

GOVERNMENT MUSEUM, MADRAS

GUIDE

TO

THE IMPORTANT MONUMENTS

IN AND

AROUND PUDUKKOTTAI

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GOVERNMENT OF TAMIL NADU
1983

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BY

M. RAGHUPATHY, M.A., M.A., Dip. Anth.



DAKSHINAMURTI

Tiruvengaivasal

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ALANGUDI TALUK

PUDUKKOTTAI

Pudukkottai, formerly the State capital of Tondaiman rulers, is about 235 miles from Madras on the main line of Southern railway to Rameswaram. The town is situated in the valley of the Vellar— the historic river that formerly separated the *Konadu* and the *Kanadu*, the Cholas and the Pandyas, and the Tanjoreans and the Setupatis of Ramnad.

The former Pudukkottai State was bound by Tiruchirappalli, Tanjore and Ramanathapuram districts. It expanded by conquests at different times, and its boundaries have been determined by the history of the state. The state comprised an area of 1178 sq. miles, and was divided into 3 taluks, namely, the Alangudi taluk, the Kulattur taluk and the Tirumayam taluk.

The rivers that flow in the Pudukkottai area are only jungle streams, remain dry for a greater portion of the year. The rivers that worth mentioning are the Vellar, the Kundaru and the Pambaru. The Vellar originates in the Velamalai in the Marungapuri tract to the west of Pudukkottai and falls into the Bay of Bengal to the north of Manamelkudi in the Tanjore district, after a course of about 85 miles. The Kundaru takes its rise in the Kavinadu tank and after a course of about 5 miles falls into the Vellar river near Kadayakkudi. The Pambaru is the outflow of Perundurai tank in the Melur tract of the Tirumayam taluk. It joins the Vellar river near Arantangi and separates from it and flows again as an independent river, and dividing itself into five branches near Sundarapandiyapuram in the Tanjore district, falls into the Bay of Bengal.

Numerous hills and lofty rocks are to be found around Pudukkottai. The important among them are the Piranmalai hills (1,800'), the Narttamalai hills, the Sevalur hills and the near Annavasal hills. Granite and Laterite (near Arimalam) are abundantly available for building purposes. Granite of fine quality for stone carving is also quarried in many places.

Though Pudukkottai area is poor in precious metals, it produces a few useful minerals like lime, Brick clay, Potter's clay, Bangle earth, Dhobie's earth, etc. Inferior varieties of Magnetic Iron Ores at Malampatti and Mica at Annavasal are also recorded.

The soil of the area is for the greater part 'Red Ferruginous'. According to local usage, the soil of this area is divided into six classes. (1) *Padugai*, (2) *Karisal*, (3) *Sevval*, (4) *Manal*, (5) *Saralai* and (6) *Kalar*.

Pudukkottai area was originally surrounded by thick forests. The southern portion of the State was called Kanadu (or the forest tract). The names of the Gods such as Atavisvarar or 'the lord of the forest' at Kulavaippatti, 'Talavanesvarar' or 'the lord of the palm forest' at Vaittur, and Venuvanesvari or 'the goddess of the bamboo reed forest' at Tirumayam testify to this fact. In course of time the forests were cleared and villages were established, a fact also established by the name of villages such as Mangadu (mango forest), Vadakadu (the northern forest), Kilankadu (wild apple forest), Kottaikkadu (the fort forest) and Alangadu (banyan forest). The traces of forests are still found by the numerous forests available in and around Pudukkottai for 'Game Shooting', among which the following names may be mentioned : (1) Senkarai forest, (about 17 square miles), (2) Narttamalai forest, and (3) Tiruvarankulam forest. In these forests very valuable and useful trees are available. The names of some of the forest trees are as follows:

On the level and low-lying portions there is a thick growth of *Memecylon* (காசா) which is hardly penetrable, and overhead are standards of *Mimusops*(பாலை), *Pterospermum* (சம்புலவு), *Albizzia amara* (உசிலை), *Dalbergia paniculata* (பச்சிலைமரம்), with a lower growth of *Atalantia* (காட்டெலுமிச்சை), and *Ixora parviflora* (சுழுந்து) at higher levels there are *Wrightia* (வெப்பாலை), stunted *Satinwood* (வன்மரம்), and *Nim* (வேம்பு), *Acacia Caesia* (வேலமரம்), *Mimosa rubicaulis* (வெள்வேலமரம்), *Zizyphus* (இலந்தை), *Carissa* (இலா), etc.

In the open tracts the undergrowth consists largely of prickly pear and the standards *Acacia latronum* (உடைவேலா) and *Albizzia amara* (உசிலைமரம்). Besides useful trees, it is rich in medical plants, herbs and roots. The Narttamalai hills are especially noted for such plants and roots.

About the Fauna of the area, there is nothing remarkable to mention. In the 'Reserve Forests' are found wild pigs, spotted deer, hares, porcupines and wolves. Foxes, jackals, wild cats, civet cats and monitor lizards are found in the Town forests. Among the game birds may be mentioned snipes, jungle-fowls, quails, partridges and several kinds of pigeons.

The history of Pudukkottai is an epitome of the history of South India. There are in and around Pudukkottai many vestiges of the oldest habitations of man, some of the oldest lithic records known in the South, and towns and villages renowned in the oldest books of the Tamil language. The Pandyas, Cholas, Pallavas, Hoysalas, Vijayanagar and Madurai Nayaks ruled over the State, fostered its communal organisations, trade and industries and embellished it with temples and monuments of outstanding merit. When the South felt the impact of the Muslim onslaught, this area was not spared. When Nayak rule at Madurai tottered, the Poligars plundered and ravaged the country for more than a century until the Tondaimans of Ambukkovil subdued them and carved out the former state of Pudukkottai.

There are two accounts now prevailing about the origin of the Tondaiman rulers of Pudukkottai. The Tondaimans of the ruling line are said to have come like the Pallavarayars from Tondaimandalam, comprising the present Chingleput and North Arcot districts. The Tondaimans belong to Kallar tribe that lived on the hills near Tirupati and skilful catchers of elephants. We may suppose that some of these were engaged by the Pallava Kings of Conjeevaram as *mahouts* or leaders of the Palace elephants, and that one of them with his people followed a Pallavarayar from Conjeevaram and had lands at Ambukkovil and some other villages assigned to him.

The Tondaimans are said to have for a time halted at Anbilnadu, a village to the east of Tiruchirappalli, South of Tanjore and north of Ramanathapuram, before they settled down at Ambukkovil. Along with the Tondaimans, nine other tribes settled in Anbilnadu. The distinguishing titles of the ten tribes are respectively the following :—

1. Manikkiran.
2. Panrikondran.
3. Pirppanrikondran.
4. Kaduvetti.
5. Menattaraiyan.
6. Pallavarayan.
7. Tondaiman.
8. Rangiyan.
9. Kaliyiran.
10. Porpanrikondran.

After setting at Anbilnadu, two more fresh tribes of Kallars joined with them. They are: —

1. Adaiyavalanjan. and 2. Kalingaran.

The whole body then moved in different directions and are said to have found the nine settlements (or Kuppams), the names of which are :—

1. Pilaviduthi.
2. Vadakkalur.
3. Kallakottai.
4. Karambakkudi.
5. Neiveli.
6. Narangiyanpatti.
7. Ammanippatti.
8. Panduvakkottai.
9. Mangalavellala Viduthi.

According to the account found in the legendry origin, the earlier Tondaimans are found in a Telugu poem called 'the Tondaiman Vamsavali'. which was written by a court poet of the name of Venkanna about 1750 A. D. According to the poem, Devendra,

King of Heaven during his tour on the earth, met a maiden, and married her. The woman gave birth to many sons, one of whom became a ruler. From him was descended the famous following line:—

1. Tiruma.	2. Namana.	3. Pacchai.	4. Dandaka.
5. Namana.	6. Tiruma.	7. Namana.	8. Pacchai.
9. Namana.	10. Pacchai.	11. Kinkini.	12. Dandaka.
13. Tiruma.	14. Pacchai.	15. Raya Tondaiman.	

While Sriranga Rayalu, King of Vijayanagar and the suzerain of Gingee, Tanjore and Madurai was touring or halting on his pilgrimage to Rameswaram, one of his elephants got out of control and caused great havoc. Avadai Raghunatha Tondaiman, son of Pacchai Tondaiman of Karambakkudi, captured the elephant with great skill, and conducted it to Sriranga Rayalu. The King was much impressed by this courageous act and conferred on Avadai Raghunatha Tondaiman the title of 'Raya' and also granted to him some lands and many insignias of distinction such as an elephant with *howdah*, a lion faced palanquin, the right to use torches in the day-time and a couple of bards to go in front of his palanquin singing his praises.

It is believed that there must have been some connection between Avadai Raghunatha Tondaiman and the Vijayanagar line of rulers, as in all the Copper-plates issued by the Tondaimans, Avadai Tondaiman is never mentioned by this name, but is always called 'Raya Tondaiman' who got the title of 'Raya' from (Sriranga) Rayar. The first Tondaiman ruler of Pudukkottai inherited the title and called himself Raghunatha Raya Tondaiman (1686–1730 A.D.). and some of his successors also adopted the title.

Raya Tondaiman had four sons of the names of Raghunatha, Namana, Pacchai and Peruma, and a daughter also of the name of Kathali.

Raghunatha Tondaiman and his brothers were bravemen, skilled in hunting. Raghunatha Tondaiman succeeded his father Raya Tondaiman as the ruler of the estates near Pilaviduthi under the title of *Raghunatha Raya Tondaiman*. He is said to have been born in 1641 and become ruler in 1661.

Vijayaraghava Nayak, King of Tanjore, hearing of the personal strength and courage of Raghunatha Raya Tondaiman is said to have invited him to his court and utilised him to check the lawless Kallars who infested the road to Rameswaram and attacked the pilgrims. He rose higher and higher in service and continued to hold his place with credit till a bout the close of Nayak rule in Tanjore about 1674. The Raja in appreciation of his services, presented to the Tondaiman a necklace with a pendant containing a diamond of the *Ramamadam* variety and a large State sword named '*Periya Rama Banam*'.

Raghunatha Raya Tondaiman helped in 1682 to Ranga Krishna Muttuvirappa Nayak to save the Tiruchirappalli Fort from falling in the hands of his enemies, and this victory brought the fame and position to him, and he was appointed as the Arasu-Kavalkar of Tiruchirappalli.

We shall see now how Raghunatha Raya Tondaiman became the ruler of Pudukkottai. (So far he was only a ruler to the estates of his father).

The Setupathi of Ramnad, Vijaya Raghunatha Kilavan Setupati (1673—1710 A.D.) hearing of the prowess of the Tondaiman, invited Raghunatha Raya Tondaiman and his brother Namana Tondaiman to Ramnad and engaged them in military service. These two are said to have been useful in subduing a number of Tevans (minor chieftains) who had been giving the Setupati a good deal of trouble, and thus secured the esteem of the Setupati. Raghunatha Raya Tondaiman is said have signalised himself by performing

two exploits which endeared himself to the Setupati. One of them was the capture of the state elephant of the Tanjore Kingdom with whose Raja the Setupati was engaged in hostilities. And the other exploit is said to have been the subjugation of the Palayakar of Ettaiyapuram.

At this time the Setupati fell in love with Kathali, sister of the Tondaimans, and married her. She is said to have been the second wife of Kilavan Setupati, who is known to have had more than 47 wives. She seems to have been much attached to her husband and committed *sati* on the death of her husband in 1710.

This marriage strengthened the ties of friendship between Tondaimans and the Setupati. About this time, according to the *Tondaiman Vamsavali*, one of the elephants of the Setupati got out of control and Namana Tondaiman is said to have captured it with great dexterity and boldness and prevented much bloodshed. This incident still further enhanced the esteem of the Setupati for the Tondaimans.

At this stage, the Tondaimans wanted to return back to their estates. It is said that the Setupati desired to present Raghunatha Raya Tondaiman with a *Palayam* and that it was suggested that the palayam of the Pallavarayans might be granted to the Tondaimans. The last Pallavarayar, Seventheluntha Pallavarayar, who had assumed the title of Raja like the king of Tanjore or the Setupati of Ramnad himself, seems to have held a small tract of land, to the south of the Vellar as a fief of Ramnad. Seventheluntha Pallavarayar, the ruler, was sommoned by Kilavan Setupati to appear before him. The Setupati was at Kalayarkoil, 10 miles east of Sivaganga, and the Pallavarayar halted at Kandadevi, about 4 miles from Kalayarkovil. The Pallavarayar was sent for ; but as he was then engaged in *puja* (to Siva) it was reported to the Setupati that the Pallavarayar, would start to see him on the completion of the *puja*. The Setupati was immensely provoked, abused the Pallavarayar for thinking more of his *puja* than of him liege lord, and, placing his son in his State elephant, directed him to march to Kandadevi and make an end of the Pallavarayar. The prince met him on the banks of a drinking water pond of Kandadevi and had him seized by his men. And the Pallavarayar, finding resistance useless, died with the curse on his mouth that the Setupatis should sooner or later lose all their sovereign rights. On hearing the death, the wives and children of the Pallavarayar are said to have committed suicide by throwing themselves into a pit in the Pallavan tank in front of the palace.

Foundation of the Pudukkottai Tondaiman line of rulers (1686).—The Setupati then sent for a gold palanquin, and, presented it to the Tondaimans, asked Ilandai Ambalakaran, a military officer under him, to take the Tondaimans to Dharma Pillai, the Setupati's agent at Tirumayam, and to arrange for Raghunatha Tondaiman's being installed as the ruler of the Pallavarayars' dominions. At this time a sword of honour is said to have been presented by the Setupati to Tondaiman which is known as Chinna Rama Banam and also a Valampuri Conch. (conch opening to the right.)

This is a short account of what is called the Setupati origin of the Pudukkottai State and the foundation of Tondaiman line of rulers. An examination on the whole question tends to show that it was a tract of land to the south of the vellar that the Tondaiman got from the Setupati, and later Raghunatha Raya Tondaiman stepped into the place vacated by the last of the Pallavarayars.

Origin of the Kulattur Tondaiman (1690).—About the time that Raghunatha Raya Tondaiman became the ruler of Pudukkottai, Namana Tondaiman (The second brother) became the ruler of Kulattur. The Palayakar of Nagalapuram (in Tirunelveli District) had become insubordinate to the power of the Nayak ruler of Madurai, and refused to pay the usual tributes. The Nayak ruler who had already received a substantial help from the Tondaimans directed them to proceed to Nagalapuram and bring its chieftain under subjugation. Accordingly Namana Tondaiman defeated the chieftain and some other Palayakaras who allied with him such as Puli Devan and Kattabomma Nayak and brought them again

under the rule of the Nayak of Madurai. He has also returned all the horses, elephants and presents that he won in the war to the Nayak ruler at Tiruchirappalli. The Nayak King Ranga Krishna Muttu Virappa (1682—89) was so much pleased with the way in which the affair was managed that he presented Namana Tondaiman with the tract of land about Kulattur from the lands that were directly under the rule of Nayak Kings. This 'free-gift land' did not become a portion of Raghunatha Raya Tondaiman's dominions, as Namana Tondaiman set himself up as a separate ruler. The attachment of Namana Tondaiman was so much towards Nayak ruler, he called himself Ranga Krishna Muttu Virappa Namana Tondaiman. He received from the Nayak King various presents and marks of distinction such as the use of flags (Hanumadhwaja and Garudadhwaja), use of torches in the day time, etc.

So about the year 1690, we find Ragunatha Raya Tondaiman ruling at Pudukkottai and Namana Tondaiman ruling at Kulattur. The letters of the Madura Mission to Rome speak of these as 'The Tondaiman' and 'Chinna Tondaiman'.

At this time, the Visenginadu Kallars appear to have been particularly given trouble to the Nayak rulers of Tiruchirappalli by their plundering expeditions. At the request of Nayak rulers, Namana Tondaiman encountered them at Puliyur, defeated them and cut off the heads of all important men.

Vijaya Ranga Chokkanatha Nayak, ruler of Tiruchirappalli, found the useful services of Tondaimans and retained them in his court. The suspicions and displeasure against the Kandalur chieftain, who had been for a time in disgrace, were revived by the Tondaiman who was apparently the personal enemy of the chieftain, with the result that the chieftain was deprived of his principality, which was transferred to the Tondaiman as a personal appanage. Avur and many other villages extending from Tiruchirappalli in the direction of the Kingdom of Madurai were made over in 1707 to the Tondaiman, as a favour by the Raja of Tiruchirappalli, whose favourite the Tondiman had become.

After acquiring the principality of Perambur and Kattalur (Kandalur), Namana is said to have had several encounters with the Kumaravadi chief (owners of Viralimalai tract), and, overcoming him, annexed Viralimalai to his dominion.

In this way Namana seems to have become the ruler of more or less the whole of the modern Kulattur Taluk. Namana Tondaiman, at this time, got the permission from the Nayak king to subdue Puchi Nayak of Marungapuri who had stopped the payment of annual tribute. The Tondaiman, with the help of his brother Raghunatha Raya Tondaiman of Pudukkottai, defeated him, and seized from him his capital Ammankurichchi and some other villages, which the Tondaimans were permitted to keep for themselves.

Namana Tondaiman was succeeded by his son Ramasami Tondaiman, who is known to have ruled till 1736 and died in that year. Ramasami Tondaiman, like his father, called himself after the Nayak ruler at the time Vijaya Ranga Chokkanatha Ramasami Tondaiman. He married Muttalakammal, one of the foster daughters of Mangammal (Queen Regent of Tiruchirappalli) and received as her dowry five villages.

Ramasami Tondaiman seems to have been a peaceful ruler, not caring for wars or extension of territory. The Servaikars of Andakkulam and Nanguppatti seem to have helped him greatly in keeping his *Palayam* in order and peace. For the convenience of the passengers to Rameswaram, he built two chattrams one at Kalamavur in 1728, for the maintenance of which the village of Pallattuppatti was set apart, and the other at Amma-chattram in 1730 in the name of his wife Muttalakammal, for the upkeep of which several villages were allotted.

Ramasami Tondaiman was succeeded by his son, Namana Tondaiman. Not much is known of this ruler. The fact seems to be that in his time, Pudukkottai had become very much more powerful than Kulattur and overshadowed it. Thus Kulattur was annexed

to Pudukkottai and ceased to be separate state about 1750. "Tradition on the subject simply says that the last ruler of Kulattur was sent to the Tirumayam Fort as a State prisoner. In all probability, the ruler thus dealt with was Namana Tondaiman, son of Ramasami Tondaiman".

Now let us look into formation and interesting places in Pudukkottai town.

Pudukkottai Town stands on sloping ground raising from the Vellar to a ridge north of the town. Its water supply comes from the north while the slope to the south facilitates drainage.

Originally the town was surrounded by thick jungles. The approaches to the town were through these jungles along three roads on the north, south, and west. On these roads stood gateways called *Vadi* at distances of three miles, two miles, and half a mile respectively from the town under the charge of a commander and a attachment. These outposts are still commemorated by the place names *Machuvadi*, *Kummandan* (commandant) *Vadi*, and *Puliva Vadi*. The town is skirted on the west by a line of low isolated rocks which supply excellent granite. Though no river flows through the town, it is within four miles of the Vellar and two miles of the Kundar on the south.

The town and its environs have a history dating back to prehistoric days. The extensive pre-historic burial sites on either side of the Tirukkattalai tract and the pre-historic sites with pottery un-burials in the Sadaiyapparai pottal, west of Tirugokarnam indicate that there was a populous settlement in the vicinity and grown into important settlement of the Chettiyar, Karala Vellalar, Maravars and Kallars.

The eastern portion was called Kalasamangalam, an important settlement of the Chettiyars, and the western of the town as Singamangalam. How these two towns perished or merged into the modern Pudukkottai town is not known; nor is it clear when the *Kottai* or fort after which it takes its name was built. The *Tondaiman Vamsavali* ascribes it to Raghunatha Raya Tondaiman (1686–1730 A.D.) but the existence of the fort is denied by Ramah Naik, the East India Company's Agent at Tanjore, who writing on 16th June 1754 observed, "there is neither stone nor mud wall." However, the Statistical Account of Pudukkottai (1813) refers to a fort three *naligais* or two and a quarter miles in circuit, with streets, houses and shops inside. Probably the fortifications would have been destroyed between 1732 and 1734 by Chanda Sahib or Ananda Row or by both during their invasion of the town. The palace referred to was probably that which is reported to have stood at the northern and after its demolition a new palace was built at Sivagnanapuram south-east of the town which then Raja used both as a palace and a hermitage, and where it is sometimes supposed that sage Sadasiva Brahmam came to initiate him into the higher truths of Vedantism.

The modern town which derives its name from a fort built round it in former years is now nearly 150 years old. The town originally consisted of irregular streets and narrow lanes of old-mud built and leaf thatched houses. In 1812 it underwent a baptism of fire in which it was nearly destroyed, and a new town, thanks to the wisdom of Raja Vijaya Raghunatha and Major Blackburne, arose phoenix like, on its ashes, with broad streets in intersecting square—a plan which has been preserved to this day in the town and its extensions with the Raja's palace in the centre.

The expansion of the town since its rebuilding in 1812 has been study and continuous and received considerable impetus during the administration of Sri Seshia Sastri (1878–1894). During his time several suburbs like Puducheri were brought into existence, the streets were relaid, tanks were deepened and cleaned, and a programme of public buildings was inaugurated and largely carried out. The town was constituted into a Municipality in 1912. (Fig. 1).

The places of worship, to a town of this size, are fairly numerous. The most important Saivaite temples are those of Sri Gokarnesvara-Brihadambal at Tirugokarnam and Santhanathaswami in the heart of the town. The principal festivals in the former are the *Dassara* and those in *Chitra* (April-May) and *Adi* (July-August) and in the latter in *Ani* (June-July). The Vaishnavite temples are of Varadharaja perumal in the eastern third street, of Venkatesaperumal on the banks of Aiyarkulam of Vitoba on the bank of Pallavankulam. Other places of Hindu worship are the *Ammankovils* dedicated to Ariana chiamman, Manomaniamman, Kamakshiamman, and recently constructed Bhuvaneswari amman ; the altars of Thadikonda Aiyanar, Singamuthu Aiyanar and Porpanaiyan ; the temples of Sundaresa and Sri Dakshinamurti (in the old Palace), a Mariamman temple on the confines of Tirugokarnam and Tiruvappur ; and Sri Venugopalaswami Kovil at Tiruvappur itself.

There are two churches in the town. The Protestant church (Fig. 2) is at the north end of the town and belongs to the Sweadish mission. It was built in 1905 and consecreated in 1906. The church of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, (Fig. 3) an elegant and spacious edifice, east of Marthandapuram is the principal church of the Pudukkottai Catholic parish. The foundation stone was laid in January 1908, the nave was completed in April 1911 and became the parish church in 1922.

There are two mosques, one in the town (Fig. 4) and the other at Tiruvappur. The town mosque is about a hundred and fifty years old, and is ascribed to one Mandra, who is also credited with having built some mandapas at Pallivasal in the Tirumayam taluk.

The *Darga* of Hazrat Shah parhezi Auliya is held in high veneration by the Muslims of the town. Parhezi Auliya a prince or chieftain of Yemen in Arabia, renounced the world and wandered about the countries of south-west Asia and India and at last settled in Pudukkottai in the first half of the 18th century. Many miracles were attributed to him. His sanctity attracted the notices of the Tondaiman ruler of Pudukkottai who held him in high esteem and had a tomb raised in his honour after his death. It is believed that his nephew and disciple also lies buried by the side of the Auliya.

There are many notable buildings and places of interest. The old palace (Fig. 5) is in the centre of the town inside a fort with thick and high ramparts. The old palace is now not used as a place of residence by the family of the Raja, and is being occupied by some government departments and private firms. This contains the shrine of Sri Dakshinamurti and the old Durbar hall. The new palace (Fig. 6) which was designed and built by one late Mr.Nilakanta Sastriar,a Special Engineer for the palace constructions, has a handsome appearance, with its well-dressed stone walls and Moorish cupolas. It was surrounded by a large park, with lawns and gardens, and there were tennis, cricket and foot-ball grounds, and a riding course. The building was first occupied in 1930.

The Public Offices building (Fig. 7) at the southern side of the Pudukkottai bus stand is a handsome two storied building constructed in the form of a hollow square (313 feet by 305 feet) with eight staircases, two of which lie inside towers rising 102 feet high. Herein are located the Sub-Collector's office, Court, the Sub-treasury, the State Bank of India, Government Branch Press, etc. In front of the Public Offices building stands a bronze statue of the late Raja Sir Marthanda Bhairava Tondaiman Bahadur.

The Raja's College is another important building with a Theatre hall, Library, Laboratory and an extensive sports ground with a pavilion. Besides, the Raja's College is a B.Ed., College (Fig. 8) with a newly constructed building.

The Town General Hospital is a specious building with extensive wards and operation theatre. It is equipped to meet the demands of modern hospital work, and has Pathological and Bacteriological, Radiological and Electro-theraphy, Ear, Nose and Throat, Dental and Opthalmic sections. The Ranee's Hospital, meant only for ladies, has airy and specious out-patient wards and lying in rooms.

Among other structures of note, may be mentioned the Barstor school, the Town Hall built by public subscriptions to commemorate the first audience that the late Raja Sir Marthanda Bhairava Tondaiman had with Queen Victoria at Windsor Castle on July 14th 1898 and the Victoria Jubilee Arch (Fig. 9) which is on the road to the Public Offices. Near the Jubilee Arch is the Gandhi (once Holdsworth) park with a clock tower maintained by the Municipality and the Municipal rest house called Satyamurti rest house.

The Tamil Nadu Government Museum at Tirugokarnam is an interesting and educative institution. It was started in 1910 by the Durbar of Pudukkottai. It is now functioning as a multi-purpose museum with the following Sections; Geology, Zoology, Botany, Arts and Industries, Anthropology, Ethnology, Epigraphy, Numismatics, Archaeology and Paintings. It has developed on modern lines largely in recent years and is worth visiting. It is open to the public on all days of the week except Mondays and Government Holidays.

It is a surprising matter to the visitor to note not less than 20 to 30 tanks to a town of its size, and the terms Aiyarkulam, Pillaikulam, etc. show how they owe thier existence to the charity of some Aiyars or Pillais who held high positions formerly in the land. Kummandan kulam near the bus stand is Commandant kulam and was excavated byCommandant Muthu-Nayakka. The largest of them is Pudukkulam (Fig 10) which lies at the south-eastern. end and constitutes the source of water now supplied to the town through the pipes. The workof repairing and renovating Pudukkulam was taken up in 1889. It was then calculated that by deepening and widening, it might hold 115 million gallons of rain water collected on a water-shed mostly under jungle, and therefore naturally free from the contamination of man and beast and supply the town with wholesome water from year's end to year's end' without fear of drought. The work of repairing the tank lasted off and on for seven years, and when it reached completion in 1894-95 it proved large enough to render a scheme of water-works possible for the town. On its southern bank are situated the water-works where water is filtered and pumped to the Machuvadi upland at the northern extremity from which it re-enters the town by natural gravitation.

The tank as it now stands as a pretty to see with its magnificent sheet of water enclosed by high and neatly turfed banks wide enough at the top to be a promenade and a drive. The father of all these improvements was Sir Seshia Sastri, who beautified the town by his four-fold programme of town improvement, relating to conservancy, town extension, tank repair, and the erection of public edifices of architectural value.

PORPANAIKOTTAI.

Porpanaikottai lies at a distance of four miles from Pudukkottai in the Alangudi route and six and a half miles in the Tiruvarankulam route. It is about one and a half miles to the north of Tiruvarankulam, and can be reached only by bi-cycle or by walk. But the Alangudi route is suitable for all conveyances.

Porpanaikottai is a place having a ruined fort round which a curious legend has gathered. The place derives its name, as the word implies from a fort in which according to the tradition there once stood a palm tree bearing gold fruits, but in the present Kaliyuga of sin and degeneracy has changed into one of the mandapas in the fort.

It is probable that the correct name was derived from Ponparappinankottai. Ponparappinan was title assumed by Bana chiefs. The original significance of the name having been lost, it was probably corrupted into *Ponpanai* (or *porpanai*) kottai, and the ignorant folk readily associated it with the legend of the golden palmyra tree supposed to have stood at Tiruvarankulam, a mile and a half to the south.

The fort is said to have been built in the form of the bird 'Garuda' (Brahminy kite) with its beak facing the east, and its wings outstretched north and south as in the Silpa Sastra lends support to this view, because the *garuda* was an emblem assumed by later Banas. The fort, therefore, may have been built in the 13th or 14th century, and, according to the Statistical Account of Pudukkottai (1813), the fort has fallen into decay by the first quarter of the 16th century. But the vestiges as well as tradition still remain, from which the following particulars are given.

The fort is truly a remarkable structure made out of square bricks and chunam plaster. The bricks used in the construction are about an English foot in length and breadth and four inches thick, being a marvel of strength, size, and durability. The circumference of its circumvallation is one mile and one furlong and the area occupied by the ramparts is 4 acres and that included within the fort is 43·87 acres. According to tradition the fort had 32 bastions, and moat which judged from the existing ditch-50 feet by 12 feet—which now lies to the north of the fort, must have been of formidable dimensions. It has had several gates the different names of which are still recognisable. Outside the fort is a pit called Surangapallam or the hollow of the secret way, said to communicate underground with Vallam near Tanjore. Inside the fort are traces of a building believed to have been the palace of a chief, and a half-filled pond, by name *Niravi*, supposed to have been used as a Teppakkulam. There are shrines on the four sides of the fort dedicated to Munisvara and Karuppar. The two temples of Munisvara claimed to be the original alters of the godling Munisvara who guarded the Gold palmyra tree are in the Eastern gateway and Western gateway. But of these two, the temple to the west is obviously the later building and must have been built not more than 100 years ago. This Munisvara (Fig. 11) is regarded as the pristine tutelary deity of Pudukkottai town and palace, whose, *ottam* or way across the town is still traced by knowing elders. To obstruct it by building or otherwise is considered to be highly inauspicious. The Munisvara in the Eastern gateway is made out of lime and mortar and is completely resembling in size the Western one. There are also shrines to this Munisvara in Pudukkottai town and within the Siva temple at Tiruvarankulam.

GOKARNESVARA TEMPLE IN TIRUGOKARNAM.

TIRUGOKARNAM is a suburb of Pudukkottai town and lies at a distance of two miles in Pudukkottai-Tiruchirappalli bus route. Here is the famous rock-cut temple of God Gokarnesa and a shrine of Goddess Brihadambal.

We learn from inscriptions that Tirugokarnam was one among the three *devadanams* that existed in Pudukkottai. As a *devadanam*, Tirugokarnam dates back to the seventh century if not earlier.

The rock-cut shrine of Gokarnesa belongs to the 'Mahendravarman epoch' (600-630 A.D.), and consists of a cubical cell with a rectangular veranda in front resembling the cave-temple at Sittannavasal and Kudimiyanmalai. The central shrine contains a *linga* in the centre which is massive and cylindrical. The veranda is supported by four pillars—two of them at either end being contiguous with the rock itself. The pillars, here, unlike those at Kudimiyanmalai are cubical at the extremities and octagonal in the centre. Above the pillars are corbels supporting the Architrave. The face of the bracket is curved and bears the usual Pallava roll ornaments. There are no *dvarapalakas* here; but the figures of the huge Ganesa on the south wall of the veranda and of Gangadharamurti (Fig. 12) on the north wall are typical Pallava sculptures. They are carved in bas-relief.

