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HISTORY OF TAMILNAD (A. D. 1565 — 1956)

General Editor : N. SUBRAHMANIAN

HISTORY OF TAMILNAD

(A. D. 1565 - 1956)

N. Subrahmanian M. A., Ph. D.



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Preface

When I wrote the first volume of the History of Tamilnad in 1972, I really believed that the second volume would follow quickly, that is within a year or so at the latest. But a number of circumstances, of which my natural laziness is one, conspired to postpone this moment of fulfillment. Last year when the second edition of the first part of this history was published I made a promise to my readers to put this part also in their hands soon. I hope I have redeemed my pledge somewhat.

This volume traces the history of the Tamil country from the battle of Talikota to the formation of the residuary state of Tamilnad (then called Madras) after reorganization of the Madras state in 1956. This is the period in which Tamilnad like other parts of India was shedding its traditional native State system and was becoming part of a foreign imperialist set up. The transition from the former to the latter is really the most interesting part of this story. But perhaps what is more interesting is the hangover from pre-independence days which still confronts us, whichever direction we move in. The decline of the Nayak Kingdoms, the transitory rule of the Nawab of Arcot, the struggle for mastery in the Carnatic among the European powers trading here, the British Government of the Tamil Country as part of Imperial India, independence, the occasional but recurring tendency among a section of the Tamils to

declare their uniqueness etc. form part of this story. While the history told in the early parts of the first volume being farthest from us suffered from a dearth of authenticated data, the history narrated in the later part of the second volume being too near to us posed its problems of interpretation. I have tried not to depart from facts but have taken the legitimate liberty to put my construction on them. I am aware there is considerable room for improvement in this work, but that has to be taken care of in a subsequent edition.

Mr. K. Seshadri of Madura College is entitled to my gratitude for his unstinted cooperation in this endeavour. My thanks are due to Mr. P. Gnanasekaran and Mr. P. Murugan of Vaigai Achagam for their help in this effort.

I thank the Koodal Publishers for producing this book.

Shillong
November 1977

N. Subrahmanian

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Vijayanagar After Talikota

The Kingdom of Vijayanagar which was established in A. D. 1336 consolidated its hold over the whole of the Southern part of the Indian Subcontinent, i. e. to the South of the Tungghabadra, when Kampana overthrew the Sultanate of Madura in 1370. Then the city of Vijayanagar far north of Tamilaham became the centre of all political activities in the once independent Tamil country. Vijayanagar ruled the country imperially, as it was the only way of ruling it from outside; and slowly but necessarily disintegrating the autonomous local government institutions introduced the Nayakship which was essentially a quasi-military establishment as its very name indicates. The first of such Nayakships to be established in Tamilnad was that of Madura which lasted from the days of Visvanatha (c. 1529-64), till the tragic end of Minakshi (1739) ended the Nayakship too. The Nayakship of Tanjore (beg. 1526) and that of Gingee (beg. 1532) were wound up earlier so that by the middle of the 18th century the last political vestiges of Vijayanagar rule in the Tamil country had disappeared. So that it will be clear that Tamilnad which came under firm Vijayanagar rule sometime in the 30's of the 16th century got out of it in the 30's of the 18th century.

This period of two centuries falls naturally into two parts :
1) before Talikota (1565) and 2) after Talikota.

The battle of Talikota, in spite of attempts by some scholars to minimise its importance, was a sure watershed not only in the history of the core of Vijayanagar itself but of the whole of what used to be the Vijayanagar Empire and therefore of Tamilnad also.

The history of Tamilnad during these two phases of Vijayanagar imperialism was part of the history of that empire, and to understand the political fortunes (and the other changes which these naturally engendered) of the Tamil country during this period an outline of Vijayanagar history of that period would be necessary. In a few earlier chapters of this work we have traced the history of Tamilnad under Vijayanagar down to the battle of Talikota; now we shall trace in brief outline the broad features of the history of Vijayanagar from Talikota (1565) to Sri Ranga III (—1649), for that will facilitate an easier understanding of the turns and twists in the history of Tamilnad of that period.

Rama Raya's imperious foreign policy led to his downfall and death in the battle of Talikota in 1565. The immediate consequence was the thorough demoralisation that set in in the military and civilian ranks; materially the near total destruction of the capital city and the deprivation of its public treasures and monuments by enemy and saboteur alike crippled its economy; the selfish royal family sought safety in retreat and took refuge in Penugonda which became the first capital of the Aravidu dynasty of Vijayanagar. Tirumala, the younger brother of Rama Raya, took the captive emperor Sadasiva and the available treasures in the palace and the other members of the royal family and repaired to Penugonda where he set himself up as the emperor. This was questioned by a clique in the palace which favoured Rama Raya's son Peda Tirumala (alias Timma) for the succession to the nominal regency. In about six years Tirumala was able to eliminate opposition and consolidate his position, which after all was not very enviable. The northern borders shrank to the south of Vijayanagar, being subject to constant harassment from Bijapur and Golconda. The empire earned the dubious distinction of being frequently sacked by the Muslims from the north and of steadily losing the loyalty of its own feudal subordinates in Mysore, Madura and Gingee, though Tanjore stood loyally by the weakened empire with commendable steadfastness.

Tirumala appointed his three sons Sriranga, Rama and Venkatapathi to rule the Telugu, the Kannada and the Tamil parts respectively of the truncated Kingdom, the first of them to rule from Penugonda. Caesar Frederick reports a rumour that one of Tirumala's sons assassinated the unfortunate Sadasiva who had been nominal emperor since 1542. Tirumala retired in 1572 and then Sriranga I, his first son, assumed imperial status and ruled for 14 years. Bijapur and Golconda vied with each other in sniping at the continuously weakening empire adding to its difficulties. Sriranga I died in 1585 and was succeeded by his youngest brother, Venkata; in the process the claims of the two sons of Rama, the second son of Tirumala, were overlooked. Venkata II ruled for 28 years. This relatively long reign was marked by the usual attacks from the north and a number of rebellions from the feudatories. A struggle between Lingama Nayaka, the chieftain of Vellore and Yachama Nayudu appointed to the fief of Chinglepat ensued, the former defying the Emperor but being supported by the southern Nayaks and the latter remaining loyal; the struggle ended temporarily in complete victory for Yachama. This was followed by a deed raid into the Tamil country by Venkata himself who finally succeeded in capturing Vellore from Lingama Nayaka and making it his capital. He died in 1614; he was followed by Sriranga II, his nephew (Rama's second son). This brought a dynastic faction fight in its wake.

Venkata II had a putative son whose claims to the throne were supported by that son's maternal uncle Jagga Raya. Sriranga II was however loyally helped by one Yachama Nayaka. The two Nayaks were nearly equally matched in intrigue and prowess and a civil war followed. What little remained after Talikota was destroyed by the protracted civil war during which fortune favoured each party by turns. Jagga Raya exterminated the Sriranga branch of the family thoroughly but a lone survivor Rama Deva (the son of Sriranga) was rescued and saved by Yachama.

In this civil war, Raghunatha Nayaka of Tanjore supported Sriranga's cause while the other Nayaks either held aloof or opposed

him. The final and decisive battle of this civil war was fought in Toppur in 1616; and it ended in complete victory for Yachama Nayudu. The Nayak of Gingee lost his dominions; the putative son was captured; the surviving Ramadeva got reconciled to Etiraja, the younger brother of Jagga Raya and married his daughter.

This reconciliation angered Yachama who however was humbled and pacified in course of time. The now chastened Nayak of Gingee was restored to his stronghold; the loyalty and support of Raghunatha Nayak continued. This again was the occasion for the Nayak of Madura, safely far from imperial headquarters, to gradually ease himself of the little allegiance he nominally owed to the declining empire. When Rama Deva died in 1630 at the age of 28 a good part of his northern territories had been lost to the Nawabs of the Deccan.

Ramadeva was succeeded by Peda Venkata (known as Venkata III) a grandson of Rama Raya of Talikota fame. His succession was disputed by Tirumala (Tikka Raja) elder brother of Sriranga II who thought he had a better claim to the tottering throne; and went on fighting for his imagined rights till 1635 when he was defeated and killed in battle by the Nayak of Gingee. Venkata III made Vellore his capital since Penugonda was under the immediate gaze of Bijapur. The confusion in the Kingdom offered an open invitation to the Sultans of Golconda and Bijapur to undertake raids into the northern district. Sriranga, Venkata III's nephew who had once stood by him, especially against Tikka Raja now turned against him and joined the forces of Bijapur against his own uncle. The hopeless Venkata III retired into the jungles in the Chittoor District where he died in October 1641. He left no children behind.

Sriranga III naturally succeeded to the throne (Oct. 1642), and now turned against the very Sultans with whom he had taken refuge earlier. He tried to divide the Sultans by bribing Bijapur and create a rift among the Nayaks by buying off

the Nayak of Gingee. These shady moves ceased being helpful when his enemies - and he had them all around him - closed their ranks. Tirumalai Nayak of Madura appealed to Bijapur to invade the territories of Sriranga III and Golconda chose to Chime in and upset Sriranga's plans entirely. The last appeal made by Sriranga to his subjects to rally round him in the name of religion and tradition sounded hollow. In 1645, he was defeated by his own feudatories. The Muslim invaders of the Carnatic were steadily bringing pressure to bear on the southern Nayaks. By 1649 Gingee and Tanjore had accepted Muslim suzerainty. Sriranga III left for Mysore where he lived in obscurity till 1672 when he and his empire perished. The Nayakships which sparked off from the main imperial stem of Vijayanagar survived for not more than half a century thereafter and they slowly fell yielding place to growing Muslim domination in the Carnatic.

The Nayaks of Madura

Virappa Nayaka (1572-1595)

Virappa Nayaka succeeded his father in 1572. Ariyanatha continued to look after the interests of the Kingdom. The Mavali Vanadarayars mounted a rebellion against the Nayaks and that was about the most important event of that reign which however lasted for nearly quarter of a century. The Mavali Vanadarayars (properly 'Mavali Vanadirayas' or 'Mahabali Banadirajas') originally belonged to the region of the Palar basin and were surely connected with the Panar (Perumbanar and Sirupanar) of the Sangam literature, and can be seen in the context of the Brihat Banas of medieval epigraphy. Evidently during the days of Kulottunga III who was waging the last successful of Chola wars in the Pandyan country, many Bana chieftains were recruited to the Chola army and planted in the Pandya country to safeguard Chola imperial interests. Subsequently when the Pandyas got the better of the Cholas and ruled practically over the whole of Tamilaham, they accepted the Pandyas as their overlords and in token thereof even assumed the name 'Pandya' as part of their own titular designation. When Visvanatha Nayaka in conjunction with Ariyanatha Mudaliar organised the Palaiyam system provided for the Banas also therein. The Banas, who were in the Pandya country known as Banadarayas, were like the other Palayagars always awaiting opportunities for assertion of independence from any authority and from time to time clashed with their overlords in Madurai.

In Virappa Nayaka's reign it was one of these Banadaraya who rose in revolt and occupied Manamadurai and Kalaiyarkovil and the neighbouring territory; but the Nayak had little difficulty in putting down this petty revolt and re-establishing order. He took such strong measures against the rebels and meted out such exemplary punishment to them that for the rest of his reign there was no question of rebellion anywhere.

Virappa, though assisted ably by Ariyanatha, was not being guided entirely by him. His loyalty to the Emperor was undoubted, though the Emperors of Vijayanagar in view of the debacle of Talikota were not in good shape. He carried out many civil works, e.g. improvements to the Tiruchy fort, the building of a new fort at Aruppukkottai, putting up of new outer walls around the temple in Chidambaram and the donation of many villages to brahmins. Some of his benefactions to the Sri Minakshi temple, Madurai are also mentioned in chronicles and inscriptions.

Thus he was a pious and peace loving ruler who had a sense of justice, and was kind to the Pandyas of Tenkasi who were his lieges.

It was during his reign that the beginnings of proselytisation by Portuguese missionaries were made but not with any success. Father G. Fernandes who worked among the fisherfolk incessantly and sincerely with a view to converting them to Christianity met with little success, for the natives disliked the food and drink habits of the missionaries and considered them unclean. It was clear that the hearts of the natives could not be touched unless the missionaries adopted the native way of life. Later missionaries did this with great success.

Virappa Nayaka died in 1595 and was succeeded by the eldest of his three sons: Kumara Krishnappa (Vira Krishna), Visvappa and Kasturi Rangappa.

Krishnappa Nayaka II (1595-1601)

Visvappa aided his brother in government, true to the Nayak tradition of government. The death of the veteran, Ariyanatha

Mudaliar at the age of 80 in 1600 was the most important event of his reign. That event brought to a close the long and distinguished career of a medieval Tamil Statesman whose achievements as a diplomat and as a warrior were equally remarkable and fruitful. He had served in the court of the Nayaks of Madurai from Visvanatha Nayaka, the founder to Krishnappa Nayaka II as Dalavay as well as Pradhani. No doubt the Telugu Nayak rule was acceptable to the Tamils by and large because of the identification of Ariyanatha with that government and his untiring efforts to punish the disgruntled chieftains who would not be pacified. He had a hand in organising the 72 palayams whose later resistance to any authority could not have been foreseen by him. Rangachariya is not far wrong when he says 'Ariyanatha gave the Nayak Kingdom its strength and its security, its organisation and its resources', though it is not necessary to believe all the legends which glorify him.

Krishnappa Nayaka II was loyal to the Emperor Venkata I and was in good terms with the Pandyas, whose power was slowly increasing during his reign. The Pandyas were in full control of the territories earlier conquered from the Tiruvadi ruler of Travancore.

Krishnappa Nayaka II died in May-June, 1601. He had been predeceased by Visvappa and the throne was seized by Kasturi Ranga, the youngest of the deceased King's brothers. But the usurper met with his death within a week of his capture of power and the path was clear for the accession of Muthu Krishnappa Nayaka. This Muthu Krishnappa was not the son of Krishnappa Nayaka II but of Visvappa his brother.

Muthu Krishnappa Nayaka (1601-1609)

His reign is important for three developments: 1. The growth of Christian influence in the coastal regions, especially among the fisherfolk; 2. The Settlement of the Setupatis with authority over the eastern part of the Nayak domains; and 3. increased attention to administration and public works. We have noticed earlier that in the reign of Virappa Nayaka, Father

Fernandes tried in vain to effect conversions among the Tamil population in the Nayak dominion; his efforts had failed by 1606. With the arrival of Robert De Nobili, a radical change occurred in the methods adopted by the missionaries.

De Nobili was an Italian who had understood the reasons for the failure of Fernandes' efforts. He planned an entirely new approach to the question of proselytisation in the Tamil country. Knowing that the people abhorred the earlier missionaries because they ate beef and drank liquor and were living in a manner unfamiliar to the natives even the lowliest among whom held them in contempt, De Nobili made up his mind to live in the Tamil country like a Tamil Brahmin (the caste that was most respected by the natives and the caste which most objected to the foreign missionaries). He called himself a Roman Brahmin; he adapted his life to that of the local wise men and imitated the Hindus in manners which did not offend Christianity essentially; he learned Tamil, Telugu and Sanskrit so that he could preach to the people in their own language. These were not easily approved by the Christian religious authorities in Rome; but the phenomenal success that in course of time attended De Nobili's methods eventually persuaded the authorities in Rome to relax certain regulations which did not support De Nobili's ways of proselytisation. His methods met with immediate success for he could convert some high placed persons quite early in his mission in southern Tamilnad. But the Brahmins whose influence and power suffered most consequent on De Nobili's success created difficult situations for him; but he got over the crisis with the help of a Palayagar by name Erumai Katti (Hermacatti) who intervened on his behalf and saved him. He wrote in January 1609 'the tempest of the Brahmins has passed'. The reign of Muthu Krishnappa saw the beginning of successful Christian proselytisation in south Tamilnad under the guidance of De Nobili.

Apart from this, Portuguese influence was growing apace along the coast and spreading among the fisherfolk and

reaching a stage at which the imperial authority of Vijayanagar felt threatened by the emergence of a parallel political force within its dominions. The Nayak of Madura who was immediately responsible for the maintenance of imperial authority in the southern parts of the empire felt obliged to curb Portuguese power. The Portuguese had unilaterally assumed so much authority over the fisherfolk that they dared to speak of them as 'the subjects of His Portuguese Majesty'; and they started assuming civil and criminal jurisdiction over these people and to unauthorisedly collect the revenues from them; which of course was quite considerable in view of this including the income from the pearl fisheries. They had begun these activities without the permission of any Indian authority and particularly Vijayanagar.

In this posture of events, the Nayak of Madura felt the need to create a force which could effectively deal with the foreign settlements. To achieve this end, Muthu Krishnappa Nayak revived or created the Setupati hegemony over the eastern sector of the Madurai Nayakdom and invested Sadaikka-deva, a Marava chieftain in Ramnad with almost gubernatorial powers. Sadaikka alias Udaiyan Setupati was equal to the task entrusted to him and he held the regions around Ramnad under effective control. There was another reason for the support given to the Setupatis. The numerous pilgrims bound for Rameswaram were put to great hardship because of insecurity on the way and for their benefit, a strong political authority was needed. Sadaikka fortified Ramnad and Pogalur (which was the earlier capital of the Setupatis) and arranged escort for the pilgrims. But this was the beginning of a flexible relationship between Madura and Ramnad; i. e. while Ramnad was normally considered to be subordinate to Madura, the Setupati was always tending to free himself of Nayak sovereignty, whenever opportunity came. The Nayak of Madura wanting to avoid the parallel authority of the Portuguese brought about the eventual political hostility of the Setupatis, though some of them did go to the aid of Madurai.

Muthu Krishnappa was loyal to Venkata II, the Vijayanagar Emperor. In his copper coins, we have the legends 'Tiruvenga (ta)' and 'Mudu Krishna'. There are also other coins which exhibit the fish emblem and mention 'Venkatapa'.

This Nayak was rightly famed for his attention to peaceful and effective administration. He was eager to share the burden of administration with other authorities as was evident when he invested the Setupati with political and administrative power. Consequent on this and other administrative arrangements the Nayak's control over the activities of the Portuguese increased and he was also on good terms with him. His religious policy was tolerant and he was prepared to allow proselytisation if that activity did not disturb conditions in the Nayakdom. He built many temples, granted many villages to Brahmins and constructed irrigation tanks and generally governed like a benevolent, traditional Hindu ruler. He built a town called 'Krishnapuram'.

Muthu Krishnappa died in April, 1609. He had three sons (Muthu Virappa, Tirumalai, and Kumara Muthu) according to some scholars, and two sons (Muthu Virappa and Tirumalai) according to others. A Kumara Muthu Tirumalai is mentioned as the son of Tirumalai Nayak in other sources. So it is not possible to be categorical about the number of sons Muthu Krishnappa left behind to contest for the throne.

Muthu Virappa Nayaka I (1609—c.1623 or 1627)

Muthu Virappa Nayaka I, the first son succeeded his father in 1609 to the Nayak throne. There are two opinions about his loyalty to the Vijayanagar Empire. V. Rangacharya thinks that there is epigraphic evidence for Muthu Virappa's unstinted loyalty to the Empire. But R. Sathyanatha Iyer is supported by S. Krishnaswami Iyengar in the view that Muthu Virappa started the tradition

of disloyalty which became manifest in the days of his successor, Tirumalai Nayaka. Antonio Vico, a Christian missionary in a letter of 30-8-1611 has said that Muthu Virappa was 'irregular in the payment of tribute and would never pay it willingly'. Proenza, another missionary has said in 1659 that 'Tirumala Nayaka merely continued his predecessor's policy of separation from the Vijayanagar Empire.' From another source, Barrados, it is gathered that the Nayak of Madura joined Jaggaraya (called the 'unscrupulous traitor' by those who still believed that the declining emperor of Vijayanagar still deserved to be propped up on a tottering throne) in the war of succession which came in the wake of the death of Venkata II and whose role therein continued to prolong the civil war which was ultimately destined to spell the ruin of Vijayanagar. The death of Venkata II (1614) led to such confusion in the Empire wherein it was natural for any subordinate ruler to aspire to independence.

Erumaikatti (Hermacatti) Nayaka helped the Madura Nayak in 1610 against some unmentioned enemies. It is understood there broke out in 1611 a war between Madura and Tanjore, though its causes and nature of cessation are not known.

When Venkata II passed away, there ensued a civil war in the Empire; one party was led by Yachama Nayaka and the other supporting the putative son of Venkata II was led by one Jaggaraya. The rights of either party and the question of who was the legal heir and who was pretender are endlessly debated by historians of Vijayanagar and the question really does not concern us here. But it is important to note that Jaggaraya was generally more competent than his foe, Yachama Nayaka was supported by Raghunatha, the Nayak of Tanjore and the Nayaks of Madura and Gingee were on the side of Jaggaraya. An important engagement in this conflict took place in Tiruchy (1616). This battle is referred to in the *Sahityaratnakaram* and the *Raghunathabhyudayam* and according to them Tanjore was victorious in this context; and one of the consequences of this defeat inflicted on the Madura Nayak

was the marriage of the daughter of the latter to the Nayak of Tanjore. Yachama Nayaka and Raghunatha Nayaka triumphed for the time being and this meant a set-back for Madura. Some inscriptions of Srivallabha (Pandya) and Varatunga Rama Pandya also mention this battle which according to them took place at Vallaprakaram (Vallam). It is possible to infer from these accounts that the contemporary Pandyas helped the Nayak of Madura against Yachama and Raghunatha Nayaka.

It was perhaps just before this battle and to safeguard Madura from possible invasions from Tanjore that Muthu Virappa shifted his capital from Madura to Tiruchy. From then onwards the capital of Madura Nayakship was being frequently shifted to and from Tiruchy till the very end of the dynasty.

Raja Udaiyar of Mysore who had carefully kept out of the Vijayanagar civil war, wished to exploit Muthu Virappa's preoccupation with Tanjore and sent in 1620 an army under a general, called Mukilan in the records, to harry Dindigul region. But the able and loyal Palayagars of Virupakshi and Kannivadi repulsed this invasion and earned the titles 'Pathia Kaval' and 'Chinna Mysuran' respectively. This was an early instance of the Palayagars saving their Nayak overlord from foreign aggression.

During the reign of Muthu Virappa an interesting turn occurred in the fortunes of spreading Christianity in Madura. De Nobili, as we said before, succeeded where Fernandes had failed. But Fernandes remembered this with jealousy and reported to the ecclesiastical authorities in Europe about De Nobili's unconventional methods of proselytisation, which some people called 'a monstrous combination of paganism and Christianity'. After much controversy and correspondence on this subject he was asked to cease from his style of proselytisation in 1611; this decision made him inactive for 12 years during when the progress of Christian conversions greatly suffered. The decline in conversions during this period was as much due to lack of support from the European religious authorities as to local persecution. In 1623 however the Pope Gregory XV approved

of De Nobili's methods. But in the meantime a lot of valuable time and much opportunity had been lost.

Muthu Virappa was disloyal to the Vijayanagar Emperor, and quietly preparing for possible hostilities against Mysore and to equip himself financially for this eventuality tyrannically squeezed a lot of revenue from his people, expected frequent invasion from the north and to guard against that shifted the capital from Madura to Tiruchy; he persecuted the Christian missionaries and in general behaved like an aggressive and disloyal subordinate that he was, indulging in petty tyranny over native and alien.

He was succeeded by his younger brother Tirumalai. The Jesuits wrongly mention Tirumalai as the former's son.

Tirumalai Nayaka (c. 1623 - 1659)

According to the chronicles, Tirumalai Nayaka ascended the throne on the 19th February, 1623. In view of the unanimity of opinion in the chronicles, the date may be accepted, though other sources like the Jesuit records and epigraphy do not exactly corroborate this. There is a probability that Muthu Virappa died only in 1627; in that case the effective rule of Tirumalai which began in c. 1623 became formal also in 1627. He was born in 1584 and was 39 years old when he ascended the throne. Till 1634 Tirumalai held court in Tiruchi but in that year he transferred the capital from Tiruchy back again to Madurai. No one has as yet given any satisfactory reason for this transfer of capital. It is quite possible that from his accession to 1634 (a period of 11 years) he lived in Tiruchy and used it as his capital, but there realising that there was no longer any danger from the north and there was no need for the Nayak himself to reside in that northern fortified city and also perhaps wanting to live in the holy city of Madura, the capital of the ancient Pandyas, he resolved to go back to Madura.

Tirumalai Nayaka whether judged by history or by legend was undoubtedly the greatest among the Nayaks of Madura.

His reign is noteworthy for making Madurai virtually independent of the Vijayanagar Empire; he made all preparations necessary to meet the consequences of such a development; the traditional differences between Madura and Tanjore were attempted to be ironed out, but with indifferent success; as a result of his independent policy he had to wage wars with rising Mysore and the decadent Empire; to assert his authority in his domains he had to subjugate the Setupati of Ramnad; an incidental war with Tanjore also ensued. But his real title to lasting fame rests on his contribution to art and letters. He beautified Madura, built a great and beautiful palace there which still stands witness to his artistic leanings. The Pudumandapam and the towers of the Sri Minakshi temple as they stand now are proof of his activities which combined art with writing.

Early in his reign, i. e. in 1625, Chamaraja Udaiyar, king of Mysore, who had by now become considerably independent of Vijayanagar, invaded the Madura country and sent the general Nandi Raja at the head of a large army to achieve the conquest. The idea behind this invasion perhaps was to complete a task which his predecessor had tried but failed to fulfil. But when the Mysore forces had reached the vicinity of Dindigul, Ramappayyan the Brahmin general of the Nayak forces and the Palayagar of Kannivadi not only defeated and drove back these forces; but pursued them to the very gates of the capital of Mysore; the successful general then returned to Madura to receive the Nayak's grateful appreciation and rewards.

Next came the invasion of Travancore by the Nayak forces again under the Command of Ramappayyan. The reason for this invasion is not known; probably the Travancore ruler, Unni Kerala Verma failed to pay the tribute which was customary since the successful invasion of that country by Ramaraja Vitthala. His intention, then, was to chastise that ruler for non-payment of customary tribute. The invasion took place after 1634. It was successful for the Nayak arms. Ramappayyan became the hero of yet another successful military adventure.

But perhaps his most spectacular victory was achieved against the recalcitrant Setupati of Ramnad in 1637. Then the Setupati in Ramnad was one Sadaikka. Thevar also known as Dalavay Setupati. This Dalavay had an illegitimate younger brother (called Tambi) who persuaded the Nayak of Madura to believe that he was the legitimate heir to the Ramnad chieftaincy and that the Dalavay was an usurper. Tirumalai Nayak consequently called upon Sadaikka to pay up the arrears of tribute and to give up the throne to Tambi. The events of the war that followed on the Setupati's refusal to obey, are narrated succinctly and vividly, (although in highly exaggerated and romantic language typical of literature of that kind) in the *Ramappayyan Ammanai*, a historical ballad written in Tamil verse. Ramappayyan assisted by Rangama Nayaka invaded the Marava country and after much fighting which was at one stage taken to the island of Rameswaram and in which Portuguese and Dutch forces were invited to participate by the rival parties, he succeeded in bringing Sadaikka prisoner to Madura where the Nayak imprisoned the disobedient vassal. He made Tambi the Setupati.

In this war waged by Tirumalai Nayak against Sadaikka it must be noted that the Setupati got the support of the Dutch while the Nayak secured the support of the Portuguese; the victorious Nayak extended to the Portuguese facilities to build churches in the Marava country and to proselytise freely. The earlier policy of the Vijayanagar Emperor of discouraging the Portuguese in the southern tracts was thus reversed to some extent.

Tambi, the new Setupati soon became unpopular; and on repetitive representations from the general public and pilgrims to Rameswaram, the Nayak reinstated Sadaikka as Setupati. The dethroned Tambi however had the Setupati murdered and the question of succession again arose. Now there were three candidates in the field: Raghunatha Theva and Tanakka Theva, nephews of the deceased Dalavay, and Tambi himself. The Nayak thought of a plan by which Ramnad would be divided into three territories each one to be ruled by one or the other of the three claimants, as determined by the Nayak. But luckily Tanakka Theva and Tambi

died soon, leaving Raghunatha Theva to rule over the whole of the Marava country. Raghunatha, the grateful Setupati proved competent and was to be of great help to Tirumalai Nayak in times of dire distress. He was greatly honoured by the Nayak.

The general Ramappayyan, in the midst of his campaigns against the Setupati was recalled by the Nayak to proceed to the north to help the Vijayanagar Emperor against Bijapur whose force were pressing the imperial army hard. The general from the South gave successful aid to the Emperor and returned to the South again to complete his victory over the Setupati. This famous Brahmin general lived for a few years after this career of consistent military success, and died sometime before 1648; Nelson however erroneously states that he died in the course of the Marava campaign. The statement is disproved by epigraphy as well as the *Ammanai*.

A very important decision of Tirumalai Nayaka has to have rejected slowly the hegemony of the Emperor of Vijayanagar over his dominions. This has resulted in to defend him. From the start, i. e. Nagama Nayaka's governorship of Madura, there was a tendency on the part of Madurai to shed the weight of Vijayanagar authority to function independently. Even in the days of Visvanatha Nayaka and his immediate successors though there was open declaration of loyalty to the Emperor, Ariyanatha Mudaliar and others had made unique arrangements in the government of Madura so that it was neither a mere replica nor an extension of Vijayanagar government. The peculiar problems of Madurai and its great distance from Vijayanagar naturally tempted the Nayaks to go their way independently of the Emperor. We have seen that Muthu Virappa Nayaka I (Tirumalai Nayak's elder brother and predecessor on the throne) instituted a policy of overt freedom from Vijayanagar authority. Tirumalai did not invent this policy out of any natural inclination to disobedience. He knew that he could not support a losing cause without danger to himself. There was no love lost between himself and Mysore; Tanjore was well known for its 'humble obedience' to the weak monarch of Vijayanagar. So in effect Tirumalai Nayaka was isolated from the other Hindu powers

of the South, so that to save himself from the wrath of the frustrated Emperor, he had to have recourse to the assistance of the Muslim powers of the Deccan, which he was not averse to inviting. Whether he was right in pursuing this policy or not has been discussed at length by scholars. S. Krishnaswami Iyengar, a great protagonist of Vijayanagar even when it was a sinking ship – sinking because of its decreasing strength and increasing enemies – is highly critical of Tirumalai's anti-imperial plans and actions. R. Satyanatha Iyer however sympathises with the Nayak's position and justifies his decisions to halt the imperial advance with the help of the Muslim powers of the Deccan.

Venkata III died in 1641 and was succeeded by his nephew Sriranga III, the last Emperor of Vijayanagar. The new ruler wished to assert his authority over the Southern Nayakdoms and marched South. Tirumalai tried to halt this by allying himself with Tanjore and Gingee; but the Nayak of Tanjore, the ever-loyal, revealed these plans to the Emperor. The Nayak of Madura who then had to shift for himself persuaded the Sultan of Golconda to attack the imperial rear, which that Sultan was only too willing to do. The disconcerted Sriranga returned to Vellore to meet the menace from the north; and though he at the beginning showed symptoms of aggressive resistance finally went down; his last attempt to secure the help of his Nayak Viceroys failed and he had to retreat to some forest in North Tanjore from where he soon fled to Mysore, where he stayed as an unhonoured guest of the Raja; the Raja soon despaired of him; the King who was destined to bring the illustrious dynasty of Vijayanagar to a close fled farther to Bednur from where he disappeared from history.

When Sriranga had retreated from Vellore, Bijapur and Golconda decided to move south into the vacuum caused by such retreat. In spite of Tirumalai's attempt to prevent Golconda from taking Gingee, a combination of Bijapur and Golconda was too much for him. Gingee fell to Bijapur; all the territory to the north of Tanjore and as far east as Negapatam fell into the hands of the Muslims of the Deccan. Mysore had become independent; Tanjore

had lost its imperial master; Madura obtained the desired freedom from Vijayanagar suzerainty. But all this was accompanied by inexorable Muslim penetration into the South. When they attempted to invade the Madura country, however, Tirumalai with the help of his *Kallar* army was able to drive them back and retain his independence intact.

Kanthirava Narasa Nayaka the Mysore ruler was anxious to punish Tirumalai Nayak for inviting Muslim help against the Emperor Sriranga, for he too had to bear the might of Muslim onslaught on the South; as soon as the field was clear of Muslim forces, Kanthirava sent his armies under the command of one Dalavay Hempaiya (1656). The province of Satyamangalam suffered badly at the hands of the Mysore army which soon reached the Dindigul region. The Nayak of Madura was then in his sick bed but did not despair. He sent for his loyal feudatory Raghunatha Setupati and sought his help. The Setupati promptly collected an army of 60,000 troops and fought the Mysore army at the northern outskirts of Dindigul. The invading army inflicted heavy damage on the defenders but itself sustained such heavy injury that it was obliged to flee back to Mysore. In fact the Marava army of Madura pursued them to Mysore up to Nanjangud and returned only after inflicting very heavy damage to men and material there. The Nayak of Madura was so grateful to the Setupati that he conferred on him the title of 'Tirumalai Setupati' and exempted him from paying any tribute.

The sources speak, in connection with the rout of the Mysore army, of a prince called Kumara Muthu of Madurai supposed by some to be the younger brother of Tirumalai and by others to be his natural son. Kumara Muthu, it is said, attacked Mysore with the help of general Ranganna Nayaka. In any case, it seems, he entertained at some stage ambitions of succeeding Tirumalai Nayaka as ruler, brushing aside the Nayak's legitimate son Muthu Virappa. But saner counsel prevailed and he is said to have retired gracefully to Sivakasi which was granted to him as a fief.

A peculiar and disgusting feature of this Mysore-Madura war was a particularly barbarous practice adopted by the Mysore army in dealing with the prisoners of war. A Fort St. George Resolution of January 19, 1679¹ described the barbarity as follows "Their custom is not to kill but to cut off the noses with the upper lips of their enemies; for which they carry an iron instrument with which they do it very dexterously, and carry away all the noses and lips they destroyed their enemies of, for which they are rewarded by the Naick of Mysore according to the number, and the reward is the greater, if the beard appear on the upper lip. This way of warfare is very terrible to all that those people engage with, so that none care to meddle with them; they being also a resolute people, and have destroyed many that have attempted them, for though they kill not outright, yet they die by lingering deaths, if they make not themselves away sooner, as far the most part they do that are so wounded, the shame and dishonour of it being esteemed greater than the pain and difficulty of subsisting."

Dr. Fryer who visited Madras around 1674 writes about the Raja of Saranpatam (Srirangapatnam): "The Raja of Saranpatam must not be slipped by in silence, because his way of fighting differs from his neighbours; he trains up his soldiers to be expert at a certain instrument to seize on the noses of his enemies with that slight either in the field or in their camps, that a budget-full of them have been presented to their Lord for a breakfast: a thing, because it deforms them, so abashing, that few care to engage with him and this he makes use of, because it is against his religion to kill anything. He enjoys a vast territory on the back of the zamerliar." It is however difficult to believe that the Raja ever had a 'nosey breakfast'.

The Madurai forces which attacked Mysore learnt this art from their enemies and practised it on them to perfection and did not exempt, it is said, even the king of Mysore from this honour. This war has been therefore called 'the War of the Noses'.

1 Quoted by J. Talboys Wheeler in his 'A History of the English Settlements in India' P. 74.

Tirumalai Nayaka was on friendly terms with the Portuguese. We have noticed how during the Marava War the Setupati solicited Dutch help and the Nayak obtained Portuguese support. These two European powers were on mutually unfriendly terms and so were willing to help opposite parties. After the Nayak's victory, the Portuguese opportunities in the coastal region of South East India for trade and proselytisation were increased. In fact Tirumalai Nayaka, apart from granting the Portuguese many religious and commercial concessions treated the Dutch, harshly (1648). The Dutch reached sharply and invading the mainland occupied Tiruchendur and attacked the Portuguese at Tuticorin and occupied the place (1658). Tirumalai Nayak, it seems, left the coastal regions largely to the contending European powers of those times. Perhaps that was all what was possible for him to do then.

During the reign period of Tirumalai Nayak, the Christian Missionaries under the leadership of Robert De Nobili succeeded in converting a number of natives to their religion. He met the Nayak himself and secured permission for unhindered conversion. Tiruchy and Salem in the earlier stages offered stout resistance to the Missionaries, but De Nobili who had settled in Tiruchy, was able to further the cause of his religion there with the active help of the Nayak himself. De Nobili later proceeded to Madras where after a long period of useful service to Christianity he died in 1660.

Despite the Nayak's support for the proselytising Missions, the local religious leaders who naturally resented their activities persuaded the local chieftains to indulge in severe persecution of the Christians. Persecution varied from mild resistance to severe physical chastisement. In 1653 persecution became general and severe in Tiruchy. Da Costa reported these matters in his letters. His personal representation of their sufferings to Tirumalai Nayak was fruitful and the Nayak ordered sympathetic treatment of the Christians. After Tirumalai Nayak's times persecution of the Christians took a nasty turn especially in Ramnad under the Setupatis. Tirumalai Nayak's generous attitude towards the

Christians has led some later-day legend-makers to invent stories of the Nayak's conversion to Christianity and a Brahmanical conspiracy which ended in the murder of the King. These unworthy legends have to be dismissed as childish for want of credible evidence. The Nayak was a sincere and devout Hindu who was however generous and tolerant towards other enlightened religions like Christianity.

Tirumalai Nayak emerges as the greatest among the Nayak rulers of Madura. V. Rangacharya's vitriolic denigration of the character and achievements of Tirumalai Nayak is proved to be mere prejudice by the undying fame which his support to every deserving social and religious cause has earned for him and the healthy pragmatism which characterised his foreign policy. The Palace, the Choultry, the Pudumandapam, the renovation of numerous temples and numberless public works he undertook — these justify his title to greatness as a sympathetic administrator and magnificent builder.

Tirumalai Nayak died on 16-2-1659 of the age of 75 and was succeeded by his son Muthu Virappa Nayak II.

Muthu Virappa Nayaka II

He ruled the vast Kingdom of Madurai for a very short period of nearly four months only from February to June 1659. Nelson's view that he was an illegitimate son of Tirumalai Nayaka is not borne out by any other source, and so has to be rejected. There was an interval of about a month or so between Tirumalai's death and Muthu Virappa's accession to the throne; and this perhaps is to be explained by succession disputes to which Kumara Muthu could have been a party.

Muthu Virappa strengthened the fort of Tiruchy and secured it against potential invaders from the north; Lingama Nayaka was in command of the garrison there. The Vijayanagar Empire had formally ceased to exist with the exit of Sriranga III from Mysore to Bednur and from there to obscurity. The political vacuum thus

created in the south could not be completely filled by the Kingdoms of Mysore, Gingee, Tanjore and Madurai. The Nawabs of Bijapur and Golconda who were in no small measure responsible for the final downfall of Vijayanagar, entered this vacuum and tried to spread themselves over the whole place. The Adil Shah of Bijapur sent an army to the South with orders to conquer the Nayak Kingdoms. Seeing that Muthu Virappa was well prepared to defend his dominions the invading Muslims turned their attention to Tanjore which they easily captured (1659); this was followed by their occupation of Mannar Kovil and Vallam. But the Kallars (the community of professional robbers) of the place became such a menace to the invaders that with the limited military resources at their disposal they could not continue to hold these places. They however pillaged the countryside and plundered the people, so much that Muthu Virappa was glad to get rid of them by paying 'a moderate sum of money' to them. The Muslim marauders were affected by famine and pestilence and were for their part willing to leave. Thus Muthu Virappa managed to save his dominions from the first Muslim onslaught on them.

The Jesuit records say that Muthu Virappa in the later part of his reign became a confirmed debauchee and consequently died. He was succeeded by his son Chokkanatha Nayaka in 1659.

Chokkanatha Nayaka (1659—1682)

Chokkanatha Nayaka son of Muthu Virappa Nayaka II has been a controversial figure like Tirumalai Nayaka himself but in a different way, in the history of the Nayaks. Ascending the throne in 1659 at the age of 16 he ruled for 24 years; his reign was sandwiched between that of Tirumalai Nayaka who broke loose from the clutches of the Vijayanagar Empire and that of Mangammal (his wife) who as regent of the Kingdom chose the path of subordination to the Moghul Emperor paving the way for the final absorption of the Nayak Kingdom in the Moghul Empire, then the Nawabi of Arcot and finally the English East India Company. Chokkanatha Nayaka tried to maintain the integrity and independence of his dominions in the face of concerted attempts by hostile neighbours on all sides to cause him trouble and succeeded in no small measure in doing so, but necessarily paying the price of

territory to the most aggressive among his foes: the ambitious King of Mysore and the turbulent Setupati of Ramnad.

Since he was but a youth when he succeeded to the throne, the affairs of State were looked after by the traditional type of regency consisting of the *Pradhani* (a sort of Dewan), the *Rayasam* (a secretary) and the *Dalavay* (the army chief). This group was a dangerous *cabal* which removed by evil means all those who opposed their interests and tried to keep the young prince ignorant of what ever was going on and to make him a mere nominal sovereign. The *Pradhani* was a brahmin and the reputed general Lingama Nayaka was the *Dalavay*. The prince got scent of the nefarious tactics of this triumvirate through a trusted lady in the court and took prompt and drastic steps to overwhelm them. The *Rayasam* was killed, the *Pradhani* being a brahmin was only blinded; and the King now free from this dangerous clique assumed full control; Lingama, however, still continued as powerful as ever. He had earlier gone to Gingee on the pretext of ousting Shahji (Sagosi) from there. When the King tried to move against him too, he escaped from Tiruchy, proceeded to Gingee and persuaded Shahji to join him in an attack on Tiruchy. The new *Pradhani* who was in charge of defence was as unreliable and treacherous as his predecessor, and so the King took personal charge of the defence of the capital. The effective defence of the capital organised by the King obliged the besiegers to lift the siege and they retired to Tanjore. Chokkanatha wishing to pursue this campaign to its end besieged Tanjore and pressed his enemies so hard that Shahji and Lingama fled to Gingee; and Vijayaraghava Nayaka of Tanjore abjectly surrendered. After this complete victory, Chokkanatha returned to Tiruchy.

The entire Nayak country (Madurai as well as Tanjore) suffered greatly as a result of ceaseless war and depredation. The Tanjore Nayak, Vijayaraghava, was a pious but worthless man and the country in particular suffered greatly from famine; added to this, the Dutch who had settled on the Coromandel coast collected a number of poor people promising to improve their lot and then

shipped them to other countries to be sold as slaves. This miserable situation was eased to some extent by the timely efforts of Chokkanatha. Poor feeding was organised on a vast scale and the King supervised it personally.

In 1663 a Bijapur army under the command of the famous general 'Vanamian' descended on the Nayak country and wrought such damage to people and property and compelled the people to commit mass suicide to escape the ill-treatment of the invader that Chokkanatha Nayaka who could do no more than to save the capital was compelled to bribe the invader to leave the country.

Chokkanatha had always felt that he had been let down by the Tanjore Nayak who supported the invasion of Tiruchi by the enemies of Madurai. When he got a respite from the Muslim raids, he invaded Tanjore, leading an army under his personal command. He occupied Vallam and besieged Tanjore so briskly that the Nayak of Tanjore soon sued for peace.

The Marava country was now ruled by Tirumalai Setupati (Raghunatha Setupati) who because of the special privileges conferred on him by Tirumalai Nayaka, assumed independence and an equal status with the Madurai Nayak himself. He had failed to help Chokkanatha at the time of Lingama's and Shahji's attack on Tiruchy. Chokkalinga who remembered this wanted to punish this insubordinate and inflated feudatory. In the initial stages of his invasion of the Ramnad country, the Nayak seized a number of fortresses like Tiruppattur, Pudukottai, Manamadurai and Kalaiyarkovil. Then he left the army under the command of his generals and returned to the capital to attend to pressing business. Then his army met with a series of bad reverses at the hands of the intrepid Marava Chieftain who was fighting on home terrain and for his freedom. The Nayak army returned discomfited and the king was greatly dejected because of the defeats his generals had suffered.

The King now in 1665 shifted his capital to Tiruchy. The question of the wisdom in changing the capital has been much debated. This can be forever discussed; since the change of capital

was wise from certain points of view like a more central position and being the northern bastion of the kingdom, or unwise for reasons like Madura being a more natural and ancient capital and an embodiment of the traditions of the Nayak dynasty. Chokkanatha, in view of the increasing inroads from the north must have decided to shift the capital to Tiruchy. He beautified his new capital and built a palace in Tiruchy in the construction of which he used material removed from the palace of Tirumalai Nayaka in Madurai.

During 1667 Chokkanatha was involved in a war with Mysore. It is not known whether he started the war or whether Devaraja Udaiyar of Mysore committed aggression. The latter perhaps took advantage of Chokkanatha's difficulties and committed wanton aggression which resulted in the loss of Coimbatore and Salem areas (around 1670) by the Nayak of Madura. These conquests were effected possibly by Chikka Deva in the last days of the reign of Devaraja Udaiyar.

His reign period from 1667 to 1673 is dark for want of any information on it. And so the story of Chokkanatha's reign during that period has to be skipped.

The next important event of his reign occurred in 1673 and it was a war with Tanjore. Chokkanatha at the age of 22 had married (in 1665 - 66) Mangammal (the daughter of his Dalavay Lingama Nayaka) whose son later reigned as Ranga Krishna Muthu Virappa Nayaka III. Still, in 1673, the king asked for the hand of the Tanjore princess, daughter of Vijaya-raghava Nayaka, who, however, had no hesitation in refusing to comply. It is difficult to be categorical about the popular legend that Chokkanatha and the princess were in love with each other. Anyway, the Nayak of Tanjore was certain that he would not give his daughter in marriage to the scion of a family, an illustrious member of which (Tirumalai Nayak) had stabbed to death one of his wives - a Tanjore Nayak princess - for daring to refuse to consider the Madura palace built by her husband superior

to the Tanjore palace of her father. Chokkanatha threatened war; but Vijayaraghava was firm. Then followed the Tanjore war of 1673. Though the declared cause was the above-mentioned, it is likely that Chokkanatha's aggression on Tanjore was politically motivated, i. e. wanting to regain lost territory.

The army of the Nayak of Madura was led by Dalavay Venkata Krishnappa. The army advanced successfully towards Tanjore and at each advance announced his willingness to withdraw if the ruler of Tanjore would comply with Chokkanatha's request. The Nayak of Tanjore persistently refused. When the military situation became too hard, Vijayaraghava put all the members of the royal family in a palace and blew them up. The Nayak himself died with his son in the ensuing battle. Chokkanatha seized the entire Tanjore Kingdom and appointed his foster-brother Alagiri Nayaka as his Viceroy there (1674); and he suitably rewarded his generals. The two Nayakships for the moment now merged under the suzerainty of Madura. But this situation obtained for a short while only.

Affairs in Tanjore were now taking a strange turn. Though in the earlier stages of his viceroyalty Alagiri was loyal to his overlord and behaved like a subordinate and paid his tribute promptly, in course of time he developed a tendency to independence, though by slow degrees. He started by defaulting on payment of tribute but later stopped paying it altogether. Chokkanatha's remonstrances ceased to have any effect on the ungrateful viceroy. This position weakened both Alagiri and Chokkanatha.

Now there was a *rayasam* by name Venkanna who had earlier seen service in Vijayaraghava's court and whose services were retained by Alagiri. This Venkanna being dissatisfied with the treatment he got in the court was devising ways to bring Alagiri to ruin. Venkanna had heard – it might after all be mere rumour – that Vijayaraghava's family had not altogether died out but a single descendant, an infant boy (either the Nayak's son or his grandson) had survived and was being brought up in Negapatam by a merchant. Venkanna thought of putting up this boy as the legitimate claimant

to the throne. But he had to find a protagonist with sufficient strength to fight and oust Alagiri. This he discovered in the Sultan of Bijapur to whom he repaired and represented his case. The obliging Sultan ordered his general Ekoji (or Venkaji), the son of Shahji, to march to Tanjore and to restore the Tanjore throne to the infant-boy named Sengamaladas. Ekoji besieged Tanjore; the hard-pressed Alagiri appealed to Chokkanatha Nayaka for help. The latter remembering the ingratitude of the former refused help and thereby invited danger to his neighbour's doorstep, which perhaps was not a very wise thing to do. Ekoji occupied Tanjore after a bold attack; Alagiri fled to Mysore (1675); Sengamaladas was installed as Nayak of Tanjore. The new boy king's foster mother revealed to Ekoji the place where the Tanjore treasures were buried. Sengamaladas disappointed Venkanna by appointing his old guardian and mentor, the merchant of Negapatam as his Dewan and Secretary. This infuriated Venkanna who left Tanjore to seek out Ekoji to persuade him to drive out the boy ruler from Tanjore and capture and retain power there for himself. Ekoji who was only as far away as Kumbakonam was a willing listener as he promptly attacked Tanjore, drove out Sengamaladas and became himself the ruler of Tanjore. It was then that he established the Mahratta rule in Tanjore (1675). One of the Nayakships in the Tamil country thus ceased to exist. Chokkanatha instead of having to manage a Nayak neighbour had thereafter to fight a Mahratta ruler.

Ekoji was the younger brother of Sivaji, the founder of the Mahratta Kingdom; the latter entered the Carnatic for a aid also wanting to claim from his brother a fraternal share of the newly conquered Nayak Kingdom. He occupied Gingee and left his elder brother (who was also officer commander) Santaji there as his governor. War between Ekoji and Santaji the two brothers became inevitable; the battles fought in the neighbourhood of Gingee and Vellore by these two brothers weakened both Chokkanatha realising that this was an opportunity for him to recapture Tanjore marched against it, but the rapprochement

between Santaji and Ekoji (already arrived at) precluded further action against Tanjore by Chokkanatha.

Chokkanatha had another unfortunate military engagement in the meanwhile; Chikkadevaraya of Mysore who had succeeded Devaraja Udaiyar in 1672 was an ambitious and aggressive ruler who took advantage of Chokkanatha's difficulties nearer home and invaded the western part of his kingdom. Chokkanatha waged a decisive and losing battle near Erode which cost him the Coimbatore and Erode regions of his kingdom permanently (1676).

Though there was a change of dynasty in the kingdom of Tanjore after the rout of Sengamaladas, there was little change in the relations between Tiruchi and Tanjore. Ekoji never forgot that while he was engaged against Santaji, Chokkanatha had invaded Tanjore. As fate would have it, with a decline in the Nayak's political fortunes the economic condition generally in the country became anxious; there was general unrest. Taking advantage of these circumstances, certain unscrupulous elements in the capital conspired against the king, declared that he was not in sound mind and threw him into prison. There they proclaimed his younger brother Muthulinga Nayaka alias Muthu Alagadri, his successor (1678). While this usurper was doing his best to ill govern the country, a Muslim upstart military adventurer, by name Rustam Khan fished successfully in those troubled waters, seized power and (mis)ruled the Nayak Kingdom for a while and he functioned not as king but allegedly under directions from Chokkanatha whom he had released from detention. This farce could go on for two years.

In 1680 there was a siege of Tiruchy by the Mysore army; and the Nayak forces were unequal to the task of defence. Dalavay Govindappayya and the Setupati of Ramnad supported by the Palayagar of Kannivadi wanting to save the situation interceded, killed Rustam Khan, restored authority to Chokkanatha and re-established a sort of order. The Setupati was conferred the title *para raja kesari* for this service by the grateful Nayak.

The invading forces from Mysore under the command of General Kumarayya which besieged Tiruchy had to contend against a strange and unnatural combination of allies viz., Arasumalai, the Mahratta general from Gingee, Ekoji of Tanjore and the Setupati of Ramnad. Though this combination was unnatural and these allies had no more loyalty to Chokkanatha than he had confidence in them, the invader was frightened out of his wits and lifting the siege tried to retreat; but his enemies fell on his army, cut it to pieces and took him prisoner. Arasumalai's brisk exertions resulted in the complete expulsion of the Mysore army from the kingdom of Madura. But the treacherous Arasumalai, the Mahratta general, turned against Tiruchi and plundered the Nayak Kingdom. Thus the last days of Chokkanatha became bitter and painful.

Chokkanatha's reign witnessed exceedingly disturbed political conditions in the kingdom; the invasions of Mysore, the changes in Tanjore, the interference of the Mahrattas, the inroads of the Muslims, the doubtful loyalty of the feudatories and a decline in the economic condition caused largely by natural calamities like unusually heavy rainfall and consequent inundation of the countryside and destruction of crops and other property – these were only some of the adverse factors which filled his cup of misery to overflowing. Chokkanatha's was an excellent example of how a competent and good government can be marked by disturbances and misfortunes due to circumstances entirely beyond his control; as for error of judgement, he was no more culpable of it than any of his predecessors or successors in the dynasty. It must be said to his credit that he was wise in the transfer of his capital to Tiruchy and tolerant in his religious policy; and in that regard was a welcome contrast to the notorious Kilavan Setupati noted for his wild persecutions of the Christians.

Christianity had its ups and downs, obtained favours and faced persecution during this period. The king and a few of his nobles like Adiyappa Nayak, a general, were considerate and generous to the foreign missionaries while the local chieftains egged on by the local priesthood indulged in fairly persistent

persecution. What happened in the Marava country leading to the martyrdom of Father John de Britto was characteristic of Kilavan's religious policy. After the death of Martinz Andra Freire, Alvarez, Proensa and Baltheser Da Costa spread the gospel of the Church under extremely difficult conditions.

Chokkanatha has been unfairly estimated by earlier historians of the Nayaks, though they have here and there recorded his initiative, generosity, courage, competence as a general and so forth. There is no doubt that his reign period marked a turning point in the fortunes of the kingdom. But it must be conceded that Tirumalai Nayaka's policy of independence and Mangammal's expediency of subordination to the Moghul were only different phases of the same process.

Chokkanatha Nayaka died on the 16th June 1682 of heart failure.

Muthu Virappa Nayaka III (1682 - 9)

Muthu Virappa was the son of Chokkanatha Nayak by Mangammal; the mention of one Annamuthammal as the mother of Muthu Virappa in an epigraph of 1687 confuses the issue but since all other sources of evidence agree on Mangammal as the mother of Muthu Virappa, this view may be held till more credible evidence to the contrary turns up. His full name was Ranga Krishna Muthu Virappa. He was perhaps born in 1666 - 67 and was, therefore, 15 years old when he ascended the throne. There is an inscription of Saka 1579 (A. D. 1657) which mentions a donation by Muthu Virappa; this means he must have been more than 25 years old at the time of accession. He must have had a younger brother, born possibly in 1681 or 1682; his infancy enabled Mangamma, his mother, to avoid committing *sati* when Chokkanatha passed away.

Whatever else this prince was, he was certainly lucky in that the traditional enemies of the Nayaks of Madurai, viz., Mysore, Gingee and Tanjore was otherwise far too busy quarrelling among themselves or resisting the Mahrattas, that he had enough time to

reorganise the government of the kingdom and even to regain parts of the territory lost to Mysore during his father's reign period. He provided good government to his people and looked after their welfare. He even personally supervised the affairs of the kingdom, went round in disguise to discover popular conditions and public opinion and exerted himself to satisfy his subject population.

Kilavan Setupati who had become insubordinate, thought of allying himself with the old Dalavay Venkata Krishnappa of Madurai, and Sengamaladas the deposed Nayak of Tanjore for an attack on Madurai. He bribed Tanjore with territory for joining in this act of perfidy. But this plot was exposed by Kumara Pillai, a Dalavay of Ramnad who however was tortured and killed by the cruel Kilavan. Muthu Virappa's subsequent invasion of the Marava country was not successful.

The Christian Missionaries who had a bad time in the Marava country seem to have fared no better under the Nayak himself. The following account in the Missionary correspondence shows the darker aspect of Muthu Virappa's government: "This cruel prince requited the loyalty of his vassal (the Palayagar of 'Moulipadi') only by the most iniquitous tyranny; the leader was arrested in the very act of paying homage, despoiled of his jewels, and shut up in a dungeon. At the same time, his troops pillaged the dominions of this unfortunate Polegar, seized his wives, and tortured them to reveal the place of his hidden treasures". But there are other stories which show that he was impartial and just in his dealings with the Christians.

R. Sathyanatha Iyer who accuses V. Rangacharya of loving romantic history and regaling his readers with puerile tales, himself mentions at length the story of this Nayak insulting Aurangzeb, the Moghul Emperor who is said to have sent a slipper on elephant back to extort tribute and obedience from the Nayak. Taylor remarked: "The affair of the Moghul's slipper is so singular, that we know not whether it be simple or rodomontade". It would be proper to treat it as pure rodomontade and leave it at that.

Muthu Virappa III died in 1689 of small pox. His wife Muthammal was then pregnant. His posthumous son by her was born in 1690. This devoted wife who had decided to commit self-immolation at once, had postponed the execution of that grim resolve to after her delivery; she kept her word and let her mother-in-law, Mangammal, hold the baby (the later Vijaya Ranga Chokkanatha) literally.

The Regency of Mangammal (1689 - 1706)

Mangammal was the wife of Chokkanatha Nayaka. Muthu Virappa Nayaka III was her son. As stated above, Muthu Virappa died in 1689 leaving a devoted wife Muthammal behind. What then happened can be best described in the words of Martin: "The queen of Trichinopoly, mother of the reigning prince, who was pregnant when her husband died about twenty years ago, made the same resolution (to burn herself to death) as soon as a son would be born to her, and carried it out with a firmness which astonished the whole court. Her mother-in-law, Mangammal, could not accompany king Chokkanatha on his pyre for the same reason, but after her delivery, she lit upon an expedient to escape the flames, the pretext being that there was none but herself to bring up the young prince and govern the kingdom during his minority. As she loved the queen of Trichinopoly, her daughter-in-law, she wished to persuade her to follow her example; but this young queen, regarding it with contempt, said to her, 'Do you believe that I am so devoid of feeling as to survive my husband? The desire to leave him a successor has made me postpone my sacrifice; but at present, nothing can prevent it. The young prince will lose nothing by my death, since he has a grandmother who has great attachment for life...' She added many more cutting reproaches, but in a veiled manner. Mangammal dissembled like a sensible woman and abandoned her daughter-in-law to her deplorable infatuation."² So Mangammal became guardian of the infant boy and ruled Madurai as his regent for 18 years from 1689 to 1706.

2 La Mission Du Madura IV : Letter of Martin to Villette Marava, 1713, p. 206.

Source material relating to Mangammal's reign is marked by numerous references to the many public works which she carried out, like laying and repairing of roads, digging of wells for providing irrigation and drinking water, building of *choultries* (boarding and lodging houses for travellers), renovating temples etc. The Mangammal choultry and the *tamagam* (the summer house) in Madurai are examples of her charity and building. She granted *agrarahas* to Brahmins and ordered the construction of irrigation channels. These give an impression rightly of a very liberal and humanitarian administration. Mangammal's name has become deservedly famous in history for these acts of benevolence. But this has also blinded historians to the very obvious facts that it was during her reign period that the steep decline of the Nayak Kingdom, having the way for its final fall 35 years later, began. This decline was the direct result of her foreign policy. The very historians who describe her husband's (Chokkanatha Nayaka's) reign as a total failure blaming him for the misfortunes caused by unavoidable external circumstances, praise Mangammal's foreign policy as one of 'careful stewardship', 'polite submission' and 'tact' while in fact all these euphemisms are to be frankly designated cynical disregard of honourable principles. It has been stated that she after all 'stooped to conquer'; this has to be paraphrased as 'her stooping before the Moghul Emperor to conquer Tanjore'. The Moghul Emperor Aurangzeb had completed the conquest of the Deccan and his famous general Zulphikar Khan besieged Gingee; he sent an army farther south for the conquest of the Nayak Kingdoms. The Moghul arms seemed irresistible; Mysore under Chikkadeva Raya and Tanjore under Shahji had accepted the suzerainty of the Grand Moghul. In 1697 when Moghul armies were directed against Madura, Mangammal, 'the Prudent' received the Moghul emissary with due honours and promptly paid her tribute. Manucci describes this graphically: "On April 20, 1702 Dand Khan received a letter from the Queen of Terchenapali, tributary to the Moghul, wherein this ruler begged him to undertake in person to assist her in the war she was obliged to wage against the prince of Aurpalaiyam (Udaiyarpalayam), another tributary

of the Moghul. This man had seized some of her towns. The letter stated with much exaggeration the iniquity of the Raja's proceedings, and was filled with humble words and prayers and intended to influence the general to come to her aid. With it came some very fine presents to be sent on to Aurangzeb, some for Dand Khan and some for the *Diwan*. They consisted in a number of valuable trinkets and precious stones for the king, 20,000 rupees in silver coin for the general, and 10,000 for the *diwan*..."³ The queen of Madura was amply endowed with the twin characteristics of all despots, of abject abasement before superior might and unabashed aggression against the weaker. She bribed and cajoled the Moghul general and frequently provided pecuniary satisfaction to the Mahrattas. Finding herself from these notorious sources of wanton aggression and territorial aggrandisement, she tried to war with her less powerful neighbours: Mysore, Tanjore and the Maravas.

Chikkadeva Raya of Mysore, having completed the conquest of the Kongu country by 1696, sent his general Kumarayya to besiege Tiruchy. But a Mahratta attack on Mysore obliged him to withdraw. That saved Madura for a while. In the extreme south the ruler of Travancore, Ravivarma had stopped paying tribute. The Nayak army went into pillage the country and punish the ruler; it returned with more than the due tribute. The Madura army became a scourge to the land of the Malayalees. In 1696 when the Nayak army proceeded to lay siege to Korkillam, an important fortress in Travancore, the ruler of Travancore cleverly submitted to the invading army and used it to get rid of his local opponents and placed the fortress in the hands of the enemy. Soon he turned the tables on the invaders and besieging the fort in his turn cut the entire Nayak forces to pieces. Mangammal retrieved the situation by sending Dalavay Narasappaiah to avenge this disgraceful defeat. The Dalavay led a successful punitive expedition into the Travancore country, which resulted in the defeat of Ravivarma and fresh collection of enhanced tribute.

Mangammal's foreign relations with Tanjore and the Marava country were marked by hostility. She had realised that the Moghul would not help her really against her local enemies; and so she decided to deal with them herself. The Mahratta ruler Shahji of Tanjore was given to aggression and he captured a number of towns within the kingdom of Madura. To counteract this, Mangammal directed her Dalavay Narasappaiyah against Tanjore in A. D. 1700. A series of tactical blunders on the part of the Tanjore army resulted in complete victory for Madura. The disconcerted ruler of Tanjore held Baloji Pandit, his chief minister, responsible for this disaster. But the intrepid Pandit pleaded with his master for some time for him to set things right. He collected a large sum of money from the merchants of Tanjore, which he used to bribe the officers in the Madura army and in particular Narasappaiyah's father. The striking arm of Madura was thus rendered innocuous by its palm being suitably greased. Peace between Madurai and Tanjore ensured. Baloji Pandit once again became chief minister.

Now a strange thing happened. Tiruchy and Tanjore were simultaneously struck by the unusual phenomenon of the Kaviri drying up during rainy season. Enquiries revealed that Chikkadeva Raya of Mysore had constructed a dam across the headwaters of the Kaviri and directed all the waters of that river for irrigation in his own country, rendering the rest of the river a long meandering stretch of sand. The infuriated rulers of Tiruchy and Tanjore started preparing a joint invasion of Mysore. But luckily (for the intending invaders), the dam, which no doubt was quite crude and a poor sample of indigenous ingenuity burst and the Kaviri became its old self again, and a war was averted.

We have already mentioned how Raghunatha Setupati (the Kilavan) had assumed practical independence even in the days of Chokkanatha. He progressed from strength to strength till he dared to defy his royal neighbours. In 1698, the Setupati besieged and captured Madurai where his army stayed till it was driven out by Narasappaiyah. Soon after this, in 1702, the Dalavay undertook

an expedition against the Maravas, with the help of the Tanjore army. The Setupati was more than a match even to the combined forces of Madurai and Tanjore, which were badly mauled by the Maravas. Narasappaiyah lost his life in one of these engagements. There was nothing thereafter to prevent the Setupati becoming *de jure* independent of the Nayak of Madurai.

Mangammal was a liberal minded patron of arts and letters and a supporter of beneficent activities. She was tolerant and helpful to the Christians who were being persecuted by the contemporary Setupati whose major achievement in the field of persecution was the murder of De Britto.

There is some controversy about how her end came about. There is a traditional account of her last days according to which she became so unpopular with the people on account of her amorous relations with her minister Achaiah – and this at the age of 54 or 55 – that she was arrested, imprisoned and starved to death. In evidence an incriminating portrait of Mangammal and her paramour in a compromising posture is cited. S. Krishnaswami Iyengar and R. Sathyanatha Iyer disbelieve these 'idle stories'.⁴ V. Rangacharya however, says 'the true cause and excuse of Mangammal's death is and is ever likely to be a mystery'.⁵ According to R. Sathyanatha Iyer 'the most obvious improbability in the story is that at the time ascribed for this love intrigue, Mangammal would be at least 55 years old'.⁶ But if this is the only reason for disbelieving the evidence, the grounds are of course not very strong. Describing the love affairs of Catherine II of Russia, it has been said that 'the Empress had twentyone known lovers, the last after she had turned sixty'.⁷

Mangammal died and her regency ended in 1706. Vijaya Ranga Chokkanatha her grandson-ward assumed full control of government in the same year

4 R. Sathyanatha Iyer: *The Nayaks of Madura*, pp. 220, 221.

5 *Indian Antiquary*: 1917, p. 185.

6 R. Sathyanatha Iyer: *The Nayaks of Madura*, p. 221.

7 N. V. Riasanovsky: *A History of Russia*, p. 284

Vijayaranga Chokkanatha (1706 - 1731) :

Vijayaranga Chokkanatha, the son of Muthu Virappa Nayaka III was 17 years old when he ascended the throne on the death of his regent-grandmother Mangammal. He was a pious and religious-minded man doing benefactions to the priestly community and liberally endowing temples. He had a penchant for maladministration, for he left the affairs of state to unscrupulous officers like the Dalavay Kasturi Rangaiah and the Pradhani Venkata Krishnaiah who systematically swindled the people. Even a highly demonstrative protest by a subject (who threw himself down from the temple tower) against this misrule had no effect. He lost the territories of Coimbatore and Salem permanently. He could not even interfere to retrieve the Marava country from its endemic chaos occasioned by succession disputes. The Setupatis sought the services of the rulers of Tanjore rather than the arbitration of the Nayaks of Madura. His Hindu religious susceptibilities persuaded him to persecute the Christians. In short he was a model of a bad ruler. He died in 1731. Though this date is not accepted on all hands, we follow the *Maduraittala Varlaru* date here.

Minakshi (1731 - 9) :

Vijayaranga Chokkanatha died without male issue and was succeeded by his wife Minakshi, who unlike Mangammal, who was throughout only a regent, ruled the country in her own right as a queen. The resources of the Nayakship which had reached their nadir were dissipated by a woman of modest means and moderate abilities; she was dazed by fast developing circumstances which soon turned out fatal to her and the kingdom. Minakshi adopted Vijayakumara Muthu Tirumalai Nayak, the son of one Bangaru Tirumalai, a descendant in a collateral branch of the Nayak family; her brother Venkata Perumal Nayaka supported her. But Bangaru Thirumalai and his secretary Venkatacharya conspired to overthrow Minakshi, and seize power for the first conspirator. Minakshi with the help of Tukoji of Tanjore survived the crisis. The posture of events was bad enough to attract the attention of Arcot. Safdar Ali, the prince of Arcot and Chanda Saheb his brother-in-law marched on Tiruchy with a view to reducing Madura and Tanjore if they failed to pay up their tribute promptly. Bangaru Tirumalai

tried to turn this situation to his advantage but for-the-moment dexterous Minakshi made up with him and sent him and her adopted son away to Madura for greater safety.

The forces of Arcot withdrew for a while; but Chanda Saheb who had earlier taken his oath on the Koran⁸ that he would not injure the interests of Minakshi, returned (1738) to the scene determined to see through his ulterior plans. The gullible Nayak queen who, according to a rumour reported by Orme, was even in love with Chanda Saheb, was taken in by the hypocritical promises of the Saheb and merely looked on while the latter produced to Madura, occupied Dindigul and Madura, drove out Bangaru Tirumalai and began to control the entire Nayak country steadily. The disconcerted Bangaru Tirumalai took refuge in Sivaganga. Eventually he was killed by Anwaruddin and the young Vijaya Kumara spent the rest of his life in unfortunate though deserved obscurity.

Chanda Saheb enacted the last act of the tragedy that was to bring the Madura Nayakship to a close. He imprisoned Minakshi in her own palace, and she suspecting the worst, took poison (or entered the flames),⁹ and ended her life (1739)¹⁰. Thus ended the Nayakship of Madura; the southern districts were thrown open to violence and chaos, characteristic of 18th century India; and they were stilled only when more than six and a half decades later, the Madras Presidency was formed.

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- 8 Col. Wilks however says that Chanda Saheb took his oath not by placing his hand on a copy of the Koran but a full-sized brick 'hidden under splendid coverings' sufficient to deceive the queen.
- 9 The manner of her suicide is not beyond debate. R. Sathyanatha Iyer on the strength of H. S. Hill's statement mentions poison; (*Nayaks of Madura*: p. 234). Orme merely says 'confined her to a prison where she died of grief'; *Military transaction* I p. 38). But the *Tuzuk-i-Walajahi* (Tr) I pp. 70-71 says 'Thus wounded in heart and helpless she burnt herself according to the custom of the Hindus'.
- 10 This date is confirmed by *Maduraittala Varalaru* which specifically mentions Minakshi's rule as lasting from 1731 to 1739. R. Sathyanatha Iyer however prefers Hill's date and makes the last year of Minakshi 1736.

The Nayaks of Tanjore

We have noticed already how after the conquest of the south by Kumara Kampana, the rulers of Vijayanagar appointed their governors to administer the southern districts; and further as they wished and necessarily had to rule the conquered territories imperially, they chose *Nayaks* i. e., military chieftains, who also performed civil functions, to rule over Tamilaham and similar parts of their empire. This arrangement entailed the appointment of a Nayak to govern the Madura country in the first place, since it happened to be in the extreme south; and secondly a trusted liege in that distant place was necessary to look after the conquest and retention of far-off territories. Chronologically Madura was first placed under Nagama Nayaka whose loyalty was suspected and who therefore had to be superseded. He was superseded by his own son Visvanatha Nayaka who became the founder of the *Nayakdom* in Madura. These developments put the rulers of Vijayanagar on their guard for they realised that the more distant a governor the more rebellious he is likely to become. They wished, after the reign of Krishnadeva Raya, to increase the number of Nayaks in the south and to reduce the territorial extent of the domains of the Madura Nayak. This was accomplished by the creation of a Nayakship in Tanjore in addition to the one that had earlier come into existence at Gingee under Vaiyappa Nayaka in 1526.

We have noted earlier that Krishnadeva Raya was served by a loyal doorkeeper, Timmappa Nayaka whose services needed recognition. So the Emperor appointed him the *amara* Nayaka or civil governor of Tondaimandalam. His son Sevvappa Nayaka was

a personal attendant of Achyutaraya and he waited on the Emperor as a *betel-bearer*. He married the sister (Murtimanka) of the queen Varadambika wife of Achyutaraya; this betel-bearer who had become brother-in-law of the king named his son Achyuta to mark his devotion to his master. These indicators of loyalty earned their wages when Sevvappa Nayaka was rewarded with the Nayakship of Tanjore. One source has it that Murtimanka brought Tanjore with her as her dowry; another and evidently later and a made-up version prefers to credit Sevvappa with the conquest of Tanjore by force of arms.

When Sevvappa accepted the government of Tanjore in 1532, he was independent of the erstwhile overlordship of Madura. Sevvappa started by ruling over the Chola mandalam and the southern parts of Tondaimandalam. He ruled peacefully and his reign period is not conspicuous for any important events, except for the transfer of Tiruchirapalli to the Nayaks of Madura in exchange for Vallam. Sevvappa made many charitable endowments, among which a gift of ten *velis* of land for the upkeep of a choultry attached to the temple in Muvalur in Tanjore district should be mentioned. He was also responsible for the repairs to the Sivaganga tank in Tanjavur which thereafter was designated Sivappaneri. He ruled till 1560 and Achyutappa his son who succeeded him ruled till 1600. It was during his governorship of Tanjore that the battle of Talikota was fought (1565). The loyalty of Tanjore to the cause of Vijayanagar was unquestioned. Before, during and after that disastrous battle, Tanjore showed a commendable consistency in its attachment to the imperial cause. He was assisted in his royal duties by the reputed Brahmin minister Govinda Dikshita. Achyutappa Nayak rendered his overlord the Vijayanagar Emperor not only theoretical fealty but practical financial aid also whenever needed and it was often needed. True to custom, he spent his time and money in renovating temples when he was not building them. The Chief tower adorning the Arunachaleswarar temple in Tiruvannamalai was begun construction in the days of Krishnadeva Raya; it was now completed by Achyutappa. He set up a number of *agraharams* for Brahmins; the famous

Mahamagam tank in Kumbakonam was renovated by the minister Govinda Dikshita. The Nayak made a gift of a village in the Chola country to the local temple at Sridesam, a subdivision of Sembian Nadu. These activities show that the military rule introduced by Vijayanagar through its Nayaks did not materially alter the tradition of endowments to temples and Brahmins.

When Achyutappa died in 1600, three hundred and seventy women of his harem committed ritual suicide. Problems of succession followed. Achyutappa had imprisoned his elder son and preferred his probably second and probably favourite son for the throne; and when he died, this favourite son, Raghunatha, killed the imprisoned brother of his and ascended the throne. The reign which began so piously is famed as the most distinguished among the Nayak reigns in Tanjore. The distinction, however, consisted in Raghunatha's attachment to the Imperial cause and patronage of the arts of peace. Those were times when the Emperor of Vijayanagar had fallen on evil days and had few friends except Raghunatha. We have already narrated how the Empire which had received a knock-out blow at Talikota was to sustain a death blow in the course of a civil war which shook the empire of its foundation. Jagga Raya and Yachama Nayaka the protagonists of the anti-imperial and pro-imperial parties respectively fought the issue out to the bitter end. The battle of Toppur (1617) was the bitter end, towards which the sustained loyalty of Yachama Nayaka and the brilliant audacity of Jagga Raya (who destroyed the entire family of Emperor Sriranga except a solitary prince) directed. While Jagga Raya secured the support of the Gingee and Madura Nayaks, Yachama won the assistance of Raghunatha Nayaka of Tanjore.

The civil war lasted for three years and was ended by the battle of Toppur (called the battle of Trichinopoly by Barradas) which according to R. Sathyanatha Iyer constitutes the 'grand climacteric of the Vijayanagar Empire'. The nature of the civil war is best comprehended with reference to what William Methwold, the English factor at Masulipatam wrote (1625-26); i. e., as follows: "The first kingdom upon the mayne is that ancient one of

Bisnagar, rent at this into severall provinces or governments held by the Naickes of that country in their own right; for since the last king (who deceased about fiftene years since) there have arisen severall competitors for the crowne, into whom the Naickes have adhered according to their factions, or affections; from whence has followed a continual civill warre in some parts of the countrey, and such extreame want and famine in most of it, that parents have brought thousands of their young children to the sea side selling there a child for five *fanums* (2sh. 6d) worth of rice, transported from thence into other parts of India, and sold againe to good advantage, if the gaines be good that ariseth from the sale of soules ...along their own coast (Golconda) they trade with smaller shipping, lading rice and other graine where it is cheapest, selling it again on the coast of Bisnagar to great profit, taking children in exchange, which cost not them above three or four shillings a childe, and they sell againe in Masulipatam and other places for forty shillings". The history of the Carnatic which was in this unfortunate state at that period had patches of purple and of indescribable misery. This shows that there were a few pockets of comfort and luxury in the midst of which the graceful arts flourished and large areas of the utmost destitution and deprivation.

