CHAPTER – II

FORMATIVE INFLUENCES IN THE LIVES OF SCOTT AND KALKI

Brief biographical sketches of Scott and Kalki are drawn and their formative influences analysed and discussed in order to present the development of their personalities.

Gleanings from the biography of a novelist invariably reveal his personality. Hence an attempt here is made to point out the important events in the lives of Scott and Kalki in relation to their literary career.

Scott was a product of the eighteenth century as well as the romantic nineteenth whereas Kalki was a product of twentieth century. Scott was very much influenced by the Romantic Age which laid its stress on imagination that helped him in bringing out his imaginative reconstruction of history. Kalki lived in an era of India’s Freedom Struggle and was very much influenced by the Freedom Movement. The French Revolution had a profound influence on Scott. Kalki was a freedom fighter and flung himself into the Freedom Struggle under the spell of Mahatma Gandhi. Like Kalki Scott served for sometime in the volunteer force of light cavalry formed in the wake of fears of a French invasion and “flunged himself into all his military duties with enormous zest, (Johnson, 1: 131-132). Though Kalki, like Scott, did not exhibit any military spirit, he was bold
and fearless. Scott absorbed the influences of his native Scotland, Percy’s Reliques of Ancient poetry, the Gothic Romances, Spenser’s Faerie Queen, Tasso’s romances, the Scottish School of Speculative History and the literary trends of the Romantic Age. Percy’s Reliques was notable for its influence on Scott. (Johnson 1: 54). Likewise Kalki felt the impact of the French and the British novelists including Scott and a wide range of books and journals, particularly those relating to nationalism and social reformation. Like Kalki, Scott was interested in the classical epic. The epics must have made a powerful impact on Scott who, even as a boy, was quite eager to hear and tell stories. (Fiske.1-3) Scott’s interest in history was mainly derived from two sources. The first was the growing enthusiasm during his own day for the Middle Ages and the second was an antiquarian interest which had been awakened and developed in the preceding century. “Scott drew not only from the formal historians but from an enormous lore in chronicles, chapbooks, Elizabethan ballads, and plays. (Johnson.: 755) Likewise Kalki’s interest in history was derived from the works of eminent historians such as K.A. Nilakanta Sastri’s the Cōlas and Sadasiva Pandarathar’s Pirkala-c-cōlar Carittiram (Sunda: 563)

S. Thothadri says: Kalki was a product of Indian Nationalism. It kindled in his heart love for his Motherland, Tamil culture and past glories of Tamil Nadu and India. Kalki reveals this love in his historical romances. (Sunda: 9)

Both Scott and Kalki came under the influence of the intellectual, social, religious, political, nationalistic forces and the cultural background of their respective countries.
Scott’s childhood and parentage;

Sir Walter Scott was born in Edinburgh on 15th August 1771. His father was a respected solicitor. His mother, the daughter of a well-known medical Professor of Edinburgh University, had brains and character, and it is tempting to believe that from her Scott inherited the ability which put him for a time at the very top of the tree. He had his education at the high school of Edinburgh and at Edinburgh University.

As a child he was a voracious reader and avid listener to tales and legends, particularly those of his native Scotland. So he was called ‘the glutton of books’ as Kalki. His copious reading was stored in a retentive memory and used to advantage in his writings; and his interest in folk-lore led to his collection and publication of Scottish ballads. When Scott was sick he was sent of to his grandfather’s farm at Sandyknowe, some forty miles from the capital, where he made contact with the strongest of all the formative elements that were later to mould his work the oral tradition of the Borders and, beyond that, of Scotland as a whole. Crawford observes:

From the Shepherds he heard fold-takes and legends; from his grandmother, stories of the old days of the reivers and freebooters; from his uncle, eye-witness accounts of the Forty-five and its aftermath; from servants and laborers, the songs and ballads that were still alive on the lips of the people. In later life he was to draw on popular literature of all kinds—broadside ballads, chapbooks, and published songs: but his first introduction to such material was oral and he never lost the sense of popular tradition as being not simply a
matter of documents shut up in dusty archives, but rather a living record on the lips of successive generations. As Stephen Guym says about his childhood days and his contact with the persons who influenced him very much: At the age of seven, near Prestonpans, Scott had much talk with a veteran of the German war one Dalgetty – a name destined to immortality; here also he met George Constable, a lawyer, afterwards sketched as the Antiquary. This friend turned him loose on Shakespeare, whom he came to know literally by heart. (273)

