) List of the Pandiyas

1. Peru-valudi, who died at Velli-ambalam: was a friend of Chola Karikala peruvallathan.
2. Maranvaludi: conquered the Northern Kings: died at Kudagaram.
3. Nan Maran *alias* Nedunjeliyan I: defeated an Aryan Army and died on his throne. [He is the Pandiyan who caused the innocent Kovalan to be murdered].
4. Vetrivel Cheliyan, succeeded Nedun Cheliyan I
5. Nedun Cheliyan II victor at Thalayalanganam
6. Pandiyan Kiran Chattan: contemporary and friend of Killivalavan, who died at Kula Mutram.
7. Pandiyan Nan maran who died at Ilavandippalli.
8. Ugra peru-valudi who beseiged the fort "Kana-pereil" (கானப்பேரெயில்) of Vengai Marpan and who was a friend of Cheran-Mavenko and Cholan Raja suyam vetta Peru Narkilli.

APPENDIX II

Some Tamil works and their probable periods

UNKNOWN

Some stanzas in the Eight-Collections : those refering to Uthiyan Cheralathan, Aravonmagan or Dharumaputra and Palyagasalai-mudu-kudumi-peruval Uthi written by Mudinagar, Kouthamar, Karikilar, Nettimaiyar and Nedumpalliyattanar. Tolkappiam. Iriyanar's Agapporul

50 TO 250 A.D.

திருக்குறள்
பத்துப்பாட்டு
சிலப்பதிகாரம்
மணிமேகலை
இறையனாரகப்பொருளுரை (நக்கீரர்
சொன்னது)
எட்டுத்தொகையுள் பெரும்பாலன

250 to 500 A.D

எட்டுத்தொகையுள் சிறுபான்மைய:-
கோச்செங்கண்ணான்,
கணைக்காலிரும்பொறை
கோப்பெருஞ்சோழன்
இவர்களைப்பற்றின.
சிந்தாமணி
சிறுபஞ்சகாவியங்கள்
இறையனாரகப்பொருளுரை
(நீலகண்டர் செய்தது)
பழந்தமிழ்ப்பாக்கள் தொகுத்து முடிந்தது.

500 to 900 A.D.

தேவாரம்
திருவாசகம் (?)
நாலாயிரப்பிரபந்தம்
திருச்சிற்றம்பலக்கோவை
பாரத வெண்பா
நந்திக்கலம்பம்

கலிங்கத்துப்பரணி
பெரியபுராணம்
விரசோழியம்
நம்பியாண்டார் நம்பி சைவத்திருமுறை
வகுத்தது
உரையாசிரியர்

<p>900 to 1200 A.D.</p>	<p>புறத்திரட்டு கம்பர் இராமாயணம் புகழேந்தி நளவெண்பா ஒட்டக் கூத்தர் உத்தர ராமாயணம் ஒளவை II, பாடல்கள்</p>
<p>1200 to 1500 A.D.</p>	<p>உரையாசிரியர்கள் புராணங்கள்: கந்தபுராணம் முதலிய. சித்தாந்த சாஸ்திரங்கள் நன்னூல் வில்லிபாரதம் அருணகிரிநாதர் அதிவீர ராம பாண்டியன் நைடதம் வரகுணபாண்டியன் பிரமோத்திர காண்டம்</p>

A Short Lay of Minstrels *

Translation by

Sri V. KANDASWAMI MUDALIAR, B.A., L.T.,

Cirupanattuppadai, a Sangam poem written by
Idakkali Nattu Nallur Nathathanar.

Towering in shades of purple and blue, hill on hill rose;
The mountain-stream, in sparkling cascades falling, swirled fast
Between two shoulders of the hills ; and in ripples silvern
Flowing, looked like a garland of colourful pearls
Lying limp between smooth, rounded shoulders, and full
firm breasts 5
Of the fair Damsel-earth¹ lying in an abandon seductive;
And swelling into a river full and flooded,
The rushing waters rammed against the falling banks
Fringed with groves flaming with flowers
Perfume-filled. And Koels² in their leafy shelter tore 10
With beaks the fresh flower from their branches, and scattered
The colourful petals on the black rippled sands.
And the sable bank thick with them, a little frayed
In the ascending sun, looked like the outspread tresses
Raven-black of Damsel-earth decked with flowers. 15
Like a moving bed of flowers the travelling minstrels,
Man and woman, strong and fair, colourfully arrayed,
Took the path of the river on their eager march

* The translator does not give a too literal version, and in many places he differs from the commentator. May we suggest to the traditionist that this even then has its value as an adaption reminding us both of ancient Tamil ideas and modern English poetry.—Editor.

¹ Mother-earth. ² Indian cuckoo.

To the far-famed court of peerless Nalliakkodan¹.
 The Belle of the minstrel party, tender of foot 20
 And gait graceful, treaded wearily her way
 On the soft sandy bank littered with lance-sharp shingle.
 Hill and dale, groves fair and fields green they left far behind,
 And reached the wilderness of burning sand and rays fiery.
 The minstrel Belle, her tender feet torn and bleeding 25
 Through the gravels of the burning road, sought shelter
 Of the lineal shade of tall Kadamba² trees
 On the endless road of the sandy, dry woodlands,
 Whose fields were parched up and whose tanks had grown dry.
 She of rare grace of womanly perfections was dowered 30
 Richly with feminine charms of rhythmic curves
 And soft supple undulations; her perfumed tresses
 Of sapphire-blue sheen, rippling down her towering neck
 And fragile waist, looked like a dusky screen-cloud against
 A gold-canopied evening hill. And smitten 35
 With shame at her willowy gait, peacocks hide
 To hide in one another's train aglow with ocelli
 Blue and green; her bare ankles slender, knit strong
 Ended in well-chiselled feet whose pink soles
 Looked like drooping tongues of tired dogs; and her shapely
 legs 40
 Full and firm, at every step, looked like the trunk
 Lusty and trailing of a cow-elephant; whole her thighs
 Lusty, olive-fair, one against another, full, firm and smooth
 Challenged the trunks of plantain trees of the cool hillside.
 Her firm breasts, chloasma-mantled, were as fair and full
 As vengai³-flowers, round which banded-bees hummed sweet
 Their minstelsies; nay, they in their rounded perfection

¹ The king of Oimanadu, in Thondaimandalam; this was bounded by Kalashti in the north,
 by Pennar in the south, east by Bay of Bengal and west by Tiruvannamalai. ² Wendlandia
 Notoniana (bot). ³ Pterocarpus indicus.

Challenged the blooming buds of Kongam¹ of dawn;
 Her row of pearl-white teeth surged with the dew sweet
 As juice of breast-shaped tender kernels of palm. 50
 She was chaste as mullai²-buds by the forest-path,
 Which is abloom with Kanjankullai³-flowers, as fair
 As pearly teeth of a damsel ; and when the Belle
 Of soft swaying gait, of fawn-look and of forehead
 Bright and chaste like flashing stainless steel rested, 55
 Her pages guileless caressed her feet fair and soft.
 "Hail, brother-harpist! urged by smiting poverty,
 Which has embittered life, you master-lutanist
 Seek the bounty of the king from whom we, laden
 With gifts, are returning. You will in his great court 60
 Waken to matchless melody the golden chords
 Of the small-harp pillowed against your left shoulder.
 Your path lies across domains great and prosperous
 Of kings and chieftains famous for their gracious bounty ;
 You will pass through the kingdoms of the three kings great 65
 Of Chera, Chola and Pandian lands and of chieftains
 Seven and princely--Pegan⁴, Pari⁵; Kari⁶, Aai⁷,
 Nalli⁸, Athigan⁹, Ori¹⁰--and I shall describe,
 For your guidance, those lands of kings and chiefs.
 "The flooded fields are starred with lilies of languid petals ; 70
 Fishes gambol stirring their green glassy waters to silver ripples ;
 The buffalo of a wide muzzle foraging for food
 Crushes the carps¹¹ under its firm heavy tread ;
 And maw-crammed with lilies, it seeks the cool shade
 Of jack-trees mantled with trailing pepper-creepers ; 75
 And to the caress of its back by leaves soft of turmeric,
 It chews slow the cud to the dripping of honey

¹ *Chlospemum gossijipium* ² Jasmine. ³ White basil—*Ocimum album*

⁴⁻¹⁰ Seven chieftain kings famed for their bounty. ref. lines 146, 154.

162, 169, 174, 180, 187.

¹¹ Carp—a fresh-water fish.

Immature from the lilies, and lapses to sleep
 On a soft floral bed of wild-jasmines snow-white.
 Such is the fertility of the western lands 80
 Over which Cheran-Senguttuvan¹ holds his sway !
 May, with his large host valorous of lancers,
 Bowmen, chariots and tuskers, he had brought low
 The enemy kings of the distant North, and planted
 His victory-bow on the blue towering heights 85
 Of the snow-capped Himalayan-hills of the North.
 Vanchi² of river-wide yawning gateway
 Is the capital of this Kuttuvan³, heroic
 Of shoulders and the lord of speeding war chariots.
 You brother-harpist, are wending your weary steps 90
 To the court of Nalliakkodan whose capital
 Is greater, and whose lands are richer by far.
 Black baboons-laurelled with pith-garlands
 Beside their ears and with red breasts as if craftsmen
 Cunning had chiselled to shape the wood of Nuna-tree⁴, 95
 Full-grown and abloom with honey-dripping flowers--
 Travelled in the caravan carts of salt-vendors
 Of well-turned necks; and their wives of silken tresses,
 Which, without having been made into any one
 Of five-fold knots, hang down their willowy waists, 100
 And wave in the wanton wind. And these fat-baboons
 Jubilate with their children of beaming anklets
 Golden, by sounding the rattle improvised of sea-shells
 Pearl-hearted, and of serrated edges. And such
 Is the prosperity of Korkai⁵ on the shores 105

¹ King of the Chera country (present Malabar). Brother of Il:anko, the author of the Song of the Anklet (Silappadikaram). He marched with his forces to the Himalayas to bring a stone to carve the idol of Kamaki, the heroine of Silappadikaram. ² வஞ்சி Sea-port of the Chera-country ³ Cf. 1. ⁴ Morinda citrifolia. ⁵ கொற்கை Sea-port of the Pandian kings.

Of the eastern blue seas of towering waves.
 And the pandian-king, coming of the long line
 Of the guardians of the southern Tamil country,
 Marched against his foes, and captured their wide domain.
 And he holding sway under the regal shade 110
 Of his white umbrella of victory, tasselled
 With pearls gleaming ; he crowned with laurels of victories ;
 And he the lord of wind-speed war chariots, is the king
 Of Madura, the eternal home of Tamil,
 The peerless tongue of antiquity, and far-famed 115
 For the amplitude of its street of jubilant crowds.
 And this Madura is lesser than the great realm
 Of Nalliakkodan, to whose city far-famed
 You, brother-harpist, are marching with weary steps.
 Kadamba¹ trees, umbrageous and aglow with flowers, 120
 Girdle dense the banks of green tanks of placid waters;
 The laurels of these trees drop their stamens and pistils
 About the watering-steps of tanks; and they
 Lying scattered look like rangoli² done in gold
 And vermeil-red. To the rays of the golden sun 125
 Rising in the orient, lotus buds, lusty as breasts
 And favoured of gods, open their fair petals.
 Dragon-flies sleep for the night in the coronae
 Golden, walled round with petals pink as
 Vermeil-dyed palm of a damsel; and they, after 130
 Resting in the sweet embraces of their partners
 Life-guarding, waken with the dawn, and with amour filled
 Hum with surge of their wings their madrigals,
 Round the honey-cups of lotus flowers surging
 In the wide fields that girdle far-flung Uranthai, 135

¹ Wendlandia Notoniaina. ² This is the floor-decoration of
 loops and curves done in white or colour powder, by Hindu women

The Capital of the Chola King Sembian. And he,
 The guardian of realms lying on the western shores,
 And great in the might of his arms hero wristleted,
 Marched against his enemies, razed their ramparts
 Of high-reaching gateways to such low heights that bulls
 Bellowing, scratched their itchy necks against the low dead
 walls.

And he is far-famed as the master of chariots stately
 And of warriors valorous, who from the battle thick
 Will not fluce. And this Uranthai looks small before
 The far-famed capital of Nalliakkodan's realm. 145
 Pegan was a cheftain of hills whose cloud-canopied peaks
 Tower to shadowy heights and whose fertile sides
 Overflow with cool mountain streams. Descending from
 Ancient Avias¹ his brawny shoulders beam with the might
 Of smiting his enemies. When a blue peacock 150
 Of his fertile hillsides apprised by its sharp cry
 Of rain-barbinger clouds, he was so pleased
 That he gave his regal mantle to it as a scarf.
 Pari, famed in classic lore for his charity
 Boundless, was the lord of the purple Parambu-hills, 155
 Which echo with the rushing waters of Ori,
 The hill-stream, which in cascades leaps over shelvy sides.
 He helped his ivory chariot, wrought² luxuriously
 With vermeil and gold, as a stay to the mullai²-creeper
 Which swayed helpless on the road lined with naga³-trees
 Round whose flowers banded-bees hummed their madrigals.
 Kari, beaming bright with circling hero-wristlet,
 Was a terror unto his foes, who quailed with fear
 At his death-dealing lance, and who under his rage
 Towering cowered. But to the minstrels he was a prince

¹ ஆவியர்.

