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A Theological Reappraisal of the Mission of the Christian Church in Tamilnadu in the light of the challenge presented by the Dravida Kazhagam Movement (a Secular Humanistic Movement)

by

Rajamanickam Paulraj

A Thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Department of Theology

The University of Durham

1995

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1 4 JUN 1995

Rajamanickam Paulraj: A Theological Reappraisal of the Mission of the Christian Church in Tamilnadu in the light of the challenge presented by the Dravida Kazhagam Movement (a Secular Humanistic Movement)

ABSTRACT

The purpose of the thesis is to make a theological reappraisal of the Mission of the Christian Church in the State of Tamilnadu in India, in the light of the challenge presented by the Dravida Kazhagam Movement (a secular humanistic movement). The first chapter includes definitions, the scope, limits and the sources of the Research. The movement has presented the challenge of social justice and of political concern. The second chapter deals with the history of the movement and its challenge. The third chapter deals with the history of the Christian Church in the State of Tamilnadu in India and its Mission. The fourth chapter deals with a theological reappraisal of the Mission of the Church with special reference to social justice and political concern. The fifth chapter deals with the conclusions which emerge from this study.

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DECLARATION

The author declares that none of the material contained in this thesis, other than that duly acknowledged to other authors, has previously been submitted for a degree in this, or any other university.

+ R Pandya

1st June 1995.

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Chapter I

INTRODUCTION

Old events have modern meanings;
only that survives of past history
which finds kindred in all hearts and lives. (1)
- James Russell Lowell

The book of the world is full of knowledge
we need to acquire, of lessons we need to learn,
of wisdom we need to assimilate. (2)
- Agnes Repplier

1 The purpose of the Thesis.

The purpose of the thesis is to make a theological reappraisal of the Mission of the Christian Church in Tamilnadu in the light of the challenge presented by the Dravida Kazhagam Movement (a secular humanistic movement). Tamilnadu is one of the southern states in India. The Dravida Kazhagam means the Dravidian Association. (3)

The following passage in Tamil, describing the origin and history of the Dravidian Movement is translated into English in the succeeding paragraph.

இருபதாம் நூற்றாண்டின் ஆரம்பத்தில்
திராவிடர் சங்கம், திராவிடக் கலாச்சாரத்தில்
தோன்றிய பழங்காலத் தமிழ் இலக்கியத்திற்கு
முக்கிய இடம் அளித்தது.
பின்பு, திராவிடரின் அரசியல் நலன்களைப்
பாதுகாக்கும் சங்கமாக மாறியது. (4)

But the interest of the Dravida Kazhagam Movement slowly shifted from its original scholarly and cultural concern to a political concern of the Dravidian People. (5)

The organization (the Dravidian Association) sought to safeguard the political, social and economic interests of the Dravidian people. (6)

1.2 The Dravidian (Non-Brahmin) and the Aryan (Brahmin) people.

The major division of India is between the Aryan North and the Dravidian South.

The Aryan people form a sub-group, roughly equivalent to a breeding population in genetics of the Hindu geographical race, primarily comprising the Indo-European populations of northern and central India. The chief physical characteristics of these people include pale to dark brown skin; moderate height; straight or wavy hair - usually black; narrow noses; often aquiline; and a high incidence of convergent eyebrows. (7)

The Dravidian people form a sub-group, roughly corresponding to a breeding isolate in genetics of the Hindu geographical race. It comprises primarily the speakers of the Dravidian languages of Southern India. The chief physical characteristics of the Dravidians are medium stature, moderate to heavy skin pigmentation, stocky build, a tendency toward dolichocephaly (long-headedness, in which the head is relatively long from front to back), and flatter, broader nosed faces than those of the Aryan local race of Northern India. (8)

> The Dravidian people today, represented linguistically, dominate South India below an irregular line starting south of Goa on the western coast, running roughly northeast to skirt the eastern side of Berar, and then about east-southeast to the Bay of Bengal - an area corresponding to the present states of Madras (Tamilnadu), Kerala, Mysore (Karnataka) and Andhra. (9)

It has been suggested that the Dravidian people might have migrated to India by sea or have entered India through the northwest.

> It has been suggested that they are the descendants of the Lost Tribes of Israel, that they peopled the area of South India through migrations by sea from North Africa and West Asia. More plausible is the view that the Dravidians' entrance into India was through the northwest, antedating the Aryan 'invasions' by as much as 1500 years. The basic Dravidian racial type is proto-Mediterranean, with the Tamilian evidencing Armenoid characteristics, which would suggest an origin in the Iranian plateau. (10) This construct, together with archaeological remains at Harappa and Mohenjodaro such as the great tanks and objects of phallic worship which bear affinity to similar culture traits of South India today, indicate that the civilization of the Indus Valley may well have been Dravidian. This view is supported by the existence of a remnant of the Dravidian language family. Brahui, is an isolated pocket in the hills of Baluchistan. Father H. Heras in his attempt to read the script of Harappa, claimed that the language was a primitive form of Tamil. (11)

When the Aryans came to the northern part of India about 2000 B.C., the Dravidians moved to the South. When the Aryans moved to South India about 1000 B.C., integration between the Aryans and the Dravidians took place.

> As the Aryans pushed down into India, beginning about 2000 B.C., the Dravidians moved South, mixing with the proto - Australoid peoples, who evidence a human antiquity in India dating back about 500,000 years and exist today as the tribal people of South India. As the Aryans expanded to the South beginning about 1000 B.C., racial and cultural assimilation between the Aryan and the Dravidian followed. (12)

A study of this successful movement and its challenge may lead to a theological reappraisal of the Christian Mission in Tamilnadu. A historical survey of this movement,

with special reference to its social programme and its political promise is made in order to discover the challenge of this movement to the Christian Mission in Tamilnadu. The movement opposed the caste discrimination.

The movement has been a powerful challenge to the social injustice of the Hindu caste system in Indian society. The Vedic theory of the Hindu caste system propounded in the Manu Sastra (a Hindu religious book) divides the people in Indian society into four divisions or varnas or castes.

The following original Sanskrit passage describing the origin of the Hindu caste system is translated into English in the succeeding paragraph.

ब्राह्मणोऽस्य मुखमासीत्।
बाहूराजन्यःकृतः।ऊरूतदस्यराद्वैश्यः।
पद्भ्यांशूद्रोअजायत।(13)

> Brahmins, who are said to have originated from the mouth of Purusha (God), belong to the highest caste and are priests and scholars; Kshatriyas are said to have originated from Purusha's (God's) arms and are rulers and soldiers; Vaisyas are said to have originated from his thighs and are merchants and landowners. Sudras, originating from the feet of Purusha are peasants, labourers and servants. (14)

The following original Sanskrit passage is translated into English in the succeeding paragraph.

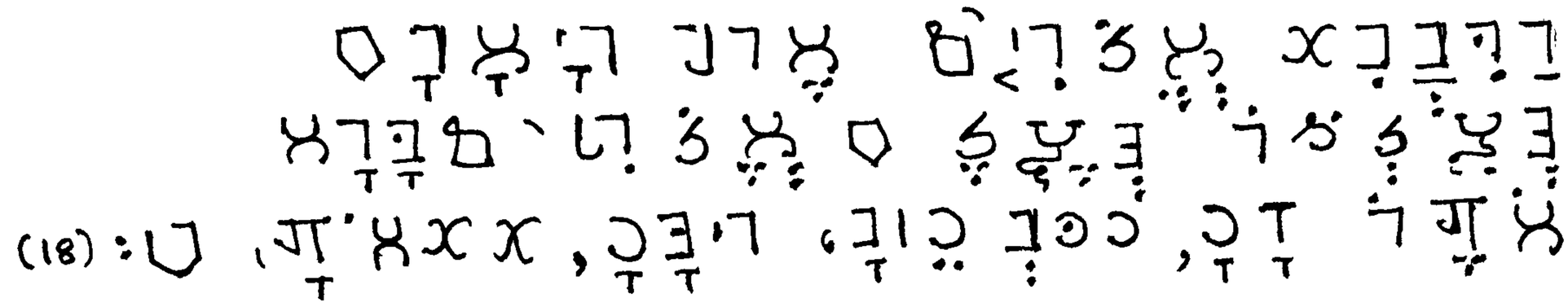
चातुर्वर्ण्यं मया सृष्टं गुण-कर्म-विभागशः।(15)

> Four castes were created by me (God) and their work determined according to their qualities.(16)

Below the Sudras and outside the caste system, are the outcastes and untouchables. These outcaste and untouchable

people had been oppressed for more than one thousand five hundred years and subjected to insult and humiliation. (17)

The Dravida Kazhagam Movement not only opposed the unjust caste system but also championed the cause of dignity and equality of men and women, irrespective of any caste. The passage in original Hebrew from the Old Testament book of Genesis of the Holy Bible advocates the sanctity, dignity and equality of men and women.



(18)

The English rendering of the above Hebrew text is given in the next paragraph according to the New Revised Standard Version. The subsequent quotations from the Holy Bible are also taken from the New Revised Standard Version.

> So God created humankind in his image,
> in the image of God he created them;
> male and female he created them. (19)
> (Genesis 1:27: New Revised Standard Version)

God created every man and woman in his own image and hence, the sanctity, dignity and equality of every man and woman irrespective of caste should be respected.

The following passage from St.Paul's Epistle to the Galatians speaks about the equality of every human person, man or woman, irrespective of any race or caste or sex.

οὐκ ἔνι Ἰουδαῖος οὐδὲ Ἕλλην, οὐκ'
Ἔνι δοῦλος οὐδὲ ἐλεύθερος,
οὐκ ἔνι ἄρσεν καὶ θῆλυ πάντες γὰρ
ὑμεῖς εἷς ἐστε ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ. (20)

The English rendering of the above Greek verse is given in the succeeding paragraph.

> There is no longer Jew or Greek,
> there is no longer slave or free,
> there is no longer male and female;
> for all of you are one in Christ Jesus. (21)
> (Galatians 3:28)

1.3 The scope and the limits of the study.

This study aims to make a theological reappraisal of the Christian Mission in Tamilnadu, in the light of the challenge of the Dravida Kazhagam Movement. It attempts to discover the challenge of this movement through a historical survey of this movement-its origin, growth, its protest against the caste system and its political endeavour. This thesis calls for additional and original research in this field for two reasons. In the first place, important developments of the movement took place during the period which was not covered by previous research in this field. Hence, there is the need to present an updated history of this movement. Secondly, this new information must be taken into consideration in any theological reappraisal of the Mission of the Church in Tamilnadu.

The following are the limits of this study :-

(1) The study is an analysis of the movement, as it prevails in Tamilnadu in South India.

(ii) The study deals with this movement and its challenge, exclusively in terms of its attitudes to social justice and to political endeavour. In consequence, treatment of other areas of this movement or its relation to other secular humanistic movements or personalities lies outside the purview of this study.

(iii) The philosophy of this movement, which is really important for the life and work of the Christian Church in Tamilnadu, requires a separate study. Hence, full treatment of the philosophy of this movement lies beyond the purview of this thesis.

(iv) Since this study seeks mainly to make a theological reappraisal of the Christian Mission in Tamilnadu, in the light of the challenge of this movement, the question of relating the philosophy of this movement to other disciplines of Christian theology lies outside the scope of this study.

(v) This is a contemporary movement and its history upto 1990 will be considered for the purpose of this thesis.

(vi) The Christian Church in Tamilnadu, in this study, mainly refers to the Protestant Church, with particular reference to the Church of South India in Tamilnadu.

(vii) The Dravida Kazhagam Movement is an indigenous secular humanistic movement. It has very little association with western secular humanism, and hence, treatment of the philosophy of western secular humanism lies outside the purview of this thesis. However, since Robert G.Ingersoll's secular humanistic views had some general influence on E.V. Ramaswami Naicker, the founder of this movement, this thesis makes general reference to the secular humanistic views of Robert G. Ingersoll. (22)

1.4 The Methodology and the sources of the Research.

The method of this thesis is historical, descriptive and comparative. It is historical, since this thesis makes a historical survey of the Dravida Kazhagam Movement (second chapter) and of the Christian Church in Tamilnadu (third chapter). It is descriptive, since the thesis describes the origin and growth of the Dravida Kazhagam Movement (second chapter) and of the Christian Church in Tamilnadu (third chapter). It is comparative, since the fourth chapter attempts to make a comparative study of this

movement and of the Church in Tamilnadu under the following two topics, namely social justice and political endeavour. This study serves as a basis for bringing out the challenge of this movement and for making a theological reappraisal of the Christian Mission in Tamilnadu in the light of this challenge.

The sources for this study are ample and different. Tracts, pamphlets, brochures and books in Tamil, Sanskrit etc., were written about this movement and about the Christian Church in Tamilnadu. Books and other published material, which have direct relevance and relation both to the history of this movement and of the Church in Tamilnadu and to the two areas of concentration, namely, social justice and political concern are chosen for this study.

1.5 The Definitions.

The Dravida Kazhagam Movement is a secular humanistic, rationalistic, social and political movement; it was started in 1910, with specific purpose of securing the rights and privileges of the non-Brahmins in the state of Tamilnadu in South India. The challenge of this movement in the following two areas is selected for this study.

1.6 The challenge of the Dravida Kazhagam Movement.

The movement has challenged the Indian caste system which has caused social injustice, oppression of lower castes and social inequalities in Indian society. The movement, through its political concern and political

participation in Tamilnadu, has challenged the Church's attitude of being a silent spectator in the political life of Tamilnadu.

1.7 The challenge of the Social Justice.

It is this movement which has openly challenged the social injustice of the caste system in Indian society. (23) This movement has equally challenged the caste spirit in the Church of Tamilnadu, which is part of the Indian society and has unintentionally and naturally inherited caste spirit from the Indian society. As a result of this challenge, the people belonging to the lower castes acquired a new confidence and their political party, the Justice Party captured the Reformed Legislative Council of Madras in 1921-22.

> Indeed, a great change seems coming over all the lower castes, as well as the depressed classes. Their traditional meekness is disappearing; ... And among all events, political as well as social, of the period under review, there is probably none of greater importance actual and potential, than the capture of the Reformed Legislative Council of Madras by the non-Brahmin party (the Justice Party). For the first time in the history of India, the lower castes of Madras have asserted themselves ... and have seized political power in their own hands ... (24)

1.8 The challenge of the Political Concern.

Secondly, the movement, which had started with a purpose of social reformation, has moved on to participate actively in the political life of Tamilnadu.

> By 1967, when the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (The Dravidian Progressive Association) took office, a talented leadership cadre existed and the party had deep roots in modern Tamilnadu political history. (25)

The movement had formed political parties-the Dravida Kazhagam (Dravidian Association), the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (Dravidian Progressive Association) and the All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (All India Anna Dravidian Progressive Association). These political parties participated fully in the elections of the Tamilnadu State Government. The Dravidian Progressive Association, a political party of this movement, became the ruling party in Tamilnadu in 1967 and continued till 1976. The All India Anna Dravidian Progressive Association, another political party of this movement, became the ruling party in 1977 and it is now the ruling party in this state.

The movement's political concern with active participation in the political life of Tamilnadu has challenged the Church's attitude of being a passive observer and a silent spectator in the political life of Tamilnadu.

> But apart from a man here and there, the vast majority of our Christian people stood aloof from the national struggle. (26)

Since this study intends making a theological reappraisal of the Christian Mission in Tamilnadu in the light of the challenge of this movement, the Christian Mission in Tamilnadu needs to be defined also.

1.9 The Christian Mission in Tamilnadu.

The word 'Mission' is a noun derived from Latin word, 'mitto' ('send'), denoting a task that a person or a group has been assigned (usually by God or God's representative) and sent out to perform. (27)

Mission means <u>being</u> <u>sent</u> to perform a task. The Greek text (St.John 20:21) of the Risen Christ <u>sending</u> His disciples is given in the succeeding paragraph.

εἶπεν οὖν αὐτοῖς ὁ Ἰησοῦς πάλιν,
Εἰρήνη ὑμῖν καθως <u>ἀπέσταλκέν</u>
(has sent) με ὁ πατήρ, κἀγὼ
πέμπω (I send) ὑμας. (28) (St. John 20:21)

The Greek word ἀπέσταλκεν is used to denote the act of <u>sending</u>. The following is an English rendering of the above Greek text.

> Jesus said to them again, 'Peace be with you. As the Father has <u>sent</u> me, so I <u>send</u> you.' (29)
> (St.John 20:21)

In the old Testament, the Hebrew word שָׁלַח is used to denote the act of <u>sending</u>. The Hebrew word שָׁלַח is used in Isaiah 6:8. The Hebrew text of Isaiah 6:8 (a part of this verse) is given in the succeeding paragraph.

וָאֶשְׁמַע אֶת־קוֹל אֲדֹנָי אֹמֵר אֶת־מִי <u>אֶשְׁלָח</u> וּמִי יֵלֵךְ־לָנוּ׃ (30)

The English rendering of the above Hebrew text is

... whom shall I <u>send</u> ... Here I am; <u>send</u> me ...(31)

The Lord Jehovah asks the prophet Isaiah, "Whom shall I <u>send</u> ?" The prophet Isaiah replies, 'Here I am, <u>send</u> me.' Mission means '<u>being</u> <u>sent</u>' to perform a task. Jesus <u>sent</u> His disciples to all over the world with a specific task of proclaiming the gospel to the whole creation. St. Mark, an evangelist, records this in his gospel.

> And he (Jesus) said to them, 'Go into all the world and proclaim the good news to the whole creation'...(32) (St.Mark 16:15)

St. Matthew, an evangelist, records in his gospel in the following way:

> Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,...(33)
> (St.Matthew 28:19)

Mission has been understood from the above verses, as world evangelization, as going into all parts of the world, proclaiming the gospel, converting and baptizing groups and individuals, enlisting them as members of the Church and planting and establishing the Churches. (34) On the other hand, Mission is also understood as establishing social and economic justice and humanizing relationships in society.

> Mission then, with a new emphasis on God's own activity in the world ('Missio Dei' as it was called), came to be regarded both in World Council of Churches and Vatican II circles as 'humanization'. (35)

There are other verses from the Bible which, condemn social and economic injustices, advocate establishing social justice and making society more human. The prophet Amos writes,

> Hear this, you that trample on the needy,
> and bring to ruin the poor of the land,
>
> saying,...
> We will make the ephah small and the shekel great,
> and practice deceit with false balances,
>
> buying the poor for silver and the needy
> for a pair of sandals,...
>
> But let justice roll down like waters, and
> righteousness like an everflowing stream. (36)
> (Amos 8:4,5b,6a,5:24)

The prophet Isaiah has an equal concern for social and economic justice.

Is not this the fast that I choose:
to loose the bonds of injustice,
to undo the thongs of the yoke,
to let the oppressed go free,
and to break every yoke?
Is it not to share your bread with the hungry,
and bring the homeless poor into your house;
when you see the naked, to cover them,
and not to hide yourself from your own kin? (37)
(Isaiah 58:6,7)

Today 'Mission' is also understood as liberation and development, liberating and developing the socially economically and politically oppressed and poor. The historical event of the Exodus reveals God's Mission as liberation and development liberating the oppressed Israelites from the oppression of the Egyptian Pharaoh and leading them towards development.

> Then the Lord said, 'I have observed the misery of my people who are in Egypt; I have heard their cry on account of their taskmasters (oppressors). Indeed, I know their sufferings,
> and I have come down to deliver (liberate) them from the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land to a good and broad land, a land flowing with milk and honey (a land of development), to the country of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites.
>
> The cry of the Israelites has now come to me; I have also seen how the Egyptians oppress them.
>
> So come, I will send you to Pharaoh to bring (to liberate) my people, the Israelites out of Egypt.' (38) (Exodus 3:7-10)

Mission, understood as liberation, has a spiritual dimension also. St.Paul writes that every human person is a slave to sin and evil, even though he or she wants to be good. The Spirit of life in Christ can liberate every person who is in bondage to sin and evil.

> For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I do.

For I delight in the law of God in my inmost self, but I see in my members another law at war with the law of my mind, making me captive to the law of sin that dwells in my members.

Wretched man that I am! Who will rescue(liberate) me from this body of death?

Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord!

For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free (has liberated) from the law of sin and of death. (39) (Romans 7:19,22-25, 8:2)

Mission has been understood as evangelization, liberation and development.

> Mission must be holistic. It must be concerned with the whole individual and the whole society. (40)

It must be a total mission to the total needs of the individual and of society. Jesus Christ refers to this total mission, as evangelization and liberation in His Nazareth Manifesto.

> The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,
> because he has anointed me
> to bring good news to the poor. (evangelization)
>
> He has sent me to proclaim release
> to the captives (liberation and humanization of the oppressed)
> and recovery of sight to the blind,
> to let the oppressed go free, (liberation and humanization)
> to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour. (41)
> (St.Luke 4:18,19)

The concept of holistic mission is now recognized in both evangelical and ecumenical circles.

> At both evangelical and ecumenical mission conferences ... there has been a noticeable feeling towards a greater wholeness; a recognition that in the words of Emilio Castro, Secretary of the Council for World Mission and Evangelism of the W.C.C. (World Council of Churches)...liberation, development, humanization and evangelization are all integral parts of the Mission ...and cannot be set apart from one

another without becoming simply caricatures of what they are. (42)

The movement considered as its mission the liberation and development of the oppressed communities in Tamilnadu and exploded the myth of the caste system, one of the main causes for oppression, through advocating social justice. This movement moved on from social reformation to political participation and attempted several social and political schemes of liberation and development for the oppressed communities in Tamilnadu.

The Church in India, in general, and the Church in Tamilnadu, in particular, continues to hold, generally, the traditional and conventional concepts of the Christian Mission and consider Christian Mission mainly as preaching the gospel and evangelization, in obedience to the great commission of Jesus Christ.

Indeed, the Church has been rendering social service to society, through establishing and maintaining educational institutions and hospitals. However, the Christian Church, being a minority, has been hesitant to engage herself in open social action against injustices in social and political life, especially against the unjust and oppressive caste system in the Indian society.

1.10 The need for the present study.

The Dravida Kazhagam Movement has openly and courageously challenged the traditional caste structure of Indian society. This movement had exploded the myth of the caste system as expounded in Manu Sastra, a Hindu

religious book; it had disproved Manu's doctrine of man which supported the unjust caste system and the supremacy of high caste; it had liberated oppressed communities, humanized and improved their social life. As a result of this powerful challenge of this movement against the caste system, people of oppressed communities (who were suppressed, held in contempt and were subjected to humiliation for several centuries) have acquired a new sense of self-respect and dignity.

The Christian Church in Tamilnadu is part of Indian society and naturally inherits, though not very obviously, but unintentionally, the caste structure of the Indian society. The Church encourages at times, unconsciously the caste spirit deeply rooted in Indian minds. Christian Mission in Tamilnadu in the light of this movement's challenge against the caste structure, includes challenging the caste structure and the caste spirit within the Church and society at large. Therefore, a study of this movement and its challenge against the unjust caste system is necessary even on the basis of the Christian doctrine of dignity and equality of man.

Further, a study of this movement will challenge the Christian Church to take active steps to bring about a humanized, liberated, equal and just society.

Members and leaders of this movement have suffered and sacrificed a great deal for the growth of this movement. Many leaders suffered imprisonment and became martyrs for the cause of this movement. A study of this movement

and its vicarious and various sufferings may remind members of the Church, of the cross and redemptive suffering of Jesus Christ, inspire them to make a theological reappraisal of Christian Mission and the membership in the Church, may help them to be transformed from their general attitude of self-centredness and of seeking material gains from the Church, to an attitude of willingness and readiness to suffer and sacrifice for the Mission of the Church. Hence, a study of this movement, its challenge and the sacrificial attitude of its leaders is necessary.

This movement was started with the purpose of social reformation. Later, it participated in the political life of Tamilnadu in order to bring about justice in society. The challenge of political participation of this movement brings to light the Church's attitude of being a silent observer and a passive spectator in the political life of the country. It may urge the Church to make a theological reappraisal of Christian Mission and may remind the Church of its social, economic, especially political responsibility. God participated in human life by sending His son Jesus Christ into this world.

> And the Word became flesh and lived among us,(43)
> (St.John 1:14a)
>
> The saying is sure and
> worthy of full acceptance,
> that Christ Jesus came into
> the world to save sinners ... (44)
> (I Timothy 1:15)

1.11 Subsequent chapters.

The second chapter deals with the history and the challenge of the Dravida Kazhagam Movement. The third chapter describes the history of the Christian Church in Tamilnadu and its Mission. The fourth chapter attempts to make a theological reappraisal of the Christian Mission in the light of the challenge of the Dravida Kazhagam Movement and the fifth chapter deals with the conclusion that emerges from this study.

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Chapter II

THE DRAVIDA KAZHAGAM MOVEMENT : ITS HISTORY AND CHALLENGE TO THE CHRISTIAN MISSION.

> The most profitable thing in the world for the instruction of human life is history. (1)
>
> - Froissart.

> Now the most difficult thing in the world in connection with history, and the rarest of achievement, is the seeing of events as contemporaries saw them, instead of seeing them through the distorting medium of our later knowledge. (2)
>
> - Hilaire Belloc.

The first chapter specified the purpose of this thesis, its scope and limits, its methodology, sources of this research, definitions about the Dravida Kazhagam Movement, its challenge, the Christian Church in Tamilnadu, its Mission and the need for the present study. The first part of this chapter deals with the history of this movement, while the second part speaks about its challenge.

A. The history.

2.1 The origin.

This movement has an indigenous origin, though Dr. Robert G. Ingersoll's secular humanistic thinking, had some influence on the thinking of Periyar E.V. Ramaswami Naicker, one of the founders of this movement.

This chapter mentions briefly a few prominent personalities of this movement like Periyar E.V. Ramaswami Naicker, Dr. C.N. Annadurai, Dr. Kalaignar M. Karunanithi,

Dr.M.G. Ramachandran and Dr.Miss Jeyalalitha who is at present the Honourable Chief Minister of the Government of Tamilnadu. The Justice Party, the Dravida Kazhagam (the Dravidian Association), the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (Dravidian Progressive Association) and the All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (All India Anna Dravidian Progressive Association) are the various stages of development of this movement.

2.2 The indigenous movement.

The Dravida Kazhagam Movement is mostly an indigenous movement. It is good to trace the origin of this movement.

> The vast Indian subcontinent, in five thousand years of history, has nourished the growth of a great civilization, vitalized through cross-cultural contact and characterized by diversities of cultural and racial differences, caste, religion and language. (3)

As it was mentioned earlier, the major division of India is between the Aryan North and the Dravidian South. When the Aryans (Brahmins) moved to South India beginning about 1000 B.C., racial and cultural assimilation between the Aryans and the Dravidians followed.

> The process of Aryanization began as Sanskritic elements were introduced into the Tamil language. Local customs were incorporated into the formation of a new social order and the Dravidian deities were placed in the elastic pantheon of Brahmanical religion. This Aryan-Dravidian fusion is probably the foundation of Hinduism as a popular religion. Archaeological discoveries indicate, for example, that the worship of Durga and Siva (Hindu gods) has a greater antiquity than the Aryan era. While Hinduism cannot be considered, 'un-Dravidian' as suggested by some Tamil nationalists, Sanskritic religion was nevertheless a tool of social control in the hands of the Brahmins. (4)

The position given to the Brahmins by Tamil kings and the increasing use of Sanskritic forms provided the base for the introduction of the hierarchal organization of the caste system into Tamil society.

When the Brahmins settled in South India, the ancient Tamil Rajahs (kings) desired to secure the benefit of the yagas (religious rites) and accorded to the fire-priests a supreme position in society: the Brahmins naturally tried to introduce their socio-religious organization into Tamil society ...the scheme of four Varnas (castes) which has given rise to social jealousies that have characterized the life of South Indians for a period of a thousand and five hundred years. (5)

These social jealousies came to manifest themselves primarily in the relationship between the Brahmin and the non-Brahmin in the South. The Brahmin of South India, often socially and psychologically aloof, had retained an exclusiveness of caste orthodoxy. Often combining economic power derived from land ownership with religious authority, the Brahmin further separated himself from the non-Brahmins and increased his control over them. The literary tradition of the Brahmin gave him the initial advantage in western education and, with the command of English, he entered the colonial administration. Thus, the Brahmins gained a new status in addition to the old; this widened the gap between the elite and the mass. (6)

Without education, economic power or political influence, the non-Brahmin of Tamilnadu felt the yoke of oppression and exploitation ... The highly educated and

politically articulate members among the urban non-Brahmin communities found out that the Indian nationalist and independence movement which was mainly initiated by the educated Brahmins, would increase and strengthen the position of the Brahmin caste and so they sought to ally themselves with the colonial British rule which would neutralize the power differences between the Brahmins and the non-Brahmins. Since the Brahmins due to their education had virtual monopoly of government offices, the non-Brahmins in the Madras area (Tamilnadu) tried to advance their communities first through education. (7)

2.3 A reference to Western Secular Humanism.

As it was mentioned earlier, the Dravida Kazhagam Movement is an indigenous movement and it has very little association with western secular humanism. Therefore, a full treatment of the concept of western secular humanism lies outside the purview of this thesis. But the secular humanistic thinking of Robert G. Ingersoll (a western secular humanist) had some influence on the secular humanistic views of Periyar E.V. Ramaswami Naicker, one of the founders of the Dravida Kazhagam Movement. Therefore, it may be appropriate at least to refer to the concept of western secular humanism as defined by some of the western authors and to the secular humanistic views of Robert G. Ingersoll.

(i) Corliss Lamont.

Corliss Lamont, (whose book, 'The Philosophy of Humanism' has seen a seventh edition in 1990) defines

humanism in the following words :-

> To define twentieth - century humanism briefly, I would say that it is a philosophy of joyous service for the greater good of all humanity in this natural world and advocating the methods of reason, science and democracy'...Humanism believes in a naturalistic meta-physics or towards the universe that considers all forms of the supernatural as myth; ... Humanism, having its ultimate faith in man, believes that human beings possess the power or potentiality of solving their own problems, through reliance primarily upon reason and scientific method applied with courage and vision. (8)

(ii) The Humanist Manifesto - I

The following is an extract from the Humanist Manifesto - I issued in 1933 and signed by about thirty humanists.

> Humanism asserts that the nature of the universe depicted by modern science makes unacceptable any supernatural or cosmic guarantees of human values. Obviously, humanism does not deny the possibility of realities as yet undiscovered but it does insist that the way to determine the existence and the value of any and all realities is by means of intelligent inquiry and by the assessment of their relations to human needs. Religion must formulate its hopes and plans in the light of the scientific spirit and method.(9)

(iii) The Humanist Manifesto - II

Here is another extract from the Humanist Manifesto-II published in 1973.

> We affirm that moral values derive their source from human experience. Ethics is autonomous and situational needing no theological or ideological sanction. Ethics stems from human need and interest. To deny this, distorts the whole basis of life. Human life has meaning because we create and develop our future. Happiness and the creative realization of human needs and desires, individually and in shared enjoyment, are continuous themes of humanism. We strive for the good life here and now. The goal is to pursue life's enrichment despite debasing forces of vulgarization, commercialization and dehumanization. (10)

(iv) H.J. Blackham.

H.J. Blackham observes that

> humanism proceeds from an assumption that man is on his own. (11)

> Is humanism a Nihilism? The most drastic objection to humanism is that it is too bad to be true. The world is one vast tomb if human lives are ephemeral and human life itself doomed to ultimate extinction. There is head-on opposition here from all developed religions, which say: the eternal alone; the temporal redeemed by the eternal; never the temporal alone. (12)

(v) Bertrand Russell.

Bertrand Russell gives expression to his belief in God, in his Cambridge essays.

> I mean today to put down my grounds for belief in God. I may say to begin with that I do believe in God and that I should call myself a theist if I had to give my creed a name. Now in finding reasons for belief in God, I shall only take account of scientific arguments ... Hence, it is quite possible that the matter and force now in existence may have had a creation, which clearly could be only by divine power. But even granting that they have always been in existence, yet whence come the laws which regulate the action of force on matter? I think they are only attributable to a divine controlling power, which I accordingly call God. (13)

(vi) A.J. Ayer.

A.J.Ayer's observations about the humanist outlook are given in the next paragraph :-

> Humanism is defined in the Oxford English Dictionary as any system of thought or action which is concerned with merely human interests. The point of the word is merely that it excludes theology ... That the scientific movement of the Renaissance was seen as a threat to religious orthodoxy is shown by the persecution of Galileo ... The most serious outbreak of intellectual hostility between science and religion occurred in the nineteenth century, when the advance of Geology and the theory of evolution undermined

> the biblical account of creation. Freedom of thought was a poor resistance to authority. (14)

A.J. Ayer also speaks about the possible basis for sound morality.

> I believe that the only possible basis for a sound morality is mutual tolerance and respect: tolerance of one another's customs and opinions; respect for one another's rights and feelings; awareness of one another's needs. (15)

(vii) Homer Duncan.

Homer Duncan makes the following observations regarding secular humanism :-

> Humanism is a doctrine, centred solely on human interests and values. Therefore, humanism deifies man collectively and individually, whereas theism worships God. (16)

The Irrelevance of Deity.

The first tenet of secular humanism denies the relevance of Deity or supernatural agencies..., the secular humanist does not accept traditional theism's belief in the the Bible as the divinely inspired word of God ...

The Supremacy of 'Human Reason'.

The second tenet of Secular Humanism is the belief in the supremacy of 'human reason'. The phrase 'human reason' encompasses the belief that man can begin from himself and on the basis of the utilization of his mental faculties alone 'think out the answers to the great questions which confront mankind'.

The Inevitability of Progress.

The third tenet of secular humanism is the belief in

the inevitability of progress. The belief in progress is perpetuated through the evolutionary theory and its cultural application (Social Darwinism).

Science, Guide to Progress.

The fourth tenet of secular humanism is the belief in science as the guide to human progress and the ultimate provider of an alternative to both religion and morals.

The Autonomy and Centrality of Man.

The fifth tenet of secular humanism is belief in the self-sufficiency and centrality of man ... This tenet of secular humanism, therefore, promulgates the idea that Man's future and salvation are in Man's hands. (17)

(viii) James Hitchcock.

James Hitchcock makes the following observations regarding humanism. He is of the view that from the time of Socrates (400 B.C.), the western tradition was increasingly humanistic, shifting its attention from the heavens and the earth to humanity itself. Beginning with the Scientific Revolution of the seventeenth century, the emphasis began to shift back toward nature again ... (18)

Wm. Hallock Johnson observed that humanism without spiritual and ethical foundation would lead to destruction of civilization.

> It is plain that science alone is not competent to usher in a reign of peace and goodwill and righteousness on the earth, and the lurid pictures of the 'next war' are not needed to show what will happen if there are no effective moral and religious restraints upon human selfishness,

greed and ambition. (19)

Wm. Hallock Johnson quotes from Bertrand Russell's Icarus 1924.

> While science has not developed more self-control or kindliness, it has given communities more power to indulge their collective passions. Men's collective passions are mainly evil; for the strongest of them are hatred and rivalry directed toward other groups. Therefore, at present all that gives men power to indulge their collective passions is bad. That is why science threatens to cause the destruction of our civilization. (20)

Periyar E.V. Ramaswami Naicker, one of the founders of the Dravida Kazhagam Movement observed that secular humanistic views of Robert G. Ingersoll had some influence on his thinking. Hence, it may be appropriate to consider secular humanistic views of Robert G. Ingersoll also.

The following passages are quotations from the works of Robert G. Ingersoll:

Secularism.

> Secularism embraces everything that is of any real interest or value to the human race ... Secularism therefore covers the entire territory ... Man finds himself in this world naked and hungry. He needs food, raiment and shelter. He finds himself filled with almost innumerable wants. To gratify these wants is the principal business of life. To gratify them without interfering with other people is the course pursued by all honest men. Secularism teaches us to be good here and now. Secularism teaches us to be generous... Secularism teaches a man to be charitable. (21)

> Secularism is the religion of humanity ... it means that each individual counts for something; it is a declaration of intellectual independence ... It is a protest against ecclesiastical tyranny ... It means living for ourselves and each other; for the present instead of the past, for this world instead of another ... It is striving to do away with violence and vice, with ignorance, poverty and disease ... It does

> not believe in praying and receiving but in earning and deserving ... It says to the whole world, work that you may not want; work that you may give and never need. (22)

Religion of Humanity.

> Let us live for man ... Humanity is the grand religion ... If slaves are freed, man must free them. If new truths are discovered, man must discover them. If justice is done; if labour is rewarded; if superstition is driven from the mind; if the defenseless are protected and if the right finally triumphs, all must be the work of man. The grand victories of the future must be won by man and man alone. (23)
>
> Man must rely upon himself ... I prefer to make no-being responsible ... I prefer to say: if the naked are clothed, man must clothe them; if the hungry are fed, man must feed them. I prefer to rely on human endeavour, upon human intelligence, upon the heart and brain of man ... Religion does not consist in worshipping gods, but in aiding the well-being, the happiness of man ... I say, religion is all here in this world right here and that all our duties are right here to our fellowmen ... A good deed is the best prayer; a loving life is the best religion...I do believe in the religion of justice, kindness ...I believe in humanity. I do believe that usefulness is the highest possible form of worship. The useful man is the good man; the useful man is the real saint ... My creed is this: Happiness is the only Good. The place to be happy is here. My doctrine is this; All true religion is embraced in the word Humanity. (24)

God.

Each nation has created a god and the god always resembled his creators ... Each god was intensely patriotic and detested all nations but his own ... our ignorance is God; what we know is science...An honest God is the noblest work of man ... There is nothing a man can do for God, as God needs nothing. But there are many things we can do for our fellowmen because many of them are in constant need. All days should be for the good of man and that day in which the most people are happy, is the best day. (25)

Salvation.

> We are told, however, that a way has been provided for the salvation of all men and that in this plan, the infinite mercy of God is made manifest to the children of men. According to the great scheme of atonement, the innocent suffers for the guilty in order to satisfy a law. What kind of law must it be that is satisfied with the agony of innocence? (26)

Heaven and Hell.

No one pretends to know where '<u>heaven</u>' is. The celestial realm is the blessed somewhere in the unknown nowhere.

> Is it necessary that heaven should borrow its light from the glare of Hell? Infinite ...punishment is infinite cruelty, endless injustice, immortal meanness ...The idea of Hell was born of ignorance, brutality, fear, cowardice and revenge. (27)

Education.

I believe that education is the only lever capable of raising mankind ... The object of all education should be to increase the usefulness of man-usefulness to himself and to others. Every human being should be taught that he should take care of himself and that to be self-respecting, he should be self-supporting. Every man should be taught some useful art. His hands should be educated (for doing useful work) as well as his head ... ignorance is the mother of mystery and misery, of superstition and sorrow, of waste and want. (28)

Women.

Robert G. Ingersoll advocates equal rights and freedom for women. 'Women have through many generations acquired the habit of submission, acquiescence ... obedience and humility ...some time will be required for them to become accustomed to the new order of things, to the exercise of greater freedom. So I say, equal rights, equal education and equal advantages.(29)

> I am a firm believer in the equal rights of human beings and no matter what I think as to what woman should or should not do, she has the same right to decide for herself that I have to decide for myself. If women wish to vote, if they wish to take part in political matters, if they wish to run for office, I shall do nothing to interfere with their rights. I most cheerfully admit that my political rights are only equal to theirs. (30)

> Nothing gives me more pleasure, nothing gives greater promise for the future than the fact that woman is achieving intellectual and physical liberty. It is refreshing to know that here, in our country, there are thousands of women who think and express their own thoughts, who are thoroughly free and thoroughly conscientious. Woman is not the intellectual inferior of man. (31)

The next section deals with the personalities who were responsible for the growth of the Dravidian Movement.

2.4 The growth.

This movement grew fast and several personalities were responsible for its quick growth. This chapter makes a brief historical survey of this movement upto 1990. Those personalities who guided this movement are selected here and their brief biographical notes are included.

2.5 The Personalities.

Periyar E.V. Ramaswami Naicker, Arignar Dr. C.N. Annadurai, Kalaignar Dr. M. Karunanithi, Dr. M.G. Ramachandran and Dr. Miss Jeyalalitha, who is at present the Honourable Chief Minister of the Government of Tamilnadu have been among the most prominent personalities of this movement.

(i) Periyar E.V.Ramaswami Naicker.

Periyar E.V. Ramaswami Naicker was born on 17th September 1879 in a respectable family in Erode, Tamilnadu of South India. (32) His Father was a wealthy merchant. When he was thirteen, he got married. Periyar narrated his experiences as a child to show that he opposed superstitious caste practices.

> When I was six years old, I was sent to a village school which was away from Erode Town. Usually people would not eat or drink in the homes of people of other castes. Hence, I was advised that I should not drink water in the houses of people of other castes and that I could drink water in the teacher's home. I asked for water in my teacher's house. The teacher was a Brahmin and the little girl would put a brass tumbler on the floor, pour water in it and ask me to lift it up and drink.
>
> This is not the way a Brahmin would give water to another Brahmin. After I drank, she would ask me to put it face down; she would pour water outside, wash it and take it inside. Also, I did not know how to lift it up and drink. [He means he did not know drinking water without touching the rim of the cup with his lips]. This is the way in which Brahmins drink liquids; a part of it would spill on my nose and body and only a part would go to the mouth. I would cough and spill even the water I would drink. That girl would get angry and scold me. Hence, if I was thirsty, I would not ask for water in my teacher's house. (33)

Drinking water prohibitions are equivalent to general interdining restrictions.(34) Brahmins would not, of course accept drinking water in non-Brahmins' homes or from non-Brahmins' hands. Many backward non-Brahmin castes (and, of course, Adi-Dravidars, one of the Depressed Communities) would not be allowed to drink water in the home of a Brahmin. The following excerpt from the Dravidan (a daily) of May 12, 1921 quotes a passage from the Christian Outlook of April 23,1921 that shows a similar controversy involving

drinking water in government offices. The Christian Outlook stated:

> Admission into the water shed is restricted only to Brahmins. As the water Brahmin (Brahmin in charge of water supplies) employed at Government expense is generally conspicuous by his absence; a non-Brahmin clerk requiring water is frequently at the mercy of his Brahmin co-clerks for a supply of the same, while the Brahmin can himself enter, drink water and quench his thirst. There have been cases in which non-Brahmin clerks, who, tired of waiting outside for water went in and helped themselves, had to pay dearly for it, as the water Brahmin subsequently broke the (water) pots and recovered the cost from them. (35)

Eating in the homes of other castes was prohibited in those days. But Periyar E.V. Ramaswami Naicker defied that caste-rule and ate in the homes of the people of other castes. He became a hermit and visited pilgrim centres all over India. He became familiar with the evils of popular Hinduism at pilgrim centres; he gave up the role of hermit and returned to Erode. He opposed his caste regulations. His young niece lost her husband and he encouraged her against his caste traditions to marry again. Even though his own people opposed him, other non-Brahmins appreciated his stand on widow's remarriage and they elected him as a chairman of the municipality of Erode town. (36)

Periyar advocated burning of Manu Dharma Shastras, (Hindu Scriptures) which advocated a caste structure in society. (37) In 1925, he organized the Self-Respect Movement for the development of the Dravidian people. He condemned the Hindu Puranas (mythological stories) as manmade myths. He studied the works of Robert G. Ingersoll, a secular humanist and was much influenced by his secular

humanistic views.

He visited Malaysia, Singapore, Germany, England, France and Soviet Union and returned in 1931 with the strong conviction that India's problems could be solved by materialism. In 1937, the Congress government in Tamilnadu introduced Hindi as a compulsory subject in schools. Periyar organized anti-Hindi agitations and the government agreed to introduce Hindi as an optional subject. The non-Brahmin's fear was that the imposition of Hindi which is mostly spoken by North Indians would pave the way for the domination of North Indians over South Indians.

In 1938, Periyar was elected President of the Justice Party. (38) Periyar advocated the Dravida Nadu, a separate state for the Dravidians, especially for the people of Tamilnadu, Andhra, Karnataka and Kerala. The Justice Party was reorganized as the Dravida Kazhagam in 1944 under the guidance of Periyar.

(ii) Arignar Dr.C.N.Annadurai.

