CHAPTER THREE

SOCIAL PHILOSOPHY IN TIRUKKURAL

3.1. INTRODUCTION

Man of yester years who wandered in the forests and dwelled in caves began to contemplate on issues in due course due to change of nature and natural growth. As civilization took the lead, he organised a 'way of life'. He firmly believed that there must be some essential relationship among fellow-men based on common feeling, emotions, instincts etc. After realizing the truth that he alone cannot live or move by himself, he established rapport with others and thus the individual customs have been converted as social norms. The 'I' consciousness has been identified as 'we' consciousness. The different individuals formed themselves as clan and various clans constituted a society. Society is nothing but the collection of individuals living with some motivations towards some purposes. The offsprings in the society learn the customs, conventions and norms of the society and thus the process of socialization has emerged.
Eventually social institutions came into existence with certain objectives to be fulfilled by the members. The first and foremost institution is family where 'face to face' relation prevails among its members. Educational and religious institutions pave the way for social upliftment and integrity among the members. However, man's thinking and actions deviated from the regular path thereby promoting evils in the society resulting in affliction to not only to the individual but to others also. Different communities mingled in themselves thereby complicating the social norms leading to confusion and chaos. As a result of this situation people baffled in determining what is good, what is bad, what is right and what is wrong epicurean and hedonistic principles predominated in social settings resulting in individual welfare and selfish aspirations.

When the economic front got developed, people developed the sense of 'mine'. Instead of living as human, man resorted to live like the beasts wherefrom he started his life. As selfishness and pride over property etc. overpowered among individuals, they forgot to promote others interests. People introduced superiority and inferiority complexes among communities and fought among themselves to establish supremacy. Hence, there prevailed no peace. Man did not know how to safeguard himself and his race. What he has achieved in life between cradle to grave? What is his duty? For what goal one has to live? Why one should seek the welfare of others? People could not know the correct answers to these questions and were baffled.
During such a period emerged the valuable ideals of life evolved by *Valluvar* to impinge upon the true meaning of life. It deals mainly with the principles of life such as culture, patronising one’s clan, the significance of action and its purity, merits of education, demerits of illiteracy etc. With special emphasis to individual ethics and the relation between individual and society. The role of an individual in social setting has been exemplified with appropriate illustrations.

It is quite natural for *Valluvar* to speak about noble virtues for perfect living since he intended to establish a society devoid of evils, wicked nature, bad habits, inhuman deeds, base mentalities etc.

Because evil produces evil, therefore should evil be feared more than fire.

*(Kural 202)*

Evil deeds bring forth evil effects, they are dreaded more than fire. Fire is used for constructive as well as destructive purposes. With a match stick one can cook food for the entire village or even destroy the entire village. Fire is caused by man and is also a natural phenomenon. Fire will burn the one who becomes a victim to it. But evil will affect the entire society and create a blot on the society. Fire will destroy a certain area to which it can spread. But evil will cross the boundaries and destroy the human race as a whole such as intoxicating drugs. Fire will cause devastation at a particular period only.

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But evil will have continuous effects such as terrorism, war etc. Fire is produced with a purpose; but evil will cause suffering continuously without any valid reason. The person who puts fire does it with ignorance and mistake. But evil is performed willingly and cause agonies to fellowmen. Hence, Valluvar realized the truth that evil is worst than fire and he has given a detailed account of evils and wanted people to desist from evil thinking and acting. Whatever thing, a man has renounced, by that thing, he cannot suffer pain.

From whatever, aye, whatever, man gets free,

From what, aye, from that, no more of pain hate he!

(Kural 341)

This kural clearly shows that one will not suffer due to something which he renounces without attachment. The more one's attachment develops the more one's affliction increases. The moment one gets rid of affection etc., he will be free from sufferings. But it is very difficult to achieve this goal viz., annihilating desires etc. Valluvar who has realized this truth shows the way for it also. Somewhere someone will be there who has renounced all ambitions. The aspirant has to search for him and should seek his company for giving up his attachment (kural 350). Suppose if one could not find a renounced person, what one has to do? Valluvar offers an instant solution even to this problem. The birth as human itself consists of suffering. Hence, to put an end to birth one has to cling fast to the grand Sempurul (ஸாம்புருல்) (Supreme substance). Those who cannot adore the Holy Feet of God cannot cross the ocean of birth. Also God has neither likes nor dislikes; no comparison with anyone
for himself, shines as the god of virtues; He is the very form of pure knowledge. Hence, if one contemplates on him, one can overcome his sufferings.

Good qualities are expressed at individual levels and patronised, still they pave the way for peaceful co-existence. The Tamil adage emphasises this idea. 'If lived together crores of benefits'. Even if any form of evil design, through thought, word and deed will be detrimental to human progress at collective level.

Why does a man inflict upon other creatures those sufferings, which he has found by experience are sufferings to himself.

(Kural 318)

With great agony Valluvar asks: why man indulges in painful deeds to fellowmen, knowing fully that they cause the same pain to him. He advises people that if one causes suffering to others in the forenoon, in the after-noon he reaps its consequence without anybody's intervention.

If, ere the noontide, you to others evil do,

Before the eventide will evil visit you.

(Kural 319)

Hence, it is obvious that anyone who intends that he should not suffer on any account, should not harm others knowing that the affliction will reach the doer instantly. Valluvar's intention is made clear that the virtuous deeds do not benefit the
individual alone, but helps others too. When one's thought is pure, word and deed
become pure; if it is tinged with evil design, then only evil effects emerge.

A person who wants to complete an action must be a determined person with
strengthened attitude. Only such persons can complete the tasks as planned. Hence,
Valluvar advocates the dictum: One should contemplate seriously before engaging in
action; it is wrong to think in the middle after commencing. It,

Think, and then dare the deed I Who cry,

‘Deed dared, we’ll think,’ disgraced shal be.

(Kural 467)

A man’s deeds are the touchstone
of his greatness and littleness.

(Kural 305)

The work efficiency of a person causes his upliftment or downfall and Hence,
greatness and lowness are due to the action which forms the touchstone. Hence, one
must be careful in the thinking process for aiming at perfection in actions.

Valluvar desires that people must desist from certain unwanted deeds and
must seriously complete the beneficial deeds. In his opinion, indulging in unwanted
deeds and non-doing of obligatory deeds will culminate in sufferings. He emphasises
that one must not indulge in deeds which are objected by the worldly people. This is
the basis for the actions to be shunned with. It is enough to wipe out actions not
desired by people, than growing lengthy hair or appear with shaven head.

The Tamils always speak about the world as the nucleus of their
contemplation. 'World is concerned with the great people; the cultured people
consistute the world. To put it in logical argument, the cultural people are the great
people. Hence, all the people in the society must be cultured citizens. Society can
never function apart from individual members. A separate tree can never become a
grove. Even in imagination a society can never exist without individuals. Only when
individual moral codes flourish, the well being of the society will be ascertained.
Valluvar's ambition was to establish a society with people full of confidence over
good conduct, virtues, pure wisdom etc. Hence, in all the couplets this view is echoed
either implicitly or explicitly.

Never did Valluvar intend to speak about ordinary human life, but men with
all noble traits. The world is constituted of the five elements such as earth, water,
fire, air and ether. But they do not add greatness to the world. If human qualities
devoid of morality and righteousness prevail, then that world will be perished as
empty earth. "The world in appearance is with sand and stone. Among other
elements, earth is the cause for its outward appearance. Besides other elements, other
living organisms, men inhabit the world and this is the greatness for the earthly world.
In the absence of human virtues if people live like beasts and trees, then people will
die due to fight among themselves and finally only barren earth will remain-what is
the world? Mere earth? Other elements associated with earth? The earth having tree, plant, creeper etc? The earth mingled with bone and flesh? The earth with brain and nerve? How would the world appear if there is no virtue? Among the grown up worms, the body of men will appear as grown up worms. These grown up worms will trouble the less strong worms and kill them. Still enquired deeply, some portions of the earth will violently attack other portions and become empty sands. It is hearty virtues which do not make the earth as empty sand or nerve and brain contained higher sand, but make the earth as a great world. Even if there are few such hearty virtuous persons, the world looks like a real world. This is the view of Thiruvalluvar” (Varadarasanar, Mu.Va., 1952: 241 - 242).

The above view is significant in the sense that every individual must discharge his duties honestly and simultaneously strive hard for social welfare. Such a person will be praised by the whole world. Individual life is dominated by pure love, when the same love is sent towards fellowmen, it shines as virtue. Abusing each other and behaving violently is worst even for sports sake. As contrary, the cultured people with noble qualities will behave gently even in the place where enmity prevails. They will remain the same among friends and foes. What is the use of loving of those who have forgotten such great principles? The expanded world appears to them as dark even during day light. They will be unfit for worldly life. Hence, it becomes inevitable for man to develop good behaviour in him.
"Ancient Tamil people treated morality as the disciplined path which patronises individual and society. Our ancestors had cherished for a long time the inevitability of moral life. Whether it granted release or not, such life enabled individual and society for perfect living and development. Generally mankind consists of multifarious wants and contradictory demands. When the complicated organisations and institutions grow, naturally contradictory ideologies also occur, grow and undergo change. Keeping these multiple desies, aversions, wants, conflicting thoughts and ideas in themselves, the Tamil fellow discharges his duties with the deep sense of morality.” (Tirunavukarasu, K.T., 1972: 24). Hence, it is certain that amidst change Tamilian did not alter his virtuous behaviour. Now we shall see how the individual virtues and aspirations such as morals, mercy, virtue, discipline, ethical code, duty, love, truth, austerity, munificence, fame etc. suit among themselves and are explained appropriately.

3.2. INDIVIDUAL MORALITY

The Tamil word aram refers to good conduct, discipline, morality, duty, virtue, charity, god of morality, religion etc. But in the ancient Tamil literature it has been used in the sense of good conduct and discipline. Valluvar also makes an emphasis for aram in the chapter on Arun Valiyuruttal which shows the greater significance of aram. This chapter is not included under Illaraviyai (Domestic life), but has been included in the Invocatory part after the Greatness of the Renounced
Souls. The grandeur of the hermits are enlisted by Valluvar that they strictly adhere to discipline, control the five senses and strong in their virtues and love all mankind. This approach reveals the significant meaning of aram.

The hidden words of the man, whose words are full of effect, will show their greatness to the world.

(Kural 28)

The greatness of the realized souls with complete and comprehensive wisdom is seen from their holy utterances as well as perfect principles of life. The culminating point of all holy works is to glorify the sages of the highest order for the overall growth of mankind. Hence, though Valluvar exemplifies the importance of discipline in one chapter, he incorporates the high ideals of life, especially lived by the renounced persons, in that chapter on the Greatness of Ascetics. Thus the essential feature of disciplined life based on virtuous look is revealed here.

There can be no greater source of good than (the practice of) virtue; there can be no greater source of evil than the forgetfulness of it.

(Kural 32)

That which bringsforth goodness is nothing other than aram. At the same time there is no other evil than forgetting the adherence to aram. Discipline is greater than the life force, according to Valluvar.
From propriety of conduct men obtain greatness;
from impropriety comes insufferable disgrace

(Kural 137)

If one follows the path of discipline he can attain all good things. If one deviates from the disciplined path, certainly he has to attain incurable disgrace. Even though there are similar ideas between emphasis on virtue and possession of decorum, still there are essential differences. Virtue is based on the human conduct leading to good and bad and judged upon the activities. On the contrary, discipline is a human endeavour to be cherished by every one so that one may be regarded as a perfect one. This path not only benefits the individual, but also brings credits to fellowmen. The habits of the perfect ones have been glorified by the society in which they lived. They attracted the hearts of the majority of the people. The habits of such individual human beings gained the merit and quality to be partonised by one and all. Thus gradually the individual habit has been transformed as a collective conduct when practised by a majority of people and thus it has been termed as DISCIPLINE. This fine character has been treated as an excellent pathway to perfection.

Those who know not how to act agreeably to the world,
though they have learnt many things, are still ignorant.

(Kural 140)
It is inevitable to adhere strictly to the path shown by perfect ones and disciplined in manifold ways. Otherwise, however much he has studied, he would be an illiterate man.

It is to be thought seriously for including the topic 'Possession of Decorum', in the section on domestic virtue and Emphasis on Virtues in the Invocatory section. In domestic life the career of a person is at the beginning stages and it becomes easy to infuse disciplinary method at that tender age. After acquiring good character etc., when a person raises above, he can realize the significance of moral virtues and a serious adherence of them will make him to the status of a great soul. Not only in 'Emphasis on Virtue' that Valluvar has emphasised about virtue but in several chapters he has discussed it while explaining good qualities and bad behaviour. But he has not defined 'aram' in a positive way. He says that joy comes exclusively through aram and aram itself is domestic life. It means that domestic life is joyful if it is based on aram which is the common denominator. But when he says love as the character of domestic life and aram as the effect, aram is construed as a 'path'. According to Valluvar, aram means a type of living devoid of jealousy, greediness, anger and abusive words. (Kural 35). This approach also endorses our earlier view that aram is neither a doctrine nor a concept but a 'pathway'. Valluvar also maintains that there is nothing which gives him goodness than following aram; there is nothing so harmful than forgetting aram and following without regularity (Kural 32). From this view we can easily determine that goodness and badness are decided upon conduct, while the basis for conduct is aram.
Valluvar is able to indicate the nature and meaning of *aram* in a negative way such as the avoidance of jealousy etc. Perfect *aram* means to be without blemishes in the heart. Any activity performed with evil design is only external and showy type. Now what is meant by ‘free from blemishes’? What is *aram*? Is it an act; a word or thought? To this question, it is answered that for an action the basis is thought. Pure thought alone leads to pure word and deed. Since thought arises in the mind, it is presumed that if the thought is to be pure, the mind must be pure. A state of the mind which is devoid of evil designs is designated as *aram*. The utterances and actions done when the mind is filled with blemishes are nothing but imperfect and outcry. They never become *aram*. Hence, it is clear that any endeavour to eliminate the dirt in the mind is *aram*. So one has to be careful by not giving room for jealousy, greediness, wrath and abusive words.

“If we consider in this approach, *aram* appears as the combine principle of thought, word and deed. If we treat *aram* as a (prism) three sided mirror, the three sides are understood as thought, word and deed. Thought is the static aspect of *aram*; word, the kinetic aspect and action, the dynamic aspect. When these three powers are immanent and unmanifest, *aram* becomes a conceptual entity. Action enables *aram* to manifest as perceptible entity. This active state is hailed by the world as discipline which will make the human souls perfect. This type of grand discipline is *aram*. Thus considered our elders”. (Tirunavukarasu K.T., 1972: 26-27).
The idea of aram which commenced in the chapter on Invocation, occurs in
the first section viz., VIRTUE which is exemplified in both domestic virtue and ascetic
virtue. Household life is comprised of living with a chasteful woman resorting to the
respective aram. Here domestic virtues are explained in terms of welfare, assistance
in domestic life. But in the section on Desire (संप्रभुश्वप्रभ) the methods of leading
a family life, varieties of experiences are mentioned. In a household life there are
acceptable and objectionable virtues. The duties of a father, son, status of mother,
living with others, charity, fame, feeding the guests, forbearance, uttering sweet
words etc., come under pleasant virtues. Not coveting another’s wife, not envying,
not coveting, not backbiting, speaking of pointless words are discussed under
unpleasant virtues.

The path of the ascetics is to renounce the world after experiencing the pleasant
moments of domestic life. Renunciation implies the relinquishing of the subjective
attachments such as ‘I’ and the external attachments such as ‘mine’. Inconsistent
conduct offers excellent advice to the renounced souls. Following the path of mercy,
performing austerity, living with truthfulness, anchoring in the path of renunciation
and enjoying the path of self-realization and the positive virtues to be adhered to by
the ascetics. Denying meat, absence of fraud, not-getting angry, not doing evil deeds,
not-killing, realizing the unstable nature of the world are some of the virtues to be
pratised negatively.
"In the section on wealth (porupol) Valluvar elaborately elucidates the social norms to be followed by an individual when interacts with fellowmen. In the last chapters of this section known as Appendix (குருங்குர்வு). Valluvar clearly indicates the natural good qualities among the individual members when they form as a group to promot social cohesion. The good qualities are to be patronised and cherished by every member in the society. He discards the qualities of wanton women, drinking toddy, gambling etc. It is clear from the condemnation of prostitution, toddy and theft, by Valluvar that discipline is indispensables for the perfect living of the people in a country along with its richness and prosperity. The male and female meeting and enjoying before marriage for qualifying themselves for that institution and their genuine household enjoyment after marriage also exemplify the role of aram in the section on desire (Kamattuppal) leading to discipline.” (Ibid. 28)

Thus we could see the portrayal of aram in its manifold applicability in all facets of life culminating in disciplined life initially at individual level and finally at social level.