A steep portion of the rock was selected at Kudimiyanmalai and Sittannavasal to excavate the *ardhamandapa* and *garbhagriha*, but at Gokarnam rather a slope has been taken and a distance of more than five feet in the slope had to be chiselled off before reaching a sufficient height in the rock to form the pillars with their capitals, etc. On the rock face to the south-east of the rock-cut cell are in bas-relief the figures of the Saptamathrikas (Fig. 13) with Ganesa and another God who may be identified as Virabhadra or Muni on either side. The *mahamandapa* and the other *mandapas* built of cut stones in front of the central rock-cut shrine belong to the Chola and Pandya periods.

The shrine of Sri Brihadambal seems to be a very late structure, probably renovated within the last two centuries. The absence of any inscription on its walls bears out this conclusion. The Goddess is the tutelary deity of the Tondaiman rulers who consequently styled themselves 'Sri Brahadambadas' or the servants of Sri Brihadambal. In this temple they are installed and it is in the name of this Goddess that the Pudukkottai State coin called the Amman cash was struck. The large *mandapa* in front of the Amman shrine, and the corridor (Fig. 14) leading into the temple from the street belong to the 'Madurai' style. The pillars in the large *mandapa* contain beautiful figures of Rati-Manmata, Ravana, (Fig. 15), etc. On the pillars of this *mandapa* are figures in high relief of chiefs and nobles who have not yet been satisfactorily identified. Within the temple are shrines to Bakulavanesvara, in the form of a linga, Sri Mangalambika and Dakshinamurti. On top of the rock-cut shrine are those of Subrahmanya, Durga, Lakshmi, Sarasvati, Bhairava, Jvaraharesvara (Fig. 16) or the 'Destroyer of fever'. At the base of a *Bakula* (Mimusops elengi) tree within the temple is a small image of Sri Sadasiva Brahmendra.

The principal festivals in this temple are the Dassara, and those in Chitra (April-May) and Adi (July-August).

The Sthalapurana of the temple has a well-known legend relating to the God and to the tarn on to the rock, celebrated in local ballads, and dance-songs. The cow of the story was Kamadenu, the giver of all objects of desire like the fabulous horn of plenty, who happening to arrive late one day at Indras Court was banished from the celestial spaces and condemned to live the life of an ordinary cow on earth until such time as she might take to expiate her sins by worshipping God Gokarnesa. On coming below, she sought he hermitage of sage Kapila situated in the *Bakula* flower jungle at this place, and under

his guidance performed daily worship to the idol of Gokarnesa under the *bakula* tree; and hard penance did she do for her sins, for every day she tramped to far away Ganges, and brought its sacred water in her ears for the God's ablution (hence the God is called Gokarnesa or the Lord of the cow's ear). In due course she became a dam, but stifling motherly instincts she still performed her daily journey leaving her tender calf to whine and bellow at the temple gate. But soon came the time for her salvation, and as she returned one day at nightfall with the sacred water in her ear, God Gokarnesa taking the shape of a tiger stood across her path at a place since called Tiruvengaivasal (the tiger's gate) and demanded from her tiger's food. On remonstrating that it was time for the ablution of the God, she was let go but on condition she returned immediately after the worship was over. When the cow came back according to her promise, the seeming tiger changed its shape, and Siva and his consort Parvati, manifested themselves on their bull *vahana*, and carried the cow to heaven. According to a variation in the story the tarn in the hill behind was cut by the cow with its horn and stored with the Ganges water from its ear, and a cleft on the top of the linga is the hoof-print left by her as she bathed the idol in the sacred water.

There are many recorded inscriptions in this temple in Pallava-Grantha and Old Tamil characters. On the south wall of the rock-cut shrine is a fragment of inscription of a single Sanskrit line inscribed in Pallava-Grantha characters which reads, 'Stapanacharya-Bhavatacharya' meaning 'Bhagavatacharya who was religious teacher and founder'. On the same south wall of the shrine is an inscription in Old Tamil character, dated in the 17th year of the Pandya King Maranjadaiyan (781-82 A.D.), which records a gift of fifteen *Kalanju* (a customary gold weight) of gold which was collected by begging, for maintaining an everburning lamp (nanda-vilakku) to the Madevar (the Lord) in the temple at Gokarnam in Tiruvetpur by Varagunavati Araiyan alias Nakkan cetti of Karkurichchi, (present Tirukkattalai near Pudukkottai) a Kavippal (Kavir district) of Valla-nadu. This god was placed under the protection of the *nattar*–the local administrative body of the Nadu or district. It is important to note that a *nanda-vilakku* is still being maintained in this temple.

The earliest Chola inscription in the temple belongs to the reign of Rajakesarivarman. On the south face of the third pillar (from the right) in front of the rock-cut central shrine is a Tamil inscription of Chola period belonging to the 9th year of the King Rajarajakesarivarman (Rajaraja I) (992-3) which records a gift of land for the upkeep of the tank called Kavirkkulam at Tiruvetpur in Tenkavirnadu by a Brahmin of Merkillimangalam, a *Brahmadeya* of Tenkarai Tiruvalundur-nadu of Sonadu (Chola Country).

An inscription in Tamil belonging to the reign of Raja Raja III (1236 A.D.) is on the rock to the left of the steps leading to the spring. It is slightly defaced. It records a gift of land for providing offerings and an everburning lamp to Tirukogarnam-Udaiya Nayanar, for the merit of the sons of Somaladeviyar, mother of Somisvaradeva, son of Hoysala Vira Narasingadeva of Dvarasamudram. This marks the close connection between the later Cholas and Hoysalas. The famous Vijayanagar Emperor Krishna Deva Raya in his Triumphal march about 1518-19 in the South visited Tirugokarnam, and worshipped Gokarnesa and Brihadambal, to whom he presented many valuable jewels.

SUNDARESVARA TEMPLE IN TIRUKKATTALAI.

Tirukkattalai is a small village nearly four miles to the east of the town of Pudukkottai. Tirukkattalai is the corrupt form Tirukarrali—the sacred stone temple. The village is mentioned in its early inscriptions as Karkurichchi Tirukarrali. This sacred stone temple is a Siva temple, and the main deity of the temple, now called Sundaresvara, is referred to in early inscriptions as *Karkurichchi Karralipperuman adigal* or the Lord of the stone temple of Karkurichchi. The present name of Tirukkattalai can be traced in a Vijayanagar inscription of the 15th century in which the main deity is called Tirukkattalai Isvara mudaiyar. Sundaresvara temple is the only temple in Pudukkottai area which has all the characteristic features of the architectural style of the early Chola period in its pristine glory, unimpaired.

The temple faces the east and a tank is seen in front of it outside the wall of enclosure. The temple is now approached both from the east gateway and the south gateway. The latter was newly made by a opening in the southern wall of enclosure.

The Sundaresvara temple (Fig. 17) is a structural temple from the basement to the finial. It consists of a *garbhagriha*, an *ardhamandapa* attached to it in front, the seven subshrines of *Parivara-devas* and the boundary wall round them and they seem to be the only structures that were originally constructed. All the other structures, the *mukhamandapa* attached to the *ardhamandapa* and the shrine for the Goddess standing to the north of the central shrine appear to have been subsequently added. This is clear when the structural style of the *mukhamandapa* and the shrine of the Goddess in one hand and the *garbhagriha* and *ardhamandapa* in the other being compared. Moreover the latest king mentioned in inscription of the main shrine is the Chola King Kulottunga I (A.D. 1070-1118) and the earliest inscription in the *mukhamandapa* is the Chola King Kulottunga III (A.D. 1178-1216). From this it is inferred beyond doubt that the shrine of Goddess and the *mukhamandapa* should have been constructed during the interval of nearly a century.

The *vimana* over the central shrine is two storeyed structure. The *vimana* is square. Below the *stupi* and *simhalalatas* and in the tier below are two rows of niches, one above the other; those on the south contain seated figures of Dakshinamurti and of Bhikshatanamurti, those on the west figures of Varaha and Vishnu and those on the north two figures of Brahma. The corbels are fluted, and over them is a line of rampant *yalis*. The figure in the southern niche of the outer wall of the *garbhagriha* is peculiar. Usually, in all Siva temples of South India, this niche is occupied by Dakshinamurti. But here is figure holding a bow and arrow instead of usual *vina* which makes us to identify as Tripurantakamurti. However this is an interesting feature and an uncommon feature to note in Siva temples. The niche in the western wall contains a figure of Lingodbhava and that on the northern wall a figure of Brahma.

The *ardhamandapa* connects the *garbhagriha* and the *mukhamandapa* in front of it. There are two standing *Dvarapalakas* on either side of the outer entrance of the *ardhamandapa*. Both of them are standing with two arms and they face east. Both have *jatamakutas*, and *yajnopavita* in the form of rolled cloth and wear large *patrakundalas* in their ears. The right hand of the figure on the southern side has the *tarjani* pose and its left hand rests on the hip. The face of the northen figure is slighty mutilated. Its trunk is turned towards the entrance. Its right hand rests on the hip ; the left one in *vismaya* pose. The two figures measures 5 feet 6 inches in height each exclusive of the basement.

All round the main shrine and close to the walls of the enclosure are the sub-shrines for the *parivaradevatas*— Surya, Saptamatrikas, Ganesa, Subrahmanya, Jyesthadevi, Chanina (Fig. 18) and Chandikesvara. The shrine of the Saptamatrikas (Fig. 19) is rectangular d shape and has a wagon-type roof. Among these deities the figure of Surya (Fig. 20) is peculiar. Of its two arms the left hand rests on the hip and the right in *abhaya* pose. The usual lotus bud is not shown in the hands as in other Surya figures. The existence of seven *parivaradevatas* instead of eight in their respective sub-shrines is a feature peculiar to early Chola temple.

There are twelve inscriptions relating to this temple, of which one is mutilated, eight are Chola, one Pandya, and two Vijayanagar. Inscriptions of the fifteenth century dated in the reigns of Vijayanagar Emperors show that the village was under the immediate rule of the Pallavarayars of Vaittur—Perungalur. Srirangan Pallavarayar and Vilitturangum Pallavarayar are among the donors to the temple. Karkurichchi was then an important *Padaipparru* or military station.

ARANKULANATHA TEMPLE IN THIRUVARANKULAM

Thiruvarankulam is five miles from Pudukkottai, and lies on the Alangudi road. It is noted for its fine ancient temple to Haratirthesvara (Arankulanathar). Arankulanatha is in the form of a *linga* which is Svayambuva.

The temple of Sri Haratirthesvara and Amman Sri Brihadamba is not only ancient but also imposing in Pudukkottai area and held in high veneration by devotees far and near. It has been the object of worship and benefaction of rulers and citizens from early times, and the inscriptions in the temple are the authority for the statement. The *garbhagriha* of Sri Haratirthesvara (Arankulanathar) may be assigned to the beginning of the late Chola period. The pilasters above the plinth have simple *idals* without petals, the *palagais* are large, the *corbels* (*podigai*) are tenon shaped and bevelled. On top of each *palagai* are two *yalis* standing on their hind legs as if supporting the architrave above. Above the pilasters is a line of *bhutaganas* supporting a convex moulded cornice. The *kudus* in the cornice are formed of foliage scrolls with human head figures within. There are niches in the walls. The niche on the south has a finely carved figure named Vinadhara Dakshinamurti (Fig. 21). But the figure is not holding the usual Vina in the hands. The figure is more or less in the same type as found in Sundaresvara temple at Tirukkattalai. The figure is in the standing pose, and the left arm holds a bow. It seems like a Tripurantakamurti. However, the *kudu* above the niche contains a figure of Yogadakshinamurti. If the figure in the southern niche is taken as Dakshinamurti, the pose of Dakshinamurti is unusual and attractive and draws the attention of the archaeologists. The niche on the west contains Lingodbhava and that on the north one Brahma. The western niche is surmounted by the figure of Subrahmanya with Valli and Devasena, and the northern niche with a bhutagana.

The *garbhagriha*, *ardhamandapa* and *mahamandapa* are of the same style. The earliest inscription in the central shrine is dated in the 40th year of Kulottunga Chola III corresponding to A.D. 1218-19. The *garbhagriha* and the two *mandapas* in front are surrounded by a hundred pillared *mandapa* which was according to the Statistical Account of Pudukkottai (1813) erected by one Gopulingam a Chola minister(?). Along the walls of the southern cloister are the figures of the 63 Saivaite saints. In this hundred pillared *mandapa* are sub-shrines of Ganesa, Lakshmi, Subrahmanya, Bhairava, Surya, etc. In the front part of the hundred pillared *mandapa* are the processional idols which are considered to be fine specimens of late Chola or early Pandya bronzes. From this *mandapa* one has to pass through the second gopura eretced by a Gangaiyaraya chief. This gopura is in the Pandya style with polygonal pilasters, *idals* with petals spread out, thin *palagais* and corbels with *pushpapodigai*. There is a long corridor between the second gopura and the first or the main gopura. The roof of the corridor is supported by massive monolithic pillars (*aniyottikal*) with carved lions on top. These pillars are elaborately sculptured with figures of donors—Valanad Chettiyars, local chieftains, etc. Among the many names found in the inscriptiions of donors contributing to the lighting, festivals, etc., of the temple that of one Arsagandaraman (alias Samantanar Semappillaiyar) persistently recurs. His birthday asterism is said to be Satabhishaj in the month of Purattasi. He built the old kitchen, and the Vinayaka shrine ; brought a flower garden, instituted services and festivals, and provided everburning lamps, torches, etc., for his merit and in his name. One of these, figures sculptured on the southern wall is that of Kattudaiyan Chettiyar who is believed to have built this *aniyottikal mandapa*. This is also called Nakshatra (star) *mandapa* in which the signs of the zodiac are sculptured in the middle part of the ceiling. To the north of the *mandapa* are the *sabhamandapa* or the "Hall of Dance".

A separate enclosure for the Amman shrine which is much simpler than that of the God. The architectural features of the Amman shrine mark the transition from the Chola to the Pandyan epoch. The *yalis* and the *bhutaganas* found in the central shrine are absent here. The Amman shrine or the hall where the Goddess is installed, as per the earliest inscription found in this shrine which dates to the 39th year of Kulottunga III (1217-18) was constructed by Kannudayaperumal, queen of the Nisadaraja Chief of Piranmalai and daughter of the Nisadaraja chief of Piranmalai and daughter of the Nisadaraja chief of Ponnamarava.ti

The main gopuram (Fig. 22) may be assigned to a late period in the Pandya epoch, and has the decorative pilaster motifs. There is an inscription on the wall of this gopuram in Telugu mentioning that a *kumbhabhiseka* was performed by Raja Ramachandra Tondaiman Bahadur.

There are 65 interesting inscriptions in this temple belonging to the reigns of Kulottunga III, Sema Pillaiyar, the emperors of the second Pandya dynasty, Vijayanagar emperors and Nayak chiefs, Vijayalaya Tevars, the Tondaiman of Arantangi, the Pallavarayars of Vaittur Perungalur, and the Tondaiman rulers of Pudukkottai. The informations that are recorded in the inscriptions convey an idea of the affluence of the temple in the past--its rich and costly jewels, festivals, cars used for the procession of deities, and lands and gardens endowed to meet the expenses of daily worship. How prosperous the temple was is seen in Pudukkottai State Inscription 607, which records that the residents of Vallanad unable to pay arrears of taxes for nine years amounting to 11,000 *kasus* mortgaged a jewel of the God, and with the money thus raised paid the taxes, and in return conveyed lands to the temple. There are 8 inscriptions reveal the agreements reached in the temple by the rival parties and compacts entered into by them not to engage in fighting in future. An inscription dated A.D. 1218-19 says that the local assembly met within the temple. It has continued to meet there in the succeeding centuries, and the caste "panchayats" of the Kallars and of the Chettiyars of Vallanad continue to meet in the temple. A sixteenth century inscription (P.S.I.746) refers to a Saiva *matham* situated in the south street then called *Vallanadan perunderu*.

Among the objects of interest in the southern cloister of the hundred pillared *mandapa* is a slab (Fig 23) with the figures of a raider on horse-back and his attendants, bearing the inscription which can be translated as—' Hail ! Prosperity !. Vijaya Raya Mindar, also called Kandiyadevar of Rajendram, the servant of Vira-Pratapan'. It is not clear to whose servant he proclaims himself to be. Vira Pratapa is one of the titles assumed by the Vijayanagar chiefs of Penukonda, and the title being such a common one, it is quite possible that some of Nayak or Tamil chiefs assumed it. The idol of Ganesa in the western entrance to the temple is supposed to be directly in the path and effulgence Porpanaikottai Muni.

To the north of the shrine, about a furlong and opposite to the Union Office, are three shrines for Kali, Karuppar and Thaiyal Ammai. The small temple of Thaiyal Ammai contains a male and a female figure made out of stucco. The male figure is small and is sitting on the lap of the female figure. But the local version is that is the baby of Thaiyal Ammai. The story is that a Paraiya disguishing himself as a Sudra was appointed Peishkar (manager) of the temple, that being detected he was killed, that a concubine of his, belonging to the dancing-girls' caste, out of grief at his death committed suicide, and both were deified after death. They are now worshipped as Pattavans by the Melakars (pipers) of the place.

The following account of the legendry origin of the temple is taken from an old Tamil prose manuscript.

A Rishi (sage) who was doing penance in these forests happened to restore one day to a *vedan* (hunter) his wife whom he had lost in the woods ; and out of gratitude, the hunter brought him every day some tubers and fruits to eat. The hunter was in his turn amply rewarded for his service, for a palm tree sprang up miraculously in the jungle, and dropped a fruit of pure gold every day at the hunter's feet, as he brought food to the hermit. But unaware of the nature of the godsend he parted with it all to a Chetti at Kanappettai near Valnad for some rice, salt, chillies, and tobacco. So a dozen years passed, and the Chetti had amassed no less than 4,420 of these gold fruits.

At this time the Chola King-Karikala who held sway over these parts had built a fort near Tiruvarankulam in fear of an amazon Queen Tatakai who ruled over these jungles. Our hunter discovering his stupidity one day demanded additional payment of the Chetti and being refused was seen by the Chola King to pass in tears along the streets of his town. Soon an inquiry was made and the miraculous fruits were examined and found to be pure

gold. The hermitage of the sage was sought but both he and the palm tree had vanished and in their place stood a linga. It also happened that a shepherd who carried milk for the King's use from Kadayakkudi stumbled every day at this hallowed spot, and broke his milk pot over the linga, thus unconsiously bringing about the daily ablution of the idol with cow's milk. When the shepherd one day examined the spot of his daily mishap with pick-axe and spade, he inadvertently cut the linga on the head and the cut may be identified to this day on the idol-and was horrified to find blood issue from the fissure. Now it was clear to the King that temple was necessary to the God, and he was glad to learn that the Chetti of the golden fruits was himself willing to build one at his expense in six months. After completing the temple in this manner and providing it with a car and some jewels, 3,000 of the gold fruits were still left and they locked up in the temple cellars.

According to the same Tamil authority, the image of this temple God was once attacked when taken round in procession, by the Maravars who had assembled at Suraikkudi, and honours were bestowed on those who defeated the impious foes. The said authority also accounts for the present connection of Paraiyans with the temple. It would appear that the temple car once struck fast, and the axle-tree broke as often as an attempt was made to drag it. Thereupon the God appeared in a vision and apprised the devotees that the car could be moved only when a Paraiyan riding on a white elephant broke the cocoanut offering, and touched the car ropes.

According to another account also current in the place Kamashapadaga Maharajah, son or descendant of Karikala Chola is divinely directed to this locality that he may be blessed with a son for whom he had prayed. He builds a fort and capital at Porpanaikottai near it (See under *Porpanaikottai*), and in the course of his exploration of the country in search of the *linga* discovers it under a golden palm with the help of the shepherd of the story. The Chetti who is in possession of the fruits is a native of Kalasapuram, and is made to disgorge his plunder under kingly pressure ; the king himself being the builder of the temple. The palm has also, in this account, a legend of its own. It was originally Siva's umbrella bearer, Pushpagandan by name, who, for dereliction of duty was condemned to a mundane life. He was directed to this spot on earth, as it had become consecreated by the *Haritirtha* tank into which once fell the Ganges water that was shed from Siva's locks. He was also doomed to a fourfold life-that of a *Vembu* (nimbavana) in the first Yuga (age), of Kattati (identified with a tree of this kind that now stands on the bank of the *Haritirtha* tank within the temple) in the second Yuga, of a gold palm (porpanai) in the third Yuga, of a stone *mandapa* in the present age. The *mandapa* now built over the idol in the temple is believed to be this deva. Whatever the puranic story, one fact stands out-which points to an original connection of the temple with the men of the Idayan (Shepherd) and Chetti castes ; and this is strengthened by the circumstance that at present, in the annual festivals the Idayans are called the bridegroom's (the God's) family, and the Chettis the bride's (the Goddess's) family, and this latter connection is further explained by the story of the Chetti girl who mysteriously disappeared as she was worshipping in the temple one day, and the voice of God was heard to say that He had taken her unto Himself.

KULATTUR TALUK

SIVA TEMPLE IN KALIYAPATTI.

Kaliyapatti is a small village ten miles from Keeranur and 25 miles from Pudukkottai, and is situated on the Pudukkottai Keeranur-Kilikkottai bus route.

On the foreshore of a so-called Samadikulam near Kaliyapatti is a small but an interesting Siva temple. It is one of the earliest stone temple built in the Chola period. This is considered to be one of the best among the single-storeyed temples of Vijayalaya's age.

This Siva temple (Fig. 24) faces the east. It is a compact structure containing intact the *garbhagriha*, the *griva* and the *sikhara*. The *stupi* and the *ardhamandapa* have disappeared. The entire structure is built of well dressed granite blocks from basement to finial.

The central shrine (*garbhagriha*) is eight feet square. Its walls are one and a half foot in thick. They are adorned with pilasters, four on each side. Their brackets have an angular profile similar to those of the Vijayalaya Cholisvaram at Narttamalai and the Siva temple at Tiruppur. There are no niches on the walls of the central shrine to house the usual deities. The cornice has, on each side, two *kudus*, well adorned with scroll-work. Each corner of the cornice ends with a beautiful scroll called *kodikkarukku*. A frieze of *yalis* runs above this cornice. Higher up is a square *griva* with four niches one on each side adorned with *kudus* above. These and the four corners of the *sikhara* are ornamented with scrolls of uncommon elegance and charm.

The *sikhara* is four-sided and curvilinear resembling those of the Muvarkovil at Kodumbalur. There is a layer of *ratnapitha*, and above it a *padmapitha*. The *stupi* which adorned it is missing and its style should have been similar to that of the Muvarkovil.

Of the *ardhamandapa*, the moulded basement alone is found in continuation of the plinth of the *garbhagriha*. The basement of the *nandimandapa* and traces of the usual seven sub-shrines can be seen ; also the basement of the front gateway and of the walls of enclosure enclosing the whole set of shrines.

The nandi figures lying on the floor should have once adorned the four corners of the *griva* and the image of Dakshinamurti of the southern niche of the *vimana* also lies on the ground.

The temple which was badly out of plumb has now been repaired, the idols of Brahma, Vishnu and Dakshinamurti have been restored to their respective niches in the *griva* of the *vimana*, and two of three stone bulls discovered in the site have been placed at the corners of the top of the shrine and the third on a pedestal in front of the temple.

The inscription found in the southern wall of the *garbhagriha* is important. This inscription is palaeographically assigned to the 9th or early 10th century. Thiru S. R. Balasubrahmanyam has identified that the inscription is of the 18th year of Parakesarivarman, who is none other than Vijayalaya Chola, and fixed the date of the inscription as A.D. 868.

MUVAR KOVIL
IN
KODUMBALUR.

Kodumbalur lies about 25 miles from the town of Pudukkottai, and is a famous place of ancient renown in Tamil Nadu State, on the road to Kudimiyanmalai and Manaparai. It is said in the *Silappadikaram*, and earliest Tamil epic of the golden age of Tamil literature, to have been situated in a strategic position of importance on the high road then in use between Uraiyur, the Chola capital, and Madurai, the capital of the Pandyas. The Tamil work *Periapuranam* calls it the chief city of Konadu, Konattuk-kodinagaram. It was formerly a flourishing capital city ruled by a dynasty of Velirs called Irukkuvels, who were connected by blood with the Cholas but politically were subordinate to them. Idangalinayanar, who is reversed as one of the 63 Saivaite saints and mentioned in the *Tiruthandakam* by Sundaramurti was a King of this Velir dynasty. He was the patron of the Saivas, and an ancestor of the Chola King Vijayalaya, the founder of the Imperial Chola line, and his son Aditya were connected with this dynasty. Another prince of the line was Bhuti Vikrama Kesarin who built the *Muvarkovil*.

Kodumbalur has taken different names at different times such as Irukkuvelur (the town of the Irukkuvels), and Mangammal Samudram in recent times, when it was given away as an *inam* by Queen Mangammal to Dalavoy Lakshmi Narasayya on the birth day of Vijaya Ranga Chokkanatha. However its present name Kodumbalur is its oldest denomination which has persisted through the centuries.

Kodumbalur is mentioned as the scene of an engagement in the 8th century in which the Pandya King Maravarman Rajasimha (c. 740-765 A.D.), defeated the Pallava King Nandivarman Pallavamalla. The Sendalai records which are full of the exploits of Perumbidugu Suvaran Maran-Muttaraiya chief and a contemporary and ally of Pallavamalla–identify him with *Satrubayankara*, and attributes a victory at Kodumbai (*Kodumbalur*) as having defeated the Pandyas and Cheras. *Satrubayankara* means "the terror of enemies", and is almost synonymous with *Satrukesari* meaning "a lion to his enemies". The Sanskrit inscription (No. 14 in the Pudukottai State Inscriptions–1929) in Grantha characters in the Muvarkovil gives the genealogy of the Irukkuvels from a King whose name is unfortunately illegible to Bhuti Vikramakesari, perhaps the greatest of them all. He was a contemporary of Madurantaka Sundara Chola Parantaka II and Aditya II.

The Irukkuvels as the staunch allies and vassals of the Cholas, helped them in all their battles. The Sinnamanur plates of the sixteenth year (c. 916 A.D.) of the Pandya Rajasimha II give an embellished account of a surprise victory that he won over the Velir forces at Kodumbalur in a war which ended, however, in the triumph of the Chola Parantaka I and his Velir ally. During the Pandya wars in the reign of Sundara Chola Parantaka II, one of the commanders of the Chola forces was prince Parantakan Siriya Velir of Kodumbalur. In the reign of Raja Raja the Great, another Kodumabalur chief marched on an expedition to the north, evidently to Nolambapadi and Gangapadi, now parts of Karnataka State. We do not hear much of the Irukkuvels after the reign of Rajendra I, and nothing remains now of the past glory of Kodumbalur except the Muvarkovil and Muchukundesvara temples.

There is a Kannada inscription on three stones built into the bund of the holy tank in front of the Muchukundesvara temple. It mentions Vikramakesari-griham, which name must refer to the Muvarkovil.

On the south wall of the central shrine of Muvarkovil is a Sanskrit inscription in *Grantha* character which gives the genealogy of nine generations of the Irukkuvel chiefs of Kodumbalur. The date of inscription has to be assigned to 10th century A.D. The inscription is mutilated both at the beginning and the end. The extant portion consists of 24 lines comprising eleven full stanzas in Sanskrit in various metres, and fragments of two others, one at the opening and the another at the end. The inscription occupies a wall space 4·10"

in height and a pilaster in the wall, bears no letters, divides each line into two parts of the length of 2′ 8″ to the left of it and about 1′ 5″ to the right. The size of the letters is well over an inch, the ligatures sometimes even reaching two inches. The inscription ends with the name of a chief called Bhuti Vikramakesarin and tells that he had two wives named Karralippirattiyar and Varaguna, and had by his first wife two sons called Parantakavarman and Adityavarman.

The Muvarkovil was built by this Bhuti Vikramakesarin (a feudatory of Sundara Chola) at Kodumbalur and has nothing to do with the three kings of the South as is generally supposed or with the three Saiva saints Appar, Sambandar and Sundarar. An inscription at Kodumbalur tells us explicitly that the three shrines were actually built by the chief Vikramakesarin in his own name and in the names of his two wives. Having built three shrines (*vimanas*) in his own name and in the names of his two wives, he set up Mahesvara (Siva) and presented to a big *matha* (brihan-matham) to Mallikarjuna of Madurai who was the chief ascetic of the Kalamukha (sect) with eleven villages for feeding fifty ascetics of the Kalamukha sect.[The Kalamukha sect is a division of Saivism. The Kalamukhas appear to be so called because they marked their forehead with a black streak, and they are said to be born of *nara* (human) and *rakshasa* (demonical) parents. The Kalamukhas teach that the means of obtaining all desired results in this world as well as the next are constituted by certain practices such as using a skull as a drinking cup, smearing oneself with ashes of the dead body, eating the flesh of such a body, carrying a heavy stick, setting up a liquor-pot and using it as a platform for making offerings to the Gods, and the like. A typical Kalamukha is wearing a bracelet made of Rudraksha-seeds on the arm, matted hair on the head, a skull and smearing oneself with ashes]. Mallikarjuna belonged to the Atreya gotra and was the disciple of two teachers Vidyarasi and Taporasi.

The Muvarkovil holds an honoured place in the evolution of both South Indian architecture and sculpture. Originally there were three shrines side by side at the Muvarkovil temple. Out of these three, only two, the central and southern are now intact. Of the third or the northern shrine, the basement alone remains. Each shrine was composed of a *garbhagriha* and a closed *ardhamandapa* attached to its front. The three shrines stood side by side in a line with the distance of 13 feet apart from one to another. Each shrine is 21 feet square at the base with 32 feet high and the *ardhamandapa* measuring 18 feet square. All of them face west. There was a *mahamandapa* 91 feet by 41 feet, common to all the three shrines, and a *nandimandapa* the basement of which has now been exposed to view. In front of the *nandimandapa* is the base of what must have been either a *dvajastamba* or *balipitha*. Surrounding this group were 15 symmetrically arranged sub-shrines, each having a *garbhagriha* and an *ardhamandapa*, the basements of fourteen of which are now intact. Surrounding these sub-shrines was the *tirumadil* (boundary wall), a massive stone wall 3′ × 4′ in thickness with two openings, one underneath a gopura and another, near the north-eastern corner leading down by a flight of stone steps to a circular stone well 10 feet in diameter. It is very probable that there was a covered cloister all round the inside of the *tirumadil* linking together the sub-shrines.

Each of the existing two shrines is 32 feet high from ground level. They are built completely from basement to finial of well dressed gneiss blocks neatly and accurately fitted. Their walls are 5 feet in thickness. When viewed from inside the shrine chamber, the roof is seen to be composed of a number of courses of cut stones projecting one above the other.

The opening on top is closed by a single roof slab. According to the tradition and report, the stones of the fort of this place were transported to Tiruchirappalli for the building of the Tiruchirappalli fort, and the materials of the Muvarkovil were used for the construction of the 'fresh-water pond' in front of the Muchukundeswara temple in this village, of a calingula in Minavelli village, and of the Siva temple in Tiruchirappalli.

