CHAPTER – V

IMPACT OF THE BRITISH RULE IN TIRUNELVELI DISTRICT

In Tirunelveli District, the depressed people of the Hindu religion suffered many social restrictions imposed on them by the landlords and the people of upper castes. Hence, they tended to convert to other religion preferably to Christianity. The Christian Missionaries helped to bring about a radical change and to create an atmosphere in favour of religious and social reform. In the mean time, the British established primary schools and primary health centres in the rural areas of the district. Moreover they opened factories in the urban areas. From 1600 A.D. onwards, the Roman Catholic and Protestant Missionaries established their missionary work through the Church Missionary Society (CMS), London Missionary Society (LMS), the Madurai Mission and the Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge. In about 1680, the congregational work stretched to Palayamkottai, Viravanallur, Kadayanallur, Kayattar, Tenkasi, Surandai, Pannikulam, Kamanayakkanpatti, Vadakkankulam, Kayalpattnam, Pettai, Sivalapperi, Tirukalur and Kalakad. According to 1991 census, the Christian population of the District was 1,21,277

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males and 1,31,453 females. Certain communities like the Pallars, Paravars, Parayars and Nadars felt no social equality. Hence, they were easily converted by the Christian Missionaries. The Missionaries not only converted them but also looked after them by providing education and other social welfare measures. The converts could get higher status in the society by their education.

Education

The western education in Tirunelveli District can be traced from the days of the Portuguese. The Roman Catholic Missionaries led by the Portuguese had influenced among the Parava community people in Tirunelveli coastal area at the beginning of the 16th century. The most important Catholic Missionary was St. Francis Xavier, who served in the District towards the close of 1542. He was a native of Spain, going with bell in hand, he succeeded

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3 According to the census of 1901, in Tirunelveli every hundred of the population, eighty four were Hindus two were Christians and six were Muslims. *The proportion of Christians to the total population was higher than in any other district in Tamilnadu.* (K.S.K. Vel Mani, *Tirunelveli District Gazetteers*, Vol.1, Madras, 2002, p.163).


6 St. Francis Xavier, a native of Spain who arrived in India in May 1542 along with the Society of Jesus missionaries for nearly a year worked among the Parava community of the west coast of Tamil Nadu and nearly 20,000, Paravas were baptized as the first installment of conversions. This was the first mass movement in South India. The method adopted by Xavier in his Mission work he called together by a bell and taught them twice a day after sun rise and two hours at sun set. (G.J. Devadasan, op.cit., p.12).
in collecting in every village a large concourse of people among whom he spread the Christian faith. In each village he visited, and he left a copy of the Christian instruction for the people to understand the rudiments of Christianity. In the beginning of the 17th century, the Catholic Mission established a Theological college to impart training to Jesuit Fathers and Brothers at Thoothukkudi for propagating Christian tenets in the District and thereby to pave the way for the educational development in the region.\(^7\) A galaxy of foreign Catholic Missionaries dedicated their lives for the cause of education in the District. Father Beschi, was the most celebrated. He is remembered ever for his contribution to the Tamil literature. He was a native of Italy and arrived in Tirunelveli in 1711. He taught the people both in Tamil and in English.\(^8\)

Among the Protestant Missionaries who came from England to this District, Rev. James Hough\(^9\) and Rev. C.E. Rhenius\(^10\) were the key figures.

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\(^9\) James Hough, the CMS Missionary, and Government Chaplain in Tirunelveli, is called the Second Father of the Tirunelveli Church after the CMS Missionary, Rev. Schwartz arrived in Palayamkottai in November 1816. He also purchased the land on which the Mary Sergeant Girl's Higher Secondary School and the Holy Trinity Cathedral Church were. He established 12 schools in 1820 contained 479 pupils. Three of these were girl's school's one is in Palayamkottai, another is in Nazareth and a third one is in Mudalur. (G.J. Devadasan, *op.cit.*, p.18).

\(^10\) Rhenius, the first CMS Missionary, took charge of the evangelistic work and he assumed the responsibility of administering the schools. In this connection for the benefit of the Christian and non Christian students he started the *Dharma Sangam*. This is one of the educational societies for the development of womens education in Tirunelveli. (G.J. Devadason, *op.cit.*, p.18).
Rev. James Hough from the date of his arrival in 1816 as a Missionary, devoted his whole energy to educational work in the District. He started a number of schools in this region and distributed Bibles and prayer books to the people.\(^\text{11}\)

Rev. C.E. Rhenius who arrived in this District in 1820, generally followed Hough's policy of educational work and founded a number of educational societies. The most important among the societies established by him was the *Dharma Sangam*.\(^\text{12}\) It was admired both by the Christians and non-Christians for its studies on Geography, Astronomy and French Grammar. In his work he was assisted by Rev. Schmid, another Protestant Missionary in the District and his wife who took keen interest in the development of women's education in Tirunelveli. On the eve of mid 19th century the Protestant woman Missionary Miss. C.C. Giberne within a short period opened a Training school at Kadatchapuram, in Palayamkottai which later on became the nucleus of the Sarah Tucker Training School.\(^\text{13}\)

**Educational policy of the Madras Government and Its Impact on the District**

It is a matter of interest to look back upon a few historical landmarks of modern education in the state and its impact on the District. In 1822, some facts about the educational system in Tirunelveli were brought to light because of a

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\(^\text{12}\) Paul Appasamy, *Centenary History of Church Missionary Society* (CMS), Tirunelveli, 1923, p.74.

statewide enquiry, conducted under the orders of Sir Thomas Munro, the Collector of Tirunelveli\textsuperscript{14}. The enquiry revealed that the public instruction was in a bad state. Few schools that existed in the District were in fact nothing better than the indigenous schools. Therefore, in 1826 Sir Thomas Munro constituted a board to organize a system of public instruction with authority to establish schools both at the District level and at the taluk level throughout the state. In every District there was a collectorate school. In the collectorate schools, English was taught as one of the languages along with the language of the District.\textsuperscript{15} In every taluk, there was a tahsildary school under a competent schoolmaster, but he was not to receive any training in Madras as of the collectorate teacher. In the tahsildary schools, the entire teaching was conducted in the language of the District.\textsuperscript{16}

