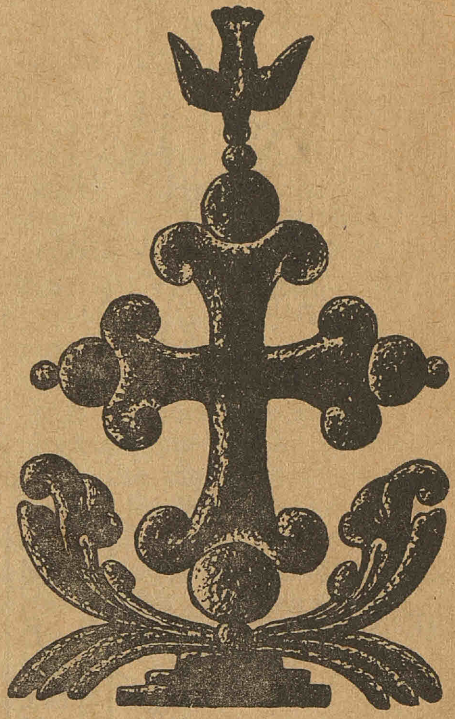

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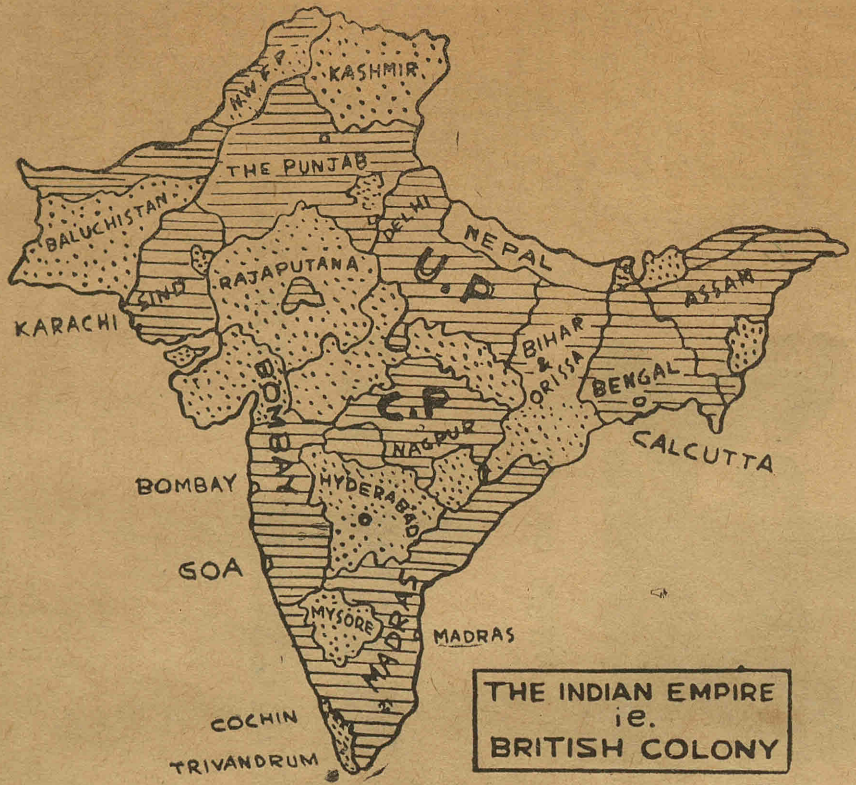
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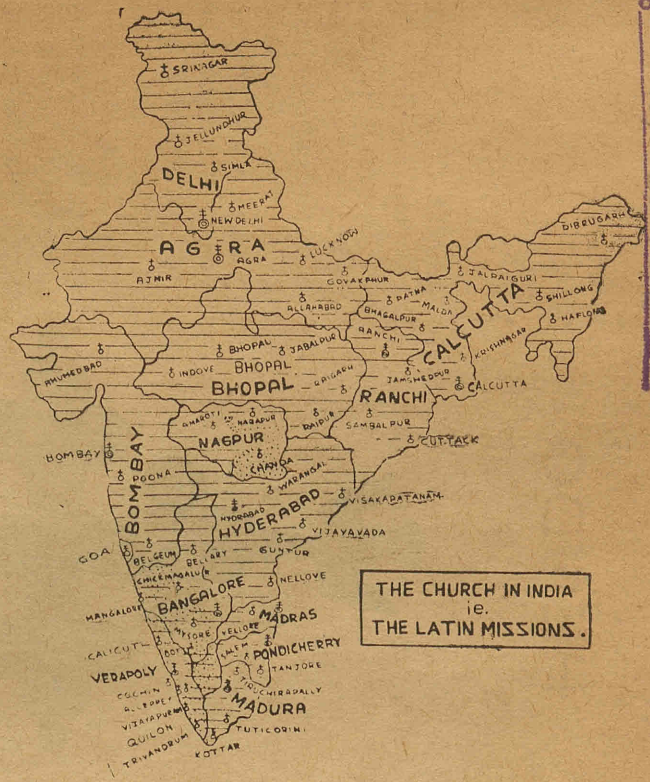
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THE CHURCH OF INDIA

THE SEE OF ST. THOMAS (VACANT) & THE OFFICE OF THE ARCHDEACON (VACANT)
METRANS FOR THE DIOCESES.

