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In connection with bows and arrows, Mr. Pawcett writes that "I once witnessed a very interesting game called *ēitū* (*ēiththu*), played by the Nāyars in the southern portion of Kurumbranād during the ten days preceding Ōnam. There is a semi-circular stop-butt, about two feet in the highest part, the centre, and sloping to the ground at each side. The players stand 25 to 30 yards before the concave side of it, one side of the players to the right, the other to the left. There is no restriction of numbers as to sides. Each player is armed with a little bow made of bamboo, about 18 inches in length, and arrows, or what answer for arrows, these being no more than pieces of the midrib of the cocoanut palm leaf, roughly broken off, leaving a little bit of the end to take the place of the feather. In the centre of the stop-butt, on the ground, is placed the target, a piece of the heart of the plantain tree, about 3 inches in diameter, pointed at the top, in which is stuck a small stick convenient for lifting the cheppu, as the mark which is the immediate objective of the players is called. They shoot indiscriminately at the mark, and he who hits it (the little arrows shoot straight, and stick in readily) carries off all the arrows lying on the ground. Each side strives to secure all the arrows, and to deprive the other side of theirs—a sort of 'beggar my neighbour.' He who hits the mark last takes all the arrows; that is, he who hits it, and runs and touches the mark before any one else hits it. As I stood watching, it happened several times that as many as four arrows hit the mark, while the youth who had hit first was running the 25 yards to touch the cheppu. Before he could touch it, as many as four other arrows had struck it, and, of course, he who hit it last and touched the mark secured all the arrows for his side. The game is accompanied by much

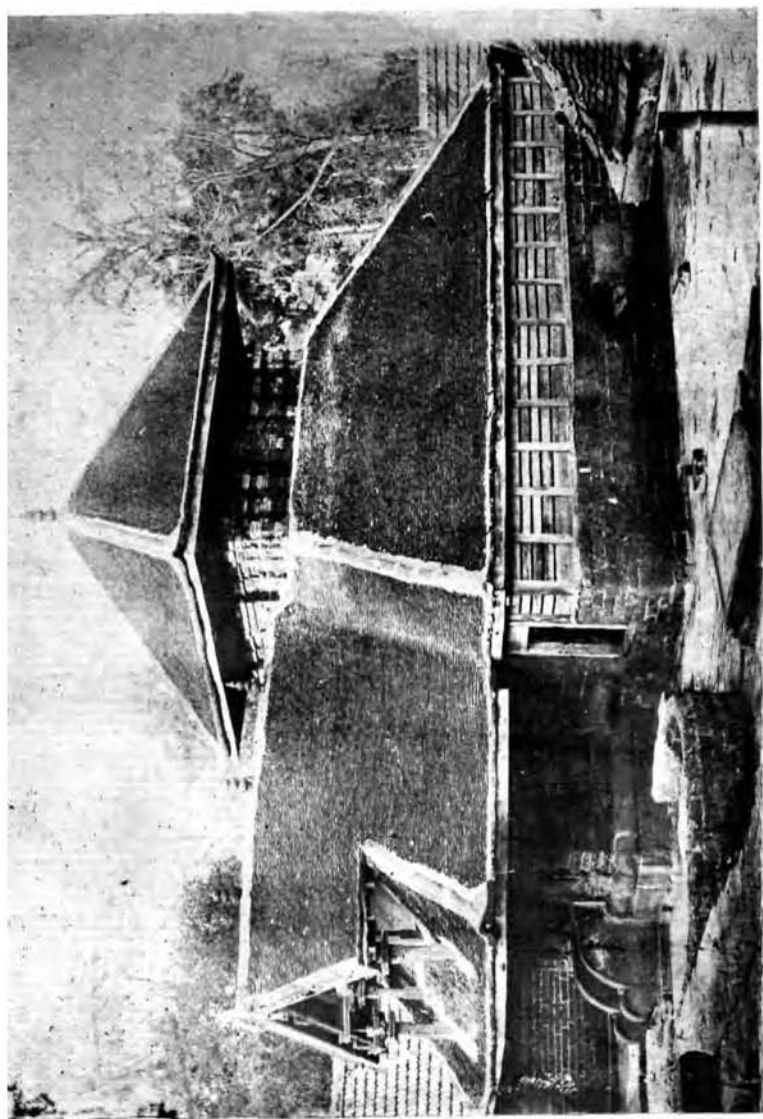
shouting, gesticulation and laughter. Those returning, after securing a large number of arrows, turned somersaults, and expressed their joy in saltatory motions." In a note on this game with bows and arrows in Kurumbranad, Mr. E. F. Thomas writes that "the players form themselves into two sides, which shoot alternately at the mark. Beside the mark stand representatives of the two sides. When the mark is hit by a member of either side, on his representative shouting 'Run, man,' he runs up the lists. His object is to seize the mark before it is hit by any one belonging to the other side. If he can do this, his side takes all the arrows which have been shot, and are sticking in the stop-butt. If, on the other hand, the mark is hit by the other side before he reaches it, he may not seize the mark. A member of the other side runs up in his turn to seize the mark if possible before it is hit again by the first side. If he can do this, he takes out, not all the arrows, but only the two which are sticking in the mark. If, while number two is running, the mark is hit a third time, a member of the first side runs up, to seize the mark if possible. The rule is that one or three hits take all the arrows in the stop-butt, two or four only the arrows sticking in the mark. Great excitement is shown by all who take part in the game, which attracts a number of spectators. The game is played every fortnight by Nāyars, Tiyaṇs, Māppillas, and others. I am told that it is a very old one, and is dying out. I saw it at Naduvanūr."

The Ōnam games in the south-east of Malabar, in the neighbourhood of Palghat, are said by Mr. Fawcett to be of a rough character, "the tenants of certain jenmis (landlords) turning out each under their own leader, and engaging in sham fights, in which there is much rough play. Here, too, is to be seen a kind of boxing, which

would seem to be a relic of the days of the Roman pugiles using the cestus in combat. The position taken up by the combatants is much the same as that of the pugiles. The Romans were familiar with Malabar from about 30 B.C. to the decline of their power.* We may safely assume that the 3,000 lbs. of pepper, which Alaric demanded as part of the ransom of Rome when he besieged the city in the fifth century, came from Malabar." Swinging on the uzhinjal, and dancing to the accompaniment of merry songs, are said to be characteristic amusements of the womankind during Ōnam festival, and, on the Patinaram Makam, or sixteenth day after Thiruvonam. This amusement is indulged in by both sexes. It is noted by Mr. Fawcett that "the cloths given as Ōnam presents are yellow, or some part of them is yellow. There must be at least a yellow stripe or a small patch of yellow in a corner, which suggests a relic of sun-worship in a form more pronounced than that which obtains at present. It is a harvest festival, about the time when the first crop of paddy (rice) is harvested."

Concerning another important festival in Malabar, the Thiruvathira, Mr. T. K. Gopal Panikkar writes as follows.† "Thiruvathira is one of the three great national occasions of Malabar. It generally comes off in the Malayālam month of Dhanu (December or January) on the day called the Thiruvathira day. It is essentially a festival in which females are almost exclusively concerned, and lasts for but a single day. The popular conception of it is that it is in commemoration of the death of Kāmadēvan, the Cupid of our national mythology. As recorded in the old Purānas, Kāmadēvan

* See Thurston. Catalogue of Roman, etc., Coins, Madras Government Museum, 2nd ed., 1894.



BHAGAVATI TEMPLE, PANDALUR.

was destroyed in the burning fire of the third eye of Siva, one of the chief members of our divine Trinity. Hence he is now supposed to have only an ideal or rather spiritual existence, and thus he exerts a powerful influence upon the lower passions of human nature. The memory of this unhappy tragedy is still kept alive among us, particularly the female section, by means of the annual celebration of this important festival. About a week before the day, the festival practically opens. At about four in the morning, every young female of Nair families with pretensions to decency gets out of bed, and takes her bath in a tank. Usually a fairly large number of these young ladies collect at the tank for the purpose. Then all, or almost all of them, plunge in the water, and begin to take part in the singing that is presently to follow. One of them then leads off by means of a peculiar rhythmic song, chiefly pertaining to Cupid. This singing is simultaneously accompanied by a curious sound produced with her hand on the water. The palm of the left hand is closed, and kept immediately underneath the surface of the water. Then the palm of the other is forcibly brought down in a slanting direction, and struck against its surface, so that the water is completely ruffled, and is splashed in all directions, producing a loud deep noise. This process is continuously prolonged, together with the singing. One stanza is now over along with the sound, and then the leader stops awhile for the others to follow in her wake. This being likewise over, she caps her first stanza with another, at the same time beating on the water, and so on until the conclusion of the song. All of them make a long pause, and then begin another. The process goes on until the peep of dawn, when they rub themselves dry, and come home to dress

themselves in the neatest and grandest possible attire. They also darken the fringes of their eyelids with a sticky preparation of soot mixed up with a little oil or ghee, and sometimes with a superficial coating of antimony powder. They also wear white, black, or red marks down the middle of their foreheads. They also chew betel, and thus redden their mouths and lips. They then proceed to the enjoyment of another prominent item of pleasure, viz., swinging to and fro on what is usually known as an *uzhinjal*, or swing made of bamboo. On the festival day, after the morning bath is over, they take a light meal, and in the noon the family dinner is voraciously attacked, the essential and almost universal ingredients being ordinary ripe plantain fruits, and a delicious preparation of arrowroot powder purified and mixed with jaggery (crude sugar) or sugar, and also cocoanut. Then, till evening, dancing and merry-making are ceaselessly indulged in. The husband and population are inexcusably required to be present in the wives' houses before evening, as they are bound to do on the *Ōnam* and *Vishu* occasions. Failure to do this is looked upon as a step, or rather the first step, on the part of the defaulting husband towards a final separation or divorce from the wife. Despite the rigour of the bleak December season during which the festival commonly falls, heightened inevitably by the constant blowing of the cold east wind upon their moistened frames, these lusty maidens derive considerable pleasure from their early baths, and their frolics in the water. The biting cold of the season, which makes their persons shiver and quiver, becomes to them in the midst of all their ecstatic frolics an additional source of pleasure. The two items described above, viz., the swinging and beating of the water, have each their own distinctive

significance. The former typifies the attempt which these maidens make in order to hang themselves on these instruments, and destroy their lives in consequence of the lamented demise of their sexual deity Kāmadēvan. The beating on the water symbolises their beating their chests in expression of their deep-felt sorrow caused by their Cupid's death."

