

THE EAST OF YELLUM
 204 / 1 / 1900
 where the man, with soul so dead
 to himself hath said,
 "My own, my native land."
 PRESENTED
 TO
 HIS EXCELLENCY
 ARTHUR BURNHAM HAVELLOCK, G.C.M.G., G.S.A.
 Governor of Fort St. George,
 ON THE OCCASION OF HIS EXCELLENCY'S VISIT
 TO THE ARMY COLLEGE,
 Madras, India, 1900.
 BY
 THE ARMY COLLEGE,
 Madras, India.

Not

2693

VÉLAPURI
OR
A PEEP INTO THE PAST OF VELLORE.

"Breathes there the man, with soul so dead
Who never to himself hath said,
This is my own, my native land."

PRESENTED
TO
HIS EXCELLENCY
SIR ARTHUR ELIABANK HAVELOCK, G.C.M.G., G.C.I.E.,
Governor of Fort St. George.

ON THE OCCASION OF HIS EXCELLENCY'S VISIT
TO THE ARCOT MISSION COLLEGE,

BY
T. S. KUMARASWAMI AIYAR, B.A. L.T.,
Arcot Mission College, Vellore.

5th Feb. 1900.

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INTRODUCTION.

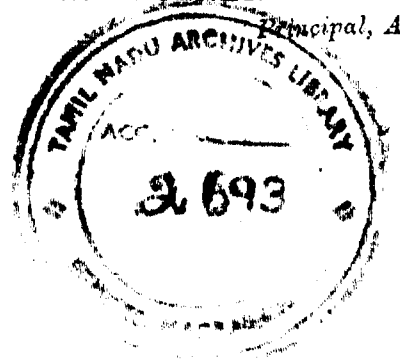
I take pleasure in introducing to the public this booklet of Mr. T. S. Kumaraswami Aiyar, B.A. L.T., representing as it does a considerable amount of original research in local history, - a task alike difficult and praiseworthy.

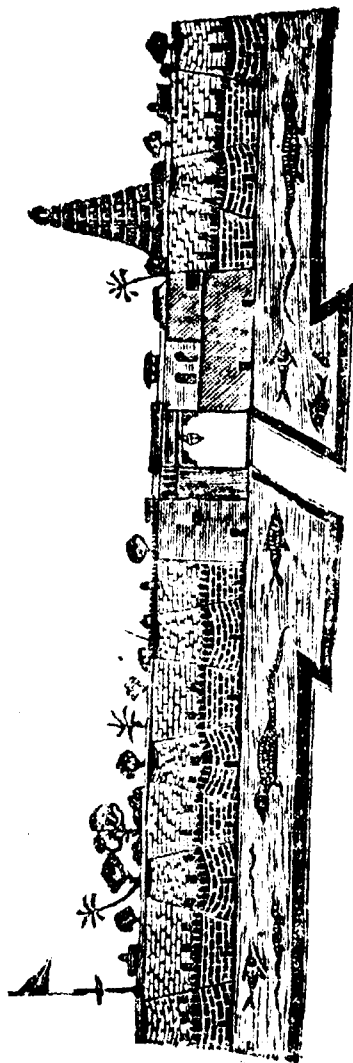
The dissemination of knowledge through publication is coming to be regarded in the West as one of the legitimate functions of the modern University. The Arcot Mission College is glad of the opportunity to encourage careful research in any branch of knowledge on the part of the members of its staff.

I trust that Mr. Kumaraswami Aiyar's work will result in a larger interest being taken in the history of the ancient town of Vellore and its well known Temple and Fort. The circumstances of the hasty preparation of this work for the press will disarm criticism of the typographical errors that may have crept in.

VELLORE,
5th Feb. 1900.

WM. I. CHAMBERLAIN, PR. D.,
Principal, A. M. College.





An old wood cut of the Vellore Temple and Fort.

Dedicated
to
Sri Jvara Khandaneswara Swami
by Whose Grace
The Temple, Fort and Town of Vellore
were built
by
The Pious Bommi Reddi
of
Bhadrachallam.

PREFACE.

The following attempt at a History of Vellore, is the substance of two Lectures, delivered at the Arcot Mission College, Vellore. It is not without considerable misgiving that I have ventured to bring it to light. The more I have been studying up the question of the antiquity of Vellore, the more have I been impressed with the difficulty of arriving at accurate information on all things past, and with the presumption of attempting to trespass into the domain of the Historian and Antiquarian. But it is neither as the one nor as the other that I now appear before the public; it is only as one who loves Vellore, with all its foibles, from the bottom of his heart.

Though in the beginning, the attempt was rather discouraging, gradually the material for the work began to grow so much that it has been hardly possible to do full justice to it. And it is because Mr. E. L. Vaughan I. C. S., the Sub-Collector, to whom I am greatly indebted for having placed several books at my disposal, very kindly inquired of me if the book could not be got ready before the arrival of H. E. Sir Arthur Havelock, the present and popular Governor of Madras, that I have pressed the work to an early and perhaps hasty completion—though, under other circumstances, I should have taken a great deal more time, before rushing into print.

Though the whole is divided into three Periods, the Ancient Period is dealt with at much greater length than either of the other two. The mediæval and the modern Periods of our History, are well before the public already in various shapes. But the Ancient Period is usually abridged and summarily disposed of as being mythical and legendary. It was, therefore, the object of this attempt to present the other side.

Further the other two periods could not possibly be dealt with at the same length, on account of the limitedness of the time, in which the thing had to be done. Known things do not need to be repeated. And there was not time enough even to

verify the various bits of new facts that may have been with some trouble picked up for some time past. They have either to be reserved altogether, or given out with a reservation. It is, therefore, requested that errors will be over-looked as unavoidable under the circumstances.

The learned authors whose valuable works I have consulted, are acknowledged either in the body of the book or in the foot-notes. I shall only say here that had it not been for Mr. Cox's "North Arcot Manual" Dr. Caldwell's, "History of Tinevelly," Dr. Hultzsch's "South Indian Inscription," and Sewell's "List of Antiquities," I could not have made any attempt like this. And if I have any where ventured to differ from any of these, it was with the greatest diffidence on my part.

I have also to thank various gentlemen that have been encouraging me in this under-taking, each in his own way. Notably among them, but with no disparagement to others, I may mention:—Dr. Hultzsch, the Epigraphist to the Madras Govt. Mr. V. Venkayya M. A., his first assistant, Rev. H. J. Scudder, M. A. B. D., the retired Principal of the A. M. College; Rev. W. I. Chamberlain, M. A. Ph. D. the Principal, A. M. College; Rev. E. Loventhal, the Danish Missionary at Vellore; Mr. Pears, C. E. Executive Engineer, Vellore; Mr. Jaganatha Mudaliar, Tahsildar, Vellore; and a revered old native gentleman, whose name, I regret, I do not know and have no means of knowing, but who has been no less serviceable than any above mentioned.

I feel very thankful that Vellore should have the good fortune of being honored by the visit of H. E. the Governor of Madras. His Excellency's visit to this place of miraculous origin and historic importance, is an epoch-making event of abiding interest and far-reaching consequences.

I trust I need offer no apology for having introduced "the Memorandum on the Fort of Vellore" written in 1815.

It is an interesting document, as I have reasons to believe that it was written by a European. The use of the word *Gentoo* in two places for Hindoo is a clear internal evidence to establish the above position. No change even where necessary has been introduced into the memorandum, lest the interest and the authority of the document should be affected. I have to thank Mr. Sadasiva Mudaliar, an octogenarian and a local retired Govt. servant, for having willingly placed the above document at my disposal.

In conclusion, in venturing to appear before the public I trust to the indulgence of those that may do me the honor, of reading this book and suggesting improvements thereon.

VELLORE }
4th Feb. 1900.

T. S. K.

CHAPTER I.

Introduction.

