

THE SYRIAN JACOBITE CHURCH OF KERALA AND THE CHURCH MISSIONARY SOCIETY

Prof. O.M. MATHEW



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A CRITIQUE ON THE DYNAMICS OF
THE SYRIAN JACOBITE CHURCH OF KERALA
IN HER RELATION WITH
THE CHURCH MISSIONARY SOCIETY OF ENGLAND
DURING 1806 - 1836

BY

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Publisher's Note

Syrian Church in India traces its origin to St. Thomas, the apostle. The church planted in India had to face many vicissitudes and had to depend upon foreign traders and missions to keep its apostolicity and catholicity. Indian Church had its participation in the first ecumenical council of Nicea (AD 325) through bishop John of Persia. This council entrusted the affairs of eastern churches to the see of Antioch and later the immigration from Edessa enriched the church in all aspects of ecclesiastical necessities. This Syrian enrichment continued throughout the history. The translation of holy relics of St. Thomas from Indian to Edessa, the visits and settlement of Syrian missionaries, bringing of Syrian Crosses, the travels of Joseph the Indian to Lisbon and Rome and his testiomials. etc, are rays of light that beams light to the dark ages of its history.

Post Portuguese period can be divided into several stages

- 1) Coonan cross and restoration of the Jacobite faith
- 2) Era of the relation with the CMS
- 3) Formation of the reformation party in the Church
- 4) Royal court judgment and the after effects.
- 5) Formation of the independent orthodox group.
- 6) Resurgence of the Syrian Orthodox Church.

This book is the study on the period of the relations with the CMS Missionaries. This study is an academic dissertation prepared by Prof. O. M. Mathew. After his meritorious service as a professor in one of the colleges affiliated to the Mahatma Gandhi University, he continued his religious studies at the Mar Thoma Vidyanikethan, Changanaserry. This thesis is an outcome of the partial fulfilment of his studies in Theology and ecclesiology. Prof. Mathew is a talented linguist and an erudite scholar.

He has covered the period of study in a very scholarly and unprejudiced manner. I hope the students of Church History will benefit much from him.

Some usages in this book like 'East Syrian', 'Monophysites', 'Pentarchy', 'Secondary sacraments' etc. are to be understood in the context to which it is used by the author. The Syrian Orthodox Church holds its own interpretation and meaning of these words.

Mor Adai Study Centre is indebted to him for entrusting the task of publishing this work in a book form. We take this as a duty for the benefit of the holy mother church. May God bless him and us all.

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Mor Adai Study Centre is a voluntary organization constituted in the Syrian Orthodox Church to promote humane and literary activities in the Church. We have published 29 books in English and Malayalam since the establishment in 2001. We are happy that our books are being counted as most beneficial to the Church and its readers. We are indebted to the Director Board Members and the Book Club Members who are promoting us in this venture.

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Abbreviations

B.C.E.	-	Book of Common Prayer
C.M.S.	-	Church Missionary Society of England
C.of E.	-	Church of England
D.C.A.	-	District Court of Alleppey
D.C.K.	-	District Court of Kottayam
E. S.	-	Eclectic Society of England
L.C.M.S.	-	London Church Mission Society
M.C.M.R.	-	Madras Church Missionary Record
M.R.	-	The Missionary Register
S.J.C.	-	Syrian Jacobite Church of Kerala
T.C.D.R.	-	Travancore Cochin Diocesan Record
T.R.C.	-	The Travancore Royal Court

Introduction

1. Scope

An attempt is being made in this dissertation to delineate the dynamics of the Syrian Jacobite Church of Kerala, (abbreviated S.J.C. hereafter) in Her relation with the Church Missionary Society of England, (abbreviated C.M.S., hereafter) during the three decades between 1806 and 1836.

The study has revealed that this relation was a complex one; the result of many an ingredient. Theological, ecclesiological and liturgical elements, besides pragmatic considerations have contributed in varying measures, to the rise and fall of these developments. So the purport of this study is not merely to chart a chronicle of events. It is, rather, to understand the roots of the reactions of the S.J.C. on the impact of the activities of the C.M.S. Missionaries in Malabar or the present-day Kerala and to underscore as to how did the Syrian Jacobite Church preserve her identity.

The first letters of four different English words are stylistically used here to denote the dynamics of the S.J.C in the four distinctive epochs of Her relation with the C.M.S.. They are named by the dissertator, the four 'R's. The 'Reticence', 'Reception', 'Rejection' and 'Resilience' of the S.J.C. with regard to the C.M.S. are what is epitomised by these letters. They denote the four epochs of varying nature in the period under survey. Herein comes, the historical or chronological aspect of this research. The underlying forces, be they secular or spiritual, become apparent on the probing of the episodes of this epoch. For this purpose, analytical and synthetic methods are employed, in accordance with the context.

It is true, that in the second epoch, 'Recognition' of the C.M.S. was the dynamics of the S.J.C. This appears to be mainly due to certain pragmatic considerations that began to mould the mind of the Syrian Church. The material prospects from the 'Mission of Help' offered by the C.M.S. was too alluring to the S.J.C. Another reason for 'Reception' appears to be the personal prejudice of the then head of the S.J.C., to the Roman Catholic Church. Consequently, the S.J.C. 'recognised' and collaborated with the C.M.S. for about a decade and a half, disregarding the marked differences in the theology and ecclesiology of the C.M.S.. Subsequent events have proved that the neglect of theological and ecclesiological lapses of the S.J.C., cost her very dearly, as it paved the way for many Jacobites to embrace Protestantism, causing reduction in the

numerical strength of the Syrian Jacobite Church.

But in all the other three phases of her relation with the C.M.S., the S.J.C. was governed by the dynamics, fostered by theological, ecclesiological and liturgical motives. These three factors operated in the S.J.C., in varying proportions and combinations, as times demanded. Thus for instance, on the issue of the 'Apostolic Succession' of the 'Church of England' (abbreviated C.of E., hereafter), the S.J.C., headed by Mar Dionysius I, reacted on theological and ecclesial grounds. So, She expressed 'reticence'. This is evident from the proviso incorporated by Mar Dionysius I, in his reply to the scheme of Rev. Claudius Buchanan. This cleric of the C.M.S. put forward a proposal of a 'union' of the S.J.C. and the C.M.S., to Mar Dionysius I, stressing on the apparent similarities between the two entities, while marginalising their fundamental differences. As was in this first phase, so was in the third and fourth epochs too. The dynamics that worked within the S.J.C. in these periods were moulded by theology and ecclesiology. The 'Rejection' of the C.M.S., that is alluded here, was a 'rejection' of the heterodox theology of the C.M.S. and not merely the 'Missionaries'. In other words, it was a re-assertion by the S.J.C. of Her 'orthodoxy', born out of the antique connection She has had with the ancient See of Antioch. As for instance, in the resolution adopted in the 'Synod of Mavelikara' in 1836, She unequivocally proclaimed Her faith in the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary and the Saints; the efficacy in the prayer for the departed etc., which all have been Her inalienable tenets for years. Again, She asserted that Her theology was the product of the Eucharist-centered Liturgy. To borrow a Latin phrase, 'Lex Orandi Lex Credendi' has been the essence of Her theology, as has been upheld by the R.C.C. The fourth phase of 'Resilience' was characterised by a return to the Antiochaeian sources of theology, ecclesiology and such other factors of spiritual dimensions, which had served as the sustenance and succour of the S.J.C. over the centuries. Concisely, this was the way in which the S.J.C. combated the C.M.S. and preserved the antiquarian treasures, of the 'deposit of faith' received by Her through Biblical, Apostolic and Patristic channels. The S.J.C. once again, thus acknowledged these visible media as the dispensing ones of Her destiny. The tornado of 'Evangelical Anglicanism' or 'Protestantism' tossed the S.J.C. But it simply passed over the Syrian Church. She, however, stood firm like the mighty oak, with of course a few boughs fallen or withered off. To put it differently, the C.M.S. came and enticed; but could not conquer the S.J.C.

As was mentioned just above, the hurricane of 'Evangelism' due to the impact of the C.M.S. carried away with it not a negligible number of

the Syrian Jacobites. This did enfeeble the S.J.C. Although technically beyond the scope of this study, the expatiation of this episode would expose the ultimate motives of the C.M.S. Also, this exercise would depict the adverse effect of giving priority to material gains over matters spiritual, as was occasioned by the myopic vision of some of the ecclesiastical heads of the S.J.C. Two happenings are to be enumerated in this context. The first one is the formation in 1840, of the 'Anglican Church' in Travancore, an erst-while state, integrated into the present-day Kerala. This was the work of the C.M.S. Missionaries in collaboration with a few Jacobites who became inclined to their Evangelical doctrines. The other event was the emergence of the 'Reformed party', a faction within the S.J.C. This group comprised of those Jacobite prelates, priests and people who had fallen under the spell of the Missionaries. Events took a toll on them. Hence, they had to leave the 'Mother Church'. Subsequently, they formed the 'Mar Thoma Syrian Church', in Syrian garb, but with Protestant principles. This happened officially in 1869.

2. Relevance of the Subject

The theme of this dissertation has been selected mainly for three reasons. One of which is the insatiable quest of the researcher to understand the ethos which enabled the S.J.C. to withstand the storming by the C.M.S. with every conceivable wherewithals like philanthropic projects, ameliorative measures and even political power. Researches have pointed out that the S.J.C., as such, would not easily barter her cherished 'orthodoxy', that is expressed through 'Traditions'. For the S.J.C. also like the R.C.C., 'Tradition' and the Church have reciprocal inter-action. 'Tradition' makes the Church; the Church creates 'Tradition'. Verily this has been Her sheet anchor.

Having realised the ethos of the S.J.C., another motive naturally crept into the mind of the researcher. It was to make certain projections about the future of the S.J.C. which is being besieged both from within and from without. The former implies the incessant litigations; the latter imports the challenges of ultra-evangelical congregationalists who decry the formularies of the S.J.C. Deductive studies from the data provided by the history of the S.J.C. have revealed that Her ecclesial history too follows a pattern as any other secular history does. The dynamics, thus identified, could be shared with the S.J.C. For, history respects not personages but only principles; and more often than not, history repeats itself. The leaders at the helm of the S.J.C. must discern the warnings of History.

Yet another motive was personal but experiential. Thanks to the eagerness of the peers of the Mar Thoma Vidya Nikethan at Changanacherry, Kerala, under the Syro-Malabar Church, who have imbibed the Ecumenical spirit of Vat II, to know at close quarters the working of the other denominations of Christianity, especially of the S.J.C., which has close affinity with the Syrian Catholics, the researcher undertook this study.

To the best of the knowledge of the author of this dissertation, a work of this type, which by and large, brings out the adherence of the S.J.C. to Her characteristic orthodoxy for dispelling 'Anglo-Evangelism' and its types, has not yet been undertaken. These are the relevances of the present work, which certainly is not exhaustive.

3. Sources

Materials for this dissertation have been collected from different sources. They include the electronic media like the Internet-links, and print sources like the Encyclopaedias, Lexicons, Treatises of scholars, Research theses, Journals, articles etc. Archives of the St. Thomas Apostolic Seminary, Syrian Orthodox Seminary, Mar Thoma Theological Seminary, C.M.S. College, all of which are situated in and around Kottayam, provided a lot of data. So also, books and other materials from the libraries of the Institute of Human Development, St. Ephrem Ecumenical Research Institute, both on the Baker Hill, Kottayam, the Public Library Kottayam, the Mar Thoma Vidya Nikethan Changanacherry and personal collections of a few professors, clerics and lay persons were also referred.

4. Methodology

Chronological or historical, analytical and comparative methods were used for arrangement and co-ordination of facts collected. Synthetic method was employed to derive deductions. Conscious of the probable reflection of subjectivity and proclivity of authors in the available materials, sufficient care has been taken to sift their findings, to make this dissertation, objective and impartial to the extent possible. Nevertheless, it is conceded that there are certain limitations in this dissertation. They are mainly due to the non availability of original sources, the lack of knowledge of the author of the Syriac language and scarcity of time at the disposal of the researcher.

5. Division of the Work

This work has nine chapters of varying length but of equal importance. The first chapter is historical, theological and ecclesiological

n contents. It brings out the landmarks in the connection of the S.J.C. with the Universal Syrian Orthodox Church at Antioch. The theological and the ecclesiological moulding of the S.J.C. expressed through the articles of faith is also articulated. It was this theology that protected the S.J.C. from the Protestant onslaught. The second chapter delineates the evolution of the C.M.S. and its characteristics. So, the 'Low Church' theology and Ecclesiology of the C.M.S. are discussed. The third chapter is mainly historical in texture. It details the explorations in Kerala by the pioneers and the first generation of the C.M.S. Missionaries, with the object of inaugurating their evangelical activities. It gives a short summary of the socio-politico-religious milieu which prompted the C.M.S. to target Kerala / Malabar. The next chapter epitomises the 'Dynamics' of the S.J.C. in her relation with the C.M.S. Missionaries. This 'relation' is described with the stylistic notation of four 'R's. In this chapter the approach is historical, ecclesiological and theological. In the chapter that follows, the change in the 'Dynamics' of the S.J.C., due to materialistic and political considerations is brought out. Besides historical, synthetic method too is resorted to in this chapter. The sixth chapter limelights the 'paradigm shift' in the 'modus operandi' of the second generation of C.M.S. Missionaries. The imbuing of Protestant ideals into the body corpus of the S.J.C., and its results are the main subjects discussed in this chapter. Chapter seven is theological and ecclesial in character. It brings out the fourth phase in the dynamics of the S.J.C. It is named 'Resilience'. In this epoch the S.J.C.'s assertion of 'orthodoxy' and 'return' to Antiochaeal sources are shown. The next chapter is technically beyond the scope as it deals with the formation of the 'Anglican Church' and the 'Mar Thoma Syrian Church' in Kerala. Its tenor is historical. The final and the ninth Chapter is the general conclusions with certain suggestions. They are the products of synthetic study. There are certain Appendices. Appendix I is a print copy of the 'Ninavu' or 'Grant of Land' of 1814, issued by H.H. The Rani of Travancore, to the S.J.C. for the construction of the Seminary at Kottayam. Appendix II is a copy of the 'Padyola' or the Resolution of the 'Mavelikara Synod' of 1836.

THE SYRIAN JACOBITE CHURCH OF KERALA

The Syrian Jacobite Church of Malabar, the present-day Kerala, owes Her beginning, becoming and being to the ‘Universal Syrian Orthodox Church’, popularly called the Syrian or Antiochaeen Jacobite Church, with the ‘Patriarch of Antioch and All the East’, as the Supreme Pontiff. “The Jacobite Patriarch has jurisdiction over the Jacobites of India and U.S.”¹. Besides juridical aspect, there are other reasons for the above contention. For, it has been the ecclesial communion of the S.J.C. with the Holy See of Antioch and the consequent legacies in Liturgy and Theology that enabled Her to develop an identity of Her own and preserve it over the centuries. Likewise, on occasions when She was ‘widowed’ for want of duly consecrated ecclesiastics, it was the generous hand of Antioch that furnished Her Apostolicity which is one of the four notae of the Church.

1.1. Relevance of the Epithet ‘Syrian’

At the outset, an enquiry is made regarding the reason and relevancy of the epithet ‘Syrian’, being used to designate the ‘Mar Thoma Nazaranees’, or its equivalent in English, ‘St. Thomas Christians’. Scholars of Indian Church History opine that the appellation ‘Syrian’ was ascribed to the St. Thomas Christians, as they used the ‘Syriac’ language in their liturgies.

“From Vatican Syriac Codex 22,... it is clear that the ‘Thomas Christians’ had the liturgical rite and language (East Syriac, called also Chaldean) of the Seleucian Church... Among the Thomas Christians, there is not to be seen any vestige of any other liturgical rite or language that existed among them previous to 1301”².

Urumpackal, another Church historian, contends that the Church of St. Thomas was qualified “Syrian, because it used Syriac in its liturgy.”³ In similar vein does Puliurumpil, another scholar of Church History,

1. EL HAYEK, ‘Jacobite Syrians’, in *New Catholic Encyclopaedia*, Vol. VII, p. 796.
2. PODIPARA, *The Thomas Christians*, p. 73.
3. URUMPACKAL, *The Juridical Status*, p. 11.

remark. According to him, the term 'Syrian' denotes "a group of Christians who follow the Syriac rite"⁴. To Thonippara, another researcher, the term 'Syrians' is used to distinguish a group of people "from the Latins on the basis of Rite"⁵. An important point of historical significance is to be noted here. No scholar has found out, till now, any monument or document of pre-17th century, having or bearing West Syriac scripts. All the available ones are either in 'Estrangelo' or 'East Syriac', also called Chaldean script. The view expressed by the present 'Malankara Malpan' of the S.J.C., Curian Kaniamparambil is quite suggestive. "The period of administration of Bishops Yakub Yousaph, Simon and Abraham in the 16th century had been another occasion for the advancement of East Syriac and the arrival of Mar Greegorious of Jerusalem in 1665, that of W. Syriac"⁶. A similar view is expressed, by a historian, belonging to the Orthodox Syrian Church. "It was during the three centuries, since the arrival of Greegorious that the West Syrian dialect came to be used in place of Chaldean Syriac"⁷. A greater proof is available from the following. The Bible, which Mar Dionysius I, the Metropolitan of the S.J.C., presented to Dr. Claudius Buchanan in January 1807⁸ had 'Estrangelo Syriac' character⁹. The remark made by Mar Dionysius I, on that occasion is the corroboration of the contention about the relative new emergence of W. Syriac. He said "We have kept it, as some think, for near a thousand years"¹⁰. In this dissertation, the term 'Syrian' is used in its ecclesial, liturgical or ritualistic flavour and not in any territorial or political connotation.

1.2. Explanation of the title 'Jacobite'

The title 'Jacobite' is derived from a certain 'James Bardai', also called 'Jacob Baradaeus'. He was ordained by a monophysite bishop of Edessa (c. A. D. 541). "His real name was Jacob bar Theophilus; the surname Burde' ana, corrupted into Baradaeus was derived from the coarse horse-cloth 'barda'than', which he usually wore"¹¹ to disguise himself from the performance of spiritual duties"¹². "The title Jacobite which appears after A. D. 575, comes from the name of James Baradai, who organised a faction

4. PULIURUMPIL, *A Period of Jurisdictional Conflict*, p. 14.

5. THONIPPARA, *Saint Thomas Christians*, p. 4.

6. KANIAMPARAMPIL, *Syriac in Six Months*, p. vii..

7. DANIEL, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 123.

8. BUCHANAN, *Christian Researches*, p. 17.

9. BUCHANAN, *Christian Researches*, p. 158.

10. BUCHANAN, *Christian Researches*, p. 159.

11. *Catholic Encyclopedia*, Internet Link.

12. *Wikipedia*, Internet Link.

within the monophysites of Syria... He consecrated a large number of Syrian monophysites as bishops and priests, thus founding a new hierarchy that was organised by the monophysite - Patriarch of Antioch, 'Sergius' (d.c. 560). The Church thus established is still known the Jacobite Church" ¹³. Among the Syrian Jacobites, 'Sergius' is known 'Severius'.

1.3. 'Jacobitism' in Kerala

As the Portuguese power in India began to wane due to Dutch smarting ascendancy, the St. Thomas Christians, who were smarting under the dual yoke of Padroadists and the Propagandists, started to appeal to the Sees of Babylon, Alexandria and Antioch for getting bishops. Only the See of Antioch responded" ¹⁴. Abdul Messiah I, the Patriarch of Antioch deputed Mar Greegorious Abdul Jaleel, "the Patriarch of Jerusalem who was subordinate" ¹⁵ to him. "The Bishop of Jerusalem is honorifically styled the Fifth Patriarch. Mar Greegorious is, therefore, known among the Syrians as the Patriarch of Jerusalem" ¹⁶. With his arrival in Malabar, the Jacobite Church of Syria began to play a crucial role over the destiny of the S.J.C. "If the Jacobite bishops of India wish to trace their line to the Apostle, they must go back to 1665, then leave India, join on to the Jacobite Church of Syria, and go back to James Burdai, Severius of Antioch and so in a way to the old Patriarchate of Antioch" ¹⁷ Mar Greegorious was "the first Jacobite prelate who introduced the doctrines of his own Jacobite Church into the Malabar Church" ¹⁸. But only the adherents of Arch-deacon Thomas, the leader of the Coonan Cross Oath of 1653, accepted Jacobitism. Although, historians like Agur ¹⁹, Philip ²⁰ and Mar Greegorious Paulose ²¹ assert that the 'consecration' of Arch-deacon Thomas was perfected' or validated by Greegorious Jaleel, through the imposition of hands on the head of the Arch-deacon, and giving him the title Mar Thoma I, this is not accepted by many other historians for want of genuine records. So, it is remarked, "some affirm, others deny, that Mar Thoma I was validly consecrated bishop by Mar Greegory" ²².

13. DE URBINA, 'Bardai James', in *New Catholic Enclopedia*, Vol. II, p. 84.

14. DANIEL, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 123.

15. AGUR, *Church History*, Part I, p. 64.

16. Cf. PHILIP, *The Indian Church of St. Thomas*, p. 144.

17. FORTESCUE, *The Lesser Eastern Churches*, p. 367.

18. AGUR, *Church History*, Part I, p. 64.

19. AGUR, *Church History*, Part I, p. 64.

20. PHILIP, *The Indian Church of St. Thomas*, p. 144.

21. Cf. GREGORIOS MAR, *Indian Orthodox Church*, p. 32.

At this juncture, the author of this dissertation may be permitted to express his personal deduction. If, Mar Greegorious had 'validated' the consecration of Arch-deacon Thomas and made him a canonically consecrated bishop, why did Mar Greegorious still call the 'new bishop' Mar Thoma I, instead of giving a 'Greek name' to him, as has been the practice among the Jacobites, when a candidate is elevated to bishopric? Raulin and Paolin, the historians do not make any mention of this incident. On the authority of these historians, it is remarked by E. M. Philip, "hatred of Nestorianism, submission to the See of Antioch and introduction of Jacobitism were among the changes made by Mar Greegorious"²³

1.4. Strengthening of Antiochaeae Relation

Ever since the arrival of Greegorious Jaleel in Malabar, the S.J.C. has been looking to the See of Antioch for theological and ecclesiological succour. Thus, Antioch began to play a crucial role in the destiny of the S.J.C. Beginning with Greegorious. Jacobite prelates from Syria, and Antioch frequented Malabar and herded the flock of the faithful of Kerala. Some of these ecclesiastics, however, indulged in highhandedness, to the discomfiture and displeasure of the S.J.C. But, on the whole, it was they who gave ecclesial formation to the Syrian Jacobites of Kerala. "Their continued presence over a span of three centuries exerted a steady and permanent influence on the people; on the form of worship, liturgy in use and even on the existence of the Church"²⁴. In matters of faith and rituals also, the S.J.C. fully adopted the tenets, liturgies and rituals of the Antiochaeae Church. All these helped to strengthen the relation of S.J.C. with the Syrian Jacobite Church of Antioch. In other words, the Jacobite Church of Kerala, became 'Syrian' in character and orientation. By this connection the S.J.C., "stood to gain in every way. This relationship helped Her to retain Apostolic succession which She had enjoyed with the Persian Church and to inherit centuries of Christian thought, Orthodox faith and form of worship. Also, She came to possess an unassailably rich liturgy"²⁵.

1.5. Summary of the Articles of Faith and Tenets of the S.J.C.

The articles of Faith and Tenets of the S.J.C. are similar to those of the 'Universal Syrian Orthodox Church of Antioch'. They are summarised

22. PODIPARA, *The Thomas Christians*, p. 216.

23. PHILIP, *The Indian Church of St. Thomas*, pp. 144-145.

24. DANIEL, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 123.

25. SAMUEL, *Malankara Sabhayude (Malayalam)*, p. 28.

in the following lines. Knowledge of them will enable any student to juxtapose them with those of the R.C.C. and the C.M.S. and drive home the fact that the affinity of the S.J.C. ought to be more with the R.C.C. rather than to the C.M.S. and its Anglican 'New Church' mentality. Again, this study is important from another angle also. It was this 'deposit of faith', handed down to the S.J.C. by the Antiochaeans Syrian Fathers that acted as a vanguard against the efforts of the C.M.S. Missionaries to deviate the S.J.C. from Orthodoxy and to lead them along the 'primrose' path of Protestantism. Although, the faithful of the S.J.C. had not had a formal or scholastic type of catechesis, the tenets of Orthodoxy, as exemplified by the living models of their ecclesiasts of those days, had gone down deep into the very recess of their communal psyche, as to make those principles part of their life-style. In other words, 'orthodoxy' had become a way of living for the Jacobites. The Church and Her children became bound by an inseparable and interlocking intimacy. The rejecting of the C.M.S. doctrines, by the S.J.C. was the logical sequel of Her abiding adherence to the 'faith' formed and nurtured by the Ecclesia and due to Her natural aversion to any principle which does not give a 'high' regard to the Church as an entity.

1.5.1. Analysis of the 'Articles of Faith' of the S.J.C., in juxtaposition to those of the R.C.C.

A student who wants to understand systematically the theology, ecclesiology etc. of the Syrian Jacobite Church, is beset with the problem of the lack of a systematic book dealing with these subjects. "It is not possible to find any systematic treatise on the Church, i.e. Ecclesiology among these Syrians".²⁶ So, the student has to glean from the writings of the Fathers, liturgists etc. and make a synthesis to have some concept of the faith. The following summarisation of the faith is the result of such a synthetic endeavour.

