

CENSUS OF INDIA 1961

VOLUME XXV

PONDICHERRY

PART IV

VILLAGE SURVEY MONOGRAPHS

4. VEERAMPATTINAM

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OF THE INDIAN ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICE
SUPERINTENDENT OF CENSUS OPERATIONS,
MADRAS AND PONDICHERRY

AND

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CENSUS OF INDIA 1961

[Census Report—Vol. XXV will relate to Pondicherry State. Under this series will be issued the following Publications]

Part	I	...	General report on Census
Part	II-A	...	General Population Tables
	B	...	Economic Tables
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Part	III-A	...	Household Economic Tables
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Part	IV	...	Village Survey Monographs (Five numbers in five volumes)
Part	V	...	Crafts and Artisans of Pondicherry State
Part	VI	...	Fairs and Festivals (Temples)
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Part	VIII	...	District Census Handbook

FOREWORD

Apart from laying the foundations of demography in this sub-continent, a hundred years of the Indian Census has also produced 'elaborate and scholarly accounts of the variegated phenomena of Indian life—sometimes with no statistics attached, but usually with just enough statistics to give empirical underpinning to their conclusions'. In a country, largely illiterate, where statistical or numerical comprehension of even such a simple thing as age was liable to be inaccurate, an understanding of the social structure was essential. It was more necessary to attain a broad understanding of what was happening around oneself than to wrap oneself up in 'statistical ingenuity' or 'mathematical manipulation'. This explains why the Indian Census came to be interested in 'many by paths' and 'nearly every branch of scholarship, from anthropology and sociology to geography and religion'.

In the last few decades, the Census has increasingly turned its efforts to the presentation of village statistics. This suits the temper of the times as well as our political and economic structure. For even as we have a great deal of centralization on the one hand and decentralization on the other, my colleagues thought it would be a welcome continuation of the Census tradition to try to invest the dry bones of village statistics with flesh-and-blood accounts of social structure and social change. It was accordingly decided to select a few villages in every State for special study, where personal observation would be brought to bear on the interpretation of statistics to find out how much of a village was static and yet changing and how fast the winds of change were blowing and from where.

Randomness of selection was therefore, eschewed. There was no intention to build up a picture for the whole State in quantitative terms on the basis of villages selected satistically at random. The selection was avowedly purposive: the object being as much to find out what was happening and how fast to those villages which had fewer reasons to choose change and more to remain lodged in the past as to discover how the more 'normal' types of villages were changing. They were to be primarily type studies which, by virtue of their number and distribution, would also give the reader a 'feel' of what was going on and some kind of a map of the country.

A brief account of the tests of selection will help to explain. A minimum of thirty-five villages was to be chosen with great care to represent adequately geographical, occupational and even ethnic diversity. Of this minimum of thiry-five, the distribution was to be as follows:

(a) At least eight villages were to be so selected that each of them would contain one dominant community with one predominating occupation, *e.g.* fishermen, forest workers, jhum cultivators, potters, weavers, salt-makers, quarry workers etc. A village should have a minimum population of 400, the optimum being between 500 and 700.

(b) At least seven villages were to be of numerically prominent Scheduled Tribes of the State. Each village could represent a particular tribe. The minimum population should be 400, the optimum being between 500 and 700.

(c) The third group of villages should each be of fair size, of an old and settled character and contain variegated occupations and be, if possible, multi-ethnic in composition. By fair size was meant a population of 500–700 persons or more. The village should mainly depend on agriculture and be sufficiently away from the major sources of modern communication, such as the district administrative headquarters and business centres. It should be roughly a day's journey from the above places. The villages were to be selected with an eye to variation in terms of size, proximity to city and other means of modern communication, nearness to hills, jungles and major rivers. Thus, there was to be a regional distribution throughout the State of this category of villages. If, however, a particular district contained significant ecological variations within its area, more than one village in the district might be selected to study the special adjustments to them.

It is a unique feature of these village surveys that they rapidly outgrew their original terms of reference, as my colleagues warmed up to their work. This proved for them an absorbing voyage of discovery and their infectious enthusiasm compelled me to enlarge the inquiry's scope again and again. It was just as well cautiously to feel one's way about at first and then venture further afield: and although it accounts to some extent for a certain unevenness in the quality and coverage of the monographs, it served to compensate the purely honorary and extra-mural rigours of the task. For, the Survey, along with its many ancillaries like the survey of fairs and festivals, of small and rural industry and others, was an 'extra', over and above the crushing load of the 1961 Census.

It might be of interest to recount briefly the stages by which the Survey enlarged its scope. At the first Census Conference in September 1959, the Survey set itself the task of what might be called a record *in situ* of material traits, like settlement patterns of the village; house types; diet; dress; ornaments and footwear; furniture and storing vessels; common means of transport of goods and passengers; domestication of animals and birds; markets attended; worship of deities; festivals and fairs. There were to be recordings, of course, of cultural and social traits and occupational mobility. This was followed up in March 1960 by two specimen schedules, one for each household, the other for the village as a whole, which, apart from spelling out the mode of inquiry suggested in the September 1959 conference, introduced groups of questions aimed at sensing changes in attitude and behaviour in such fields as marriage, inheritance, movable and immovable property, industry, indebtedness, education, community life and collective activity, social disabilities, forums of appeal over disputes, village leadership and organisation of cultural life. It was now plainly the intention to provide adequate statistical support to empirical 'feel', to approach qualitative change through statistical quantities. It had been difficult to give thought to the importance of 'just enough statistics to give empirical underpinning to conclusion' at a time when my colleagues were straining themselves to the utmost for the success of the main Census operations, but once the census count itself was left behind in March, 1961, a series of three regional seminars in Trivandrum (May 1951), Darjeeling and Srinagar (June 1961) restored their attention to this field and the importance of tracing social change through a number of well-devised statistical tables was once again recognised. This itself presupposed a fresh survey of villages already done; but it was worth the trouble in view of the possibilities that a close analysis of statistics offered and also because the 'Consanguinity' Schedule remained to be canvassed. By November 1961, however, more was expected of these surveys than ever before. There was dissatisfaction on the one hand with too many general statements and a growing desire on the other to draw conclusions from statistics, to regard social and economic data as inter-related processes, and finally to examine the social and economic processes set in motion through land reforms and other laws, legislative and administrative measures, technological and cultural change. Finally, a study camp was organised in the last week of December, 1961 when the whole field was carefully gone through over again and a programme worked out closely knitting the various aims of the Survey together. The Social Studies Section of the Census Commission rendered assistance to State Superintendents by way of scrutiny and technical comment on the frame of Survey and presentation of results.

This gradual unfolding of the aims of the Survey prevented my colleagues from adopting as many villages as they had originally intended to. But I believe that what may have been lost in quantity has been more than made up for in quality. This is, perhaps, for the first time that such a Survey has been conducted in any country, and that purely as a labour of love. It has succeeded in attaining what it set out to achieve; to construct a map of village India's social structure. One hopes that the volumes of this Survey will help to retain for the Indian Census its title to 'the most fruitful single source of information about the country'. Apart from other features, it will perhaps be conceded that the Survey has set up a new Census standard in pictorial and graphic documentation. The schedules finally adopted for this monograph have been printed in an Appendix.

New Delhi,
30th July, 1964.

ASOK MITRA,
Registrar General, India.

PREFACE

An interesting feature of 1961 Census is the preparation of monographs on selected villages.

Five villages were selected for this purpose in the Union Territory of Pondicherry. Reports have already been published on three of the villages—Kadirkamam, Thirunallar and Thimmanayakenpalayam. This report on Veerampattinam is the fourth in the series.

Veerampattinam is an old and settled village. Pattanavans, the sea fishermen form the dominant population and fishing is their main source of livelihood. The method adopted for fishing is primitive. The elements of urbanisation are noticed among the younger generation.

The report has been prepared by Sri K. C. Narayana Kurup, my Deputy Superintendent, assisted by Sri V. Rajagopalan, Research Assistant. It is hoped that the report will be of interest to the reader.

P. K. NAMBIAR.

LIST OF VILLAGES SELECTED FOR THE SURVEY

PONDICHERRY AREA

* 1. Kadirkamam

* 2. Thimmanayakenpalayam

3. Thengathittu

†4. Veerampattinam

KARAIKAL AREA

*15. Thirunallar

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*Already printed.

†The present volume (No. 4 of the series).

VILLAGE SURVEY REPORT

ON

VEERAMPATTINAM

Field Study & First Report ... ... V. RAJAGOPALAN, B.A., *Research Assistant.*

Photographs ... ... N. D. RAJAN, *Photographer.*

Maps ... ... N. CHANDRAN, *Draughtsman.*

Sketches ... ... A. RAMADOSS, *Artist.*

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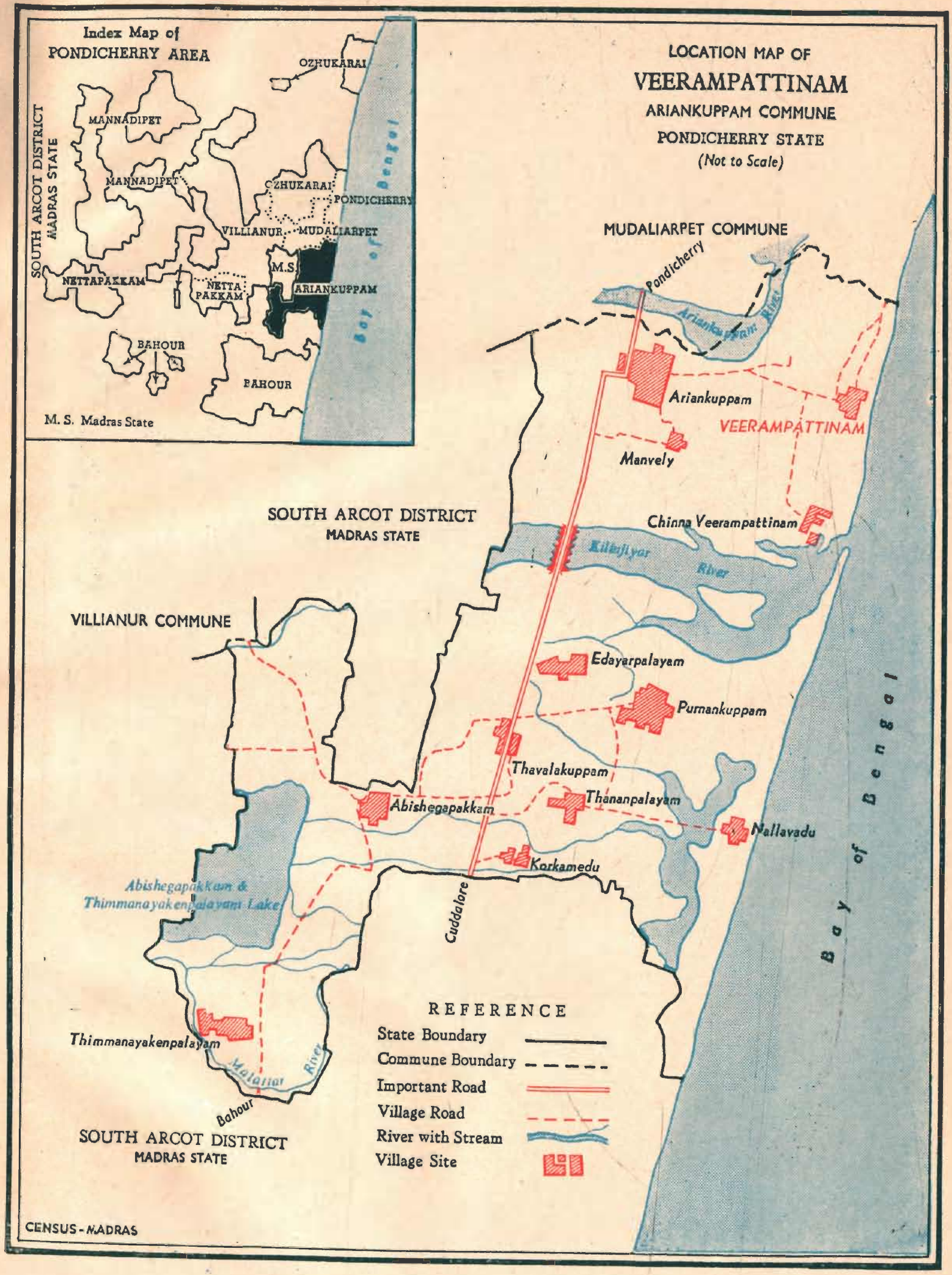
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MADRAS STATE
MANNADIPET
OZHUKARAI
PONDICHERRY
VILLIANUR
MUDALIARPET
M.S.
NETTAPAKKAM
NETTA PAKKAM
ARIANKUPPAM
Bay of Bengal
BAHOUR
BAHOUR
M. S. Madras State
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SOUTH ARCOT DISTRICT
MADRAS STATE
CENSUS - MADRAS

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The Village

Veerampattinam, a typical coastal village in Pondicherry area, lies at a distance of about 5.5 kilometres to the south of Pondicherry town. It is one of the 20 villages constituting Ariankuppam Commune. The village has assumed a special religious significance in the area in view of the location of a temple dedicated to the Goddess *Sengazhuneer-amman*. Along with other French enclaves it was under French regime for over two hundred years. With the *de facto* merger in November, 1954 and *de jure* merger on 16th August, 1962 of the former French settlements with the Indian Union, it became part of the Union territory of Pondicherry. It is old and settled in nature and 'Pattanavars' form the majority of the village population who find their calling in sea-fishing. An analysis of the socio-economic structure of this fishing village has been made in the following chapters.

Location

2. The village lies approximately between 79° 49′ 39″ Eastern Longitude and 10° 55′ 30″ Northern Latitude. Situated to the south of Pondicherry at a distance of about 5.5 kilometres by road and 4 kilometres by sea-shore, it is bounded by the villages Ariankuppam and Kakayenthope on its west, Keera-palayam and Thengathittu on its north and Manaveli and Chinna Veerampattinam on the south. On the east it has the Bay of Bengal. The nearest town is Pondicherry. An attraction to the tourists, Pondicherry town also serves as the headquarters of the territory of the same name. Cuddalore, head-quarters of the South Arcot District of Madras State, lying to the south of the village at a distance of 11 miles, is another neighbouring town.

Physical features

3. The entire Pondicherry area is situated in the Ponnayar delta region. As a few rivers flow through this area, the soil is almost entirely formed of sand beds and alluvial deposits brought about by them. Two rivers flow close to the village of Veerampattinam and empty themselves into the Bay of Bengal. The one flowing to the north of the village, at a distance of one kilometre, is known as Ariankuppam River. Bordered on both sides with dense and ever-green vegetations, water is available in it throughout the year. The water, being brackish, is not suitable for drinking but fishing thrives in it. The other river, known as Chunambar, flows at a distance of 1½ miles to the south of the village. It appears mostly dry except during monsoon period. These two rivers are the branches of the River Gingee or Varaghanadhi which has its source in the hills of Malayanoor. This river has a run of about 34 kilometres in Pondicherry area. At a distance of 7 kilometres from its mouth, it branches into two, the southern known as Chunambar and the northern as Ariankuppam river. Veerampattinam, situated on a plain, has sandy soil. There is only one pond here by the side of the temple which is used by the villagers and devotees for bathing. No forest is seen anywhere in the vicinity of Veerampattinam.

Climate and rainfall

4. Three distinct seasons could be noticed in this area. The cold season lasts from October to February. December happens to be the coolest month during this season. The hot season lasts from March to June and the rainy season from July to September. During the hot season, the temperature ranges from 88°F to 104°F during day and from 81°F to 84°F in

the night. The climatic conditions of Pondicherry area hold good to Veerampattinam also since it lies in close proximity to it. Being a coastal village the fishermen and others here are immune to the extremities of the tropical climates. The village has no rainfall recording station. The amount of rainfall, as recorded at Pondicherry, for the years 1948 to 1960 are shown in the statement given below:

STATEMENT No. 1

Amount of Rainfall (in millimetres)

Months	1948	1949	1950	1951	1952	1953	1954
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
January	74.00	...	5.00	6.75	25.00	24.00	84.50
February	2.00	...	1.50	...	17.75	...	...
March	...	...	...	3.25	...	...	125.00
April	...	3.00	...	147.00	...	64.00	13.00
May	6.50	36 50	79.50	19.00	38.50	...	15.00
June	27.00	63.50	10.12	18.50	17.25	83.50	14 50
July	104.50	57.20	71.70	43.50	25.75	14.50	127.50
August	19.50	167.80	49.95	165.78	55.75	112.50	150.50
September	174.70	139.80	84.80	150.40	5.00	96.95	36.00
October	86.50	104.50	145.03	53.00	202.25	400.00	463.00
November	254.20	134.30	149.75	367.30	25.00	159.50	...
December	...	...	78.00	974.48	213.50	26.00	225.75
Total ...	**748.90**	**706.60**	**675.35**	**1948.96**	**625.75**	**980.95**	**1254.75**
(or) in inches ...	**29.48**	**27.81**	**26.58**	**76.73**	**24.63**	**38.62**	**49.39**
Average monthly rain fall	**62.41**	**58.88**	**56.28**	**162.41**	**52.15**	**81.75**	**104.56**
(or) in inches ...	**2.45**	**2.31**	**2.21**	**6.39**	**2.05**	**3.21**	**4.11**

Months	1955	1956	1957	1958	1959	1960
(1)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)
January	72.00	55.50	...	22.50	1.00	9.00
February	...	2.00	8.00	...	70.00	...
March	...	...	...	...	...	...
April	68.60	14.50	...	2.50	3.50	2.00
May	226.00	...	...	97.50	51.50	...
June	35.00	163.00	59.00	1.50	19.50	64.25
July	81.60	62.02	116.75	35.00	29.50	63.00
August	150.75	126.95	113.75	187.00	197.00	68.25
September	34.50	180.50	103.50	247.00	61.50	88.75
October	164.25	664.00	245.00	243,75	205.00	204.50
November	135.50	301.25	274.00	315.50	408.75	969.75
December	122.75	143.00	51.50	61.75	3.00	91.75
Total ...	**1090.95**	**1712.70**	**971.50**	**1214.00**	**1050.25**	**1561.25**
(or) in inches ...	**42.95**	**67.42**	**38.24**	**47.79**	**41.34**	**61.46**
Average monthly rainfail	**90.91**	**142.73**	**80.96**	**101.17**	**87.52**	**130.10**
(or) in inches ...	**3.57**	**5.61**	**3.18**	**3.98**	**3.44**	**5.12**

Average yearly rainfall 1211.83 mm. (or) 47.70 inches.

The average annual rainfall is 47.70". During the years 1951—1956 the rates of rainfall seem to be the maximum. Generally during October and November heavy rainfall is recorded. Thus it is seen that the village lies in a moderate rain-receiving region.

Transport and communication

5. The village is easily accessible as there are passenger buses plying between Pondicherry and this village. From the Pondicherry-Cuddalore Road, at a distance of about 3.5 kilometres from Pondicherry town, branches off an asphalt road which leads to this village. This road takes off exactly from the bazaar of Ariankuppam and terminates at the sea-shore passing through the village. The Pondicherry-Cuddalore Road is a busy thoroughfare and quite a good number of buses ply through it. As such, a visitor to the village can either board the bus at Pondicherry that goes to Veerampattinam directly, or any one of the buses going in the direction of Cuddalore and get down at Ariankuppam bazaar. From here the village is in easy approach. Cycle rickshaws are available or one could easily make the distance by foot as it is only about 2 kilometres. The village can also be approached along the coast covering about 4 kilometres by foot. Cycle is the common mode of transport to the villagers to reach Pondicherry and other nearby places. For postal facilities the villagers have to go to Ariankuppam where there exists a Branch Post Office with telegraph and telephone facilities. For purposes of remittance of money also the villager has to depend solely on the Post Office at Ariankuppam. The village falls within the limits of Ariankuppam Police Station. There is no police post at Veerampattinam. The village was electrified on 24—12—57.

History and etymology of the name of the village

6. The area of the Ariankuppam Commune in which the village is situated is 9.4 Sq. miles and the population as per 1961 Census count is 20,226 consisting of 10,193 males and 10,033 females. Prior to 1907, Pondicherry area was divided into 4 communes for administrative purposes. The village and Ariankuppam, the present headquarters of the commune of the same name, might have been under Oulgaret division, at that time. After 1908, by a decree, Pondicherry area was divided into 8 communes. One of the 8 communes is Ariankuppam commune and Veerampattinam falls in its jurisdiction. The village along with other settlements of the territory is enjoying the popular form of Government under a Lt. Governor, after their merger with the Indian Union on the 16th August, 1962.

7. As the tradition will have it, the village is believed to have been in existence for over 350 years. In a place known as Aricamedu, situated on the banks of Ariankuppam river, at a distance of one kilometre to the north-west of Veerampattinam, excavations were made in 1936. The findings there revealed the probability of existence of a Port-town dating back to as early as first or second century B C. There are two views current as regards the name of the village. The local saying goes that the village derived its name from one Veera Raghavan Chettiar who is stated to have constructed a small temple and installed an idol of *Sri Senguzhuneeramman* in this village in pursuance of a dream in which the deity desired him to do so. As per this belief the village was originally known as Viraraghavapattinam, but in course of time, it came to be known as Virampattinam. This view is supported by Mr. Gangatharan, a native of the village in his Tamil Book entitled *Sri Senguzhuneeramman.*

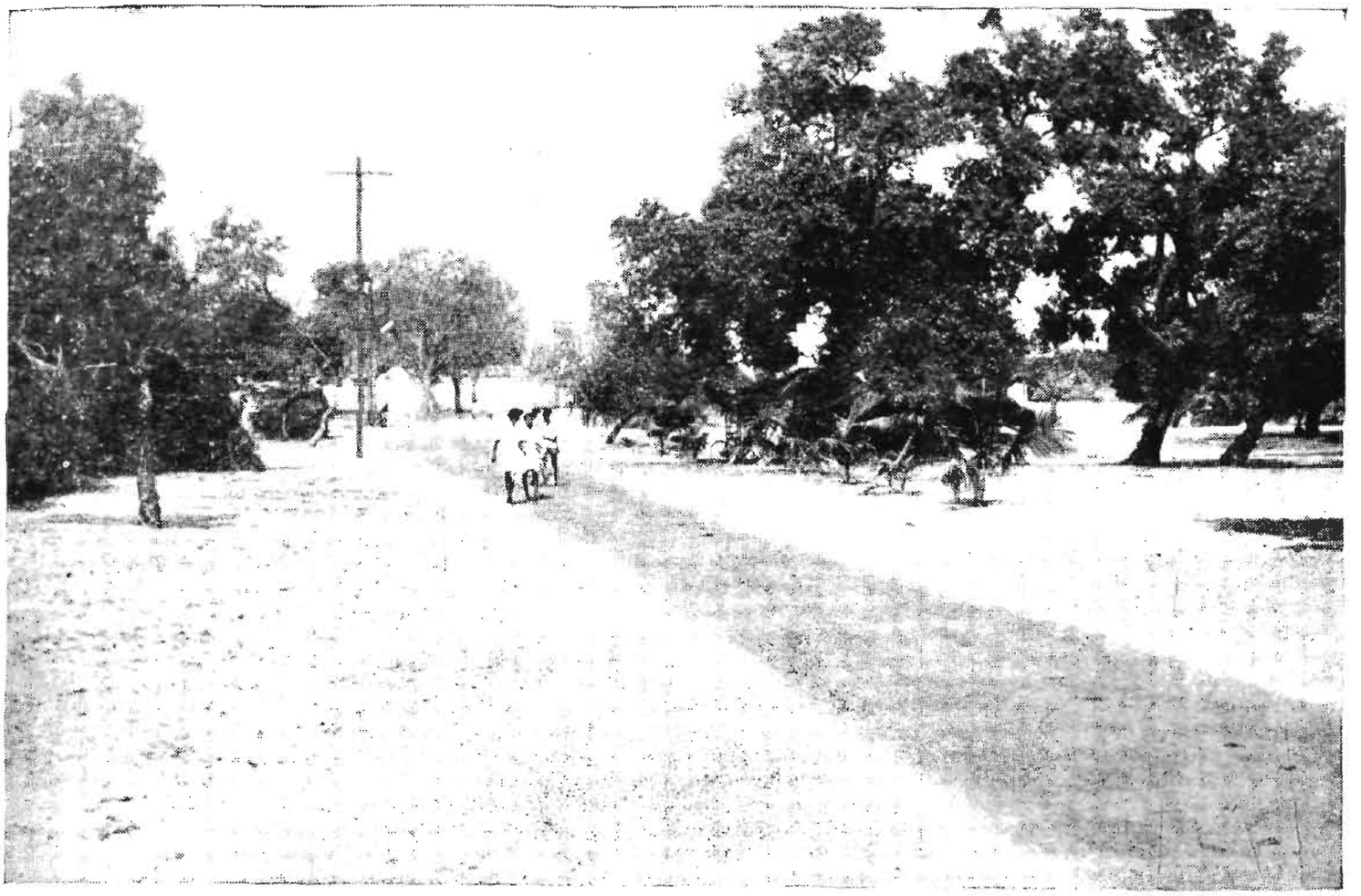
8. Another view is found in a book entitled 'Virapatnam' written in French and found in the Pondicherry Public Library, and is extracted below: "Virapatnam covers an area of 200 Ha, 4 K.m., south of Pondicherry. It is situated on the right bank of Ariankuppam River at a distance of one k.m. to the mouth of the river. In 1775 the astronomer Le Gentil installed an observatory there, drew up the plan and made the following description which is always exact in its broad outlines. According to him, "The Ariankuppam river flows fast near Villianur, crosses the plain to form, before reaching the sea, an islet known as 'Island of cocoanut trees'. Just above the place where the river forks to form this islet, Ariankuppam village is located. The place is all the more charming as the river banks. Moving forward along the river banks, the land climbs. As such, the river side is very steep and the escarpment is hardly 20 feet high. On the top of the steep, in the valley, foundations of some big town or village were discovered in recent times; the walls found there are more than 10 feet high. I have seen bricks of more than one foot long and 7 to 8 inches wide and proportionately thick, taken out therefrom; they were easily removed unbroken because they were adhering to each other with a sort of clay which is commonly found in the outskirts of Pondicherry and is made use

of with brick for building purposes. This clay is locally known as 'Calimannou'. Whether the Indians on this coast had given up the practice of making such kind of large bricks or the European practice of making them into smaller sizes became prevalent, the fact is that Indians like the French are now using very small bricks. The town had some wells dug in the plain near the river, the depth of which was atleast twenty feet before reaching the water level. Traces of them are still found down the escarpment. These wells, judging from the remnants, I had seen, were about 4 feet wide but not made in masonry — A confused legend of this foundation prevails in this country, which, however, seems to have been notable. This was, from what the Tamil people told me, a fort belonging to a Raja or Kind-Lord named Vira-Raguen and hence the name Virapatnam. It is very likely that the river while in spate began to destroy this town". Close to Virapatnam ruins, between this fort and Ariankuppam village, a statue of an old Indian divinity called in the country as *Baouth* (Buddha) is found. At a distance of 1,800 feet (300 toises) from this old fort on the sea-shore lies a poor fishermen village called also Virapatinam. In 1734, the *Conseil Superieur De Pondicherry* informed the company directors in Paris that it was under the obligation of granting to the farmer of Ariankuppam, a portion of rent, as the collection of bricks 'spread over in the sourd lands and their removal to the river side where the work was being carried out', has caused considerable havoc. The place where bricks were collected is not indicated, but on account of the proximity of the river, it is quite likely that it was Virapatinam and its surroundings.

The Secretary of Historical Monuments Commission having his headquarters at Pondicherry from 1879 to 1881 while explaining his research scheme to the head of the colony, wrote "6—to locate the old site, of the part situated on the river side in between Ariankuppam and the mouth of the river of the same name. It is obviously in reference to the town of Virapatinam". In 1886, M. Jumean, the Director of the Public Works Department of the colony while excavating a site near the present Ariankuppam bridge at a distance of 1500 metres from Virapatinam discovered a piece of granite statue, a petrified vertebra, some logs on the verge of turning into lignites and specimens of old bricks and carried them to Pondicherry. The port-*cum*-town perhaps extended upto this bridge.

In 1937, M. J. Dubreuil conducted research for the first time on the surface of the soil with the assistance of children living in the area whom he rewarded liberally. Quartz fragments collected by him were, two years later, donated to the *Ecole Francaise d' Extreme Orient* together with a collection of beads in various shapes made of half precious stones and glasses. Previously a lot of similar glass beads had been sent to Mr. Ch. Autran who wrote on 22—6—1939 recording the views of M. Conteneau, Curator of Oriental Antiquities section in the Louvres Museum as follows: "Such types of glass beads (just as that given by him) are found in plenty all over the western Asia right from Iranian Plateau to the West Coast (500 B. C. & after). As to the paste of glass, it is commonly found in abundance on the Phoenician coast". He added, "what has struck M. Conteneau most was, to find in the lot, glass beads forming part of knick-knacks so common at that time, along with articles that looked like locally made imitation samples of a more or less rough variety".

At the beginning of 1941, M. Jouveau Dubreuil invited Dr. Ayyappan, Curator of Madras Museum to visit Virapatnam. The latter came and stayed there from 2nd to 8th March and dug the site in various places. On the 23rd of the same month, a Madras daily *The Hindu* published an article written by Dr. Ayyappan, entitled *A Dakshina Taxila (Taxila of South) (Historic relics from Arikamedou)*. In his article Dr. Ayyappan declared that Virapatnam gave the same products as were found at Amaravathi; that it was a centre of manufacture of glasses; that at last the excavations carried out prove promising. The land owner raised some objections in connection with the researches made by Dr. Ayyappan. In order to avoid further opposition, the Government sought the concurrence of the Commission on scientific or historic sites and issued an *arrete* dated 15—3—41 by which the land lying along the river to a length of 600 metres was declared an historic site. Mr. Rao Bahadur Dikshit, Director General of the Archaeological Department, British India, whose interest was aroused by the article *A Dhakshina Taxila*, arrived at Pondicherry on 21st September 1941, accompanied by Dr. Ayyappan and the Superintendent of the Archaeological Department of Madras. They visited Virapatnam and Paccamodeampath (a neolithic site) and examined the collection of objects found from both these places and left Pondicherry very much satisfied with their visit. Mr. Dikshit even expressed unambiguously his desir



The approach road to Veerampattinam.



The village is easily accessible by the passenger bus plying between Pondicherry and the village.



The East Street which terminates at the sea-shore. The temple car and a few shops are found here.



The **South** Street where the well-to-do Pattanavans and Vanniars dwell.

to see his department undertaking excavations in Virapatnam. From a note he wrote later, we are reproducing below the following extract. "The large sizes of bricks we have seen in the walls indicate obviously that we are in the presence of a site dating back from the beginning of Christian era. It is now clear that in any remote period, Indian cities had their own districts of lapidaries and that cutting of stones and their transformation into glass beads are evident in big cities like Ahanhudora, Taxila, Patna and Arikamedou (Virapatnam)". Then, Governor Bovin secured the collaboration of Mr. Surleav, Engineer-Director of Public Works Department and Father L. Faucheux, a member of *Ecole Francise d' extreme Orient* and decided that excavations be started at Virapatnam under their supervision and at Government expenditure. Sometime after the first discoveries were made, the Virapatnam site (or Viraptinam) instead of being made known to public under its real name was known as *Arikamedou*, a name which is not recorded in the survey office and which is merely a distortion of the word *Arippumedu Punjai*, an appellation for a land exclusively meant for millet cultivation. We have therefore deliberately avoided that name and adopted the name of Virapatnam which has the double advantage of not only being the traditional name but also being more in consonance with the aim assigned to our successors. The aim referred to consists in proving that this place corresponds to *Poduke* discovered during the Periplus of Erythrean sea and alluded in the geography of Ptolemy. Virapatinam is in fact formed of Vira, name of a prince and of 'Patnam' which means a town. The interpretation of a 'Patnam' is a town situated on the sea-shore or on a river bank, particularly one on its curves (as is the case for our site)".

8. From the above account about Veerampattinam, we understand that the name was confined not to the present village only but applied to the whole port-town that might have existed on the right bank of the river Ariankuppam during 1st or 2nd century, B.C. The site where the historical town of *Virapatnam* might have once stood, is now known as Arikamedu and the traditional name of Veerampattinam applies now to the village only. The name Arikamedu is found to be in usage from 12th century onwards. It has also been pointed out by the archaeologists who conducted excavations in the site, that the remains seen there, establish the commercial relations that existed between Rome and India. These historical evidences substantiate the fact that the name Veerampattinam is very old in its origin and a port-town and a village existed with that name in Pondicherry area from the beginning of the Christian era.

9. The statement made in the Tamil book by Mr. Gangadaran has gained strength from one generation to the other and though there is no historical evidence to prove whether Veeraraghavan was a king, as stated in the French book 'Virapatnam', or an ordinary fisherman as stated in the book 'Sri Sengazhuneeramman' this much is evident that it has been named after a prominent person who was living in the area and who was perhaps responsible for the installation of the idol of Sengazhuneeramman. The village now is found in two hamlets, the one known as Peria Veerampattinam and the other as Chinna Veerampattinam. The distance between the two hamlets is about six furlongs and at present these two hamlets are treated as two different villages. Peria Veerampattinam is popularly known as 'Veerampattinam' wherein our survey has been conducted.

Residential pattern

10. The residential pattern found in the village, is, to a certain extent, based on caste system. The communities living in the village are Nattars, Pattanavars, Vanniars and Parayans. Only two regular streets are seen and even in them the pattern is communal. Thus, in the South Street, Pattanavars and Vanniars are living. The North Street is in the sole occupation of Nattars. The Parayans live in Cheri, a bit far removed from the main dwellings. On the sea-shore, hutments are found built in a haphazard manner. They present an atmosphere of congestion and the majority of the Pattanavars are found living in them. The approximate number of households, community-wise, found in the village is shown in the statement given below:—

Community	No. of house-holds
(1)	(2)
Pattanavars (Chettiars) ...	346
Vanniar	15
Sembadavar (Nattars)	12
Parayan	10
Total ...	**383**

Settlement history

11. Pattanavars appear to be the earliest settlers who form the majority of the village population. Veeraraghava Chettiar, after whom the village is believed to have been named, was also a Pattanavar. This community's claim to be the earliest settlers is not disputed by any one and all other communities honour their claim. Nattars might have closely followed Pattanavars, since the place provided ample scope for fresh water fishing in the two nearby rivers. The Vanniars and Parayans appear to be recent settlers, their duration of stay lasting since 3 to 4 generations. They appear to be migrants from adjoining South Arcot District of Madras State.

Layout

12. There is nothing peculiar in the general *layout of the whole settlement. The village situated* on a plain and flat ground is coastal. The streets are sandy and hard to wade through. The temple has been constructed eastwards, facing the sea. The street running north to south has been named as South Street and another running east to west has been named as East Street. The wide street wherein the temple is situated terminates at the sea-shore and is hence named East Street. Thus we see that all streets have been named after geographical land marks. In the regular street, well-to-do Pattanavars, Vanniars and Nattars are living. However, on the sea-shore, in the large number of hutments, the majority of poor Pattanavars are living. Thus we discern that grouping of houses to some extent indicates social distinctions. The school has been constructed behind the temple, to the left side of the approach road at the very entrance to the village. The *Radio Nilayam* is found opposite to the temple and by the side of it is stationed the temple car. Two other small temples, seen in the village, are situated on the sea-shore at a distance of about half a mile to the farther south of it.

Flora and fauna

13. Flora found in the village are similar to those seen in areas having tropical climate. Banyan, Tamarind, Tulip, Margosa, Mango, Cocoanut, Palmyra and Acacia are the huge trees found. Being a coastal village casuarina trees are found in large numbers on the sea-shore. The village is noted for the plantation of cashew trees. The trees, appearing like dense bushes are spread over in the outskirts of the village. Cashew fruits and nuts are marketed in Pondicherry and adjoining South Arcot District. Small shrubs are seen everywhere in the village.

14. Though vegetation nearby the village is dense, especially on either side of the banks of Ariankuppam river, no carnivorous animals like tiger, jackal, cheetah etc., inhabit the place. Non-poisonous snakes are commonly seen. Mongoose is not rare. The rodent varieties found are squirrels, rats, mice and bandicoots. No monkey is seen anywhere in the vicinity.

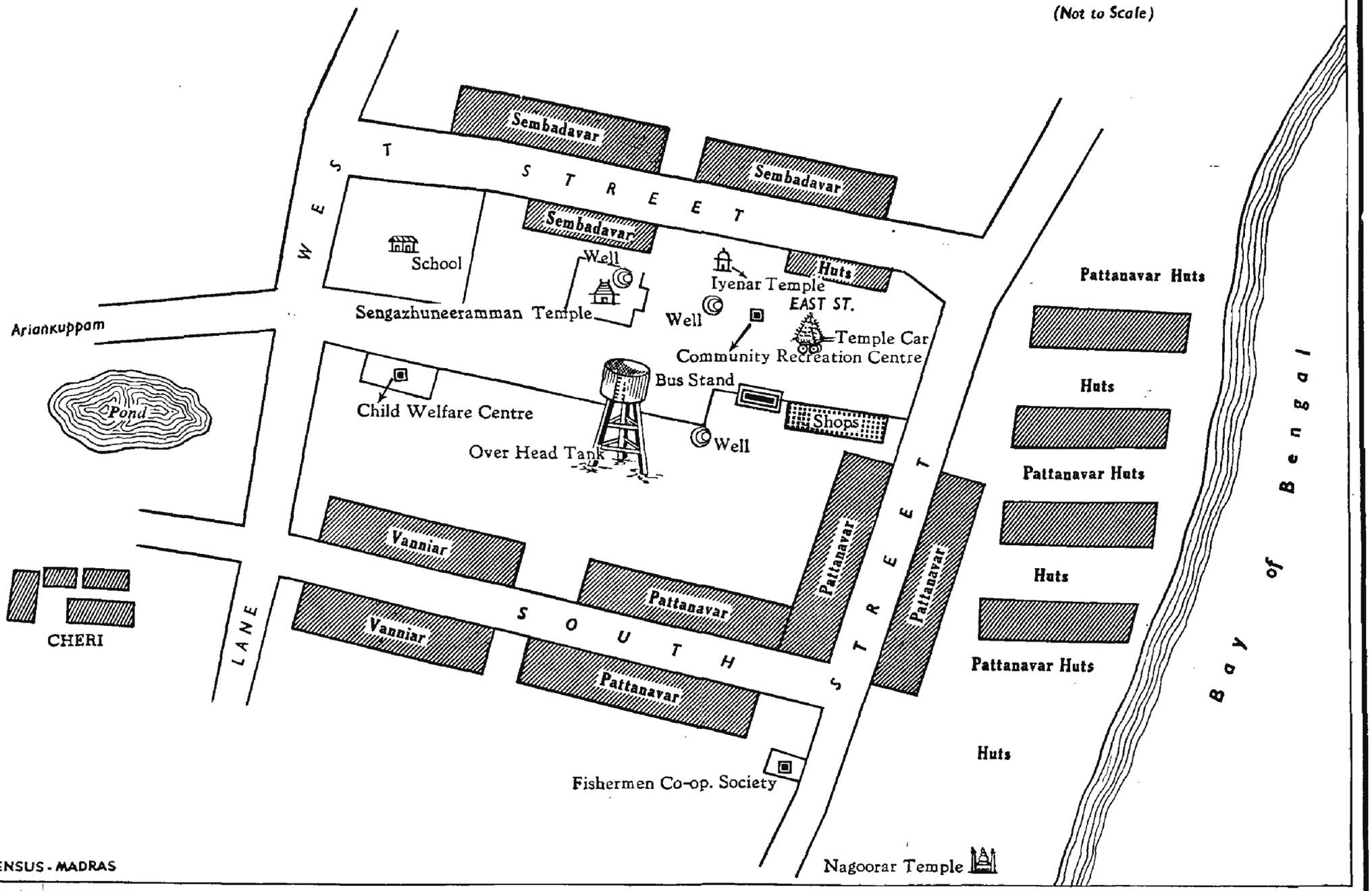
Residential Pattern of

VEERAMPATTINAM VILLAGE

ARIANKUPPAM COMMUNE

PONDICHERRY STATE

(Not to Scale)



CENSUS - MADRAS



Parayan huts in the Cheri. Household utensils are kept outside for want of space inside the huts.



The road leading to the Cheri where Parayans dwell. Note the public well built for the exclusive use of the parayans.



The Sembadavan dwellings.



A few Vanniar houses in the South Street.

CHAPTER II

THE PEOPLE AND THEIR MATERIAL CULTURE

Ethnic composition

15. It is interesting to note that Hindus constitute the only religious group living in this village and the society is divided into four communities *viz.* Sembadavars, Pattanavars, Vanniars and Parayans. As such there is not much variety in the ethnic composition of people in the village. Out of a total of 383 households in the village, our survey covered 202 households and the distribution of these 202 households by communities is detailed in Table No. I below. Parayans occupy the lowest position in the social ladder while the highest position is occupied by the Sembadavars. Pattanavars by virtue of their numerical strength claim social superiority but Sembadavars keep aloof and assert their superiority by not interdining or interaligning with Pattanavars. Next to Pattanavars but above Parayans rank the Vanniars. The community of Parayans has not been covered in the survey since there were only a few houses belonging to them at the time of conducting the survey.

TABLE No. I

Ethnic Composition

No. of households surveyed: 202

Community	No. of households covered by the survey.	Population		
		Persons	Males	Females
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Pattanavars (Chettiars) ...	193	1,014	513	501
Sembadavars (Nattars) ...	7	28	11	17
Vanniars ...	2	13	8	5
Total ...	**202**	**1,055**	**532**	**523**

Sembadavars

16. At the time of our survey there were about 12 houses of Sembadavars in the village and 7 households of them have been covered in the survey. They are apparently descendants of migrants from South Arcot district a few generations ago. The Sembadavars of Veerampattinam have assumed the title of Nattar and dwell in North Street situated by the side of the temple. One Nattar family is traditionally officiating as priest in the Sengazhuneeramman temple. Since by tradition they officiate as poojaris in temples dedicated to village deities it is probable that this community had migrated from South Arcot district and settled down here soon after the temple was built. The Sembadavars of Veerampattinam are all Saivites and *Pichaivarathan* is the reigning deity of their families. They pursue the occupation of fishing in the nearby rivers and lakes. They consider themselves superior to Pattanavars and do not interdine and interalign with them. Economically this community is more backward when compared with Pattanavars.