3.3. DOMESTIC VIRTUES

It is clear that our ancient Tamils followed the footprints of elderly persons in all walks of life. If one wants to follow the righteous path shown by perfect scholars, one must realize the philosophy of life. In one's life span from cradle to
grave different stages come and go-different changes take place at body and mental levels, though the 'person' remains the same. During childhood the person will be obeying the commands of his parents and senior members of the family. At prime youth it is quite natural to follow whimsical ways of thinking and acting, but one has to regulate his life in accordance to certain norms and goals. Guidance is needed at this stage to stick on to the stipulated path of perfection. But at the domestic life, the spouse becomes the guiding star and moving spirit.

The quest to earn a good name among the family members and neighbours which arises spontaneously, one enters into a wedded life. Valluvar in the introductory section deals with the Praise of God, the Excellence of Rain, the Greatness of Ascetics and the Assertion of the Strength of Virtue. In the last section he speaks about the greatness of virtues common to all people at all stages of one's life. Similar is the case with the other three sections where common ideas have been emphasised. But since 'charity begins at home' equally virtues also begin at home. Actually one's life in an independent way commences at the domestic level. Hence, Valluvar shows the significant features of 'functional' virtues at family life. Valluvar has never considered family life as a means to gratify sexual urges, but treats it as a primary institution. A male and female become one in thinking and beget children and make them worthwhile citizens. This objective is made possible in the family which is the basic institution. From the song of Puranamuru, it is clear that 'Mother's duty is to beget children' and father's duty is to make them perfect persons so.
Even today people dispute over the superiority of life, whether domestic life or ascetic life. If we consider in the line of Valluvar's approach, the gradation of life such as first family life and then ascetic life is to be resorted to. On the contrary, after becoming an ascetic it is absurd to become a family man.

According to Valluvar, "He will be called a (true) householder, who is a firm support to the virtuous of the three orders in their good path" (Kural 41). The expression 'இந்தியர் குழு' the respectable three - refers to parents, wife and children. (Mohanarasu,K, 1998:11). But Professor Devesenapathi holds that a man of domestic virtues is one who lives as a model for the celebrates, saints and ascetics (Devasenapathi, V.A., 1971:332). G.U.Pope (1976:13) simply calls 'three orders' without elaborating them. He who wants to strive hard for joyous living will certainly lead a perfect household life. "The chief duty of the householder is preserve the five-fold rule (of conduct) towards the manes, the gods, his guests, his relations and himself". (Kural 43). Mohanaraj (1998) interprets the term 'இந்தியர் குழு' as men of clear knowledge. Usually that term refers to the deified souls of dead ancestors. In the category of his relations the parents, children and wife are included. Whenever the elder of the family must preserve himself means that he has to preserve the interest of those depend on him or whom he depends upon such as parents, wife and children. It is a natural obligation. It will be absurd to take care of himself does not mean excluding the intimate relations. Hence, the order represents the youth, saint and ascetic. The following couplet will strengthen our argument: "What will he who lives virtuously in the domestic state gain by going into the other (ascetic) state?" (Kural
46. Here the term other states (upāśārāmas) may indicate the three states of life. The culmination of household life and ascetic life is the attainment of celestial life according to Valluvar. "He who destroys the pride which says "I", "mine" will enter a world which is difficult even to the gods to attain". (Kural 346). This type of attainment, though recommended for the renounced, is equally applicable for the householder too. Like water on the lotus leaf, the householder can live by giving up the senses of assertion and possession. Though the celestial world is pointed out nominally, only on this earth perfect living is possible.

Domestic life is filled with auspicious events. The regularised household life is to maintain chastity by husband and wife who lead a civilized life and beget good children. The foremost duty of a wife is to adore her husband and the primordial duty of a husband is not to chase after other women even in thoughts.

Manly excellence, that looks not on another's wife,
Is not virtue merely, 'tis full 'propriety' of life.

(Kural 148)

The joy to the body is the tender touch of young babies and the joy for the ears is to listen to their monosyllables (Kural 65). Here itself Valluvar sows the seed for future generation. The children must be brought up with fertile knowledge, cultured in all spheres (Kural 67). The father has to prepare the grounds for the speech of his children in the hall filled with eminent scholars (Kural 68). The son's duty is to make the scholars wonder as to what penance his father had performed to beget such a son.
(Kural 70). The goal of family life is to make the son a perfect scholar (Kural 61). The mother will rejoice more when she hears about the perfect scholarliness of her son, than when he was born (Kural 69). So the topic on begetting children is to indicate the truth that no child should go astray but become models to be followed in the realm of perfect wisdom.

That body alone which is inspired with love contains a living soul:

if void of it, (the body) is bone overlaid with skin

(Kural 80)

Our human soul must be naturally endowed with love. The soul in its essence is the very form of love. If it lacks love, then it is nothing. What is the use of a body covered with bones and skin? Why does Valluvar equate human soul with love? For it is love that bridges the gulf among people, countries, continents etc. In the contemporary world the religious love viz., 'love others as thyself' was promulgated by Valluvar initially. Selfishness arises if one does not consider or respect other's sentiments. This sentiment is the expression of love in one way or the other. Only men of personal gratification will resort to proclaim ownership for everything since they do not know the real connotation of love. The men who develop love will be prepared to serve for others and even their bones would be meant for others' benefits

The loveless to themselves belong alone;

The loving men are others' to the very borne.

(Kural 72)
Hence, the term 'service' has gained a new meaning in Valluvar's terminology. A fellow without love is equal to a mere skeleton, but even the bones will be of useful to others, of those who have love. Valluvar illustrates again through bones. A few boneless creatures such as worms, flies, ants etc., suffer due to sun; likewise the lord of virtues will harm those without love (Kural 77). A life without true love is like the blooming of a dried tree in a desert.

The loveless soul, the very joys of life may know,

When flowers, in barren soil, on sapless trees, shall blow.

(Kural 78)

Love favours not only to aram, but also to valour. Another effect of love is to show hospitality to the guests. The purpose of acquiring wealth is not to make the guests wait in the entrance itself, but to receive them inside the house with pure smile. It is a social obligation to welcome the guests and honour them whole heartedly.

With smiling face he entertains each virtuous guest;

Fortune with gladsome mind shall in his dwelling rest.

(Kural 84)

Domestic life serves the purpose as an institution to promote human qualities by relegating animal behaviour. Valluvar's ambition is that all the members in a family must lead a harmonious life by addressing to each other in sweet words. (Kural
Hence, men of good character will always utter fine words. Showing reverence is a virtue for speaking nice words, when reverence is reduced ugly words arise automatically (\textit{Kural} 99). At social life reverence will culminate in greatness.

The great will always humble himself;
but the mean will exalt himself in self-admiration.

\textit{(Kural 978)}

It is clear that those who live in greatness will always show reverence; those who praise themselves are the grammar for lowliness. The men of low nature must be cautious in the usage of words. They must protect their speech even though they protect not other things. Men of sweet words will promote submissiveness. \textit{Valluvar} warns people that who always utter bad words have to suffer (\textit{Kural} 127). Can any one prefer unripened fruit while ripened fluit is available? (\textit{Kural} 100) Similarly why should people speak filthy words, while sweet words are available. \textit{Valluvar} seems to be a linguistic philosopher since he promulgates the view that languages is the cause for all sufferings. People must know the words and their meanings accurately and also their appropriate usage. Language paves the way for several human characters and behaviour.

Men who love others and utter sweet words always come forward to help others. Those who receive such assistance should not forget the voluntary help to redress his grievance in his lifetime.
(The gift of) heaven and earth is not an equivalent for a benefit
which is conferred where none had been received.

(Kural 101)

One should feel exhilarated that when he did not help others why should others come forward to help him? To such assistance even the sky and earth cannot be equated. The idea is simple that we must help others and must be grateful to others who help us at the hour of need. Even if small help is rendered at the appropriate time, that is greater than the world (Kural 102). People will pardon any vice, but will not pardon those who forget one's timely help (Kural 110). Man cannot be a self sufficient person. He cannot live without others help. Life is filled with both joy and sorrow. One should not go down when affliction affects him. Valluvar wants people to laugh at difficulties and there is no other means to overcome it. At the same time when others attempt to remove our suffering, we must regard it and accept it provided it is being done without expecting anything in return. Such acts are greater than the sea.

Kindness shown by those who weigh not what the return may be:

When you ponder right its merit, Is vaster than the sea.

(Kural 103)

Man's life is not sailing smoothly; it has several pitfalls to cross, several ups and downs to climb. One must remain the same person both in prosperity and adversity. Similarly he has to make others always to be impartial (Kural 115). The
moment one becomes partial in his approach to any issue, evil starts instantly. Even if one is prone to suffer, if he maintains impartial attitude, then the world will not look him disdainfully (*Kural* 117). Rather it will appreciate him. *Valluvar* prescribes the grammar for the perfect judges with an illustration.

To incline to neither side, but to rest impartial

as the even-fixed scale is the ornament of the wise.

(*Kural* 118)

The scale must show balance of its needle before it weighs commodities. Similarly the judges with wisdom must maintain neutrality before taking up any case. With boldness they have to pronounce the judgement. Even if they face penury, seldom they should deviate from the integrated personality of impartiality. *Valluvar* as a prophet, has viewed the role of the tradesmen in business. Impartiality is an essential virtue for the tradesmen.

The true merchandize of merchants is to guard and do by the things of others as they do by their own.

(*Kural* 120)

To practice impartiality and to raise to the level of divine nature by giving up animal nature, one has to promote self-restraint. If one does not control himself and does everything whimsically, he has to face several ordeals in his life (*Kural* 121). On
the contrary, if one develops self-restraint in his endeavours, he will raise above the mountain (*Kural* 124). The affluent persons ought to promote self-restraint which is a wealth to them. *Valluvar* with the example of the tortoise which controls all its five limbs, tries to show that human beings must have self-restraint through the five senses. If one yields to the dictates of his senses (*Kural* 126), then he has to face several difficulties. If the senses are controlled in these births, it will pave the way for perfect life in subsequent births. To lead a life of virtue, self-restraint is a primordial requisite. The wound caused by fire will be healed, but the wounding words will create only a scar (*Kural* 129). Hence, it is clear that holding the tongue leads to basic restraints. To a person with restraint nature, no harsh words will come out.

*Valluvar* offers a new definition to the concept of decorum even though the entire section on aram emphasises about individualistic ethics. Among all the things on earth one's soul (*uviar*) is the highest thing to be cherished; but decorum is superior to the soul, since it grants prosperity (*Kural* 131). Whatever may be one's clan or lineage, one must preserve decorum which will lead to a life of happiness. Following wicked decorum will yield only suffering (*Kural* 138). Brahmans are expected to chant the holy texts regularly. Even if they fail to do so may be pardoned, but if they go against the decency and decorum, then naturally they will perish. This shows the anguish of *Valluvar* towards the topmost community in the society when it goes wrong (*Kural* 134). During the time of *Valluvar* there was a danger in decorum since some went on extra-marital relation especially with other's wives. *Valluvar* strongly
condemns this indecent behaviour and insists that one should not even think of another's wife which is the standard for his manliness (Kural 148). Enlightened persons with perfect mind will consider other women as mothers and sisters which is one of the highest virtues.

Hatred, sin, fear, disgrace, these four will never leave him who goes in to his neighbour's wife”.

(Kural 146)

Those who are well versed in these highly despicable characters alone will indulge in such abnoxious behaviour which will bring forth only disrecoit. At one stage Valluvar with great dismay laments thus:

“Though a man performs no virtuous deeds and commits (every) vice, it will be well if he desire not the womanhood of her who is within the limit (of the house) of another” (Kural 150). Implicitly Valluvar states that infatuation for other's wife is the worst sin.

Another important virtue is forbearance. In the Tamil tradition it has been maintained that forbearance is greater as a virtue than ocean. (மலைக்குறியை பாண்டியை மூலிகை). Though who preserves this virtue may rule over the earth. When somebody praises us we accept it with pride, but when criticised we could not tolerate it.
Valluvar with a nice analogy elucidates this phenomenon. When digged, at the earth never revolt. It will bear the one who digs deeply. Likewise we must tolerate the one who is a trouble shooter (Kural 151). Why Valluvar insists for such a virtue like showing patience? For, otherwise there will be chaos, confusion, fighting, quarrel etc., thereby endangering to peaceful existence. If we go on punishing those who harm us, there will not be any glory in this world. The joy of punishing a fellow men will remain for one day only. But pardoning the sinner will yield honour like respecting gold by the fellow men. His fame will sustain till the world persists (Kural 155). If one forgives the other who abuses the former, then that act will be certainly superior to the ascetic deeds. What else do we require to glorify the virtue of forbearance (Kural 159)? Valluvar's realistic and optimistic ideology is revealed here.

Another quality which is detrimental to decorum and decency is jealousy which will be the cause for one's down fall. No other quality is glorious than not envying. Greediness is responsible for envying; it may kindle greater enmity. He who develops envy over one helping the others, is relly the sinner; the follows the evil path; even his relatives will perish without food and clothing. In this context Valluvar's statement is to be deeply pondered over.

The wealth of a man of envious mind and the poverty of the righteous will be pondered.

(Kural 169)
How are we going to account for this variation of envious one's prospering, while the virtuous ones suffering. As Valluvar could not give a perfect reply, he has no other option than to leave the response in the minds of the readers to find out a fitting answer.

Greediness, jealousy etc., will lead to robbery thereby acquiring wealth through unfair means and covetousness. Those who aspire for everybody's well being seldom think of selfish joy and usurp others' belongings. Hence, he who is covered with greediness and selfish urge will not work but lead a life of idleness. Men of such nature will indulge in theft. Those who have triumphed over the five senses, eventhough do not have wealth, become enlightened ones and never wish to earn money through immoral ways (Kural 174). As perfect thought yields ideal living, men of wisdom will not prefer perishable objects through robbery. Valluvar considers backbiting as a worst evil than robbery. Due to this tendency good people are treated as wicked ones and vice-versa. Even though a person does not follow the path of righteousness or indulge in unrighteous deeds, still he will be treated as a man of virtue, if he resorts to non-backbiting, since many evils emerge due to this unwanted behaviour (Kural 181). This world shoulders good people, sinners, evil mongers, virtuous etc. Valluvar with dismay accepts that this world bears with patience even the men of base mentality besides others. If one goes on finding fault with others, others will laugh at him with his fault (Kural 189).
*Valluvar* seriously thinks about the truth as to how to live without suffering. Only he who realizes his own folly like those of others alone can lead a life of happiness (*Kural* 190).

Another best way to attain happiness is to utter sweet words. Our thoughts get expression through words. When our words are useful to others, they bring forth auspicious things. Others will look at him contemptuously, who speaks ill words (*Kural* 191). Men of perfect wisdom even forgetfully seldom utter harsh words. He who speaks good words will engage in good deeds (*Kural* 194). Words of blemish nature will always yield bad results. Even if one faces poverty he should not speak abusive words. If so, more penury will strike him (*Kural* 205).

Though the knowledge of what is befitting a man's position, one acquires the quality of others' service as an individualistic virtue. Society is nothing but the collection of individuals. The service rendered to the society by us must be without expecting anything in return like the cloud which does not expect anything from people in its downpouring (*Kural* 211).

All the wealth acquired with perseverance by the worthy is for the exercise of benevolence.

(*Kural* 212)
Wealth is essential for one's livelihood, but one should not spend his entire lifetime for accumulating wealth and even then he should not spend it for himself. Anyone who lives for others alone is treated as a living person; men of selfish nature will be treated as dead. Even if affliction arises while engaged in public welfare, one must come forward even to sell himself to continue that service (*Kural* 220).

Another domestic virtue which is closely associated with public welfare is donating. The definition for donation according to *Valluvar*, is to donate to the have-nots without expecting in return. Wealth will get accumulated to those who attempt to appease the appetite of poor people (*Kural* 221). Donating liberally to the deserving people, assisting at the appropriate hour etc will bring glory, while eating by oneself will bring disrespect. The fruit of human birth is to help others (*Kural* 231).