Arignar Dr. C.N. Annadurai was born on 15th September 1909 in Conjeevaram near Madras in Tamilnadu. He studied in Pachaiyappa's College in Madras and obtained an M.A. Degree in Economics. Dr. Annadurai is quoted to have said the following in his biography:

> I am a simple man, I was born in a very ordinary family ... I also belong to a backward caste. (39)

Annadurai was poor and that was the time when wealthy and elite Brahmins and non-Brahmins dominated politics.

> Annadurai fought his way to political recognition in an arena where intelligence and lower caste

> origins were still considered anomalous. There is strong evidence that Annadurai's orientation to politics was significantly shaped by this experience and may have provided the emotional ingredient in many of his early literary and political writings against casteism. It also gave him a direct interest in the success of radical social reform. (40)

Dr. Annadurai's biographer reports that Annadurai studied in Pachaiappa's College, Madras on a scholarship and that he was a very bright student.

T.V. Nathan and P. Balasubramanian, editors of the Sunday Observer, recruited Annadurai into the Justice Party while he was still a student. In those days, English was the language of the elite and of politics. Only elite non-Brahmins who spoke English in their homes were members of the Justice Party. He translated Periyar E.V. Ramaswami Naicker's speeches from Tamil to English. He first heard Periyar speak at a conference in Conjeevaram. Periyar, at this conference decided to leave the Congress Party and to support the non-Brahmin movement. He met Periyar in person in 1935.

In 1935, Dr. Annadurai contested the Corporation Elections in the city of Madras and he made propaganda for social reform for political purposes. M. Subramaniyam was the Congress candidate who opposed him. He had a real concern for the low caste people and he ate with them. Although Annadurai lost the election, he maintained his position as a rising star within the Justice Party. Annadurai's ability in politics propelled him into leadership. He came to be recognized as a great leader next to Periyar, both in the Justice Movement and in Dravida Kazhagam.

The combination of Dr. Annadurai's non-Brahmin background, his extraordinary intellectual talents and the existence of a radical social reform movement provided the context in which he accepted the radical ideas of Periyar and attached himself to the Dravidian Movement. (41) Gradually, Annadurai came to be recognized as a great leader. He was affectionately addressed as 'Anna' (which means 'elder brother') by his followers. People recognized the charismatic power in him, in his speeches, writings and in his leadership. He became a great hero for the Dravidians, for the non-Brahmins, especially for the youth. He was regarded as Arignar (Genius) and later as Perarignar (Great Genius). He became a symbol of hope for social transformation, social reformation and for the development of non-Brahmins.

Dr.Annadurai expressed his sense of Mission and stated publicly that his Mission was to uplift the downtrodden Tamilians and he urged the people of his party to observe the triple commandments.

'Duty, Dignity and Discipline.'

He could win the support of the masses awakening in them an urgent sense of Mission for uplifting the downtrodden; they were personally devoted to him and they set their hope on him as a leader who could fulfil their vision of development of non-Brahmins. (42) When Periyar married Mani Ammai, who was far younger than himself, Annadurai discontinued his association with Periyar and started the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam.

Dr. Annadurai organized the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam in an effective manner. The Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam in addition to its goal of social reformation and uplifting the downtrodden masses, entered into the political life of Tamilnadu. The Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam won a stunning victory in the elections held in 1967 and became the ruling party and Arignar Annadurai became the Chief Minister of Tamilnadu on 6th March 1967.

But he passed away after two years on 2.2.1969 and Kalaignar Dr.M. Karunanithi became the Chief Minister of Tamilnadu in February 1969.

(iii) Dr. Kalaignar M.Karunanithi.

Dr.Kalaignar M. Karunanithi was born in a village near Tiruvarur of Tanjore District of Tamilnadu on 3rd June, 1924. From his very early days, he had great concern for uplifting the downtrodden masses. He started a magazine called Murasoli in 1954, organized news agents in remote villages, party branches and a support structure for himself. He won a great reputation for pragmatism, a way of getting things done for the movement. He wrote very many popular plays for the film industry.

The movement made a great propaganda and developed additional organizational infrastructure through its films. He won popularity among the masses at the grassroot level.

He rendered remarkable services to the poor and the oppressed. He implemented social and political reformation. He liberated oppressed communities from their social oppression.

(iv) Dr.M.G.Ramachandran.

Dr. M.G.Ramachandran was born on 17-1-1917 in Kandy of Sri Lanka. His father was Gopala Menon and his mother was Sathia Bama. His father served as a judge. He was very honest and strict in his judgements. Dr.M.G. Ramachandran's mother was very kind and her acts of charity won her a good name in Kandy. They returned to India, but their close relatives did not render them any help. So they stayed with Peethambaram, a make-up man in Ottaipalayam.

While he was nearly three years old, his father passed away. Then Sathia Bama went along with her children to Kumbakonam in Tamilnadu, India. He started his early education at Anaiadipalli near Kumbakonam and loved to swim in the river Cauvery. He was selected as a school pupil leader and he acted very well in school dramas. (43) Later, he married Parkavi alias Thangamani who belonged to Palghat in the state of Kerala. When Parkavi died, he married Selvi V.N. Janaki, who had been acting with him. (44) He started acting in cinemas from 1936 onwards at the age of nineteen. He acted in more than one hundred and fifty films upto 1978.

Dr.Ramachandran participated in the political life of the country and joined the Congress Party during his early days. He had great thirst for social justice and later joined the `Dravida Kazhagam Movement which opposed the social injustice of the unjust Indian caste system. He started another political party called the Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam on 16-9-1973 due to some misunderstanding among the former leaders. Later, he was elected

as the Chief Minister of Tamilnadu on 30-6-1977. (45) He was a great philanthropist. He rendered liberal financial help to writers, actors and actresses, students, victims of fire, drought and flood. He gave raincoats to six thousand rickshaw pullers during the floods. He passed away on 24-12-1987.

(v) Dr. Selvi Jeyalalitha.

Dr. Selvi Jeyalalitha was born on 24th February, 1948. Her father was Jeyaram and her mother was Santhia. She studied in Holy Angels Convent in Madras, Bishop Cotton Girl's High School, Bangalore and Church Park Convent, Madras and won many prizes. (46)

She became a very famous actress and acted in a large number of films. Her mother passed away in October 1971. This caused a great vacuum and sorrow in her life. She joined as a member of the All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam. Soon she became the propagation secretary for that party.

The general elections were held in Tamilnadu on 15th June 1991. Her party contested one hundred and sixty eight constituencies for the Tamilnadu Legislative Assembly out of which one hundred and sixty three seats were won by her party. She became Chief Minister of Tamilnadu Government. She proved her administrative ability within a short period. She abolished the sale of cheap liquor which is injurious to health. She expressed the view that the public opinion of the people should be taken into consideration in finding solutions to the problems in

society. She pleaded for more funds from the Central Government for starting many industries in Tamilnadu. She is very proficient in English. She is very hardworking and systematic in all her work. (47)

2.6 Religious movements for social reformation.

The Dravida Kazhagam Movement was started as a secular movement for social reformation in South India during the early twentieth century, while there were a few religious movements for social reformation in North India during the nineteenth century. A brief review of these religious movements for social reformation in North India will serve as a fitting prelude, before the history of this secular movement for social reformation in South India is narrated.

(i) The Brahma Samaj Movement.

Raja Rammohan Roy (1774-1833) was the founder of the Brahma Samaj. He opposed several inhuman practices, like the practice of Sati (forcing the widow to die in the flames along with the dead body of her husband). He opposed polygamy, polytheism and idol worship.

The impact of the Brahma Samaj can be assessed correctly only if we keep in view the social and religious conditions in the state of Bengal in North India in the early nineteenth century, when the Brahma Samaj came into existence. (48).

> Polygamy had become a regular practice with (men) in Bengal, who however, did not care to maintain their wives and children ... girls unable to meet the pecuniary demands of the Kulin boys had to remain unmarried till death. The widow also

> generally had a miserable life unless her children were grown up and dutiful to their parents ... It was largely to avoid the disgrace and misery of widowhood that so many women perished every year in the flames along with the dead bodies of their husbands ... The complete callousness of our people to the sufferings of their own kith and kin is also illustrated by several other practices prevalent ... at this time, such as the throwing of children into the Ganges (a river in North India) in fulfillment of certain vows, self-immolation ...selling of people including children and young girls into slavery and the offering of human sacrifice ...(49)

(ii) The Prarthana Samaj Movement.

The ideas of the Brahma Samaj gradually spread outside the state of Bengal; but it was only in the state of Maharashtra that they found the most suitable soil to spring up in the form of a kindred organization known as the Prarthana Samaj Movement.

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, social and cultural life was at a very low level. (50)

> They realised that the age-old customs like child-marriage, polygamy, enforced widowhood, disfigurement of young widows, rigid caste restrictions, untouchability, denial of education to women and such other moral and social evils were the bane and blight of the society. This awakening brought forth a great liberal movement in Maharashtra. (51)

This movement, inspired by the love of God was reinforced by a love of humanity. Ranade, the chief exponent of this movement constantly stressed its ideal. Religion is as inseparable from social reform as love to man is inseparable from love to God. (52) This movement championed the cause of Harijans (Depressed Communities in India). The attitude of the Prarthana Samaj to this problem is described in the words of Chandravarkar, one of

the leaders of social reformation.

> By elevating the depressed classes, we elevate ourselves ... He who tries to lower and degrade others and treat them as caste-aways ends in the long run by lowering and degrading himself. There can be no reform or hope for the higher as long as the so-called lower castes are despised. (53)

The other social reform objectives of this movement like the abolition of child-marriages, re-marriage of widows, inter-caste dining and inter-caste marriages found their proper place in the all-India social reform movement.

(iii) The Arya Samaj Movement.

Swami Dayanand born in the state of Gujarat in 1824 was the founder of Arya Samaj Movement. This movement advocated charity to the people in need-victims of flood, earthquake, fire and drought. This movement laid stress on service to humanity. It led a crusade against child marriage. It advocated widow's marriage. This movement started educational institutions for girls. It advocated the cause of the Depressed Classes and worked for their development. This movement opposed the caste system and worked for the equality of all castes. (54)

2.7 The Dravida Kazhagam Movement.

Among the secular movements for social reformation in South India, the Dravida Kazhagam Movement championed the cause of establishing justice for the Dravidians, the non-Brahmins in Tamilnadu.

2.8 The factors responsible for the rise of the Dravida Kazhagam Movement.

The following are the notable factors which led to the formation of the Dravida Kazhagam Movement.

(i) The superiority of Brahmins in the Hindu Ritual Hierarchy.

The Brahmins were regarded as the guardians of the Hindu tradition (55) and regulators of the religious life and social interaction (56) of the Hindus. Though they were a small minority, while the non-Brahmins were the majority, the Brahmins had a decisive way in all aspects of life. Brahmin dominance was solely due to the order of precedence in the caste system which kept the Brahmins at the top. The religious literature of the Hindus was largely the work of the Brahmins and advocated their superiority. (57) This social dominance of Brahmins generated ill-feeling and social grievances among the non-Brahmins.

(ii) The Brahmin majority in the civil services.

The population of the Madras Presidency (present Tamilnadu) in 1919 was approximately forty two millions (58) and the Brahmins formed only three per cent thereof and yet the Brahmins monopolised more than eighty per cent of the appointments in the public services. Though the non-Brahmins constituted eighty six per cent of the population, (59) they occupied only seventeen per cent in the public services.

(iii) The Brahmin domination in the Legislative Council.

What was true of Government service was equally true of local and other public bodies. The composition of the Madras Legislative Council from 1910 to 1920 reveals that the Brahmin element dominated the council. Where the voters were largely non-Brahmins, a non-Brahmin had no chance of getting himself elected. (60) Eight were Brahmins out of nine Indians who served as official members. The Brahmins captured eight out of nine seats to be filled by the constituencies of Municipalities, Taluks and District Boards.

(iv) The Nepotism of the Brahmins.

Brahmins monopolised all elective positions and appointive places. This monopoly went hand in hand with nepotism.

> Every door of the office was closed against non-Brahmins and whenever a vacancy occurred, a Brahmin official let in his wife's brother, or his brother's son-in-law. (61)
>
> Fair Play in his pamphlet, The ways and Means for the Amelioration of the condition of the non-Brahmin Races cites an instance of nepotism. One D.Krishna Rao, Huzur sheristadar of Cuddapah district, had managed to bring one hundred and eight of his actual relations into one district and into only one department of the government. (62)
>
> The Revenue officials of Nellore district gave appointments to 49 relatives and 'connections' of G.Venkataramanayya, a Telugu Neyogi Brahmin. (63)

(v) The Madras Provincial Congress Committee - a sectarian body.

The Brahmin supremacy was quite perceptible even in the Madras Provincial Congress Committee. The report of the

executive committee of 1915 discloses that the non-Brahmins were practically excluded from the All India Congress Committee.

> This grabbing attitude of the Brahmin community provoked a good deal of adverse criticism in the press particularly, Madras Mail, West Coast Spectator and Non-Brahmin. Confirming the apprehension expressed in the columns of Madras Mail, West Coast Spectator repeated that the action of the Madras Provincial Congress Committee in excluding both Karunakara Menon and P. Kesava Pillai who were not in any way inferior either to the Triplicane clique or Mylapore Cabal, would strengthen the impression that 'Home Rule' will but degenerate into Brahmin rule. (64)

(vi) The Brahmin monopoly of the press.

The press, a powerful mass medium, had been effectively controlled by the Brahmins in the early decades of the twentieth century. The leading popular newspapers such as The Hindu and The Swadeshamitran were owned and edited by the Brahmins. They had taken a pro-Congress, but anti-Justice (anti-Dravidian or anti non-Brahmin) disposition. From the beginning, they were opposed to the non-Brahmin movement, which they decided was anti-nationalistic and communal. The Indian Review, a monthly English magazine edited by G.A. Natesa Iyer, a Brahmin, published a number of articles condemning the ideologies and policies of the non-Brahmin Justice Party. K. Nageswara Rao, a Brahmin was the editor of another newspaper by name Andhra Patrika. Thus, the press in the Madras Presidency remained very much a tool in the hands of the Brahmins.

(vii) The Sudras - a humiliating term for the Non-Brahmins.

The non-Brahmin communities which formed the bulk of the population of the Madras Presidency were called Sudras in the Varna (caste) system. The laws of Manu enjoined the Sudras to be the servants and menials of the three higher orders namely (1) the Brahmins, the priestly and the learned class; (2) the Kshatriyas, the military and governing class; (3) The Vaisyas, the traders and the agriculturists. The Varna system as stated earlier was introduced by the Brahmins to establish their supremacy in Hindu ritualistic society. (65)

It remains still a riddle how the term 'Sudra' was applied to the non-Brahmin castes of the Madras Presidency, though they had honourable avocations and status of their own. The wealthy and educated non-Brahmins took a strong exception to the use of the appellation 'Sudras' to denote non-Brahmins and considered it derogatory to their status and position in society. (66)

(viii) The rediscovery of the greatness of the Tamil Dravidian language and literature.

The people in Tamilnadu who speak the Tamil language belonged to the Dravidian family. The discovery of the greatness of the Tamil (Dravidian) language gave a new identity and dignity to the Tamil people (Dravidians) in Tamilnadu.

The publication of the book entitled, A Comparative Grammar of the Dravidian or South Indian Family of Languages in 1856 by Rev. Robert Caldwell (1819-1891),

a Scottish philologist and missionary, revolutionised the thoughts of both Tamil scholars and the 'emerging elites'. (67) Though this book dealt with the grammar and the linguistic affinities of the Dravidian languages, it revealed much about the characters of the Dravidian culture. The author had propounded certain theories about the origin and character of the Dravidian culture. (68) The implication of his theories was that the Dravidian culture had a separate independent existence before the Aryans invaded South India. (69)

Rev. Robert Caldwell assigned a remote antiquity to the development of the Dravidian languages and regarded their structure as unaffected by contact with Sanskritic idioms. On the contrary, he tried to explain that a considerable proportion of Sanskrit roots was of Dravidian origin. He further contended that Tamil was the most highly cultivated of all Dravidian idioms, could dispense with its Sanskrit if need be, and could not only stand alone but flourish without its aid. (70) This comparative study of Dravidian languages established the fact that Tamil literature was noted for its sophistication both in its manner of expression and in the ideas that it conveyed. (71) These views of Rev. Robert Caldwell not only reversed the prevalent opinion that the cultivated Dravidian languages were descended from Sanskrit like the modern dialects of North India, but also provided valuable facts for those who sought to establish the antiquity and the purity of the Tamil language. Rev. Robert Caldwell's works on Dravidian philology stimulated the Dravidian consciousness which lay dormant for centuries.

Dr. G.U. Pope (1820-1907), a lecturer in Tamil in Oxford University, was a great scholar both in English and Tamil. His translation of the Thiruvasakam (a book of ethical Tamil poems) with valuable notes on the South Indian system of philosophy and religion was a monumental work. It illustrated the greatness of the Tamil religious system. He explained its unique and meritorious features in Note XI to the Appendix of his translation of the Thiruvasakam.

Dr.G.U.Pope observed that the Vedic religion was introduced into South India by the Aryan settlers. Consequently, the inhabitants of South India adopted to a great extent their (Aryan) social institutions, myths and forms of worship. (72) Based on the views of Dr.G.U.Pope, M.S. Purnalingam Pillai, in his book entitled Tamil Literature explained that the Tamil religion has been an old prehistoric religion of South India even before the advent of the Aryans.

These observations on the ancient religion of the Tamils had a significant influence on non-Brahmin Tamil scholars, who were stirred up to evince an active interest in knowing the glory of their own cultural and religious heritage. Subsequently, several Tamil Sangams (Tamil Associations) sprang up in various cities of the Tamil region with the definite object of reviving Tamil language and literature. The most conspicuous was the one organized at Madurai in 1901 under the patronage of Pandithurai Thevar, the zamindar (wealthy farmer) of Palavanatham. (73)

(ix) The Tamil classics from the palm leaves to the printed books.

The Sangam classics were orally handed over from generation to generation by rotation. At a later stage, oral words were written on palmyra leaves, used as a writing material. This practice continued till the introduction of the printing press. Either scholars or local princes or sixty zamindars had taken great efforts to collect those manuscripts and preserve them in libraries. They were under the custody of private individuals whose negligence caused them to be eaten away by moths and white ants. Numerous volumes of literature perished due to their carelessness.

When the printing press was invented, the Tamil scholars got the Tamil classics on palm leaves printed into books. Arumugha Navalar, Damodaran Pillai of Jaffna and U. V. Swaminatha Iyer worked very hard to get the Tamil literature on palm leaves printed into books. They rediscovered a large number of books of ancient literature which had fallen into oblivion and which revealed the old, the ancient glory, richness and splendour of Tamil literature and culture. This also brought about a great change in the outlook of the Tamil scholars who elaborated the picture of an early and once widespread Dravidian civilization, separate and distinct from the Aryan and Sanskritic culture. (74)

P.Sundaram Pillai, Professor of Philosophy in Maharaja College, Trivandrum worked out the theory regarding the antiquity of the Dravidians. He expressed his view (in a

famous essay on 'The Basic Element in Hindu Civilization' contributed to Madras Standard) that South India, and particularly the Tamil area, was culturally self-sufficient and could be independent of the arts and philosophy of Sanskrit and the North. He spoke very highly of the Tamil language, in his drama, Manonmaniam.

Another famous scholar V. Kanagasabhai Pillai, in his celebrated work The Tamils 1800 Years Ago enunciated that the Tamils had attained a high degree of civilization before the advent of the Aryans. The theories propounded by Rev. Robert Caldwell found explicit exposition in the writings of Tamil authors like Maraimalai Adigal and Somasundaram Bharathi. They argued that the Dravidians possessed a very rich civilization of their own before the advent of the Aryans. The Dravidian civilization 'owed nothing to the Aryan culture but rather gave the Aryans a ready-made civilization. (75)

(x) The Fair Play's Pamphlets and the Non-Brahmin Letters.

An aggrieved non-Brahmin official with an imaginative name 'Fair Play' wrote in 1895 two pamphlets entitled

1. The Non-Brahmin Races and the Indian Public Service.

2. The Ways and Means for the Amelioration of the condition of the Non-Brahmin Races.

These pamphlets were written in the form of open letters to His Excellency Lord Wenlock, the Governor of Fort St. George.

> The first pamphlet namely, 'The Non-Brahmin Races and the Indian Public Service' came out with an open accusation that the Brahmin theocracy in a modified form still existed even a century and a

half after the advent of the British rule. It declared that despite the fact that the British were called the rulers of India, it was only the Brahmins who ruled it and the Indian National Congress represented only the Brahmins' interests. Besides, it made a lofty plea for reservations in the Indian public services for the non-Brahmins in proportion to their population. (76)

The second pamphlet which bears the title 'The Ways and Means for the Amelioration of the Non-Brahmin Races' is a weighty memorandum. It gave a scheme for the institution of a National Association to secure equalization in distribution of appointments in the public services among all classes of the people. Further, it laid stress on the unity of the non-Brahmin races so as to enable them to emancipate themselves from the present unhappy position. It also made a fervent appeal to the princes, the zamindars and the gentry in general for starting a journal with a view to infusing 'continued exertion' into such an association. (77)

Sri. Sankaran Nair wrote a book entitled the Dravidian Worthies. An obscure author wrote a book entitled the Non-Brahmin Letters. These letters consisted of 21 epistles, signed and addressed to different persons by name. Generally, these letters portrayed not only the current feelings of despair of the non-Brahmin communities but also reflected the growing consciousness among the educated non-Brahmin youth of their lowly position in society. (78)

> They (the Non-Brahmin Letters) emphatically spoke out the disunity and the jealousy that prevailed among the non-Brahmins and condemned their foolishness in pursuing their traditional occupations without taking advantage of the western education. They had to blame themselves for not having high ambitions to occupy powerful positions in the bureaucratic service of the Government of Fort St. George. They further disclosed how the non-Brahmins had become the victims of their own sense of inferiority. These epistles urged the non-Brahmins to organize a movement for their unity and progress and even pleaded for the establishment of a 'national' college making the Dravidian vernaculars as media of instruction. Thus the publication of these

> letters symbolised the political awareness of the non-Brahmins that the establishment of an organization to fight against the Brahmin monopoly both in the field of education and in public services was the imperative need. Their publication was timely. There is no doubt that their influence on the educated non-Brahmins during the process of organising themselves into a party should have been considerable. (79)

The publication of the Non-Brahmin Letters brought to the surface, the long-felt need for the political organization to champion the cause of the welfare and development of the non-Brahmins.

(xi) The need for a political organization for the Non-Brahmins.

By the end of the 19th century, a good number of young students from the non-Brahmin castes developed increasing interests in the pursuit of urban occupations, higher education and urban politics. When they moved to urban areas, particularly to the city of Madras, they found the educational institutions, the politics and the public services dominated by the Brahmins. A sense of disappointment and frustration naturally developed in them. They also found, with great mental agony, that, due to the caste system, the non-Brahmins had lost their self-respect, dignity and social status.

It was at this time that the works of Rev. Robert Caldwell, which spoke about the past glory of the Dravidian culture, were taught in schools and colleges. In addition to this, the publication of the 'Dravidian Worthies' and the 'Non-Brahmin Letters' created a political awareness among the non-Brahmins. They were

convinced that the establishment of an organization to fight against the Brahmin monopoly both in the field of education and in the public services had become inevitable.

2.9 The Justice Party.

The following are the various stages of the non-Brahmin's movement.

(i) The origin.

The demand for justice was initiated through starting a social organization called 'the Madras United League'. A few aggrieved non-Brahmin officials of the Revenue Board and other Government institutions who suffered from the partiality and unfair treatment of their Brahmin superiors formed this association solely for the purpose of ventilating their grievances in respect of their prospects in their official career. (80)

Though the initiative was taken by a set of government officials to form an association for the cause of the non-Brahmins, Dr. C. Natesa Mudaliar, a non-official, service-minded and popular doctor of Triplicane gave 'The Madras United League' proper leadership and guidance. Before the League developed into a full-fledged non-Brahmin organization, its name was changed into 'The Madras Dravidian Association' at its first annual meeting, as its original name was not indicative either of its constituent element or of its purpose.

The association with the new name, "The Madras Dravidian Association", started functioning from 10th

November 1912 with new rules and regulations. One of the activities of this association was the annual 'At Home Party' arranged in honour of the non-Brahmin graduates of the year. This was the occasion which brought 'the capable and brilliant young men of the community on one platform and introduced them to the elite of the non-Brahmin communities. (81)

> Another significant task successfully carried out by this Association was the running of a hostel for the non-Brahmin students at Akbar Sahib Street in Triplicane. This was the long-felt need of the students who went over to the city from mofussil centres for the purpose of pursuing higher studies in city colleges, as they were not permitted to eat in Brahmin hotels. 'The establishment of the Dravidian Association hostel was the first practical step of a small but important group of non-Brahmins in Madras to organize themselves. Since the hostel gave shelter to helpless Dravidian (non-Brahmin) students of mofussil areas, it was aptly called the 'Dravidian Home'. Among the students who stayed in the hostel, the most notable were T.M. Narayanaswami Pillai who later became Vice-Chancellor of the Annamalai University and Subramania Nadar, who later rose to the position of a judge of the Madras High Court. (82)

Mrs. Besant, an English lady who resided in India launched an agitation in favour of the 'The Home Rule' (Governing India by Indians especially Brahmins). This created a ferment in the provincial politics of Madras and it soon began to spread like a wild fire from district to district.

The elections to the Imperial Legislative Council took place in 1916.The Madras Legislative Council had to elect two members. There were seven contestants. But the composition of the Council revealed that a majority of them were Brahmins. The non-Brahmin leaders, relying very much on the false support of the Brahmins, had fielded Dr.T.M. Nair as a candidate against V.S.Srinivasa Sastri. The Brahmin members of the Council who were jealous of Dr. T.M. Nair's popularity and influence voted in favour of V.S. Srinivasa Sastri contrary to their promise. In the fray

> V.S. Srinivasa Sastri for the southern districts and B.N.Sharma for the northern districts emerged successful. Logically, the defeat of Dr. T.M. Nair was considered as the defeat of non-Brahmins at the hands of the Brahmins. (83)

The defeat of the non-Brahmin stalwarts forced the non-Brahmins to organize a non-Brahmin political party. The non-Brahmin leaders had a genuine fear that in the event of Home Rule, the Brahmins who were predominant in every quarter would keep the non-Brahmins oppressed and it would pave the way for the revival of the supremacy of the Brahmin as in the days of Manu. In other words, Home Rule would mean Brahmin Rule. The fear of a Brahmin take-over of political power, if Mrs.Besant succeeded in her Home Rule endeavours, forced the non-Brahmin leaders to think in terms of a political association for the welfare of their communities. The non-Brahmins who had great influence both in Madras and the mofussil met at a conference at the Victoria Public Hall in Madras city on 20th November 1916 and resolved to form a political association to advance, safeguard and protect the interests of the non-Brahmin community.

Accordingly, the South Indian People's Association was formed and later, the South Indian Liberal Federation.

The South Indian People's Association issued a historic document (the great charter of the non-Brahmins) - 'The Non-Brahmin Manifesto', at the end of December 1916. The publication of the 'The Non-Brahmin Manifesto' marked the origin of the non-Brahmin political movement. The reasons, objectives and the scope of the movement are given in the next paragraph.

The primary purpose of the document was to define the attitude of the several important non-Brahmin Indian communities in the Presidency of Madras towards the Indian Home Rule movement, which the Manifesto described in 'trenchant language as an extravagant scheme, devised by the radical politicians of the Brahmin caste not content with having secured the practical monopoly of the political power.

The Manifesto laid emphasis that the non-Brahmins were not in favour of any measure which was

> designed to undermine the influence and authority of the British rulers who alone in the present circumstances of India were able to hold the scales even between creed and class and to develop that sense of unity and natural solidarity without which India would continue to be congeries of mutually exclusive and warring groups, without a common purpose and a common patriotism. (84)

The South Indian Liberal Federation came to be called the Justice Party by its opponents (Brahmins), because it fought for justice for the non-Brahmins. (85)

(ii) The policies and the programme of the Justice Party.

The policies and the programme of the Justice Party were designed to protect the interests of the non-Brahmins. Though the constitution of the Justice Party forbade the Brahmins to become its members, its attitude towards the Brahmins as a community was not inimical. The South Indian Liberal Federation was not started as an anti-Brahmin movement, but its main aim was the improvement of non-Brahmin communities and the securing of equal opportunities for all communities in the governance of the country.

> Towards the Brahmins we cherish no feeling of bitterness. If we have to fight them, we do so in the interest of truth and justice, and we shall be prepared to extend to them also the right hand of fellowship, when they shall see the wrongs they have inflicted upon us and repent. Ours is essentially a movement of love and not of hate, or love based upon a sense of what is due to the various classes which constitute the

population of this vast and ancient land. (86)

However, critics characterized the Justice Party as communal on the basis of its exclusion of Brahmins from its membership. However, a resolution was adopted at a conference in September 1929 in Madras to accept Brahmins as members of the Justice Party. A.P. Patro moved the following amendment to the resolution.

> That every person, who is willing to subscribe to the creed and aims and objectives of the South Indian Liberal Federation and who is willing to abide by the rules framed by the Executive Committee is eligible to become a member of the Federation. (87)

The newly adopted constitution of the Justice Party stated that to obtain Swaraj (Independence) for India as early as possible by all peaceful and legitimate and constitutional means was one of its objectives. The Justice Party adopted the same word Swaraj to demonstrate that it was not against any political and constitutional progress of the nation towards Independence. There was much less distinction between the Justice Party (the non-Brahmin party) and the Congress Party (predominantly the Brahmin's political party) with regard to their ultimate goal of independence for India. Both parties aimed at achieving Swaraj. The Justice Party with its objective of responsible cooperation with the British Government opposed the campaign of non-cooperation launched by Mahatma Gandhi.

> The Fourth Non-Brahmin Confederation of the S.I.L.F. (South Indian Liberal Federation) passed a resolution condemning the non-cooperation movement of Gandhi and the Indian National Congress as a calculated move to subvert all constitutional agitation and to bring the

country to chaos and anarchy and calling upon all patriotic Indians in the best interests of the country to strongly oppose all efforts to preach such doctrines. It was unfortunate that the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi as well as his non-cooperation movement appeared to the non-Brahmins of the Madras Presidency as substitutes of Mrs.Besant and her Home Rule League. Like Besant, Mahatma Gandhi also glorified Brahminism and Brahminical caste. His camp followers in Madras were only Brahmins. Mrs.Besant chose C.P.Ramaswami Iyer as the trusted colleague whereas Mahatma Gandhi took C. Rajagopalachari (a Brahmin) as his conscience-keeper. (88)

Dr. T.M. Nair, the chief exponent of the doctrines of the Justice Party, wrote many articles in the columns of Justice (a journal for non-Brahmins) and explained that social justice and the social reformation were the major policies of the Justice Party. They were documents of inestimable value. It was one of the convictions of the Justice Party that the Brahmins and their 'tyranny of caste' were primarily responsible for the degenerate condition of the non-Brahmins. The following is part of the extract from an editorial in Justice :

> ... the Hindus who form the majority of the population have been cut up into innumerable castes with the priestly class at the head of the caste hierarchy. Even today the Hindus are under the tyranny of the usages and customs introduced and maintained by the highest castes. To add to this, not less than fifty or sixty millions live outside the Hindu society whom that society in its arrogance still regards as Untouchables and Depressed Classes. (89)

The leaders of the Justice Party emphasised that social reformation should precede political regeneration. Sri. M. Venkatrathinam Naidu, in his Presidential address at the Fourth Non-Brahmin Confederation held on 8th January 1921, emphasised the need to give priority to social reform activities and spoke as follows :

> Social reform is the basis for all progress ... It is social degradation that clogs the wheels of political progress ... Caste system has been the bane of the country. It must go root and branch ... Go forth into the country, educate the masses and preach to them our creed and ideals. Ours is really a democratic movement. Liberty ... and equality shall be our watchwords in all spheres of activity, political, social, and economic. Social and political reform must go hand in hand. (90)

The social reformation gained further momentum, when Periyar E.V. Ramaswami Naicker and other leaders involved themselves in the social reform activities of the party.

(iii) Communal representation for Non-Brahmins in the councils and in public services.

One of the proposed goals of the Justice Party was to secure adequate communal representation of non-Brahmins on the Madras Legislative Council and in all branches of administration.

> The leaders of the Justice Party found a precedent in the separate electorate granted to the Muslims under the act of 1909. This was claimed by them under a shield against the preponderance of the Brahmins. The Non-Brahmin Manifesto had not failed to bring out this fact. They had genuine apprehension that the self-government without communal safeguards which the Montford Reforms envisaged would result in Brahmin Oligarchy. As it has been narrated already, they made a lofty plea both before Montego and the Joint Parliament Committee on the necessity of granting communal representation to the non-Brahmins for at least sometime till the differences found among the various communities were wiped out. They made it clear to the British authorities that their principal plank was communal representation without which the non-Brahmins were not prepared to accept any reform. (91)

The authorities at London were also convinced that something must be done to secure the non-Brahmins a 'Fair Share' in the legislature. Hence, the Government of India

Act 1919 made provision for the reservation of seats for non-Brahmins on the Madras Legislative Council. Lord Meston, as an arbitrator awarded twenty eight seats for the non-Brahmins to obtain a comfortable majority on the newly constituted council under the Reform Act of 1919. The two communal Government Orders, passed on 16th September 1921 and 15th August 1922 respectively, due to the efforts of the Justice Party gave the non-Brahmins much opportunities to enter into public services.

(iv) Free and compulsory Elementary Education.

It was one of the basic principles of the Justice Party that elementary education must be made free and compulsory. A demand to this effect had been made in the original Non-Brahmin Manifesto of 1916. Subsequent resolutions repeating the same demand were passed. The Coimbatore Conference held on 19th August 1917 passed the following resolution.

> This conference is of opinion that primary education is the first need of the country, that the efforts that have been made to diffuse education among the people are quite inadequate, and that government should give prominent place to any scheme that may be suggested for imparting free primary education to the people and making it compulsory in all municipal areas. (92)

(v) The abolition of the caste system and the development of the Depressed Classes.

The Justice Party was the earliest political party in modern India to condemn Varnashrama Dharma (the caste system) and its concomitant evils. It considered caste as a baneful sin of humanity and stood for the abolition of the caste. In all political conferences and confedera-

tions, it laid stress on the need for enacting social legislation to establish an egalitarian society and to elevate the Depressed Classes. The following resolution passed at the Fourth Non-Brahmin Confederation held at Madras on 8th January 1921 on social reform and legislation bears eloquent testimony to their keen interest in the welfare of the Depressed Classes.

> This confederation looks upon the Depressed Classes as an integral part of the non-Brahmin community for social as well as for political purposes, and regards it as the prime duty of non-Brahmins to treat them with perfect equality and to accord them every opportunity and facility for rising in the social, economic and political scale.
>
> In the same confederation, it was very much emphasized that in the interests of the non-Brahmin movement, it was necessary that the non-Brahmin classes should abjure caste and other Brahminical institutions. As the first step towards achieving this goal, the leaders of the Justice Party urged the non-Brahmins to promote inter-caste marriages among the different sections of their communities. (93)

The participants of the confederation proposed great interest in the development of the Adi Dravidas, one of the Depressed Communities. They urged the government to initiate a more vigorous policy towards improving the condition of the Depressed Classes by giving more liberal facilities for education such as total exemption from fees, granting of scholarships and starting of free hostels. (94)

(vi) The promotion of the Dravidian regional languages.

The University of Madras abolished the study of regional languages as per the new regulations which came into force in 1911-12. Languages such as Sanskrit, Urdu,

Persian and Arabic were given importance and the Dravidian languages were completely omitted from curricula. Many were openly making a demand in the Senate of the University for the reintroduction of the regional Dravidian languages as part of the curricula.

The Justice Party, especially T.C. Thangavelu Pillai, moved the following resolution in the Fourth Non-Brahmin Confederation, seeking reintroduction of the Dravidian languages in the University.

> That this confederation urges on the authorities concerned that the Dravidian languages should be placed on a footing of equality with languages like the Sanskrit and the Arabic, in order that the official careers like the Indian Civil Service, now open only to students of certain languages conventionally called classical, may be available for students of the Dravidian languages as well. (95)

2.10 The demand for dignity.

The non-Brahmins not only demanded justice, but they also insisted that they should be treated with dignity and self-respect. The term 'Self-Respect' corresponds to the Sanskrit word 'Suya Mariathai'. It is a combination of two words, 'Suya' which means 'Self' and 'Mariathai' which means 'Respect'.

Periyar E.V.Ramaswami Naicker was a staunch and ardent supporter of non-Brahmins. He discovered slowly that the Brahmins (the majority in the Congress Party) treated the non-Brahmins with contempt due to discrimination of caste. There were many experiences which proved that the Brahmins did not treat the non-Brahmins with dignity and self-respect.

Periyar E.V. Ramaswami narrated some experiences.

When a conference was held at Tirunelveli for the removal of untouchability, a non-Brahmin member, Govindasamy Nadar of Virudhunagar was asked to go and eat in a separate enclosure other than those of the Brahmins. Immediately he left the conference and set fire to the Khaddar clothes in the street. Not only in the case of Govindasamy Nadar, but also in the case of other non-Brahmins, similar treatment was meted out in the conferences in the name of religion and traditions. Tiru. Vi.Ka. (Thiru Vi Kalyana Sundaram) also makes a reference to this. Though the Brahmins spoke in the same platforms, they had separate dining halls for them at the time of dining. (96)

E.V. Ramaswami Naicker himself narrated an event to show how far his Self-Respect was wounded in this question. Once when E.V.Ramaswami Naicker went with Srinivasa Iyengar to a Brahmin's house for dining, he was supplied food in a separate place and when he went again for lunch to the same place, the leaves used for serving breakfast were not even removed and in the same place he was again served meals. The leaves in which he ate both in the morning and afternoon were there till night meal was served. As he was a Sudra according to them, the mere touch of the leaves would lead to pollution. Similar incidents happened to him at various places. (97)

Periyar E.V. Ramaswami Naicker discovered that Brahminism (Brahmins' sense of superiority and their contempt for non-Brahmins) prevailed in the Congress Party. The Brahmins did not treat non-Brahmins with self-respect and hence Periyar resigned from the Congress Party. Therefore, he started a protest movement called 'Self-Respect Movement' in 1925.

Self-respect meant self-respect for (culturally and politically) downtrodden Dravidians and freedom from slavery of the mind. Essentially, the cultural functions of this movement were combined with a strong emphasis on social reform.

P.T.Rajan, an important leader of the Justice Party defined this movement in the following words when he inaugurated the first Self-Respect Conference :

> The Self-Respect Movement wants to do away with a social system that keeps man and man apart, community and community aloof-a system that puts premium on the accident of birth. (98)

This movement had a great zeal for social justice and social equality and condemned socially evil practices.

> The movement also had a passion for social justice and campaigned vigorously for social equality and the abolition of caste. The injustice of caste division as well as its alleged scriptural foundation came in for much criticism. Other evils which were denounced were child marriage, the dowry system (the social custom of the bridegroom's party demanding an exorbitant sum of money and property from the bride's party at the time of marriage) and the prohibition of widow marriage. The movement championed the cause of women's education. It upheld their right to divorce, to practice birth-control and to marry outside their caste. Hindu festivals were denounced as wasteful and similarly expensive marriage customs were condemned. (99)

(i) The Vaikom Sathyagraha. (agitation for truth)

The 'Vaikom Sathyagraha' provided Periyar E.V. Ramaswami Naicker with the opportunity to demonstrate his capacity to fight for social justice on behalf of the untouchables in Kerala. He earned the name 'Vaikom Hero' (Vaikom Veerar in Tamil language) for the role he played there.

People belonging to the Scheduled castes in the former princely state of Travancore (the present Kerala State) were not allowed to walk in the streets of a small town called Vaikom. The spirit of self-respect of the Scheduled castes was awakened in due course. So they aspired for the

achievement of their right to walk along the streets of Vaikom town. The Congress leaders of the state of Travancore sympathized with the untouchables and planned to start an agitation.

The agitation originated from an incident that took place between some Brahmins and Madhavan, a lawyer from a Scheduled Caste, namely the Ezhava community. Madhavan came to attend the court in connection with a client's case. The court was located inside the compound of the Maharaja's (Great King's) palace. At the same time, a religious function in honour of the King's birthday was in progress. The orthodox Brahmins were afraid that the entry of a low caste man would cause pollution and prevented Madhavan's entry. This incident was made into an issue by the local leaders of the Ezhava community and there was a big agitation.

A procession of untouchables was arranged on the prohibited road. The leaders responsible for the procession were arrested and imprisoned. They finally invited Periyar E.V. Ramaswami Naicker to lead the agitation with the following note.

> ... We had already started a mission that is too great. As the consequence, governmental opposition too has been let loose. We had never imagined that we would be caught and put behind the bars so soon. Only if you come here to Vaikom and assume the leadership of the Sathyagraha and prolong the struggle, our honour and the honour of our Kerala will be left unscathed. There is no time to think over deeply and delay. (100)

Periyar E.V. Ramaswami Naicker went to Vaikom and led the agitation and made very fiery speeches and was arrested. Later, he was released two months early. Finally, the agitation was successful and the prohibited

roads were thrown open by the ruler of Travancore to the untouchables in October 1927. (101) As a result of this successful agitation, there was continued struggle for temple entry and subsequently, all the doors of the Hindu temples in the state of Travancore were declared open for the people of Scheduled castes. Thus, this movement presented the challenge of the need for social justice.

(ii) The Gurukulam controversy.

There was a traditional learning centre called Gurukulam at Seranmadevi in Tirunelveli district. The Gurukulam was established by V.V.Subramania Iyer in December 1922 at Kallidaikurichi; later it was shifted to Seranmadevi with the object of imparting religious and national education to youth inculcating in them the spirit of patriotism and social service. (102)

The Gurukulam received donations for its upkeep from various communities. There were frequent complaints of gross partiality. The Brahmin students were given richer food and better comforts than those of the non-Brahmin community. In January 1925, Periyar E.V. Ramaswami Naicker received certain complaints from the students of Gurukulam especially from the son of O.P. Ramasami Reddiar (a later Chief Minister of Madras) about the enforcement of separate dining among the Brahmin and the non-Brahmin students. Even separate water pots were kept there for non-Brahmin boys. (103) There was a great protest from the non-Brahmin members who had donated liberally for the establishment and maintenance of Gurukulam.

A committee appointed to investigate the allegations, learnt that V.S.S.Iyer, who looked after the institution, had himself given permission to two Brahmin students to dine separately on the insistence of their parents. (104)

Popular resentment arose due to the prevailing practice of separate dining. Periyar E.V. Ramaswami Naicker spoke against separate dining and opposed it. However, V.S.S.Iyer and his supporters pointed out that inter-dining was not in practice either in society or in educational institutions run by the government and refused interdining in Gurukulam. This created a big rift between Periyar E.V.Ramaswami Naicker and the Brahmin leaders and Periyar started the Self-Respect Movement to champion the cause of self-respect for non-Brahmins and for their social justice.

2.11 Principles of the Non-Brahmins' demand for dignity. (105)

The resolutions passed in conferences, the speeches delivered and various articles written by the leaders of the Self-Respect Movement throw ample light on the principles of this movement. The principles of this movement can be found in one of its proclamations published in the columns of Kudi Arasu (Republic), an important journal of the movement, under the title 'The Principles of the Self-Respect Movement'. The summary of its principles is given below :

(i) Social action.

The abolition of priest-oriented rules which are

beyond the comprehension of the bride and bridegroom during a wedding ceremony.

The practice of regarding men and women as high and low on the basis of their caste by birth should be stopped.

The use of the word 'Sudra' for non-Brahmins should be banned, since the word means 'son of a prostitute'.

The practice of prohibiting fellow human beings (of low caste) from entering and walking along the streets (of high caste people) should be stopped.

(ii) Politics.

The fraudulent stand of patriots who pronounce that self-respect can be achieved only after the achievement of 'Swaraj' (Independence) should be unmasked.

The Self-Respect Movement should boycott any group or individual who is against the principle of communal representation.

(iii) The temple.

The practice of prohibiting people from low castes entering into the temple should be stopped.

The practice that only those who are born in a particular community (Brahmin community) are entitled to conduct worship in the temple should be stopped.

