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H. Em. CARDINAL
EUGENE TISSERANT

(A BRIEF SKETCH OF HIS LIFE)



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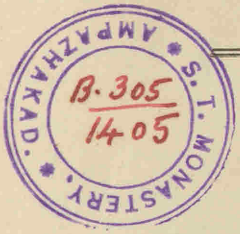
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CARDINAL
EUGENE TISSERANT

(A BRIEF SKETCH OF HIS LIFE)





By

Sahitya Thilakan
Very Rev. C. K. Mattom
K. H. S., M. R. A. S., F. R. S. A. (London),
Member, International Association of Poets, Editors & Novelists.

WITH
A
FOREWORD



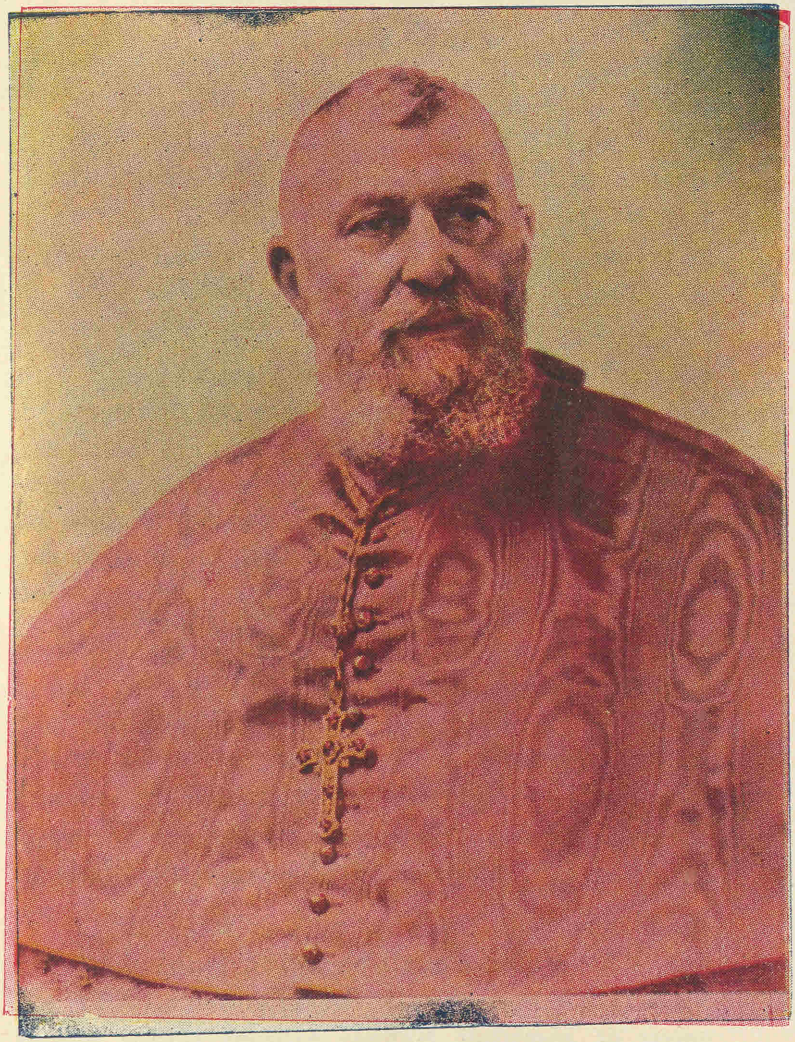
By

The Most Rev. Joseph Mar Severios B. A., D. D.,
Bishop of Tiruvalla.

1953.

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H. Em. EUGENE Card-TISSERANT.

FOREWORD.

I deem it a proud privilege to usher to the Public, particularly of Malankara, a life sketch of His Eminence Cardinal Tisserant, the Cardinal Secretary to the Sacred Oriental Congregation on the eve of his visit to the faithful of the Oriental Church in India.

This brochure evidently makes no claim to be anything more than a record of a few of the activities of His Eminence as a scholar. It would not have been possible even if attempted to sketch the full life of His Eminence in the few pages of this book.

"You cannot expect to understand what a living thing is except by seeing how it has come to be what it is and considering all the relevant data. That is just the trouble. There are too many data. Writing history consists principally in leaving out, and the shorter the history the more you leave out," remarks Professor A. D. Ritchie.

This book is true to the letter and spirit of the learned professor's observation. For the life of His Eminence is so rich in achievements that it would require several volumes to write a real biography.