The last topic in Domestic virtue is Renown which is a permanent one while the world is impermanent. A scholarly man will get fame during his life time. But when one donates liberally will receive glory as long as the world is sustained.

Those live who live without disgrace.
Those who live without fame live not.

(*Kural* 240)

Even the earth which bears the men of ill will becomes disgraceful. This approach of *Valluvar* shows his authentic view about renown.
Thus the domestic virtues which commenced in household living culminates in renowned life. It involves several auspicious qualities like love, inviting guests, talking sweet words, control of passions, discipline etc., and giving up of using abusive language, jealousy, covetousness etc. To an individual, for his well being Valluvar insists with affection, sometimes with harsh language with positive and negative approaches. After successful living at domestic level, the matured people in virtues have to renounce this worldly life and prefer ascetic living.

3.4. DISCIPLINE THROUGH ASCETICISM

The term turavaram (asceticism) too contains aram. As soon as we hear the word 'asceticism' instantly we are reminded of the wandering monks with matted hair, saffron dress etc. Valluvar's conception of asceticism is not of that type. The objective of human life is to make an indelible mark in name and fame by relegating animal characteristics and promoting high human qualities. In this process people have to develop detachment in certain things. Attachment towards the world of objects, promulgation of 'I' and 'mine' are to be relinquished and renunciation takes place at mental level. "There is nothing negative in turavaram. It is no running away from life. Turavaram therefore represented a higher perfection and a more comprehensive love. Probably because of this interpretation, the great German Philosopher Schweitzer (1936) in his work Indian Thought and its Development, does not see any negativism or world-negation in Tiruvalluvar, inspite of the latter writing
on turavaram. But there is one difficulty in the way. The turavaram Tiruvalluvar treats of, does certainly lead to the universalism and perfection of the world man. However, when one reads Tirukkural, one could not assert that the turavaram which he contemplates is the turavaram of the native born world man. It is difficult to resist the conclusion that Tiruvalluvar speaking of those who are not born with this universal love but who have to become perfected in that way. Here again one sees that Valluvar is not developing a world-negation. He is not describing a life which is out of the ordinary. He emphasises those points in one's life which have to be developed to perfection. Turavaram is a natural development for all. (Murugesan Mutaliar, N., 1971: 245-246).

According to Valluvar, a man in household can practice renunciation. An ascetic is one who leads a life of grace and not totally alienating from the social living. Following the path of truthfulness, realization of the reality, understanding the basic principles, effects and truths of perfect life may be considered as ascetic life. In this venture the citizen has to give up certain practices which would be detrimental to himself and to his society. In the process of ascetic virtue we could notice the principles of life to be patronised as well as desisted from. Also we cannot boldly say that the virtues meant for domestic life and ascetic life is mutually exclusive. The virtues meant for ascetic life is applicable to domestic life also and vice-versa. They are not two totally different paths.
To those who ask the true connotation of wealth Valluvar did not refer to material wealth. For it is unstable and moving from person to person. It will be filled in abundance with the wicked people where as the virtuous ones may be poverty-stricken. Hence, the wealth of benevolence is the genuine wealth among all wealths. This stage is to show love towards all living beings like the love to oneself. Only at this state, because of affection towards fellow beings no wicked thoughts and evil designs will emerge. Valluvar illustrates the approach of one who tries to live with aram without arul (benevolence) is like the ignorant aiming at the highest wisdom. It is clear that to realize the highest wisdom clarity in understanding becomes a prerequisite. Valluvar hints at the significance of realizing wisdom which he is to elaborate later.

To realize the truth, one must have pure thinking. Valluvar makes a distinction between the two-fold world. He remarks it as 'this world' (கொழுக்கும்) and 'that world' (வனவியும்). This world is the world of our direct experiences for which wealth is essential. That world is the newly conceptualized world which is full of benevolence. This world is not for the impoverished ones, while that world is not for the graceless ones.

As to impoverished men this present world is not;
The 'graceless' in you world I have neither part not lot.

(Kural 247)
Another virtue to be adopted in the ascetic life is not to harm others. “When a man is about to rush upon those who are weaker than himself, let him remember how he has stood (trembling) before those who are stronger than himself”. (Kural 250) Everyone who tries to injure others must think for a while about the idea conveyed here. Every one should remember the torture given to him by his superiors. The same torture would be met with by the less fortunate ones to him. If this wisdom is born in experience, then we can love each other by transcending enmity, hatredness etc. (Kural 247)

As soon as a person promotes ‘love’ in its comprehensive sense, instantly he gives up the eating of flesh of other living organisms by killing them. Here we have to think seriously about Valluvar’s arrangement of the topics first not eating meat and then not killing. Some meat eaters today argue that they do not kill, but someone else kill the animals and, acquire sin, Valluvar insists that if everyone refrains from eating flesh, then there will be no one to kill any animal for this purpose. How can a person who breeds his body with the flesh of another body be filled with benevolence? Valluvar explains the result of eating meat thus:

Like the (murderous) mind of him who carries a weapon (in his hand), the mind of him who feasts with pleasure on the body of another (creature), has no regard for goodness.

(Kural 254)
It is a known fact that the possessor of lethal weapons will have only cruel thinking. Similarly the flesh-eaters can seldom think positively (Kural 253). They will be aggressive and agitative with malevolent behaviour. No grace can be traced in them. In this context Valluvar brings in a social revolution by comparing non-eating of flesh with performing fire retuals. Non-killing of a life and eating its flesh is superior to the performance of a thousand sacrifices pouring with ghee etc. The entire lives in the world will adore him unitedly when he decides not to kill and eat the flesh of a living being.

To get away from the evils of killing and eating flesh, one has to perform penance which is essentially required for discharging one's duty. Tovam literally means 'deep involvement'. Discharging one's duty with true commitments is called penance. Otherwise one has to be caught by desires and invite troubles. Tapas has two lively programmes. One, to endure the afflictions without revealing to outside and the other, not to harm other living beings. Even as gold gets shining when heated repealed the men of austerities will shine in wisdom when they continuously bear with their sufferings. Valluvar answers to the question why there are only few people who discharge their duties with dedication and penance, while many do not do so (Kural 270). In another place he even could not categorically assert about the wealth of a man of envious minds and the poverty of the righteous ones. They will be simply thought about and not answered. (Kural 169)
True disciplined life has two-fold dimension. First, the person must
relinquish false discipline (pretentions) and evil thoughts. Secondly, he has to lead a
pure life, both in the internal and external sides. It is scientifically proved that every
one is determined by the five elements. The elements will ridicule and laugh at those
who resort to false discipline with wicked designs.

Amongst living men there are none so hard-hearted as those who
without forsaking (desire) in their heart, falsely take the appearance of
those who have forsaken (it).

(Kural 276)

Valluvar deeply contemplates over the person who would be the most wicked
one in this world. He finds out one who pretends as if he has given up desires, but
without giving up attachments, behaves with evil mentality. Valluvar illustrates the
attitude of a person who is shining outwardly, but having darkness in the inner frame
work like the red berry of the Abrus (දිගල්) shows red colour but contains
black colour at is back. He condemns certain superstitions like shaving the head and
growing beard etc. If one gives up certain behaviours as desisted by the world then
there is no need for such attitudes. Those who prefer the path of good conduct seldom
think of snaching other's principles. Even such a thought will yield hardship and those
who plan for covetousness live not for a long time, curses Valluvar. They will
however perish. So people should develop the sense of self-sufficiency. Various
desires peep in due to greediness. Theft implies taking away other's belonging through unfair means and hence, *Valluvar* condemns it.

When the heart is purified, darkness vanishes and the inner light brightens. All the outer lamps drive away only physical darkness and they are of not any use to the perfect ones. The non-telling lies are the primordial virtue. The word 'Vaymai' is defined by *Valluvar* as uttering not harsh words. But harsh words will not come out only when the person is pure and perfect. Even as physical body is purified with water, the inner purification can be found through (veracity) *vaymai*. Hence, logically it follows that a purified person with inner vision seldom speak filthy language. Only at this stage even lies can be treated as *vaymai* provided they yield good results. Hence, *vaymai* is superior to penance and generosity.

Amidst all that we have seen (described) as real (excellence),

there is nothing as god as truthfulness.

*(Kural 300)*

Hence, uttering the truth is a subjective exercise. In domestic virtue *Valluvar* generally clarifies the meaning of *aram* negatively as devoid of jealousy, greediness, anger and abusive words. But in the ascetic virtues he specifically elucidates them. Getting angry frequently will culminate in evil deeds. If one wants to safeguard himself, he must be cautious that he does not get angry. If not, the same wrath will kill him gradually. If one beats severely on the surface of the earth only his hand gets
pain. Similarly, if one treats anger as the way of life, he will ruin himself. A man with excessive anger will be treated as dead while he who annihilated anger will be hailed as an ascetic.

Any one wants that he should not suffer, should not inflict suffering to others. For if one causes pain to others in the forenoon, he will receive suffering in the afternoon. Valluvar realistically exemplifies the truths of life that suffering is not a natural phenomenon but deliberately earned by human beings. But men do not want pain for themselves but intend pain for others.

Good path is that which considers
how it may avoid killing any creature.

(Kural 324 )

Though it is difficult not to punish others who cause suffering, Valluvar insists that such a virtue of making them feel sorry for of their behaviour will bring forth calmness and harmony among the people instead of creating restlessness. What is the use of one's perfect wisdom if he does not do good even if that person creates suffering? asks Valluvar. Hence, it is clear that any one who wants to become a man of perfect wisdom should not think ill of others. Excessive anger, abusive words and inflicting pain etc., may result in killing. Valluvar wishes that every one should
practice non-killing as a major virtue. Even if one's life is spared, he should not indulge in killing.

Philosophical wisdom lies in discriminating the permanent things and the momentary things. Youthfulness, wealth etc., are impermanent entities. The body will perish one day. Wealth may come and go. If one realizes this truth no evil tendency will emerge. It is stupid knowledge to know what is impermanent as permanent. Even as people assemble and disburse in a theatre, wealth will get accumulated and leave. Birth and death are connected between the body and the soul. Even as a bird comes out of its nest the relation exists between the body and the soul. The soul may leave the body at any time. The relationship is not everlasting. Even as sleep and awaking are natural activities, death and birth are natural phenomena. To realize the impermanent ones and to apprehend the permanent ones ascetic attitude is inevitable. The greatness of asceticism is to give up unwanted aspirations by controlling the senses. Once getting rid of attachment, all the afflictions of birth will vanish. Uncertainty of things will be realized.

As a landmark of asceticism, Valluvar emphasises on the realization of Truth (Meyyunartal). Only in this stage one's bookish knowledge and personal experience gets complete and attains fulfilment. If a man wants to become a full man, first he has to realize himself, realize the nature of his fellowmen and the nature of the world. True knowledge of things lies in knowing their true nature. Unreal things are made
real leading to quarrels, fightings etc., in the society resulting in the degradation of birth itself.

"True knowledge consists in the removal of ignorance; which is (the cause of) births, and the perception of the True Being who is (the bestower of) heaven".

"The right kind of knowledge is emphasised in meyyuwartal. One should not mistake unreal things for real. Whatever the thing and whatever be its outward nature, true wisdom lies in realizing its real truths. One must not be a doubting. One must achieve the clear vision leading to certainty and spiritual action. Our sense organs are the windows of knowledge. But in the absence of true wisdom and true vision, even the correct scientific phenomenal knowledge will not yield any useful harmony of the conflicting bits of knowledge. Involvement in the yale of births is really ignorance. When one escapes from this, the glorious truth dawns and one's own true being is realised where there is no lust, anger or delusion. This is where one has to take refuge, getting rid of false attachments one is accustomed to. In short, the true wisdom or perception of the inner truth dawns only when attachment ceases and the true universal love blossoms. 'Purity is the absence of selfish desires. That purity comes when one aspires for truth' (Kural 364). (Murugesu Mudaliar, N., 1971: 250).

To become a total ascetic one has to give up desires which are the cause for sufferings in all the births. If one wants to put an end to births and deaths has to destroy all the desires. A renounced person, is one who has renounced desires. Aram
lies in having dread for desire. Only when desires are relinquished, joy peeps in, otherwise only sorrows follow. Hence, what is to be relinquished in one's life is desire.

3.5. **FREEDOM VERSUS DESTINY**

In the section on *Aram*, *Valluvar* discussed about individual ethics from two perspectives viz., *illaram* (domestic life) and *turavaram* (ascetic life). Towards the end of this section he has introduced a chapter called *vuliyal* (destiny) which is common to both the categories of people living either in household or asceticism. However, the notion of destiny indicates a life of determinism. Men are pre-ordained in their destiny. It is their fate which determines at every stage of their life. This approach to the idea of destiny goes against the freedom of mankind. Man is having free will through which he can do anything he likes and refrain from dislikes. Those who take life seriously will attribute everything to fate, but those who take life in the lighter vein will indulge in any sort of activity dictated by their passions, the reason being suppressed. This kind of discussion on freedom and determinism is an ongoing one and scholars inconclusively argue for and against this issue.

*Valluvar* as a pragmatist approaches this problem very carefully and tries to solve the riddle thus: Taking human beings generally *Valluvar* claims that nothing is forcible than destiny. For even if one attempts to overcome it, he will be affected by it
somehow. At the same time he cautions the people not to be terrified of fate. If one takes earnest steps incessantly, certainly he will triumph over fate (620). This is the specific truth put forth by Valluvar. Valluvar classifies ul (destiny) as twofold: (i) ilavul (bad destiny) and (ii) akalul (good destiny). The first one will make a man ignorant and illiterate while the latter a wise man.

There are (through fate) two different natures in the world, Hence, the difference ( Observable in men) in (their acquisition of ) wealth, and in their attainment of knowledge.

(Kural 374)

There are two kinds of activities in the world viz., acquiring wealth and accumulation of knowledge. In the former evils may turn out to be good and vice-versa, but in the latter only good thing will emerge.

There are opportunities for mankind to resort to good conduct and follow the path of asceticism. One must willingly undertake these assignments. But of one is conditioned by fate all his activities are determined. Then how can we judge them as good or bad. Keeping this situation in mind we have to approach the problem of destiny enunciated by Valluvar. For both good acts and bad acts the root cause is one's thought, word and deed. If all the three are directed in the righteous path, the results would be good. On the contrary, if they were done with evil design, the resultant
effect would be bad. *Valluvar* holds good that efforts and dullness are already determined.

Perseverance comes from a prosperous fate,

and idleness from an adverse fate.

*(Kural 371)*

It is clear that prosperity will take place through good *karmas* and efforts, while adversity will affect those indulge in bad *karmas* with dullness. For one's suffering in poverty and one's delight in affluence are due to his fate and nothing else.

When rejoining at prosperity, why do people repent for adversity? If they realize the truth that one's destiny is the reason for such events an equanimity of mind will arise thereby treating both joy and sorrow alike. When we declare that even if one reads a lot of books, only his natural wisdom will predominate, it is sure, then, that one becoming a scholar and another becoming an illiterate are due to destiny. Even if one is endowed with crores of money, he must have the gift of enjoying it, that is also due to his fate. Even as a boat can move in the direction of the course of water, man has to abide by his destiny and cannot live as he likes. If this is the standard of living, then indulging in evil deeds willingly and put the blame to fate thereby escaping from the sin of crime may arise. *Valluvar* has thought about this issue and has declared that for one's greatness and lowliness one's activities are responsible. The efficiency in the acts turn to be good act or bad act and make the people reap the consequences. Hence, any one who is interested in good always has
to engage in good deeds. When evils haunt us, we have to think and get clarified that our past karmas cause such things.

In social life one should not desist from action by pointing out destiny, but must work hard to set at naught even that society is the collection of individuals. Hence, the grandeur of unified living, the preventing forces, how to overcome them are well explained by Valluvar in Social Morality.