² Jasmine.

³ Naga trees - கரபுன்னை.

Of sweet winsome grace, who staggered the world by the gift
 Of all his lands with his steed, of rippling white mane,
 That was decked with a bridle of sweet-chiming silvern bells.
 Aai of shoulders brawny through wield of bow, and perfumed
 With sandal paste was of such sweet enrapturing grace 170
 Of words and gifts, that he offered to the deity
 Templed under the banyan-tree the cast-off skin
 Of a king-cobra of a beaming blue-black hue.
 Althigan is he who gave to Avvai¹ the fruit of nelli²
 Black and beautiful--the elixer vitae--of the tree 175
 That grew on the sides of his majestic blue hills,
 Colourfully carpeted with perfume-filled flowers.
 And he wields his long lance flaming with fiery wrath,
 And is the lord of a force wide as surging seas.
 Nalli, the lord of hills towering peak on peak,
 And where the rains drizzle in sparkling silver drops,
 Through his unebbing generosity, gladdened
 The hearts of those who sought his bountiful friendship;
 And with his lusty hands, famed with the might of war
 In the enemy's fields of battle, he bestowed gifts 185
 So generously that they knew no future want.
 Ori the master of a horse of silken mane
 Snow-white battled down Kari of steel-blue steed. And he,
 So famed in war, gave as gift to minstrels his lands
 Fair, of low-lying hills bristling with naga-trees
 Of crowded branches flaming with perfumed flowers.
 Not one of these seven bounteous chiefs is as great
 As Nalliakkodan in his generosity.
 And he of war-famed strength of well-knit lusty limbs,
 To the beam of his fame in the wide world, girdled 195
 By vasty seas, bears now and lone the heavy yoke

¹ அளவை. ² நெல்லி. ³ Cf. line-160. ⁴ அகில்=eagle or akila wood or aloe
 or agila wood=aquilaria ovata.

Of an endless giver of gifts, instead of those
 Bounteous chiefs of adamantine shoulders, who smote
 Their ever-rising-foemen; he is greater
 Than all the kings of Ceylon broad, ancient and of fame
 Unfading ; of Ceylon of sea-rammed shores, and famed
 Even on the day of its foundations firm;
 And he is greater than those of Ceylon kings
 Who helped the damsels of rounded soulders gambolling
 In the waters of the sea with Naga³-wood
 Of frgrant flowers, eagle⁴ and sandal-wood as floats.
 On the day of our grinding poverty, with eager hearts,
 We approached this Nalliakkodan, who wields in war
 His stainless sword, and who is as strong of limb
 As a sinewy tiger and who comes of Avia-line. 210
 His fame is so great that in cowardly retreat
 He had never turned his hero-ankleted feet,
 Covered with indurations of riding his war-tusker.
 We approached him of lusty hands, as famed as the rains
 Bounteous, through gifts of herds of elephants to minstrels
 Of diverse musical instruments ; and we sang.
 Praises of his unsurpassable lineage and also
 Of his sire's plenitude of lands of soaring hills.
 In those days our cold hearth, overgrown with mush-rooms
 Hollow-stalked, looked dismal with the bamboo falling 220
 From the thatch, and with aged walls gnawed by white-ant hosts.
 Our gloomy fire-place echoed with sharp muffled bark of
 the bitch,
 Famished and newly littered, which spurned, unable to bear
 The pain of blind pups of folded ears feeding at her dry breasts.
 And we, for fear of the curiosity of tell-tales, barred 225
 The doors of our fire-place; and our tambourine-girl
 Of slender waist, swaying with pain of gnawing hunger,
 Picked with unclipped nails, to the jingle of conch bangles,

The velai-greens growing on the dust-shoot; and we,
 Cooking it even without salt to savour, shared 230
 With our dusky kindred large, and thus our hunger
 Gnawing mitigated in those indigent days.

"And we now are returning from Nalliakkodan,
 Laden with his gifts of stately chariots, and tuskers
 Small-eyed, ichor shedding, terror-striking and decked 235
 With chiming bells to apprise people before and behind.

And you also, brother-harpist, now distressed with the want
 Of your own and of your large dusky kindred, will seek
 With a heart guileless the bounty of such a king.

The towering waves of the surging blue seas ram 240

Against white sands; your path lies by such a shoreland,
 Where aloes abloom with swan-shaped flowers;

Where early spring flowers of gold-mohur trees

Vie with gold in colour and seem to cheat the eye;

Where the lusty mature buds of musundagam¹

Bloom with sapphire-blue sheen; where long-stalked

punnai² buds

Hand like bewitching garlands of the pearls of the sea.

If after long march, you reach the song-famed shore-land

town

Of Eilpattinam³ of ice-cool tanks, and famous

For its towering ramparts girdled by moats of blue waters,

You will meet the good-wives of the shoreland, who will

Raise flaming-red fire and dusky blue smoke curling,

Of akil⁴ wood, brought by the towering sea-waves,

And heaped up to the height of ruminating camels.

¹ Leather berried buid-weed. *Rivea ornata*.

² *Calophyllum Inophyllum*

³ Eilpathinan, Vellor, and Amoor were important towns.

⁴ Akil= அகில் or eagle wood.

And these damsels of lusty shouders, of lance-mortal
looks 255

And of such a spotless beauty of face that the moonIs smitten
with sorrow for want of such a beam,
Will serve mature toddy to men of the shore-land.
If tuning your lyres tothe dance-measure of minstels
Fair and of sweet-toned flues, you go singing praises 260
Of the lord of Kidangil¹ beaming beautiful
Like his flower garland, and who is the lord
Of groves thick with trees of flower laden boughs,
You will get at every hamlet the poached meat
Of corned kuzhal² fish of their fresh-water tanks. 265
On your way to Veloor the red bean-nuts hang fair
Like threaded coral wreaths; Kayan³ thickets surging
With sapphire-blue buds bloom like a flock of peacocks;
Musundai⁴ flowers hang like spindles on their boughs
Umbrageous; and bunches of Kanthal⁵ flowers open 270
Like the pink fingers of a fair damsel;
And in the long devious path of the kitchen garden
Velvet mites of read vermilion hue creep slowly.
Its hills are girdled by fair woodlands embowered
With white mullai flowers chaste as home-templed wives.
Turning your steps to west, where the opulent glow of the sun
Fades behind hills, whose sides sparkle with silven streams
Leaping from cove to cove, you will reach Veloor.
If you reach Veloor, bright with tanks filled with flowers
Of petals sharp as smiting lance, and which is famed 280
For its triumph through wield of triumphant lance, matrons,
Of the woodlands, avoiding the blazing sun
For their no less fiery huts, will serve you sour-rice

¹ கிடங்கில். ² குழல். ³ Eugenia braeteata. ⁴ Cf. 1. 245. ⁵ Gloriosa Superba.

Delicious, hot from fire with roasted venison
 For your refreshment, and of your women of tender 285
 Mango-leaf complexion decked with wristlets but few.
 Fragrant flowers of drawn hang in wreaths on thickset
 Kanchi-tree on whose bough perched, the blue king-fisher
 Of golden beak keeps long vigil, gazing into
 The fathomless tank, and then picks up a stenchy minnow,
 When the lotus leaf broad is torn by its long beak.
 Ruby-eyed blue bees buzz round the honey cups
 Of morning flowers of bristle-stalked lotus plant;
 And the bees circling round the white flowers look
 Like the shadowy serpent-Ragu¹ round the sun. 295
 Such are Amoor's agricultural lands of cool fields.
 Its cities wide are stoutly guarded, its priests
 Pious dwindle not, and its warehouses are cool and
 beautiful.

You will rest in its hospitable villages;
 And when you seek to leave the place, you will be barred
 By children urged by their mothers of wristleted arms,
 And of braids of sapphire-blue sheen, stout as trunks
 Of cow-elephants, hanging down their necks in languid grace;
 And they are sisters to tillers of soil, who own
 Sturdy bulls, whose necks are grown lusty and strong 305
 Through ploughing the fields round and round all day long.
 These sisters will serve you sweet savoury dish
 Of crab of curved claws with chunks of snow-white rice
 Cooked of grains well polished by dark adamantine
 Pounders to the wearing away of their silver-blue
 ferrules. 310

The ghoul of white beaming tusks, of a tongue

¹ Ragu-it is an Indian belief that the serpent Ragu causes the eclipse of the sun by swallowing it.

Red and drooping like flame, of black ears hanging like
 Those of a black goat and of curved beastly paws,
 After having gorged on corpses, ruffles wildly
 By her loud echoing laughter, the silence
 Sepulchral reigning in the battle field at its eve.
 And so looks the tusker awe-inspiring, whose nails
 Are dyed with gore through kicking about corpses
 With its legs drum-stout; and the cloud of dust thus raised
 By its stampede is lowered by its rain of streaming
ichor. 320

The calm of streets after the festive dust and din
 Of noisy, surging, shouldering crowd is like
 The silence of battle field after the tusker's stampede.
 And Nalliakkodan's city of such festive
 Streets loud with noise is not afar but a-near. 325

You will reach his towering gates of lofty doors
 Ever opened, like the cloven Meru-hills
 Where god is tempted, to the minstrels, the pandits
 And to Brahmins deeply learned in rare vedic-lore.
 Those deeply learned in lores many thus him praise: 330

'He is grateful to those who do him a good turn,
 He spurns the company of the small-minded,
 He is as affectionate as he is sweet,
 And of a face ever beaming bright with smile.'
 Warriors renowned for the might of sword praise him thus: 335

'He is a shelter to those who seek refuge in him,
 He does not harbour deep-seated hatred against foes,
 He will fight shoulder to shoulder with his forces,
 He will inspire courage in the hearts of the flagging.'
 Damsels abright with pink-rayed eyes, large with paint,
praise thus : 340

'He will fulfil the deep longings of their hearts,

He will, when they with passion surge, satisfy their amour,
He will be no one seductive courtesan's tool,
He will, when in sorrow, hasten to relieve them.'

Minstrels who with his bounty run their houses praise

thus: 345

'He will before men of little learning appear as simple,
He will with the learned discourse with equal wisdom,
He will reward to endless measure and each to his desert.'

Him will you approach, who shines bright in the council
Happy of the learned, the seers and ministers 350

Like the milk-white moon amidst its brilliant star-host.

Yours is a harp to whose upright post, wrought in grace,
Is firmly fixed the tapering black-wood cross-beam
Fashioned like the snake-twinded forearm of a green-eyed
monkey

Black, grasping the snake; and the two halves of its sound

box 355

Blue-black as Kallam¹ fruit of the woodlands, are knit

Close with a line of bead-headed pins; and the box,

Rich with far-famed carver's cunning craft is covered

With deer-robe, which at the stitch of its halves looks

Like downy hair-line running down a woman's belly. 360

You will stir its nectar-sweet chords, golden like

Dripping honey, and waken, as fixed in music-lore,

The twisted chords one by one to the melody

Of bewitching music templ'd in your cunning harp.

To the music so raised you will sing praises thus 365

Of Nalliakkodan. 'Oh King, thou art he whose hand

Is ever shaped like a hanging bud through your gifts

Endless to aged seers; thou art he whose broad shoulders

Are a shelter to flagging warriors and damsels

¹ Camissa - களம் பழம்

Languishing; and thou art he whose sceptre is a shade 370
 Sheltering to tillers of soil; and art the mighty
 Of shoulders, whose lance flames in fury at the sight
 Of your enemy-kings of stately war-chariots.¹
 And ere you your song of praise finish, he will
 You apparel with garments as white and thin as
 The epidermal lining of the hollow of bamboo.
 To such a measure large he will serve you sweet mead
 That you inebriate will lilt your head as a snake
 Sways its hood in anger left to right; he will feast you
 On viands prepared, not a jot swerving from culinary
 rules 380

Laid down by Bhimsena of Himalayan broad shoulders;
 And who is elder to Arjun of brocaded scarf ;
 And whose quiver is full of arrows, which to flames
 Consuming made a prey the forests of Kanda¹
 He will viands delicious serve in a circle of cups 385
 Golden, which vie in colour with fate-stars-girdled sun
 Of dawn rising in eastern sky, flaming abright
 Like the flash of steel ; he standing beside you
 Will feast you with unebbing hospitality.
 With victory-winning might he puts to rout even 390
 Foes famed for strength of victory-winning lance-host ;
 He destroys their strongholds, and with booty thus gained
 He relieves the wants of minstrels, and all of those
 Who seek his bounty ; and to you he will give gifts
 Of gold, yellow as morning sky, gained as booty 395
 Of vanquished kings by his heroic chieftains ; further
 He will give you a chariot whose spoked wheels, bound by
 Steel tyres and firmly fixed to the steel-strong axle-tree

¹ Bhimsena one of five Pandava princes of Mahabharatha, a Hindu epic, burnt to flames the forest of Kanda

Chiselled with carver's cunning craft, look like full moon
 Of silvery ray, rolling in after-winter sky 400
 Of dark, cold clouds ; the inner side of its towering canopy
 Is painted with vermillion, red as surging bunches
 Of sky-reaching palasa¹ tree, whose blooming buds
 Are circled by a swarm of bees of jubilant songs ;
 And the canopy outside gleams like molten gold. 405
 And with it he will give you a charioteer, a bull
 Grey-white, fair of head and fleeter of foot than horses
 speeding,
 Yoked to the chariot of well-tested speed and wrought
 In all grace and beauty by an adept craftsman.
 These gifts you will get, if you go seeking the bounty 410
 Of Nalliakkodan decked with tender-leaved laurels.
 And in whom fleeting fame is firm based ; and he is
 The lord of those hills whose thunder-ploughed sides are
 too steep
 To be scaled, and whose towering purple peaks bristling
 With swaying bamboos are girdled by misty drizzling
 clouds, 415
 Amidst which peacocks spread their blue bejewelled fans,
 Which look like akil-fume mantled blue tresses of damsels
 Of supple shoulders, and of willowy waists from which
 Sarees
 Diaphanous and white fall in bewitching languid folds."