The subjects taught in these schools were not in any way different from the subjects taught in the indigenous schools. The new scheme aimed at the establishment of a few well-managed schools so that, they might be held out as models for the numerous indigenous schools, which were considered an unsatisfactory condition. In accordance with the new scheme, a collectorate school and two tahsildary schools were opened in Tirunelveli District.\textsuperscript{17} But all these schools in this District as well as in other District in the Madras State soon turned out to be total failures. The teachers of the collectorate schools

\textsuperscript{15} R.Caldwell, \textit{op.cit.}, p.277.
\textsuperscript{16} \textit{Ibid.}, p.279.
were described as the refuse of the expectants on the collectors list while the teachers of the tahsildary schools were said to be inferior, overall, to the common village masters.\footnote{Ibid., p.57.}

A new era dawned in 1830, when the Court of Directors of the East India Company advocated the filtration theory, the best result could be obtained by educating the higher classes in the first instance and leaving it to them to create a desire for educating among masses. Then there was another controversy as to whether English or the Indian languages should be given prominence in the scheme of education. The controversy reached its climax in the famous Minutes of Lord Macaulay of 1833 and the equally famous resolution of Lord William Bentinck, on 7th March 1833 which endorsed the Minutes of Macaulay by observing that the great object of the British Government ought to be the promotion of European literature and science and that all funds allocated for the purpose of education would be spent on English education alone.

In consequence of this policy, the collectorate*\footnote{In the \textbf{collectorate schools}, English was to be taught one of the languages along with the language of the district. In the Tahsildary School, the entire teaching was to be conducted in the language of the district. (D. Packiamuttu, Printmedia and Christian Literature, New Delhi, p.37).} and tahsildary schools in Tirunelveli as well as in other Districts were abolished in 1836 and the Board of Instruction was superseded by a Committee of Native Education and the Committee was directed to organize a normal school for training teachers.
for the new English schools which were to be eventually opened in different parts of the state. This committee was shortly afterwards replaced by the University Board constituted in January 1840 by Lord Elphinstone, the then Governor of Madras\(^\text{20}\). The University Board was replaced by the University of Madras through Legislative action on 5th September 1857. By 1854, the filtration theory has been discarded and the policy of mass education inaugurated. As a result, the University was remodelled. A Department of Education was organized. Provisions were also made for normal schools, a few provincial schools, several taluk schools, depots for schoolbooks and educational presses and scholarships.

The experiment of private sector in education since 1855, with the formulation of the grants in aid rules, resulted in the establishment of a number of aided institutions such as Boarding School at Sattankulam in 1856. During the period, 1856-57, there were 273 schools aided by Government with 7088 students in the District. In 1871, with the constitution of the local bodies under the Town Improvement Act and the Local Board Act, instruction was given to local authorities to organize education.\(^\text{21}\)

**Growth of Education from 1871-1947**

The composite Tirunelveli District had 423 middle schools and 243 primary schools for boys and 14 middle schools, and 21 primary schools for


girls during 1870-1871. In 1875-1876 there were 323 aided schools with 12,397 pupils, besides 729 schools aided by local funds on the results system. The number of pupils in the later case on an average was about 30 for each school, giving 21,870 pupils or a total of about 34,807 children under instruction. The Anglo – Vernacular school at Tirunelveli, as well as several Missionary schools, carry education to a high standard. In the year 1880-1881, the number of primary schools both boys and girls had risen from 264 to 1087.

For administrative convenience the Presidency was divided into 22 educational Districts. These are grouped by Educational Department into six divisions or Inspectorates in 1881-1882. The composite Tirunelveli District came under the fifth division. In 1881-1882, the total number of indigenous schools in the district was 897 with 22,714 pupils studying in them. In 1882-1883, the number of schools under the control of Education Department was 1,756 with 50,877 pupils. There were no Government schools up to 1882-1883.

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24 *Idem*.
### English High and Middle Schools (1884-1885)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl.No</th>
<th>Institution</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Nature of Institution</th>
<th>Total number of pupils</th>
<th>Total number of teachers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>CMS High School</td>
<td>Tirunelveli</td>
<td>aided</td>
<td>188</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>CMS High School</td>
<td>Palayamkottai</td>
<td>aided</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>8</td>
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<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>St. Xavier's High School</td>
<td>Palayamkottai</td>
<td>aided</td>
<td>211</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Hindu Middle School</td>
<td>Palayamkottai</td>
<td>aided</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Central School</td>
<td>Tirunelveli</td>
<td>aided</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Hindu High School</td>
<td>Tirunelveli</td>
<td>aided</td>
<td>321</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>8 Middle School for Hindus</td>
<td>various places in towns</td>
<td>aided</td>
<td>259</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>10 Middle School for Christians</td>
<td>do</td>
<td>aided</td>
<td>504</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>13 Middle School for Hindus</td>
<td>various places in the district</td>
<td>aided</td>
<td>519</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>3 Middle School for Christians</td>
<td>do</td>
<td>aided</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>8</td>
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</table>
# Primary Schools for Boys 1884-1885

