CHAPTER TWELVE

THE PALLAVAS

I. THE TAMIL LAND

The end of the third century A.D. marks the beginning of a new epoch in the history of the South. The Saṅgam age draws to an end, and the Andhra-Sātavāhana empire goes out of existence. The Cholas cease to exist as a political power in the Tamil country which comes to be divided between the Pallavas to the north of the Kāverī river and the Pāṇḍyas to its south. Till the beginning of the ninth century the only vestiges of the Cholas are found in the Telugu-Choda kingdom in the valley of the N. Peṇnār, and in stray literary and epigraphical references to the Chola country. From the close of the Saṅgam age the history of the Tamil country becomes very obscure until about the middle of the sixth century A.D. or a little later; no continuous history of the intervening period can be attempted in the present state of our knowledge. The story of the subsequent period is well attested by epigraphy and literature.

The Sātavāhana empire reached the height of its prosperity under Gautamiputra and his immediate successors. It attained its farthest expansion in the south under Yajña-Srī towards the end of the second century A.D. How far south of the Krishṇā-Tuṅgabhadrā line the power of the Sātavāhanas extended cannot be definitely determined. Coins of Yajña-Srī have been found as far south as the Southern Peṇnār, but this does not necessarily imply that his empire extended so far. No Sātavāhana inscriptions are known to have been found south of the Bellary district. On the other hand there is some evidence from Saṅgam literature that some areas south of the Tuṅgabhadrā were ruled by chieftains who were not Tamils and who were not always at peace with them. On the west coast the region round Mt. D'Ély, a little to the north of Cannanore, marks the northernmost limit of the Tamil country; its ruler was Nannan of Chera extraction whose land is called golden Koṅkāṇam. Beyond it lay the Ārya country, the Ariake of the Greek writers, and the Daṇḍāraṇyam. Erumai of the modern Mysore country is definitely described as a Vaḍuga chieftain, and his land

1 Nāṭṭ, 391.
as the western country, Kuda-nādu. We shall see that the Saṅgam tradition seems to distinguish Vaḻugas from the Telugus and Karnā-takas, though we may not be quite sure of this as we have only relatively late authorities to guide us. Pulli of Vēṅgadām (Tirupati) is another chieftain who is called the chieftain of Kalvar and whose speech is said to have abounded in longish sounds, a statement which recalls another description of Vaḻugar as the people of untutored drawling speech accompanied by fierce dogs. On the other hand Pulli’s neighbour to the east was a Tamil chieftain of Tiraiya origin who had his capital at Pavittiri, which has been identified with Reḍḍipālem in the Nellore district, a little to the north of the Pulicat lake. The Vaḻugas are said to have once formed the vanguard of the Mauryan army, and it is quite probable that under the Sātavāhanas they occupied the southern marches of the Deccani empire. We have several echoes in literature of conflicts between Tamil chieftains and Vaḻugas, but the total absence of a reliable chronology renders these casual literary references practically valueless for purposes of history.

When the Saṅgam age closes and the Sātavāhana empire disappears in the third century, we find the Chuṭu-nāgas, who had the Sātakarni title and were apparently an offshoot of the Sātavāhana line, in occupation of the south-west region of the original empire of the Sātavāhanas, and the Pallavas in the south-east with Kāṇchīpuram for their capital. Though at first the Pallavas seem to have ruled over the whole of the eastern coastal territory up to the Krishṇā river, they became known particularly as the rulers of Tonḍai-maṇḍalam, the territory round Kāṇchīpuram, which in later times consisted of twenty-four divisions, each with a fortress of its own.

It may be useful to note at this point an ancient scheme of linguistic division of the Tamil country and its neighbourhood as it was understood by the Tamil grammarians. The nature of the division is hinted at briefly in the text of the Tolkāppiyam, the most ancient and complete treatise extant, but the details we owe to Nachchinārkkiniyar, a commentator of the late middle ages who doubtless reproduced the prevalent tradition of his time. The area of standard Tamil (Sen Tamil) lay between the rivers Vaigai in the south and Marudi; a streamlet in the Trichinopoly district (a little beyond Coleroon) in the north, the sea in the east and Karūr in the west. Round this central block lay twelve other divisions, also reckoned as Tamil country, but not of such cultivated speech as the Sen-Tamil-nādu. They were: (1) Poṅgar (2) Oḷi (3) Ten-Pāṇdi

---

2 Aham, 115, and 253.
3 Ibid., 61, 107 (Vaḻugar) and 396.
4 Ibid., 340.
(4) Kuṭṭam (5) Kuḍam (6) Pāuli (7) Kārkā (8) Śitam (9) Pūli (10) Malaiyamān (11) Aruvā and (12) Aruvā-Vaḍatalai. Similar regions beyond these are also noted by him though not by his predecessors, Ilampūrāṇar and Sēnāvaraiyar; these regions are also twelve in number, and obviously include some areas where Tamil was not spoken. They are: (1) Siṅgalam (Ceylon) (2) Pālam Tivu (lit. old island, a name of the Maldives) (3) Kollam (4) Kūpam (5) Koṅkānam (6) Tulu (7) Kuḍālu (8) Kārṇadām (9) Kuḍam (10) Vaḍugu (11) Teluṅgu and (12) Kalingam. It will be noticed that Kuḍam (west) occurs twice over in the lists besides Kuḍaḷu (Coorg). This may appear to detract from the authenticity of the lists. We may have here one more instance of the common feature of unfamiliar geographical names being transformed out of recognition in repeated transcriptions by scribes. Nevertheless, it is of interest to note that Vaḍugu is counted as distinct from Kārṇadām and Teluṅgu. Two Vaḍuga chieftains, Erumai and Pulli, have been mentioned above as occupants of the northern frontier of the Tamil country. The Baḍagas of the Nilgiris may be taken to represent the last remnants of the Vaḍugas of old. The river Ayiri, said to water the good country of Erumai,5 may be identified with the Hagari in Kaḍūr and Chitaldurg districts of Mysore. Bāna inscriptions of a later time speak of the Bāna homeland as a 12,000 district, forming the western part Vaḍuga-vali, the Vaḍugaroad, which is usually rendered into Sanskrit by the phrase Andhra-patha—an indication that the Vaḍugas were closely related to the Andhras, if not identical with them.

II. THE ORIGIN OF THE PALLAVAS

Who were the Pallavas? Many indications point to their being strangers to the Tamil country, unrelated to any of the three ancient lines of the Chera, Pāṇḍya, and Chola. Many have treated the name Pallava as a variant of Pahlava, and held that like the Satraps of Ujjain they were a foreign line of rulers of ‘Scythian’ origin. With less justification others have sought to connect them with Jaffna, identified with the island of Manipallavam mentioned in the Manimekalai. That poem mentions that Pillalai, a nāga princess, who had a son by a Chola prince, sent the child to its father on a merchantman, which left Manipallavam but was wrecked before it reached its destination, and that the child was lost in the sea. But there is nothing to connect the child with the Pallavas, and Manipallavam cannot possibly be Jaffna so near the mainland of India. Nachiśi-nārkkiniyar, however, records a later legend. A Chola prince from

5 Ibid., 258.
Nāgapaṭṭinam had a liaison with a nāga maiden (not named) in the nether world; before his departure he told her that if she floated the child of their union on the waves of the sea with a twig of the tōndai creeper as a mark of identity, and if the child reached the shore safe, he would give him a share of his kingdom. This was the origin of the family of Tōndaiyar who ruled over Tōndaināḍ. Pallava is a Sanskrit word meaning tender shoots and leaves of a plant. And the official history of the Pallavas, as recorded in a relatively late Sanskrit inscription from Amarāvati, traces the line to an eponymous ancestor Pallava, child of a union between the apsaras Mādanī and the Brāhmaṇa warrior Aśvathāman, fifth in descent from sage Bhāradvāja, the son of Brahmā.6 The inscription says that Aśvathāman gave the name Pallava to the prince, because his mother laid him on a litter of sprouts. It is an impossible task to get behind so many layers of legend and discover the true origin of the Pallavas. All their early charters are in Prākrit, and obviously they were not Tamils in origin, though they were ready enough to adopt local traditions to make themselves the more acceptable to the people that came under their sway. There is much in favour of the thesis that the Pallavas rose into prominence in the service of the Śātavāhanas in the south-eastern division of their empire, and attained independence when that power declined. This view, which till recently was no more than an intelligent guess, seems to gain support from a Prākrit Brāhmī inscription recently discovered in the Palnad tāluk of the Guṇṭur district. In spite of its mutilated condition, it clearly mentions Sīhavamma of the Palava dynasty and Bharadaya gotta; it also mentions a devakula to which a gift seems to have been made. This is the earliest Pallava inscription so far known. The name Palava is intermediate in form between the original Pahlava and Pallava of the Hirahadagalli plates of Śivakandavaram. And as Sīhavamma bears no titles of independence like Dhammamahārājādhīrāja, it seems possible that he was still a subordinate ruler of the Ikshvākus, though it must be noted that he speaks of his own kingdom (appano vejayike).7 Stress has been laid recently on one factor pointing to a foreign extraction for the Pallavas. In the Vaikunṭha-perumāl temple at Kāṅchipuram we have a series of sculptured panels illustrating the events of Pallava history; in one of the panels depicting the selection of Nandji-varman II, a prince from a collateral line, to the throne then vacant owing

6 SII, I, No. 32. The name of the apsaras is Menakā in the Kaśākudji plates, SII. II, pp. 346 ff.; V. 17; and in the Rāyakotta plate of Skandaśihya (EI, V. No. 8) the mother of Pallava is a nāgī.

7 IAHC, II, pp. 68–69 and 'Ten years of Indian Epigraphy', by B. Ch. Chhabra in Ancient India, No. 5.
to the failure of the main line, one of the state officials explains to the father of the young prince that what he had brought with him was not an elephant's head, but the crown for his son. This clearly recalls the crown shaped like an elephant's scalp with which Alexander, Demetrius, and other foreign rulers are depicted on their coins. On the other hand Rājaśekhara, the poly-histor of the early tenth century, gives no hint of any connection between Pallavas and Pahlavas whom he treats as separate peoples in his Kāvyamānī.

III. THE EARLY PALLAVAS

The next Pallava ruler we hear of is Sivaskanda-varman. Palaeography suggests an interval of about half a century between him and Śivahavamma, and there is no other evidence for a closer determination of the chronology. Sivaskanda issues two charters, both in Prākrit, one as Yuvārāja and the other in the eighth year of his rule as king. Both grants are issued from Kāñchipuram. The earlier grant is an order addressed to the governor (vāpatam) of Dhaṇṇakaḍa (Dhanakataka, Amaravati) and disposing of a village in the Andhra country. His territory thus extended at least up to the Krishṇa in the north. In the later grant the king claims to have performed Agnishtoma, Vaijapeya, and Aśvamedha sacrifices, and bears the title Dhammamahārājadhirāja. He also mentions Bappasāmi who gave away large quantities of gold and numberless cows, besides thousands of halas of land. Bappasāmi means 'Lord father' and is no proper name; but he is given the title of Mahārāja and his commands were honoured without question (appatihatasāsana). There is a third Prākrit charter with more or less the same palaeography as the two already mentioned. It belongs to the reign of Śiri Vijaya-khandavamma Mahārāja but the regnal year is lost. Probably the king was identical with Sivaskanda, though some are inclined to treat them as two different persons. This charter mentions further the Yuvamahārāja Vijaya Buddhavamma, and his queen Chārudevi, the mother of Buddhyāṅkura. It records the gift of four nivartanas of cultivated land by Chārudevi to God Nārāyaṇa of the Kuli-Mahataraka-devakula in Dālūra. These three charters, read together with the stone inscription from Palnad, give the impression of a rising and prosperous kingdom with an organized system of administration which derived many of its features from the Sātavāhanas and Mauryas. The western

8 SII, XII, p. 11.
9 Mayidayolu, EI, VII, 84-89.
10 Hirahadagalli, EI, I, p. 5; II, 483-85.
boundary of this early Pallava kingdom of Kāñchī is nowhere stated. But the Kadambas claim that Mayūrasārman, the founder of the line, got from the Pallavas, in the latter half of the fourth century A.D., the territory between Preharā and the western sea which became the nucleus of their kingdom. The Gaṅgas of Mysore acknowledged the suzerainty of the Pallavas. A Pallava charter of the ninth century states that an early monarch of the line, Vīrakūrcha, the son of Chūtapallava, obtained all the insignia of royalty together with the hand of a nāga princess—12—which might be an echo of a dynastic alliance with the Chuṭukula-Sātakarnis who ruled in the south-west part of the Sātavāhana empire. All these facts may warrant the inference that in these early days the Pallavas ruled from sea to sea.