Nothing else is so sweet as Self. This is a bit of Nature's Law. A child begins with the instinct of Self-preservation. It likes itself, it may be unwittingly. It likes its mother. It learns to like the father, the brother, the sister; also, the grandmother and the grandfather. As days go by, the pet kitten, the time-keeping crow, the calf of the house, and in turn the house itself and things therein—all come in for a share of its liking. And now when the child has learnt to stand up on its own legs, and to make excursions across the threshold into the street beyond,—then, neighbours and neighbours' houses, the street itself, and the village or pettah to which the street belongs, come to be liked. And so on, *ad infinitum*, from town, country and continent, to the Creator of them all. Says Pope :—

“God loves from whole to parts; but human Soul,
Must rise from the individual to the whole.
Self-love but serves the virtuous mind to wake,
As the small pebble stirs the peaceful lake;
The centre moved, a circle straight succeeds,
Another still, and still another spreads;
Friend, parent, neighbour, first it will embrace,
His country next, and next all human race,
Wide and more wide, th' o'er flowings of the mind
Take every creature, of every kind:
Earth smiles around, with boundless bounty blest,
And Heaven beholds its image in his best.”

Thus man rises from Nature unto Nature's God.

So, Dear Reader, pardon me if there is such a feeling in me; when I undertake to deal with the past of Vellore. Vellore is a place I love very much. Here was a good part of my early

education received. In and around Vellore are places in which I have all earthly interest. It is no wonder, therefore, that Vellore should engage my attention.

I have been for some time endeavouring to trace Vellore to its remotest past; but though the time spent in the attempt cannot be said to be inconsiderable, neither can the outcome be said to be considerable. And the reason is not far to seek. "Very little," says Dr. Caldwell "is known with certainty of the early history of most districts in India. It is a singular fact, that the Hindus, though fond of Philosophy and Poetry, of Law, Mathematics and Architecture, of Music and the Drama, and especially of the Religious or Theosophic speculations and disquisitions, seem never to have cared anything for History."

This may be an unpleasant truth; but we must bow to stern realities. The only thing that may be said to come near History is the Purana. "The name Purana itself which implies 'old,' indicates the object of the compilation to be the preservation of ancient traditions; a purpose, in the present condition of the Puranas very imperfectly fulfilled." So says Professor Wilson. "He argues and establishes that 'we have not, at present, the same works, in all respects, that were current, under the designation of Puranas in the century prior to Christianity.' That there have been subsequent interpolations can be illustrated even with reference to the Puranas alluding to Vellore and its vicinity. That the Sthalapuranas, or chronicles of shrines, as a class, come under the head of interpolations, it will not be too much to say. Of course this does not apply to very ancient shrines, to the same extent, as it does to more modern ones. At the same time 'a very great portion of the contents of all, is genuine and old. And the sectarian interpolation or embellishment is always sufficiently palpable to be set aside without injury to the more au-

thentic and primitive material."⁴ At best, therefore, the Puranas can be but indifferent and unsafe guides; though it will be too much to say they are valueless.

Dr. Caldwell only puts the above truth somewhat strongly when he says:—"Popular legends and poetical myths, by whatever name they are dignified, may be discarded, not only without loss, but with positive advantage."⁵ Puranas have been turned to good account by skilful scholars. As one instance, we may say that such an authoritative work as the Madras Manual of Administration, has, while speaking of the conversion to Mahomedanism of the Raja of Kerala in the 9th century thought it unobjectionable to say "This occurrence is recorded in the *Keralolpatty*".⁶ *Kerala-oothpathi* is simply the puranam describing the origin (*oothpathi*) of Kerala. But this is only one out of a host of instances. The genealogical tables laboriously drawn from inscriptions, are when patiently adjusted, identical in many cases with the same given in Puranas. To give one instance:—"An inscription at Tirutani in the Pallava country gives a genealogy of five generations, and the local chronicle of *Narayanavanam* mentions four, of which the names correspond."⁷ And the identity in the case quoted has been a highly suggestive and useful one. And so it is expedient to welcome sources of information from any quarter; while at the same time too much of watchfulness cannot be exercised in sifting the material.

If there is no History--and, according to Caldwell, popular legends and poetical myths are not reliable--what then are we to do? Dr. Caldwell⁸ says "The only ancient Indian History worthy of the name, is that which has been spelled out from Inscriptions and Coins." I shall quote a few more words of this great authority, which I am sure, will bear any amount of repetition.

2. History of Tinnavelly Page-1. 3. Introduction to Vishnu Purana.

4. Introduction to Vishnu Purana 5. Convocation Address. (Madras) 1879
6. Vol I. P. 146. 7. Sewell's Antiquities (Madras) Vol II. P. 158. 8. Convocation Address (Madras) 1879.

"The study of the history, ancient literature, and archæology of the country will never reach anything like completeness of development or realize results of national importance, till it is systematically undertaken by educated natives. Learned natives of Calcutta and Bombay, trained in European modes of thought, and vying with Europeans in zeal for historical accuracy, have already made a promising beginning in this department of research. I trust that the Native scholars of the South will resolve that they will not be left behind in the race. The most important aid educated natives can render to the study of the history of their country, is by means of a search after inscriptions, many of which, hitherto unnoticed and unknown they will find inviting their attention on the walls of the temples in almost every village in the interior."

Dr. Hultzsch "also writes to the same effect. He says "It is to be hoped that other young native graduates will follow on Mr. Venkayya's lines and take up the neglected subject of South Indian Epigraphy. The records are so numerous, and so many intricate historical questions have still to be solved, that there is room for a large number of independent qualified workers." *

One other source also is recommended by Dr. Caldwell.¹⁰ "A humbler, but still very important, branch of archaeological work lies open to every educated Hindu. Let him set himself, before it is too late, to search out and discover the vernacular works that are commonly supposed to be lost."

If old books have to be patiently searched for, old men have to be duly regarded. The information stored up in the heavy heads of aged men should not be allowed to be burnt or buried, too, along with the old men. Even though it may not be gospel truth, it may be taken for what it may be worth. Inscriptions and coins are undoubtedly the best sources; but in their absence, even second-best ones are welcome. Seen in this light,

Preface to the South Indian Inscriptions Vol. I. 10 Convention Address.

In this connection I may be allowed to say that fired by such passages, I have been trying to do something in the line. Just now there is an inscription on stone planted on this side of the Palar. I wrote about this to the Epigraphist. He has promised to get it deciphered at an early date.

reverence for mere age as age, found in ancient Greeks and modern Japanese no less than the Hindus, is not altogether meaningless.

Even though, then, there may not be any reliable basis for the early History of Vellore, still there is with me a manuscript old kadjan, which it was my fortune to come by through the kind offer of a student of mine. On the face of it, the old book must be just an attempt to record received traditions about the origin of the Vellore Fort, and a copy of it must I should think have been the basis of the account of Vellore given in Cox's Manual of this District—though, of course, I can't say of this anything more than that it is highly probable. There is also a printed book in Tamil, sold in the bazaars, and called *Velaimanagara Chritram* (வேலையநகர் சரித்திரம்.)¹¹ The kadjan with me is altogether different in manner, though fundamentally similar in matter. I shall take this as the base of operation: and shall attempt to march out in various directions, when that can be safely done, and return to the kadjan, when there is no help for it. The contents of the book will be discussed in the light of the latest inscriptions known as far as possible, and without prejudice or partiality; and when nothing better is available, as will naturally be the case with regard to the first beginnings of anything, the theory of the book maintained. As regards the more modern times, there is not the same difficulty. We can tread upon more reliable soil now. We can breathe in a more genuinely historical atmosphere.

As I was just going through the Proof of this, it was my peculiar good fortune to get another very important, and, to all intents and purposes, reliable document, on the History of Vellore, through the kindness of the octogenarian referred to in the preface. This is a manuscript paper, written in 1815, and in the English Language. It does not materially affect the position taken, though, as must be natural under the circumstances, there are some points of difference not of a very fundamental character.

The subject, I think, divides itself naturally into three Periods.

1. The Ancient or the Heroic Period :—From the earliest known times to the building of the Temple and beginning of *Pooja* or worship.
2. The Mediaeval Period :—Up to the cessation of worship.
3. The Modern Period :—After the cessation.

CHAPTER II.

The Ancient or Heroic Period.

