# THE
# Carmelite Congregation
## OF
# MALABAR

## 1831—1931

K 90.2
C 21

TRICHINOPOLY:
ST. JOSEPH'S INDUSTRIAL SCHOOL PRESS
1932

K90

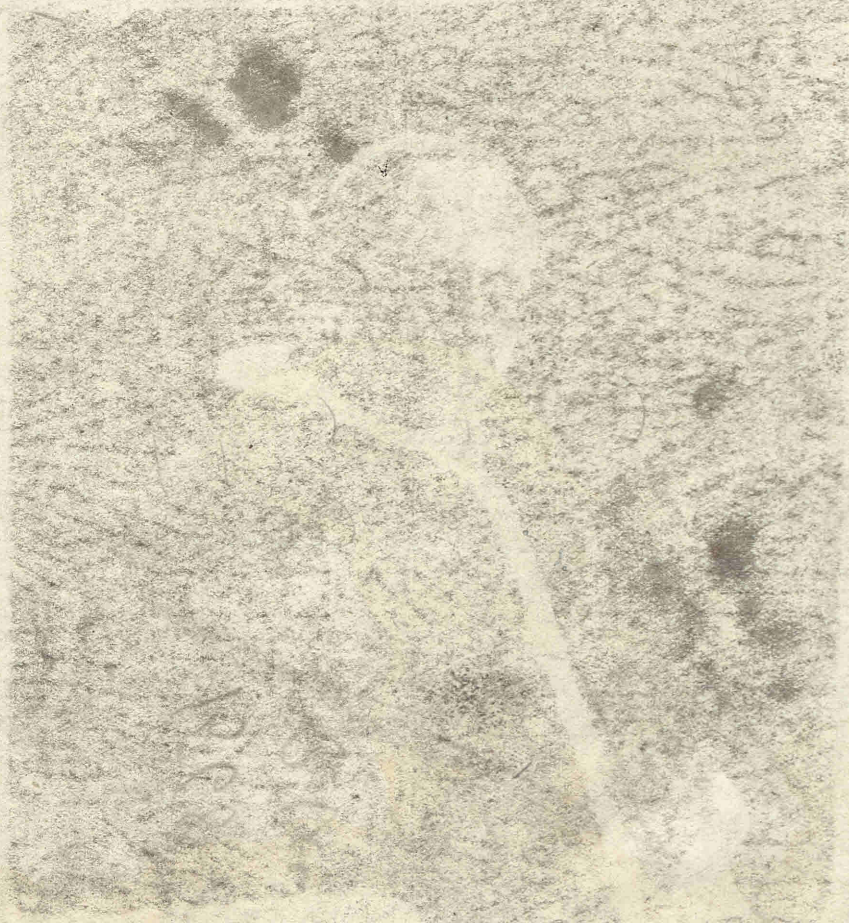
K 90.2

Carmelite Congregation

Album

DHARMARAM COLLEGE
LIBRARY
BANGALORE

DHARMARAM COLLEGE LIBRARY
Ac. No. 37865
Call No. K 90.2/C21



# Autograph Blessing of H. H. Pope Pius XI.



Beatissime Pater,

P. Joannes a Jesu et Maria, Superior Generalis Congregationis Fecliariorum Carmelitarum Syro-Malabarensium, ad pedes Sanctitatis Vestrae humillime provolutus centesimo volvente anno ab ipsa Congregatione constituta, sibi suisque Confratribus Apostolicam Benedictionem implorat.

PP XI

# Syro-Malabar Hierarchy.



His Excellency
Mar Augustine Kandathil, D.D.,
Archbishop of Ernakulam.



His Excellency
Mar Alexander Choolaparampil, D.D.,
Bishop of Kottayam.



His Excellency
Mar Francis Vashapilly, D.D.,
Bishop of Trichur.



His Excellency
Mar James Kalacherry, Ph D., D.D.,
Bishop of Changanacherry.



KING GEORGE V.



**His Excellency The Right Hon'ble**
**Sir Freeman Freeman-Thomas Baron Willingdon,**
**G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E., G.C.M.G., G.B.E.,**
*Viceroy of India.*



**His Highness Sri Rama Varma Chittira Thirunal**

*Maharaja of Travancore*



**His Highness Sri Rama Varma,**
*Maharaja of Cochin.*

313

# The Carmelite Congregation of Malabar

1831-1931

DHARMARAM COLLEGE LIBRARY BANGALORE

DHARMARAM COLLEGE LIBRARY
Ac. No 37865
Call No

# CONTENTS


PAGE

FOREWORD ... ... ... ... ... XIII—XVI

INTRODUCTION ... ... ... ... ... 1—8

CHAPTER I: 1828—1831, The two Founders of the Congregation —Beginnings of the Mother-House ... ... ... 9—25

CHAPTER II: 1831—1846, Trial of Obedience—Seminary work—Apostolate of the Press—Death of the two Founders ... 26—29

CHAPTER III: 1846—1856, The twofold life—Profession of the First Eleven Fathers—Fr. Cyriac Elias (Chavara)—Missions and Retreats ... ... ... ... ... 30—36

CHAPTER IV: 1856—1860, The Monastery of Coonamavu—Fr. Cyriac Elias (Chavara), Superior General—The Monasteries of Elthuruth, Vazhakulam and Plasanal ... ... 37—42

CHAPTER V: 1860—1861, The Title T. O. C. D. of the Congregation ... ... ... ... ... 43—47

CHAPTER VI: 1861—1866, The Rocosian Schism and the Congregation—The Monastery of Pulincunnu ... ... 48—54

CHAPTER VII: 1866—1873, Carmelite Sisters—Catechumenates —Death of Mgr. Bernardine—The Monasteries of Ampalacat and Mutholy—The Syrian Breviary—Fr. Cyriac Elias (Chavara's) death—Fr. Cyriac Eliseus (Porukara) ... ... 55—66

CHAPTER VIII: 1873—1887, The Mellosian Schism—Petitions for an Indian Bishop—Bishop Leo Meurin, S.J.—Mgr. Marcelline, Coadjutor Bishop—The Monasteries of Thevara and Chethipusha—The Constitutions are approved "experimenti gratia"—Mgr. Agliardi, Delegate Apostolic—The separation of the Syrians from the Latins ... ... ... 67—78

PAGE

CHAPTER IX: 1887—1890, The Delegate Apostolic becomes the Prior General of the Congregation—Modifications in the Constitutions—The Monasteries of Coonamavu, Pavaratty, Panapally and Thevara—The Good Shepherd Church—Death of Fr. Cyriac Eliseus (Porukara) ... ... ... 79—91

CHAPTER X: 1890—1931, School work—House of Studies at Mangalore—Aspirants' School—Mgr. Bernard, O. C. D., Prior General—Indigenous Bishops and indigenous Priors General —The Constitutions are approved "in perpetuum"—Monasteries of Kurianad, Champakulam, and Alwaye—Branch Houses—Re-union movement and the Congregation ... 92—111

CHAPTER XI: 1931, The Centenary. The principal Centenary Celebrations in St. Joseph's Monastery, Mannanam, the Mother-House ... ... ... ... 112—134

CHAPTER XII: 1931—1932, Centenary Celebrations in other Monasteries of the Congregation ... ... ... 135—154

# FOREWORD

MALABAR, the cradle of Christianity in India, from remote Apostolic times, has always been characterized by her filial devotion towards the Mother of God. Tradition has it that the Apostle, St. Thomas, had an apparition of our Lady on Malayattur Mount, where he was encouraged by her to preach the Gospel to the inhabitants of the land. Christian monuments of antiquity unmistakably proclaim how deep-rooted was devotion to the Mother of God in the hearts of the St. Thomas Christians. Many of their churches that are in existence now for over fifteen or sixteen centuries, are dedicated to our Blessed Lady, the Virgin Mary. The Divine Maternity is commemorated several times daily, in the Mass, in the Liturgical prayers, in the public religious functions, and in the popular hymns and songs. The holy name of Mary was constantly on the lips of the Malabarians, and her feasts were kept up by them with all possible solemnity. There was scarcely a family --as even now—but proudly owned a daughter named *Mariam*; and priests added to their Christian name that of the Mother of God. The devotion of the "eight days' fast," consisting of voluntary abstinence, fast, and unceasing prayer in one or other of the famous churches dedicated to our Lady, is peculiar to the St. Thomas Christians of Malabar. This practice—observed particularly by young women—dates as far back as the 9th century and is nowhere in vogue in the Christian world except in Malabar.

After the advent of the Portuguese, Western forms of Marian devotion were introduced into Malabar, where, in the hearts of the sons of St. Thomas, they found a soil congenial to their growth and development. It was at this period, in 1577, we read of Pope Gregory XIII, sending 50,000 rosaries to the St. Thomas Christians, to augment their devotion to the Blessed Virgin. In 1585 or 1586, Rev. Fr. Roz, S.J., wrote in admiration of the strenuous efforts of the Syrian Clergy of Malabar to promulgate, by their public preaching and teaching, the glorious title of Mary "Mother of God",

Fr. Roz was a witness of the extraordinary devotion to the Mother of God of the then Archdeacon of the Syro-Malabar Church, George of Christ. He had, in 1576, built a church in honour of our Lady of the Assumption, and had procured for it privileges from Pope Gregory XIII, through the Rajah of Cochin.

The Schism of 1653 did not interfere with the queenly sway Mary held in Malabar. The Papal Commissary, Mgr. Sebastiani of the Carmelite Order, sent to stem the Schism, was highly gratified to find more than 5000 Catholics, in the parish of Kuravilangad alone, wearing the scapular of our Lady of Mt. Carmel. The schismatics who had unhappily severed all connections with the Holy See, could not find it in their hearts to turn away from the Mother of God, as did their contemporary sectarians of the West.

The Carmelite rule that followed, strengthened and confirmed the filial attachment of the Christians of Malabar to the Blessed Virgin Mary. Marian devotion in its various forms is now so admirably practised by Catholic Malabar, as to suggest to any one that the Catholic religion and Marian devotion are synonymous on the Malabar coast, so much so, that a Catholic without the scapular of our Lady about his shoulders, is liable to be taken for a non-Catholic. The word "Matha" (mother), used by a Malabar Catholic without any qualifying epithet, is taken to refer to our Lady *per se*. You will search in vain for a house in Catholic Malabar, that does not possess an altar dedicated to the Divine Mother, before which the inmates daily recite the Rosary and pay special homage during the month of May. All these proclaim, how devoted the St. Thomas Christians were and are to the Mother of the Word made flesh. Malabar is really 'Mary's Land'; may it not be allowed to adopt the enviable title "Mary's Dower" unhappily forfeited elsewhere?

It was as it were to crown the Marian cult in the Syro-Malabar Church that Providence designed the Institute of the Carmelite Congregation of Malabar in 1831. The year was a propitious one, as it witnessed the celebration of the Fourteenth Centenary of the

Council of Ephesus, that crowning triumph of our Blessed Lady over heresy.

This Congregation limited in its resources, has yet signalised itself by promoting loyalty towards the See of St. Peter and devotion towards the Mother of God, as did the Council of Ephesus in 431. Students of Malabar Church History are well aware that, but for the Congregation, the Rocosian and the Mellosian Schisms would certainly have cut Malabar off from the vivifying union with the See of Peter. The Congregation has, from its very first beginnings, always worked zealously to promote devotion to Mary among the Christians of Malabar. It is no exaggeration to state that the Marian devotion as it exists today in Malabar, owes a great debt to the untiring labours of the members of the Congregation. Conspicuous among the results of this salutary devotion has been the erection of the Syro-Malabar Hierarchy. For, His Holiness, Pope Pius XI, now gloriously reigning, in the course of his Consistorial allocution on December 21, 1923, proclaiming the erection of the Hierarchy, remarked among other things: "Id autem omnino Postulabat.....singularis eorumdem erga Beatissimam Virginem Mariam pietas."

All Malabar knows and appreciates the work effected by the Congregation during its century-long existence. Along domestic, social, educational and spiritual lines, Catholic Malabar has made rapid progress, owing, in great part, to the disinterested labours of this indigenous Carmelite Congregation. It is therefore, but proper, that a short sketch of its history be published in book form as a souvenir of its Centenary celebrations during the years 1931 and 1932, sealed with a special blessing and unique favours granted by the Holy See. The work of drafting the sketch was entrusted to the Very Rev. Fr. Bartholomew of Jesus, Prior, Chethipusha Monastery, and to the Rev. Fr. Placid of St. Joseph, Ph.D., D.D., D.C.L., and carefully revised by the Very Rev. Fr. Hyacinth of the Mother of Dolours, Prior, Mannanam Monastery, and by the Rev. Fr. Romeo Thomas of the Immaculate Conception, M.A., L.T. I therefore, on my part, gladly give my approbation to its being sent to the Press, with the hope that it will prove a fitting token

of thanksgiving to God Almighty, for all the graces and favours He has bestowed on the Church and people of Malabar, through the instrumentality of the "Carmel in Malabar". May it also be a medium of expressing our gratitude to all the generous benefactors and well-wishers of the Institute, who have contributed to make it what it is at present: "The most important Religious Congregation of the Indian Church."

*L. D. et M.*

MONASTERY OF THE SACRED HEART,
THEVARA,
*17th April, 1932,*
Feast of the Patronage of St. Joseph.

FR. JOHN OF JESUS MARY,
T. O. C. D.,
*Prior General.*

# INTRODUCTION

I. 1. "The kingdom of heaven", said Our Lord, "is like to a grain of mustard - seed which a man took and sowed in his field. Which is the least indeed of all seeds: but when it is grown up, it is greater than all herbs and becometh a tree, so that the birds of the air come and dwell in the branches thereof" (Matt. xiii. 31, 32). This parable which was also a prophecy, was surely meant to apply primarily to the kingdom of God upon earth, the Church. It prefigured also the Church's various institutions having as their aim the salvation and the sanctification of souls, among which, Religious Orders and Congregations hold



His Eminence, Cardinal Sincero, Secretary of the S. Congregation for the Oriental Church.

a conspicuous place. Their history will tell us how humble their origin was, how slowly they grew, what fruits they have borne. The Carmelite Congregation of Malabar, the history of which we propose to sketch in this brochure, cannot indeed in any way compare with the great Religious Orders in the Church, which have ever stood out as her glory. There is, however, every indication, as may be seen from its history, that it too is a seed, sown by the divine Sower and fostered by Him fondly, these past one hundred years, till it has grown to be a small tree, the branches of which spread over all the Malayalam-speaking states of India, i. e., Travancore, Cochin, and British Malabar. The very existence of this Religious Congregation for a century in this country, while many others became extinct after a short life, compels one to cry out, "The finger of God is here." Whether or not the Congregation has justified its century-long existence, God knows; it is for others to judge. We mean in these pages merely to make a short survey of men and events, as they present themselves to us in a hurried review of them.

2. The Religious Congregation under review is of the Syro-Malabar Rite. It is an indigenous one in its origin. The divine Planter, who had sown the seed, put it under foreign influence in order to make it grow according to His eternal designs. As plants and trees get reformed in quality by means of grafting, so too, this plant adapted itself to the Western Mode of religious life, by adopting much that was found suitable to time and circumstances. The plant is indigenous, but it has been largely nourished and fertilized by the luxuriance of Carmel.

II. 1. Before beginning our sketch, we deem it not irrelevant to say a few words about the Catholic Church in Malabar, of which the Carmelite Congregation is a fruit.

2 Both history and tradition testify that St. Thomas, one of the twelve Apostles of Our Lord, evangelized South India and left there a living legacy in the persons of the Syrian Christians known always in history as "The St. Thomas Christians." Tradition has it that from the very beginning they used the East Syrian or Syro-Chaldaic Rite.

3. In the 16th century, the West coast of India came under Portuguese influence. The Portuguese started active missionary work. The King of Portugal was granted by the Holy See the right of Patronage (Padroado) over the new missions. In 1534, a Bishopric was established at Goa. In 1558, it was raised to an Archbishopric, and a suffragan See was established in Cochin. The Syrian Christians attracted the attention of the Portuguese, and they felt the influence of the Padroado. In 1599, Mgr. Alexis de Menezes, Archbishop of Goa, at a Synod held at Diamper, brought them under the Padroado and Latin rule. The Syrian See of Angamaly was placed under a Latin Bishop of Portuguese nationality, and it was transferred to Cranganore in 1605. This change occasioned dissatisfaction among the Syrians. In 1653, it



His Excellency, Mgr. E. Mooney, Delegate Apostolic of the East Indies. 1926—1931

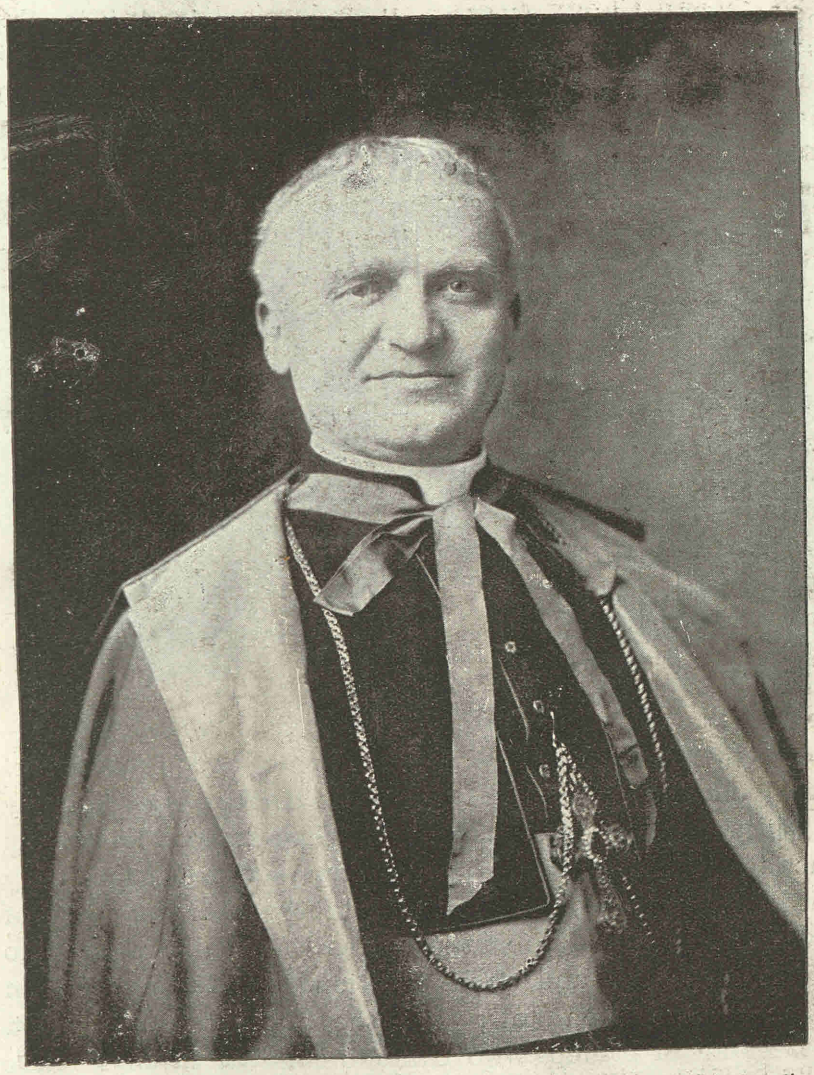
culminated in a great schism in the till-then-undivided Church of Malabar.

4. Those Syrians who were not involved in the schism sent a petition to the Holy See. At their request, Italian Carmelite Missionaries were sent to Malabar in 1656. Some influential members of the Syrian Clergy co-operated with the Carmelites, and the mission proved a success. Since the Catholic Syrians did not like to continue under the jurisdiction of the Padroado Archbishop of Cranganore, the Holy See placed them under the jurisdiction of Mgr. Sebastiani, the head of the Carmelite Mission. The Vicariate of Malabar or Verapoly was established for the Syrians, and when Mgr. Sebastiani was forced by the Dutch to leave India, an indigenous Syrian Priest, Alexander de Campo, was consecrated Vicar Apostolic of Malabar in 1663. The Vicariate was independent of the Padroado and was subject to the Propaganda. After the death of the Syrian Bishop, the Vicariate was placed under Latin and Carmelite Prelates. Hence, by the beginning of the 18th century, many Syrians reverted to the jurisdiction of the Padroado Archbishop of Cranganore. About a century later, in 1838, when along with the Padroado, the Diocese of Cochin and the Archdiocese of Cranganore were suppressed by the Holy See, the Syrians of Cranganore were again placed under Verapoly. In 1857, on the restoration of the Padroado, a part of the Syrians again came under Padroado jurisdiction.

5. When the Dutch expelled the Portuguese from Cochin, at the end of the 17th century, Verapoly was given jurisdiction also over the Latin churches. Thus Verapoly ruled over both Syrians and Latins. In 1845, the Holy See decreed the separation of the South Travancore Mission from Verapoly. The decree was given effect in 1853, and the new Vicariate of Quilon was thus established.

6. The intense desire of the Syrians to be governed by a Bishop of their own Rite, again gave rise to the Rocosian schism in 1861 and the Mellosian schism in 1874. Moved by the repeated petitions of the Syrians, the Holy See determined to grant them indigenous rule. As a first step, the Holy See in 1887, withdrew the Syrians from the jurisdiction of Verapoly and Cranganore and

placed them under two new European Vicars Apostolic. In 1896, three indigenous Syrians were consecrated Vicars Apostolic. Finally, in 1923, the Holy See established the Syro-Malabar Hierarchy with the Archbishop of Ernakulam as Metropolitan and the Bishops of Changanacherry, Trichur, and Kottayam, as suffragans. The Syro-Malabar Rite is a modified form of the ancient East-Syrian or Syro-Chaldaic Rite.



His Excellency, Mgr. L. P. Kierkels C. P., the present Delegate Apostolic.

7. The schismatic Syrians who were cut off from the Mother Church in 1653, fell into the Jacobite heresy in 1665; in course of time they adopted the West Syrian Rite of Antioch used by the Jacobites. This Rite permits Arabic translations for certain prayers and Rubrics. Among the Malabar

Jacobites, Malayalam took the place of Arabic. Protestant Missions followed in the wake of Jacobitism; they made converts chiefly from the depressed classes. Several attempts at reunion were made. The one set on foot by the Bethany Movement deserves the praise and esteem of all. Mar Ivanios, Archbishop of Bethany, and his suffragan, Mar Theophilos of Tiruvalla, were received into the Church on the 20th of September, 1930. They retain the West-Syrian Rite of Antioch, as used by the Malabar Jacobites, with necessary corrections. This new Rite is called the "Malankara Syrian Rite" to distinguish it from the "Syro-Malabar Rite". Malabar and Malankara mean the same, and the word "Syrians" in Malabar, refers to the St. Thomas Christians.

8. A word about the Latin Catholics of Malabar. In 1886, when the Indian (Latin) Hierarchy was established, Verapoly became an Archdiocese with Quilon under it. Cranganore had been suppressed long before; Cochin still continues to be under Goa as it was from its beginning. In 1930, the southern portions of Verapoly and Quilon were constituted respectively into the new Dioceses of Vijayapuram and Kottar. Verapoly and Kottar are entrusted to the indigenous Latin Clergy; Vijayapuram and Quilon are administered by the Discalced Carmelites of the First Order, and Verapoly still enjoys the title of the Archdiocese.

III. 1. Religious life for the St. Thomas Christians was not a novelty. Ossorius in the 16th century wrote thus about them:— "There are among them sodalities of monks and communities of sacred virgins, who, however, live in remote dwellings: Chastity is observed by them with the utmost zeal. They derive this custom from the time of St. Thomas" (Raulin). There was a monastery and a church of striking dimensions at Mylapore near the tomb of St. Thomas, whither many of the St. Thomas Christians resorted to spend their lives in prayer and contemplation. Like the Chaldean monks they must have been following the ancient Rule of St. Antony. The Chaldean bishops who came to Malabar in 1504 make mention of this monastery in their letter to the Chaldean Patriarch of Babylon. On the following passage in that letter of the bishops, "some christians have begun to inhabit the house (Dair) of St.

Thomas the Apostle," the Rev. Fr. H. Hosten, S.J. makes the following comment:—"The Syrian bishops of 1504 would apply to it the expression used by 'Amr (c. A. D. 1340), and the Dair Thuma of Yakut and the poet Marrar al-Fak'asi might be Yonan's monastery of St. Thomas in India, near (or below) the Black Island



The Very Rev. Fr. General of the Carmelite Congregation of Malabar with his Councillors.

(before 363 A. D.) which we think should be identified with the monastery and church of great size and magnificence visited by Theodore, before A. D. 593-594 at the place in India where St. Thomas' body was first buried (i.e. Mylapore). . . . . Mar Yonan's monastery (before 363 A. D) was near the town of Milon, which we identify with 'Amr's Meilan, i. e. Mayila-pur (peacock-town)." (Kerala Society Papers, Series 5. p. 245.)

2. Thus we find that the Carmelite Congregation of Malabar is but a revival, in modern times, of religious life among the St. Thomas Christians. The Malankara Syrian Church too has Religious Institutions known as the Bethany Brotherhood and Bethany Sister-

hood, which follow the ancient Rule of St. Basil. We shall have to speak incidentally of the Sisterhood of the Syro-Malabar Church. The Latins of Malabar also have indigenous Religious Institutions for men and women. Of all these, the Congregation we have to deal with, is the first in the order of time and importance.

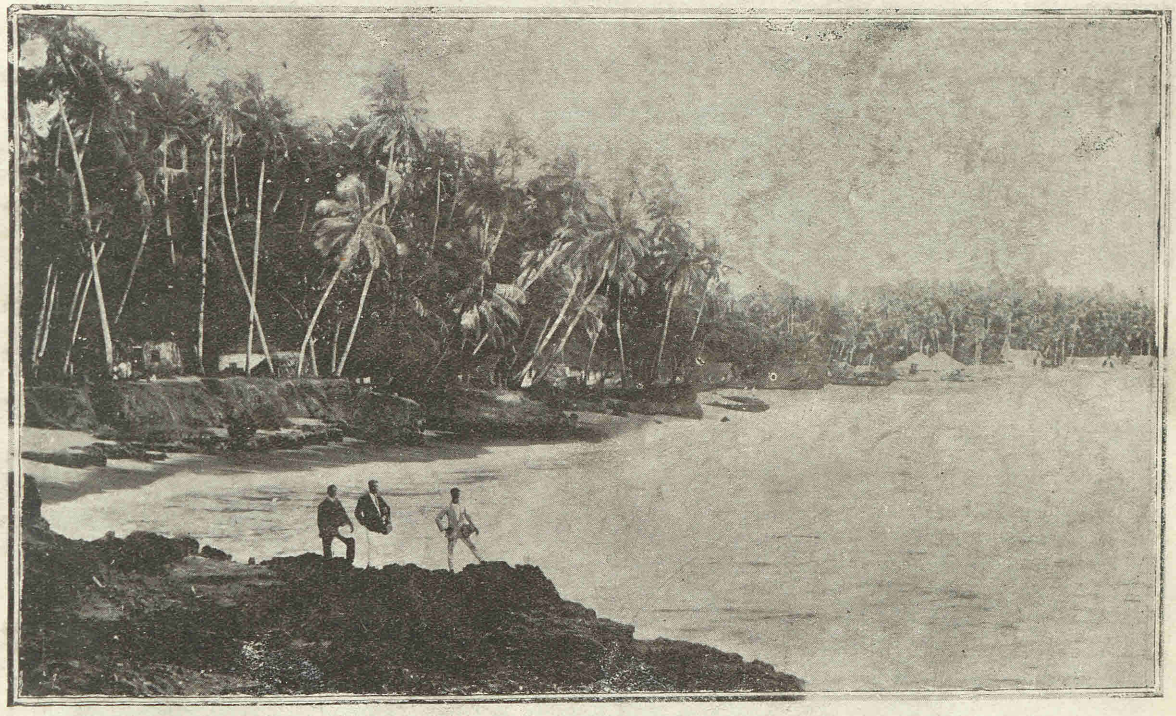
213

# CHAPTER I

## 1828—1831

## The Two Founders of the Congregation—Beginnings of the Mother-House.

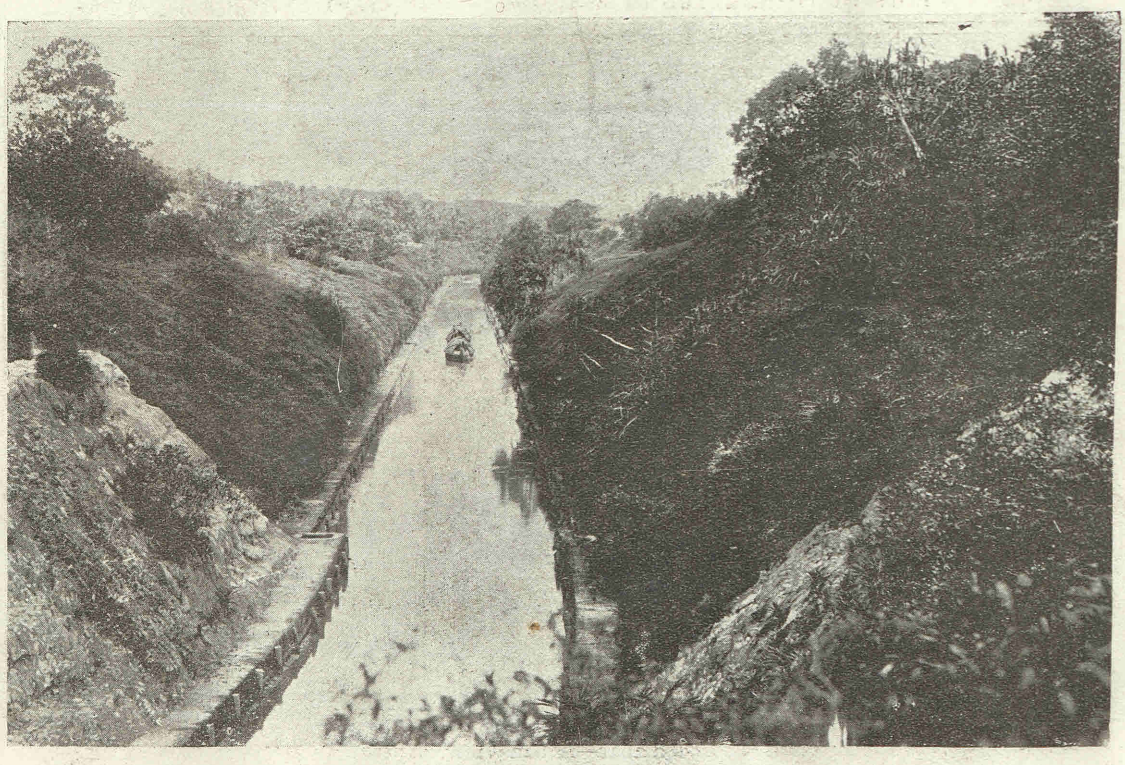
1. It was the beginning of the 19th century; the famine and plague that followed Tippu Sultan's invasion of Malabar had just subsided. The schismatic Syrians, owing to their too close contact with Protestant Missionaries, began gradually to be protestantized. Disobedience to the mandates of the Holy See was about to give



Malabar—A Sea View.

rise to the notorious Padroado schism in the churches under the Portuguese Patronage. The Syrian Catholics of Malabar, however, as a body, kept imperturbably to the Apostolic See. There was, however, among them much room for improvement and progress.

The education of the bulk of the Clergy was conducted by "Malpans" (professors), priests noted for their learning and piety, who, with the recognition from the local Ordinaries, were Rectors of Petit Seminaries—a system of imparting ecclesiastical education not uncommon in Europe even after the Council of Trent. A thorough knowledge of the Syriac language, a sufficient knowledge of the rudiments of Theology, a minute study of Holy Writ, and an elaborate training in all the Ceremonies of the Church, were at all times insisted upon by the "Malpans". The spread of Protestantism among the schismatic Syrians called for higher and more exhaustive knowledge in Theology on the part of the Clergy. Only a select few received their training in the Seminary of Verapoly conducted by the Discalced Carmelite Missionaries.



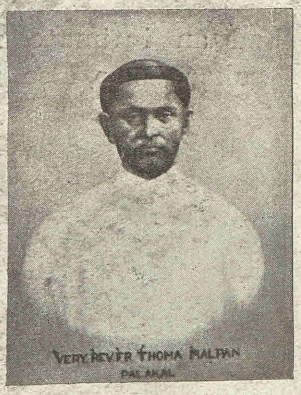
Malabar—A Hill View.

2. The status of the laity, too, called for improvement in various directions. Generally speaking, they knew to read and write. The study of Sanskrit Classics was the privilege of only a very few.

As for higher secular education, there was no scope for it. With the advent of the C. M. S. Missionaries, English education began to hold ground in Malabar. The schismatics naturally took the best advantage of it. In the absence of proper parochial schools, Catholic children had to learn their Catechism and ordinary prayers in village schools.

3. The local Ordinaries had always at heart the amelioration of the spiritual and social conditions of both the clergy and the laity; they had done towards it what their circumstances permitted; much, however, remained still to be done. The fulness of God's time came in the 19th century, when, there appeared a confluence of agencies that wrought with marvellous success an all-round improvement in the Church of Malabar. The chief of these agencies, it may be said, was the Carmelite Congregation of Malabar trained under the able direction of learned and holy ecclesiastical authorities.

4. The Very Rev. Fr. Thomas Palakal of Pallipuram in the present Archdiocese of Ernakulam, beloved alike of God and man, a great disciplinarian and an ardent lover of prayer and retirement, was Rector of Pallipuram Seminary, which, in discipline and observance of rules, far surpassed all its sister seminaries scattered all over Malabar. As Secretary to Mgr. Raymund Surio, O. C. D., Vicar Ap. of Verapoly 1808–1816, and as Consultor to his successors,



Very Rev. Fr. Thomas Palakal, Founder.

Father Palakal had gained the esteem and love of his superiors and inferiors alike. His childhood was marked by an extraordinary devotion to Our Lady and to St. Dominic. He received his ecclesiastical training under Fr. Abraham Thachil of Kuthiathode; immediately after his ordination to the Priesthood, he assumed the charge of training candidates for the Sacred Ministry. Through his disciples, Fr. Palakal introduced many reforms into the Malabar Church. He deviated, not a little, from the old method of conducting studies and enforcing discipline in seminaries. He insisted upon the seminarians always remaining under his immediate vigilance

and their habitual wearing of the clerical soutane—an innovation gradually adopted by the whole of the Syro-Malabar Clergy. Not satisfied with the old curriculum of studies, he got down Tamil books treating on Theological subjects and taught them to his pupils. What characterized him most was his ardent love of study, prayer, and penance. He was always seen, either busy with books in his room, or pouring forth his soul before God in the church. He observed a daily rigorous fast without any breakfast. He had the gift of tears; it was more difficult for him to suppress his tears than for others to shed them. His face, though emaciated, was ever radiant with divine love; Mgr. Francis Xavier, O.C D., the then Vicar Ap. of Verapoly, used to say that those who looked at the face of Fr. Palakal, felt the Holy Ghost dwelling in him. He daily recited, with the seminarians, the Syro-Malabar Office, which at that time had not a definite form and was rather long. His patience with and love of enemies were quite extraordinary. His life as the Seminary Rector actuated him with the desire of founding a Religious community, which, he hoped, would prove an instrument in the hands of God towards the material, intellectual and spiritual welfare of Malabar.

5. Father Palakal had an intimate friend in the person of Very Rev. Fr. Thomas Porukara, who, also, fostered the noble idea of inaugurating Religious life among the St. Thomas Christians. Father Thomas Porukara of Champakulam in the present Diocese of Changanacherry had received his ecclesiastical training in the Seminary of Verapoly. He too was noted for his deep piety and mortified life. Vicar of his own parish, Champakulam, Fr. Porukara was the Apostle of the devotion to St. Joseph. The custom of preaching sermons in churches every Sunday, owes its origin to him. He was a great friend of the poor. Every Saturday, before distributing alms—a long-standing custom in the well-to-do families and churches of Malabar,—Fr. Porukara would gather the poor in the church, recite the Rosary with them and prepare



Very Rev. Fr. Thomas Porukara, Founder.

many of them for Confession. He introduced the holy custom of reciting the Rosary in parish churches every evening. His zeal for the salvation of souls was so great that his superiors appointed him to more difficult and more responsible posts.