The practice of offering girls to the temple for the purpose of temple services and making them dance inside

the precincts of the temple should be eradicated.

(iv) Journalism.

All the dailies and journals which support the tyranny of the Brahmins and are against the Self-Respect Movement should be banned.

(v) The Brahmin representatives.

The practice of non-Brahmins electing the Brahmins as representatives to Union Boards, Municipalities, Assembly etc should be stopped.

The trend of political voting on the grounds of mercy, compassion, influence or money due to ignorance of the value of voting should be arrested.

(vi) The Puranas (folk stories).

The fact that the four Vedas (Hindu scriptures) which are said to have been composed in the Sanskrit language, do not belong to the Tamil people should be given wide publicity.

The Hindu Sastras (stories) like Manusuriti which created unjust caste divisions in society should be burnt.

People should be turned away from false and superstitious beliefs in the Puranas.

(vii) Commerce.

Non-Brahmins should not eat in hotels run by Brahmins, since non-Brahmins were not treated with dignity in hotels managed by Brahmins.

(viii) The worship of the priests.

The practice of offering money and things to a Brahmin and of worshipping him as family preceptor should be stopped.

People should protest against the practice of calling ordinary human beings religious preceptors.

The practice of calling the group of people (Brahmins) 'priests' who advocate only the welfare of their own kith and kin, without minding how the other sections of the society get ruined, should be stopped.

(ix) The judiciary and the godhead.

The jealousy, rancour and antipathy that creep in among non-Brahmins should be annihilated.

The practice of rushing to the court of law, whenever any conflict arises among the members of a family or community or the people of a village should be stopped.

People should abstain from engaging Brahmin lawyers when there is a necessity for going to a court of law.

It is foolish to believe that whatever sins and dishonest acts a man might have committed, he can earn the forgiveness of God by merely building a temple or bathing in a temple tank or offering money to a Brahmin priest.

The blind belief that God is sure to offer a place in heaven to any dishonest person who pays a Brahmin priest and conducts through him ritual celebrations in temples, should be eradicated.

Human society should be liberated from the blind belief that God feels satisfied with any sinful person, after accepting his offertory of shaven hair from his head.

The following is the programme of action of the Self-Respect Movement.

2.12 THE DRAVIDA KAZHAGAM (The Dravidian Association).

The Dravida Kazhagam Movement (The Justice Party and later on called the Self-Respect Movement) was reorganized in 1944 under the guidance of Periyar E.V.Ramaswami Naicker as the Dravida Kazhagam (the Dravidian Association or the Dravidian Federation). Subsequently, this assumed the character of a highly militant mass organization. Periyar E.V. Ramaswami Naicker had visited in 1930 the Axis countries as well as the Soviet Union. He declared that 'members of the Dravidian Association should wear black shirts whenever possible, as a symbol of the present day downtrodden condition of the Dravidians. (106)

This Dravidian Association adopted a constitution at the conference at Tiruchirapalli in 1945, and took as its symbol a black flag with a red circle at the centre; the black represented mourning for the oppressed Dravidian people; the red indicated the hope of a Dravida Nadu (the Dravidian State). The organization of the party was to be based upon units in each village, taluq and district. The object of this association was proclaimed to be the achievement of a sovereign independent Dravidian Republic, which would be federal in nature with four units corresponding to linguistic divisions, each having residuary

power and autonomy of internal administration. (107) It would be a 'casteless society', an egalitarian Dravida Nadu to which the depressed and the downtrodden could pledge allegiance.

(i) The Dravidian Association and its Philosophy.

The Dravidian Association advocated a secularistic and humanistic philosophy of life. An analysis of the secularism of this association indicates that it lays specific emphasis on the following :-

A Positivism which would say that what matters really are the things that are now experienced as real.

A Utilitarianism which would maintain that all things would be valued according to their usefulness. Whatever is valuable is valid. That is reasonable also. Social institutions, economic patterns, cultural traditions and religious beliefs are worthwhile only in so far as they contribute to the welfare of the people.

A Relativism necessarily follows from what has been said above; because, the concept of usefulness is relative subject to time and situation.

Above all, man, the agent of reason, is the centre of the circumference of life. He is the measure of all things. He is the maker of his own destiny. It is this humanism that is the life-nerve of the Dravidian Association, programme of reform and revolt. (108)

There was a long period of struggle for this demand for a separate Dravida Nadu.

(ii) The Dravidian Association and Religion.

At the outset, it must be observed that the Dravidian Association had not worked out any systematic exposition of its religious position. However, random statements were made in public speeches by their leaders and similar references were made in their writings to religion in general and to Hinduism in particular. But there is no doubt that the association took a hostile attitude towards all religions. It all began with its fierce disapproval of Brahminism. This term obviously means Puranic Hinduism with its popular myths of gods and goddesses. The typical god cited by the Dravidian leaders, is the god Ganesha, who is a very popular deity among the Tamils in South India. The association's understanding of Hinduism is therefore limited. It is not aware of the Upanishads (Hindu Scriptures) or the Bhagavad Gita.

Thus, it would seem that when the leaders of the Dravidian Movement repudiate belief in vidhi (divinely ordered destiny) and karma-samsara(the consequence of one's actions resulting in a series of births), they are thinking of these concepts in the popular sense which makes people resigned to present circumstances as something over which they have no control, because all is determined for them by a Supernatural force. Consequently, they begin with the assumption that to believe in god or gods is to believe in irrational beings who exercise autocratic powers over the destiny of people and the world of nature. Whether it was deliberately done or not, the fact remains that, during many centuries among the common

folk in South India, there developed this type of religion, which benefitted the priestly class of the Brahmins not only by providing them with a source of income but also by giving them a superior status in society as a group of people who have a higher destiny (vidhi) in this life (samsara), because of their karma (good deeds in the previous birth).

The religion which the Dravidian repudiates is the religion which gives sanction to the belief that there is an essential disparity among people. When disparity is questioned, then religion itself is questioned. That is why, there is the appeal to reason. The disparity among people should disappear, because such disparity does not stand to reason, and as such it is false. From this, it is argued, that whatever is true should stand the test of reason. The Dravidian leaders are never tired of claiming that reason should be the one accepted guide for all people in making decisions in life everyday.

This insistence on reason as the primary principle does not necessarily lead to the denial of belief in the existence of god or gods. The Dravidian therefore does not openly claim to be atheistic. But he does say that, since the beliefs of all religions are expressed in the form of dogmas, which are claimed to be beyond this life, all religion is unnecessary, irrelevant and irrational. If the claims of religion are beyond reason, because they relate to what is not of this world and present life, then the Dravidian urges people to confine themselves to the realities of this

life and of this world here and now, without reference to what may or may not be outside. (109)

(iii) The Dravidian Association and the cultural renaissance.

The cultural factor came to be underscored and accepted as an important plank in the day-to-day programme of the movement. Many young people who joined the party, although they were not formally educated, were encouraged to produce literature, which was partly propaganda and partly an outlet for artistic expression. The literary output of a growing number of gifted young leaders of the Dravida Kazhagam Movement has resulted in nothing short of a cultural revival. It has succeeded in initiating a progressive movement of 'new writing' in Tamil, developing a characteristic style of expression and vocabulary. Simultaneously, a serious attempt was made to revive the Tamil classics. In this enterprise, the movement found eager support in non-Brahmin academic centres like the Pachaiappa's College, Madras, the Annamalai University and the like. In particular, the Dravida Kazhagam Movement popularised the Thirukural which was made to be more and more their one final source of authority in ethics. The Thirukural does not lay much store by religion but it does develop a system of ethics which rivals the Brahminic Dharma Sastra. Moreover, the Dravida Kazhagam Movement set about reviving Tamil classic words and avoiding the use of all words of Sanskrit origin. Another outcome was the interest taken in literary research. A great deal of scholarly work was done to evaluate Tamil classics with a view to prove that, in origin and style, they were purely

Dravidian. Where Aryan influence had penetrated, its effect had been invariably to lessen their real value and merit. (110)

(iv) The Dravidian Association as an economic revolution.

Dr.C.N.Annadurai, an important young leader of this movement had spoken and written at length setting forth a scholarly analysis of the economic situation in South India and suggesting a remedy for its ills. Other Dravidian leaders limit their contributions to platitudes or emotional references to the plight of the farm labourer and the industrial worker. He follows closely the Marxist analysis, to which he makes a constant appeal. But there are significant deviations. He divides society into three classes and not two. Between the bourgeois and the proletariat, he conceives of a 'middle-class', which is neither capital nor labour, but represents consumers. These consumers, who have a real stake in the capital-labour relationship, should constitute themselves as a people's court to judge disputes or to arbitrate. They should side with the labourers rather than with the capitalists, for humanitarian reasons. In effect, this is only what Marx had prescribed as the role for the communists in relation to the proletariat.

Dr.C.N.Annadurai does go on to say what should be done in the economic sphere after Brahminism is rooted out. His pattern of reform is socialistic, with an accelerated system of taxation to prevent undue accumulation of wealth in individual hands; he advocates state-ownership and control of key industries, etc. But he makes a significant

addition viz. the restriction of the market; this in the context of his fear of North Indians will mean preventing North Indians from using South India as their market.

At the time of the partition of India, it was reported that Periyar E.V. Ramaswami Naicker tried to secure the help of Jinnah, the first Prime Minister of Pakistan so that the Dravida Nadu also might be set up simultaneously. But Jinnah refused assistance as it was none of his concern. The British also ignored the movement at the time when negotiations were under way to hand over the Government after partition into Indian hands. This was one reason why the movement boycotted the Independence Day Celebrations. It was largely due to the insistence of Periyar E.V. Ramaswami Naicker. But, Arignar Annadurai, the younger leader did not agree with him, for he felt that the fact of national independence should be celebrated by all Indians. (111)

(v) The activities of the Dravidian Association.

During the First National General Elections in 1951, it was agreed that the association would not set up any candidate, nor directly participate in the campaign. But it lent its support in different parts of South India to candidates of other parties who claimed to accept in various measure the association's policy and programme. Soon after the elections, anti-Hindi agitation was once again started by the non-Brahmins. This time, it was directed at wiping out Hindi names on the sign boards in railway stations. In 1953, on the Buddha's birthday, Periyar

E.V. Ramaswami Naicker called for a public demonstration in which people were urged to break all idols of Ganesh (a Hindu god). Although this threat did not result in much serious damage, it caused a considerable stir in public opinion which did not however help the movement much. About the same time, the members of the association in Trichinopoly raised a hue and cry against the attempt to change the name of Dalmiapuram (where Dalmia, a North Indian industrialist, had established a cement factory) into Kallakudi. This was regarded as a symbol of the increasing infiltration of Northern Industrial enterprise into South India. The charge is brought that after independence the Central Government tends to become more and more Aryan and North Indian. Industrial enterprises initiated in the North and subsidised by the Central Government, it was alleged, are encouraged to establish factories in the South, reducing the South to an area for the supply of raw material and cheap labour. Very often, public opinion in Southern towns was whipped up against North Indian trading agencies and industrial outposts. Similarly, Brahmin housing colonies were threatened if any special amenities were provided for them by civic authorities.

It needs to be pointed out that as a people's organization, the association had a tremendous appeal. One thing that must be noted to its credit is that it has inculcated a sense of self-respect and confidence in many low caste non-Brahmin people, especially among youth. They do not feel any longer inferior. If they are now the under-privileged, they know that they can assert their claims and

acquire their rights. The association has undoubtedly put a fighting spirit into people oppressed by social tyranny for a long time. It has liberated them from many superstitious beliefs. Consequently, in increasing numbers, people who are members of the Dravidian Association courageously defy many of the social conventions that had bound them. In dispensing with the Brahmin's priestly services, they have not only reduced expenses but also gained the freedom to think and act for themselves. The large number of 'reformed' marriages in many villages and towns, according to the Dravidian association rites, is an indication of the influence of the association. Intercaste marriages and widow remarriages are more and more socially accepted even in remote rural life. The hold of custom has been relaxed. The importance given to the place of reason has resulted in a tendency to encourage enquiry and investigation of many traditionally accepted institutions. This attitude has put new life and confidence into the simple folk of the villages and the slums.

Generally, all this has also affected the outlook of all the people in Tamil villages, no longer does the Brahmin claim for himself any preferential treatment. He realizes that there are respectful values in the culture of non-Brahmins which command respect. Greater interest is also taken in the remains of Dravidian art, drama and Tamil film by all the people. (112)

2.13 THE DRAVIDA MUNNETRA KAZHAGAM (The Dravidian Progressive Association).

The Dravidian Association in spite of its appeal to

the masses, could not fully democratise its organization. There arose within the movement a challenge to the virtually deified position of Periyar E.V. Ramaswami Naicker. The progressive wing of the party, upholding the principle of democratic party organization seemed to be frequently discouraged. (113)

Dr. Annadurai, however, saw national independence as the accomplishment of All India and not merely the Aryan North. Dr. Annadurai's repeated demands for a democratization of leadership in this movement were ignored. Periyar E.V. Ramaswami Naicker, when he was 72, married Maniammai, a 28 year old lady, who had been an active member of the party. Periyar said that he married her, with the hope that she would lead the party after his death. One of the accepted social objectives of this movement was the elimination of the practice of unequal marriages. Dr. Annadurai, on the pretext that this marriage was contrary to the accepted social objective of the movement, receded from the Dravidian Association Party and formed the Dravida Munnetra Kazahagam Party (the Dravidian Progressive Association). (114)

(i) The organization.

Dr.Annadurai made an effort to weld the Dravidian Progressive Association into an effective political organization. The basic structural unit of the party is the ward committee in cities and the village committee in rural areas. Each committee required at least twenty five members for its formation.

The main source of income for the Dravidian Progressive Association is the membership fee of its members. The conferences of this movement attracted several thousands of people. Dr.Annadurai's powerful oratory kept the people in rapt attention during his speeches at these conferences.

The movement became very popular among the urban lower classes, the proletariat, the lower middle classes and students. The masses (people who belong to the lower castes and the Scheduled Castes) responded to the appeal of the movement. (115)

(ii) Factionalism in the Dravidian Progressive Association.

When the Dravidian Progressive Association was formed, Dr.Annadurai had announced that the general secretaryship could be rotated among the top leaders to avoid a kind of totalitarianism. Dr. Annadurai was the general secretary of the Dravidian Progressive Association from 1949 to 1955. When he tried to implement the rotation plan, both Mr. E.V.K. Sampath and Dr. Kalaignar M. Karunanithi (prominent members in the party) wanted to become the general secretary. Dr.Nedunchezhian was selected as a compromise candidate for the general secretaryship.

Mr. E.V.K. Sampath argued that non-political persons such as cinema actors and dramatists played too important a role in party affairs; that they were often given precedence on party platforms and that people were often more interested in seeing and listening to film stars than

political speakers. Mr. E.V.K. Sampath was very firm that the Dravidian Progressive Association should devote itself solely to politics. The political purpose of this association should not be diluted by this movement's involvement in cultural (film industry) and social reform activities. He also insisted that the demand for a separate Dravida Nadu was not practical and hence should be dropped. However, other leaders of this association continued to involve the movement in cultural and social reform activities. So, Mr.E.V. K.Sampath was dissatisfied with the Dravidian Progressive Association and left the party on 10th April 1961 and organized a new party, the Tamil Nationalist Party (TNP) on 30th July 1961. He explained the aims of the party and mentioned that he had left the Dravidian Progressive Association because the demand for a separate Dravida Nadu was not practicable.

> The demand for a separate Dravida Nadu was not practicable, it was just a dream ... He also accused the Association of raising false hopes in the public and said that it had no support in neighbouring states of Kerala, Mysore (Karnataka) and Andhra Pradesh. (116)

(iii) The Sixteenth Amendment to the Indian Constitution.

The completion of states reorganization into linguistic areas enhanced the fear of national disintegration. This concern led to a conference of chief ministers on national integration in 1961. The amendment prohibiting the separation of any state from the Indian Union was passed in October 1963 and hence the Dravida Kazhagam Movement had to give up the demand for a separate Dravida Nadu.

A committee on national integration and regionalism grew out of the chief ministers' conference and recommended an amendment to the Indian Constitution that had the effect of prohibiting the sessionist activity by political parties. The amendment was passed in October 1963 and specified that the state assembly could make laws to penalize any individual who questioned the sovereignty or integrity of India and amended freedom-of-speech clauses to allow a requirement that all candidates for the Lok Sabha or for any legislative assembly would have to take an oath of supporting the sovereignty of India.

Lest any doubts remain, in commending the bill, the central law minister, A.K.Sen, said that this was the proper time to outlaw political activities of a sessionist nature. Amendment sixteen to the Indian Constitution provided formidable justification for the Dravidians to abandon separation. As we know, the Dravidian top leadership had already secretly decided that separation could not be achieved and should not be maintained in the face of the government action. (117)

(iv) The Dravidian Progressive Association in ministry.

In February 1967, the Dravidian Progressive Association and its political party won a stunning victory and it formed the ministry in Tamilnadu. Dr.C.N. Annadurai was elected as the Chief Minister of Tamilnadu.

(a) Social reform.

Social reform is an important issue in the ministry of the Dravidian Progressive Association. There are three areas in its social reform policy.

(b) Untouchability.

The Dravidian Progressive Association worked very hard to remove the practice of untouchability from society. Untouchability means that people belonging to the backward classes and the Scheduled Castes would not be allowed to

move freely in society. They had to live in isolated colonies. Dravidian service in this area is so great that many people who belong to the untouchable backward and Scheduled Castes became great leaders like ministers and high officials in government service.

> The Dravidian Progressive Association championed the cause of the Harijans, Backward classes and the lower middle classes and worked for a caste-less common egalitarian society. After assuming power, the government had taken energetic steps to protect their interests and redress their grievances. (118)

(c) Religious reform.

The Dravidian Movement, at different times, advocated atheism, agnosticism and even monotheism (in contrast to polytheism). Dr.Annadurai called people to become torch-bearers of rationalism.

> Rationalism does not mean repudiation of basic and fundamental truths-but the annihilation of dubious modes of thought and action.
>
> We have been for too long a period doting upon decayed forms of thought. Our religion has degenerated into rituals; our society which was once classless and casteless has degenerated into watertight compartments of caste and creed. And more than that, whenever a doughty warrior comes forth to fight against evils prevalent, we denounce him.
>
> Periyar E.V. Ramaswami represents and symbolises the fury and frustration in a sizeable section of the society at this state of affairs. To allow systems to degenerate and at the same time denounce those who champion the cause of rationalism is but to perpetrate superstition and orthodoxy. (119)

The Dravidian Movement encouraged intercaste marriages between members of Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and caste Hindus by awarding gold medals to partners in these marriages.

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(d) Secularism.

The third area of social reform is secularism. A circular was sent by the Chief Secretary of the Tamilnadu Government that pictures of gods and goddesses in government offices should be removed.

> The heads of departments, etc. are informed that in view of the secular nature of our state, the government considered that it is not proper to exhibit pictures, idols, etc. of any Gods or Goddesses including saints, messiahs etc. The exhibited idols or pictures in many government offices should be removed gradually and unostentatiously so as to avoid attracting any notice or creating any local incidents. (120)

(v) The Dravidian Progressive Association and the official language issue.

The Dravidian Progressive Association assumed office in February 1967. The new government faced a severe test in November 1967. This involved the language issue and by implication Tamil nationalism. As a result of anti-Hindi agitations in 1965, Mr. Shastri, the then Prime Minister of India agreed to give statutory recognition to Nehru's assurance on the continued use of English. On 27th November 1967, an amendment bill to the Official Language Act of 1963, section 3 was introduced into the Lok Sabha (one house of the Parliament).

Section 3 reads:

> Not withstanding the expiration of fifteen years of the commencement of the Constitution, the English language, may as from the appointed day (i.e. January 26, 1965), continue to be used, in addition to Hindi. (121)

(vi) The Dravidian Progressive Association and labour relations.

The involvement of the Dravidian Progressive Association in labour relations came at a time when trade unionism in the state of Tamilnadu was suffering from its own internal crisis. The rise of the Dravidian Movement and cultural nationalism slowly influenced the trade union movement. The Dravidian Movement had greater opportunity to control labour activities; trade union leaders gained access to decision-making councils of the ruling party. It is fair to say that the Dravidian Progressive Association attempted to be responsive to the needs of the urban labourer by organizing them and providing an increasing role in party councils.(122)

There was further division in the Dravidian Progressive Association and the new party was called the All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazahagam (All India Anna Dravidian Progressive Association).

2.14 THE ALL INDIA ANNA DRAVIDA MUNNETRA KAZHAGAM (The All India Anna Dravidian Progressive Association).

Dr.M.G.Ramachandran, who was a famous film actor and later became Chief Minister of Tamilnadu started the All India Anna Dravidian Progressive Association.

(i) The formation of the All India Anna Dravidian Progressive Association.

Prohibition was in existence for thirty three years before the Dravidian Progressive Association took over the

Government of Tamilnadu. It had been abolished by the Government of the Dravidian Progressive Association. He produced a film 'Ulagam Sutrum Valiban' (The Youth who travels around the world); he borrowed lot of money; he was very unhappy that he was not helped in such a crisis.

Dr.M.G.Ramachandran was the treasurer of the Dravidian Progressive Association. He demanded proper maintenance of accounts from other members of the party in connection with the huge income and expenditure of the party. He wanted ministers and leaders of the Dravidian Progressive Association and their relatives to declare their assets. Discontent slowly developed between him and other leaders of the association. He was expelled on 13-10-1972 from the political party of the association. Later, he formed a new party called the Anna Dravidian Progressive Association on 18-10-1972. Later on, this party was called the All India Anna Dravidian Progressive Association. He was elected Chief Minister of Tamilnadu when the All India Anna Dravidian Progressive Association became the ruling party of Tamilnadu.

(ii) The All India Anna Dravidian Progressive Association and its Organization.

(a) Structure.

The organization of this party has been divided into the rural sector and the urban sector. In the rural area, every village in Tamilnadu has a branch of the All India Anna Dravidian Progressive Association. Each branch should have at least twenty five members. The members elect a chairman, a secretary, a treasurer, a joint secretary

and a representative for higher organization. There are branches in Panchayat Union villages also. The office bearers of the village units along with their representatives form the General Council at the Panchayat Union level. In the urban sector, municipal towns with a population of less than 100,000 people will have branches called Town Councils. (123)

(b) Membership.

Membership has been extended to all men and women above the age of eighteen, provided they pay a membership fee of fifty paise at the time of enrolment.

(c) Finances.

In general, the party finances of the All India Anna Dravidian Progressive Association are collected from :

Subscriptions and contributions from its members;
Donations from sympathizers;
Income from the sale of property, literature and party journals;
Periodic collections from the public;
Collections from cultural programmes and dramatic performances staged by party troups;
Voluntary contributions from the business community, etc.

B. The Challenge of the Dravida Kazhagam Movement.

So far, the history of the Dravida Kazhagam Movement has been dealt with. The following section deals with the challenge of this movement. The movement has presented a

twofold challenge.

The Challenge of Social Justice.

The Challenge of Political Concern.

2.15 The challenge of Social Justice.

The life of the Depressed Castes in India, in general, and in Tamilnadu in particular, has been one of ignorance, misery and servitude during the early twentieth century.

(i) The life of the Depressed Castes.

Enumeration on the basis of caste started appearing from the 1911 census onward. In the year 1964, the government recognized one hundred and twenty castes as eligible for special treatment. Of these, Pallan, Paraiyan, Chakkilian, Nayadi, Mala, Madiga, Holega and Pulaiya receive special treatment; these major castes of the Depressed Classes (Lower castes) are found in all the linguistic groups of the Madras Presidency. (124)

The daily life and living conditions of the Depressed Classes were extremely pathetic. The place of their residence was called cheri or slum. This was at a considerable distance from the habitation of upper middle class Hindus. The slums were not provided with basic facilities and amenities. They led their lives under unhygienic conditions like aborigines and animals. (125)

The use of public wells, tanks, and roads was prohibited to the Depressed communities. They had to collect their drinking water from stinking muddy unhygienic pools. Unkept hair, rags for clothing, sickly and withered

bodies - this was the general appearance of the Depressed Classes.

They were not permitted to oil or comb their hair. The village barbers' services were denied to the Depressed Classes. They were forced to dress themselves only in rags. They were forbidden to take up any profession or occupation other than scavenging and other menial tasks. (126)

The Indian notion of untouchability denotes the socio-religious practice by which Hindus did not permit the lower castes to touch or come near their houses, temples, tanks and sometimes even public roads. (127) Untouchability underlines the notion of defilement.

Dr. Ambedkar, the leader of the oppressed people wrote as follows :

> ... So the Hindus have their untouchables. slavery, serfdom and villainage have all vanished. But untouchability still exists as long as Hinduism will last...They (the sufferings of the Depressed Classes) are the result of a cold calculating Hinduism. The untouchable is not merely despised but denied all opportunities to rise. Yet nobody seems to take any notice of the untouchable. (128)

(ii) The struggle against social injustice.

Social justice in India emerges in a situation of social injustice in Indian society. The unjust caste system along with untouchability in Indian society has caused gross injustice.

Nearly sixty five years back, there was neither the constitution, nor a directive principle regarding social justice; then the concept of social justice was unknown in

India. There appeared in Tamilnadu a crusader against the social inequality and the social injustice of the caste system. He was Periyar E.V. Ramaswami Naicker, who opposed the caste system. He started the Self-Respect Movement in Erode in 1925. The following were the goals of this movement; the abolition of caste and the eradication of untouchability.

(a) The abolition of caste.

The purpose of abolishing caste and untouchability is to create equality of status and opportunity for all citizens including the oppressed communities.

The first attempt for social justice was made when Periyar E.V. Ramaswami Naicker started a vigorous campaign in 1922 against the Cheramadevi Gurukulam which enforced casteism and separate dining for Brahmins and non-Brahmins. Periyar propagated that the existence of Agraharam (Brahmin's colony of houses) for Brahmins and Cheries (a separate colony of houses for Adi-Dravidars) is another type of apartheid. Such social segregation is negation of social justice. (129)

The magazine of the Self-Respect Movement called Kudi Arasu (Republic) referred to the following message of a poet, Subramania Bharathi :

All belong to one caste and
All belong to one race
There is no caste at all, darling,
To entertain difference is sin. (130)

The abolition of the caste system was stressed in several articles, speeches and resolutions. Periyar decried caste in his speeches. (131)

Periyar condemned the Manusm rithi (Laws of Manu), which is the foundation for the caste system and which advocated the supremacy of the Brahmins. Members of the Self-Respect Movement celebrated festivals in temples, birth and death anniversaries with all rituals, without inviting Brahmin priests, in order to decry the supremacy of the Brahmins and the Brahmin priests. (132)

Interdining was arranged for various communities of the non-Brahmins to create a sense of unity and harmony among the non-Brahmins.

> At one of them, convened under the auspices of the Nagapattinam Youth Association on 2nd January 1927, about a hundred people from different communities assembled and dined together. The Adi-Dravidas served the meals to the participants. On an another occasion, on 24th April 1932, A.R.Sivanandam, the president of the Coimbatore Self - Respect League arranged an interdining of different non-Brahmin communities and invited some caste associations, including the Adi-Dravidas. On that occasion, nearly a hundred persons dined together without any distinction or difference. (133)

Members of the Self-Respect Movement challenged the evils of caste discrimination in hotels run by the Brahmins in railway stations.

> In 1927, K.A.P. Viswanathan, Manavai Paramasivam and a host of other self-respectors, marched to a hotel named 'Bala Murugananda Bhavan', run by a Brahmin at Big Bazaar street in Tiruchy and made an appeal to its proprietor in a threatening voice that if he failed to remove the name board bearing the discriminatory note that 'the Brahmins alone are entitled to take meals in the hotel', they would stage a satyagraha in front of the hotel. The proprietor of the hotel, having been threatened, came forward to serve food

to both the Brahmins and the non-Brahmins equally without any distinction... Periyar EVR (E.V.Ramaswami) was reported to have declared his intention of staging satyagraha outside the Railway restaurant rooms and coffee hotels if the words 'For Brahmins only' on the sign boards were not removed. He also declared that the various eating houses should be opened to all classes of people without distinction. His continuous appeals to the Railway authorities bore fruit and on 20th March 1941, they, by an order disallowed such discriminatory practice in Railway canteens.(134)

When the non-Brahmins of low castes were unable to secure access to public roads, tanks, wells and temples, the self-respect members condemned such an inhuman practice.

> In 1931, a Nadar community man was prevented by the Brahmins from carrying water from a Municipal well situated in a Brahmin street at Villibuttur, Chengalpattu district,. He was stabbed and as a result of it, the entire Nadar community of that area protested and a word of apology from the Brahmins seemed more than sufficient to heal their wounded feelings. (135)

The self-respectors from different parts of Tamilnadu took an active part in asserting their rights to enter into temples where low caste non-Brahmins were prohibited. The then Government of Madras made the following report about such protests against social injustice.

> On February 3rd 1927, an attempt was made by some non-Brahmins to enforce the right to worship in the sections of the Madura temple, which are reserved for the Brahmins. After some discussions at the Chitti Vinayaga temple, the non-Brahmin party went on to the Meenakshi shrine with an intent apparently to perform worship there. The Bhattars (the priests) however ... had already closed the main door of the Arathanmantapam(inner temple). The demonstrators were unable to go beyond the usual limits to which the non-Brahmins are confined...On February 7th, a further attempt was made on the same lines by some persons sent by Mr.Ramanathan and again the Bhattars obstructed it. There was considerable commotion in the temple, but fortunately no breach of peace occurred. (136)

Mr. J.N. Ramanathan continued his demands for temple entry with a group of self-respectors.

> J.S. Kannappar, a Justicite and a self-respector and an editor of the Dravidan, a Tamil daily, along with some of his followers tried to enter the Siva temple at Thiruvannamalai in 1927. There, he and other self-respectors were prevented from entering the temple on the pretext that they belonged to the SRM (Self-Respect Movement). The priests of the temple filed a suit in the court against J.S. Kannappar on 8th February 1927. The sub-magistrate passed the judgement on 30th April 1928 in favour of J.S. Kannappar and fined the priests on the grounds that J.S. Kannappar and his convoy, being Hindus, had every right to enter any Hindu temple as they did not disturb either the proceedings or the pantry of the temple. (137)

Thus the Self-Respect Movement was ideologically committed to enable all communities to enter into the temples without any obstruction.

(b) The eradication of Untouchability.

The Depressed Classes or the untouchables formed the majority of the population in the state of Tamilnadu. They were socially oppressed and economically exploited. The Self - Respect Movement struggled hard to remove untouchability and felt very happy when the government passed legislation making untouchability illegal and punishable. (138)

When the Government of Madras in 1924 passed a legislation to the effect that thereafter all public utility places should be accessible to the Depressed Class people and they, instead of being called by several ignonimous names, be called as Adi-Dravidas in future. The SRM in its party medium expressed its overwhelming happiness with a note that it was due to its efforts, it so happened. (139)

The self-respect members felt elated at the successful attempt in getting a Bill passed at the council, which sought to include a clause

in the Madras Local Boards Act, permitting the levy of a fine of Rs.100/- on a person who obstructed anyone from walking along a public road. (140)

At a Conference held in Madras on 9th and 10th February 1929, Periyar moved the following resolution:

> For the development of human society and ultimately of the nation, on humanitarian grounds, the evils of untouchability should be done away with and the eyes of such hapless people be opened. (141)

At the South Arcot District Adi-Dravida's Conference held at Kallakurichi on 12th June 1929, Periyar spoke thus:

> Like you (Adi-Dravidas) the bulk of the non-Brahmins also suffer from the social indignities at the hands of the Brahmins ... For Brahmins we are untouchables ... So defy, deny and confront the Brahmins and Brahminism ... (142)

Because the Hindu religion accepted the caste system and untouchability, Periyar and self-respect members encouraged members of the Depressed Communities to be converted from Hinduism to Islam and Christianity. Periyar spoke thus :

> Our community (including the low caste non-Brahmins) represents the majority in the total population. Still we remain untouchables because we are in the fold of the Hinduism. (143)
>
> Thus, Periyar denounced Hindu religion as highly discriminatory. He declared that he would prefer to die as Musalman (Mohammedan) whose religion promises social equality and casteless society. (144)
>
> Some stray cases of Adi-Dravida conversions into Islam had taken place in several parts of Tamilnadu. The Kudi Arasu reported these conversions in bold letters as if it was its personal achievement. On 6th October 1929, sixty nine Adi-Dravida 'Kudumbars' joined Islam at Cheelayampatti in Madurai district, in the presence of about three hundred Muslims who came from different villages nearby especially for this purpose. Immediately after this incident, Periyar EVR speaking at the Truth Seekers' Association in Erode, said that those sixty nine Adi-Dravida Kudumbars' had at last freed

> themselves from social indignity based on birth, after joining Islam. About one hundred and four Panchama and Chakkili Adi-Dravidas had been converted to Christianity in 1930 near Dindigul in a village called Mambadi. (145)

Efforts were made by the Self-Respect Movement to secure social rights for the Depressed Classes to worship in the temple and to travel in buses.

Efforts were made by the SRM to secure social rights for the Depressed Classes with an approach unique of its own. At Thiruvarur in Thanjavur district, on 16th December 1929, some Adi-Dravidas along with other non-Brahmins were permitted by the priests on request to enter Sri Veerabadraswami temple to offer prayers. Soon after this, an interdining for three hundred people belonging to different communities was arranged due to the efforts of Lakshmana Pillai and other self-respectors of the place. (146) 'W.P.A. Soundarapandian, the District Board President and one of the leaders of the Justice Party and a staunch supporter of the SRM, sent the following circular to all the service bus owners:

> It is learnt from reliable sources that several private bus owners in the district do not permit Adi-Dravidas to travel in their buses. Moreover, it is believed that a condition was mentioned on the tickets that 'tickets will not be issued to the Adi-Dravidas'; this is highly reprehensible, hence, anti-social. If such practices continue in these buses unabated, the licenses to the concerned bus owners will not be issued. Within a week after receiving this circular, the concerned bus owners should produce a sample ticket for verification in this office. (147)

Some of the non-Brahmin self-respect members were very considerate to the Depressed Classes.

In a village near Gopichettipalayam, Coimbatore district, a Mirasdar self-respector allowed the depressed class people to make use of his well for the purposes of drinking, bathing and washing clothes. His family also used the same well for the purposes of drinking, bathing and washing clothes. But he had to encounter the wrath and non-cooperation of some of his relatives and other co-villagers for his act. They even took efforts to stall workers from working in his farm. Undeterred by this social boycott, the Mirasdar self-respector, by associating himself

> with S. Muthu Velappa Gounder, another well-to-do self-respector, resolved to work for the social upliftment of the Depressed Classes in his area. (148)

Finally, the Government introduced the Removal of Civil Disabilities Act and the Temple Entry Act in 1938. The Civil Disabilities Act of 1938 of Madras was aimed to abolish the stigma of untouchability and violation of this Act was liable for punishment as a cognizable offence. The members of the Self-Respect Movement were full of praise for these acts. (149)

(iii) The Communal Government Order and social justice.

In government services, only Brahmins (who were only a minority) occupied key posts and most of the government appointments were given to Brahmins because of their intellectual background. The non-Brahmins, though they were a majority, could not get government appointments in proportion to their majority population. So, the Justice Party enacted what was popularly known as the Communal Government Order which brought the rule of communal representation in government services.

> On account of the disproportionately large number of posts in the Madras Government Services held by the Brahmins and the extensive control which the Brahmins had over the administrative frame work, the Justice party enacted what is popularly known as the 'Communal G.O.' (Communal Government Order) which brought the rule of communal representation in services on the ground that it was the only mechanism whereby the great majority of the Non-Brahmins could be protected against the Brahmin-rule which had a continuing history of social tyranny. The Communal G.O. ensured representation in Government Services to all communities in proportion to their population. Periyar visualised that the Communal G.O. can be used as the best instrument to usher in social justice in a caste-ridden society under the Brahmin dominance. (150)

After Independence, the Constitution of India came into force on 26th November 1949. The Communal Government Order was challenged in the Madras High Court on the grounds that it conflicted with Article 14 of the Indian Constitution. The Madras High Court struck down the Communal Government Order as being violative of the Indian Constitution and this was upheld by the Supreme Court. Periyar and the self-respect members raised a voice of protest to amend the Indian Constitution in such a way that adequate representation in government services could be given to the non-Brahmin communities, scheduled castes, scheduled tribes and backward communities; articles 15(4) and 16(4) were added amending the Constitution in order to give preferential treatment to scheduled castes, backward classes and the non-Brahmin communities.

The Madras High Court struck down the Communal G.O. as being violative of the Constitution and this was upheld by the Supreme Court; it was virtually a death-knell for the backward classes and the scheduled castes who can never hope to free themselves from the tyranny of the Brahmin domination. Then came the one voice, the loud voice, the bold voice of Periyar that if the Communal G.O. is repugnant to the Constitution, the Communal G.O. cannot go, but the Constitution should be amended. The vision, the fairness and the justice in that voice made an impact on the State as well as the Central Government. The first Amendment to the Constitution was made on 18th June 1951 by which Articles 15 and 16 of the Constitution came to be amended. Article 15 was amended by introducing a new Article 15(4) which empowered the State to make special provisions for the advancement of any socially and educationally backward classes of citizens or for the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes.

Similarly, Article 16 was amended by introducing Article 16(4) which enabled the Government to make provision for the reservation of appointments or posts in favour of any backward class of citizens, which, in the opinion of the State is not adequately represented in the Services under the State; Article 15(4) and 16(4) thus enabled the Government to reserve seats in

educational institutions and reserve posts for appointment in Public Services for the socially and educationally backward class of citizens and for the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes. (151)

(iv) The rights of the Harijans (a section of the people of lower castes) for temple priesthood.

The pillar on which social justice rests is equality of opportunity and articles 15(4) and 16(4) are designed to achieve that objective.

The Supreme Court of India pointed out in a decision :-

> ... unless adventitious aids are given to the underprivileged people, it would be impossible to suggest that they have equal opportunities with the more advanced people. This is the reason for the justification for the demand of social justice that the underprivileged citizens of the country should be given a preferential treatment in order to give them an equal opportunity with the other more advanced sections of the community. (152).

Periyar pleaded for the rights of the Harijans to become temple priests.

> Periyar says : 'We must strongly oppose the rules of the Agamas (Hindu Scriptures) stating that the gods will die if we, the non-Brahmins, touch them.' In the interests of equality, Periyar claimed the right for all to enter the innermost shrine and perform pooja (ritual during worship). In 1970, the Tamilnadu Government issued an order that no body should be prevented from becoming a priest on account of his caste. The order was objected to by the Brahmins and a petition for its cancellation was filed in the court. Finally, the Supreme court declared that the ruling of the Government was in order, but added the clause that, with all respect for religious freedom, the rules of the Agamas must be followed in regard to the temple worship. This caused Periyar to cry out : 'The operation was successful, the patient died'. The reason for his indignation was that the Agamic rules prescribed both qualifications and consecrational investiture. Nevertheless, in Kerala State, it was reported in the daily papers in 1971 that Harijans were being trained for the priesthood. (153)

(v) Women's rights.

The Dravida Kazhagam Movement pleaded for the rights of women. The equality between men and women is stressed by this movement.

(a) Temple girls.

Before the earlier part of the twentieth century, there was a system, which permitted young girls to stay in Hindu temples and they were morally abused. Periyar Ramaswami condemned this tradition of 'Temple girls' at the Self-Respect Conferences from 1929 onwards, with an outcry; 'Free them and marry them. (154)

(b) Remarriage of widows.

According to the Hindu tradition, widows were not permitted to remarry, especially among the higher castes.

> In his early opposition to caste regulations, Periyar advocated the rights of women, when he defied his orthodox kinsmen by encouraging his young niece to re-marry after she had lost her husband early in her life. According to the census of 1921, there were 11,892 widows in India below the age of fifteen. At the self-respect conferences in 1929-30, women's right to divorce and property was emphasised. The marriage age for girls should be sixteen, as it was later laid down in the Sarda Act, and widows were to be helped to re-marry. (155)

Periyar's views on the situation and the rights of women may be summarised in brief statements as follows :

> What is marriage of today? We are not bound to any tradition. Marriage is an agreement. Marriage of lust is not good. (156)

(c) A wife is a help-mate in life.

Periyar expressed his view on marriage and preferred

that a wife should be called a help-mate or a companion.

The following are some of his ideas :

> Periyar objects to terms like 'giving of a maid' and 'given in marriage'. They are Sanskrit phrases and treat woman as a thing. He wants them substituted by 'valkkai tunai' (a Tamil phrase which means companion in life), a word for marriage taken from the Tirukkural, which means 'help-mate in life'. (157)

> In marriages conducted by Periyar, i.e. Self-Respect marriages, he sees marriage as a mutual agreement, a co-operative enterprise, a deal, an order of Nature, according to principles and decisions. Periyar advises against giving guests coconuts, flowers and meals at weddings, since they are unnecessary expenses and burdens on the brides' family. (158)

(vi) Inter-caste marriages.

Inter-caste marriage was advocated by the Self-Respect Movement as a method to achieve the goal of the abolition of the caste system. The inter-caste marriage or the self-respect marriage has been defined as a special type of reform marriage which was conducted without inviting a Brahmin priest and without observing superstitions and meaningless customs and rituals.

> It was a simple marriage which did not incur unnecessary and wasteful expenses. These marriages included all inter-caste marriages, widow re-marriages, adult and love marriages and arranged marriages. Initially, the presence of the Tamil priests and rituals characterized these marriages and later without rituals and ultimately by 1930, the SRM encouraged simple marriages even without a non-Brahmin Tamil priest and without the process of tying a thali (a sacred thread which a bridegroom ties around the neck of the bride at the time of wedding). (159)

In 1925, an inter-caste marriage between Saranathan, a Brahmin sub-editor of the Kudi Arasu and Lakshmi, the daughter of a devadasi (temple girl) mother, took place at Palaghat (presently in Kerala) without rituals in the presence of Periyar EVR. This marriage was the first of its kind in the annals of the SRM in Tamil Nadu. On the same lines, in 1925 at

Karaikudi, a marriage took place between Murugappa (Nattukottai chetty community) who later became the editor of Kumaran (a Tamil daily), one of the media of the SRM and Maragathavalli (goldsmith community), a widow, in the presence of Moovalur Ramamirdammal, a self-respector. This was the second inter-caste self-respect marriage of the SRM. (160)

From the launching of the SRM till the formation of the Dravidian Association in 1944, about 771 self-respect marriages were conducted by the activists and sympathizers of the SRM in Tamilnadu. Out of them, nearly 40 per cent seemed to have taken place in rural areas and the rest of the marriages in semi-urban and urban areas. Majority of these marriages were conducted among the different but the same non-Brahmin communities; the rest of the marriages were either inter-caste or widow-remarriages. Of these two, the majority of the inter-caste couples had hailed from the prosperous business community or rich landlords. (161)

2.16 The challenge of Political Concern.

The movement did not stop with presenting its challenge of social justice, nor did it stop with the communication of its programme of social justice and ideology. It went on to implement its programme of social justice through political action. Therefore, the movement, which started as a social reformation movement, soon became a political party and then the ruling party of Tamilnadu and presented a real challenge of political concern.

(i) The Political Concern of the Justice Party.

This party appealed to the non-Brahmins in Tamilnadu (who outnumbered the Brahmins by 22 to 1) not to be silent and inactive, because, a very small minority of the Brahmins enjoyed the majority of appointments in the government services. Sir. Thyagaraja Chettiar wrote an

article, 'The Non-Brahmin Manifesto' in the Hindu dated 20th December, 1916, which surveyed the conditions of the non-Brahmin community and pointed out directions for their progress.

> We appeal to the enlightened members of the non-Brahmin communities ...to start associations for the advancement of the education of the non-Brahmin classes, to maintain social and political organizations, to publish newspapers of their own, both in the vernaculars and in English and to push forward their claims. By their attitude of silence and inaction, they have failed to make their voice heard and others more astute than they, have used them for their own ends with the result that there is a great deal of discontent among the non-Brahmins about their present lot as compared with that of the Brahmins. (162)

The non-Brahmin community became conscious of its responsibility, joined together and elected the Justice Party. The Justice Party came to power in the state of Tamilnadu in November 1926.

