



“Some of the extant works of ancient Tamil literature such as Tholkappiam, Paripadal, Purananooru and others date from 3500 B.C. to the first century A.D. and bear witness to the high level of civilization which the Tamils reached in Pre-Aryan times. Certainly, there could have been at that remote period none but one Dravidian language spoken not only all over India but even beyond its frontiers, and that language could have been no other than Tamil which still lives among twenty million people in all its literary glory and usefulness. Except Tamil no other Dravidian language possesses such vast, antique, varied, original, valuable literature, the literatures of the other few cultivated Dravidian tongues such as Kanarese, Telugu and Malayalam being not more than seven or eight hundred years old at most and even these consist of works either translated from Sanscrit or written in imitation of some Sanscrit works. It is an admitted fact that, that language alone which possesses grammar and literature that forms the only criterion to estimate the height of civilization to which the people who owned them had attained.

- Maraimalaiyadigal



2, Singaravelar Street,  
Theagarayar Nagar, Chennai-17.  
Tel : 044-2433 9030  
e-mail: elavzhagantm@gamil.com

# Maraimalaiyam

Speeches & Writings of Maraimalaiyadigal

33

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(A commemorative publication of centenary  
celebrations of Pure Tamil Movements)

[1916 - 2016]

- \* Can Hindi be the Lingua Franca of India?
- \* Saiva Siddhanta as a Philosophy of Practical Knowledge
- \* Prefaces of Maraimalai Adigal

Maraimalaiyam



TAMILMANN

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Author

Mummozhi Chemmal

**Marimalaiyadigal**

Editor

**A. Mathivanan**

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No. 2, Singaravelar Street,  
T.Nagar, Chennai - 600 017.  
Ph: 24339030, Cell: 9444410654  
E-mail: elavazhagantm@gmail.com

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## **PREFACE**

Maraimalai Adigal who sowed the seed for the Pure Tamil movement was a multi-faced personality. He was a Professor, Scholar, Researcher, Linguist, Orator, Literary critic, Author, Journalist, Nature cure expert, Leader of movements, Printer, Publisher, Psycho analyst, Reformer, Philosopher and Saint. It is rare to find a scholar in the whole of nineteenth and twentieth centuries who could be equated with him.

As a scholar par excellence in Tamil, English and Sanskrit, he was the inspiring source for Devaneyya Pavanar (1902 - 1981) who spent all his life to establish that Tamil was the primary classical language of the world which could exist independently without the support of any other language.

He worked with a single - minded devotion to establish the supremacy of the Tamil language. He put in his best efforts to propagate to the world that Tamil as a classical language deserved the place which the linguists of the world had offered to other classical languages such as Greek, Latin, Hebrew etc. He left no branch of knowledge untouched, be it, literature or linguistics, human physiology or psychology, philosophy or Ethics. With his mastery over Tamil, English and Sanskrit he could establish success in any field he ventured to tread upon.

As an avid researcher, his findings paved the way for future researchers. The breadth, depth and length of his research could be evidenced from his masterpiece, 'Manicka Vasakar Varalarum Kalamum'. (The History and Times of St. Manicavasakar) It stands a testimony to his methodology and establishing the facts with irrefutable evidences.

To put it in a nutshell, he was a reformer and a reformist movement by himself. He was all against casteism and he condemned it as a perpetual evil perpetrated by the Aryans. He put

forward very strong ideas against casteism in his Tamil work ‘Sadhi Vetrumaiyum Poli Saivarum’ & ‘Seerthirutha Kurippukal’. To a great extent, the views of Maraimalai Adigal formed the basis for the Justice parties and the Dravidian parties to work for the renaissance of Tamil language and the upliftment of Tamil race. He pioneered the movements such as Pure Tamil Movement, Anti-Hindi Agitation, Saivite Samaj, etc. Among them the Pure Tamil movement has had the distinction of having a triumphant history of a century (1916-2016).

He could well be termed a personal medical counsellor to anybody who has studied his Tamil work, ‘Makkal Noorandu Uyir Vazhkai’ (மக்கள் நூறாண்டு உயிர் வாழ்க்கை). As a dutiful mentor, he would give out the tips on wellness and specific methods of treatment for various diseases only after due testing on himself and members of his family like Roentgen, the inventor of X-ray. He made it a norm to preach the principles of life only after he practised them in his own life.

Tamizhmozhi Kavalar Thiru G. Elavazhagan, the founder of Tamilmann Pathippagam has devoted his life for the cause of Tamil. Starting with the publication of complete works of Devaneyya Pavanar marking his centenary celebrations in the year 2002 till the current project of bringing out the entire works of Maraimalai Adigal, embarking on marathan projects has become his way of life. To mention a few, the complete writings of Thiru.Vi.Ka, Na.Ci. Kandaiya, Saminatha Sarma, Avvai Duraisami, Navalar Venkatasami Nattar, Vidhwan Gopalaiyar, Sami Chidhambaranar, Pavendar Bharathidasan have been published by him as classic prints for the benefit of the Tamil community at home and abroad.

A word of apology: In spite of all our strenuous efforts, some essays had to be left incomplete since the old volumes were subjected to the ravages of nature and time. And we are unable to retrieve the volumes of ‘Oriental Mystic Myna’ (bi monthly -1908) Sure, if found at a later date, they will be incorporated in the editions to come.

It is our earnest desire that the treasures of Maraimalai Adigal bequeathed upon the Tamil readers, teachers, scholars and students be utilised in full measure in order to reach the horizons of wisdom.

**A. Mathivanan**  
Editor

**CAN HINDI BE THE  
LINGUA FRANCA  
OF INDIA?**

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## **PUBLISHERS' NOTE**

Lemuria, a continent south of the Kumari river and mountain, submerged in the Indian Ocean, was the original home of man. Tamil was the language spoken by the people there. God Siva, in the form of Sivalinga, representing the tapering tongue of fire or Light was worshipped by the Lemurians. When Lemuria got submerged, the people there escaped to the north, east and west of India and the world. So, Tamil, the Tamils and their religion spread through the length and breadth of the world. Now these facts, testified to by great Historians and archeologists, have to be borne in mind in attempting to forge the unity of India and the world. Now these facts, testified to by great Historians and archeologists, have to be borne in mind in attempting to forge the unity of India and the world by the adoption of a common tongue for India (and the world).

Hindi as a hybrid, upstart language with no reputable ancient literature or vocabulary of its own, is unfit for adoption as the Lingua Franca of India. These points are made clear by the great Tamil, Sanskrit and English scholar Maraimalai Adigal in his Tamil booklet entitled 'Can Hindi be the Lingua Franca of India?' which now has been translated into English by Thiru R. S. Pillai Tamil Research Institute, Madras.

Besides, extracts from Maraimalai Adigal's introduction to a Treatise in English entitled 'India's Language Problem' by the great Tamil, Hindi and English scholar K. Appadurai Pillai, M.A., L.T. Visharad (Hindi), along with extracts from the writings of C. Rajagopalachari, K.M. Cariappa and others are given at the end of the booklet for the benefit of the readers.;

We express our deep debt of gratitude to our revered Yogi Shuddhananda Bharatiar, for his valuable and erudite foreword contributed to this brochure.

It is hoped this publication will be welcomed lby the public at this crucial lhour of India's Language Problem and National unity.

## **UNIVERSAL EXPRESSION OF TAMIL**

Sir Maraimalai Adigal (Swami Vedachalam) is an embodiment of the ancient Tamil culture and civilisation. He was a strong defend of Tamil. He ddistributed a powerful pamphlet challenging Hindi in 1937 when it greatly gained the favour of the Madras State. The pamphlet then in Tami, now in English puts forth strong arguments againsst forced Hindi in Non-Hindi regions. "Hindi off" is its refrain. The pamphlet maintains the right of Tamil to become our Lingua Franca and insists upon the use of English as the link language until Tamil reaches its deserved height of being the national language. It is a bold challenge to Hindi claims.

I go a step further and maintain with all the force of my linguistic knowledge that Tamil deserves to be the Lingua Universum. It is the most ancidnt living language still developing and expanding. It is andelastic language capable of standing upon its own merit. It does not shine in borrowed feathers. It has the vitality to express all branches of modern Sciences clearly.

We have how a very wide circle of poets, writers, novelists, journalists, thinkers, dramatists, essayists, scientists, painters, sculptors, philosophers, linguists and oliticians who are harbingers of a vernal renaissance fragrant with the blossoms of love and beauty, and fruits of hope and wisdom.

The tpwering glory of Tamil literature is the Tirukkural of Saint Valluvar, the universal lawgiver. The only drawback is that we oftern fail to recognise our own genius. and encourage our great souls by

honouring them properly.

Literature is the life-force of a nation. It is an efflorescence of the inner urge of the time spirit. The poet's word is the breath of national re-birth. The life of a nation is ensouled in the words of the poet. A drop of ink from his pen makes thousands think. An inspired writer gives inexhaustible energy to generations. We have a galaxy of such immortals even today just as we had yesterday. We must find out genius and bring it to open light and encourage it. We must not allow deserving pens to starve in obscure corners. Tamil has the merit of possessing quality books by inspired authors long before European classical authors were born. The antiquity of Tamil goes as far as 9000 B.C. The lost Lemurian glory was richly compensated by the Kapatapuram high-lights of literature. Mohenjo-dara and Harappa excavations bring to light a brilliant evidence of Tamil culture even in the fifth millennium B.C. Considering its great past, its living dynamism, its mellifluous elasticity of expression, its fertility to produce new works in tune with the time spirit, taking into consideration its vitality to measure the heights of Scientific technology, we can very well maintain the invincible capacity of Tamil to develop into a universal language even like English, French, German and Russian which hold sway over the modern world of scientific intellectualism. The only thing is that we must look forward and go onward from 1970 without merely gloating over a few books of old.

St. Valluvar says: 'As moves the world, so move the wise in tune with changing times and ways.'

The modern savants look forward to an intelligent, emotional co-existence and intergration and to create one humanity in one world. The old conceptions of walled creeds and sectarian dogmas have become defunct. Even our ancient poets sang for Ulagu the entire universe and mankind and not for a sect or division of mankind. We must build up our literature in the light of modern collectivism. If Tamil comes forward to build up literature of universal significance it is sure to soar higher and higher in fame and name and reach the

eminence of English. English is a must; we must learn English or we will be back-numbers. English is a power all over the world. No language shall undermine it. Tamil must rise to its level and vigour. Then we can hold our own against Hindi from which we have nothing to learn.

Behold how French has develop[ed into a world language, an international diplomatic language. It developed from rustic Latin and vulgar Roman language spoken by the soldires of Julius Ceasar.

Behold how the Russian language has developed after the October revolution of 1917. Even Usbeg language has a big library of Modern Science. Tamil must measure its steps and walk abreast with the progressive atomic age and produce original books worthy of being translated into foreign languages. I am silently doing this seevive day and night. My Bharata Sakti in English translation has been appreciated by Savants of the West. We must come forward to honour genius and maintain our states quo before the rush of modernism. Then only we can answer the challenge of Hindi or English or any other language.

I have myself written Science books in Tamil. It is the only language that can be spoken smoothly without wasting breath in harsh aspirants. In minimum letters it expresses maximum ideas. Under the aegis of the awakened Tamil Nadu, writers and fighters for the rights of Tamil culture are building up a better future for our beloved Mother tongue. The wanton casteism has disappeared into the limb of the Renaissant. Spirit which marches head-erect towards a collective life of the human aggregate based upon the Soul that is one in all. The old casto-sectarian bias has no meaning to the progressive modern thinkers and men of action. That chapter of caste-pride is closed and we need not open it again.

I wish that the facts expressed in this brochure will go to inspire Tamils to grow from strength to strength until the Tamil language becomes the Lingua Universum. Let us broaden our views, sstrengthen our sinews and omnify our aspirations and conquer little-

ness by our largeness!

Yoga Samaj,

Adyar

18-12-68

YOGI SHUDDHANANDA BHARATI

## **CAN HINDI BE THE LINGUA FRANCA OF INDIA?**

Many of the Scholars of Northern India and some of the South, working for the uplift of our country opine that Hindi spoken in the north of India in varying forms in varied places, should be made the common language of all the Indian people.

There have besides started Hindi Schools here and there. Before embarking on a project, we should investigate and find out whether the thing to be undertaken possesses the necessary qualities that could confer any benefit on the people amongst whom it is to be introduced and what the condition of the people is. To launch the project after such investigation is a mark of wisdom and true patriotism. We shall first examine the worth and suitability of Hindi for adoption as the lingua franca of India.

### **ANCIENT CULTURAL LANGUAGES**

The main object of a language is to serve as a medium of expression of one's thoughts to another without impediments. The languages in vogue in the several parts of the globe are, according to linguistic scholars, nine hundred and ninety nine. Of these nearly thousand tongues, only very few are both spoken and written; of these few, a less number are possessed of grammar and literature, of these still very few are ancient tongues. The ancient languages that possess all these three essential qualities are Tamil, Egyptian, Chaldean, Hebrew, Mexican, Aryan, Greek, Latin and Arabic. These tongues were spoken and written by the ancient cultured people. They possessed works of grammar and litera-

ture which could at all times confer sweetness and light on those studying them. But all these tongues except Tamil have now ceased to be languages may give one a knowledge of the past, but it cannot confer on the benefit of converse in those tongues with others anywhere on earth or confer other benefits in life.

### **TAMIL AND THE NEW TONGUES**

But only or precious Tamil Tongue, from of old to this day, serves as the spoken and written language of many crores of people in India, Ceylon, Burma, Malaysia Singapore, Fiji, Mauritius, South Africa etc. Books of Gaammar, Morality, Virtue, Wealth, Governance, Epic Poetry, Lyric Poetry, Stories, Mathematics, Astronomy, Medicine, Science, Mythology etc. have been written by great scholars in the Tamil tongue, and these confer benefits on people in this life and the life to come. The Tamil tongue possesses besides potentialities of a living and developing language, capable of giving expression to the highest and the minutest thought in the simplest manner and in the shouter compass (i.e. Kural).

But the other languages in vogue in the far-flung earth came into existence five or six hundred years ago, some of them only having books of Grammar, Literature, Art etc. Worth the name for the last two or three centuries. The beauty and richness of these new tongues are no match for the ancient Tamil tongue of rare worth and rarer works. So it is incumbent on the part of the young who are greatly enamoured of the artificial and external beauties of the sprung languages and their works, to give deep thought to the innate worth of Tamil the ancient tongue and do the needful to make its treasures many tongues. SAIVA SIDDHANTA AS A PHILOSOPHY OF PRACTICAL KNOWLEDGE

#### **Contents Of The Preface**

The great erudite Tamil scholar Dr. G.U. Pope held Saiva Siddhanta to be the pre-Aryan system of Tamilian thought.

Neither the materialistic monism of the scientists nor the idealistic monism of Sankaracharya can satisfy the cravings of the human beings,

It is the Saiva siddhanta, or as it is styled as the pluralistic monism by William James, that can satisfy such cravings,

God or pathi is truth, intelligence & bliss, it is above births and deaths,

God is called Sivam simply because this term expresses the essential quality of God *Love* - God is both transcendent and immediate-The significance of image worship,

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God the efficient cause

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Prof. Sully on day and night dreams

Harm & confusion of the illusion theory,

Andrew Lang's 'Dreams & Ghosts,'

Pluralistic Monism of S. Meikandan & Prof. James,

7-8-1923

Corpus Christi College,  
Oxford.

I know nothing of Saiva Siddhanta beyond what I have learnt from Swami Vedachalam, but if it means, as he says, opposition to Vedantist Pantheism with its doctrines that all is one and all is illusion, it has my heartiest sympathy. For I have long thought monism as harmful socially as it is scientifically groundless, and the widespread acceptance it has won in India seems to be a clue to

much of political history of the country. If the peoples of India can be persuaded that the truth of speculations also must be tested by their bearing upon life, the progress of India be much accelerated.

I have also been much struck by the account Swami Vedachalam gives of the relation between body and mind as conceived by S. Meikandan. For if it is correct it shows that he also anticipated William James in formulating the 'transmission' theory which supplies so elegant irrefragable an answer to materialism.

(Signed) F.C.S.Schiller.

### PREFACE

*“The Caiva Siddhanta system is the most elaborate, influential, and undoubtedly the most intrinsically valuable all the religions of India. It is peculiarly the South-India, and Tamil religion. \*\*\*\* Caivism is the old pre-historic religion of South India, essentially existing from Pre-Aryan times, and holds sway over the hearts of the Tamil people”*:- thus states Dr.G.U.Pope in his English translation of the sacred Tamil lyrics, the *Thiruvachakam* of the great Saiva Saint Manickavachakar, p.lxxiv.

The above extract expresses the just estimate arrived at by that great Christian missionary and profound Tamil scholar Dr. G.U. Pope, as regards the intrinsic merit and antiquity of the Saiva Siddhanta the religion and philosophy of the Tamil people. Most of his active period of life Dr. Pope spent in the heart of the Tamil country moving intimately with all classes of the Tamil people and learning at first-hand not only their beliefs, customs and manners but also their ancient classics such as *Thirukural*, *Purananooru*, *Silappadhikaram*, *Manimekalai*, *Palamoli*, *Naladiyar*, *Periapuranam*, *Sivajnanabodham* and others. His erudition in Tamil was equal to, and in some respects even exceeded, the erudition of great native scholars. So his impartial estimate of the Saiva Siddhanta, coming as it does from a great western

scholar who combined in himself the culture of both west and east, may, by being prefixed to this preface of the following work of mine on Saivism, serve well to impress its value and importance on the minds of those learned Indians Europeans to whom it is a sealed book. For the modern philosophic and religious thought in the east and the west is so strongly coloured either by the atheistic system of the Buddhists or by the pantheistic system of Sankara and his cult, except where the most wholesome teaching of Professor William James have pervaded, that almost all lines of inquiry either into the realm of matter or into the realm of spirit, might be said, without exaggeration to end themselves either in a materialistic monism or in an idealistic monism; that is to say, that affirm simply that the end (the end of what is not clear from what they affirm) there exists nothing but what appears to be a form of energy whether you call it matter or spirit.

In whatever way this kind of monism so stubbornly held in the teeth of all human experience, may seem to satisfy certain “tough-minded” people, certain it is it cannot satisfy the cravings of the “tender-minded people, as the two types, namely the monists and pluralists, have been so pertinently called by Prof. James. We who live in the world of both mind and matter we who acquire all our knowledge and experience by our contact with so many intelligent beings higher and lower with so many products of matter which minister to our wants, cannot rest content with such a nameless and form less and therefore such an incomprehensible monism, but need a system which would meet our wishes and aspirations in entire harmony with our past and present experiences.

While our worldly experience is thus many-sided, it has yet a unity that underlies all its variety. In the words of James, “It is both one and many,” and therefore “let us adopt a sort of pluralistic monism.”<sup>1</sup> Now the Saiva Siddhanta furnishes us with such a *pluralistic monism* as is evident from the following quotation taken from one of the fourteen authoritative works in Tamil which treat of the Saiva Siddhanta system. According to this system,

“There are six entities which have no beginning. The first of these is the Lord (*Pathi*) Who is One. The second is the aggregate of all Souls (*Pacu*) with their undeveloped potentialities of thought and act, interpenetrated by a divine but hidden influence. The third is the impurity of *Anavam* wearing the form of darkness. The fourth is twofold dees (*Vinai*). The fifth and sixth are the two kinds of *Mayai*, the pure and impure the substratum and material of the phenomenal universe.”<sup>2</sup>

In the following work which contains the essence of my lectures delivered at different places and on different occasions, I have given to the best of my ability a clear and national exposition of the views of the Saiva Siddhanta relating to the six entities enumerated above. For the guidance of my readers let me give here a succinct explanation of the six aspects.

Saivism is strictly a monotheistic religion holding that only as God which is truth, intelligence, and bliss which is above births and deaths, which is all love and grace towards all individual souls, which is distinct from both matter and finite selves and yet dwells within them and without and is ever active in bringing the souls out a darkness and setting them in its light and beatitude. It calls God by the name of *Sivam*, simply because the term specifies the essential quality of God which is pure love, pure bliss. In later times many more gods such as Subramanya, Ganesa, Veerabhadra and others were adopted into its fold; but none of the founders of the Saiva religion held any one as God except Siva. In the ten collections of the sacred hymns or *Thirumurai* sung by St. Thirujnanasambandar, St. Appar, St. Sundarar, St. Manickavachakar and others, there is not a single hymn sung in praise of any god other than Siva. And in each and every temple of Siva, his only true emblem the Sivalinga is set up in the central shrine as the pre-eminent object of first worship, while the images of all other gods are quartered around the central sanctuary and offered only subordinate places and ordinary worship. Thus yet find that not only do the ancient sacred literature of Saivism but the very construction of its temples and

the pre-eminent form of worship daily offered in them to Siva also bear indisputable testimony to the monotheistic character of the Saiva religion.

According to Saivism God is as remote and transcendent as He is near and personal. Though His nature is one, it appears to be twofold to the finite conception of the individual minds, just as the sun which appears to our naked eyes like a small bright disc, is, in reality, immense in its size and thus seems to present two aspects to our perception and conception. As has been so well pointed out by Prof. James in the lecture on Philosophy in his epoch making work: "The Varieties of Religious Experience." "that the transcendentalist reasonings fail to make religion universal," this incomprehensible and inconceivable aspect of God can never appeal to a devout mind that is thirsting after to obtain at least a glimpse of his presence and personality. In so far as God is will, intelligence and freedom, he cannot be an unfeeling, unintelligent and impersonal existence. Nowhere is the personal aspect of God which is in vital relation with all living beings is so strongly emphasized as in Saivism. Since He is in and near every vital being and is helping them all to develop their faculties of thought and feeling, life is held in it so sacred that taking it away from a man or a beast is looked upon by it as an unpardonable and sacrilegious crime. Hence the very word Saivism has come to be applied to a vegetarian mode of living also.

Now, it is this hankering of the human mind after the having personal relation of God to itself that has prompted it to feel deeply the need for setting up a physical image before its outer eyes as a means of setting up a corresponding mental image before its inner eyes. For all our knowledge of anything consists in bringing into our mind a mental image corresponding to that particular physical thing and storing it up permanently in our memory for after use. Blot that image out of your mind or forget altogether and you thereby lose the knowledge of it also once for all. In fact, a man of vast knowledge is distinguished from another man of small knowledge only for his power of forming in his mind as well as of fixing on

his memory myriads of distinct mental images corresponding exactly to the forms of physical objects which he was observing attentively and noting carefully. This psychological law pertaining to the formation and development of the human mind must disclose to us the necessity of keeping before our eyes an image made of clay or wood, stone or any mineral matter for the sake of raising up in our mind a clear image of God corresponding to it. For, is not utterly impossible for us to conceive of an object thus we have not previously seen or heard, touched or smelled or tasted? It is the deep-felt longing of the human mind for a concrete thing to meditate upon that has brought into existence a multitude of temples not only in the Tamil country where its number is comparatively very large but also in other ancient civilized countries such as Egypt, Babylonia, Chaldea in the west and Mexico and Peru the east. We cannot close this part of our subject relating to idol-worship better than by citing the words of Dr. Edwin Caird taken from his masterly treatment of "The Evolution of Religion." which run as follows:-

"To represent God as a mere object is, as we have seen, to express the divine in an inadequate form, in a form that, at least, cannot be made fully adequate to the idea; for the principle of unity in all objects and subjects cannot be properly represented as one object among others. But, at the same time, it is also true that in some sense the whole is involved in every part of the universe, and therefore any part of it may for a time be taken as a type of the whole. \* \* \* When the spiritual cannot yet be separated from the natural, it is of the highest importance that the natural object which represents the spiritual should be, as it were, transfigured by the imagination, so that it may, so far as possible, symbolically take the place of the spiritual."<sup>3</sup>

Viewed in this light how significant is the worship offered to Sivalinga in the great temples that burst so magnificently on the sight of the travellers all over the south of India, must become apparent to all who have a right thinking mind. I cannot pursue the treatment of this topic further in a short preface like this. For a de-

tailed explanation of the origin and meaning of the Sivalinga-worship the reader is referred to my Tamil lectures on “The Image-worship” and “Sivalinga” and to my English lecture on “The Conception of God as Rudra.”

Now, as to the second entity of the Saiva Siddhanta: “The aggregate of all Souls.” From the tiniest and the most simple unicellular organism called *protoplasm* to the highest and the most complex organism called man there exist from all eternity countless individual souls each having a distinct character of its own and each undergoing different degrees of development in accordance with its nature, capacity and effort. All these souls are not the principles created out of nothing according to some religions, nor are they the splintered pieces of God Himself according to some other religions; nor do they constitute so many evolved centres of unintelligent matter according to some material sciences, nor could they be pure fiction imagined in the infinite absolute according to some range idealism. On the contrary, they are as eternal as God and not even a single soul could, by any known or unknown power or process, be reduced into nothing nor could any one of them be transmuted into any other of the group. According to the Saiva Siddhanta, and “the pluralistic, as according to the Leibnizian view,” says Dr. James Ward in his remarkable *Gifford Lectures*, “all the individuals there are have existed from the first and will continue to exist indefinitely.”<sup>4</sup> And the same authority like the Siddhanta, holds tenaciously to the view that “individuals who have no ‘doubles,’ whose like all in all we never shall meet again.”<sup>5</sup> In upholding the eternal reality of individual souls Dr.F.C.S. Schiller has said ever more emphatically as follows:

“The ultimate self-existence of spirits, the doctrine that existences are many, spirits uncreated, uncaused, they are and ever have been and can never cease to be, is the only metaphysical ground for asserting the immortality of the individual. And this metaphysical ground we have secured by the preference given to Pluralism over Monism.”<sup>6</sup>

Now, as regards the third principle the dark and impure *Anavam*, What the Saiva Siddhanta states is, in the words of Dr. F.C.S. Schiller, this: “Evil was potentially existent in the world” and “the world was created in order to remedy this pre-existent and pre-cosmic defect.”<sup>7</sup> If all had been eternally perfect like God, creation is unnecessary, and it may even be said to be mischievous, like the mischievous play of some wild boys, who take pleasure in throwing stones on innocent animals and even on grown-up persons. But such does not seem to be the case, since all souls have defects and imperfections ingrained in them in various trades and degrees which, with the help of created things and substances, they strive and struggle to get rid of. This supreme purpose of creation cannot in the least be understood, unless you recognize in the individual minds the potential existence of the evil principle called *Anavam* in the Saiva Siddhanta. Of this evil principle Prof. Henry Drummond the great scientist and theologian, writes:

“There is a natural principle in man lowering him, acadening him, pulling him down by inches to the mere animal plane, blinding reason, searing conscience, paralysing will.”<sup>8</sup>

So far as my knowledge of various religions and various systems of philosophy is concerned, I venture to say that I have not come across any religion or any system of philosophy in which this root-cause of creation, this pre-existent principle of evil has been recognized and explicitly mentioned as in the system of Saiva Siddhanta. Of course, there is a hint of it in the first chapter of the Book of Genesis of the Old Testament as has been penetratingly pointed out by Dr. F.C.S. Schiller, but it has unfortunately escaped the notice of almost all commentators on the book.

Now, let us turn to the fourth concept; the two kinds of deeds called the good and the bad. Even living thing from amoeba upwards is endowed with intelligence and this enables all to respond to impressions proceeding from surrounding objects and perform certain functions either in opposition to, or accordance with, these

impressions. In answering thus to outward calls the lower organisms learn to repeat what seemed at first favourable to the maintenance of their own life and afterwards to the maintenance of the life of their own offspring. The first act of every living being meets with great resistance offered both by animate and inanimate objects, that is, by its own body and the things external to it. All the products of matter not yield themselves readily to the will of an intelligent being, unless it exercises its own intelligence constantly and devises newer and newer means to bend them to its will. In this way it learns that not one act but many acts, of which every succeeding one is more intelligently performed than the preceding one, are necessary for achieving the conquest over matter.

It is such repeated actions of living beings that have come to be collectively called *Karma* or *Vinai* in Saivism; or in the language of psychology *habit*. As we observe the infinite grades of lives, and the infinite degrees of intelligence, we are led to believe that no man, who gains an insight into the nature and evolution of individual souls, can at a bound conclude that the life of a soul can become perfect in a single birth, when even the duration of which varies from a moment to an age.

Further, the actions of living beings acquire moral value only after they ascend to human life in the scale of their existence. Therefore it seems most unreasonable to assert that the lower lives will become extinct after they have passed through a single existence and before they have reached higher levels at which their actions acquire moral value. Even after reaching the human level, individual souls do differ so widely among themselves in the degrees of intelligence that, here too, perfection is not attainable by all, in the single birth. And so, before attaining to the highest level of perfection, it is but reasonable to hold with the Saiva Siddhanta that all souls must accumulate habits after habits only by passing through myriads of bodily existences in this world and in others that are distant from our own, as has been so wisely put by Dr. James Ward: "At any rate 'metempsychosis' in some form seems an unavoidable corollary of thorough-going

pampsychism, so long as we look broadly at the facts of life as a whole.”<sup>9</sup>

And we now come finally to the fifth and the sixth elements, the pure and the impure *Mayai*. Modern science has discovered that the world of our experience is ultimately resolvable into protons and electrons. The impure *Mayai* is the direct material cause of the universe, while the pure; the protons and electrons, constitutes only indirectly so. The reason for this two fold classification of *Mayai* is this: The souls buried, as it were, in coarse and foul impurities require equally coarse things to be cleansed of their impurities; whereas the highly developed souls rising above dirt and fifth require only the help of finer substances to raise them still higher. For we see plainly before our eyes the mental faculties of different individual souls developing different degrees and in different directions without the limit being set to them. In proportion to the mental development of souls, matter which serves as its vehicle also becomes rarefied in different degrees. In the words of Dr. Schiller, “The spiritualization of Matter is displayed also in its relations to spiritual beings. As in the course of evolution these become more harmonized with the Divine will, Matter, the expression of that will becomes more and more harmonized with the desires of spiritual beings.”<sup>10</sup> That the doctrine of *Maya* as held by Saivism is coming to be understood as being in entire harmony with the discoveries of modern science, must be clear to all who make a comparative study of the two.

To all those who seek after an exact knowledge of these six eternal verities, it must be very gratifying to note that the recent developments of western philosophy and physical science go every inch to prove the truth and value of all the fundamental doctrines that are peculiar only to Saiva Siddhanta but not to any other religion or philosophy ancient or modern.

## **HISTORICAL SKETCH OF SAIVA SIDDHANTA**

But the religion and philosophy of Saiva Siddhanta, as has been pointed out by Dr. G.U. Pope, are “peculiarly South-Indian”

and the Tamils who are the pre-Aryan inhabitants of India, are alone the sole and strict adherents of this system from times immemorial. This historic fact being a very momentous one, we have to devote our serious attention to it and elucidate it in as brief a manner as possible. For it has become a pleasing custom even among Tamil Scholars of non-Aryan descent to derive every thing excellent in pure Tamil literature from Sanscrit or to ascribe its origin to the thought of some legendary Aryan sage or other. From my twentieth year, that is, nearly forty two years ago, when I was for some time an editor of the Tamil edition of that very useful magazine *The Light of Truth*, the question with regard to the true origin of the Saiva Siddhanta began to engage my earnest attention and led me to make a comparative study of both Sanscrit and Tamil literature.

The results of this study disclosed to me facts undreamt of even by profound Sanscrit scholars European and Indian, notwithstanding a partial knowledge which an exceptional few of them did possess of those facts. Why such vital historical facts relating to the mental moral and religious culture of such a highly civilized and ancient race as the Tamils, escaped the notice of so many Sanscrit scholars, has been due to an utter want on their part of knowledge of Tamil literature produced before the first century A.D. i.e, at a time when the influence of the Aryan ceremonial cult had not penetrated into the South. The facts obtained from my close critical study of the two literatures are set forth fully in my large Tamil work on 'The Life and Times of St. Manickavachakar' and also to a limited but intelligible extent in my recent English work: 'The Ancient and Modern Tamil Poets'. For a correct understanding of the origin of Saiva Siddhanta it seems to me very necessary to set down some of these facts here in this short preface.

From a careful perusal of the hymns of the Rig Veda the most ancient work extant in the Aryan tongue any one of an acute intelligence can detect in them the intermixture of two entirely different modes of life and thought belonging to two different races that must have come into contact with each other long before the compilation of its hymns took place in northern India. From the hymns them-

selves we learn the existence of two peoples of which one was called the Aryas and the other the Dasyus. About these two people Ragozin says; “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 difference in colour and cast of features is the first to strike us, and in that, as already hinted, we trace the beginnings of caste distinction. ‘Destroying the Dasyus, Indra protected the Aryan color,’ gratefully proclaims one poet. ‘Indra’, says another, ‘protected in battle the Aryan worshipper, he subdued the lawless for Manu, he conquered the black skin.’”<sup>11</sup>.

While the Aryan people had Vasishtha as their chief priest, the powerful ruling tribe of the indigenous Tamils who were called the Bharatas had Visvamitra for their chief priest and patriarch. In dwelling on the typical contrast of these two Rishis, Ragozin had clearly brought out the prominent characteristics of the Aryas and the Tamils and the cults they represented. With a deep insight he declares; “To keep strictly within the information supplied by the Rig Veda itself-Vasishtha was the bard of the Tritsu, the leading and purest Aryan tribe, and Visvamitra was the bard of the Bharatas their great enemies and one of the most powerful native tribes. He at one time had been with the Tritsu, and for whatever cause he left them-not improbably persons revenge-he played a conspicuous part in the confederacy which attempted to check the Aryan advance and increasing power. \* \* \* At a later period the followers Vashistha and his descendants represent the narrowly orthodox Brahminic school, with its petty punctiliousness in the matter of forms, rites, observances, in intolerance of everything un-Aryan, its rigid separatism \* \* \* The followers of Visvamitra and his descendants, on the other hand, represented the school of liberalism and progress, of conciliation and amalgamation. \* \* \* But it must also have been owing to this their

policy of conciliation that many of their beliefs and practices of the once loathed aborigines gradually crept into the Aryan worship, and gained a footing there paving the way for the mixed forms of Hindusim in the future.”<sup>12</sup>

Now who these Dasyus were, and who the Bharatas that had been so contemptuously spoken of and called the black-skinned by the Rig Vedic Aryas has been also pointed out by Ragozin in the following passage:

“Of the Dravidian race, tribes are scattered through the central Vindhya region, while its bulk has, from pre-Aryan times to this day, covered the entire three sided table-land sweepingly named Dekhan. In moral characteristics they, from the first, strongly contrasted with the Kolarians. They too live in village communities, but under a rule which leans more to the monarchic type, and, in all their ways, they show more public spirit. Equally good traders and farmers, they are patient, laborious, steadfast, and loyal. \* \* \* In several of those passages in which the priestly poets exhaust their ingenuity inventing abusive epithets for their Dasyu foes, they call them with scathing contempt, Sisna-devas, literally: ‘Whose God is Sisna or Sesh.’<sup>13</sup> And in a still more remarkable passage which follows, he dwells on the racial affinity existing between the Dravidians and the Shumiro-Accads: “The connection between the Dravidians of Northern and Western India and the first Babylonian Empire, - the Babylonia of the Shumira-Accads, before the advent of the Semites-becomes less surprising when we realize that there was between them something more than chance relations, that they were in fact of the same race or stock-that which is broadly designated as Turanian. Philology points that way, for the Dravidian languages are agglutinative; craniology will not disprove the affinity, for a glance at the Gondh types on illustration No.23, and the turbaned head of Tell-Loh (Accadian Sirgulla about 4000 B.C.) will show the likeness in features and shape. But even more convincing is the common sacred symbol-the Serpent, the emblem of the worship of Earth, with its mystery, its wealth and its forces. The Accadian supreme god Ea

was worshipped at his holiest shrine at Eridhu under the form of a serpent, and as Eridhu was the centre from which the first Chaldean civilization started and spread, so the serpent-symbol was accepted as that of the race and its religion".<sup>14</sup>

From these extracts taken from the work of an able and impartial historian of ancient India whose historical studies, though they are based not upon Tamil literature but upon the literatures and archaeology of the Aryans, the Eranians, the Shumiro-Accads, the Babylonians and others of the ancient west, yet we get glimps of the following facts pertaining to the history of the ancient Tamils in relation with the Aryas:

1. The Tamils, the only civilized section of the people generally called the Dravidians, possessing as they do, a vast and rich literature produced from 3500 B.C. up to our own times, must have been the early inhabitants of the whole of India, before the Aryas entered its north western part. They had in ancient time commercial relations with the people of the west, and it was the trading classes of the Tamils who settled permanently in the thriving centres of the west that, as time went on, came to be called the Babylonians, the Sumarians, the Accadians and so on.

2. The Aryas who entered India found the Tamils be rich, intelligent and powerful and live in strongly fortified towns and castles that they dreaded to meet openly on battlefield, but sought the aid of their dead heroes such as *Indra*, *Varuna* and others by means prayer and sacrifice, for the protection of their own race and the destruction of the Tamils whom they contemptuously called the black skinned *Dasyus*. The Aryas, for their safety, put so great a faith in the efficacy of bloody sacrifices and drinking bouts that they became extremely punctilious in the observance and performance of rites and ceremonies pertaining to them. The faith in the rituals took so strong a hold of their mind that it led them to look upon the riteless Tamils with bitter hatred and derision. The hymns to *Indra* in which they give vent to their malignant feelings against the Tamils are not a few in number, and they all plainly show how narrow

their views were and how intolerant they became of everything un-Aryan.

3. The Tamils, on the other hand, held not only liberal views about the Aryas, their customs and manners, but even earnestly wished to conciliate them to their own high moral and religious principles, and, if possible, to unite them with their own people. The culture of the Tamils was wide and their sympathies went beyond the circle of their own people.

4. The Aryas had no religion, if by religion we mean the belief in one Almighty God of the universe and the loving communion which man longs to have with God as a person and parent. Having been in dire want of even the bare necessities of life, the Aryas struggled hard to obtain a suitable dwelling place as well as food and clothing. Being also poor in the number their fighting men and money, they sought to gain the end by appealing to their head heroes such as *Indra*, *Varuna*, *Mitra* and others whom they exalted each in turn to the highest place of God. Consequently, they could think of no God who is greater than them, and who, besides being single, invisible and intangible, personal, kind and merciful also.

5. The Tamils, on the other hand, having settled in life long before the advent of the Aryas and having also reached the highest level of civilisation which was contemporaneous with that of the Egyptians and the Sumerians, had ample scope to reflect upon the wonderful nature of this immense material universe and the inner spiritual world and set down their thoughts in works of imperishable value. They did not stop with the investigation of mere material phenomena but dived deep and discovered that bottom of existence of a spiritual principle which is single and all powerful and which has been the efficient cause of all creation. They conceived God not as wholly invisible but somewhat visible in light, particularly in the light of the Sun, the Moon, and the fire, so that in later ages they came to use a material symbol resembling the form of the burning flame and paid their worship to it with

mere leaves and flowers, with no other rites or ceremony. Unable to grasp the meaning of this symbol of God which was called the “Sivalinga” in later times, the Aryas, like most of the present day orientalist, called it “Sisna devah” or phallus. The Tamils not only attached little value to rituals but even looked upon with loathing the bloody sacrifices of the Aryas and the numberless rites and ceremonies which they went on multiplying with the selfish intent of squeezing out money from the people by striking awe into their mind.

As regards the first point; the pre-Aryan occupation of the whole of India by the Dravidians, pre-eminently above all others by the Tamils, that was pointed out by Dr. Caldwell as early as the year 1856 as follows: “Every form and root which the Brahui possesses in common with the Dravidian tongues may be regarded as many centuries older still. The Brahuic analogies enable us to ascend to a period anterior to the arrival in India of the Aryans which cannot safely be placed later than 1600 B.C.”<sup>15</sup> And that of all the Dravidian languages Tamil alone was the earliest cultivated has also been clearly shown by the same veteran scholar in his admirable work on the Dravidian languages. “The Shen Tamil,” he says, “which is the language of the poetry and of the ancient inscriptions, and which not only contains all the refinements which the Tamil has received, but also exhibits to a great extent the primitive condition of the language, differs more from the colloquial Tamil than the poetical dialect of any other Dravidian idiom differs from its ordinary dialect. \* \* \* As the words and forms of the Shen Tamil cannot have been invented by the poets, but must at some period have been in actual use, the degree in which the colloquial Tamil has diverged from the poetical dialect, notwithstanding the slowness with which language, like everything else changes in the east, is a proof of the high antiquity of the literary cultivation of the Tamil.”<sup>16</sup> Many more facts are adduced by Dr. Caldwell to prove the high antiquity of the cultivation which the Tamil alone of all the Dravidian tongues received, but the above will suffice for our purpose in a preface like this.

Further, if one can take the trouble of comparing the time of Tamil literature with the times of some other Dravidian literatures, one would find the high antiquity of Tamil culture easily established to the exclusion of other Dravidian cultures. For it should be borne in mind that Kanarese literature sprang into being only after the 9th century A.D.; Telugu literature came into being only after the 11th century A.D.; Malayalam literature only after the 14th century A.D. All other Dravidian dialects still remain uncultivated, although they are spoken in the north and south of India even to this day. That the literatures of three the Dravidian tongues possess no original works of their own except the translations made of a few mythical Puranas and Epics in Sanscrit, is a point that should be noted by all who intend to make a correct estimate of the value Tamil literature in comparison with others. For ancient Tamil literature possesses not only many works completely original such as *Tholkappiam*, *Ahananoory*, *Purananoory*, *Kalithokai*, *Kurunthokai*, *Iyngurunooru*, *Narrinai*, *Pathitruppathu*, *Paripadal*, *Thirukkural*, and others, all produced from 3500 B.C. to the beginning of the Christian era, quite independently of any Sanscrit influence but it also possesses many epics and sacred hymns of such merit that in their matter and manner they are unequalled and unexcelled even by Sanscrit classics.

As all the pure Tamil works had thus been produced continuously without any break from 3500 B.C. to the 12th century A.D., this vital fact alone would be sufficient to prove the prosperous, peaceful and intellectual condition of life enjoyed by the Tamils from the very remote past. Hence it must have been the Tamilians themselves that occupied the whole of India as far as the north western frontier, when the Aryan nomads came to the Punjab and found them such, powerful and highly civilized. As we find not race either in ancient Tamil literature or in Sanscrit of any other Dravidian people speaking such modern Dravidian tongues as Kanarese, Telugu, Malayalam, etc., We cannot be far from being correct in concluding that at that distant period of time the only civilized people who inhabited the whole of India could be none other than the Tamils, for they were

then one undivided people, the single race speaking only one single tongue the pure Tamil.

Although there must have been individual variations in their speech, and customs and manners owing to distance of places, diversity of climate and callings just as there are, at present, differences in them between the people of Madras and the people of Ceylon, with graded differences prevailing among the other Tamil people living between the two land limits, yet the Tamil language has retained its identity for more than five thousand years, assuredly not on account of anything but the wide cultivation which it generally received at the hands of all the several classes of the Tamil people who lived all throughout India.

To add to this important cause, many of the ancient Tamils, like their modern descendants, seem to have been enterprising traders both on land and sea, so that the constant intercourse with all classes of the Tamil people living wide apart, had constituted another powerful factor which contributed towards keeping up Tamil wholly intact. From time to time separate companies were formed of these traders who went to east and west and settled permanently in several important centres so as to render easier the commercial intercourse of the mother country with the foreign nations. That it was the Tamil people who belonged to these trade settlements that, as time went on, came to be called the Sumerians and some other civilized nations of the west, is evident from the recent utterances of Sir John Marshall;

“It may be recalled” he says in his great work on *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 lan-

guage 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 interpreted as additional proof of its correctness.”

Now, do not these historical facts brought to light by the indefatigable labours of European scholars prove beyond doubt that the civilized people who, long before the advent of the Aryas, occupied the whole of India and given other countries lying beyond its north western limit, were none other than the Tamils? If the Tamils been the pre-Aryan inhabitants of India, it follows as a matter of course that their religion too must have been pre-Aryan in every respect.

Then, what sort of faith did the ancient Tamils profess? To cut the thing short, it may be promptly and directly replied that it was nothing but Saivism pure and simple. The term *Saiva* was coined in post-Vedic times to represent the religious cult which held Siva as the one almighty God of the universe. That Siva had been a pure Dravidian deity is the view expressed long ago by Mr. P. Wurm.<sup>17</sup> But we cannot see why to M. Barth it should seem inadmissible, while he himself detects behind it “an old aboriginal worship.” And even Mr. A.B. Keith who would like to attribute everything great and excellent in the civilisation of the Dravidians to the influence of the Brahmins, is, in this respect, constrained by rigid facts to admit and describe how the Brahmins came to adopt this god of the people into their religious cult; He says:

“The position of Rudra as a popular deity is sufficiently shown by the litanies to him in the Samhitas of Yajurveda, and by the whole outlook of such texts as the Aitareya, Kaushitaki, and Catapatha Brahmanas. When Prajapati committed incest with his daughter, the Aitarey tells us that the gods were wroth, and from their most dread forms produced the god Bhutapati ‘lord of creatures’ who represents one aspect of Rudra’s activities. He pierced Prajapati and thereby acquired his dominion over all cattle. In another passage the

wording of a Rig Vedic verse altered to avoid the mention of Rudra's dread name: in yet another he appears at the sacrifice in black raim and appropriates to himself the sacrificial victim, *We need not suppose that in this presentation the Brahmanas were creating a new figure; rather they were adapting to their system, as far as they could, a great god of the people.* But the Rudra of this period can hardly be regarded as a mere development of the Rudra of the Rig Veda; it seems most probable that with the Vedic Rudra is amalgamated an aboriginal god of vegetation, closely connected with pastoral life. *Vishnu cannot be said to have won any such assured place as Rudra, who is already hailed as the 'great god' par excellence, and already bears the name of Civa, 'propitious' which is to be his final appellation.*"<sup>18</sup> (Italics ours)

Now, this quotation taken from the article of a pro-brahmin Professor of a Scotch University does not beat about the bush in saying what is true of the origin of Rudra worship, but openly declares the fact of its being the hereditary cult of the non-Aryan people, although the professor seems to be somewhat reluctant to call these people the Dravidians.

Still it must be noted here that Mr. Keith likes not to identify the Rudra of the Rig Veda with the Rudra of the Tamils who preferred to call him in subsequent ages by the name of *Siva*. The term *Siva* itself as the name of Rudra is not an unknown thing to the Rig Veda. In the tenth book of this Veda (92,5), Rudra is called *Siva* in the following verse:

*"yebih Sivah Svavan evayavabhir"*

To this important point which establishes the identity of Rudra with *Siva*, some more facts taken from the Rig Veda itself might be adduced to prove the sameness of the Deity represented by the two terms.

Since God manifests himself in fire, Agni is called Rudra in the Rigveda; "*Tvam Agne Rudra*" (ii. 1,6). In like manner, in the Thiruvachakam and Devara hymns, you will meet with hundreds of

verses which either identify Siva with fire, light, the sun and the moon or call these His special forms. For instance, St. Manickavachakam sings: “His (Siva’s) blazing form is verily the fire (சுடர்கி றகோலந் தீயேயேன ம னு னு னு றம்பலவர். St. Thirugnanasambandar, St. Appar and St. Sundarar glorify Siva in the same strain as “பொங்கழ உருவ.” “அ எரி ஈசனது உருவருக்கம்.” “மெ சூயநி றெரியம் விளக்கே யொத்த தேவர்ஔரா ” respectively.

Modern science has not as yet arrived at any positive conclusion as to what constitutes the essence of light and heat. All that it could affirm about them is that the two manifest themselves as the result of two distinct vibratory motions of etheric waves. As they are imponderable, they are not substances, but are mere energies; so says the Physical science. But what originates these energies? Why should the ether vibrate in two different ways instead of one? Does the ether possess so much intelligence as to produce two distinct vibrations with a set purpose. These are questions on which science maintains complete silence.

But the ancient Saiva religion holds that light itself is God, that light is inseparable from heat though in some substances from which light emanates heat may be latent, that where both light and heat appear together the fire too becomes visible, and that as no known process of reasoning can prove fire to be a material substance the fire constitutes the manifestation of God brought about by Himself out of grace for illuminating both the outer and the inner eyes of the finite souls. Only when you can imagine what the world would be without light and heat to minister to the wants and existence of living beings, can you truly and fully comprehend the divine character, nature and significance of fire and its being the manifestation of God. When you go deeper into the matter, you will find it quite meaningless to speak of fire as being of two kinds, physical and spiritual, for there are no two kinds of fire but one only which is divine through and through.

Perhaps, this way of looking at fire might be deemed strange, nay, even ludicrous by some, the sensitiveness of whose mental vi-

sion has become deadened by long and close familiarity with this divine principle. Still a little serious thought bestowed on this great and vital subject will suffice to bring home to one's mind the fact of God being by His extreme grace easily accessible to all in the form of fire. That is why the fire itself has been called Rudra in the Rig Veda and all the Saiva Saints have been led to identify Him with the fire and the sun. And the colour of the two things being either red or gold, Rudra too has been said in the Rig Veda to be ruddy (i, 114) and to shine like gold (i,43). The Saiva Saints too describe Siva as having a form glowing red (சிவன் எனும் நாமந் தனக்கேயுடைய செம்மேனி எம்மான்) or shining like gold (பொன்னார் மேனியன்). The root-meaning of the two terms Rudra and Siva, in Tamil is 'to be ruddy.' Without mutilating and twisting the shape of these two terms, you can quite easily derive the one from the root *uru* (உரு) and the other from *Siva* (சிவ), both meaning in Tamil 'to be ruddy.' In spite of this patent fact, why should "the suggestion of Pischel that *rud* means to be ruddy, or as Grassmann, suggests, to shine" be regarded by Mr. A.B. Keith, "as too hypothetical to found any theory upon," or why should the connection of the term Siva (rpt) "with the Tamil Sivan 'redman'" be deemed by him as "neither proved nor plausible,"<sup>19</sup> I am at a loss to understand, Such assertions of his cannot be accounted for, except on the supposition that he must have been either totally ignorant of Tamil language and literature or that he is as is evident, strongly prejudiced against the Tamils and their high antique culture. Whatever might be his view about the Tamils and their civilisation, one thing is clear, sure, and certain from what he has said about Rudra that He was not the god of the Brahmins, but he was adapted or rather adopted, by them from "a great god of the people." Whether the Rig Vedic Aryans were identical with the Brahmins of the later ages or not, concerns us not to inquire in a preface like this, although evidence for their identification could not be obtained from the first nine books of the Rig Veda. All that we can say about the origin of the Rudra or Siva worship is that the cult was as entirely foreign to the ancient Indo-Aryans as it was to the other Aryan tribes who had spread throughout Europe.

If, on the contrary, the Rudra cult really belonged in ancient times not to the Tamils but to the Aryas only, then it must have prevailed either among all, or at least, among some classes of the Aryan people who migrated to Europe and settled there in its various centres. For the oldest Aryan gods that are glorified in the earliest hymns of the Rig Veda, are found to have been worshipped among the Greeks, the Romans, the Celts, the Slavs, the Lithuanians, the Teutons, etc., who formed the several sections of the early Aryan tribe. For instance, the god *Dyaus-Pitar* was worshipped by the Greeks and the Romans, as well as by the Rig Vedic Aryans. In the same way, the worship of Parjanya, Bhaga, Mitra, Vala, Atri, Varuna, Indra and other Rig Vedic Aryan gods is found widely dispersed among the Latins, the Slavonians, the Lithuanians, the Iranians, the Kosseens, the Phrygians, the Lydians, the Greeks and other Aryan people of Europe. But neither the worship of Rudra, nor His name, note it, could be met with even in a single Aryan clan in the west.<sup>20</sup> Does not this significant fact conclusively prove that the whole Aryan tribe, before any of its kinsmen entered India, knew nothing about Rudra, knew him not even by name?

Moreover, a clay-tablet discovered in 1907 by Hugo Winckler in Boghazkoi in Asia Minor, contains an inscription which mentions, among others, the names of the Aryan deities such as Indra, Varuna, and the Nasatyas, and the date of which is ascertained to be 1400 B.C.<sup>21</sup> From this vital archaeological evidence, is it not obvious that, as far back as 1400 B.C., the Aryan people who settled in Asia Minor had been addressing their prayers just as their kinsmen who migrated to Northern India did, only to Indra, Varuna, and the Nasatyas, but not to Rudra whom they evidently did not know, as, at the time they were roving about outside of India.

To add one more vital proof to those already mentioned, we may point out how the Aryans who came into India took quite a wrong view of the Sivalinga the Emblem of Rudra which they found devoutly worshipped every where, and spoke contemptuously of it as “Sisna devah” (Rig Veda, VII, 21 and X,99) or the phallus, and

reviled its worshippers as Dasas. The fact that, from time immemorial, the Tamils alone have been the devoted worshippers of Sivalinga, is testified to by the large number of magnificent Siva temples that stand out in all their architectural glory, not only in north India but also in the south where the descendants of the ancient Tamils dwell in such teeming millions at the present day. This too establishes the important fact that the early Aryan besides being quite strangers to the Rudra cult, had been at first even bitter enemies to the Tamils who were the real originators and staunch believers of this great and very ancient form of divine worship. But, as days went on, the Aryan immigrants settled down peacefully in India, and began to move closely with the Tamils and learn the high significance and value of the one great God Rudra and came gradually to adopt the cult and made it as if it had been their own. Eighty years ago Thomas Buckle took notice of this great religious fact and set it down in his brilliant "History of Civilisation", his keen historic insight directing him into its true origin. "The worship of Siva" he says, "is more general than any other; and as to its antiquity, there is reason to believe that it was borrowed by the Brahmins from the original Indians."<sup>22</sup> This opinion of an able and great historian is corroborated by the statement recently made by another Englishman who was a Professor of Economics in the University of Madras in the very heart of the Tamil country and who made a careful study of its language, religion and caste and expressed his views about them unreservedly and unequivocally in a valuable treatise on Indian culture-I allude to Dr. Gilbert Slater who says on this important religious matter as follows:

"The caste system, the sancity of the Brahman, the worship of *Kali*, of *Siva* and *Vishnu*, of *Parvati*, the consort, and *Subramaniam* and *Ganesa*, the sons of *Siva*, and of Krishna, the last incarnation of *Vishnu*, these things are not mere alien and unimportant accretions to an Indian culture of Aryan and Vedic origin, they are of the innermost essence of Indian culture. If *Kali and Siva and Vishnu are not Vedic deities, and vertainly they are not, they can hardly be Aryan, and there seems no other possible alternative than to suppose they are Dravidian.*"<sup>23</sup> (Italics are mine) And in another place he

says: “Vishnu and Siva demand no blood sacrifices.”<sup>24</sup>

Is not this statement of a momentous historical and religious fact made by an Englishman who remained in the capital town of the Tamil country and eagerly studied on the spot the language, the history, the social conditions and the religious principles of the Tamil people, more notable than the biased assertions made by men like Mr. Keith and Mr.A.C. Das, who, it seems, knew next to nothing of Tamil language and literature and who, most probably, gleaned all their stray information about them from unreliable sources mainly from untrust worthy accounts of Sanscrit books? Having proved so far the fact of the Rudra-cult being the exclusive property of the Tamilians, I now pass on to consider the point whether the Rudra of the Rig Veda was different from, or identical with, the Rudra or Siva of the Tamils’ Saiva religion.

With admirable labour and patience Dr. John Muir has brought together in the fourth volume of his very valuable “Original Sanscrit Texts” all the original passages that relate to Rudra or Siva in the Vedas, the Brahmanas, the Upanishads, the Ithihasas and the Puranas, so that, for a careful study of the Rudra-cult, we cannot find a better book than this to recommend to all earnest inquirers of this great subject. To our present purpose the passages collected by him from the Rig Veda alone are of extreme importance. And we cannot sum up all that is told in them of Rudra better than in the words of M.Barth who gives a succinct summary of it as follows:

“From their father, Rudra, they inherit the knowledge of remedies. *This last whose name probably meant the ‘reddish one,’ before it was interpreted to mean ‘The Howler’* is, like his sons, a god of storm. In the Hymns, which certainly do not tell us everything here any more than elsewhere, he has nothing of that gloomy aspect under which we find him become so famous afterwards. Although he is armed with the thunderbolt, and is the author of sudden deaths, he is represented as pre-eminently helpful and beneficent. He is the handsomest of the gods, with his fair locks. Like Soma, the most excellent remedies are at his disposal, and his special office is that of protector

of flocks.”<sup>25</sup>

In the same way as He is represented in the Rig Veda (i.43) as possessing healing remedies, Siva is called ‘Vaidyanatha’ and two famous temples are dedicated to Him, one in Northern India at Baidyanath and the other in Southern India at Vaidisvarankoil. As regards His names Rudra and Siva being pure Tamil words, I have already quoted verses taken from the hymns of the great Saiva Saints who existed from the third century A.D. to the ninth. Just as He is spoken of in the Rig Veda (i.85) as being most bounteous and beneficent, as possessing a brilliant form and the spirally braided hair, as being the protector of two-footed and four-footed creatures, so is He repeatedly invoked in the ancient classical Tamil poems, especially in the Paripadal and in the hymns of the Saiva Saints, as the most unstinted bestower of boons and the God of the most gracious benevolence, and is invariably called ‘Sadaiyan,’ that is, one who has the braided hair, and ‘Pasupathi’ or the Lord of all creatures whether two-footed or four-footed. These epithets which are no less frequently applied to Rudra or Siva both in Sanscrit and Tamil literatures are familiarly known even to the illiterate Tamilians of the present day who repair in millions to the Siva temples which exist in thousands all over India from Benares to Ramesvaram.

And of the many protective deeds that are ascribed to Rudra or Siva in both the literatures, two are distinctly referred to in the Rig Veda: one is the burning of the three cities (vi.16) and the other the drinking of poison (x.136). These are the two great and gracious acts which Siva is said to have performed for the sake of protecting the gods from the persecutions wrought against them by the Asuras. Now, in most of the Tamil poems of ancient and later times where Lord Siva is invoked and praised, one cannot but be struck by the frequency with which the two great deeds of His are mentioned by the poets as indicating His unbounded mercy and grace shown to beings suffering helpless, whoever such beings are, whether Aryan or Tamilian, who seek His help by devotion and penance.