6. In 1828, when Fr. Porukara was Vicar of the Latin church of Thankacherry in the present Diocese of Quilon, Mgr. Maurelius Stabilini, O.C.D., came to Malabar as Vicar Apostolic *ad interim* of Verapoly. Relieving Fr. Porukara of the care of souls, Mgr. Stabilini, reposing full confidence in him, appointed him his Secretary.

7. Fr. Palakal and Fr. Porukara felt, with divine inspiration, that the time had come when they could realize their long cherished desire of founding a Religious institution wherein to devote themselves entirely to the attainment of evangelical perfection and to work for the social, moral and spiritual advancement of their brethren. Their idea they communicated to Mgr. Stabilini. He was very pleased to approve of it and to encourage them in their holy enterprise. Moreover, he contributed his share of a good sum towards the erection of a suitable Religious house, inviting the churches and the faithful of Malabar to follow his example, to bring the arduous endeavours of the two Fathers to a happy success. His circular letter met with a hearty response from the leading Syrian churches, especially of Kuttanad as also from the people of Malabar; in a very short time the two saintly Fathers collected sufficient funds with which they could begin the work of the Religious house they proposed to erect.



Mgr. Maurelius Stabilini, O.C.D., Vicar Apostolic of Verapoly 1828-1832.

# PHOTO OF THE CIRCULAR LETTER

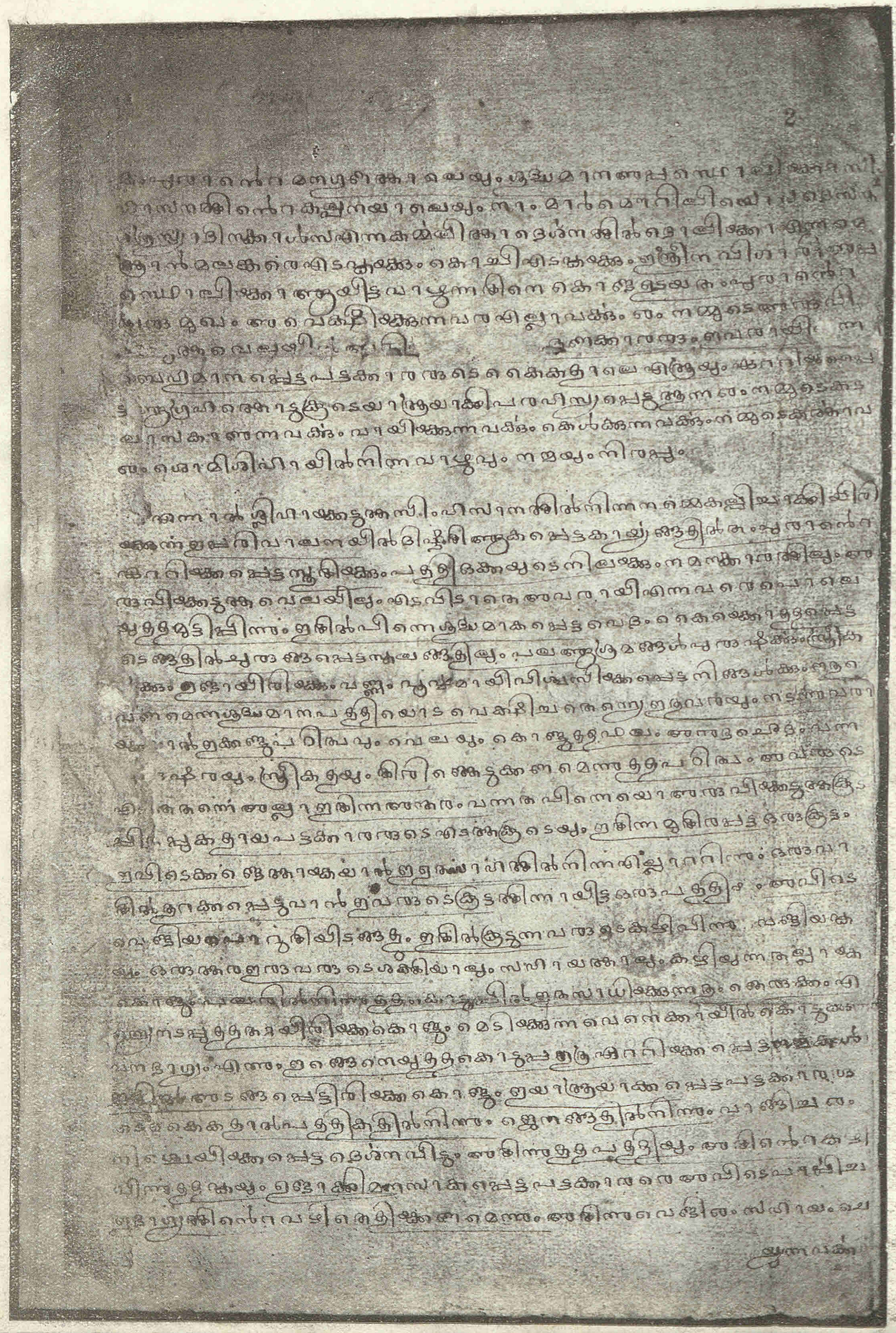


PHOTO OF THE CIRCULAR LETTER

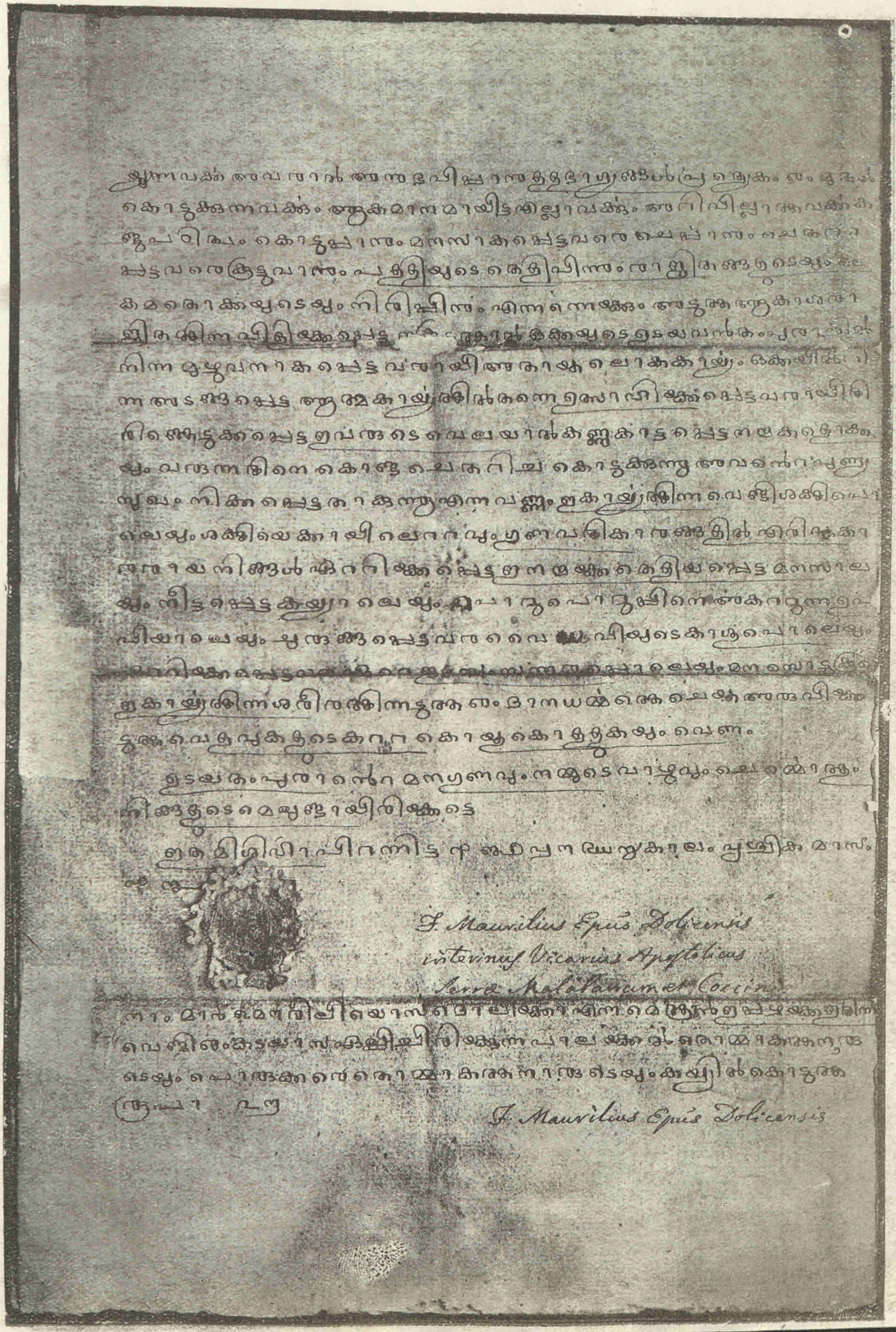
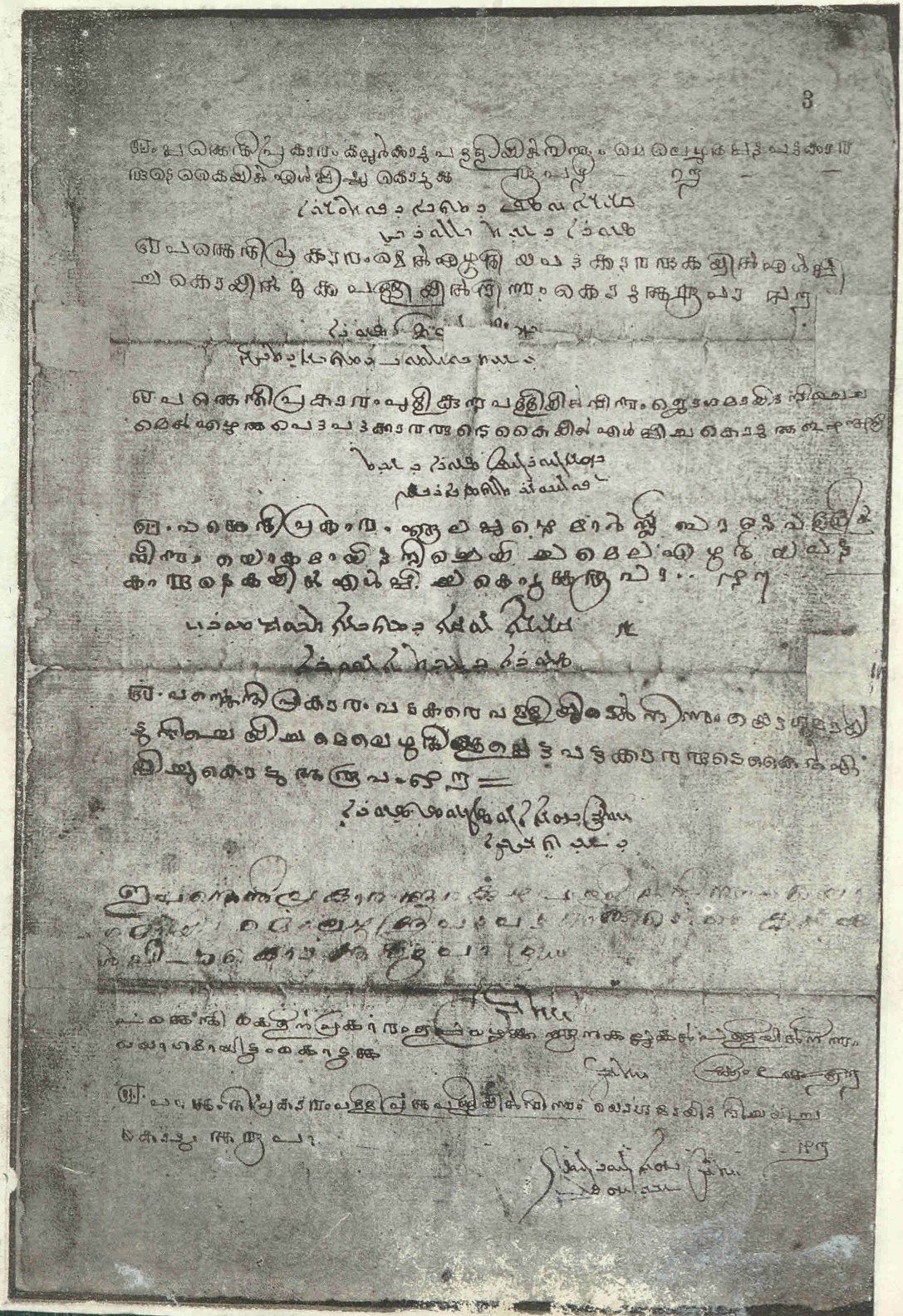
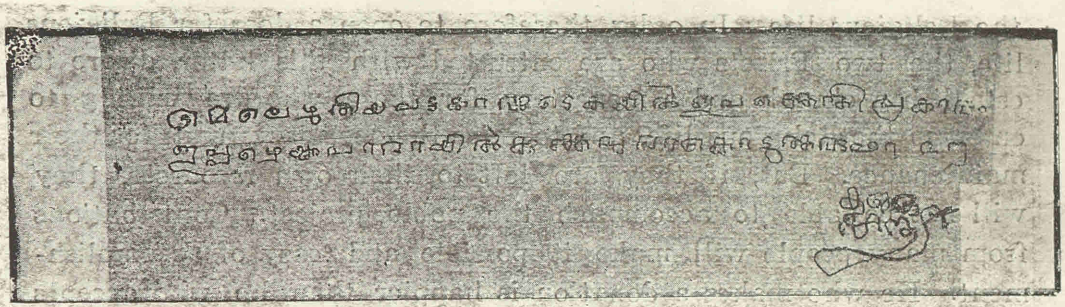


PHOTO OF THE CIRCULAR LETTER





## The Translation, more or less literal, of the above given Circular Letter

We, Maurilius of St. Teresa, of the Discalced Carmelite Order, by God's grace and by the authority of the Holy Apostolic See, Bishop of Dolica and interim Vicar Apostolic of the Diocese of Malabar and of the Diocese of Cochin, benediction, grace, and peace, from our Lord Jesus Christ, to all those who see, read, and hear this Our letter, sent and published with great desire through the hands of the Revd. Priests, Our coadjutors and co-operators in Our spiritual work on behalf of those who seek the face of our Lord.

In the territory committed to Our jurisdiction by the Apostolic See, We are ever on the alert to carry out all those things which are necessary for the welfare of the faithful and conducive to God's greater glory and the good of the Church. We know that you desire to see among you a community of men living like the holy souls who are continuously engaged in prayer and spiritual works. In other countries which were evangelised much later than Malabar, and even in those which are not so extensive as Malabar, there are many monasteries for both men and women. You, who are ancient Christians, requested the Holy Church to establish for you also similar Religious Houses. Yet, so far, no steps have been taken for the establishment of a monastery. There are no men and women here who have benefited by the example and labour of the Religious. The teaching about the choice of the Religious life is not known among lay men and women; and even among the Priests, Our spiritual brethren, We do not find many who are ready to embrace

the Religious life. In order therefore to open a door for Religious life, the two Priests who are entrusted with this letter, desire to establish a church and a monastery for those who are willing to embrace the Religious life, and to raise the necessary funds for their maintenance. But, if they are left to their own resources, they will not be able to accomplish the noble project. Contributions from many people will make it possible and easy of accomplishment. He who makes a donation is happier than he who accepts it. Contributions for the present purpose will entitle the donors to innumerable divine favours and blessings. Hence We earnestly desire and recommend that donations be given from the churches and the people to the two Priests whom We send, so that they may raise the monastery, the church and the necessary funds for the maintenance of the Religious. Thus the way will be opened for the happy introduction of Religious life into this Diocese. And those who help this project will undoubtedly share in all the benefits resulting therefrom. The example of the Religious will instruct the ignorant. Those who are willing to become Religious will have a chance to do so. The piously inclined who are now scattered here and there can live together in communities. The Church will be glorified. The countries and the whole world will have peace. Those who are called to enter heaven by means of the Religious life, will be made perfect by the Lord of all things. They will be free from all worldly affairs and they will devote themselves entirely to spiritual things. By the zealous work of these elect souls, all possible blessings will be secured. Generous charity will ensure perseverance in virtue. We know that your zeal is such as will impel you to make donations for this purpose according to your means, nay even beyond your means. We exhort you therefore to make contributions according to your ability, to give with willing minds and extended hands and with a charity which knows no murmur. We advise and command all of you to give with a generous mind, the required material alms, each one according to his means, the poor in imitation of the poor widow who cast in only two mites, and the wealthy in imitation of the rich man who cast in much; thus will you reap a spiritual harvest.

May the grace of the Almighty God and Our own blessing and benediction be upon you.

This decree is issued on the 1st of November 1829, after the birth of Christ.

(Sd.) F. MAURILIUS,
*Bishop of Dolica,*
*interim Vicar Apostolic of Malabar and Cochin.*

To the two Priests, Fr. Thomas Palakal and Fr. Thomas Porukara, who are entrusted with this decree, We, Maurilius, Bishop of Dolica, have handed over rupees two hundred (Rs. 200) as Our own contribution for this excellent project mentioned in the decree.

(Sd.) F. MAURILIUS,
*Bishop of Dolica.*

In accordance with these letters patent, from the parish church of Kallurkat, Rs. 200 are handed over to the above mentioned Fathers.

(Sd.) FR. JOSEPH PUTHUCHIRA,
*Vicar of the Kallurkat church.*

According to these letters patent, four hundred rupees (Rs. 400) are handed over from the church of Koilmuck to the above said Fathers.

(Sd.) FR. GEORGE THEKEDAM,
*Vicar.*

In accordance with these letters patent, from the church of Pulincunnu, with the consent of the parishioners, assembled in Council, one thousand paras of paddy are handed over to the above mentioned Fathers.

(Sd.) FR. GEORGE MUNNUTTI NALPATHU,
*Vicar.*

In accordance with these letters patent, from the church of the Holy Cross at Alleppey, with the consent of the parishioners, assembled in Council, one hundred rupees (Rs. 100) are handed over to the above mentioned Fathers.

(Sd.) FR. LUKE THEKUMURI,
*Vicar.*

In accordance with these letters patent, from the church of Vadacara, with the consent of the parishioners, assembled in Council, one hundred rupees (Rs. 100) are handed over to the above mentioned Fathers.

(Sd.) FR. AUGUSTINE,
*Vicar.*

In accordance with these letters patent, from the church of Arakusha, with the consent of the parishioners, assembled in Council, fifty rupees (Rs. 50) are handed over to the above mentioned Fathers.

(Sd.)

In accordance with these letters patent, from the church of Anakallunkal, with the consent of the parishioners, assembled in Council, for the present, two thousand five hundred Chuckrams, (Rs. 87½) are given.

(Sd.)

In accordance with these letters patent, from the church of Pallipuram, with the consent of the parishioners, assembled in Council, one hundred rupees (Rs. 100) are given.

(Sd.) FR. GEORGE,
*Vicar.*

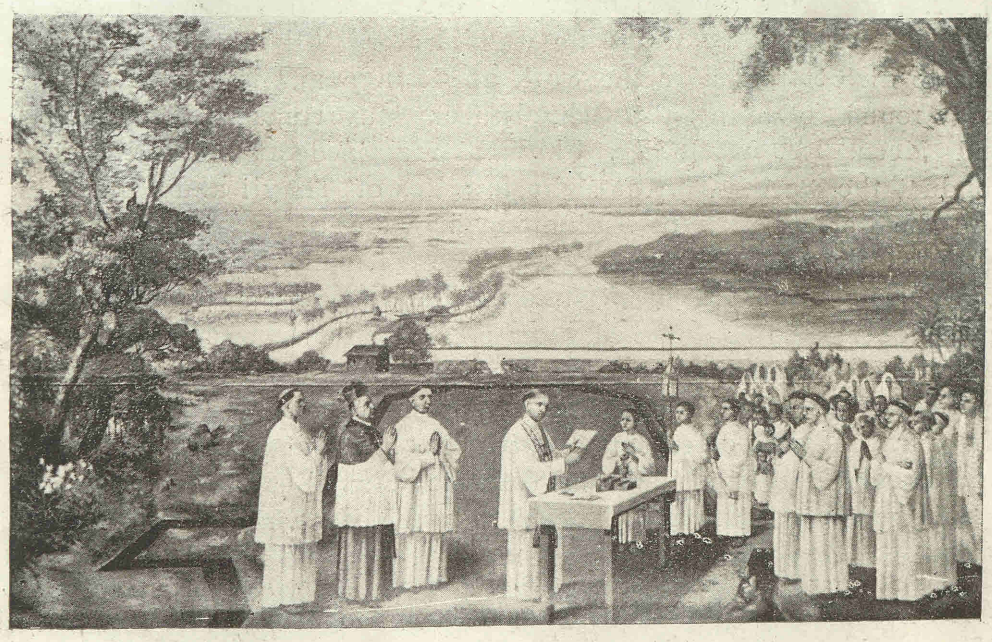
To the above mentioned Fathers, according to these letters patent, for the present, two hundred rupees (Rs. 200) are given by Parayil Kunjavirah.

(Sd.)

8. The next step was to select a suitable spot whence they could, while serving God under a religious roof, radiate their activities throughout the whole of Malabar. Several hillocks were proposed; at last, Mannanam, exceptionally blessed by the beauties of Nature, and easy of access from every part of Malabar, in the present Diocese of Changanacherry, was fixed upon.

9. From the very beginning Rev. Fr. Cyriac Chavara of Kainakary in the present Diocese of Changanacherry, a disciple of Fr. Palakal, Rev. Fr. Pascal of the Latin Rite from Arthungal, and a layman, Jacob Kanianthara, a neighbour of Fr. Porukara, were associated with the Founders in the noble work of erecting the new House of God.

10. May 11, 1831, was the day fixed for the blessing of the corner stone of the Mother-House of the future Carmelite Congregation of Malabar. Mgr. Stabilini came to Mannanam to perform



Mannanam Hill in 1831.

The Laying of the Foundation Stone of the Mother-House and the First Church of the Congregation.

the function personally, but, being impeded by an unexpected indisposition, left the desirable task to either Fr. Palakal or Fr. Porukara. Owing to mutual deference neither of them would undertake to perform the ceremony. At last Fr. Porukara yielded. There then arose the question as to the name the foundation stone should bear. Mgr. Stabilini suggested the name of St. John the Baptist, Fr. Palakal that of St. Dominic, and Fr. Porukara that of St. Joseph. Finally, Fr. Porukara's suggestion was accepted, and the foundation stone bore St. Joseph's name. Whereupon, Father Porukara, in the presence of Mgr. Stabilini, Fr. Palakal and a multitude of priests and laymen, during the Pontificate of Pope Gregory XVI and the reign of Rama Varma Kulasekhara Perumal, Raja of Travancore, laid the foundation stone of the First Church and Mother-House of the Congregation, in the name of St. Joseph, the great Patron of Carmel. With the hearty co-operation of the Malabar Clergy and laity, the work progressed under the direction of Fr. Porukara and Fr. Chavara. Fr. Palakal had to return to Pallipuram Seminary where he was Rector. All that he could do was to direct from afar the work at Mannanam. Fr. Porukara had to go round collecting alms, chiefly from Muvattupusha, Thodupusha, and Meenachil, while Fr. Chavara remained at Mannanam to conduct the work. The Catholic families of Thayil and Perumalil, and the Nair family of Kalampucad, were of great help to the Fathers, who were strangers to the place. The neighbouring parishes of Athirampusha, Kaipusha, and Kudamaloor, and some of their parishioners also contributed their share for the work at Mannanam. Mass was said on Pentecost Sunday of the same year in the newly-built Chapel. It is worthy of mention that Fr. Porukara and Fr. Chavara were often found with the workmen, carrying stones and mortar for the building of the Chapel and the adjacent Monastery—an example followed by the Fathers who succeeded them.

11. Ever since the foundation of the Monastery at Mannanam, Mannanam has been the centre of Religious life and Catholicity in Malabar. The Visitors Apostolic and Papal Representatives have been given official and solemn receptions, in the name of the whole

Catholic Malabar, at Mannanam. Delegates Apostolic and Bishops have often selected Mannanam for their residence. The Clergy and



The Visitor Ap. Mgr. (now Cardinal) A. H. M. Lepicier, O. S. M., at St. Joseph's Monastery, Mannanam, when Very Rev. Fr. Aloysius of St. Mary, was the Prior General.

laity of Malabar gathered at Mannanam to deliberate on religious and social questions.

12. The Royal Families of Travancore and Cochin have always been kind and benevolent towards the Congregation. His Highness Sir Rama Varma Ayilliam Tirunal had often expressed his satisfaction at the rapid growth of the new-born " Asrama " at Mannanam. H. H. Visakham Tirunal presented to the house a large oil-painting of the Madonna which is still kept in a prominent place in the Monastery. H. H. Prince Aswati Tirunal, B.A., was pleased to pay a visit to Mannanam. His Highness Sri Mulam Tirunal, of happy memory, looked upon some of the members of the Congregation with special veneration, and the new magnificent buildings of the

St. Joseph's Press, have been inaugurated as a memorial of the Shashtiabdapurthi of His Highness. H. H. Kerala Varma Valia Koil Thampuran, C. I. E, was likewise a great admirer of the Congregation. His Highness's visit to Mannanam and also the assumption of the patronage of the St. Ephrem's High School are only a few among the many tokens of the sincere esteem of the illustrious scholar, for this Religious Institution. The Circular Letter issued by the Prior General of the Congregation on the occasion of the Installation of H. H. Sri Chittira Tirunal, the present Maha Raja, amply bears witness to the deep-seated loyalty of the Congregation towards the Royal House.



His Highness, Sri Mulam Tirunal, the late Maha Raja of Travancore.

13. The attitude of the Royal Family of Cochin towards the Congregation has been equally sympathetic. His Highness Sri Rama Varma the late Maha Raja, contrary to all precedents, even paid a visit to the Monastery at Elthuruth and himself laid the foundation of the present English School there. H. H. the present Maha Raja is also evincing a similar interest in the well-being of the monasteries in the State. It is worth mentioning in this connection that the British Residents as well as the Dewans and the other Public Officials of the two States have, without exception, contributed much towards the progress and prosperity of the Congregation.



## CHAPTER II

## 1831—1846

### Trial of Obedience—Seminary work—Apostolate of the Press—Death of the Two Founders.

1. Mgr. Stabilini embarked for Rome in 1832, and Mgr. Francis Xavier, O. C. D., was appointed Vicar Ap. of Verapoly. There is nothing under the sun that can count on the approval and good pleasure of all men; the work of God,—and such a one is the institution of a Religious Congregation,—should prove its merit in the furnace of trials. No wonder, therefore, if evil reports reached the ears of the new Vicar Apostolic concerning the Mannanam enterprise. Thereupon, Fr. Porukara was appointed Vicar of the two Latin churches, Kayankulam and Pillathop, of the present Diocese of Quilon, and Fr. Chavara, that of Southern Pallipuram. They had to leave Mannanam, giving up all there which they held most dear, and to assume their new charges which separated them widely from each other. Every one felt the blow very keenly. With the advice of Fr. Palakal, they accepted the trial as coming from the hands of God Almighty, and entrusting the care of the future to Divine Providence, they obeyed the order of the Vicar Apostolic without a word of complaint.

2. Mgr. Francis Xavier was highly pleased with the saintly behaviour of the two Fathers and relieved them of their parochial charge in 1833, when, both of them, under the auspices of the Vicar Apostolic himself, resumed the work at Mannanam, assisted by the clergy and laity as before.

3. At the express desire of Fr. Palakal, a Seminary for the education of the Secular Clergy was attached to the newly-built Monastery at Mannanam. The seminarians were lodged apart from

those who desired to embrace the Religious life. Father Palakal was Rector 'ex-officio' of this Seminary as well. Continuing to



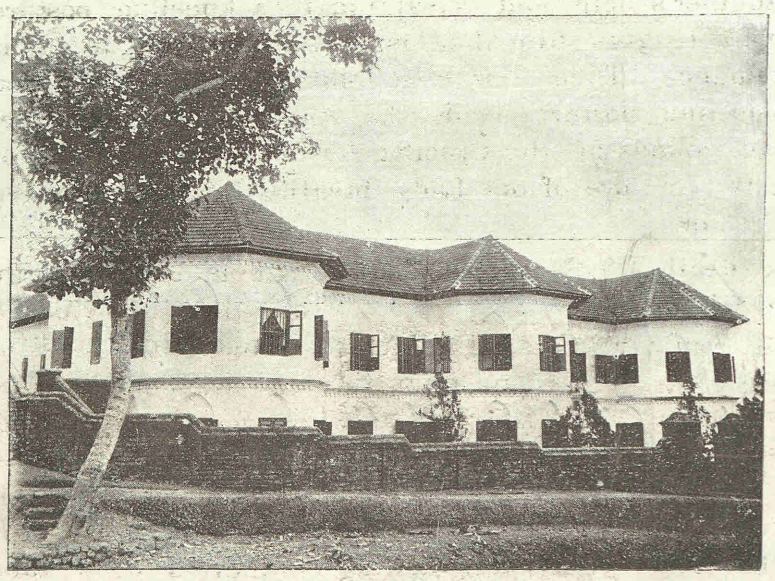
His Ex. Mgr. L. M. Zaleski, Delegate Apostolic, who visited all the Monasteries of the Congregation, at Mannanam, when the Very Rev. Fr. Basil of St. Teresa was the Prior General.

reside with his seminarians at Pallipuram, he conducted at the same time the Seminary at Mannanam, through the Fathers there.

4. The death of the saintly Fr. Palakal, which took place at Pallipuram in 1841, was really a heavy blow to Fr. Porukara and Fr. Chavara. Trusting in God they continued the building of the church and the monastery by means of collections raised from all the different parts of the country. The work at Mannanam roused general interest and was looked upon as a common cause by all. It is worth mentioning that the leading secular priests of the day paid frequent visits to Mannanam. Some of them even looked after the works there, in the absence of Fr. Porukara and Fr. Chavara. While engaged in the building works at Mannanam, Fr. Porukara often went to distant parishes to preach missions and to attend to the spiritual needs of the Faithful. His saintly life, his winning

manners and the unction with which he preached, led the Vicar Apostolic invariably to send him out on difficult missions, especially in the struggle with the Padroado schism. The zealous labours of Fr. Porukara and other Syrian Priests converted many from that schism in Quilon and other parts of Malabar.

5. Fr. Porukara and Fr. Chavara keenly felt the need of the Apostolate of the Press in Malabar. Fr. Chavara taking the lead, established under the patronage of St. Joseph, a Printing Press at Mannanam in 1844—the first Catholic Press in Malabar. This premier establishment, with the blessing of its pious founder, has to this day continued to spread sound Catholic literature throughout the whole Malayalam-speaking States. The "Nazrani Deepika," the only Catholic Daily newspaper in India,* and the "Flower of Carmel," a monthly periodical, are regularly published by this Press. The "Nazrani Deepika" is the undaunted champion of the political and social interests of the Catholics of Malabar, while the "Flower of Carmel" is intended to strengthen the Faithful in piety and devotion. The amount of good "Deepika" does to society and to Religion is beyond praise. During the Great War, the paper opened a subscription for the stricken people of Central Europe. The amount reached many thousands and won unstinted appreciation and thanks from Rome.



The present St. Joseph's Press, Mannanam.

* Owing to the universal depression, the Daily is, for the time being, made a Weekly.

6. Mgr. Francis Xavier died in 1844 and was succeeded by Mgr. Ludovic, O. C. D. Before his death, Mgr. Francis Xavier had nominated Fr. Porukara and Fr. Chavara "Malpans" and Examiners of the Syrian candidates for the Priesthood, in the Vicariate Apostolic of Verapoly.

7. In the inscrutable designs of God Almighty, Fr. Porukara too was called to his reward, before witnessing the complete establishment of religious life at Mannanam. Aware of his approaching end he received the last Sacraments with extreme devotion from the hands of Fr. Chavara. At midnight on January 8th, 1846, occurred his touching and edifying death. He had been lying stretched on his bed, heroically enduring excruciating pains and peacefully awaiting the end. Then, as if inspired, he raised himself with another's help, and remaining in a kneeling posture, asked Fr. Chavara to give him the last absolution, and to enjoin his agony as penance. Then, this close follower of Jesus Crucified, in the same kneeling posture, made the sign of the cross, kissed lovingly the five wounds of the Crucifix he held in his hand, and finally kissing the picture of our Lady breathed his soul into the hands of his Creator.

8. By the death of Fr. Porukara, the whole burden of the infant institute fell on the shoulders of young Fr. Chavara, who from the very beginning had imbibed the spirit of Fr. Palakal and Fr. Porukara, and who from 1833 had consecrated himself and all his personal earnings for the noble work begun at Mannanam. Fr. Chavara was thus destined by God to complete the work of the two Founders and to develop and guide the life and activities of the Institute, delineated by them, to the formation of a canonical Religious Congregation, comprising both the contemplative and active life, in perfect harmony.



Very Rev. Fr. Cyriac Elias Chavara, the first "Prior" of the Congregation.

## CHAPTER III

### 1846—1856

### The Twofold Life—Profession of the First Eleven Fathers—Fr. Cyriac Elias (Chavara)—Missions and Retreats.

1. The priests and laymen, disciples of Fr. Porukara, continued obedient in all things to Fr. Chavara, after the former's death. The little community adopted as its motto, "sanctification of self




His Ex. Mgr. Fumasoni Biondi, Delegate Apostolic, at Mannanam, when the Very Rev. Fr. Gabriel of St. Joseph was the Prior General.

and the sanctification of others." They blended the contemplative with the active life, without a formally approved Rule of Life or Religious Vows. The Founders had in mind the institution of some kind of preaching Congregation, after the model of the Dominican Order.

2. From the very start, their active life was not confined to the sacerdotal ministry alone; it comprised also the work of teaching in Seminaries and the Apostolate of the Press. Hence, the nature of the active life the Founders had in view, was more or less similar to that of modern active Religious Institutions. In fact, from their programme of active service, they did not exclude anything that was necessary for or conducive to the glory of God and the salvation of souls in this Mission country, as far as was compatible with the Rules and Constitutions under which they lived.

3. The active life was to be a sequel to the contemplation that gave them the life and spirit of true Apostolic pioneers. The spiritual exercises practised daily at Mannanam from the beginning were as follows:—After morning prayers the Priests said the Divine Office, after which all recited the five Joyful Mysteries of the Rosary and the Rosaries of the Five Holy Wounds and of the Seven Dolours and concluded with a petition to St. Joseph for preserving intact the virtue of Holy Purity. Next followed the celebration of Masses and the recitation of the Litany of all Saints. At noon, before meals, were said in common the five Sorrowful Mysteries of the Rosary and other prayers addressed to the Five Holy Wounds and to St. Joseph, and lastly a prayer for obtaining divine love and courage to suffer pains and afflictions for love of God. In the evening, at the sound of the Angelus, all gathered together; the one appointed, after announcing the name of the Saint of the following day, would recite in Syro-Chaldaic




The Archbishop of Ernakulam at Karukutty Branch—House.