<table>
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<th>Sl. No</th>
<th>Institution</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Nature of Institution</th>
<th>Total number of pupils</th>
<th>Total number of teachers</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
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<td>1</td>
<td>Combined Schools for Hindus</td>
<td>Various places in the district</td>
<td>board</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Combined School for Muslims</td>
<td>do</td>
<td>board</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Salary School for native Christians</td>
<td>Palayam-kottai</td>
<td>aided</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Results School for Hindus</td>
<td>Palayam kottai Muncipality</td>
<td>do</td>
<td>452</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Sixteen Results Schools for Hindus</td>
<td>Tirunelveli Muncipality</td>
<td>do</td>
<td>690</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>12 Results Schools for Christians</td>
<td>Various parts in towns</td>
<td>do</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>114 Results Schools for Hindus</td>
<td>do</td>
<td>do</td>
<td>4029</td>
<td>125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>One Results Schools for Muslims</td>
<td>Tiruneveli</td>
<td>do</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>309-Results Schools for Christians</td>
<td>Various places in the district</td>
<td>do</td>
<td>9044</td>
<td>358</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>439 – Results Schools for Hindus</td>
<td>do</td>
<td>do</td>
<td>11228</td>
<td>473</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Institution</td>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Nature of Institution</td>
<td>Total number of pupils</td>
<td>Total number of Teachers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------</td>
<td>------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2 Results Schools for Christians</td>
<td>Palayamkottai Municipality</td>
<td>aided</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>3. Results Schools for Hindus</td>
<td>Tirunelveli Municipality</td>
<td>do</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Results School for Hindus</td>
<td>Palayamkottai</td>
<td>do</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>12 Results Schools for Hindus</td>
<td>Various places in urban</td>
<td>do</td>
<td>402</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>61 Results schools for native Christians</td>
<td>Various places in the district</td>
<td>do</td>
<td>1546</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>34 Schools for Christians</td>
<td>Various places</td>
<td>do</td>
<td>652</td>
<td>44</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Primary Schools for girls 1884-1885
Vernacular Schools for boys and girls (1884-1885)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No</th>
<th>Institution</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>nature of Institution</th>
<th>Total no of peoples</th>
<th>Total no of Teachers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2 Middle schools for Hindus</td>
<td>Various places in the district</td>
<td>aided</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>4 Boarding Schools for native Christians</td>
<td>do</td>
<td>do</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>one Anglo Vernacular School</td>
<td>Bramhadesam</td>
<td>unaided</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>do</td>
<td>Alwarkurichi</td>
<td>do</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>do</td>
<td>Sankaran Koil</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Miss. Sergeant Boarding Girls School</td>
<td>Palayamkottai</td>
<td>aided</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Roman Catholic Boarding Girls School</td>
<td>do</td>
<td>do</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In addition to the educational institutions tabled above the District had an aided normal school for masters located in Palayamkottai and an aided Sarah Tucker training school for mistresses at that time. In these schools 69 and 103 trainees respectively were trained.\(^{26}\)

\(^{26}\) H.R. Pate, *op.cit.*, pp.226-267.
According to 1911 census, the then Tirunelveli District was ranked fourth among the Districts of the Presidency about the literacy of the population as a whole. If males alone are considered, the District stood third. In every 10,000 males 2290 were returned as able to read and write\textsuperscript{27}.

During 1910-11, two main groups of Secondary Schools for boys, Brahmin Schools and the Mission Schools existed. The former school was situated mostly along the river valley. They were managed by a committee of Brahmins and Vellalars together. The pupils were Brahmin boys. The later schools were found either at the important centres of the district like Palayamkottai, Dhonavur, Pannivilai and Surandai\textsuperscript{28}.

There were five schools for boys in 1910, two at Palayamkottai, and one each at Pattamadai, Ambasamudram, and Gopala Samudram. In the year 1911, there were more than 1700 elementary schools including 119 for girls. Local Boards and Municipalities were responsible for 163 of the total number of the aided schools, the majority were maintained by Missionary Societies\textsuperscript{29}.

In 1932 the District had, two first grade colleges, St. Xavier’s College at Palayamkottai owned by the Jesuit Mission\textsuperscript{30} and the Hindu College at

\textsuperscript{27} Idem.


\textsuperscript{29} K.N. Krishnaswamy Ayyar, Statistical Report, Tirunelveli District, Madras, 1934, pp.224-225.

\textsuperscript{30} Jesuit Mission: French Foreign Missionaries, later Jesuit Missions most of them were in Portugal. They had little knowledge of Tamil, were full of a sense of their own social superiority. They started the Xaviers College in 1923 at Palayamkottai. (G.J. Devadasan, \textit{op.cit.}, p.11).
Tirunelveli managed by an Educational Society of the place registered under Act XXI of 1860. Two second grade colleges belonging to the Church Missionary Society, one of which was for boys. St. Johns College (formerly called C.M.S. college) was removed in 1928 from Tirunelveli to Palayamkottai where there were other colleges, Sarah Tucker college for girls and a college for teaching Sanskrit at Kallidaikurichi. Then there were 32 secondary schools for boys, 8 schools for girls, 3 secondary schools for Sanskrit studies, 2605 elementary schools (of which 324 were for girls only) 8 Industrial schools and three special schools for deaf and dumb and for blind children.

During 1940 aided Missions and non-Mission agencies showed greater enthusiasm to provide educational facilities for the people of the District. Out of the 2169 elementary schools, for boys with an enrolment of 1,21,059, 1807 were aided schools of which 320 elementary schools for girls and 149 were managed by aided agencies. The District Board managed 6 high schools and the Mission and non-Mission bodies, each managed 5 middle schools and 10 high schools.

**Schools for the Handicapped**

In the year 1892-93, there were three blind schools in the Presidency one for blind boys and another one for blind girls at Palayamkottai and they are at

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32 *Idem.*  
Pannaivilai now in Thoothukudi District. Rope making, basket making, rope net making were taught to boys and basket making and knitting to girls.\textsuperscript{34}

The blind school at Palayamkottai was set up in 1890 by Miss Askwith, a Protestant Missionary in the District\textsuperscript{35}. An interesting story about the establishment of this blind school is behind this. In 1890 a blind boy, when approached Miss. Askwith, who was instrumental in starting Sarah Tucker College, for alms, she spontaneously replied, "we are here to impart education, not to dispense charity". The boy turned to her and asked, “give me education.” Impressed deeply by these words, she admitted the boy in her home as a student. Thus, the Blind School came to existence with the sheer dint of Miss Askwith’s hard work the strength of the school increased, steadily. By 1906, the number of students in this school was 62.\textsuperscript{36}

**The Deaf and Dumb School**

In 1897, Florence Swainson Deaf and Dumb school was founded at Palayamkottai. It was the third school opened for the deaf and dumb in India. Miss Swainson was a member of the Church of England and a member of the Zenana Missionary Society. She was teaching in the Sarah Tucker College, Palayamkottai. One day, two deaf girls turned up before her for help. She thought that special education, was needed. A small class for deaf and dumb

\textsuperscript{34} K.S.K. Vel Mani, *op.cit.*, Vol-II, p.1189.
was started. In addition, Miss. Swainson got government recognition first for the boys, and then for the girls in 1889 and 1898 respectively.37

