CHAPTER I
CHAPTER -1

INTRODUCTION

History deals with human society. Arnold J. Toynbee, a pioneer historian, stated that society should be the basic unit form of historical study.\textsuperscript{1} G.M. Trevelyan also stresses the importance of the study of social history.\textsuperscript{2} It is no doubt that "the history of a people is enormously wider than the history of their kings and ministers, wars and treaties."\textsuperscript{3} Social history deals not only the history of the people, but also their customs, habits, traditions and social institutions. It has attracted the attention of recent historians as man's activities have made society more dynamic through changes and reforms. Social reforms have widened the scope of transformation as a catalytic agents of progress and promotion in a society. Therefore the reforms, which cause social changes, emanate as the end-product of social justice. When time passes by the ephemeral social techniques and institutions yield to transitions on the basis of reforms injected into the society every now and then. Such a common phenomenon was applicable to the nineteenth century. Indian

society was in dire need of reforms, since there was ignorance, illiteracy, poverty and political turmoils. There are catastrophic economic deteriorations and the ever mounting political imbalances paved the way for disunity and they in turn expanded the horizon for the introduction of reforms as overhauling measures in Indian society. As people who believed in the ‘Rule of Law’ the liberal – minded British endeavoured to eliminate the different social evils that existed in India.

The English word ‘movement’ is derived from the old French verb ‘movir’ which means “to move, stir or impel”. It is derived from the Latin word “movimentum” meaning to move. Thus movement “course or series of action and endeavours on the part of a body of persons, moving, tending more or less continuously, towards some special end”⁴. Reform refers to changes that take place in the political social or economic spheres. Reforms become essential for a society when its institutions become obsolete. Applying this norm to Indian society in the nineteenth century, the need for a reform movement was felt as there was danger to Hinduism from Christianity. Reformers who were engaged in removing the meaningless practices of the Hindu religion that had been practiced over the centuries.

With the emergence of the Indian Social Reform Movement in the nineteenth century, the age old Hindu customs such as Sati, Child-Marriage and forced permanent widow-hood were severely condemned by the reformers with the desired results.

The Social Reform Movement in India was gradual, but drastic in nature. It was not a revolutionary movement. Some historians were of the view that reforms were a substitute for revolution. In other words revolutions are bound to occur if reforms are not effected. Samuel Steinberg, falling in line with this view, has reiterated that “tree that does not bend to the wind breaks; reform is better than revolution”. 5 Those who advocated a break with the past traditions of the Hindu society were called as ‘Social Reformers’. They endeavoured to “reform” the society which was seething with disabilities. They took strenuous efforts to restructure the deteriorating society on a rational basis so as to bring about equality among the social communities.6 It changed the attitude and outlook of the people to a great extent.7

The term “reform” generally refers to advance progress or modernization.8 Social Reform Movement can be defined as a movement which aims at the introduction of progressive ideas or modern trends which

7. Ibid.
alter the society. The Oxford English Dictionary defines the term ‘reform’ as “the amendment or altering for the better some faulty state of things .......... the removal of some abuse or wrong”. When used as a verb transitive, it means to form again, to renew, restore, re-establish, to make a change for the better, or improve by removal of faults or abuses. Reform, further is a process that is never completed.

It was during the nineteenth century that India came under the direct and complete control of the alien British yoke which introduced reforms through legal measures. The Social Reform Movement along with the Religious Reforms Movement reached a high zenith during the 19th century. R.C. Majumdar observes that “the nineteenth century was the great dividing line and these hundred years changed the face of India”. The wake of the new education system being acquired, a new awareness came and stirred the educated Indians. Yet, it could not be denied that indigenous forces also contributed to the newly emerging awakening. Among the educated elites, those who were well-versed in Hindu Shastras felt the necessity of starting both English and Vernacular educational institutions.

10. Ibid.
Thus, by 1830 a good number of schools and colleges were established in different parts of the Indian sub-continent. A critical approach towards the past came to be developed, rationalism took the place of faith, superstitious beliefs gave way to scientific approach and zeal for reform overtook the ignorance of the people. People till then in passive, began to question the very foundations and fundamental values of the society. As such the “age old beliefs and traditional, social and religious customs came under severe criticism.”