The plinth of each of the three central shrines rests on a lotus base. The *kumudam* is curvilinear as in all early temples, and above it runs a frieze of *vyalas* with projecting *makhara* heads, with human figures sporting inside their gaping mouths. At each of the corners a *makhara* head juts out with its snout coiled up and with a *gandharva*. The walls are decorated with a series of tetragonal pilasters crowned with *kumbam*, *kamalam* and *palagai* successively. The *palagai* is large and massive, as in late Pallava and early Chola temples. The capitals are adorned with elegant scroll-work. The corbels are brackets with angular bevelling, and the lower surfaces of the bracket-capitals is decorated with horizontal rows of roll ornament with a slightly raised band in the middle. But these rolls are not uniform as the Pallava structures. One of them in each corbel curves inwardly.

The walls in the exterior side are provided with niches in the middle. Over the niches in the walls are curved in low relief arched *toranas* springing from the mouths of a pair of *makharas*. On top of the walls and below the cornice runs a frieze of *bhutaganas*, a sort of cherules playing on different kinds of musical instruments. Above the wall runs a cornice which is as in the Pallava structures, thick and single arched and ornamented at close intervals along its whole length with *kudus* crowned with trifoliated, finials instead of the spade shaped finials, found in the Pallava structures. In addition to this, the cornice in all its corners and the *kudus* in it are carved with scroll work and its lower edge is also carved throughout its length with a series of small semi-circles simulating lotus petals. Over the cornice are the *vyalavari* with heads of *makharas* jutting out at the corners. All these features occur invariably in structure of this type.

Each of the two intact shrines (Fig. 25) is crowned by a *vimana* rising in three tiers but diminishing in size. Each tier is being separated by a thick and single arched cornice which is similar to the tower most cornice in all its minor details. In the storey just above the first cornice, a small structure called *kutam* is placed in each of the four corners with a four-sided curvilinear roof and a small four-sided finial above it. In the middle of each corner is the model of a building called *salai* with a wagon-shaped roof which reaches the second cornice. There are pilasters on either side of the wagon-roofed tops. As regards the topmost tier of the *vimanas*, each has a four-sided curvilinear roof which is ornamented on its four sides with projecting *kudus* filled with sculptured shrines in miniature in the middle and crowned by *simhalalatas*. Its corners are carved with elaborate scroll work and the whole length of its lower edge had incised a series of semicircles simulating lotus petals. The neck (*griva*) below the 'roof' is also four sided with a niche projecting in the middle of each side. A row of *bhutaganas* runs round its edge close below the roof. In each of the corners of the topmost storey a seated bull is placed facing outwards. This is evidently to show that the temple is dedicated to Siva. The roof portion terminates with two rectangular slabs one above the other, the lower one called *ratnapitha* and the upper one *kamalapitha*; the latter is drawn out into petals. On the top a finial fits into a close fitting sockets in the centre of the *kamalapitha*. From what are left of the sub-shrines we may infer that their architectural features were similar to those of the central shrines.

There are no *lingas* inside these shrines but a complete *linga* and the fragments of two others have been found in the excavations conducted at that site. The niches on the walls and *vimanas* contain sculptures of great beauty. Siva is represented in these sculptures either as a terrific, destructive deity or a pacific, boon-conferer. They are Ardhanarisvara (Fig. 26), Vinadhara-dakshinamurti (Fig. 27), Gajasamharamurti, Kalarimurti (Fig. 28), Alinganamurti (Fig. 29), Gangadharamurti (Fig. 30) and Rishabhanugrahamurti (Fig. 31). The sculpture of Kalarimurti is superb. It represents Siva in the act of chastising the God Yama for attempting to take away the life of Markandeya, his staunch devotee, in his sixteenth year. The figure of the God is fierce-looking. Yama is represented grovelling on the ground with his face upturned towards Siva. Siva's left leg is placed on Yama while the right one is raised. He has four arms, the upper right holding a *parasu* (axe) while the lower one is raised and holds a *pasa* (noose). The upper left hand holds a black buck, while the lower one points towards Yama (Sucihasta pose). The image of a lady

at her toilet (Fig. 32), probably representing Mohini, is perhaps the finest of the unearthed sculptures. Except for two in the Government Museum, Madras, and two in the Pudukkottai Museum, all the other loose images of this temple are kept in the site as a site museum representing a fine gallery of early Chola sculptures. In main, they resemble Pallava sculptures in form, pose, and proportion of parts, but are more highly decorated, the decoration being simple though elegant.

The local tradition that there were as many as 108 Siva temples at Kodumbalur is supported by the fact that best *lingas*, *nandi* and other sculptures have been unearthed wherever the soil was turned up by the plough. Further the architectural skill displayed in the temple reins is another proof of its ancient greatness.

MUCHUKUNDESVARA TEMPLE IN KODUMBALUR.

Muchukundesvara temple is another interesting temple not to miss to visit at Kodumbalur. It is situated nearly a furlong from Muvarkovil towards north. It is also a protected monument.

Muchukundesvara (Mudukundram.Udaiyar) temple is an early Chola shrine. The excavations round the basement of the central shrine have disclosed four inscriptions dated in the reign of a Parakesari which mention clearly that the *karrali* or the stone temple of Tirumudukundram Udaiyar, the ancient name of the *linga* here was built by Mahimalaya Irukkuvel also called Parantaka Vira Cholan or Kunjaramallan, who appointed priests to conduct worship and endowed the temple with *devadanam* lands in Ollaiyurkurram and other places. Mahimalaya Irukkuvel was a contemporary of Parakesari Parantaka I and his successor Rajakesari Gandaraditya, and he built this temple in the 14th year of the reign of the Chola Emperor Parantaka I, i.e., about A.D. 921.

Muchukundesvara temple (Fig. 33) is built completely of well-dressed and close fitting gneiss blocks. It faces east. Originally it seems to have been composed only of *garbhagriha* and *an ardhamandapa* attached to it in front. The closed *mahamandapa*, an open pillared *mandapa* and Ammankovil standing in front of them have been added at a later period. In Inscription No. 144 of the Pudukkottai list, the temple is stated to have been renovated and the stone idols of Dakshinamurti,Vishnu, Brahma and two Dvarapalakas are stated to have been installed evidently in the niches of the main walls of the central shrine and in those on either side of the entrance of the *ardhamandapa*, in the 6th regnal year of Kulottunga III, i.e., about 1183–84 A.D. The temple was built long before Kulottunga III and all the idols mentioned above should have been placed in the several niches at the time of the construction of the edifice but are lost through neglect. Hence new ones were installed at the time of the renewal of the structure. None of these images is found in its place now but the Dakshinamurti now found in a corner of the open *mandapa* might probably be one of the images referred to in the inscription.

The walls of the main shrine are adorned with four-cornered pilasters with *kalasam*, *padmam* and *palagai* on top. The corbels are decorated with a roll-moulding with a median band of the Pallava type. The arches above the figure niches are surmounted by *makhara* toranas. The *kudus* have trifoliated finials. Above the cornices are friezes of *bhutaganas* and *vyalas*, from the corners of the latter of which *makhara* heads jut out. The dome shaped stone *kutams* resemble that of the Tirukkattalai temple is also found.

The whole shrine is enclosed by a boundary wall (prakara) within which four small sub-shrines are seen standing close to the boundary wall and facing the main shrine, one in each of the two corners in the eastern side, one in the north-western corner and the fourth on the rear side of the main shrine .Images are placed in two of them, Subrahmanya in the sub-shrine on the rear side, and Bhairava in the sub-shrine in the northeastern corner of the main shrine. No images are found in the two other sub-shrines nor is there any gopura standing above any of the four sub-shrines. Originally there should have been seven sub-shrines surrounding the temple, and an image should have been placed in each of them.

In the *mahamandapa* many images not connected with the shrine are placed of which a Dhara linga (Fig. 34) (prismatic linga with sixteen faces) similar to the lingas of the Pallava King Rajasimha's time is prominent. There is also an image of Jyestha Devi which would have been an image in one of the sub-shrines.

The temple seems to have been repaired in the 13th century when the *mahamandapa* was built. There is an ancient circular stone well in the temple measuring 6′ 9″ across, said to have a tunnel 2′ 9″ in width below, probably an inlet for water from the tank in front of the temple.

An interesting specimen of a *nandi* is also found near the main road and the path that lead to the Muchukundesvara temple. The large stone *nandi*, measuring 9′ from the foreleg to the tail and 8′5″ round the neck, is comparable for artistic skill and majesty of appearance with the *nandi* in the Tanjore Brihadesvaraswami temple, but the latter is larger. Attempts to remove it to Pudukkottai proved futile, and it stands there itself on a platform.

SIKHANATHA TEMPLE IN KUDIMIYANMALAI.

KUDIMIYANMALAI is situated at a distance of 12 miles to the west of Pudukkottai, which in turn is 233 miles from Madras towards south, and 33 miles from Tiruchirappalli towards east. It is connected by bus services from Pudukkottai and Tiruchirappalli.

Kudimiyanmalai is called in earlier inscriptions *Tirunalakkundram*, and in later ones *Sikhanallur*. 'Tirunalakkundram' means 'the sacred and prosperous hill'. The Tamil word *nala* which means prosperity, excellence, etc., was later Sanskritised and made to refer to a Puranic king Nala, and popular fancy associated the temple with his name. '*Sikha*' is the Sanskrit word for *Kudumi* which means a 'tuft of hair'.

The principal idol worshipped in the temple here is named 'Sikhanatha' or the 'Lord with the tuft'. This queer name is explained in a local legend, according to which a temple priest once gave his sweet-heart the flowers intended for divine worship, and when the ruler of the place came for worship unexpectedly to the temple, offered him as *prasadam* the flowers that the lady had worn. The king discovered some loose hair among them, and questioned the priest how it got there. To conceal his offence the priest asserted that the God himself had natural hair, at the same time praying in his heart that he might not be proved untruthful. His *prayer* was heard and Kudumi or tuft of hair miraculously appeared on the *linga*. A small protuberance on the idol is still shown to the worshipper as the *kudumi* that originally appeared to save the priest.

In the past the village extended all round the sacred hill Tirunalakkundram (Kudimiyanmalai) which is crowned by a temple to God Subrahmanya. By the side of the path leading upto the top of the hill is a natural cavern under overhanging ledges of rock which bears signs of habitation in very early times. At foot of the rock and on its eastern side is the celebrated temple of Sri Sikhanatha and Akilandesvari—one of the biggest in the state.

Kudimiyanmalai is full of historical associations. There is a grant according to which the place was once given away to the Maravars by the Karala Vellalars. The rock-cut temple, and the inscription in Pallava Grantha which are found here relate to the Pallava period prior to the 10th century A.D. There is an inscription of Kulottunga I dated 1106 A.D. According to the Statistical Account of Pudukkottai (1813) the seven-storeyed *gopura* of the temple was the gift of a Pandya, and some of its *mandapams* were built by the Pallavarayars who ruled and worshipped here. In 1615 Achyuta Pallavarayar, *arasu* (chieftain) of Valuthur and Mallappa Pallavarayar granted lands to Brahmins of this village. Malla Pallavarayar, the son of the first of them gave presents subsequently to a dancing-girl here. In 1681 Mallappa Nayaka Pallavarayar and Seventheluntha Pallavarayar were ruling in these parts, and were soon after succeeded by the Pudukkottai Tondaimans who following on old customs were installed in this place till recent times. Raghunatha Raya Tondaiman (1686—1730) built one of the *mandapams* of the cave temple, and his minister Kuruntha Pillai another part of the shrine. In 1730 Raja Vijaya Raghunatha Tondaiman was crowned in this temple; and in 1773 his military chiefs Lingappa and Raghunatha Servaikar dug tanks for the public benefit. On the southern wall of the Ammankoil is an inscription dated 1872 recording the *kumbabisheka* (consecreation) ceremony of the two shrines by His Late Raja Ramachandra Tondaiman.

The ancient historical and cultural objects of interest in the place are (1) a rock-cut temple called Melaikkovil, (2) a rock-cut figure of *Valampuri Vinayaka*, (3) a rock-cut *musical treatise* in Pallava-Grantha, (4) a rock-cut figures of the *aruvathi muvars* or the sixty-three South Indian Saints with Siva-Parvati on the bull, (5) the principal shrines of Sikhanatha and Akilandesvari, (6) *anivettu mandapa* and the *ayirakkal mandapa*, and (7) the wells, *Tambikinaru* (younger brother's well) and *Annankinaru* (elder brother's well).

The rock-cut temple consists of a cave and an outer veranda scooped out of the hill. The cave contains a cylindrical *linga* which is also cut out of the rock. It is reached by a flight of 12 steps of which nine lead up to the veranda, and the remaining three to the altar. The four pillars on which the veranda rests are also hewn out of the rock, and judged from the central two among them which are low, square and crude represent primitive architecture. The two *Dvarapala* (gate-keeper) figures cut in bas-relief on the sides of the veranda are admirable specimens of sculptural work in stone. They stand 7′—3″ high, crowned in the head, and ornamented in the ear, neck and waist. As usually found in the Pallava shrines of the 8th and earlier centuries, they possess only a couple of hands; but the hands rest one on the hip, and the other on a club entwined by a hooded snake. The pillars and sides of the veranda are covered with numerous inscriptions that may be palaeographically assigned to the 10th century.

The Valampuri Vinayaka figure (Fig. 35) lies to the south of this temple. It is cut in base-relief on the vertical slope of the rock, nearly to the same height as the temple itself. It may be assigned to the Pallava age.

Between the rock-cut shrine and the *Valampuri* Ganesa is the musical treatise in Pallava-Grantha inscriptions remarkable in the first instance as a peace of calligraphy—so neat and legible, and uniform are the characters in the rock. The characters closely resemble to those of the Mahendravarman's inscriptions at Tiruchirappalli and the South Arcot District, and may therefore be assigned to the same period as the latter—early 7th century A.D. The area covered by the inscription is 13′×14′.

According to the colophon it was composed by a king who calls himself the pupil of Rudracharya though both the preceptor and the student are now unidentifiable.

About the contents of the *Treatise*, the writer in the Epigraphia Indica for January 1914 says as follows :—

'It is divided into seven sections corresponding to the seven classical *ragas* of the time, viz., (1) Madhyamagrama, (2) Shadjagrama, (3) Shadva, (4) Sadharita, (5) Panchama, (6) Kaisikamadhyama, and (7) Kaisika. Each section consists of a collection of groups of four notes, arranged in sub-sections of sixteen, each sub-section taking up one line of the inscription. Of course only those notes are used, which are proper to the particular *raga*. Each group in a sub-section ends in the same note,. The note in which a particular *raga* must be ended is called the *nyasa* (final). That sub-section, which consists of groups having the *nyasa* for their ending note is put the last in a section . The other sub-sections are arranged according to the position of the ending note in the Hindu gamut *sa, ri, ga, ma, pa, dha, ni,* ; a sub-section consisting of groups ending in *sa* preceding one of groups ending in *ri* and so on.

The importance of this inscription is that it is the only treatise on music now extant between the earlier *Natya sastra* of Bharata (4th century A.D.) and *Naradi siksi* (date not known), and the very much later one, Sarangadeva's Sangitha Ratnakara (13th century).

Far above the rock-cut temple, but a little to the north of it, and also on a vertical surface of the rock approached by a narrow and dangerous ledge are found the well-known figures of the *aruvathi muvars* or the 63 South Indian Saints with an image in the centre of Siva and Parvati riding on the sacred bull.

The temples of the God and the Goddess exhibit in their principal and innermost part laudable specimens of stone carvings. In front of the Amman idol is a hexagonal *mandapa* with a single flag stone of similar shape fixed in the floor on which the coronation ceremonies were conducted in former times.

The *ayirakkal* (thousand pillared) *mandapa* which is at the entrance is now in disrepair. In the portions continuous with the *anivettu mandapa* are found large images of Monkey Gods locally identified as Vali, Sugriva, and Hanuman, the Matsya, Kurma, Varaha and Narasimha forms of Vishnu, Manmatha and Rati riding on parrots which in their turn are carried by *Yalis* and equestrian warriors.

The *Anivettu mandapa* is in the second *prakara* or circuit of the temple of the God. On the pillars are sculptured huge figures of Ganapati, Shanmugha (Fig. 36) Ravana with ten heads (Fig. 37) Ugra Narasimha (Fig. 38) in the act of tearing the entrails of Hiranya, Rati and Manmatha riding on swans, Mohini enchanting sages who stand at her feet ravished, Vishnu on Garuda (Fig. 39), Urdhvatandava Siva (Fig. 40) and a gandharva. On the frieze overhead are cut in bas-relief scenes of puranic and legendary significance.

The two wells, Thambikkinaru (younger brother's well) and *Annankinaru* (elder brother's well) lie respectively to the south and north of the hill. Of these former is the better known, and now supplies drinking water. The *Annan* well is reported to be the gift of one Thalaiur Nadalvar ; while the other bears as inscription which states that its 18 steps were constructed in the name of one Udayappan by two chettiyars who came from Tiruchirappalli in the time of Mallappa and Seventheluntha Pallavarayar.

KUNRUANDARKOVIL

IN

KUNNANDAR KOVIL.

Kunnandarkovil is at a distance of 17 miles from Pudukkottai and can be reached via Puttambur and Andakkulam.

Kunnandarkovil (Kunru - Andar - Kovil = the temple of the Lord of the hill) referred to in inscriptions as *Tirukkunrakkudi* has a rock-cut temple at the foot and a Subramaniya temple on the top. The date of the rock-cut temple may be assigned to the time of Nandivarman II Pallavamalla (c. 710—775 A.D.). In plan it is similar to the Gokarnesvara temple at Tirugokarnam. It consists of an inner shrine (12′—6″ × 10′—6″ × 10′—6″) and a hall (21′—8″ × 15′—2″ × 8′—9″) with a doorway between the two (5′—9″ × 2′—8″), and hewn out pillars measuring 5′—10″ in around.

The chief objects of interest in the temple is the figure of big Ganesa (Fig. 41) (7′ high and 4′—11″ across) with his trunk curled to the right which is on the rock-face to the south of the cave, and to the north is a Somaskanda group (Fig. 42) in which Subrahmanya, who is generally placed between Siva and Uma, is placed to the left of Uma. In my opinion the figure left to Uma does not seem to be Subrahmanya, but seems to be a female figure with the right hand in raised position with a plate containing some fruits in it, and the left hand in downward position. The headdress is in the spreading manner like jala-bhara. Hence it may be called Umamahesvara rather than Somaskanda. The two dvarapalakas (Fig. 43) are portrait sculptures. A fine figure to the south with royal personage (Fig. 44) probably be the Pallava King himself or a Muttaraiya vassal of his. The other is that of a nobleman probably the governor of the nadu, and his features exhibit humility and reverence. From the coronet on the chief's head projects what according to Mr. Longhurst are bulls' horns. But another suggestion which is more probable is that the horns are those of the crescent, and are intended to recall the fact that the Pallavas, as is mentioned in the *Nandikalambakam*, claimed descend from the lunar race of kings.

A number of persons whose names are enumerated in the inscriptions (P.S.I. 1097 to 1106) contributed to the erection of the *mandapas* in front called the *Pottaraiyan* and the *nritta mandapas*. A fine hundred pillared *mandapa* (Figs. 45 and 46) now in ruins is of the Vijayanagar style, and is supposed to be fashioned as to resemble a chariot on four wheels drawn by a pair of horses. The second gopura is probably a twelfth century structure. The image of a Pattavan (standing figure) in the front *mandapa* in the southern side represents a man who lost his life while watching the temple property, and offering are sometimes made to him. The temple has some fine bronzes.

The two oldest inscriptions in this temple belong to the reigns of Nandivarman and Dantivarman. They refer to the feeding of Brahmins and other persons during the Arudra festival days. There are other inscriptions belonging to the period of the Chola-Chalukyas, later Pandyas and Vijayanagar Kings. Among the donors to this temple are a Tondaiman, called Valarthu Valwitha Perumalana Tondaiman who lived in the reign of an unidentified Kulasekara Pandya, Adaikkalangattar also called Narasingadeva, chief of Perungalur, and Avadai Nayanar or Pillai Pallavarayar, chief of Perungalur. One of the Pandyan inscriptions is a royal order instituting a daily service in the temple called *Rayarayan Sundara Pandyan Sandhi*. Another relates to a sale of lands to Vyapaka Siva, a disciple of the spiritual head of the Naduvilmatham at Tiruvanaikovil (P.S. I. 446). Here is a record which relates to a covenant among ariyars in which they agreed not to cause any damage to the villagers, and not to molest way farers and tenants whenever they were engaged in internecine feuds. An undated inscription on the (unfinished) entrance gopura in modern script relates to a toll of 1/16*panam* levied for the benefit of the temple on every package of goods coming from or going to Tanjore and Tiruchirappalli. The above inscriptions throw some light on the life of the past.

Kunnandarkovil is one of the earliest Karala Vellalar and Kallar settlement. It is said that the northern part of the village belongs to the Kallars of the Vadamalai nadu, and the southern to those of the Tenmalai nadu. The joint meetings of the panchayats of the two nadus are held in the Kunnandarkovil temple. An inscription in the temple, dated about 1394 A.D. tells of a joint meeting of assemblies, artisans and agriculturists to which learned and influential men were invited from Srirangam and Tiruvanaikovil, to consider the loss of life and property that the Kallars has caused, and to afford protection to the people who inturn were asked to make to the temple an annual payment, and an offering of a ring and money for every marriage celebration.

SIVA AND VISHNU TEMPLE

IN

MALAYADIPATTI.

Malayadipatti is at a distance of 24 miles from Pudukkottai in the Kunnandar koil-Killukkottai route and also in the Keeranur-Killukkottai route. It is also called Tiruvalattur-malai and is note worthy for a combined temple of Siva and Vishnu, cut out of a single rock and situated within one common *prakara* or terraced walk infront. This Vishnu temple in particular was held in high veneration, being considered another Tirupati.

The Siva temple is older among the two, and is of the Mahendra style. The upper and lower parts of the massive pillars are cubical, while the middle is octagonal. The front half of the cave is hall of the rock-cut shrine running east to west, while the rear half has a square cell, wherein is the *linga* with a sort of *ardhamandapa* in front, wherein the *nandi* is placed on a pedestal. On the walls of this *ardhamandapa* are panels with figures in bas-relief including the Saptamatrika group, Ganesa, Virabhadra, Siva, Vishnu and Mahishasuramardani (Fig. 47). The Durga or Mahishasuramardani panel is of particular interest; and the Goddess here as at Mamallapuram is represented with a benign countenance, eight-armed, riding on her lion, and aiming a spear at the *asura*. The *dvarapalakas* like all Pallava *dvarapalakas*, two armed. One of them bears a bull's horn and a coronet (Fig 48). Evidently this figure represents a person of rank probably the chief who built the shrine.

According to common report, the cave-temples in these parts, eighteen in number were dug out by one Nandi Raja. But according to an inscription on a pillar of the *maha-mandapa* of this rock-cut Siva temple, the Siva temple with a hall 22 feet 2 inches by 18 feet 4 inches by 9 feet 1 inch with a shrine measuring 9 feet by 7 feet with four pillars which are each 6 feet 3 inches in height and 5 feet 3 inches in circumference and a Nandi was cut in the 16th year of Vijaya Danti Varman, a Pallava King (c. 775–826 A.D.) by Videlvidugu Muttaraiyan *alias* Kuvanan Sattan in the hill at Tiruvalattur and installed the *linga* which is here named Vagisvara (the Sanskrit equivalent of Tirunavukkarasu called Appar) after Saint Appar. Malayadipatti was then known as Tiruvalattur.

In the front of the rock-cut shrine is a *mandapa* built in the Vijayanagar style, the pillars of which are slender and have corbels of the *puspapodigai* type.

The Vishnu shrine with its hall 32 feet 7 inches by 32 feet 2 inches, platform or altar 9 feet 3 inches by 3 feet 6 inches and shrine 16 feet 8 inches by 5 feet belongs to what Longhurst calls the Mamalla type. The pillars here are more elegant than in the Siva temple. The base is carved in the shape of a conventional lion sitting erect and carrying the shaft of the column on its head. The shaft is crowned with a capital which carries a double brakets, supporting the architrave. The pillared hall in front of the cell contains large panels cut in the side walls filled with sculptures in high relief including Narasimha (Fig. 49) and Varahamurti (Fig. 50) and standing and seated images of Vishnu with his consorts (Fig. 51). The cell proper contains the principal idol, a marvellously carved image of Vishnu as *Seshasayi* or the God lying on the serpent Adisesha (Fig. 52). The five hoods of the serpent are spread out like a canopy over the God's head. From his navel raises a lotus stalk crowned with a flower on which Brahama is seated. The feet of the God rest on another lotus. On the wall are the figures of Madhu and Kaitabha, two demons who threatened to slay Brahma, but were themselves slain, and other sculptures represently *devas*. In front of the serpent couch are the kneeling figure of a Rishi believed to be Bharadvaja, and of a Goddess, probably Bhudevi. This fine image of Vishnu, lying down as at Srirangam on a stone serpent is smaller than the one at Srirangam, which in turn is smaller to Tirumayam. The two armed *dvarapalakas* here are also do not seem to be conventional figures, but may be portrait-sculptures.

P.S.I. 943, an undated inscription records that Mangan Tenkondan, son of Sellapokkan an Araiyar of Temmavur built the Amman shrine and installed the Nacciyar (Lakshmi) in it.

Two inscriptions—P.S.I. 757 and 912—refer to a gift of villages and other grants to the Vishnu shrine by Achutappa Nayak, king of Tanjore (16th century).

P.S.I. 116, dated 1087 A.D. a record of the reign of Virarajendra, mentions that Kalakkudi was a *devadanam* village belonging to the Siva temple here. P.S.I. 904 in the Siva temple relates the story of Avudaiyan Tevan of Pucchikudi who went to the house of a dancing girl at Tirunedungolam, and finding her in the company of a Brahmin killed both of them and lost his eyesight in consequence, but recovered it on his vowing to grant land in perpetuity to the God Vagisvara and the Goddess Vadivullamangai.

There are crude paintings, now considerably defaced, on the ceiling of the Vishnu cave-temple just above the reclining Vishnu image. In the beginning it was thought to be the original painting work of the Pallavas, but the later tests proved that those paintings are not earlier than the 16th century and are perhaps much later.

VIJAYALAYA CHOLISWARAM TEMPLE

IN

NARTTAMALAI.

Narttamalai lies 11½ miles to the north-west of Pudukkottai, in Pudukkottai—Tiruchirappalli route. Narttamalai is the name given to a group of nine low hills and a small village that lies rested at their foot. According to folk-lore and legendry account the hills are fragments of rocks of the Sanjiviparvata (Mt. Sanjivi) which dropped here when Hanuman flung it back from Lanka (Ceylon) after he had saved, by the miraculous herb *Sanjivi* which grew on it, the lives of fallen heroes who had swooned on the battlefield. Hence the hills are said to be quite a garden of rare medicinal herbs. It is also said that mineral formations and deposits like Silagit, Asbestos and Iron Sulphate exist on the rocks.

The Perungalur Sthalapurana derives the place-name Narttamalai from sage Narada (Narada's hill) and this is perpetuated by mistaking the image playing on the Vina found in many parts of the village for the sage Narada's image. Many stories are woven round it to show that the village was found by Narada. In the inscriptions, it is referred to as Nagarattarmalai, the old name of the place.

Narttamalai was included in the Pallava empire for about two centuries 7th to 9th, but was directly administered by the Muttaraiyar chiefs, who used to be under the control of the Pallava Kings. The cave temple at Melamalai, known as *Paliyili Isvaram* was excavated in the time of the Pallava Nandivarman III (c. 826–849 A.D.) by a Muttaraiya chief Satan Paliyili, son of Videlvidugu Muttaraiyan. There is an inscription here dated in the seventh year of the Pallava emperor Nrpatungavarman (c. 849–875 A.D.). This region must have afterwards been disputed by the Pandyas and Cholas till about the middle of the 9th century when it was conquered by Vijayalaya Chola and incorporated in the Chola temple. The structural temple on Melamalai is named after Vijayalaya. In the reign of Raja Raja I (c. 985–1014 A.D.). Narttamalai was called Telungu Kula-Kola puram after one of the titles of the King. There are inscriptions here of the reigns of Rajendra II and Kulottunga I. In the reign of Kulottunga III the place was also called Kulottunga Cholapuram. During the last years of his reign, Narttamalai came under Pandyan rule. Rajendra III probably recovered it, since there is here an inscription of his reign, but very soon it again passed into the hands of the Pandyas.

It is believed that after subduing the Hoysala Kingdom, and the cities of Kannanur Srirangam, etc., the Khilji general Malikkafur marched towards Madurai byway of Kadambarkovil at Narttamalai. Narttamalai was under the rule of the Madurai Sultans for about 50 years in the 14th century until the Vijayanagar inscription here is dated A.D. 1431 in the reign of Devaraya II, and mentions a local chief Ambeyaraya Udaiyar, son of Mahamandalesvaran Virakumara Tirumallinatha Udaiyar, it came later under the direct rule of the Madurai Nayaks. We hear of Akkal Raja, a Vijayanagar nobleman, with his title (PSI. 911) *Sriman Mahamandalisvara Solarviman Sola Narayanan Immadi Akkaladeva Sola Maharaja*, who on his way to Rameswaram was persuaded to settle in this tract to put down the lawless Visenginattu Kallars. He lived in a fort on the Narttamalai hills. A Pallavaraya princess Akkacci (Akkacciyakulam is at Pudukkottai) by name employed a Kallar warrior of the Kacciran kept to slay him and bring her his head. When Akkal Raja was thus killed, his seven wives committed *sati* by throwing themselves into a fire prepared near Noccikkanmoi by the side of the Narttamalai hills. The Tondaimans got Narttamalai from the Pallavarayans.

Owing to its natural advantages for defence it was for long used as a military station, and traces now exist of fort walls and citadels.

The earliest reference to local assemblies are in the period—7th, 9th centuries. The *nagaram* of Narttamalai came into prominence in about the 10th century, and, as a unit of local administration flourished for many centuries. It controlled the temples, received and

managed gifts for them, controlled taxation, effected sales and other modes of conveyance of land, exempted lands from taxes, distributed among its members the revenue-survey and accounts work of the village, and functioned through an executive body of its own creation. Silaya Chettis, who often bore the names of Chola or Pandya Kings, seem to have been the chief mercantile class in this *nagaram*. The Vishnu shrine in the Melamalai cave is called *Padinenbhumi Vinnagaram*, evidently after the "eighteen towns" of the *Ainnurruvar*, and we may conclude that this *nagaram* was associated with or affiliated to the great corporation of *Ainnurruvar*.

The nine hills at Narttamalai are called 1. *Melamalai*, 2. *Kottaimalai*, 3. *Kadambarmalai*, 4. *Paraiyanmalai*, 5. *Uvaccanmalai*, 6. *Aluruttimalai*, 7. *Bommamalai*, 8. *Manmalai*, and 9. *Ponmalai*.

The chief object of our interest is found at Melamalai. They are *Vijayalaya cholisvaram*, *Paliyili Isvaram* and *Samanarkudagu*.

Vijayalaya cholisvaram temple is one of the earliest and grandest of the structural stone temples built during the time of Vijayalaya on Melamalai (Fig. 53). It is having a main shrine in the centre with six sub-shrines all round facing the main shrine. The basement of the seventh sub-shrine can be traced. Originally there must have been eight sub-shrines. There should also have existed a *prakara* wall surrounding the whole group with a gateway in the eastern side.