Our town goes by the name of Vellore. It is situated in 12°-54'-7" N. latitude and 79°-10'-7" E. longitude. In the whole range of geography, we do not come across another town bearing the same name. True it is that there is in common parlance another town of the same name in our own Presidency. And this is distinguished by the unenviable epithet of *Ooppu*, while ours has the dignified title of *Roya*. As to the significance of the latter epithet, we shall have some thing to say by and by. But this much can be safely said of the former town *Ooppu Vellore*, that it is no more Vellore at all, but only Ellore, which as every school boy knows is famous for its carpets.

Now, what is this strange sound Vel-lore? There are no less than three theories on the point, though one of them commends itself for ready acceptance, and has the sanction of tradition, too. First of all, there is the authority of Dr. G. Oppert,¹ once the Sanskrit Professor of the Government Presidency College at Madras. He says Vellore is a corruption of what must properly be called *Palliur*, the *Oor* or town of Palli, the original stock. And for analogy he gives Palli-konda, Palar, and even Polar.

Next there is the theory that the town has been so called, because of its resemblance to the weapon *Vēlayudham*, a long pole-like instrument with a pointed piece of metal at the end. The reason assigned for this derivation is the length of the town. Vellore may vie with Madras in being "the town of distances." I do not know who the author of this fanciful idea is. But such is one of the derivations given of the word Vellore.

1. I got this information from Rev. E. Løvethal, the Danish Missionary at Vellore.

There is one other given, and this seems to find favour with the people at large. Further, this account of the origin of Vellore is the one given in the *kudjan* referred to in the Introduction. This old book takes us away from our present surroundings and associations, into the dim past when there was as yet no such thing as Vellore. Imagine a vast thick Jungle of *babool trees* (in Tamil, செவ்வாடு) at the foot of the immortal hills to the east and extending over several square miles as far as your eye can reach on any side, bounded on the north perhaps by the Palar, on the west by the village of *Saduperi* (செதுபு குடி) and on the south by no one knows what. Imagine also, dear Reader, to have a vivid picture of the scene, imagine that you are on the top of the neighbouring hills, looking down upon the jungle below. You will find then, no Fort or Court, no town or tower, no temples, no churches, no mosques, no trace of the human art. It will be all one vast ocean of forests, from end to end, occupying the full field of your view, varied only perhaps by the mountain beneath your feet, and the sandy stream beyond and infested by hissing serpents and ferocious wild beasts. A pleasant spectacle, no doubt, to see from the safe summit of a hill—so soft, and so green; but not so very pleasant to attempt to pass through this primeval forest.

Yes, in those early ages, it was all tree and nothing but tree, one continuous Jungle without limit or boundary—one big Brazilian Forest. Turn to any direction, and unmistakable evidences of the sylvan nature of the surroundings are pouring in and staring us in the face. *Katpadi* to the north bears in its very name a history of its origin. *Arni* to the south, is to mind, only a corruption of *Aranyam* a sanskrit word for forest. My own Tiruvalam is only *Sripulam*,² or a forest of *Bilva trees*. *Thiruvalngadu*, was only a grove of Banyan trees. North Arcot itself is a part of the original *Dravida Country*,³

2. This is the view taken by Kokkonda Venkatarathanam Pantulu Garu in his Telugu Work *Bilvesvarium*. 3. District Manual Vol. I, Chapter II,

which was in the beginning a vast cluster of thickets and forests. The whole was only a continuation of the classical *Dandakaranya*.

A vast jungle then was this part of the world called Vellore, years and centuries ago. What were its surroundings then? A king of the Chola Dynasty, Karikala Chola by name, was, then, reigning in Kailasapatnam at the foot of the Kailasagiri hills. At first methought that the present Oosur was the original seat of the king. But some time after, the existence of Cholavaram came to my mind. And then what was more natural than the identification of Kailasapatnam with Cholavaram? Speaking of this place Cox says in his Manual⁴:—"At the base of the hill there once stood a large town called Kailasapatnam, often a royal residence in the time of the Chola kings, but now effaced" In the Manual of Administration of Madras,⁵ I am glad to find:—"Cholavaram: from Karikalan, the Chola king." The position of the Kailasagerry hill is L 12°-50'; Long 79°-07'; that of Cholavaram is L 12°-49'; Long 79°-03. The position of Kailasapatnam is not at all given. So may it not be suggested that Cholavaram was once called Kailasapatnam, and that it covered a wider area than now, as it must have seeing that it was the royal residence?

Speaking of the hill, Cox says⁶ "It has a small hill-fort built upon the summit, some say by the Mahrattas" That it is a Hindu Fort there can be no question. For amidst the ruins of the fortress, one comes across blocks of stone with Hindu figures in bold relief. We may also take it that the fort was built before the fort of Vellore and, therefore, much before the time of the Mahrattas. The old manuscript in my hands distinctly refers to this fort as having existed in the time of Karikala Chola. Then the only question is whether it was built by the Pallava kings or their Chola conquerors—not certainly by the Maharattas, i. e. if the manuscript speak true.

4. Vol. I. P. 129. 5. Vol 975. 6. Vol III. P. 128.

In this connection, I hope to be excused if I bring in a bit of folk-lore, connected with the hill and the Chola's town below, and obtained at first-hand from some of the shepherds on the top of the hill. One of the Chola Kings of *Cholavarum*, finding there was no rain for a long while within his dominions and learning there would be none so long as he was alive, let himself fall from a precipice immediately below the fortress—thus making a sacrifice of himself for the well-being of his people. I had been very near the spot, but lest I should, in spite of myself, follow in the foot-steps of the reputed Maharaja too far, resisted the temptation of peeping down the precipice.

Then, six miles to the north-east of the *Kailasagiri*, is mentioned a hill called the *Dharmalinga Hill* (*தர்மலிங்கம்*). This is no other than the Vellore Hill, on which stands the imposing fortress. Immediately to the south-west of this hill, is mentioned a small village—Kuppam (*குப்பம்*) is the word used in the original—called *Velappadi*, to the east of which, and at a distance of half a-mile, is said to be a Hill called the *Balakonda Roya Hill*. This name is very suggestive and a very interesting question rises as to who this Balakonda Roya may have been. Now a days the hill goes by the name of the *Bhagavati Hill*. The manual of Madras Administration⁷ speaks of it as the Bhawany or *Balakonda Hill*. Putting all things together, it appears to me that the hill was so called because there was a shrine thereon of *Parvati*, or *Bhavani* or *Bhagavati* or *Bala*—all different names of the same Deity; that at some subsequent period some petty chief who took possession of this hill and its surroundings, must have become known as *Balakonda Roya*; and that, by a strange circuit, the chief having obtained a name for himself from the hill, must have given his name in turn to the hill.

Herein, I cannot but refer to a very interesting document, which is a clear beam of light piercing this dim past. This is an inscription⁸ engraved on a rock below the summit of

7. Vol III. P. 978. 8. Dr. Hultzsch has very kindly sent me a copy.

the Bagavati Hill near Velappadi and deciphered and translated by Dr. Hultzsch. It is dated the 26th of the reign of Kannara Deva, who has been identified by Mr. Venkayya with the Rashtrakuta King Krishna III, who flourished about 950 A. D. The inscription records the gift of Velurpadi—which, by the way, must have been the original and unbroken name of what is now called Velappadi—to the shrine of Ponnappeswarar, which a certain Ponnappai, evidently a woman, had established on the *Siddadu Parai Hill*, the Balakonda Roya Hill of the Kadjan, or the modern Bhagavati Hill. The donor was Thribhuvana Dhera whose son received Velappadi from Vira Chola. The document is signed *Pallava Murari*. Dr. Hultzsch concludes that Vira Chola and Thribhuvana Dhera, who was probably connected with the Pallava Rulers, must have been the tributaries of Krishna III.