1.5.1.1. On the Sources of Theology

The S.J.C. holds, as the R.C.C. does, that there are two sources of Theology and they are the Holy Bible²⁷ and the 'Holy Tradition' of Apostolic and Patristic nature, as enunciated by the magisterium of the Church²⁸.

1.5.1.2. On the Creeds

The S.J.C., like the R.C.C., upholds the Creed enunciated at Nicaea

26. PANICKER, *The Church in the Syriac Tradition*, p. 30.

27. DIONYSIUS MAR, *Mathopadesa Saram*, (Malayalam), p. 77.

28. DIONYSIUS MAR, *Mathopadesa Saram*, (Malayalam), pp. 81-82.

and Constantinople Councils, held in A. D. 325 and 381 respectively²⁹.

1.5.1.3. On Trinity

The following is the doctrine of the S.J.C.

“We believe in the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, three persons in one God, neither confounding the persons, nor dividing the substances, one in three, and three in one. The Father generator, the Son generated and the Holy Ghost proceeding. None is before or after the other; in majesty, honour, might, and power co-equal; Unity in Trinity and Trinity in Unity”³⁰.

The R.C.C. does not deny any of these. But, She however, has added the Filioque clause, which the S.J.C. does not recognise.

1.5.1.4. On the Church

The S.J.C. holds as the R.C.C. does, that the Church, was founded by Jesus Christ on the rock, St. Peter. Consequently, both these Churches hold the ‘Peterine Primacy’. Again, the view of the S.J.C. regarding the Church and Sacraments³¹, as ‘Mysteries’ and vehicles of salvation, is similar to that of the R.C.C. Further, for both the S.J.C.³² and the R.C.C. there are seven sacraments. In other words, for the S.J.C. and the R.C.C. the Church or the Ecclesia is the medium through which Salvation History is fulfilled. Further, both the S.J.C. and the R.C.C. uphold the inerrancy of the Sees of Rome, Constantinople, Alexandria, Antioch and Jerusalem, collectively called the Pentarchy, and the validity of their Apostolicity and ‘Apostolic Succession’.

29. DIONYSIUS MAR, *Mathopadesa Saram*, (Malayalam), p. 80.

30. Cf. BUCHANAN, *Christian Researches*, p. 125.

31. DIONYSIUS MAR, *Mathopadesa Saram*, (Malayalam), p. 9.

32. DIONYSIUS MAR, *Mathopadesa Saram*, (Malayalam), p. 10.

Evolution of The Church Missionary Society in England

The close of the 18th century witnessed the emergence of Britain as a dominant state of Europe. Steadily and speedily did she grow into a world power. The Napoleonic wars could be accounted to a large extent, for the all-round development of England. The political and its corollary, the economic strides that Britain attained in this period paved the way for an unprecedented religious awakening and evangelical enthusiasm in her soil. One of the visible manifestations of this, was the founding of religious 'missions' of various hues and types.

2. 1. Prototypes of the C.M.S. of England

In spite of the religious fervour referred above, the Church of England (C.of E.), curiously enough, was neither able nor willing to undertake the work of spreading the Gospel to the four quarters of the world. This was mainly due to the 'conservatism', that was then prevailing in the C.of E. So, this noble work was left to voluntary societies. Thus, as a sequel to the spiritual surge and evangelical enlightenment, many missionary societies sprang up in England during the last decade of the 18th century¹. These societies had to depend on the initiative of dedicated souls and the charity of noble Christians². The 'Eclectic Society' (E. S.) was the first to be so founded. This was in 1786. Six years later, in 1792, the Baptist Mission Society was established. In 1795, was formed the London Mission Society.

2. 1. 1. The 'Eclectic Society'

Founded in 1786, the 'E.S.', was a small association of Evangelical clergymen and laymen who used to meet fortnightly. Their main topic of discussion was about the methods to promote the knowledge of the Gospel among the Heathens³. When the Society met on April 12, 1799, John Venn took the chair. Formal resolutions were moved; a committee consisting of thirteen clergymen and eleven laymen was chosen. Office

1. Cf. FIRTH, *Indian Church History*, p. 145.

2. Cf. NEIL, *A History of Christian Missions*, p. 243.

3. *L.C.M.S., One Hundred Years of C.M.S.*, p.10.

bearers were also appointed⁴. Venn introduced the subject of evangelisation. Certain decisions were taken. “One thing strangely enough was omitted; no name was given to the new society”⁵. In the closing week of May 1799, when the ‘E.S.’ met again an official name was declared. And, it was the following: ‘The Society for Mission of Africa and the East’. In subsequent years, people began to use the word ‘Church’ colloquially to designate this Society. Their intention was to distinguish it, having evangelical characteristics, from other societies, which were not under the auspices of the ‘Church’ as such, but were controlled exclusively by the hierarchy. The under current of the talk and thought of the members of the new Society was not on Church formularies or rituals. But they were all centred on,

“The Christ of Kerygma: the Christ of yesterday who died to redeem us from sin; the Christ of today, who dwells in our hearts by his spirit, the Christ of tomorrow, who is coming in glory, to complete this work of redemption and transformation”⁶

This message of personal conversion through the power of the living Christ, lay at the root of the ‘E.S.’ On comparing this ideal of the ‘E.S.’ with the VIth ‘Article of Faith’ of the C.of E.,⁷ the following deduction can be made. The Kerygmatic emphasis of the ‘E.S.’ was only an amplification of the Article adduced above. Here, one discerns the link of the ‘E. S.’ with the C.of E., despite differences in their ecclesiologies.

2.1.2. The ‘Baptist Mission’ and the ‘London Mission’ Societies of England

The ‘consecrated cobbler’⁸ William Carey, caused the formation of the ‘Baptist Mission Society’. “It was... his sermon on Isaiah 54: 2-3, with its famous two points, ‘expect great things from God, attempt great things for God’, which had moved a small group of them to found the society; and he himself became one of its two first missionaries... It was through his persuasion that the Society chose Bengal as its first field”⁹. In 1795, was established the inter denominational ‘London Mission Society’. Its first meeting was held in the first floor room of the hotel ‘Castle and

4. L.C.M.S., *One Hundred Years of C.M.S.*, pp. 12, 13.

5. L.C.M.S., *One Hundred Years of C.M.S.*, p. 13.

6. BLACKWOOD, *Evangelism*, p. 285.

7. *The 39 Articles*, Art. No. vi.

8. DUNSTAN, Ed. *Protestantism*, p. 174.

9. FIRTH, *Indian Church History*, p. 147.

Falcon' in the Aldergate street of London¹⁰. W. T. Ringeltaube and two others were the pioneer L.M.S. Missionaries to India. It was in 1804 that they landed in Tranquebar, in the present-day, Tamil Nadu. Evangelisation of the non-Christian world was the common avowed aim of the 'E.S.', 'B. M. S.' and the 'L. M. S.'¹¹

2.2. The Official Beginnings of the C.M.S. in England

The C.M.S. is an evolution. After the founding of the 'E. S.', thirteen years had to elapse before the entity, C.M.S., became articulated. The term 'Church' that the people of England casually gave to the 'Society for Africa and the East', was officially recognized in 1812, as part of the name of this Society. Thus, the antiquarian Roman maxim, 'Vox populi vox Dei', came true, with regard to this Society. Subscription fee was fixed. It was a guinea for laymen and half a guinea for clergymen¹². On the revision of the rules of the Society, effected shortly afterwards, the following clause was incorporated. Lay persons and all subscribing clergymen shall be members on the committee¹³. John Venn and Thomas Scott were elected president and secretary, respectively. Ere long, in 1813, the name of the Society was shortened to, "The Church Missionary Society". Promoting Gospel knowledge and Christian faith among the non-Christian territories and countries were, undoubtedly, the obvious motives of the C.M.S. But the founding fathers of the C.M.S. were conscious and aware of the social outreach of the Gospel. So, besides evangelisation, social services also became a working principle of the C.M.S.. It is to the credit of the C.M.S. that it did establish schools, colleges, hospitals etc., wherever it outstretched itself, moved as it was by service motives.

But with all this, the C.M.S. had to face opposition from the East India Company (E.I.C), to inaugurate its functioning in India. The E.I.C., which was beginning to gain political power in Bengal and the neighbouring areas, was apprehensive of the working of the C.M.S. Missionaries in India and hostile to the Missionary influence. Here, one cannot avoid noticing the difference in the attitude of the Padroado regime and the E.I.C.'s rule, regarding missionary work in India. The difference lay in the fact that while Portugal and her Padroado rule were interested in religious activities, the E.I.C. had political, economic and commercial motives. The E.I.C. suspected that the overzealous activities

10. *L.C.M.S., One Hundred Years of C.M.S.*, p. 10.

11. Cf. *L.C.M.S., One Hundred Years of C.M.S.*, p. 15.

12. Cf. *L.C.M.S., One Hundred Years of C.M.S.*, p. 14.

13. *C.M.S. Triple Jubilee Souvenir*, p. 1.

of the C.M.S. in India would bring the wrath of the Hindus¹⁴. Therefore, the E.I.C. did everything possible to prevent the growth of the C.M.S.. “This interregnum, may be described as the dark period in the History of Christianity”¹⁵. But a change came over, when the charter of the E.I.C. was renewed in 1813. Accordingly, two provisions concerning religious activity were introduced in the charter. One of them was regarding the formation of regular Church establishments in India. The other stipulated conditions of obtaining an official licence for carrying on the missionary activity in India¹⁶. On the 21st July 1813, the Charter received the assent of the British Sovereign¹⁷. Thus, were opened the doors of India for the C.M.S. to begin its official activities.

2.3. The Salient Features of The C.M.S. : The ‘Low Church’ Ecclesiology

“Evangelical Anglican”¹⁸ was the ecclesiological feature of the C.M.S. It signified the characteristics of that section of the Church of England, which emphasised on the Evangelical principles or ‘Kerygma’, more than any other formularies of the Church. To understand the implication of the above terms, knowledge of British History of the 17th to the 19th centuries, is essential.

While Henry VIII was ruling England, ‘the Church Assemblies’ or ‘Convocations’¹⁹, as they were known, acknowledged the King as the ‘Supreme Head on earth’, of the Anglican Church, also known, the Church of England. In this capacity the C.of E. began to owe allegiance to the King. Legislations were introduced to sever every administrative, financial and judicial bond or tie with the Roman Pope. Henry, however, did not allow the introduction of any doctrinal change. Nevertheless, he promulgated the ‘42 Articles of Faith’, the gist of which was the ‘protest’ against Papacy. “This advancement to Protestantism was followed by a reaction under Queen Mary, who restored the Papal Supremacy”²⁰. But, with the accession of Elizabeth I, to the throne of England, there was again a swing of the religious pendulum to anti-Papacy. Under her orders, obedience and loyalty to the Supreme Pontiff of Rome were repudiated. A new See, with the Arch-Bishop of Canterbury as the head, was inaugurated. Further, an ecclesial entity called ‘Anglican Communion’,

14. Cf. NEIL, *A History of Christian Missions*, p. 243.

15. STOCK, *The History of the Church Missionary Society*, Vol. I, p. 41.

16. HUNT, *The Anglican Church*, Vol. I, p. 3.

17. STOCK, *The History of the Church Missionary Society*, Vol. I, p. 104.

18. FIRTH, *The Indian Church History*, p. 145.

19. *The Oxford Dictionary of the Church*, p. 343.

20. *The Oxford Dictionary of the Church*, p. 290.

consisting of Churches whether in England or abroad, recognising the See of Canterbury, was also formed²¹. C.of E., naturally became a member of the 'Anglican Communion'.

In 1542, Queen Elizabeth I, introduced innovations into the C of E. She reduced the number of the 'Articles of Faith' from 42 to 39 and promulgated them as the official code of faith of the C.of E. This is known, the Elizabethan Settlement. When the Papal bull of excommunication was proclaimed in 1570, there arose different factions in the C.of E. One group consisted of the Papal supporters. It was called the enclave of 'Popish recusants', known in later years as 'Old Catholics'. The other group called, 'Puritans', drew inspiration from the ultra-Protestantism propagated in Geneva. The Puritans deemed the "Elizabethan measures as only half-way house to full reformation"²². A third faction also came up²³. This faction upheld the doctrine called 'Anglicanism', which, in terms of theology, was neither Catholic nor Protestant²⁴. 'Anglicanism' proclaimed, "truth was to be sought from the joint testimony of the Scripture and ecclesial authority, which in its turn was to be based on the tradition of the first four centuries"²⁵. "The Anglican tradition has displayed unique genius in attempting to hold in delicate balance the positive insights of both Catholicism and Protestantism. Although the emphasis has shifted from time to time Anglicanism preserved in holding to both"²⁶.

By the end of the 17th century, the 'Via Media' concept of the Elizabethan age got crystallised into what is known the 'High Church' principles. They included the "stress for historical continuity with the Catholic Christianity... A high conception of the authority of the Church, of the claims of the episcopate and the nature of sacraments"²⁷. When William III became the King of England, most of the High Church men were excluded from the ecclesiastical offices. There was thus a shift to what is termed the 'Low Church' principles. "The term Low Church which dates from the early 18th century, was coined in contrast to the High Church; but originally used to the latitudinarian or liberal group who

21. Cf. *The Oxford Dictionary of the Church*, p. 57.

22. *The Oxford Dictionary of the Church*, p. 290.

23. Cf. *The Oxford Dictionary of the Church*, p. 57.

24. Cf. *The Oxford Dictionary of the Church*, p. 57.

25. *The Oxford Dictionary of the Church*, p. 57.

26. DUNSTAN, *Protestantism*, p. 94.

27. *Oxford Dictionary of the Church*, p. 647.

applied evangelical ideas for their actions”²⁸. But this ‘Low Church’ group, did neither go out the C.of E. nor sever connection with her. This is evident from the following two points. Firstly, the ‘Low Church’ did accept the ‘full text’ of the ‘39 Articles of 1542’. Secondly, the methodology of evangelisation was drawn from Art. VI of the ‘39 Articles’, which, among other things, states that “the Holy Scripture containeth all things necessary for salvation...”²⁹ But the ‘Low Church’ gives “a relatively unimportant or low place to the claims of episcopacy, priesthood and sacraments”³⁰. Therefore, theologically and ecclesiologically ‘their approaches approximate to those of Continental Protestantism’ or ‘Non-Conformist ideology’.

It was these ‘Low Church’ principles which were adopted by the C.M.S. and became its desideratum. This is clear from the assertion of John Venn, the first president of the C.M.S. He said, at the very inauguration of the C.M.S. in England, that “the new society must be founded upon... not the High Church principle”³¹. Venn’s undertone was liberalism in evangelical activities as against the conservative stand adopted by the High Church faction of the C.of E. The ‘High Church’ had laid down two directive principles regarding evangelisation. Firstly, it declared that “no Church enterprise ought be undertaken by individual clergymen without the bishops at the helm. Secondly, any man ordained by a bishop was ipso-facto qualified to be a missionary”³². A modern Church historian explicates this as follows:

“The C.M.S. differed from the old Anglican Societies in two respects. It represented private enterprises in missionary endeavour and had at first none of the official backing from the dignitaries of the Church, which the older Societies enjoyed. It was definitely associated with the Evangelical party in the Church, while the older societies were not partisan. Accordingly, as the C.M.S. grew and flourished, it attracted to itself almost all the ‘Low Church’ men”³³.

It may be deduced here that the term ‘Church’ appended to the C.M.S. was, only by popular parlance. It had no apostolic or ecclesiological basis. A contemporary theologian summarises the outlook of the ‘Low

28. *Oxford Dictionary of the Church*, p. 839.

29. *Oxford Dictionary of the Church*, p. 839.

30. *Oxford Dictionary of the Church*, p. 839.

31. Cf. *L.C.M.S., One Hundred Years of C.M.S.*, p. 14.

32. Cf. *L.C.M.S., One Hundred Years of C.M.S.*, p. 15.

33. GIBBS, *The Anglican Church in India*, p. 46.

Church' in the following words. "The Low Church... lays main stress on Natural religion, which differs from Revealed religion... In Natural religion, communication is external while in the Revealed religion, communication is internal or subjective³⁴. Thus it may be deduced that in the 'Low Church', individual wisdom as against the corporate wisdom of the Ecclesia or 'People of God', is given upper hand.

It cannot be gainsaid that it was the emergence of the C.M.S. that did bring in the spirit of reformation and Kerygmatic mission into the C.of E. Very creditably, the C.M.S. missionaries moved, as they were enthused by the Kerygmatic fervour and the impact of personal metanoia and forayed into the unexplored regions and witnessed Christ. But, the C.M.S. in their eagerness and excessive enthusiasm failed to take note of an inexorable fact. That even if the mind of the individuals can be revolutionised by the preaching of the 'Word' of God, it is not that easy to effect such change in the collective psyche of a society, perhaps much less in an ecclesial community. More often than not, time-tested traditions which contain the wisdom of the ages and which have swayed over the content and contour of such ecclesial communities will continue to dictate the dynamics of such entities. A tension would naturally result in. It is this dialectics that ultimately resulted in the rejection of the C.M.S. doctrines, by the S.J.C. which cherishes 'Traditions' on par with the 'Word' of God.

34. Cf. DUNSTAN, *Protestantism*, p. 101.

CHAPTER 3

EXPLORATIONS OF THE C.M.S. IN KERALA FOR MISSIONARY WORK

The C.M.S. got interested in the State of Kerala in general and the S.J.C., in particular, only when two exploratory 'reports' and a 'request' reached it. The 'reports' alluded to, are those prepared by Rev. Richard Hall Kerr and Rev. Claudius Buchanan, separately in 1805 and 1806 respectively. The 'request' referred above is the one sent to the C.M.S. in 1815 by Col. John Munro, the resident cum diwan of the States of Travancore and Cochin, to depute an English clergyman to these States. In this context, it may be noted that Munro might have written so, after appreciating the evangelical work of the L.M.S. Missionary, W. T. Ringeltube, in the southern part of Travancore during 1809 to 1815. The C.M.S. however, moved to action only a little later.

3.1. Rev. Richard Kerr's Report on the visit of Kerala

As commissioned by Lord William Bentinck, the governor of Madras, Rev. Dr. Richard Hall Kerr, an Irishman¹ and senior chaplain of the East India Co., at Madras, came to Travancore in 1805². "He was to inquire into the state of the Syrians and other Christians of Travancore"³, besides that of the Hindus. The report that he submitted to the Madras government, was subsequently sent to England and published in the 'Christian Observer', of Nov. 1807, in the 'Philosophical Magazine' and other periodicals. Dr. Kerr suggested, inter-alia, various measures for the improvement of the moral character of the Hindus, for increasing their attachment to the British rulers and especially for the spread of the gospel among the Indian subjects of the growing British Empire⁴. The portion relating to the Syrian Christians was incorporated by Rev. Claudius Buchanan, in his work entitled, 'Christian Researches in India'.

3.1.1. Analysis of the Report of Kerr, and deductions therefrom.

As regards the 'Syrian Christians', Dr. Kerr made the following remarks "The Christians on the Malabar coast are divided into three sects: 1. The

1. AGUR, *Church History*, Part I, p. 77.

2. AIYA, *The Travancore State Manuel*, Vol. I, p. 211.

3. AGUR, *Church History*, Part I, p. 78.

4. AGUR, *Church History*, Part I, p. 78.

St. Thome or Jacobite Christians. 2. The Syrian Roman Catholics. 3. The Latin Church⁵.

Regarding the Jacobites, he reported that, the members of this community of mostly cultivators and artisans, living entirely inland, paying attention to their religious duties and to their clergy, respected by the Rajah and the Nairs, are remarkable for their veracity and plain dealing⁶.

Be that as it may. About the religious rituals and practices of the S.J.C., the following observations are extracted from his report.

“They admit no images within their churches, but a figure of the Virgin Mary;... which is considered merely as an ornament and not a subject of idolatrous worship... the creed they now hold... seems to coincide in several points with the creed of Athanasius, but without its damnatory clause. The service in their Church is performed very nearly after the manner of the C.of E; they never admitted as sacraments, extreme unction, marriage and confirmation”⁷.

Dr. Kerr then expresses his wish of the ‘union’ between the Syrian Jacobite Church and the Church of England.

“When the Metropolitan was told that it was hoped that one day, an union might take place between the two Churches, he seemed pleased at the suggestion.... Their number, it is generally supposed, may be estimated at seventy or eighty thousand. The direct protection of the British Government has already been extended to them... and it is most devoutly to be wished that those who have been driven into the Roman pale, might be recalled...”⁸

On analysing this report the following deductions can be drawn. Kerr’s eagerness for a ‘union’ between the S.J.C. and the C.of E.. With this in view, he put forward certain points of coincidences on the credal and ritualistic aspects of the two Churches.

The question to be settled, first, is the grounds which prompted him to ‘hope’ for the ‘union’. The clue of the answer seems to be in the various advantages that the C.of E. could reap by a ‘union’ with the S.J.C., whose members in the words of Dr. Kerr himself ‘may be estimated at seventy or eighty thousand....’. More ambitious or scheming was his

5. MOOLAYIL, *Four Historic Documents* p. 43.

6. FIRTH, *Indian Church History*, pp. 166-167.

7. MOOLAYIL, *Four Historic Documents*, p. 43.

8. MOOLAYIL, *Four Historic Documents*, p. 44.

statement, ‘it is most devoutly to be wished that those who have been driven into the Roman pale might be recalled.’ As a devout Protestant Christian, it was natural that his anti-Roman prejudices moulded his thesis. If it were done, he could have had the satisfaction of being a privy to the dwindling of the Roman Church and the augmenting of the influence of his own Church. Of course, this is a conjecture only, albeit logical.

Adverting to the ‘coincidences’ and the parallelisms that he adduced as supportive ones for the union, the following is the deduction. On the grounds enumerated hereunder, they are not above board. The photos of Virgin Mary found in the Syrian Jacobite churches are no mere ‘ornaments’, as Kerr considered. They are, rather, objects of veneration for the faithful of the S.J.C.. As queen of all saints, and ‘Sempo Virgo’ or ‘ever-virgin’, She is accorded ‘hyperdulia’ by the Jacobites. “The doctrine of the (Jacobite) Church regarding St. Mary is the theme of innumerable liturgical works”⁹ Dr. Kerr’s contention that the creed of the S.J.C. has many coincidences with the Athanasian Creed professed by the C.of E. is not correct. For, the creed of the S.J.C. is the one enunciated at the Nicaea-Constantinople councils and is not known after Athanasius. Again, the very appellation, ‘Athanasian Creed’ is an erroneous attribution¹⁰. Perhaps, it might have gained validity by popular use of it. The opinion of Dr. Kerr that the S.J.C. ‘never admitted’ the sacraments of ‘extreme unction’, ‘marriage’ and ‘Confirmation’ is wrong. These were and are regarded as sacraments, but only as of secondary importance to Baptism and the Holy Eucharist, e.g., confirmation as a rule is administered along with baptism¹¹. Finally, his statement that the S.J.C. was enjoying the ‘direct protection of the British Government’ is historically wrong. Until the renewal of the Charter of the E.I.C. in the year 1813, the British Government, ‘per se’ did not take any direct or active interest in the Christians of Kerala. To speak of ‘protection’ to the S.J.C., even in 1805, when he landed in Travancore, is anachronistic on the part of Dr. Kerr. The above account of deduction is concluded with the following remark of the author of the ‘Travancore State Manual’. “Mr. Kerr did not go below the surface and his ‘report’ throws no light on the history of Christians”¹².

9. MANI, *Queen of Sacraments*, p. 109.

10. KIRKPATRICK, *Chambers Dictionary*, p. 76.

11. PHILIP, *The Indian Church of St. Thomas*, p. 215.

12. AIYA, *The Travancore State Manuel*, Vol. I, p. 211.

3.2. Report of Rev. Claudius Buchanan on the visit to Kerala

Close on the heels of Kerr, arrived in Travancore, in 1806, another Anglican cleric, the Rev. Claudius Buchanan. He was at that time the Provost of the College at Fort William in Bengal, a member of the Asiatic Society and “one of the founders of the C.M.S.”¹³. Dr. Buchanan came to Travancore “on a mission of Christian Research”¹⁴, at the behest of Marquis of Wellesley, the Governor General of India. He paid two visits to Travancore. The first was in October 1806¹⁵. He was in Travancore upto Feb. 1807. During this period he called on personages like the Rajah of Travancore, Mar Dionysius I, the Metropolitan of the S.J.C. and Msgr. Raymondo, the Pope’s Apostolic Vicar and had discussions with them on collecting ‘Hindoo Manuscripts’¹⁶, measures of improving the academic and general standards of the S.J.C. and translating their Scriptures. Although the Rajah and the Metropolitan were favourably disposed to the projects of Buchanan, Msgr. Raymondo was not inclined, for fear of Inquisition. The Msgr., “an Italian of liberal manners”¹⁷ told Buchanan, “...but believe me, the Inquisition will endeavour to counteract your purpose by every means in their power”¹⁸. Buchanan visited various Jacobite and Catholic Churches during his stay in Travancore. Beginning with the one at Mavelikkara¹⁹ he halted for his research works, at many important Syrian Jacobite churches including those at Chengannoor, Ranni, Kandanadu and Ankamali. The Romo-Syrian churches that he visited were of Udayamperoor, Kodungalloor and Varapuzha. It was at the Kandanadu church, the official residence of the Primate of the Jacobite Church, that Buchanan called on Mar Dionysius I, the then Metropolitan of the S.J.C. It was on 23rd Nov. 1806²⁰. “It was from the days of Mar Thoma VI (i.e. Mar Dionysius I) that the name ‘Metropolitan’ is seen to have been assumed by the local Metrans”²¹. Buchanan had more than one audience of Mar Dionysius I²². It was on one such occasion that Buchanan proposed a ‘union’ of the S.J.C. with the C.of E., to the Metropolitan. On another occasion, Mar

13. AGUR, *Church History*, Part III, p. 957.

14. PHILIP, *The Indian Church of St. Thomas*, p. 167.

15. Cf. BUCHANAN, *Christian Researches*, p. 111.

16. BUCHANAN, *Christian Researches*, p. 112.

17. BUCHANAN, *Christian Researches*, p. 135.

18. BUCHANAN, *Christian Researches*, p. 137.

19. Cf. BUCHANAN, *Christian Researches*, p. 114.

20. Cf. BUCHANAN, *Christian Researches*, p. 126.

21. D.C.K., *Judgement n. 93*, p. 120.

22. PHILIP, *The Indian Church of St. Thomas*, p. 167.

Dionysius I presented a very old manuscript copy of the Syriac Bible to Dr. Buchanan, who thereupon remarked, "I scarcely expected that the Syrian Church would have parted with this manuscript"²³. This was in January 1807. In the following February, he left for Calcutta. In 1808, he visited Thrissur and Kunnamkulam, two important Christian centres of the Cochin State. After a short stay, he went back to Bombay²⁴. The 'Report' that Buchanan authored, after his visit of Travancore, Cochin, Goa, Bombay, Bengal and other places in India besides a few other countries of Asia, bears the caption, 'Christian Researches in Asia'. It was published in England in 1811.