The main shrine (Figs. 54 and 55) facing the west is built from basement to the finial of well-dressed gneiss blocks neatly and accurately fitted and covers an area of 1,240 square feet. The *garbhagriha* is circular. Its interior diameter is 5 feet 6 inches and its height 8 feet. The wall running round it is 5 feet thick in its circular portion. There are four square pillars at the four corners which probably be meant to support the heavy stone structure above the hollow stone *vimana*. Round the shrine chamber runs a circumambulatory passage (*pradakshinapatha*) to serve as a passage for the benefit of the devotees. The circular *garbhagriha* is enclosed by a square structure measuring 24 feet side to side outwardly. The linga is cylindrical.

The walls of the *garbhagriha* are adorned with plain pilasters, and there are no niches of its walls for installing images, which we generally found in some Hindu temples of 9th and 10th centuries.

An *ardhamandapa* in the form of a closed hall is attached in front of the main *mandapa* and has a moulded basement. This front *mandapa* and, which is covered, is supported by six pillars in the centre, which are cubical at the extremities but octagonal in the middle. The capitals above are bracketed, and their underside is bevelled off and has a rolled ornament with a median band. The walls are decorated with pilasters having plain and angular bracket capitals. The roof of the *mandapa* is flat, composed of flat slabs drawn out into a single arched massive cornice which is adorned with *kudus* at close intervals throughout its length. Inside the *kudus* are carved human heads or animal figures and on their top is a trifoliated finial. There are the usual rows of *bhutaganas*. Over the edge of the rock runs a parapet wall decorated with a series of miniature shrines called *panjaras*. The *panjara* or cells at the edges are cubical in form with a four sided curvilinear roof while in the centre there is a rectangular structure with a wagon shaped roof over it. In the interspace projecting in front of the parapet, are dancing finial figures of nymphs illustrating some graceful poses of *Bharatanatya*.

The spire above the central circular shrine is unique in style. It consists of a circular tower rising just above the roof of the central circular shrine. The whole structure is hollow and completely shut out from the lower shrine. It has four storeys and each storey is separated from the next by a heavy single arched cornice which is similar in all minor details to the one on the main walls of the outer *mandapa*. The roofs of the parapet wall over the *garbhagriha* and of the *ardhamandapa* merge with the second tier of the *vimana*. The topmost cornice is circular and the *sikhara* rises above the *griva*. It is dome-shaped and adorned with *kudu's* on its four sides and with similar but smaller ones between them. The circular *griva* (neck) is provided with projecting niches in which images are placed. Four seated bulls are placed at four corners. The *stone stupi* (finial), which should have once adorned it, is missing now. Among the figures in the niches, those of Umamahesvara and Vinadhara Dakshinamurti are very graceful and interesting. The Vina in the hands of the latter figure is peculiar. The 'sound box' at the lower end is rectangular and not circular.

The main entrance of the central shrine in front of the *ardhamandapa* has a fine floral design above the lintel.

There are two door-keepers, dvarapalakas (Figs. 56 and 57) of great artistic value on either side of the entrance to the *ardhamandapa*, though in some temples they are placed at the entrance of the *mulasthana* itself. Dvarapalakas are five feet each in height. They stand with their legs crossed. They have only two arms each, one resting on a thick club and the other held in '*vismaya*' (wondering) pose. Each is crowned with '*jatamakuta*' and loose hair radiates on either side. Their heads are also surrounded by a halo (*prabhavali*) and two horns like the limbs of a crescent project on either side. They wear big circular ear-rings in their long ears and are adorned with the usual '*katibandha,udarabandha*' for the body, armlets on the wrists, bracelets on the upper arms and be jewelled necklaces on the neck. The rolled type of the sacred thread (*yajnopavita*) runs round the left shoulder across the chest, rests on the right hip and is ornamented with a series of tassels and bells.

There are now six (out of the eight) sub-shrines round the main shrine. Each of them consists of a small shrine-chamber with a circular bell-shaped tower crowned with a circular stone finial; an enclosed rectangular open *mandapa* stands in front. No image is found in any of them now. Each is one storeyed (*eka-tala*).

There are traces of paintings on the walls of the *ardhamandapa*. As the edifice was left in a completely neglected condition and the whole of its ceiling was leaky for a long time, and due to the rain water inest of the paintings have disappeared now, and only in few places they are visible in a faint and indistinct condition.

The painting on a portion of the northern side wall of the *ardhamandapa* though not clearly visible can however be traced. It covers an area of 8 feet by 5 feet and represents Siva Bhairava. The figure is drawn in a standing posture with a wide mouthed dog standing behind it. It is enclosed within two arms of an arc with their ends converging at the top and the bottom and their sides decorated with a series of flames throughout their length. It has eight hands and holds a *damaru*, a hooded serpent, a long-pointed lance like arrow and some weapon not clearly visible, probably *khatvanga* in its four right hands; a dagger, a shield, a long bow and a spouted vessel in its four left hands. It has three rounded eyes and puts on a fierce aspect. It wears a mailed corsetlike covering for the chest. A sacred thread (*yajnopavita*) passes over its left shoulder right across the chest and falls on its right hip. It wears a number of necklaces and garlands of which a long string of human skulls is prominent. It has a waist band from which four bells are suspended and two serpents are also entwined round the loins with their hoods spreading out. It has a *jatamakuta* on its head adorned with a number of ornaments. A number of armlets and bracelets are placed on all its wrists and upper arms. In its ears it wears ear-rings (*kundalas*) and other ornaments usually found in similar figures painted from the 17th century.

It is painted in dark bluish green. Two figures probably *gandharvas* are painted one in each of the two corners on the top. The whole background and all the outlines in it are drawn in rich brick red colour. The fine brush work especially found in line drawing of the artists of the 9th and 10th centuries is completely absent. The graceful poses given to the limbs of human figures showing a feeling for movement in the paintings of the 9th and 10th century in Southern India are also absent in it.

An inscription of the 12th year of the Pandya King Maravarman Sundara Pandya Deva (A.D. 1228) is found on the rock to the north east of cave I (alias Samana Kudagu) and opposite to the group of structural shrines. This inscription mentions about the provision made by the *Nagarattar* (the corporation of merchants) of this village for the celebration of the *Vaigasi* festival of " Uddaiyar Vijayalaya Cholisvaram Udaya Nayanar". According to Thiru S. R. Balasubrahmanyam, the Pandya inscription does not refer the cave I as it is a Vaishnavite temple and the cave II as it is already referred beyond any ambiguity as *Paliyili Isvaram* by the inscription on the basement but refers only this group of structural stone shrines, as there is no other Siva temple on the Melamalai. Moreover, "in the whole dynastic list of the Chola Kings, there is only one King who bears the name of Vijayalaya Chola. Hence it has been concluded that this group of structural shrine at Narttamalai is the Vijayalaya Cholisvaram constructed during the time of Vijayalaya Chola" the founder of the Chola dynasty, and the identity of the structure of its age are beyond dispute.

The Pandyan inscription, no doubt, belongs to the 13th century, but it is only correct to infer that it should have recorded the name of this temple faithfully as it was handed down by tradition from the time of its foundation.

Paliyili Isvaram:.—Paliyili Isvaram, known as Cave Temple II is a small rock-cut Siva temple. It has a *garbhagriha* cut out of the rock. It measures 8' x 7'6" and is 6'8" in height. In front of it is a moulded basement with a moulded beading above and frieze of dancing *bhutaganas*. A cyclindrical *linga* and two *dvarapalakas*, two armed, belonging to this temple have now been excavated, and now placed on the platform. An inscription on the moulded basement, dated in the seventh year of the Pallava King Nrpatungavarman (A.D. 855–896) records that the temple was excavated by Sattan Paliyili, son of Videlvidugu Muttaraiyan, that Sattan's son built the front *mandapa* and had a *nandi* installed, and that his daughter Paliyili Siriyanangai, wife of Minavan Tamiladiyaraiyan, also called Mallan Anandan, made a gift of land to the temple. This is therefore styled *Paliyili Isvaram*, after the name of the founder.

Samanar Kudagu:—Cave temple I is a rock-cut cave popularly called 'Samanar Kudagu' (Cave of the Jains) which is 50 feet to the north of Paliyili Isvaram. Perhaps it was originally a Jaina cave of about the 7th century A.D. Now it has features of a Vaishnavite shrine containing a rectangular sanctuary, with a doorway and an *ardhamandapa* supported by massive but rude pillars supporting bracketed capitals. The sanctuary is empty, but the *ardhamandapa* contains twelve wonderful images of Vishnu (Figs. 58 and 59) cut in high relief, two on the sides and five each on the two sides of the doorway leading to the sanctum. The figures are all alike, and each holds in its upper arms a *prayogachakra* (a discus as if in the act of hurling it) and a conch. One of the lower arms is in the abhayamudra, or pose indicative of protection from danger, and the other touches the thigh. The *sankha*, the *chakra*, the garments and the ornamentation deserve praise. The twelve figures perhaps represent those of the twelve common names of Vishnu-Kesava, Narayana, Madhava, Govinda, Trivikrama, Vamana, Achyuta, Sridhara, Padmanabha, Damodara, Vasudeva and Madhusudana.

In front of the temple is the moulded plinth of the *mahamandapa* with figures of lions elephants, *yalis* and *kamadenus* carved above the beading. From an unpublished inscriptions traced on the moulded basement dated in the 45th year of the Chola King Kulothunga I (1050 plus 45=A.D. 1095) Thiru S. R. Balasubrahmanyam concludes that this temple was converted into a Vishnu shrine 'at least very close to this period, if not actually at the date of the inscription' (J. O. R. Vol. VIII, pp. 25-26). This inscription registers a sale of land

by the Nagarattar to Devan Periyan also called Mudikonda Chola Telungaiyaraiyan for the conduct of daily worship to the God Karumanikka Alvar of Tirumerkkovil. According to Thiru S. R. Balasubrahmanyam, the position of the inscription is so low and the gaps so narrow that it would not have been possible for any stonemason to engrave it after the construction of the basement. *Hence it has to be inferred that the inscription was engraved prior to the fitting up of the blocks into the basements.* P.S.I. 281 of the reign of Maravarman Sundara Pandya I clearly mentions that the 'western temple' was consecreated and in it were installed the idols of Vishnu and those of his consorts. From this we may conjecture that there was a temple to Karumanikka Perumal, then known as the Tirumer-Kovil or western temple in the reign of Kulottunga I, that it must have subsequently fallen into ruins, and that about a century later, in the reign of Maravarman Sundara Pandya I, the Jain cave temple was converted into *Tirumerkovil*, and the idols of Vishnu and his *devis* were installed in it. These idols are now missing. The twelve figures of Vishnu must have been cut out the rock when the cave temple became a Vishnu temple.

SIVA (AGASTISVARA) TEMPLE
IN
PANANGUDI.

Panangudi is a village situated about nine miles from Pudukkottai in the Pudukkottai-Annavasal road and a little to the south of the world famous fresco paintings in the rock-cut Jaina cave-temple called Sittannavasal. The temple is situated on the southern bund of the tank of the village.

This Siva temple (Fig. 60) is a conserved monument, in external appearance it is a very small, compact but beautiful edifice, built completely from the basement to the finial of well-dressed and close-fitting granite blocks. It is exactly similar to the structural temples at Kaliyapatti (Kulattur taluk), Tiruppur (Kulattur taluk) and Enadi (Tirumayam taluk), both in size and style of construction. This is a single-storeyed temple and is complete with its original *sikhara* and *stupi*. It consists of *garbhagriha* and the *ardhamandapa*. The basement of *nandi mandapa* and one of the subshrines can be traced from ruins. The moulded basement of the *mahamandapa* which is buried below the surface of the ground can also be traced.

The *garbhagriha* is nine feet square externally and five feet square internally. The outer walls contain pilasters which are decorated with elegant scroll work. The corbels are plain and angular. There are niches on the walls of the *garbhagriha*, but no idols are found in them at present. The *ardhamandapa* is intact and forms an integral part of the original shrine. The cornice is provided with *kudus* crowned with trifoliated pieces of stone. Its corners are decorated with scroll work. A frieze of *bhutaganas* is found below the cornice and a frieze of *yali* above it, with *makhara* heads at the corners. The *griva* above the cornice is four-sided with a niche in the centre of each of the four sides for idols. The niches are surmounted by large beautiful *kudu* crowned with *simha* heads projecting into the *sikhara*. Fine stone images of Indra, Dakshinamurti (Fig.61), Vishnu and Brahma are installed in the niches. Each image is one foot and two inches high.

The *sikhara* is four-sided and curvilinear. The stone *stupi* is also four-sided in keeping with the shape of the *sikhara*.

Images of Jyesthadevi, Ganapati, a Naga and four Nandi figures were found buried in the ground. Jyesthadevi should have been one of the deities of the sub-shrines of the original shrine.

There are three inscriptions in this temple—one of the Chola King Kulottunga Chola III (acc. A.D. 1178) and another of an unidentified Maravarman Kulasekhara Pandya and the third, the earliest dated in the fourteenth year of a Ko-Parakesarivarman on the northern wall of the temple. In the last mentioned inscription, the presiding deity is called **'Panangudi Paramesvaran'.**

JAIN CAVE TEMPLE

IN

SITTANNAVASAL.

Sittannavasal, corruption of SITTANNALVAYIL (*Sittu* means Siddha or adept, *annal* means great or exalted) which means 'the abode of Great Saints' is a village nine miles north-west of Pudukkottai town in the Tiruchirappalli-Viralimalai route. In the village is a hillock which is about 200 feet in height and runs approximately north and south. On the western slope of the central rock there is a rock-cut cave temple called *Arivarkovil* (the temple ofARHAT or the Tirthankara).

This rock-cut temple is believed to have been excavated in the time of the Great Pallava King Mahendravarman I (640-670 A.D.). From the fact that among the numerous cave temples made in his time, this is the only Jaina temple, while all the others are dedicated to the Hindu Gods, it seems probable that this was made early in his reign when he was a Jain, before his conversion to the Saivite faith. An inscription of the time of the Pandya King Avanipasekara Sri Vallabha, on the rock to the south of the cave-temple, describes the construction of a *mukhamandapa* in stone in front of it, the plinth of which is still intact. An easy climb of about hundred feet over the sloping rock takes the visitor of the entrance of the cave-temple.

The plan and construction of the temple in all essentials resemble the other well-known 'Mahendravarman' cave temples in South India. The rock-cut cave consists of a *garbha-griha* 10′ square and 7′ 6″ in height, and an *ardhamandapa* in front, 22′ 6″ in length, 7′ 6″ in width and 8′ 6″ in height, both facing west. A doorway, 5′ 6″ by 2′ 6″ approached by a flight of steps flanked by *surulyalis* leads from the outer hall to the sanctum. The facade consists of two massive pillars in the middle and two pilasters, one at either end. The pillars are typical 'Mahendravarman Pillars' with a cubical base and top (two feet square) the middle third being octogonal. The pilasters are of the same design. The pillars carry massive 'Pallava' corbel capitals with bevelled edges. The lower surface of the corbels including the bevelled part are adorned with roll ornaments or flutings on either side with a plain median band in the centre. The rock above the pillars is carved in the form of a massive beam, in front of which projects a single flexured cornice.

On either side of the doorway to the inner shrine are ornamented pilasters enclosing two niches, one on either side. These pilasters are smaller but of the same type as the pillars. They have on the upper cubical parts of the outer face lotus medallions carved in bold relief, a usual feature of this type of cave-temples. There is a large niche in each of the northern and southern walls in the front-hall.

The niche on the southern wall of the outer hall contains a figure in bas-relief, nude and seated cross-legged, in the meditative pose. The hood of the five-headed serpent above its head denotes that it is the image of Parsavanatha, the twenty-third Tirthankara. The figure on the opposite wall, placed in a similar niche, seated in the same pose with a single umbrella over his head, is designated Tiruvasiriyan or the Great Acarya in a Tamil inscription on the eastern face of the bottom of the pillar in front of it.

On the back wall of the sanctum above the middle line of the wall are three images carved in relief, all in the same seated meditative posture. The northern and central figures have triple umbrellas, showing them to be Tirthankaras, while the southern has a single umbrella, and probably represents a Cakravartin or an Acarya.

The ceiling of the sanctum shows a wheel with a hub and axle which no doubt represents the *dharma cakra* or wheel of the law.

The whole cave, consisting of the walls, ceilings, cornice, beams and pillars were originally covered with plaster and paintings, and the sculptures also were covered with painted stucco. Now those on the walls have perished, and only portions of the paintings on the ceilings, beams and the upper parts of the pillars alone remain intact today. This painting was discovered by the late Mr. T. A. Gopinath Rao and Prof. G. J. Dubreuil of Pondicherry.

The paintings above the three images in the sanctum is intended to serve as canopy which is nine feet by three feet. The design suggests a green carpet with red striped borders on all sides and is decorated with a series of irregular circles and squares interlinked. Within the squares are conventional designs of lotus flowers, and inside the circles are *svastikas*-crosses with bulbous ends resembling the 'Ujjain' symbols on old Andhra coins. Above the horizontal arm of each cross are two human figures, one on either side, and below the arm are two lions, one on either side, and facing outwards. Both patterns are green with black outlines on a red back-ground.

Carpet canopies of different patterns are painted on the ceiling over the two images in the *ardhamandapa*. That over Parsavanatha has both natural and conventional lotus flowers, the former in full blossom against a lotus leaf background. That over the *acarya* has only conventional designs of green lotuses outlined in white and black with black dots ; they are now much faded and defaced.

In the centre of the ceiling of the *ardhamandapa* and in the front part of the ceiling of the inner shrine, upto borders of the carpet canopy, we find the principal painted scene of the Lotus-pool, containing water-lilies and lotuses, (Fig. 62) signifying an aspect of Jaina mythology and believed to be *Samavasarana Tank*. This tank is the *Khatikabhumi* or the region of water in the *Samavasarana* heaven in Jaina mythology. The whole background is formed by the green leaves and the black stalks of the lotuses and the water lily. Against this are depicted with the utmost realism red and white lotuses (nelumbium speciosum) and red water-lilies (Nymphaea pubescens) at different stages of blossom and bud. In their midst are found some *matsyas* (fish), *hamsas* (geese), (Fig. 63) cranes, a *makhara*, three bulls (M. J. Dubreuil calls them buffaloes), three elephants and three men, who are probably *Bhavyas*, each holding a lotus in his hand.

Near the north-west corner of the tank are two *Bhavyas*. They wear only loin clothes, their ears are lobed, and hair is cut close and parted in the middle. One of them red, outlined in black, and is plucking lotus flowers with his right hand and has a basket of flowers slung on the other. His companion is orange outlined in black, and carried a lotus in one hand, while his other arm is bent at the elbow, the fore and little fingers forming the *Mrigamudra* or deer-gesture. The third *Bhavya*, near the south-west corner, extremely beautiful figure, orange in colour and outlined in black carries a bunch of lotuses by their stalks over his left shoulder and a long stalked lily over his right.

The pose and expression of these three *Bhavyas* have a charm and beauty which compel attention. The colours of their bodies have a significance and so have those of the animals depicted in the tank. According to Jaina belief *Pita Lesyam* (orange) *Sukla Lesyam* (white) and *Padma Lesyam* (Lotus-red) are the *Lesya* (the colour of the soul) of pure souls, while *Krsna* (black), *Nila* (indigo or dark-blue) and *Kapota* (grey) are the *Lesya* of wicked souls.

There are also some more important paintings on the pillars worth mentioning. On the front face of the southern pillar is a beautiful figure of a dancer (Fig. 64) her left arm stretched out gracefully in what is known in *Natya-Sastra* as the *danda* or *lolahasta* or *latavrsika* gesture, and her right arm bent at the elbow, the palm held in the Abhaya pose. Her ears are adorned with *patrakundala* or *olai* or rings set with gems, and her arms decked with bracelets and bangles. The colour of the body is yellow, the outlines are dark red and the back-ground red.

Perhaps even more graceful is the other dancer on the front face of the upper cubical of the northern pillar. Her coiffure is artistic, the hair is parted in the middle and done up into a chingnon at the back, adorned with a few ornaments and a number of flowers and petals of the *Pandanus*. The ears are adorned with rings set with gems. She wears necklaces of various kinds, and her arms are adorned with wristlets and armlets. She has her left arm in the *gajahasta* gesture suggesting an elephant's trunk, while her right arm is bent at the elbow, the palm facing outwards in the *abhaya* gesture. These two gestures suggest those of the two arms of *Nataraja*. The colour of the body is yellow, the outlines are dark red and the back-ground red.

These two animated figures, with their broad hips, slender waists, and elaborate ornaments, recall the beauty of the apsaras of mythology; their pose and expression suggest rhythm and dynamic movement.

On the northern face of the southern pillar is a portrait group of a king and queen (Fig. 65). They are identified as Mahendravarman and his queen. The king has an elaborate *kirita* (coronet) on his head, and a *patrakundala* in one ear and *makharakundala* in the other. Round his neck there are a few necklets. His demeanour and his diadem indicate his royal status. Behind him is his queen, her hair made up in a sort of top-knot (*dhammilla*). Both these figures are yellow, with dark-red outlines, and the background is green. In front of them is a human figure coloured red—too faded to be identified.

There are also paintings on the corbels, beam and cornice. On the corbel are scroll designs with lotuses. The paintings on the cornice, which projects in front of the *mandapa*, is made up of carpet designs with conventional lotuses. The surface of the cornice in front of the two pillars bears a *hamsa* or mythical swan. On the northern wall below the cornice, on a patch of plaster are the figures of a trident, fruits and flowers in yellow and red.

The technique employed here is known as *Fresco-secco* or painting in a medium of lime, while the Ajanta and Bagh are of tempera technique. The Sittannavasal plaster is firmer and better consolidated than the Ajanta one (S. Paramasivam in studies in Indian Paintings). The ground was prepared by a coating of rough plaster (rich pure lime and fine angular grains of sand as an inert material) to make the surface of the dressed stone even. No organic binding medium like drying oil, gum, glue, albumin or Casein is present in the plaster. Over this a thin coat of lime-wash was applied while the plaster was still wet to ensure proper binding between the layers. The lime-wash was spread just before it was painted on. Vegetable colours, sensitive to lime and other alkalies, could not be used, and, obviously therefore, earth or mineral pigments were used. This fact limited the choice of colours. The chief colours used are black, green, yellow, orange blue, and white. The substances used for these pigments have been found on analysis to be wood-charcoal or lamp-black for black, red ochre for red, yellow ochre for yellow, lapislazali or ultramarine for blue, terre-verte for green and lime for white. Evidently pigments which were locally available and which were compatible with lime have been used.

The Sittannavasal paintings carry on the tradition of the well-known Ajanta frescoes of the first seven centuries A.D., the Ceylon Sigiriya frescoes of the fifth century and the Bagh frescoes in the Gwalior state of the sixth and seventh centuries A.D. Sittannavasal is therefore an early example of the Ajantan or post-Ajantan period, and in merit is compares well with Ajanta and Sigiriya. We may safely say that the wall paintings at Sittannavasal forms the only group of Jain paintings in India of the 7th century A.D. executed on the Ajanta style.

SRI VYAGRAPURISVARA TEMPLE
IN
TIRUVENGAIVASAL.

The village Tiruvengaivasal is three miles from Pudukottai and is situated in the village which lies in between the Pudukottai-Manapparai and Pudukottai-Tiruchirappalli route.

Tiruvengaivasal is a well-known and an ancient place of worship. The name means the 'Sacred place or gate of the Tiger' and refers to the story of the God Gokarnesa of Tirugokarnam who here took the form of a tiger, to terrify and finally grant salvation to a cow that daily brought the sacred water for his ablution (*see* under Tirugokarnam for an account of the legend. Page 10).

The main shrine faces east. It has been renovated, and the original structure should have been an early Chola structure. The reason for this conjecture is the presence of the Saptamatrika group, and other old idols within the cloister in the southern *prakara*. The present structure is of the Pandya style of the 13th-14th centuries. The pilasters are polygonal in section with square bases having *nagapadmas*; the *padmas* are drawn out into *idols*, and the corbels are of the *pushpapodigai* type with rudimentary buds.

There are niches in three sides of the main shrine. The niche in the north is empty, while the west contain a standing Vishnu. In the place of the south niche, a small roofed structure is constructed with the help of some fallen pillars, and an idol of *Gnana Dakshinamurti* (Fig. 66) is installed. This idol of Gnana Dakshinamurti has rare iconographic features. The deity is in seated pose with his left leg kept in *utkulikasana* posture, a posture suitable for concentration. It has four arms, and the front left arm is stretched on the left leg, which is unusual.

There is an *ardhamandapa* and a *mahamandapa* in front of the main shrine of Sri Viyagrapurisvara. To the north of the *antarala mandapa* is the shirne of the Goddess Sri Brihadambal, facing south, which is late Chola or early Pandya structure with square pilasters, simple *idals*, square *palagais* and tenoned corbels. The southern part of this *mandapa* contains modern bronze idols now carried in the temple processions. The *mahamandapa* is a Chola structure with pilasters as supporting large *palagais* and corbels with tenons.

At the main entrance in the east to the temple is a *mandapa* with massive pillars supporting carved lions on its top. The base of the *gopura* is of the late Pandya style, but the upper part has been reconstructed.

In the southern *prakara* there is a shrine facing west containing an interesting sculpture of Subrahmanya (Fig. 67) in bas-relief in the *virasana* pose; the upper right hand holds a rosary, and the upper left a *Sakti* or spear; the lower right hand is in the *abhaya* pose and the lower left hand rests on the thigh. Within the cloister of the southern *prakara* is an idol of Yoga Dakshinamurti, Subrahmanya with two arms, two Ganesas, two lingas with their *yonipitha* and a Gajalakshmi.

In the northern *prakara* is a shrine facing west and containing three sculptures of Bhairava, Surya and Subrahmanya. Another shrine is in the same *prakara* towards the western end facing towards south, and contains a four armed Subrahmanya with his consorts-Valli and Devasena. A mutilated loose sculpture of Bhairava is also in the northern prakara.

Near the southern entrance is a shirne built in the reign of Raja Rāmachandra Tondaiman, in which is kept the idol of Amman, slightly mutilated in its left hand. It is said that when a new idol was installed, the old mutilated one was about to be thrown into the tank to the south of the temple, and that Amman appeared before the Raja in a dream and directed him not to cast it away but to preserve it in a shrine, which the pious Raja did.

There are 15 inscriptions in this temple; six are Chola, seven Pandya, one of the Vijayanagar and one of the Pallavarayar's period.

The earliest inscription in this temple of Sri Vyagrapurisvara is dated in the reign of Raja Raja I (1011 A.D.) and refers to the God as *Tirumerralai Perumal* or 'the Lord of the western Shrine'. He is called Cudamani Vitangan in an inscription of the reign of Rajendra I (1037 A.D.), which also mentions the Amman shrine which was probably built in this reign. Sadiran Irasan, also called Kullottunga Chola Kidarattaraiyan, consecrated a *linga* called after him *Sadira Vitangan*, and instituted a festival, at which plays were enacted (P.S. I. 139 of the reign of Rajadhiraja II, dated 1175 A.D.). An inscription of the reign of Raja Raja III records that land endowed for a festival was to be allotted in equal shares to the God Vyagrapurisvara or Tiruvengaivayiludaiya Nayanar and to the God Sadira Vitangan and his Amman. Four inscriptions refer to *Santi kuttu* or dances performed in the temple festivals to induce a feeling of repose. Those who played this dance were also called *Santikutti*. The temple seems to have been very rich and had *devadana* land in the villages of Perundanaiyur, Sellikudi, Mayilapur (now called Mayilappatti), Orumanimangalam, Tiruvetpur (now called Tiruvappur), Kavalamangalam, etc. An inscription of the time of the Vijayanagar prince Kampana records the grant of *Padikaval* rights by the temple authorities and the residents to a chief of Irumbali. Tiruvengaivasal had both a *Sabha* or Brahmin assembly, and an *Ur* or common village or town assembly, during the centuries of Chola and Pandya rule.

SUBRAHMANYA TEMPLE
IN
VIRALIMALAI.

Viralimalai is situated about 26 miles from Pudukkottai, and is about 18 miles from Tiruchirappalli on the high road to Madurai. It is a well known place throughout South India for its Lord Subrahmanya temple on a hillock (Figs. 68 and 69). Viralimalai is a corruption of *Viraliyurmalai* or the 'Hill of Viraliyur'. Viralimalai also takes its names from a 'bold rock' of 'beautifully banded micaceous granite gneiss' which it contains.

The origin of this temple is ascribed to Jnana varodaya, a native of Vayalur, six miles to the west of Tiruchirappalli. When he was a little boy, he played the truant one day to escape being flogged at school, and hid himself behind the idol of Subrahmanya in the temple at Vayalur. There he remained shut up for the night unseen by temple servants, when the God Subrahmanya appeared to him and blessed him with the gift of poesy. On the next morning his parents discovered him in the temple and were delighted to find that he had suddenly become learned and wise.

Sometime afterwards, God Subrahmanya, so runs the story, came a hunting to the tract now called Viralimalai accompanied by this gifted boy, and found the country so charming that the God told the boy in a vision of his wish to have a temple built for him on the top of the hill at Viralimalai. Thereupon the boy Jnana varodaya communicated this good news to Alagiya Manavala of Perambur, who was then the chieftain of this tract. Alagiya was also granted a vision of the Lord in answer to a hymn of the 'boy' , but the vision was so dazzling that the chief lost his eyesight for a while. The chief built the temple, and became one of his most devoted worshipper. The boy Jnana varodaya became the first trustee of the temple. Portions of the temple were extended by the Kumaravadi and Marungapuri chiefs who were the vassals of the Madurai Nayaks. Laudatory songs are still sung in praise of the Perambur chiefs during one of the temple festivals at 'the Eastern gate mandapa'.

One Karuppamuttu Pillai, a minister of one of the Kumaravadi chiefs was in the habit of visiting the temple every Friday. Once after he had set out from his house, he found that on account of heavy showers, a tank had burst and the Mamundi stream, lying between Kumaravadi and Viralimalai, had become unfordable. He concluded that he had to spend the night without meals and what was more important to him without smoking. The God, however, appeared before him in human form, kindly supplied him with a cigar and light, and arranged for his visiting the temple that night without difficulty. The grateful devotee ordered that henceforth cigars should be offered to the God at the time of the last *puja* of the day along with food and other eatables and distributed among the brahmins and others visiting the temple. It is said that, after the tract passed into the hands of the Tondaimans, a ruler of Pudukkottai ordered the offering of cigars to be stopped as inappropriate to such a superior deity as Subrahmanya, and that is said to have appeared to the ruler in a dream, exhibiting, his injured body and explained that it was impossible for him to get on without smoking, with the result that the cigar offereing was permitted to be continued.

Arunagiri, the great Saiva Saint who is believed to have lived in the middle of the 15th century, visited Viralimalai, and sang in praise of the God here, expressing some of his mystic experiences in his famous hymns called *Tiruppugal.*

Subrahmanya Mudaliyar, son of Ekanayaka Mudaliyar of Kunriyur, both the ministers of Vijaya Raghunatha Raya Tondaiman, were greatly devoted to this temple, and is the hero of a verse drama called *Viralimalai Kuravanji* which is still staged annually by the dancing girls here.