¹ Palasa tree- கல்யாண முருங்கை

The Song of Madurai¹

மதுரைக்காஞ்சி

V.KANDASWAMI MUDALIAR

Studded wit bee-hives golden, wind-swept hills
Rise from the bosom of the earth washed
By boisterous breakers of the roaring seas.
Stars of day swerve not from their courses appointed ;
The flaming sun that lights the day, the silver moon 5
That illumines night shine in radiance spotless ;
Rains fail not, and fields fertile bear fruit
To a thousand fold, carpeting the land
With the splendour of their harvests golden ;
And branches of trees hang low, laden with fruit ; 10
Man and wife are bright with flush of happiness
Full-fed ; and the cardinal tuskiers four,
Stately and caparisoned bright, bear aloft
The burden goodly of the earth far-flung
On their rounded shoulders ample and large. 15
The wealthy of plenty ceaseless dwindles not a mite
Through consumption, nor the landscape fair fades
Through evil looks cast at their abundance.
The people of the city large, and of streets wide
And well-ordered, in full happiness live, 20
Under the sheltering wings of their king
Cherished deep ; and who, guided by ministers
True but never false, holds his regal sway,
True to the glory of his ancestors great.
In the crimson field of carnage, corpses 25
Headless, time with dance-steps of the ghoul
That had gorged on the gory carcasses
Of tuskiers that lie with their severed trunks.

¹ Today the second largest city in the South ; it was the capital of Pandian-land, one of the three Tamilian Kingdoms of ancient India ; even during Asoka's time these three were independent.

On severed heads of the fallen enemies,
 Arranged like a frightful oven, the demon cook 30
 Well-versed in cunning culinary art,
 In a pot of crimson blood of fallen Kings,
 Bubbling on the fire of his flaming wrath,
 Prepares sacrificial rice by stirring
 With ladles of the severed and wristleted arms, 35
 As a blood offering to steel the arms
 Of warriors, who to the quake of their enemies
 Would not turn their backs on the field of war.
 Of such a force large and ever victorious
 Art thou, Sovereign Liege, the King. 40
 Thou art equal to divine Agastya¹,
 Templed on the Pothia-hills² flashing silver
 With water-falls, who crushed Ravana³
 The lord of the surging, southern, blue seas.
 Gaily-visored war tuskers wallow deep 45
 In the mire of their fragrant ichor,
 And sweep the battlefield, spreading carnage
 Among enemies in frightful order arranged.
 Harnessed to chariots strong as steel, leaping
 War-horses fleeter of foot than racing wind 50
 Raise a cloud of dust sanguine and darken
 The flaming orb of day in welkin blue.
 With arms toughened through use of flashing steel,
 You have with chieftain-kings vanquished
 The Chera⁴ and the Chola⁵ Kings ; with it 55
 Not content, you have other chiefs vanquished,
 In their homes flanked by towering hills gleaming
 With mountain-streams ; and other smaller chiefs

¹ Agastya was the divine founder of the Tamil tongue ; he was in Pothia-hills in Tirunelveli district, where Tampiraparani river takes its rise. ² Pothia-hills in Tirunelveli district. ³ The ten-headed and twenty-shouldered mythical monster with whom Rama, the hero of Ramayana, warred for the abduction of Sita, his consort. ⁴ ⁵ Two of the three kings of Tamilian Kingdoms of the South.

Of dark forest-lands serried with tall trees.
Thus had added to your world-wide renown. 60

Thou art a scion of great Umbal-Pandian¹
Of gleaming golden garland, and art likened
To bellowing thunder which scorches trees
Of the hillside, and scatters to the winds four
The rocks powdered by the fierce thunder-bolt. 65

Kings, whose lands are belted by forests dark
Against enemies, and whose circling ramparts
Are girdled by deep moats, and from whose fort-walls
Battlemented, and of towering gateways,
A cloud of sharp arrows is rained thick,
Are now divorced from victory of wars ;
And, subject unto you as vassals,
Carry out your behests now as old friends.
And thou art the King of Kings of domains
Between the towering Meru²-mountains 75
In the north, the Virgin³-Cape in the south,
The calm deep waters of the eastern blue seas,
And of the sounding western oceans deep.

Ships, stately with mast-heads of flapping flags,
Laden with goods of sovereign worth, cleave 80
Through the rolling waves of the dark blue sea,
Canopied with clouds, and reach your broad shores
To the welcome peal of kettle-drums⁴ large.
Urged by the furious wild wind across the seas
The fleet of vessels of swollen dusky sails,
Lying at anchor on the heaving seas,
Is like cloud-capped hills rising in the distance.
And you are the doughty victor of Saliyoor⁵,
Named after salinel⁶ the rarest of grains.

¹ The far remote ancestor and the most famous of Pandian Kings. ² The Olympus of Hindus, probably the Himalayas. ³ Modern Cape Comorin of S. India where there is a temple dedicated to the Virgin (*kanya*) goddess. ⁴ It is a large kettle-drum of nearly three feet in diameter ; it is a war-drum, and was beaten at fort-gates and now at temple-gates. ^{5 6} A small kingdom of a chieftain, near Madurai, named after red-paddy (*salinel*) for which it was probably famous.

Its ports on clear deep waters are lined long 90
 With yawning ware-houses and swarms with ships.
 Your shores and far hills echo with the tumult
 Of home-coming traffickers from far seas ;
 Echo with the cry of those who goad bulls
 At the thrashing ground ; with the silver peal 95
 Of bells round the necks of bulls ; with the beat
 Of the flails, which scatter the golden grains
 Like the broken rays of the radiant dawn ;
 With the cry of those who scare away birds
 From harvest fields ; with the song of those, 100
 Who, drawn up in a line, flood the green fields
 With the water of baling-buckets dragged
 From the brimming freshes of tanks; with the strain
 Amoebaeon of men who tread the *picotta*¹,
 And with the dance steps of Baratha² maids 105
 On sand-dunes set with sparkling sapphires
 Of Mundaga³ flowers ; and those mingle sweet
 With the drum-measure of war-minstrels
 In villages surging with festive noises.
 Thou, the vanquisher of Kutwas⁴, loadest 110
 The War-minstrels of shoulders broad and round
 With gifts of herds of cattle, with stately elephants
 Of gleaming tusks, their calves and jewels priceless,
 And decorate them with golden stars lotus-shaped.
 The clouds may their seasonal showers withhold, 115
 The hills may be scorched with sun's fiery rays
 Of midsummer, and Venus the star of dawn
 May even swerve from its course and rise South,
 But through ever flooded rivers of Vellilaiyur⁵
Your lands will yield golden fruits without abatement 120
 You are the overlord of the chieftains
 Of ancient Vellilaiyur, whose ripe fields

¹ A baling bucket attached to a pole for lifting water from wells. ² People of shore land, their chief occupation was fishing and salt-growing ; they were traders. ³ Indian night shade. ⁴ People of a chieftain state (Kutta-nadu) ⁵ A small state near Madura, drained by the Vaigai of Madura (Pandian Capital).

Ring with the rustle of wind-swept golden corn,
 With the sickle-swish of harvesters at work ;
 With the twitter of birds that alight in fields ; 125
 With the roar of the sprumy waves of stenchy seas,
 Teeming with gambolling sharks savage and blue
 With the incessant drizzle in the aloe groves
 Of pitcher-shaped flowers crowning the sand-dunes
 Lunette-shaped ; with the tumult of fish—boats 130
 Heavy laden, grating on the sandy shore ;
 And with the noisy barter of salt-vendors
 In the salt-fields of the wide back-waters.

The people of the four-fold¹ lands of ancient fame
 And of small holdings, but jubilant 135
 With plenty, pursue the faultless twin trade
 Of honest husbandry and fair commerce.
 And they, now your allies, true as old friends,
 Render you service ; and with their allegiance
 You had swept through your enemy's country, spreading 140

Terror and consuming fire in Alanganam²

You vanquished the Cher-Cholas³ with other
 Smaller chieftains, capturing their war-drums ;
 And won immortal fame through the strength of arms
 Slaughterous, and celebrated your success 145
 By sacrificial blood offerings to ghouls.

Your friends you raise aloft to heights of glory,
 And your foes hurl down to abject dust
 Of humiliation ; you are the well-beloved
 Of the flourishing people of Korkai⁴ fort 150
 Lapped by seas, and whose pearl fishers dive deep
 To gather the harvest of mature pearls, and conches
 Radiant ; and of the small villages around,

¹ Agricultural, pastoral, sea-bound and hill-lands ; four of the five-fold lands of Tamil country. ² It is in Chera country-Malabar ; Pandian King Nedunchelian defeated the seven chieftain-kings. ³ Two of the three Tamil Kingdoms. ⁴ The sea-board Capital of Pandian kingdom, prior to Madura : archaeological finds seem to confirm that Korkai was the cradle of Dravidian civilization.

Whose people indulge in toddy as beverage.
 And you shine, before the righteous of these lands, 155
 Clothed in the glory of your victories great.

You spread confusion in your foe's country ;
 You are the war-bull of South-Barathas¹,
 Now your faithful allies, whose lands are rich
 In pulav-rice² rich with fatty meat 160
 And juicy roots, and whose arrows slaughterous
 Are still fresh with revolting stench.

With the might of your arms you gained the wealth
 Hoarded of your enemies, and you bestowed it,
 With unselfish generosity, on your allies, 165
 And not content to rest on your laurels,
 In the lands strange now dear to you,
 You marched in arms to the thick forest lands
 At the foot of the towering Himalayas,
 Down whose sides thawing snows flow in silver sheen
 170

Your serried ranks poured into the forest lands,
 Razed their fortresses ; and you rested for years
 In those strange lands to establish lordship
 Over them to their benefit, and then left
 Their ancient land. And marching against 175
 Unyielding enemies scorched their forests,
 Standing as ramparts against their fierce foes.
 You made their evergreen fields, wide and large,
 A prey to hungry colourful tongues of flames.
 Thus you turned the flourishing cities 180
 Of Marutha³ lands of bleak blackened waste ;
 Wild beasts now stalk where sheep and cow
 Nibbled peacefully, and green meadows are charred ;
 Modest damsels fair and lusty have renounced
 Their *Thunangai*⁴ -dance of tuneful measured steps : 185

¹ People of sea-board land, fishers and traders. ² A dish of rice and meat stewed in ghee ; a delicious and favourite dish with modern Muslims. ³ Agricultural land, one of the five-fold divisions of Tamil country Marutha (pastoral), Mullai (wood), Kurinchi (hill), Neidai (shore), Palai (desert). ⁴ Hand-in-hand dance of man and wife.

The pillared hall of learned disputations
 Echoes no longer with the chant of lore,
 But darkly resounds with heavy dance steps
 Of ghouls of fierce looks and beastly paws
 Damsels of bewitching beauty sadly solicit 190
 Help of sentinels standing guard at the gates
 Of cities evacuated of their peoples,
 And where home-gods-templed¹ lofty mansions rise.
 Faded with hunger, damsels of towns all round
 Leave their homelands seeking the sure shelter 195
 Of their many kith and kin in distant lands ;
 The ominous wail² of the horned owl and mate
 Echoes in corn-bins, which had fallen charred
 From many-storied stately mansions ;
 In the fields which surged with flowers blue 200
 Of sengalineer,³ grow thick rushes and reeds
 To the over-shadowing heights of tuskers ;
 The boar and bristled sow wallow in fields,
 Where stately bulls peacefully turned the soil ;
 And the green fields of your enemies, 205
 Who were loth to be subject unto you,
 Are a mouldering ruin of scorched wasteland.
 Your invading host of man and beast raise
 A tumult echoing in the very heavens ;
 War-elephants of stately legs wander 210
 Wildly, and trumpet with the thunder peal
 Of their trunks raised in between their gleaming tusks.
 Like wrathful Muruga your sea-wide forces
 Of brawny shoulders, and which would not pursue
 The fleeing forces, marched unimpeded against 215
 The foemen, to the echo of their march
 In the blue sky ; their arrows rained thick
 And dark like heavy rain-drops to the wane

¹ Even to-day many of the Hindu homes have a chapel-room for worship of home-gods.

