however, believed Tamil to be a corruption of *tenmoli,* southern speech, in contradistinction to *vadugu,* the northern, *i.e.,* Telugu language. As in the case of the Kafir, Turkish, Tagala and other typical languages, the term Tamulic or Tamulian has occasionally been employed as the designation of the whole class of Dravidian peoples and languages, of which it is only the most prominent member. The present article deals with Tamil in its restricted sense only. The Tamils proper are smaller and of weaker build than Europeans, though graceful in shape. Their physical appearance is described as follows:—a pointed and frequently hooked pyramidal nose, with conspicuous nares, more long than round; a marked sinking in of the orbital line, producing a strongly defined orbital ridge; hair and eyes black; the latter, varying from small to middle-sized, have a peculiar sparkle and a look of calculation; mouth large, lips thick, lower jaw not heavy; forehead well-formed, but receding, inclining to flattish, and seldom high; beard considerable, and often strong; colour of skin very dark, frequently approaching to black (*Manual of the Administration of the Madras Presidency,* Madras, 1885, vol. i., Introd., p. 36; see also Caldwell, *Com­parative Grammar of the Dravidian Languages,* 1875, pp. 558-79). The Tamils have many good qualities—frugality, patience, endurance, politeness—and they are credited with astounding memories; their worst vices are said to be lying and lascivious­ness. Of all the South-Indian tribes they are the least sedentary and the most enterprising. Wherever money is to be earned, there will Tamils be found, either as merchants or in the lower capacity of domestic servants and labourers. The tea and coffee districts of Ceylon are peopled by about 950,000; Tamils serve as coolies in the Mauritius and the West Indies; in Burma, the Straits, and Siam the so-called Klings are all Tamils (Graul, *Reise nach Ostindien,* Leipzig, 1855, vol. iv. pp. 113-212).

*Language.—*The area over which Tamil is spoken extends from a few miles north of the city of Madras to the extreme south of the eastern side of the peninsula, throughout the country below the Eastern Ghats, from Pulicat to Cape Comorin, and from the Ghats to the Bay of Bengal, including also the southern portion of Travancore on the western side of the Ghats and the northern part of Ceylon. According to the census of 1901, the total number of Tamil-speaking people in all India was 16,525,500. To these should be added about 160,000 in the French posses­sions. But as of all the Dravidian languages the Tamil shows the greatest tendency to spread, its area becomes ever larger, encroaching on that of the contiguous languages. Tamil is a sister of Malayâlam, Telugu, Kanarese, Tulu; and, as it is the oldest, richest, and most highly organized of the Dravidian languages, it may be looked upon as typical of the family to which it belongs. The one nearest akin to it is Malayâlam, which originally appears to have been simply a dialect of Tamil, but differs from it now both in pronunciation and in idiom, in the retention of old Tamil forms obsolete in the modern language, and in having discarded all personal terminations in the verb, the person being always indicated by the pronoun (F. W. Ellis, *Dissertation on the Malayâlam Language,* p. 2; Gundert, *Malay- âḷma Dictionary,* Introd.; Caldwell, *Comparative Gr.,* Introd., p. 23; Burnell, *Specimens of South Indian Dialects,* No. 2, p. 13). Also, the proportion of Sanskrit words in Malayâḷam is greater, while in Tamil it is less, than in any other Dravidian tongue. This divergence between the two languages cannot be traced farther back than about the 10th century; for, as it appears from the Cochin and Travancore inscriptions, previous to that period both languages were still substantially identical; whereas in the *Râmacharitam,* the oldest poem in Malayâlam, composed probably in the 13th century, at any rate long before the arrival of the Portuguese and the introduction of the modem character, we see that language already formed. The modern Tamil characters originated “ in a Brahmanical adaptation of the old Grantha letters corresponding to the so-called Vaṭṭeluttu,” or round-hand, an alphabet once in vogue throughout the whole of the Pâṇḍyan kingdom, as well as in the South Malabar and Coimbatore districts, and still sparsely used for drawing up con­veyances and other legal instruments (F. W. Ellis, *Dissertation,* p. 3). It is also used by the Moplahs in Tellicherry. The origin of the Vaṭṭeluttu itself is still a controverted question. Dr Burnell, the greatest authority on the subject, stated his reasons for tracing that character through the Pahlavi to a Semitic source *{Elements of South Indian Palaeography*, 2nd ed., 1878, pp. 47-52, and plates xvii. and xxxii.). In the 8th century the Vaṭṭeluttu existed side by side and together with the Grantha, an ancient alphabet still used throughout the Tamil country in writing Sanskrit. During the four or five centuries after the conquest of Madura by the Cholas in the 11th it was gradually superseded in the Tamil country by the modern Tamil, while in Malabar it continued in general use down to the end of the 17th century. But the earliest works of Tamil literature, such as the *Tolkâppiyam* and the *Kuraḷ,* were still written in it. The modern Tamil characters, which have but little changed for the last 5∞ years, differ from all the other modern Dravidian alphabets both in shape and in their phonetic value. Their angular form is said to be due to the widespread practice of writing with the style resting on the *end* of the left thumb-nail, while the other alphabets are written with the style resting on the left side of the thumb.