Yet another important festival, Vishu, is thus described by Mr. Gopal Panikkar. "Vishu, like the Ōnam and Thiruvathira festivals, is a remarkable event among us. Its duration is limited to one day. The 1st of Mētam (some day in April) is the unchangeable day, on which it falls. It is practically the astronomical new year's day. This was one of the periods when, in olden days, the subjects of ruling princes or authorities in Malabar, under whom their lots were cast, were expected to bring their new year's offerings to such princes. Failure to comply with the customary and time-consecrated demands was visited with royal displeasure, resulting in manifold varieties of oppression. The British Government, finding this was a great burden, pressing rather heavily upon the people, obtained as far back as 1790 a binding promise from those Native Princes that such exactions of presents from the people should be discontinued thereafter. Consequently the festival is now shorn of much of its ancient sanctity and splendour. But suggestive survivals of the same are still to be found in the presents, which tenants and dependents bring to leading families on the day previous to the Vishu. Being the commencement of a new year, native superstition surrounds it with a peculiar solemn importance. It is believed that a man's whole prosperity in life depends upon the nature, auspicious or otherwise, of the first things that he happens to fix his eyes upon

on this particular morning. According to Nair, and even general Hindu mythology, there are certain objects which possess an inherent inauspicious character. For instance, ashes, firewood, oil, and a lot of similar objects are inauspicious ones, which will render him who chances to notice them first fare badly in life for the whole year, and their obnoxious effects will be removed only on his seeing holy things, such as reigning princes, oxen, cows, gold, and such like, on the morning of the next new year. The effects of the sight of these various materials are said to apply even to the attainment of objects by a man starting on a special errand, who happens for the first time to look at them after starting. However, with this view, almost every family religiously takes care to prepare the most sightworthy objects on the new year morning. Therefore, on the previous night they prepare what is known as a kani. A small circular bell-metal vessel is taken, and some holy objects are systematically arranged inside it. A grandha or old book made of palmyra leaves, a gold ornament, a new-washed cloth, some 'unprofitably gay' flowers of the konna tree (*Cassia Fistula*), a measure of rice, a so-called looking-glass made of bell-metal, and a few other things, are all tastefully arranged in the vessel, and placed in a prominent room inside the house. On either side of this vessel two brass or bell-metal lamps, filled with cocoanut oil clear as diamond sparks, are kept burning, and a small plank of wood, or some other seat, is placed in front of it. At about 5 o'clock in the morning of the day, some one who has got up first wakes up the inmates, both male and female, of the house, and takes them blindfolded, so that they may not gaze at anything else, to the seat near the kani. The members are seated, one after another, in the seat, and

are then, and not till then, asked to open their eyes, and carefully look at the kani. Then each is made to look at some venerable member of the house, or sometimes a stranger even. This over, the little playful urchins of the house begin to fire small crackers, which they have bought and stored for the occasion. The kani is then taken round the place from house to house for the benefit of the poor families, which cannot afford to prepare such a costly adornment. With the close of the noise of the crackers, the morning breaks, and preparations are begun for the morning meal. This meal is in some parts confined to rice kanji (gruel) with a grand appendage of other eatable substances, and in others to ordinary rice and its accompaniments, but in either case on a grand scale. Immediately the day dawns, the heads of the families give to almost all the junior members and servants of the household, and to wives and children, money presents to serve as their pocket-money. In the more numerically large families, similar presents are also made by the heads of particular branches of the same family to their juniors, children, wives and servants. One other item connected with the festival deserves mention. On the evening of the previous day, about four or five o'clock, most well-to-do families distribute paddy or rice, as the case may be, in varying quantities, and some other accessories to the family workmen, whether they live on the family estates or not. *In return for this, these labourers bring with them for presentation the fruits of their own labours, such as vegetables of divers sorts, cocoanut oil, jaggery, plantains, pumpkins, cucumbers, brinjals (fruit of *Solanum Melongena*), etc., according as their respective circumstances permit. With the close of the midday meal the festival practically concludes. In some families, after

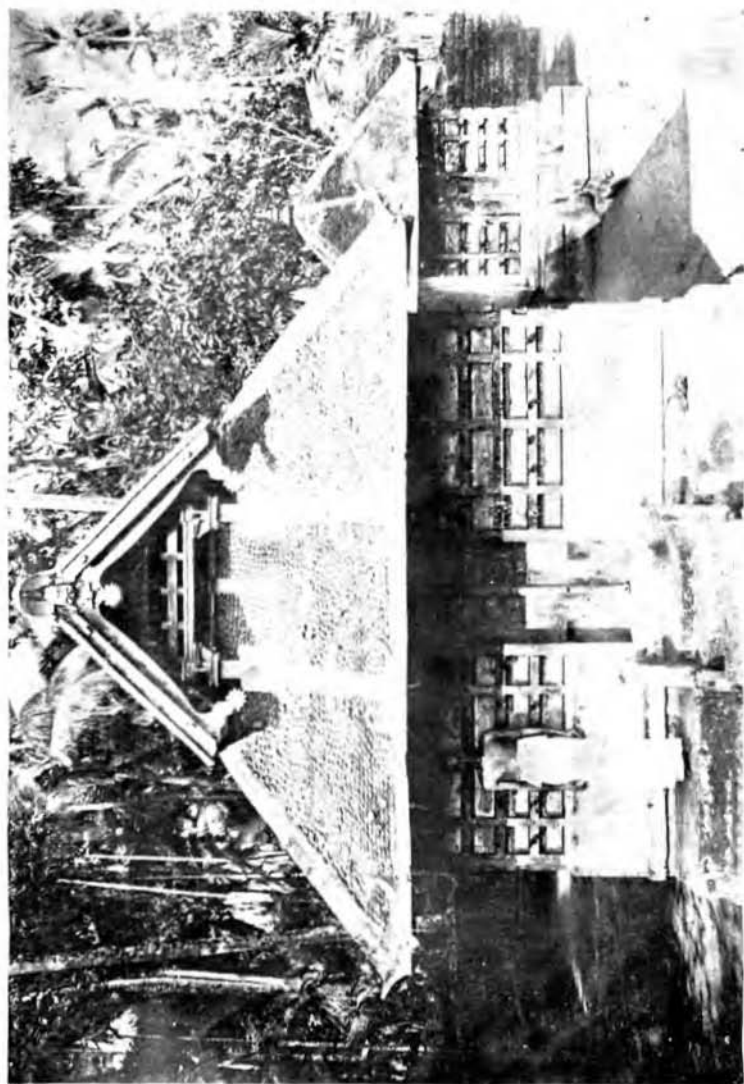
the meal is over, dancing and games of various kinds are carried on, which contribute to the enhancement of the pleasantries incidental to the festival. As on other prominent occasions, card-playing and other games are also resorted to."

On the subject of religion, Mr. Fawcett writes as follows. "No Nāyar, unless one utterly degraded by the exigencies of a Government office, would eat his food without having bathed and changed his cloth. It is a rule seldom broken that every Nāyar goes to the temple to pray at least once a day after having bathed ; generally twice a day. The mere approach anywhere near his vicinity of a Cheruman, a Pulayan, or any inferior being, even a Tiyan, as he walks to his house from the temple, cleansed in body and mind, his marks newly set on his forehead with sandal-wood paste, is pollution, and he must turn and bathe again ere he can enter his house and eat. Buchanan tells us that in his time, about a century ago, the man of inferior caste thus approaching a Nāyar would be cut down instantly with a sword ; there would be no words. Now that the people of India are inconvenienced with an Arms Act which inhibits sword play of this kind, and with a law system under which high and low are rated alike, the Nāyar has to content himself with an imperious grunt-like shout for the way to be cleared for him as he stalks on imperturbed. His arrogance is not diminished, but he cannot now show it in quite the same way.

"I will attempt a description of the ceremonial observed at the Pishāri kāvū—the Pishāri temple near Quilandy on the coast 15 miles north of Calicut, where Bhagavati is supposed in vague legend to have slain an Āsura or gigantic ogre, in commemoration of which

event the festival is held yearly to Bhagavati and her followers. The festival lasts for seven days. When I visited it in 1895, the last day was on the 31st of March. Before daybreak of the first day, the ordinary temple priest, a Müssad, will leave the temple after having swept it and made it clean; and (also before daybreak) five Nambūtiris will enter it, bearing with them sudhi kalasam. The kalasam is on this occasion made of the five products of the cow (panchagavyam), together with some water, a few leaves of the banyan tree, and darbha grass, all in one vessel. Before being brought to the temple, mantrams or magic verses will have been said over it. The contents of the vessel are sprinkled all about the temple, and a little is put in the well, thus purifying the temple and the well. The Nambūtiris will then perform the usual morning worship, and, either immediately after it or very soon afterwards, they leave the temple, and the Müssad returns and resumes his office. The temple belongs to four taravāds, and no sooner has it been purified than the Kāranavans of these four taravāds, virtually the joint-owners of the temple (known as Urālas) present to the temple servant (Pishārodi) the silver flag of the temple, which has been in the custody of one of them since the last festival. The Pishārodi receives it, and hoists it in front of the temple (to the east), thus signifying that the festival has begun. While this is being done, emphasis and grandeur is given to the occasion by the firing off of miniature mortars such as are common at all South Indian festivals. After the flag is hoisted, there are hoisted all round the temple small flags of coloured cloth. For the next few days there is nothing particular to be done beyond the procession morning, noon, and night; the image of Bhagavati being carried on an elephant to an orchestra

of drums, and cannonade of the little mortars. All those who are present are supposed to be fed from the temple. There is a large crowd. On the morning of the fifth day, a man of the washerman (Vannān) caste will announce to the neighbours by beat of tom-tom that there will be a procession of Bhagavati issuing from the gates of the temple, and passing round about. Like all those who are in any way connected with the temple, this man's office is hereditary, and he lives to a small extent on the bounty of the temple, *i.e.*, he holds a little land on nominal terms from the temple property, in consideration for which he must fulfil certain requirements for the temple, as on occasions of festivals. His office also invests him with certain rights in the community. In the afternoon of the fifth day, the Vannān and a Manūtan, the one following the other, bring two umbrellas to the temple; the former bringing one of cloth, and the latter one of cadjan (palm leaves). I am not sure whether the cloth umbrella has been in the possession of the Vannān, but think it has. At all events, when he brings it to the temple, it is in thorough repair—a condition for which he is responsible. The cadjan umbrella is a new one. Following these two as they walk solemnly, each with his umbrella, is a large crowd. There are processions of Bhagavati on the elephant encircling the temple thrice in the morning, at noon, and at night. Early on the sixth day, the headman of the Mukkuvans (fishermen), who by virtue of his headship is called the Arayan, together with the blacksmith and the goldsmith, comes to the temple followed by a crowd, but accompanied by no orchestra of drums. To the Arayan is given half a sack of rice for himself and his followers. A silver umbrella belonging to the temple is handed over to him, to be used when



AYAPPAN TEMPLE.

he comes to the temple again in the evening. To the blacksmith is given the temple sword. The goldsmith receives the silver umbrella from the Arayan, and executes any repairs that may be needful, and, in like manner, the blacksmith looks to the sword. In the afternoon, the headman of the Tiyans, called the Tandān, comes to the temple followed by two of his castemen carrying slung on a pole over their shoulders three bunches of young cocoanuts—an appropriate offering, the Tiyans being those whose ordinary profession is climbing the cocoanut palm, drawing the toddy, securing the cocoanuts, etc. This time there will be loud drumming, and a large crowd with the Tandān, and in front of him are men dancing, imitating sword play with sticks and shields, clanging the shields, pulling at bows as if firing off imaginary arrows, the while shouting and yelling madly. Then come the blacksmith and the goldsmith with the sword. Following comes the Arayan with the silver umbrella to the accompaniment of very noisy drumming, in great state under a canopy of red cloth held lengthways by two men, one before, the other behind. The procession of Bhagavati continues throughout the night, and ceases at daybreak. These six days of the festival are called Vilākku. A word about the drumming. The number of instrumentalists increases as the festival goes on, and on the last day I counted fifty, all Nāyars. The instruments were the ordinary tom-tom, a skin stretched tight over one side of a circular wooden band, about $1\frac{1}{2}$ feet in diameter and 2 or 3 inches in width, and the common long drum much narrower at the ends than in the middle; and there were (I think) a few of those narrow in the middle, something like an hour-glass cut short at both ends. They are beaten with curved drum-sticks, thicker at the end held in the hand.