² Wall of owl is an evil omen ; the cry of horned or barn owl is ominous at dusk and it resembles the cry of a child. ³ Pink or crimson water-lily.

Of your enemies' fame ; horses speeding
 Raised a cloud of sanguine dust dark against the sky; 220
 Horn and conch loudly pealed, and their ramparts
 Circling captured to the wane of their fame,
 And to the ruin of their cities and towns.
 And those enemies are now unto you
 Subject, as you smote them with the aid 225
 Of their very kith and kin ; and hence art thou
 The overlord of domains ancient and wide
 Of the mighty Thondai¹ and Chola Kings.

Swerving not from just rule, you lead the subjects
 To virtue by your example, ever walking 230
 In the footsteps of your grandsires, who whorshipped
 The waxing moon in the twilight west, and spread
 Your glory from generation to generation,
 To the dwindle of your enemies' strength,
 Like the waning moon in the glowing east. 235

Even should you gain the lofty heavens
 With ambrosia, falsehood you will not cherish ;
 Even should the whole earth girdled by roaring seas,
 And even should the Devas² of the heavens
 Rise against you, you will not lend your knees 240
 In surrender ; even should you gain the wealth
 Hoarded, and as great as hills, of Vanan³
 Of the South, you will not court infamy ;
 But will thirst for renown that comes by charity ;
 No one is your peer in your virtues great. 245

Destroy the illusion of fame that comes
 Through war and victory. I can only
 Discourse, but initiated acharyas⁴ can set
 Your feet on the path to illumination.
 May your ancient fame stand firm-based 250

¹ The Pallava country with Kanchi as its capital, a later Tamil Kingdom. The Chola country was round about modern Tanjore. ² The gods of heaven. ³ A Hindu Pluto ; an asura (Titan) who had hoarded up untold wealth in the underworld (South). ⁴ Teachers who initiate in the path of virtue, the learned in lore, and seers.

Like towering hills against the four winds !

The mother-earth groans under the heavy weight !
Of the granaried grains and garnished gold
Of your lands, and your palace bells ring sweet
With the tintinabulations of anklet bells 255
Of *thuंगai* dance-steps of minstrels,
Man and wife ; your music hall overflows
With these travelling harper's rumble of drums,
To the fair minstrels, silver strains, sweeter
Than the soft melody of their cunning harps. 260

Feasted on unsatiating meat and viands
Varied and rich, and yet renouncing them,
They carouse on mead sweeter than the viands.
And the harpists laden with gifts of tuskers
And gold, and their partners of slender hands 265
And fair of form, now decked with beaming bracelets,
Leave for their dear homelands from whence they come.

Your domain of undwindling fertile fields
Is the home of Latchmi,¹ the goddess of wealth.
To your allies you give the booties of war, 270
Gained by razing the towering ramparts of foes;
You march in arms against your enemies
Still nursing the raw wounds of spear and sword
To the quail of even their brazen hearts.

Harpists gathered at dawn at your city gate to 275
Leave your land laden with gifts of chariot and horse;
Decked with flaming flowers ever abright
With your unfading valour in victories,
In token covered ever with sandal paste fragrant,
And with your war-chiefs renowned for heroic 280
deeds,

And inebriate with draining to the dregs
The mead served in brimming bowls, you march to war.

Your allies you teach to walk in your footsteps,
Vanquish to vassalage your adversaries,
Marching against them to collect subsidy. 285

¹ The consort of Vishnu, and the goddess of wealth, prosperity and plenty; she is represented standing on a pink-lotus.

And your victory-drums peal the birth of dawn
 At the gates of the battlemented citadels,
 High above the flight of whistling eagles.
 Not content, you gained their other lands ;
 And they are kings whose victory-drum 290
 Of bristly band have won endless laurels.

They to the spread of their fame had vanquished
 Their foes to carry out their behests ; and they
 Had vanished with their minds unilluminated,
 And without pursuing the path of victory 295
 Over the unending cycle of birth and death.
 And such kings are greater in number
 Than the sands of dunes heaped on the shores
 Of the ink-black sea of ramming waters !
 Where are they now ? To what end ? 300

Fleecy flocks of clouds from the eastern seas,
 Dark with winter rains hover over hills,
 And volley down day and night the hollows,
 Submerging the rising mounds from end to end.
 To the flights of tuskers in bamboo-forests 305
 Of hillsides, thundering clouds roar like bellowing bulls ;
 And their red rushing rain waters sweep down
 In cascades and eddies and fill tanks and swell
 The river that empties in the eastern main.

The dug-out pits for Valli¹ - roots on banks 310
 Of the river, bubble and boil with the overflow.
 The bunds of perennial tanks and belted
 By fields tall with corn to the screening height
 Of tuskers ; the tanks are alive with the chorus
 Of bees round jubilant flaming flowers 315
 Of bristle-stalked lotus, and round soft petaled
 Honey cups of blue Neidal² flowers

The surge of rivers of agricultural lands
 Bedecked with Korukachi³ flowers echoes
 In the distant heavens ; and the loud roar 320

¹ Valli root, a sweet edible root, rich in sugar and starch. ² Neidal, water-lily of different colours, blue, pink, red, white, purple. ³ A reed like plant variety.

Of the Vaigai¹ in floods, overflowing banks,
 Mingles with ringing merriment of children
 Bright-eyed, and of fair women bright with glint
 Of gold and colourful glamour of Sarees²
 At their Adipperukku³ festival. 325

The gallants' gaities and loud laughter
 Merry, of their seductive courtesans
 Of physical perfections frolicking free
 In the sanguine freshes, to the tangle
 Of their colourful garlands, blend sweet 330
 With the rush of heedless flow of waters.

The hum of festivity and the drizzle of rains
 Rise from cloud crowned Parankundram⁴,
 The sugar-cane press tunes its cricket-drone
 Monotonous, the sweet amoebaen strains 335
 Of man and woman at weeding, the uproar
 Of inebriate men rescuing the aged bulls
 Caught in the mire of fields, and the loud rumble
 Like drum-beat sound of the windswept cornfields
 Mingle with the ringing din all round. 340
 And fishers in their peaked hats sweep away
 The tangle of valli-creepers⁵ to the scared flight
 Of terns nestled among reeds, cast their nets
 And loudly barter their haul ; and crows,
 On trees under which the fisher-women 345
 Are dressing their fish, call to their kind
 Croaking, to share the stenchy offal.

In pastoral-lands, golden stag and hind gambol
 Gracefully amidst millet fields, ready
 For the scythe, amidst gingeli, black and fit 350
 For harvest, and the black-stalked ripe ragi
 Rustling in the wind ; and when kondrai⁶

¹ The river in Madura. ² Saree, a loin cloth worn by ancient Tamil women, round the waist and not carried up to the shoulders. ³ A festival of floods in rivers ; burnt food, lamp and flower offerings are made. ⁴ One of the six famous places of pilgrimage dedicated to Lord Muruga. ⁵ A water-cress. ⁶ Gold-mohur.

Gleaming golden and over-shadowing rocks
 Carpets them with yellow flowers, and when
 Musundai¹ stars the land with flowers 355
 Silvern, and when neidai-plants gleam
 Brighter than sapphires in their tangle of flowers
 Blue, a loud tumult rises in dales
 Like the echoing dance-measure of devil-steps.

Against a pillared mound of clipped agil 360
 And sandal, bamboo-paddy² waves in the wind ;
 And the long stalked mustards raise their heads,
 Towering higher than the mountain-paddy.

Varied hill-products with ginger, pepper
 And turmeric stand in colourful heaps. 365

The alarm of watchers who scare away
 Parrots from millet terraces ; the yell
 Of hillmen chasing away the heifers

From the fields where bean-hoppers shed their nuts
 Coral-tinted ; and the yell raised at smiting 370

The boar, lusty and fat enough to be ensnared
 In camouflaged trips-pits ; the false alarm
 Of "vengai-vengai"³ raised by gay girls,
 Gathering the yellow flowers of vengai tree
 And the echoing roar of striped tiger,
 As it strikes down the white-tusked boar,
 Mingle with the rush and ripple of mountain brooks,
 And echo from hill to hill of mountain-land.

In hill-girt dry woodlands bleak and parched,
 When the bamboo forest is ablaze with flames 380
 Golden-tongued, when blue smoke rises

In whirling clouds, and when the hill rings loud
 With fire's crackle, herds of elephants flee fast
 To other lairs ; their heavy thud of steps,
 Their trumpet-peal of distressed cry blend in sight 385
 And sound with the consuming forest-fire.

¹ Leather-berried bindwood. ² Bamboo rice or paddy is a hill product,
 and a fare of the hill-tribes. ³ Vengai means tiger ; and also a tree of hill
 country, *pterocarpus mersupium*.

The sound oboe, musical and jubilant,
 No longer sounds, as fields are consumed in flames.
 And the hot wind, drying up hill-brooks,
 Vanishes in the deep dark caverns of hills. 390
 Stretches of grass-lands, turned golden in summer,
 Lie like hay-ricks ; and summer's wild hot wind
 Ruffles the deep waters of delves, and echoes
 Like boisterous seas ; and the village bucks,
 Severe of speech and mien, and armed with bows 395
 Leave their deer-robe beds in their hay-thatched huts,
 To guard the mountain-pass under the sun
 Blazing, without the cool shelter of trees.

Urged by sailors brave and bravery of seas,
 Ships in majestic multiplicity 400
 Of sails, laden with varied wealth of land
 And sea, far and near, cast anchor at ports
 Of Pandian Kingdom far-famed for wealth.
 And her ware-houses on the sand-covered
 Shoreland are full with iridescent pearls 405
 Of the deep sounding seas ; with rolls of bangles
 Slenderly cut and daintily wrought of conch ;
 With sweet tamarind and white salt-heaps
 Of black salt-pans brought by Baratha merchants ;
 With huge, plump slices of salt-fish heaped up 410
 By brawny fishers ; with precious products
 Varied, of classic shores¹ ; with stately horses
 Of mettle and breed of Arabia brought
 In exchange for their rare homeland products.

Drums of festivity rumble in your streets 415
 Festive, dance-steps of kuravai-koothu²
 And of thunangai echo soft ; fragrance
 Sensuous rises from courtesans' squares ;
 Prosperous villages jostle one another ;

¹ They traded with Egypt, Greece, Ionian Islands, Tyre and Sidon. ² A hand-in-hand dance of man and wife akin to Thunangai.

The growing wealth of five-fold¹ lands overflows, 420
 And such are the bewitching beauty
 And colourful glory of your broad realm,
 As sung by your country's bards of renown.

Rising from the distant misty mountains
 Of the west, the broad Vaigai, carrying 425

Fragrant flowers of various hues and moulds,
 Flows like a flower garland between
 Rippled sand-banks dense with wind-swept trees
 Ringing with the cry of peacocks of trains
 Of opulent lines ; dark with towering trees 430

On whose network of boughs jubilantly swing
 Troops of monkeys, sire and dam ; and packed
 With hones of Panas² of ancient descent,
 Nestled in groves flaming with the radiance
 Colourful of perfume-filled flowers of dawn. 435

Girdled by a moat of fathomless depths
 Of sapphire-blue waters, your broad ramparts
 Battlemented, rise tier upon tier like cloud-topped hills
 Reaching the very heavens ; and your street teeming
 With man and beast, wide as the Vaigai, leads up 440

To the invulnerable gateway renowned of yore,
 Where is templed the awe-inspiring god of war,
 And guarded by massive doors waxed jet black
 With mustard oil ; and they have put to flight
 The besieging army of enemy kings, 445

Who had lost their wide domain comparable
 To Alzhumbil³ of the chieftain-king, named
 Mana-viral-vel,⁴ whose wealth of rich lands
 Of ever growing fertility does not fade ;
 And those who had lost their villages 450

¹ Marudham, Kurinchi, Mullai, Neidal and Palai. (agricultural, hill, pastoral, woodland, sea-board, semi-desert). ² Akin to Adi-Dravidas, or immigrants of remote times.

³ அழும்பில் - a place near Madurai and in Pandian land under the chieftain-king Mana-viral-vel (மன விநல் வெள்); there is a place of the same name in Chola country.

⁴ மன விநல் வெள் or Vana-viral-vel - மன விநல் வெள்.