There ensues total darkness for some time after the period of the Prākṛit charters. The only gleam of light is the occurrence of the name of Vishnugopa of Kāñchī among the rulers of the South who were defeated by Samudra-gupta about the middle of the fourth century A.D. (p. 24). The name Vishnugopa occurs in the genealogy of the Pallavas, as we shall see; but at a time much later than the age of Samudra-gupta. Ugrasena of Pālakka, another opponent of Samudra, had his principality somewhere in the Nellore district, and was most probably a subordinate of Vishnugopa whose side he naturally took against the Gupta invader. He may be looked upon as belonging to the same family as Satyasena from whom Skandaśishya, an early Pallava king, is said to have seized the ghaṭıkā of the Brahmins.13

The next stage in the history of the Pallavas is marked by nearly a dozen copper-plate charters, including a fragment,14 all of them written in the Sanskrit language and recording only the names of kings besides land-grants of little historical value. They bear only the regnal years of the ruling king, and the tentative chronology of the period rests on general palaeographical considerations and a couple of synchronisms with two rulers of the Gaṅga dynasty who are said to have been crowned by their Pallava overlords. The

---

12 Velīrpālaiyam plates, III, II, No. 98—V, 7.
13 Ibid., V, 8.
14 They are: (1 and 2) Oṃgūḍha A and B, EI, XV, 246-55; (3) Unvapalli, IA, V, 50-53; (4) Neḍuṅgaṇaṇa, Bhārata (Vrisha, Jyeshṭha, 609-713; (5) Maṅgādūr, IA, V, 154-7; (6) Pīkara EI, VIII, 159-83; (7) Buchireddipālem, II. Mad. Uni, XII, 129-59; (8) Chendalūr, EI, VIII, 233-36; (9) Udoyendiram, EI, III, 142-47; (10) Chura, EI, XXIV, 137-43; (11) Daršī fragment, EI, I, 397. Nps. 8-10 are at best copies of lost originals, as their palaeography does not pertain to the period to which they purport to belong. Neither the confused list of the Vāyalūr pillar inscription giving fifty-four names with many repetitions (EI, xvii, 151), nor the vague statements of later Pallava charters, are of much real use to the historian.
genuineness of some of these Pallava Sanskrit charters is not, however, beyond question. The manuscript of a Jaina work, Lokavibhāga, contains the information that Sarvanandin finished (copying or composing) the work on a day corresponding to 25 August A.D. 458, which fell in the twenty-second regnal year of Śiṅhavarman, the ruler of Kaṅchi. The genealogy and chronology of the Pallavas of this period may be reconstructed as in the following table, where some names found in the Vēḻṟpāḷaiyam grant are added in brackets before the names of the first four kings found in the contemporary charters to indicate the identifications made by some writers, and the regnal periods are calculated on the data detailed above.

(Kālabharträ)-Kumāravishṇu I (Om. A), A.D. 325-50

(Chūta-Pallava) Skanda-varman I, 350-75

(Vīrakūrcha) Vīra-varman, 375-400

(Skandaśishya) Skanda-varman II (Om. A), 400-36

Siṅha-varman I, 436-60 Yuvamahārāja Vishṇu-
(crowned Gaṅga Gopavarman I (Urva-
Ayya-varman) pallī, Neṇūṅgarāya)

Skanda-varman III, Simha-varman II, 480-
460-80 500 (Om. B, Maṅ gadūr,
Nandi-varman Pikira, Buchir.)

(Udayendiram) Vishṇu-gopavarman II Kumāravishṇu III

Kumāravishṇu II

Vishṇu-gopavarman II 500-525 (Chura)

Kumāravishṇu III (Chendalur)

None of the Sanskrit charters except the Chendalūr and Udayendiram plates, both suspect, are issued from Kaṅchipuram, but from camps at different places like Tāmrapa, Palakkada, Menmāṭura, Daṅnapura, Pikira, and Oṅgoḍu. For this reason some writers hold that the Pallavas lost their hold on Kaṅchī during this period, and that the city passed into the hands of the Chola Karikāla and his successors for a time. They believe that Kaṅchī was redeemed from the Cholas by Kumāravishṇu II as stated in the Vēḻṟpāḷaiyam plates.

16 V, 9. See also ASIAR. 1906-7, p. 224; EI, XV, 249.
of Nandi-varman III. But there is no place for Karikāla, the early Chola monarch of the Saṅgam age, after the period of the Pallava Prākrit charters; he belonged most certainly to an earlier time, and there is no tangible evidence of his ever having conquered Kāṇchipuram. The fact that the charters are issued from 'victorious camps' (vijaya-sthāna, or viṣaya-skandhāvāra, or ācāsaka) in different places cannot mean that the kings issuing the charters had lost their capital, but only that they were touring in their kingdom and exercised active supervision over its administration. We know how much depended on the personal alertness of the king, and what emphasis our manuals of polity lay on the constant vigilance and activity (utthāna) of the monarch. The statement in the Vēḷūrpalaiyam plates regarding Kumāravishṇu — then came Kumāravishṇu, victor in battles, who held Kāṇchīnagara in his hands (grihita-kāṇchīnagara) — is vague, and may well be taken to mean that Kāṇchī was the base from which he planned his campaigns, rather than that he took Kāṇchī from an enemy, least of all the Cholas—particularly because the second half of the verse contains a distinct statement that his son Buddhavarmanā was the submarine fire to the army of the Cholas. There is in fact no evidence that the Pallavas were dispossessed of their capital at any time during the period of the Sanskrit charters.

From the dates suggested above for the different kings, it will be seen that the invasion of Samudra-gupta must have taken place in the reign of Kumāravishṇu I. Either he was himself the Vishnugopa of Kāṇchī mentioned in the Allahabad inscription of the Gupta monarch, or some close relative of his, say a younger brother. Little is known of the political events of this long period of about two centuries. Śimha-varman I crowned the Gaiga king Ayya-varman (c. A.D. 450), and his son Skanda-varman III likewise crowned Ayyavavarman’s son, Mādhava II, c. 475. Vishnugopa-varman I perhaps died as a Yuvarāja, although the title Mahārāja is applied to him in the Chura prāṣasti of his grandson. Śimha-varman II doubtless enjoyed a long and prosperous reign, as he is found issuing the largest number of grants. A Chola inscription from Tirukkalukkuṟṟam mentions a grant to the temple of the Mūlāsthāna in that village originally made by Skandaśishya and continued by Pādāvikonḍa Narasinga-Pottarayar.17 The second king was clearly Narasiṃha-varman I; but the identity of Skandaśishya is not easy, as he may be anvone of the three Skanda-varmans that figure in the genealogy of Pallavas of the Sanskrit charters.

What happened after Vishnugopa II is by no means clear. The Vāyalūr list at this point reads: Śimha-varman, Vishnugopa, Siṁha-varman, Siṁhavishṇu, Mahendra-varman. Hence some writers are

17 El, III, 279.
inclined to assume that a Siṃha-varman III was the son of Vishnugopa II and father of Siṃhavishṇu who begins the best known line of the Pallavas, late in the sixth century. And the name Siṃha-varman for the father of Siṃhavishṇu is supported by the Vēḻṟpāḷaiyam plates. But the relation of this Siṃha-varman to Vishnugopa II and the rulers of the Sanskrit charters, which rests only on the Vāyalūr list, must get some confirmation before we can accept it as a settled fact.

IV. THE KALABHRAS

In the last quarter of the sixth century A.D. the Pallavas and Pāṇḍyas rose again and began a new epoch of glory and achievement in the northern and southern halves of the Tamil country, and during the period of their ascendancy and rivalry, the Cholas disappeared almost totally from the political map except for some chieftains in the Ceded Districts claiming descent from the Cholas of Uraiyūr or from Kari-kāla. In the interval between the close of the Śaṅgām age and the revival of the power of the Pallavas and Pāṇḍyas just mentioned, the Tamil land passed through a severe political and religious crisis, and the two rulers who inaugurated the period, the Pallava Siṃhavishṇu, and the Pāṇḍyādhirāja Kaḍuṅgon, are said to have begun their rule by putting an end to the power of the Kalabhras. On the Kalabhras we get few definite or clear data from our sources. The Vēḻvikudi grant says that after that village, which had been granted as brahma-deya by Mudukuḍumī ‘of many sacrifices’—a king known to the Saṅgām literature—was enjoyed by the donees for a long time, it was abrogated by ‘a Kali king named Kalabhraṇ who took possession of the extensive earth after displacing numberless great kings (adhirajas)’. Elsewhere the Kalabhras are mentioned in the plural. Whether the description ‘Kali king’ is meant only as a condemnation of the wickedness of the ruler who abrogated the long-standing charitable endowments or indicates that he belonged to the Kali dynasty of rulers cannot be determined. Who the Kalabhras were, how they succeeded in upsetting the social and political order of the Tamil country, and how long their evil rule lasted, are questions to which no answer can yet be given. The suggestion may be made that the Kalabhras were identical with the Kaḷvaṭ, one of whose chieftains was Pulli of Vēṅgadam, and that these half-wild people broke loose in the confusion caused by the inroad of Samudra-gupta and overran the Tamil country and ruled it for a time. But this view rests almost entirely on the dubious phonetic similarity between Kaḷvaṭ and Kalabhraṇ, and has

18 V, 11.
19 EI, XVII, 291 ff.
20 See PK, 47-49 for a full discussion.
little tangible evidence in its favour. In the writings of Buddha-datta we seem to get singularly interesting data on the rule of the Kalabhras in the Chola country. And the Cholas, we know, suffered a longer eclipse than the Pândyas and did not recover till the ninth century. Though the exact date of Buddha-datta is not clearly settled, there is no doubt that he lived in the dark period of the South Indian history after the light of Saṅgam literature fails, and before a fresh dawn commences with the revival of Pallava and Pândya power. He says that his Vinayavinichchaya was begun and finished when Achchutavikkanta of the Kaḷabhakula was ruling the earth. He gives a glowing description of the Chola country and the port of Káveripatīnām, but says not a word of the Cholas themselves. Late literary tradition in Tamilñāvalar-charitai knows of a king by name Achchuta who kept the three Tamil kings, Chera, Chola, and Pândya in confinement for a time. Some songs about him are cited by Amitasāgara in his Yāpparanjalak-kāṟigai in the tenth century A.D. Here we seem to have the genuine relics of Kalabhra rule and its consequences. Possibly there were other rulers besides Achchuta who were, like him, enemies of the Tamil powers and votaries of Buddhism. Some of the Purānic stories, narrated by Sekkilār in his Periya-purāṇam, also appear to refer to this period; the stories of Mūrti Nāyanār in which there is reference to a Karnāṭak king of Jaina persuasion ruling in Madurai, and of Kūṟuva Nāyanār, whom the Brāhmaṇas of Chidambaram declined to anoint in the manner in which they usually anointed the Chola monarchs, deserve particular mention. It seems probable, therefore, that the Kalabhra rule was marked by the capture of political power in the Tamil country and was possibly aided by an invasion from outside. It is perhaps not without significance that the revival of Pallava and Pândya political power is followed almost immediately by a strong religious reaction against Buddhism and Jainism, led by the celebrated Nāyanārs on the side of Saivism and Alvar on that of Vaishnavism. All indications point to Śivahavishnu as the first monarch to strike a blow against the Kalabhra usurpation: the Pândya Kaduṅgon followed very soon in his wake and completed the task he had begun of terminating an alien tyranny and restoring its traditional polity to the country as a whole.