The accuracy with which they were played on, never a wrong note although the rhythm was changed perpetually, was truly amazing. And the crescendo and diminuendo, from a perfect fury of wildness to the gentlest pianissimo, was equally astonishing, especially when we consider the fact that there was no visible leader of this strange orchestra. Early on the seventh and last day, when the morning procession is over, there comes to the temple a man of the Pānan caste (umbrella-makers and devil-dancers). He carries a small cadjan umbrella which he has made himself, adorned all round the edges with a fringe of the young leaves of the cocoanut palm. His approach is heralded and noised just as in the case of the others on the previous day. The umbrella should have a long handle, and, with it in his hand, he performs a dance before the temple. The temple is situated within a hollow square enclosure, which none in caste below the Nāyar is permitted to enter. To the north, south, east, and west, there is a level entrance into the hollow square, and beyond this entrance no man of inferior caste may go. The Pānan receives about 10 lbs. of raw rice for his performance. In the afternoon, a small crowd of Vettuvars come to the temple, carrying with them swords, and about ten small baskets made of cocoanut palm leaves, containing salt. These baskets are carried slung on a pole. The use of salt here is obscure.* I remember a case of a Nāyar's house having been plundered, the idol knocked down, and salt put in the place where it should have stood. The act was looked on as most insulting. The Vettuvans dance and shout in much excitement, cutting their heads with their own swords in their frenzy. Some

of them represent devils or some kind of inferior evil spirits, and dance madly under the influence of the spirits which they represent. Then comes the Arayan as on the previous day with his little procession, and lastly comes the blacksmith with the sword. The procession in the evening is a great affair. Eight elephants, which kept line beautifully, took part in it when I witnessed it. One of them, very handsomely caparisoned, had on its back a priest (Müssad) carrying a sword smothered in garlands of red flowers representing the goddess. The elephant bearing the priest is bedizened on the forehead with two golden discs, one on each side of the forehead, and over the centre of the forehead hangs a long golden ornament. These discs on the elephant's forehead are common in Malabar in affairs of ceremony. The Māppilla poets are very fond of comparing a beautiful girl's breasts to these cup-like discs. The elephant bears other jewels, and over his back is a large canopy-like red cloth richly wrought. Before the elephant walked a Nāyar carrying in his right hand in front of him a sword of the kind called nāndakam smeared with white (probably sandal) paste. To its edge, at intervals of a few inches, are fastened tiny bells, so that, when it is shaken, there is a general jingle. Just before the procession begins, there is something for the Tiyaṇs to do. Four men of this caste having with them pūkalasams (flower kalasams), and five having jannakalasams, run along the west, north, and east sides of the temple outside the enclosure, shouting and making a noise more like the barking of dogs than anything else. The kalasams contain arrack (liquor), which is given to the temple to be used in the ceremonies. Members of certain families only are allowed to perform in this business, and for what they do each

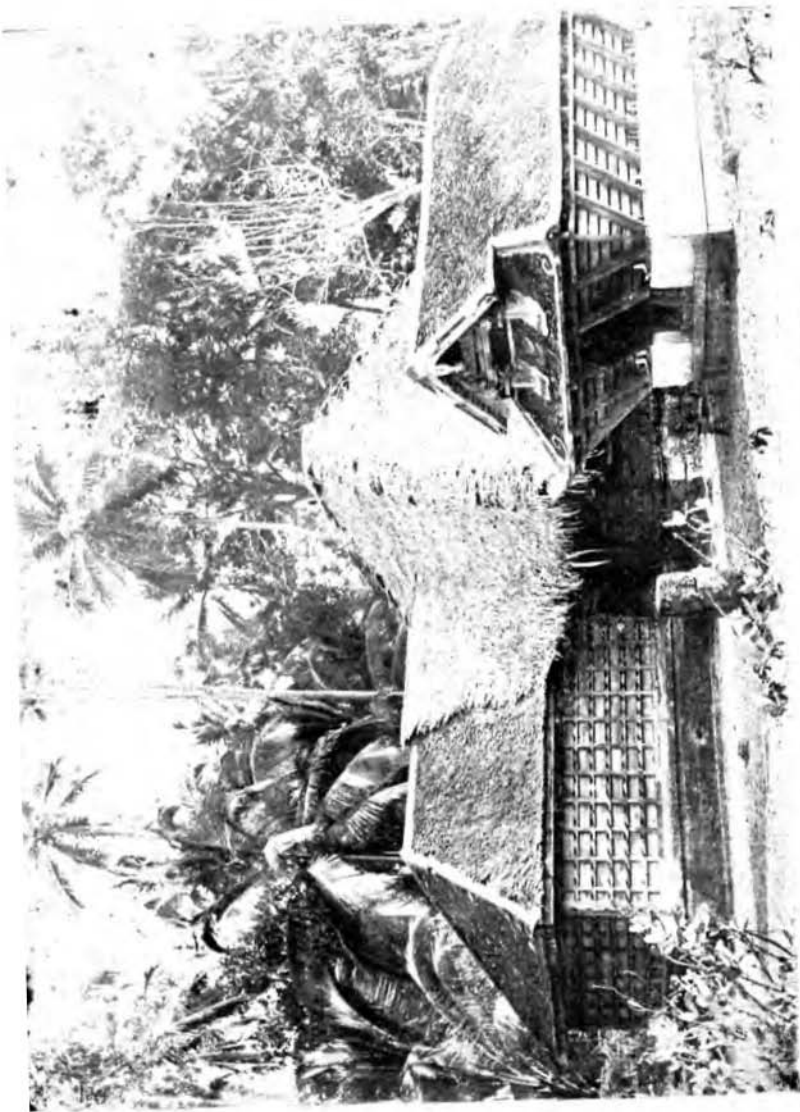
man receives five edangālis of rice from the temple, and a small piece of the flesh of the goat which is sacrificed later. These nine men eat only once a day during the festival; they do no work, remaining quietly at home unless when at the temple; they cannot approach any one of caste lower than their own; they cannot cohabit with women; and they cannot see a woman in menstruation during these days. A crowd of Tiyans join more or less in this, rushing about and barking like dogs, making a hideous noise. They too have kalasams, and, when they are tired of rushing and barking, they drink the arrack in them. These men are always under a vow. In doing what they do, they fulfil their vow for the benefit they have already received from the goddess—cure from sickness as a rule. To the west of the temple is a circular pit—it was called the fire-pit, but there was no fire in it—and this pit all the Tiyān women of the neighbourhood circumambulate, passing from west round by north, three times, holding on the head a pewter plate, on which are a little rice, bits of plantain leaves and cocoanut, and a burning wick. As each woman completes her third round, she stands for a moment at the western side, facing east, and throws the contents of the plate into the pit. She then goes to the western gate of the enclosure, and puts down her plate for an instant while she makes profound salaam to the goddess ere going away. Now the procession starts out from the temple, issuing from the northern gate, and for a moment confronts a being so strange that he demands description. Of the many familiar demons of the Malayālis, the two most intimate are Kuttichchāttan and Gulikan, who are supposed to have assisted Kālī (who is scarcely the Kālī of Brāhmanism) in overcoming the Āsura, and on the occasion of this festival these

demons dance before her. Gulikan is represented by the Vannān and Kuttichchāttan by the Manūtan who have been already mentioned, and who are under like restrictions with the nine Tiyaṇs. I saw poor Gulikan being made up, the operation occupying five or six hours or more before his appearance. I asked who he was, and was told he was a devil. He looked mild enough, but then his make-up had just begun. He was lying flat on the ground close by the north-east entrance of the enclosure, where presently he was to dance, a man painting his face to make it hideous and frightful. This done, the hair was dressed; large bangles were put on his arms, covering them almost completely from the shoulder to the wrist; and his head and neck were swathed and decorated. A wooden platform arrangement, from which hung a red ornamented skirt, was fastened to his hips. There was fastened to his back an elongated Prince of Wales' feathers arrangement, the top of which reached five feet above his head, and he was made to look like nothing human. Kuttichchāttan was treated in much the same manner. As the procession issues from the northern gate of the temple, where it is joined by the elephants, Gulikan stands in the northern entrance of the enclosure (which he cannot enter), facing it, and a halt is made for three minutes, while Gulikan dances. The poor old man who represented this fearful being, grotesquely terrible in his wonderful metamorphosis, must have been extremely glad when his dance was concluded, for the mere weight and uncomfortable arrangement of his paraphernalia must have been extremely exhausting. It was with difficulty that he could move at all, let alone dance. The procession passes round by east, where, at the entrance of the enclosure, Kuttichchāttan gives his

dance, round by south to the westward, and, leaving the enclosure, proceeds to a certain banyan tree, under which is a high raised platform built up with earth and stones. Preceding the procession at a distance of fifty yards are the nine men of the Tiyan caste mentioned already, carrying kalasams on their heads, and a crowd of women of the same caste, each one carrying a pewter plate, larger than the plates used when encircling the fire pit, on which are rice, etc., and the burning wick as before. The plate and its contents are on this occasion, as well as before, called talapōli. I could not make out that anything in particular is done at the banyan tree, and the procession soon returns to the temple, the nine men and the Tiyan women following, carrying their kalasams and talapōli. On the way, a number of cocks are given in sacrifice by people under a vow. In the procession are a number of devil-dancers, garlanded with white flowers of the pagoda tree mixed with red, jumping, gesticulating, and shouting, in an avenue of the crowd in front of the elephant bearing the sword. The person under a vow holds the cock towards one of these devil-dancers, who, never ceasing his gyrations and contortions, presently seizes its head, wrings it off, and flings it high in the air. The vows which are fulfilled by this rude decapitation of cocks have been made in order to bring about cure for some ailment. The procession passes through the temple yard from west to east, and proceeds half a mile to a banyan tree, under which, like the other, there is a high raised platform. When passing by the temple, the Tiyan women empty the contents of their plates in the fire pit as before, and the nine men hand over the arrack in their kalasams to the temple servants. Let me note here the curious distribution of the rice which is heaped in the fire pit.

Two-thirds of it go to the four Tiyaṅs who carried the pūkalasams, and one-third to the five who carried the jannakalasams. Returning to the procession, we find it at the raised platform to the east of the temple. On this platform have been placed already an ordinary bamboo quart-like measure of paddy (unhusked rice), and one of rice, each covered with a plantain leaf. The principal devil-dancer takes a handful of rice and paddy, and flings it all around. The procession then visits in turn the gates of the gardens of the four owners of the temple. At each is a measure of rice and a measure of paddy covered with plantain leaves, with a small lamp or burning wick beside them, and the devil-dancer throws a handful towards the house. The procession then finds its way to a tree to the west, under which, on the platform, is now a measure of paddy and a lamp. Some Brāhmans repeat mantrams, and the elephant, the priest on his back and the sword in his hand, all three are supposed to tremble violently. Up to this time the procession has moved leisurely at a very slow march. Now, starting suddenly, it proceeds at a run to the temple, where the priest descends quickly from the elephant, and is taken inside the temple by the Mūssad priests. He, who has been carrying the sword all this time, places it on the sill of the door of the room in which it is kept for worship, and prostrates before it. The sword then shakes itself for fifteen minutes, until the chief priest stays its agitation by sprinkling on it some tirtam fluid made sacred by having been used for anointing the image of the goddess. This done, the chief amongst the devil-dancers will, with much internal tumult as well as outward convolutions, say in the way of oracle whether the dēvi has been pleased with the festival in her honour, or not. As he pronounces this oracular utterance, he falls

in a sort of swoon, and everyone, excepting only the priests and temple servants, leaves the place as quickly as possible. The sheds which have been erected for temporary habitation around the temple will be quickly demolished, and search will be made round about to make sure that no one remains near while the mystic rite of sacrifice is about to be done. When the whole place has been cleared, the four owners of the temple, who have stayed, hand over each a goat with a rope tied round its neck to the chief priest, and, as soon as they have done so, they depart. There will remain now in the temple three Mūssads, one drummer (Marayar), and two temple servants. The reason for all this secrecy seems to lie in objection to let it be known generally that any sacrifice is done. I was told again and again that there was no such thing. It is a mystic secret. The Mūssad priests repeat mantrams over the goats for an hour as a preliminary to the sacrifice. Then the chief priest dons a red silk cloth, and takes in his hand a chopper-like sword in shape something like a small bill-hook, while the goats are taken to a certain room within the temple. This room is rather a passage than a room, as there are to it but two walls running north and south. The goats are made to stand in turn in the middle of this room, facing to the south. The chief priest stands to the east of the goat, facing west, as he cuts off its head with the chopper. He never ceases his mantrams, and the goats never flinch—the effect of the mantrams. Several cocks are then sacrificed in the same place, and over the carcasses of goats and cocks there is sprinkled charcoal powder mixed in water (*karutta gursi*) and saffron (turmeric) powder and lime-water (*chukanna gursi*), the flow of mantrams never ceasing the while. The three Mūssads only see the sacrifice—a part of the rite which



AIYAPPAN TEMPLE, NEAR CALCUT.

is supremely secret. Equally so is that which follows. The carcass of one goat will be taken out of the temple by the northern door to the north side of the temple, and from this place one of the temple servants, who is blindfolded, drags it three times round the temple, the Mūssads following closely, repeating their mantrams, the drummer in front beating his drum softly with his fingers. The drummer dare not look behind him, and does not know what is being done. After the third round, the drummer and the temple servant go away, and the three Mūssads cook some of the flesh of the goats and one or two of the cocks (or a part of one) with rice. This rice, when cooked, is taken to the kāvu (grove) to the north of the temple, and there the Mūssads again ply their mantrams. As each mantram is ended, a handful of saffron (turmeric) powder is flung on the rice, and all the time the drummer, who by this time has returned, keeps up an obligato pianissimo with his drum, using his fingers. He faces the north, and the priests face the south. Presently the priests run (not walk) once round the temple, carrying the cooked rice, and scattering it wide as they go, repeating mantrams. They enter the temple, and remain within until daybreak. No one can leave the temple until morning comes. Before daybreak, the temple is thoroughly swept and cleaned, and then the Mūssads go out, and the five Nambūtiris again enter before sunrise, and perform the ordinary worship thrice in the day, for this day only. The next morning, the Mūssad priests return and resume their duties. Beyond noting that the weirdness of the human tumult, busy in its religious effusion, is on the last night enhanced by fireworks, mere description of the scene of the festival will not be attempted, and such charming adjuncts of it as the gallery of pretty Nāyar women looking on from the

garden fence at the seething procession in the lane below must be left to the imagination. It will have been noticed that the Nambūtiris hold aloof from the festival; they purify the temple before and after, but no more. The importance attached to the various offices of those who are attached to the temple by however slender a thread, was illustrated by a rather amusing squabble between two of the Mukkuvans, an uncle and nephew, as to which of them should receive the silver umbrella from the temple, and bear it to the house of the goldsmith to be repaired. During the festival, one of them made a rapid journey to the Zamorin (about fifty miles distant), paid some fees, and established himself as the senior who had the right to carry the umbrella.