3.6. THE VIRTUES ACCEPTABLE TO THE SOCIETY

The significance of the classification of virtues by Valluvar is that there are attestable as well as detestable virtues. Those which are conducive for human progress come under accepted virtues and those which are detrimental fall under despicable virtues. They are education, Listening, Knowledge, Seeking the support of Noble Men, Acting after due Consideration; The Knowledge of Power, Knowing the Fitting Time, Knowing the Places, Selection and Confidence, Selection and Employment, Cherishing one's Kindred, Benignity, Energy, Manly Effort, Power in Speech, Purity in Actions, Power in Action; The method of Acting, Friendship, Investigations of Friendship, Familiarity, Medicine, Nobility, Honour, Greatness, Perfectness, Courtesy, Family Maintenance and Agriculture are the Virtues to be promoted by every individual since they are obligatory and assigned duties in the society. On the contrary, Illiteracy, Avoiding Mean Association, Unforgetfulness,
Evil Friendship, Unreal Friendship, Folly, Ignorance, Hostility, Gambling, Wealth without Benefaction, Shame, Poverty, Mendicancy, Baseness etc., are the characteristics or behaviours which hamper the human progress. Hence, they cannot be even called as virtues. The remaining topics in Porutpal refer to the political philosophy as envisaged by Tiruvalluvar. The rulers have the responsibility to pave the way for people resorting to progressive virtues and prevent them from indulging in regressive virtues. They are also subjected to the above virtues since basically they are citizens. Only when people in the society lead a perfect life, the dynasty will flourish or when the kingdom is directed to promote the welfare of the citizens, then the society will be prosperous. Hence, the porutpal contains common virtues to be adhered to as well as desisted from by both common men and the ruling machinery.

While specifying the grammar of a king, Valluvar remarks that vigilence, education and boldness are the fundamental virtues to be possessed by a king. When emphasis is laid on the king's education, needless to say about the education of the people. Tolkappiar, while mentioning ten important equalities between the lover and the beloved, treats education as one among them (Poruladikaram 272-3). It is evident to show as to how the ancient Tamils had patronised education. Valluvar has devoted four chapters to indicate the significance of education such as Education, Illiteracy, Listening and Knowledge-possession. Education and knowledge are intertwined. The former is the means while the latter is the end. The method of getting education is listening. Non-education is despicable. Both education and knowledge make
people perfect and men of wisdom. Education is not mere wrote-learning but to be practised at every day life.

Let a man learn thoroughly whatever he may learn
and let his conduct be worthy of his learning.

(Kural 391)

In this couplet Valluvar brings out the psychological process of learning. First a young baby begins to learn the alphabets of a language. As it grows, its vigorous aptitude also grows that it must learn without any defect. In due course the youth selects the books to be learnt and studies them. The idea of education is fulfilled when the learner becomes the practitioner of what he has learnt - One should conduct oneself in a manner worthy of one's learning. Valluvar thought that there is close amity between education and discipline. For one's learning has to culminate in good deeds. Since hearing from worthy persons required for learning Valluvar emphasised that method also. If you cannot study properly atleast listen to what elders say. Such knowledge will soothen one's heart at the time of crisis. Listening to the men of total virtues will prevent one as a staff prevents one from falling in the slippery land.

Knowledge is the resultant effect of learning which prevents human beings not to go astray as dictated by passions but lead them to the path of righteousness by annihilating evils. The genuine characteristic of the well-learned men is to lead a harmonious life with fellowmen. The educated people will establish friendship with
everyone and make friendly the entire world. The anxiety of Valluvar is exhibited here that only when a society is filled with educated men, then peaceful co-existence will prevail in the society, for the very essence of education is to unify people on broader understanding by relinquishing all narrow and mean mindedness. To the living beings two elements of learning are fundamental like the eyes. They are number and letter. Number refers to mathematics, while letter refers to the linguistic elements such as grammar, word, meaning etc. There are scholars who interpret this couplet as two-fold educational technique. First, the scientific education which is primarily concerned with mathematics which is the basis for all sciences. Secondly the cultural education is based on letters that too in one's mother tongue. Hence, the number and letter are like two eyes.

According to some, letter refers to empirical education (including economics etc.), while number (the word bliss’ also means to think) indicates spiritual education. “Thus for wealth and grace pave the way for the total life of man for which the two-fold education (the two eyes) are not only essentially needed for the king and ministers, but also to the entire human race. What is wrong in Valluvar’s contention that those who do not acquire the two-fold education have only wounds in their face and not eyes. Considering these two types of basic education Valluvar in the Way of Accumulating Wealth holds (Kural 757) that the child mercy which is borne by love grows under the care of the rich nurse of wealth’. In the Possession of Benevolence holds that (Kural 247) as this world is not for those who are without wealth so that world is not for those who are without kindness' and ‘those who are without wealth
may, at some future time, become prosperous; those who are destitute of kindness are utterly destitute; for them there is no change (Kural 248). Thus Valluvar in all the appropriate places upholds the greatness of this two-fold education”.

In the Possession of Decorum also Valluvar maintains that ‘those who know not how to act agreeably to the world, though they have learnt many things, are still ignorant’. (Kural 140). Hence, it is clear that Valluvar’s notion of education is not for fetching a job to eke out one’s life, but make life perfect on this earth which is the fruit of education and knowledge. Only the learned will put forth their views in the assembly clearly as to be approved and accepted by one and all. It is rare to come across people other than men of deep knowledge and wisdom, to utter submissive words. Hence, the consequence of good knowledge is to show humility. Seldom such men of knowledge will speak unparliamentary words. Men of good education and audition will always speak with analytic skill. Hence, the fruit of right education is not only to make men with decorum, but also make men move with others in many respects. Valluvar did not feel, as is felt today that education is simply for memory to get some degrees and settle in life with a job. The education one has in one life will help him in all subsequent births.

From the paradigm of ‘sand well’ Valluvar proves that there is no end for education, it is to be the acquired wealth throughout one’s life time. In the sand-well water will spring forth whenever water is taken out. Similarly the more and more a person learns, the more and more will grow his knowledge. In the sand-well water
can be supplied to the entire village. Similarly through one scholarly person, the entire village will be benefitted. In the sand-well only when sands are removed constantly, water will come out instantly. In the same way when ignorance is removed and efforts made to grow rich in knowledge, one will be a fully educated man. An educated person is respected not only in his place, but wherever he goes, he is respected. Valluvar insists that one should learn till one's death.

"How is it that any one can remain without learning, even to his death, when (to the learned man) every country is his own (country), and every town his own (town)?" (Kural 397)

From this couplet we can understand the anguish of Valluvar about those who are reluctant to learn. The reverence he had for education and his expectation of what regard the society has to give for education are revealed here. The obligation of the people in a society is to praise a learned man who may belong to any place or any country. He must feel at home on seeing the hospitality, such is the service to be rendered to an educated man. Hence, there is no banks, frontiers, time etc., for learning. Till his death one has to continue his learning. One's education forms the basis of the joy of the worldly people and Hence, people prefer to learn more. Even the ambassad of the government has to learn a lot. Hence, education is the imperishable highest wealth.
To most of the people at the initial stage, knowledge is acquired through hearing. The famous Tamil proverb says: 'It is better to listen than to learn'. When Valluvar holds that the people who do not prefer the taste of listening to others, but always tasting the food such people are equal to the dead, we can understand the human concern of Valluvar. Even if the quantum of ideas are less, it is better to know from the appropriate authority which can foster one's living conditions. But when noticing people's interest in eating habits, we are forced to think that such people live only for eating.

Anyone wants to make humble speech must have acquired good amount of knowledge through listening. Otherwise humbleness and simplicity will not arise. No man is free from suffering which is caused by his own deeds, his relatives, neighbours, enemies, robbers, wild animals etc. But a man who has acquired wisdom through listening to elders will safeguard himself since he is like a fortress and no opponents can destroy it. Only men of education have everything, but affluent people without education have nothing. Such is the greatness of knowing through listening.

As a means of getting knowledge, one has to keep the company of scholarly masters since they know the actual method of living especially in the realm of morality. They have sharpened intellect. Keeping away from them will lead to increase manifold enmity. Always knowledge leads to action. Before execution of any act the doer must contemplate over the nature of the act, the method of execution, the benefits arising out of it, the loss etc. Valluvar's philosophy of life is simple. But
at the same time elegant. It will not be fair to complete the assigned task individually
or independently. We must consult the experts in the field who got triumph in their
ventures and then enter into fulfil the work. In that case there will be no defeat. It is
not proper to enter into an act without serious thinking and repent for it in half way
through.

He will perish who does not what is not fit to do; and he also will
perish who does not do what it is fit to do”

(Kural 466)

A person must have clear knowledge as to what actions he has to perform and what
not. If one indulges in non-righteous deeds, the resultant effect will be worst. At the
same time not engaging in the righteous deeds would also result in disastrous
consequence. In certain deeds, we must analyse the personality of those for whom we
exercise our duty. Even good acts too will produce bad effects if we do not study the
persons.

There is a famous Tamil proverb: 'If anything exceeds the limit, even nectar
will become poison'. In all our endeavours, there must be restrictions. If we exceed
the limit since the phenomenon is light or simple, then it may result in danger.
Valluvar's analogy is excellent in this context. The peacock feathers are light in
weight and for that matter if they are loaded in a vehicle beyond a limit, then the
central rod will be broken. A man must grow in his venture gradually, but if he tries to
grow abruptly all on a sudden, it may endanger his life. Even as a person climbing a
tree must know to what extent the tree will bear him. Instead, if he foolishly climbs
to the top of the tree, it will be an end to his life. In the same way before we spend on
any category we must know our income. Otherwise life will be miserable.

As soon as one knows his strength, one must know the appropriate time. A
doer must know the nature of the deed, his own strength, the strength of the
opponents and execute it at the suitable time and place. There is nothing as non-
execution of work if one does by analysing and knowing the measure of the work.
Without caring for one's own strength out of emotion, an action is done and lot of
people have left in the middle. Similarly, without co-operating with others, without
knowing his strength and the quantum of work, if one praises himself will get
perished soon. Even if one's income is low, there is no harm. But one should not
excessively spend beyond his income. Even the world can be attained, if an action is
performed by knowing the time and place. In the deep waters a crocodile will have
more strength to kill other living beings. But once it comes out of water, any being
can kill it easily. Hence, it becomes obvious that we should not leave the place which
is a stronghold for us. Hence, one must be sure of the time factor and place factor
before venturing into any act. If there is no clarity about these factors, then
continuous difficulties may arise. To the query as to what is the yardstick to measure
the personality of a person, Valluvar answers exuberantly. The judge has to consider
a man's good qualities, as well as his faults first and finally can decide the character
of that individual, based on that which predominates.
Weigh well the good of each, his failings closely scan,
As these or those prevail, so estimate the man.

(Kural 504)

In our daily life, if we like a person, we elevate him by pointing out his virtues and brushing aside vices. On the contrary, if we hate a person, we magnify his small misdeeds and forget all his good qualities and blame him. Realizing this kind of state of affairs, Valluvar, during his period itself has asked the people to measure, the overpowering quality in him whether good or bad and decide his personality accordingly. In this context Valluvar speaks about the three grand qualities of (muppal) viz., aram, porul and inbam. Before associating any person with ourselves, we must carefully estimate about his fascination for virtue, acquisition of wealth and indulgence in lustful events and no dread for life. In the present day context, we come across lot of inefficient people who are appointed for non suitable posts and thus causing calamities and confusions. Valluvar has realized this truth then itself and advocates that just because a person is close to the employer, the latter should not employ the former. This attitude will bring forth only unpleasant events.

Before appointing a person, his birth, brought up, studies, previous experience, conduct, character, education etc. are to be carefully considered and then only he must be taken into confidence. Instead of doing these, trusting a fellow and
after appointing him losing faith in him and suspecting he will always give displeasure.

After having considered 'this man can accomplish this, by these means' let the boss leave with him the discharge of that duty.

(Kural 517)

Here three major factors are involved:

(i) The nature of the assignment
(ii) The qualified person to successfully complete the task
(iii) Entrusting the work to him

As a pre-requisite, the suitable person for the suitable post must possess the following characteristic feats: path of love, clarified perfect knowledge, sharpened intellect and no desire.

It is a known truth that no man can live alone. For one reason or the other, man has to interact with his fellowmen. This interaction will solve many riddles and will pave the way for peaceful co-existence. A man in the society has to cultivate good qualities and live harmoniously with kith and kin. Even if a person has abundant wealth, but if has no relatives closely, then his life will be miserable like the water stored up in a bankless tank. More water can be stored if the banks are high; if no banks at all, no water can stay. Similarly only when we are endowed with high virtues, our relatives will come close to us; if we lack human qualities, no relative will rear us. Even as a crow cries with joy when seen its food and invites fellow
crows, mankind also attune to live like the crow. Only then good relatives and good
development will be there.

An im proper virtue to be fostered by mankind is benignity. As mercy is
expressed through the eyes, it has been termed by Valluvar as kannottam. There is
no meaning in having mere eyes on the face. The ornament for the eyes is mercy.
Merciless eyes will be considered as two words on the face. They exist just like a tree
exists.

Those who desire (to cultivate that degree of) urbanity which all shall love,
even after swallowing the poison served to them by, their friends, will be
friendly with them.

(Kural 580)

Cultured people are those who love everyone irrespective of any other condition.
Such loveable persons even if offer poison, the cultured people will accept it with
smiling face. In the Greek history we come across Socrates, as a noble man showed a
pleasant feeling eventhough the court had asked him to swallow poison.

Perseverance (ukkam) is one of the virtues to be adopted according to
Valluvar. Men of energetic calibre will never lose heart, but succeed in all their
endeavours; they may even retrieve their lost property. Even if the arrow spears deeply
in the body of an elephant seldom it dwindles, but attacks more vigorously. Such
should be the attitude of the men of courage and will power. When a belligerent tiger attacks with full power, even the powerful and courageous elephant too will be terrified. Similarly when ordinary man begins to agitate with untiring and energetic vigour, even men with powerful weaponry and man power have to be afraid of them. Thus Valluvar wants every human being not to give up hope or lose heart even failure haunts. We have to face the situation courageously with confidence.

The corollary of perseverance is not to be lethargic. Manly effort is essentially needed to achieve any objective in life. Man has to strive hard with constant and consistent effort to reach the target. These efforts will bring forth riches. Non-effort will land in nothingness (616). The famous Tamil proverb contains the similar meaning: 'Those who labour seriously hardly face diffidence when untiring efforts are made, only success succeeds and wealth is accumulated. If no effort means only no-life situation will prevail.

Although it be said that through fate, it cannot be attained, yet labour, with bodily exertion, will yield its reward.

(Kural 619)

People usually will seek the grace of God to fulfil their demands. If, due to his past deeds, he could not achieve the result and even by devotion failure may arise, the effort he has made with painful strivings will certainly fetch its reward. Even destiny
can be triumphed over, if strenuous efforts are made to achieve the objective. Anyone who works hard untiringly and without wasting time, he will be subservient to others.

A man who wants to attain name and fame must develop the quality of speech-efficiency. Already we have stated that one has to control his tongue, even though he could not control anything else. Otherwise he has to suffer due to improper usage of language.

According to Valluvar, good and bad will come to light through one's utterances. The moral standard of finding an act to be good or bad depends on, according to Valluvar through speech. For speech provokes one to act in a right or wrong way. Hence, one must be sure of expressing with dedication, measure, useful and glorified words. When a person begins to address the gathering, he must have the ability to attract both who likes or dislikes him.

'Tis speech that spell, bound holds the listening ear,

While those who have not heard desire to hear.

(Kural 643)

In the course of his talk, one must take the audience with him. Only such proficient person alone can flourish as a man of profound words and victorious. A fine speech is one which attracts the listeners and motivates the non listeners to hear repeatedly. None can win over a speaker who is bold enough in facing the assembly, utter without any distortion, confusion etc and speak like the flow of a brook.
Valluvar’s illustration through an analogy is remarkable. A flower which has blossomed must spread its fragrance; otherwise people will not care for such flowers. Similarly, a highly qualified literate must be benevolent and useful to others by clearly expounding the truths of the subject on which he speaks.

Another important virtue to be promoted for perfect living is purity in action. Even as guidance is inevitable for progress, to enjoy one’s life good deeds become essential. Valluvar emphatically maintains that even if one’s mother suffers due to hungry, one should not indulge in acts not encouraged by perfect men. Accumulating wealth through unfair means resemble the stupid deed of storing water in the unburnt pot. The moment water touches the unburnt pot, it dismantles, but if the pot is burnt, it can supply huge quantity of cool water. Similarly money earned through proper means must be spent to one and all. Also one must have steadfastness in the endeavour. It is easy to make declarations by all that they would do this or that. But it would be impossible to execute the same and attain success. But Valluvar wants us not to lose lope. If our thought-process is perfect, then certainly we can achieve the goal.

If those who have planned (an undertaking) possess firmness (in executing it) they will obtain what they have desired even as they have desired it.