The ascent to the top of the hill is made by a series of flights commencing at an entrance close to the *ahanamandapa*. To the north of the first landing, about half-way up, there is a natural cavern in which there is now a shrine containing a *linga*, an Amman, Ganesa, etc. At the top is a *mandapa* from which one enters the main *gopura* facing south. More steps lead to the northern *prakara*. The idol of Sri Subrahmanya has six faces and twelve hands. The God is seated on a peacock, with the two Ammans—Valli and Devasena, standing on either side. The *mandapas* are of the Madurai style, and the one of the extreme east affords a panoramic view of the country round as far as the Tiruchirappalli rock fort.

Some panels containing dancing figures in bas-relief evidently belonging to a ruined early Chola temple at Kodumbalur, have been built into the walls of the northern *prakara*. The two lion-pillars in the *ahanamandapa* at the foot of the hill are of the Pallava type, and probably brought from the ruined Aintalai or Aivarkovil at Kodumbalur.

BHUMISVARA TEMPLE
IN
VIRALUR.

Viralur lies on the trunk road from Tiruchirappalli to Madurai. It is three miles from Kodumbalur, and a mile and a half from Viralimalai, which is 18 miles from Tiruchirappalli and 26 miles from Pudukkottai. In the past, Viralur was a part of the larger village of Viraliyur or Viralur mentioned in the *Tiruppugal*, which also included the modern village of Viralimalai that has grown up round the temple on the rock. The modern village of Viralimalai was then known as Viraliyurmalai.

Viralimalai is now famous for the temple of Subrahmanya on the hill ; but the small Bhumisvara Siva temple (Fig. 70) of Viralur is of greater antiquarian importance and interest. This temple has been considered as an early Chola temple.

The Bhumisvara temple faces the east. It is a *karrali* of the single-storeyed (*eka-tala*) variety. The main shrine and the *ardhamandapa* are of the early Chola period, while the *mahamandapa* with the Amman shrine to the north are modern structures. The *garbhagriha* is square. The plinth (*upapitha*) has simple moulding with a three sided *kumudam*. The walls of the *garbhagriha* are adorned with tetragonal pilasters, with the usual components, *kal*, *tadi*, *padmam*, *idal*, *palagai*, etc. The abacus is large and massive with a plain moulding, and the *idal* below is not carved into petals. The corbels are simple with plain bevelled-brackets. The cornice is thick and single-arched and with a number of *kudus* crowned with *simha mukhas*. Above the cornice there is a *yali* freize. There are three niches in the three sidewalls of the *garbhagriha*. Each niche has been surmounted by a plain arch. In the northern niche instead of usual Brahma, there is a sculpture of a standing Bhikshatana (Fig. 71) which was originally housed in one of the sub-shrines, and a standing sculpture of Vishnu in the western niche. Dakshinamurti which might have been housed in the southern niche of the main shrine is lying on the ground of the compound outside the temple. Sculptures of a Jyestha and a Ganesa, probably of the sub-shrines, are also found here.

The *ardhamandapa* has no niches in its walls. The *vimana* over the sanctum is of the circular type with a circular *griva*, a bell shaped *sikhara* and a circular *stupi*. On the four sides of the *griva*, are niches, and on the four sides of the *sikhara* are four large *kudus* surmounted by *simhamukhas* which are supported by the niches below. These niches are now empty. The *stupi* rests on two layers of lotus petals. The *vimana* is hollow inside. There are traces of sub-shrines all round the main shrine.

Unfortunately there are no inscriptions anywhere in this temple. But considering the architectural features, it can be assigned to the early Chola period. The noteworthy features of this temple is the simplicity in its structure the nobility in the sculptures, and the beautiful bell-shaped *sikhara* crowned by a bulbous *stupi*.

MARGASAHAYESVARA TEMPLE IN VISALUR.

Visalur is 22 miles from Pudukkottai, 8 miles from Keeranur on the Keeranur-Killukottai road.

Visalur has long been famous as the meeting place of the caste panchayats of the Senkilinattu Kallars. The ancient banyan tree here, with about hundred stems, was for centuries the rendezvous of the Kallars, who met and planned their decoities and depradations, and took oaths of loyalty to their chiefs and clans. Oaths taken here were held binding, and no Kalla would utter a falsehood within some furlongs of Visalur. According to tradition Visalur was originally a Vellala village. A Kalla of a neighbouring village asked for the hand of a Vellala girl, but her father put him off with evasive replies, until all the Vellala inhabitants migrated to another village. One Vellala, however, was in love with a dancing-girl of Visalur, and continued to pay stealthy visits to her. He was discoverd and killed ; and the dancing-girl thereupon committed suicide. But these two lover's love became immortal, and the two lovers are still worshipped as Pattavars. A Karuppar, a deity from Malabar who was on his way to Nagapattinam, later settled here, and is now worshipped along with the Pattavars.

The Siva temple here is a *karrali* and single storey (*eka-tala*) structure similar to those at Kaliyapatti and Tiruppur. Though plain and simple, it is a grand structure and very well preserved.

The *garbhagriha* and *ardhamandapa* are of the same date, and they stand on a plinth which has plain mouldings. There are no niches in the walls of the main shrine. Its walls are adorned with four simple pilasters which are tetragonal with square *palagais* and bevelled corbels. The cornice is single curved (arched) and adorned with *kudus* surmounted by *simhamukhas*. There is no *bhutagana* frieze below the cornice ; but a *yali* frieze is found above it.

The *garbhagriha* is a square of 8 feet 6 inches in exterior sides and 4 feet 8 inches in the interior.

The *griva* of the *vimana* is square and has four bulls at the four corners (*Fig.* 72). The figure-niches in the *griva* are crowned with *kudus* surmounted with lion-heads. The southern niche contains a sculpture of Dakshinamurti, that in the west one of Vishnu and that in the north one of Brahma. The *sikhara* and the *stupi* are four-sided ; and the latter is placed on *ratna* and *kamalapithas*.

The *ardhamandapa* projects forward 5 feet 6 inches in the same axis, and is of the same age.

The *mahamandapa* is a century or so later in date.

The whole structure from basement to finial is covered with lime-plaster (*Fig.* 73), which hides not only the inscriptions but also the decorative motifs. Half a dozen inscriptions have been copied so far, but they are incomplete ; one of the reign of an unidentified Kulottunga Chola, one of an unidentified Jatavarman Vira Pandya and another of an unidentified Vira Pandya. The others are fragments and are undated.

The Amman shrine is a much later structure. There are two portrait-sculptures-one within the Amman shrine and the other in front of it.

TIRUMAYAM TALUK.

BALASUBRAHMANYA TEMPLE IN KANNANUR.

Kannanur, also known as Rangiyam Kannanur is a village at a distance of 17 miles from Pudukkottai and about 2 miles inside from the main road to Rangiyam from Pudukkottai. There are two temples close to each other on the eastern bund of the large tank of the village. The one close to the bund is the Balasubrahmanya temple and the other is dedicated to Vishnu. Both the temples are conserved monuments and of considerable architectural interest.

The original temple of Balasubrahmanya contains a *garbhagriha* and *ardhamandapa* which are early Chola structures belonging to the 9th century. Orginally the temple should be surrounded by a wall of enclosure, of which only the basement and the pillars of the main gateways can be seen now.

This temple is a complete structural stone temple of the *svayampradhana* class with Subrahmanya as the main deity. The *garbhagriha* is square, each side measuring twelve feet six inches externally. Its walls are thick and they are adorned externally with pilasters which resemble those in the Siva temple at Tirukkattalai and have elegant scroll ornaments, *kalasa*, *kumbha* and *palagai*. The corbels have an angular profile. There is a frieze of bhutaganas below the single-arched thick cornice (*kodungai*) which is also decorated with *kudus* having beautiful scroll work. Over the cornice is a frieze of standing *yalis*. There are niches (deva-koshtas) for deities in the outer walls of the *garbhagriha*, but they are now empty except the southern one which contains an idol of Dakshinamurti.

This temple is a single storeyed type. The *vimana* over the central shrine (*Fig.* 74) stands on a circular basement, and there are four niches in its *griva* portion which have scrolled *kudus* crowned with *simha* heads on the four cordinal points. Images are found only in two of them and they are beyond identification due to it weather beaten condition. At the four corners of the *griva* are four figures of sitting elephants, the vehicle of Subrahmanya.

Generally, Subrahmanya has the banner of the cock which is held in the hand with peacock His vehicle standing behind. But the Sangam literature of the Tamils and some of the *agamas* and Puranas mention also the elephant as His vehicle. *Gajavahana* (elephant rider) being one of the important names given to Subrahmanya, this is evidently an emblem of the presiding deity, viz., Balasubrahmanya. This temple is one of the rare temples which has the elephant as Subrahmanya's vehicle.

The *sikhara* is bell-shaped with a beautiful curvature, convex followed by concave surfaces. The *sikhara* resembles that of the Kadambar temple at Narttamalai, with this difference that underneath the stupi here, there are two layers of lotus petals-*padma* and *ratna pattikas* whereas in the Kadambar temple there is only one. It is crowned by an ornamented spherical stone *stupi* of exquisite workmanship.

The *ardhamandapa* is about 8 feet square forming an integrated structure with the main-shrine. Both the main-shrine and the *ardhamandapa* have entrances facing west, while the *mahamandapa* has one facing south.

The present presiding deity is a new one, and the original deity of the shrine is found in the *mandapa*. The original deity is a standing figure (*Fig.* 75) about three feet six inches in height and one foot six inches across the shoulders. It has four arms, with *sakti* (spear) and *akshamala* (garland of beads) in the back upper arms. The front right lower arm is in the *abhaya* pose and in the left one resting on the hip. It has a cross band across the chest and wears a *karanda-makuta* (3 tier type).

The temple of Kariyamanikka Perumal called in inscriptions *Virudaraja Bhayankara Vinnagara Emberumanar* contains some fine sculptures. The *mukhamandapa* is different in style from that of the parts of the temple. All the nine published inscriptions are found on the walls of the *mukhamandapa* only. All of them belong to Pandyan Kings, and the earliest of them is one of the III year of Maravarman Sundara Pandya, who ascended the throne of Madurai in 1216 A.D. Hence the *mahamandapa* has been assigned without any doubt to the 13th century.

KILANILAI FORT.

Kilanilai fort is at a distance of 20 miles from Pudukkottai towards Arimalam-Karaikkudi bus route. The name *Kilanilai* means the eastern gate or site as distinguished from another adjacent place called *Melanilai* or western gate. Between them is *Pudunilai*.

Kilanilai was an important military station from the days of the Imperial Cholas and Pandyas upto the 19th century. According to the Ceylonese chronicle, the *Mahavamsa*, a line running from Ponnamaravati to Kilanilai, and from here to Manamelkudi in the Tanjore district, divided the Chola and Pandya dominions in the 10th and 11th centuries before the final subjugation of the Pandyan kingdom by the Cholas. The line also marks the northern limit reached by the Sinhalese in their invasion of South India. The strategic road that ran in the 12th—13th century from Kilanilai to Arantangi in the east and to Tiruppattur and Ponnamaravati in the west can be seen even now. About the middle of the 12th century, the Ceylonese general Lankapura, who was in alliance with Parakrama Pandya, defeated Kulasekhara, a rival claimant to the Pandyan throne, who had killed Parakrama (C. 1162 A.D.) and placed Vira Pandya, Parakrama's son, on the Madurai throne. During this campaign a sanguinary battle was fought at Kilanilai in which, according to the *Mahavamsa*, the slaughter was so great that the corpses of the slain covered a space of four leagues.

According to a local tradition, the fort was built by a Setupati called Nondi Maravan or the lame Marava. The Trichinopoly Manual states, on the other hand, probably on the authority of the Tanjore Manual (1883) that it was built by Vijaya Raghava Nayakan, the last of the Nayak Kings of Tanjore, who died about 1674. The statistical Account of Pudukkottai of 1813 says that the fort was built with an arsenal in the days of Vijaya Raghunatha Setupati about the year 1683. It is probable that this Setupati, who got possession of the fort, repaired or extended it by adding an arsenal. In 1756 when the place was temporarily occupied by Vijaya Raghunatha Raya Tondaiman of Pudukkottai, a granary was built in which to store provision against sieges. The inference to be drawn from these different accounts is that it passed through different hands—especially between Tanjore and Ramnad rulers before it finally came over to Pudukkottai. About 1674 it was under Tanjore. According to Trichinopoly Gazetteer (1907) "it (fort) was captured shortly afterwards by the Setupati of Ramnad, and was one of the forts given by that chief in return for the alliance of the King of Tanjore in 1686, and forcibly retaken by the former in 1698. Henceforth it seems to have become part of the debatable land which passed from the hands of Ramnad to Tanjore in 1771". As early as 1723, the fort and district of Kilanilai were promised to the Tondaimans of Pudukkottai by Tanda Tevan of Ramnad, if he gained the throne with the Tondaiman's assistance. It also appears that Tukoji, Raja of Tanjore (1729–36), granted it to the Tondaiman, that the Tondaiman sold it back to Tanjore on certain conditions, and that when the conditions were violated, the Tondaiman attempted to capture it. In 1749 Manoji, the Tanjore general, ceded it to the Tondaiman on his own account in return for military assistance, in consequence of which the Tondaiman actually got possession of it immediately. But the Raja of Tanjore refused to ratify the act of his general, and ordered Manoji himself to recover it. This happened in 1756. In 1781 it was seized and occupied for a time by Hyder's army, but was recovered by the Tondaiman in August of the same year, at the request of colonel Braithwaile of the Madras Army. Soon after this, the whole of the Tanjore territory was annexed by the British, but Kilanilai, which originally formed part of Tanjore but had all along been claimed by the Tondaimans, continued to be a subject of dispute till 1803, when it was finally ceded to Pudukkottai, subject to the annual tribute of an elephant, which however was never paid, on the ground that this stipulation was inconsistant with previous treaties, and with the rank and status enjoyed by the rulers, and was formally waived in 1837 by the court of Directors themselves.

The extensive fort of historic value (Figs. 76 and 77) is now in a dilapidated condition It was built of laterite quarried close by in the Sengiiai and Sakkottai patches. The area enclosed by the fort walls is 43·61 acres. The first place of interest that a visitor observes within the fort is a small temple of Hanuman. Then he has to approach the temple of Ariyanayaki Amman, the principal temple within the fort. Behind the temple is a *Ammankulam*, to the south of which is a Vishnu temple. The magazine was located near the southern gate, adjoining which are a shrine to Munisvara and an *Urani*. There is an underground passage, which is now blocked, near the southern gate. Tradition says that it was a secret passage leading to the fort at Sakkottai in the Ramnad district. A fairly large iron cannon lying on one of the ramparts is all that now remains of the efficient military equipment with which the fort was once fitted. The cannon has a date 13th January 1920 in its rear part.

In front of the fort is an old temple car made of wood with good artistic pieces of wood-carvings, depicting scenes of Hinduism. Near the entrance of the fort is a Sri Chellaswami mut, and Chellaswami samadi, constructed recently on behalf of a local saint called Chellaswami.

SIVA TEMPLE.

IN

MALAYAKKOVIL.

Malayakkovil is at a distance of 12 miles from Pudukkottai towards Namanasamudram-Ponnamaravati route and a mile from Nachchandupatti, towards north in a branch route.

There is a small rock hill temple dedicated to Subrahmanya. It can be reached by a paved incline on the western slope of the hill and a narrow flight of steps on the south. This temple, according to an inscription near the flight of steps, was built by a native of Nachchandupatti towards the close of the nineteenth century.

Below this hill temple, on the eastern side is a rock-cut cubical cell (Fig. 78) with a rectangular entrance. This is a protected monument. It contains *linga* which stands on an octagonal *yonipitha*, the *gomukhi* or spout of which is supported on a rearing lion. On either side of the entrance is a shallow niche flanked by pilasters bearing corbels, the brackets of which are curved and bear the usual Pallava roll-ornaments. The *ardhamandapa* and *mahamandapa* are later additions to the shrine but they are completely dilapidated. There is a *nandi* and a fractured Valampuri Ganesa which is said to be there in the Pudukkottai manual is missing. There are two other miniature niches on this side of the rock, one of which contains a *linga*. There is an inscription here which is in three parts ; the script of one part is Pallava grantha, and that of the other two Tamil. The Pallava grantha part is a label reading *Parivadinida-Parivadinida* is a seven-stringed lute. The lines in Tamil are not wholly intelligible ; but part of it may be interpreted as " behold the method of learning the science of *Parivadini* as enunciated or established by Gunasena ". Gunasena is believed to be a title of the Pallava Mahendravarman I and this cave-temple may, therefore, be attributed to him.

The other rock-cut cave-temple is on the southern vertical slope of the same rock, and in plan, resembles the Siva cave-temples at Tirumayam and Malayadipatti. The cubical sanctum facing west is at the eastern end of the cave. It contains a *linga* which stands on a circular *yonipitha*, the spout of which has no lion to support.

In front of the cubical sanctum is a rectangular *ardhamandapa*, the facade of which is supported by two pillars and two pilasters of the usual Pallava style, massive and cubical at the base and top, and octagonal in the middle, and surmounted by a corbel with roll-ornamentation. On the northern wall of the *ardhamandapa*, which is the surface of the rock, contains four pilasters corresponding to the pillars and pilasters of the facade. There are a *nandi* in front of the *linga* and a Valampuri Ganesa (Fig. 79) in the west wall of this hill.

The *mahamandapa* is a later structure. There are some layers of pilaster on the walls which shows that they were once covered with stucco. To the east of this cave-temple is a miniature square niche with a *linga* in it.

The Amman shrine, which is a structure of the late Chola style, stands a little to the south and faces the north. It contains a *garbhagriha*, *ardhamandapa* and a *mahamandapam*.

An inscription, dated in the 3rd year of Jatavarman Kulasekhara Pandya I, registers a remission of taxes on the *devadanam* lands of Sri Varamudaiya Nayanar, which seems to have been the name of the *linga* in the rock-cut cave-temple, though, according to an inscription at Panaiyur, the God was called Tirukalisvara.

SRI NAGANATHASWAMY TEMPLE

IN

PERAIYUR.

Peraiyur is at a distance of 9½ miles from Pudukkottai towards south-east in Ponnamaravati route, and two miles towards north in a branch road. The *linga* of the temple is a *Swayambu* (Self-born). It contains a Siva temple, called Naganathaswami temple of great renown. It is about 4 miles from Namanasamudram Railway Station.

The present *garbhagriha* of this Siva temple is Pandyan structure of the 12th-13th centuries. It stands on a moulded plinth with a *vyalavari* at the top and a curved *kumudam* in the middle. The pilasters are octagonal with rectangular bases, but without *nagapadams*. The *palagai* is large and square; the *padma* has well-defined petals. The corbels are tenoned. The *kudus* in the cornice bear circles with lotus medallions in the centre and scroll designs at the sides. Above the cornice is an unfinished *vyala* frieze.

The walls in the main shrine contain niches on three sides. The niches are flanked by circular pilasters and crowned by arched *makharatoranas*. The southern niche contains Dakshinamurti, the western Lingodbhava, and the northern Brahma. The *vimana* is a modern brick structure. The *ardhamandapa* is a pillared hall. It contains a *swarangapadai* (underground path) which is located in the northern corner of this *mandapa*. It was not clearly known where it leads.

The oldest extant structure in the temple is the western *gopura* behind the sanctum, the entrance of which is now walled up. It is of the 10th century Chola style, and has four sided pilasters with massive square *palagais*; the *padmam* below is not cut into petals; and the corbels are bevelled. The features of this structure, coupled with the presence of a Saptamatrika group in bas-relief on a single stone, and an inscription of Rajendra I (1012-44) on the rock near the tarn, show that the temple was originally a Chola structure of the 10th century but was later renovated in the 12th or 13 th century. The eastern or main *gopura* is a Pandya structure; its chief features being pilasters with *nagapadams*, tenoned corbels and decorative pilasters with *pancaras* on top; but the brick work above is modern. The other *mandapas* in the *prakara* are modern. The temple was frequently renovated; the latest renovation was towards the close of the last century in the reign of Raja Ramachandra Tondaiman of Pudukkottai.

The shrine of the Amman Sri Brihadambal belongs to the close of the 15th or the beginning of the 16th century, and is of the late Vijayanagar style. The *pushpapodigais* with fully formed flower buds, unconnected with the stem, are characteristic.

There are inscriptionsof Chola, Pandya and Vijayanagar period. The earliest inscription in the temple is dated in the reign of Rajendra Chola I (1012-14). An order of a *samantan* (A samantan is a chief or general; here , perhaps, an officer whose duty was to subdue treacherous vassals and safeguard the person of the king) Sriman Mahapradani Meysatrukandan (destroyer of personal enemies), granting to the temple the taxes due from the village of Sendamangalam, is dated 1236 A. D. in the reign of Raja Raja III. Two inscriptions, which describe Peraiyur as a *devadanam* and *Brahmadeya* village are dated in the reign of an unidentified Kulottunga Chola. There are three damaged inscription. of the 16th century, one of which refers to the building of a shrine to Chandikesvara. Ponnambalanatha Tondaiman (about the year 1515) of Arantangi, who was a charitable ruler, made large grants to this temple. Seventelunta Pallavarayar was a devotee of this temple. Peraiyur Nadu was one of the divisions of the *palayam* ruled by the Pallavarayars before its conquest or annexation by the Tondaiman rulers. One of the tanks here is still called Pallavankulam. On the outer wall of the temple kitchen is a damaged inscription relating to a settlement of a dispute between the Pallars and the Paraiyans to settle which three inscriptions on the subject in dispute at Tekkattur. Virachchilai and Lembalakkudi were consulted and compared, under the orders of Raghunatha Raya Tondaiman before a decision was given.

A Sanskrit inscription in Telugu script records the performance in 1865 of a *kumbhabisekha* or purificatory ceremony to the God and Goddess of this temple by Raja Ramachandra Tondaiman.

There are some bronzes, mostly modern, except that of Nataraja. (Fig. 80) 3 feet 6 inches in height or 5 feet including the pedestal, which is of the Chola style. The stone sculptures of Siva and Parvati seated on their bull and of Nataraja (Fig. 81) are fine. There are hundreds of sculptures of fivehooded cobras, (Fig. 82) installed by devotes as votive offerings. It is believed that the performing *nagaprathishtai* or the snake-installation ceremony with suitable rites and prayers will remove barreness in women. There is a tarn (spring) in front of the central shrine. A curious natural phenomenon is said to be associated with the tarn; when the water reaches a certain level on a sloping rock marked with a trident, a celestial music of the Vina, bell and conch is believed to be heard once a year in the month of *Panguni* (March-April) being caused according to the temple legend, by the worship conducted by *Adisesha* or as some say Devendra.

VAIDISVARA TEMPLE
IN
TIRUKKULAMBUR

Tirukkulambur which is at present known as Tirukkalambur was also spelt Thirukkurumbur in the inscriptions. It is at a distance of 29 miles from Pudukkottai towards Ponnamaravati route.

Tirukkulambur means the 'Village of the sacred hoof'. According to a legend, once upon a time, when a Pandya king was riding in this place, his horse stumbled when it placed its hoof on an object embedded in the ground from which blood issued. On examination, it proved to be a *linga* which had been broken inadvertently by the horse's hooves. The parts were fastened together by a copper band and it had been worshipped ever since.

The linga here is called both *Vaidisvara* and *Katalivanesvara* or the 'Lord of the plantain forest', probably from the luxuriant growth of plantains in the temple *prakara*. This variety of plantain fruit is believed to cause stomach-ache when grown and consumed elsewhere. The *garbhagriha* is of the Pandya style; and the pillars on the walls support corbels with *pushpapodigais*. The corbels of the Amman shrine are bevelled. The *ardhamandapa* and *mahamandapa* are of later style. The presence of Jyestha and other sculptures show that the original shrine, which must have dated from about the 10th or 11th century, was renewed later.

There are bronzes among which a group of Nataraja, Sivakama Sundari and Manickavasagar are fine. Lingodbhavamurti (Fig. 83) in the western niche of the main shrine is highly polished and of exquisite beauty. There are interesting sculptures both within and outside the temple. The stone bull in front is finely ornamented.

The temple contains 12 inscriptions; the earliest of which is dated A. D. 1199 in the reign of Jatavarman Kulasekhara I, and related to a gift to a Brahmin by Keralan Nisadarajan, chief of Tirukkodumkunram or Piranmalai. An inscription, dated A. D. 1259 in the reign of Jatavarman Vira Pandya II, records a sale of land, tank, well, etc., by the *Ur* of Maraiman Vikrama Pandyanallur. It is not clear whether *Maraiman Vikrama Pandyanallur* was another name for Tirukkulambur or was a different village. Three inscriptions are royal orders issued by a Konerinmeikondan (Royal orders were often issued under the king's title Konerinmeikondan, instead of with the proper name of the king) probably Maravarman Kulasekhara II (acc. 1314). One of them relates to a grant of tax-free *devadanam* land, which was signed by a Tondaiman, and was inscribed on the temple wall by a *padaikkanakku* or military accountant. Another records that certain taxes payable to the king were made over to the temple for repairs and for the conduct of worship. There is an inscription (A. D. 1502) of the reign of the Saluva Immadi Narasimha of Vijayanagar relating to an order by Narasa Nayakar, the commander-in-chief who was the *defacto* ruler of the empire, remitting the tax on oil mills and ordering the free supply of oil to this temple for the lamps and to anoint the Gods to secure merit for Tipparasa, a secretary or minister of Narasa Nayaka.

At a short distance from this temple towards east stands another fine Siva temple (Fig. 84) which was renovated by Minaksi Sundara Desikar. The old *garbhagriha* is a conserved monument. According to an inscription on the west wall of the central shrine, this temple was built in memory of a Kulasekara Pandya and the original *linga* was known as *Kulasekharisvaramudaiyar*. The new linga, that has now been installed, is called *Tiruvalarolisvarar*.

According to the statistical Account of Pudukkottai (1813) a fort was constructed here by the Nayak Kings of Madurai which had fallen into ruins by 1620. It was near this village in the jungle of Kaliapur that Kattabomman Nayak, poligar of Panjalamkurichchi, and his dumb brother Ommaiyan were captured in 1799 by the Tondaiman's *Sardar*, Muthuvairava Ambalagar of Tirukkalambur, a feat celebrated in a poem composed in the *Kummi* metre.

SIVA—VISHNU TEMPLE AND FORT IN TIRUMAYAM.

The word Tirumayam was derived from the word 'Tirumeyyam' which means the 'Place of Truth' (Sanskrit, Satyakshetra). It is situated at a distance of 13 miles from Pudukkottai town towards Karaikkudi route. It is now the headquarters of Tirumayam taluk.

The Siva cave-temple is the earliest monument here. It is assigned, on architectural and other grounds, to the period of the Pallava Mahendravarman I. An inscription in the adjoining Vishnu temple mentions the Muttaraiya Chief called Sattan Maran, a contemporary of the Vijayalaya line of Imperial Cholas. In the 12th and 13th centuries the Hoysalas interested themselves in the affairs of the South, first as allies of the Cholas and later of the Pandyas. Two inscriptions in this temple refer to Appanna, a Dandanayaka or general of the Hoysala army who while returning from his victorious triumphal march to Rameswaram, presided over an important tribunal held at Tirumayam to settle a long-standing dispute between the trustees of the Vishnu and Siva temples. In the 13th century, Tirumayam seems to have passed under Pandyan rule, and to establish the fact there are inscriptions dated in the reigns of Maravarman Sundara Pandya II, Jatavarman Vira Pandya III, Jatavarman Parakrama Pandya and an unidentified Vira Pandya.

The Vijayanagar inscriptions are dated in the reigns of Virupaksa I and Krishnadeva Raya. In the 15th century, Tirumayam was administered by the chiefs of Surraikkudi. Parakrama Pandya Vijayalaya Tevar also called Sempaga Ponnayanar, and Avaiyandan Sundara Pandya Vijayalaya Tevar are the Suraikkudi chiefs mentioned in the inscriptions. In the 16th and 17th centuries, Tirumayam was a northern outpost of the territories of the Setupati of Ramnad, but it was directly administered by the Pallavarayars. About the year 1636, Vijaya Raghunatha, popularly known as Kilavan Setupati of Ramnad, a brother-in-law of Raghunath Raya Tondaiman, the founder of the last ruling house, made over to the latter the Palayam of Tirumayam. (The Setupati, on that occasion, also gave a sword of honour to Raghunatha which is still preserved in the palace and called *Chinna Rama Banam*, and a right handed conch which is said to bring good fortune to its owner). Setupati Tanta Tevan confirmed this cession in 1723 in return for military help that he received from the Tondaiman against Bhavani Sankar, a rival claimant to the chiefship of Ramnad. In 1733, Tirumayam was the only place of refuge centre left to the Tondaiman when the Tanjore general Ananda Row overran the whole of the Pudukkottai country. Here Vijaya Raghunatha Raya Tondaiman lay besieged for about a year until Ananda Row raised the siege and retired. In 1755, the Raja of Tanjore submitted to the East India Company a claim for Tirumayam, but did not seriously maintained it. Then is an unauthenticated tradition that at the time of the Poligar war of 1799, Kattabomma Nayak of Panjalamkurichchi and his dumb brother, were for a time imprisoned in the Tirumayam Fort before the Tondaiman betrayed them to the English. The truth is that the Poligars, who had taken refuge of their own accord in the jungles of Tondaiman territory near Tirukkalambur, were captured by the Tondaiman's men and sent to Madurai at the request of Mr. Lushington, the Collector of the Poligar Peshcush. During the second Poligar war, Tirumayam was a depot for Lieutenant Colonel Agnew's army.

Tirumayam is one of the important religious worship centres in the South, and its temples are regarded with great veneration both by Vaishnavites and Saivaites.

The Satyamurti (Vishnu or the Lord of Truth) temple is regarded by local Vaishnavites to be second in sanctity only to the temple at Srirangam. It is indeed called *Adi Rangam* or the original *Rangam* and is claimed to be older than the temple at the latter place. A festival takes place in *Margali* and lasts twenty days ; the first ten days are called *Pakal-pattu*, when the processions take place in the day time, and the last ten days *Rappattu*, when the processions occur at night. It is believed that those who worship the deity on the Ekadasi or eleventh day of this festival are sure of salvation. The other important

festivals are the *Chitrapournami* and the *Nawaratri*, and those conducted in the months of *Vaikasi* (May-June) and *Adi* (July-August). The sanctity of this temple has been enhanced by the fact that Tirumangai Alvar, the celebrated Vaishnava Saint sang hymns in praise of this Lord, Satyamurti (Fig. 85).

The main gopura at the entrance has many of the features of the 'late Pandya' style, such as the corbels with *pushpapodigais*, many sided pillars with *nagapadams* and decorative pilasters. The entrance mandapa has tall pillars containing large crude sculptures. To the left are three shrines facing east, containing *Cakrattalvar* or the presiding deity of Vishnu's discus. Andal and Krishna, and to the right are a shrine to Lakshmi-Narasimha, and the rooms to keep the processional bronze idols.

Entering the second *mandapa*, the visitor turns to the Amman shrine to the left. Ujjanivanittayar, the Amman, is believed to be very propitious. To the right is a narrow shrine containing the sculptures of the Vaishnavite Acharyas-Ramanuja, Madhurakavi and others, and the Alvars Behind this *mandapa* is the *mahamandapa* of the Satyamurti shrine, which contains a shrine for Garuda, the vehicle of Vishnu. This *mandapa* is structure of the "late Pandya" period, and displays on the walls both decorative and artistic pilasters and *kumbha pancaras*. The recess to the north is called Sundara Pandyankuradu and leads to the main shrine of Sri Satyamurti, which is surrounded by cloistered halls. The principal shrine, which adjoins an overhanging cliff belongs to the 'late Pandya' period. The pilasters on the walls are round, with square bases and *nagapadams*; the *idals* have delicately carved lotus petals, and the corbels have *pushpapodigais*. The sculptures of Vishnu on the *prakara* are of the Pallava period ; and the images are represented as holding the discus as if in the act of hurling it.