This inscription of Vellore is a very important one and will be found of immense value in fixing dates. For instance Dr. Burnell says, and Dr. Caldwell⁹ agrees with him, that Vira Chola or Rajendra Chola or Raja Raja Narendra Chola flourished between 1064 and 1113 A. D. But if Dr. Hultzsch and Mr. Venkayya are right as to the date of the present inscription, Vira Chola must have flourished about 950 A. D, i. e. full 150 years before the date fixed by the other two Doctors. Where Doctors differ, what are we humble folks to do? Again the difficulty becomes all the greater, when we find a Vira Chola, who ascended the throne in 1001 Sak or 1079 A. D. It is evident from all these, that the history of the Chola kings of the 11th century is very obscure.

This inscription is also important in another way. As Mr. Venkayya says¹⁰ "The Velappadi inscription derives its importance from its being one of the records which establish this event"—i.e. the invasion of the Rashtrakuta king, Kannara Deva.

Another bit of folk-lore here. It is generally believed that there is a rock in the hill, in which treasure is

9. History of Tinnevely Chapter II. P. 31. 10. In a letter to me.

stored up and on which something is written, and whoever can read it will have the key to unlock the rock and take the treasure away. The rock with its inscription above referred to may be the one in question. Dr. Hultzsch might have got richer too for having deciphered the rock, but not exactly in the sense that tradition understood. But it is open for one to say that it is a different rock altogether.

We have seen that six miles to the north-east of the Kailasagiri hill was mentioned Velapadi. Now about 2 miles to south-west of Velapadi a river is mentioned, and strange to say and hard to believe, Kshoera Nadi (க்ஷோர நதி) it is called! Though at first sight this may seem absurd, yet it is possible that the river may have had a different course centuries ago. Turn to the District Manual and what do we find? "The Palar, the principal river of the district, which now flows into the sea 42 miles to the south of Madras, formerly flowed down what is now recognised as the alluvial valley of the Kurtalayar river and entered the sea somewhere to the north of Madras." Again, near Virincheepuram, to the west, the river has changed its bed, as we evidently see. It is possible, therefore, that the river Palar was to the south of Velapadi at the time we are speaking of. But the probability is that the river did not change its course here, though it did change its course elsewhere; and that the author or the writer of the kadjan only made the simple mistake of writing south-west, instead of north-west.

A word about the Palar itself. With due deference to Dr Oppert, there can be no hesitation in saying that Palar is only the Tamil form of the Sanskrit Kshoera Nadi (क़्षोरा नदी) Mr. Cox¹² says "The name of the Palar signifies milk river" and is by some thought to refer to its freshes; but this seems unlikely, as the rise of the river is not unusually sudden. One of the sacred legends related of it, tells us that Siva being displeased with his riding bull, transformed him into the hill of Nandi. Drug of Mysore, where the Palar rises. Nandi prayed to Vishnu who interceded with Siva and finally Ganga, who resided in

his head consented to bless the hill by falling on it in a stream of milk. Thus the Palar originated and from its origin is said to have the power of purifying from sin." The content of "the sacred legend," as I find it, varies slightly from above. Siva was displeased and Nandi was transformed. Ganga was requested, to and did, save the Nandi by her sacred tears, but not by coming down in torrents of milk! Originally Palar flowed only in the form of water, and then the name was not the Palar but only the Padmini.¹³ Subsequently on the occasion of the Yagnam of Brahma near Pallikonda, milk flowed from the River which was since called the milk-river or the Palar.

So much about the immediate vicinity. Looking further afield, we find that the chief towns that might arrest the attention of an on-looker of the time, were Conjeevaram, Vincheepuram, Narendranagaram, Pallikonda and Padavedu. The town Narendranagaram calls for some remarks. This was probably founded by Karikala Chola's father, who was also called Raja Raja Narendra, or simply Narendra. The Kadjan tells that Sarangadhara, who by the evil machinations of the vicious Chithrangi was deprived of his hands and feet at the command of his father Narendra, a descendant of Dharma Raja, sought refuge in the Durga-protected Hill, called the Beeja Hill,¹⁴ to the east of Pallikonda and spent his time in the company of holy sages thereon; when, he had, by the grace of God, recovered back his limbs. From this we may perhaps infer that Narendranagaram itself was not far away from the Beeja Hill at Pallikonda.

These were the towns that were famous at the time in question. Who were the rulers of the country, round Vellore? I will quote Mr. Venkayya,¹⁵ who has very kindly sent me an account of the early political history of Vellore and its surroundings. "The country in which Vellore is situated was originally under the Pallavas of Kanchi (Conjeevaram). After the extinction of the dynasty, the Ganga-Pallavas took possession of it. A number of inscriptions belonging to this dynasty have been found at Tiruvallam and in the vicinity of Vellore."

Given in the local chronicle of Pallikonda. Same as 13.

I have preferred this account to any other, because I thought that this, at least, would be the best.

The Banas, who appear to have been the feudatories of the Ganga-Pallavas, were probably the immediate rulers. The Cholas under Parantaka I (A. D. 900-940) then uprooted the Banas and established their dominion. It was during the time of Parantaka's son and successor Rajaditya that the invasion of the Rashtra Kuta King *Kannara* took place. Later Chola inscriptions at Vellore itself and in its vicinity show that the place continued under Chola Sovereignty."

Such was the condition and such the surroundings of the place which has become since of so great an importance. Let us see how this change was effected.

Bommi Reddi and Thimmi Reddi or Nayadu, sons of one Yadama Reddi and Kamalatchi, and natives of Bhadrachallam, on the banks of the Krishna, are now fleeing for their lives from their home. And for this reason. Yadama Reddi had married a second wife, after the demise of the first, and by her had four more sons. In due course, the various ceremonies after birth of a son, like *Jatakarma*, *Namakarana*, were all done, and the children were being brought up in a fashion suited to his station. And after some years had gone by, like a prudent man he, with a view to avoid any hitch or unpleasantness among his children, wanted to effect partition among them himself. He gave half a share to the two sons of the first wife, and the other half to the four sons by the second wife. This of course jarred upon the cherished expectations of the latter, as it undoubtedly violated the principles of Law recognised by our sages. Some time after, he passed the way of all men.

Soon the anticipated quarrel, so far from being avoided, was exactly excited by the unreasonable and illegal partition. The four sons of the second wife put their heads together, and decided to take the law into their own hands by despatching their two step-brothers to the other world. The latter caught scent of the conspiracy,—and consequently decided to seek a safer spot. They are now on their way to the south, very probably to Rameswaram.

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On their way, the Palar arrested their attention, and the two brothers and their little family, sojourned on its banks for ten days at a place called Thirumani. This Thirumani, on the other side of the Palar, a small insignificant village as it may be now, was once an important ancient shrine from which water was carried for the daily service of Sri Ranganatha Swami at Pallikonda.

To return to the brothers, they after ten days crossed the Palar and came to Velappadi. Here again they halted for ten days. During their short stay at Velappadi, they heard all about the Dharmalinga, the Bala Konda Roy and Kailasagiri Hills, and also of the glory of King Kari Kala Chola that was reigning at Kailasapatnam.

Now Bommi Reddi, the elder of the two pious brothers thought of paying a visit to the reigning King. He left Velappadi for Kailasapatnam, and obtained an interview with the King. To him he related the whole story, of how they were living at Bhadrachallam, and why they had to leave it, and requested the King to afford them shelter. The King pleased with the candour and grace of the now comer, granted him free permission to settle anywhere he pleased, and conferred on him lands for his maintenance. Thereupon the pious Bommi Reddi, who always thought of the eternal rather than the ephemeral, of the divine rather than the mundane, of the world to come rather than the world before, pitched upon Velappadi with its holy surroundings as about the best place he could choose. Consequently he returned thither and took abode in a choultry.

Somedays went peacefully and suddenly of a night a band of Poligars from ~~Andhra~~ ^{Andhra} south-east traversed the Jungle between ~~and~~ ^{and} great haste to Velappadi. Bommi Reddi rose equal to the occasion. Emerging from his obscurity arms in hand, he attacked the marauders, killed some and drove the rest.

The day dawned and the incident spread round like wild-fire. King Chola too heard it, among others. And admiring his prowess and presence of mind, and considering him worthy of his encouragement and patronage, he gave him a band of retinue and enough to maintain the same. Thus was Bommi Reddi living happily for sometime, attending to his men and cattle, cultivating his soil, yet all the while never forgetting his Creator.