The Tamil alphabet is sufficiently well adapted for the expression of the twelve vowels of the language *(a, â, i, i, u, û, e, ê, o, ô, ei, au),* —the occasional sounds of *ö* and ū, both short and long, being covered by the signs for e, *ê, i, í;* but it is utterly inadequate for the proper expression of the consonants, inasmuch as the one character ⅛ has to do duty also for *kh, g, gh,* and similarly each of the other surd consonants *ch, ṭ, t, p* represents also the remaining three letters of its respective class. The letter *k* has, besides, occasionally the sound of *h,* and *ch* that of s. Each of the five consonants *k, ch, ṭ, t, p* has its own nasal. In addition to the four semivowels, the Tamil possesses a cerebral ṛ and ḷ, and has, in common with the Malayâlam, retained a liquid ḷ*,* once peculiar to all the Dravidian languages, the sound of which is so difficult to fix graphically, and varies so much in different districts, that it has been rendered in a dozen different ways *{Manual of the Administration of the Madras Presidency,* vol. ii. pp. 20 seq.). Fr. Müller is probably correct in approximating it to that of the Bohemian ř*.* There is, lastly, a peculiar *n,* differing in function but not in pronunciation from the dental *n*. The three sibilants and ḥ of Sanskrit have no place in the Tamil alphabet; but *ch* often docs duty as a sibilant in writing foreign words, and the four corresponding letters as well as *j* and *ksh* of the Grantha alphabet are now frequently called to aid. It is obvious that many of the Sanskrit words imported into Tamil at various periods (Caldwell, *loc. cit.,* Introd., pp. 86 seq.) have, in consequence of the incongruity of the Sanskrit and Tamil notation of their respective phonetic systems, assumed disguises under which the original is scarcely recognizable: examples are *ulagu* (loka), *uruvam* (rûpa), *arukkeu* (arka), *aṛpvtnm* (adbhutam), *nalchattiram* (nakshatram), *iruḍi* (ṛishi), *tîrkam* (dîrgha), *arasen* (râjan). Besides the Sanskrit ingredients, which appear but sparsely in the old poetry, Tamil has borrowed from Hindustani, Arabic, and Persian a large number of revenue, political, and judicial terms, and more recently a good many English words have crept in, such as *tira'ti,* treaty, *paṭtar,* butler, *âkt,* act, *kulôb,* club, *kavarnar,* governor, *pnnnalkôdu,* penal code, *sîkku,* sick, *mejastiraṭṭu,* magistrate. But, as compared with its literary sister languages, it has preserved its Dravidian character singularly free from foreign influence. Of Tamil words which have found a permanent home in English may be mentioned curry, (kaṛi), mulligatawny (*milagu,* pepper, and taṇṇîr, cool water), cheroot (*suruttu),* pariah *(pareiyan).*

The laws of euphony (avoiding of hiatus, softening of initial consonants, contact of final with initial consonants) are far more complicated in Tamil than in Sanskrit. But, while they were rigidly adhered to in the old poetical language (Sen-Tamil, or “ Perfect" Tamil), there is a growing tendency to neglect them in the language of the present day (Kodun-Tamil). It is true the Tamil rules totally differ from the prevailing Sanskrit; still the probability is in favour of a Sanskrit influence, inasmuch as they appear to follow Sanskrit models. Thus, *iruḷ nîkkinân* becomes *irunîkkinân; pon pâttiram, porpâttiram; vüṭṭil kaṇdên, vuṭṭiṛ kaṇḍên; vâlsirumei, vâtsirumei ; palan tandân, patanrândan.* Nouns are divided into high-caste or personal and low-caste or impersonal,—the former comprising words for rational beings, the latter all the rest. Only in high-caste nouns a distinction between masculine and feminine is observed in the singular; both have a common plural, which is indicated by change of a final *n* (feminine *ḷ)* into *ṛ;* but the neuter plural termination *kaḷ (gaḷ)* may be super­added in every case. Certain nouns change their base termination before receiving the case affixes, the latter being the same both for singular and plural. They are for the acc. *ei,* instr. *âl,* social *ôdu (odu, ufah),* dat. *ku,* loc. *il {idattil, in),* abl. *itirundu (ininru),* gen. *ufeiya (add).* There is, besides, a general oblique affix *in,* which