**Sarah Tucker College**

The Sarah Tucker College for women managed by the Church Missionary Society is one of the most important institutions of its kind in this Presidency affiliated to the Madras University. This college derives its name from one of the sister of the Rev. John Tucker, Secretary to the Church Missionary Society. It was started as a primary training school. Then it was developed as high school in 1890 and in 1895, it was raised to a second grade college and later in 1939, it was upgraded as first grade college.38

**St. Johns College**

St. John’s College Palayamkottai is another premier educational institution of the Madras Presidency. It was founded in 1878 by the Church Missionary Society in Tirunelveli. To start with, there was a pre-degree course, leading to the award of a diploma by the faculty of arts of the University of Madras. Rev. Schaffter was the first principal from 1872-1920. When Rev. Young, the second principal took over the charge, he carried out the shifting of the college from Tirunelveli to Palayamkottai.39

St. Xavier’s College

This is yet another educational institution of the Madras Presidency. It was started in 1923 by the Jesuit Missionaries, who were running a school for nearly 50 years in Tirunelveli. Fathers Maha, Lebeau and Honore were the founders of the institution. Their zeal had created a tradition of academic excellence and universal service. Rev. Fathers Cousannal, Dhanansamy and Gnanaprakasam contributed to the early development of the college. This college is run by the Society of St. Francis Xavier. The motto of this college is "Life and Light through Truth".  

Madurai Draviyam Thayumanavar (M.D.T) Hindu College

The Madurai Draviyam Thayumanavar Hindu College, Tirunelveli popularly known as MDT Hindu College, owes its existence to an uncomfortable state of feeling brought about by the successful proselytizing efforts of the old Palayamkottai high school managed by the clear early history Church Missionary Society. The oldest institution in Tirunelveli District was initially started as a second grade college in 1878. The college was shifted to the new campus at the beginning of the academic year 1958-59.

Social life

Many mirasdars, who held offices in villages moved into the widening world of opportunity created by the growth of government and urban employment. They went to schools, wrote examinations, and obtained

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40 Report from the Secretary, St. Xaviers College, Palayamkottai, dated 13 April 2008.
employment with the government that opened up to them. They became teachers, professionals, traders and built in the city based on inherited assets in wet villages.\textsuperscript{42}

Caste differences began to surface in the society during the British rule. Higher caste people of Tirunelveli town opposed the movement of low caste people and their funeral processions along with the high caste people’s residential streets. Most of the families of the town owned land worked out appropriate routes for low caste funerals in spatially segregated mirasdar villages nearby. Such processions would not touch town streets at all but would move away to the cremation or burial ground unseen through paddy fields and irrigation ditches.\textsuperscript{43}

In 1858, a Pallar died of Cholera in the Government Hospital it located behind the Nellaiyappar temple. The movement of the dead body along one side of the temple towards the new street connected the Pettai in the town Tirunelveli was objected by the people. The town people closed their shops and crowded into the streets to prevent the movement of the Pallar’s body through the street. Then the Tahsildar reported this to the Collector. The Collector sent armed soldiers who carried the corpse not towards the new street, but rather around the temple, out of the main gate of the town and along the high road to Palayamkottai. The people still resisted which resulted in the use of arms and


\textsuperscript{43} Ibid., p.189.
killing about ten people and wounding many.\textsuperscript{44} Higher caste people might have objected with such force to the Pallar's body being moved through their street for fear that this would set the precedent of allowing even the low caste people to have free access to their streets. However, more probably, the vehemence derived from the success two weeks before when resident's objection had altered the burial plan of a Christian weaver and more generally from confidence that their just cause enjoyed government support because the collector in 1853 ordered that standing rules remain place for bidding objectionable low-caste movement through town streets.\textsuperscript{45}

No similar incident happened again. Custom changed, at one stroke to accommodate social forces that demanded free access to town streets than would be customary in \textit{Mirasdar} villages, which were designed to segregate high caste residential space from pollution. The demand had come from the people whose physical mobility through the streets, labourers, artisans and hawkers, underpinned their livelihood, whose cause had been taken up by both English Missionaries and by a reforming Collector who nullified the Collector's order of 1853. Though resistance came from elite, and the officials were firm in helping the riots on the basis that the streets belonged to the government not to any caste.\textsuperscript{46}

\textsuperscript{44} \textit{Ibid.}, pp.189-190.
\textsuperscript{45} \textit{Ibid.}, p.190.
\textsuperscript{46} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 196.
Shanars or Nadars of the District embroiled themselves in a great many disputes, first over property rights and then for access to temple honours. They were able to succeed in their case in course of time. While the dominant castes – Brahmins, Vellalars and Vadugars contested with one another for power and influence, the success of the Nadars posed a much more serious challenge to Maravars and Mirasdars in the District. Before 1859, individual Nadar families took up fight for tenant land rights. The hamlets of the Nadars developed in the outskirts of the Mirasdar villages. The inferior dependent status of Nadars under Mirasdar authority was customarily enacted not only in Nadars payment of swamibaham but also in Nadar payment of labour service, particularly at the temple festivals. In their dispute with Mirasdars, Nadars pursued right by the same means and with much same results as cultivating tenants generally did. Missionaries supported Nadar conversion to Christianity and made the Tirunelveli District one of the bright spots of the heathen world for the Church Missionary Society. The Nadar converted and established new self-sustaining communities with the help of the Missions. Schools and self-help societies enabled Christian Nadars to develop new village outside Mirasdar control.47

There was an incident during 1860 and 1870. The Nadars demand for temple entry met with fierce resistance particularly from Marvars who seem to have been most resentful of this Nadar attack on customary rules of access to

sacred precincts in traditional Maravars. The conflicts centered around towns where Nadar businessmen prospered visible and around villages where Marava and Nadar fortunes had moved in opposite directions for decades. Conflict over temple entry became increasingly tense during the year 1860. The Government policy decision to settle the temple entry disputes threatened the peace in the district.\textsuperscript{48} The Marava Nadar conflict occurred at Madurai, Tiruchendur, Srivilliputhur, Ramanathapuram, and Tiruneveli.\textsuperscript{49} The Nadar Maravar conflicts once again raised its ugly head in 1918, during the great food crisis first world war.\textsuperscript{50}