By the Grace of God, one day one of his many cows gave birth to a she-calf, perfect in its proportions, white all over but with the nose and lips red like coral, and the teats five in number, black as anything! Such a cow is called *Kurampasu* (சுரம்பசு), and among the Hindus, to whom all cows are sacred is held with marked sanctity and veneration. When Bommi Reddi came to know of this prodigy, he was filled with feelings of wonder and thankfulness to God!

The calf gradually grew into a cow. All along it was studiously and scrupulously alone, never keeping company with other calves or cows, at home or abroad. In the fulness of time the cow, indeed, became the mother of a he-calf; but, strange to say, neither did the cow give its milk to the calf, nor did the calf care to turn to the mother's side. For all that the calf did not get lank or lean. The cow, too, it returned home in the evening with its udder perfectly empty. So passed day by day.

Bommi Reddi could not solve the riddle himself. Nor could he get it solved by the cow-herd, who saw the cow only as it started from and returned to the stall, but not at all in the meantime. Bommi Reddi's confusion was now worse confounded and therefore he set his mind on discovering the mystery. Accordingly, one day he followed the cow, without its knowledge; and passing through the jungle situated at a distance of nearly a mile from Velaphdi, he eventually caught sight of an ant-hill, surrounded by water to the depth of four feet. The cow swam across the water and while it was

standing on the ant-hill, a five-headed cobra came out of the hole, and applied its five mouths to the five teats. Soon the cow returned.

Bommi Reddi was lost in wonder at the sight, but was not a bit nearer the mystery. He devoutly prayed to God, Who revealed Himself to him and said that all that was His work; and that He had appeared there in the form of *Jalakanteswara*. And when Bommi Reddi entreated Him to allow him to build a temple on the spot, He consented and revealed a place in the Balakondaraya Hill, (on which Sri Venkateswara and Himself were holding a joint-abode before the Former's departure to Tirupati,) which contained a lot of gold but visible to his eye only for the space of seven days and nights. Bommi Reddi arranged relays of men from the ant-hill up to the other hill, and transported the treasure within the appointed time.

The matter having been brought to the notice of the Chola king, he congratulated Bommi Reddi, promised cooperation, if necessary, and ordered all the workmen and coolies in his dominions to go and work for pay under Bommi Reddi. Men and money were now on hand; but still not ~~the man~~, who might be entrusted with the work. No competent *Silpi* or architect could be found.

Just then an architect from the north, was going to the south, leaving his wife big with child at home; and on his way, hearing of the proposed temple, saw Bommi Reddi, whose delight at the sight was indescribable. Bommi Reddi at once asked him to clear the forest and commence the work of building the temple round the ant-hill. He agreed.

In an auspicious day and hour the work was begun. And this was, says the book, on the 10th day of Panguni, in Saka year 1190 Salivahana Saka, in Kaliyuga. The Divine injunction to Bommi Reddi was to finish the work within 9 years, and to begin worship in the temple to Siva called *Jalakantheswara* for the reason that He appeared in an ant-hill covered with

"water up to the neck." Accordingly Bommi Reddi began the work in right earnest, without sparing men or money.

He was getting all the forests of *babul* and other trees, cleared. Then, lo! suddenly emerged groups of hare from one of the bushes! A hound went after them all. All escaped except one, which instead of being chased by the dog, was chasing it round and round the ant-hill! Bommi Reddi's Divine Counsel advised him to mark the track taken by the hare, promising to reveal its use in due time. Accordingly, the route was noted. Stones were got from the Pallikonda quarries. Work was being pushed through in all haste. Various *mantapam* were finished. A pond was sunk. Many miscellaneous things were attended to.

Now, Dear Reader, do you remember that the architect left his pregnant wife behind? She gave birth to a male child. The boy in due course ascertained the whereabouts of the father, and came in quest of him. On the way he was attracted by the new Siva Temple, now building. Soon finding out the architect, and Bommi Reddi also, the young architect told them that by force of the *lagnam* or the hour of commencement, the temple would have worship, not continuously but only intermittently. Naturally Bommi Reddi was very much grieved! And as naturally did he seek his Divine Adviser. Who said that the sor must be asked to fix another *lagnam*, in which a fort round the temple might be begun.

Accordingly, the son fixed an hour. In the north-eastern corner of the Temple, *kalasam** was placed in the chosen hour. To test the efficacy of the hour, iron chains attached to the *kalasam* were made to be drawn by elephants. The elephants were baffled; but the *kalasam* stood firm! The fort was then built along the track already marked; and according to the Divine will the whole thing was finished within 9 years from the date of commencement i.e. - 1278 A. D.

Then the inaugural ceremony necessary to declare the Temple open was duly gone through. And worship was begun.

* Vessels containing Sacred water for ceremonial purposes.

of *Jalakanteswarar* and *Akhilandeswari*, the Male and the Female Forces of Nature. Minor Deities were placed all round. An *Agraharam*, or houses for Brahmins, was built within the fort; and streets for Kshatriyas, Visayas and Sudras were made. And out-side the fort, Chattrams and offices and streets were brought into existence all round, so that the Deity might be taken round in procession on important occasions. The fort and the town were then called Vellore, for the reason that *babul forest* (*Callosan*) had to be cleared for the construction of the temple and the fort.

And now one more difficulty presented itself to Bommi Reddi. Having been so long only a subject and not a ruler, he felt himself unworthy of the royal dignity. His Friend, however, settled the difficulty by directing him to go to Proudha Deva Raya who was reigning in Penukonda, and his son Venkata Deva Raya. Accordingly, when Bommi Reddi went to them with the offer of a fort and a small kingdom round it, they readily consented.

But Proudha Deva Raya had four sons and, therefore, he wanted to divide his dominions among them. Lot was cast and Vellore came to the share of Venkata Deva Raya. Chakrapuram and Srinagaram fell to the lot of Achuta Deva Raya. Conjeevaram. Ginjee fell to the share of Rama Deva Maharaya. Chandragiri, Tirupati and Penukonda was the share of Vasu Deva Maharaya.

Then Bommi Reddi with intense delight brought Venkata Deva Maharaya to Vellore, and escorted him to the Temple to worship God. Thereafter he was duly installed in right royal style. And because a Raya became the first ruler of Vellore, there fore was this town called Raya Vellore.

The question of the date of the Vellore Fort has now to be considered. Nothing can be more difficult than the determination of this all-important question. We have seen that the Kadjan in my possession gives the fort as early

a date as 1269-1278 A.D. We have seen also that the District Manual gives 1274 A.D. as the date of the beginning. Mr. Stuart, the learned Editor of the Dt. Manual adds the following foot-note.¹⁶ "On the walls of the temple of Malayampattu, in the Gudiattam Taluq, is found an inscription which serves to fix the date of Bommi Reddi. It records the fact that the temple was built by the "Great Lord and Poligar Venkata Bommi Nayani Lingama Naidu" in S. S. 1320 or A. D. 1393. As this Lingama Nayadu was evidently the son of Bommi Nayadu, the latter could not have built the Vellore Temple much earlier than the middle of the fourteenth Century."