V. LATER PALLAVAS

For a period of well over two centuries after the fall of the Kalabhras, the Tamil country was divided between the Pallavas in the north and the Pândyas in the south with Kāṇchī and Madurai for

their respective capitals. There was a constant rivalry between them often breaking out in open war, and the boundary between the kingdoms oscillated about the line of the Kāverī, and the feudatory chief-tains in the border territory often changed sides according to the exigencies of politics. The Pallavas, however, had to fight on two fronts, because they had also to contend with other enemies from across the Tuṅgabhadra. The Chālukyas of Bādami, who rose to prominence in Western Deccan at the same time as the Pallavas of the line of Siṃhavishṇu, and soon established a collateral line of rulers in Eastern Deccan, were their first enemies. In the middle of the eighth century the main line of the Chālukyas was extinguished by the rise of the Rāṣṭrakūṭas under Dantidurga, but in spite of dynastic connections between the Pallavas and Rāṣṭrakūṭas, there was little abatement of hostility between the two powers on either side of the Tuṅgabhadra. The entire period was marked by a natural tendency for the enemies of the Pallavas to act in concert, and the Pāṇḍyas are often found co-operating with the Deccani power. On the other hand, the rulers of Ceylon, being neighbours of the Pāṇḍyas across a narrow sea, were hostile to them, and often fought on the side of the Pallavas. But the age of the Pallava rule is more remarkable for its achievements in the realm of the spirit than for its politics and warfare. It witnessed a widespread religious revival the roots of which undoubtedly go back to the dark age preceding it. This revival ended in the definite weakening, though not total disappearance, of Jainism and Buddhism, and the secure establishment of Saivism and Vaishnavism in the Tamil country. It led to the glorification of almost every shrine dedicated to Śiva and Vishnu and the rise of a popular devotional literature which has remained the most precious heritage of the Tamils. Equally striking was the advance registered in the domains of architecture and sculpture. The celebrated Chinese Buddhist pilgrim Hiuan Tsang visited the Pallava and Chālukya courts, among others, in the middle of the seventh century, and has left an interesting account of them.

Siṃhavishṇu (A.D. 575-600) was lord of the entire country between the Krishṇa and the Kāverī. and is said to have seized the Chola country with all its areca-groves and paddy-fields.22 He was a devotee of Vishnu and bore the title Avanisimha (lion of the earth). According to a literary tradition the great poet Bhāravi visited his court.23 The portrait of Siṃhavishṇu is found sculptured in the Adivarāha temple of Māmallapuram; the king wears a tall crown besides other

22 Velūrpālaiyam, v. 11.
23 See Copalan: Pāllavas of Kāñchi. 43; and Keith, History of Sanskrit Literature xvi.
ornaments and is seated on a throne, and two of his queens, also with jewelled crowns, stand on either side of him.24

VI. MAHENDRA-VARMAN I

Mahendra-varman I (A.D. 600-30), the son and successor of Sinha-vishnu, was a versatile genius whose strongly-marked individuality secures him a place among the most notable figures of history. He was not only soldier and statesman, but religious reformer, architect, poet, and musician. He was fond of many titles among which occur Vichitra-chitta, Mattavilasa, Gunabhara, Satrumalla, Lalitankura, Avanibhajana and Sankunajati, besides several others even more curious with Telugu forms and endings, found engraved in the ornate Grantha character of his time on the beams and pillars of the upper cave on the rock fort at Trichinopoly. We read in the Kasakudi plates25 that he annihilated his chief enemies at Pullalur, about fifteen miles north of Kanchipuram. Though the enemy is not named, it is obvious that he was the powerful Chalukya ruler of Badami, Pulakesin II, of whom the Ahobil inscription records that 'he caused the splendour of the lord of the Pallavas, who had approached him in strength and eminence,26 to be obscured by the dust of his army, and to vanish behind the walls of Kanchipuram'. After his accession to the throne in A.D. 609-10, Pulakesin left his younger brother Vishnuvardhana in charge at Badami,27 and started on an extensive campaign of conquest in Eastern Deccan (c. A.D. 618). He overthrew in quick succession Southern Kosala, Kalinga, and the kingdoms of the Vishnuukundins and the Durjayas, and then, crossing the Krishnâ river, invaded the Pallava country. That the invader met the Pallava forces at Pullalur, very near their capital city, gives a measure of the strength and swiftness of the Chalukya advance and the success that

24 Annual Report of the Superintendent of Archaeology (Southern circle), 1922-23, p. 94. Other identifications are proposed in MASl, 26 and 599, XII., p. iii (Narasinha-varman I and Mahendra-varman II).
25 SIfl, II. No. 73, v. 22.
26 The phrase I have rendered into 'who had approached him in strength and eminence' is, in the original, akrantatmabolonnatin. This was translated by Kielhorn into 'who had opposed the rise of his power' implying that the Pallava had opposed the rise of Pulakesin and thus given him offence. The thesis has been developed with some elaboration at SIfl, XI (i), p. 11. But there is in fact no evidence of the Pallavas having meddled in Chalukyan affairs, and I think that the long-drawn Chalukya-Pallava conflict was started by the martial ambitions of Pulakesin II who aspired to a position of dominance in the South, like that of his contemporary Harshavardhana in the North, and could not brook the independence of a rival power. See JAHCl, I, pp. 186-71.
attended it. The Pallava claims to have annihilated the enemy, while
the Aihole inscription implies that Mahendra-varman had to take
shelter behind the fortifications of his capital. Though Kāñchipuram
was saved, the northern provinces of the Pallava kingdom were
evidently lost to the enemy. After his return to Bādāmi, Pulākeśin
deputed his brother to the east to settle the newly conquered terri-
tory, and that was the beginning of the line of Eastern Chāluukiyas of
Veṇgi.

Mahendra-varman was a follower of Jainism to start with, and
then, under the influence of Tirumāvukkaśa or Appar, himself a Jain
converted to Saivism by his sister, changed over to Saivism.
The event is attested by a significant pun on the word liṅga in a verse
in the Trichinopoly rock inscription of the monarch.28 Tradition avers
that the Pallava monarch demolished Jainā foundations at Pāṭalipuram
(Cuddalore) and elsewhere, and used their material in the
construction of a Śiva temple, Gunadh(bh?)ara-īśvaram at Tiruvadi
in South Arcot district. But this appears unlikely as it conflicts with
what we know of this tolerant and cultured monarch from other
sources. He deprecated extreme and corrupt religious practices, and
turned the laugh against the Kāpañikas and Buddhist bhikshus in his
rollicking farce (prahasana) entitled Mattavilāsa,29 which impresses
the reader by its remarkable freedom from the sectarian intolerance
that was growing in the period. He studied music under Rudrāchārya,
and composed exercises for the practice of students on a variety of
the vīna known as Parivādinī, and had them engraved on rock at
Kudumivāmalai (Pudukottai) in the southern border of his kingdom.
With him begins in South India the practice of scooping out of the
live rock maṇḍapas and temples of simple and impressive designs,
and in one of his inscriptions he glories in his capacity to raise
shrines without the use of brick, timber, metal or mortar.30 A labelled
panel in the Varāha temple at Māmallapura bears sculptures depicting
Mahendra-varman pointing out the sanctum of the temple to two of
his queens whom he is leading to it.31 The paintings in the rock-cut

28 SII, I, No. 33, v. 2.
29 Though the Bhagavadajjuka is mentioned together with this play in I. 6 of
SII, IV, No. 36, there is some doubt about the authorship of Bhagavadajjuka, some-
times attributed to a certain Bodhayananakavi. The story of Jains being persecuted rests
on the relatively late evidence of the Periya Purāṇam.
30 EI, IV, p. 152.
31 The labels above two panels read simply: Śrī Sīhmaciṇṇu Pottādirājan and
Śrī Mahendra Pottādirājan. I prefer the older identification of these figures with
first two monarchs of the Sīhmaciṇṇu line to the more recent attempts at other
identifications (See Krishna Sastri in MASI, No. 29, and SII, XII, Introd., where
Krishna Sastri’s identification of Sīhmaciṇṇu with Narasimha-varman I is upheld
and that of Mahendra with the obscure Mahendra-varman II is proposed). There
temple at Sittanavāsal (Pudukkottai), which used to be ascribed to Mahendra-varman's time on account of the architectural style of the cave-temple, are now regarded as belonging to a later period (ninth century) and to another line of rulers (Pāṇḍyas, particularly Śrī Māra Śrī-Vallabha). There is some evidence that the cave was originally painted in the days of the Pallava ruler; but none of it has survived, and the extant paintings were made at the time of the renovation of the shrine by Madurai Āsiriyān Īlañ-Gautaman in the reign of the Pāṇḍya ruler mentioned above.

VII. NARASIMHA-VARMAN I

During the reign of Narasimha-varman I Mahāmallā (A.D. 630-68), the son and successor of Mahendra-varman I, Pulakeśin II renewed his attack on the Pallavas, evidently because he was not satisfied with his achievements against them in his first invasion. But he paid a heavy price, for not only did Narasimha-varman inflict a number of defeats on the invading forces at Pariyala, Sūramāra, and Maṇimaṇgalā—the last mentioned place being only about 20 miles east of Kānchipuram, but the Pallava monarch turned the tables on the Chālukya and advanced with a powerful army to the heart of the enemy kingdom and laid siege to Bādāmi (Vātāpi). In the fighting that ensued Pulakeśin lost his life (A.D. 642), and Narasimha-varman earned the title Vātāpikonda. His occupation of the city is attested by an inscription, dated in his thirteenth regnal year, engraved on the rock behind the temple of Mallikārjunadeva at Bādāmi. In his wars against the Chālukyas, Narasimha is said to have been actively assisted by Mānavarman, an exiled prince from Ceylon. Later, the Sinhalese prince, who wanted to gain the throne of Ceylon, was provided with armies on two occasions by the Pallava monarch whom he had served so loyally. The success achieved on his landing in Ceylon proved to be temporary, and he had once again to seek refuge in the Pallava court till a second attempt resulted in his capture of Anurādhapura. The expeditions to Ceylon, led by Mānavarman, started from Māmallapuram, which takes its name from a title of Narasimha. The rising importance of the port in this period is borne out by references to it by Hiuan Tsang and in the

is no reason why later Pallava kings who built the Varāha temple should not have caused their great ancestors to be portrayed in preference to themselves or their immediate predecessors.

32 PIHC, 1944 (Madras), pp. 170-73.
33 SII, I, p. 148; II, pp. 15-17; XI (i), No. 1.
34 SII, II, No. 98, v. 12.
35 CV, Ch. 47.
hymns of Tirumāṅgai Āḻvār. The Kaśākuṭi plates refer to the conquest of Lankā and of Vātāpi (Bādāmi) as the chief achievements of Narasimha, and say that his fame rivalled that of Rāma and Agastya. The Chinese Master of Law, Hiuan Tsang, visited Kāṇchi-puram most probably a little before the despatch of the expedition against Bādāmi, and noted that Buddhism of the Sthavira school and Digāṃbara Jainism flourished in the city besides Hinduism. He noted that it was the birthplace of the celebrated Dharmapāla, who became the abbot of the great vihāra of Nālandā and was the author of well-known works on Buddhistic logic and theology. He also notes that Buddhism flourished in Malakūta (the Pāṇḍya country), perhaps from hearsay. Narasimha-varman was a great builder and doubtless did much to embellish the sea-port which came to be called Māmallapuram after him; many of the cave-temples and sculptures in that place give evidence of the high quality of the artistic tradition current in his reign.

VIII. PARAMESVARA-VARMAN I AND HIS SUCCESSORS

How long Narasimha-varman held Bādāmi cannot be determined. The Pallava occupation brought about a crisis in the affairs of the Chālukyan kingdom; but Vikramāditya I, the ablest of the sons of Pulakeśin II, saved the kingdom from disruption, restored its unity after clearing it of invaders, and proclaimed himself king in A.D. 655. He claims victories against three successive Pallava monarchs, and Narasimha-varman is the first among them. We must take it therefore that Chālukyan recovery began with a war waged by Vikramāditya against Narasimha which brought about the withdrawal of Pallava troops from the Chālukya country. The Cholas, Cheras, and Pāṇḍyas, as well as the Kalabhras, are counted among the enemies of Narasimha, but as no details are forthcoming, it is not easy to say if this is history or just empty boast. There was peace between the Chālukyas and Pallavas for the rest of Narasimha's reign which must be taken to have come to a close, not in 655 or 660, but some years later still, say about 667 or 668, if we accept the indications from statements in the contemporary Chālukya charters of Vikramāditya I. Narasimha was followed on the throne by his son Mahendra-varman II who had a short reign in which he is said to have encouraged the ghatikā (college of learned Brāhmaṇas) in the capital city, and promoted many charitable works.

