



BULLETIN
OF THE
MADRAS GOVERNMENT MUSEUM

EDITED BY THE SUPERINTENDENT

4

INDIAN EPIGRAPHY AND SOUTH INDIAN SCRIPTS

BY

C. SIVARAMAMURTI, M.A.

*The Assistant Director,
National Museum, New Delhi
(Curator,*

Archaeological Section, Madras Museum, 1935-1946).

NEW SERIES - General Section. Vol III. No. 4, 1952

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First Edition : 1948
Reprinted : 1966, 1999

© Principal Commissioner of Museums
Government Museum, Chennai-8

Price : Rs.285.00

Printed at
Madipakkam Stationery & Register Making
Industrial Co-op. Society Ltd.,
Chennai-81.

CONTENTS

	PAGE
Author's Preface	vii
Indian Epigraphy—	
Introductory	1
Document	16
Signature	21
Seal	22
Inscriptions, their form and contents	25
Scribes	32
Ornamental characters	35
Literary value of Indian Epigraphy	38
Influence of Indian Epigraphy abroad	49
Indian Epigraphy and South India's contribution	51
The Development of the Letters of Alphabet during the Centuries	58
Select passages from Inscriptions	155
Appendix	233
Bibliography	241
General Index	247
Plates and Explanations	i-xii

DEDICATED with affection and esteem to my brother-in-law

Sri P. N. RAMACHANDRAN, B.A., under whose fostering care I grew up and had my education, and to my friend.

Sri K. V. RAMACHANDRAN, B.A., who broadened my æsthetic vision.

AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

WHEN studying epigraphy I keenly felt the necessity of knowing at a glance on the same chart the development of each individual letter of the Indian alphabet in different areas and during centuries in different types of script developed from the same parent stock. I therefore, prepared a genealogical tree for each letter of alphabet for comparing the stages of development of the various scripts of India in general and South India in particular. The late Rao Bahadur Dikshit was interested in this scheme of presentation of palæography and advised me to complete the work giving it all my attention. As I had seen my book on Amaravathi sculpture through the press in the meantime I was free to devote myself to this. I suggested to Dr. Aiyappan, Superintendent, Government Museum, Madras, that I would prepare this book on Indian epigraphy and South Indian scripts. He readily agreed and the permission of Government was sought and obtained. In the meantime I planned the book with illustrations showing the earliest representations in sculpture of manuscripts, signatures, seals with legends, ornamental letters, shell characters, and so forth. Having long felt that it was essential to give select passages from inscriptions not only to provide a sort of exercise for the student to attempt reading them, but also with an idea of showing the literary beauty of composition in epigraphy, I have given select pieces with all the letters carefully drawn from the facsimiles. As however the literary beauty of epigraphy requires to be explained at some length I have devoted a chapter for it. The influence of our scripts abroad specially in South East Asia has been considerable and I have also dealt with it. The scribe, document, seal so essentially related to the official mode of writing and record has been discussed, as also ornamented varieties of letters. Epigraphy being usually a neglected subject, I have discussed the value and need for its study in the introductory chapter. The plates given at the end represent some of the valuable originals in the epigraphical collection of the Madras Government Museum. The constant kind enquiries from England about the progress of this book by Dr. Gravely, retired Superintendent, Government Museum Madras, whose very kind interest in my work has been a great encouragement has in no small measure helped me to progress in this in spite of various pressing items of work in my rearrangement of the Archæological galleries of the Indian Museum, Calcutta, where I was in the meantime posted early in 1946. Dr. R. E. M. Wheeler, the Director-General of Archæology in India, warmly

encouraged me in this work and exhorted me to finish this alongside with the gallery work of the Indian Museum. Dr. Suniti Kumar Chatterji whose overwhelming kindness made me at once feel at home in Bengal has also kindly expedited me in this. I am thankful to Dr. R. C. Majumdar for giving me a reprint of his paper on the development of scripts in Annam which was helpful in the preparation of my chart showing the development of Indian scripts abroad. The magnificent works of Buhler, Ojha, Fleet, the volumes of Epigraphia Indica, South Indian Inscriptions, Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum, Indian Antiquary and other journals and books have all been of immense help in my work. A bibliography is added at the end. It is a great pleasure to me to convey my thanks to all my friends who have been very kind to me in my study of epigraphy particularly Dr. B. Ch. Chhabra, Mr. M. Somesekhara Sarma and Mr. V. Prabhakara Sastri. I cannot adequately express my gratitude to Mr. T. N. Ramachandran who at the instance of our revered Professor Mahamahopadhyaya S. Kuppaswami Sastriar very kindly introduced me to the study of Archaeology after my graduation from the Sanskrit Department of the Presidency College. To Dr. Aiyappan I am extremely thankful for his personal interest in expediting the publication. In conclusion I warmly thank Mr. Bhudev Mukherji for his ready help in the preparation of the typed manuscript for the press. To Mr. Asoke Kumar Bhattacharya I am grateful for readily undertaking the preparation of the Index.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SECTION, INDIAN MUSEUM, C. SIVARAMAMURTI.
Calcutta, the 5th January 1948.

AUTHOR'S PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION.

The reprinting this book has long awaited. As this was in the press my friend Mr. I. Mahaderan, M.A., I.A.S., a brilliant young scholar in the field of South Indian epigraphy who has made a careful study of this book, offered some valuable suggestions which have been incorporated. I heartily thank him for this.

NATIONAL MUSEUM,
New Delhi, the 4th February 1965.

C. SIVARAMAMURTI.



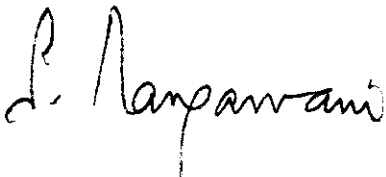
S. RANGAMANI, I.A.S.
Principal Commissioner of Museums

Government Museum,
Chennai - 600 008.

P R E F A C E

The history of India, unlike the histories of several western countries, has got to be pieced together from the remains of her material culture. It is quiet interesting to note that such remains of the past, abound in India. Inscriptions form a major share of those materials. They are important from the point of view of chronology and other aspects of social life. The Government Museum, Chennai can claim with justifiable pride that it is one of the best museums in India which possesses unique collections of inscriptions on stone and copper plates. Dr. C. Sivaramamurti's "Indian Epigraphy and South Indian Scripts" published in 1966 is a commendable work in the field of South Indian Epigraphy. It catered the needs of serious scholars as well as the interested general public. Soon after its publication the copies went out of print. The need for reprinting the same was felt especially in view of great demand for copies both from scholars and students alike. Knowing that there are a number of Museums and Archaeology departments in the Universities, I have very little doubt that a large number of Curators and students would derive benefit by studying the same.

Chennai - 8.
24.02.1999


(S. Rangamani, I.A.S.)

INDIAN EPIGRAPHY AND SOUTH INDIAN SCRIPTS

BY

C. SIVARAMAMURTI, M.A.

INDIAN EPIGRAPHY.

INTRODUCTORY

One of the most important sources of information for reconstructing the history of India and weaving the web of true and logical narration of facts is the study of inscription. India is rich in inscription and the considerable material already brought to light is indeed most valuable and interesting from different points of view. In spite, however, of the excellent efforts of the Epigraphical Department to save the inscriptions, there is a destructive agency of such tremendous proportions present all over that without a kindly understanding and interest in the mind of every individual in every village this tendency for destruction cannot be stopped. Every day and every hour the village-smith is probably in some corner of some village melting down a precious copper plate in the possession of some private family for utilizing the metal. The vandalism of misguided faith has demanded a heavy toll of most valuable inscriptions — an instance may be cited from Amaravathi where after rubbing out all inscriptions and sculpture to satisfy Muslim conscience, the carved stupa slabs were utilized in building construction. Similarly, a large number of inscribed stones, built up with face into the wall while transforming a Hindu structure into a mosque as in the university of Bhoja at Dhārā, require urgently to be rescued. In the Hindu temples themselves the tragedy of pious renovation has undone most of the labours of the mighty monarchs of old to hand over recorded history in inscriptions, as the process of renovation emphasizes for economy the utilization of the old material by rechiselling and renewing, or rather more correctly to put it; ruining the figures and obliterating inscriptions wherever they occur. In South India which abounds in temples and equally in pious renovators the problem is an urgent one. The last surviving inscribed pillar of a derelict *Sūryaśaṅkapa* from Kāñcīpuram recording the *Sūryaśataka* of Mayūra in Coḷa letters of the 10th century A.D. was broken and utilized by the ignorant temple trustees as building material; the small cost of purchasing extra slab or two may have been saved but at tremendous cost to archæology.

The Public Works Department which has often used rich architectural, sculptural and epigraphical material for their work utilized the stones from the ramparts of the stately temple at Gangaikondacholapuram, Tanjore district for constructing a dam across the Coleroon. The Kāveripākkam tank is studded with the most exquisite carvings from South India. Another vandalistic tendency is the use of gold and silver coins as buttons, studs and the like with the result that the legends are obliterated (*Ind. Ant.* XIV, p. 325).

The study of epigraphy, therefore, is a matter of vital importance. The inscriptions throw light on the life of sovereigns and the people over whom they ruled. Important incidents are recorded in them. Sometimes they supply or strengthen a weak link in accounts of dynasties known to us from other literary sources. They help us to locate the sites of ancient places by the geographical material recorded in them. They introduce us

to institutions prevailing in the country at the time of their record. They supply us with a complete list of the designation of officers of State to whom different functions were allocated. The prosperity of the country by sea-borne trade and privileges of merchant guilds are herein pictured. The religious faith, toleration or bigotry, endowments and charities for temples, monasteries, universities, etc., are recorded. Maintenance of charitable institutions, hospitals and colleges is herein mentioned.

The long and pompous descriptions of the royal families known as *Prasastis* or *Meykirtis* give graphic accounts of various exploits. In the grants where the extent of land is specified with boundaries and other particulars, the names of villages and other geographical details help identification of the spot in terms of modern location. Modern Ahicchatra is mentioned as Ahicchatrābhukti in the Banskhera plate of Sri Harṣavardhana. Sthanagundura is not a far cry from modern Tālgunda nor Ellāpura from Ellora nor Kalyānapura from Kalyan. The exact location of Lumbini was possible only by the mention of the place in the Rummendai pillar inscription of Aśoka found in the place. In an inscription from Amaravati the word '*Kudūranivāsikāsa*' points to a resident of ancient Kodura which may be identified with modern Kodduru. Kondukur and Bezwada are mentioned in an Eastern Cālukyan inscription in Telugu of the 9th century A.D. Modern Pithapur is known as Piṣṭapura in an early inscription.

The royal *Prasastis* and *Meykirtis* are repeated at great length in the long stone-cut inscriptions running the whole length of the outer plinth and walls of the sanctum in some temples. One of the most classical instances of such inscriptions is the group on the walls of the Bṛhadīśvara temple at Tanjore that records the erection and installation of the famous deity Rājarājeśvaramudiār by the great emperor Rājarājacola. All the great gifts made by him, his sisters, queens, noblemen and generals are recorded; many minute details are mentioned regarding the infinite number, weight and value of jewels and beautiful metal images presented to the temple, some of the latter being among the finest of early Colla workmanship yet known. The variety of jewels of the period and their patterns and workmanship as we gather from these inscriptions, is amazing. A few names will serve as a sample—*tirumudai*—sacred lock, *po pū*—gold flower, *tiruvanicadam*—combinations of strings, *annaṃ*—swan, *kili*—parrot, *kaikārai*—bracelet, *adikārai*—anklet, *sonayachiku*—lock formed in the fashion *Jonikas*, *vai* and *valukavai*—earring, *bhadram*—auspicious mark, *sutti*—ornament for the forehead, *kondanan* or *kondattudur*—necklace, *kaṭakam*—bracelet, *modiram*—finger ring, *paṭṭigai*—girdle, *tiruppattam*—diadem, *makuṭam*—crown, *muttuvalaiyal* or *ratnavalaiyal*—pearl bracelet or jewelled bracelet. These are just a few of a long list of ornaments. The inscriptions mention different varieties of pearls like *vaṭṭam* (round), *anuvattam* (slightly curved), *oppumuttu* (hollow pearls), *tuzumuttu* (small pearls), etc.

The inscriptions furnish a good deal of information regarding weights and measures; tables of measures can be made out by a study of the inscriptions where even the smallest measure is mentioned; similarly also regarding the weights used for gold, silver, copper and

other metals. Just as the measure, *drona*, was started by the Nandas ' *Nandopakramam dronah* ' similarly some measures were started by Pallava and Cola kings. Sometimes they were named after the kings themselves like *Arumolidevan* after Rājarāja or *Viḍelviḍugu* after Pallava Mahendravarman or more often after the gods like *Dakṣiṇāmeruvīṅgan* and *Āḍavallān*. From the inscriptions we get an insight into the price of articles to be compared with modern prices but it was mostly in terms of paddy, rice, pulse ghee, oil, etc.

The brilliant paper on irrigation in ancient times by V. Venkayya (*Annual Report of the Director-General of Archaeology in India for 1903-4*) shows how valuable inscriptions are in enriching our knowledge about the facts of irrigation in ancient times. The inscription mentioning *Mahendratatāka* at Mahendravādi is among the most important Pallava documents. The *Vairāmegatatāka*, *Parāmeśvaratatāka* and *Chitrāmegatatāka* are other irrigation tanks of the Pallava period. The Tiruvallarai tank came into being during the reign of Danṭivarman. The high bund built by Karikāla for the Kāveri, famous in literature, is mentioned in inscription as also other irrigation canals opened by Cola kings of the 10th-11th centuries like *Uyyakonḍān* and *Muḍikonḍān*. Pāṇḍyan inscription, also mentioned such water channels.

The famous *Bhojasāgar* is a feat of engineering skill, and one of the largest irrigation tanks constructed in India. It really stirs our pride to read of how Bhoja, the great king, administrator, conqueror, poet, patron of poets, scholar in different branches like *Vyākaraṇa Alankāra*, *Sāṅkhyā*, *Yoga Silpa* and *Sihāpatya* was also an engineer and took special pride in this great irrigation lake on the waters of which his boat glided softly as he watched the scenery around.

An irrigation tank of huge dimensions which has existed in India from the earliest historical times having been repaired during the Mauryan period twice and again during the time of the Kṣātrapa king Rudradāman is mentioned yet once more during the time of the Guptas in the Junāgaḍh inscription of Skandagupta. The lake *Sudarśana* was again carefully rebuilt with masonry work making the embankment really strong (Fleet *C. Inscr. Ind.-III*, p. 61); but the most picturesque description in epigraphy describing the overflow from the huge water reservoir is recorded in the inscription of Mahāksatrapa Rudradaman where the same *Sudarśana* lake forms the object of description.

If the discovery of tribal coins of the Yaudheyas, Arjunāyanas, Audumbaras, Mālavas, Pañcālas, Vatāsyakas, etc., has helped the historian to understand literary sources better and reconstruct the history of democratic institutions in ancient India, inscriptions have helped him a thousandfold. Just as the discovery of Kauṭilya's *Arthasāstra* revolutionized the viewpoint of the historian of India regarding her political institutions so also the publication and interpretation of the Uttaramallūr inscriptions describing village institutions in the 10th century A.D. have removed all doubts regarding the innate spirit of self-governing democratic

bodies in South India from very early times. The various qualifications required of a candidate standing for membership in the village assembly are given, the minimum property, age limit, character and equipment. Disqualifications are also mentioned. The method of election is most interesting. The village was divided into a number of wards or centres where pots were kept with their mouths covered, leaving a slot for the voting card, a small palm-leaf ticket with the name of the person noted to be dropped in. On the day of election, all the people of the village gathered together, the contents of each pot made into a bundle and all emptied into an empty pot and well shaken. A boy who knew nothing about all this was to take a card at random from the pot and the name was read out. This was done in the presence of arbitrators, near the village temple. One man was chosen for each ward. After this general election, several committees were formed for looking after gardens, tanks, fields, gold, the wards, administration of justice, etc.

The system of punishment and administration of justice in the case of criminal offence can be learnt from inscriptions. An example may not be out of place. A man hunting at night missed his aim at the boar and shot a human being. He was ordered to give thirty-two cows for a lamp to be kept burning in the temple for the merit of the deceased.

The inscriptions also give glimpses regarding the social conditions of the time. In a Vijayanagara inscription we are told that the emperor settled the disputes between a Vaiṣṇava Jeer and a Jain teacher by making them agree to be friends and raised no points of dispute. In another Vijayanagara inscription there is a graphic account of how the learned scholars in all branches of sacred studies assembled and signed a document which forbade *Kanyāśulka* and *Varadakṣiṇā* in any marriage arrangement and threatened punishment by the king and social exclusion from the community for parties receiving either (*S. Ind Inscr.* I. p. 84). Special privileges like the bride and bridegroom riding a horse in procession being allowed by royal command (*Epigraph Ind.* VI, p. 346) is also gathered from inscriptions.

The temple was one of the greatest institutions created by the Indian genius. It was the hub on which revolved the whole life of the village. The temple provided for the education of the scholar, the amusement of the public, the cultivation of art and aesthetic sense and for the piety of the worshippers. The temple, as can be gathered from the inscriptions, was at once a great centre of various activities. The great endowments made to temples were not in vain. The sense of responsibility of the committees that managed the temples was very great and it should be remembered that high character and scholarship were essential for those who were to serve on these committees. The temples provided for the conducting of classes in various sciences and systems of philosophy grammar rhetoric and religious hymns. In inscriptions from Ennāyiram we have a long list of the various courses of study, the number of teachers, and students for whose maintenance provision was made. An excellent scheme of both juvenile and adult education on the noblest lines for imparting right ideas of social life and conduct, right morals, incorruptible

ways, sound general knowledge of the affair of the world, of institution political and social, and of economics from a broad view-point, was all arranged by the king through the exposition of special parts of the *Mahābhārata*, the encyclopædic national epic, which has shaped Indian thought and character through the ages.

Hospitals were maintained by the temples. A Kākatiya inscription from Mālkāpuram mentions a maternity hospital. Another inscription in Tamil gives a long list of medicines stocked and the quantity of each. In times of famine the temples, being rich institutions dedicated to the service of humanity, undertook the feeding of people on a large scale.

Provision was made in the temples for morning and evening music, the pipers, drummers, flutists and others being given separate land allowances. An inscription mentions the arrangement for the play of the *Viṇā* in the temple. Having myself witnessed in a large but neglected, out of the way temple in my district the dance and *abhinaya* performed before the deity, the song being sung and commented in the language of gesture according to the canons of Bharata, I can say that it is no exaggeration that either Rājaraja or Rājendra was thrilled when he witnessed a great *nāṭya* performance in one of the temples; but the inscription does mention in glowing terms the king's high appreciation of this art and his reward therefor. The *Nāṭya-mandapa* in the temple was explicitly for this purpose. However prude social reformers may be on the question of the *nautch*, it was a necessary institution in the temple. Similarly, drama was fostered, and the *Ranga-mandapa* in the temple served as the open-air theatre and we learn from inscription of the drama, *Raja rājesvara Nāṭaka*, enacted during the time of Rājendra Coḷa I in such a theatre.

Provision was made for the chant of *Devāram* in Saivite temples and the hymns of the *Ālvārs* in Viṣṇu temples. Similarly arrangements were made for the chant of the *Vedas*, *Rg*, *Yajus* and *Sāma*. The temple provided occupation for wood-carvers, sculptors, painters, gardeners, garland-makers, potters, watermen, cooks and accountants, among others. The festivals conducted at periodic intervals attracted crowds from distant places and large fairs contributed to that healthy social intercourse which is a unifying bond between villages, and districts. We learn from inscriptions that the kings also supported educational institutions (*ghaṭikas*), outside the temple precincts, solely dedicated to the dissemination of knowledge in the different branches of studies. These *ghaṭikas* were looked upon with great respect and the one at Kāñcī took an important lead in the election of the prince Nandivarman Pallavamalla to the Pallava throne as is gathered from the inscription in the Vaikunthapuram temple. It is from inscriptions that we learn of the friendly interest that the kings took in the various religions other than their own. The *Cūḍāmaṇivihāra* at Negapatam was an instance of a Buddhist institution fostered by the Colas. The sister of Rājarāja, the queen Kundavai, was responsible for a Jaina temple at Tirumalai. This is not an isolated instance. King Devarāya similarly built a Jaina temple. We have the

classical instance of Aśoka giving his opinion in the matter. It is from his edicts we learn that it is the most foolish thing for one interested in his own faith to persecute the faiths of others and Aśoka has expressly preached tolerance, nay, requested active support for faiths other than one's own.

Sometimes there may be a stone in a village with quaint figures of an archer and cows ; of a man fighting a tiger ; or of a warrior on elephant or horseback fighting a rival. These stones may sometimes contain inscriptions describing a hero who died fighting in a *Gograhana* (cattle-raid), a man who killed a tiger which was harassing villagers, a devotee fulfilling his vow by offering his head ; or of a warrior killed in battle being gloriously transported to heaven. Sometimes the slab represents the upraised female hand with bracelets and the inscription would mention the act of *Sati* committed by the woman on the funeral pyre of her husband. We have classical mediæval examples of *Sati* in the noble queen Yaśomati of Prabhākaravardhana and in Vānavanmahādevī, the wife of Sundaracola ; both of them were great queens, mothers respectively of the great emperors, Harsa and Rājarāja. And an inscription from the temple of Rājarāja at Tanjore mentioned the image set up by princess Kundavai for her mother, Vānavanmahādevī.

From the inscriptions, again, we gather an amount of information about land divisions, assessment, survey and settlement. The taxes payable to the state, and the conditions of land ownership are given. The proportion of the produce to be enjoyed by the cultivator and the state is specifically mentioned.

So far as territorial divisions are concerned large areas corresponding to our modern Presidencies are known as *deśa*. In North Indian inscriptions the *deśa* was divided into *bhuktis*, *bhuktis* subdivided into *viśayas*. In South India in the Tamil area *valanāḍu*, *nāḍu*, *koṭṭam*, *ūr* were the territorial divisions. Large units were known by the name of *mandalam*, *pāḍi*, or *vāḍi* in the Tamil and Canarese areas. We have such names as Colamaṇḍalam, Tonḍamaṇḍalam, Gangavāḍi, Raṭṭappāḍi, Perumbāṇappāḍi, Nulampāḍi. Sometimes there are territorial divisions based on the name of the adjoining hills as, for instance, Ballamkoṇḍa, Tirumalai, Venkuṇḍram, etc. Such territorial divisions as *Vadabala-valināḍu* and *Vadavalināḍu* show that their boundaries were high roads known by those names. Similarly, the banks of rivers also formed boundaries. In the Cola period many of the *Valanāḍus* were named after the king as Arumoliḍalanāḍu, or after some branch of art or culture, like Nityavinodavalanāḍu.

Of the officers under the king the inscriptions give a lengthy list. At the royal court were the *Sacivas*, *Amātyas*, *Pradhānāmātyas* ; the important ministers, *Mahādaṇḍanāyakas*, *Mahābalādhikṛta*, *Mahāsenāpati* or commanders and generals ; and under them in charge of cavalry and elephantry corps were *Aśvapatis* and *Pilupatis*. *Bhuktis* were under *Uparikas*, and *Viśayas* under *Viśayapatis* or *Viśayamahattaras*. Other subordinate revenue officers like *Ayuktas*, *Vyūprtas*, *Adhikṛtas* are also known. *Cūtas* and *Bhaṭas* were asked to

police officials. Among judicial officers are the *Nayādhikaraṇas* and the *Dharmādhikaraṇas*. All these designations occur mostly in North Indian records. In the Hirahadagalli plates of Pallava Sivaskandavarman, *Amātyas* are mentioned but in later Pallava inscriptions, *Mātras* are mentioned. They correspond to the Mauryan *Mahāmātras*. In the Prakrit charters of the Pallavas the names of a number of officers are given like *Vallava*, *Govallava*, *Rahasyādhikṛta*. It is believed that *Vāyilkeḷpār* mentioned in the Kaśākudi plates were secretaries and the *Kośādhyaśa* is the officer in charge of the treasury. The *adhikaraṇadaṇḍa* mentioned in the Kaśākudi plates should mean the fine imposed by the law courts. Among the officers in close attendance on the king are the *Tirumandīravolai*, and *Tiruvāikeḷri* who took down the orders of the king and carefully listened to his utterances.

The inscriptions give us an insight into the extent of Indian influence, cultural, maritime and military in such distant islands as Java, Sumatra, Borneo, Malaya, Annam, Burma, Ceylon, Laccadives, Maldives and other islands in the Indian Ocean. The various places mentioned in the inscriptions of Rājarāja and Rājendra in many cases still remain a puzzle, though the efforts of scholars have helped us greatly in understanding the naval conquest of these mighty kings beyond the seas. Rājendra's overseas campaign is graphically described in the Tamil *prasasti* : " (Who) having despatched many ships in the midst of the rolling sea and having caught Sangrāma-vijayottungavarman, the king of Kadāram, together with the elephants in his glorious army (took) the large heap of treasures, which (that king) had rightfully accumulated; (captured) with noise the (arch called) *Vidyādharaṭoraṇa* at the war-gate of his extensive city; Śri Vijaya with the 'jewelled wicket-gate' adorned with great splendour and the 'gate of large jewels'; Paṇṇai with water in its bathing ghats; the ancient Malaiyūr with the strong mountain for its rampart; Māyirūḍingam surrounded by the deep sea (as) by a moat; Ilangāśōka (*i.e.*, Lankāśōka) undaunted (in) fierce battles; Māpappālam having abundant (deep) water as defence; Mevilimbangam, having fine walls as defence; Valaiṇṇandūru having vilappandūru(?) Talaitakkolam praised by great men (versed in) in the sciences; Mādamālingam, firm in great and fierce battles; Ilāmuriḍēsam, whose fierce strength rose in war; Mānakkavāram, in whose extensive flower gardens honey was collecting; and Kadāram, of fierce strength which was protected by the deep sea." (*S. Ind. Inscr.* II, p. 109). Though the task of identification of the places mentioned in Rājendra's inscriptions was undertaken quite a long time ago by Hultzsch, even in the time of Venkayya the identification progressed only to the extent of correctly understanding Nakkavaram as Nocobar Islands and Pappālam as a port in Burma. The efforts of Coedes to understand the various places have given the most intelligible account of Rājendra's campaign and place names like Māyirūḍingam, Ilangāśōkam, Talaitakkolam, Mādamālingam, Ilāmuriḍēsam, etc., should be located in the Malayan Peninsula and Sumatra. From the inscriptions we learn that Sangrāma Vijayottungavarman of the Sailendra dynasty of Śrīvijaya acknowledged the suzerainty of the Cola emperor. The larger Leyden grant refers to the construction

of the Cūdāmanivihāra at Negapatam by Māra Vijayottungavarman and shows the relationship between India, Sumatra and Java.

From inscriptions we learn of the prosperity of the land through trade with other countries. During the time of the mighty emperor Rājendracola, who converted the Bay of Bengal into a 'Coja lake,' trade flourished and we find inscriptions of merchants from his realm in distant islands like Sumatra (*An. Rep. S. Ind. Epigraph*, 92 II). The tax levied on merchandise according to the unit of ship in terms of Gadyāna coins is mentioned in a Rāṣṭrakūṭa inscriptions (*Epigraph Ind.* III, p. 301). Similar tax known as *Kūpaśulka* was levied on commodities taken overseas and this we learn from a Kākatīya inscription (*An. Rep. S. Ind. Epigraph*, 10, 45).

We know from literature that from the earliest times there used to be very active maritime intercourse between India and various other countries. The Baveru jātaka is an instance. Important posts were at Bharukaccha, Sorpāraga, Kāveripūmpaṭṭanam, etc. In early Sangam literature the last mentioned figures prominently. The Ālvārs mention the seaport of Mahābalipuram as Kadalmallai. Masulipatam was a great seaport about the introducing of the Christian era. Here again the inscriptions render invaluable service in beginning to us various places to which our ancient sailors resorted both with merchandise and colonists.

The sixth century Sanskrit inscription of Rudravarman from Fu-nan Kamboja and four of Pūrnavarman from West Java show that Hindu kingdoms were established in these distant lands. Similarly the Hindu kingdom of Śrīvijaya was founded in Sumatra. The Sanskrit *Yūpa* inscriptions of about the 5th century A.D. mentioning the sacrifices performed by Mūlavarman graphically describing the large quantity of gold expended by the king in the performance of the great sacrifice known as *Bahusuvarṇa* giving away twenty thousand cows as *dakṣiṇā* at Vaprakeśvara show the deep-rooted nature of Hindu thought and culture in the Island. In the words of Majumdar "the inscriptions discovered at Borneo, Java, Annam, Cambodia and Malay Peninsula lead inevitably to the conclusion that the language, literature, religion and political and social institutions in India made a thorough conquest of these far-off lands, and to a great extent, eliminated or absorbed the native elements in these respects." Chhabra's illuminating paper on the cultural expansion in South India during the Pallava rule gives a vivid picture of this aspect.

The religion, whether Brahmanical or Buddhist, in these islands came from India and the whole pantheon is found transplanted on their soil. Some of the most lovely specimens of the different *mūrtis* have Indian influences. The *Rāmāyaṇa* is represented in exquisite sculptures at Prambanam and the story of Buddha at Borobudur. The fine Prajnāpāramitā image comes from Java and is now preserved in the Leyden Museum. Sanskrit language and literature being highly cultivated, the language of the inscriptions is flawless Sanskrit. The script used for the inscriptions is also borrowed from India.

The inscriptions reveal to us the personality of our greatest rulers. The Nāsik inscription of Balasiri, the plaintive cry of a sorrowing mother recounting the noble qualities of a worthy son and sovereign, presents an excellent picture of the personality of Gautamīputra Sātakarni, the great Sātavāhana ruler. His face resembled the full moon. His long and shapely arm resembled the stately form of the lord of serpents. He had the charm of the lotus flower fully opened by the rays of the sun. He allayed the tears of anyone who sought his protection. His orders were obeyed by all kings with great respect. He was the very pink of courtesy and most devoted to his mother. He shared the pleasures of his subjects and sympathised with them in their woes. He always spared the life of even the most troublesome enemy as he could not bear unnecessary shedding of blood. He promoted the families of the twice-born and the lowly. He established by practice and precept righteous conduct. In this inscription he is described as 'the only bow-man,' '*Ekadhanudhara*' and on his coin this epithet has been symbolised by a strung bow shown on the obverse.

The Allahabad pillar inscription describes Samudragupta a great ruler, a great general, a great scholar and a great musician. The graphic description of his musical talents in the inscription is actually given realistic shape on the obverse of his lyrist type of coins where the king is shown seated on couch, playing the *Vīṇā* resting on his lap.

The personality of Māhaksatrapa Rudradāman is again clearly revealed in the Junāgadh inscription. His birth in the lap of fortune and power, his comely appearance, his exceptional capacity in battle, his special training in statecraft, his knowledge of the different sciences and arts including grammar, music and logic, the fabulous wealth in his treasury overflowing with gold, silver, diamonds and gems but all the wealth rightfully obtained, present him as an exceptionally fortunate and brilliant prince. No wonder that as the inscriptions mention he was wreathed with many garlands at different *svayamvaras* by the daughters of many kings. His personal beauty and even the sweetness of his voice and the lovely nature of his gait are specifically mentioned in the inscription.

The personality of Asoka is revealed in his inscriptions. Their language is simple and the picture presented is quite clear. We have here the greatest of Indian emperors speaking to his subjects as to his children. How often has he not repeated that this should be done and not something else? The broad sympathies, clear-cut views, tolerant vision, and quaint simplicity, of a powerful emperor are at once evident in his edicts. His feeling heart is revealed in his sorrow over the huge killing and bloodshed in the Kalinga war. His utter disregard for personal comfort and the one desire to be of the utmost help to his subjects—his subjects he regarded as his own children and he was in the true sense a Rājā by *prakitiranjana*, his subjects being his *Prajā* in the literal sense—is evident from one of his edicts where he mentions that there is no fixed time for interviewing him but any affair of state could be brought to him for disposal whether he was in the dining chamber or in the harem or in the cowshed or in the palanquin or in the pleasure garden. We are reminded:

how similarly Rājendra, the Coḷa emperor, also heard cases and issued orders to his officers even when he was in the dining hall. Aśoka's child-like simplicity is revealed in his plain statement of facts about ration in his kitchen. The slaughter of animals and fowl which was originally done on a large scale was reduced to that of a single deer as he had almost tabooed venison ; peacock killing was reduced to the minimum, only two being allowed at the time the edict was incised ; and the emperor declared his wish that he would give up even this. We can imagine what a sacrifice this is on the part of the king if we read the *Sundarakāṇḍa* of the *Rāmāyaṇa* where the different viands and liquors are graphically described in Rāvaṇa's kitchen almost causing the mouth of those accustomed to these to water ; and how praiseworthy for one accustomed to luxuries to voluntarily lead the simple life of almost an anchorite. Aśoka's inscriptions refer to certain administrative innovations carried out by the emperor to improve the prevailing state of affairs. *Dharmamahāmātras* who did not exist before were appointed by Aśoka for the propagation of piety. Never in the past have officers called *Māhāmātras* of morality (*Dharmamahāmata*) existed, but now Aśoka created them since it was his intense desire to see that virtue was practised. Though the emperor knew of the various traditional auspicious ceremonies performed during marriage child-birth, etc., he regarded most of them as useless and favoured only such ceremonies as would bear good fruit, like courtesy to slaves, reverence to elders, gentleness to animals and liberality to Śramāṇas and Brāhmaṇas. Aśoka deplors that people are prone to recount only their virtuous deeds, but not their evil performances. So he puts forth a strong plea for avoiding sin and practising merit. In the past kings went on pleasure tours, but Aśoka went only on tours of morality. His deep concern for the welfare of man and beast is evident in the arrangements made by him to plant banyan trees and mango groves to afford shade, to dig wells at intervals with flights of steps for drinking water and to build numerous rest-houses and hospitals both for men and animals. The inscriptions of Aśoka describe the emperor's missionary activity and efforts to propagate ideas of *dharma* and social service not only within India but far outside its borders, in the kingdoms of Ptolemy II Philadelphus of Egypt, Antigonos, Gonatas of Macedonia, Magas of Syriani and Alexander of either Epirus or Corinth (Tulamaya, Antekina, Maka and Alikasudara) even at the risk of being ridiculed as a mad idealist. In the inscription of Gautamīputra Sātakarṇi it has been stated that the emperor identified himself with its subjects in their sorrows and joys ; Skandagupta is described in the Junagadh inscription as making his people happy by sweet talk pre-faced by smiles, courtesy, honour and liberality. In one of his inscriptions Aśoka expresses himself as the father of his subjects, in whose welfare and happiness he is interested as in that of his own children, and that not only in this world but also in the other. But he was not satisfied with the happiness of his own subjects ; he extends his desire for this happiness beyond his dominions and expresses his anxiety for the increased joy of people beyond his dominions whom also he considers as his own children. It is for this purpose that he made arrangements for transcribing his edicts even beyond his domain and arranged that his *Mahāmātras* may strive to inspire confidence and induce the borderers to practise meritorious deeds.

A great contemporary of the Śunga, Puṣyamitra, and Śātakarṇi, the powerful Śātavāhana sovereign, was Khāravela, the greatest king of Kalinga. A complete picture of this great ruler is presented in the Hathigumpha inscription where all his exploits year after year are stated with precision. His own personal talents and learning in various sciences and arts are also mentioned. From this inscription we gather how he repaired the gates and ramparts of his city, erected embankments to several tanks including the lake *Khivira*, at a very great cost, built a royal residence called the *Mahāvijayaprāsāda* or the palace of great victory with the riches brought from Anga and Magadha. He built excellent towers with their interiors decorated with sculpture and painting. The amenities provided by him in his realm are also mentioned. He caused festivities and *samāja* assemblies to be held to entertain his people with dance, drama and music, vocal and instrumental. He constructed rest houses remitted many taxes, bestowed several privileges on the corporations both urban and rural (*Paura* and *Jānapada*). He celebrated the famous *Rājasūya* sacrifice by establishing his might with his army. His religious bent of mind is revealed in all that he did for the Jaina religion on the Kumari hill in the nature of amenities and offerings for the ascetics and sages following the *dharma* of *Arhat*. With all he was a tolerant monarch as is evident from his attitude to the Brāhmanas. He was a great King of Peace, King of Prosperity, King of Monks, and King of Religion who had seen, heard and realised blessings (*kalyāṇa*).

The mighty ruler Rājarāja and his son Rājendra did not have the good fortune to be visited by foreign travellers to leave grand accounts of the noble, awe-inspiring royal courts, palaces and temples as in the time of Kṛṣṇadevarāya. All that we know of the Coḷa emperors is mainly from their inscriptions, which, however, give ample material for the understanding of their personality. History has no greater instance of a pious queen than the saintly Sembianmā-devī, the consort of Gaṇḍarāditya who was widowed at a tender age with a babe in her arms; and many indeed are the temples in the Coḷa realm that have been endowed by this queen whose every wish Rājarāja, her grand-nephew, respected. The Tiruvālan-gaḍu inscription specially mentions that though the people chose the heir-apparent Rājarāja to be their king he would not consider the throne when his uncle Uttama-coḷa had not enjoyed it. Rājarāja's might, conquests, administrative machinery, fabulous wealth, unparalleled liberality, in short, all the pomp and splendour of the great Coḷa empire in the building of which he had such an important hand before his son extended it further, is all revealed in minute detail in the long inscriptions from the Br̥hadīśvara temple at Tanjore. The campaigns of Rājendra Coḷa described at such length and with such a wealth of detail in his *prasastis* are fittingly celebrated by the erection of a novel *jayastambha*, in this case a *jalastambha* of the most sacred water on earth. He emulated Bhagīratha and in fact the tribute he levied from those whom he overcame in the region of the Ganges was only the water of the holy river to be carried to his realm to be emptied in the mighty tank near the huge temple of Śiva at a new capital for his empire that he constructed and named Gangai-koṇḍacholapuram to commemorate the great event. The conquest of Rājendra mentioned

in his inscriptions and its consequence are confirmed by a Gāhaḍavāla inscription at Ganga-konḍacholapuram wherein the usual preamble of the Coḷa inscriptions preceds its own indicating in unequivocal manner the suzerainty of the Coḷa emperor years later. The Dvārapālaka from Kalyānapura in the Dārāsuram temple and the few Kalinga and Pāla images found scattered in these Coḷa temples are additional evidences of Coḷa military triumph but it is the inscriptions that give a clearer written record of victory.

Sometimes it is not merely the personality of the ruler that is revealed in the inscriptions but occasional light is thrown on the exigencies of social life as in the case of a Brāhmaṇa who turns into a warrior. A remarkable statement with a wealth of detail is in the Tāla gunda inscription of Kākusthavarman where the progenitor of the Kadamba family Mayūrasarman is described as a student come to Kāñci for his Vedic studies who on being insulted by the soldiers in the cavalry of the Pallava king, could not brook it and, in the words of the inscription, with the hand that was accustomed to hold the *kusa* grass, fuel, stones, ladle, melted butter and the oblation vessel, he grasped a flaming sword to conquer the earth and so continues the inscription to narrate how the successors of Mayūrasarman went from strength to strength and the family where the hair was wet with the holy water of the purificatory rites of different sacrifices, deeply learned in the sacred lore, that kindled the fire and drank the Soma, in the interior of whose houses loudly resounded the chants of the *Veda* and the Vedānga, and that tended a Kadamba tree with blooming flowers near their dwelling turned into a house of Ksatriya kings and one of the daughters of the family, married into the imperial house of the Guptas.

The Maṇḍagapaṭṭu inscription is another epigraphical curio. This is a joyous exclamation of a king taking delight in inventing something novel, different from existing things. Hitherto constructions generally were of brick, timber, lime and metal but now this curious-minded king—the king actually describes himself so—excavated cave temples with the carved panels out of the living rock. This is the origin of the numerous early Pallava temples in the Tamil area about the beginning of the 7th century A.D.

Life is short and uncertain, wealth is fleeting in nature ; and the ruler of today is the begger of the morrow. It is not always that the surface of the stream of life is unruined. Great men have adversities. In the Bhitari pillar inscription of Skandagupta there is a statement of great significance. The inscription says that in preparing himself to restore the fallen fortunes of his family a whole night was spent by the emperor on no other couch except the bare earth.

Sometimes there is a dramatic effect in the narration in an inscription. In the same Bhitari inscription it is stated that with the cry, 'Victory has been achieved' Kumaragupta rushed to his mother whose eyes were wet with tears of joy, like Kṛṣṇa going to his mother

Devaki after slaying his enemies. The glorious king Īśānavarman wedded to heroism and truth though fully favoured by fortune resorted to Prayāga and there, decorated with flowers entered a fire kindled with dry cow-dung cakes as if it were water for a bath and put an end to his life. This is in accordance with the belief that voluntary death at Prayāga assures heaven as Kālidāsa says *Tanutyajām nāsti śarīrabandhaḥ*. Another instance like this, known through epigraphy is the death of Cālukya Āhavamalla Someśvara II, the father of Vikramaditya VI who being the victim of a malignant fever put an end to his life in the *Sangama* of Tungabhadrā followed by his devoted queens and against the wishes of his loving, tearstained subjects who followed him to prevent the mishap.

We may have heard of fabulous stories of extraordinary wealth and gifts and charities beyond all conceivable limits of liberality. A story narrates how Anāthapiṇḍada spread the whole surface of Jetavana garden with gold coins, purchased it at that price, and presented it with a newly built monastery to the Enlightened One. It is in the Nānāghat inscription of Śātakarni and the inscription of Usavadāta at Nāsik that we get a staggering account of the generous impulses in a man. Possession of wealth is one thing and natural liberality another. The Nandas were fabulously rich but we do not know of any gifts made by them. Śātakarni in performing the *Aśvamedha* twice, *Gavāmayana*, *Agnyādheya*, *Rājasūya*, *Aptoryāma* and other sacrifices, gave liberal *dakṣiṇā* or sacrificial fee consisting of villages *kārṣāpanas*, cows, elephants, horses, horse-chariots, silver pots, dresses, and so on. Khāravēla, his contemporary, was equally munificent. He even made the gift of the golden *Kalpataru*. But these are specific sacrificial gifts. The long catalogue of meritorious deeds of Usavadāta is more interesting. He was the donor of three hundred thousand cows, performer of sacred gifts of gold on the river Bārnāsa, giver of sixteen villages to the gods and Brāhmaṇas, host, all the year round, of a hundred thousand Brāhmaṇas, giver of eight wives to Brāhmaṇas in the sacred place Prabhāsa, donor of quadrangular hermitages, dwellings and shelter houses at Bhārugaḥa, Daśapura, Govardhana and śorpārāga, maker of pleasaunces, tanks, and wells, founder of free ferries by boats on the Ībā, Pārādā, Damanā, Tāpi, Karabenā, and Dahanukā.

If occasionally we have here and there a portrait sculpture of some great ruler, it is also sometimes accompanied by his consort or consorts. The Pallava royal portrait sculptures are famous. In the lovely painting fragment of Mahendravarman at Sittannavāśal there is the lovely face of his queen beside him. Even here epigraphy supplies its own quota to the pictures that we have of great kings and queens. We have considered kings. A single instance of a queen would suffice. The favourite queen of Rājasimha, the Pallava king who constructed the Kailāṣanātha temple, was Rangapatākā who, according to the inscription in that temple, was a *patākā* (banner) as it were among women. She is described further as 'full of loveliness, sharpness, grace and cleanliness, who seemed to be the master-piece of the Creator, whose skill had at last attained perfection after He had created thousands of good-looking women, she who was charming through genuine sweetness who was adorned with grace, coquetry and feeling . . . etc.'

The infinite value of epigraphy in the understanding of the ancient arts like dance and music is amply illustrated in the musical inscriptions of the Pallavas and the labelled dance poses from the *gopura* of the temple at Chidambaram. The Kudimiyāmalai musical inscription and a similar one from Tirumaiyam are extremely valuable as they record the musical notes as understood and practised during the time of the Pallavas. Similarly the use of the term *Parivādinī* in the inscription shows that the early type of *vīṇā* was still in use in the seventh century. And this is confirmed by a sculpture from the Dacca Museum where Sarasvatī, the consort of Viṣṇu, represented on Garuda carries the lyre type of *vīṇā*. The labelled sculptured panels representing the different *sthānas* and *karāṇas* given in Bharata's *Nāṭya-śāstra* are the most elaborate commentary and most intelligible, probably more so than even the learned explanation of the texts by Abhinavagupta. This visual explanation is aided by the presence of the labels which are short inscriptions describing the *sthānas* (dance poses). And about these representations being the most correct there can be no two opinions as the Coḷa period undoubtedly was the time when the glory of dance was at its zenith, the emperors being great patrons of this art as gathered from the inscriptions.

The presence of inscriptions along with sculpture either to explain the carving or to mention a gift and the name of the donor is the most valuable clue to understanding its date, the circumstances under which it came into being, and the theme of the carving itself. It is the presence of the inscriptions, labels explaining the panels and carvings at Bharhut, that has helped a correct understanding of this important monument. Without the label how could we know whether the image was intended to represent Sirimā or Culakokā or Sudarsana? It is the presence of a single line of inscription in an early sculpture from Amaravati that has proved beyond doubt that Yakṣa worship prevailed in the Krishna valley and was a feature as much of South India as of the North. Images dated on stylistic grounds independently can have their dates verified and checked with the help of such images as bear inscriptions on their pedestals, with dates, if any. But even if the dates were absent, the palaeography of the inscription would itself help considerably in the proper dating of the figure. Sometimes even though identification of panels containing stories from the *Jātakas* and *Avadānas* is not impossible the inscriptions below vouch for the correctness of the identification. Sometimes it so happens that there is not sufficient literary material to throw light on the sculptured theme, in which case the label becomes absolutely valuable. If the Pallava inscriptions give long lists of the royal house the sculptures of the Vaikuṇṭhanātha temple at Kāñchīpuram present a more graphic picture of the rise and growth of the dynasty. Here again it is the presence of a few inscribed labels that has helped the scholars to proceed and progress along the correct path of identification with the clue obtained therefrom.

Again, without the help of inscriptions we cannot understand who executed the carvings how, and at whose instance. Mostly it is the name of the donor that is given. If the carving is a religious gift it is so stated. Occasionally the name of the sculptor is also given. This is not only in the case of a sculpture as such but also in the case of any part of a sculpture for

which the donor is responsible. Such donative inscriptions abound in the early stūpas where a cross-bar or two, an upright or coping piece from a rail, a casing slab or a *dharmacakra* or a *pūrṇa-ghata* is presented by a perfumer or a cobbler or a musician or a trader or a leader of a caravan of merchants, a lay sister or a monk or a house-holder with brothers, sisters, sons, daughters, daughters-in-law and other relations and friends. Sometimes we hear that a guild of workmen completed a particular part of a building as, for instance, is given in an inscription at Sānci that one of the *torana* gateways was carved by the ivory carvers of Vidiśā and the fine workmanship is an enlarged version of the usual delicate work of the ivory-carvers. From these inscriptions we gather information also about the different places from which such pious pilgrims came, e.g., at Amaravati we hear of people coming from distant places like Pātaliputra, Rājagiri and Simhagiri. The occurrence of the carved moon-stones near the gateway entrances of the stupas and monasteries at Nāgārjunakonda which points to Ceylonese influence is amply testified by the inscription found in the place.

However graphic may be the description of a battle—and we have one of the most picturesque descriptions of a battle in the Kūram grant of Parameśvaravarman—historians are bound to view with suspicion any account of large-scale conquest. But the prominent presence of an inscription in the vanquished ruler's city to announce the shame of defeat of the king is evidence not to be lightly brushed aside. The presence of the inscription of the victorious Western Cālukyan Vikramāditya in the Kailāsanātha temple at Kāñcīpuram, the capital of the Pallavas, and similarly of Narasimhavarman proclaiming his victory prominently at Bādāmi itself, the capital of the early Western Cālukya, is a more important and more emphatic assertion of the conquest of both than in any of their other inscriptions, however forcefully put. On such occasions the scribes and stone cutters follow their royal patrons and inscriptions are incised to commemorate their victories or donations in a language and script totally different from those of the area concerned. Rājendra's victorious *praśastis* in Kalinga or in the Cālukyan area, Narasimhavarman's inscription in Grantha at Vātāpī are instances. Similarly the occurrence of Tamil inscriptions in distant islands like Sumatra where the language is totally unknown, and the presence of the Gāhaḍavāli inscription at Gangakondaḥolapuram have all their own story to tell.

Numismatics is no doubt an important source in understanding the true history of the land, but the coins themselves to be understood require the help of epigraphy. This dependence on epigraphy is not in any small measure when we remember that sometimes the legends on coins are sufficiently lengthy. It is only by a study of the different scripts that one can unravel the mysteries of coin legends which are as numerous and varied as the scripts themselves. Sometimes it is only the coins that reveal the use of a particular script in an area in a subsidiary fashion alongside of a main script used for inscriptions. As example, may be cited the Cola coins of Uttama, Rājarāja and Rājendra and a Kerala coin of Śri Virakerala wherein Nāgarī is used for the legends, though we know of no inscription in Nāgarī issued by these kings, the script used being invariably Grantha, Tamil or Vaṭṭeluttu.

So far we have considered the need for studying inscriptions and what the inscriptions reveal to us. There is probably no field of knowledge that does not come within the scope of inscriptions, after all, inscriptions are only permanent documents recording the life and happenings of their time with special reference to the king and his relationship with his people.

But to study and understand these inscriptions which differ from area to area and age to age in the type of script and language used, knowledge of palaeography is essential. Palaeography being the subject dealing with scripts, a study of this reveals how scripts came into being, developed and changed during the centuries. In the subject of epigraphy palaeography comes in as the most important limb. The age of the inscriptions, the growth of language, the literary beauty of the language—all these come only next in importance. In the following pages the essential features of the Indian epigraphy with special reference to South India and her scripts have been discussed.

DOCUMENT.

A document is engraved on a tablet or a metal plate which is usually shaped after a simpler original—a leaf or bark. In sculptures we find figures carrying these documents of bark or leaf in their hands. This is the usual thing in the case of all divinities presiding over learning and great masters profound in their knowledge of the essentials of wisdom. Brahma, the Lord of Learning is always represented in sculpture with a book in his left hand. A good early example of this may be seen in the representation of the deity at Aihole and Badami to which Buhler (*Ind. Ant.* XXXIII, p. 1) has drawn attention; a still better example is the Gupta-Maitraka sculpture from the Ardhanārīśvara panel at the Elephanta cave, near Bombay (Fig. 1). His spouse Sarasvatī carries a book similarly as she presides over



FIG. 1.

C. S. del.

learning more particularly over the secular and artistic side than her four-faced lord whose very breath is of the essence of the four *Vedas* which are chanted by an equal number of mouths. The earliest example of Sarasvatī yet found in India is a headless image of the deity from Mathura with an inscription on pedestal of about the beginning of the Christian era. In her left hand she holds a book composed of palm-leaves or cut birch bark tied together with string (Fig. 2). Śiva as a teacher of the universe, the teacher *par excellence* whose disciples



FIG. 2.

O. S. del.

are sages ripe in years and wisdom, holds a book in the same manner. One of the early examples of Vishnu in this form is in a panel from the Gupta temple at Deogarh (Fig. 3).



FIG. 3.

O. S. de

His right hand is in the *vyākhyānamudrā* or in the attitude of elucidation. These two hands and their attitude are noteworthy as the *vyākhyānamudrā* occurs also in the case of the greatest of Indian masters, the Buddha. The *dharmacakrapravartana*, the setting in motion of the wheel of dharma or the first sermon on dharma of Buddha is suggested by the *mudrā* of his hands styled *dharmacakrapravartanamudrā*. In most representations, one end of his cloak is caught by Buddha in his left hand while the other is raised. The end of the cloak resembles a small book and this is very suggestive (Fig. 4). *Mānikkavācaka*, the great scholar devotee of Śiva from South India, is always represented in sculpture

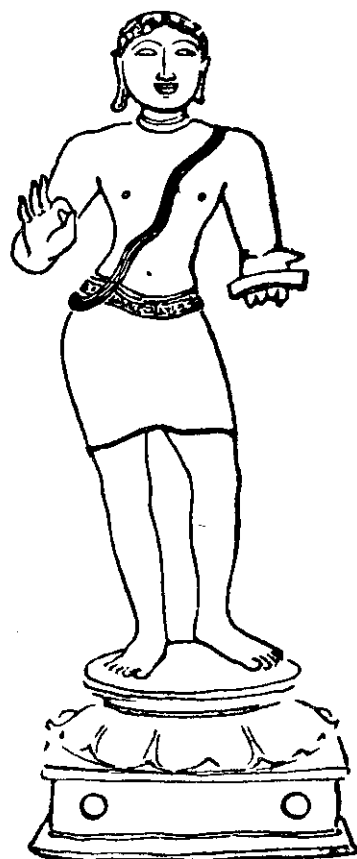


FIG. 4.

C. S. del.

carrying a book in his left hand and in one of the bronzes of his has actually a verse from one of his works inscribed on the leaf in letters of the late Coḷa period (Fig. 5). One of the finest sculptures in Ceylon is the sage holding a book in both his hands (Fig. 6). This is differently interpreted by different scholars as Agastya, Tiruvalluvar and Parākrama-bāhu, a king of Ceylon. However it may be, it is undoubtedly an early representation of a great scholar. In the early Coḷa painting representing Śiva disguised as the old man come to fetch Sundaramūrti, he is represented as carrying an umbrella in one hand and a palm-leaf document in the other.

The very name of a document, *patra* suggests its origin. The earliest material used for writing was the leaf. It may have been *tālapatra* or *bhūrjpatra* cut to proper shape,



C.S. del.

FIG. 5.



C. S. del.

FIG. 6.

the former being popular in the Deccan and the latter in North India. A page is also connoted by the same term. The term *panna* occurs in Buddhist literature and writing on a leaf is often referred to in the *Jātakas* (II, p. 122 ; IV, p. 35 ; VI 204). The antiquity of the palm leaf as writing material has been well established by Bühler, who cites (a) Huien Tsang (seventh century A.D.), an eye witness for its use, (b) some fragments of palm manuscripts of the Godfrey collection of the fourth century A.D. and early copper-plates of about the Christian era modelled after-palm-leaf, and (c) Buddhist traditions that the canon was written on palm leaves at the first Council soon after Buddha's death (Bühler, Appendix to *Ind. Ant.* XXXIII, p. 94). The terms *grantha* and *prabandha* suggest a book composed of a number of leaves properly arranged and tied together. The words *kāṇḍa*, *sarga* and *paṭala*, terms for portions of a work, also convey this sense.

The word *olai* in Tamil is significant in this connection as it specifically means the palm-leaf used for writing. The calendar carried by the astrologer who is an adjunct to temples is referred to a *Nalolai* in inscriptions (*S. Ind. Inscr.* III, p. 321). A document is styled

Arai-olai (Ibid. pp. 163 and 275) and the officers who noted the oral orders of the sovereign were called *Mandira volai* and *Olaināyagan* all based on the palm-leaf used for writing. There is an interesting statement in an inscription how actually the king graciously ordered that his instructions may be entered into accounts and the order was written by the *Mandiravolai* and issued with the signatures of the *Olaināyakam* officers (Ibid. p. 312). The process of writing itself is described as *variylit̃tu*, i.e., putting in lines. The process of transferring the royal command, first copied on palm-leaf, to more permanent material, like stone, is picturesquely described in an inscription from Tiruvālangāḍu, where the personality of the great emperor Rājendracōla, who allowed his officials to bother him even at such odd hours as when he was engaged in dining, recalls the magnanimous spirit of Aśoka, who similarly allowed himself to be disturbed at all hours. The emperor while dining in his day residence at Śivapuri being informed by one of his officials that twenty-five families may be settled on the land in the village to be called Rājendracōlappāḍi to supply oil to the deity at Tiruvālangāḍu granted the wish and the order was received with the signature of the royal secretary (*Tirumandiravolai*) and conveyed to the magistrate who ordered it to be engraved on stone to prevent any one from disobeying the royal order (Ibid. p. 136).

Another term for a document is *lekha* which is derived from the root *likh*, to write. The term *lipi* is also used and a well-known instance is the *dhamma-lipi* of the emperor Aśoka—इयं धम्मलिपि लिखापिता, i.e., this moral treatise or document has been incised. The term *likhāpitā* suggests the incising of the letters and the word *lipi* suggests the painting of the letters. The use of the term *lekha* also suggests the transferring of the document, drafted in ink or *maṣī* from a less permanent material as was obviously used for such purposes to a more permanent medium like a stone tablet in imperishable incised letters.

Copper plate grants that are found in such large numbers all over India are copies of originals from the royal archives or from those of the nobles. They were intended for the donees who kept them carefully to establish their right to the gifted land or other property. Elaborate descriptions there are of how a king made a gift. The king with his hand purified by the touch of the cow's ear and kusa-grass poured water and made the gift with the words that it may last for ever गोकर्णकुशलतापूतकरतिलोदकपूर्वमाचन्द्रार्कं यावत् शासनीकृत्य प्रदत्तः (*Epigraph. Ind.* XIII, p. 297). The recording of the facts of the gift are also expressly maintained, sometimes even the metal composing the charter being alluded to (Ibid. VIII p. 142; XV, p. 143, III, p. 353). That the charter was intended for establishing claims by exhibiting it is also made clear in some inscriptions (Ibid. VI, p. 142). The giving of the charter itself is sometimes recorded in it as in the Mayidavolu plates (Ibid. VI, p. 88).

As already pointed out, the commands of the king were recorded on leaf or birch bark by a keeper of records like the *Āksapaṭalika* or *Divirapati* according to the instructions of the messenger (*Dūtaka*) usually the minister, *Pramātr* or *Mahāsādhivigrahika* or *Rahasika*, who conveyed it to him (Ibid I, 318; p. 73; p. 88; p. 9.) and passed on to the engraver.

SIGNATURE.

The final stamp of authority was with the affixing of the signature and seal. The former was usually done by expressing the name of the king prefixed by the phrase *Svahasto mama*. A classical example of this is the signature of Śrī Harṣavardhana (Fig. 7). It is easily

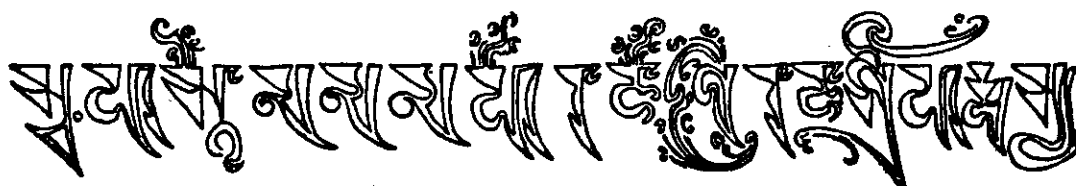


FIG. 7.

O.S. del.

the best preserved, highly florid and most artistically drawn royal signature yet found in India. It has led one of the scholars in the epigraphical field to wonder how the king could find time in the midst of his military conquests and administrative and literary activities for such florid signatures to be affixed to documents. In Telugu grants, the name of the king was suffixed by the term *Vrālu* meaning 'signature,' as in *Singānāyānivrālu* (Fig. 8) or some-

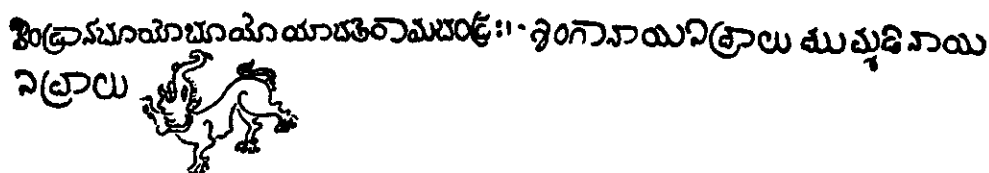


FIG. 8.

O.S. del.

times the word 'signature of' was omitted and merely the name of the king was given as in Vijayanagara grants. In the Vijayanagara grants, it was however only sometimes that the king's name was given, as for instance, *Śrī Harihara* (Fig. 9) but sometimes the name of the

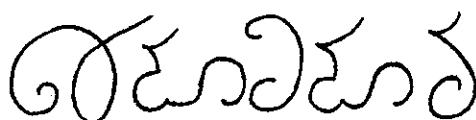


FIG. 9.

O.S. del.

great deity of the principal temple at Hampi Śrī Virūpākṣa was put down instead, suggesting that the king was acting on behalf of the Lord himself. There are many instances of the king's name with the word *Svahasto mama* like that of Bhoja of Dhārā—*Svahastoyam Śrī Bhojadevasya* (Ibid. XI, p. 182). Sometimes it was only the king's name as *Śrī Mūlarājasya* (Ibid. X, p. 79) or sometimes merely *Svahasto mama* (Ibid. I, p. 88) which was felt sufficient as the seal was also given.

Fig. 7.—स्वहस्तो मम महाराजाधिराजश्रीहर्षस्य

Fig. 8.—వేంద్రాన్ భూ యో భూ యో యాచత రామచంద్రః॥

—శింగానాయనివ్రాలు ముమ్మిడినాయనివ్రాలు

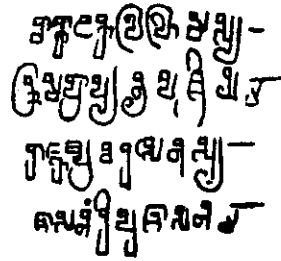
Fig. 9.—శ్రీహరిహర

SEAL.

The seal affixed to a document was considered the most important element to proclaim its validity and the *dharmasāstras* demand its use. In the drama *Mudrārākṣasa* Rāksasa, the minister of the Nandas, wonders whether he can deny the validity of a document bearing his own seal, although he was not responsible for its issue (लेखोज्ञं न ममेति नोत्तरमिदं मुद्रा मदीया यत :-*Mudrārākṣasa* V, 18). So the seal counted for everything as in the *Rāmāyaṇa*, Sītā trusts Hanumān as Rāma's messenger only on the presentation of the signet ring of Rāma with his name engraved on it विश्वासार्थं तवानीतं तेन दत्तं ह्यनिन्दिते । रामनामाङ्कितं चेदं पश्यदेव्यङ्गुलीयकम् (*Rāmāyaṇa*) V, 36, 2). The signet ring was sometimes the seal itself but often there were separate larger seals. India abounds in seals of various types found all over the land. There are private seals, seals of guilds, seals of high officials and dignitaries, noblemen, seals of generals, ministers, royal seals including those of princes ; there are also seals of institutions like the *Vihāra* of Nālandā, religious and votive seals with such legends as the usual Buddhist creed ' *Ye dharmā*, etc.' The earliest seals in India from Mohenjo-daro are not yet understood as their script has not yet been deciphered. The scheme of representing a motif like an animal or some object of importance together with a legend is, however, found repeated in later seals as well. Even in coins, the same method has been adopted.

In Samudragupta's Allahabad inscription, the respectful offerings of seals with the mark of *Garuḍa* from his numerous *Sāmantas* is specially mentioned. An example of the Gupta royal seal is also given (Fleet, *C. Inscr. Ind.* III, pl. XXXVII). The royal seal was usually a model of fine workmanship. The seal of Śarvavarman Maukhari is an example of fine artistic work (Ibid, pl. XXX). The bull, the *lāñchana* of this house, is very well represented. Similarly the bull is found on the seal of Maitraka Bhatārka (Ibid, XXIV and on the Sonpat seal of Harṣavardhana (Ibid, pl. XXXII). The *Varāha* was the *lāñchana* for a number of dynasties ; the Western Cālukyas, the Kākatīyas after them and the Vijayanagara rulers still later. The elephant adorned the seal of the Western Ganga while the bull was chosen by the Eastern Gangas. The bull also adorned the Pallava seal. The tiger was the emblem of the Coḷas and it was placed as suzerain over the fish and bow emblems respectively of the Pāṇdyas and Ceras, the royal umbrella and chauris being shown above the tiger suggesting overlordship. Similarly in the case of the *Varāha* signifying the royal house of the *Cālukyas* the various *Rāja-cihnas* or the royal emblems like the parasol, chauris, auspicious lamps, conch, lotus were shown. The conch and lotus signify the *nidhis (kośa)* of the king, the umbrella and chauris power, and the *ankuśa* and spear *daṇḍa* or military strength, the lamps the brilliancé of the king, and the sun and moon the glory of the house till eternity (i.e., till the sun and moon last). These emblems of the king are actually enumerated in some of the Eastern Ganga grants, the conch, golden chauri, white umbrella, bull emblem, etc. गोकर्णस्वामिनः प्रसादाडसमासादितैकशङ्खभेरीपचमहाशब्दधवलच्छत्रहेमचामरवरवृषभलाञ्छनसमुज्ज्वलसमस्तसाम्रज्यमहिम्ना (*Epigraph. Ind.* IV, p. 189). The seal of the Pāla kings of Bengal is a beautiful representation of the first sermon of Buddha suggested by *Dharmacakra* flanked by deer.

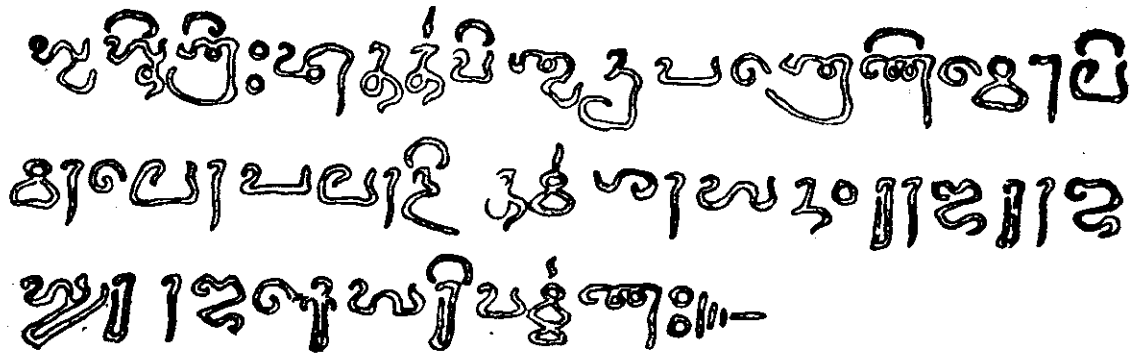
Apart from the emblems there are legends sometimes long, sometimes short. The name of the king and the dynasty and sometimes the pedigree are given. An example of the legend on Vākāṭaka seals is given in Fig. 10. The legend from the closing portion of an inscription of Rājarāja (Fig. 11)



C.S. del.

FIG. 10.

is also the type of legend occurring on a seal as may be seen on that of Rājendra's



C.S. del.

FIG. 11.

Tiruvālangādu plates (pl. II-a). Another example of a legend is from a Kalinga seal (Fig.12).

Fig. 10.—वाकाटकललामस्य क्रमप्राप्य नृपश्रियः ।

राज्ञः प्रवरसेनस्य शासनं रिपुशासनम् ॥

Fig. 11.—स्वस्तिश्रीः एतत् विश्वनृपश्रेणिमौलिमालोपलालितम् ।

शासनं राजराजस्य राजकसरिवर्मणः ॥

सत्राग्र्यनियुक्तं नृपतिरिन्द्रोः
 श्रीमत्प्रतिष्ठास्य रणभीतस्य शासनम् ।

O. S. del.

FIG. 12.

The seal of Rājendra for the Tiruvālangāḍu plates suggests his conquest and power (pl. II-a). It is a fitting appendage to the most remarkable collection of copper plates strung on one ring, a more real epigraphical curio than the Paiṭhān plates. The bull on the seal of the Tanḍamtōṭṭam plates is also of exquisite workmanship. The lion on the seal of the Viṣṇukunḍin plates (pl. III-b) is realistic with its mouth open, paw raised and the tail looped. Of the exquisite elephant on the fifth century Western Ganga seal of the Penugonḍa plates of Mādhava II, it would suffice to say that the beautiful letters of the inscription are matched by the realistic elephant done by the goldsmith Aiya, whose son Apāpa engraved the letters (Ibid, XIV p. 335). An epithet like *Śrī Tribhuvanāṅkuśa* occurs with boar emblem on Eastern Cālukyam seals (pl. III-c) some of which are works of art (pl. IV.)

The seal was generally of metal, the royal seal of gold, and it was applied to a flattened ball of clay affixed to the document of which there are numerous instances in literature (*Dhammapad-Atṭha-Kathā—Buddhist Legends* I, p. 165). Even now there are to be seen on the backs of seals the impressions of the leaf documents to which they were affixed and of the holes for the string used for binding the sheets. A pictureques example of the use of the seal, and the clay presented for the purpose of stamping the seal is given in the *Harṣa carita*.

“During the king’s stay there, the village notary appeared with his whole retinue of clerks, and saying ‘Let his Majesty whose edicts are never void, even now bestow upon us his commands for the day,’ so presented a new-made golden seal with a bull for its emblem. The king took it. As soon, however, as a ball of earth was produced, the seal slipped from the king’s hand and fell face downwards upon the ground, and the lines of the letters were distinctly marked upon the nearly dry mud and soft earth of the Sarasvati’s bank. Apprehensive of an evil omen, the courtiers were depressed, but the king thought in his heart : “The minds of the dull are indeed blind to reality. The omen signifies that the earth shall be stamped with the single seal of my sole command ; but the rustics interpret otherwise.’ Having thus mentally welcomed the omen, he bestowed upon the Brahmans a hundred villages delimited by a thousand ploughs.” (*Harsacarita*, trans. Cowell, p. 198). The original document on perishable material was kept by the *Aksapatalika* or the keeper of the records.

Fig. 12.—मण्डलाग्रनिष्पेषनिष्पष्टारातिसङ्घतेः ।

श्रीमत्प्रतिष्ठास्य रणभीतस्य शासनम् ।

The more important copy, made on metal sheets which were strung on a ring with a facsimile seal made of metal affixed to it—not a mere sealing on clay—was presented to the person concerned. Surely the grants are embellished by the addition of such fine seals as remarked by Bāṇa (*Harṣacarita*, p. 284). Before, however, it was given away, it was compared with the original as may be seen actually recorded occasionally in the words *dr̥ṣṭam* 'seen'.

INSCRIPTIONS, THEIR FORM AND CONTENTS.

In India it has always been a habit to introduce auspicious utterances in works of any nature.

There is practically no work, literary, scientific or philosophical, without *mangalāśloka* or *mangalavacana*, i.e., auspicious verse or word at the beginning. The *mangalas* may be of three kinds, *āśīh* or benediction, *namaskriyā* or salutation to the deity, or *vastunir̥d̥deśa* or suggestion of *mangala* while abruptly beginning the topic. This has been followed in all written documents. The inscriptions on stone metal plates and other materials follow the same arrangement.

In many early inscriptions, there are a number of auspicious symbols in addition to salutation. The salutation is generally short and in prose, though soon it develops into beautiful verses in praise of deities. Thus the symbols, *Svastika* and *Śrīvatsa* occur in the Hathigumpha inscription of Khāravela to suggest *svastiśrī*, a form in which actual writing marks the beginning of Cālukyan grants—स्वस्ति श्रीमतां. This is in addition to the brief salutation to the Jinās. The same symbols which occur as auspicious ending in some early inscriptions occur in words in many mediaeval inscriptions in the form, मंगलं महाश्रीः. Asoka's inscriptions are examples of *vastunir̥d̥deśa* type of *mangala* as the word देवानां पिय begins with the auspicious word Deva—god. In the caves of Western India there are numerous examples of these symbols of auspiciousness. Sometimes *Namo* or Salutation is expressed by the symbol which is usually referred to by writers as Wheel on *Trisūla*. The symbols of a Drum and *Bodhi* tree also occur, the former probably representing *praṇava* or *Omkāra* or *Bhagavān* and the latter *Nārāyaṇa* (as *Aśvatthānārāyaṇa*). The symbols in the Nanaghat cave are additional to the salutation to *San-karṣaṇa*, *Vāsudeva*, *Indra*, *Candra*, *Sūrya* and other deities. At Amaravati the symbols are used along with salutations to Buddha. Sometimes the word *Siddham* is used.

In early copper plate grants as in some of the early charters including Prakrit ones of the Pallavas, the early Western Ganga plates of Mādhavarman, Viṣṇukunḍins, and the earliest copper plates from Kalinga, *svasti* is used in the marginal space almost pushing in one of the central lines of the first plate. Similarly, *siddham* is used in early Kadamba, Nala and other inscriptions as in those of the Guptas and Yaśodharman. *Dr̥ṣṭam* is believed to be another auspicious word used as in some early Pallava Prakrit charters and those of the Vākāṭakas.

But it is most probably intended to convey the idea that the copy on the copper plate has been compared with the original and found correct. *Om* is expressed by spiral symbol in Western Cālukyan and Rāṣṭrakūṭa inscriptions which they begin. There are other forms like जितं भगवता in early Western Ganga and Pallava charters; ओं नमः शिवाय *Epigraph. Ind. II*, pp. 10, 410; VI, p. 200; XIX, p. 279), नमो बुद्धाय (Ibid, VI, p. 287), नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय (Ibid, II, p. 350; XIII, p. 290). नमो ब्रह्मणे (Ibid, II, p. 3; XIX, p. 211), नमः सरस्वत्यै or भारत्यै (Ibid, II, pp. 182, 333). श्री गणाधिपतये नमः begins all later Vijayanagar grants.

Salutations to Śiva and Viṣṇu in beautiful verses are plentiful. Some are addressed to Devī also. Other salutations are to Viṣṇu on the serpent couch or as Narasimha (Ibid, XIX, p. 241), Trivikrama, Vāsudeva, Kṛṣṇa, Mukunda, Padmanābha or as the sportive consort of Laksmī (see Gāhaḍavāla inscriptions from Kanauj). He is most popular as the Ādivarāha rescuing *Prthvī* in which form his praise begins all the inscriptions of later Cālukyas, Kākātīyas, Yādavas, Redḍis and Vijayanagar kings. Beautiful praises of Śiva and Viṣṇu occur in the Gupta inscriptions and the salutation to Śiva in the Meharauli inscription and those of Yaśodharman are splendid examples of their kind. There are also salutations to Sūrya couched in the most elegant language. Salutation to Gaṇapati precedes that of other deities in some inscriptions (Ibid, II, pp. 119, 276; XIII, p. 200; XIX, p. 49), principally of the Redḍis and Vijayanagar monarchs. There are instances of Brahma and Sarasvatī praised in some inscriptions. *Brahma* in the abstract form is also occasionally invoked (Ibid, XIX, p. 211). Salutation to Jinas begins all Jain inscriptions which abound in the Canarese country and Northern Gujarat. Mañjughosa (Ibid, p. 296), Vasudhārā, Mañjuśrī and other Buddhist deities are also invoked at the commencement of certain charters. Often these verses contain details which help iconographic study (Sivaramamurti 4).

After the salutation, the pedigree of the ruler, the donor, is given. Three generations at least are mentioned. To take concrete cases, the Western Ganga king, Mādhava II mentions in his copper plate his father, grandfather, and great-grandfather Ayyavarman, Mādhava and Śri-Konkaṇivarman respectively, and a short account of exploits in addition to those of his own as the donor. Similarly, the Pallava king Simhavarman mentions his great-grandfather Mahārāja Śri Viravarman his grandfather Mahārāja Skandavarman and father Yuvamahārāja Viṣṇugopa as repositories of penance and prowess, learned in Śāstras, abiding by the law and so forth. In the Valabhi grants, the founder Bhaṭārka is mentioned and his glorious successors preceding the donor are described in beautiful embellished prose passages. In the inscriptions of the Guptas, the family tree up to the time of the king when the inscription is incised is given. The Mahārājādhirāja Samudragupta, exterminator of all kings, without one of equal power in the world, whose fame was tasted by the waters of the four oceans, equal to Dhanada, Varuṇa, Indra and Antaka, the very axe of Kṛtānta, performer of Aśvamedha, is mentioned as the great-grandson of Mahārāja Gupta, grandson of Mahārāja Ghaṭotkaca, son of Mahārājādhirāja Candragupta and daughter's son of Licchavi

by his mother, queen Kumāradevī ; his son is mentioned as Mahārājādhirāja Candragupta by queen Dattadevi; his son is mentioned as Mahārājādhirāja Kumāragupta born of Dhruvadevi and his son Skandagupta of great glory subsisting like a bee on the widespreading water-lilies which were the feet of his father. The phrase of *Mātā-pitr-pādānudhyāta* (i.e., contemplating on the feet of the parents) is a very common feature in most north Indian inscriptions together with the mention of father as well as mother which custom is continued from the practice observed in Gupta inscriptions. An excellent example of this is found in the copper plate grants of Harṣavardhana where Mahārāja Śrī-Naravardhana is mentioned first, then his son that contemplated on his feet Mahārāja Śrī-Kājyavardhana born of queen Vajrinidevi and a great devotee of Sūrya, his son that contemplated on his feet Ādityavardhana born of queen Apsarodevī and also a great devotee of Sūrya, his son that contemplated on his feet Paramabhaṭṭāraka Mahārājādhirāja Śrī-Prabhākaravardhana born of queen Mahāsenaguptādevi and also a great devotee of Sūrya and his son that contemplated on his feet Paramabhaṭṭāraka Mahārājādhirāja Śrī-Rājyavardhana born of queen Yaśomatī and follower of Buddha, and finally is his brother Paramabhaṭṭāraka Mahārājādhirāja Śrī Harṣavardhana, great devotee of Śiva, Paramamāheśvara. From this, it can be easily seen that in the same family there are Paramādityabhaktas, Paramasaugatas, Paramamaheśvaras and even Paramabhāgavatas. The Guptas were mostly Paramabhāgavatas, followers of Viṣṇu. The pedigree portion thus brought into the inscriptions forms a very important source for historians in settling successions and dating the grants where definite dating is not clear. When there are, for example, two or three Narasimhavarmans or two or three Mādhavavarmans, the names of the predecessors help in the correct location of the ruler concerned.

Sometimes, the mythical origin of the family of the donor is mentioned. When the family is *Sūryavamśa*, it is so described with poetic exuberance; similarly in the case of *Candravamśa*, the moon is praised in verses often full of poetic skill as the theme lends itself to excellent description. Sometimes is described his origin along with Lakshmī from the milky ocean, sometimes from Atri and mostly in his role as the crest-jewel of Śiva. Sometimes the mythical origin of a royal family from the fire of Vaśiṣṭha on Mount Arbuda is described at some length.

Sometimes the special favour shown to the family by gods or sages is mentioned. Thus in Cālukyan grants, the special kindness shown to the rulers of this house by the Lord of Kauśikī (Śiva) who gave them their kingdom, by Mahāsena whose feet they adored, the Saptamātrkās who were their protectors and Nārāyaṇa whose gift of the boar emblem assured them victory is always mentioned. In the Eastern Ganga grants, the kings of the dynasty are described as washed of all sins by their salutation to the pair of lotus feet of the Lord Gokarṇa on the Mahendra Mountain. In the Vākāṭaka grants, the Bhāraśivas are described as specially favoured by Śiva because they carry the *Śivalinga* on their shoulder.

Some early legendary ancestor is often mentioned with great pride, as, for instance, Karikāla in the Tiruvālangāḍu plates of Rājendracoḷa. The great esteem in which the royal family was held by venerable men is sometimes mentioned, as in the Sinnamannūr plates where the Pāṇḍya kings are described as honoured by the sage Agastya acting as their priest. Exploits of the king, the donor of the grant, are mentioned in what are known in Tamil as *Meykīrtis*. The *Meykīrtis* in the Tamil inscriptions of the Coḷas and the Pāṇḍyas differed with different kings and grew in length with every fresh victory. Such exploits are also vividly described in Sanskrit and Prakrit inscriptions and are called *Prasastis*, the Sanskrit for *Meykīrti* in Tamil. Of such *Prasastis*, those of Gautamīputra Śātakarni in the Nasik cave, of Khāravēla in Hathigumpha, of Rudrādāman in Girnar, of Samudragupta in the Allahabad Pillar inscription and of Yaśōdharman in the Mandasor stone inscription are famous. The first two are in Prakrit, the rest being in Sanskrit.

The purpose of the inscription is then stated. The donee is mentioned. Sometimes it is a general who had distinguished himself in battle and earned the honour at the hands of the king, as in the Eastern Cālukyan grant of Amma I, where the king mentions the prowess of his general Bhaṇḍanāditya alias Kuntāditya to whom he made over certain villages (*S. Ind. Inscr.* I, p. 38). Sometimes it is a presentation of land, for the daily worship, *caru*, *bali* and other offerings, *dhūpa*, *dīpa* and other adjuncts of worship and for the maintenance of flower garden, etc., for the *pūjā* requirements of some temple. Sometimes the grant mentions the gift of land made by the king in recognition and appreciation of the musical talents of a songstress of repute. But mostly, the grants record the gifts of the king to distinguished scholars in the *Vedas* and *Sāstras* and for *Bhaṭṭavṛtti* or honorary professorship for freely imparting Śāstric and Vedic knowledge. In such cases, the donee's name is mentioned and occasionally his pedigree as well, but invariably his *gotra*, *śākhā* and special proficiency are mentioned. Sometimes it is a Kramapāṭhi or a Ghanapāṭhi or a Yājñika, Agnihotrin or *Yajvā* or a *Bahvṛccarana*, a *Caturveda*, a *Triveda*, *Dikṣita*, *Dviveda*, *Śrottriya* or *Upādhyāya*. Whether the donee was a student of *Rg*, *Yajus* or *Sāma Veda* is made clear by the mention of *śākhā*. For those who are interested in the study of geographical distribution of the *Vedas*, with special reference to their schools like the *Vājasaneyya*, *Taittirīya*, *Mādhyandina*, *Kaṭha*, *Kaṭhuma* and so on and for the distribution of *gotras* like *Vaśiṣṭha*, *Bhārgava*, *Gautama*, *Vatsa*, *Bhāradvāja*, *Mudgala*, *Śāṇḍilya*, *Kautsa*, *Kāsya*, etc., and the mode of their occurrence, these inscriptions are valuable.

Where the gifts are made to institutions like a temple or a *Maṭha* or a *Ghaṭikā*, there is mention of some special committee or elders of the villages or elected members of the village assembly called on to protect the gift or charitable endowment and the endowment itself is described with minute details.

These grants were usually made on auspicious occasions and the time chosen is always specifically given. May be it is a solar eclipse or a lunar eclipse or the time of some auspicious

constellation of planets. These help in the accurate fixing of the dates in terms of the corresponding dates of the Christian era. In the earlier Prakrit inscriptions, the regnal year of the king the *pakṣa*, the *ṛitu* or season and the day or *dina* are given. In the Khāravela inscription, the number of years from the time of the Nandas is given. In the Gupta inscriptions the date according to the Gupta era is given. In the Western Cālukyan inscription of Mangaleśa at Badami, the Śaka era is mentioned. In all mediæval inscriptions the Vikrama era or Śalivāhana śaka era is mentioned. In the Eastern Ganga inscriptions the Ganga era is mentioned. The exact date of the Ganga era in the fifth century A.D. has been fixed by accurate mathematical calculation by Vepa Ramesam. There are other eras like the Cedi era and Harṣa era which are of secondary importance. In mediæval inscriptions, the broad classification of *ṛtu* and *dina* is absent but greater detail is introduced by giving the *ayana*, *māsa pakṣa*, *tithi*, *vāra*, *nakṣatra* and any other peculiar phenomenon such as an eclipse. These details help the modern astronomer in correctly fixing the date.

The purpose of the grant is then specified, the extent of the land granted, the boundaries and other particulars. These details give sometimes the names of hamlets, adjoining areas trees, wells, lakes, river bank and so forth. Even in Sanskrit inscriptions, the name of these occur in the local language, as, for instance, in making the gift of the village, Maliyapūṇḍi, its boundaries given are in Telugu, Munjunyūru in the east, Yinimili in the south, Kalvakūru in the west and Dharmavuramu in the north. The boundaries of the fields of this village are *Gollangigunṭa* pond in the east, the tank *Raviaperiaceru* in the south-east, a demarcation stone in the south and south-west, *Malkapaṛru* and the tank *Koraboyutaṭāka* in the west a demarcation stone in the north-west, a tank *Dubaceruvu* in the north, the north-east boundary being the same as that of the field *Evvokacenu* in Kalvakūru (*Epigraph. Ind.* IX, p. 56). It may be remarked that similar vernacularizations occur for describing local weights, measures, and different items of offerings and we have examples of Guzraticisms (*Ibid*, I, p. 271) and Marathisms (*Ibid*, I, p. 338) in some late mediæval inscriptions of which Buhler and Kielhorn have given a useful list (*Ibid*, I, p. 163.)

At the end of the inscriptions there are the usual imprecatory verses which generally vary in number, sometimes long and occasionally restricted to a single verse. The imprecatory verses in Prakrit charters are sometimes in Sanskrit. In other charters the imprecatory verses are in Sanskrit. Some inscriptions in Tamil, Telugu and Canarese, however, have short imprecatory prose passages in the language of the inscriptions.

In early inscriptions this is rather simple. The sin of killing a cow and a Brāhman and the guilt of five sins are pronounced for those who violate the *dharma* य उच्छिन्धात्स गोब्रह्महृत्यया संयुक्तो भवेत् पञ्चभिश्चानन्तर्यैः (*Fleet, C. Inscr. Ind.* III, p. 32); यैन्नं घर्मस्कन्धं व्युच्छिन्धात् ष पञ्चमहापातकैः संयुक्तः स्यादिति (*Ibid*, pp. 38, 40). The sin of killing a cow, teacher and

Brahman and sins in additions to the five heinous sins are mentioned in an imprecatory verse in another Gupta inscription (Ibid, p. 71).

In the early Prakrit charter from Mayidavolu, king Śivaskandavarman threatens corporal punishment to one who causes trouble or annoyance to the donee by transgressing his orders जो अम्ह सासनं अतिच्छित्तुना पीला वाधा करेज्जा वा त कारापेज्ज वा तस अम्हो सारीरं सासनं करेजामो (*Epigraph. Ind.* VI, p. 87; also Ibid, VIII, p. 162 in Śimhavarman's charter. Ibid, VIII, p. 235 in Kumāraśiṣṇu's copper plate, and Ibid, III, p. 146 in Nandivarman's copper plate). This is what a king can do when he is alive and in power to enforce his word. But it is not possible for all time. So devine wrath is invoked for assuring protection to the gift. There is also a prayer put forth to all future kings to take care of gifts of former kings. In this, the most powerful kings with one accord repeat the evanescence of wealth and the fleeting nature of their own glory and request with folded hands their successors in power for all time to protect their gifts. Here they cite the mighty king Rāmabhadra of Ayodhyā as requesting all future kings to protect the gifts of former kings.

The Gupta king Pravarasena, like Śivaskandavarman, threatens punishment and fine to those who give even the slightest trouble to the donees, if they were denounced as culprits by the Brāhmanas. He adds that he is silent about the many gifts of former kings which he has protected to avoid such boasts. He orders all contemplatory kings to protect his own gifts. Here one or two verses of Vyāsa are introduced in support of protection of gifts.

यश्चास्मच्छ्रासनमगणयमानः स्वल्पामपि परिवाधां कुर्यात्कारयित्वा वा
तस्य ब्राह्मणैर्वेदितस्य सदण्डनिग्रहं कुर्याम । अस्मिञ्च घर्मादरकरणे-
अतीतानेकराजदत्तसंचिन्तनपरिपालनं कृतपुण्य, नुकीर्तनपरिहारार्थं
न कीर्तयाम. संकल्पाभियोगपराक्रमोपजातान्वर्तमानानाज्ञापयामः
एष्यत्कालप्रभृष्णिगौरवाद्भूविष्यान्विज्ञापयामः—व्यासगीताश्चात्र
श्लोकाः—स्वदत्तां परदत्तां वा यो हरेत वसुधराम् । गवां शतसहस्रस्य
हर्तुर्हरति किल्बिषम् ॥

(Ibid, III, p. 262 and Fleet, *C. Inscr. Ind.* III, p. 247.)

Warding off of all troubles from the donee being a very important thing, the kings made necessary provisions in the charters; अचाटभटप्रवेष्य land was not to be a thoroughfare for *chāṭas* and *bhaṭas* (*Epigraph. Ind.* XII, p. 36, Fleet, *C. Inscr. Ind.* III, p. 98 and *Epigraph. Ind.* XII, p. 141) अमटप्रावेश्यम् (Ibid, VI, p. 87) meaning regular troops. In one of inscriptions even the movement of wind on the donee's land is sought to be controlled recalling Hanumān's remark in Lankā वायुरप्यत्र नाज्ञातश्चरेदिति मतिर्भम् (*Rāmāyaṇa*, V, pp. 2-44).

The imprecatory verses grew in length in the later charters and we have all forms of curses heaped on the head of the wrongdoer. Bhagavān Vyāsa is quoted. Many kings like Sagara and others have donated lands and many have protected the gifts and the fruit of the gifts have also been enjoyed by the owners of the land. Sixty thousand years of heavenly bliss is assured for the land donor, and hell for one disapproving the gift. The pilferers of Brahmadeya are born as dark cobras in the Vindhya forests bereft of water and live in the dried up hollows of trees.

बहुभिर्वसुधा दत्ता बहुश्रिानुपालिता । यस्य यस्य
यदा भूमिस्तस्य तस्य तदा फलम् ॥ षष्टि वर्षसहस्राणि स्वर्गे
मोदति भूमिद । अच्छेत्ता चानुमन्ता च तान्येव नरके वसेत् ॥—
विन्ध्याटवीष्वतोयासु शुष्कक्रोटरवासिनः । कृष्णाहयो हि
जायन्ते ब्रह्मदेयापहारकाः ॥

(*Epigraph. Ind.* VI, p. 211.)

The length of the imprecatory verses increased further in other grants. Vedic quotations and the *dharma-śāstra* are mentioned as authorities. The gift is described as granted for successive generations, as in the words of the *Veda* 'Growing from every clump created in hundreds and growing into thousands'. To allow the enjoyment in succession in the donee's family and out of respect for the king and *dharma*, not the least annoyance should be caused to the donee. Then are conjured up the visions of hell and heaven for the destroyers and protectors of grants respectively. Protection of others' gifts has greater fruit than that born of one's own gifts. It assures the merit of thousands of *Aśvamedhas*, hundreds of *Vājapeya*, and numerous *Paṇḍarīka* sacrifices. Eleven generations of *Pitrs* (forefathers), even if suffering in hell, ascend to heaven and immortal bliss by the act. But one who despoils land given by himself or by some other is born as a worm in a refuse heap and is tormented along with his *Pitrs*. One who steals even a single gold coin or cow or an inch of land is condemned to hell till the great deluge. Of all gifts, that of land is the best ; it overcomes all accumulated sin of æons. Eleven generations of the donor's family suffering in hell free themselves by the gift of land like a serpent issuing from its cover ; twenty-four generations of *Pitrs* including the donor ascend heaven step by step casting off the cloak of sin. Such is the merit of the fruit (gift) ; but the plunderer of land destroys the fruit. The pilferer of land cannot cleanse himself of his evil even by the performance of thousands of *Aśvamedhas* and hundreds of *Vājapeya* sacrifices and by the gift of tens of thousands of cows. Even metal dust, stone powder and poison may be digested but who is it in the three worlds that can digest *Brahmasva* ? Sacrifices are spoilt by the utterance of falsehood penance is diminished by pride ; but a swindler of land brings down to hell twenty-one generations of ancestors. Realising that life is ephemeral like water drops on tips of grass blades

and like water bubbles, reputation and righteous conduct should not be allowed to dwindle. The voice of the *Veda* and *Smritis* proclaim to the R̥ṣis and gods, 'such is a land plunderer'; hence, Oh! men, do not plunder, Oh! do not plunder. Just as a drop of oil on water spreads, so grows the gift of land. The father's chuckle and the fore-fathers skip about in joy at the thought that in their family would be born a land-donor who would be their refuge. The gods, Āditya, Varuṇa, Viṣṇu, Brahma, Soma, Agni and Śiva applaud the land-donor. The giver of land and its recipient, both of meritorious action, surely go to heaven. Thus reflecting on the fleeting nature of fortune and life, like a drop of water on a lotus leaf, and understanding all that has been thus explained, men should never destroy the gifts of others (Ibid, XII, pp. 324-325).

The last verse which refers to the evanescent nature of fortune and the short span of life allotted to man occurs in earlier grants like that of the emperor Harṣavardhana. In a preceding verse the monarch admonishes future kings in his own line conscious of great and noble lineage, and reminds them that it is obligatory on their part to protect the gifts of their ancestors before they gloat over their ancestry.

