

DRAVIDIAN & ARYAN

BY

P. CHIDAMBARAM PILLAI.
EDITOR "TAMILIAN."
NAGERCOIL.

PUBLISHED BY THE AUTHOR.

PRINTED AT THE ALEXANDRA PRESS,
NAGERCOIL.

1936.

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APPENDIX

JULIAN, S. HUXLEY. D. SC.

IN

"WE EUROPEANS" (JONATHAN CAPE. 1935)

"One particular and very unfortunate ascription of the methods of one science to those of another, is the myth of the existence of an 'Aryan' race, the repercussions of which have been so intense that we must discuss it separately.

Despite the fact that England had had commitments in India from the beginning of the seventeenth century there was no scientific interest in the languages of that sub-continent until the end of the eighteenth century. In the year 1783 the eminent oriental scholar, Sir William Jones (1746-1794) landed in India as Judge of the High Court of Calcutta. He began at once to study the Indian languages. During the remaining ten years of his life he demonstrated the relationship of the Sanskrit and allied tongues to the main vernaculars of Europe.

It was Sir William Jones who introduced the word Arya into modern European literature. He used it in a translation from Sanskrit in a perfectly correct and purely linguistic sense, to distinguish the speakers of certain Indian languages from others. Later it was used to denote the speakers of the Aryan or

Indo-European family of languages. The word itself means noble and is applied especially to deities. It is of Sanskrit origin, occurs also in Zend, and passed thence into Persian and modern Indian dialects. It was used by the Greeks and Romans (Latin *Ariana*, modern *Iran*) as a description of Eastern Persia, the district now called Afghanistan. *Arya* has also been used, as Sir William Jones well knew, as a religious group-name, to distinguish the worshippers of the gods of the Brahmins from the worshippers of certain other Indian deities.

During the first half of the nineteenth century the work begun by Sir William Jones was carried on by European philologists, especially in Germany. It came to be realised that there was a concrete group of languages which had certain very distinctive common factors and included Sanskrit, Zend, Sinhalese, Pehlevi, Pali, Armenian, Persian, Greek, Latin, as well as the Celtic, Teutonic, Slavonic and other sub-groups. Hittite has recently been shown to be of the group. The greater number of these languages are or were spoken in Asia. They came to be described as 'Aryan' though they were also called 'Indo-European,' 'Indo-Germanic' and sometimes-following the Biblical theory-Japhetic. There was however, always a tendency among philologists to restrict the use of the word Aryan to the Asiatic portion of this group of languages. This restriction rested on the firm ground that

only the ancient Indian and Persian speakers of this family of languages called themselves *Arya*.

It happened that at the beginning of the nineteenth century the Romantic school in Germany became attracted to the study of the Indian languages. This was largely the result of the efforts of the poet Friedrich von Schlegel (1772-1829) who, with his equally romantic wife—a daughter of the Jewish philosopher Moses Mendelssohn (1729-1786)—became deeply impressed by Sir William Jones' translations from the Sanskrit. Friedrich von Schlegel learnt the language and induced his brother, August Wilhelm von Schlegel (1767-1844) to do likewise. In 1818 August Wilhelm became, at the University of Bonn, the first Professor of Sanskrit in the west.

From Schlegel's time to the present, the study of the philology of the Indian languages and their relation to the European has been pursued in Germany with more zeal than in any other country. We are not concerned with the general course of these investigations, but there is one incident which is specially important for our theme.

In the early years of the reign of Queen Victoria—from 1841 to 1854—the Prussian Minister to Britain was Baron Christian Carl Josias Bunsen (1791-1860) whose grandson was British Ambassador to Vienna at the outbreak of the Great War. Baron Bunsen

was a considerable scholar overflowing with enthusiasm for German philology. In 1847 he read a paper to the British Association at Oxford, in which he sought to show that the whole of mankind could be classified according to language and that this was a valuable anthropological guide.

About this time there came to England, under Bunsen's patronage, the young German scholar Friedrich Max Muller (1823-1900) who settled in Oxford in 1845 and remained there for the rest of his life. The high character and great literary and philological gifts of Max Muller are wellknown. About 1853 he introduced into current usage the unlucky term, Aryan, as applied to a large group of languages. His use of this Sanskrit word contains in itself two assumptions one linguistic, that the Indo-Persian sub-group of language is older or more primitive than any of its relatives; the other geographical, that the cradle of the common ancestor of these languages was the Ariana of the ancients, in Central Asia. Of these the first is now known to be certainly erroneous and the second is at least very doubtful. Around each of them a whole library of literature has arisen.

Moreover Max Muller threw another apple of discord. He introduced a proposition which is demonstrably false. He spoke not only of a definite Aryan language and its descendants but also of a corresponding Aryan

race. The idea was rapidly taken up both in Germany and in England. It affected to some extent a certain number of the nationalist, historical and romantic writers, none of whom had any ethnological training. It was given especial currency by the French author de Gobineau. Of the English group it will be enough to recall some of the ablest, Thomas Carlyle (1775-1881) J. A. Froude (1818-1894) Charles Kingsley (1819-1875) and J. R. Green (1837-1883).

In England and America the phrase 'Aryan race' has ceased to be used by writers with scientific knowledge, though it appears in political and propagandist literature. In Germany the idea of an Aryan race received hardly more scientific support than in England. Nevertheless it has found able literary advocates, has been made to appear very flattering to local vanity and has steadily spread, fostered by special conditions with which we are not concerned, though some of its fruits are very evident.

Max Muller was later convinced by scientific friends of the enormity of his error and he did his very best to make amends.

Thus in 1888 he wrote: "Aryas are those who speak Aryan languages, whatever their colour, whatever their blood. In calling them Aryas we predicate nothing of them except that the grammar of their languages is Aryan". "I have declared again and again that if I say Aryas, I mean neither blood

nor bones nor hair nor skull; I mean simply those who speak an Aryan language..... When I speak of them I commit myself to no anatomical characteristics. The blue-eyed and fair-haired Scandinavians may have been conquerors or conquered. They may have adopted the language of their darker lords or vice versa.....To me an ethnologist who speaks of Aryan race, Aryan blood, Aryan eyes and hair, is as great a sinner as a linguist who speaks of a dolichocephalic dictionary or a brachycephalic grammar."

Max Muller frequently repeated his protest, but alas! in vain. "The evil that men do lives after them, the good is oft interred with their bones!" Who does not wish to have had noble ancestors? The belief in an 'Aryan race' had become accepted by philologists, who knew nothing of ethnology—and even by a few ethnologists who had no technical training and no clear idea of the biological meaning to be attached to the word "race". The influence of the idea of an 'Aryan race,' vitiates the work of a small band of anthropologists to this very day. If the term Aryan is given a racial meaning at all, it should be applied to that ethnic unit, whatever it was, that first spoke a language distinguishable as Aryan. Of the character of that hypothetical unit it is the simple truth to say that we know nothing whatever".....

RIGHT OF TEMPLE-ENTRY.

BY

P. CHIDAMBARAM PILLAI B. A. & B. L.,

M. L. A. (TRAVANCORE)

ENGLISH EDITION— RE. 1 ONLY

TAMIL TRANSLATION I PART—5 As ONLY

EXTRACTS FROM SOME OPINIONS.

“The book is undoubtedly an *intellectual feast and is characterised by a remarkable measure of research*. It is both interesting and instructive, each chapter containing in a nutshell important and thought-provoking statements.....

The publication of this book is very opportune in as much as Mahatma Gandhi is even now touring the whole of South India for Harijan uplift in general and to gauge and guide public opinion with reference to the Temple-Entry Bill which has been introduced in the Indian Legislative-Assembly. The Government have invited the opinions of organizations and prominent leaders of the people. A book like this, which is atonce a *treasure of learning and a feast of logic*, will be of very great help both to those who wish to submit their views and to the Government

of India. Every Government official, in particular, ought to own a copy of this book The book is very powerfully and carefully written and will more than repay a perusal”

The Bombay Chronicle, 14-1-34.

“Mr. P. CHIDAMBARAM PILLAY’S book on the Right of Temple-Entry is a *monumental* work on the subject and deals with the question elaborately from the historical and legal stand points..... It may be that some feel the smell of his indifference to things of religion and contempt for caste glories, but it cannot be gainsaid that he has laid the Hindu community, under a deep debt of obligation by embodying his very useful researches in this book of his.”

Mr. K. Subramonia Pillay, M. A. M. L.

Advocate, & Tagore Professor of Law.

“This work most opportunely meets the needs of the time”.....

Swami Vedachalam,

The famous Tamil Scholar of Pallavaram.

"The book is an open challenge to the opposition and its law-makers. Will they hereafter at least learn to be netural, if not openly to support temple-entry?..... The book is full of pertinent matter and deserves carefull study by friends and foes of temple-entry. I congratulate my friend for his deep study and cogent arguments and I do not miss his characteristic humour even in the tersest part of his subject."

Dr. M. E. Naidoo,

L. R. C. P. & S. (Edin) L. F. P. & S. (Glasgow)
L. M. (Coombe) NAGERCOIL.

"..... Orthodoxy may lose temper. The reformer should not..... At the same time, the temper of the writer has lessons and warnings for orthodoxy..... Some points he does make and they are worthy of note..... That *Agamas* do not lay stress on caste, but only on initiation will have to be admitted, however few the cases may be of the initiation of men of the lower classes. It is undoubtably a curious feature of our system that we can find place within our temples for Harijan saints without any relaxation of our notions on the question of Harijan entry..... And the intolerance of Malabar in regard to the imitation by the lower of the higher classes in dress is not only inhuman and unjust, but like much else in that part of the country unintelligible.

Patience in the conditions there is not easy and impatience is to me both intellegible and excusable."

Mr. T. R. Venkatrama Sastry,
In "The Hindu" dated 18th March 1934.

"The author's encyclopaedic knowledge of legal points as also of Sastric rules is simply astounding. Your publication is very opportune. I wonder how any man of culture and learning can Canute-like stem the tide of progressive ideas. You have established that every Hindu has the right of temple-entry.

Sir P. C. Ray.
CULCUTTA.

"Even a student of antiquities, of ethnology and social origins will find matter for thought in this book. "Even the ranks of Tuscany' can scarce forbear to cheer this very entertaining and illuminating book."

'United India & Indian States'
NEW DELHI.

"Mr Pillai goes to the root of the matter over the question of the "Right' of temple entry and by much industry exposes the

hollowness of the claims of Caste-Hindus to keep out any section of the Hindus from public places of worship. When the temples had been under direct Government supervision, no such claims were entertained, and it was only when they were placed under "trustees?" that old time memories, social conveniences etc., found an opportunity to take up a most unreasonable and inhuman attitude with regard to the question. Mr. Pillai's book contains much curious information especially about south Indian usage, and his views are sane and healthy, and the book treats exhaustively of the "*Right*" aspect of the subject."

Modern Review,

October Issue 1935. Page 442.

PREFACE.

"While the history of Aryan rule in India has been told with comparative completeness and covers a great deal of Northern India", observed H. H. the Yuvarajha of Mysore in opening the Eighth All-India Oriental Conference at Mysore recently, "there still remains much of uncertainty regarding the history of the South, even in what are commonly described as historical times. Further excavations and further researches and a re-reading of the Hindu epics and the Vedas in the light of modern research, may open up wonderful vistas of history and disentangle from the legends of old the historical truth which is often more marvellous than the legends themselves.The effect of the Aryan invasion on the inhabitants of Southern India, with the consequent intertwining of cults and beliefs, the effect of the impact of one civilization on another, the origin and growth of the caste system, all these are matters which have still to be seen as a collected whole in a great history which archeology, anthropology, philology, epigraphy and ethnology must combine to produce. That is a task which would defeat any one man but it is just in such a conference as this that a group can be formed which can set to work to tackle the problem as a whole" These are very weighty words.

In the following pages an attempt will be made to show how there was no Aryan *invasion* of India at all, let alone the South of it; how the Aryan was acknowledgedly a barbarian when he migrated to this country; how he came to accept or was made to accept all the Dravidian cults and beliefs then prevalent; how he was dovetailed into the caste or social system which was purely a Dravidian conception by being taken as the Kshatriya or military caste; how from a barbarian he developed into a civilized being on his coming into contact with the highly civilized Dravidian; and how, ultimately, the Dravidian himself became ashamed of his own past and called himself an Aryan, and is proud of it today.

As regards a group of historians writing Dravidian History, this book will show how in South India, it has been impossible for more than a thousand years to do it and how some time must elapse before it can be attempted even. As some indication of it, it may be pointed out here, that almost all the able Historians of South India, especially those dealing with the Dravidians, during the last quarter of a century, have been uniformly Vaishnavite Brahmins. Dr. S. Krishnaswamy Iyengar; the late Mr. P. T. Srinivasa Iyengar; Rao Bahudur. K. V. Rengaswamy Iyengar; Messrs. V. Ranga-charya; T. R. Sesha Iyengar and several others—these come up before the mind's eye

easily. The other variety of South Indian Brahmins—the Smarthas—has produced very few historians of outstanding merit. And why? That is one skeleton in the Madras historian's cupboard.

The craze for what was thought to be Aryanism set in very violently during Sri Sankara's time—as it has now reappeared in Germany under Hilter; the former was intellectual, the latter, no doubt, is merely racial. And that is why, the Vaishnavite Brahmin is a better Historian than the Smartha, for the former's ancestry is much better rooted in the Dravidian and recognised though halfheartedly to be such.

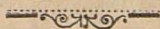
The other skeleton is the Non-Brahmin scholar. Once the latter was himself a very bigoted Aryanist; to-day he is fast becoming a Dravidian and is prepared to stand or fall with that culture—which, of course, is a nuisance to the Brahmin Historian of South India, Vaishnavite and Smartha alike. And there we are.

Therefore, all things considered, the time is still as far off as ever when a trustworthy History of South India and of the Dravidians may come to be written.

The following pages, it is hoped will show what all difficulties may beset a student of Dravidian History in arriving at correct conclusions. There is no higher ambition which prompted the writer.

The present study is based upon Sir John Marshall's "*Mohenjo-daro and the Indus Civilization*"; Dr. Gilbert Stater's "*The Dravidian Element in Indian Culture*"; the writings of the late Mr. J. H. Nelson, the Editor of the Madura Manual and the numerous works of Swami Veda-chalam, one of the greatest Dravidian scholars alive to-day. Other writers have been consulted and duly acknowledged in their respective places in this book.

The writer does not profess to be a historian in the accepted sense of the word, but a mere journalist and that of late only. An effort has been made by the writer to place some very controversial historical points clearly before the lay public. Recently the present writer made a similar attempt with the highly controversial topic of Temple-Entry as regards the so-called Untouchables. It met with a very warm reception throughout India and it has prompted the writer to make another venture in the same direction. The next book, more or less a sequel to this—*Brahmin and Non-Brahmin*—is in course of preparation and will be out shortly.