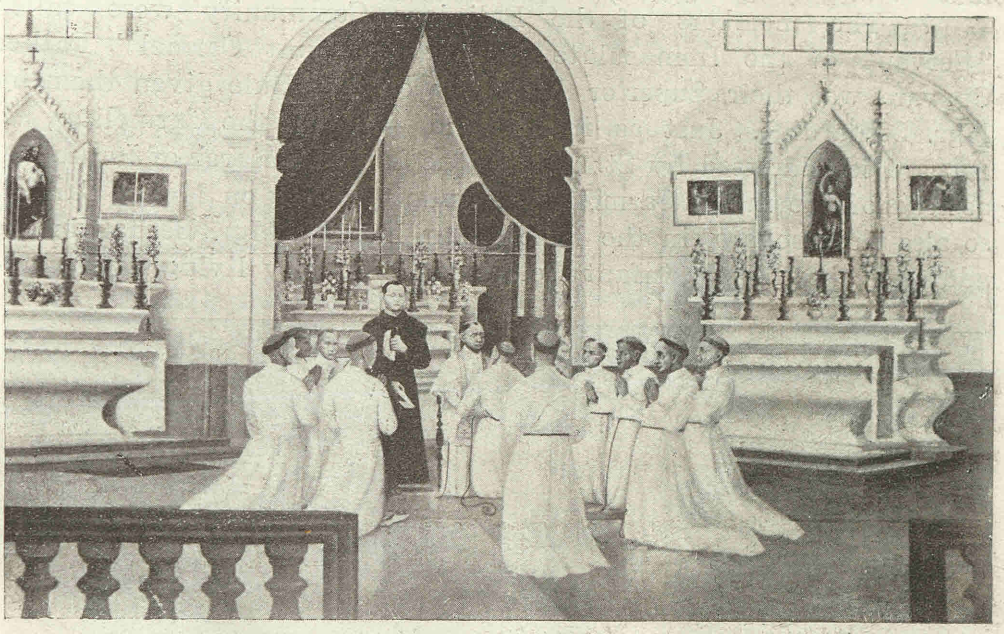
the antiphon, "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew Thy Holy Spirit within me," to which all would respond in the same tongue, "Cast me not away from Thy presence and take not away Thy Holy Spirit from me." This was followed by meditation, the points being read from a Malayalam book, called 'Gnana Muthu Mala' (Garland of Spiritual Pearls). The meditation ended with the recitation of the five Glorious Mysteries of the Rosary and prayers in honour of St. Joseph, Our Lady of Mt. Carmel, and the Five Wounds of our Lord. To these were added certain devotions in honour of St. Dominic, which were practised by Fr. Palakal in the Pallipuram Seminary. As a rule, they retired at 10 p.m., except during the great Lent (50 days preceding Easter), when the Vigil was protracted till midnight. All the rest of the time was devoted to study, teaching and manual work.

4. The contemplative and active life, begun under the direction of Mgr. Stabilini, and tacitly approved by Mgr. Francis Xavier, attracted the attention of Mgr. Ludovic who, in 1850, expressed his desire of having the Institute approved by the Holy See.

5. In 1852, Mgr. Ludovic was called to Rome and Mgr. Bernardine of St. Teresa, O. C. D., was nominated Administrator Apostolic of Verapoly. Mgr. Bernardine took very keen interest in the Religious Community at Mannanam. After studying the mode of life embraced by Fr. Chavara and his followers, and knowing their desire of binding themselves to God by Religious Vows, he sent them the ancient Rule and Constitutions of the Discalced Carmelites, modified to suit the circumstances of time, place and Rite. Rev. Fr. Marcelline, a European Missionary of the First Order of the Discalced Carmelites, (afterwards coadjutor Vicar Ap. of Malabar for the Syro-Chaldeans), was sent to Mannanam to preach a retreat of ten days preparatory to the Feast of the Immaculate Conception, 8th of December, 1855, on which auspicious day it was settled that all who desired it, might pronounce their Religious Vows.

6. Two Priests, eight Seminarians and one lay postulant, finding it hard to follow the Rules, left the Community. Fr. Marcelline O. C. D., on the day fixed, officiated solemnly, in the name of the

local Ordinary at the Religious Profession of the three Vows of Poverty, Chastity and Obedience, made by Father Chavara, who immediately after, in quality of Superior of the new Religious Community, received the Vows of ten others, who together with him, formed the First Eleven Professed Fathers of the Congregation:

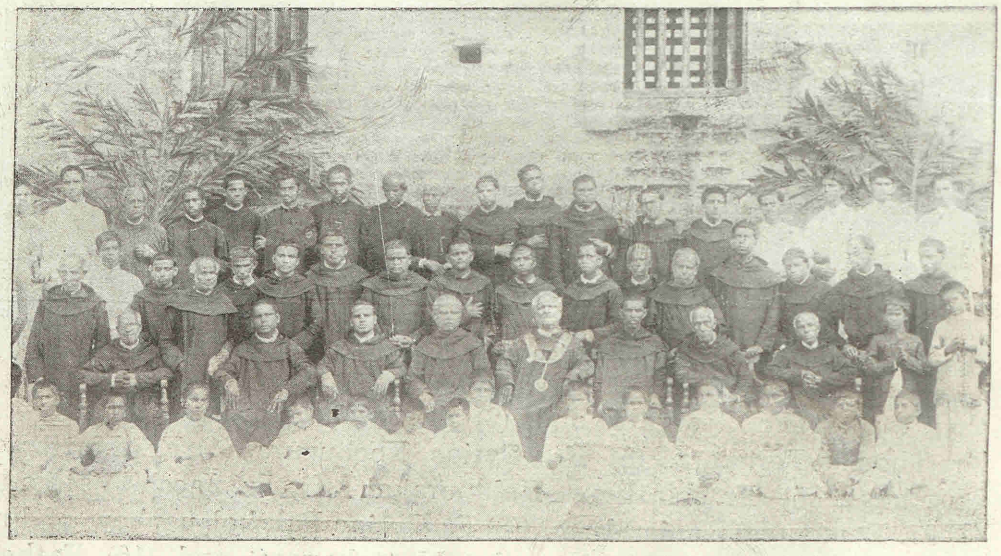


The Religious Profession of the First Eleven Fathers, 1855.

they were (1) Fr. George Thopil, (2) Fr. Cyriac Porukara, brother of Fr. Thomas Porukara, (3) Fr. Cyriac Kochupura, (4) Fr. Matthew Munjanat, (5) Fr. Matthew Kalapurakal, (6) Fr. Jacob Valliara, (7) Fr. Emmanuel Kaniarakam, (8) Fr. Cyriac Palakal, nephew of Fr. Thomas Palakal, (9) Fr. Alexander Kattakayam, and (10) Father Zacharias Kalathil. This unique Religious function was witnessed by a large congregation that had assembled from far and near, attracted by the fragrance of spirituality and sanctity emanating from Mannanam, and spreading throughout the whole country. This event, as conspicuous before men and as precious in the eyes of God as it was hidden from the eyes of the world, evidently marks a golden epoch in the history of the Church in Malabar, for

her chosen children of the second Spring, consecrated themselves to God through the hands of Mary on this auspicious occasion of the Anniversary of the Definition of the Dogma of the Immaculate Conception, which has contributed highly, ever since, to the spiritual and social resurrection and triumph of our Mother Church.

7. The members of the Religious Community were called "Servants of the Immaculate Mother of Mount Carmel". Father Chavara was their Superior by virtue of the Rule given them by Mgr. Bernardine. Just as in the old Rule of the Carmelites, St. Brocard is addressed by St. Albert, the Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem, as head of the infant Carmelite Community living on Mount Carmel, so also Fr. Chavara, in the Rule given him by Mgr. Bernardine, is addressed, head of the infant Religious Community living at Manna-



The Very Rev. Fr. Alexander of St. Joseph (Senior) Prior General, wearing the "Croce di Benemerenza" awarded by Pope Leo xiii.

nam. We have seen how Mgr. Bernardine, as local Ordinary, gave Fr. Chavara a Rule of life, for a community already formed with ecclesiastical approbation, by the labours of Fathers Palakal, Porukara and Chavara. But it is not to be passed over in silence that Mgr. Bernardine was, on account of his paternal and sym-

pathetic dealings with Fr. Chavara and his followers, more than a mere Ordinary.

8. Father Cyriac Chavara, dropping off his family name, took at his Profession, as is customary in many Religious Institutes, the name, Cyriac Elias of the Holy Family. Later on, all the other Religious as well, at their clothing began, to change also their Christian name, which they had received in Baptism,—a practice which is still observed in the Congregation.

9. A leathern girdle was the only external sign which distinguished the First Professed Fathers from the Secular Clergy, who wore a white soutane. In addition to the girdle, they wore beneath the religious robe a small-sized, brown, woollen Scapular.

10. During the ten months that followed, the newly Professed led a perfectly retired life under the direction of Fr. Marcelline, O. C. D., who taught them, with all diligence and assiduity, the principles and practices of Religious life.

11. After this term of perfect retirement and union with God, the Fathers began their active life. In company with Fr. Marcelline, O. C. D., they began to preach Retreats and Missions in the churches of Malabar, from one end to the other. This Mission veritably began to renew the face of Malabar and immensely contributed to make it spiritually what it is to-day. This public service, no doubt, was the incentive for the many vocations to the Religious life that followed. The First Professed Fathers were accomplished preachers, this, combined with the odour of their sanctity, gave unfailing efficacy to their words. Some of them were asked to preach the word of God at any time they happened to arrive at a church. People gathered at the ringing of the bells; they listened with rapt attention to the inspiring sermons of the Fathers as we read in the life of Fr. George of St. Joseph, (Thopil). Fr. Alexander of St. Joseph, (Kattakayam) was so famous a preacher that even to-day he is known by the name, "Second Xavier." There was no church in Malabar, where Fr. Alexander of St. Joseph did not preach more than once. The Fathers made it a point always to devote one of the daily instructions of the Retreats to the devotion to the

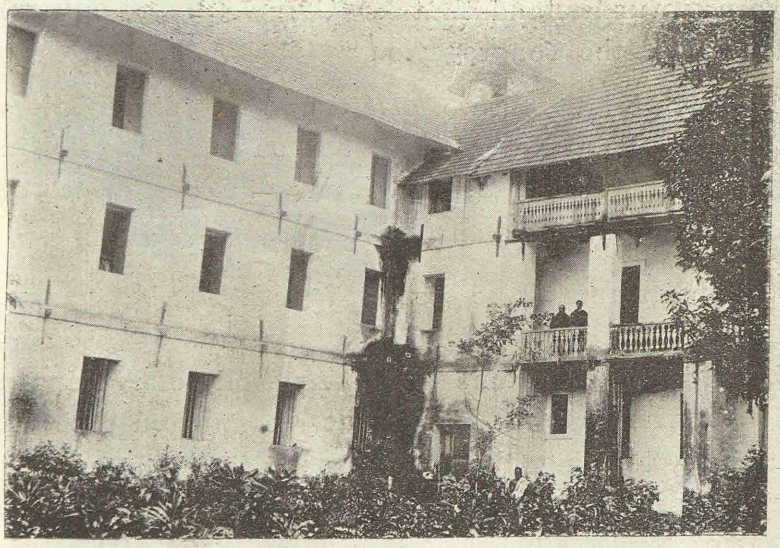
Sacred Heart of Jesus, to the Seven Dolours of our Lady and to St. Joseph. These three are the chief family devotions of Malabar to-day. The services of the Fathers were eagerly sought for to help the people, especially on their death-bed and in their agony; their popularity among all classes is evinced by their success in pacifying complicated quarrels and family disputes which saved many, not only from spiritual but also from material ruin.

## CHAPTER IV

## 1856–1860

# The Monastery of Coonamavu—Fr. Cyriac Elias (Chavara), Superior General—The Monasteries of Elthuruth, Vazhakulam and Plasanal.

1. Owing to the active work of the Fathers, the Congregation began to spread abroad and new Monasteries came into existence. The church of St. Philomena at Coonamavu with the adjoining house built by Mgr. Francis Xavier, was in 1857 turned into a Monastery by Mgr. Bernardine, to introduce Religious life among the Christians of the Latin Rite; the inmates of the house were four Latin Priests selected by that Prelate himself. Fr. Philip, O. C. D., (a European Missionary), was appointed their Superior. The four Latin Priests had not the courage to persevere; consequently, the vacant Monastery was handed over to the Fathers of Mannanam to establish therein a new house of the Congregation.



Monastery of Coonamavu.

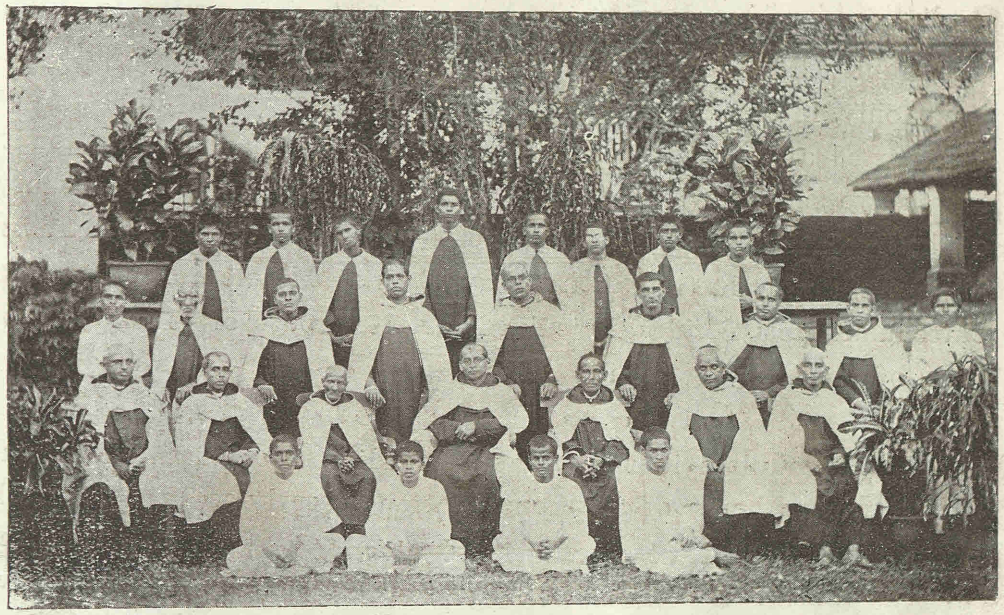
Fr. Marcelline was in this connection transferred to Coonamavu to take the place of Fr. Philip. Mgr. Bernardine, for this purpose, wrote through Fr. Marcelline to Fr. Cyriac Elias (Chavara) to send some Fathers to Coonamavu to take possession of the church and the house, expressly stating in that document, that Coonamavu was henceforth to belong to the Syrian Community. Thus in 1857 two Professed Fathers and two novices in Minor Orders from Mannanam occupied the Monastery of Coonamavu, and Fr. Marcelline took up the office of Superior. Since Fr. Marcelline had to accompany the Fathers to preach retreats in various churches, Fr. Cyriac Elias (Chavara) was appointed by Mgr. Bernardine "Prior" also of Coonamavu Monastery. Fr. Cyriac Elias (Chavara) after taking charge of the house at Coonamavu substituted Fr. Matthew (Munjanat), a member of the Congregation, as his Vicar, and returned to Mannanam. This fact and its repetition in the case of other Monasteries, give us to understand that Fr. Cyriac Elias (Chavara) was Superior General of the Congregation.

2. Foreseeing the bright future awaiting the Congregation, Mgr. Bernardine appointed Fr. Philip to act as his delegate in matters pertaining to the Congregation, and he, in consequence of his appointment, took up his residence at Coonamavu.

3. Till 1859, postulants were received both at Mannanam and at Coonamavu. For the uniformity of training Mgr. Bernardine, who by this time became Vicar Apostolic of Verapoly, ordered all the postulants to be lodged at Coonamavu with Fr. Philip as their Master, during the novitiate career. The novices, after their course of studies and ordination to Priesthood, had to undergo one year of Noviceship before they were admitted to their Vows which were always simple and perpetual.

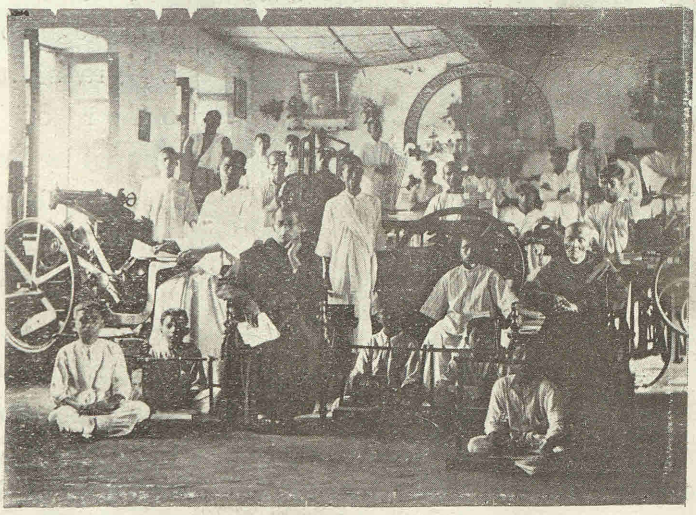
4. The fame of the Religious life led at Mannanam and of the Missions preached by the Fathers, made Fr. Antony Thottunkal of

Kandasankadavu of the present Diocese of Trichur, visit Mannanam



Fathers and the Lay-Erother novices, St. Mary's Monastery, Elthuruth.

and spend a few months there. He returned home with the idea of starting a Monastery in his native place. The Priests and laymen of Trichur and the neighbouring parishes, heartily co-operated; in 1851, Elthuruth, (Isle of God) near Arnattukara was chosen as the site for the Monastery. It was only after a satisfactory test of the regular discipline observed by the Fathers at Mannanam that in



Industrial School, Elthuruth.

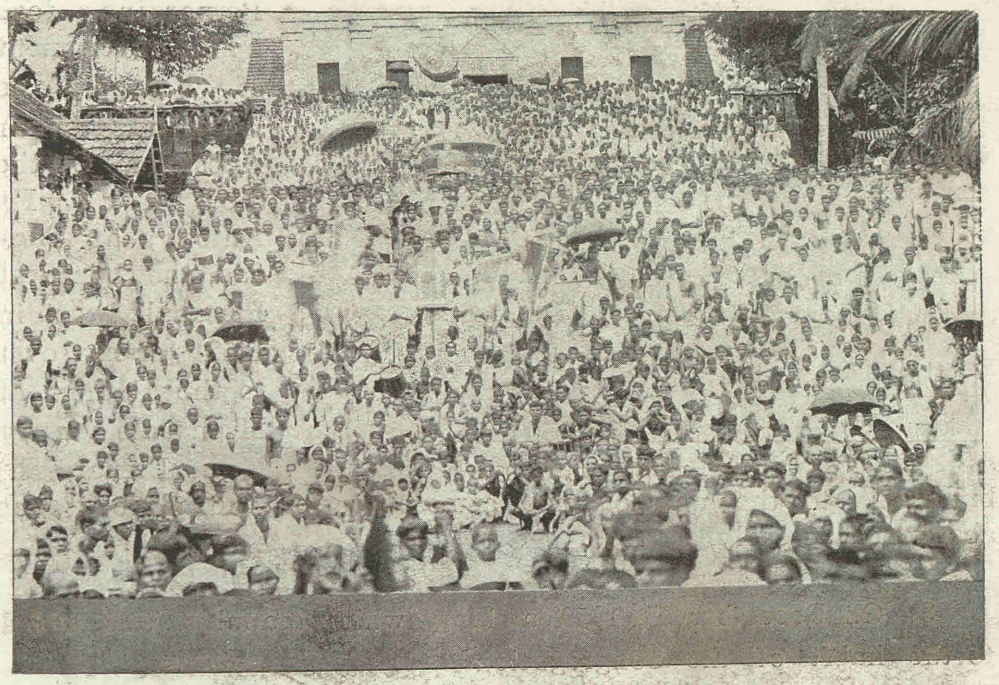
1852, Mgr. Bernardine gave his consent to the erection of the new Monastery. In 1858, Fathers were sent to Elthuruth to begin Community life there, although regular Religious life was to begin there only later on. Along with the Monastery a Seminary was also started after the model of the one at Mannanam. This Monastery, as we shall see, has played a very important part in the history of the Syro-Malabar Church. Elthuruth now is the seat of a Printing Press, an Industrial School, an English Middle School, and a Catechumenate. Besides, it is the Novitiate House of the Lay Brothers of the Congregation.

5. Vazhakulam in the present Archdiocese of Ernakulam was blessed with a house of the Congregation as early as 1859. A well-wisher, Fr. Matthew Nampiaparampil, made to the Congregation a gratuitous offer of a chapel he had built there, along with its site where rose the Monastery of our Lady of Mount Carmel of Vazhakulam. The dominant figure that almost single-handed carried out the work of building the massive church, monastery and seminary at Vazhakulam, and guided the destiny of that institution till his death, in the capacity of Superior, was the



The Inmates of Vashakulam Monastery. (Inset) Fr. Jacob of St. Mary, (Kanatt).

talented and able Fr. Jacob of St. Mary (Kanatt). Regular,



The Feast of Our Lady of Mount Carmel at Vashakulam Monastery Church, 1930.

monastic life was commenced at Vashakulam in 1859. Now it includes an English Middle School and a Catechumenate.

6. Here, a word about the Plasanal Institution, seems to be not out of place. Fr. Antony Kudakachira from Palai of the present Diocese of Changanacherry, an alumnus of the Mannanam Seminary, was not on good terms with Fr. Thomas Porukara, one of the two co-founders of the Congregation. At Plasanal near Poonjar, Fr. Antony opened a rival religious house where he and his followers gave themselves up to external penances. They followed the ancient Rule of St. Antony.

7. The friendly relations between Fr. Antony and Mgr. Ludovic having been broken, the former proceeded to Babylon with the hope

of bringing down a Chaldean Bishop. This was in 1853, when Mgr. Bernardine took up the government of Verapoly as Administrator Apostolic. On the death of Fr. Antony, at Bagdad, the house at Plasanal was in 1858 given over to the Fathers of Mannanam by Mgr. Bernardine; but owing to the unwholesome atmosphere of the place it was abandoned as early as 1860.



Branch-House, Poonjar, 1930.

8. On December 25, 1859, a long white scapular was added to the habit of the Congregation. It was Mgr. Bernardine who designed and imposed it as though to manifest his intention of affiliating the Congregation to the First Order of Discalced Carmelites.

9. In 1860, Fr. Leopold, O. C. D., (a European Missionary), was appointed Master of Novices at Coonamavu in place of Fr. Philip, O.C.D., who still continued to be the Delegate of Mgr. Bernardine.



Fr. Leopold, O. C. D., Novice Master.

# CHAPTER V

## 1860–1861

## The Title T. O. C. D. of the Congregation.

1. Although the name and institution of a "Third Order" are not to be sought for in history, earlier than in the 13th century, still the Knights Templars, the Oblates of St. Benedict and the Norbertines, may be called Tertiaries in the modern sense of the



The Golden Jubilee Celebration of the Profession of the First Eleven Fathers, Mannanam, 1905.

term. In the 13th century, when the religious status of ecclesiastics reached a very low ebb, laymen offered themselves for the office of preaching and teaching. Not being well instructed themselves, some of them hopelessly erred, as was the case with the Waldenses, while others, e.g., the Humiliats, had to limit their work to moral instruction alone. Some of these last mentioned received Holy Orders and the rest remained in the world under the spiritual

direction of Priests, both Secular and Regular, and were called "Tertiaries." Their union was known as the Third Order. This is the origin of "Third Orders."

2. In course of time, all the ancient Mendicant Orders began to have Tertiaries under them; they were trained and directed according to the spirit of the Order of which they were Tertiaries.

3. Tertiaries are divided into Tertiary Regulars and Tertiary Seculars. The former live in community and take Religious Vows with or without dependence upon the Orders whose namesthey assume. The latter have no community life and their union is, in all things, similar to



His Ex. Mgr. Peter Pisani, Delegate Apostolic, who visited the important Houses of the Congregation.

a Confraternity, except for the special promise, which makes it a kind of Religious Institution or Order. Tertiary seculars are sometimes allowed, by privilege, to use the habit of the Order of which theyare Tertiaries. The Franciscan Third Order of Seculars, in the latter part of the 13th century, gave birth to the Third Order of Regulars with simple vows, although they themselves, in the 15th century, became strictly Regulars by converting the simple vows into solemn ones. Their institute is still known as the Third Order of the Franciscan Regulars. In the 19th century were founded a number of Congregations of nuns with simple vows adopting the Rule of St. Francis, though without dependence upon the Franciscan Order; they were called Franciscan Tertiary Regular Congregations or Franciscan Third Orders Regular. These Third Orders were affiliated to the First Order; the affiliation was believed by some as bestowing on the latter, jurisdiction over the former.

4. We shall now see how the community of "The servants of the Immaculate Mother of Mount Carmel" was made a Tertiary Regular Congregation of the Discalced Carmelite Order with dependence upon it.

5. In 1861, Mgr. Bernardine, O. C. D., informed the Fathers of Coonamavu Monastery that the General Chapter of the Discalced Carmelite Order, held in Rome in 1860, had received the Congregation as its Third Order; that the Prior General of the Discalced Carmelites had nominated him (Mgr. Bernardine) his Vicar Provincial, with faculty to erect new houses, and that by virtue of this affiliation the members of the Congregation had acquired the right of participation in the good works of the First Order.

6. This radical change in the constitution of the infant Congregation had been hinted at by Fr. Marcelline, O.C.D., when he, in 1860, paid a canonical visit to the Monasteries of Mannanam and Coonamavu where he made the important revelation that the visit was in the name of the Prior General of the First Order.

7. It is to be noted here that this affiliation to the Carmelite First Order, which was to nullify the status of the Congregation

begun as an independent institution, was not asked for by the Fathers of the Congregation. This is all the more evident from the fact that Fr. Cyriac Elias (Chavara), Superior General of the Congregation, was not by the new settlement deprived



The solemn celebration of the feast of St. Teresa of the Infant Jesus, Mannanam, 1924.

of his office, although that office, had not been canonically imposed, nor ecclesiastically acknowledged. Fr. Cyriac Elias (Chavara) had even a successor in the capacity of Superior General. By the new organisation, the Prior General of the First Order was to receive the Vows of the members of the Congregation either in person or through his delegate. Since Mgr. Bernardine was more than a father to all, and since Fr. Cyriac Elias (Chavara) virtually retained his former position, none of the Fathers made any complaint concerning these newly introduced modifications.

8. Fr. Leopold, O.C.D., Master of Novices, from 1860, was, in 1863, nominated delegate in the place of Fr. Philip, O. C. D. He brought into force the rule that every year, after the feast of

the Patronage of St. Joseph, the Superiors (Vicars) of all the monasteries should assemble in General Chapter at Coonamavu to discuss matters of common interest, and that every third year new Superiors should be elected. These elections began in 1864, but the Superiors-elect did not as heretofore receive their appointment to office at the hands of Fr. Cyriac Elias (Chavara) but from the Vicar Ap. of Verapoly, Vicar Provincial of the Prior General of the First Order.

9. Fr. Cyriac Elias (Chavara), who for 31 years had been residing at Mannanam, was asked to remove to Coonamavu where the delegate of the Vicar Provincial was. Fr. Cyriac Elias (Chavara) obeyed, and Fr. Cyriac Eliseus (Porukara), brother of Fr. Thomas Porukara, was made Vicar of Mannanam Monastery.

10. We shall now pass on to the storm of the Rocosian Schism which greatly impeded the rapid growth of the Congregation.

# CHAPTER VI

## 1861–1866

## The Rocosian Schism and the Congregation – The Monastery of Pulincunnu.

1. Ever since the Synod of Diamper in 1599, the Syrians of Malabar were sighing for a Bishop of their own Rite. Those Syrians who were under the Padroado regime had frequent negotiations with the Chaldeans of Mesopotamia, who were ready to do anything to establish a Chaldean Bishop in Malabar. Father Antony Kudakachira, a secular priest, after causing some agitation in Malabar, proceeded to Babylon for the same purpose. With him went another secular priest, Fr. Antony Thondanat, and some others. The Chaldean Patriarch, Mar Joseph Audo, did not concede to their request. Whereupon, Fr. Antony Kudakachira returned to Malabar to create a party and to prepare a petition to Rome, and to take it back to Babylon, to be endorsed by the Patriarch, before it was forwarded to the Holy See. In spite of the protest of Fr. Cyriac Elias (Chavara) and of the whole Congregation with him, Father Antony Kudakachira returned to Babylon, armed with the signatures of many priests. He died on the way at Bagdad.

2. Upon the death of Fr. Kudakachira, Fr. Antony Thondanat took up the cause, and urging the Chaldean Patriarch by means legitimate and illegitimate, succeeded in having a Chaldean Bishop, Mar Thoma Rocos, sent with him to Malabar. This is the beginning of the Rocosian Schism which took its hold in Malabar, in 1861.

3. The Carmelite Congregation, headed by Fr. Cyriac Elias (Chavara) spared no pains to extirpate the Schism. Before Rocos reached Malabar, Fr. Cyriac Elias informed all the churches of Malabar that a Chaldean Bishop had set out for Malabar without a canonical mission from Rome; he proved his assertion by credentials Mgr. Bernardine had received from the Holy See.

4. The Rocos party, on the contrary, led by Fr. Thondanat, left no stone unturned to convince the people that Rocos was sent to Malabar by the Holy See. The majority of the Syrian churches of Malabar joined the schismatic Bishop. Fr. Cyriac Elias was then nominated Vicar General of the Syrians with extraordinary facul-



The Sacerdotal Golden Jubilee of the Very Rev. Fr. Alexander of St. Joseph (Senior), the First indigenous Prior General of the Congregation, Mannanam, 1903.

ties. In the name of the Syro-Malabar Church and of the Congregation, he at once wrote to His Holiness, Pope Pius IX, requesting fresh information and instruction. The Holy Father sent him a very kind reply dated September 5, 1861, encouraging him and the Fathers under him and commending their true zeal for the glory of God and of His Holy Catholic Church. The letter was written both in Latin and Syro-Chaldaic and was signed by the Holy Father himself.

## LETTER OF THE HOLY FATHER IN SYRO-CHALDAIC

## Literal Translation of the Letter

### Pope Pius IX

To Our beloved sons, Father Cyriac Elias, Prior, Fathers Alexander and Eliseus and others of the Syro-Malabar Rite, peace and Apostolic benediction.

We inform Your Reverences that We have received your loyal letter written on the 9th of June of this year, which you, beloved sons, sent to Us with prayer and entreaty to know in what manner you ought to deal with Bishop Rocos who arrived amongst you last year on the second of May bearing with him a letter of Our Venerable Brother Mar Joseph, Patriarch of Babylon of the Chaldeans, and

stating that he has been sent by Patriarch Joseph at Our command to govern the Church of Malabar. We greatly rejoiced and even now rejoice, and it pleased Us much, that to remove from among you all danger of error in this grave matter, you consulted this Apostolic See and this Holy Church of Great Rome which is the Mother and Teacher of all other Churches.

Know ye, therefore, beloved children, that Rocos has come to you at the will and by the command of the Patriarch alone, while We had already written and ordered the same Patriarch in the year 1860 on the 26th of November, not to interfere at all in the affairs of the Church of Malabar. From this, know you, beloved sons, that Bishop Rocos is without ecclesiastical jurisdiction; let him be to you as one illegally sent and as one who has fallen under ecclesiastical censure.

Now, the true and lawful ruler of this Church of Malabar is Our beloved Brother, the Venerable Bernardine, Bishop of Parsala, whom We have appointed as Our Vicar there, and who is the representative of this Holy and Apostolic See, to whom you owe obedience. We also inform you that We have, immediately and without any delay, commanded Patriarch Joseph to recall Bishop Rocos from among you.

While We hasten to inform you of these things, as an earnest of all heavenly gifts and of Our paternal love for you, We impart to you from the bottom of Our heart the Apostolic blessing.

Written in the City of Rome, at the Holy Church of Simon Peter, on the 5th day of September, in the 16th year of Our Pontificate, the year of our Lord, 1861.

PIUS IX, POPE.

---

5. At the instance of the Holy See, the Chaldean Patriarch recalled Rocos. The Holy See had instructed Mgr. Bernardine to excommunicate Bishop Rocos if he disobeyed the orders of his Patriarch. Rocos would not quit Malabar. Fr. Cyriac Elias (Chavara)

and his Religious followers became the butt of the ridicule of the schismatics, who had even made up their minds to convert Mannanam and Elthuruth into residences of the schismatic Bishop.

6. Mgr. Bernardine drew up the sentence of excommunication against Rocos, which Fr. Matthew of St. Mary (Kappil), Vicar of Coonamavu Monastery, intrepidly read out in the Narakal church, where Rocos stood surrounded by his furious, fanatical partisans. Fr. Matthew of St. Mary was pursued by the bloodthirsty adherents of Rocos; but narrowly escaped by taking shelter with one of the Catholic families of the place. Whereupon, Rocos repented, and in 1862 embarked for Bagdad. Fr. Antony Thondanat accompanied him. Did Fr. Antony then think that he would be the cause of a similar Schism in 1874?

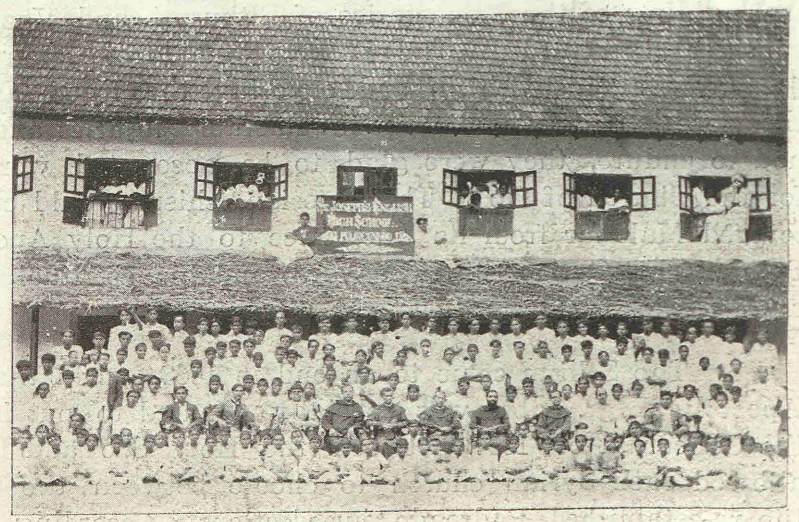
7. The whole Congregation whole-heartedly devoted itself to the Catholic cause during those turbulent days, so much so, that the building of the Monasteries of Elthuruth and Vazhakulam was considerably retarded. The Fathers went from church to church preaching against Schism and exposing the fraud and forgery of the Rocosian party amid the innumerable injuries and insults they had to endure, they were glad to be accounted worthy to suffer for the Church of God. The Rocosian Schism would certainly have severed Malabar from its allegiance to the Holy Apostolic See of Peter, if Fr. Cyriac Elias (Chavara) and his spiritual sons had not applied the right remedy at the proper time.

8. The Schism came to an end in 1863, when the Commissary Apostolic, Mgr. Saba, was specially deputed to put into execution the Concordat of 1857 between the Holy See and Portugal. He allowed each Syrian church to choose between the Verapoly and the re-established Padroado jurisdictions. According to the Concordat, this indulgence was granted only to the Syrian churches that had fallen into Schism. But the Commissary, in order to procure greater peace, extended it also to other churches that were under the Verapoly jurisdiction. This certainly was the cause of great loss to Verapoly; it was however repaired during the Vatican Council.

9. St. Sebastian's Monastery at Pulincunnu in the present Diocese of Changanacherry, planned before the Schism, was completed in 1866. It was the parishioners of Pulincunnu that took the initial steps towards the building of this Monastery. Pulincunnu as well, not long after, became the seat of a Seminary. Now it possesses a Catechumenate and an English High School.



The Inmates of St. Sebastian's Monastery, Pulincunnu.



Manager, Staff and students, High School, Pulincunnu.

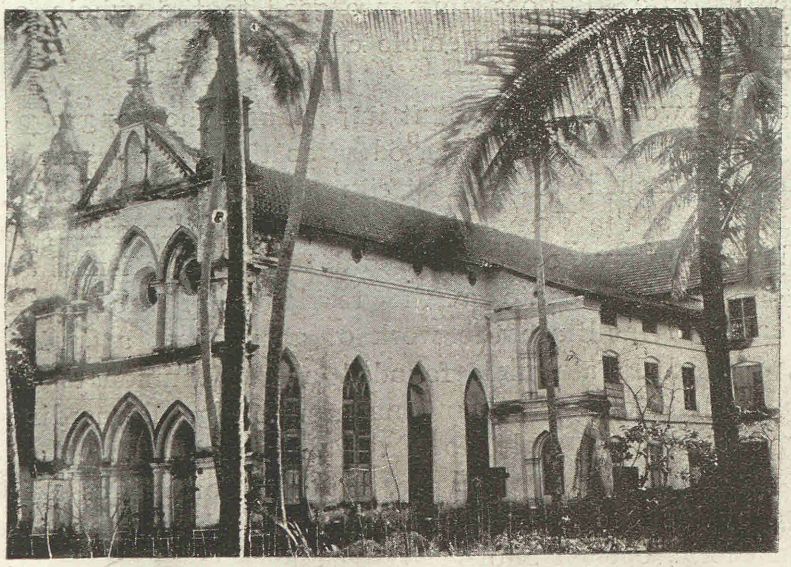
## CHAPTER VII

## 1866—1873

### Carmelite Sisters—Catechumenates—Death of Mgr. Bernardine—The Monasteries of Ampalacat and Mutholy—The Syrian Breviary—Fr. Cyriac Elias (Chavara's) death—Fr. Cyriac Eliseus (Porukara).