36 SII, II, No. 73, v. 22.
37 How the place got the name Mahābalipuram is a mystery, though some hasty history has been based at times on this popular name.
38 Gardvāl plates, El, X, 101, v. 3.
39 Kaśākuṭi, SII, II, 346, v. 23
ditya I claims to have caused the pride of Mahendra to go down. The statement appears to find its explanation in an obscure inscription in the Mysore country which records a fight between Mahendra and Siladitya. The latter may be identified with the son of Jayasinha, a younger brother of Vikramaditya, and Mahendra may well stand for the Pallava monarch. If these identifications are correct, the Chalukya-Pallava conflict must be taken to have re-opened after the death of Narasimha-varman with an advance of the Chalukyas through the Ganga territory, and an attempt on the part of Mahendra-varman II to resist it—this time when the invading forces were still far away from the capital. Mahendra-varman II was followed on the throne by Parameśvara-varman I (A.D. 670-80). In the Kuraum grant of his own reign Parameśvara is clearly described as the son of Mahendra-varman II, and this must be accepted as the true relation between the two rulers.

Parameśvara-varman I was the third Pallava monarch whom Vikramaditya claims to have defeated in battle. And in his war against the Pallavas, the Chalukya ruler had the active assistance not only of the Gaṅgas who acknowledged the suzerainty of the Pallavas or the Chalukyas according to the dictates of their temporary interests, but also of Arikeśari, king of the distant Pandyas of the South.

That Vikramaditya was aided by the Gaṅgas and led his expedition through their country is a legitimate inference from the facts that he is known to be the son of a Gaṅga princess, possibly Gaṅgamahādevi at whose request the Gadval plates were issued in A.D. 674, and that four years earlier we find Vikramaditya issuing his Honnūr plates from his camp at Malliyūr (Malaiyūr in the Wandiwash taluk) at the instance of a Gaṅga prince by name Mahādeva. So it is clear that the attempt of Mahendra-varman II to stop the Chalukya invasion did not succeed, and it is not unlikely that the Pallava ruler perished in his attempt. Early in the reign of his successor Parameśvara-varman, Vikramaditya continued his victorious march against the Pallava capital and encamped at Malliyūr near Kāñchipuram. Instead of allowing himself to be shut up in his capital and facing a siege, Parameśvara made his escape from Kāñchi to be able to organize the resources of his kingdom for the relief of his capital and the repulse of his enemy. He was in great difficulty for some

41 The Kaśākudī and the Udayendiram plates of the reign of Nandi-varman II (SII, II, Nos. 73 and 74) leave the relation indefinite; the former uses the word pāchāt after Mahendra II and the latter tutah. Krishna Sastri suggests that Parameśvara I was the younger brother, not son, of Mahendra II (SII, II, 504). The direct statement of the Kuraum grant, it will be noticed, is not contradicted by the later charters. The Velūrpālaiyam plates omit Mahendra II altogether.
time and was defeated at Saṅkaramaṅgai (not identified) by the Pāṇḍya Arikesari (as stated in the Sinnamanūr plates). But, undaunted, he attempted with much success a bold diversion by launching a counter-invasion into the Chālukya country where Vikramāditya’s son Vinayāditya and grandson Vijayāditya were able to hold their own against the invading force, which had advanced almost up to the very gate of the capital city, and returned with a heavy booty. Vikramāditya, in his turn, pursued Parameśvara-varman to the south, and fixed his camp for a while at Uraiyyūr (Uragapura) near Trichinopoly on the southern bank of the Kāvēri, where doubtless he effected a junction with his Pāṇḍya ally. Before proceeding against the allies, Parameśvara thought it necessary to deal with Bhūvikrama, the Gaṅga subordinate of Vikramāditya. A battle was fought at Viḷande, but it went against the Pallava ruler who lost to his enemy a valued crown-jewel, the necklace which contained the gem ugrodaya. Though a defeat in a military sense, the battle served its purpose in the strategy followed by Parameśvara, who, not minding defeats in individual battles, was bent upon winning the war. It rendered the Gaṅga relatively innocuous at the time of the main engagement in the whole war which occurred at Peruvallanallūr in the Lālguḍi taluk of the Trichinopoly district. The Kūram grant gives a long and turgid account of the battle which it ends by saying: he (Parameśvara), unaided, made Vikramāditya, whose army consisted of several lakshas, take to flight, covered by a rag. This is, of course, an exaggeration, but Vikramāditya had to accept the verdict of the battle and withdraw from the Pallava country, and found himself in no position to renew the conflict.

Parameśvara-varman is called Ugradaṇḍa and ‘destroyer of the city of Raṅgarasika’ in an inscription of his son from Kāṅchipuram. Raṅgarasika was a title of Vikramāditya I, and by his city was doubtless meant Vātāpi. Parameśvara had many other fine titles like Atyantakāma, Chitramāya, Guṇabhājana, Śrībharana, Raṇajaya, and Vidyāvinīta Pallava, the last name occurring in the Kūram grant, and the rest in the inscriptions found in a Gaṇeśa temple at Māmallapuram. He is also called Lokāditya in a Kailāsanātha inscription of his grandson Mahendra III.

Parameśvara-varman’s son and successor was Narasimha-varman II (A.D. 680-720) better known as Rājasimha. There was a lull in the

42 Jejuri plates, El, XIX, 62; Nerur grant, IA, ix, 126.
43 Name in Udayendīram plate, SII, II, No. 74.
44 SII, I, No. 24.
45 BG, I, (ii), 329, n. 5.
46 El, X, 8.
47 SII, I, No. 27.
conflict with the Chālukyas, and Rājasimhā’s long reign was an era of peace and prosperity. The king is hailed as an adept in the path of Śaiva Siddhānta, and he erected many excellent temples of Śiva in different parts of his realm. The most celebrated among them, both for architectural quality and the excellence of sculpture, is the Rājasimheśvara, also called Kailāsanātha, at the capital. In its construction queen Raṅgapatākā and prince Mahendra-varman III, the heir-apparent, took much personal interest. The date of its consecration had to be put off in response to a divine voice advising the king that on the date, originally fixed for the ceremony, the Lord was entering another temple constructed over a long time in the mind of Puṣalār-Nāyanār; the story is given at length in the Periya Purāṇam, but the main incident, the divine voice heard by the king, is recorded in a contemporary inscription in the Kailāsanātha temple itself. Other temples built by Rājasimhā were the Shore temple at Māmallapuram, the Airāvatesvara at Kāñchipuram, and the Śiva temple at Panamalai, all of which contain his inscriptions, and some of them still possess traces of excellent paintings apparently coeval with the temples. Literature flourished, and there is good reason to hold that the great Sanskrit rhetorician Dandin spent many years in the Pallava court in Rājasimhā’s reign. Maritime trade grew and embassies were sent to China. The Chinese annals record that ambassadors from Śrī Naraśimhapota-varman reached the Imperial Court in A.D. 720 and that the emperor honoured them with a robe of flowered silk, a golden girdle, a purse with an emblem in the form of fish, and the seven objects; the title of ‘the army which cherished virtue’ was conferred on the Pallava army which was to be employed to chastize the Arabs and the Tibetans, who commanded considerable power in the Bay of Bengal at the time and perhaps obstructed trade; and Narasimhā himself was honoured with the title ‘King of the Kingdom of South India’. Rājasimhā carried the love of ornate birudas far beyond any of his predecessors, and more than 250 of his titles are found on the way of Kailāsanātha alone. The Vēlurpālaiyam plates state that Narasimhā II re-established the ghatikā (college) of the Brāhmaṇas besides recording his construction of the stone temple of Kailāsanātha. Rājasimhā was followed on the throne by his elder son Parameśvara-varman II. An inscription, dated in the third year of his reign, at Tiruvadi, S. Arcot, records a gift of gold to Viraṭānēśvara temple. After he had ruled for about ten years, the Chālukyas appear to have renewed their aggression against the Pallavas. A Kannada

48 SII, I, No. 24, v. 7.
49 Foreign Notices, 116-17.
stone inscription of the thirty-fifth year (A.D. 730-31) of Vijayāditya states that Yuvarāja Vikramāditya II conquered Kāṇchipuram and levied tribute from the Pallava Paramēśvara and that on his return he made the gift of the villages Ulchala and Pariyala to a Gāṅga prince.51 This was the first of the three raids on Kāṇchī with which Vikramāditya II is credited in an undated inscription of his queen Lokamahādevī at Paṭṭadakal.52 The Gāṅga prince of the Ulchala inscription was Durvinnīta Erçyappa, son of Śrīpurusha. When the Chālukya and Gāṅga forces withdrew from his capital, Paramēśvara evidently invaded Gāṅgavādi to punish Śrīpurusha for the active part he had taken in last Chālukyan expedition against Kāṇchī. Śrīpurusha met him in battle, slew him at Viḷande, and appropriated to himself the royal umbrella of the Pallava together with the title of Permānaḍī.52a

IX. NANDI-VARMAN II

The death of Paramēśvara-varman II (c. A.D. 731) was followed by a crisis in the affairs of the Pallava kingdom owing to failure of succession in the royal line, Mahendra-varman III having evidently predeceased his elder brother. A series of inscribed panels of sculptures in the Vaikunṭhapurumal temple in Kāṇchipuram narrate how the next ruler came to be chosen, after depicting the entire legend and history of the descent and rule of the Pallava monarchs that preceded him.53 The anarchy that followed the demise of Paramēśvara II appears to be represented by a blank space in the series of panelled sculptures. Then the mātras, ghaṭūkā, and the mūlaprakṛiti of the capital approached Hiranya-varman mahārāja of the Kāḍavēśa-kula seeking his aid for filling the throne in a suitable manner. From the Kaśākudi plates we learn that Hiranya was fifth in descent from Bliṃa-varman, younger brother of Śimhavishṇu, who began the line of imperial Pallavas.54 Hiranya-varman consulted the kulamallar, but none of them was inclined to take up the charge; then he consulted his own sons Śrīmalla, Raṇamalla, Saṅgrāmamalla, and Pallavamalla; the first three declined the offer, but the last, also called Paramēśvara, agreed to go as king. His statement was received by his father with mingled feelings, as he was then only twelve years of age, and

51 "Ten years of Epigraphy", Ancient India, No. 5.
52 IA. X, 164-65.
52a EC. VII, Nagar 35 (A.D. 1077). The evidence is late but fits in very well and may be accepted.
53 MASI, No. 63.
54 The Udayendiram plates of yr. 21, SH, II, 74, are clearly wrong in making Nandi II son of Paramēśvara II.
the joy at the prospect of his son becoming king of the great kingdom was diminished by grief at the prospect of separation from him. He was indeed inclined to veto the boy's going, when the aged statesman (vriśdha-gamika) Taranidkonda-Pośari, who foresaw a bright future for the boy, persuaded the aged father to waive his objection and let the boy go and occupy the vacant throne. Among the insignia brought by the deputation from Kāñcī was a crown in the shape of an elephant's head, and this roused the curiosity of Hiraṇya-varman. At last Pallavamalla was invested by his father and Pośar (Bhoja) with the insignia of royalty, and after taking leave of his father, he rode on the back of an elephant all the way to the capital city where he was received by the great sāmantas, nagarattār, mālaprakṛiti, and Kāḍakka Muttaraya who had advanced far out of the city when they heard of the arrival of the new king. Then followed his formal installation in the capital under the title Nandi-varman. These incidents, recorded in such authentic detail in the sculptures and labels on the walls of the temple erected by Nandi-varman II, are put more briefly in the Kaśākudī plates of his twenty-second year, which state that he was chosen by his subjects (vritah prajābhīh) for his high office.

The young Nandi-varman II enjoyed a long reign of sixty-five years.\textsuperscript{55} With the aid of faithful and able generals at first, and then by his own diplomatic skills and powers of organization, he succeeded in upholding the unity and extent of the Pallava kingdom in the face of many difficulties from different quarters. The events of his reign are well attested by several grants and inscriptions of the king himself and a number of records of other contemporary dynasties. One of the earliest troubles that Nandi-varman II encountered was the appearance of a pretender to the throne in the form of a Chitramāya who is said to have been of Pallava extraction and who seems to have been promised support not only by a section of the people in the Pallava kingdom but also by the contemporary Pāṇḍya ruler Māra-varman Rājasimha I. Chitramāya had also other allies—the Chera (Villava) and the Šabara chief Udavana, probably the lord of some wild territory in the northern marches of the Pallava kingdom. It is not known how and where the enemies of Nandi-varman joined their forces; but it is clear that they marched into the heart of the Tonḍai-mandalam, defeated Nandi-varman in battle and forced him to take refuge in the fort of Nandipura to which they laid siege.