Raghunatha Nayaka was in the main responsible for the defeat of Jagga Raya and the saving of the imperial cause though not its fortunes or prestige. Though it was not within the power of Raghunatha to save the Empire (whether it deserved to be saved in that condition being a different question) he saved atleast Tanjore and tried to consolidate its position by an alliance with Madura.

Ever since Muthu Virappa Nayaka became the Nayak of Madura, the relations between the two Nayakdoms were not pleasant. Further when Muthu Virappa transferred the capital from Madura to Trichinopoly in 1616 which could have been a mere exercise in discovering a more viable northern defence line for his kingdom, this act was interpreted by Tanjore as a hostile act 'The transfer of the capital from Madura to Trichinopoly in 1616 was a warlike move' says R. Sathyanatha Iyer. But it is not clear why it should

be so treated. It could well have been an act of self-defence, since in the context of his relations with the Empire and knowing fully well the attitude of Raghunatha towards the Empire and therefore towards Madura also, he had perhaps no option but to strengthen his defences. If that went against the interests of Tanjore and therefore of the Empire, it was certainly not his fault.

Raghunatha Nayaka, in this juncture, i.e., in 1617 married the daughter of Muthu Virrappa Nayaka of Madura. The two Nayak families, not in the best of terms till then, were now united matrimonially. The matrimonial alliances contracted by royal parties in history have, more often than not, failed to yield the expected results of better understanding and amity. While in the case of Raghunatha Nayaka an alliance did not heal the old wound, when Vijayaraghava Nayaka was ruling Tanjore a refusal to cement an alliance also led to a war which in effect ended the Nayak dynasty in Tanjore.

It was during the reign of Raghunatha Nayaka that the arrivals of European merchants on the Coromandal Coast occurred in strength. The Portuguese had already established themselves in Nagapattinam and in Santhome in Madras, on the east coast. The English who had attempted to establish a factory in 1624 was not successful in doing so, but this period also saw the arrival of the Dutch and the Danes on the east coast. The final verdict of history on the character and achievements of Raghunatha Nayaka will be based upon his steadfast loyalty to his overlord, his victory in the battle of Toppur and his remarkable patronage of letters and music. He was himself a scholar in literature and musicology.

Raghunatha Nayaka was succeeded by his son Vijayaraghava Nayaka, who was destined to bring the effective Nayak rule in Tanjore to an end.

Vijayaraghava was born in 1593; became to the throne when he was forty years old i. e. in 1633. He died forty years later when he was eighty years old i. e. in 1673. He wrote a play in Telugu entitled the *Raghunathabhyudam* in which he said that he had a

younger brother named Ramabhadra who took part in the battle of Toppur. But Proenza in one of his letters written in 1659 says, "In the confusion of this pillage, the prisons were thrown open and a multitude of state prisoners were set free, the sole crime of most of whom being their fortune or social position. Among the latter were two brothers of the Nayaka whom he had shut up in these prisons, after pulling out their eyes to remove all desire on their side of succeeding him." This statement suggests that Vijayaraghava Nayaka was a usurper, that he had two elder brothers whom he blinded to prevent their claiming in the throne. If Proenza's statement means this, then Vijayaraghava must be treated as not only a cruel man but a consummate liar for in his own work he gives a different genealogy. But a careful study of his character shows that he could easily have been both. It is known that later on in the course of his reign he imprisoned his own son Mannaru Das who was ordered to be put in golden chains and that when he himself went down fighting, he put all the members of his family in an apartment which was blown up at his command. We learn from the *Anandaraghava Natakam* written by Raja Chudamani Dikshita that Raghunatha Nayaka had two other sons named Achyuta and Ramabhadra. It is quite possible that Vijayaraghava was a legitimate son of Raghunatha and that he ruthlessly destroyed his competitors to secure the throne. There is a slight suggestion of the ways of Aurangzeb (his Moghul contemporary) in the doings of this Nayak; both did away with their brothers, both imprisoned their own sons, both were deeply religious and both brought their respective Kingdoms practically to a close and under pressure from the Mahrattas; but the comparison can go no farther for Vijayaraghava possessed none of the heroic qualities of the last great Moghul Emperor. When V. Vriddhagirisani, the historian of the Nayaks of Tanjore says that "the general character of the Nayaks themselves... as borne out by their literary evidence does not admit of the possibility of an usurpation"¹ he commits the logical fallacy of *petitio principii* and we know how historically worthless contemporary literature produced under the auspices of the court can be.

1 *The Nayaks of Tanjore* p. 129.

When Vijayaraghava Nayaka ascended the Tanjore throne, he was content to continue the traditional relations which existed between Tanjore and Madura on the one hand and between Tanjore and the empire on the other. The former was one of traditional hostility ever since the days of Muthu Virappa Nayaka and the later one of subordinate 'affections' since the very inception of Tanjore Sevappa Nayaka. But when Sriranga III (the last Vijayanagar ruler) ascended the imperial throne, things began to take a different shape. This was due not only to the character of Sriranga but also the disposition of Vijayaraghava. Sriranga wished to bring the recalcitrant Nayaks of the realm to a sense of discipline and duty and invaded the southern regions with a large army. Initially in this critical hour the three Nayaks of Gingee, Tanjore and Madura joined in an unprecedented alliance to resist the imperial armies. But very soon, Vijayaraghava went back on this resolution to oppose Sriranga and opposed Madura. The ruler now in Madura was Tirumalai Nayaka. This Tirumalai Nayaka, as we have seen earlier, was determined to maintain his independence of imperial interference and to appeal to the Nawab of Golconda to attack Sriranga's army in the rear. The ruler of Golconda was more than pleased to do this favour to anyone who opposed the ruler of Vijayanagar. Thus caught between the horns of a military dilemma gave up and withdrew from the southern campaigns. Tirumalai Nayaka succeeded in his ruse, Sriranga was caught in an endless broil with Golconda and later with Bijapur. The worst affected however was Vijayaraghava Nayaka whose hasty and unseemly retreat from his erstwhile and short-lived alliance with Madura, made him revert to the anti-Madura foreign policy; and this was ultimately to land him in ruin. Proenza is very clear in explaining these circumstances; he says that Sriranga 'invited the three Nayaks to join him against the common enemy, and offered them favourable conditions, which were accepted'. But Vriddhagirisan, in spite of this credible statement by Proenza reiterates his faith in the character of the Nayaks of Tanjore. Vijayaraghava's manouvres and tortuous negotiations did not help Sriranga much. Sriranga III disappeared into obscurity *via* Tanjore and Mysore.

Soon Tanjore had to pay the penalty for its support to Sriranga. Golconda invaded the Tanjore territories and struck terror into the Nayak heart. Proenza's description of the situation that prevailed in Tanjore when Muslim army approached its environs is worth quoting in the original, for it gives one an idea of discipline as understood by the Nayak and his subjects: "Nothing more was necessary to spread in the citadel a panic terror, of which there are few examples. The inhabitants believing that they were besieged by the whole army of the enemy, rushed in crowds in the streets, ran against one another, fell head over heels in uttering frightful cries without knowing what they were saying or where they were going. The fright and disorder were augmented by the din of weapons, the sound of trumpets and drums and the agitation of the soldiers, who ran in every direction, increased in the streets, and asked with a bewildered air, what is the matter, where is the enemy? Everybody trembled without knowing why. The crowds moved like the floods of a torrent towards the gates of the fortress; those who arrived first did not dare to go out for fear of falling into the hands of the Muslims, nor could they retrace their steps, because the streets were overcrowded. In this confusion the men, crushed under the feet of horses and elephants, uttered cries and horrible howls; one would think the town had been taken by assault and delivered to pillage. However, the bravest moved on to the ramparts, furnished with a prodigious quantity of pieces of artillery of every calibre and started unloading them, firing in the air and at random without any other object than that of frightening the besiegers; but the rush handicapping their manœuvres, the pieces, improperly loaded, did not even produce the desired explosion. A single instance will give you a measure of their skill. A big cannon, in the mouth of which a man could conveniently hold himself constant, having been put into action throughout the night, one found on the morrow all the bullets in the ditch on the bank of which it was set. The Nayaka, who should have inspired the courage of others, was of all persons the most demoralised by the terror. During the whole night he was anxious only to hide himself and change his refuge every instant seeking everywhere a safety which his fear found nowhere. At last,

when the morning dissipated the darkness and put an end to this confusion, one was astonished to find no enemy, and it was recognized that all this confusion was caused by 500 Moghul (Golconda) cavalries who pursued Narasingha without any thought of approaching Tanjore." R. Sathyanatha Iyer quoting the above passage concludes by saying 'Thus ended this much ado about nothing.' But one ought to be thankful to Proenza for this extraordinary description of what perhaps was quite an ordinary and usual occurrence on the eve of foreign invasion or siege of a beleaguered town, in India. The passage makes the total absence of discipline among the subject population as well as the army very clear.

Golconda which struck terror into the timid hearts of the people of Tanjore and their ruler by mere rumours of its presence, actually invaded Tanjore soon after. Vijayaraghava's own prevarication on an earlier occasion had totally alienated the much needed Setupatis of the Nayak of Madura, who must have been delighting in his undependable adversary's predicament. The betrayal of the alliance on the occasion of Sriranga's invasion had not been forgotten by Madura. So under the circumstances the Nayak of Tanjore took the only course open to him. "He decided on the most senseless and disastrous step; he delivered himself up to the King of Golconda and concluded with him a treaty by which he surrendered at discretion." But worse was to follow. The Nawab of Bijapur seized Gingee in 1648 and followed it up by a march on Tanjore. Misfortunes always came in bunches to Vijayaraghava Nayaka; now he did better than on the previous occasion. He hid himself in neighbouring jungles and when he was sought out, he surrendered ignominiously to the conqueror. In another invasion which occurred in 1653 he fared no better. But these political debacles and military failures do not seem to have weaned him from extravagant expenditure on flippant pomp in the same year as witnessed by Balthasar Da Costa who wrote from Tanjore in 1653 as follows: "The months of March and April have been for our Christians a period of alarms and persecutions. It is the season when the people, after the harvest, are engaged during their leisure

hours in the noisy pomp of pagan solemnities. This year the fury of the festival has been stimulated also by the example of the Nayaka. In that which he has celebrated in the great *pagoda*, he has spent nine thousand *ecus* exclusively for illumination and fireworks during eight days. More considerable sums have been devoted to the decoration of ten or twelve triumphal cars of gigantic dimensions, and he has ordered to cover them entirely with gildings. Our enemies are clever to profit by these epochs of exaltation in creating trouble for us."

When Tirumalai Nayaka died in 1659, his son and successor Muthu Virappa Nayaka II, for strategical reasons, improved the defences of Trichinopoly which had always been their northern bastion. This alarmed Vijayaraghava who persuaded the Bijapuris under Shahji and Mulla Muhammad to attack Trichinopoly. The invading army which found Trichinopoly rather impregnable turned their wrath on Tanjore in March 1659 and captured it easily. Mannargudi and Vallam were also seized. The disorganised reaction to the Muslim attack on Tanjore and Vallam on this occasion is best seen in a narrative provided by a contemporary missionary: "The Nayaka had no more faith in his courage than in the fidelity of his subjects; he sacrificed his dearest and fled to the forests of Talavarayan, his vassal...(the defenders of Vallam)..., believed that they would be safer in their impenetrable forests than behind their ramparts. As soon as night came to conceal them, they escaped one after another, without noise and with such perfect agreement that, at daybreak, the commander found himself in a deserted town with only a few faithful officers. They also made up their mind to follow the fugitives; but when going away, they wished to take their share of the treasures (of the Nayaka kept at Vallam, which was considered impregnable) which they abandoned to the enemy they opened the coffers of the Nayaka, took what they could carry of the most precious in gold, pearls and precious stones, and fled to the most inaccessible forests. Their strength was not in proportion to their greed; they were obliged to abandon a part of their riches on the way, and soon they found themselves entirely

relieved by the Kallans who robbed them. The latter, informed of the condition of the fortress, hurried to it in crowd, placed one of them as guard at the gateway, and possessed themselves of these fabulous treasures which till then were not counted but in measuring them by the bushel. Everyone took in his cloths as many pieces of gold and precious stones as he could carry; those who came late followed the footsteps of those proceeding before to gather what fell from them in going hurriedly. This is without doubt the happiest episode of the war. These treasures, the fruits of the avarice of kings and of the labour of the poor, were thus saved from the capacity of the Muhammadans and divided among a crowd of indigent families, to whom they procured an honest life. The Kallans used them with more generosity than could be expected. Seeing the Nayaka in misery, they restored to him a part of his riches, protesting that they had taken them only to preserve them safe. In the confusion of this pillage, the prisons were set free, the sole crime of most of them being their fortune or social position. Among the latter were two brothers of the Nayaka, whom he had shut up in these prisons, after pulling out their eyes to remove all the desire on their side of succeeding him. At last, the Muhammadans arrived at Vallamkottai and found only the walls there; they put a small garrison in it and burst out on the country. They have already been, for several months, in possession of this beautiful and fertile country; no one knows yet what their ulterior designs are, whether they will establish themselves here, or will content themselves with collecting the riches they can find there and return to their country afterwards."

By 1662 Tanjore had been in the occupation of the Bijapur generals Shahji and Mulla Muhammad for nearly two years. "The people were not uneasy thereby; they sufficiently accommodated themselves to the yoke of the conqueror in whom they found less cruelty and more justice than in their own sovereigns." "Famine and pestilence drove the inhabitants to the provinces of Madura and Satyamangalam, where the ravages were less terrible. The Muslim invaders tried to arrive at some compromise with the ruler of

Tanjore. But "the Nayaks of Tanjore, having nothing to lose or to give held himself peacefully in the woods; that of Madura confined himself to the fortifications of Trichinopoly, defended by Lingama Nayaka at the head of a strong garrison. The famine and contagion forced Mulla to abandon Tanjore, he came to besiege Trichinopoly with the elite of his soldiers (1660). But on the one hand, the view of the citadel, protected by nature, surrounded by high walls and a very deep ditch; on the other, the courage of the besieged and the vigilance of the sentinels deprived him of all hope of surprising it by a ruse or taking it by force. He began to devastate the country, but this was to range a desert with much labour and without any profit; besides, it was harassed by Kallans who, coming out of their woods in the night fell on the detachments of the army, penetrated as far as the camp and fled away with booty before they could be pursued."

The enmity between Tanjore and Madura (now under Chokkanatha Nayaka, the capital was Trichinopoly) found ever new causes for fresh lease of intensity; more often than not Tanjore was the victim. One standing reason, however, for hatred was the consistently treacherous attitude which the Nayaks of Tanjore had assumed towards the Nayaks of Madura. Chokkanatha Nayaka, Nayak of Madura with his capital now in Trichinopoly, was able to survive the treacherous activities of his general Lingama Nayaka, and a ministerial clique consisting of a Rayasam and a brahmin Pradhani, by sheer dint of personal effort and royal assistance from a few trusted servants. Chokkanatha after getting rid of the traitorous Rayasam and Pradhani was planning to punish the able but untrustworthy general Lingama Nayaka; but that wily soldier escaped to Gingee. There he managed to persuade Shahji to proceed against Tiruchy assisting him to besiege that fortress. So, with an army of 12000 infantry and 7000 cavalry, they tried to defeat Chokkanatha's army of nearly 50000 men. This adventure had the open support of Vijayaraghava Nayaka. Chokkanatha who was again plagued by ingratitude and treachery in the form of another brahmin Pradhani had to get rid of him before he could

defend himself against the invaders. The alertness and activity of Chokkanatha disconcerted the enemies who loosing heart withdrew their armies to Gingee through Tanjore. Chokkanatha Nayaka, who was waiting to teach Vijayaraghava a lesson which he would not forget in a hurry, marched on Tanjore with an army 70000 strong. Vijayaraghava consistently with his character and ability, abjectly surrendered to his traditional foe.

Vijayaraghava's reign was marked by his personal devotion to the cause of religion, patronage of arts and letters and by an exceeding indifference to the welfare of his subjects. Vijayaraghava's pursuit of religious bordered on the grossly superstitious. He was in the initial stages of his reign well-disposed towards the Christian missionaries; but when his mind was poisoned by false insinuations suggested by low sycophants he turned against them. His personal indulgence in religious exercises and lavish expenditure of the state resources on this score made him neglect his rightful duties to his subject and led to considerable impoverishment of the treasury Proenza's account of Vijayaraghava's religious exercises makes interesting reading: "The Nayaka of Tanjore spends the whole of December in the midst of his idols. Two hours before sunrise he wakes up to go to the sanctuary of Mannar which is his place of delight; he remains there five hours wholly engaged in shedding on the Gods head a continuous stream of sweet smelling flowers; the cultivators of the environs have been ordered to bring them from hour to hour so that they might always be fresh. While the prince offers this sacrifice in his mysterious solitude, the whole town takes part in this noisy solemnity. Fireworks, cannon, musical instruments, in a word, all the uproar of a diabolical festival excites the enthusiasm of the spectators. During this month the Nayaka lives the life of a *Samnyasi*; not only does he abstain from everything that had life or principle of life, but what he eats should be prepared by himself, and he does this cooking in vessels of gold and silver intended for this use. His devotion does not stop there; ceremonies and processions are above all necessary for him. Here is what he never misses to celebrate in honour of his spiritual master. The *guru* (Kumara Tatacharya) is seated in a niche richly adorned and

carried by the dames of the court; in another niche shining with gold and precious stones, are placed the slippers of the *guru*, and the king, going on foot, a censer in hand, precedes the slippers, and the censers during the whole procession, which must proceed thus through the different streets of the town. The *guru* would not be satisfied with these honours once a year; whenever he entered the palace or came out of it, he was always carried in a rich litter in the midst of Brahmans charged with the censer, like an idol. This divinity made to order does not shelter the pretended god from the blows of death. Last year (1658) he fell grievously ill; the king visited him and nursed him with the tenderness of a son. When he saw him nearing his end, he assured him that, in recognition of the good advice he had given him, he would give him magnificent funerals and offer for him many prayers and good works. The last words wounded the pride of the *guru*, who accustomed to be regarded as a god, felt insulted by the offer of those aids which he did not at all, said he, require. If the blindness of his pride went to the extent of making him think as he talked, his awaking must be terrible at the threshold of eternity. The Nayaka, true to his word, ordered the celebration of his obsequies with extraordinary pomp.

“ Some months later the Nayaka thought of making a pilgrimage to Ramanancor or Rameswaram. This island, situated between the coast of Coromandel and the straits of Mannar, is especially celebrated for its tank; celebrity well merited since the goddess Perumal, bathing in its waters, communicates to it the miraculous virtue of effacing all sins, past and future! To obtain this effect with more certainty, the Nayaka, on the persuasion of his Brahmanism imitated the example of illustrious Sannyasis; he shaved from head to foot and imposed the same ceremony on all the seigniors of his court. This deed was famous throughout the country as an act of eminent merit. But what secured for him much more glory was that, according to the custom of pilgrims of royal blood, he weighed himself with the queen on a weighing machine arranged for this purpose before the idol and offered a sum of gold equal to the weight indicated by the balance. He did not get off so

cheaply. On his return his beloved idol Mannar became jealous of the money he had spent in honouring a foreign god; it began to make loud cries and threaten the kingdom with the most terrible scourge, so that the pious king seized with fright, thought it his duty to hasten and spend again more than twenty thousand *ecus* of gold in order to appease it. While he consoled himself for his expenses by telling the wonders of the idol of Ramanancor, he believed he should address a new deputation to honour him in his name and found no person more worthy of so noble a mission than the eunuch I have mentioned before : “Prince, answered boldly the sworn enemy of Christianity, I am astonished that, spending your treasures for honouring Perumal, you allow to live in peace not only in your kingdom and in this town but even in your palace, the persons who dare to say that Perumal is not a divinity and all that you do in his honour is without merit; if Perumal is only a chimera, what is the purpose of these honours and enormous expenses; if he is a true divinity, why do you tolerate in your court a law which despises him and tends to destroy his cult? The argument you see was skilful and pressing. The Nayaka asked, who were then these men, and on the reply of the eunuch, ordered him to bring immediately the principal Christians of the palace. Only one was present, he was the nephew of the first Seiginior of the court. He was brought before the king, surrounded by his wives and courtiers. Is it true, the prince asked him, that you know the Christian law? Not only do I know, replied the intrepid neophyte, but I profess to practise it. And immediately, he recited the ten commandments of God, explained them as best as he could, and apologised, on account of his youth and ignorance, for his inability to express himself more exactly. The Nayaka satisfied with his reply, sent him away with the assurance that he could say his prayers.”

This extensive quotation is given to show that Vijayaraghava had not only attachment to the theory and practice of the religion in which he was born, but had the wisdom and tolerance to recognize merit whenever it was to be found, and that he resisted those who tried to sow ill-will in his mind towards other persuasions.

Christianity had a chequered career in the southern districts of the Tamil country in the 17th and 18th centuries. There were tolerant princes like Tirumalai Nayaka and intolerant bigots like Kilavan Setupati; Vijayaraghava Nayaka, whatever his other faults, was tolerant of whatever religion appealed to him as meritorious. There was a Kallar chieftain in the Tanjore territory, by name Meykandan (Meicondono, the missionaries call him). He was a brave man; none could conquer him. He was an able swordsman, too. One day hearing of the extraordinary skill a christian neophyte showed in the use of a sword, Meykandan summoned him and asked him to measure with him, which the Christian with great trepidation and fear did. In the end, however the Christian won and it was gracefully accepted by the Kallar chieftain who appointed this Christian his tutor in swordswanship. The tutor took every opportunity to teach his Kallar disciple not only the nuances in the art of wielding a sword but also the doctrines of his church. Thus did Christianity spread in diverse ways in the Tamil country.

This Nayakdom's fame as an unconquerable warrior spread far and wide; but while he lacked enemies from outside, there was no dearth of traitors from inside to compass his ruin. Once there was a concerted attack on his forest stronghold by a number of his enemies who were aided by fifth columnists within his fort. His stronghold was taken by his enemies but he and a chosen hand of his friends escaped in time. Eventually however this brave man came to grief.

The economic condition of Tanjore during Vijayaraghava's reign was not prosperous at all. Famine, pestilence and contagion spread misery everywhere. The calamities of nature and the callousness of the prince made the condition of the subjects pitiable. Famine became so widespread that poor people sold their children to earn a day's food. Prity Baldaeus, the Dutch minister in Ceylon remarked in 1660 as follows: "At the time of our arrival (1660) we found the affairs of Negapatnam in no small confusion; the city having been just before besieged by the Naik who after a

vigorous sally made by the besieged, had been forced to retreat with the loss of 300 or 400 men. Besides this, the king of *Visiapour* had not long before the siege made an inroad into the country and by destroying all the fruits of the Earth, and whatever else he met with, occasioned such a famine, that the poor country wretches being forced to fly to the city for want of rice and other eatables, you saw the streets covered with emaciated and half-starved persons, who offered themselves to slavery for a small quantity of Bread, and you might have brought as many as you pleased at the rate of 10 shillings a head; about 5000 of them were there bought and carried to Jafnapatnam, as many to Columbo, besides several thousands that were transported to Batavia. In the year 1669 the Naik was again embroiled with the Dutch Company, but being bravely repulsed was glad to be at quiet."

The famine referred to here affected most parts of the southern districts of Tamilnad. But while Chokkanatha Nayaka the Nayak of Madura, took what steps he could to alleviate the miseries of the people by organising large scale poor feeding, Vijayaraghava presided over a corrupt administration which added to the sufferings caused by nature and left uncured by the callousness of man. Andre Freire's letter of 1666 gives an idea of the level to which the wickedness and selfishness of men in power could descend: "The pradhani of Tanjore, to fill the royal treasury and make his own fortune, gave to a Brahman the authorisation to despoil all the vassals without any formality. Whoever by dint of labour and industry had gathered some money was by this alone guilty, doomed to be proceeded against by the finance minister. In conveying this order he had only the largest fortunes in view; but the Brahman who had also a purse to fill, extended the decree to all ranks, and employed for execution means so violent and cruel that the inhabitants, seized with consternation, sought safety in flight. The artisans suspended their work; the merchants closed their shops; most of the people left their homes; and the kingdom showed the appearance of a desert. The king could not ignore such barbarities; but being himself thirsty of gold, he dissembled in the hope of gathering the fruits of these plunderings; then, when he thought

the moment favourable to strike a blow, he understood that the minister had known how to take measures and remove his treasures. He took vengeance on him by giving him up to the people's anger; this was the most equitable and severest punishment which he could inflict on him; for nothing is more terrible than the anger of the weak when impunity is assured to them." When administration becomes so corrupt as this, the unfortunate consequences for the common man in the realm can be imagined.

In 1673 broke out the last war between Chokkanatha Nayaka and Vijayaraghava Nayaka and this brought about the end of the latter. There is some puerile controversy regarding the causes of this war. Vriddhagirisan in his *Nayaks of Tanjore* is of the opinion that "the immediate event that preceded his war was the reconquest of Vallam by Vijayaraghava about A. D. 1664... the reconquest of Vijayaraghava Nayaka of his lost territories and the old animosities between Madura and Tanjore constituted the main causes for a war in A. D. 1673." This opinion is rejected by R. Sathyanatha Iyer in his *Tamilaham in the 17th Century* on the plausible ground that what happened nine years earlier cannot be an 'immediate' cause. The Jesuit letters pertaining to the period 1616 to 1676 are not available; and so the only remaining source is the *Tanjavuri Andhra Rajula Charitra* according to which the war was caused by the refusal of Vijayaraghava to give his daughter in marriage to Chokkanatha Nayaka. Most historians feel that Chokkanatha's request for Vijayaraghava's daughter's hand was but a subterfuge for his intended war on Tanjore. This argument sounds rather hollow, since we do not know whether Indian Kings, like their counterparts elsewhere ever needed any subterfuges for declaring wars on whomsoever they pleased. It is difficult to associate the sophistication of a subterfuge with Chokkanatha especially when he was dealing with his traditional and inveterate enemy in Tanjore.

According to the chronicle, Chokkanatha wished to marry Vijayaraghava's daughter (or one of his daughters). So his messengers carried the royal request to the Nayak's counterpart in Tanjore. Vijayaraghava, for reasons it is difficult to be categorical about, not only refused to accept to this request but treated

the messengers with contempt and insulted them for daring to bring such a request to him. Again different views have been hazarded to explain why the Nayak of Tanjore refused this request. It is generally held that Vijayaraghava thought that his lineage was superior to that of the Nayaks of Madura. This conceit apart, it is also said that Vijayaraghava had not forgotten the tragic end which a princess of his illustrious family met with at the hands of Tirumalai Nayaka of Madura who had stabbed her to death for the fault of suggesting that the palace in Madura would not compare with that in Tanjore. If the story were true – and there is little improbable about it – no wonder the Nayak thought many times before presenting his daughter to a family of short – tempered murderers, and finally decided not to. A historical novelist has ventured to suggest that Chokkanatha Nayaka, who had already married Mangammal was deeply in love with the Tanjore princess who also reciprocated that love; and that was the reason for his asking for her hand. In any case the Nayak of Tanjore spurned the request and brought on a fatal war on himself.

Chokkanatha who was exasperated at the way Vijayaraghava had treated his enemies sent a military expedition under his ablest general Venkatakrishnappa Nayaka. He defeated a detachment of the Tanjore army before he seized Vallam. Tanjore then mobilised sufficiently to meet the threat from Tiruchy. A terrible battle ensued resulting in a decisive victory for Chokkanatha. Even at that stage Venkatakrishnappa was prepared to call off the fighting if Vijayaraghava was to reconsider his decision to refuse Chokkanatha's request. The Nayak of Tanjore stuck to his decision. Tanjore was besieged and taken; Vijayaraghava and his just then released son Mannarudas fell fighting – one heroic act which that Nayak did in his life. According to Andre Freire "The Nayak of Madura took possession of the kingdom of Tanjore and cut off the head of the king, his enemy". Vijayaraghava had already arranged that the apartment (the harem) in which all the female members of his family were assembled was to be blown up on an agreed signal from him; the signal was given and the seraglio was blown up. Thus perished all the family of that ill-fated monarch; except one of whom more will be said later.

Venkatakrishnappa's triumph was complete and he garrisoned the city and annexed the kingdom of Tanjore to that of Madura. Chokkanatha appointed his foster-brother Alagiri Nayaka as his viceroy in Tanjore. Now, this foster-brother ruled over Tanjore for just over a year i. e., during 1674.

Alagiri who was appointed merely as a Viceroy in Tanjore soon began to conceive of himself as an independent sovereign and even address Chokkanatha Nayaka in that assumed capacity. This naturally infuriated the Nayak of Madura who however instead of either recalling Alagiri or punishing him otherwise, did no more than remain sullen. Mentioning this Andre Freire says in 1676: "follies and mutual jealousies between the two brothers... the Nayak of Madura soon fell out with his brother." Events in the meantime were moving fast in Tanjore and elsewhere. In the court of Alagiri there was a Rasayam by name Venkanna who was a born schemer. This Rasayam who was praying for a misunderstanding between the two Nayak brothers discovered that when the royal harem was blown out during Venkatakrishnappa's successful assault on Tanjore one person had escaped death and that was a prince by name Sengamaladas (perhaps from years old in 1673) who had been secretly transported from Tanjore to Negapatam. There was a merchant in Negapatam who brought up the child. Venkanna, coming to know of the existence of a legitimate heir to the Nayak throne of Tanjore proceeded thereto and taking Sengamaladas with him went to Bijapur and met the Sultan and pleaded for his assistance to secure the Tanjore throne to its rightful prince. The Sultan ever anxious to muddy the ever disturbed politics of the Hindu States in the South entrusted Venkaji (or Ekoji) with the task of deposing Alagiri and enthroning Sengamaladas. This Venkoji was a half-brother of Sivaji and son of Shahji.

Coming to know what was transpiring abroad Alagiri approached Chokkanatha for help. Chokkanatha in an angry mood decided not to help the ungrateful and disloyal Alagiri and so kept aloof leaving Alagiri to his fate. In the meantime Venkaji had reached the frontiers of the Tanjore Kingdom and had been

waiting there for nearly a year expecting a more suitable time to arrive for him to make the final assault on Tanjore. According to one source, Alagiri fought Venkaji near Ariyalur and losing the battle retreated to Tanjore and from there returned to Mysore. Andre Freire summarises these events thus : "Idal Khan, informed of these events (at Tanjore) sent an army under the command of General Ekoji to re-establish on the throne of Tanjore, the son (grandson) of the defeated king (Vijayaraghava), who had gone to implore his help. The Nayaka of Madura had entrusted the command of the conquered kingdom to his elder brother (foster-brother, Alagiri Nayaka), whose bravery at first checked the impetuosity of Ekoji. The latter resolved to continue by stratagem a victory which he did not dare to hope by force; he remained, for one full year, on the frontiers of the kingdom, convinced that follies and mutual jealousies between the two brothers would afford him a favourable moment to accomplish his designs. He was not mistaken in his expectation. The Nayaka of Madura soon fell out with his brother and Ekoji, profiting by this division, marched at the head of his troops, fell on the town of Tanjore, and in the first attack captured it and all its dependencies and appeared before the gates of Trichinopoly where the king of Madura was. The citadel and all the kingdom would have been his conquest if his boldness had equalled his poor fortune. He feared to compromise his success by delivering the assault immediately; and this hesitation gave the Nayaka time to recover from the prince which had demoralised him. He could defend himself and save his capital, but he was deprived of a large part of his dominions and of all the strong places in his provinces... this is what has just happened at Tanjore. General Ekoji, instead of placing the (grandson) of the late Nayaka on the throne, according to the orders of Idal Khan, has refused to usurp the title and authority of an independent king." Though initially Venkaji allowed Sengamaladas to occupy the throne of Tanjore, so that he could probe the defences of Trichinopoly and allow the perfidious Venkanna to play his role and to permit Sengamaladas to fell off power of his own accord, within a year of helping him to ascend the throne, he did usurp it driving the young

Nayak prince out of Tanjore; and in that way Venkaji departed from the instruction Idal Khan had issued to him. That he usurped the throne after a year and that another ruler occupied the throne of Bijapur at the time of his usurpation takes little difference to the act of usurpation or to his intentions in that regard.

The foster-mother of Sengamaladas revealed the place where Vijayaraghava's treasures were buried; a sum of twenty-six lakhs in *pagodas* and immense quantities of jewels were discovered and appropriated by Venkaji and his associates who got also the revenues of certain districts. For the moment the Mahratta general retired to the outskirts of Kumbakonam and received the revenue from that district for the maintenance of his army.

Sengamaladas appointed his guardian, the merchant of Negapatam as his Dalavay and Pradhani, ignoring the claims of Venkanna. The latter was naturally disappointed and he repaired to Kumbakonam, met Venkaji and suggested to him that he might seize power in Tanjore easily and that he himself would help him do so. The Mahratta who was only too willing to listen to such advice he proceeded to attack Tanjore. In the meantime Venkanna returned to Tanjore and spread wild rumours about the invincible Mahratta army that was about to attack the capital. The demoralised Sengamaladas left Tanjore for Ariyalur where he stayed for sometime. In the meantime Venkaji had occupied Tanjore, and usurped the throne. Sengamaladas again figures in history as one who cooperated with Venkaji and the rebellious Kilavan Setupati against the Nayak of Madura. It must be restored that Sengamaladas, who was perhaps not more than four years old in 1763, was only around seven years of age when he occupied and soon lost the Tanjore throne. So all the acts that have been attributed to him in the above narrative must be deemed to have been directed or performed by his advisers especially his old nurse and the merchant from Negapatam.

The last scene of this tragi-comedy centres round Venkanna who started the series of events which culminated in Venkaji's usurpation of the Nayakship of Tanjore. The old *Pradhani* paid

the price for consistent ingratitude by being dismissed from all seats of power by Venkaji who thought that a person like Venkanna was not to be trusted with power. Venkanna suspecting that worse might follow left the city *incognito* 'cursing his stars'.

The Nayak rule which came to Tanjore with Sevappa Nayaka in 1532 continued for two hundred and thirty-three years and yielded place to the Mahrattas. Among the Nayak rulers of Tanjore 1) Raghunatha Nayaka, because of his competence and steadfast support to the Empire, and 2) Vijayaraghava Nayaka, because of his supreme incompetence, must be considered significant. This period of two centuries, especially the reign period of the two rulers mentioned above, witnessed remarkable and informed patronage of art and letters, more the latter than the former; more so because the patrons themselves practised the arts they promoted. The peculiar flavour for which the cultural tradition of Tanjore is noted owes not a little to these Nayaks.

The Marava Kingdoms of Ramnad

A. THE SETUPATIS OF RAMNAD

The Setupatis were of *Marava* extraction and the Maravas as a community belonged to the territory to the east of Madura, south of Tanjore and north of Tinnevely and bounded on the east by the sea. They were also known as *Kallar* (literally 'Robbers') and they designated themselves *Tevan* (not to be confused with the *Devas*). They were a war-like people, temperamentally disinclined to subjection to any authority; they had their hideouts in the many forests of their land which has always been infertile and dry and has corresponded to the *Palai* of Tamil literature. Their origins as a political power are shrouded in historical mist further confused by interminable legends.

The Setupatis emerge into history during the reign of Muthu Krishnappa Nayaka (1601-1609). We know how Krishnappa Nayaka I (1564-1572) had to deal severely with one Tumbichi Nayakan whose insurrection ended only with his beheading; this Nayaka was a chieftain of the Marava Country. The Portuguese had settled on the eastern coast around Rameswaram and the Nayaka found it difficult to collect revenue from these tracts; and the numerous pilgrims had no local authority to ensure their safety from beasts, robbers and the Portuguese in their journeys to and from *Sethu*; further a bastion of defence against possible raids from Ceylon (or in the alternative a strong spring-board for an attack on that island). Considering all this, Muthu Krishnappa appointed one Sadaikka Tevan as the local chieftain to whom the revenues of the Marava country were farmed out and in whom sufficient political authority to rule the turbulent people was vested.

Sadaikka Thevar Udaiyan Setupati (1605 - 1622)

Sadaikka proved his competence by proper and prompt realisation of revenue, and establishment of law and order (to the extent possible in those troubled times) in his country. He humbled the Vanniyas and pacified the Palaiyagars whose chief he became. The Nayak then confirmed Sadaikka in a position of subordination to himself and entitled him the Setupati (the ruler of the Setu). Sadaikka improved and liberally endowed the Ramana-thaswami Temple in Rameswaram. He was allowed to issue coin on his own. He ruled from Pugalur, situated to the west of Ramnad. He was succeeded by Kuttan Setupati, the eldest of his four sons.

Kuttan Setupati (1622 - 1636)

His reign period was devoid of anything particularly important. He continued the tradition established by his father. He was a loyal subordinate of the Nayak of Madura. The benefactions to the Rameswaram temple continued as usual. After an eventless reign of fourteen years he passed away without leaving a son to succeed him.

Sadaikka II (Dalavay Setupati) (1636 - 1645):

Kuttan's adopted son Sadiakka succeeded him. Some sources consider him Kuttan's brother, but the *Ramappaiyyan Ammanai* an important source for the events of Sadaikka's reign considers him Kuttan's son. Perhaps it is correct to treat him as Kuttan's adopted son. Kuttan had a natural son called Thambi ('younger brother') who entertained a vague notion that he had somehow been deprived of his right to the throne by Sadaikka.

For about three years, Sadaikka II ruled peacefully. Then started a series of events which ended in the biggest encounter between the Nayak and the Setupati. Thambi convinced Tirumalai Nayak of Madura that he (Thambi) was the legitimate heir to the Pugalur throne and that Sadaikka II was an usurper. Thereupon the Nayak sent a messenger with a note to Sadaikka calling for an

explanation and asking him to pay up the arrears of tribute. The Setupati treated the messenger with scant respect and on hearing this, the Nayak became furious and despatched a large army under the leadership of the Brahmin General Ramappaian, who was assisted by the 72 Palaiyagars. In the war that ensued, Sadaikka was ably assisted by his son-in-law Vanni who inflicted a number of defeats on Ramappaian. But the superior resources of the Nayak army told in the end. The Setupati who retreated to the island of Rameswaram and sought the naval aid of the Dutch was no match to the Nayak's forces which were assisted by the Portuguese. Vanni died in battle. Sadaikka was taken prisoner, bound hand and foot and brought before the Nayak in chains by Ramappaian. The Nayak clapped Sadaikka in jail. Ramappaian who had in the meantime marched north to help the Emperor of Vijayanagar against Bijapur returned victorious to complete his campaign against the Setupati; he was amply and gratefully rewarded by the Nayak.

Thambi now became Setupati; but his incompetence led to complete anarchy in the country; taking advantage of this confusion Ragunatha Tevan and Narayana Tevan, nephews of Sadaikka II rebelled and caused more trouble. Popular representation made Tirumalai Nayaka release Sadaikka from prison and restore him to power in Pugalur. The restored Setupati ruled for 5 years and passed away in 1645. It is held by some authors following Nelson that Sadaikka was murdered by Thambi, but the chronicles probably correctly say that Sadaikka died a natural death.

The country was once again plunged in chaos. The old dispute between Thambi on the one hand and Sadaikka's nephews on the other was renewed. Tirumalai Nayak intervened and temporarily settled the question of succession by dividing the country into three parts for the three claimants. But two of the claimants Thambi and Narayana Tevan,

after ruling for about ten years, died and left the field clear for Raghunatha Tevan, who reunited the country and became the next Setupati.

Sadaikka was greatly devoted to Ramanathaswami in Rameswaram. He built the Chokkanatha Swami temple there. The eastern tower he began constructing could never be completed due to the political and military disturbances that characterised his reign. He was noted for his charity and public works.

Raghunatha Setupati alias Tirumalai Setupati (1645—1670)

Raghunatha Setupati ruled one third of the Setupati dominions from 1645 and the whole of the kingdom from 1655 to 1670. He may be considered to be the greatest among the Setupatis; Sadaikka II was no doubt the reckless rebel, and Kilavan who ruled later was a great fighter and a fanatical persicutor of the Christians - but these considerations cannot go to make a great ruler. Raghunatha Setupati was great not because of his many successful military exploits but because of his steadfast loyalty to Tirumalai Nayaka, his contribution to arts and letters and his own personal qualities.

Early in his reign, he obtained the collaboration of Thambi in defeating Tanjore and annexing Mannarkoil, Devakottai, Arantangi and probably Tiruvarur. He secured from Madurai in return for services rendered in the war against Mysore-Tirubhuvanam, Tiruchuli and Pallimadam. Thus his chieftaincy became almost a kingdom and when the Nayak of Madura exempted him from any tribute to him, he became virtually independent.

His relations with Tirumalai Nayaka was characterised by unstinted and consistent loyalty. This policy earned the gratitude of his overlord and a respite for himself to set his country in order. He suppressed a fairly serious Muslim attack

on Madurai under the command of one Kutb Khan for which he got the privilege of celebrating the Navaratri festival in his capital with as much pageantry as was seen in Madurai during that festival. This is one of the early occasions when the Nayak was saved by the ablest of his feudatories. Arising by the Palaiyagar of Ettaiyapuram was also quelled easily and effectively by him; in return he was granted some territories around Mannarkoil and reciprocally he had to guard the pearl fisheries which yielded considerable revenue to the Nayak. The Setupati, to show his contempt for his defeated foe of Ettaiyapuram adorned his sandals with a portrait of 'Ettan'.

Tirumalai Nayaka of Madura had been frustrating the Vijayanagar Emperor, Sri Ranga III by inciting Bijapur and Golconda to attack the imperial territories. Bijapur effectively attacked Mysore which stood by Sri Ranga. When these manouvres and counter-manouvres drew to a close the ruler of Mysore Kanthirava Narasa was waiting to teach Tirumalai Nayaka a lesson. He invaded the territories of the Madura Nayak and having captured Satyamangalam on the way and terrorised the countryside approached the very gates of Madura. The Nayak who was ill at that time sought the assistance of Raghunatha Setupati once again. The dutiful vassal responded swiftly and brought a large and powerful army which soon stood between the ramparts of Madura and the enemy from Mysore. Encouraged by this the Nayak himself collected a considerable force and placed it under a brahmin general to throw the enemy back. The enemy, however, was able to bribe the Nayak's general into inactivity. The Setupati's army which noticed the posture of affairs immobilised the brahmin general and fought decisive and victorious battles against the Kannadiga army; not content with saving Madura from the enemy, the Maravas pursued the fleeing Mysoreans to their own city and wreaked vengeance on them. We have already noted how this war came to be called 'the War of the Noses' because of a barbarity committed by the Mysore

army of cutting off the noses of its opponents. The victorious Marava army took for its motto the principle of 'a nose for a nose' and it returned, it is said, with the royal nose itself as part of the war booty. Tirumalai Nayaka recognised the services of Raghunatha Setupati on whom he conferred the title 'Tirumalai Setupati'.

'Chokkanatha Nayaka' the grandson of Tirumalai Nayaka of Madura transferred his capital from Madura to Tiruchi and from there engaged in many wars against Tanjore, then ruled by Vijaya Raghava Nayaka. Once when Chokkanatha's capital city was beleaguered by the Muslim general 'Vanamian', the Nayak called upon Raghunatha Setupati to help him. But the Setupati for the first time wavered and faulted in his loyalty to the family of the Nayak of Madura; he did not respond. When Chokkanatha had somehow freed himself from the Muslim pressure and had inflicted a heavy defeat on Tanjore, turned his attention to the recalcitrant Setupati. Chokkanatha personally took the field and directed operations against the Marava country. He captured the forts of Tiruppattur, Manamadurai and Kalaiyarkoil. But then as he wished to return to Tiruchy to attend to other matters of State and attend to the calls of religion, left the army under other generals to pursue the enemy and complete the mopping up operations. But the elusive Marava chieftain emerged from his forest hideout and beat back the Nayak army which could make no further headway. Raghunatha continued to rule independently till 1670.

Raghunatha Setupati was a great patron of literary men and a builder and renovator of temples. In spite of the many wars he waged, he found the resources and the time needed to promote the peaceful arts. The Telugu language, in addition to native Tamil was used in Court records and official correspondence. Alagiya Chitrambala Kavirayar and Amirtha Kavirayar were among the Tamil poets patronised by him. He performed the Hiranyagarbha sacrifice and earned the title

'Hiranyagarbhayaji'. Perhaps he is to be credited with the construction of the Second **prakara** (verandah around the sanctum for circumambulation) of the Ramanathaswami temple in Rameswaram. He was a learned and discriminating patron. Thayumanavar, the famous mystic poet spent his last days in Ramnad during the reign period of this prince.

Surya Tevar and Athana Tevar (1670)

Tirumalai Setupati was succeeded by the elder of his two sons: Surya (Raja Surya) Tevar and Athana Tevar. They reigned in succession but, the reign periods of both of them together did not exceed one year. The former reigned for six months. He was also called Katta Teva Raja Surya Tevar. He died a tragic death being involved in the intrigues of the Tanjore Court which was then changing hands from the Nayaks to the Mahrattas. It would appear that Raja Surya who tried to help Senganaladas against Madura was taken prisoner by the Madura Dalavoy Venkata Krishnappa who later got him killed while in detention. The story originally narrated by Nelson is discredited by later writers who do so on the ground that Surya Tevar had died in 1670 while the war between Chokkanatha Nayaka and Tanjore took place in 1673. But it is not very difficult to imagine another and a less important conflict between the perpetual rivals of Madura and Tanjore in 1670 in the course of which Surya Tevar met with his end.

He was succeeded by his younger brother Athana Tevar who after a reign of three months passed away.

Now neither of these Tevars left of a legitimate heir to succeed to the throne. There was however an illegitimate son of Raja Surya Tevar who was naturally endowed with an aggressiveness and a spirit of aggrandisement which enabled him to flight his way to the throne. The people wanting some ruler were not loathe to have this illegitimate son of a shortlived ruler on a by no means secure throne.

Reghunatha Setupati alias Kilavan Setupati (1671-1710)

The new Setupati named Raghunatha was nick named 'Kilavan Setupati'. 'Kilavan' has been misconstrued to mean 'old man'. Apart from the improbability of a freshly installed ruler calling himself 'an old man' it is to be remembered that 'Kilavan' means the 'legitimate'. The assumption of this sobriquet was perhaps after all to conceal the truth about, his illegitimacy. It would be remembered that William 'the bastard' son of Robert Duke of Normandy, wanting to erase the humiliating reference to his illegitimacy, assumed the title William 'the conqueror'. So it is clear that Kilavan Setupati merely means 'the Setupati who holds office by legitimate right'. He ruled for 36 years and it was a reign of considerable importance. He was a ruthless and cruel man, warlike and intolerant, but in his own way competent.

His reign began with his ruthless murder of two members of the Setupati family who might have had any claims to the throne. He started with a show of loyalty to the Nayak of Madura. Chokkanatha Nayaka who was then the Nayak had suffered greatly at the hands of a multiplicity of enemies abroad and fifth columnists at home. Once he was declared insane by some of his ungrateful courtiers and imprisoned. One Rustum Khan taking advantage of this confusion seized power, released the king but retained power in his own hands and behaved like an usurper. Then 'Kilavan' Setupati with the help of one Govindappaian and Chinna Katri Nayaka of Kannivadi intervened in the affairs of Tiruchy, killed Rustum Khan and restored Chokkanatha Nayaka to his throne. The grateful Nayak bestowed the the title 'Para Raja Kesari' on the Setupati and transferred the services of his general Kumara Pillai to him.

This sense of loyalty did not last for long. When the Mysore Army invaded Tiruchy, the Setupati did not proceed

to help the Nayak but actually turning against and joining Tanjore the traditional foe of Madura gave assistance to Mysore. In 1683, the 'Kilavan' succeeded in annexing some territory of the Madura kingdom; he allied himself with Tanjore, when the Mahratta Ekoji was ruling, and proceeded to attack the Nayak of Madura. The general Kumara Pillai, piqued by the disloyalty of the Setupati, organised a revolt against the 'Kilavan'. But on the general's ill-luck would have it, the Setupati came to know of it and caught and executed the general in a most horrible manner; even his relatives were not spared. These acts of horror led to another war between the Nayak of Madura and the Kilavan who was now aided by Ekoji. The Setupati succeeded in forcing the Nayak forces to fall back and he ceded to the Mahratta ruler of Tanjore some territory in the neighbourhood of Pattukottai. The tortuous relations among the southern powers were so tangled that very soon these two powers fell out among themselves and fought a war in which again the Setupati was successful; he captured the Tanjore fortresses of Arantangi, Tirumayam, Piranmalai and all the territories to the south of the Ambari river, except the fortress of Pudukkottai. The next phase of this revolving politics was a combination of the Madura and Tanjore forces for a big assault on Ramnad. At this time, the ruler of Madura was the Regent Mangammal. But once again the Setupati succeeded against his enemies and insured his effective independence from the overlordship of Madura. Madura recognised the impossibility of bringing this feudatory to any sense of loyalty. But Tanjore perhaps wished to have the luxury of another defeat at the hands of the 'Kilavan' and invading the Marava country tried to capture the territories lost by him earlier. Tanjore, as was to be expected was again defeated decisively. That ended further ambitions on the part of the Mahratta ruler of Tanjore to commit successful aggression on the Marava country.

Some scholars have claimed that the Pudukottai Kingdom was created by Kilavan Setupati. The legend which makes this claim says that the Setupati had appointed to important military positions one Raghunatha Raja Tondaiman and his brother; further, the Setupati married the latter's sister by name Kathali (or more probably Katteri). Consequently, the Setupati appointed the Tondaiman chief of a Palayam to the north of the Ramnad territories. This Palayam was called the Palayam of the Pallavarayas. There were a few Ambalakarars who helped in the establishment of the new Palayam which later became the state of Pudukottai. Its very name Pudukottai ('the new fort') suggests its recent creation. This is what the legends say regarding the origin of the Kingdom of Pudukottai. But this account is not favoured by other sources. Radhakrishna Iyer is of the view that the palace records and other local chronicles which mention an earlier and independent origin of Pudukottai speak the truth. According to these sources one Tirumalai Tondaiman migrated from Tondaimandalam around the 10th century A. D. after the fall of the Pallavas consequent on the rise of the Imperial Cholas; he set up a small principality in the eastern domains of the Pandyas. This migration can be compared to that of the Banas from more or less the same region to the Pandyan Country. The Raghunatha Tondaiman could himself have belonged to the Pallavaraya clan as his name indicates. The Setupati's role in all these affairs seems to have been to have encouraged Raghunatha Tondaiman in consolidating his position in Pudukottai and to have married into his family. There is no doubt that during Kilavan Setupati's reign he was the most powerful ruler in all the territories to the south of the Kaviri.

We have noted the fortunes of Christianity in the Nayak Kingdom of Madura and seen how most of the major rulers of that dynasty were sympathetic to the efforts of the Missionaries. But Kilavan Setupati proved to be the worst persecutor of the Christians. Due to the increasing efforts and single minded devotion to the cause of Christianity of

John de Britto of the Madura Mission, a number of Maravas were converted to that religion. De Britto succeeded Fr. Alvarez in the Madura country as the chief missionary there. He lived a simple life, dedicated himself totally to the cause of the poor and the illiterate and set a noble example to all Missionaries. He was beloved of all but those who were fanatics and bigots. The Marava country had not seen any Christian Missionary of note during the past seventeen years. While he was passing through Sivaganga he was arrested, put in chains and produced before the Setupati. Under orders of the Kilavan, de Britto was tortured in all manner of ways known to the persecutors. After very considerable suffering and after being expelled from the land of the Maravas, de Britto left for Portugal where he was greatly honoured.

But soon the great Missionary returned to his work in the Marava country. His mission succeeded greatly. At one time he converted nearly 8000 Maravas to Christianity. There was a Marava prince by name Tadiya Tevar who was healed by one of the Missionaries attached to de Britto; this prince under the influence of de Britto became a Christian and put aside all his numerous wives except one and treated them like his sisters. One of those forsaken wives happened to be a niece of Kilavan Setupati. So naturally this grief-stricken lady repaired to the Setupati's Court and begged of her uncle to persuade Tadiya Tevar to change his mind. The Setupati who was by nature a cruel and hard-hearted man, implored by his niece and incited by the Brahmins whose religion was the target of the Missionaries' activities decided on killing de Britto. He ordered the churches to be burnt and the Missionaries to be punished. In January 1693 de Britto was arrested, put in chains and literally dragged to the court in Ramnad. He and a few neophytes were humiliated and tortured on the way. The king under the influence of the Brahmins was in no mood to be merciful. The Brahmins got the permission of the King to destroy de Britto by performing a sacrifice. The sacrifice proved to be ineffective against the

saint; he outlived all their efforts. The exasperated Setupati ordered the execution of de Britto. This time Tadiya Tevar came to the rescue of the Missionary, and stood between the infuriated Marava Chief and the implacable Christian Missionary. For a while the Setupati dissembled. But soon de Britto was handed over to the Governor of one of the Marava provinces to be executed. On the 3rd day of February 1693 de Britto wrote 'Arrived January 31st; awaiting death'. On the 4th February of that year he was beheaded. Even a burial was denied to his body for a long time. This in short is the story of the martyrdom at the age of 46, of one of the greatest Missionaries who worked in Tamilnad. Scholars, great as well as petty, have argued that the Setupati was politically motivated in this act of murder and that he was not a religious fanatic. But the defence seems to be halting and feeble. The Setupati was guilty of extreme fanaticism in faith and barbarity in act. If he is to be absolved, all bigots who indulge in acts of cruelty are to be exonerated. But as is usual in all such cases, persecution was the surest insurance for the greater success in future of the Missionaries.

Kilavan Setupati's services to the cause of Hinduism were many. He endowed a temple in Tiruvadanai with lands; he provided for the comfortable functioning of many Mathas. He made an endowment of three villages to a temple near Kalaiyarkoil. His religious fervour did not prevent him utilising the services of Muslims and Christians when they were useful to him. He shifted his capital from Pugalur to Ramanathapuram (Ramnad); and built a strong fort around that city. He ordered the excavation of a large reservoir called the 'Mugavai Urani', and the construction of a dam across the Vaigai. He permitted the Dutch who had settled themselves on the eastern coast, to fish freely in the waters nearby for but a nominal fee.

In 1709 began a famine brought about by continuous absence of rainfall and it lasted for many years bringing misery to the people, many of whom emigrated to Madura, or to Tanjore.

The Setupati at the age of eighty and after a reign of thirty-nine years, passed away in A. D. 1710. His fortyseven wives committed self-immolation on his funeral pyre. He left no heir to succeed him.

Thiru Udaya Tevar alias Vijaya Raghunatha Setupati (1710-20)

There is much debate as to the relationship between Kilavan Setupati and his successor. Some accounts say that the Kilavan nominated an illegitimate son of his to succeed him. But for unknown reasons the nominee was overlooked and one Thiru Udaya Tevar was chosen successor. There are conflicting reports regarding the relation between the late Setupati and these two men. Udaya Tevar entitled himself Vijaya Raghunatha Setupati; the 'Vijaya' standing for the Vijayadasami day on which he was crowned. The new Setupati inherited a very bad economic condition of the country and had to face famine on the one hand and floods on the other and the consequent hardships. The Jesuit letters say 'mothers ate their children, husbands bargained their wives for a few measures of rice and thousands died of starvation'. He provided a sort of relief by repairing and improving the irrigation works which however could not give any immediate relief to the people. He caused a lake called 'Raghunatha Samudram' to be excavated near Tanjore. He divided the country into a number of defence zones and improved also the civil administration. The Palaiyagars were disciplined and the Palaiyam system was reorganised. He had a number of forts built, including one at Kamudi which the French helped him build; he added an artillery division to his army with Dutch assistance. He ruled a vast territory between Tiruvarur in the north and Tirunelveli in the south.

There was an invasaion of his country by the Kallans of the north whom he destroyed by a subterfuge. It was during his reign that the Zamindari of Sivaganga came into existence. Sasivarana Tevar (Nalkottai

Udaya Tevar) married an illegitimate daughter of Thiru Udaya Tevar, and the Kingdom of Ramnad and the Zamindari of Sivaganga and the two were united in the cause of the Maravas. Thiru Udaya Tevar was killed by epidemic in the course of an engagement with the combined forces of Pudukottai and Tanjore. This was in 1720 and it revived the old question of succession to the throne.

Thiru Udaya Tevar was a devout Saivite who made many additions to the Ramanathaswami Temple in Rameswaram, looked after the comforts of pilgrims and endowed Brahminical institutions with lands and other grants. The Setupati who began as a reasonably tolerant ruler soon fell into the familiar ways of persecution and harassment of his Christian subjects and the Missionaries. In the story that he, for trivial reason, ordered his son-in-law (who had married two of his daughters) to be killed despite the entreaties of his daughters be true, it shows that piety to God was not inconsistent with cruelty to man. When the Setupati died the Jesuits were so relieved as to think that his death was 'a favour of Divine Providence'. Though the Setupathi had married 360 wives no legitimate child of his survived him.

Sundaresvara alias Tanda Tevar (1720)

As in the case of most of the Setupatis, the relation of this successor to his predecessor in office is not clearly known. Perhaps he was nominated successor by Vijaya Raghunatha, his maternal uncle. Bhavani Sankara Kilavan's illegitimate son continued to contest the throne; he crowned himself Setupati with the help of some Marava chieftains. Tanda Tevar appealed to the Tondaiman of Pudukottai and the Nayak of Madura for help. With the help rendered by these rulers, he besieged Bhavani Sankara in Aranthangi. Bhavani Sankara fled to Tanjore and sought the assistance of the Mahratta ruler of that place, promising to cede valuable territory to him. Ananda Rao, general of the Tanjore armies then marched against the forces of Tanda Tevar and his allies. Ananda Rao was able to divide the armies of his enemies and beat them

severally. He then marched on to Ramnad where he besieged and captured the fort and took Tanda Tevar and his family prisoner and beheaded them, ending for the moment the succession issue.

Bhavani Sankara (1720-1729)

Bhavani Sankara who came to the throne after much waiting and striving could not get on with his vassals of whom one Sasivarna Tevar was a reputed Palaiyagar. This Palaiyagar who was driven out of his fief approached the Mahratta ruler of Tanjore for help against Bhavani Sankara. The ruler of Tanjore who knew that every occasion of successful assistance to one of the contending parties of Ramnad would bring with it fresh cession of territory to him, readily agreed. The Tanjore General was again successful, this time against Bhavani Sankara who was taken prisoner and who died in captivity later. Rangachari says with some truth that "With the tragic end of Bhavani Sankara the history of United Ramnad ended". The Palaiyam of Sivaganga became independent under Sasivarna Periya Udaya Tevar who got nearly two-fifths of the Ramnad territory. The remaining part which became the residuary Ramnad was inherited by Kattaya Tevar who assumed the title 'Kumara Muthu Vijaya Raghuanatha Kattaya Tevar'.

Ramnad which in the days of Kilavan Setupati extended from Tiruvarur to Tirunelveli and could defy Madura and Tanjore got broken up when Pudukottai and Sivaganga splintered off leaving a debilitated Ramnad to brood over her past glories and present problems.

Kattaya Tevar alias Kumara Muthu Vijaya Raghunatha Setupati (1729-1735)

Kattaya Tevar was also called Periya Maravan. In his days there were two invasions of the Marava country by the forces of

Tanjore under Tukkoji, the successor of Serfoji I. In the first attempt the Tanjore armies narrowly escaped encirclement and destruction; in the second attempt made by Tanjore under the generalship of the famous Ananda Rao the invading armies had to withdraw in the middle of the protracted siege of Tirumayam, on hearing that the army was needed in Tanjore to defend the country against the Moghuls.

Kattaya Tevar was a builder of temples and patron of the learned. Ramalinga Pillai and Vairavan Pillai were two famous civil servants he employed. This Setupati died in 1735 and was succeeded by his son.

Sivakumara Muthu Vijaya Raghunatha Setupati (1735-1746)

This Setupati was ably assisted by a competent minister called Vellaiyan Servaikaran. His reign was peaceful and undisturbed by wars. He was a contemporary of the last Nayak ruler of Madura and of Chanda Saheb of Arcot. He looked after the worship etc. of the ancient deities of Madura which had been removed to Manamadura fearing a Muslim attack on the temple city. He built choultries and made new endowments to old religious institutions. He died in 1746 and was succeeded by Rakka Tevar, a cousin of Kattaya Tevar.

Rakka Tevar (1747)

During the reign of this Setupati there was an invasion by Tanjore which was warded off by his minister Vellaiyan Servaikaran. Vellaiyan also succeeded in subduing the turbulent Palaiyagars of the south. The Palaiyagar of Ettaiyapuram alone was left in peace since the Setupati treated him as **guru**. The high handed acts of this minister roused popular antipathy and the Setupati who was about to recall and imprison the minister was himself imprisoned and deposed by Vellaiyan; the successful minister then promoted the Ramnad throne another scion of Kilavan Setupati's family by name Sella or Vijaya Raghunatha Tevar in 1748.

Sella Tevar (Vijaya Raghunatha Setupati (1748-1761)

The new Setupati was aunt's grandson of Sivakumara Muthu Vijaya Raghunatha Setupati. He ruled at a time when the Nayakship of Madura had come to a close and some pretenders to the Madura throne were being harassed and rooted out by the Nawabs of Arcot whose advent on the scene had started upsetting the existing alignment of powers in Tamilnad. Vijayakumara, the son of Bangaru Tirumala was for some time supported by the Setupati but when Muhammad Ali of Arcot sent an army in to the Marava country the fugitive prince made good his escape.

The Arantangi frontier between Tanjore and Ramnad was always sensitive and the former never lost an opportunity to harass the latter whenever she found the Maravas weak. In 1749 Raja Pratap Singh sent an army under the command of Manekji to seize Arantangi. The result of the ensuing engagement is differently reported; but perhaps it ended in a draw. The intercession of the English East India Company had perhaps a sobering influence on the invaders. This did not however prevent a joint invasion of Ramnad by Tanjore and Pudukottai now supported even by the English. In one of the engagements the invading allies succeeded and in another the defenders routed the aggressors by turning against them the guns which they had earlier seized from them.

The middle of the 18th century saw the English and the French interceding in the affairs of the Indian rulers and trying to create zones of influence for themselves here, specially in the Carnatic. It also happened that in these endeavours the rulers of Ramnad sought the assistance of the French and those of Pudukottai and Tanjore the help of the English. The Nawab of Arcot was ally to the English in Fort St. George and he was friendly to the Tondaiman. Though the Nawab was willing and eager to help the Tondaiman in his adventures, provoked or unprovoked, against the Setupati, the English were not willing

to get involved too much in these broils and so on most occasions persuaded the Tondaiman to seek peace with Ramnad. This policy was not fruitful beyond a point.

In the struggle between Chanda Saheb and Muhammad Ali for mastery over the Carnatic, the English and the French fought each other as protagonists of one or the other of these claimants to the Nawab of Arcot. Again the Setupati unfortunately decided to support Chanda Saheb and the French whose ultimate defeat ended in the English permanently suspecting the Maravar as a class. Too late he realised his folly and sought to mend his relations with the English who accepted his apologies and presents but kept their options open.

In 1755 Tanjore and Pudukottai mounted a joint offensive against the Setupati. The Nawab entertained, in the meanwhile, the double hope of curbing the power of Tanjore on the one hand and persuading the southern districts to accept his suzerainty on the other; and as was his wont he put pressure on the English to support him. Col. Heron the English officer in Madurai who had, on his own initiative accepted some territories from the Rajas of Ramnad and Sivaganga was ordered to withdraw his support to the Maravas. Compared to the warm relations which grew between the English and the Tondaiman, the Setupati's efforts to secure English friendship ended in continued suspicion and mutual distrust.

The relations between the Maravas and the Dutch mercantile settlement in Kilakkarai varied from cordial to bitter during this period. The Dutch records with archives of the Government of Ceylon give an account of how the Dutch in Tuticorin had recourse to naval pressure on the Setupati for the restoration of normal relations between the two. Sometime during the reign of Sella Tevar the Dalavay Vellaiyan Servaikaran passed away and his place was taken by one Damodaran Pillai (1755). Sella Tevar died in 1761 and left no son behind.

Many charitable institutions were set up by this Setupati and his dalavays. The Balasubramanyaswami temple in Rameswaram was built by him.

Muthuramalinga Setupati (1761-1772; 1781-1794)

Sella Tevar was succeeded by his sister's son Muthuramalinga Tevar who was then only a child and was but two months old. His mother Muthu Thiruvayee Nachchiyar was appointed his regent. This office was usurped by Muthu Vijaya Raghunatha, the Setupati's uncle; and he became very despotic and started planning to seize royal power. Then started a battle of wits between the unpopular regent and the popular dalavay Damodaran Pillai. Neither, however, was for the state and each was for himself and so external interference especially from Arcot, Tanjore and Pudukottai became routine during the later part of the 18th century. The Nawab of Arcot after his defeat of the Madurai and Tanjore forces and exacting tributes from them had concluded that he was the overlord of the entire Carnatic including the southern region of Tamilnad; so according to him Ramnad, Sivaganga and Pudukottai also owed allegiance to him and it was within his competence to regulate their relations with Arcot and with one another. The Nawab Muhammad Ali sought the assistance of Ramnad against Yusuf Khan. The regent promptly deputed Damodaran Pillai to proceed to the Nawab's aid for it was his absence from Ramnad that the Regent desired most. When Pillai resisted this move the Regent reported his insubordination to the English and sought his removal from office; further to strengthen his own position he arrested the boy-king and his mother and was on the point of seizing the throne. Damodaran Pillai sought the intervention of the English in the affairs of Ramnad and for the restoration of the boy-king. The English, with whom the Nawab concurred, used this opportunity to utilise the services of the ministers of Ramnad and Sivaganga to reduce the rebels in

Madurai and make the position of the English authorities in Madurai safe. While the Regent who was now isolated sought the help of Muhammad Ali, the latter — expert in the act of double dealing — promised to help him also. But before such help could be availed of, the Regent passed away. The ministers, who were devoutly wishing for this event, succeeded in reinstating the boy-king Muthuramalingam to the Ramnad throne. During this period of confusion the Mahratta ruler of Tanjore occupied the oft disputed Arantangi area. The Nawab of the Carnatic was too busy dealing with the rebels in Tinnevely to control the Raja of Tanjore. Damodaran Pillai temporarily enlisted the support of the Dutch in Kilakkarai against the anticipated incursions of the traditional foes from the north.

The first Anglo-Mysore war (1762-69) was sufficient screen behind which Ramnad proceeded against Tanjore in committing counter aggression. The Madras Council to whom Tuljaji, the ruler of Tanjore, appealed gave him full permission to do what he pleased with the Maravas. The aggressive Mahratta, then, placed on the Ramnad throne one Mappillai Tevar; the beleaguered boy-king and his mother agreed however to the extremely humiliating terms of a treaty by which Tanjore gained territories yielding annual revenue of three lakhs of rupees in return for his restoration to power. But from the point of view of Tanjore, all this effort was a waste since at this stage the Nawab of the Carnatic interfered and ordered the ruler of Tanjore to return to the Marava all the territories and money he gained for them. The Nawab did not spare Ramnad either; he got the assistance of the English who sent a force under Col. Joseph Smith to sack Ramnad. The Tondaiman who never missed an opportunity to help the English against his own countrymen also proceeded against Ramnad. Ramnad fell to the English; the boy-king and his mother were taken captive and removed to a jail in Tiruchy, the usual refuge of all royal prisoners.

Then it was, i.e. in 1772, that Ramnad came under the direct management of the Nawab of Arcot; and it so remained for eight years till 1780. Many attempts were made by the aspirants to the Marava throne to seek Hyder Ali's aid to change the situation in their country. Nothing could happen, since the Second Mysore War broke out in 1780 and the English and the Nawab became too busy with Hyder to think of lesser problems farther south. Sivaganga, in this confused period had come under the control of a pair of scheming usurpers called the Marudhus, who took some aid from the Muslim general Syed Saheb of Dindigul and spread ruin in the Marava country and harried the Nawab's troops. The Marudhus made one Vellachi the queen of Sivaganga and they proclaimed themselves her ministers.

Things threatened to go from bad to worse in Ramnad; the Nawab forestalled this by releasing the boy-king from Tiruchy and restoring him to the Ramnad throne (1781). The Setupati therefore agreed to pay the Nawab a tribute of Rs. 1,75,000/- a year. The ruler of Ramnad proposed to marry Vellachi of Sivaganga who however spurned his offer. This led to a number of minor skirmishes between the two Marava powers. The English called upon Ramnad to cease faction fights; Powney, the English Collector of Palayagar Peshkush ordered the Setupati to meet him in person and explain himself. The Setupati felt emboldened to defy the orders.

In the meantime the Nawab had become so indebted and impoverished as to cede to the English Government in Fort St. George the management of the Nawab's territory; and the Board of assigned revenues was created to administer the collection of revenue. In 1790 Maclead became the Collector of Revenues in the Madurai country. In 1792 the Ramnad territories were ceded to the British by a treaty; Col. Martinz occupied the Maravar country. At this juncture, Mangalesvari Nachchiyar, a sister of the Setupati claimed the Zamindari for herself and appealed to the English for orders recognising her right. Major

Stevenson proceeded against Ramnad and occupied it in 1795. The Setupati was deposed on the plea that he indulged in unnecessary wars with neighbouring powers and oppressed his people. The Setupati was then despatched to Tiruchy for incarceration; and later from there to Madras where he died in 1801. Ramnad came under the direct government of the Company and so remained till 1803, when the Zamindari was transferred to Mangalesvari Nachchiyar; but by then it had ceased to be a kingdom and been reduced to the status of a Zamindari.

Muthuramalinga Setupati's reign was full of troubles to himself and to his people; though he did a few acts of public benevolence, his reign ended with the end of Ramnad as an independent power.

Mangalesvari Nachchiyar (1803—1812) and her successors (down to 1889)

Mangalesvari Nachchiyar became Zamindarini on the 21st February 1803 and with greatly attenuated powers. Edward Clive, the son of Robert, Lord Clive was then the Governor of Fort. St. George. She agreed to pay an annual peshkush of Rs. 3,24,404. The manager of the Estate was one Thiagaraja Pillai. Since she had little political responsibilities and was deprived of opportunities for warlike activities, her efforts as well as those of her more enlightened successors were directed towards building choultries and endowing temples and similar traditional acts of charity. She had married one Ramaswami Tevar who however died in 1803; and so she adopted Annaswami Tevar, her husband's nephew. The deed of adoption was executed in the presence of Col. Martinz and the Collector Mr. Parish. The Zamindarini died in 1812.

Annaswami Tevar succeeded his mother in 1812 and assumed the title Muthu Vijaya Raghunatha Setupati; since he was a minor, the manager Thiagaraja Pillai looked after the administ-

ration. Soon the Zamin fell a prey to claims and counter claims to the 'throne', some of which went up to the appellate Court in Madras. Annaswami Tevar succeeded him in 1829. The interval was spent by the Courts in determining his title to succession; but he died in 1830 throwing the estate again into confusion and contests for succession. Disputatious womenfolk and corrupt managers qualified the estate to merit the company's attention. The Zamin came under the care of the Court of Wards which finally i.e., in 1846 placed it under the management of Parvatha Vardhani Nachchiyar, widow of Ramaswami Tevar. She tried to settle the question of succession by adopting her sister's son Muthuramalinga Tevar in 1847. His title to the Zamin was after long last accepted by the Privy Council in 1868. While the case was pending in the courts, the East India Company's Indian administration was taken over by the Crown in 1858. Muthuramalinga Tevar had assumed the Zamindari rights even in 1862 in anticipation of the court's verdict. Ponnuswami Tevar, the manager of the estate was a competent administrator. He was also a scholar and a patron of scholars. Nelson got the memo containing the Setupati genealogy from this Ponnuswami Tevar. The Tevar died in 1869. His son Pandithurai Tevar became the reputed founder of the Madurai Tamil Sangam.

The Estate in the meantime had fallen into debts obviously due to unrealistic budgeting; government, anxious to keep the Zamin going took over its management and appointed Lee Warner to look after it. This happened as early as 1871.

Muthuramalinga Setupati died in 1873 leaving a minor son Bhaskara who was then only about four years. The Zamin, therefore, had necessarily to be in the Court of Wards till Bhaskara attained majority which he did in 1889; then the Zamin was restored to him.

Bhaskara Setupati (1889-1903) was an exceptionally enlightened Zamindar whose administration of Ramnad during a decade

and a half was marked by magnificent patronage of scholars, poets and musicians. He was himself an English-educated chieftain, well-versed in the traditional type of Tamil scholarship too. He had the good habit of maintaining a diary in which he noted matters which interested him. The diary naturally remains unpublished. He was largely instrumental in persuading Swami Vivekananda to attend the Parliament of religions in Chicago, which he himself intended attending earlier. He was not entirely free from the tendency to whimsical exercise of power so natural to personal government. He was a stranger to careful economy in the management of the Zamin and so tended to slip constantly into ever increasing debts. The Estate had been heavily mortgaged to money lenders like AL. AR. Ramaswami Chettiar of Devakottai.

Bhaskara Setupati died in 1903; his son **Raja Rajeswara alias Muthuramalinga Setupati (1910-1929)** was a minor about 13 years old then. He began direct administration of the Estate in 1910 and found that the Estate was bankrupt for the whole of it had been leased out to moneylenders. After much parley the lessees agreed to mitigate the situation by compounding the outstanding debts to some extent. The Zamin attained some financial stability in 1915. Various circumstances had rendered the turbulent Marava dynasty to the position of humble and loyal subordination to the British Government in India. With every succession power and dignity declined. The Raja of Ramnad became a politician and probed various channels of expression of grievances; the British Government, however, treated such expressions as normal political activity and took no notice. The Setupati as an influential member of the Madras Land Holder's Association insisted that the leading landholders should be treated as Chieftains. He then joined the non-Brahmin movement which was then dominated by Thiagaraja Chetty, the Raja of Bobbili and other Telugus and found it necessary to ask for greater Tamilian representation in Justice Party and in the fruits which the party hoped to gather as a

result of its political activities. The Raja served a term as a member of the Madras Legislative Council. He too like his father patronized scholars and maintained a diary. But the range of his political power had been restricted to the Presidency of the District Board (1920-28) and similar exercise of innocuous power. He was the President of the Rameswaram Temple Devasthanam and the Madurai Tamil Sangam. He died in 1929 and was succeeded by his son.

Shanmuga Rajeswara Naganatha Setupati (1929-67)

This setupati was an English educated man who had studied law. During 1935-45, the estate was in the Court of Wards and in the latter year the Setupati resumed direct administration. Like his father he was also President of the District Board. In 1949 he joined the Congress party which had earlier in the year abolished the Zamindari system and he was minister for Public Works from 1952 to 1957. He was a sportsman, particularly devoted to horse racing. The Marava dynasty which Muthu Krishnappa Nayaka brought into existence in the 17th century had a rather chequered career and in the beginning of the 19th century was engulfed by the spreading power of the British in India, and was reduced to the democratic floor by the Government of Imperial India.