"HENDO"

THE CHURCH OF INDIA

India has a glorious past and she is justly proud of it. After centuries of political rivalries and enslavement she has emerged a Sovereign Republic in our day, and her upward course as a young nation, on thoroughly democratic lines, is an achievement of modern times. Had it not been for the existence of a strong and stable national government her nation – building plans could not have been realized, and there would not have been such an impact upon the other resurgent nations of the world. Similar is the case of the Church of India now generally called the Syro–Malabar Church. Having passed through changing vicissitudes for centuries, she has at long last been blessed with the restoration, at least partial, of her Hierachy (1923), Canon (1948–57), and Liturgy (1957). But this restoration has not been quite a success; it seems to be a shadow devoid of reality. And this sad failure has to be attributed to the lack of a central goverment of our Church as such. At present we have no hierarchical head, but only hierarchs for the diocesan units. The restoration in short was ill-directed and the chaos it created still continues. Bereft of an hierarchical head and a leader of the type of the Archdeacon of by-gone days, our Church still stumbles in the dark.

The Church of India had been well-known throughout the centuries, even to the farthest ends of Christendom. Pilgrims and merchants and chroniclers from East and West frequenting India had much to say about the Church they found here. The gist of all their reports and statements is that the Apostle Thomas one of the Twelve, is the founder of this Church, and that the Christians here enjoyed a very influential position. This is confirmed by local history handed down from generation to generation for the last nineteen hundred years, both among the Christian and non-Christian people of Malabar and the Coromandal coasts. At one time its historicity was questioned by some European writers. But our scholars such as Frs. Nidhiry, Bernard, and Dr. Thomas were equal to the occasion, and among our foreign sympathisers we could count such eminent men as Vincent Smith, Hosten, Farquahar, Shurhammer, Heras, Beltrami and Tisserant. "The tradition that St. Thomas the Apostle preached and died in India, is as old and deep-rooted as any of the early Christian traditions accepted by historians... An impartial study of it will convince one that it stands on the same plane as many of the generally accepted historical facts about ancient India" says Dr. P. J. Thomas of the University of Madras. And the Supreme Pontiffs Paul V, Leo XIII, Pius XI, and Pius XII by their pronouncements have borne witness to the truth of our Apostolic tradition. That India had ecclesiastical affiliation and juridical ties with Persia and Soleucia, is but recent history. But in spite of all that, she has maintained her position as the Church of India with canons, customs, traditions and characteristics of her own.

The dawn of the sixteenth century witnessed the European nations spreading all over the world as adventurers, colonisers and conquerors. It was for the sake of the Portuguese people in India that the jurisdiction of the See of Funchal was extended to India. Then the see of Goa was established (1534) and later made an archbishopric (1557). By this time the Portuguese were the most formidable power in the East, and with all the might of an empire, and the influence of the missioners, the Church of India began to be harassed, persecuted and finally subjugated to the rule of missionary prelates at the Synod of Diamper 1599. It was a herculean task for our Church to hold out against aggressive might. After three centuries of subjugation and ill-treatment and all kinds of wrongs sustained we regained freedom, but with a great loss, devoid of a head and leader, law and liturgy. Without a hierarchical head, prelates were placed over our Church (1887, 1896), and their jurisdiction was circumscribed to a very limited area, not even to breathing space, whereas our Church had comprised the whole of India under the Metropolitan of Malankara and All India, and had been managed by the Archdeacon, his legal executive. We had definitely and repeatedly asked for one and only one hierarch and that we should not be divided under many prelates. But just the opposite was the result: our Church was bifurcated, the then Apostolic Delegation being responsible for that unhappy event. Our clergy continued to be trained in Latin seminaries, and we could not hope for good, patriotic and well-informed administrators. And when the hierarchy was restored in 1923, the Metropolitan, shorn of all faculties, was just one among his equals; and at present there are two Archbishops, no one being in a position to guide the Church. In short, the restoration has not been on proper lines. We have of course, our own seminaries and our own bishops now; but because we have not an hierarchical head for our Church, it is in a very bad predicament, and impotent too, exhibiting all the weaknesses of a divided nation.

Along with the restoration a new title has been attributed to our Church, the Syro-Malabar Church, a name quite improper and ridiculous and offensive to our national honour. That naming was only the thin edge of the wedge by which we were cut off from the rest of India, and with which we were to be tied down to the confinement that was already forced upon us. India has been partitioned up into so many Latin prelacies, and such titles as the "Hierarchy of India", the "Catholic Church of India" are usurped and applied to these Latin missions while we the Church of India are considered a non-entity, or at best an exception. This reminds us of the days of the British rule in India when the whole subcontinent was divided under the British Governors and the native princes were allowed to remain their vassals. This arrangement was styled the "Indian Empire"- neither empire nor Indian,- but colonial and British. That procedure has been copied in every detail in the present ecclesiastical colonialism in India. A comparison between the political conditions prevailing then and the ecclesiastical situations obtaining now, will be interesting. The British were the rulers of India, the native princes with no real power,

being the puppets in the hands of their over–lords. Similarly the Latin missions in India have juridical possession of the whole country, the Oriental dioceses being engulfed by them and a mere existence being "benevolently" granted to them! Even the British paramountcy respected the individuality of the native states along with their rights. Now here in Independent India the Church of India is being grudgingly viewed, indeed bullied, by a foreign imposter, the exotic Church of the West.