3.2.1. Analysis of Buchanan's 'Report' and deductions therefrom

In Buchanan's historic document, there is a chapter on the 'Syrian Christians in India'. The very second paragraph of this chapter contains an invaluable information for the present dissertation. And it is the following. The Portuguese were "surprised to find upwards of a hundred Christian churches on the coast of Malabar... The European priests were yet more alarmed when they found these Hindoo Christians maintained the order and discipline of a regular church under Episcopal Jurisdiction: and that for 1300 years past they had enjoyed a succession of Bishops appointed by the Patriarch of Antioch"²⁵. This remark throws much light on the antiquarian relation that the S.J.C. has had with the See of Antioch and why did She thus turn to this Petrine Throne for obtaining valid Apostolic succession.

The notes that he made at the various places of his visit and which are incorporated in the chapter under study are very informative, instructive and hence very important. "They are the present existing valuable documents regarding the social, political, cultural and ecclesiastical situation of Malabar at the beginning of the nineteenth century"²⁶.

As the analysis of the Buchanan's 'Report' is likely to provide better evaluation of his activities in Kerala, it is ventured upon.

It is true that "the two chief objects which he proposed to himself in exploring the state of this ancient people were these. First, to investigate their literature and history, and to collect biblical manuscripts. Secondly, if he should find them to be intelligent people and well acquainted

23. BUCHANAN, *Christian Researches*, p. 159.

24. *T.C.D.R.*, Vol. xxi, No. 4. Aug. 1911, p. 108.

25. BUCHANAN, *Christian Researches*, p. 107.

26. PULIURUMPIL, *A Period of Jurisdictional Conflict*, p. 201.

with the Syriac Scriptures, to endeavour to make them instruments of illuminating the Southern part of India, by engaging them in translating their Scriptures into the Native languages”²⁷. It is conceded that Buchanan did succeed considerably in both these aims. The Syrian Christians still venerate Dr. Buchanan for his literary services to their community. It was he who got published the four Gospels, written in Malayalam, and “the whole Bible in Syriac printed in England for the use of the Church of Malabar”²⁸. Again the S.J.C. acknowledges with gratitude another noble act of his. The reference that he presented to the University of Cambridge, the Syriac Bible that he got from Mar Dionysius I, instead of keeping it as a personal treasure. By this gesture, Buchanan has provided opportunity to scholars, to become aware of the antiquity of the Syrian Jacobite Church.

But some of his actions cannot but draw flakes.

His remark to the ‘Rajah of Travancore’, “that the Syrian Christians were supposed to be of the same religion with the English”²⁹, can be construed as a double strategy; i.e. as a ‘threat’ and a ‘ploy’. A veiled threat it was, to the Hindu Rajah, that his ‘Syrian’ subjects would have the support of the ‘English’, if need be. It was a ‘ploy’, to befriend the ‘Syrians’.

Again, his report reveals that Buchanan solicited the ‘union’ of the S.J.C. and C.of E. with a political motive for combating the growing influence of the Roman Church in India. He writes, “When I reflected on the immense power of the Romish Church in India, and on our inability to withstand its influence alone, it appeared to be an object of great consequences to secure the aid and co-operation of the Syrian Church...”³⁰. The contention is self-explanatory. Nonetheless, the following observation made by a modern Church historian may be cited. “For Buchanan, the English ecclesia was to be transplanted to serve both colonial and missionary work”³¹.

Further, it cannot be denied that Buchanan was aware of the ‘Evangelical spirit of the Low Church’, which was eager to open its missionary activities in Kerala. Equally, he was conversant with the

27. PHILIP, *The Indian Church of St. Thomas*, p. 168.

28. BUCHANAN, *Christian Researches*, p. 111.

29. BUCHANAN, *Christian Researches*, p. 128.

30. BUCHANAN, *Christian Researches*, p. 150.

31. DAVIDSON, ‘*Culture and Ecclesiology*’, in : WARD and STANLEY, Eds., *The Church Missionary Society*, pp. 204-205.

conservative, traditional orientation of the S.J.C. The incompatibility between these two divergent perspectives was not difficult for Buchanan to realise. Still, he insisted on the 'union'. So, the deduction that Buchanan suppressed truth and suggested falsehood, is not without basis.

Besides, how could Buchanan propose the 'union' between the C.of E. and S.J.C., without the sanction from the C.of E. When Mar Dionysius I, asked Buchanan, whether he had the authority from his Church to make such a proposition, Buchanan, "answered that I had not..."³². In this context, the cautionary note of the C.M.S. of England to its Missionaries of Kerala, is to be recalled. "The C.M.S. of England discourage the idea of a union of the S.J.C. and the C.of E. Their wish was to preserve the individuality of the Syrian Church."³³

Finally, the observation of Msgr. Prendergast, the Apostolic Vicar in Kerala, on the report of Buchanan is worth citing. "An English Protestant, Dr. Buchanan wrote a book full of lies and falsity with devilish proofs, against our Holy religion in general and in particular against our Holy Father... Besides the exposed lies, he (Buchanan) pretends to prove that all the Church in Malabar were Nestorian schismatics..."³⁴.

A historic fact is to be recorded. Buchanan's 'Christian Researches' was "the book which first brought to the knowledge of the British public the existence of the Syrian Christians in India"³⁵.

3.3. Effects of the Reports of Kerr and Buchanan

The reports of Kerr and Buchanan had favourable results in England. Kerr had reported that the service in the Syrian Church was almost approximately after the manner of the Church of England³⁶. Buchanan made several speeches in England including the one at the anniversary of the C.M.S., in 1809. These speeches and sermons, along with his great work 'Christian Researches in Asia' created among the Christians of England, a strong impulse to establish a fraternal contact with the ancient S.J.C. Such a contact, they felt, would enable them to spread Christianity in India³⁷. Thus Kerr and Buchanan were instrumental, both directly and indirectly in the C.M.S. getting interested in Kerala and the S.J.C.

32. AIYA, *The Travancore State Manuel*, Vol. I, p.212.

33. HUNT, *The Anglican Church*, Vol. I, p. 14.

34. PRENDERGAST, cited in PULIURUMPIL, *A Period of Jurisdictional Conflict*, p. 204

35. Cf. CHERIYAN, *The Malabar Christians*, p. 76.

36. BUCHANAN, *Christian Researches*, p. 123.

37. C.M.S. *Gleaner*, Vol. VI, No. 70, Oct., 1879, p. 110.

3.4. Causes of the C.M.S. for targeting Kerala

Various views have been put forward by Scholars and Church historians regarding this topic. Some opine that it was for 'reforming' the S.J.C. This is the opinion of "Rev. G. M. Rae of the United Free Church of Scotland, for sometime, a professor of Madras Christian College"³⁸. Citing the views of a few members of the C.M.S., Rae writes that the aim of the C.M.S. was, "to reform, without disintegrating the Syrian Church, to help it, in fact, to reform itself from within"³⁹. The missionaries considered the S.J.C. "as a primitive Church, corrupted by contact with the Roman Catholic tenets and they wished to remove all ritual and doctrine which could not be brought to the list of the rule of Scripture"⁴⁰. G. T. Mackenzie also holds that the C.M.S. missionaries intended to 'remove' "those Catholic tenets entered into the Syrian Christian belief through the Portuguese Missionaries"⁴¹. Be they as it may. The arrival of the C.M.S. in Kerala, however, was due to other considerations and factors as well.

3.4.1. Political and Social Climate of Kerala

The dominions of the petty princes and feudatory chieftains were subdued in the 18th century by the State called, Thiruvithamcore or Travancore. She, thus became the most powerful kingdom in the South. "Travancore annexed the smaller lords between Kochi and Quilon"⁴². Many trade agreements were entered into between Travancore and the East India Co. "In 1764, the Rajah of Travancore gave permission to the Co. to erect a flagstaff at Vizhinjam"⁴³. The East India Co., took control over the port of Cochin in 1795, after defeating the Dutch. "By the treaty of Seringapatam (1799) the whole of Malabar, (except Wynad) Kochi, and Coorg were ceded to the British by Tippu... Thus making good use of the unstable situation of Malabar by allying themselves with Thiruvithamkoor and Kochi against the Mysore forces, the English power took root in Malabar"⁴⁴. Virtually, the British rule, through the East India Co., thus spread over the present-day Kerala. "Protestant missions followed the flag"⁴⁵.

38. PHILIP, *The Indian Church of St. Thomas*, p. 30.

39. RAE, *The Syrian Church in India*, p. 285.

40. AIYA, *The Travancore State Manuel*, Vol. II, p. 214.

41. Cf. PULIURUMPIL, *A Period of Jurisdictional Conflict*, p. 200.

42. PANIKKAR, *Malabar and the Dutch*, pp. 165-166.

43. THONIPPARA, *Saint Thomas Christians*, p. 6.

44. PULIURUMPIL, *A Period of Jurisdictional Conflict*, p. 172.

45. FIRTH, *Indian Church History*, p. 146.

The social climate, then prevailing in Kerala, was quite conducive for the different endeavours of the C.M.S. Paradoxical, though it may appear, the C.M.S. might have been drawn to Kerala due to an ambivalence in the social scenario of the State. What is implied is the privileged position the Syrian Christians then enjoyed. The high status of the Syrians could have been, because they proved themselves to be indispensable to the economy of the State. This was in contrast to the pathetic plight of the non-caste Hindus, due to the religious regulations of Hinduism. Taking the cue from the Roman Catholic Missionaries of India, the C.M.S. was likely to have hit upon the following probabilities. Once the Jacobite Syrians were befriended, then, the C.M.S. could carry on with the different projects involving even politics. And, when the unprivileged Hindus were brought into the ambit of civilised society, the C.M.S. could carry on its evangelisation, thereby the numerical strength of the C.M.S. could be increased.

3.4.2. The Religious milieu: The Rising Tide of the Roman Church in Kerala

It can be deduced that the religious milieu, then prevailing in Kerala, must have been yet another cause for the C.M.S. to target Kerala, for its operations. Two of such contributory factors can be identified. The first is the 'declining' state of the S.J.C. This fact, as Buchanan records in his 'researches' was admitted by the bishop, Mar Dionysius I, himself. "You have come, 'said he', to visit a declining Church"⁴⁶. As against this, was the second factor. And that was, the condition of the Roman Church. She had social status, ecclesiastical structures and political support. Thus She was fully equipped for weathering any storm, as well as to make a leap forward. The political support of the R.C.C. can be inferred from the following data. Col. Macaulay, the first British Resident to Travancore and Cochin "was in good terms with Msgr. Raymondo",⁴⁷ the Apostolic Vicar. "Many letters of Msgr. Prendergast show that the English Residents were friends of Varapuzha... During the fishermen controversy Msgr. Stabellini wrote secretly to the English Resident"⁴⁸ for certain jurisdictional arrangements, which were readily granted. This saved the Roman Catholic Church of Malabar from "a total destruction"⁴⁹. Another development in the R.C.C. of

46. BUCHANAN, *Christian Researches*, p. 127.

47. Cf. PULIURUMPIL, *A Period of Jurisdictional Conflict*, p. 179.

48. Cf. PULIURUMPIL, *A Period of Jurisdictional Conflict*, pp. 178-179.

49. Cf. PULIURUMPIL, *A Period of Jurisdictional Conflict*, p. 179.

Kerala appears to be more significant for Her growing influence in the State. It is the “emergence of the national leaders”⁵⁰ during the close of the 18th and the beginning of the 19th centuries.

“The community had a strong conviction that the time was ripe for self-rule and to heal the wounds caused by various divisions. This consciousness, which had been, dormant for years, now appeared very active, primarily due to the emergence of *Malpan* Joseph Cariattil, *Cathanar* Thomas Paremmakkal, Tachil Mathoo Tharakan and Mar Thoma VI alias Mar Dionysius I”⁵¹.

This rising tide of the Roman Church in Kerala was to the discomfiture of the C.M.S.⁵². It was but natural therefore, that the C.M.S. decided to turn to Kerala, enlist the support of the S.J.C., by the offer of ‘helps’; of the ‘heathens’ by making them members of the C.M.S., through ‘evangelisation’.

3.4.3. *The Spiritual Pride of the S.J.C.*

As was in the past, the S.J.C. of the 18th century was imbued with a ‘spiritual pride’, quite unbecoming of any Church, the mission of which, ought be ‘diakonia’ and the obliteration of the sense of superiority. How has this anomaly come about, it may be enquired. It was born of and bred by the belief in the antiquarian origin of the ‘Church’ through the evangelisation work of Apostle Thomas, in ‘Malabar’ or Kerala, and due to his converting of the ‘Namboodiri Brahmins’, the highest caste of the Hindus, as early as A. D. 52. As a corollary to it, every Syrian Jacobite has taken into heart, of the high pedigree of ‘Brahmin’ origin. As critics point out, this is only a ‘tradition’, for want of documentary evidences. But the Syrian Jacobite, would retort that the absence of evidence is no evidence of absence; also they would add, quoting John Huss, the ex-Rector of the University of Prague, during the early 15th century, that what we know is vastly less than what we do not know”⁵³. The Jacobites would also adduce the following argument. Till Rev. G. M. Rae of the 19th century, “advanced the novel theory that St. Thomas did not and could not have visited any part of Peninsular India”⁵⁴, Roman Catholic writers generally and Jesuit writers in particular, Dutch and even Anglican Protestants were all in favour of this tradition⁵⁵. Some

50. THONIPPARA, *St Thomas Christians of India*, p. 44.

51. THONIPPARA, *St Thomas Christians of India*, p. 44.

52. Cf. BUCHANAN, *Christian Researches*, p. 128.

53. WORKMAN, *The Dawn of the Reformation*, Vol. II, p. 76.

54. PHILIP, *The Indian Church of St. Thomas*, p. 30.

55. Cf. PHILIP, *The Indian Church of Stt. Thomas*, p. 30.

other' Syrian Christians, probably the Suddists entertained another tradition, which also caused a sense of superiority. These Syrians told the Portuguese bluntly, "We, 'said they', are of the true faith, whatever you from the West may be; for we come from the place where the followers of Christ were first called Christians"⁵⁶. Anyway, these traditional beliefs had gone down deep into the psyche of every Syrian Jacobite. For the same reasons, it is so with every Syrian Catholic also; with a marked difference, however. And that is, the Syrian Catholic Church, on account of its intercourse with the Latin Church, does not make this as a point of credit, to be put forward in and out of contexts. The Jacobites gave vent to this deep-rooted feeling, even to Dr. Buchanan, when he called upon them⁵⁷. It is quite an appreciable act on the part of the C.M.S. with its 'Low Church' ecclesiology that it decided to 'correct', through the translation of the Bible and spiritual cum secular education this vainglorious attitude of the S.J.C. that was undoubtedly one of the causes for her decline and decay. The S.J.C. ought to be grateful to this noble work of the C.M.S.

3.4.4. *The 'Kerygmatic' Indifference of the S.J.C.*

As a corollary of its 'spiritual pride', the S.J.C. became indifferent to her bounden duty of 'Kerygma'. It may be explicated. The Syrian Jacobite community, which formed part of the 'Mar Thoma Christians', called 'Mapillas'⁵⁸, "developed an individuality of its own; this individuality was Christian but typically Malabarian"⁵⁹. On account of the rampant casteism prevailing then in Malabar, the Syrian Jacobite Community of the 17th and 18th centuries was also treated by the Kerala society as a 'caste', of course of a superior type. What Gouvea, in his *Jornado*, observes is relevant here. "...no other caste of similar value and esteem among the Malabarians as the Mar Thoma Christians"⁶⁰ is seen. The caste feeling tended the S.J.C. to adopt a policy of 'splendid isolation' resulting in reluctance for undertaking missionary projects. The S.J.C. seemed to have pushed into oblivion the inviolable dictum that the Church, by nature, is missionary. She was quite content with the observance of rituals. The 'Word of God' as enshrined in the Bible, She hardly propagated. She should have

56. BUCHANAN, *Christians Researches*, p. 108.

57. BUCHANAN, *Christian Researches*, p. 108.

58. Cf. THONIPPARA, *St. Thomas Christians of India*, p. 9.

59. PODIPARA, *The Thomas Christians*, p. 79.

60. GOUVEA, cited in THONIPPARA, *St. Thomas Christians of India*, p. 9.

realised that, as two lungs are necessary for the healthy functioning of a human body, so are the 'Word' and the 'Rituals', equally indispensable for the Church, the mystical body of Christ. The exemplary missionary or evangelical activities of the Roman Catholic prelates like Dom Menezes, St. Francis Xavier and Msgr. Stabellini, among the coastal fishermen flock and their remarkable results, of the reception of the Gospel by these people, did not open the eyes of the S.J.C. This lapse of the S.J.C. was capitalised by the C.M.S. Its result, of course, was reaped by the C.M.S., only after it parted company with the Syrian Jacobite Church.

The exploratory endeavours of Kerr and Buchanan, the itinerant clerics, had certain salutary effects on the S.J.C. She came out of her cloistered existence which had been nurtured by the feeling of 'touch me not, I am holy' attitude. This change was due to Her contacts with Kerr and Buchanan. As for the C.M.S. of England, the reports gave an impetus to target Kerala. It is said that when the reports of these missionaries were published in England in 1811, two things fascinated the English mind. The first was, the information contained in them regarding the existence of the antiquarian Christian community called the Syrian Jacobites. The second was, the interesting account regarding the juggernaut or the Jaganath chariot festival of the temple of Orissa. True, the C.M.S. had to wait for some more time to cast its die in Kerala. When the C.M.S. realised that the time was ripe, it was quick to act.

DYNAMICS OF THE S.J.C. IN HER RELATION WITH THE C.M.S. MISSIONARIES OF KERALA

The dynamics of the S.J.C. in Her relation with the C.M.S. Missionaries of Kerala was not of a simple one or uniform type. It varied in accordance with the contexts, which the S.J.C. had to encounter. This contextual change was quite natural and even logical. The main reason is the following. The S.J.C. which, as any other Church shares the characteristic of 'ecclesia mixta', manifested Her dynamics not merely through theological abstractions. Non-theological factors, arising from history, economics and sociology etc. had their role in moulding Her dynamics. So, if a student is not to become a utopian, all the above factors have to be analysed.

4.1. The Epitomisation of the Dynamics of the S.J.C. by the notations of four 'R's.

Four 'R's, to put stylistically, constitute the dynamics of the S.J.C., in Her relation with the C.M.S. missionaries of Kerala, during the three decades, from the year 1806 to 1836. 'Reticence', 'Recognition', 'Rejection', and 'Resistance' are what is epitomised by the four 'R's. The variations or the vicissitudes in the dynamics of the S.J.C. were the sequels of the secular and non-secular forces at play on both these entities, the S.J.C. and the C.M.S.

Initially, the S.J.C. adopted the dynamics of 'Reticence' towards the C.M.S. It was on account of the irreconcilability of Her theology and ecclesiology with those of C.M.S. The S.J.C. became aware of these differences in the course of Her Bishop's discussion with Claudius Buchanan, the pioneer representative of the C.M.S. to Kerala, during his sojourn in this State, in 1806. These stances, however, underwent a sea change to one of 'Recognition' of the C.M.S. on the part of the S.J.C. The dynamics that wrought out this transformation, by and large, was

the pragmatism of the S.J.C. So, the S.J.C., unceremoniously kept the theological and allied concerns in the hold. She became swayed by the many phased and multi-pronged prospects, that She could reap by the co-operation and collusion with the C.M.S. And of course, Her judgement was not wrong. Ostensibly, the S.J.C. made much material progress by the 'Mission of Help' offered by the C.M.S. But, with the change in the 'modus operandi' of the C.M.S., by imbuing the S.J.C. with the 'Low Church' ideals, the Jacobites had to assume another sort of dynamics. The Syrian Jacobite Church, realising as it were, Her lapse in neglecting the time-honoured theology, reasserted Her traditional thinking. Tempers ran high and low among the two entities, during this time. The incompatibility of the theology and ecclesiology of the S.J.C. with those of the C.M.S., gave rise to the new dynamics of 'Rejection', as the S.J.C. was concerned. This implied the rejecting of, not only the C.M.S. Missionaries, but of their doctrines too in toto. Differently put, the S.J.C. bade adieu to the C.M.S. 'help', and parted company with it for good. As a corollary, the S.J.C. adopted the dynamics of 'Resilience'. The obvious outcome was Her turning to the Antiochaeian ethos which had made the S.J.C. what She had been, all through the centuries. This was the finale that happened, following the 'Mavelikara Padiyola' of 1836.

4.1.1. The first 'R'. The 'Reticence' of the S.J.C. towards the C.M.S.

'Reticence', referred to as the first 'R' in this dissertation, was the initial dynamics of the S.J.C., when She had Her maiden acquaintance of Rev. Buchanan, the harbinger of the C.M.S. and of his projects of 'union' between the Syrian Jacobite Church and the Church of England. As for Buchanan, he had been entertaining high hopes about the materialisation of his vision. It was not a mere wishful thinking on his part. He had, rather, genuine reasons for such a stance. "The Syrian Christians were supposed to be of the same religion with the English"¹. Secondly, because Malabar or Kerala was recognised by the English as "a nation of fellow Christians"².

Since Mgrs. Raymondo, the Roman Catholic Bishop of Varapuzha, did not show a favourable disposition to the projects of Buchanan,³ the latter had to turn to the S.J.C. Thus, Buchanan wrote from Kandanad, on 24th Nov. 1806. "Since my coming amongst this people, I had cherished the hope that they might be one day united with the Church

1. BUCHANAN, *Christian Researches*, p. 110.

2. BUCHANAN, *Christian Researches*, p. 119.

3. PULIURUMPIL, *A Period of Jurisdictional Conflict*, p. 200.

f England... I was afraid to mention the subject to the Bishop at our first interview”⁴. Dr. Buchanan’s objects in proposing a union of the Syrian Church with the C.of E. revealed his mind. His intentions were to aid the S.J.C. “in the promulgation of ‘pure’ religion against the preponderating and increasing influence of the ‘Roman Church’ and to secure the ordination, by the Syrian Bishop, of ministers to preach in the English Churches in India”⁵.

But the S.J.C. evinced reservations on this scheme. This can be deduced from the disposition of Her laity, clergy and even the bishop. Buchanan himself records that the members of the St. Mary’s Jacobite Church of Mavelikara, “could not believe that I was come with any friendly purpose”⁶. Again, when Buchanan had a discussion with a priest of that parish, regarding the “original language of the Four Gospels”, which, the priest maintained, was Syriac, the priest and the parishioners “suspected from the complexion of my argument, that I wished to weaken the evidence for their antiquity”⁷. Consequently, “their countenance began to assume great distrust”⁸. At Kandanad, the clergy cast doubts about the validity of the priestly ordination of Buchanan⁹. As for the Bishop Mar Dionysius I, he “did not perfectly comprehend”¹⁰ the C.M.S. ecclesiology.

The deductions from the above extracts are obvious. The Syrian Church, from the first was not without serious misgivings about the aims of a foreign Church, that was seeking a ‘union’ with Her.

2. Reasons for the ‘Reticence’

Many and varied were the reasons for the S.J.C. to assume the dynamics of Reticence. While, some of such reasons were buried in the by-gones of Her ecclesial history, some were intertwined with ecclesiology and theology, tempered by sociology.

2.1. Historical Reasons

The ‘Reticence’, which the Jacobite Church put on initially, in Her dealings with the C.M.S. was rooted in the ecclesial history of the ‘Syrian Christian Community’, of which S.J.C. is a section. In fact, this dynamics

BUCHANAN, *Christian Researches*, p. 128.

PHILIP, *The Indian Church of St. Thomas*, p. 167.

BUCHANAN, *Christian Researches*, p. 114.