The study of the Social Movement which had all along been considered to be the province of history, is now emerging as an important field of sociological research. The study of Social Movement involves many important historical events and documents which give valuable guidance for research work. Many writers also have tried to define the concept of Social Movements from different angles. But there is still a lack of clarity on the conceptual definition of the term ‘Social Movement’. The term itself is ambiguous and so it is difficult to make an analysis of this term. On the other hand the analysis of social movement has constituted an amorphous field of sociological research. In this respect many sociologists have given

different views. They have also pointed out the important roles played by the Social Movements in changing the social process of a particular country. Taking this view into consideration they are of the opinion that a “Social Movements are a socially shared demand for change in some aspects of the social order”.\textsuperscript{15} Another slightly different view is that social movements are a wide variety of collective attempts to bring about a change in certain social institutions or to create an entirely new order.\textsuperscript{16} Here, they point out the conflict between the Society’s traditional institutions or values and other outside forces and the role of the social groups for the establishment of new arrangements. It is a fact that the demand for change is always met with resistance. So in order to bring it to an end it brings in some form of conflict. Therefore “Social Movement” as termed by some Sociologists “is not the unnoticed accretion of many recognized and conscious indictment of whole or part of the social order together with the conscious demand for change”.\textsuperscript{17}

In 1896 Warner Sombart developed another view on the concept of Social Movements. In his book, ‘Socialism and Social Movement,’ he defined Social Movement as the “conception of all the attempts at emancipation on the part of the proletariat,”\textsuperscript{18} In 1951 Rudolf Herberl and

\textsuperscript{15} International Encyclopaedia of Social Science, Vol.No.13-14, New Delhi, 1918, p.445.

\textsuperscript{16} Ibid, pp. 438 – 349.

\textsuperscript{17} Ibid p. 445.

Ferdinand Tonies shared the idea of social movements as a work of social collectivism. He further distinguished the social movement in two criteria. First social movements are always integrated by a specific pattern of normative commitments, constitutive idea, or ideology and secondly, social movements are not necessarily nationally confined, they may be multinational in character. With regard to the importance of social movements he says that the social movements produced low positive impacts in the society. First it helped in the formation of the common will or political will and secondly in the process of socialization training and requirement of political elites.

To give a more comprehensive idea, he tries to define the term ‘movement’ as “autonomy”, self-generated and independent action, control of hardships, a mechanism of organization and discipline following in the place of an untamed surging crowd. Neilsmelser in 1962, in his book “Theory of Collective Behaviour’ points out two types in the character of Social Movements, i.e. ‘norm oriented movement’, and ‘value oriented movement’ which also may be regarded as general historical movement and

in the second category he gives the example of revolutionary movement and religious reforms movements. But in the beginning of the 19th century the idea of social movements were confined only to a limited area. They believed that social movement meant the movement of the new industrial working class with its Socialistic, Communistic and anarchistic tendencies. Some movements may be defined by the character and implication of the commitments and others by the organizational mode and strategy, and others by the ‘constituency’ of the population which accords the movements normative commitment and participation. On the basis of his idea Paul Wilkinson identifies some movements of different dimension, like millenarism, youth movements, revolutionary movements, women’s movements, intellectual movements etc, as a frame work of typology of Social Movements. At the beginning they emerged as ‘protest movement’ and were confined only to a small group then, and gradually it developed as an organized movement, and finally it was transformed into a genuine Social Movement.


Millenarian movement is an important category of Social Movement. This term comes from the Latin word ‘millenium’ and is also equivalent to the Greek word "Chillias", it literally means a period of thousand years. Fr. Stephen Fuchs has interpreted the term as the hope or expectation of a paradise on earth, lasting a thousand years or some indefinitely long period. The ritual of most of the Millenarian movement involves wild and offer frenzied emotional display. Some cases like hysterical and paranoid phenomena, mass possession trances, fantasies and other forms of ecstatic dance, figure prominently in the millenarian movement. This basic objective of the movement is to bring about a radical change in the system.