Both during Portuguese colonialism, and later under the direct missionary activitiy of the Propaganda de Fide, not a stone was left unturned to liquidate the Church of India – and the result, its present unfreedom here in our own motherland, and the monopoly here of the Church of Rome. Most intolerant indeed! And on account of them the fundamental freedom guaranteed by the Constitution of the Republic of India, has been violated!! We are denied our rights.

Art. 26. "Every religious denomination or any section thereof shall have the right a) to establish and maintain institutions for religious and charitable purposes."

To have religious and charitable institutions for our own people in so many places throughout India is a crying need. But we regret to say, we are forbidden to exercise this right.

Art. 29. "Any section of citizens in the territory of India or any part thereof having a distinct language, script or culture of its own. shall have the right to conserve the same."

We have a distinct language to preserve: the mother–tongue of Jesus Our Lord, preserved for nineteen hundred years, and possessed as a most precious and enviable relic; we have a tradition to follow and a culture to keep up: the "Arsha Samskar" – Hindu culture – elevated by the Gospel Revelation. But we are denied that right.

Art. 30. "All minorities whether based on religion or language, shall have the right to establish and administer educational institutions of their choice.

"All persons are equally entitled to freedom of conscience and the right freely to profess, practice and propagate religion."

Both as minority religion and as a cultural unit, we have to establish and administer our own institutions. But we are barred from exercising these rights on account of the ecclesiastical set up of the Latin Church in India, and its existence here has became a hindrance for the cause of Christ in India. To propagate our religion – to announce the Gospel, to look after our own people living outside our dioceses, even to practice religion in our own way – we have no chance whatever; the very right for existence is being questioned. The people of India, and much more, the Government of India, cannot connive at this insolence of foreigners and foreign culture. These provisions of the Constitution could be defended before a court of law. These very rights of fundamental nature are denied to us Indian citizens on account of the intolerance and through the influence of

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those who are alien to this land either by birth or breeding, but all the while make a show of missionary zeal.

Precisely it is these people who clamour for adaptation, and this adaptation-mania is proof that what is brought and imposed upon, is something foreign. To what should the Church adapt herself? Is she a foreigner to do so? It is not unusual to hear Christianity being called the European edition of the Gospel revelation or religion. In fact. short of the supernatural revelation and the divine positive set up, each Church may well be called a national religion but in Catholic usage it is the national or local Church. Hence in that perspective the Church of Rome is a European religion, and the Church of India an Indian religion. Thus, when there is already here the religion of the land – the Church of India being Hinduism perfected by the Gospel Revelation – there is no need for importing and imposing a European religion equally perfected by the Gospel revelation. In short the religion propagated so far by the western missionaries is something foreign, and that is the weak point of western Christianity here. The part played by European Christianity in India has been "**a cultural aggression.**" (K. M. Panickar). That has to be resisted and rejected. The colonial days are over, and with the exit of the Europeans from India the western missionaries too have forfeited their claims here. The maximum that could be conceded to them is a benevolent permission to look after the Europeans and Eurasians left behind in India. Colonial expansion both political and ecclesiastical had its beginning from Goa, and with the fall of Goa, the western Church too has to make room for the real claimant – the Church of India, the so called Syro-Malabar Church.

The truly Christian-minded missionaries will only be too pleased to serve the Church of India, because their motive is love and service, not backing up colonials. The best course for them to adopt would be to integrate themselves with the Church they wish to serve. In western Asia the Oriental Churches eg, the Melchite Church of Antioch, are served in this way by the Latin missionaries from Europe. "We have no ill-will towards foreigners, we welcome all, provided they are willing to serve and not to exploit" said our late Prime Minister in the first days of our Independence. Those very words are applicable to the missioners as well. It is a very sad sight that the many missionary agencies are still exploiting the Church of India, and in all truth they are impeding the cause of Christ, the growth of the Church, in India. They are striving every nerve to impose the western Church on India. What the Latin missionaries try to adapt here in India, is superficial and contemptible even in the eyes of non-Christians. Churches and pictures, customs and garments of the obselete pagan style may satisfy missionary demands, and may please zealous Christians in the west, but seem abominably poor taste in the eyes of cultured Hindus. Caricature of Hindu models will signify nothing at all, it will only render the Church less respectable. On the other hand the Church of India (Syro-Malabar Church) commands the respect of the highest castes and

groups in India. They know why we are different from them, and how they are similar to us. For the Gospel truths and truly Christian principles the Hindus have the highest veneration, and many of them have been impreceptibly adopted by them. It is the missionary pretensions and aggressiveness that they look down and call by the name of churchianity; that is the religion they speak of as European. Christ's command to His Apostles was not to import anything from outside, but to renew the face of the earth by complementing all the existing religions by the supernatural revelation. He had communicated to them. The gift of God, of the Church, to the world, is the Good News that God has become man to re-make the world, that He has redeemed men and washed them in His blood.