(ii) The Political Concern of The Dravidian Progressive Association.

The Dravidian Progressive Association became a political party and participated in the elections from the year 1952 (First General Elections) onwards. This party issued the following election manifesto for the Second General Elections in 1957.

1. Each state should have full freedom to secede from the Indian Union if it desires and should be given full and equal representation in parliament so that the large states do not dominate the others. The central government's taxing powers in the states must be limited.

2. Industry should be nationalized, as 'the pre-dominance of private enterprise has been a great impediment to the welfare of the people.'

3. The South must have industries to develop, but the Five Year Plans have been formulated mainly to improve the wealth and raise the living standards of the North. The majority of the irrigation and hydroelectric projects and new industries have been concentrated in the North; the Dravida Nad has been completely neglected.

4. No wages for personal services should be less than Rs. 100 a month and maximum salaries should be no more than twelve times that amount.

5. There should be a ceiling on land holdings to help the peasantry overcome exploitation by intermediaries. Co-operative farming should be developed in livestock, poultry and dairying. Fisheries must be developed.

6. The state must meet the national goal of free education upto the secondary school. Several crores of rupees are being wasted in educational schemes actually designed to strengthen the grip of the Congress Party. Education must be free from political, religious or communal bias.

7. The medium of instruction at all stages must be the students' mother tongue. The fanaticism with which Hindi is being imposed upon the South is to be deplored. English, being an international language, should be given due encouragement and should be treated on par with the mother tongue to facilitate the spread of technological and scientific knowledge. To concede to the teaching of Hindi in the State of Tamilnadu would be dangerous.

8. Uniform wage scales should be established for employees of the central and state governments. 'Dearness allowance' should be included in basic pay. Village servants should be paid a living wage.

9. Only Tamil diplomats should be appointed as envoys to countries with many Tamil settlers.

10. It is unnecessary for the Indian Government to be spending more than half its income for defence purposes. The Government should cut these expenses and use the savings for development.

11. The working class must be provided with housing, medical and leave facilities. The Congress has failed here too. The Five Year Plans help the North Indian worker and discriminate against the South. Profit-

sharing and capital-sharing plans are needed.

12. To help the handloom industries, all dhotis (a garment worn by Indian men) and saris (a garment worn by Indian women) should be handloomed.

13. Tamilnadu must not be joined in any bilingual or trilingual state but must include all Tamil-speaking areas ...Madras state should be renamed as Tamilnadu.

14. We must have a classless, casteless society.

15. The Dravidian Progressive Association deserves the voter's support to provide an effective opposition to the Congress. (163)

(a) The price-rise agitation : the Political Concern for the comman man.

The Dravidian Progressive Association organized an agitation on July 19, 1962 against the rise in prices of commodities like food grains and consumer goods, which are essential for the common man. This protest was a symbol of social justice for the common man.

Mr. Rajagopalachariar, the former Governor General of India and the former Chief Minister of the state of Madras (present Tamilnadu) remarked that one of the reasons for the rise of this movement to power in Tamilnadu was its concern for the common man, with special reference to the rise in prices of food commodities. One of the reasons for the defeat of the previous ruling party, the Congress Party at the 1967 Elections in Tamilnadu was the sharp rise in prices of food commodities. (164)

In one of the editions of the newspaper, The Hindustan Times, K.S.Ramanujam described the food situation in Madras prior to elections in 1967 in the following words :

> The deterioration in the food situation is so well-known that it is needless for me to say much about it. Madras is ordinarily self-sufficient in rice, often with surplus production available to Kerala. Yet today, every morning when I go out for a walk, I see a queue of a thousand people before a single fair-price shop. Poor women and children assemble as early as 4.00 a.m and go on sitting there indefinitely. No one knows when they are served or whether all of them get their rice for the day. (165)

The concern of the leaders of this movement for the common people was so genuine that many persons including leaders like Dr.C.N. Annadurai and others suffered imprisonment for nearly six weeks because of their protest.

(b) Protest in Dalmiapuram against the domination of an industrialist.

This protest was made to show the opposition of the Dravidian people against an economic oppressor named Dalmia, a North Indian industrialist. This was focussed upon the village of Kallakudi in Tiruchirappalli district. This North Indian capitalist had established a cement factory in the village Kallakudi and had persuaded the authorities to rename that village as Dalmiapuram to honour his name. It was not just a change of name, but a deeper issue of the domination of the North Indian industrialist who was behind this matter.

Dr.Kalaignar M. Karunanithi, Messrs. Mullai Sakthi, S. Kulanthaivelan, M. Murugesan, A. Maruthanayagam Valarmathi, Somasundaram and Kasthuri Rajah went to Dalmiapuram on July 15, 1953 and fixed new name boards with the original name Kallakudi on all the old name boards. They went into the railway station and pasted a sheet with

'Kallakudi' printed on it on the existing name board with 'Dalmiapuram' on it. Policemen were quietly observing all that the protesters did. Then the protesters went and laid down across the rails and said that they would continue to lie down across the rails until the official name of the village would be changed to Kallakudi and that if the Government decided to run the train over them, they were prepared to become martyrs. (166)

The police officer gave the orders for the driver of the railway engine to start the engine and to move on. People on either side of the platform panicked. The engine was moving fast and came to a halt just near Dr.Kalaignar Karunanidhi who still was lying across the rails. Later, two protesters were arrested and imprisoned. Violence started all over the state of Tamilnadu and policemen resorted to shooting and thereby six young people were killed. The name of the village was changed to Kallakudi when the Dravidian Progressive Association became the ruling party in Tamilnadu. The Dravidian Progressive Association took up this issue of social justice for the powerless weak minorities, in order to prevent the domination of the powerful industrialists over the weaker sections in society.

(c) The protest against Hindi as the only official language.

Fourteen regional languages of India have been recognized as national languages. These languages are used in various states of India for administrative purposes and as the medium of instruction in educational institutions. Tamil is the regional language in the state of Tamilnadu,

where the Dravidian Movement is the ruling party.

Hindi is one of the national languages of India and it is spoken by a majority of the people in India and hence, the Indian Constitution has laid down that Hindi should become the official language of the Indian Union in place of English which has been the official language in India for nearly two hundred years.

Tamil-speaking people and other non-Hindi people from the minority groups are not familiar with Hindi and their opportunities in Indian Government services are curtailed, when Hindi becomes the sole official language of India. Therefore, this movement took this up as an issue of social justice for minority groups, especially for the Tamil people and protested against Hindi becoming the sole official language of India.

The Indian Constitution laid down the following clauses with regard to the official language:

> 301 A (1) The Official language of the Union shall be Hindi in Devanagiri script.
>
> (2) Notwithstanding anything contained in clauses (i) of this article, for a period of fifteen years from the commencement of this Constitution, the English language shall continue to be used for all the official purposes of the Union, for which it was being used at such commencement:
>
> Provided that President may, during the said period, by order authorise for any of the official purposes of the Union, the use of Hindi language in addition to the English language and of the Devanagiri form of numerals in addition to the international form of Indian numbers.
>
> (3) Notwithstanding anything contained in this article, Parliament may by law provide in for the use of the English language after the said period of fifteen years for such purposes as may be specified in such law. (167)

This movement involved itself in the official language issue from 1937 onwards, when Sri.Rajagopalachariyar, the then Chief Minister of Madras tried to introduce Hindi as a compulsory language in schools. Periyar Ramaswami Naicker and Dr.Annadurai organized a protest and courted imprisonment.

Sri. Avinasilingam Chettiar, the Education Minister in Madras state in 1948, made Hindi a compulsory subject in schools. This movement organized a protest against this move. Later, when the Education Minister had to be changed, Hindi was made an optional subject. (168)

The Government of India appointed a commission called 'the Official Language Commission' on June 7, 1955, with the late Sri.B.G. Ker as its chairman. When the commission visited Madras on January 8, 1956, the following unanimous resolution was passed; Periyar Ramaswami Naicker and Dr.C.N. Annadurai were the chief signatories of this resolution :

> We are often of the view that it will be greatly unjust to make any other language take the place of English, to a population of about a hundred million, living in continuous territory in the south; it will be a language with which for all practical purposes they are totally unacquainted. (169)

The movement organized a 'Protest Day' on October 13, 1957 against the imposition of Hindi. It called upon the Government to amend the constitutional provisions relating to the official language and to permit the use of regional languages for communications within each state and for judiciary purposes; it requested the Government to permit the use of English for communication with

other states, with the Central Government and the outside world.

Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru gave the nation the following assurance on August 7, 1959 on the language issue.

> I would have it (English)as an alternate language as long as people require it and decision for that, I would have not from the Hindi-knowing people, but from the non-Hindi-knowing people. (170)

The Indian Parliament discussed the Official Language Bill in April 1963 and made provisions for the continued use of English in addition to Hindi for the official purposes of the Indian Union after January 25, 1965. The Bill reads: 'English may continue...'

The non-Hindi people demanded that the words '<u>shall continue</u> ...' should be used in the place of '<u>may continue</u> ...' and that the Bill should read, '<u>English shall continue</u> ...'

During January and February 1965, language protests were serious in the state of Tamilnadu. There was a three-language formula; a student was expected to learn his regional language, Hindi and English. Even this three-language formula did not seem to satisfy the nation. When the <u>Dravidian</u> Progressive Association became the ruling party in Tamilnadu in February 1967, it banned the teaching of Hindi from the educational curriculum of the state of Tamilnadu.

The movement had championed the cause of social justice for minorities, like the Tamil people and non-Hindi people, through its political protests.

(d) One rupee per measure of rice.

The Dravidian Progressive Association demonstrated its concern for the common people by organizing protests against the rise in prices of food commodities. It promised in its election campaign that it would provide a measure of rice for one rupee. When it came to power, it provided a measure of rice for one rupee in the cities of Madras and Coimbatore. This helped the Dravidian Progressive Association to gain great popularity among the lower classes. Further, the Dravidian Progressive Association was instrumental in lowering prices on a number of other food commodities. Sri. Mathiazhagan, the then Food Minister, personally intervened to have restaurants lower their prices.

(e) Tamil Nationalism.

The Dravidian Progressive Association satisfied the Tamil people's sense of Tamil nationalism. They had quotations and photographs of Thiruvalluvar (an ancient Tamil poet) exhibited in state-owned buses and government offices. Ministers used every available opportunity to exhibit symbols which could express the greatness of the Tamil language . The World Tamil Conference and the activities associated with it promoted Tamil nationalism and strengthened the Government of the Dravidian Progressive Association.

(f) The government of the Dravidian Progressive Association appreciated by the ministers of the Indian Central Government.

The Indian Central Government had been favourably impressed by the performance of the Dravidian Progressive Association. The following editorial in the 'Madras Mail' (an English daily) expressed this appreciation:

> By and large, the DMK ministry can look back with pride and satisfaction at its one-year rule of Madras State. There have been many Non-Congress states, at least three of which have come under President's rule. Generally speaking, the inherent weakness of Non-Congress coalitions have contributed to their downfall. Madras, on the other hand, has the remarkable phenomenon of a single party commanding a solid majority in the legislature and the DMK has the sense of discipline, restraint and responsibility in not misusing its power, at least deliberately... All credit is due to the DMK government for its firm handling of the language controversy. (171)

(g) Economic policy and labour relations.

The Dravidian Progressive Association attempted to organize labour unions. The movement of the Dravidian Progressive Association came at a time when trade unionism was suffering from its own internal crisis. In the state of Madras, the rise of the Dravidian movement and cultural nationalism slowly influenced the trade union movement. This movement so characterized itself as a labour government that it had great sympathy for the labourers. It had greater control over workers' activities and trade union leaders who gained access to the decision-making councils of the ruling party.

2.17 The Political Concern of the All India Anna Dravidian Progressive Association.

The All India Anna Dravidian Progressive Association was concerned for the development of Backward communities, Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, women and people from rural areas.

(i) Backward Classes.

The Government of the Anna Dravidian Progressive Association had presented a political challenge by working hard for the development of Backward Classes.

> The AIADMK (All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam) government had identified 201 (in 1986) communities as belonging to the Backward Classes for purposes of relief and reservation under articles 15 (4) and 16 (4) of the Constitution. The population of these communities are more than fifty four per cent of the population of Tamilnadu. The Department of Backward Classes functions for their welfare since 1969. The Department spends the bulk of its budget allocation only on education, scholarships, hostels, supply of free tools to the students of technical courses which are the major avenues of expenditure. Free legal aid is also extended to weaker sections. (172)

In the offices of the state government and in their undertakings, as well as in educational institutions, thirty one per cent of reservations was maintained for the Backward Classes till January 1980. Also 50 students of the Backward Classes were given coaching and facilities to appear for the All India Services Examinations every year.

The Economic Development Corporation was set up in 1980 in order to uplift the Backward Classes. The department had spent 103.82 crores for the welfare

of Tamilnadu and it had also set up the Second Commission for the Backward Classes of Tamilnadu to look into the whole problem of the Backward Classes and casteism; the Government had ordered the erasure of caste surnames inscribed on the name boards in the streets.

(ii) Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Adi-Dravidars or Adi-Hindus).

The Government has done a great deal for the development of the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes.

The Department of Adi-Dravidar and Tribal Welfare accelerated the pace of development of Adi-Dravidars', by implementing the 'Special Component Plan' in Tamilnadu since 1980-81. According to this strategy, eighteen per cent of the total funds under the general sector should be allocated for Adi-Dravidars.

The mainstay of the Adi-Dravidars is agriculture and allied sectors. Under the Integrated Rural Development Programme, 475,000 families were given financial aid to the tune of Rs. 14.62 crores up to 1985-86. The Tamilnadu Adi-Dravidar Housing and Development Corporation was established in 1974 to improve the standard of living of the Adi-Dravidars.

Education is also given due importance. The Adi-Dravidars get eighteen per cent reservations in all educational institutions and in employment opportunities. Scholarships, hostels, text books, uniforms, loans and medical facilities are given to all Adi-Dravidar students.

One hundred and fifty pre-schools, one hundred and seventy six social workers and three hundred and seventy five student hostels function exclusively for them. Special coaching is given to enable the Adi-Dravidar students to do better in the All India Service Examinations. Those who have been selected are given a sum of Rs.1000/- while undergoing training in Mussoori. Couples are given a gold medal and Rs.4,500/- to encourage inter-caste marriages.

Though the Tribal population of Tamilnadu is small and scattered, its problems are given special attention. The Tribal Sub Plan takes care of the nine tribal pockets of Tamilnadu. Education, medical facilities, housing and the economic development of the tribals form the core of the Tribal Sub Plan. The amount spent under this scheme was 16.8 crores for the year 1986-87. (173)

(iii) Women.

The Anna Dravidian Progressive Association had a special concern for helping women and for improving their status.

> The AIADMK administration shows increasing attention to this neglected aspect of social administration. The department of social welfare has been undertaking welfare programmes for the socially backward women in general and for the children falling in the vulnerable age group from 2-5 years and the physically handicapped. The Government of Tamilnadu has set up a Guidance Bureau for widows. The Bureau functions in Madras, Thanjavur, Madurai and Coimbatore. The objectives of the Bureau are securing admissions for widows in voluntary institutions, education of the children of widows, education and training of women in handicrafts, helping them to get their dues from the government and offering loans from the nationalized banks for setting up small businesses. The Tamilnadu Corporation for

Development of Women had been functioning since 1983, for the betterment of the economic status of women.

Three service homes, eighteen hostels for working women, eight work centres and production units (exclusively for Scheduled Caste women for educating them in professions like tailoring etc.) exist now. Fifty Women's welfare branches are now exclusively run by the Bureau. Eleven thousand two hundred and twenty Mahalir Manrams (Women's Associations) at a cost of Rs.12.5 lakhs are also run. These Mahalir Manrams impart nutrition education; small-scale economic activities, social extension activities, maternity and child health service. Two thousand nine hundred and eighty eight pre-schools are also governed by women.

For those who are physically handicapped, the department provides exclusive help to overcome the physical difficulties. Old age pension, distribution of sewing machines, training in rural textiles, widow's remarriage and subsidy for small hotels are some of the schemes by which women receive help from the government. In 1986-87, the Bureau had spent 117.82 lakhs on the welfare of women. (174)

(iv) The children.

The Government has great concern for the development of children and for their needs.

The special Nutrition Programme was further expanded into the Chief Minister's Nutritious Meal Programme for children on July 1, 1982. The cost of implementing this programme was Rs.28.74 crores for 1984-85. The scheme offers a nutritious meal to all children who want it, for all the 365 days in a year. Along with this nutritious meal scheme, a tooth powder scheme has also been launched. Also there are 4,113 child welfare centres spread all over the state. 'Integrated Child Development Services' are implemented. Under this scheme, a child gets supplementary nutrition, health examination and referral services, immunisation, nursery and pre-School education etc. The Social Welfare Department had allocated Rs.15.28 crores for the welfare of children in 1984-85. (175)

Thus the Dravidian Movement has presented a great challenge in the area of social justice and of

political concern.

The next chapter deals with the history of the Christian Church in Tamilnadu and its Mission.

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Chapter III

THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH IN TAMILNADU: ITS HISTORY AND MISSION

And He (Jesus Christ) said to them (His disciples) 'Go into all the world and proclaim the good news to the whole creation'. (1)

(St.Mark 16:15)

The Church is not a static institution. It is men and women who enflesh in daily life the meaning of faith, the reality of the Risen Christ. (2)

Myron S. Augsburger

A Church exists by Mission as fire exists by burning. (3)

Karl Barth

The blood of the Martyrs is the seed of the Church. (4)

Tertullian

History is the story of what has been done, and by its means, what has taken place in the past, is perceived. (5)

St.Isidore

A. HISTORY.

This chapter deals with the history and the mission of the Protestant Church in Tamilnadu, with a brief review of the Christian Church in India upto the 18th century and with a short description of the Protestant Christian Church in Tamilnadu during the 19th and the 20th centuries.

3.1 The origin of the Christian Church.

The birthday of the Christian Church was the day of Pentecost (fiftieth day after the Ascension of the Lord Jesus Christ), when there was a great outpouring of the Holy Spirit on those who had assembled together in Jerusalem.

καὶ ἐπλήσθησαν πάντες πνεύματος
Ἁγίου, ... οἱ μὲν οὖν ἀποδεξάμενοι
τὸν λόγον αὐτοῦ ἐβαπτίσθησαν,
καὶ προσετέθησαν ἐν τῇ ἡμέρᾳ
ἐκείνῃ ψυχαὶ ὡσεὶ τρισχίλιαι: (6)

(Acts 2:4a,41)

The following is an English translation of the preceding Greek text :-

> All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit ... So those who welcomed his (Peter's) message were baptized, and that day about three thousand persons were added. (7) (Acts 2:4a,41)

They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching etc.

ἦσαν δὲ προσκαρτεροῦντες
τῇ διδαχῇ τῶν ἀποστόλων καὶ
τῇ κοινωνίᾳ, τῇ κλάσει τοῦ
ἄρτου καὶ ταῖς προσευχαῖς. (8)

(Acts 2:42)

The following is an English translation of the preceding Greek text :-

> They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. (9) (Acts 2:42)

St.Luke, the author of the book of the Acts of the Apostles has recorded that the Risen Lord Jesus Christ told His disciples that they would receive power through the Holy Spirit and would become His witnesses in several parts of the world.

ἀλλὰ λήμψεσθε δύναμιν
ἐπελθόντος τοῦ Ἁγίου Πνεύματος
ἐφ' ὑμᾶς, καὶ ἔσεσθέ μου μάρτυρες
ἔν τε Ἰερουσαλημ καὶ ἐν πάσῃ τῇ
Ἰουδαίᾳ καὶ Σαμαρίᾳ καὶ ἕως
ἐσχάτου τῆς γῆς. (10)

(Acts 1:8)

The following is an English translation of the preceding text :-

> But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth. (11) (Acts 1:8)

St.Matthew writes that the Risen Lord Jesus Christ asked His disciples to go and teach all the nations and baptize them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

πορευθέντες οὖν μαθητεύσατε
πάντα τὰ ἔθνη, βαπτίζοντες
αὐτοὺς εἰς τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ
πατρὸς καὶ τοῦ Υἱοῦ καὶ τοῦ
Ἁγίου Πνεύματος ... (12)

(St.Matthew 28:19)

The following is an English translation of the preceding Greek text :-

> Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. (13) (St.Matthew 28:19)

St.Mark writes that the Risen Lord Jesus Christ asked His disciples to go into all the world and preach the gospel.

Καὶ εἶπεν αὐτοῖς, πορευθέντες
εἰς τὸν κοσμον απαντα
κηρῦξατε το εὐαγγελιον
πάσῃ τῇ κτίσει. (14)

(St.Mark 16:15)

The following is an English translation of the preceding Greek text :-

> And He (Jesus Christ) said to them (His disciples), 'Go into all the world and proclaim the good news to the whole creation'. (15)
>
> (St.Mark 16:15)

St.John writes that the Risen Lord Jesus Christ told His disciples that as His Father had sent Him, he would also send them.

Εἶπεν οὖν αὐτοῖς
ὁ Ἰη σοῦς πάλιν, Εἰρήνη
ὑμίν καθως ἀπέσταλκέν
με ὁ πατήρ, κἀγὼ πεμπω
ὑμας. (16)

(St.John 20:21)

The following is an English translation of the preceding Greek text :-

> Jesus said to them again, 'Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you. (17)
>
> (St.John 20:21)

3.2 The tradition of St.Thomas.

A detailed discussion of the origin and the growth of the Christian Church in India is outside the purview of this thesis. However, a brief summary of the origin and the growth of the Christian Church in India is attempted.

The tradition is that the apostle, St.Thomas, in the course of his missionary journeys landed in 52 A.D. in Cranganore (Muziris), an ancient port in the west coast of Kerala. He visited several places and preached the gospel and founded seven Churches in the following places:

1. Maliankara (Cranganore)
2. Kottakayal (Parur)
3. Palayur (Chowghat)
4. Goha Mangalam
5. Niranam
6. Quilon (Kollam) and
7. Chayal (Nilakal). (18)

It is said that the apostle (St.Thomas) ordained priests to look after these Churches. Later he crossed over to the east coast and reached Mylapore (now a part of Madras city) and continued evangelistic work. Many people accepted the gospel and became the followers of Jesus Christ. But this evoked great hostility from the Hindus, who killed him in 72 A.D. at St. Thomas Mount, a suburb of the present Madras city in the state of Tamilnadu. His remains are supposed to have been buried at Mylapore. The Roman Catholic Cathedral of Santhome, Mylapore of Madras city stands over his tomb. Later, in the second century A.D., his bones were carried to Edessa in East Syria and buried there. (19)

Historical references to India as the evangelistic field of St. Thomas and as the place of his martyrdom are found in the writings of the holy fathers from as early as the middle of the 3rd century A.D.

(i) The third century

The 'Doctrine of the Apostles' written in Edessa about 250 A.D. observes that the Indian field of St. Thomas was 'even to the farthest sea.' It can be reasonably concluded that an altogether baseless tradition could not have become credible within 200 years of the event. (20)

(ii) The fourth century

St. Ephraem, who spent the last ten years of his life (363-373 A.D.) in Edessa, refers to the grave of St. Thomas in some of his poems. In Nisibena Hymn 42:1,2 the devil is represented as saying:

> The Apostle I slew in India
> has overtaken me in Edessa ...
> The merchant brought the bones,
> nay, rather they brought him ...
> But the casket of Thomas is slaying me,
> for a hidden power there
> residing tortures me.

We find in another hymn the following reference: 'Blessed art thou, Thomas the Twin ... in white robes thou should clothe, cleanse by baptism, a tainted land. (21)

(iii) The fifth century

St.John Chrysostom writes, 'The place of burial of St. Thomas is definitely known; where could it be except in South India?' (22)

(iv) The sixth century:

Bishop Gregory of Tours in his 'In Gloria Martyrium' writes: 'Thomas the apostle, according to the history of his passion, he is declared to have suffered in India.

In that Indian place where he first rested, there is a monastery and a Church of a wonderful size, carefully adorned and arrayed. After a long time, his blessed body was taken to the city which was called Edessa in Syria and there buried. (23)

(v) The ninth century.

In the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle we read, and in the same year 884 A.D. Sighelm and Ethelstan conveyed the alms which King Alfred the Great had vowed to send to India to St. Thomas and St. Bartholomew. (24)

3.3 Christianity in India upto the 18th century.

This section deals with the Christian Church in India upto the 18th century.

(i) Pantaenus - 189 A.D.

Pantaenus, was a great teacher in the catechetical school of Alexandria. He was sent by Demetrius to India at the request of the Christians of Malabar. St.Jerome writes that he preached among the Brahmins and the philosophers of India. Pantaenus visited Malabar in 189 A.D. When he returned, he took with him the Gospel according to St. Matthew, in Hebrew characters, which he found among the Christians there. (25) Scholars like, Rae, Philip and J.N. Ogilvie accept that Pantaenus visited India. (26)

However, Dr. Mingana writes, 'The India, they refer to, is without doubt, Arabia Felix. The fact has been recognized by all historians since Assemani and Tillemont, and has been considered as established even by such a

conservative writer as Medlycott. (27)

(ii) The third century.

Dudi (David) Bishop of Bashra (in Mesopotamia) left by sea to visit India, where he evangelized many people. This is the first reference to a Bishop coming to India and it needs to be noted that Dudi (David) was a Mesopotamic Bishop. (28)

(iii) The fourth century.

The name 'John of Persia' is found in the list of Bishops who attended the Nicene Council of 325 A.D. He signed as representing the Churches in the whole of Persia and Greater India. Unless 'Greater India' refers to Abyssinia and Arabia Felix, this would indicate that there were Christians in India at that time and that they were under the jurisdiction of the Bishop of Persia. (29)

(iv) Thomas of Cana.

The visit of Thomas of Cana, a Syrian merchant brings a new stage in the history of the South Indian Church. The Catholics of Jerusalem, on learning the needs of the Malabar Church, sent Joseph, the Bishop of Edessa, some priests and deacons and about 400 people under the leadership of Thomas of Cana. There were women and children in this group. They landed in Cranganore about 345 A.D. The local king (Rajah) Perumal received them well and they settled down in and around Cranganore (in the state of Kerala). They were given land and privileges inscribed on copper plates. (30)

(v) The sixth century.

A rich sailor from Alexandria known as 'Cosmos Indicopleustes' landed on the Malabar Coast in 522 A.D. He traded in his vessels with many countries around the Indian Ocean. He collected information about the people of the countries he visited and about their history. He lived in a monastery during the later part of his life and described his travels in a book named 'Universal Christian Topography'. He has made the following record in this book:-

> We have found the Church not destroyed, but very widely diffused and the whole world filled with the doctrine of Christ, which is being day by day propagated and the Gospel preached over the whole earth. This I have seen with my own eyes, in many places, and I have heard narrated by others, I, as witness of truth relate. In the island of Taprobane (Ceylon) in Farther India, where the Indian sea is, there is a Church of Christians whose clergy and the faithful are to be found; whether also further beyond, I am not aware. And such is also the cause in the land (Malabar) where pepper grows. And in the place called Kallia (Quilon or Kalyam) there is a Bishop usually ordained in Persia. (31)

This provides valuable evidence of the existence of an organized Church here early in the 6th century and its communion with the Church in Persia.

(vi) The eighth century.

A second colony arrived at Cranganore towards the end of the 8th century. King Veera Raghava Chakravarthi inscribed some privileges on copper plates to Eravi Korthan of Cranganore as representing the Syrian Christian community. He was given the power and privileges of local chieftain including the right of carrying the armour, which

was not granted to the Jews. (32)

(vii) The ninth century.

Some more Christians arrived in Quilon in the 9th century. A Persian trader, Marwan Sabriso, arrived in Quilon in 825 A.D. with a large group of people including two Bishops, Mar Sapriso and Mar Prodh. Marwan Sabriso built a new Church at Quilon. The king gave the Church two sets of copper plates of which five are still in existence and two lost. (33)

(viii) The eleventh century.

The movement of Turkish and Mongolian people of Central Asia became powerful during the period from the 11th century and spread over Western Asia. The Mongols, united under Chenghis Khan, during the 13th century, conquered a vast territory stretching from China through the Central Asia to Russia. (34)

The Mongols accepted Islam towards the 13th century and consequently Christianity suffered. Timur (Tamelene) practically wiped out Christianity from the Central Asia. Therefore, the Church of the East, which had once spread over many parts of Asia was reduced to a small and insignificant community in Mesopotamia. By the 15th century, partly by reason of gradual deterioration under Muslim rule and partly by reason of war persecution, the Church in the East had shrunk to a precarious remnant. (35)

3.4 The itinerant visitors.

A number of itinerant traders and missionaries left travel records which speak about the condition of the Christian Church in India during this period.

(i) Marco Polo.

Marco Polo visited Mylapore (Madras, India) in 1293 A.D. and left a record of his visit. He stated that both the Christians and Saracens went on pilgrimage to Mylapore to visit the tomb of St.Thomas and paid homage to it.

(ii) John of Monte Carvinom.

John of Monte Carvinom, a Franciscan monk was sent by Pope Nicholas IV in 1289 to China. Because of war in China, he travelled by way of India. He wrote in his letter that he remained for thirteen months in the country of India, wherein stands the Church of St. Thomas the apostle. He wrote in another letter that there were some Christians and Jews on the Malabar Coast, and that the inhabitants of that place persecuted the Christians. (36)

(iii) Friar Jordain Catalam.

Friar Jordain Catalam was a Dominican Friar and he visited India first between 1321 and 1323 A.D. and then again in 1330 A.D. He was a Frenchman. During his first visit, he landed at Thana near Bombay and evangelized the people at Surat, Broah and Sapora.

During his second visit, he came as the Bishop of Quilon... He carried a letter from the Pope addressed to the Christians of Quilon wherein they were urged to give up their schism and enter the unity of the Catholic Church.(37)

(iv) Odoric of Pordenone.

Odoric of Pordenone, a Franciscan Friar, visited India on his way to China in the early part of the 14th century. He visited Quilon. He wrote that he visited a place where the relics of St. Thomas were buried in a Church, around which about fifteen families of Nestorians and pestilent heretics lived. (38)

(v) St. John de Marignolli.

St.John de Marignolli, a native of Florence was sent on an embassy to China. He came to Quilon about ten years later. He wrote that the Syrian Christians appeared as a prosperous community controlling the pepper trade. He visited also the tomb of St.Thomas at Mylapore. (39)

(vi) Nicolo de Conti.

Nicolo de Conti, an Italian visited India in the 15th century. He wrote that the body of St.Thomas lay honourably buried in a large and beautiful Church at Mylapore and that it was venerated by the Nestorian Christians.

3.5 Arrival of missionaries.

This section deals with the arrival of missionaries in the state of Tamilnadu, India, from Europe and America

and the establishment of Churches in Tamilnadu during the earlier stages; these Churches were named after the missionary societies, which established them. Later on, the ecumenical movement, with the purpose of promoting unity worked towards unity among the Churches belonging to the following traditions, the Anglican Church, the Methodist Church, the Presbyterian Church and the Congregationalist Church and brought about one united Church called the Church of South India.

Though this chapter gives an account of the Protestant Missions in Tamilnadu, two missionaries from the Roman Catholic Church are also mentioned because of their great impact on the Church in India.

(i) St.Francis Xavier.

St.Francis Xavier (1506-1552) was the most prominent of the Portuguese missionaries. St.Xavier's missionary activities were confined to the coastal regions of India and most of his converts belonged to the fisher folk community. He founded schools, appointed catechists to give spiritual instruction to the converts to Christianity and ministered to the poor and the sick and brought about their social and economic development. Though St.Francis Xavier died on his way to China, his body was taken to Goa, where it is still enshrined. (40)

(ii) Father Robert de Nobili .

Father Robert de Nobili was an Italian Jesuit priest, from an aristocratic family and he came to India in 1606 A.D. and chose Madurai, a city in the southern part of

Tamilnadu, one of the states of India. He adopted indigenous methods in his missionary work. He lived like a high caste Hindu in his dress, food etc., and lived in a mud hut like an ascetic or Sanyasi (hermit) in his humble ashram.

He studied Sanskrit and Hindu philosophy to discuss religious topics with learned Hindus. Many caste Hindus were converted to Christianity. Father Nobili did not attack the caste system, which he looked upon as an inevitable social institution of India. Christian converts from high caste Hindus were allowed to form a separate congregation, without joining the Christian converts from the low caste Hindus. However, Fr.Robert de Nobili's approval of the caste structure in the Church was severely criticized. The Madurai Mission extended its ministry to neighbouring districts like Tiruchirapalli and Tanjore and later to Mysore area also.

(iii) Missionaries : Ziegenbalg and Plutschau.

The Danes from Denmark came to India around 1620 A.D. for trade and they founded a few settlements. The most prominent was at Tranquebar (Tharangambadi in Tamil). They established a factory at Tranquebar in 1624, with the permission of the Rajah of Tanjore.

King Frederick IV of Denmark who ruled in the beginning of the 18th century was really religious and interested in Christian propaganda. He chose two young Germans to be sent to India as missionaries. They were Heinrich Plutschau and Bartholomew Ziegenbalg. They arrived

in Tranquebar after a tedious voyage of thirty weeks on 9th July 1706.

In spite of the cold treatment given to them, Plutschau and Ziegenbalg did their missionary work faithfully. They learnt the regional language Tamil, and by March 1711, Ziegenbalg had completed a translation of the New Testament into Tamil. Many Hindus were converted to Christianity. The first 'native Church' named Jerusalem Church was dedicated on 15th August 1707. More schools were started. As a result of this missionary work, the first Lutheran Church was established. Ziegenbalg died in 1719.

(iv) Rev. Philip Fabricius (1742-1791).

After Ziegenbalg, more missionaries came to India and developed the missionary work. They were Benjamin Schulster who worked in India from 1726 to 1741 and Philip Fabricius who served in India from 1742-1791. The Lutheran Church spread to the neighbouring districts of Tiruchirapalli, South Arcot, North Arcot and Chingleput. Fabricius published the entire Bible in Tamil. Further, he produced a hymn book, a Tamil grammar and an English-to-Tamil dictionary. As a result of his missionary work, many people were converted to Christianity. The oldest high school in the city of Madras, Fabricius High School, is named after him.

(v) Christian Frederick Schwartz (1756 - 1798).

Rev. Christian Frederick Schwartz was a very talented missionary. He wielded considerable political influence, and he was employed as an envoy by the British rulers in

Madras to negotiate with Hyder Ali, a warlike ruler of Mysore. Both parties had implicit confidence in his integrity and so his negotiation was somewhat successful. He was a good friend of the King of Tanjore.

Schwartz had achieved commendable mastery of the Tamil language and so his Tamil sermons were appreciated by the Hindus and the Muslims. He got several opportunities, as a chaplain of the British army, to go to various places in South India and he used all these occasions to preach the gospel, to establish elementary schools and to effect conversions. He was able to convert even notorious tribes accustomed to robbery. Dr.L.P. Larsen was another missionary who served in the United Theological College, Bangalore for a long time.

3.6 The missionary societies during the 19th and the 20th centuries.

The missionaries mentioned above were sent by missionary societies from Europe and America. This section gives a very brief description about those missionary societies.

(i) The London Missionary Society (L.M.S., 1806).

The London Missionary Society started its work in South Travancore in 1806 and it carried on evangelistic, educational and medical work in South India.

Rev. Ringeltaube was the pioneer missionary of the London Missionary Society. He was a German and was first

sent to Tranquebar in 1804. Making 'Mailadi' in South Travancore his headquarters, he travelled widely along the villages of South Travancore, preaching, teaching and baptizing, and the result of his labour was that nearly one thousand converts from Hinduism received baptism. The foundation for the Church at Nagercoil was laid in 1819. New missionaries, C. Mead and Richard Knill, arrived from England. The work was extended to Quilon, Neyyoor and Trivandrum.

The London Mission work was extended to Tamilnadu in the districts of Coimbatore, Nilgiri Hills and Salem. One famous L.M.S. missionary in Tamilnadu was Rev. H.A. Popley who was a Tamil scholar, a popular preacher and a musician.

(ii) The Church Missionary Society (C.M.S., 1813).

The missionary work was started about 1813 in cities like Madras and Bombay. This society belonged to the Anglican Church. The appointment of an Anglican Bishop in Calcutta for the whole of India in 1814 gave some strength and solidarity to the work of the Anglican Mission. The Church Missionary Society founded the Churches in Madras and Tinnevelly during the course of a decade (1814-1825).

(iii) The Society for the Propagation of the Gospel (S.P.G.).

The society started its work in South India from 1825, taking over the stations which were formerly served by the Society for the Propagation of Christian Knowledge (S.P.C.K.). Trichinopoly was an important S.P.G. centre besides Madras. Both the Church Missionary Society and the

Society for the Propagation of the Gospel made it their policy to open a number of schools, some of which later developed into colleges. The Anglican Church in India founded, in 1821, Bishop's College, a theological college in Calcutta.

(iv) The Wesleyan or Methodist Missionary Society (M.M.S., 1816).

John Wesley was a great preacher and Charles Wesley was a great devotional writer in England. This missionary society was started in their names. The Wesleyan or Methodist Mission established its Mission centres from 1816 onwards in various parts of South India, such as Trichinopoly, Madras, and several places in the state of Mysore and Hyderabad. The Wesleyan Mission also founded Churches, schools, colleges and hospitals. The Meston Training College in Madras, Kalyani Hospital in Madras, Mission Hospitals in Ikkadu, Woriur (Trichinopoly), Dharapuram (near Coimbatore) and several other schools, colleges and hospitals were started by the the Wesleyan Mission. Some of the outstanding missionaries of the Wesleyan Mission were Rev. J. Cooling, Rev. J. Kellet, Rev. D.G.M. Seith, Rev. C.H. Monahan and Rev. J.S.M. Hooper.

(v) The Church of Scotland Mission (C.S.M.).

The Presbyterian Church of Scotland and later the United Free Church of Scotland opened several missionary centres in the following places :-

Bombay in 1829 by Dr.John Wilson

Calcutta in 1830 by Dr.Alexander Duff

Madras in 1837 by Dr. John Anderson

Nagpur in 1844 by Stephen Hislop.

Dr.William Miller developed the Madras Christian College, Tambaram, Madras. This society started the Christian Rainy Hospital for women in Madras.

3.7 The Church of South India (C.S.I.).

These various missionary societies sent missionaries to India; Tamilnadu is one of the states to which these missionaries came and started Churches and founded schools, colleges, hospitals, technical schools etc. The Churches formed by these missionary societies were named after them. For example, the Church formed by the London Missionary Society was called the London Mission Church; the Church formed by the Church Missionary Society and the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel was called the Anglican Church. The Church formed by the Wesleyan or Methodist Missionary Society was called the Methodist Church; the Church which was formed by the Church of Scotland was called the Presbyterian Church.

The missionaries and Indian leaders of these four Churches had a great concern that these Churches should be a United Church. The Church of South India, which is a United Church, was formed on 27th September 1947. The Christian Church in Tamilnadu mainly refers to the Church of South India, (which is a united Church of the Anglican, Presbyterian, Congregationalist and Methodist traditions). It needs to be mentioned that in the state of Tamilnadu, there are also other Churches like the Roman Catholic

Church, the Lutheran Church, the Orthodox Church, the Pentecostal Church etc. There are seven dioceses in the Church of South India in Tamilnadu. They are :-

1. The Coimbatore Diocese
2. The Kanyakumari Diocese
3. The Madras Diocese
4. The Madurai - Ramnad Diocese
5. The Tiruchirapalli - Thanjavur Diocese
6. The Tirunelveli Diocese
7. The Vellore Diocese

The total population of India is about 800,000,000 as per the latest census and the total Christian population in India is 16,165,447. Christians in India form about 2 percent of the total population. The total population in the state of Tamilnadu is 48,408,007. The total Christian population in Tamilnadu is 2,798,048. Christians in Tamilnadu form 5.78 percent of the population

Christians form a small minority in India and yet they have a great role to play as the salt of the earth and as the light of the world.

3.8 The Protestant Christian Church in Tamilnadu during the 19th and the 20th centuries.

In 1800, the Protestant Churches in Tamilnadu were small. They were started by the Tranquebar Mission (or Danish Halle-Mission). They were supported by the (Anglican) Society for the Propagation of Christian Knowledge and were established in the present districts of

Thanjavur and Tiruchirapalli with about 50,000 members at the beginning of the 19th century. These members included scattered congregations in the Madurai and the Tirunelveli Districts with some hundreds of Christians as well as congregations at Madras, Cuddalore and a few other places of similar size.

The work of the Tranquebar Mission had been extended to the garrison of Palayamkottai where Tamil Christians from Tiruchirapalli and Thanjavur in the service of the British army had been stationed. These Christians came together for worship as a small resident congregation near Tirunelveli under the leadership of Clorinda, who was the widow of a Maratha Brahmin employed by the King of Thanjavur and who was betrothed to a British officer. Sundaranandan, a young man from the village of Kalangudi had run away from home, had become acquainted with Christianity near Thanjavur, was baptized in 1795 and was employed in 1796 as assistant to Satyanathan who served as pastor of the Church of Tirunelveli. In 1797, Sundaranandan(called David after his baptism), had gathered a Christian group among his relatives and friends, from his caste (Nadar) at the village of Vijayaramapuram and its neighbourhood.

David's uncle was a leader of this group of Christians, who were attracted by the caste-transcending Christianity. These Christians encountered opposition from their relatives and settled in the following villages of their own: Mudalur ('first town' 1799), Jerusalem (1802), Bethlehem (1802), Nazareth (1804), etc. (41) More than 5000 people, including the entire village of Navaladi were

baptized between October and December 1802 by Satyanathan, and Gericke, a visiting missionary from Thanjavur. Apart from people of the Nadar caste, people from the Adi-Dravidar and other castes were also among the new converts. They all became associated with the 'Tinnevelly Mission' within the 'Tranquebar Mission'.

Secondly, Maharasan, a Sambava (Adi-Dravidar) of the village of Mayiladi in South Travancore, who was a staunch Saivite, had forsaken his family god Elankamanyan. He questioned the rigidity of the caste distinctions as well as the propriety of idol worship. His family had migrated to Mayiladi from Thanjavur. He went with his nephew to Chidambaram on a pilgrimage. On his return, he stayed with his Christian relatives in Thanjavur. During his stay in Thanjavur, he was so impressed by a missionary's sermon that he wanted to be instructed in the Christian faith and later he was baptized as Vedamanickam. (42) He was advised to sell his lands at Mayiladi and to join the Church at Thanjavur. But he started teaching the Christian gospel to his relations in Mayiladi in 1800. During his visit to Thanjavur in 1805, he was asked to meet a German Lutheran Missionary, namely Ringeltaube, who had been sent to Tranquebar by the London Missionary Society. Vedamanickam pleaded with Ringeltaube to help his young congregation of about 800 unbaptized followers of Christ.

The congregation at Tirunelveli requested Ringeltaube to replace Satyanathan who had returned to Thanjavur due to animosities between the local party under the catechist David and the 'Thanjavur

Party' led by Satyanathan. (43) Thus the two movements in Tirunelveli and Mayiladi became closely linked during the years from 1806 to 1809. Later, Ringeltaube lived like a sanyasi (hermit) in Travancore and finally in Mayiladi itself. Subsequently, the two movements were formed into three separate ecclesiastical units. After a severe crisis due to the outbreak of a cholera epidemic, half the Christians returned to their ancestral worship. (44) The congregation around Tirunelveli passed from S.P.C.K. supervision into the care of the (Anglican) Church Missionary Society through the offices of James Hough (chaplain at Palayamkottai from 1816 to 1819) and the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel. The missionaries of the London Missionary Society who succeeded Ringeltaube after 1816 introduced the congregationalist tradition to the congregation around Mayiladi.

The Tamil congregations of the Tranquebar Mission at Vepery (at that time already a suburb of Madras) with a good Christian population were hardly in a position to bring about spiritual renewal. But a number of chaplains of the East India Company created a new atmosphere among the congregation in Madras. Richard Hall Ken (the first among the evangelical chaplains at Madras, senior chaplain there from 1801), built a chapel from public contributions in the 'distant Black Town'(later called George Town) for the Anglo-Indians and the other Protestants speaking English. Ken supported moral and religious publications in English, Tamil and other languages at the press of the Male Orphan Asylum. He had contributed five volumes of weekly tracts, which were widely used by the missionaries.