Jubilant and jostling ; and who cherishing
 Long-standing hatred had with their army
 Great of tuskers, and renowned in warfare,
 In retreat turned their backs against war
 Leaving behind a trail of sweet-toned kettle-drums 455
 As through an æolian harp the wind sings sweet
 Through the open windows of sky-reaching
 Storied mansions that line the river-wide streets,
 Where by beat of drums, roaring like the seas
 Stirred by wild wind, the coming festivity 460
 Is announced ; where with tumultuous harmony
 Of conch, drum, and horn, the jubilation
 Of crowds, like the churning noise of bathers
 Frolicking in the wide waters of tanks.
 Mingle ; where the babel of the crowd 465
 Of many climes echoes ; where the morning
 And evening bazar roads, as beautiful
 As a picture, are brilliant with flags
 Colourful of different booths. Festoons
 Of temple-fair, victory flags raised aloft 470
 By chieftains of war commemorating
 The capture of enemy's fortresses
 By their surging sea of armed forces
 And the stenchy slaughter of war-tuskers
 By the bristling lancers ; and flags in praise 475
 Of sweet toddy by its vendors ; and flags
 Of the assemble halls of the learned,
 The seers and the bounteous flap in the wind
 Like the distant gleam of colourful brooks
 On the blue and the purple mountainsides. 480
 Swept by a wild whirlwind, the full-sailed ship
 Of queenly grandeur lying at anchor,
 On the shores of the deeps, where panai-fish¹
 Gambol with conches, wrenches its anchor
 Breaks its mast to silvers, cuts its rigs, 485
 Tears its sails to shreds and wildly rolls

¹ climbing perch.

On the heaving sea; and so the tusker
 In musk, tramples down to death its goader,
 In fury throws down the mahout, and breaks
 The shackles of its hind legs, and to the sound 490
 Apprising of conch, behind, before, thunders
 Madly through the wide street spreading panic.

Charioteers deeply versed in trainer's art
 Urged their horses to mad-wind speed, when chariots
 With the added grace of white maned horses 495
 Harnessed to them sped fast, raising a cloud
 Of sanguine dust which screened the blazing sun ;
 And horses speeding to the bewitching toss of manes
 Promoted and well dressed left behind
 A trail of deep hoof-marks ; and this was like 500
 A flight of red-legged swans of feathers
 Snow-white, trying to reach the radiant sun.

With the rumble of chariot-wheels, the clip-clop-clep
 Of racing horses, and the trumpeting loud
 Of stately tuskers mixed the cry of hawkers. 505

Standing in purple and cool shadows of mansions,
 Flower-girls with perfumed flowers and garlands
 Colourful, bewitchingly arranged,
 Sellers with betel leaves green,
 Tender and long-stalked, with chunam paste¹ 510
 Of fired conch, arecanuts stewed in juice
 Of karungali-bark,² and chewing-powder³
 Perfumed and pulverized of camphor, sandal,
 Gold and civet, cried out their wares exposed
 For sale in their baskets large as kettle drums 515
 Of warriors gleaming with hero-anklets
 And golden flowers. And sturdy warriors

¹⁻³ Chewing betel leaf still obtains in India : betel leaf with a pinch of chunam paste, arecanuts and perfumed powder is munched after meal, it helps salivation like sweets after dinners.

Inebriate and of elephant port
 Shambled about the crowd-surgng street.
 When hush fell, as at the end of battle 520
 Of four-fold⁴ armies contending, people caught
 In the shouldering crowd heaved a sigh of relief.
 When eve fell, when the crowd thinned and when
 Silence reigned, the streets echoed with foot-falls
 Soft, with muffled clops, with silvern voices 525
 Of courtesans of seductive peacock grace,
 Of blond complexion fair as rays of eve,
 Reflected from golden statues of shoulders round
 And sleek like hollow bamboo,⁵ encircled
 With bright anklets, of looks as mortal 530
 As arrow-darts, of ensnaring pearl-rows
 Of teeth, of languid ink-black tresses,
 Of voluptuous breasts mantled with pink-fair
 Chloiasma⁶ and painted⁷ with creeper design,
 Who, eagerly bent on their way for embraces 535
 Lascivious of lustful youths, promenaded
 Against the loud ensnaring allurements
 Of these, moved in modest matronly grace,
 Old dames of silver-white hair made up
 Into the shape of right-whorled conch of the deeps 540
 Hawking from door to door their viands diverse
 And delicious and fragrant, and colourful
 Flowers bewitchingly arranged in their trays.
 Thus passed the evening hour of ablution
 On the seventh day of the festivity 545
 Unparalleled in grace, colour and sound
 In the bazaar streets of four-boroughed
 Madura-land, whose far and near crowd
 Incoming and outgoing does not diminish
 Nor swell, as the waters of the seas do not 550

⁴ Bowmen, lanciers, chariots and war-elephants. ⁵ This is a common simile in Tamil literature, comparing the round smooth shoulders of a woman to round, smooth bamboo.

⁶ This is considered a mark of beauty. ⁷ Painting the breasts and shoulders of a woman, by her lover, in creeper patterns was common then.

Decrease through thirsty coluds nor increase
By the winter freshes of rivers of land.

The broad streets echo with the rattle of chariot wheels
And tramp of prancing horses ; and handsome youths
Of rank, and generous as blue rain-clouds, 555
Arrayed with gold-brocaded *kachams*, as pink
As gorgeous clouds of the colourful west,
And with gold-hafted swords depending bright
From flaming girdles, and with hero-anklets
Gleaming round their ankles firm and close knit 560
And indurated, urge to racing-wind speed
Their chariots wrought in grace ; their whips rattle loud
In their sockets, their neem-garlands, a mark
Of the wane of fame and strength of enemies,
Sway in company with their blue garlands 565
Of sengalineir⁸ flowers, their pink scarves
Flutter in the wind, and footmen steer clear
The way full with the last-lingering crowd

The Nayanar⁹ festival is loud
With colour and sound ; and colourful banners 570
On adamantive staffs of storied mansions
Stream in the wind like spume flags of green waves
Towering, of the sapphire seas ; and screened
Behind them vanish as they appear,
Like the full moon behind dark-blue clouds, 575
The radiant faces of stately damsels.

The festive streets overflow with the fragrance
Of civet, with the soft silver chime
Of pearl-hearted beaming anklets,
With the golden radiance of jewelry 580
Flashing, and flower-graved bracelets wrought
Out of divine gold purified in fire,
And with the winsome charm of damsels
Bright of face as the golden sheen
Of ear-pendants fashioned like shark-fish. 585

⁸ Deep crimson or purple water-lily.

⁹ The chief of the tutelary gods.

The music of evening worship softly rings,
 When men pure in body and mind offer
 Delicious food and flowers radiant, unfading
 To the lofty Siva¹⁰ girdled with the sword
 Flaming, wrought with the elements five 590
 Of ether, fire, air, earth and water,
 And to other awe-inspiring deities.

Bedecked in blazing jewelry, women
 Of chaste matronly grace, with their children
 Against their full firm breasts, looking like
 Gold-hearted lotuses, join at prayer.
 With their well-beloved lords of sweet
 Conjugal felicity, in the worship
 Regular of Amana¹¹ monasteries.

In the Brahmin monasteries huddled 600
 Like hills rise the clear chant of Vedas,
 The blue curling smoke and the golden flame
 Of sacrificial fire, and other rites of priests,
 Who have become one with Brahman, who is
 In and through the universe ; and these 605
 Who have gained the bliss of heaven after
 Having lived a householder's life in lands
 Fourfold of the firm earth, by walking
 In the righteous path of love for man and beast,
 Share their bliss with other jeevan mukthas.¹² 610
 The redeemed—of the Brahmin monasteries.

Jain mutts¹³ high as reach of human eye
 Rise like rock-temple from groves full with flowers
 Rare, fragrant and colourful, whose high walls
 Are sculptured like high-relief bronze-work. 615
 From other mutts cool as the waters of a tank

¹⁰ One of the gods of the Hindu triad ; the destroyer. ¹¹ Jain and frequently applied to Buddhist ; Buddhism merged into earlier Jainism and came to be equated as Vaishnavism and Saivism are equated as Hinduism ; the one erotic and the other ascetic. ¹² Those who have realised God even in a house-holder's life. ¹³ Mutts, monasteries of Jains. Brahmins and Buddhists

Rises soft the chant of those who offer prayers
 With incense smoke, and flowers alive
 With the chorus of gold-banded bees ;
 Wherein live those sages, who by penance, 620
 Without bodily mortifications,
 Have gained the peace that comes through subduing
 Their senses five, and those wise seers who read
 The past and the future, and who have
 A knowledge of heaven and earth; from whose mutt roofs
 Hang in nets bowls as narrow of mouths
 As the clefts in rocks of towering hills.

As holy priests, who raise sacrificial fire
 Leading to heaven subdue the king and so
 The assembly of wise ministers far-famed 630
 And of flaming-white turbans decorated
 With golden lace¹⁴ of regal honour, guard the King
 From all ill-fame, and lead in path lofty
 Of righteousness that comes through elevating
 His people by planting in them the love 635
 Of kith, kin and all things living, after
 Weighing impartially, like the beam
 Unswerving of the scales, his good and evil.

Man and wife walking in the righteous path
 Of householders live in mansions fair, huddled close 640
 Like their neighbouring hills ; and on the heights
 Towering, of mansions full with viands
 Varied, eagles rest and jubilantly cry.
 And beside them live merchants who trade
 In products of hills, land, sea, as gold 645
 Precious, peerless pearls and colourful gems,
 And also priests, captains, ambassadors
 And spies of four-fold jargon, like knightly kosas
 Affecting four different tongues, who live
 In Mogoor of the chieftain king, Pazhaiyan¹⁵ 650

¹⁴ A strip of gold-leaf decoration given by the king and worn on the face of a turban.

¹⁵ The chieftain King of Magoor.

Ever fertile through unfailing rains.

Your four-square streets beam with the colour
And ring with the hum of crowded traders
And artisans standing shoulder to shoulder
And hip to hip ; weavers great and small spread 655
Their sarees in ripple-folds and hawk them ; sellers
Of bangles cut and fashion slender conch wristlets ;
Jewellers drill gems to beads and string them
Into necklaces of blue sapphires, corals
And pearls ; goldsmiths exhibit their ornaments 660
Fashioned out of purest gold, and those who
Determine the purity of gold stand
By them ; braziers weigh and barter their wares
Old and new ; drapers do the kachams¹⁶
To the latest fashion ; flower girls,
Akil¹⁷ and sandal sellers, and artists
Keen-eyed, who paint in cunning colours and true,
Finish up the motley crowd of Bazaar-streets.

In the evening-bazaar, the cry of hawkers
Of juicy jacks, sweet and rare mangoes, 670
And other fruits mingles with the jubilation
Of eating-houses where people feast on milk-rice
Sweetened with candy sweeter than nectar,
And on savoury meat-rice served with
Other delicious dishes of cooked roots, 675
Vegetables and fresh greens, luxuriant
Through the never-failing seasonal rains.

This babel of voices is like the surge in halls
Of assembly, where men adept in debates
Religious, argue and discourse before 680
The Chera-king of gleaming palm-flower garland¹⁸
Whose praises are sung, to the beat of drums,
By the minstrels of his cool seaboard land
It is like the tumult that rises aloud

¹⁶ Probably turbans.

¹⁷ Cagil-wood (aquilaria agallocha)

¹⁸ Insignia of Chera King.

In the noon of day, when full-sailed, stately	685
Merchantmen, to carry to distant lands	
Diverse products, cast anchor in the seaport	
Stenchy, where the Kaveri ¹⁹ empties itself ;	
It is also like the noisy twitter	
Of crop-full birds, as they fly down to feed,	690
In the fast-falling eve, their eager nestlings.	
In the evening hour when the sun, abating	
Its fiery rays, sets behind western hills,	
When the moon, grown full after sixteen days	
Of waxing, rises in east making noon of night.	695
Fawn-eyed women beloved of their kind	
For their chastity, eager for the embraces	
Of their husbands, deck themselves with garlands	
Of fragrant water-lilies and radiant jewelry,	
Smear their bodies with sandal and musk,	700
Anoint their long tresses with scented oil,	
Smoke their diaphanous, flower-worked sarees	
With the perfume of akil and sandal.	
Smitten with amour at the approach of night	
Convivial, after the hush of noisy day,	705
They light their hundred lamps of golden tongues,	
Illumining the town to its very borders	
Round, to welcome home their dear absent lords.	
They then raise, by turns, enrapturing music	
In their seven-tuned small harps ; and after	710
Amour, with the return of modesty	
Dearer than life, quiescently repose.	
And courtesans of affected modesty	
And seductive, eager for the lascivious	
Embraces of bucks deck their raven black hairs	715
With flowers of heaven-reaching perfume.	
The broad festive streets, littered with fallen	
Opening buds, overflow with fragrance	
Luxurious, and with the jingle of courtesans	
Wandering for the sweet seductions of night.	720

¹⁹ A river in Chola country, now it drains Tanjore

Who set their straying jewelry ; and decked
 Abright with almost a bower of buds,
 Varied in hue and sweet perfumed, which open
 To the chorus of circling bees, hasten
 For further captivations of enrapturing night. 725

At dawn pearl-winged bees hum their flatteries
 Round the fallen flowers at their portals,
 And desert after draining their honey cups ;
 And so the courtesans spend the balmy night !
 Locked in the arms of lustful youths, 730
 To the print of their jewelled garlands,
 On their supple full breasts, and rob them
 Of their wealth with honeyed words of loving
 Affectations, and leave them in the lurch.