It was only in 1937 that I joined the Catholic Church and in 1938 I assumed charge of this diocese of Tiruvalla. Since then I have been under the loving, and solicitous care of His Eminence. In 1950 I went to the Eternal City for the Holy Year and for my Ad Limina visit. During my stay in Rome I have had many an occasion to make personal acquaintance of His Eminence. It was with some nervousness that I first presented myself to His Eminence. His Eminence's abiding interest in all that is Oriental made me happier each time and more at home than ever before.

I do not intend to make any reference to His Eminence's learning. It is too vast and deep for me, even to make a passing allusion. His Eminence is the embodiment of the dispostions of the Holy See towards the Orientals, particularly so towards the reunited.

The holy See has made it clear time and again that the Church is Catholic and not specifically Latin or European. Several Popes from Gregory XIII downwards made tentative efforts to establish at Rome some sort of a congregation or permanent commission to deal with Oriental affairs. Eventually in 1862 Pius IX erected a congregation "for Eastern Rite business", as a department of

the Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of Faith. In 1917 Benedict XV set apart a new and independent Sacred Congregation for the Eastern Church—"The Sacred Eastern Congregation". Of this congregation the Prefect is always the reigning Pope in person, and its personnel consists of a Cardinal Secretary and sixteen other Cardinals, an Assessor, a Substitute and a body of expert Consultors. This Congregation is competent in all matters having relation to Eastern Rites whether it be personal, disciplinary or liturgical. The same Pope, in the same year created the Pontifical Institute for Oriental studies (The Oriental Institute). A practical identification of Catholicism solely with the Western Church, the false idea that Eastern Catholicism is essentially inferior or only half authentic article and that the more it is made to resemble the Latin Church, the more "really Catholic" it will be, has so often been, and is condemned at Rome. This hibridization is a grave stumbling block to reunion, the Holy See knows only too well.

At the International Eucharistic Congress held in 1893 in Jerusalem, the Eastern element predominated. It marks a new era in the history of the Catholic East. In 1894 Pope Leo XIII gave out the constitution "Orientalium dignitas"

which decreed among other things that all rites were on exactly the same footing religiously and canonically. It decreed also that any Latin Priest who induced an Oriental Christian to adopt the Latin rite should by that very act incur suspension from the exercise of his Sacerdotal functions. Any Eastern non-Catholic who becomes a Catholic is strongly encouraged to adhere to the rite which he has hitherto followed though it seems he is not bouud to; without a rescript from the Holy See no Catholic can change his Rite from Oriental to Latin or vice versa.

His Eminence is more Oriental than an Oriental. While we discussed certain customs prevelant among the non-Catholics, he wanted me to insist the priests of the Syro-Malankara rite to grow their beards.

When the Sacred Oriental Congregation adopted some decisions concerning the matters of the Syro-Malankara liturgy, first of all the Sacred Congregation recalled some general principles which embody dispostions repeatedly issued by the Holy See. These are as follows:-

1. It is not permitted to innovate or do anything which tends to diminish the integral and exact observance of one's legitimate rite.

2. An exception to this fundamental principle is made when in some text or rite is expressed an error about faith or morals.

3. It is allowed to introduce new devotions on these conditions:-

a) that in one's own legitimate rite there is no equivalent devotion, not even under different form (which should be developed and intensified);

b) that in adopting the new devotion or devout exercises, it should be adapted to the style of the rite;

c) that it be done prudently, taking into account the historical autochton and aesthetic aspects, without confusing what is essential in divine worship with what is an expression of it, reflecting particular circumstances of time, place and mentality.

In communicating these decisions to us, the retired Apostolic Internuncio, the Most Rev. Dr. Leo P. Kierkels says: It is evident from all this that the Holy See earnestly desires to encourage the progress of the flourishing Syro-Malankara community and is anxious that the rich liturgical partimony of this rite be preserved, and that no outside element be

introduced which is liable to spoil the genuine and original beauty of it. Thus it is hoped also that the separated brethern may feel more encouraged to join in the true fold."

Very Rev. Fr. C. K. Mattom, K. H. S. has masterfully touched the salient points in the life of His Eminence Cardinal Tisserant. He writes in simple, clear language for the understanding of the average reader. This brief sketch will convince any reader how great a man has been entrusted with the Government of the faithful of the Oriental rites. Let this biograghical outline of a great scholar by a versatile author help the readers to have a clear understanding of that Eminent Prince of the Holy Church whose duty it is to preserve and maintain the venerable rites of the Oriental Churches and to work for the return of the dissident churches of the East—*ut omnes unum sint*—that all may be one.