Sir W. W. Hunter¹⁷ also gives the same date 1274-1283 A. D. Alexander Rea, M. R. A. S.,¹⁸ the Archeological surveyor to the Govt. of Madras, includes the Vellore Temple among the later Dravidian Temples, which belong according to this great authority to "the 15th Century et-seq." Dr. Caldwell says¹⁹ "The Forts of Chandragiri and Velur are said to have been built by him (Vira Narasimha Rayar, whose reign commenced in 1437). By some, however, they are said to have been built by his great successor Krishna Raya." Sewell's²⁰ remarks on this vexed question of the date of the Vellore Temple, will be interesting. He says "various dates are given for the construction of the temple. Some native traditions make it A. D. 1274, and that of the fort A. D. 1295, a succession of eleven Kings being given from Bommi Reddi, the north-country founder, to Krishnadeva Raya A. D. 1536. This date, it is needless to say, is wrong; and we want some proof of the existence of the eleven chiefs. Another account (Madras Journal XX 274) states that the Reddi built the fort only 25 years before Krishna Deva Raya of Vijayanagar became possessed of it. This would make its date as late as A. D. 1485 or thereabouts." Captain H. H. Cole R. E.²¹ the curator of Ancient Monuments

¹⁶ Foot note 10 P. 419, Vol II. ¹⁷ Gazetteer of India. ¹⁸ List of Ancient Monuments P. 18. ¹⁹ History of Tinnevely Chp. II P. 48. ²⁰ Lists of Antiquities (Madras) Vol. I. P. 164. ²¹ Preservation of National Monuments. (Madras Press) P. 7.

in India, makes of the "Kalyana Mantapam" which he characterizes as "the gem of the whole place" date from 1350 A. D. I may also say here that "the memorandum of the fort of Vellore,"²² the English manuscript of 1815 referred to in the Preface, refers to the event as having taken place about 450 years ago i.e. about 1365 A. D.

Dear Reader, I confess I am confounded by this chaos of contradictions. But we must do what lies in our power. The only two things that can be of any use in this connection are the names Kari Kala Chola and Bommi Reddi.

First then about Karikala Chola. Dr. Caldwell says²³ "Kari Kala Chola's name occupies an important place in Chola traditions, in connection with the life of Ramanujacharya, the great Vaishnava teacher; but it is uncertain whether the Karikala Chola mentioned in Tinnevely inscriptions is the same person or another person of the same. Dr. Burnell places the Karikala Chola of Tanjore some where about 950 A. D. This would be too early for any successor of Kulothunga Chola, as the Karikala of Tinnevely seems to have been. It is also too early for the date of Karikala Chola by whom Ramanuja was persecuted. Ramanuja is said to have fled from Karikala's persecutions to the Court of Bhitti Deva, the Bellala king of Dwarasamudra, whom he converted from the Jaina to the Vaishnava Faith. The king on his conversion, took the new name of Vishnuvardhana, and this event has been always placed in the beginning of the 12th Cent. Rice in his Mysore inscription places it in A. D. 1117. This is one of the most important eras in south Indian History, as it gives us a date, on which we can depend, and from which we can calculate backwards and forwards."

From this precious extract, we find that there was one Karikala Chola of Tanjore in 950 A. D. There was another Karikala Chola, the persecutor of Ramanujacharya whose date

²² Vds Appendix. ²³ His of Tin. Chp II P. 39.

is known beyond doubt to have been early in the 12th century. But the Karikala Chola of Kailasaputnam is, it appears to me, can be neither the one nor the other, but a different person altogether. For even the date given in the Kadjan, the earliest given, is only 1269 A. D.

There is another dim light falling from a different quarter on this King of Darkness, Karikala. This is no other than the genealogy already referred to in the Introduction ²⁴. From the two genealogical tables, one given in the local chronicle of Narayanavanam, and the other in the Tiruttani inscriptions, the inference is irresistible that Chakravarthi is only another name of Adondai. Adondai being the son of Kulothunga, and Chakravarthi being given as the son of Karikala, the question that Sewell raises is whether Karikala is only another name for Adondai. It evidently looks as if it is. If so, the date of Karikala must be 1064-1113 A. D. This date, also, is much earlier than that of the Kadjan.

Even this, after all, does not help us. Karikala Chola does, indeed, as Dr. Caldwell has already pointed out, play a very important part in South Indian History. But apparently there seems to have been even more Karikalas than have been yet brought to light. And I venture to think that the Karikala of the Kadjan may be provisionally added to the list, to be confirmed there only when the Kadjan is corroborated by rock-cut characters.

We must now hasten to turn our eyes to Bommi Reddi, in hopes that he at least will help us over the difficulty. Under the various designations of Bommi Reddiar, Bomma Nripati, Bomma Nayaka, Bomma Nayan, we find references made to him in very many inscriptions. All these inscriptions, however, undoubtedly make him a deal more modern than the Bommi Reddi of the Kadjan. Among the historical results obtained from the more important of these inscriptions, Dr. Hultzsch²⁵ mentions :-

²⁴ P. 3, Foot-note 7

²⁵ South Indian Inscription Vol. I. P. 69.

"The Siama Bomma Nayaka of the inscriptions is perhaps identical with Bommi Reddi or Nayadu to whom tradition assigns the foundation of the Vellore Temple." If the two should be identical, the fort must have been built only in the latter half of the 10th Century.

This date is much later than the latest given by the others. And no case has been made out against the tradition, or its exponent the Kadjan. On the other hand, with due deference to the high authority of Dr. Hultzsch, who only says that Bommi Reddi, the traditional hero, and Bommi Nayak of Vellore, are perhaps identical, the probability seems to be the other way. Dr. Hultzsch²⁶ himself refers to the Vilapaka grant of Venkata I, which mentions the son and the father of Veluri-Bomma Naipati. The father is Virappa Nayaka Kshmapa. But the father of Bommi Reddi, the traditional builder of the Fort, is Yadama Reddi. The father's name rests on the same shaky ground of tradition, as the son's name itself. Both must stand or fall together. Presumably, therefore, the two persons are not one.

Again there is this reason to say that Bommi Reddi and Veluru Bomma Nripati are different. In the Kadjan, one reason why Bommi Reddi wanted a different person to rule over the new town was that he himself was only a peasant and no prince, a ryot and no member of the royal family.

For my own part, I think it quite possible, not to say probable, that Bommi Reddi, a peasant that he was in the beginning, was, by being made the head of a small principality raised to the Peerage, as it were, by the grateful Vijayanagar ruler, whom Bommi Reddi had installed on the new throne of Velur; and that his descendants therefore went by the dignified name of Princes.

Then with regard to Mr. Stuart's foot-note on the date given in the body of the Manual, Mr. Stuart quotes an

²⁶ South Ind. Ins. Vol. I P. 69.

inscription in the Temple of Malayambattu in the Gudiyattam Taluq. This temple, it would seem, was built by the great Lord and Poligar Venkata Bommi Nayani Lingama Nayadu in 1398 A. D. We have already seen that, in the Vilapakā grant of Venkata 1 of 1523, Linga-bhupala was made the son of Veluri Bomma Nayakar. In the above Malayambattu inscription Lingama Nayak, the son, is building a temple in 1398. Are these two different persons altogether?

As regards the Malayambattu inscription itself, Dr. Hutzsch²⁷ gives an inscription in the Siva temple at Malayabattu near Virincheepuram. In the latter Nagama Naik, not Lingama Nayak, is made the son of Veluru Bomma Nayak. And the date is Saka 1524 or A. D. 1602. Is the Malayampattu inscription different from the Malayapattu one? If so, there are not simply one or two, but three Bomma Nayakars.

A word about Mr. Sewell's remarks about the date. He says:—"Another account states that the Reddi built the fort only 25 years before Krishna Deva Raya of Vijayanagar became possessed of it. This would make its date as late as A. D. 1495 or thereabouts." The English document of 1815 says something like this. For instance, it says that the fort was completed 25 years after the Temple and that at that stage Krishna Deva Rayar took possession of the fort, constructed the *Surya Gunta* &c. I find it hard to question the views of my betters. Still, I do not see why the date of the fort should be as late as 1495. True there may have been a Krishna Deva Rayar in the beginning of the 16th Century. That does not exclude the existence of other Krishna Deva Rayars before him. And as a matter of fact there have been three of that name, one in the 14th the other in 15th, and the 3rd in the 16th Century. If the Fort should have been built 25 years before the first of that name, the real date will not be far removed from the supposed date.

²⁷ South Indian Inscription Vol. I. P. 137.

So the date given in the book will not be far removed from truth. And until new light is thrown upon the genealogy of the Vijayanagar dynasty, we may take the one given in the book as a tentative one.

The question of date being set aside, one or two other points have to be referred to here. First of all, as regards the name of the Deity in the Temple. The name generally given is "Jalakanteswara Swami" or "the Lord with water up to the neck." *Jvarakhandeswara* is the real name, as is recorded in the inscriptions and testified to even by the Puranas.