In their mansions overflowing with perfume 735
 And illuminated with golden flames,
 Courtesans, ravishingly fair as nymphs
 Of heaven, decked with beaming jewelry
 Of purest gold, spend the night with youths,
 Who, like birds that go in quest of trees 740
 Fruit-laden, gather round them. And the courtesans
 With these gay gallants gambol in water
 Cool, of Vaigai river, rest on sand dunes
 Playing on harps and drums, till far
 Into the night and then desert in haste. 745

And girdled round their swaying waists with wreaths
 Of water-lilies, and cresses hanging
 Over their languid zones for other captivations
 Seductive, hurry to their stately mansions
 Full with perfume of enrapturing flowers. 750

On the bright Onam-day²⁰ of the birthday
 Festivity of Nannan,²¹ the king radiant
 With golden garland in token heroic
 Of vanquishing the host of Avunas,²² 755

²⁰ Now an important Malayalee festival : basically a harvest festival : has mythological association with Mahabali, the asura king. ²¹ A great chieftain king. ²² ചിങ്ങമു.

Heroic warriors, inebriate with toddy, 755
 Heedlessly wandered about the streets littered
 With sharp steel gravels thrown in the mad path
 Of battle-tuskers, for the abatement of their speed,
 By goaders from the lap-folds of their tunics
 Of broad, blue borders. The hands of warriors 760
 Are indurated with training tuskers
 Of war, death dealing, whose heads are covered
 With scars of battle, and their thumbai garlands
 To the hum of bees, sway round their shoulders,
 And love of war ever burns in their hearts. 765
 With milk surging in full round breasts, women
 Of matronly grace, newly delivered
 Of children, to the great joy of their husbands,
 Wash, with their kith, kin and others
 Of their households, the pollution of child birth, 770
 In the holy waters of the temple tank ;
 And join in worship to the sweet melody
 Of harps set in tune with drums large and small,
 By food offerings before the golden flames
 Of camphor, when enceinte women of pea-cock gait 775
 Pray for a similar deliverance
 And safe of their first and anxious conception,
 As augured by the presiding, god-posessed
 Priestess of broad, full and rounded shoulders.
 With these mingles the surge of devil dame-square,
 Where the awe-inspiring priest, decked abright
 With a garland of kurinchi²³ flowers.
 Of winter, dances to the music silvern
 Of Pellet-anklets²⁴ and hand-silambu ;
 And apprises the crowd of the cause 785
 Of their several misfortunes, and offers
 Propitiatory worship to Muruga
 Decked with kadamba²⁵ flowers. The festive

²³ Now applied to blue flowers of Nilgiri Hills, *Strobilanthes Gunthianae*.

²⁴ Pearl or jewel hearted anklet, and the same is used as a hand musical instrument by priests when they dance in ecstatic-square. ²⁵ *Wendlandia Notoniana* (bot.).

Birth-day of far-famed Nannan finished up
 With the surge of kuravai dance and song, 790
 Of man and wife, in the villages
 Several and cheries of Madura-town ;
 Thus passed the first watch of the night.

When conch trolls the end of first watch, women
 Stately and modest of mien, decked with jewels, 795
 Shut their booths of sliding plank-doors, to rest
 For the night, and confectioners of cakes
 Spongy as beehive, of sweet puffs with dhol
 And cocoanut stuffed and sweetened with candy,
 And of cates stewed in honey, sink to sleep 800
 By their confection baskets beside.

Dancers, pipers, trumpeters and others,
 At the end of the festivity, lie hushed in sleep
 Like the sea that calms after its surge.

In the darkness of midnight, 805
 When evil spirits wander with demons deadly,
 Swarthy thieves, one with the dark night, dressed
 In tunics, black as hide of tuskers stately,
 Over their many-coloured underwears,
 And dusky turbans, cower about the streets 810
 For a chance to steal jewelry ; swords hang
 By their sides, deadly daggers and hidden
 In the rippled folds of their underwears ;
 Rope-ladders are wound round their loins, and they
 Wander about with sandaled feet, and armed 815
 With chisels to which even firm stone walls
 And steel-bound heavy doors will easily yield.

While armed with unerring bows and arrows
 City-guards, versed deep in criminology
 Fearless of evil spirits and unmindful 820
 Of heavy rains of the night that flood
 The broad streets, go round their night watches
 Spying for thieves, who vanish in the twinkle
 Of an eye, and wait under cover
 To pounce upon them, as tigers sinewy 825
 Lie in wait to strike down stately tuskers.

The Vedic Brahmins²⁶ humming-chant rises
 Like the chorus of dragonflies round
 The opening pollen cups of fragrant flowers
 Of cool green tanks; harpers tune their lyres and play 830
 Marutha songs ; goaders urge tuskers to eat ;
 Chariot horses in stalls begin to chew grass ;
 Bazaar-keepers sweep their booths and spray
 Them with cow-dung water;²⁷ toddy vendors
 Loudly tell the prices and hawk the beverage. 835

When the morning rays of sun dispel darkness
 Of night, chaste damsels sleeping in embraces
 Loving of their lords, eager for duties
 Domestic of day rise betimes, open
 The lofty doors guarding their high-walled mansions, 840
 To the jingle of their anklets and bracelets
 Flashing like lightning, when the morning echoes
 With the confused lisp of men still under
 The spell of their night's carouse, with praises
 Of minstrels, some standing and some sitting, 845
 And with the bell-toll of time-keepers.

Peal of drums apprises the birth of dawn,
 And mingles with the bellowing of bulls in stalls ;
 The song of pie-bald cock ushers in the dawn ;
 The hoopoe, the swan and the peacock tune 850
 Their amorous notes calling to their mates ;
 Tuskers in company of their dames peel loud
 Jubilantly ; and the roar of tigers,
 Bear, and lions immured in cages echoes
 In the distant chaste blue heavens of dawn. 855

When the morning rays of sun put to rout
 The darkness of night, ushering in the dawn
 With the promise of security, maids
 Sweep the mansions littered with arecanuts,
 Pearls and gems flaming as flower torn from 860
 Necklaces in the night's amours, and sweep

²⁶ Brahmins whose business is to chant the Vedas. ²⁷ This custom still obtains in Hindu homes of South India ; cow-dung and other products of cow are sacred to Hindus, for example the wine ; it is supposed to remove pollution.

The sanded gateway buzzing with bees circling round
Fallen flowers of the night's amour.

Tuskers deserted by brazen-shouldered
Warriors in their retreat, horses fleet of foot 865
Captured from the enemy's country, and herds
Of cattle deserted by fleeing herdsmen through
Slaughterous flames raised by fierce Vetuwas,²⁸
Massive doors of fortresses girdling round
The hill-country, and subsidies of gold 370
And jewelry offered as homages
By vassel kings flow in volume
Measureless into Madura like waters
Many of the Ganges that empty themselves
Into the sea. Thus in riches greater 875
Than of the domains of gods shines in glory
Far-famed Madura-town of Pandian king.

Damsels roseate fair as the rays of sun
Setting behind western hills, filtering
Through a grove of asoka²⁹ trees aflame 880
With burning-red leaves on a network
Of boughs circled round by humming flatteries of bees—

Damsels decked with jewelry wrought of gold
Purest, set with sparkling colourful gems,
Walking in bewitching peacock-gait casting 885
Radiant haloes—

Damsels tender of newly-budded
Mango-leaf complexion mantled fair
With golden chloasma in leaf-vein patterns—

Damsels with a fine array of pearl teeth, 890
With ears beaming with pendants shark-shaped,
And of faces bright as large pollen-filled flowers
Of red lotus of flaming petals that grow
In the sacred tank, and decked with wristlets
Of rare craftsmanship of cunning artists 895

In a bed curtained with colourful garlands
The king rested for the night in the embraces

²⁸ A fierce warrior tribe.

²⁹ (hot) *Polyalthia longiflora*.

Fond of such sweet consorts, with his head
Pillowed on their perfumed shoulders round,
And rose betimes for the work of morn, 900
After amour-satisfied quiescent sleep
Sweet, at the early hours of the dawn.

The king handsome as a statue wrought
In cunning colours lively and true to life
By cunning artists, and smeared with fragrant paste 905
Of sandal of adamantine core and decked
Abright with pearl necklace and fair garlands
Of colourful flowers, round which hummed bees,
Gold-banded, their amorous songs, set in state--

The jewel-set rings on his fingers gleamed, 910
In tune with the golden hero-anklets ;
And his starched diaphanous tunic on shoulders
Broad, hung in straight faultless folds in tune
With pearl-garlands hanging down from his neck.

Sovereign liege, lord of hosts and princes !
Sitting in state, you welcome those warriors,
Who, like the anicut that stops the fast-rushing
Waters, advancing between two warring hosts,
Have put to flight the surging forces of foes,
To the praise of your fame through victories of sword: 920

Those warriors who with mighty bend of bows
Have their arrows against their broad chests borne,
And of shoulders brawny enough to master
Wild horses of mettle and fleet of foot :

Those warriors rich in heroic deeds who had 925
Guarded the fortresses girdled by as deep moats
As yawning hill-caverns into which surge
And rush the waters of winter rains ;

Those warriors still covered with raw wounds
Through battling tuskers of war, and who, 930
To the peal of kettle-drums of mouths stopped with the
robe

Of death-dealing bulls, had boldly marched
Into the very thick of battle like forest-fire
To the devastation of enemies :

Those allies decked with garlands of gold-wrought 935
 Thumbai-flowers, who had flung their arrows
 And steel-capped lance-sticks at the enemies.
 To their confusion, and who are armoured
 In sectional coats-of-mail dull with age,
 Over their bodies obvious with ribs, 940
 Like the spokes of wheels, through flesh-lorn wounds of
 war

Those who have patched up friendships
 Between those, whose prosperous domains broad
 Are comparable to the regions of the gods :

Those vassals of smaller domains, who are 945
 Decked with colourful garlands, whose chests deep
 Are dry with sandal paste, and who had
 Devasted the arrayed forces stately
 Of tuskers of war :

Thus welcome princes 950
 And warriors famed through war to enter,
 Without hesitation, your lofty palace gates.

Accessible thus, you will be to all,
 And welcome the troops of minstrels, singers,
 Dancers and trumpeters ; and not curious 955
 To know who and whence they are, you with them
 Consider as your own kith and kin,
 And without their solicitations,
 And to the measure of their dear wishes,
 Give gifts of lofty chariots decked with lotuses 960
 Wrought in ivory, and tuskers.

In fields far and wide people carouse wild
 On sweet toddy ; under every tree fat sheep
 Are slaughtered, and the fat melts under fire raised
 To approach them ; and tumult of people stewing 965
 Vegetables of diverse kinds mingles with fumes,
 Purple and blue as mist-clouds of winter,
 Hissing through the final flavouring
 Of dishes over fire in frying pans.

Thus does Madura of lofty mansions jubilate ! 970
 May you walk in the path of your forbear,

Lofty Kudumi,³⁰ famous for raising
 Many penance fires, and who shared the bliss
 Of heaven with great teachers, who had performed
 All austerities as mentioned 975

In ancient lore. And you like lofty Vishnu³¹
 The lord of all the wealth of the wide world,
 Will share all your good things with your peoples.

Filled with greatness matchless, wisdom,
 And all other praiseworthy virtues, you will
 Bestow precious gifts on the many
 Families that live in your large domain,
 And elevate them. And filled with deep learning
 You will shine amidst your kith and kin
 Prosperous like the flaming sun that rises
 From the depths of sapphire seas, and like
 The full moon amidst her starry host.

And you will, to the deep desire of your heart,
 Lead in the straight path of righteousness,
 Chieftain kings famed for war ; the five-fold men³² 990
 Great in virtue and wisdom, decked with jewels
 Of far-famed gold, of your great assembly ;
 The Kongan³³ kings famed for smiting with sword
 Unfailing, their foes, beginning from Maran,³⁴
 A chieftain king, famous and decked with flowers 995
 Of gold, who on earth established renown
 Fair ; and to the blessings of the wise,
 Beaming with renown, of the assembly.

When night comes, sleep against the shoulders
 Of consorts, decked with beaming jewelry, 1000
 After carousing on the well-flavoured mead,
 Offered by them in cups of gold.

May thou, lofty king, great in wisdom

³⁰ A greatly renowned forbear of the Pandians. ³¹ Vishnu, one of the Hindu triad, the preserver : in one of his incarnations he rose to sky-reaching height and hence lofty.