B. THE RAJAS OF SIVAGANGA

The Sivaganga state became an independent political unit in the days of Thiru Udaya Tevar alias Vijaya Raghunatha Setupati of Ramnad. There was a family of Udaya Tevars in Nalukkottai somewhat to the north of Sivagangai. Of this family came one Sasivarna Tevar who married illegitimate daughter Akhilandeswari Nachchiar of Vijaya Raghunatha Setupati. This Sasivarna Tevar acquired an independent status for his domains thanks largely to the Setupati's concessions. Akhilandeswari brought with her enough property to enable her husband to maintain three thousand fighters. Sasivarna Tevar obtained sovereign

rights over the fortress of Piranmalai, Thiruppattur, Cholapuram and Thirubhuvanam.

After the death of Vijaya Raghunatha Setupati there was a succession dispute between Kilavan's illegitimate son Bhavani Sankara and his nephew Tanda Tevar. Sasivarna Tevar interfered in the politics of Ramnad and carried the ill-will of both the contestants to power. So he decided on supporting the claims of one Kattaiah Tevar who also received the help of the Nayak of Tanjore. Consequently Kattaiah Tevar became the Setupati of Ramnad and Sasivarna Tevar not only increased his dominion but lengthened his honorifics into Muthu Vijaya Raghunatha Periya Udaya Tevar. This Tevar died in 1750; and his son Muthu Vaduganatha Periya Udaya Tevar succeeded him. He seems to have ruled for thirty years. Muhammad Ali Wallajah who was his contemporary Nawab in Arcot was determined to bring under his rule all the old Nayak kingdoms of Tamilnad and their traditional feudatories and to that end despatched troops to the Marava country. In an encounter with the Nawab's troops Muthu Vaduganatha was killed. He had no male issue but had a daughter by name Vellachi by his wife Velu Nachchiar. The widow and her daughter fled the country.

But in the meantime the Marudu brothers (these two were called Periya Marudu and Chinna Marudu) two upstarts who were menial attendants on the deceased Muthu Vaduganatha got Hyder Ali to help them free Sivaganga for the time being of the Carnatic troops. They further persuaded Velu Nachchiar to resume the governance of Sivaganga, themselves becoming her ministers. Velu Nachchiar, in her anxiety to secure an heir to the throne adopted one Gowri Vallabha Tevar as her son. The Marudu brothers had ulterior plans of usurping the Sivaganga throne and so this adoption disappointed them and frustrated their designs. So they started playing more complicated tricks. They got Vellachi Nachchiar, the daughter of Muthu Vaduganatha married to one Periya Udaya Tevar of their choice; and proceeded to harass

Gowri Vallabha the adopted son. Gowri Vallabha unable to cope with the Marudus left Sivaganga for Pudukottai. Velu Nachchiar died in 1790 and was succeeded by Vellachi whose government was actually in the hands of the Marudus: Vellachi also died soon after, i.e. in 1783. The elder of the Marudus gave his daughter in marriage to Periya Udaya Tevar, in the hope that ultimately he could place on the Sivaganga throne a scion of his own family. The perfidy of these two usurpers of power would have gone unnoticed by history if they had not been destined to clash with the English.

Their contemporaries in Arcot were Muhammad Ali Wallajah till 1795 and Umdat-ul-Umarah later. These Nawabs of Arcot inherited along with their Carnatic possessions a lot of turbulence from a band of fierce Palayagars who disliked paying tribute to anyone and delighted in fighting each other. After 1790 the Nawab of the Carnatic had assigned to the English the right to collect peshkush in the southern districts. But some of the Palayagars and the Marudu brothers among them refused to recognise the right of the English Company to collect revenue from them. Revenues had then to be collected by force. The wars with Tippu were weakening the military position of the English in the South; they waited till Tippu was disposed of in the battle of Seringapatam in 1799 and then concentrated their forces on the recalcitrant chieftains among whom the Marudu brothers were prominent.

Edward, Lord Clive (the son of Robert, Lord Clive) who was then the Governor of Fort. St. George decided on forcing the issue. The Marudus who had been joined by the remnants of the Panchalankurichi rebel forces resisted till their strongholds Piranmalai and Kalaiyarkoil fell to the English in 1801; the Marudus were caught and executed. Thus ended the usurpation and rebellion of the upstart brothers, whose execution paved the way for the restoration of the legitimate ruler Gowri Vallabha Udaya Tevar to the throne of Sivaganga in 1801. But then his position had been reduced to that of a Zamindar. The royal family had ceased to be,

The Marathas of Tanjore

We have noticed the fall of Nayak dynasty of Tanjore and detailed the circumstances under which Alagiri Naidu, a half brother of Chokkanatha Nayaka fought and got defeated at the hands of Venkaji alias Ekoji, the Maratha who served in the Bijapur Army. It has also been noted that a villainous Rayasam Venkanna conspired with Sengamaladas (in all probability the grandson of Vijayaraghava Nayaka) and incited the Bijapuris to invade Tanjore to secure the throne for Sengamaladas. Sengamaladas the chronicles say, was but two or three years old when he was smuggled away to Negapatam from the Tanjore harem on the occasion of the Triuchy--Tanjore war. Then at the time of his accession to the Tanjore throne he could not have been more than five or six years old.

To credit him with decisions on state policy at that age seems to be wrong; so it is probable that he was a youth old enough to act on his own. As Sathyanatha Iyer convincingly says, in view of Vijayaraghavan's very advanced age at the time of his death in battlefield he could, then, not have had a son aged but two or three years old. Under these circumstances it is more reasonable to hold that Sengamaladas was the son of Mannarudas, the first son of Vijayaraghava, and that he was not an infant when he escaped from the palace. It should be remembered that the chronicles between themselves do not agree as to whether he was Vijayaraghava's son or grandson. His stay in Nagapatam also is not invariably mentioned in all the sources. Nelson seems to have hit on the

probability that 'Sengamaladas escaped from the palace... and fled for refuge to the court of Idal Khan, who received him kindly and promised to assist him.' Anyhow the important role that he played in disappointing Venkanna suggests that he was old enough to take state matters into his own hands.

It may be taken that the rule in Tanjore of Sengamaladas came to an end in 1676. This marks the beginning of Maratha rule in Tanjore. It was inaugurated by Venkaji (alias Ekoji), the Maratha general of Bijapur.

Venkaji was the son of Shahji and Tuka Bai; he was born around 1630 and was nearly of the same age as his more reputed brother Sivaji who was born of Shahji's first wife Jijibai. Thus Venkaji and Sivaji were half brothers though the latter tended to look upon his brother as a sort of ward and advise him superciliously. Both of them inherited their father's propensity for aggression, conquest, plunder etc. Shahji who in addition to his martial activities in the Deccan had attacked the Tanjore twice in 1659 and in 1662 and obtained tributes from the weak Nayak ruler of Tanjore, had however not thoroughly conquered or received by submission the Tanjore territories. So, he had really no title to Tanjore. Though it is pointless to talk of 'title' in those days of universal aggression and pervasive insurgency in India, surprisingly when Shahji died in 1664 he left to his beloved son Venkaji (as against Sivaji whom he disliked) the 'Karnatak' jagir with the implication that it vaguely included Tanjore. Shahji was in his rights in bequeathing the jagir which he got from Bijapur to one of his sons; but if either of his sons (e. g. Sivaji thought that this jagir included Tanjore it was mere presumption).

In 1664 the position was that Venkaji was a general of Bijapur army and the jagirdar of the Carnatic which would not include territories to the south of Gingee or at least of the Coleroon. Venkaji was watching the developments in the Nayak kingdoms and hopefully waiting for an opportunity to

interfere in their affairs. The deterioration that set in the Government of the Nayakdom of Tanjore in the later days of Vijaya Raghava Nayaka became rapid when Alagiri took over. Venkanna's intrigue and Sengamaladas' appeal to Idal Khan of Bijapur provided the long awaited opportunity to Venkaji. Idal Khan who had perhaps no personal interest in the affairs of Tanjore 'however' asked Venkaji to help Sengamaladas to gain the Tanjore throne. Shaji succeeded in doing so. Alagiri who appealed to Tiruchy for succour got none; and he fled to Mysore after being defeated in the battle of Aiyampet. Sengamaladas was enthroned. This was soon followed by the second treachery of Venkanna who incited Venkaji to take Tanjore over for himself. Venkaji who after installing Sengamaladas on the throne of Tanjore had not left that place far behind but was sojourning near Kumbakonam (and was receiving the revenue from that district for the maintenance of his army) decided to disobey the Sultan of Bijapur and usurp the Tanjore throne. Ousting Sengamaladas was child's play for the veteran Venkaji and he succeeded for a second time against Tanjore and driving out Sengamaladas founded the Maratha rule in Tanjore. Andre Freyre says that Venkaji, instead of placing the (grand)son of the late Nayaka on the throne, according to the orders of Idal Khan, has preferred to usurp the title and authority of an independent king. The chronicles on the other hand unanimously speak of a Nayak interlude between the two Maratha attacks on Tanjore. The interlude lasted but for a year but still it was there.

This act of Venkaji enthroning Sengamaladas in 1675 and then usurping the throne in 1676 has made historians debate a rather insipid point i. e., whether Venkaji obeyed his master's orders or not. Some say that Venkaji by installing Sengamaladas on the throne in the first instance had obeyed Idal Khan's orders; others contend that in as much as he had soon after not taken over the government himself, he was an usurper and a rebel. The discussion may be

dismissed with the observation that in situations involving people like Venkaji, legalities and proprieties are irrelevant. He could rule Tanjore at least by the right of conquest which is as good a right as any other.

Sengamaladas who fled Tanjore did not proceed beyond Ariyalur, but later got reconciled with Venkaji and joined Kilavan Setupati against Chokkanatha Nayaka. The future of Sengamaladas is not known, and the Nayak rule had firmly come to an end in Tanjore.

Venkaji (1678-84)

Venkaji began his reign cautiously to win over the people of the newly got kingdom. Andre Freyre says: "Thus becoming absolute master of the kingdom, he seeks to make himself loved by the inhabitants, and has already succeeded in it. The justice and wisdom of his government begin to heal the wounds of the preceding reign and develop the natural resources of this country, one of the most remarkable in all India by the fertility of its lands and the richness of its production. By repairing the canals and tanks, he has fertilised extensive fields, uncultivated for many years, and the last harvest has surpassed all that one had ever seen. Unhappily this prosperity will not be of long duration, for, on the one hand, Idal Khan sends an army to punish the revolt of his general; on the other the Nayak of Madura so sluggish when it would have been easy for him to join his brother to crush Ekoji, is at last waking himself up from his apathy. He is raising a formidable army in agreement with his vassals, who have forgotten their own quarrels to unite their forces against the common enemy. At the same time, Mysore, who cannot see without uneasiness a bold set of people establishing themselves on her own frontiers fortifies the citadels she has taken from the northern provinces of Madura, gathers fresh troops, and makes great preparations for war. On the pretext of strengthening herself against the Muhammadans, she

may have in view an attack on the kingdom of Madura, when the Nayaka will be involved in his war with Tanjore."¹ This eulogy of Venkaji's administration is reflected in a statement in a different source: "Venkaji has carefully studied the internal economy of his state with a success that enriched his subjects and ennobled his name."² But this is to be contrasted with what Andre Freyre says in a letter of 1682: "I shall say little about Tanjore; the tyranny of Ekoji (Venkaji) continues his work of destruction there. After plundering the men, he has fallen on the pagodas of his own idols. One had never seen so much temerity in a pagan, but he is a pagan who has no other god than his cupidity. To satisfy it, he has appropriated the treasures of the pagodas and their large possessions. The Brahmans came in vain to lament and represent to him that their gods were abandoned without offerings, because the rice fields whose produce was intended for their worship, had been taken away from them. He replied to them that the gods did not eat rice, and that offerings of fragrant flowers would suffice. It can be judged from this how Ekoji treats his subjects."³ This is some straight-forward testimony against Venkaji's attitude towards the subject population. Father Britto in a letter of 1683 writes about Venkaji's revenue administration: "Ekoji takes away four-fifths of all the produce. As if this were not enough, he enforces payment in cash, and as he is careful to fix the price himself much above what the owner can realize, it happens that the sale of the whole harvest is never sufficient to pay the tax. Accordingly, the cultivators are burdened with a crushing debt and often they are obliged

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1. Bertrand : *La Mission du Madure* III p. 249.
 2. Col. Mackenzie, 1815 — *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, XIII, 457.
 3. Bertrand : *La Mission du Madure* III p. 306.
 4. Bertrand : *La Mission du Madure* III p. 338.

to prove their inability to pay, when they have to pay, by submitting to barbarous tortures. It will be difficult for you to conceive of such oppression.”⁴ There is obviously some contradiction between the first and second quotations given above and the third and fourth. This has been attempted to be glossed over by protagonists of Venkaji speaking of his natural benignity being curbed by his later troubles with his brother and others. Sir J. N. Sarkar deplores “deliberate falsification of history by later Maratha writers” and goes on to say “that contemporary records enable us to correct these misrepresentations and put Venkaji’s character in a true light as no unworthy brother of Sivaji.”⁵ Sir Jadunath is unconsciously right in the last part of his above statement in a sense in which he did not mean it! The truth could well be that Venkaji, earlier in his reign wishing to consolidate his hold over his newly conquered territory began in a conciliatory manner and when he was well-established began to show his true character.

Now occurred in 1676-77 an invasion of the Carnatic by Sivaji. The purpose of this visitation is variously explained by different historians. Some contend that he asked for a share of the Carnatic territories which Shahji bequeathed to Vankaji on the ground that as a brother he was entitled to such a share. But since the Carnatic Jaghir of Shahji was self-earned by him and Venkaji was the son who performed the funeral ceremonies of his father and Shahji had a right to bequeath such self-earned property on any one (in this case the son of his choice), and since in any case Tanjore territory was conquered by Venkaji personally, the claims of Sivaji, if he made any, are very tenuous. Then, it is stated that he wanted to conquer and consolidate a southern kingdom to which in times of danger from the Moghul Imperial forces he might be able to retire and from where he could defend himself more effectively. This certainly was not his motive for he did not do such a thing, though it was in his power to have done so after the

5. J. N. Sarkar : Shivaji and his times, p. 314.

conquest of Gingee and Vellore. Bijapur certainly would and could not have prevented him. Then M. G. Ranade and his band of romanticisers hold that he was somehow aware of the great role as successor to Vijayanagar he was to play in redeeming India from the sorry state to which the country had been reduced in his days. But the reality seems to have been, as Jadunath Sarkar thought, plunder on a vast scale. Sivaji's style of plunder was organized brigandage and so when he ordered his troops not to plunder the countryside, it was to prevent private enterprise in looting the countryside but to promote it as a state enterprise; and Sivaji was the Maratha State. This can be compared to Lord Clive's regulations preventing the servants of the Company in Bengal from accepting 'presents' and leaving that privilege safely in the hands of the Company as an entity. So J. N. Sarkar's view that 'the partition of his father's heritage was only a plea adopted to give a show of legality to this campaign of plunder' seems to be the only reasonable alternative explanation. He said 'gold and not land was his chief object'⁶ and added that 'the Karnatak was a land of gold' and that 'he obtained booty staggering the imagination of the Maratha chroniclers.' Sathyantha Iyer contends that 'plunder was a side issue; his palpable objective was the conquest and administration of the Eastern Karnatak in order to strengthen his own military and political position'.⁷ Two things are overlooked here: in the first place he did not arrange for administration of the territory he really conquered; in the second there was undoubted plunder. In fact some of his agents he planted in the Carnatic behaved in such a way as to attract the following observation from Martin: "Sivagy assured our envoy that we might stay in complete security at Pondicherry without taking the side of either party . . . that he would send an

6. J. N. Sarkar: Shivaji and his times, p. 303.

7. R. Satyanatha Iyer: *Tamilaham in the 17th Century*, p. 105.

avaladar in a few days to govern Pondicherry, and that we might have to live with him in the same manner as we had done with the officers of Chir Cam (Sher Khan Lodi) Sivagy sent some Bramans to all the villages in the country for governing them; the number of these scamps who had followed Sivagy for trying to get some employment is something amazing; they counted more than twenty thousand”⁸ Thus it becomes apparent that these attempts to ascribe motives to Sivaji who in all probability was motivated by the simple and natural desire to augment his wealth and reputation by extending the sphere of his usual activities, are beside the point.⁹

Sivaji or rather Shaji had given Venkaji the benefit of the counsel of a learned Maratha Brahmin by name Raghunatha Narayana Hanmante, who was supposed to act a Venkaji's mentor. But that Raghunatha Pant was for some reason dissatisfied with Venkaji's independent ways; and so he repaired Raighar and persuaded Sivaji to undertake the Carnatic campaign in 1676. Sivaji was accompanied by his brother Santaji and Raghunatha Narayan. From his homeland as he descended on the Carnatic, royalty and chieftancies fell like nine pins. Crossing Golconda on the way where he was royally entertained he moved

8. S. N. Sen: Foreign biographies of Shivaji, p. 278.

9. Sivaji had the misfortune to be assessed by Aurangzeb and Kafi Khan on the one hand Ranades and the Rayasats on the other, with mildly prejudiced critics like Vincent Smith and Sardesai in between. The pendulum has been swinging from one end to the other so violently that it cannot find its point of equilibrium even at the hands of a declaredly sober scholar like J. N. Sarkar. The trouble can be avoided, I think, by treating Sivaji as a human being and not a 'rat' or 'an incarnation with a mystic mission', but a natural product of the late 17th century, not too sophisticated, but sufficiently insensitive to nice moral doctrines to be able to provide enough of a contemporary answer to Aurangzeb.

on to capture Vellore and Gingee. The former place which was defended by an able general Abdullah Khan was taken later after 14 months while Gingee, defended by competent commanders, Kauf Khan and Nasir Muhamed Khan sons of the Vizior of Bijapur was captured by diplomacy rather than a compelling siege.

Sher Khan Lodi who was ruling from Valikandapuram the southern half of the Bijapur Carnatic regions was defeated in June 1677 and the Lodi made peace with the Marathas in July 1677. Sivaji then reached the northern banks of the Coleroon (Kollidam) river. From there he sent envoy to the Nayak in Tiruchy to demand one crore of rupees. As the Nayak expressed inability Sivaji settled accounts with him by accepting six lakhs of rupees.

Sivaji then sent for Venkaji who met him on the banks of the Coleroon; the invader demanded Venkaji to part with $\frac{3}{4}$ th of his jagirs to him. Naturally Venkaji refused, and left for Tanjore by the earliest and quickest conveyance. The disappointed Sivaji having appointed Santaji to rule over his Carnatic conquest and Hambi Rao his minister and general respectively, retired from the Carnatic (November 1677) after plundering Porto Novo on the way.

The firmness which Venkaji showed in his dealings with his brother provoked Sivaji's generals in the Carnatic to commit aggressions on Venkaji's kingdom. Venkaji marched to the region beyond the Coleroon and after a tortuous engagement with Santaji's armies, returned to Tanjore after an inconclusive conflict. Chokkanatha Nayaka of Tiruchy who wished to benefit by Venkaji's difficulties, marched on Tanjore but returned without achieving anything. The fight between Sivaji's forces and Venkaji's armies succeeded only in reducing the country-side to desolation and ruin.

Sivaji died in 1680. Venkaji besides others felt relieved. In 1680, Trichinopoly was under attack from the Mysore

general Kumaraiya. Venkaji, the Maratha general at Gingee and Kilavan Setupati the Marava chief continued to save Chokkanatha from this difficult situation. But when Chokkanatha died and was succeeded by Muthu Virappa II the relations between the Setupati and the Nayaka of Madura deteriorated. There was a combination of Tanjore, and Ramnad against Madura. Ultimately the Madura forces were washed.

Venkaji died in 1684 and was succeeded by his first son Shaji.

Venkaji, as we have seen before, inherited the whole of his father's Carnatic Jagir. But in the face of persistent and successful attacks on the northern regions of that Jaghir by Moghul forces he could hardly maintain his hold over them. In 1687 he had to sell away Bangalore to Chikka Deva Raya the Mysore ruler for three lakhs of rupees. The descendants of Venkaji ruled over only Tanjore in the Coramandel region.

Shahji (1684-1712)

Venkaji had three sons: Shahji, Serfoji and Tukkoji. These three sons succeeded to the throne one after another in the order of seniority, since Shaji as well as Serfoji died, the former without any issue. The Sahendra Vilasa Kavya by Ayyaval of Tiruvisalur says that Venkaji installed Shaji on the throne even during his own life time. Thryambeka Raja Makhi, the author of Dharmakuta was his minister.

During Shaji's reign the Tanjore principality took care not to indulge in unmanageable wars. Rajaram his kinsman was in Gingee and the strong fort was being besieged by Zulfikar Khan the redoubtable Moghul general. Seeing the plight of Rajaram "Eccogee sent horsemen and money to Ramanuja who hoped to rout the Mohgul".¹⁰ In 1693 Shahji provided Rajaram

10. Madras Diary and Consultation Book, 1690 p. 72.

with an army of 20000 horse. These did not escape the attention of Zulfikar Khan who imposed a military contribution of four lakhs of rupees a year on Tanjore. Shahji did not pay the tribute properly and the Moghul army frequently visited Tanjore to ensure payment. In 1694 "Zulfikar Khan has made an agreement with the Eccojee (Shahji) that he will not meddle with Tanjore nor any part of his country. Eccojee paying him twenty lakhs of rupees and maintaining one thousand horse and one thousand foot in Zulfikar Khan's service while he says in these parts, upon which agreement Eccojee paid 17 lakhs and offers to pay the rest when the Nabob carries his army over the river." ¹¹

Shahji learnt the hardway the lesson that in dealing with superior foes, prudence was decidedly the better part of valour a lesson which his illustrious contemporary in Madurai, Mangammal had learnt and began earnestly practising without firing a shot. But this did not prevent the continued waging of a tripartite war among Madura, Tanjore and Ramnad. The usual combination was for Tanjore and Ramnad to oppose Madura. The declining power of Madura which was evident even in the days of Mangammal made that Nayakdom an easy prey for Ramnad in particular. Kilavan Setupati of Ramnad was in a position even to occupy the capital city of Madura itself for two years and could be removed only by the most energetic measures of the Madura Dalavay Narasappaiah. In 1700 Mangammal declared war against Tanjore and the Madura army led by the reputed Narasappaiah reached Tanjore and would have occupied it but for the fact Shahji's minister Baloji (or Vagoji) successfully bribed the invading commander away from Tanjore and saved the city. Kilavan Setupati became independent and rewarded his ally Tanjore with Puthukkottai and the adjoining regions.

11. Ibid, 1694, p. 68

It was during Shahji's reign that Chickadeva Raya, the ruler of Mysore thought of damming the Kaviri within his kingdom ostensibly for providing irrigation for the lands in his territories but with the additional malicious intention of depriving the Trichinopoly and Tanjore regions of water. This aroused the two rulers of the Tamil country most affected by this design to jointly plan an invasion of Mysore. But before such a plan could fructify, the Mysore dam burst, chiefly due to inefficient engineering and saved the situation.

The final struggle between Madura and Ramnad which preceded the assumption of independence by Kilavan Setupati witnessed the death in battle of the famous Madurai general Narasappaiah. Tanjore gave marginal assistance to Madura in this conflict. This infuriated Kilavan Setupati who after finishing of Madura, attacked Tanjore in 1709. Shahji could not withstand the Marava offensive and had to sue for peace. Peace was secured by Tanjore by ceding Arantangi to Ramnad.

Shahji was a scholar who discovered and encouraged talent. A number of eminent poets and philosophers who wrote in Sanskrit received royal patronage. Marathi and Telugu to some extent flourished. But Tamil the language of the natives of the Kingdom languished for want of discerning patronage. Shahji was a builder and he provided medical and educational facilities to the people. Physicians who were imported from Hyderabad and Arabia were employed in hospitals he set up.

Shahji was intolerant of the Christians in his kingdom. He persecuted them; levied a pole-tax on them and put them to all kinds of hardship. Their churches were destroyed. The Nawab Daud Khan, Faujdar of the Carnatic wrote a strong letter to Shahji condemning his attitude towards the Christians. This had some effect on Shahji.

Shahji died in 1712 and when he died he was forty years old. Since he had no issue to succeed him, his next brother Serfoji I who was then Governor of the Subah of Sekkottai succeeded him.

Serfoji (1712-1728)

Serfoji continued the illustrious cultural and the not-so-illustrious political traditions established by his brother. Among the officers who served him must be mentioned the reputed general of the army Dalavay Ananda Rao, the dewan Rago Pandit and a minister of sorts by name Ayyavayyan who is much mentioned in inscriptions and seems to have been a generous person of worthwhile causes. The personal abilities of Serfoji I can not be determined, as C.K. Srinivasan does, on the basis of the usual eulogies in contemporary literature.

The only event of any importance that occurred during his reign was the war which Tanjore waged with Ramnad in connection with a succession struggle in the latter principality. We have detailed in the account of the 'The Marava rulers of Ramnad and Sivaganga'¹² the struggle between Tanda Tevar and Bhavani Sankara who fought for the throne left vacant by the death of Vijaya Raghunatha. These two contestants to power approached Serfoji of Tanjore for intercession in the affairs of Ramnad on their behalf. When initially Tanda Tevar sought the assistance of Madurai and Pudukkottai, Bhavani Sankara approached Serfoji for help promising to grant to him all the Ramnad territory to the north of the Pambar in return for such help. Serfoji accordingly sent an army under Ananda Rao to assist Bhavani Sankara: Ananda Rao defeated the armies of Madurai and Pudukkottai severally and pressed the siege of Ramnad with great vigour. Ultimately his troops entered the fort, seized the Setupati Tanda Tevar and his family and executed them. Bhavani Sankara became the Setupati in A. D. 1720.

Bhavani Sankara did not keep his promise to the Raja of Tanjore in the matter of cession of territory; and he picked a quarrel with his polygars. One of the polygars so affected was

12. Vide chapter IV supra.

one Sasivarna Tevar who approached the Court of Serfoji I and represented the state of affairs in Ramnad. One again the Tanjore army proceeded against Ramnad this time to punish Bhavani Sankara. The Ramnad forces were defeated, Bhavani Sankara was captured and thrown into prison where he eventually died. Out of this broil arose, the Zamindari of Sivaganga; and with some truth Rangacharya remarked that 'with the tragic end of Bhavani Sankara, the history of united Ramnad ended'.¹³

Serfoji I had no legitimate children by any of his wives. An attempted subterfuge by one of his wives Apamba Bai to foist on the family a putative son did not succeed and was not encouraged. Serfoji however had an illegitimate son by one Kuppi or Rupi, a concubine; he was called 'Kattu Raja' since he had taken refuge in the Udayarpalayam jungles, before seizing the Tanjore throne for a short while in 1738.

Tukkoji (1728-1736)

Venkaji's last son Tukkoji succeeded Serfoji I in 1728 and reigned till 1736. Tukkoji's reign also witnessed the involvement of Tanjore in the affairs of the Marava country. Tanjore thwarted in the north by the superior might of the Moghuls, in its turn became aggressive in the south and interfered in the politics of the Maravas and of Tondaiman. Tukkoji was neither competent nor peace-loving; he was rashly aggressive and disgustingly cruel in the tactics. He tried to prop up the quickly and surely declining Madura Nayakdom under the rule of the infatuated queen Meenakshi who fell an easy prey to the wiles of Chanda Saheb of Arcot.

In Ramnad, Katta Tevar had become Setupati in 1729. There are two versions of an invasion by Tanjore of Ramnad. Nelson is of the view that Katta Tevar provoked the aggression by invading Tanjore territories with the help of the

13. The Indian Antiquary volume XLVI, page 213

Zamindar of Sivaganga; and the reason mentioned was to recover the territories annexed by Tanjore on the occasion of installing Bhavani Sankara as Setupati. But Jesuit letter dated 13th August 1733 says that 'Tukkoji having extricated to himself from Moghul pressure in the north took out a large army to invade Ramnad. He proclaimed that the intention was to help Bhavani Sankara recover his throne. In fact he wished to secure the Marava country for his own son'. This is what in substance the Jesuit letter says.

Katta Tevar was contemplating submission to the superior forces of Tanjore. But a chieftain, who owed allegiance to Tukkoji, and named Pandaram advised the Setupati to resist the aggression; and the Setupati did likewise and used all the native tactics of the Maravas to harass the Tanjore army. The Maratha army besieged Ramnad closely. In the meanwhile Tukkoji learning that Katta Tevar had been advised to resist, by his own chieftain Pandaram ordered him to be executed. This was done; and the victim's 'body was dragged along the principal streets'. This brutality horrified a section of the Tanjore army which turned and retreated under the leadership of Pandaram's son. They cut off the retreat lines of the rest of the army, so that the main Tanjore army had to lift the siege and retire with considerable loss. Katta Tevar generously decided not to destroy the Tanjore army.

Tukkoji's relations with Tiruchy were equally disgraceful and unsuccessful. He tried to persuade Rani Minakshi to shift her capital from Tiruchy to Madura so that he could take advantage of the exposed defences of that kingdom. But since Minakshi did not oblige, his manouvre failed. Later the Tanjore and Madurai armies under the joint command of the veteran general Ananda Rao moved into the Tondaiman's territories. Except Tirumayam a strong and well defended fortress, the rest of the country was easily occupied. At that stage, Marava troops from Ramnad came to the assistance of the Tondaiman. These troops caused

a lot of destruction among the enemy forces. General Ananda Rao prevented from achieving his objective retreated to Tanjore.

These constant offensive acts which Tukkoji was committing provoked the Tondaiman and the Setupati to request the Nawab of Arcot to intercede which he did. The Madura and the Muslim armies, one from the west and the other from the north, jointly invaded Tanjore and besieged the city. Ananda Rao, no doubt, valiantly fought but fell in battle, killed by a poisoned arrow. Tukkoji bought peace by paying very heavy ransom.

Tukkoji was a scholar and a patron of scholars like most eminent members of his dynasty; he was a musician and wrote a text on musicology. He patronised the famous scholar Ghansyama Pandita, whose whole family was reputed for its brilliant Sanskrit scholarship.

The Immediate Successors of Tukkoji (1736-39)

The death of Tukkoji in 1736 landed the kingdom in chaos in the matter of succession. It all happened this way. Tukkoji had five sons: Baba Saheb, Saiyaji (Sahuji), Anna Saheb, Nana Saheb and Pratap Singh. Of these Anna Saheb and Nana Saheb (who were illegitimate children) predeceased their father. Of the remaining three Baba Saheb and Saiyaji were Tukkoji's children by his wives and Pratap Singh his son by Annapurna, a second wife of his.¹⁴ Since the two legitimate children were highly incompetent, the illegitimate Pratap Singh entertained ambitions of securing the throne which were supported by some nobles in the court. The situation was complicated by the existence of a natural son of Serfoji I a Katturaja who was also called Savai Shahji or Siddhuji - born of a concubine named Rupī or Kuppi. When the legitimate sons

14. A second wife is one who is married to the heroism of a king and not his royalty.

were worthless, a very aspiring and enterprising illegitimate son conspired to secure the throne by whatever means he could manage.

Baba Saheb, the elder of Tukkoji's sons, succeeded his father and ruled for a year. During his reign period Tanjore was invaded and plundered by Chanda Saheb. There was a lieutenant of the army in charge of defending the fort who was named Saiyid. He worked himself into the good books of royalty and amassed sufficient influence to be able to make and mar kings. He was an arch conspirator. Baba died or was done away with. He was succeeded by his wife Sujana Bai who ruled for two years i. e., from 1737 to 1738. Now Kattu Raja emerged from his obscurity and overthrowing Sujana Bai seized the throne in 1738. The scheming legitimate son Saiyaji fled from Tanjore to Chidambaram from where he corresponded with M. Dumas the French Governor in Pondicherry and sought help for gaining the Tanjore throne. He offered to transfer Karaikkal and ten adjacent villages in return for such help. M. Dumas agreed to send a naval squadron for attacking Karaikkal. But by then Saiyid had become friendly to Saiyaji and Kattu Raja was overthrown and Saiyaji became Raja of Tanjore. This was in August 1738. The flush of victory turned his head and he forgot the promise he had made to M. Dumas. He perhaps felt that since M. Dumas had not secured his throne for him, he was not obligated to keep the promise. The French too did not press the matter; the squadron was withdrawn. Chanda Saheb who was on the look out for gains, territorial and monetary, any where, and who was friendly with the French, moved with an army to Karaikkal and captured the place. Before Saiyaji could react to this, he was overthrown and Pratap Singh his younger and half-brother ascended the throne. It was left to Pratap Singh to cede Karaikkal to the French.

The order of succession after Tukkoji is differently mentioned by different historians. Dodwell holds with Elias Quillor, the

Dutch governor of Negapatam (1739) that Shahji and Saiyaji were one and the same; K. R. Subramanyan holds that there was no ruler of the name of Saiyaji¹⁵. But a careful survey of the available records tends to establish the order of succession which we have mentioned above and which C. K. Srinivasan also adopts.¹⁶

Pratap Singh (1739 - 1763)

The quarter of a century during which Pratap Singh ruled Tanjore witnessed the Carnatic Wars, the struggle between Muhammad Ali supported by the English and Chanda Saheb supported by the French and in the destroying of the one and weakening of the other of the Nayak states in Tamilnad as a result of political and military activities. Though he did his best to ward off attacks on Tanjore, he could not do much to prevent the beginning of the final decline of Tanjore as an independent kingdom. One of the first things he did after assumption of royalty was to execute Saiyid which rid the country of a very undesirable conspirator. One of his able ministers was Dabir Pandit, and Manaji and Sakhoji were among his ablest generals. But the abilities of these generals could not save Tanjore from constant attack from such diverse quarters as the Nawab of the Carnatic, the Marathas, the English, the French and the Tondaiman of Pudukottai. He also followed the general policy so far pursued by his predecessors for committing uncared for and wanton aggression on weaker neighbours and bribing heavily stronger foes to leave him in peace. These will be evident from what follows. We have seen that earlier in 1732 Safdar Ali and Chanda Saheb descended on Tanjore from Arcot and carried the place by assault, and that the then-ruling Raja of Tanjore bought them off by bribing the invaders handsomely. The invaders even took an undertaking from the ruler of Tanjore that he would pay tribute regularly. Pratap

15. K. R. Subramanyan : *Maratha Rulers of Tanjore*, pp. 44-46.

16. C. K. Srinivasan : *Maratha Rule in the Carnatic*, p. 248

Singh was irregular in the payment of tribute ; and this occasioned their interference of Arcot more seriously in the affairs of Tanjore. But any action serious was interrupted by the invasion of the Carnatic by the Marathas of Satara. We have seen how in the battle of Damalcherus Pass (1740) Dost Ali was defeated and slain by the Marathas. Chanda Saheb who had shut himself up in Trichinopoly was forced to surrender the fort and was taken prisoner to Satara. Trichy thereafter was garrisoned by Murari Rao Ghorpade, the Maratha general. Pratap Singh was happy that this Maratha interlude in the Carnatic saved him from imminent extermination at the hands of the Nawab of Arcot. When these disturbed conditions in the Carnatic prompted Nizam - Ul - Mulk to personally enter the Carnatic at the head of a large army and when he was at the gates of Tanjore, Pratap Singh brought peace by executing a bond for seven lakhs of rupees and immediate payment of some considerable cash.

When the old Nizam had died and been succeeded by Nazir Jang, the affairs of the Carnatic came to his notice and he wished to set things right. He was welcomed by a motley crowd of mercenary forces under the various chieftains there. Murari Rao, the Raja of Mysore, Mohammad Ali and the English joined hands with him. They were opposed to the combinations of Chanda Saheb and Muzafar Jang supported by the French.

During 1749-50 Chanda Saheb and Muzafar Jang supported by the French crossed the Coleroon into the Tanjore kingdom and reaching Tanjore quickly besieged it. Pratap Singh was not in a position to resist. He then had recourse to duplicity. He secretly sought the assistance of Muhammad Ali and the English while he delayed finalising terms of surrender to the besiegers who demanded four million rupees. But the Tanjore general Manaji who was too confident of his powers started fighting but was worsted by the enemy. The Muslim and French troops reached the walls of the Fort and were on the point of carrying everything before them. At that point, Pratap Singh agreed

to pay Chanda Saheb seven crores of rupees and two lakhs at once to the French troops; he also agreed to cede 81 villages to the French East India Company, and to remit the annual ground rent due for the Karaikkal territory. These were but promises; and on principle, Pratap Singh never meant what he said; he delayed implementation of his promises. In the meanwhile Muhammad Ali and Murari Rao advanced towards Tanjore and relieved the place of French and Muslim pressure. Chanda Saheb had to be content with the little advance money he had received from Pratap Singh; the French - supported Faujdar and Subedar retreated to Pondicherry with much loss of face.

In 1749, Kattu Raja who had been deposed and driven out earlier was trying hard to come back. He first approached the French but did not succeed in enlisting their support. So he tried the English in Fort St. David and successfully enticed them to enter into an alliance with him promising to cede the well fortified Devikkottai on the mouth of the Coleroon. The English were quite willing to help, since whoever was not wanted by Dupleix became a friend automatically of the English in those times in the Carnatic. The first attempt made by the English on Devikkottai did not completely succeed but in a subsequent attempt in which Lawrence and Clive participated Devikkottai was captured, though the place was stoutly defended by Manaji. Pratap Singh made peace with the English, ceded Devikkottai to them, and agreed to pay Kattu Raja a pension of Rs. 40,000. Pratap Singh was convinced that the friendship of the English was valuable in the face of French hostility.

The politico-military situation in the Carnatic was converging on Trichinopoly when Muhammad Ali was besieged. Muhammad Ali was assisted by the English and the Marathas and the Raja of Mysore. Pratap Singh threw in his lot with Muhammad Ali and his friends and sent Manaji to Tiruchy with a

contingent. Chanda Saheb and his French associate Law, commander of the French forces were caught between the armies defending Tiruchy and those which were surrounding the besiegers. They were driven into the Island of Srirangam, where Law was taken prisoner and Chanda Saheb sought refuge with Manaji, the Tanjore general. Manaji committed the unpardonable crime of killing one who had taken refuge. Chanda Saheb was murdered at the instance of Manaji. This perfidy was rewarded by Muhammd Ali who granted Koviladi and remitted the arrears of tribute for ten years.

Dupleix realising the value of Murari Rao's service bought them by granting very liberal terms to him. Murari Rao who was essentially a freebooter roamed about the Carnatic, pillaging and plundering and striking terror into Muslim and English hearts. Pratap Singh who first promised to help the English against Murari Rao, withdrew his offer and aid fearing the Marathas. But in Lawrence's siege of Trichinopoly directed against the Raja of Mysore, Pratap Singh participated and helped the English in the battle of the Sugar-loaf Rock. Dupleix who found the combination of Muhammad Ali, the English and the Raja of Tanjore too formidable for him, bribed the minister Sahoji to try for the dismissal of Manaji and at the same time threatened Pratap Singh with the prospects of a Maratha invasion of the Tanjore country. Pratap Singh ignored Dupleix's warnings and failed to make up with the English and waited on events. The only thing he did was to dismiss Manaji from the army command; and that was a very foolish thing to do. The new commander was Govinda Rao; and he was a very inefficient general. In the meantime, the country was ravaged and pillaged at will by a body of Maratha troops. To escape from this scourge, Pratap Singh realised that the only thing he could and must do was to restore Manaji to the command; and this he did. Manaji thereupon caught his enemies in a trap between two branches of the Kaviri and not only decimated them but went to the

extent of murdering even his prisoners of war. The valour and cruelty of Manaji frightened Sakhoji who again complained against Manaji to the king. Pratap Singh had become a tool in the hands of his minister Sakhoji who had become his evil genius.

In 1754 French and Maratha troops again subjected the Tanjore country to considerable damage and Govinda Rao, when he tried to intercept them was severely defeated by Murari Rao. The English advised Pratap Singh to note that his misfortunes were all due to the evil advice of Sakhoji. So Pratap Singh dismissed that minister and recalling Manaji appointed him as minister as well as commander. Murari Rao left the Carnatic having received seven lakhs of rupees from Tanjore.

The troubles of Pratap Singh with the French did not end really till 1758. Lally who became governor of Pondicherry had like Cornwallis come to India with the idea of keeping aloof from native Indian politics; but like Cornwallis again he entered the vortex of Carnatic politics. He seized Fort St. David and released an uncle of the wandering Kattu Raja. This uncle promised the French forty lakhs of rupees in exchange for the restoration of Kattu Raja to the Tanjore throne. Lally who was even otherwise contemplating to extract 56 lakhs of rupees from Pratap Singh, proceeded to Karaikkal and Nagore where he indulged in much futile search of allegedly hidden gold and treasure. His invasion of Tanjore which was on the point of success had to be terminated and he had to retreat on hearing of the arrival of the English fleet off Karaikkal. He returned from Tanjore to Karaikkal in August 1758.

Pratap Singh tried twice to reconquer the Arantangi region from the Setupati. In the first attempt he met with defeat and so he asked the Nawab of Arcot to help him. The

English Presidency in Madras counselled peace among Tanjore, Pudukkottai and Ramnad; and not indulge in war trying to break the peace. The enmity between Tanjore and Ramnad was so deep that any attempt by the English to befriend the the Maravas was treated as an unfriendly act by Pratap Singh. But the English required the Setupati's help to control the Palayagars of Tirunelvelly.

The Raja of Tanjore and the Tondaiman of Pudukkottai also had their border disputes. The forts of Kiranelli and Tirumayam were bones of contention between the two and in 1755 a war broke out. Once again the Governor of Madras advised them to settle their differences peaceably. Regardless of this sound advice, Pratap Singh ordered Manaji to invade the territories of the Tondaiman. To avoid a confrontation between Tanjore and Pudukkottai, the English Captain Caillaud in Trichinopoly made military preparations to move against both: thereupon Tanjore withdrew its forces. But in 1756 Pratap Singh renewed his attempts and succeeded in capturing Kiranelli. During 1759 and 1760 further clashes between them occurred; in almost every instance, Pratap Singh was the aggressor. Neither the Nawab nor the English Presidency was in a position to control him.

Pratap Singh's aggressions against his southern neighbours came to an end in 1763 when he died. Most writers on Pratap Singh and his government have exaggerated his competence and his importance. The dubious compliment that Dodwell has paid quoting from the Company's letters, namely, that 'the king of Tanjore acts as justly as Eastern politics allow' is reproduced in every text book on the Tanjore Marathas and used as a genuine compliment which it is not.

Pratap Singh was succeeded by his son Tuljaji.

Tuljaji (1763 - 1787)

Tuljaji who ruled for quarter of a century (with an interval of 4 years during which he was deposed) during a

very disputed period in the history of the Coromandel, paved the way for the final fall of the dynasty. His reign period began when the Seven Years War had just ended but when Hyder Ali's cavalry attacks on the Carnatic had just started. While Hyder's troops were spreading fire and destruction in the Carnatic, during intervals of his malevolent attention, Tuljaji did the same service in a diminutive way and earned minor notoriety. In 1769 Hyder warned Tuljaji that the latter should pay up forty lakhs of rupees as compensation for his aid to the English general Captain Richard Smith in capturing Karur. He added that if it be not done, he would 'not only burn the whole country, but cut off the whole body of the inhabitants and Brahmans'. The frightened Tuljaji paid up four lakhs of rupees and four elephants to appease the visitor to the Carnatic.

Hyder's and Tippu's civil governments were but the necessary stalk from which stemmed aggressive, depredatory and poisonous branches which thrust in all directions and they discovered that they should ally with anyone - whom they could leisurely destroy after initial alliances to thwart the English whose ultimate capacity to dominate the Indian field (political as well as military) was well understood and dreaded by them.

Tuljaji's relations with the Tondaiman and the Setupati were no less pleasant. The old rivalries continued. Tuljaji frequently wished to sack Ramnad and attack Pudukkottai, but the Nawab of the Carnatic did not like the Raja of Tanjore forces to be kept in readiness for any eventuality that may be caused by the sudden appearance of Hyder in the Carnatic. He accordingly advised him to desist from aggressive activities against the southern states. But there were provocations also from Ramnad which the Raja of Tanjore could not ignore. In 1753, Damodaran Pillai, the Dalavoy of Ramnad supported by the Chieftain of Sivaganga recovered

all the territory which Tanjore had once taken from Ramnad, either in war or by treaty. In 1771, Tuljaji contemplated reprisals and led an army against Ramnad. Both Ramnad and Pudukkottai appealed to the Nawab of the Carnatic but in vain. The Maratha armies appeared before the gates of Ramnad and were in a position to dictate peace to the Setupati, who agreed to allow Tanjore to retain its conquests and agreed also to pay one lakh of rupees and give thirty thousand rupees worth of jewels and present two large elephants and two pieces of cannon. The Raja of Tanjore then directed his armies against Sivaganga which at the instigation of the Nawab resisted. The Raja hurriedly returned to Tanjore to find himself in a fix, for the Nawab was declaiming war on him. The Nawab contended that the Raja had disobeyed his orders in invading Ramnad. Though it may be stated as C. K. Srinivasan does that the Nawab's substantial reason for military action against Tanjore was self-aggrandisement, it was also true that Tuljaji had been disobedient and aggressive and a menace to his southern neighbours and needed chastisement. It had been agreed in 1762 (by the treaty dated 20th September 1762) that if there be dispute between the Nawab of the Carnatic and the Raja of Tanjore the English should be the arbitrators between the two. But now the Nawab wanted to take unilateral action. The Nawab and the English were both against Tuljaji whom they suspected of collusion with Hyder Ali of Mysore.

After the invasion of the Carnatic by Hyder Ali in 1769 and many warnings he issued to Tanjore, Tuljaji got frightened and began befriending the usurper of Mysore. He wrote to Hyder whose help he sought against the domination of the Nawab and of the English and wrote to say that he was depending on his firm friendship. So when the Nawab demanded payment from Tanjore the English concurred and thought that it was most unreasonable that the

Rajah should possess the finest part of the country, and yet pay nothing for its defence. The Raja thought that it was right for him to throw himself on the mercies of the Mysore marauder since neither Arcot nor Fort St. George helped him when he was in difficulties; but it was also reasonable for Arcot and Fort St. George to hold that Tuljaji who had sought the friendship of their enemy Hyder Ali, had by that very act forfeited any claim on their protection.

So the Nawab in his traditional way demanded 25 lakhs of rupees from the Raja who in his traditional way prevaricated. Then an army from Arcot jointly led by Umdat-UL-Umara, the Son of Mmhammad Ali, and general Smith attacked and defeated the Tanjoreans (September-1771) and dictated peace. The Raja was to pay 32 1/2 lakhs of rupees as cost for the military expenses incurred by the invaders; he was also to return to the Setupati whatever land or other things he had extracted from him earlier in 1771; he had to agree to help the Nawab when the latter needed it; he must surrender Arni, Tevanur and some other villages in Trichinopoly, in lieu of the payment of 32 1/2 lakhs of rupees mentioned above, the regions (Subahs) of Mayavaram and Kumbakonam were handed over to the Nawab for two years. The Raja was to treat considerately the merchants of the English Company who had settled in Tanjore; it was also stipulated that the fort of Vallam was to be destroyed. This humiliating treaty evidences neither diplomatic competence nor military ability on the part of Tuljaji. But he seems never to have intended to keep the treaty.

The Nawab found enough reasons for a second invasion of Tanjore. He maintained that Tuljaji imported Marathas from Poona who were asked to help the rebels in Ramnad and Sivaganga to rise against their own chiefs, and that he sold away (or mortgaged) the district of Kumbakonam to the Dutch and

that he had not paid him the moneys stipulated in the treaty of 1771. The Nawab secured the assistance of the English this time also and in August 1773 marched against Tanjore. Having captured Budalur and Tirikkattuppalli on the way, they soon reached Tanjore which fell to the invaders on the 17th September 1773. Tuljaji, his family, Manaji and many other leading citizens and officers were taken captive. A considerable quantity of jewels were also seized. The king was deposed and the Nawab took over the government of Tanjore. The territories which had been sold to the Dutch by Tuljaji were also recaptured by the English and added to the Nawab's dominions.

The Nawab let loose on the kingdom of Tanjore a reign of terror and limitless extortion during the two years and six months (September 1773 to April 1776) he administered it. The Rev. Schwartz, the great German missionary wrote in 1799 : "In the year 1773 the Nawab found means to usurp the Tanjore country, which he ruined by inhuman exactions".¹⁶ The Nawab made over the revenues of the kingdom to his creditors like the notorious Paul Benfield. The Nawab carried away from the Tanjore country 4000 horses, 140 elephants, 500 palanquins with balls of ivory, 1000 Gujarat cows, 8000 country cattle, 1000

16 Elaborating this point C.K. Srinivasan points out that the Nawab got 81 lakhs of rupees from the people as revenue while Pratap Singh got only 57 1/2 lakhs and that the difference shows the extent to which the spoliation went. But before such a conclusion can be arrived at it is necessary to show that the 57 1/2 lakhs collected during Pratap Singh's period does not represent inefficient tax collection as contrasted possibly to really efficient methods employed by the Nawab which yielded more revenue. But even if revenue were collected without employing undue force, the government could still be oppressive in various other ways. Further incessant wars during Pratap Singh's period must have affected agricultural operations too.

buffaloes, guns, brassware, tents, furniture, clothes, jewels golden images of gods, ammunition and gold and silver as well as ready money. The total value of the looted property was nearly 105 lakhs and ten thousand pagodas. The Directors of the English East India Company who came to know of this collusion between the Nawab and the English and the deposition of Tuljaji, ordered the dismissal and recall of governor Wynch of Fort St. George. Wynch's place was taken by Pigot who set about undoing all the injustice which Muhammad Ali had done to Tanjore. The Court of Directors had said: "The Court are of opinion, that the Governor and Council of Madras were not justified, in 1771, in placing the Company's troops at the disposal of the Nawab, leaving it to him to settle with the Raja as he pleased, and they were much less justified, in 1773, in dethroning the Raja, and putting the Nawab in possession of the Principality." Pigot restored Tuljaji to the throne, but reduced him to a position subordinate to that of the Company. It was stipulated that the Raja must maintain English troops to garrison the capital city at an expense of four lakhs of pagodas every year; and that the English should have the sole right to defend the Tanjore kingdom against invaders; and that the Raja was not to enter into any alliance with any other power without English permission or knowledge or to give help to the enemies of the English. The Nawab's rights in the kingdom were reduced to those mentioned in the treaty of 1762. The restoration occurred in April 1776. The Raja became servile and proclaimed, "The country of Tanjore is the Company's. I have only to beg they will preserve my honour." He granted to the Company 277 villages known as the **Nagore Settlement**, exclusive of inams to temples, choultries and Brahmans.

In July 1780 occurred another of those disasters called Hyder Ali's invasion of the Carnatic. The country was reduced to desolation. Schwartz who knew it at first hand says: "Their idols are taken away, their houses are

burnt and their cattle driven away, and what afflicts thousands of parents unspeakably more is that Haider sends their best children away (to be turned Muhammadans). All the the small boys of eight or nine or ten years he sends to his country"¹⁷. Bowring expatiating on this says: "The young were afterwards trained to arms and formed the first nucleus of a band of compulsory converts from Hinduism to Islam - a band which was largely augmented in the time of Tippu Sultan under the title of **Chela** or disciple battalions"¹⁸. Schwartz says again: "When it is considered that Haidar Ali has carried off so many thousands of people and that many thousands have died of want, it is not at all surprising to find desolated villages such distress I never before witnessed and god grant I never may again"¹⁹. Many people fled the country and to make matters worse Bava Pandit, the minister of the restored Tuljaji introduced an oppressive system of revenue collection which completed the miseries of the people.

The Tondaiman of Pudukkottai had a long standing complaint against the Maratha rulers of Tanjore that the latter were holding the forts of Kiranelli, Pattukkottai and Arantangi illegally. He now successfully appealed to the English for the restoration of these forts. On orders from Colonel Braithwaite the Tondaiman captured those forts.

In 1782 Tippu, the son and successor of Hyder Ali descended on the Carnatic and after defeating Col. Braithwaite near Kumbakonam, moved on to lay the country in ruin. The king of Tanjore represented to the English that Tippu's minions "crossed the Coleroon, plundered the districts of Mayour and Shiyally, plundered Cumbeconam completely, wounded

17. Pearson : Memoirs of Schwartz Vol. I, pp. 338 -339.

18. Haidar Ali : p. 75.

19. Pearson : Memoirs of Schwartz Vol. I pp. 348 -350.

several people and carried away several women, spread themselves over the country and were causing devastation in a manner not to be described". Schwartz said: "Having carried twelve thousand children captive from Tanjore, he (Tippu) compelled them all to become Muhammadans".²⁰

Tuljaji, the incompetent, the unfortunate, died in 1787. A throne was not exactly the thing for him to sit on, while he had inherited all the weaknesses of his ancestors, he had none of the virtues of some among them. The aggressions of the usurpers of power in Mysore, the avarice of the English, the ambitions of the Nawab, the continued hostility of the Tondaiman and the Setupati, and above all some of his own officers like Bava Pandit were no doubt responsible in a large measure for the ills of Tanjore during his times. But his contribution to his own fall was not inconsiderable. He could not distinguish foes from friends, nor could he gracefully yield when he could nor forcefully resist when he should. His kingdom saw unprecedented horrors in his regime. In proportion to the decline in his official position his character also deteriorated. His well known learning and his alleged eclecticism were of no avail when he had to face hard facts of life. He solved them by fleeing from them into the arms of bad company. He no doubt sacked Dabir Pandit which was not a bad thing to do. But he sank into a mire of dissipation and sensuality from which only death relieved him.

Tuljaji had adopted Serfoji (Sarabhoji) belonging to a collateral branch and appointed Schwartz to educate the boy and make him fit to assume royalty in due course when he attained majority. In the meantime, he nominated his brother Amar Singh to act as regent of the minor prince and look after the affairs of state.

20. Pearson: *Memoirs of Schwartz*, Vol. I. p. 375,

Amar Singh (1787—1798):

Amar Singh was also called Ramaswami and was the product of a morganatic marriage which Pratap Singh had contracted. The English who thought it prudent and advantageous, i.e., to them, to introduce changes in the relations of Tanjore with the Company each time there was a change in ruler in Tanjore, imposed a new treaty on Amar Singh in 1787. It was stipulated thereby that Amar Singh should make an annual contribution of four lakhs of pagodas to the Company and that it should vary with revenues of the state; that if punctual payment of the amount is not made, the Company would be at liberty to make its own arrangements to collect the amount, during war time 4/5 of the state revenues should be paid into the English treasury but the usual tribute could be suspended; the Raja was also to pay an annual amount of three lakhs of pagados to liquidate the arrears due to the Nawab; and that all the aforesaid amounts were to be remitted into the English treasury only. Even if Amar Singh had a will to pay, it looked as if he had not the means to honour the terms of this treaty. He appointed officers for the collection of revenue with instructions to do their worst by the cultivators. They did better than he ever intended. The corruption and the cruelty that crept into the revenue administration became notorious. He was illiterate and had no means of looking into state budgets and accounts. The Company finding the Raja in great financial difficulties slightly modified the terms of the earlier treaty by fresh provisions which were announced in 1792. The position however did not materially change. Amar Singh had become a titular ruler, with no control over foreign affairs and burdened with financial duties beyond his capacity to discharge. The English had started the process of reducing the king to a non-entity and eventual take-over of the state. The Nawab of Arcot who had a notion that he was the de jure overlord of the entire Carnatic including Tanjore was quietly overlooked.

Amar Singh's relations with his ward Serfoji was never amicable. He ill-treated him and foisted false charges of attempt to murder him on the youthful prince. The supporters of Amar Singh advised him to appeal to the Governor of Madras, Sir Archibald Campbell to declare that he (Amar Singh) was the legitimate heir to the throne notwithstanding his low birth and that Serfoji was in no way entitled to the throne. The gullible Madras Governor consulted a number of pandits in Tanjore on these points. The pandits had already been bought off by Amar Singh and they unanimously and emphatically asserted that Amar Singh was the rightful heir to the throne and dismissed the claims of Serfoji.

Amar Singh in the confidence of legally permanent power went from bad to worse and turned an abominable tyrant. Revenue officers like Sar-i-Khel Siva Rao devised measures which made the tyranny pure and effective. The hostility of Amar Singh towards Serfoji became unbearable and Schwartz represented matters in effective language to Lord Cornwallis, the then Governor-General. A thorough probe was made afresh and it was decided that Amar Singh was to be pensioned off and Serfoji should take over as ruler. Before these decisions could be implemented the great and noble Schwartz passed away.

Actually when Serfoji (Sarabhoji) was raised to the throne (1798), Wellesley was the Governor-General. It was his desire that Serfoji II himself should initiate a new treaty with the English. The transfer of power occurred smoothly. Serfoji "agreed to the treaty of 1792 and to such other arrangements as may be mutually agreed upon for the honour and interest of both parties". Amar Singh was deposed in June 1798 and abhorred to reside in Tiruvidaimarudur near Kumbakonam on a pension of 25000 pagodas per year. He died in 1802.

Serfoji II practically surrendered the whole of the rights of government of the Tanjore country to the English by the

treaty which he now ratified. He agreed to the appointment of a commission which would recommend measures for the better management of the country; the recommendations of the commission were embodied in the treaty of 1799. This treaty recognized Serfoji II as the ruler of Tanjore but his writ would run within the city of Tanjore and Vallam only. The rest of the government was surrendered to the English. When the Madras Presidency was formed two years later, i. e., after the final conclusion of the Polygar problem and the settlement of the Mysore question, Tanjore became a part of it. The Raja was granted annual allowance of one lakh of pagodas and one-fifth of the net revenues of the country. The treaty of 1799 practically ended the sovereignty of the Maratha Raja of Tanjore. The revenue and judicial system which the Company proposed to establish was outside the jurisdiction of the Raja and was to be part of the overall administrative arrangement which the English were contemplating for the whole of the Presidency. Though conditions had changed, it was perhaps in the long term interests of the much parried people that the kind of peace which the British alone could provide them, had to be established. It was unrealistic to expect that the Raja of Tanjore, however, competent and enlightened he might be, could give the country the government which they needed then and thereafter.

Serfoji, the nominal ruler of Tanjore, deprived of power but endowed with glitter spent his time and energies on art and literature instead of on war and diplomacy; the choice, though imposed, was well made. He put his opportunity to the best use. He was better even than Shahji in his patronage of scholarship and practice of the arts. His English education was taken care of by no less a person than Schwartz himself; he wrote and spoke English fluently and well. He was made into a fine gentleman whose style, bearing and manners are praised by natives as well as foreign visitors. His collection of books and manuscripts in Sanskrit, Telugu,

Modi and Tamil which goes by the name of the Tanjore Saraswathi Mahal Library is monumental in reputation and importance, though not in numbers. He encouraged music and Tanjore became the centre of Carnatic music. He had a fancy for curios like an electrical gadget, rare paintings, a printing press, astronomical instruments, an ivory skeleton and so on. He was a good shot and he even tried his hand in English poetry. The only verse he seems to have composed is preserved to posterity since it is engraved on the tomb stone of Schwartz. The verse is more an evidence of his gratitude than his poetic talents. He endowed the Brihadeesvara temple lavishly and added a few new shrines thereto. He had a concubine, Mukkamba, whose name he gave to a choultry at Orathanadu. He showed his gratitude and affection to the English (who allowed him to survive as a ruler of sorts) in 1875 by erecting two stone columns which he dedicated to the memory of the triumphs of British arms.

Serfoji died in 1833 and was succeeded by his rather sickly son Sivaji II who ruled from 1833 to 1855.

Sivaji II (1833—1855)

Sivaji had never been conspicuous for intelligence, dash or initiative. The harem was his normal residence where a multitude of wives shared his dyspeptic attentions. Bishop Heber who offered to improve him was not given the opportunity by Sivaji's overindulgent mother who thought that her dear son was safer in the company of concubines than a scholarly missionary. Bishop Heber ruefully observed: "So poor Sevajee must chew beetle, and sit in the zarana, and pursue the other amusements of the common race of Hindu princes, till he is gathered to those heroic forms, who girded with long swords, with hawks on their wrists, and garments like those of the king of spades, adorn the principal room in the palace"; and this Sivaji II by choice as well as the force of circumstances did,

Sivaji II died on 27th October 1855, leaving behind two elders; the elder was in her deathbed when the king died; the king left no sons behind. Mr. Fortes, resident at Tanjore proposed that the younger daughter be proposed for the throne. But the Madras governor's Council decided that since the king did not leave a male issue behind (though he had twenty wives) succession had lapsed and so the state was to be taken over by the British government by the doctrine of lapse a decision with which Lord Dalhousie naturally concurred. This was the mentioned reason though the British government really wished to cite only a consistent reason for the acquisition of territory; and the political reason was based on no real defensible principle but on expediency. When the territory was taken over, unfortunately even the private property, jewels etc., of the royal family were taken over; a serious defect which was rectified later. The royal family continued to reside in its ancestral palace and enjoy and exercise permitted rights and draw a nominal pension.

Later on, the government of Viscount Canning ordered the return of the real and personal property of the deposed royal family; and when the order had been carried out and when it was also decided that a total pension of Rs 45,535 be spent on the pension dues of nearly 5000 members of the ex-royal family, the Maratha dynasty of rulers in Tanjore established less than two centuries before then by Kenkaji passed into history.

Sharp difference of opinion on the political morality of Dalhousie's decision to absorb the state of Tanjore in the British Indian territories (as per the policy of mediatisation) has been expressed, and it has ranged from Hickey's view that "This act of the Honourable East India Company might be well called a political atrocity" to P. E. Robert's view that "these titular sovereignties which had long ceased to have any real meaning had to be swept away on the ground that they

might at any time become a nucleus and rallying ground for seditious agitation". These differences of opinion will persist and will be vigorously canvassed till it is possible ultimately to choose definitely between romantic principles and compelling necessities in the politics of large nations.

The Moghuls in the Carnatic

It is well known that Sriranga III (1642-49) was the last ruler of Vijayanagar and that when he tried to re-establish Vijayanagar supremacy over the southern Nayak chieftaincies the Nayaks of Gingee and Madura resisted the attempt. Tirumala Nayaka of Madura persuaded Bijapur to invade the northern fringes of the truncated Vijayanagar to divert Sriranga's attention, and the plan succeeded. Bahlol Khan Miana ('Vanamian') and Shahji, the generals of Bijapur invaded the Carnatic, captured places like Gingee, Porto Novo, Tegnapatam and so forth and even attacked Tanjore and Tiruchy and extracted tribute. Gingee thus came under Muslim rule; for most part it was only misrule. Andre Freyre wrote in 1666: "Nothing can equal the cruelties which the Muhammadans employ in the government of Gingee".

In 1677 Sivaji descended on the Carnatic in lightning campaign and Gingee was one of his early objectives. Rauf Khan and Sayyid Nasir Khan who commanded Gingee promptly submitted to the Maratha. Sivaji capturing Gingee strengthened its defences anticipating later Moghul aggression. Sivaji had promised the ruler of Golconda that he would seize Gingee and hand it over to Golconda but thought it unnecessary to keep his promise; he left Raghunatha Pant to garrison the city. Raghunatha Pant was succeeded by Haji Mahadik, a brother-in-law of Sambaji, as the Maratha viceroy of the Gingee country. The squabbles among the

immediate successors of Sivaji I gave Harji an opportunity to assume near independence and even to style himself Maharaj. The death of Sivaji and Aurangzeb's invasion of the Deccan nearly coincided. Soon after the invasion i. e., within six or seven years had reduced Maharashtra, seized and executed Sambhaj - the worthless son of Sivaji, Bijapur and Golconda and had heard about the doings of the Maratha viceroy in Gingee.

Sambaji had sent in 1687, two years before his capture and execution, two of his generals Keshav Pingle and Sambaji Ghorpade to replace Harji and defend the fort against possible Moghul attack. But before they could do so, Aurangzeb realising the tactics of the Marathas strengthened Bangalore, which distracted the Marathas of Gingee. The reduction of Golconda by Aurangzeb changed the situation in the Carnatic very considerably. Still the Marathas were not able to forge a unity among themselves in Gingee. Keshav Pingle and Harji did not get on well. The Moghul general who had reached down to the Palar, and the two Maratha generals - Keshav Pingle and Harji - individually, each on his own account plundered the entire region of north Carnatic.

Aurangzeb ordered four of his generals to proceed to the Carnatic to establish order and peace there. Consequently the Moghuls occupied Poonamalle and Wandiwash; and the Maratha divisions retired into safe forts in the adjacent country. The organised loot carried on by all the powers there led to a terrible famine in the countryside.

The death of Sambhaji and the reduction of Maharashtra by the Moghul Emperor broke up Maratha power in Raigad and Rajaram the son of Sivaji by Sagira bai (a younger wife of his), wishing to keep up Maratha resistance in the southern part of the country, fled to Gingee. (1689). Before his arrival at Gingee Harji had died and Rajaram stationed himself

there, and ran a miniature Maratha government there. As his financial position was very unsatisfactory, he resolved to plunder and bribe to conquer territory and fill his treasury. He got money from prospective zamindars for granting even territory firmly in the possession of the Moghuls.

Aurangzeb sent Zulfikar Khan, the ablest of his generals in the southern command to reduce Gingee (August 1690). Shahji, the Maratha ruler of Tanjore tried to help his kinsman in Gingee when the place was besieged by Moghul forces. Soon Zulfikar Khan descended on Tanjore and Tiruchy and extracting tribute from them immobilised them. Rajaram was thus isolated from possible friends. The siege which started in 1690 somehow dragged on and it looked as if Zulfikar Khan was not pursuing the siege as vigorously as was expected. The Marathas in the meanwhile sent two of the generals Dhanaji Jadav and Santaji Ghorpade to help Rajaram. The forces were now more or less equally matched. It was widely reported that there was a secret understanding between the Moghul general and Rajaram by which they allowed the siege to go on merrily neither side hurting the other too much. Reports of possible treachery reached the ears of the Emperor who sent Asad Khan, the wazir, and Prince Kan Baksh to Gingee. Then it was reported that the prince himself was guilty of treacherous deals with the enemy and he was recalled. Aurangzeb now issued stern orders that Gingee must be quickly reduced. A letter from Fort St. George dated 1696 stated: "Zulfikar Khan has been frequently ordered to take Gingee, and it has been in his power to do so and destroy all the Marathas in the country. But instead of that it appears plain that he hath joined council with them." But since the imperial orders were stern and peremptory, Zulfikar Khan bestirred himself briskly. Against the forces of Sambaji, he scored a victory at Arcot, and drove the Maratha armies under his generals upto the southern banks of the Tungabhadra and resumed vigorously the siege of Gingee.

Rajaram tried to negotiate peace and sent his son Karna for that purpose to the Moghul general. But the general was now firm in his resolve to capture the fortress. When it was certain that Zulfikar Khan was in earnest, Rajaram and his party fled from Gingee to Vellore and soon after that the fortress fell. The Moghuls systematically reduced that 'impregnable' fort; they took care not to harm the Maratha women and children in the fort. The siege had lasted from 1690 to 1697 for seven years; and finally when the fort was taken the chief defender had fled away. This confirmed the suspicion that there was a secret understanding between the Maratha defender and the Moghul general by which the latter decided to storm the fort only after the former had safely escaped to Vellore.

Zulfikar Khan entered the fort of Gingee in the first week of January 1698. A letter from Fort St. George dated 26th February 1698 states: "in the last month, i. e., January. Zulfikar Khan took Gingee (Rajaram having escaped to Vellore fort where he remains) and appointing Gussafar Khan, Killedar of Gingee, gave him Cuddalore and Zegnapatam as part of his jaghir". Despatches from Fort St. David confirm that Zulfikar Khan launched the final attack on Gingee on 30th December 1697 (Thursday) and that Rajaram made his escape from the fort on Monday the 26th at night.

Gingee was thus brought under the authority of the Moghuls at the end of the 17th century. Saadatullah Khan the first faujdar of the Moghuls in Arcot had to subdue a recalcitrant raja in Gingee, by name Tej Singh, who failed to pay tribute to the Moghul. Perhaps in 1713 Tej Singh was defeated and killed in battle and his wife committed sati. Though a minor incident in the history of the Carnatic or even of Gingee, this has acquired an important place in popular memory because of many romantic balladas which praise the heroic defence of Gingee by Tej Singh.

The Nawabs of the Carnatic

Aurangzeb who undertook the Deccan campaign in 1681 had conquered Golconda by 1689 and the siege and conquest of Gingee which was entrusted to the redoubtable Zulfikar Khan ended favourably to the Moghuls after much wilful delay and plundering of the neighbourhood which extended as far as Tanjore and Tiruchy. This Zulfikar Khan who enjoyed the sympathies of the Emperor in ample measure had a deputy by name Daud Khan. It was his business to arrange for the consolidation of the newly conquered tracts in the Carnatic and he appointed Saadatullah Khan, general of Aurangzeb, as the Nawab (or governor) of the Carnatic. The Nawab was also called Faujdar. The Carnatic was made into a permanent Nawabi and its headquarters was in Arcot on the Palar and it was situated due west of Madras and near Vellore. This was one of the thirty or so Nawabis which were constituted to look after the political unity and the economic benefits of the south Indian territories conquered by Aurangzeb in the course of his Deccan campaigns.

This Saadatullah Khan was a fairly successful administrator and he was Faujdar from 1710 to 1732 when he died. He had a nephew by name Dost Ali who succeeded him and was Faujdar from 1732 to 1740. These faujdars were supposed to be the subordinates of and answerable to the subedar of the Deccan who was one of the major agents of the Moghul Emperor. According to the principle that more distant a governor from the imperial capital the

more rebellious he tends to become, the faujdars of Arcot began to entertain ambitions of freedom from the Subedar and eventually the Emperor himself; at least to convert a rent-collecting office into a hereditary rule. This ambition was furthered by the fact that his superior the Nizam-ul-Mulk was too busy with his aggressive Maratha neighbours and coping up with the mercurial politics in the Imperial capital. The Nawabi of Arcot extended over a strip of territory, narrow and long, stretching from Ongole in the north and Gingee in the south and included the Coromandel coast in the east. Since the country to the south of Gingee was studded with petty and mutually warring states and principalities, the Nawab of Arcot was tempted to interfere in their affairs with a view to their ultimate liquidation and absorption. Among the states which invited, by their very condition, the attention of the Nawab must be mentioned the Nayak state of Madura in Trichinopoly then ruled by Minakshi, the widow of Vijayaranga Chokkanatha Nayaka; and the Maratha state of Tanjore then being ruled by Tukkoji (1728 - 36) and then his illegitimate son Pratap Singh (1739 - 63).

Zulfikar Khan, the commander of the Moghul armies in the course of his protracted siege of Gingee had attacked the Nayak kingdom of Tiruchy and the Marathas of Tanjore and extracted from these rulers enormous booty as well as promises to pay tribute and recognition of the Moghul Emperor as their overlord. This gave the Nawab of Arcot (who was the faujdar under the Moghul Subedar of the Deccan) the legal title to expect, and if denied extract, the promised tribute from these Nayaks and the Marathas. This also meant that the Marava rulers of Ramnad and the Palayagars of Tinnevely who were but the feudatories of the Nayak of Madura, albeit habitually turbulent and inclined to disloyalty, were but the sub-feudatories and tributaries of the faujdar of Arcot.

Dost Ali had a son by name Safdar Ali and a son-in-law Chanda Saheb (Husain Dost Khan). These two invaded Tiruchy and conquered it; this conquest led to the suicide of Minakshi and

the occupation of Tiruchy by Chanda Saheb. The invaders tried to reduce Tanjore also but the resources of Tanjore were enough to bribe or to resist the invading Muslims. Chanda Saheb's men reached as far as Madura and struck terror and sowed confusion into the Marava country. The two brothers of Chanda Saheb, i. e., Buda Saheb and Sadak Saheb were stationed in Madura and Dindigul respectively.

The Maratha armies under generals who had no other occupation then, or whose need for revenue could be satisfied only by the collection of :Chauth in other people's territories, had a current pretext to invade the Carnatic. They had heard of the plight in which the Maratha ruler of Tanjore found himself as a result of the raids of the Nawab of Arcot; and so the Maratha generals Fateh Singh and Raghuji Bhonsle invaded the Carnatic in 1740. It was also rumoured that Safdar Ali himself, being jealous of his brother-in-law Chanda Saheb and suspicious of his designs secretly invited the Marathas to invade the Carnatic. But this sudden descent of the Maratha cavalry on his dominions was a surprise to Dost Ali. The Marathas were coming from the direction of Cuddapah; and Dost Ali hurriedly collected an army and marched forth to meet the invading cavalry. The two armies met at the Damalcheruvu pass which was a valley only 800 yards in width. The Marathas, however, guided by a traitor, bypassed the pass on the eastern side and fell upon Dost Ali's forces from the rear. The armies of Arcot with their Nawab and other leaders perished in the ensuing battle, like a diminutive Leonidas and his army. The successful Marathas then swiftly proceeded to Arcot where Safdar Ali bought peace with them by paying a crore of rupees.

Safdar Ali's and Chanda Saheb's families were in safe refuge in Pondicherry under the care of the French governor Dumas. The Marathas demanded their surrender, but the French boldly refused the demand; for this Dumas got the title of Nawab and also the rank of *Mansabdar* of 4500 horses.

Chanda Saheb who was occupying Trichinopoly was temporarily relieved to hear that the Marathas had moved on

Bangalore from Arcot forgetting the Carnatic for the moment. But in 1741 the Marathas did appear before the gates of Trichinopoly and besieged that place: it surrendered after a short siege. Chanda Saheb gave himself up to his enemies who took him off prisoner to Satara, leaving one Murari Rao to hold Trichinopoly. Buda Saheb and Sadak Saheb who resisted the Marathas were killed in battle.

The collapse of the plans of Arcot in the presence of the Maratha incursion made Dost Ali nervous; they could not even collect their usual revenues, for more than that had been plundered by the Maratha cavalymen. Nizam-ul-mulk, the Subedar of the Deccan, was struck by the extra-ordinary confusion in the Carnatic. He delayed the formal recognition of Safdar Ali as the Nawab of Arcot. So Safdar Ali started raising funds and collecting revenues urgently. He left his young son in the protection of the English in Madras and proceeded to Vellore in 1742 and demanded the due tribute from Murtaza Ali, his cousin (father's brother's son who was also his wife's brother), who was commanding the garrison there. Murtaza Ali was now seized with the idea of doing away with his cousin and appropriating Arcot to himself. His first impulse was to poison his cousin; somehow the attempt failed. Then he caused Safdar Ali to be murdered in cold blood.

Having achieved this foul object, Murtaza Ali proceeded to Arcot from Vellore and proclaimed himself the Nawab of the Carnatic. The soldiers of Safdar Ali's army who had supported Murtaza Ali in the hope that the latter would clear their arrears of pay immediately were getting disillusioned because no payment was forthcoming, and they began to riotously demand their dues. Murtaza Ali was essentially a coward; unable to manage the situation he fled Arcot in the guise of a purdah woman and reached safely in Vellore where he hoped to defend himself better from the anger of his troops.