This gift should be protected by those that claim our noble lineage and also by other kings realising that a gift and its protection alone are the fruit of fortune which is fickle like the lightning and the water bubble (Ibid, IV, p. 211).

SCRIBES.

One of the most important sculptures from Egypt is a wooden figure of a scribe from Thebes, now in the Cairo Museum. The scribe was a prominent figure in the ancient world. Ornamental letters were often written with the greatest care and dexterity by scribes. The lay public though well educated sought to avoid writing as the scribe's handwriting was distinctly superior. This is evident from the remark of Cāṇakya that even though written with utmost care the letters of a Śrotriya (Vedic scholar) like himself would be far from clear श्रोत्रियाक्षराणि प्रयत्नलिखितान्यपि नियतमस्फुटानि भवन्ति (*Mudrārākṣasa*, Act I) and he prefers the services of a scribe; and when the final draft is brought to him he admires the letters अहो दर्शनीयान्यक्षराणि (Ibid, Act I). It was very often expert craftsmen that undertook the task of inscribing. But official documents on less permanent material like leaf, bark and cloth were executed by trained scribes. These were known as *lekhakas*. Some of extraordinary ability were chosen to work in the royal palace and, being special officers under the king, were known as *rājalekhakas*. There is mention of a *rājalekhaka*—a king's scribe—in one of the donative inscriptions from Amarāvati, wherein is recorded his quota of embellishment to the stūpa of the Enlightened One. An early example of a *rājalekhaka* in sculpture, not quite so remote in date from this inscription and at no great distance from its findspot, is from Nāgārjuna-

koṇḍa (Fig. 13). The scribe is shown here casting the horoscope and recording the predi-



FIG. 13.

C.S. del.

ctions of the astrologers who were summoned by Śuddhodana for knowing the future of his new-born son, Siddhārtha. He holds the cut leaves in the left hand on his lap and is rapidly incising the lines with an iron style with a large and convenient handle. *Rājalekhakas* were also known as *rājālipikaras* and this synonym is used for a royal scribe Subāhita Gotiputa, whose donation is recorded at Sanchi (*Epigraph Ind. II*, p. 102).

The earliest of *lekhakas* in royal service known to us from an inscription is Capaḍa. He is styled *lipikara* and was responsible for the Brahmagiri and Siddāpura version of Aśoka's edicts (Hultzsch *C. Inscr. Ind. I*, p. 176).

The *lipikaras*, as testified by the inscriptions that they engraved, were sometimes really very skilful at their work and naturally took a great pride in their execution. One Sūksmaśīva from the Gauḍa country, engraver of the Apshad inscription of Ādityasena, describes his letters as beautiful विकटाक्षर (Fleet *C. Inscr. Ind. III*, p. 205). A scribe from Vijayavāda (Bezwada) who engraved a charter of the Eastern Cāḷukyan king Narendramṛgarāja is styled *Akṣaralalitācārya*, i.e., expert writer of beautiful letters (*S. Ind Inscr. II*, p. 36). Letters clear and distinct are compared to pearls and gems in all Indian languages. Such a description suggesting the beauty of letters occurs in a well engraved inscription from Bhuvaneśvar—

सूत्रकारः शिवकरः सद्द्वृत्तामक्षरावलोम् ।

निचखान शिलापट्टे मुक्ताफलनिभामिव ॥

(*Epigraph Ind. VI*, pp. 202–203). A scribe (*sūtradhāra*) Mahīdhara compares the letters of an inscription engraved by him to the stars in the sky.

(*Ibid II*, p. 13). A scribe named Viśāla describes his letters as beautiful (*Ibid. II*, p. 421).

The expression 'engraved in clear letters' is used by the clever Mathura scribe *Vāsū* in describing his own execution मायुरो . . वासू लिखेन्न विमलाक्षरैः (Ibid. XII, p. 46). A *Sūtradhāra* named *Sāhila* describes his well-cut letters as resembling the Goddess of Learning उत्कीर्णा सूत्रधारेण साहिले न स्फुटाक्षरा । चित्राङ्ग वायव्यवर्णा सरस्वतीव साभते (Ibid. IX, p. 254). The letters are described as soft by another dexterous scribe *Nāgamuṇḍi* who incised the *Vasantagaḍh* inscription प्रभाति मृदुभिर्वर्णैः प्रोत्कीर्णा नागमुण्डिना (Ibid. IX, p. 192). *Jalhana*, the engraver of a copper plate of *Govindacandradeva* of *Kanauj* compares himself to *Citrāgupta*, the divine scribe, and as he puts it, he did his work with ease and pleasure for earning reputation करणीकोद्गतो विद्वान् चित्रगुप्तोपमो गुणैः । यशसे जल्हणः श्रीमानलिखत्ताम्रकं मुदा ॥ (Ibid. VIII, p. 153). A neatly engraved inscription giving the text of the first two acts of a newly discovered drama, *Pārijātamañjarī* by *Madana*, gives the name of the engraver *Rāmadeva*, son of an expert sculptor *Sihāka* कृपकारप्रकाण्डस्य सीहाकस्याङ्गजन्मना (Ibid. VIII, p. 117). An artist *Karṇabhadra* whose engraving is perfectly neat is described as an intelligent, courteous and accurate workman कर्णभद्रेण भद्रेण शिल्पितानल्पबुद्धिना । ताम्रं विनयनन्नेण निर्मितं साधुकर्मणा ॥ (Ibid. II, p. 354). A sculptor *Sovaraśi* from the *Canarese* country actually boasts of his skill in one of his inscriptions : 'when he can entwine forms of elephant, lion, parrot and many other forms as to shine among the letters will you madly compete with such a sculptor, *Sovaraśi*'—(Epigraph Car. XI, Cd. 47). The boast is not an empty one as may be seen from similar letters engraved in some of the *Canarese* inscriptions (Fig. 14). The personal experience of a distinguished scribe is recorded at the end of

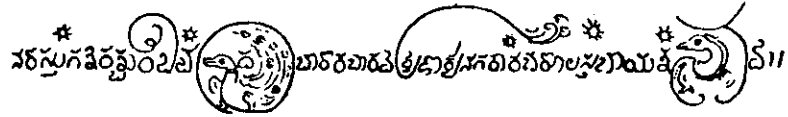


FIG. 14.

C.S. del.

an inscription by *Someśvara* who compares himself to a lover painting intently with different colours a picture of his beloved one—

शिल्पविन्मागघः कामी तन्मना वर्णभक्तिभिः ।
 सौमेश्वरोऽलिखदिमां प्रशस्तिं स्वामिव प्रियाम् ॥

(Epigraph Ind. XIII, p. 292).

One of the finest specimens of letter engraving on stone is the *Tālagunda* inscription. Its scribe who is also the composer gives his name in the inscription itself as *Kubja* कुब्जः स्वकाव्यामदमश्मतले लिखेत् (Ibid. VIII, p. 33).

Sometimes the *lipikaras* were anxious to avoid errors of omission or addition ; the validity of the charter is specially emphasized in spite of all missing or redundant syllables ऊनाक्षरमधिकक्षरं वा सबमत्रप्रमाणमिति (Ibid. XII, p.203). The scribe requests people that may read the inscription to forgive any errors of his in the writing [चान्क तस्य वल्लुकेऽसु S. Ind. Inscr. IV, p. 214). In one of the charters the writing is said to have been executed by the person concerned by virtue of his office and the letters suggest that but for his presence in that office he could not have been selected for the writing लिखितं च व्यापारणया ईश्वरदासेन (Epigraph Ind. VIII, p. 287).

But there were also those whose writing, provided problems for decipherment. Bühler refers to the *Vikramānkadevacarita* of Bilhana where queen Sūryamatī does not allow herself to be cheated by 'writers using crooked alphabets' कायस्यैः कुटिललिपिभिः (Bühler, Ind. Ant. XXXIII, p. 50). *Kuṭila* or crooked letters were most difficult to make out and knowledge of them was considered an attainment—कुटिलाक्षराणि विदुषा. But the *lipi* named *kuṭilalipi* by Princep is no more crooked than any other script and in fact is elegant. And being sometimes more floriated than other scripts has caused great confusion and strain to the eye in following the curves and strokes ; and scribe Takṣ āditya from Gauda takes pride in being well acquainted with crooked letters. . . लिखिता गौडेन करणिकेणैषा । कुटिलाक्षराणि विदुषा तक्षादित्याभिघेयेन॥ (Epigraph Ind. I, p. 81). The letters of the beautiful Deopara inscription are executed by Śūlapāṇi who describes himself and rightly as the best among the craftsmen of Vārendra (Bengal) बृहस्पतेः सूनुरिमां प्रशस्तित्म् । चखान वारेन्द्रकशिल्पगोष्ठीचूडामणी राणकशूलपाणिः (Ibid. I, p. 311). The transfer of a manuscript of a *praśasti* to stone in clear letters incised on it is alluded to in the Mau inscription of Madanavarman (Ibid. I, p. 197).

Usually after the issue of the oral order of the king which was taken down by a high official of the court like an *Amātya*, *Rahasika*, *Balādhikṛta* or *Sāndhivigrahika*, e.g., Harṣavardhana ordering Avanti his *Sāndhivigrahika* (*Harṣacarita*, p. 217) or after the king's approval of a *praśasti* composed by a poet, the text after having been neatly copied by a *Karaṇika* or *Kāyastha* or *lekhaka* or *lipikara* was incised on metal or cut on stone by a professional engraver (*Sūtradhāra*, *Rūpakara*, *Takṣa* or *Śilpi*) ; but there are instances of the poet himself engraving the letters, like Kubja of the Tālāgunda *praśasti*.

The payment appears to have been fair judging from an inscription, though it not is clear whether it was intended for the composer or the engraver. Yuddhakesari pperumbaṇaikāran who wrote the Velvikudi grant of Neduñjaḍayan got a house-site, two *ma* of wet land and a dry field (Epigraph Ind. XVII, p. 304).

ORNAMENTAL CHARACTERS.

The genius of each particular script has provided peculiar form for each letter of the alphabet. The seventh century Nāgari script is by itself somewhat florid—Similarly the Canarese script in the Hoysala area of about the 12th to 13th centuries is ornamental. Tenth

century Eastern Cālukyan script has similar decorative charm about it. But the letters of these scripts cannot be said to have any ornamentation introduced deliberately for decorative purpose. It is a natural decorative type. But there are many instances in Indian epigraphy of deliberate ornamentation of letters. Simultaneously we see the use of the regular and ornamental series, for instance in the Banskhera plates of Harṣavardhana, the letters though decorative in shape are of the normal variety, while the signature of the emperor is in a highly floriated type ornamented for decorative purpose. In the Nagari inscription form the Kailāsanātha temple at Kāñcīpuram the numerous *Birudas* of the Pallava monarch are neatly incised in both the simple and ornamental type of letters. In Fig. 15 both the varieties

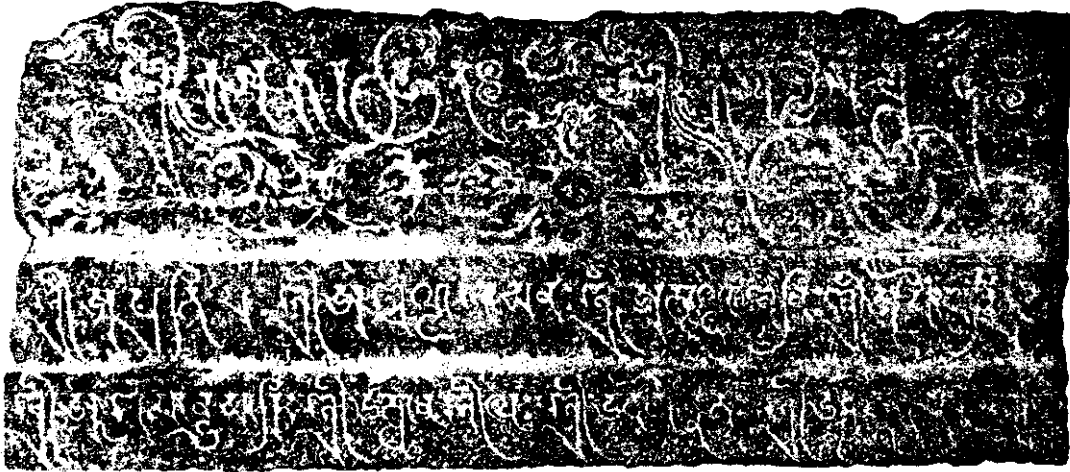


FIG. 15.

are shown. In Fig. 16 which shows one of the *Birudas* in the ornamental type, we can see not only the beautiful sway of curves and lines in creeper fashion but also in their contours,

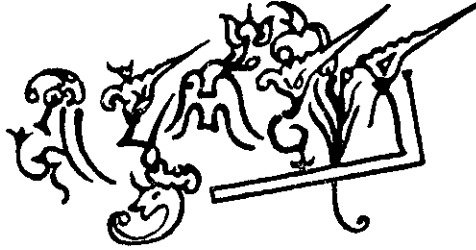


O.S. del.

FIG. 16.

of the necks and wings of peacocks. The head of the peacock with a decorative plume is deftly introduced in the script and the whole plan of lettering is very clever and presents a pleasing appearance. On a pillar in the temple of Rājivalocana at Rājīm, in the Central Provinces, is the name of Śrī Pūrṇādītya incised in a similar highly ornamental type of

letters (Fig. 17). Here the letters are so obscured by the peculiar decorative pattern added to them that it is rather difficult to make them out but they can be easily made out by comparing them with the same name in plain letters given along with it by Cunningham (*Arch. Sur. Ind.*



After Cunningham,

FIG. 17.

Rep. XVII, pl. X, p. 19, pl. X). In Western Cālukyan inscriptions which are in Canarese letters this element of decoration exists. An excellent example is the Kurgod inscription of Cālukya Someśvara IV. The *anusvras* of the invocatory verse are represented by stars arranged above the letters, and wherever the letters lend themselves to decoration they are shaped like animals and birds. Thus one of them is shaped like a swan and another like a peacock. Fleet (*Ind. Ant.* XV, p. 364) has styled them bird characters. The sculptor who incised the *praśasti* takes a just pride for producing such amusing letter shapes. In the *Biruda* labels in Pallava Grantha script at Mahābalipuram and elsewhere the florid and the ordinary type of letters occur together. These ornamental letters, however, do not offer any great difficulty in decipherment as in the case of the so-called shell characters which yet remain a puzzle. An example of shell characters from Central India is given in Fig. 18



FIG. 18.

(Hunter p. 10). The so-called shell characters occur even in distant Java (Fig. 19) and the name of Pūrṇavarman has been read in one of these by Jayaswal (*Epigraph. Ind.* XXII, p. 4).



FIG. 19.

C. S. del.

LITERARY VALUE OF INDIAN EPIGRAPHY.

The inscriptions are among the many sources for the study of Sanskrit literature. The language of some at least of the inscriptions is not without charm and is worthy of careful study. The records in copper plates and stone inscriptions are permanent documents and sometimes it is good that Sanskrit poets of repute have composed the *praśastis*. The Allahabad inscription of Samudragupta is an excellent piece of poetry composed by Hariṣeṇa. This elegant composition and its poet would have been lost to the history of Sanskrit literature but for the inscription. Ravikīrti's *praśasti* at Aihole is another instance in point. Though the name of the composer is lost, the importance of the Junāgaḍh inscription of Rudradāman cannot be minimized. It is the earliest pure Sanskrit inscription and the language is most elegant. The Tālaguṇḍa inscription of Kadamba Kākusthavarman is another important contribution to Sanskrit literature and fortunately the name of the poet Kubja is preserved. Here the majority of verses are in a metre which does not occur elsewhere. Sometimes well known poets compose the *praśastis*, as for instance, Umāpatidhara, the author of the famous Deopara inscription. Jayadeva mentions Umāpatidhara as one of the poets of his day, along with Dhoyī, and the *praśasti* is a valuable contribution to Sanskrit literature. In the inscription of Vema, the Redḍi king, it is expressly stated that Śrīnātha, the poet and Director of Public Instruction in the kingdom, composed it and, as it is bilingual, it shows Śrīnātha's ability as a poet both in Sanskrit and Telugu.

Not only is a portion of Sanskrit literature contained in Indian inscriptions, but passages from many of the known Sanskrit works are often quoted and thus help us in fixing the lower limit in the dates of composition of the works. Sometimes the works themselves are preserved by being engraved in letters of the century; in such cases these lithic records are not only surviving copies of the work in question, but serve excellently in providing variant readings.

It was till recently believed that the Aihole inscription of Ravikīrti contained the earliest reference to Kālidāsa but there is as I have already pointed out (Sivaramamurti 3, p. 25) an earlier inscription, the Mahākūṭa pillar inscription of Mangaleśa, which gives a whole line यथाविधिहुताग्नीनां यथाकामार्चितार्थिनां (Raghuvamśa I, 6) from Kālidāsa's *Raghuvamśa* by cleverly dovetailing it as an epithet of the Cālukyas मानव्यसगोत्राणां हारीतीपुत्राणां अप्रतिहतोत्साहबल मतिप्रतापशौर्यधैर्यवीर्याणां मातापितृपादानुध्यातानां यथाविधिहुताग्नीनां यथाकामार्चितार्थिनां अनेकधर्मकर्मपुण्यप्रसवानां चलिक्यानां. Similarly passages from the *Rāmāyaṇa* have been cleverly introduced in inscriptions and happily help us to show that at the time of the inscriptions they were present in the text of the book and were not later interpolations. The line नानागोत्रचरण-तपस्स्वाध्यायनिरतेभ्यः in the Maṭṭepād plates of Dāmodaravarman (*Epigraph. Ind.* XVII, p. 329) is clearly after तपस्स्वाध्यायनिरतं तपस्वी वाग्विदां वरम् the opening verse of the *Rāmāyaṇa*. In the Mahākūṭa inscription of Mangaleśa there is the line समुद्र इव गंभीरः क्षमया पृथिवीसमः (*Ind. Ant.* XIX, p. 17) following Vālmīki's lines समुद्र इव गाम्भीर्ये धैर्येण हिमवानिव ॥ कालाग्निसदृशः क्रोधे क्षमया पृथिवीसमः ॥ (*Rāmāyaṇa* I, 1, 17-18). Another line from the same inscription ज्येष्ठः श्रेष्ठगुणसमुदयोदितपुररणपराक्रमाङ्कप्रियः (*Ind. Ant.* XIX, p. 17) is after the line ज्येष्ठः श्रेष्ठगुणैर्युक्तं प्रियं दशरथः सुतम् (*Rāmāyaṇa* I, 1, 20). In the Satāra grant of the Eastern Cālukyan king Viṣṇuvardhana, nephew of Mangaleśa the lines तस्य पुत्रो महातेजाः कन्दर्प इव मूर्तिमान् । धर्मज्ञश्च कृतज्ञश्च पार्थतुल्यपराक्रमः (*Ind. Ant.* XIX, p. 309) are clearly after those in the *Rāmāyaṇa* रूपवान् सुभगः श्रीमान् कन्दर्प इव मूर्तिमान् and धञ्च कृतज्ञश्च सत्यषाक्यो दृढव्रतः ज्ञः (*Rāmāyaṇa* V, 34, 30 and I, 1, 2). Among the Pallava *Biruda* inscriptions of Narasimhavarman at Mahābalipuram one on an ornamental pavilion of the Dharmarājaratha runs as सत्यपराक्रमः (*S. Ind. Inscr.* I, p. 4) after one of the epithets used by Vālmīki to describe Rāma दिव्यैर्गुणैः शक्रसमो रामः सत्यपराक्रमः (*Rāmāyaṇa* II, 2, 28). In Ravikīrti's Aihole inscription the line जलनिक्षिप्रिद्वं श्रोमं श्रोमनः समोऽभवदम्बुधिः (*Epigraph. Ind.* VI, p. 6) has Vālmīki's गगनं गगनाकारं सागरः सागरापमः ॥ रामरावणयोर्युद्धं रामरावणयोरिव। (*Rāmāyaṇa* VI, 110, 23-24) as its model. The phrase पर्जन्येन एकार्णवभूतायां भिव पृथिव्यां कृतायां (*Epigraph. Ind.* VIII, p. 42) in the Girnār inscription of Rudradāman clearly savours of the line in the *Rāmāyaṇa* अयं ह्युत्सहते क्रुद्धः कर्तुमेका गंत्रं जगत् (*Rāmāyaṇa* V, 49, 20).

Verses and passages from other important poets have been utilized by poets composing inscriptions. I have elsewhere pointed out the indebtedness of poets composing royal charters to Kālidāsa. Among other poets is the pre-eminent Bāṇa. One of the invocatory verses of his *Kādambarī*

जयन्ति बाणासुरमौलिलालिताः दशास्यचूडामणिचक्रचुम्बिनः ।
सुरासुराघीशशिखान्तशायिनो भवच्छिदस्त्र्यम्बकपादपांसवः ॥

(*Kādambarī* I, 2)

has been used as an invocatory verse in Mahārāja Kumārapāladeva's Rewah plates (*Ind. Ant.* XVII, pp. 230, 232). The opening verse of Bāṇa's *Harṣacarita*

नमस्तुङ्गशिरश्चुम्बिचन्द्रचामरचारवे ।
त्रैलोक्यनगरारम्भमूलस्तम्भाय शम्भवे ॥

(*Harṣacarita* I, 1) begins many later Western Cālukyan inscriptions and is invariably used as the invocatory verse of Vijayanagara inscriptions.

Similarly, the third invocatory verse of the Rewah plates of Trailokyamalla Kalacuri (*Epigraph. Ind.* XXV, p. 5) is a copy of Daṇḍin's praise to Sarasvatī in his *Kāvyaḍarśa*

चतुर्मुखमुखाम्भोजवनहंसवधूर्मम ।
मानसे रमतां नित्यं सर्वशुक्ला सरस्वती ॥

(*Kāvyaḍarśa* I, 1).

The opening verse of the same plates.

जयतु जयतु देवो देवकीनन्दनोऽयं जयतु जयतु कृष्णो वृष्णिवंशप्रदीपः ।
जयतु जयतु मेघश्यामलः कोमलाङ्गो जयतु जयतु पृथ्वीभारनाशो मूकुन्दाः ॥

is from the *Mukundamālā Stotra* of Kulaśekhara where it occurs as the third verse. The opening verse of Kālidāsa's *Raghuvamśa*

वागर्थाविव संपृक्तौ वागर्थप्रतिपत्तये ।
जगतः पितरौ वन्दे पार्वतीपरमेश्वरौ ॥

is repeated *in toto* in the invocatory verses of the Huli inscription of the Western Cālukyan king Vikramāditya VI (*Epigraph. Ind.* XVIII, p. 197). Similarly, the *Mangalāśloka* of Kālidāsa's *Abhijñānaśākuntalam*

या सृष्टिः स्त्रष्टुराद्या वहति विधिहुतं या हविर्या च होत्री
ये द्वे कालं विघत्तः श्रुतिविषयगुणा या स्थिता व्याप्य विभ्रम् ।
यामाहुः सर्वभूतप्रकृतिरिति यया प्राणिनः प्राणवन्तः
प्रत्यक्षाभिः प्रपन्नस्तनुभिरवतु वस्ताभिरष्टाभिरीशः ॥

is an invocatory verse in an inscription from Rajputana (*Epigraph. Ind.* XI, p. 65). Clearly after the opening verse of the *Daśakumāracarita*

ब्रह्माण्डछत्रदण्डः शतधृतभवनाम्भोरुहोनालदण्डः
क्षोणीनौकूपदण्डः क्षरदमरसरित्पट्टिकाकेतुदण्डः ।
ज्योतिश्चक्राक्षदण्डस्त्रिभुवनविजयस्तम्भदण्डोद्भिद्घ्नदण्डः
श्रेयस्त्रैविक्रमस्ते वितरतु विबुधद्वेषिणां कालदण्डः ॥

is the invocatory verse of the Pathāri inscription of Prabala

त्रिभुवनभवनस्तम्भो नभस्थलाम्भोधिसेतुरघदहनः ।
ब्रह्माण्डमण्डलाम्बुजदण्डरुचिर्जयति हरिचरणः ॥

(*Epigraph. Ind.* IX, p. 252.)

The line नलिनीदलगतजलमतितरलम् from Śankarācārya's *Bhajagovinda stotra* occurring in the Sevadi plates of Cāhamāna Ratnapāla (*Epigraph. Ind.* XI, p. 310) is interesting both as proof of the genuineness of this important work and also as an index of the general influence of these inspiring writings.

The occurrence of the verse

सर्वमङ्गलमाङ्गल्ये शिवे सर्वार्थसाधके ।
शरण्ये त्र्यम्बके गौरि नारायणि नमोस्तु ते ॥

in the Dadhimatīmātā inscription of Druhlana (*Ibid.* XI, p. 299) is very important. It occurs in its complete form in the section called *Devīmāhātmya* of the *Mārkaṇḍeya-purāna*. The latest date of the composition of the *Devīmāhātmya* is thus determined by the date of the inscription, the 7th century A. D.

Inscriptions like those from Swat giving Sanskrit renderings of verses from the Buddhist Pali texts (*Ibid.* IV, p. 135) only show as Bühler remarks that the Northern Buddhists had Sanskrit versions of several famous *gāthās* untraced in the *sūtras* of Nepal.

The occurrence of passages or even complete works in lithic records is illustrated by the inscription on the pillars of a Surya temple at Kāñchīpuram containing the *Sūryasataka* of Mayūra in early Coḷa Grantha characters of about the 10th Century A.D. One alone of these pillars has survived to proclaim the popularity of the work within three centuries of its composition in so southerly a part of this vast land with the then difficulties of communication which however were no barrier against the travel of literary works and appreciation of literary beauty. In the collation of different manuscripts and the use of the earliest copies for determining correct readings, this is probably most useful.

The other example of a complete work occurring only as a lithic record is very valuable as the only surviving text when all other copies on perishable material are lost. An example is supplied by the *Pārijātamañjarī nāṭaka* by Madana discovered at Dhāra, in the original *Bhoj-sālā*, now turned into mosque (*Epigraph. Ind.* VIII, p. 96.) and rescued from one of its walls. Along with this were discovered two Prākṛt poems attributed to king

1 Even this one has suffered at the hands of ignorant temple renovators and split into bits it has served as building material part of which being irretrievably lost inside construction the remaining part has been rescued and preserved as a valuable treasure in the Madras Government Museum (Pl. IX-b).

Bhoja and eulogising the tortoise incarnation of Viṣṇu (Ilid. VIII, p. 241). As Bhoja is reputed as great patron of letters this discovery is of interest. It shows at the same time how the text of works engraved on stone and fixed in the walls of the great Universtiy established by Bhoja at Dhārā supplied easy reference books for the students.

Though the earliest Sanskrit incriptions are definitely later by many centuries than the literary works themselves, the inscriptions alone supply the earliest literary writings in the most ancient regional languages of the country like Tamil, Telugu and Canarese. The earliest Tamil works are dated round about the Christian era and their real antiquity is lost in a dark period of literary history ; but the discovery of peculiarly written Brahmi inscriptions in the numerous caves of the Tamil disticts and their able decipherment by K. V. Subramanya Aiyar has proved that the earliest written records in Tamil can be traced back to third century B. C., and are contemporary with any of the other oldest records in India. Similarly, literary works in Telugu date from about the 10th-11th centuries A. D. and all earlier poetical efforts in the language should be traced to inscriptions. The local origin of metres like *Akkara*, the predilection for the use of such metres as *Taruvoju* which are later discarded, special early forms of using the *anusvāra*, etc., and the beginnings of Telugu poetry established in the early Eastern Cālukyan inscriptions, may be so traced.

The literary value of the incriptions is clear from the language and ideas in the *prāsaśtis*. In the earliest example of a pure Sanskrit inscription, Rudradāman's *prāsaśti* at Girnar, the language is really charming. As already pointed out, in some places there is unconscious lisp and repetition of expressions of the *Ādikavi* Vālmīki. Both *Śabdālamkāra* and *Arthālamkāra* are present but it is the former that predominates. The sweet play of soft words and syllables is beautifully expressed in the works of Kālidāsa where they abound. The *anuprāsas* and *yamakas* in Kālidāsa are very sweet. His language abounds in such expressions as ततो गगेन्द्रस्य मृगेन्द्रगामी वधाय वध्यस्य शरं शरप्यः (*Raghuvamśa* II, 30) बालामबालेन दुमुखीं वभाषे (Ibid. VI, 53), इन्दुं नवोत्थानमिवेन्दुमत्यै (Ibid. VI, 31), असौ शरप्यः शरणोन्मुखानां (Ibid. VI, 21), अथ प्रदोषे दोषज्ञः संवेशाय विशांपतिम्। सूनुः सूनृतवाक्स्रष्टुः विससर्जोर्जितश्रियम्॥ (Ibid. I, 95) पप्रच्छ कुशलं राज्ये राज्याश्रममुनिं मुनिः (Ibid. I, 58). कुलप्रदीपो नृपतिर्दिलीपः (Ibid. VI, 74). पप्रच्छ भद्रं विजितारिभद्रः (Ibid. XIV, 31) इति रामो वृषस्यन्तीं वृषस्कन्धः शशास ताम् (Ibid. XII, 34). कृच्छ्रलब्धमपि लब्धवर्णभाक् (Ibid. XI, 2), सप्तसामोपगीतत्वां सातर्णवजलेशयम्। सप्ताचिर्मुखमाचल्युः सतप्लोकैकसंश्रयम् (Ibid. X, 21), अहीनगुर्नाम स गां समग्रामहीनबाहुद्रविणः शशास । (Ibid. XVIII, p. 14). As example of the *yamakas* we have all the verses of the 9th Canto of the *Raghuvamśa*, besides others. Such examples in this inscription are to be seen in passages like गुशभिरम्यस्तनानो रुद्रदाम्नो (1.4) अभिधेयानां यौधेयानां (1.12), हस्तोद्धितार्जितोर्जित (1.13), दानमानावमान (1, 14), महाक्षत्रपनाम्ना, प्रतापदाम्न रुद्रदाम्ना etc. Examples like this occur in other inscriptions, as for instance, the lines सुतः प्रसूतो यशसां प्रसूतिः धर्मतो धर्मदोषः. कृत इव कृतमेतत् in Mandasor inscription of Yaśodharman and समवतु वसुधारा धर्मपीयूषधारा in the Sārṇāth inscription of Kumāradevi (Epigraph Ind. p 323).

Combining a tendency of echo with *anuprāsa* runs the line कारिता शाला श्रीविशाला (Ibid. IV, p. 60) which reminds us of Kālidāsa's श्रीविशाला विशालाम् in the *Meghaduta*. The line the Pahoa *prāsāsti* of Mahendrapāla सरलितप्रचुरालकजालका: (Ibid I, p. 246) is an excellent example recalling similar *yamāka* in the verses of the 9th Canto of Kālidāsa's *Raghuvamśa*. The composition of the Kāngrā Jwālāmukhi *prāsāsti* composed by Rāghavacaitanya, a poet often quoted reverentially in the *Śārngadhara-paddhati* is one string of *anuprāsas* in which it abounds (Ibid. I, p. 192). *Chekānuprāsa* is illustrated in lines like चक्रे कृती सुमनसां मनसामकस्मादस्मादकालकलिकालविरामशंकां in Khajurāho inscription II (Ibid. I, p. 129). *vrtyanuprāsa* has such examples as

मौलाविन्दुधरः फणाधरधरः स्कन्धे भवानीधरो
वामे कामधरः प्रमाणनिरतो गङ्गाधरो मूर्धनि
मूर्तौ धूलिधरो गले गरधरः केशेषु वेणीधरः
पाणौ शूलधरो हरः पुरहरः पुष्पातु वो मङ्गलम्

in the Kaśākudi plates of Nandivarman (*S. Ind. Inscr.* II. p. 346) or

वल्गद्वेतालवर्गं त्रुटितनिजशिरोधारिधावत्कबन्ध-
ण्डात्कुर्वद्वाकडिम्बं मुखबिलविलसत्सम्मुखोल्कामुखोल्कं ।
मांसग्रासाभिलाषस्वनदशिवशिवाभैरवारातरौद्रं
रौद्रं यो धाम विभ्रत्प्रतिसमरमिति द्वेषिचक्रञ्चकार ॥

of the Bilhari inscription (*Epigraph. Ind.* I, p. 256). Fine examples of *Lāṭānuprāsa*

अहिमकरचक्रकुवलयविलसत्कमलालयः सदानवकायः ।
जलनिाधरिव हरिरवतात्पुराणपुरुषोऽपि यः सदा नवकायः ॥
शकलीकृतसर्वाङ्गा नानाभरणभूषिताः ।
दृश्यन्ते रिपवो यस्य नानाभरणभूषिताः ॥

(Ibid. IX, p. 252, 253). Kielhorn's remarks about the poetry of this inscription are particularly interesting in the light of the value he has attached to the piece and the pains he has taken in reconstructing the text of Harṣa, the author of the *prasasti*. All the type of *anuprāsas* and *yamakās* are found in inscriptional literature. An example of *Vakrokti* is found in the verse

कस्त्वं द्वारि दिगम्बरः क्षपणकः कस्मादकस्मादहो
बाले शूलधरो धिगायुधोवधिं वर्हस्त्वदर्हाननु ।

मां जानीहि महेश्वरं स्फुटमिदं वस्त्रेप्यभावादिति
प्रेयस्या परिहासतो विहसितं शम्भोः शुभायास्तु वः ॥

of the Kahjuraho inscriptions IV composed by Rāma (Ibid. I, p. 140).

As for the *arthālankāra* variety the examples are as varied and interesting. A few samples will suffice. *Upamā* of the *dharmopameyalupta* type may be seen in the verse

अब्धौ मुक्तायमाना शिरसि हिमगिरेरभ्रगङ्गायमाना
व्योम्नि ज्योत्स्नायमाना दिशि दिशि करिणां कुम्भमालायमाना ।
उच्चैर्देवालयाणामुपरि सितपताकायमाना यदीया
कीर्तिभ्रान्ता समन्तादनुनदि पुलितं राजहंसीयमाना ॥

of the Dewal *praśasti* of Lalla (Ibid. I, p. 79). *Rūpaka* illustrated in verses like

दिक्सुन्दरीवदनचान्दनपत्रभङ्गलीलायमानघनविस्तृत कान्तकीर्तेः ।
श्रीराष्ट्रकूटकुलशैलमलङ्करिष्णीस्तस्मादभून्निरुपमो निरवद्यशौर्यः ॥

from the pen of Trivikrama, the famous author of the *Nalacampū* in, a Rāṣṭrakūṭa record of Indrararāja [Ibid, IX, p. 30], or

हेरम्बस्य विकल्पदन्तमुकुलं गौरीरहस्योत्सवप्रत्यासन्नविलासदीपकलिका गङ्गा-
मृणालाङ्कुरः ।

देवस्य त्रिपुरद्रुहो विजयिना पुष्पेषुणा मस्तके विन्यस्ताङ्कुशविभ्रमा विजयते

चूडासुधांशोः कला ॥

in the Cebrolu inscription of Jaya (Ibid. V, p. 142). *Utprekṣā* is illustrated in verses like

यदध्वरोल्लासिहुताशधूमलेखाः स्फुटानेकविभङ्गिभाजः ।
दिगङ्गनापीनपयोधरेषु विलासवेणीश्रियमाश्रयन्ति ॥

from the Baṭeśvar inscription of Paramardideva (Ibid. I, p. 210). The opening verse of Rājendracola's Tiruvālanngādu plates

स्वस्ति श्रीकण्ठकण्ठाभरणभुजगराट्मूर्ध्नि माणिक्यमध्ये
दृष्ट्वात्मीयां सलज्जा प्रतिकृतिमपरामङ्गनां शङ्कमाना ।
आश्लेषालोलचित्तं कृतचरणनतिप्रार्थनं वो भवानी
दिश्यात्पश्यन्त्यधीरं निजपतिमनिशं सेष्यमर्धेक्षणेन ॥

[S. Ind, Inscr, III, p. 393] and the verse

भ्राम्यन्तीनां वनान्ते यदरिमृगदृशां हारमुक्ताफलानि
छिन्नाकीर्णानि भूमौ नयनजलमिलत्कज्जलैलाञ्छतानि ।

यत्नाच्चिन्वन्ति दर्मक्षतचरणतलासृग्विलप्तानि गुञ्जा-
स्रग्भूषारम्यरामास्तनकलशघनाश्लेषलोलाः पुलिन्दाः ॥

from the Naihati inscription of Vallālasena (*Epigrāph. Ind. XIV*, p. 160) are examples of *Bhrāntimat. Smaraṇa* is illustrated in another, a pathetic verse from the same inscription of Vallālasena.

यस्यारिराजशिशवः शवरालयेषु वालैरलीकनरनाथपदेऽभिषिक्ताः ।
दृप्ताः प्रमोदतरलेक्षणया जनन्या निश्वस्य वत्सलतया सभयं निषिद्धाः

(*Ibid. XIV*, p. 160), and another

उद्यद्दीधितिरत्नजालजटिलं व्याकृष्टमद्विग्धनुः
ऋद्धेनोपरि वैरिवरीशिरसामेवं विमुक्ताः शराः ।
धारासारिणि सेन्द्रचापवलये यस्येडथमव्दागमे
गर्जद्भूर्जरसंगरव्यतिकरं जीर्णो जनः शंसति ॥

by the poet Trivikrama in the Rāstrakūṭa record mentioned above (*Ibid. IX*, p. 31). *Ullekha* has a good example in a verse of Nṛsimha, the poet of the 12th century in Sihola stone inscription of Kārṇarāja.

कन्दर्पबाणगणशाणशिलामनोज्ञो दिक्कामिनीवदनदर्पणमण्डलश्रीः ।
देवः शशी विजयतेऽत्रितपःपयोधिमुक्ताफलं हरशिरोमुकुटैकरत्नम् ॥

(*Ibid. IX*, p. 185) and in the verse from the famous Pallava temple of Kailāsanātha from Kāñcīpuram.

कलाचतुरयोषितां रहसि रञ्जने मन्मथस्त्रयीपथनिषेविणां सततपालने वासवः ।
मुनिद्विजसुरद्विषो हृदयदारणे माधवः स च द्रवणसंपदा सुजनतोषणे वित्तदः ॥

(*S. Ind. Inscr. I*, p. 12). *Samāsokti* is illustrated in another verse of Trivikrama

कृत्वास्पदं हृदयहारि जघन्यभागे स्वैरं पुनर्मृदु विमर्द्यं च मध्यदेशम् ।
यस्यासमस्य समरे वसुधाङ्गनायाः काञ्चीपदे पदमकारि करेण भूयः ।

(*Epigraph. Ind. IX*, p. 30), the verse

भरत इव सर्वदमनः सगर इव कृतासमञ्जसत्यागः ।
कर्ण इव पुष्कलाङ्गो यः प्रियकाव्यो ययातिरिव ॥

from the Kūram grant of Parameśvaravarman (*S. Ind. Inscr. I*, p. 148) is an example of *Śleṣa*, as also the line

व्यपगतविषयस्नेहो हततिमिरदशः प्रदीपवदसङ्गः

from the Bodh-Gaya inscription of Mahānāman (Fleet, *C. Inscr. Ind.* III, p. 276); and more examples may be seen in verses like

यशोदानन्दभाक्चक्रे पूतनामारणक्रियाम् ।
जातो वृष्णिकुले कं स रिपोःच्छेत्ता नरोत्तमः ॥
गांधारीं भजता प्र; ष्टशकुनिस्वानप्रियां प्रेयसी
भीष्मद्रोणवचांस्यकण्ठं सुखदान्याकण्ठ्यं संमूर्च्छता ।
नो धर्मप्रभवं विरोधितवता प्राप्यापि दंशक्षयं
संप्राप्ता धृतराष्ट्रत सुसुहृदा विद्वेषिणेत्यद्भुतम् ॥

from the Khajurāho inscription (*Epigraph. Ind.* I, p. 145, 143) and

पीताम्बरं यस्य यशो बभूव सुदर्शनं यस्य वपुर्विजज्ञे
गुणोत्करो यस्य च नन्दकोऽभूदासीत्स तस्मात्पुरुषोत्तमाख्यः ॥

from the Baṭeśvar inscription (*Ibid.* I, p. 211). In the verse of the Masulipatam plates of Vijayāditya III

यस्मिन्नारूढदन्तिन्यरिकुलमाधिसंरोहति क्ष्माभृदग्रं
यद्वाहावात्तखङ्गे रिपुयुवतिकरा गृह्णते चामराणि ।
आबद्धायां भृकुट्यां मधु रिपुभवने यस्य बध्नन्ति भृङ्गः
यद्धामन्याजिभेरीध्वननमनु शिवाश्शत्रुधाम्नि ध्वनन्ति ॥

(*Ibid.* V, p. 124) there is an example of *Sahokti* of which another illustration may be seen in

नाम्नैव यस्य रमणाङ्कविवर्तिनीनां रोमञ्चवेपथुभृतामारिसुन्दरीणाम्
अश्रूणि बाहुवलयानि मनांसि सद्यः संत्रासवेगविधुराणि समं निपेतुः ॥

in the Bhandak plates of Kṛṣṇa I (*Ibid.* XIV, p. 124). *Virodha* and *Virodhābhāsa* are respectively illustrated in verses

दारिद्र्यं हरतार्थिनो रिपुजनाल्लक्ष्मी मनो योषितो
रूपं पञ्चशरादगाधपयसो गांभीर्यमम्भोनिधेः ।
चित्रं येन विचारचारुमनसामाचारमातन्वता
सर्वत्रैव जनापवादरहितं चौर्यं प्रकाशकृतम् ॥

and

धनदोऽपि न प्रमत्तो ध्वस्तसमस्तसविषोऽपि न विरूपः ।
रत्नाकरोपि न जडो यो नाशोकोऽपि रागिष्ठः ॥

from an inscription in the Vaillabhāṭṭasvāmi temple in Gwalior (Ibid. I, p. 156). A verse of Umāpatidhara from the famous Deopara praśasti gives an example of *Adhika* in the verse

उच्चित्राणि दिगम्बरस्य वसनान्यर्धाङ्गनास्वमिनो
रत्नालङ्कृतिभिर्विशोषितवपुः शोभाः शतं सुभ्रुवः ।
पौराद्यश्च पुरीः स्मशानवसतेर्भिक्षाभुजोप्यक्षयां
लक्ष्मीं स व्यतनोद्दरिद्रभरणे सुज्ञो हि सेनान्वयः ॥

(Ibid. I, p. 310). *Yathāsamkhyā* mixed up with *Upamā* is found in the verse

चलत्पताकान्यवलासनाथान्यत्यर्थशुक्लान्यधिकोन्नतानि ।
नडिल्लताचित्रसिताभ्रकूटतुल्योपमानानि गृहाणि यत्र ॥

of the Mandasor inscription of Kumāragupta and Bandhuvarman (Fleet, *C. Inscr. Ind.* III, p. 81). As an example of *Vyājastuti* are the lines from the Nagarjuni cave inscription of Anantavarman Maukhari.

आसीत्सर्वमहीक्षितां मनुरिव क्षत्रस्थितेर्देशिकः श्रीमान्मत्तगजेन्द्रखेलगमनः श्रीयज्ञवर्मा नृपः ।
यस्याहूतसहस्रनेत्रविरहक्षामा सदैवाध्वरैः पौलोमी चिरमश्रुपातमलिनं धत्ते कपोलश्रियम् ॥

(Ibid. p. 224)

So far *padya* (verse) has been considered ; *gadya* (prose), however, has always been held by the Sanskrit poet as the touch-stone for judging poetic ability. In all Sanskrit literature none can equal Bāṇa in his majestic flow of language, rhythm in the construction of sentences and dazzle in the meanings and suggestions that appear on the surface and peep from deeper recess. The most typical models of noble Sanskrit prose composition are the passages in his *Harṣacarita* where the unbridled flame of intellectual youth is evident. The *Kādambarī* which abounds in equally fine passages shows the poet mellow and moderate in his expressions with experience and age. As Bhāsa is styled as smile incarnate (*hāsa*) and Kālidāsa as sport (*vilāsa*), similarly Bāṇa is passion incarnate (*Pañcabāṇā*). Bāṇa has been the model for all prose compositions and in the lines

सोयं नरपतिमकुटमकरिकामरकतप्रभापटलपल्लवतपादपीठो गजपतिगलगजित-
प्रलयपञ्चाननस्त्रिशङ्कपतिकपटपाटनक्रकचपातश्चपलपञ्चालचूलचुम्बनचणचन्द्रहासो गिरि-

पतिपिचुपिण्डचण्डमारुतः कवलितकलिकालकपटपिटको निर्वाणपथिकलोपाकदर्शनसमाधिगत
सकलदर्शनस्वरसपेशलज्ञानसंपद्विजितमुनिमनोवृत्तिराश्रयः श्रेयसामाकरः सर्वं विद्यानामालय
कलानामाधारः स्वामिसम्पदांपरमभट्टारकमहाराजाधिराजपरमेश्वर परममाहेश्वरनिजभुजोपा
जितश्रीकन्यकुब्जाधिपत्यश्रीमच्चन्द्रादित्यदेवो विजयी ॥

in Candradeva's plates (Ibid. XIV, pp. 193-195) the echo of Bāṇa's language is obvious.
The descriptive epithets in the Nidhanpur plates of Bhāskaravarman.

कलियुगपराक्रमाकलितविग्रहस्य समुल्ल्वास इव भगवतो धर्मस्याधिष्ठानमास्पदं गुणानां
निधिः प्रणयिनामुपघ्नः संत्रस्तानां श्रीसम्पदामायतनं । (Ibid. XIX, p. 118),

are clearly contemporary imitation of the great court poet of the paramount sovereign of
the time.

Sometimes there are also examples of didactic poetry. In the Sarangarh plates the verse

यौवनं विविधैर्भोगैर्मध्यमं च वयः श्रिया ।

वृद्धभावश्च धर्मेण यस्य याति स पुण्यवान् ॥

(Ibid. IX, p. 280) suggests the equal allocation of time in ones life to the *puruṣārthas* namely,
dharma, *artha* and *kāma*. Kālidāsa's

वयोरूपविभूतीनामेकैकं मदकारणम् ।

तानि तस्मिन्समस्तानि न तस्योत्सिषिचे मनः

(*Raghuvamśa*, XVII, 43).

and Bāṇa's

गर्भेश्वरत्वमभिनवयौवनत्वमप्रतिमरूपत्वममानुषशक्तित्वं चेति महतीयं खल्वनर्थपरम्परा
सर्वा । अविनयानायेकैकमण्येषामायतनं, किमुत समवायः ॥

(*Kādambari*, p. 196.)

have strange inscriptional echo in the verse

शौर्यं श्रीयौवनं राज्यमेकैकं मदकारकम् ।

सर्वं श्रीमानभीतस्य निर्विकारमुपस्थितम् ॥

from the Koṇḍeḍḍa plates of Dharmarāja (*Epigraph. Ind.* XIX, p. 269).

As already pointed out most verses of Kākusthavarman's Tālaguṇḍa inscription are
very interesting as they are composed in a metre rarely found elsewhere. Similarly, in the
Addanki inscription of Paṇḍaranga the metre is special and proves its occurrence in very
early Telugu.

 INFLUENCE OF INDIAN EPIGRAPHY ABROAD.

The key note of Indian civilization lies in its one basic culture that permeated the whole land, geographically divided by long rivers and large mountains but culturally knit by a constant unifying factor of common faith and ideals underlying the apparent diversity. In India two thousand years ago when communications were more difficult than now the bonds of this affinity were closer. The emphasis on differences is a later factor. The barrier of river and mountain was not so great as the barrier of conflicting dynasties. Aśoka by combining under his sceptre the whole of the land greatly overcame these barriers but his successors like the Śungas, Śātavāhanas and Kalingas slightly undid his work by the very division of the country into fragments. The great Gupta emperors succeeded once again in establishing a well-knit empire. If we find the grace of Gupta sculpture at distant Elephanta in Western India or Ajanta in the Deccan, it is because the Maitrakas of Valabhi ruled as *Sāmantas* of the Guptas in western India and the Vākāṭakas were close kinsmen under the direct cultural and political influence of the Gupta emperors. The script of the Guptas not only influenced palaeographic development in Western India and the Deccan but it even spread to the distant dominions of the Kadambas and Pallavas and accounts for the false box-head occurring in the letters of early Kadamba and Pallava inscriptions of the 5th century A.D. On the other hand, local influence has also been at work and if the script of Aśoka's edicts differs in areas, or the script of the Guptas shows variations in different localities it is due to such influences. Mediaeval sculpture is different from the Gupta or early sculpture of the same area, and with the tendency for local development, local variations developed from the mediaeval period with sharper contrast with the efflux of time. The shade of the single umbrella of a single king being eliminated, different and numerous parasols produced a chequered effect of light and shade; and so the complex schools of Indian culture. But the underlying vein was however the same. This unifying factor of Indian culture has spread beyond the mainland and widened the sphere of cultural bond. In distant Java as in Cambodia, Annam and other parts of South-eastern Asia, Indian culture from the mainland has ingrained itself in the soil and has made possible the rise of such monuments as the stupa of Borobodur, the Rāmāyaṇa reliefs at the Śiva temple at Prambanam and the great monuments at Ankor Thom decorated with Nāga and Garuḍa motifs. The earlier figures from Java with all the grace of Gupta and Pallava sculpture and the late mediaeval carvings of Cambodian art suggesting affinities to the picturesque shadow figures of the *Wayang*, show the persistence of a great culture. This cultural conquest of South-eastern Asia more than the colonization and the effects of the brilliant conquests of the Coḷa emperor Rājendra has survived. The discovery of bronzes at Negapatam showing Javanese influence in the case of some and that of the copper plate of Dharmapāla at Nālanda point only to the cultural comradeship of the empires in India and Java.

The sand buried manuscripts and documents of Central Asia and Tibet, recovered by Stein, are in a script which is surprisingly similar to the late Gupta script. Tibetan script has remained the same after the lapse of nearly a thousand years and more.

In Burma the script used in the fifth century A.D. in the Maunggun plates resembles closely the Śāṅkāyana script which was in vogue in the Krishna valley a little earlier. A couple of centuries later a further development in the script used there is recorded in the Pyu inscriptions. The modern script in Burma is a development from this script, though a thousand years and more have brought about infinite changes here as in the scripts in the mainland of India. Here may be observed affinities with Grantha-Tamil in some cases. The peculiar case of medial *e* wherein the letter from the Grantha-Tamil is substituted for the full vowel in modern Burmese script is an instance in point.

In Ceylon the early script used in the 3rd century B.C. was quite akin to the contemporary script in India in the inscriptions in the caves in Tinnevely, Madura, Trichinopoly, etc. In the second century A.D. the development is similar to that in the Krishna valley and in the inscriptions from Maharatmale the letters are exactly like the contemporary ones at Amaravati. It may here be recalled that some sculptures similar to the carvings of Amaravati have been discovered in Ceylon and the moon-stones with the beautiful decorations of rows of geese, elephants, etc., occurring in Nāgārjunakoṇḍa are clearly borrowed from Ceylon. The inscriptions from Nāgārjunakoṇḍa indicate that there was cultural and religious contact between this part of the Andhra country and Ceylon. Later, during the time of Narasimhavarman Pallava, the contemporary king of Ceylon who was his friend was restored to his throne by the help of the navy of the mighty Pallava monarch. The picturesque description of the great fleet and the royal ship given in the Ceylonese Chronicle *Mahāvamsā* is easily visualised by a look at the two types of large ships from the magnificent panels from Borobodur, as the types occurring at Java represent similar ones from South India about the time. In the Ceylonese inscriptions of the tenth century A.D. the Grantha type is similar to that obtaining in South India at the time. The influence of both Grantha and Vaṭṭeḷuttu can be seen in the script used. This is not only due to geographical proximity, but also to the frequent conquest of the island by the kings of South India, specially the great Coḷa emperors Rājarāja and Rājendra. In the modern script of Ceylon the peculiar slanting types of *ta* and *na* in the inscriptions in Vaṭṭeḷuttu are significant. Here, as in Malabar, the script has not materially changed since the mediaeval period.

In Cambodia and Annam the evolution of the script has been similar. In the second and third centuries A.D. the script is very similar to that in contemporary India. In the 4th and 5th centuries, though there is a further development, the earlier type is still preserved. In the 8th century the script changes and approximates to the script in Vengi or in the Andhra area and thereafter the further development in the tenth Century shows the influence of the Pallava script and even later Tamil script. Here the letter *ka* tends to shape

itself like the letter *ka* in Tāmil. *Fa* is shaped after the Canarese and Telugu type. *Ca* is similarly formed. *Ya* tends more towards the Telugu-Canarese variety. In all these cases a peculiar box-head shaped or semi-circular head added to each letter distinguishes it, like the serif in contemporary South Indian letters.

An inscribed slab from Malaya, mentioning Budhagupta, a *Mahānāvika*, captain of a ship, shows the occurrence of a similar script in Malaya also. The inscription is of about the 5th century A.D., judging from its palæographic features. The place mentioned in this inscription, Raktamṛttikā, is identified with Rangmati in Bengal and the close similarity of the letters with the southern variety in the Krishna area about the time proclaims the unity of culture.

The discovery of the interesting *Yūpa* inscriptions of Mūlavarman in Kutei in Borneo apart from proving clearly, a highly vigorous Brahmanical faith and powerful Hindu rule in distant islands shows the cultural affinity, a clear evidence of which is supplied by the clear similarity between South Indian Pallava script of the 4th and 5th centuries A.D. and the script of these inscriptions.

In the inscriptions of Pūrnavarman from Java we can see clearly the palæography of Pallava script of the 5th and 6th centuries A.D. The numerous Sanskrit inscriptions found in these distant islands show the extent to which Indian culture penetrated, which is also testified by the sculpture and architecture in these places.

The deep-rooted nature of this culture can be understood, when we remember that even in Java to-day where the religion has changed, the *Wayang* plays yet immortalise the Hindu story of the *Rāmāyaṇa*, though the troupe that conducts it and the audience that appreciates it is mostly Muhammadan.

INDIAN EPIGRAPHY AND SOUTH INDIA'S CONTRIBUTION.

The earliest inscriptions in India of which the edicts of Aśoka are the most famous are in Prakrit. The earliest Sanskrit inscriptions come much later. The Girnar inscription of Rudaradāman is a very early example of an inscription in Sanskrit. So also is the inscription of Uṣavadāta, the son-in-law of Nahapāna, from the Nāsik cave. The earlier tendency has always been to record the official documents in Prakrit. That is not to say that Sanskrit did not enjoy a great official position in the royal court ; for the Patañjali, the great grammarian, was amongst the most noteworthy persons of his time having great influence with Puṣyamitra, the Śunga king, whom he helped in the performance of the Aśvamedha. Correct spelling, pronunciation and usage were everything for this great grammarian and the language was looked on as the heavenly cow. It was not without any basis or support that this position was claimed for this supreme language of languages which has been described later by Bhavabhūti as the language of the gods revealed to the world by great sages.

संस्कृतं नाम देवी वाग्वाख्ययात्रा महर्षिभिः

Still the language understood by the people was Prakrit rather than Sanskrit. In the *Nāṭakas*, the king, the priests, the *Rṣis*, and the learned speak Sanskrit ; the queen and all the other common folk speak Prakrit. The language spoken and understood by the majority was Prakrit and this was chosen for the inscriptions.

Slowly, however, Sanskrit came to displace Prakrit in the inscriptions. It became a fashion to use Sanskrit more and more ; and though in the initial stages the language was generally simple, as we find in the earliest inscriptions of the Pallavas soon after the change from Prakrit to Sanskrit, still as the years advanced we can see the change in those very Pallava inscriptions of a later date, as for instance in the Kaśākuḍi plates or the Taṇḍam-toṭṭam plates. Some of the long *praśastis*, as for instance the Mau inscription of Madanavarman, the Dewal *praśasti* of Lalla, the Khajuraho inscriptions, the Baṭeśvar inscription of Paramardideva, the inscription of Parabala, the Deopara inscription of Vijayasena, the Cebrolu inscription of Jaya, the Svapneśvar inscription from Bhuvaneśvar, the Mandasor inscription of Kumāragupta and Bandhuvarman, and the *praśasti* of Yaśodharman, are splendid examples, of what is described by Keith and others as artificial poetry. This, however, is not a fair way of describing this type of composition simply because the language is more complex, giving us samples of other literary *pākas* and not *drākṣā pāka* in which Vālmiki and Kālidāsa were adepts. As has been already pointed out there is no *rīti* or *pāka* which is absent in this branch of literature, nor is there any lack of enthusiasm on the part of the composers of the *praśastis* to introduce a great variety of *śabda* and *arthālānkāras* at their disposal. Often the model of earlier classical poets has been before them and the rich contribution of the composers of the *praśastis* has greatly added to the wealth of Sanskrit literature. It only remains for the students of Sanskrit to study these inscriptions as specimens of literature. A step in the right direction has been taken by the Nirnayasagara Press, Bombay, in publishing the two volumes of *Prācīnalekhamālā* which unfortunately has not met with any great encouragement, and as the inscriptional literature now available in printed form is quite vast, it behoves all those interested in Sanskrit learning to make it a part of the study of Sanskrit literature.

The greatest bond in this vast sub-continent has been our cultural unity. If the pilgrim of North India craves for a dip in the *Sangama* or the confluence of Ratnākara and Mahodadhi (Bay of Bengal and Arabian Sea), the South Indian equally yearns for a bath in the holy stream of the Gangā or the confluence of the three rivers at Prayāga, Allahabad. Jagannāthapurī, Puṣkar, and Dvāraka are places of similar importance. In ancient days students travelled to distant Universities at Taxilā, Banaras, Nālandā, and Kañcī. Great philosophers like Śankara established centres of learning for the dissemination of knowledge all over the land and Śankara went all the way to meet Kumārilabhatta in distant Bihar. Rājendra

Coḷa brought great Śaivite teachers from the banks of the Gangā and established them in his capital. The Pallavas encouraged families versed in Vedic lore to migrate from the Narmadā to their own kingdom and the survivals in the names *Aṣṭasahasra*, *Bṛhadcaraṇa* and *Vaḍama* are significant. The Kāśmīri poet Bilhaṇa was patronised by the Cālukyan king, Vikramāditya VI. The *Kulīnas* were imported into Bengal from Kanauj. But the greatest bond was due to the influences of *Śruti*, *Smṛti* and *Itihāsa*. If the Veda and the *Purāṇa* appeared like an overlord or a friend respectively in the voice of their mandates, *Kāvya*, came in with greater appeal like the sportive voice of the beloved one. It should here be remembered that the language of the *Veda* is quite different from the Classical and even that of the *Purāṇa* is archaic. It is the language of the *Kāvya*s that has the greatest appeal and it is this that has enjoyed the position of the language of the court. Any court anywhere in India had only this; and there was no geographical barrier or linguistic for a scholar in that language anywhere in the land, and India abounded in Sanskrit scholarship. Whether Jagannātha wrote from Delhi or whether Appayya Dikṣita wrote from Viriñchipuram, the students and scholars who read and appreciated their work hailed from all over the land. The State language of India was Sanskrit. It was pure Sanskrit in all the inscriptions of North India whether of the Guptas, of the mediaeval dynasties like the Vardhanas, Maukharis, Pratihāras, Paramāras, Candellas, Pālas, Senas, Gāhaḍavalas, Haihayas, Gangas, in short, of any Northern dynasty. The Southern dynasties had also Sanskrit as the principal official language and almost all the grants are completely or nearly so in Sanskrit. The script used in all North Indian inscriptions is Nagari in one form or other, though the form differs in different geographical areas. In South India and the Deccan not only is the script different in different areas but also the regional language used for inscriptions alongside of Sanskrit. The Rāṣṭrakuṭa inscriptions are mostly in Nagari characters and in the Sanskrit language though sometimes they are in Canarese-Telugu script, the language being either Sanskrit or Canarese or a jumble of both. Similarly in the Eastern Ganga inscriptions the script used is sometimes Nagari and mostly the Canarese-Telugu type. In the inscriptions from the Tamil area both Grantha and Tamil scripts are used, the former for Sanskrit and the latter for the Tamil portion of the inscription. In the Telugu area similarly Telugu-Canarese script is used for both the Sanskrit and Telugu portions of the inscriptions.

All inscriptions in languages other than Sanskrit are in the regional languages. They belong to the mediaeval period and are restricted to the Southern part of the land. Though the earliest Tamil inscriptions are contemporary with the earliest Prakrit inscriptions, pure Tamil inscriptions of some length occur again only in the 6th Century A.D., as for instance, in the Paḷḷankovil grant of Simhavaraman. This paucity of Tamil inscriptions from about the end of the Sangam age (c. 3rd century A.D.) to the beginning of the Pallava rule in the Tamil country (c. 6th century A.D.) may be attributed to the unsettled conditions during the Kalabhra interregnum.

The three important South Indian languages, Tamil, Canarese and Telugu, are the only regional languages used in inscriptions in India, barring Prakrit used in early inscriptions.

Though it may appear rather surprising the fact remains that we have inscriptions practically in no other regional language. The presence of numerous inscriptions in these three languages does not however mean the non-prevalance of Sanskrit in the areas ; on the other hand Sanskrit was given the first place as the accepted court language. But while in North India the kings used the official language Sanskrit for the inscriptions in South India, the regional languages were greatly favoured together with Sanskrit. The great and numerous *Meṅkīrtis* or eulogies of royal dynasties in Tamil which supply most of the material for the history of the Coḷa and Pāṅḍya dynasties are patterns of composition in themselves. Tamil Pallava inscriptions like Dantivarman's Tiruvallarai inscription are contributions to Tamil literature. The terms used in special senses in these Tamil inscriptions are so numerous, the vocabulary is so rich, the expression so elegant, and the diction so dignified that Tamil literature has been greatly enriched by this inscriptional literature. There is practically no pillar or wall of a temple, specially the plinth of a Coḷa temple—South India teems with temples of immense proportions distributed on the average of one for every mile or two, specially in the Tanjore district—which has not lengthy inscriptions on the exploits of the king or his numerous gifts or institutions he established. Indeed, the beautiful descriptions of royal exploits, rich in rhythm and colour of language, vie only with the greatness of the exploits themselves. The Coḷas and the Pāṅḍyas were among the greatest patrons of Tamil literature. And the great composers of the *Tevāram* Appar and Sambandar, were contemporaries of the Pallava who greatly honoured them. It is interesting to note that not only the opening verse of the great *Tiruvācakam* of Manikkavācaka is inscribed on the palm-leaf shown in the hand of the bronze figure of the saint from Madukkūr, Tanjore district discovered nearly two decades ago as Treasure Trove by the Madras Government and returned to the villages for worship, but also some of the hymns including a few rare ones are found inscribed on the walls of the temple at Tiruvaḍavāyil, Tanjore district in Coḷa characters of the 12th century A.D.

The earliest Telugu works like the *Mahābhārata* are rather late, as Nannayabhaṭṭa, the father of Telugu poetry, is of the 11th century. But Nannecoḍa, the author of *Kumārasambhava* in Telugu, is a century earlier. The famous Yuddhamalla inscription from Bezwada in Telugu poetry is in the script of the 10th century A.D. Earlier still is the inscription describing the exploits of the Eastern Cāḷukya general Paṅḍaranga which is of the 9th century A.D. On the back of a monolithic, Dvārapālaka, an excellent example of an early Eastern Cāḷukya work which I brought a few years ago from Bezwada to the Madras Museum, an inscription was found reading *Vegināthu velaṅḍu*, meaning "servant of the lord of Vēgi" in letters of the 7th century A.D. This is a very early instance of the use of Telugu in inscriptions. In an inscription a portion of which is in Telugu, the poet Śrinātha, the doyen of Telugu literature, is described as the composer of the inscription and his official position as the Director of Public Instruction in the Redḍi kingdom is also mentioned. The Eastern Cāḷukyan, Reddi and Vijayanagara kings were great patrons of

Telugu literature and along with Sanskrit, the official language, the regional language had its due place in inscriptions.

Though the antiquity of Canarese goes back to the beginning of the Christian era as fragments in that language were discovered in an Egyptian Papyrus¹, regular Canarese literature is a thousand years old. Though even in the Canarese area Sanskrit occupies pre-eminent position in inscriptions, Canarese also occurs alongside.

The scripts of South India have contributed enormously to the spread of Indian culture overseas. As pointed out elsewhere, the script of Ceylon is derived from Grantha Tamil. The script of the inscriptions in Java like those of Pūrṇavarman closely resembles the early script of South India. The same applies also to the characters used in the inscriptions of Annam or Campa. It is therefore clear that the contribution of South India to Indian epigraphy is considerable not only in the development of languages but also in the spread and evolution of the script which has travelled beyond the seas to supply characters for writing in the many islands of the Pacific. The crowning achievement of this cultural link between South India and South-East Asia is the great military conquest of Malaya by Rājendra Coḷa who commanded one of the finest navies that India ever possessed and brought South India and the East Indies into closer touch.

¹ *Linguistic Survey of India* by Sir G. A. Grierson (Calcutta, 1927), Vol. I, Part I, p. 87.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE LETTERS OF ALPHABET DURING THE CENTURIES.

A.—This, the first letter of the alphabet (Fig. 20), is found in nearly three similar forms in the 3rd-2nd centuries B.C. The Mauryan alphabet presents the letter in two ways, a vertical stroke with two arms moving away from a central point, either as straight or as curvilinear strokes. The letter from Bhaṭṭiprolu has straight strokes, while in the early inscriptions from the Tamil caves of South India it is of both these types in addition to a third type wherein the vertical stroke is also shown curvilinear. The next important phase in the development of this letter is seen in the Kuṣāṇ, Kṣatrapa and Śātavāhana inscriptions, all of the 2nd century A.D. The lower arm develops greater curve in all the three, while the vertical stroke is lengthened considerably and the curve becomes a definite curl in the inscriptions of the time of the Ikṣvākus. The northern type of Gupta script of the 4th century A.D. shows a development from that of the Kuṣāṇ, while the Central Indian Gupta variety of the same period gives that letter a box-head and the vertical stroke descends down and the curl is replaced by a parallel upward stroke. This is uniformly repeated in all the letters of the box-headed variety, i.e., the Kadamba (4th-5th centuries A.D.), the Vākāṭaka (5th century A.D.) and the Naḷa (5th century A.D.), the Somavaṃśi (6th-7th centuries A.D.) and the Pallava (5th century A.D.), the box-head being most pronounced in the first four. This stroke is similarly formed in the Western Gaṅga (5th-6th centuries A.D.) and Traikūṭaka (5th century A.D.), though the parallel stroke is rather close in the former. In the Śālakāyana and early Pallava of the 3rd-4th centuries A.D. and the Viṣṇukunḍin letters of the 6th century A.D. the bottom curve of the vertical stroke soars up with a flourish. In the Western Cālukyan and Maitraka (6th century A.D.) and Eastern Gaṅga (7th century A.D.) the vertical stroke repeats a parallel stroke, as in the box-headed variety, but in the Eastern Cālukya of the 7th century A.D. the curl soars up somewhat as in Viṣṇukunḍin. In contemporary script from the Tamil area, the Pallava Grantha gives the vertical stroke as a double line, the two arms tending to combine to form a loop before reaching the vertical stroke. In Tamil of the same period the arms combine and form a loop to reach a single vertical stroke. In the Nāgari of the time a single vertical stroke shoots up a little to left to form an angle at its bottom tip. From its centre a small line joins the two arms curved into a shape resembling the Arabic numeral 3 (double arched). The precursor of this letter is already present in the letter of Yaśodharman's inscription. These are the parents of the principal scripts, Nāgari, Canarese, Telugu, Grantha and Tamil.

In the further developments of the letter in Nāgari, a horizontal top stroke connects the part shaped like double arch with the vertical stroke as in Rāṣṭrakūṭa script of the 9th century A.D. In the Paramāra inscriptions of the 11th century A.D. there is a nail head at the right end of the top stroke. The angular stroke at the bottom of the vertical line is

lengthened and straightened in Yādava of the 13th century A.D. In the Nandināgarī variety of the Vijayanagara period the double arch that was all the while getting enlarged to the size of the vertical stroke stands quite equal to it. In the Eastern Ganga of the 11th century A.D. the small central stroke develops into a double curve, making the letter somewhat different from the rest of the Nagari letters.

In the Canarese area, the lower end of the vertical stroke of the letter of the early Western Cālukyan of the 6th century A.D. runs up in semi-circular fashion to touch the top of the upper arm in the Rāṣṭrakūṭa records of the 9th century A.D. In later Western Cālukyan of the 11th century A.D. the letter is composed simply of the vertical stroke running up after forming a curve at the bottom and curling up close to the top. A small stroke in the Central space is all that is left of the arms. This is further developed in Hoysala of the 12th century A.D. and in the Vijayanagara period the letter is the same type for Telugu and Canarese.

In the Vengi country the early Eastern Cālukyan letter of the 7th century A.D. so develops that in the 10th century the lower arm curls twice, the upper one dwindling into a small serif which is touched by the tip of the vertical stroke that rushes up semi-circularly. The later developments of the letter are more or less allied to that of the Canarese alphabet.

In Grantha the loop of the arms becomes smaller in the 8th century but again enlarges in early Coḷa (11th century A.D.). In late Coḷa of the 13th century A.D. the top end of the arm which here appears curved develops into a regular angle-shaped top, the loop enlarges and this end of the arm pierces the stunted double line, occupying the place of the vertical stroke. This continues in the Vijayanagara period.

In Tamil the loop disappears in Pallava records of the 8th century A.D. and in the early Coḷa period the letter is just a curve attached to the top of a horizontal line against a vertical one. In late Coḷa (13th century A.D.) and Vijayanagara (15th century A.D.) the curve curls up at the top.

In Vatteluttu script the letter is somewhat like the Pallava letter of the 8th century but slanting towards left. Its development is seen in the Coḷa letter of the 11th century A.D.

Ā.—The second letter of the alphabet (Fig. 21) is a lengthened form of the first. This lengthening is indicated by a small dash added on top or in the middle of the vertical stroke in Mauryan script. It is similar in Bhaṭṭiprolu script. In the letter in the Tamil caves the top stroke is used. In the Kuṣān script of the 2nd century A.D. the dash is at the lower end of the vertical stroke, while it is almost in the centre at the starting point of the arms in contemporary Kṣatrapa and Sātavāhana inscriptions, its shape being curved in the Kṣatrapa letter. In the 3rd century A.D. in the elongate Ikṣvāku letter the curved dash starts a little below the point where the arms start. The dash is curved and in similar position in Kadamba

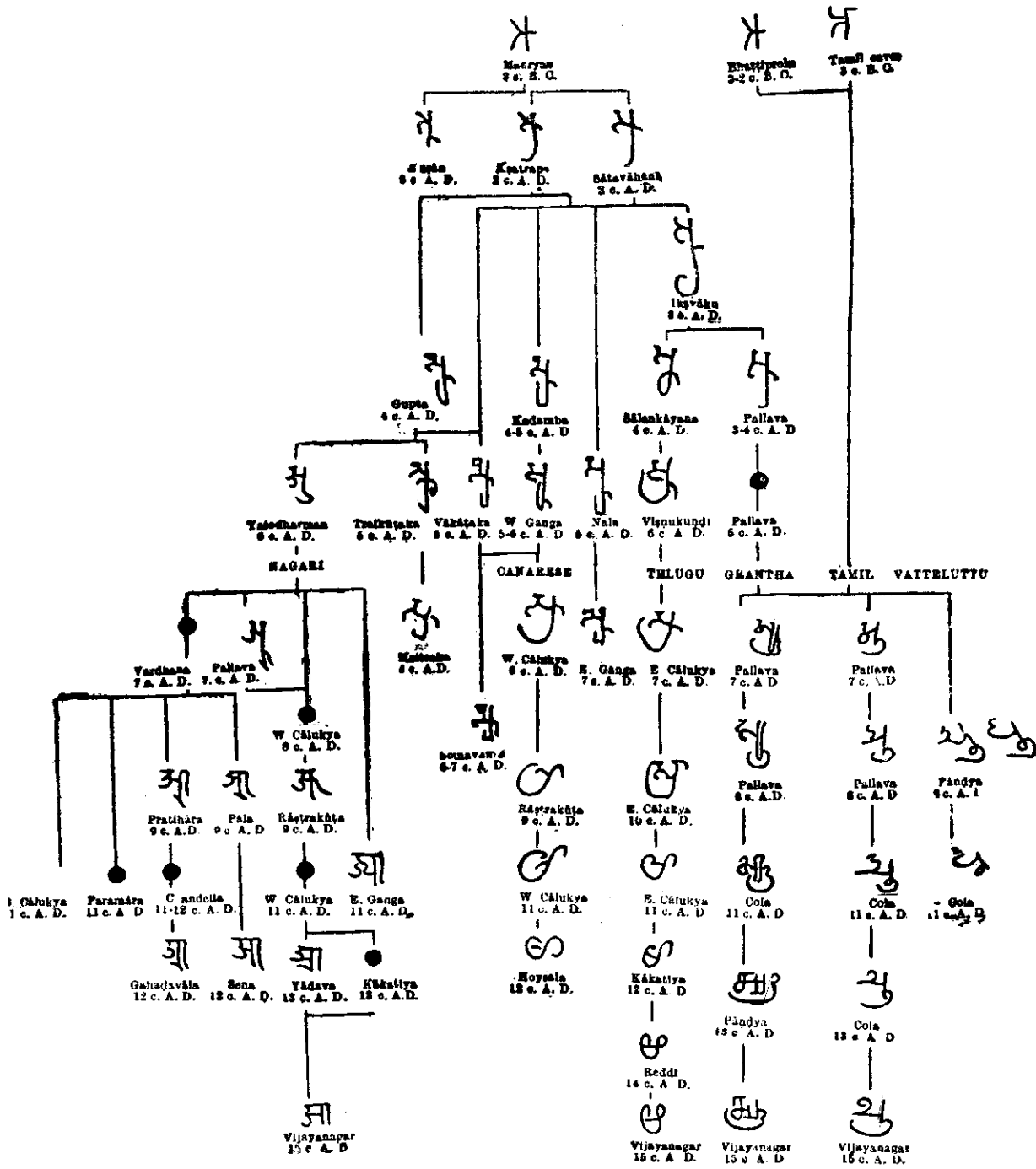


Fig. 21.

O.S. del.

(4th-5th centuries A.D.), Śāṅkāyana (4th century A.D.), Pallava (3rd-4th centuries A.D.), Western Gaṅga (5th century A.D.), Nāḷa (5th century A.D.), Viṣṇukunḍin (6th century A.D.) and Eastern Gaṅga (7th century A.D.), except that in Western Gaṅga it is a little near the lower end. The 4th century Gupta letter being derived from Kuṣān has an appendage of this curved dash from the vertical stroke below the point whence the arms emanate. In Maitraka (6th century A.D.), Somavamśi (6th-7th centuries A.D.), Western Cāḷukya (6th century A.D.), Eastern Cāḷukya (7th century A.D.), it is from the point where the arms start. In Pallava Nagari letter of the 7th century A.D. the curved stroke is towards the lower end, as also in Pallava Grantha and Tamil of the 7th century A.D., the curve running in a flourish in the last two. In Pallava Grantha however, the curve is double. While in Rāṣṭrakūṭa Nagari of the 9th century A.D. the dash is just in continuation of the central stroke, in other contemporaneous ones like Pratiḥāra and Pāla (9th century A.D.) and in all the later ones like Gāhaḍavāla, Sena, Yādava, etc., the dash becomes a line parallel to the vertical stroke and continues so in further developments.

In the Canarese area the dash is a curve projecting from the top of the vertical stroke which itself becomes a circle as in Rāṣṭrakūṭa (9th century A.D.) and in later developments, i.e., Western Cāḷukya (11th century A.D.) and Hoysala (12th century A.D.) it continues so.

In the Telugu area the position of the dash is almost similar in Eastern Cāḷukyan of the 10th and 11th centuries A.D. and in Kākatīya (12th century A.D.), with this difference that the starting point of the dash is at an angular point in Eastern Cāḷukyan of the 10th century A.D., but in Redḍi (14th century A.D.) and Vijayanagara (15th century A.D.) the curve of the dash forms a definite loop and runs in to join the central stroke.

The letter in Pallava Grantha of the 8th century A.D. shows a curl at the bottom which develops into a double curve with a flourish at its bottom and in Coḷa (11th century A.D.). This continues in Pāṇḍya (13th century A.D.) and Vijayanagara (15th century A.D.)

In Tamil a curl at the bottom in Pallava (8th century A.D.) develops into a loop and curl in Coḷa (11th century A.D.). In Vijayanagara (15th century A.D.) the curl broadens with a flourish, shedding its loop.

In Vatteluttu script the letter has a loop and a curl at the lower end of the vertical stroke which itself is slanting, as already noted.

I.—In the Mauryan alphabet this letter (Fig. 22) is simply represented by three dots arranged triangularly. This arrangement continues even in the 2nd century A.D. in the Ksatrapa inscriptions but in the contemporary Kuṣān and Sātavāhana inscriptions the dots change into small dashes, one of which is vertical beside two parallel ones in the former. In the Gupta script of the 4th century A.D. the vertical dash is a little lengthened besides two dots in place of the other two dashes. In the Ikṣvāku letter of the 3rd century A.D. the

dashes curve a little at their tips, and in the earliest Pallava records in Prakrit these appear as small crosses with arms extending so little beyond the point of intersection that they appear as dots more or less. The Kadamba letter of 4th-5th centuries A.D. is composed of a horizontal line with a slight central dip and ends bent down vertically a little above two dots. The form of this letter from the 5th to the 9th centuries A.D. both in Canarese and Telugu areas is only a little modified form of this type. In the former the line develops a small curve to the left and in the Telugu area to the right, but in both the horizontal length of the line is greater than the vertical part of it. In the Vākāṭaka (5th century A.D.) the dip of the horizontal line is replaced by an additional vertical in centre; in Maitraka (6th century A.D.) the dots are replaced by dashes and in Eastern Gaṅga (7th century A.D.) the letter is much the same as in contemporary Cālukyan. In the earliest Nagari of the 7th century A.D., both in the North and the South Indian scripts, represented respectively in Vardhana and Pallava inscriptions, the letter is composed of a sign like an interrogation mark without the dot below, turned at an angle of 90° to the left with two dots a little above the curled head. This continues in all the later Nagari inscriptions of the Western Cālukyas, Rāṣṭrakūṭas, Pratihāras, Paramāras, Candellas, etc., but from the 12th century A.D. onwards there is a change and a horizontal stroke above and two small circles joined together by a slanting stroke represent the letter in Gāhaḍavāla script (12th century A.D.). Two dots below with a triangle above forming the letter in Pāla script (9th century A.D.) develop into two ovate parts, situated slightly above a dash and combining below a small vertical stroke reaching the top line, which descends vertically towards its left, in Sena (12th century A.D.). In Yādava (13th century A.D.) a horizontally drawn hook connected with the top stroke beneath it and a dash looped at one end compose the letter which in Vijayanagara Nand nāgari (15th century A.D.) shows a vertical hook with strokes at both ends. In Kalinga Ganga script of the 11th century A.D. two small circles with a sickle-shaped sign on top represent the letter.

In contemporary Western and Eastern Cālukyan the two dots below the double curved line above transform themselves into a loop in continuation of the left end of the curved line and the line composing the loop develops in continuation to its left during the centuries in the Canarese and Telugu areas and is very pronounced in the Vijayanagara period (15th century A.D.).

In the early Pallava Grantha of the 7th century A.D. the curved line above runs down to the right to meet one of the two circlet dots below. Sometimes the circlet dot touching the line is absent when the line turns up to run up parallel. In the 8th century Pallava the first-mentioned variety continues as also a type in which the line running down slants to the left and a dot occurs on the right. In the 11th century Coḷa script the letter starts with a curl, curves twice, slants down to its right and again down to its left. In the 13th century Pāṇḍya the last slant of the letter straightens and it continues so thereafter.

The letter in Tamil of the Pallavas of the 7th century A.D. is shaped somewhat like the modern Arabic numeral 3 with a pronounced curve at the top start. The lower half of the figure is lengthened somewhat in Pallava script of the 8th century A.D., while the same is in addition a little broadened in Coḷa (11th century A.D.). In Vijayanagara (15th century A.D.) and later inscriptions, the lower part is flattened somewhat, while in this and the earlier Coḷa (13th century A.D.) the tail end almost encircles the figure in a flourish.

The letter in Vaṭṭeḷuttu of the 8th century A.D. is peculiarly shaped, beginning with a broad curve almost forming a circle, then developing horizontally to the right to rise again and slant towards the curve, finally ending in an arc which is somewhat angular. The curve hooks up at its start and broadens in Coḷa (11th century A.D.), the rest of the letter getting simplified into two arcs one in continuation of another.

I.—This letter (Fig. 23) in its earliest form is seen in the inscriptions of the Tamil caves of the 3rd century B.C. where it is a vertical stroke flanked by two dots. In the Kṣatrapa and Kuṣān alphabet of the 2nd century A.D. the vertical stroke has a small serif at the top and is curved to left at the lower end. This continues so in Gupta script two centuries later but in Pallava script of about the same time the vertical stroke is represented slanting from right to left with the dots above and below it.

The form of the letter in Yaśodharman's inscriptions of the 6th century A.D., and the later development in Harṣavardhana's inscriptions a century later is just a modification of the Gupta type, the curve being replaced by just a thickening of the lower end. In letter of the 9th century A.D., this stroke separates into two parts one as a double arched serif above the dots and a hook below.

In Vākātaka script of the 5th century A.D., the box head appears as usual and the lower curve is emphasised by the formation of double line as in *ra*.

The later development in Cālukyan area is judged by the Rāṣṭrakūṭa letter of the 9th century A.D. where the end of the curve has joined the serif to form a stumpy tube-shape with the dots on either side.

In the Telugu area about this time the form is the same but in the next century the body of the letter is more ovoid as seen in the Eastern Cālukyan alphabet of the 10th century A.D. In the next century the serif as usual in other letter of the time takes a V shape and the two dots change into an arched stroke running across the belly of the letter and this continues thence forwards.

In the Tamil area the Ġrantha letter is composed of the dots on either side of two close parallel strokes joined by a serif at the top as in *ra*; and the Tamil letter is a single vertical stroke with the serif modified as in other letters of the alphabet and with strokes.

In Vatteluttu script the letter is almost the same as the Tamil one except that it slants from left to right.

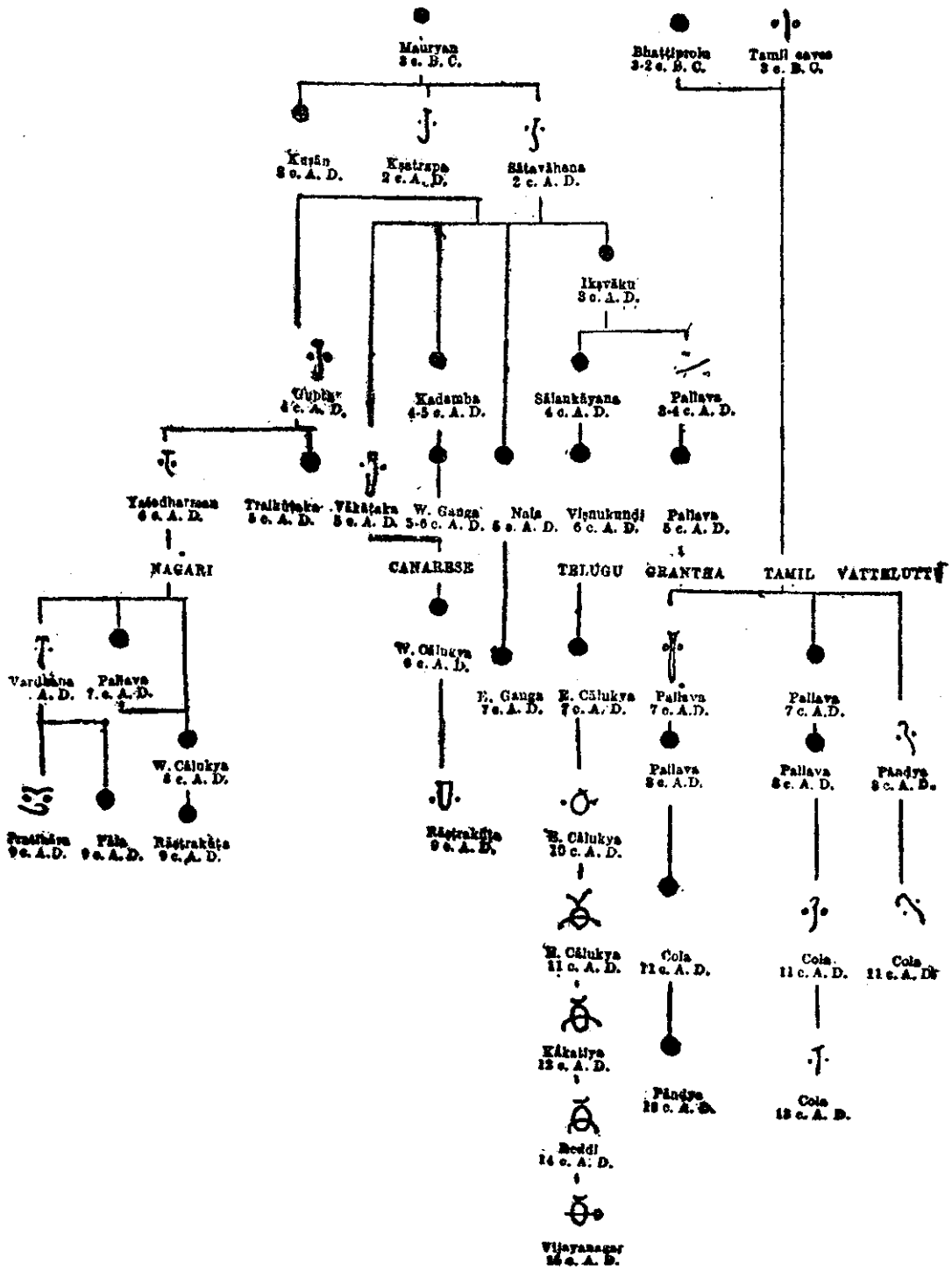


Fig. 23.

O.S. del.

U.—In the Mauryan script it is just two lines, a long vertical and short horizontal forming a right-angle and resembling 'L' (Fig. 24). It is the same type in contemporary script at Bhattiprolu and in the Tamil caves of the Pāṇḍya country. In the Kuṣān, Kṣatrapa and Sātavāhana inscriptions of the 2nd century A.D. and Īkṣvāku of the 3rd century A.D. the angle tends slightly to become acute and a serif is developed at the top. In the earliest Prakrit Pallava of the 3rd-4th centuries A.D., the slanting vertical line is rather pronounced in comparison to the horizontal one which dwindles. In Gupta of the 4th century A.D., it is shaped like a hook with the angle rounded, and in all the box-headed varieties the serif is replaced by the box-head, the letter itself looking somewhat like an inverted question mark touching the dot transformed into a box. In the script of Yaśodharman's time and Nagari from the 7th century A.D. the shape definitely tends to resemble the Arabic numeral 3 with a nail head, as in Pallava, Vardhana (7th century A.D.), Western Cālukya (8th century A.D.), Paramāra and Candella (11th century A.D.); or serif, as in Rāṣṭrakūṭa (9th century A.D.), later Western Cālukya (11th century A.D.), Gāhaḍavāla, Sena (12th century A.D.), Yādava Kākatīya (13th century A.D.), etc.

The letter in the earliest Western Cālukya (6th century A.D.) is almost a semi-circular curve with serif on top; this gets flattened and bulbous and the serif changes into a slight topward projection of the line and this develops more obviously in the succeeding centuries in the Canarese area till in the Hoysala (12th century A.D.) the line on top slants back and a horizontal stroke is introduced in the belly immediately above the lower line which is double arched.

In the Telugu area the earliest Eastern Cālukyan letter of the 7th century has no serif but the semi-circular body of the letter lifts up its top which definitely projects vertically in the Eastern Cālukyan of the 11th Century A.D. and Kākatīya (12th century A.D.) In the last two centuries the lower line tends to develop a notch which produces a double curve and in the Kākatīya letter a horizontal stroke is added in the middle space which continues later.

In the Grantha of the 7th century A.D. the slanting vertical line diminishes in size and develops a curve to the left while the horizontal lower stroke lengthens and slants downwards. The curve develops from the 8th century A.D. onwards, while the base line tends to rise up again in the Coḷa period (11th century A.D.) and definitely becomes straight from the later Pāṇḍya period (13th century A.D.). The top curve enlarges and definitely curls in the Vijayanagara period (15th century A.D.). It is exactly the same in Tamil.

In Vatteluttu of 8th century A.D. the letter starts approximately the same as in the Pallava Tamil or Grantha, except that the base line has no slant, is longer and curved, with a definite inward angle at the end. The curve of the body of the letter tends somewhat to broaden and straighten in Coḷa (11th century A.D.).

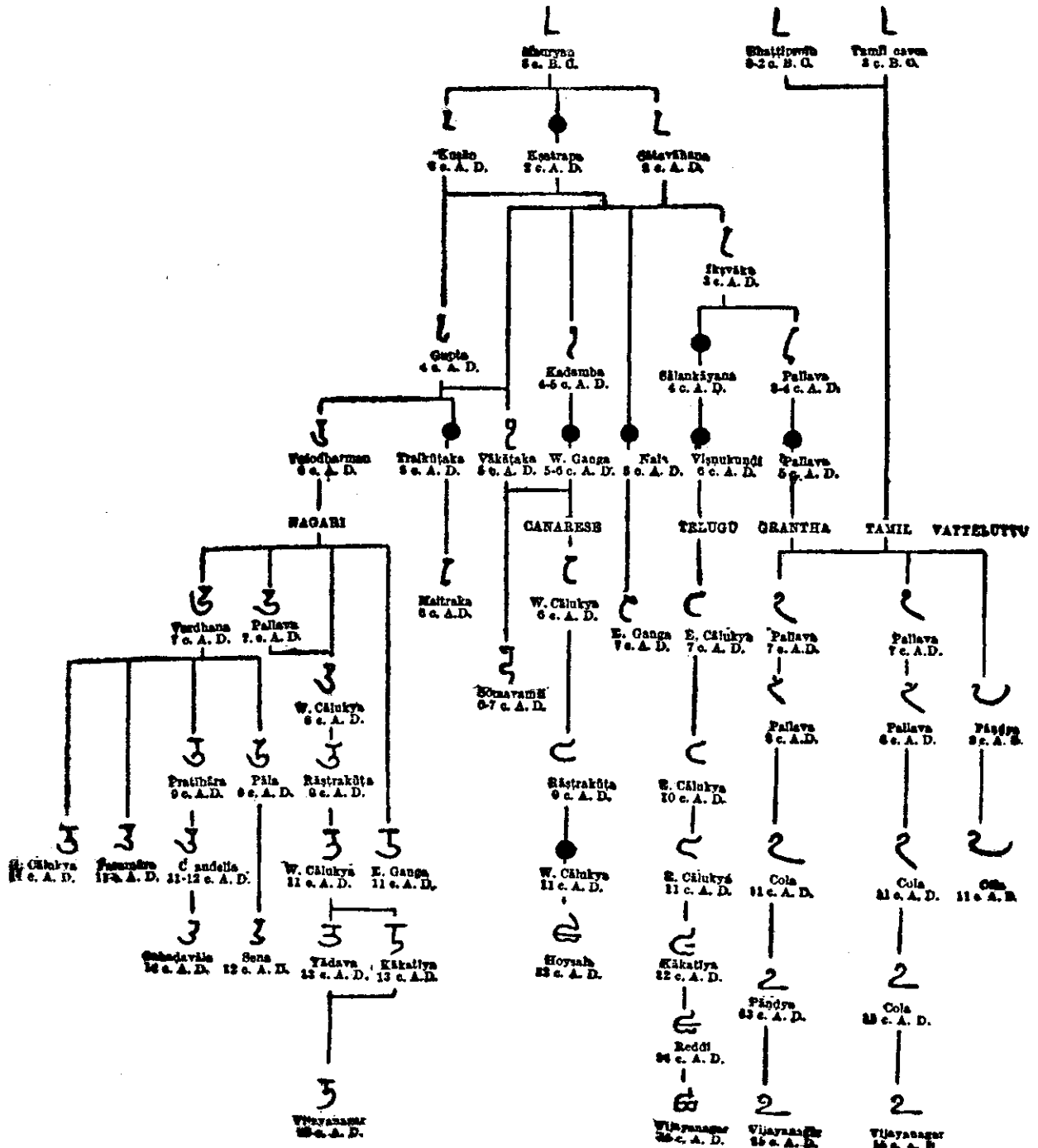


FIG. 24.