17. About the origin of this community the following account is found in the book entitled, 'Castes and Tribes of Southern India' by Edgar Thurston. "The Sembadavars are the fishermen of the Tamil country who carry on their calling in fresh water tanks (ponds), lakes and rivers and never in the sea. Some of them are ferrymen and the name has been derived from Sem (good), Padavan (boatmen). According to tradition it is said that the Goddess Ankalamman whom they worship with offerings of sheep, pigs, fowls, rice, etc., was a Sembadava girl, of whom Siva became enamoured and Sembadavan is accordingly derived form Sambu (Siva) or a corruption of Sivan Padavan (Siva's boatman). According to another legend the name is derived from Sembu Padavar or copper boatmen. Parvatha Raja was once sailing in a boat made of copper. He had disguised himself as a fisherman and had transformed the four Vedas into a net for fishing. He had intended to catch the Rakshasas who had taken the form of fishes. But inadvertently a Rishi was caught up in the net, who in his anger cursed the fisherman that all his descendants will earn their living from fishing. This story is often quoted in support of the Sembadava claim that they belong to Parvatha Raja Vamsam."

18. The Sembadavans of Veerampattinam are able to recall the latter legend regarding their origin with some variations in detail. According to them, the legend runs as follows:

"Devas were harassed by the Rakshasas. They appealed to Siva to protect them from their difficulties who deputed Parvatha Raja to do away with the Rakshasas. The Rakshasas were in the act of harassing the Devas at night and during day hid themselves under the sea assuming the forms of fishes. Parvatha Raja therefore went in a copper boat (Sembu padavu). The net he used was made by transferring the four vedas into thread with Siva's ring as the hold. Parvatha Raja, sailing in the copper boat, saw at a particular place heaps of big fishes whom he understood as Rakshasas and cast his net. Within the net a Rishi was also caught. He was *Meena Maharishi* who was doing penance. Disturbed during his penance by the act of Parvatha Raja, he became angry and shouted at him (Parvatha Raja) as "Sembu Padavan, who are you?" Hearing that he was Parvatha Rajan, he cursed that hence-forth his descendants would go with the name 'Sembadavans' and earn their livelihood by fishing".

19. About the Sembadavans of the South Arcot District the following account has been given by Thurston, quoting Mr. Francis. "The Sembadavans of the South Arcot District are fresh-water fishermen and boatmen. Both their occupations being of restricted character they have now in some cases taken to agriculture, weaving, and the hawking of salted-fish but almost all of them are poor. They make their own nets and when they have to walk any distance for any purpose they often spin the thread as they go along. Their domestic priests are Panchangi Brahmans and these tie the *Thali* at weddings and perform the purificatory ceremonies on the sixteenth day after deaths". Since Pondicherry area is geographically part of South Arcot District, the above account more or less holds good in the case of Sembadavars of Veerampattinam too. They pursue the occupation of fresh water fishing and they make their own nets. It is a common sight in the village to see a Nattar while going out for any purpose spinning the thread, and twisting it now and then by rolling it on his thigh. The Nattars lead a life of hand to mouth existence. The life cycle of a Nattar from conception to death is ritual-ridden just as any other caste in Hindu society.

Birth

20. Pregnancy is a matter of pride and joy. Though a pregnant woman is a source of pride for the household, the expectant woman is not entitled for any special treatment or perquisites. However, in the advanced stage of pregnancy the prospective mother is not allowed to do hard work. Among Nattars, on the 7th or 9th month of first pregnancy, a function known as *Valai Kappu* is celebrated for a parturient woman. The function takes place in the wife's house. After a ceremonial bath the pregnant lady is presented with a saree and blouse and adorned with bangles. No Brahmin Purohit is engaged to officiate at this function which is conducted with a view to ward off the effects of evil eyes on the pregnant lady. Delivery takes place in the sleeping apartment of the house and elderly women come for immediate assistance. A Pariyarichi is sent for and she is expected to officiate as a midwife and conduct the delivery. She will be entitled for a payment varying from Rs. 5 to 10 depending upon the economic status of the household.

21. The new-born baby is fed with *Sevennai* or sugared water as the case may be. Sevennai is an admixture of castoroil with palmgur, *sukku* and other herbs. The mother will be under restricted diet for three days and no non-vegetarian food will be given to her until the ninth day. Delivery in a Sembadavan household entails pollution for eleven days. On the 11th day, to terminate pollution completely, a function known as *Punyahavachanam*, is conducted. Telugu Brahmin Purohits are engaged to officiate at the ritual. The mother and the new-born are bathed and then water sanctified by the mantras uttered by the priest is sprinkled all over the house as a mark of purification. The priest is given a fee of Rs. 3 to 5 with or without rice and vegetables.

22. As required under an *Arrette* of the French Government, governing the system of births and deaths, the child is given a name on the 8th day after its birth. The tonsure ceremony and earboring ceremony are conducted any time within three years of its birth. The goldsmith who does the ear-boring ceremony and the barber attending to the tonsure ceremony will be entitled to some payment too. The rates vary from Rs. 3 to 5. Rice, plantains etc. are also given. Prior to these ceremonies, in propitiation of the family deity, *Pongi Eduthal* is celebrated.

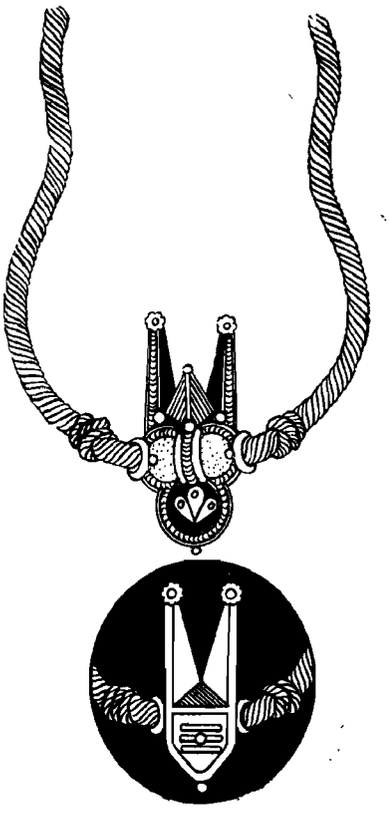
Puberty

23. Attainment of puberty by a girl in a Sembadavan family entails pollution for 9 days. The girl is segregated during the period and she is neither allowed to enter into the kitchen nor allowed to touch any household utensil. On the ninth day, after a ceremonial bath, the girl is presented with a saree and blouse by her maternal uncle. This function is known as *Manjal Neer Suba Sadangu.* This is celebrated elaborately or informally according to the economic status of a household.

Marriage

24. The period generally accepted for marriage of both sexes is after the attainment of puberty by them. In the majority of cases it is postponed for a definite or indefinite period even after the attainment of puberty. This is mainly due to poor economic status. Child marriage is unknown to the village. Monogamy is generally, the socially accepted norm. Among Sembadavars marriage is preceded by a betrothal known as *Nichtiyathartham.* Sembadavans are in the habit of consulting an astrologer to find out the agreeability between the two horoscopes of the bride and the groom. Valluvans living in Ariankuppam village are consulted for this purpose. The bride is seen by the parents of the groom and after their approval the groom is allowed to see her. Then betrothal is arranged by the parents of the bride in their house. Purohits are not engaged to officiate. In the function, which is mostly informal, the groom presents a saree with blouse and a jewel to the bride. He also pays the conventional bride price of Rs. 7 which is termed as *Pariam Panam.* In the Sembadavar community marriage is usually celebrated in the groom's place and the rituals last for two days. The ritualistic pattern is similar to that found in the marriages of all other non-brahmin communities such as Vanniars, Gramanis and Chettiars.

25. On the previous day to the marriage, the bride's party arrives and stays usually in the temple or some other common place. The close relatives of the groom join the procession with plantains, betel leaves, flowers etc. and receive the party. They are also treated with a light drink such as *Panagam. Panagam* is prepared by diluting jaggery in water spiced with cardamom powder. Then the bride is taken in procession to the place where marriage is to be celebrated. This is known as *Penn Azhaithal.* A feast is held at night whereat close relatives are entertained. The marriage day commences with *Ennai Nalangu* performed to the groom and the bride. They are given a ceremonial oil bath. Meanwhile the marriage booth is got ready and *Pandakkal Naduthal* is completed. This *Kal Naduthal* consists of planting of twigs before the marriage booth. Dressed in the wedding garments the couple are seated on planks before *Homam* arranged by the Purohits for the occasion. Sembadavans engage Panjanki Brahmins to officiate at their marriages. *Kappu Kattuthal* marks the beginning of the rituals. Yellow-coloured threads are tied around the wrists of the bride and the groom. The groom performs oblations now and then as directed by the Purohit who utters Sanskrit mantras. Just as the Brahmins the Sembadavas also go through such ceremonies as *Dharai varthal, Ammi mithithal* and *Arunthathi Parthal.* They call *Daraivarthal* as *Kannika Dhanam* and in this ceremony the parents of the bride pour water over the cocoanut and betel leaves placed in the united hands of the couple. When the *Muhurtham* or the auspicious time arrives, the *Thali*



'PILLAIYAR THALI' USED BY THE SEMBADAVAR COMMUNITY

is passed around in order to get the blessings of all elders present on the occasion before it is tied round the neck of the bride by the groom, It was the

original practice to get the *Thali* tied round the bride's neck by the officiating Purohit. A reference to this effect is seen in Thurston's volume on Castes and Tribes also. But this practice is no longer in vogue. Now-a-days, the groom himself performs this part of the function. The *Thali* used by Sembadavans is known as *Pillaiyar Thali*. After *muhurtham* the ceremonies of *Ammi Mithithal* and *Arunthathi Parthal* are performed. *Moi Seithal* is yet another important function that follows the Thali tying ceremony. During this function presentations in cash and kind are made to the couple by close relatives and friends. A new development in this regard is the announcement of details of presentation over loud-speakers. In the afternoon, a grand vegetarian feast is got up to entertain the relatives and close friends. *Kappukalaithal* marks the end of the function. The yellow coloured thread tied around the wrists of the couple are removed signifying that the marriage ceremonies have come to a close. Marriage is consummated either on the same night or after 15 days, on an auspicious day, as the case may be.

26. The next day's function is known as *Boothakalam*. The bride's party return the feast given by the groom on the marriage day. The expenditure is also borne by them. On this day, the groom goes with the bride to her place. This is known as *Ambogam*. He stays there for 3 to 4 days for *Maruvunnal*. *Maruvunnal* means feasting. If the marriage is not consummated, the groom returns to his place with the bride and her brother. Once again he goes to the bride's place and returns to his place after 2 or 3 days, this time with the bride alone.

Death ritual

27. Dead bodies are mostly buried and not cremated. The burial ground is situated outside the village just over half a mile north of the main village settlement. The corpse is first bathed in cold water and then placed on the bier. At the burial ground offerings are made to the legendary king Harischandra who was reduced to the position of a sexton by a stroke of fate. This pooja is conducted before the body is disposed off. In the case where the corpse is to be cremated, the village barber will hand over the torch to the chief mourner to lit the pyre. Milk pouring ceremony to the dead takes place on the second day. A death entails pollution for 16 days. Only vegetarian dishes are taken during the period of pollution by the mourners. On the 15th day, *Kal Nadappu* takes place. A stone is planted in memory of the dead before the house. On the 16th day, oblations are performed to the stone and it is thrown into a tank. While returning, the funeral celebrant comes in procession with a turban. This is known as *Thalai Kattal*. The *Thalai Kattal* is performed by the parents-in-law of the funeral celebrant. The object behind this is that, in the absence of the deceased the responsibility of maintaining the household is to be borne by the funeral celebrant. On the 17th day, *Thalai Muzhugal* takes place. The members terminate pollution by taking an oil bath. With this function, pollution is said to terminate and normal life is resumed. To mark this, there will be a sumptuous non-vegetarian feast on the 17th day. Annual ceremonies are of course performed in honour of the departed.

Pattanavan

28. This is the dominant community and Pattanavars account for about 95% of the village population. Approximately, 346 households out of the total number of 383 found in the village belong to this community. The number of households of this community covered in our survey is 193 containing a population of 1014 consisting of 513 males and 501 females. The Pattanavans of Veerampattinam assume the title of 'Chettiar' and the majority of them are sea-fishermen. A good number of them are engaged in business, government service and other private institutions. This community consists of both the richest and poorest sections of population. Pattanavans are considered inferior to Sembadavans in social status, who do not interalign or interdine with them. However, since a section of this community is economically well off they over-rule this superiority and for all practical purposes dominate other communities in the village affairs. The Temple Management Board members are all of this community. The educated section of the village belongs to this community. They are all Saivites and *Periandavan* is the chief deity to the majority of families in this community.

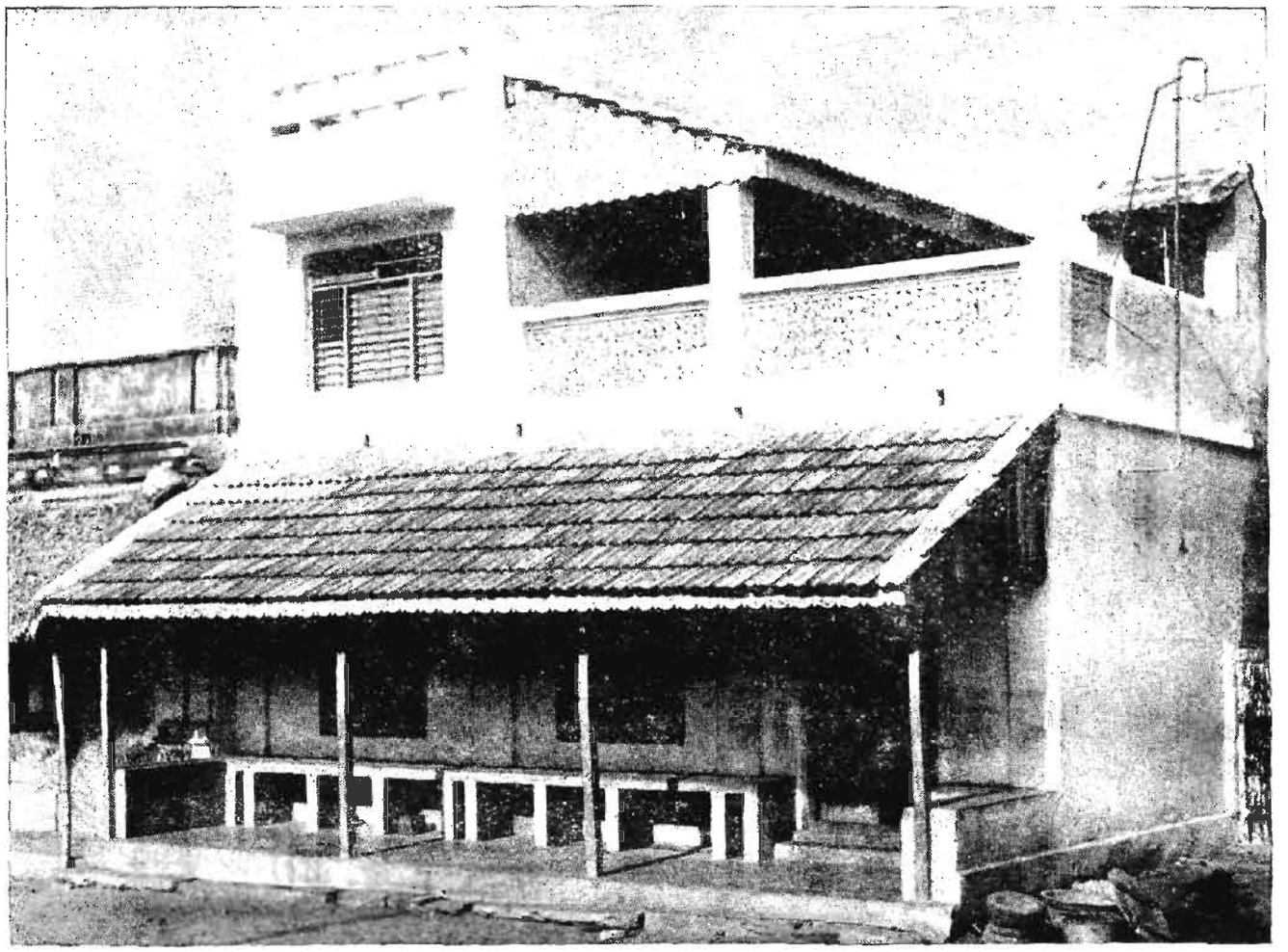
29. As regards the Pattanavans and their origin the following account is given by Edgar Thurston in the book entitled 'Castes and Tribes of Southern India'. "Pattanavan means literally a dweller in a town or Pattanam which word occurs in the names of various towns on the sea coast, *e.g.* Nagapattanam (Negapatam), Chennapattanam (Madras) etc., The Pattanavans have two main divisions, Peria (big)



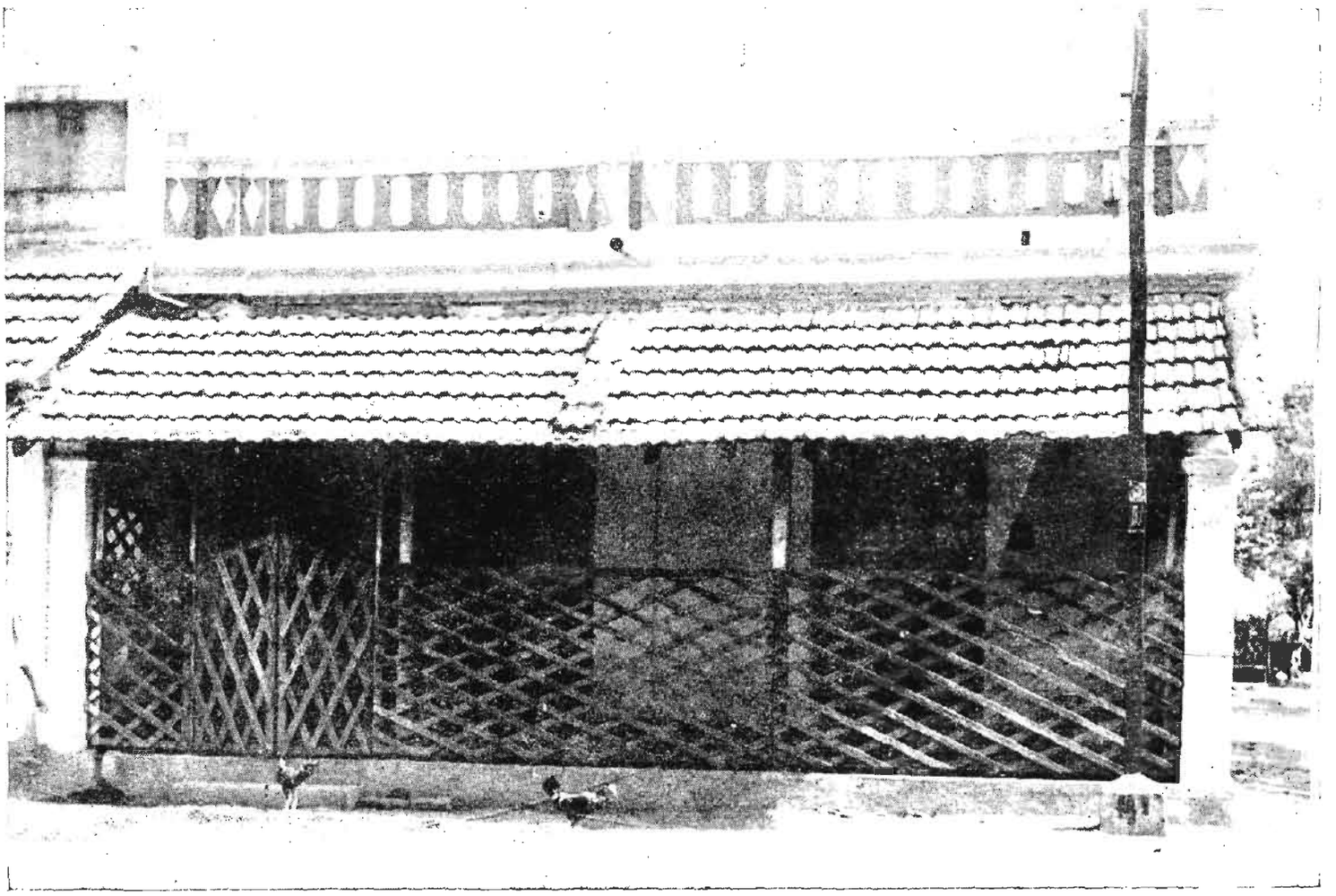
Pattanavan womenfolk.



A group of Sembadavan males, females and children.



The terraced house of a well-to-do Pattanavan.



The tiled house of a Pattanavan in the East Street.

and Chinna (small) and in some places, for example, at Nadukuppam in the Nellore District exogamous septs *e.g.*, Gengananga, Peyananga, Kathananga (Children of Ganga, Peyan and Kathanar) and Kullananga (children of dwarfs). Some Pattanavans give themselves high sounding caste titles *e.g.*, Ariyar, Ayyayirath thalaivar (the chief of five thousand), Ariya Nattu Chetti (chettis of the Aryar country), Acchu Vellala, Karaiturai (sea-coast) Vellala, Varunakula Vellala or Varunakula Mudali after Varuna the God of the waters or kurukula vamsam after Kuru, the ancestor of Kouravas. Some Pattanavans have adopted the title Pillai. The Pattanavans are said to be inferior to the Sembadavans who will not accept food at their hands, and discard even an earthen pot which has been touched by a Pattanavan. Concerning the origin of this caste, there is a legend that the Pattanavans were giving silk thread to Siva, and were hence called 'Pattanavar', a corruption of 'Pattanaivor' meaning knitters of silk thread. They were at the time, all bachelors and Siva suggested the following method of securing wives for them. They were told to go out, fishing in the sea and make of their catch as many heaps as there were bachelors. Each of them then stood before a heap and called for a wife who was created therefrom. According to another story some five thousand years ago, during the age of the lunar race, there was one Dasa Raja who was ruling near Hastinapura and was childless. To secure offspring he prayed to God and did severe penance. In answer to his prayer, God pointed out a tank full of lotus flowers and told the king to go thither and call for children. Thus five thousand children issued forth from the flowers, to the eldest of whom the King bequeathed his kingdom and to the others money in abundance. Those who received money travelled southwards in ships which were wrecked and they were cast ashore. This compelled them to make friends of local fishermen whose profession they adopted. At the present day, the majority of Pattanavans are sea-fishermen and catch fish with nets from Catamarams".

30. The Pattanavans of Veerampattinam are unable to recall any of the legends regarding their origin. A few, however, vaguely remember the legend regarding their ancestors having supplied silk thread to Lord Siva and hence being known as 'Pattanaivor' or 'Pattanavar'. They are spread over in the two hamlets known as Peria Veerampattinam and Chinna Veerampattinam. The Pattanavars living in Peria Veerampattinam alone were covered in the survey. Chinna Veerampattinam now remains one of the 20 villages, lying in Ariankuppam Commune itself.

Birth

31. There are many functions associated with child birth among this caste. The first delivery of a woman is generally conducted at her mother's place and for this her parents come to take her to their house during the 5th or 6th month of pregnancy. During the 7th month a ceremony is performed. It is known as *Sool Saithal.* During this the parturient woman is bedecked with bangles etc. A *Nalangu* is performed to ward off all effects of evil eyes. Essentially a lady's affair, this is celebrated in an informal manner or in an elaborate way depending upon the social and economic status of the family to which the pregnant lady belongs. Skilled attendence at birth is not very much in vogue. Pariyarichi or the barber women attends to the delivery. Though the Barber women are not presently available in the village itself they are invited from a neighbouring village for the occasion. There are also cases where delivery cases have been taken to the hospital at Pondicherry. The attending traditional midwife or the Pariyarichi will be entitled for a payment of Rs. 3 to 5.

32. The new born is fed with *Sevennai.* Birth entails pollution for 11 days. The mother will be given only strict diet for 3 days and no non-vegetarian dishes will be served to her for the first 6 days. A purificatory function is performed on the 11th day to terminate pollution. This is kuown as *Punyahavachanam.* A Brahmin purohit officiates on the occasion. The mother and the new born are bathed. The clothes and utensils used are cleaned well. The entire house is sprinkled with the water sanctified by the mantras uttered by the purohit. The purohit is suitably paid in cash, kind or both. Ear-boring and tonsuring ceremonies are performed before the child completes its sccond birthday. Often these ceremonies are preceded by *Pongal Vaithal* to the presiding deity of the family. This is done to propitiate and receive the blessings of the family deity before anything auspicious is done.

Puberty

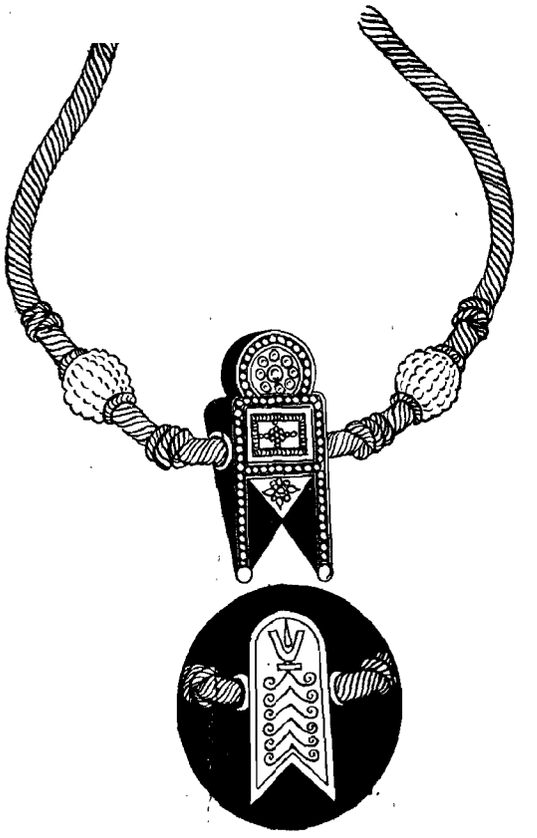
33. A girl who attains puberty is considered to be under pollution for nine days. The news is conveyed to the near relatives and friends through a dhobi woman just as it is donc in other

non-Brahmin communities. Thurston in his compilation 'Castes and Tribes of Southern India' while dealing with this community speaks of giving a small piece of iron to the girl who has attained puberty, but no such custom is found to be prevalent at present. The girl is segregated during the period. She is fed with nutritious food like eggs, milk etc. On the ninth day, pollution is eradicated by the celebration of 'Manjal Neer Suba Sadangu'. Sometimes a Brahmin Purohit is engaged to officiate at the function. He performs the purificatory ceremony. Soon after the bath, the girl is presented with a saree and blouse by her maternal uncle which she wears. *Nalangu* is performed to her to ward off the effects of evil eyes. It was customary to impose restrictions on the free movements of the girls after the attainment of puberty, but now-a-days no such restrictions are imposed and they freely go to schools and other places.

Marriage

34. Pattanavans are in the habit of consulting an astrologer to find out the agreeability of horoscopes. If they agree, the parents of the groom go to see the girl which is known as *Penn Parthal.* It is said that in olden days, the groom never used to see the girl and he was bound to marry the girl selected and approved by his parents. But now-a-days they also go to see the girl and give their approval. Then *Nichiyathartham* takes place whereat the parties of the bride and the groom exchange betel leaves and arecanuts in the presence of village elders signifying that a negotiation has been entered into between them. After some time, *Pariam Poduthal* takes place in the bride's place. The groom presents a saree, a blouse and a jewel to the bride. The traditional bride-price known as *Pariam Panam* is also paid by the groom's party to the bride which is Rs. 7. The Muhurtham date and timings are then fixed. The village elite are invited to attend this function. Sometimes a Brahmin Purohit is engaged for the occasion. After betrothal marriage is celebrated within 15 or 30 days.

35. In Pattanavan community marriage takes place in the groom's place and lasts for one day only. The previous night is marked with *Penn Azhaithal* and the bride is taken in procession to the marriage place just as the Sembadavans do. The ritualistic pattern of the marriage is similar to that found in the case of a Sembadavan marriage. The rituals start with *Ennai Nalangu* in which the groom and the bride are annointed with oil and bathed. Dressed in wedding finery they are seated in the marriage booth got ready for the occasion. A Telugu Brahmin purohit officiates at the function. He gets up the *Homa Kundam* which has been got ready. *Kankanam Kattuthal* marks the beginning of the function. Yellow coloured threads are tied round the wrists of the groom and the bride. The groom repeats the mantras uttered by the priest and makes oblations now and then in the sacred fire. The other ceremonies are the same as those seen in Sembadavar or any other non-Brahmin marriages such as *Thali Kattuthal, Moi Saithal, Ammi Mithithal* and *Arunthathi Kattuthal.* The Thali used by the Pattanavans is known as either *Pillaiyar Thali* or *Ramar Thali.* Soon after



'RAMAR THALI' USED BY THE PATTANAVARS

Muhurtham, a vegetarian feast is got up and the invitees are entertained in a fete. The ceremonies come to a close with *Kappukalaithal* in which the yellow coloured thread tied around the wrists of the couple are removed signifying that the function has come to a close. The marriage is consummated either on the same night or after 15 or 30 days on an auspicious day. After the marriage, on the next day

'Ambogam' and 'Boothakalam' take place and are similar to those already explained in the case of a Sembadavan marriage.

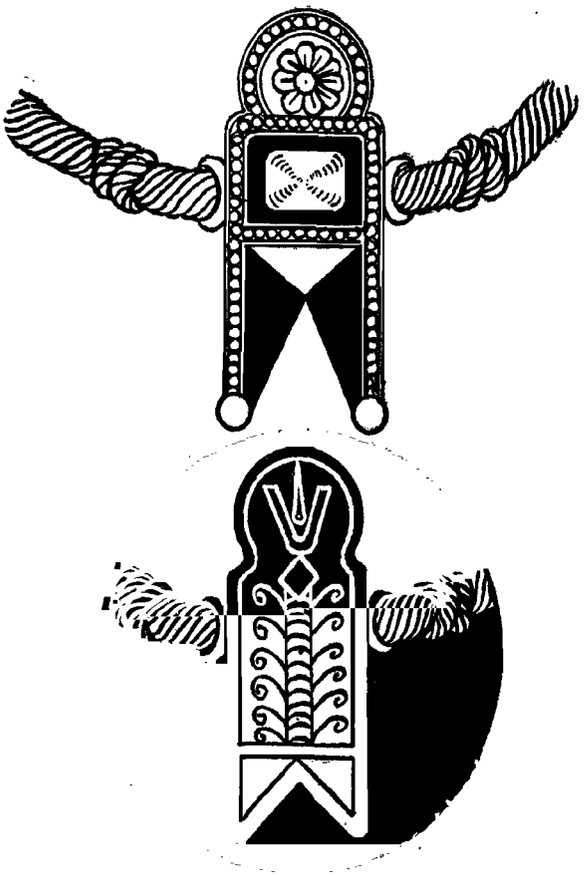
36. Dowry system is not prevalent among Pattanavans but bride-price known as *Pariam Panam* is given by the groom's party to the bride. The conventional rate is Rs. 7. Consanguineous marriages are commonly found among them and the most common type is for a man to marry his maternal uncle's daughter. Polygamy is freely allowed. In some cases soon after betrothal, a man and a woman start living as husband and wife without the marriage ceremony. Their issues are considered legitimate and the father and mother get married at any time convenient to them. Another form of matrimony found among Pattanavans is that a man lives with a particular woman for sometime and ultimately their society recognizes them as husband and wife. The above types of matrimonial arrangements are mainly due to poor economic status which makes celebration of a marriage an impossibility. No ceremony is attached to a widow remarriage. In an informal and simple function the man who is marrying a widow ties round the lady's neck a turmeric stained twine and with that the function is over. This is known as *Naduveettu Thali Kattuthal*. Adultery is rare in this community and divorce is not widely prevalent.

Death ritual

37. In Pattanavar community, a dead body is either buried or cremated. If the dead is a Lingayat (wearing Lingam) he is cremated. The Pattanavans use the common burial ground available in the village. A Pandaram is engaged to officiate at the death rituals. The body is bathed in cold water and placed on the bier, head facing southwards. It is taken to the burial ground and placed on the pyre, if the body is to be cremated. Rice is thrown on the pyre and a pooja is performed to a small stone found there. This is supposed to signify Harischandra, the legendary king who by fate, was reduced to the position of the guardian of a burial ground. Accompanied by a barber the funeral celebrant comes round the pyre three times, carrying a pot full of water. As soon as the third round is over, the barber makes a hole in the pot. The pot is then thrown away and the funeral celebrant lits the pyre. Some of the Lingayats in this community bury the dead in a sitting posture. The milk pouring ceremony to a dead takes place on the second day. A death entails pollution for 16 days as is the custom found in the case of all other non-Brahmin communities. On the 15th day, *Kal Naduthal* takes place. This stone signifies the dead. On the 16th day, oblations are performed to the planted stone. It is then taken and thrown into a tank or pond. The funeral celebrant is subjected to *Thalai Kattal* similar to that found among Sembadavans. No non-vegetarian food is taken during the period of pollution by the agnates of the dead. On the 17th day, pollution is terminated by taking oil bath which is known as *Thalai Muzhugal*. Non-vegeterian food is sumptuously taken by all the members of the family on this day. Mourning is observed during the days of communal and social festivals in the first year. Soon after the completion of one year after death, annual ceremony is performed to a dead.

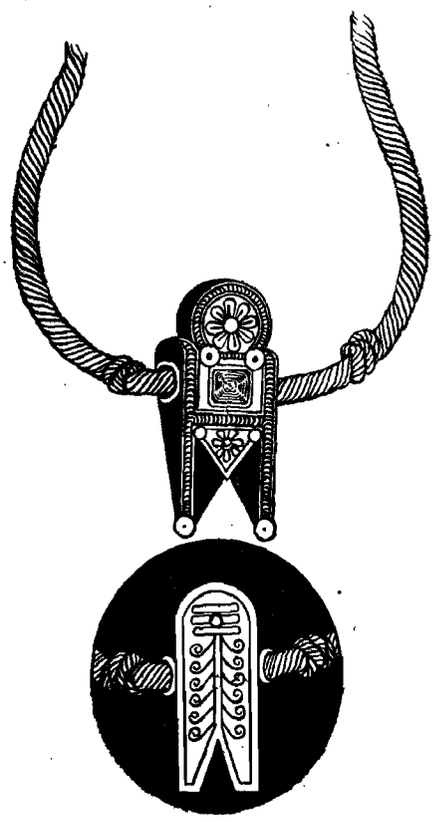
Minor communities

38. Vanniars and Parayans are the two minor communities of the village. There are about 15 Vanniar households and 10 Parayan households in Veerampattinam. They are migrants to the village



THALI USED BY THE VANNIAR COMMUNITY. IT IS KNOWN AS 'RAMAR THALI'

from the adjoining South Arcot District or Pondicherry area. Two Vanniar households have been covered in the survey. They contain a population of 13 persons comprising 8 males and 5 females. One household is engaged in cultivation and the other is a worker in a mill. The majority of the Vanniars are employed in the spinning mills at Pondicherry. They are seen living with Pattanavans in the South Street. Vanniars consider themselves superior to Sembadavans and Pattanavans and do not interdine or interalign with them. They assume the title of Gounder and are Saivites. Their family deity is Iyenarappan. Regarding the origin of this community much has been said in other village survey reports covering Pondicherry area. They say they belong to 'Arasakula Vanniar' and their community originated from a bowl of fire. 'Vahni' in Sanskrit is said to mean fire and hence they are 'Vanniars'. *Valaikappu* is performed to a pregnant lady for the first child. This is done on the 7th or 9th month.



'THALI' USED BY THE PARAYAN COMMUNITY

Soon after birth the child is fed with *Sevennai* and the delivery entails pollution for 11 days. The child is named within 8 days of its birth. Tonsuring and ear-boring ceremonies are performed to a child soon after the completion of one year of age. Attainment of puberty by a girl entails pollution for 9 days. The marriage ceremonial is similar to that found in the case of Pattanavan or Sembadavan. Marriage usually takes place in the groom's place and lasts for one day only. It is preceded by betrothal known as *Pariam Poduthal*. Bride-price known as *Pariam Panam* is also paid by the groom's party to the bride. The marriage ceremonies include *Ennai Nalangu*, *Kankanam Kattuthal*, *Kannikathanam*, *Thali tying*, *Ammi Mithithal*, *Arunthathi Parthal*, *Moi Seithal*, and *Kappukalaithal*. *Ambogam*, and *Maruvunnal* (feasting) are the subsequent events on the next day after marriage. A dead body is buried or cremated. Death entails pollution for 16 days. Vanniars perform annual ceremonies to the dead in propitiation of their souls. No Parayan household has been covered in the survey.

Material culture: Dwellings

39. Houses in Veerampattinam are all permanent structures. The total number of houses is 313. Households number 383. Regarding the form and plan of construction of houses generally no uniform pattern is observed. However, in three streets *viz.* North, East and South streets, houses are seen in rows on either side of the street. The irregularity in construction is more marked in the seashore settlement where hutments are found in clusters, built in a haphazard fashion. In some places hutments are strewn here and there. The standard of habitation is generally found to be poor, in that the number of pucca houses built with tiled and terraced roofs are very few when compared to the number of huts which are scattered in an orderless fashion.

40. The standard is generally assessed on the basis of the materials used for construction. In Veerampattinam we find that most of the houses have mud walls and that coconut or palmyra leaves serve as roof. It is the building material that is the index to the standard of housing. For every 1,000 houses in rural areas, 711 houses have mud walls. The average life of a hutment is estimated at 15 to 20 years. Of the 202 houses covered by the survey, 165 are with thatched roof and mud walls, 28 are tiled or terraced, with brick walls and 8 are houses with brick walls and thatched roofings. Table No. II shows the number of tiled and thatched houses out of the 202 sample houses, community-wise, indicating the raw materials used for walls and roofings.

TABLE No. II

House type – wall and roof

No. of households surveyed: 202

Community	Total No. of houses	No. of houses with: Mud walls and hay as roof	Mud walls and palmyrah leaves as roof	Mud walls and coconut leaves as roof	Brick walls and tiled	Brick walls and terraced	Brick walls and palmyrah leaves as roof	Brick walls and coconut leaves as roof
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
Sembadavar (Nattar) ...	7	...	...	1	1	...	...	5
Pattanavar (Chettiar) ...	193	1	80	82	20	7	1	2
Vanniar	2	...	...	2	...	...	...	...
Total ...	**202**	**1**	**80**	**85**	**21**	**7**	**1**	**7**

Thus as much as 166 houses or 82.18% of the total sample houses are thatched with mud walls. The raw materials mainly used for roofings are coconut or palmyrah leaves. Coconut and palmyrah leaves are locally available since these trees are found in large numbers in and around Veerampattinam. There are as many as 7 houses, covered by our survey, which have Madras terrace as roofing, with burnt brick walls.

Size of household

41. Size and composition of households is yet another index to housing condition in any area. Details of the same are presented below:

TABLE No. III

Size and composition of households

No. of households surveyed: 202

Size of households	No. of households	Males	Females
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
One member	2	1	1
2—3	34	48	45
4—6	115	279	277
7—9	47	180	180
10 and above	4	24	20
Total	**202**	**532**	**523**

42. The Table reveals that among 202 households with over 1,000 population the average size of a household works out to 5.2. If this is considered to be meaningful and if we could fix the optimum size of an average family to be 4—6 members then Veerampattinam has a large number of optimum sized households. Out of the 202 households surveyed 155 happen to come under this size group of family. Only 36 households fall short of this size and among them only two are single member families and the remaining 34 are families with 2 to 3 members. As against this we find that there are 51 households with over 6 members. These can be called large sized families. Among these 51 families 47 are families with 7 to 9 members while the remaining 4 have ten or more members. In this context it will be useful to remember that the number of persons per household was found to be 5.05 in rural areas of Pondicherry and 5.34 in Ariankuppam commune of which this village forms part. Thus the village only reflects the normal trends and pattern of housing and households in the area and also commune of which it is an integral part.

Room

43. In order to make our discussion on housing more purposeful, it will be necessary to touch upon the space availability in houses also. The size of houses will differ considerably, but it is more necessary to discuss about the number of rooms available in each house and relate the same to the number of occupants

in the house etc. This analysis, if done by communities, will prove far more fascinating than it appears to be at the first instance. The following Table will throw some light on these factors.

TBLE No. IV

Households by number of rooms and by number of persons

No. of households surveyed: 202

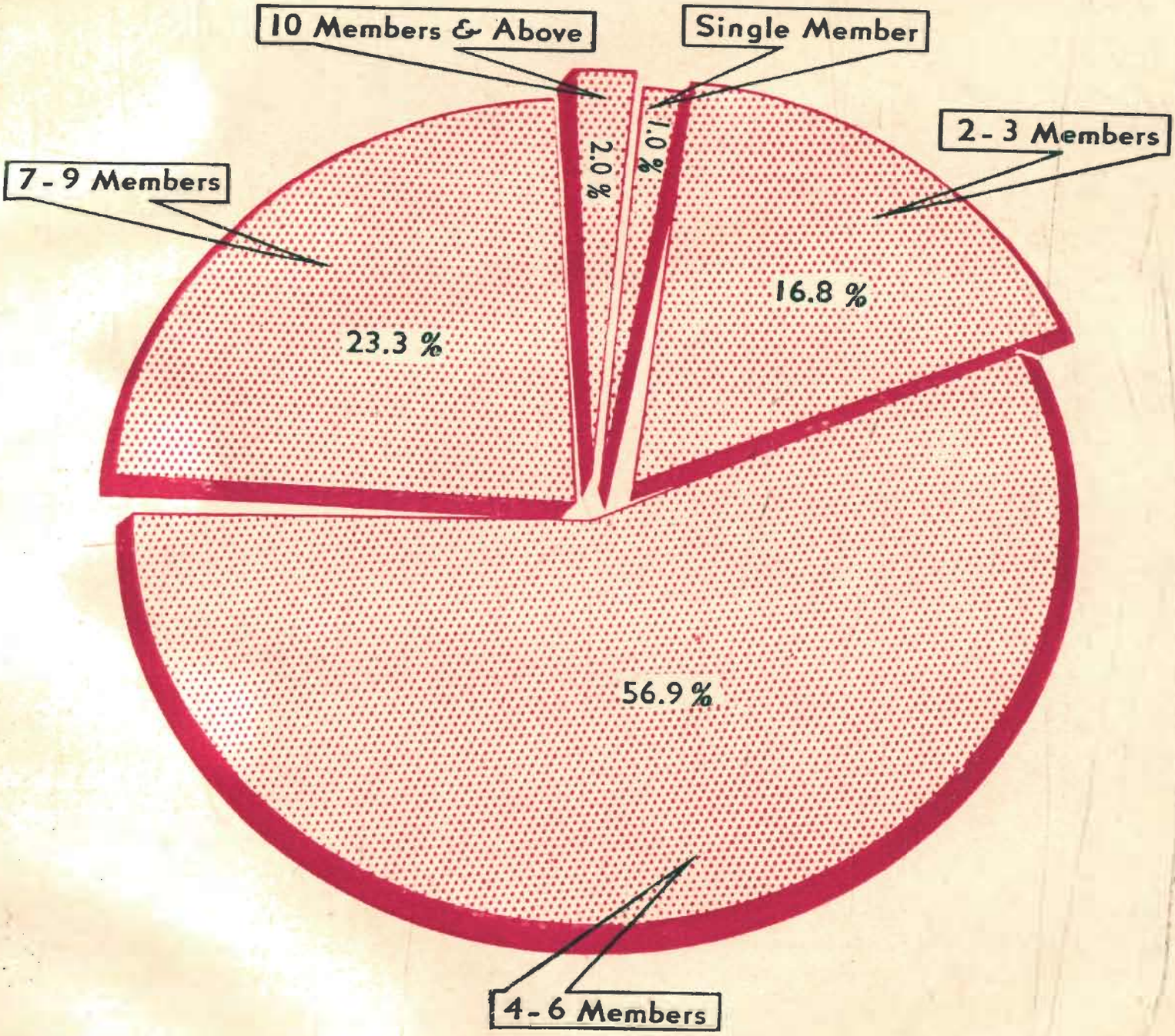
Community	Total No. of households	Total No. of rooms	Total No. of persons	Households with one room		Households with two rooms	
				Total No. of households	Total No. of family members	Total No. of households	Total No. of family members
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Pattanavar (Chettiar)	193	263	1,014	147	735	31	195
Sembadavar (Nattar)	7	7	28	7	28	...	...
Vanniar (Gounder)	2	3	13	1	4	1	9
Total	**202**	**273**	**1,055**	**155**	**767**	**32**	**204**

Community	Households with three rooms		Households with four rooms		Households with five rooms		Households with six rooms or more	
	Total No. of households	Total No. of family members	Total No. of households	Total No. of family members	Total No. of households	Total No. of family members	Total No. of households	Total No. of family members
(1)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)	(16)
Pattanavar (Chettiar)	7	39	7	38	1	7	...	...
Sembadavar (Nattar)	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Vanniar (Gounder)	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Total	**7**	**39**	**7**	**38**	**1**	**7**	**...**	**...**

The number of persons per room is generally taken to be an indicator of the magnitude of the problem of congestion. The number of persons per room in the total households surveyed (*viz.* 202) with the total room availability at 273 works out to 3.86 or just little short of 4 persons. The average rate of persons per room is said to be 2 persons. When viewed with this norm we find that the majority of the sample households surveyed fall short of our expectation. As many as 155 of them have only single rooms and occupancy rate in these single roomed houses works out to 4.95. In double roomed houses the rate works out to 3.2 per room. Thus we find that congestion is chronic and only houses with three rooms or more have enough accommodation in the village.