Do not these traits in the portrayal of Rudra in the Rig Veda and of Siva in the ancient and later poems in Tamil clearly indicate the identity of the Rudra of the former Aryan work with the Siva of both the ancient and later works in Tamil? To these facts one more might be added as showing in a still clearer light the oneness of the apparently two gods.

In the quiescent and meditative mood in which He sat to instruct the four sages the method of merging the individual self-consciousness in the universal consciousness of God, Rudra is represented in the Rig Veda (x.136) as the Muni or the silent being who wears on his head long and beautiful braided locks, just like the siva yogis, seen all over India from the Himalayas to Cape Comorin, do even at the present day. In this attitude Siva is known by the name of Dakshinamoorthi, the great yogi, and you will find the image of Dakshinamoorthi set up in every Siva temple all over India. the god of yoga is not any of the Aryan deities such as Indra, Mitra and Varuna, but is Isvara as has been emphasized by Patanjali in his 'Yoga Sutras.' M. Barth rightly observes: "He (Siva) is also *par excellence* the god of asceticism and austerities. He is the chief of the yogins."<sup>26</sup> The term 'Isvara' applied by Patanjali to Rudra, has already appeared in a slightly altered form in the Rig Veda (ii.33) as the name of Lord Rudra. There the word occurs as 'Isana,' and in the later Vedas as 'Isa' and 'Isvara' For a detailed treatment of this point and the Tamilian origin of yoga, the reader is referred to my article 'Who the Originators of yoga?'

With the mixture of the Aryan priests and the Tamilian yogis, the Brahmanic literature too came to be mixed with the Ascetic poetry of the Tamils. Prof. M. Winternitz in the course of his critical studies of Sanscrit literature came to be struck so much by this marked difference and admixture of the two streams of thought that he greatly interested himself in making their distinctive character clear in one of his learned and instructive lectures collectively called "Some problems of Indian Literature." The following extracts from

the lecture on “Ascetic Literature in Ancient India” are given as proving my conclusion independently arrived at by a careful study of both Sanscrit and Tamil literature. Prof. Winternitz observes:

“There was in ancient India an ascetic literature different in its character and in its teaching entirely from the Brahmanic literature.”

“And it will be found that the ideas and ideals of this ascetic poetry are originally connected with Samkhya and Yoga as well as with Buddhism and Jainism while whenever they appear mixed up with orthodox Brahmanism in Brahmanical literature they appear as something foreign.”

“The ethics of the legendary poetry and still more of the Brahmanical gnostic poetry is entirely a priestly code of morals. It requires knowledge of the Veda, sacrifice, and honouring of the Brahmins, who are even placed above the gods. It strictly adheres to the system of castes. By ‘charity’ these Brahmanical legends and maxims invariably mean liberality towards the Brahmins, ample gifts to the priests. Self-sacrifice means absolute devotion towards the priests. That king is praised and glorified who presents thousands of cows to the Brahmins, that king is actually raised into heaven, who is entirely obedient to the priest and humbles himself completely before the Brahmin.”

“Quite different is the ethical ideal of the ascetic poetry. Its legends are not based on the mythology of the Veda, but rather on folk-lore of popular tales and ballads. The heroes of this legendary poetry are not the half-divine Rishis, but the world-renouncing yogins and ascetics.”

“This ascetic morality culminates in *Ahimsa*, abstaining from hurting any being, and in *Maitri*, love of all that lives. It demands complete renunciation of this world, and it disregards caste. Not priests are the poets of these legends and maxims and the teachers of this morality, but sages of all castes and ranks.”

“This ascetic morality however is only part of the whole as-

cetic view of life which is based on the belief in transmigration and *Karman*.”

Here, for fear of tiring the patience of the reader I stop giving further extracts from the very interesting lecture of Prof. Winternitz. While admiring the penetration of mind which led Mr. Winternitz to detect the presence of an ascetic poetry in the ancient Sanscrit literature and discriminate it from the Brahminic poetry which was lying side by side with it, we regret he has not shown who the originators of the ascetic poetry were, if, as he stressed the point, the Brahmins could not have been so. If Mr. Winternitz had possessed the slightest acquaintance with some of the ancient Tamil classics such as the *Thirukkural* and the *Purananooru* which were produced at the beginning and long before the beginning of the Christian era, he might have easily discovered that it was the Tamil Saints and Sages who had been the real founders of the ascetic poetry. In proof of what I have said about the origin of the ascetic poetry, let me quote here the English translation of a verse in the *Purananooru* collection, which I inserted in my English work on “The Ancient and Modern Tamil Poets” and which contains the gist of the ascetic poetry.

“All places are ours, all are our kith and kin,  
Good and evil come, not caused by others;  
Pain and relief are brought likewise, not by others;  
Dying is not new; nor living gave us joy;  
Misery we hated not. As in the flood,  
Caused by clouds that poured in torrents  
On a mountain top with lightning flash,  
A raft goes in the direction of the stream,  
So the swarm of lives move onward  
In the way of destiny. This we have discerned  
From the teachings of sages strong in wisdom.

So we admire not the great; nor scoff at the churl.”

This Tamil verse was composed by the poet Kanian Poongundran who existed most probably in the pre-Buddhistic period. The poets whose poems form the collection of Purananooru existed from 3000 B.C. to the first century A.D. But our poet Poongundran and some others of his time and that preceding his do not seem to have lived at the time when either the Aryan or the Buddhist influence had come into operation in Southern India. It was Asoka who first sent Buddhist missionaries to the south to preach the moral teaching of the Buddha; but the Tamil people had already been in possession of such comprehensive moral and religious principles as not only included within their range the moral maxims of Buddhism but even went beyond them in inculcating the worship of one Almighty God of the universe and the principle of non-killing and abstinence from flesh-eating to its very highest limit. In the poems of Poongundran and some others of his type are found the very pith and marrow of the great ethical and religious teachings of the ancient Tamil Saints and Sages, the special features of which cannot be traced to any Aryan or Buddhist ethical codes and religious texts. The Poet Poongundran, therefore, seems to my mind to belong to a period when neither the Aryan nor the Buddhist mode of thought came to exercise any influence on the minds of the Tamil thinkers in the south.

Further I have shown elsewhere<sup>27</sup> that the Buddhist ethical religion itself was a development of one important phase of the Tamilian faith, that is, of the religion of love and mercy-love and mercy which must be shown not only to human beings but also to the very lowest of the animal kingdom. In proof of this let me quote a few verses from the Sacred Kural of St. Thiruvalluvar who lived in the latter half of the first century A.D.

*“All letters have A as their first cause.*

*So also does the whole world own but one*

*God as its first cause.”*

*“Those who have gained the feet of Lord  
Will cross the ocean of births,  
While others cannot cross it in any wise.”*

*“The first of virtuous deeds is not to kill,  
The next to it is not to lie.”*

*“Instead of offering a thousand sacrifices  
with clarified butter,  
It is good not to kill a living being  
and eat the flesh thereof.”*

*“If there be love and charity in one’s household,  
That forms the virtue and fruit of it.”*

*“All living beings are equal from the  
very nature of birth,  
While distinction springs from variety  
of callings.”*

*“Those who renounce all attain to heaven.  
Others get into the snare lured by  
mistaken mind.”*

While verses of this ascetic character abound in the old classical Tamil literature, very scarcely do we meet in it with those which mention with approval any of the Brahmanic doctrines. The social, moral and religious principles which the ancient Tamil poems inculcate are so comprehensive in their character and so broad in their outlook that they embrace within their fold all the true and high principles that are common to all people, irrespective of caste, creed and country.

And it must be borne in mind that all the great teachings, enshrined in the ascetic poetry, written either in Sanscrit or in Tamil,

centre round the figure of the great Yogi and almighty God of the world, Lord Rudra or Siva.

More still the significant fact must be impressed that the Lord Rudra as depicted in a few hymns of the Rig Veda is not in any way different from, but is quite identical with, the Lord Siva of both the ancient and modern forms of Saiva religion. And the very paucity of the hymns - for there are only five entire hymns addressed to Rudra in the whole of the Rig Veda which contains 1017 hymns in all of which 250 are devoted to the praise of Indra, itself testifies to the Tamilian origin of the Rudra-cult. And it is only in the hymns to Indra that the Aryas pray as much for their being discriminated from their foes the non-Aryas whom they call the Dasas or Dasyus as for the wholesale destruction of the latter; whereas in the hymns addressed to Rudra no such bitter racial hatred nor any Aryan malignity make their detestable appearance. Further, it is only in the hymns to Indra that the horrible sacrifices attended with the cruel and inhuman slaughter of animals and the drinking revelry of the Aryas are referred to, whereas in the hymns to Rudra neither such bloody sacrifices nor drinking bouts are even remotely alluded to. Do not these two different types of hymns make it quite clear that Indra was the favourite god of the Aryas, while Rudra was the special god of the Tamils? As pointed out by Dr. Slater, Siva makes no demands for any kind of bloody sacrifices, as Indra and other Aryan deities do.

Now, in corroboration of what has been said so far, evidence of still greater and more permanent value has come forth from the recent excavations carried on at Harappa and Mohenjodaro in the Punjab, where the once highly civilized states of the Tamilians existed before the advent of the Aryan nomads, but which are now unearthed only in a ruined condition. Among the objects that have been discovered there is a stone image, the posture and the peculiar half-shut eyes of which have been thought by one authority to represent the attitude of the *Yogi* in contemplation.<sup>28</sup> Similarly are discovered some stone and pottery seal amulets on which

was found stamped “a nude deity, with horns and three faces seated on a stool with his heels pressed closely together in what is evidently a religious attitude.”<sup>29</sup> With respect to this figure Dr. Mackay says: “Sir John Marshall has identified this figure as the Indian god Shiva, in his aspect of Pasupathi or Lord of Beasts. The fact that the god is shown on the seal-amulet with three faces, and perhaps even a fourth on the side turned away, gives strong support to Sir John’s theory, for Shiva was, and is, pictured in India with as many as five faces. It has always been suspected that he was one of the oldest Indian gods and that his worship dated from the prehistoric period, a supposition which is justified by this interpretation of this seal amulet.”<sup>30</sup>

And as regards the pre-historic antiquity of the Saiva religion, Sir John Marshall himself has written:

“Among the many revelations that Mohenjodaro 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.”<sup>31</sup>

From this impartial utterance of an eminent archaeologist the fact that Saivism had been the religion of the pre-Aryan Tamils who occupied the whole of India 5000 years ago, must become quite and well established.

Now, the following treatise is based on the contents of the paper read as the presidential address in the annual gathering of “The Madras Presidency College Philosophical Association” which took place on the 15th November 1922. And again at the request of the Secretary of “The Universal Religious Conference,” it was read at its third day session on the 31st of March, 1923. It was but the earnest desire of the organisers of both the conventions to familiarize themselves and the educated public at large with the principles of the Saiva Siddhanta, the great South Indian system of thought, in a succinct yet clear form, that occasioned the writing of this short treatise.

A little after the time that called it forth, some of the points briefly touched in that paper seemed to me to require a somewhat enlarged treatment, and a clear comprehension of this has now been attempted and done to a reasonable extent in the following expansion of the above work.

Still, I cannot pretend to have given a full exposition of all the fundamental principles of the Saiva Siddhanta. To do so would require a large volume in itself. And for embodying the results of my critical and comparative study of almost all the systems of philosophy, both eastern and western, carried on in relation to the Saiva Siddhanta, I have a great mind to write a book of much more useful and comprehensive kind; but I do not know whether I would be spared by Providence to undertake the task and be enabled by it to accomplish the great work which I have ever in my view.

Still, within its limited scope, it is my belief the present work has done its best not only to give a clear exposition of some of the fundamental and most important principles of the Saiva Siddhanta, but to show also the close resemblance they bear to modern European and American thought as developed by John Stuart Mill, James Martineau, William James, F.C.S.Schiller, James Ward, Bergson, Eucken, Henry Drummond, James Sully and others.

But many who read the history of both the ancient and modern philosophical system of the east and the west, are little acquainted with the Saiva Siddhanta and they even think that the Vedanta, as interpreted by Sankaracharya, is the only philosophy which has reached the high watermark of the Hindu, or rather, Indian thought. Unfortunately this misunderstanding is due not a little to the stark ignorance in which are kept the oriental scholars, in respect of the Saiva Siddhanta and Tamil literature. The fact must be borne in mind that in Tamil alone exist systematic, authoritative works on the Saiva Siddhanta whereas in Sanscrit either in the Vedic or in the post-Vedic period not even a single systematic work on this phi-

losophy is to be met with, even though its principal tenets are found scattered with much that is rubbish, in the Upanishads and in the Samkhya, the Yoga, the Nyaya, the Vaisesika and the Vedanta works.

For this grievous ignorance of Tamil literature and the Saiva Siddhanta, it is the early contact of the western scholars with the Brahmins that is responsible; for the Brahmins almost without an exception detest the Tamil people, their language, religion and philosophy and do not like to show the value of the knowledge of Tamil and Tamilian thought to a mighty foreigner, but take every precaution to represent with all their eagerness Sanscrit to be only divine language treasuring the genuine thoughts of the Saints and Sages of India who pondered over the ultimate problems of life and life's existence and arrived at their correct solutions.

The more the influence of the Brahmins who are usually of a pushing nature, increased with the Europeans, the more the study of Sanscrit and Sanscrit literature rose into prominence, and the more study of Tamil and pure Tamil classics came to be thrown into oblivion. And as the pluralistic philosophy of the Tamils stands diametrically opposed to the pantheistic system of the Brahmins, in the same way as the strictly monotheistic religion of the Tamils shows itself to be in marked contrast with, the latter's polytheistic creed, the aversion of the Brahmins for the Tamils grew more and more intense in proportion to the degree in which the excellence of the Tamilian thought came to be secretly recognized by the Brahmins. So they totally denied, just as they do even at this scientific age, that there was anything valuable to know outside the pale of Sanscrit. Consequently the knowledge of Tamil and Tamil classics had to lie concealed, or rather unrecognized, for centuries, even from the searching eye of the European intellect, until a few learned and very painstaking Christian missionaries such as Dr. Caldwell and Dr.G.U.Pope ventured to turn their serious attention to Tamil classics and devote their whole life-time to a deep study and correct representation of their nature and contents. In spite of all their labours, the Tamilian thought cannot be said to

have received still the attention it deserves from the European and American thinkers.

It is my humble ambition to present to the English knowing people the main principle of the Saiva Siddhanta in as succinct a form as possible, that has prompted me to attempt the writing of this short treatise in English. Those who possess no knowledge of this philosophy and its original source may marvel at its remarkable resemblance to modern thought and may even doubt whether what I have treated here really belongs to the Saiva Siddhanta. To such I would recommend the study of the fine and faithful English translation of the *Thiruvarut-payan*, a brief but authoritative work in Tamil on this system of philosophy, inserted by Dr.G.U.Pope in the introduction to his scholarly English rendering of the *Thiruvachakam*, the sacred lyrical poem of St. Manickavachakar.

In concluding this preface, I beg to acknowledge my deep indebtedness to Dr. F.C.S. Schiller of Corpus Christi College, Oxford, who, at my request, took trouble, in the midst of his college work and arduous philosophic labours, with his usual kindness to authors, to go through this treatise in manuscript and not only made in it many valuable suggestions and corrections but also furnished a sympathetic note to this unpretentious work on the Saiva Siddhanta.

After Dr. Schiller returned the manuscript, I set myself to the task of enlarging certain points here and there and getting the prepared portions printed in my Press.

But this work I could not carry on continuously, since it was interrupted every now and then by my incessant labour in Tamil. Moreover, I consider my Tamil work to be more important than the work I intend to do in English. For my Tamil brethren are mostly illiterate and even the very few who are literate are unenlightened and unprogressive socially, morally, intellectually and religiously. Therefore I had to apply myself most strenuously for more than forty years

to the hard labour of bringing enlightenment to my countrymen in almost all the most useful and important branches of knowledge by lectures and by the production of Tamil works which have come to more than forty up till now. It is this continuous lecturing and writing work in Tamil that has delayed the publication of this short English treatise for nearly eighteen years. I pay my humble homage to the sacred feet of the almighty God, for having enabled me to bring this out after so long a period of time.

Pallavaram,  
29th April, 1940

Vedachalam.

#### **Footnotes**

1. Pragmatism, p.13.
2. Taken from Dr. G.U. Pope's translation of the Thiruvirutpayan; see his Translation of the Thiruvachakam. p.li.
3. Dr.E. Caird's "The Evolution of Religion," vol.1.p.227.
4. The Realm of Ends, p.204
5. Ibid, p.18
6. Riddles of the Sphinx, 2nd edition, p.403.
7. Ibid, p.434.
8. Natural Law in the Spiritual World, cheap Ed., p. 29.
9. The Realm of Ends. p.213.
10. Riddles of the Sphinx, p.298.
11. Vedic India, pp.284-285.
12. Ibid, pp.318-320.
13. Ibid pp.292,293
14. Ibid pp.308,309.
15. Comparative Grammar of the Dravidian Languages p.69.
16. Ibid, p.54.
17. See M. Barth's Religions of India, p.163, footnote
18. The Cambridge History of Ancient India, pp. 144-145.

19. The Religion and Philosophy of the Veda and Upanish ads, Vol. I, pp.143 & 146.
20. Rig-Vedic Culture, by Mr. A.C. Das, pp.56-96.
21. The Cambridge History of India, Vol.1,p.72.
22. “History of Civilisation” edited by J.M. Robertson and published by Routledge,p.80.
23. The Dravidian Element in Indian Culture, by Gilbert Slater, M.A., D.Sc., p.50
24. Ibid, p.110.
25. A. Barth’s ‘The Religions of India’,p.14.
26. The Religions of India, p.165.
27. Refer to my Tamil work on “The Life and Times of St. Manickavachakar.”
28. See The Indus Civilization by Dr. Ernest Mackay, p.66.
29. Ibid. p.70.
30. Ibid, p.70,71.
31. Mohenjo-daro and the Indus civilization, Vol.I.

**SAIVA SIDDHANTA AS A  
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## **SAIVA SIDDHANTA AS A PHILOSOPHY OF PRACTICAL KNOWLEDGE**

“Philosophy” says Professor William James in his monumental work on religion.<sup>1</sup> “lives in words, but truth and fact well up into our lives in ways that exceed verbal formulations.” In these words what he means to insist on is that a philosophy, bearing no vital and intimate relation to the stern realities of life, is like an empty and dead body that has lost the pre-eminent principle of consciousness which makes it both valuable and useful. From the earliest times, here in India as in Greece and other western countries, there have been, and still are, in existence, various systems of philosophy and various kinds of religion, a great many of which are mostly built upon mere imaginations, assumptions and fancies. But Saiva Siddhanta, unique amongst them all, is grounded solely upon sound practicalities of life. Even on rare occasions when it reaches the very outskirts of practical reason to jump into unexplored regions of pure reason, it does not venture to disappear completely from our sight without leaving behind at least a clue for us to discover how it went there and what it was that enticed it away from its native home.

Numerous problems which it solves are solved in the crucible of stringent practical tests. Nothing in it is taken for granted, nor anything is asserted arrogantly, nor any attempt made to shut the mouth of an earnest and inquiring student. Every problem and every knotty point in the history of thought is taken up in a calm, serious and dignified mood, is duly considered in all its aspects, and is then

solved by the application of strict logical methods derived from the keen observations of daily occurrences in life. As has been effectively said by Prof. William James that “to attain perfect clearness in our thoughts of an object, we need then only consider what sensations, immediate or remote we are conceivably to expect from it, and what conduct we must prepare in case the object should be true. Our conception of these practical consequences is for us the whole of our conception of the object, so far as that conception has positive significance at all.”<sup>2</sup> Saiva Siddhanta, again in his words, “could never get away from concrete life or work in a conceptual vacuum.”<sup>3</sup> It is my humble desire to impress on your mind the importance of this position of Saiva Siddhanta - this practical point of view from which it proceeds to argue the three categories of life, namely mind and  
*Pasu,*  
*Pasam and Pathi.*

But at the present time as in the past, in complete opposition to this practical stand-point of Saiva Siddhanta, there are prevalent everywhere many fanciful theories of which one holds that all knowledge derived through sense perception from the practical affairs of life, being the knowledge of individual things passing every moment out of existence, cannot be admitted to have permanent value, but must be given up as untrue and illusive, and only that knowledge acquired through direct intuitive perception of a thing abstract and everexisting should be accepted as true and valuable. However attractive and convincing this may seem to some light-minded people, it cannot satisfy the cravings of the serious-minded. In abstractions man can never live long. He has a substantial body made of flesh and blood; and many and varied are his needs. To meet his daily wants, he seeks not after abstract but concrete things, by working hard and unremittingly both night and day. When his hunger is acute, his thirst is unbearable, you cannot persuade him to imagine that he is taking sweet and wholesome food and drinking cool, fresh and clear water. He will simply treat with scorn any such suggestion and will go his way in search of a spot where he can really get his food and drink. Similar are his other requirements which can be gratified only by concrete things.

Some may object to this by saying that in a future state of existence when man can live free from the contact and contamination of this gross earthly matter, not only will life in an abstract world be possible but it must also constitute the only true goal to attain which man, while he is on this earth, must strive hard to cultivate the habit of forgetting this world and its transitory objects and must learn to live in the thought of the pure and real Absolute. But this future state and the mode of life thus claimed for it, I venture to say, we have no means of knowing, What certainly is there that this form of abstract life will lead to a similar state of life in future? What is there to prove that this is the right method to attain salvation? Who are those that have forgotten this world in this way? And what is that on which they fix their mind? Our knowledge is limited, it is true; still we want to know what proofs there are for such assertions. If you discard all proofs and simply indulge in asserting your own opinions, you are narrowing the extent of your mental plane and increasing the power of darkness that limits and encircles it. The more you shut the light of practical reason out, the more you let the gloom of ignorance into your mind and make all intellectual progress an impossibility.

No doubt the course of our mind's development began in a remote past and runs through our present; and there is every reason to believe that it will project itself into a distant future. Limited as are the conditions of his life, man alone, of all living beings, is endowed with that wonderful faculty of reason which enables him to extend his vision both backwards and forwards with the help of the present. In this consists his glory. He cannot afford to lose the present. If he should deliberately wish to lose it, granting it possible for argument's sake, though it is psychologically impossible, his mind would become a mere blank or a vacuum and he dead, though living, like a maniac, if a maniac can be conceived to think no thoughts.

Even were it possible for some peculiarly constituted person to construct an abstract world out of his own mind, is it possible to think that it is not a copy of some fragment of this external world? Is it not a persisting law of nature that each and every image formed in

the mind of man, is formed, in some way or other, to reproduce an external fact of nature? I cannot state this intimate relation of an abstract idea to a concrete thing better than in the words of an eminent scientist and thinker Dr. James Ward who says: "In abstract theory, then, we may introduce first one particle and then another, each moving in given directions in absolute space, and we may talk of their speed as measured by absolute time flowing equably without relation to anything else. But, in reality, nothing of this kind is accessible to us."<sup>24</sup> He continues: "It is easy to see that the mechanical theory is here divided against itself, and in this state cannot stand. Experience compels it to admit the thorough-going interdependence of all bodies, while mathematics tempts it to suppose that it is possible to deal with bodies independently and apart. The bodies which mathematics would regard as isolated wholes are but undetermined fragments of what is really indivisible, abstract aspects that never exist alone."<sup>25</sup> This verdict of a great scientific voice should be sufficient to settle any lingering doubt as regards the untenable position of the abstract theory. Even here, in proving the unsoundness of the abstract theory, one would see that appeal is made to concrete things. Can you conceive of motion apart from a moving body? Can you think of a virtuous act out of its relation to a bounteous man? Can you picture to your mind the glowing colours of blue, crimson, yellow, green and purple except as they are painted in the sky on a bright winter evening, or as found in some beautiful fruits and flowers? These facts brought to bear upon the abstract theory, in comparison with the practical or pragmatic view of Saiva Siddhanta, will clearly show that to form a correct estimate of an abstract idea, it must be related to the object which gave rise to it. This truth was long ago seen and enforced in clear and unmistakable terms by one of the profoundest thinkers of the last century, I mean, John Stuart Mill to whose genius the British philosophy owes its breadth and modern development. He says: "It is one of the most unquestionable of all logical maxims that the meaning of the abstract must be sought for in the concrete, and not conversely."<sup>26</sup>

St. Meikandan, the first systematic expounder of Saiva Siddhanta in Tamil, held, six hundred and fifty years ago, that “but for life in the concrete, which serves like lamp-light to illumine the understanding of the soul, the self can know nothing nor can it discriminate one thing from the other; for just as a piece of wood hides fire within itself, so the evil principle which is darkness itself envelops the soul from eternity.”<sup>77</sup> To explain the matter so tersely put by St. Meikandan in a single stanza of his great work, the Sivajnanabodham in Tamil, would require several hours which we cannot spare now. I shall, therefore, touch on it briefly.

By concrete life the Saint means the life that is going on in intimate union with this organic body and all its organs, this earth and all its objects. Independently of this form of life, he holds, the Self cannot evolve, nor can it attain to a knowledge of itself and its environment, nor can it escape from the trammels of evil, sin and ignorance. To understand clearly this abstract teaching of our Saint, we must again have recourse to a concrete example. Let us compare a newborn child with a magnet. For, as has been told by Prof. James Sully, that “unless we could observe in children and the lower animals the simpler forms of mental processes, we should be unable to trace back the complexities of adult consciousness to their constituent elements, and even with this help, we can only carry such analytical simplification of physical phenomena to a certain degree of completeness.”<sup>78</sup> Now the child has a supple body made of living matter and completely fitted up with all complex organs; but the magnet is not made so; it has neither living matter nor any growing organs.

Still there is a little similarity between the child and the magnet. When hungry, the child sucks the breast of her mother; and the magnet also draws towards itself little pieces of iron, although you cannot attribute to it any motive for its action, as in the case of the child. So much for their similarity. Now comes a difference which is most vital and significant of results. As soon as her hunger is appeased, the child leaves off sucking but the magnet never lets the iron pieces go, unless another force comes into play between them. Fur-

ther, as days and months pass by, the child learns, step by step, to make an intelligent use of her organs and, as years roll on, she becomes more and more intelligent and in proportion to the growth of her intelligence she becomes more and more independent. But all this time of the child's growth, our magnet lies quiet with the iron pieces so much so that we can confidently predict that its state in the future will ever continue to be the same unless otherwise disturbed. To every thinking mind, these observations of the two cannot but reveal certain momentous facts. Though the body of the child and that of the magnet are both made of matter, the body of the child has something more added to it while that of the magnet has nothing of that sort. Now, it must be apparent to you that this additional something in the child is not a property of her body, just as the force in the magnet is its property, but is an independent entity separable from its corporal matter as is seen in the case of a dead infant. Nor can this separable something be another material but subtle body, inclosed within this gross material sheath, since the living frame of a child or any other human being has not been found to weigh heavier than the dead one but is remarkably lighter than that. It is a commonly admitted fact that a body instinct with life is much lighter than when it is without it.

If this be a real fact which awaits the scientific test for its correctness, it will go to prove that life is not another material substance but an immaterial and imponderable something which has not been found to add to its weight when it remains one with it nor has it been to lessen it when it leaves that body. Nor again, can this something be a form of blind energy such as heat, light and electricity, since it is conscious of itself and its actions, since it performs its functions not according to blind and uniform mechanical laws but according to its own freewill and fancy which cannot be brought out by any known agency under any fixed laws. How markedly this contrast between the material body and that something which dwells inside of it, is set forth by Prof. William James, may be seen clearly from what he says in his larger work on Psychology. "If some iron filings." he writes, "be sprinkled on a table and a magnet brought near them, they will fly

through the air for a certain distance and stick to its surface. A savage seeing the phenomenon explains it as the result of an attraction or love between the magnet and the filings. But let a card cover the poles of the magnet, and the filings will press for ever against its surface without its ever occurring to them to pass around its sides and thus come into more direct contact with the object of their love.

Blow bubbles through a tube into the bottom of a pail of water, they will rise to the surface and mingle with the air. Their action may again be poetically interpreted as due to a longing to recombine with the mother-atmosphere above the surface. But if you invert a jar full of water over the pail, they will rise and remain lodged beneath its bottom, shut in from the outer air, although a slight deflection from their course at the outset, or a re-descent towards the rim of the jar when they found their upward course impeded, would easily have set them free. If now we pass from such actions as these to those of living things, we notice a striking difference. Romeo wants Juliet as the filings want the magnet; and if no obstacles intervene he moves towards her by as straight a line as they. But Romeo and Juliet, if a wall be built between them, do not remain idiotically pressing their faces against its opposite sides like the magnet and the filings with the card. Romeo soon finds a circuitous way, by scaling the wall or otherwise, of touching Juliet's lips directly. With the filings the path is fixed; whether it reaches the end depends on accidents. With the lover it is the end which is fixed, the path may be modified indefinitely."<sup>9</sup> He then continues: "The pursuance of future ends and choice of means for their attainment are thus the mark and criterion of the presence of mentality in a phenomenon."<sup>10</sup>

But among men of science in the latter half of the last century, attempts have been made to identify this intelligent principle with its corporeal matter by experiments carried out with a set purpose to evolve life out of lifeless matter. Fortunately for us, students of philosophy, Prof. John Tyndall, a scientist of great repute, proved, once

for all, by carefully-conducted experiments, that life is not produced from lifeless matter but for its production the influence of another life must precede it necessarily. In his luminous essay on 'Spontaneous Generation,' after describing the details of the numerous experiments very cautiously conducted by himself on test conditions, he concludes, "These and other experiments, carried out with a severity perfectly obvious to the instructed scientific reader, and accompanied by a logic equally severe, restored the conviction that, even in these lower reaches of the scale of being, *life does not appear without the operation of antecedent life.*"<sup>11</sup> (Italics are mine). This vital conclusion reached by Prof. Tyndall in the year 1878, still remains unshaken, and the vast number of researches made by the succeeding generations of scientific men from his day up to the present, simply go to confirm it with added strength.

Sir Oliver Lodge, a great living authority in Science, expresses more pronounced views on this momentous question of life and it is very gratifying to note that this opinion of his and similar others pertaining to religion and philosophy bear a close resemblance to those of St. Meikandan. He says in his admirable book on *Life and Matter*; "The view concerning life which I have endeavoured to express is that it is neither matter nor energy, nor even a function of matter or of energy, but is something belonging to a different category; that by some means at present unknown it is able to interact with the material world for a time, but that it can also exist in some sense independently; although in that condition of existence it is by no means apprehensible by our senses.

It is dependent on matter for its phenomenal appearance-for its manifestation to us here and now, and for all its terrestrial activities; but otherwise, I conceive that it is independent, that its essential existence is continuous and permanent, though its interactions with matter are discontinuous and temporary; and I conjecture that it is subject to a law of evolution-that a linear advance is open to it-whether it be in its phenomenal or in its occult state."<sup>12</sup> In another place of the same book he observes, "We do not know to generate life without

the action of antecedent life at present, though that may be a discovery lying ready for us in the future; but even if we did, it would still be true (as I think) that the life was in some sense preexistent, that it was not really created de novo, that it was brought into actual practical every-day existence doubtless, but that it had pre-existed in some sense too.”<sup>13</sup> Again in the concluding pages of that book, he states, “So far, however, all effort at spontaneous generation has been a failure; possibly because some essential ingredient or condition was omitted, possibly because great lapse of time was necessary. But suppose it was successful; what then? We should then be reproducing in the laboratory a process that must at some past age have occurred on the earth; for at one time the earth was certainly hot and molten and inorganic, whereas now it swarms with life. Does that show that the earth generated life? By no means; no more than it need necessarily have generated all the gases of its atmosphere, or the meteoric dust which lies upon its snows.”<sup>14</sup> These extracts from a living scientist’s work will suffice to represent the attitude of modern science towards the solution arrived at by Tyndall and Meikandan concerning the problem of life and matter.

Not only by experiments but even under our own daily observations, we find in the core of every living material body, set in the sharpest contrast to it, an immaterial, conscious and intelligent principle which you may call by whatever name you choose such as mind, life, self, soul, ego, spirit, *atma* and *uyir*.

Though the soul is thus naturally distinct from matter, we see it here only in an intimate union with a material body. Why this intimacy between the two was brought about, has also been explained by St. Meikandan not from any assumed, unfounded and fanciful theory but from the same and simple practical point of view as is within the easy reach of all reflective minds. The purpose of this union, he says, is to bring enlightenment to the individual soul which lies immersed in mental gloom. For a clear comprehension of this fact we must again

turn to our old example. Watch the condition of the new-born infant. For some days since her birth, she remains for the most part in deep sleep, except at stated intervals when pinched by hunger and thirst, she opens her eyes and cries. Immediately the gracious and loving mother takes her to her breast and suckles her. Thus satisfied, the child remains for a while awake and then goes again to sleep. In these dim beginnings of child life, only a feeble ray of mental light peeps through for a short time and thereafter all is again deep and thick gloom.

Observe here how the provision of benign Nature, without permitting the child to sleep away all her time in darkness, through hunger and thirst, taps at her like her gentle mother and brings her back, every now and then, to consciousness and activity. Here, then, we see clearly two opposite principles at work, both in close connexion with the child's mental life, one seeking to draw the child's consciousness off from the other's grip, while the other easily drags it back to its empty cellar of pitchy darkness. The child's body is so constituted as to call forth and disengage her consciousness little by little from the possession of mental darkness, while this darkness itself works all the time against it and regains its influence over the soul in every next moment. To this earliest struggle that is going on in the life of every human offspring, might be traced all the later and more complicated contests both in the individual and social lives of mankind. So far, it is as clear as day light that three principles, considerably diversified in nature and character, co-exist in one inseparable unity, each interpenetrating the other in a mysterious manner. Of these three, one is an individual mind, the other a darkening and limiting cause which we may call as a subtle and peculiar kind of matter, if the term matter may be so extended as to include in its meaning that which is imponderable and non-intelligent but has a certain manifest power of direct action, and the third a tangible, visible and extremely complex organic body which by degrees serves to evoke the consciousness of the indwelling spirit and enables it to develop and display all the infinite potentialities of its mind.

In the terminology of Saiva Siddhanta these three are called Pasu, Pasam and Maya. Here it is necessary to distinguish between the meaning of the term Maya as used in the philosophy of Saiva Siddhanta and that used in the modern Vedanta. We do not find this word Maya anywhere either in the ancient Vedas or in the earliest Upanishads. It makes its first appearance only in a later Upanishad called Svetasvatara; even there it is used not as a name for some deceptive phenomenon but as a synonym for the term Prakriti which signifies the primordial cause of matter and all its products such as this world and all its objects. The doctrine of illusion is quite unknown to the Svetasvatara and still older works of the Aryan tongue. In the Saiva Siddhanta too, this term Maya is invariably employed to signify the substratum of all the material worlds and their contents.

The meaning of deception which it has acquired in the neo-Vedanta is of comparatively modern date and as such it finds no place in the ancient Vedanta, as has been conclusively shown by the profound Vedic scholar Mr. Behari Lal Sastri. He says in his *Thesaurus of Vedic Knowledge*, “The Mayavada or illusion theory of later Vedantism appears in some of the modern commentaries of the Upanishads and the Vedanta Sutras.”<sup>15</sup> To Saiva Siddhanta, treasuring as it does the golden thoughts of ancient Indian Saints and Sages, this illusion-theory of neo-Vedanta is quite foreign, it being throughout concerned with the hard realities of life and strict in using, consistently to its principle, the term Maya to denote the real basic element of matter and its appearances.

From these few and simple observations of the beginnings of child's life, it is plain how this complex body comes into this world bearing within its womb a blind, sleepy and undeveloped soul, how it afterwards tends to awaken it from its torpor and stimulate it to respond to the summons made from without and how as time advances it forms itself as a medium of unequal importance to bring its activities into vital relations with the objects of an external world. If this body be not given, or if it be cut off prematurely, what the state of this finite

soul would be is easy to imagine. Surely it must lie in the same blinding darkness as it is found to be when it comes into this world, it would have no consciousness either of itself or of its surroundings, it would have no means of getting out of this imprisonment, nor would it have a knowledge of other finite souls or be known by them if all including myself and yourselves had remained deep buried in that impenetrable gloom.

It is only after we are sent into this world clothed in this wonderfully constructed body with all its internal and external organs made and adjusted in faultless perfection, that we are able to see each other, mingle with one another physically, morally and intellectually. If there be any defect in this organism, if you are born blind, deaf, or mute, you are made unable to see, hear and talk and lose thereby the knowledge you can otherwise acquire. The more these deficiencies increase, the more the growth of your mind is hindered and the more the blinding power of darkness over soul increases. Now, then, a perfect organism-perfect in all its parts and adjustments constitutes an immediate and most important condition for the enlightenment of all individual souls.

Next to it come other conditions such as this world, its objects and other sentient beings as human, animal and vegetable. If all these had not remained ready-made, before the advent of the soul here in its earthly tenement, the very advent of it is rendered unthinkable and absolutely impossible. It follows, therefore, as an inevitable conclusion that this world and all objects of experience form a second great condition necessary to the evolution and enlightenment of individual minds. These two conditions, St. Meikandan would call as the effects of *Maya*, the first cause of matter. In the midst of these conditions are set all the finite selves for the sake of their development. In the language of Biology these two conditions are called as *Heredity and Environment*. Of these two, Prof. Henry Drummond, an original thinker and able expositor of Religion in the light of modern science, says, "Mr. Darwin, following Weismann, long ago pointed out that there are two main factors in all Evolution-the

nature of the organism and the nature of the conditions.\* \* \* These two, Heredity and Environment, are the master-influences of the organic world.

These have made all of us what we are. These forces are still ceaselessly playing upon all our lives. And he who truly understands these influences; he who has decided how much to allow to each; he who can regulate new forces as they arise, or adjust them to the old, so directing them as at one moment to make them co-operate, at another to counteract one another, understands the rationale of personal development. To seize continuously the opportunity of more and more perfect adjustment to better and higher conditions, to *balance some inward evil* with some purer influence acting from without, in a world to make our environment at the same time that it is making us—these are the secrets of well-ordered and successful life.”<sup>16</sup> Is not this statement of an eminent scientist but an echo of Saint Meikandan’s voice which resounded throughout this land of philosophy some six hundred years ago? “Every living thing,” again in the words of Drummond, “normally requires for its development an Environment containing air, light, heat, and water. In addition to these, if vitality is to be prolonged for any length of time, and if it is to be accompanied with growth and the expenditure of energy, there must be a constant supply of food.

When we simply remember how indispensable food is to growth and work, and when we further bear in mind that the food-supply is solely contributed by the Environment, we shall realise at once the meaning and the truth of the proposition that without Environment there can be no life.”<sup>17</sup> Holding the same view as he does, Saint Meikandan goes a step forward and insists that not only for life but also for the enlightenment of its understanding, environment, (that is to say, a body and an external world with objects of senses,) is required as an absolutely necessary condition. This thoughtful teaching of our Saint, in addition to being a veritable fact of our experi-

ence, finds its corroboration in the works of our modern scientists as I have just now shown.

At this point I would like to warn you against being carried away by the opinions and sentiments of certain great names associated with the school of thinkers called neo-Vedantins who simply assert that this organism and all its surroundings are mere myths and false creations of a deluded mind, a deceptive product of gross ignorance. You must bear in mind that this assertion of neo-Vedantins is nothing more than a mere assertion devoid of all proof. To some, nay even to many, this may seem to be a workable hypothesis, but this hypothesis, not being demonstrable, leads to no positive and fruitful conclusion. Where all is ignorance or nescience there is no room for any kind of knowledge. See how emphatically this doctrine of nescience is rejected by so great a scientific thinker as Dr. James Ward who says, "But unless we are prepared to repudiate logic altogether, this sharp severance of known and unknown, knowable and unknowable must be abandoned, so radical are the contradictions that beset it.

Where nescience is absolute, nothing can be said, neither that there is more to know nor that there is not. But if science were verily in itself complete, this could only mean that there was no more to know; and then there could be and would be no talk of an environing nescience."<sup>18</sup> If all that we think, will and do are the outcome of ignorance, why, then, strive after acquisition of knowledge? Why seek ye to know God? If all be ignorance, what is knowledge then? Is it not a fact that only after we have come to know who we are and what our surroundings are, that we are able to distinguish between knowledge and ignorance? Does not the very act of knowing what ignorance is, imply a knowing agent, his knowing intellect and the knowledge arising and resulting from the combination of the two? If ignorance be a fact, that fact cannot be known unless there be an intelligence to know it. For, as has been so well pointed out by Dr.F.C.S.Schiller, "Facts must be interpreted by intelligence, but intelligence always operates upon the basis of previously estab-

lished fact. The growth of knowledge is an *active assimilation* of the new by the old. Or in other words, our hypotheses are suggested by, and start from, the facts of already established knowledge, and then are tested by experience.”<sup>19</sup> From this you see, to know and interpret ignorance, you require a knowing intelligence and not another ignorance. And even this new progress of knowledge presupposes another old one, and that a still older one and so on, until we reach a tiny point where the faint glimmer of the light of intelligence gleams as in the first beginnings of a child’s life.

Although we are unable to stretch our observation beyond this limit, we can confidently say if the inferential process of proceeding from what is known to unknown can be relied upon, that the dark line of ignorance and the gleaming bright line of intelligence, observable not only in the human child but also in the very lowest types of life, must ever recede into an indefinite past running parallel to each other, just as they are seen to project into a similarly indefinite future, without the one ever merging in the other so as to become one inseparable thing. How truly said are the words of the profound psychologist, Frederic Myers, relating to this parallel existence of ignorance and intelligence in the mental atmosphere of all living beings, may be seen from what he states in his great work on *Human Personality* that “Optical analysis splits up the white ray into the various coloured rays which compose it.

Philosophical analysis in like manner splits up the vague consciousness of the child into many faculties; - into the various external senses, the various modes of thought within. This has been the task of descriptive and introspective psychology. Experimental psychology is adding a further refinement. In the sun’s spectrum and in stellar spectra, are many dark lines or bands, due to the absorption of certain vapours in the atmosphere of sun or stars or earth. And similarly in the range of spectrum of our own sensation and faculty there are many inequalities-permanent and temporary, of brightness and definition. Our mental atmosphere is clouded by vapours and illumined by fires, and is clouded and illumined differently at different times.”<sup>20</sup>

So, then, although it be an undeniable factor in the constitution of our mental phenomena, ignorance is not the be-all and end-all of our existence. Side by side with it, yet quite distinct from it, sparkles our intelligence ever aspiring to overcome it and get rid of its evil influence.

Would any one of us here or elsewhere like to remain in ignorance all throughout his life? Should we like to be called ignorant men, idiots, fools and block-heads? No; certainly not. On the other hand, we feel an ever-growing desire to become wiser and wiser, which is so deeply implanted in us that, prompted by it, we work hard day and night to acquire knowledge and dispel by its supreme light the huge darkness that enwraps our soul. Had this principle of darkness and evil been an essential part of ourselves, an inseparable property of our soul, would we like to part company with it, would we like to become wise and good souls? But the innate and noble aspiration felt in every one of us towards an attainment of the highest wisdom and the fullest goodness must itself be sufficient to show that evil ignorance, though it co-exists with all individual souls from time beyond limit, hindering their development and enlightenment, is not a property of their mind as intelligence is a property, that it remains not as the prevailing condition of our existence but shows clear signs of its being vanquished in the great battle<sup>21</sup> that is being waged untiringly by the reasoning minds with the invaluable assistance of *Maya* or environment, under the guidance of a Supreme Intelligence, and that the hypothesis held by the neo-Vedantins that this organism and its surroundings are the mythical and deceptive creations of pure ignorance, must, therefore, be abandoned as quite untenable.

Now, it must also be very clear to you how the position of our Saint Meikandan becomes stronger and stronger as we approach nearer and nearer to a careful and penetrating study of the simple verities of our life and its growth. With Mekandan we must bid good-bye to the mere phantasies and chimerical ravings of certain imaginative thinkers—great though they seem in the eyes of a certain class of people, and go direct to the actual conditions of life to get a clear and

true comprehension of their setting and ultimate purpose. This practical point of view inculcated by St. Meikandan in the philosophy of Saiva Siddhanta is in substantial agreement with the pragmatic view of such great modern thinkers as William James, Bergson, Eucken, Schiller, James Ward and others.

So far we have seen, by observing the beginnings of life, body and its environment to be veritable instruments of thought and this souls placed in their midst to make use of them with a view to rid themselves of the evil influence which the dark principle eternally co-existing with it exercises and to obtain power over it by enlightening their own understanding into perfection. This interaction between mind and matter is going on, we should say, for indefinite ages, for we know not when it began or how long it took to come to its present stage or when it will end.

Had there been but one individual soul instead of many, its evolution would not have taken so long and unlimited a period to complete it. But such is not the fact. There are countless individual souls ranging from the simplest and the minutest organic beings such as moneron, amoeba and protoplasm to the highest and the most complex organic beings called human. While maintaining a surface resemblance and a superficial law of unity to its species or group, every organism and every ego that dwells within it, possesses unique characteristics which other members of its class do not share. The more the knowledge of science advances, the more the classification of groups and sub groups multiply. Instead of homogeneity being the law of nature, heterogeneity is becoming its determined law. This has been well pointed out by Dr. Schiller in his *Formol Logic* thus: “Darwin conclusively showed it be conceivable that one species might develop into another by the accumulation of individual differences under natural selection. Thus a species is really nothing but a temporary grouping of individuals, all of whom are indefinitely variable and capable of developing in various directions” He continues: “Species, therefore, ceases to exist as an ontological reality. The individual alone is real.

He alone bears the burden of the whole past, and contains the promise and potentialities of all future development. We conclude, therefore, that science cannot be indifferent to him, and that the doctrine of real kinds is metaphysically false.”<sup>22</sup>

In spite of this demonstrated fact of science, some idealistic monists of the neo-Vedantic school still passionately cling to the doctrine which asserts that all the mental and material phenomena passing before us are not so many variant and distinct realities but are mere shadows or reflections of an Absolute Being which alone is real. This too is a mere assertion, for according to it you cannot have any means of proving it, since all that is known is unreal and only that which is unknown is real. If all that we experience is unreal, then, let me ask ‘Who are you that argue thus please? If you are as you say an unreal phantom of an unknown something, why should we, who do not believe that we are such phantoms, believe you any more than any phantom of a dream? Why argue about the incomprehensible being of which you claim to be the inexplicable reflection?’ Such questions must inevitably be suggested to every thinking mind by this idealistic monism. We cannot evade them by eloquent preaching, or by quoting scriptural texts, or by claiming the authority of the learned over the unlearned. These objections will continue to arise in the mind of every one who confronts the hard problems and severe life-struggles that are ceaselessly going on within and without himself.

Another weak point in the doctrine of the idealistic monism is that it speaks of its absolute and transcendental being in the language of matter, We have seen visible and tangible substances casting shadows and reflections. Even among material substances those that are invisible like air and ether do not cast either shadows or reflections. How, then, can the incomprehensible Absolute, which is an immaterial, and consequently invisible and intangible being, throw out such despicable shadows and reflections as ourselves and our surroundings. To get over this difficulty he has created, the idealist has no other means but to create a further and

still greater difficulty which too is contrary to all our experience. He says that all these individual selves, their bodies and surroundings being mere illusions, have no real existence of their own and as such do not affect the transcendent Absolute in the least, even if it is spoken of in terms of matter.

This view of the idealists undermines the very fundamentals of knowledge, since he who strives to know the Absolute is as illusory as is the process of his knowing. Consequently his position must end in the same despair and ignorance as it was at the beginning. As I have already given a detailed criticism of this view, I would now pass by it by quoting the opinion on this subject of a great living authority in philosophy, Prof. Eucken. He states in his great work on *Life's Basis and Life's Ideal*: "From being a life penetrating power Pantheism becomes more and more a vague disposition; indeed an empty phrase. The living whole, which in the beginning raised things to itself, has finally become a mere abstraction which cannot hold its ground before vigorous thought. Thus, with an immanent dialectic, such as historical life often enough shows, the movement, since it strove for breath, has been destroyed in its life-giving root; it has abandoned the basis from which it derived its truth and power immanent Idealism shows itself to be one great contradiction; a fascinating illusion, which, instead of reality, presents us with mere appearance."<sup>23</sup>

Then, there is the formidable theory of the materialistic monists who exult in reducing all mind and matter to what they call 'energy' or 'force.' It is not at all plain how one can think of energy apart from the matter which produces it. By a most difficult and hard exercise of thought we may hope to abstract force from matter and imagine it to have a separate existence but whether we will succeed in it is the point at issue. Whenever we try to form an idea of motion, we are unconsciously led to bring into our mind the picture of a moving vehicle, or a running horse. For, we acquire knowledge and experience only by observing the qualities and movements of particular things. Though the growth of knowledge consists in generalising into abstract principles the actions and attributes of individual objects simi-

lar to each other, yet the images of these individual objects arise distinct in our mind by the law of association, so inseparably bound up with their actions and attributes that it is absolutely impossible for us to conceive of them as two independent sets. When we try to think of beauty, we invariably think of it as it exists in a beautiful person, or in a fine painting or in a fresh blown rose. When the thought of intelligence, or of virtue enters our mind, the image of an intelligent man, or of a loving friend, or of a charitable person appears in intimate union with it. The process of thought is such and such is the constitution of mind in every human being that he cannot hope to achieve his mental development otherwise than in this prescribed manner. In the words of John Stuart Mill: “The general propositions, whether called definitions, axioms, or laws of nature, which we lay down at the beginning of our reasonings, are merely abridged statements, in a kind of short hand, of the particular facts, which, as occasion arises, we either think we may proceed on as proved, or intent to assume.” He continues, “All inference is from particulars to particulars; General propositions are merely registers of such inferences already made, and short formulae for making more.”<sup>24</sup> From this it must be apparent to you that the meaning of the abstract term ‘energy or force’ cannot be conceived of except as it is found either in mind or in matter. “How,” we may ask with Dr. James Ward, “can the bodies of abstract dynamics be conceived as merely geometrical figures moving according to rule, if they are collectively endowed with all the forces of nature; gravitation, light, heat, electricity, chemical attraction, etc? What are these if they are not the active properties of material bodies?”<sup>25</sup> As the great scientist Clerk Maxwell has said, “that wherever magnetic force exists, there is matter,”<sup>26</sup> the theory of the materialistic monists who say that inasmuch as all mind and matter are reducible to a single form of energy, there must ultimately exist only energy or force, should be given up as a forgone conclusion.

Even granting it to be true that mind and matter in their ultimate form exist as mere energy, we are not precluded from making a cor-

rect estimate of its nature and constitution. When a visible and tangible substance changes into an invisible and intangible form, its existence is not easily ascertainable except by its action on other bodies. For instance, so long as oxygen and hydrogen appear in their combined form as water, we can see and feel them; but when they are separated, they immediately change into a subtle gaseous form which we can neither see nor feel; but we can detect their existence by bringing a red-hot splinter near the mouth of the tube in which oxygen has been collected; when so brought the splinter at once bursts into flame.

But if you take the same splinter near the mouth of the other tube in which hydrogen is, it is not re-kindled. Instead of a red-hot piece of wood, if you bring a lighted candle to the mouth of this tube, the gas itself is lighted and it burns with a pale, blue flame. By such means we are enabled to apprehend the existence of oxygen, hydrogen and other gases, though to our naked eyes these seem to be an empty void. So far it is manifest that the existence and characteristics of different substances in their subtle state, can be ascertained only by their different modes of action upon other visible and tangible things. Now I think it would be easy for us to extend the range of our mental vision either to a remote past or to a distant future in which this whole universe remained in or will dissolve into, a subtle form which might be best described only by the term 'energy' or 'force.' Still that energy, I think I am justified in saying, must be not a single undifferentiated unit existing quite independently of both matter and spirit, but simply a subtlest form of the two comprehending within its area all the manifold elements that have already come and have still to come to our knowledge.

All that is found in the effect must, as a law of necessity, lie in the cause, but of course in a subtle and latent form. That is the tenet held by our Saint Meikandan. To obtain an accurate knowledge of a certain cause, you must proceed to study not the cause itself but its effects. The value of this procedure can best be illustrated by a golden

saying of Lord Jesus. By their fruits shall ye know them and not by their roots. A good number of seeds different in kind and character are so similar in their shape and size that they defy detection even by practised eyes. But when they are sown in the ground, they grow into different varieties of plants and trees and yield fruits greatly varied in colour, size and shape, taste and smell. Only then are you able to say what sorts of plants and trees they were. Similarly when all transform into a subtle seed-like state, we are justified in inferring that all the variations palpable in their solid, liquid and gaseous conditions must exist there in so finest a form transcending our conception that we can best describe them only by their action which a vague, indefinite and indistinct term as 'energy' or 'force' is best fitted to express. Thus interpreted in the light of Saiva Siddhanta, even the theory of the materialistic monists may be made to acquire a new and pregnant significance and harmonize with the fundamental principles of practical knowledge.

Except on this interpretation, the theory of the materialistic monists, too, being inexplicable from the practical and scientific point of view and on that account quite arbitrary, must be left behind as useless to guide us to a right understanding of the facts of life and nature.

But physiologists may, here, step in and affirm thus: 'Without brain, mind is never seen to play its part independently; when the brain is in proper working order, when it is able to act upon the various stimuli received from outside, consciousness originates; if any slight injury occurs to it or if the strong influence of some intoxicating thing is brought to bear upon it, all consciousness vanishes; and is it not then quite clear that mind is simply a function of brain and nothing more, and with the destruction of this organ is destroyed irretrievably the mind also?' In answer to this, I wish to call your attention to the momentous fact recently brought to light in some of the American hospitals, concerning certain cases of sudden deaths in which, after very careful and minute post mortem examinations of dead bodies, no cause for such quick extinction of

life was discernible either in brain or any other vital organs of the body. The whole body and all its parts were in thorough good order and in perfectly workable condition; still there was no life in it. How do you account for such a strange phenomenon on a purely physiological principle? The vehicle was there in excellent order but the driver left it owing to some mysterious cause not within the reach of the physiologist's ken.

But it may be asked why consciousness is affected when brain goes wrong. To this our St. Meikandan would answer by stating simply "Because the soul is set within this engine-like body."<sup>27</sup> By this compendious answer he means that the individual soul is not the maker of this complex machine, since he is plunged in ignorance, but it was made for him by a Supreme. Being of perfect intelligence and given him so that he may attain knowledge by making a careful use of it, by preserving it, by paying close attention to the wonderful adjustments of all its parts and how all of them work together to produce results desired by him.<sup>28</sup> If soul be the maker of it, he can set it right when it goes wrong, and remain unaffected by its disorder. But he is not so; his mind is eternally blinded by the darkness of an evil principle and for the very removal of this darkness and for illuminating his intellect, will and emotion, he stands in sore need of this marvellous mechanism.

It is no wonder, then, that he becomes affected when the organism gets into disorder. This may be made very clear by our familiar example of a steam-engine and its driver. So long as a steam-engine is in a perfectly good condition, the driver can drive it as he chooses; even if any petty disorder happens to it, he can repair it if he be a capable hand to that extent, and make it run; but if it goes wrong to such an extent as lies beyond his capacity to set it right, he is, then, rendered powerless to handle it and the engine comes to a dead stop. In the same way, when your brain or any other vital organ goes out of order, your consciousness and all your activities are brought thereby to an utter standstill. But that does not go to prove that the soul is a mere meaningless void. This exposition of the relation of the

soul to the body, as given by St. Meikandan, is echoed in the words of the great living French philosopher, Prof. Bergson who says in his excellent work, *Mind-Energy*, "The mind is undeniably attached to the brain, but from this it does not in the least follow that in the brain is pictured every detail of the mind, nor that the mind is a function of the brain. All that observation, experience, and consequently science, allows us to affirm is the existence of a certain relation between brain and mind."<sup>29</sup>

This relation between mind and brain may be illustrated also by the familiar instance of a painter and his painting requisites. Our painter may be a man of fine discriminative sense, of strong and vivid imagination, and above all may possess great skill in drawing beautiful pictures corresponding exactly to his mental images; still he cannot produce them without the aid of pencil and paper or colours, brushes and canvas. All his mental power avails not to exhibit his skill externally without such aids, nor can that power create the aids out of itself. Equally is it impossible for the painting accessories themselves to produce the pictures or create the mind of the painter. Each has an independent existence of its own and each possesses properties and potencies peculiar to itself. Nevertheless the two must co-operate with each other, if a picture is to be produced. Even when the two thus co-operate, how diligent and thoughtful the artist is at his work and with what nice discrimination he makes use of his painting materials, are points that impress us much. We perceive that all his intelligent and thoughtful strivings aim at bending the materials to his will in order to produce an exact likeness of his mind's picture.

Here it must be noted that the picture on the canvas is as real as the picture in the artist's mind, that neither the one nor the other is a transformation of its opposite, and that what the painter's invisible intelligence thus achieves with the aid of his colours and tools, these things themselves cannot achieve.

In the same way the mind uses the brain as an instrument of thought and so bends it to its will as to make it subservient to its own

growth and expression. Neither is mind a transformation of the brain, nor the brain a transformation of the mind; nor can the one create the other as in the above instance; for the laws and natures of the two are ever distinct and in no known circumstance are the laws violated. No doubt the intimate, interpenetrative and eternal union of the two substances raises difficulties insuperable to certain minds and renders the nature of the one indistinguishable from that of the other; still opportunities are not wanting in our experience to bring home to our mind the characteristic marks which differentiate the one from the other. The laws governing the nature and functions of the brain fall under the laws of matter, while those of the mind come invariably under the laws of immaterial principles. Wherever anything exerts itself in setting something else in motion, or in binding up its particles into certain definite masses, or in breaking them up again to pieces, it is mind that is at work there; in all such operations it is mind that restrains and releases the activities of matter, while matter, though it offers resistance up to a certain point, yields at last to the mandates of the mind.