I have much pleasure to bless the learned author and his book.

L. F. Mount,
Tiruvalla,
25—9—'53.

✠ **Joseph Mar Severios,**
Bishop of Tiruvalla.

A Word of Thanks.

I am indebted to the Rev. Fr. Hambye S. J., and Rev. Sister M. Luella O. P. in drawing the outline of my work.

My gratitude to His Excellency the Most Rev. Joseph Mar Severios, Bishop of Tiruvalla is beyond the power of my pen to find adequate words to express.

Tiruvalla,
3rd Oct. 1953.

The Author.

HIS EMINENCE
EUGENE CARDINAL TISSERANT.

In view of the forthcoming visit of His Eminence Cardinal Tisserant to India, a short sketch of his life will be of great interest to the Public.

It was in 1950 in Rome that I was formally introduced to His Eminence by the Rt. Rev. Mgr. Sebastian Vayalil soon after he was consecrated a Bishop by the Cardinal. As we sat and talked at lunch after the ceremony, His Eminence impressed me as a scholar and as a man of extraordinary erudition.

I had already heard a good deal about him in 1932 when I accompanied the late Mar Ivanios to Rome as his secretary. Therefore I considered it a great privilege and a rare honour to have had the opportunity for a personal contact with His Eminence.

Eugene was born on the 24th of March 1884 at the ancient and historic city of Nancy in France, the seat of a university on the borders of the River Meurths, with a population of

114,500. Nancy was the capital of the duchy of Lorraine till 1765.

The ancestors of Eugene both from the father's and mother's side are illustrious. His father and his grand-father were very successful surgeons. One of his grand uncles, was a holy priest and two of his grand-aunts were pious nuns. Another grand uncle, who was also his god-father had become famous by his scholarly writings and learning. He was a professor of the National Vetenary college at Lyons. His name is Hyppolitus, as his father's.

Lady Octavie Connard, the fortunate mother of Eugene was born at Geroneville in Meuse. Her father was a land owner of repute and high standing. The hapy couple, Hyppolitus and Octavie lived an exemplary Catholic life in the sight of God and the Church. The lady was however of feeble health. But they had one poignant sorrow. They lived for fifteen long years in wed-lock without any issue. They resorted to the practice of fasts and prayers. At long last God was pleased to grant them twin daughters, followed by another. Then came the most illustrious of all the six children of the couple-Eugene, followed by two sons. One of the sisters became a nun in the Congregation of the Christian Doctrine at Nancy and slept in

the Lord in 1939 while Superior of the Orphanage at Charmes-sur-moselle. One of the brothers, Charles, two years junior, joined the Congregation of the Holy Ghost. Since 1911 he is a missionary working in the French Equatorial Africa — not at all an attractive job. Proficient in several languages, like his brother the Cardinal, Fr. Charles has published a grammar and a dictionary, the first ones in the difficult Banda language. He is a botanist too.

The above short description of Eugene's family is an index of his extraordinary future career and genius.

Not much is known of Eugene's boyhood; yet it is said that he began reading at the early age of three like Sree Sankaracharya the greatest Philosopher of India. At 7 he joined the nursery and teaching school conducted by the Sisters of Christian Doctrine—an Order of nuns founded by a canon of Toul in 1718. Under the solicitous care of the Sisters the young boy showed evidences of extraordinary intelligence and astuteness in studies. For, at seven he started to learn Latin and German. At eight he completed his Primary course and joined the diocesan day-school of Saint Leopold for his high school studies. Between his tenth and eleventh year he absorbed the historical studies of Adolph Thiers and similar authors. When

he was only 12 years old he was admitted to the college of St. Sigisbert, who was king of Austrasia and later the heavenly patron of Nancy. After four years of study there, he was graduated in Mathematics and Philosophy with distinction. During the last two years of his college career he also took lessons in the school of science at the University of Nancy.

In 1894 his father inherited the library of 2000 volumes from his uncle and god-father. The new library included French classics published by the Societe des Bibliotheque Elzevirienne and Bibliopphile Jacob. These volumes aided greatly in developing young Eugene's love of books from the very beginning.

Soon after obtaining his Baccalaureate, he entered the Major Seminary of Nancy. He was only 16 years old at the time. As a seminarist he spent his vacation-days along with another, to supervise a "subscription library" as an additional charge. This collection of several hundred books was circulated by mail to the diocesan priests and was known as "Gorini Library". Besides, he was assigned to teach physics to the students of the first year of philosophy.