1. The years that followed the departure of Rocos from Malabar witnessed extraordinary activities in the Congregation. The great work the Fathers were able to achieve for the Church during the turbulent days of the Schism was appreciated by all; it gave an impetus for embellishing the Seminaries attached to the Monasteries of Mannanam, Elthuruth, Vazhakulam and Pulincunnu.

2. Fr. Cyriac Elias (Chavara) directed his activities in other directions also. With the advice of Fr. Leopold, O. C. D., in 1866, he laid the foundation of the now flourishing Congregation of Carmelite Sisters of the Syro-Malabar Rite. He collected alms from the Syrian parishes with which the Coonamavu Nunnery was



General View of the Chapel and the Nunnery, Coonamavu.

built; it is the Mother-House of the Carmelite Convents of Sisters scattered throughout the Syro-Malabar Church. Mgr. Bernardine



Sisters with their boarders, Carmelite Convent, Changanacherry.

approved of the Institute. It does immense good to the whole of Malabar, especially in the field of Female education.

3. The apostolic work of paramount importance, the Congregation was able to effect during this period, was the establishment of Catechumenates attached to Monasteries and parish churches. The European Fathers of the Verapoly Mission did not then go about converting infidels as they now do. Candidates for Baptism had to be sent to the Catechumenate at the residence of the Vicar Apostolic. In order to facilitate the work of conversion, a Syrian Secular Priest, Fr. M. Palakunnel, founded a Catechumenate at Koraty in the present Diocese of Changanacherry. Mgr. Bernardine most willingly extended all help to Fr. Palakunnel. The then Padroado "Govarnador" of Cranganore, Antony Correa Dos Reis Coelho, assisted by his Secretary, Rev. Emmanuel Nidiry, an indigenous Syrian Cleric, opened another Catechumenate at Athirampusha, near Mannanam. Fr. Chavara followed suit and opened one at Mannanam in 1866 and another in the parish of Edathwa.

4. Almost all the monasteries of the Congregation imitated the Mother-House in opening Catechumenates attached to them. In these, many adults and infants are cared for, instructed and baptized every year. During the period between 1866 and 1931, more than 20,000 souls were gained to Christ by the missionary zeal of the Fathers of the Congregation. The number would have been larger still, if they had vaster material resources at their disposal.



Catechumenate, Mutholy.



Catechumenate, Kurianad.

5. The Congregation which was making admirable progress in every direction, received a shock by the death of Mgr. Bernardine, O.C.D., on September 5, 1868. To his indefatigable zeal and paternal solicitude the Congregation owes its canonical formation and early progress. A little before his death Mgr. Bernardine added a white hood to the habit of the Congregation. On the introduction of the hood, the biretta and collar fell into disuse.

6. The great uplift Malabar witnessed in the 19th century is mainly to be attributed to the zeal of Mgr. Bernardine and his Vicar General, Fr. Cyriac Elias (Chavara). It is worthy of mention that at this time the whole of the Syrian Church was divided, by the Vicar General, into four Districts, each being entrusted to one of the Fathers of the Congregation. These Fathers were known, so to say, as the "Plenipotentiaries" or "Deputies" of the Vicar Apostolic, each in his District. They had special charge over the Clergy and laity; they supervised School work, conducted Catechetical institutions, settled knotty disputes and quarrels and transacted other works of importance. Thus, the members of the Congregation, directed by Fr. Cyriac Elias (Chavara), visited, from the beginning, all the churches of Malabar, preached Retreats and Missions, corrected abuses, and even discharged parochial work, when the peculiar circumstances of a parish required it.




Catechumenate, Pulincunnu.



Catechumenate, Ampalacat.

7. Mgr. Bernardine had the happiness to see the beginnings of St. Teresa's Monastery at Ampalacat in the present Diocese of Trichur. The preparations for the erection of a Monastery at Ampalacat were set on foot in March 1868, when the local chieftain Ittoop Kanichai made a donation of a considerable portion of his property to the Congregation. The Monastery was completed during the early part of the regime of Mgr. Leonard



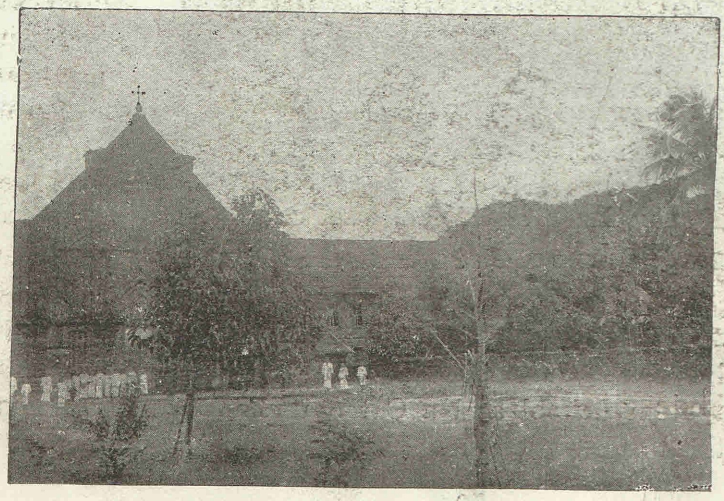
Fathers, Novices and Postulants, St. Teresa's Monastery, Ampalacat.

Mellano, O.C.D., who succeeded Mgr. Bernardine in November 1868. Ampalacat is the Novitiate House of the Congregation. An Elementary Malayalam School and a Catechumenate are under the management of the Fathers there.

8. The newly-appointed Vicar Apostolic, Mgr. Leonard, was called to the Vatican Council in September 1869. Committing the care of the Vicariate Apostolic to Fr. Philip, O. C. D., Mgr. Leonard, with Fr. Leopold, O.C.D., went to take part in the Council. Fr. Gerard, O.C.D., brother of Fr. Leopold, was to act as Delegate over the Congregation, during the absence of Fr. Leopold. In Rome, Mgr. Leonard was created Titular Archbishop of Nicomedia and authorised to admit to his jurisdiction any Syrian church of Malabar which, giving up the Padroado jurisdiction to which it had allied itself during the time of Mgr. Saba, willingly went over to Verapoly.



Mgr. Leonard Mellano, O.C.D., Archbishop Vicar Ap. of Verapoly.



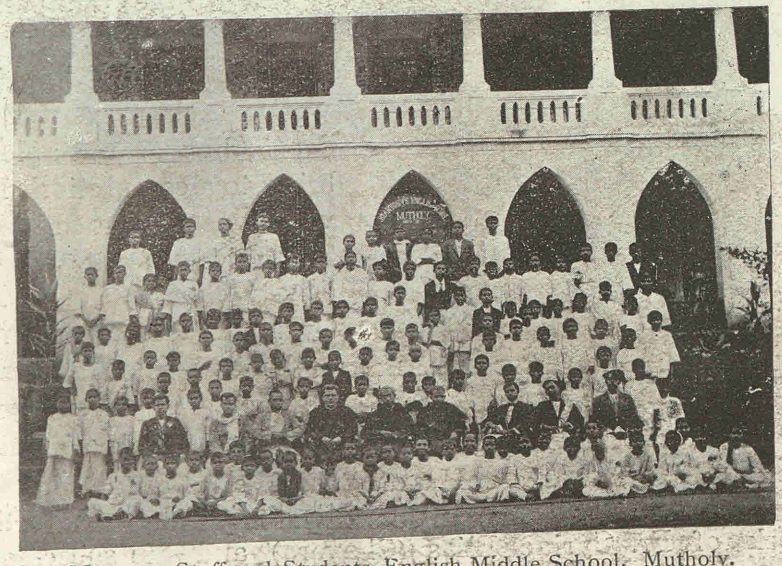
General View, Mutholy Monastery, 1925.

9. The leading laymen of the parishes of Palai and Cherpunkal of the present Diocese of Changanacherry, headed by Fr. Cheriath Karapusha and Fr. Joseph Thayil (afterwards the Pontifically Privileged Vicar

General of the Syrian Vicariate Apostolic of Kottayam) approached



Fathersland Students, inmates of the St. John's Monastery, Mutholy.



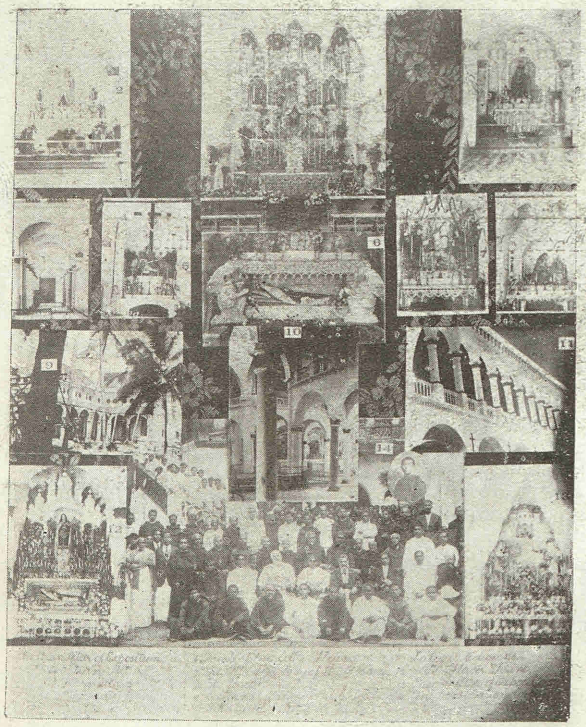
Manager, Staff and Students, English Middle School, Mutholy.

Mgr. Leonard before the latter embarked for Rome and obtained permission for a Monastery of the Congregation in their place. Fr. Cyriac Elias (Chavara) deputed by Mgr.

Leonard, approved of the hill of Mutholy as the site of the Monastery. The Mannoor family willingly made a donation of the hill where, in January 1870, in the presence of Fr. Gerard, O. C. D., the foundation of the present St. John's Monastery was laid by Fr. Philip, O. C. D., Pro-Vicar Apostolic. Mutholy is now one of the Houses of Studies of the Congregation. Attached to it there is also an English Middle School and a Catechumenate.

10. In November 1870, Mgr. Leonard returned from Rome. It is worthy of mention that, after the Vatican Council, the Prior General of the First Order of the Discalced Carmelites had only a nominal jurisdiction over the Congregation.

11. Mgr. Leonard was authorised by the Holy See to abridge the Divine Office recited by the Syro-Malabar Clergy; it was too lengthy and wanting in uniformity. He entrusted Fr. Cyriac Elias (Chavara) with this responsible task; collecting various MS. Codices from different parts of Malabar and consulting all the "Malpans" of Malabar Fr. Cyriac Elias set his hand to the work which, prevented by death, he was not able to bring to a completion. His work was continued by Fr. Zacharias of St. Joseph (Thattacherry) and Fr. Cyriac Eliseus (Porukara), both members of the Congregation. The present Syro-Malabar Divine Office owes its compilation in its abridged form, to the laborious work of Fr. Cyriac Elias (Chavara) and his successors.



St. Thomas Church, Pavaratty, with the Consecration Group.

The 'Officium Feriale' alone is recited by the Secular Clergy, while the Fathers of the Congregation, according to the ancient practice of the Malabar Church, recite Offices of Feasts which are either common or special.

12. The Syro-Malabar Calendar in its present form was drawn up by Fr. Cyriac Elias (Chavara). A document dated 14th Dec. 1863, bears testimony to the fact that it was through Fr. Cyriac Elias that the permission and the privilege to celebrate the important Feasts of the Carmelite Order, with the special faculty both to recite the Divine Office and to use during Mass the Epistle and Gospel readings, proper to the Feasts, was first granted to the Congregation by Mgr. Bernardine. From 1896, the Congregation, like any other Religious Institute of its status, has been using its own Calendar. The Feasts of all the Saints of Carmel are duly inserted in it. Fr. Cyriac Elias accurately wrote and published the Rubrics to be observed during the celebration of the Holy Sacrifice of Mass according to the Syro-Malabar Rite. The laudable practice that every church contributes five per cent of its income towards the "Mensa Episcopalis" owes its origin to Fr. Cyriac Elias. The holy custom of "Pidi-ari," originated by Fr. George of St. Joseph (Thopil) was first introduced into Malabar by Fr. Cyriac Elias. The faithful were asked to set apart in every house a special vessel, labelled "Infant Jesus'



House of Studies, Mangalore, 1931.

Treasury" and to put into it a handful of rice, three times a day, when rice was measured out for daily consumption. This quantity was collected at fixed intervals and used for charitable purposes according to the instructions of the Vicar Apostolic of Verapoly. The establishment of Confraternities of the B. V. Mary in the leading churches of Malabar was to a great extent due to this man of God. It was Fr. Palakal, one of the Co-Founders of the Congregation who started this devotion in Malabar.

13. It may not be passed over in silence that in matters pertaining to the Rite and the Liturgy of the Syro-Malabar Church, Fr. Cyriac Elias was a little influenced by the latinizing tendency of the period. He it was who, after having obtained the necessary permission from the Holy See through the Vicar Apostolic of Verapoly, translated from Latin into Syro-Chaldaic the complete Ceremonial of Holy Saturday to be performed in Syrian churches. It was first introduced in the Monastery churches.



The members of the Congregation who took part in the First Profession of 1855 and lived to see the Golden Jubilee in 1905.

14. On January 3, 1871, Fr. Cyriac Elias (Chavara) breathed his last at Coonamavu in the odour of sanctity. Foreseeing the approach of death, he freed himself of all administrative charges and gave himself up to prepare for it. In his last days he had inscribed over the door of his room that visitors might converse with him on no other but spiritual topics. At the hour of death he revealed to his spiritual children who were kneeling around his bed, lost in tears and prayers, that he had with the

help of God preserved intact his baptismal innocence; the same has been deposed by the many who were privileged to hear him at that solemn hour. He also left a legacy in writing to his spiritual sons consisting of a precious collection of exhortations on Religious Perfection.

15. From his childhood he had a tender devotion to the Blessed Sacrament and to the Blessed Virgin, which he tried to implant in the hearts of others. Several pieces of poetry written by him on the mysteries of the Christian Religion are still extant. He was a gifted orator, a man of great literary attainments. Fr. Cyriac Elias (Chavara), in short, was the elect of God for the great mission of resuscitating Malabar to a new life for which work he was profusely blessed with all the necessary qualities.

16. His mortal remains were translated from Coonamavu to Mannanam, the Mother-House of the Congregation, where they lie together with those of five others of the First Eleven Professed Fathers.

17. Fr. Cyriac Elias (Chavara) was succeeded in office by Fr. Cyriac Eliseus (Porukara), brother of Fr. Thomas Porukara. By a special decree, on February 22, 1871 Mgr. Leonard appointed him Superior General, then called "Prior," of all the Monasteries of the Congregation. He was also nominated Vicar General of South Malabar.



Very Rev. Fr. Cyriac Eliseus (Porukara), "Prior".

18. In May, 1873, was convoked an extraordinary General Chapter of the Congregation at Magnumey, the residence of the Archbishop Vicar Apostolic. Fr. Leopold then resigned his office; in his stead Fr. Philip was again made Delegate of the Archbishop Vicar Apostolic, who nominally held the place of Vicar Provincial. Owing to the difference of opinion among the Fathers, the modifications of the Constitutions introduced by this Chapter and published by Fr. Philip, were not put into execution. The modifications, including

the change of the title of the Congregation, were calculated to subjugate the Congregation entirely to the Archbishop Vicar Apostolic of Verapoly. Later on, the office of "Delegate" was abolished and the Archbishop Vicar Apostolic himself began directly to govern the Congregation.



## CHAPTER VIII

### 1873–1887

The Mellosian Schism—Petitions for an Indian Bishop—Bishop Leo Meurin, S. J.—Mgr. Marcelline, Coadjutor Bishop—The Monasteries of Thevara and Chethipusha—The Constitutions are approved "experimenti gratia"—Mgr. Agliardi, Delegate Apostolic—The separation of the Syrians from the Latins.

1. The quiet respite the Congregation enjoyed after the departure of Rocos, was all on a sudden disturbed by the appearance on the scene of another schismatic Bishop, Mar Elias Mellos, who came to Malabar in 1874. He was sent by the Chaldean Patriarch, at the request of some Syrian priests, mostly of the Padroado jurisdiction. He fixed his headquarters at Trichur and was joined by Fr. Antony Thondanat, the same that had long before returned to Malabar, consecrated, they say, Bishop, by the Nestorian Patriarch. In 1875, he got down another Chaldean Bishop, Mar Jacob, whom he set over the Schismatic churches of South Malabar.

2. The schismatics who were aware of the weakness of their cause, tried to convince the people that Mellos was sent by the Holy Father, Pope Pius IX; upon which Fr. Mathew Gregory (Kodupadam), a member of the Congregation, then Vicar of Ollur Parish Church, near Trichur, directly inquired of the Holy See to ascertain the truth; His Holiness, Pope Pius IX replied that Bishop Mellos was an intruder, illegally sent to Malabar against the express orders of the Holy See. Mellos was excommunicated and Mgr. Leonard gave a special commission to Fr. Cyriac Eliseus (Porukara) to fight against the Schism of which Trichur was the centre. The Fathers of the Congregation, foremost among them, Fr. Mathew of St. Mary (Kappil), Fr. Alexander of St. Joseph (Kattakayam), and Fr. Jacob of St. John of the Cross (Palakunnel)

fought against the growing Schism. They were supported by some of the leading families of the place and especially by Fr. Emmanuel Nidiry. The Mellosian party eventually lost footing, and the labours of the Fathers were again crowned with success, to the greater glory of Mother Church.



Fr. Jacob of St. John of the Cross (Palakunnel).

3. The Fathers were not slow to understand the psychology of the Malabar Syrians. Their longing for a Bishop of their own Rite to rule them, as heretofore and at any cost, was at the root of all the Schisms that again and again played havoc in the Church of Malabar. The Fathers therefore in due form submitted a petition to the Holy See in order to safeguard their Mother Church from any further attack of Schism, begging that the Syrians might be separated from the Verapoly jurisdiction and placed under a Bishop of their own Rite. The Secular Clergy joined hands in the enteprise with the leading Fathers of the Congregation. They requested some of the Vicars Apostolic of India to plead their cause before the Holy

See. Mgr. Leo Meurin, S. J., Vicar Apostolic of Bombay, in a particular manner, sympathised with Malabar; he made their cause his own.



Mar Aloysius Pareparampil, the first indigenous Vicar Apostolic of Ernakulam.

4. The Archbishop Vicar Apostolic of Verapoly, Mgr. Leonard, O. C. D., took offence at this course of action; seven Fathers, who took the lead in petitioning the Holy See, were forthwith expelled from the Congregation. One of these seven was the late Mar Aloysius Pareparampil who, in 1896, was eventually nominated by Leo XIII, one of the first three indigenous Vicars Apostolic to govern the Syrians. Moreover, the admission of fresh members into

the Congregation was discouraged. In 1875, Fr. Leopold, O. C. D., and his brother, Fr. Gerard, O. C. D., left Malabar for good. The Fathers keenly felt the separation from them, especially at that critical juncture. Both of them had evinced considerable sympathetic interest in the Congregation and the Congregation loved them as they deserved.

5. Matters had already reached a threatening attitude when Mgr. Leo Meurin S. J., of Bombay was appointed Visitor Apostolic of Malabar. In 1876, he reached Mannanam; Fr. Emmanuel Nidiry acted as his Secretary. Mannanam was fixed as the meeting place for the Syrian Priests and the leading laymen; there they could unveil their hearts to the Visitor Apostolic. The leading Fathers of the Congregation as well, were present. General meetings and private audiences were held. The Visitor Apostolic after studying well all sides of the question, promised he would do everything for the Syrians. He declared that the behaviour of the Fathers of the Congregation, in this respect, was not to be blamed and called the seven Fathers who were expelled, "The Seven Dolours of the Congregation," predicting at the same time that they would be turned into "Seven Joys." Those seven were permitted to re-enter the Congregation if they wished to.



Mgr. Leo Meurin, S.J.,
Visitor Apostolic of Malabar.

6. Mgr. Meurin visited several churches and the Monasteries of Coonamavu, Ampalacat and Elthuruth. For a long time he made Elthuruth his residence, exerting all his energies to crush the Schism of Mellos who had his headquarters at Trichur, and to recall the schismatics to the bosom of the Catholic Church. During his stay there, Mar Jacob, auxiliary to Mellos, was reunited with

the Church; Fr. Emmanuel Nidiry was the chief instrument in his conversion. He was lodged at Elthuruth; after a few months,



Elthuruth Monastery and the adjacent buildings.

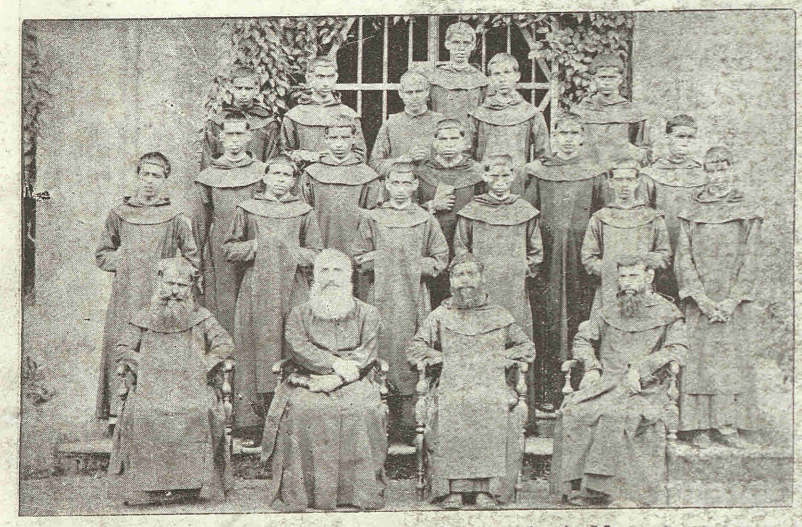
he accompanied Mgr. Meurin to Bombay whence he embarked to his native country.

7. When Mgr. Meurin's report reached the Holy See, another Commissary Apostolic, Mgr. Ignatius Persico, O. M. Cap., was sent to Malabar; after visiting the Seminary of Puthenpally and the Monastery of Coonamavu he had a private conference with Mgr. Meurin at Elthuruth; then after interviewing several persons and visiting some places in India he returned to Rome.

8. Mgr. Meurin's visit had its immediate result. Fr. Marcelline, O. C. D., was appointed Coadjutor Bishop to Mgr. Leonard to govern the Syrians. He was consecrated in October 1877. A few days before his consecration, Mgr. Meurin, 'expleto officio,' returned to Bombay after having won the grateful hearts of the Syrians. From his letters to Fr. Aloysius Pareparampil and others, it is clear that

in compliance with a request made at Mannanam by the Syrian priests and some laymen, he had recommended a Jesuit Bishop assisted by a Syrian Bishop from Malabar, to govern the Syrians.

9. The relations the Congregation had with Mgr. Meurin, were the prelude to the innumerable benefits it has, from that date, received and will continue to receive from the Society of Jesus of which Mgr. Meurin was a distinguished member.



The Carmelite Fathers and the Scholastics in Mangalore with Rev. Fr. Zanetti, S.J., Rector of the St. Joseph's Seminary, 1896.

10. Bishop Mellos, seeing his party daily grow weaker and weaker, departed for Mesopotamia in 1882, entrusting the care of the forty churches that acknowledged him, to Bishop (?) Thondanat and to the Corepiscopus Augustine of Mesopotamia. All the churches, except that of Trichur, gradually came over to the Catholic Communion. The Protestant Nestorians of Trichur are the residue of the once turbulent Schism of Mellos.

11. In spite of misrepresentations regarding the Fathers' efforts to have a Syrian Bishop rule over the Syrians, the Holy See all along had in mind the interests of the Congregation. In his letter to Mgr. Meurin, dated 27th August 1877, Cardinal Franchi, Prefect of the Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of Faith, after speaking of the separation of the Syrians from the Latins, says: "Qua in re peculiaris sollicitudo geritur Tertiariorum Syro-Malabarensium quorum institutum S. Congregationi semper cordi fuit et est.....".

12. Mgr. Marcelline, by the new settlement, became the "Diocesan Superior" of the Congregation. According to the instructions of the Holy See, he convoked a General Chapter of the Congregation in December 1877 at Coonamavu and himself presided over its sessions. The Constitutions were modified and forwarded to the Holy See for approbation.



Mgr. Marcelline, O. C. D.

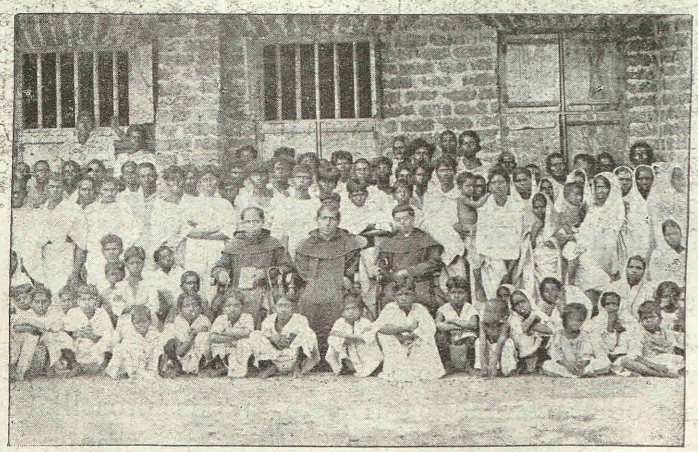
13. When Leo XIII was elected Pope, Fr. Cyriac Eliseus (Porukara) in the name of the Congregation sent him his homage, to which His Holiness replied in words of praise of the Congregation, encouraging all its activities. The letter was a pretty long one and was signed by the Holy Father himself. Fr. Cyriac Eliseus was addressed in it: "Prior General" of the Congregation. Here is an extract from the letter:

"Jamvèro gratum omnino et Nobis erit, Dilecte Fili, in iis quae respiciunt bonum vestrum et Syriacae gentis praedicti Praedecessoris Nostri vestigiis studiose insistere; ac persuasum Vobis esse volumus Nobis maxime cordi esse in iis procellis et perturbationibus, in quibus versamini, tranquilitatem omnium, et spirituales utilitates vestras promovere et nihil Nos magis cupere, quam ut Institutum vestrum, a quo si rectum cursum teneat, plura

bona expectanda sunt, reflorescat, et firmatis optimis disciplinae regulis, ac debita obedientia legitimae auctoritati fideliter servata, propositum sibi finem, incrementum religionis et salutem animarum feliciter assequatur."

"It will be extremely pleasing to Us, Beloved Son, to follow carefully in the footsteps of Our above mentioned Predecessor in those things which concern the good of your Congregation and that of the Syrian people; We wish that you be convinced that We have greatly at heart to promote the peace of all and the spiritual advantages of your Institute, in the midst of the storms and disturbances in which you are involved, and We do desire nothing more than that your Congregation, from which much good might be expected if it keeps to the proper course, might flourish and being strengthened by very good disciplinary rules, and observing faithfully due obedience to legitimate authorities, might happily attain the end it has in view, namely, the increase of religious fervour and the salvation of souls."

14. The beginnings of the Monasteries of Thevara and Chethipusha are to be traced in this connection: Fr. Jacob of St. Mary (Kanatt), Vicar of Vashakulam Monastery, obtained permission from Mgr. Marcelline to build a chapel at Thevara. The faithful of the place, both Syrians and Latins, heartily co-operated with the Father. The chapel was completed and blessed in 1879. It was definitely ceded to the Congregation in 1890, on behalf of a Monastery to be opened there. We shall have to speak of it in another chapter.



Catechumenate, Chethipusha.

15. Mgr. Bernardine had already sanctioned the erection of a Monastery near Changanacherry.

In 1882 the people of Changanacherry approached Mgr. Marcelline through Fr. Cherian Chakkala, a Secular priest, and expressed their desire to have a Monastery at Chethipusha near Changanacherry to which the Vicar Apostolic consented. The foundation of the Monastery of the Sacred Heart which is now the Scholasticate of the Congregation, was laid on February 20, 1883. Fr. Alphonse of



Fathers and Scholastics, S. Heart's Monastery, Chethipusha.

St. Mary, assisted by Fr. Jacob of St. John of the Cross, contributed so much towards the early progress of this house as to be its founder. To the Monastery are attached a Catechumenate and an Elementary Malayalam School.

16. In 1881 the Congregation celebrated the Golden Jubilee of its foundation. Mgr. Marcelline convoked the Superiors of

Monasteries to Mannanam, where under his direction the celebrations took place; a vast number of clergy and laity from every part of Malabar attended the solemn festivities.

17. The modified Constitutions that had been submitted to Rome, were, on January 1, 1885, approved for six years, "experimenti gratia". By virtue of the new Constitutions, the power of electing Superiors of Monasteries was vested in the General Chapter of the Congregation; Superiors of Monasteries, consisting of six or more professed Fathers, were to be called "Priors" instead of the then prevalent title "Vicars" which from that time was limited to Superiors of lesser Monasteries, i.e., those containing not less than four professed Fathers. But the new Constitutions made no mention of the Prior General. This omission in the approved Constitutions of the office of Prior General, created a general disappointment among the Fathers.

18. As we have seen above, the Congregation from its very beginning had a Superior General, called the "Prior"; this title and office were kept up even after the affiliation of the Congregation to the Carmelite First Order. Mgr. A. Agliardi, the first Delegate Apostolic of the East Indies, quite understood the situation. He induced the Fathers to overcome their reluctance to accept the approved Constitutions.



Mgr. A. Agliardi, the First Delegate Apostolic of the East Indies.

19. The General Chapter, held in 1885 under Mgr. Marcelline, O.C.D., submitted a petition to the Holy See exposing the general grievances of the Fathers and asking for a Prior General. The Holy See, at the recommendation of Mgr. Agliardi, granted full freedom to the Congregation to make the necessary additions and alterations to the Constitutions and to submit them

for approbation after the lapse of six years dating from January 1, 1885. Mgr. Marcelline, who according to the new settlement was head of the Congregation, that same year, nominated Fr. Cyriac Eliseus (Porukara), his delegate over the Congregation; but the holy man, owing to old age and in order to be free to prepare for a happy death, declined the high office.

20. During the same year, at the order of the Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of Faith, four Syrian students were sent to the Urban College, Rome, for pursuing their ecclesiastical studies. Two of them, Sebastian Pullen and Alexander Kattakayam, nephew of Fr. Alexander of St. Joseph, were novices in the Novitiate House of the Congregation at Coonamavu. Alexander Kattakayam after completing his studies re-entered the Congregation and took the name of Alexander of St. Joseph (Junior). He was twice elected Prior General.



Very Rev. Fr. Alexander of St. Joseph (Junior).

21. The year 1886 witnessed the establishment of the Latin Hierarchy in India by which Verapoly became an Archdiocese with Quilon as its suffragan See.

22. The following year, May 1887, His Holiness Pope Leo XIII of immortal memory, completely separated the Syrians from the Verapoly jurisdiction, and placed them under two Vicars Apostolic of the Latin Rite, who were to associate with themselves two Pontifically privileged Vicars General from among the Syrians. The Priors of the Monasteries of Mannanam and Elthuruth were commissioned by the Delegate Apostolic to communicate the news officially to all the Syrian churches of Malabar.

## CHAPTER IX

### 1887—1890

The Delegate Apostolic becomes the Prior General of the Congregation.—Modifications in the Constitutions—The Monasteries of Coonamavu, Pavaratty, Panapally, and Thevara—The Good Shepherd Church—Death of Fr. Cyriac Eliseus (Porukara).

1. We have spoken above of the separation of the Syrians from the Verapoly jurisdiction. Mgr. A. Medlycott and Mgr. C. Lavigne S. J. were the two Bishops who were appointed Vicars Apostolic for the Syrians; Trichur and Kottayam were their respective residences. Mgr. Medlycott took charge in December 1887 and Mgr. Lavigne in May 1888. To prepare for the reception of the two Prelates, two grand public meetings of Priests and laymen were held, one at Elthuruth Monastery and the other at Mannanam Monastery. Mgr. Lavigne fixed his temporary residence at Mannanam. One of his Consultors was Fr. Alexander of St. Joseph (Senior).



Mgr. C. Lavigne, S. J., Vicar Apostolic of Kottayam.

2. That the territorial ecclesiastical division of the Syrians might not divide the Congregation into Diocesan Institutes, the Holy See, by a special decree, dated December 15, 1887, appointed the Delegate Apostolic for the time being, Prior General of the Congregation. Thus Mgr. Marcelline, who from the beginning cherished a tender love for the Congregation and who did so much for its growth, progress and stability, severed, from that year, all

connection with the Congregation. The Fathers were very keenly affected by the separation.

3. According to the new arrangement, in matters pertaining to the administration of the Sacraments, care of souls and the like, the members of the Congregation were to depend upon the Vicars Apostolic; for all the rest upon the Prior General alone. Here is the decree of the Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of Faith concerning this settlement:—

## DECRETUM

## S. Congregationis de Propaganda Fide

### Pro Negotiis Ritus Orientalis.

Per Decretum datum die 1 Januarii anni 1885 Sacra haec Congregatio, probante SSmo D. N. Leone Papa XIII, Regulam et Constitutiones Tertii Ordinis B. Mariae Virginis de Monte Carmelo apud Syro-Malabarenses instituti auctoritate sua ad sexennium experimenti gratia confirmavit. Iam vero ab huiusmodi Regula et Constitutionibus Vicarius apostolicus pro tempore, in cujus Vicariatu praedicti Tertii Ordinis domus existunt Prior Generalis eiusdem Ordinis cum plena iurisdictione circa spiritualia et temporalia constituitur. Cum autem per Apostolicas Literas in forma Brevis, quarum initium *Quod iampridem* datas die 20 Maii proxime elapsi, Ssmus Dominus Noster, peracta rituali separatione Catholicorum Syro-Malabarensium a Latinis, duos pro illis erexerit Vicariatus Apostolicos ab invicem territorialiter divisos; cumque Sacrae huius Congregationis mens sit ut praefatus Tertius Ordo unus atque indivisus remaneat; hinc Prioris Generalis eiusdem designationi aliter consulere necessarium visum est. Quapropter eadem S. Congregatio, probante Ssmo Domino Nostro, mandat et statuit, ut, firmis manentibus juris dispositionibus, quarum vi quaeque religiosa domus in casibus nominatim expressis, et praesertim in iis quae pertinent ad animarum curam et Sacramentorum administrationem

subest Ordinario loci, omnia et singula quae in praedictis Regula et Constitutionibus de Vicario Apostolico dicuntur, quaeque monasticum regimen, disciplinam et administrationem respiciunt, a die praesentis decreti, et quoad usque ab Apostolica Sede aliter decernatur, dicta intelligantur de R. P. D. Delegato Apostolico pro tempore Indiarum Orientalium, cui integrum erit, prout opportunum censuerit ecclesiasticam personam sibi benevisam deputare, quae in huiusmodi obeundo munere eiusdem vices gerat. Contrariis non obstantibus quibuscumque.

Datum Romae ex Aedibus eiusdem S. Congregationis die XV Decembris anni MDCCCLXXXVII.

JOANNES CARD. SIMEONI PRAEFECTUS.

L † S.