He enjoyed the support of Bentick, the Governor of Madras (1803-1806).

When Ken died in 1808, another chaplain Marmaduke Thompson, a gifted preacher, was appointed in 1815 at the newly built St.George's Church at Madras. That Church was already a fruit of the far-reaching decision of the British Parliament in 1813 to allow the Anglican hierarchy to be established in India. The Anglican Christians in Madras not only benefitted from it for their own sake, but also took immediate advantage of the 'missionary clause' in the renewed charter of the East India Company to increase their efforts in spreading the Christian faith to non-Christians. (45)

Another missionary of the London Missionary Society, W.C. Loveless, was permitted to enter Madras Presidency before 1813 because of the less restrictive attitude of some governors in Madras. Loveless built a chapel chiefly for the Anglo-Indians at Popham's Broadway in Black Town in 1810 (Davidson Street Church). He anticipated the future 'Missions among the Natives'.

The Anglicans continued this missionary work with two new organizations. In 1814, a corresponding committee of the Church Missionary Society was formed with Marmaduke Thompson as Secretary and with a large degree of autonomy from the board of this society in London. (46) They had built a Church at Black Town in 1819; C.T.E. Rhenius, a missionary, gathered a Tamil-speaking congregation with the help of two able Tamilians, John Devasagayam and David.(47)

The 'Madras District Committee' was formed by the S.P.C.K. in 1815 in order to revive the old Mission in Madras with which the Society for the Propagation of Christian Knowledge had been connected since 1728. Bishop Middleton, the first Anglican Bishop in India, stationed at Calcutta from 1814, had further promoted the Mission in Madras. He included the Vepery Mission in his inspection during his first visit to Madras in 1816. When Dr.Rottler was appointed as the missionary to this congregation in Vepery, this was joined with his small congregation at Black Town, mostly residents of Royapuram (part of the city of Madras near the seashore). (48) Rottler's translation of the Book of Common Prayer into Tamil marked the start of the transition from the Lutheran to the Anglican traditions.

When Bishop Middleton visited Madras for a second time in 1819, he supported the plans for a larger Church building for the congregation at Vepery because of its swift growth. (49) That Church was opened in 1826 as the congregation was transferred from the Society for the Propagation of Christian Knowledge to the more strictly Anglican Society for the Propagation of the Gospel and its Madras committee. The Protestant Church continued to grow in Tamilnadu and in the northern part of Sri Lanka. The Methodist Church in England also promoted the Christian efforts at Madras.

> Finally, after the Anglicans, the Methodists of England joined in the Christian efforts at Madras. This was another non-conformist contribution that originated with the British Methodists in Madras who established the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society (WMMS) there in 1816 with a chapel also at Popham's

Broadway and with groups of Christians south of Madras at Royapettah and St.Thomas Mount. (50)

This branch of Tamilnadu Christianity was the first to gain closer contact with the Tamil Church in northern Sri Lanka. Its first missionary, Lynch, who arrived in 1817, had been inspired by the catechist Christian David at Jaffna and he was soon succeeded by a colleague of David with several years of service in Tamil on the island. The new life and the spread of Protestant Christianity in the principal city of Tamilnadu, naturally had a bearing on the smaller towns and on the countryside. This outreach was strengthened by the fact that, as we have seen, several missions formed committees and centres at Madras with the jurisdiction over the whole province, by the re-establishment of the printing press at Vepery,the formation of a Bible Society, by the migration and the increased mobility of the people. For many years to come, especially strong links existed between the Church in Tirunelveli District and that in the Metropolis. They began when Rhenius and Schmid of the CMS were sent from Madras to Palayamkottai in 1820 at the request of James Hough, the chaplain there, who returned to Madras in 1821 after strengthening the movement in Tirunelveli from 1816 on. Under the leadership of Rhenius and his assistants, notably John Devasagayam, whom he had taken along from Madras and David Pillai, that movement gained strong momentum again. (51)

Tranquebar continued to play a role as the mother of the Missions. The missionaries acquired their first knowledge of Tamil and Tamil Christianity from Tranquebar. However, the Danish harbour at Tranquebar had already begun to decline and hence the Christian contribution of Tranquebar consisted in the strengthening of other congregations which migrated from there to Madras, rather than in strengthening the congregation at Tranquebar itself.

The Anglican Church took over the responsibility for looking after the Protestant Churches between Tranquebar and Thanjavur and in many other places of Tamilnadu as quoted in the following paragraphs :

> The numerically dwindling and financially indebted Churches at Tranquebar and neighbouring Porayar continued to be supported by the Danish Mission Collegium at Kopenhagen, but had been placed under the Royal Colonial Council at Tranquebar, in 1825. After the sale of Tranquebar to the British in 1845 the Lutheran Mission of Dresden (later Leipzig Evangelical Lutheran Mission) took over the responsibility, finally in 1847. In consequence of the belated colonial Church government at Tranquebar, all Churches outside the Danish territory with 1300 Christians had been given to the care of the SPCK as early as 1820. Together with the older English mission stations, they were handed over to the SPG in 1825/6 - all the Churches between Tranquebar and Thanjavur as well as the churches at Thanjavur, Nagappattinam, Kumbakonam, Cuddalore, Vellore, Tiruchirappalli, Madurai, Dindigul,Ramanathapuram and all villages in their neighbourhood along with Vepery. This amounted to an acceleration of the Anglicanization of these Lutheran churches. But new supervision did not necessarily lead to a revival of them. It meant, however, an increase of missionaries and adherents. (52)

(i) The extension of the Protestant Church in Tamilnadu.

The Protestant Church started spreading all over Tamilnadu. Missionaries of the London Missionary Society started their work in the present Kanyakumari District. They made great progress, especially in the areas of Parichali and Neyyur.(53) Later, smaller Protestant groups, the Salvation Army (in 1883) and the Missouri Evangelical Lutheran India Mission (MELIM) came in.

In 1854, the Church Missionary Society extended its work from Palayamkottai,Tirunelveli to the northern part of the district around Kovilpatti, Sankarankoil,southern Ramanathapuram District around Sathur and Srivilliputhur. (54) The English Strict Baptists worked in the northern part of Tirunelveli from 1881 onwards and they emphasized 'believers baptism'(adult baptism) as an essential requirement for the second generation of Christians. The

Protestant community in Tirunelveli District included more than half of all the Tamil Protestant Christians in 1857.

Missionaries of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, an interdenominational congregationalist society, had decided in 1835 to have Madurai as the base of their work in India. They were inspired by their own activities among the Tamils of Sri Lanka and won the cooperation of the Tamil coworkers from Tirunelveli and the older Churches of Thanjavur. (55) The American Madurai Mission preached the Christian faith systematically.

> It was the method of that 'American Madurai Mission' (AMM) to preach the Christian faith rather systematically in each and every village from Madurai and smaller town centres throughout their well delineated area. Those town centres formed an ellipse around Madurai, Tirumangalam, Periyakulam, Palani, Dindigul, Melur and Sivaganga. From there, the mission made a slow but steady progress. (56)

Another venture of the SPG reached the south-east border of the American Madurai Mission.

> Another enterprise of the SPG bordered also from the lower castes in the whole region around Ramanathapuram, Kilakkarai, Paramakkudi, Rajasingamangalam and Kilanjanai. (57)

The American Madurai Mission transferred their areas of work in the North in Pudukkottai in 1849 to the Leipzig Evangelical Lutheran Mission.

> To the north, in the principality of Pudukkottai, in 1849 the AMM transferred Christian beginnings to the Leipzig Evangelical Lutheran Mission (LELM) an European society with its centre in Germany belonging to the priest-orthodox revival among the Lutherans. Those beginnings had been made by the Indian Missionary Society of Madras in 1836 and handed over to the AMM in 1845. The new mission in the principality, for a longer time was entirely staffed by Indians. (58)

Leipzig Evangelical Lutheran Mission claimed to be the legitimate heir of the congregations of the Tranquebar Mission, in the 18th century.

> In the course of the 'border regulations' and distribution of spheres among the Protestant Missions during the forties and fifties of the 19th century, the LELM claimed to be the legitimate heir of the congregation of the 18th century Tranquebar Mission. Beyond the old stations in the former Danish territory of Tranquebar, it succeeded in acquiring from the CMS the work at Mayiladuthurai (then Mayavaram, later Mayuram). But it could take over only sections of the congregations at Kumbakonam, Thanjavur, Tiruchirappalli, Coimbatore and Madras during the period 1848 and 1856, mostly the Vellalars among them, who were attracted by a more lenient policy against the caste system which was then followed by the SPG at those places. The SPG was not prepared to give up its engagement with them. Geographical non-interference failed to become a principle here. Thus the ecclesiastical structures of the SPG and the LELM overlapped widely in the Cauvery-Kollidam (Kaveri-Coleroon) - Delta including Nagappattinam. (59)

The Wesleyan Missionary Society (WMS) from England started its work in Nagappattinam in the east coast of Tamilnadu.

> To make the picture even more checquered, another element entered this fertile country from the cells of European and Eurasian Christians at Nagappattinam - the missionaries of the Wesleyan Missionary Society (WMS) from Great Britain, who stressed the conversion of individual souls as their aim rather than the building up of a people's Church as the LELM did and in some measure, the SPG as well. In the course of the century, the WMS missionaries established themselves in a narrow strip that cut across the whole width of central Tamilnadu from the coast to the Anamalai Hills. Beginning humbly at Nagappattinam in 1820 as little more than army chaplains for dissenters among the Englishmen as well as the Dutch and the Portuguese descendants, they turned to the Roman Catholics and the Hindus and made an impact on the Brahmin community at Mannargudi. They also gathered a congregation of Vellalars at Tiruchirappalli from 1852 on and in their westward drive, collected starving children from all castes, predominantly of Vellalar, Oddar (stone-quarrier of Telugu origin) and Kaikolar

(weaver) parentage during the famine of 1877, until the mission reached Dharapuram in 1881. Here, in the western part of Tiruchirappalli District and the southern part of Coimbatore District, the ground-work was laid by their 'Kongunad Mission' which in the 20th century led to the Community Mass Movement. (60)

In the eastern part of Tamilnadu, the Danish Missionary Society (DMS), a Lutheran organization, worked in the following towns and their surrounding areas -Cuddalore, Nellikuppam, Panruti, Tirukkoyilur, Tiruvannamalai, Ulundurpet, Kallakurichi and Shevary Hills. (61) In the central part of Tamilnadu, the London Missionary Society started its Salem Mission in Salem town and its surrounding areas in 1827. From Salem, they extended their activities to the Shevary Hills as well as to Tirupattur, Coimbatore (62) and eventually to Erode. Leipzig Evangelical Lutheran Mission started its ministry in Coimbatore District also. This work was gradually (1909-26) entrusted to the Swedish co-workers, who had formed in 1901 a Swedish Diocese of the Lutheran Church of Swedish Mission (LCSM) for its scattered southern congregations in the regions of Madurai, Ramanathapuram, Pudukkottai and Pattukkottai. (63)

Missionary work was started among the hill tribes in the Western Ghats particularly in the Nilgiris in Tamilnadu. In the Western Ghats (Nilgiris) the hill tribe of the Badagas, refugees from the north was reached in 1858 by Basel missionaries from Central Europe. They had arrived in the hills in 1847, called by a British official to continue, as it were, a mission that one of Rhenius coworkers, Schmid had begun. Later they took over a small congregation of Kannada speaking Badagas and Tamil speaking Adi-Dravidars from American missionaries of the Reformed Church of America mainly working in northern Tamilnadu. (64) The Todas, to whom the Badagas paid tribute, were

> almost entirely Christianised early in the 20th century by a single lady missionary of the Church of England(of) Zenana Mission Society. Udagamandalam (Ootacamund) being the summer resort of Europeans, several missions entertained an outpost station there, as later others did at Kodaikanal in the Palani Hills. (65)

The north-eastern corner of Tamilnadu, through its important port city of Madras and the cultural openness of its people, functioned as a natural magnet for missionary enterprise in the area, particularly along the main roads and railway lines starting from Madras in the directions of Tiruchirapalli and Bangalore.

> Towards the end of the century - after the gathering of small congregations -the present Chengalpattu District became conspicuous by the efforts of the Free Church of Scotland Mission (FCM) with centres at Chengalpattu, Kanchipuram and Sriperumpudur and the Leipzig Evangelical Lutheran Mission (LELM) at and around Tiruvallur for the benefit of Adi-Dravida rural labourers. In the northern part of the present North Arcot District, the Arcot Mission of the Reformed Church of America (AMRCA) made the first main impact of its Tamil branch around Vellore, Arcot and Arni. But it was soon extended to the south-east into South Arcot District (Tindivanam). (66) Its band of missionaries was strikingly homogenous in spirit by virtue of middle class background higher education, conservative evangelical outlook and concern with personal conversion as well as family ties and upbringing in missionary homes (e.g. of the Scudders). (67) Their joint enterprise resulted in an Indian Christian community from various caste groups. The work among the Muslim population westward of the trade route, at Ambur, Vaniyambadi, Krishnagiri (formerly Salem now Dharmapuri District) was emphasized by the Missouri Evangelical Lutheran India Mission (MELIM). (68)

Madras city finally developed into a microcosm of Christian Tamilnadu with bases, headquarters, pioneer institutions and migration communities of most Mission agencies and Churches.

The Mission of the Church of Scotland made a lasting

impact on Madras by using education as its main instrument. John Anderson of the Church of Scotland Mission opened a school for the higher classes of Madras society in 1837. The Church of Scotland Mission, the Church Missionary Society, the Arcot Mission of the Reformed Church of America, the Wesleyan Methodist Church, the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, Leipzig Evangelical Lutheran Mission and the Church of the Strict Baptists - all these missionary societies and Churches worked in the city of Madras to establish Churches.

> Out of this beginning and through the 'Disruption' of the Church of Scotland (1843) two enterprises came into being in 1844, one of the Free Church Mission in Black Town (later George Town) (69) and one of the (Established) Church of Scotland Mission. It was at Black Town, the harbour area, where for a long time the largest share of mission efforts was located (70) with a conglomeration of mission houses and church buildings. But in the course of the century, the real concentration of Christians shifted to Vepery and extended to Purasawalkam and Kilpauk in the process of the western extension of the city. In these parts of the old city, the corresponding committees of the English societies for the whole presidency were also instrumental in gearing British residents to the task of missions. Of singular influence among them was from 1833 to 1847 John Tucker, the secretary of the Church Missionary Society Committee. (71) The main Protestant Church buildings constructed after 1830 in the 19th century included the Church Missionary Society churches at Chintadripet and Mount Road (chiefly for domestic servants), the Wesleyan Methodist Church at Royapettah (in the south), the Arcot Mission of the Reformed Church of America, Church at Royapuram (in the north), the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel Churches of St. John's, Egmore, St. Paul's, Vepery and Santhome, Mylapore (72), the Leipzig Evangelical Lutheran Mission Churches at Purasawalkam and Royapuram and the Church of the Strict Baptists at St.Thomas Mount. (73)

Attempts were made to address Christians and non-Christians by public meetings and revival campaigns and

these efforts brought new members into the Christian Church.

> It would be a serious omission, if one important new type of enterprise remained untold; the attempts to address Christians and non-Christians alike by public meetings and revival campaigns for the whole city were frequently used as a method by newly arrived Christian messengers, which eventually resulted in the addition of a new Christian group to the existing ones. That was the case with the Methodist Episcopal Church of America in Vepery after the appearance of its Bishop W.Taylor in 1874 and with the Salvation Army in 1893-a pattern that was to repeat itself many times during the 20th century. (74)

The increased mobility of the population facilitated the Churches of the oriental rite from Kerala, particularly the Mar Thoma Syrian Church and the Orthodox Syrian Church of the East to get established in Madras and other cities of Tamilnadu. (75)

(ii) The role of Indian Leadership.

By the Grace of God, Christian congregations were started in Tamilnadu by the missionary societies and the missionaries from Europe, North America and Australia However, along with the foreign missionaries, the Indian Christian leaders had played a big role in establishing and nurturing Christian congregations in Tamilnadu. At the rural lower level, the catechists who are usually called the upadesis (teachers of the Holy Scriptures) had helped the missionaries in establishing Churches in Tamilnadu.

The renewal of Christian life and its expansion in Tamilnadu was indeed to a large extent carried out by a host of 'clerus minor' raised in the country, the so-called catechists. No missionary could do this work without, from the very beginning, being helped by those native co-workers. Almost as a rule, he could pick them up, when he arrived, or they asked him for employment. It was they who catered to the needs of the scattered congregations, even when no missionary was at hand. They came from other

regions outside or inside Tamilnadu. They passed on the Christian teachings and traditions in their families. Being called upadesis, teachers of Holy Scriptures or 'divines', they performed the role of religious instructors and pastors, instructing those who wanted to become Christians, baptizing children, visiting the members of the church in their homes, especially the sick and the dying, settling disputes, preaching in divine services and also on the streets. In contrast, the small number of the non-Indian missionaries or padris functioned as district priests and a sort of Bishops with whom again some catechists were associated as assistants. (76)

The process of ordaining Indian Christian leaders was very slow, because ordination was considered as a status of a missionary after proper theological training.

> But until the middle of the 19th century, the number of ordained Tamils remained very small, evidently for two reasons: firstly, at least among Protestants, ordination was, from older times considered as conveying the status of a missionary with district-wide functions, thus making an Indian an 'assistant missionary' or a 'country priest'. Secondly, ordination was viewed as the culmination and seal of a higher theological training comparable to that of the missionary and that was seldom possible to attain. (77)

The Lutheran missionaries ordained four senior catechists at Thanjavur in 1811, another three were ordained in 1818. (78) The Anglicans gave a definite lead in building up a full-fledged Indian ministry. John Devasagayam, who was a capable assistant of Tranquebar missionaries was an ordained deacon in 1830 and priest in 1836. (79) He worked as a missionary for a long time on a par with his European colleagues in the large area of Kadachapuram which belonged to the Church Missionary Society. (80) His son Jesudason John received ordination in 1847. (81) D.Gnanamuthu was ordained deacon in 1847 (82) and he was the first Indian priest from his own

congregation in Tirunelveli. Eight candidates were ordained at the same time in 1859 and among them, the following were very significant; P. Armanayagam, Devanayagam Viravagu, Vedhanayagam Viravagar, Joseph Cornelius and W.T. Wathianadhan. (83)

The Free Church of Scotland Mission ordained their first three converts, Rajahgopaul, Venkataramiah and Ethirajooloo in 1851, ten years after their baptism. (84) The American Madurai Mission ordained Winfred in 1855; the Arcot Mission of the Reformed Church of America ordained Andrew Sawyer in 1859. Other missionary societies like the Leipzig Evangelical Lutheran Mission, the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel and the London Missionary Society ordained Indian Christian leaders.

Due to the ordination of many Indian Christian leaders, the ratio of foreign missionaries and Indian clergy was reversed.

> Within ten years, the ratio of foreign missionaries and Indian clergy was reversed. Whereas in 1861, only forty three ordained Indians worked side by side with one hundred and seventeen missionaries in Tamilnadu, in 1871, their number had increased to one hundred and four as against only eighty two missionaries. By 1890, in at least one Protestant mission, the number of ordained Indians had increased to more than double that of the missionaries. (85)

Though the missionary societies made it a policy to treat Indian clergy with equal status and dignity, in practice, missionary paternalism began to prevail. Missionaries felt that elevations of Indian clergy to missionary status and to the episcopate would lead to racial and communal divisions in the Church.

But already, another arresting element began to make itself felt. Most missions had from the beginning emphatically made it known that one of their priorities was to raise an indigenous clergy and make themselves superfluous as soon as possible; but in the course of time, in practice, they contradicted their own theories by refusing equality of status to the converts... Native pastors... for a season... cannot be on a perfect equality with missionaries any more than the child with the parent. Catechists and pastors with independent judgement, frequently, the ablest among them, did not endure for a long time in the service of a particular mission. An interesting case is that of Winfred, the highly gifted first ordained of American Madurai Mission, who resigned as early as 1857 because of his views regarding the strictness of church discipline... Alternatively, they suffered a life-time under the dominance and paternalism of their missionary colleagues, before whom they refused to "cringe and homage". Exceptions are carefully noted in their sporadic reminiscences, and so are extreme representatives of that paternalism. (86)

It is clear that after the revolt of 1857/8 and the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869, the sending agency in the West reserved to itself more and more the right to govern the mission churches in India. The view expressed concerning its decision by a modern historian, (that 'quite clearly the time was not ripe', since the appointment of an Indian Bishop 'might have led to a racial division in the Church'), reflects quite clearly the majority attitude of the missionaries against accepting an Indian leader. (87)

Opportunities for Indian leadership were given outside the structure of the Church in the Indian Missionary Society, in the National Missionary Society etc.

Small outlets and exercise grounds for genuine Indian leadership among Protestants developed outside the Church structures, in the Indian Missionary Society of Tirunelveli (founded in 1903) which worked among the Palayan Adi-Dravidars of Tirunelveli and in Salem, Coimbatore and North Arcot Districts of Tamilnadu and in Andhra Pradesh; indigenous leadership was encouraged in the following indigenous organizations also; the Madurai Home Missionary Society of 1904 with an indigenous enterprise in Kongunadu, the (All-India) National

> Missionary Society of 1905 with its mission field in Tamilnadu among the tribes of the Javadi Hills near Jolarpettai, the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) which had entered Madras in 1980 and later the Christian Ashram Movement. (88)

In some cases, the Indian pastors became Bishops. Pastor V.S. Azariah from Tirunelveli of Tamilnadu, one of the founders of the Indian Missionary Society became a Bishop in 1912 in Dornakal, Andhra Pradesh. After the formation of the Church of South India in 1947, many Indian Christian leaders were given the opportunity to serve as Presbyters and Bishops in the Church.

(iii) The indigenous independent Churches in Tamilnadu.

With the creation of an Indian ministry, with Indian priests and Bishops, the ground was prepared for forming indigenous and independent Churches in Tamilnadu.

> Again a long complicated process, not without drawbacks and reverses, led to self-government and independence. From being assistant missionaries and paid employees of an ecclesiastical body abroad, (89) the Tamil ministers became chosen leaders of their own churches and Dioceses. When 32 ordinations took place at Palayamkottai in 1869, the candidates were 'ordained for service under the Native Church Councils, not as agents of a foreign society'. (90) These Native Church Councils of the Church Missionary Society, London Missionary Society, (91) Native Evangelical Societies of the American Madurai Mission and later the Tamil Synods of Leipzig Evangelical Lutheran Mission were to be the germ cells of the indigenous churches. (92)

The Mission secretaries promoted the early formation of the Native Church Councils. However, missionaries continued to be in charge of administration and institutional work while Indians were in charge of congregational work.

The early formation of the Native Church Councils had been facilitated by those two strategic mission secretaries much connected with Tamilnadu developments -Henry Venn of the Church Missionary Society and Rufus Anderson of the American Board of Commissioners. They had developed concepts of speedily releasing the newly planted churches into independence. (93) But when the Native Church Councils of the Church Missionary Society were ready to grow into permanent synods in 1890, John Barton, sent by the 'Parent Committee' in London betrayed Venn's concept by dissolving the local councils, replacing them by Pastorate Committees and creating a structure of Church government from above with a constitution that was issued by the authority of the 'Home Committee.' (94) That kind of influence was the cause of the development of parallel structures in Protestant churches: the old missionary organizations and autonomous ecclesiastical bodies functioning side by side within the same church. Such dichotomy received ideological support by the distinctions drawn between evangelistic work and congregational work or between institutional work and congregational work, non-Indians being in charge of the former, Indians in charge of the latter. In the course of time, foreign missionaries more and more retreated to administrative work. (95)

When the Indian political movement for the independence of India emerged in the form of the Indian National Congress in Pune in December 1885, the National Church in Madras also made an attempt to indigenise the Indian Christian Church and to bring about a United Indian Christian Church.

The Church of South India was the largest indigenous Church that was created among the Protestant Churches in Tamilnadu. It was inaugurated on 27th September 1947. The Church of South India is a united Church of the people of the following four traditions:- the congregationalists, the Presbyterians, the Anglicans and the Methodists.

> Of the Protestant Churches in Tamilnadu, the largest that was created was the Church of South India. It was inaugurated in September

1947, a few weeks after India's declaration of independence. Its Tamil constituency was composed of the former Anglicans of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel and Church Missionary Society, congregations of the former London Missionary Society, Wesleyan Missionary Society, American Madurai Mission, Arcot Mission of the Reformed Church of America, United Free Church of Scotland Mission and Basel Mission.(96)

The Tamilnadu section of the Church of South India (CSI) comprised of the following dioceses:- Madras, Tiruchirappalli-Thanjavur, Coimbatore, Vellore, Madurai-Ramanathapuram, Tirunelveli and Kanyakumari. (97)

The Tamil Lutherans of the Leipzig Evangelical Mission constituted themselves as an independent Tamil Evangelical Lutheran Church in the year of the Tranquebar Manifesto, 1919. The Lutherans of the Danish Mission in Arcot formed the Arcot Lutheran Church in 1950. Negotiations for Church union between the Lutheran Churches and the Church of South India could not succeed.

The last remnants of missionary rule in the administration of the Churches in Tamilnadu slowly disappeared during the years between 1950 - 1970. However, very few Churches in Tamilnadu were financially self-supporting in 1970.

> It appears that between 1950 and 1970 all these churches and dioceses abolished the last remnants of missionary rule in their administration. But by 1970 few had become financially self-supporting inspite of many efforts in that direction over more than 100 years. Those efforts began about 1830 on a local basis in the Church Missionary Society in Tirunelveli. (98) Their example spread to other missions. The London Missionary Society city church at Nagercoil was one of the first to be self-supporting. A system of reduction of the grants from abroad by 5$ each year was introduced in Tirunelveli in the 1870's, but was modified later under Sargents' 'benevolent despotism'. That syndrome of reduction schemes which were undermined was frustrating in other missions, although there was final success in Tirunelveli. The rising needs of

> the Christian churches, the poverty of the majority of their members, local and world-wide crises and the general economic decline and exploitation of India: all these worked together to make schemes fall.
>
> Nevertheless, slow progress was made in the field of pastoral work and even expensive institutions. But the official report of the first thirty years of the Church of South India (1977) still speaks of 'heavy dependence on foreign funds. (99)

(iv) The emergence of non-institutional Church groups.

The organizational and administrative patterns of the Church are not customary in non-Christian religions. There arose a conflict between the two lines of thinking-Indian unification against Western denominationalism; Indian broadmindedness against Western legalism and institutionalism. As a result of this, many non-Institutional Church groups emerged in Tamilnadu, especially in Madras city to begin with and later on all over the state of Tamilnadu.

The Salvation Army, Pentecostal Churches and their various groups like Jehovah Shammah, Laymen's Evangelical Fellowship, Evangelical Church in India - all these sprang up in Tamilnadu as non-Institutional Church groups.

> Before long they appeared as a growing number of independent groups in Madras rather than as dependent mission churches and recruited themselves not only from non-Christians, but also from 'nominal' Christians and dissatisfied Christians. They made up more than five percent of the Protestant Christians in the city in 1972. With the exception of the Ceylon Pentecostal Mission, a rather ascetic group practicing priestly celibacy, they formed a 'Pentecostal Fellowship' in the city. Their major groups were called; Christ for India, Apostolic Christian Assembly, Zion Gospel Prayer Fellowship, Madras Pentecostal Assembly, India Pentecostal Church, Beulah Church, Apostolic Fellowship Tabernacle, Apostolic Fellowship Tabernacle Church, Christ for India Full Gospel Church, and Pentecostal

Centre. From Madras some of these groups were able to spread over Tamilnadu, particularly in Tirunelveli District.

> The Reorganized Church of Christ of Latter Day Saints, with a large number of members drawn from traditional Churches rose to significance between 1930 and 1980 during the city's heyday of industrialization and immigration. (100)
>
> In 1972, the 'independent Pentecostals' and the 'independent non-Pentecostals' together with the Evangelical Church in India constituted more than fifteen percent of the Protestants in Madras, presumably even more, since double membership in many cases involving one of the older Churches must be assumed. A large sign for the growing criticism of the 'main line Churches' was the establishment of the 'interdenominational' Evangelical Hindustan Bible Institute in Madras for the training of the evangelists and ministers without any definite organizational commitments. (101)

The preceding sections described the formation of organized Churches and the emergence of non-Institutional Church groups in Tamilnadu. Who are these Christian people? who became the members of these Churches? What is their background? What are their conversion motives? The following section makes an attempt to answer these questions.

(v) The Christian people.

The change of religion is one of the memorable events in human life. Those who became Christians did not only experience a great change in their own lives, but also became the agents of change in their surroundings-in their families, clans, villages, districts and in Tamil society at large.

(a) Their background.

The survey on the spread of missionary service and activities in the 19th century has revealed that the majority of the Christian people came from economically poor sections of the society. According to the 1871 census, the smallest contingents of Christians in Tamilnadu came from the Brahmin community.

> Since all later Census abandoned the linkage between caste and religious community in their questionnaire, we rely on rather sporadic information for the time after 1871. After the formation of the state of Tamilnadu (still called 'Madras'), according to the 'Sattanathan Report' of 1970, approximately fifty percent of all Christian Tamils belonged to the 'Scheduled Castes and Tribes' (a category mainly designating Adi-Dravidars apart from the hill tribes, most of these Adi-Dravidars living in the districts of Chengalpattu South and North Arcot and Thanjavur), thirty percent to the 'Backward Classes' (mainly Nadars, most of them in the districts of Kanyakumari and Tirunelveli) and twenty percent to the 'Forward Classes.' (102)

(b) Conversion patterns and motives.

Why did the people in Tamilnadu change their ancestral religion in favour of the Christian faith? What was the pattern of their conversion?

The first pattern is the sanyasi (hermit) conversion. The people who were in search of salvation (moksha) became hermits (sanyasis) and they abandoned normal human life and lived in isolation in quest of salvation. During this period of search, they came in contact with Christians who introduced them to the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Thus they were converted and became Christians.

> There is first of all the sanyasi conversion, not frequent, to be sure, but of religious weight and of public impact through autobiographical and

biographical publications. The experience of the Smartha Brahman Lakshmi Krishna Subrahmanyam, later Theophilus Subrahmanyam, may serve as an example. A student of medicine, Subrahmanyam leaves the college as a sanyasi on a pilgrimage to the north in quest of moksha (salvation). His family's attempts to hold him back prove in vain. In the Vindhya mountains he meets an old ascetic who has taken the vow of silence. For fourteen months both communicate by way of gestures and writing English words on the sand, which both had learnt at different mission high schools. (103)

The sisher conversion, (leading to the change of life in the company of a missionary) was more common than the sanyasi (hermit) conversion.

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> More common than the sanyasi conversion was the sisher conversion, the change of life in the company of a missionary, particularly at a school with the missionary as a teacher of religion. In that case, younger people, mostly boys between thirteen and twenty five years of age, were - in the mentally and spiritually formative period of their lives - deeply impressed by the words and the character of their alien preceptors. They asked for baptism after some time in conscious rejection of the beliefs of their parents. Institutions well known for such conversion were that founded by J.Anderson at Madras which developed into the Madras Christian College.(104)

The 'enquirer' pattern was another category of the individual conversion. The enquirers were inspired and moved by an address at a street corner at a mass assembly of an evangelistic campaign or a radio message and they had asked for further instruction and information.

Another category of individual conversion is that of the 'enquirer' who has been stirred by an address at a street corner or - in later times - at a mass assembly of an evangelistic campaign or a radio message, or by any other contact, and asked for further information and instruction. As for sanyasi conversions, accounts of such cases do not abound. When they occur, they do so mostly in an urban setting (105). But conversions as a result of open-air preaching did happen in great numbers, in one mission in the 19th century an estimated eighty percent of all of them in seventy five years. (106)

The Kudumbam (family) conversion (the mass conversion) was the common pattern of conversion in rural areas, in contrast to the individual conversion in cities.

> In contrast to cities, the kudumbam conversion was the rule in the rural areas, that is the family conversion, which often happened, when the decision of the head of a joint family was followed by his relatives. (107)

Several motives were found among the new converts to Christianity : a search for salvation, forgiveness of sins, protection from famine, liberation from the oppression of the upper castes, search for material and social benefits like educational and medical facilities. etc. Bishop Robert Caldwell, the leading guide of the 1841 Tirunelveli mass conversion, was concerned about the principle of missionary policy, namely, never to reject any one who seeks to accept Christ and becomes a member of the Church. Jesus said,' ... anyone who comes to me. I will never drive away'. (St.John 6:37) Therefore, it is not proper to reject anyone who seeks to accept Christ. Further, social liberation , providing relief during a period of famine - this kind of service is part of the Christian ministry as per the Nazareth Manifesto.

> The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,
> because he has anointed me
> to bring good news to the poor.
> He has sent me to proclaim release
> to the captives
> and recovery of sight to the blind,
> to let the oppressed go free. (108)
>
> (St.Luke 4:18)

Therefore, it is proper to accept people who seek to enter the Church, expecting social liberation from oppression similar to economic relief.

Bishop Robert Caldwell, wrote that, despite the importance of the motives of new converts for accepting the Christian faith, the Church should not reject people who would like to accept Christ.

> To that Robert Caldwell, the leading guide of the 1841 Tirunelveli Nadar movement and historian of the Tirunelveli Church, after decades of experience reacted in a seemingly cynical way. He wrote, that asking catechumens for their motives in this context was a 'waste of time', since women and children followed the head of the family and the men were too unlettered to articulate their innermost feelings. He did not question the importance of motivation. His concern was a principle of missionary policy, namely, never to reject receiving those people into Christian instruction. (109)

3.9 The Church's struggle against caste observance within the Church.

The history of the Christian Church in Tamilnadu needs to include the struggle against caste observance, because when Hindus (who observed the caste system in the Hindu society) became Christians, the new converts could not immediately shake off their caste spirit and caste prejudice and were not willing for common participation, along with the new converts from other castes,at common worship. They were unwilling to come to the Lord's Table and accept the Lord's Supper along with new converts from other castes. The missionaries, especially the younger ones,were very firm and said that the caste system should never be practiced within the Church and should be eradicated from the Church completely. The history of the Christian Church in Tamilnadu reveals many conflicts due to the prejudices of the caste system in the

Christian Church.

There was a conflict at the Vepery congregation in Madras. Bishop Heber and Bishop Wilson did their best to resolve the conflict due to the observance of caste .

> Even in the very heart of that life together, in the celebration of the Eucharist, the differences of rank and status were not suppressed. Different caste groups were allowed to participate one after the other. Sitting in separate parts of the Church or on separate mats was the established custom. (110)

At the beginning of our period, newly arrived Protestant missionaries protested officially against the segregation they found. (111) But the older ones defended the tradition, and their Society (SPCK) made a careful pronouncement (112) that could be interpreted by the missionaries as endorsing their traditional distinction of the religious and the civil aspects in the caste. Influenced by younger missionaries, Adi-Dravidars in the Vepery congregation of that society asserted some more rights for themselves, but their quarrel with the 'caste people' was quenched by the older station missionary who called in the police. (113) That can be regarded as the prelude to the first major group conflict. It took place in 1820-6, when Haubroe, a young missionary of the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge at Vepery, under the influence of Rhenius of the Church Missionary Society, who following a new policy refused 'to admit the caste' into his school (114), (but could not prevail) (115), had seated the Christian children at his school irrespective of the caste and in the Church the Adi-Dravidar boys near the pulpit in front of the Vellala children. The offended Vellalars entered a solemn covenant boycotting the Church attendance and appealed to Heber, the Anglican Bishop at Calcutta. Heber sought the advise of Christian David, a former catechist of C. F. Schwartz, now working in Sri Lanka (Ceylon), whom Heber had just ordained. Christian David carefully but firmly convinced Heber of the legitimacy of his opinion that the civil aspect of the caste should be accepted in the Church. The younger missionaries had lost their case. Christian David strengthened the tradition at Vepery during a longer stay at Madras, and Bishop Heber during his visitation in Tamilnadu in 1826 initiated an enquiry into the current missionary opinion, concerning the result of which conflicting interpretation exists. (116) The extant sources reveal, however, that some-not a small minority-

> held the view that the caste was originally an entirely civil institution, which had been made rigid and sacred by the Brahmans and now was getting restored to its original position through the Christian faith. (117)

The missionaries included the rules of mixed seating in Church during worship services (no separate and segregated seats according to the various castes), mixed communion at the Eucharist (no separate communion services for the different castes), accepting Adi-Dravida catechists into all houses on religious matters and no caste separation in cemeteries.

> The Vellalars at Madras started to conduct their own services, placing strike-posts at the entrance of the Church where the Adi-Dravidars worshipped. But slowly more and more Vellalars returned to them (118) apparently because Wilson's rules were not strictly enforced. Those rules included, apart from mixed seating in Church and mixed communion at the Eucharist, the reception of anyone by the minister or the catechist into his house in religious matters, reception of Adi- Dravida catechists in religious matters into all houses, no caste separation in the cemeteries and an indiscriminate choice of god - parents at baptism. (119)

After many conflicts and a long struggle against the evil of the caste system, it was learnt that the evil of caste prejudices could never be eradicated by the artificial restraints and the rules of the Church. The Indian Christian conscience with the power of the Holy Spirit and with God's Grace alone, can effectively deal with the evil of the caste system.

> Bishop Gell had to make fresh inquiries in 1868. In this connection, a common meal as a test among Indian employees and their families of the Tirunelveli district of the SPG, demanded under threat of notification to the higher authority in case of non-attendance, revealed that little or only 'some progress' had been made. The Indian church historian of Tirunelveli, Paul Appasamy, observed about the time 1880-9:

As the strong hand of the station missionary was removed, caste prejudices appear to have manifested themselves and caused no little anxiety to the Parent Committee. They felt rightly that the evil of the caste could never be dealt with effectively by the artificial restraints. It must be rejected by the Indian Christian conscience... We find missionaries trying their best to hold the scales even before all classes, and while strictly excluding the caste from all the church life, seeking to avoid unnecessary interference with the homes and private life of Christians. (120)

The South Indian Missionary Conference of 1900 declared that all lawful methods should be used to eradicate the evil of the caste system. Some Churches started using the common cup (the Chalice) instead of individual cups for giving wine to the communicants, to show that there was no caste prejudice.

> 'Most missionaries leave caste severely alone and yield rather than fight'. The battle on the civic field was not won. At the same time, the introduction of individual cups at Holy Communion in some churches of the American Madurai Mission with the argument that many Hindus by that will find it easier to join the church and the custom of pouring the wine into the mouths of the communicants by way of spouts on the chalices made one of the victories of the past in the religious realm of caste practices (the victory for the one caste-breaking cup) somewhat obsolete. (121)

Finally, caste prejudices were concealed, but reappeared on the occasions of elections within the church, selection of leaders for the Church, and selection of brides and bridegrooms in Christian families.

3.10 The Christian Church and Tamil culture.

The history of the Christian Church in Tamilnadu needs to include a section on the interaction between the Christian Church and Tamil culture, because a

religion can never be separated from the culture with which it is associated. Any religion can never be fully identified with culture. However, no religion exists in a cultural vacuum. The religion associates with the culture, it modifies the culture and creates the culture. When the Christian religion had its great impact in Tamilnadu, there was a renaissance of Tamil culture.

Tamil literature on palm leaves was printed into books. The great value of Tamil literature with its culture was discovered.

> As in the cultural discovery of so many other regions of India, the Christian missionaries were the first to show an interest in Tamil culture and to study Tamil language. (122)

> It is entirely to the credit of several early missionaries, that, they induced the Tamils of their time by example as well as exhortation, to wake up to the greatness of their culture. (123)

Dr. G.U. Pope, the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel missionary at Sawyerpuram translated the following Tamil poetical books into English and revealed the greatness of Tamil culture :- the Thirukkural, the Thiruvasagam and the Naladiyar. Another missionary, Robert Caldwell, wrote a book, 'The Comparative Grammar of the Dravidian or South Indian Family of Languages.

> The fact is that Pope's publications - apart from the Kural, translations of Thiruvasagam and Naladiyar as well as Tamil dictionaries and grammars-his praise of the Saiva Siddhanta (124) and his clarion call: 'Let the Tamils cease to be ashamed of their Tamil', kindled a fire of enthusiasm among the English educated intelligentia of Tamilnadu for digging up the glories of the Tamil past.

This was preceded by the studies of Pope's colleague, Robert Caldwell in ١٩ comparative linguistics, arriving at the conclusion that the Dravidian languages occupy a position quite distinct from the Aryan (or Indo-European)

language family (125) and those who speak them form a distinct ethnic group. His Comparative Grammar of the Dravidian or South Indian Family of Languages, first published in 1856, with further editions in 1875 and later, became a classic which was reprinted by the University of Madras in 1956, 1961 and 1976.

The renaissance of the Tamil culture and its literature enabled the Christian Church to develop the Tamil Christian language and use it for its life and work, especially for its worship, for translating the Bible into Tamil, for its liturgies, for its devotional songs, for developing a language for the Church and for producing Tamil Christian literature. The Christian Church in Tamilnadu, in its interaction with Tamil culture, made use of Tamil art and architecture also.

(i) The Tamil Christian language and worship.

The Christians in Tamilnadu, inspired by the renaissance of Tamil culture and by the development of Tamil language, developed the Tamil Christian language and used it for worship, especially for the translation of the Bible into Tamil. J.P. Fabricius's complete translation of the Bible in Tamil was printed in Tamil in 1796. This was popular for its simple style and clear structure. However, it was criticized in that it failed to use the current idiomatic Tamil, because Church Tamil or Christian Tamil had lagged behind the developed common Tamil. Rhenius' translation of the New Testament was printed in 1827. His translation was not fully accepted, because it deviated from the original Greek and Hebrew texts, by way of paraphrasing under the leadership of Peter Percival of Jaffna; another translation was

brought out, but it was rejected in 1850, since it contained too much Sanskrit. H. Bower, with the help of Robert Caldwell, C.S.Kohlhoff, and Muthiah Pillai, a Tamil teacher brought out a translation in 1871. This was accepted by the Christians who later formed the Church of South India.

The main problem posed was the use of the Tamil word for God. The word தேவன் (devan) means numerous Hindu Gods. The word பரபரன் (parabaran) also means Parvathi, the female power of the Hindu God. The word சர்வேசுரன் (Sarvesuran) means the Almighty God, but it is not a Tamil word: it is a Sanskrit(Aryan) word. The word கடவுள்(Kadavul) means the Supreme God who surpasses thought, word and reality, a Personal God with transcendent existence.

> It turned out that its main problem was posed by its adoption of தேவன் (devan) for 'God'. Fabricius and Rhenius had used பரபரன் (parabaran - the one who is transcendent and immanent at the same time) (126). But that expression had been discarded by Rhenius in 1836, when he felt himself convinced of its derivation from (punar=Parvati) and (paran = Siva), a combination with the connotation of 'Sivasakti' (the female power of Siva). Devan was now adopted because of its widespread use and most probably also because the Bibles in the other Dravidian languages employed cognate words. (127) But the word is not Dravidian. It is reminiscent of the 33 lakhs of devas of the Hindu pantheon, and later it was taken as a self-denotation by the caste of the Maravars (128). The Union Version was widely used, even in Lutheran homes, although 'Fabricius' renamed the Bible for official use in the Lutheran Churches. (129)

C.H. Monahan brought out a translation of the Bible in 1949 and it was improved by C.G. Diehl's Jubilee Edition of 1956. D. Rajarigam, a Tamilian brought out a translation of the New Testament in 1975. At present, both the Protestant and the Roman Catholic

Churches are making efforts to bring out the Inter-Confessional Translation of the Bible. The Anglican Church got its Book of Common Prayer translated into Tamil at an early stage. Rotler brought out in 1819 a translation of the English liturgy (130).

Christian David brought out another translation of the liturgy. Another version of the Tamil liturgy appeared in 1846. Further major revisions appeared in 1872 and in 1895. The Dutch Reformed Tamil Liturgy was printed in 1862. The Church of South India brought out in English its Book of Common Worship in 1965. It was later translated into the four regional languages (in Tamil, Malayalam, Kannada and Telugu). (131)

The early missionaries thought that the Indian songs and lyrics would be associated with Hindu culture and Hindu religion and hence, they decided to avoid the use of the Indian songs and lyrics for common worship. They also decided to translate the Western (English, German and French) hymns into Tamil and use them during worship services. The best hymns from 'Hymns Ancient and Modern' had been translated into Tamil by 1910.