But the subject that attracted the young seminarian most, was the study of the Bible,

chiefly the Old Testament. He spent the summer holidays working on books dealing with the Assyrian language and the ancient history of the peoples of the Orient. He must have been mindful of the following words in the Encyclical "*Providentissimus Deus*" of Pope Leo XIII dated November 18, 1893.

"Teachers of the Sacred Scripture are not to be appointed at haphazard out of the crowd but they must be men whose character and fitness are proved by their love of and their long familiarity with the Bible and by suitable learning and study."

In October 1904 Eugene was admitted to the Biblical school of St. Stephen conducted by the Dominican Fathers at Jerusalem to undergo the special and expert course in Holy Scripture. Utilising even the siesta (noon rest) moments he made an intensive study of the collection in the excellent and specilised library of that institution. It was also there at Jerusalem that he acquired a special interest in the Holy Land and a great love for the Eastern Rites. But the young seminarist was not allowed to prosecute his cherished studies for more than a year, because he was compelled by the French law to return to his native land and join the army for a year of regular military service. After an year's

service at Toul the Bishop of Nancy sent him to the Catholic Institute in Paris, where he graduated himself in Hebrew, Syriac, Arabic, Ethiopian and Assyrian languages. He also specialised in Greek Paleography (study of ancient scripts), and Archeology, as well as in Semitic Epigraphy (interpretation of inscriptions) in the colleges at Louvre and Sorbonne.

On the 4th of August 1907, the longlooked for day of his career dawned and he was ordained priest by His Excellency Bishop Turinaz at the early age of 23 in his native place at Nancy. It was indeed a happy day for Rev. Fr. Eugene, for he had become a "priest for ever according to the Order of Melchisdech." Subsequently he was appointed by Pope Pius X of blessed memory as a Professor in the Appolinaris University in Rome and as a Curator of the Oriental manuscipts in the Vatican Library. Pere Lagrange, O. P., the head of the Biblical school in Jerusalem had made in March 1907 a strong recommendation to His Holiness to confer these double posts on Rev. Fr. Eugene. To take charge of both the posts assigned to him, Fr. Tisserant arrived in Rome on the 30th October 1908. The young professor thus found himself in very congenial surroundings His knowledge of, and interest in the Oriental languages found full play in

the invaluable books and manuscripts found in the Vatican Library, the largest in the world for rare manuscripts. In the course of the first six years of his life as a professor and librarian he edited six large volumes and wrote twenty erudite essays relating to the old Patriarchs and the Eastern Fathers. These books exhibit a wonderful combination of style and scholarship.

In 1910 Father Tisserant agreed to compile for the Gottingische Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften a combined list of Oriental translations of the Old Testament made from the Greek text of the Septuagint. These translations were found in several Italian libraries, among which the Ambrosian Library in Milan, where Monsignor Ratti (later Pius XI) was Prefect. Monsignor Ratti welcomed Father Tisserant with great cordiality and made accessible the translations which he had come to examine. Until 1914 Father Tisserant worked on the manuscripts in the Ambrosian, stopping for a day's work at Milan between two nights on the train.

As leisure permitted he also gave himself to the study of Arabic manuscripts and their catalogues in the Bibliotheque Nationale of Paris as well.

In 1910 and again in 1912 he visited the British museum while compiling his Specimina

Codicum Orientalium. He was not however satisfied with the knowledge he acquired by reading the books on Oriental subjects. He wished also to see again the places referred to in the Bible and the most recent excavations of places of archeological importance. Hence he once again started for the Holy Land. In those days travel in Palestine could be made only on a camel or a horse, though conditions have improved now as I have personally experienced during my own pilgrimage very recently.

Father Tisserant therefore first went to Bagdad on horse-back. There he visited part of Transjordan. At home, he was engaged in studying the Armenian and Russian languages. But again he had to discontinue his studies; for the World War of 1914 forced the French Government to demand the services of all her adult citizens. In the same year he had been appointed a member of the Biblical Commission. Father Tisserant joined the Army first as a corporal in the infantry. He was wounded in September 1914. As soon as he was healed, he was called to the Ministry of War at the General Staff section in Paris. In 1917 he was appointed as Assistant Adjutant and Quartermaster General of the French Expeditionary Forces in Syria and Palestine. Here his knowledge of the topography and languages

of the Near East made his services invaluable. He won the Croix de Guerre and became Chevalier de la Legion d'honneur. These war years did not completely interrupt his scholarly pursuits. He was able to practise speaking Russian during a sojourn in Paris. When he went to Beirut he examined a Syrian text containing fragments of the Book of Jubilees, and while in Jerusalem he deciphered a few pages of a palimpsest of the Book of Job at the Patriarchal Library.