Dravidian & Aryan.

CHAPTER I.

The Aryans.

The Aryans were just barbarians when they entered India, now about four thousand five hundred years ago. "It is indeed probable that all the facts of this migration, so far as we know them, can be explained without postulating an earlier beginning for the migrations than 2500 B. C." (Professor P. Giles in the Cambridge History of Ancient India.) So, they say or said.

To quote one old writer:—

"The Aryans in the childhood of their history were savages; and lived upon the flesh of wild animals which they hunted. They had not even huts to live in; but generally formed a small gang either for protecting themselves from dangers to which they were naturally exposed or for hunting wild beasts for purposes of food..... They gradually passed to pastoral life; pastures now formed their territory and cattle their property. They soon acquired quite and harmless habits and became sober and deligent. They also became encircled by large families. In this manner, a number of

clans were formed.” (*The Indo Aryans* by Ramachandra Gosha 1881).

To the average Indian today it may appear strange that such a people should have existed or that they could have been Aryans. You will find their proto-types in the manner of their life even to-day scattered throughout India. They are known as the hill-tribes.

“ Various tribes of wild but inoffensive mountaineers, occupy the higher hills and the mountains finding a rather precarious living by migratory agriculture, hunting and the spontaneous products of the forests They have to wander about in seasons of scarcity in search of wild Yams, which they boil and eat on the spot and are thorough gluttons, eating all they can get at any time, then suffering want for days. Women are filthy in their habits, the sick are uncared for and mortality among the children is great... . These remarkable people are very rude and primitive in manners. (Native Life in Travancore by Rev. Samuel Mateer, 1883).

Therefore, you must know something of the hilltribes of today just to have an idea of what the Aryans were like when they arrived in India driven from their home (unknown and undiscovered till now) by hunger or pestilence— just as you find so many Baluchis and Pathans wandering about the country.

You can imagine what would happen to the city of Madras (today), for instance, if

some of the hill-tribes who even now exist were to invade that town. But, said the Pandits, the Aryans had to contend with a much worse set of barbarians than they themselves were. These latter, called Dasyus were the aborigines of India. Words failed to describe the latter—except in Sanskrit.

“At the time when the Indo-Aryans left their original home and set foot on Indian soil, they came into contact with the Dasyus or the aborigines of India. These people forming the Turanian branch of the human family differed widely from the Indo-Aryans in their physical appearance and colour, language and manners. Under such divergence, there was no ground for the establishment of conservation of feelings of amity and unity between the classes. Consequently the Indo-Aryans and the Dasyus frequently found themselves in the bitterest conflict. The Indo-Aryans, *as they were naturally of fair complexion, of majestic appearance, civilized and much more advanced in thought*, looked down upon the aborigines who were of beastly appearance. In the Veda, the aborigines are frequently called Dasyus or Dasas; and the Indo-Aryans with a certain degree of hatred called them *Twacham Krishnam* or the black-skin.” (The Indo-Aryans by Ramachandra Gosha 1881).

These people with whom the Aryans came face to face in India be they Dasyus or Dravidians or aborigines must have been a

despicable lot indeed. As Ragozin in her *Vedic India (Story of the Nations Series)* observes:-

“It were impossible to exaggerate the loathing and contempt with which the Aryas regarded those whom they were robbing of land and liberty. These feelings primarily aroused by that most ineradicable and unreasoning of human instincts, race antagonism, find vent in numberless passages of great value because they enable us to piece together a tolerably correct picture of what those aborigines must have been and in what manner they chiefly contrasted with their conquerors.”

The great epic Ramayana has been treated as a gift of the gods to the Arya Brahmin and therein we shall see how true a picture of the aborigine has been drawn.

Even such a sober historian like Professor Rapson wrote enthusiastically, (if a little ignorantly) in the *Cambridge History of India* (Vol. I. Ancient India) thus:-

“The caste-system is the outcome of a long process of social differentiation to which the initial impulse was given by the introduction of a higher civilization into regions occupied by peoples in a lower state of culture. The Aryan settlers, as represented by the sacrificial hymns of the Rigveda, were both intellectually and materially advanced. Their language, their religion and their social institutions were

of the Indo-European type like those of the ancient Persians of the Avesta and the Greeks of the Homeric Poems; and they were skilled in the arts and in the working of metals."

"The extent of the influence of one people upon another" observes Dr. W. H. R. Rivers in 'The contact of Peoples' "depends on the difference in the level of their cultures." In the estimate of Professor Rapson, Aryan culture was on a higher level than that of the aborigine.

CHAPTER II.

The European Scholar and his enthusiasm.

The enthusiasm for everything Aryan was a late fad of the English and German Orientalist and it started with an assumed kinship (ethnologically speaking) between the Brahmin (the purest representative of the Aryan) and the white-skinned European.

It reminds one of the famous "Aryan" race theory now adumbrated by Adolph Hitler in Germany in his drive against the Jews.

Till very recently there was no limit to this enthusiasm for the Aryan in India, his language, his culture, his purity of blood and his religion; no curb placed upon the imagination of the Orientalist.

I shall extract certain quotations from the Cambridge History of India (1922) written after the old enthusiasms had sobered down considerably; when doubts had crept in and protests had been made

“The bare fact that India possessed ancient classical literatures like those of Greece and Rome can scarcely be said to have been known to the Western worlds before the last quarter of the eighteenth century..... To meet the requirements of the law-courts, the Governor-General had ordered a digest to be prepared by pandits from the authoritative Sanskrit law-books; but when the work was finished no one could be found able to translate it into English. It was therefore necessary to have it translated first into Persian and from the Persian an English version was made and published by Halhead in 1776. ⁽¹⁾ The object lesson was not lost. Sanskrit was evidently of practical utility; *and the East India Company adopted and never afterwards neglected to pursue*, the enlightened policy of promoting the study of the ancient languages and literatures in which the traditions of its subjects were enshrined.” Both Sanskrit and the Aryan were taken under the wing of the Government

(1) I have shown very clearly in another place [Right of Temple Entry Chapter XII] how this initial blunder had brought about that maladministration of Hindu customary law which is now the most formidable obstacle to social progress in India.

“The inauguration of the study of India’s past history came at a fortunate moment; for it is precisely to the last quarter of the eighteenth century that we may trace the growth of the modern scientific spirit of investigation..... The first manifestation in the new spirit of inquiry, *which was soon to transform all learning*, was seen in the study of language. The first Western students of the ancient languages of India were statesmen and scholars who had been educated in the classical literatures of ancient Greece and Rome. They were impressed by the fact, which must indeed be patent to everyone who opens a Sanskrit grammar, that Sanskrit, both in its vocabulary and in its inflexions, presents a striking similarity to Greek and Latin. This observation immediately raised the question, How is this similarity to be explained? The true answer was suggested by Sir William Jones, whom that sagacious, Dr. Johnson recognised as “one of the most enlightened of the sons of men.” (2) In 1786, Sir William Jones wrote:—

“The Sanskrit language, whatever be its antiquity is of a wonderful structure; more perfect than the Greek, more copious than the Latin and more equisitively refined than either; yet bearing to both of them a stronger

(2) To “Sir William Jones, law was his profession and the comparison of languages only an amusement.”

affinity, both in the roots of verbs and in the forms of grammar, than could possibly have been produced by accident; so strong indeed; that no philologist could examine them all without believing them to have sprung from *some common source* which perhaps no longer exists."..... "Sir William Jones had the insight to observe (in 1786) that the sacred language of India (Sanskrit), the language of Persia, the languages of Greece and Rome, the languages of the Celts, Germans and Slavs were all closely connected."

To put it shortly, a close family relationship was traced between the Englishman and the Brahmin in India and not merely in language. As the same learned writer observes elsewhere in the same book "Classical Sanskrit became the standard language of Brahmin culture in every part of India; and *it is still the ordinary medium of communication between learned men*, as was Latin in the Middle ages of Europe."

But this assumed relationship between the Englishman and the Brahmin though admitted to be such on the one hand only for linguistic purposes was claimed to be such on grounds of blood-relationship as well, on the other hand.

"The study of this family of languages has *from the beginning* been beset with a subtle fallacy. There has been throughout an almost constant confusion between the

languages and the persons who spoke them. It is hardly necessary to point out that in many parts of the world the speaker of a particular language at a given time was not by lineal descent the representative of its speakers at an earlier period." Other instances are given in which mistakes occur but not the specific question of the relationship between the Englishman and the Brahmin in India. And the historian continues "It is therefore clear that it is impossible, without historical evidence, to be certain that the language spoken by any particular people was the language of their ancestors at a particular period".

But the repudiation of the Brahmin in India as a close family relative of the Englishman came too late. ⁽³⁾

Therefore from 1786, when Warren Hastings was establishing the British Government in India and when Sir William Jones was the Chief Justice of the Premier High Court in India, till 1922, for nearly one and half centuries the idea was that both the Brahmin and the European were of the same blood-stock and not merely linguistically related. "It commonly appears to an Indian that to be regarded as a Dravidian rather than an Aryan is to be denied his kinship with the Western European and relegated to an inferior

(3) I have shown in my book "Right of Temple Entry," what effect this supposed relationship has had upon the administration of Justice and the Governance of the Country.

category. This idea is, of course, groundless" (*Dr. Gilbert Slater: the Dravidian element in Indian Culture, 1924*). Hence the very low place assigned in the old days to the Dasyus or the aborigines of India by the historian and the Sanskritist, European and Brahmin.

The disaster is due to the fact that the whole theory, was built upon comparative philology and that only—"To ingenious attempts at explaining by the light of reason things which want the light of history to show their meaning, much of the learned nonsense of the world has indeed been due." (G. Elliot Smith; *Diffusion of Culture*).

Very much, indeed.

"The Aryan theory, which held that the dominant people of Europe had spread from a centre in South-Western Asia, had one advantage" observes Sir Arthur Keith in his Prefatory Note to the "Peoples of all Nations". "It provided an easy explanation for the fact that all the languages spoken between Ireland in the West and India in the East are modifications of the same ancestral tongue. Men did not then believe that speech could spread except by racial expansion and conquest. *It was supposed that blood and speech must spread together.*"

CHAPTER III.

Protests.

It has to be admitted however that historians, though small in number, were not wanting who raised their hand in protest against this absurd enthusiasm of the Brahmin and European Sanskritist; some expressed mere doubts, though others put it still more forcibly.

Nearly fifty years ago, Dr. Rhys Davids, the great authority on Buddhism, complained that "the Brahmin view, when Europeans entered India, has been regarded so long with reverence among us that it seems almost an impertinence now to put forward the other" that is the Non-Brahmin view. "Even to make this attempt" said the learned historian "may be regarded by some as a kind of *lese majeste*." How true!

"It is a common error, vitiating all conclusions as to the early history of India, to suppose that the tribes with whom the Aryans, in their gradual conquest of India, came into contact, were savages. Some were so. There were hill-tribes, gypsies, bands of hunters in the woods. But there were also settled communities with highly developed social organisation wealthy enough to excite the cupidity of the

invaders and in many cases too much addicted to the activities of peace to be able to offer, whenever it came to a fight, a prolonged resistance. But they were strong enough to retain, in some cases, a qualified independence and in others to impose upon the new nation that issued from the struggle many of their own ideas, many of the details of their own institution. And in many cases it never came to a struggle at all." (*Buddhist India* by T. W. Rhys Davids.)

Similarly, at about the same time, Ragozin in her "Vedic India" criticised this meaningless and unfounded enthusiasm for Brahminism and Aryanism:—

"It were a great and fatal mistake—fatal to sound historical criticism— were we to imagine that the entire population of the land stood on the lowest level of barbarism. It is to be feared that this error was, at one time, only too generally entertained, but it could proceed only from a superficial study of the Rig-Veda or from insufficient means of research on a field so very lately opened; or— and it is probable that this was a frequent and fruitful source of error— from too blind a confidence in certain theories which indeed had an ample foundation of truth so that the fault lay not so much in them as in the exaggerated enthusiasm which accepted them too unconditionally to the exclusion of other elements."

As regards the main sources of Brahminical history Dr. Rhys Davids observed:—

“The unhappy system of taking these ancient records in the sense attributed to them by modern commentators with much local knowledge but no historical criticism, with great learning but also with considerable party bias was very naturally adopted *at first by European scholars who had everything to learn.....* In the interpretation of the Vedic hymns this method, followed in Wilson’s translation has now been finally abandoned.” But, it may be added that by the time this method was abandoned considerable mischief had been already done.

So far back as 1893, Gustav Oppert had struck a note of warning as regards the Dasyus or the aborigines of India, which went unheeded.

“The Aryan invaders showed little sympathy with the inhabitants they found on the confines and in the interior of India. The *outward appearance* of the Dasas or Dasyus—these were the names with which the new-comers honoured their opponents—was not such as to create a favourable impression and they were in consequence taunted with their black colour and flat noses which latter made their faces appear as if they had no noses.”.....

“So far as civilization is concerned, a great difference could hardly have existed between the two races when they first met. However rude may have been the bulk of the indigenous population, a considerable portion of it must have already attained a certain degree of civilization. It was no doubt the wealth which they had acquired that stimulated the invaders to pursue their conquests, even when a brave and stubborn resistance warned the Aryans not to drive to despair the various chieftains who had retreated to their mountain strongholds.” (Gustav Oppert — *The original inhabitants Baratavarsha or India*).

In spite of these protests and warnings made by European scholars of established reputation, the idea has persisted till to day that Aryanism was the embodiment of all that was best in Indian culture. Otherwise, it would not have been possible to bring into existence the fashion of Varnasrama Dharma today which is in the words of Ragozin “a narrowly orthodox Brahminical school with its petty punctiliousness in the matter of forms, rites and observances, its intolerance of everything un-Aryan, its rigid separatism.”

CHAPTER IV.

The Aryan School.

When cold water was thrown on the enthusiasm of the Orientalist, the European school adopted the policy of ignoring the obvious fact, while the Arya Brahmin is not even aware of the obvious. Ofcourse, it will not pay him. This new method of historical study has been ably portrayed by Rhys Davids when he advocated the Non-Brahmin or Buddhist view-point.

“Why not leave well alone? Why resuscitate from the well-deserved oblivion in which for so many centuries they have happily lain? The puzzles of Indian history have been solved by respectable men in Manu and the Great Bharata, which have the advantage of being equally true for five centuries before Christ and five centuries after. Shade of Kumarila! What are we coming to when the writings of these fellows (Buddhist writers) renegade Brahmins among them too — are actually taken seriously and mentioned without a sneer.”