In addition, the original hymns (composed by the Tamilians) were also printed and used for common worship. The Tamil Hymn Book of the Madras Religious Tract and Book Society, the Tamil Church Hymn Book of the Society for the Propagation of Christian Knowledge, the Gospel Hymns and Hymns of Faith from Palayamkottai, the Tamil Hymns from Jaffna and the Tamil Christian Lyrics - all these are original song books in Tamil, which included

the original Tamil Christian hymns and lyrics. (132) Devasahayam Pillai, a Christian poet from Tirunelveli and his son Vedanayagam Sastriyar composed 95 Christian lyrics out of 373 lyrics printed in the Tamil Christian Lyrics. (133)

There has been great encouragement given to indigenous Tamil Christian art and architecture. Tamil dramas, songs, villupattu (song-dialogue method of propagating the gospel, with an instrument similar to the bow) and many such indigenous arts are used for worship, especially for the propagation of the gospel among the people of other faiths. These types of indigenous Indian arts are quite appealing to the Indian people and they feel quite at home with these Indian arts.

Many Church buildings are built according to Dravidian and Indian architecture. The Christu Kula Ashram Church building at Tirupattur near Vellore and the Shantivanam Ashram Church building near Tiruchirapalli have been built according to Indian architecture. Many people from other faiths, especially Hindus feel quite at home with these Churches and visit these Ashrams and listen to the Christian Gospel. (134)

B. MISSION

This section deals with the Mission of the Christian Church in Tamilnadu, as it was generally understood. The general understanding of the Mission of the Church was preaching the gospel, converting people from the other faiths, baptizing them and enrolling them as members of

the Christian Church. In addition, establishing Mission institutions - Mission schools, Mission colleges, Mission hospitals, Mission homes for the blind, homes for the aged, homes for the deaf and the dumb, Mission orphanages for boys and girls, homes for the handicapped, homes for abandoned and deserted women and technical training schools etc. - was also considered as part of the Mission of the Christian Church. In short, the Mission of the Christian Church consisted of establishing Churches and rendering social service through various institutions.

3.11 The Proclamation of the Gospel.

In obedience to the Great Commission of the Lord Jesus Christ,

> Go into all the world and proclaim the good news to the whole creation... (St.Mark 16:15)

Missionaries and Christian workers preached the gospel. The early missionary approach was to condemn other religions and to preach the gospel in the light of the universal claim of the gospel.

> That, at least, was the early 'missionary approach' at the beginning of the 19th century. Direct confrontation and assault was the method on the 'field' of the first great missionary success in Tirunelveli District and South Travancore. After the initial waves of the indigenous mass movement, stirred by genuine religious search, but soon mixed with material aspirations (135), the whole country was systematically drawn into an evangelistic plan of action by Rhenius and his co-workers between 1820 and 1835. Their aim was to destroy 'devil worship'. The term 'devil' referred to the malignant spirits in the shamanistic and fetishistic religion of the Nadars as well as to Kali and Rama of the Brahman pantheon, about which Rhenius held discourses with Brahmans near temples, at bazaars, festivals and fairs. When the Christian

> faith was accepted by the larger groups, village idols were destroyed and temples turned into chapels for the Christian preaching and teaching. (136)

The content of the Protestant preaching to the Hindus was arranged around the central concepts of Hinduism and Christianity. H.M. Scudder's book, 'Bazaar Book' furnishes such details.

> The characteristic tone of the Protestant preaching can be gathered from the Bazaar Book by H.M. Scudder, because of its wide circulation. It was prepared as a guide for Tamil preachers about the middle of the 19th century with patterns and examples readily to be used. The material is arranged around some central concepts of Hinduism and Christianity like 'Guru', 'Transmigration'. 'Caste', 'Brahmins' or 'Sin and Expiation'. The Hindu scriptures are quoted frequently, rarely the Bible. Often the Tamil book of wisdom, the Thirukkural and illustrations from the Tamil poet Tayumanavar are used as an opening point-of-contact positively or negatively. The concept of avatar (a descent of god) is taken up for an understanding of Jesus Christ. Shankara is quoted affirmatively against the 'worship of stones' and Kapila for the ethical concept of Brahmanhood. But the caustic criticism is poured over the Puranas depicting Vishnu and Siva as totally immoral and as false gurus. The belief in transmigration is vehemently attacked. But there is no coming to grips with such key concepts of the Hindu thought as dharma (righteousness) and karma (action in previous birth as per the Hindu mythology), and so the argument for the Christian notions of sin and redemption appears weak and superficial in spite of the popular and lucid style of the book. (137)

In 1889, J.P.Jones, one of the missionaries criticized the attitude of condemning Hinduism and such condemning methods recommended in the Bazaar Book. His study revealed that preaching the crucified Christ alone had been almost universally accepted by the missionaries and that the time had come to acknowledge the truths contained in Hinduism. Another theory that, Christianity replaced Hinduism by fulfilment was propounded by T.E. Seater, a missionary of

the London Missionary Society. Dr.William Miller advocated Jesus as the 'highest possible ideal of all that is good and lovely'. J.N. Farquhar published his famous book on 'Christ, the Crown of Hinduism'.

> In 1889, J.P. Jones, the missionary whose convictions on 'the necessity of the work' were cited above, criticized the Bazaar Book for entrenching the polemical method in the minds and practice of many evangelists. His inquiry had shown that preaching Christ alone and him crucified had become almost universally accepted by missionaries after a period ... Now was the time rather to heal the wounds, to acknowledge the truths contained in that faith and the change in the general mood of Hindus effected by the Christian preaching. He quoted G.M. Cobban as a representative of the new approach. That colleague of his had in the same year advocated dealing with Vedantism, (Vedantha means Hindu Scriptures) in the same way as early Christianity had modified and absorbed Neo-Platonism and Stoicism faiths...

The way for Cobban's view had actually been paved by T.E. Slater, a London Missionary Society missionary who worked in Madras during 1871-82 and propounded the theory of replacement of Hinduism by fulfilment. (138) The same view had been vaguely expressed by Caldwell too. (139) The fulfilment theory did not pass unchallenged, but undoubtedly a new trend had been set, (140) which found an able and well-known exponent in Dr. William Miller at the Madras Christian College, a man (with a deep influence on the educated young generation) who advocated Jesus as the 'highest possible ideal of all that is good and lovely'. Jesus 'chose the path of shame and sorrow' to unfetter moral forces to change this brutal world and will come again for the consummation of that work.(141) Particularly, Miller's lecture on 'The place of Hinduism in the story of the world' in 1895 made a big impression. Hinduism, he said, might contribute to the spiritual development of mankind, the beliefs in an irresistible universal power, in the 'omnipenetrativeness' of God and in the solidarity of all men. (142)

It is likely that this new trend was a result of an acute public confrontation between Hinduism and Christianity during the second half of the 1880's, in which the Hindu missionaries had paid back Christians in their own coin. The era of rethinking along the lines of tact and more visible love followed the time of culminating hopes that the shaken foundations of Hinduism would soon collapse. (143) When later, in 1913,

J.N. Farquhar published his famous book on Christ, The Crown of Hinduism, in Bengal, he could build on the foundations originally laid in Madras. (144) For open air preaching, this new Madras school of thinking meant to use the good precepts of Hinduism and noble teachings as background on which to present Christ, unearth the deep longings in Hinduism, and to use positively the 'noble stories in the Ramayanam and Bharatham. (145)

Missionaries had developed a renewed interest in the concept of the Saiva Siddhanta of the Hindu religion. They attended the conference of the Saiva Siddhanta Sabha. They developed interest in the Hindu-Christian, Islam-Christian dialogues. Young missionaries were asked to be acquainted with the Indian philosophy and the religions of India, like Hinduism, Islam etc. Dialogue, discussion and debate had become part of the open-air preaching. Many tracts were published to help these inter-religious dialogues.

The formation of the Saiva Siddhanta Sabha in 1886 with the Vellalar J.M. Nallaswami Pillai as chief proponent (146) was followed by a period of missionary euphoria with regard to that branch of Hinduism. Here was evident the deep longing of a fettered soul for the grace of God which alone would bestow redemption and liberty on her. Here was a preparation for Christianity, presumably even an early influence of Christianity on the religion of Tamilnadu. Missionaries attended the conferences of the Saiva Siddhanta Sabha as an ally against Vedanta and for a religious motivation of social activity. There, they received public thanks for their part in the renewal. They had translated and published the sacred books of Saiva Siddhanta. Most notably, Dr.G.U. Pope who had, in 1900, thus elevated the collection Thiruvasakam. In the preface to its English translation, he called Saiva Siddhanta 'the most elaborate, influential and undoubtedly the most intrinsically valuable of all the religions of India'. More critical and differentiated opinions were voiced from the Lutheran and the Catholic side. (147) But, the attraction was general. Missionaries and Christian Indians continued to take more scholarly interest in Saiva Siddhanta. Upto the present day, the comparison between Christ's suffering and death with Siva Nilakantha (Siva, a Hindu god, who drinks the poison Halahala to

save humankind) plays a distinctive role in Hindu-Christian dialogue.

A lasting result of the new approach was the requirement for young missionaries, not only for the Jesuits among them, to be better acquainted with Indian philosophy and Hindu religions, and to have free dialogue with Hindus soon after arrival in India.

E. Sell's Faith of Islam, which also appeared in Tamil, became more objective and dialogue-oriented. (148)

Dialogue, discussion and debate had been a part of the open-air preaching. But not all preachers possessed the skill to keep the atmosphere of the ensuing public conversation relevant and calm; not all of them were able to live up to challenging questions. As more and more resistance built up, such discussions were avoided and discouraged in favour of distribution of tracts. (149) On the basis of the printed word, it seemed more suitable to develop the dialogical approach. (150) It had already been impressively used in the early decades of the Free Church Mission in Madras with experiences that led up to the views of William Miller. In 1841, Wednesday evening discussions were conducted in Anderson's School which lasted upto six hours, were taken down in shorthand, and were partly published in The Native Herald (151) along with principal articles on ethical and religious topics; many of them were written by the new converts for readers all over South India.

In 1858, Rajahgopaul founded the Native Christian Literary Society for discussions in a library hall. A similar society existed at Madurai in 1867. It was a platform for interreligious exchange which once climaxed in a public debate on the divinity of Christ. (152) Such organized discourses did not happen very often. Examples known for other cities are Simpson's three-day disputation at Tiruchirappalli in 1858 and J.P. Jones disputation at Coimbatore in 1887, both in years of public excitement and interest.

Hindu-Christian dialogue is preserved in the correspondence between Doraiswamy Iyer and Fr. Lacombe in 1893 before the former's baptism. That close encounter between Catholic Christianity and Brahman faith at Tiruchirappalli too was accompanied by the publication of tracts, the Tracts for the Times. Another series of pamphlets on Hinduism and Catholicism were issued in 1929 and 1930 by the Indian Catholic Truth Society. Protestant

societies and institutions also combined oral debate with printed tracts.

To be sure, severe oral attacks on Hinduism continued in the 20th century on the part of certain preachers or campaigns like the Evangelistic Forward Movement of the Madras Christian Council during 1916-8, but the dialogical attitude of thinkers like J.N. Farquhar and evangelists like Dr.Stanley Jones more and more won the day at least in the 'main line' churches. (153)

Through all changes of outlook in preaching and dialogue, there was a basic consensus among Christians in presenting the gospel to the Hindus, which is well expressed in the words of the outstanding Catholic layman M. Ruthnaswamy.

> Christ and Christianity offer you certainty in the place of speculation, one road instead of many, truth achieved instead of truth attempted, unity instead of multiplicity in the God-head, the personality of God serving the personality of man. (154)

3.12 Conversions.

When the gospel was preached to people of other faiths, the Holy Spirit moved their hearts and minds and led them towards conversion and they became Christians and members of the Christian Church. There were two types of conversions : individual conversions (individuals were converted) and mass conversions (crowds of people, sometimes people of several villages were converted).

(i) The Individual conversions.

(a) C.I. Venugopal.

His father was a Brahmin. He retired as a Deputy Collector in the old Madras Presidency. He continued Hindu worship daily, but the question of death and suffering was a problem to him. He wrote in his own words,

> From the point of view of material needs, my position was satisfactory; a bright academic

> career was unfolding itself; the family circumstances were favourable in every way; and I had a home to protect me from the evils of gregariousness in a boy's hostel. (155)

When he was a young lad, able to think and discern, he attended a public meeting addressed by Dr.E. Stanley Jones in August 1926 and he narrated his experience.

> I went immediately after my evening pooja (a mode of Hindu worship) and was soon gripped by what the speaker was saying. The subject was 'the Cross of Jesus Christ as the supreme revelation of the heart of the universe'. I sat up to see that here was an answer to some of my questions. Verily God limited himself by giving man a free-will; he took a risk, so to speak, conceding the possibility of free-will wrongly exercised and of the inevitable burden, mankind would have to bear as a result. But he did not remain a spectator, but became himself the greatest burden-bearer in his incarnation of suffering love as Jesus Christ. Something, which goes very much deeper, I had glimpsed then, and over the years I have come to realize more fully. It is that in Christ's life, death and resurrection and finally in his continuing presence through the Holy Spirit, there is hope for me in my direct need and there is power given to me to triumph over the cruelest forms of disease and death, whether of the flesh or of the spirit. (156)

After this experience, he met great Christian leaders like Rev. Dr. Larsen, Principal of the United Theological College, Bangalore, Rev. Dr. A.G. Hogg, Principal of the Madras Christian College and Bishop H. Pakenham Walsh. He was baptized in August 1933 at Calcutta. C.T. Venugopal was not a poor man in need of any financial aid.

He had the good fortune to meet two great guides, the late Rev. Dr.Larsen and Rev.Dr. A.G. Hogg and they firmly advised him not to be baptized at that stage, before he could give his parents and relatives an opportunity to realise that his new faith would not separate him from his family and his traditions; and not to identify his new experiences which were essentially an inward revolution, with the outward forms of an alien religion. This advice had given him seven years, from his first confrontation with Jesus Christ,

to his decision to join the Christian Church.

He graduated from the Madras Presidency College in 1928 and worked as a lecturer in a Hindu college. It is a clear case of the Love of Jesus Christ, as expounded by a person who had enjoyed it and communicated it to Venugopal. Let it also be noted that he was neither a poor man depending on aid of any kind, nor was he in a hostel, attached to a Christian college; yet the supreme love of Christ reached Venugopal and he became a Christian and he lived a very open Christian life. He entered into a competitive Civil Service and joined the Indian Railways in the finance department from April 1930; he was in Calcutta, Bombay and Rangoon. It was during this time that Bishop H. Pakenham Walsh, arranged his baptism in August 1933 at Calcutta. By then, he had contacted quite a few Christians. The conversion of Venugopal demanded a conviction and confession before the baptism. (157)

C.T.Venugopal describes his experiences in the following words :-

> Life began anew for me with putting certain things right even at the cost of being laughed at, and I had a fresh realization of what my sins cost God and of his forgiveness through the Cross of Christ. (158)
>
> In short, my contacts, brief or extended with men and women indisputably Christian by any standard make me diffident about predicting in what ways Christ's redeeming love will reach the millions in India and in what manner or form the Christian Church in India is likely to grow. All that I can say with assurance is that, the basic Christian experience is essentially an inward awakening which does not recognize the barriers created by caste and community. (159)

(b) Henry Albert Krishnapillai.

Krishnan, the son of Sankara Narayana Pillai was born in 1827. He belonged to a Vellala family and was a talented boy. He had great contempt for the Christian religion. When he was ten years old, he read a tract with the title 'The Incarnation of Grace' and was greatly convinced that Jesus Christ is the Saviour of the world, who can forgive

the sins of the world. He expressed his experience in the following words :-

> In contrast with them, the narratives in the Hindu religious books were clearly fictitious, legendary and amusing. As a result, the various ceremonies and rites of the Hindu religion became unacceptable to me. It was at this time that I began to realise that I shall be held responsible for all my sins and misdeeds and that the various methods of easy atonement which were set forth in the Hindu religion were quite useless. And yet my old leanings towards sin did not leave me. My sinful habits, which had been formed through a long stretch of years did not become any less. (160)

At this time, Dhanakoti Raju, a friend of Krishna Pillai explained to him that Christ suffered death on the cross in order to forgive the sins of humankind; that He rose again from the death on the third day; that He ascended into heaven; that He sent the Holy Spirit to be with humankind to sanctify sinful men and women; that He would come again to judge humankind and that those who would believe in Jesus Christ would receive salvation.

This was very appealing to Krishna Pillai and he believed in Jesus Christ as his Saviour. He expressed his experience in the following words :-

> That very day the spirit of God made this truth enter my heart. That very day I believed in Christ ; that very day I learnt to pray in His name. The sins which had been sweet to me became bitter from that day. That very day I resolved to become a Christian. (161)

He was baptized in Madras on 29th March 1858. Krishna Pillai was a great Tamil scholar, a poet and he wrote in Tamil 'Rakshanya Yathirigam', using John Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress. H.A. Krishna Pillai became a Christian

through the Grace of God and not because of any need of material help nor because of any external pressure.

(c) Nilakantha Sastri Goreh.

There were a number of converts from the Brahmins. Nilakantha Sastri Goreh was a Brahmin. He was originally a devotee of Siva (a Hindu god) according to his family tradition. But, he changed his God and started to worship Vishnu (another Hindu god) of his own choice. C.E.Gardener, his biographer described his contempt for Christianity.

> However, his discontent with Siva did not in any way lead to Christianity with favour. His first attitude was of undisguised contempt and hatred. The simplicity of the Gospel and his teachers offended him. He thought the action of unlearned missionaries (that is ignorance of Sanskrit), 'Barbarians', Mileechus, as he called them with their gross manners and customs coming to India and to sacred Benares, was foolish and insolent to a degree. What right he asked, had they to try and force their crude European notions, in their ridiculous pronunciation of the divinely originated language (Sanskrit) upon the Indians. (162)

Rev. William Smith, a missionary, gave Nilakantha Sastri Goreh a copy of the New Testament translated into Sanskrit and told him that all his doubts and questions would be explained, if he would read it. When Goreh read the New Testament, he was convinced and converted.

The whole plan of action that Nilakantha Sastri had, was to superimpose his Brahminical thinking with the power of Sanskrit language and all the philosophical thinking coupled with a great rhetoric. He wanted to silence the missionaries and put to them questions which were contradicting and confusing, with the ulterior motive of compelling them, either to leave the country or to confine themselves to the teaching of Christians. This had brought the learned Brahmin Sastri to the home of a missionary, only to continue his controversy about

comparative claims of Christianity with Hinduism. This continued for quite a long while and in the end, Mr. William Smith left India, leaving a copy of the Sanskrit New Testament with him. The Rev. William Smith put the matter in the humblest possible way and told Sastri that all his questions and doubts were clearly explained in the New Testament and that he could read and find out the answers. So, in most cases, it was not human influence that created the process of conversion, but it was the living word of God. Nilakantha Sastri reading the New Testament as critically as he could, found out the truth. He expressed this not with vehemence, but in the simplest possible language and tried to convince quite a large number of people about the supremacy of the Gospel over all Indian philosophical thinking. So Sastri after the great day of his conversion, led many people come to the acceptance of the Gospel through the process of enquiry and debate. (163)

(d) Narayan Laxman Harshe.

Narayan Laxman Harshe was a learned Brahmin and he was a Marathi language teacher to famous missionary doctors, professors,teachers and preachers. He hated the Hindu caste system and he longed for a casteless and classless society.

> It is most unfortunate that Hinduism seems to consider any other religion to be just another caste in India! We look forward to the Golden Day when all the Indian State Governments and social and educational institutions will have eradicated this unnecessary classification system according to castes and religions. We also look forward to the time when Indians will have become truly registered in schools or elsewhere as members of a certain religious group, when they are still too young to understand what religion means and have had no opportunity to choose for themselves. This would be real freedom. But unfortunately, Free India, instead of trying to grow as a casteless and classless society, in which all are equal is still following this unwanted classification system according to the caste and the religion. (164)

Narayan Laxman Harshe was baptized in May 1934 and he accepted Jesus Christ as his Lord and Saviour. Many people forced the owner of the house (where Narayan was staying)

to vacate Narayan from his house, because he became a Christian. But the owner gave the following reply :

> Pandit Harshe is a better religious man than most of us so-called Hindus. He is very loving, honest and gentle. I don't care whether he is a Hindu or a Christian. But I have known him personally for several years and can assure you that he is a better man than any of us. (165)

Harshe's elder son Raghunath, after his graduation became a Marathi teacher to the missionaries. He was convinced of the power of Jesus Christ to save mankind from sin and was baptized on the Easter Sunday, 10th April 1955; he described his experience in the following words:-

> Although I was intellectually convinced about the great spiritual power and moral force of Jesus Christ, and was admiring Him with my lips, I had no place for Him in my heart. I was practically at the door of the Kingdom of God, but Satan was trying to pull me back with all the intellectual arguments against Christianity. Satan was using all his sharp weapons to turn me away from Jesus Christ, but on the other hand, Jesus was knocking at the door of my heart. He was using all His Divine weapons in the form of His assurances and promises, namely, the Forgiveness of sins in the life which is past; new joy and peace which knew no bounds; fellowship and love; salvation and everlasting life and the help of the Living Power to overcome temptations and fear of death. I was convinced that Jesus Christ would never forcibly break open the door of my heart, like a robber or a thief although He is Almighty and All Powerful. One must open the door voluntarily and welcome Him to come in and abide there. The Bible verse that touched my heart was this : 'Behold, I stand at the door and knock ; if any man hear my voice and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him and he with me' (Revelations 3:20). There was a tug-of-war, as it were, going on between Satan's forces on the one hand and the Living Power of Jesus Christ on the other. (166)

Every man is a sinner, however great he may be, compared to the Righteous and the Holy God. There is no doubt, that we are all sinners. The only question is of the degree and the kind - big sin and small sin ! Generally a man does not wish to admit that he is a sinner, because of his self-righteous attitude and I was no exception to this. (167)

However, Christ enabled Narayan Laxman Harshe to overcome his self-righteousness and to accept Jesus Christ as his Saviour.

> Since we had acted to fulfil God's Call, it could not be wrong or misleading. Wherever there is the working of God's power, human arguments and discussion have no place. My wife and I jumped into a Divine Pool of Living water full of Joy and Peace and were saved, although neither of us knew how to swim ! Inscrutable are the ways of God. Faith begins when arguments and discussions end. No argument can prove the sweetness of sugar! You must take a spoonful and put it into your mouth and experience for yourself how sweet it tastes!! Such is the Love, the Joy and the Peace which Jesus is eager to share with you, if you will only receive it with a child-like faith. (168)

(e) Narayan Vaman Tilak.

Narayan Vaman Tilak was born in 1870 in an orthodox Brahmin family. He was given a copy of the New Testament during a railway journey. It was a miracle that Tilak became a Christian on 18th February 1894. The following are his words :-

> At least to those who know me, here is an irrefutable miracle. Am I not a Christian? Have I not full faith in my Lord Christ? Only two years ago, was I not sworn enemy of this Christ and His followers? With this hand, now so eager in His service, how many papers have I scribbled off in the heat of my scorn for Him? This tongue, which today is always ready to witness to the one great mercy of Christ, has here-to-fore poured what unrestrained contempt on that Holy Name?
>
> In former days did anyone think or even dream that I would become a Christian? Could anyone have conceived in those days that this man, so proud of the Hindu religion, would propose to forsake it, and glory in the Bible and abandon his old faith ? (169)

(f) Panditha Ramabai.

Panditha Ramabai was born in 1858 in a Maratha Brahmin

family. She happened to read St. Luke's Gospel. She felt that Hinduism did not fulfil her deeper spiritual needs.

> Hindu religion held no hope for me: the Brahmo religion was not a very definite one. For it is nothing but what a man makes for himself. He chooses and gathers whatever seems good to him from all religions for his own use. The Brahmo religion has no other foundation than man's own natural light and the sense of right and wrong which he possesses in common with all humankind. it could not and did not satisfy me. (170)

> I asked the sister who instructed me what it was that made the Christians care for, and reclaim, the 'fallen women'. She read to me the story of Christ meeting the Samaritan woman and His wonderful discourse on the nature of the true worship and explained it to me. She spoke of the infinite love of Christ for sinners. He did not despise them, but came to save them. I realized after reading the fourth chapter of St.John's Gospel, that Christ was truly the Divine Saviour. No one but He, could transform and uplift the downtrodden womanhood of India and of every land.
>
> Thus my heart was drawn to this religion of Christ. I was intellectually convinced of its truth on reading a book written by Father Goreh, and was baptized in the Church of England, in the later part of 1863, while living with the Sisters at Wantage. I was comparatively happy and felt a great joy in finding a new religion which was better than any other religion I had known before. I knew fully well that it would displease my friends and my countrymen very much : but I have never regretted having taken the step. I was hungry for something better than what the Hindu Sastras gave. I found it in the Christian Bible and was satisfied. (171)

(g) Sadhu Sunder Singh.

Sunder Singh's father belonged to the Sikh religion and lived in Rampur,a small village in the state of Punjab. He was a rich land owner and lived in comfort . The Sikh religion combined the best of Hinduism and Islam with Guru Nanak as the founder. Sunder was born on 1st September 1889. Like St.Paul, Sunder Singh saw in a vision the Risen

Christ, who said, 'Why do you persecute me? See, I have died on the Cross for you and for the whole humankind'. He was baptized at Simla on 3rd September 1905. He had to undergo a lot of suffering because of his conversion to Christianity. He wrote that he learnt many things during his times of meditation.

> When I spent hours at His feet in prayer, I found enlightenment and God taught me so many things that I cannot express them even in my own language. Sit at the Master's feet in prayer; it is the greatest Theological College in this world. We know about theology. He is the source of theology. He explains in a few seconds a truth that has taken years to be understood. Whatever I have learnt, has been learnt only at His feet. I have found at His feet in prayer not only learning but life also. (172)

His final visit to Tibet was on 18th April 1929. This brought the end of the earthly ministry of Sadhu Sunder Singh. All efforts to find out what had happened to him and his followers had failed. It is assumed that he might have died in any one of the dangerous routes he had traveled or he could have died as a martyr for preaching the gospel in Tibet, which did not permit Christian preaching.

3.13 Mass conversions.

When the Christian Gospel was preached in Tamilnadu as well as in other parts of India, in addition to individual conversions, people in great masses (from other faiths) from the socially oppressed and economically backward communities were converted to Christianity. The Christian Gospel gave them the great hope of liberation from social oppression and economic backwardness.

(i) The social and economic conditions of the mass movement (group - movement) conversions.

Caste discrimination in Tamil society was one of the main reasons for the social oppression of many oppressed communities in Tamilnadu. There were several kinds of social oppression. The people of low castes lived in a segregated area in any village. They were not allowed to buy land or build houses in the colonies of high caste people.

> The abode of a Chandala and a Swapaca (low caste) must be out of the town; they must not have the use of entire vessels; their sole wealth must be dogs and asses. Their clothes must be the mantles of the deceased; their dishes for food were broken pots; their ornaments were rusty iron; continually must they roam from place to place. Let no man, who regards his duty, religious and civil, hold any conversation with them; let their transactions be confined to themselves and their marriages be only between equals. Let food be given to them in potsherds, but not by the hand of the giver; and let them not walk by night in cities and towns. (173)

People of all castes used public roads normally. However, people of low castes were not allowed to take out marriage or funeral processions along the streets where Brahmins lived. Low caste people were not allowed to draw water from the wells used by high caste people. The low caste people had to draw water usually from a distant well allotted for them. The caste system created an attitude of inferiority in the minds of the low caste people.

> As a degraded people, the Depressed Classes were expected to follow a code of behaviour according to which any man from the Depressed Classes may not do anything which will raise him above his appointed station in life. He should not dress in a style superior to that of his status, nor should his wife adorn herself with ornaments after the fashion of the high caste Hindu women.

> He should not have a house better nor bigger than the houses of other people in their village. He should not own land or be independent. He should not take to new and more remunerative services except those which are necessary. (174)

The castes within which the Christian mass movement had taken place, with few exceptions, were very poor. Their earnings were very marginal. They suffered a lot because of great debts. Very few people owned their own houses. Many people lived in huts and thatched sheds.

The Christian gospel has brought spiritual, social and economic liberation to people from oppressed communities, as Jesus Christ described about the purpose of His Mission.

> The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,
> because he has anointed me
> to bring good news to the poor.
> He has sent me to proclaim release
> to the captives
> and recovery of sight to the blind,
> to let the oppressed go free,
> to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour. (175)
> (St.Luke 4:18,19)

> Changes in social characteristics and standards and in the whole social pattern are taking place among groups that have embraced Christianity in mass (group)movement...these converts have learnt to worship God as revealed in Christ and have established habits of worship; they have acquired concepts of God and of themselves in relation to Him (Christ) that have powerfully affected their social standards, their conduct and in the course of time, their status in their villages... centuries of acquiescence in the Hindu assignment to them of menial work and of degraded social status have produced in them numerous inhibitions. The karma (according to Hindu religion) doctrine that their degradation is due to their misconduct in previous lives has strengthened these inhibitions. But Christian teaching, followed by active Christian worship has introduced a new force into their lives strong enough to destroy those inhibitions and to restore the possibility of normal response to stimulation ... As these old inhibitions are broken, unexpected powers are released. They see opportunities and take hold of them with a

> confidence they had never known before ... Some of the most significant examples of this new power to recognize and respond came from areas where Christians are found working as tailors, carpenters, masons, gardeners, watch-repairers etc., etc., (176)
>
> Christianity has improved the economic condition of mass movement converts by breaking down inhibitions and occupational restrictions. (177)

At present, many Christians have experienced tremendous spiritual, social and economic transformation. They have become teachers, engineers, doctors, priests and Bishops.

> Mass movements in all the states of India and the conversion of such masses and the education and uplift of the depressed people,the untouchables, has produced thousands of teachers, doctors and nurses. These were social reformers who brought the unlimited resources as personal and committed servants to bring about changes that are much needed for our low standard of living. Recently, a Minister of state made a significant statement in a Conference that the Untouchables who were denied the opportunity for education by the religion of this land, now blossom forth because of Christianity and conversion, to be our teachers and educators for the downtrodden people. How true this is, in the states of Kerala, Tamilnadu, Andhra, Madhya Pradesh, Bihar, Punjab, etc., (178)

3.14 The establishment of the Church.

As a result of individual and mass conversions, many people became Christians and members of the various Churches. These Churches were established and the establishment of Churches was considered part of the Mission of the Christian Church.

The following are the statistics regarding the growth of the established Churches and the number of the members in the Christian community in Tamilnadu.

The following table for Tamilnadu(without Pondicherry) can be taken as fairly reliable upto 1951 and as accurate as far as the official statistics go, after 1951.

Year	Christian community in Tamilnadu
1871	487,000
1881	603,000
1891	654,000
1901	748,000

Year	Christian community in Tamilnadu
1911	882,000
1921	963,000
1931	1,148,000
1941	1,308,000
1951	1,465,000
1961	1,763,000
1971	2,368,000
1981	2,798,000

On the basis of these figures, the percentage of the Christian community in the whole population of the present Tamilnadu is given below.

Year	Percentage
1901	3.86
1911	4.22
1921	4.45
1931	4.89
1941	4.98
1951	4.87
1961	5.23
1971	5.75
1981	5.78 (179)

3.15 Social services.

Rendering social services through establishing institutions, was also considered part of the Mission of the Christian Church.

> Then Jesus Christ went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and proclaiming the good news of the kingdom and healing every disease and every sickness.(180)
> (St.Matthew 9:35)

The Lord Jesus Christ considered preaching, teaching and healing as His Mission. The Christian Church also considered Christ's Mission as her Mission and rendered social services in the field of education and healing.

(i) Educational institutions.

The Christian Church established many educational institutions, which catered for the educational needs of the people.

> As in most countries of the world, the strongest factor instrumental for social change in Tamilnadu during the 19th and 20th centuries was the development of education causing not only the rise of new classes of society, but also loosening the rigidity of class differences by its tendency for universal spreading. Tamilnadu has the distinction of its Christianity having stimulated that process much earlier and for a long time more strongly than Christians in any other region of India. (181)

Ziegenbalg and other German missionaries started 3 schools in Tranquebar, Cuddalore, Madras, Thanjavur and Tiruchirappalli. Sullivan, a British resident of Thanjavur, together with C.F. Schwartz, a Christian missionary established in 1787 what became known as provincial schools in many villages in the areas of Thanjavur, Ramanathapuram and Sivaganga with annual grants by the East India Company.

> In Madras and other military stations, schools for Eurasians abounded. Tamil schools were run by the Society for Propagation of Christian Knowledge in the spirit of German pietism and by the London Missionary Society and company chaplains experimented broadly in the

educational field. One of them, Andrew Bell at the end of the 18th century developed at the Male Orphan Asylum in Madras on the basis of Tamil methods. What he brought to Britain was the 'Madras System of Education', a system - elder children monitoring younger ones - which played a large role in the European educational renaissance of the early 19th century and was revived in Madras by Bishop Middleton in 1819 / 20. (182)

Missionaries founded many schools to produce leaders for the Church.

> Before the company did anything on the education clause, James Hough went ahead using private and mission funds to fund schools in Tirunelveli district. Rhenius who had probably been called to Madras primarily as educational missionary, (183) later cultivated that system with fervour. He employed non-Christian teachers at his schools in Madras and had to yield gradually to caste distinctions. (184) Those distinctions could be abandoned by him only when he served in the south from 1820 to 1835. During that time, he opened no fewer than one hundred and seven smaller schools, positively as means of mission work, as incentive for villages to call the missionary (185) and as tools to enable every individual, so willing, to get to know the scriptural basis of the Christian faith by reading it for himself or herself as well as means to produce future helpers and leaders for the Church.

Later on, high schools and colleges were started with provision for hostels for the students to stay on the college campus.

> The opening of the Madras University in 1857 on the basis of the Educational Despatch facilitated the development of full-fledged missionary colleges affiliated to that University after the pattern of the University of London allowing missionaries to exert influence on policy matters as fellows of the University. The first of those Christian institutions affiliated was (in 1865) the Central Institution, which was upgraded to become the Madras Christian College. This happened under William Miller after eight years of stagnation (1855-63). The Madras Christian College competing with the Presidency College at Madras gathered strength in 1874-6 by securing the cooperation of all the Protestant missions of British background at Madras. It was followed by

its Roman Catholic competitor, the St. Joseph's College, first at Nagappattinam, affiliated to Madras University in 1866, from 1883 at Tiruchirappalli. At that new place, it soon outstripped in size and excellence its Protestant rival,after it had overcome strong opposition on the part of the Society of the Propagation of the Gospel there. It attained a high reputation through Fr.Sewell, a former officer in the British army of the Anglican Church membership and attracted students in great numbers also from Kerala, because the Carmelites there hesitated to found an English medium college for fear of the Protestant colour of that language.

At Palayamkottai / Tirunelveli, close competition arose between Cruickshanks' Anglo - Vernacular School and the Hindu College, which had been started as a rival school, a competition from which emerged the new C.M.S. College of 1880 (St. John's College). The Society for the Propagation of the Gospel tried to concentrate its strength in the south on Caldwell College, Tuticorin(which developed out of the seminary of Sawyerpuram). It was affiliated to Madras University in 1881; its place was later (1962) taken by Pope's College, Sawyerpuram. The same mission maintained two larger colleges at Thanjavur and Tiruchirappalli (Bishop Heber College). Its other college at Madras (Royapettah) and the Church of Scotland Mission College there were virtually absorbed by the Madras Christian College. Equally ambitious in this field was the Wesleyan Mission. But its college at Nagappattinam / Mannargudi (Findlay College 1884-1935) had to be closed after five decades of outstanding work. The Scot Christian College at Madurai, the Voorhees College at Vellore and, as a very late addition, the Tranquebar Bishop Manickam Lutheran College at Porayar (1974) cover important church areas in between. (186)

(ii) Hospitals and Dispensaries.

The Christian Church considered the healing ministry as part of its Mission and started many hospitals and dispensaries in many cities, towns and villages. There are leading Christian hospitals in the cities of Tamilnadu like Madras, Madurai, Coimbatore, Tiruchirapalli, Vellore, Tirukoilur, Karur, Dharapuram, Tirunelveli, Nagercoil etc. The healing ministry is part of the Mission of the Church.

This (Third) chapter has so far dealt with the history of the Church in Tamilnadu and its Mission. Chapter four will deal with a theological reappraisal of the Christian Mission in Tamilnadu in the light of the challenges of the Dravida Kazhagam Movement.

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CHAPTER IV

THE CHRISTIAN MISSION IN TAMILNADU IN THE LIGHT OF THE DRAVIDIAN CHALLENGE : A THEOLOGICAL REAPPRAISAL

The spirit of missions is the spirit of our master : the very genius of His religion. A diffusive philanthropy of Christianity itself.(1)
David Livingstone

The Church as a whole must be concerned with both evangelism and social action. It is not a case of either-or; it is both-and. Anything less is only a pastoral (and partial) gospel, not the whole counsel of God. (2) (Robert D.De Haan)

The Church cannot be restricted to the sanctuary. The Church is not just a preaching Church or a sacramental Church alone, but is involved in the total life of the human being, which is another way of saying religion has implications in society. (3) (Francis J. Lally)

What matters in the Church is not religion but the form of Christ and its taking form amidst a band of men. (4) (Dietrich Bonhoeffer)

Justice delayed is justice denied. (5)

But let justice roll down like waters,
and righteousness like an everflowing stream. (6)
(Amos 5:24. New Revised Standard Version)

This chapter deals with a theological reappraisal of the Mission of the Christian Church in Tamilnadu in the light of the challenge of the Dravida Kazhagam Movement. This movement has presented a two-fold challenge of social justice and of political concern. Establishing the Church (congregations) along with rendering social service through educational institutions and hospitals had been the general and the usual understanding of the Mission of the Church. The Christian Church in Tamilnadu also held the same old usual concept of the Mission of the Church. A

theological reappraisal of the Christian Mission in the light of the Dravidian challenge of social justice and political concern leads to a search for the answers to the following questions.

What is the theological basis for social justice and the political concern of the Church and for her involvement in the issues of social justice, social action and political concern ?

What is the role of the Christian Church in Tamilnadu in bringing about social justice in the light of the Dravidian challenge of social justice? What is the role of Christian Church in Tamilnadu in implementing her political concern in the light of the Dravidian challenge of the Dravidian political action? The first part of this chapter deals with Christian Mission and social justice while the second part deals with Christian Mission and political concern.

4.1 Christian Mission and social justice.

The Christian Mission of the Church is Christ's Mission. Christ included social justice in the agenda of His Mission.

(i) Social justice : Theological basis and Theological reappraisal of Christian Mission of social justice.

The Dravidian challenge of social justice has been dealt with in detail in the latter part of the second chapter. This section will refer to the Dravidian challenge wherever it is appropriate and necessary.

There are many passages in the Bible which declare that God is the God of justice and that He intervenes in situations of social injustice to bring about social justice.

(ii) Social justice in the liberation of the oppressed Hebrew people.

The Hebrews were oppressed by the Egyptian King Pharaoh, in the year approximately about 1491 B.C. The Lord chose Moses to remove that injustice and oppression and liberated the Hebrew people from such oppression. The following passage indicates God's concern about social justice and His determination to liberate the oppressed Hebrews from the Egyptian oppression.

> Then the Lord said, "I have observed the misery of my people who are in Egypt; I have heard their cry on account of their taskmasters. Indeed, I know their sufferings,
>
> and I have come down to deliver them from the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land to a good and broad land, a land flowing with milk and honey."... (7) (Exodus 3:7-8)

God continues to be concerned about social justice in our present world and continues to call leaders for the task of liberating oppressed people. A theological reappraisal of the Christian Mission of social justice lies in awakening the Church in Tamilnadu, to identify contemporary areas of similar social and economic oppression, to discover ways and means of liberation and to implement effective liberation, like Moses a liberator in Egypt and in the light of the Dravidian challenge of social liberation of the oppressed communities in Tamilnadu.

(iii) The ten commandments and social justice.

Some of the commandments are foundations which promote social justice. The commandment of resting and giving rest to the servants on the seventh day speak about social justice. The commandments which prohibit the following social crimes like committing murder, committing adultery, stealing, bearing false witness against one's neighbour and coveting one's neighbour's property are the pillars which promote social justice.

> Six days you shall labour and do all your work.
>
> But the seventh day is a sabbath to the LORD your God; you shall not do any work - you, your son or your daughter, your male or female slave, your livestock, or the alien resident in your towns.
>
> Honour your father and your mother,...
>
> You shall not murder.
>
> You shall not commit adultery.
>
> You shall not steal.
>
> You shall not bear false witness against your neighbour.
>
> ... You shall not covet your neighbour's wife, or male or female slave, or ox, or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbour. (8)
>
> (Exodus 20:9,10,12a,13-16,17b)

A theological reappraisal of the Church's Mission of social justice lies in educating and enabling the Church in Tamilnadu to serve as the conscience of society and to awaken moral conscientiousness, like Moses, the law giver and the Dravidian Movement which has challenged the immorality of the tradition of temple girls.

(iv) The two commandments of Jesus Christ and social justice.

The ten commandments promote social justice through

their prohibitions, asking people not to commit murder, not to commit adultery, not to steal etc., etc. But the two commandments of Jesus Christ are the pillars of social justice through their positive commandment of loving God and loving one's neighbour as himself or herself. If people love their neighbours as themselves, there will not be any social injustice at all. On the other hand, love will transcend all standards of justice.

> Jesus answered, "The first is, 'Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one;
>
> you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength.'
>
> The second is this, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these." (9) (St.Mark 12:29-31)

A theological reappraisal of Church's Mission of social justice lies in educating people to love God and to love their neighbours as themselves.

(v) Social justice in the book of Leviticus.

The writer of the book of Leviticus exhorts the people to do justice, by using honest balances and honest weights and by judging neighbours without partiality.

> You shall not defraud your neighbour; you shall not steal; and you shall not keep for yourself the wages of a labourer until morning.
>
> You shall not render an unjust judgement; you shall not be partial to the poor or defer to the great: with justice you shall judge your neighbour.
>
> You shall not cheat in measuring length, weight or quantity.
>
> You shall have honest balances, honest weights, an honest ephah, and an honest hin: I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt. (10) (Leviticus 19:13,15,35,36)

The writer of the book of Leviticus exhorts the people to do justice; he writes that the fiftieth year is the year of Jubilee and therefore, liberty should be proclaimed throughout the land in the Jubilee year and possessions and land pledged by the poor people to rich landlords, should be returned by the rich landlords to the poor.

> And you shall hallow the fiftieth year and you shall proclaim liberty throughout the land to all its inhabitants. It shall be a Jubilee for you: you shall return, every one of you to your property and every one of you to your family.
>
> In this year of Jubilee you shall return, every one of you, to your property.
>
> When you make a sale to your neighbour or buy from your neighbour, you shall not cheat one another.
>
> You shall not cheat one another, but you shall fear your God; for I am the LORD your God. (11)
>
> (Leviticus 25:10,13,14,17)

This practice of the rich landlords returning the pledged land and the pledged property to the poor in the jubilee year prevents the rich becoming richer and the poor becoming poorer. This paves the way for social justice and economic equality. The Christian Church has a Mission to envisage and implement through legislative bodies, appropriate land and property reforms in such a way to prevent accumulation of wealth with a few people and to ensure equitable distribution of wealth.

A theological reappraisal of Christian Mission of social justice lies in promoting economic equality in society and ensuring honesty and justice in trade and commerce by encouraging the use of honest weights and balances by traders, in the light of the challenge of the Dravidian Movement which has been struggling to promote

economic equality and honesty in trade and commerce.

(v) Prophets and social justice.

Prophets such as Isaiah, Amos, Micah, Jeremiah and other writers of the books of the Bible have exhorted people to do acts of social justice and condemned social injustices.

(vi) The prophet Isaiah on justice.

The Prophet Isaiah advises the people to seek justice.