³² Ministers of the king's assembly (cabinet) : ministers, commanders, priests, ambassadors, spies. ³³ Kongan, a country of a chieftain king. ³⁴ A chieftain king of the line of Pandians.

Live for the rest of your god-ordained days
Walking in the goodly path of righteousness !

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A HALF-HOUR WITH TWO ANCIENT TAMIL POETS BY

Hon. P. COOMARASWAMY

The Paper which I propose to read to-night consists of a translation, somewhat free and short, of two poems : one by *Kapilar* and the other by *Muḍattāmakkaṇṇiyār*, both of which from part of the collection known as *Pattupāṭṭu* or the *Ten Poems*.

Kuriṇjippāṭṭu, by some said to be known also as *Perunkuriṇji*, was composed, according to the famous commentator *Naccinārkkiniyar*, in order to complet the Tamil education of a certain *Ārya* prince by name *Pirakattan*,* who, judging from the poem, was perhaps the ruler of a mountainous district. The poem consists of 260 lines, and makes mention of many different trees, shrubs, and flowers, such as seldom occur in other Tamil poems. In this translation I have omitted them, as those who seek information on the subject can easily consult the original. The author of this poem was *Kapilar*, the brother of *Tiruvalluvar*, whose *Kural* is wellknown. *Kapilar's* age must be fixed prior to the second half of the second century of the Christian era. At page 149, Vol. XIII., 1894, of this Society's Journal, my statement that *Kapilar* and *Paraṇar* were contemporaries, and that *Paraṇar* received presents from the *Chera* king *Senkuṭṭuvan*, whom *Gaja Bahu I.* of Ceylon visited, will be found. This visit took place between 113 and 135 of the year of Christ, as that was the period of the reign of the latter monarch, according to the list of kings given in p. iv. of *Wijesinha* Mudaliar's edition of the *Mahawamsa*.

Porunarāṭṭuppadai, the second of the poems which I have translated, consists of 248 lines, and is sung in praise of the great Chola king known to history as *Karikāla*. It purports to describe the experiences of a musician who was the recipient of that king's liberality. Many matters of interest with regard to the food, mode of life, manners and customs, poets and musicians of the Tamils of ancient times appear in this poem. *Karikāla's* age, for the following reasons, was not later than the first century of the Christian era.

1. The celebrated Tamil poem *Kalingattupparaṇi* was written by its author in praise of his patron, king *ko-raja-Kesari-varman*,** alias *Kulottunga Chola Deva I* of the *Chālukya* dynasty, who reigned from 1063** to 1112 after Christ. The date of this poem has been correctly fixed as not long after 1081,** which date is also accepted by

* I give this name as it is spelt in Tamil, as I am not certain what the Sanskrit equivalent is : *Query Prahasta*.

* Cf. *Indian Antiquary*, Vol. XIX, pp.329 *et seq.* : Vol. XX., pp.278 *et seq.*, *South Indian Inscriptions*, Vol. II., Part I., p.230, Mr. P. Sundarampillai's valuable Paper, "The Age of Tirujnana Sambandha."

other Tamil Scholar. In this poem *Karikāla* is mentioned as an ancestor of *Kulottunga Chola Deva I.*, as having gone to Northern India on a tour of conquest, and as having accepted the poem *Paṭṭinappālai* (Which also forms part of the collection, *Pattupāṭṭu*, already referred to), and paid the author of that poem one million six hundred thousand pieces of the gold coin called *pon*. Many of these and other particulars regarding *Karikāla* are mentioned in other Tamil works, such as the *Periyapurāṇam*,[#] *Chilappadikāram*, & C. So that according to the *Kalingattupparaṇi*, *Karikāla*'s age was much anterior to 1063, when his so-called descendant *Kulottunga Chola Deva I.* began his reign.

2. In volume II., Part II., page 153, of the *South Indian Inscriptions*, Dr. Hultzsch says : " In the two only copperplate grants which contain a genealogical account of the Chola dynasty the same three kings" - Viz., *Karikāla*, *Ko-chengannan*, and *Ko-killi* - "are mentioned as ancestors of *Vijayālaya*, the grandfather of *Parāntaka*." *Vijayalaya* reigned about the year 875.* We therefore are enabled to take a further step and say that *Karikāla*'s reign was long prior to 875 *anno Christi*.

3. The *Cilappadikāram*, a Tamil poem of the second century** (and it matters little for purposes of this inquiry whether it is of the second century or later by a few hundred years), which records many notable events of the first and second centuries, makes mention of this great prince in different places. It was from him that *Mādhavi*, the dancing girl, on completion of her studies, after due exhibition of her ability, received the customary first prize granted to experts in music and dance. And this event happened - if the time ranging over the period covered by the several events chronicled in this poem be properly computed - many years prior to the visit of *Gaja Bahu I.* to India.*** The ancient Commentator of *Cilappadikāram*, *Aḍiyārkkunallār*, and the still more ancient commentary known as the *Arumpadavurai*, state that *Karikāla* was reigning over the Chola country at the beginning of *Kovalan* and *Kannaki*'s career, and that this prince's daughter, *Natconai*, was the wife of *Seralātan* and mother of *Senkuṭṭuvan*, friend of *Gaja Bahu I.* I would call particular attention to the following among other passage in the *Cilappadikāram* which refer to *karikāla*, his daughter's husband *Seralātan*, and her son *Senkuṭṭuvan* :-

Written circa twelfth century. Cf Mr. Sundarampillai's Paper on "The Age of Tirujnana Sambandha."

* Cf. *South Indian Inscriptions*, Vol. I., p.112. By studying the list given in this page, and computing backwards from the reign of Raja-raja (Saka 919 to 930 = 997 to 1008 of the Christian era), it will be found that *Vijayalaya*'s reign will be about the year I have mentioned above.

** Cf. my Paper *Chilappadikāram*, Journal No. 44, Vol. XIII., 1893, of this society : also Mr. W.P. Ranasinha's Paper, "Which *Gaja Bahu* visited India." read in September, 1894; and the notes of discussion on that Paper.

*** The visit was between 113 and 135 of the Christian era.

1. பெரும்புகழ்க்கரிகால்வளவன்றண்பதங்கொள்ளுந் தலைநாட்போல.
2. மன்னன்கரிகால்வளவன்மகள்வஞ்சிகான்றன்னைப்புனல்கொள்ளத்தான் புனலின்பின்சென்று கன்னவிநோளாயோவென்ன.
3. உலகாண்ட சேரலாதற்குத் திகழொளி ஞாயிற்றுச்சோழன் மகளீன்றமைந்தன் செங்குட்டுவன்.

Paranar, who addressed the fifth *pattu* of the *Padirruppattu** to the Chera king *Senkuttuvan*, and, as I have said before, received presents from him, calls him the son of *Seralātan* by the daughter of Chola :-

குடவர் கோமானெடுஞ் சேரலாதற்குச் சோழன் மணக்கிளியீன்ற மகன்.....
செங்குட்டுவன்.

And in the *Manimekalai*, a poem written by *Kūlavānikan Sittalai Sāttanar*, a contemporary of *Senkuttuvan*, *Karikāla* is spoken of as already dead:-

மன்னன் கரிகால்வளவனீங்கியநாளின்னகர்போல்வதோரியல்பினதாகி,

The Third step in this inquiry then shows that *Karikāla* was the maternal grandfather of *Senkuttuvan*, who, I had almost forgotten to say, is said to have occupied his throne fifty years before Gaja Bāhu visited him.

It is thus shown on the authority of *Kalingattupparanī* that *Karikāla* was the alleged ancestor of *Kulottunga Chola Deva*, whose reign began in 1063. It is further shown, on the authority of Dr. Hultzsch, that he was an ancestor of *Vijayālaya*, who reigned circa 875. And lastly, on the authority of the poems, poets, and commentators above cited, that he was the maternal grandfather of *Senkuttuvan*, contemporary of the Gaja Bāhu who reigned in Ceylon from 113-135.

It may therefore be safely concluded that *Karikāla*, one of the greatest of the Chola kings, lived prior to the second century of the Christian era, and that the poem *Porunarāṭṭuppadai*, addressed to him by *Mudattāmakanniyaṛ*, belongs to the same period.**

These two poems which I have now translated are a fair sample of the short poems which were in vogue nearly two thousand years ago in Tamil-land, and display great powers of observation, and are well worth careful study by students of Tamil literature. My translation can give no adequate idea of the rhythm and the terseness and felicity of expression of the original; for, after all, the best prose translation (which mine does not pretend to be) of a poem can only "tell the story without the song."

* A manuscript copy of which I have the pleasure of possessing.

** From internal evidence, such as the language, structure, &c., of the poem, it can also be shown that it is very ancient.

1. Kurinjippāttu

Mayest thou prosper, mother! Pray, hear me with patience.

My lady, whose brilliant brow, soft hair, and lustrous body were pre-eminent among women, is over-borne by a grief that no medicine can cure, - so painful that I have till now kept its cause from you.

Seeing her beauty fade, and her limbs waste; seeing too that others have noticed her bracelets slipping off her wrists, and that the desire for solitude is daily growing upon her then tossed in mind, not knowing the cause, thou didst seek the help of soothsayers.

Learning from them that her condition was due to the malignant *devas*, * prayers with incense and flowers didst thou offer, and yet her health hath improved not, and thou are still in sorrow, much perplexed.

Jewels made of gold and set with pearls and rubies, lost or tarnished, may yet be replace, but when appropriate action, loftiness of purpose, and the desire to act in conformity with the prescribed modes of social life fail, the *wise* declare that even the *Devarishis*** have no power to prevent the consequences.

Transgressing the rare restraints placed by her father - possessor of stately chariots - forgetful of the duty to parents and elders, which teacheth us to wait until they choose for us husbands, she hath chosen for herself a lord. If I inform thee, my mother, that this form of marriage, called *gāndharvam*, is sanctioned of old as consistent with chastity and modesty, shall I deserve blame? Certainly not. Prarie, I think, will be my due.

Thy daughter, unable to bear the distress of a concealed love, timid-eyed, bereft of energy, and in bitter anguish, is thus resolved:-

Ever shall I remain faithful to my lord. Such shall be my constant duty. Even if the gods grant not that in this life I become his wedded wife, we shall surely, when death ends my sorrows, come together in the next.

Thus she remaineth weeping and wailing, helpless: Through fear of thee and concern for her, I too am overwhelmed with grief, even as the *wise* who seek to restore peace between two great but passion-borne monarchs.

The usual form of marriage solemnized after the moral qualities of both spouses have been previously ascertained and weighed, begetten unto them unbroken happiness, and unto their kith and kin friendship and help; but the *gāndharva* mode, though rare of occurrence and determined upon in secret, unknown to parents and

* Devas, Spirits. ** Devarish a saint of the celestial class.

without previous consultation with any one, is also sancioned for the salvation of the soul. Such as marriage having already taken place, I have resolved to inform thee. Hear my story and be not angry.

One day theou didst say unto us, "Like unto the elephant's trunk raised to despoil the tall bamboos of their seed, the millet-stalks in our fields, their gray heads bent with the weight of heavy ears, are swarming with parrots, eager for the corn. Go ye and drive them away, and return when the day has ended." Thither we went, and, scrambling up the pretty ladder made of canes brought from hill-sides, seated ourselves on the platform built by forest rangers on a tall tree, and took up *taḷaḷ** and *Taṭṭai*** and *kulir**** in our hands, and drove the birds, and remained there until the noonday sun blazzed fiercely hot.

The heavy clouds having drunk the waters of the sea so as even to diminish its quantity, with distant thunders resembling the roll of drums gently beaten, causing birds to seek their roosts, overspread the sky. Lightnings flased like unto the spear wielded by the *war-god*# against the *asuras*. The winds rose and drove the clouds widely, until trembling and confused, they sent the rains down in torrents on the hills. From the mountains waterfalls came bounding down in foam like unto white lawn,## and begat in our minds a resistless desire to go into the limpid stream. We sported therein a long while, singing such songs as pleased us. Then wringing the water from our plaited locks, which rolled down our golden backs like glistening sapphires, we, with flushed eyes, dried ourselves and culled *kānal*,+ aniccam, and other fragrant flowers. We heaped them on a rain-washed stone, broad and lying alongside the stream, and weaving garlands wound them round our locks and waists and rested under the cool shade of an *asoka*++ tree, bearing fire-like flowers and tender sprouts. Now and again by word and song we frightened the green parrots away from the corn fields.