From the Udayendiram plates of Nandi-varman we learn that the great general Udayachandra served Nandi-varman with consum-
mate ability and unstinted devotion. He is said to have belonged to the Pūchān-kula, a family that had served the Pallavas for many generations. He is also described as the lord of the Vegavatī river and of the city of Vilvala. He restored the kingdom in its entirety to Pallavamalla by rushing to his rescue when he saw him beleaguered in Nandipura by the Tamil kings, working havoc among his enemies with his sword and putting to death the Pallavarāja Chitra-māya and many others; he also inflicted several defeats on the foes of the Pallava monarch at Naṅbavena (Veṅbil?), Chūtavana, Saṅkara-grāma, Nellūr, Nelvéi, Suṟṟavaḷundur and other battle-fields. In the terrible battle of Nelvéi he clove the head of the opposing Sabara king Udayana and seized his royal banner made of a peacock’s tail. Though the names of the battles mentioned in the Pāṇḍya charters are different from those of the Udayendira plates, we need not doubt that we have before us two versions of one and the same war fought with great tenacity over several years and on a wide front. In his hymn on Paramēśvara-viṇṇagaram, i.e. the Vaikunṭhaperumāḷ temple built by Paramēśvara (Nandi-varman Pallavamalla), Tirumangai Āḻvār states that the Pallava king struck terror into the heart of the Pāṇḍya in battle, and names the battles of Maṇṇai and Nenmeli where the Villava (Chera) turned and fled.

The geography of these campaigns cannot be worked out satisfactorily, as there is no means of determining the order of the numerous battles mentioned on either side, each apparently laying stress just on those engagements in which it gained an advantage. The siege of Nandipuram was the central event, and the chief concern of Udayachandra was to raise the siege and relieve his master. Nandipura was identified with Naṭhankoyil near Kumbakonam till recently, on the strength of the alternative name Nandipuraviṇṇagaram applied to it in the hymns of Tirumangai Āḻvār. While Tirumangai’s hymn\(^{56}\) is unmistakable evidence that Nandi-varman II erected a Vishnu temple at Naṭhankoyil some time in his reign, it may be doubted if so soon after his accession and in the midst of the confusion prevailing in the Pallava kingdom at that time his authority extended so far south. Further, on the assumption that Nandi-varman stood siege at Naṭhankoyil, it has not been easy to identify the places where his general Udayachandra fought for the relief of his master. The part played by the Śabara chief in these campaigns also points to a more northern location for Nandipura. It was most probably the modern Nandi-varman in the Chingleput district which is referred to in inscriptions as Nandipura and which continued to be the headquartres of a division.

\(^{56}\) Periya-Tirumoli, 5.10.
under Vijayanagara. On this assumption the other battle-fields are seen to be distributed round about the neighbouring region. Nimba-vana may be Peppangulam near Kāṅchi; Māṅgaḻu in Sriperumbudur taluk will represent Chūtavana. Saṁkarampadi in the Arko-nam taluk would be Saṅkaragrama; and Sūrāvalunḍūr retains the same name to this day and is situated in the Chidambaram tāluk. Nenmali must be the same as Nemmali near Tiruttani, about 30 miles to the north of Kāṅchi. The Udayendiram grant states that Udayachandra destroyed the fort of Kālidurga which was protected by the Goddess Kālī and defeated the Pāṇḍya army at the village of Manṉaikkudī. Although the location of Kālidurga is unknown, Manṉaiakkudī may be identified with Manṉivakkam in the Chingleput tāluk which contains a temple called Manṉiśvaram. Most of the battles must have been fought before the siege of Nandipuram was raised as is implied in the statement in the inscription that they were fought by Udayachandra on behalf of the Pallava. This war against Chitramāya and the Pāṇḍya Rājasimha I was indeed the first crisis in the long reign of Nandi-varman II, and he was enabled to tide over it successfully by the steadfast devotion and the brilliant generalship of Udayachandra.

Another achievement of Udayachandra was his campaign in the north. In the northern region also, says the Udayendiram record, (he) pursued the Nishāda chief, called Prithivīvyāghra, who, in desiring to become very powerful (prabalāyamānam), was running after the horse of the āsvamedha, defeated (him), ordered (him) out of the district (vishaya) of Vishnuṟaḷa, (which) he subjected to the Pallava, and seized faultless pearl necklaces of excellent lustre, an immeasurable heap of gold and elephants. Who performed the horse sacrifice and let loose the horse which Prithivīvyāghra was pursuing is not stated. Hultsch attributed the sacrifice to the Nishāda chieftain himself and translated the phrase prabalāyamānam as above. But another view is possible. The horse might have belonged to Nandi-varman II who, after his victories in the recent wars which secured the throne for him, might have sought to assert his imperial position by a horse sacrifice. Prithivīvyāghra, a feudatory of the Eastern Chālukya Vishnu-vardhana III, evidently wanted to obstruct the act of the Pallava king, and as usual, Udayachandra defended his master’s in-

56a 255 of 1910, 165 of 1932-33 and 34 of 1934-35. This and the identification of other battle-fields have been suggested by K. R. Venkataraman in a paper read before AIOC, Oct. 1951 (Lucknow).
56b 416 to 420 of 1902.
56c 352 of 1908 (SII, XII, 53), 351 of 1908.
56d 169 of 1929-30.
57 SII, II, 364 and 372.
terest by punishing the Nishāda chief, driving him from his territory which he held of the Eastern Chālukya, and annexing it to the Pallava dominion. It seems quite probable that Vishnu-vardhana was also privy to his feudatory’s effort to seize the Pallava horse. There is, however, no other evidence of Nandi-varman having performed the sacrifice. The exact location of Prithivīvāghra’s fief is also not known.\(^5^8\)

Of his relations with the Chālukyas of Bādāmi the inscriptions of Nandi-varman II maintain a discreet silence; but the records of the Chālukyas including a Kannada inscription of Vikramāditya II on a pillar in the Kailāsaṇātha temple of Kāṇḍipuraṇam give a fairly full account.\(^5^9\) Vikramāditya II, we learn, was in high spirit after his attainment of the world’s sovereignty, and he then made up his mind to destroy his natural foe, the Pallava, who had cast a shadow upon the glory of his ancestors. He reached the Tūṇḍāka country by forced marches, his Gaṅga feudatory Śrīpurusha and perhaps also the Eastern Chālukya Vishnu-vardhana co-operating with him, defeated in battle and drove from the field the Pallava king Nandi-varman who had advanced to meet him, seized his insignia, viz. the instruments of martial music known as katūmukhavādītra and samudra-ghosha together with the khatvāṅga banner, captured a number of high class war elephants and heaps of bright jewels, and entered the city of Kāṇṭhi without doing any damage to it. He pleased the people of the Pallava capital by his liberal gifts to Brahmīns, the poor, and the indigent, and obtained great fame by returning to Rājasinīheaśvara, which Narasiṁhapota-varman had built of stone, and to all other temples, the heaps of gold that belonged to them. Vikramāditya’s valour caused distress to the southern kings, and he erected a jayastambha in the form of his great fame that spread to the southern ocean. The Kāṇḍipuraṇam inscription says that Vikramāditya took Kāṇṭhi and became happy at the sight of the wealth of Rājasinīheaśvara which he returned to the deity. It adds at the end that it was written by order of the Vallabha-durjaya. Thus, it is clear that Vikramāditya was the aggressor on this occasion. The disgrace of Narasiṁha I’s occupation of Vētāpi and the inscription left by him

58 The surmise put forward by P. T. Srinivasa Iyengar in his Tamil work on *The Pallavas* (Pt. III, p. 7) that Prithivīvāghra was a Nāgavāhī king of Bastar seems to have no other basis than the word vāghra (tiger) appearing in the name of the chieftain and also describing the flag of the Nāgavāhis. In the obscure phrase niravadya-pramukhaṁśhuḥhārān, rendered by Hultsch into ‘faultless pearl necklace of excellent lustre’, some are inclined to see a reference to Chālukya Vijāyāditya of Bādāmi who had the title Niravadya. N. Venkataramanayya, *The Eastern Chālukyas of Vengī*, p. 76.

59 Vakkaleri pl., EI, V, 200; Kendur pl., IX, 200; Kāṇṭhi Ins., III: 359.
near one of the great temples of that city rankled in the mind of the Chālukya, and he paid back in the same coin by having an inscription of his own engraved in his own language on the largest and most beautiful of the numerous temples of the Pallavas in their capital city. No indication is found, either of the route followed by Vikramāditya in his expedition, or of the place where he met Nandi-varman in battle and defeated him. An inscription of the 15th year of Nandi-varman at Mallam in the Gudur tāluk of the Nellore district records a gift of gold to a temple made by order of the Chalukki-arasar on the request of Āluva-arasan, and this may well be accepted as an indication of the route followed by Vikramāditya either to Kāñchī or on his way back from there. We may allow his claim to have spared the city and its temples from destruction and loot, and infer that Narasīṁha’s occupation of Vātāpi, a century earlier, was marked by the same restraint and moderation. Some time later, another expedition against the Pallava kingdom by Vikramāditya’s son Kīrti-varman II as ŋuварája was of the nature of a successful raid from which the Chālukya prince returned with a number of elephants, a vast amount of gold, and jewels seized from the Pallava monarch. This was the third and last of the expeditions against Kāñchī for which Vikramāditya is given credit in the undated inscription of his queen at Paṭṭaḍakal.

The next notable event of the reign of Nandi-varman was an invasion by the rising Rāśṭrakūṭa king Dantidurga. Starting on his victorious career some time about A.D. 742 when we find him already in occupation of Ellora, Danti-varman was rapidly building up his power: Taking advantage of the weakness and incapacity of Kīrti-varman II, he brought under his sway all the outlying provinces of the Chālukya empire before delivering his final attack on the home territory. He made his arms felt by the Gurjars of Malwa, the rulers of Kosala and Kāliṅga, and the Telugu-Chōdas of Śrīśailam region before he appeared in Kāñchīpuram. His aim was not so much to defeat the Pallava monarch or seize territory from him, as to make sure of his goodwill and friendship in the pursuit of his designs against the Chālukya power. Danti-varman’s invasion of Kāñchī is mentioned by Tirumaṅgai-Āḷvar, and we have every reason to believe that after an initial demonstration of force, Dantidurga struck up an alliance with Nandi-varman Pallavamalla to whom he gave his daughter Revā in marriage. She became the chief queen of the Pallava monarch and her son Danti-varman succeeded his father on the

60 Nellore Ins., 429-30. G. 454. MAR, 1941, p. 220, No. 45, from Tūmārkā district also seems to refer to this expedition of Vikramāditya II.
throne. The first Rāṣṭrakūṭa invasion of Kāñchī may be placed in A.D. 750 or 751. Some years later, possibly about A.D. 783, Nandi-varman II led an expedition against the Gaṅga kingdom, captured the Gaṅga strongholds, defeated Śrīpurusha in battle, and forced him to surrender much wealth and restore the necklace which contained the precious gem ‘ugrodaya’. The Gaṅga inscriptions claim victory in this battle for Śrīpurusha, and state that he killed the Kāḍuveṭṭi in battle and captured his state umbrella. As a matter of fact it would seem further that as a result of the war Śrīpurusha lost some territory which the Pallava monarch handed over to his Bāña feudatory Jaya-nandi-varman.

The real foe of Pallavamalla was, however, the Pāṇḍya. The defeat of Pallava forces by the Pāṇḍya Jaṭila Parāntaka at Pēṉāgaḍam showed that the new ruler of the southern country was likely to be at least as troublesome as his father had been soon after his accession to the throne. Hence he sought to restrain the growth of Pāṇḍyan aggression by organizing a confederacy against Jaṭila, and entered into an alliance with the rulers of Koṅgu and Kerala as well as the Adigaimāns of Tagaḍūr. Jaṭila’s war against the confederates of Palla-vamalla and the successes that attended him will be described later, in connection with the Pāṇḍyas. The prime mover in the effort to restrain the Pāṇḍya did not escape unhurt. A Pāṇḍyan inscription of A.D. 776 mentions the destruction of Vembil and Jaṭila’s encampment at Niyamam in the Tanjore district. Another record, dated five years later, mentions the Pāṇḍyan king’s camp at Arasūr on the banks of the Pēṉār in the Tonḍainād. Further details are not forthcoming; but it is clear that the coalition against the Pāṇḍya failed utterly and that Nandi-varman II did not succeed in checking the expansion of the Pāṇḍyan empire.