BUCHANAN, *Christian Researches*, p. 114.

AGUR, *Church History*, Part I, p. 80.

Cf. BUCHANAN, *Christian Researches*, p. 128.

D). BUCHANAN, *Christian Researches*, p. 130.

was the outcome of the xenophobia that had come to be an emotional ingredient of the psyche of the S.J.C. since Her bitter experiences with the foreign Portuguese prelates.

It is true that Will Durant, the great historian cum philosopher reminds us the wisdom contained in an Arab proverb which runs, “a world fears time”¹¹ as it wipes out all things in its great and irresistible efflux. But ironically enough, the all-destroying or the all-devouring ‘time’ had not obliterated from the memory of the S.J.C. the misdeeds, which had been perpetrated towards Her by the Padroadists. After all the evil that men do lives after them. Some of such misdeeds are to be specified here.

The authoritarian, arbitrary and arrogant actions of Archbishop Menezes, at the Synod of Diamper, as well as his vandalism in consigning to flames, an enormous number of religious books which were kept at the churches of Angamaly, Chengannoor and Cheppat¹² are to be listed first. “At Diamper, the authority of the Council of Trent and of the Inquisition were accepted... the old liturgies of the Syrian Church were either destroyed or altered beyond recognition”.¹³ The Syrian Christians rightly judged that these authoritarian moves of Menezes and his successor Garcia’s rule ‘with the rod of an iron’¹⁴ were all calculated to “metamorphose the traditionally Eastern Church into a Latinised Western Church”¹⁵.

What has come to be known, the ‘Ahatulla’ episode was yet another heart-rending one for the Syrians. Ahatulla, the prelate who came from the Middle-East, to herd the Syrian sheep of Malabar “was condemned a heretic by the Inquisition of Goa and died at stake in 1654”¹⁶.

The pent-up emotions of the Syrians were given vent to at the ‘Coonan-Cross’, church at Mattancherry. The assemblage of the Syrians took the oath that they would not submit any longer to any ecclesiastical authority of the Sampalur Missionaries. The term ‘Sampalur’ is a corruption of the ‘Fathers of St. Paul’, or the Jesuits, belonging to the College of St. Paul at Goa. Since they were sent out as Missionaries from

11. Cf. DURANT, *The Story of Civilisations*, Part I, p. 150.

12. Cf. HOUGH, *History of Christianity in India*, Vol. V, p. 175.

13. KEAY, *A History of the Syrian Church in India*, pp. 50-51.

14. DANIEL, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 104.

15. DANIEL, *The Orthodox Church*, p. 105.

16. Cf. TISSERANT, *Eastern Christianity*, pp. 79-80.

his institution, this name is used to denote them¹⁷.

So, when Buchanan suggested, the 'union' of the S.J.C. with the C.of . the Jacobites recalled all that had befallen them. This can be gained from what was explicitly expressed by a 'senior priest', ¹⁸ of the Chengannoor church, on Nov. 10, 1806 to Buchanan himself. "About 100 years ago an enemy came from the West, bearing the name of Christ, but armed with the Inquisition; and compelled us to seek the protection of the native Princes. And the native Princes have kept us in a state of depression ever since"¹⁹.

Thus, history of the past acted as an anamnestic or a corrective factor, and dictated the dynamics of 'reticence' to the Syrian Jacobites, lest She lapsed again.

2. 2. *Theological differences between the S.J.C. and the C.M.S.*

Coupled with the historical element, were the divergences and irreconcilability of the ecclesiologies and theologies of the S.J.C. with those of the C.M.S. While those of the former were entrenched in 'tradition' and eucharistic-centered liturgy, the theology and ecclesiology of the latter were moulded and maintained by the evangelical, non-conformist, and reformatory ideas of the 'Low Church' faction of the C.M.S. of E., based on Anglicanism.

When Buchanan proposed the 'union', the S.J.C. was sagacious enough to safeguard Her theology and ecclesiology. She was conscious that it was Her theological tenets and ecclesiological concepts which had gained Her the status of an antiquarian 'orthodox' Church. The S.J.C. had no qualms also in acknowledging that Her theology and ecclesiology were the legacies of the filial relation, She had had, with the ancient See of Antioch. As the S.J.C. was quite aware of the differences in Her theology and ecclesiology with those of the C.M.S. Missionaries of the 'Low Church', She remained 'reticent' when the C.M.S. put forward the shibboleth, or catch word of reforms. A survey of the main points of difference in the theology and ecclesiology of the S.J.C. and the 'Low Church' is effected in the following lines, for the sake of explicitation.

While the S.J.C. maintains that both the Holy Bible²⁰ and the Holy Tradition²¹ of the Apostolic, sub-Apostolic and Patristic periods,

17. Cf. AGUR, *Church History*, Part II, p. 205.

18. Cf. BUCHANAN, *Christian Researches*, p. 117.

19. BUCHANAN, *Christian Researches*, p. 117.

20. DIONYSIUS MAR, *Mathopadesa Saram*, (Malayalam) p. 77.

21. DIONYSIUS MAR, *Mathopadesa Saram*, (Malayalam) pp. 81-82.

are equally valid as sources of theology, they are contravened by the C.M.S. and its Missionaries. The doctrine of the 'Low Church' or the C.M.S., in this regard is that 'the Bible alone' is the source. This doctrine, known, 'Sola Scriptura', as enunciated by the 'Fathers of Reformation', Luther, Zwingli and Calvin, has been zealously upheld by the 'Low Church'. Again, while the 'Low Church' appears to stick on to the literal interpretation of the Bible, the S.J.C., like the Catholic Church, holds that it is part of the magisterium of the Church to give the correct explanation and expatiation of the 'Word' reckoning the 'signs of times'. Otherwise, the Bible may be treated by critics and sceptics as outdated and obsolete. In interpreting the Bible, the S.J.C., unlike the C.M.S., follows the three variable factors of intellectual insight, emotional tone and the environmental ethos of the authors.

As regards the 'Creed' adopted, there is genetical difference between the S.J.C. and the C.M.S. The 'Creed' enunciated at the Ecumenical Councils of Nicaea of 325, and Constantinople of 381 is what the S.J.C. has been professing. But the C.M.S., as the C.of E. does uphold the "three creeds of Nicaea, Athanasius and Apostles"²².

The 'Petrine-Primacy', valued and cherished by the S.J.C. is neither appreciated nor acknowledged by the C.M.S. To substantiate the stand of the S.J.C. on this score, the observations of Dionysius Bar Salibi, the 12th century bishop of Amid, and Gregorius Bar Hebraeus, the Jacobite Maphrian of the East, are incorporated hereunder. Bar Salibi wrote, "Our Lord has transmitted to Simeon and through him to ourselves these two powers of binding and unbinding, which belongs only to God"²³. More expressively did Bar Hebraeus opine. "The Disciples seem to have forgotten what had been said to Peter, viz., 'thou art a rock, upon thee, I will build My Church, and to thee, I will give the keys of heaven'²⁴.

The 'Petrine-Primacy' has been brought out very clearly by a modern Protestant theologian. "If the New Testament makes clear the special status of the apostles, surely it also makes it clear that St. Peter had a certain primacy among them. He was obviously the leader and is reported as the first to have recognized Jesus as the Messiah, and the first of the apostles to have seen the risen Christ²⁵. More specifically Christ declares him to be the rock on which he will build the Church;²⁶ and it is

22. Cf. *The 39 Articles*, Art. No. viii.

23. BAR SALIBI, cited in PANICKER, *The Church in Syriac Tradition*, p. 37.

24. BAR HEBRAEUS, cited in PANICKER, *The Church in Syriac Tradition*, p. 60.

25. Mark., 8:29, 1Cor. 15:5.

26. Matt., 16:18.

o to St. Peter that the risen Lord commends the care of the Church²⁷ in the postlude to the Fourth Gospel”²⁸. But, none of the ‘Articles of Faith’ of the C.of E. mentions about ‘Petrine-Primacy’.

Again, the view of the S.J.C. regarding the Church as ‘mystery’ is not accepted by the C.M.S. or its parent organisation the C.of E. For the C. of E., “the visible Church of Christ is a congregation of faithful men”²⁹.

While the S.J.C. believes in the Apostolic origin of the Church, and its perpetuation through the Sees of Rome, Constantinople, Alexandria, Antioch and Jerusalem, with their anchorage in monastic tradition, the C.of E., does not have ‘high’ concepts about the Apostolic Sees or their encouragement to contemplative orientation. In fact, the C.of E. holds that these Sees “have erred”³⁰.

‘Sacraments’, for the S.J.C. are ‘vehicles for salvation’³¹. Whereas, for the C.M.S. they are only “signs of grace’ which strengthen and confirm our faith in him”³². Further, while the S.J.C. has seven sacraments, the C.M.S. recognises only two. They are, ‘Baptism’ and the ‘Supper of the Lord’³³.

The unique mystery that the S.J.C. teaches about the Eucharist, the Liturgy based on it, and its sequel, the remission of sins, are not recognised by the ‘Low Church’. Even though, the S.J.C. does not have any “such word as transubstantiation in its liturgy and canons, they did, and do believe in the Real Presence (of Christ) and that the elements undergo a change by the all sanctifying influence of the Holy Ghost”³⁴. For the C.of E., “the sacrifices of Masses, in the which, it was commonly said, that the priest did offer for Christ, for the quick and the dead, to have remission of pain or guilt, were blasphemous fables and dangerous deceits”³⁵.

With regard to the invocation of the perpetual virgin St. Mary, and the saints and their intercession, the S.J.C. subscribes Herself to the

27. John 21:15-19.

28. MAC QUARRIE, *Principles of Christian Theology*, p. 369.

29. *The 39 Articles*, Art. No. xix.

30. *The 39 Articles*, Art. No. xix.

31. DIONYSIUS MAR, *Mathopadesa Sarangal*, (Malayalam), p. 9.

32. *The 39 Articles*, Art. No. xxv.

33. *The 39 Articles*, Art. No. xxv.

34. PHILIP, *The Indian Church of St. Thomas*, p. 215.

35. *The 39 Articles*, Art. No. xxx.

positive effects. But, the C.M.S. missionaries frowned at these religious practices, the efficacy of which, although incomprehensible, many a faithful avers. So also, about the prayer for the departed; while the S.J.C. deems it as potential, the C.M.S. entertains a negative and even a pejorative view on it.

4. 2. 3. Sociological Reasons

It is to the credit of the Syrian Christian Community which is the parent entity of the S.J.C., that it allowed the Semitic characteristics of Christianity it imbibed, to be tempered by the Indian environs or 'sitz im leben' or life situation. In short, it had become Indian in culture. This is what is precisely put by Placid J. Podipara, the scholarly historian of the Syro-Malabar Rite. His oft-quoted dictum runs that the Syrian Christians have been 'Christians in religion, Indians in culture and Orientals in worship'. Elsewhere, he himself expatiates. "They (*the Syrian Christians*) developed an individuality of their own in the socio-political environment of the country adapting themselves to, or rather christianising, their ancient culture in almost all its aspects. This adaptation extended itself also to their liturgical and canonical rites, i.e. to their mode of worship and Church administration"³⁶. This cultural patrimony was shared by the S.J.C. too. So, when the S.J.C. countenanced the C.M.S. pioneers over emphasising the role of the 'Bible' to the exclusion of all other heritages, the Jacobite Church put on 'reticence', specifically for the following reason. If 'Bible' was the life for the Britons, life was the Bible for the Jacobites. Therefore, they initially viewed the C.M.S. clerics not as co-religionists but as exotic ecclesiasts.

4.2.4. Doubts of the S.J.C. regarding the Apostolicity of the C.M.S.

One of the reasons for the 'reticence' of the S.J.C. was Her doubts regarding the Apostolicity of the C.M.S. "The Bishop's chaplains confessed to me that they had doubts as to the purity of English Ordination... 'Whence do you derive your ordination'... This was the point upon which they wished me to be explicit"³⁷, wrote Buchanan. This doubt was quite pertinent. For 'Apostolicity' is one of the four notae of an 'Apostolic Church'. This has been made imperative by one of the canons of the Nicaea - Constantinople Councils of the 4th century. "Apostolicity of the Church is its constancy in the faith of the apostles"³⁸.

36. PODIPARA, *The Thomas Christians*, p. 79.

37. BUCHANAN, *Christian Researches*, pp. 128, 129.

38. MAC QUARRIE, *Principles of Christian Theology*, p. 368.

‘The doctrine of apostolic succession means that the mission and sacred power to teach, rule and sanctify, that Christ conferred on His disciples, is in accordance with Christ’s intentions, perpetuated in the Church’s college of bishops... In giving them this mission, Christ promised that He would be with them, all days, even unto the consummation of the world (Mt. 28:20). This promise of abiding divine assistance given in the context of the apostolic mandate implies that the mandate itself was to endure even though the original recipients of the mandate were mortal men”³⁹. It is this characteristic that guarantees a Church the “continuity and identity”⁴⁰, even while She gains extension through time.⁴¹ How, this is achieved is explicated by the reputed theologian Macquarrie. “The note of apostolicity has its own embodiment or institutional form to protect it. This form is the episcopate. This office, publicly transmitted by the apostles to their successors and then on through the generations, is the overt, institutional vehicle for ensuring the continuity of that heritage of faith and practice which was like-wise transmitted by the apostles”⁴². On the basis of this theory, what is meant by an Apostolic Church becomes very clear. “The apostolic Church is the authentic Church continuing the teaching and practice of the apostles, who had been ‘eye witnesses’ of the events proclaimed in the Church’s message and who had been commissioned by Christ himself”⁴³. Buchanan’s answer that the C.of E., had received ordination “from Rome”⁴⁴ did not satisfy the chaplains of the bishop. It was evident from their answer⁴⁵. This attitude was due to a false sense of superiority or on account of the lack of a dispassionate study of Church History, or may be because of the recalling of the bogy of Latinisation, or perhaps the resultant of all these factors, that worked in the minds of the Syrian Jacobite priests with whom Buchanan discussed the ‘union’. A comment drawn from ‘history’ is to be incorporated here ‘Church History’, after all, is the record of the ways and means by which Churches endeavour to preserve the ‘deposit of faith’ received by them through traditions. The S.J.C.

39 SULLIVAN, ‘Apostolic See’, in *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, Vol. I, p. 695.

40 MAC QUARRIE, *Principles of Christian Theology*, p. 367.

41 Cf. MAC QUARRIE, *Principles of Christian Theology*, p. 367.

42 MAC QUARRIE, *Principles of Christian Theology*, p. 368.

43 MAC QUARRIE, *Principles of Christian Theology*, p. 367.

44 BUCHANAN, *Christian Researches*, p. 128.

45 BUCHANAN, *Christian Researches*, p. 129.

does not therefore deserve the deprecatory criticism of holding on to 'inordinate orthodoxy'.

4.2.5. *Views of Mar Dionysius I, on the 'Union' of the S.J.C. with the C.M.S.*

When Dr. Buchanan proposed to Mar Dionysius I, the Metropolitan of the Jacobites, of his project on the 'union' of the S.J.C. with the C.of E., the latter asked him to state the advantages of the scheme. The answer that Buchanan furnished, show that he had specifically two⁴⁶ axes to grind. The one was that the C.M.S. Missionaries would get chances to preach in the churches of the Jacobites. Naturally, the C.M.S. could then dilate upon the 'pure religion', as against Catholicism. The other advantage was the following. By permitting the priests, ordained by the Syrian bishop, to preach in the English Churches of India, the scarcity, that the C.M.S. was experiencing in getting preachers proficient enough to speak in the native languages, could be overcome. The Metran did not appear to have been greatly moved by this scheme. His reply revealed 'reticence', though, couched in courteous words. "I would sacrifice much for the 'Union': only, let me not be called to compromise anything of the dignity and purity of our Church"⁴⁷.

To sum up, it is no exaggeration or figment of fancy to contend that the S.J.C. and the C.M.S., were not made for each other. The C.M.S. clamoured for the 'union'. But the dialectics of history, deterrents of theology, dictates of ecclesiology and the demands of sociology all severally or jointly drew a line of demarcation between the S.J.C. and the C.M.S. Thus the Syrian Jacobite Church countered with Her 'reticence', the rhetoric of the Church Missionary Society.

46. Cf. BUCHANAN, *Christian Researches*, p. 129.

47. BUCHANAN, *Christian Researches*, p. 130.

CHANGE IN THE DYNAMICS OF THE S.J.C.

The Ecclesia, it is acknowledged, is like a living organism. So, Her dynamics will and must change, as per the times and climes. Ecclesiologists, however, express that this should not entail forfeiture of the fundamentals of the Church. At the most, changes should affect only the forms, formalities and the formularies. To put it differently, only the externals and not the essentials of the Church should be subjected to alterations. It was this phenomenon of change, that was witnessed in the relation of the S.J.C. to the C.M.S., shortly after Her 'Reticence'. Thus, for economic, social and other reasons, the dynamics of the S.J.C. metamorphosed into one of 'Recognition' of the C.of E., and Her Missaries in Kerala, the C.M.S. Missionaries. The characteristics of this new dynamics were the mutual understanding and co-operation of the S.J.C. and the C.M.S.

5.1. *The Period of the Second 'R' - The Recognition of the C.M.S. by the S.J.C.*

A new era was inaugurated in the relation of the S.J.C. with the C.M.S., by 1808. This epoch is described, the 'period of Recognition of the C.M.S. by the S.J.C.', and epitomised as the second 'R', by the present dissertator. The project that was thus ushered in by Mar Dionysius I, gradually gained ground by a complex of processes and combination of personalities. This era was christened by the C.M.S., the 'Mission of Help'. It brought many economic, social and cultural benefits to the S.J.C. This period lasted till the demise of Metropolitan Mar Dionysius II of the S.J.C., in May 1825. With the accession of Mar Dionysius IV, in Aug. 1825, the relation began to wane, as this bishop was not in favour of the reform moves of the C.M.S. The Missionaries of the C.M.S., accused him of financial unreliability¹. An estrangement naturally ensued between him and the Missionaries. The interference of the Govt. of Travancore in expelling the Antiochaeon Patriarchal delegate, Mar Athanasius, made matters worse. The S.J.C. logically deemed it as the result of a plot by the C.M.S. Missionaries, who had their own motives against the Patriarch. Despite this kind of mishaps, the C.M.S. Missionaries continued their 'Mission of Help' at least formally for

¹. GIBBS, *The Anglican Church in India*, p. 111.

sometime more till the most unfortunate period, i.e. from May 1833 to Jan. 1836.² One may say that it lasted, although in a low tone, till, the period of the 'first generation' of C.M.S. Missionaries was over.

5.2. Causes for the change in the Dynamics of the S.J.C.

The change in the dynamics of S.J.C. from 'Reticence' to 'Recognition' vis-à-vis, the C.M.S. was not a sudden development or accidental occurrence, as it is likely to appear apparently. Ecclesial episodes too take place, on account of the operation of many overt and covert factors, as secular events happen. Thus many causes of personal, political, and economic genre can be identified for the attitudinal alteration of the S.J.C.

5.2.1. Buchanan's pleadings

It is to be deduced that Buchanan's pleadings for the 'union' of the S.J.C. with the C.of E., might have precipitated the action of Mar Dionysius I, in the conditional 'recognition' of the C.M.S. It may be summarised as follows.

It is a feat of skill or 'tour de force' on the part of Dr. Buchanan that he achieved what he had cherished. He succeeded in allaying the apprehensions of Mar Dionysius I, on his proposal of the 'union' of the S.J.C. with the C.of E. Here is an instance where a cleric prevailed upon an eparch. What Buchanan has recorded regarding his conversation with the Syrian Jacobite Prelate is the testimony for the above contention. On the 24th Nov. 1806, Buchanan wrote in his notes, as follows: "I told him, we did not wish to degrade; we would rather protect and defend it (*the S.J.C.*) ... The C.of E., would be happy to promote its (*S.J.C's*) welfare to revive its spirit and to use it as an instrument of future good in the midst of her own Empire"³. It appears, that in Buchanan's terminology, 'union' merely signified inter-communion or mutual recognition of the two Churches, without either of them interfering authoritatively in the affairs of the other. "Each was to remain as an independent branch of the One Universal Church"⁴. Buchanan's words wrought out the wonder of a change of mind or 'metanoia', as it were, in the Metran. On the very next day⁵ i.e. on the 25th Nov. 1806, what was dreamt by Richard Kerr and Claudius Buchanan, but what was not desired initially by the Syrian Jacobite Community, happened. The

2. CHERIYAN, *The Malabar Christians*, p. 251.

3. BUCHANAN, *The Christian Researches*, p. 130.

4. HOWARD, *The Christians of St. Thomas and Their Liturgies*, p. 57.

5. BUCHANAN, *The Christian Researches*, p. 130.

dynamics of 'Reticence' became a thing of history, as the new dynamics of 'Recognition', dawned in the relation of the S.J.C. and the C.M.S. Mar Dionysius gave in writing a qualified approval to the notion of some mutually agreed connection with the C. of E."⁶. The writ of 'Mar Dionysius the Great' replaced the rule of 'Reticence' of the S.J.C., to one of 'Recognition' of the C.M.S. Seldom has so much been achieved in so little a time.

2. 2. *Bitter Experiences of the S.J.C. in the 'unity move' with the R.C.C.*

The bitter and humiliating experiences, that Mar Thoma VI, also known as Mar Dionysius I⁷, had had in his 'unity move' with the R.C.C. might have made him antagonistic to the Catholic Church.

"Mar Dionysius I, made many attempts to be reunited to the Catholic Church. His first attempts were through the apostolic vicar Msgr. Florence, through the archbishop of Kodungalloor Salvador dos Rees, through the apostolic visitor Laurence Justiniani and then again through the apostolic vicar Msgr. Francis Sales. The second attempt was through Mar Joseph Cariattil and Thomas Paremmakkal"⁸.

Both these attempts did not bear fruit due to the "adverse attitude of the Carmelites... and the little interest of Bishop Emmanuel and of the Bishop of Cochin, in admitting Mar Dionysius, who might possibly become a threat to the Padroado authority by demanding all the Syrians to be under him..."⁹

"In a pro memoria submitted to the propaganda Fide, Cariattil and Paremmakkal expressed the sad experiences of Mar Thoma in his reunion attempts"¹⁰.

"Mar Dionysius... tried once more, either willingly or by forced circumstances, exploiting the peculiar situation in Malabar... Mar Dionysius with a few followers, ... on June 11, 1799, formally embraced the Catholic faith at St. Michael's Church, Thathampally, before Bishop Pandari..."¹¹. But, not much later, Mar Dionysius realised that either Bishop Pandari or his so-called vicar- General, Kattakayathil Abraham were not the legitimate persons or authorities to receive a non-Catholic group to the Catholic faith. ...Mar Dionysius also could not find any

6. FIRTH, *Indian Church History*, p. 167.

7. Cf. PULIURUMPIL, *A Period of Jurisdictional Conflict*, p. 28.

8. PULIURUMPIL, *A Period of Jurisdictional Conflict*, p. 29.

9. PULIURUMPIL, *A Period of Jurisdictional Conflict*, p. 29.

10. PULIURUMPIL, *A Period of Jurisdictional Conflict*, p. 29.

11. PULIURUMPIL, *A Period of Jurisdictional Conflict*, p. 30.

one from the Latin authorities of the Catholic side, well disposed to promote his cause... after six months of Catholic life he reverted... Before being reinstalled in the former office, as a penance, he had to celebrate 40 masses at his own expense.”¹²

Mar Thoma VI might also have recalled to his mind, the similar experiences that his predecessors, Mar Thoma V, Mar Thoma IV and Mar Thoma III, had had on their unity moves. “Mar Thoma IV in 1704 and Mar Thoma V in 1748, tried to be received into the Catholic Church”¹³. “Before 1682, Mar Thoma III approached the missionaries to be reunited with Rome”¹⁴. Msgr. Sebastiani, the Apostolic Vicar was against it¹⁵.

With all these unpleasant memories ever green in his mind, it was natural that Mar Dionysius I decided to be an ally of the C.of. E., the enemy of his own ‘enemy’, the R.C.C. Here is an instance of a prelate playing power politics.

5. 2. 3. A strategem of the S.J.C. to counter the moves of the R.C.C.

‘Recognition of the C.M.S.’, the new dynamics of the S.J.C., could be construed as dictated partly by political expediency. In fact, the political scenario then prevailing in Kerala necessitated such a change. This may be briefly put as follows. “Col. Macaulay took over as Resident of Travancore in 1800, with the power of supervision over Cochin”¹⁶. He put forward the following policy. “The Christians in Travancore and Cochin are under the special protection of the English Sovereign”¹⁷. Macaulay could enunciate this doctrine as the power of the Padroadists and the Propagandists had declined considerably and also because the E.I.C., as the representative of the British monarchy, had begun to take roots in the soil of Kerala, defeating the French and the Dutch, in India.

The R.C.C. was quick enough to realise the implication of the victory of the English overlords. This can be deduced from an anecdote detailed by Dr. Buchanan on his visit to the “Pulingunnu Syrian Academy for the Cassanars of the Romish Church”¹⁸. He wrote. “The priests were very polite

12. PULIURUMPIL, *A Period of Jurisdictional Conflict*, pp. 32-33.

13. PLACID, ‘*The Syrian Church*’ p. 374.

14. PODIPARA, *The Thomas Christians*, p. 217.

15. *Cong. Part* (Archives of S.Prop.) Vol. 109, ff. 54, 55.