44. A community-wise analysis of the statement will reveal that the Pattanavars alone have three-roomed or four roomd houses in the village. A few Vanniars (9 of them, all members of a household) have two-roomed houses whereas the Sembadavars as a group live in highly congested single roomed dwellings. According to 1961 Census, Ariankuppam

SIZE OF HOUSEHOLDS



commune has been considered backward with regard to accommodation and this holds good with regard to Veerampattinam also. The average number of persons per room in the rural areas of Pondicherry is 3.39 and in Ariankuppam commune it is 3.72. The figures are more or less similar to the village figure which we have just seen *viz.* 3.86 per room. Of the 202 sample households, there are 15 households having three rooms and more. They are having, more or less adequate accommodation.

Types of dwellings

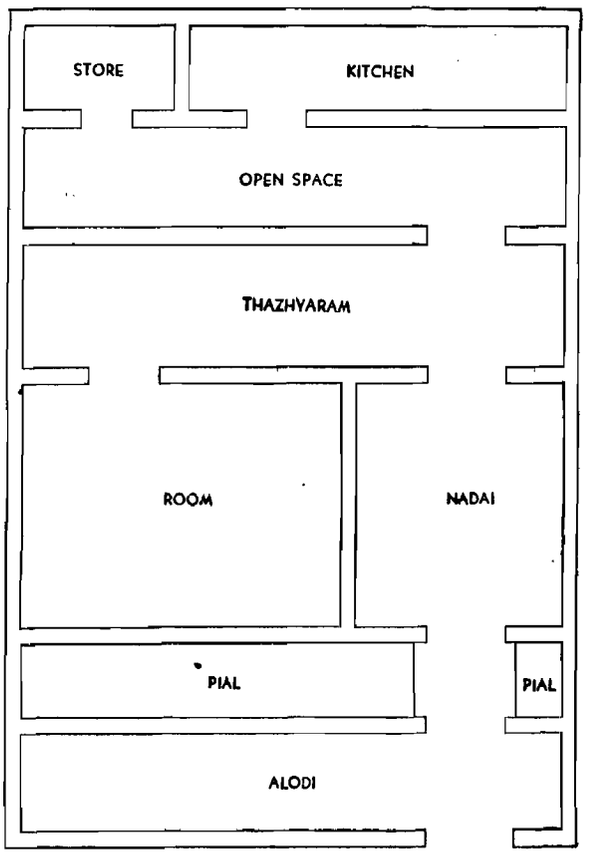
45. No standard pattern is noticed in the type or design of houses in Veerampattinam. Since a convenient type of house with more space and accommodation has got a direct bearing on the economic status of a household, we find in the village houses of variegated designs. Majority of dwellings are hutments and the fisher-folk being poor cannot afford even the minimum convenience of two pials and a room with or without the front or backyard verandha. The ground plans of a few houses have been shown in the sketches presented alongside here. Out of the 7 Sembadavan houses covered by the survey, 5 are houses with brick walls and thatched roofings, one has tiled roof with brick walls and another has thatched roof with mud walls. Among Pattanavans, it was noticed that 163 out of a total of 193 had thatched roofing and mud walls while 20 had tiled roofing, with brick walls, 3 had brick walls but had only thatched roofings. Only 7 houses were found to be pucca constructions having terraced roofings and brick walls.



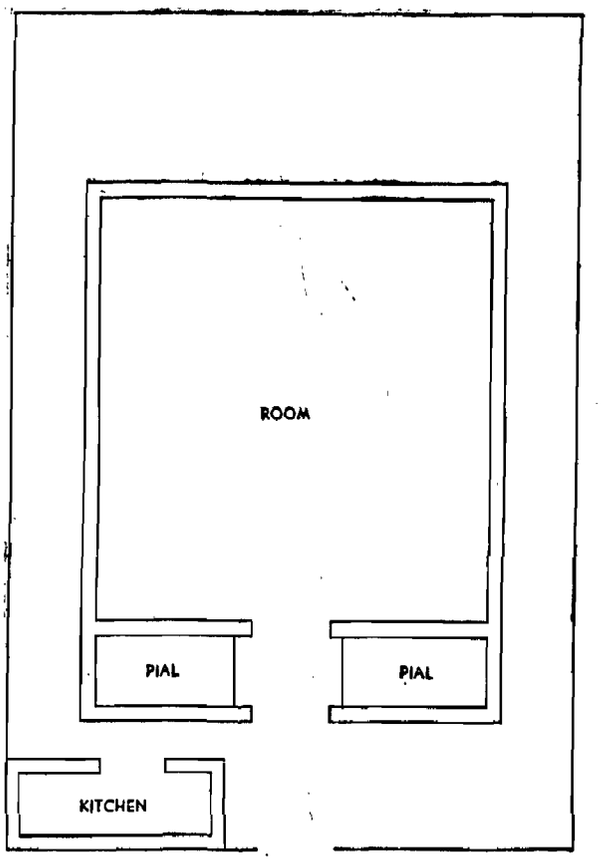
PATTANAVAR HOUSES IN SOUTH STREET

Some of the houses of Sembadavans and Pattanavans found in north, east and south streets are tiled, with brick walls. Terraced houses are also seen in these three streets. Two Vanniar households were covered by the survey and both these houses were found to have thatched roofing and mud walls.

46. As regards the pattern of houses prevalent generally among the lower middle class people of the village, the following type seems to be most common. There is a verandah in the front. This is known locally either as 'vasal' or 'Alodi'. From this verandah we reach the 'Nadai' on either side of which there is a pial or 'Thinnai'. The passage between the 'Thinnai' on either side leads to 'Nadai'. In some of the households one room is found on either side of the 'Nadai'. Sometimes there will

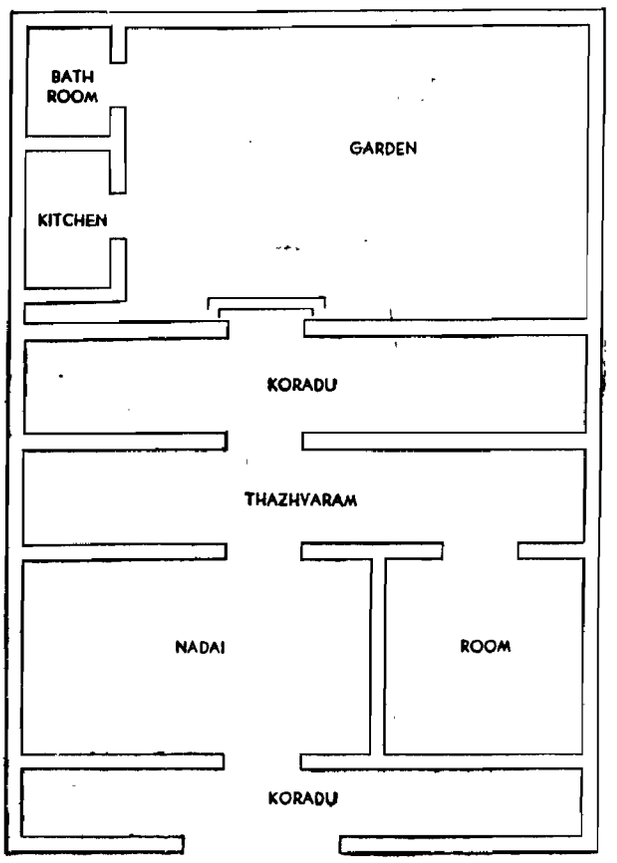


GROUND PLAN OF A SEMBADAVAN HOUSE

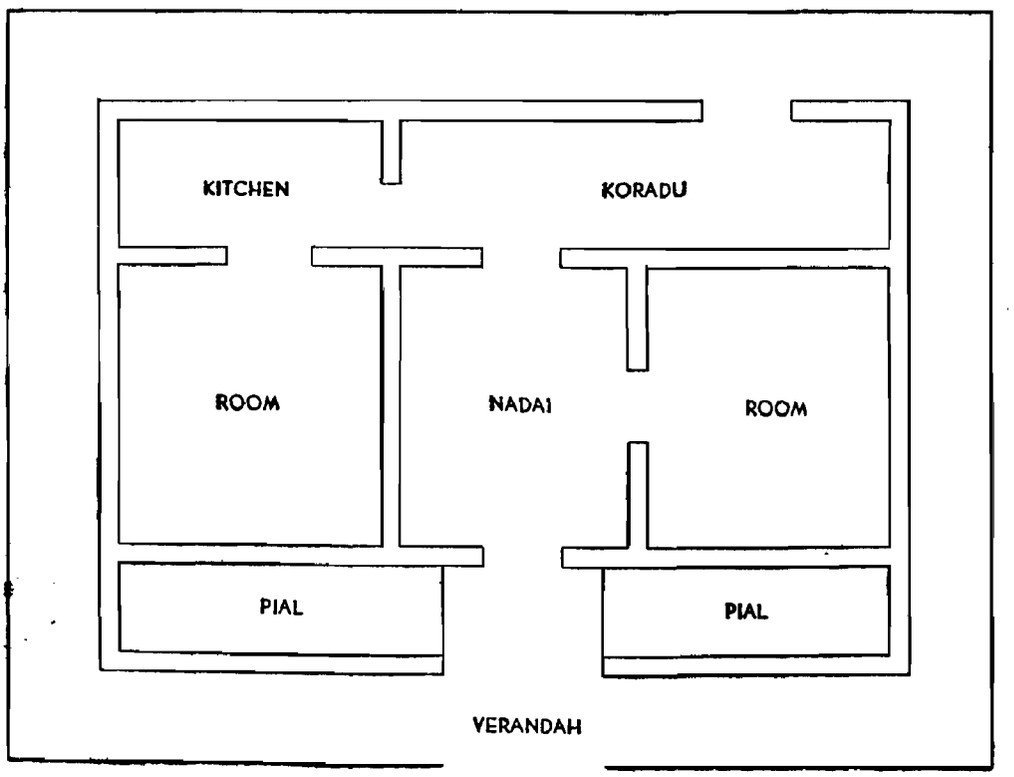


GROUND PLAN OF A PARAYAN HOUSE

be two rooms also. There is yet another doorway to the 'Nadai' which will lead us to another verandah known as 'Thazhvaram'. In some of the houses we find some square open space of lower level, adjoining the Thazhvaram or surrounded by Thazhvarams or corridors. Onc rossing the corridor, we reach the backyard where the kitchen is situated. In some of the households there will be no separate room for kitchen but it will function in the rear verandah itself.



GROUND PLAN OF A VANNIAR HOUSE



GROUND PLAN OF THE TILED HOUSE OF A WELL-TO-DO PATTANAVAR

47. When we take into consideration the huts or dwellings of poor fishermen in the village the position is quite regrettable. They have very little accommodation in their dwellings with the result that they cannot afford to set apart any particular portion for any particular role or even for exclusive use by men or women. All are common. These dwellings will at the most have two pials in the front. Between the pials there will be a passage or a door leading to a hall which is utilised for cooking, sleeping and for every other purpose. Sometimes there will be another door to this, leading to a kitchen garden. These huts have provision neither for light, air nor any other form of ventilation.

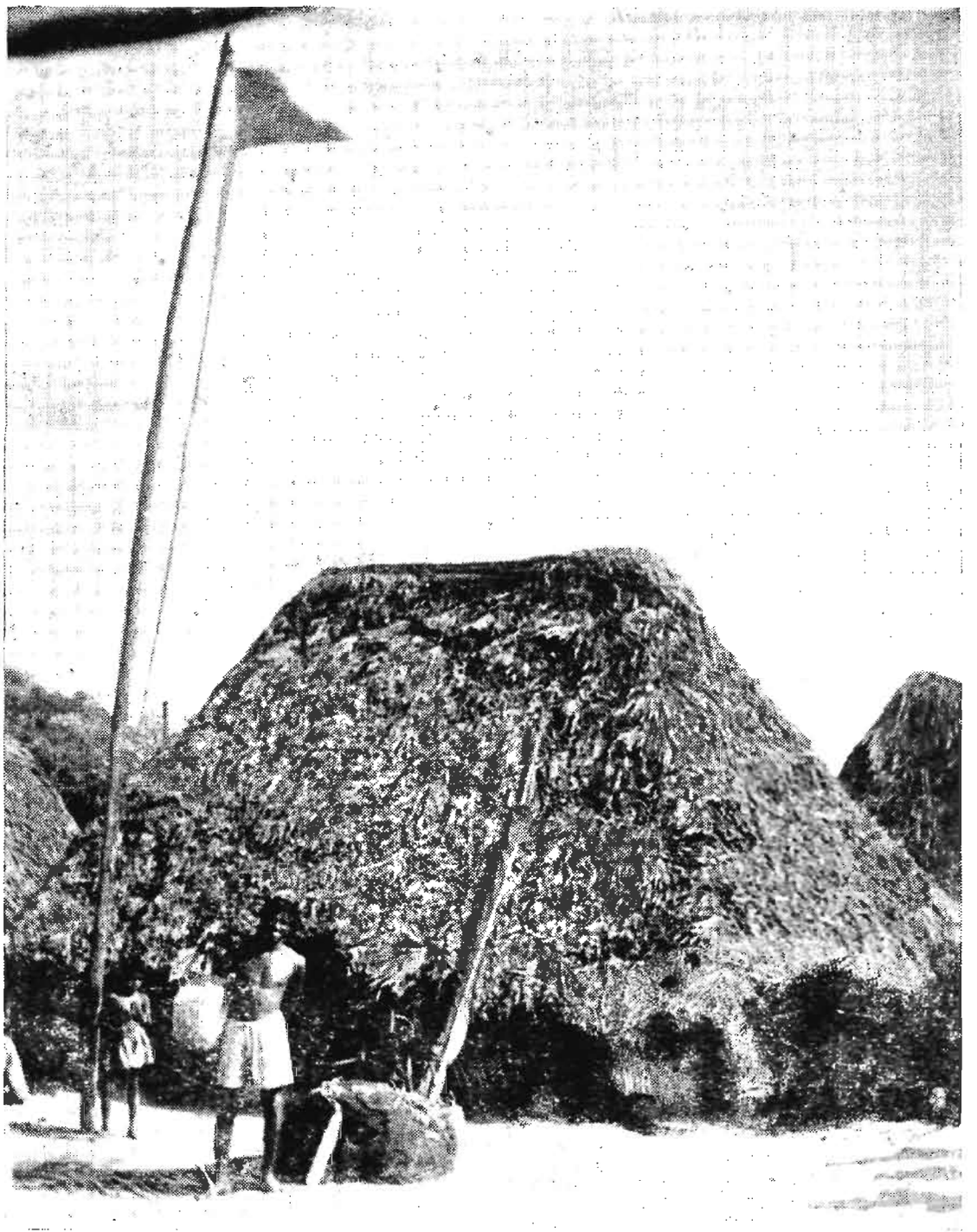


A FEW VANNIAR HOUSES

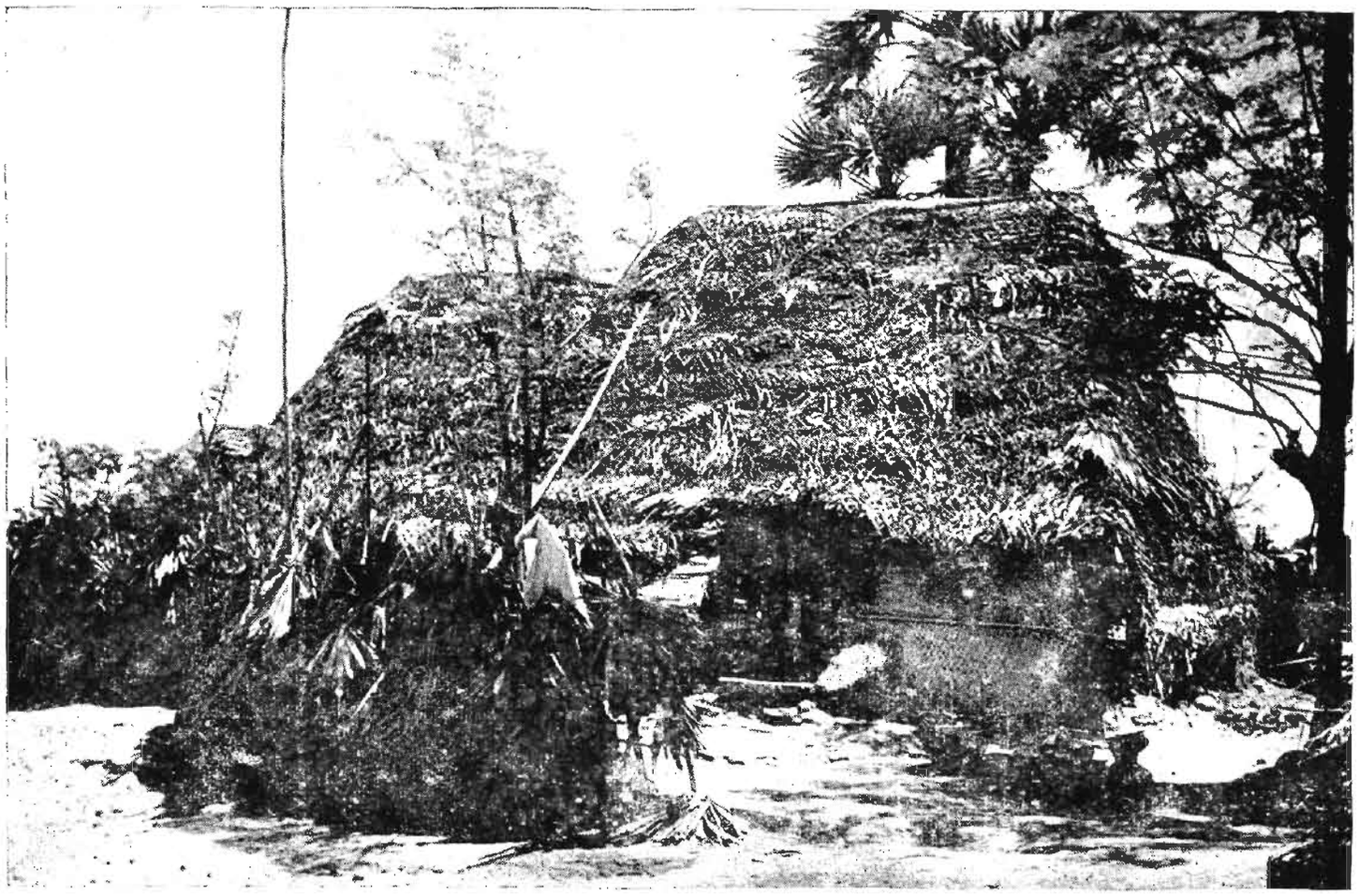
48. About floorings, tiled houses have invariably cemented floorings. Some of them have floorings got out of bricks and lime mortar. Thatched houses have mud floorings smeared with cow-dung. In one of the terraced houses an upper storey is noticed which can be reached by a staircase built out of bricks and lime mortar.

House construction and the ceremonies

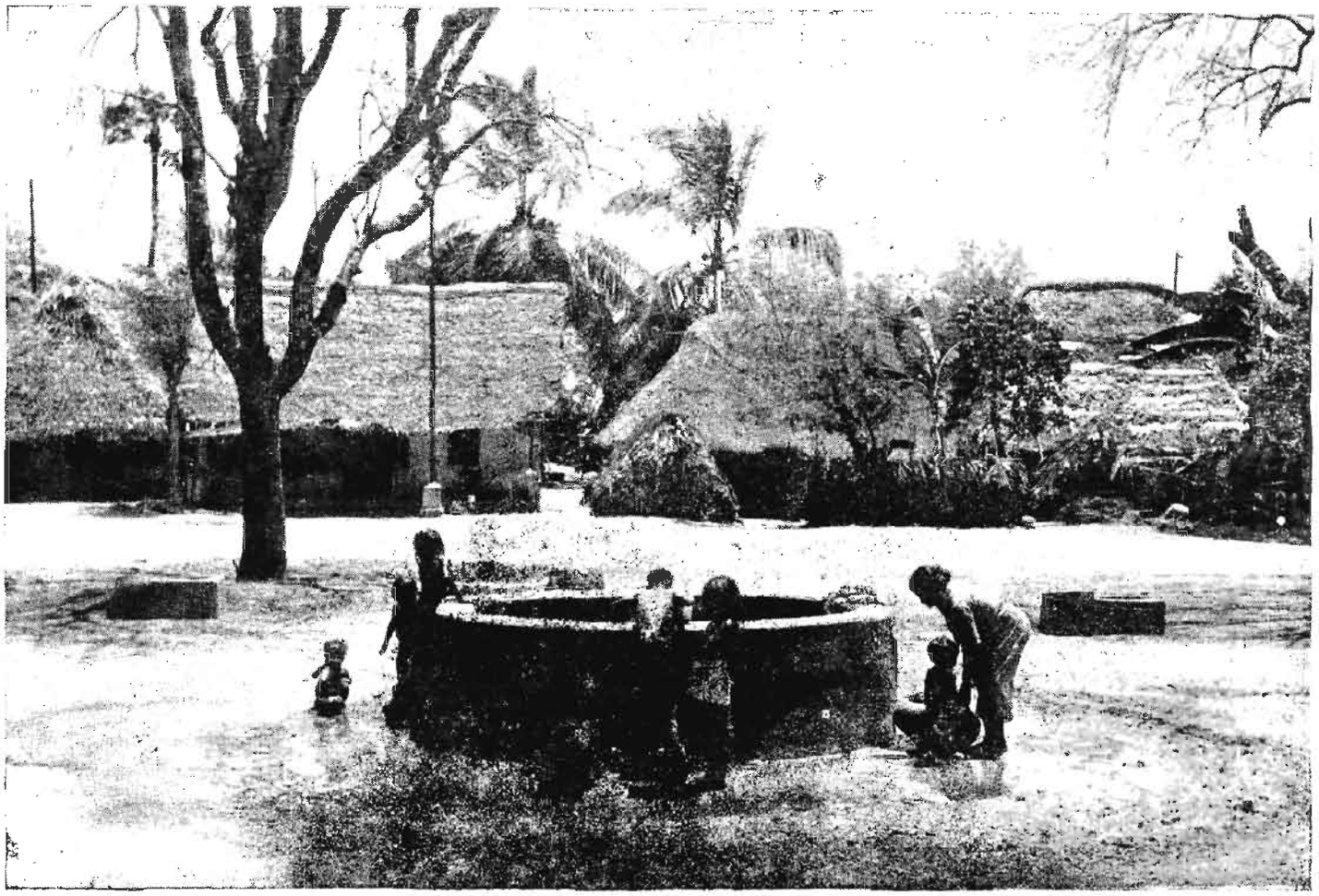
49. The selection of a house-site is an informal function, more or less a business like settlement. No particular ceremony is conducted. But generally sites very near the burial or cremation ground are avoided. Then the construction work is generally attended to



Thatched structure of a poor Pattanavan near the sea-shore.

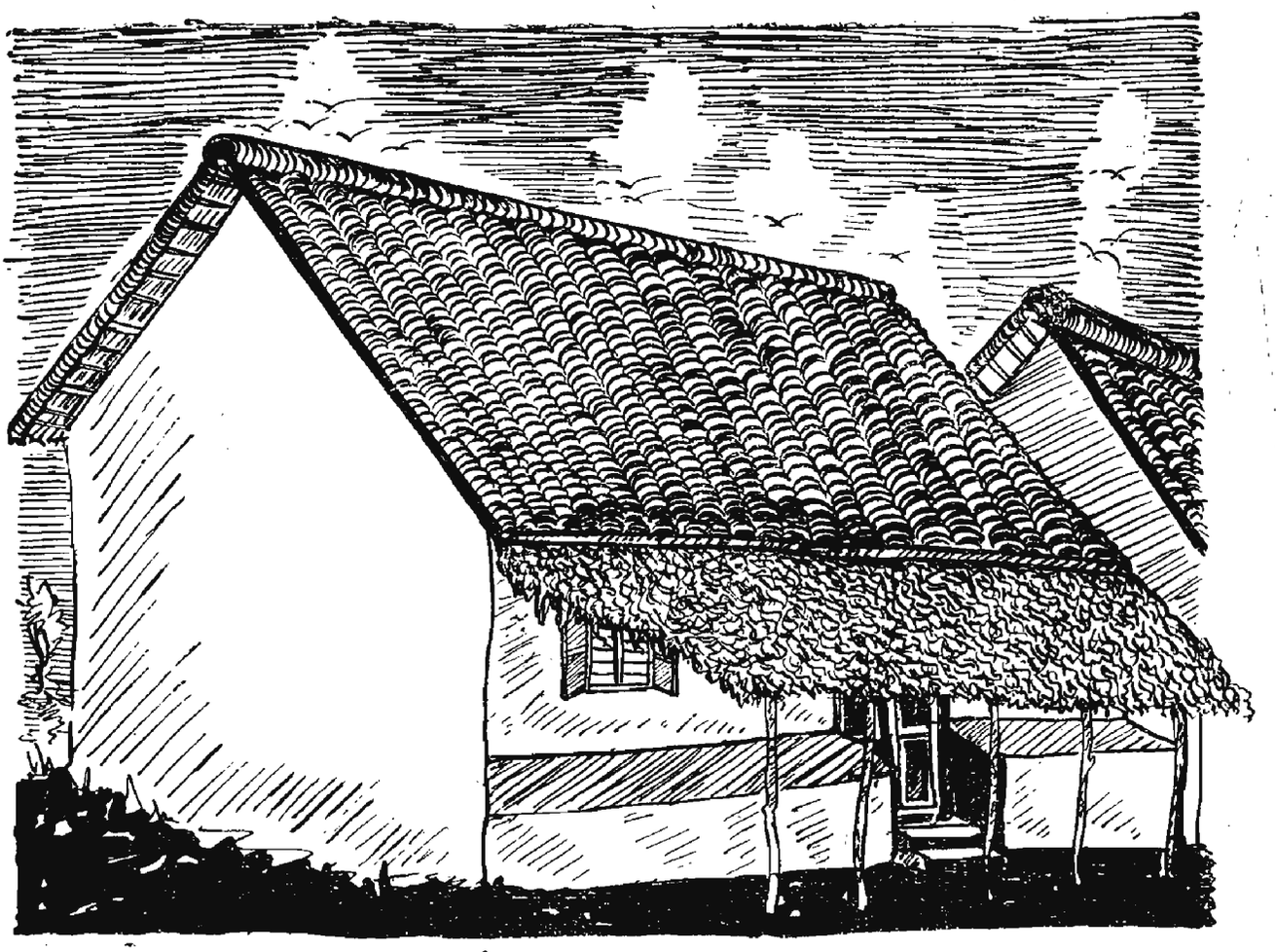


The thatched hut of a Parayan in the Cheri.



One of the public wells in the village. Water is used both for drinking and bathing.

by the masons or the Kothanars, a community engaged in the task from time immemorial. Digging the foundation is an important occasion and some religious performances take place with it. Before commencing the digging operation, offerings are made to God Pillaiyar or Vigneswara. A conical shaped figure made of turmeric paste is supposed to symbolise Pillaiyar and offerings are made to Him. The turmeric image is placed on a heap of bricks and vermilion smeared on it; camphor is lighted and *Arati* is offered in order to cast off all evil eyes and also to invite the blessings of Lord Vigneswara. No priest is generally engaged, but an elderly lady performs the pooja. After this, betel leaves and arecanuts are

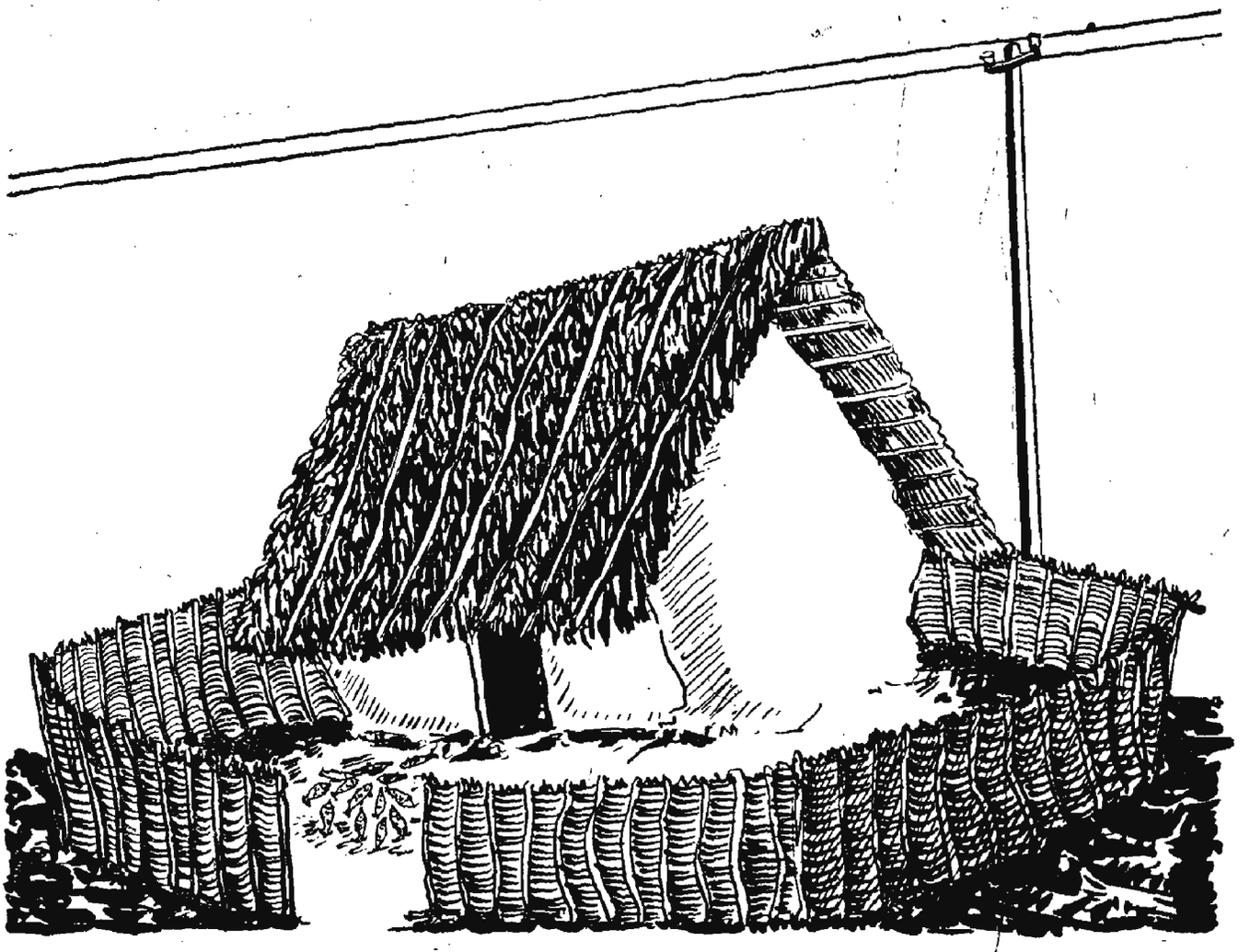


TILED HOUSE OF A VANNIAR

distributed to masons and to other special invitees. The ceremony observed at the time of fixing the 'vasal' *i.e.* main entrance is simple. The door frame is smeared with turmeric paste and vermilion. It is also decorated with flowers and then pooja is performed to it. Five *Sumangalies* (married ladies) who do the ritual with the assistance of male members fix the door-frame. The masons and carpenters engaged in construction work are honoured on this day by presenting them with dhoties and towels by the prospective house-owner. Pan-supari is distributed to one and all present. After the completion of

construction work and before its occupation, *Graha-pravesam* (house-warming ceremony) is performed. This is elaborate or informal according to the social and economic status of the concerned household.

50. Construction of a thatched house is simple. No deep foundation is dug. The superstructure, if thatched, consists of coconut or palmyrah leaves lashed together by means of bamboo poles and ropes. Sometimes rafters are seen and wood is either purchased from Pondicherry or from nearby villages. In the case of a tiled house, foundation is laid to a depth of 3′ to 4′ using brick jelly, cement and lime. Pebbles are available in abundance in Pondicherry area. They are used as jelly and mixed with lime mortar when foundation is laid. Burnt



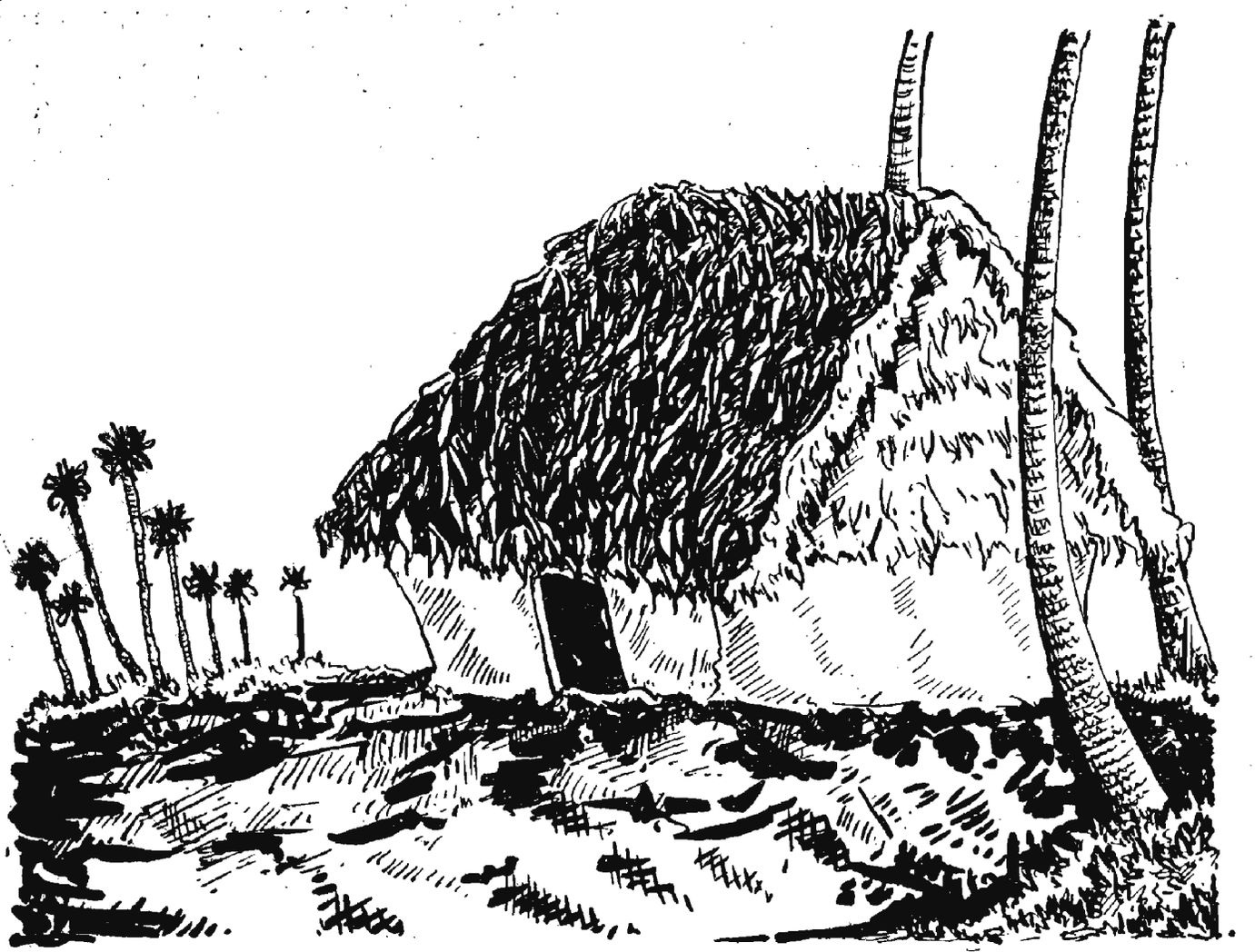
THATCHED HOUSE OF A POOR PATTANAVAN

bricks are used for raising walls. The roof is mostly tiled with 2 to 4 slopes and the superstructure rests on the brick walls by means of wooden rafters. In some of the houses, the timber work is fastened by means of pegs. The other materials required such as hinges, latches, locks and bolts are available in Pondicherry market. Timber is procured from Pondicherry and door frames, windows etc., are made by engaging carpenters. The average cost of construction of a tiled house of normal size is about Rs. 6,000 to 7,000. Tiles used in Pondicherry area are small in size and are locally available. The average life of a tiled

house is normally 20 to 30 years. Tiled houses are mostly white-washed using lime and floorings are cemented.

Furniture

51. Possession and use of furniture could be taken as index to the material culture of a community. The possession of furniture is a good indicator of economic standard. In Veerampattinam it is found that even lower middle class families are very few and as such the usage of furniture by households will be limited. In the single roomed hutments of fishermen, we could hardly locate any item of furniture. In the few pucca and semi-pucca houses of the higher strata of the local society we notice only common furnitures like movable chairs or tables and a few built-in shelves, cupboards, cloth-pegs etc. For sleeping purposes the luxurious provision is the country made coir or ribbon-woven cots.



A PARAYAN HUT IN THE CHERI OF THE VILLAGE

52. The two Vanniar households covered by the survey do not possess any item of furniture. Of the 7 Sembadavan households, almirahs were found in 4 households, benches were used by 3 households and 3 households were seen using stools. Two households were also seen in possession of one easy-chair each. Of the 193 households belonging to the Pattanavan community, covered by our survey, only 15 households used some items of furniture. These 15 households together used 15 tables, 29 chairs, 3 easy-chairs, 14 almirahs, 6 cots, 15 benches, and 13 stools. Obviously the above households belong to the lower middle class and only in two or three families could be found more than one chair and a table. The furniture used are all made of wood, either locally made or purchased from Pondicherry. Coir-cots are

mostly used for sleeping. In the wooden almirahs in some households mirrors have been fixed and they appear well polished. The households in general use some rectangular plank to sit for meals. This is a universal custom in rural areas and among poorer communities and families, honoured guests are offered planks to sit on. Thus it is evident on the whole that the village is very poor as regards the standard of using furniture.

Other articles

53. Veerampattinam villagers seem to attach little significance to the possession and use of other items like cycles, lamps, torches etc. A detailed discussion will prove useful in this regard. Out of the two Vanniar households, one, of the monthly income group Rs. 51—75 and the other, Rs. 45, the former is found to possess a bi-cycle while the latter does not possess any notable items of the type at all. Oil lanterns were of course noticed in these households. Among Sembadavans out of 7 households one in the income group Rs. 51—75 and the other four in the income group Rs. 76—100, no special item of furniture was found used. However, all these seven households had either bed room lamps or oil lanterns with them. One household out of two in the income group of Rs. 101 and over was found to possess a bi-cycle. In the case of Pattanavans it was found that out of 193 households only 15 households used any item of furniture at all. Two households in the monthly income group of Rs. 26—50 and 51—75 along with three households in the group Rs. 76—100 possess a bi-cycle each.

54. There are 10 households in the income group of Rs. 101 and above. Of these, 8 have one cycle each and 2 have 2 cycles each. Two households are having one Radio receiver set each and 5 households are found in possession of torch lights. Thus only very limited number of such items are found in use in the village and even these items belong to the families of the lower middle class.

Utensils

55. The receptacles used, generally, in all households in Veerampattinam are made of brass, aluminium and mud. Vessels made out of these materials are used for cooking food over the fire and for other purposes such as serving food, drinking etc. Mud vessels are commonly in use for all purposes in the case of poor fisher-folk and Parayan households. A few households belonging to lower middle class families, of late, are using ever-silver vessels in small numbers. Their description and use are given below :

Vatta satti: This is made of brass used for cooking food and other dishes.

Thekkusal: Made of brass and used as a container for preparations like Rasam, Sambar etc.

Kundan: This is made of brass and used for storing water.

Soppukudam: This is made of brass and used for bringing water from a well or pond.

Joduthavalai: This vessel, bigger in size and made of brass, is used for storing water required for bathing, washing etc.

Panikkan: This vessel is made of brass, resembling a flower-vase in its shape. But this is used for spitting. It is found invariably in all Sembadavan households. There is an interesting legend about this vessel connected with Sembadavan community. It is said that at the time of the marriage of Parvathi, the daughter of Parvatha Raja, with Lord Siva, several communities carried *Seervarisai* and graced the occasion. The Sembadavan community, it is said, had the rare honour of taking *Panikkan*, one of the gift articles, on the occasion. This, the community considers as an exclusive privilege confereed by Parvatha Raja on them and they are traditionally in possession of this.