“An important local festival is that held near Palghat, in November, in the little suburb Kalpāti inhabited entirely by Pattar Brāhmans from the east. But it is not a true Malayāli festival, and it suffices to mention its existence, for it in no way represents the religion of the Nāyar. The dragging of cars, on which are placed the images of deities, common everywhere from the temple of Jagganath at Pūri in Orissa to Cape Comorin, is quite unknown in Malabar, excepting only at Kalpāti, which is close to the eastern frontier of Malabar.

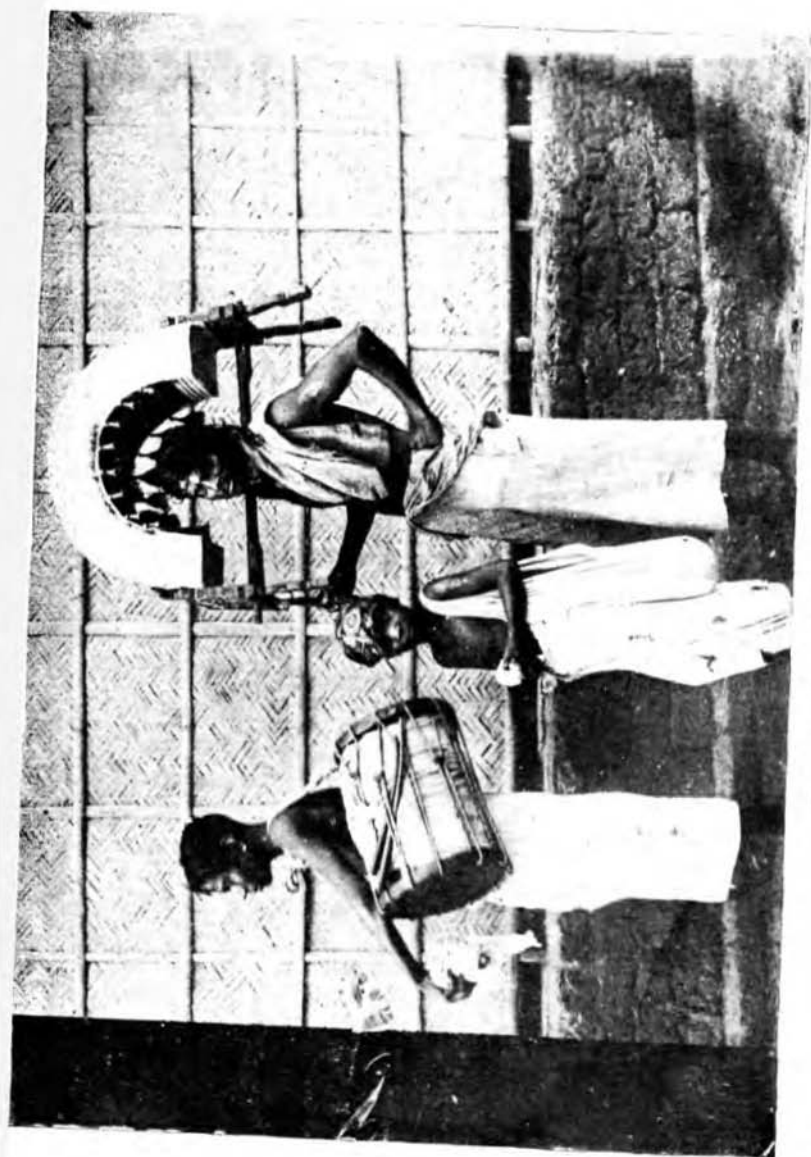
“Near Chowghāt (Chavagāt), about 30 miles to the southward of Calicut, on the backwater, at a place called Guruvayūr, is a very important temple, the property of the Zamorin, yielding a very handsome revenue. I visited the festival on one occasion, and purchase was made of a few offerings such as are made to the temple in satisfaction of vows—a very rude representation of an infant in silver, a hand, a leg, an ulcer, a pair of eyes, and, most curious of all, a silver string which represents a man, the giver. Symbolization of the offering of self is made by

a silver string as long as the giver is tall. Goldsmiths working in silver and gold are to be seen just outside the gate of the temple, ready to provide at a moment's notice the object any person intends to offer, in case he is not already in possession of his votive offering. The subject of vows can be touched on but incidentally here. A vow is made by one desiring offspring, to have his hand or leg cured, to have an ulcer cured, to fulfil any desire whatsoever, and he decides in solemn affirmation to himself to give a silver image of a child, a silver leg, and so on, in the event of his having fulfilment of his desire.

"A true Malayāli festival is that held at Kottiyūr in North Malabar, in the forest at the foot of the Wynād hills rising 3,000 to 5,000 feet from the sides of the little glade where it is situated. It is held in July during the height of the monsoon rain. Though it is a festival for high and low, these do not mix at Kottiyūr. The Nāyars go first, and after a few days, the Nāyars having done, the Tiyaṇs, and so on. A curious feature of it is that the people going to attend it are distinctly rowdy, feeling that they have a right to abuse in the vilest and filthiest terms everyone they see on the way—perhaps a few days' march. And not only do they abuse to their hearts' content in their exuberant excitement, but they use personal violence to person and property all along the road. They return like lambs. At Kottiyūr one sees a temple of Īsvara, there called Perumāl (or Perumāl Īsvara) by the people, a low thatched building forming a hollow square, in the centre of which is the shrine, which I was not permitted to see. There were some Nambūtiri priests, who came out, and entered into conversation. The festival is not held at the temple, but in the forest about a quarter of a mile distant. This spot is deemed extremely sacred and dreadful. There was,

however, no objection to myself and my companions visiting it; we were simply begged not to go. There were with us a Nāyar and a Kurichchan, and the faces of these men, when we proceeded to wade through the little river, knee-deep and about thirty yards wide, in order to reach the sacred spot, expressed anxious wonder. They dared not accompany us across. No one (excepting, of course, a Muhammadan) would go near the place, unless during the few days of the festival, when it was safe; at all other times any man going to the place is destroyed instantly. Nothing on earth would have persuaded the Nāyar or the Kurichchiyan to cross that river. Orpheus proceeding to find his Eurydice, Danté about to enter the Inferno, had not embarked on so fearful a journey. About a hundred yards beyond the stream, we came upon the sacred spot, a little glade in the forest. In the centre of the glade is a circle of piled up stones, 12 feet in diameter. In the middle of the pile of stones is a rude lingam. Running east from the circle of the lingam is a long shed, in the middle of which is a long raised platform of brick, used apparently as a place for cooking. Around the lingam there were also thatched sheds, in which the people had lodged during the festival. Pilgrims going to this festival carry with them offerings of some kind. Tiyaṅs take young cocoanuts. Every one who returns brings with him a swish made of split young leaves of the cocoanut palm."

Of the Kottiyūr festival, the following account is given in the Gazetteer of Malabar. "The Nambūdiri priests live in a little wayside temple at Kottiyūr, but the true shrine is a quarter of a mile away in the forest across one of the feeder streams of the Valarpattanam river. For eleven months in the year, the scene is



PALNI PILGRIM AND KAVADI

inconceivably desolate and dreary ; but during the month Edavam (May-June) upwards of 50,000 Nāyars and Tiyans from all parts of Malabar throng the shrine for the twenty-eight days of the annual festival. During the rest of the year, the temple is given up to the revels of Siva and Parvati, and the impious Hindu who dares to intrude is consumed instantly to ashes. The two great ceremonies are the Neyyāttam and the Elanīrāttam, the pouring of ghee (clarified butter) and the pouring of the milk of the green cocoanut. The former is performed by the Nāyars, who attend the festival first, and the latter by Tiyans. In May, all roads lead to Kottiyūr, and towards the middle of the month the ghee pourers, as the Nāyar pilgrims are called, who have spent the previous four weeks in fasting and purificatory rites, assemble in small shrines subordinate to the Kottiyūr temple. Thence, clad in white, and bearing each upon his head a pot of ghee, they set forth in large bodies headed by a leader. At Manattana the pilgrims from all parts of Malabar meet, and thence to Kottiyūr the procession is unbroken. However long their journey, the pilgrims must eat only once, and the more filthy their language, the more orthodox is their conduct. As many as five thousand pots of ghee are poured over the lingam every year. After the Neyyāttam ceremony, the Nāyars depart, and it is the turn of the Tiyans. Their preparations are similar to those of the Nāyars, and their language *en route* is even more startling. Eruvatti near Kadirūr is the place where most of them assemble for their pilgrimage, and their green cocoanuts are presented gratis by the country people as an offering to the temple. The Elanīrāttam ceremony begins at midnight, and the pilgrims heap up their cocoanuts in front of the shrine continuously till the evening of the

same day. Each Tiyan then marches thrice round the heap, and falls prostrate before the lingam ; and a certain Nāyar sub-caste removes the husks preparatory to the spilling of the milk. The festival finally closes with a mysterious ceremony, in which ghee and mantrams play a great part, performed for two days consecutively by the presiding Nambūdiri, and Kottiyūr is then deserted for another year."

"A shrine," Mr. Fawcett continues, "to which the Malayālis, Nāyars included, resort is that of Subramania at Palni in the north-west corner of the Madura district about a week's march from the confines of Malabar near Palghat. Not only are vows paid to this shrine, but men, letting their hair grow for a year after their father's death, proceed to have it cut there. The plate shows an ordinary Palni pilgrim. The arrangement which he is carrying is called a kāvadi. There are two kinds of kāvadi, a milk kāvadi containing milk, and a fish kāvadi containing fish, in a pot. The vow may be made in respect of either, each being appropriate to certain circumstances. When the time comes near for the pilgrim to start for Palni, he dresses in reddish orange cloths, shoulders his kāvadi, and starts out. Together with a man ringing a bell, and perhaps one with a tom-tom, with ashes on his face, he assumes the rôle of a beggar. The well-to-do are inclined to reduce the beggar period to the minimum ; but a beggar every votary must be, and as a beggar he goes to Palni in all humbleness and humiliation, and there he fulfils his vow, leaves his kāvadi and his hair, and a small sum of money. Though the individuals about to be noticed were not Nāyars, their cases illustrate very well the religious idea of the Nāyar as expressed under certain circumstances, for between the Nāyars and these there

is in this respect little if any difference. It was at Guruvayūr in November, 1895. On a high raised platform under a peepul tree were a number of people under vows, bound for Palni. A boy of 14 had suffered as a child from epilepsy, and seven years ago his father vowed on his behalf that, if he were cured, he would make the pilgrimage to Palni. He wore a string of beads round his neck, and a like string on his right arm. These were in some way connected with the vow. His head was bent, and he sat motionless under his *kāvadi*, leaning on the bar, which, when he carried it, rested on his shoulder. He could not go to Palni until it was revealed to him in a dream when he was to start. He had waited for this dream seven years, subsisting on roots (yams, etc.), and milk—no rice. Now he had had the long-looked-for dream, and was about to start. Another pilgrim was a man wearing an oval band of silver over the lower portion of the forehead, almost covering his eyes; his tongue protruding beyond the teeth, and kept in position by a silver skewer through it. The skewer was put in the day before, and was to be left in for forty days. He had been fasting for two years. He was much under the influence of his god, and whacking incessantly at a drum in delirious excitement. Several of the pilgrims had a handkerchief tied over the mouth, they being under a vow of silence. One poor man wore the regular instrument of silence, the mouth-lock—a wide silver band over the mouth, and a skewer piercing both cheeks. He sat patiently in a nice tent-like affair, about three feet high. People fed him with milk, etc., and he made no effort to procure food, relying merely on what was given him. The use of the mouth-lock is common with the Nāyars when they assume the pilgrim's robes and set out for Palni;

and I have often seen many of them garbed and mouth-locked, going off on a pilgrimage to that place. Pilgrims generally go in crowds under charge of a priestly guide, one who, having made a certain number of journeys to the shrine, wears a peculiar sash and other gear. They call themselves pūjāris, and are quite *au fait* with all the ceremonial prior to the journey, as well as with the exigencies of the road. As I stood there, one of these pūjāris stood up amidst the recumbent crowd. He raised his hands towards the temple a little to the west, and then spread out his hands as if invoking a blessing on the people around him. Full of religious fervour, he was (apparently at any rate) unconscious of all but the spiritual need of his flock.