O. S. del.

E.—In Mauryan script this (Fig. 25) is shaped like a triangle, composed of a vertical stroke and two lines from either end meeting to the right at a central point. It is similar in the Tamil caves, except that the two lines do not meet actually at the point. In the Kuṣān script of the 2nd century A.D. the triangle is so shaped that it has two angles on top and one below and in contemporary Kṣatrapa and Sātavāhana it is quite the reverse. In Gupta of the 4th century it is similar to the latter. In Ikṣvāku (3rd century A.D.) the letter assumes a contour not unlike that of the human stomach, i.e., a deep curve lengthened towards the top right, bounded above by a shallow arc. In Śālikāyana (4th century A.D.) the belly of the letter protrudes to the left and the bottom curves in at the centre. This last feature of the bottom is absent in Pallava of the 3rd-4th centuries A.D. In Viṣṇukunḍin of the 6th century A.D. the developed belly and the arch in the bottom are present but there is a break where the line of the belly reaches the vertical stroke. In box-headed script, the letter is represented by a square with the vertical line on the right prolonged above. This vertical line has a small top serif in Vākāṭaka script (5th century A.D.) and Somavamśi (6th-7th centuries A.D.) which it lacks in Kadamba in 4th-5th centuries A.D. In the Maitraka (6th century A.D.) it partakes off characteristics of both the box-headed and the Cālukyan varieties.

The letter takes a shape tending towards that of the human heart in the script of Yaśodharman (6th century A.D.) which becomes more pronounced in the Vardhana and Pallava script of the 7th century A.D., and in one form or other it is only a development from this in all the later varieties of Nagari. The vertical stroke to the right is a little lengthened in Pāla and Rāṣṭrakūṭa of the 9th century A.D., in the Paramāra, Western Cālukya (11th century A.D.) and the Gāhaḍavāla (12th century A.D.). The top line separates from the boundary line to the left and curves in Sena (12th century A.D.) while in Yādava (13th century A.D.) and Vijayanagara (15th century A.D.) the tips of the line to the left curved in the former and straight in the latter and the shorter straight line to the right do not touch each other. In Kākatīya (13th century A.D.) it is triangularly shaped like the Vijayanagara letter with the lines from the sides meeting at the bottom.

A medial.—This (Fig. 26) is denoted in the Mauryan script by a small dash added to the consonant usually to the top right; but sometimes as in *jā* or *nā* it is a middle stroke and not a top one. In the Bhaṭṭiprolu inscriptions this stroke is in addition to a stroke already existing as a part of the consonant letter. In the Kuṣān inscriptions of the 2nd century A.D. this is represented sometimes as a dash but generally by a stroke slanting to right. In *jā* the stroke runs up somewhat in a curve in continuation of the central stroke. In the inscriptions of the Western Kṣatrapa, as illustrated by those of Uṣavadāta and Rudradāman, the medial *ā* is represented by a simple dash usually at the top right but sometimes also at the centre, as in *bā*, *bhā*, etc.

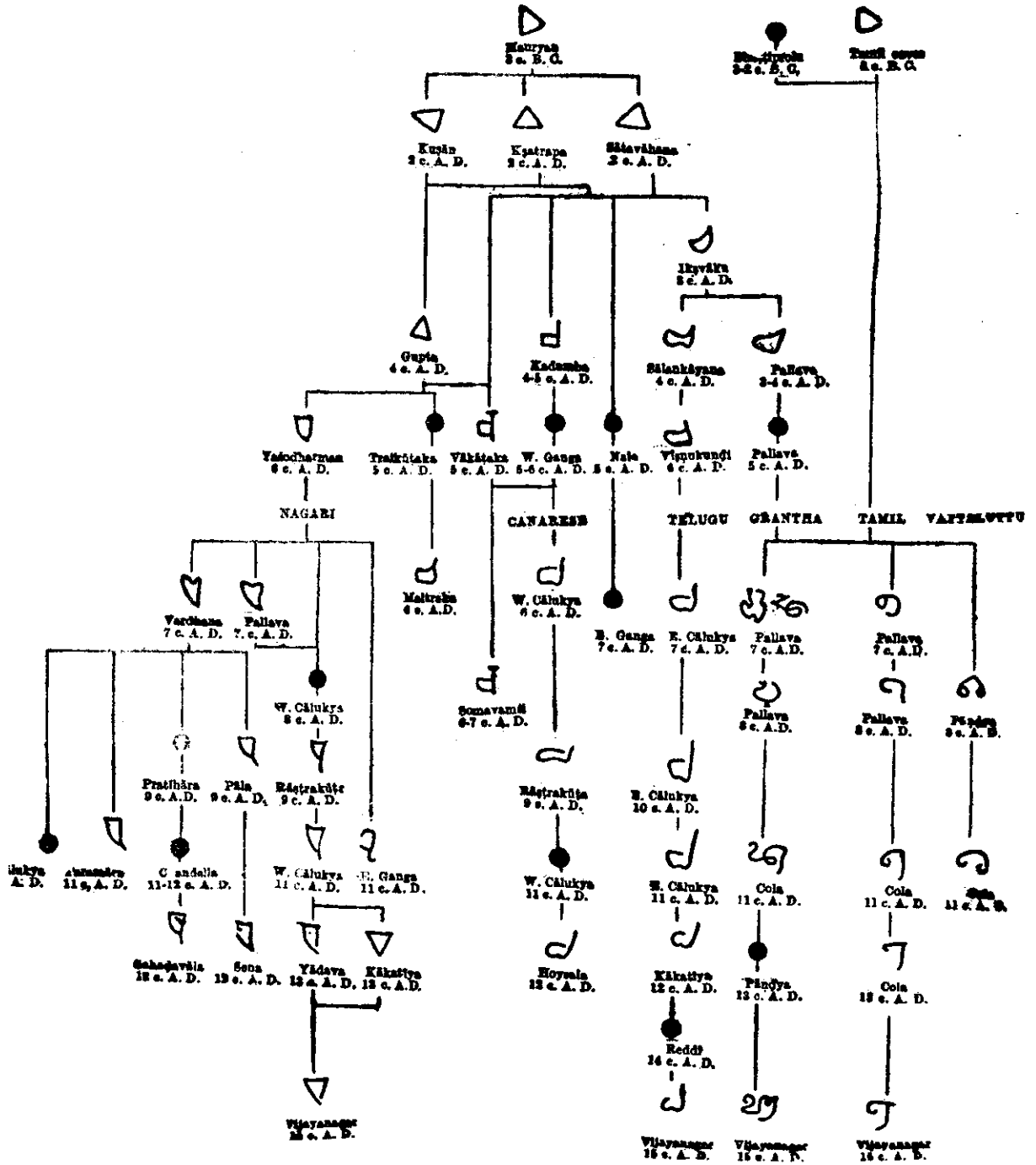


FIG. 25

In the Ikṣvāku inscriptions of the Krishna valley this is represented generally by a horizontal top stroke, slightly curving towards its tip, and also by the earlier simple stroke without curve. In the early Pallava Prakrit charters the curve of the stroke is sometimes as in the Ikṣvāku inscriptions, but sometimes the curve is more pronounced or it definitely develops a downward arm. The stroke for *jā* has a definitely greater flourish.

In the Gupta letters of the 4th century A.D. medial *ā* is generally depicted as a not-too-straight horizontal top stroke but sometimes by an upward stroke, as in *jā* or *tā*, in continuation of the central stroke in the case of the former and curving down from the top stroke to proceed up, in the case of the latter.

In the 6th century A.D., in the earliest Nagari letter to be seen in inscriptions, like Yaśodharman's, medial *ā* is a slightly bent horizontal top stroke or a vertical one shooting up and ending in a curve to the right. The stroke is sometimes upwards from the bottom line or downwards from the top line, as in *ṇā* and *mā* respectively. In the 7th century Nagari, as illustrated in Harṣavardhana's charters, the upward stroke is above the top line, shaped like a query, and the bent horizontal stroke definitely becomes a short abrupt downward stroke. In the inscriptions of the Pratihāras of the 9th century this stroke is elongated, while upward strokes are also sometimes found as in *ṭa*. In all subsequent Nagari inscriptions like those of the Paramāras in Gujarat and Malwa area and the Senas in Bengal, the downward side stroke elongated is the only form to denote medial *ā*.

In Central, Southern and Western India in the 5th and 6th centuries A.D. the medial *ā* is denoted by a horizontal top stroke to the right curving downwards, as seen in Vākāṭaka (5th century A.D.), Pallava (5th century A.D.) and early Western Cālukya (6th century A.D.) inscriptions, though the upward stroke also occurs sometimes as in *ṇa*. Both the varieties occur in Eastern Cālukyan script of the 9th century with a change that likens the strokes to those of the 6th century Nagari.

In the Telugu inscriptions of the 12th and 13th centuries A.D., illustrated by those of the Kākatīyas and Reḍḍis, the horizontal stroke is with a definite curve which later becomes curl to the right.

In Pallava Grantha of the 7th century A.D., medial *ā* is represented by the addition to the top line of the consonant letter to the right, a small crescent with a wavy vertical stroke above it in its centre. In Pallava Grantha of the 8th century, upward and side strokes to right and in the contemporary Tamil the side strokes above, represent this sign. The side stroke is more elaborated in the Coḷa period, and the 15th century Vijayanagara inscriptions the medial *ā* in Grantha and Tamil is represented by a shorter and longer vertical line with top stroke.

I medial.—In the 3rd century B.C., as seen in Aśokan inscriptions the medial *i* (Fig. 27) is a horizontal top stroke to the right, which forms an angle by darting up vertically. In the Kuṣān script of the 2nd century A.D. this curves up to the left and sometimes bends doubly

-	𑌕𑌃𑌃𑌃𑌃	Mauryan 3 c. B. C.
=	𑌕𑌃𑌃𑌃𑌃	Kusha 2 c. A.D.
-	𑌕𑌃𑌃𑌃	Ugavdāta c. A.D.
-	𑌕𑌃𑌃𑌃	Kastura 2 c. A.D.
~	𑌕𑌃𑌃𑌃	Kipvāka 3 c. A.D.
~	𑌕𑌃𑌃𑌃	Pallava 2-4 c. A.D.
~	𑌕𑌃𑌃𑌃	Pallava 2-4 c. A.D.
~	𑌕𑌃𑌃𑌃	Gupta 4 c. A.D.
~	𑌕𑌃𑌃𑌃	Yashodharman 6 c. A.D.
~	𑌕𑌃𑌃𑌃	Haryavardhana 7 c. A.D.
~	𑌕𑌃𑌃𑌃	Pratihāra 8 c. A.D.
~	𑌕𑌃𑌃𑌃	Paramāra 11 c. A.D.
~	𑌕𑌃𑌃𑌃	Sena 12 c. A.D.
~	𑌕𑌃𑌃𑌃	Chalukya 8 c. A.D.
~	𑌕𑌃𑌃𑌃	Pallava 8 c. A.D.
~	𑌕𑌃𑌃𑌃	W. Chalukya 6 c. A.D.
~	𑌕𑌃𑌃𑌃	E. Chalukya 10 c. A.D.
~	𑌕𑌃𑌃𑌃	Kakatiya 12 c. A.D.
~	𑌕𑌃𑌃𑌃	Reddi 12 c. A.D.
~	𑌕𑌃𑌃𑌃	Pallava 7 c. A.D.
~	𑌕𑌃𑌃𑌃	Pallava 8 c. A.D.
~	𑌕𑌃𑌃𑌃	Ora 11 c. A.D.
~	𑌕𑌃𑌃𑌃	Nayabagar 15 c. A.D.

towards left and right. In Uṣavadāta's inscription the leftward curve is the feature, but in inscriptions of Kṣatrapa Rudradāman of the 2nd century A.D. the leftward curve is deeper. In contemporary Sātavāhana inscriptions the curves are much the same, as in Kuṣān. In the Ikṣvāku inscriptions of the 3rd century A.D. the leftward curve tends to rise up, sometimes straightening up but always forming a curl at the tip, occasionally the main curve itself being right instead of leftward, as in *li*. In Pallava-Brahmi of the 3rd-4th centuries A.D., curves are towards left generally and to right occasionally as in *li* to denote medial *i*.

In early Gupta inscriptions the leftward curve is the sign for the letter. For the first time in the Nagari of the 6th century A.D., as in Yaśodharman's inscriptions, the curve runs leftward and turns right to form a double curve in flourishes or proceeds up leftwards and ends by running down vertically, or, simply curves left and runs down deep vertically. In the 7th century Nagari inscriptions, like those of Harṣavardhana, the flourishes increase, the leftward stroke curving twice and sometimes having an inverted crescent added to the tip. The plainer form is the leftward curve which curves down deep vertically. This second type continues in the Nagari of the Pratihāra inscriptions of the 9th century A.D., a curl at the top end being present very often. In the Paramāra inscriptions of the 11th century the curve straightens or bends a little inward in the centre and in the Sena inscriptions of the 12th century A.D. the curve is shallow and its downward course vertically straight.

In the Central, Western and South Indian early mediaeval scripts, like the Vākāṭaka, the early Pallava and the early Western Cālukyan, of the 5th-6th centuries A.D., medial *i* is represented by an upturned crescent streak, which sometimes appears as a full circle where the shape of the top stroke of the letter demands it.

This definitely flattens at the top in the Eastern Cālukyan script of the 10th century A.D., though it continues much as in its earlier form in the Kākatīya and Reddi inscriptions of the 12-13th centuries A.D.

In the Pallava Grantha of the 7th century A.D. this curve starts after forming a hook shape from above the serif of any letter; the hook is however absent when there is no serif involved and one end slightly curls. The simple semi-circular curve and full circle at the top of letter is the sign of the medial *i* in Pallava Grantha and Tamil of the 8th century A.D., while in later inscriptions, like those of the Coḷas in the 10th-11th centuries and the Vijayanagara kings of the 14th-15th centuries, an inverted crescent streak or arc is the usual sign in Grantha and Tamil, except occasionally when, as in *ṭi*, there is a special sign to denote the medial element.

I medial.—In Mauryan script medial *i* (Fig. 27) is represented by doubling the sign of medial *i*, as in *mī*, *tī*, etc., or by two parallel slanting strokes, as in *thī*. In the Kuṣān script of the 2nd century A.D. the sign for the medial is composed of two curves from either side of the top point of the letter forming horse-shoe shape. In Uṣavadāta's inscriptions at

Nasik the curve to the right runs up and turns slightly to form the shape of an upturned interrogation mark without the dot. In the Kṣatrapa and Sātavāhana inscriptions of the 2nd century A.D. the curves one on either side of the top point of the letter form horse-shoe shape or a nearly complete circle. In the Ikṣvāku letters of the 3rd century A.D. one of the two curves shoots up and both sometimes curl at the top end. In Pallava letters of the Prakrit charters 3rd-4th centuries A.D. the two curves are not quite so different as in the Ikṣvāku medial *ī* sign.

A curve to the left and a vertical from the right side of the top point usually denote medial *ī* in Gupta letters, as in the Allahabad inscriptions of Samudragupta; but two curves, one rising slightly higher than the other also occur frequently. In early Nagari, as represented in Yaśodharman's inscriptions, medial *ī* is a hook rising up to the left from the top point of the letter. This curls in and curves out again to the right with a flourish and gathers an upturned crescent at its tip in the Nagari of the 7th century A.D. as in Harṣavardhana's charters. In later Nagari, as in the Pratihāra inscriptions of the 9th century A.D., medial *ī* starts as a curve above the top of letters and ends as a curvilinear stroke running parallel to the height of the letter. The top curve of the sign changes sometimes into a curl in letters of the Paramāra inscriptions of the 11th century A.D. In the Sena inscriptions of the 12th century A.D. the stroke is straight except at its lower end.

In the Vākāṭaka script of Central India a horse-shoe shaped curve and a small central vertical stroke represents the medial *ī*. In early Pallava inscriptions of the same date, 5th century A.D., and in early Western Cālukyan letters of the 6th century A.D., the medial sign is a horse-shoe shaped curve that curls to left and forms a spiral. In Eastern Cālukyan inscriptions of the 10th century A.D. the horse-shoe shaped curve flattens at the top, and a small hook-shaped vertical stroke is added in the middle. In Kākatiya and Redḍi inscriptions of the 12th and 13th centuries A.D., a curve curling to the left represents medial *ī*. The same sign obtains in Pallava Grantha and Tamil of the 7th-8th century A.D., while in the Coḷa and Vijayanagara inscriptions from the 10th to the 16th centuries A.D., the curl of the curve is to the right.

U medial.—In Aśokan Brahmi medial *u* (Fig. 28) is denoted either by a stroke which is either horizontal or downward vertical in continuation or issuing from a bottom of the letter. In the Kuṣān script of the 2nd century A.D. the horizontal stroke curves a little at both ends, while the vertical downward stroke lengthens. It is same in the inscriptions of Uṣavadāta, though the horizontal retains the same simple earlier form. In Kṣatrapa script of the 2nd century A.D. the horizontal changes into a short downward stroke, curving up in the right into a hook, and the vertical stroke slants slightly to left at the lower end with a slight small curve at the tip. In contemporary Sātavāhana inscriptions the sign for medial *u* is either a straight horizontal stroke or a slightly bent or downward elongate stroke, slanting slightly towards its end. In the Ikṣvāku letters of the 3rd century A.D. the short hook-like

1	𑀧 𑀢 𑀤	Mauryan 3 c. B. C.	𑀧 𑀢 𑀤	= 11
2	𑀧 𑀢 𑀤	Kushān 2 c. A.D.	𑀧 𑀢 𑀤	= 14
3	𑀧 𑀢 𑀤	Usavādān c. A.D.	𑀧 𑀢 𑀤	??
4	𑀧 𑀢 𑀤	Kastapa 2 c. A.D.	𑀧 𑀢 𑀤	2 =
5	𑀧 𑀢 𑀤	Sātavāhana 2 c. A.D.	𑀧 𑀢 𑀤	3
6	𑀧 𑀢 𑀤	Ikyāku 3 c. A.D.	𑀧 𑀢 𑀤	4 =
7	𑀧 𑀢 𑀤	Pallava 3-4 c. A.D.	𑀧 𑀢 𑀤	5
8	𑀧 𑀢 𑀤	Gupta 4 c. A.D.	𑀧 𑀢 𑀤	2 5
9	𑀧 𑀢 𑀤	Yaśodharmas 6 c. A.D.	𑀧 𑀢 𑀤	5 1
10	𑀧 𑀢 𑀤	Harsavardhana 7 c. A.D.	𑀧 𑀢 𑀤	5 2
11	𑀧 𑀢 𑀤	Pratihāra 9 c. A.D.	𑀧 𑀢 𑀤	1
12	𑀧 𑀢 𑀤	Paramāra 11 c. A.D.	𑀧 𑀢 𑀤	2
13	𑀧 𑀢 𑀤	Senā 12 c. A.D.	𑀧 𑀢 𑀤	3
14	𑀧 𑀢 𑀤	Vākātaka 6 c. A.D.	𑀧 𑀢 𑀤	4
15	𑀧 𑀢 𑀤	Pallava 5 c. A.D.	𑀧 𑀢 𑀤	5 6 7
16	𑀧 𑀢 𑀤	W. Cālukya 6 c. A.D.	𑀧 𑀢 𑀤	8
17	𑀧 𑀢 𑀤	E. Cālukya 7 c. A.D.	𑀧 𑀢 𑀤	9
18	𑀧 𑀢 𑀤	E. Cālukya 10 c. A.D.	𑀧 𑀢 𑀤	10 11
19	𑀧 𑀢 𑀤	Kākatya 12 c. A.D.	𑀧 𑀢 𑀤	12
20	𑀧 𑀢 𑀤	Reddī 13 c. A.D.	𑀧 𑀢 𑀤	13
21	𑀧 𑀢 𑀤	Pallava 7 c. A.D.	𑀧 𑀢 𑀤	14
22	𑀧 𑀢 𑀤	Pallava 8 c. A.D.	𑀧 𑀢 𑀤	15
23	𑀧 𑀢 𑀤	Cola 11 c. A.D.	𑀧 𑀢 𑀤	16
24	𑀧 𑀢 𑀤	Vijayanagar 15 c. A.D.	𑀧 𑀢 𑀤	17

Fig. 28

C.S. Del.

curve and the more common elongate downward stroke ending in a broad curve to left are the two forms of Medial *u*. In the Pallava Prakrit charters that are close in date to the Ikṣvāku inscriptions, there are three forms, *viz.*, the elongate downward stroke with final curve to left, the short downward stroke curving and fully rising up to right hook-like and the horizontal stroke with curved tip. As may be observed in all these early letters of various dates and in the letters of later date as well, the horizontal stroke in any form is added to letters like *ka* or *ra*, i.e., those with a single long vertical stroke, extending down beyond the body proper of similar letters; it is added either somewhere near the end of the vertical or at the end itself. In the earliest letters, the horizontal is used for letters like *ta*, *bha* etc., i.e., those with more than one short stroke composing the body of the letter, but this soon changes into a small hook as in, *tu*, *gu* *śu* in somewhat later letters. The downward elongate stroke, which is at first short, then long, subsequently slanting and curved and lastly straight and hook-shaped at the end, is used in the letters with a stroke composing the base of the body, as in *ba*, *na*, *pa*, *sa*, etc.

In the 4th century A.D. in the Gupta inscription on the Allahabad pillar all the three varieties occur; the horizontal stroke is added at the very end of letters, like *ra*, and the curve is so pronounced that it appears sickle-shaped; the downward elongate stroke is just straight, and the hook-shaped stroke descends to left and rises up again at the right. In early Nagari, represented in Yaśodharman's inscription, the sickle-shaped hook and the downward elongate stroke with a small barb at the tip represent medial *u*. This continues even in the 7th century A.D. In the Pratihāra and Paramāra inscriptions ranging from the 9th to the 11th century A.D. the sickle-shaped sign continues. In the Sena inscriptions of the 12th century this as well as the barb are found, in addition to a small sign composed of two strokes forming an upward right-angle to right and is added to letters like *ra* to sound *ru*.

In the Central Indian script of the 5th century A.D., as seen in Vākāṭaka inscriptions hook-shaped signs to right or left form sharp angles, as also the horizontal transformed into a sign composed of two strokes, forming a downward right angle to right. In Pallava script of the same date in South India the hook-shaped sign to right and the somewhat curved horizontal stroke are, as in the Central Indian script, lacking definite angularities, but the hook-shaped sign to right is drawn with a flourish to form a semi-circle below a letter from the tip of one of the lower arms of the letter, as in *gu*. In early Western Cālukyan script, a century later, in the same letter, the semi-circle drawn with a flourish narrows into a long drawn hook, with its end shooting up the whole length of the letter. The other two forms are as in the early Pallava script of the 5th century A.D. In early Eastern Cālukyan script of the 7th century the hook-shaped sign is just composed of two parallel vertical strokes connected at the lower end by a small curve, though the regular hook shape continues even in the 11th century script of the Eastern Cālukyas. In the Kākatīya and Redḍi inscriptions of the

12th and 13th centuries, medial *u* is of crescent shape, which is occasionally lengthened towards top to right.

In Pallava Grantha of the 7th century A.D., medial *u* is represented by two signs; the hook-shaped sign transformed into something like U, compressed and elongated; and the sign formed by a sweeping flourish, resembling a sickle somewhat but with a light curl at the tip, which makes the whole sign look somewhat like a creeper tendril. In Pallava Grantha of the next century the compressed U-shaped sign, a crescent-shaped sign and a sign composed of two strokes, suggesting the outline of one end of a boat, represent medial *u*, while a sign like the lower half of No. 3 and another of two strokes suggesting 'L' reversed, represent it in Tamil. In Coḷa Grantha script of the 11th Century A.D. the U-shaped sign and a clamp-shaped sign represent this, while in the Tamil script a downward vertical stroke and a sign like an upturned question mark, without the dot, are used. In the 15th century Vijayanagara script and later, the medial in Grantha is either an angular U with the bottom line projecting a little to the left, or is a sign somewhat like No. 3, the former added beneath and the latter beside the consonant. In Tamil it is a slight modification of the earlier Coḷa type.

Ū medial.—In Aśokan Brahmi *ū* (Fig. 28) is represented by two strokes added to the bottom of letters. The strokes are either horizontal or vertical. In Kuṣān letters of the 2nd century A.D. the horizontal strokes slant a bit and the vertical strokes join at the top to form a fork. In Uṣavadāta's inscriptions the fork is replaced by a sign resembling a question mark without the dot. In Kṣātrapa letters of the 2nd century A.D. a short and a long and sometimes bent-up stroke made up the medial *u*, as also the parallel horizontal strokes, which are added to the right not at the tip but in the middle. The sign, consisting of the longer and shorter vertical strokes, occurs in contemporary Sātavāhana inscriptions as well. In the Ikṣvāku inscriptions the shorter of the two vertical strokes is a horizontal stroke that slants downwards a bit and the vertical downward stroke is like 'J' in written script. The parallel strokes are also used sometimes and these slant to right. In the early Pallava Prakrit charters it is somewhat like the first mentioned type, occurring in Ikṣvāku letters, but reversed.

In the 4th century Gupta inscriptions, one sign is a vertical downward stroke running to the left as a curve, as in *dhū*, *sū*, etc., and a curve running up into a vertical, to which is attached a horizontal stroke terminally curved downwards as in *bhū*. In Yaśodharman's inscriptions this is represented as an upturned sickle with small horizontal stroke to right, as in *gū*, *bhū*, etc., and as a downward half arrow mark with long horizontal stroke to the left issuing from about the centre of the vertical, as in *cū*. Both these types continue in the Nagari of Harṣavardhana's time. In the Pratihāra script of the 9th century A.D. it is like a hook with its straight end slanting down to right. In the Sena inscriptions of the 12th century A.D. the type just mentioned and another composed of two brackets added centrally to the vertical of the letter to the right make up this medial. The former may be seen in *sū*, *bhū*, etc., and the latter in *rū*.

In the box-headed Vākāṭaka script of Central India, a downward vertical, bent twice to form an open rectangle, with a long slantingly curved or short horizontal stroke to top, is added to the letter to represent this sound. In the case of letters, like *ta*, *bha*, *na*, etc., the lower end of the vertical is bent upward to right and a stroke added to the vertical to the right. In the case of letters, like *pa*, *ṣa*, *ha*, *sa*, etc., the vertical is prolonged downward and bent to the left, and a long slanting curved stroke is added at its top base. In early Pallava of the 5th century A.D., one variety is the sweeping downward curve with a central stroke, as in *gū*, and *bhū*, another a downward vertical, bent and continued upward parallel, with a long curved stroke at its top, as in *pū* and a third composed of two small slightly curvilinear horizontal strokes added to letters like *ka*, *ra*, etc. In the early Western Cālukyan of the 6th century A.D., the downward vertical which shoots up again, curves at the top to right near the serif to form this sign, as in *bhū*, or to left even below the base line as in *pū*. In Eastern Cālukya of the 7th century A.D., and even in the 10th century A.D., the same are repeated. In Kākatīya script of the 12th century A.D. a small sign already observable in 10th century Eastern Cālukyan *kū* develops into a sign almost like a reverse 'S' laid on its face. The starting point of this sign forms a sharp angle, instead of a curve, in Redḍi script of the 13th century A.D.

In early Pallava Grantha a sweeping curve around the double vertical 'U' sign below the letter, as in *dū* and a double arch inside the sweeping curve, as in *śū*, make up this sign. The downward double vertical with a long horizontal stroke to left, terminally curved, as in *mū* and *dhū*, and a triple curve horizontally to left, to right slanting downwards and again to left horizontally, as in *śū*, represent the sign. In the 11th century Coḷa script the double vertical below the letter has a sweeping curve, double-arched, at the right and encircling it, as in *mū*.

R medial.—This medial (Fig. 29) in its earliest form may be seen as it occurs in Uṣava-dāta's inscriptions, where it is a curve added beneath letters having a base line, as in *vr*, or to the vertical stroke running downward at some point in the middle, as in *kr*. In Kṣatrapa inscriptions of the 2nd century A.D., it is similar. In the time of the Pallava Prakrit inscriptions of the 3rd-4th centuries A.D. *r* medial is a hook with long stalk added below the letter as in *br*.

In Gupta script of the 4th century the curve added beneath the letters is reversed, as in *kr*, *kr̄*, and in the inscriptions of Yasodharman and later Nagari medial *r* is like a reversed upturned query mark without a dot, added to the base or lower end of vertical of letters, as in *vr*, *kr*, *gr*, etc.

In the box-headed Vākāṭaka inscriptions the sign is as in the earliest Prakrit Pallava charters, except that the curve is more graceful and is actually a pronounced curl rather than a curve. This occurs with a less pronounced curl in Western Cālukyan script of the

✓	𑀓𑀕	Mauryan 3 c. B. C.
✓	𑀓𑀕	Ksatrapa 2 c. A. D.
✓	𑀓	Pallava 3-4 c. A. D.
✓	𑀓𑀕𑀕𑀕	Gupta 4 c. A. D.
✓	𑀓𑀕𑀕𑀕	Yajodharman 6 c. A. D.
✓	𑀓𑀕𑀕	Harsavardhana 7 c. A. D.
✓	𑀓	Paramāra 11 c. A. D.
✓	𑀓𑀕	Sena 12 c. A. D.
✓	𑀓𑀕𑀕	Vākāṭaka 5 c. A. D.
✓	𑀓	Pallava 5 c. A. D.
✓	𑀓𑀕	W. Cālukya 6 c. A. D.
✓	𑀓𑀕	E. Cālukya 10 c. A. D.
✓	𑀓𑀕	Kākatya 12 c. A. D.
✓	𑀓𑀕𑀕	Reddi 13 c. A. D.
✓	𑀓𑀕𑀕	Pallava 7 c. A. D.
✓	𑀓𑀕𑀕	Pallava 8 c. A. D.
✓	𑀓𑀕	Cola 11 c. A. D.

FIG. 29.

O.S. del.

6th century A.D. In Eastern Cālukyan script of the 10th century A.D. the curl becomes more graceful and prominent than ever, and a stroke leading on to the final curl undulates gracefully and continues so in Kākatīya and later scripts of Telugu.

In early Pallava Grantha of the 7th century A.D. almost the same form of the medial continues, with the curl changed into a broader curve beneath the letter. In the 8th century Pallava Grantha the stroke leading on to the final curve straightens but changes again in Coḷa script of the 11th century A.D. In this script the old form is the usual type but there is also a special form, as in *kr*, where the reversed curve as in Nagari runs across the letter in continuation of the curved cross stroke.

E medial.—In Mauryan script of the 3rd century B.C. this (Fig. 30) is represented by a stroke added to the top left. In Kuṣān script of the 2nd century A.D. this slants upward to left. In Uṣavadāta's inscriptions and in those of the Kṣatrapas and Sātavāhanas it is just a top left stroke as before. In the Ikṣvāku letters of the 3rd century A.D. this stroke slightly curves terminally and more so in the letters of Pallava Prakrit charters and sometimes even slants, as in *me*.

In the Gupta script of the 4th century A.D. the sign is both the upward slanting stroke to left as in *me* and the usual horizontal stroke slightly curved terminally. In Yaśodharman's inscriptions a long stroke gracefully shaped like a feather, either slanting up or horizontal, represents this sign, as in *no* and *he*, as also a short curve to top of the letter, as in *dhe*. These strokes curve gracefully and form the shape of streamers or banners above the letter's serif in Harṣvardhana's inscriptions. In the 9th century Pratihāra script the simpler, slightly terminally-curved, horizontal stroke to left is the only one present. In Paramāra script of the 11th century A.D. a gracefully curved, slanting upward stroke and a vertical to left represent this sign. Both are present in the Sena script of the next century.

A small terminally-curved leftward top stroke represents this sign in the Vākāṭaka script of the 5th century A.D. The stroke is slightly longer in contemporary Pallava script and another variety is the broad curve enveloping the letter to the left. In the Western Cālukyan letters of the 6th century A.D. the sign in the Vākāṭaka script is repeated. In Eastern Cālukyan script of the 10th century A.D. the leftward stroke is curved up to run right and curves up terminally. This reversed slanting 'S'-shaped sign continues in Kākatīya script; and it appears less slanting in Redḍi inscriptions.

In Pallava Grantha script of the 7th and 8th centuries a curve to left, terminally almost curled, before the letter, indicates this medial sound. In all the later scripts the curl becomes more definite. The development is the same in Tamil script as well.

Ai medial.—Two top horizontal strokes to left represent this (Fig. 30) in Mauryan script. In Kuṣān script these are slanting to top. In 2nd century Kṣatrapa script the two horizontals to left are present.

-	0 7 3	Kauryan 3 c. B. C.	0	
-	0 1 4	Kushan 2 c. A. D.	8	"
-	1 3 5	Usavadiha c. A. D.		"
-	2 0 2	Ksatrapa 2 c. A. D.	0 2 3	"
-	2 1	Satavahana 2 c. A. D.		"
-	2 2 0 7	Ikkvika 3 c. A. D.		"
-	2 3 0 8	Pallava 3-4 c. A. D.		"
-	3 0 3 2	Gupta 4 c. A. D.	3 0 3 2	"
-	3 0 3 7	Yasodharman 6 c. A. D.	3 0 3 7	"
-	3 0 3 7	Kanjavardhana 7 c. A. D.	3 0 3 7	"
-	3 0 3 7	Pratihara 9 c. A. D.		"
-	3 0 3 7	Paramara 11 c. A. D.		"
-	3 0 3 7	Sena 13 c. A. D.		"
-	3 0 3 7	Vakataha 6 c. A. D.		"
-	3 0 3 7	Pallava 6 c. A. D.		"
-	3 0 3 7	W. Chalukya 6 c. A. D.		"
-	3 0 3 7	E. Chalukya 10 c. A. D.		"
-	3 0 3 7	Kakatiya 12 c. A. D.		"
-	3 0 3 7	Reddi 13 c. A. D.		"
-	3 0 3 7	Pallava 7 c. A. D.		"
-	3 0 3 7	Pallava 8 c. A. D.		"
-	3 0 3 7	Cola 11 c. A. D.		"
-	3 0 3 7	Vijayanagar 15 c. A. D.		"

Fig. 30.

G.S. del.

In the Gupta script the Kuṣān type is continued. In Yaśodharman's inscriptions upward slanting feather-shaped stroke and the small curved stroke to left together make this sign. In Harṣvarddhana's inscriptions, of the same two strokes, the feather-shaped one changes into a streamer-shaped one. In the 12th century Sena script the two signs that individually denote *e* conjointly denote *ai*.

In the Vākāṭaka inscriptions of the 5th century A.D. two small terminally-curved leftward top strokes make this sign. In Pallava script of the 5th century A.D. one terminally-curved horizontal stroke and a curve slanting downward represent it, as in *hai*, *rai*. In Western Cālukyan of the 6th century A.D. the form of the sign occurring in Vākāṭaka is almost repeated. In Eastern Cālukyan of the 10th century A.D. and later in Kākatiya, the reversed slanting 'S'-shaped sign above the letter, together with a horizontal stroke below, curved upwards to left, make up this medial. In the Reḍḍi script of the 13th century A.D. the *e* sign on top of the letter and an acute-angle shaped sign below to the right, give the medial.

In Pallava Grantha script of the 7th century A.D. and in the later varieties, the *e* sign is repeated one below the other, to the left, beside the letter and this is continued in all the later varieties of the script. In Tamil of the 7th century it is a double-looped curve to the left and it is so in all the later varieties.

O medial.—In Mauryan script this (Fig. 31) is composed of two strokes, making up *e* and *ā* added to the letter. To letters like *na* or *ya* it is added at the top to right and left of the vertical one slightly below and another above. In letters like *bo* they are added in the middle to left and right. But in Kuṣān where the two strokes slant up and form V shape or the shape of an indistinct flying bird at a distance in a picture, the strokes are immediately on top of *ba* to form *bo*, and normally also in *to*. In the inscriptions of Uṣavadāta, as in *śo*, *go*, *bho*, etc., the two small horizontal strokes run in one line. The same two strokes continue in Kṣatrapa and Sātavāhana inscriptions. In Ikṣvāku inscriptions the strokes show a very slight tendency to curve and this is clear in the Pallava Prakrit inscriptions of the 3rd-4th centuries A.D. In some special cases as in *jo* the curved left stroke is added to the peculiarly normed *ja* and similarly the vertical top of *la* is looped to left and the stroke continued to right to form *lo*.

In Gupta script of the 4th century A.D. two curved strokes to right and left above the letter as in *no* or *to*, ordinarily give this sign. But in some peculiar cases, like *to* and *go*, it is the normal stroke to left and the peculiar sign added to *ta* to right and a top vertical and a curved right stroke added halfway up to the right vertical of *ga* that give this medial. In Yaśodharman's inscriptions both the simple and ornamental strokes for *e* and *ā* combine to produce this. Similarly in Harṣvarddhana's inscriptions of the 7th century A.D. One of these varieties produces a lovely horn-shaped design over the letter, as in *śo* or *ko*. In Pratihāra, Paramāra and Sena scripts the same principles is adopted to produce the sign. In the Paramāra inscriptions one variety shows an upward stroke to left and a vertical

—	இச்சம்	Mauryan 5 c. B. C.		
~	சுந	Kuṣāṇ 2 c. A. D.		
--	சுபாநச	Uṣavādāta c. A. D.		
--	சுந	Kṣātrapa 2 c. A. D.	செய் ரு உ	~ ~ ~
--	சுந	Śātavāhana 2 c. A. D.		
-	சுந	Iṅgavāku 3 c. A. D.		
-	சுந	Pallava 3-4 c. A. D.		
~	சுந	Gupta 4 c. A. D.	சுந	சுந
~	சுந	Yatodharman 5 c. A. D.	சுந	சுந
~	சுந	Harṣavardhana 7 c. A. D.	சுந	சுந
~	சுந	Pratihāra 9 c. A. D.	சுந	சுந
~	சுந	Paramāra 11 c. A. D.	சுந	சுந
~	சுந	Seṅga 12 c. A. D.	சுந	சுந
~	சுந	Vākāṭaka 5 c. A. D.	சுந	சுந
~	சுந	Pallava 5 c. A. D.	சுந	சுந
~	சுந	W. Cālukya 6 c. A. D.	சுந	சுந
~	சுந	E. Cālukya 10 c. A. D.	சுந	சுந
~	சுந	Kākatīya 12 c. A. D.	சுந	சுந
~	சுந	Reddi 13 c. A. D.	சுந	சுந
~	சுந	Pallava 7 c. A. D.		
~	சுந	Pallava 8 c. A. D.	சுந	சுந
~	சுந	Cola 11 c. A. D.	சுந	சுந
~	சுந	Vijayanagar 15 c. A. D.	சுந	சுந

Fig. 31.

stroke to right ; another shows both the strokes as verticals to right and left. The latter occurs in Sena inscriptions of the 12th century A.D.

The terminally-curved short horizontal strokes to left and right occur in Vākāṭaka and Pallava inscriptions of the 5th century A.D., as also in Western Cālukyan inscriptions of the next century where their curvature is greater. In Eastern Cālukyan script of the 10th century three strokes, i.e., top and right side strokes as in *yo*, left side and downward strokes as in *ro*, and double-arched top stroke as in *lo*, are to be noted. The first and third are continued in Kākātīya and Redḍi inscriptions, with this modification that in the first the top stroke tends to get diminutive and the side stroke longer, while in the other the double-arch terminal curves broadly with a flourish.

In Pallava Grantha of the 7th century A.D. the curl to left and wavy vertical above crescent to right top of letter, represent this medial and in the next century both these signs are present to left and right, but the latter of the two becomes just a straight vertical beside the letter and not on a crescent at the top. In the Coḷa script of the 11th century A.D. this vertical becomes hooked at the top which appears more angular in the Vijayanagara script of the 15th century A.D.

Au medial.—In the early Prakrit inscriptions this letter (Fig. 31) does not appear. But it appears in the early Sanskrit inscription of Kṣatrapa Rudradāman. It is either composed of a slanting top stroke or a horizontal stroke to left, added to the sign making up the medial *o*. Thus *sau* is *so* with the addition of a slanting top stroke. In *pau* there are three horizontal strokes, two to left and one to right. *Nau* is somewhat peculiarly formed.

In the Gupta script of the 4th century A.D. a top vertical is added to the double-arched sign at the top of the letter. In Yaśodharman's inscriptions these three strokes are feather-shaped to left, streamer-shaped and upward to right and comma-shaped to right level with serif. In the inscriptions of Harṣavarddhana there is a central vertical stroke between the two horn-shaped signs at the top of the letter above the serif. A vertical to right small horizontal to left in continuation of the serif and a top stroke make up the medial of the Pratihāra script. In Paramāra and Sena scripts of the 11th and 12th centuries respectively the verticals to right and left and the top stroke running to left produce this sign.

In the box-headed Vākāṭaka script the small curved horizontal stroke to left in continuation of the top line and a hook added above to top right of the letter produce this medial sign. It is the same in early Pallava and early Western Cālukya of the 5th and 6th centuries respectively. In the Eastern Cālukyan inscriptions of the 10th century A.D. both these signs combine and there stands distinctly above the letter the small stroke to left appearing as a hook lowered, the whole sign hence looking like two hook-heads attached to each other. In the Kākātīya script of the 12th century A.D. the hook to the left dwindles, while the one to the right becomes larger. In the Redḍi script of the next

century there are two varieties of this sign ; one like medial *o* but with small sign of medial *e* repeated at the root of the long *ā* sign as in *mau* ; and another without this small sign of medial *e* separately to right top as in *tau*.

In Pallava Grantha of the 8th century A.D. this sign is almost like medial *o* except that the vertical stroke to right is double arched. In the Coḷa script of the 11th century A.D. and onwards the double arch is transferred to the top left of the vertical which is straight and is in continuation of it.

Ka.—This (Fig. 32) is a simple cross in Mauryan script of the 3rd century B.C. In the Bhaṭṭiprolu script of the same date there is an additional small top stroke to the right which in the normal script would represent elongation of the vowel element. In this letter from the Tamil caves of the same age this stroke is absent. The lower end of the vertical stroke is lengthened in Kuṣān, Kṣatrapa and Sātavāhana inscriptions of the 2nd century A.D. ; it curves slightly in the Sātavāhana and pronouncedly so in the Kṣatrapa letter. The top end is thickened and the cross stroke slightly curves in the Kṣatrapa letter. In the letter in the Ikṣvāku inscriptions of the 3rd century A.D., the lower end of the vertical stroke is unusually long and curls up tremendously. The northern type of Gupta script of the 4th century A.D. shows this letter as a slight development from that of earlier Kuṣān while the contemporary Central Indian Gupta variety gives a box-head to the letter and a curve and parallel upward stroke to the elongate lower end of the vertical stroke. In Kadamba inscriptions of the 4th and 5th centuries A.D. the letter is similarly gracefully slender and elongate and has a box-head top, the lower end of the vertical stroke not only forming hook shape but running up parallel half way to the main stroke. This continues in the Western Gaṅga letter of 5th, 6th centuries A.D., where however the length of the letter is diminished, the top loses the box-head but gains a serif, the cross stroke curving at either end. In Vākāṭaka inscriptions of the 5th century A.D., Somavamśi inscriptions of the 6th, 7th centuries A.D., Naḷa inscriptions of the 5th century A.D. and the Eastern Gaṅga inscriptions of the 7th century A.D., the box-head is very pronounced in the former two and less in the rest ; the lower end of the vertical stroke in all these varieties as also in the Maitraka letter of the 6th century A.D., forms sharp angles in its bend and slight parallel upward course.

In the Sālankāyana inscriptions of the 4th century A.D., and early Prākṛt Pallava inscriptions, the letter develops a hook-shaped lower end and in the former a serif on the top. In the latter the cross stroke curves down at either end. In Viṣṇukunḍi and Pallava inscriptions of the 5th and 6th centuries A.D., respectively, the letter continues its hook-shaped lower end with a thickened top.

The earliest Nagari type may be recognised in Yaśodharman's inscriptions, though regular features are better observed in the 7th century A.D. The letter in the script of Marāvardhana's inscriptions has a nail-headed serif and the lower end of the vertical shoots

up a little to form an angle, while the cross stroke flows to the right obliquely. In contemporary Pallava script the cross stroke is in continuation of the tip of the lower end of the vertical, sharply shooting up, and this continues in one form or other in all later developments. The nail head is pronounced in the Western Cālukyan letter of the 8th century A.D., and in the Paramāra letter of the 11th century A.D. ; the curve of the oblique cross stroke is pronounced in most letters thereafter though lengthened in Pratīhāra inscriptions of 9th century A.D., and compressed in Candella inscriptions of 11th, 12th centuries A.D. The oblique stroke curves out slightly at the tip in Rāṣṭrakūṭa inscriptions of the 9th century A.D., Gujarat Cālukya, Paramāra, Candella, Western Cālukya, Eastern Gaṅga inscriptions of the 11th century A.D., Gāhadavāla inscriptions of the 12th century A.D., and Yādava inscriptions of the 13th century A.D.

In Canarese inscriptions of very early date from Western Cālukya area of the 6th century A.D., the lower parallel stroke joins the cross stroke and forms the shape of the letter which continues in the 9th century in Rāṣṭrakūṭa inscriptions. In Western Cālukya and Hoysala inscriptions of the 11th and 12th centuries A.D. respectively, the form of the letter resembles contemporary Eastern Cālukya and Kākatīya letters, respectively. It has however to be noted that in the Hoysala letter the cross stroke is rather elongate.

In Eastern Cālukya inscriptions of the 7th Century A.D., the letter is much the same as in Viṣṇukunḍi and Pallava inscriptions of the two preceding centuries, though three centuries later in inscriptions of the same dynasty the letter is rather rounded and dwarfish ; the serif is pronounced, the cross stroke and the compressed hook-shaped lower end of vertical stroke together form a rectangular shape. In the next century the letter comprises three parts, the serif now changed into two strokes meeting at a point on the central cross stroke, and a circle beneath it. It continues like this in the Kākatīya and Reḍḍi inscriptions; the letter is some-what modified and elongated in Vijayanagara inscriptions of the 15th century.

The development of the letter in Grantha and Tamil inscriptions may be seen in Pallava, Coḷa and Pāṇḍya inscriptions. In all these the vertical stroke is doubled in Grantha, while in Tamil it is a single stroke. In Pallava Grantha of the 7th century A.D., the parallel vertical strokes are joined at both ends and the cross stroke curls down on their side. This continues in Pallava inscriptions of the 8th century A.D., and the Coḷa inscriptions of the 11th century A.D., and even in the Pāṇḍyan inscriptions of the 13th century A.D., though in the last mentioned the stroke connecting the parallel vertical lines is lengthened at the bottom and curved out at top, the letter itself being compressed and made short or stunted. In the Vijayanagara inscriptions of the 15th century the letter is modification of this Pāṇḍya type. In Tamil inscriptions of the Pallavas of the 7th and 8th centuries A.D., the letter is very simple with a single elongate vertical stroke, the cross stroke and thickened top. In Coḷa inscriptions of the 11th century the thickened top develops a hook-shape. In Coḷa inscriptions of the 13th century the letter is compressed in

contemporary Grantha script but it lacks the additional vertical stroke that we find in Grantha. In Vijayanagara script of the 15th century the lower end of the vertical stroke and one end of the cross stroke, both of them curved, combine to the left to form a letter which has not changed its form ever since. In Vaṭṭeḷuttu script of the 8th and 11th centuries, in inscriptions of the Pāṇdyas and Coḷas respectively, the features noted in contemporary Tamil script continue, though these letters are oblique and the cross stroke curls up towards the right in the Vaṭṭeḷuttu letter of the 8th century A.D.

Kha.—This (Fig. 33) is shaped like a hook with a dot at its lower end in the Mauryan script of the 3rd century B.C. In contemporary Bhaṭṭiprolu script the hook lacks the dot but has a stroke added to its top right. In the Kuṣān and Kṣātrapa scripts of the 2nd century A.D., the hook develops a large triangle at its lower part. In contemporary Sātavāhana script the hook has a stroke at the base to the right which gives it the appearance of Arabic number 2. In the Ikṣvāku inscriptions of the 3rd century A.D., the hook is more like a query without the dot below. In the Gupta script of the 4th century A.D., the hook and triangle composing the letter have developed from the Kuṣān script and this feature of the letter is present in inscriptions of Yaśodharman of the 6th century A.D., Traikūṭaka inscriptions of the 5th century A.D., and Maitraka inscriptions of the 6th century A.D. In Kadamba inscriptions of the 4th and 5th centuries A.D., Vākāṭaka, Western Gaṅga and Nāḷa inscriptions of the 5th century A.D., the triangle is replaced by a narrow rectangle, a feature that continues in the Somavamśi inscriptions of the 6th and 7th centuries A.D. In the Pallava Prakrit inscriptions of the 3rd, 4th centuries A.D., the belly of the letter is shaped more like a triangle than a rectangle and in Śāḷankāyana script of the 4th century the letter is crescent shaped. In Viṣṇukuṇḍi inscriptions of the 6th century A.D., the letter is a hook with a stroke to the left at its base.

The earliest Nagari variety, as may be seen in the inscriptions of Harṣavardhana and the Pallavas of the 7th century A.D., is an advanced development from the hook and triangle of Yaśodharman's time. The hook itself bends double, thickens at the top end and the triangular part assumes the shape of a half leaf. The thickened top end which is bent downwards to the left has sometimes the shape of a shovel, sometimes that of a bean, and sometimes of two strokes forming a wide angle. The leaf-shaped part of the letter similarly changes its contour sometimes into that of a semi-circle against the vertical stroke to the left. The shovel-shaped stroke is present in Rāṣṭrakūṭa script of the 9th century A.D. and Paramāra script of the 11th century A.D. The bean-shaped arm of the letter is present in Pāla script of the 9th century, Eastern Gaṅga script of the 11th century A.D. and Gāhaḍavāla script of the 12th century A.D. The arm composed of two strokes forming a wide angle is present in the letter of the Pratihāra script of the 9th century A.D., Candella script of 11th, 12th centuries A.D., Western Cālukya script of the 11th century A.D., Yādava and Kākatiya

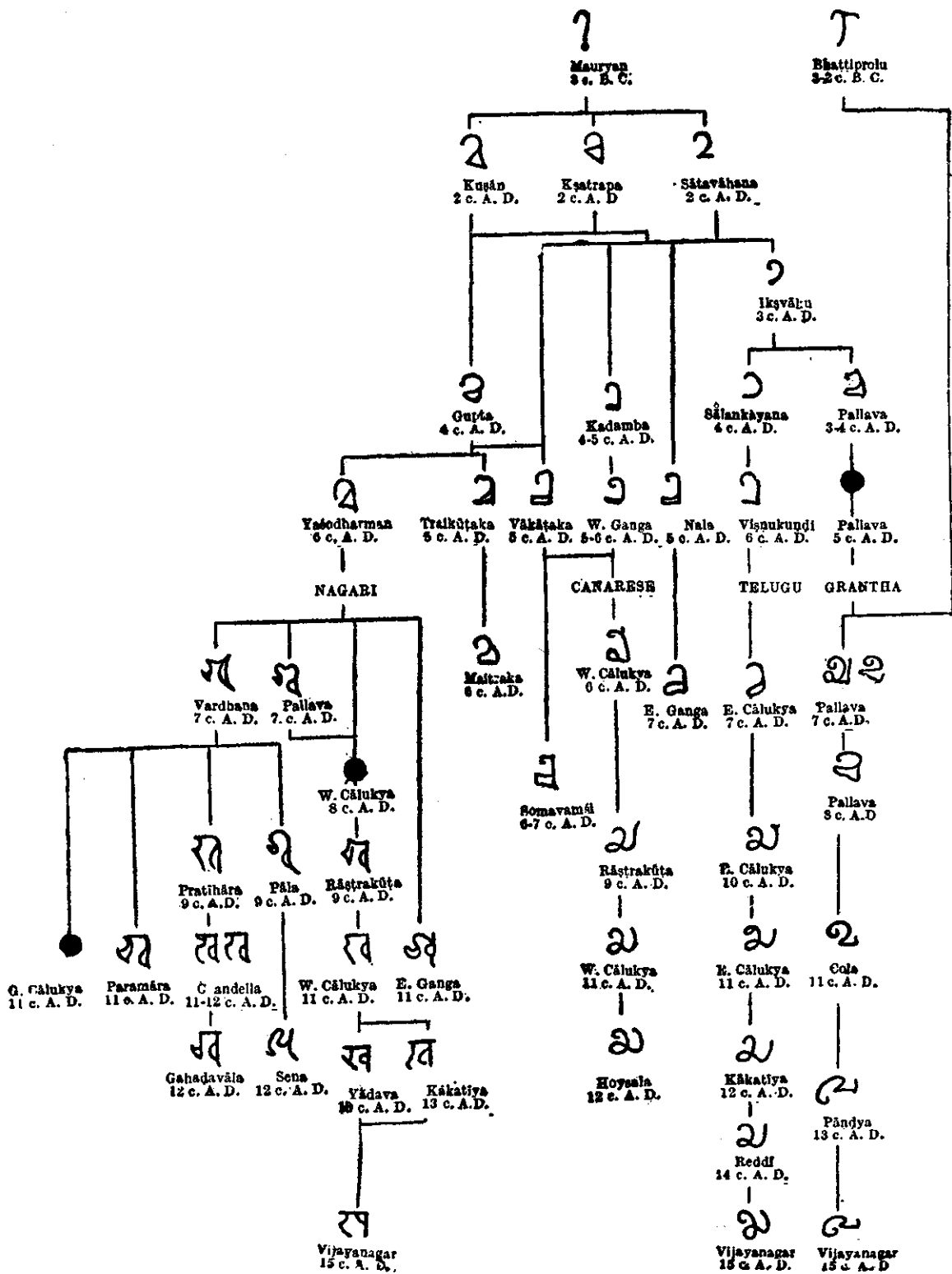


FIG. 33

C.S. det.

scripts of the 13th century A.D. and Vijayanagara script of the 15th century A.D. This arm is shaped like a double-bent hook in Sena script of the 12th century wherein the semi-circle or leaf-shape against the vertical stroke to right is absent. In Vijayanagara script of the 15th century A.D. this semi-circle is replaced by an oblique stroke at the top right which forms a triangle with the vertical and top strokes.

In Canarese inscriptions of very early date from Western Cālukyan area of the 6th century A.D. the letter is more or less like that in Western Ganga script of about that time, except that the narrow rectangular belly is transformed into a loop. Further development of this letter in Rāṣṭrakūṭa script of the 9th century A.D., Western Cālukyan script of the 11th century A.D. and Hoysala script of the 12th century A.D. is a hook which forms a loop and continues an additional upward stroke with a flourish.

The hook and loop in the Eastern Cālukyan script of the 7th century A.D. representing this letter change in the Eastern Cālukyan script of the 10th century A.D. and become almost like the Rāṣṭrakūṭa or Western Cālukyan letter of about the same time, the upward side stroke having a serif-like thickened top end. The letter in Kākatīya, Redḍi and Vijayanagara inscriptions of the 12th, 14th and 15th Centuries respectively continues in almost the same form.

In Grantha script of the Pallavas of the 7th century A.D. there are two varieties the hook with loop and upward side stroke and the hook with strokes almost forming a triangle. In the next century the letter in Pallava script is a hook with triangular belly. In Coḷa script of the 11th century A.D. the hook is shaped more like the coil, and the triangular part opens out somewhat, as one of its sides does not actually join another. In Pāṇḍyan and Vijayanagara script of the 13th and 15th centuries A.D. the hook expands downwards into an elongate curl and the triangle opens out more.

Ga.—In Mauryan script of the 3rd century B.C. two strokes meeting at the top compose this (Fig. 34) letter which looks like the letter V inverted. In Bhaṭṭiprolu script this letter has an additional top stroke to the right which in ordinary script of the time represents elongation of the vowel element. In Kuṣān, Kṣatrapa and Sātavāhana inscriptions of the 2nd century A.D. and Ikṣvāku inscriptions of the 3rd century A.D. the letter is more or less horse-shoe shaped. In the northern variety of the Gupta script of the 4th century A.D. a small base stroke is added to the arm of the horse-shoe to the left while the arm is elongated downwards to the right; in the southern variety of Gupta script the arm of the letter is curved inwards to the left and the top flattened a bit. While in Traikūṭaka script of the 5th century A.D. the horse-shoe shape still appears without change, a box-head appears above the flattened top of the letter in Vākāṭaka and Somavamśi inscriptions of the 5th and 6th—7th centuries respectively, the flattened top of the letter being marked by a small thicker stroke in all the other letters of the 4th and 5th centuries A.D., like Kadamba, Śāṅkāyana, Pallava, Western Ganga, Nāḷa, Visnukunḍi. It continues so in Maitraka script of the 6th century A.D. and Eastern Ganga of the 7th century A.D.

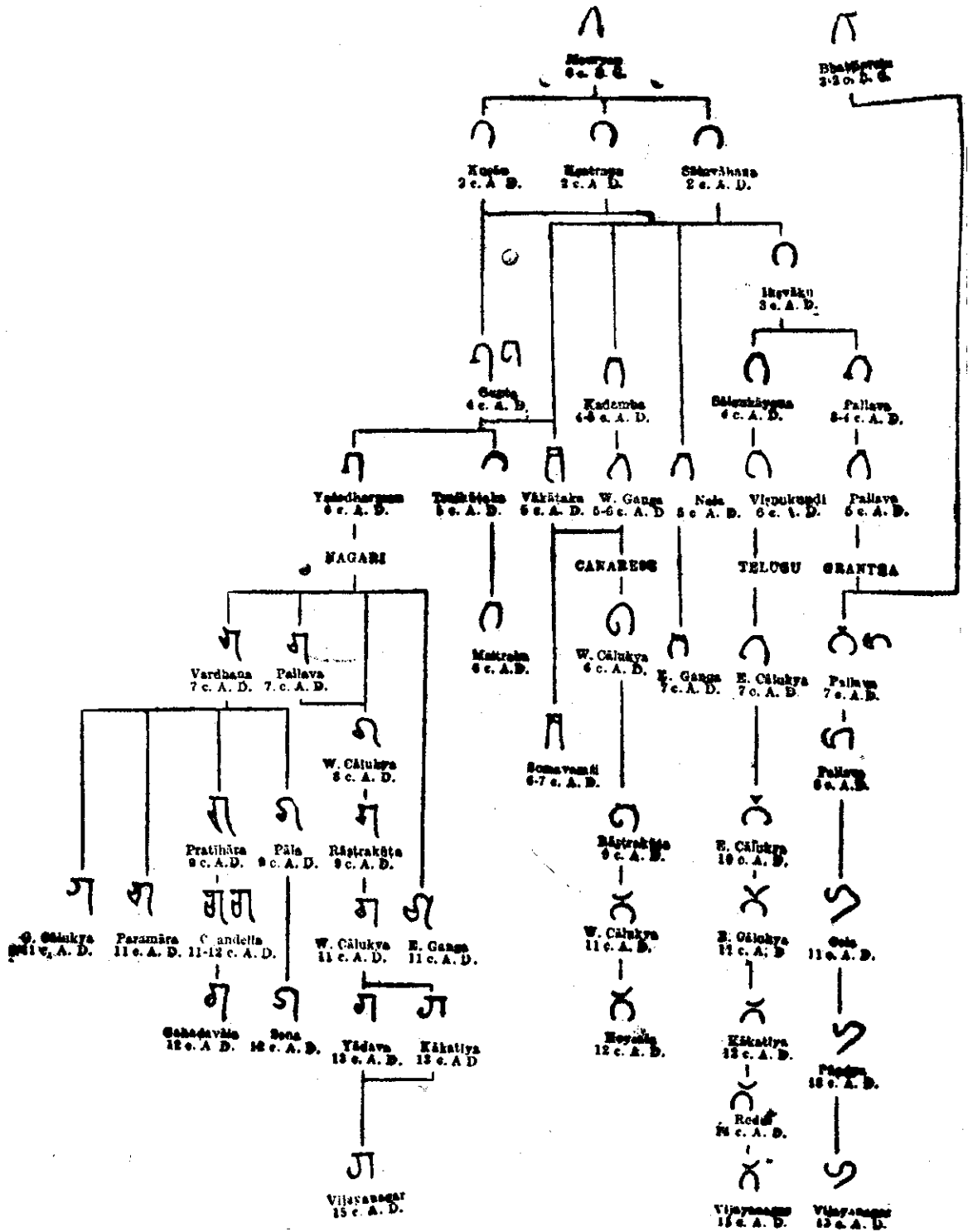


FIG. 34.

The letter of Yaśodharman's time is a development from the northern variety of the Gupta script, but in the regular Nagari of the seventh century A.D., as seen in the inscriptions of Harṣavardhana and the Pallavas, the flattened top, the straightened right arm and the left arm with pointed loop end show considerable advance in its development. The flattened top of the letter continues in all letters of the Nagari variety, except in Western Cālukyan of the 8th century A.D., Pāla of the 9th century A.D., Eastern Ganga of the 11th century A.D. and Sena of the 12th century A.D. The left arm of the letter is leaf-shaped in Pratihāra script of the 9th century; triangularly curved resembling a shovel in Rāṣṭrakūṭa script of the 9th century A.D. and Paramāra script of the 11th century A.D. ; has a bean shaped tip in Western Cālukyan script of the 8th century A.D., Pāla of the 9th century A.D., Candella of the 11th—12th centuries A.D. and Eastern Ganga of the 11th century A.D. This arm ends in a small circle in Western Cālukyan of the 11th century A.D., Gāhaḍavala of the 12th century A.D., Yādava of the 13th century A.D. while it curves out without actually forming a circle in Kākatiya and Vijayanagara inscriptions of the 13th and 15th centuries respectively. In all these the right stroke is usually straight or slightly slanting to right.

In early Canarese inscription from Western Cālukyan area of the 6th century the letter is horse-shoe shaped with the left arm curving inwards. In addition to this feature in the compressed dwarfish letter of the Rāṣṭrakūṭa script of the 9th century A.D. a light serif stroke is added on top, which later, in the Western Cālukyan and Hoysāla script of the 11th and 12th centuries A.D., curves up like a crescent. In the two latter scripts the inward curve of the left arm is absent.

The horse-shoe shape with slightly flattened top of this letter in the Eastern Cālukyan inscriptions of the 7th century A.D. has a separate nail-head serif added above it in the same script of the 10th century A.D. This serif shoots up into two divergent strokes in the next century and looks like the letter V above U inverted. In Kākatiya, Reḍḍi and Vijayanagara inscriptions of the 12th, 14th and 15th centuries A.D. respectively, this is changed into a crescent above the horse-shoe.

In Grantha script of the Pallavas of the 7th century A.D. the letter with serif is somewhat like the Eastern Cālukyan letter of the 10th century A.D. Another variety of the same time lacks a serif but adds to itself an additional upward-curved stroke to the left. In the Pallava script of the 8th century A.D. the arm of the letter is vertical to the right while the additional curved stroke to the left is present, the serif is absent, and from now onwards there is no serif for the letter in the subsequent centuries. The shape arising from the addition of the curved stroke to the left is modified in the letter of Coḷa script of the 11th century A.D. to form a hook-shape and the arm to right runs downwards to right and again to left obliquely. This form of the letter continues in Pāṇḍya script of the 13th century A.D., though in the Vijayanagara script of the 15th century A.D. the angularities are softened into curves.

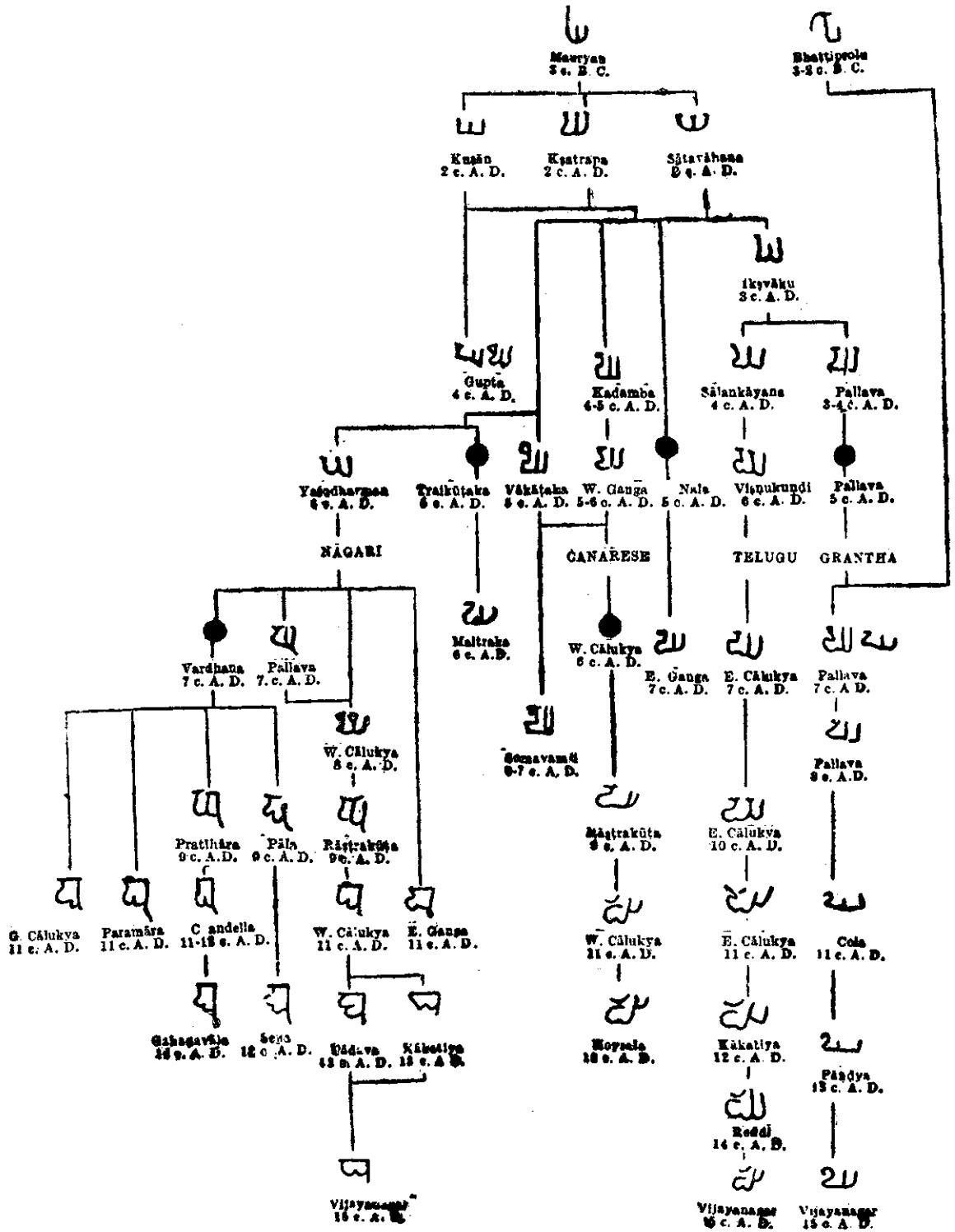


FIG. 35.

Gha.—In Mauryan script of the 3rd century B.C. this (Fig. 35) letter is shaped somewhat like a fishing hook with a central stroke which gives it three prongs, the one to the extreme left being elongate. In Bhattiprolu script of the same time it is shaped like an oblique reversed with a stroke to the top right. In Kuṣān, Kṣatrapa and Sātavāhana letters of the 2nd century A.D. it is three pronged. In the first and last the middle prong is smaller while in the Kṣatrapa letter all the prongs are of equal length. In the Kuṣān letter the semi circular base gets flattened and the whole letter looks like E lying on its vertical stroke. In the Kṣatrapa letter the stroke to the extreme left has a small undulation while the Sātavāhana letter is still a semi-circle with central stroke. The strokes in Kṣatrapa and Sātavāhana letters are thickened somewhat at the top. In the Ikṣvāku letter of the 3rd century A.D., the prongs are elongate. In the Gupta script of the 4th century A.D., the bottom line is slightly oblique, the central stroke somewhat to the right and the stroke to the left thickened at its top. In the Central Indian variety of the same script of the letter is of trident shape with a triangular nail-head for the left prong. In the script of Yasodharman's time the letter is more like W, but in inscriptions of the Kadāmbas of the 4th and 5th centuries A.D., of the Śālanakāyanas of the 4th century A.D., of the Pallavas of the 3rd and 4th centuries A.D., of the Vākāṭakas of the 5th century A.D., of the Western Gangas of the 5th-6th centuries A.D., Maitrakas of the 6th century A.D., Somavamśis of 6th-7th centuries A.D., Eastern Gangas of the 7th century A.D. and Viṣṇukunḍins of the 6th century A.D., the trident shape of the letter with somewhat elongate arms in many cases continues with the left prong, bulging out somewhat and receding again to take an upward course before finally getting thickened at the top or developing a serif or wearing a box-head.

In early Nagari of the 7th century A.D., the three prongs of the letter continue, a serif, is added to the top of the bulging left stroke and the stroke to the right runs down a little to form the usual lower stroke so common in most Nagari letters. In Western Cālukyan Nagari script of the 8th Century A.D. the prongs have a triangular nail-head at the top. In Pratihāra, Pāla and Rāṣṭrakūṭa script of the 9th century A.D. the prongs are still clear, the serif becomes larger and the downward stroke is prominent. In all later varieties of Nagari the serif is changed into a full top stroke, the right prong into an elongate side stroke, the central stroke dwindling and the left stroke bulging out and receding into form the contour of a crude animal head.

In early Canarese inscriptions of the Western Cālukyan area the letter is developed from the Western Ganga letter of the 5th-6th centuries A.D. and in the Rāṣṭrakūṭa letter of the 9th century the bulge of the left prong is very prominent, the letter itself being broad and short. In Western Cālukyan script of the 11th century the serif changes into small crescent and the link between this and the bulging arm of the letter to the left is lost. This bulging arm to left takes a double bend at the base and the right arm perches itself towards the top end of the central arm which is the only one prominent in the letter of the Western Cālukyan and Hoysāḷa scripts of the 11th and 12th centuries A.D. respectively.

The Eastern Cālukyan letter of the 7th century A.D. is not very different from the earlier Viṣṇukuṇḍi letter and the serif is rather more prominent in the Eastern Cālukyan letter of the 10th century A.D., the letter itself being rather broad. In Eastern Cālukyan script of the 11th century A.D., the letter is somewhat like that of contemporary Western Cālukyan but the crescent serif is here a double stroke shaped like V. In the Kākatiya and Vijayanagara scripts of the 12th and 15th centuries A.D. the letter is just like the one in Hoysala script of the 12th century, though in Redḍi script of the 14th century A.D. the right prong issues from the base and is as long as the middle one.

In Pallava Grantha of the 7th century the letter is not very different from that of earlier Viṣṇukuṇḍin or contemporary Eastern Cālukyan. This shape almost continues to be so in the next century, though in Coḷa, Pāṇḍya and Vijayanagara scripts of the 11th, 13th and 15th centuries A.D., respectively the letter is rather broad with a straight baseline, two strokes for the central and right arms, the left arm being shaped like a query without the dot.

a.—In the Mauryan alphabet this letter (Fig. 36) is practically a square with the right side open. It is practically the same in the Kuṣān inscriptions of the 2nd century A.D. In the Gupta script of the 4th century A.D., the northern form of the letter follows the Kuṣān type but the southern variety shows a small inward dip in the vertical and a small downward projection of the tip of the top stroke to right. This is repeated in Kadamba script of the 4th and 5th century A.D. The letter is nearly similar in Śālankāyana script of the 4th century A.D., Western Ganga (5th century A.D.) and Viṣṇukuṇḍin of the same time. The early form of the letter is maintained in Vākāṭaka (5th century A.D.), and Maitraka (6th century A.D.) alphabet as also in Eastern Ganga (7th century A.D.).

The letter of Yaśodharman's inscriptions (6th century A.D.) is developed in the next century by emphasis on the dip both in the vertical and the base which continues in later forms. In Eastern Ganga (11th century A.D.) and Sena (12th century A.D.), Nagari inscriptions the letter shows a circlet to the right top.

The Pallava Grantha letter of the 7th century A.D. gives a clue to understanding the later development of the letter in Telugu script. The development is much as in *ja* as the dip in the vertical forming curves at the top and the base decide the form of the letter.

In Pallava Grantha letter of the 8th century A.D., the vertical stroke is lost by the intrusion of a diagonal stroke which continues thereafter to connect the top and base of the letter.

In Tamil the projection of the left end of the base and the curves of the vertical stroke already observed in the 7th century Pallava script form the basis for a series of transformations that finally settled the letter in the Coḷa and Vijayanagar inscriptions.

The Vaṭṭeluttu letter follows the form of the Tamil letter.

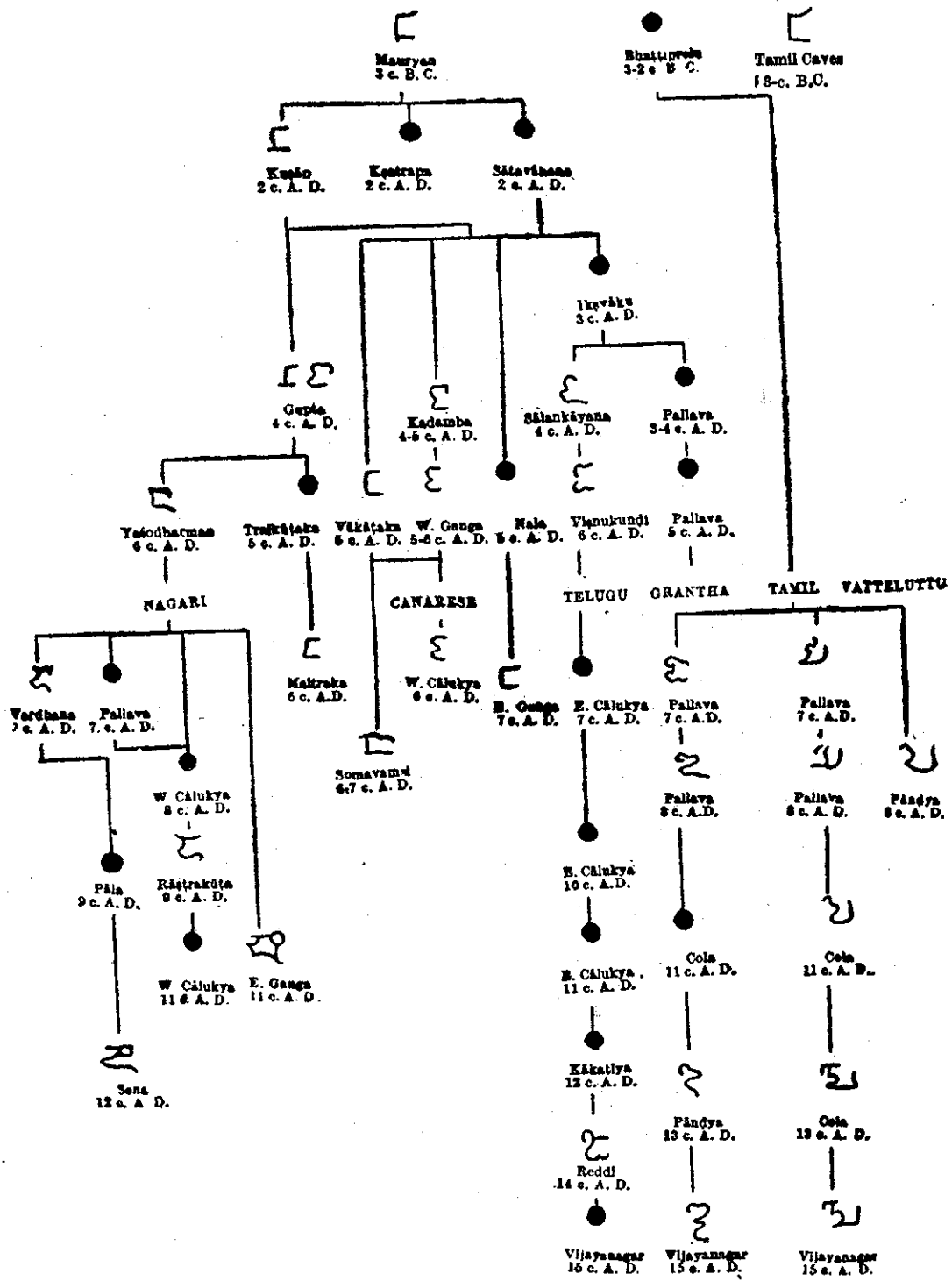


FIG. 86.

O.S. del.

Ca.—In Mauryan script it (Fig 37) is a semi-circle, with the vertical stroke double its diameter to the right, giving the letter the appearance of a reversed P upside down. In contemporary script from the Tamil caves it is similar, but in Bhāṭṭiprolu script the vertical stroke slightly projects downwards and a stroke is added to top right which in ordinary script would signify lengthening of the vowel element *a*. In Kuṣān, Kṣāstrapa and Sātavāhana of the 2nd century A.D. the belly of the letter bulges forward to assume the shape of an orange cell, the vertical stroke dwindles, a small thick knob towards the right top being all that is left of its whole length. In the Kuṣān letter the knob is more or less a serif stroke. In Ikṣvāku script of the 3rd century A.D. the letter looks more compressed. The Northern variety of Gupta letter of the 4th Century is like the earlier Kuṣān one, while the Central Indian type of letter shows a box-head. In Kadamba, Vākāṭaka, Somavamśi, Nala and Eastern Ganga scripts of the 4th, 5th, 6th—7th, 5th and 7th centuries A.D. respectively the belly of the letter is more or less rectangular and the box-head clearly crowns the vertical stroke that again rises up. In Śālikāyana, Western Ganga and Viṣṇukunḍi letters of the 4th, 5th—6th and 6th centuries A.D. respectively, the serif to the left is clearly marked and in all these, as also in the Pallava letter of the 4th and 5th centuries A.D., the base line undulates to form a double-curve. The Traikūṭaka letter of the 5th century A.D. is somewhat shaped like a triangle, with a serif stroke to the right top, the Maitraka letter of the next century showing the triangle curving up to form orange cell shape. In the script of Yaśodharman of the 6th century A.D. the letter resembles a spouted pitcher facing left. In the early Nagari letter, as in Harṣavardhana's inscriptions, the letter is derived from that of Yaśodharman's, the belly merging into the spout. In Pallava Nagari of the same time the belly of the letter is just half an orange cell, the vertical stroke appears again and slightly projects downwards, its top thickening into a nail-head. This nail-head is very prominent in the Western Cālukyan Nagari letter of the 8th century A.D. and Paramāra letter of the 11th century A.D. The letter in Pratihāra, Pāla and Rāṣtrakūṭa scripts of the 9th century A.D. is almost like that of early Pallava script. The orange cell shape of the belly of the letter occurs in Eastern Ganga script of 11th century A.D. and Gāhaḍavāla script of the 12th century A.D. But in late Western Cālukyan (11th century A.D.), Gujrat Cālukyan (11th century A.D.), Sena (12th century A.D.), Yādava and Kākatīya scripts (13th century A.D.), the serif becomes a full top stroke, and the belly of the letter seen against the vertical stroke is a triangle.

In early Canarese script of the 6th century A.D. from Western Cālukyan area the letter is more or less like that of Western Ganga script of the 5th and 6th centuries A.D. In Rāṣtrakūṭa script the 9th Century A.D. the base line undulates to form a double curve and a serif is present. The Western Cālukyan letter of the 11th century A.D. shows the serif changed into two strokes branching off to form an angle, the base line undulating to form a double curve and the belly opening near the serif stroke and a small upward beak-like stroke

to right gives the letter almost the shape of a kettle. This is the shape of the letter in Hoysala script of the next century.

This shape continues in all the varieties of Telugu script from this time onwards but the serif strokes so prominent in the 11th century A.D. soften into crescent shape from the 15th century onwards.

In Grantha of the 7th century A.D. the letter is much as in earlier Pallava script of 4th and 5th centuries A.D. The thickened serif-like top is slightly forked in one type and the belly somewhat bulges up more to the left. The shape of the belly is somewhat like a triangle in the 8th century A.D. and from the 11th century A.D. the letter is composed of a curl that stands against the base line which has a slight curvature and a short vertical to the right.

In Tamil the Pallava letter of the 7th century A.D. is like the Aśokan letter with a small thick top knob. In the 8th century the knob disappears and the belly opens a little. In the Coḷa letter of the 11th century A.D. a small stroke appears in the place of the knob of the 7th century A.D. This develops in the 10th century T shape and the opened belly joins again; later in the Vijayanagara script the top stroke of the T-shaped part shoots down and cuts an angle to the left.

In Pāṇḍyan Vatteluttu script of the 8th century A.D. the letter is oblique and looks a *svastika* with the left and downward stroke joined. It is much the same in Coḷa script of the century A.D. though the slight topward curve of the right stroke is absent.

Cha.—In the Mauryan script this (Fig. 38) is a long vertical stroke, the lower half of which divides an oval or ellipse into two equal parts. In Bhaṭṭiprolu script as usual a top stroke is added to the right. In Kuṣan, Kṣatrapa and Sātavāhana script of the 2nd century A.D. the letter is dwarfish and the two cells of its oval belly develop into two close-knit spheroids with a central vertical stroke above, with its top end thickened. In Ikṣvāku script of the 3rd century A.D. the letter is composed of an elongate oval to left crowned by a small crescent closely connected with an oval or ellipse. In Gupta script of the 4th century A.D. from Central India a box-head crowns the small vertical which is slightly to the left. In the letter of Yaśodharman's time the two spheroids are a little apart but connected by the central stroke which has a thick serif-like top. The letter in all the early scripts of South India and Deccan, like Kadamba, Śālikāyana, Pallava Viṣṇukūṇḍin, and early Western and Eastern Cālukyan, is composed only of these two spheroids, now shaped like pears, the top of the left one among them being a little more pointed and raised than the other. The early Nagari letter of the 7th century A.D. in Pallava inscriptions is not very different from the letter of Yaśodharman's inscriptions. From this time onwards the letter is more or less a circle or ellipse laid on its back divided into two equal halves by a straight or slightly curvilinear vertical stroke with a top serif and in some cases small downward projection.

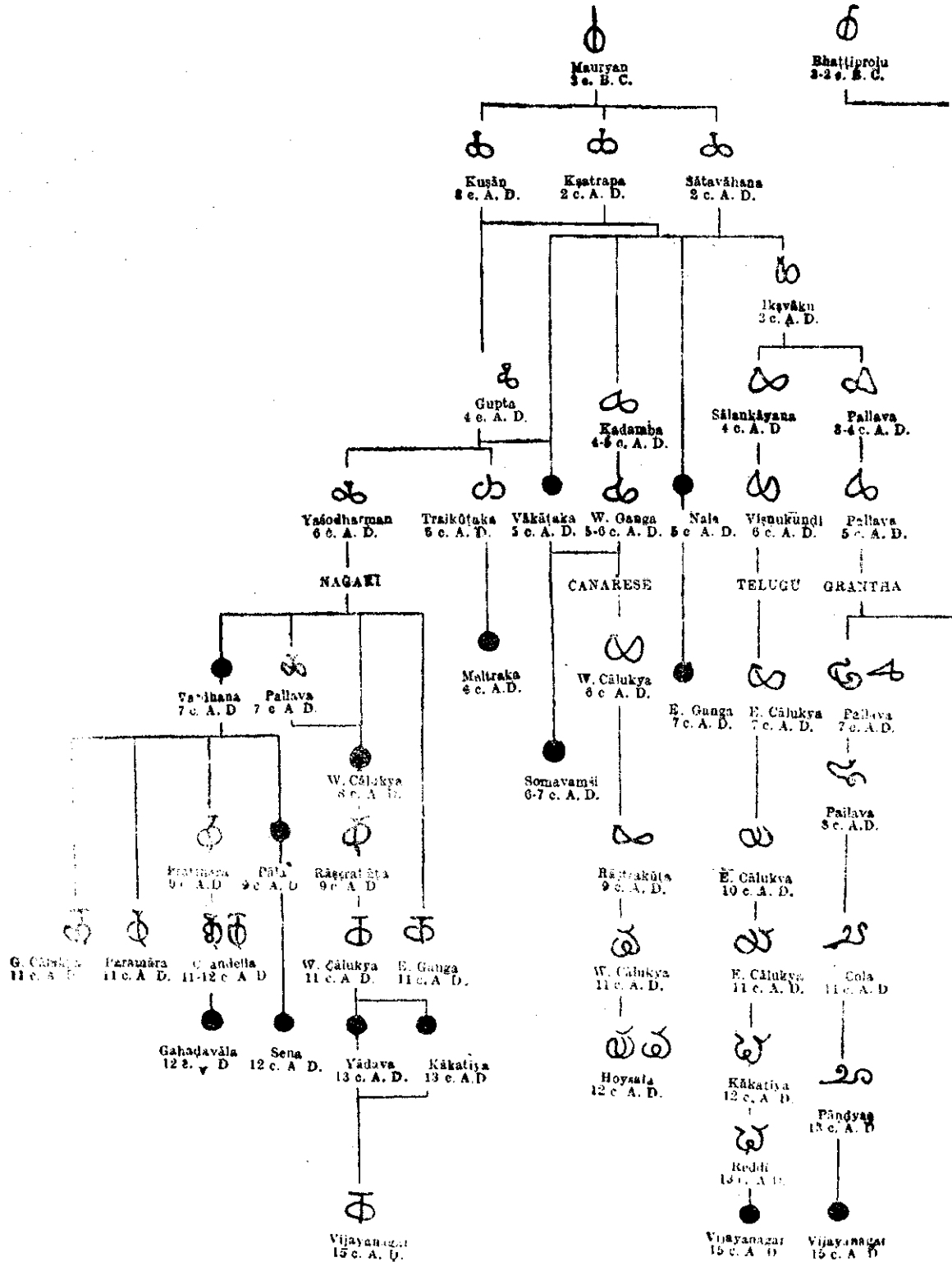


FIG. 38.

C. S. I. I.

In early Canarese script from Western Cālukyan area the two pear-shaped parts, composing the letter in the 6th century Cālukyan script, get flattened out in the Rāṣtrakūṭa letter in the 9th century A.D; but in the 11th century Western Cālukyan script it becomes an almost circular form like two coils of a spring forming a central loop, the right end being surmounted by a small arch-shaped serif. This and a modified form of the earliest Western Cālukyan letter occur in Hoysala script of the 12th century A.D.

In the earliest Eastern Cālukyan script the letter resembles its Western contemporary. But in the 10th century one of the pear-shaped cells opens at the top end and in the next century an arch-shaped serif is added to the top of the arm to the right. The letter in the Kākatīya and Redḍi scripts of the 12th and 13th centuries A.D. is more or less akin to that in Western Cālukyan and Hoysala script of the 11th and 12th centuries A.D.

In the Pallava Grantha letter of the 7th century A.D. there are two varieties, both based on the earlier Pallava type of the 5th century A.D. In the 8th century A.D. one of the spheroids dwindles and the other opens out. In the Coḷa script of the 11th century A.D. and onwards the letter is like unaspirated *ca* with the arm to the right, at first curving out slightly but later curving out strongly.

Ja.—In Mauryan script this (Fig. 39) is like the letter E. The central stroke is lengthened in the Bhaṭṭiprolu letter of the same date. The spine of the letter is sometimes straight and sometimes curved in all these varieties during the first few centuries of the Christian era. In the Central variety of Gupta script, Kadamba, Śāḷankāyana, Pallava Western Ganga, Nala and Viṣṇukunḍin scripts of the 4th, 5th, 6th centuries A.D. the top and bottom strokes undulate to form slight double curve. In the Vākāṭaka script of the 5th century A.D. the vertical stroke recedes inwards above the second stroke and adds a box-head to its top left. In *Somaśamaśī* script of the 6th, 7th centuries A.D. the box-head is not present. In the letter of Yaśodharman's time the two lower strokes tend to be oblique; and in the Nagari script of Harṣavardhana's time the short vertical recedes inside above the middle stroke, both the middle and lower strokes running down obliquely, the latter even curving a bit to left the top stroke thickens a bit at its ends and drops down a little to the right.

In the Western Cālukyan letter of the 8th century A.D. and Paramāra letter of the 11th century A.D. the top and vertical strokes combine to change into a triangle above the middle stroke. In all further developments except in Sena and Vijayanagara scripts the middle stroke runs down obliquely or very nearly straight and down in cursive manner, the other stroke strongly curving in and out again; and with the serif on vertical stroke above the middle stroke the letter looks like T on S. with top end of the letter lengthened downwards. In Sena script of the 12th century A.D. the middle line is not oblique but curves up to right towards the serif. In Vijayanagara script the middle stroke bends and runs down to form a right angle.

In Canarese script from Western Cālukyan area the letter of the 6th century A.D. is not very different from that of the slightly earlier Western Ganga script but a tiny dash across the middle stroke may be noted. This later accounts for the curl-shape to the left of the top stroke of the letter in Rāṣṭrakūṭa script of the 9th century A.D. In the 11th century Western Cālukyan script the top line breaks and forms a curl to the left and an upward curve to the right, the central stroke just connecting this part with the stroke forming the base that undulates to form a double bend. This shape of the letter continues in the Hoysala script of the 12th century A.D.

In the Eastern Cālukyan script of the 7th century A.D. the letter is after the earlier Viṣṇukunḍin variety. But in the 10th century A.D. the letter is more like the Western Cālukyan in the next century, with this difference that the curl to the left actually forms loop and the top end of the curve to the right thickens serif-like. From the 11th century onwards the letter is about the same type as in Western Cālukyan and Hoysala scripts.

In the Pallava Grantha script of the 7th century A.D. there are two varieties of the letter. In the first the top stroke starts with a curl and this along with the other two strokes is wavy forming a double arch, as in earlier examples. In the other one the top stroke starts with a curl, has a double bend, and then obliquely runs down to the left and again to right, forms a loop and a curve in continuation. From this the Pallava letter of the next century is formed. In Coḷā script of the 11th century A.D. and later the letter is only a continuation of this type with the additional curve beyond the loop being absent.

Na.—In the Mauryan alphabet the letter (Fig. 40) is like the letter H with the left vertical extended a little to left horizontally and the right vertical with its upper half omitted. In the Kuṣan, Kṣatrapa and Sātavāhana letters of the 2nd century A.D. the lower end of the left vertical stroke is somewhat prolonged. It is abnormally prolonged and definitely curves to left in the Ikṣvāku letter of the 3rd century A.D., and the limb to the right tends to curve. This continues in the early Pallava letter of the 3rd and 4th century A.D. In the Kadamba and Sālankāyana letters of the 4th century A.D., the horizontal top stroke in continuation of the left vertical develops a double bend. In the former the lower end of the prolonged vertical curves and shoots up as a parallel stroke. The right limb of the letter from now onwards curves and tends to be hook-shaped as in Vākātaka (5th century A.D.), Maitraka (6th century), Viṣṇukunḍi (6th century A.D.), Pallava (5th century A.D.), Eastern Ganga (7th century A.D.), and Eastern Cālukya (7th century A.D.).

In Gupta script of the 4th century A.D. the letter is a simple one lacking the loop of Pallava Grantha letter of the 7th century A.D. and later in the inscriptions of Yaśodharman the form is continued.