The chief enjoyment of his holidays was to escape with a chosen friend, who had the same taste with himself, and alternately to react to each other such wild adventures as they were abler to devise. They used to select, for the scenes of their indulgence, long walks through the solitary and romantic environs of Arthur’s Seat, Salisbury Crags, Braid Hills, and similar places in the vicinity of Edinburgh; and the recollection of those holidays still forms an oasis in the pilgrimage which he had to look back upon. [W. General Preface 349-50]

When Scott was fifteen years old he delved deep into the studies of romances, old plays and epic poetry. As he says:

When boyhood advancing into youth required more serious studies and graver cares, a long illness threw me back on the kingdom of fiction, as if it were by a species of fatality… There was at this time a circulating library in Edinburgh, founded, I believe, by the celebrated Allan Ramsay, which,
besides containing a most respectable collection of books of every
description, was, as might have been expected, peculiarly rich in works of
fiction. It exhibited specimens of every kind, from the romances of
chivalry, and the ponderous folios of Cyrus and Cassandra, down to the
most approved works of later times. I was plunged into this great ocean of
reading without compass or pilot; and unless when some one had the
charity to play at chess with me, I was allowed to do nothing save read,
from morning to night... As my taste and appetite were gratified in nothing
else, I indemnified myself by becoming a glutton of books. Accordingly, I
believe I read almost all the romances, old plays, and epic poetry, in that
formidable collection, and no doubt was unconsciously amassing materials
for the task in which it has been my lot to be so much employed... Time as
it glided on, brought the blessings of confirmed health and personal
strength, to a degree which had never been expected or hoped for. The
severe studies necessary to render me fit for my profession occupied the
greater part of my time.[W. General Preface 350-51].

Claire Lamont says that ‘Highland’ and ‘Jacobite’ were linked in Scott’s mind:
“from childhood, through his father’s friend and client Alexander Stewart of Invernahyle,
Argyllshire. Invernahyle had been out in both the ‘15 and ‘45, and he thrilled the young
Scott with tales of Jacobites. Scott many times pays tribute to him ‘whose tales were the
absolute delight of my childhood.”(W viii)
Kalki’s childhood and parentage:

Sunda observes Kalki’s formative influences in his childhood days:

Kalki was the pseudonym of R. Krishnamurthy born on 9th September, 1899 at Putthamangalm in Thanjavur. Kalki imbibed the composite culture of Thanjavur in most of its aspects, through observation, experience and study and mirrored it in his writings. His father Ramaswamy Ayyar was the village Karnam (accountant) who used to deliver musical discourses from the epics and puranas every evening to the villagers. The child Krishnamurthy was one among them who listened to the discourses with rapt attention. His mother Thyalnayaki was noted for her frugality [17].

Kalki was very much influenced by his father whereas Scott was very influenced by his mother Anne Rutherford during their infant days. Kalki as a boy was frail and weak like Scott. Kalki was taught by Ayyaswamy Ayyar who was considered to be Kalki’s guru (worshipful teacher). He was taught tales of heroism and selfless service for the welfare of humanity. He was made proud of the cultural heritage of India. Kalki was greatly indebted to his guru and expressed his gratitude. “My guru moulded my character when I was five years of age... If I am a writer now, and that too the kind of writer I am, I owe it to him. I salute him with gratitude and reverence” [Sunda: 19]

One of his friends Muthukrishnan known as Swami Rudrananda of Ramakrishna Mission continued his spiritual influence on Kalki throughout his life. Rundrananda says about Kalki: “Kalki was a brilliant student. He was given a prize on the occasion of the celebration of coronation day of George V for his first place in the Ramayana
Competition Examination held in the Putthamangalam School.” [Subra Balan:245-46] Another friend Subramaniam, an architect, offered his moral support to Kalki whenever he required his services.