The state of being invisible and intangible to our senses, is no more a reason for denying the existence of mind than it can be for denying the subtle states of matter. As has been already pointed out, not only the existence of invisible and intangible things but also their different characters are studied and ascertained only by noting their action and influence upon things that are visible.

The essential mark by which we distinguish between the two great classes of the objects of our thought is spontaneous motion. So far as our experience goes, we are quite sure that spontaneous motion is no property of matter. Nor do we perceive anything approaching to self-movement in any part of matter. If what is seen and experienced to be an invariable property of a part may safely be predicted of the whole, we shall not be wrong in saying that all matter is inert, that it is incapable of any self-movement. Whenever and wherever an apparent movement of a material body occurs, then and there we perceive either within it or close

beside it a mind-principle first originating that movement in itself and then communicating it to the body that was lying still before. It is from this clear expression of its impulse in matter that we are assured of the existence and nature of an invisible mind. Finite and imperfect as is our experience, we cannot afford, even were we inclined, to ignore the fact which that experience repeatedly and invariably brings before our mind.

For, all our knowledge consists not only in noting the frequent and invariable occurrences that take place in individual objects but in connecting them together by the help of memory and in deducing from them the law of such objects. Every fragment of pure matter, that is matter not susceptible of being impressed by a mind-principle, being always in an inert condition, we cannot be wrong in extending to the whole the application of what holds good of the component parts. To our empirical knowledge modern science too adds its corroborative proofs. The science of Geology shows us various specimens of stocks and stones dug out from the lowest strata of the earth in a condition which indicates that they never possessed even the faintest vestige of life, although their age is computed to be millions and billions of years. In the same way the science of Biology exhibits an infinite variety of structural forms which have once been the habitation of life but have long since become dead and have remained in that condition ever after. I believe the knowledge coming from these two sources must enable us to distinguish between the matter that is dead and the matter that lives and serves as the vehicle of life.

If there were no God, if matter alone had been the creator of life, if life were the result of certain peculiar self-adjustments of material particles taking place quite accidentally within the womb of matter itself, then the perpetual existence of vast quantities of matter lying lifeless for ages indefinite, receives no explanation whatever. In spite of the strenuous effort made by some so-called scientists to bridge over the wide gulf of difference that persists between the dead and the living portions of matter, that difference becomes the more pronounced the more our insight into its nature increases and the

more the researches of modern science advance. It is, therefore, against all facts, reason and experience, to say that matter itself is instinct with a creative faculty and that life is but a result of its activity and not anything separate from it.

Qualitatively the brain and other parts of our body are in no way different from the painting materials possessed by an artist. Both are parts of matter and both are used by the mind to give an outer expression to its inner ideas. Like the brush and colours of the painter, the brain too is a mere instrument of thought, though many degrees finer than they. You can weigh the brain as you can weigh the painter's materials. You can even cut it into several parts as you can the other; and you can again put together the severed pieces of the brain and, if life has not quitted it, can make it live once more, just as a painter mixes his colours and produces a fine picture. The only difference between the two kinds of matter is that, while the picture produced by the artist remains lifeless all through, the brain of a living body throbs with life for a certain period in a way the mystery of which is inscrutable to man. Although this intimate union of the two is too mysterious to be known exactly, we are not left in uncertainty as regards their distinct characters. That life is not the result of brain function but the expression of a superphysical principle in the brain, is forced upon our mind, whenever we come across the corpse of a man whose brain was once instinct with life but is now dead. If, as the physiologist holds, the brain itself had been the generator of life, the question naturally suggests itself, why has it not then regenerated it in a dead body?

If it be argued that the cessation was due to physical exhaustion, just as the extinction of a lamp-light is due to its losing itself gradually in the course of its radiation, we may point out that such exhaustion of the brain is brought on not by a gradual expenditure of its own force but by a decrease in efficient blood-supply, as the light of a lamp goes out as soon as the supply of oil stops. Now both the brain and the blood being material substances, neither the brain can of itself secure the blood-supply, nor can

the blood by itself reach the brain. Other causes, both internal and external, are indispensable to such physiological processes and when all these processes are carefully analysed and inquired into, they disclose within and behind them the presence of an intelligent mind as the fundamental cause which constitutes the main-spring of all their complex movements.

It is no doubt true that blood is manufactured from food by the contact of inhaled air and circulated by the action of the heart; still it must not be forgotten that, in order to secure food, to assimilate and convert its essence into blood and send it up to the brain, the presence and activity of an intelligent agent is absolutely necessary. If it be asserted that all these too might be the actions of the brain itself, then the former question will recur; how can death, or complete cessation of activity befall such a vigilant organ as the brain? The physiological theory can therefore offer no solution whatever to this question, so long as the mind is held to be merely a function of the brain. Whilst, on the other hand, the metaphysical theory which posits within the brain an intelligent and immaterial mind-principle that can generate, combine and adjust all the complex life movements, readily offers an easy and satisfying solution to that vital question. When pressed by consistent reasoning grounded on the facts of life, the physiologist has in the last resort no other alternative than to admit the existence in the brain of a superphysical principle that communicates to it all its activities and thus renders it a living substance.

To prove further the unsoundness of the physiological theory, St. Meikandan has brought forward another argument of great importance which merits our most careful consideration. Even were we inclined to leave out of account the case of a dead body, in which the brain, owing to some mysterious cause, has ceased to perform its functions, we cannot so leave the case of a living body in which the brain occasionally becomes dead as it were, whilst life is still seated within. Such seemingly lifeless occasions St. Meikandan points out to be, in the experiences of sleep and rare trance conditions into which healthy living beings enter. So long as man, or any lower crea-

ture, is buried in deep sleep, the brain too is quite inactive, although it continues to be in perfect working order; but when he is awake it is also in full activity. These two entirely different states that alternate with each other do not so readily yield themselves to be explained away on the materialistic hypothesis of the physiologist as may be imagined; for if the brain itself be an active principle, it must be as ever active as is the magnet or steam; either attracting like the one or propelling like the other; and again, as in the case of the magnet and steam, the brain too must act in one uniform manner and not in any other way.

But that is not what we find to be the case. On the contrary, very minute and intricate plans and infinite combinations of movements that are being formed in the brain every moment imply the presence in it of an intelligence which should be capable of bringing into play all such complex operations and should, therefore, be totally distinct in its character and constitution from the brain which, by being a mere material organ, is rendered powerless to exercise of itself any such function of thought. Unless there be in the sleeping and trance conditions a resting soul which has temporarily relinquished its hold on the brain, there can be no reason for our belief that life still exists there, even after the brain has ceased to act. Unless there be in the waking hours an animating self which wakens in the brain, or rather transmits to it, its own activities, how a mass of matter that has once become inactive, can resume its activity without being actuated by another, must for ever remain an insoluble problem. As has been shown above, all matter being destitute of voluntary movement, the brain too which is simply a form of organic matter, can never pass from an active into an inactive state and *vice versa*, without an intermediary principle of mind to bring it about. Nay, our very existence would become a sheer impossibility, had there been no such intelligent self distinct from the two states and yet passing through them from one to the other in due and inverse order.

In addition to this difficulty St. Meikandan points out another and still greater difficulty which presents itself in the phenomenon of consciousness and renders the physiological theory inadmissible. Eminent physiologists themselves are in a fix when they come to consider impartially the question of consciousness and its manifestation in the brain. While it is patent that the elements that enter into the structure and composition of the brain are purely physical, those that constitute consciousness have never been proved to be such; on the contrary, the two are always observed to be intrinsically opposed to each other. When flame radiates light, when water gives off vapour, when flowers emit fragrance, we know that the light, the vapour and the fragrance could be none other than the finer emanations of their respective substances; in other words, they are proved to be the same as the things themselves but with this difference: while the things that produce them are tangible, the emanations are intangible, inasmuch as the finer particles that constituted the things separate themselves from them and enter into that impalpable condition.

Similarly can consciousness be said to be a finer emanation of the brain, and be nothing else but an intangible state of the minutest particles of the very same organ? No. For, from a careful study of the two phenomena we come to know that the nature of the one is so different from that of the other that it baffles all attempts to derive the one from the other or trace even a remote resemblance between the two. In the words of Prof. James the two are “heterogeneous natures altogether.”<sup>30</sup> If consciousness and the brain had been really identical substances, so long as the brain exists, consciousness too must exist without undergoing any change in its manifestation just as a burning candle gives us light until it is wholly consumed in the process. Whereas the flow of consciousness is not so continuous but is frequently interrupted by intervals of mental darkness as in dreamless sleep and profound trance and comes to complete stop at death, even when the brain is whole in all these different states.

In fact, consciousness could be neither a finer emanation nor a specific function of the brain but must be the vital expression of the

essence of the finite selves or monads in the language of Leibnitz, which take their seat in this mechanism of flesh and blood and propel it in accordance with their needs and requirements. Although it is true that a serious hurt caused to the brain deprives a man of his consciousness, yet it must not be forgotten that, in most cases, it is only a temporary suspension of its activity brought on by the breakdown of the mechanism. That consciousness is never destroyed by a disruption of the brain but exists there persisting in its work of making it serve its purpose, may be seen from the restoration after sometime of the injured part to its previous sound condition. This restorative function cannot be imagined to take place in a living organism unless there be a conscious self silently to effect it. Another noticeable feature in this restorative process is that, when the injured part of the brain is wrecked beyond scope of repair, the self seizes some other part near to it and so plies it that it ultimately assumes the function of the injured part. This fact relating to the assumption by one part of the brain of the function of another through the intervention of a conscious self, had long ago been brought to light by Dr.F.C.S. Schiller and we shall do well to quote here his very words. "If e.g., a man" he says, "loses consciousness as soon as his brain is injured, it is clearly as good an explanation to say the injury to the brain destroyed the mechanism by which the manifestation of consciousness was rendered possible, as to say that it destroyed the seat of consciousness.

On the other hand, there are facts which the former theory suits far better. If. e.g., as sometimes happens, the man after a time more or less recovers the faculties of which the injury to his brain had deprived him, and that not in consequence of a renewal of the injured part, but in consequence of the inhibited functions being performed by the vicarious action of other parts, the easiest explanation certainly is that after a time consciousness constitutes the remaining parts into a mechanism capable of acting as a substitute for the lost parts"<sup>31</sup>. Between this view of an eminent modern thinker and the argument put forward by St. Meikandan to prove the exact relation subsisting between the brain and consciousness, how close is the agreement!

Now as a last point in our discussion of this important subject, we would pick out one more argument from those set forth by Meikandan in his treatise Sivajnanabodham and would bring this topic to a close. The all-important faculty of memory which makes individual life what it has come to be, brings before our mind another difficulty that cannot be explained a way on the physiological theory of the materialists. That the brain is made up of cells, that it loses old cells every moment and gets newer ones in their stead, are facts quite familiar to all physiologists. If, according to them, memory be the simple result of a certain spontaneous disposition of brain-cells, then the old contents of memory must perish every instant that the old brain-cells perish and newer details must accumulate in proportion to the entry of newer cells, these again in their turn to be driven out to make room for the subsequent influx of still newer items, and so on *ad infinitum*, and we should have in consequence no memory at all, no recollection of our own past experiences, nay even of the very identity of our own past and present selves.

Should this theory of the physiologists be true, fortunately it is not so, all human existence must end in utter wreck and ruin. In spite of the unwarrantable assertion of such materialists, our memory persists all through the infinite changes which the brain-cells undergo, and maintains its existence independently of their birth and death. That none of the events that once happened within the range of our experience could ever be forgotten, is proved beyond doubt by cases recorded of hypnotic subjects in the great book of Myers, by a reference to which one can easily know with what marvellous accuracy the details of a past occurrence, supposed to have been long ago forgotten by the waking brain, are called up when the subject is in profound hypnotic sleep, his brain and all reasoning faculties being then set at complete rest.

Besides this distinct quality of memory, its quantity too, if quantity we may call its capacity, presents another insuperable difficulty to an admission of the physiological theory. From the time of our childhood when we began first to exercise our memory we have been

storing it up with an infinite multitude of ideas which exceeds our power of computation and which, if actually had been the functions of our constantly accumulating brain-cells, must also have a brain correspondingly increasing in size. But, as a matter of fact, such is not the case, inasmuch as the development of our brain is not proportionate to the development of our memory and all of us, whether great in memory or not whether learned or unlearned, have brains almost equal in size, although in point of quality there may be much difference between one brain and another. This disproportionateness of the brain to the limitless growth of memory makes it quite clear that memory could be neither a function of the brain nor a mere material element increasing in size concomitantly to the growth of the brain, but must be a principle immaterial since it occupies no space, independent since it depends not on brain as in hypnotic subjects, and spiritual since it is the very essence of individual selves.

Dr. Schiller truly observes: “On a materialist hypothesis the memory of a certain arrangement of certain particles of brain tissue, and in the case of complex facts, the memory would evidently require a very complex system of particles. Now as the contents of the brain are limited, it is clear that there can only be a limited number of facts remembered. It would be physically impossible that the brain could be charged with memories beyond a certain point. And if we consider the number of impressions and ideas which daily enter into our consciousness, it is clear that even in youth the brain must soon reach the *saturation* point of memory, and that the struggle for existence in our memory must be very severe. If therefore we receive unexpected proofs of the survival in memory of the facts most unlikely to be remembered, we have evidently reached a phenomenon which it is exceedingly difficult for materialism to explain.”<sup>32</sup> So then, memory, existing only as a spiritual faculty of souls, and not as any other belonging to the physical brain, is itself sufficient conclusively to prove the falsity of the physiological theory and establish that mind and brain are two distinct principles, though their existence on this plane is coeval and most intimate up to a certain point of time.

These inquiries brief and humble as they are, being conducted in strict conformity with the teachings of St. Meikandan, into the conditions and existence of life-struggles, disclose to us these facts; individual soul is an eternal unit of intelligence which exists in its primitive state enshrouded by a dark and evil principle called *malam*, for the removal of which and for the enlightenment of the soul's understanding various organisms and environments are being constantly moulded out from an ever-existing material cause called *maya*. Every individual soul dwelling in every body is not only distinct from that body but is also eternally different from every other ego. So, we have, instead of one, a numberless multitude of souls each shaping its destiny according to the tendencies of its mind and unfoldment of understanding.

Having obtained these results, I now pass on to give a succinct account of the efficient cause of this creating, for without which this brief sketch of Saiva Siddhanta would be incomplete. As already pointed out, all the individual souls, being primarily immersed in ignorance, cannot, for the sake of setting themselves free from its influence create for themselves this body and all its surroundings. Nor can *maya* the original and material cause of these organisms and worlds originate them from itself, since it is devoid of intelligence and therefore of all voluntary movements. As has been proved by Prof. Bergson that all original movements must have proceeded solely from an intelligent cause, to set *maya* in motion and bring into being these wonderful adjustments of microcosm and macrocosm for the benefit of all individual souls, the existence of Supreme Being of an ever-resplendent intelligence naturally follows as an inevitable consequence. St. Meikandan argues that this Supreme Being could be neither a material nor an instrumental cause but must solely be an efficient cause. To illustrate this he takes a potter and his pots.

In the process of making pots, he requires a lump of fine clay as the material cause which is always inseparable from the pots produced out of it; he then uses a spinning wheel and a rod and moves them as the instrumental cause; while he himself remains all the time

as an efficient cause, quite distinct from the other two. In like manner God stands as an efficient cause, *maya* as the material cause and God's will power and intelligence as instrumental cause, when the creation proceeds as the result of the combination of all these three causes. But, the class of thinkers who exult in the flight of their own imagination, can never bring themselves to concede any but phenomenal existence to *Maya* the material cause of the world. Their chief contention is as follows; to believe in the reality of an objective world is as unreasonable as it is to believe in that of the dream-world; in dreams we do receive impressions and we do send responses as vividly as in our waking state; difference between the two experiences being thus only in name, ascribing reality to the one while denying it to the other is like saying things inconsistent in one and the same breath; and as what one experiences in the dream-world dissolves into nothing no sooner than that person wakes up, so also all experiences of the waking life may disappear into a mere void no sooner than a glorious soul realizes its self-sufficiency and rends asunder the veil of deception that hid its mental vision.

Now this view of the idealists has so stealthily entered into almost every system of philosophy widely different in other respects, that it excites our surprise to detect its presence even in the philosophy of Dr. F.C.S. Schiller whose mode of thought appears to be in many important points in striking harmony with that of St. Meikandan. For Dr. Schiller says in one place that "the cosmos of our experience is a stress or inter-action between God and ourselves."<sup>33</sup> and in another place, likening our present life to dream-life he affirms that "while it lasts, therefore, a dream has all the characteristics of reality. And so with our present life."<sup>34</sup> Still, he has not shown how from bare interaction which can only be relational operations of God's and Soul's intellect, a principle possessing the objective quality of dead matter can ever arise. If matter which is under the limitations of space and time can be produced from Divine intellect which from its nature must be beyond them, then both should be essentially identical in substance, and speaking of them differently will turn out to be a con-

tradition in terms. Yet, it is curious that no one has dwelt upon the distinction between matter and consciousness more emphatically than Dr. Schiller himself<sup>35</sup>. In spite of that, the spell cast on him by the illusion theory of the Idealists had been so powerful as to make him even give up his own strong position and seek shelter in the airy castle built by the dreaming idealists.

Now, mere interaction between God and Soul, being purely an intellectual activity, cannot of itself constitute the basic principle of the world which is composed of lifeless matter. Nor can it be taken to create the world out of nothingness, for no known form of energy, however potent, is seen to produce anything out of nothing. Hence, St. Meikandan lays it down as an immutable law that "From sheer emptiness no phenomenon of any real kind can take its rise."<sup>36</sup> But Schiller contradicts this by likening our present-life to a dream. Although in the preceding sections of this essay we have sufficiently discussed the illusion-theory and shown its incorrectness, the new aspect which it has assumed in Dr. Schiller's philosophy renders it necessary to re-examine it in the light shed by St. Meikandan's argument.

In the first place we have to consider whether it is legitimate to hold that dream-life is unreal. Before coming to a definite conclusion about this, we must inquire how we come by such an experience as dream-life. It is plain to all that dream-life is not the one with which our life on this earth at first begins. We have no proof to affirm that the new born child has dreams; nor can we say that children can dream until and after some months elapse since they saw the light of the day, during which time they acquire little by little a knowledge of their surrounding objects. All the infinite variety of external things which we had been taking cognizance of in our childhood gradually became represented within our mind in the form of mental images. But these images are only our subsequent mental products and not our original possessions. What we brought with us as infants did not amount to more than a few vital activities such as the feelings of hunger and thirst, crying, seeing and the moving of limbs and an intellec-

tual faculty which, though latent, is nevertheless endowed with an ability to form mental images in exact correspondence to outward objects.

With these we grew and with their help we stored up our mind with mental images and in this way we acquired knowledge both of the inner world and the outer. But such growth and expression of our mental faculties could not have taken place, if we were not fitted up with a body of the five marvellous sense-organs which serve to bring our mind into an active contact with the external world. Independently of this body and the world surrounding it, no soul exists, nor from its imagination does it manufacture all these multifarious phenomena in the same way as it does in dreams. In point of fact all mental images that we form, are formed in correspondence to the external world by virtue of our being in active contact with it. If we might suppose that a person totally indifferent to the impressions and solicitations of nature could exist somewhere, I ask who must be the loser thereby? Undoubtedly it must be he that was indulging in such supreme callousness of mind and not nature which readily ministers to all who appeal to her for her ministrations. The fact should, therefore, be pressed against the misconception that the world must lose its reality and become null and void, simply because a fugitive soul drunk with self-deception pays no heed to its impressions and leaves it going away whither it knows not. The indisputable laws of indestructibility of matter and conservation of energy must for ever stand for the eternal reality of the world.

Further, he who cannot understand the world, cannot understand his very self. If it be argued that, for him who is not conscious of the world, the world cannot exist, we may equally argue that for him who is not conscious of his own self, his self too cannot exist. To base an argument for the existence or non-existence of the world, on our being either conscious or unconscious of it, would lead to great confusion and self-immolation of thought.

Legitimate reasoning would, therefore, necessarily require three real principles for the production of any mental image. These three

must be: a subjective mind endowed with the faculties of understanding, will and emotion; an objective world which calls these faculties into play; and a material organism which mediates between the two by transmitting the impressions of the latter to the former and returning the responses of the former to the latter. In the combination of these three principles the mind of a child unfolds and expands in proportion as it introduces into itself every new idea and every new mental image. Until she is able to distinguish between herself and her body, between her body and her surroundings, the child is naturally powerless to know that she is a self, that she possesses a body and that she lives in a world already made for her. This truth has been pointed out so well by Prof. Robert Adamson that we can do no better than quote his very words here: "It is true that self-consciousness implies a contradistinction from nature, that mind only knows itself in knowing nature that is distinct from itself.

But the very implication of this truth is that neither mind nor nature as thus contrasted in consciousness is possessed of independent being, that mind knows nature only in so far as it is a part of nature, and that its knowledge of nature, its apprehension of fact other than itself, is the living link which binds it to nature and to the sum-total of reality. Ideas, as one may put it, are not so much in mind as of mind; they are the actual modes of our participation in the reality of which external nature is a part."<sup>37</sup> Hence we are inevitably led to the conclusion that all the three distinct principles constitute a real whole, of which each being a part and parcel, one could be no more real than the other, and that, for the development of thought and imagination of the soul, each must necessarily co-operate with every other. We cannot, therefore, say that for the new-born child the world could not exist simply because her mind was inoperative then.

If ignorance alone reigned supreme allowing no room even for a single ray of intelligence to enter into our life, then there might be a sense in saying that the world was unreal and did not exist. Even then it would be more correct to say that there was no means of ascer-

taining whether or not the world existed. Since the very intelligence engaged in ascertaining either of the two, must, according to the dream-theory, be included in the general illusion, both the knower and the known along with the means of knowing, should be involved in utter null and void. But fortunately the theory based on the analogy of dreams does not, in the least, affect facts; for the facts of life have so stern and solid a reality that theories of such flimsy character dash against them simply in vain.

After all, what are dreams? Are they mere nothingness? No, would say St. Meikandan; for he positively holds, as has just been shown, that from mere nothingness no phenomenon of any kind can arise. According to him a new-born child whose mind is a clean blank, can have no dreams whatever. But as days roll by, external impressions repeatedly impinge on the senses of the child, through them touch her latent faculties and rouse them so as to respond to those impressions. At the beginning the child takes only a very faint notice of sense-impressions; the sense of touch being the first to come into play and that of sight next.<sup>38</sup> Only after she has learnt to exercise her sense of sight, does she acquire the power to form mental images. Even after this, the child in her early years is unable to distinguish real objects from her mental representations of them, and for many years confuses the two.

This nature of the human mind in childhood, a passage from Prof. Sully's *Studies* will make quite clear to us. "I believe," he says "that this same tendency to take art representations for realities re-appears in children's mental attitude towards stories. A story by its narrative form seems to tell of real events, and children, as we all know, are wont to believe tenaciously that their stories are true. I think I have observed a disposition in imaginative children to go beyond this, and to give present actuality to the scenes and events described. And this is little to be wondered at when one remembers that even grown up people, familiar with the devices of art-imitation, tend now and again to fall into this confusion."<sup>39</sup> From this confusion the grown-up child frees her mind only after putting

her faculties to continual trials and tests for months and years together. Only when she reaches the intellectual stage, does she obtain a clear comprehension of the two sets of facts and their character, so that the one becomes in her mind unmistakably marked off from the other and no difficulty is felt afterwards in conceiving that the outer objects from the originals of which her ideas are mere copies. If, owing to insufficient attention, some of her ideas become either obscure or obliterated from her memory, she recalls them simply by the help of external things and events with which they remained in close association and thus succeeds in reviving them in her memory.

From such common experiences it is obvious that all the multifarious ideas which the mind of man has formed from the time of his infancy could be nothing else but the reflections of external things as it were. No idea-not even such abstract ones as of virtue, vice, pleasure, pain and so forth a conception of which is facilitated by the use of language, can be shown to possess an existence in the mind independently of all relation to the outer world. In fact what we call an adult mind is nothing but a repository of ideas or ideal images, on the quality and quantity of which the superior or inferior nature of a person depends. Only those human beings whose mind is thus enriched by a variety of ideas but not their new-born offspring whose mind is a clean blank, can be said to have dreams either in the waking or in the sleeping state.

Even when a man appears to be wide-awake, there are moments in which his mind becomes so completely absorbed in his own thoughts that for the time being he forgets his surrounding and lives as it were in a dream-world. And it may be his desire, as in the case of some lazy persons, to live uninterruptedly in such a world, but the pressure brought to bear upon his mind by his bodily needs, calls his attention off from it and directs it to the stern realities of waking life. From such day dreams, dreams of night differ but little, for in the two it is the ideas that are so active, that take so complete a possession of the human mind. The only difference

observable between the two is that, while in night-dreams our mental images attain to great clearness and vividness, those in day-dreams are neither so clear nor so vivid.

The cause of this appears to be that, in sleep, the objective or reasoning part of our mind relaxes its hold on our thoughts and lets them have unchecked play under the influence of the emotional part, whereas in wakefulness the reasoning faculty is active by being in touch with the material world and by holding our thoughts under its control and allowing them to move only so far as is conformable to the activities of other beings like ourselves. As regards the distinctive character of the two psychic conditions, Prof. Sully's careful observations are worth quoting here in his own beautiful words: "To say that in sleep the mind is given over to its own imaginings, is to say that the mental life in these circumstances will reflect the individual temperament and mental history. For the play of imagination at any time follows the lines our past experience more closely than would at first appear, and being coloured with emotion, will reflect the predominant emotional impulses of the individual mind... When asleep the voluntary guidance of attention ceases; its direction is to a large extent determined by the contents of the mind at the moment. And thus, in sleep, just as in the condition of reverie or day-dreaming, there is an abandonment of the fancy to its own wild ways."<sup>40</sup> "In our waking states these innumerable paths of association are practically closed by the supreme energy of the coherent groups of impressions furnished us from the world without through our organs of sense, and also by the volitional control of internal thought in obedience to the pressure of practical needs and desires."<sup>41</sup> Apart from this difference which consists in the presence of the will-control in the one and the absence of it in the other, the waking and the sleeping conditions of our life are the same, in so far as the inner world of ideas is a product formed in exact correspondence with the outer world of matter.

After having inquired into every notable aspect of the question relating to the waking and the dreaming conditions of life. Prof. Sully concludes the subjects by saying "For these reasons dreams may

properly be classed with the illusions of normal or healthy life, rather than with those of disease.”<sup>42</sup> It should be borne in mind that Prof. Sully does not use the term ‘illusion’ either in the popular or in the metaphysical sense of a deceptive appearance having no foundation in reality; but he draws a clear line of distinction between illusion and actuality by taking the first to mean “deviation of representation from fact.” He says further that “this is due in part to limitations and defects in the intellectual mechanism itself, such as the imperfections of the activities of attention, discrimination, and comparison, in relation to what is present.”<sup>43</sup> From this clear and definite statement of a great authority on the science of Psychology, it must be plain to every thinking mind that dreams could be no mere rootless fictions of fancy but must be the result of the uncontrolled play of mental images, and twisted representations of actual facts.

No one doubts the truth of the external realities being the basis of our internal thoughts; although it is only the idealists that introduce a great confusion into philosophy by assuming the thought-world alone as real and the physical unreal. Unless the human mind be set to think on a subject coherently, it is naturally thrown out of balance and runs haphazard as much in dreaming as in waking. One idea brings in its wake another with which it was slenderly connected, and this goes on in such quick succession that, unless some strong stimulus comes either from within or from without, our mind is easily carried away by the stream of such ideas quite unawares.

While this is common to the two states, why take the dreaming state alone as unreal and the waking real? As long as the objective mind is quiescent leaving off its work of setting our ideas in order and orderly sequence, our self must be duped by the chaotic and disorderly play of thoughts brought on either by the activity of emotions or by indolence, so that the dreaming state does not in this respect vary much from the waking. And so long as this incoherent, distorted and fanciful display of mental images lasts, there can arise no actual experience, no true knowledge of facts, the knowledge even of one’s own self. Had not man been under the imperious call of physical

needs, it is certain that he would always live in his chaotic mental world, whether awake or asleep and there can be no what we call progressive human experience, or human knowledge. When physical needs are left out of all account, it is meaningless to make any difference between the dreaming state and the waking, for there is no actual difference between the mental life in the one and the mental life in the other.

When you look carefully into the matter, the truth will manifest itself that real human experience, and real human knowledge begins only when a vital and logical connection is established between the inner world of mind and outer world of matter. Prof. James has well observed: “Between the coercions of the sensible order and those of the ideal order, our mind is thus wedged tightly. Our ideas must agree with realities concrete or abstract, be they facts or be they principles, under penalty of endless inconsistency and frustration.”<sup>44</sup> Still this vital connection takes place only when the mind is wide awake, whereas in sleep that connection becomes broken temporarily. We attribute unreality to dreams, simply because what we experience in the dream of one night does not connect itself with what we experience in that of another night. For the dream experience occurs not only entirely disconnected with the experience of the outer world but also with its own in succeeding nights and lies completely shut up within the repeatedly isolated and unconnected domain of imagined ideas; while the experience in the waking state moves every day continuously in close connection with the outer world which constitutes its infallible corrective whenever it goes wrong. Our mental experience would be nothing if it were not vitally related to the experience of other animate beings and to the inanimate objects of sense. Take away this intimate relation, and you can find little difference between the waking state and the dreaming. A raving man is no better than a dreaming one who lives in his own mental world. It must, therefore, be obvious that drawing analogy between our normal experience of the outer world and dreaming experience of the inner world, for the sake of proving the former to be unreal, is quite unjustifiable and is against the whole experience of mankind.

Here I must caution the reader against supposing all dreams to be a disconnected play of thoughts, a mere chaotic jumble of ideas, or a fantastic show of distorted images of mind. Under the influence of certain intensely spiritual feelings some persons are capable of perceiving in their dreams connected pictures of incidents that occurred in the past, or are occurring in the present, or are going to occur in the future. Into the truth and correctness of such exceptional dream-perceptions, talented men like Myers, Gurney and Lodge have carried their investigations with a patience and assiduity that astonish the world by their labour employed on such untilled but immensely fruitful ground. For an authentic record of such real dreams, I might refer the reader to the useful book on 'Dreams and Ghosts' by Mr. Andrew Lang. Still such dreams are rare and exceptional cases and so they do not affect our view about dreams which are generally chaotic, which, therefore, do not produce a connected and wholesome experience like that which we have during the active waking life, and which, for that reason, must never be confounded with the latter under the pretence of analogical argument. So far I have made it plain that, to take matter as a fictitious appearance which arises as a result from the interaction between the human and Divine minds, to compare its manifestation to our dreams, as has been done by Dr. Schiller and the neo-Vedantists, is more like ascribing horns to a horse and attempting to take accurate measurements of their length and breadth.

Therefore our St. Meikandan not only repudiates the very idea of conceiving Maya as illusive but insists strongly on its being the real material cause of the universe and compared it to a lump of clay in the hands of a potter who makes different kinds of earthenwares out of it. As potter moulds the clay into several earthen vessels, so too God creates the world out of Maya, - not of course standing outside Maya but staying within it and producing them by means of his sheer will-power. The analogy of potter must not be stretched too far, since it is taken only as an illustrative example to bring home to our mind how the creative principle is essentially distinct from the material cause and how it operates upon it in the creative act.

It must also be noted that St. Meikandan is very careful, here, in distinguishing between the working method of a known efficient cause and that of the unknown, in this way. The known efficient cause, potter, stands aloof from the clay and makes pots from it with the aid of his instruments; while God does not so stand away from matter and mind, but remains in intimate union with them within and without. He is immanent and omnipresent in all. Though He thus exists, yet is He distinct from them by virtue of His innate and pristine qualities. While the power and intelligence of individual soul are finite, those of His are infinite. While they are subject to births and deaths, misery and happiness, He remains forever untouched by them. He sheds His grace and love on each and all souls and uplifts and sets them all in the realm of his ineffable light and love. He renders them all kinds of help without expecting anything from them in return, except their love and devotion. What can man do to Him in return for all that He did and doeth, without his asking? What is there to be given to a giver of inestimable gifts, who is the richest and the most perfect of all, by a poor and imperfect soul such as man is, except his grateful heart and his humble self? This is the highest, the noblest and most ideal conception of God, the efficient cause of the universe, as expressed by St. Meikandan in his great work 'The Sivajnanabodham', the final authority on the religion and philosophy of Saiva Siddhanta.

Except on this pragmatic and pluralistic conception of God, Mind and Matter, no progress of human thought, no attainment of happiness is possible, and no success of all scientific labours, of religious and philosophical studies can be achieved, as has been wisely pointed out by Prof. William James in his scholarly work on religion. 'Philosophic theism,' he says, "has always shown a tendency to become pantheistic and monistic, and to consider the world as one unit of absolute fact; and this has been at variance with popular or practical theism, which latter has ever been more or less frankly pluralistic, not to say polytheistic, and shown itself perfectly well satisfied with a universe composed of many original principles, provided we be only allowed to believe that the divine principle remains supreme, and that the others are subordinate.

In this latter case God is not necessarily responsible for the existence of evil. He would only be responsible if it were not finally overcome. But on the monistic or pantheistic view, evil, everything else, must have its foundation in God; and the difficulty is to see how this can possibly be the case if God be absolutely good. This difficulty faces us in every form of philosophy in which the world appears as one flawless unit of fact. Such a unit is an *Individual*, and in it the worst parts must be as essential as the best, must be as necessary to make the individual what he is; since if any part whatever in an individual were to vanish or alter, it would no longer be *that* individual at all. The philosophy of absolute idealism, so vigorously represented both in Scotland and America to-day, has to struggle with this difficulty, quite as much as scholastic theism struggled in its time; and although it be premature to say that there is no speculative issue whatever from the puzzle, it is perfectly fair to say that there is no clear or easy issue, and that the only *obvious* escape from paradox here is to cut loose from the monistic assumption altogether, and to allow the world to have existed from its origin in pluralistic form, as an aggregate or collection of higher and lower things and principles, rather than an absolutely unitary fact. For then evil would not need to be essential; it might be and may always have been, and independent portion that had no rational or absolute right to live with the rest, and which we might conceivably hope to get rid of at last." (*The Varieties*, pp.131, 132.)

As a nugget of pure gold contains nothing but particles of pure gold, so do these memorable words of Prof. William James contain only solid and substantial thoughts which furnish the true key to the solution of the most intricate and mysterious problems of life and life's existence on this material plane. How this profound thinker came to apply the same principles of criticism to the momentous and ultimate questions of Philosophy and Religion as had been done by our St. Meikandan some six centuries ago, is a great wonder to me. I need hardly say that all those who have an earnest desire to acquire a correct knowledge of human life and its destiny, would be greatly

profited by making a comparative study of both Meikandan's and William James's works.

**Footnotes**

1. The Varieties of Religious Experience, page 456.
2. The Varieties of Religious Experience, pp.444,445.
3. The Varieties of Religious Experience" p.456.
4. Naturalism and Agnosticism, Vol.1. page.80.
5. Ibid.
6. An Examination of Sir W. Hamilton's Philosophy page.45.
7. Sivajnanabodham, 4th Sutra, 2nd Adhikarana.
8. Outlines of Psychology. p.8.
9. The Principles of Psychology, Vol.1. pp.6&7
10. The Principles of Psychology, Vol.1. pp.6&7
11. Fragments of Science, Vol,2, page,299.
12. Life and Matter, pp.136-137.
13. Ibid, p.149
14. Ibid, p.197
15. Page, 185.
16. Natural Law in the Spiritual World, p.69.
17. Ibid, p.71.
18. Naturalism and Agnosticism, p.28.
19. Axioms as Postulates, in Personal idealism, p.107.
20. Human Personality, vol.1,p,17.
21. Compare what Dr. F.C.S. Schiller says in his Riddles of the Sphinx, p.866. "Evil and imperfection is that which is ever vanishing away, It is impermanent itself and the cause of impermanence in the imperfect, the lawless and acosmic factor, which must be continually transcended and ultimately eliminated in the process towards perfect Being."
22. Formal Logic, pp 56,57. Dr. Schiller expounded the same fact long ago in his Riddles of the Sphinx, p.358 thus: "In the interpretation,

therefore, of our world pluralism is supreme; it is the only possible and relevant answer to the ultimate question of ontology. It is only by asserting existences to be ultimately many that we can satisfy the demands either of the Real or of the Ideal. And it is a mere prejudice to suppose that there is any intrinsic difficulty in the ultimate existence of many individuals; for the conception of ultimate existence is no more difficult in the case of many than of one.”

23. Life's Basis and life's Ideal, p.21
24. Mill's Logic P.120
25. Naturalism and Agnosticism, p.60
26. Ibid, p.128.
27. Sivajnanabodham, 3rd Sutra.
28. Compare Prof. L.T. Hobhouse's statement in Mind in Evolution. p.14.
29. Mind-Energy, p.36.
30. Human Immortality, p.45.
31. Riddles of the Sphinx. 2nd edition, p.296.
32. Riddles of the Sphinx, 2nd edition, pp.296,297.
33. Riddles of the Sphinx, 2nd edition, p.279.
34. Ibid, p.285,
35. Ibid, p.207.
36. Sivajnanabodha, 1st Sutra.
37. The Development of Modern Philosophy, Vol. II, pp.17,18.
38. See Prof. Sully's 'Studies in Childhood,' pp. 400-401.
39. Studies in Childhood, p.314.
40. Illusions' by Prof. James Sully, p.137.
41. 'Illusions' by Prof. James Sully, p.158.
42. Ibid, p.183.
43. Ibid, p.332.
44. Pragmatism, p.211.

## **SCHOLARS' VIEWS ON SAIVA SIDDHANTA**

“Saivism is the most ancient living faith in the world.”

- *Sir John Marshall.*

“Saiva Siddhanta philosophy is the choicest product of the Dravidian intellect. Saiva Siddhanta is the most elaborate, influential and undoubtedly the most intrinsically valuable of all the religions of India.”

- Dr. G. U. Pope.

“Saiva Siddhanta may be ranked among the perfect and cleverest system of human thought”

- Dr. Kamil Zvelebil.

“Those who have studied the (Saiva Siddhanta) system, unanimously agree that this eulogy is not a whit too enthusiastic or free worded.”

- Rev. Goodwill.

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

“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 watermark of Indian thought and Indian life, apart, of course, from the influence of the Christian evangel.”

- Rev. W. H. Goudie.

“Of the many systems into which the Saivites stream of Vedanta teaching has spread out, the Saiva Siddhanta possesses by far the richest literature and holds the greatest place in the life of South India”

- J.N. Farquhar.

“The most courageous attempt to transcend his bondage is that of the Saiva Siddhanta system, a system which for that reason we may pronounce the noblest among Indian Theisms.

“A system which perhaps from the theistic point of view is the most valuable of all that have sprung up upon the Indian soil.”

-Rev. Nicol Macnicol, M.A., LITT.D.,

“In no literature with which I am acquainted has the individual religious life-its struggles, dejections, its hopes and fears, its confidence and its triumph-receives a delineation more frank and more profound.”

-Sir Charles Eliot.

“The Saiva Siddhanta Philosophy of South India is one of the classical products of the Tamil mind. Not only so, but the system, in keeping with the claim inherent in the name, is one of the finest systems of Hindu thought and life.”

- Rev. Dr. J. H. Piet.

“The superiority of the Siddhanta is thus established through its consideration of categories not known to other systems. The Samkhya, for instance, recognizes only twenty-four categories; the Yoga recognizes practically the same number, though it postulates the Lord in addition to them. The Pancharatra and other Agamas, it is contended, do not recognize any more, while the Siddhanta alone explains all the thirty-six categories, by the full knowledge of which, one may attain union with Siva, i.e., final release.”

-Prof. S.S. Suryanarayana Sastri.

**THE CONCEPTION OF  
GOD AS RUDHRA**

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## CHAPTER I

### RUDRA IN THE RIG VEDA

As a pronounced theist, I purpose to speak from the theistic point of view of the conception of God as Rudra, formed in the minds of the ancient civilized Hindus in India. I take the Being represented by the term 'Rudra' to be identical in character with that indicated by 'Siva'. Millions of people from cape Comorin to the Himalayas pay their homage every day to this deity and there are all over India - especially in the south, many huge, magnificent and beautifully constructed temples dedicated to him. Next in importance comes the worship of Vishnu who too claims many equally large temples though they are not so numerous as those of Siva. Leaving aside several minor deities worshipped either as household gods and goddesses within or as village gods and goddesses without, the Hindu religion may, to all intents and purposes, be divided between the followers of Siva and those of Vishnu. If you take the word 'Hinduism' to mean a theistic religion, i.e., a religion which believes in the existence of an all-powerful and all-wise. Being not unknowable and inaccessible to man but gracious and personal living through and through in sympathetic relation to all that have life, then you cannot include in it any religion except these two creeds; others; Buddhism, Jainism and Mayavada being atheistic though ethical and metaphysical in character.

Now, let me turn to the oldest literary records both in Sanscrit and in Tamil in order to determine the intrinsic nature and function of Rudra from the descriptions given of him in them. For a fulness of

account Sanscrit works stand pre-eminent, as almost all the Tamil works pertaining to religion and philosophy were irretrievably lost in the Lemurian floods that swallowed up the original home of the Tamils. Yet enough of Tamil remains, a few literary poems and an entire work of rare excellence called the 'Tholkappiam' which go back to a period when the Rig - Vedic hymns of Rudra were most probably just beginning to be composed and which, by presenting to us a clear picture of his person, enable us to know the earliest conception formed of God as Rudra.

In the Rig-Veda. Rudra is spoken of as the terrible fire;<sup>1</sup> He is appealed to as the lord of hymns, the lord of Sacrifices and as one who keeps healing medicines; He is brilliant as the sun, refulgent as bright gold, He is the best of all gods and most bountiful;<sup>2</sup> He is excellently wise, most bountiful and strong;<sup>3</sup> He who is strong and He the lord of heroes, has braided hair and is invoked to bring prosperity to the two-footed and four-footed creatures that all might be well-fed and healthy; He with the braided hair is called the boar of the sky and described as having a dazzling form glowing red. He is the father of the Maruts. He is immortal but bestows on all the food of mortals;<sup>2</sup> in glory he is the most eminent of all beings, the mightiest of the mighty;<sup>3</sup> He is the greatest physician of physicians;<sup>4</sup> He is gracious and easily invoked;<sup>5</sup> Divine power can never depart from him who is the supremed lord of this world;<sup>6</sup> There is nothing mightier than him;<sup>7</sup> He fulfils the aims and objects of rites and sacrifices;<sup>8</sup> He is the father of Maruts and his consort Prisni is their mother;<sup>9</sup> He their young and energetic father and his consort Prisni their mother bring fortunate days to the Maruts;<sup>10</sup> in more than one place. He is identified with Agni and is praised to have burnt the three castles;<sup>11</sup> His consort is called not only by the names Prisni, and Aditi but also by the name Soma, and He is, therefore, frequently addressed by the name Soma-Rudra (vi. 74,1,2,3 and 4). This Divine mother is in many places called Aditi. And Rudra too is called by several names such as Bhaga, Pushan, Brahmanaspati and Siva; He is said to have a strong bow and swift arrows; He is the self-dependent and wise God and

the conqueror whom none can conquer; through his power. He perceives all beings on the earth, through His high imperial sway He bends His looks upon the beings in heaven;<sup>12</sup> He the long-haired Being sustains fire, water and the two worlds; He is all sky to look upon; He is this light; He the Muni associated in the beneficent work of every God, is said to fly through the air looking upon all forms;<sup>13</sup> He is also stated to have drunk poison along with Rudra.<sup>14</sup>

These notable references to Rudra I picked up only from the Rig - Veda in the order in which they occur from its first book to its last. But, for the sake of our argument, all the scattered epithets applied to him in the above references may be classified under three categories, one relating to his self, the other to his form and the third to his functions. He is said to possess excellent wisdom and boundless knowledge, unlimited grace and bountifulness, almightiness, fierceness eternal youth, immortality and self-dependence.

His form is constituted of pure and resplendent light the colour of which is either red or golden; He has braided hair and long, loose locks; He holds in his hands a strong bow and swift arrows; He remains in an inseparable union with a female principle which is variously called Prisni, Aditi and Soma. The word 'Soma' means with 'Uma'<sup>15</sup>; hence 'Soma Rudra' means 'Rudra who dwells with Uma'.

Being the wisest, the mightiest and the best of all gods. He with Prisni creates the universe, sustains all - the two footed and four - footed creatures, by bestowing on them food, prosperity and healing medicines, and at length destroys them all. He hears the songs and prayers of his devotees and is easy of access to them. He it is that presides as the chief deity over all kinds of sacrifices and fulfills most bountifully the aims and objects of the sacrificer, At one time he drank poison to save gods from mortality while he himself remained ever immortal without being in the least affected by that dreadful poison. At another time, He burnt up the three castles of three demons that had been giving immense trouble to gods. He is also said to perform austerities and is on that account called a Muni, the modern Dakshinamurti.

Thus we get a clear, definite and perfect picture of Rudra from the delineations given in some whole hymns of the Rig-Veda, as well as in many stray passages found interwoven with other hymns addressed to various other deities. These attributes and functions of Rudra, except for a few personal traits, are the same as those generally attributed to the Supreme Being by the common consent of man. So far as my knowledge of the Rig-Veda is concerned, I venture to say that such a grand conception of the one Almighty God cannot be found entertained of any other god in the Rig-Vedic pantheon. Even Indra the pre-eminent deity in the Rig-Veda-pre-eminent because of the greater number of hymns (250 out of 1028) addressed to him, does not seem to have been raised to the position of an Almighty God of the universe. In one place some of the gods are spoken of as mightier than others (i27,13), While in another all are equally great (viii 30,1). In hymn 18 of the fourth book, not only all the gods but Rudra are distinctly stated to have been born but Indra too is mentioned to have been brought forth like others. And it is curious that this hymn fails not to note that the very same Indra slew his father and that Vamadeva, the author of the hymn, cooked a dog's intestines and ate them. Nor are the gods immortal whose number amounts to three thousand and three hundred and thirty nine (iii,9,9), for in the words of Prof.A.Macdonell, "Immortality is said to have been bestowed upon them by individual deities, such as Agni and Savitri, or to have been acquired by drinking Soma"<sup>16</sup>. And on the crimes committed by gods it is not pleasant to dwell and so I dismiss them with an observation made by Dr.Barth; "In a developed and concrete form it becomes embarrassing whether when it offers a conception of the gods which looks mean, gross, or even loathsome or when it simply represents them in an aspect too human, too epic, and in a sense too familiar for the religious consciousness, now grown more exacting."<sup>17</sup>

But Lord Rudra, the father of Maruts and of many other Rudras is nowhere said to be one amongst the gods, nor is he taken to have been born and brought up and become immortal by drinking Soma; on the other hand he is declared to be eternally young

and immortal and he stood so even when he drank the deadly poison. In the whole range of the Vedic literature I do not find a single passage that ascribes to Lord Rudra either birth or death, either any imperfection of mind or any mean action that characterizes man and the so-called gods. When we consider all the sublime qualities attributed to his self, we perceive in Rudra the complete conception of the Supreme Being.

But as we approach the descriptions given of his form as having red or gold complexion, his head braided hair or long loose locks, his hands as holding a strong bow and arrows, himself as coupled with a female principle, and of his feats of poison - drinking and castle-burning, we seem to encounter in him a mere human hero greatly deified. Yet, so far as his essential nature is concerned, it is clear there is nothing in it which militates against the conception of an Almighty god of the universe, What is thus inwardly great and divine cannot express itself outwardly as a low human. It is not, therefore, reasonable to bring any human interpretation to bear upon the descriptions pertaining to his form and functions. For, in judging of the actions and appearances of a person or thing, do we not find a careful consideration of the intrinsic nature of that person or thing is brought into full play? why? Because we like not to be deceived by mere appearances. For instance, a copperpiece, when it is thoroughly polished or coated with gold, glitters like gold; and so long as you do not require it, or do not feel yourself sufficiently curious to know whether it is real gold or not, you may treat it rather indifferently; but when you want it for your use, you cannot rest satisfied unless and until you have made a thorough study of it. So, here too, in studying the form and functions of Lord Rudra, we must be guided not by his mere appearances but by the light we get from his essential nature. Since, as shown above, all the Rig-Vedic passages and hymns relating to Rudra proclaim his inward nature to be supremely divine, it behoves us to interpret the nature of his form and functions also in keeping with his divine essence and not otherwise. For, how can a being that is divine through and through, that is perfect and imperish-

able in every way, that is all grace, bliss and intelligence, be said to assume mortal forms and perform human functions imperfect, erroneous and vengeful? When a man has risen once to the highest and the noblest conception of a being, it is unthinkable that the same man will descend down to the lowest and the meanest notion of the same being. So much opposed to each other are the Divine and human natures that one cannot say without contradiction that the very same seers who rose once to the height of the Divine conception of Rudra, sank down afterwards to the lowest level of thought, and ascribed to him the human character also. In fact the seers in question were not so hopelessly inconsistent; what they said of the intrinsic nature of Rudra will, on a careful examination, be found to be in perfect harmony with what they declared of his form and functions. But, all along, the kind of interpretation that has been brought to bear upon his form and functions has been incorrect and misleading. To my knowledge, even highly accomplished scholars both Hindu and European, whose patient labours in the field of ancient Vedic literature kindle the mingled feelings of wonder, admiration and gratitude in the hearts of all Vedic students, have not correctly interpreted the seemingly contradictory characters of Rudra, nor have they perceived the truth that underlies the conception of his personality. If this truth can be properly understood and grasped, it will, I believe, lead to an ultimate solution of the vexed problems of religion and set at rest all sectarian wrangles. That a clear comprehension of this important truth was reserved for the seers and saints of the old Tamil literature, will become apparent as we proceed on.

#### Footnotes

1. "Radraya drisikam," i 27, 10, <sup>2</sup> "Gatha-patim medha-patim Rudram jalasha-bheshajam" "Yah sukrah iva Suryo hiranyam iva rochate/Sres ho devanam vasuh" i.3,5, <sup>3</sup> 'kad Rudraya pra chetase mithusetamya tavyase/vochema Santamam hride" i, 3, 1.
2. Imah Rudraya tavase kapardine kasyad-virays prabharamabe matih/Yatha sam asad dvipade chatushpade vasvam pushtam

- grame asminnaturam” “Divo varabam arusham kapardinam dvesham rupam” “Pitre Marustam/rasva cha no a mrita marta bhojanam” i, 114, 1,5,6,
3. “Sreshtho Jatasya Rudra sriya’, si tavastamas tavasam vajra babo”,ii, 33,3,
  4. “tva bhishajam srinomi” it, 33,4,
  5. “Ridudarah suhavo” ivid, 5,
  6. “isanad asya bhuvanasya bhurer na vai u yoshad Rudrad asuryam” ‘ibid,9,
  7. “navai ojiyou Rudra tvad asti” ibid, 10,
  8. “Rudram yajnanam Sadhadishtim apasam” iii, 2,5.
  9. “Prisnim vochanta mataram/adhapitaram ishminam Rudram” v.52, 16,
  10. “Yuva pita svapah Rudrah esbam sudugha Prisnih sadina Marudbhayah” v.60,5,
  11. “Ya ugrah iva Sarya-hatigma-sringo na vamsagah/Agne poro rurojitha” vi, 16,39. “Pratar Bhagam Pushanam Brahmanaspatim pratah somam uta Rudram huvema” vii, 41, 1; “Yabhih Sivah svavan evayavabhir”x.92,9
  12. “Imah Rudraya sthira-dhan vane girah kashipreshave devaya svadhavne | ashalbaya sahamanaya vedhase tiginayudhaya bharata srinotn nah | sa hi kashayena kshamayasya janmanah samrajyena divyasya chetati” vii, 46,1,2.
  13. “Kesi Agnim kesi visham bibarti roadasi | kesi visvani svar drise kesi idam jyotir uchyate | antarikashena patati visva rupa vachakast-Munir devasya devasya saukrityaya sakha hitab” s, 136, 1,4.
  14. “Kesi vishasya patrena yad Rudrenapibat saha” s. 136,7.
  15. Muir’s Sanscrit Texts, Vol iv. p.357.
  16. Sanscrit Literature, p.71.
  17. The Religions of India, p.27.

## CHAPTER II

### EXPLANATIONS

Why was the common and impersonal heavenly Father of mankind individualized as Rudra? Why Was he described as possessing a form of light glowing with red or gold colour? And why was he said to remain in an inseparable union with a female deity called Prisni, Aditi or Uma? These are questions, correct answers to which will, I hope, unravel the mystery that encircles his individuality and will render the universal conception of God distinctly intelligible, simple and immensely useful. I will, therefore, make an attempt to find out an answer for every one of them.

In the first place, let us consider why God was individualized as Rudra. The common consent of man tends to take God as all-gracious and all-beneficent; and the Rig-Veda too speaks of Rudra as all-gracious and all-beneficent. Why should God be gracious and beneficent? As all living beings are buried in mental darkness, as they all suffer greatly on that account, in order to release them from that darkness and from that suffering, a supreme being who is all light, love and happiness must necessarily exist; and unless he be gracious and merciful he cannot be said to be sensible of their pains and sufferings, nor can he be regarded as inclined to help and free them from such sufferings. These invaluable qualities; grace, and mercy it is that bring him into vital, active and intimate relation with man and other living things. As has been pointed out by Prof. William James,<sup>1</sup> his immateriality, his infinitude, his absoluteness and transcendence have no interest for man, since they do not serve to bring him directly near to his suffering children. No doubt, phi-

losophers from Xenophanes, Parmenides and Plato of the old Greek school down to our own Sankaracharya and Spinoza, Berkeley and Kant, all held that there existed but one true substance, a colourless, formless, impalpable and incomprehensible Absolute transcending the limits of time and space and abstracted from all material and mental phenomena which, according to them, have no existence of their own but are supposed to be mere null and void. But “to think of it in this way,” says Walter Pater, the eminent critic, thinker and model prose-writer of modern age, “was in reality not to think of it at all; - That in short Being so pure as this is pure nothing”<sup>2</sup>. And the same writer again wisely observes: “Thereafter, in every age, some will be found to start a fresh quixotically, through what waste of words! in search of that true substance, the One, the Absolute, which to the majority of acute people is after all but zero, and a mere algebraic symbol for nothingness.”<sup>3</sup> Thus the human instincts and intellect can never be satisfied with a dispassionate and unsympathetic Absolute which is held by some to exist out of all relation with man and the world. Indeed, his daily wants, cares and sufferings create in man an ever persistent desire to seek a remedy for all these evils and to picture God as the greatest physician who keeps all healing medicines in his hands. That is why the Rig-Veda calls Rudra the physician of physicians-the modern Vaidyanath. Nor has man erred in putting his trust in God believing him to be his gracious father and beneficent friend who is every nearer to him than even his own soul and body, since there are clear indications in the provisions of nature which exhibit beyond doubt God’s love and care for all living beings. Wherefore it is that Lord Rudra is called the father of the world in Rig-Veda.<sup>4</sup> While setting up hard life-struggles in the lower animal kingdom for calling forth the energy and intelligence of its denizens, has not Nature provided the weaker ones with a foreknowledge of dangers, with colours hardly distinguishable from their habitat, with swift feet and steel-like horns? And is not man himself above all endowed with superior intelligence and reasoning faculties, a careful, timely and judicious exercise of which may enable him to overcome almost all difficulties and maintain a happy life? An intelligent study of Biol-

ogy will disclose the fact that in all its dealings with life and life-adjustments Nature is always just and gracious.

Where this love-nature exists, there all that have life can never live one apart from the other. Love is the bond of union but its opposite hate cuts it asunder. If God be a being animated with love, then he cannot stand away from the suffering souls the objects of his love. As God is love, so too are all living beings, especially the human, constituted of love. Man can never live without discovering this love nature of God, without discovering from the core of his heart his own unquenchable love of God. The veriest savages whom we think lowest in the scale of human intelligence and civilisation are nevertheless shown by Andrew Lang<sup>5</sup> to possess the highest conception of the Supreme Being, of a kind and loving Heavenly Father whom they worship with all the love and humility they are capable of. Just as he sees his children everywhere, so also must his children see him, meet him and mingle with him. Being a spirit of infinite power, he can see them as well through mind as through matter, but they of finite mental powers cannot, at this stage of evolution, see him through the mind's eye as they can through the physical. Until they reach that highest stage in which their mental eye will open to see him face to face in all his pristine glory and dazzling splendour, will he leave them to grope after him in darkness? No; he will not, he cannot, for he is all love for his children; it is because of this love that he willingly condescends to show a little of himself even through the physical matter, so that we may see him even with our physical eyes, meet him and mingle with him to a permitted degree. When in this way the Supreme Lord of the universe shows us a little of himself he is supposed to have individualized himself for our sake and is, on that account, spoken of as Rudra. But in fact, he does not become finite thereby. Just as from our point of view the immense body of the sun looks like a tiny circular plate of polished gold, so too the infinite God of the world looks to our feeble physical and mental eyes as if he were but a finite little person like ourselves. Yet his finitude is simply apparent and not wholly true. In fact his seeming littleness is the effect of two causes. The first of which is, as shown above, the soul's incapacity to perceive his

boundless nature and extent, while the second is the limited nature of the physical matter itself which can but serve to manifest only a part of his glory, standing as it does, mid-way between himself and ourselves as a meeting point.

**Footnotes**

1. The Varieties of Religious Experience, pp. 445-447.
2. Plato and Platonism, p.34.
3. Ibid, p.40. Italics are mine.
4. “Bhuvanasya pitaram,” vi, 49,10.
5. The Making of Religion, Ch.IX,X,XI and XII.