\textbf{Social Dominance}

The Tamil Kings patronized Brahmin priests and teachers and donated lands to them. The position afforded to the Brahmins by Tamil Kings and the increasing use of Sanskrit forms provided the Brahmin dominance in government jobs. The non-Brahmins felt denied of social eminence enjoyed by the Brahmins. The literary tradition of the Brahmin gave them the initial advantage of western education and with the command of English, they entered the colonial administration, gaining a new status in the Society.\textsuperscript{51} The practice of early marriage was declining at a faster rate among the Christian than among Hindu females.\textsuperscript{52}

\textsuperscript{48} David Ludden, \textit{op.cit.}, pp. 193-194.
\textsuperscript{49} \textit{Ibid.}, 195.
\textsuperscript{50} \textit{Idem.}.
\textsuperscript{52} \textit{Ibid.}, p.181.
Literary Contribution

Printing was first introduced in India by European Jesuit Fathers as early as in 1577. In India Tamil had the unique privilege of getting in to print first among Indian languages. In fact, the first Tamil book was printed in Roman characters in Lisbon in 1554 with transliteration in Portuguese above each Tamil word. It is a book of 38 pages with a long title.53 Bartholamaeus Zeiganbal a Protestant Missionary translated the New Testament into Tamil and getting it printed was a monumental contribution to modern Tamil prose. The birth of Christian literature in India reflects the meeting of the Christian message with Hinduism and its vast literature. The early Missionaries had to confront the great task of choosing the right words from the Hindu vocabulary to express the Christian truth. Tamil sentences were written like a chain without any space between words and finally for the first time the Madras Bible Society introduced spacing between Tamil words about 1848 in printing Tamil Bibles.54

Henniques one of the Jesuit Missionary born in Portugal, came to India in 1546 and worked in the Fishery Coast from Vembar to Kanyakumari staying at Punnaikayal. He was a contemporary of Francis Xavier. He founded a Jesuit College Tamil at Punnaikayal in Tirunelveli District for Missionaries to learn Tamil. He wrote the first grammar of the spoken dialect and compiled the first dictionary in Tamil.55

54 Ibid., pp.2-4.
Robert de Nobili, was the next important Jesuit Missionary landed in Goa in 1605 and from there he moved to the fishery coast and stayed there for a short period. Later he moved to Madurai and mastered Tamil, Telugu and Sanskrit. He was the first European scholar to have studied Sanskrit, reserved for Brahmans alone. He lived like a Brahmin Sanyasi and the Tamils called him Thathuva Pothagar.\footnote{J. Devadason, \textit{op. cit.}, p.18.} He wrote a number of books in Tamil, Telugu and Sanskrit and he wrote Tamil poems in classical style named 'Senthamil'.\footnote{\textit{Ibid.}, p.20.} His prose works in Tamil could be easily understood by everybody. Many of his writings could not be printed during his time and they remained in palm leaves.\footnote{D. Packiya Muthu, \textit{op. cit.}, p.4.}

European Missionaries wrote profusely in Tamil, which had the effect of introducing new literary in Tamil. They translating their books on theology, sermons, prayers and rituals in Tamil. Then they wrote directly several books on religion in Tamil.\footnote{Rajkumar, \textit{op. cit.}, p.160.} The two versatile writers were Father Nobily and Father Beschi. Father Nobily has the distinction of being the first great prose writer in Tamil. Parallely essays on Hindu theology began to appear large number. The most important works in Hindu religion of that period are on Saiva Sithantham. Father Beschi provided a number of translations of the first two parts of Thirukural.\footnote{David Annaussamy, \textit{Cultural Interaction in South India} (1400-1800), New Delhi, 2003, p.165.}
In the history of printing, another mention worth being made is that Father Beschi brought about some slight modifications in the Tamil alphabet prevailing then in order to make printing easier and more economical. He also has composed three dictionaries Latin-Tamil, Portuguese-Tamil, French-Tamil Books on Tamil grammar were written in the Latin tradition. He provided two such grammars one for the classical language and the other for colloquial language. The later was the first book of grammar ever written in respect of colloquial language. Books of Tamil vocabulary were also produced.\(^6\)

**The Tamil Bible**

The next phase of printing in Tamil Country began with the arrival of Bartholomaeus Zeiganbalg, the first Protestant Missionary from Germany, in 1706 of Tranquebar. In 1711 the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge (SPCK) founded in London managed to send a printing press to Zeiganbalg with a printer. The printing machine was reached Tranquebar two years later. With this time Zeiganbalg was ready with the Tamil translation of the New Testament. The Tamil types of the New Testament were brought out in print in 1714.\(^6\) This is a landmark in the history of Tamil language and literature. The New Testament supplied to all the Christians. No wonder that the Tamil Christians are known as *Vedakarars* to the Hindu brothers, because of the revolution brought out by Zeiganbalg. The Gospel reached Tirunelveli through Clarinda, a Brahmin widow from Tanjore who in 1785 built the Church at


Palayamkottai and got it dedicated by the famous German Missionary Christian Schwartz.\textsuperscript{63}

**Religions and Tract Society**

Charles Theophilus Ewald Rhenius a missionary of Christian Missionary Society, was responsible for founding the religions and Tract Society in 1822 in Tirunelveli. A printing press was established there. The Society published and distributed tracts in Tamil. The society was sponsored by the CMS and the LMS. During the first ten years the number of tracts printed was 2, 61,000.\textsuperscript{64}

**Translation of Bible**

Tirunelveli played an important role in the revision of Bible translation. The present Tamil Bible was published after that revision. The Bower Committee carried out the major part of the work in Palayamkottai and Courtallam.\textsuperscript{65} C.E. Rhenius further revised the New Testament and published in 1826. He also completed the translation of Old Testament books from Genesis to Judges, and the books of Psalms, Isaiah and Daniel, but could not get them published.\textsuperscript{66}

\textsuperscript{63} D.S. George Muller and R.S. Jacob (eds), *Bicentenary of the Tirunelveli Church, Souvenir*, Tirunelveli, 1980, p.9.