Like Scott Kalki had read and re-read all the fine books in Tamil and English, which his guru had collected over the years and preserved in his home library. Kalki had learnt by heart all those books. In addition to that Kalki collected a number of novels in English “which apart from entertaining him and evoking his admiration, might have aroused in his mind the aspiration to be a writer.”[Sunda: 21]. It is quite possible that Kalki who was ‘a glutton of books’ in his youth might have read and been inspired by the Indian writers who wrote historical novels in English such as the Times of Yore (1855) by Sochee Chunder Dutt, K.K.Sinha’s Sanjogita (1903), T. Ramakrishna’s Padmini (1903), Sridar Jogendra Singh’s Nur Jahan (1903), A.Madhavaiah’s Clarinda(1915), A.S. Panchapakesa Ayyar’s Baladitya (1930) and Three men of Destiny (1938), S.Gopalan’s Old Tanjore (1938) and Bankim Chandra’s historical novels translated into Tamil. There is no reference in Sunda’s biography to show that Kalki had read the historical novels written in English. The only models therefore must have been the novels in English, especially those of Walter Scott. But, as Meenakshi Mukherjee has observed, though “the influence of Sir Walter Scott is often cited as important in shaping the historical novel in India… On a closer examination Scott’s influence turns out to be much less than is rumoured.” [Mukherjee: 43]

The poetic and prose romances and epics that flourished in the Middle Ages and earlier periods also influenced Kalki. According to Taninayagam the publication of “the
historical works and the literary works of the carikam period and the great Tamil served to create an awareness of the achievements of the ancient Tamils, besides awakening a keen interest in the past.” [68]

Like Scott Kalki also frequented the public library in the city to peruse a wider range of books and journals, particularly those relating to nationalism and social reformation.

Kalki was exposed to books in English: some non-fiction [Edwin Arnold’s Light of Asia, the writings of Ramakrishna Paramahamsa and Swami Vivekananda] and a tremendous amount of fiction, both the classics of those times (Victor Hugo, Alexander Dumas, Walter Scott, Lord Lytton, Charles Dickens, W.M. Thakeray, Thomas Hardy) and more recent popular writers (Edgar Wallace and William Reynolds). P.G Wood House, Jerome K.Jerome, Mark Twain and Stephen Peacock were to become later additions to this list.

[Sriraman, T. xviii].

Kalki was very much influenced by Subramania Bharathi, an eminent poet of Tamil Nadu who inculcated the spirit of patriotism and nationalism in the minds of the people of Tamil Nadu in order to liberate the nation from the shackles of slavery from the British Government in India. Sunda observes:

The moment Kalki read the songs of Bharathi aloud, a new and strange feeling, i.e. the spirit of patriotism surged in his mind. The refrain of one of the poems, “Let us worship our motherland with the mantra, Vande
"Mataram" became the mantra of his life from that very day urging him to dedicate himself to the task of liberating the mother (nation) from the shackles of slavery (21-22).

In January 1921 Kalki left school all of a sudden and joined Mahatma Gandhi's Non-Coperation Movement. He propagated not only nationalistic ideals but also reformist views like anti-untouchability and prohibition and was imprisoned thrice in his life. Like Kalki Scott was also a fighter and a patriot who was the moving force in forming a volunteer home-guard unit, in which he held the position of a quartermaster in 1797 when the fear of a Napoleonic invasion seized great Britain. In spite of his crippled leg he was bold and expert horseman, and apparently was disappointed at not engaging Napoleon's forces, [Magill, Frank N.: 957]

Both Scott and Kalki emerged as multi-faceted personalities. Scott started his career Writer to the Signet and grew as poet whereas Kalki started his career as journalist and grew as a writer of short stories and social novels. In 1786 Scott entered his father’s office as an apprentice Writer to the Signet. Here he was exposed to bourgeois side of his inheritance-to money values, worldly ambition and sober calculation. The first step upwards was taken in 1788 when it was decided that he should aim at the very highest branch of the legal profession-that of advocate, the Scottish equivalent of a barrister. But Kalki never thought of possessing wealth.

Soon Walter was mixing freely with the Edinburgh elite and the social circle dominated by the younger advocate and the officers of the garrison. There followed another period of university study, which began with his
attendance at the class of Civil Law, and he took other classes between 1788 and 1792, including Moral Philosophy from Dugald Stewart. The good sense and refined sentiment which were Stewart’s supreme values mingled and contrasted with Scott’s other reading, and the two strands were present together in his mind all the days of his life [Crawford:3-4].