In the midst of his preoccupations with Pāṇḍya expansion, Nandi-varman found it possible to co-operate with the Rāṣṭrakūṭa Govinda II in helping Gaṅga Śivamāra II to gain the throne against the opposition of his brother Duggamāra Ereyapa, and both the Rāṣṭrakūṭa and Pallava monarchs are said to have been present at the coronation of Śivamāra II and tied the fillet of royalty on his forehead with their own hands. This was perhaps in A.D. 778. And shortly after, when Govinda II saw his position threatened by the ambitions of his young-

61 Velūr plates, vv. 16-17.
63 EC, VII, Nagar 35; MAR, 1919-20, paras 51-52.
64 414 of 1904.
65 105 of 1905.
66 Alur grant of Yuvarāja Mārasiṅgha, II. 63-66, MAR, 1924, p. 74. Also EC, IX, N.I. 60, Maṇṭe grant, same prince, dated two years earlier.
er brother Dhruva Nirupama, both Sivamāra and Nandi-varman II went to his aid. But Govinda lost in the civil war that followed, and Dhruva became king about A.D. 780. One of his first tasks was to punish those who had allied themselves with Govinda in the recent conflict, and in pursuit of this plan Dhruva marched against Nandi-varman, who had to make his submission and yield a tribute of war elephants. His confederate Sivamāra was caught and imprisoned for several years. The milder treatment of Nandi-varman might have been due, partly to his independent status different from that of the Gaṅga feudatory, and partly to the fact that his chief queen Revā was a Rāṣṭrakūṭa princess.

Nandi-varman II continued to rule till about A.D. 795, but there is no record of any important events in the last years of his reign. He was apparently greater in diplomacy than in war. He was well served in the early part of his reign by Udayachandra. The military record of his later years is by no means good; yet he found it possible to make his political influence felt practically over the whole of South India, and in the midst of great difficulties he maintained the power of the Pallava kingdom almost undiminished throughout his long reign. He was a worshipper of Viṣṇu, and constructed the Vaikunṭhaparamāl temple, the Paramechchura-vinnagaram of Tirumaṅgaī’s hymns, one of the perfectly integrated temples in the Pallava style. If the praśasṭis in his records may be trusted, particularly the Kaśākudi grant, Nandi-varman must have possessed high accomplishments in archery, in the knowledge of elephant lore, in the composition of poetry, and in the arts of love. Learning flourished under his rule, and many hundreds of scholars are known to have received grants of land and other forms of encouragement from him and his courtiers. The longer inscriptions of the reign furnish ample evidence of the value attached to high literary form even in state documents. The celebrated Viṣṇuva saint Tirumaṅgaī Āḻvār was most probably his contemporary, as he makes frequent and intimate references in his hymns to the occurrences of Nandi-varman’s reign. Nandi-varman was succeeded by Dandi-varman, his son, by the Rāṣṭrakūṭa queen Revā.

The early years of Dandi-varman’s rule, which lasted for fifty-one years, must have coincided with the closing years of Nandi-varman Pallavamalla’s reign.67 Pāṇḍyan aggression under Varagama I and his son Śrī Māra Śrīvallabha continued in the reign of Dandi-varman and deprived him of much territory in the south. The Trichinopoly

67 262 of 1904 gives year 51 of Dandi’s reign. Pallavamalla was 31 when his marriage with Revā took place in A.D. 750; supposing Dandi was born five years later he would have been 40 when his father died, and a rule of fifty-one years after that date is quite improbable.
and Tanjore districts remained for some decades under the occupation of the Pāṇḍyas who, having deprived the Pallavas of half their dominions, were preparing to march on their capital itself. In the north Danti-varman was exposed to depredations from the powerful Rāṣṭrakūṭa Govinda III in spite of their dynastic connection. About A.D. 803-4 Govinda, flushed with the great successes that had attended his arms in Northern India, made a dash against Kāñcī from his camp at Śrībhavana on the Narmadā, defeated Danti-varman in battle, and entered his capital. There he received the submission offered by an embassy from Ceylon, and then retired to the banks of the Tuṅgabhadra where he fixed his camp at Rāmeśvara-tirtha.68 Danti-varman's reign was thus a period of defeat and disaster, and it seems a wonder that he continued to rule so long as he did. He appears, however, to have retained the loyal devotion of the Bānas to the end, as is seen from an inscription at Gudimallam dated in his forty-ninth regnal year.69 He married a Kadamba princess by name Aggalanimmati who gave birth to his far abler son Nandi-varman III.

Danti-varman's reign may be taken to have closed about A.D. 836. Nandi-varman III ruled for about twenty-five years, or a little less, from that date. One of his first tasks was to deal with Pāṇḍyan aggression which was threatening the very existence of the Pallava kingdom. In his difficulty he looked about for allies, and seems to have secured substantial aid from the Gaṅgas and even the Rāṣṭrakūtas. Early in his reign he gained a signal success in his enterprise. The Velūṟpālaikam plates of his sixth year state distinctly that he obtained the prosperity of the Pallava kingdom, which was difficult for others to get, by an exhibition of his prowess in the battle-field, and after a decisive defeat inflicted on his enemies. He is generally described in his records as Nandi-varman who gained kingdom after his victory at Tēllāru, a place about thirty miles south of Kāñcīpuram in the Wandiwash ādār of the North Arcot district. The scene of the decisive battle is clear evidence of the extent of Pāṇḍyan aggression, which doubtless made it easy for Nandi-varman to gain extraneous support for his attempt to recover his position. His Pāṇḍyan foe was doubtless Śrī Māra Śrīvallabha who was accompanied by the feudatories of his extensive empire, as we learn from the Nandikka-
lāmbakam, an anonymous Tamil poem of a conventional variety. According to the poem, Nandi III gained other victories at Palaiyārī Vellāru, Nallāru, Kurūgoḍu, and elsewhere, and his army even advanced as far as the banks of the Vaigai. The battle at Palaiyārū, near Kumbakonam, seems to be confirmed by an inscription from

68 IA, xi, 126; EI, xvm, 246 (Saryan Plates, verse, 34).
69 EI, xi, 224.
Mysore which attributes a victory at that place to Deva, the son of Rāṣṭrakūṭa Amoghavarsha I. The Tamil poem describes him as the ruler of the good land watered by the Kāverī, as if to emphasize the recovery of territory long lost to the Pāṇḍas. There is no doubt that after his initial successes, Nandi III enjoyed several years of peaceful and prosperous rule, and the Pallava kingdom recovered remarkably from the disasters of his father's reign. Nandi-varman was a patron of arts and literature, and the Bhāratam was translated into Tamil under his patronage by Perundevanār to be distinguished from his namesake of the Saṅgam age whose translation of the epic is no longer extant. The Kalamībakam describes Nandi III as the lord of the four oceans, and says that he maintained a powerful navy. A Tamil inscription at Takua-pa in Siam on the west coast of the Malay peninsula mentions a tank called Avani-nāraṇam and a Vishnu temple in its neighbourhood, both placed under the protection of the merchant guild known as Maṅigrama. Avani-nāraṇam (Nārāyaṇa-on earth) occurs as a title of Nandi-varman III in the Nandikkalāmībakam. Nandi-varman's queen was a Rāṣṭrakūṭa princess, Sankhā by name, most likely the daughter of Amoghavarsha I Nripatūṅga, as her son was also called Nripatūṅga. Towards the close of Nandi-varman's reign, the Pāṇḍya Śrī Māra had recovered sufficiently to resume his aggressive policy against the Pallava ruler, and both the Sinnamanūr and Bāhūr grants agree that Śrī Māra gained a victory against the Pallava near Kumbakonam on this occasion (A.D. 860). Nandi-varman does not seem to have survived this defeat long.

Nripatūṅga, who was associated with his father at an early age, was held till recently to have ruled for about twenty-six years; but a record of his forty-first year has come to light, and we may tentatively assign him to the period 855-96. Nripatūṅga, as yuvārāja, avenged his father's defeat at Kumbakonam, and in another battle on the banks of the small stream Arichit (Arišil) he inflicted a crushing defeat on Śrī Māra, whose reign closed in gloom. As the result of his victory Nripatūṅga restored the integrity of the Pallava empire, and there is an inscription of his seventh regnal year as far south as Nārttā-

---

70 EC, x. Cd. 76.
71 This is doubted, however, by S. Vaiyapuri who would place the poem in the thirteenth century A.D. in the time of Köpperuṇjīṅga, who won an important success at Telliṟṟu also. The poem only mentions the battle won by the patron of the author without giving his name, and the language of the poem appears to Mr. Vaiyapuri to be more of the thirteenth century than the ninth.
72 JRH, vi, 300.
73 Bāhūr pl. EI, xvii, 5, v, 14.
74 At Mathavalam, 'Ten Years of Indian Epigraphy' (Chhabra) Ancient India No. 5.
75 385 of 1904.
malai in Pudukkoṭai. The Bānas in the North Arcot region continued to acknowledge Pallava suzerainty, as an inscription from Guḍimallam testifies. Education was encouraged under him, and the Bāhūr plates, dated in the eighth year of the reign, record the gift by one of his ministers of three entire villages to the Vidyāsthāna (college) at Bāhūr, controlled by the learned men of the place who organised the study of fourteen gaṇas in the institution. The gaṇas were obviously the four Vedas, six aṅgas, Mīmāṃsā, Nyāya, Purāṇa, and Dharmaśāstra.

The reign of Nripatuniṅga witnessed the initial stages in the rise of the Cholas to power after centuries of obscurity. Possibly some years before his accession, the first ruler of the new Chola dynasty, Vijayālava, captured Tanjore and made the city his headquarters. His son Aditya I is known to have succeeded him in A.D. 871. There is reason to suppose that in this period the Cholas were subordinate to the Pallavas, or at least friendly to them.

The chronology and order of succession after Nripatuniga are not as clear as one would wish. If our assumption that Nripatuniga's rule extended to 896 is correct, it means that he must have lived up to the eve of the effective Chola conquest of Tondaimandalam. But there are no inscriptions of his after his twentieth year except the recently discovered one of the forty-first year. There are two other Pallava princes whose relations to each other and to Nripatuniga are by no means clear. They are Aparājita and Vijaya Kampavaran. Aparājita, whose inscriptions are confined to the north of Tondaimandalam and go up to the eighteenth year, figures in some important events which must have fallen in Nripatuniga's reign. Kampavarman also must have been his contemporary, for on a slab at Tiruvorivūr on which three inscriptions are engraved continuously, a record of the seventh year of Kampavarman precedes another in the sixth year of Aparājita. There is reference to a Nandi-Kampeśvara temple at Kāṭṭutumbūr in an inscription at Sōlapuram (N. Arcot). This means that the temple was built by Nandi-Kampa, i.e. Kampa the son of Nandi. It is thus possible that Kampa was a younger brother of Nripatuniga, and Aparājita another brother or cousin of his, with both of whom Nripatuniga shared his power. Aparājita seems to have been the ablest soldier of them all. Not only does he figure prominently in the last military events at the close of Pallava history, while the two others are not heard of, but in a Chola record of the reign of

76 228 of 1903.
77 SII, xn, 90 Intr.
78 423 of 1902.
Kulottuṅga III he is still remembered, centuries later, as Rāja-
maṛttana (Sun among kings) Aparājita-varman.79 The conquest of
Toṇḍaināḍam was effected by Āditya by about the twenty-seventh
year of his reign (a.d. 897), and taking this to be the last year of
Aparājita's reign we may suppose that he began his rule some time
in 879, and Kampa-varman, a year or so earlier.