In 1919 he was allowed by the French Government to return to Rome to resume his duties. He became in December of the same year an Assistant to the Prefect of the Vatican Library—Mgr. Mercati—who in the preceding year had succeeded Mgr. Achilles Ratti—late Pope Pius XI. Father Tisserant had his first contact with Msgr. Ratti in Milan in 1910, as we have already seen. Later, as Chief of the Vatican Library, Msgr. Ratti had sufficient occasions to appreciate the ability and the scholarship of Father Tisserant—an appreciation that paved the way for further rises on the ladder of his career.

Among Fr. Tisserant's duties as Assistant to Msgr. Mercati were the supervision of the personnel and the direction of the laboratory

for the restoration of manuscripts, where the Coptic manuscripts of the Pierpont Morgan Library were to be treated. He also participated in the negotiations which resulted in the acquisition by the Vatican of several important collections; the Rossiana Library, the Rospigliosi archives and library, and a collection of Latin Bibles of P. Vercellone. It was under his direction that, in January 1923, the Chigi library, a gift of the Italian Government, was transferred from the Chigi Palace to the Vatican. In the same year Monsignor Tisserant (in 1921 he had been appointed a Papal Chamberlain) visited the Balkans to purchase manuscripts and printed books. His itinerary included Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, Turkey, Syria the Lebanon, Palastine, Egypt and Greece. Through his effort was acquired an important collection of printed books and manuscripts which belonged to the great logothete of Phanar, Stavrakis Aristarchi.

Fr. Tisserant made use of this unique opportunity to get in contact with all classes of people both Catholic as well as non-Catholic of the various Oriental rites. He called on many Orthodox Prelates, monks and laymen. He returned to Rome with a deep knowledge of the Eastern Rites and above all an inward sympathy for all the dissident churches.

After three years, he visited Greece and spent his days very profitably at Athens. In 1926 he was appointed Consulter of the Sacred Oriental Congregation.

The elevation to the Papacy, in 1922, of the former Prefect of the Vatican Library, Monsignor Ratti, justified hopes for its additional expansion. Within the same year, H. H. Pope Pius XI turned the private chambers of the Borgia apartments of the Vatican Palace over to the Library. The acquisition of three important collections in the early years of his Pontificate (the Rossiana, comprising more than nine thousand items; the Chigiana, with more than thirty-three thousand items; and the Ferraioli collection of more than forty thousand items) made the problem of storage acute.

These and other acquisitions added to the gigantic problem of storage which the Vatican Library admistrators had long been facing. Limited ground space made horizontal expansion by additional building impossible, and since the skyline of the historic buildings had not been modified for three centuries, vertical expansion was not considered. The vicissitudes of its various quarters in the Vatican form an interesting chapter in the history of the Library.

In 1926 Pius XI sent Msgr. Tisserant to the Congress of Archeologists at Beirut.

Towards the end of 1927 a happy coincidence permitted the extension of the Library into adjacent quarters, which for more than a century had been used as horse stables and living-quarters for grooms. Pius XI now decided to introduce motor transportation throughout the Vatican. The horses were sold and the stables converted into a stackroom three tiers in height; later increased to six tiers, when the mosaic factory located above the stables was moved.

The felicitous combination of circumstances which led the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace to collaborate with the Vatican in the modernization of the Library for the benefit of scholars of all races, nationalities, and creeds is well known. That New World innovations met with such ready acceptance in an Old World library is attributable in no small measure to the clarity of vision and organising power of Monsignor Tisserant whom Dr. William Warner Bishop of the Carnegie Endowment has characterized as "a thoroughly modern man".

Invited by the Carnegie Endowment, Monsignor Tisserant accompanied Mr. Bishop to the United States. During his two and a half months' stay there, he visited forty-two Municipal, University, and special Libraries. His article "Notes et impressions sur les bibliotheques

d'Amerique" concisely expresses his observations on the libraries he visited in the United States and Canada. The thoughtfully planned effort to acquaint Monsignor Tisserant with American practices, equipment, and ideals was a practical step in the modernization of the Vatican Library. Taking into account the increase in readers and books, he formulated a programme which would insure its developement for the next fifty years and, upon his return to Rome in Midsummer, he presented it to H. H. Pius XI. Within the last several years, most of the recommendations in this long-range programme have been implemented.