16. MENON, *Kerala History*, p. 167.

17. AGUR, *Church History*, Part I, p. 94.

18. AGUR, *Church History*, Part I, p. 90.

nd would not allow that the English were either heretics or schismatics”¹⁹. Buchanan asserted, “I am a schismatic. Col. Macaulay and the Governor-General and all the English are schismatics from the Romish Church”²⁰. But the Seminary authorities did not seem to have accepted his stand. More important is Buchanan’s observation, after his visit of the prelate of Veropoli. The Bishop and the priests there, were under the notion that Buchanan’s “purpose was to subjugate them to the C.of E.”²¹ When Buchanan asked them as to how could that be possible, they gave him a thought-provoking answer. It revealed the recognition by the R.C.C. of the growing power of the British, in Kerala. “If the English Government should desire it, and threaten to withdraw its protection, if we did not comply, what alternative would be left?”²² In this context, it must be noted that Col. Macaulay, the Resident, had permitted ‘Sankoorikal Gheevarghese’, the administrator of Kodungalloor, to exercise his official powers without any hindrance. So also, he had granted to the Syrian Catholics, the freedom of access to him, on religious matters. Verily, the R.C.C. had won the confidence of the British.

Mar Dionysius I, a personage of practical wisdom did not lag behind in taking cognizance of all these actions of the R.C.C. So he made a move, which was a strategem to counter the moves of the R.C.C. “Thinking it better not to turn again to the Jacobite Patriarch, Mar Dionysius turned to the Church Missionary Society, which, with the influence of the British in Thiruvithamkoor, was advancing the Catholics of Malabar”²³. Another political reason can also be detected in the development of the S.J.C.’s dynamics of ‘Recognition’. As the head of the community, Mar Dionysius must have been aware of and moaning over the lack of political freedom for his flock. In fact, this sad plight was confided to Dr. Buchanan by a certain Abraham, one of the ‘principal Christians’ of the Chengannoor Church, on the latter’s visit. “We are here in bondage like Israel in Egypt”²⁴. So, naturally, Mar Dionysius could have expected “some freedom and personal consequences as a people”²⁵ similar to those that the Roman Catholics were enjoying, to accrue to the S.J.C. by She recognizing the C.of E., and aligning with Her.

19. AGUR, *Church History*, Part I, p. 90.

20. AGUR, *Church History*, Part I, p. 90.

21. AGUR, *Church History*, Part I, p. 93.

22. AGUR, *Church History*, Part I, p. 93.

23. PULIURUMPIL, *A Period of Jurisdictional Conflict*, p. 33.

24. BUCHANAN, *Christian Researches*, p. 116.

25. BUCHANAN, *Christian Researches*, p. 119.

5. 2. 4. *Material prospects from the 'Mission of Help' of the C.M.S.*

In the wake of the initial 'reticence', the prospects of prosperity including material, that his 'declining church'²⁶ would obtain from the 'union' with the C.of E., the official Church of the English, "a war-like and great people"²⁷, could have contributed to the change of mind of Mar Dionysius and brought in the new dynamics of 'Recognition'. But a fact remains. Even before Buchanan offered literary and educative helps to the S.J.C., a few Syrian Jacobites of social standing had posed hopes in the English and other Missionaries, for the enterprising endeavours of the S.J.C. They had prophetic vision, as it were, that the C.of E. and the C.M.S. would bring back 'the once commended' material glory of the S.J.C. On the 10th of Nov. 1806²⁸, at the Chengannoor Church, a senior priest²⁹ had told Buchanan. "We are in a degenerate state compared with our forefathers... we rank in general next to the Nairs, the nobility of the country; but they have encroached by degrees on our property, till we have been reduced to the humble state in which you find us. The glory of our Church has passed away; but we hope your nation will revive it again." Words of poignancy surpassed by salutary expectations. Mar Dionysius I was not destined to see the new dynamics developing into fruition, as he breathed his last in 1808. Subsequent events, especially during the time of Col. John Munro, the British Resident cum Diwan of the States of Travancore and Cochin proved this.

5. 2. 5. *Founding of the 'Syrian Seminary' at Kottayam*

A classical example of the positive result of the new dynamics of 'Recognition' of the C.M.S., was the founding of the Syrian Seminary at Kottayam. This was an achievement of the joint efforts of Mar Dionysius II, the successor of Mar Dionysius I, and of Col. Munro, who had close connection with the C.of E.

Col. Munro who was interested in the S.J.C. for various reasons, realised that three things were imperative for the amelioration of the ancient S.J.C., which had become decadent and degenerate due to both internal and external reasons. "The clergy must be given an adequate and efficient education; the scripture must be translated and discipline within the Church must be strictly enforced"³⁰. So, when Ittoop Ramban

26. BUCHANAN, *Christian Researches*, p. 107.

27. BUCHANAN, *Christian Researches*, p. 128.

28. BUCHANAN, *Christian Researches*, p. 113.

29. BUCHANAN, *Christian Researches*, p. 117.

30. BROWN, *Christians of St. Thomas*, p. 132.

of Pulikottil, who later on became the Metropolitan Mar Dionysius II and “who was well versed in the Indian science of architecture”³¹, laid the plan of establishing a theological institution for the education of the Syrian Clergy, Munro, prevailed upon Rani Parvathi Bai, the ruler of Travancore, to provide the site, ‘tax free’³² for the Seminary. Col. Munro also arranged to be placed before the Metran, the arrears of interest accrued on the ‘endowment’ for the Syrian Christians. “This fund consisted of 3000 ‘star-pagodas’, said to have been obtained by Col. Macaulay as compensation for wrongs suffered by Jacobites in the past and invested by him on their behalf for their benevolent purposes”³³. A ‘star-pagoda’ is “an old money system prevalent in India in the last centuries, called in Malayalam poovarahan”³⁴. “All the documents agree that the sum of 3000 pagodas was equal to Rs. 10,500/-”³⁵. It may be noted in passing that the right to draw the interest called ‘vattippanam’ in Malayalam became in later years, a bone of contention between the two factions of the S.J.C. This dispute ultimately led to the litigation, known in the ordinary parlance of Malayalam, as the ‘vattippanam’ case. This amount was meant for the running of the Seminary, that had started functioning in March 1815. Col. Munro also freed one hundred ‘Harijans’ and placed them at the disposal of the bishop for helping in the construction of the Seminary³⁶. He made the Government to provide tax free an island, near Kallada³⁷. This island is today known the Munro Island. Thus, it can be seen that what Buchanan had conceived of in 1806 came to be partially fulfilled, almost a decade later. While conceding that the institution, known today, the ‘Old Seminary’, brought much enlightenment to its students, it remains a fact that the overzealous missionaries sowed the seeds of dissension among them. “The Old Seminary was at first the centre of their operation and later on the focus of contention”³⁸.

5. 3. Favourable disposition of Mar Dionysius II

An analysis into the causes that led to the favourable disposition of Mar Dionysius II towards the C.M.S. and its consequences, is necessary

31. PHILIP, *The Indian Church of St. Thomas*, p. 176.

32. Cf. APPENDIX I.

33. BROWN, *Christians of St. Thomas*, p. 127.

34. PULIURUMPIL, *A period of Jurisdictional Conflict*, p. 189.

35. PULIURUMPIL, *A period of Jurisdictional Conflict*, p. 189.

36. Cf. AGUR, *Church History*, Part I, p. 110.

37. Cf. AGUR, *Church History*, Part I, p. 110.

38. GREGORIOS MAR, *The Indian Orthodox Church*, p. 34.

for this part of the dissertation. This can be accomplished only by resorting to the reservoir of history.

When Mar Thoma VI died in 1808, Mar Thoma VII took the reins of administration of the S.J.C. This prelate expired in 1809 before appointing a successor. "When he was about to die, such of the members of the community as were present at his death, entertaining anxiety regarding the succession to the episcopacy, got his successor Mar Thoma VIII, suddenly consecrated by laying on his head, the hands of the unconscious Metran who was lying on the point of death".³⁹ The S.J.C. acknowledged him as a spiritual head. So long as Col. Macaulay was in office, the accusations of his opponent, Ittoop Ramban of Pulikottil, were of no avail. Mar Thoma VIII "always wished to have juridical dependence on the Antiochaeon Patriarch"⁴⁰. "He was against the anglicanizing tendency"⁴¹. The tussle between Ittoop Ramban and Mar Thoma VIII reached its climax in 1813, when Mar Philexinos of Thoziyur Church, supported the Ramban. Munro, the Resident convened a meeting at Quilon, of the representatives of all the Jacobite Churches; he deputed an officer to take possession of the Metran's credentials and personal properties... declared the Metran's consecration null and void..."⁴². Ittoop Ramban got consecrated in March, 1815, with the episcopal name Mar Dionysius II, by Philexinos of Thoziyur. "The Travancore Government, prompted by the British Resident, issued a proclamation in January, 1816, requiring all Syrian Christians to obey Mar Dionysius II as their Metropolitan. This was followed by a similar proclamation issued by the Cochin Government"⁴³. "In... getting his consecration from Mar Philexinos, Mar Dionysius II had the support of the British Resident through the English Missionaries"⁴⁴. This action of Mar Dionysius had far reaching adverse effects on the S.J.C.

"It was from his time that the Travancore and Cochin Governments began to interfere in the appointment and removal of bishops in the Syrian Church. It became law that no bishop could exercise his episcopal authority unless he was recognised by the States through proclamation enjoining all the Syrian Christians to obey him. If a Bishop was once recognised, it was considered penal for a Syrian to disobey his orders

39. PHILIP, *The Indian Church of St. Thomas*, p. 171.

40. MALANCHARUVIL, *Syro-Malankara Church*, p. 42.

41. PULIURUMPIL, *A period of Jurisdictional Conflict*, p. 198.

42. PHILIP, *The Indian Church of St. Thomas*, p. 174.

43. PHILIP, *The Indian Church of St. Thomas*, p. 177.

44. PULIURUMPIL, *A period of Jurisdictional Conflict*, p. 198.

hereafter. Freedom of choice was not heard of for several years hereafter. Any pretender who could court the favour of the British Resident, could be freely recognised by the Hindu States, whether or not his consecration was valid or he possessed the confidence of the Syrian community”⁴⁵

As for the S.J.C., ‘Recognition’ of the C.M.S. resulted in the depriving of Her ecclesial freedom. She was forced to serve two masters, firstly the C.M.S., directed by the British Resident and secondly the sovereigns of the States of Travancore and Cochin. From the above facts it can be deduced that Dionysius II, “favoured the ideas of Protestant missionaries”⁴⁶ for ousting a prelate who wanted the century-old Antiochaeian relation, kept in honour in the S.J.C. It is another story that Dionysius II had to rue subsequently for his favouritism towards the C.M.S. and the recognition of it. “Citing from the autograph-diary of his grandfather, the late Edavazhikal Philipose Cathanar, a priest who had an extra-ordinary reputation and influence in the Syrian Church and who was himself an eye-witness of the scene”⁴⁷, E. M. Philip, a great scholar of his times and who was once the secretary of the Malankara Association Managing Committee, has recorded: “the Metran expressed to the attendant priests in bitter terms with tears running down his furrowed cheeks: repent having sought the Sahib’s help in the construction of the Seminary”⁴⁸. A researcher is apt to remark : ‘His was the tragedy and S.J.C.’s was the misfortune’.

5. 4. *Col. Munro’s motives in helping the S.J.C.*

Col. John Munro was the Resident cum Diwan of the States of Travancore and Cochin almost during 1810-1819. The combination of these two offices virtually made Munro, not only the ‘de-jure’ but also the ‘de facto’ ruler of these two principalities. Munro naturally entertained the idea that he could win over the Syrian Christian community, including the Catholics. He wrote to the Madras Government. “I believe that no great difficulty would be experienced in converting the greatest part of the Roman Catholics in Travancore - Cochin, an event extremely desirable on every ground of policy, humanity and religion.”⁴⁹ Impelled by political acumen, endowed with administrative

5. PHILIP, *The Indian Church of St. Thomas*, p. 178.

6. PULIURUMPIL, *A period of Jurisdictional Conflict*, p. 198.

7. PHILIP, *The Indian Church of St. Thomas*, p. 182.

8. PHILIP, *The Indian Church of St. Thomas*, p. 183.

9. MUNRO, *Minute to the Madras Government*, in HUNT, *The Anglican Church*, p. 58.

power and encouraged by evangelical spirit, Munro decided to aid and assist the ancient S.J.C. to regain Her lost pristine glory. And, he, as “a sound Christian, and sincere friend of this ancient Church”⁵⁰ did achieve many a thing to improve the plight of the S.J.C. Munro was certainly the master-mind behind the ‘Mission of Help’ offered by the C.M.S. This project, undoubtedly brought in much development in the social, political and even moral conditions of the Jacobite Community. “Col. Munro appointed several Syrian Jacobites to high and low offices in the Sirkar”⁵¹. The Syrian Jacobite Community “is indebted to Col. Munro for much of the material and social freedom they now enjoy”⁵². Not content by being the patron of the Jacobites in political and material things only, he planned a reformation of their religious life as well, which in his Western perspective was primitive. So, “he designed for them the two fold benefit: civil and religious”⁵³. To carry out these objects, he procured missionaries from the C.M.S. of England and posted them as preceptors and professors in the Seminary that was started partially by his good offices.

Even while acceding to all this, it can be seen on analysis that other considerations, in no small measure, prompted Munro to take so much interest in the S.J.C. “It may even be doubted, whether, in lending a strong helping hand to the Syrians, Col. Munro was activated by more of philanthropy and sympathy than of political considerations”⁵⁴.

What these ‘considerations’ were, can be understood by analysing the observations of certain historians and the political situation of Travancore.

“In helping the Syrians, therefore, he looked forward to securing for the British Raj the support of a respectable body of Christian subjects, connected with the mass of the people by a community of language, occupation and pursuits and united to the British Government by the stronger ties of religion and mutual safety”⁵⁵. In his doctoral dissertation, Ponnunmuthu Selvister, a Catholic cleric writes:- “J. Munro thought that the missionaries would help the stability of the British supremacy in Travancore”⁵⁶. The remarks made by

50. PHILIP, *The Indian Church of St. Thomas*, p. 179.

51. AGUR, *Church History*, Part I, p. 18.

52. PHILIP, *The Indian Church of St. Thomas*, p. 179.

53. HUNT, *The Anglican Church*, Vol. I, p. 37.

54. PHILIP, *The Indian Church of St. Thomas*, p. 180.

55. HUNT, *The Anglican Church*, Vol. I, P. 37.

56. PONNUMUTHAN, *Basic Ecclesial Communities*, p. 105.

E. M. Philip, a historian of the S.J.C. are to be incorporated in further substantiation of the political motives of Munro. Philip makes his observations on the basis of a report that Munro made after stating certain proposals for help to be rendered to the Syrians by the Madras Government. In his report, Munro minced no words. "The British Government would receive, in their grateful and devoted attachment on every emergency, the reward due to its benevolence and wisdom"⁵⁷. In this connection, certain political events of the then history, of Travancore should be brought out, as they are likely to provide some data for deducing the political motives of Munro. In 1808, an attempt was made on the life of Col. Macaulay the British Resident. "Some documents show that it was Msgr. Raimond who saved the life of Macaulay from the conspiracy of rebels"⁵⁸. "All these events were fresh in Col. Munro's memory, and probably he was afraid of a repetition of similar acts of disloyalty... Under such circumstances it was quite natural that he should regard the loyal devotion and attachment of the Syrian Community... as essential... to the peaceful security of the British power in Travancore"⁵⁹. So, the deduction, that Munro was motivated in his attempt to be friendly to the S.J.C. not by grace and sympathy alone, but by political considerations as well, appears to contain some elements of truth.

5.5. *'Request' of Col. Munro to the C.M.S. of England for deputing a Missionary to Kerala*

Col. Munro was not content with the functioning of the Seminary in the 'Malphanate' system, then commonly practised by the S.J.C. The gist of that system is furnished under. The aspirants to priesthood would resort to either a cathedral or to the house of a scholarly preceptor, designated 'Malpan' in Syriac, stay with him and learn the lessons of spiritual subjects by 'word of mouth' and effective participation in spiritual exercises as well as of liturgies. The element of personal interaction between the teacher and the taught is the dominant salient feature of this system. This is something similar to 'tutorial' method found in some Western Universities. 'Malphanate' system is distinct from the modern seminary model, where instruction is imparted in an impersonal manner through scholastic methods. Munro wanted the C.M.S. Missionaries to be brought from England and appointed on the

57. MUNRO, *Report dated 30th March 1818*, in : PHILIP, *The Indian Church of St. Thomas*, p. 180.

58. PULIURUMPIL, *A Period of Jurisdictional Conflict*, p. 180.

59. PHILIP, *The Indian Church of St. Thomas*, p. 180.

teaching staff of the Seminary. He naturally visualised that by this exercise the Seminary would generate a generation of Syrian priests, pampered with evangelical views of the 'Low Church' of C.of E. Put differently, Munro entertained the hope that the Seminary would become, sooner than later, the breeding ground or cradle of Protestantism. So, even while encouraging the Metran to start the Seminary, Munro, who was apparently of dictatorial disposition, was not prepared to grant a free hand to the Syrian prelate, decided that someone acquainted with the Western educational method and imbued with evangelical fervour ought be placed at the helm of the Seminary. This, he thought, would facilitate propagation of 'pure religion', which signified the 'Low Church' genre.

With these ideas in mind Munro made a 'request' to Rev. Marmaduke Thompson, who had become the secretary of the newly formed 'Corresponding Committee' of the C.M.S. at Madras. The 'request' was to depute a missionary to Kerala. Munro wrote, from Courtallum* on the 7th Aug. 1815. "I am more anxious than ever to attach a respectable clergyman of the C.of E. to the Syrians in Travancore and I should wish that Mr. Norton might be sent to me for that purpose, at the earliest convenient period of time..."⁶⁰ Munro's intention was "to guide the Metran, if not take control of the Seminary"⁶¹. When Marmaduke Thompson's letter of recommendation, containing the words "the mission to Travancore should not be delayed by one day unnecessarily"⁶² reached the C.M.S. at England, it directed him to take necessary steps. Accordingly the 'Madras Corresponding Committee' decided to direct to Travancore, the Rev. Thomas Norton who was on his move to Ceylon⁶³ and put him at the disposal of Munro. Thus, everything was set to ready for the opening of the 'Mission of Help' of the C.M.S. towards the Syrian Jacobite Church.

5. 6. Arrival of Rev. Thomas Norton, the first C.M.S. Missionary to Kerala

The 'Mission of Help' of the C.M.S. was inaugurated with the arrival of Rev. Thomas Norton, to Kerala. Born at Yorkshire, England, he started his career as a shoe-maker, like William Carey, the renowned and respectable B.M.S. Missionary of Bengal. Trained by Thomas Scott, one

60. MUNRO, 'Letter dated 7th Aug. 1815' in : M. R., Sept. 1816, p. 367.

61. HUNT, *The Anglican Church*, Vol. I, p. 10.

62. *T.C.D.R.*, Vol. II, No. 3, Sept. 1816, p. 367.

63. Cf. FIRTH, *The Indian Church History*, p. 168.

* Presentday Kuttalam

f the founders of the C.M.S., he was oriented towards the evangelical ideals of the 'Low Church'. Norton, the first C.M.S. Missionary, with his family, set foot at Cochin on the 8th May 1816.

Despite his role as an intermediary or liaison between the Metran and Munro the Resident, he did not directly get involved in the 'Mission of Help'. Of course, he was able to allay the apprehension of Mar Dionysius II, who "became alarmed"⁶⁴, at Munro's proposal to station Norton at the Seminary. Consequently, it was settled that Norton should live at Alleppey and occasionally visit the Kottayam Seminary. Permission was given to him by Mar Dionysius II for preaching in the Syrian Churches⁶⁵. The Travancore Government allotted a bungalow at Alleppey for the family of Norton. This bungalow was his house and headquarters until his death, twenty four years later.⁶⁶ While at Alleppey, Norton, with the help of a Syrian Priest, engaged in the translation of the Bible into Malayalam⁶⁷.

The texts and verses of the Bible that Norton and his followers translated were only those canonised as per the VIth Art. of the 39 Articles of the C.of E. Neither Norton nor any subsequent C.M.S. translator cared to render into Malayalam, some of the books and verses upheld by the Catholic and Syrian Canons of Bible. Therefore, the members of the S.J.C. did not get a chance to understand the biblical origins and bases of certain tenets of Her theology. Instead, many of Her members became imbued with Protestant ideas, which were propagated by the C.M.S. Missionaries, from inside and outside the Syrian Jacobite churches. The newly preached Protestant version of the 'immutable Word of God' could have caused much confusion in the minds of the simple minded Syrian Jacobites. This development was due to the indifference or sufferance of the Syrian prelates and the priests. Such a thing did not happen in the R.C.C., as some of the Carmelite Missionaries were vigilant over the intentions and activities of the C.M.S. The following letter of a Carmelite Father named Nicholas, is ample proof to this. "I wrote to all the churches either Syrian or Latin in the apostolic vicariate prohibiting the faithful to read those gospels printed by the English Missionaries"⁶⁸.

4. FIRTH, *The Indian Church History*, p. 169.

5. Cf. FIRTH, *The Indian Church History*, p. 169.

6. T.C.D.R., Vol. XIX, No. 6, Dec. 1909, p. 87.

7. T.C.D.R., Vol. XIX, No. 6, Dec. 1909, pp. 9-10.

8. PULIURUMPIL, *A Period of Jurisdictional Conflict*, p. 203.

5. 7. *Interference of Col. Munro in the affairs of the S.J.C. and the reaction of Mar Dionysius II*

In compliance with Munro's suggestion, Norton came down to Quilon, where the former was then staying. Mar Dionysius II was also asked to call on Munro. At Quilon, the Resident, the Metran and the Missionary held discussions regarding the relation between the S.J.C. and the C.M.S. "Apparently Munro had not revealed his plan before hand to the Metran"⁶⁹. Instead, "Col. Munro naively said that he meant to offer further assistance to the Metran and his community by stationing a European at the Seminary"⁷⁰. The 'European' obviously was Norton himself. At this suggestion of Munro, the Metran seemed to have discerned that the 'recognition' of the C.M.S. by the S.J.C. was not an unmixed boon; the schemes of Munro smacked of much scheming. In other words, Dionysius II might have had a shock on his original all-out dynamics of 'recognition'. Ostensibly, the Bishop began to sense that Munro's intentions were neither innocent nor innocuous. Probably therefore, Dionysius II objected to the posting of the Protestant Missionary at the Syrian Seminary. Dionysius expressed his reservation in the following words. "He is a member of a different creed... His faith and our faith are not one; if he were to live in the Seminary, it might lead to religious feud and the result might be deplorable"⁷¹. Prophetic utterance indeed, as evidenced from subsequent events.

Curiously however, Mar Dionysius acquiesced over Norton overseeing the affairs of the Seminary as and when the latter visited it on his tour from Alleppey. The reaction of Mar Dionysius II on Munro's interference in the affairs of the S.J.C. is evident from the former's comment on his return from the Quilon conference, referred earlier. "Since the days of Buchanan, the eyes of the Europeans are fixed upon our poor Church as those of a kite upon chickens; God knows the end; as long as I live, I will under God's guidance guard this poor Church. May God preserve it for ever"⁷². It remains a puzzle to researchers as to why did this far-sighted Dionysius II, while he was Ramban Ittoop, seek the support of Munro in getting removed Mar Thoma VII from the office of the Metropolitan of the S.J.C., and thereby provided a chance to Munro to drive in the thin edge of the wedge in to the corpus of the S.J.C.

69. FIRTH, *The Indian Church History*, p. 169.

70. PHILIP, *The Indian Church of St. Thomas*, p. 181.

71. PHILIP, *The Indian Church of St. Thomas*, p. 181.

72. PHILIP, *The Indian Church of St. Thomas*, p. 182.

Mar Dionysius II died on the 24th Nov. 1816 and was interned in the chapel attached to the Syrian Seminary, that he himself built. He was succeeded by Mar Dionysius III of Punnathura family of Kottayam. His ordination and accession to the office, like those of his predecessor, were dictated by Munro himself. It can therefore be safely commented that, what Munro commanded, the Syrian Church complied.

8. *Arrival of the 'First Generation' of C.M.S. Missionaries*

The 'dynamics of recognition' adopted by the S.J.C. and its response by the C.M.S. through the 'Mission of Help', became pronounced with the arrival of the 'first generation' of the C.M.S. Missionaries. This appellation of 'first generation' is applied to Revds. Benjamin Bailey, Joseph Fenn and Henry Baker, who were sometimes referred to as the 'Kottayam Trio'. It was while Mar Dionysius III was the Metropolitan of the S.J.C., that the C.M.S. Missionaries arrived in Kerala. Bailey was the first to arrive. It was in 1817. A couple of years later, came Fenn. Shortly afterwards, in April 1819, landed Baker.