“Any words, however” moaned the great *savant* “are, I am afraid, of little avail against such sentiments. Where-ever they exist the inevitable tendency is to dispute the evidence and to turn a deaf ear to the con-

clusions." "And there is, perhaps, after all but one course open and that is to declare war, always with the deepest respect for those who hold them, against such views."

It was in an enthusiastic view that the latest epitome concerning Aryanism came to be compiled in the Cambridge History of Ancient India in 1922, - only a dozen years ago.

I have already quoted how the Cambridge historians started with the theory that the Aryans possessed a "higher civilization" when they came into India and the Dasyus or Dravidians or aborigines were in a "lower stage of culture."

Orientalists had not, by 1922, come to any conclusion as to the native place of the Aryans: from where they came into India. "They must have lived in a severely circumscribed area. *We cannot tell whether they were long-headed or short-headed, tall or of little stature, brunette or fair.* It has been customary to imagine them as having something of the characteristics which Tacitus describes as belonging to the German of the end of the first century. A. D."* "But" observed they of the Cambridge History "all the evidence adduced in support of this is really imaginary." And, ofcourse, the best evidence was Ramayana itself."

* Perhaps it was this which led to German Orientalism and modern Hitlerism. At any rate there is the recorded statement of Risely that Max-Muller remonstrated with him when the ethnographical study of India revealed the non-existence of the Aryan as such, in India in modern times.

“It is very doubtful whether they possessed a word for the sea at all.” They knew “the oak, the beech, the willow and some coniferous trees. The fruits they knew are more uncertain than the forest trees.” To these people the name Aryan is given which means “of good family, noble.” “It is the epithet applied by the composers of the Vedic hymns to distinguish their own stock from that of their enemies the earlier inhabitants of India, whom they call Dasas or Dasyus.”

“The leading vices of the Aryan race have always been drinking and gambling. The Rigveda bears ample witness to both... That the vice of gambling should breed the worse vice of cheating at play stands to reason. Accordingly we find it mentioned in the Rigveda with a frequency and familiarity which shows the practice to have been a common one.” (Ragozin: *Vedic India*) “The Vedic Indian was an inveterate gambler” (Cambridge History). It is these people who are alleged to have civilized India, threw light where all was darkness before. “The native word for caste, *Varna*, means colour and the first beginnings of the caste system were laid when the fairer people who migrated into India felt the importance of preserving their own racial characteristics by standing aloof from the dark skinned Dasas or Dasyus, whom they found already established in the peninsula..... Modern Hinduism is the

lineal descendent, however much modified in the course of ages of the ancient Aryan worship which we know first in the Rigveda"..... (Cambridge History).

Two things, Hinduism and its appanage the Caste-system, are attributed to the genius of the Aryan after entering India.

As regards Dasyu and Dravidian, the same historian observed:—

“Of the stage of civilization attained by the aborigines we learn little or nothing. They had, it is certain, large herds of cattle and they could when attacked take refuge in fortifications called in the Rigveda by the name *pur* which later denotes “town,” but which may well have then meant no more than an earthwork strengthened by a pallisade or possibly occasionally by stone. Stockades of this kind are often made by primitive people and are so easily constructed that we can understand the repeated references in the Rigveda to the large numbers of such fortifications which were captured and destroyed by the Aryan hosts”.....

“All the evidence points to the absence of city life among the (Aryan) tribes..... Of the construction of the Vedic houses we learn little but the bamboo seems to have been largely used for the beams which borrowed their name from it. In the midst of each house burned the domestic fire, which served the Indian both for practical and sacrificial uses.” (Cambridge History).

The Dravidians are usually brushed aside with little or no reference. In the Cambridge History of Ancient India, there is not even one per cent reference, so late as 1922. It was not for want of material; it was want of European scholarship and enthusiasm which favoured Aryanism at the expense of the Dravidian.

But events turned out so suddenly and so startlingly that it well illustrates the Italian proverb which says "He who goes quietly goes safely and goes far."

CHAPTER V.

The Aryan Myth and the *Mirage Oriental*.

Down till 1922, we saw the Cambridge Historians who were Orientalists placing Aryan culture on a higher level than that of the Pre-Aryan culture, for according to that school all the subsequent cultural developments are due to the Aryan. "The extent of the influence of one people upon another depends on the difference in the level of their cultures". (Dr. W. H. R. Rivers).

For fifty years, why till very recently, Indian historians were swearing by Max-Muller and his Sacred Books of the East. He spoke "not only of an Aryan language but an Aryan race or family". This as we shall

see subsequently, brought the Brahmin and the Britisher closer.

As one French *savant* Reinach puts it: "The profound impression which was produced by the discovery of Sanskrit at the end of the last century (18th) among the savants of Europe is well known. As this language happened to possess a grammatical mechanism more complicated than others it was believed for a long time that it was the mother or atleast the eldest sister of the Aryan languages. A fabulous antiquity was ascribed to its literary monuments; it was supposed for a long time, though not explicitly stated, that "Aryaque" or Sanskrit had been the language of the first men. India, Asiatic plateaus and the pure Aryas, became the *alpha and omega* of erudition" (P. Mitra Prehistoric India)

There was a doggerel even:

"E'en when Max Muller, celebrated man,
Conceived the past upon a different plan

.....
No part of dim antiquity, but it

Was made or fancied by Hellenic wit."

Out of this enthusiasm for Aryanism came into existence the numerous Sanskrit Colleges in South India sponsored by Courts of law as at Tirupati, Rameswaram etc. and it found expression in schools and colleges and Universities in Dravidian India as well —during the last half a century. Which

just means that a great impetus was given to Sanskrit scholarship in South India at the expense mainly of Tamil, for as I shall show later, the other Dravidian languages had more or less succumbed under the spell and glamour of Sanskrit. One may even say the other Dravidian languages are not even existent; they are practically dead though not buried.

"It was deemed impossible" writes Sir John Marshall, "that the older races of India—the contemptible outcaste Dasas— could already have been living in well-built cities or fortresses or in other respects attained to a higher state of culture. Mentally, physically, socially and religiously, their inferiority to their conquerors was taken for granted and little or no credit was given them for the achievements of Indian civilization." (Sir John Marshall: *Mohenjo-daro and the Indus Civilization Vol. I.*)

The Aryan does not die game. Writing so recently as 1927, Mr. P. Mitra in his *Pre-historic India*, still clings to the Aryan myth and says: "whichever way the Aryan question be decided, the Indo-Aryan stamp of Indian society and religion cannot be denied." It certainly cannot be admitted— if Sir John Marshall is to be believed.

"Among the many revelations that Mohenjo-daro and Harappa have had in store for us, none perhaps is more remarkable than

this discovery that Saivism has a history going back to the Chalco-lithic age or perhaps even further still and that it thus takes its place as the most ancient living faith in the world" (Sir John Marshall: *Mohenjo-daro and the Indus Civilization Vol. I.*)

"Never for a moment was it imagined that five thousand years ago, *before the Aryans were heard of*, the Punjab and Sindh, *if not other parts of India as well*, were enjoying an advanced and singularly uniform civilization of their own, closely akin to but in some respects even superior to that of contemporary Mesopotomia and Egypt, yet this is what the discoveries at Harappa and Mohenjo-daro have now placed beyond question. They exhibit the Indus peoples of the third and fourth millenia B. C. in possession of a highly developed culture *in which no vestige of Indo-Aryan influence* is to be found".

(Sir John Marshall: *Ibid*)

The Indo-Aryan stamp is a fabricated one. The Aryans if any, were tall liars as witness their Ramayana.

"The great obstacle to a right appreciation of the Dravidian influence in the evolution of Indian Culture" writes Dr. Gilbert Slater who was some time Professor of Economics in the Madras University and a Member

of the Madras Legislative Council "is the widespread currency and established position of what may be called the Aryan myth... Indians cling to the theory that they are Aryans and that their religion and culture are Aryan. The word Aryan is legitimate enough provided the definite meaning is attached to it, as a name for the invaders from the North-West who introduced the Sanskrit language into India. It is illegitimate if used to imply the theory popularised by Max Muller that an ancient "Aryan" race, superior to other races, spread from the original "Aryan home" somewhere in Europe or Asia, over India, Persia and Europe, displacing the previous occupants all regarded as inferior mentally, physically and culturally and bequeathing to their descendants the various languages of the Indo-Germanic family. All attempts to harmonise that theory with the facts have broken down hopelessly and Max Mullar himself was brought to admit that language is no test of race" (Dr. Gilbert Slater: *The Draviaian Element in Indian Culture*).

CHAPTER VI.

The Ramayana or the Conflict of Cultures.

Before we enter upon a discussion of who the Dravidians were, it would be well to remember that the whole of India was

composed of only two sets of people going by the old historians — the Aryans and the Dasyus. This is how Indian history was begun to be taught in schools and continues to be taught even today. A few years ago, the name of the Dravidians came to be whispered and these, in spite of the mention made, came to be clubbed along with the Dasyus. Suspicion still persisted about the culture of these same Dravidians; but even that was drowned in the overpowering voice of the orientalist. All must give way to Aryanism and did. The great epic of Ramayana was a picture of the conquest by the North Indian Aryan of the South Indian Dasyus or Dravidians— whichever word you choose—either historically true or culturally correct according to Aryans. By slow degrees, the historical aspect of it was given up, while the cultural conflict was held to be faithfully portrayed. We shall discuss the cultural aspect later on; at the present moment it is barely enough to point out how as a piece of history it is a terrible lie and how in South India, some thirty years ago, it led to a huge controversy and practically laid the foundations for the faction between the Brahmin and the Non-Brahmin scholars which has not even now died out.

One famous Tamil scholar* set the ball rolling professing to base his remarks upon

* Mr. V. P. Subramania Mudaliar in the *Tamilian Antiquary*

the researches of the late Professor Sundaram Pillai. "Some historians look upon the Ramayana as an allegorical representation of the spread of Aryan civilization in India and the conquest of South India by the Aryans. As such, the Ramayana of Valmiki would be a poem written by an Aryan poet to proclaim the prowess of the Aryans." Another Tamil scholar (Mr. T. Ponnambalam Pillay in the Malabar Quarterly Review) developed this idea with the title "The morality of the Ramayana" and held that Ramayana was meant 'to proclaim the prowess of the Aryans and represent their rivals and enemies, the Dravidians, who had attained a high degree of civilization at that period, in the worst possible colour."

An acute, critical and penetrative study of Valmiki's Ramayana taking it to be historically correct, then took place at the hands of famous Dravidian scholars and they came to conclusions adverse to Aryan pretensions.

"At the time of the Ramayana, the Aryans, it would seem, were just colonising South India. * They had not yet entered into large cities. They built huts in the forests and lived in them.... Nowhere do we find the slightest trace of that hated caste distinction—the curse of later day India." concluded Mr. Mudaliar.

* The Aryans were not even acquainted with South India at the time: Rhys Davids' Buddhist India.

"The Peninsula further south was the Tamilagam or Tamil country ruled over by the three Tamil kings, Chera, Chola and Pandiya. Special mention is made by Valmiki of the last mentioned prince. At this period the Aryans were settling themselves down in unoccupied portions and their colonies were very few and had not extended to the towns".

"The soveriegns of these countries as well as of Ceylon were Dravidians or of Dravidian extraction," continued Mr. T. P. Pillay. "The high standard of morality set up by them and the perfection attained by them in most of the fine arts are evident signs of the high civilization reached by them. The masterly account of the metropolis of Ravana and of the golden gate of the Pandian fort as given by Valmiki are more than flights of imagination."

"Even the Ramayana" wrote Gustav Oppert in his "*Original Inhabitants of India*" "extols the beauty and grandeur of Lanka, its architectural splendour and the efficiency of its administration. This latter was so excellent, that no thief dared to pick up any valuable thing lost on its streets. The enemies of Rama could hardly therefore, have been so rude and uncivilized as they are generally represented."

This purely historical study of the Ramayana drew a violent protest from the

late Sir T. Sadasiva Iyer—a puisne Judge of the Madras High-Court who condemned such historical studies in general “The ambition of many of my Southern Vellala friends and of the so-called non-Brahmin portion of our community in the southern portions of India to now cut themselves entirely adrift from Sree Rama and Sree Krishna and the Sanskrit Vedas and the Tiruwaimozhi Prahbandham and to rise a standard of revolt on a pure Tamil Saivite anti-Brahmin and non-Aryan basis, is, if I may be permitted to say so, an utter wild-goose chase.” He consigned the whole lot to perdition.

Sir John Marshall was constrained to say even so lately as 1931:—

“To the ancient Greeks, the Iliad and the Odyssey were as much the beginning of things as the Vedas are still to the Indians many of whom regard it as little short of impious to look beyond these venerable writings for a possible source of inspiration and knowledge.”*

To use the words of Dr. Rhys Davids* it would have appeared as “lese majeste” to some; or as impertinence to all Sanskritists and orientalists, to do so.

It was pointed out by Mr. T. P. Pillay that R. C. Dutt the great Indian historian had

* Mohenjo-daro and the Indus Civilization by Sir John Marshall Vol. I.

* Already quoted Vide Chapter III. (3)

condemned Ramayana as being utterly useless as a piece of history.

“Like the Mahabaratha, the Ramayana is utterly valueless as a narrative of historical events and incidents. As in the Mahabaratha, so in the Ramayana, the heroes are myths pure and simple.”

“Sita, the field furrow had received divine honours from the time of the Rig Veda and had been worshipped as a goddess. When cultivation gradually spread to southern India it was not difficult to invent a political myth that Sita was carried to the South. And when she is goddess and woman—the noblest creation of human imagination—had acquired a distinct and lovely individuality, she was described as the daughter of the holiest and most learned king on record, Janaka of the Videhas.”

“But who is Rama, described in the epic as Sita’s husband and the king of the Kosalas? The later Puranas tell us that he was an incarnation of Vishnu, but Vishnu himself had not risen to prominence at the time of which we are speaking. Indra was still the chief of the gods of the Epic period. And in the Sutra literature (example: Paraskara Grihya Sutra II 17.9) we learn that Sita, the furrow goddess, is the wife of Indra. Is it then an untenable conjecture that Rama, the hero of the Ramayana, is in his original conception, like Arjuna the hero of the Mahabaratha

only a new edition of Indra battling with the demons of drought?. The myth of Indra has thus been mixed up with the epic which describes an historic war in Northern India and with the epic which describes the historic conquest of Southern India." (Dutt's Early Hindu Civilization. Vol. I. Page 138.)

It may be noticed, incidentally, that the deification of Rama in South India took place nearly two thousand years later than when Valmiki is supposed to have composed this epic when Kamban wrote his Tamil Ramayana. Until then, he was an unknown hero and unheard of God, in the South.