Kai sembu: This is made of brass and used for washing hands, bathing etc.

Thayir sembu: This is made of brass or Aluminium and used as container for curd or butter milk.

Karandi: Made of aluminium or iron and used for serving sambar, rasam etc.

Annakuthi: This is made of aluminium and used for serving food.

Aluminium sembu: This vessel made of aluminium is used for storing milk.

The other vessels include 'Tumblers' and 'Kinnams' made of brass or aluminium, used for drinking water and as containers for oil and ghee, respectively. Some vessels of the above description made of mud, are used in poor fishermen and Parayan households. The vessels used by the villagers are obtained from the markets at Pondicherry and Ariankuppam. A few well-to-do households use silver vessels on ceremonial and other special occasions.

Dress

56. The term dress covers a wide range from a mere band to a multiplicity of apparels. The dress may at times consist of one or more garments. The villagers of Veerampattinam without any regard for their sexes were seen wearing a minimum of two garments, the ladies wear an ordinary saree and blouse and men a dhoti and a towel. The quality of the clothings in general is coarse and mostly of handloom variety. The saree worn by women is generally 6 yards in length and the mode of wearing is simple. It is worn in such a manner that 6" to 8" of the upper portion of it is held together closely and tied in a rope like fashion around the waist. The saree pallav always rests on the left shoulder. Poor fisherwomen always wear dark coloured sarees whereas ladies of lower middle class families use light coloured sarees with or without floral borders. Blouses are neatly tailored and some young women are seen wearing also bodice inside blouses. Young girls are seen wearing *Dhavani* and skirt known as *Pavadai*. Female children of poor families are seen with torn skirts only, leaving their bodies bereft of clothings. The dress styles of women belonging to well-to-do families in the village are found more or less guided by the prevailing fashion in the neighbouring urban areas. The mode of dressings and styles of the visitors to the temple here also can be considered to be a contributing factor in the matter of women's dress in the higher strata of this society. Men wear dhoties and towels either mill-made or handloom. The Pattanavans, while going out for fishing in sea, wear dhoti in such a manner that it is rolled up to the hip and one end of it is drawn in between the legs and tucked in at the back. Wearing the towel as a turban and leaving the body bare, they set sail in their catamarams.

57. Modern trends in dress styles and marks of western culture in dressing patterns are noticed in the village also. It is common to find a villager of the younger generation going out to Pondicherry or other areas in his best tailored shirts and pants or trousers. Boys attending school uniformly wear shorts and shirts in pure urban fashion. In the case of very poor Pattanavar households, we come across children of both sexes wearing garments which hardly cover their private parts and children below 3 years go absolutely nude.

58. Cotton garments suit the climatic conditions in the region and there is no seasonal variation in the material used for clothes. They are not locally made by any family or individual but purchased from the clothes-shop at Ariankuppam or Pondicherry. Handloom clothes are popular among the villagers. This is because they suit the climatic conditions and are also cheaper. A dhoti of 4 cubits can be obtained at a cost of Rs. 1.75 or Rs. 2 and a saree of six yards of 60 to 80 counts is available for Rs. 7 to 9. Clothes purchased for shirts or blouses are neatly tailored either at Pondicherry or at Ariankuppam. No variation in clothing is noticed except at the time of festivals like Pongal and Deepavali, when new garments are specially worn for the occasion. No special dress is worn by the fisherfolk to suit their occupation of fishing in sea. On the whole, the use and significance of clothing in Veerampattinam seems to be dependent on the economic standard of the concerned household. In all the lower middle class families, heads of households are using sandals while going out. But the majority of Pattanavars who are poor fisher-men could not afford to have them. During the hot season when the sandy bank of the shore burns like a furnace under the blazing sun, the fisherfolk move about freely without any foot-wear. This is because from head to foot they are immune to the extremities of the weather.

Ornaments

59. Women wear ornaments mainly for decorative purposes. Ornaments are also the signs of social status. Women, in general, irrespective of their economic status, are so much enamoured of the ornaments that they make it a point to have something or other of the kind to adorn themselves. Common types of ornaments worn by women in Veerampattinam are ear-rings, nose-screws and bangles. In addition to these, married women wear *Thali* around the

neck and silver rings known as *Metti* on their toes. Ornaments are generally made of gold, silver or brass. Descriptions of some common types of ornaments worn by some women in Veerampattinam are given below:

1. *Mookuththi*:—This is the nose-screw made either of gold or brass and studded with a cheap

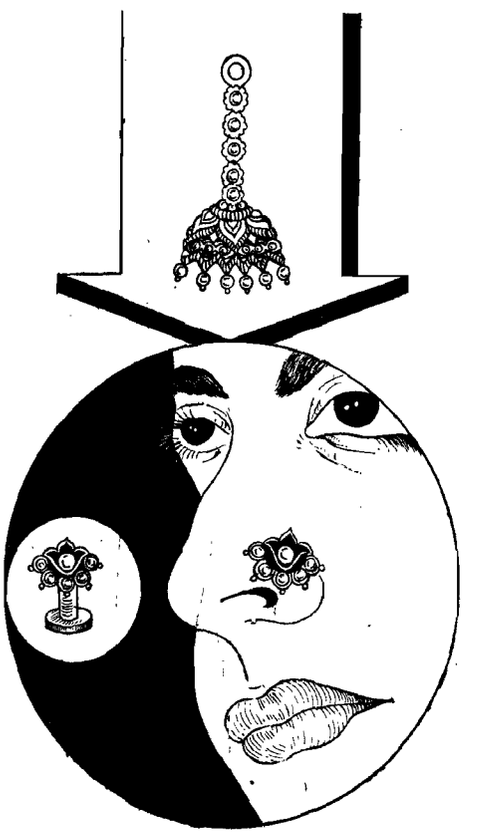


NOSE-SCREW KNOWN AS 'MOOKUTHTHI'

or costly white or coloured stone. The cost of this ranges from Rs. 5 to 60. Diamond nose-screw costs Rs. 200 to Rs. 300.

2. *Thodu or Kammal*:—This is the ear-ring made of either gold or brass and studded with white or coloured stones usually 6 or 7 in number. This ear-ring made of gold and studded with stones of average value costs Rs. 60 to 75. The cheap variety made of brass costs only Rs. 5 to 10.

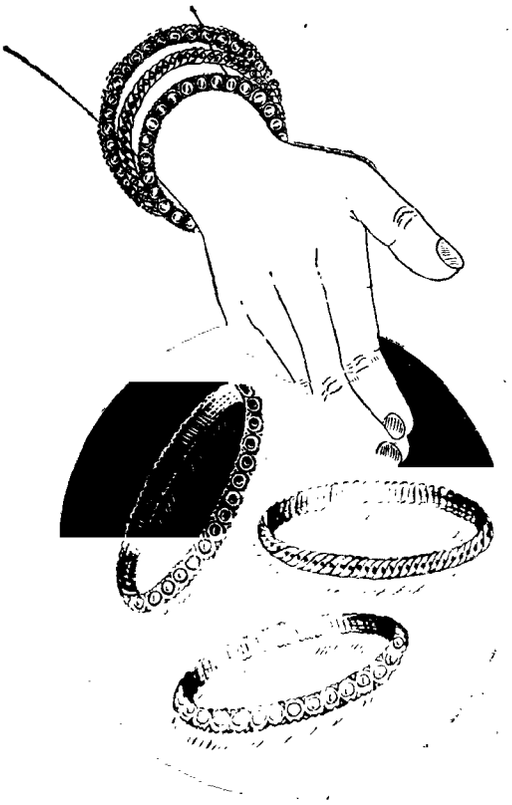
JIMIKKI



NOSE-SCREW

3. *Pattai*:—This is the anklet made of silver, usually worn by female children or young girls. Some married ladies are also seen wearing this ornament. The value of the anklet will be Rs. 20 to Rs. 30. This ornament is available in various designs. The types of ornaments described above are shown in the sketches. In addition to these, women belonging to lower middle class families are wearing gold chains of various patterns. In some cases, the pattern is up to-date in fashion. The Parayan women and the majority of Pattanavar women are seen wearing beads of all kinds. Ornaments are mostly worn on all occasions. A few rich Pattanavar and Sembadavar women wear more ornaments while going out, only to indicate their social status.

60. As regards the procurement of ornaments by the sample households, out of the 202 covered in the survey only 62 households possess ornaments of some value or the other. An analysis of the 62 households community-wise indicating the value of jewels

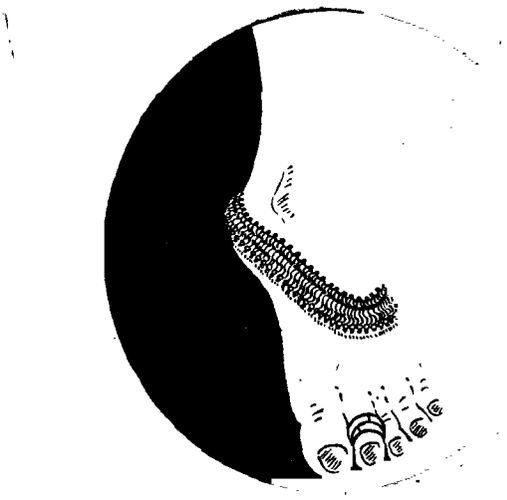


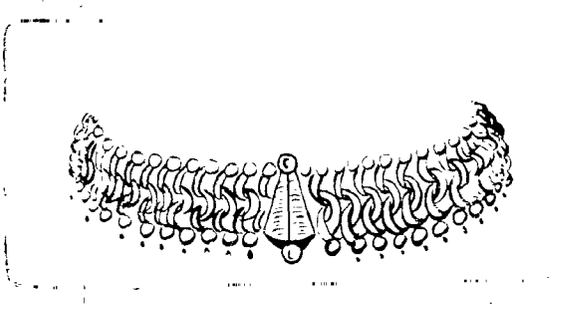
BANGLES KNOWN AS 'VALAI'



NICKLACE KNOWN AS 'ADDIGAI'

possessed is given below. In the Vanniar community it was found that the two households covered by the survey had no ornaments at all. Out of 7 Sembadavar households surveyed six had some ornaments. Three of them had jewellery worth Rs. 100 each. One had jewellery worth Rs. 200, the other had it worth Rs. 300 while the third had the same worth Rs. 500. Among Pattanavas, 193 households were





ANKLET KNOWN AS 'PATTAI'

covered, but only 56 were found to have any item of jewellery. Distribution of these households by value of jewellery owned is indicated below:-

STATEMENT No. 2

Value of jewels (in rupees)	No. of households
20—50	16
51— 100	15
101— 200	11
201— 300	8
301— 500	3
501—1,000	1
1,500	1
3,000	1
Total	**56**

Usually menfolk in Veerampattinam do not wear any ornament. In a few cases, however, they are seen wearing rings either made of gold or silver. There is no goldsmith in Veerampattinam and the villagers procure ornaments from the jewellers at Pondicherry.

Hair dressing

61. Though hair dressing is considered to be one of the commonest mode of enhancing personal appearance, the villagers in Veerampattinam do not seem to have taken to it very seriously. However, it is possible to distinguish the sexes by the style of the hair-do adopted traditionally. Males have their hair-cut regularly while females allow their hair to grow to full length. Women help themselves to comb the hair but occasionally the help of another lady is sought to have it done. Parted in the middle of the head, locks are plaited straight and finally turned into a pear-shaped knob or curled into ringlets by tucking one tuft into another. It is either left inclined or folded like a bun as the case may be. Ladies of well-to-do families wear pins to keep the plaiting intact. Flowers are generally worn to decorate the hair-do. Pattanava women pay casual attention to hair-dressing and oil is used sparingly. The hair of both men and women in the village appear a bit brown and rough, perhaps affected due to sea-breeze and their swimming in the sea.

62. Men adopt a very simple hair style. Parted either on the right or left side of the head the hair is combed straight. The style of having tuft among men is considered archaic and outmoded. But males commonly have moustaches. Some appear with unshaven faces also. Shaving is done in the majority of the cases once in a fortnight. The younger generation especially school-going boys and girls use cosmetics like scented oil, face powder and snow. Plastic combs appear quite popular among the villagers. Women paint their nails sometimes with *mehandhi* known in local parlance as *Marudhani*. The colour of the stain is red. Married ladies also wear *kumkum* on their foreheads. Widows wear *poosai* or *namam* according to their sect.

Diet

63. The food habits of the people in this village are very simple. Essentially rice eating people, they are used to other food grains like millets which are used as complimentaries to the main item of food *viz.* rice. But for the one solitary Brahmin household in the village, all are non-vegetarians here. Most of the people here live on rice, vegetable, meat, fish etc. The following Table will perhaps throw more light on the food habits of households among various communities.

TABLE No. V

No. of households surveyed: 202

Community	Total no. of households	Food habits: Staple food rice only	Food habits: No. of households taking 2 meals a day	Food habits: Vegetarian households	Food habits: Non-vegetarian households
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Sembadavan	7	7	7	...	7
Pattanavan	193	193	193	...	193
Vanniar	2	2	2	...	2
Total	**202**	**202**	**202**	...	**202**

Thus all the sample households are non-vegetarian in food habits, taking rice as staple food and having at least two meals a day. The dietary habits of the people are given below:

(*i*) *Morning meal*: The economically backward section of the village population take *rice kanji* or *rice gruel*, a liquid form of cooked food, with chillies and salt to go with it. Cold rice is also taken by a few households. This is formed by soaking the cooked rice in water overnight. In well-to-do households *Iddali* or some other *palagaram* of rice is prepared and taken.

(*ii*) *Noon-meal or lunch*: Rice is freshly cooked and taken with vegetable curry and sauce like *Sambar* or *Rasam*. A few complete the meal with butter milk and rice. Meat or fish may or may not be taken in the afternoon. Noon-meal is taken generally between 12 O'clock and 1 O'clock.

(*iii*) *Night meal or dinner*: Rice is either freshly cooked or the left over of the noon meal is used. Non-vegetarian dishes prepared out of mutton or fish are mostly taken with the night meal. Fish normally figures in the night meal since fishing is the dominant occupation of the villagers. At the time of festivals like Pongal and Deepavali one or two special food items like *Sakkarai Pongal* and *Payasam* are prepared and included in the dinner.

64. Some of the villagers take tea in the morning and in the evening. A tea shop is located at the entrance to the village. Prohibited items of food include pork and beef. Toddy is taken by 95 per cent of the village population. A toddy shop is located outside the village. The daily turn-over in the shop is said to be Rs. 50 to 60. A litre of toddy costs about 56 nP. and side dishes are also simultaneously sold. In the evening invariably there is a large attendance in the toddy shop. Majority of fisherfolk spend a sizeable portion of their daily earnings in drinking toddy. While on the one hand this habit reduces them to a status of bankruptcy and poverty, on the other it is argued that it is essential for them, in as much as, it relieves them from the physical strain especially after a day's arduous toil *viz.* fishing in sea.

65. Milk obtained from cows is used for feeding children and for the preparation of beverages like tea or coffee. A few households maintain milch cows, and collect milk either for domestic use or for sale to others. Of the 202 sample households, the two households belonging to Vanniars and the 7 households belonging to Sembadavan communities do not possess milch cattle. Out of the 193 households of Pattanavars only 3 households have got 5 cows each. Two households have one cow each and the third household has 3 cows. With regard to milk consumption the village is very backward. However butter-milk is taken by one and all.

66. Only a handful of families follow cultivation, as an occupation. These households store the grains harvested either in small paddy bins or in big pots. To the majority of the village population preservation and storage of food grains are not problems because they obtain their day to day requirements from the nearby market at Ariankuppam. Even grocery requirements like chillies, tamarind, salt etc., are purchased daily by them. Well-cooked food is always preferred and the villagers use mainly firewood (casuarina) to cook food. Cooking is done in small country type ovens. For frying curry etc., gingelli or groundnut oil is widely used. The oil products are available in the market at Ariankuppam and in the petty shops in the village itself. Salt is mixed with all food items excepting rice. Sugar is used for preparations like *Sarkarai Pongal* and *payasam*. Vegetables are cooked with meat and taken. Spices and condiments are not unknown to the villagers and those commonly used in cooking are *cardamom*, pepper, asafoetida, cloves, mace, corriander etc. Lime and mango pickles, are well-known additions to a square meal. Cooking is done by the womenfolk of a family.

67. Meals are usually taken at set times such as 6 O'clock in the morning, 12 O'clock at noon and 9 O'clock at night. Taking of tiffin and drinking beverages in between the set times is dependent on individual inclination and economic standard. Food is served to the male members and children first and the womenfolk dine later. Food is served in plantain leaves or in aluminium plates. It is said of the Sembadavan community that they always use plantain leaves and no metal plate has been used so far for serving meals in any of their households. Food is served by the females, but occasionally one helps oneself. The mode of eating is, as is common in the southern region, by using the right hand. The informal ceremonies observed at the beginning of meals are washing hands and offering food to crows. Offering is also made to divinities, which is known as *padaithal*. Water is commonly drunk and hands are washed well after eating is over. Generally food is taken to satiation. But in very poor households whatever quantity available is taken. Sometimes children in the poor households are given one or two annas by their parents who cannot prepare a meal and feed them. They purchase some edibles from the hawkers and quench their appetite. On special occasions such as during pregnancy, illness and certain religious ceremonies, prescribed food items are taken.

68. The main village consisting of places in and around the temple of *Sengazhuneeramman* appears neat and clean. But at the sea shore where Pattanavans live in congested and crowded hutments, the standard of sanitation is very poor. There is no proper course for the flow of cess-pools which dirty the pathways that run amidst the hutments in a criss-cross pattern. During rainy season the place appears all the more bad and nauseating. The surroundings of the public wells are also kept unclean and water is ever stagnant. Mosquitoes breed profusely in them. This unhygienic condition to certain extent is responsible for frequent outbreak of epidemics like small-pox and cholera. The place where Parayans live appears a bit better off than that of Pattanavans with regard to cleanliness in and around the dwellings. Hutments of fisherfolk are kept filthy in and outside. But the *Pattanavans and Sembadavans living in the three*

regular streets near the temple keep the premises of their houses neat and clean. At least once a day every house is swept with a broom.

Personal hygiene

69. No special place is reserved for sanitary purpose in Veerampattinam. The sea-shore is used for answering calls of nature by the villagers. The use of sea-shore, very near the habitation of Pattanavans, as a public convenience at large makes the place dirty and very much untidy. Only a handful of houses have got country type of latrines attached to them. There is no public convenience built anywhere in and around the village. Majority of Pattanavans bathe in the sea every day, either in the morning or in the afternoon. The children of Pattanavans can be seen bathing in the sea in the morning and in the evening in groups. Some of them go pretty deep into the sea enjoying swimming. There is a pond near the village which is used as a public bathing ghat. Water is available in it throughout the year and some people bathe daily in it. But with regard to cleanliness in matters of clothing, care of hair and other bodily functions very casual attention is paid and the standard in general is poor. The Pattanavans appear hale and healthy because of the hard nature of their occupation. They have well-built bodies and sturdy limbs. Their constitution set out to face all oddities of weather appear rough and strong.

Medical aid

70. There is no dispensary or medical depot at Veerampattinam and the nearest hospital available is at Ariankuppam. The Rural Hospital and Dispensary functioning at Ariankuppam was started on the 17th February 1956 and the villagers of Veerampattinam make use of the facility available at this medical centre. The staff in the hospital consists of one Medical Officer, one male nurse, one female nurse, one Infirmier (compounder) and two ward-boys. One Health Inspector is also attached to the hospital who pays periodical visits to nearby villages including Veerampattinam and educates the people about public health. Schools are also visited by him and children are taught about the need for cleanliness and sanitation. There are also 4 beds available at the hospital. Delivery cases of a complicated nature in Veerampattinam are sometimes taken to this hospital. But the majority of delivery cases are conducted in the village itself by engaging 'Pariyarichis' (women of barber community) in view of the fact that their services are available at cheaper rates, say Rs. 5 to 10 per delivery. Allopathic system of treatment appears to be quite popular among the villagers and nowadays a large number of them go to Ariankuppam hospital for medical consultation. No doctor, native or modern, is found practising at Veerampattinam. A Sembadavan Nattar, who besides his services at the temple, was practising the Ayurvedic system of medicine, has given up the practice since he cannot thrive on it. Sparingly his medical advice is sought by one or two families which he now renders free of cost. The medical care of the 202 sample households covered by the survey is shown in the following Table, which is self-explanatory.

TABLE No. VI

Medical care

No. of households surveyed: 202

		No. of cases
A. Maternity cases—		
(*a*)	Confined in hospital ...	14
(*b*)	Confined by bringing un-qualified Dai at home ...	188
B. Ordinary medical treatment—		No. of households
(*a*)	Allopathic ...	202
(*b*)	Ayurvedic ...	10
C. Medical consultation—		
(*a*)	In public hospitals or dispensaries	202
(*b*)	No. of household members vaccinated ...	202

71. The common diseases affecting the village occasionally are small-pox, cholera, ordinary fever like 'flu' and other respiratory diseases. As already stated, the outbreak of these diseases is due to the unhygienic conditions of living of the villagers. The already unhealthy surroundings are made appallingly dangerous during the grand festival taking place every year, when the village is thronged with visitors from outside. The outbreak of these epidemics has been effectively checked by the timely measures taken by the Health Department of the Pondicherry Government. Periodical vaccination and inoculation are conducted to check the outbreak of small-pox and cholera. In the year 1961, Veerampattinam was affected by small-pox. About 500 persons were affected by the epidemic out of which 6 proved fatal,

all being children. Steps were taken immediately to vaccinate the entire village population and the spread of the disease was checked.

72. Apart from the above epidemics, the only ailment quite common among the fisherfolk is stomach trouble. Those who set sail for fishing at night soon after their supper suffer, invaribly from stomach pain. This is mainly due to indigestion caused by the tossing of catamarams on the surface of the sea which affects adversely the stomach. The fisherfolk say that there can be no cure to this and they have to put up with it somehow or other. Some say that they are immune to this trouble. The villagers feel that a medical depot can be opened at the village itself to render prompt medical aid. The attitude of the villagers towards modern medicine is encouraging. As said earlier, all the 202 sample households prefer the allopathic system of treatment and they go to the dispensary at Ariankuppam for consultations. The villagers are familiar with modern medicines and believe in their curative effect. Medicines like Aspro, Saridon etc. are quite popular and are taken for head-ache and fever. The younger generation is aware of the location of some of the leading chemists' shops at Pondicherry. Some of the families also utilise the services of mid-wives available in the Government Hospital at Ariankuppam for deliveries taking place in their houses.

Water supply

73. The only source for supply of water to the villagers is wells. Some of the houses have got wells dug in the backyard of their houses. Besides, there are 6 public wells supplying drinking water to the majority of the village population. Of the 6 public wells, one is situated in the cheri for the exclusive use of the Parayans and the other 5 are spread over in other parts of the village. To facilitate the supply of drinking water to the Pattanavans living close to the sea, four bore wells have been sunk and hand pumps set up by the Pondicherry Government. Water is raised from wells by means of pulleys involving rotary motion. A long rope with an ordinary bucket tied at one end is employed in the groove of the pulley and water is collected in the bucket and drawn. Well water is drunk as such and no steps are taken for purifying it. The public wells have got cemented parapets to a height of 2½′ and the surroundings to a limited distance have been cemented. Water is not scarce at any time and it is available throughout the year. Though the sea is situated very near, water is not saline, but potable. Water is considered sacred and the fisherfolk pay their homages to the sea-god every time they set sail for fishing. Water sanctified by mantras is considered to be capable of terminating pollutions. Well water in the village is not used for any purpose other than drinking and bathing.

CHAPTER III

POPULATION

74. According to 1961 Census, Veerampattinam has a population of 1914 persons consisting of 935 males and 979 females. As per the count of 1948 conducted by the then French Administration the population of the village was recorded as 1647. There has been an increase of 267 persons in 13 years. This rise in population records a 16.21 per cent increase which is far above the rate of increase of 7.66 per cent recorded by Ariankuppam commune as a whole. Scrutiny reveals that the village follows more or less the rate of increase in population recorded by Pondicherry area which, as such is 16.17 per cent. Veerampattinam does not attract outsiders in large numbers; and hence growth in population cannot be attributed to migration. It can only be due to the high birth-rate. Another factor that has to be borne in mind is that consequent on the merger of the Pondicherry area with the Indian Union, no pain was spared to introduce public health amenities and other steps to prevent the spread of epidemics like cholera, plague, small-pox etc. These precautionary measures and other curative steps taken by the Government naturally would have kept the death rate under control. The vital statistics figures available in respect of the village for theye ars 1951—61 as recorded at the Mairie at Ariankuppam, the commune headquarters of the village, are given in the following statement.

STATEMENT No. 3

Year	Births			Deaths		
	Males	Females	Total	Males	Females	Total
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
1951	18	22	40	39	43	82
1952	19	29	48	17	22	39
1953	12	14	26	15	16	31
1954	13	8	21	15	17	32
1955	22	21	43	28	26	54
1956	22	30	52	34	41	75
1957	34	33	67	27	23	50
1958	36	19	55	21	19	40
1959	29	37	66	20	19	39
1960	29	43	72	20	19	39
1961	41	40	81	20	32	52
Total	**275**	**296**	**571**	**256**	**277**	**533**

A casual analysis of the above figures shows that during the years 1953—1956 death rates outnumber births but from 1957 to 1961 it is the reverse, namely births out-numbering the deaths. The non-availability of population data prior to 1948 Census is a great handicap in our way and does not enable us to make further detailed studies regarding demographic trends in the village.

Registration of births and deaths

75. The French regime introduced a well organised system of registration of births and deaths in Pondicherry territory. The registrations of births and deaths are governed by a French Civil Code in the case of 'Renoncant' citizens and by a decree dated the 24th April 1880 in the case of other Indian citizens residing there. 'Renoncant' citizens are persons who have renounced their Indian citizenship and have become citizens of France, thereby enjoying the privileges of a French citizen in France. A 'Renoncant' should register the birth of a child in his family within ten days of the incident in the local Mairie (Municipality). The birth can be reported either by the mid-wife or by the parent or by any close relative or neighbour, if the delivery takes place at home. If it takes place in a hospital, the hospital authorities can inform it to the concerned Mairie. If the birth is not reported within the stipulated period and the matter is brought to the notice of the Mayor of the municipality, he can inform the Public Prosecutor who will take legal action against the parents or those responsible for not reporting the matter. When it is settled in the court, a certificate obtained from the court is to be produced without which a birth cannot be registered in the Mairie. If the birth of a child takes place outside Pondicherry territory a certificate from a court is demanded to register it in the local Mairie.

76. All deaths occurring within Pondicherry limits should be certified by the Medical Officer of the Hygiene Department or by a Government Officer. In the case of villages where no Government Medical Officer can be found, the nearest police station is approached. The Police Officer will inform the Mairie having jurisdiction over the village. Without such a certificate no death can be registered in a Mairie. A death should be registered within 8 days of its occurrence. In the case of unnatural deaths like suicide, murder and accidents the Public Prosecutor, after the postmortem of the body by the Government surgeon, will issue a certificate. If a 'Renoncant' died in a hospital situated outside the French territory the court should issue a declaration without which no registration could be effected in the Mairie. The cause of death is on no account sought for and entered. Cases of still births and abortions are entered as births without life in the register of deaths. No fee is charged for registration of either a birth or a death. No birth or death should be registered in more than one commune. For Veerampattinam a Mairie is situated in Ariankuppam which lies at a distance of about a mile from the village and the births and deaths are usually registered there.

Area and density

77. The area, density of population etc., of Veerampattinam have been given in the following Table:

TABLE No. VII

Area and density

Area in acres (1)	Population (2)	Density per sq. mile (3)	No. of houses (4)	No. of households (5)
260.59	1914	4,785	312	383

The area of the village is 260·59 acres or about 0·4 square mile and hence the density of population is a problem. The density of population in the village works out to 4785 per square mile as against 2280 in Pondicherry area and 2152 in Ariankuppam commune. Thus it is found that the density of population in the village is higher than that in the area and commune in which the village is included. The coastal area included in the village is full to the brim with hutments of fishermen and provide no further scope for expansion.

Age structure

78. Our survey covered 202 households and the population of these households is given in the following Table by age-groups and sex break up.

TABLE No. VIII

Population by age-group

No. of households surveyed: 202

Age groups (in years)	Persons	Population as percentage to total sample population	Males	Females
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
All ages	1,055	100.00	532	523
0—14	394	37.34	202	192
15—24	185	17.54	85	100
25—59	407	38.58	209	198
60 & over	69	6.54	36	33

The above Table will reveal that maximum concentration of population occurs under the broad age-group 25—59. This age-group has under it

38.58 per cent of the total sample population. Next in order of strength ranks the age-group 0—14 with 37.34 per cent of population. The least concentration is recorded under the age-group 60+. This group has only 6.54 per cent of the population. The rest 17.54 per cent of the population is under 15—24 age-group. The sample population of 1055 persons constitutes 55.12 per cent of the entire village population of 1914 persons. In other words 56.90 per cent of the total male population and 53.42 per cent of the total female population have been covered in the sample survey. We can, perhaps, say that our sampling analysis of the age structure holds good in respect of the village as a whole.

Sex-ratio

79. As already stated, the village population consists of 935 males and 979 females. This gives a sex-ratio of 105 females per 100 males. The sex-ratio of Pondicherry commune according to 1961 Census is 101 females per 100 males and the ratio for the whole of Pondicherry area is 98 females per 100 males. In Ariankuppam commune wherein the village lies the ratio is the same as for the entire area, *viz.* 98 females per 100 males. Thus sex ratio of the village is higher than that noticed in the commune or even the area in which the village is situated. As regards the sample population it was found that the sex-ratio tends to decline with advancing age-groups. Thus we find the proportion of females per 100 males to be 117 in the age-group 15—24 and 95 in the age-group 25—59 and finally 92 in the last age-group *viz.* 60 and over. However, this interesting trend is not true of the village population as a whole.

Marital status

80. The marital status of the sample population is shown in Table No. IX given below:

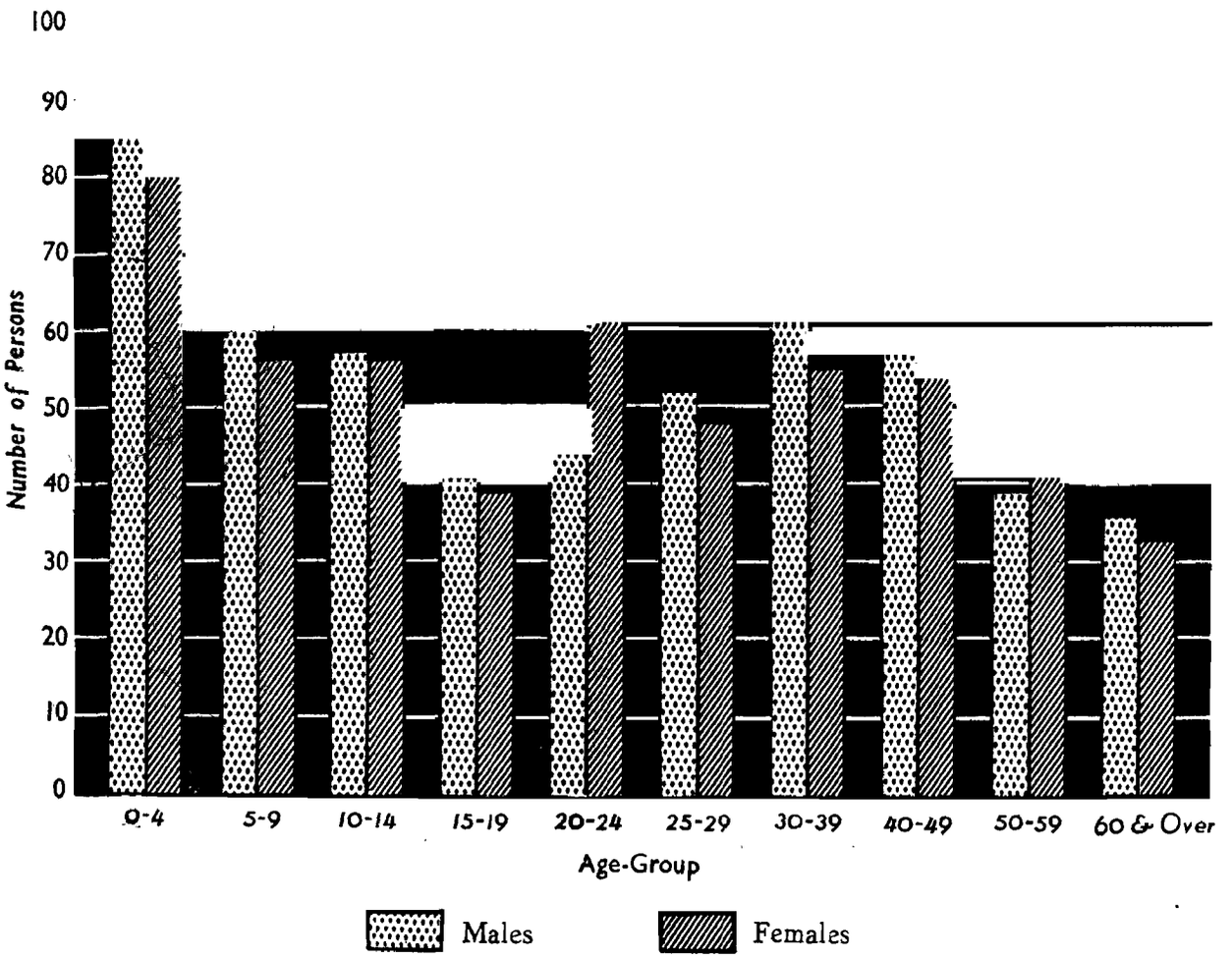
TABLE No. IX

Age and Marital Status

No. of households surveyed: 202

Age groups (in years)	Population			Never married		Married		Widowed		Divorced or separated	
	Total	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)
0— 4	165	85	80	85	80	...	...	...	...	...	...
5— 9	116	60	56	60	56	...	...	...	...	...	...
10—14	113	57	56	57	56	...	...	...	...	...	...
15—19	80	41	39	41	21	...	18	...	...	...	...
20— 24	105	44	61	34	4	10	57	...	...	...	...
25—29	100	52	48	11	2	41	43	...	2	...	1
30—34	65	36	29	...	...	35	28	1	1	...	...
35—39	51	25	26	...	1	24	22	1	3	...	...
40—44	63	30	33	...	...	27	26	2	6	1	1
45—49	48	27	21	...	...	25	13	2	8	...	...
50—54	50	22	28	...	...	18	10	4	18	...	...
55—59	30	17	13	...	...	15	7	2	6	...	...
60 & over	69	36	33	...	...	27	5	9	28	...	...
Total	**1,055**	**532**	**523**	**288**	**220**	**222**	**229**	**21**	**72**	**1**	**2**

AGE STRUCTURE





The Government Middle School in Veerampattinam situated at the very entrance to it

In the age-group of 0—14, there are 202 males and 192 females and all of them are never married. This will incidentally indicate that child marriages are not in vogue in this village. The statement will show that mostly girls get married in the age-group 15—24 while men prefer late marriages. The regular trend in civil condition is reflected here also. The percentage of married women increases at a rapid rate as age advances while that of men rises only at a gradual pace.

81. In the age-group 20—24, it is found that 77.27 per cent of males and 6.56 per cent of females are never married. This 6.56 per cent of never married women in this age-group can be taken to indicate that late marriages among women of this village is also not quite uncommon. As we touch 25—34 age group we find that percentage of married males has risen to 86.36 while that of females has set on the declining trend. Only 92.20 per cent of females in this age-group are married but over 5 per cent of these females are widowed or devorced/separated and the rest are never married. It is at this stage that a change or a turn in the marital status is recorded and sex difference starts telling upon the civil condition of the population. The percentage of widowed and divorced/separated persons goes up. This is more so among females. In the age group 40—59 there are 96 males and 95 females. Among these as many as 85 males are married while only 56 females are married. There are 50 widowed and divorced/ separated persons of which as many as 39 are females.

82. In the age group of 60 and over there are 36 males and 33 females. There are no males or females who are never married. Seventy five per cent of males and 15.15 per cent of females are recorded against married. The percentages of males widowed and females widowed are 25 and 84.85 respectively.

Literacy and education

83. Literacy and education are two different concepts. Literacy is only a means to the end of education. A literate can be defined as one who has got the ability to read with understanding and to write either in one's mother tongue or any other language. On the contrary enrichment of mind constitutes true education. Pondicherry State, according to 1961 Census, ranks high in literacy. It occupies the second place next to Delhi among union territories and third in rank among Indian States acceding the first and second places to Kerala State and Delhi territory. The literacy standard of Pondicherry has been estimated at 37.43 per cent as against 24.02 per cent for all India. The effective spread of education in Pondicherry territory has been made possible through a net-work of Elementary, Higher Secondary and Secondary educational institutions found in the rural areas there. The village Veerampattinam has got a Government middle school.

84. According to 1961 Census, Veerampattinam has a population of 409 who are literates. This is composed of 297 males and 112 females. The number of literates to the total village population constitutes 21.37 per cent or in other words 31.76 per cent of the males and 11.44 per cent of the females are found to be literates. Out of 409 persons who are literates as many as 255 persons or 62.35 per cent have been covered in the sample survey. Table No. X shows the sample population by age, sex and education. Male literates numbering 202 constitute 39.29 per cent and female literates numbering 46 constitute only 8.79 per cent of the total sample population. Illiteracy is found to be much higher in the case of females. The literates who are just able to read and write in Tamil in both sexes are 172 (144 males and 28 females). Persons with primary or junior basic as educational qualification, number 78 consisting of 60 males and 18 females. There are only 5 persons (all males) who are matriculates or having higher secondary as educational qualification. The proportion of female literates decreases with advancement in the age-groups.

TABLE No. X

Education

No. of households surveyed: 202

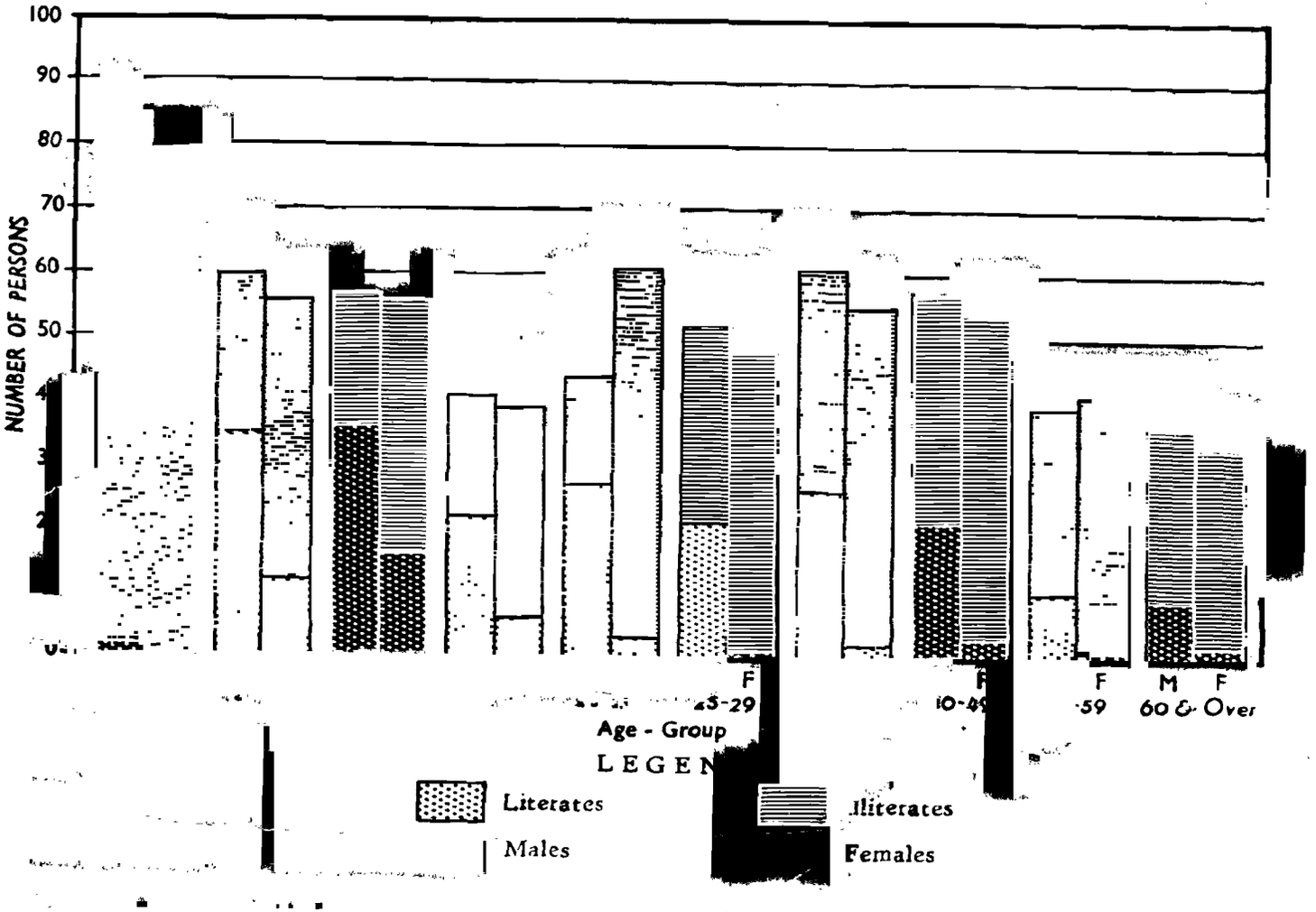
Age-groups (in years)	Total			Illiterate		Literate without educational standard		Primary or Junior Basic		Matriculation or higher secondary	
	Persons	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)
0— 4	165	85	80	83	80	1	...	1	...	...	...
5— 9	116	60	56	25	44	...	...	35	12	...	...
10—14	113	57	56	21	40	12	10	24	6	...	...
15—19	80	41	39	19	33	22	6	...	...	...	...
20—24	105	44	61	17	58	25	3	...	...	2	...
25—29	100	52	48	31	47	20	1	...	...	1	...
30—34	65	36	29	21	28	14	1	...	...	1	...
35—39	51	25	26	14	25	10	1	...	...	1	...
40—44	63	30	33	17	31	13	2	...	...	...	...
45—49	48	27	21	19	20	8	1	...	...	...	...
50—54	50	22	28	15	27	7	1	...	...	...	...
55—59	30	17	13	14	13	3	...	...	...	...	...
60 & over	69	36	33	27	31	9	2	...	...	...	...
Total	**1,055**	**532**	**523**	**323**	**477**	**144**	**28**	**60**	**18**	**5**	...