Scott early attended a class in German which led directly to his first literary attempts—translations of ballads, and a few years later, of Goethe’s Goetz von Berlichingen. During all this period he read omnivorously in the novel, in medieval romances, in Ariosto, in Spanish literature. In 1792 he was admitted to the Scottish Bar, and became a hard-drinking habitué of Edinburgh clubs, a participant in anti-Jacobite riots and in 1797, an officer in the local volunteers. These were the years of Revolutionary war, and the young quarter-master—who always felt that he was a soldier manqué—compensated for his frustrated longings for a life of action by drilling on Portobello sands. An unknown advocate’s life at this time was both leisured and precarious. In order to gain a brief, he had to appear in the Parliament Buildings at nine in the morning and hang about till two in the afternoon, walking the boards, hoping against hope that some Writer to the Signet would ask him to take part in his case... Walter soon became well known in this society as an interesting ranconteur, and he was later to carry its style, and even its very tone of voice, into his own prose... Though he turned against his father’s Calvinism, Scott retained to the end the habits of
diligence fostered by that creed, and the values of rational control and moral restraint which it shared with both Augustan ethics and utilitarianism. His most vivid experiences took place in the world of the historic imagination, not in personal relations.

[Crawford: 4-5]

After 1797, Scott’s main interests were work and business. Crawford observes: His emotional, even vehement nature turned inward to the imaginative re-creation of the past, then outward to the risks and speculations made possible by the embodiment of that re-creation in works of literature sold on a favourable market. At the present time Scott is often regarded as primarily an eighteenth-century survival, as a writer who, whatever his innovations, looked backwards to Johnson, Swift, and even Dryden rather than towards such contemporaries as Coleridge and Keats. But this is to underestimate the complexities of literary history. Scott was the culmination of the antiquarian movement of the eighteenth century and the counterpart of his colleagues John Leyden, Joseph Ritson, and C.K. Sharpe, yet at the same time he represented the transformation of that movement by a type of imagination that was both “romantic” and historical.

Scott’s first publications (1796) translations of Burger’s “Lenore” and of “Der Wilde Jager,” showed that he was alive to fashionable literary influences, and a meeting with “Monk” Lewis stimulated him to publish a collection of ballads which finally grew into the Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border 2 vols, Kelso, 1802. The
Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border, inspired by the example of Percy’s Reliques, is not by modern standards, scholarly. There are valuable discursive notes. Nonetheless the Minstrelsy confirmed Scott’s bent towards the historic past, and it established his reputation as a rising man.

Scott won his first recognition as a poet in 1805 with his first original work, The Lay of the Last Minstrel and became a major literary figure in England with Marmion (1808) and The Lady of the Lake (1810). The success of The Lady of the Lake, Scott claimed, encouraged him to attempt, ‘something of the same kind in prose.’ [W. General Preface.: 351]. The moment Byron sprang into sudden fame with his Child Harold, Scott recognized the superiority of his rival, and decided to give up verse-making since Byron had beaten him at his own game. He now became a story-teller in prose, using the same fount of inspiration. During his poetic career Scott completed two major works of scholarship, an eighteen-volume edition of Swift, either of which would have made a reputation for a professional scholar. On the other hand, Kalki began his journalistic career as a sub-editor in ‘Navasakti’ in 1923. It was edited by the great Tamil scholar Thiru V. Kalyana Sundara Mudaliar [Thiru Vi.Ka]. Kalki’s valuable contribution to ‘Navasakti’ was his translation of Mahatma Gandhi’s autobiography, “My Experiments with Truth”. It was published as a book “Satya Sodanai”.

Kalki left ‘Navasakti’ in 1928 to join Rajaji’s ashram in Tiruchengode but at the same time he also started writing for ‘Ananda Vikatan’. The editor of Ananda Vikatan, S.S.Vasan spotted the prodigious talent for witty and humorous writing that lay in Kalki
and accepted to publish his first article under the name Kalki in 1928. From August 1928 onwards he wrote under a pseudonym Kalki. He gave the reason for his pseudonym:

"With the reformatory zeal natural in a young writer. I assumed the role of destroyer of ignorance and backwardness in order to create a new world, much in the manner of Lord Vishnu in his tenth avatar of Kalki." True to his creed most of Kalki's writings were idealistic and purposeful, and they influenced the feelings and actions of a considerable number of his readers.[Sunda 13]

At the end of 1931 Kalki joined "Ananda Vikatan", a Tamil weekly and made it popular by his humorous writings and serialized fiction. On August 15, 1941, six years before independence Kalki started the new magazine named "Kalki" as the pen name had by then acquired a halo. "Kalki" was an instant success.["Sunda 40] Kalki was free to express his views on natural problems, politics and polemics with the utmost boldness.