India's association with Christianity is as old as the Gospel Revelation itself. The Good News was announced here by the Apostle Thomas coming direct from his Master, and with the baptism of our fore-fathers, the Church of India was born, and has continued to be here to this day. It is a Church that sprouted in this soil and as an Apostolic Church as old and as new and as Catholic and of the place as any of the original Churches of Christendom we are one with the non-Christian masses here, and that is our strong point. Jainism, Budhism and Sikhism are religions native to India, yet other than Hinduism. But the Church of India is often regarded as a form of Hinduism with the Gospel principles, even as Saivism and Vaishnavism (two forms of Hindu cult) are varied among themselves. The St Thomas Christians, Nasranees as they are called, are cent-percent Hindus in their customs and ways of life. The ceremonies in connection with childbirth, marriage, funeral, festivals etc. are the same for Nasranees and Nampudirees. [The child has the hereditary name, ceremonial feeding, jewellery, clothing, house - planning and architecture, items of food, cleanliness, education, modesty of women, wedding symbol "Thali", wife serving food to her husband, eldest son's role at death and funeral of the pater-familias, "sradham", "pula"..., Church parapharnalia, Church assembly... etc. etc]

Even in the north of India the Christian has come to be respected only after our coming to the scene, because of our origin and social status and the high consideration due to caste superiority. The advanced state of this part of the country, Kerala, has to be attributed to the influence of the Church of India. Pagan customs have become meaningless and the majority of the people might be called unbaptized Christians. Christian principles are highly appreciated that elements in the national and social life here, are more christian than those that exist in the so called Christian nations; justice of the social system, and toleration are assured to all. St. Thoms Christians can be proud of their contribution at all levels to the motherland. Even the first patriot to visualize India as a nation and to proclaim her rights and claims, was a churchman from among us (+) That tradition is still continued. We had our share in the freedom - struggle, and after Inde-

(+) Thomas Paremakal (1736 — 99) Governor of the Church from 1786 to 1799.

pendence, we did shoulder the responsibility in the Government and the services, and continue to do so. Such illustrious names as C. J. Varkey, A. J John, R. V. Thomas, T. M. Varghese, John Mathai, P. J. Thomas, C. P. Mathen, P. T. Chacko..... will always be remembered.

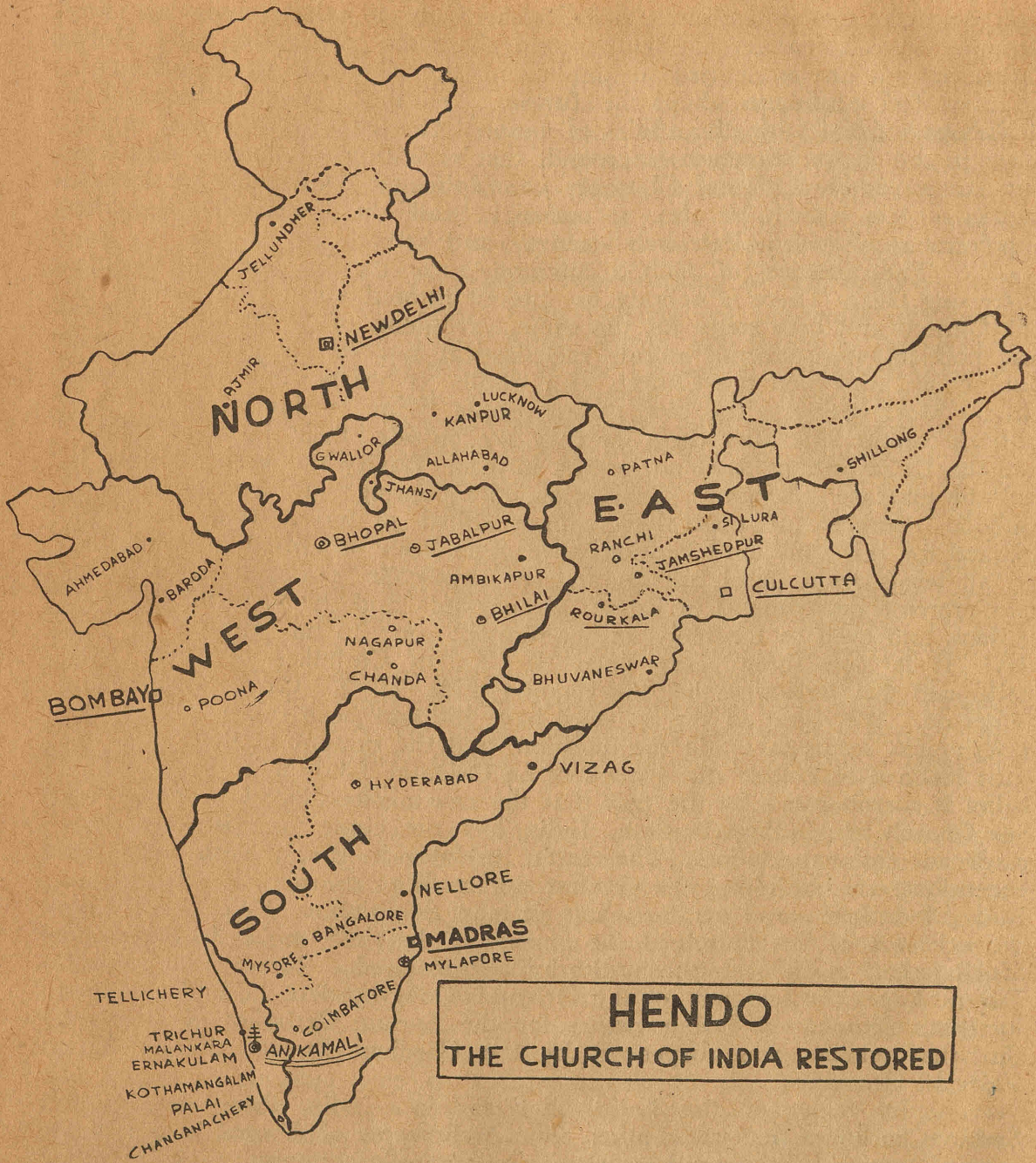
Our Church is well-rooted, flourishing and blessed with vast missionary potential and zeal Our missionaries are working in almost all the dioceses of India, and our Church has supplied the greater part of the man-power for the missions in India. As statistics speak for themselves, there are more or less, one thousand priests, two thousand clerics, and four thousand sisters from our community, now working in the missions, with diocesan or religious membership. Some dioceses are predominantly served by our people viz. Nellore, Vizag, Patna, Ajmir; 200 sisters in Ajmir itself. The Bishop of Oottacamond belongs to our Church If "priestly vocations are a precise and certain index of the vitality of the faith and love of individual, parochial and diocesan communities and the testimony of the moral health of christian families" (Pope Paul VI) the Church of India (Syro-Malabar) has a good testimony of herself. To take the case of the religious societies, we are represented in almost all of them: Carmelite, Capuchin, Jesuit, Salesian, S. V. D., Redemptorist, T. O. R., ... etc. These are Congregations of the Latin Church, but why cannot they have Syrian provinces when so many members are of the Syrian rite? Why cannot some of the dioceses served predominently by our people, be made Syrian? The missionaries are of the Church of India, the people converted and to be converted are the citizens of India, and the Church of India has been existing here for full nineteen centuries. Then why the Latin Church is thrust upon us here? We supply missionaries and we are barred from mission fields. This anomaly cannot find justification. "Plenty of labourers but no field to work in !!!"