S. CRETONI SECRETARIUS.

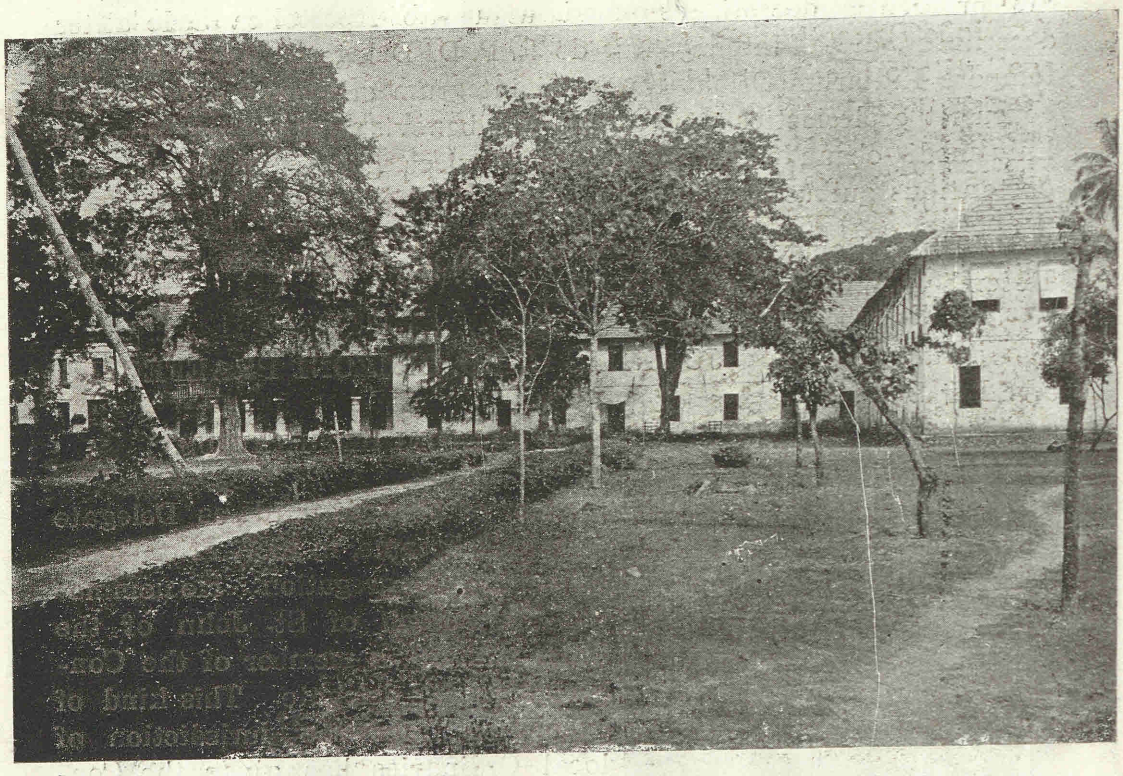
4. Thus Mgr. A. Ajuti, successor of Mgr. Agliardi as Delegate Apostolic, became, in 1887, Prior General of the Congregation. He nominated Fr. Joseph of St. John of the Cross (Thayil), a member of the Congregation, his delegate. This kind of exemption from the jurisdiction of local Ordinaries has given the Congregation a status higher than that of Congregations "Juris Pontificii" of the Latin Rite. In this connection it is worthy of mention that important matters pertaining to the whole Syro-Malabar Church are referred by the Holy See to the Prior General of the Congregation as well.



Mgr. A. Ajuti, Delegate Apostolic of the East Indies and Prior General of the Congregation.

5. We have seen how the Monastery of Coonamavu was handed over to the Congregation in 1857, by Mgr. Bernardine. But when the Syrians were removed from the Verapoly jurisdiction, Mgr. Leonard put forward his claims on Coonamavu. The case was

pending for many months before the Roman Curia. In the meantime the new Seminary building at Puthenpally was offered in lieu of the Monastery; but the Fathers refused to accept it as an



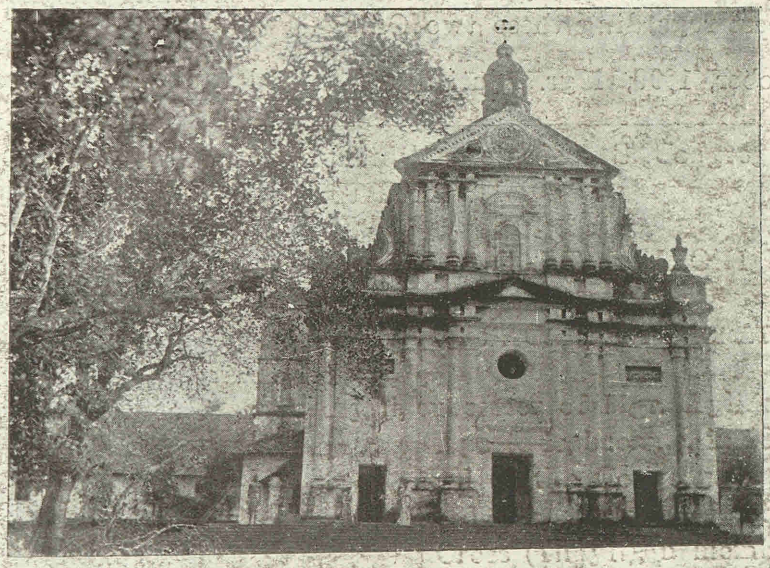
The Seminary of Puthenpally.

exchange for the Monastery which was combinedly the Novitiate and Scholasticate of the Congregation, where they had lived and worked so many years and for the progress of which they had contributed their very best men and means.

6. The Delegate Apostolic, Mgr. Ajuti, in 1889 canonically visited all the Monasteries of the Congregation. At Elthuruth he had a conference with the Superiors of Monasteries, whom he convoked also to an extraordinary General Chapter at Mannanam to discuss chiefly the modifications to be introduced into the Constitutions. Four of the Fathers were commissioned to re-write

the Constitutions with the necessary changes. The Coonamavu question was treated both at Elthuruth and Mannanam.

7. The final decision of Rome regarding the Coonamavu question was in favour of Mgr. Leonard, whereby the Congregation lost both Coonamavu and Puthenpally. This decision evidently entailed an immense sacrifice on the Fathers; Mgr. Ajuti, who was entrusted with the execution of the order was greatly edified at their ready submission in a matter which was of vital importance to the whole Congregation. The Novices and Students from Coonamavu were transferred to Ampalacat; thus St. Teresa's Monastery there became the Novitiate house of the Congregation. The Coonamavu Nunnery however, though there were among its inmates a few of the Latin Rite, was adjudged to pertain to the Vicar Apostolic of Trichur.



St. Teresa's Church and Monastery, Ampalacat.

8. In May of the same year, when the ordinary General Chapter was held at Mannanam, the Delegate Apostolic deputed Mgr. Lavigne, S. J., Vicar Apostolic of Kottayam, to preside over its sessions as his representative. After this Chapter, Fr. Joseph of St. John of the Cross was nominated Delegate over the whole Congregation.

9. In August, 1890, Fr. Joseph of St. John of the Cross convoked an extraordinary General Chapter at Ampalacat to

discuss about the modifications made in the Constitutions by the above mentioned commission of four Fathers. After the discussions, the Constitutions were sent to the Delegate Apostolic to be forwarded to the Holy See for approbation. The General Chapter made no provision for a Prior General and Consultors (Definitors). They only requested the Holy See to add to the Constitutions what seemed best regarding these two Offices.

10. In October, 1890, Mgr. Ajuti again visited the Monasteries of the Congregation. During this visit he gave permission to the Fathers to say Mass in a bungalow that was close to the old Monastery of Coonamavu, ceded to the Archbishop of Verapoly.



The inmates of the St Joseph's Monastery, Coonamavu.

This was the origin of the present St. Joseph's Monastery of Coonamavu in the present Archdiocese of Ernakulam. In 1902 it was raised to the status of a "Vicariate" Monastery, and in 1931 to that of a "Priorate".

11. Mgr. Ajuti, the great benefactor of the Congregation, returned to Rome in 1891 and was there appointed Secretary to the Sacred Congregation of the Propagation of Faith. Mgr. Zaleski, his successor, was nominated a year later, i. e., in 1892. During the 'inter regnum,' His. Em. Cardinal Simeoni, Prefect of the Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of Faith, acted as Prior General of the Congregation with Fr. Joseph of St. John of the Cross as his Delegate. The General Chapter that was to be

held in 1892 was postponed till the Constitutions were again approved by the Holy See in 1893 for another six years. In the approved Constitutions, a chapter on the Prior General and another on the Definitors, were added on by the Holy See Itself.

12. We shall now proceed to speak of the Monasteries of Pavaratty, Panapally, and Thevara, and of the beginnings of the Good Shepherd Church at Kottayam, the Cathedral Church of the newly erected Vijayapuram Diocese.

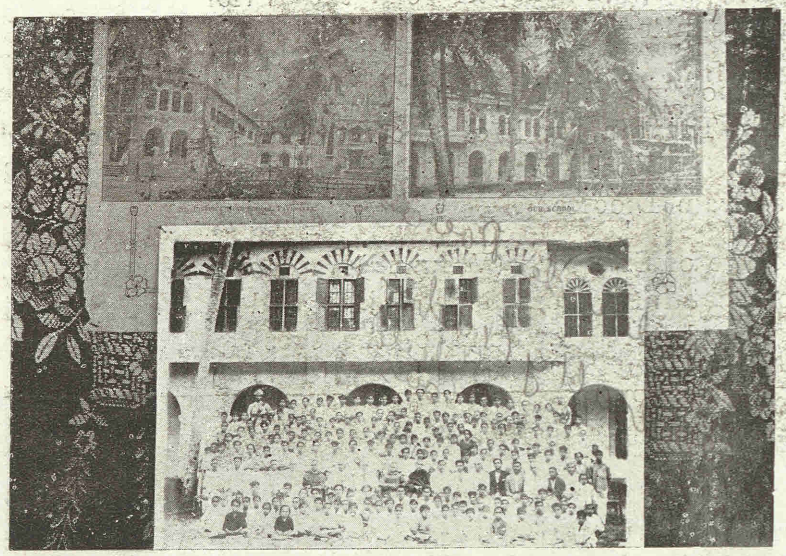
13. Fr. George of St. Mary (Varunny) Prior of Elthuruth, using the permission obtained from Mgr. Ajuti and Mgr. Medlycott, through Fr. Joseph of St. John of the Cross, Delegate, began



The Fathers and the Aspirants, St. Thomas Monastery, Pavaratty.

in 1890 the building of a Monastery at Pavaratty in the present Diocese of Trichur. This Monastery and the Students' House at Mangalore are the only Institutions of the Congregation in British

India. All the other Monasteries are in the British Protected States of Travancore and Cochin. From 1895 regular monastic life was begun at Pavaratty. It is worth mentioning that Mgr. Medlycott was so pleased with the new institution that he expressed his conviction that there would be no Schism in those parts of Malabar which lay under the influence of the new Monastery. In the list of benefactors the leading families of the place deserve special mention. The St. Thomas Church at Pavaratty is a marvel of modern architecture. An English High School and a Catechumenate are conducted by the Fathers there. An Aspirants' House is attached to the Monastery.



St. Joseph's High School, Pavaratty.

14. Fr. Kuncheria Vazathara of Pallipuram, and Fr. Thomas Erumachadam of Thuruthy, both Secular Priests, sought admission into the Congregation in 1880. It was, as we have seen, a very sad time for the Congregation. Mgr. Leonard, O. C. D., Vicar Apostolic of Verapoly, instituted for them a new Congregation, the Congregation of St. Philip Neri. At Panapally in the present Archdiocese of Ernakulam, Mgr. Leonard himself, in 1880, laid the foundation of the Mother House of the new Congregation and gave its habit to the above mentioned Fathers. As long as they were under Verapoly they received full support from Mgr. Leonard; when the Syrians were placed under two Vicars Apostolic, many

of the postulants left the new Institution, and Fr. Thomas Erumachadam, after the death of his companion, with the permission of Mgr. Ajuti ceded the whole house at Panapally to our Congregation, himself becoming a member. From 1897 Panapally had been a house of the Congregation. It was transferred in 1925 to Pallipuram, the birth place of Fr. Thomas Palakal, one of the Co-Founders of the Congregation. It is now a "Priorate" Monastery.



The inmates of Pallipuram Monastery.

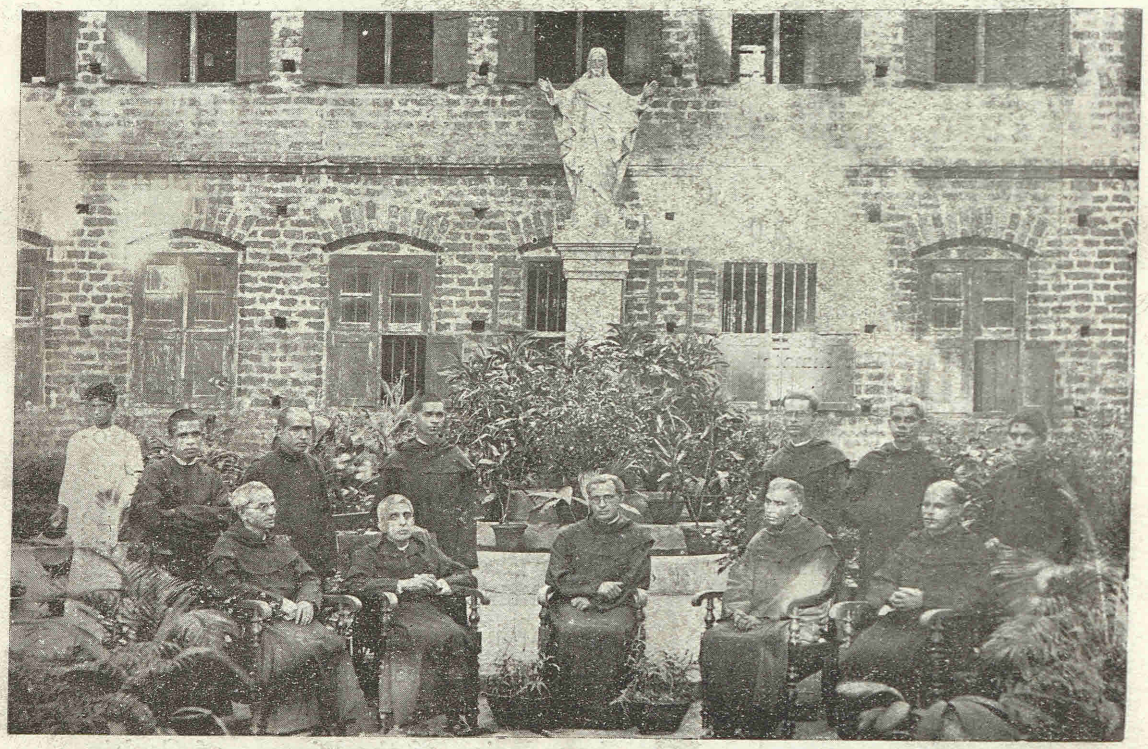
15. We have already spoken of the beginnings of the Monastery at Thevara. With the establishment of the Indian Latin Hierarchy, the Padroado Diocese of Cochin was re-constructed and thus Thevara was included within the boundaries of the Diocese of Cochin. This gave occasion for a dispute between the Syrians and the Padroadists. Fr. Zacharias of St. Ephrem, Vicar of Vashakulam Monastery, assisted by Fr. Joseph Antony and Fr. Paul Xavier (Kanatt) both members of the Congregation, strenuously argued that Thevara ought to belong to the Syrians. Fr. Aloysius Parekkarampil, then a secular priest, rendered into Latin the documents



Fr. Zacharias of St. Ephrem.

produced by the two last mentioned Fathers, to be forwarded to the Delegate Apostolic.

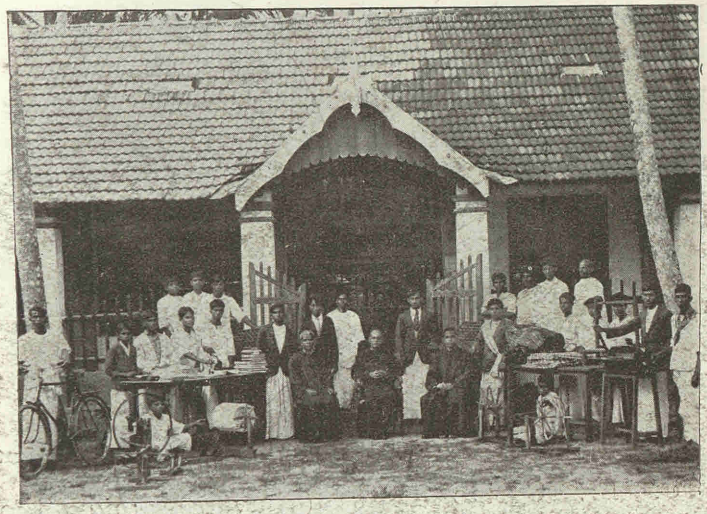
16. The decision of the Holy See was in favour of the Syrians. In 1890, the chapel of the place was included in the Syrian Vicariate



Very Rev. Fr. General, Definitors and the inmates of the S. Heart's Monastery, Thevara.

Apostolic of Kottayam under Mgr. Lavigne, S. J., who the same year, handed it over to the Congregation. In 1892, a Branch House of the Congregation, was opened there under the care of the Prior of Vashakulam Monastery, and in 1900 it was raised to a canonically established House of the Congregation. Thevara, owing to its unique situation, has several times been chosen as the residence of the Prior General. An English High School, a Printing Press, and an Industrial School are attached to this Monastery. A monthly periodical "Kudumba Deepam" (The Family Torch) is published

from its Press, as a souvenir of the double Golden Jubilee of the sacerdotal ordination of H. H. Pope Pius XI and of the dedication of the Monastery Church, the first one dedicated to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, in this pagan land.



Industrial School, Thevara, 1930.

17. We have seen how Mgr. Bernardine's desire of founding a Carmelite Institute for indigenous Latins was frustrated at its very start. Nevertheless, the few Latins who desired to lead a religious life were admitted into the Congregation. The Syrians and the Latins thus lived together for a long time. Although a Monastery was opened for the Latins at Magnumey, formerly the residence of the Vicars Apostolic of Verapoly, some still continued to stay with their Syrian brethren. Among these was Br. Roche, an inmate of Mannanam Monastery. He had in mind to organize a society of the Good Shepherd. With due permission from Mgr. Marcelline, he began to build the Good Shepherd church at Kottayam, in 1882, with alms collected from the Syrians and Latins. The church itself was for a long time administered by a Syrian priest, Fr. Cyriac Mailaparampil, after whose death, the Prior of Mannanam became its Rector. He administered it through Fr. Charles of St. Elias, a member of the Congregation. After the separation of the Syrians from the

Verapoly jurisdiction, the right over the Good Shepherd church was contested and finally adjudged to Verapoly in favour of the Latins at Kottayam; in compensation, Mgr. Lavigne, S.J., was offered the favour of sending Thomas Kurialacherry, afterwards Bishop of Changanacherry, to Rome for his ecclesiastical studies in the Urban College of the Propaganda.



Mar Thomas Kurialacherry, first Bishop of Changanacherry.

18. On January 7, 1890, Fr. Cyriac Eliseus (Porukara) ended his saintly life in the Monastery of Mannanam. The appreciation of him can be summed up in these few words: "He was the worthy successor of Fr. Cyriac Elias (Chavara) and the worthy brother of Fr. Thomas Porukara". He is the author of the most popular and devotional book in Malabar, called "Nithiaradhana". The Syriac Office of the Dead as well as the Bible History in Tamil are the fruit of his indefatigable labours. Moreover Fr. Cyriac Eliseus is the apostle of the devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus in Malabar, which he spread everywhere chiefly through his "Nithiaradhana". Of his activities after the Mellosian Schism, the most important was the introduction of English education among the Catholic Syrians of Malabar, of which we shall have to treat below.

19. Fr. Cyriac Elias (Chavara), as we have seen above, founded the first Convent for Sisters at Coonamavu in the North. It was his desire that similar Convents be opened also in other important parts of Malabar. Fr. Cyriac Eliseus (Porukara) therefore, established the second Convent for Sisters at Mutholy in the South.

20. But, above all, he was a man of God, and, if saints are pre-eminently men of prayer, he has his claim to the title. He spent the greater part of the day in communing with God; his face beamed with a celestial light during his meditation. Every

one who came in contact with him revered him and fondly cherished his memory. Mgr. Meurin, S. J., Visitor Apostolic, after his return to Bombay, kept a vivid memory of the saintly old man. He says in his letters: "I much venerate that holy man".

21. This ardent lover of Jesus in the most adorable Sacrament of the Altar introduced in 1867 the Forty Hours' Adoration in Mannanam, where it is most solemnly kept up every year. Other Monastery churches and recently some of the Parish churches adopted this solemnity in honour of the Holy Eucharist, with innumerable spiritual benefits.



The Grotto of Our Lady, Monastery, Mutholy.

22. Fr. Cyriac Eliseus (Porukara) seems to have had a very definite intuition of his approaching death, for which he made the minutest preparation. He said Mass, handed over his Mass accounts to the Procurator, saying it was his last, and then, as usual, went through his ordinary routine of life in the forenoon. Before the "Angelus" bell went, he had a slight indisposition, when, calling for the Superior of the house, he urgently asked for the last Sacraments, which he received with edifying devotion and afterwards, peacefully enjoying a foretaste of heaven, passed away from this vale of tears.

# CHAPTER X

## 1890—1931

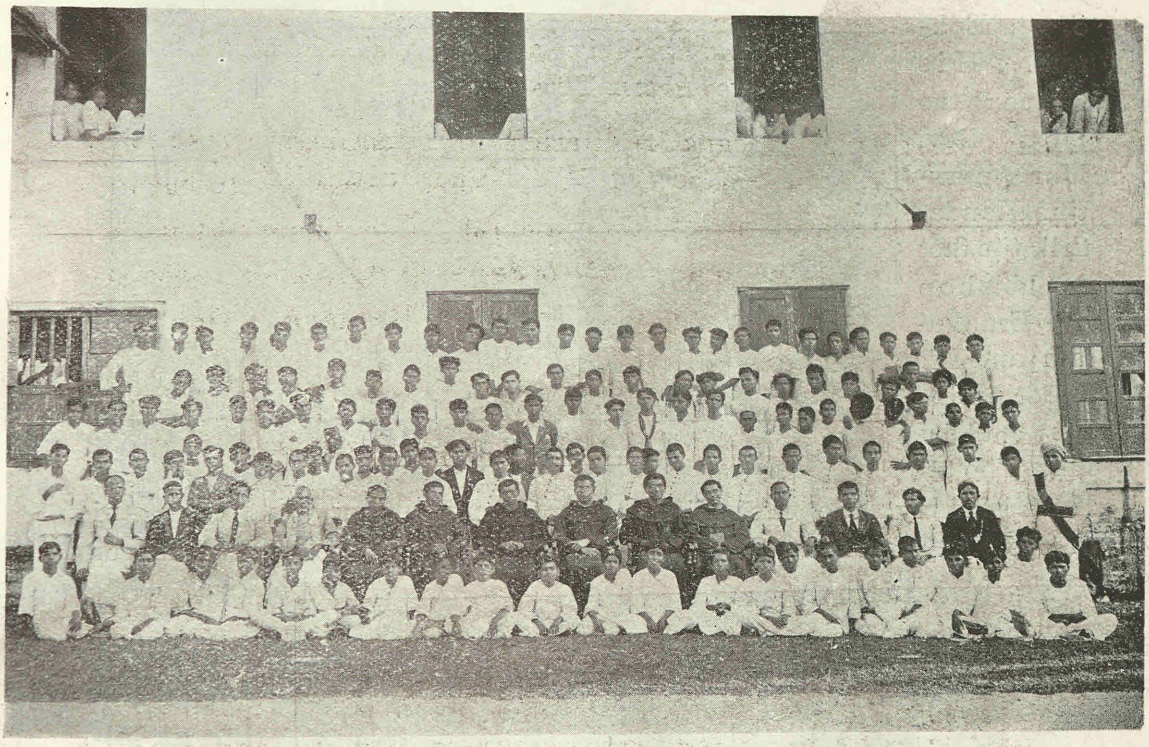
School work—House of Studies at Mangalore—Aspirants' School—Mgr. Bernard, O. C. D., Prior General—Indigenous Bishops and indigenous Priors General—The Constitutions are approved "in Perpetuum"—Monasteries of Kurianad, Champakulam and Alwaye.—Branch Houses—Re-union Movement and the Congregation.

1. We are now entering into a new field of activity opened by the Congregation, when its Seminaries were abolished in favour of the Central Seminary at Puthenpally. In this Chapter, we shall speak of the changes and growth of the Congregation up to the present day.

2. In 1888, Mgr. Medlycott, in order to keep direct vigilance over his seminarians, suppressed the Seminary at Elthuruth and removed the seminarians to his residence at Trichur. Mgr. Lavigne, S.J., for the same reason and to introduce uniformity in the training of candidates for the Priesthood, suppressed, first the Seminary of Vashakulam in 1888, and in 1891, that of Mutholy, whither had been sent the seminarians from Vashakulam and the convert Clergy from the Mellosian Schism. About the year 1880, Mgr. Marcelline, O.C.D., gathered all the seminarians of Pulincunnu at Mannanam. Thus all the Seminaries, except that of Mannanam, were suppressed before 1892. Mannanam too was closed in 1894; from that time almost all the Syrian candidates for the Priesthood have been trained in the Central Apostolic Seminary at Puthenpally, conducted by the Discalced Carmelites of the First Order.

3. The relief from the direction of Seminaries opened the way to vigorous educational work on the part of the Congregation. The Fathers attached much importance to English education which they understood to be absolutely necessary for the uplift of Malabar. English education had not been much valued among the Catholics of Malabar before the visit of Mgr. Meurin, S.J. It was Fr. Cyriac

Eliseus (Porukara) who started the first English School for Syrians at



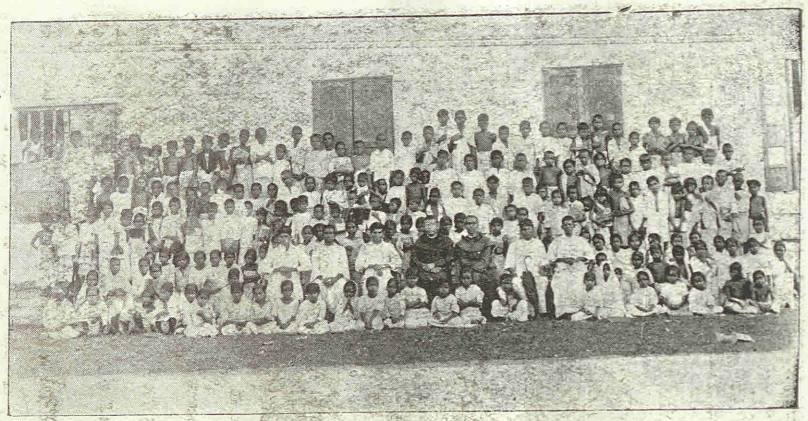
Manager, Staff and Students of St. Ephrem's High School, Mannanam, 1930.



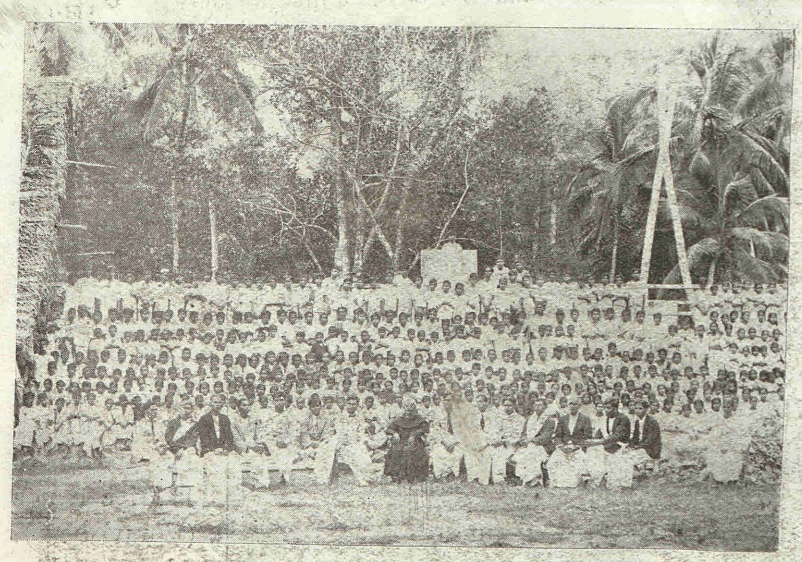
Manager and Staff, English Middle School, Elthuruth, 1930.

Mannanam. Fr. Gerard of St. Joseph was the pioneer educationist under Fr. Cyriac Eliseus (Porukara). The modest school opened at Mannanam, in 1885, gradually rose in the former Semi-

nary building to the status of a High School under the patronage of St. Ephrem. His Grace the Most Rev. Mar Augustine Kandathil, the first Archbishop of Ernakulam, and His Lordship the Rt. Rev. Mar Thomas Kurialacherry, the first Bishop of Changanacherry, are alumni of the St. Ephrem's. Close by, there is also a vernacular school for boys.



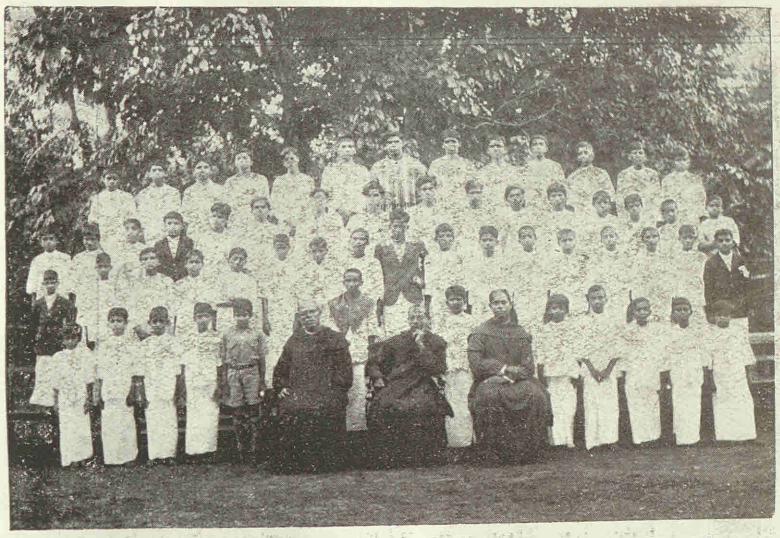
Vernacular School, Mannanam.



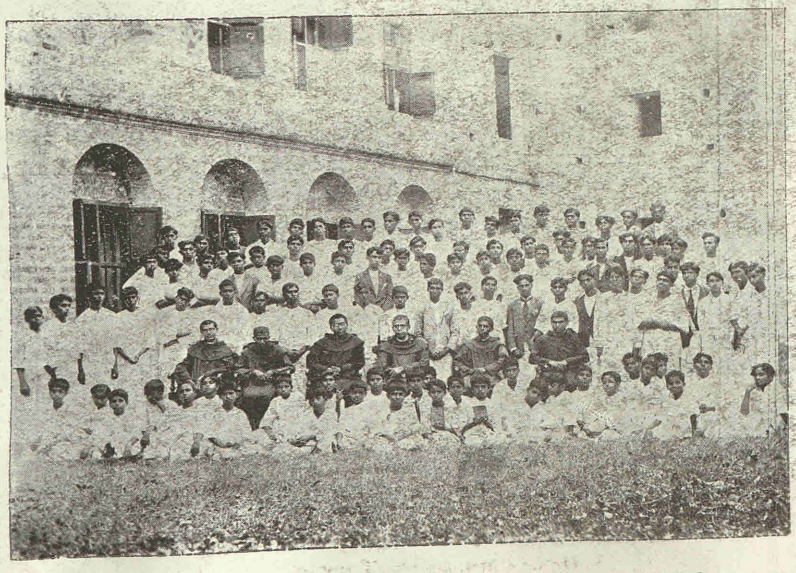
Manager, Staff and Students of the English and Vernacular Schools, S. Heart's Monastery, Thevara.

4. The other Monasteries followed the lead of the Mother House. The Congregation now possesses four English High Schools, four English Middle Schools, and four Vernacular Schools. In order to conduct the school work more efficiently, the Congregation decided to send up its own members for higher secular studies, and so, among the

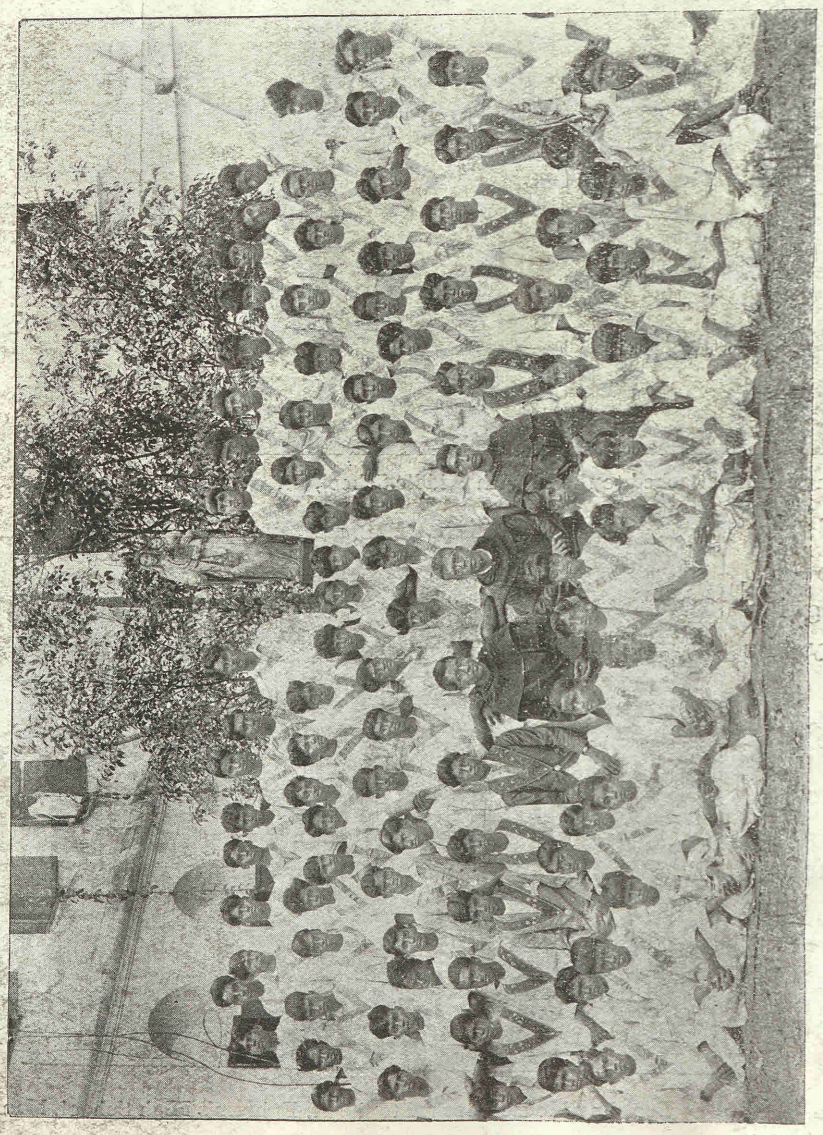
teaching staff there are also many Fathers of the Congregation who have taken University degrees. The Fathers spare no pains in instilling the Catholic spirit in the hearts of their students. Besides regular Catechism classes conducted by the Fathers, the Sodality of the Bl. Virgin Mary is duly established in all English Schools. These Schools, moreover, have boarding houses attached to them for the up-bringing of Catholic boys under the special care of the Fathers. It may be remarked here that the High Schools and Boarding Houses have been a real nursery of Priests, both Religious and Secular, and of eminent



Boarding House attached to the English Middle School, Elthuruth, 1930.



Boarding House attached to the St. Ephrem's High School, Mannanam.



Sodalists, St. Ephrem's High School, Mannanam.