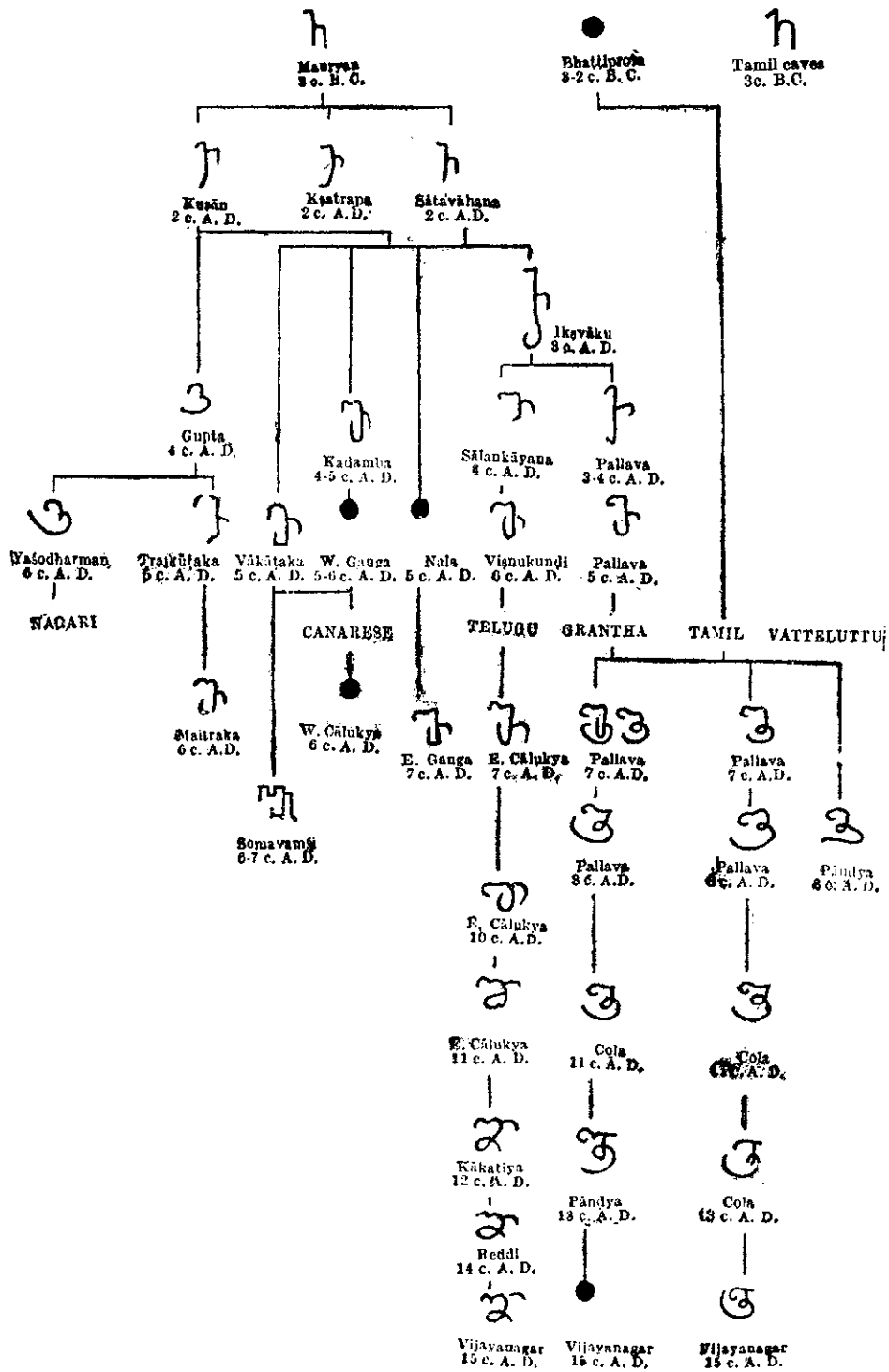


FIG. 40.

G.S. del.

In the Telugu area the parallel stroke in continuation of the vertical tends to bulge into a loop as in letter *ī* of the same alphabet in different stages and the hook-shaped right limb gets diminished into a small projecting arc.

In the Grantha script the loop is formed in the 7th century A.D. itself and the right limb starts in continuation of the loop as a curve with a flourish encircling the loop, a shape continuing during later centuries.

The letter is the same in Tamil script as well. The Vaṭṭeḷuttu letter is formed after the Tamil one.

Ta.—From the Mauryan times to practically about the 4th century A.D. this letter (Fig. 41) is a semi-circle shaped like 'C'. From the 4th century A.D. there is slight change. In Gupta script of the 4th century A.D. the top of the letter is a horizontal stroke. This is found also in Kadamba, Vākāṭaka, Śāṅkāyana, Nala and Pallava scripts of the 4th, 5th centuries A.D. though in Vākāṭaka and Somavamśi script of the 5th, 6th and 7th centuries A.D. respectively a box-head is added. The base of the letter is somewhat straightened and a small undulation gives it a shallow double curve in Śāṅkāyana Western Ganga, Viṣṇukunḍin and Pallava letters of the 4th, 5th and 6th centuries A.D. In the script of Yaśodharman the top end of the letter has a distinct dot. In the Nagari script of Harṣavardhana's time the top end of the letter raises itself up and touches the serif added to it, thus giving the contour of half a pot. In nearly all the later forms this appearance continues almost unchanged; the Paramāra letter of the 11th century A.D., however, has a triangular nail-head instead of the mere top stroke; and in Pāla, Eastern Ganga and Sena scripts of the 9th, 11th and 12th centuries respectively the back of the letter has a double bend.

The early Western Cālukyan letter of the 6th century A.D. resembles the earlier Kadamba letter and the Rāṣṭrakūṭa letter of the 9th century A.D. has a shallow double bend in the base line. This feature continues in the Western Cālukyan and Hoysala letters of the 11th and 12th centuries A.D., respectively; and in addition the top end of the letter is prolonged to shoot up.

In eastern Cālukyan script the letter of 7th century A.D. is after the earlier type and like its earliest Western Cālukyan cousin. But in the 10th century A.D. the top end shoots up into a prominent vertical stroke. In the subsequent centuries this letter of the Telugu script continues both the top vertical stroke and the double curve of the base line.

In Pallava Grantha script of the 7th century A.D., one form of the letter is the simple C-shaped one and another like 'L' upside down and oblique or a hooky-stick placed handle downwards in slanting fashion. In the next century the lower end of the letter is bent and curved to form a small hook. This hook is enlarged in the 11th century Coḷa and 13th century Pāṇḍya letter which resembles S written slanting with definite angularities.

In the Vijayanagar letter of the 15th century A.D., the letter is simplified into a downward stroke just slanting to left, then to right and again to left.

The early Pallava Tamil letter of the 7th century A.D., is akin to contemporary Grantha letter composed of a stroke aslant from right to left and again from left to right, with the angle rounded a bit. This form continues till the 11th-12th centuries but in the 13th century Coḷa script the lower part of the stroke running from left to right lifts itself up to form a straight horizontal line and later in the Vijayanagar letter of the 15th century A.D., the other stroke also straightens itself into a vertical and the letter consists of two sides of a rectangle forming a right angle.

The Vaṭṭeluttu letter in Pāṇḍya script of the 8th century A.D., is more or less a crescent and in the 11th century Coḷa script it continues the same form except that its base is somewhat flattened.

a—In Mauryan script the letter (Fig. 42) look like H with the top and bottom half of the arms to left and right respectively rubbed out. In the Kuṣān, Kṣatrapa and Sātavāhana scripts of the 2nd century A.D., it is shaped like a sickle with handle upwards; a small serif crowns the Kuṣān letter, In the Ikṣvāku script of the 3rd century A.D., the top is thickened wedgelike. In the Gupta letter of the 4th century A.D., which is developed from the earlier Kuṣān one the curved lower part straightens itself somewhat vertically. In the Kadamba, Vākaṭāka and Somavamśi scripts of the 4th, 5th and 6th-7th centuries, respectively, the letter develops a box-head. In these, as well as in the Śālikāyana, Pallava Viṣṇukunḍin, Traikūṭaka, Maitraka, Western Cālukya and Eastern Ganga scripts of the 4th, 5th, 6th, 5th, 6th and 7th centuries A.D., respectively, the letter though still sickle-shaped has the curved blade-shaped base, slightly 'double bent' and wavy. In Yaśodharman's script the letter is shaped somewhat like the numeral 3 with the top line flattened slightly and in the Nagari of Harṣavardhana's time the top stroke is clearly a serif. In the 9th century Pāla and Rāṣṭrakūṭa scripts the letter is more or less like that in Vardhana script but from the 11th century A.D. the letter in Nagari is more or less an 'S' with the top end continued up vertically a little and then horizontally to left. In the Paramāra script of the 11th century A.D. this stroke above the 'S' shaped part is marked like a nail-head.

In early Western Cālukyan script of the 6th century A.D., the letter is still sickle-shaped but the base tends to develop a wavy contour, which persists in the successive centuries, till in the Hoysala script of the 12th century A.D. the wavy line curls towards the right end; the connected serif changes into a separate small crescent above the letter from the 11th century onwards.

In the Eastern Cālukyan script the development is like that in Western Cālukyan but in the 11th century A.D. the serif is composed of two strokes shaped like 'V' rather widened, but from the 12th century onwards the crescent takes its place.

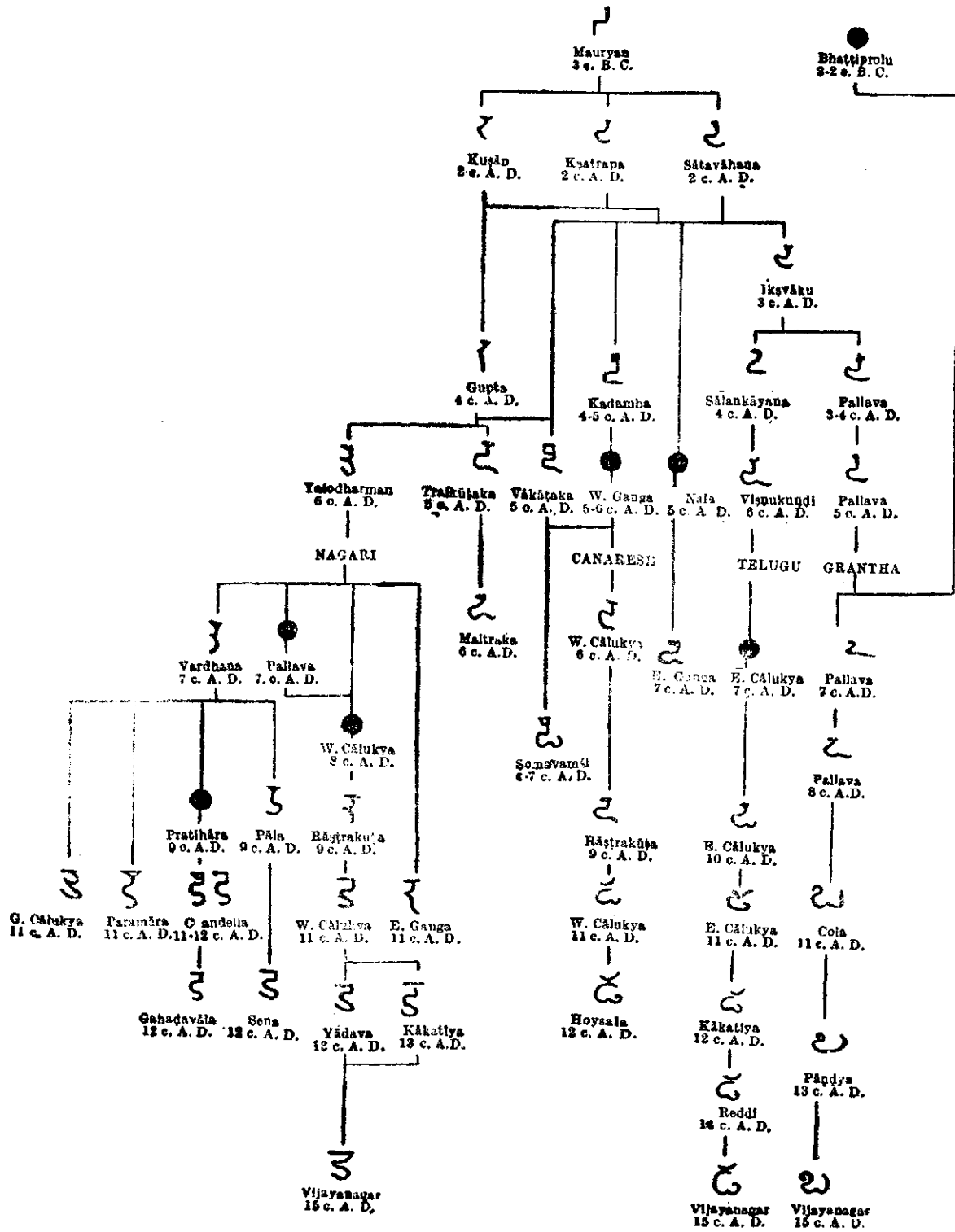


FIG. 42

C.S. del.

In Pallava Grantha script of the 7th century A.D. the letter is like the numeral 2 with the horizontal stroke lengthened. In the same script of the next century a dot, a stroke slanting down from right to left and continued as wavy base line, compose the letter. In the 11th century Coḷa script the dot and slanting strokes combine to look like a hook and the wavy line in continuation is very deep showing a clear double arch which ends as a vertical stroke. From this time onwards the form of the letter is more or less of this type.

Dha.—In the Mauryan script this letter (Fig. 43) is shaped as an inverted question mark without the dot. The base is flattened and the top end somewhat thicker in the 2nd century Kuṣān and Kṣatrapa and Sātāvāhanā letters. In the southern variety of Gupta script the base curves in as also in Kadamba (4th and 5th century A.D.) and there is a tendency for the right end of the letter to curl which is more pronounced in later letter of the Canarese, Telugu and Grantha scripts; the letter is mainly in these areas very like *ḍa* in the different periods with the addition of the loop through the Vijayanagar Telugu letter has also a stroke added below it.

The letter in the Nagari script of all periods and areas is more or less shaped after the earlier Gupta type which is clearly after its parent letter of the 2nd century A.D. and the curl towards the end of the right end is to be noted.

a.—In Mauryan script and in the script of the early Tamil caves *ṇa* (Fig. 44) has two strokes at the top and bottom connected in the middle by a vertical stroke which give it the appearance of 'H' resting on one of its sides. In Bhaṭṭiprolu script a stroke to the right is added at the middle of the vertical. Though in Sātāvāhana script of the 2nd century A.D. the letter is more or less the same, the base line of contemporary Kṣatrapa letter and the base and top strokes of the Kuṣān letter of the same date and of the Ikṣvāku letter of the 3rd century A.D. curve a bit giving the letter somewhat the appearance of 'X' composed of two crescents joined back to back. The letter in Northern Gupta script of the 4th century A.D. and that of Yaśodharman's inscriptions is composed of a small horizontal stroke with both ends rising vertically and curving out in opposite directions. Two small strokes joining to continue as a vertical stroke which branches off to curve downwards in opposite directions compose the letter in Śālikāyana, Viṣṇukunḍin, Pallava, Western Ganga and Western Cālukyan scripts of the 4th, 5th and 6th centuries A.D. But as in the Southern variety of Gupta script, in Kadamba, Vākāṭaka, Traikūṭaka, Maitraka, Nala, Eastern Ganga scripts of about the same date one of the small strokes at the base changes into a loop to the left; and in the first two as well as in the Nala letter a box-head is present where the vertical branches off into two downward curves. In the script of Yaśodharman's inscriptions the letter is of the type of the Northern Gupta variety and from this is derived the Nagari letter in Harṣavardhana's inscriptions and those of the Pallavas, wherein the strokes composing the curves are lengthened downwards and the small horizontal stroke slants to right. In Western Cālukya and Pratīthāra scripts of the 8th hand

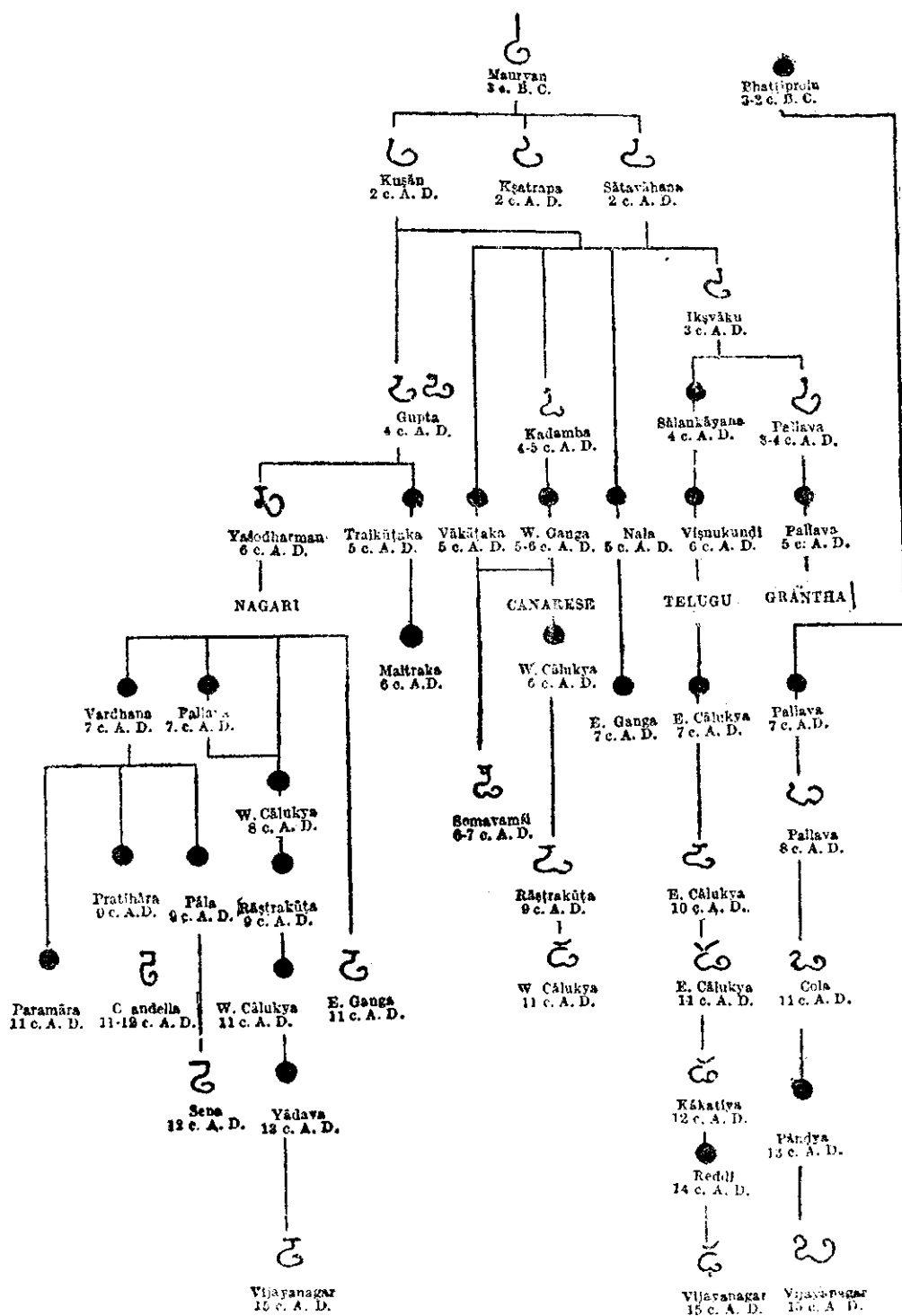


FIG. 48

9th centuries A.D. respectively the type is the same, though in Pāla script of the 9th century the vertical upward and downward strokes composing the limb to the right change into a single stroke. In contemporary Rāṣṭrakūṭa script the small central horizontal stroke disappears or dwindles into a small stroke which itself branches off to curve downwards in opposite directions. The double curve thus formed at the top is crowned by a horizontal stroke in Gujrat Cālukya, Paramāra and Western Cālukya scripts of the 11th century A.D. In Ganga script of the same century the letter is more or less like that of the Pāla script already described. The Candella, Gāhaḍavāla, Yādava, Kākatiya, and Vijayanagara letters of the 12th, 13th and 15th centuries A.D. look like 'E' with its three strokes facing downwards.

The Western Cālukyan letter is more or less like that of contemporary Viṣṇukūṇḍin or Pallava script. In Western Cālukyan and Hoysala scripts of the 11th and 12th centuries A.D. the two small strokes at the base form a small curve to the right allowing the vertical to run up curving to left in continuation and develop a double bend and a large curve to right.

In Eastern Cālukyan script of the 7th century A.D. the letter resembles its Western Cālukyan cousin and the later developments during the centuries are quite akin to those in the Canarese area.

In Pallava Grantha of the 7th century A.D. the letter is of two types ; one is more or less like the earlier type of the same script with however this difference that the top left curve is curled and the left stroke at the base is changed into a loop ; another is shaped like the profile of a spring straightened but still retaining some of the curves. In the 8th century A.D. the letter is formed by a curl to the left continuing as a small horizontal stroke, and then an upward curve which abruptly descends as a straight vertical. In the 11th century A.D. the letter starts as a curl and forms two loops before it descends vertically downwards to some length. In the subsequent centuries this continues.

In Tamil script all the varieties of Grantha are repeated during the centuries.

In Vatteluttu script of the 8th century A.D. the letter starts as a loop, curves to right, bends twice in its downward curve and runs again to left. This form continues in the 11th century A.D.

Ta.—In Mauryan script and in the script of the Tamil caves it (Fig. 45) is like 'Y' upside down ; the Bhaṭṭiprolu letter has a stroke as usual added to its right. In the Kuṣān, Kṣatrapa and Sātavāhana scripts of the 2nd century A.D. the letter has a thick serif-like top and the two lower limbs curve to form a horse-shoe shape. In the Ikṣvāku letter of the 3rd century A.D. the left lower limb forms a loop. The small vertical over the horse-shoe has a wedge-shaped cap in the Northern variety of the Gupta script of the 4th century A.D., though in the Central Indian variety there is a box-head instead. This box-head is found

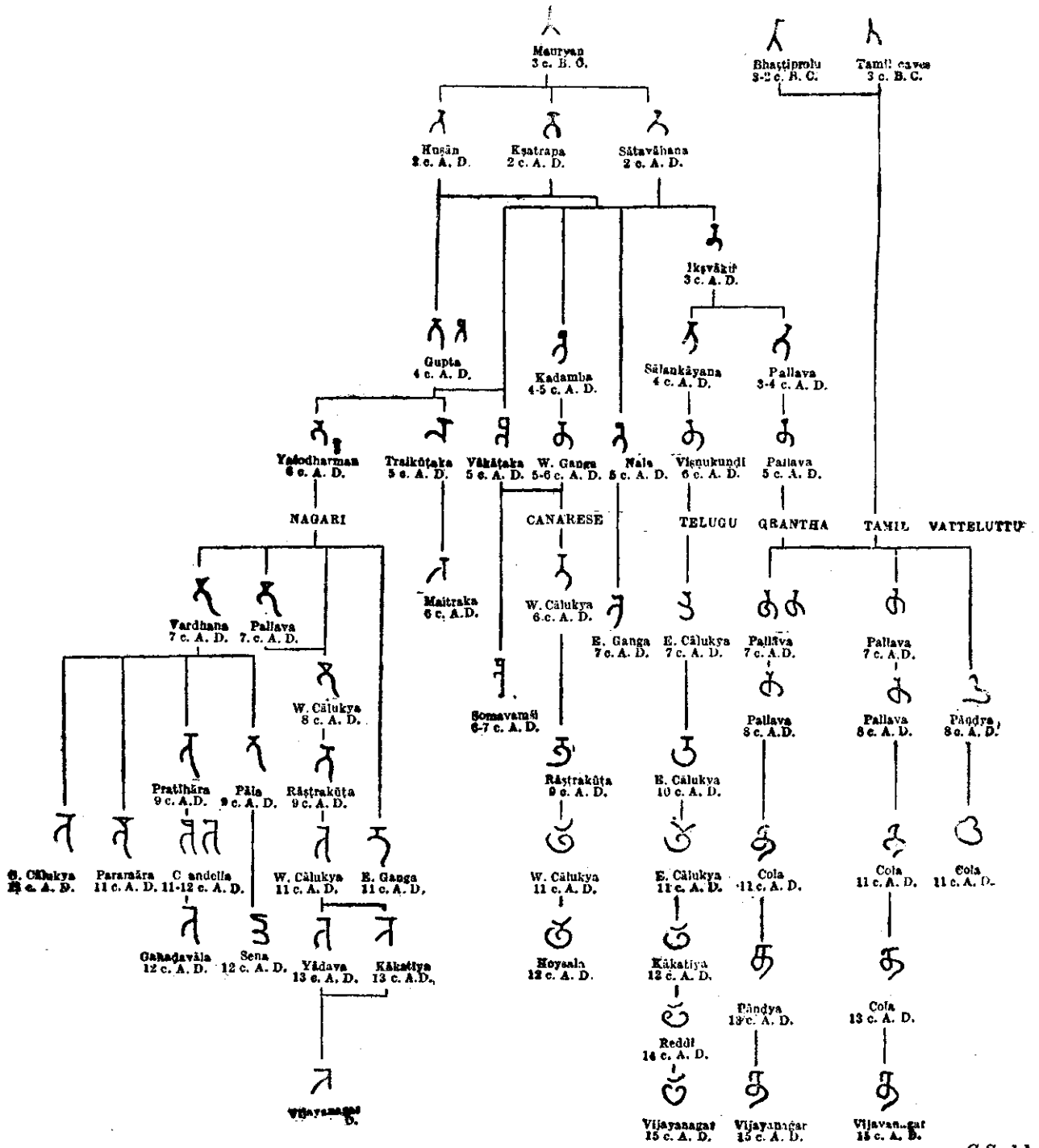


FIG 45

C.S. del.

in Kadamba, Vākātaka, Nala and Somavamśi letters. The looped form at the lower end of the vertical is found in Western Ganga and Viṣṇukunḍin letter of the 5th-6th centuries A.D.

In the letter of Yaśodharman's inscriptions the wedge is on the horse-shoe much as in earlier Gupta script and this form is continued in the Nagari of Harṣavardhana's time as also in Pallava Nagari of the 7th century A.D., the arm of the horse-shoe tending to get shortened to the left and lengthened and slightly curved at the terminal to the right. The Western Cālukya letter of the 8th century A.D. is much the same. In Pratihāra, Pāla and Rāṣtrakūṭa scripts of the 9th century A.D., Gujrat Cālukya, Western Cālukya, Eastern Ganga scripts of the 11th century A.D., Gāhaḍavāla script of the 12th century A.D., Yādava and Kākatīya scripts of the 13th century A.D., and Vijayanagara script of the 15th century A.D. which show further development of the form, the wedge on top is replaced by a horizontal stroke on top of the vertical, which in the first four and in the Eastern Ganga letter looks like a small 'T' on a hook. The Paramāra letter of the 11th century A.D. however has a triangular top and the Sena letter of the 12th century A.D. looks a cork-screw silhouetted or like the numeral 3 connected to a top horizontal stroke.

The Western Cālukya letter of the 6th century A.D. is a vertical stroke with small serif situated on a hook. In the 9th century Rāṣtrakūṭa script the letter is composed of a 'T' on a curl. In the Western Cālukyan and Hoysala letter of the 11th-12th centuries A.D. this curl becomes more pronounced and a crescent replaces the 'T' shaped serif.

In Eastern Cālukyan script of the 7th century A.D. and in the three subsequent centuries the vertical with small serif and the curl give a shape approximating the numeral 3; in the 11th century A.D. the serif changes into two large strokes shaped like 'V' widened; but from the next century onwards it is changed into a crescent as in contemporary Hoysala script. In the Vijayanagara letter of the 15th century A.D. the semi-circular belly of the letter curves in at both ends beneath the crescent.

In Pallava Grantha of the 7th century A.D. this is almost like its predecessor two centuries earlier. The top end of the vertical stroke is slightly forked. This continues in the next century A.D. but the letter is more buxom. In the 11th century Coḷa script the vertical develops a hook-shaped top and the curve in continuation of the loop descends aslant. In the 13th century Pāṇḍya letter the hook changes into an open rectangle which continues in all later script.

The development of the letter in Tamil is not different from that in Grantha.

In Pāṇḍyan Vatteluttu of the 8th century A.D. the letter is somewhat like No. 3 with the bottom slightly enlarged and projecting to right. In the Coḷa script of the 11th century A.D. the lower half of the letter sweeps up as a broad curve to reach the top.

Tha.—In Mauryan script and the script of the Tamil caves it (Fig. 46) is a circle with a dot in the centre. The Bhaṭṭiprolu letter has a top stroke added to right. In Kuṣān ,

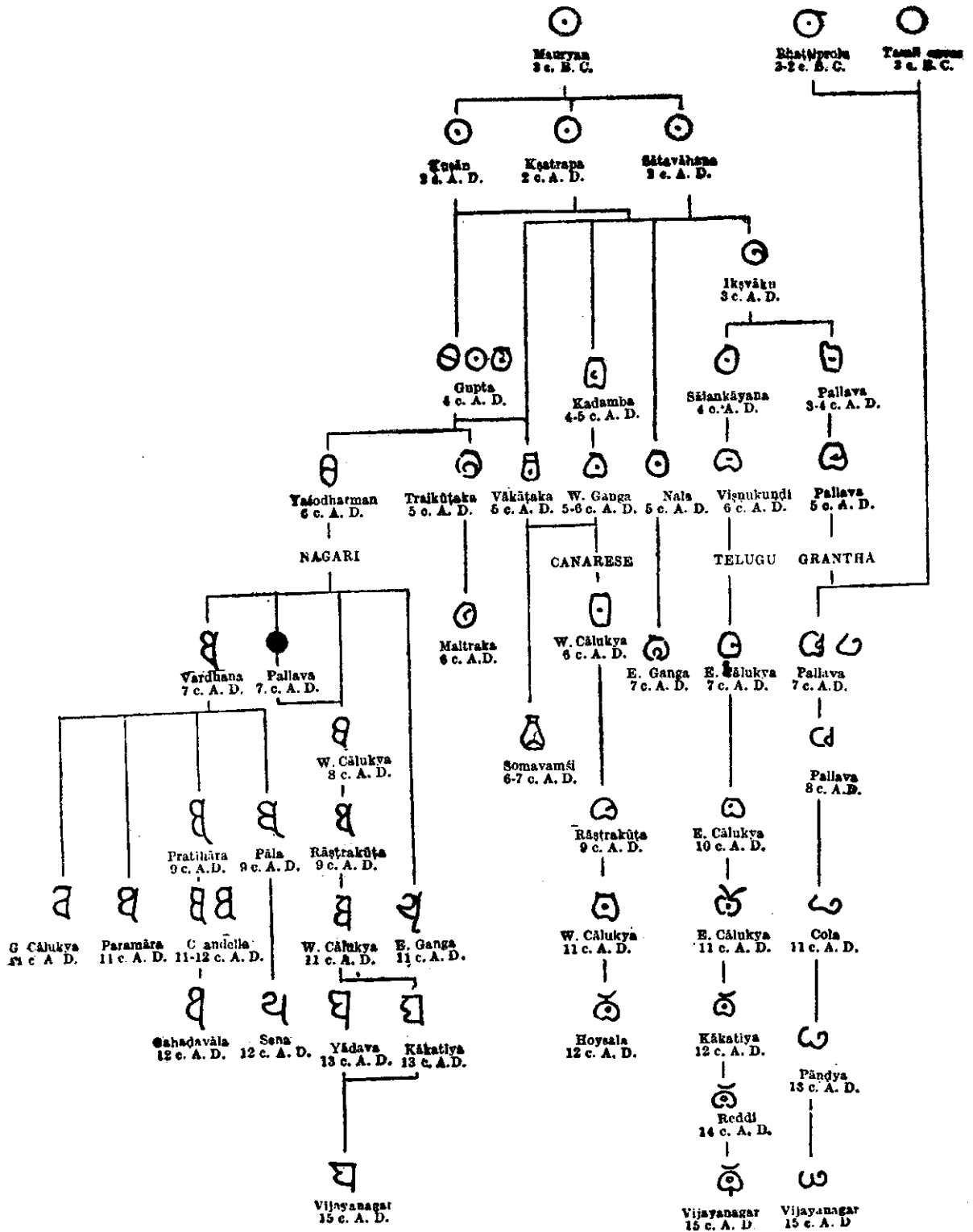


FIG 46

C.S. del.

Kṣatrapa and Sātavāhana writing of the 2nd century A.D. and Ikṣvāku script of the 3rd century A.D. it is the same circle and dot that make up the letter. In the Northern Gupta script of the 4th century A.D. a slightly elliptical circle with a central dividing line or a circle with central dot make the letter, while in the Central Indian variety the top of the ellipse with central dot is at once flattened and thickened. The Kadamba letter of the 4th-5th centuries A.D. tends to appear somewhat rectangular standing heightwise with thickened flat top and base slightly curved-in centrally and with the central dot as a small circle. The early Pallava letter of the Prakrit charters is somewhat similarly rectangular though the Śālikāyana letter of the 4th century A.D. is an oval but both have the central dot. The Traikūṭaka, Vākāṭaka, Western Ganga, Nala, Viṣṇukūṇḍin and Pallava—all of the 5th century A.D., have flattened and thickened top and all dots in the middle except the first and last which have a larger and small incomplete circle in the place of the dot; the base of the last two has also the central inward curve; the Maitraka letter as a small arch in the centre of the oval. The Vākāṭaka letter and its derivative in the Somavamśi script of the 6th-7th century A.D. have a box-head top and the latter has an arch which forms an upturned boat-shape at the base of the conical flask-shaped letter. The Eastern Ganga letter is like that in Nala script but the dot is replaced by a circle nearer the base than the centre.

The letter of Yaśodharman's inscriptions is just an elongated type of the Gupta one with a central horizontal stroke across an ellipse. In the regular Nagari of the 7th century A.D., as seen in the script of Harṣavarddhana's inscriptions, the letter develops a straight vertical line to right with two closely knit spherules attached to the left, one below another, so that the letter looks like 'B' reversed. It looks similar in Western Cālukyan script of the 8th century A.D., the Pratīhāra, Pāla, Rāṣṭrakūṭa scripts of the 9th century A.D., as also in later scripts where the vertical is lengthened slightly downwards and sometimes slightly curved terminally to right. In the Gujrat Cālukyan letter of 11th century A.D. the top spherule is opened out. In the contemporary Eastern Ganga script the top spherule opens and the lower one becomes somewhat angularly curved, giving the contour of the neck of a goose. In the Sena letter of the 12th century A.D. the letter is formed of a line twice curved in the shape of a swan's neck and separated from the vertical line. The Yādava and Kākatīya letter of the 13th century A.D. and the Vijayanagara letter of the 15th century A.D. have almost a rectangular shape with the vertical stroke slightly lengthened at the lower end and having an inward curve on the left side.

The Western Cālukyan letter of the 6th century which is a rectangle standing heightwise with a dot in the belly changes into a more rounded form with the base centrally curved in in the 9th century Rāṣṭrakūṭa script. In the 11th century Western Cālukyan letter the central dot in this becomes a circle and the top is flattened with two slight ear-like projections at either end on top. In the Hoysala script of the next century the flattened top line with projecting ends becomes a crescent placed slightly above.

The development of the letter in the Eastern Cālukyan script is almost on the same lines as in Western Cālukyan but in the 11th century A.D. the top line shoots up into two strokes 'V' shaped. In this and the Redḍi script of the 14th century A.D. there is a break in the base line where it curves in slightly. In the latter and in Vijayanagar script of the 15th century A.D. the letter has a circlet instead of a dot in the centre and in the 15th century letter a small downward stroke is added centrally at the base.

In Pallava Grantha script of the 7th century A.D. the earlier type of the letter is continued but with the letter slightly opened to the right top making the side stroke vertical and a small circlet is added to it a little above the middle. In the 8th century A.D. the circlet is lowered down. In the Coḷa script of the 11th century A.D. the letter is simplified; it opens out widely and beyond the double curve of the base curls at the right terminal. The form continues in the thirteenth century Pāṇḍya script and in the Vijayanagara letter of the 15th century A.D. the slight curve of the base changes into a regular stroke giving it the appearance of the numeral 3 with a curl at the top terminal and laid on its back.

Da.—In Mauryan script it (Fig. 47) is a semi-circle with the ends continued at the top and base vertically. It is reversed in Bhaṭṭiprolu script and a top stroke is added to the right. In Kṣatrapa script the Mauryan form of the letter continues though the lower vertical stroke curves to right. But in contemporary Kuṣān and Sātavāhana scripts as also in Ikṣvāku, Gupta, Kadamba, Śāṅkayana, Pallava, Traikūṭaka, Vākāṭaka, Western Ganga, Nala, Viṣṇukuṇḍi, Maitraka, Somavamśi, Eastern Ganga, Western and Eastern Cālukyan scripts the sickle-shape continues with slight changes. In Gupta, Kadamba, Vākāṭaka, Nala, Eastern Ganga and Somavamśi scripts the letter has a box-head and in most of the letters of the 7th century A.D. and onwards the base line curves in slightly in the middle. In the script of Yaśodharman's inscriptions the letter has a top wedge and a short angular beak at the back. From this is derived the Nagari letter of Harṣavarddhana's time and that of the Pallava Nagari of the 7th century A.D. In the latter the curved base line suddenly slants down to right. In the 8th century Western Cālukyan script the letter continues so. In the 9th century Nagari script the wedge is replaced by a top line except in Paramāra script of the 11th century A.D. and the slanting downward stroke lengthened a bit and thereafter the letter tends to be almost like the Mauryan one reversed and with top horizontal stroke added.

The top serif of the Western Cālukyan letter of the 6th century A.D. appears more prominent in the Rāṣṭrakūṭa letter three centuries later and in the Western Cālukyan letter of the 11th century and later the top horizontal changes into a crescent on top of the body of the letter unconnected by the small top vertical stroke which is now lost.

In the script of the Eastern Cālukyas, Kākatīyas, Redḍis, and in Vijayanagara script the development of the letter may be observed as quite similar to the Western Cālukyan except that the Eastern Cālukyan letter of the 11th century A.D. has its serif changed into two strokes looking like 'V' above the body of the letter,

The basic form of the Pallava Grantha letter of the 7th century A.D. is not different from the earlier type except that every stroke and curve is more ornamental and the end of the vertical top stroke is forked. The lower stroke which is still small in the 8th century A.D. Pallava Grantha letter is lengthened and slants to left in the 11th century Cola script while the top stroke curves to form hook-shape. It is almost the same in the 13th century Pāṇḍya script but in the 15th century Vijayanagara script the hook is enlarged.

Dha.—In Mauryan script it (Fig. 48) is like a strung bow with string to left or simpler still, like 'D'. The Bhaṭṭiprolu letter is reversed with a stroke to top right. In Kuṣān Kṣatrapa and Sātavāhana letters it is like 'D' reversed. In the Ikṣvāku and Northern variety of Gupta script the letter is of the same type. In the Gupta letter of the Central Indian variety it is more or less shaped like an egg with flattened and thickened top. The Kadamba letter of the 4th-5th centuries A.D. has a flattened and thickened top and a base, curved in the middle. The Sālankāyana, Traikūṭaka, Maitraka and Nala letters are egg-shaped, though with top slightly flattened and thickened. The Vākāṭaka and Somavamsi letters have a box-head. The Western Ganga, Viṣṇukuṇḍi, Pallava, Western and Eastern Cālukyan letters have the usual inward curve in the base. The letter of Yaśodharman's inscriptions tends to be pointed towards the lower end and thereafter in all the Nagari letters it is generally shaped like the left half of a leaf, broad or narrow. With its pointed and prolonged lower end of vertical it looks somewhat like reversed 'P' in Pāla, Rāṣṭrakūṭa and Sena script but with the vertical projecting topward it appears somewhat like 'P' reversed and upside down in Paramāra, Candella, Western Cālukya and Gāhaḍavāla scripts. In Yādava and Kākatīya scripts the letter looks like 'R' reversed and upside down, and the Vijayanagara letter is only a modification of the Kākatīya letter.

In Western Cālukyan script of the 6th century A.D., it is the earlier type of a rectangle standing heightwise with the base line curved in the middle. The later developments of the letter with its buxom apple-shape and a crescent top show it exactly like *tha* with the central dot absent.

In Eastern Cālukyan script also the development is just as in *tha* without the dot in the centre.

The Grantha letter is similarly allied to *tha* without the circlet or the later curl to the left.

Na.—In Mauryan script it (Fig. 49) is like inverted 'T'. In the contemporary script of the Tamil caves there are two types, one like the Mauryan letter and another with the vertical terminally curved to right. The Bhaṭṭiprolu letter is like the Mauryan one with the usual addition to the top stroke to the right. In the Kuṣān, Kṣatrapa and Sātavāhana letters of the 2nd century A.D. the top end of the vertical is thickened and the horizontal base inclined downwards at both ends making the letter look somewhat though not exactly

like inverted 'Y'. In the Ikṣvāku script the letter is composed of the vertical stroke forming a small loop at the base to left and curling beyond downward to right. Except in Śālikāyana, Pallava, and Viṣṇukunḍin scripts where the letter retains the inverted 'Y' shape but in more pronounced manner than in 2nd century A.D., in all the rest like Gupta, Kadamba, Traikūṭaka, Vākāṭaka, Western Ganga, Nala, Maitraka, Somavamśi, Eastern Ganga and the script of Yaśodharman's inscriptions the loop to the left of the base is present. In the Central Indian variety of Gupta script, Kadamba, Vākāṭaka, Nala and Somavamśi scripts the letter has a box-head. In the Nagari of the 7th century A.D. the vertical starts with wedged top and after forming a loop to left runs down, inclined to right slightly. The wedge of the 8th century Western Cālukyan letter is more pronounced and the stroke beyond the loop to right is a broader curve. Though the wedge is replaced by a top line or serif in Pratihāra, Pāla and Rāṣṭrakūṭa scripts which continues thereafter, the form of the body of the letter is the same in the first two but in the third there is a vertical stroke and from its middle to the left is a small horizontal stroke which terminally forms a loop. Except in Gujrat Cālukyan and Vijayanagara scripts of the 11th and 15th centuries A.D. where a curve is present instead of the loop, the letter is of the same type all over. In Sena script the loop is filled and in Eastern Ganga script the line forming the loop runs parallel to the vertical to touch the serif.

In Western Cālukyan script of the 6th century A.D. the vertical stroke with serif has a small curved stroke as the left limb near its base. In the Rāṣṭrakūṭa letter of the 9th century A.D. this curved stroke becomes more prominent, and in the 11th century Western Cālukyan letter, the vertical curves inward a bit, the serif turns a crescent and with the curved left limb it assumes a shape that continues thereafter almost the same. In Eastern Cālukyan, Kākatīya, Redḍi and Vijayanagara scripts the development of the form of the letter is similar to that in Western Cālukyan except that in the 11th century A.D. the serif of the letter is forked 'V' like.

In Grantha of the 7th century A.D. the top end of the vertical is either forked or has a small serif and to the right is a curved limb. In the 8th century A.D. the vertical loops rather imperceptibly to the left base before continuing to right to form the curved limb. A hook-shaped top of the vertical, somewhat slanting down to left and continuing to right as the curved limb, constitutes the Coḷa Grantha letter of the 11th century A.D. Two parallel vertical strokes crowned by serif and a curved limb in continuation of the right vertical constitute *na* of the Pāṇḍyan script of 13th century A.D. and thereafter.

In Tamil script the development of this letter is exactly as in Grantha.

In Vaṭṭeluttu the letter is like 'S' reversed both in Pāṇḍya script of the 8th century A.D. and in Coḷa inscriptions three centuries later.

Pa—This (Fig. 50) is composed of a vertical curved to right at base and shaped like a hook in the Mauryan script. The letter of the Bhāṭṭiprolu script has a top stroke to right

added. In the script of the early Tamil caves the letter is an open rectangle standing heightwise. The Kuṣān and Sātavāhāna letter of the 2nd century A.D. is an open square while in contemporary Kṣatrapa letter the side stroke to left is indented half way up ; and in all the three the left stroke is thickened at the top end. In Ikṣvāku script of the 3rd century A.D. the left stroke and the base are both curved in slightly centrally and both the vertical strokes are terminally thickened. The letter in Northern Gupta script resembles 'U' with a serif at the left top and the right vertical slightly prolonged straight downwards. The Central Indian Gupta letter is an open square and the top half of the left stroke is indented and crowned with a box-head. The letter is similar in Kadamba, Nala, Somavamsi and Eastern Ganga scripts, though in Western Ganga and Pallava scripts of the 5th century A.D. the box-head is not very distinctive. Except for the box-head which is replaced by a small serif the letter is similar in Śālikāyana, Traikūṭaka, Maitraka, Viṣṇukunḍin, early Western and Eastern Cālukyan scripts. But in the Śālikāyana, Western Ganga, Viṣṇukunḍin, Pallava, Western and Eastern Cālukyan letter the base line very slightly curves in at the centre. The letter of Yaśodharman's inscriptions has a wedge-shaped serif to the left and the base line slants down slightly to right ; and the Nagari letter of the 7th century A.D. is more developed, the wedge clearer, and the slant of the base line more pronounced. In the letter from Harṣavardhana's inscriptions the base line curves in centrally slightly. In this and the Pallava letter of the same date the vertical stroke is slightly prolonged downwards. The letter of 8th century Western Cālukyan script is not different. The Pratihāra letter of the 9th century A.D. is like 'U' with serif on the arm to left and the arm to right prolonged downward vertically. The serif becomes a top horizontal stroke touching both the arms in the letter of contemporary Pāla and Rāstrakūṭa scripts and in all later Nagari variations. The left arm of the letter in Eastern Ganga and Sena script of the 11th and 12th centuries A.D. slants in from the top and curves out again.

The letter in Western Cālukya and Rāstrakūṭa scripts of the 6th and 9th centuries A.D. is after the earlier type like Western Ganga, but a small serif crowns the indented top end of the left limb. The Western Cālukyan letter of the 11th century A.D. changes its serif into a crescent above the left arm which curves in and stops.

In Eastern Cālukyan script of the 7th century A.D. it is like its western cousin ; in the 10th century a wedge-like serif crowns the right as well as the left limb and in the 11th century A.D. two 'V' shaped strokes replace the serif ; but from the next century onwards in Kākatīya, Redḍi and Vijayanagara scripts the crescent appears as in the Canarese area.

In the Pallava Grantha of the 7th century A.D. one variety is after the earlier type with the arm to left indented half-way towards the top and with the base line centrally curved in somewhat ; in addition the arm to left is terminally slightly forked. The other variety is an open rectangle with the arm to left slanting inwards and thickened at its top

end. In the letter of the script of the next century the arm to the left slants inwards and a dot is added to left at its tip. The base line slants down to right a little and curves slightly. The right arm is a straight vertical. In the 11th century Coḷa script the dot joins the end of the left arm to form a hook and the whole letter is like numeral 2 with the base line prolonged and raised up a little vertically.

In Tamil the letter of the 7th century has a left limb which curves and slants down to the right as the base line and mounts up vertically. In the next century it is the same type but in the 11th century Coḷa script the letter is an open rectangle with the two corners at the base rounded. In the 13th century Coḷa script and 15th century Vijayanagara script the corners of the letter are more angular and it looks like 'E' on its back without the middle stroke.

In Vaṭṭeluttu script of the 8th century A.D. the letter starts as a hook and turns backward and up, giving the lower contour of the head, neck and body of a duck. It continues this shape in the 11th century A.D.

Pha.—In Mauryan, Bhaṭṭiprolu, Kṣatrapa and other early script the letter (Fig. 51) is the same as *pa* except that the lower end is curled in. In Gupta script the arm to the right curves to form a loop touching the base in the centre. This is the case of the Vākāṭaka letter of the 5th century A.D. and the letter in Yaśodharman's inscriptions of the 6th century A.D. In Kadamba, Śālanakāyana, Pallava, Western Ganga, Viṣḍukunḍin scripts of the 4th-5th centuries A.D., Maitraka and Western Cālukyan scripts of the 6th century A.D., Somavamśi and Eastern Cālukyan script of about the 7th century A.D. the right arm of the letter curves in. The Eastern Ganga and Pallava letters of the 7th century A.D. form a loop to the right.

The Nagari letter of the 7th century A.D., as seen in the inscriptions of Harṣavardhana, has a loop to the right. In Pāla script of the 9th century A.D. the arm to right terminally curves out but the contemporary Rāṣṭrakūṭa letter has an outer loop at the top to right. In Paramāra script of the 11th century A.D. the line forming the outer loop runs down again parallel to the vertical. In the Eastern Ganga letter of the 11th century A.D. the loop is replaced by a downward double curve starting from top to right. In the Gāhaḍavāla letter of the 12th century A.D. the double curve starts a little above the middle to right. In the Sena script the letter is basically the same as its parent, though it slants and has the vertical extended downwards in curvilinear shape. The Kākatīya and Vijayanagara letter of the 13th and 15th century A.D. has a stroke shaped like 'S' reversed, added to the right.

The terminal inward curve of the Western Cālukyan letter of the 6th century A.D. is replaced in the Rāṣṭrakūṭa letter three centuries later by a small crescent-like downward median curve, added on the inside to the right arm. In the Hoysala letter of the 12th century A.D. the downward crescent actually cuts the right arm towards the base.

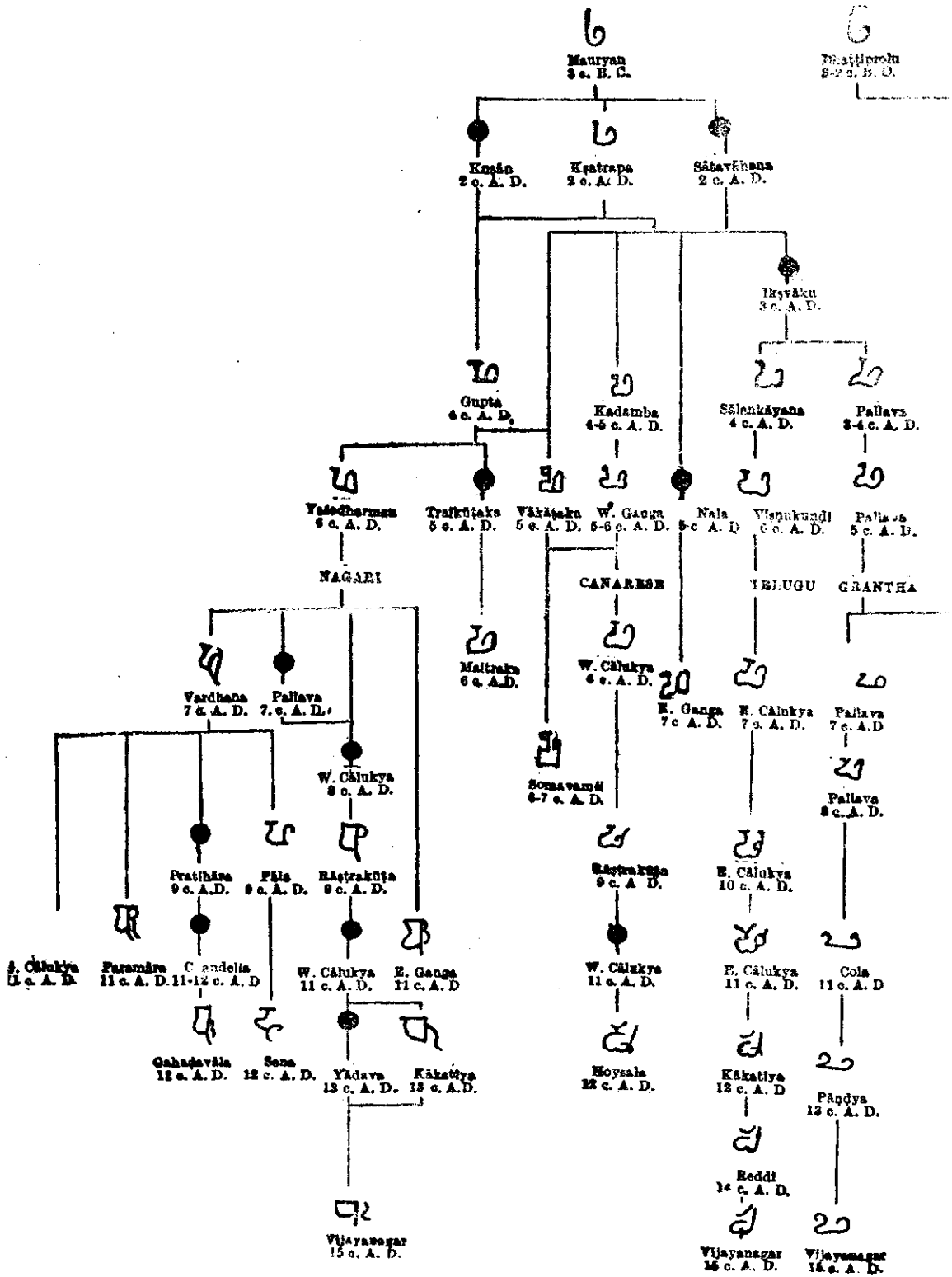


FIG 51.

s. d. e.

In the Eastern Cālukyan letter of the 10th century A.D. the small crescent is replaced by a semi-circlet which touches the right arm at both ends. This is developed into a regular median circle, breaking the right arm, in the letter of the 11th century A.D. The letter of the Kākatīya script is like the Hoysala one, though in the Redḍi letter the crescent is shifted below the letter. In Vijayanagara script a stroke below the base replaces the crescent.

In Grantha script the earliest form of the letter shows a loop to the right, but later it is always the inward terminal curve of the right arm that distinguishes *pha* from *pa*.

Ba.—The Mauryan letter (Fig. 52) is a square and in Bhaṭṭiprolu script it has the addition of an outer stroke centrally to the right. It remains a square even in the 2nd century script of the Sātavāhanas. But pronouncedly in contemporary Kṣatrapa script and less so in Kuṣān script the left arm of the letter has a median inward curve. This median curve is present in the Ikṣvāku letter of the 3rd century A.D. The Northern variety of Gupta script shows the letter more or less as a square but the median curve is quite pronounced in the letter of the Southern variety. The Kadamba letter of about the same date and the Western Ganga letter of the 5th-6th centuries A.D. are not different except that the former is a little elongate heightwise. In the Pallava letter of the Prakrit charters of the 3rd-4th centuries A.D. and the Vākāṭaka letter of the 5th century A.D. the left side is indented in the centre in such a manner that a small open square is formed. There is a break in the line to the left in the Sālankāyana letter of the 4th century A.D. and Viṣṇukuṇḍin letter of the 6th century A.D., which is maintained even in the 7th century Eastern Cālukyan letter. In the early Nagari letter of Harṣavardhana's inscriptions there is a wedge-shaped serif and a semi-circular belly to left against the vertical stroke. It appears similarly in Western Cālukyan script of the 8th century A.D., though in Pallava script of the 7th century A.D. it is shaped somewhat like 'B' reversed without the central stroke. In almost every other variety of later Nagari the serif, semi-circular belly and the right vertical continue. The belly is divided by a stroke in the letter of the Yādava and Vijayanagara script of the 13th and 15th centuries respectively.

In Canarese script of the 6th century A.D. the letter already shows a slight median inward curve at its base in addition to the indented left side. In the 11th century Western Cālukyan letter the top opens, the left side top curls inward out and the median curve gets more pronounced. This continues in the Hoysala letter of the next century.

In the Telugu script of the Eastern Cālukyan territory the development is not very different from that in the Canarese area, except that in the 10th century A.D. Eastern Cālukyan letter the top end of the right arm is thickened serif-like and in the 11th century letter the curl to the left top is aggressive and there is a median break in the base line as in *ca* of the period.

In Pallava Grantha of the 7th century A.D. there are two varieties, one showing the letter with indented left side and with top and base line medially curved in slightly; and another

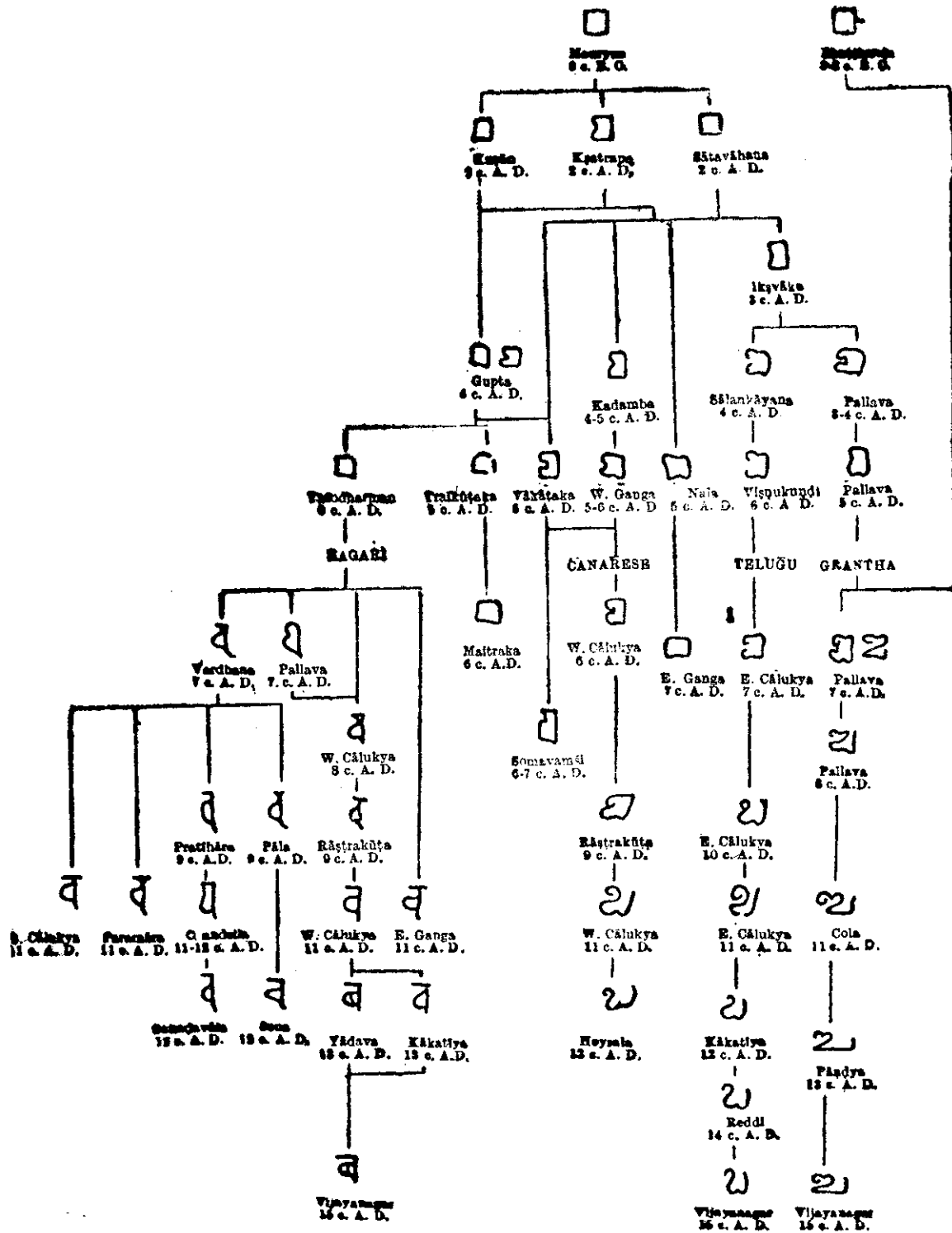


FIG. 5.

starting as a double curved top line from left to right slanting down to left medially curving again in the base line and rising up vertically. This second form continues more or less unchanged during the later centuries.

Bha.—In Mauryan script *bha* (Fig. 53) is like *ḍa* with an additional vertical stroke to right, parallel to the lower one. In Bhaṭṭiprolu script this is reversed and a stroke added to top right. In Kuṣāṇ, Kṣatrapa and Sātarāhona script of the 2nd century A.D. the body of the letter is double bent like a bow having a vertical stroke with thickened end on top of the right hump. The curve to the right shoots up cliff-like in the Ikṣvāku letter of the 3rd century A.D. In the Gupta letter of the Northern variety a serif-crowned vertical stroke and a stroke starting from the neck and slightly slanting down to left and again down to right form the letter. In the Central Indian variety the top of the letter is crowned with a box-head, as also in the letter of the Kadamba, Vākāṭaka, Naḷa and Somavamṣi scripts. Whenever the body of the letter is not curved it is a rectangle with the base open and with the vertical line to right continued up and finally thickened or crowned by a box-head. In the script of the Maitrakas the two side-strokes petal-like meet at the top. The Somavamṣi letter forms two small open squares to left and at the bottom being composed of two straight strokes. The letter of Harṣhavardhana's inscriptions and of Pallava Nagari of the same date starts with a wedged head, curves down to left, runs down straight aslant to right slightly and curves again to right. This form of the letter is repeated in Western Cālukyan script of the next century and in Paramāra script of the 11th century A.D. But in Pratihāra, Pāla, and Rāṣṭrakūṭa scripts of the 9th century A.D., Gujarat Cālukya and Eastern Ganga scripts of the 11th century A.D. the wedge is replaced by a horizontal serif stroke. In Candella and Gāhaḍa-vaḷa script the letter comprises a serif line, a vertical stroke to right and small central stroke against the vertical branching off to form a triangle or wedge. In Western Cālukyan script of the 11th century A.D. and the Sena, Yādava, and Kākatīya scripts the triangle is replaced by a stroke which also lingers in the Vijayanagara script of the 15th century A.D.

In script of the Canarese area of the 6th century A.D. the curved bow-shaped body and top vertical with small serif make up the letter which continues so even three centuries later, but in the 11th century Western Cālukyan letter the two limbs of the letter separate, the one to the left being like reversed 'S' and the other to the right, an inward arc, crowned by the serif changed into something like a crescent. This continues with greater flourishes in the Hoysala script of the next century.

In the Telugu area the form of the letter is composed of a slanting reversed 'S' shaped left limb and slightly arc-like right limb meeting at the top which is thickened into a small serif. In the 11th century Eastern Cālukyan and the 12th century Kākatīya script the letter is practically like the contemporary one in the Canarese area, except that in the former the serif is 'V' shaped. In the letter of the Reddi script of the 14th century A.D. the bottom

ends of the two limbs join in an inward curve and in the Vijayanagara letter of the next century a small vertical stroke is added beneath this central curve in the bottom.

In Pallava Grantha script of the 7th century A.D., one form of the letter is like a triskelis with curved limbs and another like an angle with the end of the base line curved up and to the side to the right. In the next century the letter is so written that it slants down somewhat to right and the top is somewhat forked as usual. In the Coḷa script of the 11th century A.D., the forked top is just curved out, so that the letter looks like a flattened 'S' slanting to right and with its top end curved up. In the 15th century Vijayanagra letter the top curve becomes a curl.

Ma.—In Mauryan script *ma* (Fig. 54) looks like a circle with 'U' on top. In the script of the Tamil caves it is more like 'U' divided in the middle by a horizontal stroke. In the Kuṣān, Kṣatrapa and Sātavāhana scripts of the 2nd century A.D. it is an 'X' with a stroke at the base connecting the cross strokes. The base line is slightly double-curved in the Ikṣvāku letter of the 3rd century A.D. In the Northern variety of the Gupta script it is a square with open top, a serif crowning the left limb and base line elongated to left. In the Central Indian variety the letter has a more or less rectangular belly with the two side-strokes cutting across and forming a 'V' shape above, the left arm being crowned with a box-head. In the Kadamba and Vākaṭāka letter of about the 5th century A.D. the 'V' shaped upper part is to the extreme right, the left stroke slanting, and the right vertical in continuation of the right side stroke of the rectangle; the box-head crowns the left stroke. Modifications of the Ikṣvāku type of letter continue in the 4th-5th centuries A.D. The letter of Yaśodharman's inscriptions is based on the Northern Gupta type. The base line starts slanting down to right even here and more pronouncedly in the next century and the projecting part is thickened. In the letter of Harṣavardhana's inscriptions, the contemporary Pallava letter, and in that of the Western Cālukyan of the 8th century A.D., the wedge in the left limb is very clear and in the last one there is a loop in the place of the thickened projection. In 9th century Pratihāra script the wedge is replaced by serif stroke to left and the base line reverts to normal, shedding its slant and the right vertical is projected downwards. In contemporary letter of Pāla and Rāṣtrakūṭa scripts there is a top horizontal stroke connecting the two verticals. This is the usual form in all the later varieties, except in Paramāra script of the 11th century A.D. where the triangular wedge to left top is present in addition, and in Sena script of the 12th century A.D. where the lower horizontal stroke slants down again, the loop changes again into a thickened projection and the left side curves and sweeps up broader at the top to meet the top line.

The early letter of the Canarese area is more or less like the letter of the earliest Śālan-kāyana or Pallava script. The 9th century Rāṣtrakūṭa letter shows the two arms of the letter shifted to right in such a way that the right arm actually cranes out and rises up and the left limb is crowned by a small serif. In the 11th century Western Cālukyan script the

apple-shaped belly of the letter slightly opens, separating itself from the vertical, the top end serif of which is transformed into a crescent and the limb curving upward to the extreme right is present. This form of the letter is continued in the Hoysala script of the next century.

Even in the 7th century Eastern Cālukyan script the right limb of the letter cranes out and the serif is present on top of left limb; in the 10th century A.D. the letter becomes graceful and the top end of the right limb has also small thickened wedge. In the next century the serif of the left limb changes into a 'V' shape and from the following century onwards the letter in the Telugu area is as that of the Canarese.

One of the varieties of the letter in Pallava Grantha of the 7th century A.D. shows it somewhat like the Western Ganga letter of a century earlier, while another is the simpler 'X' with a base line joining the arms. In the next century the second variety is shown with a base line double curved. In the 11th century Coḷa script and later the letter resembles the numeral 8 with the lower part larger and somewhat flattened. In the Vijayanagara script the letter is a circle crowned by a dextral curl.

In Tamil of the 7th century A.D. the letter is a crescent with the right tip curved in. In the next century the right side of the letter has flattened loop. In the 11th century Coḷa letter the earlier form is repeated but with the base flattened and with the curve to right more approaching a curl. In the 13th century Coḷa script the letter develops a full loop to the right which continues thereafter.

In Vaṭṭeḷuttu script of the 8th century A.D. the letter has the contour of a goose with a loop at the tail end, and the form continues almost the same in the 11th century A.D.

Ya.—Ya (Fig. 55) in the Mauryan script is a crescent with a long vertical rising from its central point. In the Bhaṭṭiprolu script it has a top stroke to right in addition. In the script of the Tamil caves three prongs of equal length make the letter. In the Sātavāhana script of the 2nd century A.D. the central stroke is shortened and its tip thickened. In contemporary Kuṣān and Kṣatrapa script the central stroke of the letter is similar, the left limb amply spreads into a curve and the right one shoots up vertically, the curved base of the letter getting flattened and the letter itself tripartite. The Ikṣvāku letter is more or less after the Sātavāhana type but the Northern Gupta letter is after the Kūsan type, the Central Indian variety being a little compressed and having the central box-head in the place of the serif wedge. The box-head appears in the letter of Kadamba, Nala and Vākāṭakd scripts of about the 5th century A.D. and in the compressed Somavam^oi letter of the 6th-7th centuries A.D. The base line between the middle and left limb of the letter of Viṣṇukunḍin and Western Cālukyan scripts of the 6th century A.D. and of the Eastern Cālukyan letter of the next century curves in medially and a small serif is present on top of the central stroke of the Traikūṭaka, Maitraka, Śālankāyana, Western Ganga, Viṣṇukunḍin, Western and Eastern Cālukyan letters. The Western Ganga letter presents also a loop to

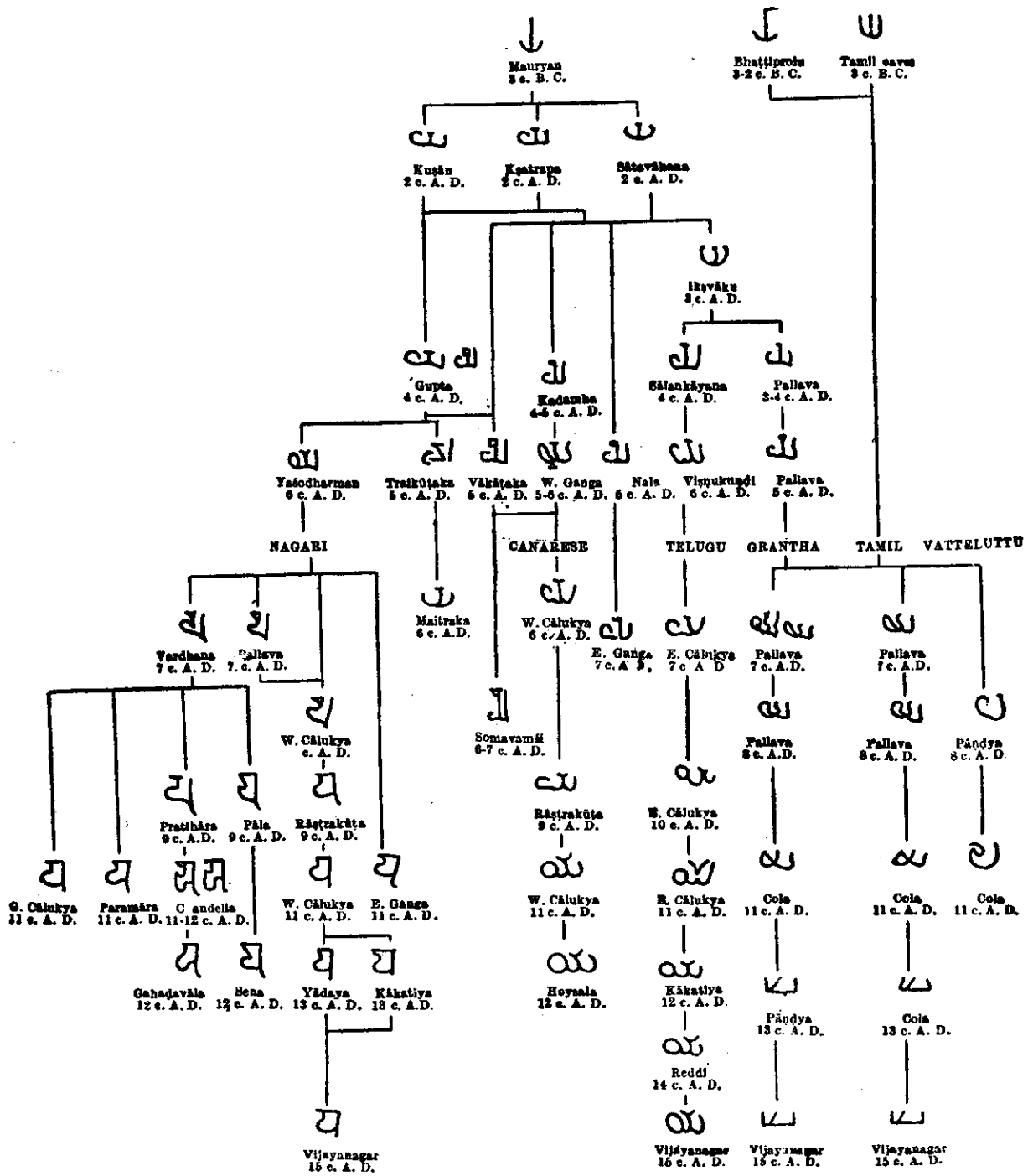


FIG. 55.

O. S. del.

left. In the letter of Yaśodharman's inscriptions the left loop is present and the central stroke has a forked tip. In the Nagari letter of Harṣavardhana's inscriptions and the Pallava Nagari letter of the time the central stroke separates itself from the base and joins the opened up loop and the base line slants down to touch the vertical, the letter thus being bipartite with a wedge on top of the vertical, to left. In Western Cālukyan script of the 8th century A.D. it is the same type of letter that is present. In the Pratihāra script of the next century the wedge is replaced by a serif stroke. But in the contemporary Pāla and Rāṣtrakūṭa letter the serif stroke closes the top entirely and this continues in all the later forms. In the Candella letter of the 12th century A.D. the original base line of the letter curves in to touch the vertical.

The Western Cālukyan letter of the 6th century A.D. becomes a flattened buxom letter in Rāṣtrakūṭa script of the 9th century A.D. and the left limb almost forms a circle touching the inward curve of the base line already formed; and this circle is perfect in the 11th century Cālukyan letter which has its serif changed into crescent shape. This form continues in the Hoysala letter of the 12th century A.D.

The development of the letter in Eastern Cālukyan area is not so different, the difference being noticeable in the 10th and 11th century inscriptions. In the former the circle to left rises up slightly and the right limb so separates itself that it appears a separate small hook starting from the right end of the small serif. In the latter the serif changes into 'V' shape and right limb shoots up vertically rather abnormally. In the 12th century Kākatiya script and thereafter, the development is not different from that of the Canarese area.

In the Grantha of the 7th century A.D., of the two types, one shows the letter with a loop to left and with central and right verticals undulating artistically, the central stroke having forked tip, and the other variety is simpler. The simple variety is continued in the next century with the loop itself curved somewhat. This form is further simplified in the Cola letter of the 11th century A.D. In the 13th century Pāṇḍya script and later the letter is a rectangle with open top and a slanting stroke dividing the angle to left.

In the Tamil script except for the absence of the ornamental type of the 7th century A.D. the letter is exactly like its Grantha prototype.

In Pāṇḍyan Vaṭṭeluttu of the 8th century the letter starts as vertical, curves bulgingly upward to left and curves in towards the top. In the 11th century Cola letter the curve to left suddenly stops and curves up again almost parallel to the outer curve.

Ra.—The Mauryan letter (Fig. 56) is a wavy vertical. In the Tamil caves the letter is a simple vertical stroke and in the Bhaṭṭiprolu script it is the vertical with the usual stroke to top right. In Kuṣān, Kṣātrapa and Sātavāhana script this vertical stroke has thickened top end and the lower end curves slightly to left. In Ikṣvāku script of the 3rd century A.D. the curve of the lower end almost develops into a curl. In the Northern variety of the Gupta script the letter is a vertical stroke with small serif. In its Central Indian variety this is

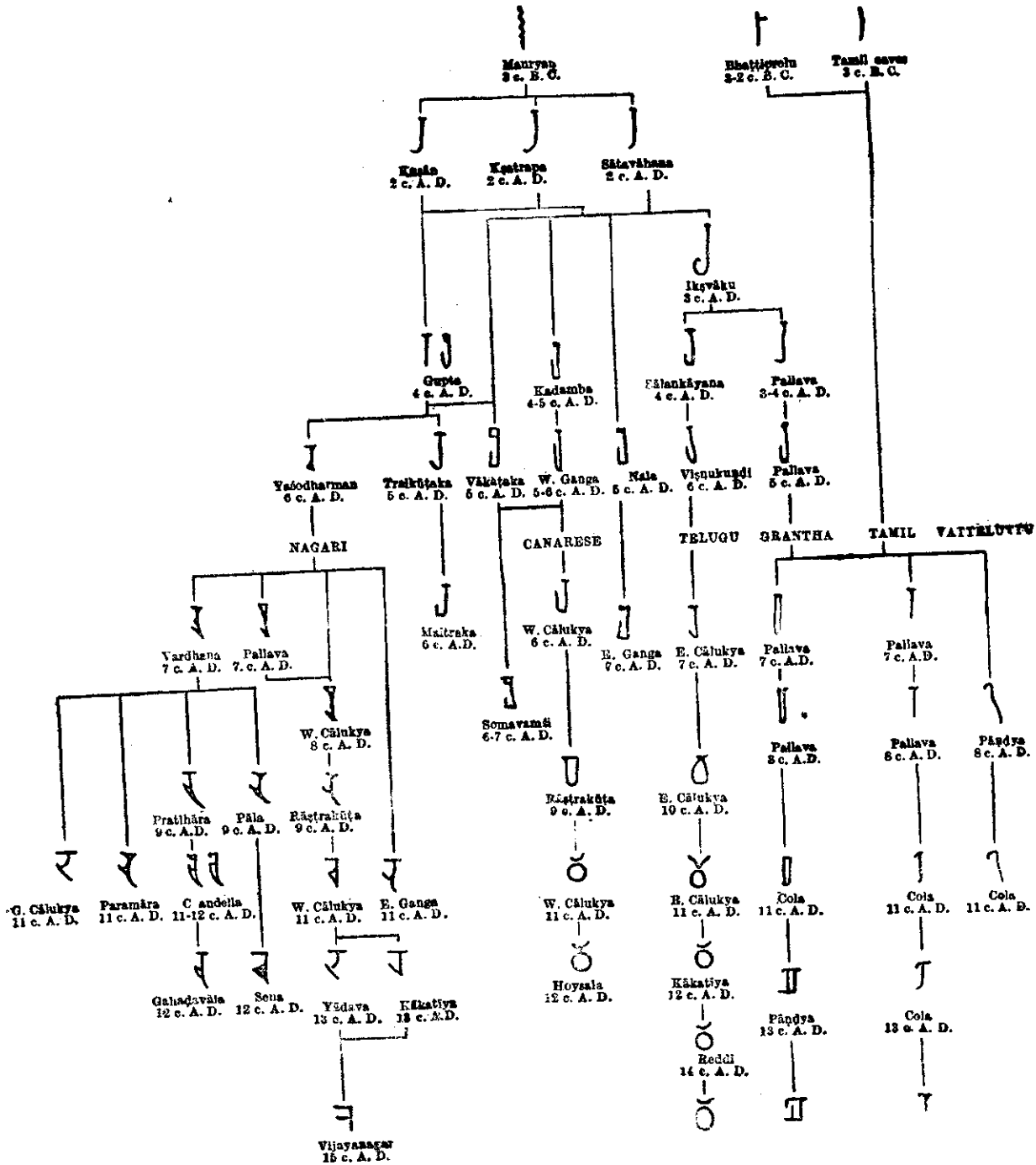


Fig. 56

O.S. del.

replaced by a box-head in which the vertical bends at the lower end to shoot up again parallel half-way. In the Kadamba, Vākāṭaka, Western Ganga, Nala and Pallava inscriptions of about the 5th century A.D. and in Somavamsī and Eastern Ganga scripts of about the 7th century A.D. the box-head, as also the parallel continuation of the lower end of the vertical are present. In the Śalankāyana letter of the 4th century A.D., Traikūṭaka letter of the 5th century A.D., and the Maitraka, Western Cālukyan and Viṣṇukundin letter of the 6th century A.D., the small serif is present instead of a box-head. In the letter of Yaśodharman's inscriptions a wedge crowns the top of the vertical, the lower end of which is triangularly thickened. In the script of Harṣavardhanā's inscriptions and the Pallava Nagari of the same date, the letter has a wedge on top and at the lower end it slightly shoots up from a point giving the shape of half an arrow. This continues in the 8th century Western Cālukyan script. In the 9th century Pratihāra and Pāla scripts the wedge is replaced by a serif; the vertical stroke slightly curves to right towards its lower end and shoots up again to left half way to form a compressed curved triangle; a similar feature is found also in the letter of Paramāra, Candella and Gāhaḍavāla scripts of the 11th-12th centuries; the vertical being straight, the triangle is also similarly formed in the Western Cālukyan letter of the 11th century A.D. and the Sena letter of the 12th century A.D., in the latter case the triangle being filled in. In the Rāṣṭrakūṭa and Eastern Ganga letter of the 9th and 11th centuries A.D. respectively the curved triangle is an open one, as the stroke running half way up vertically to left is absent. In Gujrat Cālukya and Yādava letter the triangle is an open one, as it lacks the lower half of the vertical, forming its right side. In the Kākatīya letter the triangle is again open, as the small central horizontal stroke joining the left slanting stroke is absent, making the letter look like half an arrow head. In the Vijayanagara letter of the 15th century A.D. a slanting stroke to left is absent and the triangle is again open.

In the Canarese area the 6th century Western Cālukyan letter is composed of a vertical stroke crowned by a small serif stroke, its lower end being bent and running parallel half way up. In the Rāṣṭrakūṭa script of the 9th century A.D. this parallel stroke proceeds right up to meet the serif that extends to meet it. In the Western Cālukyan letter of the 11th century A.D. and thereafter the serif becomes crescent-shaped and separated from the body which becomes circular.

The development is not very different in the Telugu area, except that in the 10th century A.D. Eastern Cālukyan script the letter is an oval with serif on top, which in the 11th century A.D. becomes an oval with 'V' shaped serif on top. In the 12th century Kākatīya script and later the serif is crescent-shaped.

In Grantha of the 7th century A.D. the letter is shaped like a test tube, being composed of two long parallel lines joined at the top and the bottom. The top becomes open in the letter of the next century. It is again joined in the rather short Coḷa letter of the 11th

century A.D. In the Pāṇḍya letter of the 13th century A.D. the top and the bottom line extend slightly to left and in the 15th century Vijayanagara letter the top stroke not only extends but also climbs down slightly.

In Tamil all these developments are present but there is only one vertical stroke.

In the Vaṭṭeḷuttu script of the 8th century A.D. the letter is a vertical that starts with a hook to left top and slightly slants to right and continues so in the 11th century Coḷa script.

La. —In Mauryan script it (Fig. 57) is like an upturned, left-facing beaked hook. The curvilinear base is flattened in the letter of the Tamil caves. In Bhaṭṭiprolu script the letter is like reversed 'N' with stroke to right top. The Kuṣān letter of the 2nd century A.D. has a flattened base and is angular, not curved. In the contemporary Kṣatrapa and Sātavāhana letter the beak curves, the base is flat and the right vertical stroke either curves in or out slightly. In the Ikṣvāku letter which is almost similar the base medially curves in and the long right vertical is straight, curving in only at the top end. In the Northern variety of Gupta script a vertical with serif on top forms a deep curve to the left from its base; the Central Indian variety is more or less like the Ikṣvāku letter, but with the line of curve of the vertical deeper and its end almost reaching the curved beak. The form of the letter in almost all the scripts from the 4th to the 6th century A.D., like Kadamba, 3rd to 4th century Pallava, Vākāṭaka, Western Ganga, Nala, Viṣṇukunḍi and Western Cālukya is almost the same, except in Śālanakāyana, Maitraka, Eastern Cālukyan, Eastern Ganga and Somavamṣi scripts of the 6th-7th centuries A.D. where the top curve encircles the letter all around except the base. In the Somavamṣi and in one ornamental variety of Pallava Grantha of about the 7th century A.D. the curved stroke proceeds angularly and produces the effect of an open rectangle. The Traikuṭaka letter of the 5th century A.D. and the letter of Yaśodharman's inscriptions of a century later have just a small vertical stroke to the right which does neither shoot up and curve or encircle the body of the letter. There is also a wedge present at the top end of the stroke in the letter of Yaśodharman's inscriptions. In the Nagari letter of the 7th century of the inscriptions of Harṣavardhana and the Pallavas, the wedge is more defined and the base line slants up to left before curving, and the vertical is somewhat lengthened downward. The Western Cālukyan letter of the 8th century A.D. is almost like the other two, and even in the 11th century Paramāra letter the wedge is present. In the Pratihāra, Pāla and Rāṣṭrakūṭa letters of the 9th century A.D. the curved beak of the letter is lengthened downwards somewhat to right. From the 11th century onwards the small base line also curves and thus a double curve is found to the left of the vertical. In the Sena script of the 12th century the double curve is absent and the central horizontal stroke parallel to its serif curves to left. The Yādava and Kākatiya letter of the 13th century A.D. and the Vijayanagara letter of two centuries later are shorter and broader.

In the Canarese area the early Western Cālukyan letter of the 6th century A.D. develops into a buxom thing in the Rāṣṭrakūṭa script three centuries later, which starts as a hook

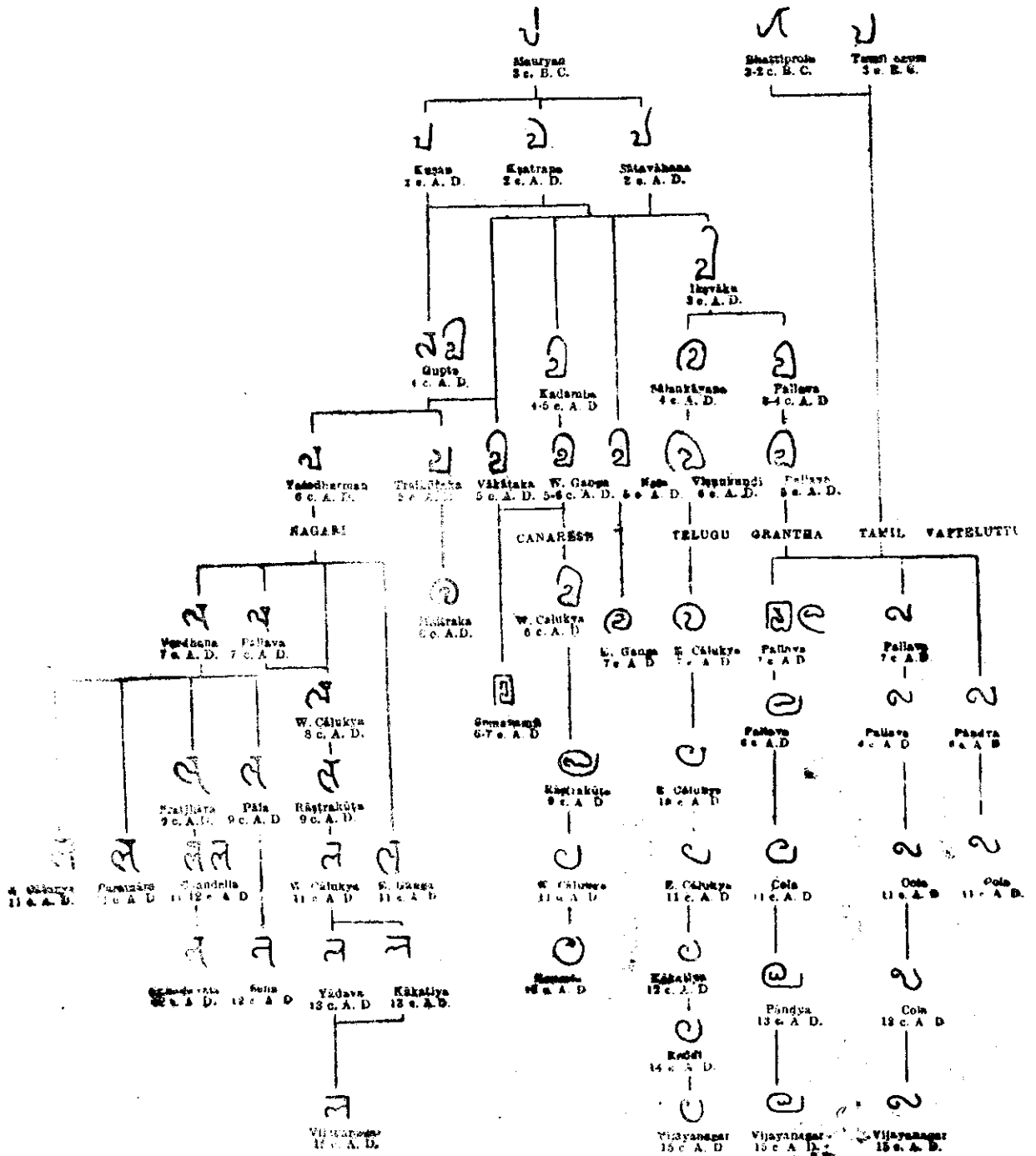


FIG. 57.

C.S. del.

running into a slightly double bent base line that curls up to the left, encircling the body on all sides. In the Western Cālukyan and Hoysala letter of the 11th and 12th century A.D. respectively, the body of the letter dwindles and the whole thing is an encircling curl.

In the Telugu area the beaked hook of the 7th century Eastern Cālukyan letter curls and encircles the body up to the base, as in the earlier forms. But in the 10th century A.D., the letter is more or less like its Western Cālukyan cousin of a century later, though it has specially in addition a small serif at the end of the curl that shoots up vertically. The further development of the letter is as in the Canarese area.

In Pallava Grantha of the 7th century A.D. one type of letter is composed of a small vertical slanting to left with forked top, curving to left and forming a belly, the base of which is slightly arched and the line continues at first vertically, then horizontally and vertically again surrounding the body of the letter by something like an open rectangle; the other is a small double curve continued on top to half encircle it. The latter type is found in the 8th century A.D. with the small double curve almost straightened and continuation of the line encircling it, flattened at the base, and drawn vertically to fully surround the body. In the 11th century letter, which is very similar to this, the straightened double curve diminishes further; but in the 13th century A.D. the double curve reappears with marked distinctiveness and the base line as well as its vertical terminal are quite straight and this continues even in the Vijayanagara period.

In Tamil of the 7th century A.D. it is like reversed 'S', with bottom end somewhat curled with top slightly flattened and laid on its back. This form is more or less repeated in all later development.

In Vaṭṭeḷuttu the letter is not different from that of Tamil.

Va.—The letter (Fig. 58) of the Maurya script and of the early Tamil caves is a circle with a vertical, placed centrally right on its top. The Bhaṭṭiprolu letter is pear-shaped with top stroke to left. The Kuṣān letter is an equilateral triangle with the top crowned by a small wedge. The equilateral triangle in the Sātavāhana letter and the pear-shaped body in the Kṣatrapa letter are crowned by a very small serif vertically. The Ikṣvāku letter, which is similar to the earlier Sātavāhana, has a small inward curve in the centre of the base. The Northern variety of Gupta letter is based on the Kuṣān type; but the Central Indian type is a rectangle with right side continued up and crowned with a box-head. The letter in the Kadamba—Vākāṭaka scripts of the 4th-5th centuries A.D. and the Somavamśi script of the 6th-7th centuries A.D. is similar to the Central Indian Gupta variety, except that the last is compressed and elongated. The Nala and Pallava letter of the 5th century and Eastern Ganga of the 7th century A.D. have also a box-head but the belly of the letter has the contour of a fig. The letter of Śālikāyana and Pallava Prakrit charters is more or less after the Ikṣvāku letter. The belly of the letter in Western Ganga and Pallava (5th century A.D.),

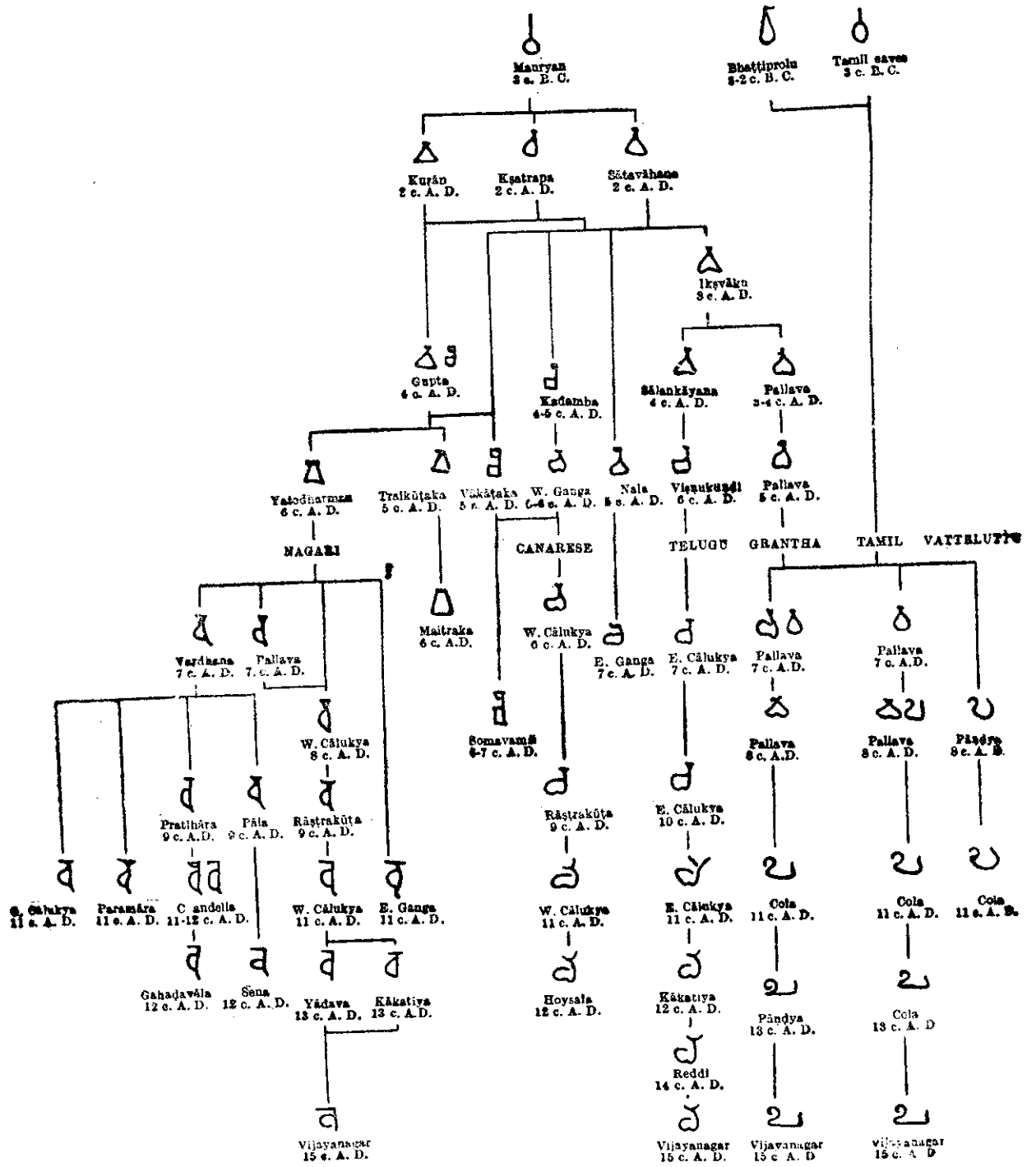


FIG. 58.