It would appear in fact that Nripatunga, who began his career with
the victory of Arichit against the Pāṇḍya Śrī Mara, summoned Kampa-
varman and Aparājita to share his power in order to avoid possible
domestic dissensions and to strengthen his position in the face of
renewed Pāṇḍyan aggression. The son and successor of Śrī Māra
was Varaguṇa-varman II who came to the throne in 862. For several
years after his accession the Pāṇḍyan ruler appears to have recognised
the suzerainty of Nripatunga proclaimed after his victory at Arichit.
At any rate we find a record at Tiruvadi in South Arcot (Toṇḍaināḍ),
dated in the eighteenth year of Nripatunga-varman (a.d. 873), mention-
ing a large gift of 570 kālaṅga of gold by the Pāṇḍya Varaguṇa Mahā-
rāja.80 Soon after, the position changes. Possibly the trouble began
in the first instance as a conflict between the Pāṇḍya and the Chola,
and then resolved itself inevitably into a war between the Pāṇḍya
and Pallava rulers. An inscription, in the neighbourhood of Dindigal,
of the reign of Māraṅgaḷaśayana mentions an expedition against Idavai
on the north bank of the Kāvērī in the Chola country led by the king
in which he was accompanied by a chieftain named Parātakapalli
Veḷan.81 That the Pāṇḍya invader sustained a defeat from the Chola
Āditya at Idavai is rendered probable by the alternative name of the
village which occurs in a Vijayanagar inscription dated Ś. 1369
(a.d. 1447).82 In this inscription Idavai is called Pāṇḍiyani-ven-kaṃḍa-
sola-chaturvedi-maṅgalam, i.e. the Brahmin village established by the
Chola who saw the back of the Pāṇḍya king. But this was not the
end of the campaign, and it seems that the Chola victory did not
by any means secure freedom from the danger of Pāṇḍyan aggres-
sion. The Pallava power had not only to join itself, but had to seek
help from all its associates and allies, prominent among whom was
the Gaṅga king Prithivīpati I, who is known to have been a feudatory
of Nripatunga from an inscription at Āmbūr.83 The Udavēndiram
plates of Prithivīpati II84 state that in the great battle of Śripuram-
biyam the heroic Prithivīpati attained heaven after making the name

79 SII, xii, No. 96.
80 360 of 1921 (SII, xii, No. 71).
81 690 of 1903.
82 42 of 1914.
83 EI, iv, 182.
84 SII, ii, 384, v. 18.
of his friend Aparājīta (unconquered) fully significant. Śripurâmbiyam is doubtless Tiruppurâmbiyam near Kumbakonam. So Aparājīta took the field against the invader, and received substantial assistance from his Chola and Gaṅga feudatories. The invasion was averted, and the military victory was complete. But Prithivipati lost his life on the field, and what is more, the rising ambition of the Chola Āditya was stimulated by his perception of the weakness of the Pallava power. The battle of Śripurâmbiyam was fought most probably about A.D. 880, some nine years after Āditya's accession to power. But after his part in the repulse of the Pândyan invasion, Āditya was no longer content with a position of subordinating to the Pallavas, and began to entertain plans for resuscitating the ancient glory of the Chola power. Āditya is said to have made a gift in Tondaimândalam in his twenty-first regnal year (c. A.D. 891), and his inscriptions begin to appear in the area from his twenty-third year. The campaigns of conquest might have lasted some years; the end is described in a verse in the Tiruvâlângâdu plates of Râjendra I (Chola) which states that Āditya overthrew the strong Pallava ruler Aparājīta and deprived him of his territory. More specifically, the Kanyâkumârî inscription of Vîrâjendra gives Āditya the title Kôdanaḍhara, and mentions that in a battle he pounced upon the Pallava king who was seated on the back of a tall elephant and slew him. An undated Râjakesâri inscription from Tillaisthânam in the Tanjore district states that it was issued by the king who spread the Chola power over Tondainâḍ. That was the end of the Pallava kingdom.

It must be noted that there are still several unsolved problems of Pallava history. For instance, we hear of a king Chandrâditya who excavated a rock-cut Siva temple called Śikhari Pallavaśvara at Śînâhpura (Singavaram) in the Gingee taluk of S. Arcot; and the inscription which records the event is in characters not later than the time of Narasimha-varman I. We cannot say if Chandrâditya was a title of one of the early Pallava kings who followed Śînâhavishnu or the name of a subordinate king of the locality. So also we have no knowledge of the exact positions of Vijaya Narasimha-varman, Vijaya Iśvara-varman, Vairamegha-varman, and others. The Nolambas of Nolambavâḍi in Bellary and adjoining tract of Mysore claimed to be Pallavas by descent, as also several chieftains of a later time in the Telugu and Tamil areas of South India, most celebrated among whom was the Kâdava Kôpperuṭiṅga.

85 SII, m, No. 142. 86 SII, m, No. 205, v. 49. 87 TAS, m, v. 55. 88 286 of 1911. 89 SII, xx, No. 115. 90 Gopalan-Pallavas, App. pp. 210-12.
Chapter Thirteen

THE PANDYAS

Reference has been made above to the foundation of the Pāṇḍya kingdom by Kaḍuṅgon. Of Kaḍuṅgon (c. A.D. 590-620) who fought against the Kalabhras about the same time as Siṁhavishṇu and resuscitated the Pāṇḍyan power, and of his son Māravarman Avaniś-ilāmanī (629-45), we have very little information from the Vēḷvikudi and Sinnamanūr charters which form the sheet-anchor of the Pāṇḍyan history of this period. Kaḍuṅgon is said to have destroyed the claims of others to the earth by the strength of his arms and established his own claim on a firm basis. The third ruler in the line, Siṇḍan or Jayanta-varman (A.D. 645-70) is praised for his soldierly qualities as well as for the justice of his rule. He bears the title Vānavan, which implies a victory against his Chera contemporary. It is from the reign of Jayantavarman’s successor, who was most probably his son, that our sources become more helpful and mention specific incidents which can be traced also in the literature of the age. This king is called Arikesari Māravarman in the Vēḷvikudi and smaller Sinnamanūr grants, and Arikesari Parāṅkuṣa in the larger Sinnamanūr grant. His reign may be assigned roughly to the period 670-710. He was most probably the Kūn Pāṇḍya and Niṟraśīr-neṟumārān of legend, the contemporary of Nāṇasambandar who, at the instance of queen Maṅgaiyarkaraśi (lit. queen among women), a Chōla princess, and minister Kūḷachchirai, weaned the Pāṇḍya ruler from Jainism and converted him into an ardent devotee of Śiva. The disputation held by Nāṇasambandar with the Jains of Madurai, who were then in the ascendancy, and the miracles he performed on the occasion, are narrated in great detail in the Periya Purāṇam of Śekkilār. The Vēḷvikudi grant says that Arikesārī defeated the Kerala in many battles, names Pāli, Nellveli, and Senulam as the scenes of battle, and couples the subjugation of the recalcitrant Paravas and the ravaging of Kuruṇāḍu with these campaigns against the Kerala. The Sinnamanūr grant says more briefly that Parāṅkuṣa defeated the Villavar (Keralas) at Nellveli. Now Kuruṇāḍu and Nellveli occur in the Travancore inscriptions, and the other battle-fields mentioned must be looked for in the same neighbourhood. The Paravar were the fishermen of the coastal country. Arikesari there-

1 TAS, III, 204 and IV and V index for Kuruṇāḍu, contra PK, pp. 51-53.
fore consolidated the strength of the rising kingdom by conquering the peoples and rulers of the small principalities in its neighbourhood, and preparing it for the greater part it was soon to play in South Indian politics. This policy of expansion would have brought him into conflict with the Pallavas in the north in any event, and it seems probable that it was hastened by Vikramāditya seeking Arikesari’s cooperation in the pursuit of his own designs against Parameśvara-varman. The result of this alliance has been noted above.

Arikesari was succeeded by his son Kochchādaīyan, who had the title Raṇadhīra (calm in battle) and may be taken to have ruled for twenty-five years (710-35). He was a great soldier, as his title indicates, and waged aggressive wars against his neighbours. He assumed the titles Vānāvan and Šeṁbiyan (sometimes Šolai), which imply suzerainty over the Chera and Chola. He is also called Madura-Karunāṭakan, the sweet Karnāṭaka and Koṅgār-koṁān, lord of the Koṅgu people; these titles seem to be indicative of substantial military achievements which evidently resulted in the extension of the bounds of his kingdom. He is said to have attacked and subdued the Mahārathas in the great city of Maṅgalāpuram, most likely modern Mangalore. Here is an indication, with no details, that the Pāṇḍyan kingdom had begun to develop the contacts which began with Arikesari Parāṅkuśa’s alliance with Vikramāditya I. We have to suppose that the hostilities with the Chāluokyas of Bāḍāmi and their feudatories, the Gaṅgas, which are well attested for a somewhat later period, had already begun, and that as a result of his campaigns in this direction Kochchādaīyan made himself master of at least a part, if not the whole, of the Koṅgu country. The Chāluoka ruler of the time was Vijayāditya. Kochchādaīyan had also to undertake some fighting in the southern hill country of his kingdom against the Āy chieftains of that region. A battle at Marudūr, perhaps in Kurunāḍ in South Travanĉore, ended in victory to the Pāṇḍya and the return to his allegiance of the Āy chief. The son and successor of Kochchādaivan Raṇadhīra was Māra-varman Rājasimha I (735-65). Rājasimha is called Pallava-bhaṅjana (the breaker of the Pallava) and the Vēḻvikudi grant says that he defeated Pallavamalla who fled from the field of battle. The Tamil portion of the same grant has an ornate passage ascribing to Rājasimha Pāṇḍya victories at Neḻuvayal, Kurumaḷḷai, Maṅṇai-kurichi, Tirumaṅgai, Pūvalur, Kodumbalūr, and another place of which the name has not been read, and stating that the Pallava king was deprived of his splendour at Kulumbūr where the Pāṇḍya captured numberless elephants and horses from his enemy’s forces. This is

2. TAS, III, 198.
doubtless the Pāṇḍyan version of the war which resulted from Rājasiṁha espousing the cause of Chitramāya.

Rājasiṁha I gained little by his efforts to support Chitramāya against Pallavamalla, though it is possible that he gained successes in individual battles which justified his assuming the grandiose title 'the breaker of the Pālla.' But elsewhere he pursued with better success the aggressive policy he had inherited from his father. Proceeding against the Kongu country, he defeated his foes at Periyalur, and crossed the Kāvērī to bring about the subjugation of Malakongam, on the border between modern Trichinopoly and Tanjore districts. The Mālava chieftain had to surrender and give his daughter in marriage to the victor, who advanced thereafter to Pāndikkōṭumudi, i.e. 'Kōṭumudi which had become a Pāṇḍyan possession,' where he worshipped the lotus feet of Paśupati and gave away with great pleasure heaps of gold and lustrous gems. This was a direct threat to the Gaṅga kingdom. Its ruler, Śrīpurusha, unable to meet single-handed the onslaught of the powerful invader from the south, applied for assistance to his suzerain Chālukya Kirtivarman II who had succeeded Vikramāditya II in 744-45. An important battle was fought at Veṇhāi in which the Chālukya monarch and his Gaṅga feudatory sustained defeat, and the latter had to make his peace by offering the hand of his daughter in marriage to the Pāṇḍya prince Jaṭila Parāntaka, the son of Rājasiṁha. This must have occurred about 750. We have no information of the events in the rest of Rājasiṁha's reign. He is said to have performed many gosahasras, hiranyagarbhas, and tulābhāras, and, to have relieved the distress of Brāhmaṇas learned in the Vedas. He is also reported to have renovated Kūḍal, Vaṇji and Koli. If this is a reference to the capitals of the Pāṇḍyas, Cheras, and Cholas, the power of Rājasiṁha must have been very great indeed. He was succeeded by his son Jaṭila Parāntaka about A.D. 765. Jaṭila had also the name Varagaṇa and the titles Māraṇjaḍaiyan and Neḍuṇjaḍaiyan. His inscriptions range from the third regnal year to the forty-third, and he may be taken to have reigned for about fifty years. Very early in his reign he won a victory against Nandi-varman Pallavamalla in a fight at Peṇṇagaḍam, somewhere near Tanjore, on the south bank of the Kāvērī; no details of the engagement are forthcoming, and it might have been no more than a border skirmish. In the third year of his reign he issued the Vēlvikudi grant to which we owe practically all that we know of his predecessors and their achievements. Its āḍhāapti was Māraṇ Kāri of the Vaidyakula (family of scholars) of

3 Vēlvikudi grant, ll, 128-34. Also India Antiqua, 254-56.
Karavandapura (Ukkirankkoṭṭai), 18 miles north of Tinnevelly, who must have held an important post under the king, if he was not already uttaramantri (chief minister). He had taken part in the battle of Venbāi and in arranging the marriage of the king with the daughter of Sripurusha soon after that battle. He was also known as Madhurakavi, and built a stone temple for Vishnu in the Ānamalai hill, formerly a Jain centre six miles to the east of Madurai, and made a gift of a rich agrahāra in the neighbourhood to Brahmaṇas on the occasion when the image of Narasimha was installed in the temple. This was in 770, and Madhurakavi died soon after. His identity with the Vaishnava ālvār Madhurakavi has been suggested, but cannot be taken as established. His brother was Mūrty Eyinan, who also became uttaramantri of Jaṭila Parāntaka, and made further additions to the temple of Vishnu, and thus completed the work of Madhurakavi. Other members of the family also occupied important positions in the king’s government, two of them being called mahāśāmanta in the sixth and seventeenth years of the reign.