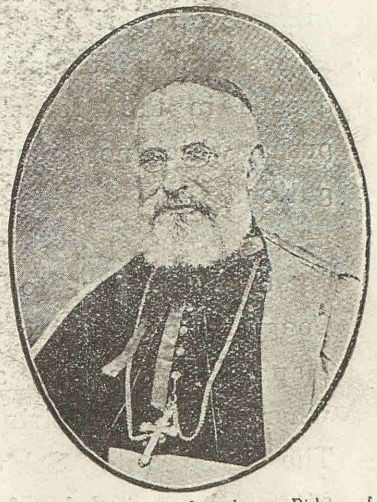
Catholic leaders. His Ex., Mgr. L. M. Zaleski, who visited these Institutions more than once, in his capacity of Delegate Apostolic,



His Excellency Mgr. Zaleski amidst the Boarders at Mannanam.

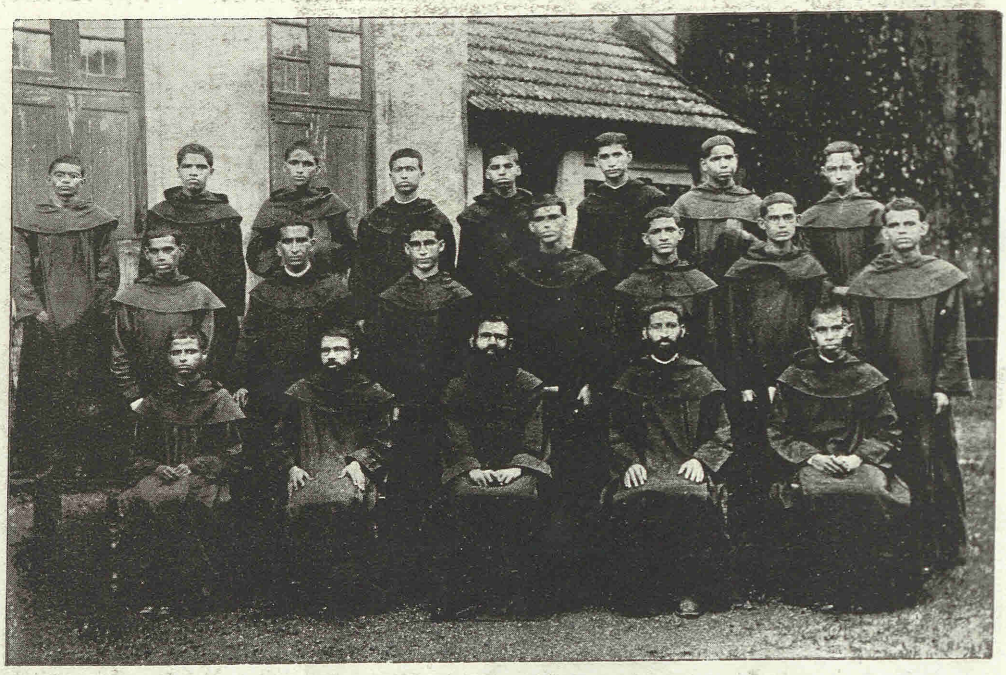
lavished high encomiums on the Congregation for its educational activities.

5. Mgr. Lavigne, S.J., Vicar Apostolic of Kottayam, took very keen interest in the progress of the Congregation. Seeing that it would be beneficial to Malabar, he recommended the opening of a House of Studies at Mangalore, where the students of the Congregation could attend lectures in the Seminary, conducted by the Fathers of the Society of Jesus. This was in 1890. This happy connection with the illustrious sons of St. Ignatius has been the



Mgr. P. Perini, S. J., who as Bishop of Mangalore, laid the foundation of the present House of Studies at Mangalore and blessed it.

source of untold benefits to the Congregation. Owing to the



Fathers and Scholastics, House of Studies, Mangalore, 1931.

increase of clerical members in the Congregation, two Juniorate Houses and a Scholasticate for ecclesiastical studies were formally opened in the Monasteries of Mutholy, Coonamavu and Chethipusha, which now represent the Seminary activities of the Congregation.

6. In order to secure and foster vocations to the Congregation, there are now three Institutions, one at Mannanam, another at Pavaratty and the third at Alwaye, where children aspiring to religious life are trained and educated. The "Aspirants' Schools," as they are called, were started after the model of "Scholae Apostolicae," very common

in Europe, and conducted by Religious Orders and Congregations.



The first Aspirants at Coonamavu Monastery.

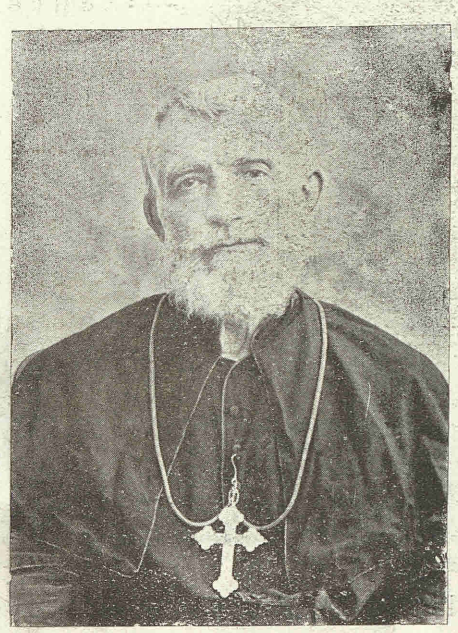
The Aspirants' School was first opened at the new Monastery building at Coonamavu, in 1892. It was Mgr Lavigne, S.J., who suggested the scheme and drew up the Rules for the Aspirants, at the instance of His Em. Card. Simeoni, Prefect of the Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of Faith. These Rules were approved by the Holy See in 1906.

7. It was in 1892 that the solemn consecration of the Monastery church of Mannanam was conducted by the Vicar Apostolic of Kottayam and the Bishop of Quilon in the presence of innumerable Priests and a vast concourse of the faithful.

8. We have seen that in 1893 the Constitutions were for the second time approved by the Holy See for six years. In the new Constitutions there was provision for a "Prior General" to be elected from among the members of the Congregation, and for a "Definitorium" consisting of four Consultors, to assist him. The Constitutions also insisted on the adoption of the formal Carmelite habit of brown wool instead of the white cotton one then in use; the *blue* mantle was retained in honour of the Immaculate Conception, and in memory of the old title, "Servants of the Immaculate Mother of Mount Carmel." In compliance with a petition sent up to the Holy See in 1891, by a special decree of the Sacred Congregation

for the Propagation of Faith, Fr. Bernard, O.C.D., (a European Missionary) was nominated Prior General of the Congregation "ad tempus," the Constitutions remaining intact in all points.

9 In 1896, Fr. Bernard, O. C. D., was consecrated Coadjutor to Mgr. Leonard, Archbishop of Verapoly. Finding the charge too heavy for him, he appointed the first Definitor General to be his Delegate in matters pertaining to the Congregation. Thus Fr. George of St. John the Baptist (Parappuram) and Fr. Frederick of the S. Heart (Punchakunnel) became Delegates in 1896 and 1897 respectively.



Mgr. Bernard, O. C. D., Archbishop of Verapoly and Prior General of the Congregation.

10. In October 1896, the Syrians, in compliance with their repeated petitions, were given three Vicars Apostolic of their own Rite, and Nationality ; they were set over the three Vicariates of Trichur, Ernakulam and Changanacherry.

11. Mgr. Leonard, O. C. D., Archbishop of Verapoly, died in August 1897, and was succeeded by Mgr. Bernard. Thus from 1897, the Archbishop of Verapoly had been also Prior General of the Congregation which was spread throughout the three Syrian Vicariates Apostolic of Trichur, Ernakulam and Changanacherry and the Diocese of Mangalore.

12. Fr. Frederick of the S. Heart, Delegate of Mgr. Bernard, after visiting all the Monasteries, convoked at Mannanam an extraordinary General Chapter of the Congregation, in 1897. The Constitutions were revised and forwarded to the Holy See for approbation. In the following year, the Holy See approved, not

DHARMARAM COLLEGE LIBRARY
BANGALORE-29.



the modified Constitutions but the former ones with two or three modifications of minor importance suggested by Mgr. Bernard. The approbation was for another six years.



The extraordinary General Chapter of 1897, convoked to revise the Constitutions, when the Very Rev. Fr. Frederick was the Delegate.

13. Jacob Kanianthara, who was from the beginning associated with the two Founders, Fr. Thomas Palakal and Fr. Thomas Porukara, having attained his 98th year, died in peace in 1898, at Mannanam. He had the happiness to see all the important events connected with the beginning and the progress of the Congregation. His Holiness, Pope Leo XIII, had sent him a special blessing before his death.

14. Fr. Frederick's term of office having expired, Mgr. Bernard nominated Fr. Joseph of St. John of the Cross (Thayil), as his Delegate, which office he held till his death in February 1902. His successor, Fr. George of St. Mary (Varunny) died before taking charge of his office. Fr. George's place was filled by Fr. George of St. John the Baptist (Parappuram).

15. In 1902, Mgr. Bernard, who did much for the spiritual welfare of the Congregation by his tactful government, with the sanction of the Holy See, resigned his office. In his petition to Rome, he bore witness that the Congregation was eminently qualified to choose its Prior General from among its own worthy members. Rome did not hesitate to put into execution the provision

for self-government which had been already granted by the Constitutions. Accordingly Fr. Alexander of St. Joseph (Senior), one of the First Eleven Fathers who made their profession in 1855, was elected Prior General, at the General Chapter held at Mannanam at the close of the year 1902. Fr. Alexander of St. Joseph, as we have seen above, was so famous a preacher as to be called the "Second Xavier" of Malabar. The Holy See honoured him with the title "Missionary Apostolic" and the "Croce di Benemerenza."



The Very Rev. Fr. Alexander of St. Joseph, the first indigenous Prior General of the Congregation.

16. In 1905, the Congregation celebrated at Mannanam the Fiftieth Anniversary of the Profession of the First Eleven Fathers, which had taken place in 1855. Special favours were granted by the Holy See on that occasion. His Holiness, Pope Pius X, sent the following autograph letter to the Congregation :—

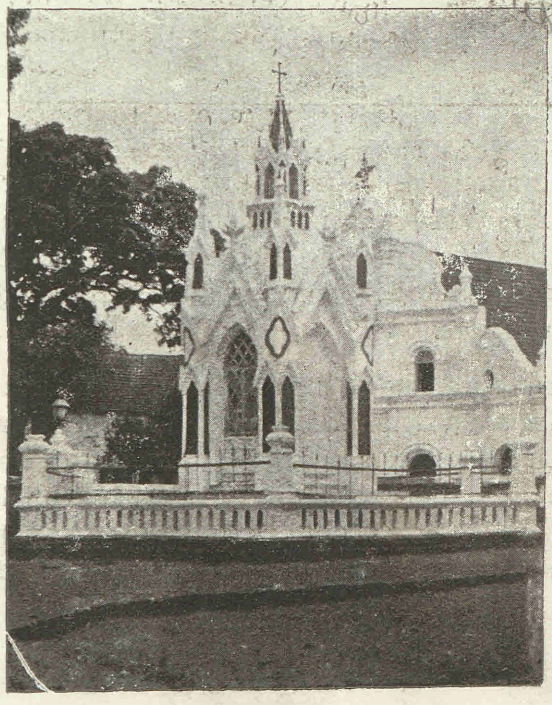
"Dilectis filiis fausta quaeque et salutaria a Domino adprecantes, Apostolicam benedictionem peramanter impertimus."

17. To commemorate this Golden Jubilee, an artistic Chapel in Gothic style, dedicated to the Immaculate Virgin Mary, was built in front of the Monastery church at Mannanam.

18. The same year Fr. Alexander of St. Joseph (Junior) who was then Prior of the Mannanam Monastery, went to Rome and




The General Chapter of 1905 in which the Very Rev. Fr. Alexander of St. Joseph (sen'or) was elected Prior General, a second time.



Golden Jubilee Memorial of the profession of the First Eleven Fathers of the Congregation, 1905.

submitted the modified Constitutions for final approbation. On March 12, 1906, they were approved "in perpetuum."

19. The epithet "Immaculate" together with the first title of the Congregation, "Servants of the Immaculate Mother of Mount Carmel" had fallen into disuse by the affiliation of the Congregation to the First Order of Discalced Carmelites. Mgr. Ajuti favoured the wish of the Fathers to revive it. Thus the title of the Congregation "Sodalitas Fratrum Excalceatorum Tertii Ordinis B. V. M. Immaculatae de Monte Carmelo in Malabaria existens" was

added in the Constitutions approved by the Holy See in 1893, and finally confirmed in 1906.

20. The term of office of Local and General Superiors being three years, Fr. Alexander of St. Joseph (Senior) was re-elected Prior General in 1905. In 1908, Fr. Basil of St. Teresa succeeded Fr. Alexander and was re-elected in 1911. Fr. Alexander of St. Joseph (Junior) in 1914, Fr. Gabriel of St. Joseph in 1917, Fr. Alexander of St. Joseph (Junior) once again in 1920, Fr. Aloysius of St. Mary



The General Chapter of 1929 in which the Very Rev. Fr. John Berch. of Jesus Mary, was elected Prior General.

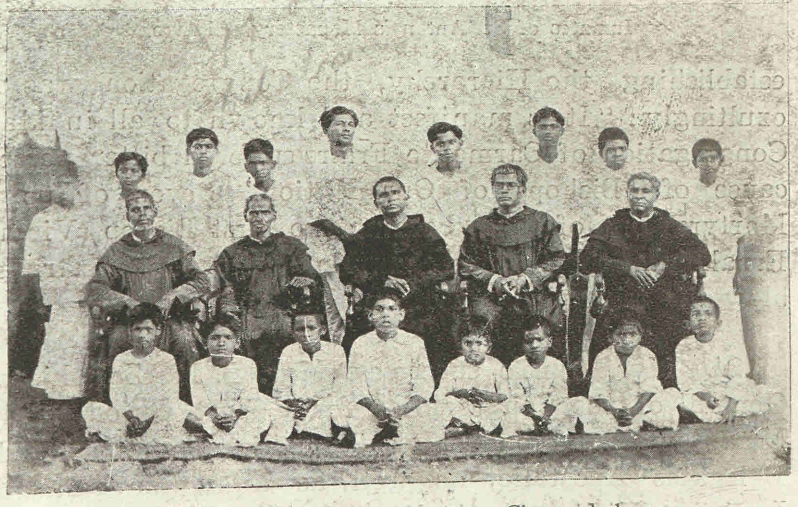
in 1923, and Fr. John Berchmans of Jesus Mary in 1926, were elected Priors General. In 1929, there was no General Chapter, as the Sacred Congregation for the Oriental Church confirmed Fr. John Berchmans and his Definitory for another three years, leaving to them the election of Local Superiors.

21. In 1916, the Holy See sanctioned the modifications introduced into the Constitutions, at the suggestion of His Ex. Mgr. Zaleski, by the General Chapter of 1914: chief among the modifications were the introduction of the *White Mantle* and the permission to wear a brown cotton habit, with some changes in the common diet to suit the climate.

22. The Monasteries of Kurianad and Champakulam in the present Diocese of Changanacherry and that of Alwaye in the present Archdiocese of Ernakulam, were opened in 1922, 1925 and 1928 respectively. A donation of the Mattathil family is the beginning of the Monastery at Kurianad, while the one at Champakulam depends on the bounty of Mr. and Mrs. Sebastian Mappilacherry and of the mother of the latter. Kurianad has under it a Catechumenate and Champakulam an English Middle School. Alwaye is very famous for its healthy waters; people from every part of Malabar resort to it during the summer season. To the Monastery at Alwaye is attached an Aspirants' House.



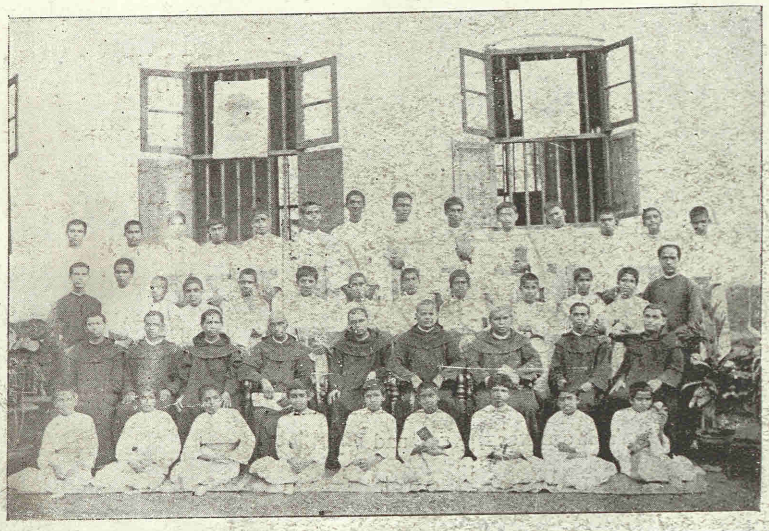
Inmates of St. Ann's Monastery, Kurianad.



Fathers and boarders, Monastery, Champakulam.

23. In 1923, the Syro-Malabar Hierarchy was established with Ernakulam as the Metropolitan See. The Suffragan Sees are Trichur,

Changanacherry and Kottayam, which last Diocese was established in 1911 for the section of Malabar Syrians called Suddists. In the address presented to Mar Augustine Kandathil, the first Archbishop of Ernakulam, a former pupil of the Mannanam School, on the occasion of the execution of the Bull of H. H. Pope Pius XI establishing the Hierarchy, the Congregation was able to declare exultingly: "It is manifest and known to all in Malabar that our Congregation of Carmelite Friars suffered bitter persecution for the cause of 'Bishops of Our Nation.' Seven of us were glorious Martyrs; one of them became the first Bishop (Vicar Apostolic) of Ernakulam, the famous champion who fought strenuously for and blew the triumph blast of our Nation."

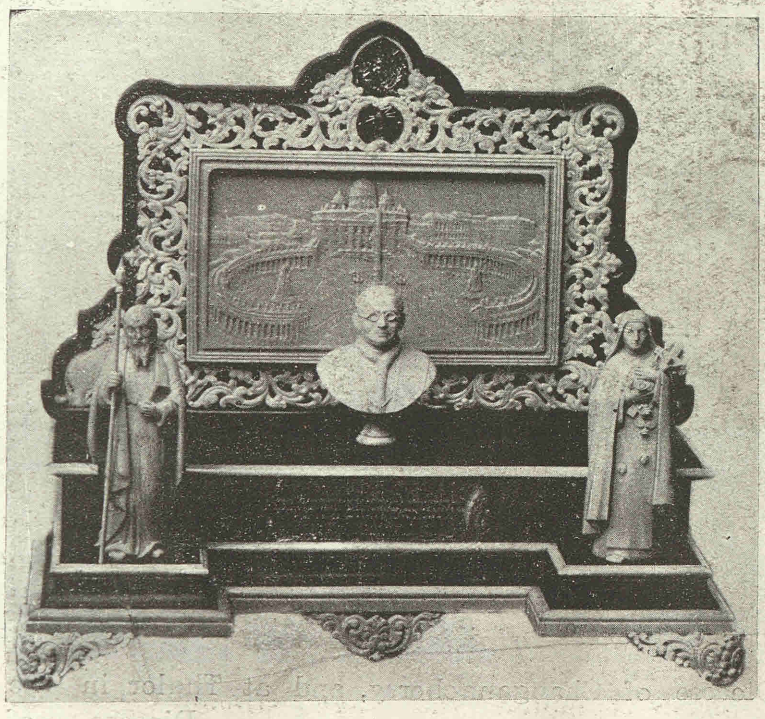


Inmates of St. Antony's Monastery, Alwaye.

24. Mgr. Ajuti's successor, Mgr. L. M. Zaleski, who was Prior General of the Congregation for a short period, and his successors Mgr. Fumasoni Biondi, Mgr. Peter Pisani, and Mgr. Edward Mooney, Delegates Apostolic, as well as Mgr. (now Cardinal) A. H. M. Lepicier, Visitor Apostolic, paid their visits to the important Houses and Institutions of the Congregation. At present it depends on the Sacred Congregation for Oriental Churches.

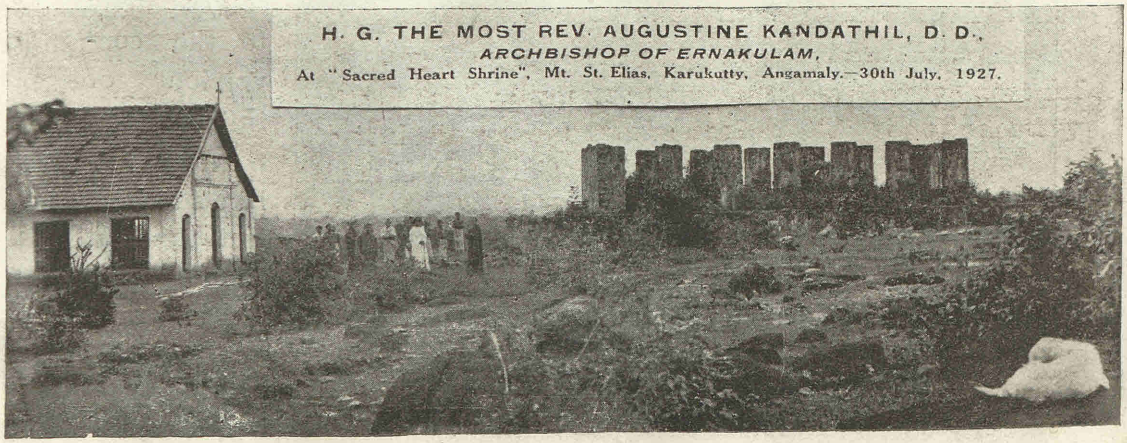
25. The Congregation was favoured to receive special Apostolic blessings from H. H. Pope Pius X on the occasion of the celebration of the Golden Jubilee of the Religious Profession of the First Eleven

Fathers, as also, from Pope Benedict XV, three days before his death, through His Em. Cardinal Marini. Our Holy Father Pope Pius XI, now gloriously reigning, also, on the occasion of his Sacerdotal Golden Jubilee celebration, sent his blessings to the whole Congregation. On that occasion the Congregation presented the Holy Father with an address and a very fine Munusculum worked in ivory and gold. The Holy Father, besides imparting his Apostolic blessing, also commended and encouraged the Missionary activities of the Congregation.



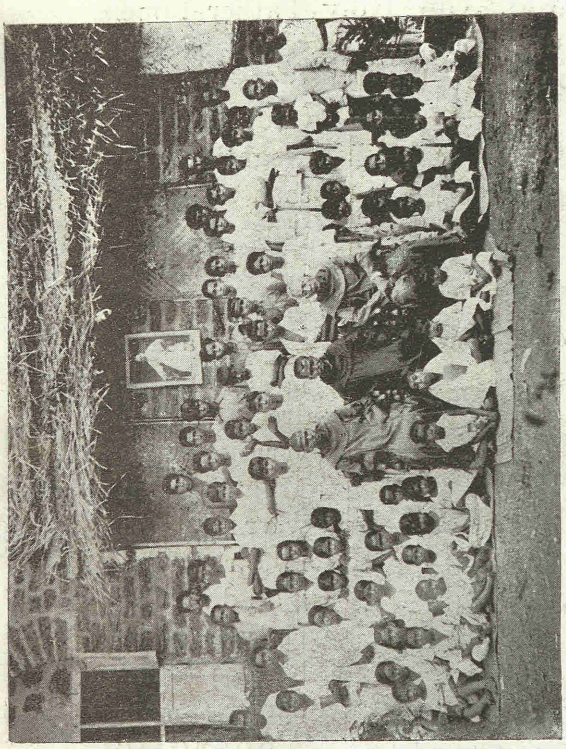
The Casket in which was enclosed the address.

26. Besides the fourteen formed Houses and the House of Studies at Mangalore, the Congregation has Branch Houses at Karukutty,

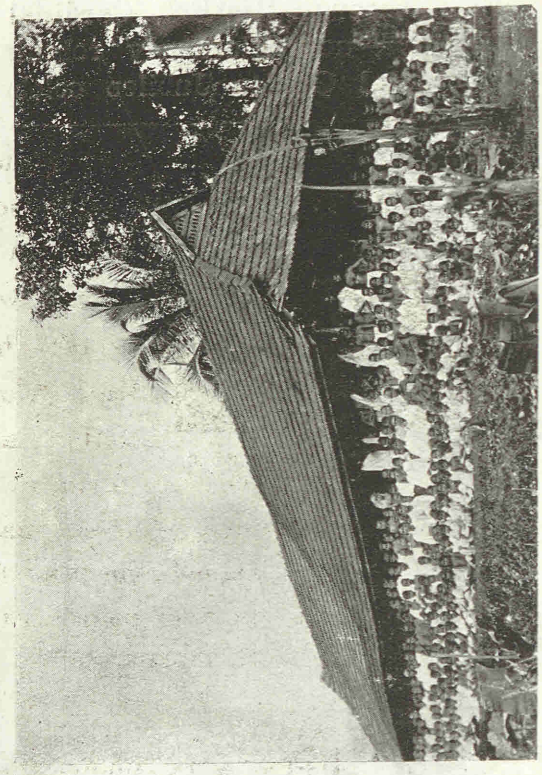



Branch House at Karukutty.

in the Archdiocese of Ernakulam, at Ayroor, Puthupally and



Branch House, Ayroor.



Branch House, Poonjar.

Poonjar in the Diocese of Changanacherry, and at Thalor in the Diocese of Trichur. In these places the Fathers devote themselves chiefly to the conversion of infidels and non-catholics. At Puthupally, Poonjar and Thalor they conduct elementary vernacular schools in addition.



Branch House, Puthupally.

27. The Catholic Syrians always have had at heart, the conversion of their separated brethren. The Congregation from its very start had always been on the alert to work for this noble cause, whenever any occasion presented itself. Since there was no House of the Congregation in any non-catholic centre, the Fathers were not able to do much in this line. In 1921, however, there was given them by Mgr. Aloysius Benziger, O. C. D., Bishop of Quilon, an occasion to work among the Jacobites. The work of the Fathers in the Diocese of Quilon removed many prejudices from among non-catholics and paved the way for the conversion of many. This was followed by the opening of the Houses at Ayroor and Puthupally, two Jacobite centres.



Mgr. A. Benziger, O. C. D., Bishop of Quilon.

28. Mission work among the Jacobites is facilitated now by the Bethany Movement, set on foot by the conversion of two illustrious Jacobite Prelates, Mar Ivanios, Archbishop of Bethany, and Mar Theophilos, Bishop of Tiruvalla. The two Prelates were received into the Catholic Church on the 20th of September, 1930. The Holy See has granted them jurisdiction over those whom they convert and permitted them the use of their former Rite and Liturgy with necessary corrections. At the request of the Archbishop of Bethany and the Bishop of Tiruvalla, Fathers of the Congregation are exercising, in various ways, mission work for the conversion, especially of the Jacobites. They often go to the mission stations to preach Missions and Retreats to the new converts and also to take active part in public conferences wherein controverted doctrines

of the Catholic Church are exposed and vindicated. Some, at the



Mar. Theophilos, Bishop of Tiruvalla with some of his priests, making retreat at Chethipusha.

request of the above mentioned Prelates, occasionally go and help them in every way their Religious vocation permits them. One of the Fathers even lived one whole year with the Bethany Brothers, who as a body had been converted to the Catholic Church along with the two Prelates. As a rule all the convert Priests spend a few days in the bungalow close to the Monastery of Chethipusha, where, under the direct supervision of the Fathers, they make their Retreat, prepare themselves for Confession and receive training in matters of Faith and the practical life of a Catholic Priest. This kind of retreats and religious instructions is extended also to lay converts in the same Monastery. Many of the convert Priests even go through a short course in Theology at Chethipusha. The Congregation is happy to meet the expenses of all these convert Priests

during their stay at the Monastery bungalow. The Fathers living in the Branch House at Ayroor, devote themselves entirely to the conversion of non-catholics. Individual converts are given all needed help and support in the other Monasteries, especially in the Mother-House at Mannanam. The Fathers of the Congregation promote the Reunion Movement also through learned and up-to-date publications.



Conversion work among the Jacobites, Branch House, Ayroor.

29. Preaching Retreats and Missions, hearing Confessions, administering the last Sacraments to the dying, teaching in Schools and managing them, conducting Catechumenates and Industrial Schools, and carrying on the Apostolate of the Press, are the chief outlets of the active life of the Congregation. At present the Congregation numbers 135 Priests, 120 Scholastics, 25 Novices, 53 Lay brothers, and 77 Aspirants.

# CHAPTER XI

## 1931

## THE CENTENARY

### The Principal Centenary Celebrations in St. Joseph's Monastery, Mannanam, the Mother-House.

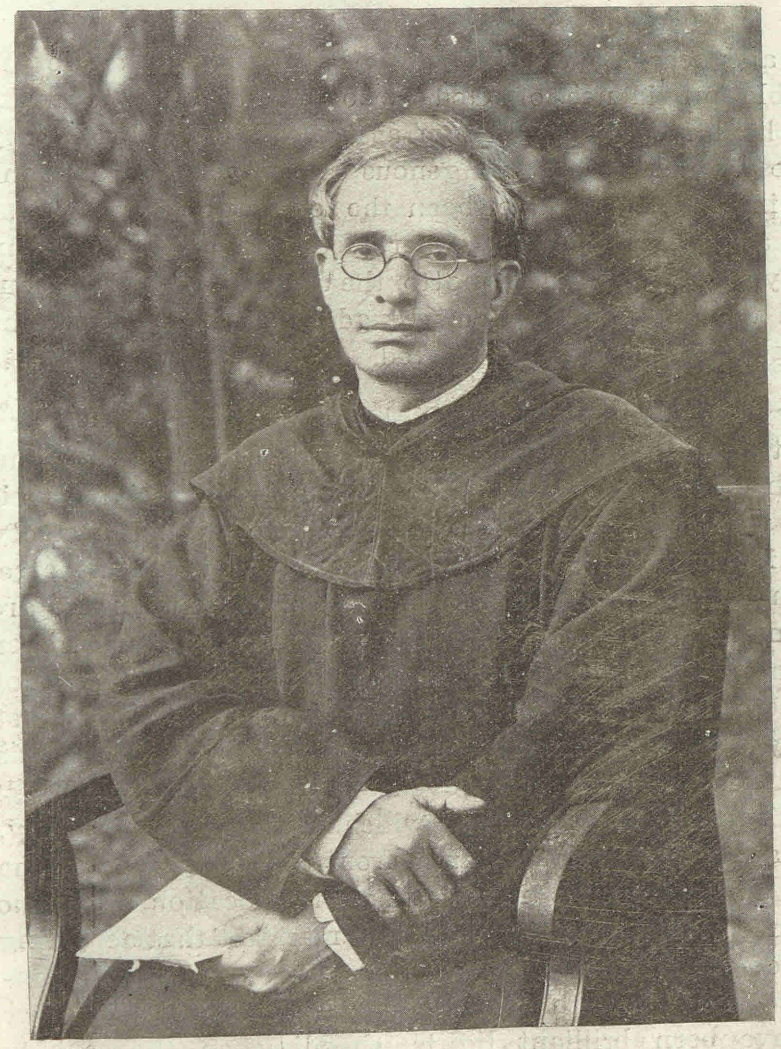
1. "Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised" (Ps. CXLIV, 3), "Great is his power: and of his wisdom there is no number" (Ps. CXLVI, 5), is naturally the hearty cry that ascends to the throne of God Almighty from the breast of every one, who is acquainted with the history of the Carmelite Congregation of Malabar which has been given to live through its first hundred years of existence. Devoted children of their revered Mother, the members of the Congregation, from the Prior General down to the freshly-arrived postulant, hailed the happy dawn of the year of our Lord, 1931, with exuberant joy and jubilation. The long-looked-for year, the happy Centenary, the rare Jubilee, has at last come! "How shall it be celebrated? Where shall this unique event in the history of the Church in Malabar be commemorated?"—were the questions that most occupied the minds of the children of Carmel in Malabar. To their supreme satisfaction and joy, the Very Rev. Fr. John Berchmans of Jesus Mary, Prior General of the Congregation, issued the following circular letter to all the eagerly expectant members of the Congregation.

2. Father General's message.

"Father John of Jesus Mary, Prior General of the Third Order of Discalced Carmelites, to the Revv. Fathers, Scholastics, Novices, Lay brothers, and Aspirants, of the said Third Order, peace and salutation in the Lord.

Revv. Fathers and dear Brothers,

I. On this happy occasion, when the Centenary of the foundation of Our Congregation is being celebrated, intense is the joy I feel in being privileged to convey this happy message to you from a heart full of love and gratitude towards God, the Dispenser of all gifts, and to exhort you, everyone, to commemorate this great occasion with due solemnity.



Very Rev. Fr. John Berchmans of Jesus Mary, Prior General of the Congregation.

This new Religious Congregation took its rise, on that memorable day, the 11th of May, 1831, when our Venerable Founders, the Very Rev. Fr. Thomas Palakal and the Very Rev. Fr. Thomas Porukara, with the permission and in the presence of their Ordinary, Mgr. M. Stabilini, and with the help

and co-operation of many of the Clergy and laity, in the name of St. Joseph, laid the foundation stone of the Mother-House and of the First church of our Congregation on the now famous mount of Mannanam.

How just and reasonable it is, then, that we should adore the incomprehensible providence of God, who has deigned to make choice of this land of Malabar, known as the cradle of Christianity in India, to be the seat of an indigenous Religious Congregation! Indescribable, indeed, must have been the exultation which these two holy men and their followers experienced, on that day when, whole-heartedly adopting as their motto, the acquisition of Religious Perfection and the extension of God's kingdom, they abandoned the world and consecrated themselves to God.

The history of the Church in Malabar in the past century proclaims to the world at large the internal development and external growth of the Congregation, its spiritual and social activities, and the immense good it has rendered to Catholic society through the instrumentality of its Seminaries, Catechumenates, Schools, Printing Presses, and other Institutions. Innumerable are the souls whom the members of our Congregation have won over to Christ by their holy lives, Missions, and Retreats. It need not be described here how effective and fruitful were the very first efforts made by our Congregation for the conversion of the pagans in our country. Our Fathers have, even at the risk of their lives, successfully withstood the Schisms, which, with torrential fury, tried to sweep away the Syrian Church from the unity of the One Holy Church. Our enterprises in the line of education are in no less degree appreciated. From all these it is manifest that according to the dictum of our Divine Redeemer, "A city seated on a mountain cannot be hid" (Matth. v. 14), our Monasteries and other Institutions have been brilliant lights, shedding on the country round about, the lustre of their wisdom and truth, and fostering a Catholic spirit therein.

On this occasion, therefore, we must deeply ponder over the innumerable benefits and graces, bestowed by God, through our

beloved Mother, the Congregation, on each one of us, on the faithful, and on the various other communities; with hearts full of gratitude and love, we must render adequate thanks to the infinite mercy of God.

II. Wherefore, in the first place, we should all, faithfully imitate our holy Founders and predecessors, who have handed down to us the noble heritage of the practice of Religious Perfection, in order to attain to the summit of the mount of spiritual life.

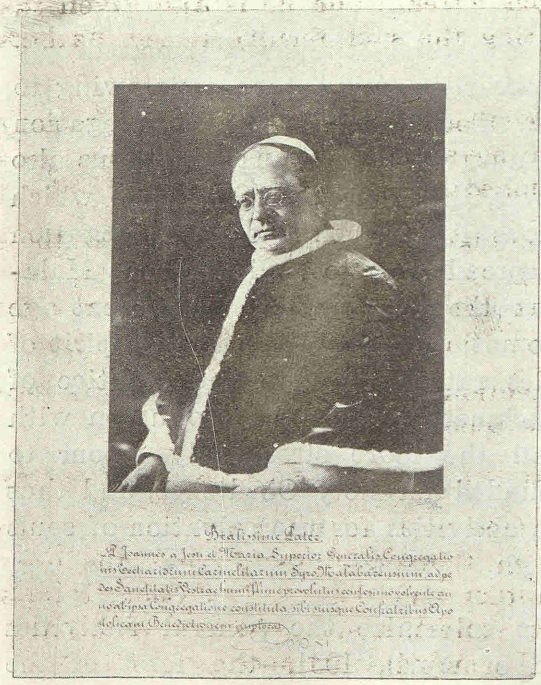
And here it may not be out of place to point out one fact in particular. If the foundation of Religious life is Obedience, we may with gratification assert that our holy Founders grounded our Congregation on the holy sacrifice of Obedience. For, when they, sacrificing all they had, tried might and main to found their cherished Congregation, the mandate of their Ordinary assigned to them far different engagements, which widely separated them from each other and from the work in which they were most deeply interested. And we must ever bear in mind that it is owing to that heroic sacrifice of our holy Founders that our Congregation struck deep roots and flourished uninterruptedly. Hence let us also foster in ourselves, more than ever, the same holy Obedience which is the basis and root of Religious life, so that our Congregation may grow more and more and spread even to lands beyond Malabar. We cannot but admit that the tendency of the present age is to tempt us to prefer the promptings of self-love to the spirit of Obedience, to external activities rather than to the practice of interior life and to worldly attachment rather than to union with God. Wherefore we should all the more strenuously labour to attain Religious Perfection grounded on holy Obedience, and thus faithfully carry out our various activities for the salvation of souls and the propagation of the Faith.