85. In regard to literacy and education, Pattanavars are in the fore-front in the village. Literacy level is highest among them here. The 5 matriculates when we came across during the survey belonged to this progressive community. One Pattanavan is the Deputy Mayor of the Ariyankuppam Commune and several members of this community are working in Government Offices and private concerns. Sembadavans and Vanniars occupy the second place in the scale of literacy, next to Pattanavans. Illiterates are more among Parayans and the Pattanavar fisherfolk living close to the sea. Traditionally, the Pattanavans used to employ their sons in fishing operations rather than sending them to school for education. Now-a-days, there is a general awakening among them about the need to educate their children. The introduction of mid-day meal scheme which is in vogue in the middle school at Veerampattinam also has boosted the strength of pupils in all educational institutions in Pondicherry area. A large number of Pattanavan and Sembadavan children attend school, of late. With all the educational facilities and encouragement now available, the literacy level of Veerampattinam is bound to record further improvements in the years to come.

Educational institution

86. There is a Government Middle School in Veerampattinam situated at the very entrance to it, on an extensive area of about 3 to 4 acres. The school which was a primary institution initially was started on 3—8—1946. The present structure of brick walls and tiled roofings was constructed in 1959, in order to provide more accommodation, after the conversion of this primary institution into a middle school. The number of pupils enrolled at the beginning of 1964 in primary classes (from I to V standard) was 204 boys and 106 girls and in the middle classes (from VI to VIII Standard) the strength enrolled was 75 boys and 19 girls. But the actual attendence is reported to be about 95 per cent. The strength of 404 pupils enrolled in the institution includes 5 boys and 2 girls belonging to the scheduled caste. The school has a staff of one Headmaster and 10 teachers consisting of eight males and two females. The Headmaster is a trained secondary grade teacher. Of the two females, one is on the teaching staff and the other is a Craft Instructress. Of the eight male teachers one is a Physical Education Instructor who is locally trained to impart physical education to pupils. His main duties are

AGE AND LITERACY



instruction and participation in operational activities while imparting physical education to pupils. An extensive play ground is available adjoining the school itself. One noteworthy aspect about the school is that free education is imparted to one and all without reference to caste or creed. Mid-day meals are served to all the pupils every day in the afternoon. The introduction of the system of feeding school children has actually increased the strength of pupils attending the school. The only inconvenience facing the institution is inadequacy of water supply to school children. There are also no staff quarters to the teaching staff. However, the school gets good cooperation from the villagers, majority of whom educate their children here. For secondary education, there is a High School at Ariankuppam and for college and professional courses, facilities are available at Pondicherry.

Workers and non-workers

87. A discussion on the working force of Veerampattinam analysing its population into workers and non-workers will prove interesting. As per 1961 Census count, Veerampattinam has a working population of 746 persons consisting of 564 males and 182 females. Thus workers constitute 38.98 per cent of the total population. Male workers constitute 60.32 per cent of the total male population and female workers constitute 18.59 per cent of the total female population. The proportion of workers in Veerampattinam is slightly higher than that of Pondicherry territory which is 37.49 per cent but corresponds to the Pondicherry area proportion of 38.9 per cent. Analysing the sex-wise proportions of workers of the village and comparing them with the territory and area proportions, we find that the proportion of 60.32 per cent of male workers in Veerampattinam is higher than that in the entire territory or area which are 55 per cent and 56.2 per cent respectively. The proportion of female workers in the village is however slightly lower than its area and state proportion. It is 18.59 per cent as against 20.1 per cent and 21.3 per cent for Pondicherry territory and area respectively. This low proportion of female workers is due to the fact that the mainstay of the people of Veerampattinam is fishing and this occupation does not absorb as many females as agriculture does. Agriculture is the chief occupation in the Ariankuppam commune in Pondicherry area, if considered as a whole. Hence the low ratio of female participation in the working force in the village. The distribution of workers and non-workers among 1055 persons covered in the sample survey is shown in Table No. XI below:

TABLE No. XI

Workers and non-workers

No. of households surveyed: 202

Age-group (in years)	Total population			Workers			Non-workers		
	Persons	Males	Females	Persons	Males	Females	Persons	Males	Females
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)
All ages	1,055	532	523	381	315	66	674	217	457
0—14	394	202	192	3	2	1	391	200	191
15—34	350	173	177	184	165	19	166	8	158
35—59	242	121	121	151	115	36	91	6	85
60 & over	69	36	33	43	33	10	26	3	23

The workers covered in the survey number 381 persons (315 males and 66 females) who constitute 36.11 per cent of the total workers found in Veerampattinam. The male workers of the sample population numbering 315 constitute 59.2 per cent of the total sample population and female workers form 12.62 per cent. Analysing the distribution of workers by age-groups, we find 3 workers (2 males and one female) are in the age-group of 0—14 and 43 (33 males and 10 females) in the age-group of 60 and above. Bulk of the workers are seen concentrated in the two age-groups, namely 15—34 and 35—59. In the age-group 15—34, there are 350 persons in the village and among them as many as 184 or 52.57 per cent of them are workers. There are

19 female workers in this age-group and it is found they are all engaged as fish-mongers. In the next age-group 35—59, 64.40 per cent of the persons are workers and the number of female workers is found to be the highest under this age-group. There are 45 workers belonging to 60+ age-group. Of these only 10 are females.

88. An analysis of the activities of the non-working population is attempted in Table No. XII below :

TABLE No. XII

Non-workers by sex, age-groups and nature of activity

No. of households surveyed: 202

Age-groups (in years)	Total non-workers			Full time students or children attending school		Persons engaged only in household duties		Dependents, infants and children not attending school and persons permanently disabled		Persons seeking employment for the first time		Persons employed before but now out of employment and seeking work	
	Persons	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)
All ages	674	217	457	60	16	...	234	154	207	...	...	3	...
0—14	391	200	191	60	16	...	3	140	172	...	...	...	...
15—34	166	8	158	...	...	...	143	8	15	...	...	...	...
35—59	91	6	85	...	...	...	82	3	3	...	...	3	...
60 & over	26	3	23	...	...	...	6	3	17	...	...	...	...

Non-workers of the sample population number 674 consisting of 217 males and 457 females. They constitute 63.89 per cent of the total sample population. 67.8 per cent of the non-workers covered by our survey are females *i.e.* to say, male non-workers constitute only 1/3 of the total non-workers in our sample study. While 87.38 per cent of females are non-workers, the same percentage is only 40.79 among males in the village. Bulk of the female non-workers are engaged in household duties and among the male non-workers as many as 60 are students attending school and 154 are dependents or children not attending school. As may as 140 males in the age-group of 0—14 are non-workers. Obviously male children belonging to this age-group are neither sent to school nor asked to take up any work. The proporation of female non-workers in this age-group is still higher being 172 or 90.05 per cent. It is thus seen that still a large number of children in the village are not sent to school.

89. While considering the activities of the non-working population, the following facts are revealed. Out of the total of 674 non-workers in this surveyed population only 76 are attending school. They all belong to the age-group 0—14 and 60 of these children are males. As may as 234 persons (all females) are engaged in household duties. 361 persons *i.e.* 154 males and 207 females are dependents *i.e.* infants, children not attending school and others permanently disabled. Among these 361, it is noticed that as many as 140 males and 172 females are children of the age-group 0—14. It is a matter for regret that these young children are forced to waste away their time neither attending school nor being usefully employed. Only 3 persons (all males) are there in the sample population who were employed once, but out of employment at the time of the survey. Analysis of female non-workers will reveal that the bulk of them *i.e.* over 50 per cent is engaged in hosehold duties. Out of 234 females engaged only in household duties as many as 143 are found to belong to the age-group 15—34 and 82 to 35—59 age-group. Only 6 ladies in the age-group 60+ are found engaged in household work. The number of persons who are dependents or permanently disabled is 15 in the age-group 15—34 and 17 in the age-group 60+.

OCCUPATIONAL PATTERN

(Whole Village)



CHAPTER IV

VILLAGE ECONOMY

90. A brief study of the economy of the village is a must to understand the people and their plight well. The economic condition of the people is very often the cause far many other evils and at times it also serves as a booster to the innate good nature of man. Hence the importance of the study of the economy. What is the village economy? It is a difficult poser, though not too difficult to answer. It is the way in which the people manage to make their both ends meet *i.e.* how they earn and how they spend their income. The various activities that arise out of this function of any society are covered under its economy. Now let us pass on to examine the economy of Veerampattinam.

91. Fishing is the principal occupation of the people of Veerampattinam. Pattanavans and Nattars who constitute 90 per cent of the village population, are engaged in fishing operations. According to the Primary Census Abstract of the village, out of 746 workers, as may as 479 or 64.21 per cent are engaged in fishing. Only males are found in this occupation and 84.93 per cent of the total male population earn their living by way of fishing. The general occupational structure of the village could be viewed from the following statement, which is based on 1961 Census count.

STATEMENT No. 4

Occupations	No. of persons
Cultivation ...	4 males 2 females
Fishing ...	479 males
Household Industry—Coir-making	2 males 27 females
In manufacturing other than household industry	34 males 4 females
Engaged in constructian ...	3 males
In trade and commerce ...	3 males 145 females
In other services ...	39 males 4 females

92. As is clear from the above statement participation in the primary industry *viz.* agriculture is very low in the village. While men concentrate in fishing women are found to specialise in trade and commerce. Enquiry has revealed that the women of the village are engaged mostly in the sale of fish in the village and neighbouring markets. This accounts for their high representation under trade and commerce. 79.67 per cent of the total working females are engaged in this line of occupation. Other important occupations are coir-making and manufacturing other than household industry. Coir-making has 3.89 per cent of total workers in it while the other category has 5.09 per cent. Another category of higher significance is other services which includes Government service, service in institutions etc. This category of occupation has 5.76 per cent of total workers. The striking feature of the occupational pattern of the village is the very low participation in agriculture which has only 0.80 per cent of total workers engaged in it.

93. The workers of the sample population number 381 consisting of 315 males and 66 females. Their occupation-wise distribution has been given in the following statement:

STATEMENT No. 5

Occupation	Total No. of persons	Males	Females
Fishing ...	286	286	...
Coir-making ...	40	2	38
Selling fish ...	25	...	25
Cultivation ...	5	4	1
Spinning mill work ...	5	5	...
Cooly work ...	5	5	...
Business other than fish selling ...	5	4	1
Government service ...	4	4	...
Tailoring ...	3	3	...
Private clerk ...	1	1	...
Mid-wifery ...	1	...	1
Military service ...	1	1	...
Total ...	**381**	**315**	**66**

We find again from the above statement that fishing is the main source of livelihood to the villagers and that while the majority of the male workers are engaged in fishing, most of the female workers are engaged in marketing the harvest of the sea. In the sample analysis also we see that participation rate in other spheres such as cultivation, business and private

service is very low. As such it is safe to conclude that economy of the village centres around fishing and no substantial subsidiary occupation is prevalent.

Occupational structure

94. The 193 Pattanavan households covered in our survey, have 369 workers consisting of 303 males and 66 females. Their occupation-wise distribution is given below:

STATEMENT No. 6

Occupation	Total number of workers	Males	Females
Fishing ...	278	278	...
Government service ...	4	4	...
Coir making ...	40	2	38
Cooly work ...	4	4	...
Mill work ...	4	4	...
Business ...	5	4	1
Tailoring ...	2	2	...
Private service ...	1	1	...
Selling fish ...	25	...	25
Mid-wifery ...	1	...	1
Military service ...	1	1	...
Cultivation ...	4	3	1
Total ...	**369**	**303**	**66**

95. We find that the majority of workers in the Pattanavan community are engaged in their traditional occupation of fishing. At the same time they have also taken up other occupations such as Government or private service, business, cultivation etc., though the rate of their participation in them is not substantial. Coir-making is perhaps the only household industry that flourishes in this village. This is perhaps because the product *viz.* coir is made use of locally by the fishermen for lashing the catamarams. Mostly women are engaged in this industry. Besides this industry women are busy with marketing of fish too. Women of this community are found engaged in other occupations like agriculture and business also. This is perhaps due to the force of circumstances. However, this has enabled them to boost up their economic status and encourage subsidiary industries which is most essential to make both ends meet. There are a few well-to-do families in this community who no longer pursue fishing occupation in view of its unprofitable and unsteady nature and who are therefore concentrating on other lucrative fields such as cultivation, business etc. Education and wealth have slowly brought in a change among a few who consider it beneath their dignity to resort to this sub-standard occupation. In the well-to-do Pattanavan households females generally do not go out for work. In the 7 Sembadavan households srveyed there were only 8 workers, all of whom are males. Unlike the Pattanavans, females of this community do not go out for earning a living. All the male workers are primarily engaged in fishing in fresh waters *i.e.* in lakes and rivers. Their earning is very poor and indeed deplorable. Their monthly income hardly exceeds Rs. 75—100 per household which is quite insufficient to support a family. As subsidiary occupation also is not popular among this community they are found to lead a hand to mouth existence all round the year. But for one household engaged in temple service and a couple of other households who have cultivation as subsidiary occupation no other worker is engaged in any kind of secondary avocation. As a contrast to the Pattanavan community this community has no one engaged in business, Government or private service etc. In the two Vanniar households there are 4 workers who are all males. Of these 4, one is a tailor, another is engaged in cultivation, the third is doing cooly work and the fourth is employed in a spinning mill near Pondicherry. In households of very poor means, ladies also go out to work in this community. Parayans have not been covered in the survey. The majority of them are coolies. Some of them are engaged in Rickshaw pulling and earn Rs. 30 to 40 every month. In the only Brahmin household which is also not covered in the survey, the head of the family is engaged in temple service.

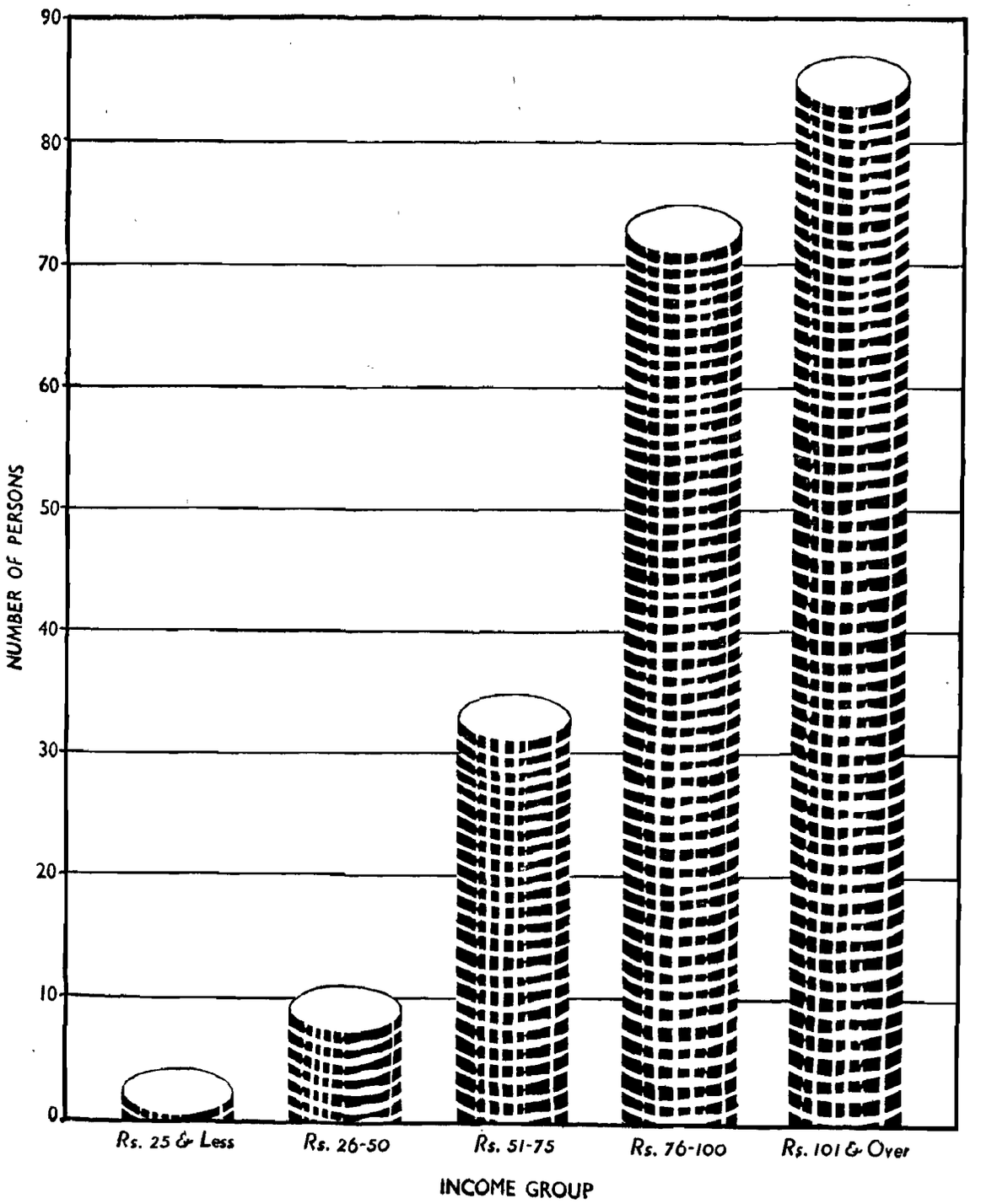
Income

96. The statement given below gives the classification of 202 sample households on the basis of monthly income.

STATEMENT No. 7

Income groups	No. of households	Percentage to the total number of households covered in the survey
Low—		
Rs. 26 & less	2	0.99
Rs. 26—50	9	4.46
Middle—		
Rs. 51—75	33	16.34
High—		
Rs. 76—100	73	36.13
Rs. 101 & above	85	42.08

INCOME OF THE HOUSEHOLDS



Two households have an income of Rs. 25 and less constituting 0.99 per cent of the sample households. There are nine households who get Rs. 26—50 every month, forming 4.46 per cent. In the middle income group, there are 33 households forming 16.34 per cent. In the higher income group there are 73 households getting an income of Rs. 76—100 forming 36.13 per cent. Households getting an income of Rs. 101 and above number 85, constituting 42.08 per cent. Though the proportions in the high income groups are greater, income is often inadequate to make both ends meet as the families have a large number of mouths to feed, each family having not less than five members. A sizeable proportion of the income, in the case of the majority of fishermen, is spent on toddy which leaves barely enough margin to spend on other items of necessities of life. Coir manufacturing industry is the only subsidiary occupation found among the Pattanavans. However, this does not provide any income to them as the coir manufactured is not marketed but used for lashing the catamarans and hauling them to the shore. Only very few households have taken up cultivation or business to supplement their income. Unless some profitable subsidiary occupation is taken up by the villagers there is no scope of their getting adequate income and leading even a life of hand to mouth existence. The monthly income of the 202 sample households, occupation-wise, is shown in the Table No. XIII given below.

TABLE No. XIII

Monthly Income of Households by Occupations

No. of households urveyed: 202

Occupation	No. of households	Monthly income of households in the range of				
		Less than Rs. 25	Rs. 26—50	Rs. 51—75	Rs. 76—100	Rs. 101 and above
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Fishing	177	...	3	30	69	75
Coir-making	5	2	2	...	1	...
Cultivation	5	...	1	1	1	2
Spinning-Mill Service ...	3	...	...	...	1	2
Business other than fish selling ...	5	...	...	...	...	5
Government service, private service, cooly work and other services	7	...	3	2	1	1
Total	**202**	**2**	**9**	**33**	**73**	**85**

The main sources of income in all the above occupations include items like income by marketing the fish, salary, wages, profit in business, yield or rent from land etc.

Income–A Community-wise study

97. Pattanavan community apart from being numerically dominant is also economically sound. The richest and the poorest sections are simultaneously seen among Pattanavans. Of the 193 households of Pattanavans covered in the sample survey, two get an income of Rs. 25 and less, eight families are getting Rs. 26—50, 32 are getting Rs. 51—75, 68 are getting Rs. 76—100 and 83 are getting Rs. 101 and above. More number of households are seen in the income groups of Rs. 76—100 and Rs. 101 and above. In the low income group also there are as many as 10 households. An analysis of the income structure of this community throws light on the cross-section of the village economy with regard to its income. Of the 7 Sembadavan households, one is found in the monthly income group of Rs. 51—75, four are found in the income range of Rs. 76—100 and two are falling in the income group of Rs. 101 and above. Sembadavans are less prosperous than Pattanavans. The two Vanniar households covered by the sample survey are in the income groups of Rs. 26—50 and Rs. 76—100. Vanniars appear to get lower income than Sembadavans. Parayans are found to belong to the lowest income group in the village.

Expenditure

98. The extent of monthly expenditure for each item coming under necessities of life, occupation-wise, in respect of the 202 sample households has been given in Table No. XIV. In general, change in the extent of expenditure for each item is noticed in the case of middle and higher class families when compared to lower income group families. Obviously being economically better, the families of higher income groups are able to spend liberally on all items of wants.

TABLE No. XIV

Average monthly expenditure per household by income groups and occupations

No. of households surveyed: 202

Items of expenditure	All households		Households with a monthly income of									
			Less than Rs. 25		Rs. 26—50		Rs. 51—75		Rs. 76—100		Rs. 101 & above	
	No. of house-holds.	Expenditure per household	No. of house-holds	Average ex-penditure	No. of house-holds	Average ex-penditure	No. of house-holds	Average ex-penditure	No. of house-holds	Average ex-penditure	No. of house-holds	Average ex-penditure
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)
Occupation—Fishing												
A. Food	177	...	...	...	3	...	30	...	69	...	75	...
1. Cereals and pulses	...	44.38	...	...	...	14.33	...	29.00	...	38.29	...	57.33
2. Vegetables	...	9.14	...	...	...	3.33	...	5.23	...	8.00	...	11.99
3. Meat and fish	...	4.45	...	...	...	1.33	...	1.22	...	3.36	...	6.85
4. Condiments	...	7.45	...	...	...	2.67	...	5.80	...	7.48	...	8.32
5. Oils and fats	...	8.58	...	...	...	3.33	...	6.33	...	8.32	...	9.92
6. Sugar	...	1.11	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	0.25	...	2.40
7. Beverages	...	5.94	...	...	...	...	...	2.93	...	3.43	...	9.69
8. Liquor	...	9.31	...	...	...	5.00	...	4.53	...	7.53	...	13.01
9. Tobacco	...	3.99	...	...	...	1.00	...	2.13	...	3.12	...	5.67
10. Others (Refreshment)	...	4.73	...	...	...	1.00	...	2.10	...	4.39	...	6.23
11. Coffee and Tea	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
B. Clothing	...	5.37	...	...	...	2.08	...	3.13	...	4.63	...	7.08
C. Housing	...	1.96	...	...	...	0.97	...	1.39	...	1.66	...	2.51
D. Miscellaneous	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
1. Education	...	0.25	...	...	...	1.11	...	0.31	...	0.09	...	0.39
2. Religious observances	...	2.86	...	...	...	1.11	...	1.89	...	2.40	...	3.72
3. Provident fund, Insuranee, etc.	...	0.11	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	0.14	...	0.01
4. Payment of debts	...	0.02	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	0.04
5. Medical fees and medicines	...	0.16	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	0.07	...	0.30
6. Amusements	...	1.41	...	...	...	0.56	...	1.08	...	1.07	...	1.88
7. Remittance to dependents	...	0.19	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	0.44
8. Travelling	...	0.20	...	...	...	0.42	...	0.07	...	0.11	...	0.35
9. Maintenance of household animals	...	2.34	...	...	...	...	...	2.11	...	2.23	...	2.56

10.	Payment of taxes	...	0.01	...	...	...	...	...	0.01	...	0.01	...	0.01
11.	Cultivation, indusrry and business	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
12.	Any other expenditure not elsewhere classified	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	Total ...	...	**113.96**	...	...	...	**38.24**	...	**69.26**	...	**96.58**	...	**150.70**
Occupation—Cultivation													
	A. Food	5	...	...	...	1	...	1	...	1	...	2	...
1.	Cereals and pulses	...	40.00	...	...	...	30.00	...	50.00	...	30.00	...	45.00
2.	Vegetables	...	12.00	...	...	...	15.00	...	10.00	...	10.00	...	12.50
3.	Meat and fish	...	9.40	...	...	...	5.00	...	7.00	...	10.00	...	12.50
4.	Condiments	...	2.40	...	...	...	1.00	...	2.00	...	2.00	...	3.50
5.	Oils and fats	...	9.40	...	...	...	4.00	...	10.00	...	10.00	...	11.50
6.	Sugar	...	4.00	...	...	...	2.00	...	4.00	...	5.00	...	4.50
7.	Beverages	...	1.60	...	...	...	...	...	3.00	...	...	...	2.50
8.	Liquor	...	6.00	...	...	...	10.00	...	...	...	10.00	...	5.00
9.	Tobacco	...	1.00	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	5.00	...	...
10.	Others (Refreshment) ...	...	3.60	...	...	...	...	...	1.00	...	15.00	...	1.00
11.	Coffee and Tea	...	1.00	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	5.00	...	...
	B. Clothing ...	...	11.70	...	...	...	12.50	...	17.00	...	8.00	...	10.50
	C. Housing	...	10.23	...	...	...	10.00	...	7.00	...	...	...	17.08
	D. Miscellaneous	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
1.	Education	...	1.70	...	...	...	...	...	8.50	...	...	...	...
2.	Religious observances ...	...	8.50	...	...	...	8.50	...	5.00	...	8.00	...	10.50
3.	Provident fund, insurance, etc. ...	...	1.70	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	4.25
4.	Payment of debts	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
5.	Medical fees and medicines ...	...	4.27	...	...	...	2.08	...	2.50	...	...	...	8.37
6.	Amusements	...	0.92	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	3.00	...	0.80
7.	Remittance to dependents ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
8.	Travelling	...	6.90	...	...	...	8.50	...	1.25	...	10.00	...	7.37
9.	Maintenance of household animals	...	6.35	...	...	...	8.50	...	4.00	...	2.00	...	8.62
10.	Payment of taxes	...	0.30	...	...	...	0.25	...	0.25	...	...	...	0.50
11.	Cultivation, industry and business	...	15.72	...	...	...	3.75	...	8.33	...	9.00	...	28.75
12.	Any other expenditure not elsewhere stated	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	Total ...	...	**158.69**	...	...	...	**120.08**	...	**140.83**	...	**142.00**	...	**194.74**

TABLE No. XIV—*contd.*

Average monthly expenditure per household by income groups and occupations—*contd.*

Items of expenditure	All households		Households with a monthly income of									
			Less than Rs. 25		Rs. 26—50		Rs. 51—75		Rs. 76—100		Rs. 101 & above	
	No. of households	Expenditure per household	No. of households	Average expenditure	No. of households	Average expenditure	No. of households	Average expenditure	No. of households	Average expenditure	No. of households	Average expenditure
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)
Occupation—**Business**												
A. Food	5	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	5	...
1. Cereals and pulses	...	60.00	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	60.00
2. Vegetables	...	9.40	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	9.40
3. Meat and fish	...	5.00	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	5.00
4. Condiments	...	5.20	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	5.20
5. Oil and fats	...	8.20	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	8.20
6. Sugar	...	1.80	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1.80
7. Beverages	...	6.00	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	6.00
8. Liquor	...	4.00	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	4.00
9. Tobacco	...	3.20	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	3.20
10. Others (Refreshments) ...	...	5.40	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	5.40
11. Coffee and tea	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
B. Clothing	...	11.25	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	11.25
C. Housing	...	4.66	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	4.66
D. Miscellaneous	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
1. Education	...	3.33	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	3.33
2. Religious observances ...	...	4.25	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	4.25
3. Provident fund, Insurance etc. ...	...	1.67	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1.67
4. Payment of debts	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
5. Medical fees and medicines ...	...	2.89	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2.89
6. Amusements	...	1.83	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1.83
7. Remittance to dependents ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
8. Travelling	...	1.67	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1.67
9. Maintenance of household animals ...		3.00	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	3.00

10.	Payment of taxes	...	0.62	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	0.62
11.	Cultivation, industry and business	...	2.50	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2.50
12.	Any other expenditure not elsewhere classified	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	Total ...	...	**145.87**	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	**145.87**
Occupation—**Coir-making**													
	A. Food	5	...	2	...	2	...	...	...	1	...	...	...
1.	Cereals and pulses	...	25.00	...	15.00	...	27.50	...	...	...	40.00	...	...
2.	Vegetables	...	4.60	...	2.00	...	6.00	...	...	...	7.00	...	...
3.	Meat and fish	...	0.60	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	3.00	...	...
4.	Condiments	...	3.60	...	1.00	...	4.00	...	...	...	8.00	...	...
5.	Oils and fats	...	3.60	...	1.50	...	4.00	...	...	...	7.00	...	...
6.	Sugar	...	0.20	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1.00	...	...
7.	Beverages	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
8.	Liquor	...	2.00	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	10.00	...	...
9.	Tobacco	...	2.00	...	1.50	...	1.50	...	...	...	4.00	...	...
10.	Others (Refreshments) ...	...	2.80	...	...	...	2.00	...	...	...	10.00	...	...
11.	Coffee and Tea	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	B. Clothing	...	2.58	...	2.50	...	1.87	...	...	...	4.16	...	...
	C. Housing	...	1.08	...	1.04	...	0.83	...	...	...	1.66	...	...
	D. Miscellaneous												
1.	Education	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
2.	Religious observances ...	...	1.92	...	1.46	...	2.09	...	...	...	2.50	...	...
3.	Provident fund and Insurance etc.	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
4.	Payment of debts	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
5.	Medical fees and medicines ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
6.	Amusements	...	1.50	...	0.83	...	2.09	...	...	...	1.67	...	...
7.	Remittance to dependents ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2.50	...	...
8.	Travelling	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
9.	Maintenance of household animals	...	0.50	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
10.	Payment of taxes	...	...	...	..	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
11.	Cultivation, industry and business	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
12.	Any other expenditure not elsewhere classified	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	Total ...	...	**51.98**	...	**26.83**	...	**51.88**	...	...	...	**102.49**	...	...

TABLE No. XIV—*concld.*

Average monthly expenditure per household by income groups and occupations—*concld.*

Items of expenditure	All households		Households with a monthly income of									
			Less taan Rs. 25		Rs. 26—50		Rs. 51—75		Rs. 76—100		Rs. 101 & above	
	No. of house-holds	Expenditure per household	No. of house-holds	Average ex-penditure	No. of house-holds	Average ex-penditure	No. of house-holds	Average ex-penditure	No. of house-holds	Average ex-penditure	No. of house-holds	Average ex-penditure
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)
Occupation—Mill-workers, Government and private services, tailoring etc.,												
A. Food	10	...	...	...	3	...	2	...	2	...	3	...
1. Cereals and pulses	...	28.70	...	...	...	22.33	...	37.50	...	35.00	...	25.00
2. Vegetables	...	8.10	...	...	...	5.00	...	9.50	...	11.00	...	8.33
3. Meat and fish	...	3.30	...	...	...	1.00	...	2.50	...	2.50	...	6.67
4. Condiments	...	4.30	...	...	...	4.33	...	2.50	...	8.50	...	2.67
5. Oils and fats	...	7.70	...	...	...	4.33	...	4.00	...	9.00	...	12.67
6. Sugar	...	2.00	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1.50	...	5.67
7. Beverages	...	0.50	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1.67
8. Liquor	...	12.40	...	...	...	4.67	...	...	...	...	...	36.67
9. Tobacco	...	2.50	...	...	...	1.67	...	2.50	...	2.50	...	3.33
10. Others (Refreshments) ...	...	6.00	...	...	...	1.00	...	2.00	...	2.50	...	16.00
11. Coffee and Tea	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
B. Clothing	...	8.50	...	...	...	2.22	...	5.83	...	5.83	...	18.33
C. Housing	...	6.63	...	...	...	4.75	...	1.88	...	2.92	...	14.16
D. Miscellaneous	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
1. Education	...	0.50	...	...	...	0.14	...	0.21	...	0.21	...	1.25
2. Religious observances ...	...	3.00	...	...	...	1.11	...	2.71	...	3.33	...	4.86
3. Provident fund and Insurance etc.	...	0.50	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1.67
4. Payment of debts	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
5. Medical fees and medicines ...	...	2.00	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	6.67
6. Amusements	...	1.54	...	...	...	0.97	...	0.83	...	1.46	...	2.64
7. Remittance to dependents ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
8. Travelling	...	1.74	...	...	...	...	...	0.42	...	0.83	...	5.00
9. Maintenance of household animals	...	2.67	...	...	...	1.81	...	2.29	...	2.08	...	4.17
10. Payment of taxes	...	0.15	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	0.50
11. Cultivation, industry and business	...	1.67	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	5.56
12. Any other expenditure not elsewhere classified	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Total ...	**...**	**104.40**	...	...	...	**55.33**	...	**74.67**	...	**89.16**	...	**183.49**

It is now evident that there are 177 households in the village who depend on fishing for their livelihood. These households are found to belong to different income groups and their distribution can be summed up as follows. Three families belong to Rs. 26—50 group, 30 families to Rs. 51—75, 69 families to 76—100 and 75 families to Rs. 101 and above. The three families getting Rs. 26—50 spend on an average a sum of Rs. 38.24 on various items of food group, clothing, housing and miscellaneous wants. As the income is meagre, a general tendency is noticed in the case of these families to adjust the expenditure within the income limit. A sum of Rs. 14.33 is spent on rice, Rs. 4.66 on vegetables, meat and fish, Rs. 5.00 on toddy, Rs. 2.08 on clothing etc. The 30 families found in the income group of Rs. 51—75 spend on an average a sum of Rs. 69.26 which is within their income level. A sum of Rs. 29 is spent on rice, Rs. 6.45 on vegetables, fish and meat, Rs. 4.53 on toddy, Rs. 3.13 on clothing, Rs. 1.39 on light, fuel etc. and Rs. 5.47 on miscellaneous items. In the case of the 69 families found in the income group of Rs. 76—100, on an average, every month, the extent of expenditure incurred is Rs. 96.58. In this case also we find that expenditure is adjusted to the income derived. A sum of Rs. 38.29 is spent on rice, Rs. 11.36 on vegetables, meat and fish, Rs. 7.48 on oils and fats, Rs. 7.52 on liquor, Rs. 4.63 on clothing, Rs. 1.66 on housing and Rs. 6.12 on other miscellaneous items. There are as many as 75 families in the income group of Rs. 101 and above and the average expenditure among them is Rs. 150.70. Since these households get the higher income they are able to spend liberally on all items coming under necessities of life. As much as Rs. 57.33 is spent on the purchase of rice, Rs. 18.84 is spent on vegetables and meat, Rs. 13.01 on liquor, Rs. 7.08 on clothing, Rs. 2.51 on housing needs like fuel, light etc, and Rs. 9.70 on other miscellaneous items like education, religious observances, medicines, amusements, maintenance of household animals etc. The average expenditure in the case of all the 177 households engaged in fishing is Rs. 113.96. Rs. 44.38 or about 38.94 per cent of the total expenditure constitutes the expenditure incurred on the purchase of rice. The expenditure on vegetables and meat constitutes 11.9 per cent and the amount spent on liquor 82 per cent. The percentage of expenditure on clothing is 4.7 and that on other miscellaneous items like education, medical, amusements and religious observances etc., is 6.6 per cent. In general the expenditure pattern in the case of the 177 households engaged in fishing appears to be normal.

99. There are five households engaged in cultivation. Of these five, two are of the income group Rs. 101 and above per month while others are of three different income strata *viz.* Rs. 26—50, Rs. 51—75 and Rs. 76—100 per month. There is one household in each one of these three income groups. The average monthly expenditure in the case of these households is Rs. 158.69. Cultivation appears to be a better source of income than fishing. The extent of expenditure on each important group under necessities of life is as follows: Rice Rs. 40.00, vegetables and meat Rs. 21.40, condiments oils and fats Rs. 11.80, sugar and beverages Rs. 5.60, liquor Rs. 6, refreshment etc. Rs. 4.60, clothing Rs. 11.70, housing Rs. 10.23, miscellaneous items like education, medical assistance, amusements, travelling, maintenance of household animals etc. Rs. 30.64 and cultivation expenses, Rs. 15.72.

100. It is perhaps proved that business is a more profitable occupation than agriculture and fishing. Running of grocery shop, fire wood depot, sweet-meat stall etc. can be considered business in a village like Veerampattinam. In this village we have five families who depend mainly on business of the above kinds for their living and they come under the income range of Rs. 101 and above. The families in this income group are seen to spend liberally on various items. On an average, they spend Rs. 60 on the purchase of rice, Rs. 14.40 on vegetables and meat, Rs. 13.40 on condiments, oils and fats, Rs. 7.80 on sugar and beverages, Rs. 4.00 on liquor, Rs. 8.60 on tobacco, refreshment etc., Rs. 11.25 on clothing, Rs. 4.66 on housing and Rs. 21.76 on miscellaneous items such as education, religious observances, medical fees, amusements etc. As a whole the five families engaged in business spend on an average, every month, Rs. 145.87. This expenditure seems to be within the limit of their income.

101. There are five families having coir-making as their principal source of livelihood. Two of them are found in the income group of Rs. 25 and less and on an average they spend Rs. 26.83 on various items. As much as 55.9 per cent of the expenditure constitutes the sum spent on the purchase of rice. Two

other families are seen in the income range of Rs. 26—50 and their average monthly expenditure is Rs. 51.88. In the case of these families income is just adequate to meet the expenditure. Only one family is found in the higher income group of Rs. 76—100 and its average monthly expenditure is Rs. 102.49. In this case also we find that income is just adequate to meet the expenditure. Coir-making appears to be less profitable than fishing and yields very poor income. Even on necessities of life like clothing, housing etc. the proportion of the expenditure incurred is far below the average level. Thus in the case of all the five households, on an average, the monthly expenditure is as given below: Rs. 25 on the purchase of rice, Rs. 5.20 on vegetables and meat, Rs. 7.20 on oils, fats and condiments, Rs. 0.20 on sugar, Rs. 2.00 on liquor, Rs. 4.80 on tobacco and other refreshments, Rs. 2.58 on clothing, Rs. 1.08 on housing, Rs. 3.92 on miscellaneous items such as religious observances, amusements, maintenance of household animals etc. The total average expenditure is Rs. 51.98 which indicates that the families lead a life of hand to mouth existence.

102. Under the category of 'others' there are 10 households. 'Others' include persons engaged in occupations such as mill-service, Government and private services, tailoring etc. Analysing the income of these families group-wise and examining their expenditure pattern, we see that the 3 households found in the income range of Rs. 26—50 spend, every month, on an average, Rs. 55.33. Expenditure exceeds the income limit. Two families are seen in the income group of Rs. 51—75 and their average expenditure is Rs. 74.67. In this case we find that generally expenditure is adjusted to income limit. In the higher income ranges, we find 2 households in the income range Rs. 76—100 and 3 families in the income group of Rs. 101 and above. The average monthly expenditure of the former group is Rs. 89.16 and that of the latter, Rs. 183.49. We find that this expenditure is well within the income limits and some families spend liberally on various items of necessities of life. The average monthly expenditure of all the 10 families is Rs. 104.40 and the extent of expenditure for each major items is as given below: Amount spent on the purchase of rice Rs. 28.70, on vegetables and meat Rs. 11.40, on oils, fats and condiments Rs. 12, on sugar and beverages Rs. 2.50, on liquor Rs. 12.40, on tobacco, refreshment etc. Rs. 8.50, on clothing Rs. 8.50, on housing Rs. 6.63 and on other miscellaneous items Rs. 13.77. A good proportion of expenditure constitutes the amount spent on toddy. Families of lower income groups because of the habit of toddy drinking, often experience difficulty in making both ends meet.

Indebtedness

103. As we have already seen, the economic condition of the villagers is deplorable, if not pitiable. The growing needs of families, soaring prices and eternally low and fixed income drive the poor villagers very often to despair and land them in the hands of greedy money-lenders. Inability to meet the basic necessities of life forces the villager to resort to borrowing and the unfortunate cycle of borrowing and borrowing to pay interest is repeated. Our survey revealed that out of 202 households surveyed in this village, 171 were indebted. The basic factor of indebtedness was common, while the degree of indebtedness varied from one family to another. These 171 families are classified according to the extent of their indebtedness in Table No. XV.

TABLE No. XV

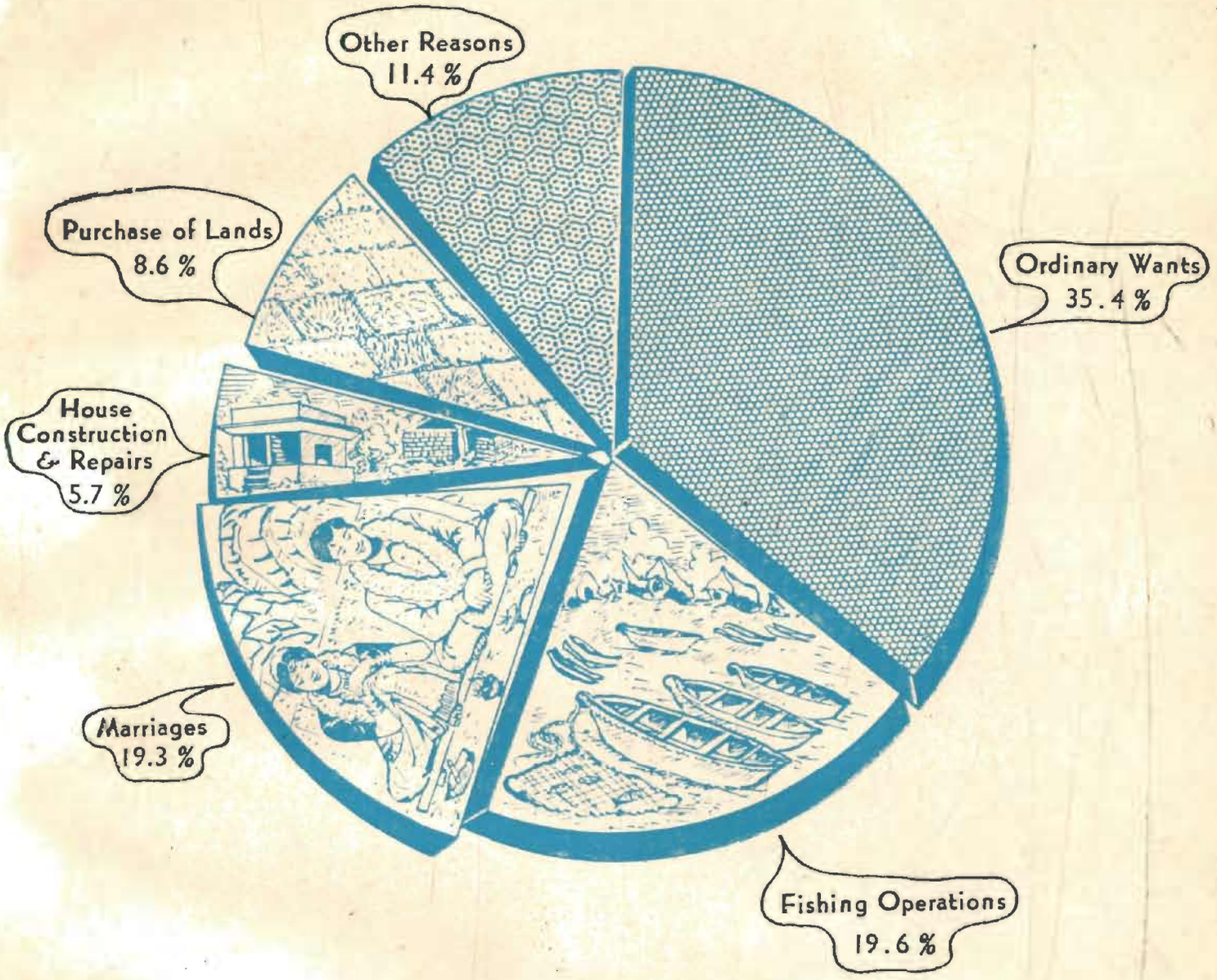
Indebtedness

No. of households surveyed: 202

Income groups (in rupees)	Total No. of households	No. of households in debt	Percentage to the total number of households	Average indebtedness of households in debt
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
All income groups	202	171	84.06	231.97
25 and less	2	2	100.00	75.00
26—50	9	6	66.67	130.00
51—75	33	26	78.79	148.00
76—100	73	64	87.67	179.00
101 and above	85	73	85.88	321.00

Families in the lowest income group of Rs. 25 and less are indebted to the maximum *viz.*, cent per cent. Generally, in different income levels, we find the proportion of indebted families almost the same and it is more than 65 per cent. The main cause, however, in respect of all the indebted families is inadequacy of income even to meet the expenditure incurred on the basic requirements of life.