As regards the modality of the Missionary work to be undertaken in Kerala, the C.M.S. of England was very specific and straightforward. This can be surmised from its instructions to these missionaries. Very precisely it stated that the Missionaries,

“were not sent to proselytize among the Syrians, but to teach pure scriptural doctrine and leave the leaven to do its works... They were not to make Syrians into Anglicans or assume authority over them... They were told that even if any of the Jacobites should wish to adopt the liturgy and discipline of the English Church, it would be well not to agree, lest this should lead to ill feelings.”⁷³

Even the most cynical critic will be at a loss to detect even a iota of malfeasance in this instruction. Thus, the avowed aim of the 'first generation' of Missionaries, was only “to reform without disintegrating the Syrian Church, to help it; in fact to reform itself from within; to alter as little as possible, so that the character and individuality of the Church might be preserved”.⁷⁴ Rev. Henry Baker is reported to have stated, “the business of the Society's Missionaries is not to pull down the ancient Syrian Church and to build another on some plan of their own,

3. FIRTH, *The Indian Church History*, p. 169.

4. RAE, *The Syrian Church*, p. 285.

out of the materials”⁷⁵ So far as these words go, they are free from malice, but replete with ‘Christian charity’ towards the co-religionists, the Syrian Jacobites.

But the issue before any researcher is to investigate as to why and how did matters take a direction and destination to the discomfiture and even to the division of the S.J.C. in subsequent days. The deduction obviously is that it resulted from a complex of causes. At the outset, it must be pointed out that the rider to the noble words in the instructions quoted above, contain the seeds of destruction. For, it runs “our (*Missionaries*) object is to remove the rubbish and repair the decayed places of the existing church”⁷⁶. What these ‘rubbish’ and ‘decayed places’ were could be decided or determined by the ‘newly anointed’ Missionaries themselves. “There were things in the Syrian Church of which they did not approve; and their own teaching was that of evangelically-minded Anglicans. At heart, they wish the Syrian Church to become more like the Church of England”⁷⁷. Secondly, it is well to remember that these Missionaries were in Kerala because of and under the tutelage of Col. Munro. All the plans were of this British Resident. It is to be reiterated at this juncture that the plans of Munro bestowed upon the S.J.C. unprecedented material progress and prosperity. They did advance in commerce and promoted to high echelons in the Travancore civil services. “In other respects, Munro’s policy was disastrous. His anti-Roman Catholic prejudices led him to favour those inclined to the ideas of English Missionaries. This split the Syrians, who until then inter-married (*with the Catholics*) and eventually lost the Syrians their social acceptability by Hindus”⁷⁸. Although the C.M.S. Missionaries had no canonical authority in the S.J.C., Munro, “encouraged them to assume a degree of authority far beyond the instructions from the C.M.S.”⁷⁹. “The zealous Colonel was prone to regard the Jacobites as a battalion under his command, with the missionaries as his junior officers”⁸⁰. Finally, it may be noted that the ‘Kottayam trio’ lacked the knowledge and sympathy about the theology and traditions of the Syrian Jacobite Church, which was totally different from those of theirs. “Unfortunately, such knowledge and sympathy were rare in the C.M.S. circles in the Church of England in the early nineteenth century which were strongly Protestant and anti-Catholic.

75. *Missionary Register*, Jan. 1829, p. 328.

76. *Missionary Register*, Jan. 1829, p. 328.

77. FIRTH, *The Indian Church History*, p. 170.

78. BROWN, *Christians of St. Thomas*, p. 138.

79. FIRTH, *The Indian Church History*, p. 170.

80. FIRTH, *The Indian Church History*, p. 170.

in their eyes, Eastern customs were the errors of the Greek Church, only a little pernicious than those of the Papists”⁸¹.

Considering all these, the tussles and troubles that took place at the subsequent times were quite natural, as the outcome of the difference in theology and ecclesiology between the so-called partners in the experiment styled ‘Mission of Help’. But on account of the fact that the theology and ecclesiology which the Syrian Jacobites had been maintaining due to the connection with the ancient Antiochaeon See and because that these features had penetrated deep down into the psyche of the S.J.C., all was not lost for the Jacobite Church.

8. 1. *Rev. Benjamin Bailey and his activities*

Rev. Benjamin Bailey was a wool stapler, from Yorkshire of England. Like Norton before him, Bailey was also trained by Thomas Scott. After his arrival in Kottayam, “he was attached to the Syrian Seminary, under the orders of Col. Munro, in order to superintend its affairs”⁸². It may look rather odd that Bailey the English man became the head of the seminary meant for the training of the Syrian clergy. The aims of the seminary were expressed by Munro in the following words. “In order to inculcate the motives of religion in the ministers of the Syrians; they ought evidently to understand its principles and believe its truths”⁸³. Bailey set-up his printing press at Kottayam⁸⁴. “He constructed at first, a wooden printing - press until a suitable one arrived from England”⁸⁵. His compilation of the English - Malayalam - English Dictionaries which is a monumental work has won the encomium of one and all of the Keralites, down the ages. He received instructions from Munro and acted as an intermediary between him and the S.J.C. Munro exercised, to use a modern terminology, ‘remote control’ over the S.J.C., apparently with the approval of the Metran. Munro wrote to Bailey. “In order to apply a remedy to the abuses and evils which exist at present, in the S.J.C., a strict and efficient system of discipline will be essentially requisite and the introduction of a system of that nature will primarily depend upon your zeal and diligence”⁸⁶.

1. FIRTH, *The Indian Church History*, p. 170.

2. *Missionary Register*, Jan. 1819, p. 34.

3. *Missionary Register*, Jan. 1819, p. 65.

4. Cf. *M.C.M.R.*, Vol. LIV, No. 11, Nov. 1887, p. 397.

5. HUNT, *The Anglican Church*, Vol. I, p. 121.

6. MUNRO, *Letter dated 6th Aug. 1817*, in : CHERIYAN, *The Malabar Christians*, p. 360.

5. 8. 2. *Rev. Joseph Fenn and his activities*

Rev. Joseph Fenn was a barrister with a lucrative practice, when he received the divine call for the occasion to be a missionary. On arrival at Kottayam in 1819, he and his wife stayed initially, in an apartment of the Syrian Seminary. They moved on subsequently to a quarters on the top of a hill, which today is known the C.M.S. College hill. In this context one cannot but notice a development, which, although is anomalous, has bearings on the ecclesiology of the Syrian Jacobite Church. The point is the following. Earlier, Mar Dionysius II had objected to the stationing of Norton in the Syrian Seminary. The Bishop's objection was based on ecclesiological reasons. But Mar Dionysius III, the immediate successor of Dionysius II, seems to have had no such qualms. How did this change come about is a matter to be pondered by the probing mind of any researcher. Perhaps, it was due to the bounty of the benefits of the 'dynamics of recognition' and its corollary the Mission of Help, which the S.J.C. had begun to enjoy. Or, it could be due to the irresistible influence of Munro. Early in 1819, Fenn became the head of the Syrian College. As directed by Munro, 'English' language also was introduced along with Malayalam, Sanskrit, Greek, Latin, Hebrew and Syriac, in the linguistic curriculum of the Seminary. It is highly commendable and unreservedly appreciable that the 'English' language which is the window to the world was flung open to the Syrians, who were revelling in the bewitching aura of the splendid golden isolation. But there are savants and scholars who attribute sinister motives to Munro's moves. Leslie Brown, an Anglican Bishop opines in this vein. According to him, it was to counter the increasing influence of the French in India, at that time, that Munro inaugurated the English education among the Syrians, as a tactic to enlist their support to the British Raj⁸⁷. On account of tutoring in various languages many of the Syrian Christian clergy could become polyglots. Insidiously, however, did Fenn introduce into the study structure of the Seminary, Watt's first and second catechisms, based on Protestantism, which endangered the theology of the Syrians. Surprisingly enough, neither the Syrian Bishop nor any of his clergymen objected to this move. Why did they keep quiet over this, is again a matter to be probed. The apparent answer is that they were not in a mood to displease the powers that were. About this time, Munro took Fenn on a tour over Travancore and Cochin. The experience of this journey enkindled in Fenn the spirit of reform, which was kept in restraint till

87. Cf. BROWN, *Christians of St. Thomas*, p. 169.

then, in deference to the original instruction of the Church of England. Penn gave vent to it through 'scripture classes', in the C.M.S. College, a practice carried on for many subsequent years.

8. 3. *Rev. Henry Baker and his activities*

The third of the first generation of the Missionaries was Henry Baker. The perusal of Buchanan's 'Christian Researches in Asia' prompted this well-to-do farmer of Essex of England, to offer himself to the C.M.S. As a result of division of labour effected among the 'trio', Baker was to supervise the seventy two non-Roman Syrian Christian churches and the schools attached to them, from Kunnamkulam in the north to Thiruvithamcotta, some miles south of Trivandrum⁸⁸. "He established numerous parochial schools"⁸⁹. He was made "in-charge of these schools intended for the people at large. Although Munro had retired by the time Baker began to be actively involved in the allotted work, he on his own accord uncompromisingly carried on Protestantising. He caught the young ones in his care in the College and coached them up, in the 'Low Church' ideals. Thus he also played his part in creating cracks in the corpus of the Syrian Jacobite Church. The authorities of the Syrian Jacobite Church seemed to suffer this without any demurring. It may be because of the following fact, the 'trio' were successful in creating the impression that they did not interfere in the S.J.C. In one of their reports of 1821, the Missionaries remarked. "The Metropolitan is the head not only of the Syrian Church, but of the Mission. Nothing takes place within the Mission without acquainting him of it nor is anything allowed to which he at all objects."⁹⁰

The S.J.C. and the people of Travancore as well, got much light from the academic accomplishments of these Missionaries. There cannot be any denial of the fact that the Syrian Jacobite Church reaped abundantly the benefits of the 'Mission of Help', especially in the material plane. The dynamics of 'Recognition' of the S.J.C. and its sequel the 'Mission of Help' did bring in not only cosmetic but even structural changes in the S.J.C. Specifically put, for all outward appearances, the so-called primitiveness of the S.J.C. was replaced by one of sophistication. This was the immediate and direct result of the educational endeavours of the evangelists from England. 'The prospects' envisioned by the architects of the new dynamics of 'Recognition' did materialise. But

8. DALTON, *The Baker Family in India*, p. 10.

9. AGUR, *Christian History*, Part III, p. 975.

10. HUNT, *The Anglican Church*, Vol. I, p. 68.

tares of heterodoxy cropped up from the seeds sown by the C.M.S. in the ecclesial body of the S.J.C. But an irrefutable fact is to be reckoned. The 'tares' or the weeds could not choke the growth of Orthodoxy from the seeds sown by the Apostolic traditions handed down to Her by the See of Antioch, Her prelates and the Apostles of the yore.

PARADIGM SHIFT IN THE 'MODUS OPERANDI' OF THE C.M.S.

The paradigm shift in the 'modus operandi' of the C.M.S. and its mentor Munro, during the second half of the second decade of the 19th century, signalled the imperative need of a change of dynamics in the Syrian Jacobite Church, from 'Recognition' to 'Rejection' of the Church Missionary Society and its doctrines. Some of the actions of the Missionaries were aimed at percolating Protestantism to the populace of the S.J.C. A few examples. Disobeying the advice of the C.M.S. of England, the mother organisation, its missionaries in Kerala, undertook the translation of the Protestant 'Book of Common Prayer' (B.C.P.), into Malayalam and the distribution of its copies to the various Syrian parishes. As for the S.J.C., there was sufficient reason for their opposition to this. Almost all of their liturgies concluded with a prayer of intercession to the Blessed Virgin or Saints or to both. Whereas B.C.P. ended, soliciting the mediation of Jesus. Naturally the Jacobites might have felt theological incompatibility in this. Another instance was the disregard of a counsel or caveat given by Bishop Middleton of Calcutta, the Anglican Metropolitan of India, not to preach in the Syrian churches, in a manner and style that would not be palatable, much less acceptable to the mind-set of the Syrians and cause dissension and discord among them. It appears that these missionaries forgot the moral that disobedience, of duly deliberated decisions of the directors, draws danger, if not destruction, to the very organisation itself. Added to this were the actions of Munro himself and the 'second generation' of the C.M.S., Missionaries. All these resulted in the change of dynamics of the Syrian Jacobite Church.

1. Attitude of Mar Dionysius III

George Punnathura, the Arch-deacon or Vicar - General of the S.J.C. was consecrated the Metropolitan of the Church, with the title Mar Dionysius III, in October 1817, by Mar Philexinos of Thoziyur, who had assumed the Metropolitanship of Malankara or Kerala, following the demise of Mar Dionysius II. The new bishop was Munro's choice or nominee. Munro's letter of August 6th 1817, to Benjamin Bailey is proof of his contention. "I am therefore induced to recommend this and request

that you will intimate the Metropolitan (Philexinos) my wish for the early consecration of Arch-deacon George”¹. There are differences of opinion among church historians and others regarding the orientation of Mar Dionysius III to the See of Antioch. At one place, in his magnum opus P. Cheriyan writes, “it is not possible to say that there ever ruled over the Malankara Church a Metropolitan who was as much attached to Antioch as he was”². The author cites an entry from Bailey’s journal that this prelate argued with him on the perpetual virginity of St. Mary and superiority of the unmarried state to the married state³. But, else where the same scholar qualifies Mar Dionysius as the ‘sincerest friend’⁴ of the C.M.S. He remarks further, “his sympathy with the missionaries and his hearty co-operation with them are well known”⁵. Mill, the Principal of the Bishop’s College, Calcutta, on his visit to Kottayam in 1821 expressed as follows. “From... Metropolitan Dionysius, I had the happiness of hearing very warm expressions of respect and attachment to the Church of England...”⁶. The opinion expressed by the honourable judges in the ‘Seminary Case’ exposes the stance of Mar Dionysius III, in very explicit words. “He got into the good graces of the authorities by lending his aid to the scheme of union proposed by Dr. Buchanan”⁷. He has been hailed pious, a man of prayer and devotion by many a Jacobite. His disposition however, appears to be ambivalent. So the following observation seems to be appropriate. “He was friendly to the Missionaries, but at the same time loyal to the Patriarch”⁸. A critical analysis of his attitudes shows that in the initial period of his regime, he was in favour of the C.M.S. May be, it was because he was actuated, as his predecessors were, by the prospects, his Church would gain by such a union. In one of his letters written in Syriac to the President of England he expressed relief over the emergence of his Church from the miserable plight and Her gains due to the work of the C.M.S. Missionaries. He eulogised the Missionaries “The priest Benjamin, the priest Joseph and the priest Henry, our spiritual and temporal friends, brothers and assistants, whom you have sent us, that they may root out the thorns and tares among the children of God, are anxiously seeking all the requisites for the redemption of

1. MUNRO, in CHERIYAN, *The Malabar Christians*, p. 108.

2. CHERIYAN, *The Malabar Christians*, p. 109.

3. Cf. CHERIYAN, *The Malabar Christians*, p. 109.

4. CHERIYAN, *The Malabar Christians*, p. 174.

5. CHERIYAN, *The Malabar Christians*, p. 272.

6. MILL, in CHERIYAN, *The Malabar Christians*, p. 153.

7. Cf. D.C.A., *Majority Judgement in the ‘Syrian Seminary’ Case*, paras. 135-137.

8. KEAY, *A History of the Syrian Church*, p. 70.

our souls, as well as constantly teaching all the deacons and children of our place, the English language”⁹.

Whether Mar Dionysius III courted the co-operation and camaraderie of the C.M.S., or whether it was the other way round, the undeniable fact is that the C.M.S. enjoyed unbridled and unrestrained freedom in the S.J.C. The attitude of Mar Dionysius III, enabled the C.M.S. to introduce several reforms among the Syrians in an unobtrusive manner. Unceremoniously, they removed the holy pictures and images found in the Jacobite churches, which for the Syrians were, “more than ornaments”¹⁰. “One of their ministers... in his own hands tore down a picture of St. George...”¹¹. “In short, they regarded themselves as lords and proprietors of the Syrians”¹². The Jacobites, traditionalists as they were, could not cope up with these ‘reform’ movements. They resented. Their resentment might have been ripple-like at that time. But the C.M.S. Missionaries were shrewd enough, not to disregard this. So, they called a meeting of the representatives of the S.J.C. Mar Dionysius III, the collaborator of the C.M.S. seemed to have a premonition of what was in store. He lamented on the liberty and the licence that he had allowed to the Missionaries. “When he was about to step into his boat on route, he said in confidence to his trustworthy friends then present. I am standing on the brink. Tomorrow I must either fall out from the *shibs* or betray my Church. They want to change our faith. I would rather lose my honour than be a traitor. Pray for me, that I may pass through this ordeal unscathed”¹³. Words of pathos, reminiscent of those of his predecessor, Mar Dionysius II, on his return from Quilon after discussing with Munro, the relation of the C.M.S and the S.J.C.

Subsequent events have proven that the actions of Mar Dionysius III did not gain benefits, tasted tragedy of high intentions, but self defeated. The meeting was held on the 3rd Oct. 1818, at the St. Mary’s Church, Mavelikara. Mar Dionysius III was on the chair, flanked on either side by Bailey and Baker. The proposals that affected the ecclesiastical practices of the Syrian Jacobites were the removal from the prayer of all mentions of the name of the Blessed Virgin and the many radical revisions of the liturgy. “On Sunday, the 29th Nov. 1818, Mr. Norton read the English

Missionary Register, Nov. 1822, pp. 431-432.

J. COLLINS, *Missionary Enterprize in the East*, p. 87.

J. FORTESCUE, *The Lesser Eastern Churches*, p. 104.

J. PHILIP, *The Indian Church of St. Thomas*, p. 185.

J. PHILIP, *The Indian Church of St. Thomas*, p. 186.

liturgy in the Syrian church, Mavelikara”¹⁴. It may be recalled that it was on this Norton that Mar Dionysius I, had reposed his hopes as one “sent by the Lord to be their deliverer and protector”¹⁵. Was this innovation of Norton, the model of deliverance conceived of by Dionysius the great, a Syrian Jacobite is likely to reflect and inquire. As for Mar Dionysius III, his faith in the Missionaries began to mitigate. Also, he was bitten by the bug of doubt about the validity of his own ordination, which was not even from a Syrian Jacobite but from Mar Philexinos, the Bishop of Thoziyur. So, secretly did he write to the Patriarch for immediate deputation of a bishop to guard against the Missionaries. He, however, wanted “to retain his honour and influence by a pretence of friendship with the European Missionaries”¹⁶. It may be deduced that this sage-like ecclesiast had the presage, even while he opened his heart to the Missionaries, that sooner than later, he would have to turn to the sources of his Church. This might explain the ambivalence, which became very pronounced in the last years of this prelate, who died in 1825.

6. 2. *Capturing of certain Roman Catholic churches by the S.J.C. with the support of the C.M.S.*

Col. Munro’s recommendations of reforms of the S.J.C. became more radical by about 1816. “The methods he employed were sometimes very rough and many suffered through them in person and in purse”¹⁷. Probably, it was because, he might have felt that the long years of attempted co-operation did not usher in the desired effects. Munro diagnosed and detected that it was due to the “presence of celibate clergy”¹⁸. So, “Munro cast about for a few priests and a few girls to do the needful. No girl coming forward, Munro offered a dowry of Rs. 250/-, a sum he eventually had to double, and then it did it. In the course of eight years, forty Jacobite priests succumbed to Munro’s blandishments and married”¹⁹. Munro’s offer of monetary bonuses to the priests who would relinquish celibacy and get married was not well taken by the generality of the clergy of the S.J.C. “Even in 1820, i.e. by the time Munro retired, only forty out of the total of

14. *Proceedings of the C.M.S.*, 1819-20, pp. 334-335.

15. COLLINS, *Missionary Enterprizes in the East*, pp. 98-99.

16. PHILIP, *The Indian Church of St. Thomas*, pp. 185-186.

17. HUNT, *The Anglican Church*, Vol. I, p. 6.

18. Cf. GILLE, ‘*Christianity at Home*’, p. 475.

19. GILLE, ‘*Christianity at Home*’, p. 475.

50 priests yielded to this apparent enticements”²⁰. The reason is not
r to seek. Even if contended that celibacy of clergy is not canonical,
had firmly become a convention among the S.J.C. This convention
had become a habitually observed ecclesial course of conduct and had
required not only the sufferance but also the sanction of the Ecclesia.
iolation of it would have entailed ecclesial unacceptance if not
t-communication. Munro tried to prevail upon Mar Dionysius to give
o celibacy. As an inducement he adopted the following tactics.

He caused the Missionaries to apply for permission to take
possession of some of the churches, then under Romo-Syrian control.

“The Valiyapally church at Kottayam and the church at
Piravam were till then under the joint possession of the Roman
and the Jacobite sects, while the churches at Changanacherry
and at Alleppey had been once chapels under the Syrian
parish church at Niranam. These grounds were made the
justification for the issue of a royal mandate to empower Mr.
Fenn to take possession of these four churches. He succeeded
in easily ousting the Roman party from the churches at
Kottayam and at Piravam, but it was not easy to oust them
from the other two, which had been in the sole possession
of the Roman party for several generations. However, Mr.
Fenn, assisted by Government officials and the Syrian
Christians, forcibly took possession of the Changanacherry
church and appointed a Syrian priest to officiate in it. On
the withdrawal of the missionary and the officials, however,
the Romo-Syrians met in a body and put the Syrian party to
flight. Thereupon, Mr. Fenn brought the military to drive out
the occupants and to retake the church for the Syrians. The
Romo-Syrian Vicar General, who arrived to help his flock,
was put in prison. Notwithstanding threats and punishments,
the Roman party, which included women and children, could
not be driven out. They were so determined, that nothing
short of death could make them move from the church.
Mr. Fenn had to retire in discomfiture. About this time,
Col. Munro was succeeded by Col. McDonnell, and, at his
instance, the order in regard to the churches at Changanacherry
and at Alleppey was revoked”²¹.

. Cf. AGUR, *Church History*, Part I, p. 114.

. PHILIP, *The Indian Church of St. Thomas*, pp. 184-185.

The motives of Munro and the Missionaries in this apparent highhandedness did not seem to have been well applauded by the enlightened section of the S.J.C. There was restlessness among the S.J.C. over the innovations and 'encroachments' attempted by Munro. This appears to be one of the causes for the change of the 'dynamics from Recognition to Rejection'.

6. 3. *Arrival of the 'Second Generation' of the C.M.S. Missionaries*

When the time was ebbing out for the departure to the Mother country, either on furlough or for good, the 'first generation' of the C.M.S. Missionaries began to take steps to facilitate the arrival of their successors. The first thing they therefore did, was to forestall a fresh lease of Antiochaeen influence over the S.J.C. They made capital of a particular incident that took place around this time in 1825. It is summarised under.

As per the request of the late Mar Dionysius III, Ignatius Geevarghese IV, the Patriarch of Antioch, deputed one of his Syrian Bishops Mar Athanasius to Kerala. He arrived in Kerala in December 1825. On scrutinising the 'stathicons' of the bishops of Kerala, he concluded that the consecration of Mar Dionysius IV, the then Syrian Jacobite Bishop was invalid, as his ordination was from Mar Philexinos of Thoziyur whose consecration was also not through any delegate of Antioch²². So Mar Athanasius asked Mar Dionysius IV to refrain from officiating pending permission by the Patriarch. For reasons which are too obvious, Mar Dionysius IV reported this to the Missionaries. They naturally supported Mar Dionysius IV, lest Antiochaeen influence would be enhanced in the S.J.C. It is reported that "Mar Athanasius tried to occupy the Seminary by force and the Missionaries resisted him with all their might"²³. Troubles were brewing. On the basis of the petitions of Mar Dionysius IV and Philexinos of Thoziyur, the Resident, "Col. Niw... took action in expelling"²⁴ the foreign bishop.

"Venkata Rao, the Diwan of Travancore issued immediate orders to deport Mar Athanasius and his Ramban and imprisoned all priests who adhered to them, the charge against the priest being that they were guilty of disobedience to the royal proclamations previously issued in favour of the native Metrans. The imprisoned priests were released only

22. Cf. HUNT, *The Anglican Church*, Vol. I, p. 81.

23. *Missionary Register*, Oct. 1826, p. 481.

24. Cf. PULIURUMPIL, *A period of Jurisdictional Conflict*, p. 202.

after ten months and on payment of heavy fees”²⁵.

The Anglican Bishop Heber, when he, “heard of this step he wrote the Resident in remonstrance saying that the sending off of Mar Athanasius across seas was on par with the conduct of Portuguese.”²⁶ There may be observers who opine that Mar Athanasius’ behaviour towards the native bishops was quite excessive and inordinate, lacking in Christian charity. But, in defence of Mar Athanasius, it can be adduced that he acted so, because he believed in the undilute and indefective flow of Apostolic succession. Very naturally, a section of the S.J.C. saw the machinations and the hands of the Missionaries in all these mishaps. This is the view expressed by Cardinal Tisserant, also.²⁷ Bailey however, refutes this accusation. He asserted that “the Travancore Government acted with entire independence of us.”²⁸ Be it so. But the ‘Athanasius’ episode caused to revive or reveal among the S.J.C. the attractiveness to the See of Antioch. The restiveness of the Jacobites began to mount up evidently since this incident in 1826. In the very same year, Fenn retired. Four years later, Bailey also left Kerala. Of course he returned after a few years. In 1831, there was an uproar against Rev. J. B. Morewood, the in-charge of the Syrian Seminary, as “he caned some of the deacons as if they had been missionaries’ sons. In protest, the deacons abstained from his classes.”²⁹ Baker went on furlough, in 1834. There was no missionary at Kottayam for some time. This interregnum was marked by many changes in the perspectives and policies of the S.J.C. and the C.M.S.