The rock-cut shrine of Yogasayanamurti or the god in a recumbent posture (Fig. 86) is situated to the west of Satyamurti shrine. The two pillars and the two pilasters in this rock-cut shrine are usually tall ; and the corbels have rolls ornaments of Pallava period. The main idol is an imposing sculpture lying on a serpent couch ; the five hoods of the serpent, which cover the god's head as a canopy, are half drawn back-ward. The deity has two arms, one stretched behind him as if consoling the serpent named Adisesha, and the other represented as protecting Lakshmi who is seated on his breast. All around the main idol is a wealth of sculptures including *Garuda*, *Citragupta*, *Markandeya*, *Brahma*, the *Devas*, the *Vasus* and the *Kinnaras*. Near the eastern wall are two demons, and sheltered near the god's feet, is the image of Bhuma Devi, the Earth goddess. The legend that is associated with this group of sculptures is that when the demons Madhu and Kaitabha approached the god in an aggressive attitude, Brahma, Lakshmi and Bhudevi were frightened. Adisesha, in his sudden wrath, spat poison which consumed the demons, but was immediately stung with remorse of his hasty action without so much as asking his Lord's permission ; but the God comforted him with an assurance of his approval of the act.

To the east of Sri Satyamurti shrine are those of the *Senamudali* and Rama (group) and further east is the holy gate, through which the principal processional idol is taken out on the Ekadasi day in *Margali* month. The Satyapushkarni is fine octagonal tank symmetrically revetted. (Fig. 87).

The first mandapa, the cloistered halls round the Satyamurti shrine and the shrine of Rama are the gifts of Chettiyars, the predominant community of Tirumayam. A prominent Chettiyar family of Karaikkudi has made endowments for daily offerings and the distribution of food to the poor.

At the southern end of the street leading to this temple is a shrine to Vedanta Desika, the founder of the *Vedagali* sect of Vaishnavas.

There are thirteen inscriptions in this temple. The earliest is on a slab which is now placed in the western prakara of the Satyamurti shrine, but must have once formed a part of the parapet to the steps leading to the cave-temple, and may be ascribed to the latter part of the 8th century or the early years of the 9th century A.D. The above inscription mentions a renovation of the cave-temple and an endowment by Perumbidugu Perumadevi, mother of Sattan maran also called Videlviduga Viluperadiaraiyan, a contemporary and vassal of the Pallava Kings, Nandivarman II and Dantivarman. This shows that the cave-temple must have been in existence before the reign of Nandivarman II. A dispute between the priests of the Vishnu and Siva temples for sharing the produce of the temple lands was adjudicated in 1245 A.D. the seventh year of the reign of Maravarman Sundara Pandya II, by a special tribunal composed of the members of the nadu representing the towns and villages of the district, the Samayamantris or royal priests, ordinary priests belonging to Tirumayam and other places, and the ariyars, and presided over by the Hoysala general Appanna Dandanayaka.

There are two Pandya inscriptions, one dated (1340 A.D.) in the reign of Jatavarman Vira Pandya III, and the other (1369 A.D.) in the reign of Jatavarman Parakrama Pandya. The earlier inscriptions records the sale of *Padikkaval* rights by the assembly of Tirumayam to a resident of Melakurundanparai, an adjoining military station to Tirumayam.

Of the Vijayanagar inscriptions, two are dated in the reigns of Virupaksa I, and Krishnadeva Raya, while the third is mutilated. The one belonging to the reign of Krishnadeva Raya records a gift of land by Sellappa Vira Narasinga Raya Nayakar to both the Siva and Vishnu temples in the ratio of 2:3.

The adjoining temple to Satyamurti temple is Satyagirisvaram. The front gopura is modern, and a good imitation of 'Late Pandya' architecture. The first pillared mandapa consists of shrines of Bhanu Umapatisvara facing the east, that of the Amman Raja Rajesvari facing the south, and one of Bhairava and the Navagraha group. This group of shrines is known as the Kilakkovil or the 'lower temple'. Further up is the shrine of Sri Venuvanesvari or 'the Sovereign Lady of the Bamboo forest', the principal Amman of the temple. It is a 'late Pandya' structure, renovated very recently. Above this is the rock-cut shrine of Sri Satyagirisvara. The cell containing the linga with yonipitha is at the western and of the cave end faces east ; and in the east opposite to the linga is a big Lingodbhavamurti, (*Fig.* 88) cut in the rock itself. This faces the west i.e., the sanctum. In between the linga and Lingodbhava is an *ardhamandapa* with its facade facing south. The pillars and pilasters of the *ardhamandapa* are of the usual Pallava style, massive and cubical at the base and top, and octogonal in the middle, and carrying a corbel with roll ornamentation. The linga which rests on a circular *yonipitha* and the *nandi* are cut out of the same rock. There is a *Valampuri* Ganesa. The *dvarapalakas* have only two arms ; the one on the north has his clothes reaching down the ankles, wears an *yajnopavita* of rudraksa beads and a peculiar coiffure, and holds up is right hand in adoration, while the other figure rests one of his arms on a club. The walls and the ceilings were once covered with stucco on which were paintings. All that is now left of them is a small patch on the ceiling with conventional carpet designs.

There are five inscriptions here. The earliest is on the northern wall of the rock-cut shrine, at the top is the Sanskrit word '*Parivadinida*' in Pallava-Grantha-character, and followed by some Tamil lines which mention Gunasena, believed to be the title of the Pallava king Mahendravarman. Near it was a musical inscription similar to that at Kudimiyanmalai, but it was obliterated in the 13th century, while recording the award of the Hoysala Appanna Dandanayaka tribunal. The words that are still legible, refer to such terms of Indian music as sa(dja), gandhara and dhaiva(ta); These go to prove that the cave-temple was excavated in the time of Mahendravarman I; and the architectural features confirm this conclusion.

The Fort (*Fig.* 89) adjoining to the temple is said to have been originally a ring fort with seven concentric walls, and a broad moat all round. The lines of the old outer defences are now marked by occasional remains of the works and ditch and by three main entrances, one on the north, another on the south and the third on the south-east. In the northern entrance is a shrine to Bhairava, and in the southern are shrines to Hanuman, Sakti Ganapati and Karuppar-all protecting deities of the fort. The walls above the rock that enclose the main citadel are comparatively well preserved. The top is accessible very easily on the west side, on which side narrow steps have been hewn in the perpendicular boulder. From the existing remains one may conclude that the walls were surmounted by parapets of strong brickwork, serrated by machicolations and pierced by musketry. At half-way up to the top, to the right, is a chamber which was used as a magazine. Opposite to it, on the western slope of a boulder, a little below the top of the fort, is a rock-cut cell containing a *linga* placed on a square *yonipitha*, the spout of which is supported by the figure of a dwarf. On the top of the fort is a platform on which a gun is mounted. To the south of this platform is a tarn. On the perpendicular southern slope are the rock-cut temples of Siva and Vishnu. To the north-west is another tarn, and to the south-east a tank.

The area enclosed by the ramparts is 39·36 acres. The erection of the fort in 1687 A.D. (according to the Statistical Account of Pudukkottai 1813) is attributed to the Setupati Vijaya Raghunatha Tevan.

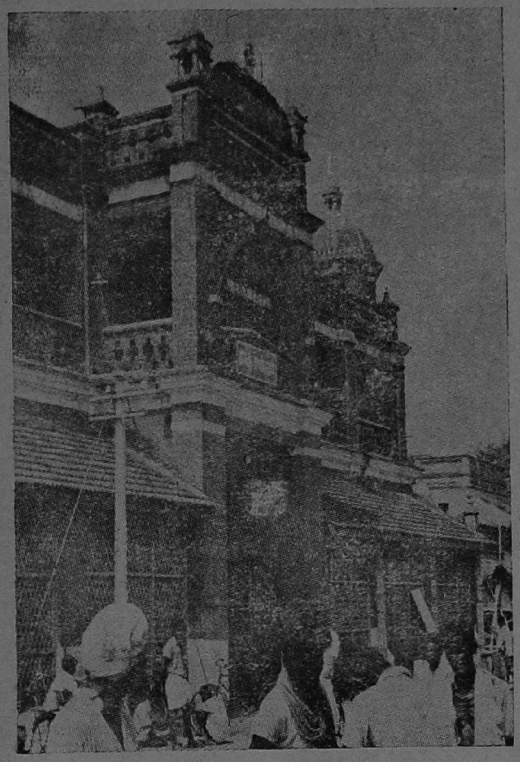


Fig. 1. *Municipal Office, Pudukkottai.*

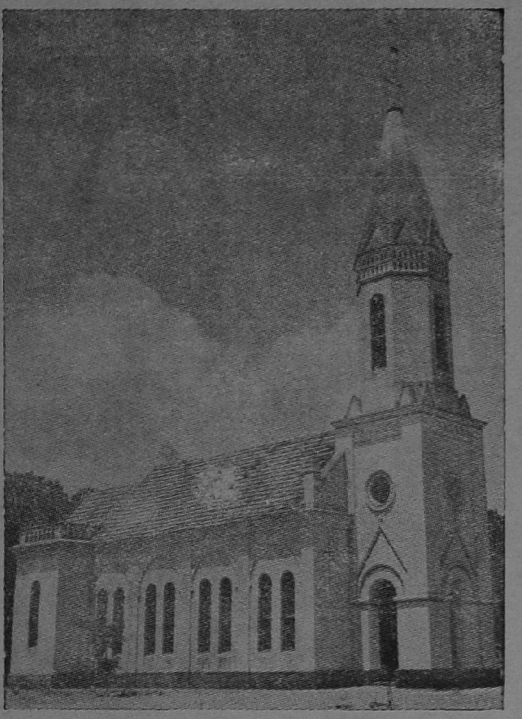


Fig. 2. *Protestant Church, Pudukkottai.*

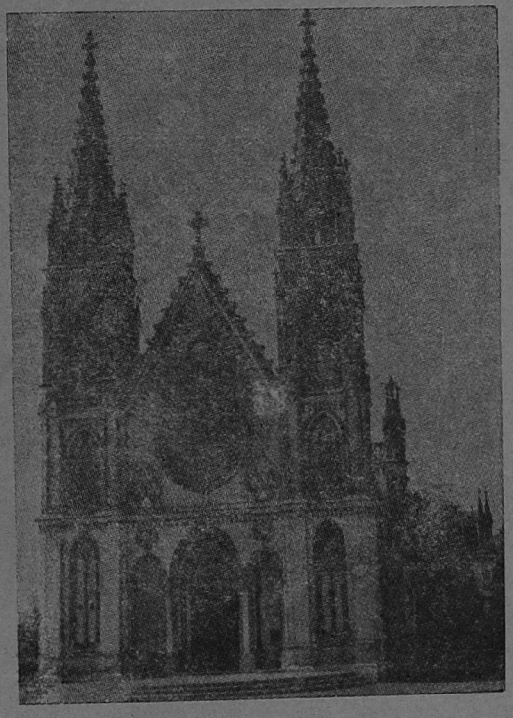


Fig. 3. *Catholic Church, Pudukkottai.*

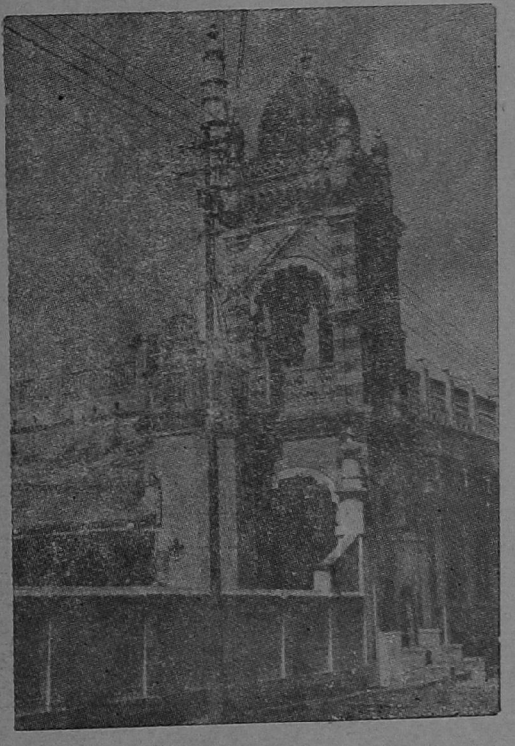


Fig. 4. *Mosque, Pudukkottai.*



Fig. 5. Old Palace, Pudukkottai.

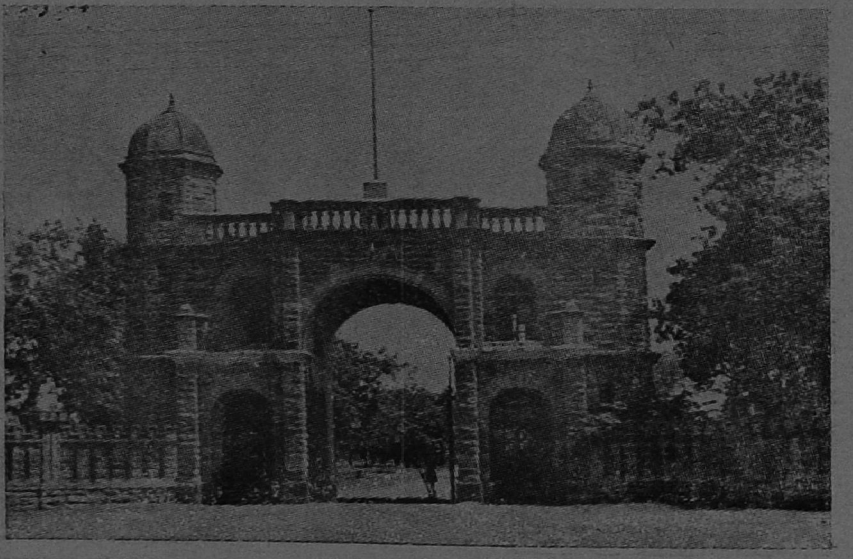


Fig. 6. New Palace, Pudukkottai.



Fig. 7. Public Office Building, Pudukkottai.

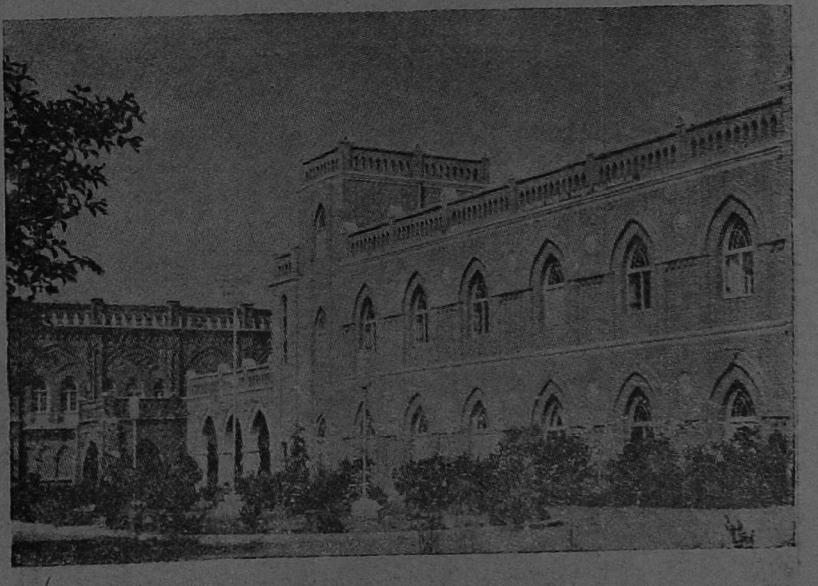


Fig. 8. B.Ed. College, Pudukkottai.



Fig. 9. *Victoria Jubilee Arch, Pudukkottai.*

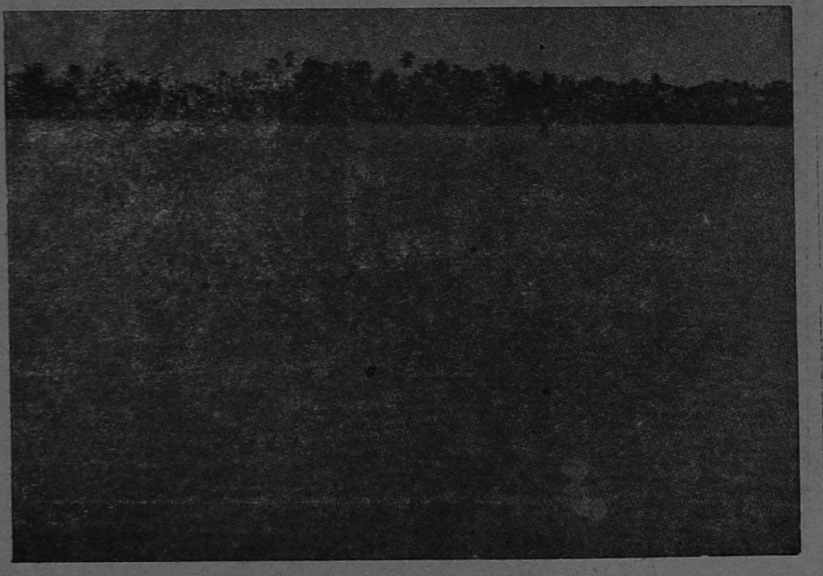


Fig. 10. *Pudukkulam, Pudukkottai.*



Fig. 11. *Munisvara, Porpanaikkottai.*



Fig. 12. *Gangadharamurthi, Tirugokarnam*



Fig. 13. *Saptamatrikas, Tirugokarnam.*

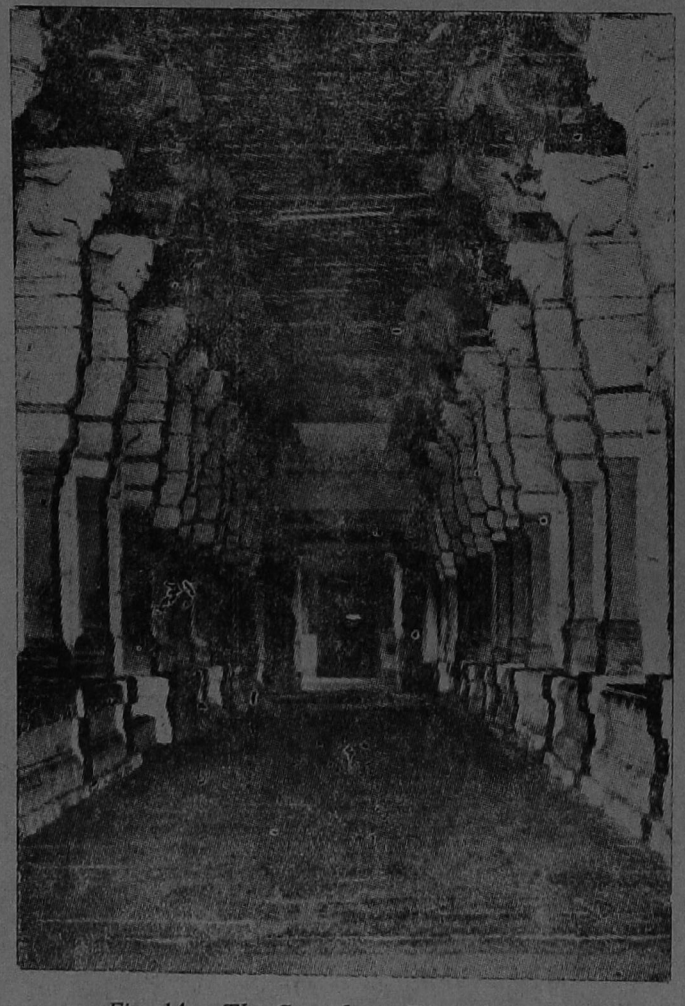


Fig. 14. *The Corridor, Tirugokarnam.*



Fig. 15. *Ravana, Tirugokarnam.*



Fig. 16. *Jvaraharesvara, Tirugokarnam*

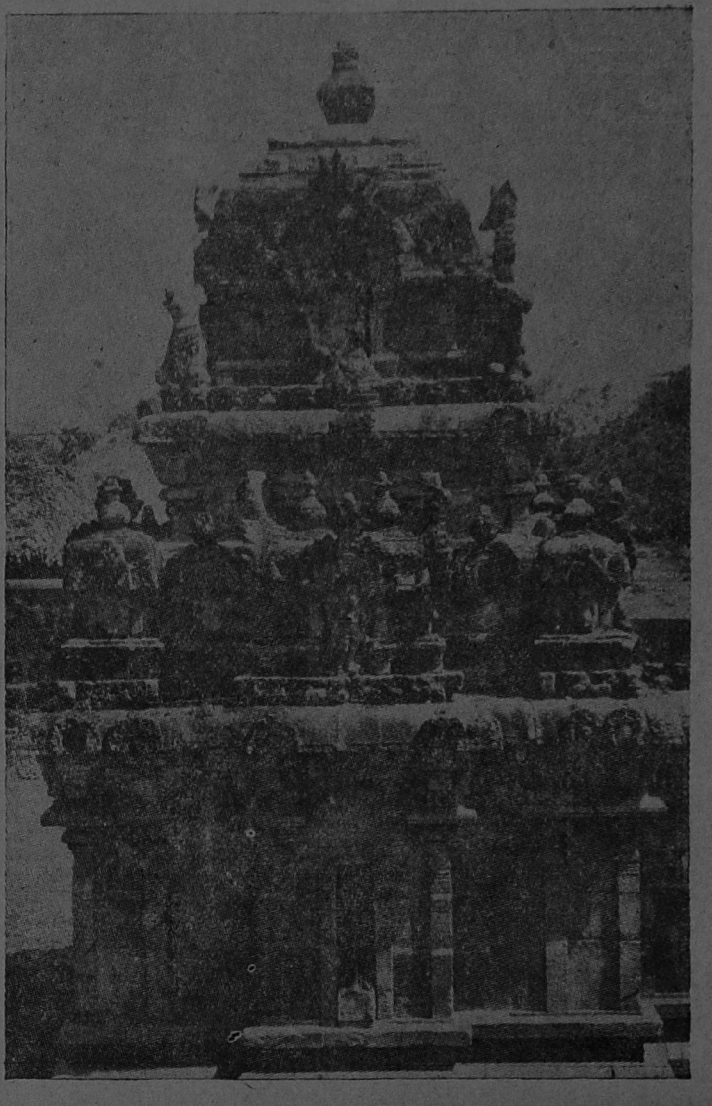


Fig. 17. *Sundaresvara temple, Tirukkattalai.*



Fig. 18. *Chandra, Tirukkattalai.*

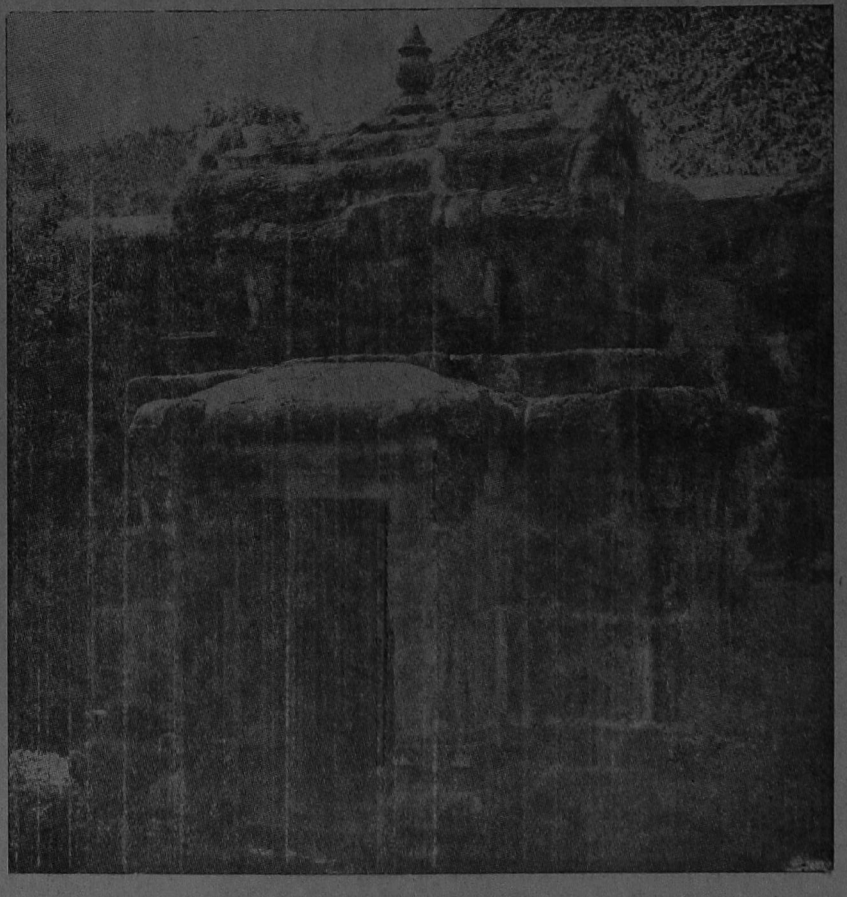


Fig. 19. *Wagon-type roof, Tirukkattalai.*



Fig. 20. *Surya, Tirukkattalai.*



Fig. 21. *Tripurantakamurti, Tiruvarankulam.*



Fig. 22. Main Gopura, Tiruvarankulam.



Fig. 23. Chieftain on Horse-back, Tiruvarankulam



Fig. 24. Siva temple, Kaliyapatti.

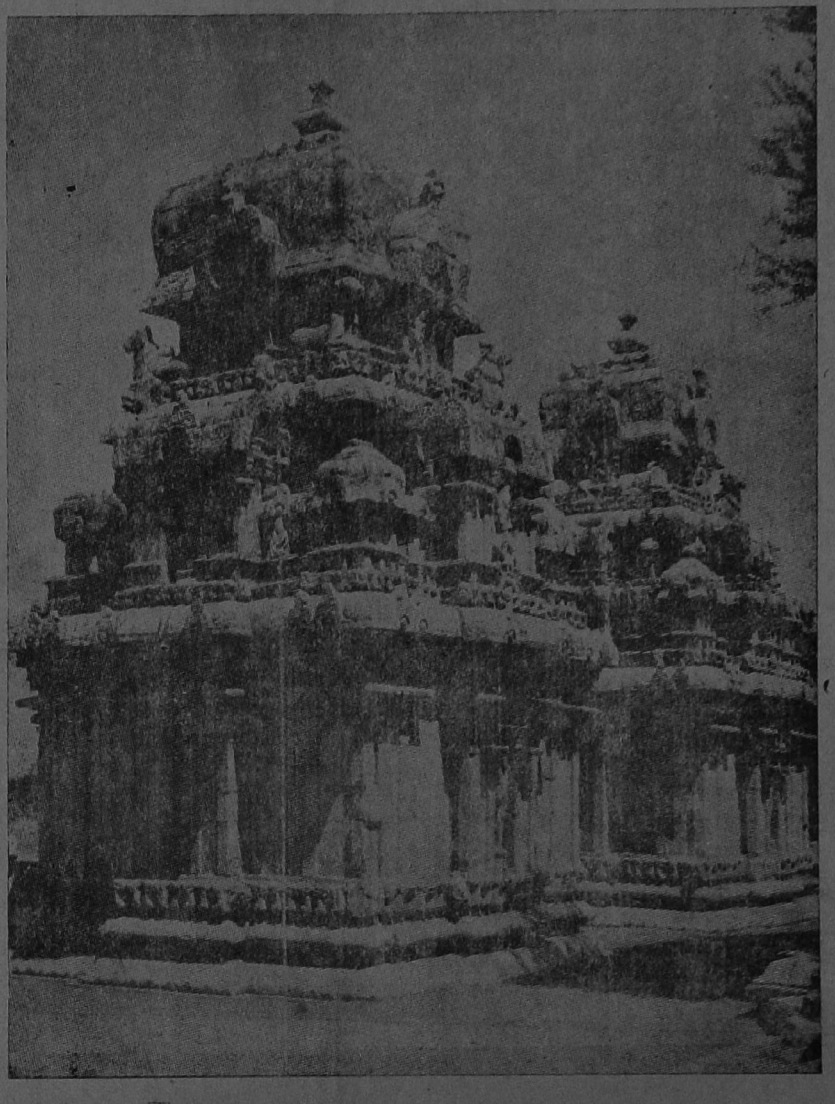


Fig. 25. Central and Southern Shrine, Kodumbalur.