\textsuperscript{64} *Ibid.*, p.10.


Rev. Caldwell Contribution

Rev. Caldwell, was a Scholar, Missionary, and Author for many books. The major works are A Comparative Grammar 1856, Lectures on Tirunelveli Missions 1857, History of Tinnevelly 1881 and Records of Tirunelveli Mission, The Shanars of Tinnevelly 1849 and a few other particularly significant articles.\(^67\) He studied Indian Philology, Ethnology, History, Geography, and Customs. His aim is to acquire a good knowledge of the so-called High Tamil. Moreover G.U. Pope as a Tamil scholar and the two CMS Missionaries John Thomas, Edward Sergeant had a perfect knowledge of Tamil and spoke it like a native.\(^68\)

Indigenous Expressions

1. Vedanayagam Sastriar

\textit{Vedanayagam Sastriar}, native of Palayamkottai studied in Lutheran School in Tranquebar. He was an eminent Christian poet. Sastriar used Tamil religious traditions in his musical compositions for conveying Christian truth and his Christian faith. His famous contributions are \textit{Paraparan Malai, Jana Thalattu, Viswasa Singi, Gnana Singam, Bethlehem Kuravanji, Jeba Malai}.\(^69\)

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\(^68\) K. Meenakshisundaram, \textit{The Contribution of European Scholars to Tamil}, Madras, 1974, pp.75-80.  
\(^69\) R. Joseph, \textit{op.cit.}, p.7.
2. Krishna Pillai

Henry Alfred Krishna Pillai is admired as 'Christian Kambar'. He was born in Tirunelveli District. He is honoured as the "Poet of Salvation", because he emphasized in his works the Christian doctrine of redemption. He wrote his epic *Rakshanya Yathriam* at the age of fifty-three. The entire work was published in 1894 by Christian Literature Society (CLS) through the efforts of the Rev. Thomas Walker of Tirunelveli. Tamil devotional literature was very much in his heart. Hence his works have a resemblance to *Devaram*, *Tiruvaimoli* and the songs of *Thayumanavar*. His lyrics are used in the worship of the Tamil church. His devotional works, *Tiruvagaval* and *Arutperumjothi Agaval* were modelled after the works of the Hindu poets Manickavasagar and Ramalinga Adigalar respectively. He applied the *Saiva Siddahanta* Terminology of three fold malas, *Marmam, Aanavam, Mayai* to the background of Christian theology.\(^{70}\)

**Abraham Pandithar**

*Abraham Pandithar* of Surandai in Tirunelveli District made great contributions to medicine and worship through music. He wrote *Karunamirtha Sagaram*. His heir, descendant Mr. D.A. Thanga Pandyan served as professor of music of Tanjore Tamil University and has made valuable contribution to Tamil music.\(^{71}\) We must bear in mind that the life and achievements of the people of any religion will be judged by the quality of the literature they produce.

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\(^{71}\) D. Packiamuthu, *op.cit.*, p.18.
Cultural Interactions

This part of the country, which has till then subjected only to influences from within India was invaded by cultures altogether different. This led naturally to various interactions of culture. Travellers and Missionaries made South India known to Europe particularly to Portugal, Netherlands, France and England. During their works changes happened in various fields like religion letters, law, and architecture.\(^{72}\)

Religious shock was very important during the period. Mohammedan and Christian religion diverged totally from the religions practiced by the people. Even though the country experienced several religious fights, those fights were between the different brands of Indian religion, which had some basic tenets in common. Further these two foreign religions which had no adopts here necessarily resorted to mass conversions. Mohammedan religion relied more on force than persuasion. Christian religion had rather recourse to preaching medical care and social service.\(^{73}\)

It is to be emphasized that the first Christian Missionaries, especially the Jesuits, used persuasion to a great extent. Those Missionaries started living like Brahmins. They abandoned wine and drank, only water. They adopted khavi dresses and they donned the sacred thread. They used to wear wooden foot like Hindu Sanniyassies. They ate only the food prepared by Brahmins and they


changed their names. Jesuit Father Nobili who changed his name in to Thathuva Podhagar and Father Beschi changed his name in to Veeramamunivar.\textsuperscript{74}

The Jesuit Fathers learnt Indian languages studied Hindu religion and got acquainted with the religious practices of the country. With these methods they established themselves very strongly at Madurai and around and were able to convert a large number of people.\textsuperscript{75} According to Francis Martin there were in the year 1694 three lakhs of Christians in Madura Mission and there were also Brahmins among the converts. He has also recorded that Jesuits Fathers were very careful to see that the aspirants were fully instructed of the mysteries of the Christian religion before being baptized and also respect of other congregations. They sometime made adoptions, for instance, people were induced to celebrate Pongal on the day of Epiphany and the preparation of sweets, which mark Deepavali, got shifted to Christmas Day.\textsuperscript{76} The Missionaries took care of studying and respecting as far as possible the local customs.

**Letters**

The most noteworthy of the literary work relating to Muslim religion is the Seerapuranam (17\textsuperscript{th} century) by Umarupulavar. It is a biography of the prophet in the epic form. In that epic the landscape is not the one found in the

\textsuperscript{74} J.L. Wyatt, *Reminiscences of Bishop Caldwell*, Madras, 1894, p.61.
\textsuperscript{75} Ibid., p.61.
\textsuperscript{76} Daavid Annoussamy, *op.cit.*, p.156.
middle east but very much the landscape with all the trees and gushing waters as found in Tamil Nadu. Similarly the characters in the epic also appear and act with all the habits and practices of Tamilnadu. In the description of Mecca, one can recognize that of Madurai. This epic is very much liked even now by the Tamil Muslims of Ceylon. Almost at the same time Father Beschi composed his Thembavani, an epic on Jesus, Mary and Joseph according to Tamil literary tradition. Here also nature and people are not those of Israel but those of Tamilnadu. Names also have been modified, Joseph became Valan, John becomes Karunayan, there is even one character called Sivan.