G.S. del.

Viṣṇukuṇḍin and Western Cālukyan of the 6th century, A.D., and in Eastern Ganga and Eastern Cālukyan of the next century, has a median inward curve at the base line. The Traikūṭaka and Maitraka letter is more or less triangular, with top angle slightly chipped to take a thick serif. Yaśodharman's inscriptions reveal a similar letter.

The Nagari letter of the 7th century, A.D., as seen in Harṣavardhana's inscriptions, is more or less like the contemporary letter *ba*. The Pallava letter of the time is however not like the *ba* of the same script but almost like the contemporary Vardhana *ba*. The wedge crowns the letter. All the later developments of this letter in Nagari are like those of corresponding *ba*, except in Yādava and Vijayanagara letter of the 13th and 15th century A.D., respectively, where the stroke in the belly of the letter *ba* is absent in *va*.

In Canarese area, the early Western Cālukya letter of the 6th century A.D. is after the Western Ganga type. The letter is almost of the same type in the Rāṣṭrakūṭa script three centuries later but in the 11th century Western Cālukyan letter, the belly of the letter slightly opens, the tip of the line forming the belly not touching the vertical which curves just a little to left, its top being crowned with the serif changed into crescent shape. The letter continues so in the 12th century Hoysala script.

The development of the letter in the Telugu area is not different from that in the Canarese area except in the Eastern Cālukyan letter of the 11th century A.D., which has a 'V' shaped serif.

Of two varieties of the letter in Pallava Grantha script of the 7th century, A.D., one is almost like the Western Cālukyan letter of the previous century, except that the serif of the Pallava letter is forked. The second variety is pear-shaped with a thick small serif. In the Pallava letter of the next century, the pear-shaped letter becomes more buxom and develops a median inward curve on the base, the serif being split into two tiny spokes. In the 11th century A.D., the base line straightens and the letter completely opens and it looks like contemporary *u* with the tail-end elongated vertically somewhat. This form continues during the later centuries.

In Tamil, the development of the letter is not different from that in Grantha.

In Vaṭṭeḷuttu, the base line of the Tamil letters curves out a bit, making the letter take the outer contours of a goose.

Śa.—This (Fig. 59) is shaped like an arrow mark in Mauryan script. The Bhaṭṭiprolu letter has a top stroke to the left in addition. The Kuṣān letter of the 2nd century A.D. is horse shoe-shaped with a line across in the middle. The contemporary Kṣatrapa and Sātavāhana letter is horse-shoe shaped with a small medial curvilinear vertical stroke. The Śālan-kāyana letter of the 4th century A.D., is a horse-shoe with a stroke across its belly. The contemporary Pallava letter of the Prakrit charters has a small base stroke added to the left

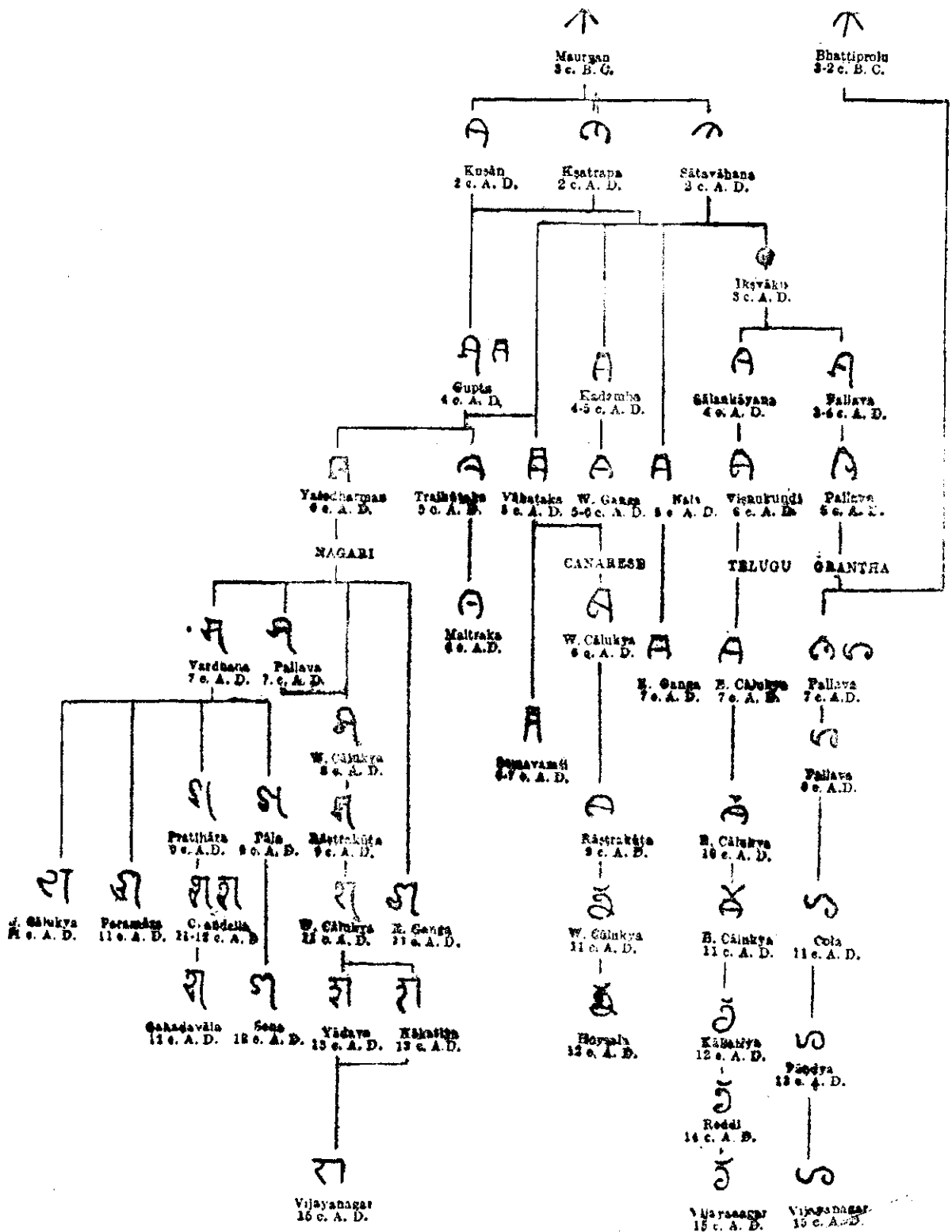


FIG. 59.

C.S. del.

arm of the horse-shoe and the right arm is lengthened straight down somewhat. In the Gupta script of the northern variety this is repeated. In the Central Indian variety it is the horse-shoe with stroke across the belly and the box-head on top. The Kadamba, Vākāṭaka, Nala, Western Ganga and Pallava letters of about the 5th century A.D., the compressed elongate Somavamsi letter of the 6th-7th century A.D., and the Eastern Ganga letter of the 7th century A.D., have the box-head top and resemble the Central Indian Gupta variety, except the Pallava which has no stroke across its belly but just a small curl added centrally to the right arm on the inside. The Traikūṭaka, Viṣṇukunḍin, Maitraka, Western Cālukyan letters of the 5th-6th centuries and Eastern Cālukyan letter of the 7th century A.D., are similar but lack only the box-head; but the left arm of the Viṣṇukunḍin and the Western Cālukyan letter curves in terminally. The letter of Yaśodharman's inscriptions is after the letter of the Northern variety of the Gupta script. In all these varieties of script till the 9th-10th centuries A.D., this letter is practically the same as *ga* with either a central stroke across or a curl to right. The Nagari letter of the 7th-8th century A.D., is just *ga* with a stroke across the belly. The letter of Harṣavardhana's inscriptions, the Pallava letter of the 7th century A.D., the Western Cālukyan letter of the 8th century A.D., the Rāṣṭrakūṭa letter of the 9th century A.D., are thus similar to *ga* with a stroke in addition. The Pratihāra and Pāla letter of the 9th century A.D., show some difference; there is no top horizontal and the left arm curves in at the top in the case of the former and the left arm joins the right vertical centrally after curving in somewhat in the case of the latter. The Gujrat Cālukya letter has again no top horizontal, the vertical stroke alone having a small serif, and the left limb curves to left and slants down to right. The Paramāra letter is more or less like the Pratihāra one, except that the top curve of the left limb comes closer to the vertical and the curved triangular lower terminal of the same is larger. In the Candella letter the left limb has both a top curl to left and a leaf-like lower terminal different from that of the left limb of *ga* of the same script. The Western Cālukyan *śa* of the 11th century A.D., is curved to left top and slants down somewhat, as in the Gujrat Cālukya letter but there is the top horizontal stroke. There is a double bump on top for Eastern Ganga *śa* instead of a single one as in *ga*. The Gāhaḍavala letter is more or less like the Western Cālukyan of the 11th century A.D. The Sena letter of the 12th century A.D. has a double bump instead of a single bump as in *ga*. The Yādava and Kākatīya letter of the 13th century and the still later Vijayanagara letter are modifications of the Western Cālukyan letter of the 11th century A.D.

The Western Cālukyan letter of the 6th century A.D., already described changes into a buxom horse-shoe with a stroke across the belly in the Rāṣṭrakūṭa script of the 9th century A.D. In the 11th century the Western Cālukyan letter begins almost as a small top curl curving to right and forming a large loop below; above the top curl is a crescent shaped serif. The Hoysala letter a century later is similar.

In the Telugu area the early Eastern Cālukyan letter of the 7th century A.D., which is a horse-shoe with stroke across the belly, becomes a buxom letter in the 10th century exactly like the Rāṣtrakūṭa one of the century earlier but with the addition of a wedge-shaped serif above it. In the Eastern Cālukyan script of the 11th century A.D., the serif becomes ' V ' shaped and in the Kākatīya script of the 12th century A.D., and thereafter the letter is like the one in contemporary Canarese area.

In Pallava Grantha of the 7th century A.D., one type is shaped like a horse-shoe with small wedge-shaped serif on top or similar still, like contemporary *ga* and has a small curl on the inside to the right instead of the central stroke across. Another is just like contemporary *ga* with the right terminal curved in almost to form a loop. The letter of the next century has similar characteristics ; the Coḷa letter of the 11th century A.D., and subsequent development of it show the letter almost like *ga* with the right terminal curved in.

Ṣa.—The Mauryan letter (Fig. 60) is a hook with a central curved upward stroke. The Bhaṭṭiprolu letter is a hook with a very small central and top stroke to left. The letter in Kuṣān script of the 2nd century A.D., is a square with top open and with a central stroke across. The contemporary Kṣatrapa and Sātavāhana letter has a small stroke across to the left of similar open square. The Gupta letter of the Northern variety is a narrow oval with serif on top and with a stroke running down slanting to right from it and shooting up vertically. The Central Indian variety is like contemporary *pa* with stroke across belly. In all the early forms of the letter, as in Kadamba, Śāḷankāyana of about the 4th century A.D., in Vākāṭaka, Western Ganga, Nala, Viṣṇukuṇḍin, Maitraka, and Western Cālukyan of about the 5th-6th centuries A.D., and in Eastern Ganga, Somavamśi and Eastern Cālukyan of the 6th-7th centuries A.D., the letter corresponds to the *pa* of the series with the addition of a central stroke across. The letter of Yaśodharman's inscriptions is not different, though in the Traikūṭaka and Maitraka letter the stroke on the belly slants down slightly. In the Nagari letter of Harsayardhana's time and in the Pallava inscriptions the central stroke is

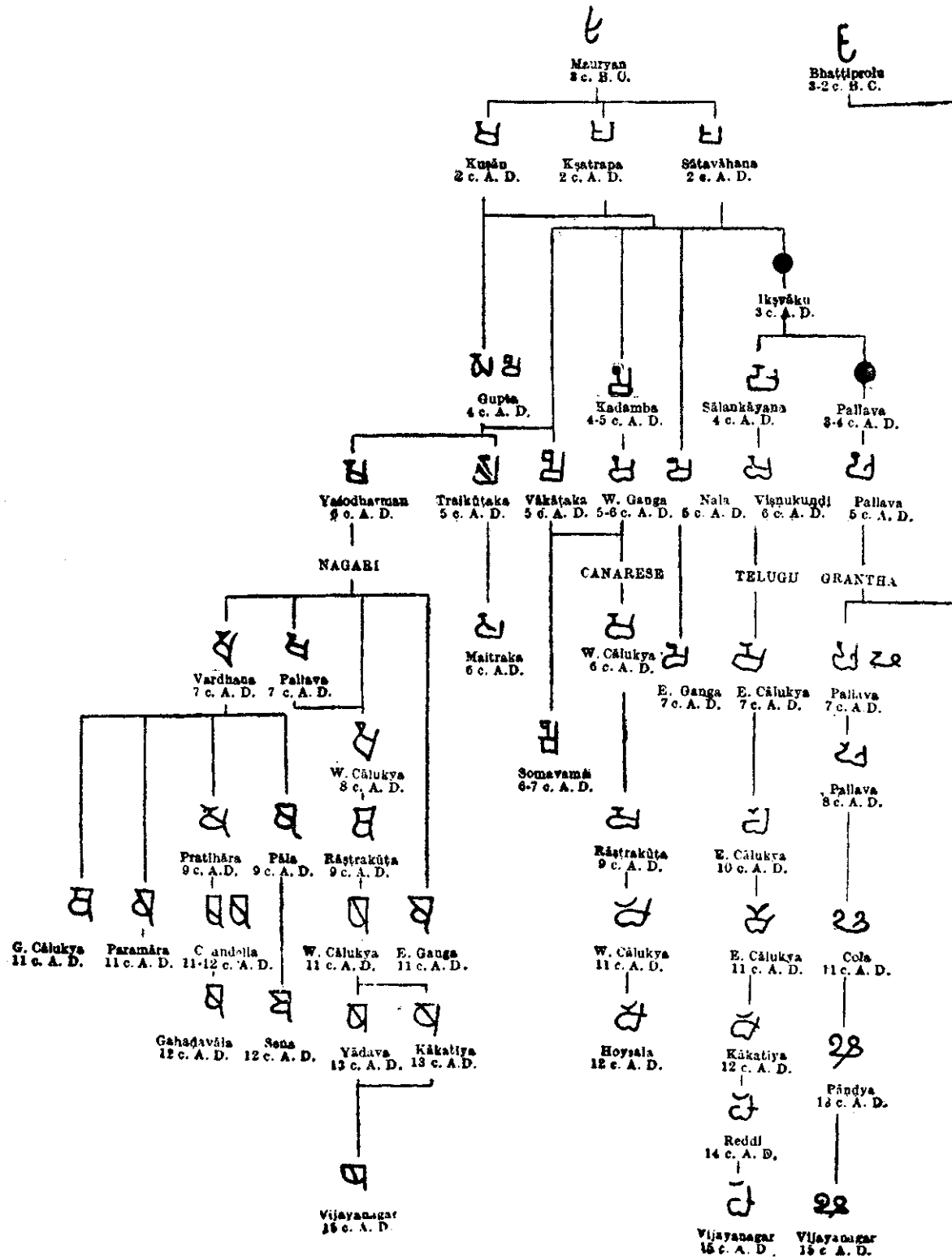


FIG. 60

O.S. Jr.

In the Telugu area the development of the letter is as in the Canarese area except that in the 11th century Eastern Cālukyan script it has a 'V' shaped serif. In the 14th century Reddi script and later the central horizontal stroke has a break in the centre, though its terminal cuts the vertical and extends slightly beyond it.

In Pallava Grantha script of the 7th century A.D., the letter is just like *pa* of the same time with a small curve added on the inside to the right in one variety and the right terminal looped in another. In the 8th century the inward curve to the right continues. In the 11th century Coḷa script and thereafter the right end of the letter slants in upwards, forms a loop, and runs down again slightly to left first almost touching the base line and later cutting it.

Sa.—In Mauryan script the letter (Fig. 61) is more or less like a triskelis, except that the top limb is straight and not curved like the other two. In the Bhaṭṭiprolu script there is a stroke added to the top right of the letter. In the Kuṣāṇ, Kṣatrapa and Sātavāhana script of the 2nd century A.D. the letter becomes more buxom, the vertical stroke is shorter and has a small wedge-like serif at its top, the curved limb to left slants down slightly to right and the right curved limb shoots up to very nearly the wedge of the vertical. The Ikṣvāku letter is somewhat compressed. The Northern variety of Gupta letter is composed of a stroke that starts with the wedged serif, forms a loop to left, slants slightly to right and shoots up vertically. The Central Indian variety shows the letter with a box-head replacing the serif. The Kadamba, Vākāṭaka, Nala, Western Ganga and Pallava letter of the 5th century A.D., and the Somavamśi and the Eastern Ganga letter of about the 6th-7th centuries A.D. have the box-head. The rest of the earlier types, like Śālankāyana and Pallava of about the 4th century A.D., the Traikūṭaka, Viṣṇukunḍin, Maitraka and Western Cālukyan of the 5th-6th centuries A.D. have the small serif. The letter in Yaśodharman's inscriptions is more or less like the Northern form of Gupta letter with a filled-in triangle instead of the loop to the left. From this is derived the Nagari letter of Harṣavardhana's inscriptions, with a pronounced wedge and triangle to left, slanting horizontal stroke and right vertical, slightly elongate towards the lower end. The contemporary Pallava Nagari letter has the triangular part opened up and this continues in the Western Cālukyan letter of the 8th Century A.D., where the slanting line connecting the right and left limbs curves in. The wedge to left in these letters is replaced by a small serif in the Pratihāra letter of the 9th century A.D. In the Pāla, Rāṣṭrakūṭa, Gujarat Cālukya, Paramāra, Candella, Eastern Ganga and Gāhaḍavāla letter the small serif is replaced by one that extends to meet the top end of the right limb of the letter and the triangular part to left is open. The Paramāra letter shows the wedge or triangular head at the top end of the left limb in addition to the horizontal serif stroke. The Sena letter shows the triangular part not open as in the rest but compressed and diminutive. In Western Cālukyan letter of the 11th century A.D., the Yādava and Kākatiya letter of the 13th century A.D. and the Vijayanagara letter of the 15th century A.D. the curve connecting the left and right limbs is replaced by a horizontal right across in the centre of the letter.

In the Canarese area the form of the Western Cālukyan letter of the 7th century A.D. is continued in almost the same manner even three centuries later but in Western Cālukyan script of the 11th century A.D. the vertical drops out and the serif changes into a crescent immediately above where the small curved left limb curves down again and shoots up slantingly to right as the right limb. This form continues in the Hoysala letter of the next century.

The development of the letter in the Telugu area is not very different from that in the Canarese area except that the Eastern Cālukyan letter of the 10th century A.D. has a small wedge-shaped serif and the letter of the next century a 'V' shaped one.

In the Pallava Grantha letter of the 7th century, there is one type showing the earlier in a more ornamented manner and with the top of the vertical forked and thickened; the other composed of a stroke slanting down to left and again to right and curving to slant down again to right and rise vertically. The Pallava letter of the next century shows the same type, with its angle formed by straight lines and with a rectangle formed immediately below the serif to left. In the 11th century Coḷa script, the letter sheds its angularity, starts as reversed 'S' to left, curves up and down, and ends as a vertical to right. In the 13th century Pāṇḍya script the reversed 'S' shaped part develops a curl at the top, flattens at the base and continues almost as in the earlier Coḷa letter. The Vijayanagara letter of the 15th century A.D., is not different from this.

Ha.—In Mauryan script *ha* (Fig. 62) is just like *la* reversed; in Bhaṭṭiprolu script a top left stroke is added as usual. In the 2nd century script of the Kuṣāṇa, Kṣatrapa and Sātavāhana the vertical stroke is shorter and thickened at the top end and slightly curved in, the bottom widened, flat and angular and the beak curved. The Ikṣvāku letter is very much after the Sātavāhana letter though a little more compressed. The Northern variety of Gupta letter is like an inverted question mark without dot and with a small serif added instead. The Southern variety shows the letter with top half of the left vertical stroke indented, as in *pa*, and crowned with a box-head. The curve of the beak is rather raised and deep, as the terminal is prolonged downwards. The box-head occurs in the Kadamba, Vākāṭaka, Nala, Somavamśi and the Eastern Ganga scripts as usual. In all these scripts of the 4th, 5th and 6th century the letter is more or less like its contemporary *pa* with the right vertical slightly shorter and curved down and the terminal prolonged downwards hook-like. The letter in Yaśodharman's script is almost like the rest of its date, except, that the left vertical is not indented. In the Nagari letter of the 7th, 8th and 9th centuries A.D., the letter is more or less like *la*, with the angularity at the bottom emphasised by a small stroke in continuation. This becomes a feature in all the later varieties of the letter.

The letter in the Canarese area, both in the 6th century Western Cālukya and 9th century Rāṣṭrakūṭa, script is more or less like the earlier form. In the 11th century Western Cālukya, 12th century Hoysala and later scripts, the curve to the right becomes more prominent at first and later tends to curl.

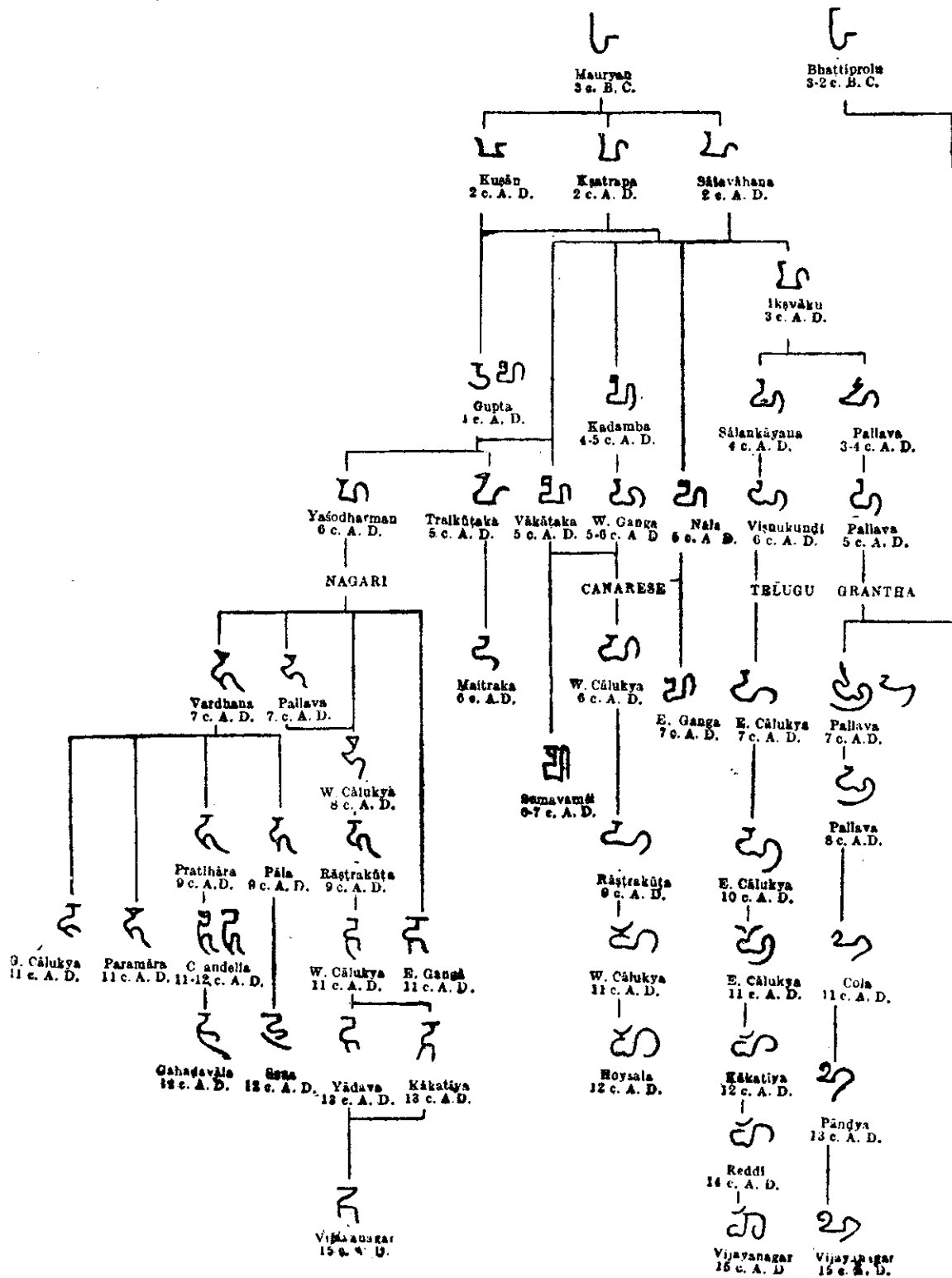


FIG. 62

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This tendency in the development of the letter is to be observed in the Telugu territory also. And except for the usual 'V' shaped serif of the 11th century Eastern Cālukyan letter, there is no great difference between the letter of the contemporary Canarese and Telugu areas.

In Pallava Grantha of the 7th century the ornamental letter shows a forked terminal for the indented left vertical a double curve at the base and the beak curves half way round the bottom. The second variety is simpler. The ornamental variety is developed in the 8th century as a somewhat simple one. In the 11th century Cola script the letter starts like contemporary 'u' with a hook and straight base line and slightly rises up to curve and slant down to left. This form of the letter continues in the 13th century Pāṇḍya and later still in Vijayanagara script.

La.—This letter (Fig. 63) occurs as already observed in Canarese, Telugu and Tamil areas. In the Telugu and Canarese areas it is more or less a circle dividing itself into two and curling its ends both sides towards with an inward dent at the base.

The earliest Tamil form of the letter as observed in the cave inscriptions of the 3rd century B.C. is not materially different from the latest one and the letter has been practically the same all through the centuries. The Vaṭṭeḷuttu letter is also similar to the Tamil one.

La.—This letter (Fig. 64) is quite common in inscriptions of South India and the Deccan. It is closely related to the regular dental *la*; and this association is clearly preserved in the form of the letter even in Tamil cave inscriptions of the 3rd century B.C., where it resembles the letter *la* with just a vertical stroke, with its top slightly curved to join it, added to the right. The same scheme of the letter continues even later in Tamil inscriptions right from the 7th century A.D. where the later form of the Tamil letter *la* has a vertical stroke added to right. It is not different in Vaṭṭeḷuttu but as usual in this script the latter slants somewhat.

The letter of the Bhaṭṭiprolu script is a vertical curved at the base to right and having two small horizontal strokes to right at the top and in the middle. In Sātavāhana script of the 2nd century A.D., it is developed from the earlier form represented at Bhaṭṭiprolu, the vertical bulging out in curvilinear shape to left and the middle stroke and basal curve transforming themselves conjointly into a fork shape. It is noteworthy that it occurs in the same shape in Kuṣāṇ and Kṣātrapa inscriptions and even in Gupta script. This characteristic form of the letter continues more or less the same in Gupta (4th century A.D.), Viṣṇukunḍin (6th century A.D.), Western Cālukya (6th century A.D.), and Rāṣṭrakūṭa (9th century A.D.).

The later Telugu letter is only a further transformation of this letter as observed in Viṣṇukunḍin alphabet (6th century A.D.). The Grantha letter of the Pallava inscriptions of the 7th and 8th centuries A.D., is only a modification of this variety though the fork is

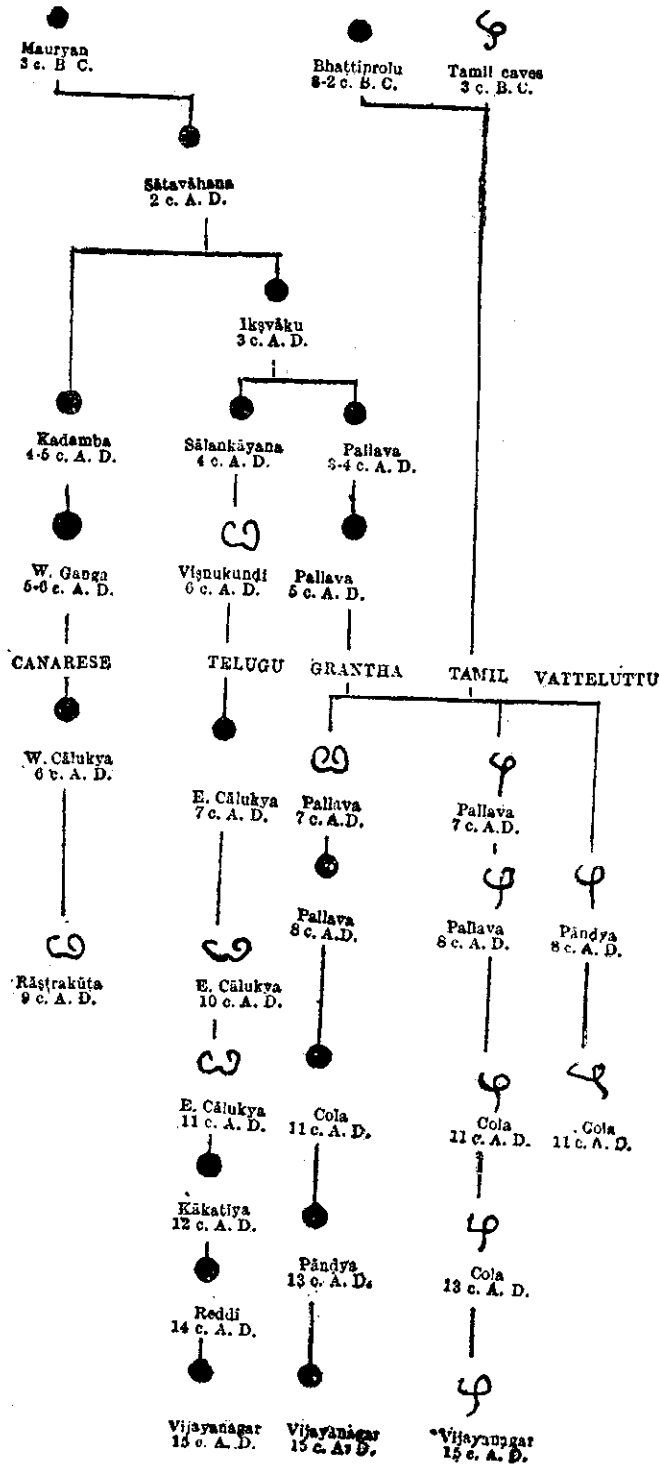


FIG. 64

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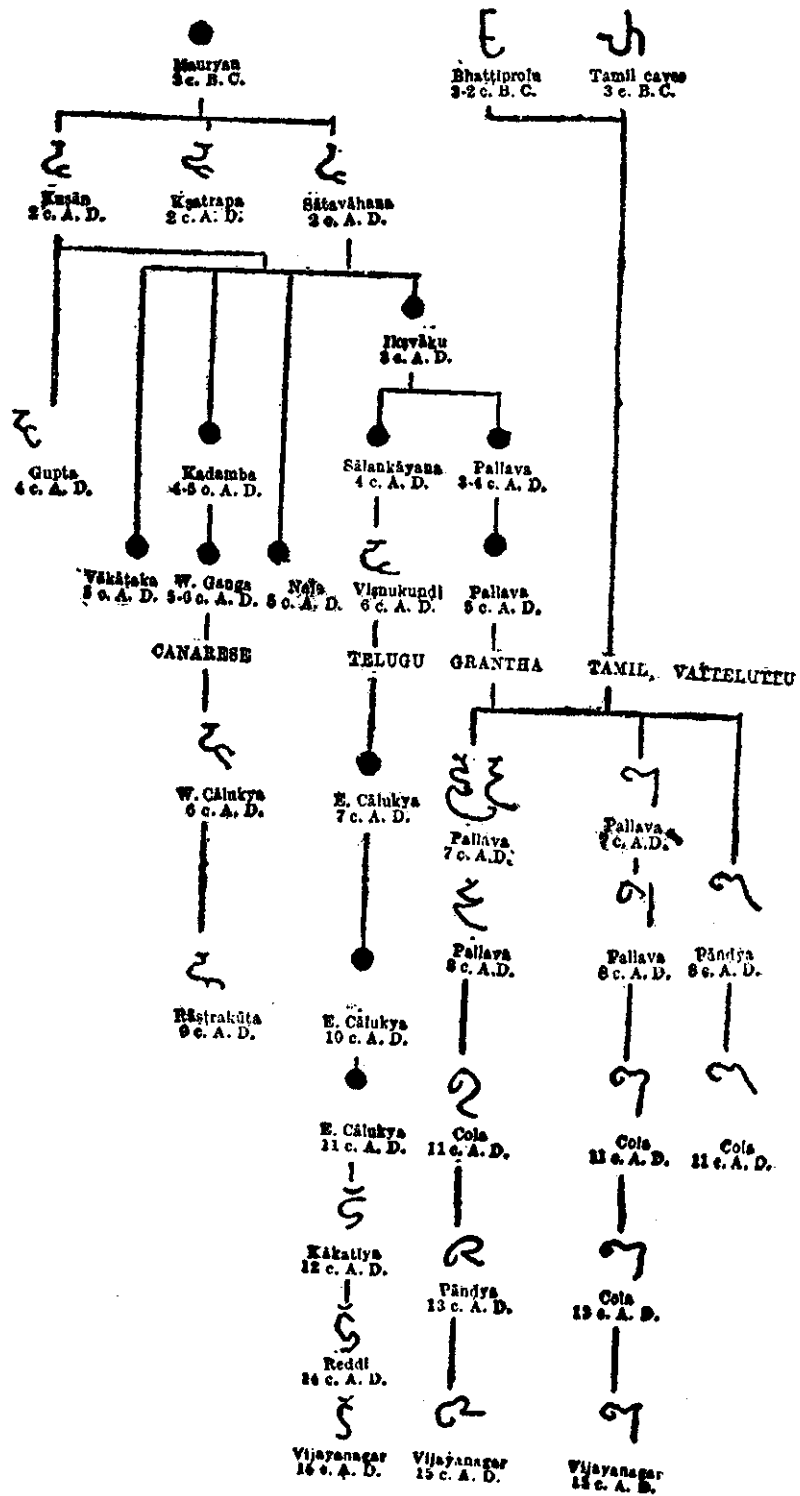


FIG. 64

C.S. del. 13

changed into a broad curve drawn with a flourish. From the Coḷa period onwards the letter tends to take somewhat after the Tamil form. It resembles more or less a sickle in shape.

Ra.—This and the preceding two letters are peculiar to Canarese, Telugu and Tamil areas. This letter (Fig. 65) occurs so early as the 3rd century B.C., in the inscriptions of the Tamil caves where it is somewhat like a reversed and diagonally drawn Z with the addition of a lower stroke, a form which without the additional stroke is continued in Pallava Tamil script of the 7th and 8th century A.D. From this develops the sickle-shaped late letter of the Coḷa and Vijayanagar periods. The Vaṭṭeḷuttu letter is after the Tamil one.

The basic form of this letter in the Canarese and Telugu areas is two circles, closely linked with a horizontal line running across them. In the initial stages it can be observed that it looks only like one circle separating into two at the bottom the separation being more complete at the top rather than at the bottom at a later stage. The name *śakatarepha* applied to this letter in Telugu is in complete accord with the formation of the letter with the two wheel-shaped circles and an axle shaped cross stroke.

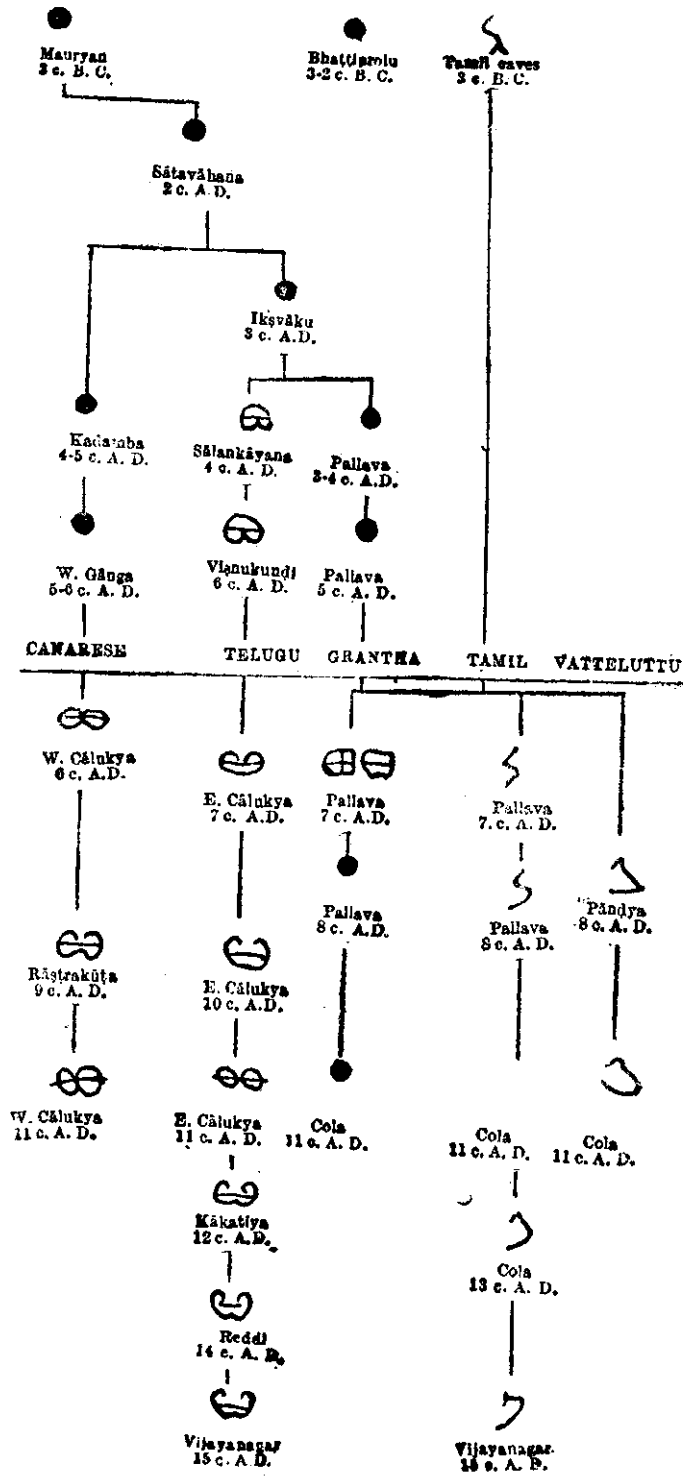


FIG. 65.

C.S. det.

SELECT PASSAGES FROM INSCRIPTIONS.

The earliest Brāhmi records yet discovered in India, as already pointed out, are the Piprahwa vase inscriptions and the writing on the Eraṇ coin. But from the third century B.C. the inscriptions of Aśoka form the most important records in that early script distributed all over the land. There are, as previously stated, local variations in the script used for the edicts of Aśoka incised on rocks and pillars. The passage given below (Fig. 66) is a small selection from one of the Mysore edicts of Aśoka or, more specifically, the Brahma-giri inscription in the vicinity of Siddāpura (Hultzsch *C. Inscr. Ind.* I p. xxvii and pp. 177-178) discovered by B. L. Rice during his explorations in Mysore. It is in the southern variety of the Aśoka script which is most pronounced at Siddāpura¹ and Girnar (*Ind. Ant.* XXXIII, p. 34). Regarding the similarity between South Indian epigraphical documents and those from Gujrat or Kathiawād, Bühler has drawn pointed attention to the grants of the Traikūṭakas, Gurjjaras and the rulers of Valabhī where the letters are of the Southern type (*Epigraph. Ind.* III, p. 135). These inscriptions from Siddāpura were written by a scribe called Capaḍa who must have served in Northern India, as the last letters of these are in the Northern Kharoṣṭhī alphabet to which he was accustomed. The use of *ra* here, instead of *la*, in places where ancient Māgadhī would require *la*, is one of the important points to be noted, as this is peculiar to the Southern variety of Prakṛt.

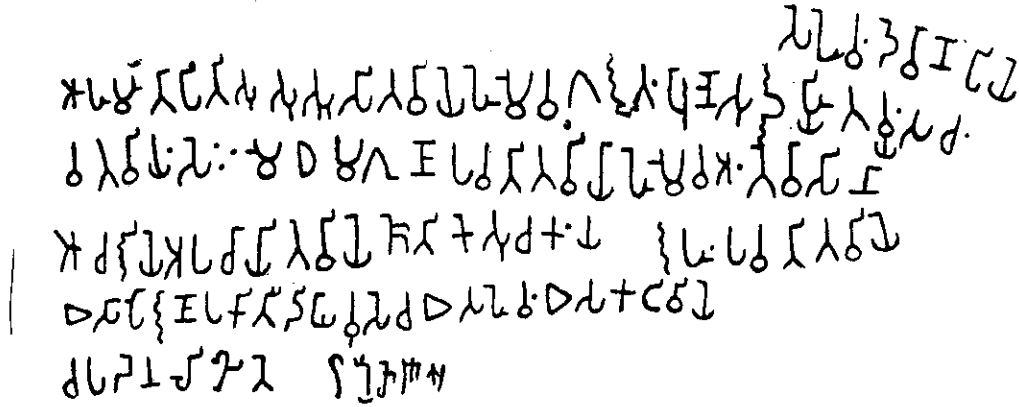


FIG. 66.

C.S. del.

से हेवं देवानं पिये

आह मातापित्सु सुसू सितविये हेमेव गरुतं प्राणेषु द्रह्यितव्यं सचं
 वतवियं से इमे धमगुणा पवतितविया हेमेव अंतेवासिना
 आचरिये अपचायितविये जतिकेसु च कं यथारहं पवतितविये

¹ Includes Siddāpura, Brahmagiri, Jaṭiṅga Rāmeśvara ; the Maski and Yerraguḍi inscriptions should be added to this list.

On the lid—

नेगमा
वद्धो चघो
जतो जभो तिसो
रेतो अचिनो षभिको
अखधो केलो केलो माहो
सेटा छदिको ओखबूलो
सोणुतरो समणो
समणदाषो सामको
कामुको चीतको¹

On the rim of the casket.

अरहदिनानं गोठिया मजूस च षमुगो च तेन कम येन कुबिरको राजा अकि²

The Brāhmī script clearly suggests its great antiquity in South India by the separate form of some letters in inscriptions found in caverns in South India, specially in the Pāṇḍyan country. Bühler felt that the southern variety of Brahmi, represented by the Bhaṭṭiprolu inscriptions, should have had many varieties in the 3rd century B.C., an existence independent of the Aśoka edicts, and a long history of growth. This is supported by the letters in the puzzling inscriptions of the Pāṇḍyan country. Cammiade's discovery of a cavern with Brāhmī inscriptions at Marugaḷalai, in Tirunelveli district, was followed by the discovery of many others. V. Venkayya, who examined the newly discovered ones, felt they were Buddhist caverns, the inscriptions being the earliest lithic records in the Tamil country and important for throwing valuable light on the origin and development of Tamil and Vaṭṭeḷuttu alphabets. Such caves with inscriptions were found in Aḷagarmalai, Ānaimalai, Aracallur. Āykuḍi, Kaḷugumalai, Karungalakkudi, Kiḍaripaṭṭi, Kilavalavu, Kongāpulayankuḷam, Kunnakkudi, Māmandur, Mankalam, Margalvalai, Meṭṭupaṭṭi, Muttupaṭṭi, Pugalur, Sittannavāsai, Tiruchirāppalli, Tiruparankunṇam, Vāvicaiyur and Vikkiramangalam. H. Krishna Sastri tried his best to decipher many of them and published their impressions to enable decipherment. But their language has always been a puzzle. One of the discoverers of these caverns, K. V. Subrahmanya Aiyar, has given an explanation of these letters which is very interesting and plausible.³ According to him, the inscriptions are Buddhist and in

¹ Members of the guild—Vacha (Skt. *Vatsa*), Cagha, Jeta (Skt. *Jayanta*) Jambha (Skt. *Jambha*), Tisa (Skt. *Tisya*), Reta, Acina, Sabhika, Akhagha (Skt. *Aksaghna*), Kela, Kesa, Māha, Seṣa, Chadika (Skt. *Chandika*) Okhabulā, Soṇutara (Skt. *Soṇottara*), Samana (Skt. *Sramaṇa*), Samaḷadāsa (Skt. *Sramaṇadāsa*), Sāmaka (Skt. *Syāmaka*), Kāmuka, Citaka.

² A casket and box are given by the Council of followers of the venerable Arāhadina (Skt. *Arhadatta*). The work is executed by him whom king Kubiraka got to prepare the carving.

³ The Pāṇḍyan country and the inscriptions in Proceedings and Transactions of the Third Oriental Conference 1924.

the Tamil language. He has specially noted five letters of this alphabet, not known to the Aśokan inscriptions and explained them as *ī*, *ṇa*, *ḷa*, *ḷa*, and *ṛ* all of them special to Tamil and Vaṭṭeḷuttu. Jouveau Dubreuil discovered at Arikameḍu, near Pondicherry, potsherds with inscriptions in letters similar to these, which await interpretation ; and this extends the area of these inscriptions further north, thus covering almost the whole of the Tamil country. The discovery and interpretation of these inscriptions is one of the greatest contributions to Indian epigraphy and K. V. Subramanya Aiyar has done a great service by his very valuable contribution. The present selection (Fig. 68) is from the Sittanavāśal cave and the inscription is typical of the rest.

O.S. del.

FIG. 68.

எஃமி நாடு குமுண்டர பிறாந்தர காவுடிஇ தென கூ
சிறுபோசில இளயரசெயதா அதிட அனாம¹

The script of the early Kuṣāṇas, developed from that of the earlier epoch (Śodāsa, Rañjuvula, etc.) is characteristic for its squat letters, specially noticeable in *ha*, *ya*, *ṇa*, *bha*, *ca*, etc. There is a small nail-head serif for the letters. There is a tendency for the lower ends of all vertical strokes to remain straight, except in the case of *ra*. *E* is a triangle elongate topwise; *ba* a square, *va* a triangle with stroke over apex, *kha* a triangle with curve over the apex to left, *ma* a triangle with the sides lengthened beyond the apex and *tha* a circle. *Ā*, *e* and *o* medials are slanting top strokes to right, left and to both respectively. *Ya* has a curve in its left limb and as subscript the letter continues to be used in its complete form, i.e., tripartite. *Ca* projects its belly too far left. The tripartite subscript *ya* becomes bipartite in later Kuṣāṇ script. The present extract (Fig. 69) is from the inscription on the sides of the umbrella post for the Bodhisattva image erected by friar Bāla at Banaras (*Epigraph. Ind.* VIII, p. 176).

¹ Citupoil Payer made this *adhīṣṭanam* for Kāvūḍi Iten who was born at Kumaṭṭūr, a village in Eruamināḍu.

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय
 ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय
 ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय
 ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय
 ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय
 ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय
 ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय

FIG. 69.

C.S. del.

महाराजस्य काणिष्कस्य सं ३ ह ३ द २२
 एताये पुवीये भिक्षुस्य पुष्यवुद्धिस्य सध्चेवि
 हारिस्य भिक्षुस्य बलस्य त्रपिटकस्य
 बोधिसत्वो छत्रयष्टि च प्रतिष्ठापितो
 बाराणसिये भगवतो चकमे सहामाता
 पितिहि सहा उपध्चायाचेरेहि सध्चेविहारि^१

In the Western Indian caves, like Kārle, Kaṅheri, Kuḍā, etc., we get the archaic and clumsy variety as also a more advanced and beautiful variety of script. The Nāsik inscription of Uṣavadāta has excellent letters which contrast with the clumsy ones of his at Kārle. These letters resemble the early Mathurā variety. They have very few Southern characteristics though the Southern *ga* is clear. The curves at the lower end of vertical strokes are very faint, bringing them nearer the northern strokes which mostly lack the curves. The vertical stroke of *la* does not curve to the left but to the right top, the left limb of *sa*

¹ In the third year of Mahārāja Kaṅṣka, the third month of winter, the twenty-second day, on this aforesaid day, the figure of Bodhisattva and an umbrella with handle (gifts) of the monk Bala, a master of the Tripitaka and fellow of the monk Puṣyavuddhi, was consecrated at Bārāṅasi (Banaras) at the Lord's promenade, with his father and mother, with his teachers and professors, his fellows...

has a peculiar curve at its tip; *śa* slants to the right; and subscript *ya* is tripartite. Medial *ā* and *e* are represented by horizontal strokes but occasionally, as in *ja*, the stroke curves upwards. Medial *u* and subscript *ra* are distinguished by the slight curvature in the case of the latter. Square patterns are obvious in letters like *pa*, *ṣa*, *ba*, *ha*, and triangles in *e*, *va*, *ma*. The present extract (Fig. 70) is from Uṣavadāta's inscriptions from Nāsik (*Epigraph. Ind.* VIII, p. 78) the letters of which are among the finest in Indian epigraphy.

FIG. 70.

O. S. del.

सद्धम् राज्ञः क्षहरातस्य क्षत्रपस्य नहपानस्य जामात्रा
 दोनोकपुत्रेण उषवदातेन त्रिगोशतसहस्रदेन नद्या
 बाणसायां सुवर्णदानतोर्यकरणे देवताभ्यः ब्राह्मणेभ्यश्च
 षोडशग्रामदेन अनुवर्षं ब्राह्मणशतसहस्रोभोजापयित्रा

प्रभासे पुण्यतीर्थे ब्राह्मणेभ्यः अष्टभार्याप्रदेन भरुकछ
दशपुरे गोवर्धने च चतुशालावसधप्रतिश्रय
प्रदेन आरामतडाग उदपातकरेण इवा पारदा दमण तारप
करबेणा दाहानुका नावापुण्यतरकरेण एतासां च नदीनां उभतोनीर

In Gujrat and Kathiawad the southern type of script was in vogue. This is indicated by the similarities in the Aśokan script from Gīrnār and from Mysore. The Southern form of script is also found in the Junāgaḍh inscription of Rudradāman (*Epigraph. Ind.* VIII, p. 36). This forms an interesting study in tracing a later development of the Southern variety of Gupta script in Skandagupta's inscription in the same place. Rudradāman's inscription is one of the most important of Indian inscriptions as it is the earliest yet known in Sanskrit. This is a fine example of classical Sanskrit. The poet of the inscription, whom Kielhorn describes as 'endowed with no mean poetic power' is well acquainted with the diction of the *Rāmāyaṇa* and *Mahābhārata* (Ibid, p. 40) and has used phrases bodily taken from the epics. As examples, may be noted पौरजानपदं जनं and पर्जन्येन एकार्णवभूतायामिव पृथिव्यां कृतायाम् reminding of the lines पौरजानपदं जनं (*Rāmāyaṇa*) and अयं ह्युत्सहते क्रुद्धः कर्तुमेकार्णवं जगत् (Ibid, V, 49, 20 and comment on this in Sivaramamurti 2, P. 4). *Śabdālamkāra* abounds as for instance in quotations from this inscription, अविधेयानां यौधेयानां, दानमानावमान, नाम्ना -दान्ना . . . रुद्रदान्ना; etc. (*Epigraph. Ind.* VIII, p. 41). The letters of this inscription appear to be the precursors of the Southern variety, the form being apparent in the curve at the lower end of the vertical strokes of *a*, *ā*, *kā*, *ñā* and *ra*, the rounded form of *ga*, the leftward turn of the top vertical stroke of *la* and the form of medial *r* not easily distinguished from subscript *ra*. The letter *ṛa*, peculiar to the Southern variety, occurs in this inscription. Though some of the letters of the Kṣatrapa and contemporary Sātavāhana inscriptions like *a*, *ka*, *ñā*, *ra*, etc., have a little curve at the end of the verticals, a feature which is absent in Kuṣaṇ letters, the verticals of the Kṣatrapa letters slant a little before curving at the tip. The use of final consonant is illustrated by *t* as in *āsīt*, the letter going just below the line. The subscript consonants are written in their normal full form. Medials *ā*, *e*, *o*, and *ai* are represented usually by horizontal strokes at the top of the consonant but sometimes this is different as in *ṭā*, *mā*, *dhā*, *mo*, etc., where the stroke curves up or down as in the first two and is added to the middle of the consonant as in the next two, or runs up vertical in continuation of the central part as in *jā*. Subscript *i* is represented by

¹ Success ! by Uṣavadāta, son of Dīnika, son-in-law of King Nahapāna the Kṣaharāta Kṣatrapa—donor of three hundred thousand cows, performer of sacred gifts of gold on the river Bārnāsā, giver of sixteen villages to the Gods and Brāhmaṇas, feeder all the year round of a hundred thousand Brāhmaṇas, giver of eight wives to Brāhmaṇas in the sacred place Prabhāsa, donor of quadrangular hermitages, dwellings and shelter houses* at Bharukacha, Daṣapura, Govardhana and Śarpāraga, maker of pleasancess, tanks and wells, founder of free ferries by boats on the *Ibā*, *Pārādā*, *Damana*, *Tāpi*, *Karabenā* and *Dāhānukā* and on both the banks of these rivers

*(On this see R. G. Bhandarkar in *Ind. Ant.* XII, p. 142).

an upward curve on top to the right and *i* by curved strokes to right and left. Medial *u* is represented by a bottom curve or stroke to the right of consonants with open bottom or having a single vertical stroke, as in *gu*, *tu*, etc., or *ku*, but otherwise it is turned to the left as in *mu*, *su*, etc.; *ru* and *ru* however are represented by a single or double stroke to the right centre of the vertical stroke of *r*. The additional stroke to denote subscript *u* may be seen in *bhū*. The following small passage (Fig. 71) is typical of the rest of this long well-engraved though damaged inscription (bid, pp. 38-39).

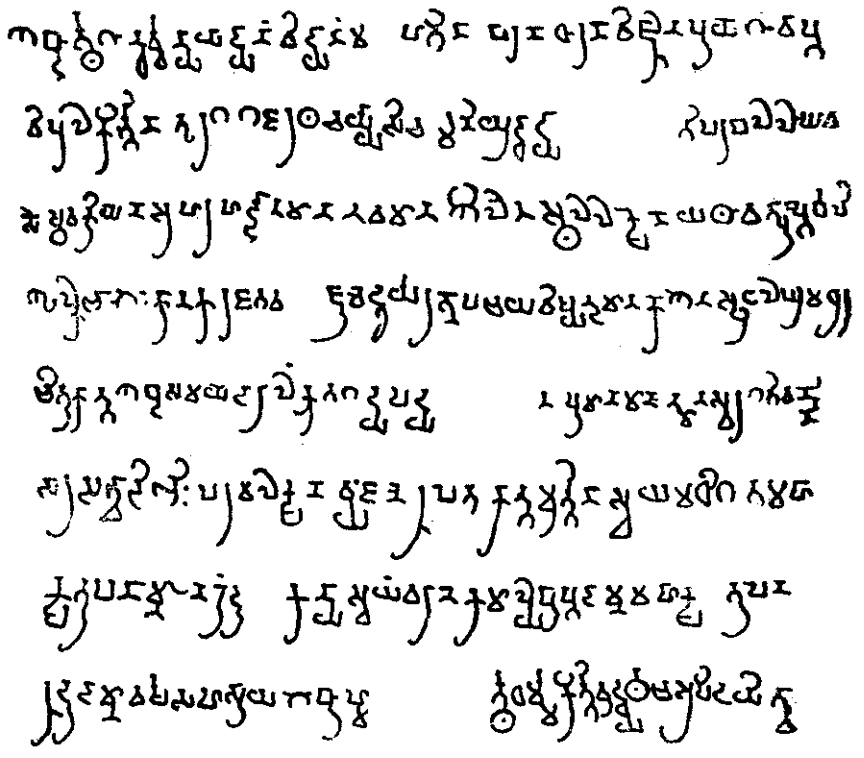


FIG. 71. C. B. Id.

शब्दार्थगान्धर्व्वन्यायाद्यानां विद्यानां महतीनां पारणधारणविज्ञानप्रयोगावाप्त
 विपुलकीर्तिना तुरगगजरथचर्यासिचर्मनियुद्धाद्या.....तिपरबललाघव
 सष्ठवक्रियेण अहरहृदिमानानवमानशीलेन स्थललक्षेण यथावत्प्राप्तैर्बलि
 शुल्कभागैः कनकरजतवज्रवैदूर्यरत्नोपचयविष्यन्दमानकोशेन स्फुटलघुमधुर
 चित्रकान्तशब्दसमयोदारालंकृतगद्यपद्य न प्रमाणमानोन्मानस्वरगतिवर्ण
 सारसत्वादिमिः परमलक्षणव्यञ्जनैरुपेतकान्तमूर्तिना स्वयमधिगतमहा
 क्षत्रपनाम्ना नरेन्द्रकन्यास्वयंवरानेकमाल्यप्राप्तदाम्ना महाक्षत्रपेण
 रुद्रदाम्ना वर्षसहस्राय गोब्राह्म त्थधर्मकीर्तिवृद्ध्यर्थं च अमीडयित्वा १

¹ Mahāśatrpa Rudradāman, who has acquired great fame by study, memorising, understanding and practice of grammar, music, logic and other great sciences, who.....management of horses, elephants and chariots, use of sword and shield, pugilistic combat and other.....acts of quickness or speed and efficiency of enemy forces, who day by day is in the habit of bestowing gifts, honouring and avoiding disrespect, who is most bounteous, whose treasury with rightfully acquired tribute, tolls and shares overflows with an accumulation of gold, silver, diamonds, beryls and other precious stones, who.....prose and verse, clear, lucid, sweet dexterous, beautiful, nobly adorned by the proper use of words, whose lovely form has the best marks and signs like proper proportions, height voice, gait, colour, vigour and strength who himself acquired the name Mahāśatrpa who has been wreathed with many garlands at the Svayamvaras of princesses: (lit. king's daughters)—for...cows and...Brahma...as for a thousand years, to increase his wealth, religious merit and glory.

सवराजलोकमडलपतिगहीतसासानस दिवसकरकरविबोधित
 कमलविमलसदिसवदनस तिसमुदतयपीतवाहनस पलि
 पूनचदमडलससिरिकपियदसनस वरवारणविकमचारुविकमस
 भुजगपतिभोगपोनवाटविपुलदोधसुदरभुजस अभयोदकदान
 किलिननिभयकरस अविपनमातुसुसूसाकस सुविभततिवगदेस
 कालसं पोरजननिविसेससमसुखदुखस खतियदपमान
 मदनस सकयवनपल्लवनिसूदनस धमोपजितकरविनियोग
 करस कितापराधेपि सतुजने अपानहिसारुचिस दिजवरकुटुब
 विवधनस खखरातवसनिरवसेसकरस सातवाहनकुलयसपतिठापन
 करस सवमदलाभवादितचरणस विनिवतितचातुवणसकरस अनेक¹

From the later half of the 2nd century A.D., the Sātavāhana script in the Krishna valley undergoes a change. The letters get elongate and more ornamental, with curls and flourishes at the ends of verticals, rather over-elongated. This tendency is to be seen in the inscriptions of the fourth period at Amarāvati (See Sivaramamurti I pl. LXV, 8, 10.). This ornamentation of the letters is seen at its best in the inscriptions from Jaggayyapeta (Burgess pl. LXII, LXIII) and Nāgārjunakoṇḍa (*Epigraph. Ind.* XX pl. i-v). The inscriptions from Jaggayyapeta and Nāgārjunakoṇḍa are of the Ikṣvāku dynasty, of which King Sirivirapurisadata figures prominently. The letters are beautiful specimens. The vertical strokes of *a*, *ā*, *ka*, *ṅa*, *ra*, *la* and the medial *i*, *ī* and *u* are quite elongate and beautifully curled. The medial *e* is also curled downwards in the typically Southern manner, as in the later inscriptions (Bühler, *Ind. Ant.* XXXIII, p. 43). *L* peculiar to Southern script occurs in the Nāgārjunakoṇḍa inscriptions (*Epigraph. Ind.* XX, p. 12). The discovery of the inscribed Āyaka pillars from Nāgārjunakoṇḍa supplies quite an amount of material for the study of the script. The passage given below (Fig. 73) is from the second Āyaka pillars to the south of the Māhācaitya at Nāgārjunakoṇḍa (Ibid. p. 18).

¹ Whose command was accepted by the entire circle of kings, whose face was lovely and pure like the moons opened by the rays of the sun, whose horses had drunk the water of the three oceans, who was lovely to look at with the charm of the full lunar orb, whose gait was beautiful like that of a noble elephant, whose arms were full, rounded, broad and long like the body of the lord of serpents, whose fearless hand was wet with the water poured out in assurances of protection, who without a stop attended on his mother, who well divided the place and time for the pursuit of the triple objects, i.e., *dharma*, *artha* and *kāma*, who equally rejoiced and sorrowed at the joys and sorrows of his citizens, who crushed the pride and conceit of Kṣatriyas, who destroyed the Sakas, Yavanas and Pahlavas, who utilised taxes acquired righteously, who disliked hurting life even in the case of an enemy at fault, the promoter of the families of the twice-born and the lowly, who exterminated the race of the Khakharatas, who established the glory of the family of the Sātavāhanas, whose feet were saluted by all provinces, who stopped the contamination of the four castes.

ಸಂಖ್ಯಾಶತಕಂಠಾಶಯೋಃ ಸಂಖ್ಯಾಶತಕಂಠಾಶಯೋಃ
 ಸಂಖ್ಯಾಶತಕಂಠಾಶಯೋಃ ಸಂಖ್ಯಾಶತಕಂಠಾಶಯೋಃ
 ಸಂಖ್ಯಾಶತಕಂಠಾಶಯೋಃ ಸಂಖ್ಯಾಶತಕಂಠಾಶಯೋಃ
 ಸಂಖ್ಯಾಶತಕಂಠಾಶಯೋಃ ಸಂಖ್ಯಾಶತಕಂಠಾಶಯೋಃ
 ಸಂಖ್ಯಾಶತಕಂಠಾಶಯೋಃ ಸಂಖ್ಯಾಶತಕಂಠಾಶಯೋಃ
 ಸಂಖ್ಯಾಶತಕಂಠಾಶಯೋಃ ಸಂಖ್ಯಾಶತಕಂಠಾಶಯೋಃ
 ಸಂಖ್ಯಾಶತಕಂಠಾಶಯೋಃ ಸಂಖ್ಯಾಶತಕಂಠಾಶಯೋಃ
 ಸಂಖ್ಯಾಶತಕಂಠಾಶಯೋಃ ಸಂಖ್ಯಾಶತಕಂಠಾಶಯೋಃ

FIG. 73.

O.S. del

सिधम् महारजस असमेधयाजिस अनेकहिरणकोटिगोसतसहसहलसत
 सहसपदायिस सबथेसु अपतिहतसंकपस वासिठीपुतस इखाकुस
 सिरिचातमूलस दुहृता रजोसिरिविरपुरिसदतस भगिनि महासेनापतिस महा
 नलवरस महादंडनायकस धनकानं खंदविसाखंगकस भया महातलवगि
 अटविचातिसिगि अपनो उभयकुलं परिणामे[त्] न अतनोच उभयलोकहित
 *मुखावहथनाय

भगवतो संमसबुधस धातुवरपरिगहीतस गहाचेतिये इमं खंभं पतिठपनति
 रजो सिरिविरपुरिसदतस ६ वा प ६ दिव १०^१

Closely allied to the Jaggayyapeta script is that of the Prākṛt grants of the early Pallava monarchs and the writing of these charters is a development of the earlier ornamental type of the Ikṣvākus. The text of the charters in Prākṛt itself indicates their early date as also the palaeography of the letters. The writing on the charters is in a highly cursive form of the elongate letters of the Ikṣvāku inscriptions (Bühler *Ind. Ant.* XXXIII, p. 44). The passage below (Fig. 74) is from the first plate of the Hīrahadagalli plates of Śivaskandavarman (*Epigraph. Ind.* I, p. 2). The perfect line in Sanskrit at the end shows that the scribe was not unacquainted with the classical language, but it was more in accordance with the usage of the day that the charter should be issued in Prākṛt, as all royal edicts, grants and charters appear in Prākṛt in the early centuries before and after the Christian era. A point to be noted in the alphabet of this charter is the peculiar way in which the *anusvāra* and the serifs are indicated by a small cross, rather than by a dot or dash (Ibid, p. 2). There is often a confusion created by the similarity of letters like *ṭa*, *ḍa* and *ḍa* or *ta* and *ṇa*, or *ta* and *ḍha* (Ibid, p. 2). The form of *e* with longer vertical stroke to the right is a precursor of the same letter in later script in the Krishna valley. The medial *e* and *o* in the case of *ka* give a different form to the letter, the small horizontal stroke slightly curved at the ends running diagonally to the vertical stroke in the former (i.e. *ke*).

Success! The Mahātalavari Aḍavi Catisiri, the daughter of king Vasiṭhīputa Siri Cātamūla of the Ikṣvāku family, performer of *Asvamedha* sacrifice, donor of many crores of gold coins, hundred thousand cows, hundred thousand plough lengths of land, and of unhampered determination in everything, the sister of king Siri Virapurisadata, the wife of Mahāscūpati Mahātalavara and Mahādandanāyaka Khaṇḍaviśākhaṇḍaka of the Ehanaka family, having due regard for both her families and to secure welfare and happiness for herself in both the worlds, has erected this pillar at the Mahācaitya of the supremely enlightened Lord (Buddha) who is absorbed by the best elements (i.e., by nirvāṇa). In the sixth (regnal) year of king Siri Virapurisadata, the sixth fortnight of the rainy season, the tenth day.

FIG. 74.

C.S. del

कांचीपुरा अग्निटथोमवाजपेयस्समेधयाजि धम्ममहा
 सिद्धम् ॥ राजाधिराजो भारद्वायो पल्लवाणुसिखद्वमो
 अम्हंसिये सवत्थराजकुमारसेनापति

Somewhat earlier than the Hīrahaḍagalli plates are the Mayidavolu plates (Ibid VI, p. 84) of the same monarch (Fig. 75). Issued by Śivaskandavarman when he was yuva-mahārāja or heir-apparent, it is distinctly older than the Hīrahaḍagalli plates where the epithet used is *dharmamahārājādhirāja* or righteous monarch. Though strictly the Mayidavolu plates ought to be given first they are given next to the Hīrahaḍagalli ones, as the letters of the latter, while agreeing generally with those of the former, however present some special forms not met with elsewhere in the whole range of the Indian alphabet. In the Mayidavolu and the Koṇḍamudi grants the letters have similar abnormalities and hence they should go together. The grant is in Prākṛt as is usual in the early grants. It is to be noted that the special form of *ke*, found in the Hīrahaḍagalli grant, has its origin in this grant. Among the special letters of this grant are *sa* and *ma* whether by themselves or a subscripts, as in *mmo*; *na*, *ja* and *e* (Ibid, p. 86). While *ma* and *sa* are totally different from any known letters, *na* creates a confusion by its close resemblance to *ḍa* in which form it is never known *ja* is peculiar sometimes, but it is easily traceable to the same abnormal letter in the Bhaṭṭiprolu alphabet, as also the letter *ha*. *E* is quite different from the same letter in other inscriptions of the same date. It differs from the same letter in the Hīrahaḍagalli alphabet.

¹ Success ! From the city of Kāñci of Śivaskandavarman of the Bhāradvāja clan and Pallava family, performer of the sacrifice *Agnistoma*, *Vājapeya* and *Aśvamedha*, righteous overlord of great kings.... In our territory everywhere royal princes, generals.....

though its form suggests strong resemblance to the later Tamil-Grantha letters in the Pallava script of the 7th century of which it is undoubtedly the precursor.

चोपुरातो युवमहाराजो
भारदायसगोत्तो पलवानं

च
सिवखदवम्मो धञ्जकडे
वापतं आनपयति

FIG. 75.

C.S.C.

चोपुरातो युवमहाराजो
भारदायसगोत्तो पलवानं

सिवखदवम्मो धञ्जकडे
वापतं आनपयति¹

The script of the Mayidavolu plates is also repeated in the plates of the Brhatphalāyana king Jayavarman (Ibid, VI, p. 315) found in the village of Koṇḍamudi in the Krishna district. This grant is important for the script as well as the mention of a royal dynasty, the Brhatphalāynas, not known from any other records. The language is Prākṛt. The last line is another notable example of the use of Sanskrit in a Prākṛt inscription for reasons remarked above (see above p. 166). The letters peculiar to the Mayidavolu grant are found here also. *Sa, ma, ja, na* and *e* are alike in both (Ibid, p. 315). *Jā* is however peculiar, in this. But while there is a confusion between *ṣa, da* and *na* and *ṇa* in the Mayidavolu grant by the similarity of their form there is a separate sign here for *da*

¹ From the city of Kāñcī Yuvamahārāja (His Royal Highness) Śivaśkandavarma, of the clan of the Bhāradvajas and of the Pallava family, commands his agent at Dhañṣakāta.

which distinguishes it from *na* which in all other respects is as confusing as *na* of the Mayidavola grant. The passage given below (Fig. 76) is from the first two plates of the grant.

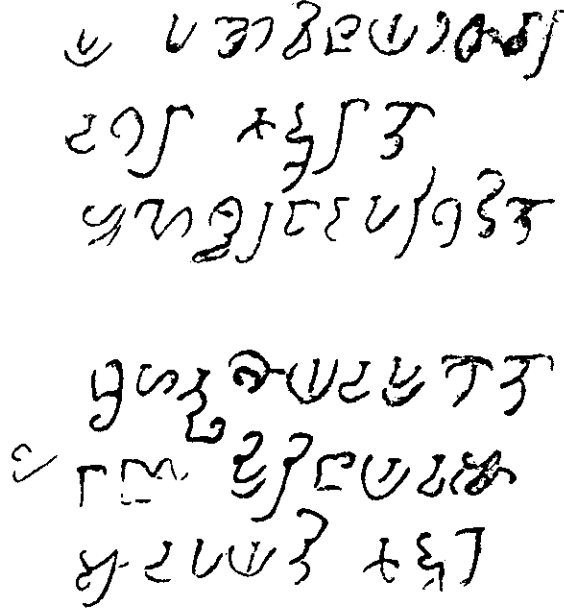


FIG. 76.

विजयखधावारा
 १ नगरा कूडूरातो
 महेश्वरपायपरिगहीतो
 बृहत्फलायनसगोतो
 २ राजा सिरिजयवमो
 अनपयति कुडूरे^१

The Western Indian script of the time is best represented in the early inscriptions of the Traikūṭakas and the Maitrakas. The plates of the Traikūṭaka king Dharasena, of the middle of the 5th century A.D., show the earlier Brāhmī type of letters not developed fully into the stage represented by those of the later Maitrakas or the earliest records of the Western Cālukyas of Bādāmi. The letters belong to the Southern variety and may be compared with the archaic ones of the Pallava records in Prākṛt of slightly earlier date. The angularities and breaks involved in the engraving of letters on copper plates are clear in this as in the early Pallava Prākṛt records. The serif of the letters is a thick short elongate dot. *Sa* is peculiar and one of its arms darts up after forming a sharp narrow angle to right. The lower end of verticals of letters, like *a*, *ā*, *ka* and *ra*, form an angle by slightly shooting up to left.

¹ From the victorious camp in the city of Kuḍūra king Śrī Jayavarma of the Brhatphalāyana clan and worshipper of the feet of Mahāśara commands—In Kuḍūra.

Tha is more or less like a spiral, *ya* a right-angle with vertical to right and an arc to the left end of the base line, a central slanting line ending with thick serif level with horizontal dividing the right angle. *Ma* is a triangle with the sides prolonged beyond the apex and with serifs. *La* starts to left as a query mark without dot, runs horizontally to right and up again vertically and does not curl, as in other scripts. *Va* is just a triangle with serif on top. *Sa* is peculiarly like *ya* of the script, except that the slanting middle line is doubled. The medial *ā, e, o* are small slanting top strokes. The square and triangle often determine the shape of letters of the script. The script of Dahrasena (*Epigraph. Ind.* X, p. 53) from which the following extract is taken (Fig. 77) is special, but the later developments in Traikūṭaka inscriptions show more regular forms.

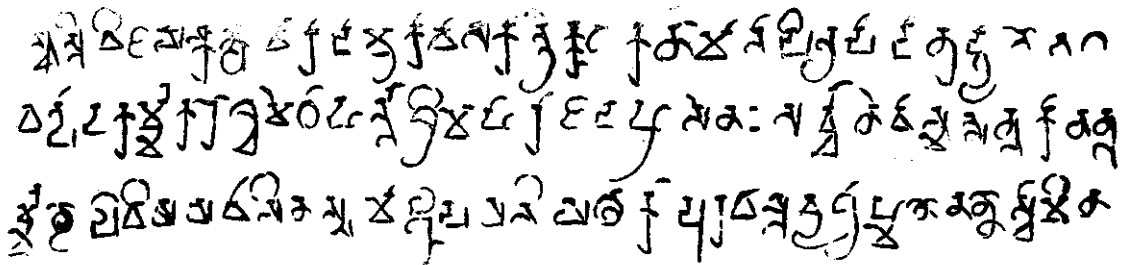


FIG. 77.

G.S. del.

खस्ति विजयस्कन्धावाराम्रकावासकात्त्रैकूटकानां मातापितृपादानुध्यातो भन
वत्पादकर्मकरोश्वमेधाहर्ता श्रीमहाराजदहसेनः सर्वनिवास्मन्तकान्त
र्मण्डलीविषयवासिनस्समाज्ञापयति यथा कापुरवास्तव्यब्राह्मणनणस्वामिन¹

The script of the Kuṣāṇa period in North India is the parent of the later northern type represented by the letters of the Allahābād *praśasti* of Samudragupta (*Fleet C. Inscr. Ind.* III, p. 1). The script of the Gupta period is characterised by three varieties, the Northern, Central and the Southern. The Allahābād *praśasti* is in the Northern class of letters which are in direct descent from the Kuṣāṇ alphabet. The Central Indian variety of Gupta alphabet is best represented by the Eran inscription of Samudragupta (*Ibid.*, p. 18) and the Udayagiri cave inscription of Candragupta II (*Ibid.*, p. 21), the former containing letters both of the box-headed and nail-headed type and the latter a fine series of the box-headed variety so typical of all the Vākāṭaka inscriptions. The Southern variety of Gupta script, which is a clear development from the inscriptions of the Kṣatrapas, is best illustrated by the Sāñchi inscription of Candragupta II and Skandagupta's Junāgaḍh inscription (*Ibid.*, p. 56). In addition there are other minor varieties, of which the most important is the one to be seen in the Bilsad inscription of Kumāragupta (*Ibid.*, p. 42) where the deep thick serifs, square letters and in long straight top strokes form a striking feature.

¹ Hail! From the victorious camp of Amrakavāsaka Śrī Mahārāja Dehrasena of the Traikūṭaka family, contemplative of the feet of his parents, performer of his duty to God, performer of the *Aśvamedha* sacrifice, commands all those resident in the Antarmandala area that to the Brāhmana Nanṇusvāmi residing in Kāpura....

The Eran inscription of Samudragupta (Ibid, p. 20) is a fine example of the use of box-headed and nail-headed type of letters. The letters are of the Central Indian variety with Southern characteristics. It is only a fragment and the small extract (Fig. 79) shows the nail-headed variety in the first line and the box-headed variety in the next two.

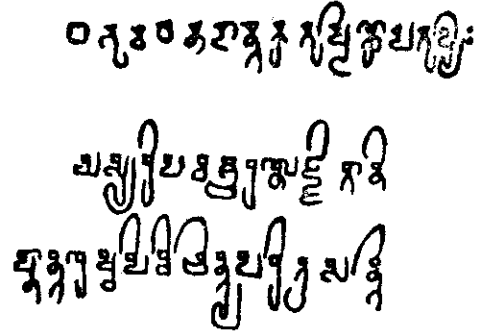


FIG. 79.

C.S.del.

बभूव धनदान्तकतुष्टिकोपतुल्यः
यस्य रिपवश्चरणोऽितानि
प्लान्तरेष्वपि विचिन्त्य परिव्रसन्ति¹

The Bilsad pillar inscription of Kumāragupta (Ibid, p. 43) is in the Northern variety of characters with beautiful letters square and triangular in shape, thick and long serifs and prolonged top strokes. The line given (Fig. 80) shows these characteristics very clearly.

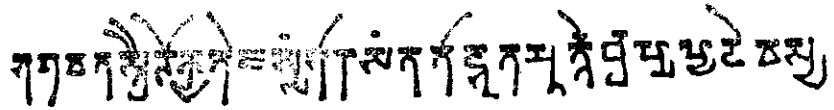


FIG. 80.

C.S.del.

भगवतस्त्रैलोक्यतेजस्संभारसंतताद्भुतमूर्तेर्ब्रह्मण्यदेवस्य²

The nail-headed type is best illustrated in the script of the Majhgawām plates (Ibid, p. 107) of Mahārāja Hastin of 510-11 A.D. (Fig. 81). The nail-head is triangular with the apex of the triangle downwards.

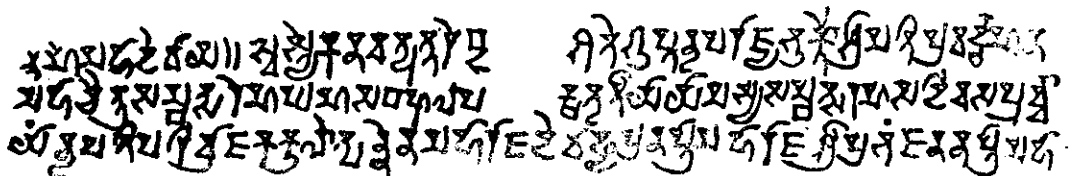


FIG. 81.

C.S.del.

¹ There was . . . equal to Dhanania (lit. bestower of wealth) and Antaka (lit. destroyer) respectively when pleased and enraged.

Those enemies are terrified when they recollect even in their dreams . . . his victories in battles.

² Lord Brahmaṅgaseva of wondrous form covered with the accumulated lustre of the three worlds.

नमो महादेवाय॥ स्वस्त्येकनवत्युत्तरेब्दशते गुप्तनृपराज्यभुक्ता श्रीमति प्रवर्द्धमान
महाचैत्रसम्बत्सरे माघमासबहुलपक्षतृतीयायामस्य सम्बत्सर मासदिवसपूर्वा
यां नृपतिपरिव्राजककुलोत्पन्नेन महाराजदेवाद्वयप्रनन्त्रा महाराजश्रीप्रभञ्जननन्त्रा महा¹

The alphabet in the inscriptions of Toramāna and Yaśodharman shows a beautiful development from the earlier northern and Gupta variety and in them is seen the origin of the beautiful Nāgarī script. The Brāhmī letters change into a type which, being intermediate between the earlier Gupta and 7th century Nāgarī, approximates more to the latter, and it is easily seen that it is the parent of the lovely writing in the Banskhera and Madhuvan plates of Harṣavardhana. *Ka* develops a thicker and angular lower end, which later tends slowly to shoot up to the left to meet the crossed stroke in the centre. *Ca* develops a projecting beak to the left, as also *da*. *Ya* still continues its earlier shape, and the loop to the left does not join the central stroke, nor does the latter separate itself from the lower line to form the letter, as we know it, in inscriptions of the next and subsequent centuries. *Ra* definitely thickens at the lower end. In conjunct consonants, *ra* appears sometimes above the line of the top stroke and occasionally in line with the body itself, as in conjunction with *ya*, and *rya* is just a stroke with the subscript *ya* below. *La* is tending towards its future shape. The passage chosen (Fig. 82) is from the Mandasor inscription of Yaśodharman (Ibid p. 146) who overcame the great Mihirakula.

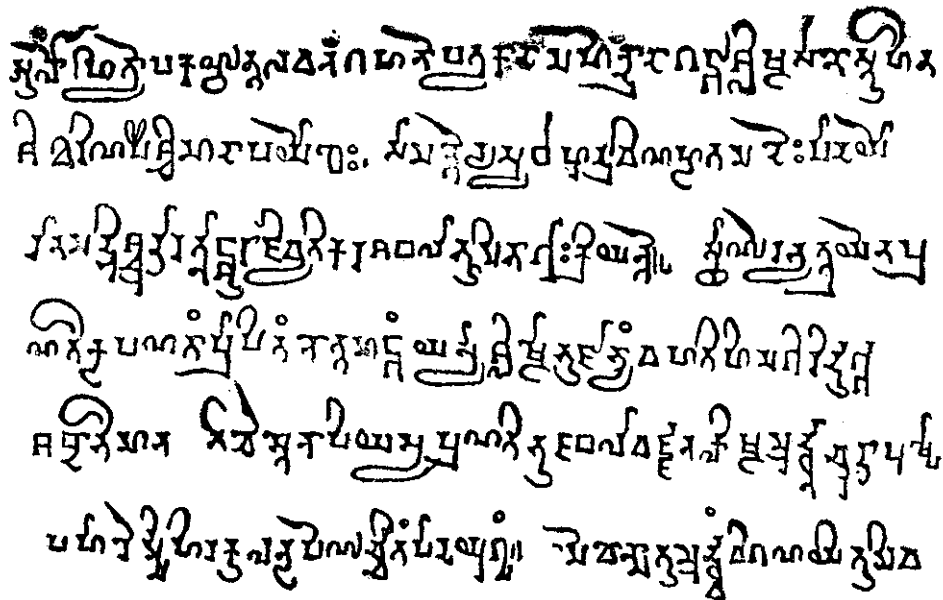


FIG. 82.

C.S. del.

¹ Salutation to Māhādeva! Hail! After a hundred years increased by ninety-one during the sovereignty of the Gupta kings, in the prosperous Māhācaitra year, in the third day of the dark fortnight of the month Māgha, on this day as specified by the year, month and day (Māhūrāja Hastin) born of the royal family of Parivrajaka Māhārājas, great grandson of Māhārāja Devādhyā, grandson of Māhārāja Śai Prabhāñjana.....

आलौहित्योपकण्ठात्तलवनगहनोपत्यकादामहेन्द्रादागङ्गाश्लिष्टसानोस्तुहिन

शिखरिणःपश्चिमादापयोधेः सामन्तर्यस्य बाहद्वविणहतमदैः पादयो

रानमद्भिश्चूडारत्नाङ्गशुराजिव्यतिकरशबला भूमिभागाः क्रियन्ते ॥ स्थाणोरन्यात्र

येन प्र

णतिकृपणतां प्रापितं नोत्तमाङ्गं यस्याश्लिष्टो भुजाभ्यां वहति हिमगिरिर्दुर्गं

शब्दाभिमानं नीचैस्तेनापि यस्य प्रणतिभुजबलावर्ज्जनाक्लिष्टमूर्ध्ना चूडापुष्पो

पहारैर्मिहिरकुलनृपेणार्चितं पादयुग्मं ॥ (गा)मेवोन्मातुमूर्ध्वं विगणयितुमिव¹

The development of the Nāgari script in the 7th and 8th centuries A.D. is interesting. It is at this stage that the letters are most decorative. The script of the Lakkhāmandal praśasti (*Epigraph. Ind.* I, p. 10) and the Bodh-Gayā inscription of Mahānāman (Fleet, *C. Inscr. Ind.* III, p. 274) present certain features which suggest affinities to the earlier script. The script in Harṣavarddhana's copper plate grants, though however of the same period, is a little different from the usual variety of the time, the flourishes being very pronounced for the superscripts. It resembles the script of the Jhālrapāṭan inscription (*Ind. Ant.* V, p. 180), the Banaras inscription of Pantha (*Epigraph. Ind.* IX, p. 60), and the Deogarh rock inscription of Svāmibhaṭa (*Ibid* XVIII, p. 125). The letters are very ornamental and are the most artistic in Indian calligraphy. The beauty of the letters composing the body of the inscription is surpassed only by the sign manual of the emperor in letters so beautifully and ornamentally incised that Bühler remarks, if King Harṣa really used these characters in signing all legal documents, he must have been a most accomplished penman, and the cares of Government and the conquest of India must have left him a great deal of leisure (*Ibid* IV p. 209). Harṣavarddhana was an eminent poet and litterateur, an able administrator, conqueror and a devotee of his faith. King Bhoja of Dhārā is an instance of a royal polymath. Penmanship in such cases was quite a simple affair. The florid lines of these letters have real companions in the South Indian Pallava Nāgari inscriptions of similar beauty in Mahabalipuram and in the Kailāsanātha temple at Kāñcīpuram. The letters have pronounced wedges, generally to the right top of the vertical, which slants to right. A tail

¹ From the neighbourhood of the river Lauhityā to the Mahendra mountain dense with palm-groves, from the snow-peaked Himalaya mountain with its slopes embraced by Gangā to the Western Ocean, feudatories, with their pride humbled by the might of his arm, render the ground variegated by the interplay of the rays of their crest-jewels as they bow at his feet. Whose pair of feet is adorned with offerings of flowers from the crest by even that king Mihirakula, with the head experiencing pain in the act of the low salute that brought down his might of arm, Mihirakula whose head had never been subjected to the humility of obeisance except to Sthānu (Siva) and by the embrace of whose arms the snow mountain bears the epithet Durga, i.e., well fortified and hence inaccessible. As if to measure heaven above or to count.....

is developed at the right end, which forms a short angle. This variety has been termed the acute-angled script, and the term *kuṭīla* has been discarded, though really the letters are *kuṭīla*, i.e., crooked, but beautifully so. The curved cross-stroke of the letters *ka* does not yet join the lower tip of the vertical to the left as in later letters. Occasionally *na* with its loop to left, attached to the top instead of to the vertical, appears like *ga* and causes confusion. The subscript *ya* is definitely curved and not like as it appears in the Mandasor inscription of Yaśodharman. The superscripts *ā*, *i*, *ī*, *e*, *ai*, *o* and *au* also run in flourishes like streamers, and are not feather-shaped, as in the Mandasor inscription and resemble those in the Jhālrapātan praśasti. The *upadhmanīya* is a semi-circle open above and with curled ends. The superscribed wedge-shaped 'r' never rises above the top line, obviously to leave it free for the medial signs *ā*, *ī*, etc. The passage selected (Fig. 83) is from the Banskhera plates of Harṣavarddhana (Ibid IV, p. 208). The inscription is couched in elegant Sanskrit prose.

० सुप्रसन्नोऽसौ मन्मथः सर्वैर्दुःखैश्च यत्रैतन्मया रक्षितं तत्रैतन्मया रक्षितं
 सुप्रसन्नोऽसौ मन्मथः सर्वैर्दुःखैश्च यत्रैतन्मया रक्षितं तत्रैतन्मया रक्षितं
 सुप्रसन्नोऽसौ मन्मथः सर्वैर्दुःखैश्च यत्रैतन्मया रक्षितं तत्रैतन्मया रक्षितं
 सुप्रसन्नोऽसौ मन्मथः सर्वैर्दुःखैश्च यत्रैतन्मया रक्षितं तत्रैतन्मया रक्षितं
 सुप्रसन्नोऽसौ मन्मथः सर्वैर्दुःखैश्च यत्रैतन्मया रक्षितं तत्रैतन्मया रक्षितं
 सुप्रसन्नोऽसौ मन्मथः सर्वैर्दुःखैश्च यत्रैतन्मया रक्षितं तत्रैतन्मया रक्षितं
 सुप्रसन्नोऽसौ मन्मथः सर्वैर्दुःखैश्च यत्रैतन्मया रक्षितं तत्रैतन्मया रक्षितं
 सुप्रसन्नोऽसौ मन्मथः सर्वैर्दुःखैश्च यत्रैतन्मया रक्षितं तत्रैतन्मया रक्षितं
 सुप्रसन्नोऽसौ मन्मथः सर्वैर्दुःखैश्च यत्रैतन्मया रक्षितं तत्रैतन्मया रक्षितं
 सुप्रसन्नोऽसौ मन्मथः सर्वैर्दुःखैश्च यत्रैतन्मया रक्षितं तत्रैतन्मया रक्षितं
 सुप्रसन्नोऽसौ मन्मथः सर्वैर्दुःखैश्च यत्रैतन्मया रक्षितं तत्रैतन्मया रक्षितं

FIG. 83.

C.S. del

ओ स्वस्ति महानौहस्त्यवजयस्कन्धावाराच्छ्रीवर्धमानकोटया महाराजश्रीनर-
 वर्द्धनस्तस्य पुत्रस्तत्पादानुध्यात
 श्शीवज्जिणीदेव्यामुत्पन्नः परमादित्यभक्तो महाराजश्रीराज्यवर्द्धनस्तस्य
 पुत्रस्तत्पादानुध्यातश्श्रीमद
 प्सरोदेव्यामुत्पन्नः परमादित्यभक्तो महाराजश्रीमदादित्यवर्द्धनस्तस्य
 पुत्रस्तत्पादानुध्यातश्श्रीम
 हासेनगुप्तादेव्यामुत्पन्नश्चतुस्समुद्रातिक्क्रान्तकीर्तिः प्रतापानुरागोपनतान्यराजो
 वर्णाश्रम
 व्यवस्थापनप्रवृत्तचक्र एकचक्ररथ इव प्रजानामर्तिहरः परमादित्यभक्तः परम
 भट्टारक
 महाराजाधिराजश्री प्रभाकरवर्द्धनस्तस्य पुत्रस्तत्पादानुध्यातस्सितयशः प्रतान
 विच्छुरित
 सकलभुवनमण्डलः परिगृहीतधनदवरुणेन्द्रप्रभृति लोकपालतेजास्सत्पथेपाज्जिता
 नेकद्रविणभूमिप्रदानसंप्रीणितार्थिहृदयोतिशयितपूर्वराजचरितो देव्याममल
 यशोमत्या श्रीयशोमत्यामुत्पन्नः परमसौगतस्सुगत इव परहितैकरतः परमभट्टारक¹

The early development of Nagari in Eastern India is best illustrated by the script of the plates of Śaśāṅka (ibid VI, p. 143). They are of the same time as those of Harṣavarddhana.

¹ Om! Hail! From Vardhamānakoti the victorious camp consisting of the great navy and elephant forces and cavalry—(There was) Mahārāja Sri Naravarddhana; his son that contemplated on his feet was Mahārāja Sri Rājyavardhana, born of Queen Vajriḍeḍi and a great devotee of the Sun god; his son that contemplated on his feet was Ādityavardhana, born of Queen Apsarodeḍi and a great devotee of the Sun god; his son that contemplated on his feet was Paramabhaṭṭāraka (the great Lord) Mahārājādhirāja Sri Prabhakaravarddhana, born of Queen Mātā senāguptadeḍi and a great devotee of the Sun god, whose fame crossed the four oceans, who subdued the other princes by his power and benevolence, whose wheel (of power) moved to well establish *varṇa* and *āśrama*, who removed the misery of his subjects like the rider of the chariot with a single wheel, i.e., Sun god; his son that contemplated on his feet was Paramabhaṭṭāraka (Mahārājādhirāja Sri Rājyavardhana) born of the Queen Yaśomatī of spotless fame and a great follower of Buddha being himself like Buddha completely given to doing good to others, who covered the entire globe with the canopy of his white fame, who assumed the lustre of Kubera, Vāruṇa, Indra and other Lokapālas (lords of the quarters) who satisfied the minds of applicants by any gifts of money and land acquired by righteous means, and who outshone in character all previous monarchs.

The script though of the acute angled nail-headed type, like that of the plates of Harṣa-
vardhana, has yet certain peculiarities that mark it out from the other. The curved cross
stroke of *ka* joins the vertical from the left wherever it occurs independently and not in
a conjunct consonant. The left limb of *sa* is open and not joined, as in the Banskhera plate.
Da, na, śa, pa, ma and many other letters differ. The tail to the right end is not pronounced
in this script. Superscript *ra* is above the top line and the medial strokes are simpler.
Subscript *ya* is of the earlier type. The *upadhmanīya* is an oval, divided by a central stroke.
The script is also illustrative of the Nāgarī of the time in the Kalinga country. The passage
chosen (Fig. 84) is from the first plate of the inscription.