“Brief mention must be made of the festival held at Kodungallūr near Cranganore in the northernmost corner of the Cochin State, as it possesses some strange features peculiar to Malabar, and is much frequented by the Nāyars. I have been disappointed in obtaining particulars of the festival, so make the following excerpt from Logan’s Manual of Malabar. ‘It takes the people in great crowds from their homes. The whole country near the lines of march rings with the shouts “Nada-a Nada-a” of the pilgrims to the favourite shrine. Of what takes place when the pilgrims reach this spot perhaps the less said the better. In their passage up to the shrine, the cry of “Nada-a Nada-a” (march, march away) is varied by terms of unmeasured abuse levelled at the goddess (a Bhagavati) of the shrine. This abusive language is supposed to be acceptable to her. On arrival at the shrine, they desecrate it in every conceivable way, believing that this too is acceptable; they throw stones and filth, howling volleys of

opprobrium at her house. The chief of the fisherman caste, styled Kūli Muttatta Arayan, has the privilege of being the first to begin the work of polluting the Bhoot or shrine. Into other particulars it is unnecessary to enter. Cocks are slaughtered and sacrificed. The worshipper gets flowers only, and no holy water after paying his vows. Instead of water, he proceeds outside and drinks arrack or toddy, which an attendant Nāyar serves out. All castes are free to go, including Tiyars and low caste people. The temple was originally only a Bhoot or holy tree with a platform. The image in the temple is said to have been introduced only of recent years.' It is a pity Mr. Logan is so reticent. My information is that the headman of the Mukkuvans opens the festival by solemnly making a faecal deposit on the image. Here again there is the same strange union of everything that is filthy, abusive, foul and irreverent, with every mode of expressing the deepest religious feeling."

Of the cock festival at Cranganore, the following account is given by Mr. T. K. Gopal Panikkar* in his interesting little book on Malabar and its folk. "In the midst of its native charms is situated a temple dedicated to Kali, the goddess who presides over the infectious diseases, cholera and small-pox. She is a virgin goddess, whom no quantity of blood will satisfy. The temple is an old-fashioned one, presenting no striking architectural peculiarities. The priestly classes attached to it are not, as usual, Brāhmins, but a peculiar sect called Adigals, of whom there are but three families in the whole of Malabar. The Brāhmins are purposely excluded from participation in the poojah ceremonies,

* Malabar and its Folk, Madras, 1900.

lest their extreme sanctity might increase the powers of the goddess to a dangerous extent. Poojahs are daily offered to her. An annual festival known as the Bharani, connected with this goddess, plays a most important part in the religious history of Malabar. It comes off in the Malayalam month of Meenam (about March or April). Pilgrimages undertaken to the temple on this occasion are potent enough to safeguard the pilgrims, and their friends and relations, from the perilous attacks of cholera and small-pox. Hence people resort thither annually by thousands from almost all parts of Malabar; and, the more north you go, the stronger will you find the hold which the goddess has upon the popular imagination. The chief propitiatory offering on the occasion is the sacrifice of cocks. In fact, every family makes a point of undertaking this sacred mission. People arrange to start on it at an auspicious moment, on a fixed day in small isolated bodies. Preparations are made for the journey. Rice, salt, chillies, curry-stuffs, betel leaves and nuts, a little turmeric powder and pepper, and, above all, a number of cocks form an almost complete paraphernalia of the pilgrimage. These are all gathered and preserved in separate bundles inside a large bag. When the appointed hour comes, they throw this bag on their shoulders, conceal their money in their girdles, and, with a native-fashioned umbrella in the one hand and a walking-stick in the other, they start, each from his own house, to meet the brother pilgrims at the rendezvous. Here a foreman is selected practically by common consent. Then commences the vociferous recitation of that series of obscene songs and ballads, which characterises the pilgrimage all along. The foreman it is that opens the ball. He is caught up by others

in equally loud and profuse strains. This is continued right up till the beginning of their homeward journey. Nobody whom they come across on the way can successfully escape the coarse Billingsgate of these religious zealots. Even women are not spared. Perhaps it is in their case that the pilgrims wax all the more eloquently vulgar. A number of cock's feathers are stuck or tied upon the tip of a stick, and with this as a wand they begin to dance and pipe in a set style, which is extremely revolting to every sense of decency. Some of the pilgrims walk all the distance to the temple, while others go by boat or other conveyance ; but in neither case do they spare any passer-by. Hundreds of gallons of arrack and toddy are consumed during the festival. The pilgrims reach the temple in their dirty attire. The temple premises are crowded to overflowing. The worship of the goddess is then commenced. The offerings consist of the sacrifice of cocks at the temple altar, turmeric powder, but principally of pepper, as also some other objects of lesser importance. A particular spot inside the temple is set apart for the distribution of what is called manjal prasadam (turmeric powder on which divine blessings have been invoked). The work of doling it out is done by young maidens, who are during the process subjected to ceaseless volleys of vile and vulgar abuse. Now, leaving out of account the minor ceremonies, we come to the principal one, viz., the sacrifice of cocks. The popular idea is that the greater the number of cocks sacrificed, the greater is the efficacy of the pilgrimage. Hence men vie with one another in the number of cocks that they carry on the journey. The sacrifice is begun, and then there takes place a regular scramble for the sanctified spot reserved for this butchering ceremony. One man holds a cock by the

trunk, and another pulls out its neck by the head, and, in the twinkling of an eye, by the intervention of a sharpened knife, the head is severed from the trunk. The blood then gushes forth in forceful and continuous jets, and is poured on a piece of granite specially reserved. Then another is similarly slaughtered, and then as many as each of the pilgrims can bring. In no length of time, the whole of the temple yard is converted into one horrible expanse of blood, rendering it too slippery to be safely walked over. The piteous cries and death throes of the poor devoted creatures greatly intensify the horror of the scene. The stench emanating from the blood mixing with the nauseating smell of arrack renders the occasion all the more revolting. One other higher and more acceptable kind of offering requires more than a passing mention. When a man is taken ill of any infectious disease, his relations generally pray to this goddess for his recovery, solemnly covenanting to perform what goes by the name of a thulabharum ceremony. This consists in placing the patient in one of the scale-pans of a huge balance, and weighing him against gold, or more generally pepper (and sometimes other substances as well), deposited in the other scale-pan. Then this weight of the substance is offered to the goddess. This is to be performed right in front of the goddess in the temple yard. The usual offerings being over, the homeward journey of the pilgrims is begun. Though the festival is called Bharani, yet all the pilgrims must vacate the temple on the day previous to the Bharani day. For, from that day onwards, the temple doors are all shut up, and, for the next seven days, the whole place is given over to the worst depredations of the countless demons over whom this blood-thirsty goddess holds sway. No human beings can safely remain there, lest

they might become a prey to these ravenous demons. In short, the Bharani day inaugurates a reign of terror in the locality, lasting for these seven days. Afterwards, all the dirt is removed. The temple is cleansed and sanctified, and again left open to public worship. The pilgrims return, but not in the same manner in which they repaired thither. During the backward journey, no obscene songs or expressions are indulged in. They are to come back quietly and calmly, without any kind of demonstrations. They get back to their respective homes, and distribute the sandals and other puja substances to their relations and friends who have elected to remain at home; and the year's pilgrimage is brought to a close."

"The month Karkkatakam," Mr. Fawcett writes, "when the Malayālis say the body is cool, is the time when, according to custom, the Nāyar youths practice physical exercises. At Payōli in North Malabar, when I was there in 1895, the local instructor of athletics was a Paravan, a mason by caste. As he had the adjunct Kurup to his name, it took some time to discover the fact. Teachers of his ilk are invariably of the Paravan caste, and, when they are believed to be properly accomplished, they are given the honorific Kurup. So carefully are things regulated that no other person was permitted to teach athletics within the amsham (a local area, a small county), and his womenfolk had privileges, they only being the midwives who could attend on the Nāyar women of the amsham. His fee for a course of exercises for the month was ten rupees. He, and some of his pupils, gave an exhibition of their quality. Besides bodily contortions and somersaults, practiced in a long low-roofed shed having a sandy floor, there is play with the following instruments :—watta ; cheruvadi,

a short stick; and a stick like a quarter-staff called a sariravadi, or stick the length of one's body. The watta is held in the right hand as a dagger; it is used to stab or strike and, in some ingenious way, turn over an opponent. The total length of the watta is two feet, and of the cheruvadi about three feet. The latter is squared at the ends, and is but a short staff. It is held in the right hand a few inches from the end, and is used for striking and guarding only. The sariravadi is held at or near one end by one or by both hands. The distance between the hands is altered constantly, and so is the end of the stick, which is grasped now by one, now by another end by either hand, as occasion may require; sometimes it is grasped in the middle. The performance with these simple things was astonishing. I should say the watta and the cheruvadi represented swords, or rather that they were used for initiation or practice in swordmanship, when the Nāyars were the military element in Malabar. The opponents, who faced each other with the sariravadi or quarter-staff, stood thirty feet apart, and, as if under the same stimulus, each kicked one leg high in the air, gave several lively bounds in the air, held their staff horizontally in front with out-stretched arms, came down slowly on the haunches, placed the staff on the ground, bent over, and touched it with the forehead. With a sudden bound they were again on their feet, and, after some preliminary pirouetting, went for each other tooth and nail. The sword play, which one sees during festive ceremonies, such as a marriage or the like, is done by the hereditary retainers, who fight imaginary foes, and destroy and vanquish opponents with much contortion of body, and always indulge in much of this preliminary overture to their performance. There is always, by

way of preliminary, a high kick in the air, followed by squatting on the haunches, bounding high, turning, twisting, pirouetting, and all the time swinging the sword unceasingly above, below, behind the back, under the arm or legs, in ever so many impossible ways. Nāyar shields are made of wood, covered with leather, usually coloured bright red. Within the boss are some hard seeds, or metal balls loose in a small space, so that there is a jingling sound like that of the small bells on the ankles of the dancer, when the shield is oscillated or shaken in the hand. The swords are those which were used ordinarily for fighting. There are also swords of many patterns for processional and other purposes, more or less ornamented about the handle, and half way up the blade."

"The Nāyars," Mr. N. Subramani Aiyar writes, "have a distinct feudal organisation, and the division of their territories had an unmistakeable reference to it. The territorial unit was the *dēsam*, presided over by a *Dāsavazhi*. A number of *dēsams* adjoining one another constituted a *nādu*, which was under the jurisdiction of a chieftain called the *Nāduvazhi*. Above the *Nāduvazhis* was the *Rājah*, the highest suzerain in the country. In course of time, each *nādu* split itself up into a certain number of *taras*, over the affairs of which a *Karanavan*, or elder, presided. An assembly of these *Karanavans* constituted the six hundred—an old socio-military organisation of the Nāyars in mediæval times. These six hundred are referred to in two places in the second Syrian Christian document, which bears the date 925 A.D. In a South Travancore inscription, dated 371 M.E., the same organisation is referred to as *Venattarunuru*, or the six hundred of Venad, and one of their duties evidently related to the supervision of the

working of temples and charitable institutions connected therewith. As Venad was divided into eighteen districts in ancient days, there might have been altogether eighteen six hundred in the country. The Nāduvazhis possessed considerable authority in all social matters, and possessed enough lands to be cultivated by their Kudiyaṅs. A feudal basis was laid for the whole organisation. Large numbers served as soldiers in times of war, and cultivated their lands when the country was quiet. In modern times, none of them take to military service in Travancore, except those employed as sepoys in the Nāyar Brigade."