Kalki's style was racy, idiomatic, impressive and elegant. Like Kalki Scott wrote with felicity and ease. He was wondrous potentate of literature. Kalki's writings gained the appreciation of great Tamil scholars such as Mahamahopadhyayaya U.V.Swaminatha Ayyar and Rasikamani T.K. Chidambaranatha Mudaliar [T.K.C]. The latter hailed Kalki as a genius. Arangarasasn maintains that Kalki's interest in the Ramayana "was due to his friendship with Rajaji and T.K Chidambabarabatha Mudaliar who threw fresh light on the aesthetic beauty of the epic and its profundity of meaning, and Kalki was indeed to model his characters on those of the Ramayana" [147]. The guiding spirits behind Kalki's political ideas were Mahatma Gandhi, Bharati and Rajaji.
Mi.Pa.Somasundaram (Somu) observes:

Kalki is like a bee sucking honey from flowers. Through his contact with great persons such as Thiru Vi.Ka, Rajaji and T.K.C during the Freedom Struggle, Kalki developed his character and personality. Through Thiru.Vi.Ka Kalki learnt the chaste Tamil, through Rajaji he learnt the art of diplomacy and through T.K.C he learnt the art of appreciation and the art of writing Tamil in a literary style [Subra, Balan.:30-31]

Kalki made his mark as a humorist in his essays or skits which appeared in “Ananda Vikatan” Kalki wrote a large number of short stories, collected later into nine volumes, many of them with social reformist intent, though invariably with a touch of humour and unexpected twists and turns.

Kalki wrote seven social novels including Amara Tara which was completed by Kalki’s daughter Anandi after his death. The more important of the social novels are “Kalvanin Katali” (“The Brigand’s love”) “Tyaga Bhoomi”. (The Land of Sacrifice) and “Alai Osai” (“The Sound of Waves”). R. Dhandayudham says:

“Kalki began his literary career as a short story writer and his taking to novels was accidental. His “Kalvanin Katali” was intended originally as a film script with dramatic scenes and situations. When it could not be produced as a film, Kalki published it as a novel”(147). Sunda observes:

P.G. Sundararajan and S. Sivapada Sundaram joint authors of “Tamil Novel- A Century of Growth”(1977) have described this novel as marking a turning point in popular Tamil fiction, and as a realistic story based on
actual life. Another critic, Dr. M. Ramalingam has hailed Kalki’s emergence as “the rising sun in the Tamil world of fiction”, in his book, “Tamil Literature in the 20th century.” This has been echoed and substantiated by Dr. T.V. Veerasami, in his treatise, “A Study on the Trends of Social Novel in Tamil” 1978 (103).

“Alai Osai”, Kalki’s longest social novel won the Sahitya Akademi award posthumously in 1956. Kalki regarded this novel as his best work published serially in “Kalki”. The background to this novel is provided by the national and international events between 1930 and 1948: the Salt Satyagraha, the Quit India Movement, World war II, the August Movement, the history of the Indian National Army India’s independence, the birth of Pakistan, the disturbances in Hyderabad and Telegana, the integration of Indian states and the assassination of Mahatma Gandhi.

It is (Alai Osai) undoubtedly one of the great novels of Tamil literature, portraying how individuals, families and human relationships are affected by the struggle for Independence.... All the major cities of India figure prominently in the novel, and the picture of violence during the partition is also included. The readers witness Gandhiji’s assassination and its impact.

The style is absorbing, language rich, narrative well controlled (Zvelebil:365)

With truth and honesty, Kalki depicted the society of his time in a remarkable way. K.R. Srinivasa Iyangar has paid a tribute to the distinguished service of Kalki: “The Gandhian age in our national History has been fittingly described as our modern Heroic
Age, and Tamil Nadu found in “Kalki” a writer a genius fully equal to the task of recording both the outer happenings and the inner movements of the heart and mind of the Age” (Dhadayutham, R:176)

Like Scott Kalki was also a translator. The most important of his translations is that of Gandhiji’s, “The Story of my Experiments with Truth” entitled “Satyasodanai” (1927). Kalki also attempted a biography of Gandhiji in Tamil entitled “Mandarukkul Oru Deyvam” (“A god Among Men”). Other translation included the works of Swami Vivekananda and Yuva-bharat or the History of the Indian National Movement by Lala Lajpet Rai.