What emerges from this is simply that no Dravidian scholar could subject to analysis any North Indian Aryan work. That must be reserved only for the Brahmin who, as the propagandist of Aryanism in South India, cannot afford to do it either. That is how scholarship was behaving in the Dravida country.

CHAPTER VII.

Dravidian Civilization.

More than twentyfive years ago I graduated from a respectable Indian University, but neither then nor at any time previously as a student of history nor for some time after

when I had to teach history to others, had I heard much, if at all, about the Dravidians or that they had any civilization worth mentioning. They were just Dasyus or Dasas or the aborigines of India, some of whom were afterwards entertained as Sudras by Manu and others, I believe. That, I take it, is the sum total of the knowledge of the student population in India today also, about the Dravidians. At any rate, that is the sum total of knowledge of the learned Sanskrit scholars who have edited the Cambridge Ancient History of India— for, in a volume of nearly seven hundred pages you will find something mentioned about Dravidians in about fifteen pages. And that is supposed to be a standard book on the subject of Ancient India.

“A once—established opinion” remarked Tylor in 1871 (Primitive Culture) “however delusive, can hold its own from age to age, for belief can propagate itself with out reference to its reasonable origin, as plants are propagated from slips without fresh raising from the seed.” The glamour about Aryanism still continues unabated; Dravidianism is as unknown today to the Orientalist as ever. As the eminent anthropologist Dr. H. J. Fleure D. Sc. observed:—“The notion of a barbarous India on which Aryan civilization descended has been fairly widespread and the number of books which tell us of Southern Indian civilization is not as large as

one might wish." We shall narrate on another occasion how that wish will have to remain unsatisfied for some time and why.

The following conclusions were arrived at by Dr. Gilbert Slater in 1924, after sifting the evidence then available* in his valuable book, *The Dravidian Element in Indian Culture*.

(1) "That there was in India at the time of the Aryan invasions a Dravidian civilization of a more elaborate and developed character than the civilization, if civilization it can be called, of the Aryans".

(2) "That in so far as this Dravidian civilization was derived from outside sources its origin is to be traced to Egypt and Mesopotamia, linked up with India by sea commerce."

(3) "That Dravidian civilization resembled that of Egypt and Mesopotamia in the importance of the influence exerted in its evolution by religious ideas and in the dominance of a priestly class or caste".

(4) "That the first step towards the linking up of India with Egypt was accomplished when the Egyptians navigated the Red Sea and reached the land of Punt. The Dravidians themselves were early navigators though on a more modest scale and as

* These remarks were made by Dr. Slater before the discoveries at Harappa and Mohenjo-daro were published by Sir John Marshall.

Elliot Smith has shown, their earliest boats were copied from Egyptian models."

(Professor Elliot Smith writes: "I have examined two skulls from Adichanallur (in the Tinnevely District, in South India). One was quite indistinguishable from the early Egyptian type. The other, though not so typical, comes well within the variation of that type).

"Rice growing" observes Dr. Slater "is obviously the economic basis of Dravidian culture." It may well be as is maintained by Perry in 'The Children of the Sun' that the idea of cereal cultivation was imported into India from Egypt, although the grain cultivated was native." (Badarian civilization).

Sir John Marshall writing in 1931 about the Indus civilization— that is seven years later than Dr. Slater— observed:—

"The Indus civilization was Pre-Aryan and the Indus language or languages must have been Pre-Aryan also. Possibly, one or other of them (if, as seems likely, there was more than one) was Dravidic. This, for three reasons, seems a most likely conjecture— first, because Dravidic speaking people were the precursors of the Aryans over most of Northern India and were the only people likely to have been in possession of a culture as advanced as the Indus culture; secondly, because on the other side of the Krithar Range and at no great distance from the

Indus valley, the Brahuis of Baluchistan have preserved among themselves an island of Dravidic speech which may well be a relic of pre-Aryan times, when Dravidic was perhaps the common language of these parts; thirdly, because the Dravidic languages being agglutinative it is not unreasonable to look for a possible connection between them and the agglutinative language of Sumer in the Indus Valley, which, as we know, had many other close ties with Sumer.'

"The circumstance which has made possible the belief that Sanskritic civilization is more ancient than Dravidian and that Indian culture has an Aryan and Sanskritic origin, rather than Dravidian, is the fact that South India cannot show either writings or buildings of incontestable antiquity. It by no means follows that South India did not possess them, for their complete disappearance is the natural consequence of the perishable nature of the materials used and the destructive power of a hot, damp climate and superabundant insect life The most ancient temples cannot be accurately dated but no one claims that they come either before or very near the Christian Era. But these earliest extant stone buildings (apart from dolmens and other rude stone monuments) unmistakably betray their indebtedness to a more ancient architectural art and tradition. Though built of hard granite rock, a most intractable material, they display the

utmost elaboration of ornament. This must have been worked up slowly through centuries by workers in more manageable materials, so that the earliest builders of temples and palaces of stone, instead of, as in other countries, first experimenting in simple forms, attempted from the beginning a height of elaboration never reached elsewhere in material of the same character. The whole story of Dravidian temple architecture can be read in a day at the ancient sacred city of Conjeevarem where may be seen one of the most ancient stone temples of the South India in ruins

“But in the way of Hindu Temples there is nothing in North India equal to the sumptuous greatness and elaboration of the great shrines of the South”.*

“In spite of the absence of Dravidian architecture of anything approaching Vedic antiquity, the facts relating to it tend on the whole to point to a greater antiquity for Dravidian than for Aryan civilization. Similarly with regard to literature”.

Again in 1924, Dr. Slater pointed out:— (before the discovery of Ur in Mesopotamia by Dr. Woolley and by Sir John Marshall at Mohenjo-daro).

“Between four and five thousand years

* Refer to the Author's Right of Temple-Entry for more details about Hindu Temples.

ago,* Dravidian India received the seeds of many sorts of culture by sea from Egypt or from Mesopotamia or more probably from both and received them into fertile soil..... In India they became the starting point of a new development by the native genius of the Dravidian race and evolving in harmony with the Indian geographical environment."

"It may be recalled" writes Sir John Marshall in 1931, in his monumental work (*Mohenjo-daro and the Indus Civilization*) "that before anything whatever had been discovered of the Indus civilization, Dr. H. R. Hall proposed to locate the homeland of the Sumerians somewhere to the east of Mesopotamia and suggested that they might belong to the same ethnic type as the Dravidians of India, who though now restricted to the south of India are believed on linguistic and ethnological grounds to have once populated virtually the whole of the peninsula, including the Punjab, Sind, and Baluchistan where as is well-known the Dravidian speech is still preserved in the language of the Brahuis. Following on the discoveries at Mohenjo-daro and Harappa which revealed various points of resemblance between the material cultures of these places and of Sumer, it was natural that a fresh impetus should be given to this theory and the resemblances referred to should be inter-

* The age of Mohenjo-daro civilization is put down by Sir John Marshall between 3250 B. C. and 2750 B. C.

puted as additional proof of its correctness". No doubt Sir John Marshall reserves his judgment upon this theory, "pending the discovery of further evidence" but he nevertheless recognises that that "is coming to be accepted as an established fact".

What Dr. Hall said was:—

"The ethnic type of the Sumerians, so strongly marked in their statues and reliefs, was so different from those of the races which surrounded them, as was their language from those of the Semites, Aryans or others; they were decidedly Indian in type. The face type of the average Indian of today is no doubt much the same as that of his Dravidian race ancestors, thousands of years ago. Among the modern Indians, as amongst the modern Greeks or Italians the ancient pre-Aryan type of the land (as the primitive of the land always does) has survived, while that of the Aryan conqueror died out long ago. And it is to this Dravidian ethnic type of India that the Sumerians bear most resemblance, so far as we can judge from his monuments. He was very like a Southern Hindu of the Dekhan (who still speaks Dravidian languages). And it is by no means improbable that the Sumerians were an Indian race which passed certainly by land, perhaps also by sea, through Persia to the valley of the Two Rivers. It was in the Indian Home (perhaps in the Indus Valley) that their writing may have been invented and progres-

sed from a purely pictorial to a simplified and abbreviated form, which afterwards in Babylonia took on its cuneiform appearance owing to its being written with a square ended stilus on soft clay. On the way they left the seeds of culture in Elam There is little doubt that India must have been one of the earliest centres of civilization and it seems natural to suppose that the strange un-Semitic, un-Aryan people who came from the east to civilize the west were of Indian origin, especially when we see with our eyes how very Indian the Sumerians were in type".

CHAPTER VIII.

The Aryan Conquest.

One of the most intriguing things in Indian History, since the discoveries at Harappa and Mohenjo-daro ought to be this: how comes it that the Aryans as seen from their earliest writings have come to miss this Indus civilization altogether—a civilization which lay right across their way into India? Was it that that civilization had altogether disappeared when they put in their appearance? Or, was it a case of the Aryans, naked, hungry and starving, being absorbed by the Dravidian society and put to uses similar to those which happened in Sumeria? That is the problem facing the honest historian.

"A comparison of the Indus and Vedic cultures" observes Sir John Marshall, "shows incontestably that they were unrelated. Thus the picture of Indo-Aryan society portrayed in the Vedas is that of a partly pastoral, partly agricultural people, who have not yet emerged from the village state, who have no knowledge of life in cities or of the complex economic organisation which such life implies and whose houses are non-descript affairs constructed largely of bamboo. At Mohenjo-daro and Harappa, on the other hand, we have densely populated cities with solid, commodious houses of brick equipped with adequate sanitation, bathroom, wells and other amenities". He concludes thus:— "As time goes on, doubtless many other salient points of difference will be revealed but for the moment the above will suffice to demonstrate how wide is the gulf between the Indus and Vedic civilizations". And further on he said:— "Enough has been said to show that, from whatever angle we view these civilizations, it is impossible to discover for them a common source or to explain their divergent characters on any hypothesis other than that the Vedic was, not only the later of the two but that it had an independent development".

Is the theory of the Aryans being conquerors of India tenable?

What was the state of Dravidian society which the Aryans met with when

they came to India?

“Their society” depicts Sir John Marshall “is organised in cities; their wealth is mainly derived from agriculture and trade, which appears to have extended far and wide in all directions. They cultivate wheat and barley as well as the date palm. They have domesticated the humped zebu, buffalo and short horned bull, besides the sheep, pig, dog, elephant and camel. For transport they have wheeled vehicles to which oxen doubtless were yoked. They are skilful metal workers, with a plentiful supply of gold, silver and copper. Lead, too and tin are in use, but the latter only as an alloy in the making of bronze. With spinning and weaving they are thoroughly conversant. Their weapons of war and the chase were the bow and arrow, spear, axe, dagger and mace. Among their other implements, hatchets, sickles, saws, chisels, and razors are made of both copper and bronze..... With the invention of writing the Indus people are also familiar”.

What chance had the barbarous uncivilized Aryans against the Dravidians? You may as well expect the present day hill-tribes to storm the cities of Bombay, Calcutta or Madras.

The Aryan conquest of India is a fairy tale; it has absolutely no foundation in fact. It exists only in the imagination of the Orientalist. They-these orientalist-were ignorant of “the

great pre-Aryan civilization that has now been revealed" as Marshall puts it. "They pictured the pre-Aryans as little more than untutored savages, (whom it would have been grotesque to credit with any reasoned scheme of religion or philosophy!). Now that our knowledge of them has been revolutionised and we are constrained to recognise them as no less highly civilized—in some respects, indeed, more highly civilized—than the contemporary Sumerians or Egyptians, it behoves us to re-draw the picture afresh and revise existing misconceptions regarding their religion as well as their material culture'. *Mohenjo-daro and the Indus Civilization*

Then what is it that really happened? There is in short, if the truth be told no foundation for the statement that the Aryans ever conquered any portion of India, let alone the South which admittedly was never done. "When we pass to the notices of tribes in the Rigveda, we leave comparative certainty for confusion and hypothesis. The one great historical event which reveals itself in the fragmentary allusions of the Samhita is the contest known as the battle of the ten kings..... Suda's victory at the Purushni, in which the Anu and Druhyu kings fell, does not appear to have resulted in any attempt at the conquest of the territory of the allied tribes..... More important by far, it may be believed, than the intertribal warfare of the people who called themselves

Aryan were their contests with the aborigines, the Dasas or Dasyus as they are repeatedly called Some Dasas, it seems, were able to establish friendly relations with the Aryans, for a singer celebrates the generosity of Balbutha, apparently a Dasa; nor is it impossible, as we have seen, that the five tribes of the Punjab were not above accepting the co-operation of aboriginal tribes in their great attack on Sudas. We must therefore recognise that in the age of Rigveda there was going on a steady process of amalgamation of the invaders and the aborigines, whether through the influence of intermarriage with slaves or through friendly and peaceful relations with powerful Dasa tribes". (Cambridge History of India. Vol I.)

We have got to go to the history of Sumer where a similar state of affairs existed for a possible explanation.

Dr. Leonard Woolley, the excavator of Ur and the high authority on Sumerians (with whom the Dravidians were compared by Dr. Hall) says that they (the Sumerians also) were pre-eminently town-dwellers. "In the north where the Akkadians were in the numerical majority, the moral ascendancy of the Sumerians was hardly less pronounced; the Semites were a more virile and a more warlike stock but they were savages compared to the southern race and unable to stand out against its higher civilization".

“In the advance of civilization the lead is generally taken by military science and equipment. In the case of the Sumerians, set down in the midst of peoples physically more powerful and addicted to war as a past-time intellectual and artistic superiority would have made little headway, could not indeed have held its own against the covetousness it must have provoked, unless that genius had been applied to war not less than to peace. They built up an empire because they had a better army and better weapons than their neighbours and throughout their annals war plays a very large part”. This is more or less true of the Dravidians as well. A whole mass of Dravidian literature had grown up about war—known as Purapporul—which it may not be possible to discuss within the small compass of this book.

“The ruthless character of the wars between the city states was one of the reasons for the decay of the Sumerian power and the final disappearance of the Sumerians.” This is also true of the Dravidian princes of the South, in later times, like Chera, Chola and Pandiya.

The contact and development of relations between the Aryan and the Dasyu or Dravidian must have been more or less on the lines of that between the Semites and the Sumerians in Mesopotamia.

"It is easy to believe" observes Dr. Woolley "that the influence of the Semites, first as rivals in war and later as masters or as predominant partners in the common state introduced a more thorough regularisation of the somewhat spasmodic military efforts of the Sumerians. The foreign conquests of Sargon of Agade must have required a standing force of more or less professional soldiers and the organisation of the whole people on a war footing: the army employed for the guarding of the throne and for any sudden emergency such as a punitive expedition is distinct from the *levee en masse* The *levee en masse* applied to the middle class of the citizens, the burgher class, who were not professional soldiers; they performed camp duties and may have formed the light arm of the service."