Since it has been decided to solemnize the general festivities of the Centenary on the 26th of April, 1931,—the feast of the Patronage of St. Joseph—at our Mother-House, St. Joseph's Monastery, Mannanam, our Very Revv. Fathers Definitors-General, Very Revv. Fathers Priors, and Revv. Fathers Vicars, are requested to

assemble there on that occasion. It is my desire that the other Fathers and members of our Congregation should as far as possible congregate and take part in the celebrations.

On the above mentioned day, in thanksgiving for all the extraordinary graces and benefits which the Almighty has been pleased to lavish upon our Congregation and upon each one of us during this past century, there will be celebrated at Mannanam a solemn High Mass with Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament, during which the "Te Deum" will be sung. And it is hereby ordained that in union with this solemn act of thanksgiving, a solemn High Mass and a "Te Deum" shall be sung on the same day in all our Monasteries.

Moreover, I am happy to announce to you that our Holy Father, Pope Pius XI, has deigned to send us on this occasion his blessing in autograph.



The Autograph Blessing of H. H. Pope Pius XI.

In addition to the Apostolic blessing, the Sacred Congregation for the Oriental Church, in order to make this celebration solemn and fruitful, by a letter No. 812 dated the 3rd January 1931, has granted us the following privileges:—

(*a*) To all the members of our Congregation the Holy Father grants a Plenary Indulgence with his Apostolic blessing, in honour of the Centenary. It is desirable that all members gain the indulgence on the feast of the Patronage of St. Joseph.

(*b*) In the Monasteries of Mannanam, Thevara, Ampalacat, and Chethipusha, the Centenary shall be celebrated. This celebration should be preceded with a Triduum of Retreat. The faithful of both sexes who after having taken part in the retreat, will visit any of the above mentioned Monastery churches, can gain the "Toties quoties" indulgence on the day of the celebration or on any day within its octave.

And I hereby enjoin on the Superiors of the said Monasteries to keep up this festivity in due time to the greatest advantage of all the faithful.

(*c*) In this Jubilee year, at the end of every retreat preached by our Fathers within the limits of the territories of the Syro-Malabar Dioceses, the Prior General is given the faculty of imparting, with the crucifix, the Apostolic blessing with a plenary indulgence to all the faithful who will have attended the greater part of the exercises of any such retreat; and he is also given the further privilege of communicating the said faculty to our Fathers who preach such retreats.

In accordance with this privilege, I delegate the same faculty of imparting the said Apostolic blessing, to our Fathers when they have preached the above mentioned retreats.

*N.B.*—(1) To gain the Indulgences mentioned in the three paragraphs given above (*a, b, c*), it is necessary for each one concerned, to confess and to receive Holy Communion and to pray for the propagation of the Faith and for the intentions of the Pope.

(2) For the Indulgences mentioned in paragraphs *b* and *c* a visit to a church is also a necessary condition.

(3) All the Indulgences are applicable to the souls in Purgatory.

Finally, praying our Lord God with all my heart that He may deign to accept our prayers and thanksgivings through the intercession of His most Blessed Mother and that of St. Joseph, to bless our Congregation in her future activities and to render each one of us rich in virtues and merits, I conclude this letter.

S. Heart's Monastery, Thevara,
*5th April, 1931,*
Easter Sunday.

(Sd.) Fr. John of Jesus Mary,
T. O. C. D.,
*Prior General.*

3. In compliance with Father General's letter, the 26th of April 1931, the feast of the Patronage of St. Joseph (Syro-Chaldean



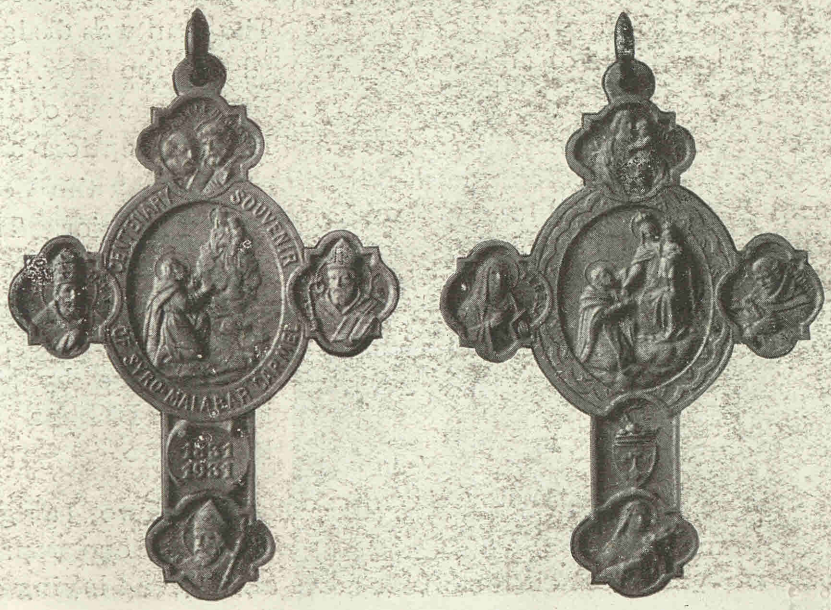
Inmates of St. Joseph's Monastery, Mannanam, 1931.

Calendar), witnessed the principal Centenary Celebrations of the Congregation, in St. Joseph's Monastery, Mannanam.

4. Preparations for the Centenary were started at Mannanam long before. In July 1929 the tombs of the Founders and other saintly deceased members of the Congregation were covered with marble slabs bearing short inscriptions. In the same year the portraits of the Very Rev. Fr. Thomas Porukara, one of the two Founders, of the Very Rev. Fr. Cyriac Elias (Chavara), of the Very Rev. Fr. Cyriac Eliseus (Porukara), of the Very Rev. Fr. Alexander of St. Joseph (Senior), with that of Mgr. M. Stabilini in the centre, decorated the walls of the Recreation Hall of the Fathers. All

these were effected in view of the coming Centenary by the Very Rev. Fr. Alexander of St. Joseph (junior), the then Prior of St. Joseph's Monastery, Mannanam. To these was added in 1931 the portrait of the Very Rev. Fr. Thomas Palakal, Co-Founder of the Institute with Father Thomas Porukara.

5. A Centenary Souvenir Medal* was also struck in 1930. This exquisite Memorial of rare workmanship with a delicately artistic finish, strikingly symbolical, and representing all the important Saints of the Order, was executed in Germany after the design prepared by the Very Rev. Fr. Hyacinth.



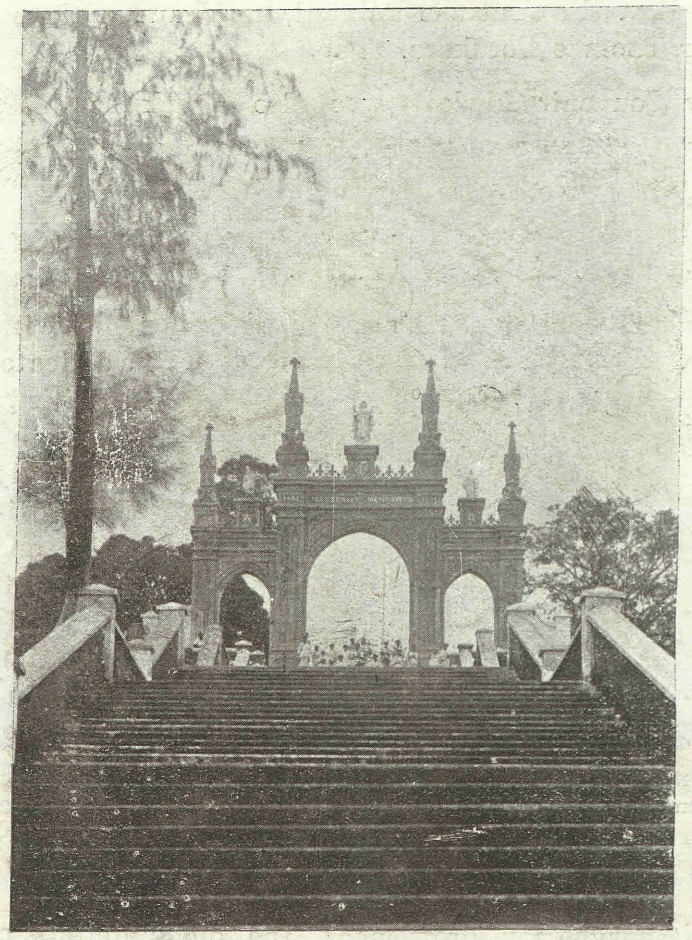

(*Front*) (*Back*)
The Centenary Souvenir Medal. (Exact size.)

6. As the Centenary Year drew near, the old buildings of Mannanam began to assume a new appearance. Towering up above those gigantic buildings and antique trees that adorn the summit and the beautiful slopes of the Mannanam hill of repute, rose gradually the huge Centenary Memorial.

7. This Memorial is a magnificent, life-size statue of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, in front of the Monastery church, supported by an

* These Medals, in aluminium, can be had from the St. Joseph's Press, Mannanam, Travancore.

artistic Gothic Arch between two sister-arches, also Gothic supporting the beautiful statues of St. Michael and of the Angel Guardian. On the main arch is inscribed in bold characters "1831—Centenary Memorial—1931." The plan was designed by the Rev. Fr. Francis Sales of the Im. Conception, and executed by the Very Rev. Fr. Prior. The three statues of exquisite charm and finish were made for the purpose by Mr. Francis D'Gama of Mangalore.



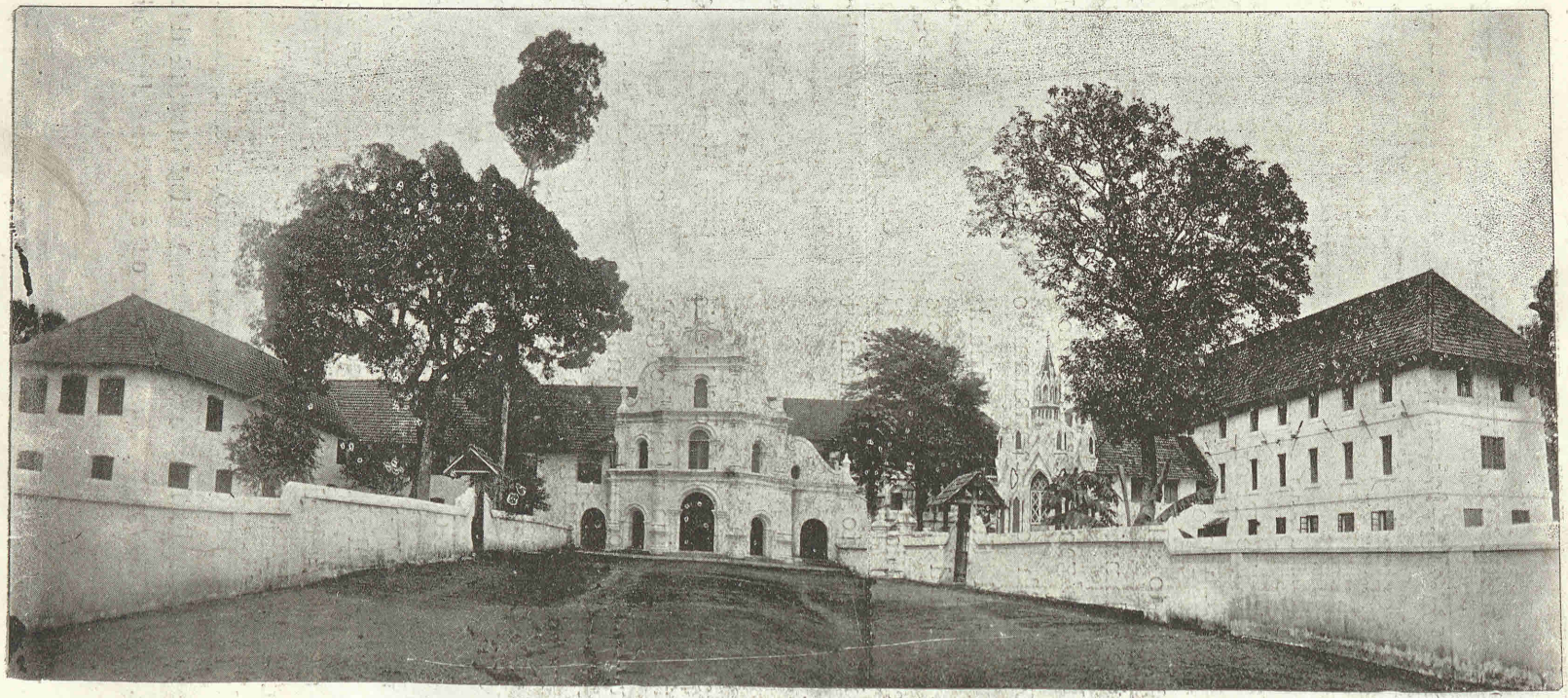
The Centenary Memorial Gate.

8. Two large pictures, one representing the laying of the foundation stone of the St. Joseph's Monastery and Church, performed by the Founders in the presence of their Ordinary and a vast multitude of Clergy and laity, and the other, representing the Religious Profession of the First Eleven Fathers, with Fr. Marcelline, O. C. D ; painted by Mr. Francis D'Gama of Mangalore, embellish the walls of the sacristy of Mannanam. On the opposite wall hangs the portrait of the Holy Father Pius XI, with his autograph blessing.

9. The Monastery church-yard was also raised to a desired level and an extensive, gaily decorated pandal erected thereon.

10. The autograph blessing of H. H., Pope Pius XI, gloriously reigning, sent to the Prior General and to all the members of the Congregation, and the Apostolic blessing with a Plenary Indulgence extended to all the members of the Institute, enhanced and ennobled the solemnity of the august Centenary celebrations. The Portiuncula Indulgences granted to all those who would visit the Monastery church of Mannanam on the day of the Centenary celebrations, and the other Indulgences granted through the Retreats preached by the Fathers of the Congregation, were the higher attractions that drew the Clergy and the laity of Malabar in flocks to Mannanam, to participate in these solemn functions.

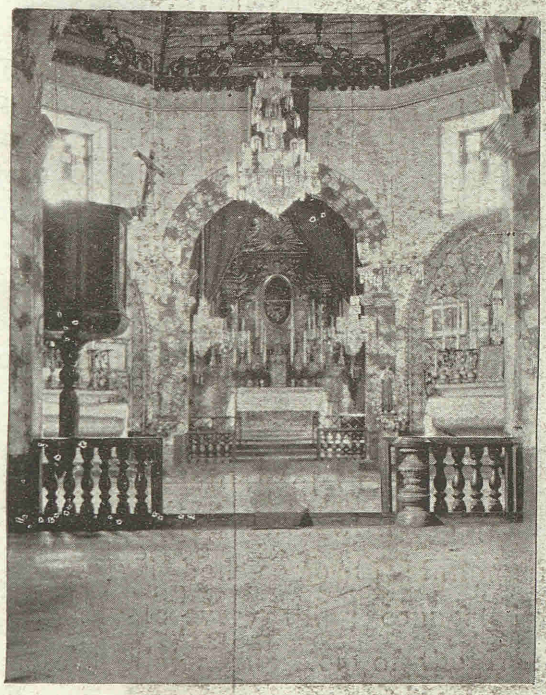
11. As the day of the celebrations drew near, the hillock of Mannanam grew alive with the gathering crowds. The Very Rev. Fr. General had come to Mannanam a week earlier to attend personally to every thing connected with the festivities. One by one, the Major Superiors of the Institute, the Local Superiors of all the Monasteries, and a good many Fathers and Brothers, reached Mannanam. The Triduum of Retreat for the faithful, in preparation for the Centenary, was preached by Rev. Fr. Alexander of St. Joseph and Rev. Fr. Placid of St. Joseph. The retreat was followed by the well-appreciated devotion at Mannanam, the Forty Hours' Adoration. This year, in honour of the Centenary, the Adoration was conducted with extraordinary splendour and solemnity; an unprecedented crowd of both Clergy and laity attended the sacred devotions.



Mannanam hill in 1931—The Monastery and the adjoining institutions.

12. As may be expected, the Jubilee eve was ushered in by an extraordinary stir. The solemn stillness of the three days of the Forty Hours' Adoration was suddenly broken by the simultaneous booming of a powerful Indian cannonade, proclaiming the Jubilee to all the four quarters. Musical bands welcomed the thousands who eagerly flocked to Mannanam from all parts of Malabar.

13. Now and again, melodious peals from the Mannanam belfry announced the arrival of some Prelate. His Excellency, Mar Ivanios, Archbishop of Bethany, was the first to arrive with one of his Bethany friars, together with the Sessions Judge, Mr. A. Philipose, M.A., B.L., who had been newly received into the Church. Having been led to the church, the Archbishop gave his blessing to the whole Congregation. As His Ex., on account of indisposition, could not stay on till the morrow, he took leave of Mannanam, shortly after.



The High Altar of St. Joseph's Monastery Church, Mannanam.

14. In the evening, at about 4 p. m., commenced Solemn Vespers sung in Syro-Chaldaic in honour of St. Joseph, the glorious Patron of Carmel, by the entire Syro-Malabar Carmel, intoning in unanimous voice the praises of their glorious Patron, who has been lavishing his paternal care on them, all through these hundred years. It was indeed a devotion-inspiring sight to behold the Carmel of Malabar,—the Prior General, the Definitors General, Priors, Vicars and a good many Fathers—clad in the white mantles and hood proper to them, honouring their heavenly Patron, forming an extraordinary Choir in the beautiful church of Mannanam.

15. Vespers were just over, when lo! the arrival of the Bishop of Kottayam was announced. He paid a flying visit and returned immediately, to come again the following morning. While the Bishop of Kottayam was being escorted to his car, His Ex., the Archbishop Metropolitan of Syro-Malabar, alighted at the Centenary Memorial gate, after having travelled all the way from Ernakulam. His Ex. was received by a multitude of Priests and a vast concourse of people. With the sweet recollections of his early school days at Mannanam, His Ex. was glad to raise the tide of happiness by his presence in the Monastery for a whole day.



His Excellency Mar Augustine Kandathil, D. D.,
Archbishop of Ernakulam.

16. At length, the bright rays of the sun of the 26th of April, 1931, burst on the hill. It was so arranged that every priest had said

Holy Mass before the Solemn Pontifical celebration. At 7 a. m., the car of His Ex., Mar James Kalacherry, Bishop of Changanacherry, and a blood-relative of the saintly Father Cyriac Elias (Chavara), the central figure in the history of the Congregation, was up at the Centenary Memorial. He was received in due form and led direct to the Sanctuary where the Pontifical Throne stood ready for him. His Ex., after the usual prayers and ceremonies, began the Pontifical High Mass, according to the Syro-Malabar Rite, amidst the large gathering of Clergy and thousands of laity, pouring forth their hearts in thanksgiving to God Almighty.



His Excellency Mar James Kalacherry, Ph. D., D. D., Bishop of Changanacherry.

17. The Pontifical High Mass was followed by the blessing and inauguration of the Centenary Memorial. Mar Augustine Kandathil, Archbishop of Ernakulam, performed the solemn function in the presence of the Bishop of Changanacherry. Immediately—the immense gathering of the faithful remaining on



The blessing of the Centenary Memorial Gate.

bended knees in devotion—the prayer consecrating the Monastery and the surrounding regions to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, was recited aloud by the Prior. Group photos were also taken to commemorate the inauguration. The Prelates were then conducted in procession to their respective apartments.

18. At 9-30 a. m., the Very Rev. Fr. Hyacinth of the Mother of Dolours, Prior of the Monastery, sang the solemn High Mass, in



His Excellency Mar
Alexander Choolaparampil, D.D.,
Bishop of Kottayam.



His Excellency Mgr.
Bonaventure, O.C.D., D.D.,
Bishop of Vijayapuram.

honour of St. Joseph, "Coram Pontifice." Mar Alexander Choolaparampil, Bishop of Kottayam, and Mgr. Bonaventure, O.C.D., Bishop of Vijayapuram, arrived, one after the other, just in time for the festive High Mass, at no little sacrifice of their precious time.

19. The next item was the sermon, the Very Rev. Fr. John Berchmans of Jesus Mary, Prior General of the Congregation, being the preacher. He had despatched a cablegram to the Holy Father, informing His Holiness of the Centenary festivities in the Mother House of the Institute, and was in hopes of a special blessing in return. When the bell from the sacristy announced the time

for the sermon the expected return-message from the Eternal City had not arrived. Not a little disappointed, Father General wended his way to the sacristy to get himself ready for the pulpit. And lo! just in time flashed in the longed-for message from Rome. Overflowing with joy and gratitude, His Reverence ascended the pulpit and read out the contents of the cablegram :

"Citta del Vaticano

Priori Generali Carmelitarum

Syro-Malabarensium

Augustus Pontifex enixe a Deo precatur ut ista religiosa congregatio nova semper sumat sanctitatis incrementa eique paterne benedicit.

Cardinalis Pacelli."

Then followed his discourse. He dwelt on the humble origin and steady growth of the Syro-Malabar Carmel as well as on the work the Congregation has been able to achieve under God's guidance in the field of Clerical education, in defending the rights of the Church against the fiery attacks of Heresies and Schisms, in propagating the kingdom of Christ among infidels, in conducting the Apostolate of the Press, and in the no less important work of secular education of the young in well-conducted schools, during its centennial existence. Then, with a most apt transition, he passed on to a panegyric on St. Joseph the glorious Patron of Carmel and of the Mannanam Monastery. The sermon was one of thanksgiving to God Almighty for all the favours bestowed upon the Congregation and upon the whole of Malabar through its instrumentality. The Prior General, in the name of the Congregation, finally thanked the numerous benefactors, friends, and well-wishers of the whole Congregation, who had amply contributed to bring it through the long period of its existence, to the most important position it now holds in the Church in India, and concluded with a hearty prayer that the next Centenary celebration might, by the special intervention of Divine benevolence, witness the raising to the honours of the Altar, of some members of the Congregation.

20. Towards the close of the sermon, His Ex., Mar Francis Vashapilly, the Bishop of Trichur, in fulfilment of a kind promise, came over to Mannanam and pontificated at the solemn Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament. His Ex. had to perform the ceremony of blessing a church in his Diocese on the very same morning. In spite of this engagement, the great-hearted Prelate, travelling at a tremendous speed from distant Trichur reached in time to oblige the Syro-Malabar Carmel so dear to his heart.



His Excellency Mar Francis Vashapilly, D.D., Bishop of Trichur.

21. During the Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament, the "Te Deum" was very solemnly sung in Syro-Chaldaic, by all the Prelates, Priests and faithful assembled in the Mother-Church of the Congregation, in thanksgiving for all the great and manifold blessings God had lavishly bestowed upon the Congregation and, through it, upon the whole Church and people of Malabar, during these hundred years. After Benediction, the Prelates retired.

22. The last function of the day was the solemn festive procession at which was borne the miraculous statue of St. Joseph. The Very Rev. Fr. Jacob Kattakayam, Vicar Forane of Kuravilangad Parish Church, officiated. The lengthy procession, attended by so many Priests, Secular and Regular, in their ecclesiastical insignia, by the laity who mustered strong,—skirting the hill of Mannanam—enlivened by musical bands and amidst an incessant shower of fire balls and loud crackers, presented a most imposing scene.

23. One of the happiest features in these Centenary festivities has been the presence of the most distinguished personages both in the Ecclesiastical and Civil departments. The whole of the Syro-Malabar Hierarchy: the Archbishop Metropolitan with his three

Suffragan Bishops, together with Mar Ivanios, Archbishop of Bethany of the new Malankara Syrian Rite, and Mgr. Bonaventure, O. C. D., Bishop of Vijayapuram, of the Latin Rite, took part in the solemn festivities. Many of the Secular Clergy from the various Dioceses of Malabar and a large body of laity, in spite of the stress of the economic depression, thronged to Mannanam, to be present at the festivities. The Bethany Brotherhood of the Malankara Syrian Church, the Oblates of the Sacred Heart of the Syro-Malabar Diocese of Kottayam, the Missionary Congregation of the Syro-Malabar Archdiocese of Ernakulam, and the Clergy of the Latin Rite were also represented.

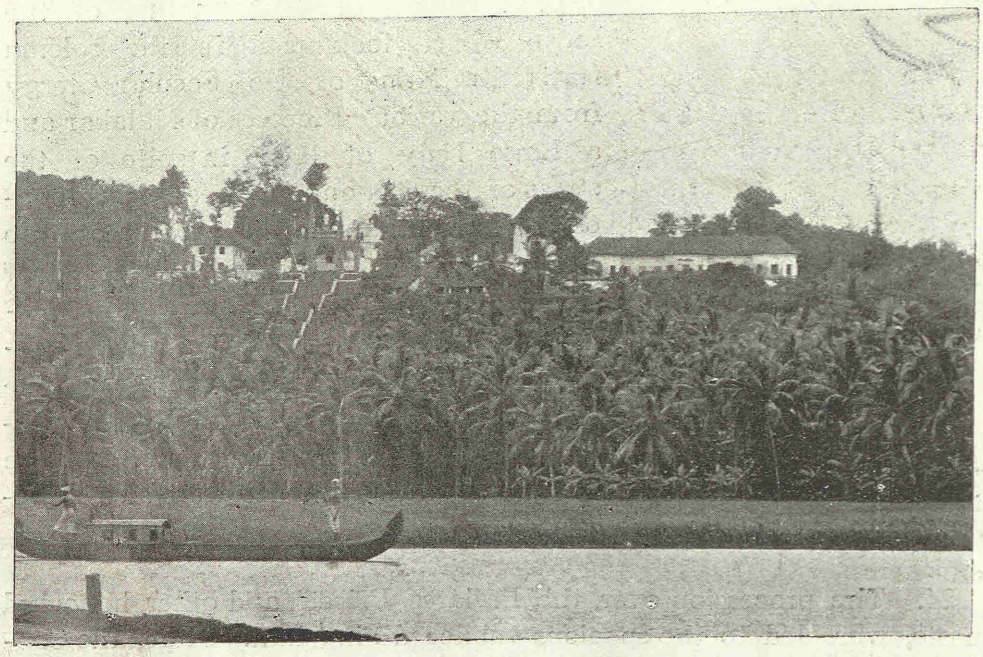


His Excellency, Mar Ivanios, M A., D.D., Archbishop of Bethany.

24. The procession over, the Prelates, Priests, and other honoured guests, were led to the spacious Jubilee dining-hall. Here, the Congregation was privileged to entertain five Bishops, a good number of distinguished secular Clergy, numerous members of the Congregation, and a few representatives of the civil authorities, numbering in all nearly 150, at a table generously laid out, though restricted within the limits of religious modesty and sobriety.

25. At dinner, the Prior General himself rose to propose the toast. After a brief survey of the glorious past under review, he paid a glowing tribute to the Roman Pontiffs who had, one after another, lavished on the Congregation favours of paternal predilection, and especially to His Holiness, Pope Pius XI who had munificently enriched and ennobled the Centenary celebrations with unique spiritual favours and privileges. The worthy Representatives of the Holy See in India were gratefully recalled on the occasion as the most benevolent protectors of the Congregation. Father General then turned towards the Syro-Malabar Hierarchy in general, and to each Prelate in particular, recounting the manifold favours

the Congregation had been receiving at their hands. Their unvarying sympathy, paternal kindness and hearty encouragement



General view of Mannanam Hill, as seen from the fields, 1931.

had placed the Congregation under a heavy debt of gratitude towards the Syro-Malabar Hierarchy in the erection of which the Congregation had played, in its turn, a very significant part. In His Ex., Mgr. Bonaventure, O. C. D., he said, the Congregation had the representative of the entire Latin Hierarchy and of the Carmelite Missionaries of the First Order, and thanked him, in that capacity, for the eminent services rendered to the Institute in its infancy by the Discalced Carmelite Missionaries and especially by the Venerable Archbishops of Verapoly. Moreover, he promised the Prelates on behalf of the Congregation not only to help them by a life of prayer and good works, spent in the Monasteries, but also to render them every active service in its power for promoting the glory of God and the salvation of souls. As a token of his gratitude, the Prior General presented each of the Prelates with a silver Centenary Souvenir Medal. Before concluding, he thanked also the honoured guests who had evinced their sympathy with and esteem

for the Congregation by their personal presence and assistance at ceremonies which though splendid in themselves, yet extended over a length of time.

26. His Ex., the Archbishop of Ernakulam, responded in clear, simple terms, on behalf especially of the Syro-Malabar Hierarchy. He thanked the Prior General and the Congregation which had done much, chiefly by preaching Retreats and Missions, conducting the Apostolate of the Press, educating the young and converting pagans and heretics. When His Ex. concluded his address, all the Prelates standing up imparted their blessing to the Congregation, its members and works.

27. Rev. Father Joseph Muttathupadam, formerly an alumnus of the Seminary of Mannanam, spoke on behalf of the Syrian Secular Clergy of Malabar. The speech expressed in vivid and witty terms the great love and esteem the speaker bore the Congregation, and his singular veneration towards its saintly Founders and especially towards the glorious Father Cyriac Elias (Chavara).

28. Among the messages of congratulation received on the occasion by the Very Rev. Fr. Prior General, those of His Eminence, Cardinal Lepicier, O. S. M., His Ex., Mgr. Peter Pisani, former Apostolic Delegate, and the Apostolic Delegation, are worthy of special mention.

---

*Roma, 11th March 1931.*

MY DEAR PRIOR GENERAL,

I have received your letter and from my heart I congratulate you and all your Congregation on the approaching celebrations of the Centenary of the Foundation of your Congregation, and I pray that every grace and blessing may descend on you and on all your members from the Throne of grace and mercy on this most happy, and for India, unique Centenary. I pray that a hundredfold and ten times a hundredfold of graces and blessings, may come to you and to all your members and also to all your

friends and benefactors and helpers and devoted Catholic people on this thrice happy occasion.

I need not assure you of the great interest I feel for and the great affection I have for India and for all Her people, and especially for Her dear Catholic people, so devoted and so loyal to the Church and to its visible head on earth, Our Holy Father the Pope whose paternal heart loves and cherishes the Catholic people of India.

From my heart I pray every blessing may be with you and all your people.

Believe me,
Yours Sincerely in Xt.
(Sd.) ALEXIS HENRY M. CARDINAL LEPICIER,
O. S. M.

---

*Roma, 2-3-1931.*

VERY REV., DEAR PRIOR GENERAL,

The Centenary of the foundation of your Congregation ought to be a feast for Catholic Malabar not only because it is the unique Religious Institution of its kind in India but also on account of the splendid work done for the spreading of the Catholic Faith all over your beautiful country.

It is therefore with great joy that I join in your celebrations and in your prayers just after commemorating your Congregation in the course of my lecture on Indian Missions at Propaganda.

Blessing you and all your Confrêres most heartily in Our Lord,

I beg to remain,
My dear Father Prior General,
Yours faithfully,
(Sd.) P. PISANI,
*Archbishop of Constance.*

---

APOSTOLIC DELEGATION
OF THE EAST INDIES
137/31

*May 6, 1931.*

VERY REV. AND DEAR FATHER,

I beg to acknowledge receipt of your kind letter No. 119/31 under date of April 22nd announcing the Centenary celebrations of the foundation of your Congregation.

I congratulate your Rev. on this eventful occasion on the meritorious work which your Congregation has done in Malabar during the century just closed. I pray that the good work done in the present century will even surpass that of the past, and that your Congregation will continue its noble labour for the benefit of the Catholic Church in Malabar.

With sentiments of high regard, I remain,
Sincerely yours in Christ,

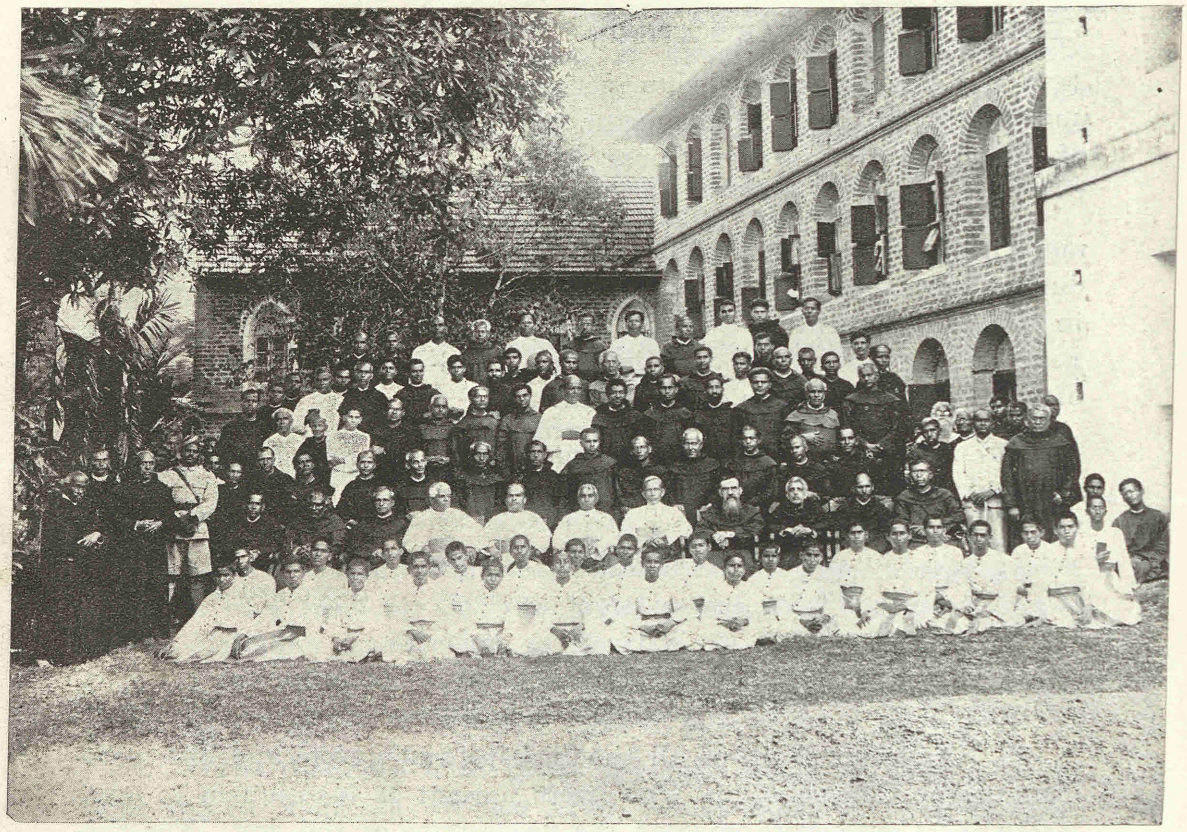
(Sd.) V. BELGERI,
*Secretary in Charge.*

---

29. A group photo of all the Bishops and guests and the members of the Congregation, who were present at Mannanam to celebrate the Centenary, crowned the programme of the day. The Prelates, accompanied by the Fathers went round the Monastery buildings, and other departments attached to it, to see the various monuments, epitaphs, paintings and pictures that spoke of the glorious antiquities of Mannanam and of Malabar in general. Later in the afternoon, at about 5 p.m., the Prelates were escorted to their motor cars where they bade farwell to Mannanam.