After ten years of great success as a writer of romances in verse, Scott turned from the romance in verse to prose fiction, and that he was led to make this change in part because the original vein which he had opened up was getting exhausted, and in part because the sudden rise of Byron threatened the supremacy which he had long enjoyed. (Hudson : 216) His “Rokeby” was to all intents and purposes a novel in verse. In this work for the first time, as he himself perceived, the interest was made to centre not in incident but in character, and the chief figures were handled in a way much more suitable to the medium of prose than that of verse. In “Rokeby”, then, verse was not an aid, but hindrance, to his powers. The transition from verse to prose was therefore natural. The reception accorded to “The lady of the Lake” convinced him that there was a large reading public interested in the Highlands and conceiving that he might turn his own first-hand knowledge of the Highlands to good account, he ‘threw together’ the opening chapters of “Waverley”. He did not, however, persevere with this experiment, and the
manuscript was thrown aside and forgotten. Then a fresh stimulus came from the Irish Tales of Maria Edgeworth. As Scott says in General Preface (1829):

My early recollections of the Highland scenery and customs made so favourable an impression in the poem called "The lady of the Lake" that I was induced to think of attempting something of the same kind in prose. I had been a good deal in the Highlands at a time when they were much less accessible, and much less visited, than they have been of late years, and was acquainted with many of the old warriors of 1745, who were, like most veterans, easily induced to fight their battles over again, for the benefit of a willing listener like myself. It naturally occurred to me, that the ancient traditions and high spirit of a people, who, living in a civilized age and country, retained so strong a tincture of manners belonging to an early period of society, must afford a subject favourable for romance, if it should not prove a curious tale marred in the telling

.... Two circumstances, in particular, recalled my recollection of the mislaid manuscript. The first was the extended and well-merited fame of Miss Edgeworth, whose Irish characters have gone so far to make the English familiar with the character of their gay and kind-hearted neighbours of Ireland, that she may be truly said to have done more towards completing the Union, than perhaps all the legislative enactments by which it has been followed up.

Without being so presumptuous as to hope to emulate the rich
humour, pathetic tenderness, and admirable tact, which pervade the works of my accomplished friend, I felt that something might be attempted for my own country, of the same kind with that which Miss Edgeworth so fortunately achieved for Ireland – something which might introduce her natives to those of the sister kingdom, in a more favourable light than they had been placed hitherto, and tend to procure sympathy for their virtues and indulgence for their foibles. I thought also, that much of what I wanted in talent, might be made up by the intimate acquaintance with the subject which I could lay claim to possess, as having travelled through most parts of Scotland, both Highland and Lowland, having been familiar with the elder, as well as more modern race; and having had from my infancy free and unrestrained communication with all ranks of my countrymen, from the Scottish peer to the Scottish ploughman.

But it was not only the triumphs of Miss Edgeworth which worked in me emulation, and disturbed my indolence. I chanced actually to engage in a work which formed a sort of essay piece, and gave me hope that I might in time become free of the craft of Romance –writing, and be esteemed a tolerable workman. ([W. General Preface : 351-53])

Like Scott Kalki also narrated the circumstances under which he started writing his historical novels C.C and P.K. Kalki visited Mahabalipuram, the seaside complex of cave temples and sculptures, in the summer of 1934, when its quiet beauty had not been spoilt by trippers. He was accompanied by Rasikamani T.K.C. and the Sastry couple.
After a two-day stay, he wrote three descriptive and illustrated articles in the July issues of “Ananda Vikatan”.

In these articles, Kalki pointed out that the name of the place had nothing to do with Mahabali, the Asura king and that it was a corruption of Mamallapuram, named after Mamallan (mighty wrestler), an attributive title of the Pallava King Narasimha, who completed the sculpture complex begun by his father Mahendra Pallava. Kalki had made a thorough study of certain books, before his visit to the place. They include:

- **Pallava Architecture** by A. K. Longhurst.
- **Pallavas of Kanci** by R. Gopalan
- **The Pallavas** by Prof. Dubrid
- **Administration and Social Life under Pallavas** by Dr. C. Meenakshi
- **Colas** by K.A. Nilakanta Sastri.