To arrest the course of such a thriving Church, to put obstacles in her path by the Latins, to work against the growth of this particular Church, is not for the glory of God nor for the salvation of souls. Is it mission work to impede the spread of the Gospel? The Roman ie. European Church still dominates India to the detriment of the Church of India, and to the general suspicion of the people and Government about the Church herself. There were forced conversions. Not only non-Christians, but Christians themselves were converted! A Church existing here for fifteen centuries demolished and replaced by a European Church !! The arguments for that step is understandable to the people of India. Proselytising people and establishing a Church were all steps in the process of a colonialism that may be called ecclesiastical. To make of the Catholic Church a society of one culture is to relinquish her true place in the world at large. That is the tragedy over which the Church of Rome has to weep, and accuse herself. The Catholic Church is reduced to the Roman Church and the Western world, and identified with the Latin culture. There are and there should be many Churches that

together make up the Church of Christ. Only in that case can the Catholic Church reassert her truly world-character. Now that the Holy Father himself has apologised in public, in the Council, all non-Roman Churches feel confident about the future. And the National Conferences of Bishops to deal with the affairs of national Churches has been a major move in the right direction to avoid the repetition of former mistakes But as regards the Oriental Churches such episcopal conferences are meaningless unless there be also a national head, the Patriarch. For the appointment of such a Patriarch we pray and beseech.

The absence of such a common authority for our Church is a distressing fact. There is nobody to interest himself about the welfare of our Church and take steps for the same. Problems of varied types– social and political, spiritual and moral, ecclesiastical and missionary– are vexing our people, and even the Church as a whole. It has became an orphaned child. Most vexing is the case of our people living outside Kerala. Our bishops cannot look after them for they are outside their juridical sphere, and the Latin Bishops have no interest in them. Laxity and even apostasy is on the increase. Religious instruction, frequenting of the sacraments, catholic contacts, all these they cannot afford to have. Who is to be blamed for this situation? Petitions have often been submitted to authorities at all levels from local bishops to the Apostolic representative, to the two supreme departments in Rome, Propaganda and the Oriental Congregations, and even to the Holy Father himself; but to no purpose to this day! It is now three years since the Syrian Catholics of New Delhi petitioned the Prefect of the Propaganda Fide H. E. Card. Agagianian in person. We regret to say, no steps have hitherto been taken. H E. the Internuncio seems to evade the question, and the rumour is that he is the least inclined to favour the growth of an Oriental Church in India. This belief is corroborated by the fact that the new mission diocese proposed for our Church in Madhya Pradesh, India, has not come to exist even after a decade of expectation. The Latin prelates in India with very few exceptions, are exhibiting the greatest antagonism towards the Church of India, and their stand on the whole is most deplorable. "We don't want the extension of the Church at the expense of the rite" spoke Bp. Raymond of Allahabad in 1953, at the auditorium, Propaganda, Rome. When Card. Tisserant was the secretary of the Oriental Congregation, he had arranged for the assignment of Syrian priests for the Syrian Catholics of Bombay. But that scheme was torpedoed by the Cardinal Prelate of that city, Valerian Gracias.