As soon as the flight of Murtaza Ali was made known, Sayeed Muhammad Khan the infant son of Safdar Ali who was

in the safe custody of the English in Madras was proclaimed Nawab of Arcot; and an able Diwan looked after the government.

In the meantime, Nizam-ul-Mulk who had never reconciled himself to the Dost Ali family and its manner of government, was sick of the growing confusion in the Carnatic and proceeded to Arcot with a considerable army in 1743. When he was in Arcot he found that authority had completely broken down and a number of fellows styled themselves Nawab. The irate Nizam deposed Sayeed Muhammad and placed a nominee of his own Koja Abdullah Khan (the general of his army) on the throne of Arcot. He then marched to Tiruchy and relieved it of Maratha control obliging Murari Rao to retreat from the entire Carnatic; Tiruchy again came under the authority of Arcot.

Now, Koja Abdullah Khan who had been appointed Nawab of Arcot continued to command the Nizam's army and led it up to Golconda where surprisingly one day he 'was found dead in his bed'. It was suspected that he died of poison. The Nizam then appointed to the position of the faujdar of Arcot one Anwaruddin Khan son of an old favourite at court. Popular opinion held Anwaruddin Khan responsible for the murder of Koja Abdullah Khan, since the new nominee benefited most by the death of the general of the army.

Thus it was that the family of Saadatullah Khan ceased to rule in Arcot and a new dynasty of rulers in Arcot was inaugurated by Anwaruddin Khan. Nizam-ul-mulk who knew that the people of the Carnatic held Sayeed Muhammad in great esteem and affection pretended first to appoint Anwaruddin Khan only as a regent-Nawab to the young prince; and Anwaruddin also treated Sayeed Muhammad with great civility and respect. But in the course of a reception which the prince held on the occasion of the marriage of a relative of his and which Murtaza Ali among others attended, the prince was assassinated by a pathan who had a private grievance against the prince. The deed was avenged by Anwaruddin by punishing the culprits, but the public strongly and perhaps justifi-

ably suspected that Anwaruddin himself and Murtaza Ali were the prime movers in this crime; for once again Anwaruddin gained most by the death of Sayeed Muhammad. Nizam-ul-mulk now confirmed him as regular Nawab of the Carnatic.

The affairs of the Carnatic were now disturbed by the opening of hostilities between the French in Pondicherry – where Dupleix had become the governor in 1742 – and the English in Madras, as a result of the outbreak of the Austrian war of succession (1740–1748). From now till in the series of struggles between the English and the French in the Carnatic necessarily for survival and if possible for supremacy, the latter were worsted and the former became masters of the Carnatic; there were three stages which will be dealt with in detail in the succeeding chapter. In the course of these Anglo-French conflicts, especially the sieges and engagements on land which swayed the commercial fortunes of these two west European nations here in South India, it was inevitable that the Indian powers on the hinterland should get involved and in its turn induce the foreign merchant powers to interfere in the politics of Muslim and Hindu India. This phenomenon which was to become widespread later, for the first time occurred in Tamilnad and particularly in the Carnatic, which meant the region between Arcot and Madras in the North and Trichinopoly and Tanjore in the south.

Dupleix,¹ the talented, ambitious and over-sensitive Frenchman had become the governor of Pondicherry in 1742. The Austrian war of succession (in which the English opposed the French in Europe) had broken out in 1740 and its repercussions came to be felt on the Coromandel Coast, where these two nations had competitive commercial interests. In 1745 an English fleet under Barnett appeared at Madras. Dupleix fearing naval action by the English requested Anwaruddin to enjoin upon the English not to indulge in warlike acts against anyone within his territories which formed part of the Moghul empire; whereupon the Nawab of Arcot called upon the English to desist from such acts. Though Nicholas Morse, the

1 to be pronounced 'dypleks' and almost invariably mispronounced 'duplej' by Indian students.

then governor of Fort St. George replied that he had definite instructions from England to attack the French, the Nawab firmly stood his ground and refused to allow the English to attack the French. So the English fleet sailed away.

But notwithstanding these transactions, with the arrival of the French Admiral Mahe de La Bourdonnais naval hostilities between the English and the French became unavoidable and the Nawab was in no position to prevent them. La Bourdonnais was about to bombard the English settlement in Madras (September, 1746), and Morse at once sought the protection which Anwaruddin had earlier provided for the French. But the Nawab now faltered and waited without committing himself either way. Madras was captured on the 21st September 1746; and "among the prisoners of war surrendered was Robert Clive, then a young writer in the Company's service, a youth of twenty-one with a melancholic temperament, high ambitions, and great, though as yet unsuspected, powers."² La Bourdonnais and Dupleix, however fell out as to what should be done with Madras, the former wanting to ransom it and the latter to retain it in occupation. La Bourdonnais, probably having received a present from the English left the Coromandel coast shortly afterwards. Dupleix had decided to keep on to Madras. The Nawab now realised that he had been tricked out of Madras by Dupleix's diplomacy and so demanded French withdrawal. The French governor however insisted that he had recovered Madras only to surrender it to the Nawab himself; the Nawab preferred to take Madras from the French, rather than wait till the latter chose to present it to him. So he sent (1746) a strong cavalry force under his eldest son Mahfuz Khan to capture Madras from the French.

The French who had in the meantime taken Madras from the English were stationed in San Thome; the French forces under Paradis. Swiss General, crossed the Adyar and a short but sharp engagement took place in which the considerable forces of the

Muslims retreated in chaos before the consistent and superior fire power of the French artillery. That was the first time when a numerically much inferior European force decisively defeated and drove back a very large Indian force with the strength of non-intermittent cannon power. Voltaire praised this deed of his countrymen saying that it 'far exceeded in fame the achievement of the Spartans at Thermopylae'. The comparison is exaggerated and it may be noted that the French won the battle while the heroic Spartans had lost theirs.

The battle of Adyar (1746), though a minor engagement in itself is historically very significant, since it was the starting point of a series of victories for European-led forces over armies led by south Indian generals, Muslim or Hindu; it may be safely computed that an overwhelming percentage of these battles went against the latter for a variety of reasons of which superior discipline and better generalship among the former were undoubtedly important.

Dupleix, elated by success in Madras, tried to take Fort St. David (Cuddalore) also when however the stubborn resistance of English defenders under Major Stringer Lawrence prevented French success. Anwaruddin who had by now become an inveterate enemy of the French assisted the English but not with conspicuous success. The friendship that was growing between Anwaruddin and the English added to the ill-feeling which Dupleix harboured against the Nawab. Madras however returned to the English under the provisions of the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle³ (1748).

So far the conflict between the English and the French remained one entirely between them without necessarily involving the 'country powers'. The Nawab of Arcot got involved because of the French capture of Madras; and circumstances up to now had only prepared the ground for alliances and counter alliances based on friendships and enmities generated during this period. What followed was an extension of the European conflict into the inescapable involvement of Indian rulers in the quarrels of the foreign merchant settlements.

3 to be pronounced akslashepel.

In 1748, Asaf Jah (Nizam-ul-Mulk) died. The event naturally meant a fight among his sons and grandsons of whom he had quite a number. His eldest son was employed in Delhi in the Imperial court and was not, or was precluded from being, interested in the struggle for power just begun in Hyderabad; Asaf Jah's second son Nazir Jung was in prison having been accused rebellion. The old Nizam had a grandson (daughter's son) by name Muzaffar Jung who, under the above circumstances, was instigated by his ambition and his friends to seize the throne. But Nazir Jung escaped from prison and claimed and ascended the throne in 1748 to the chagrin of his nephew, Muzaffar Jung. Dupleix the governor of French India saw his opportunity in this confused situation, and promptly supported Muzaffar Jung the disappointed claimant to the Nizamate and coupled it with the possibility of putting up a rival to the Nawabi of Arcot then held by Anwaruddin whom he heartily despised. He hit upon Chanda Saheb (the son-in-law of the old Dost Ali) who had been defeated in Trichinopoly and taken and kept prisoner by Murari Rao, as the most appropriate rival to Anwaruddin. Thus Muzaffar Jung for the position of the Nizam and Chanda Saheb for that of the Nawabi became the clients of Dupleix whose objections were twofold: 1. to get a dominant footing in the affairs of the local rulers; and 2. to deprive the English, his commercial rivals, of all opportunities in the Coromandel. Raja Saheb, son of Chanda Saheb, met Dupleix and represented the case of his father, who was languishing in a Maratha prison in Satara. Dupleix, who was quick to see his chance, paid seven lakhs of rupees to the Maratha ruler and obtained the release of Chanda Saheb from his prison in 1748. Chanda Saheb who was now free was joined by Muzaffar Jung in an attack on Anwaruddin, the Nawab of Arcot, whom they, supported by the French troops, defeated and killed in a battle at Ambur (North Arcot District in 1749. With the death of Anwaruddin, the throne of Arcot fell vacant and invited a competition for its seizure by Chanda Saheb supported by the French and Muhammad Ali (the illegitimate son of Anwaruddin) naturally supported by the English, not because they loved Muhammad Ali

but because they hated Dupleix and his doings. Muhammad Ali fled to Trichinopoly where he shut himself up in the fort. Chanda Saheb took possession of the Carnatic as Nawab with the support of Dupleix, who was rewarded by his protege with eighty villages around Pondicherry. Half the plans of Dupleix were now realised and the Carnatic was in his control.

In the meantime, the English had set an example for European interference in the affairs of native rulers by Floyer, the governor of Fort St. David, supporting a claimant to the throne of Tanjore in return for the cession of Devikottai at the mouth of the Coleroon. Pratap Singh of Tanjore opposed the English and their claimant, and so the English under Major Lawrence besieged and captured Tanjore in 1749. But peace ensued when the English recognized Pratap Singh as the king of Tanjore and pensioned off their client, marking the temporary end of a rather shady deal. This gave Dupleix what he considered his right to interfere in the affairs of the 'country powers' for his own benefit and to counter English moves in the Carnatic.

The English occupied San Thome, south of Fort. St George on the ground that it belonged to Muhammad Ali, but Dupleix thought that it belonged to Chanda Saheb, his protege. Dupleix sent an army to Trichinopoly to besiege that place to put pressure on Muhammad Ali. The English began to support Muhammad Ali. Now, Nazir Jung who had become Nizam was annoyed at the extraordinary confusion in the Carnatic and in the capacity of the Subehdar of the Deccan he marched (1750) at the head of his armies into the Carnatic to set things right. As he was nearing the neighbourhood of Valdavur (near Pondicherry), his forces were reinforced by the English. His nephew Muzaffar Jung surrendered to him and though he had earlier sworn not to harm him, he imprisoned him as soon as he came to surrender. The French who wanted to counter this sent their ablest general, Bussy, to capture Gingee which he did. Another officer La Touche made a night attack on Nazir Jung's camp and during that attack Nazir Jung lost his life. J. T. Wheeler, however, says

"Three turbulent Afghan chieftains raised an uproar in the Nizam's camp; the Nizam galloped to the spot and was shot dead". This released Muzaffar Jung from prison. Immediately he proceeded to Pondicherry and was made the subedar of the Deccan by the French governor, and Muzaffar Jung designated Dupleix, Suzerain of South India from the Krishna to Cape Comorin'. The towns of Divi and Masulipatam were made over to the French: a sum of 50,000 was given to the French East India Company; Dupleix received a personal present of 200,000 'and a jagir consisting of the village Valdavur with 10,000 a year'. Macaulay later said that thereafter Dupleix 'ruled thirty millions of people with almost absolute power', a somewhat exaggerated account. It was but an 'honorary suzerainty' that was conferred upon him. Chanda Saheb who was now in Pondicherry was made Nawab of the Carnatic and the joy of Dupleix and Chanda Saheb knew no bounds. J. T. Wheeler says, 'they embraced one another like men escaped from shipwreck'. This was the apogee of Dupleix's power in the Carnatic. Thereafter began his decline, which ended so far as India is concerned in his recall.

Muzaffar Jung now returned to Haidarabad accompanied by Bussy (1751); and was fully satisfied that everything had happened according to his wish. But Muzaffar Jung was assassinated by some of his private enemies and this again raised problems of succession to the Nizamate. Bussy, the undaunted, was not worried. He set aside Muzaffar Jung's minor sons and put on the throne Salabat Jung, the third son of the late Asaf Jah. Bussy stayed on in Haidarabad to consolidate the rule of his latest protege. He continued to do this for seven years with great success.

From 1751 the influence, power and prestige of Dupleix suffered great decline. The position in the Carnatic was that Chanda Saheb was Nawab of the Carnatic and Muhammad Ali was shut up in Trichinopoly. The French seconded by Chanda Saheb invested Trichinopoly thought the siege was not vigorously prosecuted. Thomas Saunders, governor of Fort St. David (1750-55) did not want all the advantage to lie with the French. Clive now

for the first time made significant contribution to the turn of events in the Carnatic. He besieged and took Arcot to divert the attention of Chanda Saheb and his French allies, who were then busy in Trichinopoly. The expected happened. The stranglehold on Trichinopoly was loosened, but Arcot stayed with the English. Muhammad Ali managed to secure the support of Mysore and Tanjore and obtain the services of Murari Rao Ghorpade, an experienced Maratha general. The French general Law suffered defeat in Srirangam and was taken prisoner. Clive and Lawrence played a considerable part in easing Trichinopoly of French hold.

Chanda Saheb and Law were held up in the temple of Srirangam. Nanjaraja of Mysore, Murari Rao—the Maratha general, Manakji—general of the Tanjore armies of Pratap Singh (the then ruler of Tanjore) and Lawrence were generally engaged in serving the cause of Muhammad Ali (the English sponsored Nawab of Arcot) in Trichinopoly. If the Srirangam temple were stormed it was certain that Law and Chanda Saheb could be taken prisoners. Law surrendered and was taken prisoner as stated above. But the case of Chanda Saheb was somewhat different as he was a prestigious prize whom everyone of these commanders wanted to possess as their own pet victim to be disposed of as they desired. They could not agree as to who should be in charge of Chanda Saheb, the prospective prisoner. Manakji, instigated or not by Muhammad Ali, lured Chanda Saheb out of the security of the sacred shrine by false promises and had him treacherously assassinated by a pathan. Lawrence who could have prevailed upon Manakji to desist from this foul deed did not choose to do so and bore the negative part of guilt for this infamy.

The general feeling among some who despised Chanda Saheb was that he deserved his fate. Forrest wrote in his 'Life of Lord Clive': "The death of Chanda Sahib is hardly ever mentioned by a Mussalman, without noticing as a visible manifestation of Almighty vengeance, that he was treacherously murdered in the same choultry, in which sixteen years before (in 1736) he had profaned

the holy Koran by a false and treacherous oath to the Rancee of Trichinopoly (Minakshi)".

Muhammad Ali when he was in straightened circumstances in Trichinopoly wrote to Nanjaraja of Mysore to secure his support. He wrote : "I am in danger of losing my life, fort and family. I therefore desire you will assist me with men and money at this juncture which goodness I shall never forget. I shall not only give you the fort of Trichinopoly but act according to your directions. For a strict observance of these, I swear to you upon my priest, father and Koran". After his dangers had passed he ignored Nanjaraja on the ground "he was but a governor and so could not part with territory." Finally he granted Nanjaraja the right to the revenues from Srirangam.

Muhammad Ali's position as Nawab of the Carnatic was now safe and assured, mostly by the English. So there was a French Nizam in Haidarabad in Salabat Jung and an English Nawab in Arcot in Muhammad Ali. Subsequent attempts by the French under Mainville could not reduce the strong fortress of Trichinopoly nor could that general take it by storm. In the meanwhile Dupleix had been recalled in 1755.

There was a further bout of Anglo-French conflict in the Carnatic when the seven years war broke out in Europe in 1756. Many battles were fought between the English and the French but they ignored the existence of the Nawab of the Carnatic whose security was insured by the English. In the encounters between Haidar Ali, the usurper in Mysore, and the English in the course of the Third Carnatic War, Muhammad Ali played no important role but was treated with great contempt by Haidar, who accused the Nawab of Arcot of duplicity. The English who agreed with Haidar on their estimate of Muhammad Ali, however, would not give up their protege on that account.

Muhammad Ali is also known as 'Wallajah' and the dynasty he set up is known as the Wallajahi dynasty. From that derives the name of a place near Ranipet. Muhammad Ali for all intents

was an independent ruler and was anxious to assert that aspect of his position; but the realities of the situation meant that he was beholden to the English for his existence. Muhammad Ali, by nature, was undependable, double-dealing and treacherous. The wars that were fought in the Carnatic between the English and the French were deemed by the former to have been fought on behalf of Muhammad Ali and so the expenses of the war were debited to his account. The Company's servant became professional moneylender to the Nawab. When Pondicherry fell, to the English in 1761, the Nawab had a debt of 22,25,373 pagodas owing to the Company. Though in five years he managed to reduce this public debt to the Company, he had in the meantime incurred more debts from private moneylenders, also belonging to the Company. An unholy relationship cemented by debts and bribes, existed between the Madras council and the Nawabi. Among those who profited greatly by lending to the Nawab was one Benfield. The Nawab could influence the Company's policies towards other political entities in the Carnatic, especially Tanjore.

Muhammad Ali's aggression on Tanjore is an instance of his foreign policy. His victim in Tanjore was Tuljajai, the son of Pratap Singh, the Maratha. The Nawab accused Tuljaji of violation of the treaty of 1762 i. e., that he failed to pay the tribute stipulated by that treaty. The forces of the Carnatic twice invaded Tanjore i. e., in 1771 and in 1773 and the Madras government helped him in these adventures. Tanjore succumbed to military pressure, the Raja was imprisoned, the government of Tanjore was taken over. For three years from 1773 to 1776, Muhammad Ali ruled Tanjore and assigned the revenues from that prosperous kingdom to his English creditors Benfield and others who did their worst exploiting the farmers of Tanjore.

Muhammad Ali remained the nominal ruler of the Carnatic and the English, unlike their countrymen in Bengal, resisted the temptation to assume direct administration of the territories they had conquered. The treaties of Allahabad (1765) dictated by Clive had released the Nawab of Arcot from subordination to the Subedar

of the Deccan. He influenced the Madras council to agree to permit him to attack and capture Tanjore. The relations of Tanjore with Muhammad Ali were controlled by the provisions of a treaty of 1762 which was forced upon the Nawab by Pigot, the then governor of Madras. The allegation against Tanjore was that its ruler had failed to pay the tribute stipulated by that treaty. Tanjore was attacked by the Nawab's forces first in 1761 and then in 1763; in the latter year Tanjore became part of the Nawab's territories. These unprincipled extensions of the Nawab's power and territories displeased the authorities in England. George Pigot, who had now become Lord Pigot, had returned to Madras again as the governor of Fort St. George in December 1775 with the express injunction to carry out the wishes of the Home authorities. When Pigot tried to do it, the majority of the council seized the governor and threw him into prison where he died the next year. The Nawab's debt thus caused the governor's death.

Many Englishmen benefited financially by friendship with the Nawab and reciprocally the Nawab could influence the English policies in the Carnatic through his English friends. Macpherson (later Sir John Macpherson and acting governor-general after Warren Hastings) was closely connected with Muhammad Ali and greatly enriched by that connection. The wealth he made in Arcot could take him as far as membership of Parliament and governor-generalship in Calcutta. He pleaded the case of Muhammad Ali with the Court of Directors who in 1784 ordered the satisfaction of the demands of the Nawab's creditors without any enquiry as to the correctness of the demanded amounts, though the parliament had insisted that such an investigation was necessary. As a result Paul Benfield received nearly sixty lakhs of rupees. The assignment of the Karnatak revenues to Macarthey - governor of Madras (1781-1785) was also got cancelled with the aid of Macpherson who was then governor-general. Macpherson was a typical example of the corrupt English official in India in the age of Clive and Warren Hastings.

To improve the financial condition of the Nawab's administration, Warren Hastings created the committee of Assigned Revenue. Its business was to manage the finances of the Carnatic in such a way as to make most of it available for war. Incidentally the committee introduced reforms in the Nawab's administration.

Parliamentary legislation and directives from the Court of Directors directed that the justice of the demands of the money-lenders should be ascertained and the rates of interest reduced. Though old loans could be softened, no one could prevent the Nawab from contracting new ones. Cornwallis who became governor-general in 1786 persuaded the governor of Madras Sir Archibald Campbell to make a new treaty with the Nawab (27. 2. 1787) whereby nine lakhs of pagodas were assigned to the state and twelve lakhs to the creditors. But the Nawab for his part would not honour the treaty. In 1790 when war broke out in the Carnatic, Cornwallis took over Madras and the Carnatic to save the region from the oppressive mismanagement of the war with Tipu which Cornwallis had to wage. In the light of this experience, a fresh treaty was concluded in 1792, whereby "the Company was to assume entire control of the Carnatic during war, but to restore it when war ended. It was to occupy specified districts if the Nawab's payments should fall into arrears; the poligars of Madura and Tirunelveli whose resistance to the feeble government of the Nawab rendered the collection of revenue impossible, were transferred to the rule of the company; and the Nawab's payments for which these terms were a security, were to be nine lakhs for the peace establishment and four-fifths of his revenues for war expenses, his payment to his creditors being reduced from twelve to six lakhs." By this treaty the Nawab's obligations to his private creditors were reduced but his commitments to the Company were confirmed. The arrangement, though well-intentioned, could not work so long as Muhammad Ali the master of dissimulation, lived. Muhammad Ali died on 13th October 1795 at the age of seventy-eight. Dodwell has characterised him as one who "had played on ruler after ruler with the skill of an expert, and he had continuously succeeded in

obtaining terms much better than he deserved if not always all that desired".

Lord Hobart who had become governor of Madras in September 1794 reported that the condition of the Carnatic was so bad because of the ruinous policy of the past and the usurious loans which were given to the Nawab. The entire transaction, according to him, 'reflected in some degree disgrace upon the British government'.

Muhammad Ali was succeeded by his son Umdat-ul-Umara who tried to continue to follow his father's policies of debts, duplicity and deception. Lord Hobart wished to modify the provisions of the treaty of 1792; but the Nawab would not yield. The English wanted to assume the civil administration of the districts pledged for the payment of the tribute, and the grant of the sovereignty over the Poligars and of some specified forts. The Nawab would not oblige. Hobart suggested that Tinnevely be annexed to the British possessions. But Sir John Shore the governor-general overruled it. Hobart resigned and left; he was succeeded by Lord Clive on 21st August 1798. Sir John Shore had also been succeeded by Lord Wellesley.

Lord Clive (son of Robert, Lord Clive) and Lord Wellesley very well agreed as to what they thought needed to be done in the Carnatic: i.e., to define effectively the native rulers of their territories under one excuse or another and what was unnecessary and clumsy, to put an overcoat of moral argument on these acts. While these thoughts of defacto annexation of the Carnatic were passing the minds of the governor-general, the war with Tipu broke-out. Wellesley while in Madras 'discovered' that Umdat-ul-Umara was in reasonable correspondence with Tipu, 'the enemy'. It was declared that this mere act of correspondence - irrespective of the subject matter of correspondence - was sufficient to treat the Nawab as the enemy of the English. It was thought that the new situation required a new arrangement of the political relations between the Nawab and the Company. The authorities of the Company offered

the following terms to the Nawab of the Carnatic, i. e., the Nawab be paid a pension or a sum enough for his maintenance and that the government of the Carnatic be transferred to the Company.

Umdat-ul-Umara died on the 15th July 1801, before the offer could be made known to him. These same terms were conveyed to his son Ali Husain who was still in mourning. He refused to accept the terms. Then Azim-ud-daula, the nephew of Umdat-ul-Umara was offered the terms which were accepted by him. By this arrangement, to quote the words of Arthur Wellesley, "This prince having agreed to the arrangement, a treaty was concluded by which the whole of the civil and military government of the Carnatic was transferred for ever to the Company, and the Nawab, Azim-ud-daula, and his heirs were to preserve their title and dignity and to receive one-fifth of the net revenues of the country". This Nawab was Walajah III.

The Faujdar of the Carnatic, once a subordinate of the Subedar of the Deccan, the agent of the great Moghul became a titled nobody whose royal powers were taken over by the English Company. The transaction has been praised by Dodwell : "Wellesley, in the annexation of the Carnatic, vindicated political justice as well as political wisdom". It was perhaps necessary for this step to be taken but to encapsule it in moral platitudes and justify it by raising feeble allegations against the Nawab were not necessary. Azim-ud-daula, Walajah III held his title till 1820. The Nawab of Arcot's debts were cleared off in 1804; but there were new debts amounting to thirty crores of rupees. A commission appointed to go into this announced in 1830 that only two and a half crores were genuine debts.

On October 17, 1855, Muhammad Ghaus, the Nawab of the Carnatic died without leaving any issue; his uncle Azim Jah claimed the rank and dignity of the Nawab as he was the nearest relative to the late Nawab. But the East India Company government of India decided to abolish the title of 'Nawab'. Lord Dalhousie who was then the governor-general held that the treaty of Wellesley with

Nawab Azim-ud-daulah (1801) was personal and not dynastic and though many of the descendents of that Nawab were also allowed to use the title, it was due to the favour of the British government rather than any right on the part of the dignitary. It was also pointed out that in the 1801 treaty, Wellesley purposely left out all mention of heirs and successors and made it a purely 'personal' treaty. Those who consider Dalhousie's action unjustified hold that "the Treaty was specifically stated to 'be established - for settling *succession* to the Subedari of the territories of Arcot' and so the mention of the underlined phrase shows that it was not a personal treaty". The succession, however, could be settled by abolishing it too - and not necessarily by continuing it. The regular succession up to 1855 was by grace of overlordship; it was terminated in 1855 by the ostensible application of the Doctrine of Lapse. In 1867, the claimant to the Nawabi was recognised as the prince of Arcot and the first noble in the Madras Presidency.

The Europeans on the Coromandel

India had for long held out an attraction for peaceful traders and aggressive invaders. Merchants from the Mediterranean countries, from China and Central Asia, from East Africa and South East Asia had always wished to benefit by their contacts with this land fabulously reputed to be an inexhaustible source of wealth. Since Darius of Persia and Alexander of Macedon invaded and conquered parts of North Western India the appetite of prospective invaders was whetted for the acquisition of territory and the domination of peoples. From ancient times trade with India was carried on overland and overseas, the former mode of communication generally being restricted to North India and the latter to South India, so that the western and eastern coasts of peninsular India became noted for maritime ports and commercial marts mentioned in classical accounts like those of the *Periplus* and of Ptolemy.

In mediæval times, with the emergence of the Arabs and the Turks as important Islamic powers which stood between the European Christian merchants and their capital on the one hand and Indian markets and their commodities on the other, the traders from Italy, Spain, Portugal, France, Holland and England tried to discover alternate routes to India, for India must be reached and traded with and no effort could be too much in that direction. To

them the sea route was the only one yet open and available, but their geographical knowledge was not enough to direct them to the shores of India overseas nor their nautical equipment, either scientific or material, sufficient to embolden them to brave the risks of long distance voyages. They had slowly and patiently to try for two centuries, the 15th and the 16th, various routes and ultimately alight upon what *then* was the shortest and the safest to India.

The Portuguese

The Portuguese were the first to seek a sea-route to India. One of the reasons for this was the religious situation in Europe during those two centuries. The continent was split into the northern half (consisting mostly of Protestants) and the southern half (consisting mostly of Catholics) competing with and contesting each other in various ways. The Pope (himself the head of the Catholic Church) arbitrated and decreed that colonisation of and trade in the western hemisphere should be a privilege of Spain and correspondingly Portugal should enjoy those privileges in the East. The Protestant countries like England and Holland were left out of consideration. Many countries no doubt joined the race for geographical discoveries, as a result of which (1) the possibility of the circumnavigation of the world was established by Megellan, (2) the American continent was discovered by Amerigo Vespucci, and (3) the possibility of reaching India by doubling the southern cape of Africa was proved. The most sensational and famous of such effort was that of Columbus who sailed on behalf of Spain and landed in the Bahamas (1492) and mistakenly called them the 'Indies'.

Portuguese efforts were mostly confined to probing the western coast line of Africa and begun by Prince Henry (1394-1460) who came to be called 'the Navigator' on that account. Bartholomew Diaz (1450-1500) reached up to the southern tip of Africa but returned unable to cope with the violent winds that dispersed his ships. He called that cape 'the Cape of Storms'. He was followed by Vasco da Gama (1460-1524) who successfully doubled

the Cape in 1497 and called that cape the 'Cape of Good Hope' and arrived at Calicut on the Malabar coast. That was the first time a European with intent to trade voyaged to reach India and successfully did reach a point here. He himself came to India more than once and he was a compound of buccaneer, discoverer, merchant, diplomat, and captain of a naval fighting force. The Portuguese came to trade and to spread their gospel; their main idea was not to acquire territory, though they did acquire Goa, Cochin, Diu, Daman etc. but that was only incidentally for the better furtherance of their trade and proselytisation. Their activities extended to the south-eastern coastal regions of Tamilnad and we have seen how their services were sought by the Nayak of Madura in his struggle against the Setupati; and how their missionaries succeeded in converting large numbers of the fishermen (the 'Paravar') of the southern coast to Christianity. The Portuguese were the only European nations to be interested in the Indian trade, till the Protestant countries of England and Holland defied the old Papal Bull and decided to join the race for the trade with India. The whole of the 16th century saw the Portuguese monopolising the European trade in south India for a period of sixty years (1580-1640) Portugal and Spain were united under a single (Spanish) monarchy and during that period Portugal was not politically active and it was then that England and Holland seized the initiative from the pioneers and entered on a career of commercial exploitation of the East Indies.

The Dutch

Due to the efforts of the Dutch traveller Linschoten who had lived at Goa in 1583-89, the Dutch also came round the Cape of Good Hope and sailed due east to what is now Indonesia, lured by the spice islands. Their earliest efforts were made during 1595-97. Cornelius Houtman, a Dutchman sailed to Sumatra and Bautam in 1596 by the route familiarised by Vasco da gama. He was an example and an inspiration to the Dutch who followed him. Their trading activities were not restricted to the East Indian Archipelago or particularly Java. They began to arrive in India also. In 1650

they opened negotiations with Golconda and set up a trading station in Masulipatam and another in Nizampatam. In 1608 they got permission from the Nayak of Gingee to open a factory at Tegnapatam (later Fort St. David), and in 1610 another near the lake Pulicat with exclusive privileges of trade granted by Venkata of Vijayanagar. This latter settlement was however destroyed by Portuguese in 1612. Later in 1617, the Dutch established a factory in Surat; and built a fort in Chinsura (Bengal) which they called Fort Gustaphus. In 1638-58, they captured Ceylon from the Portuguese. In 1658 they occupied Tuticorin and the next year Negapatam; Cochin, Cranganore and Cannanore also fell to them. They supervised their trading activities in the east from their chief station in Cochin. In 1689 Negapatam became the headquarters of their governor. A Christian missionary (a Jesuit) by name Abraham Roger who lived in Pulicat from 1637 to 1641 translated the *Niti* and the *Vairaghya Satakas* of Bartruhari.

The Dutch had no territorial ambitions in India. All their attention was concentrated on the islands of Sumatra, Java, Borneo. It was only to help them successfully pursue their trade there that they required some footholds in India. They fought the Portuguese who were their traditional foes (in fact the rulers of the Iberian peninsula had long standing feuds against the Netherlanders) and captured their possessions and trading settlements in India. Their activities were organized and led by brilliant men like Coen (the Dutch governor-general) who founded Batavia, and like Van Diemen.

The fate of the European merchants, as individuals as well as organized companies, depended largely on the political relations among their mother countries in Europe. As a result of the Napoleonic wars, all the Dutch possessions in the East were taken over by the successful French. But when Napoleon was defeated in Waterloo by the English, those possessions were appropriated by the latter; and with that also ended Dutch commercial interests in India. But their commercial and political activities continued in the East Indies till immediately after the Second World War.

The Anglo-Dutch commercial rivalry in the 17th century reached an ugly climax in 1623, when the Dutch captured Towerson, the English agent and eighteen other Englishmen besides many Japanese on imaginary charges of piracy; and Towerson and nine other Englishmen and nine Japanese were put to death. This is known in history as the 'Massacre of Amboyna', and some would consider it 'legal murder'. Since James I the contemporary English ruler was friendly to the Dutch he took no notice of this unfortunate incident. But Cromwell, the English Protector, who ruled England after Charles I obtained indemnity of 85,000 from the Dutch for their action in Amboyna. This incident embittered Anglo-Dutch feelings.

The Danes

The Danes founded an East India Company in 1616 and established a commercial settlement in Tranquebar (Tarangambadi) on the Coromandel coast in 1620. They became friendly with Raghunatha Nayaka who was then the ruler of Tanjore; and they bought Tranquebar from him. The aim of this company was to buy goods from India and sell them in the East Indian islands. But their expectations of fabulous profit did not materialise; still they persisted in these activities for a few years. The fort that they had built in Balasore in Orissa was destroyed by their own governor. They established a colony in Serampore in Calcutta in 1676. In the end Danish political or commercial interests in India did not thrive. In 1845, they sold away Serampore and Tranquebar to the English East India Company for a sum of twelve and a half lakhs of rupees.

The French

Louis XIV became king of France in the middle of the 17th century. He had a wise minister called Colbert, who looked after the finances and general administration of France. Due to his great efforts a French East India Company was established in 1664. They founded trading stations in Surat in 1668 and in Masulipatam in 1669. The commercial station which they set up in San Thome in

1672 was captured by the Danes in 1674. In the same year Francois Martin founded in Pondicherry (Puducheri) a trading station on a site bought from Sher Khan Lodi. In 1677 when Sivaji invaded the Carnatic, his Maratha hordes plundered Pondicherry, Martin went to Surat in 1686 but soon returned to Pondicherry. He founded a factory in Chandranagore in Bengal in 1690. The Dutch captured Pondicherry in 1693 and it took six years for the French to recover it. Martin built the fort of St. Louis in Pondicherry. In the meanwhile they gave up their factories in Surat and in Masulipatam. Martin, the great pioneer who promoted French interests in India, had laboured for his country here for thirty-eight years. He died on the last day of the year 1706. Among Frenchmen who had been to India he was not inferior in ambition or achievement to Dupleix.

The English

Prevented by the Papal Bull from undertaking commercial or colonising enterprises in the East, the English were sending explorers and discoverers to chart new routes to India in the North Western and North Eastern directions. As these attempts landed them either in the Arctic ocean or in the icy tracts of Northern Canada there was no prospect of reaching India that way. The circumnavigation of the globe, though proved to be possible, was yet not commercially feasible and the time taken for the voyages would be prohibitively long and so at the very end of the 16th century, like the Dutch the English also decided to reach India by the route charted by Vasco da gama and defy Papal objections which had however become inoperative by then. On the 31st day of December 1600 a band of English merchants secured a charter for trade with the East Indies from Elizabeth I. The trading Company that was established by that charter was called "the governor and Company of Merchants of London trading into the East Indies". That company secured the right to trade with the countries between the Cape of Good Hope and the East Indian archipelago for a period of fifteen years. To look after its affairs a committee consisting of a governor, a deputy governor, a treasurer, and twentyfour members were created. These officials were subject to the authority

of a general council. Only shareholders were its members; it was decided that each share was to be for 500. When James I, successor to Elizabeth, renewed the charter, its provisions were further confirmed. It was convention for shareholders to share the profits or losses of the trade after each voyage. But from 1661 onwards it became customary for them to share profits or losses during defined periods of time rather than voyages. During the reigns of James I and his son Charles I, the English East India Company was patronised by royalty and not by the general public. In 1635 however a London merchant by name Sir William Courten (or Courteen) obtained a licence for trade with the East Indies. This was a setback to the earlier company. But the two companies agreed in 1649 to cooperate, and not compete and thereafter the situation somewhat improved.

After Cromwell got compensation from the Dutch for the Amboyna tragedy, the English could trade freely with the East without fear of unholy competition. The Company got the patronage of Charles II who granted them fresh charters in 1661, 1669, 1677 and 1683. During 1685-88 his brother James II granted charters which helped greatly the growth of the Company. The profits and therefore the popularity of the Company grew. Sir Josiah Child and Sir John Child (two Directors of the Company who were however not related to each other in any way) jealously guarded the privileges of the Company. These two Directors found fault with the managers of the Company for bringing about a struggle with Aurangzeb, the Moghul Emperor; the managers and others tried to start competitive companies but failed in their efforts. Sir Josiah Child liberally bribed members of Parliament to secure a new and favourable charter for the old Company. The Parliament however decided that individual commercial enterprise need not be prohibited. So a number of private traders came together and formed an association (1698), in a meeting held in the Hall of the Skimmer's Company in Dowgate Street; Sir Josiah Child spent a lot of money on members of Parliament whose malversations were publicly criticized. Anyhow in 1702 the companies

agreed to sink their differences; and the agreement was confirmed by Act of Parliament in 1708. It took the shape of a United Company. Lord Godolphin took the trouble to bring this about; and the result of his endeavours is called 'Godolphin's award'.

When Commander Best of an English naval squadron defeated a Portuguese fleet in 1612, the Moghuls were convinced of English naval capabilities and permitted the English to set up a factory in Surat. Then came Sir Thomas Roe as ambassador to the Moghul Court from James I. He stayed in that court during 1616-18. He was able to get some concessions for English trade in India from the Moghuls. According to him it was the business of the English in India to mind their commerce only and not think of building forts and waging wars.

Captain Hawkins was in Agra in the Moghul court in the reign of Jahanghir. Though he tried to establish an English trading station in Surat, he did not succeed. Surat later became the Headquarters of English trading activities in Broach, Agra and Ahmadabad. After A. D 1620 it became clear that the English were more powerful on the seas than the Portuguese. In 1625, the English and the Dutch who were however rivals themselves vanquished the Portuguese and made their presence here ineffective; in 1630 they were defeated even in a land battle. Peace between the English and the Portuguese ensued after five years.

In 1661, the English King Charles II married Catherine the sister of the Portuguese monarch; the bride brought with her the island of Bombay as dowry. Charles II who felt no personal need for the rather narshy and unhealthy island leased it out to the English East India Company for an annual rent of £ 10. One Gerald Angier who was looking after English interests in Surat from 1669 to 1677, built the city of Bombay on proper lines. The island soon became the headquarters of English mercantile activity on the West Coast of India. The English East India Company expressed in 1687 the view that they wished to establish longstanding domination over the Indian trade. Though during the later part of Aurangazeb's reign there was a short, sharp war

between the English Company and the Moghuls, the former were able to set up trading stations in Tellicherry (1683) and Anjengo (1694).

The English East India Company began setting up factories on the East Coast in 1611 when they founded the Masulipatam factory. They made a futile attempt to land at Pulicat in 1611 but were permitted to trade there in 1621 by a treaty with the Dutch. In 1639 Mr. Francis Day bought a piece of land to the north of San Thome; the idea was the English wanted a trading settlement in a place where cheap cloth was abundantly available for export. Day, it is said, had another and a rather personal motive; for trying this piece of land he had a concubine in San Thome and a nearby residence he naturally thought would be handy. The Fort St. George which was built on the site bought by Francis Day was completed in 1641. Cohen shared with Day the privilege of having built this fort around which grew later the city of Madras. The Raja of Chandra-giri from whom Mr. Day bought Madras was called Sri Ranga Raja (i. e., Sri Ranga III). Madras was then within the territorial jurisdiction of the Nayak of Chingleput, called Chenna Nayak. The plate of gold in which the grant was engraved was lost in 1746 at the capture of Madras by the French.

By 1641, Fort St. George became the Headquarters of all English commercial settlements in the East. In 1647 the Nawab of Golconda who was largely responsible for bringing the Vijayanagar Empire under Sri Ranga III to an infamous end, conquered all the territory around Madras and confirmed the trading rights conferred on the English merchants by earlier rulers. From 1661 Madras became the most important trading station of the English on the East Coast of India. When Sivaji, the Maratha chief invaded the Carnatic, the English traders in Madras took care to be on good terms with him; and Fort St. George escaped the fate of Surat. In 1687 the English established factories in Cuddalore, Porto Novo and Vizagapatam, all on the East Coast. In 1688 Madras was made into a city and it got its mayor, and twelve Aldermen to mind the civic administration. Zulfikar Khan the Moghul commander who

conquered Gingee in 1687 confirmed the existing privileges of the company and conferred a few more. Near Cuddalore, in a place called Devanampetam (also Jegnapatam), the Fort St. David was built and soon it was second in importance only to Fort St. George.

In 1657 a humble trading station was founded on the Hooghly in Bengal at the place which grew into Calcutta. Following that similar stations were established in Patna, Cossimbazar and Dacca. The English had to retreat from Bengal temporarily because of the war which the great Moghul declared on them. But they soon came back. Job Charnok founded the city of Calcutta; a fort was built on the site in 1696. They called it Fort William after king William III, the contemporary king of England.

At the time of Aurangzeb's death, the Moghul Empire had fallen so low that the English and French East India's Companies which were the more important among the surviving powers, had the opportunity not only to stabilise themselves greatly but enter into a contest for supremacy; that contest was not only one between themselves but one between the European powers and the Indian States. In 1715 an embassy under John Surman and Edward Stephenson proceeded from Calcutta to Delhi and obtained from the Emperor important privileges. The Moghul Emperor was persuaded to give these privileges largely because of his gratitude to one William Hamilton, surgeon in the embassy, who cured the Emperor of a serious illness. Among other privileges certain villages near Madras were handed over to the Company.

Emperor Charles VI who was also ruler of the Netherlands was anxious to utilise the maritime capacities of the Dutch and use them to defeat the naval and had a monopoly which the English enjoyed. To achieve this purpose the Ostend Company was formed and it was commissioned only in 1722. This Company was not a serious competitor to the English Company; but it did found at least two settlements, one at Bankipore on the Hooghly and the other at Covelong near Madras. But the Emperor soon

abandoned the Company and it came to ruin soon, The Covelong factory continued for some years more; the Company itself officially became defunct only in 1793.

Aurangzeb's Deccan campaign and its aftermath profoundly affected the fortunes of the Madras factory. The vacuum that was created by the dissolution after defeat of the states of the Bijapur and Golconda pervaded the Carnatic and it was but natural that the English and French East India companies should try to fill it. Thomas Pitt, the governor of Madras, obtained from the Nawab of the Carnatic 'five towns' in the neighbourhood of Madras in September 1708. The struggle between two different contenders for the Nizamate of Hyderabad and the Nawabi of Arcot ultimately ended in great advantage to the English in Fort St George. In view of the very disturbed condition in the Carnatic, Fort St. George was greatly strengthened. Till the middle of the 18th century, however, the two English Forts on the east coast continued to be subject to possible attack by Maratha cavalry. But it must be said that in the early days of the English Company, the factories on the Coromandel coast were served by very incompetent and corrupt men.

Amenities were few, morals were lax, temptations were numerous, opportunities were not wanting, in factories in which men from England arrived to work as writers, factory apprentices, merchants etc. and were mostly away from family. The great distance from home induced some of them even to rebel against the authorities of the Company at home. Sir Edward Winter was governor of Fort St. George in 1665. He was reduced in his position from the first to the second by the Court, but refused to yield; he seized and Jailed, on a silly and irrelevant charge. Foxcroft who was appointed to succeed him, he submitted to authority only when the court sent from England five armed ships to bombard their own settlement in 1668. This incident is known as Winter's rebellion.

The factories slowly developed into quasi-colonies and this development took place all the time during the 17th century

especially when Sir Streyntsham Master (1677-81) and Elihu Yale (1687-92) were presidents of Madras. In 1681 Bengal became independent of the control from Madras. In 1688 a municipal government consisting of a Mayor and twelve Aldermen was set up in Madras. In 1726 a royal charter permitted the establishment of a mayor's court at each of the Presidency towns for the trial of civil actions.

The English personnel living within the Fort and segregated from the native population outside was not famous for continence, sobriety or even normal good behaviour. Stringent measures had to be devised to punish offenders. In 1721, a letter to Madras said: "It is with great concern we hear the itch of gaming hath spread itself over Madras, that even the gentle women play for great sums". The vice continued even thirty years later; they gambled when they did not drink; they drank when they did not fight duels. Private trade at the expense of the Company which employed them was quite common. Buying and selling of slaves was a common trade and in 1751 the Directors of the company wished to buy 600 for Fort St. George.

Since these factories and forts had their governors and their councils, the relationship between the two had to be defined: The governor is entrusted by us, in the first place to see all our orders are obeyed; we appoint a council to join with him therein, and to give their opinion each of them in all matters that come before them; the majority of votes are to determine every question." The council was thus intended to be a check on the governor. Inter-factory quarrels and insubordination to the headquarters were not unknown.

Robert Raworth, the Deputy governor of Fort St. David in 1713 revolted against Edward Harrison the governor of Fort St. George. But soon he surrendered to the officers sent from Madras to bring him to reason; later he retired to Pondicherry. In 1721 the court dismissed the governor of Fort St. George and his entire council for disobedience of orders.

Anglo-French Conflict in the Carnatic

We have referred to the great Martin who founded Pondicherry and set French-Indian trade and politics on a secure path of progress. He died in 1706. From then till 1720 there was a certain stagnation in the affairs of the French East India Company for want of dynamic leadership. In 1720 the French E. D. Company was revitalised by its fresh constitution into the 'perpetual Company of the Indies'. Lenoir who was governor of Pondicherry (1720-35) was a dynamic administrator. It was during his governorship that the French secured a footing in Mahe, Calicut, Yanam and Masulipatam. Pondicherry was made a beautiful and stately capital. Colonel Malleon describing this development observes: "Tasteful houses were erected, a college was built, gardens were laid out, a stately edifice for the accomodation of foreign envoys rose in its turn from the ground".

The next governor was Dumas who held office from 1735 to 1742. He was a tactful and competent man. In 1739 he acquired Karaikkal from the Raja of Tanjore. The Maratha invasion of the Carnatic under Raghoji Bhonsle did not unduly upset him. He was on friendly terms with the Nawab of Arcot. The Moghul Emperor had made him a Nawab and a *mansabdar* of 4500. He was succeeded by Dupleix, the greatest among the Frenchmen who came out to India.

Dupleix became the senior member in the governor's council in Pondicherry in 1720. Private trade in which he freely indulged made him enormously rich. In spite of a temporary and unfortunate setback in his official position in 1726, he managed to become the Director of the factory at Chandranagore (1731-41). In 1741 he married the widow of a friend and colleague of his. She stood in good stead through thick and thin, though Anandaranga Pillai has not one kind word to say about her. His successful administration of Chandranagore earned for him the governorship of Pondicherry and he was appointed the Director-general of the French settlements in India. Dupleix was governor from 1742-1754.

During the governorship of Dupleix in 1746 there arose a conflict between the French in Pondicherry and the English in Fort St. George and this conflict in one way or another continued till 1761 and reestablishment of peace between the two was effected only in 1763. That is the Austrian War of Succession (1740-1748) in Europe which involved the English and the French as opposing forces in March 1744 reached India only in 1746. The conflict that began in the Carnatic between these two involved the country powers like the Nizam of Hyderabad, the Nawab of Arcot, the Raja of Tanjore etc. This conflict running its course variously continued till 1763 when at the end of the Seven Year's War, the Peace of Paris reestablished normalcy in so far as the French and the English were concerned in the Carnatic. The conflict is usually divided into three parts chronologically :

I *The First Carnatic War:* From the beginning of the impact of the Austrian War of Succession on the Carnatic in 1746-to 1749 when, as a result of the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle concluding that war, the Carnatic struggle saw the end of its first phase.

II. *The Second Carnatic War:* From the treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle (1749 - so far as the Carnatic was concerned) to the recall of Dupleix in 1754.

III. *The Third Carnatic War*: From the recall of Dupleix which is the same as the arrival of Godehu as governor of French India, i. e., 1754 to the fall of Pondicherry which is the same as the recall of Lally in 1761: The hostilities actually ceasing in 1763 as a result of the Peace of Paris of that year; so chronologically the three phases of this almost continuous conflict were I: 1746 to 1749; II: 1749 to 1754; and III: 1754 to 1763. The peculiarities of this conflict were (1) that the issues which controlled the Carnatic conflict had nothing to do with the basic issues of the contemporary wars in Europe which in a sense justified the extension of armed conflict to India between the opposing powers; in this case England and France; (2) the managers of the Carnatic wars like Dupleix and his counterparts in Fort St. George took upon themselves the responsibility for the resumption and cessation of hostilities; (3) these conflicts involved the country powers to a great extent and marked the beginning of European intervention in the affairs of native Indian states some of whom sought such intervention. So far as Tamilnad is concerned, these wars greatly helped in the total liquidation of the sorry remnants of the Vijayanagar Empire; and the discarding of the tools (like the Nawabi of Arcot and the Nizamate), which the European powers had used, after their utility had ended; and the ultimate survival by military strength and careful diplomacy, of one of these European Powers, viz., the English who finally stood out as the Paramount Power.

Since we have earlier recounted the role of the Indian powers in these wars, we shall hereafter in this chapter confine ourselves to a narration of the part played by the English and the French and only incidental references to the others.

Till 1745, Dupleix had tried to maintain peace in the Carnatic and he had hoped to achieve his victories without having to pay the price of war. But the English in Madras being conscious of some naval superiority did not cooperate and Admiral Barnett appeared with some ships off the Coromandel Coast in 1745. Dupleix requested the Nawab of Arcot (Anwaruddin Khan) to interfere and insist that peace shall not be broken by any mercantil

power stationed within its territory. Still to be on the safer side he requisitioned the services of M. La Bourdonnais, the governor of Bourbon and Mauritius, who was a competent admiral. In the meantime Peyton had succeeded Barnett as admiral of the English fleet and he was not quite competent. In a naval engagement off Negapatam in 1746 between these two, the English were obliged to yield ground and withdraw to Ceylon and later to Bengal. La Bourdonnais now found Madras unguarded and with the help of Dupleix seized the port and the fort easily. Now Nicholas Morse, the then governor of Fort St. George appealed to the Nawab of Arcot exactly as Dupleix had done earlier, but when expostulated Dupleix naively replied that Madras was being captured to be handed over to the Nawab. But after Madras had been captured, Dupleix and La Bourdonnais fell out and disagreed on what should be done with the captured city. The former wanted it to be retained in French possession, while the latter wanted it to be ransomed. It is not unreasonable to suppose that the Admiral had been handsomely bribed by the English. So he left Madras with his fleet which in the meantime had been partially damaged by a storm. Dupleix however did not approve of the Admiral's actions; he retained the city and looted it. Though these two Frenchmen made it out to be a question of jurisdiction of authority, it is certain that more practical and less honourable considerations of pecuniary benefit weighed with both. The Nawab of Arcot was thoroughly displeased with what was going on in Madras under his very nose and contrary to his wishes and injunctions. So he sent an army under his son Mafuz Khan to Madras to rid the place of the new menace. Madras was already in French possession but the Nawab's army forced the French to engage in a battle on the banks of the Adyar just to the north of San Thome. This is the famous Adyar battle (1746) also called Battle of San Thome, in which the Nawab's cavalry was easily scattered and largely destroyed by the superior French artillery. It is futile to hold that superior French military discipline had nothing to do with the victory in that battle. Dodwell says that the event "announced emphatically the value of that development of arms and tactics which had been introduced in the preceding eighty years".

Dupleix tried to follow up this victory by three attempts to capture Fort St. David; but he could not succeed. Dupleix had not only made irreplaceable enemies of the English but alienated permanently the sympathies of the Nawab of Arcot. In 1748 Admiral Boscawen besieged Pondicherry but Dupleix, admirably aided by an active and competent Madame Dupleix, successfully defended the city. Boscawen was forced to lift the siege and retire to Fort St. David. Before he could try again to besiege Pondicherry, the War of the Austrian Succession in Europe had come to an end and the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle concluded. The treaty restored Madras to the English. Dupleix's reputation however did not suffer. The victory in the Battle of Adyar and the then successful defence of Pondicherry and his daring defiance of the Nawab of Arcot far outweighed his failure against Fort St. David and the restoration of Fort St. George to the English.

Thus ended the first Carnatic war, but only nominally.

But there was a continuation of that war in the Carnatic though the English and the French were at peace at home. The causes for this continuation were however different from those which caused the beginning of the series. The mercenary levies which the two commercial companies had collected for waging this war had gone out of occupation but actually hostilities began because Floyer, governor of Fort St. David, interfered in the question of succession to the Tanjore throne and supported one of the claimants (Kattu Raja) in return for the cession of Devikottai at the mouth of the Coleroon. Pratap Singh who was then the reigning prince of Tanjore would not yield and so two British expeditions had to be sent to reduce Devikottai. In 1739 Major Lawrence was to play a big role in the ensuing Carnatic wars, assisted by Robert Clive who was just then emerging into prominence. Even after taking Devikottai, the English recognized Pratap Singh as the ruler of Tanjore but managed to get a substantial pension for their protegee.

This kind of interference in the internal affairs of Indian royal families having been inaugurated by the English could be

imitated by the French and Dupleix was not the man to miss such an opportunity if it came or to create one if he wanted it. We have seen how Chanda Saheb was taken prisoner in Tiruchy by Murari Rao and jailed in Satara, his son Raja Saheb persuaded Dupleix to get Chanda Saheb released. Dupleix who knew thatnddiA nwarn of Arcot had become his deadly enemy thought that by getting Chanda Saheb released he could use him as a competitor to the Nawabi of Arcot. Accordingly he paid seven lakhs of rupees to the Marathas, obtained the release of Chanda Saheb (whose family had already taken refuge in Pondicherry), and started a chain of events which culminated in the second phase of Anglo-French conflict in the Carnatic.

Chanda Saheb and Muzaffar Jung, a claimant to the Nizamate in opposition to Nazir Jung, attacked, defeated and killed Anwaruddin in the battle of Ambur (1749). Chanda Saheb was declared Nawab of Arcot and Muzaffar Jang, the Nizam of Hyderabad. The twin repaired to Pondicherry when the victors and Dupleix honoured each other. After the battle of Ambur, Muhammad Ali (the son of Anwaruddin) had left for Trichinopoly where he shut himself in the Fort. Dupleix who wanted to fight Chanda Saheb's enemy sent an army to Tiruchy to besiege the place. The English automatically supported Muhammad Ali and encouraged other forces like Marathas to besiege Tanjore. In the meantime Nazir Jang the Nizam of Hyderabad moved into the Deccan with a considerable army which while passing by Pondicherry received some English reinforcements; and he was left free by the French who prudently withdrew to Pondicherry avoiding a battle. Nazir Jang received the submission of his nephew and competitor Muzaffar Jang, imprisoned him and stayed in Arcot. The French whose forces were now cammanded by Bussy, a very competent French general, succeeded in taking Gingee a place till then considered to be nearly impregnable. Nazir Jang himself was killed in a night raid by La Touche and this released Muzaffar Jang from his prison. Bussy escorted Muzaffar Jang to Hyderabad (1751).

Dupleix sent Jacques Law to Trichinopoly to invest it to force Muhammad Ali out of that place, but he was not able to do

much. Thomas Saunders who was governor of Fort St David (1750-55) thought that these moves on the part of the French must be met and checked and defeated. There was an old and valuable suggestion by Muhammad Ali that the best way to relieve pressure on Trichinopoly was to besiege Arcot. The idea was there and the man to do it was easily found also. It was Robert Clive who marched on Arcot *via* Madras with a body of 200 Europeans and 600 sepoys, and effortlessly captured the fort there. He held the place against the besiegers for over fifty days. It was the holding of the fort for so long that really redounded to his credit. That was the beginning of a long and difficult career of military and achievements for him. The immediate effect of this capture and defence of Arcot was as expected to have led to the lifting of the siege of Trichinopoly by Law. Clive followed up his performance in Arcot with a great victory at Kaverippakkam and saved Madras from the French. Another relieving force pushed Law and his contingent into Srirangam from where unable to fight his way out he surrendered to the English who took him prisoner. Chanda Saheb took refuge with the Tanjore general who against all canons of hospitality got him murdered by a pathan. Muhammad Ali and Major Lawrence were only indirectly responsible for this murder. That Chanda Saheb was in a sense responsible for the suicide of Minakshi many years ago cannot be a justification for murdering Chanda Saheb. It was merely an act of military and political expediency.

Dupleix, even in this hour of multiple tragedy for him did not lose confidence or hope. He managed by dexterous diplomacy to separate Muhammad Ali from his friends. He got also the services of the mercenary Murari Rao; he sent general Mainville to besiege Tiruchy; but that general could not meet with success, partly due to his personal incompetence and partly due to all military efforts on the part of the French having to be called off at the instance of the home authorities. An attempt at reconciliation in a meeting at Sadras (1754) didnot produce the desired results.

In the same year, 1754, the home authorities in France recalled Dupleix. They sent Godehu to Pondicherry to relieve

Dupleix of his charge and to take over from him. Godehu was even instructed to arrest Dupleix if he refused to hand over charge. But that was rather unnecessary to have done that; for Dupleix was not the man to do that kind of thing. He returned to France; and after much suffering and humiliation passed away. Both England and France had humiliated and punished some of the greatest among their countrymen who combined great patriotism and sense of devotion with some failings or weaknesses. A few days before his death he wrote in his memoirs : "I have sacrificed my youth, my fortune, my life, to enrich my nation in Asia My services are treated as fables, my demand is denounced as ridiculous, I am treated as the vilest of mankind. I am in the most deplorable indigence. The little property that remained to me has been seized". Dupleix was a great man, great in his projects and ambition and by no means inconsiderable in his achievements; but he was greatly misunderstood and illtreated by his own countrymen. It is futile to try to hypocritically reconstruct possible course he could have adopted for success. He did his best for his country, but a combination of circumstances defeated his purposes; at the end the French endeavours in the Carnatic suffered his fate and collapsed. Macaulay was largely correct in considering Dupleix as the pioneer among those who had a native mercenary force to defeat native princes and their armies, for though there were a few before him who knew and practised this, none had done it on the scale he adopted. Dupleix cast his net too far and too widely, tried to become the successor to the Moghul Emperor by winning a few minor battles in the Carnatic, but fell a victim to the superior good luck of the English and to a number of complicated situations and events like the death of Muzaffar Jang, for instance. He attempted too much in too short a time; hence his failure.

The recall of Dupleix and the arrival of Godehu ended the second phase of the Carnatic war. As noted above the third phase followed soon after when the Seven Year's War broke out in 1756. But by then Godehu had been succeeded by Leyrit and the latter

had been succeeded by Lally as governor. The third phase of the Carnatic was synchronised with the Seven Year's War. Thomas Arthur Count de Lally was appointed to the position of the King's representative in India by the French in 1756. His commission was to reform the administration in Pondicherry and to expel the English from India, but he could reach India only in 1758. He was a famous, brave and honest officer, not devoid of professional competence. But by the time he arrived in India English domination over Bengal had become complete as a result of Plassey (1757).

Lally, as soon as he arrived in the Carnatic captured Fort St. David. Lally then wished to collect from the ruler of Tanjore the arrears allegedly due from him ; on the way he took and plundered Nagore and then proceeded to Tiruvarur where since he could get nothing to loot caught hold of six priests of the temple and executed them. His savagery reminded one of the days of Maratha plunder. Though he reached Tanjore and laid siege to the city he soon lifted it and returned to the Coast. Meanwhile two indecisive naval engagements took place between the English Admiral George Pocock and the French Admiral D'Ache. Lally was bent on capturing Madras and so proceeded towards that place, conquering many places on the way. He began the siege of Madras on 14th December, 1758 which had however been well prepared for defence by its governor George Pigot. The French effective attack started in January 1759. The defenders secured the assistance of a contingent from Trichinopoly which harassed the besiegers to a great extent. In February however, an English fleet arrived off the coast of Madras and this had the desired effect of compelling Lally to raise the siege of Madras and retire to Pondicherry. In further struggles the English were defeated at Conjeevaram by the French who however had no financial resources to pursue the advantage. In September D'Ache was defeated and wounded in a naval engagement with Pocock. He left the Coromandel Coast finally soon after. The decisive turn in this war came when Sir Eyre Coote came with reinforcements and on January 22, 1760 defeated Lally at Wandiwash. Bussy who also fought was taken prisoner. This

left the French with their possessions confined to Pondicherry, Gingee and Mahe.

Lally allied with Hyder Ali, but got nothing out of the alliance. Eyre Coote seized Villianallur near Pondicherry. Later he blockaded Pondicherry itself. Then Leyrit was governor and Lally was king's representative. The economic condition of Pondicherry deteriorated greatly so that a dog came to be sold for Rs. 24. On January 16, 1761 Pondicherry fell. The city was thoroughly destroyed, so that "not a roof was left standing in this once fair and flourishing city". Even Gingee and Mahe fell to British arms and "The French were left without a foot of ground in India". Lally was arrested and despatched to England as a prisoner. The Peace of Paris concluded in 1763 ended the Seven Years War and restored their possessions in India to the French. They were allowed to pursue only commercial transactions in Bengal. Muhammad Ali felt secure. In 1763 Lally returned to France, where he was lodged in the Bastille. The government of France condemned him to death in 1766 alleging that he had betrayed the king and the Company. Since he was a nobleman he was given the benefit of being beheaded instead of the horror of being hanged. As in the case of Dupleix, Lally too was too harshly judged and too severely punished. Lally could have been guilty of error of judgment but to have executed him was a sign of the fickleness of law in those times. He was, along with the weaker moments of Dupleix, also responsible for the failure of the French in India.

The end of the three Carnatic wars also meant an end of the French supremacy in India. By the end of the Seven Years' War, they had definitely yielded to the English. The reasons for their failure are manifold but could be understood under three headings : Military (including naval), Administrative and Financial. In the 16th and 17th centuries sea power was a deciding factor in the success of colonising and imperialist powers. Even those which honestly wished to confine themselves purely to trade had need to possess an effective naval fighting force, for they had to safeguard their cargo from attacks from pirates and other hostile forces.

England was easily the most powerful among the seagoing powers of those times as had been amply demonstrated even in the days of the Armada. So long as English naval power was indecisive, France had the upper hand as when she captured Madras and Pondicherry could successfully defend herself against ineffective English naval attacks. The Seven Years' War and the manner in which the English won that war on the high seas is a sure indication of Mahan's thesis regarding the importance of sea power in history; the Seven Years' War was a decisive watershed in the turning point of history in the middle of the 18th century and undoubtedly it turned in favour of the English and against the French.

The English and the French fought each other on the Indian soil with the help of mercenary troops recruited from among the Indians. Except for a handful of generals and their immediate aides, the Anglo-French wars in India were fought by Indians; and in regard to fire power they were really equally matched. Therefore the variable was generalship and this involved tactics and strategy in both of which the English excelled the French. Major Stringer Lawrence, Robert Clive and Sir Eyre Coote possessed military talents and competence for leadership in immeasurably greater degree than any one we can think of among the French, not excluding Le Bourdonnais, Bussy and Law. If Pondicherry was well defended by Duplax, Fort St. David was better for longer periods defended by Lawrence; if Madras was captured, Pondicherry too fell; if Bussy succeeded in reducing Gingee, Trichinopoly could not be taken. If the English first failed against Devikottai, Lally failed against Tanjore. But the French had no brilliant achievements comparable to the capture and defence of Arcot, Kaverippakkam or Wandiwash.

There was an essential difference between the structure of the English East India Company and the French. The power, in spite of the charters issued by English monarchs and the occasional parliamentary debates which it evoked, was fundamentally a private organization exemplifying Queen Elizabeth's dictum (1580) that 'the ocean was free to all, for as much as neither nature nor regard

of public use do permit the exclusive possession thereof'. On the other hand the French East India Company had become practically a French department of state. While the English company had been 'cradled in the chilly but invigorating atmosphere of individualism', the French made the company a bureaucratic organization controlled by the ministers of the French monarch. There was no popular enthusiasm shaping the policies or warming up the activities of the French company and the public were by and large neither happy with, and proud of the sources of their mercantile efforts nor pained and disappointed by their failure.

The English company, due to the support of wealthy merchants of London, was from the start financially better off than the French. The commercial prosperity, therefore, which attended their efforts also exceeded that of the French. Dupleix wanted to start on a career of political ascendancy even before commercial success had become assured. As P. E. Roberts quotes, he thought of 'grasping the sceptre too soon. That was the fatal rock to which the French companies were lured to destruction ... militarism is a dangerous weapon in the hands of a chartered company—at least in the early stages of its history'.

Before we conclude, it would be necessary to get to know some important personalities thrown up during this period and the role they played in history. We have seen in brief outline the career of Dupleix and the tragedy of Lally. Among the English the most important person who was also destined to lay foundation of English power in India was Robert Clive (later Lord Clive).

Robert Clive son of Richard Clive was born in 1725 at Market Drayton in Shropshire (though later, Chatham said he was 'heaven-born'). He had no inclination for formal education but a tremendous proclivity to petty mischief and playing practical jokes. He was treated as a menace by the local people. He later learned some book-keeping in a school which fitted him for a writer's post in the East India Company in Madras on a salary of £ 5 *per annum* besides an annual supply of drink. When Madras was captured by

the French in 1746, he blackened his face and in the dress of a *dubash* escaped to Fort St. David. He tasted military action for the first time when Fort St. David was besieged by the French. In 1749 he assisted Lawrence in the capture of Devikottai. In 1751 he became Captain and went to Trichinopoly to repel the Arcot and French forces. His capture and defence of Arcot in 1751 brought him suddenly into the lime-light of history. The defence of that place for fifty or fiftythree gruesome days goes down in history as a marvel of doggedness typical of Clive. His subsequent victory over the French in Kaverippakkam (1752) confirmed the success at Arcot and confounded the plans of Dupleix to capture Madras. He cooperated with Lawrence in the neighbourhood of Trichinopoly and greatly aided in the defeat and capture of Law. These services were recognised by a grateful British public which presented in 1754 'a gold tilted sword enriched with diamonds'. His subsequent life was spent either in Bengal where he won the Battle of Plassey (1757) by heroic as well as corrupt practices and served as governor when he was charged with rooting out of corruption. He was governor of Bengal on two occasions; and when finally he returned to England (1767) he was accused by the Parliament of many acts of corruption to which he replied "Mr. Chairman ... I stand astonished at my own moderation". Finally the Parliament concluded that 'Robert Clive did render great and meritorious services to this country' (England). Clive who was by nature suffering from a sort of Melancholia committed suicide in November 1774. While his undoubted defects in character cannot and need not be underestimated, his strength of will and scale of achievement, as a civilian as well as a soldier, cannot and must not be played down. His son Edward Clive was governor of Fort St. George from 1798 to 1803 during a very important and formative period in the history of Tamilnad.

Anandaranga Pillai is a name to conjure with in the annals of Tamil history. He was a *dubesh*¹ in Pondicherry helping to assist French trade in India and he bult a fortune for himself. He

1 Dubesh: Dobhashi: One who knows two languages.

was the son of Tiruvenkadam Pillai who came down to Pondicherry from Perambur near Madras. He became a favourite of Levoir and Dumas. But with the advent of Dupleix he rose greatly in wealth, influence and importance. His fame and fortune rose and fell with those of his patron and master, Dupleix; but after a short period of revived good fortune in 1758 when Count de Lally came to French India, Pillai's fortunes once again sank. On the 12th January 1761, exactly four days before the capture of Pondicherry by Eyre Coote, Anandaranga Pillai died.

The Nizam of Hyderabad conferred on Pillai the title of 'Vizier' and 'Kumara Banangal'. He was a great patron of literature and fine arts. His patronage of poets led to the composition of a Telugu panegyric 'Ananda Ranga Chanthas' and a Sanskrit poem 'Ananda Ranga Champu' and the Tamil classic 'Ananda Rangan Kovai' by Thyagaraja Desikar, son of Ilakkana Vilakkam Vaidyanatha Navalar.

The real and undying fame of Ananda Ranga Pillai, however is based on his diary in Tamil covering the period 1736 to 1760. This diary reveals his profound capacity for political judgment, and is a most valuable source of history for that period. The reason for his having maintained this diary can only be guessed; for, he nowhere says why he did so. This diary is perhaps the only one of its kind before the 18th century though we know Bhaskara Setupati the ruler of Ramnad at the time of the 19th century was also a diarist.

Bussy, the great French general and diplomat was born in 1718, came to India from Mauritius with La Bourdonnais; he participated in the battle of Ambur (1749). He became famous the next year for having captured the fortress of Gingee, considered to be the Gwalior of South India. In 1751 he escorted Muzaffar Jang to Hyderabad. Though the latter perished on the way, he put Salabat Jang on the Nizam's throne and accompanied him to Aurangabad. He acquired the northern sarkars for the French by careful diplomacy. When Lally resumed his attack on Madras, Bussy also was

called to the south. In the battle of Wandiwash (1760) he was taken prisoner, but allowed to return to France. He came back to India in 1783 and died at Pondicherry in 1785. "The career of Bussy in the sarkars offers numerous parallels with Clive's career in Bengal". His capacity and wisdom established French power in the Deccan.

The English, Haidar Ali And Tippu

We have seen the interference of Chikkadeva Raja (1672-1704) the great king of Mysore, in the affairs of the Tamil country in the last decades of the 17th century. He was succeeded by Kanthirava Narasa II who was deaf and dumb and ruled from 1704 to 1713. He was in his turn succeeded by Dodda Krishnaraja (1713-31) who was a very weak and incompetent king and allowed his ministers to dominate the administration. In his days Mysore clashed with Sadatullah Khan, the Nawab of the Carnatic and the conflict ended with appeasing the Nawab with a gift of a crore of rupees. Dodda Krishnaraja's successor was one Chamaraja VII (1731-34); Devaraya and his cousin Nanjaraja (the dalavay and the Finance minister respectively of Mysore) usurped power and imprisoned the king. Chamaraja's successor Chikka Krishnaraja was put on the throne at the age of five in 1734 and he ruled till 1766. The minority of the incompetent king and the temerity of the unscrupulous ministers consolidated the practical usurpation by the latter of the powers of the former. Some time afterwards Nanjaraja mentioned above died and his place was taken by Devaraja's younger brother also named Nanjaraja. Debunking of royalty and ministerial usurpation became the order of the day in Mysore. Devaraja died before 1759 and his brother Nanjaraja became all powerful.

Now arose on the scene Haidar Ali (born in 1722) who rose from the rank of a soldier under the patronage of Nanjaraja.. He had participated in Nazir Jang's invasion of the Carnatic (1750) and in Nanjaraja's siege of Trichinopoly (1751-1754) and attracted attention by his military qualities especially as a cavalryman. In 1757 he became the faujdar of Dindigul where he was defeated in a clash (1757) with the more competent Yusuf Khan. He learnt the art of military operations by association with the French for whom he (and later his son) developed an affection which was equalled only by the hatred which both of them bore towards the English.

In 1758 he returned to Seringapatam, then the capital of Mysore and put down an army mutiny with the help of Khande Rao, a Maratha Brahmin officer. From then Haidar slowly and steadily rose to power by using as his tools murder (of Hari Singh, e. g.) dissimulation and ingratitude (his cheating and imprisonment of Nanjaraja) and forgery (his misleading of Khande Rao). Having got rid of his possible competitors to power, he usurped royal power in 1761 though he suffered the puppet king to sit on the throne.

In the early days of his supreme power he propitiated the Nizam Basalat Jang and conquered Bednur putting an end to the Nayakship of Ikkeri; this was the beginning of a career of aggression which was continued by his more militant Anglophobe of a son, Tippu Sultan. We shall here be concerned with the career of this remarkable man only so far as his activities in Tamilnad are concerned.

The father and the son clashed with the English on the soil of Tamilnad and of Mysore on four occasions: these being called the four Mysore wars. The first and the second Mysore wars were fought by the English against Haider and the third and the fourth and last with Tippu his son. These wars began in 1767 and ended in 1799. When they began there were four powers in South India contending with each other in unprincipled warfare and tortuous diplomacy, viz., the Marathas, the Nizam, Seringapatam

and Fort St. George. At the end of the period, there were only two, the Nizam having been tamed and Tippu Sultan destroyed, i.e., the Marathas and the English. The English in Fort St. George and in Fort William were fully preoccupied with the Mysore war with Haidar began in 1767 and ended in 1769; the second war lasted from 1780-17784, when Haidar died, and was continued by Tippu from 1783 to 1784 this ended with the Treaty of Mangalore (1784). The third was fought from 1790 to 1792 with Tippu and it ended with the treaty of Seringapatam. The fourth and last Mysore war was fought in 1799 and ended in the defeat and death of Tippu and restoration of the Hindu kings to the Mysore throne. The first Mysore war was fought during the governorship of George Bouchier in Madras, the Second during the governor-generalship of Warren Hastings, the third during that of Cornwallis and the fourth that of Wellesley.

The English acquired the Northern Sarakars from the Moghuls in 1765 by the Treaty of Allahabad. The Nizam, though demurred at first, later acquiesced and it was agreed between Nizam Ali (1762-1802) and the English that the latter should station troops in Hyderabad ready to help the Nizam 'in everything that was right and proper' and whenever required (1766). These meant according to Haidar Ali that the English and the Nizam had joined against Haidar. The Marathas who were expected to join the Nizam did not do so and consequently the Nizam and Haidar joined against anyone who might oppose either of them. This was treated by the English as a gang-up against them. In 1767 Haidar and Nizam Ali were defeated by Colonel Joseph Smith at Changma in North Arcot District and against Tiruvannamalai jointly by Colonel Smith and Colonel Wood. Haidar was again defeated at Ambur. The Nizam was separated from Haidar by an invasion of the former's dominions by an English force from Bengal. The Nizam promptly confirmed the older treaty now again in 1768. The English however could not succeed in taking Bangalore. The English experienced great difficulties in locating and defeating Haidar whenever he was very mobile. He soon descended on the Baramahal (the twelve

regions of North Eastern part of the Salem District), and soon took Karur. Near Erode he defeated Captain Nixon. In 1769 he unleashed on the Carnatic a most destructive raid which had caused so much destruction that the people of the region for many generations to come deep in the 19th century of remembered and dreaded the very memory. Such unprecedented horror which the Arcot Districts experienced was in no small measure responsible for the people of the Carnatic accepting British rule even as blessing. Haidar was fanatically opposed to Muhammad Ali who was better understood by the tyrant of Mysore than the book-keepers in Madras. When the Madras government tried to settle terms with him, he promised to reach the gates of Madras from where he would dictate terms to them. He kept his promise and the terms he dictated included the restoration of each other's conquered territories; Haidar retained Karur; mutual assistance was to be rendered in times of defensive war.

Many historians have pointed out that this war was lost by the English, and Haidar was the victor. But it is clear that Haidar was himself as often defeated by the English as the latter were defeated by him and the terms of the treaty were excessively favourable to Haidar. It is said Haidar was generous and moderate; but if such a man was to be that there must have been sufficiently compelling causes. In fact the English retained the option to discretely implement the provisions of the treaty. When the Marathas attacked Haidar and when he asked for English help, they were indifferent to the demand and this made the English Haidar's most hated enemies.

The myth of Haidar's excellence of generalship was exploded by the Marathas under Madhava Rao who imposed a most ignominious treaty on him after a devastating victory (1772). The blackness of his heart and the darkness of his designs were proved, if proof they needed, by his murder of the king of Mysore in 1770. Then he turned upon his subjects and like a veritable Mohammad Bin Tughlak even tortured his subjects to yield money. His one time

favourites and friends like Fazalullah Khan and Nanjaraja were in the most ungrateful manner done away with by him.