FIG. 84.

C.S. del.

ओं स्वस्ति चतुर्दधिसलिलवीचिमेखलानिलीनायां सद्दीपा
गरपत्तनवत्या वसुन्धराया गौप्ताब्दे वर्षशतत्रये वर्त्तमाने
महाराजाधिराजश्रीशशाङ्कराज्ये शासति गगनतल
विनिसृत भगीरथावतारिताया हिमवद्गिरेरपरि
पतनानेकशिलासंहातविभिन्नवहिःपातालात्तज्जलौघै
सुरसरित इव विविधतरुवरकुसुमसञ्छन्नोमयतट¹ ।

Further development of the Nāgarī script in the Gangetic region is to be seen in the
charters of the Pratihāra kings of the 8th and 9th centuries A.D. The letters approach the
still later types and shed their affinities to the earlier Brāhmī, which can be seen clearly in
the script of Yaśodharman's inscriptions and even in the Nāgarī of the 7th century A.D.
Ā develops a full vertical stroke to right, instead of the small lower stroke to the right. The
curved cross stroke of *ka* joins the vertical to the left. The left limb of *kha* slants twice
and forms a shape that continues in all later types. The body of *ja* beneath the serif curves

¹Om! Hail! On this (gem-laden) earth, resting on the girdle of waves of the water of the four oceans and
having islands, mountains and towns, during the year 300 of the Gupta era, when Māhārājādhirāja Śaśāṅka was
ruling (from the bank of the Salimar river), with both its banks covered with a variety of flowers of excellent
trees, like the celestial river (Gaṅgā) that issued from heaven being brought down by Bhagiratha, its water
streams falling on the top of the mountain Himālaya being divided into many streams by dashing and break-
ing against many rocks....

twice like 'S', and the top end is continued slanting down to right. A small tail is added to *da* at its lower end to right. A loop is formed to the left of *ma* which continues in all later forms of the letter. A blade-like strip is added over half way from the bottom to left to the curved vertical of *ra*. The left limb of *śa* separates and curves at the top, and the central stroke is absent. The left limb of *ṣa* is a little more open than in the earlier type. The tail to the bottom of letters is more pronounced in this script, and the serif is a horizontal stroke and not a wedge. The letters are compressed. The superscripts *ā, ī, i, o, etc.*, are simpler. The sign for *e* specially is so simple that it is almost missed. The passage chosen (Fig. 85) is from the grant of the Pratihāra king Mahendrapāla of Mahodaya (*Ind. Ant.* XV., p. 105).

ॐ स्वस्ति श्रीमहोदयसमावासितानेकनौ स्त्यश्वरथपत्तिसम्पन्नस्कन्धावारात्परम वैष्णव
महाराजश्रीदेवशक्तिदेवस्तस्य पुत्रस्तत्पादानु तः श्रीदुयिकादेव्यामुत्पन्नः
परममाहेश्वरो
महाराजश्रीवत्सराजदेवस्तस्य पुत्रस्तत्पादा, . . . सुन्दरीदेव्यामुत्पन्नः परम्भगवती . .
क्तो महाराजश्रीनागभठदेवस्तस्य पुत्रस्तत्पादानुव्यात श्रीमदीसठादेव्यामुत्पन्न परमादित्य
भक्तो महाराजश्रीरामभद्रदेवस्तस्य पुत्रस्तत्पादानुध्यातः श्रीमदप्पदेव्यामुत्प
न्नः परम्भगवतीभक्तो महाराजश्रीभोजदेवस्तस्य पुत्रस्तत्पादानुध्यातः श्री चन्द्रभ
ट्टारिकादेव्यामुत्पन्नः परम्भगवतीभक्तो महाराजश्री महेन्द्रपालदेवः ॥ श्रावस्ती^१

FIG. 85.

C S. del.

¹ Om! Hail! From the camp teeming with many ships elephants horses, chariots and infantry stationed there—(there was) the great devotee of Viṣṇu, Mahārāja Śrī King Śaktideva; his son that contemplated on his feet and born of the queen Śrī Duyikādevī was the great devotee of Maheṣvara King Vatsarājadeva; his son that contemplated on his feet and born of queen Śrī Sundarīdevī was the great devotee of Bhagavati (Devi) King Nāgabhaṭa; his son that contemplated on his feet and born of the queen Śrīmad Isatādevī was the great devotee of the Sun god Mahārāja Śrī King Rāmahadradeva; his son contemplated on his feet and born of the queen Śrīmad Appa²devī was the great devotee of Bhagavati, Māhārāja-Śrī King Bhojadeva; his son contemplated on his feet born of the queen Śrī Candrabhaṭṭārikādevī was the great devotee of Bhagavati Mahārāja-Śrī King Mahendrapāla—Śrāvastī . . .

Still further development of this variety of Nāgarī is seen in the inscriptions of the Gāhaḍavalas of Kānyakubja. In this script the letters have become definitely more modern-looking. The horizontal stroke covers the entire top of the letter. The letter is compressed or attenuated and straight. The vowel *i* is different from the earlier one. The left limb of *kha* has a small triangular terminal loop. *Gha* is no more composed of three strokes, but the central line dwindles, giving a shape like that of the letter in other Nāgarī varieties of slightly earlier, contemporary and later dates. *Na* is composed of three vertical strokes with the top horizontal, as in all later forms of the letter. The middle horizontal limb, with terminal loop and with terminal triangle, distinguishes *na* and *bha* respectively, as in all later varieties. The tail of *ha* to left is lengthened. The medial signs *ā*, *e*, *o* are usually represented by vertical stroke to right, left and on both sides respectively of the letter. Some times *o* is represented by the superscript *e* and vertical stroke to right and *au* by the side strokes and superscript. The signs for *i*, and *ī* are gracefully curved at the top end. The present selection (Fig. 86) is from the copper plate of Candrādityadeva (*Epigraph. Ind. XIV.*, p. 197), dedicating a village to the shrine of Sri Candramādhava at Candravati and is couched in fine language describing the ephemeral nature of fortune and power and the necessity of righteous conduct.

अशुभो विदिते वता वीर्यमनियताऽमृतः कृतियमदि वशावला कस्यमपीय अमुमय कुमुमस्य
दिवसंयममनतगवरीकृटकवाहिनीसुलिनवालुका कूरमिवदिनामापुसाय तमवुराः कटु कयाकि
ला दुर्जरकितरताऽनविषयता वाऽमदयदा ता कनय सञ्जव निवेशा विलसितानी वदु उयवासा
गीदिविणि नददममनि रविमकस्तान्ना विर्यतादिनीः प्राप्ताणि कीर्तिः कृतिनिर्विश्वस्यवयंसा
अदति कयानेकादमसं वसवे तेषावनिताऽकतः अतीयाऽनिदिनि प्रयाकृततौ या युगादियर्षीणि
कमितनु अरिध रणायमर्षणशीम दादिकनवयद्वन्ना विविवन्तदवमु विमनुत्तत यितगणं
अयथि वातिमिसय रतया टनयदुमहसुत्ता विवसुय यदिति जलदहनयवनगमनयकमान
अहिनकिरिणा उण व पुषत्मा वदियति शकतमेतव ईतमम्यर्था नग्नो वाद्यद वस्य मजां विवस्य प्रचुव
यायमनह विजा हवुर्जुं ह्यैयटिपण्युयङ्गं निर्वर्त्य उपरिलिखितगामाऽम इतच्छलगिरिगहनगे त्रैष र

FIG. 86.

C.S. del.

अस्तु वो विदितैव तावदियमानित्यता जगतः कतिपयदिवसावलोकरमणीया मधुमास
 कुसुमसंप
 दिव सम्पत्। सततगत्वरं गिरिकटकवाहिनीपुलिनवालुकाकूटमिव देहिनामा युरापातमधुराः
 कटुकपाकि
 नो दुर्जरास्तिलखला इव विषयभोगाः सदसदालोकनपराङ्मुखानि वेश्याविलसितानीव
 दुरूपचारा
 णीन्द्रियाणि । तदिदमस्माभिरपि सकलसास्त्राविसंवादिनीभिः प्रामाणिकीभिः स्मृतिभिः
 विमृस्यषट्पंचा
 शदधिकसतैकदेससंवत्सरे वैसाखसिताक्षतःतृतीयायां सनिदिने अद्याक्षततृतीयायुगादि
 पर्वणि
 जनितसुरसरिद्धरणाघमर्षणे श्रीमदादिकेशवघट्टे स्नात्वा विधिवन्मन्त्रदेवमुनिमनुज
 भूतपितृगणां
 स्तर्पयित्वा तिमिरपटलपाटनपटुमहसमुष्णरोचिषमुपस्थाय क्षितिजलदहनपवनगगन
 यजमान
 तुहिनकिरणारुणवपुषमोषधिपतिशकलसेखरं समम्यर्च्य भगवतो वासुदेवस्य पूजां
 विधायप्रचुरपायसेन हविषा हविर्भुजं हुत्वा पितृपिण्डयज्ञं निर्व्वर्त्य उपरिलिखितग्रामाः
 साजलस्थलगिरिगहनगर्तोषर

The development of the Nāgarī script in the 11th century in Western India can be seen in the script of the grants of the Paramāra kings of the time. The Banswara plates of Bhoja of Dhārā (Ibid XI, p. 181) show letters that still retain wedges but considerably flattened and well on the way to a horizontal serif line. This top line, unlike earlier letters, covers the entire top. The letters however change and assume a different shape in later Paramāra inscriptions where the script resembles somewhat the ornamental variety of Candella given in the tables. Here sometimes *ka* in *ku*, *kr*, etc., has a terminal loop to left for its cross stroke. The left limb of *kha* is a curved elongate triangle, as also that of *ga*. *Ja* is composed of an S-shaped left limb and an undulating vertical right limb, joined at the top by a flattened wedge serif. *Na* is composed of three verticals, the central one short and issuing from

1 It is known to you, this ephemeral nature of the world; that prosperity is like the wreath of flowers in spring pleasant to behold only for a few days; that the life of beings is ever impermanent like dunes of sand particles of a stream on mountain slope; that sexual enjoyments are sweet on the surface but bitter in the end and not easily assimilated like bad sesamum seeds; that the sensory organs are not easily satisfied being opposed to scrutinising of right and wrong like the charms of a courtesan; hence having consulted the *Smritis* that are authoritative and in consonance with all *Sastras*, on this Saturday the *aksata* third day of the dark fortnight of the month of Vaisākha in the year eleven hundred increased by fifty-six on the *Aksata* tritīya of the Yugaḍiparvan, having bathed in the Adikeśāva ghaṭṭa at the sin-destroying confluence of the celestial river Gangā and Varuṇā and having satisfied according to rights gods, sages, men, animals and manes, having adored the hot-rayed sun who possesses effulgence effective in dispelling the gathering of darkness, having worshipped Śiva whose body is composed of earth, water, fire, wind, sky, sacrificer, cool-rayed moon and the sun and whose crest adornment is a slice of the lord of medicinal herbs (the moon), having performed worship of lord Vāsudeva, having made offerings of excellent milk food and ghee to the enjoyer of sacrificial ghee (fire) and having finished the rites of food-offering to the manes, we (hereby make over) the above-mentioned village with its areas of water and soil, mountain and forest, pits and marshes....

the upturned apex of the flattened wedge serif. *Pha* has a double curved stroke added to right, which forms a loop towards the top and slants down. *Ra* has a triangular central projection added to the vertical to left. The limbs of *Śa* are separated at the top and the left one curves in to the top and has a curved triangle at its lower end. The medial, *ā*, *e*, etc., are as in the script of the Gāhadavālas. The passage chosen (Fig. 87) is from the charter of Bhoja whose eminence as a polymath, poet, grammarian, rhetorician, architect, *yogācārya*, engineer, administrator, general and patron of letters is very well known.

ॐ जयति व्योमकेशोसौ यः सर्गाय विभक्ति तां । ऐंदवीं शिरसा लेखां ज
गद्बीजांकु राकृति ॥ तन्वन्तु वः स्मरारातेः कल्याणमनिश जटाः ॥ क
ल्पांतसमयोद्दामतटिद्वलयपिंगलाः परमभट्टारकमहारा
जाधिराजपरमेश्वरश्रीसीयकदेवपादानुध्यातपरमभट्टारकम
हाराजाधिराजपरमेश्वरश्रीवाक्पतिराजदेवपादानुध्यातपरमभ
ट्टारक महाराजाधिराजपरमेश्वरश्रीसिन्धुराज देवपादानुध्यात
परमभट्टारक महाराजाधिराजपरमेश्वर श्रीभोजदेवः कुशली ॥

FIG. 87.

C.S. del.

ओं जयति व्योमकेशोसौ यः सर्गाय विभक्ति तां । ऐंदवीं शिरसा लेखां ज
गद्बीजांकु राकृति ॥ तन्वन्तु वः स्मरारातेः कल्याणमनिश जटाः ॥ क
ल्पांतसमयोद्दामतटिद्वलयपिंगलाः परमभट्टारकमहारा
जाधिराजपरमेश्वरश्रीसीयकदेवपादानुध्यातपरमभट्टारकम
हाराजाधिराजपरमेश्वरश्रीवाक्पतिराजदेवपादानुध्यातपरमभ
ट्टारक महाराजाधिराजपरमेश्वरश्रीसिन्धुराज देवपादानुध्यात
परमभट्टारक महाराजाधिराजपरमेश्वर श्रीभोजदेवः कुशली ॥ 1

Towards the end of the 11th century A.D. the script of North-eastern India develops certain characteristics that distinguish it as the parent of the modern Bengali. These characteristics are clearly seen in the Deopara inscription of Vijayasena (Ibid I, p. 305) of about the close of the 11th century and beginning of the 12th century A.D. The letters, though of the Northern type, differ in some respects pronouncedly, as in vowels *i* and *e* and consonants *kha*, *ja*, *ña*, *ta*, *ṇa*, *ta*, *tha*, *pha*, *bha*, *ma*, *ra*, *la* and *sa*. In Vaidyadeva's grant

1 Om! Victorious is (Śiva) the one whose hair floats up skywards, who for the purpose of creation bears on his head that streak of the moon that is like the sprout of the seed of the universe. May those matted locks of the enemy of Smara (Cupid), brown like the bright curves of lightning towards the end of an aeon, always do you good. All well! The great lord paramount king of kings Śrī Bhojadeva, who contemplates on the feet of the great lord paramount king of kings Sindhuājadeva, who contemplates on the feet of the great lord, paramount king of kings Śrī Vākpatideva, who contemplates on the feet of the great lord, paramount king of kings Śrī Siyakadeva. .

(Ibid II, p.347) of slightly later date the change towards the Bengali script is clearer still. *Ra*, usually superscript, is sometimes used in the line itself. *Avagraha*, the first appearance of which has been traced in the Baroda copper plate of Rāstrakuta Dhruva (see Bühler p.91), is clearly used in this inscription. Bühler, on account of the definite shape of these letters towards Bengali, has named the script proto-Bengali, as the parent of the later script. The language of this inscription is undoubtedly beautiful. It has been composed by the famous poet Umāpatidhara, of whose poetic skill Jayadeva, his younger contemporary, वाचः पलवयव्युमापतिधरः धेयो कविक्षमापतिः ॥

has given his estimate along with that of Dhoyī, the author or Pavanadūta

i. e., Umāpatidhara allows his words to sprout, Dhoyī is king among poets. As may be seen from the following short passage (Fig. 88), the letters have an individuality all their own and the language is sweet but verbose, as described by Jayadeva.

उच्चित्राणि दिग्म्बरस्य वसंनान्यर्धाङ्गनास्वामिनो रत्नालंकृतिभिर्विशोषितवपुःशोभाः
 शतंमुभ्रुवः
 पौराद्याश्च पुरीः श्मशानवसतेर्भिक्षाभुजोस्याक्षयां लक्ष्मीं स व्यतनोद्हरिद्रभरणे सुज्ञो हि
 सेनान्वयः ॥
 चित्रक्षौमेभचर्म्मा हृदयविनिहितस्थूलहारोरगेन्द्रः श्रीखण्डक्षोदभस्मा करमिलितमहानील
 रत्नाक्षमालैः
 वेषस्तेनास्य तेने गुरुडमणिलतागोनसःकान्तमुक्तानैपथ्यनृस्थिरिच्छासमुचितरचनःकल्पका
 पालिकस्य ।
 बाहोः केलिभिरद्वितीयकनकच्छत्रं धरित्रीतलं कुर्वाणेन न पर्यशेषि किमपि स्वेनेव तेने
 हितम् ॥ किन्त
 स्मं दिशतु प्रसन्नवरदोप्यर्धेन्दुमौलिःपरं स्वं सायुज्यमसावपश्चिमदशाशेषे पुनर्दास्यति ॥ १

FIG. 88.

C.S. del.

उच्चित्राणि दिग्म्बरस्य वसंनान्यर्धाङ्गनास्वामिनो रत्नालंकृतिभिर्विशोषितवपुःशोभाः
 शतंमुभ्रुवः
 पौराद्याश्च पुरीः श्मशानवसतेर्भिक्षाभुजोस्याक्षयां लक्ष्मीं स व्यतनोद्हरिद्रभरणे सुज्ञो हि
 सेनान्वयः ॥
 चित्रक्षौमेभचर्म्मा हृदयविनिहितस्थूलहारोरगेन्द्रः श्रीखण्डक्षोदभस्मा करमिलितमहानील
 रत्नाक्षमालैः
 वेषस्तेनास्य तेने गुरुडमणिलतागोनसःकान्तमुक्तानैपथ्यनृस्थिरिच्छासमुचितरचनःकल्पका
 पालिकस्य ।
 बाहोः केलिभिरद्वितीयकनकच्छत्रं धरित्रीतलं कुर्वाणेन न पर्यशेषि किमपि स्वेनेव तेने
 हितम् ॥ किन्त
 स्मं दिशतु प्रसन्नवरदोप्यर्धेन्दुमौलिःपरं स्वं सायुज्यमसावपश्चिमदशाशेषे पुनर्दास्यति ॥ १

1 He gave highly decorated clothes to the naked one (lit. quarter-clothed); to the lord who assumed the form of a woman (lit. lord of half a woman), hundred damsels with charming brows all with the beauty

ओं स्वस्ति श्रीमतामखिलभुवनविनुतनयविनयदयादानदाक्षि
 ष्यसत्यशौचशौर्य्यधैर्य्यादिगुणरत्नपवित्रगकाणामात्रे
 यगोत्राणां विमल विचाराचारपुण्यशलिलप्रश्यालित क
 लिकालकलमषमषीणां महामहेन्द्राचलशेखर प्र
 तिष्ठितस्य सचराचरगुरोःसकलभुवनिनिर्म्मा
 णैकसूत्रधारस्य शशाङ्कचूडामणे भर्भगवतो गोकर्णस्वामिनः प्र
 सादात्समासादितैकशङ्खभेरीपञ्चमहाशब्दधवलच्छत्र
 हेमचामरवरवृषभलाञ्छनसमुज्वल समस्तसाम्राज्यम¹

The Pallavas usually used Grantha and Tamil for their inscriptions and there are floriated and plain varieties of this. A few of the Pallava inscriptions are found also in Nāgarī and a whole series of *birudas* are incised in this script in the Kailāsanātha temple at Kāñcīpuram. These *birudas* are in a script closely resembling the Nāgarī of Śrī Harṣavardhana. There are two varieties, the florid and the plain. The present inscription (Fig. 90) is from Śaluvānkuppam (Ibid X, p. 12) and is one of the early inscriptions in Nāgarī found in South India. The floriated variety shows beautiful flourishes and curls and peacock designs worked into the letters, specially the medials and subscripts which makes it rank with the most lovely floriated Canarese letters in the shape of swans, peacocks and other birds (see above p. 34).

the place of human bones, he so provided a dress to him that would be in accordance with the wish of the wearer of skulls at the time of the deluge. Making the whole expanse of earth devoid of a second golden imbrella by the (heroic) sports of his arm, he was left nothing that he can desire for. So what possibly can the half moon-crested one (Śiva) grant him even though pleased to confer a boon? But (this we pray) He will grant him final union with Himself at the end of his old age.

¹ Om ! hail! (of the family of the Gaṅgas) who are fortunate, pure by excellent qualities praiseworthy of the whole world like kindness, liberality, courtesy, truthfulness, cleanliness, heroism, bravery, etc., who belong to the Ātreya clan, who are cleansed of the soot of the sinful dirt of the Kali age by the holy water of pure thought and deed, whose entire royal glory is effulgent with the unique conch, drum, five musical instruments, white umbrella, golden chauri and precious bull emblem all obtained by the grace of the Lord Gokarṇasvāmi, the lord of all mobile and immobile things, the one architect for the creation of this entire universe, and the wearer of the moon as crest jewel....

श्री यमशुभ्र कयशु
 द्विषदृष्टायश्री २०: श्रीवि
 वे: कयशुशुभ्र कयशु वमशुनि
 व: गमुदिसकद्वियापुर्वेकविशुशुभ्र
 युत्तकोशुभ्रविभाये यपुशुभ्रविशुभ्र
 शिमंका: गमेदंकाशित चशुभ्रव
 वदुतयेदुव: केयास यशुभ्रविशुभ्रदुशुभ्र
 युशुभ्रविशुभ्रदुशुभ्र: कथायवशुभ्रदुशुभ्र
 श्रीशुभ्र दशुभ्रवशुभ्रदुशुभ्रदुशुभ्र श्रीशुभ्र
 शुभ्र अशुभ्रविशुभ्रदुशुभ्र: यशुभ्रविशुभ्रदुशुभ्र यशुभ्र
 यशुभ्रदुशुभ्रविशुभ्रदुशुभ्र: अंकाशुभ्रदुशुभ्र
 दगयाशुभ्रदुशुभ्रविशुभ्रदुशुभ्र: अंकाशुभ्रदुशुभ्र

FIG. 90.

C.S. del.

ज्योत्स्नापूर इवामलशशधरादाह्लादयन्मेदिनी यः प्रावर्तत यद्गतेन शशिनं मुक्त्वा कलङ्कः
 क्वचित्
 यस्यास्तोदयहिम्यशैलमलयाः सैन्येभदन्तावलीटङ्कक्षुण्णतटा भवन्ति विजय
 स्तम्भा जगन्निर्ज्जये ॥ असीद्यस्यविलोलवीचिकलिकावाहाग्रफेनावलीप्रेङ्खच्च
 मरचारुचौरचतुरा दासी चतुस्सागरी यज्जातस्य करोति मूर्ध्नि मुकुटीवन्धैकवन्धो रमाली
 लाम्भो
 रुहमण्डलेनललितां रत्नातपत्रश्रियम् ॥ यज्जातेष्वनुवन्धयाजिषु गतेष्वद्यापि तारापथे
 लक्ष्यन्ते
 हयमेधधूमनिकरा लग्ना इवाम्भोधराः यत्रत्यानिव चानुकर्तुमथ ते गत्वा चतुस्सागरी-
 म्वर्धन्त्याहृतमाहृत
 म्वसुमतीभूत्यै स्वसासेच्चयम् ॥ स्थेया क्षितिभृतां मूर्ध्नि स्फुरन्मुक्ताफ्रलोदयः वंशो कार्ण्य
 भूपानां सोयमा¹



FIG. 92.

The use of Nāgarī in South India has not been much. The Pallava inscriptions are the earliest to use it. Nāgarī was used for the legends on coins in the early Coḷa issues of Uttama

¹ May that family of the kings descended from Vṛṣṇi, shining like (a string of) pearls, remain above the head of kings; the family that like the pure flood of moon-light issued from the moon gladdening the world; on account of which the stain on the moon has disappeared; and for the conquest of the world by which the mountains of *Asta* (sunset) and *Udaya* (sunrise) Himālaya and Malaya serve as pillars of victory with their slopes battered by the chisel-like rows of tusks of elephants in the army for which the four oceans became a hand-maid (as it were) adept in waving beautiful chauris in the form of the line of foam in the hand-like crests of their moving wave, for those (kings) born in which the goddess Ramā (Lakshmi) produces the charm of a beautiful jewelled umbrella with her sportive lotus over their heads always associated with the crown; though those incessant performers of sacrifices born in which are no more, yet even now ought to be seen the volumes of smoke from their horse sacrifices as if sticking to the sky in the form of clouds; and as if to emulate those belonging to this family, they (*i.e.*, the clouds) fetch from the four oceans over and over again and shower the best of their essence for the welfare of the world.

Cola, Rājarāja and Rājendra Gangaikondān (Fig. 92). Similarly Nāgarī was used for the coin legends in Ceylon, e.g., Parākramabāhu, Vijayabāhu, Lilāvati, Sāhasamalla, Dharmāśoka, Bhuvanaikabāhu, all of which are similar to the coinage of the great Coḷa emperor Rājarāja (Smith, p. 327). Nāgarī was used on coins from Kerala also, and the coin with the legend *Vīrakeralasya* on obverse and *Gaṇḍaraṅkuśasya* on reverse of about the 13th century A.D. is an example. There is a rare instance of use of Nāgarī on a copper plate from the border of the Cera and Pāṇḍya country, but in Coḷa territory, the script used for inscriptions is only Grantha Tamil or Vaṭṭeḷuttu. In the area of the Pāṇḍyas, Nāgarī has been used for the legends of some coin types, which Elliot considers the earlier series (Elliot, p. 119 and pl. III, p. 129). In the Ceylon type of Pāṇḍya coins, Nāgarī is not used and the legend is in Tamil. So either this Nāgarī should be before the 11th century or after the 12th century, but, considering the letters, the latter seems more probable and probably the use of Nāgarī in Ceylon and Coḷa area influenced the adoption of Nāgarī in Pāṇḍya territories also. The type of letters used and the central lines separating the rows of letters, as in the case of Hoysala coins with Canarese legends, like *Talakūḍu-koṇḍa* or of the late Vijayanagara coins with Nāgarī legends, warrant this assumption. From the Vijayanagara period onwards, Nāgarī is used profusely for all copper plates, the signature alone being in Canarese Telugu. It is also used for coin legends. The type used here is known as Nandināgarī, and is a debased variety of the earlier Yādava and Kākatīya Nāgarī.

The earliest instances of the use of Nāgarī either in Western India or the Deccan are in the Samangad plates of Dantidurga and the Paṭṭaḍakal pillar inscription of Kirttivarman II (*Epigraph. Ind.* III, p. 1) from which latter the present extract (Fig. 93) is taken. Fleet opines that these characters stand midway between the characters of the Bodh-Gayā inscriptions of Mahānāman and the Samangad copper plates, as the former shows a further stage of development. The letters here have a triangular top with apex downwards, wherever the letters admit of it, as in the case of *ka, kha, ca, ja, ta, da, na, pa, ba, bha, ma, ya, ra, la, ṣa, sa, ha,*. The letters *pa, ma, ṣa, sa,* and *ya* have a top line, not yet fully developed. Nāgarī is about this time already in vogue in the Pallava area further to the South-East, as there are inscriptions of the close of the 7th century in places like Śāluvaṅkuppam and Kāñcīpuram. In the Deccan and Western India, Nāgarī was later freely used by the Rāṣṭrakūṭas, who succeeded the Western Cālukyas of Bādāmi. The inscription, from which the following extract is taken, belongs to the last of the Western Cālukyas of Bādāmi. This and Pallava Nāgarī thus represent the Nāgarī type occurring for the first time in Deccan and South India and in vogue in the 7th-8th centuries A.D. Further details about the extent of use, development, etc., Nāgarī in South India already discussed may be seen above (p.187).

ॐ नमो शिवाय ॥ स जयतु वामबाहुपरिचुम्बितवदनप
 योद्धरोस्थलो अलिकुललोललीलअलकावलिवि
 द्भृतकराग्रमण्डलो दशशतनयनकिरणपरिवाद्धित्तरागर
 सतिवद्धितो विकसितपुण्डरीकप्रतिमो हरगौरीसगमो स
 जयतु चुलुकिवंशवर्द्धमान रघुरिषकलियुग . . सृष्टमनसूर्यसु(त)
 मिव दानरतः सदा वृकोदरमिव साहसरसिक श्रीनिरवद्यवुदारवि ज
 यादित्गसत्याश्रय श्रीपृथिवीवल्लभ . . हाराजाधिराजपरमेश्वरभट्टारकेन¹

FIG. 93.

C.S. del.

ओं नम शिवाय ॥ स जयतु वामबाहुपरिचुम्बितवदनप

योद्धरोस्थलो अलिकुललोललीलअलकावलिवि

द्भृतकराग्रमण्डलो दशशतनयनकिरणपरिवाद्धित्तरागर

सतिवद्धितो विकसितपुण्डरीकप्रतिमो हरगौरीसगमो स

जयतु चुलुकिवंशवर्द्धमान रघुरिषकलियुग . . सृष्टमनसूर्यसु(त)

मिव दानरतः सदा वृकोदरमिव साहसरसिक श्रीनिरवद्यवुदारवि ज

यादित्गसत्याश्रय श्रीपृथिवीवल्लभ . . हाराजाधिराजपरमेश्वरभट्टारकेन¹

Further development of Nāgarī in the Deccan is illustrated in the Talegāon plates of the Rāṣtrakūṭa king Kṛṣṇarāja I (Ibid, XIII, p. 275) wherein the letters show an approach towards the type of Nāgarī used in later Rāṣtrakūṭa inscriptions. This changes in form may be seen in the letters composing the inscriptions of Rāṣtrakūṭa Kṛṣṇa III. The Bagumrā plates of Indrarāja III of 915 A.D. (Ibid, IX, p. 24), may be quoted as examples. The present

¹ Om Salutation to Śiva. May that union of Hara and Gauri be victorious, union in which the face and breasts are caressed (lit. kissed) by the left arm the fingers move out among the curly tresses resembling (in their movement) a swarm of bees in motion and which resembles a full blown white lotus with its beauty enhanced by the flush of the red which is made obvious by the rays of the thousand-eyed sun god. May he be victorious the promoter of the *Culuki* family like Raghu with mind uncontaminated by Kali sin, delighting in charity like the son of Sūrya (Karna), ever fond of adventure like Bhīma (lit. with attenuated belly like that of a wolf), the illustrious unimpeachable, noble Vijayāditya Satyāśraya, the beloved of Fortune and of Earth, Mahārājadhīrāja Paramēvara Bhaṭṭāraka.....

selection is from the second of these grants (Fig. 94). The full top stroke of *a*, *ā*, with sign of elongation of the earlier type from the centre of the vertical to right, the peculiar open triangle for the left limb of *kha*, *ga*, and *śa* are noteworthy. *Gha*, *da*, and *śa* with central stroke are of the earlier type. *Na* and *na* are nearer the later varieties. *Ṣa* has a stroke across, instead of aslant. *Ra* is more or less like the Eastern Ganga letter of the 11th century A.D.

कृत्वास्पदं हृदयहारि जघन्यदेशे स्वैरं पुनर्मुदुविमर्द्य च मध्यदेशं
 यस्यासमस्य समरे वसुधाङ्गनायाः काञ्चीपदे पदमकारि करेण भूयः ॥ आसेतोः सा
 नुवप्रप्रवलकपिकुलोल्लनफुल्लल्लवङ्गादा कैलासाद्भवानीचलचरणरणन्नूपुरो
 न्नादितान्तात् । यस्याज्ञां भूमिपालाः करमुकुलमिलन्मैलिमालायमानामानभ्रैरु
 त्तमाङ्गैरवनितललुठज्जानवो मानयन्ति ॥ जित्वा जगन्निजभुजेन पुनर्जिजगीषो :
 स्वर्गं
 विनेतुमिव तस्य गतस्य राज्ञः ॥ तत्राभवत्परमधाम्नि पदे पितृव्यः श्रीकृष्णराजनूप
 तिः प्रथितप्रतापः ॥ दिक्सुन्दरीवदनचन्दनपत्रभंगलीलायमानधनविस्तृतकान्तकी¹

FIG. 94.

C.S. del.

कृत्वास्पदं हृदयहारि जघन्यदेशे स्वैरं पुनर्मुदुविमर्द्य च मध्यदेशं
 यस्यासमस्य समरे वसुधाङ्गनायाः काञ्चीपदे पदमकारि करेण भूयः ॥ आसेतोः सा
 नुवप्रप्रवलकपिकुलोल्लनफुल्लल्लवङ्गादा कैलासाद्भवानीचलचरणरणन्नूपुरो
 न्नादितान्तात् । यस्याज्ञां भूमिपालाः करमुकुलमिलन्मैलिमालायमानामानभ्रैरु
 त्तमाङ्गैरवनितललुठज्जानवो मानयन्ति ॥ जित्वा जगन्निजभुजेन पुनर्जिजगीषो :
 स्वर्गं
 विनेतुमिव तस्य गतस्य राज्ञः ॥ तत्राभवत्परमधाम्नि पदे पितृव्यः श्रीकृष्णराजनूप
 तिः प्रथितप्रतापः ॥ दिक्सुन्दरीवदनचन्दनपत्रभंगलीलायमानधनविस्तृतकान्तकी¹

Though many inscriptions of the later Cālukyas are in the Canarese script, unlike those of the Rāṣṭrakūṭas, most of which are in Nāgarī, there are yet some in Nāgarī, as the earlier

¹ The hand of this (prince) without a peer in battle, having established itself on the alluring lower region of the earth-damsel, and after freely and softly pressing the central region, set itself on the regions of Kāñci (lit., the region of the city Kāñci and the region of the girdle, i.e., below the waist) even as a lover's hand after establishing itself on the hip of a damsel that lures the heart, and freely and softly pressing the waist again sets itself on the region of the girdle or beneath the waist. From the *Setu* with blossoming cloves pulled by herds of mighty monkeys on the mountain slopes, to the mountain Kailāsa, with its ends resounding with the jingle of the anklets on the moving feet of Bhavāni, kings honour with their heads his command appearing like a crest garland touched by their hands in adoration as their knees rubbed the ground. When by the might of his arm he won the earth and desirous of further victory went to heaven as if to conquer it, in his illustrious seat sat his uncle king Śri Kṛṣṇarāja of renowned valour. Of (that king whose) fame was full, expansive and bright, sporting itself in the designs in sandal paste painted on the faces of the damsels namely the quarters.....

tradition of the Rāṣṭrakūṭas persisted and later specially the Yādavas and to a certain extent the Kākatīyas continue to use the script. The script of the later Western Cālukyas of Kalyān is more or less a settled type, approximating to the modern Devanāgarī. The Nilgunda plates of Vikramāditya VI (Ibid, XII, p. 142) are an example of this script of the 12th century A.D., but the most neatly executed, but somewhat defaced, inscription of the time and reign is the Sitābaldī inscription (Ibid, III, p. 304) from which the present extract is taken (Fig. 95).

ॐ स्वस्ति संकतपकोतीसंवत्सरांतर्गतदशशतयत्र अष्टत्यधिकसकु १००८ प्रभवसं
वत्सरे वैशाखसुधतृतीयासुकदिने अद्य ह समस्तभुवनाश्रयश्रीपृथ्वीवल्लभम
हाराजाधिराजपरमेश्वरपरमभट्टारकसत्याश्रयकुलतिलकचालुक्याभरणश्री
मतिभुवनमल्लदेवमहीप्रवर्द्धमानकल्याणविजयराज्ये । तत्पादपद्मोपजीवीलत

FIG. 95.

C.S. del.

ओंस्वस्ति शकनृपकालातीतसंवत्सरांतर्गतदशशतयत्र अष्टत्यधिकसकु १००८ प्रभवसं
वत्सरे वैशाखसुधतृतीयासुकदिने अद्य ह समस्तभुवनाश्रयश्रीपृथ्वीवल्लभम
हाराजाधिराजपरमेश्वरपरमभट्टारकसत्याश्रयकुलतिलकचालुक्याभरणश्री
मतिभुवनमल्लदेवमहीप्रवर्द्धमानकल्याणविजयराज्ये । तत्पादपद्मोपजीवीलत¹

The next stage of development of Nāgarī in the Deccan is marked by the script used by the Yādava kings of Devagiri. The script used here closely resembles the rude variety of the late Cālukyan Nāgarī used in the Nilgunda plates which is a contrast to the neat and beautiful letters of those in the Sitābaldī inscription. These rudely incised letters are the parent of the still more clumsy letters of the Vijayanagara grants. The letter *i* is well on its way to the modern type, as seen in Vijayanagara script. *Na* and *tha* of both this and the contemporary Kākatīya script approach the late Vijayanagara form. *Dha* is peculiarly like *ṣa* without the top stroke. *Ba* for the first time has a stroke aslant on its belly, and this is continued in Vijayanagara script. The left limb of *śa* of the earlier type is slightly

¹ Hail ! In the year of ten hundred with eight added to it after the time of the Śaka king, in Śaka 1008, on Friday the 3rd lunar day of the bright fortnight of Vaiśākha of the year Prabhava; during the prosperous, auspicious and victorious reign of Mahārājādhirāja, Paramēśvara, Paramabhṭāraka Tribhuvanamalladeva, the refuge of the entire world, the beloved of Fortune and of Earth, the beauty mark of the family of Satyaśraja the ornament of Cālukyas; the dependent on his lotus feet.....

lower and a small stroke connects it with the top line. The passage chosen for illustration (Fig. 96) is from the Thāṇa plates of the Yādava king Rāmachandra of the 13th century A.D. (Ibid, XIII, p. 198).

पा दद्या सतरातिर कविनमत्पृथ्वीमिथःसंमिलत्सप्तां
 लो धिपयःप्रवाहकलनावित्रस्तविश्वत्रयाः। चंचत्कौतुककंदुकीकृतकुल
 क्षोणीघरश्रेणयो हेरम्बस्य जयति दानरभसभ्रांतालयः केलयः ॥ १ विभ्राण
 स्तुहिनाद्रिमौलिविलसल्लीलाभ्रलीलां भुवं दंष्ट्राग्रेण जगत्त्रयीमवतु स क्रीडावरा
 हो हरिः।यस्यांगव्यतिषंगिणी प्रसृमरा सा क्वापि सप्तानंबो नव्योन्निद्रतमश्रमांबुक
 णिकासंदेहमभ्यस्यति ॥ २ आस्ते पयोधिप्रतिमो यदुनां वंशः प्रतीतो भुवनत्रयेपि।

FIG. 96.

C.S. del.

पादन्यासभरातिरेकविनमत्पृथ्वीमिथःसंमिलत्सप्तां
 भोधिययः प्रवाहकलनावित्रस्तविश्वत्रयाः। चंचत्कौतुककंदुकीकृतकुल
 क्षोणीघरश्रेणयो हेरम्बस्य जयति दानरभसभ्रांतालयः केलयः ॥ १ विभ्राण
 स्तुहिनाद्रिमौलिविलसल्लीलाभ्रलीलां भुवं दंष्ट्राग्रेण जगत्त्रयीमवतु स क्रीडावरा
 हो हरिः।यस्यांगव्यतिषंगिणी प्रसृमरा सा क्वापि सप्तानंबो नव्योन्निद्रतमश्रमांबुक
 णिकासंदेहमभ्यस्यति ॥ २ आस्ते पयोधिप्रतिमो यदुनां वंशः प्रतीतो भुवनत्रयेपि।¹

The use of Nāgarī script continued during the Vijayanagara rule in South India and the Deccan, and its peak was from the 15th century onwards. Canarese and Tamil Grantha was also used but Nāgarī was the dominating script at least for the copper plate grants. The signature was usually in Canarese, either in the king's name as *Śrī Harihara*, etc., or in the name of the deity *Śrī Virūpākṣa*, *Śrī Triambaka*, etc. The Nāgarī used is known as Nandināgarī and is a clumsy derivative of the earlier Yādava and Kākatīya scripts. The illegible nature of the script and clumsy formation of the letters is, as Burnell thinks, probably due to the slow deterioration owing to the practice of writing on palm leaves (Burnell p. 53). Rounded letters, like Telugu, Canarese, etc., lent themselves for beautiful writing on palm leaves while the angularities of Nāgarī led to deterioration. The peculiarities to be noted in the script are that *bha* and *ta* are almost alike, *tha* and *dha* are like modern Nāgarī *dha* and *tha* respectively. The triangular formation to right top of *kha* characterises it. *Ga* is peculiarly like modern Nāgarī *ū*. *Na* has no terminal loop for its horizontal middle limb. *Ba* has a stroke against its belly. *Ra* is composed of a top and middle stroke against

¹ The sports of Heramba are victorious, sports wherein the three worlds are terrified by the sinking of the earth by the heavy tread of his feet, and consequent mingling of the streams of the seven oceans and where the rows of the principal mountains are made moving sportive walls. May that Hari in the sportive form of a boar protect the three worlds (Hari) who held the earth on the tip of his tusks even as she looked like a dark cloud on the peak of the snowclad (Himālaya) mountain, by the contact of whose body the entire seven oceans mixed up and flowed giving the illusion of drops of perspiration caused by the fatigue of one awake after deep slumber. There is the family of the Yadus famous in the three worlds and comparable to the ocean.

the vertical one. *Sa* is simpler than the earlier letter. The passage chosen (Fig. 97) is from the Satyamaṅgalam plates of Devarāya II, illustrative of the script of the 15th century A.D. and resembles the Daṇḍepalle plates of Vijayabhūpati (*Epigraph. Ind.* XIV, p. 68).

भूयस्यै भवतां भूत्यै मूयादाश्चर्यकुंजरः ।
 विहारविपिनं यस्य विदुर्वेदान् पुराविदः ॥ ६
 मं वः प्रचुरीकुर्यत् क्षोणीमभ्युद्धहृन्नयं क्रोडा
 कृतेरभूद्यस्य क्रीडापल्वलमंबुधिः । अस्ति क्षी
 राणंबोभ्रूतमपां पुष्पमनुत्तमं । अम्लानं यद
 निर्माल्यमाघत्ते शिरसीश्वरः । सदामोदनिधेस्त
 स्य संतानो यदुसंज्ञया । अभूदाश्चर्यमाधुर्यं वसु
 धायास्तपः फलं । संगमो नाम राजासीत्सारभू
 तं तदन्वये । प्रजानां यः समस्तानां प्रमोदो भूति
 मानिव सर्वरत्ननिधेस्तस्य संम्राडासीत्तनूभुवां
 मध्ये बुक्कमहीपालो मणीनामिव कौस्तुभः ॥

FIG. 97.

C.S. del.

भूयस्यै भवतां भूत्यै मूयादाश्चर्यकुंजरः ।
 विहारविपिनं यस्य विदुर्वेदान् पुराविदः । क्षे
 मं वः प्रचुरीकुर्यत् क्षोणीमभ्युद्धहृन्नयं क्रोडा
 कृतेरभूद्यस्य क्रीडापल्वलमंबुधिः । अस्ति क्षी
 राणंबोभ्रूतमपां पुष्पमनुत्तमं । अम्लानं यद
 निर्माल्यमाघत्ते शिरसीश्वरः । सदामोदनिधेस्त
 स्य संतानो यदुसंज्ञया । अभूदाश्चर्यमाधुर्यं वसु
 धायास्तपः फलं । संगमो नाम राजासीत्सारभू
 तं तदन्वये । प्रजानां यः समस्तानां प्रमोदो भूति
 मानिव सर्वरत्ननिधेस्तस्य संम्राडासीत्तनूभुवां
 मध्ये बुक्कमहीपालो मणीनामिव कौस्तुभः ॥¹

¹ May that wonderful elephant (Ganapati), whose pleasure grove seers have understood to be Vedas, give you all immense prosperity. May this (god) increase your welfare, for whom in his boar form as he raised up the earth the ocean became the sportive pit. There is the most precious, unfading flower never cast off and born of the milky ocean, which Śiva wears on his head. Of that repository of perennial joy (or sweet perfume) was born an offspring named Yadu, the wonderfully sweet fruit of the penance of the earth. In his distinguished family was born a king named Saṅgana who was like the joy incarnate of all his subjects. Of that repository of all gems among all his sons was the emperor Bukka, like the *Kaustubha* among gems.

The development of the script in Central India may be seen in the evolution of the box-headed letters which show southern characteristics. A very early inscription with letters of the box-headed variety is the Eran stone inscription of Samudragupta. In this inscription both the box-headed and nail-headed varieties occur as already pointed out (see above p. 172). The Udayagiri cave inscription of Candragupta is another early one in this script. But it is the Vākāṭaka inscriptions that are the most important of the box-headed variety. The Nachne-ki-talāi inscription of Mahārāja Prthviṣeṇa (Fleet *C. Inscr. Ind.* III, p. 233) is a very early one among the Vākāṭaka inscriptions. The letters are not shapely, as Vākāṭaka characters usually are, but the box-head is quite clear. The later charters of the Vākāṭaka family are well shaped and are typical specimens of this variety. The letters are quite angular and, though not attenuated, are more heightwise than breadthwise. But in the further development of this script, to be seen in the plates of the Kings of Somavamśa, the letters are more elongate heightwise and the crossing lines usually slightly extend beyond their limit giving special peculiarity to them, which distinguishes them from the normal earlier variety. The box head is found in the case of almost all the letters, including sometimes even in the letter *ja* that does not lend itself to it, but some letters like *e*, *ba*, *la*, etc., lack it. *Ja* has this box-head sporadically. It has it in the Siwani plates of Pravarasena II (Fleet, *Ibid*, p. 243) but not in the Dudiya plates of the same monarch. I has a small central vertical stroke. *Kha* has a regular oblong base as in other box-headed varieties. *Ba* has a square indentation in the middle of its outline to left. The medial signs are simple and like those of the contemporary early Pallava series, except that *u* and *ū* are more angular. The passage chosen (Fig. 98) is from the Dūdiya plates of Pravarasena II (*Epigraph. Ind.* III, p. 258),

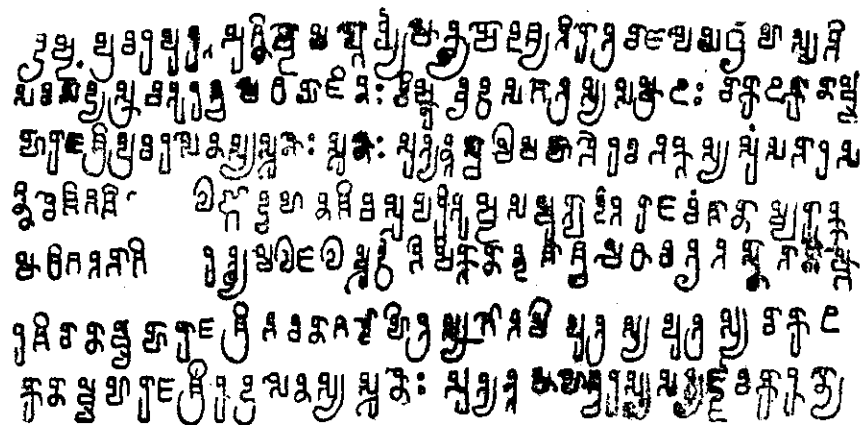


FIG. 98.

दृष्टम् प्रवरपुरत् अग्निष्टोमप्तोम्यामोक्थ्यषोडस्यतिरात्रवाजपेयबृहस्पति
मवसाद्यम्क्रचतुरश्वमेधयाजिनः विष्णुवृद्धसगोत्रस्य सम्राटः वाकाटकानाम्म
हाराजश्रीप्रवरसेनस्य सूतोः सूतोःअत्यन्तस्वामिमहाभैरवभक्तस्य अंसभारस
त्रिवेशि तगिवलिङ्गोद्रहनशिवमुपरितुष्टसमुत्पादितराजवंशानाम्पराक्र
माधिगनभागीरथ्यमलजलमूर्द्धाभिषिक्तानान्दशाश्वमेधावभृतस्नातानाम्भा
रशिवानाम्पहाराजश्रीभवनागदौहित्रस्य गौतमीपुत्रस्य पुत्रस्य वाकाट
कानाम्महाराजश्रीरुद्रसेनस्य सूतो अत्यन्तमाहेश्वरस्य सत्यर्ज्वकारुण्य¹

The Kadambas along with the Vākāṭakas had not only political but marital relationship with the Guptas and Gupta influences naturally can be observed. An important affinity is noticed in the box-headed script used in the early Kadamba inscriptions. The most perfect example of this variety is in the Tālagunda inscription of Kākusthavarman. The letters are long, narrow and artistic. The spread of the box-headed variety in the South, through the Vākāṭaka area, is observed in the Kadamba, Early Western Gaṅga, Śālanākāyana and early Pallava inscriptions of about the 4th-5th centuries A.D. The Tālagunda inscription supplies the most regular and artistic writing among early Kadamba inscriptions and this is greatly due to its being engraved on stone, unlike those of Mṛgeśavarman on metal plate (*Ind. Ant.* VII, p. 37 and *Epigraph. Carn.* IV, p. 136). Among vowels *i*, *a* and *e* are noteworthy, the first lacking the central stroke occurring in the Vākāṭaka letter. The letters *kha* and *ja* lack a rectangular base and the box-head respectively, as in the Vākāṭaka script. Note-worthy letters are *ḍa* and *ḍha*, *ta* and *thā*, the latter with the circle in the centre, *ba* with the small inward indentation to the left and *la* with its long and beautifully curved tail end. The subscript *na* and *ya* may be noted. Medial, *ā* as it occurs in two ways in the case of *ṇa*, i.e., in continuation of the letter or as an

¹ It has been seen from Pravarapura—the son's son of Mahārāja Śrī Pravarasena of the Vākāṭaka family an emperor, of the Viṣṇuvārdhī clan, and performer of sacrifices like *Agniṣṭoma*, *Aptoryyāma*, *Ukthya*, *Śodas Atirātra*, *Vājapeya*, *Bṛhasptisava* and *Sadyaskāra* and four *Āśvamedha* sacrifices, the daughter's son of Mahārāja, Śrī Bhavanāga, exceedingly devoted to the Lord Mahābhairava and of the Bhāraśiva family, whose royal house, originated owing to the supreme pleasure of Śiva at the act of their carrying the *Śivalinga* placed on their shoulder who were bathed on their head (during coronation) by the pure water of the (river) Bhāgirathī (Ganges) won by their valour and who had taken the *avabhṛta* bath after performing ten *Āśvamedha* sacrifices, son of Gautamiputra (Rudrasena) son of Mahārāja Śrī Rudrasena of the Vākāṭaka family (son of Prthvisena), who was exceedingly devoted to Śiva, was truthful, straight, merciful.....

तदुपचारवत्तदास्य तरोस्सानाम्यसाधर्म्यमस्यतत् प्रववृते सतीत्थ्यविप्राणां प्राचुर्यतस्तद्विशेषणम् ।

एवमागते कदम्बकुलेश्रीमान्बभूव द्विज्जोत्तमःनामतो मयूरशर्मति श्रुतशीलशौचाद्यलंकृतः

In the Kalinga and neighbouring areas the script used about this time was of the boxheaded type. A beautiful inscription of the Nalas, a dynasty of rulers of this area, shows letters approaching in beauty those of the Tālagunda inscription. This inscription at Poḍāgadh in the Jeypore agency of Visakhapatnam district (Fig. 100) is the only inscription on stone of the Nalas yet discovered (Ibid XXI, p. 153). The letters are more rounded than in the Tālagunda inscription where they are distinctly compressed narrow and heightwise. There is no box-head for *ja* as sometimes in the Vākāṭaka letter, and *ba* has no inward indentation to the left, as in the Vākāṭaka and Kadamba letter. Final *m* is represented by a miniature *ma* below the line. The marks of medial vowels and some ligatures are drawn with flourishes which however are not so sweeping as in the Tālagunda inscription.

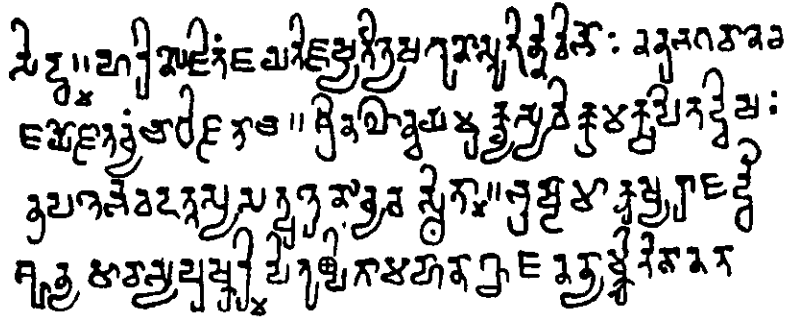


FIG. 100.

c.s. del,

सिद्धम् ॥ हरिणा जितं जयति जेष्यतीत्येषगुणस्तुतिर्न विभोः ननु भगवानेव
जयो जेतव्यं चाधिजेताच ॥ श्रीनलान्वयमुख्यस्य विक्रमक्षपितद्विषः

¹ Then arose a high family of the twice-born with its circle of good qualities expanding like the rays of the moon, in which the sons of Hariti trod the path of the three Vedas, and which was born of the foremost of ṛṣis Mānavya ; in which the hair was wet with the bath of holy water of final ceremonies of different sacrifices, which was well versed in delving deep into the sacred lore, lit the (sacrificial) fire according to proper rites and drank soma (juice); the interior of whose houses was resounding with the study chant of the six subjects of study (*Vedāngas*) all beginning with *Om*; that performed without any simplification *Chāturmāsya* sacrifice, burnt offerings, oblations, animal sacrifices and fortnightly *śrāddha*; with the daily ceremonies always fruitful by three sacrifices in the house always resorted to by guests, and having a single blooming Kadamba tree growing in the vicinity of the house. By the tending of this tree for these Brāhmaṇa co-students there arose generally that distinguishing epithet which was the nature of sameness of name with the tree; when thus flourished the Kadamba family there arose an illustrious Brāhmaṇa named Mayūrasarman who was adorned with virtues like scholarship, conduct and purity.

नृपतेर्भवदत्तस्य सत्पुत्रेणाव्यवस्थिताम् ॥ भ्रष्टामाकृश्यराजद्धिं
शून्यमावास्य पुष्करीम् पितुःपितामहानाश्च जनन्याम्कृतिनानता¹

The use of box-headed script for the Kalinga inscriptions may be noticed in some, if not all, wherein the unmixed Southern type of letters is used. The Rāgolu plates of Śaktivarman (Ibid XII. p. 1) and Brhadprostha plate of Umāvarman (Ibid, p. 4) present the best examples. The box is filled and is not marked in outline, as in the regular box-head letters of the Vākāṭaka and Kadamba inscriptions. The letters are buxom, and not narrow and artistic, like the onces in the Tālagunda inscription. The following passage is from the Rāgolu plates ; (Fig. 101).

FIG. 101.

c.s. det.

एवमेतस्मै गोत्राय दत्तः अभटप्रावेश्यः
सर्व्वकरप्रदेयैश्च परिहृतस्त ज्ञात्वा युष्माभि
पूर्व्वप्रवृत्तया मर्यादयोपस्थानङ्कृतं
व्यम्मेयहिरण्याद्यश्चोपनेयम्²

Another early Eastern Gaṅga inscription, dated in the 39th year of the Gaṅga era, is chosen for letters showing the box-head type. The box-head is not very prominent, as in the Vākāṭaka or Kadamba inscriptions, though it is sufficiently obvious. The letters

¹ Success. There can be no praise of the qualities of the all parvasive Lord in the strain ' Hari has been victorious or is victorious or will be victoriou?; rather it is the Lord Himself Who is victory, the object of victory and the victorious. By the illustrious son of King Bhavadatta the fore most of the Nala family and the valiant destroyer of enemies was recaptured the uncertain and lost royal glory and repopled the deserted city Puskarī of his fathers and fore fathers and to his mother.

² To him belonging to this Gotra is it (the land) given ; it may not be entered by the King's servants and is exempt from all taxes and dues; knowing this you should abide by the obligations already prevailing and bring measurable things, gold, etc.

are more buxom and not narrow like those of the Tālagunda inscription and the medial vowels are not expressed with flourishes. The following passage (Fig. 102) is from the Jirjingi plates of Ganga Indravarman (Ibid XV, p. 281).

Handwritten inscription in an ancient South Indian script, likely Grantha or Tamil, showing various characters and ligatures. The text is arranged in several lines, with some characters appearing to be in a different script or dialect than the main body of text.

FIG. 102.

c.s. del.

स्वस्ति अमरपुरप्रतिस्पर्द्धिश्रीमद्वन्तपुराद्भगवतस्सकलभु
वनतलोत्पत्तिस्थितिप्रलयहेतोः परमेस्वरस्य सततप्रणा
मावाप्तः पुण्यसञ्चयप्रभावनिरस्ताशेषदुरितो गाङ्गामलकुल
गगनतलसहस्ररश्मिः अनेकचतुर्दन्तसमरविजय
विमलविकोशनिस्त्रिदशधारासमाक्रान्तसकलसामन्त
नृपतिमण्डलाधिपतिः मकुटनिहितरुचिरपद्मराग
प्रभाप्रसेकपरिष्वङ्गपिङ्गाङ्गीकृतचरणयुगलः ¹

The box-head loses its prominence in the Ganga plates of a slightly later date, though it can still be distinguished. The Acyutapuram plates of Indravarman (Fig. 103), dated in the 87th year of the Ganga era, (Ibid III, p. 127) and later than the previous one by half a century are examples. The letters are definitely squat and dumpy. The loop for *na* is separated from and joined to the vertical line, as in Nāgarī. Medial is indicated by an upturned crescent or circlelet in a large loop above the letter. *Ba* as usual lacks the usual indentation to left.

¹ Om! Hail! From Dantapura that emulates the city of gods, who is rid of all sins by the efficacy of merit earned by constant obeisance to Lord Paramesvara, the cause of creation, existence and destruction of the entire world, the thousand-rayed sun in the expanse of the firmament of the spotless family of the Gangas, the overlord of hosts of all vaasal kings overpowered by the edge of the spotless unsheathed sword victorious in many battles with numerous four-tusked elephants, whose pair of feet was reddened by the embrace through the scattering of the red lustre of the lovely gems set in the crowns of (vassals).

ॐ स्वस्ति सर्वतुरमणीयाद्विजयलिङ्गनगरात्सकलभुवननिर्ममाणैक
 सूत्रधारस्य भगवतो गोकर्णास्वामिनश्चरणकमलयुगलप्रणामा
 दपगतकलिकलङ्को विनयनयसम्पदामाधारः स्वासिधारापरि
 स्पन्दाधिगतसकलकलिङ्गाधिराज्यश्चतुरुदधितरङ्गमेखलावनित
 लप्रविततामलयशाः अनेकसमरसंक्षोभजनितजयशब्दो
 गाङ्गामलकुलप्रतिष्ठः प्रतापातिशयानामितसमस्तसामन्त¹

FIG. 103.

c.s. del.

स्वस्ति सर्वतुरमणीयाद्विजयलिङ्गनगरात्सकलभुवननिर्ममाणैक
 सूत्रधारस्य भगवतो गोकर्णास्वामिनश्चरणकमलयुगलप्रणामा
 दपगतकलिकलङ्को विनयनयसम्पदामाधारः स्वासिधारापरि
 स्पन्दाधिगतसकलकलिङ्गाधिराज्यश्चतुरुदधितरङ्गमेखलावनित
 लप्रविततामलयशाः अनेकसमरसंक्षोभजनितजयशब्दो
 गाङ्गामलकुलप्रतिष्ठः प्रतापातिशयानामितसमस्तसामन्त¹

The box-headed type of script occurs in the early Pallava charters of about the 5th century A.D. The Māngalūr (*Ind. Ant.* V, p. 154), Uruvapalli (*Ibid.*, p. 51) and Pikira (*Epigraph. Ind.* VIII, p. 159) grants are examples. The letters of the Pikira and Māngalūr grants are not so well-shaped, as in the Uruvapalli grant, in which the box-head is clearly depicted, as in the Vilavaṭṭi grant. The box-head in the case of these grants is a little smaller than in those of the Vākāṭaka and Kadamba inscriptions, but is nevertheless clear. This represents the box-head as it occurs in the Tamil area, and the script has its echoes in Java in the inscription of Pūrṇavarman, the script of which closely resembles that in Pallava grants. Among vowels, *e* and *u* are to be noted. The medial vowels are drawn with ornamental flourishes which to an extent approach to the grace of those in the Tālagunda inscription as *i*, *ī*, *u*, the last occurring in two forms in the usual mode and downward curve, as in *gu* and *bhu*. *ū*, *e* and *r* are also similarly drawn. In all these cases the signs are similar in these allied inscriptions. *O* is specially peculiar in the case of *lo*. Among consonants *ja* does not have a box-head as sometimes in Vākāṭaka script. *Ta* has a loop which *na* lacks. Among subscript *ya* and *ra* are drawn with flourishes. The final *m*, as in *Pallavānām*, is

¹ Om, Hail; From the victorious Kalinganagara, pleasant in all seasons—who is free from the blemishes of the Kali age by obeisance to the lotus-like pair of feet of Lord Gokarnomsavami, the supreme architect for the creation of the entire world, who is the receptacle of the wealth of modesty and wisdom, who gained overlordship of the entire Kalinga by the movement of the edge of his sword, whose spotless fame covered the surface of the earth girdled by the waves of the four oceans, who has caused the shouts of victory in the turmoil of many battles, famous of the pure Ganga family, who has subdued all his feudatories by his great might.

expressed by a smaller letter below the line, as in the Tālagunda inscription. The example chosen here is from the Pikiria grant of Simhavarman (Fig. 104).

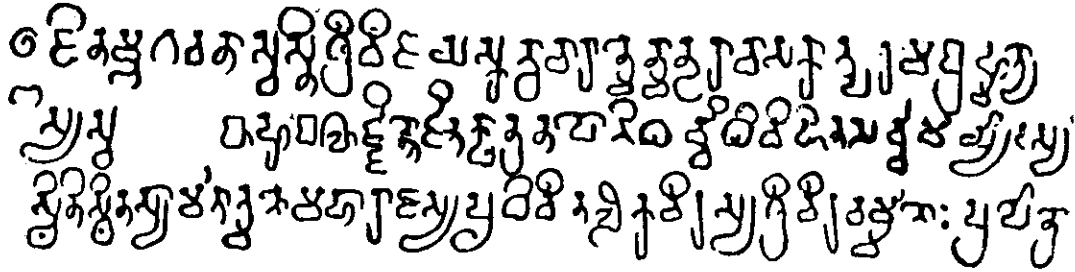


FIG. 104.

O.S. del.

© जितम्भगवता स्वस्तिश्री विजयस्कन्धावारान्मेन्मानूरावासकात्परम ब्रह्मण्य

१ स्य स्वाहुबलाज्जितोज्जितक्षात्रतपोनिध्विधिविहितसर्वमय्यादिस्य
स्थितिस्थितस्यामितात्मनो महाराजस्य पृथिवीतलैकवीरस्य श्रीवीरवर्मणः
प्रपौत्रो^१

The best example of box-headed script in the Pallava area is to be seen in the Vilavaṭṭi plates (Fig. 105), in which the letters are even more beautifully shaped than in the Uruvapalli plates. The box-head is clearly marked, though the size is smaller than in the Vākātaka and Kadamba letters. Some of the letters in this grant are nail-headed or arrow-headed and the occurrence of the box-head together with the nail-head reminds us of the Eran Gupta inscription. The noteworthy point about the letters is that, in the case of *a* and *śa*, the small curl to the right inside, as in the other inscription, is here a neat small square. *Ba* has sometimes an inward indentation to the left, which is not invariable. The box-head for *ga* and *śa* is absent. *Na* and *ta* are distinguished by the absence and presence of the loop. *Ja* also lacks a box-head which sometimes occurs in the Vākātaka letter. Final *m* and *t* are expressed by miniature letters below the line. In this particular inscription the peculiar Tamil letter *a* occurs. Medial *ī* is expressed by curling one end of the loop. *Kha* has a rectangular bottom. The following passage is from the Vilāvaṭṭi plates of Simhavarman (Ibid XXIV, p. 296).

¹ Om ! The Lord (Viṣṇu) has been victorious ! Hail ! Prosperity ! From the victorious camp of Menmānūr the great grandson of Mahārāja Śrī Viravarma, the most virtuous repository of penance and great warriorhood won by the might of his arm, who established all rules of conduct according to the precept of the *Sāstras*, who was abiding by the law and immeasurably great.....

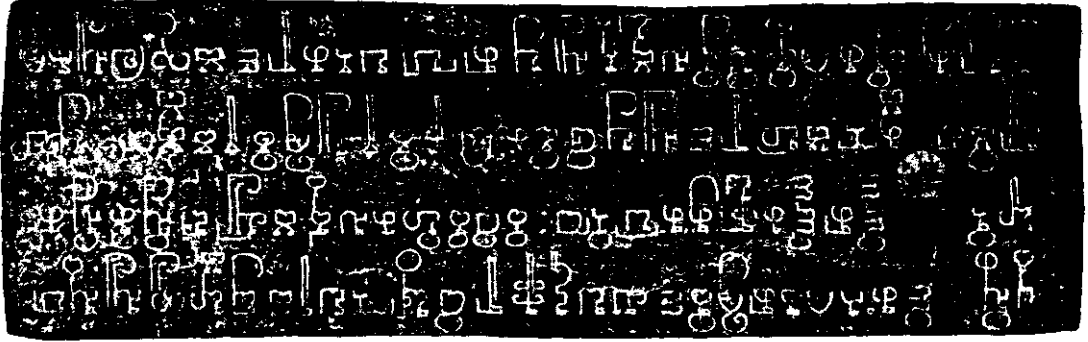


FIG. 105.

स्वस्ति जितं भगवता श्रीविजयपट्टककराधिष्ठाने परमब्रह्मण्यस्य स्वबा
हुनिज्जितार्ज्जितक्षात्रतदोनिधेः विपिविहितसर्वमर्यादास्थितिस्थित
स्यामितात्मनो महाराजस्य पृथिवितलैकवीरस्य श्रीवीरवर्मणः प्रपौ
त्रस्यात्युच्चितशक्तिसिद्धिसम्पन्नस्य प्रतापोपनतराजमण्डलस्य भग¹

Closely akin to the letters of the Uruvapalli grant and the Tālagunda inscription in the general features and ornamental formation, are the letters of the Western Ganga plates of Madhava II (Fig. 106) from Penukonda (Ibid XIV, p. 334). The only difference is that the box-head is lacking. This variety leads us on to the Western Indian script of which the Valabhī inscriptions and the Western Cālukyan, Rāṣṭrakūṭa and other Canarese ones are the most noteworthy, as the Yādava and Gurjjara inscriptions invariably, and Rāṣṭrakūṭa inscriptions frequently, used Nāgarī, and this line of development from Brāhmī merges in the Canarese-Telugu variety. The box-headed type continues with reinforced angularities and emphasised box-head in the grants of the kings of Śarabhapura and other inscriptions from Central Indian till about the 8th–9th century A.D. This inscription, along with others of its time in South India, begins with such expressions as *Jitam Bhagavatā* which may be found in the early Pallava inscriptions noted above. In the Western Ganga plates this is amplified and followed by the lines *Gataghanagaganābhena Padmanābhena*. It is to be noted that the inward indentation to the left for *ja*, *pa*, *ba* is pronounced, *ya* is so formed that there is a regular loop to the left, *la* begins with a larger curl larger than its compressed belly.

¹ Hail ! The Lord (Viṣṇu) has been victorious. From the royal seat at Vijayapaṭṭakara—the great grandson of Mahārāja Śrī Viravarman, the most virtuous, the repository of penance and warriorhood won by the might of his army, who established all rules of conduct according to precept of the *Sāstras*, who was abiding by the Law and immensely great (grandson of Mahārāja Śrī Skandavarman) of very great power and success, with the whole circle of kings subdued by his effulgence.....

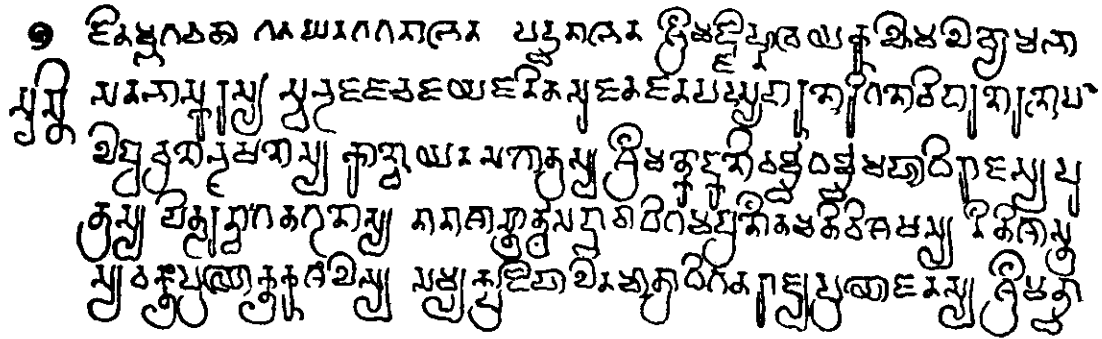


FIG 106.

C.S. del.

© जितम्भगवता गतघनगगनाभेन पद्यनाभेन श्रीमज्जाह्नवेयकुलामल व्योमभा
 स्वस्ति सनभास्करस्य स्वभुजवजयजनितसुजनजनपदस्य दारुणारिगणविदारणरणोप
 लब्धव्रणभूषणस्य काण्वायनसगोत्रस्य श्रीमत्कोङ्कणिवर्मधर्ममहाधिराजस्य १
 त्रस्य पितुरन्वागतगुणस्य नानाशास्त्रार्थसद्भावाधिगमप्रणीतमतिविशेषस्य नीतिशास्त्र
 स्य वक्तृप्रयोक्तृकुशलस्य सम्यक्प्रजापालनमात्राधिगतराज्यप्रयोजनस्य श्रीमन्मा^१

The development of the Southern variety of Gupta script in Western India and Northern Deccan is found mainly in the inscriptions of the Traikūṭakas, Maitrakas and the Western Cālukyas. Of these, the Maitraka records are in a script that follows palaeographically the Junāgadh inscription of Skandagupta (*Fleet C. Inscr. Ind.* III, p. 56) with frequent affinities to the Mandasor inscription of Kumāragupta (*Ibid.*, p. 79). These letters are at once buxom and more angular in their contour than those in the Western Cālukyan, though the angularity is not so pronounced as in Vākāṭaka and Somavamśi letters. The projecting lower end of letters like *a*, *ā*, *ka*, *ra* form an open rectangle. *Visarga* is indicated by two dashes rather than dots. Similarly dashes take the place of dots in *i*. *Ca* is more after the earlier Western Indian type. The loop of *na* and *ṇ* is broken, as also the central stroke of *ka*, and the limbs are indicated by separate bits of strokes. As in *ca*, so in *bha* this separate formation of the neck of the letter is lacking. *Ma* and *sa* follow the Southern variety of the Gupta letter *in toto*. *Ya* is still of the earlier type, lacking even the indications of a loop to the left. The tail of *la* which encircles the body appears more prominent. *Va* has the contour of a cone

¹ Hail! Om! the Lord Padmanābha of the hue of the sky free from clouds has been victorious. Of the prosperous Mādhavavarma, of excellent qualities imbibed from his father, with keen intelligence trained by the understanding of the essential purpose of different sciences, clever in the exposition and practice of the signs of moral codes, who had achieved the purpose of a kingdom only by the proper protective rule of his subjects, son of the virtuous Mahārāja, the prosperous Konkapivarma, of the Kāṇvāyana clan, the Sun lighting up the firmament of the spotless Ganga family, who made his territory full of good men by the speedy conquest with the might of his arm who was adorned by the wounds caused by a host of fierce foes,.....

with the top cut, as, like *ca* and *bha*, the neck of the letter is undeveloped and the earlier Kuṣāṇ and the Traikūṭaka type is continued. *Ga* and *śa* lack the inward terminal curve of the left limb, as in contemporary Western Cālukyan, and *śa* has the usual central stroke. Subscript *ra* is drawn somewhat flattened. The passage chosen (Fig. 107) is from the Palitānā plates of Dhruvasena, I, the Maitraka king of Valabhī, dated in the Gupta year 210 i.e., 529 A.D. (*Epigraph. Ind.* XI p. 109).

FIG. 107.

C.S. del.

© स्वस्ति ।वलभीतः प्रसभप्रणतामित्राणां मैत्रकानामतुलबलसंपन्न मण्डलाभोग
संसक्तसंप्रहारशतकलब्धप्रतापः प्रतपोपनतदानमनाज्ज्वोपाज्जितानुरगोनुरक्त
मौलभूतमित्रश्रेणीबलावप्तराजश्रीः परममाहेश्वरस्सेनपतिश्रीभटवकः¹

The parent of the Canarese-Telugu variety of script is the early Cālukyan script that spread both in the west and east. The earliest Eastern Cālukyan script is but essentially similar to that existing in Pulikeśin's time in his own western territory. The script in the 6th century Bādāmī cave inscriptions of Maṅgaleśa (Fig. 108), the Aihole and Paṭṭadakal inscriptions marks an initial stage. The earliest Kadamba, Western Ganga also contribute to the formation of the regular Canarese-Telugu variety. The script in Maṅgaleśa's time shows certain peculiar features, which suggests the existence even then of certain peculiarities that occur in the letters at a later stage in their development. For instance, two types of the lower limb of *ā* and *a* as a curved flourish and as compressed open rectangle; *ka* and *ra* with the lower limb closed to the left or open. The scribes seem to vacillate here. The left limb of *ga* and *śa* curves in terminally. *Na* usually, and *na* always lacks a loop but they are both derived from the looped ones. *Ta*, though lacking an actual loop, suggests a cursive development from a loop, the broken part of which may be noted, and later development makes this clear. *Ya* is looped and is akin to the earlier northern form. The peculiar shape of *kha* is to be noted. Medial *i* in this, as in the later development, is shaped like a circle and *ī* as an incomplete circle with curled left end. A cursory form of medial *ū* is seen in *pū*, *bhū*, etc. The following passage is from the Bādāmī cave inscription of Maṅgaleśa (*Ind. Ant.* VI p. 363; X p. 58).

¹ Om ! Hail ! from Valabhī—to the family of the Maitrakas who subdued their enemies by force belonged the great devotees of Mahēśvara, the commander-in-chief Śrī Bhaṭārka, who gained glory in hundreds of battles waged with large hosts mighty beyond measure, who gained the devotion of those subdued by his valour through his gifts, courtesies and straightforwardness, who obtained the splendour of royalty by his devoted hereditary servants concourse of friends and the (regular) army

ಸ್ವಸ್ತಿ ಶ್ರೀಸ್ವಾಮಿಪಾದಾನುಷ್ಠಾತಾನಾಮ್ನಾನವ್ಯಸಗೌತ್ರಣಾಙ್ಗಾರಿತಿಪುತ್ರಾಣಾಮ್
 ಅಗ್ನಿಷ್ಟೋಮಾಗ್ನಿಚಯನವಾಜಪೇಯಪೌಂಡರಿಕಬಹುಸುವರ್ಣಾಶ್ವಮೇಧಾವಃ
 ಭೃತ್ಸನಾನಪವಿತ್ರಿಕೃತಶಿರಸಾಂ ಚಲ್ಕಯಾನಾಂ ವಂಶೋ ಸಂಭೂತಃ ಶಕ್ತಿತ್ರಯಸಂ
 ಪನ್ನಃ ಚಲ್ಕಯವಂಶಾಂಬರಪೂರ್ಣಚಂದ್ರಃ ಅನೇಕಗುಣಾಗಂಗಳಾಂಕೃತಶರೀರಸ್ಸ
 ಧ್ವಂಶಾಸ್ತ್ರಾರ್ಥತತ್ವನಿವಿಷ್ಟಬುದ್ಧಿರಬಿಲಪರಾಕ್ರಮೋತ್ಸಾಹಸಂಪನ್ನಶ್ರೀಮಙ್ಗಲಿಶ್ವರರಣವಿ
 ಕ್ರಾಂತಃ ಪ್ರವೃದ್ಧಮಾನರಾಜ್ಯಸಂವತ್ಸರೇ ದ್ವಾದಶೋ ಶಕನೃಪತಿರಾಜ್ಯಾಭಿಷೇಕಸಂವತ್ಸರೇ
 ಷ್ವತಿವಕ್ರಾಂತೇಷು ಪञ್ಚಮು ಶತೇಷು ನಿಜಭುಜಾವಲಮ್ಬಿತಖಡ್ಗಧಾರಾನಮಿತನೃಪತಿಶಿರೋಮ
 ಕುಟಮಗ್ನಿಪ್ರಭಾರಣ್ಣಿತಪಾದಯುಗಲಶ್ಚತುಸ್ಸಾಗರಪರ್ಯಂತಾವನೀವಿಜಯಮಙ್ಗಲಕಾ
 ಗಾರಃ ಪರಮಭಾಗವತೋ ಲಯನಮಹಾವಿಷ್ಣುಗೃಹಮತಿಥೈಮಾನುಷ್ಯಕಮತ್ಯದ್ಭೂತಕ
 ಮ್ನೋ ವಿರಚಿತಂ ಭೂಮಿಭಾಗೋಪಭಾಗೋಪರಿಪರ್ಯಂತಾತಿಶಯದರ್ಶನೀಯತಮಂ ಕೃತ್ವಾ
 ತಸ್ಮಿನ್ ಮಹಾಕಾರ್ತಿಕಪೌರ್ಣಮಾಸ್ಯಾಂ ಬ್ರಾಹ್ಮಣೇಭ್ಯೋ ಮಹಾಪ್ರದಾನಂದತ್ವಾ ಭಗವತಃ ಪ್ರಲ

Fig. 108.

C.S. del.

स्वस्ति । श्रीस्वामिपदानुष्ठातानाम्मानव्यसगौत्रणाङ्गारितीपुत्राणाम्
 अग्निष्टोमाग्निचयनवाजपेयपौण्डरीकबहुसुवर्णाश्वमेधावः
 भृत्सनानपवित्रीकृतशिरसां चल्कयानां वंशो संभूतः शक्तित्रयसं
 पन्नः चल्कयवंशाम्बरपूर्णचन्द्रः अनेकगुणागंगालंकृतशरीरस्स
 ध्वंशास्त्रार्थतत्त्वनिविष्टबुद्धिरबिलपराक्क्रमोत्साहसंपन्नश्रीमङ्गलिश्वररणवि
 क्रान्तः प्रवृद्धमानराज्यसंवत्सरे द्वादशो शकनृपतिराज्याभिषेकसंवत्सरे
 ष्वतिवक्रान्तेषु पञ्चसु शतेषु निजभुजावलम्बितखड्गधारानमितनृपतिशिरोम
 कुटमग्निप्रभारण्णितपादयुगलश्चतुस्सागरपर्यन्तावनीविजयमङ्गलका
 गारः परमभागवतो लयनमहाविष्णुगृहमतिथैमानुष्यकमत्यद्भूतक
 म्ने विरचितं भूमिभागोपभागोपरिपर्यन्तातिशयदर्शनीयतमं कृत्वा
 तस्मिन् महाकार्तिकपौर्णमास्यां ब्राह्मणेभ्यो महाप्रदानन्दत्वा भगवतः प्रल

योदितावर्कमण्डलाकारचक्रक्षपितामरारिपाक्षस्य विष्णोः प्रतिमा प्रतिष्ठाप
नाभ्युदयनिमित्तं लञ्जीश्वरनाम ग्रामन्नारायणबल्युपहारार्थं षोडशसंख्येभ्यो¹

The development of this script during the next three centuries in the Cālukyan area is styled the middle variety by Bühler. This is exemplified by the earlier Cālukyan and Rāstrakūṭa grants. The letters undergo further change and in a couple of centuries they are rounded *ka* and *ra* having their lower limbs closed to left. The loop of *ya* develops into a full ovoid. The curved lower limb of *ta* predominates over the dwindled upper limb. The tail end of *la* runs around the body with a flourish. The two curved limbs of *bha* separate right from the serif. The limb to right of *ga* and *śa*, rather than that to the left, curls inward terminally. The base of *pa*, *da*, *tha*, *dha*, *ba*, *ma*, *sa*, *ca*, *va*, *ha*, *ja* shows clear notch. The letters are squat and broad. An excellent example of these features in the Nilgūṇḍ inscription of the Rāstrakūṭa king Amoghavarṣa of the 9th century A.D. from which the following passage (Fig. 109) is chosen (*Epigraph. Ind.* VI, p. 98).

ॐ योऽस्यैव न रं रं न्युय्युः एवोदयोऽपि नृपस्यैव न्युय्युः एवोदयोऽपि
न्युय्युः एवोदयोऽपि नृपस्यैव न्युय्युः एवोदयोऽपि नृपस्यैव न्युय्युः
न्युय्युः एवोदयोऽपि नृपस्यैव न्युय्युः एवोदयोऽपि नृपस्यैव न्युय्युः
न्युय्युः एवोदयोऽपि नृपस्यैव न्युय्युः एवोदयोऽपि नृपस्यैव न्युय्युः
न्युय्युः एवोदयोऽपि नृपस्यैव न्युय्युः एवोदयोऽपि नृपस्यैव न्युय्युः

O.S. del.

Fig. 109

जयति भुवनकारणं स्वयंभूर्जयति पुरन्दरतन्दनो मुरारिः जयतिगिरि
सुतानिरुद्धदेहो दुरितभयापहरो हरश्च देवः स वोव्याद्वेषसा धाम यन्ना
भिकमलं कृतं हरश्च यस्य कान्तेन्दुकलया कमलं कृतं लब्धप्रतिष्ठमचिराय

¹ Hail! Born of the family of Calkyas, meditative of the feet of the Lord, belonging to the clan of Mānavya the sons of Hārīti, whose heads are purified by the final *avabhṛta* bath after the performance of sacrifices like *Agni; ioma*, *Agnicayana*, *Vājapeya*, *Paundarika*, *Bahusuvarṇa* and *Aśvamedha*, Mangalisa, victor in battles, endowed with the three powers (*Prabhu*, *Mantra* and *Utsāha*), full moon in the firmament of the family of Calkyas, with his body embellished by his many good qualities, with his mind set on the truth of the essence of all *Sāstras*, and opulent in great strength, valour and bravery, in the twelfth of his ever prosperous years of reign and (correspondingly) when five hundred years had elapsed from that of the time of the coronation of the Śaka king, his pair of feet tinged by the lustre of the gems on the crowns of Kings subdued by him with the edge of his sword held in his hand, his auspicious abode being the earth extending to the four oceans won by him; greatly devoted to Viṣṇu (Bhāgavata), made a cave temple for Viṣṇu, exceeding the height of two men and of wonderful workmanship, extensive in its major and minor parts, ceiling and sides all extremely beautiful, to behold, and in it on the full moon day Mahākārtika month having given great gifts to Brāhmins, for establishing gloriously the image of Viṣṇu, who extirpated the hosts of demons (lit. foes of Gods) with his discus resembling in shape the solar disc emerging after the deluge, the village Lañjīśvara (was given) for the offering of daily workship to sixteen . . .

कलिं सुदूरामुत्साय्य शुद्धचरितैर्द्धरणीतलस्य कृत्वा पुनः कृतयुगश्रियम
प्यशषां चित्रं कथं निरुपमः कलिवल्लभोभूत् प्रभूतवर्षो गोविन्दराजागोर्य्यमु¹

The next stage in the development as in the later Western Cālukyan inscriptions, is styled by Buhler the old Canarese type. The letters are definitely rounded specially *a*, *ka*, *ra*, *ga*, *tā*, *tha*, *dha*, *ba* and *la*. In this stage of development the serif of any letter is a small arch or crescent. The main limb of *a* and *ā* dominates as a circular flourish, the two dots of *i* change into a loop connected with the right end of the main part above, the body of *ka* is shaped like a circle surmounted by a dash supporting a crescent serif. The serif already noticeable for *ga*, *tha* and *dha* develops individually for the first time, now being marked separately above. The right limb of *gha* diminishes in size and perches upward. In the case of *ca*, and *va* the left limb separates and the serif is retained towards the right. *Cha* develops a medial loop. The two upper horizontal strokes of *ja* change into a curl to left and an upward arc to right. *ṭa* develops an upward stroke. The central vertical stroke of *ṇa* loses its individuality. *ṭa* develops a marked loop to right below the serif. *Tha* shows a circlet in the belly. The base of *na* and *sa* definitely moves separately towards the left. *Ba* opens at the top with a terminal curve to left, while the limbs of *bha* separate from beneath the serif, which is retained to the right. The slight opening of the belly of *ma* to left, the peculiar prominent serif and right limb give a different shape to *ma*. The circle to the left of *ya* is prominent. *La* is more or less a broad curl drawn with a flourish. *Sa* is a double looped curve with serif above. The right terminal of *ha* is prominent. The following passage (Fig. 110) is from the Huli inscription of Vikramāditya VI (Ibid XVIII, p. 197).

ॐ नमोऽङ्गिर्द्धरणीतलस्य कृत्वा पुनः कृतयुगश्रियम
प्यशषां चित्रं कथं निरुपमः कलिवल्लभोभूत् प्रभूतवर्षो गोविन्दराजागोर्य्यमु

ॐ नमोऽङ्गिर्द्धरणीतलस्य कृत्वा पुनः कृतयुगश्रियम
प्यशषां चित्रं कथं निरुपमः कलिवल्लभोभूत् प्रभूतवर्षो गोविन्दराजागोर्य्यमु

FIG. 110.

C.S. ed.

¹ Om! Victorious is the self-born cause of the universe (Brahmā); victorious is Murāri (Viṣṇu) the beloved One (lit. son but meaning brother in this case) of Indra; victorious is also the God (Śiva) whose body is closely embraced by the daughter of the Mountain (Pārvatī) and who removes sin and consequent fear. May that One (Viṣṇu) protect you whose navel lotus was made his abode by Brahmā and also Hara (Śiva) by whose beautiful moon digit was adorned the sky. Wonderful it is how Nirupama became Kalivallabha (lit. beloved of Kali) having by his pure deeds driven off, Kali (sin-personified) who had established himself lately, quite afar from the surface of the earth, and again restored fully the charm of the *Kṛta* age (the Golden age). King Govinda . . .

© नमस्तुंगशिरश्चुंविचंद्रचामरचारवे त्रैलोक्यनगरारंभमू
 लस्तंभाय शंभवे ॥ वागर्थाविव संदृक्तौ वागर्थप्रतिपत्तये
 जगतः पितरौ वंदे पार्वतीपरमेश्वरौ । ओं नमः शिवा [य
 © स्वस्ति समस्तमृतनाश्रयश्रीपृथ्वीवल्लभमहाराजाधिराज
 परमेश्वरपरमभट्टारकसत्याश्रयकुलतिलकचालुक्या¹

The latest phase of development which leads on to the form of the letters as they are in modern Canarese is to be found in the latest Cālukyan and Hoysala inscriptions. Here the letters are more rounded and specially in the Hoysala area the letters are as rounded and ornamented as the sculptures themselves. The features already observed in later Cālukyan script continue with greater emphasis. The medial *i*, *u*, *ū*, *r* and other signs and subscripts *ya*, *ra*, etc., form fine flourishes and loops and sometimes there are decorative designs and floral patterns added terminally to the flourishes of the signs of the letters. The last stage is seen in Vijayanagara script which is the same for Canarese and Telugu. The modern Canarese script with the some peculiar differences from the Telugu script is after the Vijayanagara period. So the parallel developments of Canarese and Telugu scripts in Western and Eastern areas of the Deccan are finally fused together in the Vijayanagara script, to later separate again in the form of two different scripts. The following passage chosen to illustrate the Hoysala script (Fig. 111) is from copper-plates from the Belur temple dated 1117 A.D. (*Epigraph. Carn.* V, P. 137).

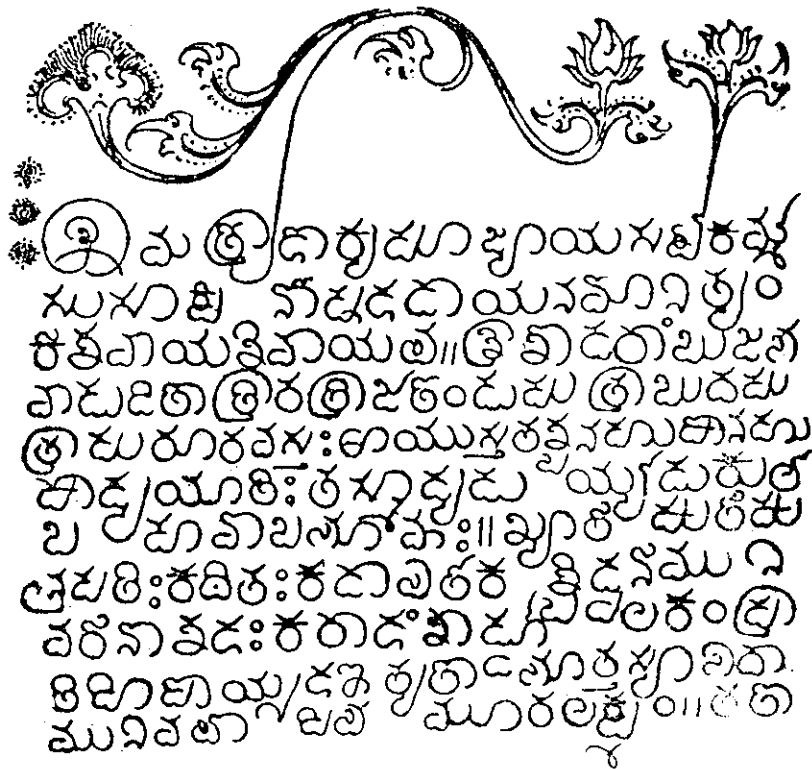


FIG. 111.

C.S. del.

¹ Om! Obeisance to Śambhu the basic pole for the erection of the three worlds beautiful with the moon
 haurlike kissing His lofty head. For proper understanding of words and their conotation I salute Pārvati and
 ramesvara, the parents of the Universe, who are united closely like a word and its meaning. Om! Salutat!
 Śiva Om! Hail! The refuge of the whole world, Sri Prthvivallabha Mahārājādhirāja, Paramēvara
 in of the kings of kings), the Great Lord the jewel (lit. beauty mark on forehead) of the famil
 wa (ornament of the) Calukyas

श्रीमत्रैलोक्यपूज्याय सक्षिकम्म
 सु साक्षिणे फलदाय नमो नित्यं
 केशवाय शिवाय च ॥ श्रीशोदरांबुजभ
 वादुदितोत्रिरश्चि जातेन्दुपुत्रबुधपु
 त्रपुरूरवस्त : आयूस्ततश्च नहषो नहु
 षाद्ययाति : तस्माच्चदुर्य्यदुकुले
 बहवो बभूवु : ॥ ख्यातेषु तेषु
 नृपति : कथित : कदाचित् कश्चिद्वने मुनि
 वरेण शल : करालं शर्दूलकं प्र
 ति हि पोयसल इत्यतोभूत्तस्याभिधा
 मुनिवचोपिचमूरलक्ष्मं ॥ ततो ¹

The development of the Telugu script in South-Eastern Deccan and the coastal area should be studied along with that of the Canarese in the Western area. The Śāṅkāyana grants from the Krishna valley supply examples of the development of Brāhmi letters after the ornamental forms of the Ikṣvāku and the earliest Pallava inscriptions. The Śāṅkāyana script is essentially the same as the earlier Brāhmi, but there are no ornamental embellishments. The serif is clearly marked. The lower limb of *a* and *ā* vacillate between running with a flourish as a broad curve and forming an open narrow rectangle as in *ra* and *ta*. The belly of *e* projects too far out to left. The medial *i* and *ī* are marked as a circle with open lower end on top of letter and similar circle with similar circle inside respectively. There is no loop either for *na* for *ta*. There is a broad dash across the belly of *tha*. *Ba* occurs sometimes as a plain rectangle, sometimes with inward indentation to the left and sometimes slightly open at the point of indentation. *Ya* forms a small narrow loop to left. The

¹Adoration always, to both Keśava and Śiva who are each individually to the three worlds and witness of all acts and the ordainers of the fruit thereof. Arti was born of the one born of the navel lotus of the Lord of Śrī (Viṣṇu); Ayus was born of Purūravas, son of Budha, son of the Moon, born Atri; from him Nahusa, from Nahusa, Yayāti; and from him Yadu; in the family of Yadu many were born. Among those renowned (kings) a certain king Sala was once told in the forest by a great sage thus "Poyasala" in regard to a ferocious tiger; and hence his name became even so.

tail of *la* surrounds the body. The following passage (Fig. 112) is in Prākṛt, as is usual in early inscriptions of the kind, and is from the plates of Vijayadevavarman (*Epigraph. Ind.* IX, p. 56).