(Kural 666)
Valluvar requests people not to mock at punic personalities. They may have great potentialities. Man's personality should not be estimated through his physical structure. Through an analogy Valluvar elucidates this idea. The linch-pin is very small, but without it the huge temple car cannot move. There are people like the linch-pin and should not be despised for their size. Before entering into any venture, the man who seeks perfection has to consider the following: (i) the true merit of the act (ii) the means of executing the work (iii) the obstacles encountered in the process (iv) the method of overcoming such obstacles and (v) the final success and glory. Also one must take serious considerations of the following: (i) money (ii) the instruments (iii) time (iv) the process of execution and (v) place. The act which is left in the middle without accounting for the above factors, the irrepessive enmity will cause affliction like the unextinct fire.

Valluvar provides interesting information to those who ask for the purpose of getting eyes. When we look at the person's eyes we have to guess the current of his thinking. Otherwise the eyes have no use. Even as crystal reflects the objects kept adjacent to it, the face will show the inner feelings. After all, face is the index of the mind. Those who accurately inform the thought contents of others must be venerated as equivalent to God.

A perfect person must be a man of perfect articulation. The vocabulary used by him will be of good ideas that too uttered boldly in the assembly of scholars. Before commencing one's speech, the speaker must study carefully the theme, the
mode of expression, the mentality of the audience etc. Even inadvertently we should not address the wicked fellows. The scholarly people will certainly feel proud to address the gathering of equal scholars. There their words and meaning will be apt and accurate. Valluvar's analogy in this regard is perfect. To address the enlightened audience with defects and deficiencies will be like a person suffering in the current of water tired of swimming. Men with six senses have to know the nature of audience and then speak wittingly and courageously.

The pure who knows the classification of words having first ascertained the nature (of the court) will not (through fear) falter in their speech before the powerful body.

(Kural 721)

The nature of oratory is twofold according to Valluvar. Not only a person must intend to speak always and wish others listen to him, but also he must listen to equally powerful speeches of others. The greatness of non-dread of the council is that we must elucidate explicitly what we know and get clarified in what we do not know. This type of advice by Valluvar is applicable to any period of history and to any man of any country.

When Valluvar maintains that this world is not suitable for those without object (porul), we have to interpret this not in a negative way i.e., the world is deluding, illusory etc and Hence, we must desist or denounce this world. Rather
positively, we need objects for the nourishing of body and for sustenance of life. Though *Valluvar* refers to the impermanence of wealth etc., he insists that for the promotion of righteousness, and to entertain domestic life wealth is needed. As *Valluvar*’s intention is empirical perfection, he has to consider anything that is a value for worldly affair. But his account of earning wealth is that it must be obtained through righteous means. *Valluvar* makes a commandment to ‘manufacture object’ no other instrument is needed to destroy our opponents than that. Once we create objects for our daily consumption and get self-sufficiency in it, we need not seek other’s support and even our enemies will afraid of us. *Valluvar*’s economic policy is revealed here.

The feeling of fraternity is inbuilt in every individual. None can live individually and independently. Till one’s death one has to keep friendship. But we must be careful in choosing our friends. Like the waxing of the moon, the true friendship of honest people will grow and become illuminative like the full moon. The friendship of wicked fellows will lose its vigour like the waning of moon and one day becomes without shining at all (new moon). Even as good books produce delight the more and more we read them, the friendship of noble people will yield immaculate joy. Friendship does not mean, as we see now, just gathering and talking aimlessly and gossiping foolishly and whiling away the time. Instead it must be deeply rooted and must have some purpose. For instance, whenever a few friends deviate from the normal path, the fellow friends’ primordial duty is to bring them back to normal life.
grief. *Valluvar* gives the grammar of friendship as well as the factors for investigation. Only after ascertaining one's character, good birth, defects and his kith and kin one must make friendship. According to *Valluvar*, even in grief, there is an advantage. It is the fundamental meterscale to measure one's friendship.

Continue to enjoy the friendship of the pure; (but) renounce even with a gift, the friendship of those who do not agree (with the world).

(*Kural* 800)

The friendship of great people will yield greatness, while the friendship of idiotic fellows will result in suffering. Hence, it is obligatory of every individual to experiment with friends and act according to the findings.

The term *palamai* in Tamil usually refers to tradition. *Valluvar* gives a new connotation to it as successive. In this topic, *Valluvar* also discusses the grandeur nature friendship. In his words,

Intimate friendship is that which cannot in the least be injured by (things done through the ) right (of longstanding intimacy).

(*Kural* 801)
We should not brush aside a few non-virtuous deeds done by our intimate friends, out of true love; instead we have to stick on to it for ever and this is what is known as familiarity according to Valluvar. The perfect ones have expounded that the grammar of friendship is 'privilege' or 'right'. Hence, we have to patronise it forever since true friendship is based on true love.

Another important truth which Valluvar wants to highlight is 'Medicine' As a physician, Valluvar suggests excellent techniques to foster one's body since he has understood the adage: 'A sound mind needs a sound body'. His knowledge of medicine is revealed in the first couplet itself:

If (food and work are either) excessive or deficient, the three things enumerated by (medical) writers, flatulence, biliousness, and phlegm, will cause (one) disease.

(Kural 941)

According to this translation, the words 'excess' or 'deficiency' has been understood in terms of food and work. But we can interpret in another way also. The major glands in the body secrete three major medical things such as flatulence, biliousness and phlegm. They must always be kept in normal conditions i.e., the secretions of these glands must be to suit the conditions of the body. If there is excess or deficient secretion of these three, certainly, as expounded by medical experts, they will cause physical ailments.
During the life time of *Valluvar* the art of medical application must be popular and *Valluvar* gives a systematic exposition of it.

Let the physician enquire into the (nature of the) disease, its cause and its method of cure and treat it faithfully according to (medical rule).

(*Kural* 948)

The learned (physician) should ascertain the condition of his patient, the nature of his disease, and the season (of the year) and (then) proceed (with his treatment).

(*Kural* 949)

Now it becomes clear that *Valluvar* teaches the scientific methods of treatment of a patient. However, he insists that disease is caused due to food habits. Due to frequent change of food, excessive eating, eating urgently before the food taken already is digested, eating limitlessly without knowing the range of appetite, eating the food which is not conducive to body conditions etc., are the causes for disease.

Another factor which makes man virtuous is the nobility of birth. *Valluvar*'s psychology is remarkable that the external behaviour of an individual reflects his nature of birth. The ideas of heredity and environment determine one's conduct. The
high-born people will maintain consistency in thought, word and deed and fear of sin. Seldom do they deviate from truthfulness, discipline and modesty. They also preserve the smile, the gift, the pleasant word, unfailing courtesy etc., which are the good signs of the true nobility. If a person does not behave properly even though he is born in a good family, *Valluvar* goes to the extent of saying that his descent from it will be questioned.

As the sprout indicates the nature of the soil, (so) the speech of the noble indicates (that of one's births).

*(Kural 960)*

The speech of a man is the measure to identify one's birth in a society according to *Valluvar*.

Honour is a grand feeling and a noble virtue. In the struggle for existence all living beings search for food, companion, self-protection etc in a competitive spirit. But men in due course develop a goal of life than gratifying the basic instincts. They try to live with principles so as to make life a perfect one even at the cost of one's life. If there arise threats to their principles, they may even prefer to sacrifice their lives. This kind of valourous feeling is 'honour'. When a man becomes affluent he has to develop humility and when he has affliction, he has to face it boldly. In that case there may not be any problem of honour. Even if a man of virtues like
mountains's stability performs the mean deed to the extent of 'abrus' grain, he has to lower himself in respect (*Kural* 965). It is better to die than to go behind the enemies by losing one's honour and dignity.

Those who give up (their) life when (their) honour is at stake are like the yark which kills itself at the loss of (even one of ) its hairs.

(*Kural* 969)

*Valluvar* justifies human sacrifice for honour since even an animal cannot sustain to bear dishonour, men of wisdom can end their lives. Here lies the greatness of human beings. Other than the struggles such as for food, for clothing, and for getting away from lower nature, *Valluvar* considers honour as an intense feeling emerging from within which condemns one's own mistakes.

"It is not great honour that others used abusive words, misbehaved etc. Besides, one should not do evil for taking revenge. Men of honour should always be men of selfless nature, but should not develop enmity and harm others due to selfish nature with the motive of revenge. Still that type of selfless nature cannot be equated with honour. Further analysis will reveal that honour helps one to patronise the basis for worldly life such as one's community, one's country as well as higher principles. It does not simply contain one's blame, glory, motivation, evil etc. One's community is higher than oneself; One's country is higher than one's community; world is higher
than one's community. Real honour lies in the contemplation of preserving equanimity than the world. Only such men who promote equanimity prosper in every country. Equally we can also notice in every country that those who have narrow level of honour perish day by day since they develop selfish tendency by forgetting equality, country, community etc., but promote always their glory, defame etc. After realizing this truth in actual experience Valluvar has elucidated the notion of honour in the poruppal which deals with common living. Here we must also note that when Valluvar glorifies honour as a noble virtue in social living, he emphasises in individual living the notions of patience, dread for evil deeds, not indulging in evil deeds etc.” (Varadarasan, Mu., 1952: 233-234).

Since honour and greatness go-together always. Valluvar, as a corollary proceeds to analyse the salient features of greatness. In social life one must aspire for greatness. It is the urge of the heart with profound enthusiasm that yields greatness; otherwise only lowliness will arise. Birth is common to all beings and inflicting hierarchy among the living species due to the work for livelihood is absurd according to Valluvar. Theirs neither greatness nor lowliness due to birth. Hence, the difference created by profession is not acceptable. Greatness will reach the honoured people only when they develop self-restraint like the chasteful women. Honour is devoid of egotism while mean mindedness will take one to the frontier of egotism.

The great will always humble himself; but the mean will

exact himself in self-admiration.

(Kural 979)
Those who have elevated themselves to the dizzy heights of perfection will show humility without pride; but the mean ones will praise themselves even when they do not have great qualities. Also the grand ones will glorify other’s great deeds and suppress any misdeeds. But the mean minded ones will always hide the good deeds and magnify the misdeeds.

The ultimate goal of life is to lead a life of perfection. As we have been pointing out, all the virtues to be patronised and all the qualities to be stunned with are meant for achieving this major objective of life. The perfect beings, approved by the society if deviated from their reputation, the world can seldom bear it. The highest virtue called ‘perfectness’ is expressed through love, modesty, beneficence, benignant grace, and truth. Tapas or penance is non-killing, while perfection is not revealing other’s evil designs. “When examined the perfect people, the great masters of the universe, we can frequently witness the qualities of humility and non-hesitance to accept defeats. Never did they think anyone as inferior to themselves. Hence, they have acknowledged their defeats and shown humbleness to every one. What is the basic reason for this? It is nothing but the grand life consisting of forgetting their individual honour, patronised everyone with reverence, afraid of indulging in sinful deeds, helpful to others and lived truthfully. Hence, love, modesty, beneficence, benignant grace and truth are stated as five pillars of perfectness by Valluvar. These great people will respect common service as great thing and will not boost their
selfish nature and pride. Only among the men of public interest and service the quality of accepting defeat can be seen. It can also be noticed that even a perfect man with eighty years old will listen to and rectify defects with love from a boy of ten years old". (Varadarasan.Mu., 1952: 140-141).

According to the Tamil culture, the routine duty of a mother is to beget children; the primordial duty of the father is to make them perfect by imparting discipline and good qualities. The mother will rejoice at the news of her son becoming a perfect man than when he was born. When a society is to prosper, the men of perfect principles with erudition must live. Otherwise, such a society devoid of such perfect men will be like a dense forget according to Avvaiyar. In the Silappatikaram, a grand Tamil epic, we come across Kannagi, after hearing the murder of her husband, Kovalan puts the first questions "Do the Pandiya kingdom have perfect men? "Were there men of eminence, no such murder of Kovalan would have taken place. Since Valluvar had realized the significant role of the perfect persons for the upliftment of the social norms and moral obligations in a society, he had given much importance to perfection.

Another associated virtue to be promoted is courtesy or goodness, or good character. The fundamental meaning of the term 'good character' is to love mankind and a good birth. Not all people have similar characters, but people with courtesy
would be respected by all. The world is sustained because of men of pre-eminence; otherwise it would have submerged in the earth.

He who is destitute of (true) human qualities (only) resembles a tree, though he may possess the sharpness of a file.

(Kural 997)

The greatness of personality for one is to make a vow for maintaining the family in a perfect way. Both efforts and wise contrivances are required for the untiring perseverance of one's family. Even the divine forces will voluntarily come forward to assist the one who resolves to promote his family interests. Finally Valluvar considers agricultural operation as a major source of livelihood for living species. Though it is not a virtue either to be promoted or refrained from, it is a profession for a few which requires high appreciation. For only rural people engage in cultivation such as tilting of the soil, sowing the seed, transplantation, removal of weeds, adding manures and harvesting. The urban based people enjoy the benefit of such profession. However, food is essential for all human living. Even the renounced souls, the ascetics have to survive through food. Hence, the greatness of agriculture is revealed. The agriculturists are like the linch-pin since they provide food for other people.

'It is agriculture which forms the fundamental, linch-pin of world economics in countries like India. Those who are employed in small/big industries and
departments on always are dependent on agriculture. Hence, *Valluvar* has declared that 'The world follows the plougher's team'

Howe’er they roam, the world must follow still

the plougher’s team;

*(Kural 1031)*

The formers are the supporters of other men in a society since they offer food even to beggars. The men of domestic affairs and the hermits to perform their respective obligations, the farmers assist them to a great extent. Even the hermits who have renounced everything cannot be honest in their undertakings if the agriculturists cease to perform their duties. To quote *Valluvar,*

If the farmers hands are slackened, even the ascetic state will fail.

*(Kural 1036)*

Besides domestic virtues and ascetic virtues, for the benefit of political virtues, glorification of kingdom, the foremost factors are the agriculturists, as emphasised by *Valluvar.* Hence, for the social-car the linch-pin is the formers. If agricultural operation is suspended, the social ethics will be flouted, the social harmony will perish; peace will be at stake, humanism will be ruined.” (Mohanraj, K., 1983: 140).
The appropriate virtues meant for social development and social establishment accepted by all in a positive way are extended upto agriculture. For the bodily health, purity of heart, prosperity of the family, betterment of community the role of the friends and relatives etc. are well explained with ample examples and Now adequate illustrations. Valluvar has resorted to the methods of suggestions, advices, requests, hospitality, condemnation etc. Next we shall analyse the objectional qualities which Valluvar describes in a negative way.

3.7. SOCIALLY OBJECTIONABLE VIRTUES

It has been declared that a society is an organization of people with likes, dislikes, expections, aspirations etc. The social philosophers state that the society prosperous it has two-fold obligation. First, all good and righteous virtues must predominate among the members and secondly non-prevalence of evil and wicked qualities. If the plants are to grow, weeds must be rooted out; if any industry I to progress, it must have industrious workers than men of lethargy. Only when goodness over power evils, any society will flourish. The atmosphere must be so conducive as to make all perfect men live peacefully and wicked ones wiped out. The evil-mongers and their evil designs must be eliminated completely since they are more dreaded than fire. In this context Valluvar’s social philosophy has been analysed from two perspectives: one, the acceptable virtues which we have discussed in the previous section and two, the objectionable virtues.
The highest virtue lies in detecting one's own faults before pointing out others' faults. Individually the person has to correct himself. Otherwise one has to repent forever. Collectively the social evils are to be identified. Valluvar shows that egoity, wrath and tainted behaviour are the bad qualities. The development of those without the above qualities is highly appreciable in the society. It is true that faults will lead to destruction. Before the emergence of faults one must protect himself, otherwise his condition will be pathetic like the heap of straw before fire. It is a worst thing that a person does not get away from faulty attitude knowing well that it will lead to disastrous consequences. "Self-centeredness will culminate in being non-righteous, non growth of commodities, non-enjoyment. The rulers must invest in beneficial schemes. The great blunder of the dynasty is not multiplying income. Ego centricism will pave the way for indulging in dreaded deeds with blindness not knowing time, place, strength etc. Indulging in actions with extreme pride will be away from virtue, wealth and joy and bringforth eternal distress. In this context, the ideas mentioned in non-vonverting, not backbiting, not speaking profitless words and dread of evil deeds." (Arunuga Mudaliyar, 1971: 62-63).