In 1773 Haidar's atrocities extended to Mercara in Coorg which he captured and whose people he tortured and whose king he imprisoned. Haidar was waiting for a good and opportune time for his attack on the English whose presence in South India was his greatest obstacle to total domination of the region. The period from 1775 to 1780 constituted a very dark period for the English. Everywhere in the world, in the American colonies, in their relations with France, Spain and Northern European powers and in the Carnatic they were isolated. The Nizam, the Marathas and Haidar aided by the French opposed them. It was 'Britannia contra burden' during that period. Haidar descended on the Carnatic and rained terror on the inhabitants. Burke described this horror in the following glowing words: "A storm of universal fire blasted every field, consumed every house, destroyed every temple. The miserable inhabitants fleeing from their flaming villages, in part were slaughtered; others, without regard to sex, to age, to the respect of rank, or sacredness of function - fathers torn from children, husbands from wives - enveloped in a whirlwind of cavalry, and amidst the goading spears of drivers, and the trampling of pursuing horses, were swept into captivity in an unknown and hostile land. Those who were able to evade this tempest, fled to the walled cities; but escaping from fire, sword and exile they fell into the jaws of famine". Sir Hector Munro, the hero of Buxar and Colonel Baille were both worsted by Haidar in North Arcot District in 1780. Haidar took Arcot but was helpless against Wandiwash which was well defended by Lieutenant Flint. Then arrived Sir Eyre Coote, the old hero of Wandiwash, in Madras. He began his campaign in 1781 and relieved Wandiwash and other places hard pressed by Haidar. Haidar was anxious to avoid a straight battle with Eyre Coote; so he attacked Tanjore and plundered it. This was an occasion for him to capture a number of boys there and send them to Seringapatam for conversion to Islam. Coote defeated Haidar in Porto Novo (July 1781) when the latter narrowly escaped capture. In September Haidar was again defeated in Sholinghur. In 1782

however Colonel Braithwaite was badly defeated near Kumbakonam by Tippu who took the English general prisoner. Haidar's successes in the neighbourhood of Tanjore and Eyre Coote's successes in the North and South Arcot districts balanced each other; and each despaired of destroying the other.

Haidar now realised the futility of fighting the English. The latter's diplomacy had separated the Nizam and the Marathas from him. Unaided they were able to maintain their own against a combination of forces; the French were not in a position to give him effective aid. Truly, then, did Haidar cry out in despair: "I have committed a great error. I have purchased a draught of *Sendhi* (an intoxicating drink) at the price of a lac of pagodas ... The defeat of many Bailles and Braithwaites will not destroy them. I can ruin their resources by land" (which was an exaggerated claim), "but I cannot dry up the sea" (which was a bare statement of fact).

In 1782 a number of engagements on land, mostly between Haidar and Eyre Coote and on the seas between Suffren (the French Admiral) and Hughes (the English Admiral). Most of these were indecisive. Tippu was experiencing defeats at the hands of Colonel Humberstone near Palghat and at Ponnani. In December 1782, Haidar died near Arcot. Purnaiya, a devoted officer, kept the fact a secret and had the body removed to Kolar. Tippu succeeded Haidar and usurped the throne by failing to nominate a king. Even the hypocritical pretension kept up by Haidar was dispelled by the frank usurpation of his son.

Tippu continued the second Mysore war, but he neglected the Carnatic and concentrated on the West Coast. Many more naval battles between Suffren and Hughes ended indecisively. Sir Eyre Coote had died in 1783 and Bussy arrived in the Carnatic after Haidar had died. Tippu was all along concentrating on Mangalore so that the southern part of his kingdom was much exposed to English attack. Karur and Dindigul were captured by Colonel Lang (June 1783) and almost simultaneously Dharapuram was taken by his successor, Col. Fullarton, who captured Palghat and Coimbatore.

Col. Campbell who had defended Mangalore for eight long and gruesome months against Tippu surrendered. This was followed by Tippu's despatch of 30000 Indian Christians to Mysore for forcible conversion to Islam. In the light of this the attempt on the part of a few modern scholars to claim religious tolerance for Tippu seems hollow and unconvincing. The Treaty of Mangalore was signed in 1784; it said that both parties were to give up their conquests and release the prisoners. Tippu did not really release all the prisoners. The treaty was treated by Warren Hastings as hastily concluded by Macartney who was then the governor of Madras.

Between 1784 and 1790, Tippu's activities consisted in extending his territories in the north and the south. His treatment of the chief of Nanguna is a scandalous chapter in the career of that usurper. He indulged in making forced conversions of masses of men and in desecration and looting of temples. Cornwallis who was then the governor-general realised the need to check this rake's progress.

Cornwallis' correspondence with Nizam Ali in 1789 promising to militarily support him when needed against anyone except the company's allies contained a list of allies which did not include Tippu. This offended Tippu. So he attacked Travancore (1789) which was one of the allies of the Company; but he did not succeed against the northern walls of defence of Travancore. John Holland then governor of Madras took no notice of this, disobeyed the governor-general's orders to prepare to resist Tippu, resigned and went home. Soon general William Meadows took over as governor (1790-92) and general-in-chief. In May war broke out between Tippu and the English and in June-July of that year Cornwallis concluded an alliance with the Nizam and the Marathas and kept himself free to concentrate on Tippu. In 1790, Meadows captured Coimbatore, Dindigul and Palghat. Colonel Hartley defeated Husain Ali, Tippu's general at Calicut. Tippu turned to the Carnatic, ever their happy hunting ground, and started once again ravaging it. He took Tiruvannamalai in 1791. By now, Cornwallis had arrived in Madras and taken personal command of

the Madras armies. He marched from Vellore and took Bangalore, and meeting Tippu near Seringapatam so severely defeated him that the latter retreated hastily. In the meantime general Ahercromie had joined the governor-general who had already captured the Baramahals. The combined forces marched against Seringapatam and besieged it. Tippu sued for place and accepted Cornwallis terms offered in March 1792. This was the Treaty of Seringapatam, by which Tippu was to give up half of his dominions, pay three crores of rupees as war indemnity, and surrender two of his sons as hostages. Even the Nizam and the Marathas, whose aid to the English was less than nominal, received their share of the indemnity, and of the ceded territory. The English obtained Malabar, Dindigul, and the Baramahals for their share. Tippu got back his hostages after he had paid in full the war indemnity in 1794. Cornwallis could have anticipated Wellesley and removed Tippu entirely from power, and avoided the horrors of a fourth Mysore war; but he was basically controlled by the doctrine of Non-intervention.

Tippu's activities after 1792 consisted in full assumption of the usurped powers in Mysore, in augmenting his military and financial resources, evidently as part of the preparation for another bout of fighting with the English; he was also contacting the French for active help. Lord Wellesley who was now the governor-general decided to end the aggressions of Tippu. He reached Madras at the end of 1798 and Lord Clive (the son of Robert) Governor of Madras cooperated with him. In February 1799 Wellesley declared war on Tippu. The war that followed was the fourth and last Mysore war.

English forces invaded Mysore from the West and the East. General Stuart Commanded the Bombay army; it forced Tippu to retreat from the Coorg frontier; the Madras forces under general Harris aided by the Nizam's army led by Colonel Wellesley (later the Duke of Wellington) defeated and routed Tippu at Malavalli. Harris marched towards Seringapatam and began its siege in April 1799. Early in May 1799 the capital was stormed by general David Baird, and Tippu was shot dead in action. The war was a completely

decisive campaign. So far as Mysore was concerned, the state was rid of a tyrant; the old Hindu family was restored to royal power. So far as Tamilnad was concerned, the successful completion of the Mysore campaign gave the Madras administration enough resources to put down the Palaiyagars, whose rebellions were quelled within two years of the termination of the fourth Mysore war. Since Raja Serfoji II of Tanjore had been reduced to nominal sovereignty and since Arcot had shared the same fate after Umdat-ul-Umara, and since in Ramnad the Setupati had been reduced to the position of a zamindar, the entire Tamil country had practically come under the rule of the English East India Company with the exception of Pondicherry and Karaikkal which the French continued to hold. The Tondaiman of Pudukkottai whose loyalty to the English had been tested and proved was allowed to enjoy some semblance of royalty. The year 1801, therefore, may be taken to represent a definite turning point in the history of Tamilnad, for all the Tamil speaking districts had been effectively brought under the government of the English East India Company. Later on the Madras Presidency came to include the Andhra districts and also Malabar (which had been taken from Tippu) and constituted then the largest of the English Presidencies in India. The fact that Malayalam and Telugu speaking districts also formed a big chunk of the Presidency was destined to have great consequences for the history of Tamilnad in the twentieth century.

We will close the chapter on the history of Tamilnad of the 18th century perfunctorily, if we fail to give atleast a short account of a great warrior whose memory needs to be cherished. He was Yusuf Khan, also known as Khan Saheb. He was a non-Brahmin Hindu, originally named Maruthanayakam Pillai and belonged to the Ramnad district. He became a Muslim, perhaps while at Pondicherry when he was getting acquainted with military matters. In 1752 he joined a band of soldiers under Clive and participated in the siege of Trichinopoly. Major Lawrence considered him "brave and resolute, but cool and sensible in action—in short a born soldier", and said "better of his colour I never saw in

the country". He became commandant of the sepoy and so popularly came to be called "Kammandan Khan Saheb". During 1756-1761, he was incharge of Madura and Tinnevely as their governor but subject to the Madras government, though nominally under the Nawab of Arcot. He defeated Haidar Ali in October 1757 near Madurai. Yusuf Khan helped the English at the time of Lally's siege of Madras, and was rewarded for that.

His administration of the districts under his charge seems to have been beneficent; though a Muslim he made endowments to the Minakshi temple in Madurai. When the English transferred Yusuf Khan's legal subordination from the Nawab of the Carnatic to themselves, he rebelled and resisted the English. The English treated him as a rebel, laid siege to Madura, captured and executed Yusuf Khan in 1764. The Nawab himself had ordered the execution. As Mill says "In his last struggle, he fought chivalrously and died gallantly". The folk songs which hedge Yusuf Khan's memory are still popular in the Tamil country.

The Palaiyagar Rebellions

In the later half of the 18th century certain forces surfaced and created a situation which demanded immediate and drastic action on the part of the English who were emerging as the most dominant political factor in Tamilnad then. The series of events which followed in the wake of this in the southern districts of Ramnad, Madurai and Tirunelveli may be conveniently and collectively called the *Palaiyagar rebellions* since the events are mostly *their* risings against the rent collecting authority of the English and they were rebellions for legally they constituted *defiance of authority*.

It will be remembered that when Visvanatha Nayaka the first Nayak ruler in Madurai and aided by Ariyanatha Mudaliar set up a number of military out-posts called 'Palaiyams', it was for the purpose of promoting the politico-military interests of Vijayanagar imperialism in the Tamil districts. These Nayak rulers brought with them or encouraged the immigration of a number of petty military adventurers into the particularly resistant districts of the Cis-Kaviri peninsula. It was a rough and ready feudal arrangement which was helpful in overcoming native opposition but contained in itself germs of indiscipline and resistance to any imaginable authority not excluding the Nayak himself. It is traditionally stated, and a list is not wanting, that seventy-two Palaiyams were originally constituted. But it is quite possible that a number of them constituted themselves either by fresh creation

or as splinters from existing ones; and so by the middle of the eighteenth century, when the Nayakship of Madurai, after Minakshi, had ceased to exist, there were a number of petty feudatories—one very reluctantly uses this word for it is very difficult to say whose feudal authority they accepted—exercising their undefined, uncontrolled powers and giving the kind of government they could be expected to give to their own subjects and by looking the neighbourhood to make up the insufficiency of their own revenues. This kind of vague groups which are the hangover of the dissolution of larger and properly constituted political organizations are not unknown to Indian history: *vide*, the Pindaris, the Thugs and so forth who were the froth thrown up by the churning of the Maratha confederacy by British military might. The English in the course of the establishment of their paramountcy in this country had to contend with and conquer many of these constantly proliferating phenomena. In view of the fact that the English administrators and generals had at times to manage a number of these forces simultaneously, it was but inevitable that occasionally it was beyond their momentary means to control all of them and equally effectively; but this should not mislead one into supposing that some of those forces which could for short periods of time withstand British force were paragons of military might; nor because a number of such forces, realising that their day of extinction was drawing near inexorably combined to resist the British, should such be exaggerated and romanticised into a liberation movement.

The political situation in the Tamil country in the late 17th and the whole of the 18th centuries can be summarised as a process of the bigger fish swallowing the smaller ones; and one large shark remaining finally the master of the situation. The Madura Nayakship swallowed the Tanjore Nayakship; the Madura Nayakship in its turn was finished by the Nawab of Arcot. The Nawab fell a prey to the English East India Company, which incidentally eliminated the French and the Marathas of Tanjore. The Setupati of Ramnad who was successfully resisting the Raja of Tanjore got reduced to

the position of a Zamindar (large landholder) by the end of the 18th century. Pudukkottai escaped by consistent friendship with the Company. Travancore became a subordinate ally and on the throne of Mysore set a truncated monarch after Tippu had fallen in Srirangapattanam in 1799.

The year 1799 is significant. The end of the century was drawing near. British arms had succeeded in reducing the whole of Tamilnad and its frontiers to a semblance of order though the vast problem of creating order out of the chaos that was the 18th century still remained. In the midst of all these activities, they had to achieve the subjection of the Palaiyagars whose rebellion lasted during the last decade of the 18th century and its embers could be stamped out only just before 1801.

The exact political locus of the Palaiyagars requires some elucidation. When Kumara Kampana conquered the Tamil country he obtained for Vijayanagar the right by conquest to rule the country which included the obedience of the subjects and payment of taxes. To facilitate, both government and taxation, the Nayak of Madura who was the viceroy of Vijayanagar in the south Tamil country, a number of Palaiyams were set up. The Palaiyagars then - i.e., when they accepted such a position - had the obvious duty to honestly but diligently collect the revenues from the subjects and transmit them to the Nayak, while as a recompense for this trouble they were entitled to certain specific benefits. When Zulfikar Khan, the general of Aurangzeb's southern armies invaded Tanjore and Tiruchy and obliged those rulers to agree to pay tribute to the great Moghul and when they agreed, it was a bargain. Then when the Nawab of Arcot who was the Faujdar under the Subedar of the Deccan, who was the great Moghul's viceroy in the Deccan, specifically conquered the Dindigul and Madura regions and the southern powers accepted his suzerainty it was a contract between the Nawab of the Carnatic and all the powers in extreme south. The Palaiyagars had automatically become bound by this position. The Nawab of the Carnatic got so badly indebted to the English Company in Madras that the Nawab transferred to the English the right to collect rent

on his behalf from the southern territories. The English, according to the Nawab had the necessary means to compel payment of revenue when such payment was withheld. It was in this capacity that the English appointed 'revenue collectors' with quasi military powers in Madurai.

Now since the Nawab of the Carnatic was *defacto* unable to enforce obedience among the numerous petty rent collectors who had assumed unto themselves the status of petty chieftains and who were in the prevailing chaos drifting towards a precarious independence, it was becoming more and more necessary for the English collector to coerce the recalcitrant chiefs to pay the arrears of revenue. Out of the numerous chieftains in the Dindigul, Madurai and Tirunelveli regions, it is admitted that a prominently large number were willing to pay up the arrears of revenue as demanded. There were certain chieftains whose status was more precisely defined and accepted, like the Setupati of Ramnad, the chieftain of Sivaganga and the Tondaiman of Pudukkottai. The English dealt with them differently. But the numerous 'Palaiyagars' especially of Tirunelveli and Madurai were on a different footing. Among them also a number of chiefs like the one of Ettaiyapuram recognized the English authority for the collection of revenue (which is almost always by inadvertence and by deliberate abuse of language called 'tribute'), but some others notably the Palaiyagar of Panchalan-kurichi most delayed and at times delayed and at times denied payment of revenue ('kist' as it was rightly called). The motivation was clear. The chaotic condition which prevailed in the country was advantageous for these chieftains, for it enabled them freely to live the countryside, loot neighbouring chieftaincies and plunder far and wide. The irksome discipline which the new authority was expected to enforce was naturally resisted by them, often singly and occasionally in groups of similarly motivated chieftains. In the tense drama of resistance to authority and enforcement of law resulting in petty warfare, miniature sieges, mock-heroic stance, crime, treachery, reprisals, farcical trials, horrible hangings—a whole budget of unfortunate occurrences—lasting for but a period of four

years from 1797 to 1801, we have what is indicated by the expression 'Palaiygar rebellions'. It will be good to remember in this context that the government of the Setupati in Ramnad has been suspended in 1793 by the English East India Company. The Company had despoised Muthu Ramalinga Setupati and taken over the government of Ramnad and they administered the region till 1803 when they restored Mangaleswari Nachchiyar as a Zamindarini to the position of Setupati. To the South of the Kaviri, in Tamilnad, serious government was just non-existent.

With the attempt on the part of the English authorities in Madurai to enforce law and order and payment of arrears of revenue, there erupted particularly in Panchalankurichi under the chieftaincy of Kattabomma Nayaka, risings against the English; these risings occasionally spread to Ramnad; the last scene of the series of episodes was enacted in the tracts around Sivaganga. Panchalankurichi was a small hamlet near Ettaiyapuram which is itself to the north west of Tuticorin and in the Tirunelveli District. Kattabomman its chief was in the habit of raiding the lands of the neighbouring Palaiyagars and this had earned for him the enmity of these neighbours and particularly Ettaiyapuram. Some other chieftains who approved of Kattabomman's easy short cut to revenue irritated and joined him in similar frays. He also had failed to pay the arrears of revenue to the English Company. This provoked Col. Maxwell, who had earlier sternly dealt with another recalcitrant chieftain i. e., of Sivagiri, to order Kattabomman to pay up the revenue and to give up encouraging and ganging up with disloyal elements. In 1797 Kattabomman was involved in a rising in Ramnad. In 1798 his men coerced farmers in such distant places as Srivaikundam and Alvar Tirunagari to pay money. Maxwell's order went unheeded: whereupon Collector W. C. Jackson of Madurai whose business was to collect Palaiyagar Peshkush wrote a strong letter (3 February 1798) to the Nayak to comply with the demand. Kattabomman did not respond satisfactorily. On August 18th and a more peremptory communication was sent to him. It seems to have had some effect since the Palaiyagar agreed to meet

the Collector. He eventually met the Collector in Ramnad; the former who thought that the latter had planned to arrest him tried to escape and in the confusion that followed Col. Clarke who was defending the fort was fatally wounded; but the Nayak and those who accompanied him escaped. Subramania Pillai, the lawyer and general of Kattabomman, however was caught by the English troops who detained him. The returning Palaiyagar and his men thoroughly looted Ramnad.

Lushington, the successor of Jackson strongly recommended to Fort St. George that steps be taken to end the activities of this chieftain. In the meantime Subramania Pillai who had been released from the Trichinopoly prison had returned to Panchalankurichi and had organized the plunder of a larger quantity of grains stored in Palaiyankottai and belonging to the Company and under the custody of one Pirkett. This daring act of robbery followed by some loss of life for which Subramania Pillai was responsible was countenanced by Kattabomman. Major Bannerman was therefore despatched to attack Panchalankurichi. Bannerman sent an ultimatum to Kattabomman to present himself before him and explain his conduct. Kattabomman sent an evasive reply. So the fort was bombarded. It became clear that the fort would fall soon. Kattabomman and a few of his followers fled from the fort and sped towards Pudukkottai *via* Sivaganga. The fort which held out for some more time surrendered; and Kattabomman's brothers, of whom one Oomaiyan (the 'Dumb') was quite reputed as a daring fighter, were taken captives and imprisoned in Palaiyankottai. Subramania Pillai was caught and executed. The Panchalankurichi fort was razed to the ground.

Kattabomma Nayak and a few followers of his who had escaped from Panchalankurichi war were caught by the servants of the ruler of Pudukkottai - Vijaya Raghunatha Tondaiman - and handed over to the English. The Palaiyagar was tried by Major Bannerman summarily in the presence of a number of his peers and ordered to be executed. He was hanged in Kayattaru on the 16th October, 1799.

The two brothers of Kattabomman who had been incarcerated in Palayankottai escaped from the prison in February 1801. In the meanwhile Banuerman had returned to England and been succeeded by another officer who also left after a short assignment. Then came Major Colin Macaulay as the general of the Company's forces in Madura. The Dumb brother had amassed sufficient resources in a very short while to reconstruct the destroyed fort of Panchalankurichi. As more reinforcements and additional leadership were deemed necessary Colonel Agnew came with a large force and more artillery and joined the English forces already besieging Panchalankurichi. The fort was captured on the 24th May 1801. The Palaiyagar brothers had escaped and reached the neighbourhood of Sivaganga. The English cavalry forces pursued them. They were caught and brought to Panchalankurichi where they were executed. With the chief rebels thus disposed of, their relatives and many others who had aided and abetted many of their acts were deported or pensioned off. The fort was once again demolished and razed to the ground.

As we have noted in an earlier chapter, Sivaganga was now ruled practically by a pair of usurpers called Periya Marudu and Chinna Marudu. The Company had never recognized their usurpation as anything but blatantly illegal act. There was thus no love lost between the English East India Company and the usurpers. When the two brothers of Kattabomman escaped from the reconstructed fort of Panchalankurichi, they sought the assistance of the two Marudus who, sharing a common feeling of enmity tempered by fear of the English, readily agreed to do so. Colonel Agnew ordered the Marudus to give up the rebels who had taken refuge with them. Since they did not comply, military operations were ordered against them. Siruvayal one of the strongholds of the Marudus was occupied by Colonel Agnew and Colonel Innes on 30. 7. 1801; then Piranmalai, Kalaiyarkovil and other important centres of rebellion were taken. By the end of October 1801 the two Marudus and their associates were discovered, caught and executed; many of their associates were also transported for life.

On the last day of 1801, the residents of Dindigul, Ramnad and Madurai were disarmed and all the forts of the Palaiyagars were destroyed. Some of the Palaiyagars were regrouped, some were abolished, some were reduced in status, none was allowed to retain armed peons. Ettaiyapuram and Pudukkottai were strengthened and Gowri Vallabha Udaiya Thevar was reinstated as the Raja of Sivaganga, now that the usurpers had been got rid of.

The entire series of episodes narrated above took place within four years; actual fighting started only after the fall of Tipu in May 1799 for then only could the English divert sufficient resources to deal decisively with the rebels. Thus the period during which the Palaiyagars posed a threat to the authority of the English was but two years. The major personages involved in this struggle were the Palaiyagar of Panchalankurichi and his brothers and the Marudu brothers of Sivaganga. The resources of the English in the final analysis were immeasurably superior to the paltry forces of the rebels. The path to the Palaiyagar wars paved with whatever good intentions might have been written into the treaty of 1792.

Parochial legends, ballads, romantic tales and other sources of local origin have led to a phenomenal development of a kind of historiography extremely unscientific and indistinct of a total lack of acquaintance with critical methods of historical writing. Fantastic distortions of an otherwise flat tale have gripped the imagination of journalists, film makers and quacks. There is little doubt that with the healthy growth of proper historiographical standards, these distortions will correct themselves and these events seen in their proper perspective.

Tamilnad Under British Rule

1. The East India Company (1801—1857)

The end of the 18th century saw the end of an era in the politics of Tamilnad. The change had been presaged by a number of events of the 18th century which unmistakably pointed towards this culmination. The finished achievement could be seen at the opening of the 19th century. It is indicated by the political event of the formation of the Madras Presidency in 1801. This date can stand comparison with A. D. 1336 when Tamilnad had come under Muslim impact and was about to be absorbed in the Vijayanagar Empire. In 1801, the merchant representatives of a foreign nation thousands of miles away, joining themselves into a company who earned a dominion in the south as part time commission and as a reward for timely and efficient interference in the affairs of the country powers, began to rule practically the whole of Tamilnad and some adjoining Telugu and Malabar districts, all of which together constituted the Madras *Presidency*: i. e., the territory administered by the Governor and the Council over which he presided. The change was epoch-making for it bade goodbye to many a tradition, political, administrative and social.

The British rule of the Tamil country as part of the Madras Presidency (which later became part of British India) lasted for

147 years which can be divided into an earlier period of 57 years (1801-1857) when the East India Company governed it through a vast administrative machinery it had created for that purpose and the latter period of 90 years (1858-1947) during which the British Crown ruled through its viceroy from the Indian Imperial Capital, first Calcutta and then (New) Delhi. But there was a lesser and a local capital, i. e., of the Presidency, namely Madras from where Presidency was governed by a governor subject to higher authorities elsewhere: the fact that such a capital happened to be in the Tamil-speaking part of the Presidency was to have great consequences later.

There are many important characteristics of this period of nearly a century and a half which need to be noted: in the first place the rulers came from a distant country with a sharply different political tradition and social philosophy but had to rear the structure of government on a basis which they found existing here, and not try to change it except in so far as considerations of efficiency and their own social philosophy compelled a change; this held good for administrative, revenue and other economic policies, education and social relations. Secondly, the structure and function of government changed frequently, not less than half a dozen times, due to the quickly changing pattern and widening authority of British Imperialism in India as a whole and also because in the earlier period, particularly, with the fall of each country power, Tanjore, Ramnad, the Palaiyagars, Arcot and Tippu, the scope and nature of government and its powers and responsibilities also widened and changed. So in the context of such a situation of double-flux as it were, the government of Madras never remained static and precisely defined, except for one fact that the Presidency was to be ruled by the Imperial power and in its interests. Subject to that supreme consideration of sovereignty, the opportunities for Tamilian participation in Presidency administration (excluding the sphere of ultimate decision) widened till in 1937, the first Congress Ministry functioned with as much *practical* autonomy as the present legislature does. Another characteristic of this period is that while an imperial governmental steelframe was fastened on to a rather fragile

administrative pattern which pre-existed here, and it was despotism still, though education and the spread of a libertarian and egalitarian philosophy conditioned the people to a growing realisation of the need for self-government. The British government, while with one arm it held the country captive, with the other-arm provided the country with the cultural and ideological tools which justified a shaking-off of that hold. The utilitarians like Bentinck, the Whigs like Macaulay, the humanitarians like Munro and the liberals like Ripon changed the outlook of the people while Imperialists like Wellesley to Curzon stiffened the hold on the country, and some of their own countrymen like A.O. Hume, Wedderburn and Mrs. Besant actively fought for the liberation of India (of which by then Tamilnad had become an integral part) from the British government. They had also created a large band of patriots who took over in every field from their foreign mentors and fought Imperialism back and restored India to freedom. But in all these vicissitudes the role of Tamilnad has been unique, occasionally falling in line with the national course but very often going its own way.

The history of Madras since 1801 is also out of the ordinary for the reason that at least the Tamilnad part of it has been absolutely free of wars, even petty ones like the Palaiyagar rebellions, not to speak of the Carnatic wars. This region having become a sub-political region was also not concerned except indirectly with foreign wars like the Burmese war or disturbances in distant North India like the 1857 revolt. There was but a single major instance of any kind of rebellion which occurred in 1807 in Vellore which was quickly put down, the Moplah rebellions occurred, as the very name indicates, in Malabar. Extreme instances which can be listed will be of the nature of exaggerated street riots which needed only police action to quell. Of course it is possible for some scholars to raise these petty instances to the level of national risings, for according to them anyone who for whatever reason it might be cried out against the British was a nationalist patriot who fought a war of independence. That is however not responsible historiography. But of even such cases we have surprisingly few in Tamil-

nad. This means that the History of Tamilnad during this period is mostly the history of the civil activities of the government and of the people. Whatever struggles the people, in the later decades of this period, put up against the British authorities were designedly peaceful under the benign influence of Gandhi, so that even the police could not indulge in large scale violence, and could control even large popular demonstrations, threatening to break the peace, with the lathi and some tear gas. So we are left with civil struggles within the Council chamber, at worst exchange of strongly worded communications, intra- and inter-party strifes, communal conflicts which consisted mostly of hustling odious adjectives at each other. This just means that *pax Britannica* had been established, and that makes the history of the period one of constitutional development engineered by the rulers, and peaceful probes to and demands made by the ruled. For the student of the history of Tamilnad who has had enough of wars from the Sangam age mentioned in the *Purananuru* to the Carnatic wars documented in British and Persian records, this must come as some relief; again he will have an opportunity to study experiments in modern constitutionalism and modern modes of political protests. Since the air had been cleared of violence, other peaceful activities could be and were pursued with greater vigour.

The rest of this chapter will deal with political developments during 1801-1947 : but as a preliminary we shall trace the course of chief events in Madras in the late part of the 17th century and throughout the 18th century.

The Fort was, as we have noted above, manned by an improvised garrison and the civil duties were in the hands of a governor and his council. This was the nucleus of the later government of the Madras Presidency. The European population confined itself to the fort, built a church there to which the most pious among them, resorted had a small library which few of them used; the younger members of the community indulged in licentious acts which were condemned by the authorities who were themselves not entirely free from a tendency to those acts. The native population which resided

in the 'Black town' outside beyond the Esplanade consisted of the merchants and their families and others. Life was lax and morals low on both sides of the walls of the Fort. Even within the council hall there was little discipline. Private trade which was permitted made the servants of the Company often neglect the interests of the Company and try rather to promote their own private trade. On the Indian side many dubashes made fabulous wealth by dexterous handling of the trade. Two very illustrious examples of such dubashes were Pachaiyappa Mudaliar of Kanchipuram and Ananda Ranga Pillai of Perambur who later settled down in Pondicherry. Communication from England to India by sea took many months to reach and effective implementation of orders from home was handicapped by time, distance and the transfer of the local officials here. This continued to be the case even when the governor of Fort William became the governor-general by the Regulating Act: the Madras officials acted on their own very often and what was really to the point, committed costly mistakes which few had the manliness to admit.

Sir Edward Winter was governor in 1665; he was superseded in that year by George Foxcroft who on arrival was seized and imprisoned by Sir Edward, who trumped up a charge of treason (against King Charles II. of England) on Foxcroft, and quietly carried on as if nothing had happened. Nothing could be done to him for three years, i. e., till August 1668 when a fleet of ships arrived with a royal mandate obliging him to yield to Foxcroft. This he did however only on an assurance being given that his and his adherents' person and property could be respected.

Everytime there was war in Europe, the agents in India of the powers at war would also wage war here, making it frequently necessary to strengthen the defences of Fort St. George in the case of the English, San Thome in the case of the Portuguese first and then the Dutch, and Fort Louis in the case of the French. Similar situations of tension were caused when the country powers waged war on the hinterland of which there was no dearth. When Sivaji descended on the Carnatic, the fortifications of Madras were

strengthened by Sir William Langhorn (agent in 1672-78) and his successor Streyensham Master (1678-81). In fact it was during the governorship of the latter that St. Mary's church was built in the fort (Robert Clive got married in that Church), and it was the first Anglican church to be built in India; and it was also during that period that the judicial system in the settlement was reorganized. In 1693 the extent of the settlement was enlarged by the addition of three adjacent villages; and during the administration of Thomas Pitt (1698-1709) five more were added. This addition was finally confirmed in 1711 by the *firman* obtained by Surman from Farukhsiyar the Moghul Emperor. Twenty-five years later Vepery and some other areas were added. In 1727 the Madras Corporation was remodelled; the number of aldermen was reduced; a Sheriff was appointed. The Mayor and alderman were authorised to try all civil cases. The governor and the five senior members of the council were made justices of the peace for the town and they tried criminal cases in quarter sessions.

The factory in Madras like those in Bombay and in Fort William suffered as a result of clashes between the old and the New East India Companies. John Pitt, the New Company's representative who was in Masulipatam quarrelled with Thomas Pitt, the governor of Madras; the latter was the grandfather of Pitt, Earl of Chatham. After amalgamation of the two companies, Thomas Pitt was confirmed in his post in Madras. His successor Culstone Addison died at Madras and was the first among English governors of Madras to do so.

It was during the governorship of Nicholas Morse that Fort St. George was captured i. e., on 10 September 1746 by the French, and the seat of government was temporarily shifted to Fort St. David, Cuddalore when the Company had a Deputy Governor. The Headquarters was re-established at Fort St. George only on 5 April 1752 when Thomas Saunders was governor. During the interval, i. e., first when Madras had fallen to the French, the company appointed John Hinde who was Deputy Governor of Fort

St. David as governor of Fort St. George on 24 January 1747; but Hinde died before receipt of orders.

Floyer, governor of Fort St. David, as we have noticed before was the first to interfere in the affairs of the Maratha rulers of Tanjore. He seized Devikottai and entered into an infamous agreement with Pratab Singh of Tanjore. Charles Floyer was however dismissed on 6 July 1750. George Pigot who first took over as governor of Madras on 14 January 1755 had an interesting time here during his second governorship which took effect from 11 December 1775. Alexander Wynch who was governor from 2 February 1773 to 11 December 1775 was superseded by Lord Pigot because the former was scandalously engaged in interferences in the affairs of Tanjore largely to satisfy Muhammad Ali, the Nawab of the Carnatic. Even after Pigot had assumed charge as governor the Nawab's creditors in collusion with some members of the governor's council plotted the overthrow of Pigot; they arrested him on 24 August 1776 and threw him into prison where he died soon after. From 1776 when George Stratton became governor to 1785 when Macartney resigned from service, there was a lot of uncertainty in the affairs of the settlement. The Dual system in the Carnatic by which the Nawab and the English shared unequally (through both acted equally cynically) the duties, responsibilities and the revenues of the region, was at the bottom of much inequity in administration and suffering to the people. Stratton was suspended Rumbold, was dismissed after his return to England, Whitehill was suspended and Macartney resigned. It was a period during which the company's servants, high and low, made fortunes by the most disgraceful means. Of them Sir Thomas Rumbold would deserve special mention; he is said to have sent home four and a half lakhs of rupees in six months. He was not diplomatic enough in his dealings with the Nizam and he incurred the displeasure of the governor-general.

From 1798 when Archibald Campbell was appointed governor, the tradition of combining the offices of governor and com-

mander-in-chief started and he was the military man who also held the civil responsibility for the government of the settlement. William Meadows who held the governorship from 20 February 1790 was also the commander-in-chief. Since this helped combine civil and military expertise in the same incumbent, and since the situation in Tamilnad from 1790 to 1801 needed such a combination the practice was confirmed; actually it went on till 1842 when general Tweeddale was appointed governor on 24 September 1842.

The governorship of Edward Lord Clive, Earl of Powis (son of Robert, Lord Clive) was quite important in view of the the last struggles which the lingering feudal forces waged against the English. The death pangs of the disappearing feudal forces were as painful as the birth pangs of the new order. Clive who became governor on 21 August 1798 managed the Palaiyagar wars and brought them to a successful (i.e., to the English) conclusion.

On 30 August 1803 William Carvendish Bentinck became governor of Madras. He was a man of Utilitarian Convictions, a humanitarian and one who believed intensely in reforming other societies in such a way as to make them conform to his own notions of right and virtue. That intolerance is inherent in the endeavours of all reformers; but Bentinck had his own brand of reformist zeal which after he became the governor-general of India helped abolish sati and introduce European system of Education through the medium of English. When he was governor of Madras certain military regulations were introduced in 1805-06 and enforced by the Madras Commander-in-chief Sir John Cradock with approval of the governor. A new form of headgear (resembling a European hat) was introduced with the ostensible intention of making the soldiers look smart; ear-rings and castemarks were prohibited; the military chin was to be shaved clear and the martial moustache trimmed according to regulations. These unaccustomed, unexpected and unwanted novelties were resisted by the Indian element in the Vellore garrison. Cradock himself erroneously thought that the family of Tippu was responsible for inciting the soldiers to revolt; he also thought it was an attempt to restore

Muslim rule. Sir Thomas Munro thought otherwise; he was of opinion that interference with the caste prejudices of the Indians was mainly, if not solely responsible for the trouble. They, the Indians, also believed that these regulations were a prelude to forcible conversion to Christianity, which they dreaded very much. In the course of the Mutiny more than 100 Europeans were killed; Colonel Gillespie from Arcot arrived with a contingent of troops; the revolt was put down; more than 300 rebels were executed. The offending regulations were repealed. The family of Tipu as a precautionary measure was removed to Calcutta. Both the Commander-in-chief and the governor were recalled in 1807. Barlow who succeeded Bentinck took care not to offend the religious or social susceptibilities of the Indians in general and the Hindus in particular. But this attitude of caution was confined only to Madras.

The governorship of Thomas Munro was extremely significant as marking a great changeover from the pre-existing revenue regulations to new arrangements which had profound impact on the economy of the land, for 'long term good' as well as for 'immediate bad'. The Ryotwari system which Munro was largely responsible in introducing consisted, roughly speaking, in eliminating the middleman called Zamindar but the government making a settlement with the ryot or the peasant-owner. This was contrasted with the permanent settlement which Cornwallis introduced in Bengal earlier.

But Sir Thomas Munro was much greater than the Ryotwari settlement. He was one of the greatest and most benevolent administrators known to Madras, nay to India. He was born at Glasgow in May 1761. He was a great lover of History and Literature and he wrote: "a few pages of history give more insight into the human mind, and in a more agreeable manner, than all the metaphysical volumes that ever were published". He first came to Madras in 1780; he participated in the Mysore wars. He worked in the Baramahal regions of Salem from 1792 to 1799 and in Kanara

from 1799 to 1800. He served as Collector of the ceded districts from 1800 to 1807. He returned to England in 1807 and came back in 1814. For two years he was President of the Judicial Commission, and in 1817-18 he served the English army in the Maratha war. He had by now risen to the rank of general. In 1819 he returned home but again came back now as governor of Madras which position he held from 1820-27 and was honoured with a knighthood. From Madras he greatly helped the governor-general (Lord-Amherst) prosecute the I Burmese war. He died of cholera at Pattikonda in the Kurnool District.

Munro was an extraordinary man who served England and India equally well and understood India better than many others who came out to this country from theirs. The people of Madras loved him more than perhaps they could have loved the best among their own rulers. They 'endearingly called him the 'Father of the people' and an enterprising poet wrote a Purana on 'Mandava Rishi' which was only the Indianised form of Munro. He was of the opinion that "whatever expense government may incur in the education of the people will be amply repaid by the improvement of the country". He insisted that Englishmen should take some trouble to understand the nature, attitudes and aspirations of Indians sympathetically. He also conceded that Indians had been suffering from many superstitions and prejudices and thought that the English government of India should be so fashioned as to help remove these deficiencies. Marshman was of the view that "he was among the greatest of the Company's servants". The equestrian statue of Sir T. Munro which adorns the Island ground in Madras is one of the best equestrian statues in India; it was put up in 1839 by public subscription.

The interval between 1827 and 1857 saw nothing spectacular happening in Madras; the reforms made and regulations passed by the Indian government under the governor-general naturally applied to Madras and with every new charter of the East India Company, Madras like the other Presidencies was becoming more and more

dependent on and being more and more controlled by a central power, to begin with the governor-general in Calcutta. Reforms like the abolition of sati and of slavery, and the introduction of Western style education affected all parts of British-held India equally. The many changes which altered the face of India in many ways and which became a special feature of the governor-generalship of Dalhousie introduced those changes into Madras also. The Railways, the telegraphs and the postal system together with the universities wrought a veritable revolution. Thus Madras was changing without any administrative or legislative decisions being taken in Madras. It was a truly imperial system which had started functioning. Under Dalhousie Tanjore and Arcot lost their independent status and were virtually absorbed in British India.

In 1857 the Indian Mutiny broke out. An important characteristic of this Mutiny was that it was confined to regions definitely to the north of the Nizam's dominions; it did not have its repercussions in the south, it almost looked as if it did not even reflect the feelings in the south, in one sense it could even be said that given the conditions of those times it was a misnomer to have called it the *Indian* Mutiny. So far as Madras was concerned there was not a single incident which could by any stretch of imagination be considered part of the tragedy that was being enacted in the Gangetic Valley. Lord Harris who was governor of Madras from 28 April 1854 to 28 March 1859 had no problems on hand in connection with the Mutiny. The only way in which he was busy with the tackling of the Mutiny was to send military personnel and other resources from Madras to Bengal from where they were distributed to other centres of aggression and resistance. General James Neill was the most notable among those officers who left Madras for the Gangetic Valley and noted for the violent and cruel way in which he put down the revolt around Allahabad.

In 1858 the British Parliament by the government of India Act (August 1858) took over the government of the British territories in India from the East India Company. The court of Directors and the Board of Control got abolished in the process.

The Secretary of State for India, a new creation, shaped into the position of the President of the Board of Control. The governor-general became the viceroy and governor-general. Otherwise the position of the government of Madras (which naturally governed Tamilnad too) did not change substantially. From 1858 to 1947 the governor of Madras still governed Madras, but under periodically varying circumstances.

2. *The British crown through the Parliament (1858—1947)*

Sir Henry George Morehead who joined as governor of Madras on 8 July 1860 remained in office but a month; he died at Madras on 2 August 1860 and was succeeded by William Ambrose Morehead. The tradition of appointing Madras governors as acting viceroys of India began with the appointment of Lord Napier of Marchistown as acting viceroy in 1872, during which time Alexander John Arbuthnot was acting governor of Madras. Lord Hobart who joined as governor on 15 May 1872 died at Madras on 27 April 1875. The tenure of governorship of the Duke of Buckingham and Chanders nearly coincided with that of the governor-generalship (and Viceroyalty) of Lord Lytton (1876–1880) the Imperialist. Then occurred in Madras the worst famine of the 19th century and it lasted for three years (1876–78). It had tremendous social and economic consequences. Ootacamund on the Nilgiris had been developed as a hill station and Lord Lytton who visited it in 1877 declared that "Having seen it, I affirm it to be a paradise".

It was during the governorship of Mount Stuart Elphinstone Grant Duff (1881–1886) that the Theosophical Society was established in Madras (Adyar) and Adyar became the world Headquarters of that Society. Lord Ripon the Governor-general who was the most popular among the viceroys was very popular in Tamilnad; as an expression of their admiration and affection for that liberal viceroy the building of the Municipal Corporation in Madras was named "The Ripon Buildings". Robert Bowdiche, Baron Connamara, was governor from 8 December 1886 to 1 December 1890 and his name is immortalised by the great public Library in Madras

named after him. A close contemporary of his as governor general was Lord Dufferin (1884-88) whose viceroyalty, among other things, is closely associated with the founding of the Indian National Congress. There are vague claims that the idea of such a Congress was first mooted in a gathering of public men in a private house in Madras long before the first session of the Congress officially met in Bombay in December 1885. The third session of the Congress however met in Madras in December 1887. Thus Tamilnad was brought into the mainstream of a national movement in 1885 at Bombay through the Tamilian representatives in that Congress and most actively on her soil by hosting that national Congress. That was one of the definite points of time at which Tamilnad began integrating with India as a whole, an integration which was inhibited in earlier times by the absence of a single political authority for the country and lack of easy communication by way of roads or the modern postal system and printed literature like books and journals. Sir Arthur Elibank Havelock's governorship is famous for the sponsorship of the visit of Swami Vivekananda to the United States for the Congress of religions held in Chicago, by Raja Bhaskara Setupati of Ramnad: an event of international significance for which an enlightened Tamilian was primarily responsible.

The governorship of Baron Ampthill (28 December 1900 - 1 May 1904) coincided nearly with the viceroyalty of Lord Curzon (1899-1905) and was eventful because Madras also was benefited by the many reforms introduced by Curzon. Baron Ampthill officiated as governor-general in 1904; he came back again as governor of Madras on 1 December 1904 and continued till 1906. When Sir Arthur Lawley was governor of Madras (28 March 1906 to 3 November 1911) the Minto-Morley reforms were introduced, i. e., in 1909. These reforms were noted for the introduction for the first time of the principle of communal representation in the interests of Muslims. This formed in one sense the basis for the non-Brahmin community's demand for reservation of seats in the legislative councils formed after the Dyarchy proposals of Montford reforms, ten years later.

Madras like the rest of India paid its share of contribution to political activity during the second decade of the present century. There was not only the Congress brand of constitutional agitation, either inspired by the radicalism of B. G. Tilak or the liberal tradition of G. K. Gokhale or the moderately militant agitation for 'Home Rule' launched by Mrs. A. Besant, but also a small quota of violent revolutionary activity, ending in the murder of at least one European officer. Madras did her bit in the matter of cooperation with the English War effort (1914-18) and there was no serious local political activity as such till the emergence of the non-Brahmin movement organized and spearheaded by Theagaraya Chetti and T. M. Nair, who founded the Justice party. They were a group of pro-British anti-Brahmin politicians who, though a majority of the population, still wanted constitutional protection against a minority.

The Montford reforms gave these politicians an opportunity to form a ministry which lasted till the Swaraj party in the Congress, which advocated Council entry, wrested political initiative from the Justices by winning the Legislative Council elections of 1926. The latter lost the anti-Brahmin forum to the Dravidian movement of E. V. Ramaswami Naicker and the Council entry programme to the Indian National Congress, and so slowly became defunct, for it had no more any mission to fulfil. It was too parochial to ask for national freedom or be concerned about it very much, and too sophisticated and Anglicised to take to mass movements for social reform. When the Justice party was in power they achieved a few government orders which provided for communal reservations in the matter of public appointments.

With the beginning of the Non-Brahmin movement in the shape of the Justice party in the later part of 1916, a social situation unparalleled in other parts of India emerged. It has a vague similarity to the Muslim apprehension of Hindu domination in North India; but the details of the analogy and other matters pertaining to this movement will be discussed elsewhere. This movement was provoked by a number of factors among which the appearance of Mrs. Annie Besant on the political scene was not the least.

The non-Brahmins of Tamilnad were afraid of constitutional reforms, even those which the British doled out at reluctant intervals and wished to be warmly protected by the sheltering wings of British imperialism after all to be saved from a minority community: 'the Brahmins' who according to the 1921 census report constituted just 2% of the total population and no more. Hence an all India national movement based on principles of democracy and national self-determination held out unnatural terrors for them. They became staunch opponents of Mrs. Besant's movement.

Mrs. Besant's advent into Tamilnad and the Indian Politics came about under the following circumstances: After the split in December 1907 in the Surat session of the Congress, the extremists led by Tilak and the moderates led by Gokhale split and parted Company. The Congress chose to remain with the Moderates and so the advocates of violence and extremism went into the wilderness. The Moderates functioned under the leadership of Gokhale, 'the Gladstone of India', who founded also the *Servants of India Society* for extending to the field of social service the ideals pursued at political level. The number of people who had attained the sophistication of Gokhale being naturally very few in any society his followers were also few but the few were noted for their patriotism tempered by reason. In Tamilnad the Rt. Honble V. S. Srinivasa Sastri, the successor to Gokhale (died 1915) as President of the *Servants of India Society*, was great educationist and the greatest orator (in English) India had known. He was the most important among the followers of Gokhale, though there were many others like Sir P. S. Sivaswami Iyer and Mr. U. Krishnaswami Iyer who were also liberals. But Tilak was certainly more popular among another category of people; he had a few Tamilnad, this number however was not large. In fact Tamilnad was not much touched by the national movement, whether it be constitutional, mildly agitational or terrorist. Madras was a 'benighted' province in that sense.

The interval between the death of Gokhale in 1915 and the rise of Gandhi on the Indian scene in 1919 was marked

by the rise of the Home rule movement organised by Mrs. Annie Besant (1847-1933). Mrs. Besant led the movement in Madras while a similar movement was started by Tilak in the north. Sometime they worked in cooperation. The First World War was going on and the national movement and the war effort did not seriously clash with each other. But the government of Madras under the governorship of Lord Pentland, feeling frustrated by her action arrested Mrs. Besant and forbade her participation in politics in any manner and confined her movements to six mentioned areas far away from Madras city but within the Presidency and in Ooty in particular. George Arundale of the Theosophical Society and S. P. Wadia (assistant Editor of 'New India' - a journal edited by Besant) shared the incarceration. Within two months, i. e., 20 August 1917, Edmund Montagu, the Secretary of State for India, announced in the House of Commons that "The policy of His Majesty's government with which the government of India are in complete accord, is that of the increasing association of Indians in every branch of the administration, and the general development of self-governing institution, with a view to the progressive realisation of responsible government in India as an integral part of the British Empire." The non-Brahmin leaders in the Justice party thought that they would be left behind under the new dispensation that was coming if they did not clamour for greater representation in any new political arrangement that might be made. This arrangement by Montagu gave the signal for the open expression of the fear that 'transfer of power' (however partial it might be) would bring in its wake further Brahmanical hold on the administration.

Earlier, in December 1916 in Lucknow, in what is known as the Lucknow pact the Congress and the Muslim League (founded in 1906) had accepted the principle of Communal representation for Muslims, as in the 1909 Council Act, and had stated the objective of their political agitation to be the attainment of Dominion Home Rule.

This was a queer state of affairs. But it was true that 'from Mrs. Besant's social reform lectures in late 1913 until Montagu's announcement in Parliament in 1917, Madras had been the centre of Home Rule agitation'. Mrs. Besant and her two colleagues were released on 17 September 1917; the government of Madras and the Anglo-Indian community in Madras felt that the British government had ordered Mrs. Besant's release without considering their feelings. But she was, as was to be expected, elected as the President of the Indian National Congress scheduled to meet in Calcutta in December 1917; and her reputation in India as a whole stood very high then. But the non-Brahmins of Madras supported by the British bureaucrats of the Madras government and the Anglo-Indian press like the Madras Mail, edited by T. E. Welby, then, continued to condemn her unanimously and vociferously. Her release was largely due also to a letter written by Sir. S. Subramanya Iyer, one of the greatest judges of the Madras High Court, and a close associate of Mrs. Annie Besant, to President Wilson urging him to intervene on behalf of nationalist Indians with the British government to get Mrs. Besant released and to have Home Rule for India considered.

The Montford Report (the Joint Report on Indian Constitutional Reforms) was published in April 1918. It introduced the principle of dyarchy and its recommendations were written into the Government of India Act, 1919. The three committees on Franchise, Function (provincial and central; reserved and transferred) and Home administration were formed. The first was presided over by Lord Southborough, the second by Feetham and the third by Lord Crewe; these committees gave the final colour to these aspects of the recommendations. V. S. Srinivasa Sastri from Madras and Surendranath Banerjee from Bengal were appointed to the first commission. The first two committees worked in India and the third one in England. The constitution was inaugurated in February 1921 by His Royal Highness the Duke of Connaught.

Pursuant on the government of India Act 1919, elections were held in Madras (the whole Presidency) in 1920. The franchise

was limited; and so for example in the Madras city the electorate was only 16555; similarly for other constituencies in the Presidency. The Congress for its own reasons, among which rejection of the Montford reforms was one, did not participate in the elections; and the Justice Party which did, had an easy victory: 65 non-Brahmin Hindus, 22 Brahmins, 5 Muslims, 14 Indian Christians and 5 'out-castes' (official appointees) got elected. The Justice party consisted of rich land owners, the urban middle class employees and related categories and was quite rich. Since Thyagaraya Chetti refused to form a Ministry, A. Subbarayalu Reddiar of Cuddalore, a lawyer who had been Municipal Chairman and District Board President, South Arcot, was asked to and he became the first 'Chief' Minister of Madras under Dyarchy in December 1920; he was in charge of education portfolio. He resigned in four months on grounds of ill-health and was succeeded by Ramarajaingar the Raja of Panagal, as Chief Minister and was in charge of local self-government too. Sir K. V. Reddy Naidu was Minister of Development, and A. P. Patro, Education Minister. It is note-worthy that all these ministers including A. Subbarayalu Reddiar spoke Telugu. What bound them to the Tamils in the Justice Party was anti-Brahminism. It is also worth noting that most of these ministers—the first Indian set that was set to administer a vast Presidency through only a few departments of public activity—had some earlier training in limited fields of public administration as Municipal Chairman and or as District Board Presidents. In 1923 K. V. Reddi's place was taken by T. N. Sivagnanam Pillai as Minister of Development (1923-26) when it was felt that too many Telugus dominated the political scene. It may be noted that from 1921 to 1936 all the Ministries except that of Dr. P. Subbarayan were headed by the Telugus, while till 1934 all the Executive Councilors had been non-Andhras, mostly Tamils.

In the whole of India, Madras was the only Province which, with the exception of the Punjab, made the reforms work. It was possible since the Justice party was pro-British. During their tenure of office they got two Government Orders passed both relating to

the greater distribution of government jobs to non-Brahmins. These attempts to control Brahmin predominance in government service go back to 1851 (Revenue Board's standing orders), when it was laid down that District Collectors should divide 'the principal appointments among several castes'. While Brahmin-non-Brahmin bitterness was the Tamilnad counterpart of Indo-British bitterness in the rest of India, Tamil-Telugu antagonism was another factor entering the provincial politics. Just like the Brahmin-non-Brahmin controversies, the Tamil-Andhra hostilities also have been a historical fact of long standing. The Andhra movement of 1913 itself was certainly not the beginning. The Justice party was predominantly Andhra and it was the common target of Brahmin that held them together. The need for a Separate Andhra University was expressed in the 20s and they managed to tag the demand to the allegation of Brahmin dominance in the Madras University. But ever since the appointment of Venkataratnam as Vice-Chancellor of Madras University in the early 20s, that University has been singularly pro-non-Brahmanical in its bias. On November 6, 1925 the Andhra University Bill was passed. This led to the demand on the part of the Tamils for a University of their own which materialised in 1929 when Raja Sir Annamalai Chettiar made a generous endowment for a unitary university. Another important measure which the first two Justice ministries passed related to centralise and administer the temples, mathas and other religious endowments. Since the legislation was passed by and executed by non-Brahmin officials of Justice complexion, it was inevitable that the Act operated as an interference in the long accepted modes of Brahmanical religion in the land and departure from the Post-Mutiny British attitude of strict neutrality to religious and social customs. The extension of suffrage to women advocated and obtained by Justices as early 1921 was another instance of non-dubious reform. By 1930 whatever predominance the Brahmins enjoyed in public services had been curtailed by law: their position in temples was jeopardised by the Hindu Religious Endowments Act. The Justice party had little else to do; for it had no national vision. On the other hand, the Tamil-Telugu bitterness

among the non-Brahmin leaders and ministers, first leading to the formation of the Andhra Province was now making the demand for a Separate Andhra Province. When all this had beendone, the Justice party had nothing more to do than to 'decline and fall'. With the demise of P. Thyagaraya Chetty in 1925 followed by that of the Raja of Panagal in December 1928 the party began to decline. The pressure of national politics was too much for them.

The 1920 elections, which were boycotted by the Congress, went in favour of the Justice Party; but the 1923 elections were contested by the Swarajists who managed to reduce the Justice majority in the Council. In course of time the Congress technique of winning elections had become almost legendary and in 1927 Madras Corporation elections, they had won all the seats.

The Sir John Simon Commission which was a statutory commission toured India in 1928. The Congress decided to boycott it on the ground that the commission did not include even one Indian. In Madras there were not only black flag demonstrations but a lot of violence; a car was burnt in front of the Law College, ironically enough; a shop was damaged by a bomb blast. The police opened fire and three persons died. But the very valuable report submitted by Sir John Simon formed the basis for the Round Table Conferences which further led to the Government of India Act, 1935.

The Congress Session met in December 1927. In that session J. Nehru introduced the complete independence resolution and it was passed. But his father Motilal Nehru opposed this resolution, not in that session, by another which aimed at Dominion Status.

The Tamilnad Congress had two roles to play, i. e., a national and a local: in the national role they joined the chorus in the Congress Working Committee; in the local they were only the Justice party under the tricolour. The Congress changed its complexion with C. N. Muthuranga Mudaliar replacing S. Srinivasa Iyengar as the President of the Tamilnad Congress Committee in 1929. With the exit of Satyamurthy and the virtual retirement of C. Rajagopalachari in 1954, the Brahmin element in the Tamilnad

Congress Committee was eliminated. The distinction between the Justice party and the Tamilnad Congress, especially after 1947, was wearing out thin.

The role of the Tamilnad Congress in 1931 Satyagraha movement was repetitive and imitative; C. Rajagopalachari playing Gandhi's role here. Salt instead of being collected in Dandi was collected at Vedaranyam; and Sardar Vedaratnam was merely a local variant of Sardar Patel. The first two Round Table Conferences saw the usual routine run of politicians from Madras attending; in 1935 the Government of India Act was passed. In the 1936 elections the Congress won what used to be called by a 'thumping majority', Arcot Ramaswami Mudaliar losing to Satyamurti—in a way very significant defeat which meant that the *Justice Mudaliar* in national context had to lose to a *Congress Iyer*: which means that the popularity of Congress as a political party (as against the Justice party) had become immensely greater than the caste popularity of Mudaliar over Iyer.

The 1935 constitution which was federal in structure but contained built-in safeguards which the British considered consistent with their continued stay here, could work only partially, in fact, the princes did not join it. So the states alone could work the constitution, the centre continuing to be what it had always been. The 1936 elections gave the Congress a comfortable majority and in pursuance of a Congress decision to work the constitution (and not wreck it), C. Rajagopalachariar formed the ministry on 14 July 1937 in Madras. It is generally estimated that his administration of Madras was one of the best known to the history of the region. His cabinet included the famous Andhra leader T. Prakasam and representatives of the Kannada and Malabar regions too. Lord Erskine who was then the Governor of Madras undertook, as a convention, not to interfere in the normal working of the Ministry. C. Rajagopalachariar's undoubted powers of Parliamentary debate and honesty in administration and incorruptibility became evident to all and a handicap to just a few. It is supposed by some scholars that he failed in his duty in thus efficiently administering the state, and they contend that

the intention of the Congress in accepting office was to wreck the constitution from within. Apart from the two basic facts that it would have been unethical to do it, and that it would have on the other hand, proved the inefficiency of Congressmen to administer the state (which would have been a very convenient handle for the British to stop further constitutional concessions or even to withdraw a few already given), it must be said that if guarantees of non-intervention were sought and got from governors it could not have been for wrecking the constitution but only for working it. But then, was there a specific mandate from the Congress Working Committee to the prospective Chief Ministers to wreck their respective administrations? The success of Rajaji's administration on both occasions when he was Chief Minister far exceeded the expectations of his worst critics. B. G. Kher of Bombay and G. B. Pant of U.P. were other Chief Ministers who worked the constitution in their States well enough.

The introduction of prohibition and the relief to indebted agriculturists were important legislative measures adopted by Rajaji; when he introduced Hindi as a compulsory subject of study, it met with opposition from E. V. Ramaswami Naicker whom he was obliged to arrest. His resort to sales tax to offset the loss of revenue caused by prohibition, was an example even to those who did not legislate prohibition or abolished it where it had earlier existed. The question of a separate Andhra Pradesh was mooted fairly noisily even then.

The Ministry resigned in October 1939 when Britain declared that India was one of the Allies fighting the Axis powers in the II World War. The objection was that the announcement was made without prior Indian concurrence. Then from 1939, the Governors Lord Erskine and Sir Arthur Hope carried on the administration assisted by civilian advisers. This was during war time; i. e., till the end of March 1946. The Congress then contested and won the general elections and accepted office again. Sri T. Prakasam formed a ministry in April 1946. In April 1947 his ministry

was succeeded by that of Sri O. P. Ramaswami Reddiar; and this ministry lasted till April 1949. Prakasam tried again in March 1948 to regain leadership of the party but again failed against O. P. R. Reddiar.

On the 15th August 1947 India became an independent dominion and on 26th January, 1950 a Republic. Tamilnad, however, became part of the new Republic and a Part A state called Madras entitled to be ruled by a governor and a bicameral legislature.

The British government of India and therefore of Tamilnad came to an end and a connection 147 years old ceased.

Communal Strife and Politics

The history of communal strife in Tamilnad is *sui generis* and is interwoven with its politics. The Tamils, all sections of them, had a traumatic experience which has been persistent and painful: the trauma itself being caused by violent contacts resulting in indelible scars. A good part of the social life of recent Tamilian history is marked by conflicts arising out of the Brahmin - non - Brahmin situation. To understand the recent and current social situation anywhere its historical antecedents must be understood. The Brahmin has been one of the oldest social institutions in historical India and the only other equally hoary social institution has been the non - Brahmin. From vedic times the Brahmin has been claiming a certain primacy in society, primacy even over the warrior not to speak of the merchant and the peasant. He has not only been claiming it but by and large securing it. This does not mean that this primacy of a necessarily small segment of society assuming unto itself the position of an elite, exclusively entitled to hieratic scholarship, went unchallenged all along. Apart from the external challenges such as those which came to it from the Buddhist and other systems of thought and action, within the structure of Aryan society itself opposition to Brahmanical ascendancy came from the Kshatriyas and the Vaisyas; many of the latter preferred to come under Jaina and Buddha discipline rather than continue to permanently be at point No. 3 in the social hierarchy i.e., the varna

scale. The Kshatriyas did fight the issue out often. The mythological narratives whether in the epics or the puranas though not literally and historically 'real' do represent or allegorise social realities of a certain period in the history of India. Rama, the Kshatriya fought Ravana the Brahmin and repaid an ancient compliment by duping Ravana *Rakstasa* (a demon); Parasurama the Brahmin who had long been destroying generations of Kshatriya rulers was himself beaten in single combat and packed off to the Himalayas by the same Rama who seems to have been a veritable 'Brahmin-conqueror'. His own family priest Vasishta had the experience of being obliged to recognize a Kshatriya Visvamitra as a Brahmana; and later this same Visvamitra claimed Rama as his special disciple. In historical times too pro-Brahmanical and anti-Brahmanical dynasties periodically rose against each other like Pushyamitra Sunga against the Mauryas. Chanakya's enmity to the Kshatriya Nandas and his willingness even to support a Sudra - Chandragupta against the blue-blooded Kshatriya are quite indicative of these hostile relations. This is so far as North India Hindu period is concerned.

In Tamilnad from the start, there has been a feeling that the Brahmins were immigrants from the North. They were northerners and their sacred language Sanskrit was the northern language ('Vadamoli'). The ancient Tamils of the Sangam age had a feeling of contempt and thinly veiled hostility towards 'the northerners'- whoever they might be. There was always a section of people among the non-Brahmanical Tamils who made fun of the pretensions of the Brahmins. But mostly Brahmin was held in esteem, deferred to, rewarded by kings and provided with lands and even whole villages. The Brahmins were priests, philosophers, poets, generals, magistrates etc. in the king's court. But the special position he filled was that of custodian of higher learning and sacred scholarship.

In the 18th century a slightly different situation came to prevail. Early in that century the Madura Nayakship had fallen and even earlier than that the Tanjore Nayakship had been superseded by the Maratha rule inaugurated by Venkaji. More or less

at the same time the Nawabi of Carnatic had been established and viable country powers were the Muslims of Arcot and the Marathas of Tanjore. These two powers employed in their courts a number of Brahmins, whose two-fold aptitude was for learning many languages and keeping accounts. There was a native non-Brahmin community of accountants called *Kanakkar* but their activities were confined mostly to villages but even then later on during the British period of the two village officers, the magistrate (munsif) was a non-Brahmin and the accountant (*Kanakkuppillai*) a Brahmin. But in the royal courts and the more important district headquarters, Brahmin *dubashis* were appointed as senior and junior government officials but not always to the top posts especially in the Arcot court. In Tanjore however, ministers, generals and finance officers were mostly brahmins – mostly Maratha and to a lesser extent local Tamil Brahmins. So for more than a century in the whole of the Tamil country the civil administration had got into the habit of employing brahmins for secretarial, accounting, audit and similar positions. A very large number of desastha (Maratha) brahmins were in such positions when the administration came directly under the British.

The British who were strangers to this country and ignorant of the language of the people required the services of a number of people who could learn English and keep their books for them. The Brahmins were traditionally a literate community always accustomed to hold secretarial posts in royal courts and naturally endowed with considerable resilience in their social behaviour and quite adaptable to changing times were about the most suitable persons for the kinds of jobs the British were thinking of. So practically throughout the 19th century one finds the Brahmins, and the desastha Brahmins in particular, occupying most of the positions in the Presidency civil service available to Indians; i. e., they began occupying all the intermediate positions leaving the top decision making jobs to the English and the bottom mechanical and menial jobs to the illiterates among the native communities.

There were three major non-Brahmin groups in Tamilnad :

1. the non-Brahmin caste Hindus; 2. the Muslims; 3. the Indian

Christians; there were apart from the 'untouchables', 'the outcastes' (who were later designated the Harijans by Gandhi) who were officially called the Adi-Dravidas. Among these the Muslims had no particular avidity for scholarly pursuits or literate occupations, they remembered the old days when they were the rulers in this country and remained frustrated; the Indian Christians were mostly from the lower communities among the non-Brahmin caste-Hindus and suffered the same disabilities which their compatriots who remained within the Hindu fold suffered. Among the non-Brahmin Hindus, the upper castes like the Mudaliars, the Pillais, the Chettiars etc. felt that Brahmins were occupying a disproportionately large number of Public positions and to that extent the majority non-Brahmin community were denied those opportunities.

Now by the beginning of the present century certain definitions and certain statistics became familiarly understood among the publicans in Madras. By non-Brahmin was not meant every one who was not a Brahmin but one the non-Brahmin caste Hindus: so that division of the local society into Brahmin, non-Brahmin, Muslim, Indian Christian and Adi Dravida was not deemed illogical. Secondly the Brahmin according to the 1921 census constituted only 3.73% of the total Madras population, though in special areas like Tanjore they were as much as 6.6%, but nowhere more than that. The majority community of non-Brahmins felt that opportunities for government service were unduly denied to them and to the same extent unduly great opportunities were given to the Brahmins.

In India there were a number of *dominations* going on: Britain over India, the Paramountcy of the Crown over the autonomy of the Indian states, the Tamilian over the Telugu etc. in the composite Madras state, the majority Hindu over the minority Muslim enjoying a potential domination in North India, the minority Brahmin over the majority non-Brahmin in Tamilnad and so on. All these constituted fairly valid sources of social irritation. But the Brahmin minority dominating a rather dumb (at that time) non-Brahmin majority could not be satisfactorily explained by any of the concerned parties. To the Brahmins and

the British each was an opportunity to the other and they exploited each other. The British, especially the administrators, resented their having to be dependent on the Brahmin for the successful administration of the state; the non-Brahmin resented the absence of opportunities for his community to occupy important positions in government service. The Brahmin resented his being kept out of ultimate decision-making positions and his having to get along with the 'mlechcha'. The local British administrator in Madras was not only resentful and suspicious but also afraid; the non-Brahmin was willing to go to any length to end this unnatural situation. The latter had no more hopes of cutting the educational distance between himself and the Brahmin than he had about eliminating the political distance between any one here and the British rulers. Political decisions were made in London implemented by Madras at the behest of Delhi and obeyed by one subject population here. But the dominant Brahmin administrator in the services could subtly influence the entire governmental procedure in any way he pleased: At the earliest stages, as an intermediate civil servant and then as member of the governor's Executive Council and then as member Board of Revenue or the secretary to government (as member of the Indian civil service) and then as Prime Minister of Madras. This could happen from within the government in the above capacities and from without as the most articulate public man. The non-Brahmin at the one end and the local British administrator at the other end naturally felt extremely hostile to the Brahmin who had initially a number of advantages over the other two.

The very minority position of the Brahmin and the awareness of surrounding hostility made him suspect the inherent dangers in the environment and set about consolidate himself as best he could. He was from ancient times religious by tradition, philosophical by temperament, clever by necessity, aloof by choice and anything by profession. He had resided in a false world of myth created by himself, thinking that that fragile shell would protect him for ever. But there were two contemporaneously prevailing conditions which

enabled and encouraged the non-Brahmins to create new and opposite myths to discorrect the Brahmin and to push him out of positions of vantage which he was found occupying: in the first place, the new education which he was now receiving told him about the Revolutionary dogmas of *equality*, *liberty* and *fraternity* and the democratic theory of the validity of majority decision and rule. These made the non-Brahmin wonder why the minority Brahmin should have most of the plums of office and he of the majority be deprived of them; secondly the very presence of the British, a third party, theoretically the upholders of the above revolutionary and democratic principles whose objection to the Brahmin was poorly concealed, was an encouraging feature from the non-Brahmin's point of view. From the Governor of Madras (Lord Pentland, for example) to the editor of the local Anglo-Indian newspaper (the 'Madras Mail' for instance) every local representative of the British authority was hostile to the Brahmin. There was some good reason why the British should have looked upon the Brahmin as a dangerous phenomenon, it was widely believed that much of the terrorist revolutionary movement was due to Brahmanical inspiration and participation. We shall see in the succeeding chapter how even in the limited revolutionary activity that occurred in the Tamil country during 1907 - 1912 (which was a period during which the whole of India went without strong national leadership) the number of Brahmin revolutionaries was around 90 % of the known total. The British thought the Brahmanical tradition was behind the Vellore rebellion (Munro definitely thought so) and the 1857 Revolt. The Brahmin clearly saw a sustained threat to all that he had been teaching and propagating in this country though nearly thirty centuries was being destroyed by this foreigner, not by his alien rule, but by his alien dogmas; the British equally clearly saw in the Brahmin a persistent threat to his supremacy here. So naturally the British and the Brahmin felt threatened by each other; that individual Brahmins (like V. S. Srinivasa Sastri and C. P. Ramaswami Iyer) got on exceedingly well with the British was another matter.

This situation was matched by the non-Brahmins and the British needing each other to keep the Brahmin down or out. The

non-Brahmin as we saw above willingly believed the new anti-Brahmanical mythology which was being spun by literatures and others; Scholars like P. Sundaram Pillai and Vedachalam Pillai in their numerous works carried on a tirade against Brahmanical Sanskrit and Brahmanical rituals; a whole new history of the origins of the caste system, and the imposition of that system on an unwary and otherwise egalitarian Tamil society was being written. The Brahmins were depicted as immigrants, strangers, intruders, infact-invaders) wicked and cunning etc. In fact what Jinnah said about he Hindus and the Muslims was said about the Brahmins and the non-Brahmins, i e., that they were 'two nations'. A spokesman of the non-Brahmin declared, "It is a misrepresentation to say that the Brahmins belong to the same Indian nation as the non-Brahmin while the English are aliens... Indian Brahmins are more alien to us than Englishmen".¹

The Brahmins did occupy a disproportionately large number of official positions during the six decades between the Mutiny and Gandhi, or the emergence into office of the Justice Party in Madras. Some data will be revealing: It has been estimated that the Brahmins occupied 55.82.3 and 72.6 percent of the posts of Deputy Collector, Sub-Judge and District Munsif in 1912; and that between 1870 and 1918 the Brahmin graduates of the Madras university ranged between 64 % and 71 % of the total number of graduates while for the non-Brahmins the percentage varied between 18 and 22. This was sure as much to gladden the Brahmin heart as it was to sadden the non-Brahmin heart. The non-Brahmins set themselves to rectify this situation.

The non-Brahmin movement started in 1916; Dr. T. M. Nair, physician and P. Thyagaraja Chetti (for long councillor and chairman of the Madras corporation) met at the Victoria Public Hall, Madras on 20th November 1916 and started the South Indian peoples' Associaton Limited which was taken to mature into the Justice party. Apart from the above two, in course of time. the party

1 Quoted in E. F. Irschick's *Politics and Social Conflict in South India*, p. 104.

attracted talented men like K. V. Reddy, C. Natesa Mudaliar, the Rajas of Panagal and Bobbili, A. Ramaswami Mudaliar and a host of others of equal talent but too numerous to mention. They started their own Journals: The *Dravidian* was their leading Journal, through its columns they expressed their views. They held conferences, issued pamphlets and called upon the British government to set right the imbalance caused by Brahmin preponderance in public services.

The Justice party took advantage of the Montford reforms and the 1919 constitution and fought and won (largely because there was none to contest their candidature) the elections (on limited franchise) and took office as ministers holding transferred portfolios under the dyarchy. A. Subbarayalu Reddiar of Cuddalore became the first Chief Minister under that scheme. The party's main objective was to secure greater and due non-Brahmin representation in government services. Two government orders were passed at their instance by quite a willing Madras governor and his secretariat by which such representation was regulated.

It was almost simultaneously with the formation of the Justice party that Mrs. Annie Besant's Home Rule League was formed. Mrs. Annie Besant asked for home rule for India even as the Irish had been fighting for their Home Rule. She was herself half-Irish and was a great humanitarian who had for some time dabbled in Fabianism. G. B Shaw paid her a great compliment by declaring that if she had stayed on in the field of English politics she would have had the distinction of becoming the most distinguished Fabian. She was a great lover and admirer of Indian tradition, culture etc. and she interpreted India to the West. She was not concerned with the communal, religious etc. differences among Indians but was interested in securing Home Rule for the whole of India as a socio-political unit.

The Justicites saw in Mrs. Besant's Home Rule movement an attempt to ignore the communal demands of the non-Brahmins and therefore indirectly to stabilise the *status quo* which was heavily

loaded in favour of the Brahmins. Further Mrs. Besant had attracted a number of leading Brahmins like Sir S. Subramanya Iyer and Sir C. P. Ramaswami Iyer, L. A. Govindaraghava Iyer and so on. This made the non-Brahmins believe earnestly that in the Home Rule League Mrs. Besant and the Brahmins were in league; and that it was now necessary for them to fight the Irish Lady and the Tamil Brahmin simultaneously. For different reasons the British also thought of Mrs. Besant and the Brahmins together and found themselves in the same camp as T. M. Nayar and Thyagaraja Chetti. They thought that the Brahmins who were known to be revolutionary opponents of the British Raj and Mrs. Besant who introducing into India the Irish tradition of opposition to British rule, were to be made ineffective not only by taking punitive action against the Home Rulers but also by encouraging the Justice party. Thus it was that the Justice party and the British bureaucrats in Madras found an ally in each other and the non-Brahmin movement could grow from strength to strength. Thus was Tamilnad presenting the picture of a house divided making it easy for the third party to exploit this difference for their own advantage. Throughout the period of Home Rule agitation, Mrs. Besant was handicapped in this way but her popularity out-lived the local opposition because of the dramatic incarceration which she underwent and the all-India stature she had developed.

The Justicites who assumed ministerial office had to manage only the transferred and relatively soft subjects like education rural development etc. and the more important (in the sense that they meant real administrative power) portfolios like police, revenue etc. remained with the Governor and his Executive council. The Executive Council had mostly a majority of Brahmin members till very late. Distinguished members of the Executive Council like Sir P.S. Sivaswami Iyer, Sir C.P. Ramaswami Iyer, V. Krishnaswami Iyer were noteworthy administrators; and a majority of judges of the Madras High Court again were Brahmins. But the government orders which regulated the recruitment to public service slowly reduced the number of Brahmin employees in the secretariat and in the subordinate civil service. It was a slow but sure process.

While the Justice party was serving some of its major objectives, E. V. Ramaswami Naicker who was an enthusiastic Congress worker in the early twenties of the present century, broke away from the Congress complaining that the Congress had become a Brahmin dominated organization; he accused Mahatma Gandhi of supporting Varnashrama principles; and even chided his fellow non-Brahmins in Tamilnad for supporting a Congress party dominated by the North. Thus he introduced a new dimension to the Brahmin - non-Brahmin situation. Already the Brahmin, Sanskrit, Manudharma etc. had been put into one packet and thrown overboard. Now a few more were to follow. Hindi which was a late medieval version of certain prakrits of the Gangetic Vally and was written in a script very much resembling the Devanagiri script, was anathema to them. E. V. Ramaswami Naicker himself fought the government of Madras on a number of occasions on the Hindi issue. Mr. Naicker was nothing if not consistent and so he went the whole hog with his anti-Brahmanism and turned atheist. C. N. Annadurai (later Chief Minister of Madras) introduced Ingersol to him and Mr. Naicker was toying with the idea of becoming a Buddhist and carrying on a crusade from the oldest anti-Brahmanical plank known to India. He started the Dravida Kazhagam which had a thin political veneer over a fairly plain social programme of seeking self-respect for the non-Brahmins.