CAUSES OF DEBT



104. The distribution of households having debts, indicating the causes of indebtedness is given in Table No. XVI.

TABLE No. XVI

Indebtedness by causes

No. of households surveyed: 202

Causes	Amount of debt (in rupees)	Number of families in debt	Proportion of debt due to cause to the total amount of debt
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Purchase of land	2,000.00	1	4.30
Construction/repair of house or any other building	2,650.00	5	5.69
Marriages	8,970.00	36	19.27
Funerals	450.00	4	0.97
To clear outstanding debts.	1,300.00	2	2.79
Sickness	1,750.00	8	3.76
Ordinary wants	16,510.00	98	35.47
Cultivation	2,000.00	1	4.30
Business	300.00	1	0.64
Purchase of nets, timber for catamarans etc.	9,120.00	22	19.59
Other reasons	1,500.00	1	3.22
Total	**46,550.00**	**179**	**100.00**

We find that the major causes are 'ordinary wants', 'purchase of nets and timber for catamarans' and 'expenditure on marriages.' The proportions of debts due to the above causes are comparatively higher. Debts due to 'other causes' constitute 3.22 per cent which include minor reasons such as expenditure on court proceedings, toddy drinking etc. Fisherfolk are traditionally a poverty-stricken class and even to possess a small net or a catamaran they are forced to go in for loans. Loans are mostly raised from private money lenders in the majority of the cases and the rates of interest vary from 10 per cent to 12 per cent. After the opening of the Fisheries Department in Pondicherry soon after *defacto* merger in 1954, financial assistance was given to the fishermen of Veerampattinam for the purchase of nets and other fishing appliances through the Block Development Office and by the department itself direct on reasonable rates of interest. Now, this financial assistance is rendered easier by giving long term and short term loans through the Fishermen Co-operative Society functioning in the village.

Land and agriculture

105. Cultivation is done on a very small scale in Veerampattinam. Being a fishing hamlet, very few persons are engaged in agriculture. The available cultivable area is situated on the southern and western portions of the village. As per the Primary Census Abstract of 1961, the village has only 6 persons (4 males and 2 females) engaged in agriculture. In the sample survey, out of the 202 families, five households returned that cultivation is their principal source of livelihood. Of these five families, one belong to the Vanniar community and 4 to the Pattanavan community. It is also seen that a few more households of Pattanavan community, numbering 9, pursue agriculture as a supplementary occupation on a very small scale. These households either own the land or have taken lands on lease or have given out land to others for cultivation. The nature of interest that the sample households pursuing agriculture have on land is shown in Table No. XVII. We find that in respect of families having land, the holdings are normally small. Four families possess land to the extent of 1 to 2.4 acres and four to the extent of 2.5 to 4.9 acres. Only one family has a holding extending from 5 to 10 acres. As regards the sample population, leased-in cultivators are nil and leased-out households number 4.

TABLE No. XVII

Households owning or possessing land or have given out land to others for cultivation

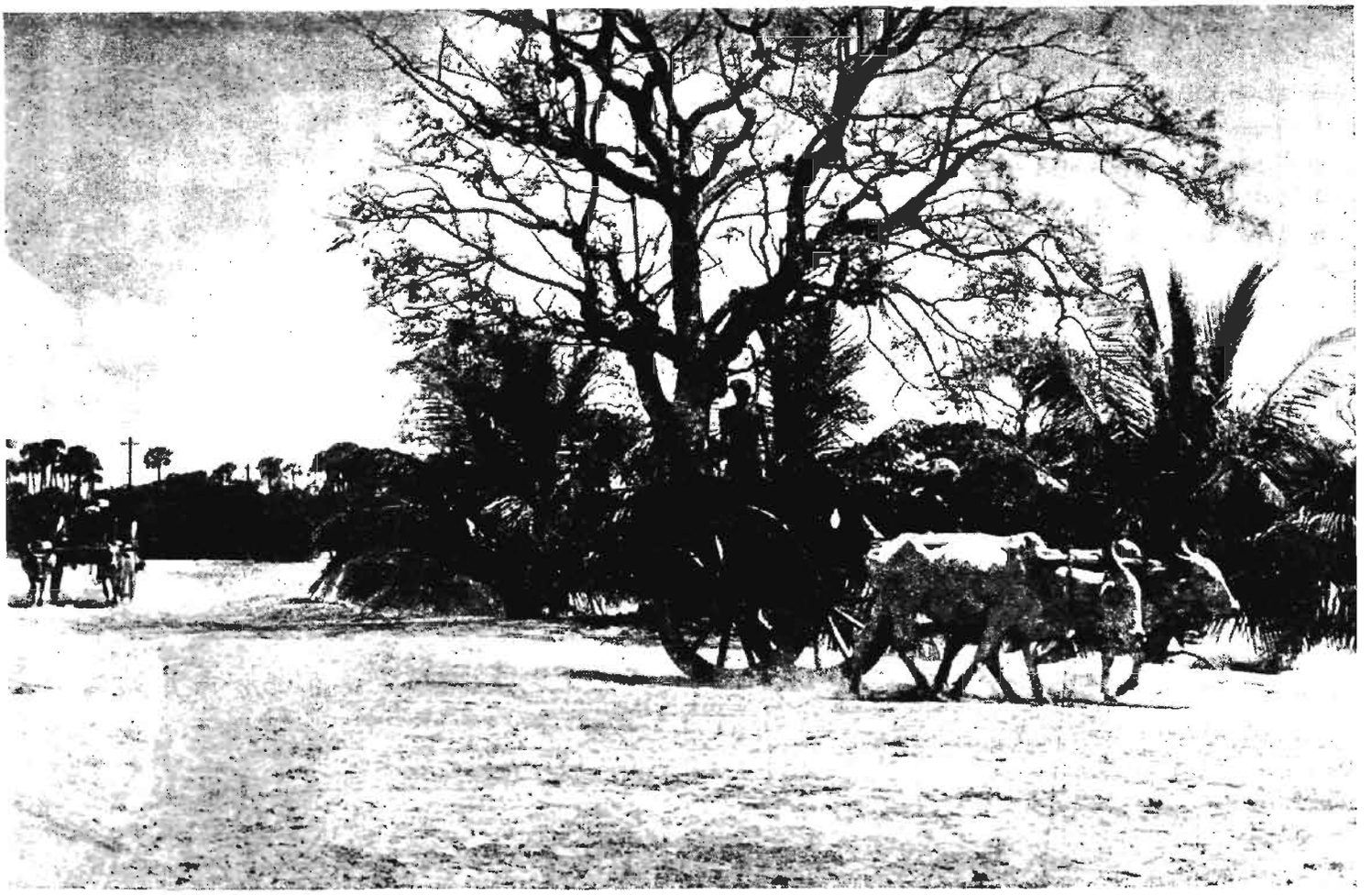
No. of households surveyed: 202

Nature of interest on land	Number of households and extent of land									
	No. land	5 cents and below	5 to 10 cents	10 to 20 cents	20 to 50 cents	50 to 1 acre	1 to 2·4 acres	2.5 to 4·9 acres	5 to 10 acres	10 acres and above
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)
HINDUS	189									
Land owned	...	...	...	...	...	...	4	4	1	...
Land held direct from Government under a tenure less substantial than ownership	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Land held from private persons or institutions	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Land given out to private persons or institutions	...	...	...	...	...	3	1	...	...	...
Total	**189**	...	...	...	...	3	5	4	1	...

106. Agricultural practices of the village are traditional and antiquated. The main source of irrigation is wells. One or two cultivators have fitted the wells with oil-engine pumps to raise water to irrigate their lands. The extent of wet land is small and paddy is raised in it. Dry lands constitute a greater proportion and the usual dry crops are Ragi, vegetables, cocoanut, tapioca and cashew-nuts. The technique of cultivation is the same as found in other villages of Pondicherry area. Generally, 3 crops of paddy are raised in a year. The first variety known as 'Samba' is a long term crop. Its calendar is 180 days. As soon as seedlings are raised, plantation takes place in the month of 'Purattasi' (September-October). It is harvested either in the month of 'Masi' (February-March) or 'Pankuni' (March-April). The yield per acre is said to be about 50 'kalams'. The value of 1 acre of wet land is said to be Rs. 6,000. The other varieties of paddy are *kullakar* or *Suvarnavari*. These are short term crops and the crop calendar is 120 days. Seedlings are raised and planted in the month of 'Pankuni' (March-April) or 'Chithrai' (April-May). Harvest takes place in 'Aadi' or 'Avani'. Green manures like *Poovarasan*, oil-cakes and chemical fertilisers like Ammonium Sulphate are generally used to increase the fertility of the soil. Agricultural labour is supplied by the Parayan community. The rates of wages are Rs. 3 per day for a male labourer and Rs. 2.50 for a female labourer. No significant ritual attendant on agriculture is noticed in Veerampattinam. A simple pooja is performed to 'Ganesa' every year individually by the land-owners, before the commencement of the agricultural operations, in their respective fields.



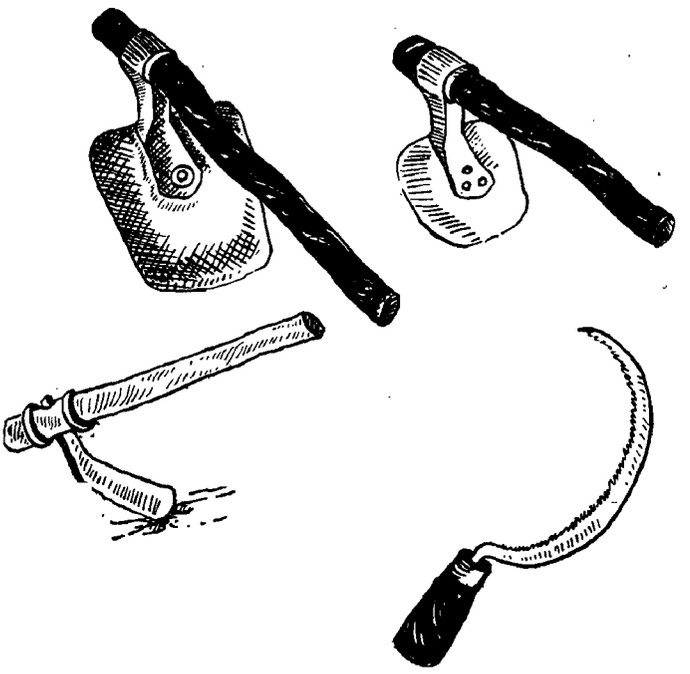
The evening bazaar in the village where fish and eatables are marketed.



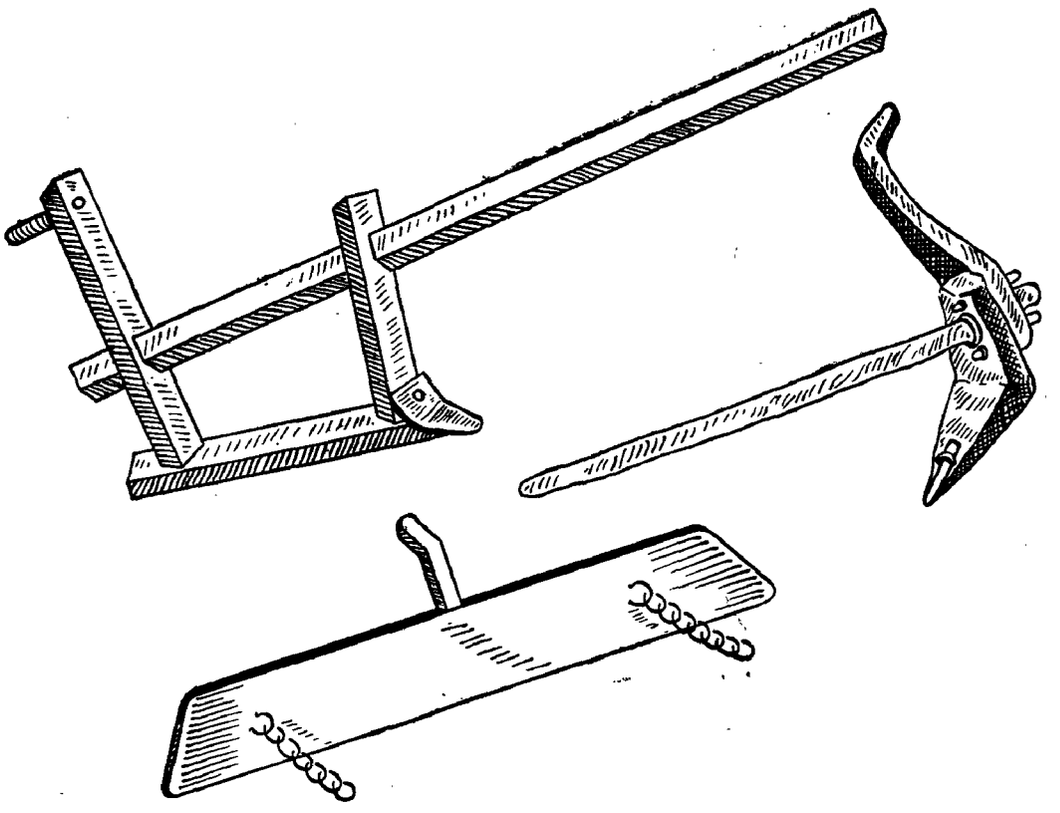
Bullock-carts transport cashew fruits and kernels.



A brisk business to the eatable-vendors.



AGRICULTURAL IMPLEMENTS COMMONLY USED



BOSE PLOUGH

107. Cashew-nut trees are found in large numbers in the outskirts of the village and during the season, the village is busy in marketing cashew fruits and kernels. The trees are found in clusters like bushes and are spread over on the northern and western parts of the village. Chettiars own the majority of the trees and every year they lease them out. The rate of lease is Rs. 3 or 4 per tree per annum. The cashew-nut season lasts from 'Thai' (January-February) to 'Vaikasi' (May-June). During the season fruits are marketed on a small scale in the village as well as in the surrounding villages. But cashew kernels are marketed in Pondicherry and Panrutti of South Arcot district of Madras State.

Livestock

108. Since agriculture is practised only in a small scale in Veerampattinam, its livestock population is slender. Whatever livestock is available is utilised for food and for other purposes like ploughing, pulling the cart etc. A list of the domestic animals including poultry kept by the people, as per the livestock census of 1961, conducted by the Bureau of Statistics, Pondicherry, is given below:

STATEMENT No. 8

Items		Number	
Cows	...	8	
Bullock	...	7	
He-buffaloes	...	2	
She-buffaloes	...	4	
Goats	...	8	
Hens	...	71	Fowls–Desi-126
Cocks	...	21	
Chicken	...	34	

Out of the 8 cows, 7 yield milk and one is dry. Cows are reared for milk. She-buffaloes are also reared for milk and out of the 4 she-buffaloes, 3 yield milk and one is dry. The milk obtained is used for domestic consumption and on an average a cow or a she-buffaloe yields about 3 seers of milk at a time. Bullocks used for pulling the carts are shod and a few agriculturists use them for ploughing their fields. Goats are maintained for milk and meat. Chettiars maintain the majority of the poultry found in the village. The fodder to the bovine population consists of hay, oil-cakes and cotton seeds and generally no shortage of fodder is felt by the owners of livestock. The livestock are taken outside the village daily for grazing. Fish rearing is the major source of livelihood to the communities of Pattanavans and Sembadavans.

109. Out of the 202 sample households, only 52 households own some livestock and poultry as can be seen from Table No. XVIII.

TABLE No. XVIII

Livestock and Poultry

No. of households surveyed: 202

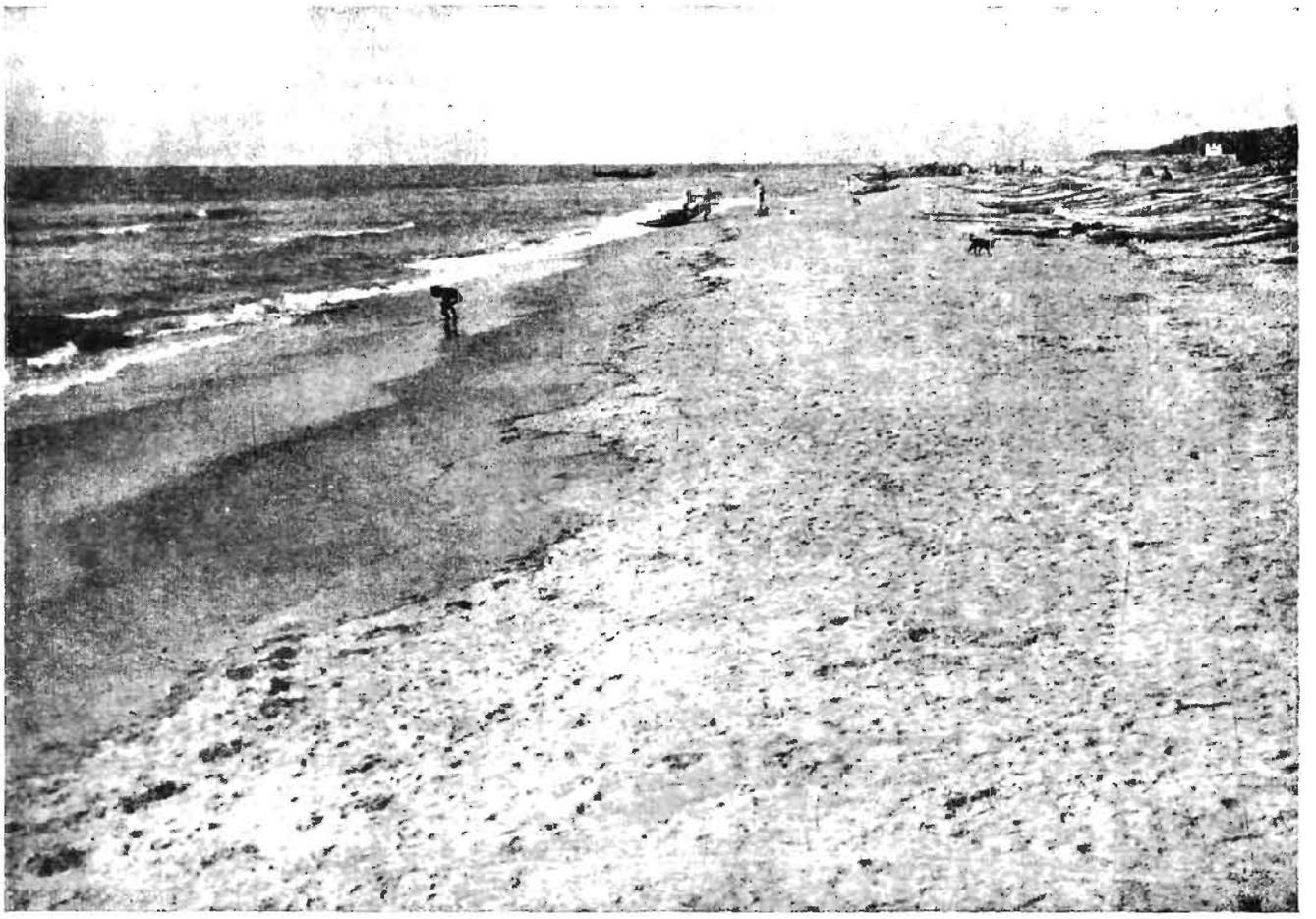
Community	Cows		Fowl	
	No. of house-holds	Total number	No. of house-holds	Total number
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Pattanavan	3	5	44	92
Sembadavan	...	...	6	8
Vanniar	...	...	2	5
Total	**3**	**5**	**52**	**105**

As many as 170 out of 193 Pattanavan families and the 7 Sembadavan families are engaged in fish rearing.

110. The nearest veterinary hospital available to the villagers is the key village unit situated to the west of the village at a distance of about 4 furlongs, on the Veerampattinam-Ariankuppam road. The unit started on 26—7—57 is functioning under the direct control of the Animal Husbandry Department, Pondicherry. The staff there consists of a stockman-compounder and a bull-attendant. The unit serves the veterinary needs of 12 villages in Ariankuppam commune, including the village of Veerampattinam. The unit concentrates on items of work like artificial insemination, gelding of bullocks, natural services, inoculations against cattle pest etc. The stockman-compounder informed us that cases from Veerampattinam are rare, since its cattle wealth is poor.

Fishing

111. The off-shores of Veerampattinam abound in all kinds of fishes; *Vajra, Vavval, Kala, Nethili, Panna, Manavarisi etc.* An expedition is also specially



A panoramic view of the off-shore of Veerampattinam.



The sea is considered sacred and the fishermen pay their homage to the Sea God every time they set sail.



Sailing in rafters, the Pattanavans go into the sea to a distance of fifteen miles.

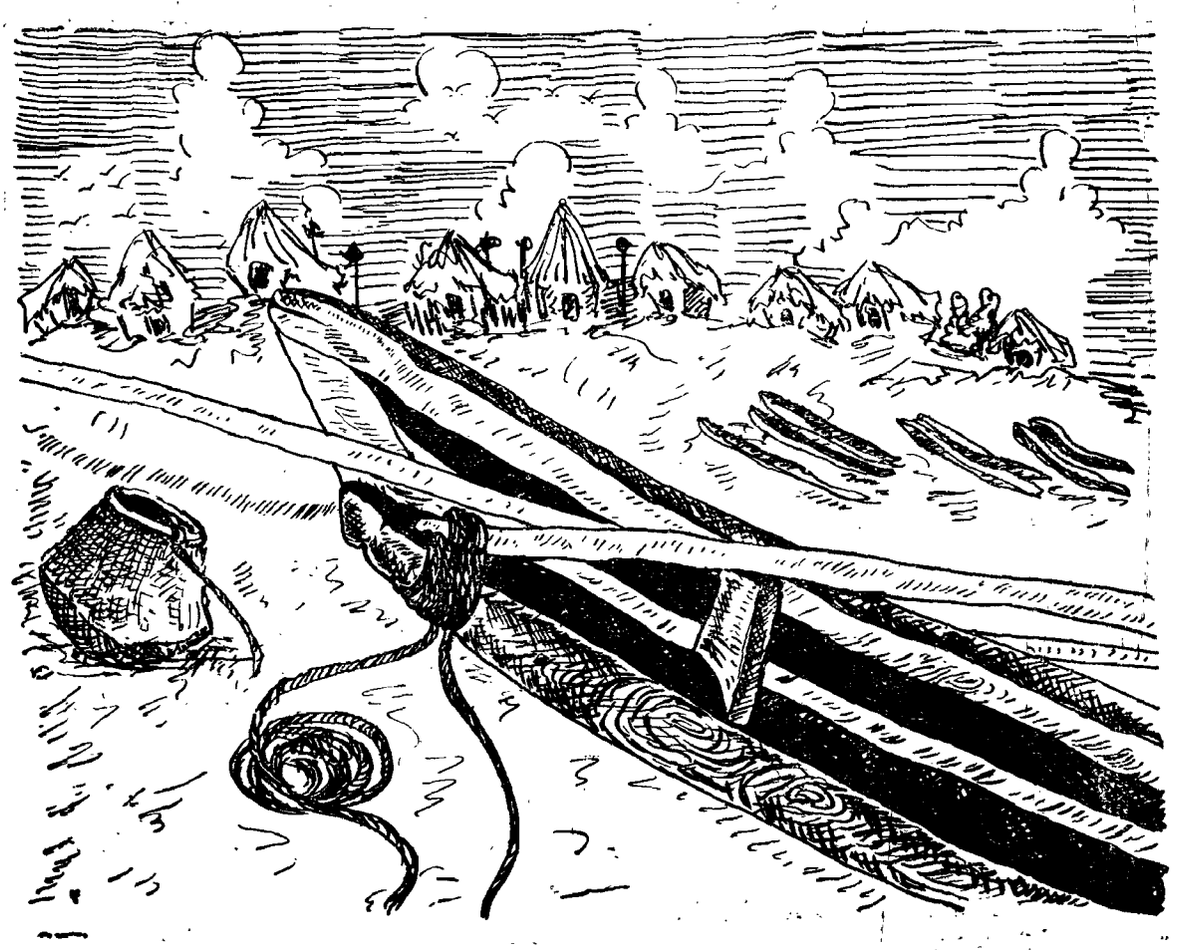


Logs of wood before being rigged as catamarans.

taken into the sea in search of *Kola*, a type of flying-fish known as exocets. The Pattanvans of the village set sail in batches to reap the harvest of the sea. Some of them start as early as 3 A.M. and return late in the evening at 7 P.M. There are also batches who go into the sea at 7 P.M. and return early in the morning by 3 A.M. Sailing in different types of rafts and canoes they go into the sea to a distance of 15 miles, from the shore, spot out the area of their operation, cast their net and try their chance. They bring their catches to the shore, and sun-dry them on sand in fenced squares. Then the produce is shared among the owners of the craft, owners of the nets and the labourers who went out into the sea. The majority of pattanavans are poor and cannot own even a small catamaran or a net. The owners of the catamarans and nets are those Pattanvans who live inside the village, away from the hutments of the poor fisherfolk. Generally, a group of persons, say 5 or 7 fishermen, join together and engage a catamaran and a net. When they return with the catch, 1/5th or 1/7th of it as the case may be, is given to the owner of the raft and similar share to the owner of the net and the remaining is shared among the labourers equally. A labourer can sell his share either in the market directly or to a middleman as he thinks fit. A labourer can thus earn Rs. 3 or 4 per day depending upon the quality of fish obtained by him. A basket full of fish on an average costs Rs. 12. A variety of fish known as *Nethili* is said to be costly—a basket full of this veriety of fish fetches Rs. 15 to 20. The produce is also marketed at Pondicherry. Quick transporting of the fish catches from the village to the market at Pondicherry is made possible through the motor-van of the Fisheries Department, Pondicherry, that comes to the village daily in the evening.

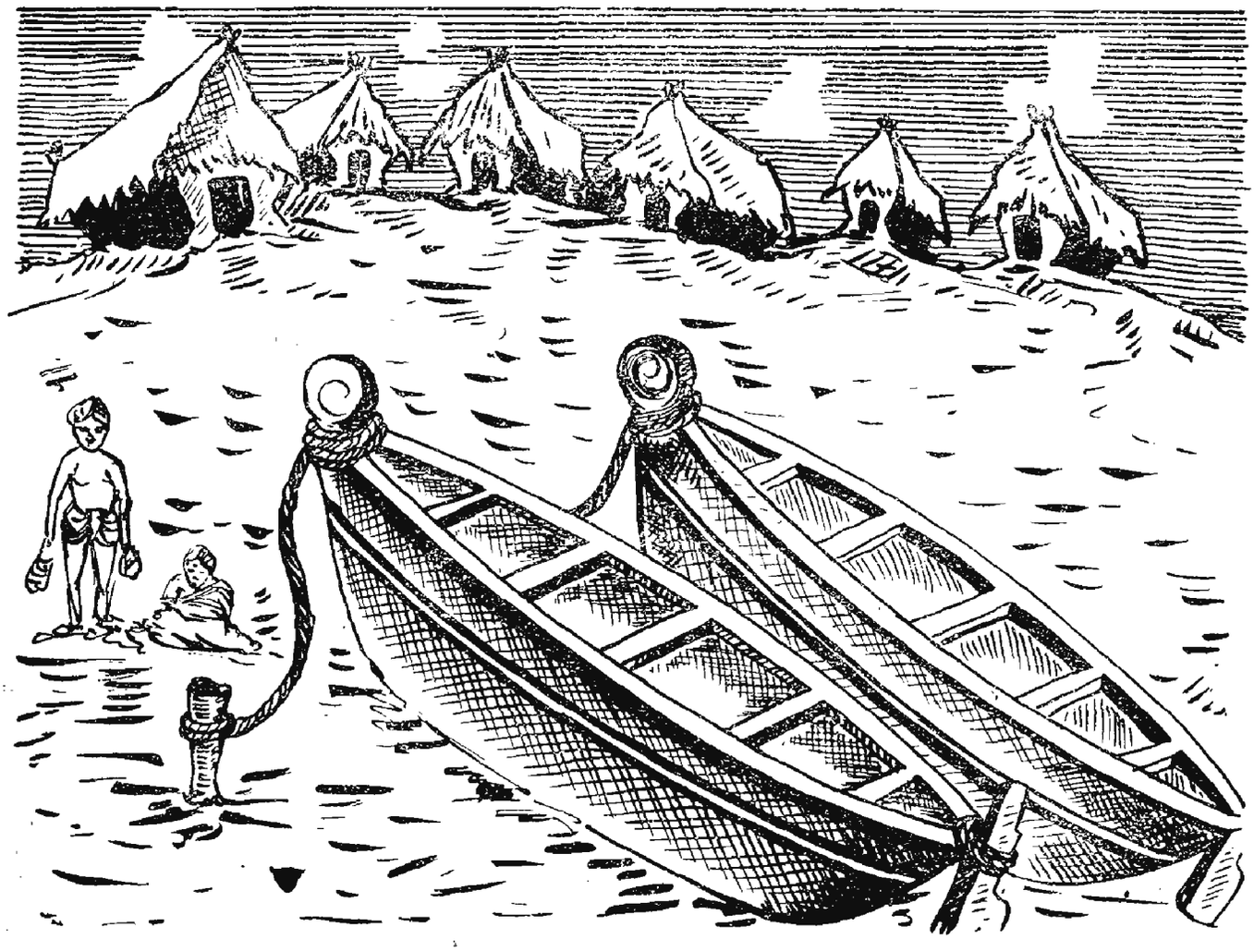
Fishing technique

112. The fishing technique adopted by the Pattanavans of Veerampattinam is traditional and antiquated. The most primitive form of water



THE LASHED CATAMARANS

transport, namely catamarans, is used by them for fishing. An overwhelming majority of the Pattanavans use catamarans and other sailing crafts, as mechanised craft is beyond their resources. Cotton nets are mostly used and they are designed to be manipulated by one or more persons. The nets employed are cast-nets, weighted at the edges with iron beads or other stones. When thrown upon the water they sink and enclose any fish that lie beneath. Sometimes long nets furnished along their edges with sinkers are shot into the water so as to enclose as large an area as possible and then drawn to the land by means of a long coir rope pulled by persons from the shore line. However, the technique adopted for fishing *Kola* the flying fish, differs from



DUG-OUT CANOES

the mode adopted for other varieties, The flying fish is said to be a dangerous type attacking persons at sight, the attack often proving fatal. Sailing on their crafts, the fishermen reach the spot where Kolas are found, lying on their crafts in crouched posture. It is said that *Kolas* used to hatch their eggs always on a rock. Seeing the catamarans motionless the fish come and cover the edges of the catamarans like flies covering a piece of jaggery. While hatching, the fish reach a stage of dizziness and at that time they are collected with bare hands by the fishermen and put in closed baskets. This *Kola hunting* is restricted to a particular season of the year.

Appliances

113. The floats and rafts employed by the fisherfolk of Veerampattinam are nothing more than logs of wood. Catamarans rigged with sails and canoes are also used for conveyance in the sea. Four to seven logs are grouped and lashed together by means of a coir rope to form a catamaran. Coir is formed from the inner bark of coconuts. Coconut trees are found in large numbers in places like Ariankuppam, Thengathittu and other nearby villages. Logs are purchased from the timber depots at Pondicherry. There are about 19 canoes or plank-built boats in



Return after a day's toil.



A close examination of the catches.

Veerampattinam which are used for deep sea fishing. They are entirely constructed of planks pegged or nailed together, and at a time 20 or 25 persons can set sail in it. Some of the common types of catamarans and boats employed for fishing in the village are indicated below :

Thoori Valai :—This is composed of 7 logs of wood lashed together by coir rope. About six persons can travel in this for fishing. With the nets, this costs Rs. 1500.

Vazha Valai :—This is composed of 3 or 4 logs lashed together. One or two persons can go in it. It costs Rs. 150.

Kavala valai :—This is composed of 4 or 5 logs lashed together and generally two persons can go in it. It costs Rs. 300.

Sennaguni Valai or Yer Valai :—This catamaran consists of 3 logs of wood lashed together. One person can go in it. It costs Rs. 100.

Eda Valai or Payinda Valai :—This is composed of 14 logs grouped in 4 joints and lashed together. Sixteen persons can go in this and the cost of production is Rs. 2,000 or 2,500.

Peria Valai :—Canoe or plank-built boats. About 20 to 25 persons can make use of this. This is rigged with cotton sail. The cost of production of this comes to Rs. 3,000.

114. Cotton nets are mostly used by the Pattanavans. A few persons also possess nylon nets but they are said to be costly. More than one strip of cotton strings are twisted together to form a cord which goes into the making of a strong net. The twisting of the strips is made by rolling them on the thigh with a spinning wheel. It is a common sight in the village to see a Pattanavan or Sembadavan twisting the strings even while walking. The cost involved in preparing a net of average size is as follows :

STATEMENT No. 9

Items	Cost Rs.
7 to 8 Kg. of cord ...	156
Knitting charges ...	22
Iron beads bordering the nets (30 in number, usually)	3
	181

The fishermen of Veerampattinam are supplied with cotton strings through the fishermen co-operative society functioning in the village. A nylon net is said to cost about Rs. 300 to 400. Net mending is a daily routine to the Pattanavans. Once a net is used, it becomes unsuitable for use again, as minor repairs are bound to be claiming their immediate attention. Major repairs are attended to once in two or three months. Nylon nets are found to be more durable than cotton nets but they are costly. If nylon twine is supplied through the society and nylon nets are made, the fishermen will be saved from the botheration of attending to the repairs daily, as nylon nets get damaged or torn once in a way only.

Handicaps

115. Catamarans used by the fishermen of Veerampattinam are old and antiquated in design and they are to be modernised. As nylon nets are found to be more durable, arrangements can be made to supply nylon twine through the Fishermen Co-operative society. The society in the village which is practically dormant is to be strengthened and reconstituted. Cotton strings and twines can be supplied at reasonably subsidised rates so that the prices will be within the reach of the poverty-stricken fishermen. Facilities are to be provided for net mending and fish-drying. Deep sea fishing is to be encouraged and suitably remodelled canoes shall be supplied to suit deep sea fishing.

116. No subsidiary industry is found among the fisherfolk and during rainy days when they do not frequent the sea, they idle away the time. Coir-making practised on a very small scale does not yield any additional income to them, since the coir so produced is mostly used to lash the catamarans or to drag the nets ashore and are not marketed. It is inevitable that subsidiary industries are started to raise the standard of living of the Pattanavans and Sembadavans. Other relief measures to them would be the supply of modern fishing appliances and cash assistance. Cyclone has become an annual feature and a cyclone relief fund, if raised, will go a long way to improve the plight of the fisherfolk and their families who are affected by it. Dominance by middlemen is another acute problem to them. The major share of the catch is taken away by the owners of the nets. As a result, often a fisherman is left with an yield worth 0.50 or 0.75. If quick

transport and cold storage facilities are provided, the fishermen can market their catch directly avoiding the middlemen.

Ritual attendant on fishing

117. The divinity of water is recognised by all the fishermen. All of them are devout Hindus. At the time of sailing into the sea, they offer worship to the deities Kuttiandavar and Nagoorar. The Nagoorar temple is found on the coast near the sea and though it is a Muslim deity, the Pattanavans consider Him as a saviour in the sea and worship Him. Every time they set sail for fishing they salute the sea. Before they go to catch the flying fish known as *Kola* during the season, they observe certain practices ritualistic in nature. The fisherfolk joining the expedition to fish *Kola* should purify themselves before undertaking the trip. They bathe daily and sleep on the shore itself for a few days avoiding the company of their sweet-hearts and other family members. On the day they leave for the sea, poojas are offered to the deity Kuttiandavar. The wives of the fisherfolk remove their marriage badges and place them before their family deities praying for the safe return of their husbands and invoking that they may be blessed with an opportunity of wearing the badges again. *Kola* hunting is quite a risky affair, since the attacks of the flyingfish more often prove fatal. In view of the fact that in all probability that some of them may not return, the wives of the fisherfolk perform the last rites of offering *Vaikku arisi* to their husbands before they leave for the expedition. In olden days the above practices prevailed among the Pattanavans of Veerampattinam. Now-a-days, very little significance is attached to such rituals. Only a handful of orthodox fishermen still observe such practices.

The fishermen co-operative society

118. A fishermen Cooperative Society is functioning in Veerampattinam. Besides the village, it has within its jurisdiction the nearby fishing hamlet of Chinna Veerampattinam also. Started on 28—6—1963 by the Fisheries Department, Pondicherry, it is housed in a rented building. The Fisheries Department, Pondicherry, has given a subsidy of Rs. 16,000 to it and it has got on its roll 299 members. About 90 per cent of the members belong to the village. The share value of the society ranges from Re. 1 to Rs. 10 and a member can have any number of shares at a time. It advances short-term and long term loans to the members, the amount varying from Rs. 50 to Rs. 100. Interest at the rate of 8 per cent is collected. The loans advanced are intended for purchase of nets, catamarans, logs, etc. Cotton strings and nylon twine are supplied once in a way to its members at subsidised rates. The office-bearers of the society consist of a President, a Vice-President, a Secretary and two members elected from among the members. The following individuals have been holding office since the inception of the society.

President	...	Sri Kailasam Chettiar
Vice-President	...	Sri Gopal Chettiar
Secretary	...	Sri Madurai
Board members		Sri Thanikachala Chettiar
		Sri Sivasankara Chettiar

The board of management has met several times after its constitution but no general body meeting has been held so far. The society seems to be very inactive and the house in which it is located is more often found closed. It is understood that the members have no confidence in the present board of management and want to reconstitute it. They are demanding for a general body meeting. Apart from advancing loans, the society has not done anything concrete for the amelioration of the conditions of the fisherfolk. Only a small fraction of the fishermen have become members in the society. Steeped in the traditional mode of fishing with appliances like catamaran and cotton nets, their natural lethargy and aversion for the adoption of modern techniques, is very pronounced. They are contented with whatever they get and spend a major portion of it on toddy. Unless they understand the benefits of a cooperative society and are provided with facilities for adopting improved techniques and modern appliances in their operations, the so-called welfare measures now being implemented will not improve their lot. Apart from the existing amenity of a van for transporting the catches fresh to the market at Pondicherry, the Fisheries Department has yet to provide many more amenities for drying the fish, for mending the nets, etc. If the society is active, it can do a lot to provide these amenities. The need to reconstitute this society and instil fresh vigour in its working has become all the more imperative.



An assessment of the harvest



The transporting of the fish catches on heads to the market at Pondicherry.



Net mending is a daily routine to the Pattanavans

Coir-making

119. Coir-making is practised in a small scale by a few Pattanavans in Veerampattinam. The majority of the artisans engaged in this household industry are womenfolk. The raw material required for coir manufacturing is coconut fibre which is obtained from Ariankuppam and other nearby villages. The fibre is soaked in water for 3 to 4 months till it gets decomposed and becoms soft. The decomposed and softened fibre is beaten well with a wooden peg and dried up in the sun. The technique of twisting is very simple. The fibre is twisted into string and coir, working with hands. No carding or twisting machine is put into use. No substantial income will be derived from this industry, even if a few households producing coir come forward to market their produce. The daily income in this case varies from 0.75 to Re. 1.00 per day. If carding or twisting machines are employed and the production of coir is increased, the surplus after meeting the local requirements, can be marketed profitably in the nearby areas. Coir industry can be developed into a supplementary occupation in the village and if adopted by all fisherwomen would provide additional income to them.

CHAPTER V

SOCIAL AND CULTURAL LIFE

Religion

120. Religion is characterised by a belief in supernatural being or beings. The formal mode of approach to it is ritual and this formal behaviour is recognized as correct in any society. No people have been found to be without belief in supernatural power of some kind or other. A man may deal with the problems of life effectively by practical measures, but even then he may find himself facing a margin of uncertainty and often of anxiety, in which case, he is prompted to resort to propitiation of supernatural powers either in private or public worship. In that process, the accompanying emotions of awe and reverence cannot always be concealed.

121. The people of Veerampattinam are all highly religious-minded Hindus – the only ethnic group found in the village. The Sembadavans, and Pattanavans who constitute the important communities of the village are all staunch Saivites. Besides holding belief in the supreme God Siva, they also worship other numerous spiritual agencies such as Mariamman, Kuttiandavar and Nagoorar. Kuttiandavar and Nagoorar are considered as the deities governing the sea and the fisherfolk deeply believe in their supernatural powers. Sembadavans are found to be more religious minded than the Pattanavans, whom they consider inferior. They have got the exclusive privilege of officiating in temples and a Sembadavan family in Veerampattinam is traditionally engaged in the duty of officiating as priest in the Sengazhuneeramman temple. Their religious susceptibility is so much that they always use plantain leaves for taking meals and using of plates amounts to breach of tenets of Hindu orthodoxy. The popular reigning household deity in the case of the majority of Sembadavans is Pitchaivarathar or Koothandavan. The Sembadavans appear to be always conscious of their religious superiority over the Pattanavans. Pattanavans are also Saivites and they claim that they were supplying silk threads to Lord Siva. Hence they are known as 'Pattanaivor' or 'Pattanavar' meaning knitters of silk thread. God Murugar or Subramaniar appears to be the popular reigning deity of their families. But they also worship other deities with equal devotion. They owe specially to the deity Kuttiandavar, the sea-God, to whom animal sacrifices are made. Animal sacrifices are also made to a deity known as Sembu Veerappan who is regarded as a Lieutenant to God Kuttiandavar. The majority of Vanniars are Vaishnavites but they also offer worship to the Goddess Sengazhuneeramman. God Iyenar is the reigning deity of their families. The Parayans have among them both Saivites and Vaishnavites and in reality they are demon worshippers.