"To such an extent were the wealth and importance born of foreign commercial intercourse developed, that in the early centuries of the Christian era *Yavana* (Roman or Greek) *mercenaries* were tempted to serve under the Pandiyan Fish Banner and mount guard on the lofty towers of his Capital, Madura. And judging from Numismatic evidence it is equally certain that in the flourishing periods of the Roman Empire there was a colony of Roman merchants settled on the banks of the Vaigai". (Dravidian kingdoms: by Dewan Bahudur T. M. Rangachariar, B. A., B. L.,

in the Tamilian Antiquary).

“At a later date, say, at the beginning of the first century. A. D, the chief objective of Indian sea-going trade is given in the *Milinda* as follows:—

“As a shipowner who has become wealthy by constantly levying freight in some sea-port town will be able to traverse the high seas and go to Vanga or Takkola or China or Sovira or Surat or Alexandria or Koromandel coast or Further India or any other place where ships do congregate.”

“Tamil poems testify to the flourishing state of Kaviri-pattinam (Kamara in Periplus, Khabari in Ptolemy) capital of Chola, on the Kaveri river, at about the same period, as a centre of international trade, especially frequented by Yavana (yona, Ionian) merchants.” (Cambridge History of India. Vol I.)

“The growth of the mercenary principle” says Dr. Woolley about the Sumerians “had the immediate advantage that it enabled the Sumerian kings to utilise the Semitic manpower at a time when the two populations were becoming more and more mixed.....; of course it substituted allegiance to king’s person for the old loyalty to the city-state and it tended to enervate that burgher class which had once been the backbone of the city but was in these days of empire relegated to a second place and seldom called upon

for active service or if called upon, might be able to avoid service by money payments. The army of the Third Dynasty was probably much superior technically to that of the fourth millennium B. C., but the Sumerian state was by so much the weaker; *it was the familiar story of military specialisation and mercenary service leading to national decay*. (*The Sumerians* by J. Leonard Woolley.)

"All through history down to the period of British rule we see one foreign power after another breaking through the north—western gateway and the strongest of these winning the sovereignty over India. But the result in all these cases was little more than a change of rulers—*the deposition of one dominant caste and the substitution of another*" (Cambridge History of India Vol I. p. 53.)

Even taking it that there was a conquest of India at any one period of time by the Aryans, in course of time, they became the military class in the countries which they conquered or as is more probable, they became mercenaries under the more civilized Dravidians and later developed into the Kshatriyas, as we find illustrated in Sumeria.

This is what Dr. Rhys Davids indicates as taking place previous to 6th century B. C. when he observes:—

"It will sound most amazing to those familiar pretensions (either in modern times

in India or in priestly books such as Manu and the epics) to hear Brahmins spoken of as "low-born". Yet, that precisely is the epithet applied to them in comparison with the Kings and Nobles. And it ought to open our eyes as to their relative importance in these early times".

It just means that the Brahmins of India were not in those days Aryans; if at all, it was the kings and nobles who later became known as Kshatriyas that were Aryans.

"Priest and Noble" wrote the same learned writer "have always worked very well together so long as the question at issue did not touch their own rival claims as against one another".

Who were the Brahmins, if they were not Aryans? In the opinion of Dr. Slater the Brahmins of north India were Dravidians. This opinion was expressed before the discovery of the Indus Civilization by Marshall. "The Aryan invasion may reasonably be regarded as one of the long series of exoduses of pastoral tribes from Asiatic steppes that have repeatedly devastated surrounding agricultural districts..... The Moghul invasion under Baber was the last, the Aryan invasion, led according to the Vedas by the god Indra, was the first; but there were many in between".

....."Later came the time of inter-racial conflict with Dravidians and pre-Dravidians

which must have passed through three stages'.....

“During the second stage and still more during the third, a mutual action and reaction was taking place. Intercourse included intermarriage; it involved a struggle for survival between languages. *That the more brawny but thicker-witted Aryan* should learn the extraordinarily difficult language of the “ill-speaking man”, as the Vedas term the Dravidian was not to be supposed. The Dravidian instead had to learn Sanskrit.”

“What happened then we can infer from the experience of South India in recent times. In the eighteenth century, with the overthrow of Dupleix, the English East India Company became the ruling power in the Carnatic. Mastery of the English language became a means to profit, influence and power. The Brahmin caste, habituated to an intellectual life and trained in the exercise of verbal memory to an astonishing degree, found here an opportunity. At the present day, though there still remain in the Tamil country, some “temple Brahmins” who are more familiar with Sanskrit than with English, with the Vedas than with Shakespere, they are a very small minority of the Caste. The ordinary Tamil Brahmin speaks English more accurately than Tamil, writes it more

easily and rapidly, reads it much more frequently and has practically adopted English literature as his own; and accordingly, the staffs both of Government offices and those of mercantile houses consist almost entirely of Brahmins and they almost monopolise the legal and journalistic professions”.....“Similiar motives existed from the time of the establishment of Aryan predominance in the Punjab to induce the Dravidian Brahmins of that and neighbouring districts to adopt Sanskrit as their language and to constitute themselves as the guardians and exponents of the Vedas. They had behind them the traditions of magic and of priest craft, of which the underlying principle is the quest for any sort of recondite or esoteric learning that either tends to differentiate the sacred caste from the common people or in any other way tends to the acquisition of power and influence And the Brahmins having thus taken the initiative in spreading the use of Sanskrit or Sanskrit derivatives, others less eagerly and with greater difficulty followed by degrees, just as has happened with the spread of English in the Madras Presidency”.

“While the Dravidians were thus Aryanised in language, the Aryans were Dravidised in culture.... The immediate effect of the incursion into India of conquering tribes that had no specialised priestly caste

and of the period of fierce warfare that ensued was to depose the priestly caste temporarily from its supremacy and to make it yield precedence to the warrior caste. Not until many generations had passed, centuries during which the Indian environment had worked its effect, the terrific heat of the summer sun, the monsoon deluges, hurricanes, pestilences, famines, all combining to teach men to honour rather those who asserted their power to control the elements and conciliate angry deities than those who wielded the sword, did the Brahmin caste succeed in re-establishing its primacy..... The nature of the social forces at work is also illustrated by the speedy domination of the descendants of Sivaji by their Brahmin ministers”.

Thus all Dravidian scholars are agreed that the Brahmin of North India was in the beginning of things, at the time of the Aryan immigration and long after, a very respectable Dasyu or Dravidian himself.

The next myth to be exploded is that the caste system as we find it today owes its inception to the Aryans. It was or, at any rate, it started as a Dravidian affair.

CHAPTER IX.

The Caste System.

The greatest trouble that came to be created by the Orientalist was in supposing that with the advent of the Aryan into India, there was, so to speak, a cultural revolution; a breaking with the past or rather that the past was a blank and the Aryans wrote their own culture on a clean slate. If only they had pursued correct historical methods and had been free from bias, if they had not pinned their faith to philology and Sanskrit, the work of two centuries need not have run to waste. But, as it is, the whole work has to be started afresh by Dravidian scholars, who have now come into their own after the discoveries made concerning the pre-historic Badarian, Sumerian and Indus civilizations. In so far as Dravidian scholarship is concerned, it had done very good work even before these discoveries had come to light, which merely confirm and amplify their theories, but which had not been known so well to European scholars and which were so carefully and assiduously suppressed by the Dravidian with Aryan pretensions. These theories do not fall within the scope of this book and are proposed to be dealt with on another occasion.

Now, there is no reason to suppose that there was any break in the culture of India which existed when the Aryans first put in their appearance. It could not possibly have taken place, what with the glorious civilization which existed in North India even before their arrival. In the preceding chapter, we have indicated more or less, how the caste system developed in North India. Opposed to all accepted theories, it has been shown how the Aryan was dragged into a system which was in existence long before his arrival.

Let us now see what the social organisation was like among the Sumerians with whom the Dravidians have been very favourably compared.

"I think it more likely" writes Dr. Woolley in his book on Sumeria "that the caste system was in its origin military". We have seen how in North India, the Aryans joined the ranks of Kings and Nobles and became Kshatriyas when the caste system was evolved and how the Brahmins were just Dravidians, who were looked down upon by the Kshatriyas as being "low-born".

Now, coming to South India where the Aryan intrusion was a very late affair, the most significant thing is the absence of Kshatriyas and Vaisyas altogether from the caste-system even today. That carries its own tale.

"It is curious" writes Dr. Gilbert Slater "that for the most part even the foreign observers in India who have been struck with what may be termed the general racial homogeneity of the great majority of the people of India and *who have drawn the natural inference that Indians are, in the main, Dravidians by race*, still tend to accept without scrutiny the popular doctrine that Indian culture, religion and philosophy are of Aryan origin But there is less than *no evidence of the superiority of the Brahmin caste, or even of the caste system itself, being an Aryan institution*".

MaxMuller also asks:—

"Does caste, as we find it in Manu and at the present day form a part of the most ancient religious teaching of the Vedas? We can answer with an emphatic, "No". There is no authority whatever in the hymns of the Veda for the complicated system of caste; no authority for the degraded position of the Sudras; there is no law to prohibit the different classes of the people from living together, from eating or drinking together; no law to prohibit the marriage of people belonging to different castes; no law to brand the offspring of such marriages with an indelible stigma there is no trace in the Veda of the atrocities of Siva and Kali nor of the licentiousness of Krishna nor of the miraculous adventures of Vishnu. We find in it no law to sanction the blasphemous

pretensions of a priesthood to divine honours or the degradation of any human being to a state below the animals. There is no text to countenance laws which allow the marriage of children and prohibit the marriage of child-widows; and the unhallowed rite of burning the widow with the corpse of her husband is both against the spirit and the letter of the Veda”.

“That caste is a Dravidian institution” continues Dr. Slater “has been pointed out above and though it pervades all India, it is best studied in the South... Notoriously the caste system is much stronger, much more elaborate and plays a much larger part in social life in South India than in North India and it reaches its highest development in that part of India which is most effectively cut off from land invasions from the north, the narrow strip of land between the Western Ghats and the Arabian Sea. This fact is by itself sufficient to prove that caste is of Dravidian rather than of Aryan origin”.

This is what led Kapilar, the Dravidian poet to complain about the Brahmin of South India: “You planted the four castes in South India,” thereby showing that it was a recent affair—viz, the present day caste system and it was introduced by Brahmins.

“The origin (of caste)” says Dr. Slater,

"lies partly in occupational, partly in racial differences".

Let us see what exactly was the social order in Sumeria at a period of time before the Aryans entered India.

"The population of the country was divided into three classes; the patrician order (*amelu*) included all government officials, priests and soldiers of the regular army; the burgher classes (*mushkinu*), merchants, shopkeepers, schoolmasters, labourers, farmers and artisans, were free men but inferior to the first; at the bottom of the scale came the slaves, who, whether captured in war, purchased or born in the house, were legally little more than chattels of their masters". These class distinctions stood practically stereotyped in South India till about a thousand years ago—when according to Kapilar the fourfold North Indian Aryan classification was adopted by the Dravida Brahmin priests of South India during the time of the Hindu revivalism in the South after the disappearance of the Jain and the Buddhist—both of which recognised no caste. "The Nairs" writes Mr. K. M. Panikkar in 'Malabar and the Portuguese' "were more a community than a caste. We have even now evidence of a former priestly class among them whose authority and importance diminished as a result of the superior position of the Brahmins. But apart from priestly functions, the Nair community consisted of three main divisions: the

Samantas or the ruling castes, to which the leading royal families such as that of the Rajhas of Calicut, Vadakankur, Mangat and the vast majority of minor chiefs belonged; the large classes which consisted of the militia of Malabar and the lower classes such as barbers, washermen, potters and weavers".

The Aryan therefore had nothing to do with the caste-system except modifying the old Dravidian class distinctions in the North and not even that in South India.

CHAPTER X. HINDUISM.

Dravidian or Aryan ?.

"Modern Hinduism" writes Dr. Giles in 1922 in the Cambridge History of Ancient India "is the lineal descendant, however much modified in the course of ages, of the ancient Aryan worship which we know first in the Rig-Veda".

A more unfortunate statement was never proclaimed anywhere—albiet unwillingly. And this has led to a good deal of misunderstanding of the Dravidian culture and especially religion by European scholars. And it may be observed in passing that the Dravidians themselves have, to a great extent, been responsible for this state of affairs, as is only too patent.

“There is enough in the fragments we have recovered (at Harappa and Mohenjodaro)” writes Sir John Marshall (*Mohenjodaro and the Indus Civilization Vol. I*) “to demonstrate that, so far as it was capable of expression in outward concrete forms, this religion of the Indus people was the *lineal progenitor* of Hinduism”. (Italics is mine).

“But these fragments give us a glimpse only of the popular, devotional and superstitious side of this religion. Of its other and more rational side; of esoteric ideas and philosophic concepts that may have been as fundamental to it as to later Hinduism—they have nothing to tell us. That is the misfortune of our possessing no documentary material that can be deciphered. Yet that there must have been such another side to this religion can hardly be doubted, unless we are to believe that a people capable of evolving this highly complex and advanced civilization were yet incapable of progressing beyond the primitive animistic beliefs with which the pre-Aryans have hitherto been credited; or that while they were superior to the Vedic Aryans in all that concerned material culture, they were yet hopelessly behind them in the ordinary processes of abstract thought. But there is another point of view from which to look at this problem. Many of the basic features of Hinduism are not traceable to an Indo-Aryan source at all. They come into view not in the earliest Vedic

literature which represents more or less the pure Indo-Aryan tradition but either in the later Vedas or in the still later Brahmanas, Upanishads and Epics, when the Vedic Aryans had long since amalgamated with the older races and absorbed some measure of their culture and teachings. Chief among such features are the cults of Siva and the Mother Goddess, of Krishna and of the Nagas and Yaksas, the worship of animals and trees and stones, phallism, *Yoga*, *Saktism* and the doctrines of *Samsara* (metempsychosis) and *bakti* (devotion to a personal god)''

“Whence these various elements were derived and when they found their way into the fabric of national religion has not been satisfactorily explained. Krishnaism is admittedly of a late date and does not come into the the question”.

“For the rest, the orthodox view has been that they represent a popular form of religion *evolved* by the Indo-Aryans themselves—a parallel growth, as it were, to the Vedic religion but which, being of the masses not of the elect, found no place in the sacred books of the Vedas. (cf. Barth). A few of these features, it has been conceded, may have been taken over from the pre-Aryans, but only such primitive ones as the worship of trees and animals and stones which are common to the majority of uncivilized races. Those who

have championed this view (and they include the chief writers on this subject) knew nothing, of course, of the great pre-Aryan civilization that has now been revealed. They pictured the pre-Aryans as little more than untutored savages, whom it would have been grotesque to credit with any reasoned scheme of religion or philosophy." (cf: Monier Wililams and Hopkins).