Before the nineteenth century, social reforms were linked mostly with religious reforms. Since the Hindu society was mainly a religion oriented one, changes affecting the Hindu society were based on religion. Prior to the nineteenth century various social reform movements were preceded by Religious Reform Movements. But in the nineteenth century, there was a deviation from the main track, and social reform movements began to take an independent course without any religious bias. It is seen that social reforms had been made possible due to factors like the British administration, English education, European thought, and Christian influences. In fact, it was said that the influence of Christian Missionaries was the beginning of much social wisdom among the Indians.
Importance of the period (1806-1936)

The proposed thesis titled, “The Social Reform Movement in south Travancore (1806-1936)” is about the historical, religious and social aspects of the people of South Travancore. The thesis provides an indepth study of the socio religious reforms like child marriage, widow Re-marriage, upper cloth struggle, slavery, Devadasi system and the Temple Entry Movement of South Travancore. It is also a study of the arrival of the Christian missionaries in South Travancore in the year 1806. After their arrival several changes took place among the people of South Travancore. The missionaries started several schools throughout South Travancore, for which most of the people could be educated and the people could understand their disabilities and difficulties and they wished to remove them with the assistance of the missionaries, who also helped them in various ways till 1936 and hence the period is fixed for a systematic study from 1806-1936.

Scope and significance:

The main objective of the study is to outline dispassionately the social importance of the people of South Travancore and to asses their social and economic activities. It is also an historical study of these aspects, which affords a fertile field of investigation into the life and culture of the people South Travancore.
The society of South Travancore comprised of several castes like the Nairs, Ezhavas and Nanchilnad Vellalas. Their customs and manners differ from one another and hence the Government and the Christian missionaries took up various steps to redress their disabilities. Further the thesis traces out the role played by the social reformers like NarayanaGuru, Chatampi Swamigal and Muthukutti Swamigal of Travancore worked for the removal of slavery and untouchability prevailed among the people of South Travancore. This kind of research has not been done by any scholar and hence this study.

Methodology

The problem which forms the subject matter of this research in very complex. The phenomenon of social change in the project area is also substantially induced by a chain of historical events. These historical event interacted with the social forces in accelerating the process of social change. Further, the genesis and development of the motivating forces, which activated the process of changes, are examined on historical perspective. So the application of historical method in the study is quite imperative. Thus the analytical framework of this study is essentially an economic interpretation to the phenomenon of social change on historical outlines. Hence, multitrait-multi-method matrix is employed in the investigation.
Sources of Information

This thesis is mainly based on primary sources. They are classified into archival archaeological materials, unpublished official files, both manuscripts (MSS) end typescripts (TS) and published Government documents include Census Reports, Administrative Reports, Departmental Annual Reports, Manuals, Digests, Directory, Annual Statistical Abstracts, Acts and Proclamations, Regulations and Proclamations, Proceedings of the Legislature, Committee Reports, Departmental Publications and Periodicals published by the Government agencies.

Annual Reports of the private agencies and records at the disposal of the missionary achieves also forms part of the primary data. Souvenirs, monographs and periodicals of private agencies are also of primary consideration. Unpublished dissertations of various related aspects are much useful to this work.

Secondary sources are used substantially to corroborate the data supplied lay primary sources. They include contemporary and semi-contemporary writings in the form of books, published thesis, newspaper reports and periodicals both contemporary and back volumes. The veracity of the sources are tested through cross-examination. The sources are analyzed both intensively and exhansively so as to eliminate the changes of bias.
Organization of study

The unique geographical position and peculiar physical features of Soth Travancore have invested it with a district individuality, Therefore, the introductory chapter of the thesis is devoted to explain its geographical significance such as boundaries, shape, area, rivers, mountains, passes, canals, coastal lines, climate, rainfall, soil, flora and fauna and explained in details.

The second chapter explains the social evils such as child marriage and widow remarriage. Among the orthodox Hindus, the marriage of a Hindu girl took place in two phases. The first one was the betrothal solemnized before puberty. The second one was the consummation ceremony which normally took place between the years eight and ten. Since the Widow Remarriage Act could not make head way, reformers made a request to the Government to fix the minimum age limit for the consummation of marriage for girls at twelve. These two social evils capture the attention of the progressive minded people in Travancore in the 19th century. The reformers instead of bestowing their attention on the question of widow re-marriage alone, but concentrated on prevention of child-marriage, as the condition of the child-widow was really pathetic and heart-rending.

The next chapter deals with the agitation for reform of the laws of inheritance and marriage. South Travancore society comprised of several
castes like the Nairs, Ezhavas and Nanchilnad Vellalas, who followed the *Marumakkathayam* system of succession and inheritance. The system and offended against all the principles of political economy, healthy family life and also destroyed all motives of prudence and fore-thought. Therefore a movement for the abolition of the system was started in South Travancore and it won the support of all the progressive sections of the community.