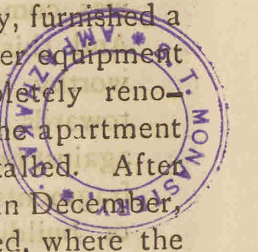
After consultation with the American library administrators, Monsignor Tisserant successfully encouraged Pius XI to purchase steel catalogue cabinets and stacks for the renovated stables. Five European firms (Italian, French and Dutch) as well as Snead and Company, New Jersey, submitted plans and tenders. Those of Mr. Angus Snead Macdonald were preferred by Monsignor Tisserent, but Monsignor Mercati was at first attracted to the plans of the Forges de Strasbourg. Pius XI decided in favour of the Snead equipment, and American stacks, never before imported for a European library, were ordered. Monsignor Tisserant supervised the erection of the three-tier, 260-foot stack, which

was begun on August 24, 1927, and the construction of the new entrance to the library from the Court of the Belvedere. Pius XI formally opened the new wing on December 20, 1927, the first day of his jubilee year, and on the following day made Monsignor Tisserant a *Domestic Prelate,* so pleased was the Pontiff with the achievement.

The next important rise in the ladder of his career was his appointment as the Pro-Prefect of the Vatican Library which took place in 1930. Some months before this, he had been made a Consultor of the historical section of the Congregation of Rites. Monsignor Tisserant took over completely the direction of the general index of manuscripts and established the rules to be followed. He worked for several years on the revision of the cards. His successor and present Prefect, the Most Reverend Abbot Anselmo Albareda, m. b., printed a code of rules under the title Norme per l'indice alfabetico dei manoscritti (rules regarding the Alphabetic Index of Manuscripts). This code was an expansion and revision, in the light of experience, of the rules which Monsignor Tisserant had compiled for the direction of his collaborators during a period of ten years.

With full administrative responsibility delgated to him by Pius XI, the Pro-Prefect made

many improvements in the library quarters: in 1931 he constructed the three additional tiers of stacks in the vacated mosaic factory, furnished a new printing room; and added further equipment and the Prefect's Office was completely renovated, and a stairway connecting the apartment with the manuscript stacks was installed. After the collapse of the Sistine Gallery in December, 1931, a new storey was constructed, where the catalogue department for printed books found suitable quarters. Five years later Monsignor Tisserant provided an office for the librarian, new quarters and equipment for photographic services, and a new repair shop for the manuscripts.



In 1931 he was sent by the Holy See to Leyden to take part in the 18th International Congress of the Orientalists.

As a member of the International Library Committee, he was invited to Chicago in 1933 to deliver an address at the annual conference of the American Library Association. On this occasion he visited Rosary College and spoke to the faculty and students.

The Cardinal closed his address with the following words which show his wide out-look in life, and the fostering of the brotherhood of man through the preservation of cultural unity.

"Therefore, our task as librarians is similar to that of the priestesses of Vesta, to whom was committed the care of the sacred fire. And this is the reason why nothing is unworthy in our life if we consider our duty towards humanity; the protection of books against beetles, repairing ragged parchment fragments, the erection of new bookstacks or building new reading rooms, as well as cataloguing or labelling—all are noble, if we feel that we are helping humanity in its trend towards that spiritual unity which would be the result of unity of culture. What the preservation of Records of scholarship means to Changing Civilizations", *Bulletin of the American Library Association, XXVII (1933), 572.*

In 1934 and 1935, he visited Madrid, and in 1936 he went to Warsaw as a member of the Library Association Committee. In the meantime be published several articles on Eastern Christian writers in the "Dictionaire de Theologie Catholique", among which was a long one on the Nestorian Church.

In 1935 he visited Spain, spending a few days in the capital studying the conditions of that country. Having been made a *Protonotary Apostolic* he was chosen by the Pope as an Assistant to Cardinal Verdier, Papal Legate to Dakar,

Africa in January 1936. In June of the same year he was sent to attend the International Congress of Librarians held at Warsaw. Soon after his return from Poland, His Holiness Pope Pius XI created him Cardinal Deacon of SS. Vitus, Modestus and Crescentius. In the meanwhile, he wrote two learned essays which merited for him the Doctorate.

In the meantime God called Cardinal Sincero, the Secretary of the Sacred Congregation for the Oriental Church, to his eternal reward, thus leaving that honoured place vacant. When Mgr. Tisserant was still in voyage, the former Prefect of the Vatican Library, then reigning as Pope Pius XI, decided to appoint him Secretary to the Sacred Congregation for the Oriental Church. This Sacred Congregation is one of the three Congregations that has the Holy Father himself as Prefect. On the 25th of July 1937 Cardinal Tisserant was consecrated Bishop by Cardinal Pacelli, now gloriously reigning as Pope Pius XII. Thus Cardinal Tisserant became closely connected with the three Piuses, Pius X, who, we hope, will soon be canonised, Pius XI, *who is perhaps the greatest Pope after the Reformation*, and Pius XII, the present Sovereign Pontiff.