"Now that our knowledge of them has been revolutionised and we are constrained to recognise them as no less highly civilized, in some respects, indeed, more highly civilized than the contemporary Sumerians or Egyptians, it behoves us to redraw the picture afresh and revise existing misconceptions regarding their religion as well as their material culture".....

"In view of these facts is it not reasonable to presume that the people who contributed so much to the cultural and material side of Hinduism, contributed also some of the essential metaphysical and theological ideas so intimately associated with it? In the absence of decipherable documents, we can, of course, but argue on the probablities of the case, but surely this presumption is more natural than to postulate among the Indo-Aryans a body of religious beliefs and doctrines of which their own voluminous literature knows nothing and which are largely alien to Vedic thought'".

The policy of the Orientalist has been "Never say, die!"

But even Sir John Marshall, who is evidently not well up in Dravidian scholarship, is halting and hesitating before he condemns in full measure this Indo-Aryan canard.

"Persistent attempts have been made" writes Dr. Gilbert Slater "to relate Hindu religion, as it is, to the deities hymned in the Vedas, but without success. Not only is it impossible to identify Indra with Vishnu or Siva, impossible to find Kali in the Vedas or the Maruts in modern Hinduism, but Vedic hymns and Hindu religion are expressions of two very different attitudes of mind".

"Contact with the highly civilized Dravidians" writes Sir. S. Radhakrishnan in 'The Hindu View of Life' *"led to the transformation of Vedism into a theistic religion"*. That is the barest truth.

"Image worship" continued the same writer "which was a striking feature of the Dravidian faith was accepted by the Aryans. To take an example from early Sanskrit literature, it is clear that Kali in her various shapes is a Non-Aryan goddess".

What was the contribution made by the pre-Aryans of India towards Hindu religion and philosophy and where can you

discover it? Sir John Marshall, as pointed out before, has come to the conclusion, on a *priori* grounds, that they must have contributed a great deal indeed towards modern Hindu religious development.

Max Muller who was very much interested in planting the "Indo-Aryan" myth, himself confessed in his last great work "Six systems of Hindu Philosophy".

"The longer I have studied various systems, the more have I become impressed with the view taken by Vignana Bikshu and others that there is behind the variety of the Six systems a common fund of what may be called a National or Popular Philosophy, a large Manasa lake of philosophical thought and language, far away in the distant north and distant past, from which each thinker was allowed to draw for his own purposes".

"And it would have certainly surprised him if one had told him" rejoined the late Mr. J. M. Nallaswamy Pillai (the great authority on Saiva Siddhanta who, of course, having died about twenty five years ago could have known nothing of the discoveries concerning Dravidian Culture), "that one need go neither to the distant north nor to the distant past to discover what this National or Popular Philosophy was, from which each thinker drew his own inspiration and a study of the two popular Hindu Religions of Modern India-we mean

Saivism and Vaishnavism will convince any one that they inherit today all the thought and traditions of by-gone ages".

"The Saiva Sidhanta" wrote the late Dr. G. U. Pope, one of the greatest Tamil scholars "is the most elaborate influential, and undoubtedly the most intrinsically valuable of all religions of India It is the choicest product of the Dravidian intellect'.

"Those who have studied the system" wrote Rev F. Goodwill "unanimously-agree that this eulogy is not a whit too enthusiastic or free-worded". What is Sankaracharya's place in this Dravidian system of religion and philosophy?*

That he was "apparently of half-Dravidian blood" was asserted by Dr. Rhys Davids and that is the tradition concerning him as also most of the ancient Rishis.

"If we raise the question as to how the finite arises from out of the bosom of the infinite" writes Sir *Radhakrishna* in his 'Hindu View of Life' "Sankara says that it was an incomprehensible mystery, *maya*..... Sankara believes that it is not possible to determine logically between God and the world. He asks us to hold fast both ends. It does not matter if we are not able to find out where they meet".

* Refer to the author's Right of Temple-Entry for more details.

"The history of philosophy in India" continues the learned knight "as well as Europe has been one long illustration of the inability of the human mind to solve the mystery of the relation of God to the world. The greatest thinkers are those who admit the mystery and comfort themselves by the idea that the human mind is not omniscient. Sankara in the East and Bradley in the West adopt this wise attitude of agnosticism".

But Sankara's agnosticism is not Siva Siddhanta which represents Dravidian philosophy and religion.

"Sir W. W. Hunter seriously contends that Sankara was the great Apostle of Saivism. But" observes the late Mr. J. M. Nallaswamy Pillai "these writers do not see that the History of Hindu Religion is as ancient as the History of Hindu Philosophy and that the people must have had a popular religion even in the very days these Upanishats were composed and that the Puranas which embodied the essence of the Upanishat teaching existed in a popular form even in those ancient days". Thus echoing the views of Sir John Marshall regarding the reasonable presumption to be raised as regards the existence of a Dravidian philosophy or Saiva Siddhanta for thousands of years before the so-called Aryan invasion.

As regards the source from which Sankara derived his agnosticism Mr. Nallaswamy Pillai writes:—

“There was one other view which was gaining ground ever since the days of Gautama the Buddha and which was connected with the peculiar theory of *Maya* or illusion. Buddha declared that all existence was momentary, that there was no world, no mind, no soul and no God, and that what really existed were the Skandhas and when this truth was perceived all desire and birth and suffering would cease and then there would be cessation of all existence, Nirvana. And the Buddhists were accordingly called *Mayavadis*. But as the Buddhist theory destroyed the very core of the Indian national beliefs, and as it also afforded no stable ground for a national existence based on morality and religion, this was pronounced heterodox but the seeds sown by him were not in vain and a Hindu school Mayavada slowly raised its head on the dying embers of this old effete philosophy. And its greatest exponent was Sankara. This Hindu school of Mayavada was in existence for several centuries before Sankara Sankara’s system is referred to as Mayavada in all the other Hindu prominent schools prevalent since the days of Sankara and though South Indian followers of Sankara seem to entertain some prejudice against the word, owing to the abuse made of it by their opponents, followers of Sankara in the North even today call it the *Mayavada*. And in some of its *extreme forms* it was also called “Prachhanna Bauddham”. The great

learning and the towering intellect, accompanied by the austere life led by Sankara, created a great following among the Prahmins of the Saiva faith and it made great strides in the time of his illustrious follower Sayana or Vidya-ranya who combined in himself both temporal and spiritual power. And the first interpreters of Hinduism happening to be mostly Brahmins of this persuasion, during the century when Sanskrit oriental scholarship came into being, this view of Hindu philosophy has gained most currency among European scholars'. (*Studies in Saiva Siddhanta*)

To use layman's language, Smarthaism is only an offshoot of Buddhism, philosophically and scientifically considered; but that has nothing to do with Saivism, ancient or modern, or Hinduism.

"No theory has ever asserted" comments Sir Radhakrishnan in trying to explain Sankara's *maya* philosophy and agnosticism "that life is a dream and all experienced events are illusions. One or two later followers of Sankara lend countenance to this hypothesis, but it cannot be regarded as representing the main tendency of Hindu thought."

Brahminism in South India has nothing to do with Dravidian Religion or Philosophy:

"In Ancient India" again observes Sir Radhakrishnan, "the highest kind of work, that of preserving the treasures of spiritual

knowledge was the least paid. The Brahmin had no political or material worth”.

“What is the difference between a Smartha and a Vaishnavite?”. “The difference” replied the sage thoughtfully “is that if the Collector’s Seristhadar (that is Confidential Secretary) is a Smartha, a Vaishnavite cannot get promotion in the office”. (‘A Book of South India’ by J C. Molony)

“The follower of the Brahmanical system” wrote Rev. R. Caldwell in 1849 “professes to believe in 330 millions of gods, but in the majority of cases does not care a pin about any of them. He is punctiliously attentive to his religion as a system of observances, as a *religio* in the primitive meaning of the term. He never forgets his ablutions, his holy ashes or any of the thousand and one ceremonies which sanctify his domestic life; but ordinarily he has not the smallest iota of belief in the divinities he so elaborately worships. He is forward to tell you that he is not so dull-witted as to believe that any of them exist; and if he have picked up a little religious philosophy, he will aver that nothing really exists. Brahma, Vishnu and Siva are a delusion; virtue and vice are a delusion; all is a delusion. (The Tinnevely Shanars by Rev. R. Caldwell B. A: 1849).

Rev. W. F. Goudie wrote in the Christian College Magazine:- (nearly thirty years ago)

“There is no school of thought and no system of faith or worship that comes to us with anything like the claims of the Saiva Siddhanta”.

“This system possesses the merits of *a great antiquity*. In the Religious world, the Saiva system is heir to all that is most ancient in South India, it is the religion of the Tamil people by the side of which every other form is of comparatively foreign origin”.

“In the largeness of its following, as well as in regard to the antiquity of some of its elements, the Saiva Siddhanta is, beyond any other form, the religion of the Tamil people”....

“We have, however, left the greatest distinction of this system till the last. As a system of religious thought, as an expression of faith and life, the Saiva Siddhanta is by far the *best* that South India possesses. *Indeed it would not be rash to include the whole of India* and to maintain that, judged by its intrinsic merits, the Saiva Siddhanta represents the high water mark of Indian Thought and Indian Life”.....

I hope enough has been said to show that modern Hinduism is purely Dravidian; it could not, by any stretch of the imagination be Aryan at all.

What happened in the dim past is extremely simple. In his efforts to teach Aryo-Kshatryas, the Dravidian priest who later becomes the Brahmin, had himself to learn

the language of the other man and impart his own culture. "That the more brawny but thicker-witted Aryan" writes Dr. Gilbert Slater "should learn the extraordinarily difficult language of the" "ill-speaking man" as the Vedas term the Dravidian, was not to be supposed. The Dravidian instead had to learn Sanskrit'. That started the trouble—almost every trouble in India.

CHAPTER. XI.

Sanskrit and Tamil.

At the present moment, neither Sanskrit nor Dravidian (of which the best representative may be taken to be Tamil), is purely Aryan nor purely Dravidian.

But it has been established that the Dravidian is the earlier of the two in India.*

"Of the language of these texts" (at Harappa and Mohenjo-daro) writes Sir John Marshall "little more can be said at present than that there is no reason for connecting it in any way with Sanskrit. The Indus civilization was pre-Aryan and the Indus language or languages must have been pre-

* This apart from theory of Rev. S. Gnanapragasar of Ceylon that both the Indo-Aryan as well as Dravidian languages are the offshoot of one and the same language: Vide. Studies in Tamil Etymology.)

Aryan also. Probably, one or other of them (if, as seems likely there was more than one) was Dravidic".... "The days of its (Mohenjo-daro) glory had doubtless passed; but even so, there is no justification for supposing that so all-important an art as that of writing would have ceased to be practised". "All the present available evidence tends to show" observed Dr. Rhys Davids long ago "that the Indian alphabet is not Aryan at all; that it was introduced into India by Dravidian merchants" (Buddhist India).

Therefore there is every reason to suppose that both writing and language had been in existence before the Aryans (if any) entered North India and must have been Dravidian. As regards the South, of course, there can be no manner of doubt about it even though a Sanskritic origin was assumed here also. "It was supposed by the Sanskrit Pundits (by whom everything with which they were acquainted was referred to a Brahminical origin) and too hastily taken for granted by the earlier European scholars, that the Dravidian languages, though differing in many particulars from the North Indian idioms, were equally with them derived from the Sanskrit" (Caldwell : Comparative Grammar of the Dravidian languages).

"The language (Sanskrit) is of the highest interest" writes Dr. Keith in the Cambridge Ancient History and long before the discoveries at Harappa and Mohenjo-daro

were made known, "as it reveals to us an Indo-European speech with a singular clarity of structure and wealth of inflection, even if we admit that the first discoveries of its importance from the point of view of comparative philology exaggerated in some degree these characteristics.... The language of all classes was being affected by the influence of contact with the aboriginal tongues. The existence of slaves, male and specially female, must have tended constantly to affect the Aryan speech and the effect must have been considerable, if, as seems true the whole series of lingual letters of the Vedic speech was the result of aboriginal influence. Many of the vast number of words with no known Aryan cognates must be assigned to the same influence". "Putting all these considerations together, it appears to me probable that instead of the Dravidian languages having borrowed the lingual consonants from Sanskrit, Sanskrit has borrowed them from the Dravidian languages; and it will, I think be shown in the "Glossarial Affinities," that Sanskrit has not disdained to borrow from the Dravidian languages words as well as sounds (Dr. Robert Caldwell : Comparative Grammar of the Dravidian Languages).

"It can be easily maintained" wrote Mr. P. T. Srinivasa Iyengar "that much, that is not found in Latin and Greek but peculiar to Sanskrit alone is due to the

contact of the Aryans with the Dravidians". (Dravidian India by P. T. Srinivasa Iyengar).

"There is refinement of expressiveness" wrote Dr. Caldwell now three-quarter of a century ago "in which Dravidian languages appear to stand alone. Sanskrit is far less highly developed in this particular, *so that if there were any borrowing, the Dravidian family must have been the lender and not the borrower.*"

"When an Aryan tongue" observed Sir George Grierson "comes into contact with an uncivilized aboriginal one, it is invariably the latter which goes to the wall. The Aryan does not attempt to speak it and the necessities of intercourse compel the aborigine to use a broken "pigeon" form of the language of a superior civilization. As generations pass this mixed jargon more and more approximates to its model and in process of time the old aboriginal language is forgotten and dies a natural death". This is the history of linguistics in North India. A similar description was given by Dr. Rhys Davids also:- "The hybrid they thus made use of became increasingly too like Sanskrit to be able to contend against it; and from the end of the fourth century the latter alone was used. Then linguistically speaking death reigned supreme. The living language was completely overshadowed by the artificial substitute. The changeling had taken the place of the rightful heir. The

parasite had overgrown and smothered the living tree from which it drew its sustenance, from which it had derived its birth”.

It may be noticed that in South India for long Sanskrit made very little progress. “It is only in the south of India” added Grierson “where aboriginal languages are associated with a high degree of culture, that they have held their own”.

“The orientalists who supposed the Dravidian languages to be derived from Sanskrit were not aware that some of the Dravidian languages which make use of Sanskrit derivatives, are able to dispense with these derivatives altogether, such derivatives being considered rather as luxuries or articles of finery than as necessities. It is true” observed Dr. Caldwell “it would now be difficult for Telugu to dispense with its Sanskrit; more so for Canarese; and most of all for Malayalam:— these languages having borrowed from Sanskrit so largely and being so habituated to look up to it for help, that it would scarcely be possible for them now to assert their independence. Tamil however, the most highly cultivated *ab intra* of all Dravidian idioms, can dispense with its Sanskrit altogether, if need be, and not only stand alone, but flourish without its aid”. (Comparative Grammar of the Dravidian Languages). One of the greatest scholars of

Tamil has written *almost* all his works and most of them voluminous—without a trace of Sanskrit—Swami Vedachalam.