Concerning the organisation of the Nāyaṅs, Mr. Logan writes that they were, "until the British occupied the country, the militia of the district (Malabar). This name implies that they were the 'leaders' of the people. Originally they seem to have been organised into six hundreds, and each six hundred seems to have had assigned to it the protection of all the people in a nād or country. The nād was in turn split up into taras, a Dravidian word signifying originally a foundation, the foundation of a house, hence applied collectively to a street, as in Tamil *teru*, in Telugu *teruvu*, and in Canarese and Tulu *teravu*. The tara was the Nāyar territorial unit of organisation for civil purposes, and was governed by representatives of the caste, who were styled Kāranavar or elders. The six hundred was probably composed exclusively of those Kāranavar or elders, who were in some parts called Mukhyastans (chief men) or Madhyastans (mediators), or Pramāṅis (chief men), and there seem to have been four families of them to each tara, so that the nād must have originally consisted of one hundred and fifty taras. This tara organisation of the protector caste played a most important

part in the political history of the country, for it was the great bulwark against the tyranny and oppression of the Rājas. The evidence of the Honourable East India Company's linguist (interpreter, agent) at Calicut, which appears in the diary of the Tellicherry Factory under date 28th May, 1746, deserves to be here reproduced. He wrote as follows: 'These Nāyars, being heads of the Calicut people, resemble the parliament, and do not obey the king's dictates in all things, but chastise his ministers when they do unwarrantable acts.' The parliament referred to must have been the kūtṭam (assembly) of the nād. The kūtṭam answered many purposes when combined action on the part of the community was necessary. The Nāyars assembled in their kūtṭams whenever hunting, or war, or arbitration, or what not was in hand, and this organisation does not seem to have been confined to Malabar, for the koot organisation of the people of South Canara gave the British officers much trouble in 1832-33. In so far as Malabar was concerned, the system seems to have remained in an efficient state down to the time of the British occupation, and the power of the Rājas was strictly limited. Mr. Murdoch Brown, of Anjarakandi, who knew the country well, thus wrote to Mr. Francis Buchanan in the earliest years of the present (nineteenth) century regarding the despotic action of the Rājas when constituted, after the Mysorean conquest, the revenue agents of the Government of Haidar Ali. 'By this new order of things, these latter (the Rājas) were vested with despotic authority over the other inhabitants, instead of the very limited prerogatives that they had enjoyed by the feudal system, under which they could neither exact revenue from the lands of their vassals, nor exercise any, direct authority in their districts.' And

again, 'The Rāja was no longer what he had been, the head of a feudal aristocracy with limited authority, but the all-powerful deputy of a despotic prince, whose military force was always at his command to curb or chastise any of the chieftains who were inclined to dispute or disobey his mandates.'* From the earliest times, therefore, down to the end of the eighteenth century, the Nāyar tara and nād organization kept the country from oppression and tyranny on the part of the rulers, and to this fact more than to any other is due the comparative prosperity, which the Malayāli country so long enjoyed, and which made Calicut at one time the great emporium of trade between the East and the West. But, besides protection, the Nāyars had originally another most important function in the body politic. Besides being protectors, they were also supervisors or overseers, a duty which, as a very ancient deed testifies, was styled kāmam—a Dravidian word derived from the verb kāmuka (to see, etc.). Parasu Rāman (so the tradition preserved in the Kēralolpatti runs) separated the Nāyars into taras, and ordered that to them belonged the duty of supervision (*lit.* kan = the eye), the executive power (*lit.* kei = the hand, as the emblem of power), and the giving of orders (*lit.* kalpana, order, command), so as to prevent the rights from being curtailed, or suffered to fall into disuse. The Nāyars were originally the overseers or supervisors of the nād, and they seem to have been employed in this capacity as the collectors of the share of produce of the land originally reserved for Government purposes. As remuneration for this service, and for their other function as protectors, another share of the produce of the soil

* Buchanan, Mysore, Canara and Malabar.

seems to have been reserved specially for them. It would be well worth the study of persons acquainted with other districts of the Presidency to ascertain whether somewhat similar functions to these (protection and supervision) did not originally appertain to the Kāvalgars of Tamil districts and the Kāpus in the Telugu country, for both of these words seem to have come from the same root as the Malayālam kāmam. And it is significant that the Tamil word now used for proprietorship in the soil is kāni-yāṭchi, to which word the late Mr. F. W. Ellis in his paper on Mirasi Rights assigned a similar derivation."

The occupation of the Nāyars is described by Mr. N. Subramani Aiyar as "comprising all kinds of worldly pursuits. So late as the end of the eighteenth century, there were with the then Mahārāja of Travancore a hundred thousand soldiers, consisting of Nāyars and Chovas, armed with arrows, spears, swords and battle-axes. The chief occupation of the Nāyars is agriculture. Cultivation of a slipshod, time-honoured type is the forte of the Nāyar, for which he has always found time from times of old, though engaged in other occupations as well. In the Velakali, a kind of mock fight, which is one of the items of the utasom programme in every important temple in Malabar, the dress worn by the Nāyars is supposed to be their ancient military costume. Even now, among the Nāyars who form the Mahārāja's own Brigade, agriculture, to which they are enabled to attend during all their off-duty days, goes largely to supplement their monthly pay. Various other occupations, all equally necessary for society, have been, according to the Kēralavakasakrama, assigned to the Nāyars, and would seem to have determined their original sub-divisions. They are domestic servants in Brāhman

and .Kshatriya houses and temples, and deal in dairy produce, as well as being engaged in copper-sheet roofing, tile-making, pottery, palanquin-bearing, and so on. But these traditional occupations are fast ceasing under the ferment of a new civilisation. In the matter of education, the Nāyars occupy a prominent position. Almost every Nāyar girl is sent to the village school to learn the three R's, quite as much as a matter of course as the schooling of boys. This constitutes a feature of Malabar life that makes it the most literate country in all India, especially in respect of the female sex. After Rāmanujam Ezhuttachchan developed and enriched the Malayālam language, numerous Asans or village teachers came into existence in different parts of Malabar. After a preliminary study of Malayālam, such as desired higher, *i.e.*, Sanskrit education, got disciplined to an Ambalavāsi or a Sastri. Even to-day the estimable desire to study Sanskrit is seen in some Nāyar youths, who have readily availed themselves of the benefit of the local Sanskrit college. In respect of English education, the Nāyars occupy a prominent position. The facility afforded by the Government of Travancore for the study of English is being largely availed of by Nāyars, and it is a matter deserving to be prominently recorded that, in recent years, several Nāyar girls have passed the Matriculation examination of the University of Madras."

It is noted, in the Gazetteer of Malabar, that "the Nāyars as a class are the best educated and the most advanced of the communities in Malabar (excepting perhaps the Pattar Brāhmans, who are not strictly a Malayālam class), and are intellectually the equals of the Brāhmans of the East Coast. Many of them have risen to the highest posts in Government, and the caste

has supplied many of the leading members of the learned professions."

Nāyi (dog).—An exogamous sept of Kuruba.

Nāyinar.—Nāyinar, Nāyanar, or Nainar, has been recorded as a section of Vellālas, who are thought to be descended from Jains who were converted to Hinduism, and as a title of Jains, Kaikōlans, Pallis, and Udayiāns. Nāyanikulam occurs as a synonym of Bōya. The word Nāyinar is the same as Nāyaka, meaning lord or master, and the Saivite saints, being religious teachers, are so called, *e.g.*, Sundara Mūrti Nāyanar.

Nāyinda.—Recorded, in the Mysore Census Report, 1901, as the name of a caste, which follows the hereditary occupation of barber, and also of agriculture. "They are," it is there said, "members of the village hierarchy. They are paid, like the Agasa (washerman), in kind for their services. They are also fiddlers, and have the exclusive right of wind instruments. They are known as Kēlasiga or Hajām. They are both Saivites and Vaishnavites. A section of them wear the lingam, and follow Lingayetism. They are known as Silavanta. These people are largely in requisition at feasts, marriages, etc., when they form the music band." Kelasi is the name of a Canarese barber caste, and Hajām is a Hindustani word for barber.

Nedungādi.—This name, denoting a settlement in Nedunganād in the Walluvanād taluk of Malabar, has been returned as a sub-caste of Nāyars and Sāmantas.

Nekkāra.—A small class of washermen in South Canara. The women only are said to do the washing, while the men are employed as devil-dancers.

Nellika (*Phyllanthus Emblica*).—An illam of Tiyan.

Nellu (paddy, unhusked rice).—A gōtra of Kurni.

Nemilli (peacock).—An exogamous sept of Bōya and Baliya.

Nērali (*Eugenia Jambolana*).—An exogamous sept of Gangadikāra Holeya.

Nerati.—Nerati or Neravati is a sub-division of Kāpu.

Nēse.—An occupational term, meaning weaver applied to several of the weaving castes, but more especially to the Kurnis. It is noted, in the Madras Census Report, 1901, that "in the inscriptions of Rāja Rāja the Chōla king, about the beginning of the eleventh century, the Paraiyan caste is called by its present name. It had then two sub-divisions, Nesavu (the weavers) and Ulavu (the ploughman)."

Nētpanivāndlu (neyyuta, to weave).—Recorded by the Rev. J. Cain * as a name for Māla weavers.

Nettikōtala.—In a note on the Nettikōtalas or Neththikōtalasi, Mr. C. Hayavadana Rao writes that they correspond to the Kalladi Siddhans of the Tamil country. The name means those who cut their foreheads. They are mendicants who beg from Gavara Kōmatis, whom they are said to have assisted in days of old by delaying the progress of Rāja Vishnu Vardhana. (*See* Kōmati.) When their dues are not promptly paid, they make cuts in their foreheads and other parts of the body, and make blood flow.

Nēyigē.—The silk and cotton hand-loom weavers of the Mysore Province are, in the Census Report, 1891, dealt with collectively under the occupational name Nēyigē (weaving), which includes Bilimagga, Dēvānga, Khatri, Patvēgar, Sāle, Saurāshtra (Patnūlkāran), Sēniga and Togata.

* Ind. Ant., VIII, 1879.

Neytikkar.—Weavers of coir (cocoanut fibre) mats in Malabar.

Nēyyala.—The Nēyyala are a Telugu fishing caste found chiefly in Vizagapatam and Ganjam, for the following note on whom I am indebted to Mr. C. Hayavadana Rao. The name is derived from the Telugu nēyyalu, meaning fried rice or cholam (*Sorghum vulgare*), which is made by female members of the caste, especially during the harvest season, into balls with jaggery (crude sugar). These are carried about the country by the men for sale to those engaged in reaping the crop and others. As payment, they receive from the reapers a portion of the grain which they are cutting. A further occupation of the caste is fishing with konti vala, or koyyala vala *i.e.*, nets supported on a row of bamboo sticks, which are placed in shallow water, and dragged by two men.

The Nāga (cobra) is revered by the caste. A Brāhman officiates at marriages, during which the sacred thread is worn. The remarriage of widows is permitted, provided that the woman has no children by her first husband. Divorce is not allowed. The dead are burnt, and the chinna (little) and pedda rōzu (big day) death ceremonies are observed.

As a caste, the Nēyyalas do not drink intoxicating liquor, and eat only in Brāhman houses. Their usual title is Ayya.

Nēyye (clarified butter).—An occupational subdivision of Kōmati.

Nila (blue).—An exogamous sept of Mēdara.

Nilagāra (indigo people).—The name of a class of dyers, who are, in the Mysore Census Report, 1901, included in the Kumbāra or potter caste.