The fourth chapter describes how slavery affected the people belonging to different castes. The feudal lords were selfish and they exercised untold cruelties upon their peasants. For a slave, the possession of a piece of land was a day dream. They had to cultivate the land and took the yields to their masters. Thus, in spite of the commendable social rendered by them what they got in return was “contempt, neglect and indifference” by their masters. Thus they were largely left to nature during ailment. The most ingnomious treatment was meted out to them. Various measures taken by the government and also by the Christian Missionaries to redress the disability are also explained in this chapter.

The content of the fifth chapter is the “upper cloth struggle” which lasted for one and half centuries and heralded the movements aimed at social liberation in other areas of India also. The Nairs attacked the Nadars for violating the customs. They stripped the upper-clothes of the Nadar women in the market places, assaulted the men for refusing to do work for them,
burnt down the chapels, chools and raided the private houses. In 1828 rioting broke out in many places particularly in Neyyantinkara, Eraniel and it continued till 1958, for the Nadars of South Travancore to secure for their women-folk, the same rights in regard to dress as were enjoyed by the upper section of the Hindus.

Chapter six is devoted to explain the system of *Devadasi* in temples and its abolition. The system of *Devadasi* had been an ancient tradition attached to the services of the temple. It had its origin in the *Pancharatra Agmas* of Hindu Scriptures which sanctifies the practices of *Devadasi* in the temples. It led to the dedication of a girl as *Devadasi* which meant a life of spinster. The dedication of a girls was a life long serfdom to the temple service. They had to undergo a kind of spurious matrimonial ceremony known as *pottukattu*. In accordance with *pottukattu* ceremony the *Devadasi* was married to the deity of the temple by the symbolic typing of the sacred thread by the temple priest. The degenerated *Devadasi* system lingered till the early part of the last century and the Government of Travancore abolished it by a Royal Proclamation issued in 1930 during the Regency of *Maharani Sethu Lakshmi Bai* (1924-1931).

Chapter seven explains the significant role played by the social reformer of in the Temple Entry Movement in South Travancore. From the earlies times the temples of Travancore and other parts of Kerala and their
precincts were treated as sanketam grounds and were not open to the low caste Hindus. Like all other temples, the Thanu Malayan temple at Suchindaram was not accessible to all classes of the Hindu society. Down to a very recent period the agamic prescriptions and time-honored customs were most meticulously observed in this temple and The Temple Entry Movement gained momentum, especially during the second half of the nineteenth century. Chapter eight is the conclusion in which a brief summary of the previous chapters are given.
South Travancore was one of the princely States of south India and it was called by different names at different periods, the popular name being *Venad*,\(^{25}\) *Vanchi Desam*,\(^{26}\) and *Thiru Adidesam*.\(^{27}\) In Malayalam the name of South Travancore was interpreted as *Thiruvithamkur*, and in Sanskrit as *Sri Vardhanapuri* or *Srivazhumkode*, meaning as the “Seat of Prosperity”.

South Travancore is surrounded by Tirunelveli district on the north and the east. On the south and south west the boundaries are the Indian Ocean and the Arabian sea. On the west and north-west it is bounded by Cochin. On south eastern side is the Gulf of Mannar.

The physical geography of South Travancore like its social economy, typifies the interaction of the east and west coasts of South India. A large portion of the Thovalai *taluk* consists of hills and valleys. The great hills of Vadamala running north-west and south-west are very lofty.\(^{28}\) Mahendragiri

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25. ‘*Venad*’ us originally known as ‘*Vanavanad*’ which means the abode of the ‘Devas’, which was later simplified into ‘*Venad*’.

26. ‘*Vanchi – desam*’ means either the land of treasure or the land of bamboos.

27. “*Thiru-Aadidesam*” is desired for the title of one of the local rules called “*Thiru – adikal*”.

(5,427 feet) is the highest point. From the south of it are the Maruthuvalmalai hills (370m) a lofty range dividing the Agastheeswaram taluk from Thovalai. The lofty range north east of Udayagiri called the Maruvattoor hills occupy a large parts of the Kalkulam taluk. They are high and rocky and but partly wooded in the south. To the north, they descend and extend up to the Shoorlacode range, and their numerous spurs are covered with forest. Comidlymalai, a lofty mountain range arising gradually runs north – west form Kunnancode. Its summit is a ridge of rocks forming three peaks, and is the boundary between the Vilavancode taluk and Neyyattinkara. Its base is covered with high forest and it slopes towards the north and inhabited by hill tribes. Next to it is Kollamalai, the most conspicuous in the Vilavancode taluk.