“It must be a disadvantage” observed Dr. Rhys Davids “to write in any language in which one does not habitually speak and think. And the disadvantage is not lessened when the existing works in that language are charged with an unprogressive (not to say reactionary) spirit in religion and philosophy”.

Now let us trace the history of Tamil literature in South India. And in so doing we must keep one cardinal fact always in mind. This is what Dr. Caldwell said more than seventy five years ago:—

“Tamil can readily dispense with the greater part or the whole of its Sanskrit and by dispensing with it rises to a purer and more refined style”.....

“In the other Dravidian languages, whatever be the nature of the composition or subject-matter treated of, the amount of Sanskrit employed is considerably larger than in Tamil; and the use of it has acquired more of the character of a necessity. This is in consequence of the literature of these languages having chiefly been cultivated by Brahmins. Even in Telugu the principal grammatical writers and the most celebrated poets have been Brahmins. There is only one work of note in that language which

was not composed by a member of the sacred caste; and indeed the Telugu Sudras who constitute *par excellence* the Telugu people, seem almost entirely to have abandoned to the Brahmins the culture of their own language, with every other branch of literature and science. *In Tamil, on the contrary, few Brahmins have written anything worthy of preservation.* The language has been cultivated and developed with immense zeal and success by native Tamilians; and the highest rank in Tamil literature which has been reached by a Brahmin is that of a commentator. The commentary of Parimelazhagar on the Kural of Tiruvalluvar (supposed to have been a Pariar, yet the acknowledged and dified prince of Tamil authors) is the most classical production written in Tamil by a Brahmin" (Comparative Grammar of the Dravidian Languages.)

Two things have to be noticed at this juncture.

The first is that Parimelazhagar himself was no Brahmin. This is how the late Pandit D. Savarirayan—a great Dravidian scholar—puts it.*

"Parimelazhagar is now-a-days considered as a Brahmin, because he was a Sanskrit scholar and a native of Conjiveram as the Thondamandala Chathagam—a work scarcely

*Tamilian Antiquary—the Kural by the Rev. Dr. J. Lazarus. (Footnote.)

of any value for historical purposes— would have it. But according to the traditional account Kadayam was his birthplace and Pungavar-nattam his residence, where he spent the major portion of his life. Both these villages are in the district of Tinnevely; the former situated on the bank of the Tambraparni to the west of Tinnevely and the latter in *Karisal-Kadu* (black cotton-soil) to the north of Tinnevely. A wealthy and munificent landlord of the village of Pungavar-nattam by name Veli-Kanda Nadar was his patron. Parimelazhagar himself was of the same caste as his patron—a Santar and belonged to the *Gurukkal* family of the community. The name itself is suggestive and not usual for a Brahmin of the later day to be assumed..... The members of this family invariably bear the title of ‘Aiya’ or ‘Aiyer’. This is a hereditary title owned from time immemorial, by the community to which the great Parimelazhagar belonged. Perhaps this has led the modern literary world as well as the late lamented Bishop Dr. Caldwell, to shift Parimelazhagar from the Santar community and place him in a Brahmin environment.”

Secondly Dr. Caldwell’s observation will have to be understood with this qualification viz, that no Brahmin author of any eminence came into being after Smarthaism under Sri Sankaracharya had raised its head.

For as I have pointed out elsewhere (The Right of Temple Entry) the followers of

Sri Sankara were mainly drawn from the temple-priests class of those days who were admittedly Dravidian. That class has continued to survive till today without being entirely absorbed by Smarthaism. They are neither acknowledged by Brahmins to be such nor are they prepared to acknowledge themselves to be any other; they are between the devil and the deep sea.

This priestly class was for long the learned community among the Dravidians throughout India; we had indicated how in North India, they had constituted themselves the Brahmins in the Caste System adumbrated there making the straggling mercenary Aryans who had become kings and nobles, the Kshatryas; how the Kshatrya revolt took on the shape of Buddhism; and how Sankara evolved a philosophy out of that Buddhism and fought the Buddhists in North India with their own weapons and how on coming south, he developed his agnosticism and turned to Sivite priests and unified all the Dravidian deities and earned for himself the sobriquet of "Shanmatha sthapana charya" or the founder of six religions represented by six Dravidian deities. There is every good reason to suppose that the traditional account of Parasurama's reclaiming Malabar for the Numbudiri Brahmin and extirpating the Kshatryas is merely a distorted fantasy of Sankaracharya's controversies with Buddhists and the introduction of his monastic

order into Malabar and the suppression of Buddhism which was the ruling religion for long in that country. For neither Parasurama nor his exploits are ever even once mentioned in the early Tamil Sangam literature, some of which were composed by Chera Kings and in the presence of Chera princes.

But in the South, both Buddhism and later and to a larger extent, Jainism was fought by the old Dravidian temple-priests, all Saivites.

In the acutely religious controversies which arose between the third and tenth centuries A. D, when temple-building activities came very much into vogue and when the North Indian, then newly fashioned and now stereotyped caste system was being slowly ushered into South India, these temple priests were forced to publish their Agamas which consisted of Saivite philosophy, including rules concerning rituals, ceremonies, temple worship and temple architecture etc.* Till they were attacked, very late in Dravidian history by Buddhist and Jains the Dravidian Saivites had kept secret their own Saivite philosophy from the public gaze. Sankara was never treated by the Dravidian Saivite philosophers as one of their own class, eventhough he was a *pucka* Dravidian himself and they had taken him into the

*Refer to swami Vedachalam's Life and Times of Saint Manikavasagar—a treasure house of original research.

fold as a Saivite merely for putting down Jainism.

Such of the Dravidian temple priests who had become Smarthas and who were practically treated as Buddhists or Mayavadis by the rest, translated into Sanskrit most of the Tamil religious works which had *then* seen the light of day—more as religious tracts or pamphlets with a view to put down Jainism and Buddhism.

But it was always a difficult thing for the purely Dravidian temple priest to learn Sanskrit but he had to do it and did it. In the conflict between the Smartha Brahmin and the (old Dravidian) temple-priest Brahmin, the question usually omitted was which religious work was in what language originally: Tamil or Sanskrit. And fabrications and forgeries and misinterpretations became the order of the day at the hands of Smartha Commentators. (Vide Swami Veda-chalm's great work on "Manikavachagar and his Life and Times")

Nobody cared a brass farthing about these controversies during Mussalman rule in India. It was with the advent of the Orientalist, with his Indo-Aryanism and Sanskritism, that the writings of the Smartha Brahmins of South India, mostly commentaries on old Tamil works, received notice. But the fact is there all the same Viz, that no original works in Tamil came

to be produced by the Tamil Brahmin as he now proclaims himself to be which is true enough in all conscience.

Therefore, even to-day, what Dravidian language, religion and philosophy were like during pre-Aryan India can be known, understood or recognised by no one who is not deeply conversant with early Tamil literature. Sanskrit in the nature of things may be helpful in confusing, both historically and philosophically, but not in improving one's idea of Dravidian culture.

To the student of Dravidian history Sankara and his Saivism are of absolutely no use. Saivism was in existence and was the religion of the Dravidians thousands of years before the Aryan was heard of; before Sanskrit was evolved and before the Brahmin had his birth, at any rate in South India. And it is in Tamil literature that was in existence before any of these influenced it that we can, at present, trace with the help of Mohenjo-daro and Harappa and other pre-Aryan discoveries the history of the Dravidians: their civilization or their religion. For in those days, Dravidian civilization was Saivism and Saivism betokened their civilization.

“What is known as religion” writes Professor Elliot Smith “is merely the chrysalisation of those ideas and practices of civilization which cannot be justified by reason but are adopted as traditional acts of

faith. In ancient times there was no such segregation of the rational from the un-rational, the secular from the religious: civilization was a unified system which took no cognisance of religion as such. What the modern writer calls Primitive Religion is really Primitive Civilization. The diffusion of religion is the spread of civilization." (Diffusion of Culture)

CHAPTER. XII.

Dravidian Law & Custom.

I have indicated elsewhere (Right of Temple entry) how the ignorant Englishman misled by the Orientalist played into the hands of the Brahmin in so far as Temple Administration in South India is concerned.

This is very much truer when we come to the question of Dravidian laws and customs. It is here that Sanskrit played the very duece.

The first thing to be noticed is that the Law which is administered to the Dravidians of South India had absolutely nothing to do with them at any time. A few passages taken from the writings of Mr. J. H. Nelson the famous author of the "Madura Manual" and a distinguished Member of the Indian Civil

Service, will reveal the true situation as regards this point.

“Vulgar errors are terribly long lived” wrote Mr Nelson in 1877, “and probably the great majority of Englishmen still firmly believe that any native they may happen to meet, if not a Mohomedan or a Parsee, must needs be a “Hindu;” that existing “Hindus” are duly ranged in four classes namely- (1) Brahmins (2) Kshatrias (3) Vaisyas and (4) Sudras; that Pariahs are outcastes and outcastes are Pariahs; that Brahmins generally are by profession and necessity priests to the Sudras; and other like absurdities too numerous to mention ”

“Has such a thing as “Hindu Law” at any time existed in the world”? asked Mr. Nelson in 1877 and even earlier. “Or is it that “Hindu Law” is a mere phantom of the brain, imagined by Sanskritists without law and lawyers without Sanskrit. For myself, I have always been unable to bring myself to believe that the innumerable non-Muhammadan tribes and castes of India have at any time agreed to accept or have been compelled to guide themselves by an aggregate of positive laws or rules set to them by a sovereign or other person having power over them ” (Hindu Law as Administered by the Judicature at Madras- J. H. Nelson. 1877).

“Suppose for example that a man named Manu once lived and set laws to men, what

little we know of the history of India shows clearly that he must have set laws not to the inhabitants of India generally nor even to the inhabitants of the limited area over which the horde to which he belonged held a more or less effective sway, generally; but to a small number of Brahmin and other *Arya* families and perhaps in a few instances to certain *Sudras* who submitted themselves to and associated themselves with *Arya* invaders of the Punjab. And Professor Max Muller tells us that 'The *Manavadharma Sastra*, the law book of the *Manavas*, a sub division of the sect of the *Taittiriya*s or, as it is commonly called the *Laws of Manu*' cannot be used as an independent authority., (Ibid).

"Assuming, however, for argument's sake that a man named *Manu* once existed and set laws to men—the probable date of these laws is as yet wholly unknown—he set them only to certain masses of men abiding in a part of the Punjab, namely to certain *Arya* tribes or families and in some instances also to certain tribes and families styled *Sudras*. Now: whether a remnant of any one of those tribes or families still exists in any part of India of course is doubtful. And whether a remnant of any one of them existed at any time within the limits of the Madras Province, except perhaps on the Western Coast, is still more doubtful. But that a remnant of any one of them exists at the present day within those limits, except perhaps on the Western

Coast, may I imagine with tolerable confidence be denied. For nowadays it is generally admitted, that the Kshatriyas of this part of India have utterly perished. And no one, save perhaps a few perishing Chetties and Oilmongers, believes now that representatives of the *Vaisya* class survive in the South of India. And there is absolutely no proof that any one of the existing tribes and castes that constitute the great bulk of the Non-Aryan population of the Madras Province was at any time made or styled "Sudra" by Arya conquerors. Indeed if I am not mistaken, there is no proof, not even a tradition, that an Aryan settlement was at any time effected in the southern part of the Indian Peninsula, whilst on the contrary there is excellent reason to suppose that the bastard Hinduism of the Madras Province, such as it is, was introduced into it very slowly and laboriously by small parties of the Brahmins and others from the north. The only real doubt, therefore, is about our Brahmins. Are the one million and odd Brahmins of the Madras Province, many of whom are as dark-skinned and puny as Pariahs, Brahmins pure and undefiled, true descendants of the white-faced warriors who first over-ran and in a sense civilized the North of India? I for one cannot believe that they are such". (Ibid)

"A very brief survey of the so-called "Hindu law" cases reported in the Madras High Court Reports" observed Mr. Nelson "will

suffice to satisfy the mind of an inquirer that:-

1. By "Hindu Law" is meant Sanskrit law.

2. Of the Chief Justices and Judges of the Madras High Court none has even partially understood the Sanskrit tongue.

3. Ordinarily the basis of decision in a case of prime importance has been more or less an unsatisfactory and unintelligible translation of a text of doubtful authenticity and authority.

4. Translations of texts are interpreted and dealt with in a thoroughly unsympathetic spirit, by men who appear to know nothing of and care nothing for, the Hindu religion.

In effect: what is now administered as "Hindu Law" to the various tribes and castes constituting the population of the Madras Province, most if not all of whom are not 'Hindu,' is an aggregate of discrepant and inconsistent guesses, made by unsympathetic persons wholly ignorant of Sanskrit, at the meaning of generally imperfect and sometimes questionable translations of mutilated Sanskrit texts, themselves of doubtful authenticity, taken at random from purely speculative and religious treatises on what ought to be the rules of conduct for an ideal *Arya* community."

"The fact is and I am confident that few Madras Judges of experience will venture to gainsay it" continues Mr. Nelson, "the

present system of administering "Hindu Law" to the so-called "Hindus" of the Madras Province works very ill indeed. Natives of all classes are dissatisfied with it. Substantial justice is *not* done. But on the contrary the decrees passed by our Courts of Justice in suits involving questions of the "Hindu Law" are for the most part grossly unjust. And the result is that houses are divided against themselves, respectable families are brought to beggary, doubt and uncertainty prevail everywhere, and the value of property is rapidly falling." (Ibid)

"During the palmiest days of the *Nayakkan* rulers of Tanjore and Madura, law, lawyers and law-courts were wholly unknown in the South of India and when obstinate disputes raged between subjects, they invariably were settled, if at all, not by decrees of Courts, but by the partial, high-handed interference of some powerful man, either the headman of a village or the governor of a district or a noble attached to the court, or occasionally the king himself." (Ibid)

To the same effect writes an Indian author of authority.

"There were no courts of justice, the settlement of disputes being left entirely to the villagers themselves and the heads of castes and clans. Even in the province of Tanjore, where owing to its comparative prosperity, it might be supposed that the necessity for

regular courts of justice would have been felt, a Court was established by the Rajha of Tanjore only about the close of the last century at the suggestion of Rev. Schwartz. Colonel Reade states:— “When the district of Salem was ceded to the Company the Chetties of certain castes, exercising judicial authority over their clients, were in the practice of levying taxes on the *pullers*, a caste of husbandmen, on the five castes of artisans Viz, gold-smiths, black-smiths, carpenters, braziers and stone-cutters and on washermen, barbers, pariahs, chucklers and others. The Chetties likewise extracted fines for murder, theft, adultery, breach of marriage contract, also for killing brahmin kites, monkeys, snakes etc. The Government in consideration of these privileges had imposed a tax on the Chetties, but conceiving that I and my assistants might administer justice with greater impartiality than the Chetties, their juducial powers were annulled and with them the tax on the castes.”