> learn to do good;
> seek justice,
> rescue the oppressed,
> defend the orphan,
> plead for the widow. (12) (Isaiah 1:17)

The Prophet Isaiah prophesies that the Messiah, the Lord's servant would bring about justice, preserving and protecting the marginalised people, who are like the bruised reed and dimly burning wick.

> Here is my servant, whom I uphold,
> my chosen, in whom my soul delights;
> I have put my spirit upon him;
> he will bring forth justice to the nations.
>
> He will not cry or lift up his voice,
> or make it heard in the street;
>
> a bruised reed he will not break,
> and a dimly burning wick he will not quench;
> he will faithfully bring forth justice. (13)
> (Isaiah 42:1-3)

A theological reappraisal of the Church's Mission of social justice lies in raising prophetic voices like Isaiah, by fulfilling the Mission of the Lord's Servant, the Mission of rescuing the oppressed, defending the orphans, pleading for the widow and bringing forth justice to the nations, by sustaining and supporting

oppressed people (the bruised reed and dimly burning wick), in the light of the challenge of the Dravidian Movement which has been toiling to liberate the oppressed communities in Tamilnadu from social oppression.

(vii) The prophet Amos on justice.

The following are the observations of the Prophet Amos on Justice :

> But let justice roll down like waters,
> and righteousness like an everflowing stream.(14)
> (Amos 5:24)
>
> Therefore because you trample on the poor
> and take from them levies of grain,
> you have built houses of hewn stone,
> but you shall not live in them;
> you have planted pleasant vineyards,
> but you shall not drink their wine.
>
> Seek good and not evil,
> that you may live;...
>
> Hate evil and love good,
> and establish justice in the gate;... (15)
> (Amos 5:11,14a,15a)
>
> Hear this, you that trample on the needy,
> and bring to ruin the poor of the land,
>
> saying, "When will the new moon be over
> so that we may sell grain;
> and the sabbath,
> so that we may offer wheat for sale?
> We will make the ephah small and
> the shekel great,
> and practice deceit with false balances,
>
> buying the poor for silver
> and the needy for a pair of sandals,
> and selling the sweepings of the wheat." (16)
> (Amos 8:4-6)
>
> Thus says the LORD:
> For three transgressions of Israel,
> and for four, I will not revoke the punishment;
> because they sell the righteous for silver,
> and the needy for a pair of sandals -
>
> they who trample the head of the
> poor into the dust of the earth,
> and push the afflicted out of the way; ... (17)
> (Amos 2:6,7a)

A theological reappraisal of Christian Mission of social justice lies in making prophetic utterances on justice like the prophet Amos, in discovering and decrying various types of injustice and oppression of the poor in the Church and society, in discovering and preventing contemporary equivalents of the "sale of the righteous for silver and the needy for a pair of sandals" and in encouraging honesty in trade, in the light of the Dravidian challenge of social liberation of the oppressed communities in Tamilnadu.

(viii) The prophet Micah on justice.

The Prophet Micah also exhorts people to do justice.

> He has told you, O mortal, what is good;
> and what does the Lord require of you
> but to do justice, and to love kindness,
> and to walk humbly with your God? (18) (Micah 6:8)

A theological reappraisal of the Church's Mission of social justice lies in awakening the conscience of the nation, the Church and the society, in such a way that its life, work and policy will reflect a deep sense of justice, kindness and humility, in the light of the Dravidian challenge of creating an awareness among the people in Tamilnadu, regarding social oppression and social injustices.

(ix) The prophet Jeremiah on justice.

The Prophet Jeremiah declares that God would judge those who do injustice to the poor and the needy.

> Woe to him who builds his house
> by unrighteousness,
> and his upper rooms by injustice;
> who makes his neighbours work for nothing,

and does not give them their wages;

who says, "I will build myself a spacious house
with large upper rooms."
and who cuts out windows for it,
paneling it with cedar,
and painting it with vermilion.

Are you a king because you compete in cedar?
Did not your father eat and drink
and do justice and righteousness?
Then it was well with him.

He judged the cause of the poor and needy;
then it was well.
Is not this to know me? says the LORD.

But your eyes and heart
are only on your dishonest gain
for shedding innocent blood,
and for practicing oppression and violence. (19)
(Jeremiah 22:13-17)

A theological reappraisal of Christian Mission of social justice lies in ensuring justice in the area of management of labour relations and just wages, in the light of the Dravidian challenge of protest against the exploitation of poor labourers. The Christian Church may plan to fulfil this Mission through a department for "Justice Concerns". This department should be fully equipped for awakening a sense of justice among the people, for identifying injustices in the Church and society and for rectifying them.

(x) King David on justice.

King David, the writer of the book of Psalms writes that God executes justice for the poor.

I know that the LORD maintains
the cause of the needy,
and executes justice for the poor. (20)
(Psalm 140:12)

(xi) King Solomon on Justice.

King Solomon writes that those who are kind to the poor, honour the Lord.

> Those who oppress the poor insult their Maker,
> but those who are kind to the needy honour
> him. (21) (Proverbs 14:31)

> Whoever is kind to the poor lends to the LORD,
> and will be repaid in full. (22) (Proverbs 19:17)

(xii) Hannah, the mother of the prophet Samuel on justice.

Hannah, the mother of the Prophet Samuel, praises the the Lord who brings about the social justice by upholding the poor in the society.

> He (The LORD) raises up the poor from the dust;
> he lifts the needy from the ash heap,
> to make them sit with princes
> and inherit a seat of honour. (23) (I Samuel 2:8)

(xiii) John the baptist on justice.

John the Baptist preached that the inequalities in the society would be removed.

> Every valley shall be filled,
> and every mountain and hill shall be made low,
> and the crooked shall be made straight,
> and the rough ways made smooth;
>
> and all flesh shall see the salvation of God.(24)
> (St.Luke 3:5,6)

(xiv) Mary, the mother of the Lord Jesus Christ and justice.

Mary, the mother of the Lord Jesus praises God, for He removes the social inequalities and brings about the social justice, by lifting up the lowly and bringing down the powerful.

> "My soul magnifies the Lord,
> and my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour,

for he has looked with favour on
the lowliness of his servant.

He has brought down the
powerful from their thrones,
and lifted up the lowly;

he has filled the hungry with good things,
and sent the rich away empty." (25)
(St. Luke 1:47,48a,52,53)

A theological reappraisal of Church's Mission of social justice lies in encouraging dejected people by reminding them that God is a God of JUSTICE, that God executes justice for the poor and the oppressed, that God removes injustices and inequalities in the Church and society. The Church should sound a note of hope and optimism and should serve as an instrument of justice in the hands of God to remove injustices.

4.2 Justice through life and teachings of Jesus Christ

The life and teachings of Jesus Christ advocate social justice.

(i) Jesus Christ and social justice.

When Jesus Christ started His ministry in Nazareth, He read the following passage (from the book of the Prophet Isaiah) as His manifesto of justice, which describes Jesus' concern for the social justice and His concern for proclaiming freedom and liberty to the oppressed.

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,
because he has anointed me
to bring good news to the poor.
He has sent me to proclaim
release to the captives
and recovery of sight to the blind,
to let the oppressed go free,

to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour. (26)
(St.Luke 4:18,19)

The act of bringing about social justice (to proclaim release to the captives ... to set at liberty those who are oppressed) was a part of Christ's Mission. The Christian Church in Tamilnadu needs to follow Jesus Christ. A theological reappraisal of Church's Mission of social justice in Tamilnadu lies in following the example of her Master, Jesus Christ and in performing His Mission which could bring about social justice by releasing the captives and liberating the oppressed, in the light of the Dravidian challenge of social liberation of the oppressed communities in Tamilnadu.

Helping people in need (the hungry, the thirsty, the sick, the prisoners, the naked, the strangers, etc.,) is an act of social justice. These deeds of social justice are equal to the services rendered to God as per the words of our Lord Jesus Christ.

> for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me,
>
> I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me. I was in prison and you visited me.
>
> Then the righteous will answer him, Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food, or thirsty and gave you something to drink?
>
> And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you, or naked and gave you clothing?
>
> And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you?
>
> And the king will answer them, "Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me." (27) (St.Matthew 25:35-40)

The Church should continue to fulfil her Mission of justice by establishing and managing orphanages, homes

for the destitute (which could provide food to the hungry and clothes to the naked), hospitals, which could provide healing for the sick. The Church has a definite Mission to prisoners and their families too.

(ii) Justice through the incarnation of God as identification with the poor.

God identified himself with the poor and raised their status through His birth in a poor carpenter's family. The incarnation of God (the source of divine power, glory, majesty and wisdom) in a poor carpenter's family is itself an act of divine social justice, because the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ was easily available and accessible to all the people, especially to the poor and to simple people. Jesus' father Joseph was an ordinary carpenter in Nazareth which is now situated in Israel. The people of Nazareth spoke contemptuously of Jesus.

> Is not this the carpenter's son?
> Is not his mother called Mary?
> And are not his brothers James
> and Joseph and Simon and Judas? (28)
> (St.Matthew 13:55)

Mary, the mother of Jesus was a poor peasant woman. Jesus was born in a cattle shed in Bethlehem and was laid in a manger, wrapped in bands of cloth.

> Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David.
>
> He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child.
>
> While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child.

> And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn. (29) (St.Luke 2:4-7)

Christ, the incarnate God identified Himself with the poor, but, at the same time, He was simple, available and accessible to and concerned for all the people (the poor and the rich).

Jesus was concerned for the poor and asked a rich young man to sell his possessions and give the money to the poor.

> Jesus said to him (rich man), "If you wish to be perfect, go, sell your possessions, and give the money to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; then come, follow me." (30) (St.Matthew 19:21)

Jesus was concerned for the rich chief tax collector Zacchaeus also.

> A man was there named Zacchaeus; he was a chief tax collector and was rich.
>
> When Jesus came to the place, he looked up and said to him, "Zacchaeus, hurry and come down; for I must stay at your house today." (31) (St.Luke 19:2,5)

Likewise, the Church should be known for its simplicity and its Mission of justice should be available and accessible to all the people, both the poor and the rich. The Dravida Kazhagam Movement also identified itself with the poor, the oppressed and the downtrodden.

A theological reappraisal of Christian Mission in Tamilnadu lies in the Church's identifying with social justice and making its services available and accessible to

the poor and the oppressed, following the example of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the light of the Dravidian Movement, namely its identification with the poor and the oppressed.

(iii) Justice in the announcement of the good news first to the shepherds.

The first announcement about the birth of the Lord and Saviour Jesus to the poor and simple people like the shepherds in that region is another act of social justice. Though the shepherds were the illiterate simple people not treated with great respect, they were given preference and it was an act of justice. The news of the birth of the Saviour brought great joy to all the people including the unsophisticated shepherds.

> In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night.
>
> But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for see-I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people;
>
> to you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is the Messiah, the Lord.
>
> This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger." (32) (St.Luke 2:8,10-12)

The leaders of the Dravida Kazhagam Movement spoke to the poor and illiterate non-Brahmin masses about their liberation from the domination of Brahmins. The dailies, journals and magazines published by this movement communicated this information of such liberation to all the poor, downtrodden and the oppressed, even in remote villages.

The Church has a Mission to communicate to all people, especially the oppressed and the downtrodden, that Jesus Christ is the Saviour and Liberator of humankind from all forces of evil and injustice.

(iv) Justice revealed through Jesus' selection of the fishermen and tax collectors as His disciples.

The fishermen and the tax collectors were considered as those who belonged to the lower sections in society. Jesus' selection of ordinary and poor fishermen and tax collectors as His disciples, is another act of social justice.

> As Jesus passed along the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and his brother Andrew casting a net into the sea - for they were fishermen.
>
> And Jesus said to them, "Follow me and I will make you fish for people."
>
> And immediately they left their nets and followed him.
>
> As he went a little further, he saw James son of Zebedee and his brother John, who were in their boat mending the nets.
>
> Immediately he called them; and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired men, and followed him. (33). (St.Mark 1:16-20)
>
> As Jesus was walking along, he saw a man called Matthew sitting at the tax booth; and he said to him, "Follow me." And he got up and followed him. (34) (St.Matthew 9:9)

Jesus gave fishermen and tax collectors who were not much regarded in society, the opportunity to serve as His disciples. Jesus did justice to fishermen and tax collectors by calling them and giving them such an opportunity to serve as His disciples and later on as the apostles of the Church.

The Dravida Kazhagam Movement as part of justice gave the ordinary people in the society an opportunity to become leaders of this movement. This opportunity given to them, enabled them to become great writers and speakers.

A theological reappraisal of Church's Mission of social justice lies in extending the opportunities of leadership to the ordinary and neglected people in society, who have been denied such opportunities of leadership, in the light of the challenge of the Dravidian Movement which had extended opportunities of leadership to ordinary people.

(v) Justice in Jesus' association with tax collectors and sinners.

Tax collectors and sinners were treated as outcastes in society during the time when Jesus lived. But Jesus did justice to them by accepting them and dining with them.

> And as he (Jesus) sat at dinner in the house, many tax collectors and sinners came and were sitting with him and his disciples.
>
> When the Pharisees saw this, they said to his disciples, "Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?"
>
> But when he heard this, he said, "Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick.
>
> Go and learn what this means, 'I desire mercy, not sacrifice.' For I have come to call not the righteous but sinners." (35) (St.Matthew 9:10-13)

Zacchaeus was a chief tax collector in Jericho. He was held in great contempt in his society and treated as an outcaste and a sinner. He wanted to see Jesus and since he was short in stature, he climbed a sycamore tree which

Jesus had to pass by. Though the society treated Zacchaeus as an outcaste, Jesus did justice to him, by going to his house as his guest and accepting him as a son of Abraham.

> A man was there named Zacchaeus; he was a chief tax collector and was rich.
>
> He was trying to see who Jesus was, ...
>
> So he ran ahead and climbed a sycamore tree to see him,...
>
> When Jesus came to the place, he looked up and said to him, "Zacchaeus, hurry and come down; for I must stay at your house today."
>
> So he hurried down and was happy to welcome him.
>
> All who saw it began to grumble and said, "He has gone to be the guest of one who is a sinner."
>
> Zacchaeus stood there and said to the Lord, "Look, half of my possessions, Lord, I will give to the poor; and if I have defrauded anyone of anything, I will pay back four times as much."
>
> Then Jesus said to him, "Today salvation has come to this house, because he too is a son of Abraham.
>
> For the Son of Man came to seek out and to save the lost." (36) (St.Luke 19:2,3a,4a,5-10)

The Church tends to develop and continue its traditional attitude of condemning defaulters in society. Jesus has shown the right attitude, in His acceptance of the unrighteous, but repentant tax collector Zacchaeus. The Church has a definite Mission to accept and correct (not to condemn) defaulters such as the fallen women in society. A theological reappraisal of Church's Mission of social justice is not to condemn defaulters and outcastes in society but to give them an opportunity to repent, correct themselves and enter into the mainstream of society and to accept them as Jesus did and as the <u>Dravidian</u> Movement gave the oppressed

communities, the outcastes an opportunity to enter into the mainstream of society.

(vi) Justice revealed through Jesus' association with the Samaritans.

Though the Jews had entertained racial prejudice against the Samaritans, Jesus (though He was a Jew Himself) did justice to the Samaritans through His loving and charitable association with them.

(a) The origin of the Samaritans.

The Jews and Samaritans held different views about the origin of the Samaritans. The Jews thought of the Samaritans as the descendants of the heathen colonists of Samaria. The following section portrays the Jewish view, the Samaritan view, the objective view and the Jewish racial prejudices against the Samaritans.

> This view identifies the Samaritans as the descendants of the colonists (non-Jewish gentiles) whom Sahlmanesar, king of Assyria is said to have brought (to the cities of Samaria) from Cutha, Babylon, Hamath and other foreign parts after he had conquered Samaria in 722 B.C. and deported the native population. (37)
>
> The king of Assyria brought people from Babylon, Cuthah, Avva, Hamath, and Sepharvaim, and placed them in the cities of Samaria in place of the people of Israel; they took possession of Samaria, and settled in its cities. (38)
> (II Kings 17:24)

The Samaritans think of themselves as the descendants of the Jews and not of Gentiles.

> The Samaritans, for their part dismiss this story as a vile Jewish coward. The deportation in 722 B.C. they say, was neither total nor final; the exiles were, in fact, repatriated after fifty five years. It is the descendants of these native Israelites that they (the Samaritans)

claim to be ... Admittedly, Pagan colonists were introduced by the Assyrian monarchs ; but these must not be confused with the true, native Israelites. (39)

There is some fact in each of these views and the truth probably lies between these two views.

...the biblical account does not prove, however, that the Jews are right in regarding the Samaritans as the mere offspring of the (Gentile) colonists rather than the true scions of Israel; and there is, in fact, much to support the Samaritan claim ... the most plausible conclusion is, then, after the fall of Samaria in 722 B.C., the local population consisted of two distinct elements living side by side -

(a) the remnants of the native Israelites (Jews) and (b) the foreign colonists. (40)

(b) The Jewish racial prejudice against the Samaritans.

However, the Jews continued to harbour racial prejudice against the Samaritans. At the time of Zerubbabel about 535 B.C., the Samaritans came to him and sought an alliance with the returned Jewish captives for building the temple. But the returned Jewish captives rejected the alliance with the Samaritans.

they (the Samaritans) approached Zerubbabel and the heads of families and said to them, "Let us build with you, for we worship your God as you do, and we have been sacrificing to him ever since the days of King Esarhaddon of Assyria who brought us here."

But Zerubbabel, Jeshua, and the rest of the heads of families in Israel said to them, "You shall have no part with us in building a house to our God; but we alone will build to the Lord, the God of Israel, as King Cyrus of Persia has commanded us." (41) (Ezra 4:2,3)

(c) Jesus' loving and charitable attitude of justice towards the Samaritans .

Though Jesus was a Jew, He was very kind and

charitable towards Samaritans. Jesus sent messengers to a Samaritan village on his way to Jerusalem. The Samaritans in that village were not willing to receive Jesus. Two of His disciples, James and John, were annoyed at this and they asked Jesus whether it was right to bring down fire from heaven and to destroy the Samaritan villagers who were unwilling to receive Jesus. Jesus did not approve of this and He rebuked His disciples for their unkind attitude towards Samaritans. Jesus had a very kind and charitable attitude towards Samaritans and did not harbour the usual Jewish racial prejudice against Samaritans.

> When the days drew near for him (Jesus) to be taken up (this indicates Jesus' ascension to heaven), he set his face to go to Jerusalem.
>
> And he sent messengers ahead of him. On their way they entered a village of the Samaritans to make ready for him;
>
> but they did not receive him, because his face was set toward Jerusalem.
>
> When his disciples James and John saw it, they said, "Lord, do you want us to command fire to come down from heaven and consume them?"
>
> But he turned and rebuked them.
>
> Then they went on to another village. (42)
> (St.Luke 9:51-56)

Once Jesus had to pass through a Samaritan city called Sychar. Jesus stopped at a well called Jacob's well. A Samaritan woman came to draw water. Jesus without any prejudice against the Samaritan woman asked her for water to drink. The Samaritan woman was shocked and surprised that, Jesus being a Jew asked her (a Samaritan woman) water to drink. Jesus without any prejudice against the Samaritan woman was very kind and charitable to her and spoke to her at length regarding the living water.

> A Samaritan woman came to draw water, and Jesus said to her, "Give me a drink."
>
> (His disciples had gone to the city to buy food.)
>
> The Samaritan woman said to him, "How is it that you, a Jew, ask a drink of me, a woman of Samaria?" (Jews do not share things in common with Samaritans.) (43) (St.John 4:7-9)

Many Samaritans also in that city believed in Jesus as the Saviour of the world; they asked Him to stay with them; He stayed with the Samaritans without any prejudice against them.

> Many Samaritans from that city believed in him because of the woman's testimony, "He told me everything I have ever done."
>
> So when the Samaritans came to him, they asked him to stay with them; and he stayed there two days. And many more believed because of his word.
>
> They said to the woman, "It is no longer because of what you said that we believe, for we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this is truly the Saviour of the world." (44) (St.John 4:39-42)

Jesus has shown the right attitude of equality among the races. The Dravida Kazhagam Movement condemned Brahmins' attitude of caste prejudice and contempt against non-Brahmins. The movement, through its literature, disproved the myth of the caste system and presented a challenge of social justice and equality of human persons of any caste.

In the light of this Dravidian challenge, and following the example of Jesus Christ, the Church has a definite Mission to condemn the caste system, the practice of caste prejudice and the prevalence of caste spirit. The Church has a definite Mission to promote Christ's attitude of equality among all human persons.

A theological reappraisal of Church's Mission of social justice is to follow the example of Jesus Christ, to condemn the caste system, the practice of caste prejudice and the prevalence of caste spirit and to promote Christ's spirit of equality among human persons of all races, castes, communities, languages and nationality.

(d) The parable of the Good Samaritan.

Though the Samaritans were hated by the Jews, Jesus (though He was a Jew), narrated the parable of the 'Good Samaritan', highly commending the loving act of the Samaritan, who helped the wounded traveller on the road, while a priest and a Levite passed by the wounded traveller without helping him. This shows Jesus' kind attitude towards Samaritans and that Jesus had no social prejudice at all.

> But a Samaritan while traveling came near him; and when he saw him, he was moved with pity.
>
> He went to him and bandaged his wounds, having poured oil and wine on them. Then he put him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him.
>
> The next day he took out two denarii, gave them to the innkeeper, and said, 'Take care of him; and when I come back, I will repay you whatever more you spend.' (45) (St.Luke 10:33-35)

(e) Jesus' commendation of the thankful Samaritan leper.

Jesus healed ten lepers and one of those healed was a Samaritan. The Samaritan leper came back to Jesus and thanked Him. Jesus highly commended the thankful Samaritan leper for his gratitude. This indicates Jesus' loving and charitable attitude towards the Samaritans.

Then one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, praising God with a loud voice.

He prostrated himself at Jesus' feet and thanked him. And he was a Samaritan.

Then Jesus asked, "Were not ten made clean? But the other nine, where are they?

Was none of them found to return and give praise to God except this foreigner?" (46)

(St.Luke 17:15-18)

Jesus has commended the loving deeds of the good Samaritan and the grateful attitude of the Samaritan leper. The Church has to appreciate the commendable qualities, deeds, efficiency and good achievements of any person, whatever caste he or she belongs to.

(f) Jesus' loving touch of the untouchable leper.

In ancient times, the lepers were considered unclean and they were not allowed to move freely in society. They should live outside the city or the village and they should shout "Unclean, Unclean", if they happened to come near the city.

> The person who has the leprous disease shall wear torn clothes and let the hair of his head be disheveled; and he shall cover his upper lip and cry out, "Unclean, unclean."
>
> He shall remain unclean as long as he has the disease; he is unclean. He shall live alone; his dwelling shall be outside the camp. (47)
>
> (Leviticus 13:45,46)

The ten lepers whom Jesus healed, kept their distance and called out to Jesus and begged Him to heal them.

> As he (Jesus) entered a village, ten lepers approached him. Keeping their distance,
>
> they called out, saying, "Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!" (48) (St.Luke 17:12-13)

A leper came to him (Jesus) begging him, and kneeling he said to him, "If you choose, you can make me clean."

Moved with pity, Jesus stretched out his hand and touched him, and said to him, "I do choose. Be made clean!"

Immediately the leprosy left him, and he was made clean. (49) (St.Mark 1:40-42)

When society considered a leper unclean and untouchable outcaste and kept the leper at a distance, Jesus was kind and charitable stretched out His hand and touched the untouchable leper and healed him.

Jesus was moved with pity, when he saw the leper; He touched the untouchable leper and healed him. When Jesus touched even the untouchable leper, is it not injustice to treat people belonging to Scheduled Castes as the untouchable?

The Dravida Kazhagam Movement has condemned this practice of the untouchability of Scheduled Castes and has presented a challenge of social justice against this unjust practice of untouchability.

In the light of Jesus' compassionate touch of the untouchable leper and in the light of the Dravidian challenge against the unjust practice of the untouchability, the Church has a definite Mission to condemn and work for the eradication of this unjust practice of untouchability of Scheduled Castes.

A theological reappraisal of Christian Mission of social justice is to follow the example of Jesus, to treat

none in society as untouchable and to condemn the unjust social practice of untouchability, in the light of the Dravidian challenge of condemning the practice of untouchability.

(g) Equality of every human person.

Jesus Christ had no social or racial prejudice at all. All racial and communal prejudices disappear in Christ; all people are equal in Christ Jesus. St.Paul wrote to the Galatians and the Roman Churches that in Christ Jesus, Jew or Greek, male or female, slave or free, all are equal.

> There is no longer Jew or Greek,
> there is no longer slave or free,
> there is no longer male and female;
> for all of you are one in Christ Jesus. (50)
> (Galatians 3:28)

> For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; the same Lord is Lord of all and is generous to all who call on him. (51)
> (Romans 10:12)

The author of the book of Genesis of the Holy Bible wrote that God created every man and every woman equally in the image of God.

> So God created humankind in his image,
> in the image of God he created them,
> male and female he created them. (52)
> (Genesis 1:27)

Peter the apostle learnt a lesson through a vision he had in Joppa that Jews and Gentiles (non-Jews) are both equal in the presence of God and Jews should not have any racial prejudice against Gentiles. So when Cornelius, an Italian (a non-Jew, Gentile) sent men to Peter asking him to come to Caesarea, the Holy Spirit asked Peter to go and Peter went there without any objection.

While Peter was still thinking about the vision, the Spirit said to him, "Look, three men are searching for you.

Now get up, go down, and go with them without hesitation; for I have sent them." (53)
(Acts 10:19,20)

and he (Peter) said to them, "You yourselves know that it is unlawful for a Jew to associate with or to visit a Gentile; but God has shown me that I should not call anyone profane or unclean. So when I was sent for, I came without objection. Now may I ask why you sent for me?" (54)
(Acts 10:28,29)

The Spirit told me to go with them and not to make a distinction between them (Gentiles) and us (Jews). (55)
(Acts 11:12)

The Holy Spirit guided Peter not to have any social prejudice against the Gentile but to accept the Gentile into the fellowship of the Church. The Dravida Kazhagam Movement condemned communal and caste prejudice between Brahmins and non-Brahmins and challenged the injustice of the caste prejudice.

A theological reappraisal of the Church's Mission of social justice is to eradicate all social and caste prejudices and to treat all persons as equal, whatever race and caste they belong to. In the light of the guidance of the Holy Spirit and the Dravidian challenge, the Church has a Mission to eradicate all prejudices of caste and to accept the members of all castes without any prejudice.

'Social justice' means complete transformation (providing new life and not just giving temporary help or alms).

The apostles Peter and John met a lame beggar at the entrance to the temple in Jerusalem. He was invalid and

could not walk; he was begging for alms; he continued to be a beggar; there was no change in his life.

Peter healed him in the name of Jesus of Nazareth. The beggar walked and jumped; there was complete transformation in his life; he was formerly dependent on others; later, he became independent and was completely transformed, he had a new life.

> And a man lame from birth was being carried in. People would lay him daily at the gate of the temple called the Beautiful Gate so that he could ask for alms from those entering the temple.
>
> But Peter said, "I have no silver or gold, but what I have I give you; in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, stand up and walk."
>
> And he took him by the right hand and raised him up; and immediately his feet and ankles were made strong.
>
> Jumping up, he stood and began to walk, and he entered the temple with them, walking and leaping and praising God. (56) (Acts 3:2, 6-8)

The Dravida Kazhagam Movement transforms completely the social and economic status of some of the sections of the oppressed and downtrodden people in Tamilnadu. The people of Scheduled Castes in the villages were dependent on people of the high castes. The movement transformed their status; they are independent now. The Mission of the Christian Church in Tamilnadu includes providing a new and complete transformation of the social and economic conditions of the oppressed people in Tamilnadu.

(vii) The Jewish concept of woman's subordination to man.

The partriarchal form of family life strongly influenced the function and status of women in the Holy Bible. The woman's position in the Bible is largely that of

subordination to her father or her husband. In several instances, the word for 'wife' signifies 'woman belonging to a man'. The Jews believed that the woman was created from the man's rib.

> So the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man and he slept; then he took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh.
>
> And the rib that the LORD God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man. (57) (Genesis 2:21,22)

Jews believed that God told the first woman that her husband would rule over her, indicating woman's subordination to man.

> ... "yet your (Eve's, woman's) desire shall be for your husband, and he (Adam, man) shall rule over you (Eve, woman)." (58) (Genesis 3:16b)

The author of the letter to the Ephesians writes that wives should be subject to their husbands.

> Wives, be subject to your husbands as you are to the Lord.
>
> For the husband is the head of the wife just as Christ is the head of the church, the body of which he is the Saviour.
>
> Just as the church is subject to Christ, so also wives ought to be, in everything, to their husbands. (59) (Ephesians 5:22-24)

Peter the apostle also writes about women's subordination to men.

> Wives, in the same way, accept the authority of your husbands, so that, even if some of them do not obey the word, they may be won over without a word by their wives' conduct,
>
> when they see the purity and reverence of your lives..
>
> It was in this way long ago that the holy women who hoped in God used to adorn themselves by accepting the authority of their husbands. (60) (I Peter 3:1,2,5)

St.Paul in his first letter to the Corinthians and to Timothy writes about the subordination of women to men.

> But I want you to understand that Christ is the head of every man, and the husband is the head of his wife, and God is the head of Christ.
>
> As in all the churches of the saints, women should be silent in the churches. For they are not permitted to speak, but should be subordinate, as the law also says. (61)
> (I Corinthians 11:3, 14:34)

> Let a woman learn in silence with full submission. (62)
> (I Timothy 2:11)

(a) The Virgin Mary, the mother of Jesus Christ.

When the concept of the subordination of women to men prevailed in Jewish culture, God chose the virgin Mary to be the mother of the Son of God, through the Power of the Holy Spirit without the biological relationship with a man. When the angel announced to Mary, a virgin that she would give birth to the Son of God, she asked the angel as to how could a virgin give birth to a son without a biological relationship with a man. This speaks of the mystery of divine justice.

The angel told Mary that the Holy Spirit would come upon her and that the Power of the Most High would overshadow her.

> The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favour with God.
>
> And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus."
>
> Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?"
>
> The angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God." (63)
> (St.Luke 1:30,31,34,35)

God's choice of a woman to be the mother of God (at a time when women were considered as inferior to men) indicates divine justice rendered to womanhood.

(b) Jesus' concern for the sick woman.

At a time, when women were considered inferior to men, Jesus treated the woman (who was sick for twelve years) with dignity and sympathy. A woman who suffered for twelve years came to Jesus and touched His garment. She was healed immediately. Jesus was very sympathetic to her and told her that her faith had healed her and asked her to go in peace.

> She had heard about Jesus, and came up behind him in the crowd and touched his cloak,
>
> Immediately her hemorrhage stopped; and she felt in her body that she was healed of her disease.
>
> He (Jesus) said to her, "Daughter, your faith has made you well; go in peace, and be healed of your disease." (64) (St.Mark 5:27,29,34)

(c) Mary Magdalene, the transformed woman.

Mary Magdalene had been possessed by seven demons. Jesus cast the seven demons out of Mary Magdalene. Jesus, after His resurrection appeared first to Mary Magdalene. Even though the concept of the subjection of woman was prevalent during the days of Jesus, Jesus treated women with dignity.

> Now after he (Jesus) rose early on the first day of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene, from whom he had cast out seven demons. (65)
> (St.Mark 16:9)

The Risen Christ gave Mary Magdalene and other women the opportunity to proclaim the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Suddenly Jesus met them and said, "Greetings!" ...

Then Jesus said to them, "Do not be afraid; go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee; there they will see me." (66) (St. Matthew 28:9a,10)

Jesus said to her, "Do not hold on to me, because I have not yet ascended to the Father. But go to my brothers and say to them, 'I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.'"

Mary Magdalene went and announced to the disciples, "I have seen the Lord"; and she told them that he had said these things to her. (67)
(St.John 20:17,18)

(d) Jesus' compassion towards Canaanite gentile woman.

A Canaanite woman was a Gentile (non-Jewish woman). She came to Jesus and requested Him to cure her sick daughter. Jesus appreciated her strong faith, cured her daughter and rendered justice to her, even though she was a Gentile woman.

Just then a Canaanite woman from that region came out and started shouting, "Have mercy on me, Lord, Son of David; my daughter is tormented by a demon."

Then Jesus answered her, "Woman, great is your faith! Let it be done for you as you wish." And her daughter was healed instantly. (68)
(St.Matthew 15:22,28)

(e) Jesus' attitude of forgiving grace and justice towards a sinful woman.

Jesus was very gracious to a sinful woman and forgave her sins. The Scribes and Pharisees brought a woman caught in adultery and said to Jesus that, as per the law of Moses, such a woman should be stoned to death. Jesus told them that those without any sin could cast the first stone at the woman. They all realized that they were all

sinful and went away one by one. Jesus told that woman that He also did not condemn her and asked her to go and not to sin any more.

> The scribes and the Pharisees brought a woman who had been caught in adultery;...
>
> they said to him, "Teacher, this woman was caught in the very act of committing adultery.
>
> Now in the law Moses commanded us to stone such women. Now what do you say?"
>
> When they kept on questioning him, he straightened up and said to them, "Let anyone among you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her,"
>
> When they heard it, they went away, one by one, beginning with the elders; ...
>
> Jesus straightened up and said to her, "Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?"
>
> She said, "No one, sir." And Jesus said, "Neither do I condemn you. Go your way and from now on do not sin again."(69) (St.John 8:3a,4,5,7,9a,10,11)

Thus Jesus was gracious to her and forgave her sins. On an another occasion, one of the Pharisees invited Jesus to eat with him. When Jesus was in the Pharisee's house, a sinful woman entered the house and anointed Jesus' feet with tears;she wiped His feet with her hair and anointed His feet with a precious ointment. The Pharisees said that Jesus did not know that the woman was a sinner. But Jesus said that she had shown greater gratitude to him; hence many of her sins were forgiven. Thus Jesus was gracious to the sinful woman and forgave her sins.

> And a woman in the city, who was a sinner, having learned that he (Jesus) was eating in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster jar of ointment.
>
> She stood behind him at his feet, weeping, and began to bathe his feet with her tears and to dry them with her hair. Then she continued kissing his feet and anointing them with the ointment.

Now when the Pharisee who had invited him saw it, he said to himself, "If this man were a prophet, he would have known who and what kind of woman this is who is touching him-that she is a sinner."

Jesus spoke up and said to him,...

"I tell you, her sins, which were many, have been forgiven; hence she has shown great love."...

Then he (Jesus) said to her, "Your sins are forgiven." (70) (St.Luke 7:37-39;40a, 47a,48)

(f) Jesus' attitude of compassion towards a widow at Nain.

Jesus went to a town called Nain. A man who had died, was being carried out. He was his mother's only son and his mother was a widow. When Jesus saw her, He had compassion for her and asked her not to weep. He touched the bier and said to the dead man, "Young man, I say to you, rise." The dead man became alive, sat up and began to speak. Jesus gave him to his mother and comforted her.

Soon afterwards he (Jesus) went to a town called Nain, and his disciples and a large crowd went with him.

As he approached the gate of the town, a man who had died was being carried out. He was his mother's only son, and she was a widow; and with her was a large crowd from the town.

When the Lord saw her, he had compassion for her and said to her, "Do not weep."

Then he came forward and touched the bier, and the bearers stood still. And he said, "Young man, I say to you, rise!"

The dead man sat up and began to speak, and Jesus gave him to his mother." (71) (St.Luke 7: 11-15)

The Son of God was born of a virgin. Jesus healed a woman who was sick for twelve years and cast out the demons from Mary Magdalene. Jesus healed the Canaanite (Gentile) woman's daughter. Jesus comforted the widow at Nain, by

raising her dead son back to life.

All these passages, which describe several types of women in different situations of life, reveal that Jesus dealt with all women with respect, dignity and sympa thy, though the Jewish culture of His days, demanded that women should be treated with contempt and a sense of inferiority.

The Dravida Kazhagam Movement pleaded for women's rights. The movement fought against the abuse of "temple girls" and such a system which degraded women. It pleaded for widows' remarriage; this movement has arranged for widow's pension and it promoted girls' education and equality of men and women. In short, the movement presented a challenge of social justice for women. A theological reappraisal of Christian Mission is to treat women with dignity, equality and justice in the light of Jesus' attitude of justice towards women and in the light of Dravidian challenge of social justice for women.

(viii) Jesus' attitude of justice towards children.

Generally and traditionally, children do not have their rightful place in society. Children are generally ignored and neglected in society by adults. When adults meet, they do not normally permit children to be with them, because adults think that children would disturb their work.

(a) Jesus blessed the children.

People brought little children to Jesus expecting that

Jesus would touch them and bless them. The disciples who were with Jesus, rebuked the people for bringing children to Jesus; Jesus was annoyed at this injustice done to children and invited them to come closer to Him. Jesus said that the Kingdom of God belongs to children and that anyone who does not receive God's kingdom as a little child, would never enter it. Then He took the children up in his arms, laid His hands on them and blessed them. This revealed Jesus' concern for children.

> People were bringing little children to him (Jesus) in order that he might touch them; and the disciples spoke sternly to them.
>
> But when Jesus saw this, he was indignant and said to them, "Let the little children come to me; do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of God belongs.
>
> Truly I tell you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will never enter it."
>
> And he took them up in his arms, laid his hands on them, and blessed them.(72) (St.Mark 10:13-16)

Even today, Jesus wants that justice should be rendered to children and that children should not be ignored or neglected in society. Jesus promised a reward for kindness to little children. Jesus pointed out the importance of little children (who are usually ignored in society) by promising a reward for kindness to children...

> and whoever gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones in the name of a disciple - truly I tell you, none of these will lose their reward. (73) (St.Matthew 10:42)

(b) A childlike nature promotes greatness in God's Kingdom.

Jesus not only blessed the children ignored by society, but also attributed greatness to a childlike nature.

Jesus said that anyone with a childlike nature is considered as the greatest in the Kingdom of God.

> At that time the disciples came to Jesus and asked, "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?"
>
> He called a child, whom he put among them,
>
> and said, "Truly I tell you, unless you change and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.
>
> Whoever becomes humble like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.
>
> Whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me." (74) (St.Matthew 18:1-5)

(c) The Danger of causing stumbling block to children.

Jesus also said that if any one caused a stumbling block to a child, it would be better for him to be drowned in the depth of the sea, with a great millstone fastened around his neck. Thus, Jesus spoke about the great value of a child.

> "If any of you put a stumbling block before one of these little ones who believe in me, it would be better for you if a great millstone were fastened around your neck and you were drowned in the depth of the sea." (75) (St.Matthew 18:6)

(d) The Warning against despising children.

Jesus spoke against despising children, since the angels of these children continually meet God and inform the Heavenly Father about what happens to children.

> Take care that you do not despise one of these little ones; for, I tell you, in heaven their angels continually see the face of my Father in heaven. (76) (St.Matthew 18:10)

(e) Jesus' love for children.

Jesus said that the act of welcoming little children

was equal to the deed of welcoming God and hence Jesus commended receiving children in God's name.

> Then he (Jesus) took a little child and put it among them; and taking it in his arms, he said to them,
>
> Whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me, and whoever welcomes me welcomes not me but the one who sent me. (77)
>
> (St.Mark 9:36-37)

Jesus received a few little children and blessed them. Jesus commended the childlike nature and said that the Kingdom of God belonged to them. Jesus warned the people against causing a stumbling block to and despising children. On the whole, Jesus had great concern for children.

The Dravida Kazhagam Movement gave special importance to children. Free education is given to them upto the final class in the Higher Secondary School. Free nutritious lunch is given to needy children. Free text books are also given to them. Children are benefitted by these welfare schemes even today. Thus the movement has a great concern for children.

In the light of Jesus giving special importance to children and in the light of the movement giving special attention to children, their education and their nourishment, the Church has a special Mission to children, to take care of their education, their nourishment and their needs.

A theological reappraisal of the Church's Mission of social justice is to give special attention to children, their education, their nourishment and their needs in

the light of Jesus' concern for children and the Dravidian challenge of justice for children.

So far the theological basis for social justice and the theological reappraisal of Christian Mission in Tamilnadu with special reference to social justice have been dealth with.

It is appropriate to find out the Indian Christians' attitude towards the Indian caste system and to suggest ways and means of maintaining social justice with special reference to the caste system.

4.3 Indian Christians' Attitude to the Caste System in Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries.

Bishop Reginald Heber received complaints from Christians (who belonged to higher castes) in Vepery (Madras), Tanjore and other places that the missionaries were interfering with their customs and practices needlessly and arrogantly. Bishop Heber asked Rev. Christian David, an Indian pastor from Tanjore to guide him in this matter. Rev. Christian David suggested that caste was essentially a civil distinction closely parallel to European and Christian notions of rank. He felt that observance of the caste did not effect adversely the life of the Church.

> David's recommendation was that the Bishop should in effect reprimand the junior missionaries for their impetuosity and disregard for the customs and feelings of their congregations, while at the same time addressing a pastoral letter to the converts explaining to them from scripture, the utter opposition of all proud notions of caste to the Gospel and intimating the earnest wish of their European instructors to remove this, with as little offence as possible to any of their

feelings or prejudices, without touching any just and proper distinction of rank, education or degree in society". Furthermore, the Bishop might well remind christians of lower caste that, as christianity had an evident proper tendency to elevate them with respect to themselves and to their countrymen, they should carefully abstain from every expression or habit ... which might have a tendency to excite disgust and dislike in their higher brethren; the Bishop might remind them also of the necessary regard and deference which christianity not only allows, but commands to be paid to our superiors in knowledge or worldly respectability, and of the special directions of St.Paul addressed to christian slaves against the contempt of their christian masters. (78)

Christian David suggested that the caste system was essentially a civil distinction closely parallel to European - and Christian notions of rank and that observance of caste did not affect adversely the life of the Church. He thought that the impetuosity of young missionaries and the restless insubordination of low-caste converts were the real causes of trouble. He felt that the Bishop should permit at least some caste observances in the Church. He challenged the missionary argument that the caste system is a relic of Hinduism which can subtly penetrate and destroy the Christian faith. Indian Christians, especially Christians in Tanjore area (eastern part of Tamilnadu), supported that caste distinctions were civil rather than religious and were similar to European notions of rank, degree and class. The Tanjore Christians believed that maintaining their caste was the only basis on which they could maintain their social contact with their Hindu neighbours. Baptist missionaries like William Carey emphasized that caste observance, an integral part of Hinduism should be given up on conversion; but they maintained that Indian culture, which should

be affirmed by Indian Christians should be used as the basis for maintaining contact with their non-Christian neighbours.

In 1845, Indian Christians opposed caste observance in the Church. John Anderson, the founder of Anderson School in Madras posed five questions on caste to some of his converts.

1. Is caste inseparably connected with Hinduism, or is it not ?

2. Can caste with truth be called a civil distinction chiefly designed to preserve a family from deterioration by inter marriage with other families?

3. Do our native Free Church brethren regard caste as part and parcel of idolatry and of all heathen abominations ?

4. Is the idea of pollution in the Hindu mind separable from the system of caste or not ?

5. Can caste be compared for a moment with the European distinctions in society ? (79)

The converts came from prosperous high caste families. C. Viswanathan was a Jaina Brahmin. P.Rajahgopal belonged to the Mudaliar caste. A. Venkataramaiah was the grandson of the registrar of the petty courts. Rajahgopal opposed the caste system.