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Fig. 26. *Ardhanarisvara, Kodumbalur.*



Fig. 27. *Vinadhara Dakshinamurti, Kodumbalur.*



Fig. 28. *Kalarimurti, Kodumbalur.*



Fig. 29. *Alingamurti, Kodumbalur.*



Fig. 30. *Gangadharamurti, Kodumbalur.*



Fig. 31. *Rishabhanugrahamurti, Kodumbalur.*

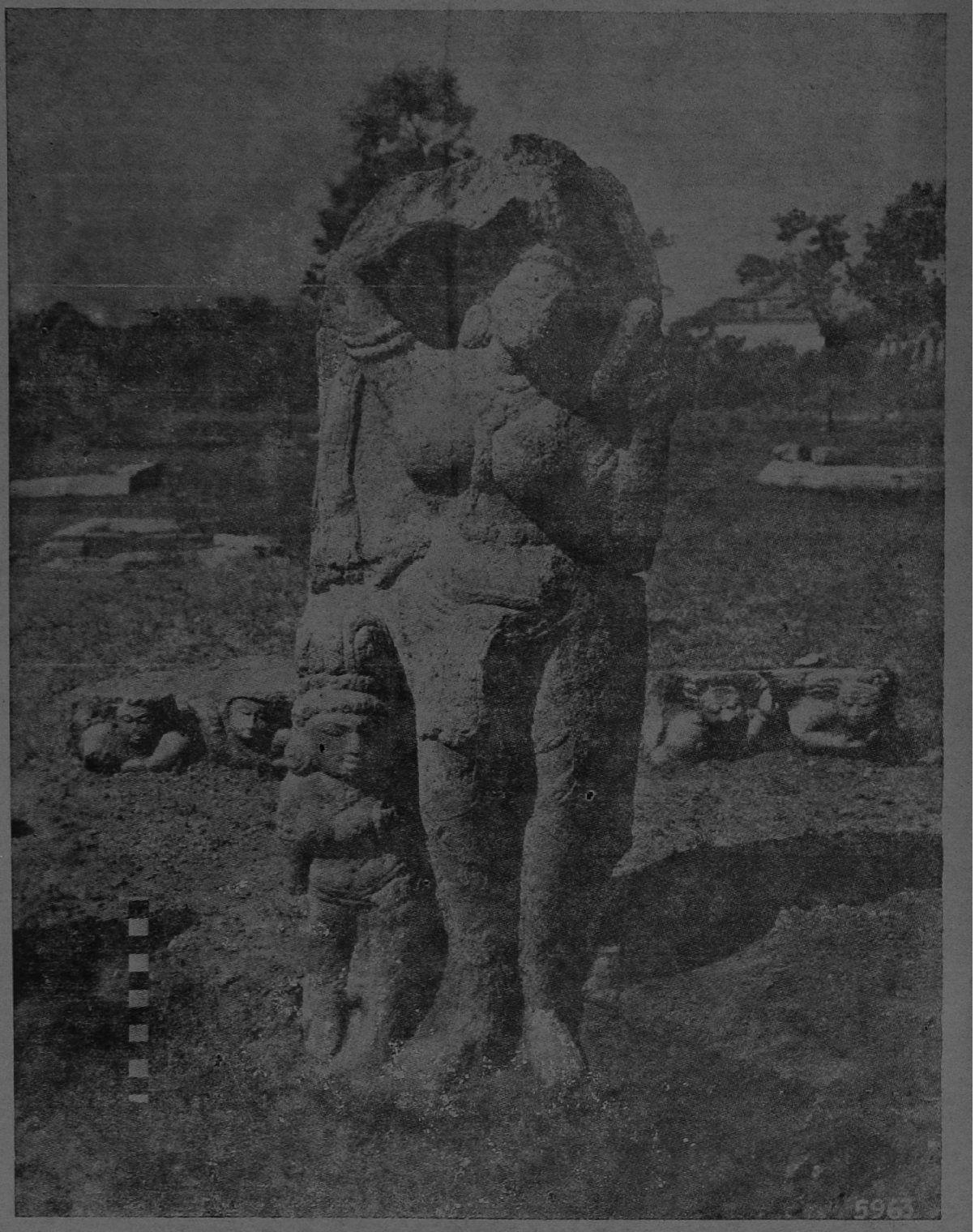


Fig. 32. *Lady at her toilet, Kodumbalur.*

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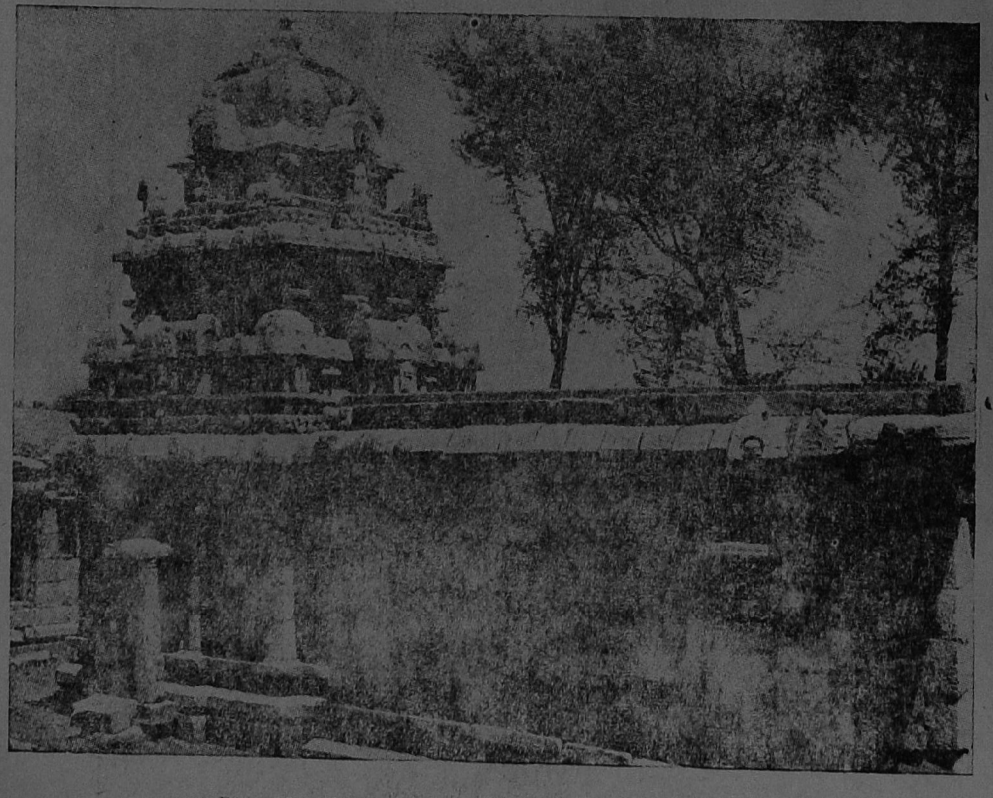


Fig. 33 Muchukundesvara Temple, Kodumbalur.

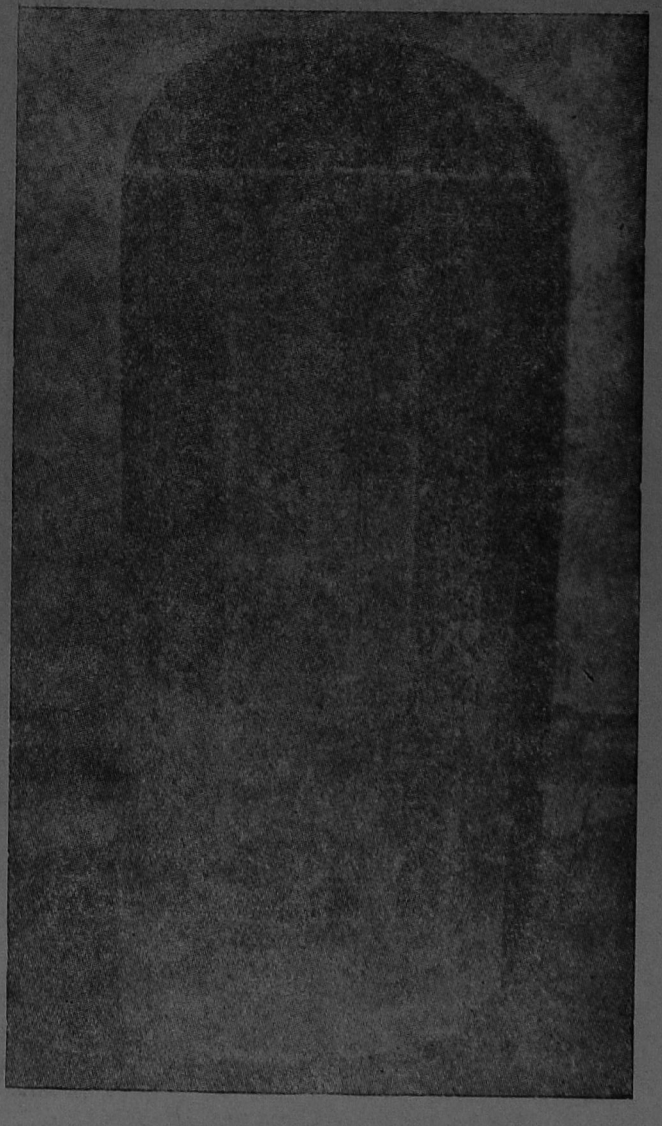


Fig. 34. Dhara Linga, Kodumbalur



Fig. 35. *Valampuri Vinayaka, Kudimiyanmalai.*



Fig. 36. *Shanmugha, Kudimiyanmalai.*



Fig. 37. *Ravana with ten heads, Kudimiyanmalai.*



Fig. 38. *Ugra Narasimha, Kudimiyanmalai.*



Fig. 39. *Vishnu on Garuda, Kudimiyanmalai.*



Fig. 40. *Urddhvatandava Siva, Kudimiyanmalai.*

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Fig. 41. *Valampuri Vinayaka, Kunnandarkovil.*



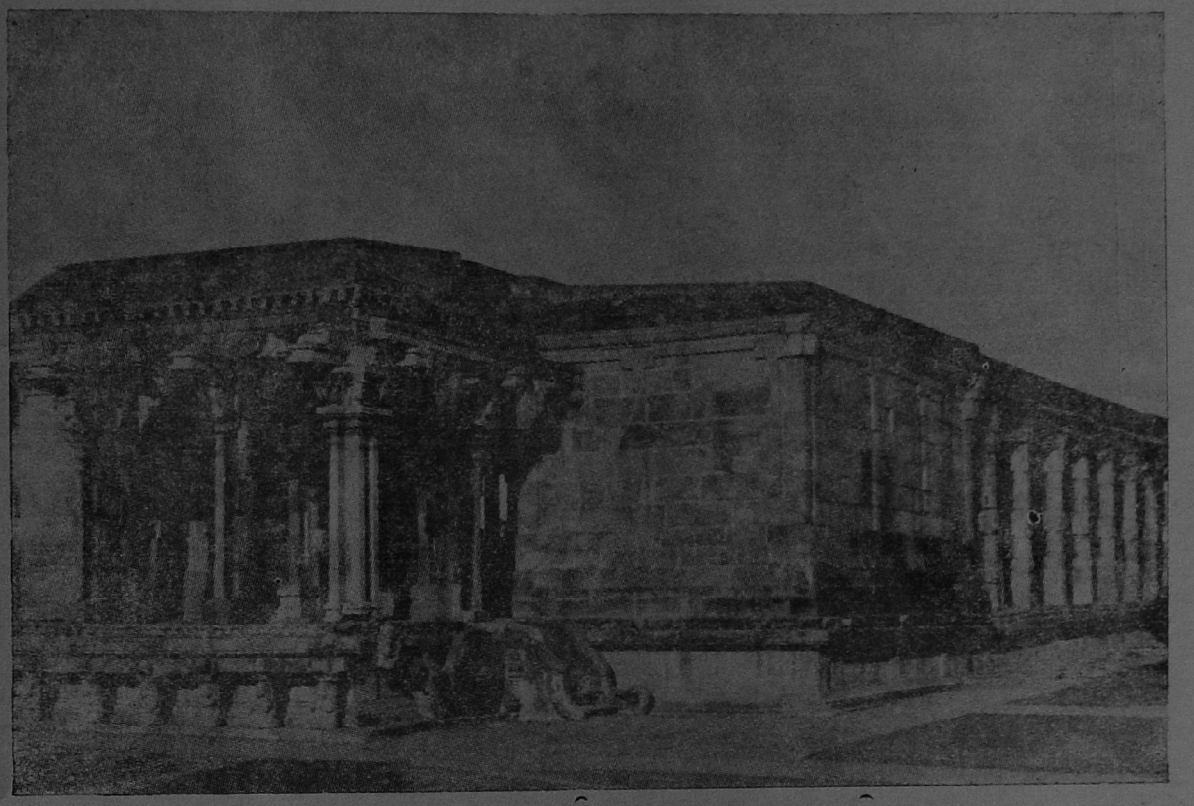
Fig. 42. *Umamahesvara, Kunnandarkovil.*



Fig. 43. Dvarapalaka, Kunnandarkovil.



Fig. 44. Royal Personage, Kunnandarkovil.



Fig, 45. *Hundred pillared mandapa, Kunnandarkovil.*

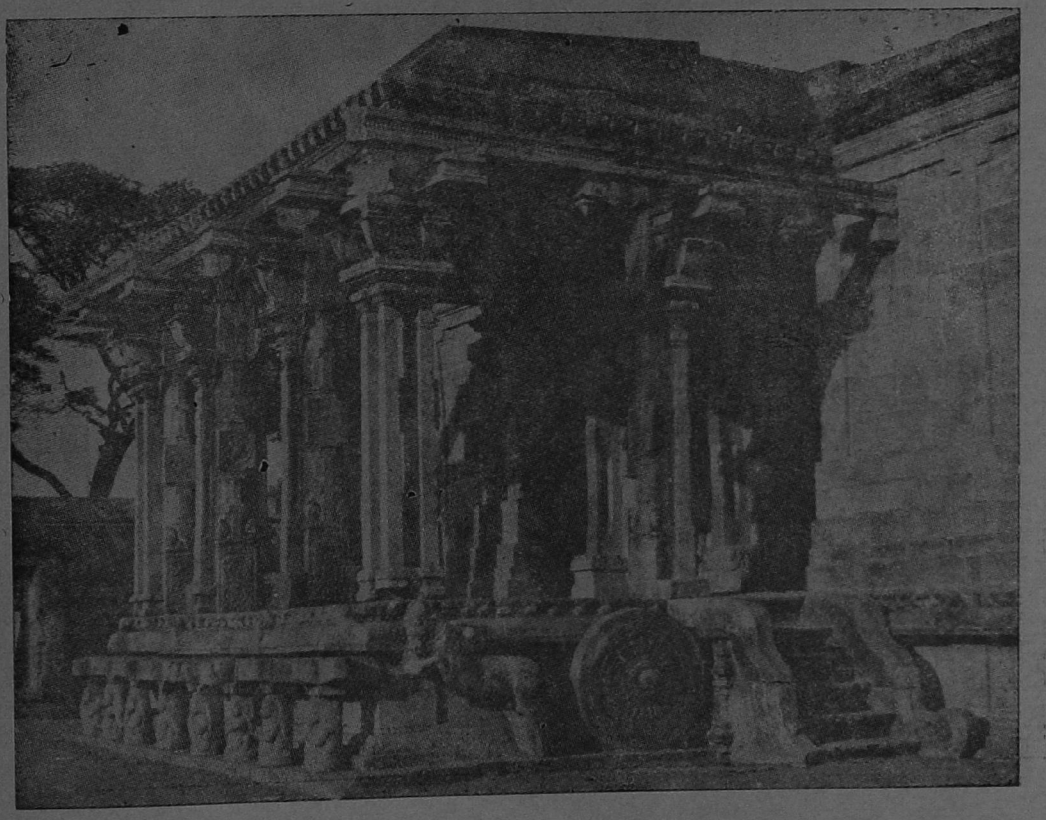


Fig. 46. *Hundred pillared mandapa, Kunnandarkovil.*



Fig. 47. Mahishasuramardani, Malayadipatti.



Fig. 48. Dvarapalaka, Malayadipatti.

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Fig. 49. Narasimha, Malayadipatti.

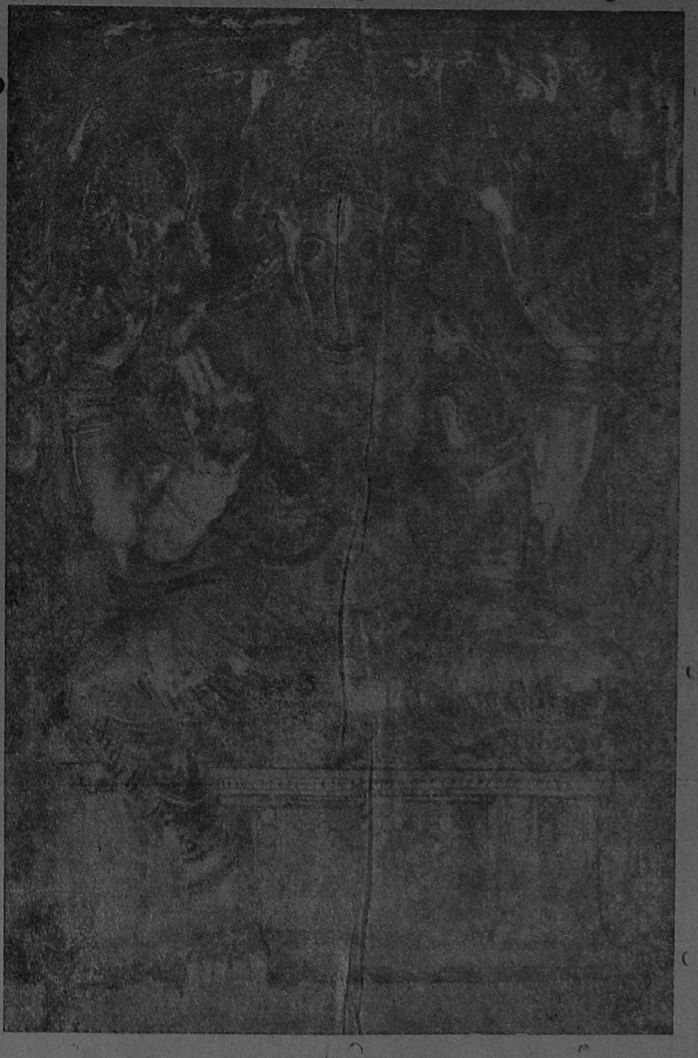


Fig. 50. Varahamurti, Malayadipatti.

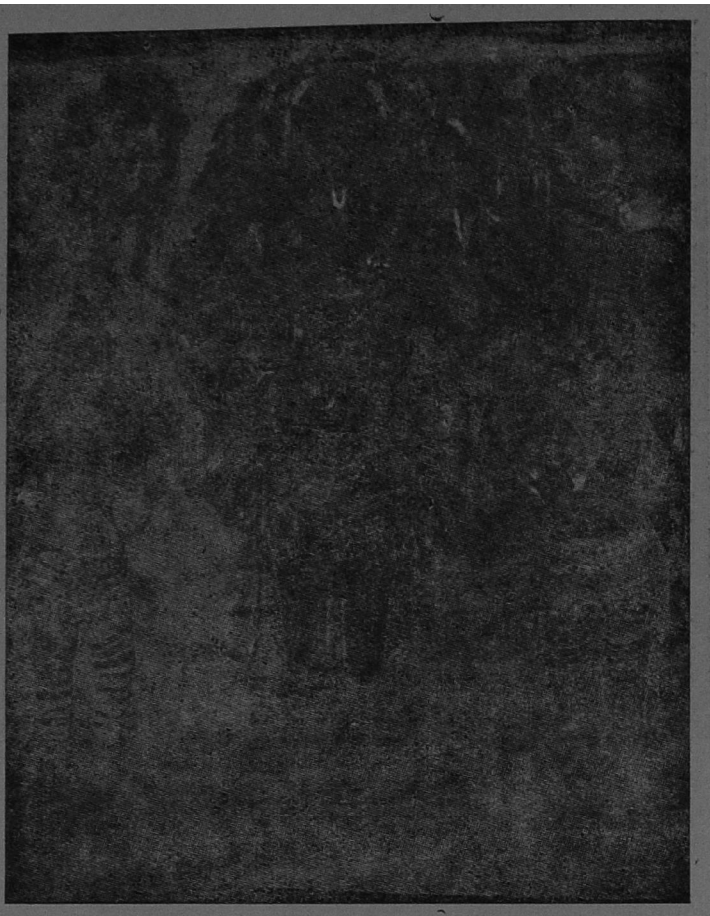


Fig. 51. Vishnu with his Consorts, Malayadipatti.



Fig. 52. Seshasayi, Malayadipati.



Fig. 53. *Vijayalaya Cholisvaram on Melamalai, Narttamalai.*



Fig. 54. *Vijayalaya Cholisvaram, Narttamalai.*

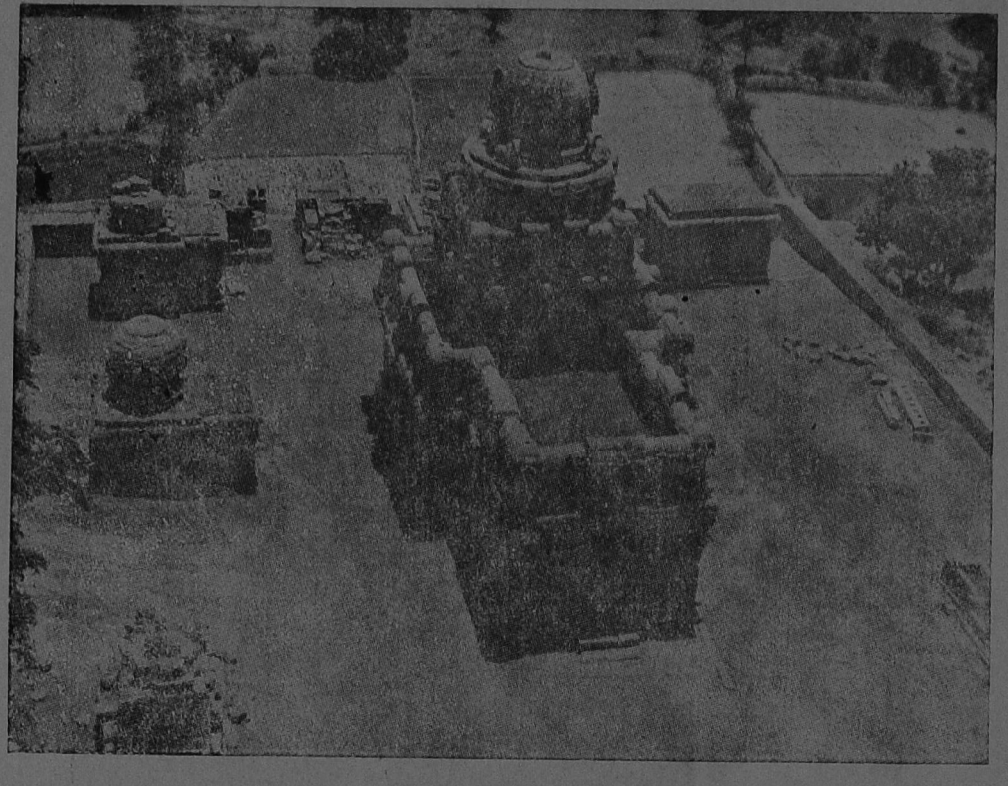


Fig. 55. Vijayalaya Cholisvaram, Narttamalai.



Fig. 56. Dvarapalaka, Narttamalai.

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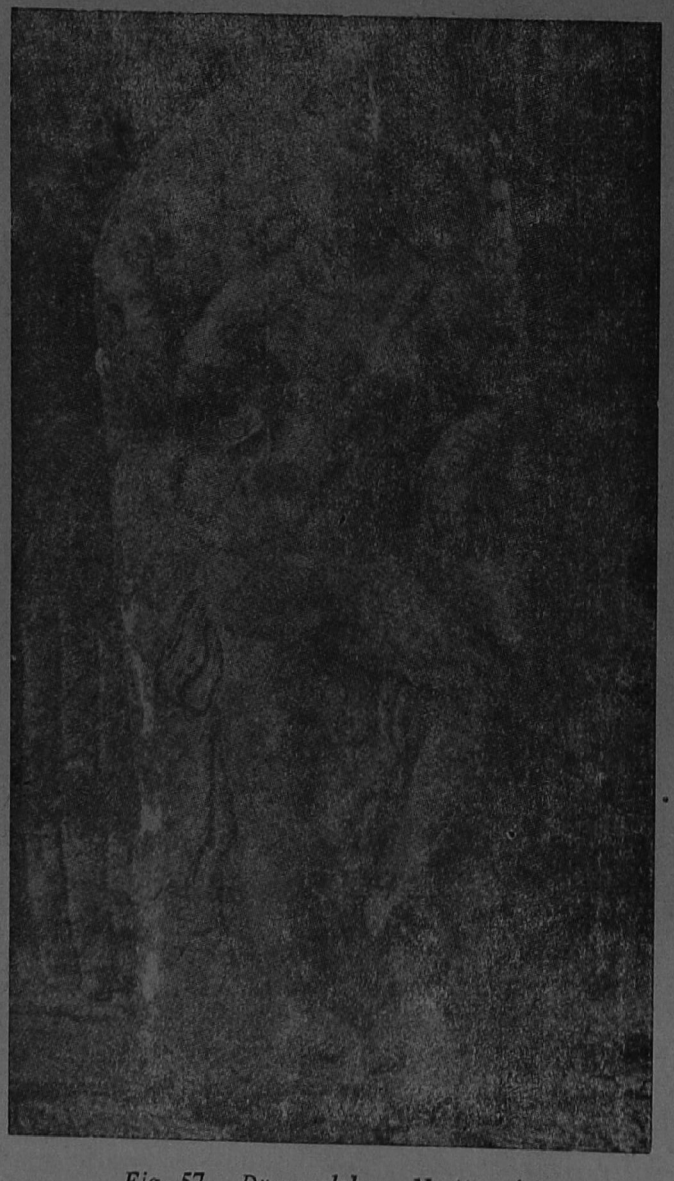


Fig. 57. Dvarapalaka, Narttamalai.

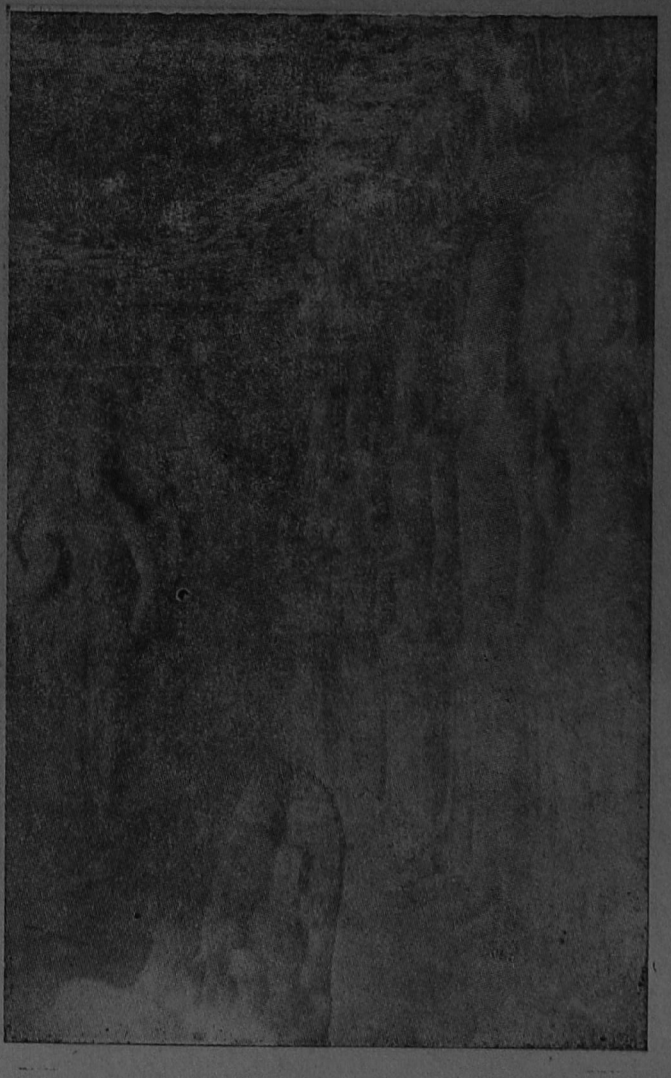


Fig. 58. Row of Vishnu, Narttamalai.



Fig. 59. Row of Vishnu, Narttamalai.

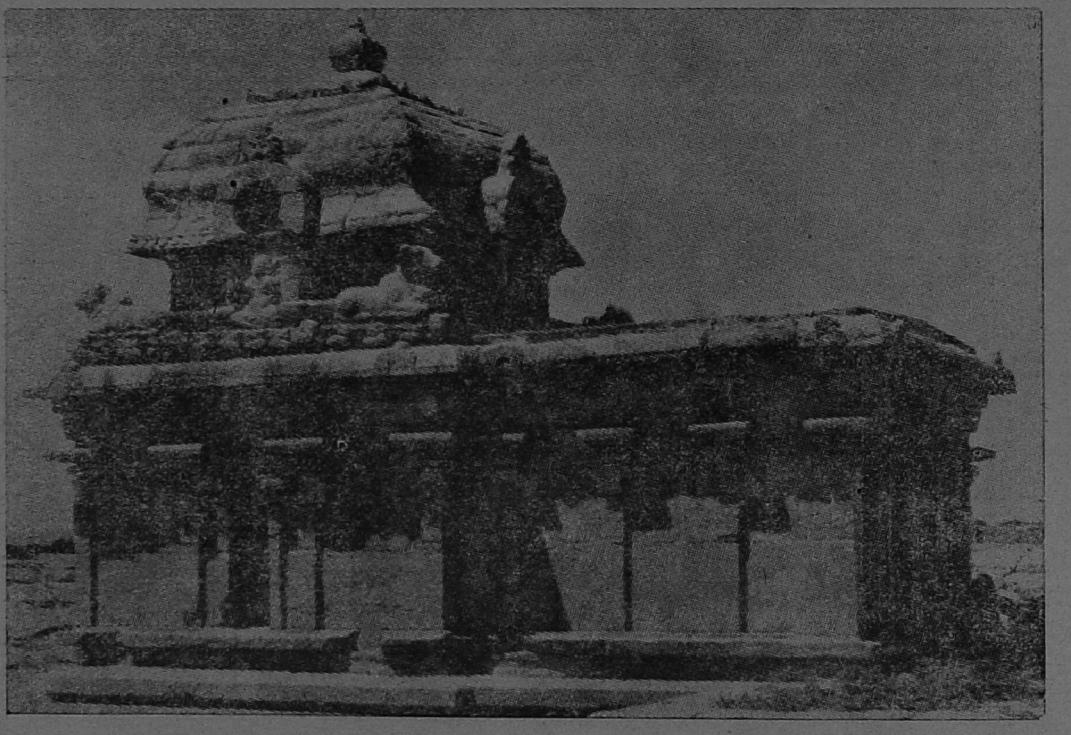


Fig. 60. Siva temple, Panangudi.

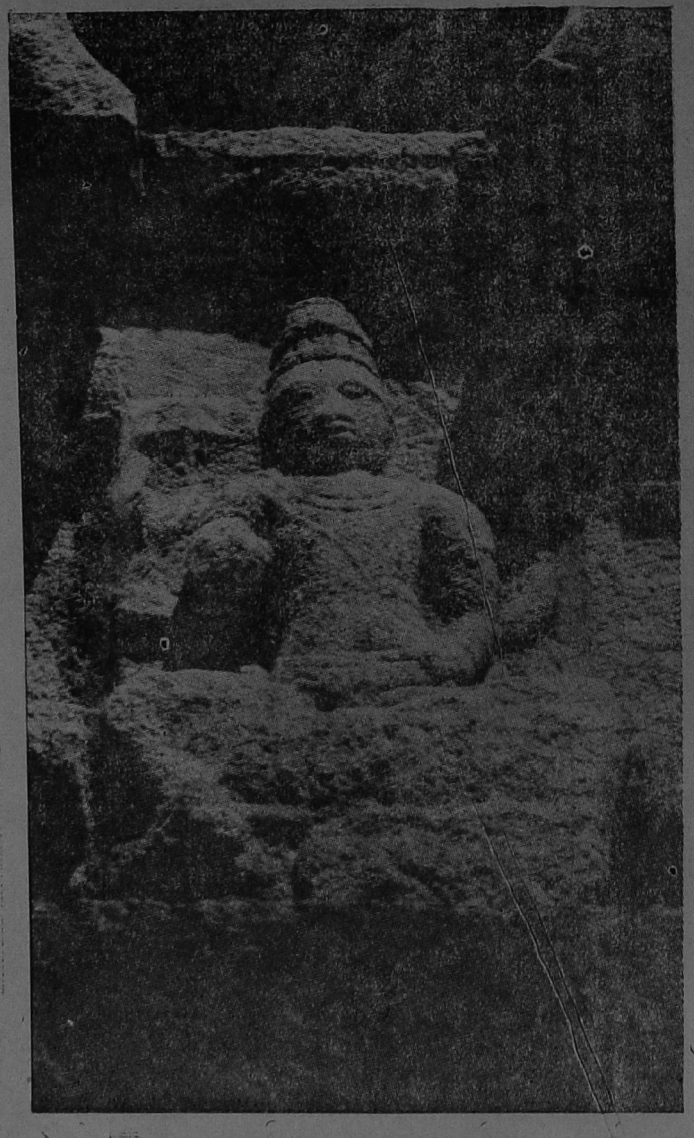


Fig. 61. Dakshinamurti, Panangudi.



Fig. 62. Water lilies and Lotuses, Sittannavasal.