**CHAPTER III****THE INTERMEDIATE  
PART OF MATTER**

Well, what part of the physical matter, then, does stand as a meeting-point at which the Supreme being and the individual selves come together and by means of which the latter are enabled to see the former, enjoy the glorious sight and offer to it their humble prayers and forms of worship? This important question leads us on to a consideration of our second question also, namely, why is Lord Rudra is spoken of as having a form of light glowing with the red or gold colour?

That God is immanent everywhere in this physical matter is an undisputed fact, but what part of it serves to show him to us is the most momentous question to be settled. For, that which is susceptible of receiving the finest spiritual light of God and that which can transmit that light to our eyes, must itself possess a nature analogous to that of God to a permissible extent; otherwise its mediumistic function cannot take place. Let us, therefore, turn to matter to inquire which part of it possesses that rare intermediate character in itself.

For all practical purposes the whole material world is, as we all know, resolvable into five primary elements as fire, air, earth, water and ether. Of these air and ether are invisible and as such cannot relate themselves to our sight; earth is an opaque body of matter though it contains here and there some bright substances and crystalline bodies; water is, no doubt, a transparent substance but it has no light of its own; and so the only thing left for us to consider is fire

alone. Not only is fire self-luminous but it also possesses heat and many other properties which make it a fitting receptacle for taking in god's spiritual light. Whether fire is a substance as was held by Helmholtz,<sup>1</sup> or only a form of energy as is held by other scientists, is a subject immaterial for our present purpose. It is a veritable fact in nature which appeals to our senses of touch and sight and we shall therefore, treat it with Helmholtz as a physical element. Nevertheless, the truth must not be overlooked that fire lies half-way between spirit and matter; otherwise it could not serve as a medium for transmitting to us the spiritual light of the Supreme Being.

Having shown the fact that fire constitutes, by its very nature, a medium or-meeting point for God and individual souls, to come together, let me proceed to consider its other properties which serve to render it a principle approaching God in its character and function. God possesses a spiritual light which dispels mental darkness and enlightens soul's understanding; even so fire emits light which drives away outer darkness and illumines our eyes. God is beneficent in his creative and preservative functions but fierce when performing the destructive; and so too is fire. So long as you make an intelligent and careful use of fire, it is very kindly towards you, for it cooks your food, it warms you against cold, it manufactures for you various articles of value, it drives steam-engines, steam-ships and what not, but when it gets beyond your control, or when it vomits flaming liquid matter through volcanic craters, what is more terrible, more destructive in its action than fire? It simply burns up all and reduces everything to mere ashes. Again, God creates, preserves and destroys all and so also does the fiery mass called the sun; for is it not a well-known fact that without the presence of solar light and solar heat no living thing can come into being nor can it exist? Why so far? For the very maintenance of life, we require a certain amount of heat in our body; when our temperature becomes abnormal, either by going up or by sinking down the utmost limit, the spark of life is instantly extinguished. God is the purest being imaginable and although he is present as closely in impure things as in pure, he is not in the least

defiled by any impurities but cleanses them all of their filth and makes them as pure as himself; and fire also is the only element within our experience which is not tainted by its contact with any amount of filth, but which burns up all impurities and changes them all into pure white ashes; other elements; air, water, and earth get themselves defiled with dirt. God is both visible and invisible, visible only to devout souls in a form assumed in the twinkling of an eye like lightning-flash, but invisible to others even while existing everywhere; and fire also has the same characteristics, since it suddenly makes its appearance at a point where you kindle it successfully, while in its invisible state it exists everywhere all through the world and its objects. Hence it is that when occasion arises for speaking of these two aspects of God simultaneously, the Upanishads such as 'Svetasvatar' and kaivalya and the Tamil Saints such as Appar and Meikandan illustrate them by painting out the two phases of fire which resemble them almost. Now it must be obvious the similarity that obtains between God and Fire is quite close in almost all respects so far shown.

And I may add that since all who speak of God speak of him as the supreme spiritual light, according to the law which makes substances of like nature combine together most intimately, God manifests himself to us through the physical light existing in it in the most intimate union conceivable. This fact must have originally impressed itself on the minds of ancient seers so vividly that they come to think of God ever after either as Fire (Agn) or as the God of fire. To the two conceptions, the Rig-Veda bears ample testimony, as is clear from the passages beginning with "Thou, Agni, art Rudra"<sup>2</sup>, and with "The long-haired being sustains fire; he is called this light"<sup>3</sup>

#### **Footnotes**

- 1 Popular Lectures on Scientific Subjects, Vol. 1, P.151.
2. 1, 1, 19.
3. "Tvam Agne Redre," R. 1,6.
4. Rig-Veda, "Kesi agaim Kesi Vishnam Kesi bibharti rodasi Kesi idam jyotir ucbyati" X.136,1.

## CHAPTER IV

# FIRE WORSHIP AMONG OTHER ANCIENT

## RACKS

Even much anterior to the compilation, if not the composition of the Rig-Vedic hymns, that this conception of God as the God of fire lay imbedded in the thoughts of all higher intelligent human beings which occupied the different centres of civilisation on this earth is becoming clearer and clearer, as the remarkable records left by them come to light by the indefatigable labours of antiquarians. In one of the early Egyptian inscriptions, the composition of which is stated to have taken place three thousand years before Christ, it is said, "The God of the world is in the light above the firmaments his emblems are upon earth it is to them that worship is rendered daily. "The emblems of light alluded to in this inscription are, no doubt, the so called phallic stones set up and worshipped all over the world. In the still earlier Sumerian record, we find the highly civilised Chaldeans worshipping God in the sun, the moon, and the fire and glorifying him in a hymn that, "The firegod, the first-born supreme, unto heaven they pursued and no father did he know"<sup>1</sup>. They erected a very huge and magnificent temple for the moon-god at Ur not only a great central place of worship but also the famous capital of their kingdom. They called the moon-god by the name of Nannar. They had similar temples, also for the sun-god, one of which was built at Sippara before 3800 B.C.; and in which they worshipped

him under the name of Tammuz.<sup>2</sup> The Babylonians also were the worshippers of the Sun-god, as is manifest from an inscription on the stone-tablet which was deposited about the year 880 B.C., and on which was found written the following; “The image of Shamash, the great Lord, who dwells in the ‘House of the sun’<sup>3</sup>. The name of this great Lord was ‘Bel’; and a great temple was erected for him in Babylon. The very name ‘Babylon’ seems to be a corruption of ‘Bel il’”, which mean ‘The House of Lord’; but Ragozin derives it from the Semitic name ‘Babilu’ which means ‘The gate of God’<sup>4</sup>, The principal divinity of the Phoenicians also was the Sun-god called ‘Baal’ whom they worshipped in both the aspects beneficent and maleficent-beneficent as giving life and light, maleficent as emitting fire and hot summer heat<sup>4</sup>, When we turn to Hebrew scriptures we find the sun worshipped under a still earlier name ‘El’, and the sun-god called ‘El shaddai,’ When Jehovah appeared unto Moses, he said, “I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob as El Shaddai (which is taken to be a Hebrew name meaning God Almighty), but by my name Jehovah I was not known to them”<sup>5</sup>. And of God’s appearance to Moses in the form of fire it is distinctly stated in Exodus (Ch XIX, 16-18) thus; “And it came to pass on the third day in the morning, that there were thunders and lightnings, and a thick cloud upon the mount and the voice of the trumpet exceeding loud; so that all the people that was in the camp trembled. And Moses brought forth the people out of the camp to meet with God; and they stood at the nether part of the mount. And mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke *because the Lord descended upon it in fire*”.

So far it is clear that not only was the conception of God as the God of fire commonly held by the Egyptians, the Accadians, the Babylonians, the Phoenicians and the Hebrews of very ancient times but even the very word expressing that conception is found almost the same in all their religious writings. Concerning this common feature of their religions what Mr. Ragozin, a great and able historian of the ancient races, says, is very important and notable. He says: “It is to be noticed that the Semites gave the first place to the Sun, and not,

like the Shumiro-Accads to the Moon, possibly from a feeling akin to terror, experiencing as they did his destructive power, in the frequent droughts and consuming heat of the desert.” “The Semitic language of Babylonia which we call ‘Assyrian’, while adapting the ancient writing to its own needs, retained the use of the sign ‘star,’ and read it *ilu*, ‘God,’ The word-Eu or El-we find in all semitic languages, either ancient or modern, in the names they give to God, in the Arabic Allah as well as in the Hebrew Elohim”<sup>6</sup>. This discloses the fact that the word ‘Allah’ is after all but a modified form of the oldest name of God ‘El,’ I wish you to remember this important old word, since I shall have to return to it when I come to discuss the affinity existing between some Samitic and Accadian words and Tamil words.

Leaving aside these ancient people of the old world for a while, let us turn our attention to some of the equally antique races that inhabited the new world. In central and south America, there existed in the remote past certain nations and kingdoms whose relics and remains especially many palaces and temples in a sufficiently preserved condition, still stand to testify to the glorious height to which the civilisation of those people had risen. Amongst the oldest peoples of Mexico, the Maya race stands pre-eminent for its civilisation, as has been observed by Prof. Konrod Haebler, who says, “The peoples to whom Central America owes the peculiarly high development of its civilisation belong to the Maya race,”<sup>7</sup> The grand temple of the sun built by them can still be seen in the ruins of the once-prosperous town called Palenque. The same authority writes: “The worship of the sun occupied a foremost place in the Maya religious observances”<sup>8</sup>. And the “Toltees another civilized section of the ancient Mexicans, also paid their adoration only to the sun, the moon and the stars”<sup>9</sup>. In the opinion of Prof. Haebler the age of these civilized races goes back to the oldest period in the Jewish chronology. Again, in still earlier ages there lived in Peru in South America still more civilized races among whom the natives of Chimu held the highest rank. Staunch worshippers they were of the sun-god as is evident from a terracotta image that was found by Mr. T. Hewitt Myring; and the manufacture of this image is computed to have taken place in 5000

B.C.<sup>10</sup>. Side by side with the sun-god they paid their homage to the moon-god also<sup>11</sup>.

Once more turn we now to the old world. Coming to later times we find great thinkers in reece, such as Heraclitus. Parmenides and Leucippus who lived in the sixth and fifth centuries before Christ, arguing to discover in fire the great moving principles of the world<sup>12</sup>, Mr. Bettany says that the idea of the greatest Greek God-Zesus took its rise from the conception of the son as the life and light-giving divinity of the world<sup>13</sup>. And as in the inner most sanctuary of the temple of Apollo they kept fire always burning on the altar in front of the image, the fact is undeniable that the olden day Greeks worshipped God in the form of fire only. That the Romans also adored only the god of fire is evident from the view they held of the highest god 'Jupiter' as 'the god of light'<sup>14</sup>. Nor was the conception of the old Teutons who lived in the extreme north western corner of Europe, at variance with this universal conception of God, since they too contemplated their highest god 'Woden' as possessing the sun for his eye and their other god 'Thor' as ruling rain, lightning and thunder.<sup>2</sup>

Now these facts furnished by the history of the ancient civilized races and their religions would, I believe suffice to throw light on the inborn tendency of the highly developed human mind to conceive of fire as the fittest embodiment of the spiritual light and heat of God. I need hardly say that the term 'fire' is used here to denote all luminous bodies, whether they possess a positive light like the sun, or only a reflected light as the moon.

It is to be further observed that in order to conceive God as the spiritual fire and view him as ever present in fire and fiery bodies, man must have attained to a certain high stage of mental development, as is evident from the historical facts quoted above; for in the accounts given of savages and their religious ideas, we do not meet with any such noble, high and intimate view of God. That they, in fact, had, and still have, as shown by Andrew Lang, a clear and unmistakable notion of the existence of a single Supreme Being is not

to be doubted; and yet they do not seem to have discovered fire as constituting the meeting-point through which man's direct communion with God becomes possible.

By the side of savages and ordinary peoples there have always been in all places certain highly developed intelligent individuals who entertain ideas mentally, morally and religiously superior to and different from, those held by ordinary people; and only such had ever been, and still are, the real pioneers of civilisation. And to such people alone is given the rare and subtle faculty to perceive the great truth hidden in nature. No wonder then, that, from the remotest past, only the civilised nations of the world and not others had discovered the grand truth about God, formed the right conception of him and worshipped him through fire. As an instance of this, I may quote an incident from Prof. Haebler's history of the ancient Inca race. Once an Inca prince called Maita Capak ordered the people of the surrounding countries to bring all the images of their gods into the town, under the pretence of celebrating festivities for them. When they had done so, he got all the images broken to pieces and built them into the walls of the great sun-temple, simply to show the people of the helplessness of their gods. This Inca ruler belonged to the ancient race of Chimu whose civilisation, as shown above, goes back to 5000 B.C.<sup>15</sup> There are many other incidents similar to this, but space and time forbid me to quote them. From what has been shown, it must be apparent that from time immemorial, not only noble and correct conceptions of Nature's truth but a partial recognition of it, in many cases, even low, mean and mistaken notions of it also have been existing side by side.

**Footnotes**

1. Mathomedanism by G.T. Bettany, M.A., p.2.
2. (bid, p.37; ep. this wish Isavasyopanishad, 4.
3. Chaldea by Z.A. Ragozin, p.213.
4. Ibid, p.248.
5. Ibid, 240.

6. Mohammedanism by Bettany, p.52
7. Exodus, vi,3.
8. Chaldea, p.232.
9. Harmsworth History of the World, p, 5728.
10. Ibid, p.5758,
11. The Story of Mexico by Susan Hale, p.27,
12. Harmsworth History of the world, p. 5817.
13. Ibid, p.5836.
14. Windleband's A History of Philosophy, p.62
15. Mohammedanism, p,187,
16. Ibid, p,259,
17. Ibid, p, 286,288.
18. Harmsworth History of the world, p. 5849.

## CHAPTER V

### PERCEPTION OF TRUTH

Then the question would eventually suggest itself to your mind, how came it about for the ancient civilized man to get at the truth, whether it was by instinct or by intuition or by reasoning or by the development of some new mental faculty, or by all these combined together? Our attempt to answer definitely to any one of these questions will involve us in insoluble difficulties of thought; and it, therefore, seems safe to explain the matter by taking mind as a whole and indivisible principle. So long as the development of mind is incomplete, it can know nothing directly of itself without the aid of material means and sense organs both internal and external; that is to say, an imperfect mind can perceive only something directly and some other thing which is beyond the range of its perception indirectly by way of proceeding from what is known to the unknown. In the language of Logic the knowledge acquired indirectly is called inferential. Where any thing can be known directly, the troublesome process of inferring, as being liable to mislead, is willingly dispensed with. By this I do not mean to say that direct perception alone is true and inference misleading. Both are likely to deceive us, if they are not carefully and properly carried on. Yet, if an intelligent use is made of, the one will corroborate the truth of the other, When mind reaches a high stage of development, its perceptive function is performed quite independently of any inferential process. Substances and occurrences not knowable with the help of sense-organs are oftentimes directly perceived by mind with a wonderful accuracy. The eminent psychologist F. W.H. Myers has given, in his epoch-making work 'Human Personality'

(p.80), the names of several well-known mathematical prodigies who, without the least mechanical means, could work out the most intricate sums in arithmetic and find out the result in a minute. Among them, the case of an uneducated little boy called Dase is the most astonishing of all, for, in the words of Myers, he “received a grant from the Academy of Sciences at Hamburg, on the recommendation of Gauss (another mathematical prodigy from his third year), for mathematical work; and actually in twelve years made tables of factors and prime numbers for the seventh and nearly the whole of the eighth million, a task which probably few men could have accomplished, without mechanical aid, in an ordinary life.”<sup>1</sup> As illustrating the remarkable mind-power of Emanuel Swedenborg to perceive things hidden from the perception of average human intellect, Andrew Lang states the following case; “Kant, however, prints one or two examples of Swedenborg’s successes. Madame Harteville, widow of the Dutch envoy in Stockholm, was dunned by a silver smith for a debt of her late husband’s. She believed that it had been paid, but could not find the receipt. She therefore asked Swedenborg to use his renowned gifts. He promised to see what he could do, and three days later, arrived at the lady’s house while she was giving a tea, or rather a coffee, party. To the assembled society Swedenborg remarked, ‘in a cold-blooded way, that he had seen her man, and spoken to him.’ The late Mr. Harteville declared to Swedenborg that he had paid the bill, seven months before his decease; the receipt was in a cupboard upstairs. Madame Harteville replied that the cupboard had been thoroughly searched to no purpose. Swedenborg answered that, as he learned from the ghost, there was a secret drawer behind the side-plank within the cupboard. The drawer contained diplomatic correspondence, and the missing receipt. The whole company then went upstairs, found the secret drawer, and the receipt among the other papers. Kant adds Swedenborg’s clairvoyant vision from Gothenburg, of a great fire at Stockholm (dated September 1756).”<sup>2</sup> It is no easy thing to convince such a great sceptic thinker as Kant of the supernatural powers of a man, unless he himself had actual personal experiences for believing them to be true. In

the case of Swedenborg a high - developed clairvoyant vision had become an undoubted fact of great spiritual significance, believed not only by himself but also by other great men of his time. Swedenborg himself says that it pleased God to open the sight of his Spirit so that he might see the things in the spiritual world and give a correct account of them<sup>3</sup>. It is remarkable that he too declares, “The Divine Life is internally in the fire of the sun of the spiritual world, but externally in that of the sun of the natural world.”<sup>4</sup> So far it is plain that when the human mind arrives at a high stage of development, it acquires the rare and subtle faculty of sounding the depths of nature’s mysteries without having recourse to any external means of knowledge. I deem it, therefore, not improbable that the seers amongst the civilized nations of the past had acquired a direct knowledge of the intimate relation in which God and fire exist, not through any reasoning process that we pursue, but quite independently of it; for do we not find even in this scientific age in which the reasoning process has attained its zenith, man remains still powerless to discover this nearness and clear manifestation of God but gropes in its very light like the blind man and expresses mistaken ideas not only about God but also about other important matters connected with it?

#### **Footnotes**

1. Human Personality, p. 83.
2. The Making of Religion, p. 26.
3. God, Creation, Man, p.19
4. Ibid, p.34,

**CHAPTER VI****SUPREME QUALITY OF  
THE CONCEPTION**

Now coming back to our subject the conception of God as Rudra, I find in it a rare excellence not met with in similar conceptions held in the minds of other ancient nations. No doubt, when they came to speak of their vision of God, they declared that he had appeared in light or descended as fire, but as regards the spiritual form in which he appeared they gave us no any very clear description of it. That only shows some lack still in their mental development. But in the case of ancient Indian seers, the description of God's spiritual form is quite clear, definite and easy to imagine. For Lord Rudra is said to have a spiritual form glowing with red colour. The possession of red colour speaks volumes for his almighty power and grace. Even on this material plane, to the very act of seeing things and distinguishing one from the other, different shades of different colours possessed by each are very essential. In importance colour stands first, while light is only secondary, since light simply illumines the former and does nothing more, whereas colour does all the rest necessary for the acquisition of objective knowledge. Further, light itself does not become visible without some colour, whereas colours exist independently of light.

Now, of all colours having so much vital significance, only two; red and blue, are supremely important, since they are primary; others being merely the blending of the two in varying proportions. Notwithstanding the fact that many scientists hold three colours to be

primary. Prof. Helmholtz “the first (scientific) head in Europe since the death of Jacobi” takes only two.<sup>1</sup> As regards the red colour the opinions of the scientists are unanimous; but as regards the other primary colour they disagree. “Young took violet for the other primitive colour,” while others take it to be either green or blue; one of the greatest scientists “Maxwell considers that it is more properly blue.”<sup>2</sup> Again, one of the profoundest thinkers and scientific men of the present century, I mean Prof. William James, takes only red and blue as the original colours.<sup>3</sup>

These two colours signify many vital truths which underlie the workings of both the physical and spiritual forces in nature and which up to this time remain undreamt of even in the domain of science. Let us, therefore, consider the significance which they bear in relation to our subject. All the physical forces in nature may be divided into two classes as heat and cold. Formerly it was thought that heat and light were distinct energies; but now after the most carefully conducted investigations they are considered as identical.<sup>4</sup> When intense heat makes its appearance with light, it glows with a red colour; similarly when cold bursts into our view it shines blue. For instance, look at the burning fire, it is red; then look at the sea, it is blue; and the sky also looks blue owing to the presence in it of watery vapour. Much more strongly may the truth of my statement be brought home to your mind, if you notice the experiments made in Chemical Science. Watch the functions of the two gases called oxygen and hydrogen. It is said that oxygen is a fiery gas, for without which fire cannot burn nor can life be maintained and that hydrogen is a watery gas, for without which no water can be obtained nor life prolonged. What are the colours of these two gases? Let us watch the experiments. By means of electric currents the chemist at first decomposes a quantity of water into these two gases and afterwards collects them in two glass tubes. Soon after he brings a red-hot splinter of wood and holds it above the up-turned mouth of the oxygen-tube and you see the splinter at once bursting into a red or yellow flame and burning; but when the same splinter is brought near the down-turned mouth of the hydrogen-tube, instead of the splinter, the

gas itself within the tube is lighted and burns with a pale blue flame. Now from this you see it conclusively proved that the fiery element is always red and the watery always blue.

Let us see next what more is signified by the two colours. Inasmuch as fire is fierce and strong on account of its heat and burning power, it was thought by all the ancients to be a masculine element. And the red colour also by its inseparable association with fire came to be looked upon as a mark of the masculine principle. In the same way, water being cool and pleasant to touch was regarded as feminine and its blue colour as symbolizing the feminine principle. This fact was perceived long ago by Prof. William James and expressed by him in a terse but pregnant sentence. "We find" he says, "something masculine in the colour red and something feminine in the colour pale blue,"<sup>5</sup>

But the fiery and watery elements are inanimate things and consequently they can neither move of their own accord nor can they move the things different from themselves; still less can they so combine together as to bring forth these worlds and the wonderful variety of organisms. And it is impossible that animate beings which are finite in power and intelligence should achieve such an arduous, unwieldy and immeasurable task as the creation of the universe. Consequently, there must be within them all a central willpower imbued with unlimited intelligence to unite and dis-unite them, to combine and re-combine them in such due proportions as will tend to bring them into existence and set them in motion.

It is this will-power that we call God. As he is all love and intelligence, as he has no touch of corporality in him, he cannot have any corporal form for any purpose; his form must therefore be purely spiritual. How is this possible? you may ask; but reflect a little. You see a white lily in a valley and admire its beauty very much; but when you leave the valley and go home, you desire to tell your people what all you have seen about it. In the first place, you make a mental picture of the lily within you, and then give a vivid description of its striking qualities. What you saw before in the valley is a physi-

cal lily but that which you now have in your mind is a spiritual lily. The two lilies are equally real though quite distinct in that the one seen outside perishes in a few days whereas the other perceived inside your mind persists for ever. From this it is plain that, while the form is common to both the physical and psychical images, the substances of which you are sensible there is a metaphysical counterpart within your mind. Now apply this as an analogy to the Divine mind, for in point of mental quality it cannot but be analogous to the human mind, of course, with necessary differences for its boundless power and perfect intelligence. I have shown above that the whole material universe is resolvable into two general categories as fire and water; now therefore under fire and water, we may classify all forces into heat and cold, all colours into red and blue, and all organisms into male and female. I have also shown that God is immanent in all inanimate things as well as in animate and sets them all in motion. According to the psychological law explained just now, all these physical forms must be concluded to have as their psychical counterparts in the Divine mind spiritual forms greatly idealized by the nature of the Supreme principle in which they inhere. If God be a principle of thought—such it actually is, then it cannot but have thought-forms. For, the very development of thought, nay its very existence, consists in the increasing number of thought-forms which it acquires and accumulates. Without form, without mental images, we cannot understand what thought is. What are they learning and knowledge and experience, except being a mental store-house of distinct ideal images formed in correspondence to outer and inner objects? Can you imagine a mind which is quite blank? An empty mind, as in the case of a new-born child, can exist only in darkness and ignorance, but not in light and intelligence. As in the instance of the human mind all excellence consists in the storing-up of ideal images, so also in the case of the Divine mind its infinite greatness consists in the glory of its ideal forms. And yet, the parallel between the two minds should not be stretched too far; because the human mind remains, in its primitive state, completely enveloped in darkness; and only after being set in an exquisitely organized frame as this body of ours, does it come out

of the gloom, only after that does it discern objects and form mental images, having all along those very objects for their prototypes; whereas the Divine mind not only exists free from the contact of such blinding darkness, but it also shines ever with its own brilliant light. Therefore the Divine mind could not have derived its ideal forms from the created matter, since, previous to creation, matter itself had no form of its own in its subtle original condition. It was the form of the Divine thought itself that impressed the formless matter and shaped it into its present forms.

That thought has forms, that it has power to impress matter and produce in it forms corresponding to its own, have been proved experimentally by Dr. Baraduc, an eminent and original French scientist. Relative to Dr. Baraduc's discovery of thought-photography. Dr. James coates remarks as follows: "Dr. Baraduc, a well-known savant, made a communication to the Academic de Medecine in May, 1896, in which he detailed a variety of experiments, and affirmed that he had succeeded in photographing thought. He exhibited numerous photographs in proof. His usual mode of procedure was simple enough. The person whose thought was to be photographed entered into a dark room, placed his hand on a photographic plate, and thought intently of the object to be produced. It is stated by those who have examined Dr. Baraduc's photographs that some of them looked very cloudy, but a few of them were comparatively distinct, and represented the features of persons and the outlines of things. Dr. Baraduc went further; he declared that it was possible to produce a photographic image at a great distance."<sup>6</sup> This may be corroborated by what Mr. C. W. Leadbeater states of his interview with the great French scientist. "The recent experiments of Dr. Baraduc of Paris," he says, "seem to show quite conclusively the possibility of photographing these invisible vibrations. When last I was there he showed me a large series of photographs in which he had succeeded in reproducing the effects of emotion and of thought."<sup>7</sup> Seeing that science itself proves the existence and potency of thought-forms, I think we are on safe solid ground when we attribute thought-forms to the Divine mind and affirm that the entire creation both the

organic and the inorganic bear the clear impress of its thought and purpose. It is quite obvious, then, that what we see in creation is nothing but the objective counterpart of what exists in God's mind rather in a subjective form. Hence it is plain that to a study of the nature and constitution of the Supreme principle of intelligence, we get a clue from the creation itself.

Just as matter is analysable into fiery and watery elements, into red and blue colours, and into male and female organisms, God also can be thought of as thermal and aqueous, red and blue, male and female, all, of course, rather spiritually, without the slightest tinge of corporeality. Why God should be taken thus as the repository of such opposite qualities, we shall consider a little. If God be a purely fiery being creation cannot take place; for, we see whenever intense heat comes into contact with any visible and tangible body of matter, it simply transforms it into a finer and invisible state of matter. See, for instance, how by applying heat, we change ice into water, water into vapour and vapour into steam. Similarly all material substances, however hard they might be, can be melted and changed into an invisible and intangible condition merely by applying to them a sufficient amount of heat. But creation occurs only when invisible and intangible matter is made to assume visible and tangible forms. If God existed only in the form of intense spiritual heat, matter would be going on endlessly subtilized by its contact and no creation would have become possible. In the words of Prof. Helmholtz, "Only when heat passes from a warmer to a colder body, and even then only partially, can it be converted into mechanical work. The heat of a body which we cannot cool further, cannot be changed into another form of force-into electric or chemical force for example. Thus in our steamengines we convert a portion of the heat of the glowing coal into work, by permitting it to pass to the less warm water of the boiler."<sup>8</sup> So of necessity there must exist another principle spiritually cold for interpenetrating the spiritual heat energy of God and transmitting it to subtle matter, in order to freeze it and bring it into tangible existence and make it habitable to all animate beings. Our ancient Hindu Saints and Seers called the fiery spirit the Almighty God Rudra

and the cooling spirit the Almighty Goddess Uma. And in accordance with this divine law Lord Rudra stood as a male principle having a spiritual form glowing with a red colour, while Goddess Uma remained by his side as a female principle having a similar spiritual form shining with a pale blue. The two principles remain for every as two distinct individualities, and will never become a single being possessing opposite qualities. In reality God is one in two and not either one or two as many suppose.

The description given of Goddess Uma or Prisni or Aditi in the Rigveda is not as distinct as that of Lord Rudra; the colour of her spiritual form being nowhere mentioned in it. I need hardly repeat that without knowing the complexion of a body, it is not possible for us to draw a mental picture of that particular body. Even in the ancient Upanishad called the 'Kena', where the appearance of Goddess Uma is depicted in clear and unmistakable terms, she is merely described as a maiden of brilliant beauty and nothing more;<sup>9</sup> of her colour nothing is even hinted at.

Let us, therefore, turn to some remnants of the oldest Tamil literature and see what they have to say on the point. Sad to relate the vast Tamil literature which was produced in the millenniums preceding the Christian era has almost perished in the Noah's deluge and in one or two other cataclysms that followed it at long intervals and swallowed up a very large portion of the ancient Tamil country called 'Kumari nadu.' Of that varied and extensive literature, only a few lyrics, some idylls, and some love poems have been left by the will of Providence as remnants to testify to the once prosperous condition of the Tamil language and the people who spoke it. These literary remnants are fortunately preserved to us in the collections; Purananooru, Ahananooru, Paripadal, Kalithokai, Narrinai, Iyngurunooru, Kurunthokai, and Pathirruppathu, made in the early centuries of the Christian era by poets under the patronage of their learned kings. Apart from these fragments, a great and entire work of rare linguistic value has also outlived the accidents and it is called the *Tholkappiam*.

**Footnotes**

1. Popular Lectures on Scientific Subjects, Vol. I.p. 218.
2. Ibid, p.220, foot-note.
3. Talks to Teachers, pp.81,82.
4. Helmholtz's Popular Lectures, Vol.I.p.210.
5. Talks To Teachers, pp.81&82.
6. Seeing the Invisible, pp.189-190
7. Some Glimpses of Occultism, p.132.
8. Popular Lectures on Scientific Subjects, vol.I.p. 153.
9. "bahu sobhamanam Umam halmavatim," Kena, 3,12.

## CHAPTER VII

# GOD IN TAMIL LITERATURE

'Tholkappiam' the oldest and the completest work extant in Tamil which treats exhaustively of all grammatical subjects and rhetoric, was composed at a time when the ancient Tamil land called 'Kumarinadu' or 'Lemuria' had not been swallowed up by Noah's deluge. All the great commentators beginning with Nakkirar, the poet-critic and president of the third Tamil Academy in the first century B.C., hold it to have been the greatest work of the antediluvian period. And there are proofs furnished from the treatise itself which go to establish it as the composition of a very high antiquity. That it must have been written prior to the Paninian grammar in Sanscrit I have shown elsewhere<sup>1</sup> and therefore do not enter into a discussion of its age here. Anyhow, by taking it as an antediluvian work, that is to say, as a work produced two thousand and four hundred years before Christ, I believe I am not laying an extravagant claim to its antiquity.

In this valuable treatise we find mention made, among others, of two deities 'Mayon' and 'Seyon'<sup>2</sup> which are being worshipped all over India from ancient times down to the present. 'Mayon' means 'The Blue Being' and 'Seyon' means 'The Red Being' and it is to be noted that both are in the masculine gender. Mayon was in later times identified with the Puranic 'Narayana' and 'Seyon' with 'Karttikeya.' It is significant that the term 'Narayana' also means in Sanscrit 'a watery being.' although this conception of a watery being was unknown to the RigVeda in which the word 'Narayana' was never used

as an appellation of Vishnu. There the term 'Vishnu' represents only a solar deity. I believe the word 'Narayana' was coined in the Tamil country, with a view to indicate the cooling principle of the Godhead and was afterwards introduced into northern parts and into later Sanscrit works where it came to be used as another name of Vishnu. Still it must not be forgotten that the senses of the two terms are quite distinct and so should on no account be confounded together in a scientific study of this great subject. It is a point worthy of note that just as in the chief sacred mantra of the Saivites the term 'Siva' stands pre-eminent, so in the sacred mantra of the Vaishnavites it is the word 'Narayana' that stands supreme and not 'Vishnu.'

The other deity which is red was considered by the ancient Tamils to be perpetually young, and hence the word 'Murugan' which means 'a young person' came to be used as his proper name. And this conception of God as an eternally young person was not an alien one of the RigVeda, since Lord Rudra too was, as pointed out at the beginning, regarded as ever young and immortal. Still, when compared to the young Lord Muruga, Rudra looks like an adult person, although both are described as red in all the literary and religious writings that have come down to us from the hoary past. But in the whole range of the Tholkappiam nowhere is to be found any reference either to Rudra or Siva, abundant as are the allusions and invocations to him in almost all the Tamil works that came in ages subsequent to the Tholkappiam. This simply proves that the composition of the Tholkappiam must have taken place at a time when the conception of God as Rudra was quite unknown to the Tamil people. From this you see the conception of God as the young and ruddy Lord Muruga preceded the conception of it as Rudra at least in the land of the ancient Tamils. By the way I call your attention to a remarkable coincidence in the religious history of the very ancient Chaldeans and the Tamilians, that is, the coincidence of the name of their celebrated God 'Muru' with the first part of the name of the equally famous Tamil God 'Muruga.'<sup>3</sup> But in after ages when God came to be viewed, probably by the grown-up and serious-minded people,

as an adult person Rudra, the young Muruga was led to occupy a subordinate position and was finally made the son of Rudra. Apart from this trivial difference, the two Gods, I believe, are quite identical in every other respect. When you dive deep into the bottom of all allegorical representations given of the two gods in the Puranas, you will find them to be fundamentally the same.

Now, let us pass on to inquire into the conception of God as 'Mayon' at some length. He is no doubt a blue being and a cold principal inasmuch as his Tamil name 'Mayon' and Sanscrit name 'Narayana' signify only such a being. This blue being, however, does not seem to have been regarded at first as a female principle. Further, no reference to Goddess Uma or Prisni is to be met with in the whole range of the Tholkappiam, except a single and solitary referene to a terrible goddess of war called 'Korravai'<sup>4</sup> Of course, it is true that this female deity came in subsequent ages to be identified with Uma and even called the mother of Lord Muruga<sup>5</sup>, but in the Tholkappiam itself there is no evidence for such an identification. From the total absence of all allusions to a benign female deity in the Tholkappiam, I am led to conclude that seers in those primitive times did not attain to such a high degree of mental and spiritual development as would enable them to discriminate between the real male principle and the female in the Godhead.

Since fire can generate a mechanical force only through the medium of water, so too God the supreme principle of spiritual fire could effect the creation of the material world only through the spiritual cold principle Uma. When she was thus actively engaged in the creative work, she was mistaken perhaps for a male, and the seers themselves were not then in as suitable a mental condition as would enable them to get a clear vision of her spiritual form. The red light, being brighter and for that reason clearer than the blue, makes itself easier to be seen distinctly than the blue. It was because of this difficulty in the perception of spiritual colours that the original seers confused the blue colour of the Supreme Being sometimes with the black colour and some other times with the green. In both the old and new

hymns addressed to Narayana, we frequently meet with expressions which represent him in one place as a blue being, in another a black, and in a third a green. In the fire itself, if you look through it acutely, you will see a pale blue light. Just as this pale blue cannot be seen as easily as the bright light of fire, so also the blue spiritual form of the Divine Mother cannot be seen so easily as the brilliant ruddy form of the Father. But in the succeeding ages, the more the spiritual vision of the seers increased in clearness, the more they came to recognise in the blue principle its feminine character.

When in this manner the motherhood of God became clearer, it was substituted for the original but mistaken notion of it as the male Narayana, and the lord Narayana himself having already become an object of great devotion, was assigned to a separate sphere and allotted a distinct function as of preserving the created worlds. That the conception of the Divine Mother came after that of Narayana is proved also by the Puranic legends which speak of her as his younger sister. In spite of the repeated attempts made by his worshippers to give stability to the original misconception of Narayana as the male, there have not been wanting accounts which reveal his feminine character by telling us that he begot Brahma the creator from his navel-point, and that he assumed at times the form of a bewitching female called Mohini. If any additional proof be required, that may be supplied by the very names of these gods. For instance, the word Narayana, if declined into feminine gender, would stand as 'Narayani' which designates not his consort 'Lakshmi,' but only 'Uma.' If Narayana be a real male, his name in the feminine gender ought to indicate his consort, but such is not the case. But the names of Rudra, when declined into feminine gender, invariably stand for his consort Uma. This fact, I believe, would be enough to bear an additional testimony to the truth that Narayana is none other than the benign female principle called Prisni in the Rig-Veda. All the Puranas in Sanscrit and all the sacred scriptures in Tamil unite in attributing to the spiritual form of both Narayana and Uma a blue colour, and this undoubtedly serves to corroborate the truth of my statement that

they are not two distinct individualities but one and the same Supreme Being which possesses the character of a feminine principle.

It seems that, when the motherhood of God came to be recognized by the advanced seership of highly developed minds, the numerous worshippers of Narayana, finding it not agreeable to their mind to give up their original conception of God and thinking it also beneath the dignity of their God to consider him a female (perhaps this might have been due to the contemptuous view generally entertained of the female sex), separated themselves from the earliest cult and formed a new church of their own. Thus was created a schism in the ancient Hindu church which was otherwise one single body, one inseparable unit.

Before the time of this split in the religious observance, there was only one religion and all paid their adoration as well to Lord Siva as to Narayana and Uma. Even after the creation of the schism, those who belonged to the original cult, still continued to worship all the three, without making any enviable distinction between the one and the other, as is manifest even to-day from the rites and observances prescribed in the old Siva temples all over India. For in all the Siva temples you will find not only the images of Lord Siva and Uma but also that of Lord Narayana set up in separate compartments and duly worshipped, whereas in the Vishnu temples you will find no image of any god except those of Narayana and his consorts. This clearly establishes the fact that the schism in the old Hindu church was created not by the Saivites but by the worshippers of Lord Narayana.

This may further be proved by a glimpse into the old Tamil classics composed prior to the third century of the Christian era. In all of them one and the same poet has composed poems in glorification not only of Siva and Muruga but of Narayana also, and has invoked their blessings with an intense devotion to all the three. For instance, the poet Perundevanar has composed invocatory verses addressed to the three gods and has prefixed them separately to some of the magnificent collections of sweet, simple and pure Tamil

lyrics which are remarkable for their faithful portraits alike of nature and human nature. And in a very beautiful lyric collection called 'Paripadal,' we find three poems composed by the poet 'Kaduvan Illa Eainanar,' of which two glorify Lord Narayana and one Lord Muruga, and in which neither the one nor the other is exalted at the expense of the other. The very terms Saiva and Vaishnava, by which the two great religions of India came to be known in later times, were quite unknown in the age to which this body of Tamil literature belongs. In fact these two religious denominations make their appearance at first only in Manimekhalai, an original Tamil epic of the second century A.D.

Besides a total absence of any reference to the two religious cults in Paripadal, no mention is made in six of its lyrics addressed to Lord Narayana, either of Rama or of Krishna whose worship has become so prominent a factor in the later Vaishnava religion. The absence is significant since it indicates the high antiquity of some, if not all, poems of Paripadal. Evidently these must have been composed at a time when either the composition of the Ramayana or that of the Mahabharata had not as yet taken place, or else the exploits of the two heroes, mythical in all probability for I do not find them alluded to in any of the ancient Tamil classics, had not become popular in the Tamil country. Only in the literature produced from the dawn of the Christian era downwards do we meet with any reference to Krishna and Rama. Here too, in point of time, the worship of Krishna preceded the worship of Rama; for we do not come across even a casual referene to the latter in the poems of the first, second and third century A.D., just as we find the worship of Krishna clearly mentioned in them. Although from a poem (378) of the Purananuru collection and from Silappadhikaram a great epic of the second century A.D., we gather that with the dawn of the Christian era the story of the Ramayana had begun to spread among the Tamils and Rama himself came to be identified with Narayana and worshipped, remember, only by a particular class of people called 'The Shepherds' and not by all, yet from the same source we are led to conclude that his worship has not become even then common to all. For, while

temples specially dedicated to Siva, Muruga, Baladeva, Narayana, Indra, the Sun, the Jina and the Moon are distinctly mentioned in the Silappadhikaram, none is mentioned consecrated to Rama. Even in 'Thiruvachakam' which contains the sacred hymns of the Saiva saint Manickavachakar who existed in the first half of the third century A.D., Rama is not alluded to even by name, while the Tamil names of Narayana such as 'Thirumal' and 'Kannan' occur in it often. And in the invocatory verses prefixed to the aforesaid collections of classical poems, only hirumal and Kannan are addressed to, but not Rama. From these facts, it is obvious that the worship of Rama should have come into vogue in the Tamil country only long after the worship of Krishna had established itself, that is, subsequent to the fifth century A.D. This conclusion based on valid literary evidence leads me to differ from those scholars who endeavour to identify Poigaiyar, the first of the twelve canonized saints of the Vaishnava faith, with a poet who bore the same name but who must have existed prior to the second century A.D., My reason for this is simply this. Rama came to be regarded as an incarnation of Vishnu and worshipped only after the sixth or the seventh century A.D., and by the time when Poigaiwar composed his hundred verses in praise of Narayana the deification of Rama became complete, as is manifest from his verses 27 and 59.

What I have said so far as regards the genesis and growth of the conception of God as Narayana marks three stages in its development to our own time. Its first stage may be divided again into two; In the prehistoric ages, that is, before and up to the time of the Tholkappiam, the Red and the Blue principles of the Godhead seem to have been cognised by the seers, one quite distinctly but the other rather somewhat dimly so as to be mistaken for a male principle; but even when in the historic period that came subsequent to the Tholkappiam and intervened until the opening of the Christian era, more gifted seers came to recognize in the blue being the Motherhood of God, the mistaken God Narayana could not be relegated to an obscure corner, but was given, in deference to the feelings of the

original worshippers, an honourable place in all the ancient Siva temples and adored like the rest with due devotion.

Its second stage begins with the deification and worship of the human hero Krishna, introduced most probably by the northern brahmins who, having been rendered unable to maintain their own narrow sacrificial cult and exclusive caste pretensions against the broad principles of kindness to all beings and equality of man, that spread all over the north under the patronage of Buddhist kings, had migrated to the south and found ready shelter under the hospitality of the Tamil kings and rich landlords. They brought with them the stories of Mahabharata and the Ramayanas and by reciting the pathetic incidents of which, they enlisted the sympathy of the Tamils and became highly favoured by them. The newcomers did not care, then as now, for the highest, the nobles, and the most correct notions held by the civilized and intelligent Tamils concerning the existence, the nature and relations of God, soul, and matter but persistently strove to supplant them by what they had brought. It seems they disliked the very idea of comparing what they had brought with what had already existed in the land, but were ever bent upon asserting and establishing their own dogmas and making their own position quite secure. This was easily achieved by means of the strange romances, the Mahabharata and the Ramayana, the recital of which captivated the minds of the ordinary people so easily and to so great an extent that they came to believe every words and every letter of the fiction as so many literal facts.

The ancient Tamils were a simple people who lived quite close to nature and earned their livelihood by means of their own honest toil. For their subsistence they never depended upon others nor did they delude others into false beliefs to gain their objects. Learned men among them sought only the knowledge of bare, plain, simple truths; and their poets admired only the beauties of nature and sang them in their own pure, simple, sweet, melodious Tamil. They taught the people only those bare unvarnished truths that lie deep in life and life's vanity and impressed upon their mind the value of cultivating

love, virtue and mercy as the only means leading to a final emancipation of humanity from sin and suffering. And the rulers themselves were kind and just and held the welfare of the people as their own. Moreover, they lavished their wealth on the poets and the learned and encouraged learning in every way. To a people living in such a simple state of life which offers no room for a lax and inordinate play of imagination, these romances cannot but open the view of a new and strange world of fiction, a peep into which sufficed to pique their fancy and afford them a hitherto unimagined pleasure. Since the ancient Tamil poets had never been in the habit of writing romances side by side with matter-of-fact narratives, the people had no means by which they could test the contents of a new production and distinguish truth from untruth, the source of a genuine pleasure from that of a spurious one. It is no wonder then that the new-comers had succeeded in exercising with these expedients so strong a magic influence over the people, as to get them completely in their grip. The learned and intelligent section of the people who were in possession of higher and nobler truths could not combat the new influence and bring back the strayed to their fold. When once you get hold of the people's fancy, you can turn them at will against their own intelligent minority. That was how the conquest was achieved here by the northerners; and even now you may watch the same thing going on all over the country.

I have already said that it was the worshippers of Lord Narayana that were at first creating a schism in the original church. But now they were still more eagerly watching for a fitting opportunity to sever their connection completely from their mother-religion and assert and establish the one newly created. And the formidable influence brought to bear upon the masses by the introduction of aforesaid tales afforded them such an opportunity; and they were not slow to seize it and turn it to their account.

No doubt they got what they so strongly desired but in the mental gloom caused by that vehement desire they lost the precious gem. Before the commencement of the Christian era, the conception

of Lord Narayana formed in the minds of his worshippers was as pure as gold. Such an ideal conception testifies to the fact that in early times they paid their worship only to the actual Supreme Being untouched by the ills which the flesh is heir to, namely, birth and death, disease and old age. In plain words, he is said in the third lyric of Paripadal (line 72) to have had no births and therefore no parents, just as Lord Siva is invariably spoken of as unborn and immortal in all the Tamil works that came from the classical times down to our own. If the ancient seers took Narayana to be the very Almighty Being birthless and deathless, how dare ye to drag him down to the lowest level of mortals and identify him with those who were carried in the womb of a mother, born and bred like us, who were subject to many hard trials and temptations and who at last ended their lives most grievously and miserably? Could there be a greater and more monstrous profanation of God than this? Could there be a loss more serious to humanity than the loss of the most sacred and genuine truth about God? It is to be ever borne in mind that the great distinguishing mark of the Divine Being is its birthless and deathless nature. If you say that what you take to be a divine being entangled itself in births and deaths, then it is quite certain that it could not have been a divine being at all but must have been a mere human self. Great confusion has set in the religious atmosphere of modern times, by this identification of the human with the Divine. So long as man worships only man and rises not above it, he cannot get beyond the ocean of births and deaths; so long as he disdains to worship the true God, he cannot hope to be saved; and the gracious Lord of creation will set him in the wheel of evolution—this wheel of evolution being nothing else than an endless succession of births and deaths, and he will turn him round and round for ages interminable, until he realizes his own object nature in contradistinction to that which is supreme and peerless.

The saving truth which consists in discriminating between human and Divine natures, was, from the beginning, perceived so clearly by the worshippers of Lord Rudra that they could not but hold it ever afterwards as a most precious element in the knowledge of

human and Divine beings. But sad to relate the worshippers of Lord Narayana had become anxious more in spreading what they regarded as their own than in keeping the ancient and original truth about God intact. It is a well-known fact that the religionists who feel very anxious to see each and all embrace their faith, by that very anxiety do mar its purity and soundness. That is how the religions of Buddha and Jina have gradually fallen into desuetude; that is how the religions of Christ and Mohammed are becoming more and more repugnant to the reason and sentiments of thoughtful persons. On great religious problems man might be made to think but on no account should he be forced to accept them quite blindly. But the Vaishnavites in their eagerness to make their religion popular, threw overboard their former ideal conception of God and put in its stead the worship of human heroes and insinuated it into the religious observances of the Tamils, the two epics having served them to do it rather imperceptibly.

It was pointed out before that the worship of Krishna was introduced into the south previous to that of Rama. The cause of it was the recital of the story of the Mahbharata which had been brought into the south by a colony of northern brahmins early in the first century A.D. Tamil version of the Mahabharata seems to have been made by the poet Perundevanar probably towards the end of the second century A.D. Almost the whole of this work is lost, except a few stray stanzas quoted by the great commentator Nachinarkkiniar and others. There was also another version of it made in the ninth century A.D., by another poet of the same name. And many more had been made from the ninth century downwards up to our own time.

While we have thus so many Tamil versions of the Mahabharata from the second century A.D., down to the nineteenth, we have got no more than a single version of the Ramanayana made by Kamban as late as the twelfth century A.D. Does not this fact prove itself very significant? It appears certain that the story of the Ramanayana had been brought into the south not before but only after the sixth century

A.D., by a later colony of northern brahmins and made by them very popular close upon the extinction of the Buddhist and the Jaina religions, although its main incidents seem to have become known here as early as the second century A.D. Why Rama is not so often addressed to as is Krishna, even in the devotional poems of the early Vaishnava saints as Poikai, Pei and Bhutam cannot be explained on any supposition other than this. In other words, it was just at the time of the first three Alwars that the story of the Ramanayana was coming to be looked upon as sacred and that Rama himself exalted as an incarnation of Narayana. This could not have taken place prior to the second half of the seventh century A.D., for in the early centuries of the Christian era Buddhism at first and Jainism soon after were eclipsing the original creeds and only after the two heretical cults had declined and almost died out, did the two old religions begin to revive and prevail, one in its more philosophical character and the other in its newly acquired Puranic setting, I think Mr. M. Srinivasa Aiyangar, M.A., is not wrong in assigning the time of the three first Alwars to the latter half of the seventh century A.D.<sup>6</sup>

After the deified heroes of the north had, in this way, been made to usurp the place of Lord Narayana, the schism between the two faiths became more and more pronounced than it was before the beginning of the Christian era; for the worshippers of Lord Rudra feeling they could not honestly accommodate themselves to the degenerated tenets of their brother-religionists, probably thought it necessary to style themselves by a class-name which should unequivocally articulate their difference from the new church, and for this purpose chose the name 'Saivites' -the name by which they came to be called ever afterwards from the first century A.D. As a matter of fact, the old Tamils had no name of their own making to specify either religion, simply because there was then no other creed in existence from which it must have been deemed needful to distinguish their own by a particular name, simply because the very thought of naming it did not occur to them under the circumstances then existed. A cursory glance at the immortal Tamil work of the pre-Christian era, I mean the sacred Kural of Thiruvalluvar, would be enough to convince you of the

veracity of this statement made as regards the nature of the old Tamil religion. The social, moral and religious principles laid down in that great work belong not to one society or one nation or one religion, but are common to all classes of people and their thought and to all kind of religion. You cannot detect in it to what particular kind of society it is addressed, or to what people its moral and religious instruction is imparted either in name or in substance. The sacred Kural is the real embodiment of the ancient Tamilian thought, it constitutes the very highest reach to which that thought attained. When the time comes for the world to recognize the value of the ideal teachings enshrined in this incomparable work and adopt it as the one universal Bible of the whole mankind, we may indulge in our imagination the coming of the kingdom of God verily on this earth, with its one religion, one race and one society all inspired with genuine love for all living beings and eternal God.

#### **Footnotes**

1. See my Tamil work on 'The Ancient Tamilian and Aryan,'
2. Tholkappiam, Poruladhikaram, 5.
3. Bettany's Mohammedanism, p.43.
4. Poruladhikaram, 62.
5. Thirumurugarruppadai
6. Tamil Studies, p.302.

**CHAPTER VIII****THE EFFECT OF BRAHMIN  
COLONIZATION**

But from the time the northern brahmins and the Sanscrit language set foot on this land, the process of deterioration set in. High qualifications were thrown into the shade; birth-right was brought to the fore. In pre-Aryan times the people who engaged in different occupations did think very respectfully of the calling of each group being useful to every other group. But as time went on, those who formerly combined to work for the general welfare of society; now came to be split up into castes and subcastes and be called by Sanscrit names which tended to breed in them vain and invidious distinctions; hero-worship was set up; legends and mythical accounts multiplied and clustered around each and every deified hero and brought into existence religious sects ever contending for supremacy one over the other; the Puranas were written so that one religious sect might produce them as their authority and fight with the other endlessly; interminable rites and ceremonies that constitute a perennial source of income to brahmin priests were invented and elaborated and stringent rules for conducting them came to be laid down in treatises - all in Sanscrit, so that the people might not know them nor practise them without the aid of priests; in short, everything calculated to tear the Tamilian society to pieces was deftly devised and brought into operation so smoothly that nobody could apprehend the evil motive which prompted it. All these were done so cautiously as to make the new settlers' position quite secure. Here I am very anxious to notify that in thus recounting the causes which led to the degeneration of the

Tamilian society, my motive should not be misconstrued or misunderstood as anything but good. For a correct understanding of the root-causes that were at work in bringing about the disintegration of a highly civilized society will, as all must admit, help us, in our reconstructive work, to discern the destructive and disastrous elements in it and eliminate them from their usurped place. The amazing progress which other nations have achieved in all walks of life, calls for our immediate action so to re-organize our society as to make each member of it co-operate whole-heartedly with every other in accordance with the needs of the time and bring back its ideal state and set it as a model to others. Unless we compare our present position with our past and adopt remedial measures to remove at once the canker that eats into the vitals of our society, we cannot expect to live long and happily but must die soon and miserably in the midst of an enlightened community which is more vigorous, whose life is more wholesome and more capable of adapting itself to varying conditions of life as time varies in its progress.

**CHAPTER IX****DESCENSION OF  
VAISHNAVAISM**

To return to our subject, the worshippers of Rudra and Uma, who were called the 'Saivites' in after times, held so steadfastly to their original conception of God that they ever persisted in not bringing the two Supreme Beings down to the level of mortal man. Even while they were inventing stories for the sake of instructing masses and counteracting the influence exercised by the two famous epics, they were ever solicitous to impress on our minds the supreme truth about Lord Siva and Uma that they are unborn, immortal and superhuman. Often and often do we meet with this unequivocal declaration in all their writings, however absurd, fantastic, and extravagant they may seem to us in other respects. But it is regrettable that our brother-religionists drifted farther and farther away from their original conception of Lord Narayana to such a long distance as not only to lose sight of his unborn and immortal nature but to ascribe also births and deaths and human sufferings to him.

Besides cherishing this contemptible conception of God, they even took to view Narayana as one of the three gods who make up the later Hindu Triad and then tried to lift him up above the other two. This marks the third stage of descent to which the Vaishnava religion has gone down from the time of the early Alvars up to our own. Although we come across one or two stray references to the Hindu Triad in the classical Tamil poems written at the beginning of the Christian era, we do not find there any one of the Triad made supreme and

others subordinates. To the still earlier Tamil poems the Trinity is altogether unknown. Even when the Trinity came to be admitted, the old Tamils held a fourth being Lord Muruga to be superior to the three.<sup>1</sup> This constitutes the pre-eminent doctrine of God-of God being the fourth principle lying above and beyond the three gods; Brahma, Vishnu and Rudra, to which the Saivites cling tenaciously even unto this day. Whether they take Muruga to be the Supreme Being, or Siva as such, they do not hold either of them as one of the Trinity but take him to be superior to all the three. According to the Saiva religion, there are many higher beings who are called 'Rudras' and who to all appearance look like the greatest Lord Rudra or Siva but who are, in fact, his mere servants treated as his sons on account of their nearness to him in love and devotion. This view is countenanced even in the Rie-Veda which invokes Rudra thus: "May the healing Rudra, with the Rudras, be favourable to us"<sup>2</sup>. "May the divine Rudra with the Rudras be gracious to us"<sup>3</sup>. Consequently the Rudra in the Trinity the Saivites maintain to be none other than one of the many higher beings who bear that name but who are not, in truth, the highest Lord Rudra. The Vaishnavas of the later period held only three beings to be higher than gods and of these three they made 'Vishnu' the highest, ascribing to him the preservation of created beings as a special function; still they believed not in the existence of a fourth being transcending the three. And of the Vaishnava Saints who proclaimed this doctrine, Poigai Alwar was the first; others simply followed him in his track.

But, how three gods can exist instead of two; how the preservative function can be performed without having as its antecedent the creative one; how a god, whose care is to preserve the created order and who is, therefore, a dependant on the creator, can be regarded as higher than the creator; how a being who, from the nature of his office, cannot prolong it to an indefinite period while there is a destructive agent, but must necessarily succumb to him when he dissolves the worn-out matter, how such a being can be raised to a mightier position than that of Rudra-all these vital points do not seem

to strike the minds of the Vaishnava saints in general. To a degree, a difficulty similar to these appears to have presented itself to the first Alwar Poigaiyar but he too made no attempt to solve it.<sup>4</sup> The Vaishnavites merely rest their faith on the Puranic stories and question not whether they are authentic accounts or mere fabricated fictions. So powerful was the influence wielded by the brahmin priests over the minds of the pious Tamils by means of such myths and so firm is the hold they still continue to have on the minds of even educated people.

But in the case of Poigaiwar, we may make a grand exception. He seems to have had such a clear mental vision at times that it enabled him to penetrate to the deep mystery which underlay the original conception formed of God by the Tamils of the Tholkappiam age, and he even yearned to go back to it. In a significant stanza,<sup>5</sup> he plainly tells us the fact that there exist not three but only two supreme principles inseparably united, one the red-coloured being Rudra and the other the blue-coloured being Narayana. Nevertheless, he was wavering between the original conception of God and the later Puranic phantasy, for a long time it appears, but finally after having had a true spiritual experience, perhaps not without a great and hard struggle, he settled down to the original conception and ended by adoring only the two Supreme principles the red and the blue.<sup>6</sup>

We have already seen that creation proceeds from an appropriate combination of not three but only of two principles, the fiery and the watery; and the created worlds can endure so long only as these two elements maintain their balance; but when the time approaches in which one element outweighs the other, the destructive action begins to set in. A careful insight into the forces of nature and their workings cannot fail to show that it is fire and not water that brings about the ultimate destruction of all including water also. To keep in harmony the two blind and inanimate forces, the activity of two spiritual and all intelligent forces of similar character is necessarily required as pointed out before. Hence it follows as a momentous conclusion that there can exist in reality not more than the spiritual

heat principle Rudra and the cold principle Uma or Parayana, a thing being unimaginable and unscientific. As we have seen these two Supreme principles together performing the creative, the preservative, and the destructive functions, it is against all reason and science to uphold an independent third principle either to direct or to control the function of preservation. Further, preservation is not a separate function, it is involved in the creative, it being nothing more than the mere continuation of the creative process, so to speak. For, is it not, a fact that at every moment and every second as old cells in our body die out, newer ones come to fill up their place, as old particles of dust fly through the air newer particles fall down and accumulate on the earth? Is not preservation a mere displacement and replacement of matter that is continually going on in cycles? If the creative action could come to a stop, that is, if things were not re-created every time that they break up, the preservative function cannot outlast but must disappear along with it leaving the destructive process to begin its work immediately and carry it out irresistibly, There are, therefore, only two functions in reality and only two Supreme principles Siva and Uma that perform these two functions conjointly.