Then appeared before us a mountain chief. His dark blue locks, well anointed and made fragrant with the smoke of the *akil*+++ were interwoven with many coloured

* *Taḷaḷ* is described by Naccinārkkiniyar as "கையாற் சுற்றினகாலத்துத் தன்னிடத்துப் பிறக்குமோசையாற் கிளி முதலியவற்றை ஒட்டுங்கருவி. கவணென்பாருமுளர்"

** *Taṭṭai* he says is "மூங்கினைக் கண்ணுக்கண்ணுள்ளாக நறுக்கிப் பலவாகப் பிளந்த ஓசையுண்டாக ஒன்றிலே தட்டுங் கருவி."

*** *Kulir* : "இளவ போல்வதோர் ஒரு கருவி."

Muruga or *Skanda*, the Hindu god of war. *Asuras*, the enemies of the *devas* or celestials.

Cf. "Slow dropping veils of thinners lawn." - Tennyson's "Lotos-eaters."

+ Here mention is made of various kinds of flowers. &c. which I omit.

++ *Asaka* : *Jonesia asoka*, Roxb.

+++ *Akil* (Sans. *aguru*), the fragrant aloc wood and tree (*Aquiluria agallocha*).

flowers from hill and meadow, tree and fountain. From one ear hung down to his shoulders the purple leaves of the *asoka*; sweet-smelling garlands of flowers mingling with brilliant jewellery, heirlooms in his family, adorned his broad chest painted with *candana*;* his strong arms, braceleted, held a manyhued bow and select arrows. His loins were tightly girt with cloth, and at every step the martial tinkle of his *virakkala*** resounded. His fierce hounds, excited by sport, resembling young warriors after a successful battle with a mighty host, ran towards us yelping and baying.

Startled, we essayed to leave our resting-place, but he broke a leafy bough from a tree and drove the baying hounds this way and that. He approached us with the gait of a proud bull walking up to his newly-found mate when he had vanquished his rivals in a hard-fought fight. He spoke to us some pleasing words: "Lovely-eyed maidens," said he, "the game I followed is lost; did it come your way?" Though pleased, we returned him no answer "If you saw not the game, ladies, will it be an offence to speak to me?" said he, and waited for a reply.

In the meanwhile, drunk with the well termented fragrant wine handed to them by gazelle-eyed wives living in huts thatched with straw, the watchers became neglectful of the corn-fields until the alarm was raised that the corn stalks were trodden down by an elephant. Fired with anger, quickly stringing their bows, they struck the elephant with swift arrows and drove him away. Trumpeting forth like peals of thunder in times of rain, rooting up forest trees and striking the ground with his strong rough trunk, the fierce animal came rushing towards us even as the god*** of death. Knowing no other place of safety, filled with fear and forgetting the restraints of our sex, we ran with trembling arrows and pierced the beautiful brow of the elephant. Blood overspread the animal's forehead in streams such as flow from goats sacrificed in the presence of women possessed of the god of war. The elephant turned and ran, and we, who had stood together, hand locked in hand like flowers pressed together in a thickly-woven garland of *kadambas*,⁺ sank to the ground unable to stand.

Seeing our pitiful state, thus did the chief address thy daughter : "Noble lady, beautiful-haired, fear not; I will not leave thee." He lifted her up, and gently stroking her faultless forehead with his hand looked at me and smiled, desiring the favour of my help. Shame and modesty awakening in her mind, much did she strive to slip from his embrace, but he folded her yet stronger in his arms and prevented her. He- the lord of fruitful country studded with mountains, capturer of maidens' hearts by his victories over seek

* *Candana*, here a paste made from the *Santalum album*.

** *Virakkala*, a warrior's ankle rings.

*** *Yama*, the Hindu god of death.

+ *Kadamba* (*Nauclea cadamba*), a tree with orange-coloured fragrant blossoms.

food enriched with ghee, - awakened at last to the fact that she could be his only by the usual formal marriage. Then he called on the war-god, who dwelleth on lofty mountains, to witness that he would soon claim her for his wife. Thus assured we spent that day until sunset in mountain caves, the delight of *devas*;- our union being due to the wild elephant roaming in the forest full of flowers.

The many-rayed sun in his chariot drawn by seven steeds reached *Attagiri*,* when herds of deer assemble under trees; when cows, issuing from forests, call their calves and overspread the meadows; when the bent-beaked *andril*,** nestling in the inner folds of the palmirah leaf, summons his mate with notes like those of the horn; when the snake spits out his gem in order to illumine his path while searching for food; when shepherds from different quarters sound their sweet flutes; when *āmbal**** flowers open their petals; when Brahmans perform their twilight ceremonies; when in houses abounding with wealth, women, adorned with sweet-smelling flowers, light their lamps and offer evening prayers; when forest-rangers in their *paran*+ reaching the sky kindle torches with friction-born fire; when black clouds overhang the hills; when wild animals make night resound with their cries, and when birds' notes become frequent, Then did the chief give his pledge; "I shall marry thee, who art decked with brilliant jewels, when thy relations apprise thy people and place thy right hand in mine. For a while yet shall I spend some days here in order to experience the great joy of conversing with thee in private. Be not alarmed. "These and other gracious words he said to her, and accompanying us to the stream skirting our town, where the drums never cease to sound, he left us.

Since then has he, with the same love as he had at first, come every night. Often disturbed by the town-guards' approach, or the angry dog's bark, or your wakefulness, or the bright moon's rise, he would depart without meeting her; and even if we, imagining causes of fear when there were none, remained indoors and kept not the tryst, he would depart, never blaming us.

He is not one who has passed the time of youth; nor has vast wealth, which ever hath the tendency to breed evil habits, changed the good qualities due to his birth; he knoweth too that it is not fitting to meet a maiden at untimely hours, and yearneth to ask her hand in marriage in order that their united lives may be spent in the performance of the duties prescribed for the married. But thy daughter, thinking in the meantime of the perils of mountain paths, of bears and tigers hiding in caves, wild oxen and elephants crossing his way; thinking of thunderbolts overhead, demons and snakes roaming the

* *Attagiri* (Sans. *Astagiri*), the mountain behind which the sun is said to set.

** *Andril*, according to Winslow, is the nightingale of India.

*** *Ambal*, *Nymphwa alba* (Winslow).

+ *Paran*, a raised platform for watching fields.

forests, alligators swarming in streams, and robbers and boa constrictors; thinking of all these dangers nightly encountered by him on his way to meet her, is ever in dire distress, her eyes streaming with tears, and alas, she resembleth a tender blossom crushed by rainstorms fearful and heavy.

II. Porunarāṭṭuppadai

Oh, minstrel, ever careful to avoid the stale food served the day after the festival, and only present when the festival is still at its height!

When thy wife, - graceful as the peacock, gifted with learning, her hair soft as moss, her beautiful brow resembling she crescent moon, her lips red like the *ilavam*'s* young leaves, and eyes gentle and dark under brows arched like the death dealing bow, her voice sweet as music, and ears shaped like the loop of the scissors** used in trimming the hair, neck slightly curved with modesty, her fingers like the *kāṇḍal**** growing on the summits of lofty mountains, and her small feet resembling in certain respects tongues† of hounds tired after a long run;- when thy wife played on the yal, which, - with its two sides low and the middle raised like the impression left by the deer's hoof on wet ground, is usually covered with flame-hued skin and is possessed of page fashioned after the crab's eye, its strings rung by slender fingers tipped with nails white as the husked *tinai*,†† when thy wife touched the yal, lovely as a bride, with her fingers now fondly resting on, now smoothly gliding over, and now rapidly striking its strings, and sweetly sang the Devapāṇi, then didst thou, with humble mind, offer prayers to the forest-gods that thy journey might be safe and successful. May thy life be long and prosperous, chief of all minstrels!

* *Ilavm*, the silk cotton tree.

** The words are மயிர்குறை கருவி மாண்கடையன்ன. Reference to scissors and their use in cutting hair occurs in several ancient poems.

ஆரமின்னவருங்குயந்தான்களைத்

தோருமொண்டிறற்கத்திரிகைத்தொழி

னிரிற்செய்தடியேத்துபு நீங்கினான்.

-*Jivakacintāmani*, Ilakkanaṇaiyar Ilambakam, Stanza

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எஃகிடைதொட்டகார்ககவின்பெற்ற வைம்பால்போல்.

*** *Kandal* (*Gloriosa superba*)

+ The words are வருந்துநாய்நாவிற்பெருந்தகுமிறடி. The comparison of the feet of women to the tongues of hounds occurs in other ancient poems also:-

மதந்த புருமலி நாவின்ன

துளங்கியன் மெலிந்தகல்பொருசிறடி. -*Malaipadukadam*.

நாய்நாச்சிறடிமேல். -*Jivakacintāmani*, Mukti Ilambakkam, stanza 96.

+ *Tinai*, *Panicum italicum* (Winslow).

++ *Devapāṇi*, song in praise of the Deity or of any of the celestials (*Devas*). For some beautiful examples. See *Naccinarkkaniyar*'s commentary on the *Poruladhikkam* of *Tolkāppiyam*.

Even as the sight of the meeting in peace and amity of the three great kings, lords of victorious armies, Chera, Chola, and Pāndiya, is pleasant unto the world, so does thy song ever delight men's minds.

Perchance thou art *puzzled* and knowest not which of these two paths thou mayest take; let thy choice be the right one. Thy luck has brought me hither, owing to the good deeds performed by thee in former births. I can direct thee to where wealth lies waiting.

If thy desire be to have done with poverty, which hitherto has been a heavy burden rise without delay, thou, to whom the seven strings of the *yāl* are ever obedient.

I, now rich, in days not long past like the hungry bird seeking the well-laden fruit-tree, went to the palace gates of him whom I shall ever sing; and, when without announcing my wants to the gate-keepers, I entered the palace, hunger and poverty methought were not. I drew near to him, and even before I could strike the *Udukkai*, * the skin of which by long beating is marked like the cobra's hood, and begin my song, he addressed me as one long known to him, and treated me with loving kindness, such that I thought begging was no disgrace. He caused me to be seated before him, and looked at me, his eyes beaming with affection and pleasure.

My garments, vile with dirt and sweat, bearing patches and stitches, and where nits and lice held sway, he caused to be removed, and clad me in silk soft as flowers. Handmaids, who by music, dance, and converse please him, poured out in golden cups intoxicating wine, ** and I drank to my heart's content, until my sorrows and the fatigue me. At dawn, when awake, the bright change in my appearance was indeed so surprising. "Am I in a dream?" I exclaimed, but I soon satisfied myself that it was reality caused by a long journey were forgotten. When I laid me down to rest, and trembling and unsteadiness of the limbs. I being heavy with wine, were all that inconvenienced.

* *Udukkai*, a small kind of drum held in one hand and struck by the other.

** In a poem by Naṭkīrar of the same time as the above, addressed in a Pāndiya, the prince is said to drink from golden cups of wine brought by the *Yavanar*, which may refer to Grecian or Italian wines.

யவனர் நன்கலந்தந்த தண்கமழ்தேறல்
பொன்செய் புனைகலத் தேந்தநாளு
மொண்டொடிமகளிர் மடுப்பமகிழ்சிறந்
தாங்கினி தொழுகுமதி யோங்குவாண்மாற.

- *Purannauru*, 56

O Pandiya of the voracious Sword! daily delighting in fragrant wine brought by *Yavanas* in bottles and poured into golden cups by handmaids may'st thou be (to your enemies) fierce as the sun and (to your subjects) gentle as the waxing moon. (Kalam here may mean bottles or ships)

This term *Yavana* is very old; according to Monier Williams it occurs even in Manu X. 44 and in Uṇādis I...74 meaning "Foreigners" &c.

Hearing my pupils and followers singing his praises, he sent for us and desired us to draw near, and when we saluted him in the mode usual on such occasions, he made us eat of the flesh of goat and other meat spitted and roasted, and drink plentifully of wine, until we could neither eat nor drink any more. Then sweetmeats of various forms and kinds were set before us, and after making us sit and eat again, he caused *Viraliyars** to sing and dance to us. Several days having thus passed, "You must now eat of rice" he said, and a great feast of rice and curries and divers dishes cooked in milk were spread before us, and we ate until we were full unto the throat. Thus did we pass our days drinking and eating meat, when, like the ploughshare which hath often furrowed hard soil, our teeth became blunt, and food and wine were no more welcome.

Then one day said I gently, "O king, who hath no more enemies to conquer, give me leave to go back to my village." Looking at me reproachfully, "Art thou then departing from us so soon? Receive these," he said, and gave me elephants male and female and their calves shambling in gait, and chariots numerous, and garments and jewellery in abundance. With these I departed, bidding farewell to poverty for ever. Askest thou, "Who then was thus generous?"

Son of Ilanchetchenni, the *Chola* of the ever victorious spear and war chariots innumerable; he, the great king, resembling *Muruga*, the angry god of war, was born entitled to kingship even from his mother's womb; wrester of countries from those princes who refused to acknowledge his sovereignty. As the sun rising from the ocean becomes brighter and more splendid when he advances to noon, so from his youth, ever increasing in power and fame, he, now mighty as *Yama*, god of death, bears on his shoulders the weight of a matchless empire. He is the great king on whose head the garland of Atti.

* * * * *

* *Viraliyar*, Women who sing and dance.

** *Atti* (*Ficus racemas*).

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