The Justice party after the 1936 elections ceased to have a justification for its survival. The Justice Party and the League of Nations died almost at the same time exemplifying two different truths. The anti-Brahmin mantle of the Justicites had fallen on the Dravidakkazhagam of E. V. Ramaswami Naicker and later on the Dravida Munnerrak Kazhagam of C. N. Annadurai; and the Congress party had become too pervasive and powerful for any provincial party to ignore it or oppose it. The 1931 civil Disobedience Movement of Mahatma Gandhi brushed aside parochialisms of all kind and Tamilnad swam down the stream with the rest of India. The 1936 General Elections ended in a landslide defeat for stalwarts of the Justice party, particularly A. Ramaswami Mudaliar, and the Congress assumed office in Madras. From 1937 to 1966

it looked as if the Congress had come to Madras to stay in office. But then the new philosophy of secession openly preached by the Dravida Kazhagam began to tell. The North, Hindi, Sanskrit, God, the Brahmin were all permanent whipping toys and there was no foreseeable future when any of these would get abolished. So even after 1956 reorganization of the Madras Presidency on linguistic basis, the Tamilnad constituency is reluctant to accept the concept of an emotionally integrated India, which (the reluctance) is certainly not a good thing for India as a whole.

Indian society, like societies elsewhere, had its contingent of social divisions. The hierarchical caste divisions, the professional divisions vertical as well as horizontal, the economic divisions into the rich, middle class and the poor and the environmental divisions into the rural and the urban are except the first common to all societies. But there were two differences which had a profound impact on the recent history of India in one case and of Tamilnad in the other. The first was the Hindu-Muslim which developed into a socio-political situation ultimately resulting in the formation of Pakistan. The second was the Brahmin-non-Brahmin difference in Tamilnad which has a secessionist overtone openly voiced when the government of India is not watching and played low when otherwise. In the former instance it was a case of the Muslims of North India being frightened by the prospect of their remaining a perpetual minority in a democratic context when the British withdrew thereby leaving the Hindus, the more numerous community, to rule over the Muslims for ever. So they were anxious that the British should create a separate state for them before they (the British) left. This was an easily understandable case of a larger community finding itself a helpless minority in the presence of a larger community and therefore those who sponsored this case created the fiction of two nations. The other case i. e., the Tamilnad Brahmin-non-Brahmin case was one in which the majority community of non-Brahmins were apprehensive of the minority Brahmin community somehow managing to outwit the majority and stabilising itself in power as a viable and irreplaceable successor to the

British. In the former case it was fear of a 'brute' majority; in the latter it was fear of the cleverness of an elite, noted all along for its cleverness. In both these situations characterised by morbid fear, secession was considered to be the only answer. The former got it. The latter tried to get it.

It has been said that the British divided and ruled this country. One does not however feel like crediting any divisions here for we had here all kinds and degrees of division which the most ardent secessionist could wish for. Only the British exploited the existing divisions and widened them wherever possible. The Communal strife in Tamilnad cannot be said to have merely influenced politics here. The only politics we have had in Tamilnad was communal strife.

The Freedom Movement

During the later part of the 19th century and the first half of the present, Indian opinion was getting hardened against British rule here. Tamilnad in the early part of the 19th century was not an integral part of any larger political entity which could be called the government of India. Tamilnad even in classical times was usually ruled by more than one crowned monarch and there were occasions when one of them conquered the others and ruled over the whole of Tamilaham. Those periods were actually foreign rule for the conquered territories, but the residents of those territories are not known to have taken any steps to rid themselves of 'foreign domination'. This is the first category of foreign domination; another category is a south Indian power like Vijayanagar conquering Tamilnad and including it in its empire and ruling over it. The Nayak rulers of Vijayanagar ruled over Tamilnad truly imperially, for they substituted military outposts (Nayakships and palayams) for the time honoured autonomous villages, and introduced Telugu as official language in the courts and planted colonies of Telugus in the Tamil country as far south as Tirunelveli. These are obvious characteristics of Imperialism; the Tamils are not known to have organized resistance to the Telugu rulers; on the other hand important and efficient Tamil administrators like Ariyanadha Mudaliar cooperated with the foreign rulers; and in the literature of those times there is no mention of these rulers as 'foreigners' nor

any hint of resentment at their rule over this country. The third category is one of North Indian rule of the extreme south, like a dynasty established by Muslims from North India setting up a government in Madurai - the Sultanate of Madurai. In fact the resistance to this dynasty came not from the residents of the Pandyan country but earlier from the Hoysalas and later from the rulers of Vijayanagar. Tamilnad was passive and on her soil a number of forces fought to decide on who should rule Tamilnad. The descendants of the ancient Chola, Pallava and Pandya Tamil monarchies who here and there put up a feeble struggle were *either* trying to regain their personal and dynastic power and prestige rather than fighting a war for 'national' liberation of any kind or fighting against the specially harsh treatment which the new conquerors imposed on them, as in the case of the Kalabhra conquest and occupation of Tamilnad. Still another instance of North Indian Imperial domination was Aurangzeb's conquest of Peninsular India and his *faujdar* in the Carnatic claiming loyalty and tribute from the whole of Tamilaham. It was a sheer case of military conquest and consequent title to rule. This too was not resisted. If there was occasional resistance it was only due to *Muslim* rule and not Muslim rule. In fact Yusuf Khan rebelled because the English in Fort St. George made him a subordinate of the Nawab of the Carnatic instead of the English authorities in Madras. Evidently he preferred the English to the Muslim. Another case of foreign rule was the Maratha conquest and government of Tanjore under Venkaji.

Yet another and the latest variety of foreign rule that Tamilnad has suffered is the English government of Tamilnad in the first instance and later of the same territory as part of British Indian dominions. Actually there is no substantial difference among these categories. But some modern scholars think that conquest and government of one part of India by another does not constitute foreign rule but only the last category will; this is wrong because they are committing the fallacy of anachronism, whereby they impute modern and late nineteenth century notions to earlier periods and persons who were not aware of these notions. This is a

grievous fault in methodology. Similarly it may be stated that the Palayagar rebellions of the late 18th century were not a variety of sophisticated resistance to alien rule but attempts on the part of present holders and enjoyers of power to prevent others from grabbing it. In short the Palayagar revolts were the late struggles of effete feudalism against the modern type of foreign imperialist rule. They would have resisted anyone who wished to uproot them. From this it will not follow that either their ruler was benevolent, or native or legitimate or that their resistance constituted any kind of patriotic movement. Total lack of historical perspective alone will lead to such fantastic views about these revolts.

So it will be clear that resistance to foreign rule on ideological grounds of nationalism, patriotism, self-government etc. was a phenomenon which appeared on the Indian political scene only at the beginning of the last quarter of the 19th century. Even the 1857 Revolt in North India which had no impact whatsoever on the south and in particular on Tamilnad constituted the death pangs of a feudal order there desperately struggling to survive in the face of overwhelmingly modern techniques of war and government and not the Indian War of Independence as some have erroneously styled it.

In the case of British rule in Tamilnad it first began with the East India Company administration in 1801 and consolidated itself over a vast territory which came to be called the Madras Presidency, of which Tamilnad formed a part. The government introduced radical changes in land revenue, police, judiciary, education and other matters. Peace was established. These were changes which the people thought, outweighed the corruptions (in earlier times) of the Company officials, the competition to local industries, the disturbances in land relations caused by the introduction of the ryotwari system etc. The very absence of continuous and destructive wars which were a sordid feature of the 18th century gave people some breathing time. Above all they remembered the depredations of Hyder and Tippu in the Carnatic, the robberies and cruelties of the Palayagars in the southern districts and the inhuman criminal

law which the native courts adopted; there was a difference between conversion to Christianity by proselytisation and preaching and inducements, and forcible conversions to Islam which Hyder and Tippu practised. So long as memories of these horrors persisted English government in spite of its obvious and unquestioned disadvantages was not resisted. In fact for the common people in the countryside these memories were strong and they came down as gruesome tales from generation to generation in families among the rural folk especially in the coastal districts of North Arcot, Chingleput, South Arcot and Tanjore and the extreme southern districts of Ramnad, Madurai and Tirunelveli.

English education, as a matter of fact was first provided by Schwartz the German Missionary in the Tanjore and Ramnad areas in the late 18th century. So through the 19th century it grew in the Tamil country beginning at first as a trickle and later in two stages becoming a flood. The first stage was when Bentinck made English the educational language in the country, the second was when in the days of Dalhousie universities were established in Madras, Calcutta and Bombay. The spread of education diachronically and synchronically, became possible. Railway lines, besides good roads were laid enabling people to easily move about and disseminate the new knowledge.

Generally speaking for the whole of India, through the new education which taught the value of secular freedom, an unknown quality in pre-British Indian thought, the British gave to the Indians the tools which were ideally suited to uproot them from here. This was very true of Tamilnad. It is again true that Tamilians, like their countrymen elsewhere in India were subject to the impact of the contemporary happenings in different parts of the world. The French Revolution, the Utilitarian Philosophy, the socialist preaching of the Marxists and the Fabian, the cooperative movement of Robert Owen, the revolutionary writings of Mazzini, the revelations of the Russo-Japanese war, the Republican example of the American colonies etc. had a cumulative effect on the Tamilian mind. The social reforms of Bentinck, the activities of Munro and

the liberalism of Ripon had a soothing effect on the subject Tamil, but curiously enough it also awakened a certain spirit within the captive mind which suddenly became aware of its captive condition.

When in the later part of the 19th century, when a decade or two after the Indian Mutiny the government had been taken over by the British Parliament and when practically all wars had ceased in and around India, and when the horrors of the previous century had been forgotten, the English educated Indians began to question the legitimacy of a foreign, alien government in India and its right to continue to govern this country. The nightmares of the past century had become dim memories and to justify the new philosophy of critically examining the nature of the British government in India, a lot of romanticisation of allegedly heroic activities of the kings and chieftains from whom the English took over power became the pastime of poetasters such as those who wrote bardic ballads on the Palayagar chieftains and the rebel Yusuf Khan and so forth.

The 19th century witnessed a number of literary forgers at work among whom the author of the *Sukraniti* could be mentioned. The English education created a mixed brood influenced equally by an urgent need to modernise, westernise and industrialise, and also a nostalgic urge to praise the imagined golden ages in the country's past and passionately call for a revival of the ancient values. No one seemed to mind the apparent contradiction in the situation. But even so, in the Gangetic Valley where the results of the Mutiny and memories of British brutality against the Mutineers were still fresh in the minds of people, antagonism to British rule continued unabated. The university bred intellectuals of Calcutta took over directly from the illiterate sepoys of the previous generation; and where the latter shot bullets the former shot questions. The latter became more embarrassing than the former. But no such situation existed in Tamilnad, which as we have seen above, was singularly free of all traces of Mutiny. So in Tamilnad the feeling of antagonism against British rule was slow in taking root and

even when it took root, it never reached frenzied heights. In fact the role of Tamilnad in the all India national freedom movement was somewhat moderate and extremely restrained with just a few stray exceptions.

No kind of united political action took place in the Tamilnad part of the Madras Presidency till in 1885, when Lord Dufferin was the viceroy, the Indian National Congress was founded and it met for the first time in Bombay in that year. It was true that some Englishmen who were lovers of India and who disapproved of the autocratic British rule in India, wished to bring prominent and socially conscious Indians together for the purpose of demanding those simple privileges which had been denied to the people of the country by a foreign government. Among them can be mentioned A. O. Hume and Wedderburn. When the Indian National Congress met in Bombay, Madras opinion was represented there by veteran G. Subramanya Iyer, 'a remarkable Tamil Smartha Brahmin.' Other Tamilians who took an active part in the early activities of the Congress were C. Vijayaraghavachariar of Salem, a Vaishnava Brahmin, Kasturi Renga Iyengar and Gopalachariu. Slowly the Congress and its principles spread all over India, the third annual session of the Congress was held in Madras in 1887. Local organizations like the Madras Mahajana Sabha carried on mild political activity, much of it being decorous making of polished speeches in moderate language and passing of timid resolutions. District Congress conferences began to be held and public meetings were addressed in Tamil, so that before 1900 the new ideas started spreading to the countryside.

Though among the Tamils fiery revolutionaries of radical views and with a proclivity to terrorist action did not originate at the beginning popular feelings were inflamed by passionate and seditious speeches delivered by victors from the North. Among them Bepin Chandra Pal was the most important and influential. He was an orator of the type exactly calculated to rouse the patriotic sentiments of the youth. It was the Bengali type of surging oratory wherein words and gestures played an equal role. They had known

it in Surendranath Banerjee also. Bepin Chandra Pal was thundering on the Marina Beach, Madras in 1907 and he soon became the idol of the college students, and the white collar employees in urban centres. Government and the educational authorities were apprehensive about the total effect of Bepin Pal's speeches which they thought stirred up disaffection. 'Disaffection was a political crime of the British Indian authorities of times, for they thought that an 'affection' should exist between the subject people and a foreign government, and anything that tended to destroy it was seditious. Bepin Pal's 'invasion' of Madras had been preceded by Swami Vivekananda's speeches there which though basically philosophical had an outer crust of nationalism and he did really 'awaken' the English educated middle class sufficiently to make them ponder their condition of political senility.

Following on the annual meetings of the Indian National Congress, the 'Hindu' (an English daily with which the renowned G. Subramanya Iyer was associated which still continues to be the most important English daily in Madras) and the 'Swadesamitran' (a Tamil daily of equal reputation in those days) were, beginning to voice opinions mildly critical of the British government. But by and large judging by the genuine enthusiasm shown on the occasion of Queen Victoria's diamond jubilee celebrations in 1897 and the undisguised public grief manifest on the occasion of the Queen's death in 1901, it cannot be said that anti-British political feelings were widespread even among the intelligentsia. In the first decade of the present century however two events happened which made the educated Tamil sit up and be interested; but neither of them happened in Tamilnad. The Partition of Bengal (October, 1905) effected by Lord Curzon, the imperious viceroy of India aroused the political passion of the Bengali beyond measure; and it had its repercussions all over India. The merits of the case were lost in the din. In Tamilnad also the partition of Bengal was talked about as a supremely Curzonian act calculated to offend Indian feelings. Many pamphlets were written in English and in Tamil on these themes and condemning the viceroy and the British

government which backed him. The other event was Japan's victory in the Russo-Japanese war of 1904-1905 in which 'tiny, oriental, coloured Japan' defeated the 'the huge, western, white Russia' and disproved the invincibility of Western arms.¹ This event thrilled all Orient and especially subject India which derived some vicarious satisfaction in pondering Japanese victory. In Tamilnad too newspaper editorials and drawing room discussions celebrated the victory.

From then onwards two trends could be seen in Tamilnad nationalist politics : one trend was deeply influenced by Bala Gangadhar Tilak, a Maharashtra Brahmin, who advocated radical and almost terrorist tactics to oust the British from India; the other was by Gopala Krishna Gokhale, again a Maharashtra Brahmin; he advocated liberal, constitutional methods of agitation. He was much influenced by Gladstone and himself became a sort of 'Indian Gladstone'. The two, as was perfectly natural, influenced very different cross sections of society. Poona which was the centre of activity of both these Maharashtrian politicians was at once the stronghold of orthodoxy and revivalism; terrorism and violence; and constitutionalism and liberalism; conservatism and social reform - backward looking and forward looking. Both these influenced Tamilnad politics profoundly at different stages of its development. It will be true to say that the Maharashtra politicians more than the Bengal ones really shaped the attitudes and actions of the most vocal among Tamil nationalists, though Tamilnad was toured more by Bengal politicians like Bipin Chandra Pal. The true and genuine terrorism practised in Bengal had little effect and evoked

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1. The true significance of the outcome of the Russo-Japanese war was universally missed by circles which treated it as a victory of the Orient against the Occident etc. In real terms, it was a victory of *Modernised, industrialised, westernised* Japan over *feudal, imperial, backward, inefficient* Russia and the victory was caused by the westernization of Japan and had little to wish its being oriental or coloured. It must also be seen that in 1905 Japan could not have defeated the British navy, nor in any manner defeat the U.S.S.R. today.

poor response in Tamilnad. On the other hand the tactics advocated by Tilak in his 'Kesari' became greatly popular.

Gokhale had a limited but devoted following in Tamilnad. It was not by accident that Gokhale chose a Tamilian - V S. Srinivasa Sastri - to succeed him as President of the *Servants of India Society*. Even Gandhi was found insufficiently qualified (temperamentally of course) to be too closely associated with Gokhale. Srinivasa Sastri was a dyed-in-the-wool liberal and under his leadership and guidance a number of liberals like P. S. Sivasami Iyer, V. Krishnaswami Iyer, T. R. Venkatarama Sastri and others functioned in the political field. They were true patriots who had no faith in violence (even in language) which, for reasons other than that Gandhi held valid they thought would always be counter-productive. They supported the British when they thought the British were anxious to give India the substance of freedom and denounced their policies when the rulers of the country contradicted themselves and indulged in repression, e. g., the Rowlatt Act. They believed in council entry and constructive statesmanship. But in a situation which was developing like an engulfing flood the values for which the liberals stood were swept away and agitational politics, pondering on the violent, remained to influence the rising generations.

Tilak as we saw above induced reaction, revivalism and radical agitational politics. He demanded freedom which he said was his birth right - from British rule not because he wished to make India in the image of the modern, industrialised west, but because he wished India to recover her lost image which was truly represented by Sivaji. It must be remembered that the one community in India which was most adversely affected by the British and their new fangled institutions, and, outlandish ideas was the Brahmin community. It had a large part to play in 1857. It was largely responsible in inciting the Kilavan Setupati and the Nayak of Tanjore against the Christian missionaries. It was the most suspicious of English education for, that education would destroy their *patasalas* and the new science that was coming in would question

their myths. Thus the revolutionary agitation under the leadership of Tilak had a most reactionary and revivalist motivation.

If these are borne in mind one can easily follow the logic of the limited terrorism of which Tamilnad had experience. During the period when Tilak was most popular in India, the competition in popularity between the Radicals and the Moderates grew till in 1907 at Surat the Congress split and for the moment the moderates won. Tilak was convicted in 1908 of sedition and sentenced to transportation for six years and imprisoned at Mandalay. Terrorism followed and in November, 1909 a futile attempt was made to assassinate Lord and Lady Minto at Ahmadabad. These events influenced a group of terrorist nationalists in Tamilnad. During the short period of 1907 to 1912 all the terrorist activity in Tamilnad had occurred and the movement, if it could be called one, exhausted itself. Among the leading terrorist revolutionaries could be mentioned V. V. Subramanya Iyer, Nilakanta Brahmachari, C. Subrahmanya Bharathi, Subramania Siva, Swadeshi Padmanabha Iyengar. Practically all these revolutionaries were Brahmins and it underlined the British suspicion that anti-British terrorism in India was generated and sustained by Brahmins; the British thought the Brahmins were at the back of even the 1857 revolt and it was Hindu orthodoxy which had fanned the discontent in 1807 in Vellore. By 1910 Aravinda Ghosh who had been indicted and imprisoned for terrorist activity in Bengal had arrived at Pondicherry and had turned scholar-saint. Pondicherry the French outpost on the Coromandel had become a heaven for fleeing terrorists. Subrahmanya Bharathi, the Tamil nationalist poet had already fled to Pondicherry in 1908. V. V. Subramania Iyer, Subramania Siva and Nilakanta Brahmachari carried on terrorist plans in the French enclave; they gave some rifle practice to would-be terrorists. In 1911 District Magistrate Ashe of Tirunelveli was murdered (shot dead) at Maniachi by Vanchi Iyer. This was the only instance of assassination committed by Tamil terrorist nationalists. The murderer committed suicide. Fourteen persons were accused. Nilakanta Brahmachari was the first accused and he was sentenced to seven years rigorous imprisonment; another accused Sankara

Krishnan got five years and the rest shorter terms; Madasami, one of the accused and a close associate of V. O. Chidambaram Pillai of Tuticorin absconded and could not be discovered. It was strange that V. V. Subrahmania Iyer who had masterminded the assassination was not among the accused.

V. O. Chidambaram Pillai, an advocate of Tuticorin, on the advice and with the help of Madasami, mentioned above, collected money and started a Swadeshi Steam Navigation Company which would ply steamers between Tuticorin and Ceylon competing with already operating British Companies. The British authorities tried to discourage the endeavour and the British companies harassed the new Company and its directors. Chidambaram Pillai was accused of making seditious speeches and organising terrorist activities and jailed first in Coimbatore and later in Cannanore from where he was released in December 1912. His later life was pathetic. He lived to thank the British for making a living possible for him when his relatives and friends refused to help him.

After 1912 there was practically little terrorist activity in Tamilnad. The combination of Brahmanical orthodoxy with revolutionary nationalism had no further lease of life in Tamilnad politics. Tilak's own popularity began to wane after his release from incarceration in Mandalay. The Home Rule movement organised in Bombay was in imitation of and in cooperation with Mrs. Annie Besant who had already started the Home Rule movement in Madras. She had founded the Home Rule League in September 1916.

Mrs. Besant, essentially a Theosophist, who had made Adyar near Madras her spiritual headquarters, had known at first hand British methods of repression and government, in Ireland and Britain. So at a time when Gokhale had died and Tilak's popularity was waning and Gandhi had not come into the picture, she had her day. Her methods were a combination of agitation and constitutionalism, appeal to the elite and organization of the masses. She was a wonderful orator, brilliant organizer, a great editor of

newspapers and an undoubted leader of men and women. She edited the 'New India'. Men of acknowledged merit like Sri. S. Subramanya Iyer acknowledged her merit. She used talented men like Sir C. P. Ramaswami Iyer to spread her new found political gospel. When she was at the height of her political activities all the rest in India were eclipsed. The World War was then being fought by the English without any real hope of early victory. In 1917 the Madras government interned her and her two associates, George Arundale and B. P. Wadia in Ooty. She was however released soon on instruction from the Secretary of State to the great chagrin of the Madras government. She was then at the height of her popularity. She was elected president of the Indian National Congress which was to meet in Calcutta in December 1917. Her ascendancy in Indian Politics soon ended with the rise of Gandhi. She was a far sighted statesman and not a mere noisy politician fighting for immediate gains and personal ends and limited goals. The India she envisaged was a united India, free, equal and prosperous; she had no sympathy with the communalists of Madras under the leadership of T. M. Nair and P. Thyagaraya Chetti; so that the Justice party which was formed by the latter constantly attacked her and accused her of supporting the Brahmins. In Indian politics anyone who takes a balanced, equitable, just and impartial view of public affairs is always accused of being partisan to one of the numerous claimants to attention here. Gandhi was later treated as pro-Muslim because he refused to treat the Hindus and the Muslims differently and unequally; similarly Mrs. Besant was accused of being pro-Brahmanical as she refused to treat the Brahmins and the non-Brahmins differently and unequally. She dreamt of and fought for a united Indian nation whose values would be sustained by its ancient culture some aspects of which are ageless. She was an Orientalist and was incapable of taking a narrow communal view of national problems. She did not much approve of Gandhian non-cooperation and the insidious inculcation of indiscipline among the youth. She totally disapproved of violent terrorism. She did not agitate and she said that the British understood only agitational politics and would not yield to any other. But her agitational methods smacked strongly of constitutionalism.

With the advent of Mahatma Gandhi, Indian nationalist politics took a new and unprecedented turn. The Rowlatt Act actually was a turning point. Even those who were willing to accept Mr. Montagu's statement on the 20th August 1917 and to work the Montford reforms (1919) were dismayed by the extent to which British repression was willing to go. The Congress under the leadership of Gandhi refused to enter the legislative council or to co-operate with the British in any manner. This made easy for the non-Brahmin leaders to assume office and became ministers under Dyarchy. These leaders were pro-British and anti-Brahmanical, the two feeling immensely and equally intensely swaying them. C. Rajagopalachariar who was first introduced to Gandhi by Sardar Vallabhai Patel in Madras on the occasion of the Mahatma's visit to the city, was the most important representative of the Congress in Tamilnad since he was the most trusted by the undoubted leaders of the entire organization. The non-cooperation movement did enthuse a vast body of middle class intellectuals, lawyers, teachers, doctors, white collar bureaucrats, journalists and writers and a body of professional politicians willing to go to jail and to brave the lathi grew. The journals criticised the government, many students threw themselves into the Gandhi-led movement and speeches in English and in Tamil from public forums of all kinds and by all kinds of men became a common feature. But the government was run by a band of devoted lovers of the British whose only passion was to drive the Brahmins out of offices and positions of public importance.

By 1925 the Swarajists in the Congress had decided to enter the councils but they were not in a majority though they managed to reduce the majority of the Justicites. S. Srinivasa Iyengar, the great lawyer, S. Satyamurthi the eloquent exponent of the Congress cause, Rajagopalachariar the keeper of the Mahatma's conscience were among the more important Congress leaders in Madras when in December 1927 the Indian National Congress met there and passed the complete Independence resolution. The next year S. Srinivasa Iyengar, the Tamilian Congress leader was presiding

over the Gauhati session of the Congress and that year was noted for the Congress boycott of the Simon Commission, a statutory commission appointed (before its time) to go into the working of the 1919 constitution. In Madras, the visit of the commission was an occasion for Congress exhibition of militant patriotism, T. Prakasam and S. Satyamurthi were the heroes of the boycott. From 1928 to 1931 when Gandhi started his salt satyagraha and renewed Civil Disobedience movement, it had its impact all over India. Rajagopalachariar was in charge practically of defying the British laws in Madras. Tamilnad which because of communal politics had voluntarily stayed out of the national movement was now in the thick of the movement. Still non-Brahmin Justicites like B. Munisamy Naidu and marginal Congressmen like P. Subbarayan were willing to run governments in Madras.

The 1935 constitution brought about a great change. The Justice party was defeated out of existence by the Congress in the 1936 elections. On the Dravida Kazhagam of E. V. Ramaswami Naicker the communal mantle of the Justice party had fallen. The Congress was willing to suspend for the moment its agitational politics and to work the Constitution. C. Rajagopalachariar was undoubtedly the stalwart among the Congressmen and he became Prime Minister of Madras in the first ministry he formed and which lasted from 1937 to 1939. It was the most constructive period of Congress political activity in Madras. The talents and energies of Congressmen and other patriotic politicians were harnessed to the useful task of building the nation and disproving the myth that there were no competent Indians to run the administration. Madras administration, then became a byword for honesty and efficiency always a difficult combination.

In 1939 when the II World War came and when the government of India announced that India was one of the allies fighting European dictatorship and when that announcement was made without the concurrence of Indians there was sharp reaction from the Congress and their ministries resigned. In Madras there was

a necessary suspension of political activities from 1939 to 1945 – the war period. But the British government which was experiencing defeat after defeat at the hands of the Axis powers was willing to negotiate terms for an amicable settlement of the political problems in India. There were no local political problems in Tamilnad which needed any attention in that critical period. The leading politicians in Madras were only reacting to all India decisions on the part of the government of India, the Congress or the Muslim League. The Muslims in Tamilnad have always been in a very small minority that they really had no independent aspirations of their own except the understandable one of honourable survival. But the Muslim problem in India as a whole had become serious under the firm and uncompromising leadership of Muhammad Ali Jinnah who was insisting on a separate homeland for his co-religionists. The many attempts made by the British to resolve this tangle failed. Sir Stafford Cripps and the cabinet mission could achieve little. Rajagopalachariar, never a prisoner of fashionable clichés or second hand ideas, boldly asserted that accommodating Jinnah was a necessary prelude to Indian independence. The Congress turned angrily against him and he resigned the membership of the Congress.

In 1942 Gandhi raised the slogan 'Quit India' and it evoked the echo from the Muslim League 'Divide and Quit'. There was very considerable damage to property followed by repression by the government after the leading Congressmen including Gandhi had been incarcerated.

The war ended; in 1946 the general elections were held; the Congress attained huge majority in Madras. The Madras Congress already got rid of the leading Brahmin leaders in the party and wherever possible filled important party posts with non-Brahmins. When C. N. Muthuranga Mudaliar succeeded Satyamurthy as President of the Tamilnad Congress Committee the change had begun. In 1946, they did not want Rajagopalachari back to lead the ministry. They got reconciled to Prakasam's Chief Ministership; but he too was superseded by. O. P. Ramaswami Reddiar who held

office till 1949. It was during his ministry that India became independent. It was during the ministry of his successor P. S. Kumaraswami Raja that India became a Republic. Rajagopalachari, though not much wanted in Madras Congress by its leaders among whom K. Kamaraja Nadar was becoming prominent, had an all India role to play and he became the first Indian governor-general of the dominion of India, from 1948 to 1950. In 1952 when the ministry was to be formed in Madras, Rajagopalachari again became the leader of the Congress legislature party and therefore the Chief Minister, largely at the instance of Jawaharlal Nehru, the then Prime Minister of India. Nationalist politics of one kind, namely that which was directed against foreign rule, necessarily came to an end with the withdrawal of that rule.

Tamilnad in Free India (1947-1956)

When Tamilnad became free of British control as a result of the Indian Independence Act passed by the British Parliament in July 1947, O. P. Ramaswami Reddiar (of South Arcot Dt.) was the Chief Minister of Madras. His ministry continued till April 1949 when it was succeeded by the ministry formed by P. S. Kumaraswami Raja (of Rajapalayam, Ramanathapuram Dt.). He carried on till the general elections of 1952. Then came the second ministry of C. Rajagopalachariar. At that time the Congress did not have a majority in the Madras Legislative Assembly 'even though it claimed the support of eight independents'. Many attempted to persuade Rajaji to accept the leadership of the Legislature Party but he refused to do so, and he was not a member of either house of the legislature. Some lesser names were thought of or were just rumoured about. Rajaji at last agreed to form a ministry and to enable him to do so he was nominated to the Legislative council (the Upper House) by the governor who also invited him to join the ministry. This ministry was formed immediately after the first general elections held in free India under the Indian Constitution; and it was quite symbolic and significant that a person who had not been *elected* by any constituency should have become the first Chief Minister of Madras under the new dispensation.

Rajaji held office from 1952 to 1954 with great distinction; he not only revived the old policies which guided him in 1937 but also enunciated new ones which attracted the attention of even those who were outside the state. In regard to Hindi he had become more guarded and much later he was to become an ardent advocate of English. That was one of the ways which Rajaji evolved in regard to many public issues. In 1954, he formulated an educational policy which considered pursuit of hereditary crafts as atleast a part time learning as a satisfactory way of solving unemployment as well as some educational problems. This was misconstrued by his followers in the party as an attempt to revive the *Varnashrama* system of education. A non-Brahmin section of the party accused Rajaji of such an attempt and arranged to lever him out of power. Kamaraja Nadar who was then the President of the Tamilnad Congress Committee spearheaded the move and in April 1954 the group opposed to Rajaji managed to remove him from the leadership of the legislative party and elect Mr. Nadar to succeed him. That was the beginning of Kamaraj Nadar's two ministries which went on till 1963. When Rajaji's ouster was made in 1954, he had served his last public term of Madras leadership. Thereafter from 1954 to 1964 and practically till his death he was engaged in creating and mobilising public opinion against certain political trends in the government of J. Nehru and his successor Prime-Ministers of India, which he strongly disapproved of.

The most important thing that happened during this ministry of Rajaji was the formation of Andhra Province (Andhra Pradesh) which completely altered the map of the Madras Presidency. So far as Tamilnad was concerned there was no problem of native Indian states, as Andhra had Hyderabad and Kerala had Cochin and Travancore and Karnataka had Mysore. By 1947, the entire Tamilnad part of the Madras state was free of all such native states except for the tiny state of Pudukkottai ruled by the Tondaiman. His state had been abolished and the territory included in the Madras state as part of the Trichinopoly District in 1948-49. The Tamil speaking districts formed a contiguous area

with the capital city of Madras in which a majority of residents spoke Tamil. But the state itself was a large one and it included the Malabar districts where Malayalam was spoken, the Andhra districts where Telugu was spoken etc. The Congress party in the organization of its provincial wings had created provincial Congress committees on a linguistic basis and in its election manifestoes had promised the formation of linguistic provinces when independence was achieved. On these bases and on the basis of long-standing historical aspirations and sense of regional unity based on language different linguistic segments of the Madras Presidency had been hoping for linguistic provinces being formed soon after independence. Among those linguistic groups, the Telugus were the most vociferous and the Tamils the least, for the latter knew that if the former was their case, it would automatically result in a victory for them also.

We shall examine the steps by which the formation of linguistic provinces in the state of Madras was achieved :

Even before India became independent of British rule (15-8-1947) the Madras Legislature had in a resolution recommended i. e., in April 1947, the formation of linguistic states like Tamilnad, Karnataka, Andhra and Kerala and wanted this to find a place in the constitution to be drafted. But it was the Andhra Province that was specially thought of and the noisiest and the most vigorous campaigning for a linguistic province came from there. Some leading Andhra gentlemen including T. Prakasam and N. G. Ranga waited on Sardar Patel and asked for an order-in-council delimiting in particular the boundaries of an Andhra Province to come. 'Patel promised to look into the matter'.¹

No one suspected that there could be any objection to this demand and most of the promises made were taken to be genuine

1 K. V. Narayana Rao : *The Emergence of Andhra Pradesh*, p. 202; for most of the facts and statements in this chapter, *vide* this book. Practically whatever quotation is used in this chapter may be taken to have been used from this book.

and their implementation postponed only because times were not propitious. Nehru declared in the Constituent Assembly that the demand for an Andhra Province was quite reasonable and legitimate (27. 11. 1947), though he thought that the formation of linguistic states like Maharashtra and Karnataka involved real difficulties. Being worried about the many steps that were being taken by the Andhras for forcing early decision on an Andhra province ten Tamil members of the Constituent Assembly met the Prime Minister to ask for a purely Tamil state. This was the only occasion when the Tamils expressed a desire for an exclusive Tamil state. It is not as if they were not anxious for it but knew that when others had got their linguistic provinces, the residuary state would naturally be such a Tamil state. A similar demand seems to have come from the Kannadigas also. Since such demands were being put forth by almost all linguistic regions, Nehru had second thoughts on the matter and decided to shelve the whole issue. But perhaps it was not wise to postpone solving a single issue like that of the Andhra state anticipating a hypothetical situation of multiplicity of similar demands. It was an early symptom of the habit of the government of India under Nehru neither to decide on priorities nor to be firm about any public issue.

In March 1948, Nehru indicated that a committee to consider the question of Andhra Province would be set up and following that a Boundary Commission also might come up. But it was evident that Nehru was wavering between what he thought were pressing problems before the government and the persistent and insistent demands for linguistic provinces. On 17th June 1948 the Linguistic Provinces Commission was appointed and it consisted of S. K. Dar, a retired judge of the Allahabad High Court (Chairman), Dr. Panigrahi and J. N. Lal. This is known as the Dhar Commission. This commission after examining more than 6000 witnesses submitted its report in December 1948. The report said in unambiguous language that any reorganization of states was not called for immediately or even in the near future and that in the distant future, if and when it is undertaken the basis of reorganization should be not

language but administrative convenience; and that if any reorganization on linguistic basis was contemplated, the cities of Bombay and Madras should be left out and treated as part C states. This report frustrated everyone. The Congress appointed a Committee consisting of Jawaharlal Nehru, Vallabhai Patel and Pattabhi Sitaramayya (the then Congress President) to review the situation afresh. This committee submitted its report in April 1948. In short it recommended the postponement of linguistic provinces by a few years, it also indicated that if a new linguistic province is to be formed at all it can only be Andhra, of course, *minus* Madras city. The exclusion of Madras disappointed many Andhras but Pattabhi Sitaramayya explained that this exclusion did not mean that the city would go to the Tamils. To the Andhras depriving the Tamils of the city of Madras gave greater satisfaction than their own getting it; for their alternative to their getting it was making it a Part C state. They could not contemplate with equanimity the Tamils getting it. This qualification in the J.V.P. Report was not accepted by T. Prakasam who said that till the Andhra province found it possible to locate its own capital and shift to it, the capital of both the states should be Madras. The Tamils did not agree to this. The partition committee appointed by the government of Madras with Mr. P. S. Kumaraswami Raja as its chairman submitted its report with Prakasam's dissenting note regarding Madras being interim capital of the Andhra Province. The lack of unanimity in the Report made it difficult, or it said so, for the government of India to accept it. Nehru, like the British, announced that since the parties to the issue did not agree among themselves the issue itself had to be postponed. The *Free Press Journal* of Bombay commented in September 1952 as follows: "Shri Nehru is fully aware that it is easier for the camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for the champions of linguistic states to agree border areas. By asking for the impossible Shri Nehru is washing his hands off a major problem that deserves to be satisfactorily settled. Shri Nehru is obviously anxious to retain the status quo".² The Andhras felt that

2 Quoted by K. N. Narayana Rao: *Emergence of Andhra Pradesh*, p. 236.

their position was deteriorating not only because their demand for a separate state was being treated in a casual way but also because by their continued stay in the composite Madras state they were losing much, for 'the Tamils got most of the benefits'. They began to doubt the intentions of Nehru and his government. In this context it may be remembered that in 1938 when the question of the status of the city of Madras was agitating the minds of all concerned, Lord Erskine (the governor) had suggested that, for administrative convenience, Madras might be the capital for both the provinces, with the same governor presiding over both the cabinets.

It was in this context that Swami Sitaram (originally known as Sitarama Sastry), a genuine Congress worker who had once been the secretary of Andhra Pradesh Congress Committee, chose to go on a fast unto death from 16th August 1951 demanding the formation of Andhra province. He had tried often before to get the province formed, but in vain. This was a very interesting situation in which the close associates of Gandhi began adopting Gandhian tactics to tackle situation which arose because of Independent India's action or non-action. The government of Free India (under Nehru's premiership) had a foretaste of this as early as 1947 when Mahatma Gandhi went on a fast to force the government to keep its word by Pakistan in the matter of sharing of assets. Swami Sitaram stated that "he wanted a cheaper and more efficient administration carried on in the mother-tongue of the people". An All-Party Convention which met at Bezwada (Vijayawada) approved of Swami Sitaram's demands. Nehru responded by stating that the fast was 'specially uncalled for'. On 14th September, Nehru told Mr. Kala Venkata Rao in the Parliament that if the Tamilnad, Andhra and Karnataka Congress Committees as well as the government of Madras agreed on all issues connected with the demanded Andhra State, the government of India would take further steps in the matter. To a large extent this requirement was fulfilled. But Nehru was not moved. He said in the Parliament that 'he would yield to facts, but not to fasts'. But

he little realised in the context of Gandhian India fasts were facts, as he was soon to learn after an avoidable tragedy had happened. Swami Sitaram in the meantime had fasted for 35 days; he broke the fast at the instance of Vinoba Bhave who has a long record of saving the face of the government of India in difficult situations. Nehru's earlier requirements regarding agreement among all the concerned parties also was fulfilled. He threw the blame on T. Prakasam who had earlier submitted a minute of dissent. That was the straw on which Nehru chose to break the demand for Andhra Province. Prakasam however did not agree that he was responsible for the situation; he threw the blame on Sardar Patel (who had by then passed away) and Nehru. Swami Sitaram had suggested that the status of Madras city could be determined by arbitration; but Nehru who had always supported the principle of arbitration on many other occasions, ruled it out in the context of the city of Madras. One knows not why.

Elections were held to the Madras Legislative Assembly during January 1954; the Congress failed to get a majority out of the 367 seats it contested. It secured only 152. It was quite clear that the poor results were the direct consequence of the non-formation of Andhra Province, which during Election time, the Andhras made a big issue of. Another appeal by Swami Sitaram personally to Nehru achieved little; the Swami began a 'Satyagraha yatra from Ellore on 27th February'. To make matters worse, Nehru announced in the Parliament on 22nd May 1952 that "Even though the formation of linguistic provinces may be desirable in some cases, this would obviously be the wrong time for it". This characteristic ambivalence made Swami Sitaram undertake a purificatory fast on 25th May for three weeks which ended on the 5th June.

After the election, C. Rajagopalachariar became the Chief Minister of Madras for the second time. Swami Sitaram's Satyagraha movement was gaining momentum and spreading. It was now that Potti Sriramulu, a Madras Telugu by birth began his fast

unto death on 19th October 1952 in Madras, as a part of Swami Sitaram's Satyagraha movement. On the 8th December 1952, when Sriramulu had completed 50 days of fasting, Nehru criticised it. In the Parliament he repeated his old statements. Sriramulu refused to give up his fast. On the night of 15th December 1952 (on the 58th day of his fast), Potti Sriramulu died. Serious rioting followed; damage to railway property alone was estimated at around half a crore of rupees. On the very next day (16.12.1952) Nehru, who had till then been categorically asserting that there was no agreement among the concerned parties, declared that his earlier statements had met with a 'fairly considerable measure of public approval'. On 19.12.1952 (four days after the demise of Sriramulu), Nehru announced the intention of the government of India to set up the Andhra state which was to consist of all the Telugu speaking districts of the Madras province but without the city of Madras. The Wanchoo commission was appointed to go into the question of financial and other implications of partition.

The question of whether it was necessary to have waited to form an Andhra Province till a dedicated citizen's valuable life was lost has been handled with great probity and scholarship by Dr. K. V. Narayana Rao in his 'The Emergence of Andhra Pradesh'. One would agree entirely with his conclusions, of which the most important is "what is more important is to understand that the fasts were the result of despair over the chronic vacillating policy of the government of India". Double standards had become one of the characteristics of the government (as much in Home policies as in Foreign) whereby the government accepted Mahatma Gandhi's terms (1947) before his fast could become fatal, while Potti Sriramulu's fast was allowed to prove fatal before they yielded. But yield they did. If they had done it four days earlier (and nothing had happened to alter the contentions in the meantime) the life of a Gandhian Satyagrahi could have been saved. "The growing violence which reached its climax on 16th December and which could be brought under control only by 19th December must have been the compelling if not the sole, reason that made the government of India decide".

Nehru, who had yielded to Gandhi's coercion in 1947 said in January 1953, "I did not want any one to compel us or coerce us into taking any action".

The Wanchoo Committee had suggested that Madras could be a temporary capital for the Andhras till they found one for themselves. The Tamils strongly objected to the suggestion. But ultimately even a temporary status for Madras as Andhra headquarters was ruled out, largely because it was reported that C. Rajagopalachariar, the Chief Minister of Madras, threatened to resign if such a solution was contemplated. If Potti Sriramulu was responsible for the achievement of the Andhra state, Rajaji was responsible for the securing of Madras city for Tamilnad; both achieved their objectives by coercion, of course of different kinds. Within four months, the government of India had yielded twice to coercion, while Nehru's assertion that he would not be coerced stood.

The story of the attainment of an Andhra province has been dealt with at some length here, because thereby the Tamils were nearer the achievement of a full fledged exclusive Tamilnad without their firing a shot. Only one more step was required to get rid of the Kerala areas and the disputed areas in the Karnataka and Andhra regions. By merely becoming a residuary state when every other linguistic part had been chopped off, Tamilnad by process of elimination became its cherished self. The Tamils really fought for a Tamilnad state to the last Andhra.

Again it was an agitation in Andhra for the formation of *Visalandhra* which obliged the government of India to appoint on December 22, 1953, a commission to examine 'objectively and dispassionately' the question of the reorganization of the states of the Indian Union so that the welfare of the people of each constituent unit as well as the nation as a whole was promoted'. The commission was known as the States Reorganization Commission and it consisted of Saiyid Fazl Ali (Chairman), H. N. Kunzru and K. M. Panikkar. Typically Nehru began by criticizing the demand for the formation of Visalandhara by calling it 'expansionist

imperialism', and ended by accepting it. But the demand for Visalandhra became insistent and irresistible. The States Reorganization Commission submitted its report on 30th September 1955 and was released on 9th October 1955. Though the commission actually recommended a separate state for Telingana, further pressure from the Andhras led to the acceptance of the idea of Visalandhra.

The States Reorganization Act was passed in 1956. It led to the final redistribution of the territories in the southern states on a strictly linguistic basis. Thereby Tamilnad had its northern boundary line starting near the lake Pulicat (to the north of the city of Madras and south of Nellore) and passing through a point between Tirupati in the north and Tiruttani in the south; it included the trilingual taluk of Hosur in Northern Salem, the Malabar district was taken away and made part of the Kerala state; Kollegal taluk was included in the Mysore state; Devikulam and Pirmedu, two small towns on the borderland between Travancore and Tirunelveli District were rejoined to Tamilnad; the whole of the Kanyakumari District was taken away from Travancore and included in Tamilnad.

Thus was the present state of Tamilnad formed. Before the end of 1956 the map of South India had been redrawn linguistically; whether it was rational or not, whether it was the starting point of the accentuation of regional loyalties and linguistic chauvinism or not, the overwhelming and passionate demands of large linguistic groups had been met thereby. This residuary state consisting largely of Tamil speaking people was called 'Madras' and its name had not been changed to Tamilnadu till many years later. After many trials and tribulations, the territorial extent of the land of the Tamils again stood at what Tolkappiar twenty three centuries ago defined it to be : with the only changes that Venkatam itself was outside Tamilnad and the land of the Malayalees because of their history during the past 1200 years fell to the west of the western borderland of Tamilnad. The Tamils became fairly autonomous in a federal set up and within the region which has been traditionally associated with them.

VIJAYANAGAR

THE TULUVA DYNASTY

Isvara Nayaka

Narasa Nayaka

Vira Narasimha
(1505-9)

Krishnadeva Raya
(1509 - 29)

Achyuta Deva Raya
(1529 - 42)

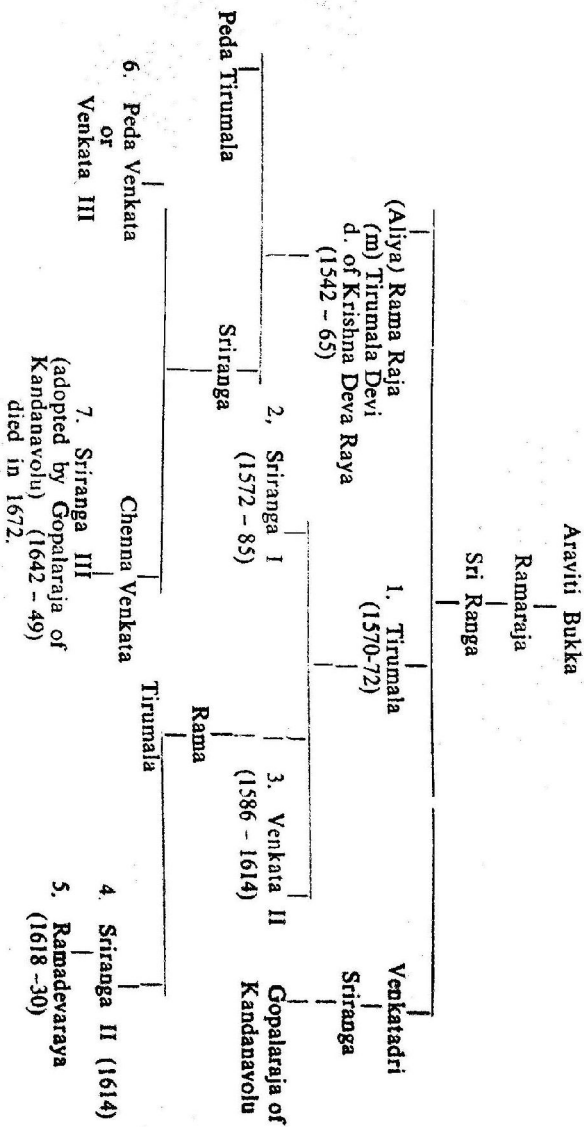
Ranga
Sadasiva
(1542 - 76)

Venkata I
(1542)

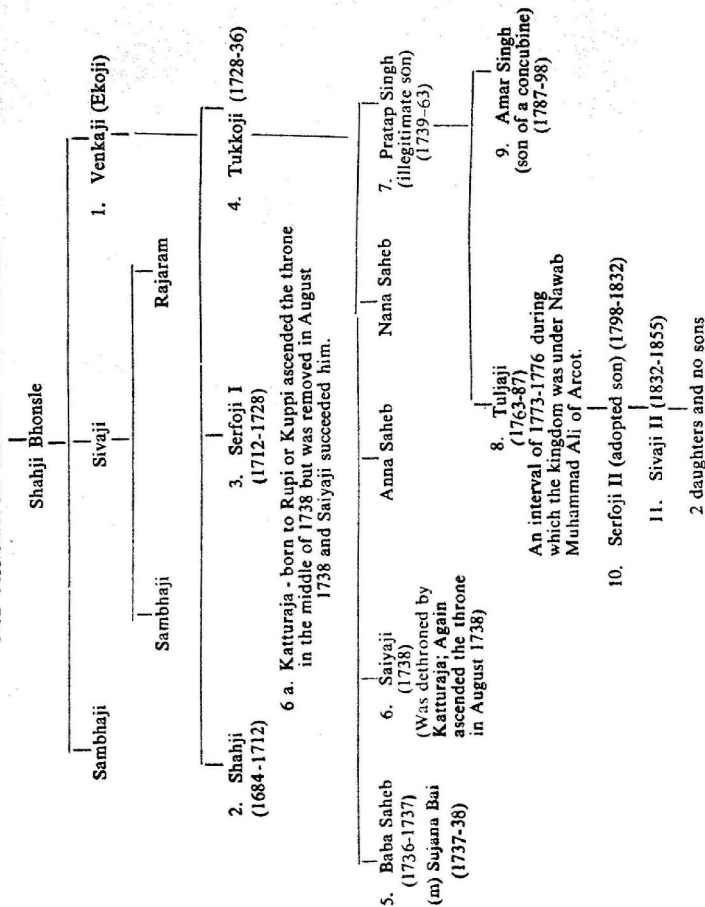
Tirumaladevi
(m) Aliya Rama Raya
(1542 - 1565)

Tirumalai Raya

VIJAYANAGAR THE ARAVIDU DYNASTY

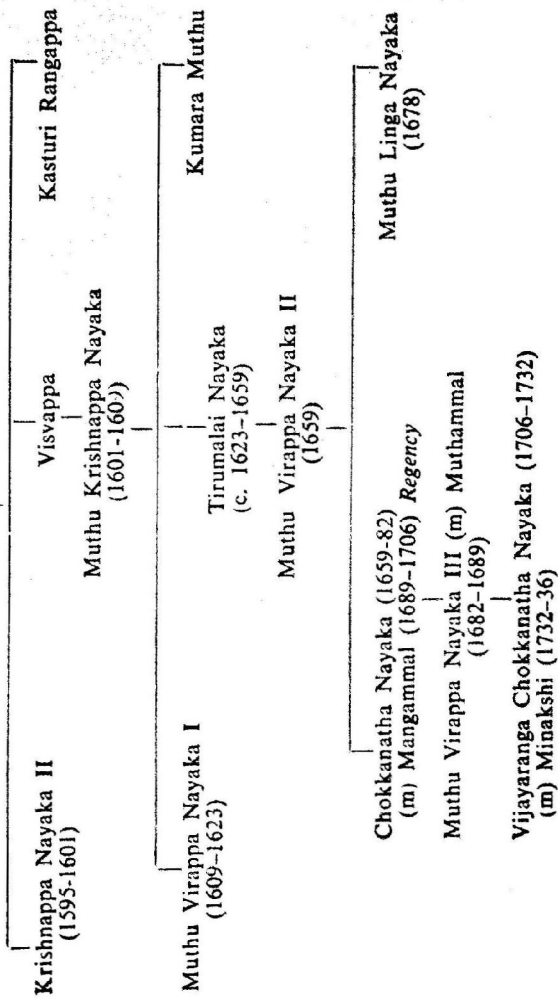


THE MAHRATTA RULERS OF TANJORE



THE NAYAKS OF MADURA

Virappa Nayaka (m) Tirumalambika
(1572-95)



THE NAYAKS OF TANJORE

Sevvappa Nayaka (1532—1560)

Achhutappa Nayaka (m) Murtimamba (1560—1600)

Raghunatha Nayaka (m) Kalavati (1600—1633) - a Pandyan princess

Vijayaraghava Nayaka (m) Ramabhadramba (1633—1673)

Mannaru Das

Sengamala Das
(1675)

Alagiri Nayaka of the Madura Nayak family ruled after Vijayaraghava and before Sengamala Das during 1674.

The Setupatis of Ramnad

1. Sadaikka Thevar I Udaiyan	1605-1622
2. Kuttan Setupati	1627-1636
3. Sadaikka II (Dalavay)	1636-1645
4. Raghunatha Setupati (Tirumalai)	1645-1670
5. Surya Thevar }	1670
6. Athana Thevar }	
7. Raghunatha Setupati <i>alias</i> Kilavan	1671-1710
8. Thiru Udaya Thevar <i>alias</i> Vijaya Raghunatha Setupati	1710-1720
9. Sundaresvara <i>alias</i> Tanda Thevar	1720
10. Bhavani Sankara	1720-1729
11. Kattaya Thevar <i>alias</i> Kumara Muthu Vijaya Raghunatha Setupati	1748-1761
12. Sivakumara Muthu Vijaya Raghunatha Setupati	1735-1746
13. Rakka Thevar	1747
14. Sella Thevar <i>alias</i> Vijayaraghunatha Setupati	1748-1761
15. Muthuramalinga Setupati	1761-1772
The country is ruled directly by the Nawab of Arcot	1772-1781
Muthu Ramalinga Setupati, again	1781-1794
East India Co. rule in Ramnad	1794-1803
16. Rani Mangalesvari Nachchiyar	1803-1812
17. Annasami Setupati (Muthu Vijaya Raghunatha Setupati)	1812-1820
18. Ramaswami Setupati	1820-1830

- | | | |
|-----|--|-----------|
| 19. | Dorai Raja Nachchiyar Muthu Chella Thevar
(Manager of the Eatate) 1830-1840 | 1830-1845 |
| 20. | Parvata Vardhani Nachchiyar (died 1871) | 1846-1862 |
| 21. | Muthu Ramalinga Setupati (died 1873)
(Ponnuswami Thevar - Manager) | 1862-1871 |
| 22. | Br. Government of Ramnad | 1871-1873 |
| 23. | Court of Wards management | 1873-1889 |
| 24. | Bhaskara Setupati | 1889-1903 |
| 25. | Raja Rajeswara <i>alias</i> Muthu Ramalinga
Setupati | 1903-1929 |
| 26. | Shanmugha Rajeswara <i>alias</i> Naganatha
Setupati | 1929-1967 |
| 27. | Ramanatha Setupati | 1967- |

The Nawabs of the Carnatic

Saadat Ullah Khan	1710-1732
Dost Ali	1732-1740
Safdar Ali	1740-1742
Muhd. Sayyid Khan	1742-1743
Anwaruddin Khan	1743-1749
Muhd. Ali (Wallajah)	1749-1795
Umdat-ul-Umara	1795-1801
Azim-ud-Daullah	1801-1820

The last Nawab Muhd. Ghause died without heir in 1855; the State was annexed to the Presidency by the Doctrine of Lapse.

In 1867 the claimant to the Nawabi, Azam Jah was made 'the Prince of Arcot'.

List of Governors of Madras

King of England	Governor-General	Governor of Fort St. George	Date of assumption of charge
	1. Aaron Baker		1652
	2. Sir Thomas Chamber		1659
	3. Sir Edward Winter		1661
	4. George Foxcroft (imprisoned by Sir Edward Winter)		June, 1665
	5. Sir Edward Winter		16.9.1665
	6. George Foxcroft		22.8.1668
	7. Sir William Langton		1670 to 1677
	8. Streynsham Master		27.1.1678
	9. William Gyfford		3.7.1681
	10. Elihu Yale (acting)		8.8.1684
	11. William Gyfford		26.1.1685
	12. Elihu Yale		25.7.1687
	13. Nathaniel Higginson		23.10.1692
	14. Thomas Pitt (grandfather of Earl of Chatham)		7.7.1698
	15. Gulstone Addison (died at Madras, 17.10.1709)		18.9.1709

16. Edward Montague (acting) 17.10.1709
17. William Fraser (acting) 3.11.1709
18. Edward Harrison 11.7.1711
19. Joseph Collet 8.1.1717
20. Francis Hastings (acting) 18.1.1720
21. Nathaniel Elwick 15.10.1721
22. James Macree 15.1.1725
23. George Morton Pitt 14.5.1730
24. Richard Bendon 23.1.1735
25. Nicholas Morse (Fort St George was captured on 10.9.1746) 17.1.1744
26. John Hinde (Deputy governor of Fort St. David; appointed President and governor 24.1.1747, but died before receipt of despatch).
27. Charles Floyer (dismissed 6.7.1750) 16.4.1747
28. Thomas Saunders (seat of government re-established at Fort St. George 5.4.1752) 19.9.1750
29. George Pigot (later, Lord) 14.1.1755
30. Robert Palk 14.11.1763
31. Charles Bouchier 26.1.1767
32. Josias Du Pre 31.1.1770
33. Alexander Wynch (dismissed) 2.2.1773

George III
(1760-1820)

governor-general of
Fort William
Warren Hastings 1774-1785

34.	Lord Pigot (placed under arrest by the majority of his council, 24.8.1776; died in prison)	11.12.1775
35.	George Stratton (suspended from the service)	23.8.1776 31.8.1777
36.	John Whitehill (acting)	8.2.1778
37.	Thomas Rumbold (dismissed after his return to England)	6.4.1780
38.	John Whitehill (acting) (suspended)	8.11.1780
39.	Charles Smith (acting)	22.6.1781
40.	Lord Macartney (resigned)	18.6.1785
41.	Alexander Davidson	
42.	Major General Sir Archibald Campbell (also Commander-in-chief)	6.4.1786 7.2.1789
43.	John Holland (acting)	13.2.1789
44.	Edward John Holland (acting)	
45.	Major General William Meadows (also Commander-in-chief)	20.2.1790
46.	Sir Charles Oakley	1.8.1792
47.	Lord Hobart	7.9.1794
48.	Lt. Gl. George Harris (acting)	21.2.1798
49.	Edward, Lord Clive (Earl of Powis, 1804)	21.8.1798
50.	Lord William Cavendish Bentinck	30.8.1803
51.	William Petrie (acting)	11.9.1807
	Macpherson (1785-1786)	
	Lord Cornwallis (1786-93)	
	Sir John Shore (1793-98)	
	Lord Wellesley (1798-1805)	
	Cornwallis (1805)	

Barlow (1805-07)

Earl of Minto I (1807-13)
Lord Hastings (1813-23)

George IV
(1820 - 30)

John Adam

(January - August 1823)
Lord Amherst (1823-28)

W. B. Bayley (1828-March)
Governors-general of India
from 1833

Lord William Bentinck
(1828-1835)

Queen of England
Victoria
(1837-1901)

Lord Ellenborough
(1842-44)

Sir Henry Hardinge
(Viscount) (1844-48)

Lord Dalhousie (1848-56)

Lord Canning : as
Governor-general (1856-58)

52. Sir George Hilario Barlow 24.12.1807
53. Lt. Gl. John Acher Crombie (commander-in-chief and temporary governor) 21.5.1813
Hugh Filio 16.9.1814
54. Major General Sir Thomas Munro (died at Pattikonda - Kurnool Dt.-on 6.7.1827) 10.6.1820
56. Henry Sullivan Greame (acting) 10.7.1827
57. Stephen Rumbold Lushington 18.10.1827
58. Lt. Gl. Sir Frederick Adam 25.10.1832
59. George Edward Russel (acting) 4.3.1837
60. Lord Elphinstone 6.3.1837
61. The Marquis of Tweeddale (also Com-in-chief) 24.9.1842
62. Henry Dickinson (acting) 23.2.1848
63. Maj. Gl. Sir Henry Pottinger 7.4.1848
64. Daniel Elliott (acting) 24.4.1854
65. Lord Harris 28.4.1854
66. Sir Charles Edward Trevelyan 28.3.1859

Viceroy's and Governors-general of India.

Lord Canning (1858-62)

Lord Elgin I (1862-63)

Sir Robert Napier (1863)

Sir W. T. Davison (1863)

John Lawrence (1864-69)

Lord Mayo (1869-72)

Sir John Strachey (1872)

Lord Napier (1872)

Lord Northbrook

(1872-76)

Lord Lytton (1876-80)

Lord Ripon (1880-84)

Lord Dufferin (1884-88)

Lord Lansdowne (1884-88)

Lord Elgin II (1894-99)

Lord Curzon (1899-1906)

Queen Empress

Victoria

(1876-1901)

King-Emperor

Edward VII

(1901-10)

67. William Ambrose Morhead (acting) 8.6.1860
68. Sir Henry George Morhead (died at Madras 2.8.1860) 5.7.1860
4.8.1860
69. William Ambrose Morhead 18.2.1861
70. Sir William Thomas Denison 26.11.1863
71. Edward Maltby (acting till 18.1.1864)
72. Lord Napier of Merchistown (acting viceroy 1872) 27.3.1866
73. Alexander John Arbuthnot (acting) 19.2.1872
74. Lord Hobart (died at Madras 27.4.1875) 15.5.1872
75. William Rose Robinson (acting) 29.4.1875
76. The Duke of Buckingham and Chander 23.11.1875
77. William Patrick Adam (died at Ootacamund) 20.12.1880
78. William Hudleston (acting 24.5.1881) 24.5.1881
79. Mount Stuart Elphinstone Grant Duff 5.11.1881
80. Robert Bowicke (Baron Connemara) 8.12.1886
81. John Henry Gustin (acting) 1.12.1890
82. Lord Wenlock 23.1.1891
83. Sir Arthur Elibank Havelock 18.3.1896
84. Arthur Oliver Villiers Baron Amphilhil (as governor-general 1904) 28.12.1900
85. Sir James Thompson (acting) 1.5.1904

Lord Minto II (1905-10)

George V
(1910-36)

Lord Hardinge (1910-16)

Lord Chelmsford (1916-21)

Lord Reading (1921-26)

Lord Irwing (1926-31)

Lord Willingdon (1931-36)

Lord Linlithgow (1936-43)

Lord Wavell (1943-47)

Lord Mountbatten (March

22 to August 14, 1947)

86. Gabriel Stokes (acting)

87. Arthur Oliver Villiers, Baron Amptill

88. Sir Arthur Lawley

89. Sir Thomas David Gibson Carmickal

90. Sir Murray Hammick (acting)

91. Lord Pentland

92. Sir Alexander Cardew (acting)

93. Lord Willingdon

94. Sir Charles Todhunter (acting)

95. Viscount Goschen

96. Sir Norman Majoribanks (temporarily)

97. Sir George Frederick Stanley

98. Sir Muhammad Usman (acting)

99. Lord Erskine

100. Sri K. V. Reddy (temp.)

101. Sir Ashun Hope

102. Sir Henry Knight (acting)

103. Sir Archibald Edward Nye

15.2.1906

1.12.1904

28.3.1906

3.11.1911

30.3.1912

30.10.1912

29.3.1919

10.4.1919

12.4.1924

14.4.1924

1929

12.11.1929

16.5.1934

15.11.1934 to 1940

1936

1940

1945 - 46

April 1946

15-8-1947 : INDIA BECOMES A DOMINION

Dominion Governors - general

Lord Mountbatten

(15.8.1947-21.6.1948)

Sri C. Rajagopalachariar

(1948 - 1950)

104. Sri Krishna Rajendra Singhe,
Maharaja of Bhavanagar

1950

26.1.1950 : INDIA BECOMES A REPUBLIC

President of India
Sri Rajendra Prasad

105. Sri Sri Prakasa

1952 - 57

THE CARNATIC WARS

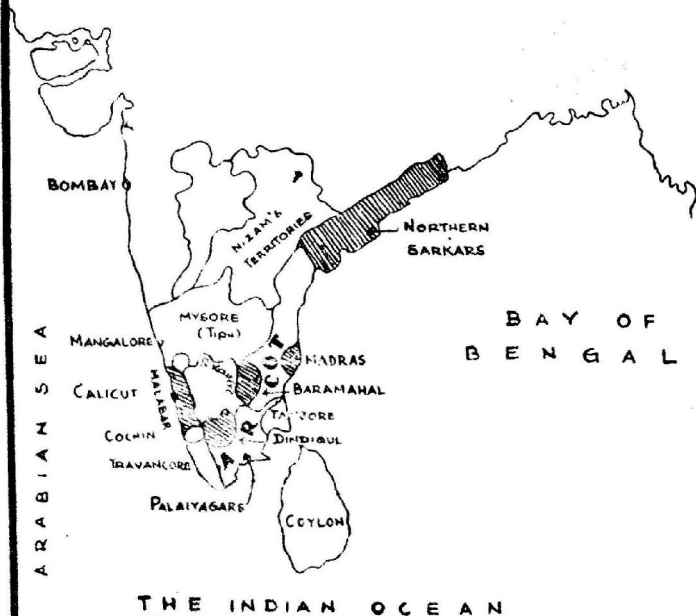
(1746-63)

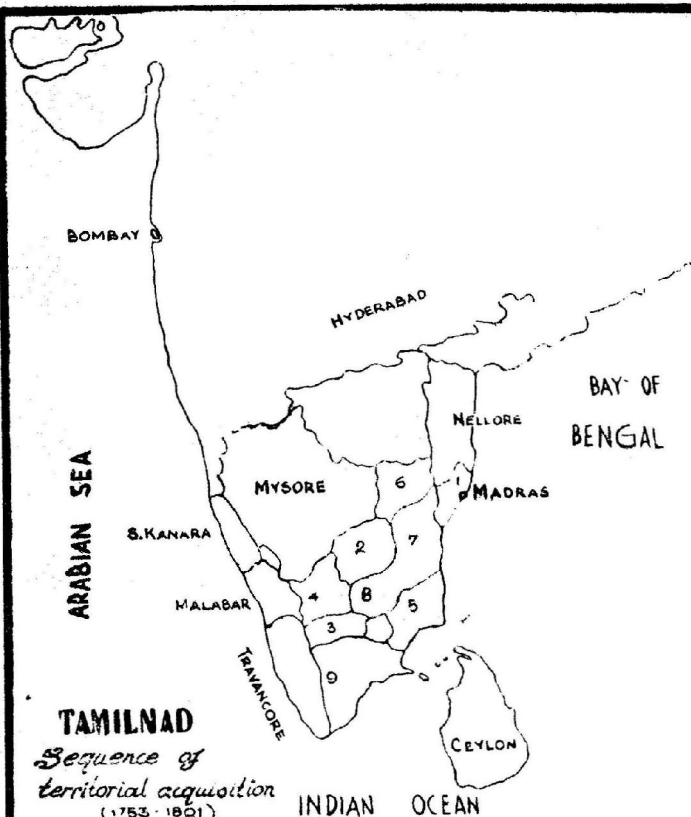


SOUTH INDIA

IN 1798.

Br. Territory 





TAMILNAD

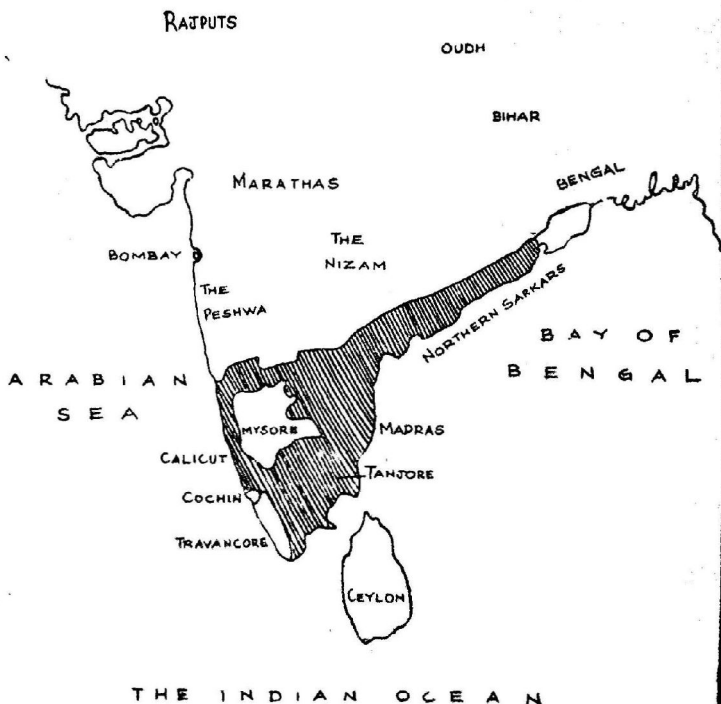
*Sequence of
territorial acquisition
(1753-1801)*

1. MADRAS - CHINGLEPUT 1753-1801
2. SALEM 1792
3. DINDIGUL 1792
4. COIMBATORE 1799
5. TANJORE 1799
6. NORTH ARCOT 1801
7. SOUTH ARCOT 1801
8. TRICHINPOLY 1801
9. MADURA 1801

SOUTH INDIA

IN 1805

Br. Territory 



PART II

Administration and Society

Constitutional Development and administrative Changes

In the history of Tamilnad we have traced in this volume, i. e., from 1565 to 1956 we have seen the political evolution of the Tamils during the past four centuries. We shall now see what constitutional and administrative changes were brought about from time to time in the governmental Polity. It will be seen that from 1565 to 1801 there was no constitutional change and very little administrative change. It was a monarchical polity all over; the Nayaks of Madurai and Tanjore, the Setupatis of Ramnad, the Marathas of Tanjore and the Nawabs of the Carnatic functioning as kings in their own independent right. The usual advisory paraphernalia were there, the courts were held, armies were maintained, revenues were collected and spent. The philosophy of government, which centred round the monarch (male or female) assuming power by hereditary succession, usurpation or conquest, being considered inviolable enough to inhibit the subject population from rising against their rulers, persisted. Thus government was a despotism, benevolent or malevolent. After 1801, also government was a despotism in the sense that the people had no say in the laying down of policies or the norms of administration : but this has to be doubly qualified; in the first place the English government of the Madras Presidency of which Tamilnad was a part was subject to authorities

in England. The English authorities were roughly speaking the Court of Directors and the Board of Directors but it was not as if they could function as they wished for they were controlled by shareholders and the English Parliament which controlled the activities of the Company, as well as the Crown which issued the charter to the Company from time to time laying down the conditions of their functioning. So the source of power was indefinite or widespread. The interest in government after that date centres round administrative patterns which tended to evolve reacting to the needs of the moment. As political awareness grows the structure of the constitution is bound to change. In the second place, the progressive participation of the common people in the government of the region was, in the later part of the period, achieved through enlarging franchise – from the franchise limited by property and educational qualifications of the dyarchy period to universal adult franchise of the 1950 Constitution.

The 19th and 20th centuries witnessed a proliferation of departments of government and growing bureaucratisation became a feature of the new government. Even these great administrative changes accompanied by social changes of an abiding and far reaching nature did not alter a certain basic characteristic of the ancient polity whereby the village continued to be the basis of government for it was the fundamental land revenue yielding unit. This was the constant feature. The greatest change related to the elimination of arbitrariness in public income and expenditure and publication of laws, rules and regulations which guided the government in its daily activities and in the progressive codification of laws, civil as well as criminal. The institutionalisation of public instruction was another important development of the past two centuries.

A. Government under the Nayaks of Madura and Tanjore

The Nayakship of Madura began as a Viceroyalty under Vijayanagar whose claim to rule over the territory comprising the whole of Cis-Kaviri Tamilnad rested purely on conquest. The

general tendency on the part of these Viceroys, called Nayaks (meaning 'Chiefs') who were originally military chiefs, was to rebel and become free of imperial control – a tendency which was manifest even in the days of Nagama Nayaka and which became a reality tacitly under Muthu Virappa Nayaka I and overtly under Tirumalai Nayaka. The conquered province was organised by Vijayanagar more as a military government than a civil establishment; the civil activities were dependent mostly on military exigencies; since Vijayanagar so far as the Tamil country was concerned was a foreign power with its political centre beyond the cultural boundaries of Tamilaham.

Visvanatha Nayaka is mentioned as the agent of the Vijayanagar ruler; similarly the Nayak too had his agents; these latter agents were appointed hereditary accountants in the temple of Pappakudi (1570) known also as Adityavarma Chaturvedimangalam.

Writing of the political condition in the Nayak dominions at the beginning of the 17th century (1611 to be precise) Antoine Vico said: "The king, or the great Nayak of Madura, has but little domains which are directly dependent on him, that is to say, which are his property (for, in this country, the nobles are the sole owners of the land, and the people are only their farmers). All the other lands are the property of a crowd of petty princes or tributary lords; the latter have, each in his domain, the complete administration of the police and justice, if ever justice there was.The great Nayak of Madura (has) to pay an annual tribute of six to ten million francs. But (he) is not punctual in paying it; often (he) postpones the payment; sometimes (he) even refuses it with insolence. In that case (the king of Bisnagar) comes or sends one of his generals, at the head of hundred thousand men, to make them pay all the arrears with interest. On these occasions, which are frequent, it is again the poor people who pay for the fault of their princes; all the country is devastated, and the people are plundered or massacred"

The Nayak, before and after he became autonomous was a despot and was assisted by ministers whose advice was only recommendatory; the Pradhani (dewan), the Dalavay (army general) and the Rayasam (secretary) were the more important among the officials of the court; their importance was dependent more on the persons holding the office than the nature of the office itself. The office of Dalavay combined civil and military duties. Ariyanatha Mudaliar, Ramappaian, Narasappaia and Venkatakrishnappa were the more renowned among the Dalavays. This predominance of military activity again is proof that military exigencies usual in the government of conquered alien territory had to be constantly kept in view.

Succession to the Nayak throne was by male primogeniture but female succession was not ruled out, e. g., Minakshi Regency during minority of the prince was not unknown either, witness Mangammal.

The Palaiyams which were local semi-military divisions originally 72 and allegedly organised by Ariyantha Mudaliar in the days of Visvanatha Nayaka, were the local agents of the Nayak for keeping local peace as well as to collect revenue on a contract basis; i. e., police as well as revenue collection duties were farmed out, so that the Nayak took action only when the Palaiyagar failed in his duty towards him and not when he employed *any* means to export *any* revenue from his subjects; so that the arrangement worked smoothly between the Palaiyagar and the Nayak normally; the condition of the revenue yielding subject is however not ascertainable. The absence of a popular revolt or of documents evidencing popular discontent is insufficient to posit a pleased countryside. The coastal regions which at least after the days of Tirumalai Nayaka were in the hands of the Portuguese (or the Dutch) also behaved like the Palaiyagars, the rent collectors of the Nayak.

The efficiency of the Nayak's army can be spoken of only relatively to that of their foes. The Maravas were fero-

cious fighters and noted for their belligerency; but the armies were for the most part mercenary and functioned like feudal levies.