सिरीवेवचङ्गीपुरा नगरे
 ॐ चित्तरथसामिपादानु
 ज्जातस्स बप्पभट्टारकपादभत्तस्स
 परममाहेस्सरस्स सालङ्कायनस्स
 २ अस्समेघयाजिनो
 महाराजा सिरिविजयदेववम्मस्स^१

FIG. 112.

O.S. del.

सिरिविजयवेङ्गीपुरा भगवतो
 ॐ चित्तरथसामिपादानु
 ज्जातस्स बप्पभट्टारकपादभत्तस्स
 परममाहेस्सरस्स सालङ्कायनस्स
 २ अस्समेघयाजिनो
 महाराजा सिरिविजयदेववम्मस्स^१

^१ From the victorious Vengipura..... of king Vijayadevavarman who contemplates on the feet of the Lord Cittarathasāmi, is a devotee; at the feet of Bappabhaṭṭāraka, who is a devout worshipper of Mahadevare, who belongs to the Śāṅkāyana family and who has performed the horse sacrifice.....

A further stage in the development of characters in the Telugu area may be seen in the Viṣṇukundin plates. Here *ta* shows a loop which is absent in *na*. The base of the left limb of *ya* develops a notch and the letter shows the tendency to develop its future shape. Both the base and top line of *ja* are notched and are so marked separately above and below the middle stroke that the beginnings of the future shape of the letter may be seen here. The notch on the base of letters, like *pa*, *ba*, *dha*, *va*, *ma* and *ṣa* is pronounced. *La* is an open rectangle with terminals curved in at the top. *La* is shaped like *da* with a curve added terminally. The medial vowel signs are the same as the earlier ones. The following passage (Fig. 113) is from the Cikkulla plates of Vikramendravarman II (Ibid IV, p. 193).

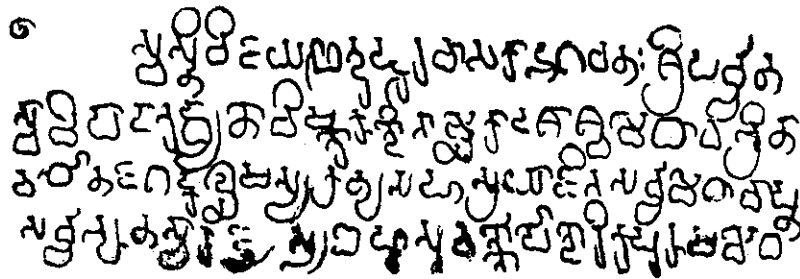


FIG. 113.

O.S. del.

ॐ स्वस्ति विजयलेन्दुलूरवासकाद्भगवतः श्रीपर्वत
 स्वामिपादानुध्यातो विष्णुकुण्डिनामेकादशाश्वमेधावभ्रिता
 वधौतजगदकल्मषस्य ऋतुसहस्रयाजिन सर्वमेधावाप्त
 सर्वभूतस्वाराज्यस्य बहुसुवर्णपौण्डरीकपुरुषमेघ¹

The advent of the Eastern Cālukyas marks the beginning of Telugu literature, as the earliest Telugu records are of this period. The earliest literary works in Telugu, including the famous *Bhārata* or even Nannecoda's *Kumārasambhava*, are comparatively late productions not to speak of *Bhāgavata* of Potana, Śrīnātha's *Naiṣadha*, or the still later works of the time of Kṛṣṇadevarāya. The earliest Telugu literature is from the inscriptions. The inscription recording the achievements of general Paṇḍaranga is an example. The earliest script of the Eastern Cālukyas, of the time of Kubjaviṣṇuvardhana, was no doubt akin to that of the Western Cālukyan under Pulakeśi, the brother of Viṣṇuvardhana. But there is a later local development of the script, which however retains its essential affinities and relationship with the parent script derived from the Western area. The passage chosen

¹ Hail! From the camp at victorious Lenduḷu (Mahārāja Indrabhaṭṭarakavarman) that meditator on the feet of the Lord of Śrīparvata, belonging to the family of Viṣṇukundins (great grandson of Mahārāja Mādhava varma) who cleansed the strain of the world by the purificatory bath after the performance of eleven horse sacrifices, who performed a thousand sacrifices, who obtained the happiness of all beings through his sacrifices, who (performed) *Bahusvarṇa Paṇḍarika, Puruṣamedha*.....

(Fig. 114) here is from Viṣṇuvaradhana's Timmapuram grant (Ibid IX, p. 318). Note worthy features of the letters are : *ka* and *ra* are definitely shorter than previously, *ka* showing a definite rectangle to the left below ; *ta* tends to become a curve below the vertical stroke crowned with serif, a tendency which is more marked in its later development ; the right limb of *ma* above the belly leans forward ; *ya* develops a circle to the left ; *ga* and *śa* develop a terminal inward curve to left ; a small stroke across the middle stroke of *ja* determines the future form of the letter ; medial *ī* is indicated by curling the left end of the curl denoting short *i*.

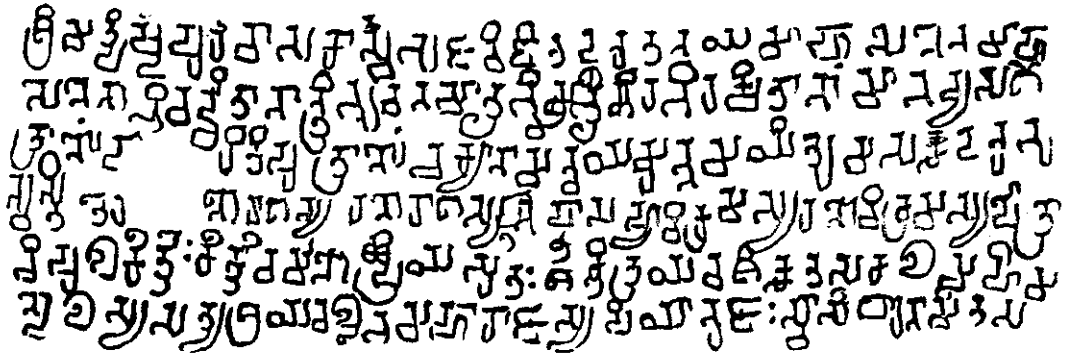


FIG. 114.

C.S. del

श्रीमत्पिष्टपुरावासकात्स्वभुजविजितदनुतनयमाहासेनेन माहा
सेनेनाभिवर्द्धितानान्त्रिभुवनमातृभिर्म्माभृभिरभिरक्षितानां मानव्यसगो
त्राणां हारितिपुत्राणां चक्यानामन्वयमुन्नमयितुमसकृदनुभू
स्वस्ति तेरणरागस्य रणरागस्य नप्तासह्यविकमस्य रणविक्रमस्य पौत्रौ
विपुलकीर्त्तोः कीर्त्तिवर्मणः प्रियसुतः शक्तित्रयवशिकृत सकलमहीम
ण्डलस्य सत्यश्रयवल्लभमहाराजस्य पियानुजः स्वासिधारनामितस¹

In a couple of centuries the letters undergo a change that marks the later script. The belly of *ka* and *ra* is definitely formed as an elongate rectangle with rounded corners. *Kha* with a large loop to left appears very like the modern letter. The left terminal inward curve of *ga*, and *śa* is still present, though the separate serif with neck-like stroke below it distinguishes this along with other letters of this alphabet. Of the three distinct strokes composing *ja*, the top and base are notched, the former curling in terminally to left. *Da*, *du*, *dha*, *pu*.

¹ Hail ! From the camp at prosperous Piṣṭapura (Viṣṇuvaradhana) great grandson of Raṇarāga who had often experienced the taste of battle to elevate the family of the Cālukyas of the Mānavya clan and sons of Hārīti, fostered by Mahāseṇa (Kārttikeya) who was victorious over the great army of the sons of Danu (Demons), and protected by the (seven) Mothers, the very mothers of three words ; grandson of Raṇavikrama whose valour was unbearable ; dear son of Kīrtti-varma of great fame ; dear younger brother of Satyāśraya Vallabha Mahārāja who subjugated the whole expanse of the earth by his triple power (*Saktitraya-Prabhu*, *Mantra* and *Utsaha*) ; who by the edge of his sword subdued.....

and *ha* closely resemble the later form in shape. *Na* develops loops to top left. *Ta* has a fine leftward curve starting in a curl to right. The notch of the base of *tha* and *dha* is marked and there is a circlet in the belly of the former. *Ba* is open to left and is notched at the top and base and terminally curves in at both ends. The two strokes composing *bha* separate immediately beneath the serif, and *ya* is nearly modern. *La* with diminutive body and large curve running around it is different from the earlier type and definitely modern. *Sa* has terminal curve to left and short neck for serif. The following passage (Fig. 115) is from the Masulipatam plates of Vijayāditya III (Ibid V, p. 122) and is a fine verse composed by one of the poets responsible for the composition of the Eastern Cālukyan plates.

FIG. 115

C.S. del.

राजः ॥ यस्मिन्नारूढदन्तिन्यरिकुलमधिसंरोहति क्षमाभृदप्रं यद्वाहावात्त
 खङ्गे रिपुयुवतिकरा गृह्णते चामराणि आबद्धायां भ्रुकुट्यां मधु रिपु
 भवने यस्य बध्नन्ति भृंगा यद्दामन्याजिभेरीध्वननमनु शिवाश्शत्रु
 धाम्नि ध्वनन्ति ॥ तस्य प्रियतनयः। कान्तेरिन्दुक्षमाया : क्षितिरमरत
 रुत्यागशक्तं
 प्रतापस्यावर्कशौर्यस्य सिंहो जलाधिरपि महासत्वतायामथायं स्थानं¹

The development of this script in the tenth century is remarkable. The letters are cast in a square mould with rounded corners and form a special type, easily distinguished from all earlier and later types by an individuality all their own. The serif in this script is somewhat thick and nail-like, while in the next century it is more or less V-shaped. The

¹ King. When he mounted the elephant his hosts of foes climbed the tops of mountains; when his hand grasped the sword the hands of the wives of his enemies took up the chauris; when he knit his brows the bees collected honey in the palaces of his foes; and after the sound of the war drum in his palace the she-jacksals howled in the mansions of his enemies. His dear son; as the moon is for light, the earth for patience, the celestial tree for power to bestow, the sun for brilliance, the lion for bravery, the ocean for great nobility, (so he was) the abode.

lower limb of *a* and *ā* forms a broad rectangle with rounded corners, the left side of which reaches the serif. The body of *i* above the dots forms two definite arches and is in a stage immediately preceding the formation in the next century of the type approaching the more modern. Medial *ā* is continued as a stroke in continuation of the serif to right, runs down and curves out slightly. Medial *i* is a circle so flattened at the top as to look a half moon. A small hook added to it above the serif of the letter makes medial *i*. *U* medial is shaped like a sickle. *E* medial is a small diagonally drawn *Z* above the letter. *Ai* medial has a downward stroke in addition to the *e* sign. A double arch above the letter denotes *o* and *au*, the arch being more emphasised in the latter. *Ka* and *ra* have a definitely short rectangular belly. The serif of *ga* and *śa* is prominent above the letter. The sides of *ca* and *bha* start separately, though still touching the serif. *Ja* assumes the modern form with a loop to left and an arch to right top. *Ta* develops a long straight horn and *ṇa* has loop to top left. The curl of *ta* to left is more pronounced. *Pa*, *pha* and *ma* and *sa* develop an apparent thickened end on the side lacking serif. *Ba* changes into its modern shape with open top and curl to left top. *Ya* is peculiarly shaped, with the circle to left and limb to right, smaller and perched slightly higher, the base of the middle limb notched. The right end of *la* is thickened at the top. The following passage (Fig. 116) is from the Vandram plates of Ammarāja II (Ibid IX, p. 131).

नृरागाय ॥ यस्मिन् सासति नृपतौ परिपक्वानेकसस्यंस
 पच्छालिः सततपयोधेनुरभीनिरीतिरपरुग्निरस्तचोरो
 देशः ॥ स सकलरिपुनृपतिमकुटतटघटितमणिगण
 नृरागाय ॥ यस्मिन् सासति नृपतौ परिपक्वानेकसस्यंस
 पच्छालिः सततपयोधेनुरभीनिरीतिरपरुग्निरस्तचोरो
 देशः ॥ स सकलरिपुनृपतिमकुटतटघटितमणिगण

FIG. 116

C.S. del.

नृरागाय ॥ यस्मिन् सासति नृपतौ परिपक्वानेकसस्यंस
 पच्छालिः सततपयोधेनुरभीनिरीतिरपरुग्निरस्तचोरो
 देशः ॥ स सकलरिपुनृपतिमकुटतटघटितमणिगण

मधुकरनिकरपरिचुंबितचरणसरसिरुह्युग
लो युलोचनपदकमलविलसद्विरेफायमाणो मा
नोन्नतोद्धत : समस्तलोक : समस्तभुवनाश्रयश्रीविज
यादित्यमहाराजधिराजपमेश्वर : परमभट्टारक : परमब्र
ह्मण्य : मातापितृपादानुध्यात : पावुनवारविषये प्रान्दोरु
द्वादशग्रामनिवासिनो राष्ट्रकूटप्रमुखान्कुटुंबिनस्समाहू¹

The emphasis on the serif in the script just considered becomes most pronounced in the 11th century letters of the Eastern Caḷukyas. The serif is V-shaped and is nearly as big as the body of the letter itself. The first stage in the formation of the modern form of *a*, *ā* and *i* appears in this script, though it is a century later for *u* as also for medial vowel signs. *ka* and *ra* are formed by a circle crowned by the V-shaped serif, but *ka* has a horizontal stroke between the circle and the serif in addition. The serif is prominent in *ga* as in all other letters but in the case of *gha* the right limb is slightly upward. In *ca* and *bha*, the two limbs separate beneath the serif which settles itself on top of the right limb and the top curve of the left limb is compressed by the squeezed form of the letter. The serif appears similarly in *cha*. The loop to top left of *ja* opens a bit now and continues so later, and the tip of the curve to right is not thickened serif-like; as in the previous century. The loop to top left of *na* opens out giving the letter the modern shape that continues thereafter. The curl of *ta* to right, above which the V-shaped serif is perched, gives it an individuality. The bottom of *tha* and *dha* is broken at the point of the notch. The vertical stroke of *na* with serif above, glides softly to merge at its bottom in the right limb. The left end of *pa* beneath serif extends horizontally towards the vertical stroke, forming a box belly for the letter. A circle separates the vertical stroke by its presence in the centre for *pha*. The loop to top left of *ba* enlarges and opens a bit, as in *ja*, and the bottom breaks at the notch, as in *dha* and *tha*. *Ya* and *ra* are more or less in the shape of the modern letter, except for the peculiar serif. *ḷa*

¹ When that king ruled, the land was beautiful with abundance of many successful crops, had cows always yielding milk, was free from fear, drought and other troubles, disease and thieves. That suzerain lord of kings, great sovereign, highly pious, meditator of the feet of his parents, whose pair of lotus feet is kissed by swarms of bees in the shape of the numerous gema set on the surface of the crowns of all enemy kings, who shines as a bee on the lotus feet of Brahmā, elevated in his self respect and of superior bearing, representing all the world, the refugee of the whole world, Śrī Vijayāditya, called the husbandmen including the principal ones like the Rāṣṭrakūṭas living in the twelve villages of Prāndoru in the Pāvunavāra district

sheds the serif-like thick tip to right seen in the previous century. The following passage chosen (Fig. 117) is from the Korumelli plates of Rājarāja I (*Ind. Ant.* XIV p. 48).

FIG. 117

C.S. del.

©श्रीधाम्नः पुरुषोत्तमस्य महतो नारायणस्य प्रभोन्नाभीपंकरुहाब्दभू
व जगतस्त्रष्टा स्वयंभूस्तत जज्ञे मानससूनुरत्रिरिति य तस्मान्मनोरत्रितस्सोमो
वंशकरस्सुधांशुरुदितश्रीकण्ठचूडामणिः । तस्मादासीत्सुधासूतेबुधो
बुधनुतस्त¹

The best example of proto-Telugu script is that of the time of the Kākatīyas. The script here is most graceful and the letters take their final shape, as from here onwards the shape of the letters undergoes but little change here and there ; as for instance the small curve below for *bha* and *pha* appears a century or two later, and is substituted by a vertical stroke in Vijayanagara and later script. The Chebrolu inscription of Ja ya (*Epigraph Ind.* V, p. 142) from which the following passage (Fig. 118) is chosen is in very good preservation and presents an excellent example of the beautiful script of the Kākatīyas. In this the modern shape of *a* and *ā* appears with the body within the sweeping curve reduced to a horizontal stroke, terminally curved to left in both with an additional outer curve in the case of *ā* to right. *U* assumes the modern shape with definite horn above and small horizontal stroke in the belly. From this time onwards the serif is a broader angle and less pronounced than in the 11th century. *Ca, da, ja, dha, da, pa, ma, la, va*, practically assume the modern form. *Cha* forms a small loop at its basal notch. The break in the base of *tha* and *dha* is discarded, though it continues for *bha*. The circlelet breaking the right vertical stroke of *pha* is replaced by a small curved stroke, as in contemporary Hoysala script. *Śa* changes into a vertical stroke curved in towards the left terminally at both ends, as in slightly earlier Western Cālukyan and contemporary Hoysala scripts.

¹ From the great navel lotus of Lord Nārāyana, the best among Puruṣas and the abode of Śrī, arose the self-born (Brahmā) creator of the universe ; from him was born his mind-born son known as Atri ; from that sage Atri was born the moon, the progenitor of the race, ambrosiac in his rays, and the crest jewel of Śiva whose neck is girdled on. From that producer of ambrosia (moon) arose Budha and from him Budha's son . . .

स्वस्तिश्रीः जयतिहरिवराहः प्रेमसं
 भ्रांतपृथ्वीस्तनभरपरिरंभारंभ
 दृप्तस्य यस्य । पुलकचुल्लकितांभः
 स्संभवस्तोयराशिः पुनरविरलनि
 र्यत्स्वेदपूरैरपूरि ॥ हेरंबस्य
 विकल्पदंतमुकुलं गौरीरहस्यो

FIG. 118.

C.S. del.

स्वस्तिश्री : । जयतिहरिवराह : प्रेमसं
 भ्रांतपृथ्वीस्तनभरपरिरंभारंभ
 दृप्तस्य यस्य । पुलकचुल्लकितांभः
 स्संभवस्तोयराशिः पुनरविरलनि
 र्यत्स्वेदपूरैरपूरि ॥ हेरंबस्य
 विकल्पदंतमुकुलं गौरीरहस्यो

त्सवप्रत्यासन्नविलासदीपकलिका
 गंगामृणालांकुरः । देवस्य त्रिपुर
 द्रुहो विजयिना. षुष्पेषुणा मस्त
 के विन्यस्तांकुशविभ्रमा विजयते
 चूडासुधांशोः कला ॥ पायाद्वः प
 रिवर्त्तमानलहरीप्राग्भारमास्फा
 लयन्सायंकालतरंगकेलिषुकरास्क
 दने मंदाकिनीं । देवस्यारभटीपरिभ्र
 मकलासंरंभसंभाविनः शंभोरंबु
 मृदङ्गवाद्यरचनारंभाय लंबोदरः ॥¹

The later development of this script is little, and, except for some minor changes the letters are practically the same as in Kākatiya inscriptions. *Ta* develops a tendency towards an occasional terminal curve to the left but this is more regular in the Vijayanagara script. *Bha* has occasionally a small curved stroke beneath it, which however becomes an invariable vertical stroke in the letter of the Vijayanagara script. The horizontal line, defining the upper contour of the belly of *ṣa*, is broken up to appear as a stroke against the right vertical, and this form continues thereafter. The following passage (Fig. 119) is from an inscription of the time of Śrīnātha, the famous Telugu poet, who is mentioned here as the Director of Public Instruction in the kingdom of Redḍis. A portion of it is in Telugu though it runs some length in Sanskrit, the official language in India all over; and we can well imagine what a manuscript of the *Śrīngāranaiśadha* of Śrīnātha would have been like by a look at the letters expressing the Telugu verses of the inscription. The inscription is from Phirāṅgi-puram in Guntur district (Ibid. XI p. 322).

¹ Hail! Prosperity! Victorious is the boar-shaped Hari by whose continuous flow of sweat was filled the ocean (lit. mass of water) the mass of water in which was drained by his horripulation as he was excited in the act of embrace of the heavy breasts of the lovingly agitated Pṛithvi. The digit of the crest-jewel moon is victorious as the probable budding tusk of Heramba (Gaṇeśa), or as the sportive lamp flame in the vicinity of Gauri's secret sport, or as the lotus bud of the Ganges, or charming as the goad placed on the head of the god who is the foe of Tripura by his victor, the flower-arrowed Manmatha. May Lambodara (Gaṇeśa) protect you, who in his evening sports of patting the waves of the river Mandākinī (Gangā) strikes the surface of the rolling waves for responding to the movements of the artistic *Ārabhaṭī* dance of the Lord Śambhu by starting the sounding of the water-drum (*Falataranga*).

దేవమునుభూఃబత్రోగంధవో
 రగరాక్షసాఃస్థావరావీచబూతా
 నిసంశ్రయంతిజలాశయం తదేయ
 స్సగ్రావస్తుబిబంతి త్రాజలంభ్య
 గ్గజ్జీమముభ్యుభేభాభేమదభలం
 లభత్రాఃస్థాదయంతి బిర్రోఃప్రశ్నశ్చ
 త్తీబలామహాఃఅఖనఃసకుశబాత
 యస్తకంకరిభ్యశ్చి॥ దిభ్యోదికారిశ్చ
 నాహావరత్నై కమబూతఃలకరాదా
 క్కరావచాంనిర్భకంధర్మనాసనాశ్చ

కపలముకరమ్మేనకడబామరవైరి
 మురభుడంబులంబరిశ్చేమస్తామ
 య్యోరముకునాద్యబాదమధ్యం
 త్రముక్తముకేవలములపే
 త్తీంకేవదత్తాం గుంబసంబభ్య
 నిజాస్తాంబూరుణాంబుననాభో
 ససంబయిత్రాసదేగంఠంబాచా
 నాములసభ్యబలగొలాంగూలక
 లయూదములశతం గడ్డవడియే
 తనదియేలంగిసరిశ్చ ససంగవచ్చు
 వారసాతలగంభీరవార్యే గుముఖే
 గ్గరావాయుమగుమనాబాధ్యవ గ్
 ముముఖమంభ్యసంతోవవదితాడ

FIG. 119.

देवा मनुष्या : पितरो गन्धर्वो
 रगराक्षसा : स्थावराणि च भूता
 नि संश्रयन्ति जलाशयं । तटाके य
 स्य गावस्तु पिबन्ति तृषिता जलं । मृ

గపక్షిమనుష్యాస్చ సోశ్వమేధఫలం
 లభేత్ । ఆస్ఫోటయన్తి పితర : ప్రనృత్య
 తి పితామహాః । అపిన్ : స కులే జాతో
 యస్తటాకం కరిష్యతి ॥ విద్యాతికారి శ్రీ
 నాథో వీరశ్రీవేమభూపతే : । అకరోదా
 కరో వాచాం నిర్మలం ధర్మశాసనం ॥ శ్రీ

కవటసూకరమైన కైటభాసురవైరి
 ఖురపుటంబులం బరిక్షుణ్ణమ
 య్యె! రఘుకులోద్యహాధనుర్యం
 శ్రముక్తలైన చిచ్చురమ్ముల వె
 ండింజేవడలు 1/0 గుంభనంభవు
 నిహస్తాంభోరుహంబున నాపో
 ననంబయి ప్రాసమొందె 1/0 భాషా
 ణముల నచ్చుళ్లగోలాంగూలక
 పియూధములచేతం గట్టువడియె ।
 వసధియేభంగినరివచ్చు ననంగవచ్చు
 నారసాతల గంభీరసారియగుచునప
 గతాపాయమగుచు శోచాధ్యవగ
 చుననువమంజైన సంతానవనధివోడ¹

The Vijayanagara monarchs ruled over the Canarese and Telugu areas ; and the script used for their inscriptions both in Telugu and Canarese was the same. Special characteristics that distinguish the modern Canarese characters from Telugu appear later. In the development of the Telugu script from the early script the only noteworthy feature is the small

¹ Gods, men, fore-fathers, Gandharvas, Nāgas, Rākṣasas, immobile objects all resort to a tank (lit. reservoir of water). That person gains the fruit of an *Āśvamedha* sacrifice in whose tank thirsty cows and other animals, birds, and men drink water. Fathers pat themselves and grandfathers dance about in glee (at the thought) that indeed he is born in our family who will dig a tank. Srinātha, a mine of literature and the Director of Public Instruction of the heroic king Vema composed this pure charter of charity.

Prosperity. It (ocean) was well trampled by the hoofs of the enemy of the demon Kaiṭabha (Viṣṇu) when he assumed the guise of a boar ; it dried up at the heat of the fiery arrows released from the bow of the scion of the Rāgha family (Rāma) ; it diminished having become a mouthful sip in the form of the lotus hand of the pitcher-born sage Agastya ; (bridged across) with boulders it got fettered at the hands of bears, langurs and monkey troops. How can this ocean be said to be equal to this peerless lotus tank (dug) for progeny, which is full of water deep enough to reach the netherworld, free from mishaps and beautiful to behold.

vertical stroke below aspirated letters, as in the case of *bha*, *tha* and *dha*, or, in the place of a small curved stroke, as in the case of *pha*. The letters are generally compressed and height-wise. The following passage (Fig. 120) is from the stone inscription in the Rangasvāmi temple at Hampi (*S. Ind. Inscr.* IV, p. 40).

ఇగణాదిపతయే నమః ॥ లక్ష్మీచుంగపబాసుచంగ
 సుఖతొలబ్ధో దృశోమీలనం నాభీతామరసేన మీలన
 జుషానాథే గిరో నిక్లుతే । ప్రేమావేశతయా విశంజమనయా
 ప్రీత్యోపగూఢో దృఢం పాయాన్మాదన్పాలతిమ్మధరణి
 పాలం ముదా మాధవః ॥
 ఇతి యా శుభ్రయోగో వాచానో
 వశంబులు ౧౪౬౨. ఆగునెంటి విశ్వావసు సంవత్సర చైత్రశుద్ధ ౩ గురువారము నాండు
 శ్రీ మన్మహారాజాధిరాజ రాజవరమేశ్వర శ్రీ వీరప్రతాప శ్రీ వీరసదాశివమహా
 రాయలు విద్యానగరముండు రత్నసింహాసనారూడులై వృద్ధిరాజ్యము ఏకచ్ఛత్రమై

FIG. 122.

C.S. del.

శ్రీగణధిపతయే నమః ॥ లక్ష్మీతుంగకుచానుభంగ
 సుఖతో లబ్ధో దృశోమీలనం నాభీతామరసేన మీలన
 జుషా నాథే గిరో నిక్లుతే । ప్రేమావేశతయా విశంజమనయా
 ప్రీత్యోపగూఢో దృఢం పాయాన్మాదన్పాలతిమ్మధరణి
 పాలం ముదా మాధవః ॥¹

శ్రీ జయాశ్వుదయ శాలివాహన నక
 వశంబులు ౧౪౬౨. ఆగునెంటి విశ్వావసు సంవత్సర చైత్రశుద్ధ ౩ గురువారము నాండు
 శ్రీ మన్మహారాజాధిరాజ రాజవరమేశ్వర శ్రీ వీరప్రతాప శ్రీ వీరసదాశివమహా
 రాయలు విద్యానగరముండు రత్నసింహాసనారూడులై వృద్ధిరాజ్యము ఏకచ్ఛత్రమై¹

1. Salutation to the Lord of Gāṇās. With his eyes closed in joy at the rubbing of the high breasts of Lakshmi and consequently as the navel lotus closed up covering the Lord of Speech (Brahmā) and being freely and closely embraced by her (Lakshmi), may Mādhava joyously protect Mādanpāla Timma.

Prosperity. In the victorious and prosperous; Śalivāhana Śaka year 1492 on this day of Viśvāvasu, bright fortnight of Caitra 3, Thursday, when the royal lord king of kings Śrī Virapratāpa Śrī Virasadaśiva Mahārāja was seated on his jewelled throne in the city of Vidyānagara and with a single umbrella raised only over his head ruled the earth.

The earliest stages in the development of the Grantha-Tamil script show close affinity to the early Canarese-Telugu variety. The script of the time of Mahendravarman I and even Narasimhavarman I is closely akin to the early common variety all over South India and the Deccan. But from the end of the 7th century onwards an individuality is developed by Grantha-Tamil script which is continued with greater emphasis later. The psychological effect of the language for developing its own script may be noticed in the fact that the script and the development is almost the same in Coḷa, Pāṇḍya and Cera areas except that a modified cursive form of the script known as Vaṭṭeḷuttu occurs in the Southernmost Pāṇḍya and Cera areas. The script, on the other hand, develops differently in the Telugu and the Canarese districts. The influence of Pallava script has been so great that its prototype is found in distant corners of South-Eastern Asia and the islands. The Pallava script of the early part of the 7th century A.D. is more or less akin to the earlier type but there are many varieties of it, all belonging to the same time, as Jouveau Dubreuil has ably demonstrated (Dubreuil, p. 39). There are the florid and simple varieties. The inscriptions of Mahendravarman in his cave temples and the different *Birudas* incised at Mahābalipuram on the Dharmarājaratha and other monuments are examples. The four lines given below are expressed in four different varieties of the script, which is generally known as Pallava Grantha, as may be seen from the four types of *a*, two types of *ma* and *ya* and three types of *na* in the four lines. These (Fig. 121) are all from the Dharmarājaratha (*Epigraph. Ind. X, p. I*).

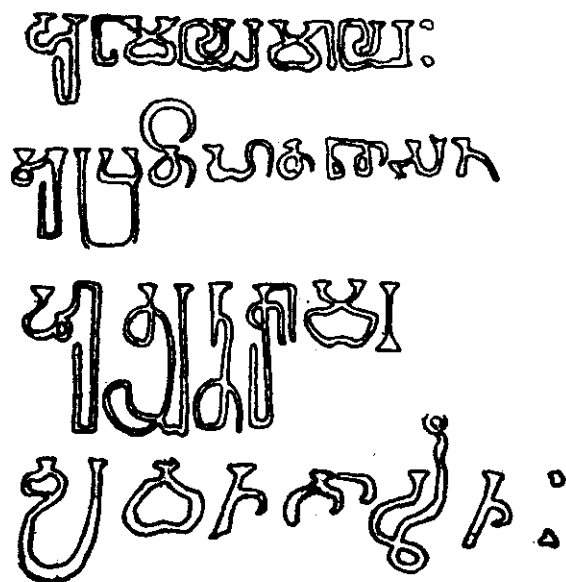
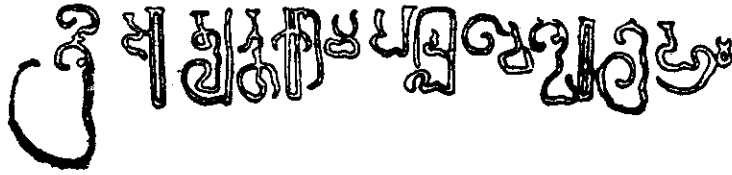


FIG. 121

अमेयमाय :
अप्रतिहतशासन
अत्यन्तकाम ।
अवनभाजन :¹

Of slightly later date, but showing definitely an advance towards the regular formation of the Grantha-Tamil variety, to which it belongs, is the line given below (Fig. 122). This script is quite similar to the example which is given next and is full of flourishes.



श्री अत्यन्तकामपल्लवेश्वरगृहम्²

The following selection (Fig. 123) from the inscription of Rājasimha (i.e., Narasimharman II) in the Kailāsanātha temple at Kāñcīpuram (*S. Ind. Inscr.* I, p. 13) supplies an excellent example of typical Pallava Grantha of the end of the 7th century A.D. It also presents the noble type of verse in Sanskrit prepared about the time and which enrich Sanskrit literature in lithic records. In the case of, *a*, *ā* and *i*, parallel vertical stroke to right characterises the letters in Grantha. The loop to left, afterwards characteristic of *a* and *ā*, starts now, as also the broad and sweeping curve to right lower end added to *ā*. In the case of *i* in grantha, the usual notched horizontal stroke is curved in to left and continued vertically down to right, the two dots being converted into circles. *U* has hook-shaped head and diagonal body line. *E* develops a loop and breaks considerably from the parent type. Medial *ā* is a small zigzag stroke over a crescent added near the serif of a letter. Medial *i*, *u*, *ū* are more or less ornamental developments with flourishes of 5th century Pallava medial signs. *E* and *ai* medial are a single and double curl, the latter, one below another, to the left of a letter. *O* medial is a combination of *e* and *ā* medial signs to the left and right top of a letter. *Ka* and *ra* are characterised by parallel vertical stroke, the former with a cross stroke curled down at both ends in addition. A prominent curl to left and looped body represent *kha*. *Ga* and *śa* retain the old form but slowly an outer curve is added to left,

¹ He of incomprehensible clever designs.

He of unquestionable command.

He of intense love.

He the receptacle of the world.

² The abode (temple) of Śrī Atyantakāmapallaveśvara (Śiva established by the Pallava Atyantakāma).

and *sa* and *tha* and *ṣa* substitute the central stroke and dot by a curve inside to the right. *ga* develops zigzag contour that charges its form. *Ta* lends to run diagonally. *Na* slowly spreads itself like a pulled wire coil. *Tha* and *dha* open to right top, where the side is straightened somewhat. The curved limb moving away from the vertical stroke of *na* is to the right, not left, as usual. *Bha* at first is strangely shaped like a triskele, but is later somewhat like the Nāgari letter of the time. *Ya* develops a narrow loop to left. *La* is at first angular, after the earlier model, but later becomes more or less like the Cālukyan letter, a broad flourish encircling the small body stroke.

ॐ श्री गुरुभ्यो नमः ॥ श्रीगणेशाय नमः ॥ श्रीगणेशाय नमः ॥ श्रीगणेशाय नमः ॥
 नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥
 नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥
 नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥
 नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥
 नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥

FIG. 123

C.S. del.

अस्मिन्नुत्तशत्रुद्विरदघनघटाराजसिंहेन राज्ञा राज्ञामाज्ञाविधेयीकृत
 सकलदिशानिर्मिते धर्मभाजा शैले कैलासलीलामपहरति गृहे
 राजसिंहेश्वराख्यां विभ्रत्यभ्रंलिहाग्रे विरचयतु सदा सुन्निधानं वृषाङ्कः ॥
 कलाचतुरयोषितां रहसि रञ्जने मन्मथस्त्रयीपथनिषेविणां सततपालने वासवः ॥
 मुनिद्विजसुरद्विषां हृदयदारणं माधवः सच द्रविणसंपदा सुजनतोषणे वित्तदः ॥¹

¹ May the Bull-bannered Lord (Śiva) always make himself present in this mansion (temple) of same bearing the epithet of Rājasimheśvara, robbing the beauty of Mount Kailāsa as it were, with its pinnacles licking the sky as it were, built by the righteous king of kings (Rājasimha) a royal lion to the packed troops of elephants of enemies who made all the quarters obedient to his command. Verily Cupid is he in pleasing in private ladies of good aesthetic taste, Indra is he ever protecting the followers of the three Vedas, Mādhava (Vāṇu) he is in tearing the heart of the enemies of sages, the twice-born and the gods, Kubera he is in pleasing good men with abundance of wealth.

The Kūram grant of Parameśvaravarman I (Fig. 124) shows the normal variety of Grantha script about the end of the 7th century A.D. from which later development can be studied. This inscription is also most valuable, as it supplies the earliest Tamil characters developed after the age when Brahmi itself was used for inscription in Tamil. The development of Grantha and Tamil is observed at once in this grant, as it is partly in Sanskrit and partly in Tamil. The development of Grantha illustrated in the passage given below (*S. Ind. Inscr. I* p. 148). *A* and *ā* show the loop to left. *E* is drawn like *Z* with its tail end drawn out in a loop and curve above in continuation. *I* has only a single large circlet to left, *Kh a* is shaped like a clumsy. Arabic 2 only with looped belly. The tail end of *Fa* is looped and continued in a curve above it. *Ta* is as usual C-shaped, but with a stroke below. *Na* is a drawn out coil. *Ta* has a prominent loop which *na* lacks and the curved limb of *na* usually to left is here to right. The base and top of *ba* are connected by diagonal stroke. *La* is composed of a small double curve, encircled by its own tail as a broad flourish. *Va* is pear-shaped with serif above. *Śa* has an almost parallel outer curve to left and an inward terminal curve to right. *a* is more or less like *pa* with terminal loop to right. *Ṣa* is more or less after the Nāgari pattern. Of the medial vowel signs *u* and *ū* are rather exaggerated. *La* here, as in Canarese-Telugu charters, is written vertically in zig-zag course.

परमेश्वर इव सर्व्वाधिकदर्शनः परमेश्वरवर्म्मा भरत इव सर्व्वदमन सगर इव कृता
समञ्जसत्यागः कर्णं इव पुष्कलांगोयः प्रियकव्यो ययातिरिव अनुपनतानां राज्ञा
यस्याज्ञा भवति सर्व्वदा पीला सैव सुहृदाम्प्रयच्छति मुखशोभा कर्णपूरतया चतुरः कला
विलासे नियतम् यश्चादो भवत्यनंगस्य मुक्तागुणस्तु हृदये मुक्तागण एव
वनितानाम् अगणितनरहयकरिकुलबिमर्द्दजनितेन रेणुतुहिनेन आरोपितश
शिमण्डलसादृश्यसहस्रकरबिम्बे पटहरवगज्जितोश्रे विकोशनिस्तिशनवि
द्युदाभोगे प्रचरितकुञ्जरजलदे विकालवर्षावितार इव तुंगतुरंगतरंगे प्रच¹

The script in the 8th century shows no doubt some development but in the main the features of the letters of the previous century continue. Noteworthy changes are the diagonal stroke for Grantha *i*, as the case of *ba*. The right side of *ga*, *tha*, *dha*, *pa*, *na*, *ba*, *ya*, *śa*

¹ Parameśvaravarman with higher vision than all like Parameśvara; who overcame all like Bharata; who abandoned everything unworthy (*asamañjasa*) like Sagara who abandoned *Asamañjasa*; who had well-developed limbs like Karna who possessed the flourishing country of Anga; who loved literature (*Kānya*) like Yāyati who loved *Kāvya* (the *Guru* of *Daityas*); whose command was always an infliction to unsubdued kings but which itself added lustre to the faces of friendly ones being like an ear ornament; being clever in the lure of arts he was always a moon to Cupid; with bad qualities removed from his heart he was like a string of pearls on the breasts of women; with a mist of dust caused by a stampede of innumerable men, horses and elephants creating for the circle of the thousand rayed sun a strange likeness to the lunar disc fearful with the din of thundering war-drums, unsheathed swords flashing like lightning everywhere, elephants moving like (dark) clouds as if it were the appearance of rain unseasonal; tall horses billow-like . . .

sa and *sa* is a straight vertical stroke. The last mentioned letter develops a rectangular box at the left top against the diagonal stroke. The small nail-head shaped serif, noticed in the florid script in the Kailāsanātha inscription still continues in this century. The letters are neatly drawn, keeping angularities to right and curves to left as far as possible. The following passage is (Fig. 125) from the Kasākudi plates of Nandivarman (Ibid. II, p. 346).

FIG. 125.

C.S. del.

स्वस्ति जयतिजगत्रयजन्मस्थितिसंहृतिकारणम्परब्रह्मा सत्यमनन्तमनादिज्ञाना
 त्मकमेकममृतपदम्॥ मायाविना येन पदत्रयाथिना सद्यः प्रवृद्धेन पुनर्ब
 लेर्मन्त्रे विचक्रमे त्रिज्जंगतस्स्वसात्कृतो स वोस्तु भूत्यै भगवान् स्त्रिविक्रमा मौलावि
 न्दुधरः फणाधरधरस्कम्धे भवानीधरो वामे कामधरः प्रणानिरते गंगाधरो
 मूर्द्धनि मूर्तो घूलिधरो गले गरधरः केशेषु वेणीधरः पाणौ शूलधरे हरः
 पुरहरः पुष्पातु वो मङ्गलम् कण्ठे कौस्तुभकालिकाभरणयो रञ्जायाम्परांम्बिभ्र
 तौ दैत्यघ्नंसनचक्रपट्टसधरौ श्यामावदातौ रुचा श्रीगौरीविलसत्कटाक्षविशिख ¹

The stages of the development of pure Tamil script are lost in obscurity for nearly nine or ten centuries, as after the early cave inscriptions of about the 3rd century B.C. in the Southern districts of the Tamil area, Tamil inscriptions of some length occur only in the 7th century A.D. The Kūram plates of the 7th century A.D. show the letters

¹ Hail! Victorious is the supreme Brahman, the cause of the birth, being and dissolution of the three worlds, the eternal, without an end or beginning, of the nature of knowledge, one and only the seat of eternity. May the Lord Trivikrama bring your fortune, who was a dissembler begging for a (space of) three feet and suddenly expanding at the sacrifice of Bali occupied the three words by his strides. May Hara increase your prosperity, who bears the moon on his head, the hooded snake on his shoulder, Bhavāni to his left, restorer of Kāma on repeated prostration, bearer of Gangā on his head, of ashes on his body, of poison in his neck, and of Triveṇī or braid of Pārvatī amidst his locks and the Trisūla in his hand. May the two (Hari and Hara) who bear the supreme lustre of the jewel *Kaustubha* and the dark poison on throat, hold the demon-killing discus and club are dark and fair in complexion and with the rays of the glances of Śrī (Lakṣmi) and Gaurī (Pārvatī) . . .

then in vogue, Tamil letters were used for expressing everything in that language, as the attenuated number of letters composing that alphabet, with the addition of a few more (already present even in the earliest stage of the script in the cave inscriptions) was sufficient in accordance with the genius of the language ; and all deficiencies, such as the aspirated letters, additional sibilants, etc., for expressing Sanskrit terms, were made up by the use of Grantha characters, closely akin to Tamil but with certain additional features, even in the case of letters existing in Tamil , like *a, ā, i, e, ka, ca, pa, ma, ra, la* and *va*, at a later stage. The following extract in Tamil (Fig. 126) is late Pāllava, when the form of the Tamil script is well on the way to the settled form of the early Cola letters. It is from the Tiruvellārai inscription of the time of Dantivarman (*Epigraph Ind. XI, p. 154*). The passage in beautiful Tamil verse is typical of gnomic poetry, but the exact source of this is not known. The Pāllava monarchs were great patrons of Tamil literature, along with Sanskrit, like their political successors, the Colas and the Pāṇḍyas, and the passage given below is a noteworthy one from the literary point of view as well. Tamil letters, it should be noted, are definitely simpler and less cumbrous than Grantha. *A, ā ka* and *ra* lack the double vertical stroke. *I* is like the Arabic numeral 3. *E* is a simple curve looped to left top. *Ca* is at first a vertical stroke with elongate loop to left which opens later. *Ta* lacks the hook at the base in Grantha. *Ma* is a looped version of *pa*. *La* is like reversed S laid flat. The later medial *u* is a bit elaborate.

திருவெல்லாரை
 பண்டையபுலகைக்காறிய
 கையையாக - கண்ணியுப்புபந்துக்க
 கார்த்தியைநிலைமுண்ணுண்ணென்று
 திருவெல்லாரைப்பெரியபெயர்

FIG. 126.

C.S. del.

ஸ்ரீ கண்டார் காணு வுலகத்திற்காதல் செய்து நிலலாதெய்
 பண்டேய பரமன் படைத்த நான்பார்த்து நின்று
 நெய்யா தெய் தண்டார் மூப்பு வந்துண்ணைத்
 தளர்ச்செய்து நிலலா முன்னுண் டேல்லுண்டு
 மிக்கது உலகம் மறிய வைம்மினெய¹

An illustration of the verisimilitude of Grantha script in the Pāṇḍya kingdom with that of the Pallava and Coḷa kingdoms further north, all in the Tamil area, is given in the passage below (Ibid VIII, p. 320). The letters are typical of Tamilnāḍ in the 8th century A.D. Grantha letters occurring with Vaṭṭeḷuttu (Fig. 127), or by themselves, in pure Sanskrit texts, as in this passage, are the same, though Vaṭṭeḷuttu, which more or less displaced Tamil scripts in the more Southern districts, is a cursory form which in many respects differs from, though based on, Tamil scripts.

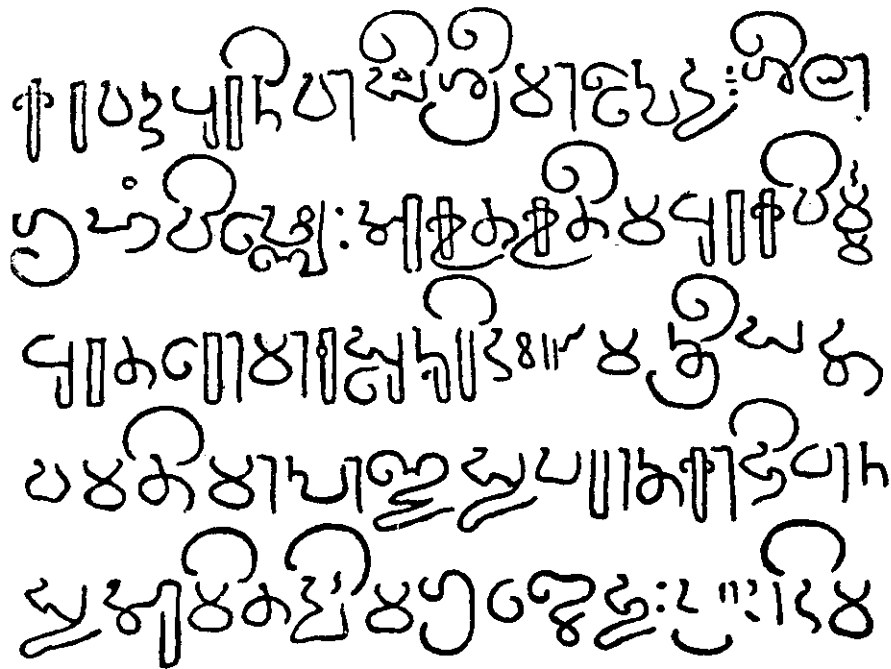


FIG. 127.

C. S. del.

¹ Prosperity! Without attachment to this world where those seen (to-day) are not seen (to-morrow), without brooding over the impending (final) day appointed by the Creator; before you are worn by old age with its (appendage of) a stick; if you have anything, enjoy (yourself) and the rest, so give away that the world knows it.

करवन्दपुरनिवासि श्रीमान्वैद्यः शिला
 गृहं विष्णोः अकृत कृति मधुरकविर्ममं
 धुरतरो मारसूनुरिदम्॥ मन्त्री स ए
 व मतिमान्पण्डयस्य परान्तकाभिधान
 स्य अमिर्तद्धिमग्रेजेभ्यः प्रादादिम¹

The slight development of Grantha-Tamil from late Pallava to early Coḷa with the main features still intact, is indicated in the example chosen below from the Madras Museum plates of Uttama Coḷa (*S. Ind. Inscr.* III, p. 264). In Grantha script the noteworthy changes from that of the 8th century given above (Fig. 128) are that the angularities to the right get rounded in general for all letters. *Kha* has an enlarged nose, the right limb of *ga* is enlarged and bent angularly, *ṭa* becomes angular still with base diagonal, *ṇa* develops loop, *tha*, *dha*, *ba* open wider to the top like *va*, the open top of *ma* closes and forms a small loop, and the box-shaped left limb of *sa* opens. Both Grantha and Tamil passages occur in the passage chosen for illustration below. There is no great change noticeable in Tamil script here from that of late Pallava given above (Fig. 126). It may be noted that *a* and *ā* lack the loop which was present in early Pallava script and which was already lost in the late Pallava letters ; *va* opens wider to the top and the base of *pa* and *ma* become more horizontal. Like the sculptures of this transitional period of late Pallava and Coḷa periods, the script of the time is most beautiful and elegant and is in keeping with the high standard of artistic perfection.

செய்வாரகாபுலம் ஈகிதிசியுள்ளவன்குலத்தின்புலையுள்ளவருடைய
 குலத்தினால் அகரகவிமம் அகரகவிமம் அகரகவிமம் அகரகவிமம்
 அகரகவிமம் அகரகவிமம் அகரகவிமம் அகரகவிமம் அகரகவிமம்
 அகரகவிமம் அகரகவிமம் அகரகவிமம் அகரகவிமம் அகரகவிமம்
 அகரகவிமம் அகரகவிமம் அகரகவிமம் அகரகவிமம் அகரகவிமம்

யாரகவிமம் அகரகவிமம் அகரகவிமம் அகரகவிமம் அகரகவிமம்
 அகரகவிமம் அகரகவிமம் அகரகவிமம் அகரகவிமம் அகரகவிமம்

FIG. 128. C.S. del.

¹ The son of Māra, Madhurakavi, resident of Karavandapura, prosperous, able, most sweet-tempered belonging to a family of physicians built this stone temple of Viṣṇu. That same intelligent minister of the Pāṇḍya king called Parāntaka, gave this innumersably rich (*agrahāra*) to the first born (Brahmans).

देयं राजभाष्यं करमितिमधुरोन्माधिना शून्यभावाच्चोलेनाज्ञापितै
स्तैरथ नगरजनैरप्यनुज्ञातमेतम्॥ आयव्ययावथालिख्य चोलानियमबा
सिभिः मासक्रमेण चैकैकन्दर्शनीयो कुडुम्बिभिः राजवस्त्रकृतामेषाञ्चतु
र्वाटनिवासिनाम् हरेः कार्यनियुक्तैश्च सार्धमूरकवासिनः॥ श्री कोऽप्यार

கேசரி பநாரண ஸ்ரீ உத்தம சோழ தேவர்க்கு யாண்டு பதினூராவது உடை
யார்க்கச்சிப்பேட்டு கோவிலினுள்ளால் தெற்கில் சித்திரமண்டபத்தெழுந்
தருளினிருக்க அதிகாரிகள் சோழமூவேந வேளார் எம்பெருமான் இகச்சிப்பேட்டு¹
த

The development of Grantha and Tamil script in the next century in Coḷa grants is illustrated Rājendra Coḷa's Tiruvālangāḍu plates (Ibid, p. 383). The passage given below (Fig. 129) is from the Sanskrit portion to show Grantha script. The Tiruvālangāḍu plates are the most unique in Indian epigraphy. They are thirty-one large copper sheets strung on a huge ring with a massive seal. No doubt Coḷa grants are large and heavy, as for instance, the larger Leyden plates, but the Tiruvālangāḍu plates weigh eight maunds, two visses and twenty palams, being 'nearly three times as heavy as the Paithan records of A.D. 1272 pronounced by Fleet to be an epigraphic curiosity in respect of its weight' (Ibid, p. 383). In this script, the serif of the letters undergoes a change in that it overhangs to left eves-like, and the letters are not so very regular and neat, as in Uttama Coḷa's inscription above. As in the case of *ga*, *śa* has also the right arm somewhat enlarged and bent angularly. The remarks about *kha*, *ṭa*, *tha*, *dha*, *bha*, and *sa* in the previous passage also apply here.

FIG. 129.

C.S. del.

¹ Being ordered by Coḷa the destroyer of Madhura (Madhurāntaka) that in consideration of their poverty no taxes like royal dues should be levied it was also authorized by those city magnates. The house-holders living in Coḷāniyama along with the managers of the temple of Hari situated in Ūraka should individually prepare monthly accounts of income and expenditure and show them to the royal weavers living in the four quarters. In the 16th year of the prosperous king *Parakesarivarman* alia Śrī Uttama Coḷadeva, when (this) Lord was pleased to be present in the Citra-maṇḍapa hall to the south within the palace at Kaccipēḍu the officer *Coḷamūvendavelār* (requested) the king-that (for the deity) of this Kaccipēḍu . . .

ஹ்லி ஸ்ரீ திருமணி வளர இருந்லமடந்தையும் பொறசய
 பபாவையும் சீர்ததநீசசெலவியும் தனபெருந்தெவீயராசி
 இணபுறநெடுதியள் ஊழியுள இடைதுறைநாடு துடர்
 வனவெலிப்படரவனவாசியும் சளளிசகுழமதிளகொளளி ¹

A further stage of development is reached in the later Coḷa inscriptions and the beginnings are already seen in the records of Rājendra Coḷa Kulottunga who combined the Coḷa and Cāḷukyan sovereignties in the third quarter of the 11th century. The following passage (Fig. 131) is from a late inscription of his at Tirukaḷukunram, dated in the beginning of the 12th century A.D. (Ibid III, p. 164). The letters tend to become more angular and the general mould is rectangular. There is no letter that has not a clear horizontal base, including even *u* and *ṭa*. In *ṣ* the tail tends to encircle its body. *Ya* is more or less like *E* laid on its back. The overhanging serif becomes more marked.

ஹ்லி ஸ்ரீ திருமணி வளர இருந்லமடந்தையும் பொறசய
 பபாவையும் சீர்ததநீசசெலவியும் தனபெருந்தெவீயராசி
 இணபுறநெடுதியள் ஊழியுள இடைதுறைநாடு துடர்
 வனவெலிப்படரவனவாசியும் சளளிசகுழமதிளகொளளி

FIG. 131.

C. S. del.

ஹ்லி ஸ்ரீ புகழ்குணபுணரி அகழ குழைபுவியில
 பொன நெமி அளவுணை நெயிநடப்ப விளங்கு
 ஜய மகளிளங்கோப்பருவத்து சசகரகோட்டத
 துவிக்கிரமத்தொழிலால் புதுமணம் புண்ணு ²

¹ Hail! Prosperity! In (his) life of great prosperity (during which he) rejoiced that while fortune having become constant was increasing, the goddess of the great earth, the goddess of victory in battle, and the matchless goddess of fame had become his great queens (conquered with his great and war-like army) Idaiturainādu, Vana-vāṣī whose warriors (were protected by) walls of continuous forest, Koḷippākkai whose walls were surrounded by ḷuḷi trees . . .

² Hail! Prosperity! while his wheel (of authority) went as far as the golden circle (Mount Meru) on the earth surrounded by the most of the sea which was surrounded by (his) fame (the king) newly wedded the brilliant goddess of victory, while still heir apparent, by deed of valour at Sakkarakottṭam.

The final stage of Grantha-Tamil script is reached in the Vijayanagara inscriptions where the letters are cast in angular moulds, with the type so settled that there is no further appreciable difference between this and the modern type. In Grantha the double verticals of *a*, *ā*, *ka* and *ra* form a rectangle heightwise with the base line somewhat extended to left. As the base of all letters is uniformly horizontal, the diagonal base of *i* is suitably changed. The curve, indicating the lengthening of *ā* partly encircles the main body of the letter. *Ta* deteriorates into a zigzag. The nose of *kha*, *da*, *ḍa*, and *pa* is enlarged and in the case of the first it hangs down somewhat; in addition the nose has a tendency to curl in *kha*, *gha*, *ḍa*, *da*, *pa pha*, *ba*, *va*, *sa*, *ṣa*, and *ha*. In *ma* the small top loop opens and appears as a curl. The earlier undulating contour of the small body of *la*, encircled by its own tail, changes into regular double curve. The central stroke of *ya* slants to right. In Tamil, the nose of *a*, *ā*, and *e* is enlarged and tends to curl. In the case of *ka*, *ca* and *ta* the earlier overhanging serif settles as a rectangle over the body loop. *Ta* is a regular right angle and *pa* a rectangle with open top. The following passage (Fig. 132) is from the Madras Museum plates of Śrīgīribhūpāla (*Epigraph. Ind.* VIII, p. 309) : —

உகூழீபகூழீயகூழீ
 றீயதகூழீயகூழீயகூழீய
 உகூழீயகூழீயகூழீயகூழீய
 றீயதகூழீயகூழீயகூழீய
 உகூழீயகூழீயகூழீயகூழீய
 றீயதகூழீயகூழீயகூழீய
 உகூழீயகூழீயகூழீயகூழீய
 றீயதகூழீயகூழீயகூழீய
 உகூழீயகூழீயகூழீயகூழீய
 றீயதகூழீயகூழீயகூழீய
 உகூழீயகூழீயகூழீயகூழீய
 றீயதகூழீயகூழீயகூழீய
 உகூழீயகூழீயகூழீயகூழீய
 றீயதகூழீயகூழீயகூழீய

FIG. 132.

C. S. del.

लक्ष्मीम् पक्ष्मलयत्वाद्यमन्त
 रायतमोपहम। प्रथमद्वन्द्व
 सम्भूतम् प्रणयाद्वैतवै
 भवम् करुणामयवामांगं क
 ल्याणगुणभूषणम्। वन्दे चन्द्र
 कलाकल्पम्महस्त्रित यलोचनम्

भुवः प्रेमपरिष्वंगपुलकाकि
 तबाहवे। नमो वराहवपु
 षे श्रीवैभवपुषे त्विषे। व
 न्देनन्तफणाभूषां स्यन्दन
 म्मेरुधन्वनः। मेदिनीं हरिदोस्तम्
 भमेघनादानुलासिनीम्। आ
 सीत् सोमान्वये रम्ये यदुः पर
 मधार्मिकः। अंशावतीर्णो यद्वं
 शे भगवान् पद्मलोचनः। त
 त्कुले संगमो राजा समभूत् ¹

As Grantha and Tamil were used together the former for expressing Sanskrit passages and Sanskrit terms occurring in Tamil inscription, so Grantha and Vaṭṭeḷuttu were used in the extreme south of the Peninsula. Vaṭṭeḷuttu is a form of cursory Tamil written in a peculiar slanting way, and as it had an independent development, the letters differ to a certain extent in their general features with greater resemblance in such letters as *ā*, *āu*, *e*, *ka*, *pa*, *ra*, *la* and *va*, but less of it in letters like *ṭa* and *ma*, and in some cases by their peculiarly different shape as for instance in *i*, *na*, *ta*, *na* and *ya*, though the ultimate common origin can easily be traced. Pāṇḍya Cera and some Coḷa inscriptions are engraved in this

¹ May that Primal (deity, i.e., Vināyaka), the destroyer of darkness of obstacles, the offspring of the primal couple and the rich in kindness without a peer, increase (our) prosperity. I bow to him (Śiva) the left half of whose body is entirely composed of mercy, who is adoned by excellent virtue, who has the moon's digit for ornament and the three lights (sun, moon and fire) for his eyes. Salutation to that lustre (Varāhamūrti) in the form of a Boar, whose hand is marked by horripulation by the loving embrace of Bhū (the earth), and who enhances the glory of Sri (prosperity) I bow to Medinī (earth), the jewel on the hoods of Ananta, the chariot of (Śiva) the bowmen who carries Mount Meru as his bow, the peahen on the pillar-like arm of Viṣṇu. In the pleasant lunar race was born the supremely righteous Yādu in whose family the lotus-eyed Lord (Viṣṇu) was born as an incarnation Kṛṣṇa. In that family King Sangama was born.

கோமாறஞ்சபையறகு உ
 ததரமணி, களககுடிவை
 டிதந மூலீவந்தமங்கலப்
 பேராயன் ஆகிய மாரங்
 காரி இக்கற்றனி செய்து
 நீரத்தனியர தேய வுழா-ரொ
 ஹணஞ் செய்த பினனை அவ
 னுக்கு அநுஜந உத்தர
 ஶனுவடி மேயதின பாண்டி
 மங்கல விசை அறையன
 ஆகிய மாறனனே இ
 னனமுகமணடமஞ்செ
 யிது நீர ததளிததன¹

¹ Mārangari alias *Vaidyan Muvendamangalapperaraiyan* of Kalakkuḍi, the prime minister of King Mārañjadayān, made this stone temple and ascended heaven without consecrating it. Later his younger brother Māraneyanan alias *Pāṇḍamangalavisaiyairaiyan*, who attained to the position of prime minister made this *Mukhamanḍapa* and consecrated (the shrine).

APPENDIX.

INSCRIPTIONS IN THE EPIGRAPHICAL BAYS OF THE ARCHÆOLOGICAL SECTION OF THE MADRAS GOVERNMENT MUSEUM.

The collection of copper-plates and inscribed slabs in the Madras Museum is probably the richest in India. The need for exhibiting in a worthy manner typical inscriptions of various dates and scripts occurring in South India was keenly felt and the result is the epigraphical bays in the mezzanine floor of the new Archaeological extension. Here the scheme of arrangement is to show the development of Brāhmī from the earliest times to the 4th century A.D. in one bay, that of Tamil Grantha from the earliest times to the latest phase in the next, that of Canarese Telugu in the bay beyond it and in the last the development of Nāgarī. In addition to the actual inscriptions and some plaster casts, originals of which could not be obtained or exhibited with safety, there is a chart given in each bay to show the various stages in the development of the script. A general label explains the development of scripts as such in India with special reference to the South Indian variety, and in each bay the history of the particular script is stressed, individual labels beneath each exhibit explaining its significance.

The huge collection, comprising mostly copper-plate grants, is partly classified, catalogued and arranged according to dynasties and kept in the reserve collection, along with subsequent additions, which have been entered and described in accession registers, but which await classification and cataloguing with adequate descriptions. Many of the large collection of inscribed stone slabs are arranged in the shed and form a rich and valuable reserve collection, while a selection from these is exhibited in the bays of the epigraphical gallery.

In the Brāhmī bay the first exhibit is a cast of an Aśokan edict from Jaugada, showing the letters in the time of the great Mauryan emperor (pl. V-a). The next is a cast from one of the inscribed Bhaṭṭiprolu reliquary lids. The original itself is exhibited in the Buddhist gallery and one interested in the original can well have a look at it there (pl. V-b, c). The peculiar features of the Bhaṭṭiprolu script deserve special attention and the importance of this exhibit is obvious. The next is an original slab from Amarāvati, an upright from the rail giving the name of a guild from Dhānyakaṭaka, modern Amarāvati, inscribed in letters of the 2nd century B.C. (pl. VI-a). A further stage of development of Brāhmī is illustrated by an inscription composed of beautiful elongate letters, also from Amāravati (pl. VI-b). All the best specimens of this elaborate ornamental lettering come from Jaggayyapeṭa and Nāgārjunakoṇḍa, an inscribed slab from Jaggayyapeṭa is given next (pl. VI-c). The final development of Brāhmī script, before it changes into the type which is the parent of the Telugu-Canarese and Tamil-Grantha, is shown by a cast of the first plate from a grant of Pallava Śivaskandavarman issued from Kāñci. The chart which comes next shows the various stages of the development in greater detail.

In the next, the Tamil-Grantha bay, the first exhibit is another cast of the Aśokan edict. The next is a small fragment of an inscription from Amarāvati of the 2nd century A.D., showing the development of Brāhmī five centuries later. The development of Brāhmī having been more elaborately dealt with in the previous bay, the development of Tamil Grantha script from Brāhmī is dealt with in greater detail here. Seventh century Grantha script, as it occurs in the inscriptions of Rājasimha at the Kailāsanātha temple in Kāñchīpuram, is illustrated by a small fragment from Kāñchīpuram (pl. VII-a). Further development during the time of Nandivarman Pallavamalla of later Pallava palaeography is shown next by a small slab kindly presented to the Museum by my friend Mr. M. K. Srinivasa Mudaliar, Zamindar of Manali. The development of this script both in Grantha and in Tamil is beautifully illustrated in the stone inscription of Rājarāja from Kalambākkam, Chingleput district, which is in excellent state of preservation (pl. VIII).* The final phase of development of Tamil-Grantha is illustrated by a cast of a Vijayanagar inscription which shows the script not very different from that of today. The chart which comes next contains, as in the Brāhmī bay, a more detailed study of this development.

In the Canarese-Telugu bay which comes next, the first two exhibits are the casts of the Aśokan inscription and a fragment of an inscription from Amarāvati in the same order as in the previous bay, as the early development of the script is the same in both the areas where these two types of scripts develop later. The inscribed slabs are arranged in two rows one above and the other below to show the simultaneous development of the script in the eastern or Telugu area and the western or the Canarese area. For showing the development of the script in the Telugu region, an early inscribed slab with no particular date but which can be assigned to the early years of the Eastern Cālukyan dynasty is shown.† The next is an inscribed slab from Addanki of the 9th century (pl. X-a). This is an important one from the point of view of both palaeography and literature. This inscription is clear proof of Telugu poetry of the 9th century A.D., though unfortunately no literary work of a date earlier than the *Mahābhārata* of Nannaya Bhaṭṭa, the poet laureate of the Eastern Cālukyan king Rājarāja of the 11th century A.D., except Nannecoḍa's *Kumārasambhava* of the 10th century A.D., has yet been discovered. The beginnings of Telugu poetry are to be sought in the inscriptions, and the Addanki stone inscription being earlier than the Bezwada pillar inscription of Yuddhamalla, which itself is a century earlier than Nannaya, is specially noteworthy. Paṇḍaraṅga, who is mentioned in this inscription, was the minister of Guṇagavijayāditya III. The next inscribed slab is of the 11th century and shows the type of letters used during Rājarāja's time (pl. X-b). After this comes a cast showing the development of Telugu during the early years of Vijayanagara rule in the 14th century (pl. X-c).

The development in the Canarese districts is illustrated by a carved slab showing a warrior in a panel with inscriptions on the border to the sides and top. The inscription,

* Early Coja script is also illustrated in pl. VII - b and pl. IX - ab.

† An early Eastern Cālukyan dvārapāla, inscribed on the back, is displayed in the gallery (IX - C).

which is partly mutilated, is of the time of Vikramāditya, the Western Cālukyan king of the Bādāmi line (pl. XI-a). This is probably the only Western Cālukyan inscription of an early date on stone found in the Madras Province. The next is a cast of a portion of a Rāṣtrakūṭa inscription from a bathing pedestal from Dānavulapāḍu of the 10th century A.D. The next is a large inscription of the later Western Cālukyan king Vikramāditya VI (pl. XI-b). The final development in both areas being the same in the Vijayanagara period, the same cast of the inscription of the Vijayanagara period serves the purpose for the script development in the Canarese area as well. Beyond this, there is a chart showing the development of both Canarese and Telugu from Brāhmī during the centuries.

In the Nāgarī bay, after the Aśokan cast, there is space allotted for a cast of a Kuṣāṇa inscription to be acquired from the Indian Museum, Calcutta. The next stage of development is illustrated by a cast of the Eran inscription of Samudragupta. Coming from Central India, it exhibits certain special features in the letters, namely, the box-head and the nail-head. The next is an original slab with an inscription in Nāgarī of the 7th century A.D., exactly as it occurs in the Kailāsanātha temple (pl. XII-a). This Pallava inscription should be assigned to the time of Parameśvaravarman, for, though most of it is obliterated, I have been able to read a line or two which follow the Kūram grant of Parameśvaravarman. The next is an original slab from near Mukhalingam of the time of Anantavarma Coḍagaṅga (pl. XII-b). This shows the type of Nāgarī prevalent in the Kalinga area in the 11th century A.D., and the Pallava slab shows letters with features similar to the Nāgarī type prevalent in North India at the time. The final stage of development of Nāgarī in South India as seen in the Nandināgarī inscriptions of the Vijayanagara monarchs is illustrated by a cast of a copper plate (pl. XII-c). Beyond this, there is a chart illustrating the development of the script.

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INDEX

A	PAGES		PAGES
<i>A</i> , evolution and varieties of ..	56 ff.		
<i>A</i> , table for	57		
<i>A</i> , evolution and varieties of ..	58 ff.		
<i>A</i> , table for	59		
Abhijñānaśākuntalam ..	40		
Abhinavagupta	14		
abhinaya	5		
Ābhira script	163		
acute-angled script, new term for Kuṭīla.	175		
Acyutapuram plates	199		
Ādavallān	3		
Addanki. inscription from ..	48, 239		
adhika	47		
adhikarapadaṇḍa	7		
Ādhikṛta	6		
ādikārai, jewel	2		
Ādikavi Valmiki	42		
Ādikeśava ghaṭṭa	180 fn.		
Āditya	32		
Ādityasena	33		
Ādityavardhana	27, 176 fn.		
Ādivarāha	26		
Agastya	18, 220 fn.		
Agni	32		
Agnicayana	206 fn.		
Agnihotrin	28		
Agniṣṭoma	195, 206 fn.		
Agniṣṭoma, performed by Śivaskanda- varman.	167 fn.		
Agnyaḍheya, performed by Śātakarṇi.	13		
Āhavamalla Someśvara II	13		
Ahicchatrā (bhukti)	2		
Aihoḷe, Brahmā represented at ..	16		
„ inscription	38, 39,		
Āikuddi, Ay. family of	196		
<i>Āi medial</i> , evolution and varieties of..	79		
„ table for	80		
Aiya, engraver	24		
Ajaṅṭa, Gupta sculpture at	49		
Akkara, metre	42		
Akṣapaṭālika	20, 24		
Akṣaralalitācarya, a style for script of Narendramgarājā	33		
amānkāra	3, 42		
arthālakāra	42		
śabdālakāra	42		
Alexander	10		
Alikasudala	10		
Allahabad inscription	9, 22, 28, 38, 73, 75, 170, 171		
Allahabad inscription, musical talents of Samudragupta described in ..	9		
Alvāra	8		
„ in Viṣṇu temples	5		
Amarāvati	1, 15, 32, 50, 164, 238		
„ inscription from	2, 239		
„ symbols at	25		
Amātyas	6, 7, 35		
<i>Ā medial</i> , evolution of and varieties of.	67 ff.		
„ table for	70		
Amma I	28		
Ammarāja II Vaṇḍram, plates of ..	214		
Amoghavarṣa, Nilguṇḍ inscription of.	206		
Ananta	235		
Anantavarman Choḍaganga	240		
„ Maukhari	47		
Anāthapiṇḍada	13		
Andhra	50, 163		
Anga	11, 226 fn.		
Aniyanka Bhīma	183		
Animals and birds, letters shaped like	37		
Ankor Thom, monuments at	49		
Annam	7, 8, 49, 50		
„ inscriptions of	55		
annam, jewel	2		
Annual Report of D.G.A. in India, 1904-1905	3		
Annual Report of South Indian Epigraphy.	8		
Antaka	172 fn.		
Antekina	10		
Antigonus Gontas	10		
anuprāsa	42, 43		
Anuvāra, early forms of	42		
chekānuprāsa	43		
lāṭānuprāsa	43		
vṛṭyanuprāsa	43		

	PAGES		PAGES
anusvāraHirahāḍagalli plates, in ..	166	āsīs, form of mangala	25
„ represented by stars	37	Āśoka,	20, 49
anuvāṭṭam, pearl	2	„ Brahmagiri, inscription of ..	155
Apāpa, goldsmith	24	„ Dharmamahāmātras, appointed by..	10
Apsad histription	33	„ Girnar inscription of	51
Appadevi	178 f.n.	„ inscriptions of	2, 9, 10, 155 158, 229
Appar and Sambandar, composers of Tevāram.	54	„ inscriptions of, local variations in	155
Appaya Dikṣita	53	„ inscriptions of, personality revealed in.	9
Apsarodevi	27, 176 fn.	„ Jaugada edict of	238
Aptoryāma, performed by Śātakarṇi..	13	„ Mysore edicts of	155
Ārabhaṭi, dance	213 fn.	„ script of, southern variety ..	155, 156
Arabic numerals, similarity of letters to arai-olai	56, 63, 65, 228	„ tolerance of	6
Arbuda, Mt.	27	assessment	6
Archeological Survey of India Reports XVII.	37	„ Asta mī	187, fn.
Ardhanārīśvara panel	16	Aṣṭasahasra	53
Arhat	11	Āśvamedha, sacrifice	31, 51, 195 206 fn., 230
Arikamedu	158	„ performed by Dhara-sena.	170
Arjunāyanas	3	„ performed by Śāta-karṇi.	13
arrangements for transcribing, made by Āśoka.	10	„ performed by Siri Cātamūla.	166 fn.
arrow-headed letters	201	„ performed by Śiva-skandavarman.	167 fn.
a: thālankūras	42, 44, 52	Āśvapati	6
artha	48	Atiraṇaṇḍa, king	186 fn.
adhika	47	Atiraṇaṇḍeśvara	186, 186 fn.
bhrāntimat	45	Ātirātra	195
rūpaka	44	Ātreya clan	184 fn.
sabokti	46	Atri	27, 209 fn. 216 fn.
samāsokti	45	Āṭṭakathā	24
śleṣa	45	Ātyantakāmapallaveśvara	223 fn.
smaraṇa	45	Audumbaras	3
ullekha	45	<i>Au medial</i> , evolution and varieties of.	83
upamā	44, 47	„ table for	82
utprekṣā	44	auspicious occasions, grants made on	28
virodha	46	avabhṛta bath	206 fn.
virodhābhāsa	46	Avadānas	14
vyājastuti	47	Avagraha	182
yathāsankhya	47	Avanti, name of Harṣa's Sāndhivigrahika.	35
Arthasāstra	3	Āyaka pillars	166
artificial poetry	52	ayana	92
Arumōḍevan, biruda of Rājarajā ..	2		
„ measures named	3		
Arumōḍivaleṭṭā	6		
Asamañjasa	226 fn.		
Asia	49		

	PAGES
Āy family	186
Āyuktas	6
Āyus	209 fn.
Ayavarma	26
B	
Ba, evolution and varieties	126
„ table for	127
Bādāmi	240
„ Brahmā represented at	16
„ cave inscription	29, 204
„ Western Cālukyas of	188
„ Western Cālukya records of ..	169
Bagumra plates	188
Bahusuvarna, sacrifice	8, 206 fn., 211 fn.
Bahvraçarana	28
Bala, monk	139 fn., 158
Balādhikāta	35
Balasiri, inscription of	9, 163
Bālī	227 fn.
bali, offering	28
Ballamkogaḍa	6
Bāṇa	25, 39, 40, 47 48
Banaras	52, 158, 159 fn.
Banaras inscription	174
Bandhuvarman, inscription of, Kumāra gupta and	47, 52, 203
Banskhera plate	2, 36, 173, 175 177.
Banswara plate	180
Bappahaṭṭāraka	210 fn.
Bārānasi, image of Bodhisattva conse- crated at	159 fn.
bark, documents of	16
Bārnāsā, river	13, 161 fn.
Baroda copper plate	182
Baṭeśvar inscription	44, 46, 52
Baveru Jātaka	8
Belūr temple, copper plates from ..	208
Bengali script	181, 182, 183
Bezwaḍa	2
Bezwaḍa inscription	239
Bha, evolution and varieties of ..	126 ff.
„ table for	129

	PAGES
bhadram, jewel	2
Bhāgavata	211
Bhagīratha	11, 177 fn.
Bhāgīrathī	195
Bhājagovinda Stotra	41
Bhaṇḍak plates	46
Bhaṇḍanāditya <i>alias</i> Kuntāditya ..	28
Bhandarkar, R. G.	161 fn.
Bharadvāja, clan, Śivaskandavarman of.	167
„ gotra	28
Bhāraśiva	27, 195 fn.
Bharata	5, 14, 226 fn.
Bhārata	211
Bhārgava, gotra	28
Bhārhut	14
Bharugacha	13
Bharukaccha, port at	8
Bharukacha, same as Bharukaccha ..	161 fn.
Bhāsa	47
Bhāskaravarman, Nidhanpur plates of.	48
Bhaṭārka	26, 204 fn.
Bhaṭas	6, 30
Bhaṭṭavṛtti	28
Bhaṭṭiprolu	56, 58, 65, 67 85, 87, 89, 93 96, 108, 111, 121, 124, 126, 128 132, 137, 139, 141, 144, 146, 148 150, 156, 238
Bhavadatta, king	198 fn.
Bhavanāga	195 fn.
Bhavānī	190 fn., 237 fn., 232 fn.
Bhima	189 fn.
Bhitari pillar inscription	12
Bhoja of Dhārā	1, 41, 42, 174 180, 181 fn.
„ a polymath	1174, 181
„ university of	1, 42
Bhojadeva	178 fn.
Bhojasāgar	3
Bhojasālā	41
bhrāntimat	45
Bhū	235 fn.
Bhuvaneśvar, inscription from ..	33
„ Svapneśvar, inscription from	52, 182
Bhukti	6

	PAGES		PAGES
bhūrjapatra	18	Bṛhadisvara temple	2, 232
Bhuvanaikabāhu	187	Rājārāja's inscription from	2
Bilhaṇa Kasmiri poet	35, 53	Bṛhadproṣṭha plate	198
Bilhari inscription	43	Bṛhaspati	171
Bikṣaḍ inscription	170, 172	Bṛhaspatisava	195 fn.
bird characters	37	Bṛhatphalāyana king	168, 169 fn.
biruda labels	37	Buddha	18, 25, 176 fn.
birudas of Mahendravarman, Pallava king.	36, 222	„ Rājyavardhana II, a follower of	27
Boar form of Viṣṇu	235 fn.	Buddhist creed on seals	22
Bodh-Gaya inscription	174, 188	„ deities invoked	26
Bodhisattva, figure of	158, 159 fn.	„ institution	5
book of palm leaves, held by Brahmā.	16	„ tradition about writing of canon	19
book of palm leaves, held by Māṇik-kavācaka.	18	on palm leaf.	
book of palm leaves, held by sage	18	Budha	209 fn., 216 fn.
book of palm leaves, held by Sarasvatī	16	Budhagupta, a Mahānāvika	51
book of palm leaves, held by Śiva	17	Bühler, G.	16, 19, 29, 35
book of palm leaves, resembled by cloak	18	41, 155, 165, 166, 174, 182, 206	207
end of Buddha		Bukka	193 fn.
Borneo	7, 8, 51	bull	
Borobudur,	49, 50	lāñchana of the Maukharis	22
„ story of Buddha at	8	on Pallava seal	22
bow on seals	22	on seal	24
box-headed letters	49, 56, 65, 67	on Śonpat seal of Harṣavardhana	22
77, 83, 85, 111, 139, 146, 183, 194		on the seal of Maitraka Bhāṭārka	22
195, 197, 198, 199, 200, 201, 202		Burgess, J.	165
240.		Burma	7, 50
„ script	198	Burnell, A. C.	192
Brahmā	32, 207, fn., 215 fn.	buxom letters	198, 199, 203
abstract form of	26		
represented at Bādāmi	16	G	
Brahmadeya	31	Ca, evolution and varieties of	96 ff.
Brahmagiri, Aśoka's edict at	33, 155, 155 fn.	„ table for	97
Brahman	227 fn.	Cāhamāna	41
Brāhmaṇas, Khāravēla's attitude	11	Cairo Museum	31
towards.		Caitra	221 fn.
Brahmaṇyadeva	172 fn.	calligraphy, Indian	174
Brahmasva	31	Cālukyas, family of	206 fn., 212 fn.
Brāhmi,	177, 202, 226, 238	Cālukyan grant	25, 27, 206
development of	209, 239	Cālukyan inscription	208
development of Canarese and Telugu from	240	Cālukyan letters	58, 62, 63, 67
letters	169, 173	100, 128	134
Brhadcaraṇa	53	„ Nāgari	191

	PAGES		PAGES
Cālukyan script	224	Ceylon coins with Nāgari legend simi-	187
„ Sovereignities	233	lar to Coḷa	
Cālukyas	26, 39, 208	„ script	50, 55
	fn.	Ceylonese chronicle	50
Cambodia	8, 49, 50	„ influence on carved moon-	15
Cānakya	32	stones	
Canarese	58, 60, 65, 89	<i>Cha</i> , evolution and varieties of	98 ff.
	91, 93, 96, 100, 111, 123, 126, 128	„ table for	99
	132, 134, 141, 144, 146, 148, 150	Champā, inscriptions of	55
	188, 192, 222.	Charitable institutions, maintenance of.	2
„ area	220, 239	Charities for temples	2
„ country	26	Charter,	
„ inscription	34, 202	giving of, mentioned.. .. .	20
„ script	35, 37, 190	meant for establishing claims by its	20
	208, 209	exhibition.	
„ signature in	192	of Bhoja	181
„ Telugu	188, 204, 226	of Simhavarman	30
	238, 239.	of Śivaskandavarman	30
Candellas	53	Pallava	25, 26, 200
Candella letters	62, 65, 86, 87	Chebrolu inscription	44, 216
	91, 111, 128	Chekānuprāsa	43
	134, 143	Chhabra, B.Ch.,	
	144, 146	on cultural expansion in S. India	8
„ scripts	53, 180	Chingleput district	239
Candrabaṭṭārikādevi	178 fn.	Cidambaram	
Candradeva, plates of	48	labelled dance poses from temple at	14
Candrādityadeva, copper plate of	179	Cikkulla plates	211
Candragupta I	26	Citrāgupta, the divine scribe	34
Candragupta II	27	Citrāmaṇḍapa, hall	231 ff.
Sanchi inscription of	170	Citrāmegataṭāka	3
Udayagiri inscription of	170, 194	Citrārathasvāmi	210 fn
Candramādhava temple	179	Coedes, G.	7
Candravamśa	27	Coins,	
Candravati,		Arjunāyana	3
temple of Candramādhava at	179	Audumbara	3
Capaḍa, scribe	33, 155	Gadyāna	8
Caru, offering	28	Kerala	1
Cāṭas	6, 30	Mālava	3
Cātisiri, daughter of Siri Cātamūla	166 fn.	Pāñcāla	3
Cāturmāsya, sacrifice,	197 fn.	Rājārāja's	15
Caturveda	28	Rājendra's	15
Ceḍi era	29	Uttama's	15
Central Asia, mss., discovered in	50	Vaṭśāvaka	3
Cera(s)	22, 188, 222	Yaudheya	3
	235	Coin, understood with the help of epi-	15
Ceylon	7, 18	graphy.	