122. The heterogeneous religious aspect of worshipping numerous family deities, in so far as the sample households are concerned, is brought out in Table No. XIX given below:

TABLE No. XIX

Association of deity/special object of worship and caste

No. of households surveyed: 202

Deity or special object of worship	No. of households that worship the deity and belong to		
	Sembadavan	Pattanavan	Vanniar
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Sengazhuneeramman	...	23	...
Murugan	...	24	...
Periandavar	...	22	...
Muneeswaran	...	22	...
Angalamman	2	21	...
Iyenarappan	...	14	2
Govindan	...	13	...
Madurai Veeran	...	10	...
Koothandavar or Pitchaivarathar	5	10	...
Irusaththa	...	7	...
Aliappan	...	7	...
Pavadarayan	...	4	...
Thajambathan	...	4	...
Tiruduappan	...	3	...
Kathayi	...	2	...
Vaitheeswaran	...	1	...
Nataraja	...	1	...
Others	...	5	...
Total	7	193	2

We find multiplicity of deities being worshipped in the case of Pattanavan community. Thus, of the 193 households of them covered in the sample survey, 24 worship Lord Murugan, 23 worship Sengazhuneeamman who is also the presiding deity of the village. Periandavar and Muneeswaran have 22 households each, who worship them while Goddess Angalamman has only 21 households worshipping Her. Of the 7 Sembadavan housheolds, 5 worship a deity known as Pitchaivarathar or Koothandavar and 2 worship Goddess Angalamman. Pitchaivarathar appears to be the popular family deity among Sembadavans. The two Vanniar households covered by the survey worship God Iyenarappan.

123. In spite of the fact that the Sembadavans and Pattanavans are staunch Saivites they do not show any hatred towards Vaishnavism or any other religion. The Vanniars who are Vaishnavites freely mingle with them in common worship in the Sengazhuneeramman temple at the time of the annual festival. The Sembadavans and Pattanavans are peace-loving communities who show remarkable religious tolerance towards any other sect or religion. They are very proud of their religion and take pride that no individual among them ever thought of converting himself to any other religion at any time.

Inter-caste relationship

124. There is only one Brahmin family in Veerampattinam. The head is a priest in the Sengazhuneeramman temple and his family resides in an apartment inside the campus of the temple. The Brahmin family receives the traditional honour and respect due to the Brahmin community and the Pattanavans, Sembadavans and Vanniars have no hesitation to accord the foremost place to it in the social hierarchy. On the other hand, the Brahmin family does not assert itself in any sphere, and adopts a policy of non-interference in the social, economic or political life of the village population. Hence there is perfect harmony between this Brahmin family and the other non-Brahmin communities of Veerampattinam. As regards the non-Brahmin communities, it is possible to arrange them in a scale of social precedence. The Vanniars can be placed foremost in the social stratification. They do not inter-dine with Sembadavans but Sembadavans have no objection to interdine with them. The Sembadavans, however, claim a status on par with Vanniars. The number of Vanniars in the village is slender and more over they are migrants and not natives of the place. Hence they do not vie with Sembadavans disputing their claim of parity with them and asserting their superiority. The Pattanavans occupy the third place in the social hierarchy. The Sembadavans and Vanniars do not inter-dine with them. The social inter-course based on matrimony is also not found among the three non-Brahmin communities of the village. Parayans occupy the lowest place in the order of the social scale.

125. But the above classification of the communities in the social scale is only theoritically sound and for all practical purposes no differences are felt by them. There is inter-caste harmony and the relationship among them is cordial and warm. The modern youths of the three communites want to break through the social barriers and prefer to interdine or intermarry with any other community. The other reasons that promote this cordiality and warmth are common language spoken by them, the same occupation pursued and above all the realization that they belong to one ethnic group, namely Hindus. There is also no acute form of untouchability practised by the villagers. Though the Parayans dwell separately in the cheri they are allowed to pass through the village streets. The non-Brahmin communities have no objection to their accepting water or food from their hands. They also join the common worship offered to the Goddess Mariamman by the villagers at the time of the annual festival celebrated to the deity. It is a common sight in Veerampattinam to see a group of Pattanavans sitting under the greenwood trees in the cheri mending their nets and occasionally entering into conversation and gossiping with the Parayans.

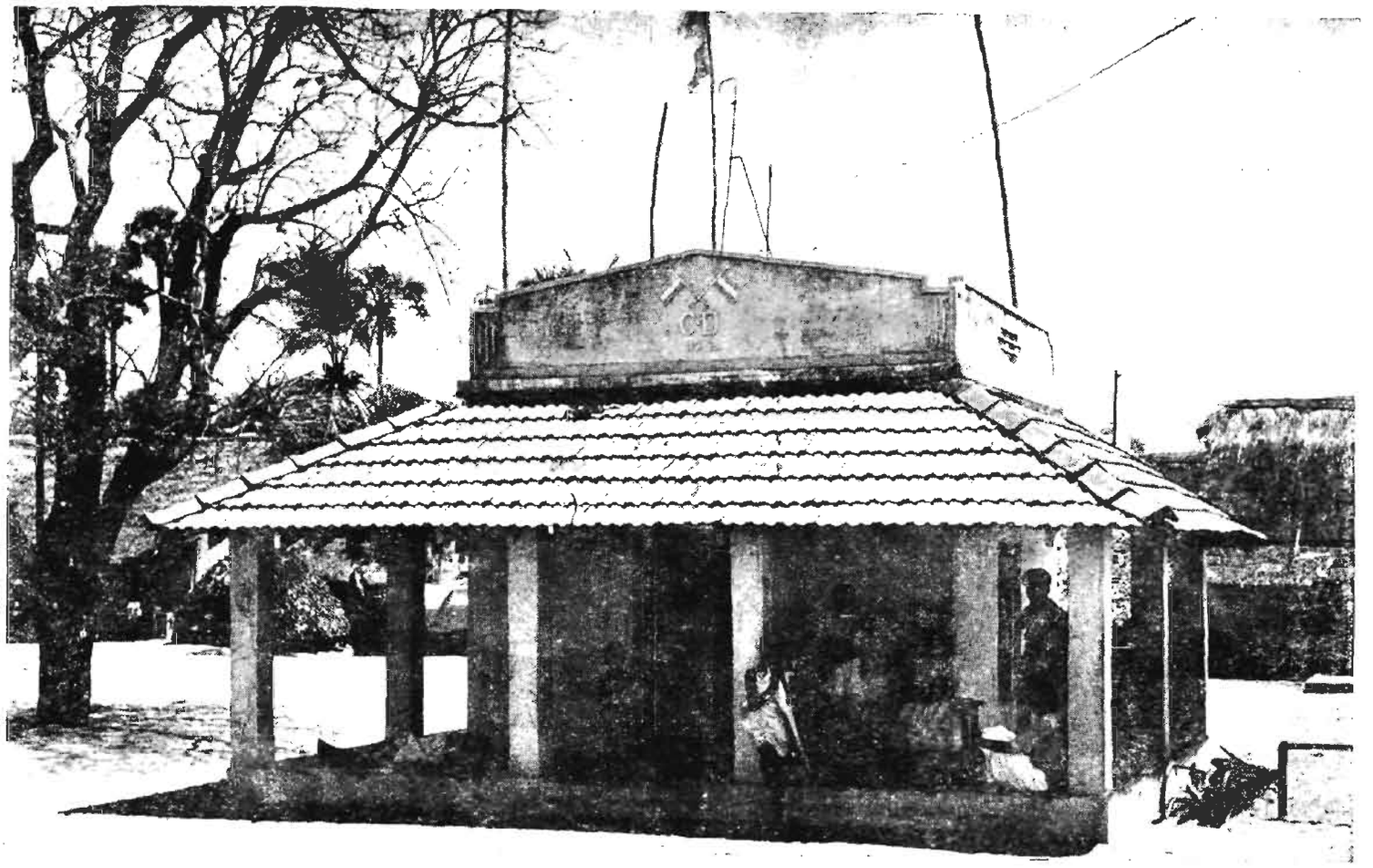
Caste panchayat

126. In Hindu Society, social inter-course between castes is always limited and often a caste forms its own Panchayat to maintain caste solidarity, oneness and also to assert its due position in social stratifications. In accordance with this we find three caste panchayats in Veerampattinam. These panchayats are found in the three principal communities of Sembadavans, Pattanavans and Vanniars. Since Pattanavans are the majority, their caste panchayat is also termed as *Ur Panchayat* or Panchayat of the village.

127. The caste panchayat of Sembadavans is a three-member body and the membership is hereditary. They hold office honorarily. The head of the panchayat is termed as *Nattanmaikar* and he is assisted by a *Kariyasthar*. Besides maintaining unity and solidarity and settling disputes among the members of the community, the other functions of the panchayat include collection of fees for marriages and other functions taking place in the households of the community and spending the funds thus raised for the welfare and general interests of the members of the caste. Every year, in the Karthigai month, the festival held in Sengazhuneeramman temple is financed by the Sembadavans from the caste panchayat funds. The extent of contribution to the festival varies from Rs. 300 to Rs. 350 every year. The unity among the Sembadavans is well brought out by the established customs of all of them observing pollution and mourning in the case of death of a member of the community. They do not take part in any function taking place either in the village or outside during the period of pollution. It is said the panchayat seldom meets now-a-days but is nevertheless effective and respected by one and all of the caste-men. The caste panchayat of the Pattanavans which is also the *Ur panchayat* consists of seven members. They are elected by Pattanavans from among themselves and they hold office for their life-time. Their office is honorary. The President of the Panchayat is termed as *Yajamanar* and he is assisted by one *Thandalkaran*. Besides maintaining caste solidarity and oneness the panchayat arbitrates in cases of disputes among its caste-men and levies fines and accords minor punishments. The funds of the panchayat are expended for general interests such as sinking wells, improvement of the temples, provision of public amenities, etc. Vanniars in the village are a few and their caste panchayat consists of three members. The functions of the panchayat are similar to those found in the case of Pattanavans and Sembadavans.

128. The system of statutory panchayat was unknown in the village during the French regime. The villages in Pondicherry territory are administered in the commune system. The Pondicherry area, divided into eight communes, has got 8 Mairies for local administration purposes. Each commune has a council which consists of a Mayor, one or more Assistant Mayors and Municipal Councillors. The Municipalities (Mairies) in the territory are neither municipal councils nor major panchayats. The number of councillors in a commune varies from 12 to 18, depending upon the size of the commune. The members are elected by universal suffrage for a period of 6 years. They can be re-elected any number of times. The Mayor and Assistant Mayors are elected by the municipal council members from among themselves. No executive officer is appointed in a Mairie. Generally, a council meets four times in a year. The meetings are not open to the public, but a tax-payer can, however, demand the minutes of the proceedings of the council and peruse them. The powers of a Mayor are comprehensive and extensive. They can be divided into two categories (*i*) Those powers which he exercises as a representative of the State and (*ii*) those he has got as a representative of the people. As a representative of the people his duties include publication of laws and rules and their enforcement and the measures of general security. He issues certificates of good character, conduct, poverty, residence etc., in respect of the residents of his commune. He keeps the registers relating to the births, marriages and deaths according to the regulation of the civil code. Registration of marriages is not compulsory, but registration of births and deaths, is. No fee is collected whenever a marriage is registered, but when a person applies for a marriage registration certificate, it is issued after obtaining a sum of Rs. 2 (Re. 1 is collected for issuing the certificate and Re. 1 as stamp charges). As a representative of the commune, the Mayor is the executive agent of the municipal council and a Magistrate invested with the power of autonomous decision. He makes appointments to all municipal posts and is in charge of the administration of properties of the commune.

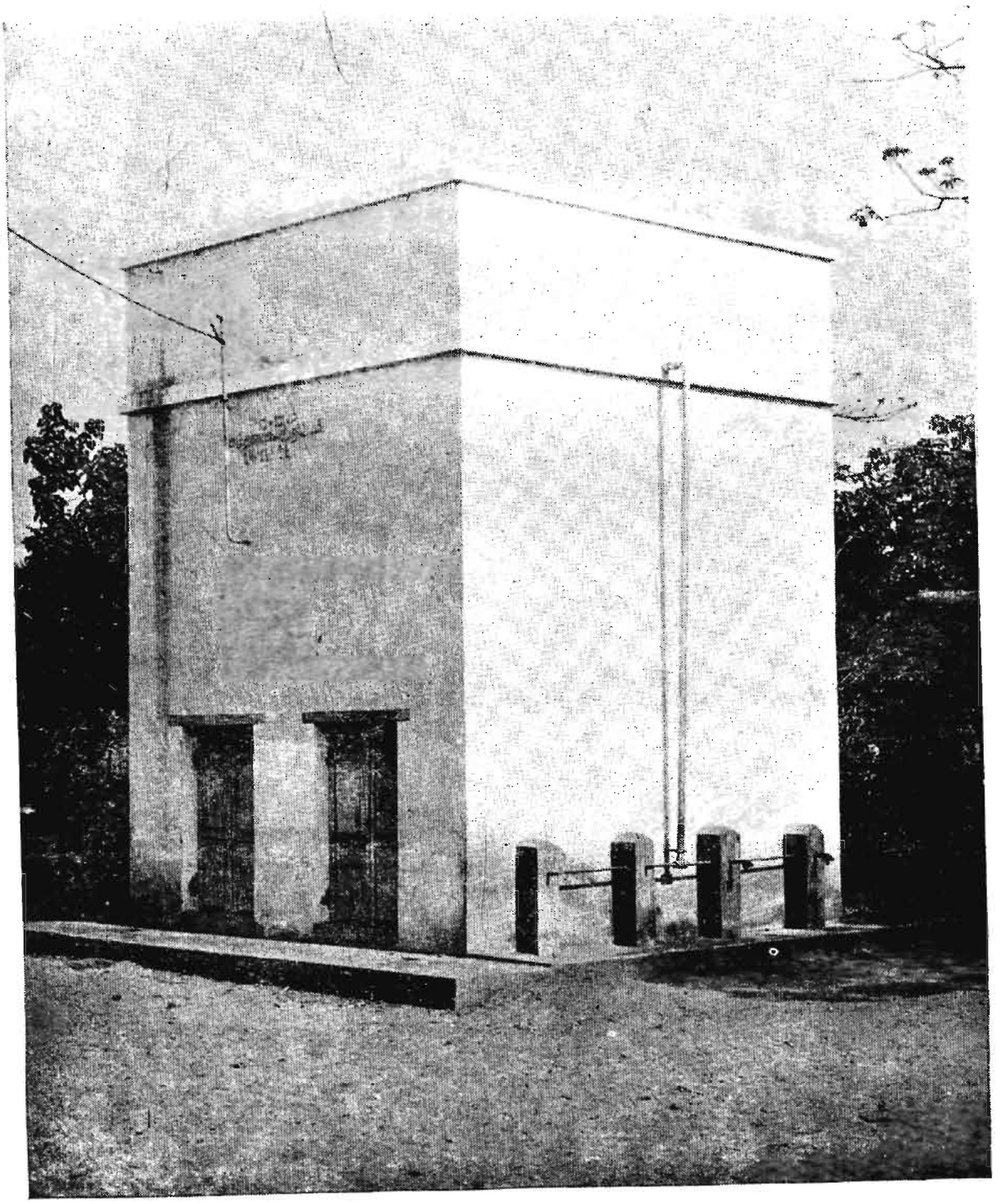
129. Each commune has its own budget. The budget is drawn up by the Mayor, then submitted to the deliberation of the municipal council and finally approved by the Lieutenant Governor. The ordinary receipts of a commune include revenue from municipal properties, concession granted by the State Government on certain taxes, stall rents collected in the markets, slaughter houses etc., parking duties in public squares and roads, toll fees, fees charged for the issue of birth, death and marriage certificates etc. The expenditure of the commune are both obligatory and optional. The obligatory expenditure includes expenses on general administration, tax collection, health, census, grave yards etc. Other expenditures include expenses on public works, police, pond, supervision of market etc.



The Community Recreation Centre provided under Community Development Programme for the benefit of the villagers



The building, housing the Social Welfare Centre in Veerampattinam



The Over-head tank constructed under the Community Development Programme caters to the drinking water needs of the villagers

130. Veerampattinam lies in Ariankuppam commune which has in its jurisdicton 19 other villages. The *Mairie* is situated in Ariankuppam village which is the commune headquarters and lies at a distance of 2 kms to the west of the village. It is noteworthy that a leading Pattanavan of Veerampattinam is an Assistant Mayor of the commune. In 1961, the receipts of the commune were estimated as Rs. 55,817 and the expenditure budgeted at Rs. 48,987.

Community development

131. The Pondicherry National Extension Service was inaugurated in May 1955, soon after the *defacto* merger. The National Extension Service block was considered a single block for administrative purposes and a double block for budgetory purposes. From the 1st October 1957, it was converted into a Community Development Block covering an area of 111 square miles with 97 main villages and 177 hamlets. Veerampattinam was one among the 97 villages and it has derived many benefits as a result of the community development schemes implemented by the block agency. One Village Level Worker has been stationed at Ariankuppam who has got jurisdiction over Veerampattinam in addition to two or three villages assigned to him in the area. The block headquarters which is Villianoor is about six miles from the village. There is an over-head tank in the village constructed under the community development programme to cater to the drinking water needs of the villagers. This was installed on 14—11—1962. Besides being useful to the villagers, at the time of the famous Veerampattinam Mariamman festival, the large number of visitors to the place are benefited by the availability of protected drinking water supply. It is reported that 50 per cent of the cost of construction of the overhead tank was contributed by the public by way of labour etc. There is also a Community Recreation Centre provided under community development programme for the benefit of the villagers. The centre is situated opposite to the temple near the sea shore. The centre has also a radio receiver set which is tuned on during mornings and evenings. Loud-speakers have been installed on the sea-shore in the midst of Pattanavan dwellings with a view to make available the facility of recreation and entertainment to them. The villagers have got a fancy for jarring cine music and always prefer broadcastings of the Radio Ceylon. Apparently the villagers are not interested either in provincial or world news or any other programme intended for the benefit of villagers. The centre has also got some play materials for children like sea-saw, swings etc. but they have been broken and are not in use. The centre gets two Tamil dailies also. The maintenance of the centre is in the hands of the Ariankuppam Municipality. The block agency has also provided to the villagers a Social Welfare Centre, in coordination with the Project Implementing Committee of the Social Welfare Advisory Board, Pondicherry.

132. The Social Welfare Centre functioning in Veerampattinam is the one initially started in the village Thimmanayakenpalayam but subsequently transferred to the village in December, 1962. It is a coordinated venture of the block agency and the Project Implementing Committee of the Welfare Board, Pondicherry. Housed in a rent free building belonging to the Sengazhuneeramman temple, the Welfare Centre is run by a Gram Sevika and a Craft Instructress. The Gram Sevika is paid from the block funds and the Craft Instructress is paid by the Social Welfare Advisory Board, Pondicherry. The temple authorities, it appears, have promised to construct a separate building for the centre from temple funds. The main activities of the centre are child-care, women welfare etc. About 50 to 60 children are taken care of in the centre, daily. They are collected without any caste or creed bias. Some Parayan children are also taken care of along with the children of other communities. The children belong to the age-group of 2 to 6 years and they are fed with milk and mid-day meal. They are taught alphabets and clean habits. Brought to the centre at 8 a.m. every day, the children return home at 5 p.m. The Gram Sevika with the Craft Instructress visits the nearby villages to educate the women about the importance of sanitation, public health, necessity of bathing daily, food nutrition and good method of cooking. The Craft Instructress teaches them simple crafts of sewing, embroidery etc., so that they may not idle away their time, but spend it usefully over such crafts. The implications of 'Vardha latrine', 'Compost pit' and 'Soakage pit' contemplated for rural improvements are explained to them and they are induced to experiment them. The centre is said to get maximum support and co-operation from the villagers and is successfully getting through its activities. Adult night classes are also conducted in the centre and about 25 adults attend the classes daily.

Village deities

133. The important temple is the one dedicated to the Goddess Sengazhuneeramman. It is also the biggest, with a 'Gopuram', covering an area of about 2 khanis. The other temples which are of minor importance are dedicated to the following deities:

(1) Iyenar
(2) Kuttiandavar
(3) Nagoorar

Iyenar temple is situated opposite to the Sengazhuneeramman temple. It is a small tiled structure with brick walls. The doors open into the sanctum sanctorum where the clay image of Iyenar, mounted on his horse, is seen. No daily pooja is performed nor any lamp lighted inside the sanctorum. However, the temple is electrified. No exclusive festival is held to God Iyenar. But the deity is taken in procession at the time of the 'Brahmotsavam' celebrated every year in the Sengazhuneeramman temple. The Nagoorar temple is seen located very near the sea-shore to the south of Pattanavan dwellings. It is a miniature mosque with a green flag having the symbol of a crescent and a star in its middle, fluttering in front of the temple. Though it is a Muslim Dharga, the Pattanavans consider Nagoorar as their saviour in the sea and offer worship. Before deploying their catamarans into the sea they salute the Nagoorar for a good boom and a safe return. No festival is celebrated nor any pooja done to Nagoorar. The image of Kuttiandavar is found in open air underneath a tree at a distance of about five furlongs to the south of Veerampattinam. Kuttiandavar is the Lieutenant to the God Periandavar who is the reigning deity in many of the Pattanavan families. A few broken images made of clay are strewn here and there underneath the tree in the midst of some full-sized bricks. Apparently no daily pooja is done or worship offered. Occasionally, a Pattanavan family may worship the deity with *Pongal vaithal*. This consists of cooking the rice and offering it to Kuttiandavar for propitiating him. Animal sacrifices are also made occasionally. No exclusive festival is celebrated for Kuttiandavar.

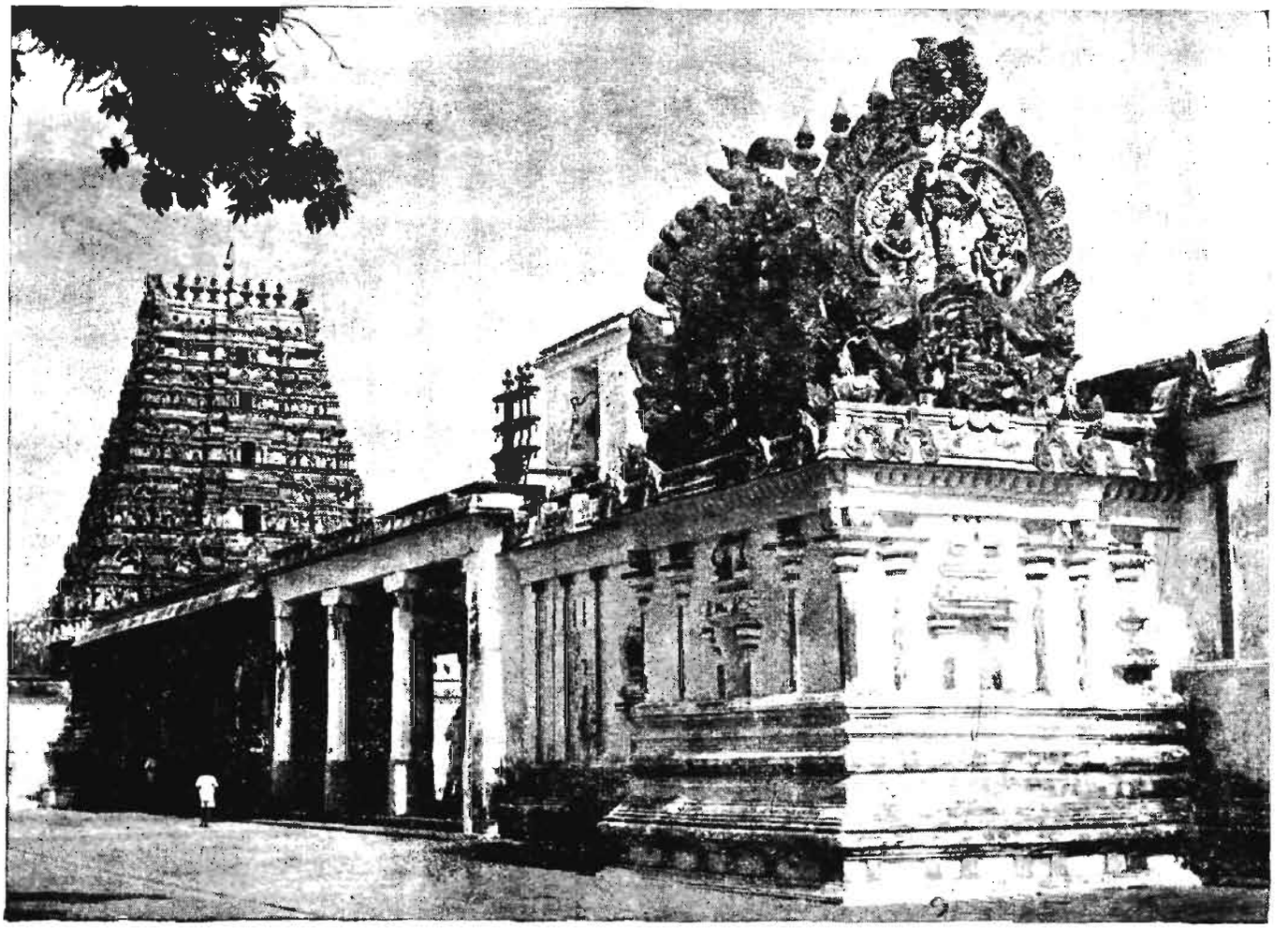
Sengazhuneeramman temple

134. Of all the Mariamman temples in Pondicherry area and the adjoining district of South Arcot, the one at Veerampattinam is very famous and widely known. The deity known as Sengazhuneeramman is well known for Her prowess to accomplish cures to all sorts of ailments and in particular eye diseases. People also believe that sterile women are blessed with children after worshipping this deity. Lakhs of pilgrims visit this famous shrine at the time of the inspiring and spectacular 'Brahmotsavam' celebrated to the deity every year in the month of 'Adi' (July—August).

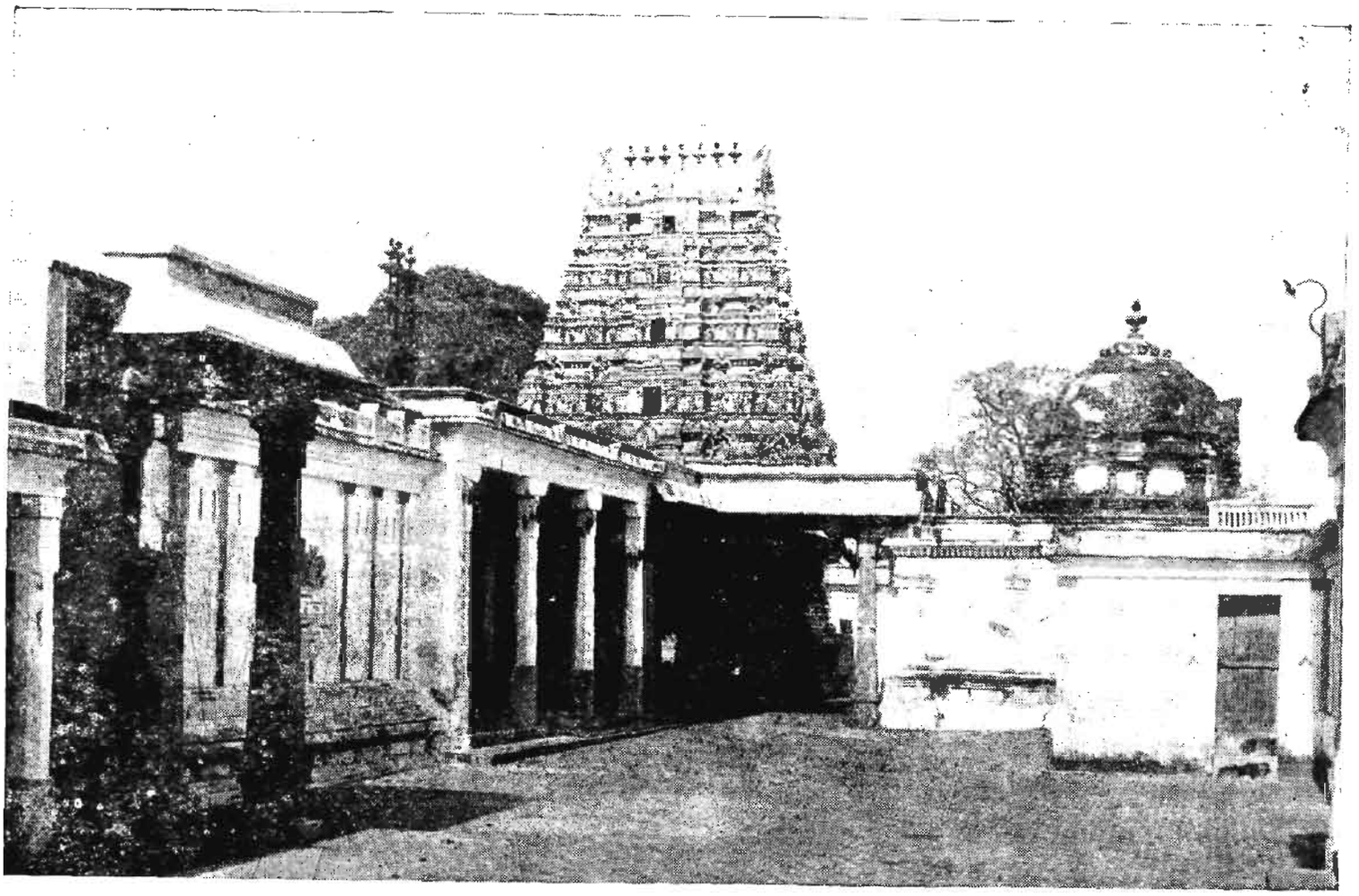
135. The legend relating to the origin and installation of the deity in Veerampattinam is of absorbing interest. It has been passed on from generation to generation and many of the villagers are quite aware of it. The legend has also been narrated in a book entitled *Sri Sengazhuneeramman* written by Sri Gangadharan, a native of the village and published by the temple Devasthanam. The legend runs as follows: About 350 years ago, a devout, pious and god-fearing fisherman known as Veeraraghava Chettiar was living in the village. One day he set out for fishing in a nearby rivulet. It contained dense growth of water hyacinths known in local parlance as *Sengazhuneer plants*. It was a bad day for Veeraraghava Chettiar as he got nothing in his net till sun-set. He was a bit frustrated, but yet having faith in almighty he wanted to try a last chance and cast his net. This time his net entrapped something heavy. Hoping that he is getting a boom he managed to draw out the net. But to his disappoitment and dismay he found a piece of log in the net instead of a heap of fishes. He returned home attributing his bad luck to the will of the God. However, he took the piece of log with him and cast it aside in the backyard of his house. One day due to scarcity of firewood his wife wanted to cut the piece of log with an axe. At the very first stroke, blood gushed out from the log. Stupified and panicky, she reported the incident to her husband. Veeraraghava Chettiar smelt something divine in it and decided to preserve the log with devout care. News of this incident spread far and wide like wild fire and soon a large number of persons poured into the village to get a glimpse of the divine object. A few months elapsed and one night Veeraraghava Chettiar had a dream. Goddess Renukai appeared before him and clarified that the piece of log is nothing but herself personified and asked him to bury it in the ground in a place near a particular bush and install the image of her head on it. She asked him to carefully look at her face attentively for a while so that the image to be made may resemble her exactly. Next morning, the Chettiar narrated his dream to neighbours who decided to carry out the divine command of goddess Renukai. The Chettiar spotted out the bush



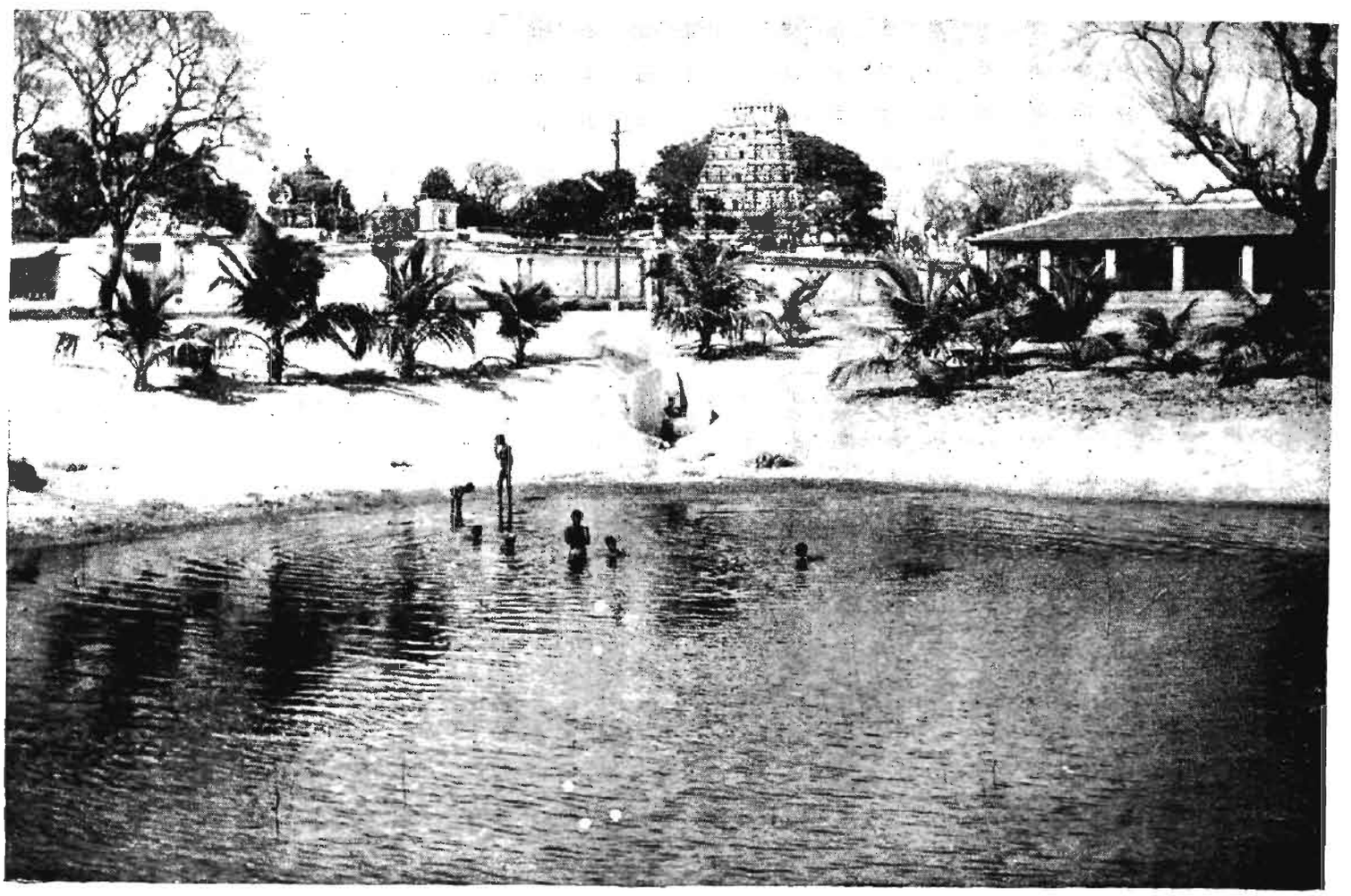
The Gopuram of the Sengazhuneeramman temple facing the East Street.



The Sengazhuneeramman temple—Inside Prakarams.



The Sengazhuneerамman temple—The corridor.



The Sengazhuneer pond found by the side of the temple. This is used by the villagers and devotees for bathing.

and when he approached it with his neighbours, a big cobra sprang out of it. The hooded cobra hit a particular spot thrice and returned to its groove. They understood the implication of this and assumed it as the place where the image of the deity is to be consecrated. The piece of log was buried there and a granite image of the head of the Goddess was installed on it. A thatched superstructure was erected over the image. Since the piece of log was found out from the rivulet of water hyacinths, the deity was named as *Sengazhuneeramman*. According to the villagers' version the cobra lived there for many years and even though it is not visible now-a-days, it is still believed to be living within the premises of the temple.

The Temple

136. The thatched structure was replaced by a small brick structure with tiled roof which in course of time assumed the present shape with a 'Gopuram', 'Prakarams' etc. It is not specifically known as to who built the 'Gopuram' and when, the present structures of the temple were put up. According to the villagers, the credit of having developed the temple to the present size is attributed to a wealthy merchant of Pondicherry who lived some 150 years ago. This is also corroborated in a narration in the booklet published by the temple Devasthanam. The wealthy merchant had a daughter who was the sole heir to all his fortunes. The daughter was suffering from chronic eye disease and ultimately lost her eye sight. The wealthy man spent a large sum of money towards treatments and tried all sorts of medicine in vain. Meanwhile, he heard about the prowess of the Goddess Sengazhuneeramman in curing eye diseases and advised by his friends went to Veerampattinam. He put up a hut opposite to the temple and stayed there with his daughter offering daily worship to the Goddess and praying her to bestow his daughter with eye sight. After spending 40 days in worshipping the deity the prayers were heard and the woman regained her eye-sight. Deeply moved by the blessings of the Goddess he hailed her as the Goddess of vision. To show his gratitude he romoved the thatched structure and built a pucca sanctum sanctorum to the deity. Also he endowed a part of his wealth to the temple. Besides other devotees who come here to worship the Goddess offer money, jewels and other gold and silver objects. The wealth of the temple increased and improvements were slowly carried out in the temple structure. The temple has also got landed property to the extent of 30 acres.

Sanctum sanctorum

137. The granite image of the head of the Goddess is firmly fixed in the sanctorum. A full image of the Goddess made of bricks and lime is found behind this ground image. The Goddesses Sengazhuneeramman, Mariamman, Muthu Mariamman, Ellaiyamman etc., are said to be different manifestations of the Goddess Renukai. The legend relating to Goddess Renukai runs as follows: Renukai was the wife of the great sage Jamadhagni and the mother of Lord Parasurama, the famous legendary warrior who took a vow to crush all the Kshtriyas within his life time. Renukai was a devoted and pious wife and attended to all requirements of the sage in performing his rituals, poojas etc., from early dawn till late mid-night. One day early morning when she was bathing in a nearby rivulet she happned to see in the water the handsome image of a Gandharva who happened to be flying in the sky. Renukai was struck for a moment by the handsome figure and thought that a woman who could marry such a handsome man must be really fortunate. Since she developed an impure thought of this kind, she failed in the normal discharge of her duties to her husband. Questioned by her husband for her abnormal mood she confessed to him about the impure thought she developed while bathing in the rivulet that morning. Enraged by her conduct, the sage Jamadhagni ordered his son Parasurama to cut off the head of his mother. Parasurama was a faithful and obedient son and he took away his mother to the river side to carry out the orders of his father. He went round his mother, worshipped her and sought her blessings and pardon and wielded his axe to strike at her head. Witnessing the entire incident, a cobbler woman came running to rescue Renukai. As Parasurama was carrying out his act with grim determination, he did not notice the cobbler woman standing in between him and Renukai. In a frenzied mood he cut off the heads of both the women. Saint Jamadhagni finding that his son had carried out his orders was very much pleased with him and offered to fulfil his wishes or desires. As he had profound affection for his mother also, Parasurama prayed that his mother should be brought back to life. Saint Jamadhagni agreed to fulfil his desire and pouring a little water sanctified by mantras, in a vessel, asked Parasurama to take it and sprinkle it on the body and head of his mother placing them together. Parasurama wanted that the cobbler woman should also be brought back to life, as she was killed for no fault of her's.

Taking the sanctified water Parasurama ran to the river bank and in his anxiety to bring them back to life, mistakenly interchanged the heads with the two trunks of the women. He sprinkled water over them. The two women came back to life, the one with the head of Renukai and the body of the cobbler woman and the other with the head of the cobbler woman and the body of Renukai. Parasurama regretted the mistake, invited the woman with the head of his mother to return home. But the two women decided to live on the banks of the rivulet. In course of time, the maid with the head of Renukai attained *moksha*. The other lady buried the body exposing the head alone. People started worshipping the figure as Goddess and called her by various names such as Mariamman, Muthu Mariamman, Ellaiyamman etc. In all the temples dedicated to these deities we find images of heads alone installed on the ground. Since the cobbler woman was also blessed with divinity, having the body of Renukai, the cobbler community as a whole worship this deity and a large number of them have taken to her as their family deity. In Veerampattinam temple, the Goddess goes by the name of Sengazhuneeramman as the image was found from the rivulet of *Sengazhuneer plants*.