It is essential for human beings to seek the guidance of some people or the other. While doing so people must be cautious of the mean minded fellows. Valluvar has devoted a chapter to warn people as not to fall a prey to the ill designs of low-minded fellows.
(True) greatness fears the society of the base;
it is only the low-minded who will regard them as friends.

(Kural 451)

Men of noble traits will dread of base-minded fellows and get away from them. Only men of low-born stature will accept such fellows as their companions and rejoice at it. Since good qualities depend on one's association, it is obligatory for such seekers to approach men of noble qualities and withdraw the company of wicked ones. Valluvar's aim was to create a society where all people live in harmony with uniform qualities. Hence, he insists on the necessity of their duties due to egoity. This is the best way to rectify one from forgetting caused by egoity.

Another worst quality, which impedes human progress, is lethargy. Valluvar had witnessed how people during his lifetime had lost several chances of growth in life due to dullness. It is really energy for mankind. A family according to Valluvar is an indiminishing lamp. But if slothfulness peeps in, certainly darkness enshrouds that lamp and the light gets diminished. Valluvar sarcastically comments that those who want to ruin themselves will wear as ornaments willingly such as delayed activites, forgetfulness, slothfulness and continuous slumber. It becomes obvious that he who wants to come up in life must refrain from the above temperaments.

Suffering is common to all. Scholars declare that sorrows arise due to oneself, his kith and kin, beasts, enemies, robbers and celestials. But human beings ought to
face afflictions courageously, but should not go down by worrying too much. *Valluvar*
suggests a nice method to overcome suffering. If one laughs at suffering as if he had
joy, then one can win over suffering.

Troubles will vanish (i.e., will be troubled) before the man who
(struggles against difficulties) as a buffalo (dwing a cart) through deep mire”

(*Kural* 624)

Even as the buffalo pulls the cart with heavy load, one should not get perturbed for
the incessant impediments and with courage and strong determination work seriously.
In that case even the suffering will suffer according to *Valluvar*. Confidence becomes
a pre-requisite for overcoming lamentations. Suffering is caused by friends with cruel
nature. An important character to be withdrawn is to keep evil companions. Generally
friendship lies nothing in return. But if a friend expecting something due to friendship
is equal to a prostitute and a robber. In friendship both word and deed must be one
and the same. On contrary, if one develops friendship with some fellows whose words
and deeds are different, then such a friendship will cause agony even in dream. It is
good to make friendship of good and intelligent persons. But it is better to keep away
from the wicked and unintelligent fellows. It is best even to acquire the enmity of
scholarly persons than to have friendship with wicked ones.

In the section on unreal friendship (*Kural* 821-830) *Valluvar* gives the list of
those with whom we should not make any friendship:
a) We should not make efforts to develop with those who pretend to be friends.

b) We should not attempt to thing of those who have wavering mind in friendship since it frequently varies like the mind of a prostitute.

c) We should not believe the speeches of those fellows who do not maintain friendship at the heart-level.

d) We should desist from the company of those who express friendship outwardly, but harredness inside.

e) If the enemy behaves like a friend, we too befool him by acting as a friend and laugh outwardly.

f) We must be stubborn in eliminating the friendship of hypocrites.

We can discern the intention of Valluvar in making as perfect at every stage by taking precautionary measures in identifying friends and eschewing the friendship of evil efforts and uncivilized ones.

Another removable character is fully (pedomai). Valluvar defines fully as the one (the main defect) that which makes one incur less and forgo gain. In actual life men strive hard to avert loss and make gain in all endeavours. Only fools will get delight in indulging in forbidden deeds. The qualities of fool are well stated by Valluvar: (a) shamelessness, (b) inefficiency to decide the course of action, (c) harshness and (d) aversion towards what ought to be respected. If such stupid guys accumulate wealth, they do not know how to spend it properly. Their behaviour will resemble the act of lunatic fellows dwindling due to intoxication. Their entry into the
assembly where scholars have gathered will be like entering into the ashram without washing our legs. How beautiful the analogies of Valluvar are! Fools will gain more in the company of fellow fools and will lose nothing while parting.

There are no greater fools than he who, though, has read and understood a great deal and even taught it to others, does not walk according to his own teaching.

(Kural 835)

As the goal of education also Valluvar insists that one should behave according to what one has learnt unblemishingly.

An associated behaviour of foolishness is stupidity or ignorance. It is caused by false thinking motivated by ego that he alone knows everything. As we come across most of the popple nowadays, we must listen to Valluvar's opinions about such despicable persons. Among the perfect ones only non-intelligence is the greatest thing to be stunned with. Other wants they do not care for. But the idiots will boast of himself that he has 'seen' what others cannot 'see'. The fellow idiots endorse his statement and make others belive.

What is called want of wisdom it the vanity which says, 'we are wise'.

(Kural 844)
According to *Valluvar* any stupid fellow who decries what has been authentically adjudicated by authoritative scholars, will be looked down as a ghost. Hence, *Valluvar* wants man to give the shameful act of idiotic behaviour and join the mainstream of wise men.

Hostility is a worst quality arising out of ignorance and foolishness. It is like a distressing disease, which ought to be ridden outrightly. Once this disease is cured, big relief with never decreasing and ever increasing fame will arise. A life of blissful nature will peep in. If a stupid fellow treats his life as a pleasurable one who frequently promotes hatredness among fellow men, his life will be filled with blemishes and he will be ruined. A fellow devoid of love, proper guidance, strength etc., will not easily triumph over his enemies. At the same time his enemies will easily overpower him. Even for sport-sake one should not promote hatredness. Real joy, according to *Valluvar* lies in destroying the greatest misery called hatred.

As *Valluvar* is aware of this detestable quality viz, hostility at individual, social and political levels, he has devoted forty couplets to highlight the salient features of this dangerous and detrimental quality such as ‘The might of Hatred’, ‘Knowing the quality of Hate’ and ‘Enmity within’. A truth seeker must be beware of his opponents both from within and without. Otherwise he has to languish and lament in the midst of enmity which is not a good sign of progress.
Hatred is a mighty quality about which every one has to be aware of. A fellow who is timid, ignorant, unsociable and niggardly becomes easy victim of the foes. For these qualities will make him miserable weak.

Highly to be desired is the hatred of him whose anger is blind, and whose lust increases beyond measure.'

(Kural 866)

Here Valluvar positively approaches to the problem. He promotes hatred tendency towards those who become negative deviants of social norms such as blind anger and excessive lust. While knowing the nature of hatredness, Valluvar classifies two kinds of tillers: first, those plough men’s heads in the battle field with bow and arrow and the second, those plough with words in the assembly of noble men. Valluvar warns us not to have enmity with the latter since it is dangerous even though we may have enmity with the former. Enmity with the warriors is open and outwardly while enmity with scholars will yield defame which is inwardly and subjective.

It is advised that we should not voluntarily disclose our sufferings to others. Also we should not declare about our lack of courage to our enemies. This will bring discredit to our safety living. While it is tender, the thorny bush has to be removed. Otherwise it will grow into a big tree and affect the cutter. Likewise the friendship with our opponents must be cut off at the beginning level; it will cause sorrow to us once we allow it to grow. Throught this analogy Valluvar expects people to be alert over hostility at any level of existence. There are two kinds of enemies, one external
and the other internal. Even from the kith and kin enmity may emerge. Even as cold water results in diseases thereby causing ill health, our own close relatives will make us suffer and turn as our foes.

Fear not foes (who say they would cut) like a sword;
(but) fear the friendship of foes (who seemingly act) like relations.

(Kural 882)

One need not be dread of the external threats, which can be managed even if they threaten us with swords. But we have to be afraid of the internal dangers resulting through friends turned foes. Internal enmity will culminate in several criminal activites to avoid enmity people must patronise mutual agreement or several issues. If one is forced to live with men who do not come forward for such agreements, it will be like dwelling in a hut with snake. That is, one’s life will be filled with continuous suffering than calm living.

Another character, which a man prefers to be wise, to be withdrawn is not to offend the great men. Great people are those will-versed in learning, listening, discipline, culture and perfectness. Instead of respecting them, if we disregard them it is really an obnoxious practice, which is condemned. Always seeking the advice of great men will fetch perfect results. On the contrary, if one performs the action out of ego-centricism without consulting the experts in the field, certainly that action will become a waste. The deeds of inefficient people mocking at and do ill for the efficient will resemble like inviting the God of death (yama) by clapping the hands.
Though burnt by a fire (from a forest), one may perhaps live, (but)
ever will live who has shown disrespect to the great (devotees).

(Kural 896)

To put it more precisely, one can escape from the forest fire but no escape is possible from ill-treating the elders.

_Valluvar_, in more than one place speaks about the nature of women in a society. In the _arathuppal_, _Valluvar_ spoke of ‘Not coveting another’s wife’ as an individualistic ethics. But in the _porutpad_ he reiterates as collective virtue ‘Not to be led by women’ and ‘wanton women’. In the former, _Valluvar_ insists that a husband should not keep a low profile in the matter concerning with his wife. When women’s liberation movements are operating in full swing nowadays, _Valluvar_’s thinking is that womenfolk are meant for promoting domestic virtues and they are unfit for social uplift movements.

Even shame faced womanhood is more to be esteemed than the shameless manhood that performs the best of a wife.

(Kural 907)

To put it simply men should not be motivated by women in matters concerned with social and political movements. A fellow who is afraid of his wife loses vitality and will be afraid of doing good to others. Those who become slaves to women and do
things according to their dictates will see meaninglessness of righteousness, wealth and joy. *Valluvar* vehemently condemns the role of prostitutes in a social setting. Since they live devoid of love, but expecting money, even their sweet words will lead to evil designs. Their embrace in darkness will resemble the embrace of an uncared for corpse in a dark room. We can understand that even during the era of *Valluvar* such pathetic situations prevailed and he did not advocate such social menaces to take place. The perfect ones who prefer wisdom seldom even think of joining the company of whores since they cause fatal diseases. *Valluvar* as a preface speaks about the evils of prostitution since he has to later hold that strumpets and gambling are rejected by the goddess of wealth.

Another social menace is drinking toddy, which can never be pardoned. As *Valluvar* was worried of the negative factors, which hamper the social progress where only men of perfection should live, he has no hesitation in making vituperative criticisms about consuming intoxicating drinks. Those who lose their control due to palm-juice have deviated already from shame and shyness. They not only lose their self-respect but also are made mean fellows to their opponents. The enemies seldom are afraid of such persons. Even the mother will not appreciate her son becoming a victim to the crel drinkis; one can note the act of drinking. What would the scholarly perfect people think about the drunkard when his own mother disowns him? Just for bodily comforts when people out of ignorance drink toddy and ide, it will be treated on par with those who consume poison and prone to die.
When (a drunkard) who is sober sees one who is not, it looks as if he remembered not the evil effects of his (own) drink.

(Kural 930)

Though it is good to redeem the alchoholic addicts, it would be better to advice them when they are not drunk. Then only they too will listen with eagerness.

With an excellent analogy Valluvar points out the efforts of wise people to bring to normality the intoxicated ones. It is really a good effort to advice the drunkards. But it is inevitable to engage in such advises when they are not addicted to alcohol. Then only they will yield to the requests and stop drinking. Advising them when they are under the grip of hot drinks resembles like searching for a drowned fellow beneath the waters with the help of burning torch. A drunkard seldom will realize the evils of drinking when he is in boose. But Valluvar intends that such fellows atleast purify themselves on seeing other drunkards when they themselves are not actually drunk!

Another evil behaviour, is detrimental to human progress and perfection, is gambling. Some people gain in the beginning in gambling and go in full swing. But later they may lose even their own personal money. Valluvar out of disgust indicates that one should not prefer gambling even if gain comes at the commencement. But in the long run it will land in difficulties.
Though able to win, let not one desire gambling, (for) even what is won is like a fish swallowing the iron in the fish-hook.

(Kural 931)

"Both gambling and toddy-drinking are to be annihilated both by politicians and public. Like lust and toddy, gambling make people deviate from generic duties. Lot of rulers have lost their wealth, positions and fame and even kingdoms have rolled on dust due to this perilous practice. Lot of families too have lost their reputations due to gambling. Even after losing the country, wealth and possessions in gambling, when the king is motivated to lose his wife in the pernicious combat, how else to account for the evil nature of gambling?" (Arumuga Mudaliyar S., 1971: 145)

Gamblers have no respect in the society, since it will land in poverty. If one feels proud about his instruments, space and his efficiency in gambling, Valluvar warns the such fellows will meet their downfall and lose his own wealth. In gambling one will lose his possessions, indulge in telling lies, and spoil his merciful nature and lead to eternal state of disrepute. Dress, wealth, food, respect, education will seldom reach the gamblers. Even if he possess them, they too will leave him gradually. Wealth without benefaction is not appreciable.

He who knows that wealth yields every pleasure and yet is so blind as to lead miserly life will be born as a demon.

(Kural 1002)
The main purpose of accumulating wealth is to help others. Otherwise it will be like a poisonous tree grown in the middle of the town. The wealth, which is not beneficial to others, is like wasting the youthfulness of a lad and attaining old age. If wealth is assimilated without love and inflicting agony to oneself, will somehow reach other's hands.

Another detestable quality is shame. One must always feel shame for non-righteous deeds. Though food, dress etc. are meant for all shyness is the unique character of human beings. When the perfect persons feel shy for certain deeds beauty will be there. If one gives up the principles in life, his entire family has to feel ashamed. Due to shameful deeds of a few somewhere, the entire society has to bow in shame. Valluvar excellently elucidated this idea through a comparison. A fellow without shyness roaming around the society resembles the wooden doll moving with life. (Kural 1020)

Our ancient Tamil scholars have pointed out the dreaded nature of poverty. Avvaiyar, the famous poetess, states that the worst evil is poverty and that too poverty in youthful state is the worst evil. Valluvar wants to eliminate poverty from social life. Even though if we want to lead a virtuous life, poverty will not permit us to grow. So many afflictions affect due to poverty and good birth, good physique etc., will be ruined. Valluvar goes to the extent of saying that one can even sleep on fire, but seldom can he close his eyelids when poverty-stricken. Either Valluvar must have
experienced the agonies of penury, or he must have witnessed other’s sufferings. Hence, he concludes that there is nothing so cruel on this earth than poverty itself.

Begging (irravu) is condemned by Valluvar, but at the same time he compromises that because of beggars, the donors can flourish Valluvar’s thinking in this regard is both positive and negative. Munificent tendency can be fulfilled only in the presence of beggars who engage in such acts due to destiny. Hence, those who give aims should not rebuke at them. Though Valluvar accepts begging as a world order, he points out the lower nature of begging. It is absurd even to beg water for cow (Kural 1066). The moment we think about begging, our heart is broken instantly. One the contrary, to see those who deny aims and conceal their wealth, even that heart will vanish. If one has been destined to eat through begging and live, Valluvar vociferously outbursts that let the one who has coded the rules of life be perished. There are some scholars who interpret the expression ‘கேட்டே கோவிலேப்போவேந்தேர்’ to mean let he who created the universe perish. Such is the anguish of Valluvar towards begging.

As appendix, Valluvar speaks about a few virtues to be seriously adhered to by the citizens. Towards the end a topic is devoted to bring out the baser mentality of the people, which is to be shunned with. When Valluvar expected to form a society with perfect persons devoid of social deviation, the presence of mean minded fellows irked him to a great extent. Hence, we could notice harsh words used by him. People must be aware of such men of uncultured behaviour. For they will resemble like
ordinary men who cannot be distinguishend. Seldom can we come across such vile
people since they appear as if real people.

The love enjoy more felicity than those who know what is good, for
the former are not troubled with anxiety (as to the good)

(Kural 1072)

As the men of base mentality do not worry for anything they are wiser than the wise
people. As the celestials behave as they like, Valluvar sarcastically equates the
qualities of the mean with them, since they too behave in a whimsical way. Men of
lower mentality will feel proud when they happen to see meaner persons than them.
The base will be controlled only through fear, even though they do not control for
money, power and desire. If they could not be controlled by fear, they will hope to
gain some extent. Valluvar equates the behaviour of the mean to the drum, which is
beaten. For they will reveal the secret messages voluntarily to others.

The mean will not (even, state of what sticks to) their hands (soon after a
mean) to any but those who would break their jaws with their clenched fists.

(Kural 1077)

No other illustration is needed to elucidate the vulnerable behaviour of the mean.
What amount of observation has Valluvar made to substantiate the stingy attitude of
the base. Only when they are threatened with physical injury they will come forward to offer something.