There are inscriptions in the following places:—*Arapakam, Ariyur, Arumbaruthi, Saduperi, Sathuvachari, Sammanginellur, and Parumai*. All of them record gifts of the respective villages to the *Jvarakhandeswara* Temple by Sinna Bommi Nayaka, of whom we have already considered.

Jvarakhandeswara is also the name given in the local chronicle of Virincheepuram. Here again the inscriptions and descriptions are in unison.

From *Jvarakhandeswara* to *Jalakhandeswara* and thence to *Jalakanteswara*, the change is an easy one. Love of laziness, as somebody says, is accountable for this result. The gradual transformations are to be seen in their various stages in the inscriptions referred to.

After once the latter names had become fairly established, then justification came in as a matter of course. The Sanskrit author of the *Virinchipuram* chronicle has not committed the slip. How did this get into any serious book? It will be interesting to know if and where a copy of the Sanskrit local chronicle of *Sri Jvarakhandeswarar* is available. Much light then will be thrown upon this question of the change in the God's denomination. But even though the name has undoubtedly gone through a change, it need not on that account be said that the whole thing is mythological.

It is thought by some that the name "*Jalakantheswara*" led to the concoction of the whole legend. Granted. But these themselves say that if not *Jalakantheswara*, there was *Jwarakhandaneswara*, on the spot. What was the origin of that name? Perhaps it may be suggested, that these forest tracts must have been marshy and malarial and that consequently the God was called "the Destroyer of Fever." Possible. God does not give Himself names. He is a nameless God. We give Him names, according to our several capacities. And just as gold is gold, even though we call it iron, so He is He whatever we may call Him.

So *Jalakantheswara*, or *Jwarakhandeswara*, or something supernatural, must have appeared there in some form. Other wise why should a temple, and a temple of such vast proportions, and such untold beauty, spring up in the centre of a forest? That these were all forest regions, once, every one must admit. Something unusual, extraordinary, supernatural, miraculous must have taken place at the spot. Man is such a calculating being by nature, that without a strong incentive, he will not easily part with his coin. The Temple, Fort, and every thing about them are a standing witness of a forgotten fact. They are the concrete embodiment of an abstract principle. They are the visible language of an invisible idea. Some body must have been impressed with and overcome by some imposing sight. He must have been carried away by that; he must have wanted to perpetuate it, immortalize it; this must have become his be-all and end-all in life.

The person was Bommi Reddi of Bhadrachallam; and the thing was a five-teated cow, feeding a five-headed cobra! Of course, this is strange, inexplicable, mysterious! But, as Dr. L. R. Scudder of Ranipet said the other day,²⁸ mighty events require mighty causes. The appearance of such a Temple and such a Fort cannot be explained by feeble piety. Something must have occurred to fill the whole mind of the man.

²⁸. In a lecture delivered in the Arcot Mission College,

We must remember that Hindus are a religious nation to the core. To them religion is the all-engrossing thought. At least so they were in the not-distant past. Any unusual thing appeared in a religious garb. In this case, the extraordinary sight must have acted on the mind of Bommi Reddi with all the force of a "fixed idea." And he tried to express and carry out the idea in all directions.

Again, as regards the hare-incident. We do not find every temple surrounded by a fort and a ditch. Why should this alone be? This phenomenon has to be explained. The hare-episode embodies the explanation. Of course, such things are not of every day occurrence. Nor are temples and forts built every day.

Perhaps it may be suggested that the Fort was the main object in view, and the Temple was only an accessory. The position of the Temple, with its renowned Kalyana Mantapam, the pond in front, in which the Deity used to have the celebration of the boat-festival, but which is now covered up with mud, Hindu religious figures all round the ramparts, coupled with the utter want of any purely secular or civil building inside the Fort—all go to show that the Temple was the first and foremost idea. Add to these the fact that there are Mantapams all along the road leading to and from the Fort, where it is said that the Deity was made to stop on occasions of Festival Processions round the Dharmalinga Hill,—and the probability becomes all the greater.

I shall close this part of the subject with the remark that Bommi Reddi, whoever he was, was as fervent in faith and hearty in devotion as valiant in arms and heroic in deeds.

CHAPTER III. The Mediaeval Period.

We have seen already that the Fort was completed in 1278 A. D. and placed in the hands of Venkata Deva Maharayar of Penukonda. This was in 1280 A. D. according to the Kadjan.

The Rayar kings and the period of their reign are detailed below.

	Years.
1. Venkatadeva Maharayar. ...	23
2. Krishnadeva Maharayar (son) ...	15
3. Vasudeva Maharayar (son) ...	17
4. Aswadeva Maharayar (son) ...	23
5. Venkatadeva Maharayar (son) ...	20
6. Vasudeva Maharayar (son) ...	13
7. Krishnadeva Maharayar (son) ...	20
8. Aswadeva Maharayar (son) ...	20
9. Praudadeva Maharayar (son) ...	20
10. Vasudeva Maharayar (son) ...	20
11. Venkatadeva Maharayar (son) ...	26
12. Krishnadeva Maharayar (son) ...	30
	252

Thus the total number of Rayar kings that reigned over the Vellore Fort Territory was 12: and the total period of their reign was 252 years. We are now in 1532 A. D. Therefore, the date of Krishnadeva Maharayar¹ is 1502—1532 A. D.

In the Dt. Manual, also, a list of kings with dates is given. According to this Krishnadeva Maharaya is made to ascend the throne in 1536 A. D. Mr. Sowell, as the result of the comparison of a number of inscriptions gives 1509—1530 as the date of Krishna Deva Raja. Dr. Hultzsch quotes an inscription where Krishna Deva Raja, the brother of Viranarasimha Deva, appears as king in 1513 A. D.

¹To Krishna Deva Raya is attributed the Suria Guata pond; and to Krishna Raya Annual, his wife, is attributed a village on the bank the Palar. There is at this moment a village called Krishnapuram on the other side of the river. It is not easy to determine to what Krishna Deva Raya these can be attributed. Chakilo drug and Ynan drug are attributed to the last of the three by the Kadjan. Another account is that they were built by the Maharattas. (Vide Appendix)

So, then, the account given in the Kadjan is not far from truth, so far as it may be arrived at from a close study of the inscriptions.

Mr. Sewell's remarks have already been quoted. Perhaps, if the Kadjan in question, had been before him, he would have found no necessity for his remarks. And he would have also, perhaps, found some solution of the difficulties he seems to have felt. For instance, in the genealogical tables of Vijianagar kings, Narasimha is represented as having two wives. Krishna-deva Raya is given as the son of the second, *Nagaladevi*, whom he has reason to suspect to be a dancing girl, but cannot declare to be one. Our Kadjan distinctly says that Venktadeva Maharaya (whose other name, or Dynasty name was Narasimha) had Krishnadeva Raya by the lighting woman of the bed-room. How useful even the much neglected traditions are!

The Temple was in a flourishing condition these 250 years. Soon its glorious days were to come to a close. Krishna Deva Raya was a pious and quiet-going sort of man. So, handing over the Kingdom to somebody, he went to a forest in quest of peace of mind!

It was at this opportune time, that Khan Khan from Delhi seized the Fort. The members of the family of Krishna Deva Rayalu were so far under the impression that he would be returning from the forest. But when they came to understand the arrival of the Moslem, they deserted the place and settled somewhere. Now Khan Khan and his son Mahommed Khan reigned for 25 years. Abdulla Khan the latter's son reigned for 30 years.

During these 55 years there was nothing but the daily service in the Temple—no *Brahmotheavam* &c.

Now two Maharattas, named Tukojee and Salla Row came with their followers from the north and were laying siege to the Fort from the banks of the river Palar for nearly 12 years. During the siege, the Mahrattas noticed a stone growing of its own accord at a distance of half a mile. The two out of curiosity and piety, began to observe it and worship it.

Then God appeared to them in a dream and revealed to them His real nature. Tukoji built a temple and formed a village round it. This is Senbakam.