European Missionaries wrote profusely in Tamil, which had the effect of introducing new literary in Tamil. They started translating their books on theology, sermons, prayers and rituals in Tamil. Then they wrote directly several books on religion in Tamil. The two versatile writers were Father Nobili and Father Beschi, Father Nobili has the distinction of being the first great prose writer in Tamil. Parallely, essays on Hindu theology began to appear in larger number. Though this was not entirely absent in the previous period, the stress so for was on mystic works. Now the emphasis shifts towards theology. The most important work in Hindu religion of that period is on *Saiva Sithantham*.  

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Tamil literature underwent complete changes under foreign influence. At the same time the treasures of Tamil literature and the niceties of Tamil language were made known to others. Missionaries were the most active in this respect as well. The first translation are from Tamil to Latin. Father Beschi provided a number of translations, the most important one being the translations of the first two parts of Thirukural. A curious event is that a catechism was written in Tamil language by Father Nobily and then translated in Portuguese. It is also to be noted that the Missionaries were the fore runners in the art of teaching Tamil to foreigners and have composed several works for that purpose.

The literary activity of the period would not have been possible without printing. Printing machines were brought to India in the middle of the 16th century. The first printed work is in Tamil language but with Roman characters. It is reported to have been printed in 1554.

The first book with Tamil characters is said to have been printed in 1578. The first casting types in an Indian language are in Tamil and were done at Goa. Both are on Christian doctrine. More printing machines were then established at Tranquebar. This gave a impetus to print in Tamil language. In the history of printing, another mention worth being made is that Father Beschi

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82 Caldwell, *op.cit.*, p.239.
brought about some slight modifications in the Tamil alphabet prevailing then in order to make printing easier and more economical.\textsuperscript{83}

To facilitate the study of Tamil language by Europeans especially the young Missionaries, dictionaries were composed. They introduced the art of lexicography in Tamil language. The alphabetical method of lexicography was introduced by the Missionaries. Father Beschi alone has composed three dictionaries Latin – Tamil, Portuguese – Tamil, French – Tamil. Book on Tamil grammar were written in the Latin tradition.\textsuperscript{84} Tamil grammar is easily classified by the Missionaries and quite different from those they were familiar with. Therefore, grammar in the Latin tradition proved very useful to them and Father Beschi provided two such grammars one for the classical language and the other for the colloquial language. The latter was the first book of grammar ever written in respect of colloquial language. Books of Tamil vocabulary were also produced.\textsuperscript{85}

**Developments**

**Tirunelveli Municipality**

Tirunelveli Municipality was constituted on first November 1866. The first council election was held on 31st March 1891 and it consisted of 16 members. All of them were natives being one ex-official and two non-officials.

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{83} Ibid., p.240.
\item \textsuperscript{84} D.S. George Muller Jacob (ed.), *Bicentenary of the Tirunelveli Church*, Palayamkottai, 1980, p.16.
\item \textsuperscript{85} Ibid., p.18.
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
nominated by the Government and 12 non-officials elected by the people. For electoral purposes, the town had been divided into six wards.\textsuperscript{86} The total number of registered voters in the Nelliappar, \textit{Katchery}, Perumal Koil, Santhi Pillaiyar Koil, Matha Koil and Thondar Nainar Kovil at the close of the year 1891-92\textsuperscript{87}. The sanctioned strength of the council was raised from 16 to 20 in 1900 and to 22 in 1901. In 1901, the two suburbs of Pettai, two miles away and Melaveeraraghavapuram generally referred to now as “Tirunelveli Bridge” were incorporated\textsuperscript{88}.  

The system of appointing councillors by election was introduced into this municipality in 1882. Up to 1949, the councillors were elected by election. During 1949, it was upgraded as a first grade Municipality\textsuperscript{89}. Its population was 87918 as per 1961 census and its total area was 5.85 sq. miles.

This municipality was upgraded as selection grade during 1970. Now the total number of wards are 36 of which two are reserved for SC/ST and one for women\textsuperscript{90}. During 1971, the total area of this municipality was 15.33 sq. km and its total population as per 1971 census was 155310. The density of population was 7168. As per 1981 census the total area of this municipality was 13.47 sq. km., the total population was 128850, and the density of

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{86} Report from the Assistant Director of Geology and Mining, Tirunelveli, 15th April 1995.
\item \textsuperscript{87} G.O. No. 1198, Local and Municipal, 11 July 1892.
\item \textsuperscript{88} G.O. No. 983, Local and Municipal 17 July 1899.
\item \textsuperscript{89} G.O. No. 3694, Local Administration Department, 1940.
\item \textsuperscript{90} Municipal Directory, 1986, Tamil Nadu Institute of Urban Studies, Coimbatore, 1986, p.122.
\end{itemize}
population was 8505. From 1987, this municipality has been functioning as special grade. During 1990, this was increased into forty-two wards\textsuperscript{91}.

Members elected by election in 1969 continued till 1976. Then it came under the control of special officer till 1986. During 1986, members were elected and they remained in administration of this municipality till 3 March 1991. From 3 March 1993, the municipality is under the control of a special officer\textsuperscript{92}.

**Vikramasingapuram**

Vikramasingapuram is famous for spinning mills. In 1869, the Governor of Madras Lord Napier established the cotton mill known as “Trunelveli mills” at Vikramasingapuram. He visited the place in the same year and suggested a scheme for the utilization of the Tamiraparani as a motive power to work a cotton mill. He selected a site between the Papanasam falls and the temple, apparently at the point where the Kodaimelalagiandom crosses the river by considering that in all seasons the water requirement was enough for the mill. Accordingly in 1869 Mr. M. Duval, a French engineer stationed at Pondicherry was sent to Tirunelveli, who examined the project scientifically and sent a report to Government for establishment. That report was referred by Government to Madras Chamber of Commerce and it appeared that the project was dispensed with. In 1883 Mr. Frank Harvey, at that time engaged in the cotton trade of the district proposed to build a mill at the foot of the hills by

\textsuperscript{91} Ibid, p.126.

\textsuperscript{92} G.O. No. 828, Municipal Administration and Water Works, 24 August, 1981.
generating power from the Papanasam falls. This Mill was opened in 1885 in the name of “Tirunelveli Mill Company Ltd.”, at Vikramasingapuram. The second and much larger mill was opened in 1908 in the same place.  