Nili (indigo).—An exogamous sept of Padma Salē and Togata.

Nirganti.—Recorded, in the Mysore and Coorg Gazetteer, as a regulator and distributor of water to irrigated lands. He is usually a Holeya by caste.

Nirpūsi (wearers of sacred ashes).—Recorded, at times of census, as a sub-division of Pāndya Vellālas. Nirpūsi Vellala is described, in the Gazetteer of the South Arcot district, as a name current in the South Arcot district meaning Vellālas who put on holy ash, in reference to certain Jains, who formerly became Saivites, taking off their sacred threads, and putting holy ashes on their foreheads.

Nityadāsu.—Nityadāsu, or Nityulu, meaning immortal slaves, is a name by which some Māla Dāsaris style themselves.

Nodha.—Recorded, in the Madras Census Report, 1901, as a very small caste of hill cultivators and earth-workers in the Oriya country.

Nōkkan.—The Nōkkans, who often go by the name of Jādipillais (children of the caste), are a class of mendicants, who beg from members of the Palli caste. The word Nōkkan is said to mean 'he who looks'. The Nōkkans make periodical visits to villages where Pallis live, and receive from them a small fee in money. They attend at Palli marriages, and, during processions, carry flags (palempores) bearing devices of Hanumān, tigers, Agni, etc., which are made at Kālahasti.

The Nōkkans claim fees from the Pallis, because one of their ancestors helped them. The legend runs as follows. During the reign of a Palli king at Conjeeveram, a car, bearing the idol of the god, stood still, and could not be moved. A human sacrifice was considered necessary, but no one would offer himself as a victim. A Nōkkan came forward, and allowed his only daughter, who was pregnant, to be sacrificed

Pleased at his behaviour, the king ordered that the Pallis should in future treat the Nökkans as their Jāḍipillais. Some Nökkans say that they were presented with copper-grants, one of which is reputed to be in the possession of one Nökka Ramaswāmi of Mulavāyal village in the Ponnēri tāluk of the Chingleput district.

In the course of their rounds, the Nökkans repeat the story of the origin of the Pallis, one version of which runs as follows. Two Asuras, Vāthāpi and Enādhapi, who were ruling at Ratnagiripatnam, obtained at the hands of Siva, by means of severe tapas (penance), the following boon. No child should die within their dominions, and the Asuras should be invincible, and not meet their death at the hands of uterine-born beings. The Dēvatas and others, unable to bear the tyranny of the Asuras, prayed to Brahma for rescue. He directed them to the Rishi Jambuvamuni, who was doing penance on the banks of the river Jumna. This Rishi is said to have married a woman named Āsendi, who was born from the cheeks of Parvati. Hearing the request of the Dēvatas, the Rishi lighted the sacred fire, and therefrom arose a being called Rūdra Vanniyan, and forty other warriors, including Nīlakanta, Gangabala, and Vajrabāhu. The Pallis are descended from these fire-born heroes. (*See Palli.*)

Nökkans wear the sacred thread, and carry with them a big drum and a gourd pipe like that used by snake-charmers.

Noliya.—A synonym used by Oriya castes for the Telugu Jalāris.

Nonaba.—A territorial sub-division of Vakkaliga. The name is derived from Nonambavādi, one of the former great divisions of the Tanjore country.

Nōttakāran.—The office of village Nōttakāran, or tester, has been abolished in modern times. It was

generally held by a goldsmith, whose duty was to test the rupees when the land revenue was being gathered in, and see that they were not counterfeit.

Nuchchu (broken rice).—A gōtra of Kurni.

Nūkala (coarse grain powder).—An exogamous sept of Padma Sālē.

Nulayan.—In the Madras Census Report, 1901, ninety-six individuals are recorded as belonging to a small caste of Malayālam fishermen and boatmen. The Nulayans are found in Travancore, and were returned in the census of Malabar, as the two small British settlements of Anjengo and Tangacheri in Travancore are under the jurisdiction of the Collector of Malabar.

Nūnē (oil).—An occupational sub-division of Kōmati.

Nunia (nuno, salt).—A sub-division of Odiya.

Nūrankurup.—An occupational name for Paravans settled in Malabar, whose employment is that of lime-burners (nūru, lime).

Nūrbāsh.—Recorded, at the census, 1901, as a synonym of Dūdēkula. A corruption of nūrbaf (weaving).

Nūvvala (gingelly : *Sesamum indicum*).—An exogamous sept of Kamma and Mēdara. Gingelly seeds, from which an oil is extracted, "form an essential article of certain religious ceremonies of the Hindus, and have therefore received the names of hōma-dhānya or the sacrificial grain, and pitri-tarpana or the grain that is offered as an oblation to deceased ancestors." (*U. C. Dutt.*) During the death ceremonies of some Brāhmans, libations of water mixed with gingelly seeds, called tilothakam, and a ball of rice, are offered daily to two stones representing the spirit of the deceased.

Nyāyam (justice).—An exogamous sept of Padma Sālē.

Ōcchan.—The Ōcchans are a class of temple priests, who usually officiate as pūjāris at Pidāri and other Amman (Grāma Dēvata) temples. They are for the most part Saivites, but some belong to the Vadagalai or Tengalai Vaishnava sects. Some of the pūjāris wear the sacred thread when within the temple. Their insignia are the udukkai, or hour-glass shaped drum, and the silambu, or hollow brass ring filled with bits of brass, which rattle when it is shaken. In the Chingleput district, some Ōcchans act as dancing-masters to Dēvadāsis, and are sometimes called Nattuvan.

The name Ōcchan is derived from the Tamil ōchai, meaning sound, in reference to the usual mode of invoking the Grāma Dēvatas (village deities) by beating on a drum and singing their praises. It has been suggested that Ōcchan is a contracted form of Uvacchan, which occurs in certain old inscriptions.* Of these, the oldest is dated Sakha 1180 (A.D. 1258), and refers to the tax on Uvacchas. Another inscription, in which the same tax is referred to, is dated Sakha 1328 (A.D. 1406). In both these inscriptions, Uvacchan has been interpreted as referring to Jonakas, who are a class of Muhammadans. This is one of the meanings given by Winslow, † who also gives “a caste of drummers at temples, Ōcchan.”

In the northern districts, the Ōcchans are divided into five sections, called Mārayan, Pāndi, Kandappan, Periya or Pallavarāyan, and Pulavan. Mārayan is also the name of temple priests in Travancore, on whom the title Ōcchan is bestowed as a mark of royal favour by the Travancore sovereigns.‡ The Ōcchans have

* E. Hultzsch, *South Indian Inscriptions*, I. 82, 108, 1890.

† *Comprehensive Tamil and English Dictionary*.

‡ *Travancore Census Report*, 1901.

many titles, *e.g.*, Archaka or Umai Archaka, Dēvar, Parasaivan, Mudaliar, Vallabarāyan, Pūsāli, Pulavar, and Kamban. Of these, the last two are said to be derived from the Tamil epic poet Kamban, who is traditionally believed to have belonged to the Ōcchan caste. There is a legend that Kamban was on his way to the residence of a king, when he heard an oil-monger, who was driving his bulls, remonstrate with them, saying "Should you kick against each other because the poet Kamban, like the Ōcchan he is, hums his verse?" On hearing this, Kamban approached the oil-monger, and went with him to the king, to whom he reported that he had been insulted. By order of the king, the oil-monger burst forth into verse, and explained how his bulls had taken fright on hearing Kamban's impromptu singing. Kamban was greatly pleased with the poet oil-monger, and begged the king to let him go with honours heaped on him.

In the southern districts, more especially in Madura and Tinnevely, it is usual for an Ōcchan to claim his paternal aunt's daughter in marriage. In the northern districts, a man may also marry his maternal uncle's or sister's daughter. Brāhman Gurukkals officiate at marriages. In their puberty, marriage, and death ceremonies, the Ōcchans closely follow the Pallis or Vanniyans. The dead are burnt, and Brāhmans officiate at the funeral ceremonies.

The caste is an organised one, and there is usually a headman, called Periyathanakāran, at places where Ōcchans occur.

Ōda vāndlu (boatmen).—A synonym of Mīla, a fishing caste in Ganjam and Vizagapatam. Some prosperous Mīlas have adopted Ōda Balija as their caste name. (*See Vāda.*)

Ōdan.—An occupational name of a class of Nāyars, who are tile-makers.

Odāri.—The Odāris or Vodāris are Tulu-speaking potters in the South Canara district. Those who have abandoned the profession of potter call themselves Mūlia, as also do some potters, and those who are employed as pūjāris (priests) at bhūthasthanas (devil shrines). In many cases, the headman combines the duties of that office with those of pūjāri, and is called Mūlia. Otherwise his title is Gurikāra.

The Canarese potters in South Canara, in making pots, use the ordinary wheel, which is rotated by means of a long stick. The wheel of the Odāris is more primitive, consisting of a small disc, concave above, made of unburnt clay, fitting by means of a pebble pivot into a pebble socket, which is rotated by hand.

Like other Tulu castes, the Odāris worship bhūthas, but also reverence Venkatarāmana.

In their marriage ceremonial, the Odāris follow the Bant type. At the betrothal, the headmen or fathers of the contracting couple exchange betel, and the party of the future bridegroom give a ring to the people of the bride-elect. The marriage rites are completed in a single day. A bench is placed within the marriage pandal (booth), and covered with clothes brought by the Madivāli (washerman caste). The bridegroom is conducted thither by the bride's brother, and, after going round three times, takes his seat. He is generally preceded by women carrying lights, rice and fruits before him. The lamp is hung up, and the other articles are deposited on the ground. One by one, the women throw a grain of rice, first over the lamp, and then a few grains over the head of the bridegroom. Then the barber comes, and, after throwing rice, shaves

the face of the bridegroom, using milk instead of water. The bride is also shaved by a barber woman. The pair are decorated, and brought to the pandal, where those assembled throw rice over their heads, and make presents of money. Their hands are then united by the headman, and the dhāre water poured over them by the maternal uncle of the bride.

An interesting rite in connection with pregnancy is the presentation of a fowl or two to the pregnant woman by her maternal uncle. The fowls are tended with great care, and, if they lay eggs abundantly, it is a sign that the pregnant woman will be prolific.

The dead are either buried or cremated. If cremation is resorted to, the final death ceremonies (bojja) must be celebrated on the eleventh or thirteenth day. If the corpse has been buried, these ceremonies must not take place before the lapse of at least a month.

Oddē.—The Oddēs or Voddas, who are commonly called Wudders, are summed up by Mr. H. A. Stuart * as being “the navvies of the country, quarrying stone, sinking wells, constructing tank bunds, and executing other kinds of earthwork more rapidly than any other class, so that they have got almost a monopoly of the trade. They are Telugu people, who came originally from Orissa, whence their name. Were they more temperate, they might be in very good circumstances, but, as soon as they have earned a small sum, they strike work and have a merry-making, in which all get much intoxicated, and the carouse continues as long as funds last. They are very ignorant, not being able even to calculate how much work they have done, and trusting altogether to their employer's honesty. They are an open-hearted,

* Manual of the North Arcot district.

good-natured lot, with loose morals, and no restrictions regarding food, but they are proud, and will only eat in the houses of the higher castes, though most Sūdras look down upon them. Polygamy and divorce are freely allowed to men, and women are only restricted from changing partners after having had eighteen. Even this limit is not set to the men."

Women who have had seven husbands are said to be much respected, and their blessing on a bridal pair is greatly praised. There is a common saying that a widow may mount the marriage dais seven times.

In the Census Report, 1871, the Oddēs are described as being "the tank-diggers, well-sinkers, and road-makers of the country who live in detached settlements, building their huts in conical or bee-hive form, with only a low door of entrance. They work in gangs on contract, and every one, except very old and very young, takes a share in the work. The women carry the earth in baskets, while the men use the pick and spade. The babies are usually tied up in cloths, which are suspended, hammock fashion, from the boughs of trees. They are employed largely in the Public Works Department, and in the construction and maintenance of railways. They are rather a fine-looking race, and all that I have come across are Vaishnavites in theory, wearing the trident prominently on their foreheads, arms, and breasts. The women are tall and straight. They eat every description of animal food, and especially pork and field-rats, and all drink spirituous liquors."