In Some of the Latin dioceses in India there are more Syrian Chatholics than the Latins. The Archdiocese of Bhopal is a typical example, with its thousand-strong Syrian Catholic community against the five-hundred-strong Latin community. Non-Catholic Syrians are even more. The same is the case of Raipur Prefecture Apostolic with the Malayalee-city of Bhilai. Raurkela, Jamshedpur, Ranchi and other industrial centres present the same picture. Bombay calls our special attention with its thirty



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THE CHURCH OF INDIA RESTORED

NOT YET

thousand Syrian Catholics and even a greater number of non-Catholic Syrians. The same is the picture in New Delhi, the nation's metropolis. Add to these the military stations and university centres. Most urgent is the call from these places. Have we no responsibility towards them? "For efficient pastoral care the bishop must be present to his people" these words Card. Leger of Montreal were echoed during this session of the Vatican Council. But when there are not even priests to look after, and even the possibility for it is ruled out, how can we talk of pastoral care? Why could not Syrian Bishops be appointed in places where there are considerable number of that community? The City of Madras is a special case: Mylapore possesses the tomb of our Father the Apostle Thomas and the other shrines connected with his name. When the Padroado was abolished the See of Mylapore could have been and ought have been entrusted to us. Besides, the great number of Syrian Catholics in Madras would also justify the appointment of a Syrian Prelate there. Our appeals, we are constrained to say, most often fell on deaf ears! Once again we present our grievances.

Thus far we have been speaking of ourselves the St. Thomas Christians. But if we take into consideration those Catholics who are the outcome of the labours of our missionaries, many Latin dioceses eg. Vizag, Nellore, Patna..., even Cochin and Verapoly of earlier times will have to be handed over to us. Many dioceses hardly deserve to have existence eg. Vijayapuram, Calicut, Ootacamand, Agra, Meerut, Bhopal, Raipur,... and many others. Now and then new dioceses are being established eg. Jamshedpur, Dumka, Chikmaglur, while for our Church, deserving cases are conveniently forgotten or set aside. If it were for the Latins or even for the other Oriental communities any number of prelacies would have come into existence by now. In Brazil and the Argentine there are Exarchs for the Eastern Catholics (150,000); thirty thousand Ruthenians of Oceania have their Exarch; in Germany 20,000 Orientals have one; Austria, France and England have Exarchs for the few thousand Orientals that live there. In the U. S and Canada there are formed Hierarchies for the Orientals. We do not prolong the citation of statistics. In the Western countries even in the predominantly Protestant England, there are military Ordinariates. An Ordinary for the Universities is under consideration. In the light of all these, the immediate step to be taken in our case, for our "Diaspora," is to appoint Hierarchs or Ordinaries in any form or under whatever titles, for these "sheep without shepherd."

All the seventy odd prelacies in India together have only six million Catholics. Of that number two and a half millions are in Kerala, Syrians and Latins in the proportion 2 to 1. Next place is for the State of Madras with a million Catholics and a quarter. Goa and Bombay are two other places of considerable Catholic population while the tribal areas of Ranchi and Assam are flourishing missions. Apart from these Christian "spots" the vast expanse of India is quite a desert as far as Christianity is concerned, and missionary work does not seem quite promising. Conversions

are entirely from the lower classes–even that has slowed down–and that is often attributed to material help, and hence the hostile attitude from all quarters. When there is such urgent need in this part of the world what is the course of action adopted by the so-called missionaries from the west? "Harass the Orientals and blockade their Church"! That seems to be their watchword. Even in the changed circumstances, the Latin missionaries, priests and prelates, are unwilling to recognise the rights of the Church of India, but are persistently obstinate to create troubles. Even so distinguished a person as the Cardinal Archbishop of Bombay has had his unfortunate utterances against us. Nor can the Apostolic Delegation of former days and the Internuntiature, its successor, divest itself of the loaded conscience of having wronged us. It has to shoulder the responsibility for having silenced us on many occasions when we had to speak out in defence of our rights. They seem to be scared by the night–mare of double jurisdiction. But the actual situation in Kerala with double, tripple or even quadruple jurisdiction is proof against that unfounded apprehension. Indeed there have been scandals, but they were among the Latins themselves. Even if there is such a fear, is it sufficient reason to strangle a Church? In many parts of the world Catholics of various rites live together without creating the so called "problems". In the Uuited States of America for instance, of the twenty six ecclesiastical provinces, twenty one have various Oriental groups of Catholics and as many juridical units within their limits, and in none of these are they subject to the Latin Ordinaries. They have their own prelates. The Armenians, Ukranians, Maronites, Syrians, Chaldeans, Melchites – all are quite free through out the world, each with its own Hierarchy, liturgy and canon. Here in India our non-Catholic kinsmen the Jacobites and Marthomites maintain churches and institutions of all kinds whereever they happen to be. They have their own missionary bishops to go about and look after their settlements. In the cities of Madras, Bombay, Delhi and Calcutta and even outside India in Singapore, Malaya, East Africa... they have their churches, associations and establishments. The Jacobite Patriarch visiting India last May, laid the foundation for still another church in New-Delhi. We Catholics alone are forbidden to move about in our own land and practise our religion, not to say of propagating it, while all other sections of the citizens enjoy that right. Is this a punishment for our profession and practice of the Catholic faith or virtual coercion to change the rite? This is indeed an outright denial of our rights, any way.