The Pazhayar is the only river which passes through the center of the district. The word ‘Pazhayar’ in Tamil means ‘old river’. It runs east of Nagercoil near Kottar, and irrigates the paddy lands around it. It also irrigates

33. L. Ward and Conner, *op.cit*, p.29.
the lands around Parakkai, Suchindrum, Therur, Mylady and Tharmaraikulam and empties itself in the Manakudy Kayal. Then Puthanar channel runs to the north of Kulasekaranputhoor. From a dam across the Pazhayar near Veeranarayananamangalam in the Thovalai taluk a channel runs to Therakalputhur and discharges into a string of tanks north of Therur. Another channel flows west of Erachakulam and discharges into the large tank at Putheri.

The Puthanar channel flowing from the dam at Shotuputhur and the Ananthanar channel entering the Thovalai taluk north of Chellanthuruthi are of the greatest utility, irrigating an extensive tract of paddy lands lying between them. There are also two other irrigation channels, one proceeding from the Bhuthapandy dam and the other from a dam thrown across a large rivulet running north of Eraviputhur to the south-west and then south-east of the Thellanthi and Thenparai and empties it in a large tank.

The Kodhayar has its source in the great range of mountains about 1½ miles to the east of Motachy peak, and from there its course is winding and broken intermitently till it reaches a point six miles south of Motachy malai.

From the Moovatumagam junction, the river Thampraparani flows to Kuzhithurai near which it cuts across by the southern high-way, and then discharges into the sea west of Thengapattanam.\(^{37}\)

The Thampraparani river has five feeders rising in Mahendragiri and Velimalai.\(^{38}\) A large stream which rises in the Meycode village runs through Eraniel and Thirunayinarkurichi and enters the sea at Kadiyapatnam. Its route is winding, through rich vast cultivated valley, abounding with tanks and studded with houses clustered among the numerous coconut gardens. The rivers and channels above mentioned are greatly beneficial to the district, and without their water resource the high state of paddy cultivation at present would not have been possible.

There are not less than 130 tanks of all sizes in the Agasteeswaram taluk, the largest being Putheri, Suchindram, Parakkai and Variyoor and also a string of smaller tanks which stretch out from Therur towards Therakalputhur, the whole being supplied from the channel mentioned above and have supply of water throughout the year. This perennial supply helps in producing a second crop of paddy.\(^{39}\) There are also some tanks with stone steps leading

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38. L. Ward and Conner, op. cit, p.18.
39. Ibid.
up to the waters edge which are mainly found near temples and those at Suchindram and NagaRaja Temple are prominent.

There are also 120 tanks in the Thovalai taluk alone, some of them small but they also serve for to irrigate the paddy fields. The larger ones are in the vicinity of Thazhakudy, Thenparai, Thovalai, Shenbhagaramanputhur, Azhagiapandipuram and those east of Kadukkarai and south-west of Chiramadam.40

There are two small back water lakes in the Agasteeswaram taluk, the one that stretches from Manakkudi to Thamarakulam is about three miles in length, and on its eastern bank are extensive salt pans, producing large quantities of salt.41 The other is a narrow piece of water that runs parallel to the coast north of the fishing villages of Pallamthurai and Pozhikkara.42

The district has a sea – coast of 68 kms and the most part of which it very regular.43 We can see projection towards the sea at Kanniyakumari, Muttam and Enayumanthurai, Colachel, the seacoast town is situated about 22 kms west of Nagercoil. About 7 kms, From the south-west of Nagercoil is Eraniel and the Dutch and the English had factories in Colachel.

40. M. Gopalakrishnan, op.cit, p.4.
41. L. Ward and Conner, op.cit,p.6.
42. Ibid.
The average annual rainfall in South Travancore is 1469.7 mm, and the highest maximum temperature is 38.2° the summer from March to May is followed by the south west monsoon from June to September, and October to November constitute the post-monsoon, season with frequent thunder storms. The period from December to February is the north – east monsoon season although the rains are confined to the first half of the season and the rest of the period is of clear bright weather. Winds are generally light to moderate with some strength in force during the south - west monsoon season. Thus the district has a warm humid climate with no cold season.