As a result of his study of such books and what he saw and heard at Mamallapuram, Kalki, conceived the outlines of C.C. (“The Vow of Sivakami”) and P.K. (The Dream of Parthiban) Kalki records his experience in his Preface to C.C.:

Rasikamani Sri T.K.C. and two other friends and myself were sitting on the sands of the seashore. Nobody was there and nobody was seen anywhere else on the seashore except us. By that time I thought that on many occasions I came over to this seashore but I had never felt as a felt today. This time I have an autistic experience that cannot be described in words. All of a sudden thousands and thousands of boats and ships appeared on the sea. Hundreds of men and women were dancing on the seashore. Sculptors
and dancers were there. After sometime all of them appeared in front of me. They were Ayyanar, Civakmi, Mahendra Pallavar, Maamallar, Parthipan, Vikkiraman, Arulmoli, Kundavai, Ponnan and Valli, Kannan and Kamali, Pulikeci and Naganandi and they all remained in my mind’s eye. We stayed in Mamallapuram for two days and we saw different kinds and types of sculptures. Each stone narrates a story, each sculpture tells us an epic. I intend to worship the sculptors who with their chisels chiselled the stones into beautiful and marvellous sculptures. I am astonished at their piety and devotion to duty. As soon as I completed C.C. and P.K. they all baid farewell and went away from my mind’s eye after twelve long years. But their name and fame may remain forever for their contribution to the cultural heritage of India.

About one thousand two hundred years before there were great sculptors in Tamil Nadu. There were great kings who encouraged them to chisel marvellous sculptures. Certainly those Tamil people who lived some one thousand two hundred years before had been men of culture and civilization. That is why it is possible for them to have such unquenchable thirst for fine arts, disciplined life and good governance in those days (C.C. Preface: v-viii)

Kalki, after having watched those immortal classics of sculpture, says:

I had heard some people say, “These temples and towers, these structures over the shrines, these rock-sculptures were all created by the tyranny of the
kings of those days”. I now came to the conclusion that such a view was absurd and nonsensical. It might be possible, through tyranny and coercion, to get other tasks done; but these miracles of art could never have arisen because of cruelty; you can force a man to till the field, weave cloth or pay taxes. But art will never grow through such means. (C.C. Preface: viii)

As Scott undertook tours to Highlands of Scotland and England and European countries, Kalki also undertook tours to Ajanta and Ellora caves in Maharashtra and Sittannavasal in Tamil Nadu which were important locales in the novel C.C. Scott first visited the Highlands of Scotland at the age of about fifteen when he went to stay with Alexander Stewart of Invernehyle. He visited the Highlands many times in succeeding years. Scott visited Carlisle and Penrith on his tour to the English lakes in 1797, and again in the summer of 1813.

Kalki being one of the honorary secretaries of the Tamil Development Association visited Sri Lanka again in August 1950. He had by then attained greater fame as journalist and creative writer. He presided over the anniversary celebrations of the Colombo Tamil Sangam. Kalki set out on an expedition with some knowledgable friends, to those historical places which कोल.legend. once been under the Cōlas, with a view to describing them in his P.C. Earlier he had undertaken for the same purpose an extensive tour of Cōla land in Tamil Nadu.

"Ilankai Yatra” was the title of the series of twelve long articles which Kalki wrote in Ananda Vikatan from its issues dated 5th June, soon after his
A.K. Chettiar, known as the “Globe-trotting Tamilan” has acclaimed Kalk’s “Ilankai Yatra” as outstanding travel literature in Tamil, and it has been serving as a model for many a Tamil writer. (Sunda 106).

Kalki travelled extensively from his home district the partitioned Punjab in the north, from Calcutta in the east to Karachi and Bombay in the west to absorb the atmosphere and visual aspects and effect in order to write his novel “Alai Osai”.

“S. Gopalan who was an authority on the history of Cōla kingdom accompanied Kalki when Kalki undertook an extensive tour of Cōla land in his country. He expressed his wonder at the manner with which Kalki was able to transport the readers to scenes of the past with his magical pen after reading particular portions in P.C.” (Sunda 108).

Kalki also visited Shantiniketan ‘the abode of peace’, founded by Rabindranath Tagore.

Kalki also played a vital role in evolving the pattern of the great work called Encyclopaedia (Kalaikalanjiam) in Tamil, set up by Sri T.S. Avinashilingam freedom fighter and Founder – President of Sri Ramakrishna Mission Vidyalaya and the Home Science College, Coimbatore, soon after assuming as Education Minister of Madras State in 1948. The second volume of Kalaikalanjiam was dedicated to the memory of Kalki.