Jaṭila was called upon to fight the same foes as his father in the north-west, and apparently with better results. Battles are mentioned at Vellūr, Vinṇam, and Seliyakkudi against unnamed foes. He put to flight Adigan of the bright lance in two battles at Ayiraveli Ayirūr and Pugalīyūr (Pugalūr in Karur taluk) on the north bank of the Kāverī, and captured his chariot together with several of his war horses. In this war Adigan was aided by Pallava and Kerala forces, which advanced from the east and the west only to be repulsed with great loss by the opposing Pāṇḍya armies. As a result of these campaigns, Jaṭila captured the king of West Kōṅgu with his elephants and put him into confinement within the walls of Madurai, and the whole of the Kōṅgu country became a part of the Pāṇḍya empire. Adigan was doubtless a member of the well-known line, the Adigaimāns of Fagaḍūr (Dharmapurī in Salem district) and he fought on the banks of the Kāverī against the Pāṇḍya because he was either the feudatory or the ally of the king of West Kōṅgu. The appearance of the Kerala and Pallava forces may be explained as the result of a combined effort of the other powers of South India to set a limit to the growing aggression of the Pāṇḍyas. The coalition, however, failed on this occasion. The extension of Pāṇḍya sovereignty to Kōṅgu was of sufficiently long duration to allow Jaṭila undertaking the construction

4 ASIAR, 1935-36, p. 102. ‘Vaidya’ means a physician, not a scholar, and also designates a well-known caste in Bengal whose members were physicians, and ranked only next to the Brāhmaṇas. The use of this term as a class or caste, demanded by the word kula, at such, an early date is of great historical importance.
of a temple of considerable size (*kunram-annador koyil*, lit. a mountain-like temple) for Vishnu in Kānjbāvypērūr in that country, and earning for himself the title *parama-Vaishnava*. But he was equally ready to endow the temples of Siva as his Trichinopoly and Ambāsamudram inscriptions show. A record of his thirteenth year (778) at Tiruchchendūr mentions a considerable endowment for the regular worship in the temple of Kumāra all the year round. Another, dated many years later (804), records a gift to the Siva temple on the banks of the Tamraparnī at Ambāsamudram.

Jatila also conquered Vēnād in south Travancore after attacking and destroying the strong fortifications of the port of Viliṇam. This port was a flourishing emporium and seems often to have roused the cupidity of the invaders of Travancore; evidently it recovered rapidly after each disaster, for we find it the target of Chola attacks three centuries after the days of Jatila, whose first conquest of Vēnād must have occurred before A.D. 782, the date of his Madras Museum plates which mention the event. Vēnād does not appear to have reconciled itself to Pândyan rule easily, for Jatila was still fighting in the neighbourhood of Viliṇam more than ten years after his first invasion. Part of this war in Vēnād was the campaign against Saḍaiyan Karunandan of the Malainād (hill country between the Tinnevelly district and Travancore). He belonged to the Āy family which apparently owed a fitful allegiance to the Pândyas; Jatila's expedition against him about 788 in which Ariviyyūrkkōṭṭai (the fortress of Ariviyyūr) is said to have been destroyed, may have been of the nature of reprisal against his having sided the king of Vēnād in his struggle for independence against the Pândya power. No wars are recorded during the rest of the long reign of Jatika Parāntaka Neṭunījadaiyan (Varaguna I) whose sway extended far beyond Trichinopoly into the Tanjore, Salem and Coimbatore districts besides the Pândya country proper and into Vēnād.

Jatila Parāntaka Neṭunījadaiyan was succeeded by his son Śrī Māra Śrī Vallabha who ruled from A.D. 815 to 862. He had the titles Ekāvīra, Parachakrakolāhala, and Avanipāsekhara. He was an ambitious ruler who, not content with maintaining the considerable empire handed to him by his father, sought to extend it further by adding Ceylon to it. The Sanskrit part of the Sīnmanūr plates says that this king brought the whole world (of S. India?) under the protection

---

5 414 of 1940; 105 of 1905; 155 of 1903; 104 of 1905.
6 277 of 1895.
7 43 of 1908; *TAS*, i, 3-5.
8 *ARE*, 1930, ii, paras 2-4.
9 *SI*, III, Pt. iv, No. 206.
of his umbrella, and became well beloved of his subjects after defeating in battle such different foes as the Māyā-Pāṇḍya, the Kerala, the king of Siṃhala, the Pallava, and the Vallabha. The Tamil portion repeats this and adds that the king won victories at Kunñūr and Viliñām as well as in Ceylon, and that he repulsed with great loss a confederation of Gaṅgas, Pallavas, Cholas, Kalingas, Magadhas and others who offered battle at Kumbakonam. It was as a result of this victory that the king assumed the high-sounding title Parachakrakolāhala (Confounder of the circle of his enemies). The battles of Kunñūr and Viliñām and the war with the Kerala receive no elucidation from any other source. We can only suppose that South Travancore never fully reconciled itself to the Pāṇḍyan yoke and that trouble from that quarter was chronic. The victories claimed for Śrī Māra against the Pallavas and their confederates including the Vallabha (Rāṣṭrakūṭa in this period), have been sufficiently elucidated by our account of the Pallava-Pāṇḍya relations in the reigns of Nandi-varman III and Nripatuṅga. We must add that there is every reason to believe that among the confederates of the Pallavas must be counted the rulers of Ceylon, who had now greater reason, on account of Pāṇḍya aggression in Ceylon, to strengthen their traditional bonds with the Pallavas. Thus Śrī Māra’s relations with Ceylon were not altogether independent of those with the northern powers.

The Chāḷavāṃśa10 states that in the reign of Sena I (A.D. 831-51) the Pāṇḍya king came with a great force and began to take possession of the island. Discord among the high dignitaries of the Sinhalese army favoured the invaders, who laid waste the whole of Uttaradeśa (the North Province) and occupied an armed camp in Mahatalitagāma. The Tamils, who had already settled in the island, gathered under his flag and strengthened his forces. The Ceylonese forces were dispersed easily in the battle that followed, and the capital was sacked. Sena made terms, and the Pāṇḍyan quitted the island. In the next reign,11 that of Sena II (851-85), a disgruntled son of the Pāṇḍyan king came to Ceylon and appealed to the Sinhalese monarch for help against his father. Sena ‘rejoiced greatly’, and a Sinhalese invasion of the Madurai kingdom followed. The country that lay on the route of the invading forces was laid waste, and the capital city of Madurai was invested and taken in the absence of its ruler. The Pāṇḍya, who came to redeem the capital, was wounded in fight, left the town to its fate, took flight, and lost his life at the place whither he had betaken himself. His consort, who had come with him, also met her death. The Ceylonese general recovered all the

10 Ch. 50, vv, 12-42.
11 Ch. 51, vv, 27-51.
images and treasure that had been brought away from Ceylon some years before, and seized much wealth besides. He then consecrated the son of the Pândya, placed the administration into his hands, and made his way back to Ceylon 'at his pleasure'. An inscription in Ceylon places this invasion in the ninth year of Sena II (860), and calls his son Kassapa V, the 'son of the great king who won the fame of victory by conquering the Pândya country'. The Pândyan version of the story stops with the simple mention of a victory in Ceylon, and omits all reference to the counter-invasion. To all appearance, Śrī Māra's defeat at Arichit by Nrijapatiṅga, and the Ceylonese invasion of the Pândya country brought about by a timely appeal from a Pândyan prince to Sena II, are closely connected and Śrī Māra seems to have come back from his defeat at Arichit to see his capital in the hands of another enemy and perished in the attempt to recover his position.

The Chulavamsa states distinctly that the son of the Pândya who appealed to Sena II was placed on the Pândyan throne after his father's death, and this could have been no other than Varagunda-varman II. But whether he was also the Māyā-Pândya (Pândya pretender) against whom Śrī Māra is said to have won a success cannot be decided; most probably he was not. Again, whether Varagunga-varman's differences with his father were fomented by the Pallavas and Sena II, or the latter only took advantage of dissensions that had broken out in the Pândyan royal family, must also remain uncertain. But the feudatory relation in which Varagunga-varman stood to Nrijapatiṅga for several years after his accession leaves little room for doubt that the Pallava and the Ceylonese ruler were acting together, and that Varagunga-varman's acknowledgment of Pallava suzerainty was a condition of the Pândyan throne being secured to him. Varagunga's attempt to assert independence led, as has been narrated, to the battle of Śrī Purandhivam, in which he himself sustained a defeat and the Chola Āditya I discovered the weakness of the suzerain power.

Varagunga II did not long survive the defeat of Śrī Purandhivam. Perhaps he had no son to succeed him, and the next ruler was his younger brother Śrī Parántaka Viranāraṇa Śālaiyan (880-900). The Sanskrit section of the Sinnamanūr plates states that he captured single-handed the hāṅghīv Ugra near Kharagiri together with his elephants, that he endowed many agrahāras and numberless devasthānas and tanks, and that he had for his queen Śrīvanavān Mahādevi, evidently a Kerala princess. The Tamil part generally confirms these statements and says further that he destroyed Peṇmāgaḍam and fought

---

in the Koṅgu country. The war with Ugra has not been satisfactorily explained. The destruction of Peṅnāgaḍam and fight in the Koṅgu country indicate a conflict with the Chola Āditya I who was rapidly building up his power at the expense of the Pāṇḍyas and Pallavas. The Chola claims to have conquered the Koṅgu country, and the Pāṇḍya record tacitly admits the validity of the claim by mentioning only a fight in Koṅgu without claiming victory. Parāntaka Vira-nārāyaṇa was succeeded by his son (by Vanavan Mahādevī), the donor of the larger Sīnnamanur grant to which we owe practically all we know of the successors of Jāṭila Parāntaka Varaguna I. He was called Māra-varman Rājasiṃha II and his rule may be taken to cover the first twenty years of the tenth century. He had the titles Vikaṭapāṭava, Śrīkānta, Rājaśikhāmani, and Mandara-gaurava. He is said to have fought against unnamed foes at Ulappilimaṅgalam, opposed the king of Tanjore, gained a victory at Koṇāmbālur, and carried destruction to Vaiṣṇī, the Chera capital in the Koṅgu country. It is quite probable that Rājasiṃha came into conflict with Āditya I, and that the battles mentioned, including the reference to Vaiṣṇī, are all the incidents of the Chola war. But the Chola power steadily gained in strength, and we find Āditya’s son Parāntaka I claiming the title Madhurāṅkata or Maduraikonda (captor of Madurai) as early as the third year in his reign (A.D. 910). The Pāṇḍya turned to Ceylon for help against the Chola and the combined forces of the Pāṇḍyas and the Sinhalese suffered a defeat at the battle of Veḷḷūr near Madurai (c. 920). Rājasiṃha had to abandon his capital and kingdom and flee to Ceylon. Though the king of Ceylon, Dappula IV (923–24),13 was willing to give him assistance for the recovery of his kingdom, ‘the nobles dwelling on the island for some reason or other stirred up a sorry strife to the undoing of the Pāṇḍu king. ‘The Pāṇḍu king’, says the Chūlavaiṣṇa,14 ‘thought his sojourn here was of no use to him. He left his diadem and other valuables behind and betook himself to the Keralas’. Thus disappeared from history the first empire of the Pāṇḍyas and its last ruler Rājasiṃha II. Though Kerala was the home of his mother, the Chola hold on that country had become so strong that Rājasiṃha relied more on Ceylon in the first instance than on Kerala. When his political plans failed him utterly owing to the reluctance of the Ceylonese generals to shed their blood in his cause, he went to Kerala, perhaps with a view to spend the rest of his days in obscurity among the relatives of his mother.

13 This king is really Dappula III. The dates of the two kings Sena I and Sena II given above on p. 348 are two years too early, cf. History of Ceylon published by the University of Ceylon (1959, 1960), Vol. I, part II (pp. 845–46). (Editor).
14 Ch. 53, vv, 5 ff.