The mean annual rainfall in Agasteeswaram taluk is 36.4 cm and that in Thovalai 48.4 cm. Of rainfall is received in January and February. The heaviest rainfall often associated with thunder storms, is received during the retreating monsoon period of October and November. The distribution of rainfall throughout the year has an important bearing on the agricultural operations of South Travancore. The land near the coast is a loose brown sandy soil, the height further in the interior incline to red and

46. K.K. Pillay, *op.cit*, p.3.
gravelly. The principal produces are paddy of various kinds, horse-gram, and cotton, much of the latter being cultivated among the forests of palmyra.\textsuperscript{47} The soil of Thovalai taluk is generally red, and part of the surface, is gravelly. The main crops are paddy of various varieties, and are raised twice a year, depending on rain. Horse-gram, cotton various and kinds of dry cereals, and oil-nuts are produced in semi arid lands, the land near Neyyoor have recently been successfully cultivated with indigo, and having a good yield. The other cash crops and trees are coconut, arecanut, pepper, plantains, jack – fruit, sugarcane, and cardamom and varieties of yams, tapioca and also vegetables of various kinds, which are grown in small enclosures near the houses.

Iron ore was found on the Veddamalahills, situated east of Ramanathichaputhur.\textsuperscript{48} It was mined and brought to Marunkur and Punnarkulam where it was smelted, made into bars and from thence taken to the neighbouring markets.\textsuperscript{49} Blacksmiths purchased the bars and made out of it agricultural tools and other implements. Yet, another place in south

\textsuperscript{47} Extract of Census of India 1991, Series 3, Tamil Nadu Supplementary, p.23.
\textsuperscript{48} Ibid, p.23.
\textsuperscript{49} K.K. Pillay, \textit{op.cit}, p. 8.
Travancore reported for its smelting industry is Aromboli. The live stock of Agasteeswaram taluk are inferior to those of Tirunelveli. Buffaloes are numerous and thrive well, sheep, through not numerous thrive well on the eastern border of the taluk. At certain periods they are driven in flocks towards Trivandrum where the consummation is great. The cattle of Thovalai taluk are in general very diminutive and hardy. Buffaloes thrive well and are numerous. Sheep thrive south on the plains. The wild animals are deer, wild dogs, tigers and in the interior high mountains the bison and elephant are in abundance. The wild animals common in the forests of Vilavancode taluk, are the elephant, tiger, bison, elk, deer, wild boar, wild cat, etc. Among the smaller animals are the mountain flying squirrel, the black monkey and a variety of other animals. There are also numerous kinds of snakes some of which are very large in size.

Half a mile south west of Agasteeswaram is the habitation of Nadars, forming small villages in the midst of Palyamyra gardens. Around and near the houses are groves of coconut and other trees. There were only a few houses of Brahmins, in their days in the area around the temple Suchindram is inhabited chiefly by Brahmins, and also the temple at Vadiveeswaram. The main inhabitants of Kanyakumari, Kovalam, Manakudy, Pallam Christian Mukuva fishermen, Buthapandy is inhabited by Tirunelveli Brahmins, and Vellalas. On the west of Azhagiapandipuram, there is an a Agraharam of
Brahmins. Thittuvillai near Bhuthapandy inhabited by Lebbays and Christians. Colochel is occupied by Lebbays, Catholic Christian fishermen, and Protestants. Thiruvattar is inhabited by Brahmins and Nairs. Thirunandikkari is a popular Nair village. The inhabitants of Kuzhththurai are mostly Nairs with a few Chettiars, more men and fishermen. The latter being Christians, few Brahmins reside near the temple dedicated to the Maha Devi. People of various castes inhabited the areas of South Travancore.

South Travancore has a sea - coast of 168 kms, and most part of the coastline is regular. In Kanyakumari, Muttam and Enayumanthurai we can see projections towards the sea and that are a few minor seaports. The ancient port of Colachel is the only natural port on the west coast of Tamil Nadu. Kanyakumari is another small finishing port of the south Travancore and it serves mainly the tourist. There is a village port at Manakudi, seven kms to the west of Kanyakumari on the edge of the Manakudi lake. Kadiyapatnam is also on the middle of the south border, about five kms, north–east from the off shore rock called “Crocodile Rock”.

50. M. GopalaKrishnan, op.cit.p. 5.
51. Ibid.
52. Ibid.
As far as the economy of the state is concerned it was largely based on agriculture and at the mercy of the monsoons. Drought and floods are the common features. However the country is provided with fertile soil which is suitable for the cultivation of various kinds of crops, tubers, and fruits. Paddy, tea coffee, ginger, turmeric, tapioca, coconuts, rubber, Cardamom are the main products of the State.