	PAGES		PAGES
Cola(s),	6, 188, 222	Cupid	224 fn., 222
	228, 229, 230, 231 fn., 235		fn.
Buddhist institution fostered by ..	5	Curses for the wrong doer	31
coins	15, 187		D
dynasty, history of	54	<i>Da</i> , evolution and varieties of ..	106 ff.
emperor(s)	11, 187	„ table for	107
family of	232 fn.	<i>Da</i> , evolution and varieties of ..	116 ff.
Grantha characters	41	„ table for	117
grants	231	Dacca Museum	14
inscriptions	12, 233	Dadhimatimātā inscription	41
kings, measures started by	3	Dāhānukā	13, 161 fn.
letters	1, 58, 60, 62	Dakṣiṇa	13
	63, 65, 69, 71, 73, 76, 77, 79, 83	Dakṣiṇameruvidangan	3
	85, 89, 91, 94, 98, 100, 104, 106	dam across the Coleroon	1
	113, 124, 130, 132, 134, 144, 146	Damana	13, 161 fn.
	148, 150, 153, 228.	Dāmodarvarman, Maṭṭepād plates of.	39
metal images	2	Dānavulapādu	240
Meykirtis of	232	Danḍapalle plates	193
military power	12	Danḍin	40
painting	18	Dantapura	199 fn.
period	14, 230	Dantidurga, Samangad plates of ..	188
„ letters of	18	Dantivarman, Tiruvaḷḷarai inscription of.	54, 223
sovereignties	233	Danu	212 fn.
Tamil inscriptions of	28	Dārūsuram temple	12
temples	12	Daśakumāracarita	40
tiger emblem of	22	Daśapura	13, 161 fn.
varieties in jewels of	2	Dattadevi	26
Colamaṇḍalam	6	Deccan	19, 163
Colamūveṇḍavelār	231 fn.	Deccan Nāgari	188, 191
Colāniyama	231 fn.	„ development of, in	191
Coleroon, dam across	1	„ use of in	188
committees for looking after gardens,	4	decorative element in scripts	37
etc.		democratic bodies	3, 4
committee to protect charitable endow-	28	Deogarh Gupta temple	17
ments.		„ rock inscription	174
copper, plates from Belūr temple ..	208	Deopāra inscription	35, 38, 47, 52
„ melting down of	1		181
Corinth, Alexander of	10	<i>deśa</i>	6
Corpus Inscriptionum		descriptions of battle in inscriptions	15
Indicarum, I	33, 155	destruction of gifts forbidden	32
„ II	33	destructive agency, on epigraphy,	
„ III	3, 22, 30, 46	misguided faith	1
	47, 170, 174, 194, 203.	village smith	1
creeper fashion, lines in	36	Devāḍhya, Mahārāja	173 fn.
Cūḍāmaṇivihāra	5, 8	Devagiri, Yādava kings of	191
Culakokā	14	Devaki, mother of Kṛṣṇa	12
Cunningham, A.	37		

	PAGES
Devānāgarī	191
Devāram, in Saivite temples	5
Devarāya	5
Devarāya II, Satyamangalam plates of	193
Devī	26
Devīmāhātmya	41
Dewal prasasti	44, 52
Dha. evolution and varieties of	108
.. table for	109
.. evolution and varieties of	118
.. table for	119
Dhammapāda	24
Dhammalipi, name for Aśoka's inscription	20
Dhanada	172 fn.
Dhanaka family	166 fn.
Dhaññakaṭa, agent of Śivaskandavarman at	168 fn.
Dhānyakaṭa, guild from	238
Dhārā,	21, 41
Bhoja of	1, 174, 180
University at	42
Dharasena, Traikūṭaka, king	169, 170 fn.
" script of	170
dharma	10, 31, 40
" of Arhat	11
dharma-cakra	15, 23
dharma-cakra pravartana	18
Dharmādhikaraṇa	7
Dharmamahāmātras, appointed by Aśoka	10
Dharmamahārājādhirāja epithet for Śivaskandavarman	167
Dharmapāla, Nālandā plates of	49
Dharmarāja, Koṅḍēḍḍa plates of	48
Dharmarājaratha	39, 222
Dharma-śāstra,	31
on use of seals	22
Dharmāśoka	187
Dharmavuramu	29
Dharmopameyalupta, a type of upamā.	44
Dhoyī poet	38, 182
Dhruva, Rāstrakūṭa king, Baroda plates of	182
Dhruvadevī	27
Dhruvasena I, Palitānā plates of	204
dhūpa, offering	28
didactic poetry	48

	PAGES
Dikṣita	28
dina	29
Dīnika	161 fn.
dīpa, offering	28
Director of Public Instruction, in the Reddi, kingdom, mentioned in inscription.	38, 54, 218, 220 fn.
Divirapati	20
Document,	16 ff.
engraved on tablet	16
name for	20
of bark and leaf in sculptures	16
donative inscriptions	15
donee, mentioned with pedigree, gotra, śākhā and special proficiency.	28
donor, mythical origin of the family of	27
" name of, inscriptions	14
Drākṣapāka	5
drama, acts of inscribed	34
droṣa, measure	3
Druhlāna, Dadhimatimāta inscription of	41
Dubbaceru tank	29
Dubreuil, G. J.	222
Dudiya plates	194
Dūtaka	20
Duyikādevī	178 fn.
Dvārakā	5
Dvārapālaka	12
" inscribed	54, 239
Dviveda	28
E	
E. evolution and varieties of	67
" table for	68
earliest Brāhmī records	155
" inscription in Sanskrit	161
Eastern Čālukyan grant	28
" " king, Rājarāja	239
" " " Viṣṇuvardhana	39
" " letters	54, 56, 60, 62, 63, 65, 69, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, 83, 89, 91, 94, 98, 100, 102, 104, 111, 113, 123, 124, 126, 128, 132, 134, 137, 139, 141, 143, 144, 146, 148, 150, 215
" " plates	213

	PAGES
Eastern Cālukyan territory	183
Eastern Cālukyas	33, 42
" " script of	36, 211
Eastern Ganga	56, 58, 60, 190
" " grants	27
" " inscriptions	29, 53
" " letters	56, 58, 60, 62, 85, 87, 89, 91, 94, 96, 102, 104, 108, 113, 123, 124, 128, 137, 139, 141, 143, 144, 146, 148
" " seals	22
Egypt	32
" Philadelphus of	10
Egyptian papyrus	55
Ekadhanurdhara, epithet of. Gautami-putra	9
Elāpura, see Ellorā	
elephant on seals	22, 24
Elephanta	
Ardhanārīśvara panel at	16
Gupta sculpture at	49
Elliot, W.	188
Ellora	2
emblems	
ankuśa and daṇḍa	22
bow for Ceras	22
bull for Harṣavardhana	22
" Maukharis	22
" Pallavas	22
conch and lotus	22
dharma-cakra and deer for Palas	23
elephant for W. Gangas	22
fish for Pāṇḍyas	22
Garuḍa for Guptas	22
lion for Viṣṇukunḍins	24
parasol and chauris	22
rājaciḥnas on E. Ganga	22
royal, enumerated in grants	22
Varāha of Cālukyas, Kākatīyas and Vijayanagara kings	22
<i>E medial</i> evolution and varieties of	79
" table for	80
endowments	2
engraver	20
payments to	35
Eppāyiram, inscription at	4

	PAGES
Eppāyiram, inscription at, courses of study, etc., mentioned in	4
Epigraphia Carnatica IV	195
" " V	208
" " XI	34
Epigraphia Indica I	20, 35, 43, 44, 46, 47, 166, 174, 181
" " II	33, 34, 227
" " III	8, 20, 30, 155, 188, 191, 194, 199
" " IV	22, 43, 174, 175, 183, 211
" " V	44, 46, 213, 216
" " VI	4, 20, 30, 31, 33, 39, 168, 176, 183, 206
" " VIII	30, 34, 35, 39, 42, 158 160, 161, 196, 200, 228, 234, 236
" " IX	34, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 48 174, 183, 188, 210, 212, 214
" " X	27, 170, 184, 222
" " XI	21, 40, 41, 180, 204, 218, 228
" " XII	30, 34, 35, 191, 196
" " XIII	20, 34, 186, 188, 192
" " XIV	24, 45, 46, 48 179, 193 202
" " XV	20, 199
" " XVII	35
" " 	39, 40, 174
" " XVIII	207
" " XIX	48
" " XX	166
" " XXI	197
" " XXII	38

	PAGES		PAGES
Epigraphia Indica XXIV	201	Gaṇḍarāditya	11
„ „ XXV	40	Gaṇḍarankuśasya	188
Epigraphical Department, efforts by, to save inscriptions ..	1	Gandharvas	220
epigraphy,		Gangā	174 fn., 180 fn., 227 fn.
coins understood with the help of ..	15	Śaivite teachers from banks of ..	53
Indian and South India's contribu- tion	51 ff.	Ganga	52, 53
picture, its connection with ..	13	„ era	29, 199
understanding arts, its value in ..	14	„ family	199 fn., 200 fn., 203 fn.
study of	1	„ grant	183
Epirus, Alexander of	10	Gangaikondaḥolapuram	15
era,		Temple at	1, 12
Ceḍi	29	Gangavāḍi	6
Ganga	29	gardeners, provided in temples ..	5
Gupta	29	garland-makers, provided in temples ..	5
Harsa	29	Garuḍa	14
Śaka	29	„ mark on seals	22
Sālivāhana Śaka	29	„ motifs	49
Vikrama	29	Gauḍa, engraver from	33
Eran coin inscription on	155	„ scribe from	35
„ inscription	170, 171, 194 201, 240,	Gaurī	218 fn., 227 fn.
Evvakacenu	29	Gautama gotra	28
F		Gautamīputra Śātakarṇi, Śātavāhana ruler	9, 10, 11, 28
fabulous stories	13	Gavāmayana, performed by Śātakarṇi ..	13
fine for trouble to donee	30	Gha, evolution and varieties of ..	93 ff.
fish on seals	22	„ table for	92
Fleet, J. F.	3, 22, 30, 37, 47, 170, 174, 188, 194, 203, 231	Ghanapāṭhi	28
Fu-nan Kamboja, inscription from ..	8	Ghaṭika	5, 28
G		„ at Kāñci, participates in royal election	5
Ga, evolution and varieties of	89 ff.	Ghaṭokaca	26
„ table for	90	gifts,	
gadya	47	destruction of forbidden	32
Gadyāṇa coins	8	institutions receiving	28
Gāhaḍavāla inscription	12, 15, 26, 179	protection of, recommended	32
„ letters	60, 62, 65, 67, 87, 91, 96 111, 113, 124, 128, 143, 144, 146	Girnār, Aśokan script from	161
„ script	181	„ inscription	28, 39, 42, 155
Gāhaḍavālas	53, 179, 181	Goddes of learning, letters resembling	34
Gaṇa	186 fn.	Godfrey collection	19
Gaṇapati	26	Gokaṛṇa	27
Gaṇas, Lord of	221 fn.	Gokaṛṇasvāmi, Lord	27, 184 fn., 200 fn.
		Gotra	198 fn.
		Govallava	7

	PAGES		PAGES
Govardhana	13, 161 fn.	Guptas	195
Govinda	207 fn.	followed by Visnu	27
Govindacandradeva	34	inscriptions of	25, 26, 29, 30, 53
Grant,		letters of	56, 60, 63, 65, 67, 69, 71, 73, 75, 76, 77, 79, 81, 83, 85, 87, 89, 91, 93, 96, 98, 104, 108, 111, 113, 123, 124, 126, 128, 130, 132, 137, 139, 143, 144, 146, 148, 150
Cālukyan	25, 27, 206	Gupta script	
Cola	231	central variety	170
E. Cālukyan	28	late	50
E. Ganga	22, 27	northern variety	170
Kondamudi	167	southern	161, 170, 203
Kūram	15, 45, 226 227, 240	Gupta temple at Deogarh	17
Madras Museum	183	Gujjara inscription	202
Mangalūr	200	Gujjaras, grants of	153
Mayidavolu	168	Guzerat, same as Gujarat	
Pikira	200, 201	Guzratcisms	29
Pratihāra	178	Gwalior, Vallabhaṭṭasvāmi temple at	47
Rāṣṭrakūṭa	206		
Śālanakāyana	209	Ha, evolution and varieties of	148 ff.
Satārā	39	" table for	149
Telugu	21	Hailhayas	53
Timmāpuram	212	hamlets, names mentioned in grants	29
Traikūtaka	155	Hampi,	
Uruvapalli	200, 201	Rangasvāmi temple at	221
Vākāṭaka	27	Virūpākṣa temple at	21
Velvikūḍi	35	Hanumān	22, 30
Vijayanagara	21, 26	Hara	186 fn., 207 fn., 227 fn.
Vijayaṣṭi	200, 201, 202	Hara and Gauri	189 fn.
Grantha	15, 19, 50, 56, 63, 65, 69, 71, 76, 89, 91, 98, 104, 106, 111, 113, 126, 134, 141, 184, 228, 229, 232, 235, 239	Hari	192 fn., 198 fn., 218 fn., 231 fn.
Grantha, development of	226, 231	Harihara, a king	21, 192
" script	37, 53, 225, 230, 234	Hariṣeṇa, Allahabad prasasti composed by	38, 171
Grantha Tamil	50, 188, 234	Hārīti	197 fn., 206 fn., 212 fn.
" development of	222, 223, 230	Harṣa, author of Pathāri inscription	43
Grierson, G. A.	55 fn.	Harṣacarita	24, 25, 35, 40, 47
Guha	186 fn.	use of the seal given in	24
Guild of workmen, buildings erected by	15	Harṣa era	29
Gujarat	69, 155, 161		
Guṇāgavijayāditya III	239		
Guntur dist.	218		
Gupta emperors	49		
" era	29		
Gupta-Maitraka sculpture	16		

	PAGES		PAGES
Harsavardhana	2, 6 27, 32, 35 69, 174, 176, 184	<i>I medial, evolution and varieties of</i> ..	69 ff
Banskhera plates of	2, 36, 173, 175	„ table for	72
Madhuvan	173	<i>I medial, evolution and varieties of</i> ..	71 ff
seal of	22	„ table for	72
signature of	21, 36	imprecatory verses	31
Hastin, Mājhgawam plates of Mahārāja.	172, 173, fn	Indian Antiquary V	174, 200
Hāthigumplā inscription	11, 25, 28	VI	204
Heramba	192 fn., 218 fn.	VII	195
Himalaya mt.	174, fn. 177 fn. 187, fn.	X	204
Hirahadgaḷli plates	7, 166, 167	XII	161 fn.
History of India, sources of information for	1	XIV	216
horoscope, casting of, by scribe ..	33	XV	37, 178
hospitals, maintained by temples ..	5	XVII	40
„ maternity	5	XIX	39
Hoysala area, Canarese script in ..	35	XXXIII	16, 35, 155 165, 166
„ coins	188	Indian calligraphy	174
„ inscription	208	Indian culture, unifying factor of ..	49
„ letters	58, 60, 65, 89 91, 93, 94, 98, 100, 104, 111, 113, 124, 126, 132, 134, 139, 141, 143 148	„ Epigraphy, influence abroad ..	49
„ script	208, 216	„ Epigraphy literary value of ..	38 ff.
Huien Tsang	19	Indian Museum	240
Huḷi inscription	40, 297	Indra	171, 176, fn. 207 fn., 234 fn.
Hultzsch, E.	7, 33, 155	Indrabhattārukavarman	211 fn.
Hunter, G. R.	38	Indrarājā	44
		Indrarājā III	188
		Indraravman, Ganga,	
		Acyutapuram plates of	199
		Jirjīngi plate of	199
		Inscriptions,	
		administration of justice learnt from	4
		arts and sciences, study of, in temples, mentioned in	41
		as labels describing sculptures ..	14
		as explaining dance poses	14
		as source for the study of Sanskrit literature	38
		battle, graphic description in ..	15
		Coḷa ornaments in	2
		dance, provision for, in temples, mentioned in	5
		Devāram recited in temples men- tioned in	5
		donative	15
		donor contemplating on feet of parents mentioned in	27
<i>I, evolution and varieties of</i>	60 ff		
„ table for	61		
<i>I, evolution and varieties of</i>	63		
„ table for	64		
<i>Iba</i>	13 161 fn.		
iconography,			
study helped by salutation verses ..	26		
Idāituraināḍu	233 fn.		
Ikṣvāku inscription	209		
„ letters	56, 58, 60, 65 69, 71, 73, 75, 76, 79, 81, 85, 89, 93, 96, 98, 102, 108, 111, 123, 126, 128, 130, 132, 137, 139, 146		
„ script	163, 166		
Īamūrideśam	7		
Īlangāśoka (Lankāśoka)	7		

	PAGES
Inscriptions,	
donor named in	14
dowry forbidden in	4
earliest, in Sanskrit	161
endowments mentioned in	2
fabulous stories in	13
forms and contents of	25 ff.
from the Indian Archipelago illus- trating cultural expansion.	8
geographical materials in	1
gifts recorded in	20
gifts to institutions mentioned in	23
hamlets, trees, etc., named in	29
Hero	6
hospitals mentioned in	5
institutions introduced by	1
irrigation in ancient India, recorded in	3
jewels, varieties noted in	2
land divisions in	6
language of	38
Mahābhārata recited, mentioned in	5
medicines mentioned in	5
membership in village assembly in	
membership in village assembly dis- qualifications for	4
membership in village assembly method of election for	4
membership in village assembly quali- fications for	4
merchants guilds mentioned in	2
music, provision, for, in temples, men- tioned in	5
musical notes in	14
obliterating	1
ornamental characters in	35
overseas influence suggested in	7
pearls, varieties noted in	2
pedigree of ruler in	26
personality of rulers revealed in	9—12
prices of articles mentioned in	3
privileges mentioned in	4
Rājarājesvara nāṭaka	5
religious disputes, how settled, men- tioned in	4
Sati stones with	6
sculptures explained by	14
social life in	12

	PAGES
Inscriptions,	
state officers mentioned in	6
study of	1
survey and settlement in	6
system of punishment noted in	4
tables of measures in	2
territorial divisions in	6
tolerance preached in	6
trade conditions gathered from	8
transferred to stone and metal from palm leaf original	20
valuable for study of geographical distribution of Vedas	23
Vedas, recited mentioned in	5
village institutions mentioned in	3
weak link in dynastic accounts, sup- plied by	1
weights and measures mentioned in	2
Yūpa	8
Addanki	48, 239
Allahabad	170, 171
Amarāvati	239
Annam	55
Aphsad	33
Aśokan	25, 154, 239
Bādāmi cave	204
Banāras	174
Bansvāra	180
Baṭesvar	44, 52
Bezvāda pillar	239
Bhaṭṭiprolu	156
Bilsad	170, 172
Bodh-Gaya	174, 188
Borneo	51
Brahmagiri	155
Brhadīśvara temple	232
Cālukyan	208
Canarese	202
Cera	253
Chāmpā	55
Chebrolu	52, 216
Coḷa	12, 235
Dadhinatimātā	41
Deogarh rock	174
Deopārā	52, 181
Eastern Ganga	29, 53
Eṇṇāyiram, from	41

	PAGES		PAGES
Inscriptions,		Inscriptions,	
Eran	170, 171, 194, 201, 240.	Nāla	25, 197
Gāhaḍavāla	12, 26, 179	Nānāghaṭ	13
Ganga	198	Nandināgari	240
Girnār	28, 39, 42, 155	Nasik	9, 163
Gupta	25, 26, 30	Nilguṇḍ	206
Hampi	221	of Candragupta	170
Hāthigumpha	11, 25	„ Kumāragupta	172
Hoysala	208	„ Kumāraṣiṇu	30
Huḷi	40, 207	„ Mahendrarvarman	222
Ikṣvāku	165, 209	„ Nandivarman	30
Jaggayyapeṭa	165	„ Parāntaka	240
Jain	26	„ Rājarāja	239
Jaṭiṅga Rāmeśvara	155 fn.	„ Rājasimha	2, 23, 239
Java	55	„ Rājendracola	232, 233
Jhalarpāṭan	174	„ Rudradāman	161
Junāgaḍh	3, 9, 38, 161, 203	„ Samudragupta	170, 172
Kadamba	25, 195, 198	„ Toramāna	171
Kailāsanātha	227	„ Uṣavadāta	160
Kākatīya	8, 26, 218	„ Vikramāditya	240
Kalambākkam	239	„ Yaśodharman	25, 26, 56, 173
Kalinga	198	Pallava	14, 184, 187, 195, 209, 240
Kanauj	26	Pāṇḍyan	53, 235
Khajurāho	46, 52	Paramāra	56
Kuḍimiyāmalai	14	Paṭhāri	41
Kurgod	37	Paṭṭaḍakal	188
Kuṣāṇa	240	Phirangipuram	218
Kutei, Borneo	51	Piprahwa vase, on	155
later Čālukyan	26	Pyu	50
Madanavarman's	52	Rāstrakūṭa	8, 26, 53, 202, 240
Mahānāman's at Bodh-Gayā	174	Śālikāyana	195
Mandagapāṭṭu	12	Śāluvānkuppam	184
Mandasor	42, 52, 173, 175, 203	Sārnāth	42
Māski	155 fn.	Sitābāldi	191
Mayidavolu	30	Svapneśvar	52, 183
Mau	35, 52	Swat	41
Meherauli	26	Tālaguṇḍa	12, 34, 38, 48, 195, 196, 197, 198, 199, 200, 201, 202
Nachne-ki-Talai	194	Tamil	15, 227, 232
Nāgari	36	Tirukkaḷikunram	233
Nāgārjuna cave	47	Tirumaiyam	14
Nāgārjunakoṇḍa	165	Tiruvālangāḍu	11
Naihati	45	Tiruvallārai	53, 228

	PAGES		PAGES
Kailāsanātha temple Pallava Nāgari		Kanheri	159
inscription at	174	Kaniṣka, Mahārāja	159 fn.
Kākatīya inscription	5, 8, 218	Kāṅvāyana clan	203 fn.
" letters	60, 65, 67, 69, 71, 73, 75, 79, 81, 83, 87, 89, 91, 94, 96, 100, 111, 113, 123, 124, 126, 128, 134, 137, 143, 144, 146.	Kāṅyakubja , <i>see</i> Kanauj.	
" Nāgari	188	Kanyāśulka	4
Kākatīyas	26, 191	Karabeṇā	13, 161 fn.
Kākatīya script	191, 192, 216	Karaṇas	14
Kākusthavarmān	12	Karaṇika	35
Kalakkūḍi	237 fn.	Karavandapura	230 fn
Kālabākkam inscription	239	Karikāla	28
Kāli	189 fn., 200 fn., 207 fn.	Kārle	159
Kali age	184 fn.	Karṇa	226 fn.
Kālidāsa	13, 39, 40, 42, 43, 47, 52	Karṇabhadra, an artist	34
Kalinga	198	Karṇarāja, Sihola inscription of	45
" inscriptions	198	Kasakūḍi plates	7, 43, 52, 227
" king Khāravela of	11	Kāśyapa gotra	28
" plates	25	Kaṭakam, a jewel	2
" praśasti of Rājendra at	15	Kaṭha, school	28
" seal	23	Kathiawād	155, 161
" war	9	Kaustubha	193 fn., 227 fn.
Kalinganagara	200 fn.	Kauthuma, school	28
Kalingas		Kauṭilya	3
Kalivallabha	207 fn.	Kautsa, gotra	28
Kalpataru	13	Kāveri, bund built by Karikāla for	3
Kalvakūru	29	Kāveripākkam, tank of	1
Kalyāṇ, Western Cālukyas of	191	Kāveripūmpaṭṭaṇam	8
Kalyāṇapura (mod. Kalyāṇ)	2	Kāvya	53
" " " Dvārapā-		Kāvyaḍarśa	40
laka from	12	Kāyastha	35
Kāma	48, 227 fn	Keith, A. B.	52
Kanauj	26, 179	Keśava	209 fn.
Kāñchi	5, 12, 52, 190 fn., 238	Kha, evolution and varieties of	87 ff.
Kāñcipuram	1, 41, 188	" table for	88
Kailāsanātha temple at	15, 36, 45, 174, 184, 223, 239	Khajuraho inscription	43, 46
Pallava capital	15	Khakharātas	164 fn.
Sūrya temple at	1, 41	Khāravela,	13, 28, 29
Vaikunṭhanātha temple at	14	his attitude to Brāhmaṇas	11
Kāṇḍa	19	" exploits	11
Kangra Jwālāmukhi praśasti	43	" works for Jaina religion	11
		inscription of	25
		Kharoṣṭhi	155
		Khivira, lake	11
		Kielhorn, F.	29, 43, 161
		King of monks	11
		" peace	11
		" prosperity	11

	PAGES		PAGES
King of religion	11	Kumāragupta	27
Kirtivarman	212 fn.	Bhitari inscription of	12
Kirtivarman II,		Bilsad inscription of	170, 172
Paṭṭaḍakal inscription of	188	Kumāragupta and Bandhuvārman, Man-	
Koddūru	2	dasar inscription of	47, 52, 203.
Koḍūra (mod. Koddūru)	2	Kumārapāladeva, Rewāh plates of	21
Koḷippākkai	233 fn.	Kumārasambhava	211
Koṇḍamuḍi grants	167, 168	" in Telugu	54
Kondanan, a jewel	2	Kumāraviṣṇu, inscription of	30
Kondattūdar, a jewel	2	Kumāri hill	11
Kondeḍḍa	48	Kumārilabhaṭṭa	52
Kondukūr,		Kundavai, sister of Rājārāja	5, 6
E Cājukyan inscription mentioned in.	2	Kundavai, sister of Rājārāja responsible	
Konkaivarma	203 fn.	for Jaina temple	5
Koraboyutaṭāka, tank	29	Kuntāditya, <i>see</i> Bhaṇḍanāditya.	
Korumelli plates	216	Kūpaśulka	8
Kośādhyaksa	7	Kūram grant	8, 45, 58, 226, 227
Koṭtam	6	Kurgoḍ inscription	37
Kramapāṭhi	28	Kuṣāṇa	204
Krishna area	51	" early, script	158
Krishna valley	50, 69, 209	" inscription	240
" later script in	166	" letters	56, 58, 60, 63, 65, 67, 69, 71, 73, 76, 79, 81, 85, 87, 89, 93, 96, 98, 102, 108, 111, 123, 126, 128, 130, 132, 137, 139, 141, 144, 146, 150, 161
" Sātavāhana script in	164	" script	170
Kṛṣṇa	26	Kutei	51
" Kumāregupta compared with	12	Kuṭiḷa	35, 175
Kṛṣṇa I	46		
Kṛṣṇa III	188	L	
Kṛṣṇadevarāya	11, 211	La, evolution and varieties of	137 ff.
Kṛṣṇarāja I, Telegoan plates of	186, 188	" table for	138
Kṛta age	207 fn.	Lā, evolution and varieties of	150
Kṣatrapa letters	56, 58, 60, 63, 65, 67, 71, 73, 76, 77, 79, 81, 83, 85, 87, 89, 93, 96, 98, 102, 108, 111, 123, 124, 126, 128, 130, 132, 137, 139, 141, 144, 146, 150, 161	" table for	151
Kubera	171, 176 fn., 224 fn.	Lā, evolution and varieties of	150 ff.
Kubja, poet and scribe	34, 35, 38, 196	" table for	152
Kubja Viṣṇuvardhana	211	Laccadives	7
Kuḍā	159	lake, Khivira	11
Kuḍimiyāmalai inscription	14	Lakkamaṇḍal praśasti	174
Kuḍūra king	169 fn.	Lakṣmi	2t
Kulaśekhara, Mukundamālā stotra of	40	Laila, Dewāl praśasti of	44, 51
Kulinas, imported from Kanauj	53	Lāñchana,	
Kuṅḍadevi,	27	bull as	22
Sārṇāth inscription of	42	elephant as	22
		tiger as	22

	PAGES
Alāchana, varāha as	22
land-divisions	6
land-donor, applauded by gods ..	32
Lafjisvara, village	206 fn.
Lankā	30
Lankāsoka, <i>see</i> Hlangāsoka.	
languages in inscriptions	53
lātānuprāsa	43
Lauhitya.. ..	174 fn.
leaf, documents of	16
legends on seals	23
lekha, documents called a	20
lekhaka	32, 33, 35
Lendulūru	211 fn.
letters,	
arrow-headed	201
box-headed	170, 171
Brāhmi	173
Cālukyan	224
Canarese	37, 184
early Mathurā variety	159
E. Cālukyan	215
florid type	37
Indo-Seythic	171
Kadmba	197
Kṣātrapa	161
Kuṣāna	161
Kuṭila	35
Nāgari	224
nail-headed	170, 171, 176
of Śrotriya	32
ornamental	37
resembling Goddess of Learning ..	34
shaped like animals and birds ..	37
Somavamsi	203
Tamil	236
Tamil Grantha	168
Vākātaka	170, 197, 203
W. Cālukyan	203
Leydon grant (larger)	8
" Museum	8
" plates	231
Lichhavi	26
likhāpita	20
Lilāvati	187
Linguistic Survey of India	55 fn.
lion, on seal	24

	PAGES
lipi,	35
" document called a	20
lipikara	35
" earliest style for scribe	33
Literary value of Indian Epigraphy ..	38 ff.
Lokapālas	176 fn.
Lumbini	2
lunar eclipse, an occasion for grants ..	28
M	
Ma, evolution and varieties of	130 ff
" table for	131
mā, a measure of land	35
Macedonia, Antigonus Gonatas of ..	10
Mādamalingam	7
Madana, author of Pārijātamañjarī ..	34, 41
Madanavarman	52
Māḍanrpāla Timma	221 fn.
Mādhava	221 fn., 224 fn.
Mādhava II	24, 26
" W. Ganga plates of	202
Mādhavavarma	25, 203 fn., 211 fn.
Madhura, destroyer of	231 fn.
Madhurakan	230 fn.
Mādhyandina, school	28
Madras Government Museum	41, 238
Madras Government Museum, inscrip- tions in	238 ff.
Madras Government Museum plates ..	183, 230, 234
Madukkūr, Tanjore, saint from	54
Madura	50
Magadha	11
Māgadhi	155
Magas	10
Mahābalādhirṭa	6
Mahābalipuram	37, 222
" Pallava inscription at	39
" Nāgari inscrip- tion at	174
" sea-port of	8
Mahābhairava	195
Mahābhārata	5, 161, 239
" in Telugu	54
Mahācaritra year	173 fn.
Mahācaitya at Nāgārjunakoṇḍa ..	166
Mahādāṇḍanāyaka	6

PAGES	PAGES		
Mahādeva	173 fn.	Malabar	50
Mahākārtika	206 fn.	Mālavas	3
Mahākṣatrapa Rudraman, inscription of	3	Malaya	51
Mahākṣatrapa Rudradāman, personality of	9	Malaya, conquered by Rājendra Coḷa	55
Mahākūṭa pillar inscription	39	Malaya mt.	
Mahāmātras	7, 11	Malaiyur	7
Mahānāman, Bodh-Gayā inscription of	46, 174, 188	Malay Peninsula	7, 8
Mahāratmale, inscription from	50	Maldives	7
Mahāsāndhivigrahika	20	Maliyapūrṇi	29
Mahāsena	27, 212 fn.	Malkaparru	29
Mahāsenaguptādevi	27, 176 fn.	Malkāpuram, inscription from	5
Mahāsenapati	6	Mālwa	69
Mahāvamsa	50	Mānakkavāram	7
Mahāvijayaprāsāda	11	Mānavya	197 fn., 206 fn., 212fn.
Mahendra mt.	27, 174 fn.	Maṇḍagapaṭṭu inscription	12
Mahendrapāla,	178 fn.	Māndākini	218 fn.
„ Pahoā praśasti of	43	Mandalam	3
Mahendrataṭka	3	Mandara mt.	186 fn.
Mahendravāḍi inscription at	3	Mandasor inscription	28, 42, 47, 52, 173, 175
Mahendrarman	3, 13	Mandira Volai	20
„ Mau inscription of	35	Mangala, threefold classification of	25
Mahendrarman I, script of his time	222	Mangalaśloka	25, 40
Mohenjodaro seals	22	Mangalavacana, same as Mangalaśloka	
Mahesvara	204 fn., 210 fn.	Mangaleśa, Mahākūṭa inscription of	39
Mahidhara, a scribe	33	„ Bādāmi cave inscription of	29, 204
Mahodaya, Mahendrapāla's inscription from	178	Mangaleśa	206 fn.
maintenance of		Mangalūr grants	200
charitable institutions	2	Māṇikkavācaka, verse inscribed on leaf held by an image of	18
colleges	2	Māṇikkavācaka, author of Tiruvācakam	54
hospitals	2	Manjughośa	26
Maitraka Bhaṭārka, seal of	22	Mañjuśri	26
Maitraka family	204 fn.	Manmatha	218 fn.
„ inscriptions	203	Māpappālam	7
„ king	204	Māra, father of Madhurakavi	230 fn.
„ letters	56, 60, 62, 67, 85, 87, 89, 93, 96, 102, 108, 123, 124, 128, 132, 137, 141, 143, 144, 146	Mārañeyanan	237 fn.
Maitrakas	49, 169	Mārangāri	237 fn.
Majhgawām plates	172	Māranjadayan	237 fn.
Majumdar, R. C.	8	Māra Vijayottungavarman	8
Makā	10	Marathisms	29
Makūṭam, a jewel	2	Maritime influence of India on Java, etc.	7
		„ intercourse between India and other countries	8
		Mārkaṇḍeya-purāṇa	41
		Māsa	29

	PAGES
Māski	155 fn.
Masulipatam, plates	46, 213
" sea-port of	8
Material for writing	18
Matha	28
Mathura, Sarasvatī, from	16
Mātras	7
Mattepad plates	39
Mau inscription	35, 52
Maukharis	53
Maukhari Śarvavarman	22
Maunggun plates	50
Maurya letters	56, 58, 60, 65, 67, 71, 79, 81, 85, 87, 89, 93, 96, 98, 102, 104, 108, 113, 121, 124, 126, 128, 130, 132, 137, 139, 141, 144, 146, 148.
Mayidavolu plates	20, 30, 167, 168.
Māyirudgam	7
Mayūra, Sūryaśataka of	1, 41
Mayūrasarman	12, 197 fn.
Measures, started by Coḷas	3
" started by Nandas	3
" started by Pallavas	3
Medicines	5
Meghadūta	43
Meherauli inscription	26
Menmānūr	201 fn.
Merchant guilds	2
Meru mt.	235 fn.
Mevilimbangam	7
Meykirtis	2, 28, 54, 232]
Mihirakula	173, 174 fn.
Modiram, a jewel	2
Monasteries	2
Moon	209 fn.
Mosque,	
Bhojaśāla at Dhārā turned into	41
Transforming a Hindu structure into	1
Mṛgeśavarman	195
Mudgala, gotra	28
Muḍikorḍān	3
Mudrārākṣasa	22, 32
Muhammaḍaḍi audience in Java	51
Mukhalingam	240
Mukhamandapa, made by Maraneynan	237 fn.

	PAGES
Mukunda	26
Mukundamālā stotra	40
Mūlarāja, signature of	21
Mūlavaraman	8
" Yūpa inscription of	51
Munjunyūru	29
Murāri	207 fn.
Mūrtis	8
Museum, Indian	240
" Madras Government	41, 54
Music, provision for, in temples	5
Muttuvalayal, a jewel	2
Mysore, Aśoka's edict from	155, 161
Mythical origin, of donor's family	27
N	
Nā, evolution and varieties of	94 ff
" table for	95
Nā, evolution and varieties of	102 ff.
" table for	103
Nā, evolution and varieties of	108 ff.
" table for	110
Nā, evolution and varieties of	118 ff.
" table for	120
Nachne-ki-Talai inscription	194
Naḍagam plates	183
Nāḍu	6
Nāgabhaṭa	178 fn.
Nāga motifs	49
Nāgamuḍḍi, a scribe	34
Nāgari	56, 58, 62, 65, 67, 69, 71, 73, 77, 79, 85, 87, 89, 93, 100, 104, 113, 123, 124, 126, 134, 141, 143, 144, 146, 148, 177, 179, 180, 184, 186, 187, 188, 190, 191, 192, 199, 202, 224, 226, 236, 240.
" development of	174
" development of, in East India	176
" development of, in South India	79, 186, 240
" inscription	36
" on Ceylon coins	187
" script	35, 53, 173, 177, 179, 180, 183, 184, 192,
" used in coin	15
" varieties of	188
" varieties of South India, in	187

	PAGES		PAGES
Nāgārjunakoṇḍa,		Narmadā	53
decoration at	50	Nāsik, Balasiri's inscription at ..	9, 163
inscriptions from	165, 166	„ Balasiri's inscription at, persona-	
Mahācaitya at	166	lity of Gautamīputra Śātakarṇi	
Stūpas and monasteries	15	„ revealed in	9
Nagārjuni cave inscription at ..	47	„ inscriptions from	160
Nahapāpa	51	„ prasasti of Śātakarṇi at ..	28
Nahuṣa	209 fn.	„ Uṣavadāta's inscription at ..	13, 159
Naihati inscription	45	Nāṭakas	52
Nail-headed letters	194, 240	Nāṭya, in temples	5
Naiṣadha	211	Nāṭyamāṇḍapa	5
Nakkavāram (Nicobar Islands) ..	7	Nāṭyāśāstra	14
Nakṣatra	29	Nautch, a necessary institution in	5
Nala family	198 fn.	temples	
„ inscription	25	Nayādhikaraṇas	7
„ letters	56, 60, 85, 87,	Negapatam,	
	89, 96, 104, 108, 113, 123, 128,	bronzes at	49
	132, 137, 139, 143, 144, 146, 148.	Cūḍāmaṇivihāra at	5, 8
Nālandā	52	Javanese influence at	49
„ plate	49	Neḍuṅjaḍayan, Velvikuḍi grant of ..	35
„ Vihāra	22	Nicobar islands	7
Nālas	239	Nilguṇḍ inscription	206
Nāḷolai, Tamil word for calendar		Nilguṇḍa plates	191
carried		Nirnayasagar Press	52
by astrologers	19	Nirupama	207 fn.
Namaskriyā, form of maṅgala ..	25	Nityavinoda Vaḷaṅḍu	6
name of document	18	Northern Gujarat	26
Nānāghaṭ cave	25	Nṛsimha	45
„ inscription	13	Nuḷambapāḍi	6
Nandas	3, 13, 29		
Nandināgari	58, 188, 192	O	
„ inscription	240	Olai, Tamil word for palm-leaf for writing	19
„ letters	58	Olaināyagan	20
Nandivarman, Kaśākuḍi plates of ..	43, 227	Olaināyakam, <i>see</i> Olaināyagan ..	
Nannecoḍa	54, 211, 239	Om	26
Nannaya Bhaṭṭa	54, 239	<i>O medial</i> , evolution and varieties of ..	81 ff.
Nārada	171	„ table for	82
Narasimha	26	Omkāra	25
Narasimhavarman,	15, 50	Oppumuttu, a perl	2
inscription of, at Bādāmi	15	Ornamental characters inscriptions ..	35
inscription of, at Mahābalipūram ..	39		
Narasimhavarman I, script of his time.	222	P	
Narasimhavarman II, <i>see</i> Rājasimha.	39	Pa, evolution and varieties of	121 ff.
Naravardhana	27	„ table for	122
Nārāyana, Lord	25, 27, 216		
	fn.		
Narendramgarāja	33		

	PAGES		PAGES
Pāḍi (vāḍi)	6	Pallava records	169
Padmanābha, Lord	26, 203 fn.	Pallavas	15, 49,
Padya	47	Pallava scripts	51, 168, 222
Pahlavas	164 fn.	„ scripts early	163
Pehoa praśasti	43	„ temples in Tamil area	12
painters, provided in temples	5	Palm leaf as writing material	19
Paithān plates	24, 231	Pañcabāna	47
Pāka	52	Pañcalas	3
Paksa	29	Paṇḍaranga, Addanki inscription of	48
Pāla images	12	„ general	54, 211
„ letters	60, 62, 67,	„ minister	239
87, 91, 93, 96, 104, 108, 113, 123,		Pāṇḍimangalavisaiyariyan	237 fn.
124, 128, 130, 134, 137, 143, 144,		Pāṇḍya	228, 229
146.		„ coins, Ceylon type	188
Pālas	53	„ inscriptions	235
Pāla seals	22	„ king	230 fn.
Palaeographic development in W.India. 49		„ kings, honoured by Agastya. 28	
palaeography, a help in dating figures. 14		„ letters .. 60, 62, 65, 91, 94, 98, 104, 106, 113,	
Pālitāna plates	204	134, 148, 150.	
Pallava area	188, 201	„ script	222
„ Biruda inscriptions	39	Pāṇḍyas,	22, 188
„ charters	26, 200	„ inscriptions of	53
„ documents	3	„ Meykirtis of	232
„ Grantha .. 37, 56, 60, 62, 65, 69, 71, 73, 76, 77,		„ Tamil inscriptions of	28
79, 81, 83, 85, 89, 94, 100, 104,		Panna	19
106, 111, 113, 123, 126, 130,		Paunal	7
132, 137, 139, 141, 144, 146,		Pantha, Banāras inscription of	174
148, 150, 222, 223.		Pappālam, a port in Burma	7
„ inscription 7, 14, 184, 187, 195, 209, 240		Parabala, Pathāri inscription of	41, 43, 32
„ king	7, 12, 26	Pāradū	13, 161, fn.
„ kingdom, letters of	229, 230	Parakesarivarman <i>alias</i> Uttamacoḷa	231 fn.
„ king Mahendravarman	3	Parakramabāhu, king of Ceylon	18, 187
„ „ measures started by	3	Paramabhāgavata	27
„ „ patron of Tamil literature	228	Parāmādityabhakta	27
„ „ Rājasinha	13	Paramamāheśvara	27
„ letters .. 56, 58, 60, 62, 63, 65, 67, 69, 71,		Paramāra inscriptions	56, 180
73, 75, 76, 77, 79, 81, 83, 85,		„ kings	180
86, 87, 89, 91, 93, 94, 96, 98,		„ letters	56, 62, 65, 67,
100, 102, 104, 106, 108, 111, 113,		69, 71, 75, 79, 81, 83, 86, 87, 91,	
123, 124, 126, 128, 130, 132,		96, 104, 111, 113, 124, 128, 130,	
134, 137, 139, 141, 143, 144,		137, 143, 144, 146.	
146, 148, 150, 228.		Paramāras	53
„ Nāgari	60, 96, 108,	Paramardideva	52
113, 128, 134, 146, 148.		„ Bateśvar inscription of	44, 52
Nāgari inscription	174	Paramasūgata	27
period	230	Parameśvara, king	208 fn.
		Parameśvara, Lord	199 fn., 226 fn.
		Parameśvaraṭṭāka	3

	PAGES		PAGES
Parameśvaravarman,	226 fn.	Plates,	
„ Kūram grant of ..	15, 45, 240	Bansklera	174, 175
„ Pallava inscription		Banswara	180
„ of his time ..	240	Belūr temple	208
Parameśvaravarman I	226	Bhaṇḍak	46
Parāntaka	230 fn.	Bṛhadproṣṭha	198
„ inscription of	236	Candradeva's	48
Pārijātamañjari, drama	34, 41	Candrādityadeva's	179
Parivādinī, term of viṇā used in inscriptions	14	Cikkulla	211
Parivrājaka Māharāja family of ..	173 fn.	Daṇḍapalle	193
Pārvati	208 fn., 227 fn.	Dharasena	169
Passages from Śanskrit works quoted in inscriptions.		Dudiya	194
Paśupati	186 fn.	Eastern Cālukyan	213
Pāṭāla	19	Hirahaḍḍagalli	167
Pāṭaliputra	15	Jirjīngi	199
Patañjali	51	Kaśakudi	7, 43, 52, 227
Pathāri inscription	41, 43	Koṇḍamuḍi	168
Patra, document	18	Kondeḍḍa	48
Paṭṭaḍakal inscription	188	Korumalli	216
Patterns, square, in letters	160	Kūram	227
Paṭṭigai, a jewel	2	Leyden	231
Paṇḍarika, sacrifice	31, 206 fn., 211 fn.	Madras Museum	183, 230, 234
Paura	11	Majhgawām	172
Pavanadūta	182	Masulipatam	46, 213
Pāvunavāra	215 fn.	Maṭṭepāḍ	39
Payment composer or engraver receiving.	35	Maungun	50
Pedigree on seals	23	Mayiḍavolu	33, 168, 200
Penukoṇḍa, Western Ganga plates from.	24, 202	Naḍagam	183
Perumbāṇappāḍi	6	Nalanda	49
Pha, evolution and varieties of	124 fn.	Nidhānpūr	48
„ table for	125	Niḷguṇḍa	191
Philadelphus	10	Paithān	24, 231
Phirangipuram	218	Paliṭāṇa	204
Pikira grant	201	Paliyam	186
Pillar, inscribed, at Kānohipuram ..	1	Ragola	198
Pilupati	6	Rewah	40
Piprahwa vase inscription	155	Samangaḍ	188, 189
Piṣṭapura (mod. Pithapur)	2, 212 fn.	Sarangarh	48
Pitṛa	31	Śaśānka's	176
Plates,		Satyamangalam	193
Acyutapuram	199	Sevaḍi	41
Bagumra	188, 189	Sinnamannur	28
		Siwāni	194
		Śrīgiriḥhūpāla's	234
		Talegaon	186, 189
		Taṇḍantottam	24, 52
		Thāṇā	192
		Thimmāpuram	213

	PAGES		PAGES
Plates,		Pratihara letters	60, 62, 69, 71, 73, 75, 76, 79, 81, 83, 86, 87, 91, 93, 86, 108, 113, 123, 128, 130, 134, 137, 143, 144, 146
Thiruvālangādū	23, 44, 231	Pratihāras	53
Uruvapalli	201	Pravarasena, Gupta king	30
Uttamacoḷa's	230	Pravarasena, Vakāṭaka king	195
Vajrahasta's	183	Pravarasena II,	
Vandram	214	Dudiya plates of	194
Vijayadevavarman's	210	Siwani plate of	194
Vīlavattī	201	Prayāga	13, 52
Viṣṇukunḍin	211	Presentation of land for worship	28
Podagaḍh	197	Princep, J.	35
Police Officials	7	Process of transferring command to stone 20	
Pondicherry	158	" writing	20
Porpū, a jewel	2	Protection of gifts, recommended	32
Portrait sculpture of ruler	13	Proto-Bengali script	182
Ports at Bharukaccha	8	Proto-Telugu	216
" Kāveripūmpattānam	8	Pṛthvī	26, 218, fn.
" Sorpāraga	8	Pṛthviṣ ṇa, Nachne-ki-Talai inscription	
Potana	211	of	194
Prabandha	19	Ptolemy II	10
Prabhākaravardhana	6, 27, 176, fn.	Public Works Department	1
Prabhañjana, Māhārāja	173 fn.	Pulakeśi	211
Prabhāsa	13, 161, fn.	Punishment for trouble to donee	30
Prābhava, year	191 fn.	Purāṇa	53
Pracīnalékhamālā	52	Pūrṇāditya	36
Pradhānamatyas	6	Pūrṇaghaṭa	15
Prajāpāramitā, image of	8	Pūrṇavarman,	38, 55, 200
Prākṛt charters	7, 166	" inscriptions of	8
" southern variety	155	" Java inscription of	51
Pramāṭṛ	20	purpose of inscription	28, 29
Prambanam	8	Purūravas	209 fn.
Rāmāyana reliefs at	49	Puruṣamedha	211 fn.
Śiva temple at	49	Puruṣārtha	48
Prandoru	215 fn.	Puṣkar city	198 fn.
Prāsasti composed by Poet	35, 38	Puṣyamitra Śunga	11, 51
Prāsasti,		Puṣyavuddhi, the monk	169 fn.
Allahabad	170, 171	Pyu inscription	50
Deopāra	47		
Dewal	44, 52	Q	
Gautamiṣṭha Śātakarṇi's	28	Queen of Rājasthan	13
Jhalrapātan	175		
Khāravala's	28	R	
Lakkhamāṇdal	174	Ra evolution and varieties of	134 ff.
Pehoa	43	" table for	135
Rudradāman's	28	Ra evolution and varieties of	153
Yaśodhāman's	52		
Prāsastis	2, 37, 52		
Pratihāra kings	177, 178		

	PAGES		PAGES
Ṛ̥a table for	154	Rājyavardhana	27, 176, fn.
Rāghavacaitanya	43	Rājyavardhana II	27
Raghu	189 fn.	Raksasa, minister of the Nandas	23
Raghu family	220 fn.	Raksasas	220
Raghuvarṃśa	39, 40, 42, 43, 48.	Raktamṛttikā	51
Ragolu plates	198	Rāma	187 fn.
Rahasika	20, 35	Rāma	22, 39.
Rahasyādhikṛta	7	.. signet ring of	22
Rājacinhas	2	Rāma, author of Khajuraho inscription iv	44
Rājagiri	15	Rāmabhadradeva	178 fn.
Rājalekhaka	32, 33	Rāmacandra, Yādava king	192
Rājālipikara, same as rājalekhaka		Rāmadeva, an engraver	34
Rājāraja	1, 2, 5, 6, 11, 50, 187, 188, 232, 239	Rāmāyana	8, 10, 22, 30, 39, 51, 161
.. coin of	15	.. relief, at Prambanam	49
.. inscription of	23, 239	Raṇarāga	212 fn.
.. measures named after	3	Raṇavikrama	212 fn.
.. sister of	4	Rangamaṇḍapa, the open-air theatre	5
Rājāraja I, Korumelli plates of	216	Rangamaṭi, see Raktamṛttikā	
Rājārājēśvara nāṭaka	5	Rangapatākā, queen of Rājasimha	13
Rājasimha, Pallava king	13	Rangasvāmi temple	221
Rājasimha, Pallava king, inscription of	222, 239	Raṇjūvula	158
Rājasimheśvara	224 fn.	Rao, T. A. Gopinath	186
Rājasūya sacrifice	11	Rāstrakūṭa(s)	188, 190, 191, 215 fn.
Rājasūya, sacrifice performed by Śāta-	13	Rāstrakūṭa grant	206
.. kṛpī	13	Rāstrakūṭa inscription	8, 26, 53, 188, 202, 239
Rājendra,	5, 7, 8, 10, 49, 232	.. king	188
.. campaigns of	7	.. letters	56, 58, 60, 62, 63, 65, 67, 87, 89, 91, 93, 96, 100, 104, 113, 123, 124, 123, 130, 134, 137, 141, 143, 144, 146, 150
.. coins of	15	.. Nāgarī	60
.. inscriptions of	7	.. record	44, 45
.. seal of	11, 12, 23, 24, 50, 52	Ratnapūla, Cāhamāna king	41
.. victorious prasūstis of	15	Ratnavajrayal, a jewel	2
Rājendracōla	5, 20, 28, 41, 232	Ratṭapādi	6
Rājendracōla, Bhagīratha emulated by	11	Rāvāna, kitchen of	10
Rājendracōla jalastambha as jayastambha		Raviaperiaceru, tank	29
.. of	11	Ravikīrti	38, 39,
Rājendracōla (Kulottunga)	233	Roa, A.	155
Rājendracōlapādi	20	Reddī (s)	25, 38, 54, 219
Rājendra Gangaikondān	187	.. kingdom	54
Rājim, temple at	36		
Rājivalocana, temple of	36		
Rājputana	40		

PAGES		PAGES	
Redḍi (e) letters	60, 69, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, 83, 85, 89, 91, 94, 100, 123, 126, 128, 146	Sahkti	46
Revenue officers	6	Sākā era	29
Rewah plates		„ king	206 fn.
of Kumārapāladeva	40	Saktā	164 fn.
„ Trailokyamalla Kalacūri	40	Sakatarepha, name for ra	153
Ṛgveda	5, 28	Sakkarakottam	233 fn.
Rice, B. L.	155, 196	Śaktideva	178 fn.
riti	52	Śaktivarman, Rāgolu plates of	198
R medial evolution and varieties of	77 ff.	Sala, king	209, fn.
„ table for	78	Sālankāyana family	210 fn.
royal seals	22	„ grants	209
rsis	32, 53	„ inscription	195
ṛtu	29	„ letters	56, 60, 67, 85, 87, 89, 93, 96, 98, 102, 104, 108, 123, 124, 126, 130, 132, 137, 139, 141, 144, 146
Rudradāman	28, 161, 162, fn 163	„ script	50, 209
Girnār inscription of	39, 51, 67	Sālivāhana	221 fn.
inscription of	38	Sāluvānkuppam	184, 188
Kṣātrapa king	3	Salutation verses, iconographic study	
praśasti of	28, 42	helped by	20
Rudrasena, Vākāṭaka king	195	Samāja	11
Rudravarman, inscription of	48	Samangad plates	188
Rummendei, Aśoka's pillar inscription at 2		Sāmantas—	
rūpaka	44	of Guptas	49
Rūpakara	35	„ Samudragupa	22
		samāsokti	45
		Sāmaveda	5, 28
S		Śambhu, Lord	186, fn. 208 fn. 218 fn.,
Śa, evolution and varieties of	141, ff.	Samgama, a king	193 fn., 235 fn.
„ table for	142	Samudragupta	9, 26, 28
Sa, evolution and varieties of	144 ff.	Allahabad inscription of	9, 22, 38, 170,
„ table for	145	Eran inscription of	170, 171, 194 240
Sa, evolution and varieties of	146 ff.	Sāñchi	15, 33
„ table for	147	Sāṅdhivigrahika	35
Śabdālamkāras	42, 52,	Śāndilya, gotra	28
anuprāsa	42, 43	sangama,	
chekānuprāsa	43	of Ratnākarā and Mahodadhi	52
lāṭānuprāsa	43	„ Tungabhadra	13
vṛtyanuprāsa	43	Sangam literature	8
yamaka	42, 43	Sangrāma Vijayottungavarman, king of	
Sacivas	6	Kaḍāram	7
Sadyaskra, sacrifice	195	Śankara	52, 186 fn.
Sagara	31, 226 fn.	Śankarācārya	41
Sāhasamalla	187		
Sahila, a scribe	34		

	PAGES		PAGES
Sāṅkhya	3	scripts,	
Sanskrit literature, inscriptions forming		Eastern Cālukyan	36
part of	38	Gāhaḍavāla	181
" terms, Tamil inscriptions, in	235	Grantha	37, 53, 225, 230, 234
Saptamātrka	27	Grantha-Tamil	50, 234
Śarabhapura, kings of	202	Gupta, late	50
Sarangarh plates	48	Hoysala	208, 216
Sarasvati	26	Ikṣvāku	163, 166
consort of Viṣṇu	14	Kākatīya	191, 192, 216
earliest representation from Mathurai		Kuṣāna, early	158
praised in Kāvya-darśa	40	Nāgari	35, 53, 173, 177, 179, 180, 183, 184, 192
river	24	nail-headed	172, 176
spouse of Brahma	16	Pallava	222
Sarga	19	" early	163
Sārnāth inscription	42	Pāṇḍya	222
Śārngadhara-paddhati	43	Śālanākāyana	50, 209
Śarvavarman: Maukhari	22	Sātavāhana	163
Śāśānka	177 fn.	Sena	183
" plates of	176	Tamil	15, 53, 227, 230, 232.
Sāstras	28, 180 fn.	Telugu	208, 209, 220, 227
Śātakarṇi	9, 11, 28	" Canarese	183
Aśvamedha performed by	13	Tibetan	50
Nānāghāt inscription of	13	Traikūṭaka	163
Satārā grant	39	Vakāṭaka	195, 200
Sātavāhana (s),	11, 49	Vaṭṭeṭuttu	15, 50, 158, 188, 229, 235, 236
family of	164 fn.	Vijayanagara	194, 208, 216, 218
inscriptions	161	W. Cālukyan	211, 216
letters	56, 58, 60, 65, 67, 71, 73, 76, 79, 81, 85, 87, 89, 93, 96, 98, 102, 108, 111, 123, 126, 128, 130, 132, 137, 139, 141, 144, 146, 150	scripts,	
script	163, 164	archaic variety	159
scribe, composer, as a	34	beautiful variety	159
personal experiences of, recorded	34	clumsy variety	159
scribes	32 ff.	element of decoration in seal,	37
scripts,		affixed to documents	22
Ābhira	163	bull on	24
Aśoka	161	Dharmacakra and Deer on	23
Bhaṭṭiprolu	238	elephant on	24
box-headed	198	Garuda on	22
Burmese	50	Kalinga	23
Canarese	35, 37, 208, 209.	lion on	24
Canarese-Telugu	53		
Candella	53, 180		
Ceylonese	50, 55		

	PAGES		PAGES
Seal,		Sihola, inscription	45
Mohenjodaro, from	22	Šilpa	3
of Čālukyas	22	Šilpi	35
„ Coḷas	22	Simhagiri	15
„ Ganges, Eastern	22	Simhavarman	26
„ „ Western	22	„ charter of	30
„ guilds	22	„ Ptkira grant of	201
„ Harṣavardhana	22	„ Viḷavattī plates of	201
„ high officials, etc.	22	Sindhurājadeva	181 fn.
„ institutions, like Nālandā vihāra	22	Singānāyanivarālu	21
„ Kākatiyas	22	Sinnamaṅṅur plates	28
„ Maitraka Bhaṭārka	22	Sins, five	29
„ Maukhari Śarvavarman	22	Siri Cātamūla, Aśvamedha performed by	166 fn.
„ Pālas	22	Sirimā	14
„ Rājendra's Tiruvālangādu plates. 23, 24		Siri-Pulumāyi	163
„ Vākātakas	23	Sirivirapurisadata	165, 166 fn.
„ Vijayanagara plates	22	Sitā	22
„ Viṣṇukunḍin plates	24	Sitabāldi inscription	191
private	22	Sittanavāsal	13, 158
royal	22	Śiva	26, 32, 180 fn. 189 fn., 195, 208 fn., 209 fn., 216 fn.
Sonpat	22	as old man	18
tiger on	22	„ teacher	16
varāhasu on	22	Harṣavardhana, a devotee of	27
various types	22	temple of	12
votive	22	Śivalinga	52, 195
Sea-borne trade	2	Śivapuri	20
Sea-port of Mahābalipuram	8	Sivaramamurti, C., 1	164
„ „ Masulipatam	8	„ „ 2	161
Śēmbian ma-devī, consort of Gaṇḍa- rāditya	11	„ „ 3	39
Sena letters	60, 62, 65, 67, 69, 71, 73, 75, 76, 79, 81, 83, 87, 91, 96, 104, 113, 123, 124, 128, 130, 137, 143, 146	„ „ 4	26
Senas	53	Śivaskandavarman	7, 30, 238
Sena script	183	„ Hirahadgalli plates of	166
Śengottai	186	„ Mayidavolu plates of	30, 167
Sevaḍi plates	41	Siwāni plates	194
Shell characters	37, 38	Śiyakadeva	181 fn.
Siddāpura, Aśoka's edict at	33, 155, 155 fn.	Skandagūpta	27
Siddhārtha	33	„ Bhūtāri inscription of	12
Signature	21, 192	„ Junāgādh inscription of. 3, 10, 161, 170, 203.	
„ of emperor	36	Skandavarman	26, 202 fn.
„ „ Harṣavardhana	21	Ślesa	45
Sign manual of emperor	174	Smara	181 fn.
Sihaka, a sculptor	34	Smaraṇa	45
		Smrti	32, 53, 180 fn.
		Social conditions, inscriptions recording 4	

PAGES		PAGES	
Śoḍāsa	158	Śrī Pūrṇadītya	36
Śoḍāśī	195	Śrīvatsa	25
Solar eclipse an occasion for grants ..	28	Śrīvijaya	7, 8
Sōma	12, 32	Śrī Virakerala, coin of	15
Somavamśa, kings of the	194	Śrī Virūpākṣa	21
Somavamśī letters	56, 60, 67, 85, 87, 89, 93, 96, 104, 113, 123, 124, 128, 132, 137, 139, 143, 144, 146, 203	Śrngāranaiśadha	218
Someśvara, inscription by	34	Śrotṛiya	28
Someśvara II, Āhavamalla	13	.. letters of	32
Śoṇagaciḍuku, a jewel	2	Śruti	53
Sonpaṭ seal	22	Sthānagunda (mod. Talagunda) ..	2
Sorpāraga	161 fn.	Sthānas, labels describing	14
port at	8	Sthāṇu (Śiva)	174 fn.
shelter houses at	13	Sthāpatya	3
South-Eastern Asia	222	Stūpas	15
South India, contribution of, to Indian epigraphy	51 ff.	Stūpa slabs, carved	1
" " democratic bodies in	4	Subrahmanya Aiyar, K. V.	42, 158
" " Indian Inscriptions, I	4, 33, 39, 45, 223, 226	Sudarśana	14
" " " II	7, 43, 232	Sudarśana, lake	3
" " " III	44, 230, 233	Śuddhodana	33
" " " IV	35, 221	Sūkṣmaśiva, an engraver	33
Sovaraśī, a sculptor	34	Śūlapaṇi, a scribe	35
special privileges	4	Śulli, tree	233 fn.
Speech; Lord of	221 fn.	Sumatra	7, 8
Square patterns in letters	160	" Tamil inscription at	15
Śramaṇas, liberality advocated by		Sundaracoḷa	6
Aśoka for	10	Sundara Kāṇḍa (of Rāmāyaṇa) ..	8, 10
Śrāvastī	178	Sundaramūrti	18
Śrī	209 fn., 227 fn.	Śunga Puṣyamitra	11, 51
Śrībhara	166 fn.	Śungas	49
Śrī Bhojadevasya, royal signature on copper plate	21	Survey	6
Śrīgirībhūpāla	234	Sūrya	26
Śrī Harihara, royal signature on copper plate	21	Maukharis, devotees of	27
Śrī Harṣvardhana	21	son of	189 fn.
Śrī Kaṇṭha	232 fn.	temple	41
Śrī-Konkaṇivarman	26	Sūryamaṇḍapa from Kāñchīpuram ..	1
Śrīnātha, poet	54, 211, 218, 220 fn.	Sūryamatī	35
poet and Director of Public Instruction	38	Sūryaśataka	1, 41
Sripārvata	211 fn.	Sūryavamśa	27
		Sūtradhāra	33, 34, 35
		Sūtras of Nepal	41
		Suṭṭī, a jewel	2
		Svahasta, as in svasto mama, svahaṣ- toyam	21
		Svāmībhūta, Deogarh rock inscrip- tion of	174
		Svapneśvar inscription	183
		Svastikā	25, 98
		Svayamvara	9, 162 fn.
		swan, letters shaped like	37

	PAGES		PAGES
Swat, inscriptions from	41	table for,	
Symbols,		<i>Pha</i>	125
at Amarāvati	25	<i>Ra</i>	135
„ Nānāghāt	25	<i>Ṛa</i>	154
„ the beginning of inscriptions ..	25	<i>R medial</i>	78
Drum and Bodhi tree as	25	<i>Sa</i>	142
Spiral	26	<i>Sa</i>	145
Syrini, Magas of	10	<i>Sa</i>	147
System of punishment, inscription		<i>Ṭa</i>	105
recording	4	<i>Ta</i>	112
		<i>Ṭha</i>	107
		<i>Tha</i>	114
		<i>U</i>	66
		<i>U medial</i>	74
		<i>U medial</i>	74
		<i>Va</i>	140
		<i>Ya</i>	133
table for,		<i>Ṭa</i> , evolution and varieties of ..	104
<i>A</i>	57	„ table for	105
<i>Ā</i>	59	<i>Ta</i> , evolution and varieties of ..	111 ff.
<i>Ai medial</i>	80	„ table for	112
<i>Ā medial</i>	70	Taittirya, school	28
<i>Au medial</i>	82	Takṣa	35
<i>Ba</i>	127	Takṣāditya, a scribe	35
<i>Bha</i>	129	Tālagunda inscription	12, 34, 35, 38, 48, 195, 196, 197, 198, 199, 200, 201, 202
<i>Ca</i>	97	Talaitakkolam	7
<i>Cha</i>	99	Talegaon plates	186, 188
<i>Ḍa</i>	107	Talākāḍukonḍa	188
<i>Da</i>	117	Tālapatra	18
<i>Ḍha</i>	109	Tālgunda	2
<i>Dha</i>	119	Tamil	15, 158, 184, 186, 235, 239.
<i>E</i>	68	„ area	200
<i>E medial</i>	80	„ cave letters	56, 63, 65, 85, 96, 108, 111, 123, 130, 132, 137, 139, 150
<i>Ga</i>	90	„ country	158
<i>Gha</i>	92	„ Grantha	192, 238, 239
<i>Hu</i>	149	„ „ bay in Madras Museum ..	239
<i>I</i>	61	„ inscription	15, 227, 232
<i>I</i>	64	„ kingdom	232
<i>I medial</i>	72	„ language	158, 232
<i>I medial</i>	72	„ letters	60, 63, 65, 69, 71, 73, 76, 79, 81, 104, 111, 113, 134, 139, 141, 201, 228
<i>Ja</i>	101		
<i>Ka</i>	84		
<i>Kha</i>	88		
<i>La</i>	138		
<i>Ḷa</i>	151		
<i>ḷa</i>	152		
<i>Ma</i>	131		
<i>Ṇa</i>	95		
<i>Na</i>	103		
<i>Na</i>	110		
<i>Na</i>	120		
<i>O medial</i>	82		
<i>Pa</i>	122		

	PAGES		PAGES
Tamil letters, development of ..	226	Temple, providing education for	
" script	15, 53, 227, 230, 232	juvenile and adult	4
" " development of	231	Territorial divisions	
Tamīlnād letters, typical of	229	based on high road names	6
Tanḍantotṭam plates, seal of	24	" " hill names	6
Tanjore	1, 11, 54	" " river banks	6
" Bṛhadīśvara temple at	2, 6, 11, 232	named after king	6
tank, Dubbacheru	29	large units	
" Korabooyataḷāka	29	maṇḍalam	6
" Raviaperiaceru	29	pāḍi	6
" Sudarśana	3	vāḍi	6
" Vairamegataḷāka	3	North Indian	
Tāpī	13, 161 fn.	bhukti	6
Taruvoju, a metre	42	deśa	6
taxes, on merchandise	8	viṣaya	6
" " overseas commodities	8	South Indian	
Telugu	192, 222	Koṭṭam	6
" area	239	nāḍu	6
" Canarese	183, 238	vaḷanāḍu	6
" grants	21,	Tevāram	54
" letters	60, 62, 63, 65, 69, 79, 98, 104, 126, 128, 132, 139, 141, 144, 146, 148, 150	<i>Tha</i> , evolution and varieties of	113 ff
" script	208, 209, 220, 227	" table for	114
Temple, Bṛhadīśvara	2	Thāna plates	192
" Chidambaram	14	Thebes, figure of scribe from	32
" Dārāsuram	12	Tibet, manuscript discovered in	50
" Deogarh	17	Tibetan scripts	50
" Gangaikoḷācōḷapuram	12	tiger on seals	22
" Jaina	5	Timmāpuram grant	212
" Kailāsanātha	13, 15	Tinnevelley	50
" Śaiva	5	Tiraḷmaṇiṇvaḍam, a jewel	2
" Vaikuṅṭhaperumāl's	5, 14	Tirukaḷukkuṅṅam inscription	233
" Viṣṇu	5	Tirumaiyam, inscription from	14
Temple, an all round institution	4, 5, 6	Tirumalai hill	6
chant of Vedas, Devāram, etc., in	5	" Jaina temple at	5
committees for managing	4	Tirumandira Volai	7, 20
exposition of Mahābhārata in	5	Tirumuḍi, a jewel	2
famine measures undertaken by	5	Tiruppaṭṭam, a jewel	2
festivals, a bond of union, in	5	Tiruvācakam	54
hospitals maintained by	5	Tiruvāikeḷvi	7
influence on village life of	4	Tiruvālangāḍu, inscription from	11, 20, 23, 24, 44
music and dance in	5	" plates	28, 231
occupation provided for painters, sculptors, carvers, etc., in	5	" seal from	23, 24
		Tiruvallarai inscription	54, 228
		" tank	3
		Tiruvalluvar	18
		Tīthi	23

	PAGES		PAGES
Topdamaṅḍalam	6	Umāvarman, Brhadproṣṭha plates of	198
Toramāna inscription of	13	<i>U. medial</i> evolution and varieties of	73 ff
torāṇa	15	" " table for	74
Tortoise incarnation of Viṣṇu	42	<i>Ū. medial</i> , evolution and varieties of	76 ff.
Traikūṭaka	56, 87, 89, 96, 108, 123, 132, 137, 141, 143, 144, 146, 204	" " table for	74
" grants of	155	unifying factor of Indian culture	49
" inscription of	170, 203	University at Dhārā	42
" script of	163	Upadhāniya	175, 177
Traikūṭakas	169	Upādhyāya	28
Trailokyamalla, Kalachūri	40	Upamā	44, 47
transfer of a praṣasti to stone, alluded to in inscription	35	Uparika	6
Travancore Archaeological Series I	186	Ur	6
Triambaka	192	Ūraka	231 fn.
Tribal coins, of Arjunāyanas	3	Uruvapalli grants	200, 201, 202
" Audumbaras	3	Uṣavadāta,	13, 161 fn.
" Mālavas	3	inscription of	1, 67, 159, 160, 161 fn. 163
" Puñcīlas	3	Utprekṣā	44
" Vaṭṣavakas	3	Uttama, coins of	15
" Yaudheyas	3	Uttamacola	11, 187
Tribhuvanamalladeva	191 ff.	inscription of	231
Tribhuvanānkūśa, epithet	24	Madras Museum plates of	230
Trichinopoly	59	Uttaramallūr inscriptions, village institu- tions described in	3
Tripitaka	159 ff.	Uyyakonḍān	3
Tripura	218 fn.		V
Triśūla	227 ff.	<i>Va</i> , evolution and varieties of	139 fn.
Triveda	28 fn.	" table for	140
Trivenī	227 fn.	Vaḍhalavaḷināḍu	6
Trivikrama, Lord	227 fn.	Vaḍama	53
" Nalacampū, author of	44	Vaḍavaḷināḍu	6
" Poet	45	Vaḍukavali, a jewel	2
Tulanaya	10	Vaidyadeva, grant of	181
Tumburu	171 fn.	Vaidyan Muvendamangalapperaraiyan.	237 fn.
Tungabhadra	13	Vaikunṭhanātha temple	14
Turamuttu	2	" Pallava history in sculpture in	14
	U	Vaikunṭhaperumāl temple	5
<i>U.</i> evolution and varieties of	65 ff.	Vaillabhattasvāmi temple, inscription at.	47
" table for	66	Vairamegatataḷaka	3
Udaya mt.	187 fn.	Vaiṣṇava jeer	4
Ukṭhya	195 fn.	Vājapeyā	31, 195, 206
Ullekha	45	" performed by Śivaskandavar- man	167 fn.
Umāpatidhara, composer of Deopara praṣasti.	38, 47, 182	Vājasaneya, school	28

	PAGES		PAGES
Vajrahasta, Madras Museum plates of.	183	Varuṇa	32, 171, 176 fn.
Vajriṇīdevi	27, 176 fn.	Vasantagadh inscription	34
Vākātaka area	195	Vāsiṣṭha	27
„ grants	27	Vāsiṣṭha, gotra	28
„ inscription	170, 194, 198, 200	Vāsiṣṭhiputra	163
„ letter	56, 62, 63	Vasu, a scribe	34
67, 69, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, 83,		Vāsudeva	26, 180 fn.
85, 87, 89, 93, 96, 102, 104, 108,		Vasudhārā	26
113, 124, 126, 128, 130, 132, 137,		Vātāpi, Grantha inscription at	15
139, 143, 144, 146, 148, 197, 201,		Vatāśvakas	178
203		Vatsa, gotra	28
Vākātakas	26, 195	Vatṣarajadeva	5
Vākātaka script	195, 200	Vatṣeluttu letters	58, 60, 63, 65, 98, 104, 106, 111, 113, 124, 132, 134, 139, 141, 150
„ seals	23	„ scripts	15, 50, 158, 188, 229, 235, 236
Vākpatideva	181 fn.	Vāyilepār	7
Vakrokti	43	Veda (s)	5, 16, 28, 31, 53, 193 fn. 197 fn.
Valabhi	43	Velvikūḍi grant	35
„ inscription	26, 202	Verna, king	38, 220 fn.
„ Maitraka, king of	204	Vengi letters	56
„ rulers of	155	Vengipura	210 fn.
Valaippandūru	7	Venkayya, V.	7
Vaḷanādu	6	on irrigation in ancient times	3
validity of the charter emphasised	35	Venkuṇḍram	6
Vallabha	212 fn.	Vepa Rameśam	29
Vallālasena	45	Viḍelviḍugu biruda of Mahendravarman.	3
Vallava	7	Vidiśā ivory carvers of	15
Valli, a jewel	2	Vidyānagara	221 fn.
Vālmiki	39, 42, 52	Vidyāḍharatorāṇa	7
Vānavanmahādevi, queen of Sundaracōḷa	6	Vihāra of Nālandā	22
Vanavāsi	233 fn.	Vijayabāhu	187
Vāandalistic tendency, coins as buttons.	1	Vijayabhūpati, Daṇḍapalle plates of.	193
Vaṇḍram plates	214	Vijayadevavarman	210 fn.
Vaprakeśvara	8	„ plates of	210
Varadaksiṇā	4	Vijayāditya	215 fn.
Varaguṇa, Palayam copper plates of.	186	Vijayāditya III	46
„ Pāṇḍya	186	„ Masulipatam plates of	213
Varāha, lāṅghana for Western Caḷukyas, Kākatīyas, etc.	22	Vijayāditya (Satyāśraya)	189 fn.
Vardhana letters	62, 65, 141		
Vardhanas	53		
Vārendra	35		
Variyilittu, process of writing described as	20		
Varuṇa	180 fn.		

	PAGES		PAGES
Vijayanagara coins	188	Virūpākṣa	21, 192
„ grants	21, 26, 191	Viśākhapaṭṇam	197
„ inscriptions	4, 40, 239	Viśala, a scribe	33
„ kings	26, 54, 220 240	Viśarga	203
„ letters	58, 60, 62, 63, 65, 67, 69, 71, 73, 76, 83, 87, 89, 91, 19, 94, 98, 104, 106, 111, 113, 123, 124, 126, 128, 130, 132, 137, 139, 141, 143, 144, 146, 148, 150	Viśaya	6
„ period	58, 188, 192	Viśayamahattaras	6
„ rule	239	Viśayapati	6
„ script	194, 208, 216, 218	Viśṅgopa	26
Vijayaṭṭakkara	202 fn.	Viśṅkuṇḍin letters	56, 60, 67, 85, 87, 89, 93, 94, 96, 98, 102, 104, 108, 111, 113, 123, 124, 126, 132, 137, 141, 143, 144, 146
Vijayasena, Deopara inscription of	52, 181	„ plates	24, 211
Vijayavāḍa	33	Viśṅkuṇḍins	25, 56
Vikrama era	29	Viṣṇu, Lord	14, 26, 32, 201 fn. 206 fn. 235 fn.
Vikramāditya	15, 240	„ temple of	230 fn.
Vikramāditya VI	13, 40, 53, 239	„ Tortoise incarnation of	42
„ Huli inscription of	207	Viṣṇuvardhana	39, 112
„ Nilgunda plates of	191	Viṣṇivardha clan	195 fn.
Vikramāṅkadevacarita	35	Viśvāvasu	221 fn.
Vikramendrarvarman II, Cikkulla plates of	211	Votive seals	22
Vilavaṭṭi grant	200, 201	Vrālu signature	21
village, assembly	4	Viṣṇi	187 fn.
„ „ membership of	4	Vṛtyanuprāsa	43
„ „ „ „ disqualifications for	4	Vyājastuti	47
„ „ „ „ qualifications for	4	Vyākaraṇa	3
„ „ „ „ method of election for	4	Vyākhyāna mudrā	18
„ „ institutions, described in Uta- ramallur inscriptions	3	Vyāpṛtas	6
Viṇā	5, 9, 14	Vyāsa, quoted	30, 31
Vindhya	31		
Virakerala	15	W	
Virakeralasya, legend on coins	188	water channels	3
Virapratāpa	221 fn.	Wayang	49, 51
Virasadāśiva	221 fn.	Weights and measures, in inscriptions. .	2
Viravarman	26, 201 fn. 202 fn.	Western Cālukyan	15, 204
Virūṅcipuram	53	„ Cālukyan letters	56, 58, 60, 62 65, 67, 69, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 80, 81, 83, 86, 87, 89, 91, 93, 94, 96, 98, 100, 104, 108, 111, 113, 123, 124, 126, 128, 130, 132, 134, 137, 139, 141, 144, 146, 148, 150, 203, script
Virodha	46	„ Cālukyas	211, 216 191
Virodhābhāsa	46		

	PAGES		PAGES
Western Caṅkyaṅ, inscriptions of ..	26, 29, 37, 40, 202, 203, 207, 240	Yādava script	192
„ Ganga inscriptions	195	Yadu	193 fn. 209 fn. 235 fn.
„ „ King	26	Yalus, family of	192 fn.
„ „ letters	56, 60, 85, 87, 89, 93, 96, 104, 108, 113, 123, 124, 126, 132, 137, 139, 141, 143, 144, 146	Yajurveda	5, 28
„ „ plates	25, 26, 202	Yakṣa-worship, in Krishna valley ..	14
„ „ seal	22, 24	„ in South India	14
„ Indian caves	159	Yama	171
„ „ Nāgari	188	Yamaka	42, 43
„ Ocean	174 fn.	Yaśodharman, inscription of ..	25, 26, 42, 56 63, 177
Wheel on Trīśūla, a symbol	25	„ „ „ letter in	58, 63, 67, 71, 73, 76, 77, 79, 81, 83, 85, 87, 91, 93, 96, 98, 100, 104, 108, 113, 123, 124, 130, 134, 137, 141, 143, 144, 146, 148
Wood-carvers, provided in temples ..	5	„ praśasti of	28, 52, 173, 175
Y			
Ya, evolution and varieties .. of ..	132 fn.	Yaśomati	6; 176 fn.
„ table for	133	Yathāsamkhyā	47
Yādava inscription	202	Yaudheyas	3
„ kings	191	Yavanas	164 fn.
„ letters	58, 60, 62, 65, 67, 87, 91, 96, 111, 126, 128, 137, 141, 143, 144, 146,	Yayāti	209 fn. 226fn.
„ Nāgari	188	Yerraguḍi	155 fn.
Yādavas	26, 191	Yinimilli	29
		Yoga	3
		Yuddhakesaripperunbanasikkāran ..	35
		Yuddhamalla, Bezwada inscription of	54, 239
		Yugāḍiparvan	180 fn.
		Yūpa inscriptions	8, 51
		Yuvamahārāja Viṣṇugopa	26

PLATE II

- (a) The Tiruvāṅgāḍu plates of Rājendra Coḷa.
- (b) Seal of the Tiruvāṅgāḍu plates of Rājendra Coḷa.

Maurras - Kulin Gupta. Vedic Age. 3c. B.C. to 4c. A.D. 7c. A.D.

Text in North India section, including Sanskrit characters and a large block of Tamil script.

Stein Col. L. Medieval. Modern. 9c. A.D. to 10c. A.D.

Text in Tibet section, including Sanskrit characters and a large block of Tibetan script.

Maurras - Tamil Caves. 3c. B.C. to 5c. B.C.

Text in South India section, including Sanskrit characters and a large block of Tamil script.

Venigeti. Mah. Simala. Vuzigidi. Modern. 3c. B.C. to 2c. A.D. 10c. A.D.

Text in Ceylon section, including Sanskrit characters and a large block of Sinhala script.

Mungpan Pl. Pru. 3c. A.D. to 7c. A.D.

Text in Burma section, including Sanskrit characters and a large block of Burmese script.

V5-Camb. 3B. 29c. A.D. to 43c. A.D. 43c. A.D. to 8c. A.D. 8c. A.D. to 10c. A.D.

Text in Annam section, including Sanskrit characters and a large block of Khmer script.

Mahabharata. 5c. A.D.

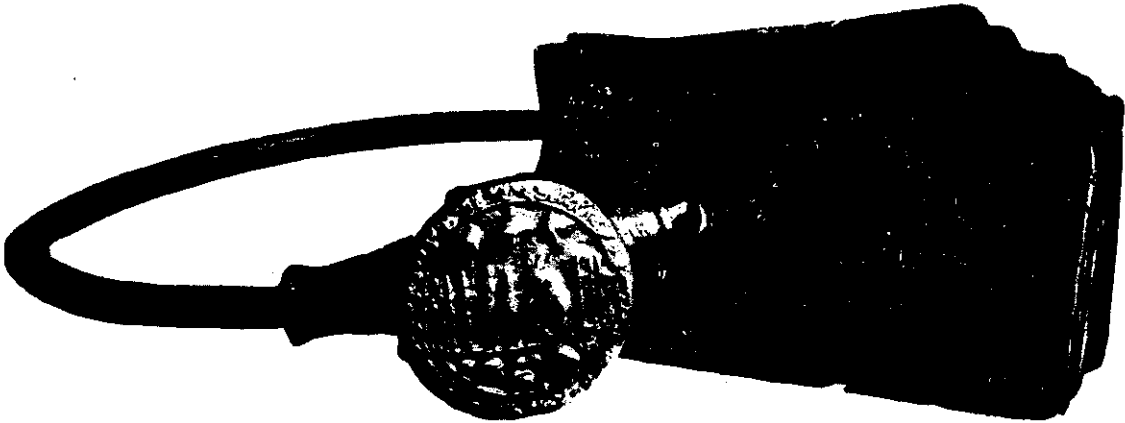
Text in Malaya section, including Sanskrit characters and a large block of Malay script.

Pingpates. 5c. A.D. to 11c. A.D.

Text in Java section, including Sanskrit characters and a large block of Javanese script.

Milichner. 5c. A.D.

Text in Egypt section, including Sanskrit characters and a large block of Coptic script.



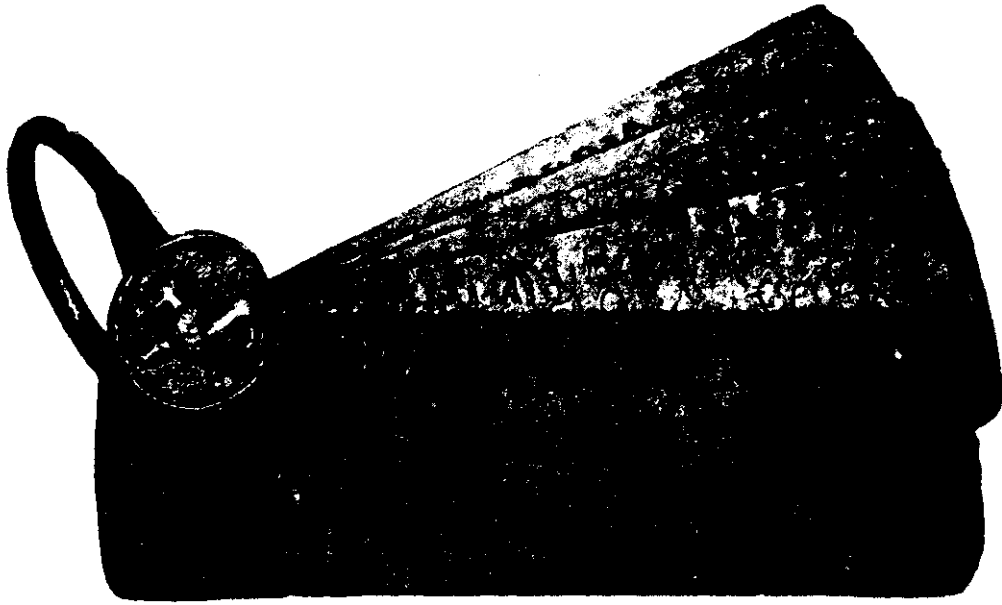
(a)



(b)

PLATE III

- (a) The Cikkulla plates of Viṣṇukunḍi Vikramendravarman II.**
- (b) Seal of the Cikkulla plates.**
- (c) Seal of an Eastern Cāḷukyan copper plate grant.**



(a)

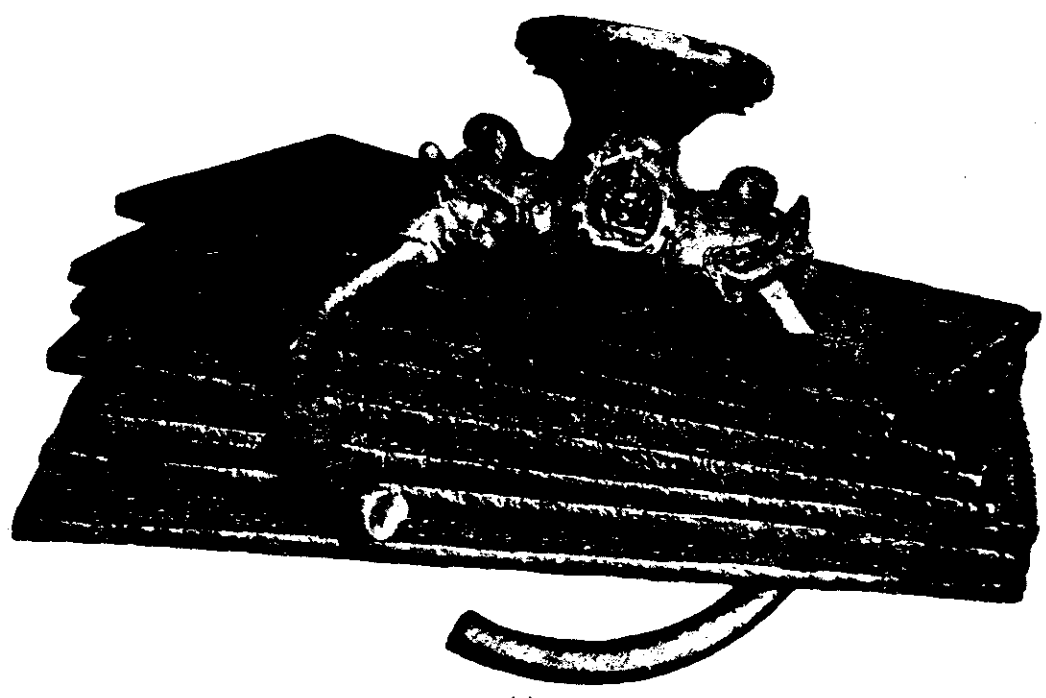


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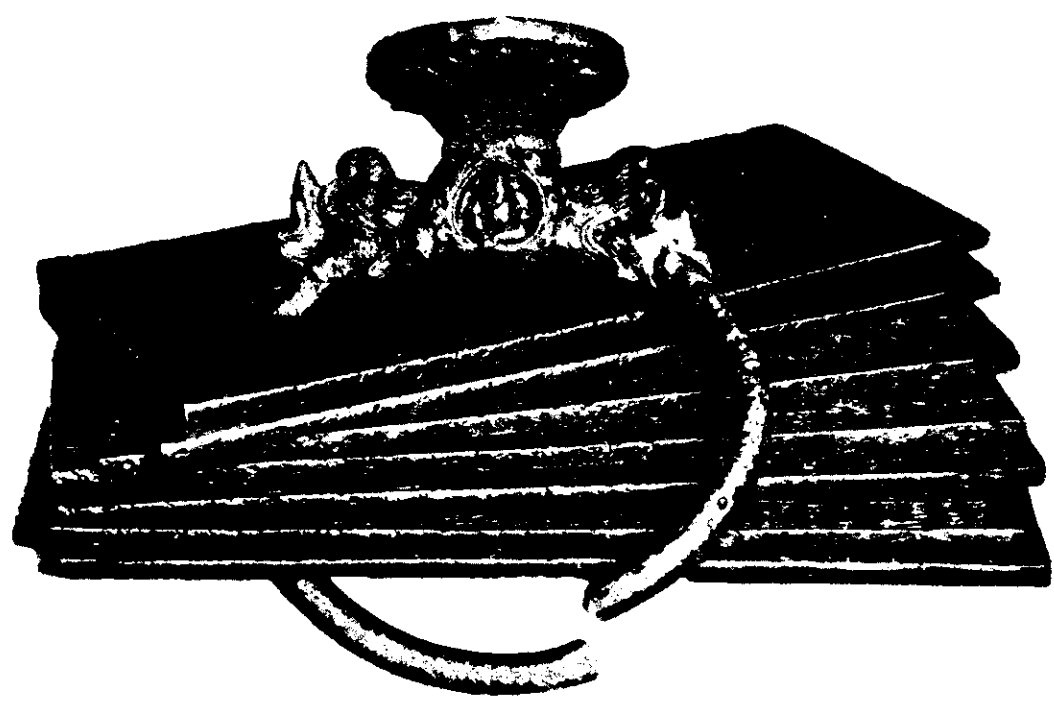


PLATE IV

(a), (b) Copper plate grant of the Eastern Chalukyan King Vijayaditya III from Sitalic
Krisna district (9th Century A.D.).



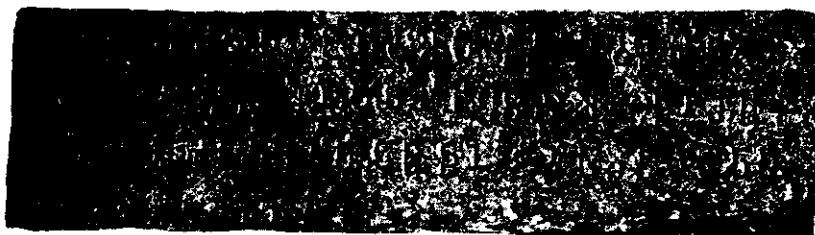
(a)



(b)

PLATE V

- (a) Cast of Asokan edict at Jangada.
- (b) Inscribed lid of stone reliquary from Bhattiprolu.
- (c) Inscribed stone reliquary from Bhattiprolu.



(a)



(b)



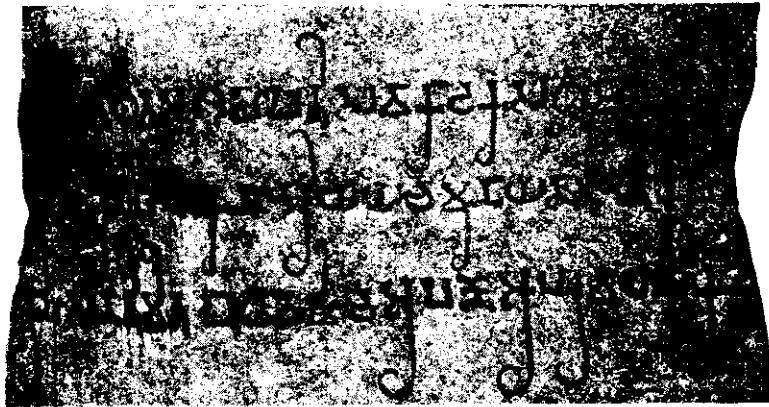
(c)

PLATE VI

- (a) Inscription from Amarāvati (C. 200 B.C.).**
- (b) Inscription from Amarāvati (Late 2nd Century A.D.).**
- (c) Inscription from Jaggayyapeta (3rd Century A.D.).**



(a)



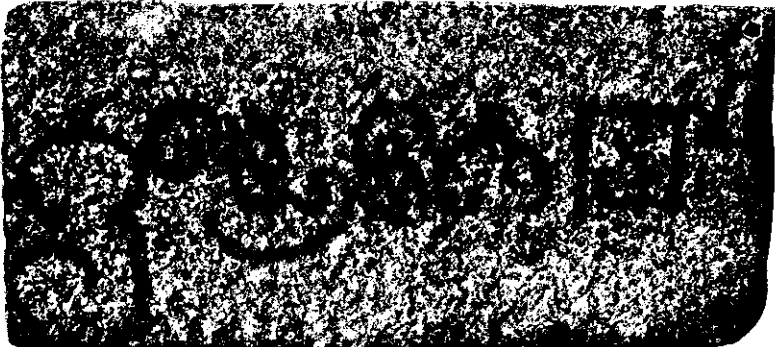
(b)



(c)

PLATE VII

- (a) Pallava Grantha inscription from Kāñcipuram (7th Century A.D.).
(b) Coḷa inscription on a hero stone from Kilmuttugūr, North Arcot district (10th century A.D.).



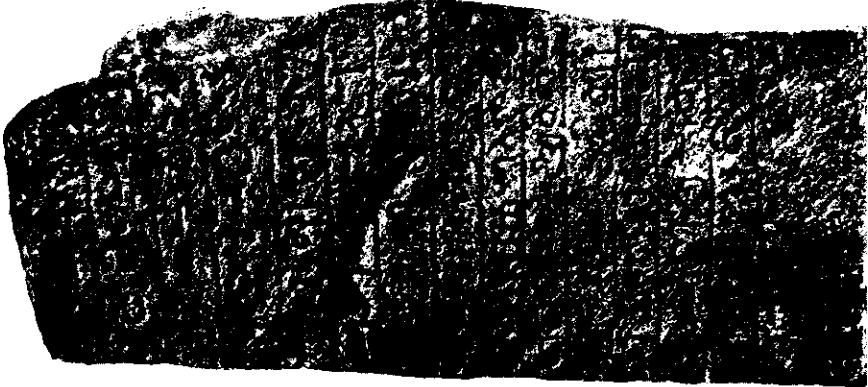
(a)



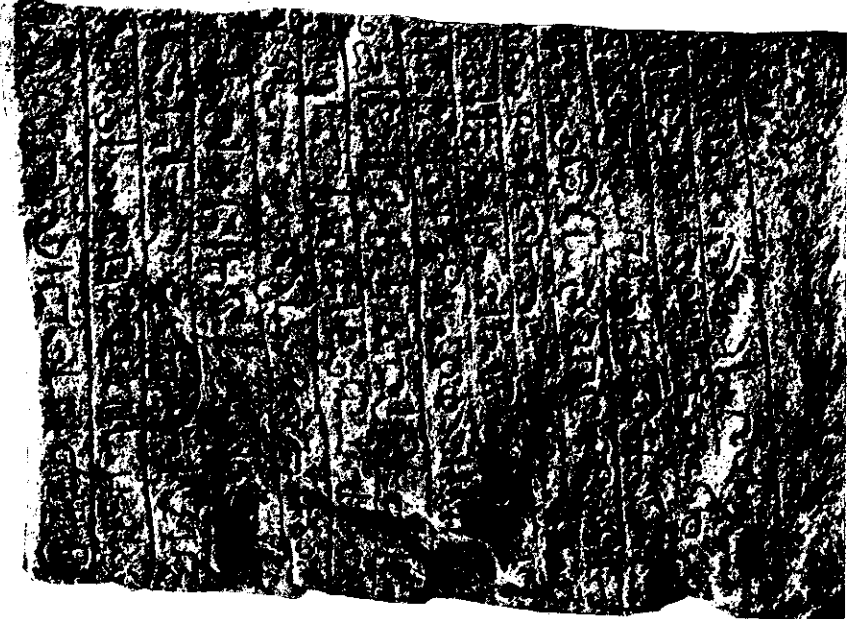
(b)

PLATE VIII

(a), (b), (c) Coḷa inscription of Rājarāja from Kalambākkam, Chingleput district (11th Century A.D.).



(c)



(b)



(a)

PLATE IX

- (a) Inscription of Pārthivēadravarma from Madras (10th Century A.D.).
- (b) *Sūryāsūkti* in Cola Grantia on a pillar from a derelict Sūryamaṅḍapa in Kacchapeśvara temple, Kāñcīpuram (10th Century A.D.).
- (c) Early Eastern Cālukyan inscription on the back of a *dyūrapāṭaka* from Bezwada.



(a)



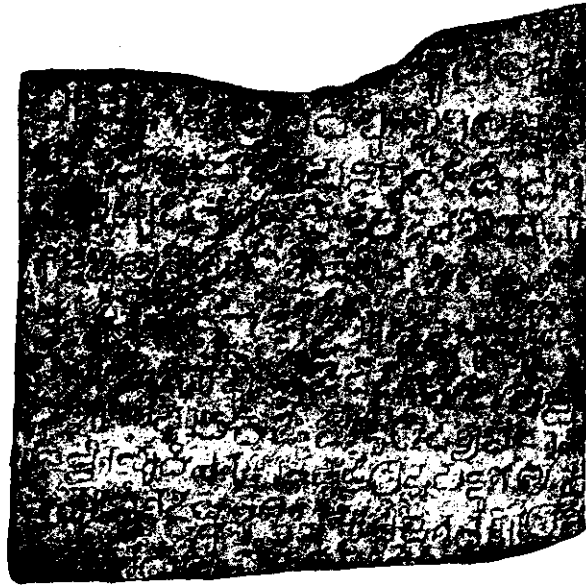
(b)



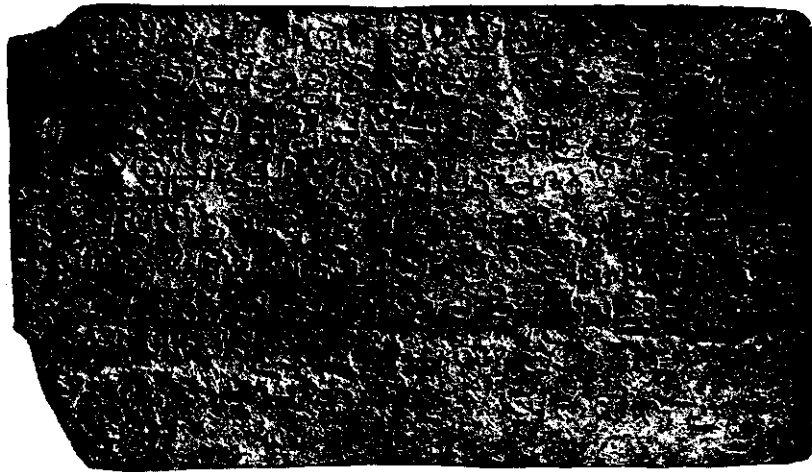
(c)

PLATE X

- (a) Early Eastern Cālukyan inscription from Addanki, Guntur district (9th Century A.D.).
- (b) Later Eastern Cālukyan inscription from Rajahmundry, East Godavari district (11th Century A.D.).
- (c) Cast of Vijayanagara copper plate (15th Century A.D.).



(a)



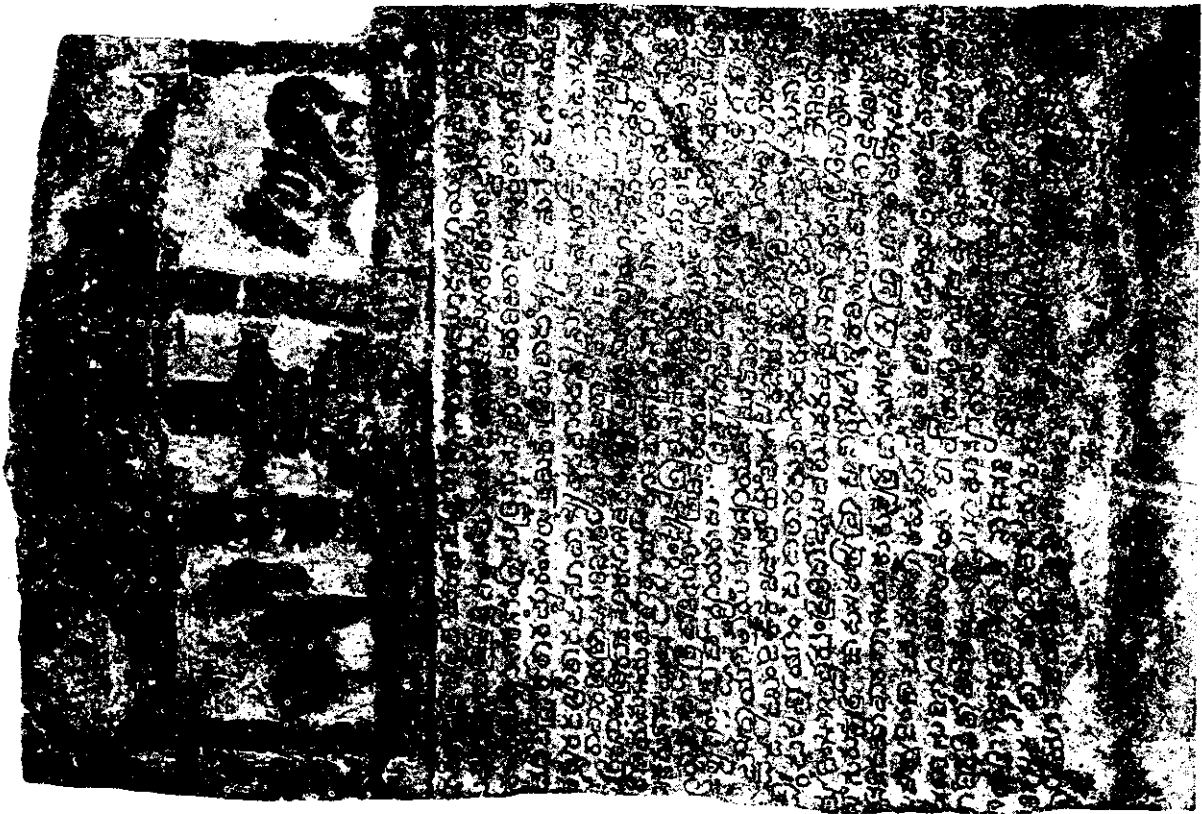
(b)



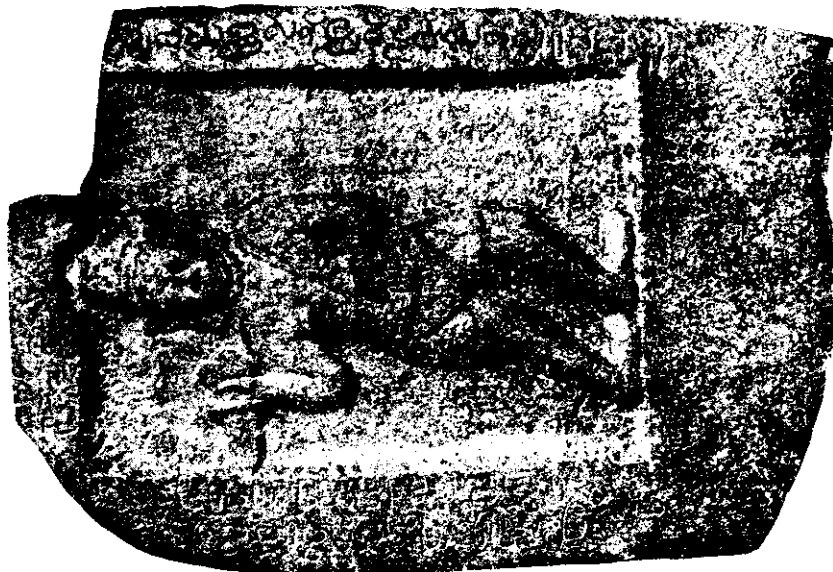
PLATE XI]

(a) Early Western Cālukyan inscribed carving from Annavara agrahāram, Nellore district (7th Century A.D.).

(b) Later Western Cālukyan inscription (11th Century A.D.).



(b)



(a)

$$\begin{array}{r} 290 \\ \underline{124} \\ 29 \\ \underline{9} \end{array}$$