Kalki was the Founder President of the Tamil Writer association as well as the President of Kamban association. He worked for protecting the rights of writers and journalists. According to him nobility, culture and compassion should be reflected in any piece of writing. As an editor he was methodical, meticulous and hard-working. Kalki was responsible for erecting the monuments for Mahatma Gandhi, Bharati and V.O. Chidambaram
Kalki was not a great poet like Scott. But some of the songs on Mahatma Gandhi, the poet Bharati, the patriotic movement and its fulfilment were printed in special numbers of “Kalki” and later recorded on gramaphone discs by the famous singer M.S. Subbulakshmi. The exact number of his compositions is not known, but those selected amount to thirty six. These lyrics are found in a note book written down by Kalki’s daughter Anandi, as desired by him (Sunda : 113)

Kalki’s emergence as short story writer led him to novel writing whereas Scott’s emergence as poet led him to prose fiction. With the emergence of Kalki, the Tamil literary world witnessed the dawn of a new era. With the emergence of Scott as historical novelist the English literary world witnessed the rise of English novels.

Like Kalki Scott is now considered primarily a historical novelist more than either poet or scholar after the anonymous publication of W in 1814. Between 1814 and his death in 1832, Scott completed about thirty novels and novelettes, several long poems, a large mass of miscellaneous writings, and a nine-volume Life of Napoleon.

Like Scott who was in the very good books of King George IV Kalki was equally in the very good books of Rajaji, the then first Governor General of India.

Kalki established the magazine “Kalki” (1941). Kalki Scott founded the Quarterly Review.(1809)

Kalki is a literary colossus like Scott. T.W. Clark includes Kalki among ‘the most famous’ novelists in regional languages whose “works will, when adequately translated, bear comparison with those many of the novelists of other nations.” (9)
Vikraman has dedicated his novel “Nantipurathu Nayaki” to the memory of Kalki. Ko.V. Manisekaran dedicated his historical novel “Sembiyin Selvi” to Kalki.

Manisekaran says P.C. is India’s biggest novel. Its uniqueness lies not only in its heaviness but also in its quality and asserts that it will remain unparalled among the historical novels of India (Tamil Varalarru – p – Putinankal : 116). According to Kalki P.C. is his “monumental work” (qtd Sunda 736). Sunda praises its depth and breadth (731). This voluminous work of Kalki has been rendered into English by C.V. Karthik Narayanan.

Scott’s novels had been translated into many languages. Scott was the source of inspiration to a number of novelists such as Harrison, Ainsworth, Charles Dickens, Thackeray, Nicholas Wiseman, John Henry Newman, George Eliot, Mrs. Gaskill, Hardy and others to write historical novels. Like Scott Kalki was also the source of inspiration to a number of writers of Tamil Nadu such as Akilon, Naa. Parthasarathy, Mi.Pa.Somu, Rajam Krishnan, Chandilyan, Mu.Mehta, Ku.Rajavelu, Sri Venugopalan, Kovai Manisekaran, Vikraman, Aru Ramanathan, Vimala Ramani, Viswaksenan, and K. Rajendran. They exercised their historical imagination on the whole history of Tamil Nadu including the period before the Cankam Age.

K. Rajendran, the Associate Editor of “Kalki” says:

As a crusader for all that is good in Tamil Culture, he was greatly responsible for its renaissance in all its art forms. If Bharati captivated the heart of Tamilians by his simple yet majestic poetry Kalki enslaved the hearts of millions by his simple prose laced with humour. He cultivated the
reading habit amongst Tamilians as nobody else could have. He glowed like a rainbow, using facile pen to write on a variety of subjects (55).

Most commentators have praised Scott the man even when they condemned Scott the poet and Scott the novelist. (Crawford.:16)

George Burke Johnston pays a glowing tribute to Scott:

Scott’s merits as man and writer entitle him to a position much nearer his former reputation than he now holds. One of his admirers called him a combination of Shakespeare and Samuel Johnson. Those who think of him only as a cloak-and-sword romancer overlook his remarkable gift of creating comic characters and his broad view of human nature in all walks of life. He was greatly admired by Balzac and Dumas: and, wise critics from Goethe to the present have been impressed with his humane wisdom (Frank Magill.N.: 958).