The territorial division of dioceses is most harmful as regards India is concerned. That might be suited to Europe. But here castes and communities are counted upon more than territorial limits. Hence it is a necessity in India not to have territorial jurisdiction for the Ordinaries, but personal jurisdiction over the respective communities. The Head of the Church, a Patriarch, to be appointed, alone should have territorial jurisdiction, and that over the whole teritory of India. After the French evacuation from Algeria, also from Tunisia, in north Africa, what was the policy adopted by the Holy See? Ninety five of the hundred Catholic churches

were handed over to the State, many of them to be used as mosques! Here in India we do not make any such demands, to hand over to us all the Latin Churches, not even those that have been forcibly wrested from us years ago. We wait to see if the bare necessities for our existence will be conceded to us: the appointment of a hierarchical head of Patriarchal status for our Church, and prelacies in the different parts of India as necessity demands.

We have been chiefly remembered as the children of the Apostle Thomas, "who have kept up the Faith even in the most trying circumstances" (Pope Pius XII). We may have to face even harder situations. But for us the paternal solicitude of the Holy See and the good will and brotherliness of Christian communities the world over, will suffice. Our prayer is to have the See of St. Thomas restored to its prestine position with All-India status and jurisdiction, and our Church declared as the Church of India, and all disabilities removed. Such an arrangement for self government- regional autonomy or home-rule as it might be called- will relieve Rome of many headaches, and also will put an end to the many abuses prevailing on account of vested interests that shuttle between. We are enthusiastically watching how much interest the Holy See and the Second Vatican Council take in the Oriental Churches, how old mistakes are being corrected and remedied, and with what confidence even the Schismatic and Heretical Churches look towards Rome. The suppression of rival Latin Patriarchates in the East, and the unreserved and open discussion with all the separated groups, have been tangible proof for the same. Compared with the other Oriental Churches we are a sizeable group. Only the Ukranians exceed us in numerical strength. "Numerically the Catholics of the Syro-Malabar Church form the Second largest community among the Oriental Churches and it can be said to be the most flourishing Oriental Church of our times" (Card. Coussa). Still we are treated as if a non-entity! See how the diminutive bodies of the other Churches are treated ! The appointment of a Patriarch alone can ensure the well-being of Our Church and calm down our anxieties.

The modern Pontiffs have been stressing the need for timely missionary enterprises. Even the approach to the separated brethren, is radically changed. The pastoral charge of the Episcopate is brought out in a most illuminating way and emphasized. The heart of the Apostolate is the love of God. But what love of God can exist in the hearts of those who can understand only the language of aggression and exploitation and not that of charity and brotherhood. Even men of good will cannot see or enjoy the beauty of that masterpiece of God, the Church, because of the smoke-screen thrown about it by those inside it, and especially by those at the helm. Can we blame the non-Catholics for their separate existence? Were not the missionaries of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries entirely responsible for the painful historical events in the Church of India? Are missionaries of today any better, at least in India? Why are the Oriental Catholics in Kerala not allowed to take up

missions? Are they unwilling or incapable? Why large numbers of them seek admission and embrace the missions and religious Orders of the Latin Church? If a commission were to be set up to enquire into the state of eccelesiastical affairs and appraise the missions and missionary work in India today, we may get so many reasons for the present sorry state of affairs. One of these would certainly be the neglect to utilize the man-power of the Church of India. Another would be the unnecessary wastage of resources, energy and money, from unhealthy competition caused by jealousy and inferiority complex. The Bishops are supposed to have responsibility over the whole Church. But what a curious situation we see here when the bishops themselves make obstructions against all lawful attempts to get down priests for the shepherdless sheep.

In view of the deep roots the Church has taken in this soil over the centuries, nay in view of its evolution congenial to the spirit and tradition of the land and nation, this Apostolic Church of India thriving and fruitful in so many ways, and in actual need of leadership and pastoral care in the various forms, cries aloud for recognition. Such a Church to be wronged and tied up is injurious to the Church, insulting to the nation, and is reprehended by all men of right sense. This appeal of ours to the Fathers of the General Council, we are confident, would be heeded. We are satisfied, we have not missed this chance of a General Council. The Intrusion of the Western Church is really doing harm, both to the Church and to the nation. It is both unwanted, and unwelcome. The Church of India if nursed and attended to, may become instrumental in God's hands to write a new and glorious chapter in the history of the Catholic Church.

A memorandum has already been submitted to the Holy Father Pope Paul VI gloriously reigning, in which we had briefly outlined our grievances and requested His Holiness to redress them. We are happy to learn that the Holy Father has gone through it and realised the due needs of our Church, the Church of Hendo. We hope that the Fathers of the Council will consider our appeal with paternal kindness and solicitude and bless our Church.