> If you admit caste to be true, the whole fabric of christianity must come down; for the nature of caste and its associations, destroy the first principles of christianity; caste makes distinctions among creatures where God had made none; it attaches moral impurity where God does not; and makes one class of men clean and another unclean, in direct opposition to the word of God; to fast and to the actual state of the world. (80)

Nehemiah Goreh, a Brahmin convert also opposed caste observance. He said that Christianity with caste

would be no Christianity at all. (81) Brahmobandhar Upadhyaya (1861-1907) was baptized an Anglican and after one year was rebaptized as a Roman Catholic. He remarked that most Indians were not attracted towards Christianity because Christianity was presented through western and foreign culture. He supported caste observance. (82) He wrote :

> Caste has served in the past a useful purpose. To it is due the permanence and tenacity which has challenged Hindu society in the face of strong influences of disintegration such as have resulted from foreign invasions and lack of stable government. Caste stands for the point of view of the community and excludes the rights of the individual. This attitude has been a moral power for it lays down certain rules of conduct and expects obedience. Thus, caste has placed upon the community the responsibility of providing for the poor within its pale. In India, accordingly there is no necessity for a poor law. (83)

S.K. Datta wrote that the Church should be utterly opposed to caste both within itself and in society at large and that it would ruin the influence and power of Indian Christianity, if caste would be tolerated in the Church. (84)

Chenchiah, who was a lawyer wrote :

> The christian community has the unique opportunity of rising above caste and community in this caste-ridden and communal India. I hope it will not surrender this high calling and be caught up in the passing show. (85)

Chakkarai who was also a lawyer was of the opinion that a casteless and classless society is the ideal of the socially revolutionary christianity (86) He believed that the Church should be an organized body having a major role in overcoming caste, class and national differences

and inequalities. He writes :

> I believe in the church as the Body of our Lord ... I believe the church is constituted not by mere cults but by communion with the living Lord for social action ... Therefore, I believe that the church should be super-rational and that the members of this Body should work for casteless society (87)

Eddy Asirvatham, another Indian Christian writes that only Christianity is capable of freeing man from thralldom to caste and communalism. He writes,

> Christianity alone is capable of giving a truly national and international outlook. It alone can free a man from village politics and make him think in terms of world politics. (88)

P.D. Devanandan another Indian Christian thinker writes after Indian independence that the caste system has been changing in a variety of ways. He observes that Christians should involve themselves understandingly and constructively in the ongoing repatterning of social structure in India. He writes that casteism survives in the Church and strenuous efforts must be made to eradicate it, while the relevant task for the Church is now the positive demonstration of a new and challenging pattern of non-communal and non-competitive society, rather than the negative attack on a dying social order. (89)

Dr. M.M Thomas affirms the earlier attack on caste. His views on caste may be summarized in the succeeding paragraph.

> The missionaries became the bearers of social and cultural humanization as their very approach to the outcastes with the gospel changed the spiritual foundations of the inbuilt structures of the caste system ... The pattern for the

church is how to purify its life in such a way that it demonstrates a non-communal koinonia (the phrase is Richard Taylor's) as an answer to some of India's most pressing sociological problems. The church must pioneer ways of living in fellowship with all on the basis of a common humanity ... the outcastes, the poor and the orphans saw christian faith as the source of a new humanizing influence and the foundations of a human community where conversion was genuine, whether of individuals or of groups; the converts saw Salvation in Christ not only in terms of individual salvation, of heaven after death, but also as the spiritual source of a new community on earth in which their human dignity and status of humanization inherent in the gospel of salvation which led to the influx of the oppressed into the church. (90)

4.4 The Christian Mission of Social Justice in the light of the Dravidian Challenge - A Theological Reappraisal.

The Dravidians challenged the theory of the caste system and the supremacy of the Brahmin caste. The movement launched upon social action and exploded the myth of the caste system described in the Manu Sastra. The movement created an awareness among the people of low caste regarding their rights and privileges and regarding the falsehood of the caste system through speeches at public meetings, magazines, newspapers, dramas, plays etc. The movement inspired and instilled in the minds of the oppressed people new confidence, new courage, new hope, new dignity, new self-respect and a new spirit to demand their rights.

The Christian Church in Tamilnadu thought that its original Mission was to preach the gospel, convert the people to Christianity, establish Churches and also to render social service by establishing schools, colleges, industrial institutes and hospitals. But in the light of

this movement's challenge of social justice and in the light of the theological insight advocating and favouring social justice, it is necessary to make a theological reappraisal of the Mission of the Church in Tamilnadu. The Christian Church (in addition to its original Mission of preaching the gospel, converting the people to Christianity, establishing Churches and rendering social service through establishing schools, colleges and hospitals) has to include in its agenda programmes of social justice and social action to ensure justice for oppressed people. Jesus Christ expressed the concept of this Mission of both preaching the gospel and rendering social justice in His Nazareth Manifesto.

The Church should regard, as part of its Mission, such programmes which create an awareness among the people of low castes about their rights and privileges. Programmes of social action which inspire and instil in the minds of the oppressed people a new dignity, new self-respect, new confidence, new courage and a new hope, should form part of the Mission of the Church.

The Dravida Kazhagam movement presented a challenge of creating an awareness among the people about the injustice of the caste system, through programmes of social action. The Church also in the light of this challenge, should arrange for appropriate programmes of social action, to convince the people that discrimination among people on the basis of caste is unjust and wrong. Groups for social action should be started and encouraged in several ways.

(i) Action-Related Studies, Research etc.

The Church should start action related studies and research programmes to create an awareness among the people about the unjust caste system. The insights that emerge from the study should be published. Public meetings and press conferences should be held. The findings of the study should be publicized in regional and national newspapers and journals. Articles in newspapers should be so written as to move the government towards definite action against the injustice of caste system.

(ii) Publications.

publications should meet the specific needs of programmes of social action. Newsletters in regional languages as well as in English, sharing of experiences and expression of views by groups on social action should find a place in publications. Instances of the oppression of the people of lower castes, their struggles, ways and means of overcoming such social injustice should also be published.

(iii) Solidarity and Network.

Regular meetings, conferences and workshops should be held at local, regional and national levels for groups involved in social action. They should be given guidance for programmes of social action.

(iv) Macro-Micro Linkages.

The relationship between local and national or global concerns and issues is a problem which has been

exercising the minds of action groups. This relationship should be considered on theoretical and action plans.

(v) Financial Support and Accountability.

Some of the action groups may be registered societies and they need financial support from the Churches for their programmes of social action. The action groups should submit an audited statement of account. If financial aid is given by the local community, the officers responsible for programmes of social action should give audited statements to local leaders. Accountability is equally important.

(vi) Legal Education and Aid.

Social action groups need legal education and aid. They should be given proper legal guidance regarding the legality of their action programmes. An organization specifically meant for legal education and aid came into existence in 1983 at the initiative of the action groups in South India.

(vii) Community Organiser's Training Programme'.

Community organizers and members of action groups need to be given adequate training for organizing programme of social action. The main task of this programme is to develop the organising skills of the trainees.

(viii) Protest against Injustices.

Dravida Kazhagam Movement presented a challenge

of protest against injustice. It made a very strong protest against the unjust caste system. It protested against the introduction of discriminating elementary education which forced students to learn only the occupations of their parents. This made the dhobi's children become dhobies, agricultural labourer's children become labourers etc. This system of education perpetuated the caste system and paved the way for the continuance of social and economic inequalities. The movement also protested against the compulsory introduction of the Hindi language in schools in Tamilnadu and against the compulsory use of the Hindi language in communication between the state and central governments. Such compulsory use of Hindi language caused great disadvantage for non-Hindi speaking peoples.

Jesus Christ also protested against the injustice of the temple trade in Jerusalem. When pilgrims came to worship in the temple, they had to exchange their money for Jewish money in order to give their offertory. The money-changers in the temple made an exorbitant profit in this exchange. The doves and animals bought from the traders in the temple alone were regarded as acceptable sacrifices and hence pilgrims were compelled to buy the birds and animals at a very high price. Jesus protested against this injustice, entered the temple and cleaned it.

> Then Jesus entered the temple and drove out all who were selling and buying in the temple, and he overturned tha tables of the money changers and the seats of those who sold doves.
>
> He said to them, "It is written, 'My house shall be called a house of prayer'; but you are making it a den ot robbers." (91)
>
> (St.Matthew 21:12,13)

The Church should protest against injustices in society, following the model of Jesus and in the light of the Dravidian Challenge of protest against injustices.

4.5 Injustices against Christians of lower castes (Scheduled Caste).

The Indian constitution when it came into effect in 1950, assured justice, liberty and equality to all the citizens. The preamble to the constitution states that the purpose underlying the constitution was

> "to secure to all its citizens JUSTICE, social, economic and political : LIBERTY of thought, expression...
>
> EQUALITY of status and opportunity; and to promote among them all FRATERNITY assuring the dignity of the individual and the unity of the nation. (92)

The other fundamental right set forth in the constitution which deserves special attention is freedom of religion. This included the right of every religious denomination, subject to public order, morality and health, "to establish and maintain institutions for religious and charitable purposes" as well as "to manage its own affairs in matters of religion". (93)

However the key provision was Article 25.

> (1) Subject to public order, morality and health and to the other provisions of this act, all persons are equally entitled to freedom of conscience and the right freely to profess, practice and propagate religion. (94)

Article 47 states that

> The state shall promote with special care the educational and economic interests of the weaker sections of the people, and, in particular, of the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes, and shall protect them from social injustice and

all forms of exploitation. (95)

Article 355 states that .

> The claims of the members of scheduled caste and the scheduled tribes shall be taken into consideration consistently with the maintenance of efficiency of administration, in the making of appointments to services and ports in connection with the affairs of the union on a state. (96)

> It was article 341 which gave the president the important responsibility of specifying "the castes, races or tribes or parts of or groups within castes, races or tribes which shall for the purposes of this constitution be deemed to be scheduled castes" and allowed Parliament to add to or delete from the Presidents' list... (97)

The president constitution (Scheduled Castes) Order No. 19 of 1950 issued on August 10, 1950 lists the castes designated Scheduled Castes according to the constitution and then states 3. Not withstanding anything contained in paragraph 2, no person who professes a religion different from the Hindu religion shall be deemed to be a member of a Scheduled Caste. In 1956, this was amended to include the Sikh religion as well. (98)

The Buddists also were included in the list of Scheduled Castes, in 1990, at the time of Ambedkar's birth centenary. The fact that only Hindus of Scheduled Castes are included in the list of Scheduled Castes which are eligible for special assistance and for reservation of seats in Parliament and in State Legislation Assemblies caused great concern among Christians of Scheduled Caste origin, because they are also equally poor economically. Dr. E.C. Bhatty, Secretary of the National Christian Council protested and wrote :-

> We do not grudge special help to the scheduled castes. In fact, we welcome it for their uplift and amelioration. But what we expect the Government of India, and the Provincial Governments to do is to provide the same economic and social concessions to all those who suffer from the same economic and social disabilities irrespective of their religion or partly

> affiliations, otherwise, we are afraid, the present discrimination is likely to cause heart-burning. We have made a good beginning in the consolidation of our nation and discontent. Equality of treatment accorded to all backward classes will be more worthy of a free, secular and democratic Government. (99)

Marc Galanter further writes that it is unjust to say that conversion to non-Hindu religions brings an automatic disqualification for special aid for reservation of seats in the Parliament and State Assembly.

> To deem conversion to non-Hindu communions an automatic disqualification for aid violates the constitutional commenced of equal treatment for different religions. It also restricts freedom of religion, which might be thought to require that Government refrain from administering its welfare schemes so as to put a heavy price-tag on its exercise... it is at variance with the stated welfare objectives of the policy of preferences for the disadvantages. (100)

On September 30, 1985, the Supreme Court of India gave a judgement on two petitions challenging the constitutionality of paragraph (3) of the President's Order of 1950, which specified the name of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes which are eligible for special assistance and for reservation of seats in Parliament and State Legislative Assemblies.

> The first petition came from Soosai, a Christian Scheduled Caste cobbler in Madras who was denied a free bunk (because he was a Christian); but it was given to other Hindus of Scheduled Castes, The other petition was sent in protest of Tamilnadu Government Order, by which Christian of scheduled castes would be eligible for special aid from government, if they would be converted to Hinduism; but would again become Christians. Both petitions blamed that there was religious discrimination in the Presidential order of 1950. (101)

The Supreme Court affirmed that the President has the right to specify the names of the Scheduled Castes and

Scheduled Tribes and that only Parliament can change the President's decision.

> To establish that, paragraph 3 of the Constitution (Scheduled Castes) Order, 1950, discriminates against Christian member of the enumerated castes, it must be shown that they suffer from a comparable depth of social and economic disabilities and cultural and educational backwardness and similar levels of degradation within the Christian community necessitating intervention by the State under the provisions in constructing. It is not sufficient to show that the same caste continues after conversion. It is necessary to establish further that the disabilities and handicaps suffered from such caste membership in the social order of its origin. (102)

The Christian Churches, heads of Churches and Christian members of Scheduled Castes origin have represented this matter to the President and Prime Minister on several occasions. But the Government has not implemented their request. The Backward Classes Commission presided by B.P. Maudal in 1980 recommended that Christians from Scheduled Castes should be included among the Backward Classes and that 27 per cent of all central government jobs should be reserved for backward classes. But the Government did not implement this. Christians of Scheduled Castes went to Delhi on several occasions and analysed a huge rally and public meetings in favour of their request. But the Government has not yet implemented their request. The Churches should continue their appeal and protest so that justice could be rendered to Christians of Scheduled Castes.

B Political Concern : Theological Basis and Theological Reappraisal of Christian Mission of Political Concern.

The previous section dealt with a theological

reappraisal of the Mission of the Christian Church in Tamilnadu with special reference to social justice in the light of the Dravidian challenge of social justice. This section deals with a theological reappraisal of the Mission of the Christian Church in Tamilnadu with special reference to political concern in the light of the Dravidian challenge of political concern. The theological basis of political concern, the role played by the Christian Church in the political life in India and the Christian Mission of political concern are considered here.

4.6 Political Concern : Theological basis.

The Bible declares that God created man and woman in His own image.

> So God created humankind in his image,
> in the image of God he created them;
> male and female he created them.
> God blessed them... (103) (Genesis 1:27,28a)

God created man and woman and blessed human society. A society which consists of individuals needs to be administered by some form of government in order that the society or the caste may be administered peacefully with justice, honesty and for the welfare of the people.

(i) The Kingdom of God.

We understand from the following verses from the Bible that God is also the king who rules over the human society. The psalmist writes that God is the king who rules over the earth.

> For God is the king of all the earth;

sing praises with a psalm.

God is king over the nations;
God sits on his holy throne. (104) (Psalm 47:7,8)

Moses and the people of Israel sang the following words :-

The LORD will reign forever and ever. (105)
(Exodus 15:18)

When the Moabites and Ammonites came to fight against Jehoshaphat, the king of Judah, he fasted, prayed to God and spoke the following words of assurance to the people of Judah :-

> ... O Lord, God of our ancestors, are you not God in heaven? Do you not rule over all the kingdoms of the nations? In your hand are power and might, so that no one is able to withstand you. (106)
> (II Chronicles 20:6)

The following words of the prophet Isaiah emphasize that God executes judgement and justice on the earth, and thus reveals His political concern. The Church in Tamilnadu should work for political justice.

> His authority shall grow continually,
> and there shall be endless peace for the throne of David and his kingdom.
> He will establish and uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time onward and forevermore.
> The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this. (107)
> (Isaiah 9:7)

The prophet Isaiah declares that the government of this world shall be upon God's shoulder and that God being the Prince of Peace, shall rule the earth peacefully. This reveals God's political concern. The Church must do its part in producing a peaceful political situation.

> For a child has been born for us,
> a son given to us;
> authority rests upon his shoulders;
> and his is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,

> Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. (108)
> (Isaiah 9:6)

The words of the prophet Jeremiah also declare that God shall rule wisely and shall execute justice. Thus, the prophet's words reveal God's great concern for political justice.

> The days are surely coming, says the LORD, when I will raise up for David a righteous Branch, and he shall reign as king and deal wisely, and shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. (109)
> (Jeremiah 23:5)

The Church in Tamilnadu should work for establishing justice as the Dravidian Movement has worked for justice. The vision of Daniel also speaks about God's kingdom and everlasting dominion.

> To him was given dominion and glory and kingship, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him.
> His dominion is an everlasting dominion that shall not pass away,
> and his kingship is one that shall never be destroyed. (110)
> (Daniel 7:14)

(ii) Liberation of the Hebrews from Egyptian oppression.

The historical event of the liberation of the Hebrews (about B.C. 1491) from the political oppression of the Egyptian king Pharaoh reveals God's political concern. This event shows that God is not a silent spectator and that God intervenes in human history through His servants like Moses to liberate the oppressed people from political injustice.

> He said further, "I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." And Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look at God.
>
> Then the LORD said, "I have observed the misery of my people who are in Egypt; I have heard their cry on account of their taskmasters. Indeed, I know their sufferings,

and I have come down to deliver them from the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land to a good and broad land, a land flowing with milk and honey, to the country of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites.

The cry of the Israelites has now come to me; I have also seen how the Egyptians oppress them.

So come, I will send you to Pharaoh to bring my people, the Israelites, out of Egypt. (lll)
(Exodus 3:6-10)

The verses in Exodus 3:6-10 express God's deep political concern; it is understood that from these verses that God had seen the affliction of His people in Egypt, had heard their cry due to Egyptian oppression and had known their sorrows. God wanted to send Moses to Pharaoh to liberate the children of Israel.

A theological reappraisal of the political Mission of the Church in Tamilnadu lies in awakening the Church to play its role for liberating the oppressed in society like Moses in Egypt and the Dravidian Movement in Tamilnadu.

(iii) Nathan's rebuke of King David.

King David planned to take Bath-Sheba (Uriah's wife) as his wife and sent Uriah (her husband) along with others to fight against the Ammonites. King David sent a letter to Job (who stayed in the battle field) and asked him to send Uriah to the forefront of the battle, so that Uriah would die in the battle. Accordingly when Uriah died in the battle, King David took Bath-Sheba (Uriah's wife) as his wife.

God revealed His political concern through the prophet Nathan, who rebuked King David on account of this sin.

> Why have you despised the word of the LORD, to do what is evil in his sight? You have struck down Uriah the Hittite with the sword, and have taken his wife to be your wife, and have killed him with the sword of the Ammonites.
>
> Now therefore the sword shall never depart from your house, for you have despised me, and have taken the wife of Uriah and Hittite to be your wife. (112) (II Samuel 12:9-10)

A theological reappraisal of the political Mission of the Church in Tamilnadu lies in enabling the Church to play its political role to safeguard the rights and privileges of women, the poor and the oppressed like the prophet Nathan and like the Dravidian Movement which had pleaded for women and for oppressed communities.

(iv) King Ahab rebuked by the prophet Elijah.

King Ahab wanted to buy the vineyard which belonged to Naboth, the Jezeolite. Naboth refused to sell his vineyard to Jezebel, Ahab's wife wrote a letter to the elders and nobles in the city of Jezreal, asked them to arrange for witnesses to say that Naboth blasphemed against God and the king, and stoned Naboth to death. They informed Jezebel that Naboth was dead. Jezebel asked the king to take possession of Naboth's vineyard and Ahab went to take possession of the vineyard.

God spoke to the prophet Elijah, asked him to meet the king and to rebuke him and his wife for their sin of killing the innocent Naboth. Elijah rebuked them. Thus, God revealed His political concern.

> As soon as Ahab heard that Naboth was dead, Ahab set out to go down to the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite, to take possession of it.
> Then the word of the LORD came to Elijah the Tishbite, saying:

Go down to meet King Ahab of Israel, who rules in Samaria; he is now in the vineyard of Naboth, where he has gone to take possession.

You shall say to him, "Thus says the LORD: Have you killed, and also taken possession?" You shall say to him, "Thus says the LORD: In the place where dogs licked up the blood of Naboth, dogs will also lick up your blood. (113)

(I Kings 21:16-19)

A theological reappraisal of the political Mission of the Church in Tamilnadu lies in enabling the Church to safeguard the rights of the weaker sections in society like the prophet Elijah and the Dravidian Movement which had worked for the rights of the oppressed.

(v) King Herod rebuked by John the Baptist.

It was unlawful that King Herod had married Herodias, his brother's (Philip's) wife. John the Baptist told Herod that it was not lawful for Herod to have his brother's wife. Herodias wanted to kill John the Baptist; it was not possible because John the Baptist was a man of justice and Herod was afraid of killing him. So Herod put John the Baptist in prison.

Later, John the Baptist was killed because he rebuked king Herod for the unlawful act of marrying his brother's wife.

> For Herod himself had sent men who arrested John, bound him, and put him in prison on account of Herodias, his brother Philip's wife, because Herod had married her.
>
> For John had been telling Herod, "It is not lawful for you to have your brother's wife."
>
> And Herodias had a grudge against him, and wanted to kill him. But she could not,
>
> for Herod feared John, knowing that he was a righteous and holy man, and he protected him.

> When he heard him, he was greatly perplexed; and yet he liked to listen to him. (114)
>
> (St.Mark 6:17-20)

A theological reappraisal of the Christian Mission of political concern is to raise a prophetic voice like John the Baptist against unjust and unlawful events.

(vi) Jesus' concern for justice and His cleansing of the temple in Jerusalem.

The priests who were in charge of the trade in the temple made a great profit out of it, arranging for the sale of animal and birds (used for sacrifice) at an exorbitant price. The poor people found it very difficult. They were more interested in the trade and its income, rather than in the spiritual atmosphere in the temple and its worship.

Jesus was not a silent spectator; He wanted to put an end to the injustice in the temple trade. He went into the temple and cast out all those who sold and brought things in the temple and overthrew the tables of the money-changers. This reveals Christs' concern for injustice and His courageous action in correcting those who were involved in the unjust trade in the temple.

(vii) Jesus and the Kingdom of God.

Jesus started His ministry preaching about the kingdom of God.

> Now after John was arrested, Jesus came to Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God,
>
> and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the Kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe

in the good news." (115) (St.Mark 1:14,15)

The word 'kingdom' includes a political meaning and 'Kingdom of God' includes the political concern of God.

The content of the preaching of Jesus is that God is a king who rules and thus God has concern (including political concern) for humankind. The passage that Jesus read in the synagogue at Nazareth (referring to the liberation of the oppressed) reveals God's political concern.

> The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,
> because he has anointed me
> to bring good news to the poor.
> He has sent me to proclaim
> release to the captives
> and recovery of sight to the blind,
> to let the oppressed go free,
> to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour. (116)
> (St.Luke 4:18,19)

Jesus mentioned that the kingdom of God would be inherited by the people who help those in need by feeding the hungry, giving drink to the thirsty, by accepting the stranger, visiting the sick and those in prison. In other words, God's rule includes and reflects a great concern for helping people in need.

> Then the king will say to those at his right hand, 'Come, you that are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world;
>
> for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing,
>
> I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me.'
>
> Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food or thirsty and gave you something to drink? And when was it that we saw you a stranger and

welcomed you, or naked and gave you clothing?

And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you?'

And the king will answer them, 'Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.' (117) (St.Matthew 25:34-40)

Jesus taught His disciples to pray that God's kingdom should come and this prayer reflects political concern.

Your kingdom come.
Your will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven. (118)
(St.Matthew 6:10)

Jesus' commandment that everyone should love one's neighbour as himself or herself reflects concern for others.

The second is this, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these. (119) (St.Mark 12:31)

The following parable of Jesus also reveal God's political concern.

In the parable of the Good Samaritan, the wounded traveller may represent individuals or a family or the weaker and oppressed section of any society or exploited nation. A priest and a Levi had passed by the wounded traveller without any concern for the exploited traveller. It is quite possible that the Church in India especially in Tamilnadu also may pass by the exploited and the oppressed sections of society, if it does not have true political concern. But, the Good Samaritan had a great concern for the wounded traveller, poured oil and wine on his wounds, took him to an inn and helped him. Jesus commended the Samaritan for his concern for others. Jesus asked the lawyer (who

asked Jesus who his neighbour was) to go and help others in need with such a great concern; Jesus taught His listeners through this parable that everyone, like the Good Samaritan, should have a true concern for those in need in society.

> But a Samaritan while traveling came near him; and when he saw him, he was moved with pity.
>
> He went to him and bandaged his wounds, having poured oil and wine on them. Then he put him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him.
>
> The next day he took out two denarii, gave them to the innkeeper, and said, 'Take care of him; and when I come back, I will repay you whatever more you spend.'
>
> Which of these three, do you think, was a neighbour to the man who fell into the hands of the robbers?
>
> He said, "The one who showed him mercy." Jesus said to him, "Go and do likewise." (120)
>
> (St.Luke 10:33-37)

In the parable of the labourers in the vineyard, the labourers employed at the eleventh hour may represent the unemployed people or those not taken care of by any society. The householder who employed the unemployed labourers at the eleventh hour may represent God with great concern for those in need. The householder was very generous and paid even the eleventh hour employees one days' wage each according to their need, even though they worked for only one hour and did not deserve one days' wage. The householder was not calculating, but extremely gracious. This reflects God's extraordinary praise, love and concern, which is not calculating but transcends ordinary standards of human justice and expectations.

> And about five o' clock he went out and found other standing around; and he said to them, 'Why are you standing here idle all day?'
>
> They said to him, 'Because no one has hired us.' He said to them, 'You also go into the vineyard.'
>
> When those hired about five o' clock came, each of them received the usual daily wage.
>
> Am I not allowed to do what I choose with what belongs to me? Or are you envious because I am generous?
>
> So the last will be first, and the first will be last." (121) (St.Matthew 20:6,7,9,15,16)

(viii) Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's and God the things that are God's.

The Pharisees and the Herodians wanted to trap Jesus in His words. They asked Jesus whether it was lawful to pay taxes to Caesar or not. Jesus asked them to show him a coin and when the coin was brought, Jesus asked them to whom the image and the superscription belonged to. They answered that it belonged to Caesar and Jesus answered, "Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's and to God the things that are God's".

> Jesus said to them, "Give to the emperor the things that are the emperor's, and to God the things that are God's." And they were utterly amazed at him. (122) (St.Mark 12:17)

Jesus' reply that Caesar's things (taxes) should be paid to Caesar, while what is due to God should be paid to God indicates one's political loyalty and responsibility. This political loyalty is not absolute; it should be within the frame of reference of one's loyalty to God.

The rulers, elders, scribes and Jews in Jerusalem asked Peter and John not to preach in the name of Jesus.

But Peter and John told them that it was not right to listen to men rather than to God.

> But Peter and John answered them, "Whether it is right in God's sight to listen to you rather than to God,... (123) (Acts 4:19)

A theological reappraisal of the Christian Mission of political concern in Tamilnadu in the light of the political challenge of this movement is to look at one's political allegiance and responsibility in the proper perspective of one's absolute allegiance to God. One can be loyal to the state as long as such political allegiance does not come in the way of one's absolute allegiance to God.

(ix) Christ's Model of Leadership - A suffering Servant.

Christ asked His disciples not to follow the worldly political model of leadership, to fulfil one's responsibility of leadership. worldly leaders are tyrants. Jesus asked His disciples not to rule with tyranny. Jesus asked His disciples to serve people with a spirit of humility and sacrifice.

> So Jesus called them and said to them, "You know that among the Gentiles those whom they recognize as their rulers lord it over them, and their great ones are tyrants over them.
>
> But it is not so among you; but whoever wishes to become great among you must be your servant,
>
> and whoever wishes to be first among you must be slave of all.
>
> For the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life a ransom for many."(124) (St.Mark 10:42-45)

A eep sense of humility along with a spirit of service and sacrifice is the right Christian perspective in

administration and political leadership.

Christ followed the model of a suffering servant. He told His disciples that He had to suffer, die and to rise again on the third day.

> Then he began to teach them that the Son of Man must undergo great suffering, and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again. (125)
>
> (St.Mark 8:31)

The rophet Isaiah writes about the suffering servant.

> But he was wounded for our transgressions,
> crushed for our iniquities;
> upon him was the punishment that made us whole,
> and by his bruises we are healed. (126)
>
> (Isaiah 53:5)

Christ sacrificed His life on the cross for the redemption of humankind.

The members and leaders of the Dravida Kazhagam Movement had to undergo great suffering for the liberation of oppressed communities. Many of them suffered imprisonment and sacrificed their lives.

A theological reappraisal of the Church's Mission of political concern in the light of the Dravidian challenge lies in educating leaders, especially Christian leaders, to follow Christ's model of leadership namely the model of a suffering servant.

(x) Christian Political concern means reflections and promotion of the values of the Kingdom of God.

Christ read the following passage in the synagogue at Nazareth. Christ said that the Spirit of the Lord had anointed Him to preach good news to the poor, to render

justice to the poor, to liberate them from oppression, and to heal the broken-hearted.

> The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,
> because he has anointed me
> to bring good news to the poor.
> He has sent me to proclaim
> release to the captives
> and recovery of sight to the blind,
> to let the oppressed go free,
>
> to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour. (127)
> (St.Luke 4:18,19)

Justice, concern for the poor, liberation of the oppressed, love for peace and comforting the broken-hearted are some of the values of the kingdom of God.

The members and the leaders of this movement presented a challenge of justice, concern for the poor, liberation of the oppressed communities etc., etc.

A theological reappraisal of the Church's Mission of political concern in the light of the Dravidian challenge is to reflect and promote the values of the Kingdom of God, like justice, concern for the poor, liberation of the oppressed etc., in Christian lives.

4.7 Life and witness of political leaders.

Christian political leaders can contribute much through their exemplary Christian life and witness. Their political service will have great impact if they serve with a sense of justice and concern for the poor.

(i) Church's commission on political affairs.

If the Church can appoint a study commission consisting of leaders with political expertise to study

bills in parliament and give guidance to people, it will help very much the people and their leaders.

(ii) St.Paul's views on obedience to political authorities.

St.Paul writes that all political powers and authorities are approved by God to do good things and to punish evil-doers. Therefore, St.Paul writes that people should respect and be obedient to higher authorities.

> Let every person be subject to the governing authorities; for there is no authority except from God, and those authorities that exist have been instituted by God.
>
> For rulers are not a terror to good conduct, but to bad. Do you wish to have no fear of the authority? Then do what is good; and you will receive its approval;
>
> for it is God's servant for your good. But if you do what is wrong, you should be afraid, for the authority does not bear the sword in vain! It is the servant of God to execute wrath on the wrongdoer.
>
> Pay to all what is due them - taxes to whom taxes are due, revenue to whom revenue is due, respect to whom respect is due, honor to whom honor is due. (128) (Romans 13:1,3,4,7)

If the authorities do good and render justice, then obedience to the authorities is justifiable. But if the authorities do evil things and do injustice, then obedience to evil authorities is not justifiable.

So far, the theological basis for political concern and a theological reappraisal of the Church's Mission of political concern were dealt with.

The next section deals with the Church's and Christians' participation in the political life of India.

4.8 Christian Church's Participation in the political life of India.

India was ruled by Britain and later became an independent nation. Christian interpreters of indian nationalism saw the providence of God at work both in India's connection with Britain and in India's awakening of nationalism.

K.T. Paul wrote that God created a new nation Israel during the period of the Old Testament, with a redemptive purpose and that Indian nationalism also would have a similar purpose. (129)

M.M. Thomas wrote that both the British interpretation and indian nationalism had a creative providential purpose. The history of British imperialism and Indian nationalism becomes a continuous action of God's creative providence for the Indian nation. (130)

4.9 Participation of Christians in Indian Nationalism - An independent position.

The Indian National Congress Party was started in 1885 with the specific political purpose of liberating India from British rule and making India an independent nation. The Christian community in India was sympathetic towards the Indian National Congress Party which worked for India's independence. However, the Christian Community in India did not join the Congress political party, but maintained an independent position. Bishop Azariah, one of the Indian Christian leaders said that the Christian Church in India should work for India's independence, but should maintain

an independent position without joining the Indian National Congress political party. The Indian Christian Church was advised to be nationalistic without being congressite.

Bishop Azariah said,

> It has been suggested that if Indian Christians desire to serve the national cause, they should become members of the National Congress. This is ultimately a matter for individual judgement, what I have said so far would rather indicate that Indian Christians should take up an independent attitude in the present-day politics in order that they commit themselves to the entire programme of no one party, but influence any party in carrying out of programme of national service not inconsistent with our religious ideals. (131)

4.10 The National Missionary Society of India : A fulfilment of Christian Nationalism.

The National Missionary Society was founded in 1905 in Serampore near Calcutta. The national ideal upheld a conscious assertion of Indian rights and ethos. Sixteen young men from different parts of India gathered together in December 1905 and started the National Missionary Society of India based on the three principles of "Indian leadership", "Indigenous method" and "Indian money". The National Missionary Society voluntarily accepted the missionary task of the Church.

Bishop V.S. Azariah, K.C. Banarji, S.K. Datta and K.T. Paul were some of the leaders who started the National Missionary Society of India. These leaders were convinced that the gospel of Jesus Christ was relevant to India and that the highest service that Indian Christians could render to their country was sharing with their countrymen the unique knowledge and experience of God

derived from Jesus Christ. They were convinced that the Church in India should be conscious of her possession of the love and power of the Gospel of Jesus Christ and that the greatest service that the Church could do was the evangelization of India.

4.11 Home Rule and the Non-Cooperation Movements and the Christian Indians.

The Home Rule Movement led to the agitation of Indians for Home Rule. During the period of the first world war, Joseph Baptista, Annie Besant, N.C. Kelkar and B.G. Tilak led a powerful movement for the cause of self-government in India. Due to the pressure of Home Rule Agitation. E.S. Montague, the secretary of State for India, announced in 1917 that Britain would arrange for ultimate self-government for India.

Gandhi called upon the Mohammedans and the Hindus to start non-cooperation with the British government in order to show their protest. There were some Christians who took part in the non-cooperation movement.

Generally, the Christian community and the Church in India did not take a very active part in the freedom struggle, though some Christians took part in the freedom struggle.

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Chapter V

CONCLUSION

The purpose of the thesis is to make a theological reappraisal of the mission of the Christian Church in Tamilnadu in the light of the challenge presented by the Dravida Kazhagam Movement (a secular humanistic movement). (Thesis, page 17).

The Christian Church in Tamilnadu refers to the Protestant Church, with special reference to the Church of South India, which is a united church of the Anglican, Methodist, Presbyterian, and Congregationalist traditions (pp.23,161). Tamilnadu is one of the southern states of India.

The concept of Christian mission and a theological reappraisal of Christian mission (which have been described in the first, third, and fourth chapters (pp.26-31;195-217;228-298)) may briefly be summarised here.

The word 'mission' is a noun derived from a Latin word; *mitto*, which means 'send'. The word 'mission' indicates a task that a person or a group has been assigned (usually by God or by God's representative) and sent out to perform. The risen Christ sent His disciples to proclaim the Gospel, as the Father had sent Him. St. John, an evangelist, records this in his gospel:

> Jesus said to them again, 'Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you. (St. John 20:21)

St. Mark 16:15 also brings out this meaning. St. Matthew, an evangelist, records this in his gospel in the following way:

> Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit... (St. Matthew 28:19)

Mission has been understood from the above verses as world evangelisation, as going into all parts of the world, proclaiming the gospel, converting and baptising groups and individuals, enlisting them as members of the Church, and planting and establishing churches.

On the other hand, mission is also understood as establishing social, economic, and political justice, and humanising relationships in society.

> Mission then, with a new emphasis on God's own activity in the world ('Missio Dei' as it was called), came to be regarded both in the World Council of Churches and Vatican II circles as 'humanisation'.[1]

The teaching of the prophets also underlines this concept of mission as humanisation. For example, the prophet Amos writes:

> Hear this, you that trample on the needy, and bring to ruin the poor of the land, saying...'We will make the epah small and the shekel great, and practice deceit with false balances, buying the poor for silver and the needy for a pair of sandals'...but let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever flowing stream. (Amos 8:4,5b,6a,5:24)

The prophets Isaiah and Micah also write with the same spirit of humanisation (Isaiah 1:17;58:6-7; Micah 6:8).

Today 'mission' is also interpreted as liberation and development, liberating and developing the socially, economically and politically oppressed and poor. The historical event of the Exodus reveals God's mission as liberation and development, liberating the oppressed Israelites from the oppression of the Egyptian Pharaoh and leading them to development (Exodus 3:7-10).

Mission has a social as well as an individual dimension (Romans 7:19,22-25;8:2). Mission means the personal liberation of every person from sin and evil by the Spirit of Christ and an experience of personal salvation. St. Paul describes this as a new creation in his second letter to the Corinthians:

> So if anyone is in Christ,
> there is a new creation:
> everything old has passed away;
> see, everything has become new! (II Corinthians 5:17)

St. Paul describes this liberation further in his letter to the Galatians, as a transformation of every person and society from sinful works of the flesh to divine qualities by the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:19-23). If such a transformation takes place in the lives of individuals and societies there will not be any social, economic and political injustice at all in any society (pp.231-232). Therefore, mission has been understood as evangelisation, liberation and development.

> Mission must be holistic. It must be concerned with the whole individual and the whole society.[2]

It must be a total mission to the total needs of individuals and societies. Jesus Christ refers to this total mission as evangelisation and liberation in His Nazareth Manifesto:

> The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor (evangelisation). He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives (liberation) and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free (liberation) and to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour. (St. Luke 4:18-19)

What are the implications of Jesus' Nazareth Manifesto? This is a quotation taken from Isaiah 61:1 and Isaiah 58:6b (to let the oppressed go free). The prophet Isaiah spoke these words originally to the exploited, oppressed and poor Jews, shortly after the Babylonian exile.

> Poor Jews...had to mortgage their vineyards and homes and even sell their children into slavery to rich fellow-Jews who grasped the opportunity to capitalise on the predicament of the poor. In the light of this, the oppressed...are to be understood as those who were economically ruined, those who had become bonded slaves and had no hope of ever again escaping from the throttling grip of poverty. Only a Jubilee, a 'year of the Lord's favour' could provide them with a way out of their misery.[3]

Jesus used these words and told his listeners that the Spirit of the Lord had anointed Him to proclaim good news to the poor, to communicate hope to the oppressed and exploited and to those who were in great despair

> The prisoners, the blind and the oppressed are all subsumed under 'the poor'; they are all manifestations of poverty, all in need of 'good news'.[4]

The concept of a holistic view of mission is now recognised in both evangelical and ecumenical circles:

> At both evangelical and ecumenical mission conferences...there has been a noticeable feeling towards a greater wholeness; a recognition that in the words of Emilio Castro, Secretary of the Council for World Mission and Evangelism of the W.C.C. (World Council of Churches): 'liberation, development, humanisation and evangelisation are all integral parts of the mission...and cannot be set apart from one another without becoming simply caricatures of what they are.[5]

All the verses quoted so far from the Bible, indicate that the sources for the holistic view of mission (which involves not only evangelism but also social and political involvement) are already contained in the Bible.

Therefore, the challenge of the Dravida Kazhagam Movement with special reference to social and political justice (which is described briefly in the first chapter and which is explained at length in the second chapter), only serves as a touchstone or as a reminder to the Church in Tamilnadu to remind the Church of its social and political responsibility in addition to its task of evangelism. The challenge of the movement has led the Church to look into the Bible afresh and again, and to discover anew insights (regarding social and political justice) which are embedded in the Bible. Creative dialogue with the movement has helped the Church to get a new understanding (from the Bible and in the light of the challenge of this movement) of the Church's responsibility of social and political justice, in addition to the present task of evangelisation for the transformation of individuals and societies.

There are very good possibilities and opportunities for a continued and creative dialogue between the Church and the movement for co-ordinating their efforts, and for co-operating with one another to promote social and political justice.

The third chapter (pp. 143-217) deals with the origin, growth and mission of the Church in India, in general, and in Tamilnadu in particular. It also describes the Church's struggle against the caste system and its role in the political life of India. An important aspect of this chapter is the numerical growth of the Church. The table on page 214 indicates especially the continuing growth of the Church. The chief causes of this growth appear to lie in the fact that the Church is addressing both the spiritual and personal needs of the people; and their educational and social needs.

The Indian Church praises God and expresses deep gratitude to the missionary movement, especially to the missionaries who rendered sacrificial, faithful and excellent services in India, especially in Tamilnadu.

India became independent on 15th August 1947. India is a secular welfare state which provides in its constitution freedom to profess and propagate one's faith. In this context of independent India, there is ample scope and opportunity for the Church in India to preach the gospel, to establish churches and to run institutions.

The second chapter (pp. 105-133) deals with the origin, growth (pp. 37-105) and the challenge (pp. 105-133) of the Dravida Kazhagam Movement. The movement has presented two powerful challenges - the challenge of social justice (pp. 106-118) and the challenge of political concern (pp. 119-133).

The movement also worked hard for the remarriage of widows (p.117), and for the abolition of the tradition of 'temple girls' (p.117), for inter-caste marriages (p.118), for the successful introduction of new clauses in the constitution of India, articles 15(4) and 16(4) to make provision for preferential treatment to scheduled castes and oppressed communities (pp.115-116), and for securing the right for scheduled castes to enter any temple and worship (pp.110-111).

The movement worked very hard for the successful eradication of caste (pp.77-84;108-111), and untouchability (pp.100-101;111-119). The movement has instilled new self-respect, new dignity, new confidence and new hope in the minds of the people of oppressed communities (pp.81-88,95,272-277), and has slowly eradicated belief in superstition, in Vidhi (fate), and has encouraged human efforts (pp.90-91).

The movement also presented a powerful challenge of political concern (pp.119-133). The movement protested against the rise in prices of ordinary commodities like

food grains (p.122) and against the domination of rich industrialists (p.123). The movement protested against the imposition of the Hindi language as the only official language of India (p.124), so that non-Hindi people should not be put at a disadvantage. Practical plans of action for promoting social and political justice are given on pages 274-298.

One of the reasons for the success of the movement is that the followers of this movement come forward willingly to work for this movement as voluntary workers (pp.97-98). The Church can explore the possibility of voluntary workers along with necessary paid workers.

The fourth chapter deals with a theological reappraisal of mission (pp.228-298) in the light of the insights that emerge from the Bible and in the light of the challenge of this movement. Insights emerging from the Bible which promote social justice and political concern have been discussed at length in the fourth chapter. These may be summarised briefly.

The insight related to the equality and sanctity of every human person irrespective of caste, race or gender emerges from the following verse:

> There is no longer Jew or Greek,
> there is no longer slave or free,
> there is no longer male or female,
> for all of you are one in Christ Jesus. (Galatians 3:28)

The image of God in every human person, male or female, speaks about the sanctity and equality of every human person:

> So God created humankind in his image, in the image of God he created them, male and female he created them. (Genesis 1:27)

Jesus, though He was a Jew, treated a Samaritan woman at the well with dignity (despite the prevailing Jewish racial prejudice against Samaritans) (St. John 4:1-15). Jesus commended the Good Samaritan (St. Luke 10:33-35) and the thankful Samaritan leper (St. Luke 17:15-18).

St. Peter the apostle learnt in his vision at Joppa (Acts 10:10-16) through the guidance of the Holy Spirit that the Church (which then consisted mainly of Jews) should accept non-Jews into its fellowship without racial prejudice.

A theological reappraisal of mission in the light of these Biblical insights and in the light of the movement's challenge of social justice is to make all efforts to eradicate social, racial and caste prejudices and to treat all persons with equality, respect and dignity, whatever race or caste they may belong to. A theological reappraisal of mission with reference to political justice is to work for the coming of the Kingdom of God and to promote values of the Kingdom like love, justice, and peace (pp.281-298).

The following are the general responses the Church can make in the light of Biblical insights and Dravidian challenges,

along with its present task of evangelisation and social service.

1. The Church needs to be enabled and educated to serve as the conscience of society and to awaken its moral consciousness.
2. The Church should raise its prophetic voice of justice against injustices in Church and society like the prophets, such as Isaiah, Micah, and Jeremiah.
3. The Church should render justice to the poor and oppressed.
4. The Church should identify with the poor and the oppressed as our Lord Jesus identified with the poor.
5. The Church should treat all persons with equality, respect and dignity, irrespective of caste or race.
6. The Church should work for the liberation of the oppressed.
7. The Church should protect the rights of the poor and the oppressed.
8. The Church should serve the people like our Lord Jesus, the Suffering Servant, with a spirit of service and sacrifice.

The following are some of the particular responses that the Church can make in the light of Biblical insights and Dravidian challenges (along with its present task of evangelisation and social service).

1. The Church should make all efforts to eradicate the lingering caste spirit when brides and bridegrooms are

selected, and when leaders in Church and society are elected.

2. The Church should make all efforts to recruit voluntary workers in addition to necessary paid workers.
3. The Church should envisage and implement plans and programs of social action (in addition to its present task of evangelisation and social service) to fight against social injustices
4. The Church should make all efforts to promote social and economic equality and to ensure honesty and justice in trade and commerce.
5. The Church should make all efforts to ensure justice in management-labour relations and just wages.
6. The Church should make all efforts to extend opportunities of leadership to ordinary and neglected people in society.

Chapter V

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