Fig. 63. *Hamsas* (*Geese*), *Sittannavasal.*

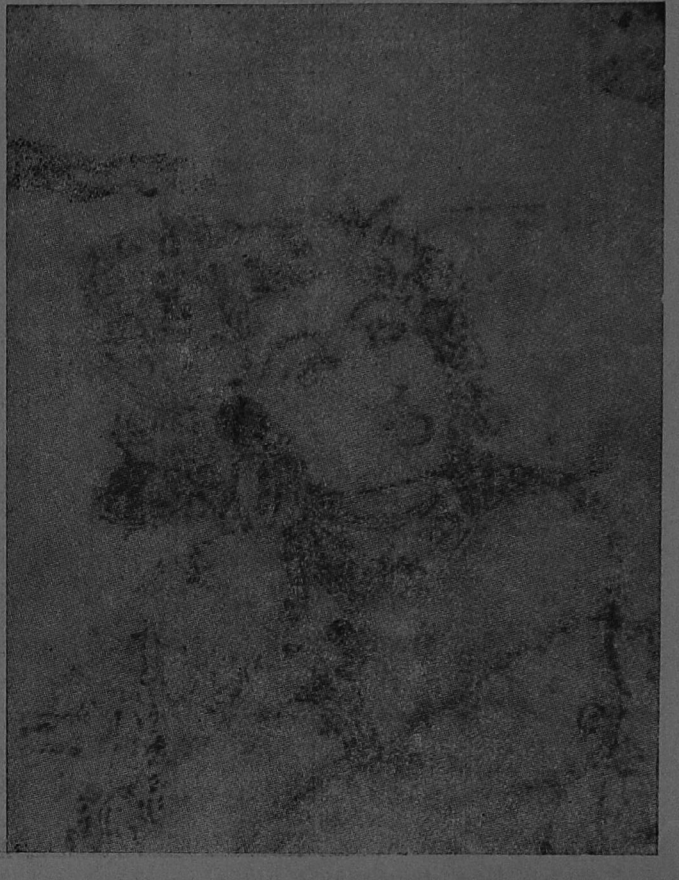


Fig. 64. *Dancin ; Apsaras, Sittannavasal,*

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Fig. 65. King and Queen, Sittannavasal.



Fig. 66. Dakshinamurti, Tiruvengaivasal.

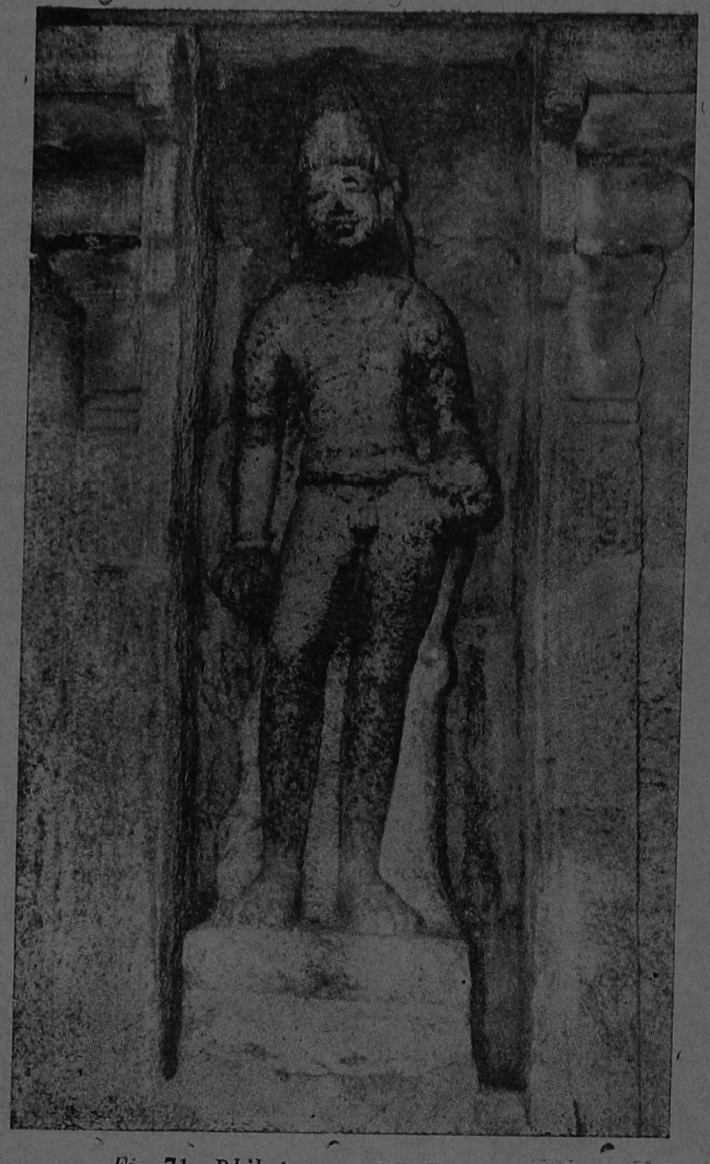


Fig. 71. Bhikshatana, Viralur.

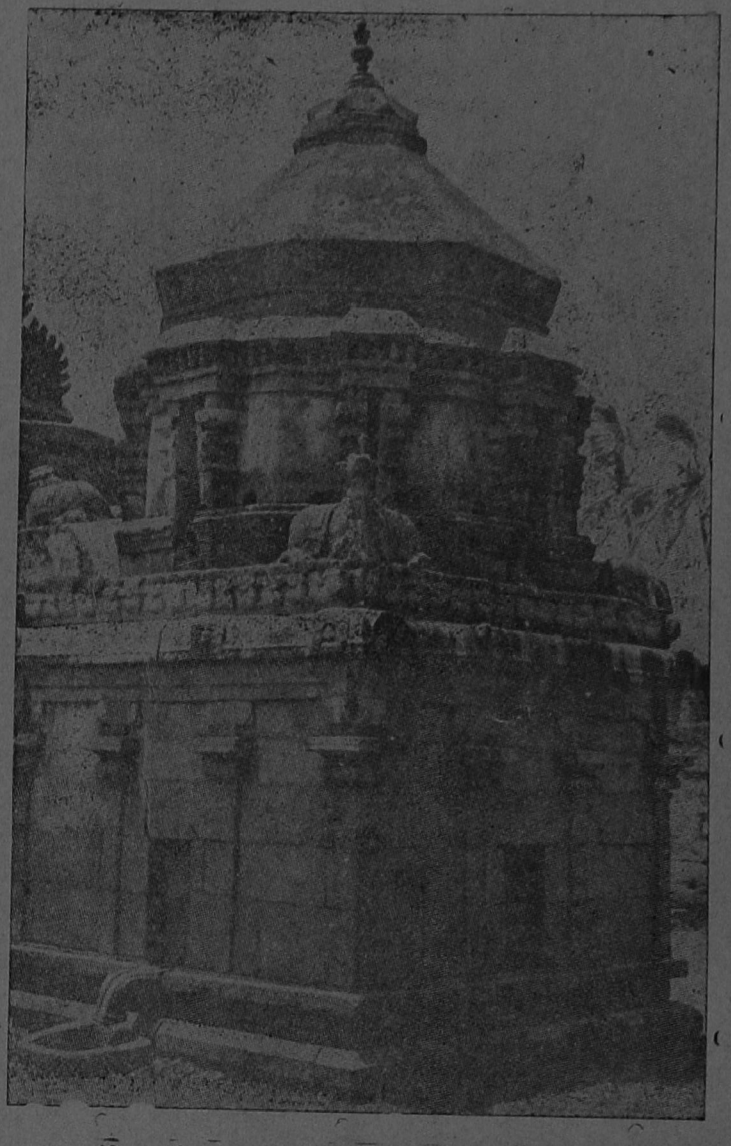


Fig. 72. Margasahayesvara temple (Vimana), Vasalur.

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Fig. 73. Gateway tower, Visalur.

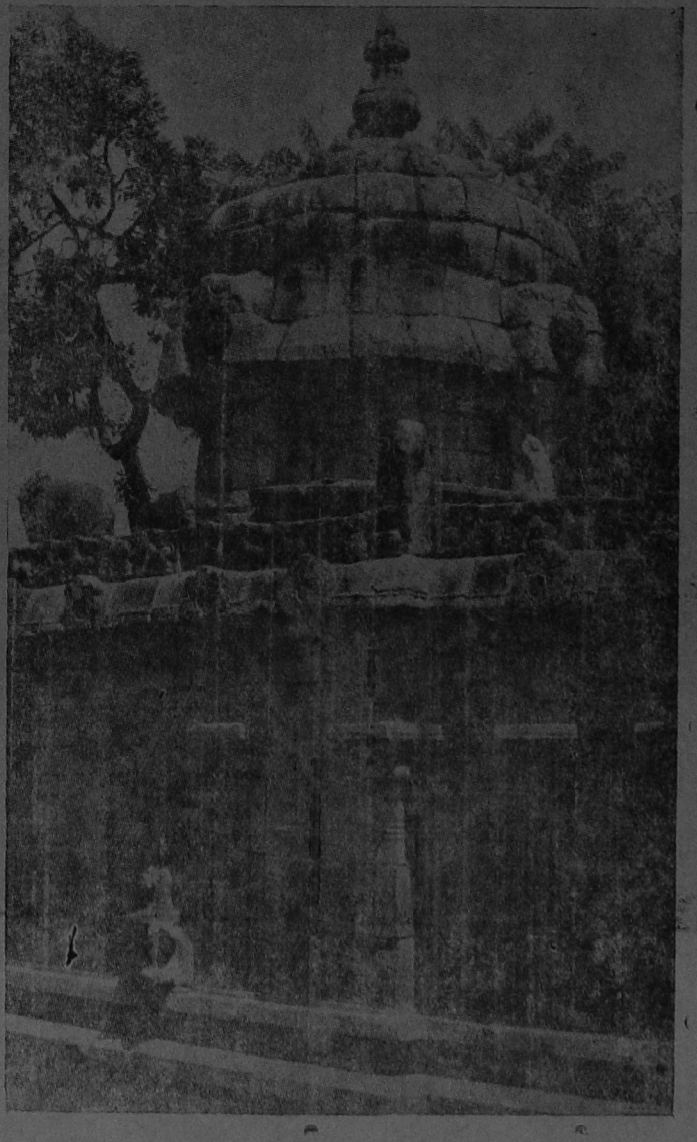


Fig. 74. Central shrine Vimana, Kannanur.



Fig. 75. Subrahmanya, Kannanur.

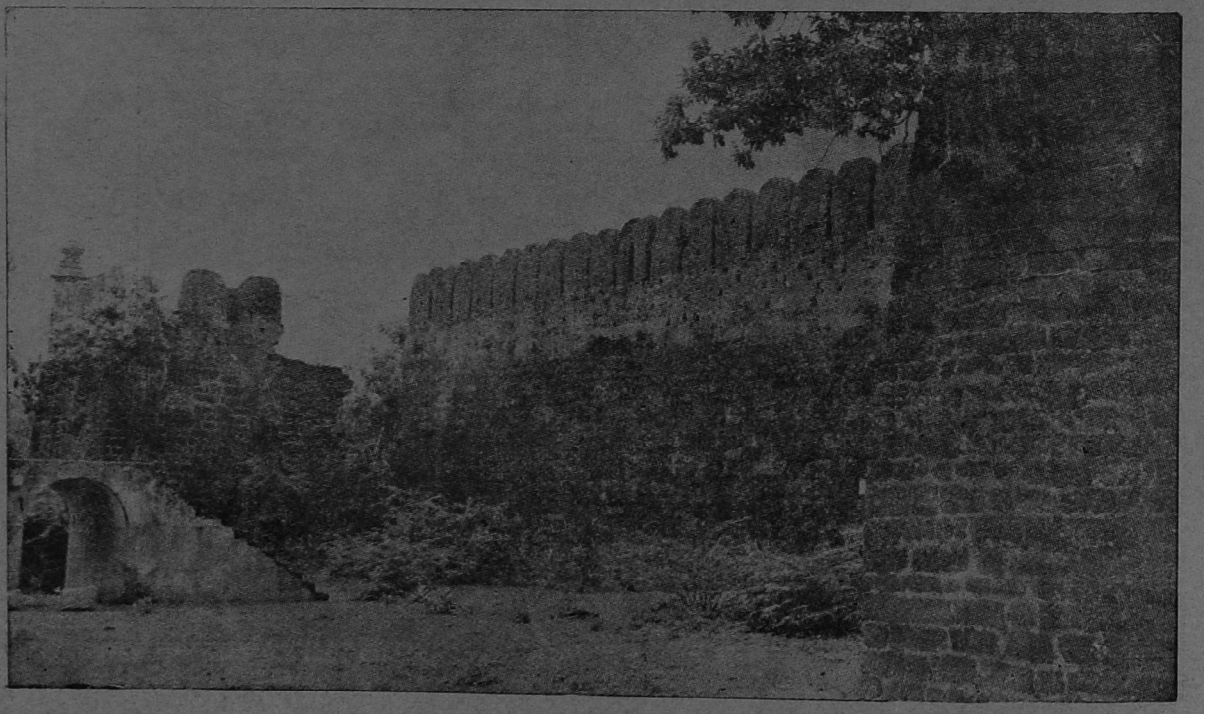


Fig. 76. Kilanilai, Fort, Kilanilai.

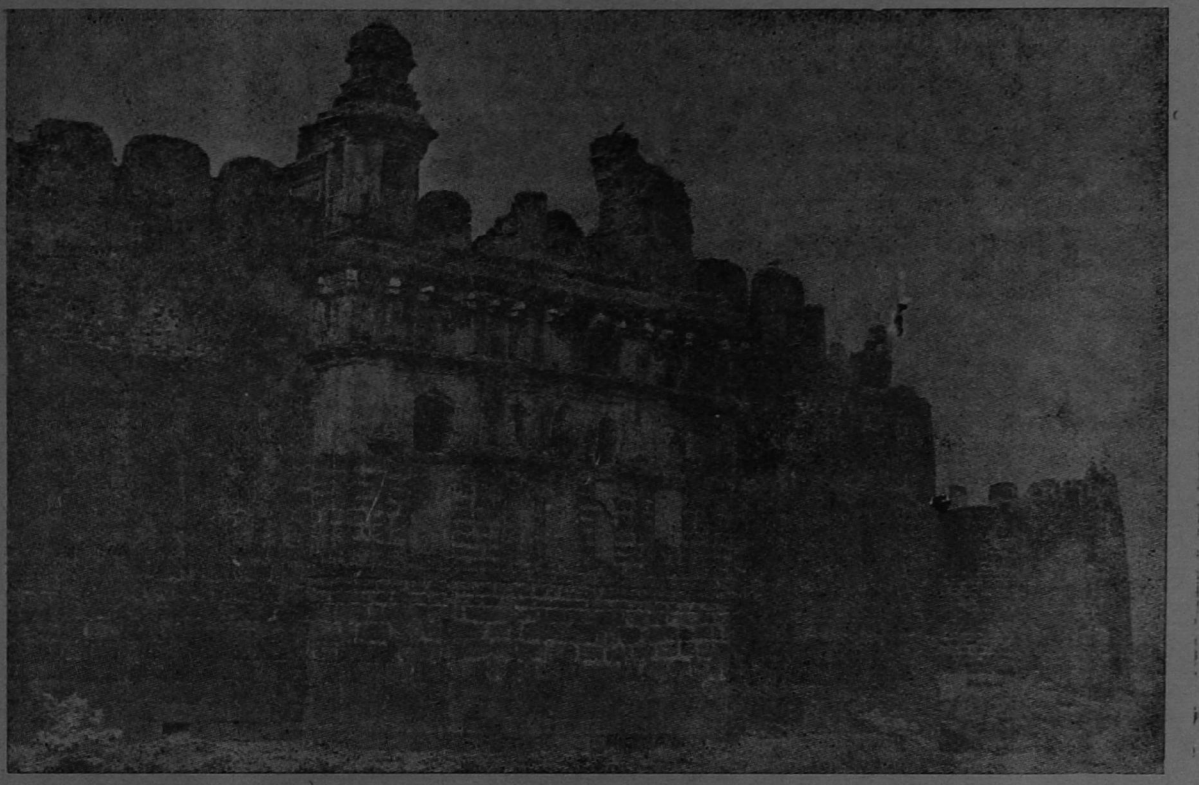


Fig. 77. Kilanilai Fort, Kilanilai.

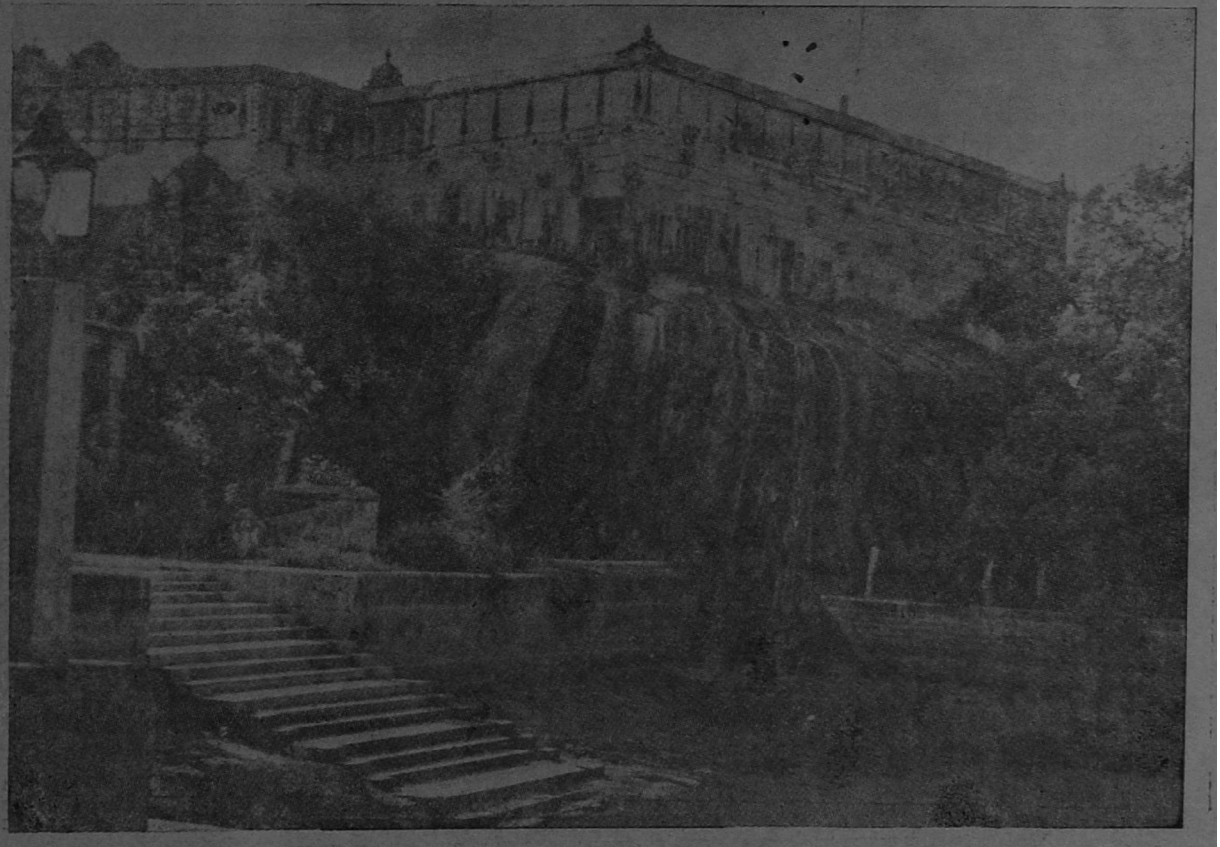


Fig. 78. Siva temple, Malayakkovil.



Fig. 79.—Valampuri Ganesa, Malayakkovil.



Fig. 80. Nataraja (Bronze), Perarayur.

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Fig. 81. *Nataraja* (*Stone*), *Peraiyur.*

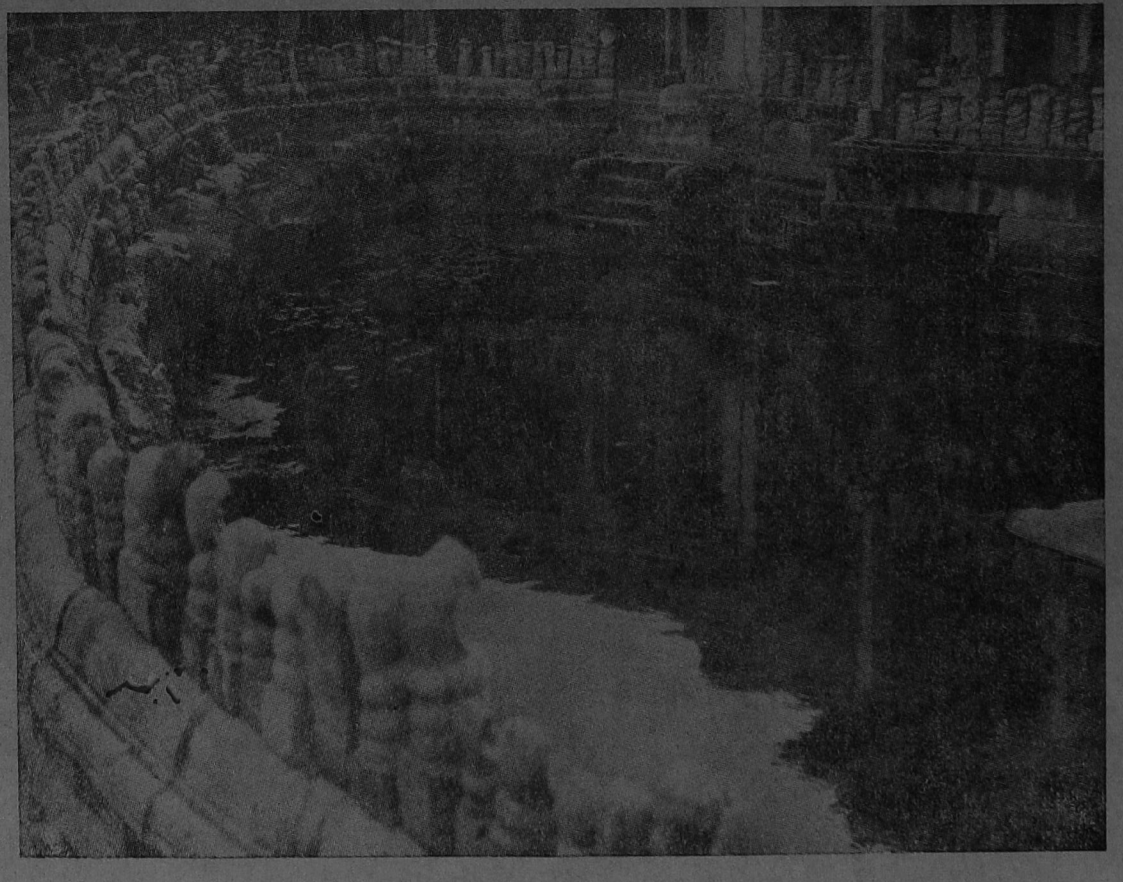


Fig. 82. *Tarn and Naga Stones, Peraiyur.*



Fig. 83. Lingodbhavamurti, Tirukkulambur.

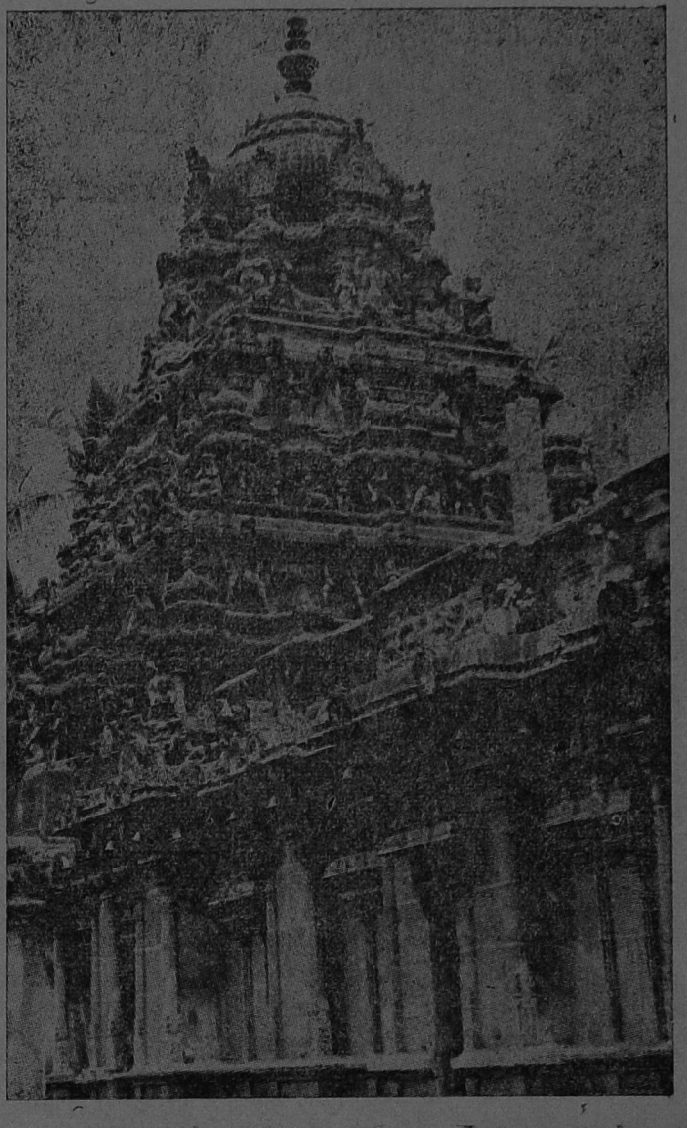


Fig. 84. Siva temple, Tirukkulambur.



Fig 85. *Satyamurti*, *Tirumayam*.



Fig. 86. *Yoga Sayanamurti*, *Tirumayam*.

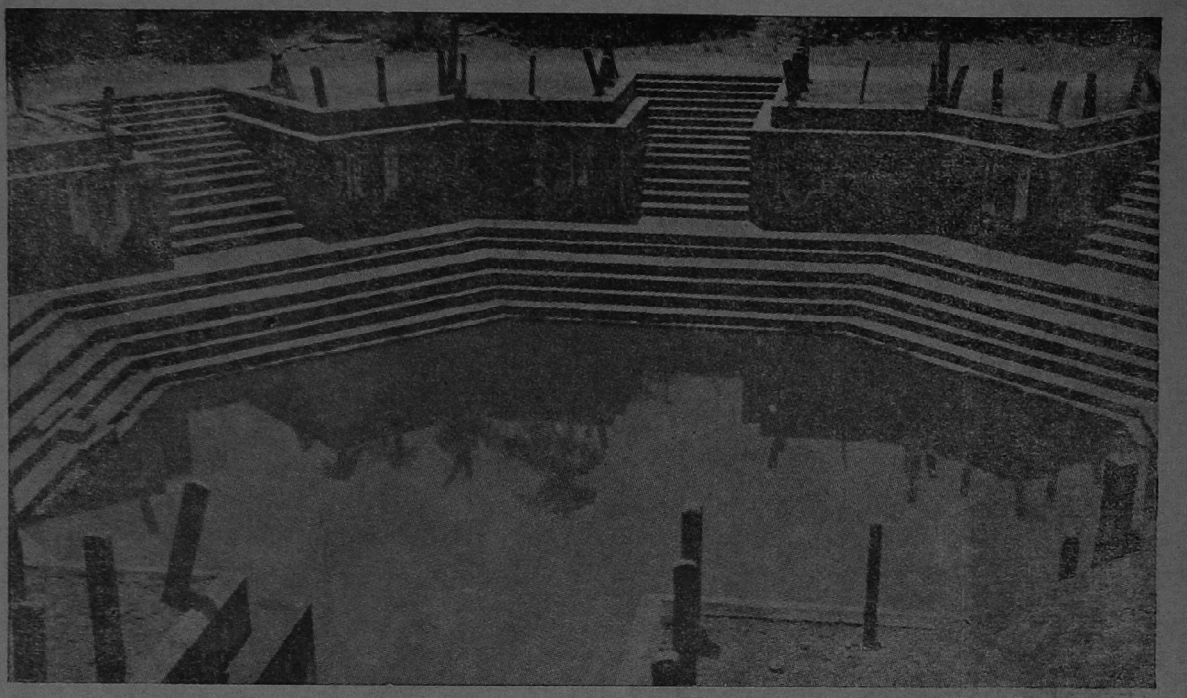


Fig. 87. *Satyapushkarni, Tirumayam.*



Fig. 88. *Lingodbhavamurti, Tirumayam.*

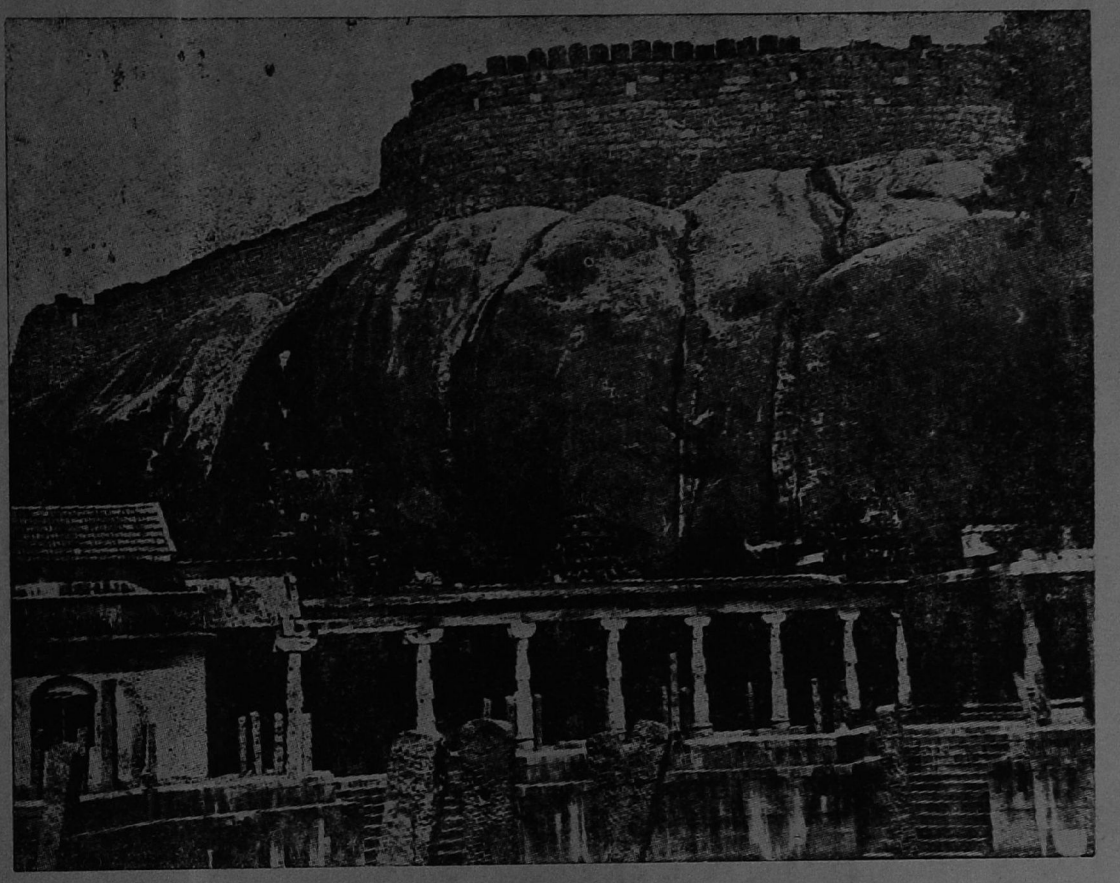


Fig. 89. Tirumayam Fort, Tirumayam.