#### **Footnotes**

1. Paripadal, 8, and Thirumuruktruppada, 11-148-176.
2. "Sam no Rudro Rudrebhir jalashah" vii,35,6,
3. "Rudro Rudrebhir devo mrilayati" x, 66,3,
4. See his Centenary poem, stanza 69,
5. Ibid, 5.
6. Ibid, 97.

## CHAPTER X

### PERSONAL STATEMENTS OF TAMIL SAINTS

So far our inquiry based on solid scientific facts has led us to confirm the truth of what our Seers, Saints and Sages, from ancient times down to our own, have perceived and proclaimed as regards the nature of the Supreme Soul. Now, it may be asked whether there is any authentic personal record of any seer who declared that he saw God face to face and that the God he saw was composed of a double personality, one a red-coloured male and the other a blue-coloured female. In answer to this, I may say at once that, though I have not met with any record of high antiquity which enshrines the personal statements of any ancient seer, yet when we approach the mediaeval period of Tamil literature, which begins from the third century A.D. and ends with the eighth, we do obtain a number of inestimable lyric poems as authentic documents in which the Saints have plainly declared the wonderful experience they have had with a personal God. As a matter of fact almost all the personal outpourings of very ancient Saints have perished, leaving the spiritual truth to be preserved and told in the works of the later Saints who came in succession in the medieval ages. That is why in all the oldest documents that have come down to us, we find ancient gods and goddesses mentioned not by the seer himself but by those who came to worship them in subsequent periods. For instance; in the antique Egyptian records, the great sun - god Osiris is represented to have the goddess Isis as his wife; in the Chaldaean, the god Ea to have Dav-kina as his consort, and the sun-god Tammuz to have Istar; in

the Phoenician the principal divinity Baal to have Ashtoreth; in the Grecian, Zeus to have Hera; in the Roman, Jupiter to have Juno; in the Teuton, Woden to have Frigga; and in the Peruvian the sun-god Inti to have the moon as his wife. Again in the very first chapter of Genesis the first book in the Bible, it is stated thus; "And God said, 'Let us make man in our image, after our likeness,' So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them," By the way, I wish to draw attention to the words uttered by God in the above quotation; the words denoting God being in the first person plural as 'us' and 'our,' whereas in the subsequent verses in which God addresses man, the words are in the first person singular, as "I have given you every herb-bearing seed." etc. This difference, it must be noted, is very significant, since 'us' and 'our' express God's will as including in it the will of his divine consort, to produce human beings in the forms of male and female like himself and his better half, while 'I' in the following passages represents him simply as exercising his authority singly over man. Although all the ancient religious writings speak of God in the terms of male and female, we do not meet with a single one in them which contains the bold declaration of seer in the first person-the declaration; "I saw God, and it was twofold; father and mother in one indivisible whole." For want of such an honest, sincere, bold personal affirmation, the world, except southern India, has not only lost the invaluable treasure of Divine truth that might have accrued to it, if it had realized this ultimate fact, but even went to the length of ridiculing the Fatherhood and Motherhood of God and dared to treat it as a mere anthropomorphic myth. It should never be forgotten that it was not man that created God in his image but it was God himself that made man after the pattern of His gracious spiritual image. Although man cannot create God's most glorious form dazzling with brilliant beauty, yet he can disfigure it as when he struggles to bring it before his mental and physical eyes, by investing it with such appendages as his ugly and mistaken notions of beauty, adornments and decorations put upon it. Of the quaint notions entertained by him of God's spiritual nature and functions, the grotesque images and idols he has set

up all over the world as their visible and tangible representations still stand as clear and indisputable witnesses. Only so much can man make and only so much, if you like, may you call anthropomorphism. But, of the transcendent beauty of God's spiritual image, ordinary man can form no idea, although the few chosen seers to whom it was given to perceive it can form a correct notion of the personality of God. Had there been one Saint who had not only seen God but had also proved the fact of it at every turn of his miraculous life, as well as in the lyrical utterances he poured extempore while he was on earth, we can then easily bring ourselves to form in our mind the true spiritual image of God and not otherwise. But, for one true account of a vision seen and proclaimed by a few real Saints, thousands of false accounts touching the personality of God came to be fabricated by self-interested persons and made to eclipse the true account of the glory of the true God and his resplendent person. As matters stand, the task of disentangling what is true like a gem from the heap of falsities has become a very hard work for us. Ever since the opening of the Christian era, romantic stories and religious myths streamed into the south not only from the ritualistic Brahmanism but also from the nihilistic Buddhism and Jainism. Even poets of rare genius and scholars of profound learning such as Ilangovadikal and Satthanar allowed their minds to be swayed to a certain extent by the people's credulity which had been very much captivated by the Puranic myths newly introduced. Yet they lost not wholly their characteristic critical acumen to discern the deep-lying truth and bring it out at times from the overs-lying heap of falsehood. If such had been the case even with the highly cultured Tamils, what the condition of the less enlightened and illiterate people could be under the new magical influence of northern priests might be better imagined than described.

**CHAPTER XI****ST. MANICKAVACHAKAR**

In the third century of the Christian era, the people of the Tamil country came so low down to the point of ignoring the real and most valuable conception of the Godhead-the conception of its Fatherhood and Motherhood, just then quite opportunely St.Manickavachakar appeared on the scene, pointed out the momentous fact and saved not only the Tamils but the whole of mankind also, from the clutch of rank ignorance and gross misconceptions. Manickavachakar was an young man of vast and deep learning and was employed as the prime minister to the then Pandian king in Madura. He says that while he was passing through all kinds of worldly experience and enjoying all kinds of pleasure, his heart was all along leaping forward to sound the deepest mystery that underlies the existence of both the animate and inanimate worlds, and was yearning to yield to it his very humble self as an offering, if he could only find it out. He panted after it, he cried incessantly aloud and wept for it but he could not find it; his heart failed at the thought whether he would be left helpless and he deemed his very existence quite intolerable. While he was in this pining mood, the Pandian king sent him on to purchase horses with which he might replenish his army for purposes of war. Accordingly he went on his journey and, while he was nearing Thirupperundurai, then a sea-coast town in the ancient Chola kingdom, the conversion of his soul came over him all on a sudden; for, God appeared to him under the shade of a *kurunda* tree, placed His holy feet on his head, and made him His devotee, Forthwith, the young prime minister came to be transformed into a new being alto-



Thy spouse and Thee did visit the worn-out huts  
 Of Thy slaves; O Supernal one! To me Thou camest  
 And showedest me Thy sacred form that glows like  
 red-hot embers,

Thou showedest me also the templeat Thirupperundurai  
 As well as Thy benignant person;

Thy servant Thou mad'st me Ambrosia ! rare”

(Thiruppalli eluchchi,8).

“On one side it has fresh water-lilies blue  
 On the other it has new lotus flowers red;  
 On the side flock the birds,

On the other murmur the ripples,

Their dirt to wash off many go to it

So that this bubbling pond looks like our

Lady and our Lord”

(Thiruvembavai, 13).

In these three verses St. Manickavachakar has sung quite incidentally and not with any set purpose, bear in mind, stating the fact that Lord Siva with his spouse Uma appeared before him and made him His servant, and that the person of Siva was glowing then with a brilliant red while that of Uma was gleaming with a light blue hue. It is indeed true that a century before Manickavachakar, the poet Perundevanar ascribed red colour to the person of Siva and blue to that of Uma in the invocatory stanzas which he prefixed to some of the eight collections of classical Tamil poems, but that never even once did he hint us that he had himself ever caught sight of God and the double aspects of his personality That goes to prove that he was merely describing the double-coloured personality of the Godhead in strict conformity with the then prevalent tradition and nothing more.

But quite different is the case of our St. Manickavachakar; for, his statement does not so depend on mere religious tradition, but is firmly grounded in his direct personal spiritual experience alone. His lyrics, informed not only with deep religious fervour but also with sublime literary grace and insatiable sweetness both in style and sentiments, his sanity of judgment and noble reasoning powers exhibited as well in his literary productions as in his disputations with the Buddhists, invest his mind with a strength and lucidity that leave little room for any doubt as regards the soundness of his spiritual experience. St. Manickavachakar gave a death-blow to the nihilistic Buddhism and re-established the original theistic conception of God, that is, the conception relating to the Fatherhood and Motherhood of the Godhead on the strong basis of scientific fact discovered by his direct, clear and sound spiritual insight.

The Saints who came after him from the fourth century onwards; namely Thirumoolar, Appar, Thirujnanasambandar, and Sundarar, have been all perfect seers who have had such a direct, distinct and true mental perception of the Godhead that there is not a tittle in their hymns which comes into conflict with the spiritual experience of St. Manickavachakar, but all is in entire harmony with his view of Divine nature. All of them unequivocally declare that they saw God not in dream but while they were fully awake and aware with perfect confidence that what they saw consisted of a red male principle and a blue female principle, in other words; the Divine Father Rudra and Mother Uma.

#### **Footnotes**

1. This I have done in my Tamil work 'The Life and Times of St. Manickavachakar.'

## CHAPTER XII

### ST. THIRUJNANA SAMBANDHA

If there be still any lingering scepticism on this supreme point, that may be finally removed by making a deep study of the life and hymns of St. Thirujnanasambandha who existed in the first half of the seventh century A.D. This unique personality constitutes the greatest wonder that the world has ever seen. For, while John Stuart Mill was grappling in his third year with his Greek lessons, and John Ruskin was in like manner scribbling verses in the third year of his life, just in the very same third year of his childhood St. Thirujnanasambandha became a master not only of his mother-tongue Tamil, but even of the vast and extensive Vedic literature in Sanscrit and poured forth his thoughts extempore in hymns after hymns in glorification of Lord Siva and mother Uma.

In this connection I venture to affirm that I am speaking under no deluded state of mind but I am stating the fact in a solemn and sane mental mood permeated by a historic sense grounded on solid and substantial genuine literary records of the past. For a study of our saintly child, I do not rest my belief entirely on what is written by his biographer St. Sekkilar, although he is the only hagiographer in the mediaeval period who is supported by recent archaeological evidence. Our Saint's own lyrics which are in all three hundred and eighty four in number, each consisting of eleven stanzas, as well as the hymns composed by his contemporary St. Appar and his immediate successors St. Sundarar and St. Nambiandar Nambi, constitute the fertile authentic sources from which we derive almost a com-

plete account of his life. It is also remarkable that that which is satisfactorily and conclusively proved in the religious and literary history of South India by co-ordinated literary and epigraphic evidences is the great fact pertaining to the date of this celebrated St. Thirujnanasambandha. And it is this date that stands as a beacon light serving to light up the preceding centuries that had hitherto lain dark for want of a reliable date in the history of the mediaeval ages that have elapsed in this part of our country.

Here it is not my intention to enter into any detailed treatment of his life beyond what is pertinent to our subject. His conversion came on in this wise; in his third year, the child followed his father who, being very pious, went to the sacred tank in the Siva temple at Seerkali which was the birth-place of the saint, in order to perform his ablutions. Leaving the child on the bank, the father went down the steps, sank into the water and remained a few minutes within, for practising the retention of breath in meditation. Not seeing his father, the child began to cry, but lo! the Heavenly Father and Mother appeared before him and gave him milk in a golden cup. Whilst the child was engaged in sipping the milk, his father, having finished his ablutions, came up and saw the child sipping milk from a cup held in his hand. The father being an orthodox brahmin, rebuked the child for having taken the milk given by some unclean hands, but behold! our little lord opened his sweet little mouth and sang extempore in Tamil a splendid hymn of eleven verses pointing out to him the Mother and Father who gave him milk. From this time until he disappeared in the light of God that appeared to him in his teens, he was incessantly visiting temple after temple and warbling hymn after hymn in praise of Lord Siva and Uma.

Whether he actually saw God when he was but an innocent child only three years old, whether he sang the glory of Lord in flawless lyrics are questions of paramount importance in his life which require to be settled, before attaching any value to the vision he had of God. For, during the period of childhood, all the latent faculties of the human mind come into play only one after another slowly and

gradually as days and months roll on as it grows. In its earlier days the child knows not what the world is; neither has it sufficient memory power to call to mind what it saw and heard, nor sufficient imaginative power to connect the different disjunctive ideas produced by words and objects and make up from them consistent, permanent and vivid mental pictures, nor has it again sufficient expressive power to exhibit these pictures in highly finished poems. Still, if it can be proved that a superhuman exception to this general psychological law of mental evolution, showed itself in the life and work of a human child, then that child cannot be taken to be a mere human offspring, but must be regarded as some superhuman being that appeared as the receptacle of the grace and inspiration of the almighty God of the universe to bestow it on the humanity. After this has been proved, we can no more entertain any doubt as regards the divine nature of that child's sacred mission and message.

I have already mentioned that St. Thirujnananasambandha sang many hymns in Tamil which fortunately for us survive in a well-preserved form up to this day, although one thousand and three hundred years have elapsed since his disappearance from this earth. All his hymns were composed extempore, not with any other intent than that of glorifying Lord Siva and Uma. Rarely does he refer in them to any incidents of his life, and where he does it, he does so merely by chance in order to bring into greater relief not the events of his own life but only the graciousness of his Lord who manifested himself in his personal and intimate relation to the events of his very devoted life. From a study of his hymns, one can quite clearly understand that, in alluding to these incidents of his life, he was possessed with no any set purpose to record them in his poems but that his piety it was which made him feel deeply, fervently and gratefully the divine grace so easily and personally shown him by his Lord and led him to give utterance to such feelings in inimitable songs. Even a rank and uncompromising atheist cannot but admit this fact from a patient study of his lyrics, that is to say, he cannot but take the incidents as so many real historical events that occurred in his short earthly career. Almost all these allusions to the events of his life may be ratified by a com-

parative study of what his contemporary St. Appar and his immediate successor St. Sundarar likewise relate of him incidentally in their solemn, sacred and glorious hymns composed similarly in praise of Lord Siva; still this is not the occasion for giving an extensive treatment to all such matters and so let us confine our attention to a consideration of a few points gleaned from what our saintly child himself says about himself.

I told you just now that Thirujnanasambandha was given milk by the Heavenly Father and Mother who appeared before him while he was standing and crying on the bank of the temple-tank at Seerkali and that when his father came up the tank and reproved him for taking milk given by unclean hands he broke out in a hymn and pointed out to him the parents who gave him milk and who were just vanishing from his sight. From that time forward the child became not only a wonder of his own age but that of other ages to come. Nevertheless the child himself viewed with no wonder the miraculous occurrences of his life, for he deemed that to God nothing was impossible. On the other hand he became enraptured with so much love for the Divine Parents that all his thoughts centred on their gracious person, that he could rest no more without thinking of them, without feeling their sweet love for him, without giving expression to his love and gratitude for them in innumerable lyrical songs. Since he was blessed with the vision of his Lord Siva and mother Uma in a Siva temple, he became possessed with an ardent longing to visit every Siva temple all over the country, in the hope of meeting his Heavenly Parents therein again and again and of finding an opportunity anywhere there to get himself permanently united to them. To this wish of his, his earthly father readily acceded and carried him on his nape to a number of Siva temples for some time, until a palanquin set with pearls was sent to him by God in a mysterious manner. In a hymn he composed extempore at the Siva temple in Thirunanipalli when he was thus carried there, he distinctly says that he sang the hymn just as he was sitting on the nape of his father.<sup>1</sup> I need hardly say that on the nape of a man no one—even a grown-up boy, can sit comfortably both to himself and his bearer, except a small child below four years.

I will give one more reference taken from his hymns to his having been only three years old when he saw God. When our Saint visited the Siva temple at Madura in response to the invitation of the Pandian queen, he stayed there for some time. At the instigation of the Jain priests who were at that period the bitterest enemies to the adherents of the Saiva religion, the king Kunpandian being then a convert to the Jain religion, secretly agreed and permitted the Jain priests to set fire to the hermitage in which St. Janasambandha and his numerous followers were lodged. In the dead of night the cruel deed was done, and when the whole hermitage was on fire, our Saint knowing in an instant who was the cause of it, implored in a pathetic hymn the mercy of his Lord to save them all and send back the fire in a mild form to the king himself. Immediately the fire disappeared but the king suddenly got a burning fever. The whole palace was astir; the Jain priests who were experts in the healing art were summoned, and all sorts of remedial measures were resorted to but all proved of no avail. At last, the queen who was a devout Saivite suggested that Thirujnanasambandha might be requested to try. Accordingly at day-break the saint was invited to the palace. On seeing him on a seat near the bedstead of the king, the Jain priests, who were assembled there, began to speak ill of him and even taunted him. It was very painful for the queen who stood by to see the little and innocent saintly child thus loaded with reproaches and she was about to raise her voice in his defence when, with an undaunted and marvellous courage-marvellous on the part of a little child, he addressed her in a beautiful hymn, the first stanza of which may be rendered in English thus:

“O mother thou that hast fawn-like eyes! O Thou, the chief  
 and great spouse of the Pandian king,  
 Hear me and grieve not that I who am here  
 a mere infant sipping milk by lovely lips;  
 As Siva of the sacred Alavai is my guard  
 am no inferior to these ill-bred

Who live in spots as Anaimamalai  
in the midst of untold woes.”<sup>1</sup>

In this stanza the occasion makes our little lord refer to his being at the time a young child fed purely on milk. So much clear and incidental reference in his own lyrics constitutes an internal evidence which proves unquestionably the fact of his having been a mere child on the occasions which called forth the composition of those lyrics. Now let us see whether there is any more evidence to testify to the direct vision he had of God when he was a little child.

It seems that the love he cherished in his heart for his Heavenly Parents who came and gave him milk so very easily and graciously, made the thought of it stand uppermost in his mind while he was in Madura and prompted

“மானின் நேர்விழிமாதராய் வழுதிக்கு மாபெருந் தேவிகேள்  
பானல்வாய் ஒருபாலன் ஈங்கிவன் என்றுநீ பரிவெய்திடேல்,  
ஆனைமாமலை யாதியாய இடங்களிற் பல அல்லல்சேர்  
ஈனர்கட் நெளியேன் அலேன் திருஆலவாய் அரன் நிற்கவே”

him to glorify that act of grace in a fine hymn which is also remarkable for showing his complete reliance upon God. The second stanza of the hymn specially commemorates that most important incident as follows:

“He, who made me his servant by presenting into my hands  
Milk in a lotus-shaped golden cup, so that my father  
Believing it to be unclean did fret; with modest Her abode  
In Kalumalam He the great Lord having rings in ears.”<sup>1</sup>

Does not this explicit reference to his conversion from the moment he received milk from the hands of his Heavenly Parents establish beyond doubt the fact of his having seen God while he was yet an young child only three years old? In addition to this, the flawless, pure, chaste, dignified Tamil lyrics which he poured forth in profusion, the series of miracles which he wrought every now and then

and which culminated in the raising up of a maiden in Mylapore from the ashes to which she was reduced by a snake-bite, his successful disputations with the Jains and the Buddhists—all these, as resulting from the divine grace and power which filled him beyond measure, point him out as a unique personality that came with a special mission to reveal the real nature of the true God and save humanity from worshipping false God and multiplying thereby the births and deaths endlessly. In the whole range of the world's

“போதையார் பொற்கிண்ணத்து அடிசில் பொல்லாதெனத்  
தாதையார் முனிவுஉறத் தான்எனை ஆண்டவன்,  
காதையார் குழையினன் கழுமல வளநகர்ப்  
பேதையாளவளொடும் பெருந்தகை இருந்ததே”

religious history you cannot find another Saint who, like Jnanasambandha, saw God in his third year, who wrought miracles like him simply to vindicate the ways of the true God, and who told as the direct vision he had of God in his own poetic compositions bequeathed to us as invaluable and imperishable records of a genuine historical personage. There may be—nay there are, stories fabricated by religious sects and fanatics with an intent to raise their favourite teachers and priests to the level of St. Thirujnanasambandha, nay even superior to him, but a careful and impartial examination of such tables will show you that they could be nothing more than mere fables. In their own sayings or writings they had left us, you would find them to betray their commonplace character and in a few instances to rise no more than persons of average mental capacity. So far as my knowledge of certain teachers of world-religions is concerned, I venture to say that there is not any substantial evidence in their sayings handed down to us by their disciples, much less in their writings which are unfortunately very scarce, that would warrant as in believing them to have had a direct vision of God. Be it far from me to make any invidious comparison between one religious teacher and the other from any motive other than good. To ascertain the intrinsic value of an object of thought, comparison is most necessary; yet, I am not going to enter upon that difficult, in a way even delicate, task,

but leave it to those who have the necessary ardour, patience and intelligence to accomplish it as an interesting and useful labour of love. I merely suggest here that an unbiassed comparison may be instituted between St. Thirujnanasambandha and other religious teachers with a view to discern which of them will come out from it to show us the real God and send us along the path that will lead us direct to his kingdom of righteousness and love.

Suffice it for our present purpose to say that the evidence supplied by the life and writings of St. Thirujnanasambandha possesses a value unique in the religious history of the world, since it infuses new life into the almost dying original conception of God held by ancient seers and handed down to us by their successive lines of disciples in the oldest works both in Tamil and Sanscrit, and as such that it should, on no account, be overlooked by earnest seekers after truth and the true God, if they care to be saved. Unless we worship the true God that created us, unless we have a right conception of him as a vital element of that worship, unless we secure his grace as the strongest vessel that would carry us through the ocean of births and deaths in the midst of stormy cares and miseries, how can we hope to reach him safe? We may build up theory upon theory, we may create Go after God as suits our fancy and may even dare to call ourselves God, but all these will not avail to lead us to our real Heavenly Father who alone can save us by put

**INDIANS INNURANT OF THEIR  
MOTHER TONGUES (MOSTLY  
ILLITERATES)**

As has been pointed out already, the whole of South India is inhabited mostly by Tamil speaking people. Though these people from their birth have been speaking the Tamil tongue and living the Tamil way of life, most of them know not to write flawless Tamil books available. They do not entertain the least wish to read them, even out of a love for their mother tongue.

During the British regime, not much importance was given to a study of the regional languages of India. Only English was given the place of precedence, as the language of the rulers and as the gateway to a career and to a knowledge of world literature and science. In consequence not only possessed poor knowledge of their mother tongue but also proved of no use to the large masses of illiterate people of their land. Only after the attainment of Independence for India, some attempt is made to give preference to the study and development of the regional languages. But in an aggressive way, Hindi is attempted to be installed in the place of English, as the Lingua Franca of India.

## **HINDI IS AS ALIEN AS ENGLISH TO NON-HINDI SPEAKING PEOPLE OF INDIA**

By the adoption of Hindi as the common tongue, what good will accrue to the non-Hindi speaking people of India, who are mostly illiterate and to whom Hindi will be as alien as English?

So if there be true patriots in the land, they should work for the study and development of the regional languages with a view to make all people proficient and learned in their respective language.

Some people claim that since Hindi is being spoken by a major portion of the Indian population, Hindi alone would seem to hold out, as common tongue of India, the brilliant prospect of bringing all the diverse people of India together unifying them for any undertaking for their common welfare.

It is our duty to point out in this connection that Hindi is not the common tongue of even the northerners. Hindi is spoken in varied ways in different places of North India. The Hindi spoken by people in one part of North India is not understood by Hindi-speaking people of other parts of the same North India. This will be evident from the following :

Hindi research scholars have classified Hindi into three broad divisions i.e. Western Hindi, Eastern Hindi and Bihari, each having a different parentage. The language spoken in the plateau west of the river Ganges and southeast of Punjab is called Bangaru; that spoken in the south of the places between the river Ganges and the river Yamuna is Kanouj; that in vogue in Panthalkand and places adjoining the Narmada river is Bandeli; and that spoken in Delhi and its

suburbs is Urdu. These five languages or dialects spoken in the north-west of India go by the common name of western Hindi.

Those coming under the category of East Hindi are : Avadhi, Bakeli, AND

**PREFACES OF  
MARIMALAI ADIGAL**

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**பொருந்தும் உணவும், பொருந்தா உணவுகளும்****PREFACE**

Of the three kingdoms in nature into which the created things are comprehensively classified, man finds his place fixed in the animal kingdom. Though the animal and the vegetable are alike in having, in common, life and growth, the one is not identical with the other but is distinguished from it by possessing the faculty of will potent to perform a complex series of actions for the sake of maintaining its existence and preserving its life from the onslaught of ferocious animals and other individuals of its own class. As for the vegetable naturally no such facilities seem to exist. Pressed by hunger when animals roam about in search of prey, or when a number of them, coming upon something not sufficient for them all to feed upon, engage themselves in a severe conflict over it, or when some of them, too weak and timid to withstand the attack of fierce kinds, flee away for life, one can see what a marvellous and tactful variety of actions denied to plant life they perform.

Since the vegetable kingdom is unlike the animal, in being left unprovided for its defence, it is clear that nature intended her to be used for food by animals; while on the contrary she has forbidden one animal being preyed upon by another by implanting in each a passionate desire for preserving its life and by giving to each the means of accomplishing it. It may even be imagined that, in the remote

past, nature could have made even the wild animals subsist solely upon herbs, fruits and roots and that it is only at a later period when certain large - sized and ferocious types of animals, belonging to polar regions where they had none of the vegetable products to live upon except animal flesh, migrated into genial southern climes, that the habit of preying upon the weaker ones became established in them. Once acquired this cruel habit came to be imitated by the animals of the tropical regions also , until it became a part and parcel of their nature.

But mother Nature never leaves unpunished those of her offspring that go astray from her control and learn to play foul towards her other children. As has been proved by the eminent Dr. A. Haig, all animal matter is saturated with uric acid poison, the fruitful source of numerous virulent types of diseases. Man or beast, all that take to animal diet import into their blood the poison of a very pernicious kind which not only undermines their own health but also tends to deteriorate both the mind and body of their progeny. In this manner all the flesh - eating creatures are made gradually to lose their vitality and become extinct at the end of a few centuries. To this hidden cause that thus saps the essentials of life, must we attribute the extinction of the huge carnivorous animals which in the past prehistoric ages were roving about the earth in large numbers. Even now how few in number are such harmful and worthless animals as lions, tigers, bears, wolves and the like when compared with the swarms of such mild strong and useful animals as cattle, horse, sheep, deer and others that live entirely upon leaves and herbs.

Now, a problem of vital importance that concerns the lives of millions every year, remains unnoticed even by men of culture; for the source of terrible epidemics has not as yet been properly inquired into, and the remedial measures that are sought to bring relief to the suffering and the dying multitude

do but touch the surface and not the depth of that source. As has been shown above, all animal carcasses being charged with extremely poisonous substance, it is from their exudations that infectious diseases of a terrible kind take their rise, spread rapidly everywhere and carry away millions of lives every year and every season. The disintegrated particles of putrid flesh continually escape into the air, find by this means an easy entrance into the living systems and produce pestilences varying in their action and character and frightful in their consequences. Whether of man or of beast every living flesh is apt to putrefy if not properly guarded against and a constant effusion of poisonous matter fills up the air until it spreads it to an extent of many hundred, nay even thousands of miles, in space. This festering property inherent in flesh requires to be held in check so long as the desire to perpetuate life continues. To do this effectually Nature has provided us for food and medicine with different kinds of edible plants and fruits which alone are entirely free from uric acid poison. But unfortunately the major portion of mankind and animals of certain kinds have, as their staple food, adopted flesh obtained by the cruel and heartless act of killing the innocent and most useful animals all over the world. Every cruel deed brings with it its own punishment. As pointed out above. Nature has put into the core of all animal matter a dreadful poison - dreadful alike to those who look into its silent workings and to those who overlook them in their rapacious craving for meat diet which is working out the ruin of all who thwart her benign purposes and violate her natural laws. With the daily consumption of meat - diet, man constantly receives into his blood an infusion of animal poison and thereby arguments the festering process that is already going on within his own flesh.

What a foolish creature man is with all his learning and ingenious inventions to add poison to poison and kill others as well as himself! Instead of taking the wholesome dish of vegetable meal that produces pure, rich and vital blood and

preserves flesh from putrefaction, he continually gorges stinking meat, until he falls ill when as a matter of necessity he abstains from the unnatural diet and seeks as a curative means medicines prepared from plants and herbs. Even then the abnormal craving for meat is so strong in many that they entreat their physician to allow them the use of light and easily digestible animal food and prescribe at the same time some powerful portion to assist the digestion of such strong food. And many a physician being more particular about his fees than the health of his patients, dares not lose his professional call but accedes to their entreaties and goes on prescribing medicines one after another along with chicken broth and meat-soup which, containing as they do, a great quantity of uric acid poison, only tend to increase the gravity of the patients' sick condition.

In other cases where the patient is a strict vegetarian and the attendant doctor a flesh-eater, the doctor invariably induces the patient to use beef-soup and port wine even against his wish. If, by chance or through some mysterious cause which still remains unknown to the scientific world, the patient recovers his health, the doctor is congratulated - why he congratulates himself, on the success of his treatment and from that time forward he not only gains the confidence of other suffering people but even believes in his own professional skill to a degree that he makes it a point to extend without any hesitation the benefit of his clever prescription of meat-soup to his other patients also. But if, contrary to his expectations, the patient expires, which occurs in six or seven cases out of ten, he attributes it to the patient's low vitality or to some trivial mistakes committed either by the helpless man or by his relatives, he himself not knowing that his patient's death was brought about by the very beef-soup and egg-flip that he prescribed. And strangely enough in the course of a few days following the death of his victim, the doctor takes care to

collect his fees from the relatives of the dead man. Such alas! is the doctor's profession and such the fate of those whoseek his help! And yet, what is the real cause of his death? May it not be the blood-poison augmented to an extent so as to affect the bodily functions by a frequent introduction of more poison in the shape of meat soup and wine into the life-fluid that had already been rendered impure by the disease? Even the lower carnivorous animals, when they are taken ill, abstain from flesh and fast for days together taking at intervals only herbs and roots until they are completely recovered. A careful observer of animal life can never fail to notice this instinctive act on theri part to rid themselves of the accumulation of blood impurities. Even among us the innocent and hard working people who live in villages removed far away from the contamination of town-life, very seldom feel unwell and when they do so they invariably fast until their appetite is improved. In a day or two they get better simply because their chief food consists of light gruel and cheap and wholesome vegetables, animal food being very scarce in rural parts. In this manner their - recovery from any occasional illness is speedy and sure and they live to a good old age.

This simple, harmless, and healthy life led instinctively by country folks and lower animals during the period of illness must have formed a model lesson to the town people who boast of learning and enlightenment, rank and civilization. What availeth all learning, light and rank, if one's life is rendered unfit for the enjoyment of physical, moral, intellectual and spiritual pleasures and be cut off prematurely by sickness and sorrow! It is, therefore, absolutely necessary that every one should know the proper means of right living and adopt it at any cost. All the physical troubles now existing might be traced to the root cause of blood -poison called otherwise Uric Acid. It is this poison that produces multifarious kinds of diseases by being carried into the vital fluid of the human frame through

flesh foods. To avoid blood poison, one must totally avoid meat food which is penetrated with uric acid poison.

Observe too how good, how mild, how useful are those animals that feed upon grass and straw, leaves and roots and how bad, how fierce and how worthless those that live upon flesh food. Do not bulls and cows, horses and camels, sheep and deer live only upon grass, and straw, leaves and reeds rejected by man as useless? And yet, how strong, how clean, and how serviceable they are to man who treats them mercilessly! Can any one make lions, tigers, wolves and panthers as useful, as these? It is impossible and impracticable. Man who has climbed up the ladder of evolutionary process so as to become possessed with a tender heart and a thinking mind which form the foundation of his moral character, should have bestowed his thought on the intimate relation in which he stands to lower animals which by serving him in many ways, make his existence happy and comfortable and have, therefore, a strong claim on him to be treated kindly and protected from being slaughtered. Dimmed by impetuous passions and strong appetite the mind of carnivorous animals can pay no heed to the value and existence of other lives as they do to their own, but man who has risen far above them in point of culture and refinement of feelings should not have been so carried away by such brutal passions and appetency as to lose sight of the great value which every moving being sets so ardently on its own life and existence.

In what does the excellence of man consist? Is it not in the freedom of his will, in the power he can freely exercise to discriminate between what is good and what is evil? Is it not in the tenacity of his resolve to cling to that alone which brings happiness not only to him but to all moving beings that have a right to live being possessed like him with an instinct of self-preservation? This right given to every creature not by man but

by Providence, this right to live in an organism even the seemingly trivial but truly marvellous structure of which the combined intelligence of all the scientific men in the world cannot raise, this right which each and every moving creature possesses for the purpose of promoting the growth of its understanding and enlivening its capacity for enjoyment, if man, in his eagerness to fill his stomach, would still refuse to recognize, then the supreme ethical importance that is attached to his existence in the universal conception of the moral law becomes empty and meaningless; for, by this disregard he descends lower down in the scale of culture and delicacy of moral sense and joins the brute creations. It is, therefore, absolutely necessary that, in order to maintain his ethical status and widen the scope it affords him for a freer and fuller play of all his finer sensibilities which not only secure him against the troubles incident to lower forms of lives but also increase the extent and intensity of his happiness, he must totally avoid infringing on the rights of other moving lives and adhere strictly to pure vegetable diet alone.

But it is to be borne in mind that even among the articles of vegetarian diet there are those that contain proportionately a greater quantity of uric acid poison than is found in the meat preparations. Such are tea, coffee, cocoa etc. These and stimulants like alcohol, tobacco, opium and others must be studiously avoided by all who wish to lead a healthy and long life and to produce and perpetuate a long line of descendants strong and sound in both mind and body. Of the substances that compose a wholesome vegetarian meal entirely free from uric acid poison, the following six classes of foodstuffs are mentioned by Dr. A. Haig as sufficient to build up all the constituents of a sound and vigorous human body. They are 1. Milk and its products 2. Bread, cereal foods and gluten 3. Nuts and nut-foods 4. Garden vegetables as potatoes 5. Garden fruits as apples 6. Dried and foreign fruits. In addition to being cheap, these are sweet to taste, sweet to smell, pleasing to

mind, harmless and humane and using them as food is in complete harmony with the high ethical station of life to which man has arisen after so many hard and fierce life and death struggles. May it therefore behave every man and every woman to awaken to a sense of the value of their ethical life and lead it so as not to cause any harm either to man or any innocent animal! And be it remembered that there can be no harm greater than that of killing a living being and depriving it of the life given not by man but by providence for the great benefit of improving its understanding by a knowledge and experience of the world!

The above was contributed by me as an article to The Indian Humanitarian magazine conducted by The Bombay Humanitarian League and appeared in the 5th no. of its first volume, in January, 1920. For the benefit of those of our countrymen who wish to read everything in English instead of in their own mothertongue, it is re-published here with many alterations and a few additions. For this I owe my obligation to the above-mentioned League which by publishing the HUmanitarian magazine and numerous books, booklets and pamphlets, has advanced the cause of vegetarianism and brought immense relief to our much useful domestic animals by stopping many animal-sacrifices and converting thousands of our people to vegetarianism. Those who wish to go deeper into this vitally important subject of vegetarianism will do well to go through all the publications of this League and make themselves thoroughly acquainted with the inestimable knowledge they yield of right living.

Now, the Tamil work that appears in the following pages consists of four parts of which the first two are taken from my large Tamil work on 'Long Life'. The third part which deals with the huitarian teachings of the great religions of the world was written many years ago and it appeared in many periodicals

that were then in existence. It is now inserted here, so that it may be of permanent use to the Tamil reading public. The fourth and the last part is newly written to meet in a plain scientific spirit the arguments raised against vegetarianism by the adherents of the Tamil atheistic movement that is now set of foot.

Pallavaram  
9th May 1929.

**Vedachalam**

மக்கள் நூறாண்டு உயிர் வாழ்க்கை

## PREFACE

*“On a natural system of diet, old age would be our last and our only malady; the term of our existence would be protracted; we should enjoy life and no longer preclude others from the enjoyment of it.”*

- Poet Shelly in “A Vindication of Natural Diet”

The following second large work of mine (my first large work being “The Life and Times of St Manickavachakar) in Tamil embodies the results of my careful study of Long Life problems, of my observations of symptoms in myself and in others in health and in disease, and of my experimental modes of living and methods of healing pursued continually for more than thirty years. Nothing but what has been found in all these thirty years to benefit others and myself is set down in the following pages. Before recommending to others what I read and thought about how to maintain a healthy life and how to restore it in cases where it was impaired, I tried them all on myself and on my people undergoing of course considerable trouble and expending large sums of money all through, until I came to hit upon the very simple, natural, correct, inexpensive modes of leading and maintaining a healthy long life. Although it took me twenty four years to complete this treatise owing to interruptions occasioned by my other literary, religious and historical works, yet it has gained - much in my long varied experience, wide study and progressive thinking.

Here in India as elsewhere, it is generally believed at liv-

ing long does not lie within the power of man. Most of the people in India attribute to the power of fate both a short life and a long one. Only a few hold to the view that man has infinite possibilities in store, if he would only care to exercise his will, and that according as he energizes it or leaves it dormant, does he either lengthen it or leaves it dormant, does he either lengthen his life's duration or shorten it to a span. These few are mostly the adherents of the yoga system of philosophy. In ancient times not only but so in Greece, the followers of Kapila and Patanjali, and Pythagoras practised strict yogic modes of living and thinking and eventually enjoyed a long life extending to hundred years and more.

But in recent times when the practice of yoga and therewith the natural ways of living and the loftier ways of thinking had the more fallen into disuse, as the people became more and more illiterate, ignorant and aggressively selfish indulging in animal passions and aggressively selfish indulging in animal passions and morbidly craving for unnatural foods and drinks, the human life also has become hideously short. Most horrible forms of disease have multiplied and great sufferings and countless premature deaths do occur. Still they pass unnoticed simply as inevitable occurrences. The yogic mode of living has even come to be looked upon as belonging exclusively to the ascetic few.

But, towards the end of the last century Saint Amalunga in Southern India and Saint RamaKrishna and his great and illustrious disciple Swami Vivekananda in Northern India had, by their impressive teachings and thrilling lectures, revived the study and practice of Yoga to an appreciable degree and showed how all who are willing might share in the benefits of Yoga.

Still earlier in far-off countries Newton the great discoverer of scientific laws, struck deeply by the fact of the wonderfully long life led by some men—especially by Thomas Parr

who lived 153 years, and Henry Jenkins 169, devoted his attention to a study of the habits and diets of the long lived persons and found out the great law existing between the purity and simplicity of the former and the long life of the latter. He then wrote a “luminous and the eloquent essay” on Defence of Vegetable Regimen expounding the principles that underlie the perpetuation of life, and thus gave a new impetus to the investigation of laws governing the length of human life. After the time of Newton, the question of clean food and its intimate relation to a healthy long life, touched the finer feelings of so great an angelic soul as the poet Shelley and so much excited his compassion for human and animal life that he promptly wrote a thoughtful, sound and brilliant essay entitled. “A Vindication of Natural Diet” and disseminated his precious ideas all over the foreign countries.

From the time of Shelly this important subject began to engage the attention of many great scientists such as Louis Kuhne, Dr. A. Haig, Prof. Metchnikoff, Prof. Loeb, Dr. Albert Matthews, and Dr. J. H. Kellogg and of such great thinkers and philosophers as Prentice Mulford, Helen Wilmans, Harry Gaze and others. Dr. Haig’s book on “Uric Acid” and Dr. Kellogg’s “The New Dietetics” are teally epoch-making works in as much as they bring to clear light the hitherto hidden fact relating to food and life. The number of learned people who are greatly benefited by the teachings of these eminent authorities is daily increasing by tens and hundreds of thousands in foreign countries, while here in Southern India those who know even the names of these savants are extremely rare.

When this vital knowledge is in such a deplorable condition even among the English-educated people of this country, is it to be wondered at for its being mjch more so among others who are almost illiterate and who only speak Tamil but know not ei-

ther to read or write any thing in it? That the increasing number of the English- educated persons should, after completing their university course, go hunting after posts in Government Offices and ilsewhere, mostly not with any honourable intention but with an avidity to scrape up as much as they can the people's money, that they should vie with each other in spending it as much in adorning their females with costly diamond jewels and silk cloths of every high grade as in other vain luxuries, that they should take no thought of the poor, suffering and prematurely dying millions in the country, of their language and religion and their social amelioration, is really a heart-rending spectacle.

It was this lamentable state of affairs that at first roused in me a feeling of boldness to layout the limited sources of my income in the acquisition and propagation of knowledge pertaining to the science of health, although this to a certain extent interfered with my study of English, Tamil and Sanscrit literatues, of the different systems of philosophy and different religious systems of the world. Even though the following work gives an elaboratge treatment to health - subjects, yet it is not done in the cold light of purposeless materialistic science. On the other hand, ideas common to allreligions and philosophies are brought to enliven and ennoble the subject and I trust that, after reading it once, one would find his or her mind greatly refreshed and exalted.

A work of this kind is quite new to the Tamil people and it may even seem strange to many a seemingly religious person that it should give such an explicit treatment to such avoided subjects as those that concern sex-functions and birth-control. Perceiving the evil of concealing such vital matters from the knowledge of people, even women of high attainments, and even men of great religious distinctions have, in the foreign countries, come forward to speak and write on those subjects without any reserve. Marie Stopes, and E.A. Rout's deservingly famous writings are familiar instances in point. And there

is not a greater and stronger upholder of the needs of birth-control than the illustrious Dean Inge of St. Paul's, nor is there a deeper and more logical thinker and exponent of the science of eugenics than Dr. F.C.S. Schiller of Oxford. "Eugenists believe" says Dean Inge "that unless civilisation is guided on scientific principles, it must come to ruin. We are ready to give up all our theories, if we can be proved to be in the wrong; but we stand by scientific as against emotional or sentimental ethics" (outspoken Essays, Second Series). And Dr. Chiller lays greater emphasis on this fact by affirming "However powerful, therefore, a society may be, and however great its resources, it is doomed if it so organizes itself as to breed the wrong sort of men and to favour the survival of the worthless at the expense of the more valuable" (Eugenics and Politics).

Ages ago our own country was not wanting in wise men who perceived the evil of indiscriminate procreation. St. Thirumoolar who existed in the 5th century A.D., not only speaks of what ought to be the right sort of sex - functions, but also indicates the conditions under which a limited number of choice offspring is producible. From this it just be clear that, in treating explicitly of sexual functions and birth - control methods, I have not done anything offensive against delicacy of taste but have simply voiced forth that the great men of the past and the present thought and aid on the subject.

Another prominent feature of this work is its strong advocacy of nature - cure methods. If man can learn to make a proper use of air, light, heat, water and dwelling places, if he can live only upon such vegetable foods as contain all the elements required for the building up of his body, if he can keep clean the excretory organs without allowing the used - up matter to remain in them long, if he can fast occasionally so as to give rest to his over-wrought organ the stomach, if he can keep his blood free from impurities and contamination, and lastly if he can exercise his mind and body to an extent benefi-

cent but not fatiguing, there is no reason why he should not live a healthy long life and why he should abandon the use of medicines altogether. One who has acquired the habit of living according to the principles laid down in this book need no longer fear either disease or untimely death. If, by unforeseen circumstances, anything goes wrong with him, all that he must do is simply to adopt the simple, inexpensive and natural methods of healing shown in the last chapters of this book and the cure will positively follow as a matter of course. With these few words I send out this most useful work of mine for the benefit of the Tamil people and offer my humble prayer to God for having enabled me to complete it after so long.

The Sacred Order of Love,  
Pallavaram,  
13th Feb. 1933.

**Vedachalam**

## சாகுந்தல நாடக ஆராய்ச்சி

### PREFACE

*“A play attains artistic perfection just in proportion as it approaches that unity of lyrical effect, as if a sony or ballad were still lying at the root of it, all the various expression of the conflict of character and circumstance calling at last into the compass of a single melody or musical theme.” - Walter Pater.*

What Pater, the profound critic and the master of an inimitable English prose style, has said in the above extract taken from his essay on ‘Shakespeare’s English Kings’ applies closely to the Sakuntala the famous drama of the Sanscrit poet Kalidasa. The theme of the drama is that which, with all the lyrical charm, treats of the deep love that had sprung between Sakuntala who lived in the hermitage of her foster-father removed far away from the busy haunts of men and the king Dushyanta who accidentally visited her there while he was on a hunting campaign in the forests at the foot of the Himalayas. The plot of the drama is not variegated, as in the comedies of Shakespeare by any artistically inwoven under plots, but is extremely simple and by means of the passionate love-songs that appear all through and by its easily comprehensible unity produces in effect markedly lyrical. Nevertheless, the interest of the plot rises at the point where the poet complicates the situation by skilfully introducing into it the curse of the sage Durvasa and making it appear for a time as if the unity had been broken by that unforeseen circumstance and by the conflict of character exhibited between an innocent young woman

absorbed in her recent love experience and the easily irritated sage who had suddenly appeared before her. Still the lyrical unity runs clearly through the succeeding events by the interest of the plot being attached anew to the loss and recovery of the ring which the king put on the finger of Sakuntala when he returned to his capital. From this it must be evident how artistically the poet Kalidasa has, for the purpose of the play, perfected this simple story taken from the Mahabharata, the great store-house of the Indian legends, by introducing into it the curse of Durvasa which is not found in its original source but which has been skilfully created by the poet himself. Though the creation of this incident looks admirable, so far as it serves as an indispensable hinge on which the plot turns, I might be permitted to question whether it is not inconsistent with the stainless character of a saintly person. I have discussed this point in the following critical study of the Sakuntala and have shown how Shakespeare stands superior to Kalidasa in this respect.

But in the art of delineating the main and the sub-ordinate characters that appear in this drama Kalidasa is not in any way inferior to Shakespeare but to a remarkable degree is his equal. With what great acuteness Kalidasa has penetrated to the inward nature of each character, in what brief, pointed expressions of thought and feeling he has so well brought it out, and in what strong relief he sets one in contrast with or foil for the other, can be grasped only by those who make an attentive and discerning study of the speeches of each personage. To the best of my understanding I have, in the following critique, shown at length these psychological differences which the poet has so carefully observed and noted in his characters.

Years ago I happened to hear in English lecture delivered by an able brahmin scholar on this drama of Kalidasa. After dwelling on some of the excellences of the play, when he came to speak of the character - study of the poet, he, instead of going right through the speeches manners and actions of each dramatic personage, and trying to exhibit whether or not there were special features in each, summarily dismissed it by saying that Kalidasa was sadly wanting in his delineation of character and is therefore no peer of Shakespeare

the prince of the dramatists. That sweeping remark of the learned lecturer kindled in me a burning desire to make a comparative study of the dramatic art of the two poets, and from that time onward I have been reading critically not only the plays of Kalidasa and Shakespeare but also the commentaries on their plays. Unfortunately in the whole range of either Sanscrit or English Literature I could not meet even a single commentary on Kalidasa's dramas that is worth mentioning along side of the very interesting and illuminating Shakespearian commentaries produced by Ulrici, Gervinus, Schlegel, Swinburne, Dowden, Brooke, Bradley, Symons, Hudson, Moulton, Corson, Brandes and others. In this life no one can experience a pleasure comparable in its height, amount and intensity to the intellectual and aesthetic pleasure which a study of these celebrated commentaries afford. The pleasure given by these is equal only to that yielded by the plays themselves, nay, I may venture to say it is even a degree higher than that. In this class of brilliant Shakespearian commentaries must be included also J.A. Symond's critical estimates both of the British dramatists and of the old Greek tragedians Aeschylus, Sophocles and Euripides, since these mark an epoch of higher dramatic criticism.

The great literary pleasure experienced in the study of these Shakespearian commentaries, impelled me to attempt after their model a deep and discriminating study of the dramatic art of Kalidasa, a Tamil translation of whose mature production the *Sakuntala* I produced in the year 1906 and a second edition of which is now issued with notes and the following critique which embodies the results of my study. This and my similar critical commentaries on the ancient Tamil Idylls the *Mullaippattu*, and the *Pattinappalai*, I believe, may serve to remove to a certain extent the reproach that the modern Tamil literature is sadly barren of higher critical prose writings. If the reader finds this my claim justifiable, I shall consider my labour as sufficiently recompensed.

In the following critique, besides showing the merits of Kalidasa's dramatic art, I have also fixed his date in the first half of

the fifth century A.D. basing it on the indisputable epigraphical evidence and co-ordinating this evidence by that afforded by the work itself.

Finally I am glad to say that, in tracing the origin and growth of the drama in India, I quite accidentally lighted on the discovery that this art took its rise not from among the alien Aryas but from the indigenous Tamils themselves. I believe I have in the following critique sufficiently explained all the facts that led me to this most important discovery.

Pallavaram,

**VEDACHALAM**

6-1-1934

**முல்லைப்பாட்டு ஆராய்ச்சியுரை**  
**PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION**

“ Poetry is simply the most beautiful impressive and widely effective mode of saying things and hence its importance

– **Matthew Arnold.**

To a mind brooding on the silent beauty exhibited in the varied phenomena of nature, to an interest diving deep into the mysteries that lie in the inmost coners of life, to a soul soaring high into ethereal regions of religion and philosophy, to a spirit seeking serene rest in moral sanctity and Divine grace, nothing appears so permanently beautiful, so certainly impressive and effective as the study of a fine piece of poetry. Not only does a fine poem delight us by presenting a faithful picture of nature’s charms and beauties but it also impresses us with the immediate presence of a benign principle that manifests itself in all that is bright and beautiful. While it thus kindles in man the thought about a supreme being of unlimited love and kindness, it calls forth also from him love and sympathy for all animate beings which like every one of us pursue certain lines of development and fulfill certain purposes in life each in its way. It is this love, this sympathy that marks him out as superior to lower animal kingdom; it is this special quality that refine and ennoble his entire being.

Further, the soothing power of poetry is great and its influence on our mind is mild and sweet. To hearts eaten away by

sorrow and worldly cares the reading of poetry comes as a healing balm; to hearts chilled by the icy hand of cruelty it appears like the warming rays of the morning Sun; and to hearts stained with the blackest crime and the basest vice it comes as the washing water of a crystal rill. Ah:! How lovely are the changes wrought by poetry in the mind of man; and how profound and permanent are the moral effects it brings into his inward nature:!

To me the study of poetry has been a welling fountain of delight and ever will it continue to be so to the very end of my life on this Earthly plane. For years together I have been devoting my time to a close, careful and diligent study of the ancient classical poems of the Tamil language and have been drinking deep the ineffable sweetness that was there strode in. The pure simplicity of thought, the close and minute observation of nature, the vivid and sublime portraits presented of the social, moral religious and intellectual conditions of the hoary Tamilian life, the energy and artistic beauty beaming through with a sterling freshness and last, but not least the great historic value which it possesses – all combine to invest Tamil Poetry with a peculiar charm and splendour that can hardly be surpassed by the poetry of any great language in the world. These characteristics of Tamil Poetry accord to Tamil quite a unique place in the history of cultivated languages in the civilized world.

But sad to relate that the Tamil poems prescribed as text books for the B.A and F.A examination in the university of Madras/ have attracted little or no attention of the students and that a study of them has even been looked upon as useless and tiresome by some who had been led to revel in stories of religious and mythological character and who had thereby lost all seriousness and all appreciation of natures charms. This has been due partly to the teaching of the Pandits and their bulky volumes of notes which mainly consist in giving word for

word meanings and turgid and trivial grammatical notes and partly to some prescribed Tamil texts in prose and poetry which/ for the most part contain silly and crude religious myths translated from Sanscrit Puranas and which by no means represent the true character of original Tamil classics.

I do not mean, however, to deny the fact that one or two classical poems are occasionally prescribed as text – books by the scrupulous members of the Tamil Board, But I only intent to say that even these brilliant grms get buried deep in the heap of filthy poems forthcoming as text – books by their side. The sparkling glitter of the former is swallowed up in the intense darkness of the latter;; and the study of Tamil Poetry therefore appears to our gaze as though it were surrounded by an impenetrable gloom.

In spite of this disadvantage I had had an earnest desire to direct the attention of students to a sound critical study of at least the few prescribed texts of classical poems and see what effect would be produced on them when they are taught in the light of modern poetry – criticism in general. Although I felt incompetent for the task, yet I ventured to make the attempt which as I afterwards found to my great satisfaction, proved highly successful not only among the students of my college but also among those who stand outside the pale of university learning and study Tamil in private out of pure love. The benefits that had accrued to students from a critical and comparative study of poetry became patent and ever since the time that I attempted my critical methods of teaching poetry my scheme was put into practice only orally. But an occasion presented itself to come for bringing my critical methods of teaching into writing also. While I was engaged in teaching Mullaippattu to my students of the senior B.A. class, they requested me to write a critical commentary on this beautiful idyll on the new lines and subscribed in advance to defray the

cost of printing. In compliance with their request I undertook the task with pleasure and finished it. I take this opportunity to express my thanks to my students of the senior B.A. class for this and many other acts of courtesy and kindness they had extended to me.

Mullaippattu is an ancient classical Tamil idyll of 103 lines sung in honour of the pandian king Nedunchelian by his court bard Napputhanar. How Nedunchelian, one having gone on a expedition to meet the combined forces of seven powerful kings in the field at Talayalanganam and routed them all in the fierce battle that ensued, returns with feat splendour and magnificence and with trophies of victory to kiss his loveliest wife and how this beautiful maiden that had been left alone in a country villa with a deep sorrow at the separation of her beloved husband, is lying down on her couch her chaste bosom heaving up with a sigh of consolation at his shortly expected return, are all related most vividly and very picturesquely in the poem. The poem is remarkable alike for simplicity of thought, beauty of expression and noble sentiments. The imaginative hold which it has on the mind of the reader is strong and elevating. The interest of the plot is sustained thought out but the poet with great delicacy and subtlety that characterize a master mind. The rhythm and harmony of style vary every now and then and adhere closely to the dignified march of the sense, while the diction, though rugged at times, is one the whole, chaste and elegant replete with genuine elements of Tamil. The Sanscrit words have mingled in it at the rare of two per cent and hence the date of its composition falls about the first century after Christian era.

In commenting on this excellent poem I have followed the main lines of literary criticism inculcated by the able and profound critic professor William minto;; for his critical methods are authentic and help much towards a true and clear under standing of the work taken to be scrutinized. From this critical point of

view, I have given a historical account of the age that gave birth to such a splendid poem as Mullaippattu and of the influence which that age had exerted on this poem. It must be remembered that the true nature of a work of art cannot be comprehended unless the nature and conditions of the times in which it had sprung are distinctly understood. I have also availed myself of the grand views expressed on poetry by such great masters as Milton and Ruskin and have even translated freely into Tamil one or two passages from their writings.

In my analysis of the poem I have adhered closely to the original idea conceived and expressed by the poet, rather than follow the mangled and distorted meanings given by the old commentator Nachinarkkiniar. The old commentator, discarding the simple and natural order and setting in which the subject matter or the idyll is disposed, has torn the excellently woven fabric of the poet to pieces and glues them again together with his own vapid thought in such a fantastic manner as to make the poem seem most unnatural and its structure highly ridiculous. And in elucidating the text I have, therefore, inserted, wherever necessary, short critical notes which would make the inaptitude of the commentators' meaning at one intelligible to all reflective minds. Pandit V. Swaminatha Aiyar of the Government College at Kumbakonam and Pandit C. Tiruchitrambalam Pillai of Coimbatore, having been misled by the commentary of Nachinarkkiniar, have in their editions, added notes which, without following the sense of the poem, simply mar the flow and natural setting of its poetic thoughts. But of the two I wish to recommend to students Mr. Tiruchitrambalam's edition, since his comments and critical introduction seem to me more valuable for a clear understanding of the old commentary, though not of the poem than that of Mr. Swaminatha Aiyar. In the course of my criticism I need hardly say that I have differed as widely from the old

commentator as from the two Pandits, But I have fully stated my reasons and authority for doing so.

I conclude these few prefatory remarks with a fervent hope that these Tamil students who take a deep interest in the study of this poem, will find in the following critical commentary a better means of getting at a true and appreciative knowledge of this only genuine relic of a great and old Tamil poet Napputhanar and will interest themselves by further devoting a few of their leisure hours to the study of Tamil classics and extend their knowledge of Tamil wider than it is at present.

Madras Christian college

*28<sup>th</sup> September 1903*

**VEDACHALAM**

## குமுதவல்லி நாகநாட்டரசி

### PREFACE

The art of fiction has, in modern times, become a potent means in the hands of educated men to awaken the finer instincts of man, so that this awakening of one's own better part might itself serve to correct his mistakes and render him a useful and helping member of society. Within his mind exist in latency capabilities of various kinds and degrees of which one class is evoked by one particular set of outward facts and another by another set of facts. With such peculiar occurrences of outer world corresponds the manifestation of evil or good character of man. Generally speaking, the evil part of human mind finds itself readily and easily called forth into activity by most of the surrounding objects while its better part, for want of fitting means, rarely gains access into the world outside. Now the most desirable function of a learned man should, as far as his innate abilities permit, have been to touch upon the inmost spring of man's delicate nature and open the doorway to the region of love and virtue. But to go deep down the softest and most fertile part of human nature is not within the power of those unwary scholars who adopt improper means without discrimination. It is only those who are cautious and shrewd, those who spend apparently a greater part of their time in the selection of efficient means, in the making of it more attractive than it usually seems to be, that accomplish this very significant and well-meaning task. Take any branch of knowledge: philosophy or science, religion or literature, in their hands it becomes a very effective weapon.