**Hydro Electric Project**

Tamiraparani reservoir is the main storage for the Papanasam powerhouse. It is about 10 Km from Ambasamudram. This is the only existing power station in the basin. Initiated by the British, it is the third power project in the state. It was taken up in the year 1938 next to Pykara and the Metur Hydro Electric Project. There are four power units with the installed capacity of seven MW each. The project was completed in two stages. The first stage was started in April 1938 and completed in 1945 and the second stage, which begins in 1945-46, was over in 1951-52. This powerhouse is located near the Agasthiar Temple at the foot of the Papanasam falls.

**Science and Technology**

District Science Centre is located along the highway to Kanyakumari and has an evergreen Science Park in sylvan surroundings of the Perennial river Tamiraparani. The District Science centre was dedicated to the public on 27th

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93 The Journal of Madras, Geographical Association, July – Sep, 1940, pp.265-266  
94 Report by the Chairman, Tamil Nadu Electricity Board, Chennai, 27 August 1993.  
February 1987. For the effective advancement of science and Technology in India

“Science is everywhere

Science is in everything”

Science centres with a fascinating array of active and interactive exhibits delightful demonstration, hands on activities, films, videos and computers, teaching and training etc, have something in them for people of all ages: bridging the differences between children, men and women, scientist and layman by having a common source of an appeal.

The District science centre Tirunelveli provides multiple opportunities to the students, teachers and the public to broaden and deepen their knowledge and understanding of science technology and nature. The new gallery "Fun Science" was opened and it has variety of interesting inspiring and fun filled exhibits that unravel some of the principles of mathematics, mechanics, aerodynamics, light, sound, hearing perception and illusion.

Visitors can watch a straight stick passing through a carved path without any hindrance. They can play a harmonium and create melodies by manipulating a stream of air they can float a ball in different directions or by manipulating liquids they can make colourful paintings. They can put their head on a platter or can see a well whose depth is infinite. They can play with

sympathetic swings in different axes and can also find how fast they react to sound and light\textsuperscript{97}.

**Mancholai**

Mancholai is 57 km away from Tirunelveli. It is situated in Ambasamudram Taluk and at an elevation of 1162 mtrs\textsuperscript{98}. There are many tea plantations in and around this place. Bombay and Burma Tea estates are famous in this area. About 4000 people are working in this tea plantation\textsuperscript{99}. Mancholai is noteworthy for the climate, scenery and the calm atmosphere. This place can easily be compared with Udhagamandalam, the “Queen of Hill Stations” as far as the pleasing climate and peaceful natural atmosphere are concerned. Just above Mancholai, there are places like Kakkachi and Nalumukku, which are real gifts of nature. On the way to Mancholai from Manimuthar there is a very beautiful place with fresh water, greens and a fine climate. The British officers in those days used to stay in their place and make some arrangements for boating\textsuperscript{100}.

**Dhonavur**

Dhonavur is a hamlet of Puliakurichi village in Tirunelveli District.. It is about 4 km, from Tirukkurungudi. This came to limelight due to the

\textsuperscript{97} *Ibid.*, pp.22-26
\textsuperscript{98} K.S.K. Vel Mani, Vol. II. *op.cit.*, p.1390
\textsuperscript{99} Thirumalai Kumaraswamy, *Tourism Assets of Tirunelveli* - A Paper presented at the two day Seminar at Mnaonmaniam University, Tirunelveli on 19th and 20th 1996.
\textsuperscript{100} Brochure, Tourist Guide, *op.cit.*, P.18.
activities of the Dhonavur fellowship, which has its headquarters here. In 1826 one of those itineraries that Rev. Rhenius the CMS Missionary came to Puliakurichi (Dhonavur) to preach the gospel. In order to serve the local people better he learnt Tamil and translated the Bible into Tamil\textsuperscript{101}. Rev Rhenius to form a Christian Congregation in the cluster of villages cantered around Puliakurichi. One Count Dohna of Schalodin in Prussia (Germany) sent to him some money to be used at his discretion for furthering the Christian cause in Tirunelveli, with that money he bought some land in Puliakurichi to be used as a Christian settlement for the converts along with few houses. Rhenius dedicated the colony on 23rd May 1827 Christening it as Dohnavur after Count Dohna\textsuperscript{102}. During 1844-1862 a beautiful church was constructed in this place with the efforts of Rev. Rhenius. This church, resembles the church of Jerusalem.

The fellowship was founded by Amy Carmichal in 1901 who was affectionately called by the villagers as Amma. This foreigner who devoted her entire life for the service of this people completely adopted the way of life of the people of this region, particularly for the sake of uplift of poor children. For this cause she worked throughout her life and she died on 18th January 1951\textsuperscript{103}. The fellowship still continuing its benevolent activities with unabated

\textsuperscript{102} \textit{Hundred years Celebration Malar}, 1893-1993, 'Memoir of Rhenius' in Christ Church, Dhonavur, 1996. p.312.
\textsuperscript{103} \textit{Ibid.}, pp..6-9.
interest. A well-equipped hospital is run by them where poor are treated free. A weekly market, Mission schools for the children, post office were established to serve the people\textsuperscript{104}.

**Shengaltheri**

Shengaltheri is located in Kalakadu mountain area in Tirunelveli District. It is 20 km from Kalakadu village, and 68 km from Tirunelveli. This area comes under Kalakadu Wild Life Sanctuary. This place is a very important picnic spot and also popular for its natural beauty and salubrious climate, perennial falls which adds attraction for travellers\textsuperscript{105}. Upto the British rule in India, the British officers stayed in the Quarters for rest.

It is connected to all important Pilgrim centres in Tirunelveli District. The nearby railway stations are Valliyoor and Nanguneri. For going to Shengaltheri Prior permission has to be obtained from Deputy Director of Wildlife, Ambasamudram, Mundanthurai and Kalakadu wild life sanctuary\textsuperscript{106}. 

\textsuperscript{104} *Idem.*

\textsuperscript{105} website, Informatics in Tirunelveli *op.cit.*, pp.10-14.