30. Monday, the 27th of April, was the day of Remembrance. A solemn Requiem Mass was sung for the repose of the deceased members and benefactors of the Congregation. The entire community, singing in their hearts "Laudemus viros gloriosos et parentes

nostros" (Eccle. XLIVI), assisted at the function. Mass over, the solemn Office of the Dead, according to the Syro-Malabar Rite, was conducted by the Very Rev. Fr. Prior General, in due form.



Group Photo taken on the occasion of the Centenary Jubilee Celebration, Mannanam.

31. At the close of the "Remembrance day", a day also of a happy family meeting and rejoicing at their Mother-House, the members of the Congregation who had hailed from far and near had at last to bid one another farewell.

32. May the Lord who has hitherto guided the Congregation with His Omnipotent Hand grant it to see more glorious Centenaries in the future!

# CHAPTER XII

## 1931—1932

## Centenary Celebrations in other Monasteries of the Congregation.

### I. Centenary Celebrations in the Novitiate, Ampalacat.

*May 17th, 1931*

One of the scenes of the Centenary celebrations was St. Theresa's Monastery, at Ampalacat, situated in the Diocese of Trichur, not far from the once famous historic port of Cranganore where St. Thomas the Apostle first landed in India. The Monastery is the Novitiate House of the Congregation; it accommodates fifty novices at present. Its position on a hillock, in the midst of six parishes, within a radius of two or three miles, made it accessible to the large crowd that attended the celebrations. It was a happy disposition of Providence that the solemn feast (Canonization Anniversary) of that widely known Saint of Carmel, the Little Flower,—who has been chosen Patroness of our Novices,—falling on the same day, enhanced the jubilation and splendour of the festivity.

The people had timely information of the celebrations and of the many spiritual privileges which the Holy See had granted to those who would take part in them according to the mind of the Church. Consequently, as a preliminary to this day of joy, a preparatory Retreat of three days was preached in the Monastery church, commencing on the 13th May. The celebrated preacher, Father Clement of the Infant Jesus, conducted the retreat to his large audience.

All was ready. The majestic church was decorated with greenery, garlands and flowers of diverse kinds. Carmel's sons came flocking to the home of their spiritual birth, counting in all, over a hundred members from the various Houses. Among the esteemed guests were the Very Rev. Father Prior General, the Definitors General and several Local Superiors. The Aspirants from distant Pavaratty and the Scholastics from far-off Mangalore also turned their steps hitherwards. Our brethren, the Secular Clergy, were not less enthusiastic in making our joy complete by favouring us with their presence and participating in our doings.

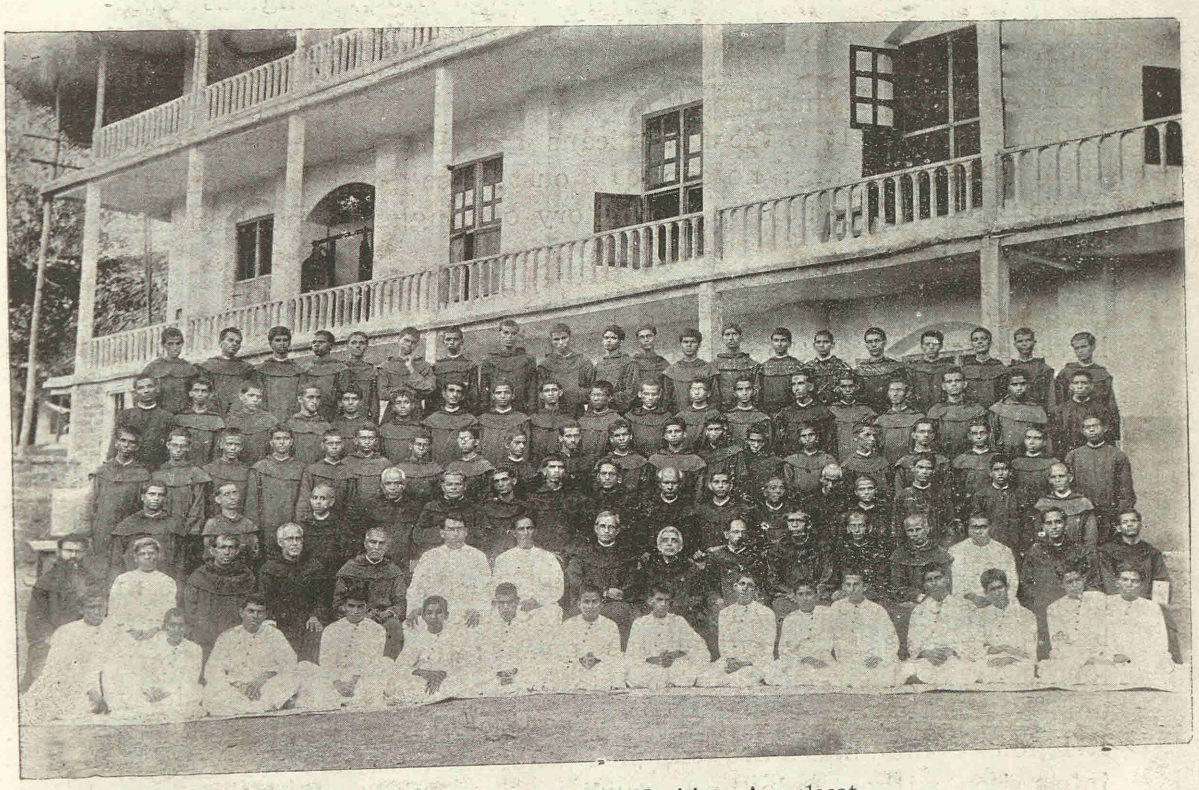
The sun was up early. The solemn swell of bells proclaimed to the expectant multitude that the day of jubilation had dawned. The booming petards rent the air, their echoes inviting those far away, and hastening the footsteps of those in the neighbourhood, so that the faithful poured in from every quarter.

At 9 a. m., the Solemn High Mass began. The spacious church could not hold the throng of worshippers. Father Hilarion of the Sacred Heart, delivered an instructive and eloquent panegyric on the Little Flower.

At about 3 p. m., our musical peals specially prepared for the occasion, sent forth their call far and near, to the accompaniment of petards. The services of the police had to be requisitioned to keep the dense crowd in order. Meanwhile a group photo was taken with our new building as a background.

The Rev. Fr. J. Palokaran, M. A. (Edin.), Principal, St. Thomas' College, Trichur, began his sermon at 4-30 p. m., taking as his text the words of the Psalmist: "Vineam de Aegypto transtulisti"— "Thou hast brought a vine out of Egypt." Then comparing Religious Communities to that vine of old which was only an image and shadow of the true vine of the New Dispensation, the preacher, in his own mellifluous style. set forth with much eloquence and clearness, the immense good done by Religious Communities both to Church and State. It is impossible to give here, in detail, all that Father Palokaran said; still we shall try to place before our readers some of the ideas which he imparted on that occasion:

"Religious Communities," he said, "have always been the joy and pride of the Church. There is no doubt that what they were they now are and will continue to be. They are her joy in the days of her prosperity, and her mainstay and consolation in her darkest hours of adversity. They have in every age and clime supplied the vanguard of the Church with intellectual giants, valiant confessors and innumerable martyrs. What man is there



Centenary Celebration Group, Novitiate, Ampalacat.

who is not moved with admiration at the sight of that galaxy of men, rich in science and sanctity, which Religious Communities have at various times presented to the Church, that fertile mother of Saints? What man is there who is not moved at such names as St. Francis of Assisi and St. Dominic? What man is there who is not captivated by the mystic Theresa of Avila, and that great luminary of Holy Church, St. Thomas, the Prince of Philosophers?

And who can ignore the services of that soldier-saint, Ignatius, and of the valiant St. Theresa in quelling the evil effects of that catastrophe of the 16th century,—the so-called Reformation? For it was they, as Chesterton says,—St. Ignatius and St. Theresa,—who heralded the Counter-Reformation.

"No arguments are required to convince us of the immense benefit, Church and State have derived from Religious Communities. One acquainted with European History, knows well what they have done for Europe. Oxford and Cambridge, the boast of every Englishman,—to whom do they owe their prestige and prosperity? It is the Dominicans and Franciscans that made them what they are; no one can oust these Religious from the glorious place they hold in the history of England's greatest seats of learning.

"It is however sad to record that the enemies of the Church have realized better than we do, the strength and force of Religious Communities in upholding the cause of the Church. Therefore, in modern times, the enemies of the Church apply a system of bombardment, which, to say the least, is quite as potent as the more ancient methods. They are too civilized to have recourse to the policy of massacre and bloodshed of the Roman Emperors of old, nevertheless they are as implacable as those cruel despots in bringing about the destruction of the Church by seemingly harmless, but indeed most disastrous means: to dry up the very fountains is their most up-to-date weapon. Leaving the laity unmolested, they turn in full force against Priests and Religious Religious Communities are expelled wholesale, Priests are thrown into prison without ado, and cruelly murdered. Instances of this abound even in our own day.

"Now coming to the Carmelite Congregation of Malabar,—none of us is a stranger to this Institution, for it has had its birth in *our* land, in *our* time, and received its first impetus from *our own* men. We are all in one way or another recipients of those good fruits which Carmel so assiduously offers. Of all moments, the present is undoubtedly the fittest to recall to memory the history

of Carmel in Malabar and to renew our affectionate relations with her.

"As in the vineyard of old, so too in this vineyard of the Lord, a branch was plucked from the glorious stock of Mt. Carmel and transplanted into the soil of Malabar, a century ago. Today, after a hundred years, we find it so exuberant in health and vigour that we are lost in wonder and admiration. For, from insignificant beginnings, fortuitous chances and unpromising circumstances, it has, at the present day, spread its branches to various parts of Malabar. The Congregation has at present twenty Houses, hundred and thirty-five Priests, hundred and forty-five Ecclesiastical Students, seventy-seven Aspirants and fifty-three Lay Brothers,—all a goodly lot. Besides they have their share in the field of the propagation of the Faith, of education and of literature. To prophesy about the future is unwise,—but with these facts and figures before us, we may venture to predict that the Carmelite Congregation of Malabar, will be able to record more glorious achievements a hundred years hence.

"Now a few words about its services to Malabar. I believe all of you have heard of that melancholy schism of Rocos which once threatened the destruction of our glorious traditions, of our best inheritance—the Catholic Faith. It was an occasion for the members of this Congregation to display their fidelity and zeal in backing up the cause of the Church. But for this Congregation, that Schism would have overwhelmed the whole of Catholic Malabar. The services rendered by the Congregation, even at the peril of personal safety, will always be remembered to its honour and credit. It is with no small pleasure and pride that we behold it maintaining the same spirit whereby it safeguards and propagates the Faith.

"Again, the members of the Congregation are quite alive to the importance of the education of youth. For this purpose they run schools wherein the student receives, besides instruction in literature and history, a good foundation in, and a sufficient knowledge of, his Holy Religion. They conduct at present four English High

Schools and several Middle and Vernacular Schools. In the field of literature, too, they have their activities. They edit a highly useful paper, the "Nazrani Deepika," and two monthlies, "The Flower of Carmel" and the "Kudumbadeepam". Their publications in the field of apologetics is well deserving our admiration. The well-equipped Press at Mannanam, which is among the best of our printing works, has ever been active in upholding the cause of our Holy Faith with its series of controversial articles. Further, they go out preaching Missions, and relieve the Parish Priests who, through their ministrations, meet many a prodigal returning. Thus both by preaching and writing and above all by their edifying example they foster the spirit of Faith and keep alive the fire of devotion.

"Let us then," the speaker concluded, "thank the Lord along with the members of this Congregation for His many favours, and let us pray that He may guard under the shadow of His wing this Carmel in Malabar. Let us also recommend to the Divine rotection, the Very Rev. Father John Berchmans of Jesus Mary, who at present directs the destinies of the Congregation."

The soft evening sun had glided into twilight when the sermon ended. After the chanting of the Litany, the grand procession started bearing with it the beautifully adorned statue of the Little Flower. The pageant of a hundred Monks in white mantles, and of numerous Secular Priests, carrying lighted candles, moved majestically down the slope, to the accompaniment of the band and slowly re-entered the church. Benediction was given by the Very Rev. Father Matthew Edakolator, Vicar General of Trichur. The "Te Deum" was sung during the exposition of the Blessed Sacrament. The Benediction service, particularly well chanted in three voices by the novices, was no small credit to them.

His Excellency, the Bishop of Trichur, could not take an active part in the festivity for reasons of health; still he was pleased to grace the evening functions with his presence. The ceremonies over, all the people proceeded to the church-yard which was brilliantly lit with paper lanterns. The façade of the church up to a height of

eighty feet as well as the surrounding trees were studded with coloured lights, making the whole scene one of enchanting beauty. The festivities of the day were brought to a happy close by the indispensable fireworks which entertained all for a whole hour.

On the following day, the Very Rev. Prior, Father Gerard of St. Mary, sang a Solemn Requiem Mass, and the Very Rev. Prior General conducted the Office of the Dead in memory of the dear departed members of the Congregation.

## II. Centenary Celebrations in the Scholasticate, Chethipusha.

*January 17th, 1932.*

The Monastery of the Sacred Heart, Chethipusha—the Scholasticate of the Congregation,—conducted enthusiastically the Centenary celebrations, on Sunday, January 17th, 1932, the feast day of St. Francis of Assisi. A retreat of eight days was preached by the Rev. Fr. Hilarion of the Sacred Heart, to the people and to the Franciscan Tertiaries whose spiritual direction is entrusted to the Monastery. The last three days of the retreat which immediately preceded the celebrations, were set apart to prepare the faithful to gain the Jubilee Indulgences granted by the Holy See. For this intention, High Mass was sung each morning at 5-30; every evening, the solemn recitation of the Litany of Loreto was followed by Benediction of the Most Blessed Sacrament. The triduum also included prayers in honour of St. Francis of Assisi.

Sunday, the day of the celebrations, was one of unprecedented solemnity in the annals of the Chethipusha Monastery. The Very Rev. Fr. Prior General, the Definitors General, several Local Superiors and members from all our Monasteries shared personally in the festivities. Crowds of people from far and near poured in. At 7 a.m. His Excellency, the Rt. Rev. Mar James Kalacherry, Bishop of Changanacherry, who by many a tie is connected with the Congregation, began solemn Pontifical High Mass according to the Syro-Malabar Rite, assisted by the Fathers of the Congregation. After the morning functions the Bishop returned to his

palace, quite close to the Monastery, with the kind intention of returning for dinner with His Excellency, the Rt. Rev. Mar Alexander Choolaparampil, Bishop of Kottayam. At 9 a.m. the Very Rev. Fr. Alphonsus of St. Mary, Prior of Pavaratty Monastery, sang Solemn High Mass in honour of the Patron of the day, and the Very Rev. Fr. Athanasius of the Blessed Sacrament, Prior of Elthuruth Monastery, preached a sermon, as touching as practical, on the Saint of Assisi. At the close, some forty candidates were received into the Third Order of the Patriarch of Assisi.

Meanwhile, Their Excellencies, the Bishops of Changanacherry and Kottayam, arrived, along with the Secular Priests of the neighbouring parishes and Catholic Institutions and some of the re-united Jacobite Priests who had received training at Chethipusha. Dinner followed. The Very Rev. Fr. Bartholomew of Jesus, Local Prior, proposed the toast. He spoke summarily of the century-long existence of the Congregation and of the numerous benefits the Monastery had received at the hands of their honoured, episcopal guests. Among other kindnesses, he mentioned the prominent place held by the Bishop of Changanacherry among the contributors to the Jubilee Celebration fund. He concluded by appreciating the hearty sympathy of the Clergy and laity of Malabar towards the Congregation and expressed, on



Centenary Celebration, Chethipusha. Re-united Prelates and Priests with some of the Fathers of the Congregation, who work for them.

behalf of his brethren, cordial gratitude for favours past and present. The Bishop of Kottayam then responded, expatiating on the services rendered by the Congregation, from the day of its existence, for the all-round progress of Malabar. He emphasised in particular the work done by the Fathers of the Chethipusha Monastery to further the Re-union movement among the non-Catholics of Malabar. His Excellency recalled with pleasure the fact that the Congregation had received its first impetus through the labours of two Secular Priests; that it has ever since enjoyed the support of the Secular Clergy, and that the Bishops—who, in course of time, have been raised to that dignity, from the ranks of the Secular Clergy,—consider it a privilege to patronise the Congregation.

Next, the Bishop of Changanacherry rose to speak. He pointed out that it was not by chance that the Congregation was started in 1831. In the inscrutable designs of God Almighty, the fourteenth centenary of the Definition of the Divine Maternity of our Lady, at Ephesus, was to be commemorated by the institution of a Marian Congregation among the St. Thomas Christians, who are second to none in their devotion to the All-Holy Mother of God. His Excellency referred to the manifold advantages accruing to the Church in general, from Religious communities, and the consequent interest evinced by the Holy See in their welfare. He admitted with gratification that what other Religious communities do, the world over, the Carmelite Congregation does in the Church of Malabar. The trials and difficulties the Congregation had to pass through, were briefly touched upon, with a paternal recommendation to fight against the foes from within and without, who try to undermine the Religious spirit of the members of the Congregation. He then gave free vent to his generous heart, exclaiming, in the abundance of his benevolence, that he loves the Congregation as he loves himself, and that the Malabar Church in general, and the Syro-Malabar Hierarchy in particular, have at heart the interests of the Congregation which has done so much good for the uplift of Malabar, especially along the line of training candidates for the Priesthood in its once famous Seminary at

Mannanam. He observed that many Priests, young and old, who are a source of consolation to him, have undergone training under the care of the Fathers at Mannanam, and that there was a time, when, going to Mannanam meant a decision to study for the Priesthood. On his own part His Excellency attested, he had done his best to strengthen the Congregation with good vocations. In conclusion, His Excellency gave the Congregation an assurance of his paternal solicitude and devotedness.

Dinner over, the two Bishops retired to the Bishop's palace, Changanacherry, to return again for the evening functions. At 4-30 p.m. His Excellency, the Rt. Rev. Mar Ivanios, Archbishop of Bethany, His Excellency, the Rt. Rev. Mar Theophilos, Bishop



Centenary Celebration Group, Scholasticate, Chethipusha.

of Tiruvalla, the Very Rev. Ramban Philip Cheppat, formerly Bishop Designate of the Jacobite Church of Malabar, with some of

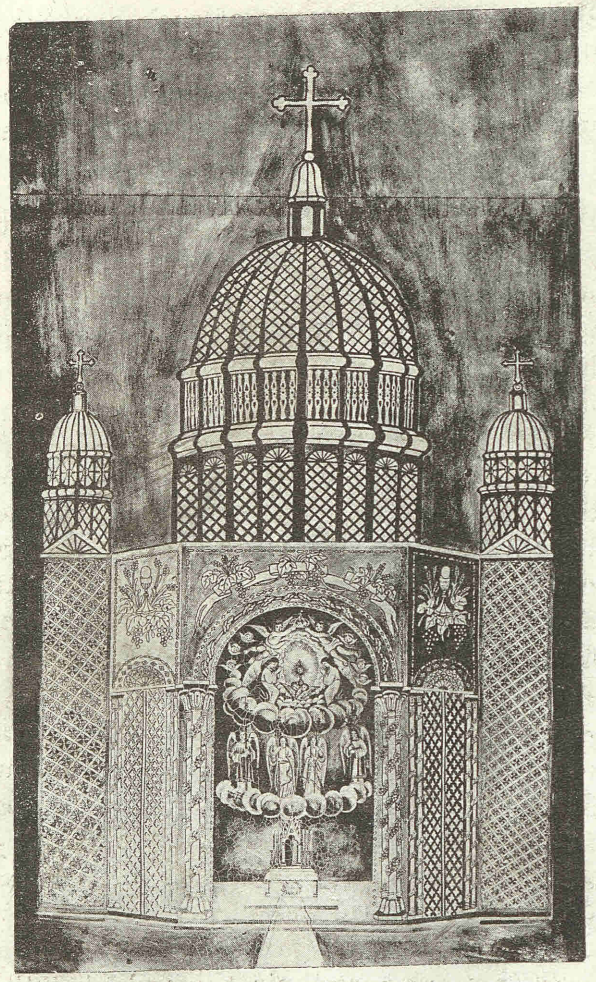
the Bethany monks, arrived, and were soon joined by the Bishops of Changanacherry and Kottayam. The memory of such a gathering has been perpetuated by a group photo, with the Monastery as background.

Meanwhile, a large concourse of the faithful, nearly seven thousand strong, had assembled in the courtyard of the church for the open-air sermon preached by the Bishop of Kottayam who recounted the history of the Congregation and the manifold services it has rendered the Church of Malabar. After an appreciative exhortation on the happiness and excellence of the Religious life, the Bishop appealed to his audience to send up a hearty act of thanksgiving to the Almighty for so signal a favour, and pointed out that this could best be done during the solemn procession of the Blessed Sacrament, which was just forming.

The route of the procession was marked by an inner railing and an outer arch-work, tastefully decorated and profusely illuminated with artistic designs. Along this path, following the processional Cross, marched in two files the members of the K. C. C. A., wearing their badges, the Franciscan Tertiaries in their brown robes, the Carmelite Fathers, Scholastics and Lay Brothers numbering more than six score, in their white mantles, the Secular Clergy in chasubles, and lastly, the Prelates, forming a cortège around the Bishop of Changanacherry who bore, beneath a canopy, the Holy of Holies. The procession moved majestically amidst thousands of devout adorers who knelt in profound recollection, pouring forth their hearts before their Eucharistic Lord. A group of choir boys, picturesquely dressed, scattered flowers before their King, singing the while appropriate hymns.

The procession wended its way some distance, then halted before a Repository prepared for the occasion. Here, the "Tantum Ergo" was sung in Syro-Chaldaic and Benediction of the Most Blessed Sacrament, given. Once more the procession moved on to pause again before another Repository, skilfully designed and erected close to the new church under construction, representing in miniature the Basilica of St. Peter's, Rome. It was indeed a work

of love on which the Scholastics had devoted over a month's labour; they were amply rewarded by the devotional and inspiring effect aroused, as the Blessed Sacrament was placed aloft, enthroned amid a sea of clouds supported by angels against a star-lit, azure sky. Immediately there was fired a salute of a hundred and one Indian guns. The "Te Deum," sung by all present, preceded the final Benediction imparted by the Bishop of Changanacherry himself.



Centenary Celebration, Chethipusha, Repository.

Ere the crowds dispersed, the Archbishop of Bethany addressed them in a stirring discourse, thanking God Almighty for having given Malabar a Religious Institute such as that of the Carmelite Congregation of Malabar.

## III. Centenary Celebrations in the Monastery of the Sacred Heart, Thevara, residence of the Prior General.

*May 8th—to 11th, 1932.*

The Monastery of the Sacred Heart, Thevara, Ernakulam, residence of the Very Rev. Prior General has been the last in the order of time, but not the least in the devotional splendour of its Centenary Celebrations.

The Festal Programme directed that the outstanding feature of the Celebration should be the Forty Hours' Adoration; the 8th, 9th, and 10th of May were devoted to it; the 11th was to be the day of Remembrance. The week preceding the festivities was zealously spent in a Spiritual Retreat to the people of the neighbourhood.

Both the Latins and Syrians of the surrounding locality gathered enthusiastically to hear the preachers, the Rev. Fr. Clement of the Infant Jesus and the Rev. Father Andrew of the Mother of Dolours. It is estimated that more than 5000 people profited by the Spiritual Exercises.

The festival of the Ascension of our Lord and the First Friday of the month occurring during the Retreat, only enhanced the solemnity of the Celebration by swelling the concourse of the exercitants, most of whom confessed and communicated on both those days. It was expected that there would be an unusual demand for Fathers in the Confessional; anticipating this need, Fathers from other Monasteries had already wended their way to Thevara, to devote themselves, four days and nights at the Confessional. The Forty Hours' Adoration that followed the spiritual retreat was an inaugural one at Thevara and its vicinity; hence, all concerned took a keen interest in making a suitable preparation for this thrice holy Solemnity. The church and the temporary pandal erected for the occasion, thanks for the generous co-operation of the Catholic Community, were splendidly decorated.

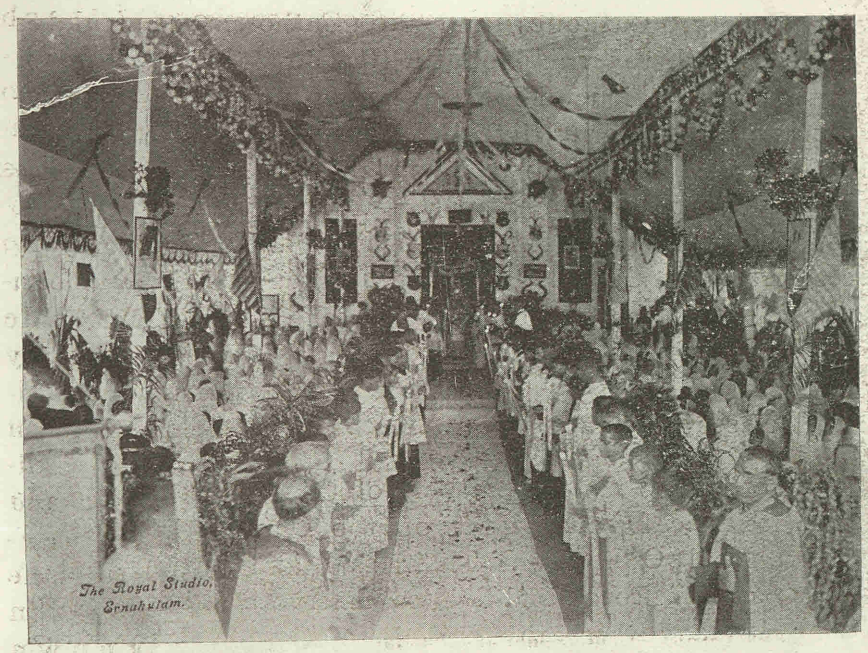
The Very Rev. Father John of Jesus and Mary, Prior General, celebrated the Conventual Mass on the first day and addressed the congregation at its conclusion, making special reference to the choice blessings God Almighty had conferred on them through the ministry of the Carmelite Institute, on Malabar in general and on Thevara in particular, where the Fathers of the Congregation have had the privilege of dedicating the first church to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. At the close, in accordance with the faculty specially granted by the Holy Father, His Reverence imparted the Papal Blessing to all who had taken part in the Retreat.

In another address to the assembled multitude, just before the Solemn High Mass of Exposition, the Rev. Father Placid of St. Joseph endeavoured to thoroughly rouse their devotion to our Eucharistic Lord, by expatiating on the solidity and tenderness of the devotion known as "The Forty Hours' Adoration", introduced by the Carmelite Congregation into the Syro-Malabar Church. The Solemn High Masses on each of the three days of the Forty Hours' Adoration were sung in turn by the Very Rev. Father Hyacinth of the Mother of Dolours, Prior of Mannanam, the Rev. Father Ambrose of the Mother of Dolours, Vicar of Champakulam, and the Rev. Father Urban of the Blessed Sacrament, while, the procession of the Blessed Sacrament was conducted by the Very Rev. Father Athanasius of the Blessed Sacrament, Prior of Elthuruth, on the first day, and by the Very Rev. Fr. Prior General, assisted by the Priors of the Monasteries of Vazhakulam and Chethipusha, on the third day. During the solemn Benediction of the Most Blessed Sacrament, given by His Excellency, the Most Rev. Mar Augustine Kandathil, Archbishop of Ernakulam, the "Te Deum" was sung. The Little Flower Aspirants' choir rendered the music most creditably on all these days under the able direction of Rev. Fr. Ludovic, Vicar of St. Antony's Monastery, Alwaye.



The Facade of the temporary Pandal.

The Very Rev. Father Jacob Naduvathuchery, Consultor to the Archbishop, and Editor of the "Sathiadeepam", then mounted the pulpit and gave out a soul-stirring discourse on the Bread of Life, devoting the latter portion of it to eulogising the Syrian Carmelite Congregation.




The Procession of the Blessed Sacrament.

As an act of grateful recognition, a summary of it follows:

"Now-a-days, even our pagan brethren have taken to celebrating jubilees of events considered notable by them; with how much more propriety should we, Catholics of Malabar, celebrate events of relatively surpassing importance in the eyes of God and men? Such an event is the Hundred Years of existence of an indigenous local Religious Institution that has during this long stretch of years dedicated itself with wonderful fruitfulness to procure the glory of God by drawing their countrymen to know, love and serve Him. It is meet, then, that all heartily join together to sing the *Te Deum laudamus*, thanking God Almighty for having given to Malabar, such a signal blessing in the holily vigorous labours of this Congregation. This mighty tree was, a hundred years ago, but a seedling, planted at Mannanam by the Fathers of holy memory,—Thomas Palakel, Thomas Porukara, and their worthy disciple, Cyriac Chavara. The seedling grew to a stately tree,

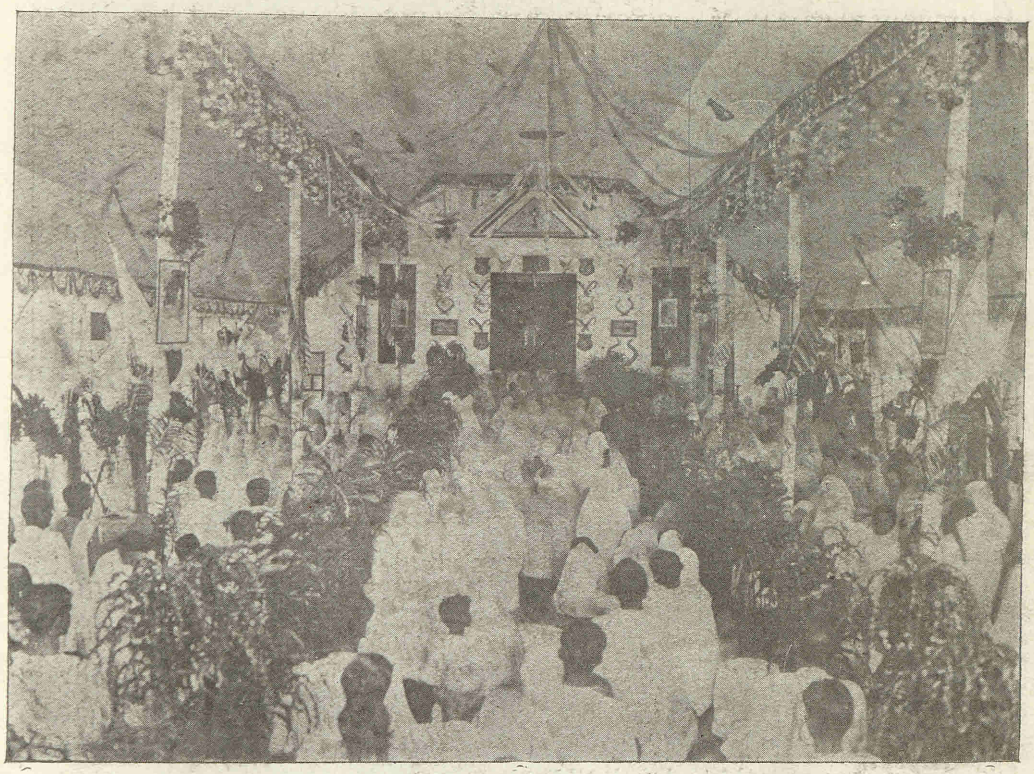
spreading its branches so far and wide as to overshadow the whole of Malabar. It has produced and is still producing delicious fruits of wonderful variety, Catholics and Non-Catholics of Malabar having been fed on these fruits for the last one hundred years. At present, the Congregation numbers some 400 members, distributed among fourteen Monasteries, five Branch Houses, and one House of Studies. There is no Christian activity in which the Carmelite Fathers have not taken a prominent part;—Educational Institutions, Industrial Schools, Catechumenates, Newspapers and Magazines are ably and creditably conducted by them, no church in Malabar, but has resounded with the voice of their preaching; no household, but possesses some literary production of theirs. Surely, Malabar has been abundantly blessed by God, through the instrumentality, of these His elect servants.

"There was a time when the Fathers of this Congregation conducted the ecclesiastical government of the Church in Malabar, under the then local Ordinaries. Their zeal and enthusiasm in fighting the Schisms of Rocos and Mellos deserve a high need of commendation; it was owing to their indefatigable labours that Malabar was saved from the schismatical pest of those troublous times. This and similar activities of the Congregation have since multiplied and developed. Almighty God has displayed His benevolence to our country by His protection of this Congregation right through the long years of a Century. We should, therefore, from the depth of our hearts thank Him to-day, the day on which the glorious Centenary Celebrations close.

"Mannanam struck the key-note of these celebrations with the "Forty Hours' Adoration," while Thevara singing the "Amen Alleluia," with the same magnificent Eucharistic Service, leaves it as an heir-loom to the Syro-Malabar Church. Our hearts cry out: how splendidly devout has been this crowning function,—the Forty Hours' Adoration of Our Lord in His Eucharistic dwelling among us!

"Let us all whole-heartedly pour ourselves out in thanksgiving to the Giver of all gifts and pray that He would shower down His choicest benedictions upon the Very Rev. Prior General,

the Definitors General, the Priors and Vicars of their various Monasteries, and finally on all the members of this Congregation. May they with the help of God's grace extend their eminently useful labours over the whole of our land, and may they be ever protected under the mantle of Our Lady of Carmel!"



Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament.

The Secular Clergy of both the Syrian and Latin Rites, representatives from every Monastery and from the Latin Indigenous Religious Congregation,—a vast and most respectable assembly, graced our table at which the Archbishop presided, in spite of not a slight indisposition, by which act of kindly self-forgetfulness, he won so much more of our gratitude.

At the end of the repast, the Very Rev. Father Prior General rose to propose the toast. After expressing his heartfelt thanks to God Almighty, for all the signal favours bestowed on the Congregation

during this year of Centenary Jubilations, His Reverence gratefully alluded to the Fatherly interest of the Holy See towards the Institute. His Excellency, the Archbishop, he said, had to undergo many difficulties in coming over to Thevara from a distant Mission-tour, just in time to preside over the closing functions of the Centenary Celebrations—a fact which they would ever remember with sentiments of sincere gratitude. He also pointed out that the Carmelite Congregation in Malabar owes its origin to two Syrian Priests from the ranks of the Secular Clergy who founded it by embracing this form of Religious life and fostered its infancy through many trials: that both the Syrian and Latin priests from all parts of the country have always evinced great interest in the growth of the Congregation to which they contributed their laudable share and hence the Secular Clergy of Malabar could boast of this Congregation as theirs at its birth, which consideration is a serious motive to knit them together in the bonds of close friendship. He alluded also to the Carmelite Religious Institute of the Latins which received its inspiration from the Congregation, and was represented in its Definitor General and two other Fathers. Lastly, communicating to them a congratulatory message from the Delegate Apostolic, and once more thanking the Superiors and other members of the Religious Family, as well as, all those who had contributed towards making these unique Centenary celebrations as splendid as possible, in spite of the prevailing financial depression, he brought his address to a close.

The Rev. Father Paul Elankunnapuzha and the Rev. Father Cyriac Payapilly responded. The Secretary of the Archbishop on account of His Excellency's indisposition, spoke for him, expressing the high esteem of the Syrian Hierarchy for the Congregation, and his desire that both sections would live in close friendship and work for the glory of God.

It is also worthy of note that His Highness the Maha Raja of Cochin, and His Excellency the Viceroy of India have sent, not to mention others, appreciative messages to the Prior General on this auspicious occasion, commemorative of the great event.




**Centenary Celebration Group, Thevara.**

The distinguished guests dispersed after leaving a memorial of the happy event in a group photograph.

The following day, the 11th of May, came the concluding item in the programme,—a solemn Commemoration of the deceased members and benefactors of the Congregation,—consisting of a Requiem High Mass sung by the Very Rev. Father Sylvester of the Blessed Sacrament, Definitor General, and the Absolution, according to the Syro-Malabar Rite, conducted by the Very Rev. Father Prior General.

THE END

28/9/93

DHARMARAM LIBRARY

BANGALORE-560 029

| Due Date | Due Date | Due Date |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Reserved by Fr. Anto Thekkudan | | |
| 28 JAN 1995 | | |

CMI Works
*00037865*
K100 C211