Trade and commerce flourished. The internal trade was largely restricted by a number of customs houses. However the Government regulated and exercised sea customs with regulations to prevent smuggling. The important articles of exports were cotton, coir, salt, sugarcane, tobacco, indigo, spices, liquors, glassware and dyecloth. The develop trade and commerce, the state maintained commercial warehouses at Colachel, Alleppey, Alwaye and Trivandrum. Shipments were made to the ports of Cochin, Calicut, Bombay, Karachi, Colombo and Jaffna. Quilon was a

54. V. Nagam Aiya, *op.cit*, p.66.
57. *Ibid*.
commercial and industrial center making tiles and cashewnut factories, spinning and weaving mills, technical industries, textiles and engineering workshops enriched with good marketing facilities. Capecomorin, Suchindram, Varkala, Thiruvattar and Ettumanur were the famous place of pilgrimages.  

The Travancore ryot is like his counter part in other parts of Indian an intelligent, industry, loyal and law abiding peasant proprietor but by no means an affluent subject of the state. He wants are few; the rice congee is his chief diet, and for the rest, the succulent roots, the country abounds with his dress is scanty, jewels are nearly unknown, house building material is cheap, since they are got from the gardens. The climate is mild and equable all through the year, and the droughts and famine are very rare. The land tax is light as compared with other countries. But litigation is plentiful and the Marumakkathayam law of inheritance is said to stifle the natural instinct for acquisition of wealth.

South Travancore had been the house of untouchability and unapproachability. Such social inhibitions were observed very strictly seriously under the guise of religious and social customs and sanctions. In the

59. A. Narayanan Thampi, op.cit, p.22.
early years, the society in South Travancore was feudal and caste ridden. Therefore Swami Vivekananda, the great Hindu religious reformer once described South Travancore as the land of the lunatics. The non-caste Hindus like the Ezhavas, the Nadars and the Parayas being the original inhabitants of the state once possessed a glorious heritage. But following the establishment of the caste hegemony by the Brahmins they were reduced to the status of serfs. Thus South Travancore presented the worst example of caste division. The caste system become the chief worst social evil in south Travancore which was not found in other parts of India. Though the traditional caste system was not vogue in south Travancore, its social ladder was a long one. The Brahmins held the highest place in society, and owners of all landed properties they depended upon the Nairs for the proper management of the land. The Nairs grew into a warrior class protect to the interests of the Brahmins and in due course they claimed higher status in the society and stood above the Ezhavas, Tiyyas the Nadars, the Parayas and the Pulayas. These low castes were subjected to great disabilities on account of the peculiar social customs of the state. They had the most inhuman

treatments in the hands of the high castes.\textsuperscript{64} Strictly speaking the people of South Travancore were divided into two groups such as \textit{Avarnas} and \textit{Savarnas}\textsuperscript{65}. According to the common law of the country they were considered as untouchables. The various disabilities fell upon the poor untouchables and subjected them to be bought and sold like animals by the high castes.\textsuperscript{66} Hinduism was the religion of the ruling house and the majority people of South Travancore. One third of the people were of Christians, Mohammedans and a small body of Europeans.\textsuperscript{67} The high caste Hindus had established temples in the important centers of South Travancore; but unlike them the suppressed classes had their temples and places of worship in their villages. They were strictly prohibited from worshipping in the temples of the high castes.\textsuperscript{68}

The nineteenth century Social Reform Movement was slightly different from the earlier ones, as it became adjunct political reform. The British wanted on the rapid progress of Indians and education and in the social field for conceding the demand of Indians for increased representation in the

\textsuperscript{64} E. Kunjan Pillai, \textit{op.cit}, p. 432.  
\textsuperscript{65} \textit{Report of the Temple Entry Committee}, 1934, p.8.  
\textsuperscript{66} E. Kunjun Pillai, \textit{op.cit}, p.432.  
\textsuperscript{67} \textit{Travancore Administration Report}, 1945, p.2.  
Government. Such measures even compelled the first session of the Indian National Congress held at Poona in 1885 to discuss social issues. When the Congress held its third session in Madras, in 1887, the Indian National Social Conference came into existence as a full fledged body giving importance to social issues only M.G. Ranade and R. Raghunatha Rao were the founders of the Indian National Social conference and T. Madhava Rao, the Dewan of Travancore was its president.