On December 13, 1937 His Eminence was given the rank of Cardinal Priest. In 1939,

he presided at the first Eucharistic Congress of the Near East held at Beirut. He gave there an address in Arabic, which aroused some stir in the linguistic circles in the East. The Arabs were marvelled at his learning and diction.

His Beatitude the Greek Orthodox Patriarch congratulated him in person and when His Eminence returned his visit to the Orthodox Patriarch they embraced each other in sportmanship fashion — a fact which was appreciated by all.

In the Consistory of 1946 His Holiness raised him as Cardinal Bishop of Porto and St. Rufina and was given charge of that suburbicarian diocese.

The Pastoral letters he sent to his flock under his charge are of such general interest that they are published in book-form and have merited the encomium of scholars.

In 1947, at the Princeton University Bicentennial Conference on Scholarship and Research in the Arts, he delivered an address on "*The Vatican and Byzantine Studies*". In the company of President Truman and thirty four other distinguished recipients, Princeton conferred on the Cardinal an honorary degree with the following citation:—

"Eugene Cardinal Tisserant, Secretary of the Sacred Oriental Congregation of Rome — Distinguished scholar and eminent churchman, interpreter of early Christian documents expert in the liturgical arts of the Eastern Rites, *world authority on Oriental languages*, master of manuscripts, knowing full well the ancient needs of scholars and the modern means for their greater satisfaction, he has helped to make the Biblioteca Appostolica Vaticana the most cooperative of all institutions of learning and by his ever-friendly response has earned the gratitude of scholars in many lands".

During this period he visited also the Catholics of the various Eastern Rites in the U. S. A. and in Canada. He is more Oriental than the Orientals themselves in keeping the purity of the original rites. For, His Eminence told them repeatedly the famous dictum of Pope Benedict XV, "IF ANY HARM HAS BEEN DONE TO THOSE RITES, IT IS NOT TO THE HOLY SEE THAT IT CAN BE ASCRIBED."

During his third sojourn in the United States, the Cardinal visited several libraries in the Chicago area. Mr. Carl H. Milam, then executive

secretary of the American Library Association, arranged a reception for him in the new headquarters of the association. Participating in the programme commemorative of the twentyfifth year of Rosary College in River Forest, the Cardinal gave an address entitled "*The Value of the Humanities in the Education of Women.*" At the Mundelein College conference of the Catholic Library Association (Illinois unit) he discussed "The Work of Catholic Librarians and the Development of an International Outlook"

In 1949 Cardinal Tisserant was sent as Papal Legate to the National French Eucharistic Congress held in his own native city of Nancy. In the following year he once more went to the East.

The Egyptian Government actually invited him to Cairo for the anniversary celebration of the University Fuad and the Royal Egyptian Geographical Society. It was the first time that a prince of the Catholic Church was asked to be the guest of a Moslem Government. He was treated with honour by King Farouk and by the Sheiks of the Al Azhar University, the intellectual centre of Islam.

On the 13th of January 1951, at the demise of Cardinal Marchetti-Selvaggiani, Cardinal

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Tisserant became the dean of the Sacred College. He was then only 67 years old.

In March 1952 he went to Belgium to look after the Oriental refugees gathered there. In the summer he presided over the 25th anniversary of the "Work for Reunion" called the "Apostolate of Reunion" at Utrecht in Holland.

He is also the president of the Pontifical Commission for Biblical studies; Member of the Sacred Consistorial Congregation, Congregations of Sacraments, Rites, Propagation of the Faith, of Seminaries and Universities, and Protector of several religious congregations of both men and women.

As a Knight of the Holy Sepulchre, the writer of these lines is happy to record the fact that the missions of Palestine which include the Holy Sepulchre are under the jurisdiction of the Sacred Oriental Congregation and that Cardinal Tisserant as its Secretary is by right one of the *12 Knights of the Collar of the Holy Sepulchre.*

In spite of the great and extraordinary learning and position of the Cardinal, His Eminence is as simple as a child. "Great men never feel great." His affability and gentle manners will attract all those who come in contact with him.

"Your gentleness shall force
More than your face moves us to gentleness"

Shakespeare.