Festival

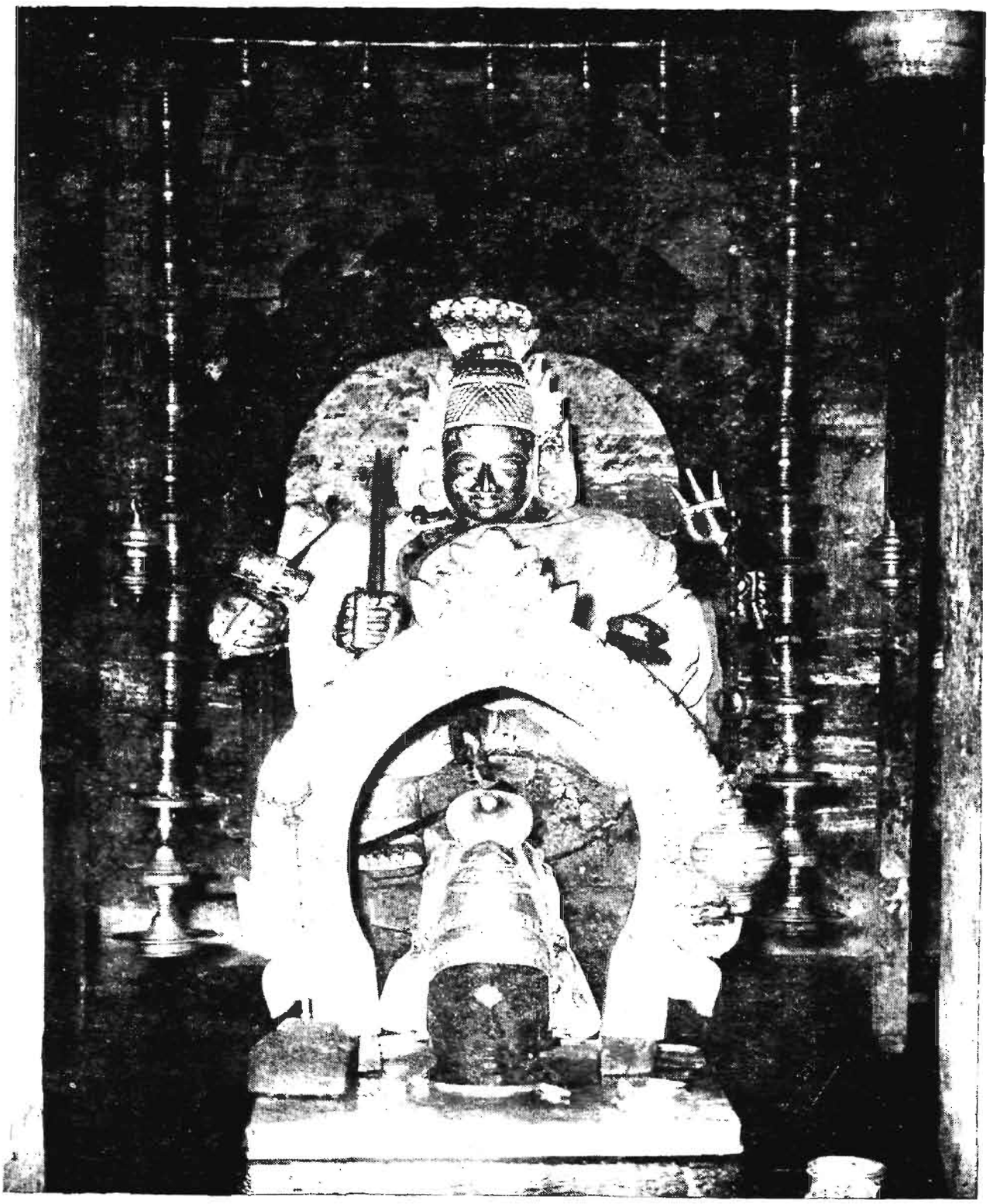
138. The important days in a week in the temple are Sunday, Tuesday and Friday. Devotees coming from places outside the village numbering about 30 to 50 perform special 'Archanas' to the deity. Forms of offerings made to the deity are cocoanuts, 'Pongal', *Mavilakku Mavu* etc. 'Pongal' is cooked rice mixed with dhall sweetened or salted. *Mavilakku Mavu* is made by mixing brown sugar or jaggery, with rice flour and dhall. On ordinary days, poojas are performed in two 'kalams' in the temple. The pooja performed in the morning lasts from 8 to 10 a.m. and the night pooja is from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. Abishegam is performed to the deity after smearing the image with *Diravia Podi*. Milk is the usual offering during the poojas.

139. Apart from the routine poojas, in a year, some important festivals celebrated in the temple are worthy of note. In the month of 'Thai' (January—February) all Fridays are important. 'Mattu Pongal' is celebrated. On these days the deity is taken in procession through the streets. In the month of 'Masi', 'Sivarathri' is an important day. *Abishegam* is performed to the deity who is taken in procession through the streets of the village. During the months of 'Aani' and 'Aadi' the spectacular Brahmotsavam is celebrated. In the month of 'Purattasi', *Vijaya-dasami* is an important day and the deity is taken out in procession. In the month of 'Karthigai' *Deepa utsavam* is the important festival. The highlight of the festival is *Sokkapani Koluthuthal* (burning a heap of things). The deity is taken in procession through the streets. In the month of 'Margazhi' all the 30 days are considered important. The month is known as *Dhanur Masam*. Poojas are performed at dawn every day.

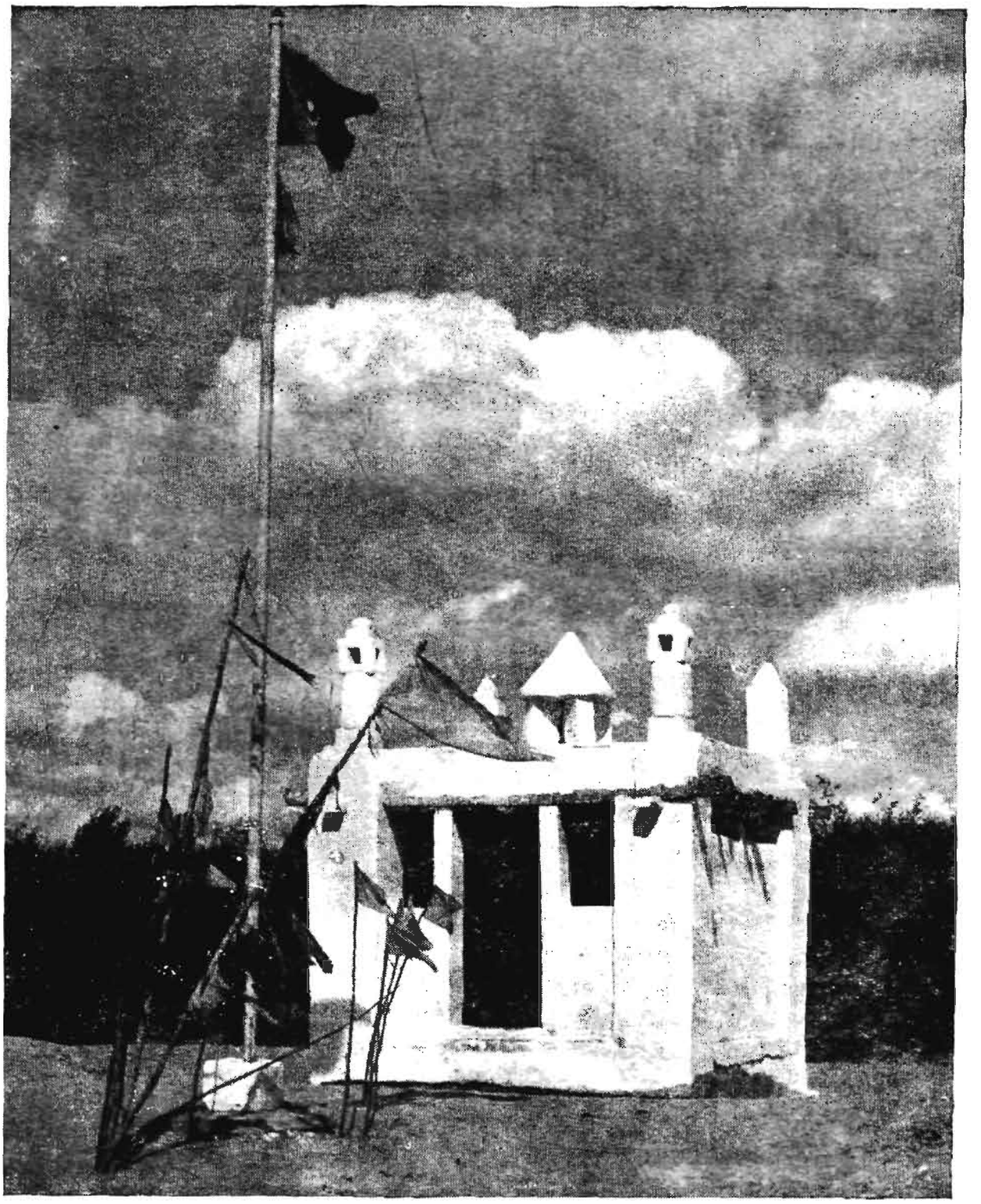
Brahmotsavam

140. Brahmotsavam is the most important annual festival celebrated in honour of the goddess Sengazhuneeramman. This takes place in the Tamil month of 'Aadi' (July-August) and lasts for ten days. Generally it starts on Thursday preceding the fourth Friday in the month of 'Aadi'. About 20,000 persons coming from places far and wide participate in the festival. On all the ten days, the bronze image of the Goddess draped in silk finery and flowers and bedecked with jewels is taken in procession on different mounts known as 'Vahanas'. The mounts consist of 'Vimanams', images of lion, bull, elephant swan, horse etc. On the ninth day 'Ratham' or car festival takes place. The floating festival is on the tenth day. The expenditure for the celebrations for the first eight days is met by persons of different occupations belonging to different communities. Most of them belong to Pondicherry and they consist of paddy or rice merchants, jewellers, paddy-brokers grocery-shop-keepers, general merchants and agriculturists. The expenditure for the car and floating festivals on the ninth and tenth days respectively is met from the temple funds.

141. The car festival, on the ninth day, is a spectacular one and attracts a large crowd. The local Government declares a public holiday on that day for Pondicherry area to enable all Government servants to participate in the festival. The car festival usually falls on the fifth Friday of 'Aadi' or on the first Friday of 'Avani'. The attendance on this day alone is estimated between 50,000 and 70,000. The temple car made of wood is about 40' in height. It is decorated with coloured garments and drapes. The social significance of the function is heightened by the participation of the heads of the administration, local bodies and other private enterpri



The granite image of the head of the Goddess Sengazhuneeramman in the *Sanctum Sanctorum.* Note the full image of the Goddess made of bricks and lime behind the ground image.



The Nagoorar temple located very near the sea-shore.

The bronze image of the Goddess suitably decorated is brought in procession and placed in the spectacular car. The honour of having the first hand in pulling the car for the procession goes to the Chief Commissioner (now Lt. Governor) of the place. During the French regime, it was always the French Governor who had this honour. After the informal pulling of the chain of the car, others follow with the beating of drums, fire-works display and 'Nagaswaram' music. The thick crowd wearing special garments for the occasion, the presence of the officials and other important persons of the area and entertainments such as display of fireworks, Nagaswaram music etc., culminate in presenting a gay and inspiring picture of social oneness and communal harmony. The car taken through the sandy streets of the village is said to come round the streets in an hour. On ordinary days when a cycle or a rikshaw or a car finds it difficult to wade through the sandy streets of the place, it is really a matter of mystery for the temple car to come round with ease and that too running at a good speed. The villagers unanimously attribute this to the prowess of the Goddess Sengazhuneeramman. In fact, they are not in favour of metalling the streets around the temple for fear that it may not be possible to control the speed of the car.

142. The floating festival takes place on the 10th day. This is held in the pond situated to the south-west of the temple. The float is formed by lashing a few catamarans together and the deity is placed on the planklike structure. Accompanied by Nagaswaram music, it is taken round, floating slowly. A gathering of about 30,000 devotees witness this event. Another important festival that follows the floating festival is 'Muthu Pallakku' (pearl palanquin). This is usually celebrated on a Friday following the car festival. Devotees perform 'Archanas' to the Goddess. On that night 'Muthu pallakku' procession takes place. The palanquin made of split bamboos is dressed with card-boards of different hues and decorated with glass-beads resembling pearls. Dolls are arranged in rows around the palanquin as added attractions. It is then illuminated with electric florescent lamps. The image of the Goddess is gorgeously decorated and placed inside the palanquin. The palanquin in turn is mounted on a chariot. It is drawn through the streets accompanied by Nagaswaram music, 'Karagam' and 'Poikkal Kuthirai' dances. The procession terminates usually at dawn.

143. This festival is socially remarkable in as much as it spreads an air of oneness and wipes off casteism among the participants. The Parayans and Sakkilians also move shoulder to shoulder with others while participating in the festival. Their entry into the temple is not restricted and they freely join others in offering their worship to the Goddess. The presence of the officials and other leading persons from all walks of life buries the feeling of social complex and brings to the surface a feeling of fraternity. The economic aspects of the festival are also equally noteworthy. The temple funds get boosted by the offerings of the devotees in various forms such as cash, gold or silver ornaments, jewels etc.

144. The rights of collection of poultry offered by the devotees and the collection of fees levied for the sacrifice of birds are leased out to a few local persons, who make out a sizeable profit out of the leases. A large number of stalls are put up at the time of the festival and the petty hawkers and the pedlars strike a good fortune. The Pattanavans of the village reap a good harvest in disposing of their catches. One can come across a row of them selling raw and salted fishes of all kinds. Other kinds of business are selling of vegetables, grocery shops, sweet-meat and eatables shops, cool-drinks stalls etc. Mud pots, dolls, baskets, iron and aluminium vessels, cosmetics including glass bangles, ribbon and plastic materials of all descriptions are some of the other articles sold in the fair. The transport owners also have their share of profit by running special buses from Pondicherry to Veerampattinam to meet the transport requirements of the huge crowd. The occasion affords enough recreation both to the young and the old. Children find entertainments like merry-go-round, white magic performances, street dance, and the old find diversion in 'Karagam' and the dummy-horse dance. They also go to cinemas in the theatres at Pondicherry and Ariankuppam. The procession of an elephant brought from Thirukovilur for participation in the festival adds to the highlight of the occasion.

The temple management board

145. The temple management is in the hands of a board consisting of 5 persons. They are appointed by the Government of Pondicherry in consultation with the villagers. They hold office for their life time

and their office is honorary. The President of the board is said to be in office, since 30 years. The present incumbents in office are:

(*i*) Sri T. V. Periandi Chettiar—President

(*ii*) Sri K. Pavadaswami Chettiar—Vice-President

(*iii*) Sri M. Murugaswami Chettiar—Treasurer

(*iv*) Sri A. Kuppuswamy Chettiar—Secretary

(*v*) Sri K. Maila—Committee member

The temple funds are accounted for and the board sends an annual statement of income and expenditure to the Government of Pondicherry for scrutiny. The board has carried out many renovation and constrution works in the Sengazhuneeramman temple. Some of the notable improvements carried out by the board are electrification of the temples, construction of Sabha Mandapams, renovation of the temple choultry, desilting of the temple pond and making jewels to the Goddess. The villagers have got full confidence in the temple management board.

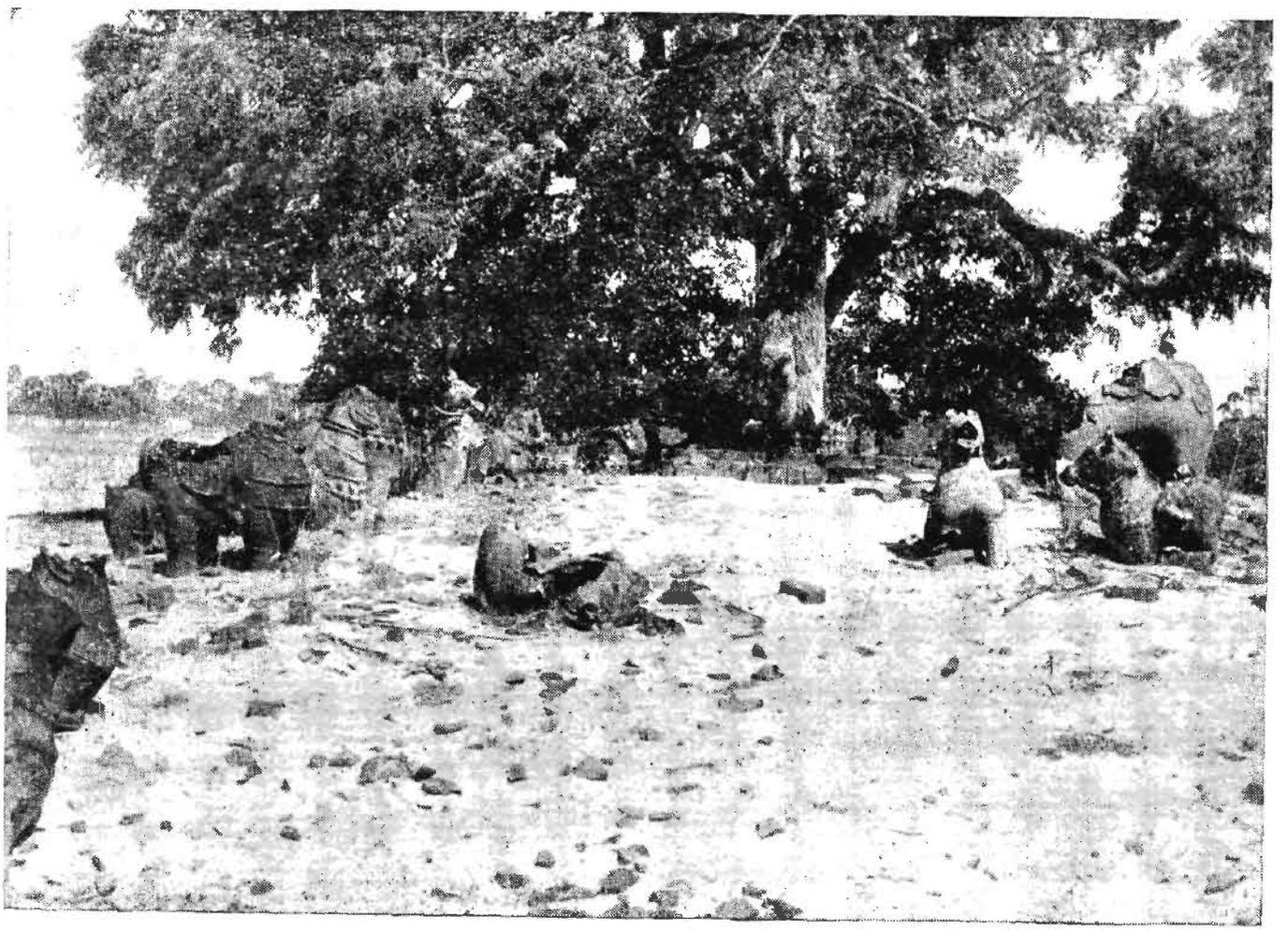
Communal festivals

146. The important festivals such as Deepavali, Pongal, Ganesh Chathurthy, Saraswathi Pooja etc. are also celebrated by the villagers. Since the village consists of Hindus only, all Hindu festivals are celebrated elaborately or informally according to the economic status of a household. The mode of celebration of the festivals has been described in other village survey monographs covering Pondicherry area.

Leisure and recreation

147. One Recreation Centre was started under the Community Development Programme on 11—7—1958. The centre known as Radio Nilayam is situated opposite to the temple. It has got play materials like sea-saw, swing etc., for children but they are broken and cannot be put into use. Children do not seem to frequent the centre. The radio found there goes on air daily in the morning and in the evening. Only cine music appears to be popular among the villagers. Both young and old are deeply interested in tuning Radio Ceylon which broadcast cine music throughout the day. The daily average attendance in the centre is 20 persons. The centre gets two Tamil daily news papers. Apart from this the only other common recreation is going to cinema house at Ariankuppam. Pondicherry is also visited where a net-work of good theatres screen latest Tamil films. Cinema entertainment is so popular among the fisherfolk that some of them have named their canoes after their favourite cine stars. Work-cum-recreation is the habit of the majority of fisherfolk. To break the monotony and rigour of their occupation they sing folk-songs while sailing into the sea. The last but not the least mode of recreation resorted to by the majority of Pattanavans and Sembadavans is frequenting the toddy shops. They find full relief and recreation only in a pot-ful of toddy.

148. The villagers have fought for the merger of the former French settlements with the Indian Union. The political consciousness of the people was always said to be timely and well regimented. The popular political parties are Congress and Dravida Munnettra Kazhagam. The Communist party has not yet secured enough support in this village.



The Kuttiandavar Temple found in open air underneath a tree.



A casuarina grove in Veerampattinam

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

149. Veerampattinam in Pondicherry area, is an old and settled village. Pattanavans, the sea-fishermen, are the dominant population and fishing is their main source of livelihood. The technique of their occupation is old and traditional and steeped in that outmoded operation they are somewhat impervious and slow in reacting to the modern methods of fishing. The unilateral attempt of the local Government to improve their lot has not met with considerable success and they still remain poor. After the *defacto* merger of the village with the Indian Union, the dawn of freedom has brought about some conspicuous over-all development. The provisions of overhead-tanks, hand-pumps and public wells for drinking water supply, electrification, recreation centre, establishment of a Fishermen Co-operative Society, public health measures etc., are some of the improvements carried out by the local administration. The intervention of middlemen who take away a lion's share of their catches is a stumbling block to the improvment of the living conditions of the fisherfolk. However, the elements of urbanization are markedly noticed in the general outlook of the younger generation. In the wake of its influence, the mainstay of the population is bound to change in the years to come.

APPENDIX I

CENSUS 1961—PONDICHERRY STATE

SOCIO—ECONOMIC SURVEY

Household Schedule

Name of Area: Name of Village:

Name of Commune: Location Code:

A. Composition of the household:

Serial No.	Name (with full name for the head of the household and name for others).	Sex	Relationship to head of household	Age	Marital Status	Occupation, if any*
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

* *Note on Col.* 7:—In the case of unemployed person write "E. S." if the person is seeking employment. If a person is unemployed and is not seeking employment write "N. W.", and also indicate the reasons for not seeking employment by writing within brackets after "N. W.", 'S' for sickness, 'O' for old age, 'I' for infancy and 'D' for those who have no special reasons for not seeking employment. In respect of persons in employment describe the nature of work. If one is a Government servant write 'G. S.' If a person is employed in an industry belonging to the household write "H. I." within brackets after describing the work. If a person is employed in a business belonging to the household write "H. B." and describe the work. If a person is employed in cultivation run by the household write "H. C." and in respect of students write 'S. T.'

B. Duration of Residence:

1. Has this household or the ancestral one originated in the village or migrated?
2. If migrated to this village, state
   (*a*) Where from?
   (*b*) How many years ago? and
   (*c*) Why?

C. Religion :

1. What is the religion of the household ?
2. Has any member of the household embraced other religion after maturity ?
3. What is the caste or sub-caste to which the household belongs ?
4. Is there any place of worship within the house ? If so where ?
5. Which is the reigning deity, God or Goddess of the household ?

D. Particulars about the House :

1. Is the house at present occupied by the household, their own or rented ?
2. If own house, is it an ancestral property or acquired by the head of the household from his own earning ?
3. If rented, what is the amount of rent paid ?
4. Does the head own more than one house ? If so how many and where are they situated ?
5. Describe the house giving the following details :
   - (*a*) wall and roof material
   - (*b*) number of rooms
   - (*c*) Number of households, if more than one are living in the same house
   - (*d*) Water facilities
   - (*e*) Sanitary conditions
   - (*f*) Whether electrified
   - (*g*) Whether there is a separate room for every husband and wife ?
   - (*h*) Number of rooms used for sleeping
   - (*i*) Location of kitchen
   - (*j*) Location of cattle-shed and any other interesting feature about the house

E. Diet :

1. The diet taken by the members of the household from breakfast till night-meal. Give details of beverages taken and the number of times in a day :

   (*a*) Breakfast—

   (*i*) Kanji

   (*ii*) Tea or Coffee alone

   (*iii*) Tea or Coffee with other dishes

   (*b*) Noon-meal

   (*c*) Supper

   (*d*) Tea or Coffee between noon-meal and supper

   (*e*) Tea or Coffee with light dishes between noon-meal and supper

   (*f*) Tea or Coffee at any other time. State how many times.

2. What is the staple food of the household? (Name the cereals or other items)

3. What are the other items of food commonly taken ?

   Pulses

   Vegetables

   Meat

   Fish

   Chicken

   Oils and fats

   Milk and milk products

   Eggs

   Sweets

   Spices

   Fruits

   Liquor

   Other items

4. (*a*) Are special preparations of food made on festive and ceremonial occasions ?

   (*b*) If so, how many such occasions are there in a year ?

   (*c*) What are the special items in the menu ?

5. Of what material the utensils used in the household for cooking are made?

6. What type of hearth is used for cooking?

7. What is the fuel generally used for cooking food?

   (*a*) Dry leaves
   (*b*) Firewood
   (*c*) Charcoal
   (*d*) Kerosene
   (*e*) Saw-dust
   (*f*) Cow-dung cake
   (*g*) Paddy husk
   (*h*) Electricity
   (*i*) Others

F. Dress, Ornaments and Footwear:

1. Describe the dress worn by the members of the household giving particulars about dothi, shirt, shawl, etc. in the case of males and sari, blouse, etc. in the case of females.

   (*a*) Males
   (*b*) Females

2. Are ornaments used by the members of the household on all occasions or only on special occasions?

3. What will be the approximate cost of the ornaments used by the household?

4. Are footwear used by the members of the household?

5. Are the clothes sent to washerman for cleaning?

G. Miscellaneous Goods:

1. Does the household possess any of the following:

   (*a*) Chairs
   (*b*) Tables
   (*c*) Cots
   (*d*) Stools

(*e*) Benches
(*f*) Almirahs
(*g*) Other items
(*h*) Lantern
(*i*) Petromax
(*j*) Electric light
(*k*) Battery torch light
(*l*) Bicycle
(*m*) Gramaphone
(*n*) Radio set
(*o*) Car
(*p*) Bullock cart
(*q*) Rickshaw
(*r*) Jutka
(*s*) Agricultural implements

H. Animals :

1. What are the domestic and other animals and birds owned by the household ?
   (*a*) Cows
   (*b*) Bulls
   (*c*) He-buffaloes
   (*d*) She-buffaloes
   (*e*) Goats
   (*f*) Sheep
   (*g*) Pigs
   (*h*) Dogs
   (*i*) Ducks
   (*j*) Fowls
   (*k*) Others

2. Does the household avail of the medical facilities, if any, provided for the animals in the village ? If such facilities are not available in the village, do they take them to the nearest veterinary hospital or treat them locally with indigenous medicines ?

I. Education :

1. How many members of the household are illiterates ?
2. How many know to read and write one or more languages ?

3. How many are?
   (*a*) Graduates (specify, French or English)
   (*b*) Diploma holders (Technical or non-Technical)
   (*c*) Holders of Oriental titles
   (*d*) S. S. L. Cs. or Matriculates
   (*e*) Intermediates
   (*f*) Any other qualification not below S.S.L.C.
4. What is the language spoken in the household?
5. How many children belonging to the household attend school or college? Specify class.
6. How many children in the age group 6–14 are not attending school and for what reason?
7. How many children below 14 who do not attend school, are sent to work in the field or elsewhere?
8. Is the household in favour of female education?

J. Amusements:

1. Does the household go to cinemas? If so, at what intervals?
2. Does the household go to dramas, folk dances, musical entertainments etc.? If so, at what intervals?
3. Does the household participate in any other amusements and what are they?
4. Is any member of the household an actor, a musician etc.? If so, specify.

K. Medical Attention:

1. Which of the following system of treatment is adopted, when a member of the household falls sick:
   (*a*) Allopathic
   (*b*) Ayurvedic
   (*c*) Homoeopathic
   (*d*) Others (specify)

2. Have all the members of the household been vaccinated? When were they last vaccinated?

3. Is any member of the household a victim of leprosy, tuberculosis, asthma or any such malady? If so, for how long he/she is suffering and what efforts have been taken to cure him/her.

4. Who usually attends to the maternity cases in the household?

L. Marriage:

1. Is the dowry system practised in the household? If dowry is given or received, in what form?

2. What is the marriageable age in the case of a male/female in the household?

3. Has there been any polygamous or polyandrous marriage in the household? How many?

4. Has there been any case of inter-caste or inter-religious marriage in the household? If so, give details.

M. Occupational Particulars:

1. Traditional Occupation:

   (*a*) What, if any, is the traditional occupation of the household?

   (*b*) Is it continued as the main or subsidiary occupation?

   (*c*) If it is not continued, why was it given up?

   (*d*) If continued, is it with any improvement?

   (*e*) Has any member of the household received any special training in improving the traditional occupation?

   (*f*) How many members are engaged in this occupation?

2. Household Industry :

(*a*) Is the household running any industry ? If so, is it in the scale of registered factory ?

(*b*) What is the nature of the industry ? Give details about machinery, if any, used, source of raw material, number of members of the household engaged in it, products thereof and marketing of the products etc. Give also the quantity and value of the products (annual) and the mode of transport to the marketing place.

(*c*) What is generally the income derived from the industry ?

(*d*) How many hired workers are engaged in the industry ?

(*e*) Does the household receive any aid from Government for running/developing the industry ? If so, give the value.

(*f*) *Any notable feature about the industry.*

3. Household Business :

(*a*) Is the household running any business ? What is the nature of the business ?

(*b*) How many members of the household are engaged in it as working partners or paid workers ?

(*c*) What is the annual net income from the business ?

4. Household Cultivation :

(*a*) Has the household any land of its own ? If so, what is the extent of the land ?

(*b*) State whether any land is held by the household under Government, institutions or private persons, the cultivation or supervision of which is done by the household. (This should be restricted to seasonal crops)

(*c*) How many members of the household are engaged in full-time/part-time cultivation during the working season ?

(*d*) Do they adopt improved agricultural practices in cultivation ? Do they use modern implements ? Specify.

N. Family Budget:

1. Income:

	Monthly	Annual
A. What are the sources of annual income of the family? Give the amount of income under each source:		
(*a*) Salary or wages		
(*b*) Rent from land		
(*c*) Rent of houses		
(*d*) Pensions		
(*e*) Industry run by the household		
(*f*) Business		
(*g*) Dividends		
(*h*) Gifts and presents		
(*i*) Help from relatives		
(*j*) Other sources (specify)		

2. Expenditure:

A. FOOD

	Amount in Rupees
(*a*) What is the monthly expenditure of the household on the following:	
(1) Cereals and pulses	
(2) Vegetables	
(3) Meat	
(4) Condiments	
(5) Oils and fats	
(6) Sugar	
(7) Beverages	
(8) Liquor	
(9) Tobacco { Chewing / Smoking	
(10) Others { Refreshments / Pan, Supari etc.	
Total:	

B. CLOTHING:

(*a*) What is the annual expenditure of the household on clothing?

C. HOUSING, ETC.

(*a*) What is the annual expenditure on the following:

1. Housing (Rent)
2. Fuel
3. Light
4. Others, if any

Total:

D. MISCELLANEOUS:

1. What is the annual expenditure on:

(*a*) Education
(*b*) Religious observances
(*c*) Provident Fund, Insurance etc., (compulsory savings)
(*d*) Payment of debts, if any
(*e*) Medical fees and medicines
(*f*) Amusements
(*g*) Remittance to dependants living elsewhere
(*h*) Travelling
(*i*) Maintenance of household and other animals
(*j*) Payment of taxes, duties etc.
(*k*) Others

Total expenditure:

E. Cultivation, Industry and Business:

(*a*) What is the annual expenditure of the household on the following:

1. Cultivation
2. Industry
3. Business activities

Total:

F. Any other item of expenditure not elsewhere classified

G. Grand Total of A to F:

3. Is the annual income of the household adequate to meet the annual expenditure?
4. If not, how is the deficit met?

O. Indebtedness:

1. Is the household in debt? If so, how much?
2. What is the extent of debt incurred for the following purpose:
   (*a*) Purchase of land
   (*b*) Construction/repair of house or any other building
   (*c*) Marriages
   (*d*) To give dowry
   (*e*) Sickness
   (*f*) To clear old outstanding debts
   (*g*) Ordinary wants
   (*h*) Running Household Industry/Cultivation/ Business
   (*i*) Other reasons, if any
3. What other financial commitments the household has?

P. Land:

1. Has the household given out for cultivation any land of its own? If so, how much?
2. Is any cultivable land belonging to the household left uncultivated? If so, for what reasons and what is the extent of such land?
3. Has it been possible for the household to secure during the last five years:
   (*a*) Better irrigation facilities
   (*b*) Better types of cattle
   (*c*) Better seeds, implements etc.
   (*d*) Better manure, pesticides

   or

4. Has it been possible to adopt land improvement measures like reclamation, soil conservation etc. (Indicate what extent of land has been converted from single to double and double to triple crop. Give the extent of land newly irrigated and brought under cultivation)

Q. Wages:

1. What does an adult member of the household earn as wages for a day, if he is working as:
   (*a*) An agricultural labourer
   (*b*) An unskilled worker in an industry
   (*c*) An unskilled general worker
   (*d*) A skilled worker in an industry (mention the name of industry and type of work)

R. General:

1. Does the household get any newspaper?
2. Does any member or members of the household work for social uplift? If so, how many?
3. Does any member of the household take part in the N. E. S. Projects? If so, in what capacity?
4. Is any member of the household a member of any Co-operative society? If so, what is the nature of the society and what is the value of share taken by him/her?
5. Has anyone in the household insured his/her life and if so, for how much?
6. Has the household been benefited by the activities of the C. D. Project in the village? If so, in what way? Do they actively participate in the C.D. programme?

Date

Signature of the Investigator.

APPENDIX II

SOCIO-ECONOMIC SURVEY

Village Schedule

I. General :

1. Name of the village :

   (*a*) Location Code :

   (*b*) Is the village situated on a plain/on an undulating surface/on a plateau/on a hillock/at the bottom of a depression ?

2. Area of the Commune :

3. Area of the village :

4. Total population :

5. Number of households :

6. Distance from nearest town :

7. Distance from nearest Railway Station :

8. Is the village connected by bus ?

9. Is there a Police Station ?

10. (*a*) Is there a Post/Telegraph Office ?

    (*b*) If yes, can money be sent through that Post Office ?

11. If not, which is the nearest Post and Telegraph Office ?

12. Is the village electrified ? If so, when was it electrified ?

13. (*a*) Which is the marketing place ?

    (*b*) Names and particulars of the market most commonly visited :

Name of the Market	Distance from the village	Transport	Weekly market only	Commodities exported to the market			General note on the market including its importance in the regions, operation of middle man, neighbours, measures, tools, recreational activities, if any.
				Item	Approximate quantity	Approximate value	
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)

14. Are there toddy and liquor shops?

15. If not, at which distance is any of these shops nearest to the village?

16. Legend, if any, about the village?

17. (*a*) Is there any river flowing through the village or nearby?

    (*b*) If so, what are the uses to which it is put by the village?

18. (*a*) Draw sketch-map of the village with indication of north line, directions of the main road, rail road and other important channels of communications including rivers and distances from the village to each of these main channels of communication:

    (*b*) Draw on the cadastral survey map of the village (if available) or on a sketch-map, the layout of the village allocating the habitation areas. (One small triangle or any other suitable symbol should indicate one family, even if that family occupies a group of structures. Separate symbols should be adopted for schools, hospitals, shops, Government Offices etc. Indicate by drawing, water sources including irrigation wells, drinking wells, tube wells,

ponds, streams etc. drainage, agricultural fields, pastures, village jungles, if any, grave-yards, burning ghats etc. Show the main roads leading to and out of the village. Indicate the distribution of the main communities in the village either by entering numbers or symbols in the map)

(*c*) If possible, enclose a photograph of the village from a distant high point :

II. Vital Statistics :

1. How are the births, deaths and marriages recorded ?
2. Is there any possibility of omission of these events in the Mayor's Office ?
3. Describe the *modus operandi* of recording of these events :

III. Housing :

1. What are the common types of houses ? Give a brief description of type of roof, wall, flooring and a sketch of the typical house type :
2. The system of grouping of houses, average distance between two clusters of houses, reason for such grouping *e.g.* whether on account of the nature of surface of land or on account of social custom :
3. Are the house types suited to the needs of the population ?
4. Can you get the legend, if any, leading to the birth of the village basing on the house arrangements ?
5. Are there houseless persons also in the village ? If so, where do they generally rest at night ?

IV. Health and Sanitation :

1. Give a list of common diseases of the village :
2. Give your impressions about the hygienic conditions inside and outside the house :

3. Do you think that the hygienic conditions prevailing in and around the village are mainly responsible for the common disease to be found in the village ?

4. Are there public latrines in the village ?

5. If there is no latrine, where do the villagers generally answer to their calls of nature ?

6. *What are the sources of drinking water ?*

7. Is water supply adequate in all the seasons of the year ?

8. What are the drainage facilities available in the village ? Are they adequate ?

9. Do the villagers send their clothes to washerman for cleaning ?

10. Is there any place for community bath ?

11. Was there any outbreak of epidemic in the village recently ?

    If so, how many died or were attacked ?

12. What measures were taken to control the outbreak of the epidemic ?

13. Which is the nearest Hospital/dispensary/medical depot ?

14. Is there a primary health centre in the village ?

15. Is there a maternity ward in the nearest hospital ?

16. Where do deliveries generally take place—at home or in the hospital ?

17. Are there any mid-wives in the village ? If so, do they attend to the deliveries ?

18. Is native or indigenous medicine practised ?

19. Do the villagers frequent toddy or liquor shops ? If so, what percentage ?

20. Give a brief note on the general health of the people :

V Literacy and Education :

1. Names and particulars of the educational institutions where children residing in the village read :

2. Give the number of teachers and students in each school and average attendance. (Give sex-wise information) :

3. How many children cannot attend school just because they are required by their parents to help them in their work ?

4. Is there a public library or reading room in the village ?

5. Do the villagers favour female education ?

Type	Name of the institution	Name of the place	Distance from the village	Since when in existence	How many students from the village are enrolled. ST/SC/Others	General notes including history of the institution, its problem etc.
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)

(1) Lower Primary

(2) Upper Primary

(3) Secondary (including higher secondary)

(4) Adult Education Centre

(5) Other educational institutions

VI. Religious Practices :

1. Do the villagers ever join in common worship ?

2. How many temples, churches and mosques are there in the village ?

3. Particulars about the fairs and festivals commonly visited by the villagers :

Name of the Fair	Distance	When held	Main attraction	Commodities transacted	Recreational activities	Religious activities	Cultural and social activities	General note including trend of changes in size of gathering, main attraction, nature of commodities and different activities
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)

4. Any other interesting fact about the way of worship or other religious practices in the village.

5. What is the name of the reigning deity?
   Why is the God or Goddess so called?
   What are the powers attributed to it?

VII. Social Life:

1. Is widow remarriage allowed?
2. What is the system of inheritance in vouge in the village?
3. What are the essential ceremonies a man undergoes from birth to death?
4. What are the essential ceremonies a woman undergoes from birth to death?
5. Is inter-caste marriage allowed?
6. Any other notable feature of social life in the village.
7. Does the village respect the sanctity of joint family system?
   If so, how many joint families are there?
8. Any punishment like banishment from village community prescribed for contravention of basic moral laws?
9. What is generally the marriageable age for both sexes?
10. Give a brief note on typical marriage in the village.

VIII. Agriculture:

1. What are the main sources of irrigation?
2. Have the villagers taken to improved agricultural practices?
3. Do people hire out agricultural implements and if so, the rate of hire charges?
4. What are the usual rates at which the agricultural labourers are paid?
5. Is absentee landlordism prevalent in the village?
6. How much of land is under lease in the village?
7. What is the rate of such lease?
8. Is any pest attack prevalent in the village? If so, what measures were taken to eradicate it?
9. What kind of insecticide is generally used and what is the source from which it is obtained?
10. Are chemical fertilisers used? If so, from what source they get them?
11. Where do the villagers generally market their produce?
12. Is there any rice or flour mill in the village?
13. Is there mutual co-operation among the villagers in agricultural practices?
14. Do the villagers get improved seeds etc.? If so, state any subsidy is given.
15. How many cocoanut or palmyrah trees are tapped for toddy per year?
16. State whether the toddy tapped in the village is locally consumed or marketed elsewhere.
17. How was the village affected by the recent rains?
18. Any other information worthy of note about agriculture may be given.

IX. Livestock:

1. The total number of livestock in the village as per the 1956 livestock census. Give category-wise information.
2. Are there any improved breeds of cattle in the village? If so, specify?
3. Give the average milk yield of cow/buffalo in the village. If possible, maximum and minimum may also be given.
4. Which is the nearest veterinary hospital?

5. What are the common diseases of cattle found in the village? What efforts have been taken to prevent cattle pests?
6. Is adequate fodder available for cattle in the village?
7. Is there a cattle pound in the village?
8. Is animal transport used?
9. What is the view of the villagers about artificial insemination?
10. Any other useful information:

X. Fisheries:

1. How many families are engaged in fishing ?
2. Where do they generally market their fish?
3. Where do they fish—in the sea, lake, river etc.
4. Is fish rearing done in the village? If so, do they get improved seedlings for the purpose at subsidised rates?
5. Are the fishermen members of any Fishermen Co-operative Society?
6. If not, is there any scope for starting a society in the village itself?
7. Are the villagers benefited by the quick marketing facilities provided by the Government? How many of these avail of the facilities?
8. What varieties of fish are generally available in the village?

XI. Household Industry:

1. Is there any household or cottage industry in the village? If so, what is the name of the industry?
2. How many are engaged in the Industry or Handicrafts?
3. Give a note on the salient features of the industry.
4. Is any aid given to the Industry/Handicraft? If so, what kind of aid is given?
5. Where are the products usually marketed?

XII. Co-operation :

1. (*a*) General particulars about the Co-operative Societies that serve the village.

   (General note on its role including whether all sections of the population are attracted, what are its problems etc.)

   (*b*) Organisational and operative details.

Type of Society	Name	Area of operation	Registered H. Q.		When registered	Total	No. from the village	Qualification for membership	Nature of operation	Aid from Government	Extent of business according to last audit report	Loss or profit according to last audit report	Dividend, if any, given
			Name of the place	Distance from the village									
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)

(1) Credit co-operative

(2) Co-operative graingola

(3) Consumers' co-operative

(4) Co-operative farming society

(5) Other co-operatives

Name of the Society	Composition of board of management	Date of registration	General meeting held after registration		Meeting of the board of management held during the last year		Remarks
			Date	Number of members attended	Date	Number of members	
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)

2. Are the villagers biassed against co-operative principles? or Do they take active part in it?

XIII. Others :

Prepare a statement giving the number of craftsmen by each category (*e.g.*) Goldsmith, Carpenter, Weaver, Potter, Cobbler, Barber, Dhobi, Tailor, Ironsmith etc.

Date

Signature of the Investigator.

APPENDIX III

Glossary of local terms

	Tamil words		*English equivalents*
1.	Ammi Mithithal	...	A function in marriage when the right toe of the bride is placed on the grinding stone
2.	Arathi	...	A red solution of calcium and turmeric water. Taken in a plate, it is waved before the couple to ward off evil eyes
3.	Cheri	...	The hamlet where Parayans dwell
4.	Dhavani	...	Saree piece
5.	Ennai Nalangu	...	A ceremony performed to ward off the effects of evil eyes
6.	Homam	...	Offering of ghee, grain etc. to the sacred fire
7.	Iddli	...	Steamed rice cake
8.	Kanganam Kattuthal	...	Tying of threads round the wrists
9.	Kappu Kalaithal	...	Removal of threads tied round the wrists
10.	Koradu	...	Verandah
11.	Kumkum	...	Vermilion
12.	Mantras	...	Mystical formulas or hymns
13.	Moi Seithal	...	Presentation of articles or cash during marriages
14.	Muhurtham	...	Auspicious time for wedding
15.	Nadai	...	Verandah
16.	Nichiyathartham	...	Betrothal
17.	Namam	...	Vaishnavite sectarian mark
18.	Palagaram	...	Eatables
19.	Pan-supari	...	Betel leaves & arecanuts
20.	Pandakkal Naduthal	...	Planting of twigs before the marriage booth
21.	Pariyarichi	...	A woman of barber community
22.	Payasam	...	A sweet sauce with sugar/jaggery
23.	Pongi Eduthal/Pongal Vaithal	...	Offering of cooked rice to a deity
24.	Poosai	...	Saivite sectarian mark
25.	Punyahavachanam	...	A purificatory ceremony
26.	Radio Nilayam	...	Place where community radio is installed
27.	Rasam	...	Broth made of pepper, dhal etc.
28.	Sakkarai Pongal	...	A dish made of rice with jaggery or sugar
29.	Sukku	...	Dried ginger