_Valluvar makes a demarcation between the perfect ones and the mean ones. The former will get benefit instantly out of the words spoken to them, i.e., they are so shrewd to cling fast to their objectives. But mean fellows seldom behave like that; unless they are crushed like the sugarcane, they will get rid of their stupid nature. The mean will frequently become jealous of others' dress, food etc., and find fault with them. Their evil design is perilous since they cannot tolerate others' comfortable living.

The base will hasten to sell themselves as soon as a calamity has befallen them. For what else are they fitted.

_(Kural 1080)_

As the base cannot realize suffering, but prepared to sell themselves to overcome, _Valluvar with disgust asks – “What for they are living?”_

_Throughout the Porutpal, Valluvar might have kept in his mind only these mean minded fellows as detestable qualities, which we have seen so far. For the entire social net will be collapsed if the base are allowed to grow. Due to their lower nature, thought, word and deed, the society will lose its prosperity and will be driven to a state of disrepute. Only to uplift such men through condemnation and belittling their attitude, Valluvar has classified two-fold virtuous path: one, the direct path of_
voluntary involvement in just and fair virtues, the other, the indirect method of getting away from some character which are really detrimental to human solidarity and social harmony. *Valluvar* has classified two-fold virtuous path: one, the direct path of voluntary involvement in just and fair virtues, the other, the indirect method of getting away from some character which are really detrimental to human solidarity and social harmony. *Valluvar* wanted to strike a balance between these two traits and hence, he strives too hard by discarding all the negative qualities from the preview of social behaviour. As his intention was to make every human being a perfect one, naturally he highlighted animal based, anti-human behaviour, which are to be safely curtailed. Hence, *Valluvar* has included even his political thinking as a major part of social norms, the ruler, minister, ambassador, warrior and others in the political organisation have to play a vital role in their respective assignment. Hence, their characteristics have also been discussed in the light of positive as well as negative virtues. They also contribute to a great extent in making men perfect by basically themselves becoming perfect.

3.8. THE HIGHEST VIRTUES

We have already pointed out that a society is nothing but the collection of individuals. While analyzing the objective of life or the highest virtue, *Valluvar* categorically categorizes a two-fold way of life: one, the domestic life and the other the ascetic life. It is quite natural to ask as to which one is the best way of life among these two. *Valluvar'*s diplomatic way of explanation is laudable. When a person is in
the domestic life, he has the obligation to fulfil the duties pertaining to domestic life. When he renounces the world, he ought to perform the duties pertaining to that way of life. The duty of the governing body is to protect the people from external threats and internal dangers and make their life really progressive and prosperous. Valluvar clearly demarcates that it is not to do the duties and indulge in non-virtuous deeds. Thus, it becomes clear that one’s duty according to the role he plays in the society is the true goal of life and the execution of it in a perfect way becomes the highest virtue.

"The Tamil society when Valluvar flourished had widely open nature. What Valluvar intended was the same. During his time, a variety of learning processes was in vogue. He wanted to intensify this process further, all people must acquire knowledge through learning and listening and one should learn till his death. In those days the life-style according to birth and profession (varnasrama dharma) peeped into the Tamil culture. The custom of discriminating people by birth gained momentum. At this juncture Valluvar showed the truth that only discipline and education would bring credential than anything else. People with different talents in different areas were promoted, patronized and respected. Valluvar too approved of this process. In the opinion of Valluvar, a society generally has a good nature in itself. Though Valluvar's vision of a society was based on peaceful existence, he warned that, if poverty and hunger affect the people and if the affluent ones do not care for them, it is natural for common man to prefer the path of violence. Hence, he patronized the
virtues like ‘offering’. There existed good opportunities for local men and foreigners in that society and Valluvar patronized it.” (Kamatchi Sinivasan, 1975: 267-268).

Everyone who studies Tirukkural can feel that: nobility and perfection are emphasized at three levels known as aram, porul and inbam. We have seen Valluvar’s conception of virtues from positive and negative perspectives that at all levels, conception of virtues from positive and negative perspectives that at all levels, i.e., when a person moves around as an individual, engaged in homely life or ascetic life or participates actively in statecraft thereby protecting the life, liberty and belongings of the people or engaged in social organisations, a person should not deviate from the regular path of perfection. For worldly life, material objects (porul) become inevitable; for a hermit’s life grace (arul) is essential; for a social worker forbearance of and perseverance are basically required and for a politician public welfare is the prime motive. Hence, Valluvar’s notion of one’s station and duties are well ordained, that according to the role one occupies in the social setting he has to discharge his duties. While doing so promotion of happiness and elimination of suffering become the underlying principle. Hence, it is not an exaggeration if we say that Tirukkural is a complete guide to elucidate the philosophy of life in a crisp, lucid and proper way.

“Hence, the philosophy of life preached by Valluvar promotes courage and confidence, besides manliness. The ancient Tamils were not cowards. They had laid the foundation for a grand civilization. Even without the knowledge of steam power,
they could move around the world through the sea by withstanding all natural odds and brought wealth to Tamil country. They did not have tiredness and fear. With full of hopes they had the determination to achieve anything. They developed full of hopes towards God. They realized about fate, but had the determination even to overcome it. Their philosophy of life was with full of vigour. In their perfect domestic life both love and righteousness flourished. They accumulated huge wealth but did not utilise it for their personal good. Since they were intellectuals they could spend it for everybody. Hence, in their life joy filled with humility was in plenty.” (Jagannathan, K.V., 1963: 118)

Between birth and death what man has achieved? Or going to achieve? What is the goal of life? When we contemplate over these questions, an answer comes out that as a human being, man has to live for achieving an objective. Whether living individually or collectively, goal-filled life should be the underlying principle. That should be the highest quality and perfect path. From Valluvar’s point of view, we can discern that realization of one’s own self is the highest goal about which he describes after realization. The illiterates, literate, scholars, perfect ones, wisdom seekers everyone knows about the nature of the soul – that it cannot sustain in the body forever. The soul has to leave the body and the body becomes a log of wood. Valluvar too analogically explains this phenomenon that even as a bird leaves its nest, the soul leaves its body. Hence, we know the truth that the soul’s stay in the body is not stable, the body is to be disintegrated, wealth is impermanent and even name, fame etc., too are not long lasting. But, the truth is that there is an abiding, permanent
substance. When we think of impermanence, then there must be a permanent being. Valluvar calls such a being as semporul (the grand substance). That substance alone can remove the ignorance of birth. We must have adequate knowledge of both permanence and transitory things.

Since, we do not realize the distinction between the true abiding substance and false momentary things. On the contrary we take for granted the transitory thing as the permanent substance. Hence, we could not lead a life of perfection. If we want to get rid of confusing and conflicting situations, we require good knowledge. To achieve this, the knowledge of perfect being becomes inevitable. Those who want to enjoy everything that is seen. According to Valluvar ‘unblemished vision’ is pure and perfect wisdom leading to the understanding of the nature and utility of all things.

Men with impure and confused knowledge will have doubt forever. In that case there cannot be clarity in knowing. Only deluded knowledge will prevail and no grip over actions will be there. Hence, it is obligatory to those who want to realize the truth about life do dispel their doubts and must acquire penetrating intelligence. Only such persons will develop purity of heart. They will enjoy the life of celestials on this Earth itself as envisaged by Valluvar. The knowledge of objects acquired through five sense organs is insufficient. Complete knowledge will emerge in knowing the True Nature of the objects. Hence, knowledge of True Being (Meyyunarvu) becomes essential and without this wisdom any amount of empirical knowledge will become
futile. Permanent knowledge according to Valluvar is to know the true nature of the object, whatever may be the object. Valluvar is keen in distinguishing True knowledge about objects as well as knowing from the utterances of people. This type of discriminative knowledge is wisdom and men of such wisdom are known as wise people – those who have realized the ultimate truth.

He who wants to terminate transmigratory existence on this earth has to equip in education and realize the Truth. This is the real goal of life, which gives immense happiness. To the realized souls, there is no rebirth undoubtedly. The foremost requirement for this state is to develop detachment from material comforts and no affliction arises then. If one relinquishes the qualities of lust, wrath and delusion, then certainly the pains caused by them will perish. We should not even tell the names of these three vices. Here we can point out the anxiety of Valluvar in establishing a society free from basic vices. Hence, according to Valluvar in the highest virtue lies in the realization of the Truth (Meyrunarthal). The life chariot must move towards the goal. The other virtues envisaged by him center around or move towards this highest goal. To achieve this goal peaceful coexistence is inevitable for which political setup becomes a pre-requisite.
3.9. VIRTUE IN KAMATUPPAL

*Kamatuppal* forms the concluding section of the *Tiruvalluvar* which deals with the ennobling aspects of human love. Human love forms past of *akam* or family life, the inner life of men and women. This approach is opposite to *puram* which deals with external life outside the house in the wide world. Man triumphs over the external dangers and the threats of nature for his survival. To increase the pleasure *and improve* the nature of human existence he engages in procreation and recreation. This joy, though temporary, man has developed an insatiable quest for this enjoyment.

"*Tiruvalluvar* is at his best in his poetic thought, form and diction, so much so, this is classes as one of the lyrical masterpieces of world literature on human love. His verses are considered as the 'choicest expression of human thought' on the noblest of passions of mankind. The subtle human emotions and the delicate feelings which love evokes in the human heart are portrayed with master strokes of elegance and charm, imaginative splendour and poetic grandeur which enthralls even a fastidious critic." (Kothandapani Pillai.K., 1971: 107).

In the *Arathuppal Valluvar* gives an outline picture of domestic life known as *illaraviyal*. The relation between husband and wife, family relationship especially with the elders, the significance of begetting offspring, the merriment caused by children etc., is stated outwardly. But the intimate relationship between the lover and the beloved is deeply elucidated in the *Kamatuppal*. This approach not only does involve biological relations, but includes psychological, moral and social factors.
Since love is a psychological feeling, its intensified stage is fulfilled in satisfying the biological urge. It is love that unites people and it has a moral significant value. Still some scholars with critical bent of mind declares that love between the male and female culminates in lust thereby leading to immoral deeds, violence, anarchy, baser mentality, social instability etc.

It has been shown by other scholars that inbam (pleasure) is not kamam (lust). Also pleasure is not the result of lust. Those who treat sex as anathema with a view to promoting ascetic ideals traduce the glory of the last section of the Tiruvalluvar. For sex according to them is vile and depraved, untidy and sin, a fetter and a drag on the human soul. Its main concern is flesh and not tender quality. Hence, the earnest endeavour of Valluvar to portray the grammar of human love has been wasted because of the unholy subject. This attitude is mainly due to the shift in norms, cultural values, human sentiments especially with reference to sex impulse and human love. G.U. Pope has made a total translation of the Tiruvalluvar. But scholars like Drew were reluctant to do so since 'it could not be translated into any European language without exposing the translator to infamy'. In the opinion of Pope "...this is only true in regard to certain of the commentaries upon it, which are simply detestable. I am persuaded that it is perfectly pure in its tendency and in the intention of its wise and high-souled composer. Its title is Kamatuppal - ' the division which treats of kama' and this means Lust or Love. Kaman is the Hindu Cupid. Hindu ideas differ from our own. This prejudice kept me from reading the third part of Kural some years, but the idea occurred to me very forcibly that he, who wrote,
Spotless be thou in mind! This only merits virtues name;
All else mere pomp and idle sound; no real worth can claim!

(Kural 34)

could not have covered himself with the spotted infamy of singing a song of lust. Thus, I ventured at length to read and study it, rejecting commentaries, when I was fairly to appreciate its spirit; and as the result, I translate it, believing that I small be regarded as having done good service in doing so" (Pope G.U., 1976: xxxii-xxxii, Tiruvalluvar TRANSLATION).

Indeed, it was G.U. Pope who had introduced and popularised the Kamaatuppai to the Western countries. People, then onwards began to think that in its suggestions, sentiments and tendencies Kamaatuppai is pure and in its expression, it is more pure, refined and decorous. "We are not sure whether the sex life, as depicted in this part, was only that actually existed at the time of Tiruvalluvar. It is however, obvious that it is not a mere figment of his imagination, as all the sex habits and behaviours set forth here are well corroborated by Sangam Literature and the traditions recorded in Tolkappiam. It is apparent that as a true poet, conscious of his mission, the author presents an ideal sex life, interpreting its significance and aim to his country men for their education and emulation". (Kothandapani Pillai K., 1971: 68). Hence, we may categorically assert that Valluvar does not vulgarise sex but sublimes it through his elucidations, illustrations, comparisons, etc.
Tamil culture and civilization has made life as two-fold in a scientific way as *akam* and *puram* based on the dynamic nature of human society. Thoughts, ideas and institutions undergo constant development whenever society grows. Revaluation and rearrangement take place in the light of the benefit which accrues to men sexually, morally and spiritually in *akam*, materially in *puram*. In this realignment of values the highest goal of life has been redesigned through the above activities as *aram*, *porul* and *inbam*. It is this *inbam* or pleasure that has been chosen by *Valluvar* as the underlying theme of *Kamatuppal*. Though happiness is a natural quality of human beings, it is to be sought by many ways. While doing so, many factors such as social, moral, cultural etc. are to be considered seriously. Otherwise there will be no difference between the pleasure pursued by the animals and the pleasure enjoyed by human beings. Hence, the Tamils have included *inbam* or joy as one of the virtues to be practiced carefully.

Among the multiple aspects of joy, which is instinctive as well as psychological in expression and experience, sex is one such? Though sex is a natural instinct it is to be satisfied under the coverage of love. In the absence of love sex is a crude animal passion not fit to be cultivated and not worthy of a human being. Hence, sexual pleasure is incorporated under the general term *inbam*, a goal of life besides *aram* and *porul*. Any civilized society will consider the regularization and realization of sexual life. If not, that society would be chaotic since the members would be worst than brutish beasts. In the grammar for perfect living sexual life also
forms a part since love arises between the members of equal age and mentality and they engage in sexual affairs. The Tamil word *anbu* is significant in the sense that it refers to one; not two i.e., in the love affair, the partners embrace each other so that they form an inseparable union which *Valluvar* calls as *Koodal*. In the intimate relation between the lovers arises are emotional developments, psychic disturbances and the transformation of the emotional and mental life of the lovers into one of love, known as *Kaadal*. At the ultimate analysis in union between the lover and the beloved, and the thrilling experience are equated to spiritual life where self-forgetful joy is experienced. Hence, *inbam* is not *kamam*. Though the latter gives *inbam*, it is more than *kamam* according to *Valluvar*.

The pleasure of lust is as great as the sea;
but the pain of lust is far greater

*(Kural 1166)*

As the husband of the lady-love has gone on business tour and prolonged his stay away from home, her agony of separation increases and in her increasing distress she makes the above soliloquy. Her joy in essence is abiding and boundless like a ocean, but her sexual cravings forces her to experience misery. The sex-impulse overpowers her joy and this is termed as *kaman*. We do not know why *Valluvar* did not explicitly mention about the cause of ocean-like joy. *Parlimelalagar*, the commentator simply interprets that *kamam* when enjoyed brings forth ocean-like joy while in separation of the male and female it causes affliction. However this
approach is to be reinterpreted in the sense that whenever separation haunts the couple, they get more and more refined and their souls unite in spiritual spheres without the craving for the flesh. In sexual union especially at the very spot of the supreme moment only spiritual growth commences. Thus the longing of the union with the beloved relates to the union if the souls. "In the solitude of her lonely chamber at the dark midnight hour, when all the sentient world were laid asleep (kural 1167, 1168), the souls of the couple meet in celestial embrace of silent communion, defying the barriers of time and space, and float in an ocean of divine bliss. Alas! Kamam, the sex impulse, attacks it and drowns the lady in an ocean of misery. What a lovely picture of the inner conflict between flesh and spirit of a love-laden soul, which, a master artist has painted in vivid colors". (Kothandapani Pillai, K., 10971: 118).

I have swam across the terrible floods of lust, but-have not seen its shore;
even at midnight I am alone; still I live

(Kural 1167)

The night which graciously bulls to sleep all living creatures,
has me alone for her compassion

(Kural 1168)

Could mine eyes travel like my thoughts to the abode (of my absent lord),
they would not swim in this flood of tears.