Of the Oddēs, the following brief accounts are given in the Nellore, Coimbatore, and Madura Manuals:—

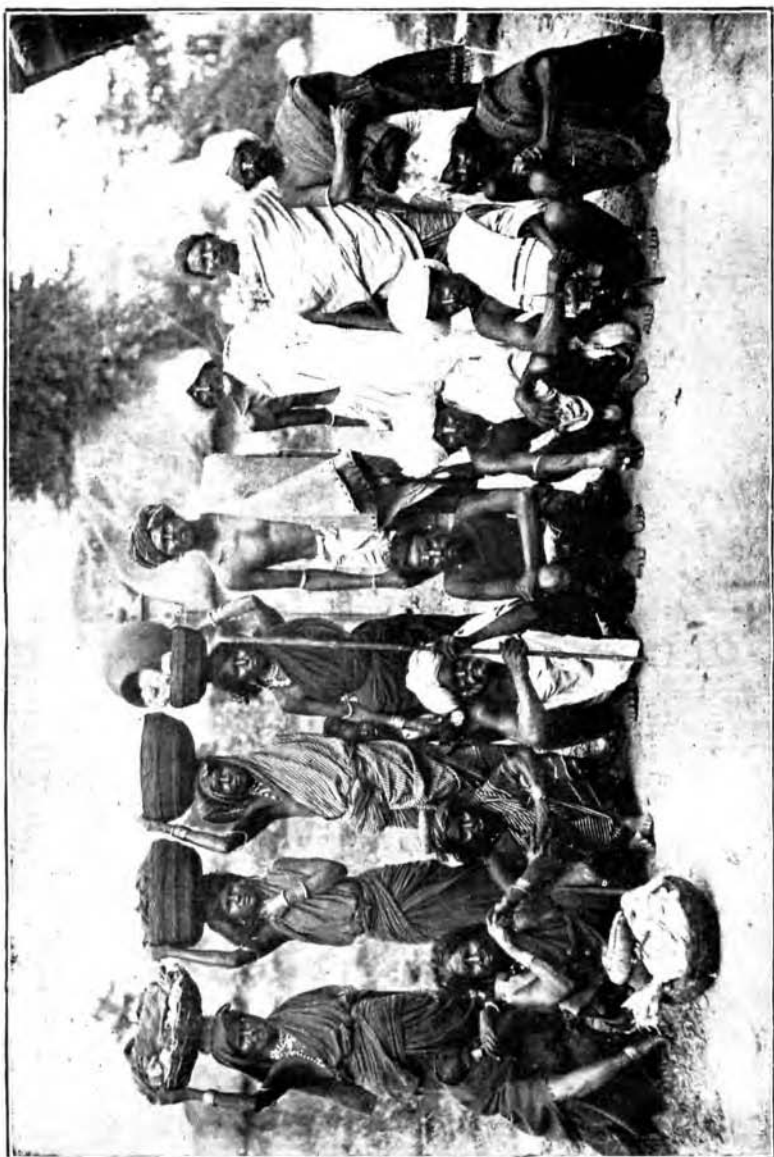
Nellore.—"These people are the tank-diggers. They sometimes engage in the carrying trade, but beyond this, they only move about from place to place

as they have work. The word Voddē or Oddē is said to be a corruption of the Sanskrit Odhra, the name for the country now called Orissa, and the people are ordinarily supposed to have emigrated from the Uriya country. Besides Telugu, they are said to speak a peculiar dialect among themselves; and, if this should turn out to be Uriya, the question might be regarded as settled. The laborious occupation of the men tends to develop their muscles. I have seen some very fine men among the tribe."

Coimbatore.—"Numerous, owing to the hard nature of the subsoil and the immense and increasing number of irrigation wells, which demand the labour of strong men accustomed to the use of the crowbar, pick-axe, and powder. They are black, strong, and of good physique, highly paid, and live on strong meat and drink."

Madura.—"An itinerant caste of tank-diggers and earth-workers. They are Telugus, and are supposed to have come southward in the time of the Nāyyakkans. Possibly Tirumala sent for them to dig out his great teppakulam, and assist in raising gopuras. They are a strong, hard-working class, but also drunken, gluttonous, and vicious. And but little faith can be placed in their most solemn promises. They will take advances from half a dozen employers within a week, and work for none of them, if they can possibly help it."

In Mysore numbers of Oddēs are now permanently settled in the outskirts of large towns, where both sexes find employment as sweepers, etc., in connection with sanitation and conservancy. Some Oddēs are, at the present time (1908), employed at the Mysore manganese mines. The tribe is often found concerting with the Korachas, Koramas, and other predatory classes in



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committing dacoities and robberies, and it has passed into a proverb that they would rather bear any amount of bodily torture than confess or disclose the truth regarding the crimes attributed to them. Some Oddēs have settled down as agriculturists and contractors, and some are very prosperous. For example, there are a few Oddēs near Kuppam in the North Arcot district, whose credit is so good that any rich merchant would advance them large sums of money. A wealthy Oddē, worth nearly a lakh of rupees, worried my assistant for half an anna, wherewith to purchase some betel leaf. It is recorded by Bishop Whitehead,* in the diary of a tour in the Nizam's Dominions, that, at Khammamett, "the Waddas who have become Christians have for some time past possessed land and cattle of their own, and are well-to-do people. One of the headmen, who was presented to me after service, said that he had 80 acres of land of his own."

Some of the timber work in the Nallamalai hills, in the Kurnool district, is done by Oddēs, who fell trees, and keep bulls for dragging the timber out of the forests. Under the heading "Uppara and Vadde Vandlu," the Rev. J. Cain gives† the following account of the distribution of wages. "The tank-diggers had been paid for their work, and, in apportioning the share of each labourer, a bitter dispute arose because one of the women had not received what she deemed her fair amount. On enquiry it turned out that she was in an interesting condition, and therefore could claim not only her own, but also a share for the expected child."

A legend is current to the effect that, long ago, the Oddēs were ordered to dig a tank, to enable the Dēvatas

* Madras Dioc. Magazine, April, 1908.

† Ind. Ant., VIII, 1879.

and men to obtain water. This was done, and they demanded payment, which was made in the form of a pinch of the sacred ashes of Siva to each workman, in lieu of money. When they reached home, the ashes turned into money, but they were not satisfied with the amount, and clamoured for more. The god, growing angry, cursed them thus : " What you obtain in the forests by digging shall be lost as soon as you reach high ground." Parvati, taking pity on them, asked Siva to give them large sums of money. Whereon Siva, hollowing out a measuring-rod, filled it with varāhans (gold coins), and gave it to the maistry. He also filled a large pumpkin with money, and buried it in a field, where the Oddēs were working. The measuring-rod was pawned by the maistry for toddy. The Oddēs, noticing the raised mound caused by the burying of the pumpkin, left it untouched to show the depth that they had dug. A buffalo, which was grazing in a field close by, exposed the pumpkin, which the Oddēs, not suspecting its contents, sold to a Kōmati.

According to another legend, the Oddēs were employed by God, who had assumed a human form, and was living amongst them. On one occasion, God had to perform a certain ceremony, so he gave the Oddēs an advance of three days' pay, and ordered them not to worry him. This they failed to do, and were accordingly laid under a curse to remain poor for ever.

A further legend is current among the Oddēs to the effect that, when Siva and Parvati were walking one sultry day upon the earth, they got very hot and thirsty. The drops of perspiration which fell from Siva were changed by him into a man with a pick and crowbar, while those falling from Parvati turned into a woman carrying a basket. The man and woman quickly sunk

a well, with the cooling waters of which the god and goddess refreshed themselves, and in gratitude promised the labourers certain gifts, the nature of which is not now known, but neither was satisfied, and both grumbled, which so incensed Siva that he cursed them, and vowed that they and their descendants should live by the sweat of their brows.

Among the Oddēs, the following sayings are current:—

The Oddēs live with their huts on their heads (*i.e.*, low huts), with light made from gathered sticks, on thin conji (gruel), blessing those who give, and cursing those who do not.

Cobras have poison in their fangs, and Oddēs in their tongues.

Though wealth accumulates like a mountain, it soon disappears like mist.

At recent times of census, the following occupational sub-divisions were returned:—Kallu or Rāti (stone-workers) and Mannu (earth-workers), Manti or Bailu (open space), between which there is said to be no intermarriage. The endogamous sub-divisions Nāta-pūram and Ūrū (village men), Bidāru (wanderers), and Konga (territorial) were also returned. Bēri was given as a sub-caste, and Oddērāzu as a synonym for the caste name. In Ganjam, Bolāsi is said to be a sub-division of the Oddēs. The caste titles are Nāyakan and Boyan. The similarity of the latter word to Boer was fatal, for, at the time of my visit to the Oddēs, the South African war was just over, and they were afraid that I was going to get them transported, to replace the Boers who had been exterminated. Being afraid, too, of my evil eye, they refused to fire a new kiln of bricks for the new club chambers at Coimbatore until I had taken my departure.

It is noted, in the Mysore Census Report, 1891, that "the caste divides itself into two main branches, the Kallu and Mannu Vaddas, between whom there is no social intercourse of any kind, or intermarriage. The former are stone-workers and builders, and more robust than the latter, and are very dexterous in moving large masses of stone by rude and elementary mechanical appliances. They are hardy, and capable of great exertion and endurance. The Kallu Vaddas consider themselves superior to the Mannu Vaddas (earth diggers). Unlike the Kallu Vaddas, the Mannu Vaddas or Bailu Vaddas are a nomadic tribe, squatting wherever they can find any large earthwork, such as deepening and repairing tanks, throwing up embankments, and the like. They are expert navvies, turning out within a given time more hard work than any other labouring class." The Mannu Oddēs eat rats, porcupines, and scaly ant-eaters or pangolins (*Manis pentadactyla*).

Of exogamous septs, the following may be cited :—

Bandollu, rock.	Sampangi (<i>Michelia Cham-paca</i>).
Bochchollu, hairs.	Thätichettu, palmyra palm.
Cheruku, sugarcane.	Bandāri (<i>Dodonaea viscosa</i>).
Enumala, buffalo.	Dēvala, belonging to god.
Goddali, axe.	Donga, thief.
Gampa, basket.	Malle, jasmine.
Idakottu, break-down.	Panthipattu, pig-catcher.
Jambu (<i>Eugenia Jambolana</i>).	Panthikottu, pig-killer.
Kōmāli, buffoon.	Upputhōluvaru, salt-carrier.
Santha, a fair.	Pitakāla, dais on which a priest sits.
Sivarātri, a festival.	Thappata, drum.
Manchāla, cot.	

At the Mysore census, 1901, a few returned gōtras, such as arashina (turmeric), huvvina (flowers), honna (gold), and akshantala (rice grain).

"The women of the Vaddevandlu section of the tank-digger caste," the Rev. J. Cain writes,* "only wear the glass bracelets on the left arm, as, in years gone by (according to their own account), a seller of these bracelets was one day persuading them to buy, and, leaving the bracelets on their left arms, went away, promising to return with a fresh supply for their right arms. As yet he has not re-appeared." But an old woman explained that they have to use their right arm when at work, and if they wore bangles on it, they would frequently get broken.

In some places, tattooing on the forehead with a central vertical line, dots, etc., is universally practiced, because, according to the Oddē, they should bear tattoo marks as a proof of their life on earth (bhulōkam) when they die. Oddēs, calling themselves Pachcha Botlu, are itinerant tattooers in the Ganjam, Vizagapatam and Godāvāri districts. While engaged in performing the operation, they sing Telugu songs, to divert the attention of those who are being operated on.

The office of headman, who is known as Yejamānadu, Samayagādu, or Pedda (big) Bōyadu, is hereditary, and disputes, which cannot be settled at a council meeting, are referred to a Baliya Dēsai Chetti, whose decision is final. In some cases, the headman is assisted by officers called Chinna (little) Bōyadu, Sankūthi, and Banthari. An Oddē, coming to a place where people are assembled with shoes on, is fined, and described as gurram ekki vachchinavu (having come on a horse). The Oddēs are very particular about touching leather, and beating with shoes brings pollution. Both the beater and the person beaten have to undergo a purificatory ceremony, and

* Ind. Ant., V, 1876.