Now, of all these instruments of knowledge, the fiction as an interesting branch of art appeals to all classes of people without effort and aggressiveness, and hence its place is daily becoming more and more prominent amidst them all. In almost all civilised countries but of India, especially southern India, the art of fiction has made a rapid and nearly a perfect development. But here it is still in its infancy. The host of novel writers are primarily led by mercenary and other motives. No genius has as yet arisen and no novel breathes the atmosphere of true art. In most of the Tamil novels that I have come across. I find neither plot nor character delineation, neither a true representation of life nor a chaste and felicitous diction of language. The story chiefly turns only upon love passion--the love in its most degraded type and gross earthly form. Although the Tamil language is pliant and rich in vocabulary capable of conveying the finest shades of meanings, yet in all the Tamil Novels published in a decade or two the diction is rendered very unwholesome by the introduction of unassimilated foreign words from Sanskrit and other languages and by the unhappy combination of words and phrases. In the matter of happy diction and choicest expression of thought a real and fastidious scholarship is the only necessary requirement; but of this not a single Tamil novel of recent times bears a notable mark. Even the Tamil renderings of some English Novels have been done by inelegant hands in so tasteless a manner that the beauty of the original appears in the new drees transformed into ugliness. Except a few who look upon themselves as civilised and up-to date, the main portion of the Tamils brought up in a simple and pure life do not like these novels at all. They like to read novels written in a pure and simple. Tamil style depicting the nature and human life as found in their experience but agreeably ennobled by the moral elevation of the novelist's ideal thought. Having keenly felt their want I ventured to produce this adapted Tamil translation of an eminent English novel in the hope that the pure and simple Tamil into which the ideas of the original are cast would please the Tamils

very much leading them further and further into an appreciation of the art and study of fiction coupled with their own progress of life.

To the Tamilians of yore and their descendants the art of fiction was not an unknown thing before the introduction of modern novel. How carefully this art was studied by them would become manifest from a glance at the critical commentary of Nakkirar on Iraiyanar Agapporul written about the first century of the Christian era. And another poetic work of considerable literary merit like that of Chaucer, I mean Udayanankadai, was already in existence some six centuries before Christ, in which many a tale of Tamil antiquity appears in a collected form each of which, of course, incorporated into the main story with so profound a sense of unity that every one of them looks like to many inseparable limbs in a whole body. Besides this interweaving of one story into the other, the entire poem drawing faithful portraits from real life and tracing the distinctive features of individual character, combine them all to one complex whole so as to impress the mind of the reader with a sense of the strong unifying power of the poet. But it was a poetic age. Even story-telling went on in verse. From the domain of poetry fiction was slowly emerging to breathe the freer atmosphere of prose, when the pernicious influence of Sanscrit broke in upon the mind of the Tamil scholars and vitiated their taste for simplicity of life. A whole series of Puranic legends and obscene myths found their way into Tamil. And the Tamil people of mediaeval period having come under the influence of priests began to pay unlimited respect to mythical accounts of Gods and lost all their study of real life and with it the art of fiction also. But fortunately for us the study of English has once more opened our eyes to the real grandeur pertaining to the art of fiction; and once again has the unwholesome contact of Sanscrit begun stealthily to sap up the vitality of the Tamil language. I need, therefore,

hardly say that it is obligatory on every son of the Tamil country to wake up from his long indifference and do his utmost to render his services in the cause of his own mother tongue Tamil which is, in fact, one of the few highly cultivated ancient languages of the world. I have great pleasure in saying that the following Tamil adaptation of a famous English novel was done by me to my greatest satisfaction and it is for the readers to judge how far I have succeeded in preserving the profound artistic skill of the English author in chaste, easy and elegant diction of Tamil.

THE SACRED ORDER OF LOVE,  
PALLAVARAM,  
1st of May 1911

**VEDACHALAM**

## சிந்தனைக் கட்டுரைகள்

### PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION

*“Different classes of persons, at different times, make, of course, very various demands upon literature. Still, scholars, I suppose, and not only scholars, but all disinterested lovers of books, will always look to it, as to all other fine art, for a refuge, a sort of cloistral refuge, from a certain vulgarity in the actual world.”*

*- Walter Pater on ‘Style’*

A literary man of fine sensibilities cannot bear to be always in touch with the vulgarity of the world in which he was destined to live. He longs to be away from it. If the circumstances of his life are such as force him to live near to it, he either seeks a means whereby he can remove the vile accretions piled up by ignorance or tries hard to introduce order and neatness where all had been disorderly and filthy. Moreover he keeps his mind intact and takes great delight in contemplating the beauties of nature and nothing the excellent traits in human character. In addition to these if he be so fortunate as to be endowed with the rare faculty of communicating his refined thoughts on life and beauty to the society in which he moves, he takes as his effective means either language or music, painting or sculpture. In representing his fine ideas in these mediums of thought, he is careful enough to avoid all sorts of vulgarity lest it should contaminate not only his mind but also the minds of those whom he addresses. If, at all, he is obliged to

touch upon an aspect of vulgarity in order to bring into strong relief either the beauty of nature or human character in the delineation of which he is engaged, he touches only so much of it as is needed for his purpose. In short, a man of refined sense and productive imagination idealizes all that his experience brings into his mind, gives to them a form which is not wholly at variance with what they have in the actual world but which now becomes in his hands more sharp and distinct in its outline, more brilliant in its colour, more vital, moral and spiritual in its expression. When this product of his intellect is given to the world, the people who see it, are not shocked at it, for they find nothing extravagantly strange in it, but are pleased to perceive what was, and is, familiar to them, has now become invested with a charm and beauty which thrills them with a heavenly pleasure and awakens in them an ardour to emulate its virtue. This effect is common to all ideal production of mighty minds whether they are prose writings or poems, music, paintings or sculptures.

Still, of all, the effect produced by language is stronger and more permanent, since it appeals directly to intellect and imagination, while that of music, painting and sculpture reaches them only indirectly. To the power and influence exercised from time immemorial by language over the destinies of nations, the Tolkapiam, the Sacred Kural, the Silappadhikaram, the Iliad, the Mahabharata and others are a standing testimony even to-day.

In English literature, leaving aside the immense good rendered by the immortal works of such master poets as Shakespeare, Milton, Shelly and others, when we come to take into account the numerous benefits that accrued first to the English people and next through them to humanity at large, from the prose writings of literary men no name stands higher in our estimation than that of Joseph Addison. Before the time of our author the English people were somewhat coarse in their tastes,

rude in manners and wanting in refinement. Their age was so badly artificial that in it even the greatness of a poem like *Paradise Lost* was not recognized. In such an age Addison came and “spoke with the true tone of a moralist, yet with a moderation and judgement that disarmed criticism, and brought the lessons home to the hearts of men. His humour is of the subtlest and most delicate kind; his wit is keen, but kept in check by a noble temper and perfect sanity of judgement.” Again it is to Addison that we are indebted “for enforcing true cannon of taste in literature, life and art, and for establishing a more correct standard writer who, in a remarkable way, fulfilled the function of a true literary artist. Even while he was in the midst of a people with little refinement, he did not allow his mind to be tainted by their meanness, but strove hard to purify their tastes and refine their manners close as he lived to reality, its vulgarity he shunned. He idealized everything on which he set his thought. If what he took to handle were by its nature pure, after coming into his hands, it glowed with a still purer light casting around a serene, moral and spiritual radiance; but if it were of a low and vulgar kind, he purged it of the foul element which rendered it unclean, while its good quality he improved.

In this noble work of idealisation Addison’s English style plays a prominent part. His choice of words is faultless and the harmony of sound and sense in which the words flow into sentences, renders the matter attractive and easy of comprehension. Besides the literary grace, his mild and delicate humour infuses an additional charm into his essays which produces a pleasurable effect on the mind of the reader, when impressing on it the great moral and spiritual ideas imbedded in them. His English style, even after the lapse of two centuries which brought in succession great masters of English prose, still remains an excellent pattern to be studied after by all who wish to acquire a good English style. It has been observed by Shaw that “Addison was long held up as the finest

model of elegant yet idiomatic English prose; and even now, when a more lively, vigorous and coloured style has supplanted the neat and somewhat prim correctness of the eighteenth century the student will find in Addison some qualities that never can become obsolete—a never failing clearness and limpidity of expression, and a singular appropriateness between the language and the thought.”

Twenty one years ago when I was studying with deep interest the essays of this master of English prose, I was taken up so much with the beauty, excellence and instructive power of which, that during the course of my reading I felt a strong desire within me to translate some of them into Tamil in order to make my countrymen understand the kind of inimitable literary grace with which the best English prose is tinged and how it aids to impress on the mind of the reader the moral and spiritual ideas which it inculcates. At first I translated ‘The Vision of Mirza’ and ‘The Wonders of Creation,’ as they are full of thoughts and sentiments that bear a close resemblance to the principles of the Tamilian religion and philosophy called the Saiva Siddhanta and published them in the year 1904 in the second volume of my magazine Jnanasagaram. To suit them to the taste of the Tamil people, I had to make certain changes in the Tamil version of the two essays. First of all I removed almost all proper names that are foreign to Tamil and put in their stead pure Tamil names. And secondly, by way of introducing the subject, I added at the beginning of each essay a few appropriate incidents taken from the early part of my life. These additions and changes, I suppose, must have made the matter of the essays look more attractive in their Tamil garb, for the readers who were not aware of their English original, believed that they were pure Tamil productions and admired their beauty. So much the two essays pleased my readers that it encouraged me to undertake the translation of some more of Addison’s essays. And accordingly, I translated

four others into Tamil sticking to my method of translation, that is, the method of displacing foreign proper names by Tamil ones, and adding to or inserting in them a few descriptive passages of my own wherever that was deemed elegant or picturesque and published them in the fourth volume of Jnanasagaram. Altogether the six essays were, a little after, made up into a book and published in the year 1908, so that they may be easily accessible to all Tamil readers.

It had taken seventeen years for the copies (1500) of the first edition to be sold off. Had it not been prescribed last year as a Tamil text for the students in Ceylon preparing for the Intermediate-in-arts-examination of the Cambridge University, it would have taken some five or six years more to get a sale for the five hundred copies supplied to students. Though this book and other writings of mine had been before the University of Madras all through the past sixteen years, she cared not to take notice of them. This is due to its being mainly a brahminridden body. Where brahmins dominate, there no non-brahmin Tamil, however learned he may be, can hope to find himself recognized merely by dint of his merits and attainments.

But not so are the foreign universities. Only in Ceylon do the descendants of the original Tamil possess power and influence. The Aryanized brahmins have not as yet found ample scope for colonizing there. Vestiges of ancient Tamilian life and civilisation can still be seen there, although those who have imbibed western education have undergone a marked but undesirable change in their costumes, customs and manners. Nevertheless, the love for their mother-tongue, Tamil, has not altogether died out from their hearts; still there are visible signs of its being rekindled into an intenser form and of extending its light to all other Tamilians wherever they are. It was this love of theirs that prompted some of their learned men to recommend

without my asking for it, this book of mine to the Cambridge University. For this and similar acts of kindness and substantial help, I take this opportunity to express my deep indebtedness to the Ceylon Tamils, especially to my friend Mr. C. Ariyanayakkam and my late lamented friend Sir P. Arunachalam. I also tender my thanks to the syndics of the Cambridge University for prescribing my book as a text to the Intermediate-in-arts-examination.

Outside the circle of University students, it is not possible to get a good sale for high class Tamil books poetry or prose, ancient or modern; for, the tide of vernacular education in this country is at its very lowest ebb. Even one in thousand knows not to read and write Tamil. Why is it so? The cause is worth considering, as in the case of well-sinkers a correct knowledge of the mass of matter that blocks the passage of an ever-flowing spring, will help them how to remove it and make way for the life-element to issue forth. I, therefore, venture to say a few words on it, even at the risk of over stepping the bounds of a preface.

The reason for this deplorable state of ignorance in South India is not far to seek. Before the immigration of northern brahmins that is before the mediaeval and ancient periods of the South Indian history, the Tamil people studied Tamil much, for their monarchs encouraged its learning in every way. All the varied forms of literature written in pure Tamil prior to the twelfth century A.D., bear ample testimony to the great literary activity of the Tamils and the vast extent of culture they had acquired in almost every branch of learning. Entire absence from old Tamil literature of all mythical, romantic, libidinous and indecent accounts about Gods and sages which constitute an essential feature of Sanscrit works, indicates the highly developed sense which the Tamilians had of the naked moral truth. But from this sense of truth came a fall, the moment the Arya brahmins came from the north bringing with them and popularizing here legendary tales about Gods and rishis, as an easy means of

catching the fancy of the people and bringing them completely under their control. Since these brahmins had been very selfish, greedy and cunning, they did their best to keep the people in ignorance and illiteracy, so that they might always be sought after by the people for any enlightenment they were in need of. Sanscrit they called the language of God, and the brahmins the gods on earth. The people were forbidden to learn anything in general and Sanscrit in particular and in their minds a perpetual fear was implanted lest any breaking away from the injunctions of the priests should bring about the ruin not only of themselves but of their whole family and relations as well. These brahmins did not scruple to show from the Sanscrit books that the injunctions found in them were laid down by the Gods themselves, while in fact, they were their own, fabricated in the name of Gods simply to intimidate the credulous people. As time went on, the influence of the northern brahmins penetrated to the very core of the Tamilian Society, that many, stationed high among them discharging priestly and educative functions, began to feel the secret power of the northern cult and with a view to raise themselves still higher in the estimation of their own people, gradually isolated themselves from their society and identified themselves with the northerners and their own interests with theirs, to so great an extent that they gave up completely the study of Tamil, thinking that it would sink them to make themselves mysterious and good-like in the eyes of the masses, and grew more enthusiastic in speaking loud of the sacredness of Sanscrit and the divinity of brahmins than even the northerners. Even a casual looker-on may not fail to note this state of things still continuing in Southern India. Here all the brahmins, with a few exceptions, are pure Tamilians and there is not a particle of evidence to prove that they had even been related to the northerners in any way; yet their aversion to Tamil and the Tamils is such that they are foremost in heartily lending their help and encouragement to a study of any language but that of Tamil and to an uplift of any people but the Tamils. Here, one can never

hope to enlist the sympathy of a brahmin, unless he follows machine-like what is told and writ in the brahminical literature. No other cause than this domination of brahminism, can explain the existence of a multiplicity of the Sanscrit Puranas that came to be written and translated into Tamil in quick succession from the 12th century A.D. down to our own, and the adoption of Sanscrit for conducting services in the Tamil temples and performing rituals in Tamil homes. The Purity of Tamil, the simplicity of Tamil life, the height to which the Tamilians had risen in moral and intellectual culture, their excellent aesthetic sense of beauty in nature and human character, their study of arts and sciences, their conception of God, soul and matter - in short, all that constituted their ancient civilisation were totally gone. Leaving them to dispute over trivial caste distinctions, to worship and offer bloody sacrifices to deified heroes and heroines, to perform ignorantly expensive and meaningless rites prescribed by brahmin priests and to earn their livelihood by means of trades and industries not intelligently carried on with improved knowledge and appliances but blindly followed from generation to generation without either any improvement, or higher motives and purposes. Such as the condition in which the Tamil people have continued to be for the last six centuries and even now when the physical, social and intellectual progress of other nations is so rapid and astounding, theirs has not advanced even a little but recedes farther and farther away into the shade.

No community that seeks its own benefit can hope to live long at the expense of others which supply its bare necessities: food and clothing, by their unremitting labour. The Hindu nation is composed of different classes of people who perform different kinds of work which go to render life easy and comfortable and productive of high moral and spiritual good and who are, on that account, bound up one with the other so intimately, just as the different parts of a living body are united together one co-operating

with the other for the common good of the whole. If any part of one's body claims an exclusive superiority to its own function and constitution, treats other parts and their functions with contempt or indifference and sternly refuses to co-operate with them, it requires no great wisdom to say what the result would be; surely a general breakdown will overtake the whole body, every part of it suffering most acutely with every other part from the effects of the disintegrating process that has set in one particular part. Similarly if the limited number of the Hindu people who call themselves brahmins, not on account of any superior merit which proves that they alone possess it in preference to others, but on account of mere birth as well as of conventions they have, with no good motive, created among themselves, go on most unreasonably claiming all high privileges exclusively to themselves, to the detriment of the teeming millions who do all sorts of useful work but not caring for their uplift and welfare, certain it is, as night follows day, that this comparatively insignificant number of people would be wiped out of existence in a few centuries. The Hindu nation does not at present live - even if we suppose it to have been in the hoary past, in complete isolation in a remote corner of this globe, cut off from all communication with the rest, but it does live in so close a contact with several great nations widely differing close a contact with several great nations widely differing from it in language, religion, customs, manners and so on, that it can no longer hope to remain unaffected by their influence. Except the Hindu, all others are progressive especially the English whose advancement in the knowledge of arts and industries, of social, moral and religious principles is simply marvellous. Besides being unprogressive, the Hindu society is torn to pieces by numberless caste distinctions nurtured by vanity, selfishness and rank ignorance. That this type of weak and degenerating society cannot hold its position long by the side of a strong and fast progressing nation like the English but must before

its assimilating power so as to be absorbed by it finally, is clear from the luminous exposition bestowed on the subject by Benjamin Kidd. He says : “The Anglo-Saxon has exterminated the less developed people with which he has come into competition even more effectively than other races have done in like case; not necessarily indeed by fierce and cruel wars of extermination, but through the operation of laws not less deadly and even more certain in their result. The weaker races disappear before the stronger through the effects of mrrer contact.” It is, therefore, most urgent that, if the Hindu people really wish to maintain a honourable place in the midst of other great nations, they should direct their energies to striking at the rootcause of all their present evil, namely: the inveterate prejudice and ignorance. These two must be ousted far from their mind by implanting in it the idea of brotherhood and a reformed knowledge of their own mother tongue. The mental eyes of every one must be opened not only to see that the present miserable condition of their life has been due to the spell cast on them by brahmin witchcraft, but also to realise the great truth common to all great religions, that is : all are the children of one Heavenly Father, and the various functions variously assigned to each, simply serve to make living less troublesome and more endurable, so that, through this mutual help, each may work independently and peacefully for the salvation of his or her soul. As such no one should ever be looked upon with contempt, how ever his calling in life may seem to unthinking minds, but should be treated with that regard which its usefulness demands: and those who, by circumstances of life, are forced to engage themselves in several low but highly useful occupations should not on that account be hindered from sharing in the benefits of education and social intercourse equally with all. While co-operating with each other, every one must have fill scope for developing on independent lines his own mental and moral culture. One must not lord over the other and

seriously interfere with his freedom of action and thought as that would silently tend to interfere with the freedom of the oppressor himself and bring about his ruin. In the interest of the brahmins and other high class people themselves, I say that, if they want to save themselves they must come down from their self-assumed and supercilious position and redeem the people from the caste troubles and their fruitful source ignorance and illiteracy. All the loose and infinitely divided sections and subsections of the Hindu community must be brought together and cemented indissolubly into one compact whole by one common ideal of brotherhood, for attaining which they should all be taught to strive hard. For, a public service not directed towards educating the people and unifying them, but directed simply towards creating a mere momentary stir will produce in the end not only no good but may even disturb the peace of the country. Hence, all serious, considerate and unselfish well-wishers of the Hindu as well as of the other communities of India should set to work to uplift the people, first by means of imparting a reformed education of their own mother tongue and secondly, by making them cohere into three or more strong and solid bodies as the Hindu, the Muhammedan, the Christian, and so on, in accordance with their time-honoured religious traditions. If these two were accomplished, all other reforms will, as a matter of course, closely follow in their wake.

Now, as regards this second edition, I wish to say a few words more. In order to make the study of this book much easier for students preparing for university examinations, I have added copious explanatory notes on words, phrases and subject-matter and have written also accounts of Joseph Addison's life and my own early life so far as the beginning of some essays. Not only to University students but also to all lovers of Tamil who study them for light and aesthetic enjoyment, these notes, I believe, will be of great use. The

translation was, from the first, made very faithful to the original but in this edition it was made still more so in a few places where handled it somewhat freely in the previous edition. This was done with double purpose: at first, to show the futility of the complaint put in by brahmins and many misled students that Tamil has no sufficient quantity of words adequately to express the meanings of English words used in dealing with a variety of high class subjects and secondly, to bring home to their mind the fact that Tamil is an independent language with a rich store of words capable of expressing in a skilful hand all kinds of thoughts that appear in the different branches of learning. Instead of arguing about this fact with prejudiced persons, is it not better to show the fact itself in practice? Accordingly the Tamil style of this edition of essays has been rendered extremely pure by eliminating completely all Sanscrit words that mingled in the original edition at the rate of four or five percent.

In this connection I wish to say that I am not one of those who plead warmly for a free, unlimited, unscrupulous introduction into Tamil of Sanscrit words and even English and other foreign words. Not only is Tamil a language spoken at the present day nearly by twenty-five millions of people, but it also is the only cultivated language that has cultivated others such as the chaldean, the Egyptian, the Hebrew, the Sanscrit, the Chinese, the Greek, the Latin and the Arabic. For a language to live so long without undergoing in its structure any such material change as would make it unfit for communication of ideas, there must, indeed have been within it an inexhaustible store of vitality. The continual existence of a language simply bespeaks the continual existence of a civilisation owned by the people who speak it, for, in less civilized communities and among savages, languages so rapidly change and die, that the very same people who were speaking formerly only one language, were after the lapse of a

few years, say twenty or thirty, found to speak many languages that had become unintelligible to each other. In illustrating this fact, Prof. Max Muller has quoted many instances, out of which the following is a remarkable one. We read of missionaries in Central America who attempted to write down the language of savage tribes, and who compiled with great care a dictionary of all the words they could lay hold of. Returning to the same tribe after the lapse of only ten years, they found that this dictionary had become antiquated and useless. Old words had sunk to the ground and new ones had risen to the surface; and to all outward appearance the language was completely changed. It was this natural law reigning supreme in uncivilized communities that had formed the essential cause which tended to create a great multiplicity of languages. It was the very same law that had, in olden times, led to the transformation of Tamil into Telugu, Canarese, Malayalam, Tulu, Brahui and other cognate tongues. The more the uncivilized portions of the Tamils moved onward farther and farther away towards the north, leaving behind in the south their civilized brethren each portion settling down into a small community in a small tract of land that was suitable for its living and each separating from the other by distance and difficulties of communication, the more was the original form of their speech neglected and left to undergo considerable change in course of time. And as if to complete the change and to mark them off as languages distinct from Tamil, the Aryans came into India and imposed on them their language manners, customs and religious beliefs. As these Tamils who marched to the north had been less civilized than those whom they left in the south, they readily yielded to the influence exerted by the cunning Aryans priests and have continued to remain in its grip ever since. Why Telugu, Canarese and Malayalam are loaded with such a large number of Sanscrit words, phrases, and myths that there is scarcely to be found in them a single literary composition which is entirely

free from them, cannot be explained on any other ground than that which is furnished by the above mentioned facts. But not so is the old Tamil literature; it is rich in grammar and rhetoric, rich in lyrics, idylls, epics and didactics, rich in exquisite poetic prose, and commentaries - all produced quite independently of any foreign influence. It was this high degree of culture, to which the ancient Tamilians had attained, that saved their language from death and decay. Prof. A.H. Sayce has truly observed: "The natural condition of language is diversity and change, and it is only under the artificial influences of civilisation and culture that a language becomes uniform and stationary. Destroy literature and facility of intercommunication and the languages of England and America would soon be as different as those of France and Italy.

Besides civilisation, the very nature of the sounds of which the Tamil words are composed, helps the people to pronounce them with least effort, and thus prevents Tamil from being corrupted into dialects. In Tamil no consonant can come at the beginning of a word without combining with a vowel; nor can any of the hard consonants k, ch, t, p and r, stand singly either in the middle or at the end of a word; while the sibilants and the aspirate s, sh, c, h are totally absent from it. For instance, the word 'chrome' cannot be pronounced in Tamil as it is; in accordance with its strict phonetic law it should be pronounced as 'kurome' by adding a vowel 'u' to the first letter which is hard consonant. This is exactly the way in which all children, I have observed, pronounce such words not according to English fashion but according to Tamil. Similarly in the middle of the word 'irksome', the sounds 'r' and 'k' and 'k' and 's' do not coalesce easily with one another, unless it is changed into 'irikkusome' according to the Tamil phonetic law by which the act of pronouncing it is rendered easier for all including children. In the same way, the word 'nut' must be pronounced 'nuttu' in Tamil; the reason is simply this: the

breath started by one's exertion to utter it does not stop abruptly at the letter 't' but runs a little onward and ends in a vowel sound 'u'. It is this and such other phonetic laws tending to an effortless utterance of words that has preserved Tamil in all its youthful glory all through the indefinite period of its life. Even the principle of laziness which is actively at work in killing one language and creating many, - these to be killed again to make room for others to be produced anew had not been able to touch Tamil, in as much as its words lend themselves to be pronounced easily by all. It is this flexible quality combined with the influence of a permanent civilisation that has made Tamil survive all the once most cultivated language of the ancient world. Even to-day the language of a purely literary Tamil piece, of course not encumbered with old and antiquated grammatical peculiarities, is not different from that spoken by the peasantry. The Tamil words that are more than seven thousand years old, have not undergone any change in the mouths of the later. The sacred Kural written two thousand years ago is intelligible even now to an illiterate rustic. Does not this indicate the great vitality of Tamil?

It was shown above that the sibilants s, sh, and c and the aspirate h are entirely absent from Tamil. These three hissing sounds and the aspirate not only do waste the breath and energy of the speaker but also produce a jarring and unpleasant sound on the ears of those who hear them. That is why all great English poets as Milton, Wordsworth, Shelley, Tennyson and others studiously eschew from their poems the use of words having hissing sounds, lest such words should mar the melody of their songs. In pointing out this characteristic beauty in Tennyson, the modern critic Mr. Greening Lamborn says, "He knew, for example, that the excess of sibilants in English is a source of hissing, and he carefully went through his work to rid it of this element - he called it "kicking the geese out of the boat." So the remarkable absence of all hard hissing and

unnatural sounds from Tamil constitutes it a melodious, poetic language in its very build. Discerning this marked excellence of Tamil, the ancients kept Tamil absolutely pure and were very careful in preventing the entry of extraneous elements into it, as almost all the foreign languages including Sanskrit are made up of harsh and hissing sounds. This wariness on the part of the Tamils, this habit or resisting unwelcome foreign influence is so persistent in them that, though what was a desirable and progressive element once has now become an undesirable and unprogressive one, it yet constitutes an important factor in keeping Tamil still alive and pure among the greater portion of their community.

But recently certain Tamil scholars who have come under the influence of brahmins express it as their opinion, may even as their conviction, that a large introduction of Sanskrit words and phrases together with a number of English words and others, would enrich Tamil and keep it abreast of the needs of modern times. Indeed this suggestion must be quite welcome to all well-wishers of Tamil, if it would really enrich it. But, infact, the intrusion of foreign words instead of enriching Tamil, impoverishes it by making its own words fall into disuse one after another, in proportion to the former gain in currency. Even such pure household Tamil words as nilam, neer, neruppu, Katru, Vanam, unavu, oil, pahal, nila, iravu, talai, mooku, adi, an, erudu, enam, payan, eruchhal, aram, vinai, uyir, mahan, mahal, kadavul, niniaivu, nool, seyyul and many more which respectively mean in English earth, water, fire, air, sky, food, light, sun, moon, night, head, nose, foot, cow, bull, vessel, use, anger, virtue, action, soul, son, daughter, God, memory, treatise, stanza etc., are slowly disappearing from the speech of the high caste people, before the Sanscrit words bhumi, jalam, agni, vayu, akka, anna, prakasa, surya, chandra, ratri, ciras, nasika, padam, pacu, rishaba, patram, prayojanam, kopa, dharma, karms, jiva, putra, putri, Iswara, jnapaaka, sastram,

kavita etc, which are usurping their place by the persistent use that is being made of them by brahmins and others who follow in their footsteps. Except amongst the rural population, in all the so-called high caste communities Tamil is giving place to a medley of speeches in which English and Sanscrit words mix up freely with Tamil. One might have observed when travelling in a railway carriage, how in a company of brahmins and other of their ilk, one man starts a conversation in which others also take part by introducing a subject in a few corrupt Tamil words, and another continues it immediately with a few more English words and short sentences, a little after both returning to Tamil, and using long and high sounding Sanscrit words, now jesting in Hindusthani, now taking flippantly on some political matters and so on, until the whole company disperses. However serious the observer may be the careless, indifferent, and promiscuous use of several languages in Tamil, cannot but excite in him laughter and indignation together. Yet there are some who would warmly advocate the adoption in Tamil composition of such a chaotic handling of heterogeneous elements!

Can the real cultivation of mind be achieved in this slipshod fashion? No, it can result only from restraining one's thoughts from wandering loosely and aimlessly from one thing to another. Thought and expression being most intimately related to each other, the process of strengthening, clarifying, and improving one's thought can be accomplished in no other way than that of concentrating one's attention on the proper, most accurate, and pleasing manner of using one's own speech.

Because, the language, one has inherited through his mother, treasures up thoughts and sentiments which have been maturing for centuries in the minds of his forefathers, and which, from the time when he was in the cradle to that when he will be laid in the grave, penetrate into his being and mould it according to their laws. However great, subtle, and profound

may be one's knowledge of a foreign language, he cannot rid himself of the habits of thought that were deeply ingrained in his mind by his mother tongue. It will therefore, be utterly impossible for any man to neglect the study of his own language and exchange it for another, without losing the essential nature, strength and simplicity of his mind. As a matter of course, the growth of one's understanding must come from within and not from without and all that the external elements can do assist the internal growth but not to create it there. Like the coconut palm that can thrive well only in Indian soil, a man's intellect also can develop well only by the study of his own language. He who learns a foreign speech neglecting his own, faces an element that hampers his mind's growth at every turn. But another who acquires a sufficient knowledge of his mother tongue first, and then devotes himself to a study of the foreign one, increases his discriminative faculty by noting the points of similarity and dissimilarity between the two. Further, one can attain proficiency in his mother tongue with less trouble and in a fewer number of years than the trouble and time he takes to master a foreign language.

Now, the cultivation of one's mother tongue itself, as just pointed out, should not be carried on in the slovenly manner in which it is done by the brahmins and their followers. Defiling one's speech by mixing up with it extraneous elements simply indicates laxity of discipline, looseness of character and lack of serious purpose in life. Acquisition of knowledge should be pursued not for the sake of money but for the sake of knowledge itself, since the possession of knowledge means the priceless enlightenment of one's own understanding. What can be more profitable to man than to obtain the light of knowledge? Riches and other earthly possessions that come to him who is learned, do not last long nor do they give as permanent a satisfaction of mind as his knowledge

of great things does. A careful, judicious and fastidious handling of one's own language not only increases the power of his understanding that arises from his gaining an insight into the native harmony of sound and sense but it also affords an ever-lasting pleasure which results from the vigilance and concentrated attention that spring up in keeping it chaste. The development of moral and intellectual elements of human mind being thus based on the aesthetic, the patriotic, and the self-restraining sense which scholars bring to bear upon the use to which they put their own speech, I need scarcely impress upon the mind of my Tamil brethren the importance of keeping Tamil pure and improving its culture in our own independent line. Scholars aiming at a refined culture must, like all great poets and prose-writers, keep themselves away from the touch of slang and vulgarity.

Here may step in some brahmins who, ever watching for an opportunity to cry down Tamil, put forth the worn-out argument that the Tamil is not as sufficiently rich as to express without the help of Sanscrit all the ramifications of modern thought brought into existence by English, and that even when English loathes not to adopt as many words as it needs, from various languages all over the world, it is against the principle of expediency of contest for keeping Tamil pure and intact. But it is most unreasonable to bring in the case of English in an argument that vitally affects Tamil, without taking into account the conditions under which English developed. The races that speak English reached a civilized stage only very lately, that is only within the last three or four centuries at most. Before that time they were less civilized and consequently the language they spoke was in a continuous state of flux. Just compare the language of caedmon, of Langland of chaucer, of shakespeare, of Milton, and of Tennyson, one with the other, and see to what great an extent the language of one poet differs from that of another. At the time of Shakespeare the English language rose to such a height of change that one who is familiar only with it, is rendered unable to understand the same as was used in its

preceding stages. The history of England tells us in what great disorder the condition of its people had been through what horrible, destructive, and sanfuinary conflicts and combats they had passed, as wave after wave the invasions of not one but different races came from Europe, and after what an immoderate degree of commotion and boiling they attained to a settled order of social and political life. All the troubles they underwent are reflected, as in a mirror, in the change and transformation which the English language went through. But no such troubles on so extensive a scale came to the ancient Tamils, as far as we can glean information on the point from their old literary works. No doubts is it true that every human community should have originally passed through such troubles in greater or less degree according to the conditions of their habitation rendered them so; and yet as we come to study the life of the ancient Tamils from their most ancient literary work- I mean the Tholkappiyam, the age of which on the best internal evidence goes back to 1500 B.C., we see them already settled into highly civilized community for the most part peaceful, but for a few infrequent feuds between one Tamil king and another. It is to this continuity of a peaceful and highly civilized life enjoyed by the Tamils that we owe the existence of the Tamil language still in its pristine purity, vigour, and glory. To shape their life into a symmetrical from the English had to depend largely on the help of other nations and so they did not lag behind to take words from whichever language they could lay their hands on. But the Tamils never depended likewise upon others. It is, therefore, absurd to draw a parallel between the two languages: English and Tamil, and seek by which means to harm the later.

Even now when the borrrwing of foreign words on the part of English has gone out of all proportion, there are not wanting freat English scholars who, inspired with a pure, fine literary sense, recommend, may even against on the cultivation of a chaste Anglo-

Saxon English style. Professor Freeman in introducing the new edition of his Essays says: "In almost every page I have found it easy to put some plain English word, about whose meaning there can be no doubt instead of those needless French and Latin words which are thought to add dignity to style, but which in truth only add vagueness. I am in no way ashamed to find that I can write purer and clearer English now than I did fourteen or fifteen years back: and I think it well to mention the fact for the encouragement of younger writers." When in this commendable patriotic spirit even great English scholars justly advise us to write chaste English, poor though the English language is, how absurd and unpatriotic it is to plead for introducing Sanscrit and other foreign words into Tamil which is in fact not only rich in words and in noble literature but is also the only ancient language that is still alive.

Now, there cannot be a greater and more evasive or ignorant or untrue statement than to say that Tamil is poor, that its words are inadequate to express the various minute shades of meanings, thoughts, and ideas with which many English words are pregnant. Such a false statement can come either from those who are utterly ignorant of old Tamil literature or from those who are deliberately intent upon concealing the truth and saying what is false for the purpose of killing Tamil wantonly. A cursory glance into the Sacred kural which deals with all kinds of high topics in a masterly manner, or into any other Tamil work of the early centuries of the Christian era, will suffice to show clearly the richness of the Tamil language. Although numerous Tamil words have fallen into disuse in the so-called higher circles, whose number is very small, yet among the masses almost all of them are in constant use and the language is quite pure still. A man who has received his education mainly in English and who can talk only in a strange colloquial Tamil mixed with English and Sanscrit, can hardly make himself understood by the people who speak only in pure Tamil. The kind of education that is now imparted to students simply serve to widen the gulf that already lies between the masses

and the learned. I have seen many a man educated in English struggling for Tamil words to express his ideas to the people whom he was called on to address. This is not due to any defect in Tamil but it is due to his own imperfect acquaintance with it. Only such persons do readily join the brahmin in condemning Tamil, just as the fox in the fable did the grapes. But as regards the richness of Tamil and of its fitness to express all manner of new thoughts and ideas, even so scathing a critic as the late Mr. M. Srinivas Aiyangar, who in a clean sweep styled the ancient Tamils liars and immoral people, did not however hesitate to speak out the truth, although in this respect he went out of his way. He says: "It (Tamil) can exist without the least help from foreign languages, as it had and even now has, sufficient elementary words of native origin, out of which compounds can, with a little attention to phonetic principles, be formed to express modern thoughts and ideas." Much more emphatically was this truth affirmed by Dr. Caldwell than whom there never was a greater, a more profound scholar who devoted himself to a deep, careful and patient study of the Dravidian languages and their affinities. "It is true," he says, "It would now be difficult for the Telugu to dispense with its Sanscrit: more so for the Canarese; and most of all for the Malayalam: - those languages having borrowed from the Sanscrit so largely, and being so habituated to look up to it for help, that it would be scarcely possible for them now to assert their independence. The Tamil, however the most highly cultivated ab intra of all Dravidian idioms can dispense with its Sanscrit altogether, if need be, and not only stand alone but flourish without its aid" "The Tamil can readily dispense with the greater part or the whole of its Sanscrit, and by dispensing with it rises to a purer and more refined style; whereas the English cannot abandon its Latin without abandoning perspicuity. Such is the poverty of the Anglo-Saxon that it has no synonyms of its own for many of the words which it has borrowed from the Latin; so that if it were obliged to dispense with them, it would, in most cases, be under the necessity of using a very

awkward periphrasis instead of a single word. The Tamil, on the other hand, is peculiarly rich in synonyms; and from choice and the fashion of the age, that it makes use of Sanscrit” (Italics are mine). This impartial and candid, comprehensive yet discriminating, view of the Tamilian languages and their relative merit put forth long ago by a great European savant, ought to open - if it had not already opened the eyes of the misled Tamils to see the youthful glory, richness, and virility of their mother tongue and advance its culture on quite independent lines in accordance with its innate laws and phonetic principles. Although a like dependent culture may seem impossible in the case of other Tamilian languages as Telugu, Canarese and Malayalam, it is not really so hopeless as it seems at first sight. With a resolute will the scholars in those languages should set themselves to the task of eliminating from them all Sanscrit elements and putting in their stead pure Tamil ones which are in fact their pith and marrow.

The Tamil, the Telugu, the Canarese, and the Malayalam people and other Dravidians living in the remotest parts of India, being the descendants of a single highly civilized ancestral race related to each other by the closest ties of blood and speech, should one more knit themselves together by eschewing the company of the Aryan intruder who harbours no good will towards them and should work harmoniously for promoting the common welfare of their several communities that live scattered all over India. By this I do not mean that we must hate the Aryans and their converts; on the other hand, I wish they must be let alone to work in their own way for their own well-being. And it may not be against our policy, to lend even our help and support to them, provided that course of action does not affect the welfare of our own people. All that I mean here is that the Tamilians who form the major portion of the Indian population should not be allowed still to be under the baneful influence of a handful of the Aryan people and suffer

indefinitely for the sake of ministering slavishly to their wants, vices, caprices and indulgences. Until he treats the path of righteousness, until he learns to treat others with a kind and human heart, until he realizes the great benefit of living on a footing of equality with others and represses the feelings of selfishness, vanity, pride and greediness, the company of an Aryan should be studiously avoided but not be hated. We must even pity him and pray to God that he might turn to the path of light, love and right understanding.

The Sacred Order of Love,  
Pallavaram,  
24th July, 1925.

**VEDACHALAM**

## சிறுவர்க்கான செந்தமிழ்

### PREFACE

*“Tamil can readily dispense with the greater part or whole of Sanscrit, and by dispensing with it rises to a purer and more refined style, where as English cannot abandon its Latin without abandoning perspicuity.” -Dr. Caldwell in his “Comparative Grammar of the Dravidian Languages,” 3rd edition, P.47.*

This great truth discriminatively perceived and impartially proclaimed by Dr. Caldwell the greatest Dravidian philologist, concerning the richness of the Tamil language and the poverty of the other, it is regrettable even Tamil scholars of the land have not sufficiently recognised. How rich, pure and elegant in words and phrases the ancient Tamil literature had been, how simple, yet how lovely, original, edifying and true to nature had the conceptions of its poets and prose writers shone, but to what a poor, mixed, inelegant and low style has the language of its modern literature fallen, and to what an artificial, ugly, slavish, corrupted and false mode of strain the thoughts and ideas of its authors are fettered, a slight comparison of the two literatures will easily disclose. As has been truly observed by J.A. Symonds, “The genius of a language is the genius of the race which made it.” This significant fact as applying to Tamil cannot be expressed so well as in the notable works of Dr. Gilbert Slater who writes thus: “The very character of the Tamil language, the perfection with which it has been developed into an organ for precise and subtle thought, combined with the fact that it represents a much

earlier stage in the evolution of inflexional language than any Indo-Germanic tongue, suggests, though of course it does not prove, the priority of the Dravidians in attaining settled order and regular government.” (The Dravidian Element in Indian Culture, p 70) Though Dr. Slater, in claiming “a greater antiquity for Dravidian than for Aryan civilisation”, only suggests, from a correct understanding of the perfect structure of Tamil, the fact that the Tamilians had attained to a settled order of society and government long before the Aryan people settled into order yet an attentive study of the very ancient Tamil work the Tholkappiam and such old Tamil classics as the Pathuppattu, the Purananuru and others will afford proofs indisputable for substantiating what the learned doctor has hinted above.

As the primary function of language is to facilitate the communication of ideas among a people by means of sounds commonly recognised by them, as the growth of civilisation among them can increase only in proportion as they imbibe the thoughts and ideas of their own intelligent men and make them the guiding principle of life, and as this intermingling of thoughts and ideas cannot take place but through their own recognised, connected, significant sounds called their mother tongue, it had become absolutely necessary for them to preserve their language from constant change and decay and make its usage pure and stable. It is only in the midst of peoples who thus advance in civilisation that the necessity of keeping their tongue pure, undefiled and fixed is deeply felt. Others who take no effort at all to better their condition but are content with the mere satisfaction of their animal appetites, care so little to stamp the usage of their speech that in a round of ten or twenty years a new language comes to life among them and in another round it dies away. After quoting many instances to show how languages, like mushrooms, rise and perish rapidly among savages, the great and distinguished linguist Prof. Max Muller says: “We

read of missionaries in Central America who attempted to write down the language of savage tribes, and who compiled with great care a dictionary of all the words they could lay hold of. Returning to the same tribe after the lapse of only ten years, they found that this dictionary had become antiquated and useless. Old words had sunk to the ground and new ones had arisen to the surface; an to all outward appearance the language was completely changed.” (The science of Language, 1899, Vol. I. p66) It must be obvious then how important it is for a civilized people to keep their language intact and maintain its purity to an utmost extent. Still, however civilized a people may be, all the persons who compose it cannot exert themselves to keep their language pure and fixed since laziness in an inborn principle in many which renders them indifferent to a correct pronunciation of words and sentences. And is close association with this principle of laziness which inwardly undermines the structure and stability of a language, another equally baneful, springing from the desire for imitation, comes rather outwardly from the contact of two peoples speaking or using two different languages, and induces them to import the words and phrases of the one into the other. Unless the mischief played by these two evil principles is checked strongly and in time, a language cannot live long but will quickly pass away and with it all scope for culture and civilisation will also pass away.

Now where can we look for a potent power to come from and check the operation of the two evils but from the small but active and intelligent section of a people which forms the centre radiating knowledge and civilisation al around. If a people could be so fortunate, like the Tamilians or the Egyptians, as to possess early among them an intelligent class who, by creating a literature and committing it to writing, made a persistent effort to check the decay of their language and the promiscuous mixture of foreign elements in it, their language, theirs alone, would acquire a vitality that would keep it

permanently living, But for the creation and existence of a large and rich literature possessing a many-sided interest for its people, it would not have been possible to arrest the change and decay of a language. Prof. Sayce pertinently well observes: “Destroy literature and facility of intercommunication, and the languages of England and America would soon be as different as those of France and Italy” (The science of Language 1900, Vol p 210).

When one grasps the importance of this circumstance which controls the fate and destiny of a language it would become clear to his or her mind why Tamil has lived so long and still continues to live in all its youthful vigour, even after such cultured languages of high antiquity as the Egyptian, the Accadian, the Assyrian, the Hebrew, the Aryan and so on have ceased to exist. So far as we can compute on historical grounds, it is for more than ten thousand years that the Tamil language is being spoken and written. And to invigorate its constitution in addition to its innate vitality it possesses a vast, varied, original, useful and highly interesting literature produced from 5000 B.C. up to the present times. The great and momentous fact must be borne in mind that, of the few cultivated languages of the ancient world, Tamil alone, as I just pointed out, is still living in all its richness and youthful vigour, all others of the modern world being only five or six hundred years old and even among these, except some European languages, few own original literatures as pure Tamil.

To many it might look a surprising circumstances that Tamil should outlive all other ancient languages, that it should still display so much virility as argues for its perennial existence. But the secret is not far to seek, although it has eluded the notice of even erudite scholars. The words, phrases and sentences of Tamil require but little effort on the part of the speaker

to utter them properly. The sounds of each letter and word issue forth from the throat and mouth normally and naturally, giving no trouble whatever to the speaker. That all its twelve vowels and eighteen consonants constitute the only natural and normal sounds that could come out from the human voice with the least effort, can be shown clearly by inquiring into the phonetic and physiological laws that lie at their basis; but in a short preface like this it is not possible to enter into that profitable study. We have already shown that laziness in pronunciation forms one of the main factors that lead to the constant change, decay and death of languages. But in the case of Tamil, however lazy a man might be, he cannot pronounce its words so badly as to efface their identity altogether. On the other hand, the words themselves, without requiring much effort, flow out from him like the rhythm of a sweet tune issuing forth from the strings of a harp touched by summer breeze. For the Tamil language does not possess such hard consonants, hissing sounds and aspirates as are possessed by Sanscrit, Hebrew and other cognate languages. It is this distinct mellifluous character of its sounds that has preserved and still preserves Tamil from any disastrous change and decay. To this day even the illiterate Tamil peasants understand the classical poetic language of the Thirukkural that was composed at the beginning of the Christian era. When I had been at Jaffna during my lecturing tour, I was struck with wonder when I heard from the lips of its people many pure Tamil words used in ancient Tamil classics, but which have fallen into disuse in Madras and suburban cities. Even big cities like Madras where all sorts of people speaking all sorts of languages mix and mingle together, all those who speak Tamil speak it purely whether they be the born Tamils or others who have adopted it merely for social intercourse or business purposes. In the colloquial Tamil scarcely one percent of either Sanscrit or other foreign words mixes.

But the mischief that affects it badly comes mainly from the circle of English-knowing brahmin and non-brahmin officials, who speak neither pure Tamil nor pure English, but mix the two together so badly and ridiculously that neither a Tamilian nor an Englishman understands their language but turns aside with disgust. Besides introducing into their spoken and written Tamil many an English word and phrase, nay even whole sentences, the brahmins and their followers import into it Sanscrit and Hindustani terms also. This “constant degradation of language” in the words of Pater, “by those who use it carelessly,” at present affects Tamil so wholly by the slipshod fashion in which it is handled by the so called educated people. Whether you speak English, or whether you speak Tamil or any other language, you must learn to use it in such a way as to make your ideas quite intelligible to the people who are born and bred in that language. The standard by which one ought to measure the nature and use of a language must be the extent of its usage among the largest portion of its people in the daily intercourse of their life. As the educated section forms a very small minority of almost all the people in the world, especially in this country not only is it an inconsiderable part, but it also concerns itself less about the welfare of the masses than its own, the present fashionable mode of their easy talk cannot, with any propriety, be taken as the standard for using a language like Tamil which has been cultivated for more than fifty centuries and is spoken still by more than twentyone millions in Southern India and Ceylon alone. As days advance with the spread of English education, the gulf between the educated and the uneducated Tamils also widens, their being little understanding between them and little sympathy with each other. The root-cause of this may, by all careful observers, be traced to the inadequate instruction imparted in Tamil to students reading from the High School to College classes.

The object of the following treatise therefore is to remedy this defect at first by feeding properly the acquisition of the knowledge of Tamil at its very root, and secondly by acquainting the young mind not only with a knowledge of actual facts but also with practical moral maxims clothed, of course, in the attractive allegorical form called the fable.

To attain my first object the whole work is written in pure but simple Tamil, only here and there so interspersed with the words and phrases taken from the classical Tamil literature, as to make their meaning easily understood by their context and help the students in this way early to store in their memory a considerable number of fine and beautiful words and expressions they will frequently meet with in their later course of higher Tamil studies. Although I have in this prose work scrupulously avoided quoting any poetic, yet the synonyms given at the opening of each original essay and the classical terms and expression used here and there, will, I hope, greatly contribute to a sound knowledge of Tamil, of its structure and peculiarities, and aid the student to understand any poetical composition also to some extent. The manner of writing employed in this book, besides increasing the student's knowledge of Tamil, will also enrich his Tamil vocabulary and serve him in good stead to communicate easily to his countrymen the ideas he has imbibed from the various branches of English learning.

My second object is to strike out a new path in the treatment of subjects, keeping in view the wide and amazing extension of knowledge achieved by the European nation, whole still clinging to some extent to the ancient mode of classifying subjects as laid down in the great Tamil grammar and rhetoric the Tholkappiam. Almost all the Tamil texts now in use never deviate from the beaten track of repeating the mythical stories of the Ramayana and the Mahabharata, as if the incidents related in them had been actual historical occurrences and of

omitting for the most part real daring adventures and soul-inspiring deeds of the heroes who actually existed in countries other than India. By this blind belief and persistent treatment of worn - out myths , by this wanton neglect doggedly maintained towards the actual greatness of the heroes of other countries, these Tamil texts, at the very time of its genial growth, blunt the historic sense of the pupils and breed in its stead an undesirable credulity which never leaves them even after years of their excellent culture in English. I have, therefore, completely left out all kinds of Indian myths in this books and brought in mainly actual historical incidents and a few supernatural events related in the reliable works in English.

In rooting up blind belief and credulity from the mind of the young pupils, it is not my desire that they should be taught to disbelieve completely all occurrences of a wonderful and supernatural character. On the other hand, it is my earnest wish that they should be instructed so as to acquaint themselves early not only with what occur ordinarily within nature and human nature but also with those that occur rarely at fitful intervals within, near and beyond them, provided they belong to the class of cases proved by careful, intelligent and disinterested witnesses. Here too the students must be on their guard, lest they should fall into the error of extending their belief from one proved supernatural and superhuman case to many an unproved one. This careful cultivation of mind, while it is plastic, will tend to make it susceptible of receiving into it only those ideas that are true, real and wholesome, and free from deceptions and will conduct it ultimately to and region where truth alone shine. For, greater than truth there is nothing to be attained by the human soul.

Finally, it is my sacred duty to emphasize the importance of diligently cultivating a pure Tamil style both in speaking and writing, for that alone could urge the student to stretch his vision over the vast domain of the very valuable old Tamil literature in

search of new words and expressions which lie abundantly there and which will readily serve him to express his precious new ideas in Tamil without seeking the aid of any foreign tongue. The more one exercises his mind in expressing himself clearly in his own mother tongue, the more will his powers of concentration and expression increase, and the better can he serve his country, language and religion. Further, that each and every word of pure Tamil bears on its face the mark of elegant use to which it was put for more than six thousand years by the very intelligent and highly civilized forefathers of the Tamil people, that these words, instead of becoming worn out and unfit for further use like the words of the dead languages, have, on the contrary, gained immense vitality and fresh life as times went on, every patriotic son of Tamil must impress on his mind indelibly. No filial son of Tamil can discard this priceless heritage of his own and go seeking after the aid of others that belong to those who bear no good will towards him, without degrading himself into beggary and bringing contempt on his great forefathers and on the great language they used and cherished with so much love. Dear sons of Tamil, awake from this negligent torpor, serve your mother with filial piety and sincere heart, and reinstate her once pure and undimmed glory!

Pallavaram,  
25th March, 1934

**Vedachalam**

## கடவுள் நீலைக்கு மாறான கொள்கைகள்

### ENGLISH PREFACE

The religious and philosophical matter that appears in the following pages form the substance of my presidential speech delivered on the 15th October, 1927, at the 42nd annual meeting of the Saiva Siddhanta Sabha at Trichi Rock Fort. What was briefly treated in the course of the delivery is now expanded into its full final form; and to a few Puranic legends then quoted to illustrate the degenerated notions about God and religion, some more are now added to make the treatment of the subject complete within its bounds. The object of this little book is to disclose the vast difference that lies between the ancient form of Saiva religion and its modern form.

In very ancient times the theoretical side of Saivism had been purely philosophical. while its practical side/ which consisted in bringing into an intimate relation of love the human and the Divine selves, tended to a worship of luminous bodies such as the Sun and the Moon and also fire which constitutes the essence of all bright objects. God was conceived to be a subtle spiritual light which manifests itself in the chief physical luminary the Sun, so that all rites, religious observances, and original myths in Saivism clung around this resplendent body. For us who have come to think of the appearances of the sun and the moon as so many natural occurrences that uniformly take place in the realm of dead matter, they have lost their high purpose and significance. But to our ancestors who lived in close relationship with Nature, they had been a great wonder,

and to their then more clear, vivid, quick and penetrating intuitive sense they revealed the gracious presence of a loving heavenly Father. What they perceived by means of their intuition, and what they loved so ardently in the manifestation of light, had not been a mere figment of their imagination, but a reality informed with infinite love and intelligence and capable of readily responding to the prayers of a fervent heart. It is this love, this intelligence in the Supreme Being which is otherwise transcendental and incomprehensible to the finite understanding of the human selves, that impels it to manifest itself to those who are pious and devoted.

Fortunately for us we are in possession of rare internalevidences in the heart-melting hymns sung by St. Manickavachakar and other Saivite Saints in glory of Lord Siva, sufficient to convince us of the reality of God's sudden manifestation to them in tangible form. From the reference made by them in several of their hymns, we are in a position to study the essential nature of the personality of God and how it blesses the few fit, pious, sincere souls. Except the inspired utterances of such exceptionally pure and favoured saints of Saivism, others can give us no clue to a clear, and definite conception of God's personality. So far as my knowledge of other religious saints is concerned, I dare say that I could get not even a single glimpse from their hymns and sayings (whose genuineness though I do not call in question as modern critics and commentators do) with reference to the vision of God they had, if they had any, and the nature and description of the personality they had thus seen. But in the case of the Saiva Saints as St. Manickavachakar and St. Thirujnanas ambandha, we are extremely glad to say that we are left in no uncertainty either with regard to their authorship of their sacred hymns or with regard to the vision of God they had and the definitely clear description they give of the Heavenly Father and Mother that had come to them. When we enter the region of the sacred Saiva literature, we find ourselves to our great wonder

and pleasure that we are on the safe, solid ground of genuine historical facts. From our most ancient sage Tholkappiar whose age goes back to 3500 B.C. to St, Thiruvalluvar and the founders and teachers of Saiva religion, all have left behind them their valuable literary and religious works which embody their thoughts on arts, ethics, psychology, philosophy and religion.

Although the Aryan, Buddhist and Jain immigrants came and settled in the Tamil country as early as the 1st century of the Christian era, their influence could not touch even the fringe of the Tamilian mind, So strongly did the mind of the cultured Tamil people cling to the realities of life and existence, that the Aryan rites and myths, and the Buddhist and Jain nihilism could find no entrance into it, great as had been their efforts to achieve it. But the modern Mayavada Vedanta and Vaishnavism which came to spread here after the 8th century A.D., achieved what their predecessors could not achieve, simply by fabricating fictitious, obscene, and licentious Puranic stories and thus catching the fancy of the Tamil people. This influx of the Aryan falsehood into Tamil led to the formation of a class of literature which is notorious for the most degraded type of Puranic religion Saiva, Sakta and Vaishnava. To the best of my ability I have endeavoured in the following treatise to sift this mongrel mixture and disentangle the golden truths of Saiva religion from the empty falsehoods of other novel religions. The task is no easier one and it cannot further be appreciated even by the Saivites whose mind is dyed deep in the Aryan myths. Still I have candidly executed it in the interest of the ancient, and genuine. Tamilian thought, and am emboldened in its execution by the prospect of a rising generation devoted solely to the cause of truth. May the glory of Lord Siva the almighty God of the universe shine for ever!

The Sacred Order of Love  
Pallavaram,  
12th May, 1929.

**VEDACHALAM**

## மாணிக்க வாசகர் வரலாறும் காலமும்

### PREFACE

The Tamil Work on :’st. manckavachakar:.’s life and Times:’ which appewars in th following pages/ is the fruit of six years:’ arduous labour almost unremitting except on a few occasions when it had to be laid aside for a short period of a month and a half each time/ in order to make room for the preparation of smaller works that demanded my exclusive attention on such occasions. The work war begun on the 16th of August/ 1992 and completed only on the 5th of September/ 1928.

During this lonf interval/ the first call came to me from the Secretary of the All - india Oriental Conference for the contribution of a paper in English on the system of Saiva Siddhanta/ to be read at its sittings that were to commence then in madras on the 23re if Decenber. 1924. In Response to the call, I prepared a paper in English on :’The Conception of God as Rudra:’ but at the end of a month and a half when the work had progressed to three - fourths of the whole/ the secretary pressed me for the paper. I, therefore, sent a copy of it so far writtern and after the emergency was over, left it incomplete and returned to this my Tamil work/ for its subject - matter was ever present in my mind and interested me more than anything else.

Aga;in in the first quarter of the year 1926, many of my readers and friends repeatedly expressed their wish for a second edition of my treatish on :’caste and its Evil:.’ which was long out of print. And in compliance with their wish I had to leave the present work foa time and direct my attention to rewriting

the book on :‘caste and its Evil:’. To keep it abreast of the times, much new and additional matter was introduced into it/ and the book grew four times in size of its first edition and appeared in June, 1926, in its full and final form.

Again/ from the time my Tamil work on :‘Personal magnetism:’ began to appear part by part in my magazine :‘Unansagaram:’, demands for it in a complete book - form increased so much that towards the end of 1926. I found it no longer possible to delay its publication. and so, I took up that useful work/ completed and published it in book - form in February/ 1927.

In the middle of 1923/ a hot controversy was opened in the Tamil papers on the subject whether the Velala people should be included in the Vaisya/ the mercantile caste or in the Sudra/ the slave caste of the Aryan classification. I was called upon to decide this moot point/ and consequently a critical and historical study of that interesting question was made on the basis of facts gathered from Tamil and Sanskrit Literatures. I traced the origin and growth/ the rank and station of the velala community and the results were published in a book-form in Nov., 1923. The copies of the first edition having sold off in three years and half, the second edition was called for early in 1927, and was, with a few more additions, published in July, 1927.

Besides these interruptions caused by literary works/ many a public function, which I was called upon to perform, delayed the present work still more, Every now and then I had to go to Perur, Thanjavur, Tiruchi, Madras and Thiruppathirippuliyoor for presiding over the grand annual celebrations and Thiruppathirippuliyoor for presiding over the grand annual celebrations of Tamil Sangams and Saiva Siddhanta Societies that were held in those places.