The Secretary,

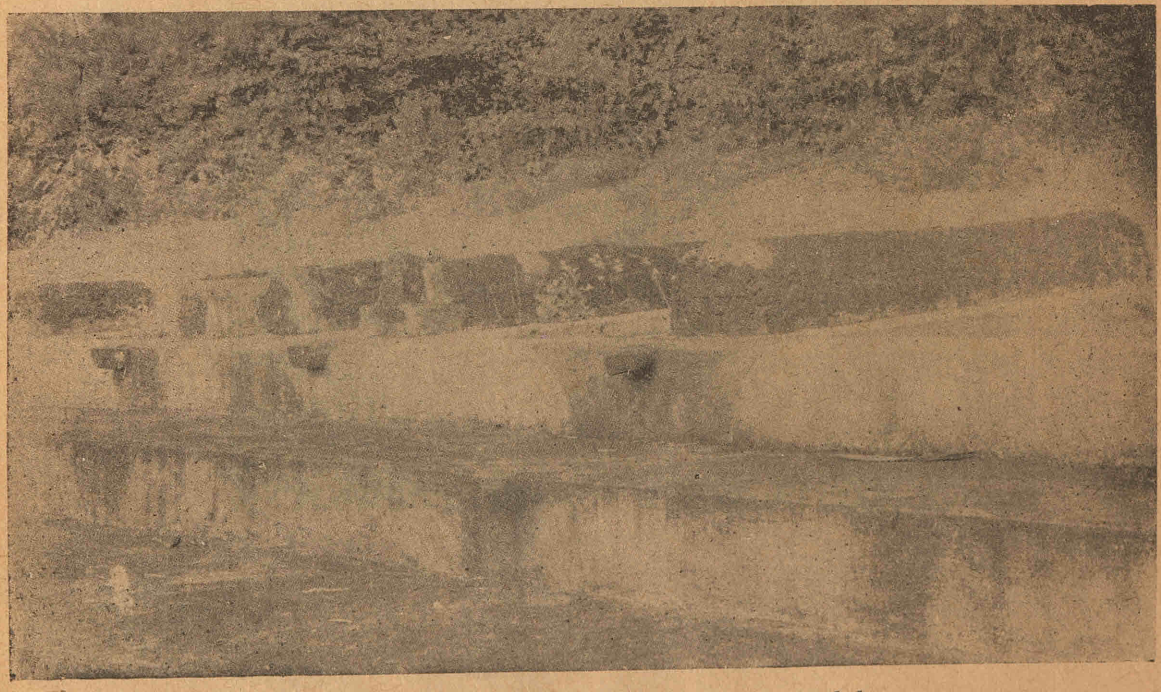
for NAVAJEEVA PARISHAD, an organisation
for the restoration and revival of the (Syrian) Church of India.

Ernakulam-1, INDIA.
18th Oct. 1964,
Mission Sunday.

41054

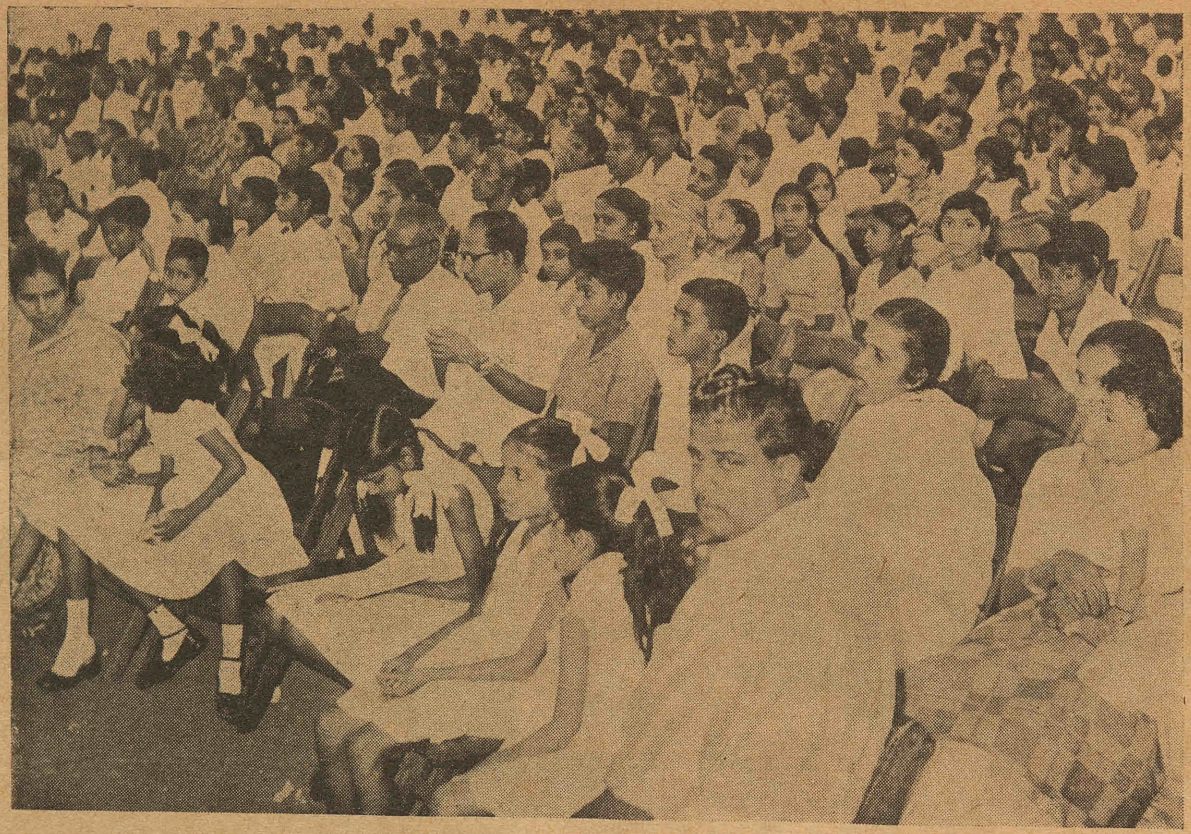


GOVARNADORACHAN, the Great 18th century Leader.



PAKALOMATTAM, the Dynastic Family of the Archdeacons.

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Nasranees (Syrian Catholics) in Bombay

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