Justice was meted out in a rough and ready manner, though it may be that the intention of the King and his officials was to be just. The Pradhani seems to have been, next to the king, the chief dispenser of justice in the realm. Thirumalai Nayaka used to go out on tour of the kingdom for personally ascertaining the condition of the people (1653). The kingdom was divided into valanadus for administrative purposes: e.g., Mullivalanadu in which the village of Kallidaikkurichi was stated to be situated (1647). According to the Jesuit writers, the land tax was $1/2$ the produce of the land. Nelson's view that it was $1/2$ the gross produce has been dismissed as improbable by R. Sathyanatha Iyer on insufficient grounds; for then what is net produce? The land tax, income from crown lands, tributes from feudatories (if and when received), and the fisheries constituted the major sources of income; profession tax was a numerous but little yielding source. The public expenses incurred by the Nayaks related mostly to religious and charitable endowments, to temples and priests, payment of salary to civil servants, public works and war. Taylor says that 'the whole revenue amounted to 44000 *puns*'; but there are other estimates which put it high in view of the Nayak's having to pay a heavy tribute to the Vijayanagar ruler. The withdrawal of Madura from Vijayanagar hegemony would have made no difference to local revenues. R. Sathyanatha Iyer is of the view that the revenue would have amounted to 700000 or nearly a crore of rupees. Apart from the quantum and incidence of taxation it was the method of collection of taxes which is referred to by the Jesuit writers as extremely oppressive. That the Marathas, the Muslims and the neighbouring Nayaks did worse does not exonerate the Madura Nayaks and their Palaiyagars, though this is often mentioned as an excuse or justification. There was a brisk foreign trade reaching as far west as Europe and as far east as Japan and the Moluccas.

Since the Nayakship of Madura and that of Tanjore were originally viceroalties of Vijayanagar, the administrative systems which they set up or modified merely represented the imperial needs of Vijayanagar. Since these Nayaks had neither the intention nor the means to make radical changes in the system of administration, they continued the older traditions of the Pandyas in Madura and of the Cholas in Tanjore. A uniform system of village administration had come to prevail in the whole of Tamilnad during the Imperial Chola period. The structure and functions of the administration remaining largely the same, certain local variations could naturally be observed. By and large the government of Tanjore was a replica of the government of Madura. A major difference could however be noticed. That was the Palaiagar system which was introduced in the Madura area even in the days of Visvanatha Nayaka. Such a semi-feudal arrangement was unknown to Tanjore. This was possibly because the turbulent chieftains in the Pandyan country who resisted the establishment of the government of the Nayaks could be subdued only with the help of the Palaiyagars, who later in their turn took over the role of these turbulent subordinates. Tanjore therefore had neither the need in early times for anything like the Palaiyagar system nor the apprehension of danger from overgrown feudatory chieftains.

The Nayak rule both in Madura and in Tanjore, to begin with, was a military administration. This necessitated a certain decline in the old, time-honoured system of autonomous villages nurtured by the Cholas and their substitution by a highly centralised government. A centralised government needed for its success an efficient monarch. In Tanjore Raghunatha Nayaka and Vijayaraghava Nayaka represented efficiency and inefficiency respectively; though in the hands of an autocrat inefficiency was perhaps to be preferred, the sufferings of the people should have increased because of the chaos and uncertainty which come in the wake of inefficiency. Real change in governmental system came only at the end of the 18th century, when the independence of the Maratha rulers in Tanjore had come to a practical end.

B. Government Under the Marathas of Tanjore

Every conqueror of Tamilnad or any part thereof did introduce some changes in the administration of the country. These changes merely amounted the adjustments at the top level mostly surrounding the ruler, leaving the intermediate and lower levels of administration fairly intact. Even at those levels wherever possible the foreign conquerors appointed men of their race, community, language. This did not happen in the case of the English rulers because knowledge of the local languages was essential to work at the level of the village and these they picked up very slowly and very few Englishmen managed to pick up sufficient Tamil to be able to converse freely with the Tamil peasant. The Marathas who under Venkaji conquered Tamilnad stood on a different footing. They did import a number of Maratha Brahmins (desasthas) and non-Brahmins to manage the Tanjore administration; further the local people especially the Brahmins could learn the Marathi language quickly. At the capital Marathi was used almost as a court language though the successors of Venkaji learnt Tamil and encouraged the Tamils at various levels of public life.

The Marathas under Sivaji and his successors had evolved a system of administration which prevailed in Maharashtra. The Marathas of Tanjore did not introduce the typical Maratha administration in the conquered territory but put a thin veneer of their innovations on an essentially native set-up.

The king was the head and embodiment of the state and so it was a despotism, tempered by the king's physical and financial limitations as also the risks he ran in over-reaching himself. So the 'wiser' among them left the government to their ministers and spent their time with courtiers or courtesans or court-poets as the fancy caught them.

"The king of Tanjore" wrote Schwartz, "is in the estimation of the ignorant, a prince who governs according to his

despotic will, but he is in fact more a slave than a king". The Brahmins who controlled Tuljaji and Amar Singh were, according to Schwartz, the prison guards. From Ekoji to Sivaji II, there were kings and kings; but their character and competence not only varied widely but also were circumscribed by circumstances so much so that the best of them was not a great king and the worst of them was not a cruel tyrant.

The ministers were only advisers to the king. The *purohits*, the judges and other chief executives constituted an informal group of ministers. The chief minister was called the *mantri*; the *mantri* in emergency contained in himself the office of the *dalavay* or general. Even as the office of the king was hereditary, the offices of the *mantri* and the *dalavay* were also hereditary. Gangadhara Makhi's descendants were ministers of Venkaji's successors. When the offices were centralised into one, the civil and military administrations were combined in one pair of hands. Ananda Rao is an example of such combination of civil and military powers. The Dewan was the revenue administrator. Dabir Pandit was such an administrator. Bava Pandit was another such officer. The Purohit was the authority on religious matters and such an officer was required for the Maratha state like most other pre-British Indian states. The *kavalkaran* literally 'a guard' was the policeman.

The government was not geared to achieve welfare of the common man; it was not its declared intention either. It was the product of depredations and it continued and was content to rest on that. Endowments to religious institutions or encouragement of Brahmins or promotion of the arts did not add up to the economic welfare of the common people. Corruption was rampant and the civil service enriched itself freely and easily. Land tax was constantly increased. After Hyder Ali's raids in 1769 and 1781, it was significantly increased. Fr. Britto says (1683): "Ekoji (Venkaji) takes away 4/5 of all the produce..... He enforces payment in cash and he is careful to fix the price himself much above what the owner can realise, it happens that the sale of the whole hamlet is never

sufficient to pay the tax.....the cultivators are burdened with a crushing debt and often they are obliged to prove their inability to pay, by submitting to barbarous tortures ”.

Andre Freire's letter of 1682 says : “ I shall say little about Tanjore; the tyranny of Ekoji continues his work of destruction there.....one had never seen so much temerity in a pagan, but he is a pagan who has no other god than his cupidity.” This does not mean he was specially so. In the matter of the tendency to plunder, he was worthy of his more illustrious brother, Sivaji.

Local government was only a continuation of the kind of parochial administration which had always existed in the country, i. e., even under the Cholas. But it had become somewhat modified during the Vijayanagar Imperial period, when the Nayaks were ruling in Tanjore. The old political divisions of Chola times still continued atleast partially, for one still heard of Rajendra Chola Valanadu, Jayamkondanadu etc. There were five *subhas* : Pattukkottai, Mannarkudi, Kumbakonam, Mayavaram and Tiruvadi. The head of a *subha* was a Subhedar. There were 5753 villages in the realm. The *Tahiyari* was the village watchman and the *Kaval-karan* the policeman, the *Panchayat* represented the *Mahajana* the general body of subjects in the village. They levied a fee for themselves on all festive occasions. ‘A Mahajana sambhavana’ was usual on marriage occasions till recently in Tanjore district. A rather undefined administrative system was attempted to be introduced in villages by the British in 1816, by creating ‘a munsif with a full complement of village officials’ which did not succeed for want of intelligent cooperation from the villagers.

The Judicial system was still of the old type. In Amar Singh's time at least, the judges were hopelessly corrupt. Schwartz had to appeal to Sir Archibald Campbell, governor of Tanjore to control judicial corruption there. The judicial procedure consisted of a plaint, defence, judgment and execution. The king could veto any judgment. The judicial revenue was used to maintain the

judicial establishment. The *Nyaya Sabha* (the criminal court), the *Mudriha sabha* (the civil court), the *dharma sabha* (religious and temple litigations), the *Nyayadisa Sabha* (appeal court in respect of all the above) were the four kinds of courts known to them; but this four-fold judiciary came into existence only after 1800.

The police were not only corrupt but cruel. "Being naturally of a predatory habit they presumed to help themselves with impunity and to make demands upon that property they were employed to protect"¹ This corrupt and cruel *kaval* system was abolished by the British in 1814. Sarabhoji II was interested in a well regulated judicial system. With the help of pandits well-versed in the relevant *sastras*, he prepared a judicial code out of the *smriti* texts, for use by his judges.

Land Revenue was assessed and collected in the usual way through the hereditary agencies common in those times. There were three types of revenue yielding land ownership. 2/3 of the land was *ryotwari*, less than 1/3 was *inam* and the rest was *Zamindari*. Schwartz speaks about the system of farming the rights of revenue collection in the Districts to the highest bidder and evil results naturally flowed out of this. Bava Pandit, the revenue minister of Tuljaji introduced the Pattach system which consisted in combining ruined with fertile villages as a single revenue unit. But the administration of this system so much degenerated and became so vexatious that the British duly abolished it.

Customs duties and tolls were also revenues. Public expenditure was on irrigation, dams, temples, choultries, endowments to teachers, the army and above all the palace establishment. The army largely maintained itself on plunder.

C. Government under the *Setupatis*

Ramanathapuram area was part of the Nayakship of Madura till Muthu Krishnappa Nayaka organized the Marava country as a

1. The Report of the 1798 British Commission.

semi-independent province with the Setupati as its administrative head. The Setupati in the early stages of the history of Ramanathapuram was definitely a subordinate chieftain, although being a native and leader of the hardy Marava community he was always prone to declare his independence. That is how the Nayak-Marava war during Thirumalai Nayak's reign began. It resulted in bringing the Setupati to his senses. But in the days of Kilavan Setupati, the Ramanathapuram state became practically independent. By the end of the 18th century, however, the status of the Setupati was reduced to that of a zamindar. After 1947 his position became purely formal. But in the heyday of his powers the Setupati was a despot in his own right. Theoretically the feudal subordinate status of the Setupati continued to be emphasised by the Nayak rulers of Madura.

He appointed, pronounced or dismissed, rewarded or punished all officers of state. Though usually succession was by male primogeniture, female succession was not ruled out. Some influential faction among the Maravas choosing a king of their choice in preference to the legitimate heir was not unknown either. Kilavan Setupati was an usurper but he ruled for long.

The *Dalavay*, the *Pradhani* and the *Rayasam* as in the case of the Nayak government were the three major officials of state. The *Dalavay* was minister [as well as general; the *pradhani* was the chief revenue officer and the *rayasam* was a sort of secretary. These officers carried out the orders of the Setupati rulers unless they were in a state of rebellion.

It was customary for the Setupatis to perform the Hiranyagarbha ceremony, an essentially vedic ritual. Tirumalai Raghunatha Setupati Katta Tevar performed this ceremony (1656). His title *Tirumalai* shows that it was usual for feudatories to assume their overlords' titles or names.

The state was divided into convenient regions over which governors were appointed to rule. The *Dalavay* supervised the activities of these governors. The revenue officer at the village level

was the ambalakaran; he also generally managed the affairs of the village. The Kavalkaran was the rural policeman; the palaiyagars within the jurisdiction of the Setupati did *desakkaval* work (i.e., guarding the realm). The police force which kept the high roads free of robbers was the *Pathaikkaval*.

Justice was rough but ready. It was arbitrary but immediate. There was no regulated hierarchy of judicial offices, though appeal lay always to the Setupati as the ultimate arbiter. Ordeals by oil, water and fire were commonly resorted to. In the last decades of the 18th century the Collector of Ramnad was invested with judicial powers which he was deprived of after 1802 when a district court was set up. Soon the district court was transferred to Madurai. In 1816 District Munsifs were appointed. In 1827 an auxiliary District Court was set up in Tirunelveli to exercise additional jurisdiction over Ramnad. In 1843 civil and sessions courts were set up to try petty offences. The Madras Civil Courts Act of 1873 set up the present judicial structure. Ramnad was constituted as a separate district in 1910 and had its own complement of district offices practically all of which were however housed in Madurai, for in the Ramnad district there was not a big enough town to accomodate these offices.

In the days of Udaiya Tevar (successor of Kilavan Setupati), the revenue system was somewhat organized. The state was divided into revenue divisions called *Mahanams* each of which was divided into Taluks. The revenue officials at taluk level were responsible directly to the Pradhani. The taluks were managed by tahsildars who were in charge of revenue collection. Land tax, of course, was the main source of revenue. Half the net produce seems to have been due to the king. Lands granted to temples, Brahmins and other religious institutions were given tax-free. With the creation of the Pudukkottai and Sivaganga chieftaincies, the revenue of Ramnad fell sharply. The unhappy state in which the Ramnad exchequer was found was perhaps not due to this fact but largely because of improvident habits of the zamindars and their indulgence

in expensive litigation. In 1803 the permanent revenue for the Ramnad Zamindari was fixed. "The right of the Zamindar was in reality nothing more than the right to collect from the cultivators that rent which custom has established as the right of government". This means that the collector had assumed the right to determine revenue which the Setupati had no right to change. The Zamindar was granted the right over waste lands. During the first half of the 19th century, the revenue from ryotwari lands amounted to Rs. 17 lakhs. The District consisted of the Zamindaris of Ramnad and Sivaganga from 1910 onwards. In 1948 the Madras Estates Abolition Act was passed and the Zamindari itself was abolished on payment of compensation. Fisheries and pearl fisheries had always been a fruitful source of revenue in the Ramnad country. There were a number of petty duties, customs, toll etc. which added to the revenue of the Setupati before the economy came to be controlled by the British.

The Setupati maintained an effective but ill-organised army of Maravars. The subordinate military chiefs who came to the aid of the king in times of military need were exempt from tribute. The army employed spies. Its performance judged by its struggles against Tanjore, Pudukkottai and Madura seems to have been quite good particularly because of the material qualities of the Marava soldiers.

D. The Palaiyagar System

This is a peculiar socio - economico - political system which prevailed in Tamilnad to the south of the Kaviri. This was introduced by Viswanatha Nayaka, the founder of the Madura Nayakship in collaboration with his able minister Ariyanatha Mudaliar. This was necessitated by the military exigencies which came in the wake of the conquest of Tamilnad by Kamara Kampana. The Nayak divided his realm into palaiyams (military stations or armed camps) and appointed palaiyagars to man them. One of the problems of the conqueror was to suitably reward the many military men who had helped him in the southern campaigns of Vijayanagar and crush local opposition to imperial expansion. They were rewarded with

these palaiyams; and being henchmen of the conqueror, they enjoyed a lot of freedom from royal control. It is said that this arrangement was made by Viswanatha Nayaka quite early in his reign and that he ruled for 26 years after this settlement. These palaiyams were held in military tenure and they were bound to go to the Nayak's aid when needed. It is usually believed that in all seventy two palaiyams were created but there is some difference of opinion on this i.e., as to the number; some hold that the number seventy two was fictitious nor was it fixed over the entire period of four centuries during which the system flourished. A number of these palaiyagars were expected to defend the Madura fortress when it was besieged. Many palaiyams lay scattered over the entire country from Travancore to Ramanathapuram. Both Tamils and Telugus were appointed chiefs to these palaiyams and Father Heras imagines that such a procedure was intended to bring about an integration between the conquerors and the subjects. But such an integration does not seem to have occurred as is evident from the mutual recriminations which prevailed among the palaiyagars in the last quarter of the 18th century. It may be reasonable to suppose they were so appointed to serve as a check on each other rather than to bring about a union among them.

The Palaiyagar system has been compared to the medieval European feudal system, because of certain obvious similarities. These similarities are not to be allowed to mislead one into supposing that they were exactly the same. Stubbs has described the medieval European feudal system "as a complete organization of society through the medium of land tenure, in which the king down to the lowest land owner are all bound together by the obligation of service and defence, the lord to protect his vassal, the vassal to do service to his lord, the defence and service being based on and regulated by the nature and extent of the land held by the one or the other. In those states which have reached the territorial stage of development the rights of defence and service are supplemented by the right of jurisdiction. The lord judges or defends his vassal; the vassal does suit as well as service to his lord.

In states in which feudal government has reached its utmost growth the political, financial, judicial, every branch of public administration is regulated as a mere shadow of a name'. Thus feudalism in medieval Europe was a combination of military and land tenure. The essence of that system was to combine the farm and agricultural field with the military and battlefield and make the services there and the loyalties to the overlord based on them an integrated socio-economic system.

Martin records in 1713: "Almost all the villages and lands of Marava are possessed by the richest in the country in return for a certain number of soldiers they have to furnish to the prince whenever he requires them. These lords keep their position at the prince's pleasure; their soldiers are their relatives, friends or slaves who cultivate the lands... and take to arms when required. In this way the Marava prince can collect even thirty or forty thousand men in less than eight days".

But in the Nayankara and Palaiyagar systems the entire land belonged to the king; the subordinate chieftains held their lands by his grace and permission. Speaking about the Palaiyagars in particular Caldwell said: "It can hardly be said that 'the idea of governing the country by means of an order of rude, rapacious, feudal nobles, such as the Palaiyagars generally were, turned out to be a happy one, for down to the period of their final subjection and submission to British authority in 1801, whenever they were not at war with the central authority they were at war with one another and it was rarely possible to collect tribute from them or revenue due to the central authority without a display of military force which added greatly both to the unpopularity and expense of the collection". T. V. Mahalingam thinks that the Palaiyagar system like the feudal system in Europe was a necessary evil which served its purposes well enough in those troubled times. But it was the direct product of the imperial system which the Vijayanagar conquerors introduced. The difference between the medieval European situation and the Palaiyagar situation in south Tamilnad mainly was that the former came in the wake of weakness of Empire and the

latter arose in the wake of the introduction of imperialism. The system in the Nayak-kingdom of Madura included a number of petty chiefs who were held in the capital city as hostages of the chieftains who ruled the Palaiyams.

It has been rightly observed by R. Sathyanatha Iyer that 'the Palaiyagar system was only 'confusion roughly organised'; its smooth working depended on an overlord who could constantly keep the turbulent chieftains in good humour and on the good sense of the latter. If it were to degenerate, as it did later on, it could be the most potent engine of disorder and oppression.'

In the 18th century a hierarchy among these Palaiyagars, based on caste and community, developed. The Setupati of Ramnad was considered to be the chief of the Palaiyagars; he had a superior position among them determined surely by his superior resources. This superior position was reflected in the court etiquette. It was an observed convention that "the Tondaiman of Pudukkottai, the Raja of Sivaganga (both of them created as independent chieftains by the Setupati), and the eighteen chiefs of the Tanjore country must stand before the Setupati with the palms of their hand joined together and stretched out towards 'the presence'. The chiefs of Tinnevely such as Kattabomma Nayaka of Panchalankurichi, Serumalai Nayaka of Kadalkudi, and the Tekkala Thottiyar being all of inferior caste should prostrate themselves full length before the Setupati and after rising must stand and not be seated. But the Sillavas and others of Ettaiyapuram and the Marava Chiefs of Vadagarai, Chokkampatti, Uthumalai, Settur, Sarandai and other tracts, and the Vannia chiefs of Sivagiri of seven thousand fields and of Dalavankottai - all these make no obeisance of any kind to the ruler of Ramnad."

The Palaiyagar system was undergoing changes all the time during the four centuries of its existence. By the middle of the 18th century, the chief Palaiyagars of Tinnevely and Ramnad knew

the prevailing confusion in the political condition and did not know to whom to pay their revenue ('kist' as it should be called but 'tribute' as it was called by many) and so stopped paying it to anyone. They created a fiction for themselves whereby they justified their non-payment of kist, i. e., they began spreading the impression that they never had paid 'kist' or 'tribute' to anyone before. This was not enough to convince the Nawab of Arcot that the Palaiyagars were not obliged to pay kist to him. The transfer of revenue collecting rights to the East India Company by the Nawab of the Carnatic led to the Palaiyagar wars, the details of which we have noted in an earlier chapter.

E. The East India Company: the first stage

The end of the 18th century saw the end of an era in the history of Tamilnad in more than one sense. The extinction of the native kingdoms and the consolidation of the Madras Presidency had nearly been achieved by them. What remained for the English rulers of the Tamil country now to do was to create a system of administration which could serve the entire vast region which was only a decade ago ruled by a number of rulers big and small. The revenue, the police, the judiciary, the military etc. were some of the departments of government which needed changes and modernisation. Another feature of the new age was that this administration was structured on a constitutional basis, which was itself evolving from time to time.

Fort St. George was the nucleus around which and the foundation on which the Madras administration was reared by the English. In 1642 it displaced Masulipatam as the chief settlement on the coromandel coast; till 1655 it remained subject to the authority of Bantam, but from that date it became independent. In 1656 the Madras council had decided to withdraw from Bengal completely but after Cromwell's charter, they changed their decision and in 1658 all the settlements in Bengal and on the Coromandel coast were made subordinate to Fort. St. George. During 1708-1744 there were twelve presidents of Fort St. George and of them two were

notable : Thomas Pitt and James Macrae. In 1681 the Bengal factories became independent of Madras. In 1688 a municipal government consisting of a mayor and twelve aldermen (three of them to be the servants of the company, three Portuguese and seven Indians) was set up at Madras. In 1726 a royal charter provided for the establishment of a mayor's court in the presidency towns to try civil actions.

In 1718 the relations between the governor and his council are clarified as follows : "The governor is entrusted by us, in the first place to see all our orders are obeyed; we appoint a Council to join with him therein, and to give their opinion each of them in all matters that come before them, the majority of votes are to determine every question". The governor was to carry out the orders of the Court of Directors; the council was not only to cooperate with him but be jointly and collectively responsible for this and other activities of the factory. Dissenting opinion was permitted to be recorded. The governor was *primus inter pares* and no chief : but this system of mutual check on each other by governor and council was not an unmixed blessing. Even the Regulating Act did not correct it fully.

It was easy to see that the English East India Company's policy in India was ambivalent till the days of Wellesley after which it was not any longer possible to take that attitude; for the responsibility for the conquered territories made them assume a sovereign position and behave not only like a trading company but like a political state. Even in 1687 they declared that "they were to establish such a politic of civil and military power, and create and secure such a large revenue as may be the foundation of a large well-grounded sure English Dominion in India for all time to come". This could well be compared with the policy of non-intervention enunciated as late as the days of Cornwallis. In 1714 the court wrote to the governor and council of Bengal : "We have always recommended to you to see justice administered impartially to all and speedily, to govern mildly and yet preserve authority".

In theory this was never changed : but in regard to justice (with the exception that certain differences were maintained in regard to the course of justice as applying to Europeans and as applying to Indians), at least all Indians were treated alike and the arbitrariness of pre-British native criminal jurisprudence and judicial practice was radically changed.

Constitutional Development

The government of Fort St. George consisted of a governor and a council of three senior merchants who were empowered to legislate but were subordinate to the governor-general-in-council at Fort William. Such was the position till 1833 when with a view to centralising all authority in the governor-general of India in council (as he was thereafter called), legislative powers were withdrawn and the Court of Directors got the powers to reduce or even abolish any provincial council. The Board of Directors reduced the councillors in Fort St. George to two, but added the commander-in-chief to it and made it three again. "In 1786, a Board of Trade and a Board of Revenue were established, each consisting of three members with a member of council as President". The Board of Trade looked after the commercial interests of the Company, and at that time also, the commercial interests of the Company, were more important to them than the political. But this was wound up in 1825 and merged in the Revenue Board. The Board of Revenue had certain judicial powers. By Regulation V/1804 it became a Court of Wards and had for many years control over religious and other endowments also. Until 1887, the United Board exercised general supervision over revenue matters. In that year the portfolio system was introduced, the number of members was raised to four; and the various branches of Revenue administration were distributed among them as commissioners.

The Collector-Magistrate who was also political agent and who was head of a number of smaller departments of activity was Chief of the District. He was first seen in 1787. He is still a potentate even when magisterial powers have largely been taken away

from him. He was a revenue judge, magistrate, with police powers. He was and is subject to the Revenue Board.

In 1792 the collectors got covenant assistants and territorial jurisdictions were assigned to these assistants and subordinate collectors in the form of Divisions. They function as the agents of the collectors. The taluks have always been under tahsildars and the arrangement predates the English administrative system. In the earlier period that was the highest position in the revenue hierarchy to which an Indian could aspire. It was only in 1857 (by the India Act I) that the post of Deputy Collectors was sanctioned: they were a sort of covenanted divisional officers.

A Supreme Court was established in 1801, but its jurisdiction was confined to Madras town. The administration in rest of the Presidency was conducted by the system introduced in 1802-06, and modified by the legislation of 1816. The reformers of 1816 simplified the legal procedure and allowed the local officials to manage their litigation. The collectors got magisterial powers and control over police. The central court for up-country purposes consisted of a body of Judges presided over by a member of council.

This tribunal was called *sadr adalat* on its civil side, and *sadr Faujdari adalat* on its criminal side. Below this body functioned four kinds of provincial courts dealing with most of the civil appeals and with suits over Rs. 5000.

These bodies, as courts of circuit managed the more important criminal litigation. In the District the principal civil judge was the zillah judge helped by assistant judges. The higher courts were all manned by European covenanted civilians. Below these judges, there were three categories of native judges: the *sadr amins* to whom suits upto Rs. 300/- might be referred, district munsifs who were authorised to deal with suits upto Rs. 200/- and village munsifs who could deal with cases not exceeding Rs. 10/- in value, or upto Rs. 100/- with the consent of the parties. Certain petty misdemeanors were punished by tahsildars and village headmen.

Till the Indian Penal Code came into force in 1862, the Muslim Criminal Law was followed.

The changes which occurred in the legal system were very far-reaching and they were spread over the 19th century. It began with the executive authority in the Presidency towns and its enactments were law; to begin with the Hindu and Muslim legal provisions were followed; to some extent the English Common Law and Equity jurisdiction also played a role. All these three sources of law were jointly operative. The king's courts exercised jurisdiction generally in the Presidency towns, while the Company's courts exercised jurisdiction over the dependent territories. The king's court favoured also personal jurisdiction over British-born subjects; and in some cases over Indians too. So the situation of different persons being tried by different courts adopting different laws prevailed. Hence a reform of the judicial system was required. So it was decided to end double legislative authority; and to vest all law-making powers in the hands of the governors-general in Council. The powers of legislation, amendment, revocation etc. given to the governor-general-in-council were far-reaching and heavy. A law member was therefore added to the governor-general's council. Macaulay was the first law member to be appointed in 1834. He realised the need for codification of Indian laws. He drafted the Penal Code which was enacted in 1861 after some amendment was made and improvements were effected.

The Regulating Act made the governor-general of Bengal superior in authority to the governor-in-council of Madras. Originally it was felt that the governor-general of Bengal was to have only the superintendence, direction and control over the governors. "In 1813 each of the three Presidencies enjoyed equal legislative powers; though the governor-general had a legal right to veto the legislation of the subordinate governments, it had in fact been little exercised."

Almost at the same time, i. e., in 1813, Lord Grenville had declared that "the British Crown is *de facto* sovereign in India... ..

that sovereignty which we hesitate to assert but necessity compels us to exercise". This meant that the British had decided on exercising sovereignty here. In 1813 the Charter Act was renewed for an additional period of 20 years; the ideas expressed in 1813 were the basis on which 1833 and 1853 revisions were made. With 1813 began a systematic attempt to improve the administration in India. In 1833 Macaulay said "We are trying to give a good government to a people to whom we cannot give a free government". Whatever may be said about the good government, it was certain that 'free government' was certainly denied.

The Presidency was divided into districts : at its largest it consisted of 26 districts; but Tamilnad alone had only Madras, Chingleput, North Arcot, South Arcot, Tanjore, Tiruchy, Salem, Coimbatore, Nilgiris, Madurai, Tirunelveli and Ramnad. Ramnad and Madura, though separate districts had their administrative headquarters in Madura. Chingleput had its headquarters in Saidapet, North Arcot in Vellore, South Arcot in Cuddalore and the Nilgiris in Ootacamund. For a short period Tanjore was divided into West and East Tanjore, later again combined into Tanjore as a single administrative unit. After Kerala partition in 1956 (by the recommendation of the States Reorganization Commission) Nagercoil became the headquarters of the Kanyakumari district. The districts were divided into taluks on an average of ten.

Till the end of the 17th century the executive and legislative powers of the Company were decided by the Crown rather than the Parliament; but in the 18th century the Parliament asserted its authority to guide and control the prerogative of the Crown in matters relating to the Company. The enquiries into the conduct of Clive, and Hastings in India whetted parliamentary interest in Indian affairs. Before the Regulating Act was passed in 1773, the government of the Company was carried on at home by a governor, a committee of 24 and the general court, consisting of subscribers to the Company's stock i. e., its ordinary members. The English settlement in Madras, like Bombay and Calcutta, was governed by a President or Governor and a Council consisting of senior merchants

Towards the close of the 17th century the home authorities consisted of a committee called the Court of Directors and the Old General Court called the Court of Proprietors. The Court of Directors, consisting of 24 members elected annually, practically managed all the affairs of the Company, and the Court of Proprietors possessed the power of over-ruling the proceedings of the Directors. Practically three-fourth of the 18th century, Madras, again like Bombay and Calcutta was independent of the other settlements in India and was responsible only to the home government of the Company. By the end of this period the government of the Presidency was conducted by a governor and a Council of twelve members and by the vote of the majority.

The extreme corruption in which the Company's officials indulged in India, a procedure which was very popular among them and was popularly known as 'shaking the pagoda tree' and the growth of a class of persons called the 'Nabobs' (i. e., Anglo-Indians who returned rich to England), made the Parliament in England wish to reorganize the Company's government in India. To this end the *Regulating Act* was passed in 1773. This Act made changes of a far-reaching nature in the Company's government at home and in India. In the Court of Proprietors, voting power was confined to holders of £1000 worth of stock, of a year's standing; the tenure of office of the members of the Court of Directors was extended to four years, and one fourth of them were to retire annually. Bengal got an executive government consisting of the governor-general of Fort William and a council of four members, the former having a casting vote in case of a tie. Decisions were to be by majority vote. The Act itself named the governor-general and the members. Warren Hastings was the governor-general. The governor-general-in-council was made supreme over the other Presidencies in matters of war and peace, except in emergencies or on receipt of special orders from home. The royal charter of 1774 established the Supreme Court which was independent of the governor-general-in-council and which exercised jurisdiction over all British subjects. A criticism regarding

the limitations imposed upon the subordinate Presidencies was that these limitations were so qualified as to leave the other Presidencies exactly where they were before. Many of the defects of the Regulating Act were corrected by the later Acts of 1781, 1784 and 1786. The Regulating Act made it obligatory for the charter to be renewed every twenty years and accordingly it was renewed in 1793, 1813, 1833 and 1853. Since the Parliament took over from the East India Company in 1858, there was no charter to be renewed. We shall see the changes brought about by these renewed charters particularly in so far as they had any bearing on the English government of Madras.

The charter Act of 1793 was easily passed by Parliament. Thereby the powers of the governor-general to control the affairs of Madras and Bombay were extended; the governor of Madras (like the governor of Bombay) was empowered to overrule his Council. The presence of the governor-general in Madras superseded the governor whose powers were automatically assumed by the former. The Company's monopoly of trade was renewed for twenty years more. The Parliament refused to accept the suggestions of William Wilberforce that English Christian Missionaries and teachers be allowed to do voluntary work in India. It is clear that the English Parliament at the end of the 18th century thought that such activities as might be indulged in by the Missionaries might be prejudicial to the English trading and political powers in India.

The Charter Act of 1813 extended the Company's charter for a further period of twenty years; the trade of which the Company had a total monopoly was now thrown open to all British subjects, except in the case of tea and of China trade. This Act permitted the restricted admission of Missionaries to India. The need for modernization of Indian education was recognized and a lakh of rupees was ear marked for promoting scientific knowledge in India. For the first time provision was made for the education and training of the Company's servants before entering service, and it was laid down that the Company's writers should have attended the college at Aailey-bury, England.

The Charter Act of August, 1833 came in the wake of the Parliamentary Reform Act of 1832. It abolished the Company's monopoly of trade altogether, and upheld the principle of free trade. The governor-general of Fort William was now styled 'the governor-general of India' and the Act thus took one more step towards the principle of paramountcy. The governor-general was also governor of Bengal and his control over Madras became more effective. The council of the governor-general now included an additional member called the 'Law Member'. From 1773 to 1833 three presidency executives legislated separately and their laws came to be known as the Regulations of Madras, Bengal and Bombay. This system was abolished in 1833; legislative power was now concentrated in the hands of the governor-general of India in Council. The intention was to codify Indian laws with 'due regard to the rights, feelings and peculiar usages of the people'. The legislative enactments thereafter were to be called Acts and not merely Regulations. A significant passage in the Charter Act lays down a principle which knocked out much of the old Indian faith in the operation of inequality in public services: "No native of the said territories, nor any natural-born subject of His Majesty resident therein shall by reason only of his religion, place of birth, descent, colour or any of them disabled from holding any place, office or employment under the said Company". Further it was stated: "It is recognised as an indisputable principle that the interests of the Native subjects are to be consulted in preference to those of Europeans whenever the two come in competition". This is a remarkable statement which drew from Ramsay Muir the rhetorical question; "Is there any parallel in history to this declaration of a ruling race in regard to its recently conquered subjects?" That this commendable principle was not fully practised at any time during the stay of the British in this country, does not however diminish the validity of this question. By this Act, Lord T. B. Macaulay, the great Whig, was appointed the first Law Member (1834-38).

This Act completed the process of the subordination of Madras (and Bombay) to the governor-general-in-council.

Macaulay, besides his many other acts of reform, introduced a great measure of liberalism in the working of the government. He produced the Indian Penal Code and the Criminal Procedure Code. He was primarily responsible for the introduction of the Rule of law in India. He fought against privilege, patronage and corruption. An Act of 1836 took away the privilege of a British litigant to appeal to the Supreme Court in cases where Indians could appeal only to the *Sadr Diwani Adalat* and everyone was brought under the jurisdiction of the Company's civil courts. This somewhat anticipated the provisions of the Ilbert Bill (1884) which never materialised. By this Act the number of ordinary members of the Council in Madras was reduced from three to two.

The Charter Act of 1853 was the last Charter Act. This Act created a lieutenant governorship of Bengal to look after the administration of that Presidency and made the governor-general of India equally superior to the three Presidencies. Dalhousie thus became the first governor-general of India in the true sense of the term. According to the Act the Company's powers were to continue 'until Parliament should otherwise direct'; and Parliament did otherwise direct even in 1858, abolishing the Company's authority altogether. By this Act, the number of Directors of the Company was reduced from 24 to 18, of whom 6 were to be nominated by the Crown. Recruitment to the Company's covenanted service was to be by competition. The Legislative Council of the governor-general was to consist of 12 members. An official from Madras represented his Presidency on this legislative council and he drew a salary of 5000/- *per annum*. At first the legislative council discussed the propriety of the actions of the Executive as in a modern legislature; in 1861, however, this provision was withdrawn and its activities were restricted to mere legislation.

The Indian Mutiny of 1857 provoked the British Parliament to think of abolishing the Company and taking over the government of India. The Company whose trading monopoly had already been removed had only its political functions to perform; and so if ever these were taken over by the parliament, John Company would

literally expire. Parliament under Palmerston, the Whig Prime Minister, intended to help it do so. John Stuart Mill drafted the petition which the East India Company presented to the Parliament to reverse this intention. But it was of no use. Palmerston said that the decision was prompted by the feeling that double government was always an evil and that it was necessary that Parliament should directly be responsible for the government instead of their indirectly directing it and then holding the Company responsible for any ills that might follow.

Consequently the *Government of India Act of August 1858* was passed. By the time this Act was finally introduced and passed, Palmerston's ministry had fallen and the Conservative Ministry of Derby and Disraeli had taken over. This Act abolished the Court of Directors and the Board of Directors and their powers were transferred to the Secretary of State for India. The secretary was to be paid out of Indian Revenues, he was to be advised by a Council of 15 members during good behaviour, later their tenure was fixed at 10 years. He could overrule his council in all matters except financial ones. During emergencies he could take unilateral action. The 'Double government' established by *Pitt's India Act of 1784* was ended by the Crown; Parliament assumed the constitutional responsibility for that government. The necessary ancillary laws were passed in 1861. The New Act came into effect from 1st November, 1858. Canning who was till then governor-general of India became also the Viceroy of India. Lord Harris was then the Governor of Madras.

The Queen of England made a Proclamation in 1858 which has since become famous as *the Queen's Proclamation*. It was addressed to the chiefs, princes and the people of India. The Proclamation made it clear that the British had no further territorial ambitions in India. The Queen said, "We disclaim alike the right and the desire to impose our convictions on any of our subjects. We declare it to be our royal will and pleasure that none be in any wise favoured, none molested or disquieted, by reason of their religious faith or observances, but that all shall alike enjoy the equal and impartial

protection of the law; we do strictly charge and enjoin all those who may be in authority under us that they abstain from all interference with the religious belief or worship of any of our subjects It is our further will that, so far as may be, our subjects of whatever race or creed, be freely and impartially admitted to office in our service, the duties of which they may be qualified by their education, ability and integrity duly to discharge.....we will do that generally, in framing and administering the law, due regard be paid to the ancient rights, usages and customs of India". The Proclamation ended with the words "In their (our subjects') prosperity will be our strength, in their contentment our security, and in their gratitude our best reward". Some of these noble sentiments had been anticipated by the Charter Act of 1833.

Between 1858 and 1919 when the first major breakthrough in constitutional development occurred, there were four Council Acts which were all so called because they did no more than alter the composition of the governor-general's council: they were passed in 1861, 1874, 1892 and 1909.

The Act of 1861 provided for a decentralised legislature, the subordinate legislatures were recreated in Madras and Bombay. This was merely a resolution of the legislative powers which they had enjoyed before 1833. The Governor-General's executive council was enlarged into a Central Legislative Council - six to twelve additional members were to be nominated by the Governor-General and of them not less than half were to be 'non-officials', meaning persons who were not in the employ of the Crown. This Legislative Council was to make laws for the whole of British India; the Bills passed by the Legislative Council became Acts only on their receiving the assent of the governor-general and the approval of the Crown. This pattern of law-making by the Governor-General-in-Council continued till 1919. Indian High Courts Act of 1816 combined the supreme and *sadr* courts and a High Court came into existence in Madras (as in Calcutta and in Bombay) with a Chief Justice and not more than 15 judges.

The Indian Councils Act of 1874 added a sixth member (in-charge of Public Works) to the governor-general's Council.

The Indian Councils Act of 1892 increased the number of 'Additional Members' for Indian Legislation, who were to be not less than ten and not more than sixteen; it increased the proportion of non officials – six officials to ten non-officials. The number in Madras was more than doubled. Of the ten non-official members of the Imperial Council four were to be chosen by the non-official additional members of the councils in Madras, Bombay, Bengal and the North Western Provinces and Oudh. For the Madras Council the method of selection varied; the city nominated a member; there were representatives of District Boards and smaller Municipal Boards met in electoral colleges to select their nominees. Though there were improvements on the position as it prevailed in 1861, the elective principle had not been explicitly accepted.

The Indian Councils Act, 1909, known as the Morley-Minto reforms, increased the number of 'additional members' of the Imperial Legislative Council to a maximum of 60 and fixed the number of elected members at 27 and of the 33 nominated members not more than 28 were to be officials. This was the first time the elective principle was overtly recognized. For the first time also, it introduced the principle of communal representation in the interests of the Muslims. The Muslims were recognized as the major minority community which felt the need for separate representation. Discussion of the budget was permitted; the division of the house on important resolution was also allowed. The Provincial (i. e., Madras and Bombay) Legislative Councils (of the governors) were also enlarged to have four members, of whom one was to be an Indian.

The next important constitutional change came in 1919 with the *Government of India Act, 1919*. This was preceded by a declaration in August 1917 by Montagu, the Secretary of State for India to the effect that "The policy of His Majesty's government with which the government of India are in complete accord, is that of the

increasing association of Indians in every branch of the administration and the gradual development of self-governing institutions with a view to the progressive realisation of responsible government in India as an integral part of the British Empire. Montagu toured India during 1917-18 and the joint Report on Indian Constitutional Reforms known as the Montford Report was published in April 1918. Then statutory committees helped in the collection of evidence which went into the government of India Act of 1919. The preamble to this Act declared that it was the policy of the government to Indianise the administrative services and the progressive introduction of responsible government within the British Empire.

The Act consisted of five parts, each one dealing with a different fact of the constitution : The first part dealt with the provincial government. It divides the provincial subjects into 'reserved' and 'transferred', creates ministers who are to be appointed by the Governor from the members of the Legislative Council, to be in charge of the transferred subjects like local self-government, Public health, Education, Public Works etc. This system was to be followed in what were called the 'governor's provinces' i.e., Madras, Bengal, Bombay etc; The governor's Executive Council which was to consist of two to four members was to be in charge of Reserved subjects - Police, Revenue etc. The Legislative Council was to consist of the members of the Executive Council and members elected or nominated for three years. It was to be presided over by an elected President. The budget was to be submitted to the vote of the legislature. But final powers were concentrated in the governor's hands. If the Council rejected or refused to admit a bill, he could certify it as essential for the discharge of his responsibility. Even in regard to transferred subjects, he could differ from his ministers 'when he had sufficient reason for doing so'. There was a majority of elected members in the legislature. Communal representation which was provided for the Muslims in 1909 was now extended to Indian Christians and others. It was made a convention that half the number of Executive Councilors were to be Indians.

Part II dealing with the government of India created a bi-cameral legislature. The legislative Assembly was to last for three years and consist of at least 140 members, provided that at least 5/7 of the total were non-officials. The Council of States (the Upper House) was to last for 5 years and to consist of 60 members with an elected majority. Here again, the powers of the legislature were curtailed by the powers of certification granted to the Viceroy.

Part III related to the Secretary of State and his Council. His salary and the expenses of his office were to be paid out of British revenues thereafter, and not Indian revenues as heretofore. The office of the High Commissioner for India was created. Part IV provided for the civil services and for the creation of a Public Service Commission. Part V said that 'at the expiration of ten years after the passing of this Act', a statutory commission was to be appointed to enquire into the working of the constitution established by this Act and to report whether responsible government was to be extended or abridged. The constitution was inaugurated by H. R. H. the Duke of Connaught who simultaneously inaugurated the Chamber of Princes also.

Madras worked the dyarchy scheme contemplated in this Act. Since the Congress party refused to enter the councils till 1925, the Justice party worked it. The Justice party's main preoccupation was to remove Brahmins from positions of authority and influence and to seek safeguards for non-Brahmin interests and to this end they cooperated with the British. During 1917-1925 the right of the Dominions (in the British Empire) and India to an adequate voice in imperial foreign relations was recognised and during 1922-23, V. S. Srinivasa Sastri visited other parts of the Empire as India's representative.

According to the Government of India Act (1919) the statutory commission was to be appointed only in 1929, but that provision was amended and the Sir John Simon Commission was appointed in 1927 consisting of seven British M. Ps. The commission submitted its report in 1930, and it recommended the introduction of full responsible government in the provinces while retaining the

powers of the Viceroy in the centre. The Round Table Conferences which followed led to the passing of the *Government of India Act of 1935*.

This Act contemplated a federal government with division of powers between federal and provincial authorities, and a federal court. These powers given to the provinces were different from those enjoyed by the states in Canada and Australia. The Native States were given the option either to join or not the federation; finally they decided not to. The creation of the federal court did not do away with the appellate jurisdiction of the Privy Council. The structure of this Act provided the basis for the constitution of India (Act) of 1950. Madras was one of the four major provinces and was to send 20 members to the Council of States (the Central Upper House). Madras was to elect 37 members to the lower house of the central legislature called the Federal Assembly which was to sit for 5 years.

Responsible government was introduced in the provinces by this Act. In fact the Act was implemented only partially i. e., in regard to the provinces only since the native states refused to join the federation.

In the Province of Madras, there was to be a nominated Governor, and a bicameral legislature. The Governor was given special powers in respect of law and order; otherwise he was to be guided by the Council of Ministers, the chief among whom was called the Chief Minister. The Legislative Council (the upper house) sat permanently, one-third of the members retiring every three years. There were 56 members in the Upper House in Madras of whom 35 were general, 7 Muslims, 1 European, 3 Indian-Christians and 10 nominated by the Governor. The Madras Legislative Assembly consisted of 215 members i. e., 215 general, backward areas and tribes 1, Muslims 28, Anglo-Indians 2, Europeans 3, Indian Christians 8, Commerce and Industry 6, Landholders 6, Universities 1, Labour 6, Women 8. Franchise was on the basis of property and educational qualifications. Fourteen percent of the population was enfranchised by this Act,

Since it was an Act establishing a Federation, there was division of powers between the centre and the states. Three lists recorded the federal, provincial and concurrent powers. The Provincial list consisted of law and order, justice, police, prisons, local government, public health, education, agriculture, forests, land revenue etc. The Federal Court had appellate jurisdiction over the High Courts in the provinces. This Act also reduced the authority of the Secretary of State for India.

Madras was one of the few states to work this Act with great distinction under the distinguished leadership of C. Rajagopalachariar. In 1939 the Congress Ministry in Madras resigned and there was a period of constitutional stagnation. The Governor and his official advisers ran the administration.

The Indian Independence Act of 1947 led to the grant of Independence to India from which Pakistan was first partitioned. The last Viceroy Lord Mountbatten continued till June 21, 1948 as the last Governor-General also. When he laid down office, C. Rajagopalachariar from Madras became the first and only Indian Governor-General of the Dominion of India. He held office till January 1950 when the New Constitution of Republican India was introduced. The first cabinet of Jawaharlal Nehru included Sri R. K. Shanmugam Chetty as its Finance Minister.

The constitution of 1950 left the province of Madras more or less where it was under the 1935 constitution. The bicameral legislature continued; the franchise became universal. The provincial list was there but the Union government enjoyed preponderant rights. The Governor nominated by the President of India enjoyed prerogatives reminiscent of British days and owed allegiance to the President of India instead of to the Viceroy. This Constitution changed from time to time by a number of amendments controls the political status and activities of Madras which virtually became Tamilnad after 1956 by the recommendation of the States Reorganization Committee.

Administrative Changes

We shall notice briefly the major changes in administration which affected the pattern of public life in Tamilnad during the late 18th, the 19th and the first half of the 20th centuries. Uniformisation of law and centralisation of the administration (not only in theory but largely in practice too) were two cardinal features of the British rule in India. One of the first concerns of the British in India after they assumed government of vast stretches of territory here, was to organize revenue of which land revenue was naturally the most considerable part. Before the days of Warren Hastings in the disturbed areas of Bengal and the Carnatic no one settled land revenue; none tried to collect it either. In the days of Sir John Shore the first attempt was made to invest the Collector with the duties not only of collecting revenue but of settling its terms. When the Committee of Revenue was converted into the Board of Revenue, the latter institution came into being. The Permanent land settlement effected by Cornwallis in 1793 was a product of this first attempt at 'a sound and just administration of the land Revenue'.

In Madras the political condition remained unsettled till 1801. So attempts at land settlement and Revenue fixation had to wait till the days of Sir Thomas Munro. The experiment in Tamilnad took a turn away from the Bengal experiment with Permanent Settlement. The village system and the ryotwari system took root in Madras. The police and judicial organizations though of ancient origin in Tamilnad needed reform. The kaval system was as despotic as the monarch itself and since it wielded power to physically harass people tended naturally to become corrupt. It had to be hedged in by checks and counter checks and sufficient supervision to make it an instrument of popular welfare. The Judicial system was a native Hindu system in Tanjore and a native Muslim system in Arcot. In the initial stages the English government adopted the native judicial system taking care to exempt Europeans from the jurisdictions of these courts. Partial exemption continued till the days of the Ilbert Bill. The institution of Revenue Boards and the

District collectorates streamlined the Revenue settlement and collection procedure. The local government at District, Taluk, Firka and Town administration levels was properly institutionalised during Ripon's Viceroyalty. Transport was modernised in the days of Dalhousie when the Railways, Telegraphs and Cheap Postage created a veritable revolution in the country. The Banking system was slowly but steadily organized till the Federal Bank and later the Reserve Bank were set up. The Secretariat at Central and State levels became a perfected bureaucracy; the covenanted civil service and then the Indian Civil Service, the Provincial Civil Service and the Subordinate Civil Service completed the steelframe of administration. The army got its own bureaucratic support and its recruitment, pay and allowances, retirement etc. came to be well settled. These changes introduced an unprecedented revolution in administration. But the growth of the press, and later the platform introduced till then unknown channels of public opinion which began to place misbehaving government on the defensive so that very often the government was compelled to impose severe censorship on the press. The nearly one hundred and fifty years of British rule in India from Warren Hastings to Lord Mountbatten witnessed a steady modernisation of administration.

The Cornwallis Code (of procedure) insisted on efficiency in the entire field of administration, judicial, police, commercial and fiscal. It introduced the principle of separation of powers, i.e., judicial from revenue. The rule of law, unknown to India earlier, was introduced though in its incipient stage. But all this applied only to the English officers at the top and not to the low-paid underlings down below. He did not contemplate the use of Indian talent for government; so the Corruption and the oppression which Robert Clive 25 years earlier tried to remove, still continued.

The last decades of the 18th century witnessed what is known as the 'double government' in the Carnatic. The government was that of Muhammad Ali Wallaja, Nawab of the Carnatic, it was technically and legally so. But since the Nawab was greatly indebted (financially obligated) to the Company's servants, and for his secu-

rity on the Company's armed forces which often had to fight his battles, the latter gained an upper hand and ran the administration for him; won the battles he could not fight, and collected the revenues he could not collect. This gave the Nawab security without fear and the Company power without responsibility: A state of affairs much worse than what prevailed in Bengal under what is called the Dual government. Dodwell spoke exclusively from the English point of view when he said: "The Dual system could be tolerated at Madras; in Bengal it could not be".

Cornwallis laid the foundation for prior training to civilian officers coming to serve India. Wellesley created the College of Fort William in Calcutta with a similar idea in 1800 but it was later (in 1802) abolished at the instance of the Board of Directors.

In 1800 the *Sadr Diwani Adalat* was reformed by investing it with the judicial powers which were taken away from the Governor-General. The legislation of 1861 created a High Court which superseded the Supreme Court and the courts of *Sadr* and *Faujdari Adalat*, and became a Court of Appeal etc. for the whole Presidency. The penal and civil procedure codes were also passed in 1861. The Muslim Criminal Law was abolished. By 1873 the District and Sessions Courts, the Sub-Courts and the District Munsif's Courts (with their jurisdiction up to Rs. 2000) were established. The settlement department and revenue affairs came under the Board of Revenue.

Wellesley was opposed to the freedom of the press on which he clamped a censorship; but the press was then in its incipient stage and in Tamilnad there was no press at all then.

Barlow was Governor of Madras late in 1807. In 1809 he ordered a reduction in the expenses of the army and following a recommendation of the Directors he abolished the tent contract which secured to the military officers a fixed monthly allowance for providing soldiers with camp equipage, whether they were in camp or not. This was a perquisite the officers cherished highly and they protested against its withdrawal. Barlow took stern measures against

the show resistance; and suspended some officers. The military officers' mutiny broke out in July 1809. This was firmly put down, but led to Barlow's recall in 1813. Another mutiny on the part of the European soldiers occurred in 1858 when their services were transferred from the East India Company to the Crown in Parliament.

In Madras reforms in administration began only in the days of Sir Thomas Munro who was Governor of Madras from 1820 to 1827. He toured extensively on horse back to know the country personally. He tried to revive the Panchayat System but did not succeed. In 1822 he bestowed much attention on the improvement of education in the state. He was of the view: "Whatever expense government may incur in the education of the people will be amply repaid by the improvement of the country". He believed in the progressive Indianisation of the services. His greatest reform however related to the land settlement known as the Ryotwari settlement. The Collector-Magistrate was again coming up relaxing the strict separation of revenue and judicial powers introduced by Cornwallis.

The Public Works Department started with the Engineering branch of the Military Board established in 1786; but the collector in the early stages looked after irrigation works. A maramat (repair) department was started in 1819 under an Inspector-General of Civil Estimates, whose office was later taken over by the Board of Revenue in 1825. It was only in 1858 that the new P. W. D. came into existence in its present form. In 1882, the responsibility for minor irrigation works belonged again to the Revenue officers.

Under Lord Hastings the Cornwallis Code was further improved. The police system of Bengal was introduced in all the British territory. Hastings supported the view that educating the Indians in modern knowledge was a prime responsibility of the government. He said; "It would be treason against British sentiment to imagine that ever could be the principle of this government to perpetuate ignorance in order to secure paltry and dishonest

advantages over the blindness of the multitude''. He encouraged also the founding of schools teaching in Indian languages. Hastings abolished (1819) the censorship on the press imposed earlier in 1799. But at that time Madras was not affected either by the imposition or its later abolition. In Calcutta and in Bombay, however daily newspapers like the *Samachar Darpan* and the *Bombay Samachar* appeared in 1818 and 1822 respectively.

Lord Hardinge (1844-48) was besides being a Governor-General, a great soldier. He was the person responsible for introducing the Enfield rifle in 1853, which became so important in the context of 1857. He reintroduced flogging as punishment in the army.

The Kavalgar system was abused by the Kaval itself which encouraged theft and shared the proceeds with the thieves, a system which did not completely die out even after the police took over.

Munro introduced a police system by Regulations IX and XI of 1816. The Collector-Magistrate was appointed controller of the police. The tahsildar was basically the collector's agent for police-duty. The torture commission of 1855 revealed abuses in police methods which have not greatly changed even now when third degree methods were not unknown and some police lock-ups tend to become torture chambers. The torture commission found torture 'a time-honoured institution'. People spoke of the Police as 'the bane and the pest of society.' Later the administration of the Police department was taken away from the Collector and vested in the Inspector-General of Police and his hierarchy. The village *talaiyari* continued. District Superintendents of Police originally were only Europeans. The system has been changed but not very much improved and certainly not perfected.

It is wrong for Butterworth to say that jails were not known to pre-British times. The *Sirachalai* and *Karagraham* were well known. In early British times in jails prisoners were flogged too frequently and too severely for breach of discipline. The administration was corrupt.

In 1855 an Inspector-General of Jails was created. In 1885 civilians came to be appointed as superintendents of jails. This was later changed to non-professional superintendents. As early as 1838 Macaulay had advised the building of Jails but it was not done till 1857. After 1864 jails came to be built in proper manner with ventilation etc.

The British claim to rule this country was entirely based on conquest. At no time did they import into this country sufficient European troops to be able numerically to overwhelm the native forces. They relied on their superior armament, disciplined organization and above all the recruitment of considerable numbers of Indian mercenaries and they persuaded them to fight their brethren here. In Madras also the British had to manage a caste-ridden army but not as much as in Bengal. In Madras all communities were recruited and they dined together but perhaps uneasily as distinct from the Bengal experience where the Brahmins socially kept aloof. Brahmin dominance in the army was suspected to have led to mutinies and revolts, since they came from the literate communities. In Madras "the object was to maintain a due proportion so that no single caste could predominate over another".

It was Major Lawrence who first introduced an organization to the Anglo-Indian army which he led. In 1759 he created the basis of the modern Indian army by dividing the armed forces into battalions and companies; he came to be called the 'father of the Indian army'. From then on the armies of the three factories (Bengal, Madras and Bombay) developed on independent lines. Lawrence also created the Madras European regiment and enlisted 2000 sepoys 'at first scarcely better disciplined than common peons' who were organized in independent companies. In the Madras area the wars with Mysore lasting for nearly quarter of a century led to great increase in the armies; thus came to be formed what are known as the Carnatic battalions.

Dalhousie's governor-generalship was, not excluding that of Curzon, the most epoch-making in the history of modern India.

The introduction of Railways, the Telegraphs and the Cheap Postage transformed the face of the country. In Madras the first railway line was laid from Madras to Arkonam in 1856. This was only 31 years after the first railway in the world was laid in England i. e., in 1825. The Railways were in the hands of private companies over which the government exercised some control. The Telegraphs were to play a significant and decisive role in the early stages of the Mutiny in forewarning Lawrence in the Punjab. Between 1853 and 1856 nearly 4000 miles of telegraph connected Calcutta with Madras, Bombay and Peshawar. The Cheap Postal System introduced in 1850 substituted stamps for cash and laid down uniform postage charge irrespective of distance. This too was introduced only ten years after a similar system had been introduced in England by Roland Hill. These measures bound the country together in a way unprecedented in the history of India, the social changes which came in the wake of these innovations were incalculable in their influence.

The development of Madras Presidency before the Mutiny (1857) was different from the chaotic condition in which the administration in the Gangetic Valley found itself. So it was one of the reasons for the comparative, nay, absolute calm which prevailed in Madras at that time. The consequences of the White Mutiny of 1859 were however felt all over India, since it involved changes in the army administration. An important change in military administration was made in 1893 by the abolition of the office of commander-in-chief in Madras (as also in Bombay) and the army being brought under a single commander-in-chief of India.

In the 1920s of the present century the government of India was concerned with the welfare of Indian labourers settled in South Africa. Most of the persons had migrated from South India and particularly Tamilnad. In 1927 the Hertog-Habibullah or the Cape Town Agreement was reached. In the same year Rt. Hon'ble V. S. Srinivasa Sastri was appointed the first Agent-General of India in South Africa where the Durban College was founded and named after Mr. Sastri.

The public service commission, competitive examinations and interviews for selection of persons for public services, the bureaucratisation of the service added to the strengthening of the permanent civil service. With the coming in of Dyarchy Ministers responsible to legislatures began to head the administration. The introduction of the communal G. Os. for the regulation of recruitment to public services had its socio-administrative impact on public affairs in the Tamil country.

The Economy

The general economy of Tamilnad has always been determined by the occurrence or absence of rainfall which in its turn is conditioned by the monsoon. Unregulated flow of water in rivers could damage crops, the storms for which the Carnatic coast is notorious and which are caused by depressions in the Bay of Bengal are a periodical menace to standing crops and dwelling houses in the coastal districts. The idea of damming the rivers and constructing irrigation channels has been as old as agriculture, especially in the Kaviri delta region, from Karikalan to C. P. Ramaswami Iyer through Chikkanna Udayar, hydraulic engineering to control river waters has been resorted to and with varying successes. The Kaviri still was the deciding factor in the economic prosperity of Tamilnad.

Martin in a letter written in 1713 said: "In 1709 drought and extraordinary that produced a great scarcity..... when there is abundant rain, rice and other provisions are very cheap; one *fanam* will procure up to 8 marakkals or large measures of very fine husked rice, which is sufficient to feed a man for more than 15 days. But when there is lack of rain, it becomes so dear that I have seen the price of one of these measures of rice mount up to four *fanams*' i.e., price rose by 32 times.

Certain land measures and grain measures find mention in the records. In 1561, grant of one *ma* of land (and the appointment

of a Superintendent of a temple by the king Kulasekhara Deva Ativirarama Pandya) is heard of; in 1538 Sriganu Udayar granted to Avinasilingam treasury half a *veli* of land (and dug a tank called Sellenga Samudram). *Ma* and *veli* have been land measures in the Tamil country from Sangam times to our own. In 1551 in an inscription of Visvanatha Nayaka, also we hear of 'remission of taxes on certain lands, charging only one *Kani* per *ma* of land'. *Salagai* is a grain measure even as *padakai* and *padi* are other such measure. An inscription of 1676 mentioning one Ranganatha Setti endowing one *salagai* of paddy land (meaning land enough to produce one *salagai* of paddy) belongs to the reign of Chikkadeva. In enumerating taxes in the reign of Visvanatha Nayaka it is said that each marriage party was to give one *padakai* of grain and two *fanams* to the god. In Inscription 521/1916 relating to 1648, the practice of distributing twelve *padis* (measures) of cooked rice to mendicants is mentioned. Warehouses or 'godowns' for the storing of grains find mention in an inscription of 1475, where 'a gift by purchase of some godowns by a certain Nagama Nayaka in Chidambaram is spoken of'.

It seems to have been customary for the king, in Nayak times to levy a brokerage from the servants employed in temples. An inscription of 1610 mentions Virappa Nayaka exempting the Mudaliar servants of the Chokkanathaswami temple in Madura from the payment of brokerage. In Nayak times we find mention of a variety of taxes. Foundation and gifts of whole villages were not unknown, even, by private persons. The Vyasaraya Matha inscription of 1707 'registers the grant of certain taxes on the imports, exports etc. of the kingdom of Vijaya Raghunatha Setupati Katta Tevar of Ramnad' to the agent of the matha at Rameswaram. An inscription of 1560 mentions the gifts of taxes on looms by the Nayak of Madurai for the merit of the Vijayanagar king. Tax on *kaikolans* and other weavers finds frequent mention. An inscription of 1848 (in the days of Nagama Nayaka) speaks of $1/4$ *panam* per month per loom. A tax on weavers being gifted to the temple by one Bommu Naicken, the agent of Nagama Nayaka is mentioned in a Tindivanam inscription of 1604. The professional classes were all taxed. *Jodi* and *Viradam* were other taxes often mentioned. Remission

of *Jodi* on the village of Nochchiyam, remission of *Jodi* and *viradam* of 38 villages of the temple in Bhuvanagiri Pattana Simai in 1582, indicate a well established system of agricultural finance and remission of taxes whenever desired. In 1551 in the reign of Visvanatha Nayaka in Madura, the subjects in a number of villages surrounding Seranmadevi abandoned the *devadanas* and the *brahmadeyas* and left. The king then remitted all taxes including *ulavu* (plough) and *pandaravadai*. Certain taxes 'levied on tenants residing at the eastern corner of Pudukkulam' were granted to the temple for the merit of Tirumalai Nayaka and of Vaidyappayyan, Ramappayyan and Krishnappayyan in 1638.

The taxes were collected by an agency which used harsh and even brutal methods which occasionally led even to fatal consequences. According to an inscription of 1710 relating to the reign of Vijayaranga Chokkanatha Nayaka of Madura a temple servant fell from the top of the temple gopura as a protest against undue collection of tax from four tax-free villages; upon which the state officials yielded. Certain taxes on land in the Nanjil Nadu were remitted for 13 years by the ruler of Travancore, owing to the advent of the Nayaka's armed forces (1697). Remission of taxes on four villages was granted to the bearers of Chokkanatha idol during procession (1712). Similarly remission of taxes on other occasions like failure of crop must have been a royal prerogative too. One of the important sources of revenue to the Pandyan king and the Setupati was the pearl fishery. "All the pearls which are fished the first day belong either to the king of Madura or the prince of Marava according to the road where the fishing is then carried on".

Whatever the economic condition of the land, it seems to have been populous, at least in highly urbanised centres like the capital cities and important ports, to have been a strain on the economy. In 1700, Tuticorin had a population of 50000 inhabitants; if so, Madura the capital city could certainly have had a population of 100,000. In the mid-eighteenth century, Pondicherry which was then supposed to be a very flourishing town and had a population of 40000. If the countryside in normal times had the same proportion

to the towns in population as it has now, (leaving a margin for the attractions of the modern industrial town) it may be supposed that in the 18th century Tamilnad had a population of fifteen millions. From 1802 to 1956 Tamilnad with a territorial extent of 140000 square miles had sustained a population which had grown from fifteen millions to forty millions. The economy had roughly adjusted itself to this growing demand on it largely because of the establishment of central government whose overall resources were also growing enormously.

Lack of proper road system and the contiguity of residential areas with jungles, especially in the Madura territory led to the prevalence of a curious menace to public safety. Father Martin wrote in 1700 "The tigers have made a surprising havoc on the whole coast this year. Besides the cattle ... alone seventy persons have disappeared". The land was infested with robbers and wild animals; Tirumalai Nayaka in fact made a grant as reward for slaying these brutes; the Jesuits mention 'wolves, bears, tigers as freely roaming about in the immediate neighbourhood of Madura' rendering travel hazardous and therefore infrequent. An inscription of 1654 mentions Tirumalai Nayaka's grant to Sri Ranga Nayaka, the Lord of Vellikkurichi as reward for his services in slaying tigers.

Famines were a constant phenomenon in India as a whole and Tamilnad has had its full share of the scourge. From the Sangam age downwards we have mention of number of famines. Famines in the second, seventh, eleventh etc. centuries are fairly well known, and we also know that there were no organized efforts, governmental or private, to combat this. Certainly there was no effort to discover academically the causes of famines and devise permanent measures for preventing them or to overcome them when they occurred. During the first half of the 19th century, when Indian wars had not become modern, the British took no steps to tackle this problem. As C. C. Davies says, "It can be safely affirmed that amid the wars and financial difficulties attending the establishment of British power the claims of famine relief attracted small attention. Although relief works were first opened by the Madras

government as early as 1792, the modern idea that famine relief is the responsibility of the State was not recognized until India passed under the Crown (1858)".

A Jesuit letter of November 1622 refers to the severe famine which had raged in Madurai for some years, so much so that nobody paid any attention to bury the victims of the scourge and the dead bodies were placed on the banks of the rivers and carried away by the waters in the rainy season". Proenza wrote in 1665, advertng to the Muslim invasions of Tiruchy: "The commotions and devastations of the war would necessarily lead to famine; it was severe in all this country, the inhabitants retired to the Provinces of Madura and Satyamangalam where the ravages were less terrible. The Muhammadans were the cause of this scourge; they were the first victims of it. The famine removed their men and horses in such large numbers that not having time to bury or burn them they piled up the dead bodies in the fields". The Madras famine of 1782 was the result of Haider's depredations. The 1876-78 famine 'surpassed all previous calamities of that sort'. Nearly people on 200000 square miles of territory were affected. In Madras State alone four million people died and it cost the state 80 million rupees. The population remained nearly static during 1871-1881. A system of importation of foodgrains, distribution of free food and the famine code followed.

The famine commission of 1867 laid the foundation of a humane policy. The idea of famine insurance originated with Sir John Strachey who made the suggestion in 1874. During the 1876-81 famine in Madras the reduced ration (known as the Sir Richard Temple ration) was first adopted but later given up as insufficient. In 1898 another famine commission was appointed; this was again followed by a commission in 1901. The latter recommended 'an efficient system of intelligence in order to obtain early estimates of the anticipated crop failures'. So far as Tamilnad is concerned, famine is potentially perpetual for at any time the monsoon might fail. The construction of dams can help in conserving and distributing water and possibly avoid wastage. But that

presumes the existence of water which might be nullified by continuous failure of rain.

The river water disputes among the neighbouring states are not entirely contemporary phenomena. They could be traced back to Chikka Deva Raya's dam on the Kaviri in 1701 directing the river waters to Mysore fields and depriving Tamilnad of the much needed Kaviri water.

The advent of the English on the Tamilnad scene produced curiously enough two opposite results. In the first place the trade which the European merchants carried on here was high profit motivated and so did work against the local traders. But this is somewhat offset by the trade potential in Tamilnad. The introduction of cheap mill-made goods in the local market did deprive the local manufacturer in the literal sense of the word, (e. g., [the hand-loom worker] of his means of livelihood; but the ruinous effect was not as total as is some times imagined; for the import of foreign manufactured goods did not reach the villages which had the major part of the region's population. In Tamilnad the English East India Company gave loans to and invested capital in supplying looms to weavers for increased production of cloth for which Madras was then famous and which was one of the reasons why they set up a factory in Madras, and in Cuddalore, and the French set up their factory in Pondicherry; so that they could buy from here and sell in their home market. In such a case the indigenous trade and skills instead of being destroyed was encouraged. A new class of merchant intermediaries flourished in the process. If the international trade of buying in India and selling in Europe had been operated by Indian master merchants or kings or companies chartered by them, the profits which the foreign companies made here would have been made by Tamilian traders and the prosperity of Tamilnad increased. This is what the Tamil merchants of the Sangam age did; hence the prosperity of those times. The failure to do so resulted in the foreign merchants prospering here. The representatives of British authority in India did not all of them hold the view that India should remain a source of mercantile profit for the English. The Conservative Ministry urged

Lord Northbrook to remove the 5% duty on imports of Manchester cotton goods; he maintained that in the interests of Indian finance the duty should not be abolished and that it would be wrong to create the impression that 'Indian interests were being subordinated to those of Manchester'.

During the British rule also land tax was the chief source of revenue, till later the income-tax became its main competitor. There were two kinds of taxes at the opening of the 19th century: 1. The Mohatarfa or tax on trades and occupations; 2. Abkari or tax on intoxicating liquor and drugs and toddy. Mohatarfa was abolished after the Mutiny. Monopoly in sale of tobacco was abolished in 1852.

Licence fee for plying a trade behield etc. was instituted in 1861 by the Licence Tax Act. The Profession tax levied by municipalities is a survival of the Mohatarfa.

In pre-British times, the salt tax was a share in the salt output. The East India Company established a monopoly, controlled by the Board of Revenue. This position was somewhat changed by the Excise Act (VI of 1871) by which manufacture of salt was permitted under licence. Private salt manufacture (i e., without licence) was made an offence in 1878. The commissioner of salt relieved the Collector of these duties. 'Since 1882 the rate of duty on salt was determined by the government of India for the whole country'.

The period between 1800 and 1860 may be considered a period of the worst experience for Tamilnad of the colonial trading policies of the English. For that was a period during which native skills, crafts and manufactures were being substituted by foreign ones and that too in the shape of finished products. The native manufacturer lost his profession without acquiring Western skills. From the second half of the 19th century onwards, the impact of the industrial revolution in the West began to produce results. The Railways and other quickened modes of transport diversified trade in terms of wider distribution. The increase in local demand of modern types

of finished products ultimately led to the setting up of local industries. The same could be said of the rural policy of the early English administrators like Sir Thomas Munro. The Ryotwari system did produce a lot of suffering and economic ill-consequences; but it took time for the intermediary rent-collecting zamindar to have been abolished. Further, India was not a capitalistic country: the British system of capitalism was attempted to be introduced and this brought about great changes in the socio-economic policy.

At the beginning of the 19th century, i. e., even in 1818, the zamindari system obtained in Salem, Chingleput etc. village leases in the north and south Arcot Districts, Tiruchy, Tirunelveli and Tanjore; and ryotwari prevailed in Coimbatore, Madura and Dindigul. The Zamindari system was not a success even in the old Palaiyagar areas; it was never dominant in the Tamil areas of the Madras Presidency. In other parts of the Presidency, particularly the Telugu areas, it continued and Thomas Munro considered the question of Zamindari rights and the rights of the ryots in great detail. indebtedness of the ryots became as much a problem as the indebtedness of the Zamindars: in the latter case the estates were placed under the Court of Wards as happened in Ramnad often due to succession disputes. The Mirasi system continued in Chingleput and Tanjore. But so far as Tamilnad was concerned, Ryotwari was the dominant land revenue policy. This settlement affected petty land-holders whose holdings did not exceed 6½ acres. The Registered occupier (owning a patta and entered as pattadar in the Revenue Settlement Registers) was free to alienate, encumber and divide his land at his pleasure; he could not be ousted unless he failed to pay assessment; if he so failed, his land might be attached and sold to the extent necessary to clear the debt. This system was originally introduced by Read and later enlarged widely and introduced by Munro. But till past 1830, the lands had not been surveyed and till full survey was over the system could not be satisfactorily implemented. The share of the government in the land yield was to be according to Munro 1/3 and 2/3 respectively; and paid in cash or kind (i. e., the produce). But a collusion between

the village officers and the ryots could defraud the state of its proper share. It was quite possible for more than one of these systems to prevail in the same area or district at the same time.

By 1875, the ryotwari settlement had reached a stage at which 'subject to the payment of a stated proportion of the produce..... the proprietary right of the ryot in the soil of his holding is absolute and complete'.

The Cambridge History of India estimates: "In 1855, the assesment amounted to $\frac{1}{2}$ the gross produce on wet land and $\frac{1}{3}$ on dry, but in 1912 it was reckoned that the government was getting less than $\frac{1}{10}$ of the gross produce".

From 1830 for a period of 20 years agricultural prices were falling and so the economic condition of the ryots deteriorated. The question of revenue remissions was gone into and remission was not encouraged because they tended to become mere charity; so alteration of assessment account to suit crop and cultivation conditions was substituted therefore.

It was only after 1855 that the government proposed to carry out a professional field survey of the presidency for purposes of assessment. In 1864, it was decided that the State's share should be limited to half the net value of the crop. The period of each Settlement was fixed at 30 years. In 1855 it was pointed out during the previous 34 years there had been no extension of cultivation; only less then half the registered arable land was under the plough.

The survey department originated in 1800 and was confined to topographical survey in 1818. In 1886, it became a government of India affair, and the Madras Department of survey was taken over by the Board of Revenue in 1903.

In ancient and medieval Tamilnad, Inams were granted for Brahmins and other services people, which entitled them to collect the usufructs and the produce of land either in perpetuity or for specified periods. In the chaotic 18th century when political

conditions were greatly disturbed, many inams were fraudulently granted to non-title holders and many village officers transferred lands to themselves as Inam, and original title deeds in many cases were lost. These led to gross loss of revenue to government, and when the government tried to look into titles and cancel obviously unauthorised inam grants, there was resistance; e.g., Narasimha Reddy of the Andhra Palaiyagars in the Ceded Districts who started a revolt was captured and hanged. The Inams question thus became delicate and the government appointed a commission in 1859 to go into the whole question.

In ryotwari assessment the land was mainly divided into 'wet' and 'dry'; there was a third category 'the garden'. But on the whole it was only 'wet' and 'non-wet'.

The irrigation was mostly by tanks, small and large: the whole of them were pre-British. The Upper and the Lower Anaikkats on the Kaviri and the Coleroon were the major irrigation projects begun in 1836: they provided irrigation for nearly a million acres. 'The Periyar work is remarkable, not for the acreage served, but for difficulties overcome in carrying out its bold conception. The idea received the approval of 'twelve intelligent men' deputed in 1798 by a Raja of Ramnad, was condemned later, was received in the sixties and transformed into action in 1884; the dam 176 feet high was finished only in 1895. Mention should be made of the most spectacular achievement in the field of construction of dams across rivers in Tamilnad. It was the Mettur Dam. It controls the headwaters of the Kaviri and is, given rains, the most beneficent project for Tanjore, the granary of Tamilnad. The idea was conceived and the project drawn up by the masterful Sir C. P. Ramaswami Iyer who was then (the early twenties of this century) the Executive Councillor on the Governor's Council. Numerous other projects like the Pykara hydro-electric project (begun in 1933), the Vaigai dam etc. have followed and added to the agricultural productivity of Tamilnad.

Rent collecting agency underwent a great change from the 18th to the 19th century. The Palaiyagars were only the agents of the Nawab of Arcot for collection of revenue on which they took a

commission and for preserving peace with the help of the kaval on which also they got a commission but in practice they were semi-independent 'collecting on their behalf and disgorging only under compulsions'. When the Palaiyams were converted into Zamindari or otherwise, these two functions were taken over by the British government.

The socio-economic reforms introduced through legislation in the 90s of the 19th century included the Factory Act of 1891 which was an advance on a Factory Act of 1881; this Act dealt with the labour of children, adults and women. The age of consent was raised in 1891 from 10 to 12. During the 20s and 30s of this century many more such Acts were passed of which mention should be made of the Indian Trade Union Act (1926), the Mines Act (1935) and Workers' Compensation Act (1923) and the Employment of Children Act (1938); the Fundamental Rights enumerated in the Indian Constitution and the Directive Principles of State Policy mentioned therein have opened up a new way of life for the economically weaker sections of society in India.