In the midst of Such varied activities/ I was also for a time striving my utmost to print my English lecture on : 'Saiva Siddhanta as a philosophy of practical knowledge::', but the printing of it could not be finished as yet/ since some of its parts require expansion which I can do only after my present literary works leave my hands.

With all these troubles/ difficulties and frequent interruptions/ it gives me no small pleasure to think that was enable by the grace of Lord Siva tio complete this most important work of mine after so long a time.

This work comprises two parts. The first part treats of the life of St. Manickavachakar and the second of the times in which he lived. The method pursued in dealing with the two subjects would seem to be quite novel to the present day Tamilians who, having, for the last four or five centuries, come under the influence of the Aryan priesthoond, have lost their independent and rational way of thinking and have become slaves to the Aryan laws, customs and manners. They not remain hopelessly unprogressive and inimical to all kinds of salutary reforms. Their observances of rites, of religious practices and social cusotms are formal and inflexible, for they care little to understand the significance of what they so strictly but unwittingly observe. This slavishness, this petrified conservatism has so thickened the gloom of their ignorance as to render them thoroughly impervious to the ray of light coming from the critical and historical spirit of the modern culture. Even the few who have acquired an extensive knowledge of Tamil grammar and modern Tamil literature, are unable to recognize the great value and importance of the critical and historical methods of inquiry, for a clear comprehension of the subject they have taken to study. This is due partly to their want of acquaintance with the pure subject matter of the ancient Tamil classics which depict nature and human nature as they truly appear, and partly also to their indiscriminate understanding of the later

Puranic literature which contains nothing but exaggerated and distorted accounts of nations conflicts as well as the mythical and legendary histories of gods and goddesses. These Puranic stories being quite foreign to the Tamil genius which keeps itself strictly close to nature, are either things imported into Tamil from Sanskrit narratives. In this state of our Pandits' knowledge, it is no wonder that my way of treating the history of our St. Manickavachakar should appear novel, new, even strange to their mind.

But it is most gratifying to note that, within the last three decades, from the time I began the publication of my Tamil magazine Jnanasagaram in which for the first time appeared not only my essays on comparative religion, science of language and literary criticism, but also historical studies of ancient authors and Tamil translations of some notable works in Sanskrit and English, a new inquiring spirit has been kindled perceptibly in the minds of educated young men but imperceptibly in the aged Tamil scholars, in a way that it has forcibly opened the eyes of the latter to recognise the merit of this kind of study to an appreciable extent. At the present time there are many here and there who can understand and admire works of this kind, although those who can produce the like of which are still few and far between.

The fact/ however, cannot be denied that, during the past ten or fifteen years, a few books in English and a very few in Tamil purporting to deal with the history of the Tamil language and literature did come out; but it is deplorable that many of them bear no marks of originality nor do they indicate that their authors possessed much first-hand knowledge of the sources from which they pretend to have drawn the materials for their works.

As the only exception to this charge might be cited an earlier English work, called 'The Tamils Eighteen Hundred Years Ago' but it treats of the Tamils that lived before the third century A.D.

and leaves out of account the important period - important from a religious point of view, which intervened between the third and the twelfth century A.D., and which the language, the religion, the literature and the social conditions of the Tamils had undergone a marked change by the introduction of the Buddhist, the Jain, and the Brahmanical religions into this country.

This defect might have been removed by a later English work called 'Tamil studies' in which the treatment of this period though not full, is correct in many respects; but sadly the merit of it has been detracted by the brahmanical bias and haughtiness which drove the author most unjustly to stigmatize the whole Tamil people as liars and extol the whole of brahmins as the only truth-tellers. Further, the author's mind is prepossessed with a strong desire to attribute the civilization of the Tamils solely to the influence of the Aryans that migrated to the south. For a true, impartial, and sympathetic study of an ancient civilized race as the Tamils, I need hardly say that such a biased state of mind is quite unfit. In the body of this work, I have gone fully into a discussion of such malicious views and opinions expressed in 'Tamil Studies' and have exposed their fallacy and shallow reasoning, by drawing parallel pictures of the Tamils' and Aryan's ethical and religious lives. This is done either by quoting my authorities from the literatures of the two languages or by referring to the chapter and verse of the works in which they occur and in this way the contrast that has existed from early times between the moral and religious life of the one race and that of the other is set forth, I believe, as clearly as possible.

From such unjust and uncharitable estimates of a nation's life and gross racial prejudices against a highly civilized race, Dr. Krishnaswamy Iyengar's 'Ancient India,' and 'Some Contributions of South India to Indian Culture' may be regarded as free to a large extent, though not entirely. For, in

these too is visible the tendency to attribute to Aryan influence whatever is excellent in the ancient and modern Tamil classics. Of course, the tendency of the author might have been due either to his brahminical caste-prejudice or simply to inadvertence to take cognizance of the schemes and methods of government and of the social, moral, philosophical and religious ideas that were common in olden times to the ruling powers and thinkers, both in the southern and the northern parts of India. There are clear evidences to prove that almost all the kings who ruled over India in the past, were of the Tamilian stock, whom the Aryan priests had called the kshattriyas. should the same be found also in the Artha Sastra of Kautilya in Sanscrit, one bearing a striking resemblance to the other, an able historian as Dr. Krishnaswamy would not be justified, as he has done in his 'contributions',<sup>1</sup> in concluding from that and that alone that Thiruvalluvar borrowed his knowledge of it from Kautilya. You must show several other coincidences, not one or two stray points of similarities as in the present case, before you forgotten that ancient writers on politics were in a large measure recording in their works not their own ideas with regard to what ought to be the principles of an administrative system and how they have to be carried into execution, but only the ideas they had observed to prevail already among the kings and to guide their ruling operations. Unfortunately this has been overlooked by Dr. Krishnaswamy when, in his eagerness to establish the influence of the Aryan writers over the Tamilian, he had lighted on a passage in the sacred Kural of St. Thiruvalluvar which makes reference to a state-craft, resembling that in the Artha Sastra of Kautilya.

The root-cause of such a misapprehension even on the part of great scholars who have imbibed the ideas of refined western education, lies deep in the high opinion which one forms of himself, and of his caste at the expense of others and

other castes, It is a lamentable fact that, in spite of their extreme reluctance of mingle with the brahmins of the north, the South INdian brahmins identify themselves with the Tamils. Still, there is not a shadow of proof to establish their claim of descent from the Aryans of the north. Probably they imagine that their caste - superiority can be maintained only by keeping themselves entirely aloopf from the people of this country and by claiming Inly Sanscrit as their won language which, being dead and therefor little understood by the people, serves their purpose to make it the language of the celestials and the exclusive repository of revealed scriptures. Further, they repudiate the very idea that any one, not born brahmini even though his mind be imbued with the cultur of Europeanlearningi is scarcely fre fromthis feeling of his caste-suÅrmacy. His mind has becom so saturated with it that it has become part and parcel of his being. He cannot, therefore, brook the thought that anything excellent or original can exist outside the pale of the brahmin caste and brahmin literature. This Extremely self-conceited state of the brahmin mind has so frequently and so prominently shown itself in almost all branches of Sanscrit literature that it ahas not escaped even the admiring eyes of some great oriental scholars. Forced by its undue prominence, they have not disdained to a vow their disapproval of it. To quate one instance: Zenaide Ragozin onserve: “At a later period, the followers of Vasistha and his descendants represent the narrowly orthodox brahmanic school with its petty punctiliousness in the matter of forms, rites, observances, its intolerance of everything un-Aryan, its regid seperatism.”<sup>1</sup> It is no wonder then that Dr. Krishnaswamy should attempt, of course without success, to make the divine sage Thiruvalluvar, the most original of Tamil poets and ethical philosophers and the reputed author of the Sacred Kural, the crestjewel of Tamil Classics, a debtor to Kautilya whose existence prior to the first century A.D., the age of Thiruvalluvar, is still in dispute.<sup>1</sup>

Apart from such flaws - fortunately they are very few, the writing of Dr.Krishnaswamy dealing with the history of Tamil kings and poets, on the whole, a reliable source of valuable information, although the dates assigned by him to be Vaishnava Alvars are incorrect as is shown in the following work of mind.

Coming now to a few Tamil books and magazine articles that have appeared within the last one or two decades, treating of the history of Tamil literature, I find only two books which require special mention here, for in the whole range of the following work, no other views that what were advocated in the two, have had to be taken for a searching criticism and an elaborate discussion, In the course of his perusal, the reader cannot fail to notice the necessity which impels me to meet at every turn the arguments set forth in both the works. Of these two works, one is 'A History of Tamil Literature' by Mr.K.Srinivasa Pillai and the other is 'The life of Seran Senguttavan' by Pandit M.Raghava Iyengar.

The first is replete with errors resulting from guesses and conjectures and from twisted interpretations but by the verses quoted in support of his views. Apart from the matter taken out of the excellent exegetical editions of Tamil Classics brought out by the veteran Tamil scholar Pandit V.Saminatha Iyer and some others, what constitutes the original contributions of the author is, I am very sorry to say, mostly erroneous. Had such matter been presented at least in a style as artistic and as fascinating as that in the historical writings of J.A.Froude, the reader would have been benefited to a degree. Even such a compensating virtue cannot be met with in this 'History of Tamil Literature.' Its Tamil style is impure, commonplace, insipid and ungrammatical, while the matter is mostly incorrect. The subject - matter of my book, being necessarily related to all that is treated in this book, it has become indispensable for me to expose the errors lurking in it and give a true and

connected account of almost all the standard Tamil works that preceded and succeeded the time of St. Manickavachakar. For Manickavachakar lived at a time that stands midway between the classical and mediaeval periods of Tamil literature and one who inquires into the characteristic features of his age and its literary productions cannot do full justice to his subject without comparing them with the nature and conditions of the works that were produced both before and after his time.

Now, the second treatise not only relates the life of the powerful Sera monarch Senguttuvan, but also attempts to fix his age, as well as the ages of the classical epics the Silappadhikaram and the Manimekhalai, of the prose commentary of Nakkirar on the Tamil poetics called Iraiyanar Ahapporul, and of the lyrics composed by the poet Mamoolanar. The biographical portion of the book is admirable in every way, whereas the historical is grounded mainly on bare suppositions, wild conjectures and on wrong interpretations of verse-quotations. If a student who has familiarised himself with the classical Tamil poems and the old exegetical prose writings, would take the trouble to inquire into the conditions of time that called them into being, he cannot but be struck with the author's fruitless endeavour to reduce the antiquity of the above mentioned classics to a comparatively later age. The brahmins, as a whole, hold that there cannot exist in any language, except in their own Sanscrit, any valuable intellectual product that can claim high antiquity. Should any irrefutable facts be forthcoming to prove the contrary, they evince a pronounced tendency to twist their meaning and character so as to render them conformable to their own favourite views and opinions. This tendency of the brahmins to distort the meanings of the original text that contain matter unpalatable to them may best be seen in the commentaries written skillfully by their forefathers on several old works in

antique Sanscrit. In the present instance the same is what we find to be the case with the author of the treatise called 'Seran Senguttuvan.' In the following work I have reviewed one by one all the facts he brought in proof of his views, and have considered them in the light of the indisputable evidence furnished by Tamil and Sanscrit literatures and by epigraphical records, to see whether they lend any support to his theories. The result is that my conclusions have reached a position diametrically opposed to those he arrived at in his treatise 'Seran Senguttuvan', I have placed before the reader all my evidence drawn from a first-hand knowledge of the original sources, with the help of which he can himself test the points of difference between us and can easily distinguish what is true from what is untrue.

Thus the two treatises and several others that had equally claimed my attention in the matter of correctly fixing the time of St. Manickavachakar, have had to be unavoidably subjected to a searching criticism and analysis, simply for the sake of truth.

My first attention to the subject was awakened in this wise: Twenty seven years ago when Dr. G.U. Pope's excellent and scholarly English translation of Thiruvachakam made its appearance, the learned translator's opinion as regards the date of St. Manickavachakar,<sup>1</sup> gave a strong impulse to an investigation of the views held on the subject by Tamil Pandits and by some English scholars who possessed also a knowledge of Tamil. Between the first and the ninth century A.D. did the opinions of these two distinct classes of learned people oscillate for the age of our Saint. At that time I was running the first volume of my Tamil periodical 'Jnanasagaram', and the question of our Saint's age, being then discussed everywhere in educated circles, drew my attention to it and kindled my interest so much that I immediately made a careful study of it and

published the results in an article contributed to that organ. This article was also translated into English by my student Mr.F.T.Peters, B.A. (then in the madras christian college, now Deputy Postmaster General) and was published in 'The Christian College, Magazine' for 1904. A little later the epigraphist Mr.Gopinath Rao, M.A. contested my arguments and published his views on the same subject in the same magazine. And a rejoinder to it was written by me in my Jnanasagaram for 1908 and with that the controversy about the age of St. Manickavachakar was set at rest. But after a long time it was raked up by Mr.Srinivasa Pillai in his 'History of Tamil Literature'. Of course for the deification of Tamil students, the same subject may be brought up for discussion any number of times, I am far from objecting to it but every time that it is thus brought up, it must be made to gain ever so much greater light and show the way to a true historical knowledge based on a sound coordination of literary and epigraphical evidence. On no account must the writer of a historical treatise allow himself to be carried away by conjectures and fancied theories about literal facts so as to live in a sphere unreal but agreeable to his own favourite purposes but must restrain himself in order that the facts themselves may make room for the emergence of truth and help it live there. But sadly the author of the work in question betrays a want of this sound historical sense. For a just and adequate treatment, the history of Tamil literature still awaits the hand of a Max Muller or a Weber, a Macdonell, or a Ragozin. In the following work, I have, to the best of my ability, surveyed the whole extent of Tamil literature beginning with the Tholkappiam the age of which goes back to 3500 B.C., and ending with the Sivajanabodham of the 12th century A.D. For the time of St. Manickavachakar stand midway between the close of the ancient pure classical Tamil period and the beginning of a somewhat mixed kind of literary Tamil period, and cannot

be adequately treated of without entering fully into the causes that led to the formation of wholesome literature and into those that introduced extraneous matter into its system and made way for its decay. I Believe I have not passed over any point of importance in fixing the time of several literary and religious strata and if any one will have the kindness to point out omission of any important point, I shall be very thankful to him and shall not fail to notice it in the second edition.

I have to say a word concerning the way in which the life of our Saint is treated here. Of the verse compositions that narrate the life of our Saint, only four have been taken for a comparative study of his life. Of these four, The Thiruvilaiyadal Puranam by Perumapatrapuliyoor Nambi is the earliest, being, as has been shown by its learned editor Pandit Saminatha Iyer, composed in the eleventh century A.D. The author of this treatise seems to have had a fair historical sense, since many of his accounts, I find to my great astonishment, are reliable. Next in point of time comes 'The Thiruvilaiyadal Puranam' by Paranjoti, a contemporary of the king Ati Vira Rama Pindian whose reign began between 1562 and 1563 A.D. (see Dr. Krishnaswami Iyengar's Ancient India, p.375). The author of this work being much influenced by the Sanscrit Purana, gives not only a false colouring even to historical incidents but introduces also many things new and unhistorical and unauthorized by previous works. And the third one is 'The Thiruvathavurar Puranam' written by Kadavulmamunivar at the beginning of the 19th century A.D. Unlike the above two this is devoted exclusively to a graphic account of the life of our Saint; and this for the most part of our Saint's life which is touched but very briefly and incompletely in the other. And the last one 'The Thirupperunthurai Puranam' by meenakshisundaram Pillai, was written in the latter half of the 19th century and possesses little or no historical value for our purpose. Though the four treatises agree in giving a

general description of his life as a whole, points of differences in details are many and numerous among them. wherever it seemed useful and necessary to note the differences between one narrative and the other, I have not only shown them but also argued for and against the one or the other and chose what was possible and reasonable under the circumstances pertaining to our Saint's life. In many a place I have quoted the very words of our Saint to make clear why I have chosen one account in preference to another. For fortunately for us and for the whole religious world, the sacred syrical utterances themselves of our Saint are interspersed with number of incidental references to all the important events to his life, so that a careful student who studies them with a critical understanding cannot but notice the points which, if picked up and strung together, will constitute a coherent and genuine autobiography of a great soul that was God face to face and attained spiritual perfection. in the matter of studying the lives of such great religious founders as Gaultama Buddha, Jesus Christ, Mahomed and others, it is not given for us to rely upon the words uttered by the teachers themselves - for they were irretrievably lost unrecorded, but are left to look up to the accounts given by interested persons who came long after them. The description of a rose-flower by a poet, however glowing it may be cannot set before us the exquisite beauty of its form and its colour and the sweetness of its perfume, as the flower itself can directly do. so too the accounts given of a great saint by others, even though they be his intimates, can never draw a true picture of his real self, nor can express the inner workings of his heart as faithfully as he himself can do. Nothing in the world is more mysterious than the ways of a saintly person who struggled through the experience of this lower world to that of a higher one which transcends the knowledge of ordinary mortals. Unless a man can reach the summit of self-realization attained by that great soul, he cannot hope to place himself in a standpoint different from his own, and view the extent

as well as profound depth of that great mind. For a true comprehension, therefore, of the essential nature of sanctified souls, the history written of them by others who stand not only much below their level but also far from their time, cannot help us much. If we be so fortunate as to possess the very utterances of such holy men, as in the case of St. Manickavachakar and other great Saiva Saints, we may with the necessary equipment, venture to enter into the sacred precincts of their life and hope to obtain the inexhaustible treasures of spiritual experience they so surely acquired within so short a time.

The glory of Tamil literature consists in its possession of such spiritual legacies as have come down to us directly from our great Saints and Sages as Manickavachakar, Appar, Thirujnanasambandar, Sundarar and Maikandadevar. The like of which, we are sorry to say, have not been bequeathed to posterity by any other saint or religious founder in any language, literature, of religion so far as our knowledge goes. The value of a literary production that has come from a great soul who saw God in a visible form and edescribed Him in a way that makes it easier for us all to bring his image before our mental eye, cannot be rated too highly. One can estimate the value of our Saint's utterances only by bringing before his mind the great and irreparable loss the world sustains in ignoring them. So long as humanity blindly follows the precepts of the so-called world-teachers, who, according to their own followers, seem to have long groped for the Supreme basic principle of the universe, but who, finding at last their efforts fruitless, gave them up in despair, and took to preaching what they deemed best under such circumstances; so long the humanity can have no true conception of the Personality of God, nor can they know anything definite of Him to fix their mind upon. Without a form physical or ideal before him, man will never be able to think of God in the true sense of the term. It is this necessity of his nature that makes him create

from his crude imagination a multitude of fantastic form and ascribe them to God. But God has a personality of his own which man can never perceive, unless God himself appears before him and reveals it by His grace. In the case of St. Manickavachakar and St. Thirujnana Sambandar we have strong internal evidence in their hymns to establish that God appeared before them in the form of a resplendent person uniting in itself the rose-coloured side of the father and the blue coloured side of the mother. I have given a scientific treatment of this dual aspect of Godhead in my paper on 'The conception of God as Rudra' and so I do not like to enter again into this subject in a preface like this. To the reader it will be now plain how clear/ how definite has been the manifestation of God's Personality, it would be better for mankind to meditate on His gracious form that revealed itself to Manickavachakar and is described by him in vivid and unambiguous words. For it is plainly laid down in the Isavasyopanishad that those who worship the forms and images of their own make mistaking them for the real Person of God, enter, at their death, into the regions of blinding darkness. Therefore let those who hanker after the salvation of their souls, accomplish it by a whole-hearted devotion of their mind to the contemplation of the one Almighty Parent of the universe as He is depicted in the Sacred Utterances of St. Manickavachakar.

Now, with the object of presenting the life of Manickavachakar in the form in which it discloses itself incidentally in his own hymns addressed to Lord Siva, I studied his 'Thiruvachakam' and Thiruchitrabalakkovaiyar' for days and nights together in a way quite different from that in which his Puranic biographers and others have viewed it. And the method of my study will be clearly seen in the extreme closeness in which the following narrative is bound up with the quotations taken from the two poems just mentioned. In spite of my ceaseless efforts to enter fully into a description

of the life and experiences of our Saint, I cannot claim to have exhausted the subject in the large work that follows. As my study deepens, new facts are daily coming into light, and I cannot hope to embody them all in a single treatise of this kind. if God be willing I may be spared to publish the present work in a much more enlarged form, samy, in three or four volumes.

when I first entered upon this work some seven or eight years ago, I never thought that the work would swell to its present size of more than thousand pages. Within the last twenty seven years from the time when my interest was first kindled in the investigation of our Saint' Life and Times, many a magazine - article many a book and booklet, came from able hands, and most of these I had to study and criticize from time to time, in order to reach definite and positive conclusions as regards the two. This was how the work increased to its present size. After so careful and comprehensive a study of the subject, it gives me no small pleasure to find that my position remains the same as it was nearly three decades back, that nothing that came in the interval from any has shaken it in the least, and that other theories, however antagonistic to my own, have, when viewed in their proper perspective, only tended in the end to bring the truth of my conclusions into fuller relief. My study of the evidences then led me to fix the age of Manickavachakar in the third century A.D., and now the same conclusion is ratified by further evidences that have come to light during this long interval.

To the following Tamil work I have prefixed an English introduction epitomizing the salient points in the Life and Times of our Saint, so that it may serve as a guide to the English knowing students who do not possess a scholarly knowledge of Tamil but who ardently wish to acquaint themselves with the treasures in Tamil literature. It is my belief that those who have imbibed English

education can appreciate better the method of historical criticism used in this book than most of the tamil pandits who do not and want not to know what is history, and what is myth.

Finally I wish to call the attention of the reader to the pure Tamil style of the treatise which is entirely free from Sanscrit and other foreign words. Let him judge from it whether a living and at the same time a very ancient language, which can deal with all the higher aspects of human thought, without borrowing words from any other language, can be called poor and ordinary. Let him remember that Tamil is the only living language on his globe that unites in itself the glories of the vanished past with the culture of the living present. And let him therefore endeavor his best to spread Tamil learning and uplift his Tamil brethren in the social, moral, intellectual and religious culture that is within the easy reach of them all.

The sared Order of love,  
pallavaram,  
22nd January, 1930.

**VEDACHALAM**

**சைவ சித்தாந்த ஞானபோதம்****PREFACE**

*“The Caiva Siddhantha system is the most elaborate, influential, and undoubtedly the most instrinsically valuable of all the religions of India. It is áeculiarly the South Indian, and Tamil religion. \*\*\* Caivism is the old prehistoric religion of South India, essentially existing from Pre - Aryan times, and holds sway over the hearts of the Tamil People”.*

Dr. G.U. Pope in his English translation of the sacred Tamil lyrics, the Thiruvachakam of the great Saiva Saint Manicakavachakar, p. xxiv.

The above extract expresses the just estimate arrived at by that great Christian missionary and profound Tamil scholar Dr. G.U. Pope as regards the instrinsic merit and high antiquity of the Saiva Siddhanta the religion and philosophy of the Tamil people. Most of his active period of life Dr. Pope spent in the heart of the Tamil country moving intimately with all classes of the Tamil people and learning at first-hand not only their beliefs, customs and manners but also their ancient classics such as Thirukkural, Purananooru, Silappathikaram, Manimekalai, Palamoli, Naladiyar, Periapuranam, Sivajnanabodham and others. His erudition in Tamil was equal to, and in some respects even exceeded, the erudition of great native scholars. So his impartial estimate of the Saiva Siddhanta, coming as it does from a great western scholar who combined in himself the culture of both west and east,

might, by being prefixed to this English Preface of the following work of mine on Saivism, serve well to impress its value and importance on the minds of those learned Indians and Europeans to whom it is a sealed book. For the modern philosophic and religious thought in the east and the west is so strongly coloured either by the atheistic system of the Buddhists or by the pantheistic system of Sankara and his cult, except where the most wholesome teachings of professor William James have pervaded, that almost all lines of inquiry either into the realm of matter or into the realm of spirit, might be said, without exaggeration, to end themselves either in a materialistic monism or in an idealistic monism that is to say, they affirm simply that in the end (the end of what is not clear from what they affirm) there exists nothing but what appears to be a form of energy whether you call it matter or spirit.

In whatever way this kind of monism so stubbornly help in the teeth of all human experience, may seem to satisfy certain “tough-minded” people, certain it is that it cannot satisfy the cravings of the “tender - minded” people, as the two types, namely the monists and the pluralist, have been so pertinently called by Prof. James. We who live in the world of both mind and matter, we who acquire all our knowledge and experience by our contact with so many intelligent beings higher and lower, with so many products of matter which minister unto our wants cannot rest content with such a nameless and formless and therefore such an incomprehensible monism, but need a system which would meet our wishes and aspirations in entire harmony with our past and present experiences.

While our worldly experience is thus mansided, it has yet a unity that underlies all its variety. In the words of James, “It is both one and many”, and therefore “let us adopt a sort of pluralistic monism”<sup>1</sup> Now the Saiva Siddhanta furnishes us with such a **pluralistic monism** as is evident from the following quotation taken from one of the fourteen authoritative works

in Tamil which treat of the Saiva Siddhanta system. According to this system.

“There are six entities which have no beginning. The first of these is the Lord (Pathi) Who is One. The second is the aggregate of all Souls (Pasu) with their undeveloped potentialities of thought and act, interpenetrated by a divine but hidden influence. The third is the impurity of Anavam wearing the form of darkness. The fourth is twofold deeds (Vinai). The fifth and sixth are the two kinds of Mayai, the pure and impure the substratum and material of the phenomenal universe.”<sup>2</sup>

In the following work which comprises nine of my Tamil lectures delivered at different places and on different occasions. I have given to the best of my ability a clear and rational exposition of the views of the Saiva Siddhanta relating to the six entities enumerated above. For the guidance of English - knowing readers I will give here a succinct explanation of the six categories.

Saivism is strictly a monotheistic religion holding that only as God which is truth, intelligence, and bliss, which is above births and deaths, which is all love and grace towards all individual souls, which is distinct from both matter and finite selves and yet dwells within them and without and is ever active in bringing the souls out of darkness and setting them in its light and beatitude. It calls God by the name of **Sivam**, simply because this term specifies the essential quality of God which is pure love, pure bliss. In later times many more gods such as Subramanya, Ganesa, Veerabhadra and others were adopted into its fold but none of the founders of the Saiva religion held any one as God except Siva. In the ten collections of the sacred hymns or Thirumurai sung by St. Thirujnanasambandha, St, Appar, St. Sundarar, St. Manickavachakar and others, there is not a singly hymn sung

in praise of any god other than Siva. And in each and every temple of Siva his only true emblem the Sivalinga is set up in central shrine as the pre-eminent object of first worship, while the images of all other gods are quartered around the central sanctuary and offered only subordinate places and ordinary worship. Thus you find that not only do the ancient sacred literature of Saivism but the very construction of its temples and the pre-eminent form of worship daily offered in them to Siva also bear indisputable testimony to the monotheistic character of the Saiva religion.

According to Saivism God is as remote and transcendent as he is near and personal. Though his nature is one, it appears to be twofold to the finite conception of the individual minds, just as the sun which appears to our naked eyes like a small bright disc, is in reality, immense in its size and thus seems to present two aspects to our perception and conception. As has been so well pointed out by Prof. James in the lecture on Philosophy in his epochmaking work: "The varieties of Religious Experience." "that the transcendentalist reasonings fail to make religion universal," this incomprehensible and inconceivable aspect of God can never appeal to a devout mind that is thirsting after to obtain at least a glimpse of his presence and personality. In so far as God is will, intelligence and freedom, he cannot be an unfeeling, unintelligent and impersonal existence. Nowhere is the personal aspect of God which is in vital relation with all living beings is so strongly emphasized as is Saivism. Since he is in and near every vital being and is helping them all to develop their faculties of thought and feeling, life is held in it so sacred that taking it away from a man or a beast is looked upon by it as an unpardonable and sacrilegious crime. Hence the very word Saivism has come to be applied to a vegetarian mode of living also.

Now, it is this hankering of the human mind after the living personal relation of God to itself that has prompted it to feel deeply the need of setting up a physical image before its outer eyes as a

means of setting up a corresponding mental image before its inner eyes. For all our knowledge of anything consists in bringing into our mind a mental image corresponding to that particular physical thing and storing it up permanently in our memory for after use. Blot that image out of your mind or forget it altogether and you thereby lose the knowledge of it also once for all. In fact, a man of vast knowledge is distinguished from another man of small knowledge only by his power of forming in his mind as well as of fixing on his memory myriads of distinct mental images corresponding exactly to the forms of physical objects which he was observing attentively and nothing carefully. This psychological law pertaining to the formation and development of the human mind must disclose to us the necessity of keeping before our eyes an image made of clay or wood, stone or any mineral matter for the sake of raising up in our mind a clear image of God corresponding to it. For, is it not utterly impossible for us to conceive of an object that we have not previously seen or heard, touched or smelled or tasted? It is the deep-felt longing of the human mind for a concrete thing to meditate upon that has brought into existence a multitude of temples not only in the Tamil country where its number is comparatively very large but also in other ancient civilized countries such as Egypt, Babylonia, Chaldea in the west, and Mexico and Peru in the east. We cannot close this part of our subject relating to idol-worship better than in the words of Dr. Edward Caird taken from his masterly treatment of "The Evolution of Religion." His words run as follows:-

"To represent God as a mere object is, as we have seen, to express the divine in an inadequate form, in a form that, at least, cannot be made fully adequate to the idea; for the principle of unity in all objects and subjects cannot be properly represented as one object among others. But, at the same time, it is also true that in some sense the whole is involved in every part

of the universe, and therefore any part of it may for a time be taken as a type of the whole. \*\*\* When the spiritual cannot yet be separated from the natural, it is of the highest importance that the natural object which represents the spiritual should be, as it were, transfigured by the imagination, so that it may, so far as possible, symbolically take the place of the spiritual.”<sup>3</sup>

Viewed in this light how significant is the worship paid to Sivalinga in the great temples that burst so magnificently on the sight of the travellers all over the south of India, must become apparent to all who have a right - thinking mind. I cannot pursue the treatment of this topic farther in a short preface like this. For a detailed explanation of the origin and meaning of the Sivalinga-worship the reader is referred to my Tamil lectures on “The Image-worship” and “Sivalinga” and to my English lecture on “The Conception of God as Rudra”.

Now, as to the second entity of the Saiva Siddhanta: “The aggregate of all Souls.” From the tiniest and the most simple unicellular organism called **protoplasm** to the highest and the most complex organism called man there exist from all eternity countless individual souls each having a distinct character of its own and each undergoing different degrees of development in accordance with its nature capacity and effort. All these souls are not the principles created out of nothing according to some religions, nor are they the splintered pieces of God itself according to some other religions, nor do they constitute so many evolved centres of unintelligent matter according to some material sciences, nor could they be pure fictions imagined in the infinite absolute according to some rank idealism. On the other hand they are as eternal as God and not even a single soul could, by any known or unknown power or process, be reduced into nothing nor could any one of them be transmuted into any other of the group. According to the Saiva Siddhanta, and ‘the pluralistic, as according to the Leibnizian view “says Dr. James Ward in his remarkable **Gifford Lectures**, “all

the individuals there are have existed from the first and will continue to exist indefinitely.”<sup>4</sup> And the same authority, like the Siddhanta, holds tenaciously to the view that “individuals who have no ‘doubles’, whose like all in all we never shall meet again”,<sup>5</sup> In upholding the eternal reality of individual souls Dr. F.C.S. Schiller has said even more emphatically as follows:

“The ultimate self-existence of spirits, the doctrine that existence are many, spirits uncreated, uncaused, that are and ever have been and can never cease to be, is the only metaphysical ground for asserting the immortality of the individual. And this metaphysical ground we have secured by the preference given to Pluralism over Monism.”<sup>6</sup>

Now, as regards the third principle the impure and dark **Anavam**, what the Saiva Siddhanta says is in the words of Dr. F.C.S. Schiller this: “Evil was potentially existent in the world” and “the world was created in order to remedy this pre-existent and precosmic defect.”<sup>7</sup> If all had been perfect eternally like God, creation is unnecessary, and it may even be mischievous, like the mischievous actions of some wild boys who take pleasure in throwing stones on innocent animals and even on grown-up persons. But such does not seem to be the case since all souls have defects in various grades and degrees which with the help of creation they strive and struggle to remove. This supreme purpose of creation cannot be in the least understood, unless, you recognize the potential existence of the evil principle called **Anavam** in the Saiva Siddhanta. Of this evil principle Prof. Henry Drummond the great scientist and theologian writes:

“There is a natural principle in man lowering him, deadening him, pulling him down by inches to the mere animal plane, blinding reason, searing conscience, paralysing will.”<sup>8</sup>

So far as my knowledge of various religions and various systems of philosophy goes, I venture to say that I have not come

across any other religion or philosophy in which this root-cause of creation, the pre-existence of the evil principle is recognized and explicitly mentioned as in the system of Saiva Siddhanta. Of course, there is a hint of it in the first chapter of the Book of Genesis in the Old Testament as has been so penetratingly pointed out by Dr. F.C.S. Schiller, but it has unfortunately escaped the notice of almost all commentators on the book.

Now, let us turn to the fourth category: the twofold deeds good and bad. Every life from amoeba upwards is endowed with intelligence and this enables all organisms from the lowest to the highest to respond to the impressions proceeding from surrounding objects and perform certain functions either in opposition to, or in concurrence with, those impressions. In answering thus to outside calls the lower organisms learn to repeat what is favourable at first to the maintenance of their own life and afterwards to the maintenance of the life of their own offspring. The first act of every living being meets with great resistance offered by both the inside and outside things, that is, by its own body and by the things external to it. All the products of matter do not yield readily to the will of an intelligent being, unless it exercises its intelligence constantly and devises newer and newer means to bend them to its will. In this way it learns that not one act but many acts of which the every succeeding one is more intelligently performed than the preceding one, are necessary for achieving the conquest over matter.

It is such repeated actions of living beings that are collectively called **Karmas** or **Vinai** in Saivism; or in the language of psychology **habits**. As we observe the infinite grades of lives, and the infinite degrees of intelligence, we are led to believe that no man who gains an insight into the nature and evolution of individual souls can at a bound conclude that the life of a soul can become perfect in a single

birth when even the duration of which varies infinitely from a moment to an age.

Further, the actions of living beings acquire moral value only after they ascend to human existence in the scale of life. Therefore it seems most unreasonable to assert that the lower lives will become extinct after they have passed through a single existence and before they have reached the higher stages at which their actions acquire moral worth. Even after reaching the human stage should do differ so widely among themselves in the amount of intelligence they exhibit that, here too, perfection is not attainable by all in a single birth. And so before attaining to the stage of perfection, it is reasonable to hold with the Saiva Siddhanta that all souls must accumulate habits after habits only by passing through myriads of bodily existences in this world and in others that are distant from ours. As has been put by Dr. James Ward, “At any rate ‘metempsychosis’ in some form seems an unavoidable corollary of thorough - going pampsychism, so long as we look broadly at the facts of life as a whole.”<sup>9</sup>

Come we now finally to the fifth and the sixth categories, the pure and the impure Mayai. Modern science has discovered that the world of our experience is ultimately resolvable into protons and electrons. The impure Mayai is the direct material cause of the universe, while the pure: the protons and electrons, constitutes only indirectly so. The reason for this two fold classification of Mayai is this. The souls buried, as it were, in coarse and foul impurities require equally coarse substances to be cleansed of their impurities: whereas the highly developed souls rising above the filth require only the help of finer substances to raise them still higher. For we see plainly before our eyes the mental powers of individual souls developing in different degrees in different souls without any limit being set to them. In proportion to the mental development of souls, matter which serves as its

vehicle also becomes rarified in different degrees. In the words of Dr. Schiller, "The spiritualization of Matter is displayed also in its relations to spiritual beings. As in the course of evolution these become more harmonized with the Divine Will, Matter the expression of that Will, becomes more and more harmonized with the desires of spiritual beings."<sup>10</sup> I need then hardly say that the doctrine of Mayai as held by Saivism is in entire harmony with the discoveries of modern science.

To all those who seek after an exact knowledge of these six eternal verities, it must be very gratifying to note as above that the recent developments of western philosophy and physical science go every inch to prove the truth and value of all the fundamental doctrines only of the Saiva Siddhanta and not of any other religion or philosophy.

#### **Foot notes**

1. Pragmatism, p. 13.
2. Taken from Dr. G.U. Pope's translation of the Thiruvarutpayan; see his Translation of the Thiruvachakam. p. ii.
3. Dr. E. Caird's "The Evolution of Religion" vol. p. 227.
4. The Realm of Ends. p. 204.
5. The Realm of Ends, p. 18.
6. Riddles or the Sphinx. 2nd edition, p. 403.
7. Ibid. P. 434.
8. Natural law in the Spiritual World, cheap ed., P. 29.
9. The Realm of Ends. p. 213.
10. Riddles of the Sphinx, p. 298.

**பண்டைக்காலத் தமிழரும் ஆரியரும்**

**PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION**

The matter which forms the subject in the subsequent pages is a lecture delivered by me in May 1905, at the annual meeting of the Madura Tamil Sangam. Many points which were slightly touched and many a quotation which was omitted during the course of its delivery owing to want of time, are here enlarged and inserted for the benefit of the readers.

The subject is quite a new one to the main portion of the Tamil-speaking population. Even to the historians of the west it is a new theme. It is only of late that Pandit D. Saviroyan and Prof. Rhys Davids have given a new turn to the historic studies of the Indian races and their literature. Pandit Saviroyan's 'Admixture of Aryan with Tamilian:' and Prof. Davids' 'Buddhist India' have set up new lines of researches to be carried on in the study of Indian history and stimulated the interest of all impartial students whether Brahmin or Non-Brahmin to seek for their guide the old Tamil literature and the ancient Buddhist works in Pali.

The indigenious races of India belonged to Tamil and even in the dim pre-historic times they were far advanced in mental culture. When the Aryans had come into contact the with Tamils, the civilization of the latter was the primary element at work in effecting a thorough change in the social, moral and intellectual constitution of the former. The result produced by the commingling of the two races is, I believe, clearly shown in this lecture. Still the subject is such that it requires an

elaborate treatment of the facts briefly mentioned here and I hope to do it in my separate English work 'Tamilic India.'

I need hardly say that I am deeply indebted to Pandit Saviroyan and Prof. Rhys Davids my forerunners in the new lines of studies in the history of ancient India.

Madras,  
1906.

**R.S. VEDACHALAM**

## சாதி வேற்றுமையும் போலிச்சைவரும்

### Preface to the Second Edition

This Tamil work on 'Caste and Its Evil' first appeared in the form of a somewhat long essay in the sixth volume of my Tamil magazine Jnanasagaram in October, 1911. The occasion which called it into existence was in this wise. In response to the invitation of the Saiva Siddhanta Sabha at Tuticorin, I had to go there in December, 1910, in order to preside at its grand annual gathering and so to conduct it as to make it meet the needs of the time. I took an active part in its proceedings, as it was ably managed by learned, intelligent and well-meaning Saivites and was also attended by a large number of men and women of enlightenment, earnestness and understanding. Everything went on smoothly and delightfully on the first day, except in one important respect. Able lecturers filled with enthusiasm for introducing reforms into religious and social matters, came from distant parts of the country, but some of them were not treated with that respect which learning, good intentions and good manners claim, but were treated, as appeared to my mind, rather badly, simply because they happened to belong to non-vegetarian castes. Whether learned or unlearned, good or bad, religious or irreligious only those who were known to be Saivites, that is, those only whose lineage was known to have originated with the vegetarian velala parents, were invited to sit in one hall and dine together, while others, whose adherence to Saiva religion and clean vegetarian mode of living could not be questioned but whose only fault was what was occasioned by the mere accident of birth, were made to sit aloof in a separate place and served meals

rather lately. This I observed on the first day and, on the next, I questioned some of the prominent members of the society why they were treated thus. One amongst them replied me that they belonged to non-vegetarian castes, and, therefore, could not be admitted into the dining - hall of the Saivites. But I said that though they were no born vegetarians, they too were Saivites in so far as they followed the principles of Saiva religion and adopted the vegetarian mode of living, and that, therefore, they ought to be encouraged, so that other like them might also come up in the hope of mingling with a higher class people and lead a purer and a truer form of religious life. I added that, if their object of conducting such religious meetings were sincere, they should spread the beneficial, teachings of the Saiva religion not in brotherly love and affection towards each other as all are the children of a single Heavenly Father Lord Siva and by prompting those of them who are morally and intellectually stronger to uplift the weaker and make them their own, and that such merciful, tender and benevolent kind of service by drawing together the choice people from every class and community, would not only tend to increase the strength of the Saivite community but would also heighten the value of their service to humanity at large. To this the man curtly replied that it was not the custom to do so. Again, I argued with him at some length pointing out to him that what he called 'the custom' was not really so but the reverse of it was the true one as is evident in the lives of the Saints and Sages who founded and spread the Saiva religion. But unfortunately the man was not amenable to reason, since his false and arrogant notion of the superiority of his caste blinded his whole mental vision. Thereupon I made up my mind to dine rather with the excluded party than with such self - conceited Saivites. And accordingly I did dine with the forbidden brethren. But so much did this action of mine enrage the Saivite brethren that, on the next day, they forbade me entering their dining hall during meal-times. This put me on my mettle and I told them point blank that, as the way to my room lay

through their dining - hall, I could not go but through it as usual; and said also that I should not take the meals cooked by their men under their supervision, since i thought the meals prepared in the midst of such inhuman people get themselves contaminated. On that day, the sitting of the Conference was to commence at 3 p.m. with me in the chair; it was nearly 2 p.m., still I had not touched my meals; having seen me persevering in my determination, all the Saivite members, except one or two, had the kindness to come to me and apologize for what the had done and expressed their willingness to treat henceforth the lecturers and other with equality and without minding any caste - distinctions. Of course, there were one or two dissenting elements but these were eliminated from our group. We then sat together, prayed to God for blessing us with that bond of unity, and partook of our meals with one joyous heart. On that third sitting day of the conference, the lectures had been very illuminating and the proceedings were brought to a successful close by my concluding speech which impressed on the minds of the audience the urgent necessity of cutting at the root the evils of caste - distinctions.

Nevertheless, a few mischievous elements with whom caste was everything, while virtue, learning, intelligence. piety, religiousness and such other great qualities count for nothing, could not be silenced either by reasoning or by any regard to social unity, but they bestirred themselves most actively and attacked me in a magazine - article which, with much abusive matter, asserted the superiority of their caste on false and most erroneous grounds. I might have treated it with indifference, for it contained no argument worth contending for, but for the harmful influence it was likely to have on the minds of the unenlightened. I had, therefore, to take up the cudgels on behalf of the down - trodden and in the interest also of the true Saiva community whose progress consisted not in its exclusiveness but in absorbing into it and assimilating with itself persons of higher qualities turned out from

lower orders and having an eager expectation to be lifted up from above; and the result was the first edition of this treatise.

The first edition was merely a booklet of 22 pages, which dealt chiefly with the practical aspect of the caste question, while its theoretical part it touched but rather too briefly. How the barriers raised between one caste and another are mere fictitious ones existing only in the imagination of certain class of people in whom it was bred by their own arrogance and ignorance, how a mixture of castes results as a product of natural human needs and takes place both openly and covertly from the very beginning of the human family, and how easily a fusion of the good and cultured people picked up from every caste and community can be effected for the immense benefit of all, were clearly shown in it. That the tenets of Saiva religion do not stand against but lend a free, unstinted, undisguised support to such a whole-some fusion of the select, was also shown by quotations taken direct from the writings of the founders and exponents of the religion. How useful the booklet proved to those who looked forward with eagerness to such a reform of castes, thought they themselves had not the courage to express the need of it might be seen from the rapid sale the thousand copies of it had in a few months.

Inevitably the book had been long out of print, though demands for it increased day after day. The elaborate research - work unaided I had to do, in order to redeem the literary and religious history of the land from the thick gloom of myth and uncertainty created and cast over it by selfish and selfinterested persons, the constant and unremitting study I pursued of works on 'New psychology', stimulated by a strong desire to introduce its subjects into Tamil, left me little leisure to devote to the preparation of its second edition earlier. But, now that I was enabled to undertake the work, years of study and research - work facilitating it for me, I set myself to enlarging the briefly -

touched - subject on 'The origin and growth of the institution of caste,' since I thought that, for healing its present corruption and infusing new life into it, only a thorough knowledge of its past history could afford a proper and effective remedy. And accordingly the subject has been amplified and treated fully and extensively in the first five chapters of this edition.

In the first chapter, it is shown that the present day castes cannot be identified with those of the past since the callings of the former have undergone so radical a change as is opposed to the ordinances laid down in the Sanscrit Vedas and Dharma Sastras. Modern castes have become hardened into unworkable masses by losing completely their pliancy of meaning and original good quality. When the composition of the first nine mandalas of the Rig Veda took place, the four castes were quite unknown to the Aryans. But, by the time when the tenth was added, the institution of four castes had become almost an established fact. Still it should be borne in mind that this division of the Indian people into four castes was based merely upon division of labour and was introduced as a convenient theoretic classification intended for the purposes of social and economical sciences. Practically there was no any hard and fast rule that one caste should not adopt the profession of another nor should the one mix with another. Many Dravidian kings, merchants and even slaves took part in the composition of the Vedic hymns and followed professions that suited best their taste and capacity.

In the second chapter, the same subject is continued and discussed how, even at the time of the twelve oldest upanishads and the two epics the Mahabharata and the Ramayana when attempts were made by brahmins to make castes hereditary and exalt themselves at the expense of others, only merit and not birth was regarded as constituting a high caste.

In the third chapter are shown how, at the time when a series of Sanscrit works called Dharma Sastras came to be written, the hereditary claims of castes were just beginning to tighten their hold on the people, how the brahmins were attempting to demand exclusive privileges for themselves and devise the cruellest and the most oppressive measures for the labouring classes, how, even then, importance was attached not to birth but to merit, and how the brahmins and others who failed, in the smallest degree, to perform the prescribed duties and functions of their caste lost their caste and became low-born. Here, for the first time, the mischief is pointed out of including the Tamilians in the Sudra or slave caste. The institution of caste-system originated not with the Aryans as is erroneously supposed by oriental scholars, but with the statesmen of the ancient Tamilians themselves who had attained to a high degree of civilisation long before the Aryans entered India.

In the fourth chapter, a critical inquiry of the 'Tolkappiam', a very ancient Tamil work which is older than even some portions of the Rig-Veda, is taken up - especially of its sections dealing with the social classifications of the Tamil people. How the Tamil people reached the agricultural stage many centuries before when the Aryans were still in the pastoral stage leading the life of nomads and how the life of an agricultural people necessitated the classification of its men and women into different classes according to their occupations, are clearly proved by the aid of its study. Though this division of the Tamil people was rendered necessary by the conditions of their civilized life, there was no prohibition in any Tamil classics of old of any caste - intermixture. On the other hand there are clear references in them to free intermingling of castes.

In the fifth chapter in which the later day Saiva and Vaishnava religious literatures are taken up for solving this intricate and difficult problem of caste, are given numerous

instances and clear quotations from the lives and writings of the Saints of the two great religions, in proof that it was only Love towards God and his servants and not caste was regarded and respected in them.

In the sixth chapter the whole of the first edition which dealt with the practical aspect of the caste question is included with necessary alterations.

In the seventh and th concluding chapter, easy and practical means for wiping away caste-distinctions and consolidating the refined elements coming above from every grade of society, are set forth.

Another prominent feature of this edition is its pure Tamils style entirely free from Sanscrit words.

In fine it is my great pleasure to express my thanks and heart-felt gratitude to my esteemed friend Mr. C. Ariya Nayagam, Proctor, at Matale (Ceylon), for the extreme kindness with which he promptly sent me a charitable contribution of Rs 250 towards the printing expenses of the book. Words are inadequate to express sufficiently my deep debt of gratitude to this generous-hearted gentleman for similar contributions which he was making frequently for the past ten years and more towards the printing expenses of my writings. But for his munificent help, I would have been much embarrassed in carrying out my literary and religious work successfully. By the grace of God may he live long in all glory!

The Sacred Order of Love  
Pallavaram,  
1926.

**VEDACHALAM**

## வேளாளர் நாகரிகம்

### Preface to the Second Edition

The first edition of this work was published in November, 1923 and 500 copies of it were sold within four years - a period too short for the sale of a Tamil book of this kind which in contradistinction to the current fashion for a mixed kind of Tamil prose, is written in a scrupulously pure Tamil style, setting forth at the same time views of a revolutionary character in the sphere of social, religious and historical ideas of the Tamil people. In point of truth the views themselves are neither strange nor revolutionary, being the outcome of a comparative study carefully made of both Tamil and Sanscrit literature. If they appear strange surely they must appear so, to many it is because their knowledge is partial: and where that knowledge claims to be derived from the literatures of the two languages, it does not go beyond the pale of modern Puranic literature of the two.

No doubt, beneath the legendary accounts of Puranas critics of trenchant intellect - such are rarely to be met with in this country, may detect facts of great value for studying the history of ancient people, but others, who are untrained in the critical and historical methods of looking at things and events, take every bit of them as so many literal truths. People in every country, before they get the benefits of an excellent education, are more credulous than children, since children cannot rest satisfied in a blind belief with respect to a certain thing or an occurrence, unless they receive satisfying answers to all they want to know about the one or the other. This, the self-interested persons know full well and such of

them as are versed in the knowledge of a language know also how to work upon the people's fancy by making that language as a medium for their artifices. This was how the huge body of Puranic literature came to be written first in Sanscrit and then translated into Tamil and other living languages in India. Sanscrit being the dead and not the spoken language understood by people, the authors of the Puranas adopted it as the means best suited to their purpose and said in them all that was to be said in their own interest and to the great disadvantage of the people. And as if to give a finishing and successful stroke to their artifices, not only did they uniformly conceal their human authorship of the Puranas, but they also attributed the composition of which invariably to Divine Beings such as Siva and Narayana. Being Divine utterances their contents were taught to be unquestionable under penalty of hell-fire to unbelievers. Having thus established the unquestionable authority of the Puranas, their authors, selecting for the basis a few cardinal facts, did their work excellently by exaggerating them so much out of all proportion, twisting them so much out of their shape, and combining them so much out of all harmony, that, to the degree they succeeded in the abnormal treatment of the subject, the legends appealed the more strongly to the minds of the credulous and led their belief to take deep root in them. As a consequence of this artifice people have become slaves to blind faith and ineradicable superstition and they completely distrust that there can be anything as reason to question about their truth or untruth. Nay the very attitude of a person who dares to doubt the legend is repugnant to the people and they are sure to look upon him as their bitterest enemy and heretic. The hold which the Puranas thus have on the mind of the people and the intensity of the prejudice which they foster in their mind against a man who doubts them, one may best learn by nothing the strength of the Puranic belief even in those who have imbibed western education.

Under this deplorable condition it is no wonder that Tamil books written on modern critical and historical lines should seem strange and revolutionary to men of such mental calibre. Still the sale of 500 copies within four years betokens a brightening prospect and authors of my type need not despair of a better condition in future. For man cannot always rest in ignorance. He is ever prompted by an innate desire to learn the nature and constitution of things and ascertain the causes that are at work within the heart of things. He is ever free to think on life and life - struggles and no power can restrain his thought nor can hold it eternally captive. To this freedom of thinking, the spread of western education is contributing its mighty and accelerating influence and we, on our part must do our utmost to bring the people to think for themselves and examine their beliefs in the light of reason before communicating them to their youngsters.

The object of this book is to examine some of the important beliefs that have clustered around the mind of the people and to rid it of such beliefs as are likely to mislead them or to hamper their progress in the path of right knowledge.

In the first place attention is directed to Velalas the civilized agricultural class of the Tamils, and to their origin, and organization. From references made to them, their occupation and social rank, in Tholkappiam the most ancient and existing Tamil work in all its entirety, the age of which goes back to 3500 B.C., it is shown that at a time when all the people except those who lived all along the equatorial regions, were leading the life of hunters or nomads, these Velalas attained perfection in the art of agriculture, built towns and strong forts, had been priests, kings and traders and by means of navigation occupied the whole of India settling in rich and fertile countries along the coasts and river - sides.

When the Aryan hordes came from the north-west of Punjab and poured forth into the interior, it was the ten velala kings then

ruling in the north that stopped their advance (See Ragozin's Vedic India.). When after a while, the intellectual section of the Aryan nomads found it impossible to get admission into the Tamilian territories by combating with their kings, they sought it by peaceful means and were thereafter accorded a cordial reception and admitted to a high rank in the Tamilian society. To the few stray hymns brought by the Aryans, the Tamil kings added a greater number of their own: and, in imitation of their four Tamil vedas which treated of practical ethics, political economy, love and heavenly bliss, they classified the hymns into four books and called them 'Vedas'. That the word 'Veda' is a pure Tamil one, is etymologically proved in the body of this work, by grouping a number of pure Tamil words all having a single root 'Ve' and cognate in meaning, After a century of laborious research in linguistic matters, oriental scholars in Europe and America are just now coming to recognise that not only was the Taqmilian civilization prior to the Aryan but it was also much superior to it and was the great formative force that modelled it after its own.

(see prof. Rapson's Ancient India).

In spite of the repeated efforts which the Taqmil kings made, as is manifest from the Chandogya, Kaushi taki and other upansihads, to divert the attention of the Aryan priests from costly rituals supposed to bring only transient benefits, to a contemplation of eternal verities and problems of philosophy, the priests were persisting in the performance of bloody sacrifices so much so that as time went on their conduct became more and more revolting to the delicate feelings of the humanitarian Velals.

So long as the Tamil kings and rich trading communities yielded to the wishes and devices of the Aryan priests and lavished their wealth on rituals, the latter pretended to treat them with utmost

respect by designating them the Kshatriyas and Vaisyas, while in fact they were positing themselves openly at the zenith in the scale of castes and casting down others secretly much below. But from the moment the kings and nobles and others began to suspect the motives of the Aryan priests, these supercilious parasites gave up their bloody sacrifices but devised other effective means to such the wealth of the Tamilians. At first they brought all the Tamils under the three denomination of Kshatriya, Vaisya and Sudra, formulated rigid rules exclusively for each and ordained numerous ceremonies to each, doing all these, by means of a dead language Sanscrit, as if in the interest of the people's welfare both here and hereafter, but in fact to establish their supremacy among them and make their priestly help seem indispensable to the people for consulting them on such rules and conducting the ceremonies prescribed for each. In this design the Aryan priests succeeded so well, that the Tamils whether kings or nobles, rich or poor, learned or ignorant, all have become thorough slaves not only to the Aryan priests but also to all who have joined the Aryan fold and bear the name of brahmin. After this the further work of vilifying the Tamils was made much easier, and all those who, in course of time, styled themselves brahmins discovered it, to their great benefit and glory, to efface the three grades of distinctions into which their predecessors classed the Tamils and to put them all together under the generic term 'Sudra' which means but the contemptuous menials as a whole. But in the Tamil country nobody will call himself a Sudra, or a Vaisya or a Kshatriya. The Tamils are either agriculturists or traders, artisans or labourers; every class of people follows a hereditary profession and calls themselves by the name of that profession. But quite recently a great mania has taken possession of some classes of people whose professions though much useful are looked upon as low by brahmins and their imitators, to bring themselves under the Aryan appellations of brahmin, kshatriya and vaisya and escape being called the Sudra.

This mania is setting one class against the other and breeds enmity and arrogance in each. All this mischief and injustice of classifying the Tamils who are above such caste iniquities, are exposed in the body of this treatise and remedial measures suggested.

Unfortunately owing to the influence of brahmins, European scholars devoted their attention exclusively to Sanscrit and have acquired the most amazing mastery in it. Had they spent half so much labour on ancient Tamil classics, the result would have been more fruitful, more accurate and more enlightening in the study of ancient Indian history, Philosophy and religion. My truth dispel falsehood and love overcome hate and God who is both truth and love illumine our understanding!

The Sacred Order of love,  
Pallavaram 20, July, 1927

**Vedachalam**

**பழந்தமிழ்க் கொள்கையே சைவ சமயம்**

**PREFACE**

The first part of the following treatise was read as Presidential Address at the All South India Saiva Conference held at Cuddalore, New Town, on the 16th, 17th, 18th, 19th, 20th and 21st 1929. The object of the Conference was to revive the study and practice of the oldest principles of the Saiva religion, which, in recent years, have greatly fallen into disuse and disrepute by being mixed up with the Puranic myths and which the modern Self-Respect movement calumniated in the most opprobrious language, without being able to discriminate between the cardinal points of Saivism and the merely adventitious ones.

In the conflict of thoughts and ethical sentiments that arose between the Tamilians of the south and the Aryans of the north who came and settled all over the Tamil country from the first century A. D., down to the fifteenth and still later, the religion of the land, that is Saivism, underwent a marked change its outer rim, although in its centre it remained as pure as crystal and as impenetrable as a hard diamond. What is bound and true to its core, what is perfect and complete in itself, requires no change, requires no improvement. At the very dawn of Tamilian civilisation, of which we catch a glimpse through the *Thol-kappiam* the oldest Tamil work extant, we find the views about God, soul, and matter and salvation to have become thoroughly sound and complete. As our knowledge of these facts deepens, as our ideas about their relations expand, we find the conclusions reached by our forefathers about their

nature and relations, daily receiving corroborations not only from the modern biological, geological, and other scientific discoveries, but also from the philosophical view worked out and held by such eminent thinkers as William James, Bergson, Lodge, Ward and others.