The S.J.C. turned out to be more Antiochaen oriented. Mar Ignatius, however, was not strong enough to lead the people in this direction. Loyalty of the members of the S.J.C. became divided between the See of Antioch and the C.of E. To put it shortly, embarrassment followed embarrassment and confusion became worst confounded. The cordiality that subsisted between the C.M.S. and S.J.C. had dwindled to almost the vanishing point and in its place mutual antipathy and suspicion reared up. This was soon to evolve into the dynamics of the ‘Rejection’ of the C.M.S., on the part of the S.J.C. It was in this notionally upset scenario that ‘the Second Generation’ of Missionaries ended in Kerala.

. PHILIP, *The Indian Church of St. Thomas*, p. 189.

. AIYA, *The Travancore State Manuel*, Vol. I, p. 215.

. Cf. TISSERANT, *Eastern Christianity in India*, p. 147.

. *Missionary Register*, Dec. 1827, p. 601.

. HUNT, *The Anglican Church*, Vol. I, p. 92.

6. 3. 1. Rev. Joseph Peet

When Rev. Joseph Peet arrived at Kottayam, by the middle of 1833, he was only 35 years of age. In the absence of any sober missionary to provide him counsels about the ethos of the Jacobites, he adopted a rough and rude attitude towards the S.J.C. With the impetuosity of a youth, he tactlessly began to implement his disconcerting policies which wrought the wrath of the Jacobites. "He had been a sailor and there was often a sort of sea salt flavour about his words and ways." Opposed to the Oxford Movement and its attempted revival of many Catholic practices in England, under the leadership of personalities like Newman, and which was gaining ground there, when he left for Travancore, this young evangelist was naturally shocked, when he found among the Syrians, the very same unevangelical ways, which the 'Low Church' detested. So, he indulged in criticising anything and everything that smacked of Syrian scent, be they ceremonies or celebrations. The Syrian Jacobites expressed their antipathy to the vituperative words of Peet, deprecating the Syrian Theology. They cried halt to the preachings of Peet. "Peet was able and energetic; but about as much in a place in a delicate situation as a bull in China shop."³¹ "He had not the prudence of a Bailey or the patience of a Baker. He himself tells us how on one occasion, when he appeared in a certain Syrian church the people fled from him as from a tiger."³² Several times, the parent committee of the C.M.S. had to admonish him for his lack of discretion and want of circumspection."³³ But, Peet seemed to have heeded not their reproofs. "Joseph Peet was ever a fighter."³⁴ Naturally a fight with Mar Dionysius IV ensued shortly on an ecclesiastical score. Peet obtained from the Metran a written undertaking that the latter would not ordain anybody without his permission. Mar Dinoysius IV who, "was a weak prelate"³⁵, consented of course with reluctance. The Metran, however, felt insulted. The Jacobites got offended over the arrogation of authority and the arrogance in the action of Peet. As if not satisfied even with this contemptuous action, Peet perpetrated an act, unwarranted by any parameter of ecclesiastical etiquette. Opinions differ regarding the date of occurrence. "E. M. Philip dates this incident in 1836. P. Cheriyan says

30. HUNT, *The Anglican Church*, Vol. I, p. 82.

31. GIBBS, *The Anglican Church in India*, p. 111.

32. HUNT, *The Anglican Church*, Vol. I, p. 168.

33. Cf. CHERIYAN, *The Malabar Christians*, p. 212.

34. HUNT, *The Anglican Church*, Vol. I, p. 172.

35. PHILIP, *The Indian Church of St. Thomas*, p. 191.

must have occurred in 1834.”³⁶ The incident happened as follows.

“While Mar Dionysius was engaged in solemn divine service in his Cathedral... away from the Seminary, Peet entered the Seminary with a blacksmith and forcibly opening the treasury (*besgasa room*), which till then was kept under the joint lock of the Metran and the Missionaries, carried away all the valuables, documents and records to his residence.”³⁷

These documents included the copper plates granted to the Syrians by the early kings of Kerala, Col. Macaulay’s acknowledgement for the loan of the ‘star pagodas’. It is pointed out that Peet was prompted to his course of action on the basis of a rumour, that Mar Dionysius IV was plotting to remove these items. But without caring to find out whether it was a fact or fancy of a few, Peet took law into his hand. As the documents thus removed were of great historical significance for the S.J.C., She became much concerned. The estrangement between the S.J.C. and the C.M.S. that had already begun to surface became all the more accentuated. The spark of the restiveness of the S.J.C. was fast falling down on the powder of Peet’s precipitateness. The inevitable conflagration was soon to consume the dynamics of ‘Recognition’. At this juncture, the following deduction does not seem out of place. If Peet was unfriendly towards the S.J.C., it was because of his inherent impulsiveness and compulsion of evangelical conviction. But, Peet should have realised that the Jacobites too had their propensities and proclivities, pampered by the passages of their ‘Bible’ and the preachings of past preceptors.

Although Peet was inhospitable as a whole to the S.J.C., it stands to his credit that he fought for his flock and dependents, as and when needed. For the sake of his “little ones he was ever ready to spring into the fray.”³⁸ Thus, this ‘foe’ of the Syrians proved to be a ‘friend’ to the slaves of the Island, named after one of the founding fathers of the C.M.S., in Kerala. Peet, together with Bailey in their capacity as trustees of the Munro Island, freed the slaves and their families thereon, from the thralldom of their masters, the landlords. At the same time these missionaries magnanimously enough did not acquit themselves of their responsibilities and duties to these downtrodden.

36. FIRTH, *The Indian Church History*. P. 171

37. PHILIP, *The Indian Church of St. Thomas*, p. 194.

38. HUNT, *The Anglican Church*, Vol. I, p. 171.

6. 3. 2. Rev. John Woodcock

Rev. John Woodcock, a young missionary of twenty-five years of age, “an ardent young spirit, fresh from Islington”³⁹, came to Kottayam to collaborate with Peet. His mind is revealed from what he wrote on the very same day of his arrival. “The minds of both priests and people are dreadfully dark. Scarcely a ray of spiritual light seems to have been burst upon the minds of any whom I have conversed. Oh! when shall the time to favour the poor Syrians arrive. It is most oppressive to the heart to see their utter ignorance of the real religion of Jesus.”⁴⁰ The S.J.C. cannot be blamed if She had sarcastically said about this cleric. ‘A second Daniel, or a Daniel come to judgement’. Woodcock fancied that the S.J.C. could be revolutionised at one blow. Speedy reform was what he dreamt of. He was argumentative by disposition. “Woodcock had a special fondness for indulging in doctrinal controversies.”⁴¹ “He arrived in Kottayam on the 30th of July, 1834, and began his controversies on the 1st of August.”⁴² He persuaded the Jacobites to discontinue the prayers for the departed. His writings on the Eucharistic celebrations of the S.J.C. “pained the Syrians very much”.⁴³ For, the edifice of the spiritual life of the Syrian Jacobites was founded on the Divine Eucharistic Liturgy, which, for them was not a memorial service but rather the sacramental and mystical celebration of the Heavenly Eucharist by Jesus Christ himself. The parent committee of the C.M.S. as it had done in the case of Peet, “warned Woodcock against the tendency to fall into the vortex of controversy.”⁴⁴ But the chidings of the committee, apparently were of no avail on the adamant attitude of Woodcock. He did not realise that the reformation of an ancient Church like the S.J.C. could not be effected with the alacrity of the Shakespearean character Othello but only by the tact of Fabius, the ancient Roman General. Therefore, Woodcock concluded that the appreciation of the C.M.S. predecessors towards the S.J.C. was responsible for the conservatism of the Jacobites. “Woodcock blamed Buchanan for self-deception where the Syrians and their Church were concerned and for misleading the C.M.S.”⁴⁵ Nothing short of a total denunciation of the doctrines and the rituals of the S.J.C. would be effective to bring in

39. HUNT, *The Anglican Church*, Vol. I, p. 93.

40. HUNT, *The Anglican Church*, Vol. I, p. 107.

41. KEAY, *A History of the Syrian Church*, p. 74.

42. HUNT, *The Anglican Church*, Vol. I, p. 211.

43. HUNT, *The Anglican Church*, Vol. I, p. 211.

44. HUNT, *The Anglican Church*, Vol. I, p. 211.

45. HUNT, *The Anglican Church*, Vol. I, p. 77.

the spirit of Evangelism in the S.J.C., concluded, this young energetic evangelist. Woodcock seemed to have disregarded the wisdom of the ages that humans always avoid extremes.

5. 4. *Imbuing of Protestantism into the S.J.C. by the C.M.S.*

The C.M.S. clerics vehemently denounced the rites and rituals of the S.J.C. as “soul destroying errors”⁴⁶. Very naturally they resorted to actions which only inflicted feelings of resentment. Naturally, it resulted in the reprobation of the S.J.C., as they felt that these moves undermined the very fabric of their Church. The ‘remedies’ recommended by the C.M.S. only aggravated the maladies, which had begun to affect the cordiality between the S.J.C. and the C.M.S.

In their sermons and preachings the missionaries openly abused the tenets of the S.J.C. Further, they indulged in irritating actions. “They also arranged the boarding system in the Seminary that during fast days when the use of meat is forbidden, animal food alone was served to the students, much to the annoyance of Mar Dionysius IV”⁴⁷. Besides, Peet set out to demolish everything, which, in his opinion contravened the teachings of the ‘Low Church’. What he considered most unacceptable was the *dulia* to the saints and *hyperdulia* to the Blessed Virgin. The following incident which took place in the Syrian Seminary is narrated by Rao Bahadur Rev. John Kurian, “himself a Syro-Anglican, attached to the C.M.S.... and who got this information direct from his grandfather, who at the time of the occurrence, was one of the students of the Seminary and subsequently an ordained pastor of the C.M.S.”⁴⁸ Peet, in a lecture at the Seminary tried to disprove the perpetual virginity of St. Mary. The audience consisting of deacons and other seminarians got offended. They sought clarification from their Malpan, “Abraham of Mammalassery (Konattu)”⁴⁹. While the Malpan was refuting what Peet had taught, “the missionary suddenly returned to the lecture hall and overhearing the criticism, dismissed the Malpan then and there. The Malpan had to return home that very night, forfeiting his professorship in the Seminary.”⁵⁰ No ‘no’ came forth from the Metran, probably for fear of the foreign overlords. The S.J.C. apparently had to pay the penalty for having accepted material ‘help’ from the earlier

46. HOWARD, *The Christians of St. Thomas and Their Liturgies*, p. 56.

47. PHILIP, *The Indian Church of St. Thomas*, p. 191.

48. PHILIP, *The Indian Church of St. Thomas*, p. 234.

49. HUNT, *The Anglican Church*, Vol. I, p. 82.

50. PHILIP, *The Indian Church of St. Thomas*, p. 234.

missionaries, for considerations, which do not at all appear to be the appreciable. This incident provides a chance to make the observation that this was retribution for the past disregard for 'the sacred' faith for things transitory. The rashness of Peet in the crash opening of the treasury of the Seminary is indirectly referred to by a missionary professor of the C.M.S. College, as well.⁵¹ His speeches at Changanacherry and Manarcad equally annoyed the Catholics and the Jacobites. At Changanacherry he preached against the intercession of St. Mary. "She is a creature and was as much indebted for Her salvation to Christ, as the penitent thief on the Cross and therefore to pray to Her or trust in Her intercession is sinful." Peet nearly caused a riot at Manarcad at the feast in honour of the Blessed Virgin, "by his violent sermon against the superstition of intercession."⁵³ It is learnt that, but for his white skin, he would have been a prey to violence. "Still he did not stop his fulmination."⁵⁴ John Woodcock, in his own way reinforced the aggressive Protestantism of Peet.

The observation of two savants on the C.M.S. Missionaries in general, would enable the researcher to evaluate the failures of the 'second generation' very correctly. "The C.M.S. Missionaries were zealous men; but they were of the extreme 'Low Church' or Evangelical school of doctrine and were disposed to disapprove of things in the Syrian Church... from the first they regarded this Syrian Church as a primitive Church, corrupted by contact with Romanism and they wished to remove all rituals and doctrines which could not be brought to the rule of Scripture."⁵⁵ The second scholar seems to be more explicit and more expressive. "The C.M.S. Missionaries were, even for that Society very 'Low Church' indeed... They never ceased pouring scorn on the Malabar Holy Liturgy, which they would call a Mass apparently as a term of abuse."⁵⁶

The activities of Peet and Woodcock only accelerated the deterioration in the relation between the S.J.C. and C.M.S. Provoked by the efforts of the young missionaries to imbue Protestantism in the Church, Mar Dionysius IV, turned against them. The stage was being set for the rejection of the C.M.S.

51. COLLINS, *Missionary Enterprises*, p. 114.

52. *M.C.M.R.*, Vol. III, No. 3, March 1836, p. 36.

53. FIRTH, *Indian Church History*, p. 171.

54. BROWN, *Christians of St. Thomas*, p. 138.

55. MACKENZIE, *Christianity in Travancore*, in HUNT, *The Anglican Church*, Vol. I, p. 10.

56. FORTESCUE, *The Lesser Eastern Church*, in HUNT, *The Anglican Church*, Vol. I, p. 10.

5. Bishop Daniel Wilson's proposals to the S.J.C.

Rev. John Tucker, the Secretary of the Madras Corresponding Committee of the C.M.S., who visited Kerala to take stock of the strained relation between the S.J.C. and the Missionaries went back with the impression that the mounting tension between these two was going to end up in a theological crisis. It was to salvage this situation and also to redress the "complaints received from Mar Dionysius"⁵⁷, in the excess of the 'second generation' of Missionaries, that Daniel Wilson, Bishop of Calcutta came down to Kottayam, by the middle of November 1835. An ardent Evangelical Anglican in convictions, he sought a thorough reformation of the S.J.C. by innovative suggestions made at a conference held on the 21st Nov. 1835.⁵⁸ Mainly, there were six suggestions. They were, that only men who had received certificates from the missionaries of the Seminary training should be ordained as priest; that the accounts of the Church properties should be audited by the Resident or his nominee; that an endowment fund should be raised to avoid dependence of the priests on the fees charged in connection with weddings and funerals⁵⁹; that schools should be established in all places; that the priest should expound Gospels to the people.⁶⁰ What the historian Perumthottam, the present Auxiliary Bishop of the Catholic Diocese of Changanacherry, wrote about the mistake of the Latin Missionaries is applicable regarding the C.M.S. also. So it may be cited. "The Missionaries considered the Church of the Mar Thoma Christians just like a mission field and approached it like any other mission."⁶¹ The most drastic was the proposal that a liturgy should be selected from the many in use in the S.J.C. and the same should be translated into Malayalam with alterations and abridgment.

It looks rather strange that Wilson who was to investigate the situation of degenerating relation between the S.J.C. and the C.M.S. made no mention at all about the moves of the Missionaries, his co-religionists. In these proposals, the Jacobites, however, detected designs to tarnish, if not to undermine the theological and ecclesiastical foundation and façade of their Church. The offer of Wilson of a sum of Rs. 1,000/- to facilitate implementation of the scheme was construed by

7. CHERIYAN, *The Malabar Christians*, p. 214.

8. Cf. AGUR, *Church History*, Part I, p. 120.

9. Cf. FIRTH, *Indian Church History*, p. 172.

10. Cf. AGUR, *Church History*, Part I, p. 121.

11. PERUMTHOTTAM, *Period of Decline*, p. 343.

the Syrians as 'a bribe'⁶². Wilson made sermons in some of the Jacobite Churches stressing the need of reforming the theology of the S.J.C. He emphasised on the imperative need of the discontinuance of prayers and oblations for the departed faithful and a revision of the ancient Liturgy, removing all those passages appeared objectionable from the standpoint of Protestants. "Wilson was careful to arrange with Bailey (who had returned by this time) to translate the sermon and circulate it among the 250 clergy and 1,00,000 laity of the Syrian Church and with the British Resident to see the Metran and put things in train to meet his wishes."⁶³

Added to these, there were the reported words of Wilson which incited or even inflamed the Syrians. Wilson wrote that under the then Metran everything had been going back. He ordained boys for money. He purloined Church property and encouraged superstition. One may solicit the authority of Wilson to make such observations. Ostensibly, however, the Jacobites acquiesced over these derogatory words and inordinate innuendos of Wilson.

6. 6. Refusal of Wilson's proposals by Mar Dionysius IV

Hoping that the S.J.C. would implement his instructions sooner than later, Wilson left for Calcutta. But, "he must have been extraordinarily insensitive not to realise what sort of an impression his proposals would be likely to make on a community, already resenting the interference of the Missionaries and anxious only to maintain its identity and independence."⁶⁴ Mar Dionysius IV, however, did not take any action in haste. The obvious reason appears to be his growing suspicion about the genuineness and the bonafide of the schemes of the C.M.S. Again, Mar Dionysius IV, who had doubts about the validity of his own ordination, had begun to solicit the See of Antioch, for rectification. So, he naturally must have realised that if Wilson's proposals were given effect to, it would provide greater grip to the Missionaries, jeopardising the Antiochaeans help. Therefore, "the Metran made a non-committal reply."⁶⁵ As for the Jacobite community, familiarity with the missionaries seemed to have bred contempt of the C.M.S. "They reflected all too clearly, the conviction of the English evangelical churchmen that they knew best what was good for the Syrian Church and their desire to

62. CHERIYAN, *The Malabar Christians*, p. 234.

63. PHILIP, *The Indian Church of St. Thomas*, p. 192.

64. FIRTH, *Indian Church History*, p. 172.

65. FIRTH, *Indian Church History*, p. 172.

impose their will on it.”⁶⁶ Wilson’s proposals of obtaining certificate for those desirous of ordination, the S.J.C. suspected, would enable the missionaries to make any candidate, ‘persona non grata’, on grounds of orthodoxy or non-compliance to Protestantism. The suggestion that the church account should be audited by the Resident, the S.J.C. judged, would ultimately give the missionaries the power to poke their nose into the financial governance of the Church. The abridgment of the liturgy, as suggested by Wilson, involved a theological issue. It would facilitate the distortion of the litanies of the intercession of the saints and supplications for the souls departed. If it were done, the S.J.C., rightly apprehended, it would destroy the design, the warp and the woof of Her theology. To sum up, Wilson’s suggestions, surmised Mar Dionysius, were “conditions imposing a bondage to which no Christian Bishop ought to submit.”⁶⁷ There is no need for amazement if the S.J.C. began to entertain their conviction that their one-time ally had made their Church an alloy, by mixing Protestant principles to Orthodox elements. They became concerned about the ways and means to purge Her. Steps must be taken immediately, they concluded. And the initial one must be the adoption of the ‘dynamics of Rejection’ of the C.M.S.

7. ‘Mavelikkara Synod’

Within less than six weeks after Bishop Wilson had left Kerala, Mar Dionysius IV at the instance of the Resident convened a Synod of the representatives of the laity and the clergy of the S.J.C. The ‘Synod or Council’ was held on the 16th Jan. 1836, at the St. Mary’s Church, Mavelikkara. Besides Mar Kurilose III of Thoziyur, who had succeeded Mar Philexinos, over fifty priests and a good number of laity of the Jacobite Church attended the meeting. Although, “one of the missionaries also went to influence the members by his presence”⁶⁸, it appears that, it was held without the knowledge of the Missionaries in general. The document which was drawn by the Synod is known the ‘Mavelikkara Adyola’⁶⁹. In this document, it was affirmed unequivocally and unambiguously that the S.J.C. unreservedly acknowledged the supremacy of the ‘Petrine See of Antioch’. It referred to the Patriarch of Antioch, Mar Ignatius as “Father of Fathers and the chief of the chiefs, ruling

66. FIRTH, *Indian Church History*, p. 172.

67. MACKENZIE, *Christianity in Travancore*, p. 90.

68. PHILIP, *The Indian Church of St. Thomas*, p. 194.

69. APPENDIX No. II.

on the throne of St. Peter at Antioch, the mother of all Churches”⁷⁰ and Mar Dionysius IV as the Metropolitan “subject to the supremacy of Mar Ignatius”⁷¹.

On the analysis of the Padyola, the following points can be noticed. The signatories stated that, they would never give up their religious practices. The representatives refused to follow foreign rituals and the teachings of the “Missionaries who were people of another sect.”⁷² Briefly, the S.J.C. summarily rejected all the recommendations of Bishop Wilson and their ramifications.

Thus, this historic document can be deemed as a sequel of what was acknowledged by Mar Dionysius III, in a letter written by him during the closing years of his life, to Lord Gambier, the President of the C.M.S. In this letter, Mar Dionysius III had stated that “he was the Metropolitan of the Syro-Malankara Jacobites under Mar Ignatius, the Patriarch of Antioch.”⁷³ It may be recalled, that this letter was written when Mar Dionysius III began to feel frustration over the actions of the C.M.S. Likewise, a researcher may find in the Padyola, a point having historical significance. It is that the desire of Marthoma VIII and Marthoma IX to maintain juridical dependence on the throne of Antioch was fulfilled by the Synod.

As the Missionaries did not know, what had happened in the Synod, they held a Missionary conference on the 19th Jan. 1836, to send out waves of counter moves. This conference chalked out the ways to ascertain the details of the Synod. “It was resolved that each member make every inquiry in his power to obtain further information on the subject.”⁷⁴ Somehow, they obtained the necessary information from the Jacobite priest, Eruthical Markose. On his version of the events, the Missionaries passed the resolution that the S.J.C. by Her unilateral decision dissolved relation with the C.M.S.⁷⁵ But, this contention of theirs seems to be incorrect. For, even Palakkunnathu Abraham Malpan, who was a collaborator with the C.M.S. had conceded that the Synod was a valid one, despite certain irregularities in procedure. The Missionaries, managed to obtain a copy of the ‘Padyola’ on the 12th Feb. 1836, through

70. APPENDIX No. II, para. 1.

71. APPENDIX No. II, para. 1.

72. HUNT, *The Anglican Church*, Vol. I, p. 13.

73. PULIURUMPIL, *A Period of Jurisdictional Conflict*, p. 199.

74. CHERIYAN, *The Malabar Christians*, p. 249.

75. Cf. HUNT, *The Anglican Church*, Vol. I, pp. 12-13.

Abraham Malpan of Palakkunnam.

5.8. *The Third 'R'. The Dynamics of 'Rejection' by the S.J.C. of the C.M.S.*

The undertone of the 'Mavelikkara Padyola' was 'the dynamics of Rejection' by the S.J.C. of the C.M.S. Missionaries and their doctrines. This happened in the third phase of the relation of the S.J.C. and the C.M.S. This is referred to by the notation, 'the Third R'.

The fundamental cause for this change was that the S.J.C. became more intensely Jacobite and Orthodox in orientation, while the C.M.S. turned out to be exclusively evangelical and aggressively Protestant in perspective. The verdict of the 'Synod', which of course was not unanimous, but general, or by consensus, was for the 'Rejection' of the recommendations of Wilson for reforms. "The Synod met at Mavelikkara in Jan. 1836 rejected them all."⁷⁶ "One priest who ventured at the Synod to support the suggestions made by Bishop Wilson was excluded."⁷⁷ Similarly, one representative from Kunnampulam, by name Kuriathu raised his voice against the 'rejection'. But, "he too was expelled from the Council."⁷⁸ The Synod 'rejected' the introduction of the 'reformed liturgy', attempted to be introduced by the C.M.S. Also, it outrightly 'rejected' all Protestant teachings.

"Some of the deacons who were under instruction, conducted affairs in opposition to our discipline and created schism against us, all of which have occasioned much sorrow and vexation"⁷⁹. This was certainly proclamation of orthodoxy by the Syrian Jacobite Church.

This outburst was apparently the resurgence, reiteration and reassertion of the 'pure religion' of the Jacobites, that was cherished by their Church, in spite of the bewitching material prospects that had enticed and deviated and even distorted Her. This lapse, it may be recalled, was certainly by the pragmatic considerations of some of Her past prelates to compromise the pristine purity of faith for the sake of material prosperity, promised by the Protestants.

The next 'rejection' was the clause making Seminary training obligatory. Mar Dionysius IV sent out a circular to all the parishes forbidding Syrian deacons, "from studying in the Seminary and

76. FIRTH, *The Indian Church History*, p. 172.

77. KEAY, *A History of Syrian Church in India*, p. 76.

78. CHERIYAN, *The Malabar Christians*, p. 221.

79. APPENDIX II, para. 3.

notifying them that those who disregarded this order would not be raised to priesthood.”⁸⁰ Two reasons can be identified for the action of Dionysius. Firstly, the disregard of the C.M.S. towards the S.J.C. and the Metran himself, in the running of the College, which was described by Rev. Fenn, one of the ex-Principals of the very same institution, “as a College of the Syrian Church and not of the Mission.”⁸¹

Yet another ‘rejection’ was through the cancellation of the licence granted to the C.M.S. Missionaries to preach in the Syrian Jacobite Churches. The fora for preaching thus forfeited, the foreigners were forced to seek new fields for footings and preaching. This prompted them to wind up the ‘mission of help’ to the S.J.C. and inaugurate the ‘open mission’ among the gentiles. “A transition period of nearly two years and a half had to be gone through before this decision was finally reached.”⁸²

The Ecclesia which was founded on earth by Lord Jesus as part of His salvation economy, was to be tended by the Apostles and their successive tribes, the bishops. In complying with this command of Christ, these custodians of the Church and the shepherds of the sheep have to lead the flock of the faithful to still waters and green pastures. They naturally have to salvage them from thorns and tares, which the sheep may bite and bleed for lack of judicious discretion. To change the imagery, it is the bounden duty of the ministers of the Ecclesia to redeem Her from the pitfalls of perfidious and preposterous preaching of the heterodoxy, by resorting to the dynamics of ‘rejection’. Belatedly although, this was what was accomplished by the S.J.C. in cutting asunder the cord of the much tomtomed ‘mission of help’, that bound the S.J.C. and the C.M.S. for over a decade. Of course, the S.J.C. had to suffer the pangs of losing many of Her sheep. Some observers may comment that, this was quite tragic. But, it is well to remember that tragedy is an attendant factor of transition. So, the S.J.C. may satisfy herself by the contention that what She lost quantitatively, by the departure of the non-conformists from Her hold, She gained qualitatively.