Then after a time, Abdullakhan left the Fort and lived in a palace by himself at a place 2 miles away to the west, on the road leading to Seringapatan, and formed a small village round it. He also built a fortress in the centre of the Sednperi tank. Thus far the Muhammadans had reigned for 67 years. Then Tukoji reigned over the Fort and the neighbourhood for 40 years. Then Tukoji's son, Sanoji Mullah Row reigned for 20 years. During their administration, the *Brahmothsavam* &c., that had been omitted, were again restored.

Now a certain Muhammadan called Deen Bahadur Sloof-khan came from the north and laid siege to the fort; and having offered a large bribe (12000 gold) to the Mahrattas got the fort from them. During his time there was neither *Abhishekam* nor *Oothsavam* but only *Pooja* going on. He reigned for 22 years.

Then Sivaji Row came from the north and got the Fort after a siege of 3 years. He reigned for 30 years. During his son's reign, all the various kinds of Divine Services that had been stopped were revived.

At this time, Daudkhan, a Nawab of the Patan family, and Sadullakhan, his minister of the Nawathi family, with soldiers and followers, came down from Delhi and, on their way south, stopped at the immenso forest, at the point where the river Palar "goes in two branches." Of course this refers to the place where the Newa river (Poincy R) joins the Palar at Tiruvalam. Daud Khan cleared the forest and founded a town, which is the modern Arcot. After some time he left the place for Delhi, making Sadullakhan, his minister, the ruler of the Province.

Sadullakhan now sent for his brother Gulam Ali Khan, whom he made the ruler of Vellore. Gulam Ali Khan ruled for 15 years. His son Bakir Ali Khan ruled for 35 years. His reign is made memorable by the building of the fortress on the Dharmalinga Hill.

During his administration Mahommed Alikhan, a descendant of Sadutullakhan, and the Nawab of Arcot, appointed Europeans in his service, and after having taken Pondicherry and Madura, came to Vellore and captured it.

There has been no service or worship, no *abhishekam* or *Oothsavam* ever since the time of Gulam Alikhan. So says the Kadjan. And the period also is calculated from the founding of Vellore.

	Years.
Rayar Dynasty (12 reigns)	250
Kankhan Dynasty (8 reigns)	67
Mahratta Dynasty (2 reigns)	60
Deen Bahadur Sloof khan 1	22
Sivaji Dynasty 2	60
Gulam Alikhan Dynasty 2	50
Total number of years	509
Bommi Reddi's rule	12
Grand Total	521
The Temple was founded in	1268 A. D.
Mahomed Ali captured Vellore in	1739 A. D.

Worship stopped in the Temple, then, about 1740 A. D.

From the above list it is clear that the Temple was built in 1268 or 632 years ago; that its palmy days were during Rayar administration, for 25 centuries, from 1268 to 1518 A. D.; from 1518 A. D. up to 1739 A. D. is for a period of 321 years, the Temple was, as it had been predicted by the younger architect, receiving worship intermittently; and that from 1740 A. D. all worship has completely stopped.

There stops also the Kadjan. It closes with this touching sentence:— "The Temple worship has stopped from the time of Gulam Alikhan. And it is not known by which blessed person the worship and other things are going to be restored!"

The Temple has been closed practically. No worship has been going on from the time of Gulam Ali Khan. The Temple jewels have been carried away by the Mahommadans, say some. They are secreted in some subterranean rooms of the Temple, say others. The future only can settle this important point.

CHAPTER IV.

The Modern Period.

The dates given at the close of the preceding Chapter, do not tally with the dates given in other places. For want of time, we cannot discuss the question here. "In 1708 Daud Khan came from Delhi and ousted the Maharatas," says Sir W. W. Hunter. In 1710 it was given by Dost Ali to his son-in-law, whose son, Murtiza Ali, murdered Sabadar Ali in 1741. For more than 20 years, the fort was the strong-hold of Murtiza Ali, who defied the authority of his relative and chief, the Nawab of Arcot, and his English allies. The English marched against the town in 1756, but retired without making any serious effort. Murtiza Ali held the fort till 1760, when an English force again appeared before its walls, and retired at the earnest entreaty of the Killadar.

An English garrison occupied Vellore soon after. Hyder threatened the place in 1768, which held its own against tremendous odds. In 1791 Vellore was the basis of Lord Cornwallis' march on Bangalore. After the fall of Tippu, his family was detained here. The revolt of the Sepoys in 1806 has been attributed to the intrigues of the members of Tippu's family. Colonel Gillespie put down the revolt and saved the place. Tippu's family was since removed to Bengal.

"Since 1806*" says Mr. Cox "two alarms have been raised in the District, both at Vellore, which is largely inhabited by Muhammadans." In 1838, a foreigner who gave himself out to be a Turk was arrested with treasonable correspondence in his possession. A dozen others were also suspected and seized. A moulvi of the Town was also imprisoned, for publishing a treasonable book.

In 1869 the second alarm occurred. The Inspector General of Police, held an inquiry. The result was that there was only a conspiracy among the orthodox Muhammadans to arouse alarm against the Wahabees and prevent those sectarians from frequenting their mosques.

Since 1869, there has been no disturbance in the District.

* Dt. Manual Vol. I Page 118.

CHAPTER V.

Topographical Notes.

I shall now give some interesting points about the topography of Vellore. Mr. Cox in his Manual says that Vellore "includes ten small villages." The following, I find, are the names of these villages:—

1 Vellore Kasba; 2 Adavananthai; 3 Ramanayakanpalayam; 4 Allapuram; 5 Sankaran Palayam; 6 Velapadi; 7 Thottapalayam; 8 Arukanthampundi; 9 Kararapettai; and 10 Kosapettai.

Though I have tried to make out the gradual growth of the various parts of Vellore, my attempts have not been crowned with any desirable amount of success.

Thottapalayam seems to occupy the greater portion of Vellore. As to how this came to be called by this name, I am given to understand that this was originally a *Kattubadi Inam* granted to those who protected the mountain passes on the Chittoor side; and that they were allowed to settle and carry on gardening (*Qasabdar*) here. As to the origin of Pallayams in general, I shall only refer the reader to Dr. Caldwell's History of Tinnevely (Pages 56-57.)

Kosapettai, seems to have been the latest to spring into existence. Some potters were living inside the Pettai, as the central block immediately to the east of the Commissary Bazaar Road was called. A certain Nawab, asked the potters to have the kiln outside the limits of the town, in the place which is now called Kosa Street. They had their kiln alone there for some time, and gradually they came and settled there. Hence the name.

Adavananthai was a village with a tank. A great part of the present Officers' line and Kosapettai and the Esplanade to the south of the Fort, was land irrigated by a tank, whose bund ran east and west along the road going in front of Captain

1 Dt. Manual Vol. II. P. 147.

my's bungalow. The village still exists; but the tank and the fields have been converted into houses and streets.

Arukanthampundi.—This, as the name indicates, is derived from *Aru* (river) and *Kanthan*, another name for *Subramania Swami*. This derivation differs from the one given in the *Madras Manual of Administration*,² where the name of the village is derived from *Arigandam*, an iron frame worn round the neck for performing a vow.

There is a peculiarity about this village. It is situated side by side with *Thottapalayam*. The explanation, I learn, is that this village was once situated on the bank of the *Palar*, and that on account of the encroachment of the river, the villagers removed themselves to a safer locality. The name of the village evidently lends itself to this theory.

The other names speak for themselves.

Kottai Street, I learn, was so called, because the people who were once living inside the Fort were asked to remove themselves to a place outside the Fort and in loving memory of their ancient abode, the people called their new place after the Fort.

Ka'askara Street was similarly called so by the *Luskare* working in the fort.

Batherimōdu (பாத்தரிமோடு) is derived from the English word *battery*.

I have simply thrown out some hints. I have had no time to pursue this interesting line of inquiry, or even to present the few more points that I may have already ascertained. I shall only mention here that I find that there were two walls enclosing two different parts of the town below and connecting them with the hill-fortresses above. *Madras Bungalow Road* separated the two parts, which were further protected, I hear, by ditches as well.