While preserving the intrinsic nature and excellence of their religious system, the teachers and prophets of the Tamil country have not disdained to take from foreign cults whatever seemed to have influenced the ordinary people, and whatever might be turned to good account in the light of their own religious thought. In this wise came to be added to the outer surface of the body of Saivism, simple as poetic embellishments remember, only a few Puranic- myths of the northerners at first, but, as time went on, rushed in quite a multitude of them which, instead of adding to the naked beauty of the resplendent form, concealed it and even rendered it ugly in the eyes of- an incautious, indolent, or an ill-intentioned looker-on. Only to the penetrating mental vision of a careful thinker, the intrinsic value of the system came to reveal itself. Others touched only its outer crust of myths, some of them believing them to be actual facts, while some others who had an inkling of reasoning, spirit, turned away from them with disgust. However, one who would like to be benefited by the inestimable knowledge treasured up in the Saiva system of thought, should not render himself liable to, be thus scared away by the Aryan myths that sit at its door. Dr. G. U. Pope who did an invaluable Service to: the world by translating into English the sacred Tamil poems called the Thiruvachakam of Sri, Manickavachakar wisely observes: “pauranic mythology and legend is dragged in, as simple poetic embellishment designed to please the multitude”\*

But the religious and philosophical ideas that are developed here in the following pages have nothing to do with such Puranic myths, for they are taken entirely from the ancient Tamil work the Tholkappiam, the only treatise extant that was composed at a

time when the Aryan influence did not touch even the fringe of the Tamilian thought, when the creation of Puranic myths did not take place as yet. The age of this unique Tamil work goes back to 3500 B. C. as is shown in my work on S1, Manicka- vachakar. The Aryans were then spreading over the north mid founding colonies in the midst of the Tamils and Kolarians that existed there long before their advent.

The Tholkappiam comprises both Tamil grammar and poetics and the latter classifies the ideal activities of the ancient day Tamilians under the three categories, Love Wealth, and Virtue. What to choose from their life for ideal representations in poetry and how to idealize them for which purpose, from the subjects of many a chapter in the third book on poetics. The life of the Tamils thus dwelt on exhibits its gradual emergence from the life of the most primitive kind into that of strikingly civilized one. Still a strong tinge of the primitive characteristics, even in the life of a highly civilized kind, cannot be explained except on the supposition that the Tamils are a people naturally very conservative in their habits and customs and that a large portion of them were then closely adhering to them even while they were adopting the elements of civilisation introduced by the best among them.

Of the many interesting subjects treated of, Love and War form the two themes that hold as prominent a place in it, as they had held in almost all famous literature of the world. For man was born in love, was bred in love lives in love, and passes at last into love. Care has been, therefore, taken by the author to distinguish this love from lust which is intense selfishness, which takes no thought of others and their happiness, and which is wrongly identified with the former by persons who know no more than what they sensuously feel and enjoy. The union of spirits and not the union of mere corporal matter was regarded as the result of love, by 8t. Tholkappiar and

by a host of poets, sages and sages who followed in his footsteps. Love regenerates both mind and body; it springs from the depth of a pure mind, flows out through the body and enters again into another mind by means of another body and blends the two minds into one. This mortal body serves only as an indispensable instrument for bringing about this intimate union of two pure spirits. When such a superior kind of love springs up from a mind and flows over sweeping before its irresistible and dignified march, all the inferior and harmful kinds of desires and passions, it goes not towards one mind alone, although it runs into one fitting centre; for filling it up with essence, but it goes into each and all and drenches them in its wholesome element in varying degree according to their deserts. Many are the forms and degrees of love, the highest, the greatest and the sublimest manifestation of it occurs only at the junction of a young man and a woman accomplished in all ideal qualities. In its immeasurable height and depth no other form of it can bear comparison with it. The man becomes the idol of her heart, while the woman occupies his inner sanctuary, at whose altar he will never hesitate to make any sacrifice that may be required of him. Thus the two come to acquire the virtue of leading a life for the other, a virtue, as it grows, makes its possessor identify his or her interests with the interests of the righteous.

From this form of the purest spiritual love, arises the necessity of acquiring wealth, not for filling his own wants, not for securing comforts and pleasures for his own self, but for keeping the object of his adoration, the offsprings of their love-union, the kith and kin of his heart, in unmixed happiness and comfort. As the circle of those, whom he is thus bound by love and not by mere duty to support widens, as the number of those who lie under his protection increases, ambition for wealth, power and distinction also increases, and this exercises his intelligence utmost and calls forth the play of all the

innate powers of his mind. There can be no a greater incentive to stimulate the intellectual energies of man, and nothing can induce him to display his formidable heroic deeds more, than what offers him a stout resistance to the achievement of his objects. This consideration naturally leads the author to bring in the topic of war, since war is the only perilous kind of resistance and obstacle that a man of the highest responsibilities meets with in the path of his ambitious life.

And lastly, when success has brought home to his mind, and to the mind of his partner, how full of cares, troubles, and untold miseries this earthly life is, to what great agony both the mind and body of a numberless beings human and animal are subjected by a few who seek their ease, comfort and happiness, the man and the woman, jointly direct their thoughts to the attainment of a bliss unattended by misery. Thus a fresh regeneration of their life commences in the purely spiritual atmosphere in which the aroma of divine love emanates from God, according to Tholkappiar, the ever resplendent intelligent principle, exhilarates their mind and transmutes their human love into divine.

It is remarkable that in emphasizing the importance of turning their mutual human love to the love of God, the married couple is advised by our 81. Tholkappiar to strive after it conjointly. From this it appears that, at the time of Tholkappiar, the life of celibacy and asceticism was quite unknown. Even in the north it came into vogue only after the rise of Buddhism and Jainism. In the pre-Buddhistic, that is, in the Vedic period, the life of the Aryan householder and the Aryan sage was similar to that of the Tamilian, but with this difference that, while in the former mere carnal pleasures reign supreme, in the latter an ideal and chaste love cast around its sweet and mellow light.

On all these points I have expatiated to the best of my lights and have shown how the principles of life laid down 5000 years ago by 81. Tholkappiar in his immortal Tamil work Tholkappiam, are in striking and wonderful harmony with the truly physical, moral, intellectual, and religious requirements of advancing modern civilisation. It is a great pleasure to me to acknowledge my gratitude to the whole modern Tamil world who, with but one strange exception, appreciated this my humble contribution to modern Tamil literature and spoke and wrote of it in very high terms. To the strange critic also, who is the type of the unprogressive conservative section, I express my grateful feelings for having given me an opportunity to defend my position more strongly than before, in the second and concluding parts.

Pallavaram,  
The sacred order of Lover  
30th April, 1930.

**VEDACHALAM**

## தமிழர் மதம்

### ENGLISH PREFACE TO THE TAMILIAN CREED

“Wilfred Scawen Blunt says that Huxley had long suspected a common origin of the Egyptians and the Dravidians of India, perhaps a long belt of brown-skinned men from India to Spain in very early days.”

“This ‘belt’ of Huxley’s, of dark-white and brown-skinned men, this race of brunet-brown-folk, spread even farther than India; they reached to the shores of the Pacific, and they were everywhere the original possessors of the Neolithic culture and the beginners of what we call civilization. It is possible that these Brunet peoples are, so to speak the *basic* peoples of our modern world.”-H.G. Wells in his ‘Outline of History’ p.138.

What had been suspected by the genius of Prof. Huxley and accepted by Mr. H.G. Wells, has recently come off an undoubted fact established by the archaeological evidence which the excavations conducted at Harappa and Mohenjodaro in the Punjab have afforded us. For Sir John Marshall, Director General of Archaeology in India, has conclusively shown in his epoch-making work “**Mohenjo-daro and the Indus Civilisation**” that the pre-Aryan people, the originators of the Indus Civilisation, could be none other than the forefathers of the Dravidian People who at present occupy Southern India and that their culture bears a close resemblance to the culture of the Sumerians and the Egyptians as the result of the commercial intercourse they had had with the latter five thousand years ago. In exposing the error into which some of

the oriental scholars had fallen when they came to speak of the pre-Aryan inhabitants of India, Sir John Marshall observes:

“They (the orientalist) 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 revolutionized and we are constrained to recognize 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.” And in another place of his remarkable work he says: “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 were 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 Kirthar Range and at no great distance from the Indus valley, the Brahu is 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.”

So much precaution and reservation with which the above statement made by Sir John Marshall as regards the high antiquity of the Dravidian people, their language and culture, may seem unnecessary to those who possess an intimate knowledge of ancient Tamil literature, some of the extant works

of which such as Tholkappiam, Paripadal, Purananooru and others date from 3500 B.C. to the first century A.D. and bear witness to the high level of civilization which the Tamils reached in Pre-Aryan times. Certainly there could have been at that remote period none but one Dravidian language spoken not only all over India but even beyond its frontiers, and that language could have been no other than Tamil which still lives among twenty million people in all its literary glory and usefulness. Except Tamil no other Dravidian language possess such vast, antique varied, original, valuable literature, the literatures of the other few cultivated Dravidian tongues such as Kanarese. Telugu and Malayalam being not more than seven or eight hundred years old at most and even these consist of works either translated from Sanscrit or written in imitation of some Sanscrit works. It is an admitted fact that, that language alone which possesses grammar and literature that forms the only criterion to estimate the height of civilization to which the people who owned them had attained.

If in India of Pre-Aryan times, there had existed no literary work that could be brought forward from any of the existing Dravidian languages except Tamil, then it is as certain as two and two makes four, that language did not exist at that time or if it could be assumed that it did exist, it was not cultivated by a civilized people in any way. For the life of a civilized nation cannot get on without the cultivation of its language and the production of a varied literatures. If Sir John Marshall had a first hand knowledge of the Tholkappiam and some other ancient classics of Tamil he would have easily shown in corroboration of what he stated as regards the pre-Aryan antiquity of one of the Dravidian languages, that Tamil alone, and not any other as he vaguely affirmed, must have been the language spoken and cultivated by the pre-Aryan inhabitants of the Indus valley. Still, he has benefited the historians of the antique past by producing solid and substantial evidence in proof of the Tamilian civilization which was contemporaneous with the civilizations of the Egyptians, the

Babylonians, the Sumerians and other ancient nations of the west. Fortunately, we are now in a position strong and unshakable to correlate with the above archaeological evidence, the proofs afforded by the ancient and genuine literary works of the Tamil language.

And this I believe has been amply done in the following Tamil treatise which is but an expansion of my Presidential Address partly read and partly delivered in “The All India Tamil Religious Conference” held in Madras on the 19th and 20th October, 1940. For the benefit of the English-knowing people I give below a succinct account of the contents of this book as far as the limit of this short preface permits.

The first section is devoted to showing who the real Tamilians were and are, since different peoples belonging to different races mingle together in modern times and almost all of them in the South speak Tamil as the common tongue. This state of things could not have existed in the remote past when the mixture of races was rare, except when one raided into the other for food and comfort and settled amongst them. But, as time went on, the Aryans the Scythians, the Monogolians, the Turks and others entered Northern India through passes in the north-west and the north-east and after hard and continuous struggles with the indigenous Tamils, settled themselves all over the north rather peacefully. This state of different racial inrush into the north led in course of time to a large intermixture of the foreign blood with the Tamil. Still, in every ethnical type the Dravidian, properly speaking the Tamilian element alone, predominates markedly all over the north. Though the Tamilian stock has thus underwent considerable change in northern India, the stock in the south has remained pure and intact, as has been shown by Prof. Rapson in his ‘Ancient India.’ So we may safely affirm that the people, living at present from Madras to Cape Comorin except those who speak at home

tongues different from Tamil, can be no other than the lineal descendants of the original and highly civilized Tamils of pre-Aryan times. Dr. G.A. Grierson justly observes: “With this we may dismiss the theory which assigns a trans-Himalayan origin to the Dravidians. Taking them as we find them now, it may safely be said that their present geographical distribution, the marked uniformity of physical characters among the more primitive members of the group, their animistic religion, their distinctive languages, their stone monuments, and their retention of a primitive system of totemism justify us in regarding them as the earliest inhabitants of India of whom we have any knowledge.”<sup>1</sup>

Then, the second section takes up the question whether there is any pure and real Aryan element in the present population of India and concludes that no such element can be said to exist so as to be easily detected in it, although a type approaching the Aryan is traced all along the river Indus, in Kashmir and in Rajputana. The fact, however, seems to be the Aryan branch of people who migrated from Bactria into India driven, of course, by scarcity of food and change of climate, could not have been so numerous as some orientalist suppose but must have been a few thousands only as shown by Ragozin<sup>2</sup> and even these few merged in course of time in the vast ocean of the Tamilian people to a degree that their physical and mental characteristics become in later ages quite indistinguishable from the latter. Therefore it has been shown in this section that the existence of a separate Aryan race in India is a mere fiction and nothing more.

The third section enters into a discussion of the colour and physical features which the Tamilians possess in common with the other Indian people. As has been shown by Dr. Caldwell, colour is not a safe guide in judging of the racial characteristics of the Tamils as well as all other Indian people. Even among those

who are generally black, there are great variations in colour ranging from pitch black to a bright pale black. The labouring classes who work under scorching solar rays become black or dimly brown even if they were born of pure yellow colour; where as the middle classes and the rich who carry on their business within doors are of either bright yellow tint or of rich brown, even here one may notice great and fine gradations. In the same way form and shape, size and height, differ widely not only among the Tamils but even among all other classes of the Indian people. With all such differences there might be seen at a glance perceptible general characteristic running through them all which marks of the Tamils from all other people who have come into India at different periods of time and settled. Many an acute student of ethnic studies has noted in the eyes and features of the Tamils a certain brightness and alertness due to a suffusion of superior intelligence which is naturally denied to others.

The fourth and fifth sections consider the origin of the Dravido-Aryans who came to call themselves '**Brahmins**' from the time when the late Purushasookta hymn of the tenth mandala of the Rig Veda was composed. Though the Brahmins nowadays style themselves 'Aryans,' they liked it not to be called by that appellation at the time when they composed the code the Manusmriti, as is manifest from the contemptuous way in which they speak of the unmixed Aryans who then dwelt in Kashmir. From this it follows that the class of people who wished to call themselves invariably 'Brahmins' rather than the Aryans, or the Dravidians, appears evidently for this very reason, to have descended from a stock which was neither Aryan nor Dravidian but was a mixture of the two.

Then, the inquiry into the true lineage of Manu the original law-giver to the Aryans is taken up and treated. That the first Manu-first because there had been many persons who bore that name in later times-was a Dravidian king who resided in Malabar,

the mountainous district of the Tamil country, has been fully shown by Ragozin in his 'Vedic India.' As the name and person of Manu are always associated with the author of an original moral code, and as this Manu was a Dravidian king who taught the laws and moral principles not to the unmixed and uncivilized Aryans of Kashmir but to the more refined Dravido-Aryans of the middle country, it is concluded that the laws he gave were intended not for the Tamils who had laws and excellent moral principles all along, but were intended for the instruction and guidance of the Dravido-Aryans who were then becoming slowly Dravidianized in the north, and that the division of the Dravido-Aryans into four castes was made by him for the special purpose of studying and controlling the social and political affairs of their life.

Sections six, seven, eight, and nine pursue the subject of caste and show how it was instituted at first by Manu in imitation of the Tamilian social system which was based not upon the merit of birth but upon division of labour since each section of which is called even now by the name of the profession which it follows. Before the time of Manu the Aryans had no caste, but Manu introduced the fourfold classification among them simply for the sake of giving stability to their calling which were otherwise in a fluidic condition, on account of their long nomadic life which bred in them a disinclination for honest work and led them to live upon plunder and cattle-lifting. What was intended at first to confer social benefit to the Aryan settlers, was seized upon with avidity by the self-interested section of the Dravido-Aryans who had the sagacity enough to perceive the high rank to which the caste system would raise them, if it could be so hardened that it could not by any means be broken through with impunity. What was at first a pliant group became in course of time an impenetrable body like steel. For this deplorable state of Hindu community the vegetarian part of the Tamilians is chiefly responsible.

I pointed out this fact thirty-eight years ago in an article on Tholkappiam which appeared in the first volume of my magazine Jnanasagaram, but no oriental scholar took notice of it then. Recently, Dr. Slater who was Professor of Economics in the University of Madras had the shrewdness of mind to discern this important fact and state that the invention of caste and its rigid observance were the work of no other people than the Tamilians. Even at the present day, no other Hindu community, as far as my knowledge goes, pays so much care and attention to cleanliness of food and chastity of their women as the Tamils, especially the community of vegetarian Velalas. In northern India, caste is not so rigidly observed as in the south, since the Aryans had no caste, since those who instituted it were the ancient civilized Tamils only. The fact must be borne in mind that while in the north most of the Brahmins are out and out flesh eaters, those in the south and the Velalas are strict vegetarians. So great an importance came to be attached to clean food and women's chastity that these two have ever stood as the prime factors actively working at the bottom of the Tamil community to split it up into innumerable small groups that can never cohere with each other.

Now, either in the north or in the south no non-brahmin ventures to call himself a God except those of the priestly class who style themselves Brahmins or Gods. With this they are not content but choose to call all the non-brahmins by the name of 'Sudras' which term means in Sanscrit the children of the concubines or slaves. But, in point of fact, it is the Brahmins who do all sorts of menial work under the Tamilian landlords, and rich Tamil merchants and heads of the Mutts, while the poor Tamils are honest labourers in the fields, are artisans and weavers. Further, the Brahmins are, as pointed out before, not at all the Aryans nor the Tamilians but are the descendants who came from the mixture of the two. Besides calling themselves the Gods on earth and treating all others as Sudras, or slaves, the Brahmins have adopted Sanscrit as their written language with the motive

of establishing their supernatural claims in the treatises which they themselves created in it but attributed their origin to the Supreme Being itself.

And in order to bring all the Tamilians under complete control, they kept them in gross ignorance of Sanscrit with the threat that the tongue of those who, in breach of the law, learn it would be cut off, into the ears of those who hear it molten lead would be poured and so on. Though the kings in the north and the south, belonging as they did and even now do to the TAMILIAN stock, were very hospitable to strangers and treated the Brahmins with respect and reverence, yet they never adopted the unjust laws fabricated by the Brahmins and passed off in the name of Manu the original TAMILIAN law-giver. Administration of justice seems to have been carried on not with any caste consideration as is laid down in the so-called Manusmriti, but with a broad outlook on the actions of man as they came to affect the welfare of the society to which he belonged. This broad-minded administration of ancient Indian kings accords well with the precepts of St. Thiruvalluvar's Sacred Kural rather than with the cruel and unnatural laws of the Manusmriti.

Now, seeing their failure to bring the kings under their baneful influence so as to make their code of laws the chief and infallible guide to their administrative functions, they sought to revive the sacrificial cult of the Vedas and the Brahmanas under the cloak of securing the Heavenly favour for the prosperity of kings; and in this they succeeded so well that the kings became in fact mere puppets in their hands and sacrifices lasting even hundreds of years came to be performed with the wealth of the monarchs. In these sacrifices hundreds and even thousands of innocent creatures such as goats, sheep, oxen, buffaloes, horses, and others had been slaughtered and intoxicating drinks prepared from Soma plants were freely indulged in. Such

inhuman deeds and inebriant revels done in the name of religion cannot but seem revolting and barbaric to the Tamilian mind nurtured in the teaching of its saints and sages who inculcated the virtue and duty of showing love and mercy towards all living beings, of respecting the sanctity of their life brought into existence not by the hand of man but by the hand of God, and of striving one's utmost to relieve their sufferings, and help them to live their life with ease and peace to the limit of time decreed by Providence.

Eventually strong protests came to be raised against animal sacrifices performed by the Brahmins, and of those who thus protested two Tamilian sages named Kapila and Patanjali stood foremost to set free the people and the ruling chiefs from the trammels of specious Brahminic teachings and their expensive and inhuman rituals. They showed how the sin of killing and drinking brought on insensibility to tender feelings and made this earth a jungle of wild beasts, and how whereas the virtue of love and mercy and wisdom lead the fit souls to obtain redemption and enjoy heavenly bliss even while they live here. These teachings of love and mercy touched the hearts of all and spread so rapidly everywhere that the ritualistic cult of the Brahmins had begun to fall into disrepute; and the kings also who were wise and learned came forward to take an active part in propagating humanitarian principles and in laying bare the futility of Vedic learning and the evil of animal sacrifice, as is manifest from such Upanishads as Chandogya, Kaushitaki, Mundaka and others. These high spiritual teachings of some noble kings gave such a strong stimulus to an investigation among royal families of the destiny of man and lower beings that a long line of kings who succeeded them could not set their mind at rest without earnestly interesting themselves in the solution of religious and philosophical problems to a complete exclusion of all ritualistic studies and performances.

The final stroke to Brahminism was, however, given by the princes Gautama Buddha and Mahavira who, renouncing even

their royal state and taking to a mendicant life, stood firmly for the cause of dumb creatures, and devoted their whole time and energy to putting a stop to animal sacrifices, and heartless observance of caste principles, and to the indiscriminate study of the Vedas and other Aryan works. Finding it no longer possible to live in the north with ease and influence, the Brahmins of the Dravido-Aryan stock migrated to the south hoping to exercise their priestly craft over the Tamils; and as expected they were accorded a hearty reception by the Tamil kings and chiefs, by landlords and people. Their complexion, their fine Personal appearance due, as in the case of modern Eurasian type, to the blending of the Dravidian and Aryan elements, impressed the aesthetic sense of the southern people and enlisted their sympathy on behalf of the new-comers. Consequently the Brahmins were allowed to settle without any trouble all over the south; but they were not permitted to live near the habitations of the vegetarian velalas but to make their abode with the other low class Tamils who, like the Brahmins, were addicted to drinking and eating all kinds of animal flesh. Those of the Brahmins who were shrewd enough to discover how low they were considered inwardly by the Velala Tamils while they were outwardly treated with respect came by degrees to give up flesh-eating and thereby succeeded in raising themselves in the estimation of all the vegetarian and non-vegetarian Tamils. Whereas others who persisted in the habit of meat-eating, freely mixed with all sorts of low class Tamils so much so that their progeny in afterages were constrained to live in complete isolation discarded for a long time as outcast, before they too adopted the vegetarian mode of living and passed themselves under the name of Brahmins.

The original Brahmin community, in proportion to its admixture with the non-vegetarian classes of the Tamils, underwent considerable changes not only in its physical characteristics but in its creeds, customs and manners also, that,

in later times, its descendants could not but live in innumerable separate groups so that each group never interdined with the other nor intermarried. To this splitting up of the Dravido-Aryan community were added many others converted from the various classes of the Tamils from the time of Ramanuja of the Vaishnava sect up to our own. In view of the high rank to which mere mention of the name 'Brahmin' raises one in this country, many a shrewd person of the Dravidian stock is daily assuming the title of a Brahmin, and is becoming an enthusiastic convert to Brahminism. In this state of unbridled racial commixture, is it not quite unsafe and unreasonable to call anyone an Aryan against all ethnological facts? And so the section nine closes with the conclusion that, except in the case of the scanty few who dwell in the north-west corner of India, in the veins of almost all the people of India it is the Dravidian blood that courses round from time immemorial up to the present.

Then the section ten takes to tracing the origin of the term 'madam' and the time when it came to signify religion in the Tamil country. Before the second century of the Christian era no word is met with in Tamil literature to denote religion. Even in the works of the second century it is the term 'Samayam' that comes to be used as the name of religion. The very first mention of the word 'madam' occurs in the Thiruvachakam of St. Manickavachakar who existed in the first half of the third century A.D. And it must be noted that both these terms 'madam' and 'samayam' are coined Tamil words though they are claimed now to belong to Sanscrit. Long anterior to the times of the Sankhya, the Yoga and other systems of philosophy, long before the rise of such humanitarian religions as Buddhism and Jainism, people do not seem to have engaged themselves either in religious speculations or in religious discussions. Neither did the Aryans whose whole mind was absorbed in performing animal sacrifices, nor the Tamils who were paying their worship to one Almighty. God whose presence they

felt in light and fire, stand in need of religious inquiries, as at that remote age there was no one who could call in question their beliefs and observances.

It was only in after ages when some Tamilians of acute intelligence and tender feelings had begun to reflect upon the horrors of animal sacrifices and the waste of life, money and energy which they involved, that their virtue on the one side and their evil on the other came to be discussed with ardour and heat and systems of religious and philosophic thought sprang into existence. And this created the necessity of calling each system by a special name, and the Tamilian religion too came to be called either Saivism or Vaishnavism according as the worshippers of the Almighty God took him to be either a heat principle or cold principle.

Since the birth-place of all the different systems of thought and belief had been only northern India. Where, at the time, the Sanscrit language and its dialects were, as it is now, asserting their dominance over the Dravidian tongues, especially in the educated circles, into all of which the Brahmins had insinuated themselves, and their influence, all these different cults and creeds came of necessity to be called by distinct Sanscrit names alone. It was in this way that all manner of dissensions arose among the people of northern India and these again were brought by the Brahmins and introduced into Southern India by the aid of Sanscrit in the three centuries preceding the Christian era and in their wake came the Jains and the Buddhists also in large numbers in the early centuries of the Christian era and spread religious disputations and hair-splitting philosophic discussions among the Tamils. Before this intrusion of the northern people, all the cultured and civilized Tamils were as a body strict monotheists paying their worship only to Siva as the almighty God of the universe and therefore had no occasion to bring in any religious or philosophic discussion among them. But after the

introduction of Brahminism, Buddhism, Jainism and Sanscrit, they became torn by religious differences and widely differing cults bearing Sanscrit names rose successively in their midst until our own time, this conclusion can be easily confirmed even by a cursory glance into the Tamil lyrics and idylls produced in the pre-Christian times and by comparing them with the epics and didactic poems and religious and philosophic treatises written in post-Christian centuries.

Then, the eleventh section proceeds to inquire what were the elements that composed the Tamilian creed and how and why they came to occupy the minds of the ancient Tamils. First of all it is shown that their forefathers entertained a strong belief in the series of existences which all beings that are endowed with life, will, feeling and intelligence pass through, not of their own accord but in accord with the will and purpose of a Supreme power, and that they looked upon this present life not as a sudden outburst of a precarious will, but as a vital link between what preceded it and what will succeed it. The purpose of creation seems to aim at the unfoldment of all the faculties of the finite mind that lie dormant being enveloped in darkness and to enable it properly to enjoy the happiness and bliss which is in store for it in this world and in the worlds to come. To the degree the beings exercised their will and intelligence, they rise in the scale of embodying themselves in various organisms which too rise in refinement correspondingly. But this unfoldment of mental powers proceeds so slowly and so gradually that no being, however much it may desire quickly to attain perfection, can overstep the bounds set to it by the Supreme intelligence. The finite mind must seek to know not only the Supreme object of the Supreme mind but must also learn to keep its own will and desire in harmony with the Divine will and purpose. It is by not doing any injury to any fellow being and by not thwarting the beneficent purpose of God, that one can

accelerate the attainment of perfect state and final redemption from sin and evil.

Then the section twelve takes up the clue afforded by the preceding section and deals with the doctrine of nonkilling embraced whole-heartedly and followed unremittingly by the Tamils in its theory and practice. It is laid down in the Tholkappiam that all lives are possessed of an instinctive desire to obtain pleasure all throughout their life here and hereafter. Man who is the apex of creation and who is given a wider scope for obtaining his own enjoyment without interfering with the enjoyment of other beings human or animal, must on no account except in an extreme case of self-defence, attempt to take away the life of any being under any other pretence. When one hardens his heart by not heeding the sufferings of other lives, he hinders the development of his own finer sensibilities without which every sweet thing becomes bitter to him or he deadens them so much as to lead the life of ferocious animals. Besides losing the higher and precious faculties of his mind man loses also the health of his body by killing harmless and useful animals and eating their flesh. As has been conclusively proved by Dr. A. Haig and Dr. J. H. Kellogg, animal food is saturated with uric acid poison and all who devour it, introduce into their blood a fruitful source of all Pernicious diseases. It is to the glory of the Tamil people that the cultured class among them had early discovered the virtue of non-killing and abstaining from flesh-food and conferred the benefit of their discovery even on such anciently civilized peoples as the Egyptians, the Greeks and the Romans with whom they held commercial relations.

That this discovery of humane and vegetarian mode of living was first made by the agricultural class of people among the Tamils is borne out by the existence of a very large number of strict vegetarians counting many millions in southern India alone. As

these Tamils have been and still are the worshippers of Siva alone their religion and their doctrine of vegetarianism became so intimately bound up that the very term 'Saivism' besides signifying the cult of Siva among the educated classes, is popularly used to mark out the vegetarian section specifically. From the many references made to these vegetarian Velalas in the old Tamil poem composed before and after the Christian era, we can safely affirm that their existence in the south and north of India goes back at least to 5000 B.C. As the Egyptian religion and the Hebrew book of Genesis forbade the use of animal food, influenced of course by the Tamil merchants, precept and example, the date we have assigned to the high antiquity of the vegetarian Tamils will not seem improbable or extravagant. From the antique past up to the present no country except India can claim so many millions of pure vegetarians that this fact alone will suffice to place this country as the only earliest home of vegetarianism.

Then, the thirteenth section treats of the lifelong union of the opposite sexes which was based in the early stages of the Tamilian society solely on pure love to the exclusion of all other considerations. Chastity of women formed so prominent a factor in the social life of the ancient Tamilians of higher classes that they permitted not any other consideration to interfere with the marriage union and mar its purity. The natural law of sexual union is expressly stated often and often in the very old Tamil work **Tholkappiam** that any other form of union, as it is at present arranged, seems to have been devised by an intrusive hand bent upon filling its own pocket. The pairs who at first chose each other out of pure love were afterwards openly wedded by their own elderly relations and the wedding ceremony was solemnized without courting the assistance of a priest.

It is further shown that the early Aryan settlers had no idea of celebrating the union of sexes by a ceremony such as we find among them, rather among their followers, in later ages when they

came into close contact with the Tamils and learnt it. The marriage hymn which is found not in the nine early books of the Rig Veda but only in its tenth book besides bearing indisputable evidence to its later introduction, shows what a mean and undignified view the Aryans took of their women's character by making them the wives of three Deva husbands previous to their marriage. From this and many other references made to their women's character, for instance to the incestuous passion of the woman *yami*, it is quite clear that the Aryans cared little for the chastity of their woman. For a fuller treatment of the institution of marriage, the difference that obtained in the observance of its rites between the ancient Tamils and the Aryan followers and the relative significance that came to be attached to them by the two people, the reader is referred to the sections twentyeight, twentynine, and thirty.

Now, the sections fourteen and fifteen deal with the custom of the Tamils which allowed them to have a plurality of wives, even though the marriage of the first wife took place as the outcome of pure love. The reason for this polygamous custom seems to be twofold. First of all the ancient Tamils paid particular attention to preserving the health of their women as well as the health of their children. Sexual intercourse should not be indulged in too often of the detriment of women's health even if they are blessed with a robust constitution and have not given birth to any children.

But, after they have begun to bring forth children, a sufficiently long interval, say three, four, or five years must be allowed them between one child-birth and another so that they may recoup their health and strength and become properly fit for sexual enjoyment and another child-bearing. Otherwise, not only is brought about the breakdown of their own health but the physical and mental capacities of their innocent children also deteriorate. But, who in fact is the root-cause of so much misery and affliction? Undoubtedly it is not the females; it is the males alone who, in

ninetynine cases out of a hundred, lose self-control in their passionate moments, commit the crime of sexual congress on their helpless wives against their will and put them to the inexpressible misery of child-bearing within an year they had given birth to a puny and pitiable child.

<sup>3</sup>Dr. John Cowan has quoted many cases to prove how heartless has been many a male partner as to commit this crime on his innocent wife under the influence of a blind and unbridled sexual passion, thus overlooking the welfare of his own family completely. It is known that women generally lose the capacity for child-bearing beyond their fortieth or fortyfifth year, and become thereby unfit for sexual intercourse: And many still, after giving birth to a child, feel a natural aversion to sexual congress. In all such cases the males conduct themselves either inconsiderately or seek to make clandestine love to women who belong to others or else they go to prostitutes.

From this state of sexual diversions it is that adultery and its evil consequences spring up and eat away the health, strength, and moral fibre of humanity. But the forefathers of the Tamils seem to have early recognized these evils towards which the strong sexual appetite of their sons tended and sought to remedy it by marrying two or more wives to their sons either at the time of their first love - marriage or subsequent to it. In this way the parents themselves stood foremost in creating facilities for their sons so that they might not go astray when their first wife was confined but might have recourse to their second wife until she too was in child-bed, when he might go to the third and return again to his first when the last was lying in. By this natural means they succeeded not only in keeping up the health and strength of their females and their progeny but also in saving their male descendants from committing criminal and sinful deeds and contracting dreadful venereal diseases.

Prophet Muhammed too seems to have perceived in the strong sexual passion of the males a serious hindrance to a healthy moral life and peace of society and therefore had permitted them to marry from one to four wives as an effective check to their evil tendencies. European travellers who visited Muslim countries were struck with wonder at the absence of adultery among their people and have attributed its absence to the polygamous custom of the Muslims. They have also observed even in countries where monogamy prevails each male having in secret a number of females as concubines. These facts must clearly disclose what a high and wholesome object the Tamilian forefathers must have had in setting up the polygamous custom among their descendants and how nobly they stand as fearless benefactors of their race inspired only by strong and undaunted moral courage.

Then, the section sixteen proceeds to show how far the Tamil parents of old held themselves responsible for the upbringing of their children and at what limit they supposed that responsibility had ceased. It is expressly stated in the old Tamil classics that the duty of the parents lies in bringing up their children healthily and in righteous ways, in educating them in arts, crafts and sciences, in marrying and settling them in life so that they might lead their life independently of their parents' help and that with this fulfilment of duty their responsibility ceases. It is also plainly enjoined that no property except a valuable education should be bestowed by parents on their children, for all earthly possession are transitory while the light of learning constitutes an everlasting possession.

In this view the ancients stood so steadfast that after setting apart a portion of their earnings for the maintenance of their family and the upbringing of their children, they employed a larger part of them for charitable purposes. It is mentioned in the old Tamil lexicons that rich persons lavished their wealth in doing thirty-two

kinds of charitable deeds; and it is to their boundless generosity that we now owe the existence of not only thousands of temples all over the south, of which many for the construction of their magnificent and artistic structure must have absorbed millions of pounds, but also innumerable rest-houses, feeding houses, hospitals, schools, religious institutions and others. With this the main subjects pertaining to the present life have closed and those pertaining to a life beyond are treated from the next section with a fulness their importance and inaccessibility to ordinary understanding demand.

Now, the seventeenth section opens the subject of future life, with the question why an instinctive longing for a continued existence of their souls after the dissolution of the mortal body is so strongly implanted in the hearts of all human beings whether cultured or uncultured. This and the following sections to the end of the twenty-first treat exhaustively what could be the genuine and well-grounded answer to it. Now the longing for a future life can find itself explained only in the imperfection every man feels every time that he faces a new problem that defies his powers of understanding, in the dissatisfaction he feels every moment after the excitement of a pleasurable feeling is over, accompanied by a sharp painful experience. It is such finite experiences mixed up with ignorance and pain all throughout this mortal life, that impel man to seek for a future life in which he hopes to attain perfection of understanding and perfection of joy.

Whether this hope of his will prove fruitful or will turn out to be a mere dream depends upon whether or not the realization of an ever-flowing source of infinite joy and bliss attainable. Inner as the experience of a pleasurable feeling is, in order to excite it every sentient being stands in indispensable need of a contact with an outer object. For instance, the feeling of sweet taste cannot be kindled unless a sweet thing, say an orange fruit or sugar, be brought close to one's tongue and palate. Similarly,

for the enjoyment of each and every kind of pleasure, man necessarily needs the contact of objects that can severally excite one and all. Now and again he clearly perceives that no object of this earth is capable enough to kindle in him the kind of pleasure at once permanent and unaccompanied by pain. Then, if there should be an infinite being as the inexhaustible source of an infinite pleasure-the existence of such a being is necessarily presupposed in the conception of the very finite as its contrast and correlate-then the hope of effecting a union of his self with that Supreme Self would find itself completely realized.

Strongly convinced therefore of the existence of such an infinite being, the acute intelligence and the highly developed instincts of the ancient Tamils anxiously set out to search for the principle in which it could reside in a way perceptible to the outer and inner vision of man. And in their quest of this source they finally succeeded in feeling it in the light and heat of the blazing fiery bodies. Light and heat are pure spiritual energies since the modern science has not proved them to be either matter or material energies. In the view of Tamil Saints and Sages, God is not a transcendent being but a being of supreme love who is ever near to his creation, to his created beings human and animal; he resides in and out of their substance and every thing lives, moves and has its being in him, in him alone. Before the creation of hot and resplendent bodies such as the sun and stars - each star being a sun millions of times bigger than our own sun, how the universe was, whether it was bright or dark, is quite unimaginable; and so far as our knowledge goes no science of Astronomy has as yet succeeded in finding out the exact nature of that unimaginable state.

Leaving out therefore, that fruitless inquiry, we must confine our attention to our luminary which gives out light and heat that pervade all throughout the universe that our vision and imagination can comprehend. There is not a needle-point of space which the

brilliant rays of the sun have not touched. This earth and all other planets that go around it are being illuminated only by its resplendent light. As it were all bodies are immersed in it or are floating in it. Now, what can be more intimate to man and other beings, animate and inanimate, than this light, this heat which not only bring forth and sustain all beings, but illumine the sight of all sentient beings and through it their understanding also? If there be no light, no heat, no materials for producing heat and light, as in the polar regions from which the sunlight is completely absent for two full months and in which nothing for making fire is procurable, will it be possible for us to get enlightenment of understanding even were it possible to eke out our bare and miserable existence under such inefficient conditions in nature? No, certainly not. It is, therefore, not unreasonable to hold with our forefathers that the light itself is God or the only true form of God, that the fire which is the source of light and heat is the only abode of God or God itself. This spiritual nature of light and heat and fire is emphasized in the body of the work by referring to the widespread worship paid to the sun, moon and fire by such early civilized people as the Egyptians, the Babylonians, the Chaldeans, the Persians, the Mexicans and by other uncivilized tribes all over the world as fully pointed out by Dr. J.G. Frazer.

Now, this intuitive perception of the existence of God in light and fire aided, of course, by an acute discriminative understanding helped the ancient Tamilians to detect in it the combination of two fundamental principles which are always at work not only in the creative and sustaining processes but also in the process of consuming the used-up materials. These two are the heat and the cold principles, of which the heat predominates over the cold in fire and the cold is not therefore easily discernible in it. Still, by holding a tumbler over the burning flame, you can clearly see drops of water collecting all around its brim and dripping from it. Besides this, if you carefully look into the flame

you can discover within it a light blue colour which the cold principle always assumes. It is from this inseparable union of heat and cold principles that energies of all kinds are generated and it is these energies that bring about the creation, the preservation and the destruction of both the animate and the inanimate bodies of the universe. Whether you call the two principles the positive and negative electricities, whether you call them red and blue, or male and female, whether you call them Siva and Uma, or father and mother, whether you call them a line and a circle when their actions manifest themselves in inanimate matter, in all these and elsewhere the law is the same without any deviation. The steam-power which works wonders in material bodies is a visible instance in which we easily recognize how the heat and cold principles work together to generate the energy required for moving heavy and massive bodies. And in the organic scales of life from the vegetable to the animal kingdom the same two principles work together for bringing forth more and more complex and intricate organisms for the use of lives as they climb more and more in the ladder of intelligence and intelligent capacity. And when we reach the high human level, in which the operation of the heat and cold principles has expressed itself in its maximum intensity, we comprehend in full the high divine purpose of a benevolent Providence in the disinterested love borne by the human father and mother towards their offspring.

Disinterested love in the Divine Being has no limit set to it, since all lives from the very lowest to the very highest are nurtured by it, whereas in the human it moves only within a limited range. Except for this difference, the disinterested love borne by our Heavenly and earthly parents towards their children is the same in substance. We see every where all around us every creature endowed with organism, the minute and complex structure of which defies the skill of human hand to produce even a meanest but vital copy of it. Does it not bespeak the illimitable grace and unbounded love on the part of the benefactor to bestow unasked

on all sentient beings such invaluable gifts as cannot be given by any but himself? Though such gifts lie beyond the scope of our earthly parents, yet what they give us with so much care, with so much love, with so much self-sacrifice must have been prompted only by the principle of universal love that dwells within every heart to make it like itself. For Divine nature is impressed on all Selves that have been brought into existence on this earth, and he who studies the nature and characteristics of his earthly parents will, as a matter of course, be led to comprehend the nature and personality of God to a real and appreciable extent. If viewed correctly in this light, how much truth is imbedded in the saying of the Holy Bible: “God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him, male and female created he them.” (Genesis, Chapter 1, verse 27). As a painter imprints his inward thought-picture on the picture he begets outwardly, as a sculpture chisels a statue out of a marble block in accordance with an image formed antecedently in his mind, so too the Divine mind prints its thought-forms on the pliant matter and brings out of it bodies of innumerable kinds and shapes.

As Plato said; “The pattern which works on earth is laid up in heaven.” Vast as is the difference between the structure of one body and that of another, the two co-ordiante principles of male and female that underlie them all are invariably the same. Hence, God is a person of light which combines in itself the principles of male and female in their most subtle thought-form which operates as the original of all male and female forms that take shape in matter. This fact relating to the two prominent features both in the material and spiritual planes had forced themselves so much into the attention of all thinking minds among the people of bygone ages that you cannot find among them one single soul who did not worship a God and a Goddess side by side.

Now, coming to our own ancient Tamil people, we find much the same kind of conception about the Divine nature to

prevail among them from the very remotest past. For, from the antediluvian compositions such as the Tholkappiam and some lyrics that have outlived the ravages of time, to the works of our own time all the wise men who came in close succession as their authors have praised and worshipped God as the father and mother intimately and inseparably united and the many verses quoted from them in the body of the work will corroborate the truth herein emphasized. But what is the vital point in this conception of God which the Tamil Saints and Sages cherished in their hearts and which distinguishes them from all other wisemen of other countries who too seem to have held the belief that in the Godhead there are both the paternal and maternal principles in intimate and inseparable union? yes; it is the knowledge possessed by the Tamils of the colour which the two principles assume that distinguishes them from all other people of all other countries. The Tamils tell us that the male principle of the Godhead glows with a red colour while the female glow with a blue. Whenever they pray to Lord Siva, they speak of him as being of brilliant red, and of mother Uma they speak as being blue and as being also in intimate union with Siva. This knowledge of the two colours of the two Divine principles marks the high significance of the Tamilian conception of God, since without having colour no object, no person can present its form either to the perception of our eyes or to the perception of our mind. It must be borne in mind that nowhere can this notable conception of God be met with except in the Saiva religion of the Tamils. This point is stressed at great length in the body of the work and the reader is referred to it for further details.

Now, to many an unreflecting mind such an ascription of form and colour to the Deity may seem not only strange but also degrading to the Supreme Being who is beyond the reach of five senses and human thought, who is untouched by the ills and impurities that are incident to the mortal frame of man.

Those who take delight in thus asserting that God is transcendent, do so simply out of fancy, while in reality God is a substance of substances that is ever accessible to reason and intuition and is not a mere zero so as to be completely incomprehensible even to the unclouded superior faculties of the human mind. Such a false conception of God, as pointed out by Professor William James<sup>4</sup>, has no bearing whatever on the life and destiny of finite souls and must, therefore, be abandoned as an empty, worthless and unprofitable speculation of some idle minds. If God be a substance—a substance indeed it is but purely spiritual, it must be known, like other substances, not necessarily to ordinary senses bereft of superior mental vision as in the case of low animal life, but it must be known to the pre-eminent intuitive perception of highly developed human beings. Further, it is quite unreasonable to hold with the transcendentalists that all forms are perishable, that they are tainted with ills and impurities. On the contrary, the fact must be brought home to our mind that all thought-forms as well as the forms of light and fire, are imperishable, that they always exist absolutely pure untouched by the ills and impurities the heritage of man's mortal clay. Throw out any amount of dirt and filth, dregs, and sediments and refuse, etc., into the fire and try to defile it but you cannot succeed. On the other hand, the fire will burn them up all to ashes, itself ever remaining pure and undefiled. So also God's thought-forms exist everlastingly the purest and uncontaminated by any impurities.

Then, the sections from twentytwo to twentyseven dwell upon the forms of worship the Tamils have been paying to God from ancient times. The conceived God in a concrete form, in the form of the human father and mother. The whole universe was taken by them to represent the person of God in which the portion suffused with golden light constituted the father as much as the portion of blue sky light constituted the mother; the three illuminating principles the sun, the moon and

the fire were viewed as forming his three eyes; the evening clouds which look ruddy were imagined as his braided red locks; and other microcosmic members of his person represented other microcosmic aspects perceived by the senses and miniaturized in the imagination so as to be easily pictured in the mind for their loving adoration. The Southern Tamils who loved the three lights chose to call their God “Mukkannan” (கிழவன்) or the triple-eyed God, that is, the God that possesses the three lights as his three eyes; while the northern Tamils who loved the red light of the evening sun fixed upon the term ‘Siva’ as being an appropriate one by which to call the Almighty God of the universe.

Now, with this mere intangible microcosmic image of God formed in their mind the Tamils were not satisfied, since it was not accessible to the worship they loved to pay externally also. Intense love towards an object expresses itself in the acts of the loving person and urges him on to offer to it, as a token of that love, what he most values of his earthly possessions. It is for the sake of satisfying this inner urge that persons of a strong religious turn of mind set up before them a stone image, made like the image of God formed in their imagination, and pay their adoration by offering to it flowers, fruits, grains etc., in all love and reverence.

The earliest stone symbol worshipped six or seven thousand years ago by the Tamils was a coneshaped piece infixed into a circular stone and called ‘Sivalinga’ in later times. This symbol represents the union of both the heat principles which, as is manifest in the burning flame, always assumes a cone-shape, and the cold principle which, as is seen in the circling motion of the deep running water, takes on a ring-shape almost. That the ancient Tamils used, than as now, such symbol stones all over India and in foreign countries where they colonized for commercial purposes, is evidenced not only by the large number of these symbol stones

recently dug out from the buried cities of Harappa and Mohenjadaro in the Punjab, but also by the multitudinous temple in which this symbol is set up and worshipped even unto this day in Southern India and western countries.

And of this very old lithic symbol the under part which is circular in shape is a plain representation of the shape of the pit in which the fire was kindled, while the cone-shaped piece infixed into it stands for the form of the flame that blazes up from the pit. It was in this way that fire was kindled and directly worshipped as God by the ancient Tamils in pre-historic times and long after; and at the end of the service the burnt up ashes was taken out of the pit as the sacred remnant of the fire and smeared all over their body and forehead. But as time went on, their love for worshipping God in still more tangible forms grew up impelling them to substitute for the pit a ring stone and for the blazing fire a piece of stone shaped like it conically; after joining the two together they anointed it with oil, they put leaves and flowers on it, they offered to it what they usually drank and ate, they sang and danced before it, they embraced it and in this wise they satisfied their passion for a tangible worship. It must be noticed too that this form of worship still continues to be paid in all the Siva and Vishnu temples all over India from Cape Comorin to the Himalayas.

Notwithstanding this plain and indisputable origin of Sivalinga or the symbol of Lord Siva, most of the European travellers and scholars and many a learned Indian too have mistaken this sacred symbol of God for a phallic emblem. No greater error can be committed than this misapprehension of the saving significance which the sacred symbol of Siva implies. The smearing of the sacred ashes is so closely associated with the worship of Siva in the form of fire that you cannot explain the association if you take the Sivalinga merely as the symbol of the phallus or the generative organ. But when you relate the use of the sacred ashes to fire-worship, it finds itself fully and readily explained, since ashes is

the only pure and sacred remnant left by fire at the end of its worship. Fire purifies everything with which it comes in contact and the pure white ashes must be considered therefore as the emblem of purity itself. That is why the very pious Saint Francis of Assisi too always carried the ashes in his hands and declared "Brother ash is very pure."<sup>5</sup> And for more extended treatment of the significance of Sivalinga the reader is referred to the Tamil text.

Besides this stone symbol of fire, the Tamils also worshipped the Heavenly Parents as represented in stone in the human male form of Siva and the female form of Uma. Images of this twofold character have been unearthed from the ruins of Harappa and Mohenjadaro and Dr.E. Mackay correctly identifies them with Siva and Uma<sup>6</sup> There can therefore be little doubt that temples dedicated to Siva built both on small scale and large, just as we find them now all over India, existed five or six thousand years ago, as is clear from mention made of them in the Tamil Lyrics composed about 3500 B.C.

As times advanced, conceptions of God's various function and of his various manifestations in various forms also multiplied that images representing them all came to be made successively and set up for worship in one and the same temple of Siva. Of such images those of Murukan and Ambalavanan constitute the earliest after the erection of Sivalinga and Umasiva. The form of Murukan represents God's eternally existing youthful personality, while the dancing posture of Lord Ambalavanan intimates the unceasing activity of God that sets the whole universe in everlasting motion. For Further representations of God's functions and what they import the Tamil text must be looked into.

Besides the daily divine service performed in the temples of Lord Siva, there were also celebrated many festivals on days specially appointed for them in every year with the object of exhibiting the dealings of God with his pious and devoted servants.

Of such sacred festivals, the worshipping of God in the great conflagration of fire called the festival of Karthikai, seems to have been celebrated more than two thousand years ago, since a full description of which is given in the Tamil poem composed at the beginning of the Christian era. That some other festivals also were held with great solemnity and magnificence in pre-Christian times is evidenced by Tamil classical poems and their commentaries produced before and after the beginning of the Christian era.

Now, the sections twentyeight, twenty-nine and thirty return to a searching inquiry of the matrimonial rite as already indicated. How did the marriage rite originate in the past, who were its originators the Aryans or the Tamils, what were the forms into which the rite divided itself between the two peoples, how was it conducted by them, how does the ancient wedding ceremony of the Tamils differ from its later form and observance, how have the modern Tamils to conduct it with necessary changes to suit the modern life requirements, what do the forms and principles of the ceremony signify—all these are treated exhaustively in these sections.

Then, the section thirty-one deals with the funeral rite observed by the Tamils in ancient and modern times and shows how it should be performed in future with the assistance of Tamil priests alone.

After that, the thirty second section enters into a full discussion of the habits of mind inherited by each individual soul as an inevitable result of the deeds done in its previous births. Habits of mind acquired in previous lives and brought into this present life by each individual soul are summarily called in Tamil *vinai or karma* in Sanscrit. The Tamil people are by nature always reflective, and they could not therefore set their mind at rest with the satisfaction of their mere bodily wants. They went deeper into the problems that affect the

human life as a whole, instead of limiting their thought to a transitory part of its existence. For every sentient being has a continuous existence, of which the present is a quick flying moment having no independent value and reality but for its intimate relation to what constituted its past and what would constitute its future. In an undertaking of a momentous kind you will not associate with you a man who seeks to take part in it, without getting an exact knowledge of his antecedents as well as his would be conduct. In the management of one's vital affairs, no one will leave it in the hands of stranger whose past history is so completely unknown as to render an inference of his future totally impossible. Nay, our very daily life is so closely interwoven with the kind of life we led in the previous days the kind of life we will lead in the days to come.

Most of all, the very law of motion which we observe to prevail all around us warrants our belief in the existence of a series of lives through which every individual soul passes. For everything in this vast universe moves in a circle. The sun, moon and stars and our own earth move in a circle. Only for a limited length of time can we catch sight of a moving body in proportion to its velocity and the position from which we view it. Sooner or later it may pass out of our view and may reappear and disappear again and again as the scenes and actors in a dramatic representation do. The sun vanishes from our sight every evening and manifests itself every morning; yet we believe the same sun, and not a new sun quite different from the one we saw yesterday, has risen to our view. In like manner, every finite soul passes away every time its flimsy garment-like body wears out and reappears in a new body refreshed and recuperated. This state of things will continue until man learns the art of prolonging the life in a single body and with that conquering death he enters into an eternal union with the Supreme Being and becomes there the receptacle of its ineffable and everlasting bliss.

Now, this fact of soul's birth and rebirth was, as evidenced by the old Tamil classics, discovered at first only by the Tamilian sages and was communicated by them to the Aryans and others who came to them for instruction in the destiny of man. Nevertheless many a scholar of oriental learning wrongly thinks that the discovery of soul's rebirth was first made by the Aryans alone. But in the whole range of such Rig Vedic hymns as were brought by the Aryans there is not even a stray reference to the doctrine of rebirth to uphold their assertion. The minds of the Aryan settlers were so overwhelmed with the anxiety of meeting their needs for the present life that they could bestow no thought on the question relating either to their past lives or their future; this can be made plain to every one who would take trouble to glance at the Rig Vedic hymns of the Aryans. They were too much concerned with the present to extend their vision either to what had gone before or what would come on hereafter. But, not so were the ancient Tamils who were so highly advanced in civilization and in mental, moral and religious culture that every problem relating to the destiny of man engaged their serious attention and was solved by them in such a way that the reasonableness of its solution and the bearing of which solution on the practical life of man constitute the marvels of the Tamilian thought.

Then, the sections thirtythree and thirtyfour treat of the ascetic mode of living with which the latter part of the ancient Tamilians' life was occupied. It has been already pointed out that the Tamilian forefathers, even while they were rolling in riches and enjoying the pleasures of life to their hearts content, never for an instant allowed themselves to lose sight of the momentous fact that their present happiness was due in a large measure to the virtuous deeds they did in their former births, and that, if their future lives also should be made enjoyable that could be achieved only by making the present life also virtuous in every respect so that it might contribute its moulding power to their future existence

and render it progressively happy. Such constant application of their mind to a serious consideration of the indissoluble connection of their present state with their past and future states of life, naturally bred in them an aversion to implicating themselves continually in a material life which continually changes, and which, however carefully led, brings on painful experiences and cannot afford a permanent and unalloyed pleasure even to highly developed souls. And so, after making their life fruitful, and before old age was approaching to sap their vitality, they retired from the worldly life in time and set their mind and energy on freeing themselves from the whirlpool of births and deaths and putting an end to their gross and impure material existence. And in order to achieve this end, they thought recourse must be had to the perfect. Being who alone being beyond births and deaths can redeem them from the clutches of mortal life and set them in the realm of light and imperishable enjoyment.

Now, what characterizes the ascetic life of the ancient Tamils is that they never forsook their wives and children like the Buddhist monks, but lived with them and devoted with them their whole time to the contemplation of God, to His Divine service, and to the service of humanity. So long as they were serving their own purpose and the purpose of their kith and kin, their love was moving on the limited plane of self-interest; but now entering the ascetic life which aims at breaking down the barrier of self-interest and merging it in the disinterested universal love of God, they looked upon all including their wives and children as their own kindred and made no difference whatever between their own and others. The olden day ascetic thought it a sin to leave his wife and children to mourn over his separation, instead of living with them and guiding them to follow in his footsteps the spiritual path which he pursued. This form of ascetic life led by the ancient Tamils is clearly mentioned in the *Tholkappiam* and for further details on this point the reader is referred to the Tamil text.

Before closing this subject, one more important point has to be brought to the notice of students who take interest in the

study of antiquities. As pointed out before, the ascetic life was peculiar to the Tamils, the theory and practice of yoga being indispensably and closely bound up as much with the virtue of non-killing and abstaining completely from flesh-eating, and drinking, as with the loving worship of Siva, the almighty God of the universe. I need hardly say that this ascetic mode of life, being quite incompatible with the life of the Aryans who were addicted to flesh-eating and drinking, and worshipping deified heroes, could not have originated with them in the remote past, but must have been discovered and brought into use by the ancient Tamil sages as the essential means of holding communion with God and attaining salvation.

Then, the final thirtyfifth section advocates such of the reforms as are necessarily and immediately required to ameliorate the present condition of the Tamilians. The chief of all is that the Tamilians who now allow themselves to be called Sudras or slaves or sons of concubines must understand to what great height their forefathers had risen in social, moral, intellectual, religious and linguistic cultures and to what a bottomless pit of ignorance and illiteracy their descendants have fallen at present and are being down-trodden by the very people who are fattening themselves on their wealth.

In the next place they must realize that the glory of a nation consists in the cultivation they have bestowed and are bestowing on their language and literature and the extreme care with which they preserve their purity and independence. It must also be borne in mind that, if the few cultivated languages of the ancient world such as the Egyptian, the Sumerian, the Hebrew, the Sanscrit, the Greek, the Latin and so on, it is, Tamil alone that still lives by being spoken and written by more than twenty million people all over this Globe. Because of this undying vitality, Tamil requires from her sons that care and vigilance which would keep it ever pure undefiled by extinct extraneous elements which, like parasites, seek to live upon living tongues.

Next to that, all Tamils must abandon worshipping the multitudinous gods and goddesses and deified heroes and return to the montheistic belief of their ancestors and worship only the one almighty God Siva with the divine mother Uma.

Finally, the Tamils must take note British government is the only best government which has been directed by Providence to rule impartially over all the Indian peoples who are torn by endless caste distinctions, and irreconcilable racial and religious differences. Each section of the Indian people is dominated by its own self-interest to the detriment of every other section. No one of them, however enlightened, can occupy an important place in the government without seeking the interest of his own community and ignoring that of others. Therefore, in all responsible posts the British people alone must be appointed, since they alone can do full and impartial justice to all the different classes and communities of the Indian people. No place of importance must be left to be occupied by any Hindu- here I except Muslims and Christians - for the Hindu administration ends, as we have recently seen in the dire distress and dissatisfaction of the people. Moreover, government by the ruling class alone is less expensive, less troublesome and more profitable. Until the people are educated at least fifty percent, until they are made to realize the responsibility they bear to each other in the social and political situations, until they learn to consolidate their interests rising above baneful caste and racial claims, they must not be suffered to bear the burden of self-government or any government in which they cannot participate intelligently, earnestly and disinterestedly. With this I close this summary directing the reader to go through the following Tamil work for fuller information on the topics touched above.

Pallavaram,  
The Sacred Order of Love,  
15th October, 1941

**Vedachalam**

**Foot Notes**

1. The Indian Empire, Vol. I. p.299,
2. Vedic India. pp.313, 314.
3. Read the chapter on 'Foeticide' in 'The Science of New Life' by Dr. John Cowan, M.D.
4. In his "Varieties of Religious Experience."
5. Read F.E. Cooke's "Life of St. Francis of Assisi."
6. The Indus Civilization, pp. 70-84.