Society

The Tamil society which evolved but very slowly from pre-Sangam times to the 17th century managed to retain many of its traditional cultural traits fairly intact. Its communal ramifications and the inter-communal dissensions not infrequently descending to the level of violent feuds reached the end of doctrinal developments in religion and philosophy by that time. The chaos of the 18th century the chief feature of which was perpetual warfare all over the region left no room for any profitable social activity. Arts and letters, too, had become stereotyped. The literature which grew during this period saw brilliant patches of conventional poetry under the aegis of the monasteries, Saivite and Vaishnavite. Tamil scholars flourished in the Marava Court in Ramnad while Sanskrit scholarship was patronized by the Maratha rulers of Tanjore, whose encouragement to the art of music was also commendable.

The caste system was intact; but this had never meant that each community minded only the profession theoretically assigned to it; though its practical status in the social hierarchy was determined by such ascription. The number of sub-castes and communities was all the time growing by a process described well by anthropologists like Hutton and reached dimensions one finds in Thurston. The Brahmin perched theoretically at the head of the social system was priest, warrior, government scribe, minister, land-holder and many other things besides; he was as much respected and admired

as he was despised and feared, all along. The conservatism of this community is well described by Abbe Dubois. The upper caste non-Brahmins like Mudalis, Chettis and Pillais were merchants and dubashis providing a link between foreign traders and the local market in the 18th and early 19th centuries. The 'untouchables' were very much there confined to their segregated quarters and treated with an indifference which has remained a major blot on this society. They minded manual work in the agricultural fields and were butchers and did scavenging and other kinds of low labour. The inscriptions of the 17th and 18th centuries relating to the Nayak and Maratha periods give us some glimpses of the activities and condition of some communities in the Tamil Country then. An inscription of 1648 speaks of *Paradesis* (wandering mendicants) being provided free food in Madura. One Subbiah Bhagavathar wished to build a free feeding house and for that purpose Mangammal of Madura made a gift of the required piece of land (1701). In 1727 a grant was made to a *sudra* priest for worship and services at a *Durga* temple at the southern gate of the Tiruchy Fort. This shows the prevalence of a non-Brahmin priestly community. A similar grant had been made earlier in 1648 also. In 1574 a grant to Muslims in Goripalayam, Madura of lands for obviously religious purposes was made. The tradition was continued in the early 18th century by Nayak rulers especially Mangammal and Vijayaranga Chokkanatha. Minakshi granted land to a mosque (1733); six years later one Kamakshi Nayaka granted lands to a Muslim for maintaining a mosque (*pallivasal*). These instances show Hindu charity to Muslim causes, the existence of non-Brahmin priesthood, the practice of public charity as a concern of royalty, and absence of discrimination in regard to charity among different sections of the public on grounds of community or religion.

Changes were occurring in the composition of Tamil society during 16th, 17th and 18th centuries. This was partly due to the influx of Marathis into the Carnatic and partly due to the establishment of the Nawabi of the Carnatic and to some extent the

European merchant settlements on the Coromandel Coast. The first of these led to immigration of the ruling community of Marathi non-Brahmins followed by a crowd of Marathi Brahmins who settled in the Arcot Districts and Tanjore mostly. The prevalence of Desastha Brahmins in such large number in British government service in the 19th century is accounted for by this event. The Muslim concentration in North Arcot Dt., in Tiruchy, Madura etc. is accounted for by the second historical event mentioned above. The rise not only of Indian Christians a community which was going to play an important role in 20th century politics in Tamilnad but also of Anglo-Indians the only community with English as their mother-tongue was facilitated by the European Christian Missionaries and the factors in the trading settlements on the east coast respectively. The settlement of Saurashtras in Madura by Mangammal's fiat has been noticed earlier. The influx of a number of Telugu speaking Palaiyagars, especially into the Madura country had begun earlier than at the beginning of the period under present review, so that, the Tamil society accounted for a number of Telugu, Marathi, Urdu and English speaking communities studded all over the place. Thus it was that Reddiars, Rajas, Naickers, Najdus, Chettis who spoke Telugu, Saurashtras who spoke a corrupt Gujarati, the English speaking planters in the Nilgris etc. could all play a significant part in the politics of Tamilnad.

Tamil society has always been a conservative society albeit radical postures which stray individuals might strike this conservatism, part of which was obstinate and obscurantist, earned for the region the peculiar appellation 'benighted'. The transformation which came over this people during the 18th and 19th centuries may be noticed in brief below; but before then a summary account of the social condition in the immediately preceding era may also be noticed. Much of what is said below, though written with reference to particular regions will apply largely to the whole of Tamilnad.

During the period of the Nayaks of Madura, the caste system continued in all its medieval rigour. The Brahmin played a great role as minister and commander-in-chief, Ramappayyan being the

most important example. The temple was a focal point in Hindu social life. Proselytisation by the Christians met with success in the midst of general persecution and occasional tolerance. Tirumalai Nayaka enforced orthodoxy and prohibited free social mingling among the five *Kammala* communities. Mangammal reversed this policy and gave a grant for the settlement of the Saurashtras in Madura (1705) and allowed them to follow Brahmanical rites. Generally the Nayak rulers were very orthodox in their social policy. Higher Education, (meaning Vedic studies and higher scientific studies) was restricted to Brahmins; the rest collected what learning they could through the traditional schools; and craft skills were inherited ones imparted and improved in the domestic set-up. It is reported that in Madura in Nayak times there were nearly 10000 students engaged in learning. This seems to be a somewhat exaggerated number since, even if we suppose the then population of Madura to be 100000, it would work out to one in ten of the population being at school.

For much of our information regarding the religious condition of Madura then, we have to depend on the Jesuit letters which throw a flood of welcome light on the social condition of Tamilnad in general during those centuries. The religious exercises of Vijayaraghava Nayaka of Tanjore are described in detail by them. It is known that he performed the *Tulabhara* and *Hiranyagarbha* ceremonies. Devotees of Siva wore the *lingam* around their neck. Fortune tellers who invoked the names of 'Kumara' and 'Valli' plied a profitable trade; the worship of Garuda, the Brahman kite was common then as now. The Mahamaham festival at Kumbakonam which occurs once in twelve years and where devotees go to bathe in the sacred tank in Kumbakonam is described in detail in a letter by Britto dated 1683.

Vico's letter of 1620 mentions a convention which expected everyone to be attached to a single woman and to observe conjugal fidelity. Adultery was severely punished. Vico viciously observes that 'chastity was a virtue much more admired than practised by the Indians'. The *Devadasis* or the dancing girls attached to the

temple of Madura were 'unfortunate creatures dedicated to the shame of the most beastly passions'. But some dancing girls who had received high education became worthy scholars. About divorce, which was permissible among certain communities, it is said that a man dismissed his wife by giving her some money and calling her his sister. Manly women though employed usefully were treated as if they had lost caste.

The royal harem was a vast establishment. Concubinage was prevalent among the people, particularly the nobility and the well-to-do. "The inhabitants of those places (i. e., on the Coromandel Coast) make but little account of their wives, but generally keep two or three harlots, by whom they have sometimes sixteen or eighteen children The Nayak (of Madura) to secure himself of the fidelity of his governors, detains always their wives and children in a certain castle..... about seven leagues from Madura, under the guard of 300 eunuchs; neither are the husbands permitted to see them without peculiar licence from the Nayak, and are obliged to depart again in two or three days. Some to avoid this inconvenience content themselves with harlots."

Adverting to Criminal law, D. C. Nobili in his letter of 1609 says: "It is a crime for Brahmins to *write* the (sacred) lawbut my master has conquered his scruples on this point..... He wrote for we all the laws; but this must be done very secretly; if the Brahmins came to know of it, the least punishment would be to pluck out his eyes." If stolen property was not recovered by the guards responsible for its safety, they must make good the loss. It was treated as a great crime to destroy the house of a penitent Brahmin. Betrayal of the *guru* was also regarded as a crime. In the discovery and proof of crime, ordeals were used.

Among the numerous castes and communities which one finds mentioned, the left hand and the right hand communities have defied identification. Blood feuds among the different communities also were common. The weavers, the hunters and the 'robbers' (Kallars) were frequently engaged in such feuds.

According to the Jesuits Indians attached great value to the pomp of funeral ceremonies; women wept for the death of their husbands and relations in a most noisy manner. The practice of casting horoscopes for children is also mentioned.

The Jesuit references are important as much for the information they convey as for the quaintness of their style.

Information about community organization and the conflicts arising among them is available in inscriptions as well as foreign notices. In an inscription of 1482 in Tittagudi, a dispute between two factions which lasted for several years being settled by Nagama Nayaka's agents is mentioned. In another inscription of 1546 the following is stated: "In the presence of Visvanatha Naicker the best skilled in putting down disputes, Tinnappa Naicker the king's agent settled some disputes between the two sections of the inhabitants of Kodagai". The following caste names are heard of even in the 17th century: Murthy *Chettiar* (1600), *Ambalakaran* (1650), Sankara *gurukkal* of the Maratha *gurukkal* assembly (1659); carpenters and blacksmiths are spoken of in an inscription of 1558. In 1623 Muthu Virappa Nayaka issued a writ prohibiting intermingling of the five subdivisions of the *Kammala* (artisan) community. This was enforced by the priest. This was an order typical of those times; and it proves that the government was interested in preventing social integration and it was not at the instance of the Brahmanical hierarchy.

Typically Brahmanical gotras, like the Kashyapa gotra, were assumed by Visvanatha Nayaka and other non-Brahmins showing a tendency among the non-Brahmins to imitate Brahmanical practices. The nine day festival conducted in honour of Durga known as the Navaratri was celebrated with great eclat in the days of Tirumalai Setupati Katta Tevar of Ramnad.

We get the following information from an inscription of 1719; An agreement was drawn up by eight merchants of the village of Batlagundu belonging to eight castes (ten classes of people) as the Goundan, Komutti, Muhammadan (!) etc. whereby they promised to give a share of their gains annually to the village temple.

The Setupati government of Ramnad was famous for charity, as it was located at the doorstep of one of the most reputed religious centres in Tamilnad, Rameswaram, a great pilgrim centre. The middle and late part of the 18th century saw the Setupatis spending lavishly in constructing a number of choultries and renovating temples (rather than building new ones) and providing for Brahmins. Persecution of the Christians, with rare exceptions, was the order. It is an anachronism and rationalisation to say that the Setupatis persecuted the proselytising missionaries because they identified them with the British and the Portuguese who were thought to be here to conquer all India politically. The objection frankly was to their religion which openly criticised Hindu religious practices especially polytheism. The former attitude is taken by certain adventurous historians to suggest that there was a nationalist feeling in those times and that the Setupatis like other Hindu rulers were tolerant in religious matters.

The Maratha rulers of Tanjore provide instances of political behaviour and socio-religious attitudes natural to the age in which they flourished.

Before 1781, i.e., before Haidar's invasion, Tanjore was supposed to contain 100000 inhabitants, according to Fullarton¹. The Brahmin and caste dominance in that society was such that even such a placid missionary like Schwartz found it difficult to convert the Tanjoreans to Christianity; the Brahmins had a big hold on Serfoji II, Schwartz's own pupil. Such was the conservatism of the people at large, due largely to the comparatively easy life made possible by nature's bounty, a condition not quite suited for radical progress and aggravated by royal munificence. Christian Missions were established early in Negapatam, Tranquebar and Pondicherry. Lockman, in his *Travels of Jesuits* says "The king's council consisted of Brahmins and they egged on the king to persecute the Christians". There was certainly some undeniable persecution of the Christians in the days of Tuljaji. The Portuguese were the first to

1 *A View of English Interests in India*, p. 84

2 Vol. I, p. 421.

set up a church in Mylapore, 'Meliapur' as they called it, and Negapatam. Their commercial influence began even in the days of Sevvappa Nayaka 1532). In 1620 Raghunatha Nayaka allowed the Danes to found a settlement in Tranquebar. But it was only in 1706 that they began spreading the gospel. King Frederick IV of Denmark sent the German Protestant pastors to spread it here and they founded the first Protestant Mission (at Tranquebar) in India. One of the pastors Ziegenbel learned Tamil very well and even prepared a Tamil dictionary.

Frederick Schwartz, the German, was a famous Missionary attached to this centre. He was in the Tranquebar Mission for 11 years; later he founded the Trichy Mission. In 1769 he came to Tanjore and met Tuljaji. Schwartz knew Persian, Urdu and Marathi. He could not convert Tuljaji because of Brahmanical counter-influence. Schwartz had great influence with the Company in Fort St. George. Sir Thomas Rumbold, Governor of Madras sent him in 1779 to Haider Ali to patch up their relations³. Schwartz gives the following opinion of Haider: "Though Hyder sometimes rewards his servants, the main spring of action here is terror. Everyone performs his part from a fear, well knowing the consequences of any neglect of duty. Persons of the highest as well as the meanest conditions are punished with the same treatment. The tyrant keeps 200 men with whips in constant readiness and no day passes without many being chastised". Schwartz was made guardian-tutor of Serfoji II by Tuljaji in 1787, in his deathbed. The Missionary pleaded with the Madras government for the recognition of Serfoji's claims to the throne as against those of Amar Singh. Serfoji was grateful to Schwartz who taught him English and good manners. The royal ward by nature was of peaceful nature and gentle. Schwartz died at Tanjore on 13th February 1798 to everyone's sorrow. There are marble statues of Serfoji II and of Schwartz in the Marathi palace in Tanjore.

Shahji changed the name of Tiruvisainallur to Shahjirajapuram and settled there the families of a group of 46 Brahmin

3 Pearson: Memoirs of Schwartz Vol. I p. 315

scholars. They were one of the greatest concentrations of Sanskrit and particularly Vedic scholarship. During Maratha times many Agraharams were created and inams granted to please the Brahmins. They built many choultries, and to some they attached patasalas. In Tanjore District alone they endowed 16 choultries of which Sarabhoji's at Orathanad, called Muthamma Chattiram was the largest and most richly endowed. Muthamma was one of his concubines.

Pratap Singh welcomed to Kumbakonam the Sankaracharya of Kamakoti Peetha from Udayarpalayam where he had taken refuge from Kanchi, due to Muslim attacks. Since then it became the headquarters of the Acharya.

Tukkoji was a great lover of music and he wrote the *Sangita Saranvita*. During Serfoji II's time Thyagaraja, Muthuswami Dikshitar and Syama Sastri the great trinity of Music composers lived. But there is no proof that Thyagaraja knew that king personally. Adiappayya was a great name in the field of Carnatic music. He adorned the court of Tuljaji. His disciples were Ganam Krishna Iyer and Syama Sastri. Pallavi Gopala Iyer, another great name in that tradition lived in the days of Amar Singh. Serfoji II built the Sangita Mahal or the Music Hall where concerts were held.

The kings maintained large harems as a rule. Venkaji had two wives and three concubines; Serfoji I three wives; and Tukkoji five wives and six concubines; Tuljaji had five wives. Serfoji II and after him Sivaji recruited liberally to the harem for which new attractive names like Mangala Vilas and Kalyana Mahal were given. Serfoji II made minor repairs to the Brihadeesvarar temple especially to the Ganesa shrine. No new temples were built. The Minaret of the miniature castle built in 1814 to commemorate the fall of Napoleon (the inscription there speaks of 1814 as the date of Napoleon's fall; so it must have been the exit to Elba that was meant and not Waterloo); the light house at Negapatam, the beacon column Pt. Calimere belong to Serfoji's period.

Medical science and medical service received much attention at the hands of the Maratha rulers. Tuljaji was the author of

Dhanvantri Vilas, Dhanvantri Saranidleni etc , it is quite possible that these works were fathered on them by their learned proteges.

Education especially Sanskrit was confined mostly to Brahmins; Telugu was somewhat patronised. Tamil the language of the masses was forced to fend for itself. The Saraswathi Mahal Library which was added to greatly and put into final shape by Serfoji II during his visit to Benaras (1820-30) is a good and famous collection. Schwartz introduced English schools in the Ramnad and Tanjore areas and for the first time in the late 18th century the window to the west was thrown open to the Tamils. The first provincial school that was started in Ramnad by Schwartz became so popular that even the Setupati and his ministers sent their children to the school.

Slavery was not an unknown institution in Tamilnad. The East India company indulged in slave trade. They bought them in Africa and employed them in their factories and settlements. They were shipped from Madagascar to Madras where "they were bought at 20 sh. a head and the surgeon 5 sh. a head for any slave delivered alive". A committee was appointed to devise measures for their proper employment. The treatment of the slaves was in practice inhuman though tolerable in theory. Those who dealt in slave trade were told: "Remember that they are men and women, though slaves, and therefore are to be used humanely ... and not treated as bad as or worse than brutes". By 1877 slavery was dying out except as bonded labour. The India Act V of 1843 declared that 'rights arising out of slavery were not to be espoused by the courts'. The 1833 Act required the Governor-General to consider acts to abolish slavery; it was however to proceed cautiously. Caution in reform was a hallmark even after the days of Bentinck.

Sati was always an all-India institution. In Tamilnad, royalty and nobility practised it. The Brahmins and the common folk, if at all, practised it rarely. Proenza in a letter dated 1659 says that 'the most distinguished among the 200 wives of Tirumalai Nayaka were burnt on his funeral pile'. Martin in a letter of 1718 says that 'it was in 1710 that the prince of Marava died aged more than eighty. His wives numbering about 47 were burned on this pyre'. In both cases

'were burnt' is the expression - implying compulsion. Muthammas' was a voluntary case. Mangammal's was a case of evasion. The government of Madras legislated against sati, though it was never widespread there, by the Madras Regulation of 1830. Female infanticide, the inhuman practice of human sacrifice etc. though not very prevalent in Tamilnad came to be banned by central legislation. Sati however was committed by the numerous wives of Sivaji II, the last Maratha ruler of Tanjore. The law in this case did not take its course.

In religious matters before 1858 the government of Madras identified itself with the policy of the Missionaries. In the early days of the Company, the Directors had expressed 'a desire to endeavour the advance and spreading of the gospel in India'. But the governors in Madras, as in Calcutta and in Bombay, had no inclination to do missionary work. The Missionaries who got free passage from Europe to India and back did this work. The Danish Missionaries in Tranquebar were noted for their good social work. Christian Schwartz was employed by Sir Thomas Rumbold on a secret mission of peace to Haider Ali in 1779 and he accepted afterwards a chaplaincy, continuing all his Missionary activities. A monument was erected after his death (in Tanjore) in the Fort St. George Church at Madras at the expense of the Company; it testifies that for fifty years he went about 'doing good', and that 'in him religion appeared not with a graceful form and placid dignity'. The Vellore Mutiny (1806) had nothing directly to do with Missionary activity, though reports were spread about the British government's intention to convert all Indians to Christianity.

In 1833 the Board of Control ordered the Governor-General to introduce reforms like: (1) abolition of pilgrim tax; (2) prohibition of employment of government servants in collecting funds for religious purposes or receiving remuneration from such sources; (3) the withdrawal of the police from festival duty etc. They spoke of 'a state of real neutrality from which we ought never to have departed'; a precursor of the neutrality envisaged in the Queen's Proclamation of 1858. There was some delay in the implementation

of the directive, but it was soon made effective. But the administration of religious endowments was interwoven with the Revenue system of the country and could not be shaken off till 1863 when government servants were relieved of all connections with religion or charitable institutions; but this came back later as the Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowment Board which continues even in the secular India of 1951.

The total policy of non-association with native institutions affected also questions like abolition of slavery which was overdue. The treatment of slaves, domestic and agricultural varied in different parts of the country. Britain abolished slave trade in 1807. In 1789 Cornwallis prohibited export of children for slavery. In 1811 import of slaves was forbidden. In 1832 the purchase and sale of slaves was made a penal offence. The Charter Act of 1833 required this provision to be implemented firmly. The India Act V of 1843 prohibited the legal recognition of slavery. The Indian Penal Code (1860) listed slavery as a penal offence. The entire process of the abolition of slavery went smoothly off and no one in India resisted it. Infanticide as a religious practice was not very much in vogue in Tamilnad; though female infanticide for economic reasons was not unknown in interior villages. Regulation VI of 1802 prohibited child sacrifice and treated it as murder.

In Madras between 1770 and 1780 sati was not attempted to be punished. In the early days the British authorities in Calcutta felt that its prohibition might make it more resistant and draw protests from Hindus; there was shudder bolt at the rite and at wounding the susceptibilities of the orthodox. But in the days of Bentinck it took the shape of official and legal prohibition. Abolition of sati was followed by remonstrance; the Privy Council stood firm and upheld the law. The law was overtly violated for some time. Then resistance died out. In the 20th century Rajaji and Vaidhyanatha Iyer of Madurai were examples of reforming Brahmins in Tamilnad reminiscent of the great Bengali Brahmin Ram Mohan Roy.

In the matter of socio-religious reform during the 19th century there was none in Tamilnad who spoke for a modern

approach to social ethics. Sainly persons like Ramalinga Swami were traditionalists who continued the mystic teachings of earlier saints. Social reform preachers of the stature of Virasalingam Pantulu also were not to be seen. Ramana Maharishi of Tiruvannamalai was the spokesman of a more orthodox vedantic tradition and he did not misinterpret ancient Indian scripture to secure Western acceptance.

Hindu intra-sectarian quarrels related to rituals and formalities associated with worship in temples; on occasion, they were not unwilling to call in the British Magistrate to arbitrate or to seek clarification of Hindu scripture by the law lords of the Privy Council. Nadar-Marava and similar inter-communal struggles were as old as the society and were more of the nature of tribal feuds than religious or sectarian disputes. Hindu-Muslim conflicts though not as widespread or intense as in North India did occasionally erupt and disturb public peace. In 1882, the resentment of the Hindus over the building of a mosque resulted in riots, the demolition of the building 'and a rather long tale of killed and wounded'. The Cambridge History of India says these riots were the result of religious prejudices; in fact they were the product of communal prejudices. 'The courts were resorted to and an injunction obtained for bidding the Shanars of Kalugumalai from going in Procession. This led in 1895 to a riot in which 9 or 10 persons were killed followed by the imposition of punitive police on the locality. Four years later a Marava Zamindar sued to restrain Shanars from entering the temple at Sivakasi. The Shanars retorted by burning many Marava dwellings. The Maravas thereon mustered in great force and attacked the enemy. Twentyfive persons were killed and there was much destruction of Shanar's property. The Marava gangs were rounded up by sepoys and a punitive police was quartered on that locality too". This ancient feud between the two communities is not yet finished. The Shanars (who had by now become Nadars) and the Tevars continued to fight each other, a fight which was epitomised in the political antagonism between Muthuramalinga Tevar and Kamaraj Nadar in recent times.

The transformation in the process and content of education during the past two centuries has been one of the greatest social revolutions in our times and in our country. In the middle of the 18th century there were very few public institutions which could be called popular schools. The best education of those times was available in the gurukulas or the single teacher private seminaries where the matter and manner of education were the same as they were during many centuries before. Beschi, who had a taste of that system himself and who called himself *Viramamuniyar* beautifully satirised that system in his immortal *guru-noodle* (*Paramartha guru kathai* in Tamil). Schwartz, usually a mild critic, castigates the debased gurukula system of the 18th century as follows: "Under a frame of government so wretched, the education of the young is miserably neglected. Few children learn to read, write and cast accounts and they are exclusively boys". The same position is put in other words by the Cambridge History of India: Indigenous education was private or public, elementary or higher, administered at home to boys and exceedingly rarely to girls, or administered to boys alone in schools which in spite of serious defects were maintained and managed by the people themselves". Vedic scholars taught Brahmin boys in Patasalas the Hindu religious texts which they learned by rote. The Chettis and the Kanakkars knew accounts and Book keeping but had no access to sacred learning or its ancillary disciplines. Cudgeon leaves were used by students and teachers for writing upon. Even after printing had come into vogue, there were only a few copies of rare books printed and published and the scarcity did not end till late in the 19th century. Teachers' fees were poor and mostly in kind.

Since Macaulay's minute and Ram Mohan Roy's objections came to be appreciated, the value of English as medium for modern knowledge became clear. It was learnt that English was as essential for science education as the plough was for tilling. They were not separable.

In Madras Sir Thomas Munro made enquiries in 1823 which revealed that there was one school for a thousand of the population.

He commented on the poor quality and general ignorance of the teachers. He wished to assist native schools but not to interfere with them; and to establish a 'normal' school in a central place for training teachers as well as two government schools in every district, one for Hindus and one for Muslims. Munro's scheme did not find favour with the Directors, who thought of "creating a body of natives qualified to take a larger share and occupy high positions in the civil administration of the country than hitherto". The Missionaries were very active setting up schools in Madras; and consequently 'a colloquial knowledge of English was more commonly found than in Bengal.'

In regard to education, from the start till deep into the 19th century, there were two opinions, one to keep the Indians safe in their own moorings and the other to pull them consciously out of them and expose them to the ideas which English education could bring. The latter wished thereby to eradicate the situations in Hindu society like that of women who were doomed 'to joyless confinement during life and a violent premature death'; 'the perpetual abasement and unlimited abjections' in which the 'lower' orders of Hindus were kept by the Brahmanical system and religion. These, it was held, were the results of dense and widespread ignorance among the people and could be reversed only by education, first of all by education in English, a key which would open to the people, 'a world of new ideas'.

What William Carey was doing to Bengal in early 19th century, Christian Schwartz was doing to Tamilnad by establishing schools for Indian boys. His schools were subsidised by the Madras government with the approval of the Directors. Earlier even than Schwartz, throughout the 18th century Lutheran Missionaries in South India were founding schools for the children of the Portuguese Tamil and European Christians. The filtration theory held that if the upper class people in the chief urban centres were educated in English modern knowledge would percolate to the masses elsewhere. This did not happen.

Due to Macaulay's influence 'Zilla' (District) schools which later became High schools were established. But Macaulay's expectation that English education would convert Indians into a people 'Indian in blood and colour, but English in tastes, in opinion, in morals and in intellect' was bound to fail because in India there were great religious systems which "forbade even the remotest possibility of their collapse within any reasonable period of time".

Sir Charles Wood, President of the Board of Control, forwarded a scheme to India through 'the Court of Directors' (dispatch 49 of 19th July 1854) which called upon the government to 'create a properly articulated scheme of education from the primary school to the university'.

Universities were to be established at Calcutta and Bombay and would be allowed at Madras and other centres provided a sufficient number of colleges were forthcoming. They would be examining bodies on the model of the London University, depending so far as teaching was concerned upon the various colleges whether maintained by government or voluntary effort.

This system outlined by Wood, in the words of Dalhousie, "set forth a scheme of education for all India far wider and more comprehensive than the supreme or any local government could have ventured to suggest". Departments of Public instructions were organized. In 1857 examining universities were established in Madras, Bombay and Calcutta.

The progress in education was interrupted in North India by the Mutiny but in Madras the interruption was not serious. The doubt whether the educational policy of the government had anything to do with the rebellion was answered in the affirmative by Outram and Kaye but it was not really relevant to Madras. But in India as a whole, while the old order was mutinying for the perpetuation of archaic values, the new educational values were being inscribed in the university statutes.

The prejudices against women's education which very much prevailed in the early 19th century were slowly overcome. At the beginning of that century the prejudice was caused by the feeling that an educated, or even a merely literate girl would become too clever for her husband and would not be as subservient as she was desired to be. This prejudice was then incorporated into a threat that educated girls would lose their husbands early. The number of (wo men of letters is not to mislead one into supposing that a large number of women were scholars. In 1833 it was laid down that "No Indian subject of the Crown 'by reason only of his religion, place of birth, descent, colour, or any of them' should be disabled from holding any place, office or employment under the said Company": educational qualifications determining competence for public service were insisted upon and the educational policy was devised suitably. In 1882 an Educational Commission under V. W. Hunter was appointed: The commission emphasised the unfortunate neglect of primary education and recommended its coming under the purview of municipalities and district boards. The State's duty to finance that education was also stressed. Lord Curzon introduced changes in the educational administrative system which heightened government control over universities; this was objected to and so modified. The suggestion that regional languages like Tamil were to be subjects of optional study was countered successfully by Tamil lovers and scholars like V. G. Suryanarayana Sastri of the Madras Christian College. By the first decade of the present century the educational system as we know it had been established. The Annamalai University at Annamalainagar (Chidambaram) was founded in 1929 by the munificence of Raja Sir Annamalai Chettiar of Chettinad; it was and is the only unitary university in South India. It had such eminent men like the Rt. Hon'ble V. S. Srinivasa Sastri and Sir C. P. Ramaswami Iyer as its Vice-Chancellors. The Hartog Committee's Education Report of 1929 is a valuable document. The Radhakrishnan Commission Report on University Education (1949) and the Lakshmanaswami Mudaliar Commission Report on Secondary Education usefully surveyed the progress so far made and put forth suggestions for improvement.

Undoubtedly during the past two centuries more purposeful change has come over educational system in the country than had occurred during all the centuries that had gone before. A notable feature of this English education was that the British gave India the education which was most conducive to create hostile sentiment against them and which gave them the tools needed for the levering out of foreign rule. The introduction of Western science and historical methods provided the modern dimension to Indian thought. The evolving political tradition unwinding itself from a colonial imperialist condition to one of total political freedom involved concepts like Democracy, Liberty, Dissent, Equality, representative institutions, the spirit of enquiry etc. which radically altered popular attitude to public issues. The new jurisprudence, and the new education were fundamental turning points in the social philosophy of the Indian people. All this was true of the Tamils also. Public opinion expressed through the press became a potent political and social instrument for change. The *Hindu* and *Swadesamitran*, two of the earliest newspapers of Madras, the former in English and the latter in Tamil, were followed by a number of other journals, periodicals and dailies constantly feeding the public mind with news and views and making up that mind and fitting it to make political decision. The censorship which frightened and guilty governments often imposed on the press was a measure of the effectiveness of the medium.

The Age of Consent Act of 1891 forbade consummation of marriage before the wife had attained the age of twelve; Madras put up the maximum resistance even to this modest reform. The Child Marriage Restraint Act, popularly called the 'Sarda Act' (after its sponsor Harbidas Sarda) fixed the minimum marriageable age of boys and girls at 18 and 14 years respectively; violation of the rule was treated as criminal and strictly punishable. This Act was amended in 1938 to make its provisions more vigorous.

The Hindu Wills Act of 1870 and the Hindu Widow Remarriage Act (1850) were instances of daring reform introduced by the

British in the teeth of orthodox opposition and implemented in spite of popular indifference.

The whole question of social change in Tamilnad revolved around the wider social phenomenon of the conflict between tradition and modernity, a problem which is unduly belittled by certain scholars. Everyone of the major social reform movements initiated by the British struck directly or indirectly at Hindu social religious complex of faith and behaviour. Abolition of sati, Age of Consent Act, Widow Remarriage Act, Sarda Act, Hindu Wills Act, frequent declaration of equality of communities, castes etc. in the matter of public service and so on; the new Indian Penal Code etc. were extremely revolutionary in their concept and effect little realised by those of the late 20th century so much accustomed to these changed conditions as to imagine that to have been in existence for even in this country. But the real problem is how orthodoxy has struck a bargain with modernity whereby orthodox thoughts pervade modern modes, conservative private behaviour lurks behind heterodox public stances; now a modern, western shell now projects the old orthodox, conservative worm inside. So behind the facade of modernism the old rituals get enacted with the customary gusto.

The 19th century is noted in India for its religious movements. A complex of new social attitudes which occurred in that century has been erroneously designated a 'renaissance'. There has been no renaissance here; for the past has always been with us; we have never parted company with it. We are trying to see if certain new values coming to us for the first time now can be fitted on to the corpus of the old. In our anxiety to give new and fashionable interpretations to this phenomenon we allow our sights to be blurred. I have discussed this situation at some length elsewhere.⁴

There have been some genuine religio-spiritual movements in Tamilnad during this period. In the first place we have Thayumanavar of the 18th century, a Saivite mystic poet belonging to the tradition of Pattinattar, though not so thoroughly pessimistic as

4 See my *'The Hindu Tripod and other Essays'*.

the latter; to the same tradition belonged Ramalinga Swami of the 19th century. In a sense they were authentic representatives of the Siddha, the Saiva Siddhanta etc. schools of thought. They had a natural native following. The second strand is well illustrated by Ramana Maharishi, a great Brahmin ascetic who did penance in Tiruvannamalai and whose disciples included European admirers like Paul Brunton. He came of the true and authentic Brahmanical, ascetic tradition and he preached advaita. He has been a great spiritual force during the past century in Tamilnad. Another important stream of spirituality was set up in Pondicherry by Sri Aurabindo (Arabindo Ghose) who taught integralism as the path to perfect consciousness which is salvation. He was a nationalist revolutionary before he came to Pondicherry. The Asram he established in Pondicherry has become world famous and he was as great a poet and thinker as he was a spiritual mentor. The fourth in modern Tamilnad belonged to theosophy. Though it was a religious system discovered and established by the Blavatskys, Colonel Olcott and Mrs. Annie Besant, all of whom were non-Indians, India was bound to be the ideal land of spirituality by the theosophists and Adyar became their international headquarters. It attracted many Indians and even now is a religious force to be reckoned with. Though J. Krishnamurthy was the product of that atmosphere he developed along different lines and has remained the admiration of even those who little understood him. Murugadasan and Gnanian Adigal were orthodox. Saivite preachers of great effect and the latter was known for his spell-binding eloquence. B. R. Rajam Aiyar however was a Vedantin whose greatness was discovered by Swami Vivekananda who entrusted to him the task of editing the Prabhuddha Bharata. Vivekananda's visit to Madras and the establishment of the Ramakrishna Mutt in Mylapore by Swami Ramakrishnananda were events which evoke the Tamilians' interest in modern interpretation of Vadanta.

The great social change that is affecting the society is during this period reflected only at its top layer. Women's education has brought forth a Rukmini Arundale, a Dr. Minakshi and so forth;

Western science has created a Sir. C. V. Raman and a Srinivasa Ramanujam; even a Bharathi was the product of the presence of the British here; Krishnaswami Iyengars and Nilakanta Sastris and Ruthnaswamis, Suryanarayana Sastris and Sundaram Pillais and L. D. Swamikkannu Pillais, Srinivasa Sastris, C. P. Ramaswami Iyers and C. Rajagopalacharis ... the list lengthens to include Jurists like Sir T. Muthuswami Iyer, journalists like G. Subramania Iyer and so on. The social change created a new world and the men and women qualified to man that world. But the whole of the phenomenon belonged to the outer crust of the society seen in industrial urban centres of political and commercial activity and in making contrast to the still primitive, medieval countryside.

Art and Letters

The development of art and growth of literature were differently affected in the modern period of the history of Tamilnad. Architecture, painting, and sculpture belonged to the ancient artistic tradition of the land. Temple architecture and bronze casting reached fantastic heights of beautiful perfection in Imperial Chola and Pandyan times. The Nayaks of Madura continued this tradition and added to the Pandyan style of temple architecture the Vijayanagar innovations and one of their proudest achievements was the Sri Minakshi Temple of Madura. Convention had made artistic style rigid and repetitive. After the 17th century there has been no brilliant achievement in the field of religious art. Renovations of decaying structures have been attempted by private persons and public bodies showing interest in the preservation of the symbols of indigenous art. But in recent times some renovations have been accompanied by certain restorations which have unfortunately resulted in a new type of grotesque 'art' which is at best a caricature of genuine Tamil art of medieval times. The Moghul invasion of the south and the influence of the Nawabi of Arcot led to structures like the Madras High Court Buildings, the Senate House (Madras) etc. which are usually classified as Indo-Saracenic. The English 'Nabob' built for himself the airy and verandahed 'Bungalow' while in recent times cities are getting accustomed to the soulless soap box

type of buildings. New residential colonies in expanding towns are putting up the new model houses instead of the 'street houses' which were dingy holes at best. Impressive mosques in Nagore, Triplicane and Vellore and the princely structure which now houses the offices of the Revenue Board and the Department of Public works, Madras are good examples of Indo-Islamic structures. From the days of the Portuguese occupation of Santhome, beautiful churches have marked the Tamilian landscape. The Santhome Church, the St. Joseph's chapel in Tiruchy and the Velankanni Church in Negapatam are such instances. But on the whole the British period has not been productive of very noteworthy architectural structures. The forts which were built in Gingee, on the Namakkal hill and the Dindigul hillock and on Tirumayam are examples of military engineering. Except the Fort St. George and Fort St. David which are not great illustrations of artistic fortifications new military constructions did not come up. But the construction of harbours like that of Madras, great Railway stations like the Madras Central and Egmore, the construction of bridges like the Pamban etc. indicate a new dimension to public works. Indigenous styles of painting had met with an early demise after the great effort in the Brihadeesvarar temple; Western styles of painting on canvas which did influence artists in neighbouring states like Ravivarma had no impact on the Tamils. Certain indigenous fine arts like puppetry in Tanjore and hobby-horse dancing in Madura were carefully but with great difficulty preserved. The industrial art of making musical instruments was promoted in Tanjore.

Dance and music which were as old as 2000 years ago in Tamilnad had been growing and flourishing throughout this long period of 20 centuries. Bharatha Natyam had its masters in whose families the knotty intricacies of this complicated but extremely graceful art were preserved. The art of music, the details of which Ilango has described and which underwent modifications in the middle ages became the most graceful of Tamilian fine arts in the hands of the musical trinity: Thyagaraja, Muthuswami

Dikshitar, and Sama Sastri, all of the late 18th century. These two arts which can be likened to the two eyes of Tamil culture were preserved in the houses of certain masters; so that the great artistes like Balasaraswathi, M S. Subbulakshmi, T. N. Rajarathnam and Ramanuja Iyengar come in a tradition of long standing in which the arts were handed down from generation to generation in the guru-sishya context. The musical compositions of the great masters who composed in Telugu and in Sanskrit apart, mention must be made of Arunachala Kavirayar's *Rama Natakam* and Gopala Krishna Bharathi's *Nandan Charitram*. The Harikatha was made into a finished art, a good part of which was music. Violin, an essentially Western musical instrument was adapted to the needs of the Carnatic concert so much so that it has now become an essentially integral part of it. From Krishna Iyer of Tirukkodikka to Jayaraman of Lalgudi, there have been numerous grandmasters among violinists. Bharatha Natyam and Carnatic Music have been struggling against heavy odds to preserve their purity of style.

The great art of drama was in a condition of decay in the later 19th century. The art was rescued by the strenuous efforts of many professionals and amateurs and it has now become a worthy medium of public entertainment. The social convention which inhibited the appearance of women on the stage was slowly overcome. The cinema which in a sense is a combination of art, technology and industry posed a threat to drama, but the inherent vitality of the stage overcame this and has come into its own.

Literature, as we said before, developed differently during this period. Till the end of the 18th century the royal courts and the monasteries (mathas) patronised the men of letters. After the English took over, State patronage of poets and other literatures ended. Minor patronage by some Zamindars and Rajas did continue. But by and large there was no certain patronage from any assured and knowledgeable quarter thereafter. It is wrong to say that the public became the patrons after printing and book production became common. For though the people might appreciate they

could not reward, for even the book purchasing capacity of appreciative readers was low. Even such prominent writers like Subramanya Bhrathi died in poverty; that a memorial was raised for him many years after his death can certainly be no consolation for him. Swaminathan Iyer the inimitable editor of classics was the protege of Saivamathas. Scholars like Raghava Iyengar (R) were patronised earlier by the Raja of Ramnad and later by the Raja of Chettinad; erstwhile Indian princes ceased to represent many native virtues one after another; but the last of them was patronage of scholarship. Till the British government was firmly established the poets of the land still had some hopes of recognition and reward; after that government left, some arrangements were made to provide rewards to proved literary merit. But the catch in the last arrangement was that an unerring mechanism for recognizing merit was not created; a cynic once remarked that such a mechanism did certainly exist but that after recognition it was rejected invariably. It has been truly said that the talented are recognized only by the talented. Scholarship and creative art had been pushed from the royal path into the popular jungle. The kind of extremely sensitive arts which the Tamils had created finds it very difficult to weather these storms, many of which so far as Tamilnad goes are communal.

The Nayaks of Madura, especially in the 17th century, have left behind a rich heritage of architectural achievement. Tirumalai Nayaka's palace in Madurai, a good part of which still stands is a noble piece of secular architecture; the Tanjore Maratha palace is another. The Nayak renovated and in fact built a new many parts of the Sri Minakshi temple. His architectural activities can be seen in Srirangam, Srivilliputtur and other places. The Setupatis were consistent renovators of the Rameswaram shrine which was their special preserve.

Close students of Tamil literature know how from the start it had become conventionalised in many respects and many admirable literary dances were performed in conventional chains; the minor prabhandas and even the major epics suffered from this voluntarily accepted tyranny of the grammarian. Verse was deemed

the only respectable mode of literary communication; prose was relegated to the domain of the commentator who wrote it poorly. There was no standardised and settled popular prose acceptable to the scholar as well. This was a signal and major contribution made by the Christian Missionaries of the 18th century and of Virama-munivar in particular. In the early stages the hyperbole which characterised their poetry invaded their prose also and the effect was fantastic. Proenza's letter of 1665 gives a sample of the Indian style of writing: "To the divine feet of rose of the one who is Seignior of wisdom and called Jnanandran (Fr. Arcolini) the very happy and very excellent swan (Paramahamsa), the master of all the *Sanyasis*, adorned with all good qualities, the doctor who imparts knowledge perfectly, - I, Ariyappaiyan, making prostration of six limbs with the submission, veneration and devotion that I have for him, I address my humble word. By the mercy of your signiory and the excellence of your prayers, meditations and sacrifices I enjoy good health. Have the kindness to let me know your intentions to me, your disciple. I have received the bezoar (stone antidote) which you have condescended to send me. To tell the truth, to dissipate all the poisons I have no need for this stone, since the force of your prayers and counsels and the efficacy of your protection are sufficient for me and constitute an all-powerful remedy". Proenza comments: "Those who do not know the Indian style and character will believe, in reading this letter, they see a man already wholly converted; they will be mistaken; this letter says merely that the Brahman recognizes in Fr. Arcolini a superiority which he does not dare to contest all the rest is purely complimentary as a payment for the bezoar". This tendency persists in some quarters even now, whatever be the language in which they write.

The Tamil language developed in addition to its prose, its lexicons, and its grammatical texts also in prose and all these fields of development were originated by the Christian Missionaries. Virama Munivar even improved the Tamil script and introduced punctuation marks so essential for prose writing.

In the 17th century Kumara Gurupara Swami flourished in Madura and was patronised by Tirumalai Nayaka. He is famous for his *Minakshi Ammai Pillai Tamil* besides *Kandar Kali Venba*. He was a naturally gifted poet. He is said to have gone to the Moghul Court and with the help of the Emperor founded the Saiva Matha in Benaras. A near contemporary of Kumara Gurupara was Sivaprakasa Swamikal who is rightly famous for his *Prabhulinga Lila* full of highly imaginative similes. Raghunatha Nayaka, the Nayak of Tanjore was a scholar and a patron of scholars. He was the author of *Parijata apaharana*, *Ramayana sara sangraha* etc. Govinda Dikshita, his minister wrote the *Sangita Sudha*. Kumara Tatacharya, a protege of Raghunatha wrote another *Parijata apaharana*. *Raghunatha bhoydayam* was written by Vijayaraghava Nayaka in praise of his father Raghunatha Nayaka. Yagnanarayana Dikshita wrote the *Sahitya Ratnakara*.

The Maratha rulers of Tanjore patronised a number of great Sanskrit scholars. Nilakanta Dikshitar, the Vedantin Balakrishna Bhagavad Padha, Chokkanatha Dikshitar, Ramabhadra Dikshitar the famous author of the play *Janaki Parinayam* were patronised by them. The last named came to be called 'the modern Patanjali', because of his proficiency in Sanskrit grammar. He was a native of Kandramanikkam but he later migrated to Shahjirajapuram in 1693. Bhaskara Dikshita, and Venkata Krishna Dikshita also were patronised by these rulers. Ramabhadra Dikshita wrote the *Vidya Parinayam* an allegorical work and fathered it on Ananda Rao, the Maratha general. Sridhara Venkatesa famous as 'Ayyaval' wrote the *Sahadru Vilasa Kavyam* dealing with the exploits of Shahji. Ekoji's minister Gangadharamakhi's son Triyambhaka Rayamakhi wrote the *Dharmakuta*, in which the *Ramayana* was given a new interpretation. The *Acharya Navanita* of Triyambhaka dealt with law and custom. Nallakavi wrote the *Subhadra Parinayam*. Shahji himself is said to have written a *Sringara rasamanjiri*. Sarabhoji I is said to have written a poem *Raghava Charitam*. Ghanasyama Pandita, the minister for the household of Tukkoji commented on Bhavabuti's *Uttara Rama Charitam*, while his wives Sundari and Kamala wrote

commentaries on a Sanskrit play. Sadaśiva Brahmendra, living after Shahji was a great philosopher and religious writer, and a composer of music which is still popular among concert performances.

Literature, dance and music were patronised and promoted in the Pudukkottai and Ramnad courts. The Tondaimans of Pudukkottai were discerning patrons who during the *Navaratri* celebrations invited and honoured musicians and poets. Bhaskara Setupati of Ramnad and his nephew Pandithurai Tevar were responsible for setting up the Fourth Tamil Sangam in Madurai in 1901 and starting a Tamil college where great scholars like Tiru Narayana Iyengar taught. Sayid Khadri or Seedakkadi was a businessman, resident of Kilakkarai, who patronised Tamil poets and particularly one Padikkasuppulavar, the author of *Tondaimandala Sadugam*. This kind of royal patronage practically ended with Raja Sir Annamalai Chettiar of Chettinad, the founder of the Annamalai University. In the 18th century, Anandarangam Pillai, the well known diarist in Pondicherry patronised many Tamil poets among whom Thyagaraja Desikar (the second son of the famous *Ilakkana Vilakkam* Vaidyanatha Navalur) who composed a *Kovai* on the patron, and Madurakavirayar, Ramakavirayar, Javvaduppulavar, Padikkasuppulavar and Namasivayappulavar deserve mention. All these clever versifiers can be called instant composers. In the Ramnad district there were a number of Muslim poets, perhaps patronised by the wealthy merchants of Kilakkarai. Umaruppulavar (Omar Pulavar) who wrote the *Sirappuranam*, Javvaduppulavar, Sarkkaraippulavar etc. belong to this category. Javvaduppulavar of the 17th century composed a *Mohideen Andavar Pillai Tamil*.

During the Middle Ages in Tamil literature i. e., from the 10th century to the 18th century, a number of very competent grammarians flourished and settled many grammatical rules. It is well known how these grew a classical tradition of commentaries on the *Tolkappiyam* from Urai Asiriyar, Per Asiriyar, Senavaraiyar and

Nachchinarkkiniyar; when Pavanandi wrote his *Nannul* there was great original contribution to Tamil grammar; a number of very competent commentators rose to provide expert glosses to this masterpiece. Mayilainathar lived earlier than the period relevant to our present accounts and his was the first commentary on the *Nannul*. In the 18th century Sankara Namasivayar wrote an elaborate commentary on the *Nannul* and it has remained standard till now. But the great Sivagnana Munivar, the author of the 'great commentary' (*Mapadigam*) on the *Sivagnana Bodham*, critically improved on that commentary. Apart from commentaries on grammatical works, we know that Parimel Alagar, Nachchinarkkiniyar and others wrote commentaries on literary classics. The tradition, in its classical form continued till the days of Chokkappa Navalar (18th century) who wrote brilliant gloss on the *Tanjai vanun kovai* of Poyyamolippulavar.

Tamil grammar came more and more under the care of Jains and Buddhists like Amita (amirta or amuda) Sagarana, Buddhamitrar, Pavanandi, Mayilainathar etc. The Saivites reacted sharply to this developing situation and Vaidyanatha Navalar of Tiruvarur wrote the celebrated *Ilakkana Vilakkam* to which he provided a commentary himself. The work was greatly praised in Saivite circles which designated it the '*Kuttittolkappiyam*'. But the great Sivanama Munivar rose above these petty affinities and wrote a strongly worded critique of this work, the *Ilakkana Vilakka Suravali*. *Nannul* however could not be dislodged from its position of absolute supremacy in that field. Vaidyanatha Navalar's reputed contemporary Swaminatha Desikar wrote the *Ilakkanak-kothu* in which he made a comparative estimate of Tamil and Sanskrit grammatical rules – an estimate which was not always favourable to Tamil. This tradition of critical estimate had begun with Buddha Mitrar and later refined by Subramanya Dikshitar in his *prayaka vivekam*. Senavaraiyar, to some extent did it; but Swaminatha Desikar, an acute scholar and an acid stylist carried it much farther. Sivanama Munivar who has been mentioned earlier wrote an excellent commentary on the first sutra of *Tolkappiyam*:

Tolkappiya Mudar Sutra Virutti. He discusses many grammatical points, following Sankara, in his commentary on the *Sivagnana Bodham*. The 18th century saw a revolution in Tamil grammatical studies at the hands of Fr. Beschi who started writing grammar in prose. He devoted attention for the first time on spoken Tamil and wrote the grammar of *Kodun Tumil*: Malanai Mahalinga Iyer who taught Tamil in the Madras Presidency college, wrote a prose handbook of Tamil grammar intended for beginners. As a pioneer it became quite famous. Visakapperumal Iyer, son of Tiruttanigai Kandappaiyar, a great scholar and brother of Saravanapperumal Iyer, another great scholar wrote a *Kandigai* commentary on the *Nannul*. He also helped Dr. Winslow who prepared the great Tamil dictionary. Iyer was also teaching Tamil in the Presidency college, Madras. Following him Arumugha Navalar of Jaffna also wrote a *Kandigai* commentary on the *Nannul*. He also helped Dr. Winslow who prepared the great Tamil dictionary. Iyer was also teaching Tamil in the Presidency college, Madras. Following him Arumugha Navalar of Jaffna also wrote a *Kandigai* commentary on the *Nannul* which soon took the place of the earlier one; Navalar's work was in its turn superseded (at a more popular level) by the *Kandigai* written by Sadagoparamanujachariar who taught Tamil in the Kumbakonam College and became rightly reputed for the notes he wrote on poetical selections prescribed by the university for students and which held the students captive for over half a century. Grammatical studies have now been taken over by linguistic and Dravidian linguistic studies originally inaugurated by Robert Caldwell, Grierson and now pursued at very high scholarly level by reputed linguists like Dr. Burrow of Oxford have their Indian representations in scholars like Dr. T. P. Minakshi Sundaram.

The 18th century was not very decadent from the literary point of view. Among native Tamil scholars, Sivanama Munivar, the author of the *Mapadigam* on the *Sivanama Bodham*, wrote also the first part of the *Kanchippuranam*; the second part was completed by his disciple Kachchiyappa Munivar. The Munivar wrote a number of Puranas which used to be exclusive delight of specialist

scholars who had done their Nikandus extremely well. The diction is so tough that currently most scholars are content with merely knowing the titles: among such works the *Tanigaiippuranam* merits special mention. Kottaiyur Sivakkolundu Desikar wrote the *Kottesvarakkovai*, *Tanjaipperu Udaiyar Ula* and *Sarabhendra Bhupalakuravanji*, all of which have been edited by U. V. Swaminatha Iyer with notes. Trikota Rajappa Kavirayar wrote the famous (because popular) *Kurralakkuravanji* but his *Tirukkurrala thala puranam* has superior literary merit. Madai Tiruvenkatanathan, a patron of Vaidyanatha Navalur, translated into Tamil Krishna Misra's *Prabhoda Chandrodhayam*. Tottikkalai Subramanya Munivar who wrote the *Kalaisai Sledai Venba* is still fondly read by beginners. Ramalinga Adigal (1823-1874) of Chidambaram was a great Saivite mystic who came of the traditional lineage which included Tayumanavar and Pattinattar before him. His poetical works have been put together by his devoted disciple Toluvur Velayudha Mudaliar (1832-1889) who called the poems collectively *Arutpa* to which a few of his opponents vainly protested. Dandapani Swamigal also called Tiruppuhal Swamigal or Murugadasar (1839-1898) wrote the *Pulavar Puranam* and came in the authentic line of the author of the Tiruppuhal. Of the traditional type of poets of the 19th century, Minakshisundaram Pillai (1815-1876) has an unsurpassed reputation as the author of innumerable and different kinds of works. Though all that he wrote was verse, some of his works are already classic: *Siyalikkovai*, *Sekkilar Pillai Tamil*, *Nagaikkaronappuranam*, must be deemed very good. U. V. Swaminatha Iyer his disciple says that Pillai wrote the *Kuchela Upakyanam* which now is authored by Valloor Devaraja Pillai. Thyagaraja Chettiar and U. V. Swaminatha Iyer were his disciples; and Vedanayakam Pillai was his friend.

The 18th century was noted for the advent of European Christian Missionary scholars who contributed greatly to the development of Tamil literature. The most noted among them was Fr. Constanzo Giuseppe Beschi (1680-1747) (constanzo: courage). He was a Jesuit from Italy and he first called himself Dairyanatha

Swami and later Virama Munivar. His contribution to Tamil is classical, modern, diverse; and in the fields of grammar, lexicography, epic poetry, religious tracts, minor poetical works, social satire and translations. He knew a number of languages like Latin, Portuguese, Sanskrit, Tamil, Telugu etc. His epic *Tembavani* was on Joseph, Christ's putative father; *Tirukkavalurkkalambagam* and *Kitteri Ammal Ammanai* were minor works on Christian deities set up in Indian temples. Veda Vilakkam, and Vedyar Olukkam, were intended for the benefit of Christian Missionary workers here. He translated the first two *Pals* of the Kural into Latin. We have already noticed his grammatical works. He introduced the system of alphabetised lexicon (the Nikandus were sort of Thesaurus in which entries were thematically arranged) and wrote the *Chethur Aharadi*. He prepared a Portuguese-Tamil-Latin dictionary and a Tamil-Latin dictionary. He learned Tamil from a local scholar who was his *guru* and he was his *sishya*. He learned all about the gurukula system as it was working then. He described the whole system in a remarkable satire 'Paramarthaguru kadai'— or the 'Aviveka purana guru kadai'— the story of the totally ignorant teacher. This he translated into Latin and English in which it was called the 'Guru Noodle'. It was a satire on the educational system in the Tamil country of those times and must be recognized as such. In the whole range of Tamil literature it is difficult to find another writer whose contributions were more original, scholarly, varied and massive. Winslow who prepared a Tamil dictionary with the help of many Tamil scholars, Caldwell who wrote the 'comparative Grammar of Dravidian Languages' and G. U. Pope of Oxford who translated the *Kural*, *Naladiar*, *Thiruvachagam* etc. were other European savants who enriched Tamil literary studies in the 19th century. The lexicographical endeavours of Beschi were followed up by those of Kadiravel Pillai of Ceylon who prepared the *Coronation Tamil Dictionary* and of the University of Madras which commissioned the lexicon in many volumes edited by S. Vaiyapuri Pillai. Virasami Chettiar (early 19th century) wrote the *Vinodarasa Manjari*, a collection of interesting essays.

Christian themes attracted many Indian Christian scholars and this resulted in a sizeable literature. Vedanayaka Sastri (1774-1834) was from Tinneveli and he composed many *kritis* in Tamil (songs set to music). Krishna Pillai (1827-1900) wrote the *Rakshanya Yattirai* an adaptation in verse of Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*. V. P. Subramanya Mudaliar (1857-1946), who however was a Hindu, wrote not only the *Ahalihai venba* but also translated the first part of Milton's *Paradise Lost* and called it '*Suvarkka Nikkam*'.

Tamil was enriched by the *Kirtana* style of literature. It consisted of *kritis* on the Thyagaraja pattern and some of them dealt with whole epic themes and were so well done that some of the pieces then have become indispensable in modern concerts. Gopala Krishna Bharathi's *Nandan Charitram* and Arunachalakkavirayar's *Rama Natakam* are the two most important examples of this kind of literature. They are important more because of their music than because of their literary merit or even the ideas expressed therein. The *Nandan Charitram* has tried to play to the gallery by ridiculing an imagined Brahmin landlord who is not mentioned in Sekkilar's original version of *Tirunalaippovar puranam* in the *Periya Puranam*. Minakshi Sundaram Pillai rightly objected to the liberty Mr. Bharathi had taken with the original story. Tamil musicology and musical compositions attracted Vipulanandar (1892 - 1947) who wrote the *Yal Nul* and the *Matanga Chulamani*. Papanasam. Sivan, T. Lakshmana Pillai and M. P. Periyasami Thooran are well-known for a number of good Tamil *kirtanas*. Many of the Tamil plays written at the turn of the century contained very good *kritis* intended to be sung on the stage. V. G. Suryanarayana Sastri and T. S. Narayana Sastri and N. Balarama Iyer set this tradition which however was allowed to lapse by later playwrights.

Viramarttanda Mudaliar had translated the *Panchatantra* into Tamil verse; Tandavaraya Mudaliar adapted the Marathi version of the *Panchatantra*; later *Kadambari* was translated by M. Natesa Sastri,

Mritchakatika and *Kautilyam* by Kadiresan Chettiar (1887-1953), *Sakuntalam* by Maraimalai Adigal and R. Raghava Iyengar and *Dasakumara Charitram* by N. Balarama Iyer. Translations and adaptations of Shakespeare became a fashion in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

The 19th century saw a number of Tamil scholars editing ancient classics with meticulous care. Arumugha Navalar of Ceylon edited the *Periya Puranam*, *Tirukkural*, *Sethu Puranam* and many other works with extraordinary care. C. W. Damodaram Pillai, who by the way was the first graduate of the Madras University published the *Kalittogai*, *Chulamani*, *Tolkappiyam* etc. Pinnattur Narayanaswami Iyer (1862-1914) edited the *Narrinai* with his notes. E. V. Anantarama Iyer edited the *Kalittogai* in 3 volumes with Nachchinarkkiniyar's commentary in a masterly manner. N. M. Venkatasami Nattar wrote commentaries on the *Tiruvilaiyadal Puranam* of Paranjoti and the *Ahananuru* - the latter in collaboration with Venkatachalam Pillai of Karandai. K. Vadivelu Chettiar (1863-1936) wrote a special gloss on the *Kural*. C. R. Namasivaya Mudaliar, who patronised many Tamil scholars, wrote a few works, but published many like *Tanjaivanan Kovai* and *Iraiyanar Ahapporul*, V. G. Suryanarayana Sastri edited the *Kalingattupparani* which was later again edited first by A. Gopala Iyer and then by Cuniah Naidu. S. Bavanandam Pillai a police officer and a patron of Tamil scholars, edited the *Tolkappiyam* and the *Yapparungalam* etc. V. O. Childambaram Pillai (1872-1936) was a good Tamil scholar who also edited the *Tolkappiyam*, with Ilampuranar's commentary. V. M. Gopalakrishnamachariar, a scholar in Sanskrit as well as in Tamil edited in a masterly way the entire *Kambaramayanam* with notes and similarly *Kural* also. In recent times N. Balarama Iyer's edition of V. G. Suryanarayana Sastri's *Natakaviyal* with critical and detailed notes, Purushottama Naidu's Tamilised version of the *Idu* (Vaishnavite commentary on the *Nalayiram*) and C. K. Subramanya Mudaliar's massive edition of the *Periya puranam* have been acclaimed as deserved celebrities in the field of editorial work. S. Vaiyapuri Pillai (1891-1956) wrote not only a History of Tamil Literature but edited a number of works.

But.....the greatest name in that field must be recognized in Dr. U. V. Swaminatha Iyer (1855-1942). His editions of numerous Tamil classics have been a marvel. His essentially analytical and logical mind and the inborn pedagogic traits made his editions all that is desirable and what is more - inimitable. His *Jivaka Chintamani* set the pattern. Then followed classic after classic and the tale is too long to be told. The fact that the only language he knew well was Tamil and that his acquaintance with any modern western language was less than casual adds greatly to the miracle. He was truly a walking encyclopaedia, a storehouse of Tamil language and literature. He wrote the biography of his teacher Minakshi Sundaram Pillai and an autobiography. He was an embodiment of humility and gratitude: qualities rather rarely found among lesser scholars.

It was the poetical tradition that underwent significant changes in form and content. In the late 19th century Minakshi Sundaram Pillai represented the older tradition of *Sthala Puranas* etc. At the other end of the scale in the thirties of the present century we have examples like Namakkal Ramalingam Pillai whose poems are reputed because they somewhat resemble Bharathi's. Currently we have some sort of poetry, so called, but practically indistinguishable from the most insipid prose. One imagines that here and there we still have some scholars, hidden away in the obscurity of villages, who continue to tread the beaten track. Achalambikai of Cuddalore wrote the *Gandhipuranam* and the *Tilakar Manniyam*: in these works the theme was revolutionary politics, but the treatment was ancient, classical and couched in the faultless diction of the old masters: she came of a learned family and was an ardent admirer of Partimal Kalaigal Thiru V. Kalyana Sundara Mudaliar called her the Modern Auvaiyar. We shall now skip poets like P. Sundaram Pillai and V.G. Suryanarayana Sastri and N. Balarama Iyer whom we shall consider as dramatists, for their contribution in that field is more cardinal.

Subrahmanya Bharathi (1882-1921), of Ettaiyapuram, was a great poet by any standard. His poems fall into three categories,

the nationalist patriotic effusions, the stray occasional verses and the larger pieces which may be called mini-epics. Their importance and value also ascend in the same order. His patriotic songs are usually set to music and sung and their effect is great. *Panchali Sabatham* and *Kuil Pattu* which belong to the third category show Bharathi at his best. He has purposely preferred a pedestrian style for in all his writings his desire was to reach a larger audience. His personal life was miserable; his spirit was irrepressible; he was a born rebel. He retired to Pondicherry which was the haven of revolutionaries hunted out of India by the British. He presided over a company of revolutionaries like V. V. S. Iyer, Subramanya Siva etc. He died at the early age of thirty nine. But it may be remembered that Partimal Kalaigal died at the age of thirty two and B.R. Rajam Iyer at the incredible age of twenty six. Bharathi's politics was taken from B. G. Tilak. He was a fiery journalist. An elephant from the Parthasarathy temple, Triplicane trampled on him and a few days later he died, leaving a void in the world of poesy not yet filled up. Bharathi Dasan also of Pondicherry was a poet of the same mould as Bharathi himself but of a slightly different metal. He fought like Bharathi for a cause: the latter fought for the nation, the former fought against a community. The more cosmopolitan a poet's outlook the more universal his appeal. Suddhananda Bharathi also of Pondicherry and sporting the name of Bharathi-is also a poet in the footsteps of the master. The original Bharathi was made by circumstances and himself constantly lashing out against those circumstances, but the followers were made by Bharathi. Another poet, though bearing the title Bharathi, came from Jaffna but wrote poetry which could easily be mistaken for Sangam poetry. Navanitha Krishna Bharathi's (1889 - 1954) *Ulagiyal Vilakkam* gladdens the hearts of classicists. Desika Vinayakam Pillai, a scholar and an amateur historian wrote poetry on the model of Bharathi and translated Fitz Gerald's *Omar Khayyam* and Arnold's *Light of Asia*. R. Raghava Iyengar (1870-1948) the author of the *Pari Kathai* was basically a poet and the *Kathai* will stand the test of all time.

The Novel was an unknown form of literature to the Tamils; in fact it was so for all the Indian literateures till introduced by

Western writers. Prose as a medium of exposition was first adapted for grammatical treatises, then for translations of Sanskrit works, then in learned essays. Arumugha Navalar wrote simple and exemplary prose. Vedanayagam Pillai (1826-1889) who was a Christian and an exceedingly good man, was District Munsiff in Shiyali and later in Mayavaram. He wrote many musical pieces, occasional verses etc. But his fame rests most securely on the *Pratapa Mudaliar Charitram* reputed as the first novel in Tamil. It was not a novel strictly speaking but a loosely constructed story more or less on the pattern of *Sandford and Merson* and in some places reminiscent of *Sancho Panza*. It became at once popular and rightly famous. He was followed by B. R. Rajam Iyer (1872-1898) of Batlagundu, the real father of the Tamil Novel. Before the age of 26 when he died, he had not only written the *Kamalambal Charitram* but edited the *Prabuddha Bharatha* for Swami Vivekananda. His religious writings are put together as the rambles in *Vedanta*. His *Kamalambal* portrays the social life of the contemporary Tamil society. A. Madavaiah (1872-1925) wrote the *Padmavathi Charitram*, *Tillai Govindan*, *Vijayamarttandam*, *Muthu Minakshi*, *Kusikar short stories* and an adaptation of *Othello* as *Udayalan* besides a farce - *Lieut Panju*. He may be said to have been the father of the short story in Tamil. Pandit S. N. Natesa Sastri (1839-1906) had seen service in many departments of government like, Epigraphy, Registration, etc. He was a profuse writer who wrote much and wrote well all that he wrote. His novels were: *Dikkarra Iru Kulandaikal*, *Dinadayalu*, *Komalam Kumariya nadu*, etc. He wrote a number of stories like *Dakkanattup-purva Kadaigal* and preserved many stories of the nature of folklore. His *Tuppariyum Davanam* narrated the exploits of a private detective. He was evidently influenced by Conan Doyle. He may be called the father of the Detective fiction in Tamil. Rangaraju was another great name in Tamil fiction. His *Rajambal*, *Chandrakantha* etc. are still read with great interest. Vaduvur Doraiswami Aiyengar was a greatly talented writer who created characters easily remembered and true to life. His *Dikambara Samiar* is a famous character. His *Menaka* is a well-integrated

story; besides these he has a number of other novels to his credit. His *Manikkavachagar*, a brilliant play which won the gold medal from the Madurai Tamil Sangam reveals an unexpected facet of his genius. His *Missing Links* enters fields into which angels fear to tread and so one wishes he had not attempted it. Arani Kuppuswami Mudaliar was devoted to popular entertainment and he liberally borrowed from G. W. M. Reynolds With 'Kalki' or Krishnamurthy (1899-1954), Tamil fiction enters a new field. He wrote an easily readable, pleasant style though often reminiscent of Mayavaram slang. He has a claim to be considered the father of the historical novel in Tamil. But his *Kalvanin Kadali*, *Sivakamiyin Sabatham*, *Ponniyin Selvan* etc. though extremely entertaining and relating to historical personalities and times, paints an idealistic, patriotic picture which is often at variance with the historical reality as determined by more authentic sources. His successors have been dazzled by his successes and so followed his lead. The true historical novel of the Scott, Dumas, Tolstoy type has not had its debut in Tamil literature yet. Kalki was a nationalist, and a political disciple of Rajagopalachari; a good journalist, an expert art critic, and a successful short-story writer. His humour was not strained or artificial. It was natural and exuberant. Like all successful writers he has been imitated but with little success. Pudumaippittan (1906-1948), T. J. Ranganathan and K. V. Jagannathan have handled the short-story satisfactorily. Rajagopalachari's short stories are extremely effective largely because of the force of the theme and the natural simplicity of the style. Thiru V. Kalyana Sundara Mudaliar, a journalist, labour leader, nationalist and Tamil scholar had great force of character and his writings reveal a great variety of interest. His style is not quite modern; and reveals a conscious attempt to be simple. His autobiography is a treasure house of contemporary information. Maraimalai Adigal (1876-1950) began as Vedachalam Pillai; when he became an ascetic he became Swami Vedachalam; when he developed a fondness for *tanittamil* (unadulterated Tamil) he became Maraimalai Adigal. He served the Madras Christian College as Tamil Pandit when V. G. Suryanarayana Sastri was the Head Tamil Pandit there. He

wrote new commentaries on the *Mulluippattu* and *Pattinappalai* and departed from the meanings given by Nachchinarkkiniyar. He was a good Saivite. His love for Tamil took him to the border of an antipathy to Sanskrit, though he knew the latter language well and translated the *Sakuntalam*. He wrote the *Somasundarakanchi Akkam* on the occasion of his teacher Somasundara Naicker's death.

In the last quarter of the 19th century Tamil dramatic literature became rich and profuse. P. Sundaram Pillai (1855-1897) who taught philosophy in Trivandrum and was a historian and good scholar in Tamil wrote the *Manonmaniyam* a play in blank verse (i. e., Asiriyappa in Tamil) on the model of the Elizabethan playwrights. He adapted the story of Lytton's *The Secret Path* in that play. It was the first literary drama written (or extant) in Tamil. May be he was the father of the Tamil drama. The beautiful *Sivakami Charithai* found in the play as an interlude is a close adaptation of Oliver Goldsmith's *The Hermit* in the *Vicar of Wakefield*. Soon after this P. Sambanda Mudaliar, a city civil court judge in Madras, was the first to write stage-worthy Tamil plays in spoken Tamil. He wrote a large number of plays, more than sixty. His earliest was *Lilavathi-Sulochana*. He was himself an actor and he started the *Suguna Vilasa Sabha* an amateur theatre. V. G. Suryanarayana Sastri who taught Tamil in the Madras Christian College was a poet, dramatist, historian of language, novelist, journalist, an editor and grammarian of the art of drama. He was also an actor and he and his friend T. S. Narayana Sastri, a lawyer, were members of the *Vidvat Mano Ranjani Sabha* in, Mylapore. In the *Pavalar Virundhu* his occasional poems are anthologised; his *Manavijayam* is a tragic play in blank verse; *Rupavathi* and *Kalavathi* were two plays in prose intended to exemplify the Western and Sanskritic rules of Dramaturgy; his *History of Tamil Language* written in Tamil is still a pioneer in the field. His *Mativanan* is an example of terse Tamil style and in a way an early example of fiction. He edited the *Gnanabodhini*, a learned Tamil journal. He introduced the sonnet as a form of Tamil poetical literature and wrote a number of them which were put

together as the *Tanippasurattogai*. At first he did not reveal the true author ship of the sonnets fearing adverse criticism and so subscribed himself Paritimal Kalaighar (a literal translation of Suryanarayana Sastri). G. U. Pope admired these sonnets and translated them into English. He wrote the grammar of Drama *Natakaviyal* and in one sense this single work takes him to the rank of Pavanandi. Sastri had twelve disciples to whom he taught Tamil in his house. Chief among them was N. Balarama Iyer; another was Jalajalochana Chettiar. Sastri passed away at the age of 32. N. Balarama Iyer, (1875-1943) wrote the first tragedy in Tamil: the *Dasarathan Tavaru*; his *Valli Parinayam*, a play in five Acts tells the story of Murugan's wedding with Valli. He translated for the first time in 1931 Mahendra Varman's *Mattavilasa Prahasanam*. He wrote a detailed gloss on Suryanarayana Sastri's *Natakaviyal*. He translated the Dasa Kumara Charita, wrote prose versions of the *Silappadikaram* and *Chulamani*. He wrote a large number of occasional verses which were put together and edited as the *Tamarai Nanmalar*. The Yavvanambikai Pillai Tamil was a masterly poem in 101 verses full of rare and imaginative similes. Jalajalochana Chettiar adapted Shakespeare's *Cymbeline* and wrote his *Sarasangia*. The Tamil literature of the 20th century has been particularly deficient in Drama, though the stage itself had a remarkable recovery and has improved in many respects.

Tamil was spread not only through the printed word but also through the time-honoured practice of public discourses. The musical discourses called the *Kalakshepams* began to have a wide-vogue. Chidambara Bhagavathar, Muthiah Bhagavathar and Sarasvathi Bai were some of the leading names in the art. Public lectures not accompanied by musical instruments also drew large and curious audience. Bhaskara Setupati, Panditurai Tevar, Gnaniar Adigal were reputed speakers, reputed not only for their scholarship but for their eloquence. In later days R. P. Sethu Pillai was known as a finished speaker. In recent times Kuppuswami Sastri, Ganapatisastri, Dandapaniswami Dikshitar and V. Raghavan have made signal contribution to Sanskrit studies.

Among Tamils wielding the English pen, some how risen to heights of international fame; S. V. Vijayaraghavachariar, advocate, signed himself S. V. V. and his *Soap Bubbles* and *More Soap Bubbles* in English are delightful skits. Venkataramani's *Kandan the Patriot*, and *Murugan the Tiller* were famous in their days. R. K. Narayanan has a number of brilliant books to his credit: *Swami and his friends* is as entertaining as *Tom Sawyer* himself. V. V. Srinivasa Iyengar's *Dramatic divertisements* and the *Sultanpet Sub-magistrate* are excellent pieces. The Tamils conquered the spoken English world to a remarkable degree: the inimitable C. P. Ramaswami Iyer, the eloquent Ramaswami Mudaliar and the silver-tongued orator Srinivasa Sastri are not easily forgotten by those who had heard them even once.

Conclusion

We have passed through thirty centuries of the history of the Tamils and seen a vista of different hues and altitudes, achievements and failures, conflicts and adjustments; the variety in this history, to a discerning eye, equals the variety which nature has provided in its geography and ethnology provides in the castes and communities abounding there, and the human tongue provides in the languages and dialects spoken by them and the multitude of faiths held dear by the sons of that soil. It cannot be pretended that this history has had a purposeful progress culminating in the achievement and consolidation of social values set before that society as a desirable goal. It has fumbled through a maze of dynasties, survived an incessant procession of wars and lack of economic organization of any cognizable kind obviously futile social struggles. But it has had its permanent achievements which lie exclusively in the fields of the arts and letters. They have made no contribution to political theory or historical literature, except in the most recent past. Apart from the village gods whose worship was unconnected with any theology or religious mythology, their religion in urban centres was heavily influenced by the Aryan faith. The Siddhas and the pessimistic religious lore of an order of mystics were part of the native tradition which objected to exotic faiths and formulae of worship; they had their system of medium unfortunately mixed up with an element of alchemy and

their system foretelling - all known ingredients in a tribal society and its culture. Their social philosophy, though nowhere explicitly set forth, everywhere suggests a robust optimism born of the secular hopes of a heroic age tampered however by the depressing pessimism of the Jains and their like.

The history of the Tamils to a careful student thereof will not fail to reveal the uniqueness of its nature. The geographical isolation in the far south saved it from the depredation of continental conquerors but equally insulated them from the desirable winds of cosmopolitan change. It protected them from invaders but confirmed them in a view of the sufficiency and superiority of their cultural armour, which even today inhibits free intercourse with alien modes and creates a philosophy of purism which is a euphemism, for inbreeding.

The political and social historian of the Tamils thus searches in vain for a meaning in this historical adventure which has lasted for three millennia. But the prospects for the historian of the art and letters of the Tamils is more promising, pleasant and profitable. Among the arts he has mastered and on which mankind dwells with justified admiration, rare heights are reached by architecture and by music, the more so the latter. The music of the Tamils of which one gets a classic account in the Epic of the Anklet is the true pride of the Tamil. From Sambandar to Thyagaraja and beyond one sees this glory. The literature which got its grammar from Tolkappiar, its typical beauty from Kapilar, its ethical pronouncements from Valluvar, and its epic grace from Kambar is not designed to be surpassed by any but the best in world literature. A people essentially gifted in the peaceful arts, whenever they indulged in the arts of war, politics and diplomacy wasted their time and energy; but when they settled down either to make a saree in Kanchi, a gold tinket in Tanjore or fine cotton garments in Uraiyur or set their nimble fingers to the strings of the yal or count the muse of poetry or to build a tower to protect a deity of their faith or cast that idol in bronze achieved rare and proud heights of glory to which the author of this account of their history wishes to dedicate it.

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