(Memorandum on the Progress of the Madras Presidency during the last forty years of Administration by Dewan Bahadur S. Srinivasa Raghava Aiyangar, Inspector-General of Registration of Madras 1893.)

“I should not be in the least surprised to learn” observed Mr. Nelson “that with the exception of a few pleaders and others acquainted with the ways of the High Court, not a soul in the Madras Province had ever

referred to or heard of Mitakshara as a treatise on law.... It cannot be doubted for a moment by thoughtful men that what is supposed to be known at the present day about the inner life and social observances of the natives of India is for the most part pure assumption and that in the hurry of business the judges and rulers of the land still continue to accept as solemn truths many of the wild fictions and baseless propositions of the earliest blunderers in the field of Indian lore. Amongst other things it is traditionally believed that every so-called "Hindu" to be found in the Madras Province, whether Brahmin or non-caste, habitually settles disputes about property more or less in accordance with the rules and precepts of the Mitakshara..... But really the conduct of an ordinary Chetti or Maravan or Reddi of the Madras Province, unless indeed he happens to come into our courts as a litigant, is no more affected by precepts contained in the Mitakshara than it is by precepts contained in the Psalms of David..... The eagerness with which the Madras High Court has sought to extend the application of the very strictest Sanskrit ideas of law to almost every class of persons in the country except Mahomedans and Europeans, is simply marvellous." (Ibid)

"It appears clearly that the Madras High Court is firmly persuaded that the great bulk of the so-called "Hindu" popula-

tion of the Madras Province live or at all events ought to live, strictly in accordance with the spirit of the "Hindu Law." Also it appears clearly that where one of the innumerable ancient customs of the aboriginal people that are opposed to the spirit of that law is brought forward, relied on and proved by a party to a suit, the chances are infinitively in favour of such custom being declared first not to exist, and secondly to be unworthy of judicial recognition because opposed to some rule found or supposed to have been found, in a speculative treatise on Sanskrit law." (Ibid)

"As Ellis observes, the law of the Smritis, unless under various modifications, has never been the law of the Tamil and cognate nations."

"The Government of Madras has on several occasions declared that the laws and customs of the (so-called) Hindus in respect of succession etc., shall be upheld by the judges of the land: but, if my view of the case is even approximately correct, so far from upholding those laws and customs the High Court of judicature at Madras has actually done its very best to stamp them out and substitute for them laws of its own invention".....

"If then," concludes Mr. Nelson "the Hindu Law ought not to be administered in any shape to the great bulk of the mixed population of the Madras Province, the

question arises, what is to be administered instead of Hindu Law? And the answer at once presents itself: the Madras Government has repeatedly promised and is strictly obliged, to preserve unbroken the customs and usages of the various tribes and castes subject to its rule. Adequate efforts must be made to ascertain what are the customs and usages of the same: and once ascertained, the High Court must be compelled by law to "judicially recognise" them. To force upon the Goldsmiths, the Maravars and scores of other castes the cold obstruction of the Brahminic law, seems to me to be as unjust and immoral as it would be to oblige the entire population of the Madras Province to follow the English law of real property."

Much water has flowed beneath the bridge since the above was written. Of course, it need not be pointed out that nothing has happened. It is the same old Brahminical law; the same old Sanskrit. To a modern lawyer therefore, Brahmin, or Non-Brahmin it will be as easy to discover Dravidian law and custom in this confusion of cultures as for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle. But it can be done by patient and painstaking though thankless scholarship and it has got to be done for the sake of history and truth. Here again, Sanskrit is absolutely useless; Tamil and Tamil only will help.

CHAPTER XIII.

Dravidian Morals and Manners.

The first great thing to be remembered all along is that polyandry was well-established among the Dravidians and traces of its existence can be discerned even to day.

The Dravidian type of polyandry was unlike the Tibetan: it was restricted to members of the same family: like Draupadi's case among the Pandavas.

The society during Ravana's time was a matriarchate and of course, polyandry was all along the case.

Women were free to choose their husbands; this Dravidian custom must have been adopted by the Aryans who entered India and among whom there was a shortage of women. According to ancient Greek writers the practice of Sati was introduced by the Aryan who suspected his Dravidian wife of poisoning him and therefore made it a practice of insisting before hand of immolating herself. (The Cambridge History of Ancient India). Swayamvara was an institution prevalent in North India only among Kshatryas, who only, if at all must have been Aryans; the Brahmins being pure unalloyed Dravidians.

Chastity, especially among women, is always governed by the Social conventions of the time. The fact that polyandry prevailed till quite recent times in Malabar—where, according to Dr. Slater, one may find a larger number of relics of Dravidian Culture than elsewhere has given rise to an impression outside that there is considerable laxity in sexual morals in Malabar. That is a profound mistake and at this stage it may be mentioned that the women of Malabar are not more immoral than the women of any other place. But that would require separate treatment. When caste was elaborated, the Brahmin shortage of women was made up by the dictum in the Vedas, that even if a woman have ten husbands, if a Brahmin were to take her, she becomes his wife and the ten others will have to lose her consortium (Atharvaveda); and if after thus being taken as a consort by a Brahmin, she were to be taken away by any other, then, of course, untold misery will follow and it becomes one of the deadly sins. (Swami Vedachallam's Life of Manikavachagar).

The significance of this state of affairs becomes apparent from a study of the Ramayana.

“From the Ramayana we learn that the Rakshasas were a highly civilized people. The position assigned to women in the Aryan community” wrote the late Pandit D. Savariyan (Tamilian Antiquary: Rakshasas— A Note Page 34) “was comparatively inferior;

among the Rakshasas women held an honourable position. The ancient Dravidian lady was the mistrees of the house and the heiress and owner of all property and she held the right to select her husband at her own choice, known as *Swayamvaram*. But among the Aryans, the marriage system was from very early times *Kanyadhanam* "giving of the daughter" and heirship was patriarchal. From the uttarakanda we learn that Ravana took possession of Lanka by maternal right, for heirship among ancient Dravidians was matriarchal and not as with Aryans patriarchal, a clear proof of their different nationality." Similarly another learned writer observes:— "Ravana gets his kingdom not from his father who was a Brahmin sage; but he inherits his kingdom through his mother's ancestors"..... (P. V. Nanu Pillai B. A.: The Ramayana, an historical study in the Tamilian Antiquary).

Surpanaka's episode in the Ramayana illustrates another conflict of views then prevalent as between the Aryanised Dravidian of the North and the pure Dravidian of the South. Surpanaka was a widowed Princess and the sister of Ravana. She cast an eye upon Rama — the north Indian Aryanised traveller. The social conventions then prevalent among Dravidians permitted her to do it: i.e. both widow-remarriage and selecting a husband for oneself. And she quite naturally might have made another mistake,

drawn from her own Dravidian social customs: Viz, that Sita was shared by both Rama and Lekshmana as admittedly Draupadi was shared by the Pandava brothers. Admittedly, polygomy was in existence then in North India, as Rama's father Dasaratha had four wives. We do not know even now, and so Surpanaka could not have known then, that the North Indian was going to develop polyandry only later, as the Mahabharata had been written long after Ramayana or portrayed subsequent social events.

But the conduct of Rama towards Sita after her rescue from Ravana indicates more or less the line which was drawn for woman's chastity according to male standards and which line has now become stereotyped for South India as well. Sita is the Brahmin ideal of a woman's chastity as Rama is a man's today.

The Aryanised Brahmin has been progressing very rapidly. In the same Ramayana is related the story of how Indra (once *the* God of the Aryans) was mis-behaving with Sage Gautama's wife Ahalya and the punishment meted out to him by the Rishi. Now, it is all the other way about. Even though, the Aryan could walk away with the wife of ten persons (evidently a Dravidian) once that girl had passed into the keeping of the Aryan, no dog shall look at her thereafter. And she, poor woman, must be, like Caesar's wife, above suspicion.

To quote the words of a Western lady observer on the episode of Rama meeting Sita after her capture by Ravana and release:-

"Rama's first words are concerned with this alone (whether Sita might have retained her purity; her physical chastity, while in the demon's power); no greeting; no reassurance to his suffering wife. "The hardship I have borne (nothing is said of hers)! with my friends, in the war, was borne to vindicate my honour, not suffered for thy sake! The sight of thee is most irksome to me!.... there is nothing left in common between thee and me!"

Rama even goes so far as to suggest to the queen that she had better choose some other husband. (This is very suggestive of the prevalence of polyandry even in North India then.) Sita answers with dignity, "You wish to give me to some other man like a dancing girl? I, born noble and married noble! I am not what you think me to be; put more confidence in me, for I am worthy of it, I swear it by your own virtue!" She then voices a complaint that has echoed and re-echoed in the heart and on the lips of woman throughout the ages down to our own day: "Blindly swayed by anger like a fickle-minded man, thou hast placed above all qualities my one quality that I am a woman"—Just this disproportionate stress on physical chastity only, no real esteem for character or the virtues of mind and heart. In those ancient days and untill our own, no

matter how mean and cramped or even lewd of thought, how ungenerous of heart, how selfish of action— a woman was a “good” woman provided she remained physically chaste.” (*Purdah* by Freeda. H. Das. 1932).

The above writer concludes:— “Brahminism, revived (after Sankarachari’s time) forged for them (women) new social shackles far more binding than any that had been welded before. From this time forward, with only minor checks, inevitably the slow but steady degradation of a woman’s status went on apace throughout the centuries to come to a halt only in our own day.” (*Purdah* by Freeda H. Das. 1932).

To come to other aspects of Dravidian and Aryan character, there is the testimony of Dr. G. U. Pope, to begin with. In his commentaries to the *Naladyar*, he says:— “The great antiquity of Tamil, which is the one worthy rival of Sanskrit, is absolutely plain.”

“There is no mention of God in the *Naladi* (save in the quite modern invocation) and no trace of religion.”

“Yet prevading these verses there seem to me a strong sense of moral obligation, an earnest aspiration of righteousness, a fervent and unselfish charity and generally a loftiness of aim that are very impressive. I have felt sometimes as if there must be a blessing in store for a people that delight so

utterly in compositions thus remarkably expressive of a hunger and thirst after righteousness. *They are the foremost among the peoples of India* and the Kural and the Naladi have helped to make them so." (The Naladyar by Dr. G. U. Pope, 1893.)

We shall next refer to the acute observations of Dr. Slater about Tamil and the Tamilians in his excellent book, *The Dravidian Element in Indian Culture*. "Tamil language as it is known to us is the product of a very long period of a somewhat elaborate civilization."

"The Tamil language is extraordinary in its subtility and sense of logic. Of all the Dravidian languages Tamil is the one best fitted to be the instrument of exact thought."

"Indian culture, with its special characteristic of systematic and subtle philosophical thought, must have come from people capable of originating and developing it. That capacity would naturally be exhibited also in the evolution of languages and the purest Dravidian language does exhibit it in the highest degree— more than any other Indian language."

What Aryan culture is like and how entirely immoral and irreligious and so diametrically opposed to Dravidian genius I have already indicated in another place. (Right of Temple-Entry by the Author.)

CHAPTER XIV.

Conclusion.

Two things brought me up to write such a book; but even as it is, it has exceeded the limits I had set for myself for this venture.

The recent discoveries concerning pre-historic civilizations like the Badarian, the Sumerian and the Indus Civilizations, which have set the whole world talking, have at the same time brought to light the very significant and very close connection which subsists or ought to have subsisted between these civilizations and the Dravidian civilization of South India. These civilizations, whose existence and grandeur were undreamt of till now, has knocked the bottom clean out of the Aryan, the Sanskritist and the Orientalist—and the Brahmin intellectual of Madras and his pretensions. The latter, who was in reality a Dravidian but himself pretended, and was assumed by others to be an Eurasian (in the Aryan sense) developed to be, and ultimately was ranked as, the latter (in the Indian sense). The Eurasian of India is usually styled in derision as “Four Annas in the Rupee.” The Madras Brahmin of today has not a pie of Aryan blood in him. As regards the Englishman and the Brahmin, both now recognise it to have been a case of

mutual mistake, ethnically and linguistically. We are now going through the acute phases of an hybrid culture in South India.

Both as a student of history nearly thirty years ago and later as one having had to teach it for some time to others, I had no idea of who the Dravidians were or that they had any civilization worth mentioning about. The same ignorance prevails even today in schools, colleges and universities with the teacher as well as the taught. And I am afraid that with the Brahminisation at its peak point in all these institutions this state of affairs will continue for some time more— I don't know for how long.

But a good many Tamil Scholars, dead and alive, have been engaged in this work of bringing out Dravidian culture into prominence, notably Swami Vedachalam; but very scant recognition was meted out to them even by the "intellectuals" among the Dravidians. But for western observers, like Pope and Caldwell, it is doubtful whether the truth about the Dravidian genius would ever have been disclosed to the public. Even Sir John Marshall is halting at times when he speaks about Dravidian culture, for the simple reason that he is not well-grounded in it and therefore could not differentiate between Aryan and Dravidian cultures as matters stand at present. This book is intended to serve, if at all, only as an intro-

duction to mark out the differences which exist between the two cultures.

Secondly, the apathy of the Dravidian himself towards his language and culture is something colossal, especially in the face of the entirely unfounded pretensions of the Brahmin with his Sanskrit and his Aryanism and his intellectual superiority. Dr. Gilbert Slater's masterly study of the subject and final exhortation set me on the path of compiling this book. "Dravida is at once the part of India where the most ancient culture still survives and the part which is closest in touch with the twentieth century"

"When India has thrown off the physical handicap of anaemia and the mental handicap of a too one-sided method of thinking, those factors which made India a land of high civilization while Europe was in the stage of barbarism will no doubt again produce their appropriate effects. The land where a student needs little food, only a shred of clothing and no artificially warmed rooms, a land peculiarly of subtle philosophy seems a suitable home for a peculiarly democratic culture marked by cheap and simple living and high thinking. Just in proportion as India gains in self-knowledge and self-assurance we see growing and strengthening an Indian scorn of the too materialistic achievements of Europe and America, of the worship of wealth and of force and of our

failure to attain to peace and harmony either between nations or between individuals and sections of one and the same nation or even in our own souls. Ultimately it may be found that the West has as much to learn from India as to teach. *But in whichever way the flow of intellectual commerce is moving, the English-speaking Dravidians will supply many of the most active intermediaries."*



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