(Kural 1170)

According to these couplets, the heart of the lady love had been handed over to her beloved and their souls in union are now floating in the ocean of celestial bliss. The
violent sex impulse has been triumphed over the mild sober spiritual experience. However, again the sex feeling overpowers the latter and it attacked seriously and the secret union between the two leads to divine culture. In the opinion of Tiruvalluvar, inbam is above sensual pleasure, which is nothing but an experience of the soul. Valluvar's sex psychology has a profound wisdom.

A research is still going on to determine whether the last section of Tirukkural is Kamathuppal or Inbatuppal. Kamam is a Sanskrit term while inbam is a Tamil term. In the list of purusharthas we have dharma, artha, kaama and moksa and in the Tamil tradition we have aram, porul, inbam, thus both kamam and inbam occurring at the third stage. When Valluvar gives the title for the first two sections as arathuppal and porutppal, he should have called the last section as inbathuppal. For, he uses the word inbam frequently in several verses. Some commentators like V.O. Chidhambaram Pillai called it as inbathuppal. But Paramelazhagar, Mosikeeranar and other later commentators began to call it as kaamathuppal. The word kamam has also been used in thirty four places. The expression 'ஞாணாய மும்பையான்நீ சுமை' reveals the truth that kamam is the cause and inbam is the consequence or to put it in psychological terms kamam is the stimulus while inbam is the response. As the motivating factors for sexual joy are high and manifold, Valluvar has devoted twenty four chapters for kamam and the inbam is the resultant effect which is essentially one, Valluvar has explained its nature in just one chapter. Again the word kamam has been used by Tolkappiam and Tiruvalluvamadalai and Hence, it is presumed that it may be a Tamil term being adapted by Sanskrit language. If kamam is misused and
improperly adhered to, it becomes the one among the five-fold crime. But Valluvar's connotation of the term has gained a special significance. The Sanksrit word kamam used by Tolkappiar and Valluvar refers to Kalavu practised in doemestic life. Karpu is developed seriously in family life and the resultant of these two is, inbam. Hence, this type of kamam is totally different from the kamam used in common sense. As the word inbam has been used by Valluvar in a multifarious way in different contexts we are uncertain to determine its correct connotation. Hence, through the means of kamam inbam is attained.

The following are the reasons for accepting the nomenclature kamatuppal mentioned by Tiruvalluvar.

The word kamam has been used in many places

a) Kamam has been treated as the motive and inbam as the consequence

b) Inbam has been used in many ways

c) Inbam not only refers to kama inbam but other pleasures

d) Commentators use the word kamatuppal and justifies its usage

e) Inbam in the list of aram, porul, inbam does not refer only to kama inbam, but to the joy obtained through aram and porul.

For the above reasons the term kamam used by Tiruvalluvar is totally different from lust or sex exclusively. It is a scheme of understanding. (Dhandapani Desikar,S., 1957: 13-15).
Again, the word *kamam* is not merely a Sanksrit word. As we have lot of words with the Tamil and Sanskrit language with the same meaning, the word *kamam* too has the same usage in both the languages. To substantiate this view we can quote a verse from Tolkappiam (*Kural* 1138).

"After the perfection of Kamam or happiness is achieved, the hero and heroine, joined with their children, perfect in the path of safety and happiness and surrounded by the relatives who are actuated by dharma, practise, what is the best; and this is the result of all their past ". Now it is clear that the final goal of we dded life is not merely the perfection of the person concerned or the family for that matter, but of universal salvation. Once salvation is attained there is no need for craving after pleasures. Thus *Kaamattuppal* is a pure variety of akam following the best traditions of the Cankam age (Meenakshi Sundaram, T.P., 1971: 228-229.)

Social Anthropology and Sociology are seriously concerned about human existence by establishing various relations for fostering and promoting their cultural heritage of the society. Since human love is the primordial factor for establishing fine relations among blood relations, like-minded persons, groups and associations, it is patronized at various levels. But the sacred and secret love affair between the male and female is termed as sex relations. If sex relations are arranged through marriage, then marriage becomes an important social institution. Family ties are strengthened in marriages. This type of intimate bodily relation has been treated by Valluvar in a
sophisticated manner and he explains it in detail such as Kalavu, Karpu etc. Social Anthropology and Sociology prove that eight kinds of marriages that were prevalent in the Northern part of India. Manu has included them in his code of conduct which were not all special to aryans non aryan in their origin. Rabindranath Tagore says:

"Therefore Manu has to recognise, in his treatise, other different forms of marriage such as the Gandharva (by mutual choice), Rakshasa (by conquest), Paishacha (by taking advantage of helplessness). In none of these is the social will manifest, but only the desire of the individual; for force, whether of arms or money of circumstances, is arrogant and passion refuses to submit to extraneous considerations. But while recording these forms, Manu censured them. Manu gives the name of Gandharva to marriage by mutual choice, and signifies his disapprobation by stigmatizing it 'as born of desire'. The way to marriage which is shown by the torchlight of passion has not for its goal the welfare of society, but toe satisfaction of desire". ('The Indian Ideal of Marriage' contributed by Tagore to', 1950, The book of Marriage by Count H. Keyserling, p.105, 108)

The Tamil approach favours the Gandharva type of marriage. As the land was classified as five-fold, the love-life aspects were also five-fold. This based sometimes on the parents and sometimes without their consent. The splendid exposition of sex life, its origin, growth and transformation into an unifying force are well and adequately elucidated by Tolkappiar. "The investigation by the author (Tiruvalluvar) has been thorough neither lopsided nor inadequate. But his style has been too brief almost enigmatic. This is rather due to the age in which he lived, than to the author
himself. In those ancient times, when paper and printing were not invented, brevity was a premium and privilege of the writers. Author seems to have vice with one another, sedulously cultivation brevity as a mark of poetic excellence. Brevity was thus achieved almost to the point of fullest saturation as we see it from Tolkappiam, Tirukkural and Sangam classics. The author has displayed a profound knowledge of sex anthropology, sex psychology and sex sociology in these few lines. That he has long fore-stalled the conclusions of modern research are indeed surprising!" (Kothandapani Pillai, K., 1971: 154)

The Tamil people in those days had an excellent sense of beauty. They enjoyed the nature and described it with sweet words since it is part of their life. In the same way they considered the whole life with aesthetic sense of appreciation. As their intention was to regulate life with principles, norms, moral standards etc, it was but natural for them to resort to a life of enjoyment ultimately. Otherwise, they knew, life would be chaotic, confusing, confronting etc. To avoid such negative attitudes of life the Tamils endeavored to lead a positive way of life in all walks of life. Hence, even the sensuous pleasure which was considered as the emergence of baser mentality, has been translated as the prelude for spiritual joy. They called them by the terms as sirrinbam and perinbam. The general Indian trend was to enjoy toe permanent bliss namely moksha only after enjoying the comfortable family life. Hence, Valluvar followed the general trend prevailed during his time and wanted to show the regulatory principle in family life. For human love is the basis both for sexual life and apritudal upliftment. In the words of Radha Kamal Mukerji, “Life
enlarges and exalts all man’s senses and emotions and capacities its tenderness becomes universal altruism, its appreciation of beauty the glory of nature, its sanctity through worship of man and universe. The lamp of love, no doubt, illumines mankind’s most direct and straight paths to the temple of ideal values, kindes it natural capacities and devotions for unflagging adoration. Love stimulates many of man’s sum lime aesthetic apprehensions and profound mystical insights as it inspires his vas ardent labors for suffering humanity... It is neither speculation nor dream but the continual realization with varying success of the whole perfect and eternal – the Divine that is hidden and potential in itself... Life is a cult springing from the body and the desire of man, but it discovers in the figure of the beloved a symbol of beauty and goodness that has far greater vital ideality than what philosophy and religion offer”. (Kothandapani Pillai.K., 1977: 209)

He who does not know the beauties and greatness of worldly things, more can explain to him about the grandeur of worldly products. He who does not know abot the taste of objects it will be impossible for him to know about the taste of nectar. In the same way he who does not know what it pleasure, none can teach him, about the great joy or bliss. Among the people born as human in the world excluding the great ascetics who have attained a supreme status through their austerities, all the people engage in sensuous joy (Sririnbam). The main objective of the third section to Tirukkural is to elevate the people who are engrossed in lower pleasure to the highest joy. It will be a tough task to make a fellow who firmly believes that Sirrinbam is the ultimate goal of life, give up that life and switch over to the life which gives
overwhelming joy. But such a person will realize one day that he had not obtained satisfaction in that type of life and deficiencies still persist in it. After realizing the true nature of lower pleasure, he will naturally search for the supreme joy which is hidden. It is quite natural for a human being to search for and attain anything that is hidden. If we prevent one from the experience of something which is attractive, the cravings will multiply to enjoy such things like pouring thee in fire. Similarly instead of preventing the sensuous experience of people and thereby preventing the increase of lust etc, it would be better to allow them to enjoy sexual life in a proper manner so that its vulgar nature will vanish. Gradually people will realize that sexual life is not the goal of life and one has to aspire for the highest and ever abiding joy naturally after giving up all the defects of Sirrinbam. This attitude of people will pave the way for the elimination of sexual crimes and make the society progressive. Hence, marriage is more a social institution than a moral institution.

Those who develop distaste for sensuous pleasure will engage in meditation to obtain the highest joy since it cannot be obtained through beautiful body and its vigor. As this supreme joy is free from the defects of birth, disease and death, make one free from worries; the aspirants will get liberation due to their serious involvement in tapas and jnana. Even as preventing a person with thirst from drinking dirty water, showing him the mirage and leading him to a pond containing sweet water, preventing a person with intense sexual life towards intensified bliss is the job of Valluvar. Hence, the section on pleasure is known as Kalaviyal. This view can be further strengthened from the composition of divine saints who in their mellifluous
songs have equated God and the saint as the lover and the beloved. This view is called
*akathinai* and *akapporu* (the subjective meaning of life).

*Valluvar* has classified the sensuous life as *Kalavu* and *kapru* which was
followed by him according to the prevailing Tamil tradition. The first one viz.,
*Kalavu* is a kind of discipline wherein a male and female without disease and oldage,
but filled with similar qualities such as form, prosperity, clan, character, maturity,
love etc., meet due to *karma* and get themselves united with love. *Karpyal* means,
the loving couple get themselves married according to tradition and enjoy the wedded
life perfectly then retire from domestic life and after realizing its unstable nature they
deavor to attain emancipation. Hence, these two approaches to life are not the
fictitious or imaginary development of *Valluvar*. When the hero and the heroine meet
in a beautiful landscape with floral garlands filled with pleasing animals and birds
the hero was amazed to behold the beauty of the lady love as

Is this jewelled female a celestial, a choice

peahen, or a human being? My mind is perplexed.

*(Kural 1081)*

When the both of them recognise each other and when they want to indicate and
intimate about the love towards each other modesty prevents them from openly
declaring their love. The social obligation in those days was that if they reveal their
affection towards the other, then it will amount to indecent behaviour since they are
overpowered by lust. To avoid such extreme attitude the lovers symbolically express
their love through the movements of eyes and lips. This view has been nicely portrayed by Valluvar:

When I look she looks down; when I do not,
she looks and smiles gently

(Kural 1094)

She not only avoids a direct look at me,
but looks as if it were with a half-closed eye and smiles

(Kural 1095)

When the male lover looks at her graciously, she will look at the land and when he does not look at her she will see him boldly slightly smile at him. When both of them look at each other there is no scope for words and language.

The words of the mouths are of no use whatever,
when there is perfect agreement between the eyes (of lovers)

(Kural 1100)

After knowing her character, conduct aspirations etc. the male lover will praise her that all the sensuous pleasure produced by the five senses are attributed to womenfolk.

The (simultaneous) enjoyment of the five senses of sight, hearing, taste, smell and touch can only be found with bright bracelet (women).

(Kural 1101)
Then he says that she would be the best medicine to the love-disease. Again with bashfulness he addresses to arnica flower, a thick fly, moon, kavalai flower etc and describes her beauty and expresses his desire to be in her company for ever. Once again social etiquette prevents him to openly declare his love towards her. Another social custom is that the hero thinks that if he stays with her praising her beauty etc., her relatives and parents may abuse her and belittle their affection. Thus the lady-love may not tolerate this type of ill-treatment and he consoles her and leaves her by assuring that he will meet her again. Thus they meet frequently in the same spot.

When the friend of the hero notices the drastic change in him enquires the reasons for it. The hero without hiding anything narrates their meetings and that he always melts for her. When his friend dissuades him that such an love affair is not suitable for his reputation, the hero stands firmly in his love and describes her beauty to him. His friend goes to her place and becomes wonder-struck to see her beauty. Then he informs his friend and the hero now asks her name and village from her friend. Here also the social ethos is that he should not enquire about her name and residence directly. Hence, the hero knows the details about her lady-love from her friend. The friend of the lady love determines that they love each other deeply.

Both the lovers are capable of looking at each other in an ordinary way, as if they were perfect strangers.

(Kural 1099)
After determining the conjugal love between the lover and the beloved, the hero eagerly approaches the friend of his lover and declares that he would commit suicide if his love is not victorious.

To those who after enjoyment of sexual pleasure suffer (for want of more), there is no help so efficient as the palmyra horse

(Kural 1131)

Mine eyes will not close in sleep on your mistress’s account;
even at midnight will I think of mounting the palmyra horse

(Kural 1136)

Here the idea of 'madal' is significant in the sense that in case if the hero meets with failure in his love affair, he will openly announce it and go in a procession by embracing the horse made up of the leaves of palmyra tree which will cause injury in his body finally leading to death. Hence, the very idea of madal (procession in palmyra horse) will be distasteful to her parents and in turn they will dissuade the hero and come forward to give their daughter in marriage to him. This approach indicates an important social truth that the parents of his lover overwhelmingly decide that the beloved is the appropriate person to take care of their daughter since he is too much of affectionate towards her and he will be her companion throughout her life.
The friend of the lady love consoles him that she would fulfill his mission - love affair successfully.

Then she gradually opens the topic with her friend and convinces her that she should love him unconditionally since he would be the perfect match for her and also if they meet secretly and continue their love affairs it would bring bad reputation to her family and relatives. Hence, she persuades her to marry him to be known by one and all.

Still the hero prefers to meet her secretly. When the news is known to her parents she would be under watch continuously. Then the lady love would develop several body changes and defects. To the distressed mother the friend would explain about her daughter's love involvement. If the parents arrange for their marriage, it would be highly appreciable and an amicable settlement will come. Instead, if they oppose and stand as a stumbling block for their union, then both of them will run away from their respective homes, even if their relatives prevent them, they will marry and love in happy union. Their wedded life would be on moral grounds with feast to guests continuously. During such occasions the male member has to separate from his wife for the following six obvious reasons:

a) for educational purpose
b) for the sake of government
c) for acquiring wealth
d) for protecting the territory
e) for establishing peace
f) for the sake of prostitute

In this context the social obligations of the husband, as the head of the family are ascertained. As a scholar he may multiply his knowledge in foreign countries or to listen to the sufferings of immature fellows, blind ones, destitute, elders etc. And redress their grievances as a governmental emissary. Also in order to remove poverty, hunger and disease, the hero may leave his wife. At that stage, the wife will weep and worry for separation especially in the nights and evenings. (Sethupillai R. P., 1965: 103)

This malady budsforth in the morning,
expands all day long and blossoms in the evening

(Kural 1227)

She rejoices at the meeting of her husband in dreams. But she gradually looses her charms all over the body which could not be suppressed but seen like the sneeze.

I would conceal my lust, but alas,
it yields not to my will but breaks out like a sneeze.

(Kural 1253)

After the assignment is over, the husband returns back with full of overflowing love and affection and enjoys her company in full and plenty. In due course they pick up
love quarrels even for petty things especially when the male member resorts to enjoyment of prostitutes.

The delicate shoulders of prostitutes with excellent jewels are a hell into which are plunged the ignorant base

(Kural 919)

"To digest what has been eaten is more delightful than to eat more; Sexual pleasure, without prolonged and short lived dislike, is like to ripe and unripe fruit .

(Kural 1326)

Once the love quarrel is over their union becomes more vigorous since according to Valluvar,

Dislike adds delight to love; and a hearty embrace (thereafter) will add delight to dislike.

(Kural 1330)

Thus the husband and wife become father and mother and beget children and all prosperity. Gradually they realize the truth that the world is uncertain and impermanent and relinquish all worldly responsibilities and engage in the great path leading to the supreme bliss granted by the Lord Supreme. This type of Tamil domestic life culminates in spiritual upliftment and final redemption from all worldly burdens. Such a society will be triumphant in all ways!