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His genius is as keen as it is profound. It reveals itself in all his actions. He is a man of great spirituality and perfect devotion to his duties—A Cardinal of varied accomplishments indeed! There is nothing in the field of Biblical science and Eastern culture that does not interest his frank and marvellous mind.

He is wonderfully gifted in acquiring and imparting knowledge. His writings are voluminous and numerous. Here are the names of a few of them.

1. A French translation of the Ethiopian text of the Ascension of Isaias. (Ascension d'Isaie).
2. A calendar of Abu-Barakat referring to Oriental patrology.
3. A Codex Zuquinensis rescriptus Veteris Testamenti.
4. A collection of facsimiles of Oriental Manuscripts.
5. Many articles in the "Revue Biblique" and in the "Revue de L'Orient Chretien"
6. A catalogue of the American Mss. of the Vatican Library.
7. An Inventory of the Arabic Mss of the Borgia Coll, ibid.

8. An article of 150 columns on the Nestorian Church in the "Dictionaire de Theologie Catholique".

9. In the same dictionary, there is an extensive article of more than 120 columns on the Syro Malabar Church, history, customs and liturgy. This was published in 1944.

10. An historical study entitled "Luigi Maria Grignion de Montfort, le scuole di carita e le origini dei Fratelli di San Gabriele Note sur la preparation de l'edition en fiesimile typographique du Codex Vaticanus.

11. A collection of speeches called L'Eglise militante.

12. A specimina Codicum Orientalium.

Cardinal Tisserent is 5 feet 6½ inches in height. He has an oval face with piercing eyes and a pleasing complexion. His lovely golden beard with a few silver lines interspersed bespeaks age and maturity, showing him as an out and out Orientalist.

"Here is a man whose name is called Eastern"
Prophet Zacharias.

He is sturdy and strong in build, a mixture of German determination and French suavity.

He has a figure and a personality that will be reckoned with, in any crowd of churchmen or Statesmen. His generosity and kindheartedness is well known.

A brilliant scholar, an eminent historian, a magnificent linguist, a benign Cardinal using his natural gifts and personal charm for the service of God and the spread of the faith in the East in particular, His Eminence takes a deep and personal interest in all that pertains to the Oriental Churches long separated from the unity of the Common Father the Pope as well as to those reunited or to those that remained loyal from the very beginning.

His vast knowledge, enormous energy and great charity are outstanding gifts in dealing with the delicate problems of the Eastern Churches. His successful services in the Vatican Library for well nigh twenty eight years have made him one of the world's greatest Oriental scholars.

Cardinal Tisserant is a zealous prelate always ready to help others. As a Bishop he does not spare time, money and labour to assist his flock. He is a rare combination of the highest scholarship and intense activity. He has even built a new and decent cathedral at his own expense for the diocese.

The proposed visit of such an outstanding person is looked upon with the greatest enthusiasm and interest by Mother India and in particular by Malabar. Excepting perhaps our own Indian Cardinal, there is no other Member of the Sacred College so familiar to Kerala as His Eminence Cardinal Tisserant. There is scarcely any Catholic house or institution in Malabar that has not taken pride in keeping a portrait of His Eminence in an honoured place. Such is the love and veneration Malabar feels towards His Eminence whom she considers as her own Cardinal.

We were sorry, last year, when we learned that our Cardinal was after all not coming to us as the Papal Legate to preside over the centenary celebrations. Now, however, we are happier in the fact that His Eminence is intending to make a long stay with us. It is hoped that the Cardinal's visit will be made use of by the various institutions in Malabar to have His Eminence lay several foundations and to inaugurate many solemn functions among which the court of enquiry into the process of canonisation of our pious Sister Alphonsa.

Now we know that His Eminence will actually set foot on the Malankara soil hallowed by the holy foot-steps of our "Father in Christ"

—Mar Thoma— on the forenoon of the 10th November.

It is presumed that he will be the proud bearer of the Sacred Remains of our Apostle— which were alas!! removed from us 16 centuries ago.

The bringing back of the relic by the greatest friend of the "East from the West", who knows, will not in the mysterious ways of Providence, fathom the deep gulf that separated the St. Thomas' Christians into two opposite camps, exactly three centuries back.

His Eminence Cardinal Gilroy came to commemorate the 19th Centenary of the planting of the Tree of the Malabar Church.

May the advent of His Eminence Cardinal Tisserant be the healing balm that will cure the wound in the Apostolic Tree, caused in 1653— by the *Coonan Cross* of Mattancherry.

May the visit of His Eminence be the harbinger of a wider and more prosperous reign of Christ in India.

"Welcome! A Hearty Welcome!! to Kerala"



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