80. CHERIYAN, *The Malabar Christians*, p. 242.

81. COLLINS, *Missionary Enterprizes in the East*, p. 112.

82. CHERIYAN, *The Malabar Christians*, p. 251.

BACK TO ANTIOCHAEAN SOURCES

Rejection of the C.M.S. that the S.J.C. achieved with adamant strength of conviction soon forced Her to issue forth the clarion call of the 'Dynamics of Resilience'. Back to Antiochaeal sources, She realised, was the antidote to the Protestant malady that had begun to eat up the entrails of the Ecclesia. For an analyst, this stance of the S.J.C. appears to be quite natural. The S.J.C. snapped the 'union' with the C.M.S. for courting communion with the Antiochaeal Church, Her source and succour over the times past.

7.1. *The Fourth 'R'. The 'Resilience' of the S.J.C.*

The 'Dynamics of Resilience', which was logically the sequel of the suggestions of the 'Synod of Mavelikkara', is being presented here by the description, the fourth 'R'. The message of the 'Dynamics of Resilience' was, what was conveyed by the resolution of the Synod. It was couched in the following words. "We being Jacobite Syrians, subject to the Patriarch of Antioch and observing as we do, the liturgies and ordinances by the prelates sent under his (*Patriarch's*) command, cannot deviate from such liturgies and ordinances and maintain a discreet contrary thereto"¹. It became crystal clear that the Jacobite Church would not tolerate any theology or ecclesiology or ecclesial or ecclesiastical set up, which would contravene the Antiochaeal model. The reason was obvious. These features had become inseparably intertwined in Her very being by the bond of spiritual strands that transcended times and climes. "Everything that happened at the Synod, indicated that the entire body of the Syrians were decidedly opposed to the introduction of any reform which did not obtain the previous approval of the Jacobite Patriarch of Antioch"². The action of even Abraham Malpan of Palakkunnam, the chief advocate of reforms in the S.J.C. would tempt one to deduce that Jacobitism in him reared up at challenging times. Hardly had he any intention of disavowing the Patriarch of Antioch. The 'Dynamics of Resilience' is discernable in his moves. Unhesitatingly did he take steps to ensure apostolic succession from Antioch. This alone would explain as to why did he cause his nephew Dn. Mathews to brave the hazards of long journey and to present

1. APPENDIX II, para. 2.

2. CHERIYAN, *The Malabar Christians*, p. 282.

himself before the Patriarch for episcopal ordination³. Anglican Bishops and their legion, stationed in India seemed to have assumed silence over this act of the Malpan. Was this sufferance of the C.M.S., due to its diplomacy not to disturb the otherwise favourable disposition of the Malpan or was it owing to the feeling of utter helplessness, is a matter that can be debated. Spell bound, as She were by the spiritual catharsis experienced from Her liturgy, which is qualified as “one of the most beautiful in Christendom”⁴, the S.J.C. naturally resolved the ‘Dynamics of Resilience’ to protect Her liturgical legacy and the roots of the allied theology, based on Antiochaeism. This, She boldly performed, by rejecting unceremoniously the C.M.S., and its ideologies enshrined in the ‘Book of Common Prayer’.

7. 2. Proclamation of ‘Orthodoxy’ by the S.J.C.

From the theological point of view, the uniqueness of the Mavelikkara Synod of 1836 was the proclamation of Orthodoxy in terse terms. A few years before this incident, it appeared that this antiquarian Church was falling an easy prey to the pleas, pleadings and persuasion by the presumptive promises of the Protestant Missionaries. Some of the high ecclesiasts of the S.J.C. had become overtly reform oriented in deference to the desire of the C.M.S.

All this may be recapitulated in this context. On the basis of permission received or licence obtained, the C.M.S. Missionaries “continued preaching in Syrian churches even when they knew their words were not welcome.”⁵ They read the ‘B.C.P.’ freely and fearlessly in the Syrian parishes. With no qualms, the C.M.S. Missionaries encouraged the Syrian clergy to waive the vow of celibacy and get involved in wedlock. “Young, arrogant and Protestant”⁶ Missionaries of the thirties of the 19th century “went out of their way to cause offence”⁷ to the Jacobites. These moves towards Protestantism, nevertheless, did not bring the desired dividends for the C.M.S. In spite of temptations, trials and tribulations, the S.J.C. was successful in maintaining Her Orthodoxy. An analyst would detect mainly two factors which acted as brakes on the plans, planks, programmes and policies of the Protestant personnel. The foremost is the formal appeal by Mar Dionysius IV, to the Patriarch of Antioch soliciting intervention. The Metran judged that

3. Cf. CHERIYAN, *The Malabar Christians*, p. 292.

4. FORESTCUE, *The Lesser Eastern Churches*, p. 350.

5. FIRTH, *The Indian Church History*, p. 171.

6. FIRTH, *The Indian Church History*, p. 171.

7. FIRTH, *The Indian Church History*, p. 171.

one could take umbrage under the Patriarch's action for non-complying with the proposals and propositions of the Protestants. The other reason appears to be more decisive. It was the determination of the laity to put up stiff resistance to the reforms of the Missionaries. "The great majority of the local Syrians were not willing either to accept reforms or to disown the Patriarch."⁸ The laity, "the sleeping or the domesticated giant"⁹, got up to oust Protestants, root, stock and barrel from the S.J.C. So were the vast majority of the priests inimical to the innovations of the C.M.S., for reasons galore. In this background, a researcher may go a step further. By probing, such a student may affirm that the spirit of 'Palliyogams' or the 'Church Assembly', which, unlike in the then Syro-Malabar Church, had not yet been extinguished among the Jacobites was the one that saved the S.J.C. from Protestantism that was hovering over Her head like a spectre.

A peep into the past ecclesiology of the S.J.C. is necessary to assess the part of the 'Palliyogams' in charting the course of the S.J.C. in Kerala. Historically, 'Palliyogam' is a heritage of the pre-Portuguese period. On the authority of the Acts 6:2-5, the remark has been made "that it takes its origin from the apostolic tradition"¹⁰. 'Palliyogams' made the Church "very close to the 'ekklesia' of the Apostolic times"¹¹. This is the theological basis of the 'Palliyogams'. The salient features of this system were "collegiality and co-responsibility... All important matters, not merely the temporalities, relating to the Church were discussed at the 'Palliyogams' of the priests and the people and decisions were taken collectively"¹². Collaboration of the priests and the people has been the mechanism of the device christened, 'Palliyogam'. Figuratively put, like two birds bearing the same signs on their heads, having plumage of identical hues, but perched on two different branches of the self-same ecclesial tree are the clergy and the laity. This would epitomise the ecclesiological significance of the 'Palliyogams' in the set up of the S.J.C.

Even the R.C.C. seems to have begun to appreciate the role accorded to the laity in the affairs of the Church, as was granted in the ancient Syrian system of 'Palliyogams'. The comment of Cardinal Newman, the father of 'laicology' would substantiate this contention. It occasioned in the following manner. When John Henry Cardinal Newman, published

8. CHERIYAN, *The Malabar Christians*, p. 296.

9. SEBASTIAN, *The Era of the Lay People*, p. 98.

10. SEBASTIAN, *The Era of the Lay People*, p. 102.

11. SEBASTIAN, *The Era of the Lay People*, p. 134.

12. SEBASTIAN, *The Era of the Lay People*, p. 102.

his essay 'On Consulting Laity on Matters of Doctrine', it annoyed many, including his own Diocesan Bishop. This ecclesiast inquired of the Cardinal, tauntingly. 'Who, dear Dr. Newman, are the laity?' Readily retorted Newman, with the gift of his gab and the Englishman's gift of wit. "Your Lordship, the Church would look pretty silly without them"¹³ This reply, it is to be assumed, might have silenced the inquisitive hierarchy.

The federation of the 'Palliyogams', on a diocesan level constituted the 'Palliprathipurushayogam' or the 'Assembly of the Representatives' of a region. Higher up was the plenary assembly called, in Malayalam the 'Malankara Sabha Yogam', or the 'Malankara Church Conference', of the representatives of all the parishes¹⁴. Technically the Mavelikkara Synod was a plenary session of the S.J.C. It was in that session, the S.J.C. decreed against Protestantism. Therefore, nothing unecclesiastical can be unearthed, as was attempted by the Missionaries. Nor can the proclamation of Orthodoxy by the S.J.C. be deemed an unwarranted action. It may also be noted that this step was taken by the S.J.C., braving the displeasure, if not the wrath of the powers that were. The Syrian Jacobites, assembled in the legally constituted plenary council of the Church, declared without an iota of doubt that "we would not follow any faith or teaching other than the Orthodox faith and teaching of the Jacobite Syrian Christians, to the end, that we may thereby obtain salvation through the prayer of the ever happy, holy and ever blessed Mother of God and redresser of complaints and through the prayers of all saints"¹⁵. This declaration, might have in all probability created a shudder in the minds of the Protestant Missionaries, it signalled that the S.J.C. has come of age.

7. 3. Back to Antiochaeae Sources

The declaration of Orthodoxy by the S.J.C., soon developed into 'Orthopraxis'. This was accomplished by adopting the 'Dynamics of Resilience' and its corollary, the return to the Antiochaeae relation and resources. It was the reconciliatory stance of Mar Dionysius IV, the stern attitude of the clergy and the stiff stand of the laity that paved the way for the S.J.C. to become Her former self.

It is to be deemed a misfortune that many incidents had happened either on the initiative or at the inducement of Mar Dionysius IV, all of

13. Cf., WARD, *Life of John Henry Newman*, Vol. I., p. 497.

14. Cf., SEBASTIAN, *The Era of the Lay People*, pp. 102-104.

15. APPENDIX II, para. 3.

which were niggardly. They all belittled the honour, dignity and status of the See of Antioch, vis-a-vis the S.J.C. His initial and inordinate intimacy to the Protestant Missionaries, his permission to the C.M.S. Pastors to preach in the parishes of the Jacobites, his actions in receiving sans the sanction of Antioch, the episcopacy from the uncanonical prelate of Thoziyur and his converse action of ordaining a bishop for the Thoziyur Diocese, are enumerated as examples. So also, is the prevailing view that he too was a privy in deporting Mar Athanasius, the deputy of the Patriarch of Antioch. Many cast doubts at his attitude to Antioch on this score. But, in defence, it may be adduced, "he was pious and tenacious of the doctrines and rituals of his Church, but not strong in mind; simplicity characterised all his dealings..."¹⁶. As an ecclesiastic he ought to have followed the counsel of Lord Jesus to combine the intelligence of the serpent with the innocence of the dove, right from the beginning of his reign. This, he did not. Enfeeblement of the ecclesia ensued.

It appears, however, that certain of the landmark of the ecclesial history of the Jacobites, began to gain sway over his mental frame, in the efflux of time. He seems to have realised that at all times, when his Church was widowed for want of duly ordained bishops, it was the See of Antioch, that had extended the helping hand in restituting apostolic succession, the possession of which, summarises the struggles in the annals of his Church. Also, the complex over his own defective episcopacy might have been chasing him. There was also, the challenge posed by the reform party. Probably, for all these, the profile of Mar Dionysius changed. He veered around. He became pro-Antiochaeon. He decided to adopt the 'Dynamics of Resilience' and lead the Church back to Her sources, the Antiochaeon ethos. The fallout of the 'Athanasius' episode which happened a few years earlier, seems to have provided the priests, the proof to impress upon the Missionaries the extent of the influence they wielded over their flock. As for the laity, they appeared to have realised, that the Antiochaeon influence would be best factor to counter the penetration of the Protestant Missionaries into the corpus of their Church. So, the deduction is that, seldom was a time in the history of the S.J.C. as then, when the Community as a whole demanded the return to Antiochaeon sources.

Mar Dionysius, naturally therefore, petitioned to the Patriarch for deputing prelates to Kerala. Accordingly the Patriarch Ignatius Mar Jacob II

16. PHILIP, *The Indian Church of St. Thomas*, p. 196.

sent a Syrian bishop by name, Mar Koorilose Joachim. "Mar Dionysius and the majority in the Syrian Community desired to have Mar Koorilose as their Metran. Mar Dionysius even made over the charge of the Diocese to Mar Koorilose"¹⁷. Thus the S.J.C. once again returned to Her ecclesial mentor, the See of Antioch.

The C.M.S. took measures which seem to be retaliatory or intended to wreak vengeance on the S.J.C. Consequently, the S.J.C. had to suffer again. On charges of forging the authority of the Patriarch, which was not proved beyond doubt, Mar Koorilose was condemned and ordered to quit Travancore. Mar Athanasius Stephanose who had, in the mean time arrived in Kerala, as the Patriarchal delegate was to leave the state on the orders of the inhospitable British Resident. As for Mar Dionysius IV, "the poor Metran was arrested and tried"¹⁸, by the collusion of some ex-trustees of the Piravom Church and the Missionaries. But, "by God's special providence he escaped punishment to the bitter disappointment of the Missionary brethren"¹⁹. The S.J.C. who had re-discovered Her true nature could not be cowed. But it appears that she was not destined to flow quietly, for new menaces were about to befall Her.

The heterodoxy, which had begun to encircle and engulf the S.J.C. since the days of Claudius Buchanan and which was ever on the increase through the preachings of the C.M.S. Missionaries could not extinguish the flame of Orthodoxy which was enkindled in Her by the Jacobite prelates of the yore. In the saga or romantic tale of the struggles and final victory of the S.J.C. in preserving Her traditions against the specious words of innovators, the role of the faithful, the laity was the determinant factor. Their emotional attachment to the Church or their filial feeling and their fidelity towards the spiritual Mother, the Ecclesia weighed heavily on them. It superseded the pleasures and the prosperity proffered by the Protestants and their lackeys. It was a struggle between the heart and the head; the emotional and intelligence quotients. And the former won. After all, emotion, they say, is more primordial than the faculty of logic.

17. PHILIP, *The Indian Church of St. Thomas*, p. 200.

18. PHILIP, *The Indian Church of St. Thomas*, p. 195.

19. PHILIP, *The Indian Church of St. Thomas*, p. 195.

SPURT OF PROTESTANTISM IN KERALA

The story of the S.J.C. in the three decades since the Synod of 1836 at Mavelikkara was marked by splits into different churches, litigation over legalities and partition of properties. The S.J.C. split up into three streams which developed into separate Churches in due course. The biggest stream consisted of those who adhered to the Orthodox faith and supported Cheppatt Mar Dionysius. The next in numerical strength was the 'Reformed' Jacobites, who supported Malakkunnathu Mar Athanasius. The third comprised of those who wanted to secede from the S.J.C. The supporters of Mar Athanasius, even while remaining within the S.J.C., tirelessly tried to turn Her towards the teachings of the Protestants. This section, however, had to separate from the S.J.C. and form a new Church later on. Those who wanted to break away were received by the C.M.S. Missionaries into the C.of E. and thus there came into being in Kerala, the Anglican Church. This church, consisted mainly, though not entirely, of the seceded Syrians. The split was followed by litigation over administrative authority and ownership of property. The dispute between the S.J.C. and the Anglican church was settled by an arbitration commission, through its verdict called, 'Cochin Award'. As regards the S.J.C. and the 'Reformed party', the issues were settled by the judgment of the Royal Court of Travancore. This was followed by their forming a new ecclesial entity, christened, 'The Mar Thoma Syrian Church'. Thus in short, the boon of 'union' that Buchanan offered to the S.J.C., three score of years earlier, turned out to be a bane for Her.

1. *The Formation of the Anglican Church*

Rev. Tucker, the Secretary of the Corresponding Committee of the C.M.S. in Madras, darted towards Kottayam to ascertain as to what had happened at the 'Synod of Mavelikkara' and its counter, the 'Missionary Conference', held on the 16th and 19th Jan. 1836, respectively. He was struck by a crisis that was in the offing. "There was among the Syrians a party who were influenced by the teachings of the Missionaries. Some of this openly abandoned the Syrian rituals and became members of the Church of England"¹. Tucker promptly reported with this

AIYA, *The Travancore State Manuel*, Vol. II, p. 216.

comment that it was the beginning of troubles. On receipt of this report the Madras Committee referred it to the Parent Committee in London. As it was natural that reply from London used to take long time to reach India in those days, the Madras Committee issued certain instructions on a temporary basis to the Missionaries stationed at Kerala². Their instructions were a double-edged sword. For, on the one hand it suggested that everything which had the inkling of breach of trust should be avoided. On the other hand it discouraged the Missionaries from “inducing the opinion among the Syrians that the Missionaries considered the errors of the Syrian Church immaterial”. The Missionaries were further asked to solicit the counsels from Corrie, the Bishop of Madras.

But, Corrie died shortly. Therefore, the Madras Committee and the Missionaries became the decisive personnel in the decision making. Regarding the Syrians, desirous of abandoning the ritualistic religion preached by the Jacobites, the Committee was doubtful whether appropriate time had arrived to introduce Anglican liturgy. Therefore they decided to revise the liturgy of the S.J.C. From the report of the C.M.S. 1837-38, it can be deduced that the Mission wanted to preserve the identity of such Jacobites, even while encouraging reformation of their religious rituals. So, the Missionaries came out with a catchword in contrivance of the revision of the liturgy of the S.J.C. Liturgists can debate whether it was an ingenious or ingenuous one. “Revision of the liturgy took place at the instance of the Missionaries”⁴. Palakkunnathu Abraham Malpan, Kaithayil Geevarghese Malpan, Eruthical Markos Kathanar (Priest) and Adangappurathu Joseph Kathanar were engaged by the Missionaries for this work. The liturgy of the S.J.C. was modified by deleting those litanies, prayers and practices which were not in consonance with that of the C.of E. It is to be cited here as to how did the C.M.S. Missionaries view the rituals of the S.J.C. “one of them designated the Syrian services as ‘mummies’ and their Eucharist as a most wretched piece of buffoonery”⁵. But, the Missionaries were doubtful whether it was justifiable to introduce the reformed Liturgy. It seems that they were emboldened by the action of a Jacobite priest who had imbibed Protestantism. This dissertator has learnt from certain elders of repute of the Mar Thoma Church, the following. Geevarghese

2. Cf. CHERIYAN, *The Malabar Christians*, p. 250.

3. TUCKER, *Letter dated 14th Mar. 1836*, in CHERIYAN, *The Malabar Christians*, pp. 250-251.

4. CHERIYAN, *The Malabar Christians*, p. 243.

5. PHILIP, *Indian Church of St. Thomas*, p. 233.

Malpan of Kaithayil and Abraham Malpan of Palakkunnathu had come to a secret understanding that on a particular Sunday, they would celebrate the Eucharist as per the new Liturgy in their respective parishes. Kaithayil Malpan, honoured the commitment, at his parish at Kollad near Kottayam, while Abraham Malpan did not, since, as he himself was said to have confided to Kaithayil Malpan later, that he was physically indisposed on that Sunday. Soon such Eucharistic celebrations “earned the nick name half mass”⁶.

1.1. Evangelisation by the C.M.S.

While this Liturgical reformation was afoot, there came the circular from Cheppattu Mar Dionysius, forbidding the Missionaries from preaching in the parishes of the S.J.C. This precipitated the issues between the C.M.S. and the Jacobites. The C.M.S. decided to close every collaboration with the S.J.C. In May 1838, “the final separation took place”⁷. The C.M.S. further decided to receive the Syrians and the Gentiles into their fold. One of the reasons for this break seems to be the persuasion of some Syrians themselves, who felt attracted towards protestant principles. In fact, “soon after the Synod of 1836 a whole congregation at Mallappalli asked to be taken over”⁸. The following points may be stated by way of expatiation. The C.M.S. changed its working model by introducing mainly two schemes. The first was the formation of congregations through the length and breadth of the State. Evangelisation and its twin proselytism were the second strategy. To the query as to why did the C.M.S. adopt the policy of converting people even by foraying into the fields where the R.C.C. and the S.J.C. had been holding sway. The plea put in pithy phrases by Gell, the Anglican Bishop of Madras, seems to be a satisfying one. “The backward state of Syrian church... Her blindness to the duty of preaching the Gospel prompted them”⁹. The apathy of the S.J.C. towards proselytism, of course, is an old story. But, one may boldly ask the S.J.C. on Her face itself as to why did she not discharge the bounden duty of evangelisation even after she could realise Her own lapse even after learning from the examples of the Anglicans and the Roman Catholics. Was it due to inertia or false sense of superiority, a student is likely to ask. The C.M.S., however, went on with its plans of proselytism and reaped dividends profusely. Anglican

CHERIYAN, *The Malabar Christians*, p. 244.

AGUR, *Church History*, Part I, p. 124.

FIRTH, *Indian Church History*, p. 173.

HUNT, *The Anglican Church*, Vol. II, p. 170.

congregations were formed at Pallom, Kollad etc. even by converting Hindus. Briefly put by such methods, an Anglican Church came to be established in Kerala. It was in 1840.

8.1.2. *The 'Cochin Award'*

The Protestant Missionaries propagated that all this was due to the misdeeds of the Jacobites. Anyway, "the 'union' which was productive of so much good broke up and thereby the innumerable ways calculated to do much benefit to the Syrians were closed"¹⁰. It may be observed that, the project of 'union' that was introduced with a bang had to be left with a whimper. Borrowing the gist of a Chinese proverb, it may be said that, the above project that was introduced with the roar of a tiger disappeared like the tail of a snake. Following the dissolution of 'Mission of Help', much ill feeling was aroused. "Syrian Christians were ex-communicated for joining Anglican Congregations and the C.M.S. Missionaries discouraged intercourse between their congregation and other Churches."¹¹ Disputes followed, regarding the ownership of the properties, held jointly by the C.M.S. and the S.J.C. Both put forward claims. They pleaded to the British Resident Col J. H. Frase for settlement. Accordingly a commissioner was appointed by the Government of Travancore. He, on his own accord, sold off part of the properties under dispute. The Madras Government stopped this deal and appointed an Arbitration Commission. It consisted of Baron D. Albedyll, the nominee of the C.M.S., John Vernede, chosen by the S.J.C. and William Horsley, representative of the Travancore Government.¹² The Arbitrators met at Cochin and issued the Award on 4th Apr. 1840.¹³ Joint properties were divided between the Protestants represented by the C.M.S. Missionaries, the Secretary of the Corresponding Committee of the C.M.S. at Madras and the British Resident of Travancore, on the one hand and the S.J.C., represented by the Metropolitan Mar Dionysius IV, a cleric and lay trustees of the Church on the other hand. Accordingly "Star Pagodas 3000, vested in the Honourable Company's funds in 1808 through Col. Macaulay, as perpetual loan... The Cudamattom Estate and money at interest therein, College of Cottayam and the land, and granary etc. attached to it and the grants in copper plates conferring privileges on the Syrians as well as ordination papers were awarded to

10. AGUR, *Church History*, Part II, p. 124.

11. KEAY, *A History of the Syrian Church*, p. 77.

12. AGUR, *Church History*, Part I, p. 128.

13. Cf. HUNT, *The Anglican Church*, Vol. II, p. 15.

the Metropolitan of the Syrian Church...”¹⁴. “The donation of Rs. 8000 received by the Syrians of Thiruvalla in 1816”¹⁵ was also awarded to the S.J.C. To the Missionaries of Kottayam were awarded the following Rs. 20,000 granted in the year 1818 by the Travancore Government as an endowment for the support of the College of Kottayam...¹⁶ Munro and the donations from the Europeans.¹⁷

Although, the Award was bilateral, there was a snag. The Madras Government opposed the inclusion of the Resident, as a nominee of the M.S. The S.J.C. too was not satisfied. Mar Dionysius IV, appealed to the Madras Government. But, it declined to interfere. Thereupon, the Metran appealed to the Board of Directors of the East India Company at England. The authorities of the company concluded that the arbitration was irregular. But, before this decision reached Kerala, the Resident had transferred to the C.M.S. Missionaries their portion of the property, in the Award. So, the Missionaries refused to surrender their share. It is not improper to make the following observation. As true respecters of law, the C.M.S. must have been motivated by the maxim of English jurisprudence that possession is nine points in Law. The Metran was helpless to retake it from them. Anyway, the ‘we feeling’, that was expected by the architects of the ‘union’ and the ‘Mission of Help’ to prevail over the S.J.C. and the C.M.S. did not fructify. Instead, there emerged the feeling of ‘mine and thine’.

2. The Evolution of the Mar Thoma Syrian Church

What originated as a ‘Reform party’ within the S.J.C. gradually became a Church called the ‘Mar Thoma Syrian Church’. This Church has certain peculiar features. Her essentials are basically Protestant in character. But Her externals are mainly Syrian. To put it differently, even while, She has adopted the theology of Protestant genre, She has assumed the rituals of the Syrian tenor. Another feature is, that like the Thoziyur Church, the Mar Thoma Church is also indigenous in ecclesiastical setup. That is, this Church has no ecclesiastical or hierarchical link with any foreign Church.

How has it all happened can be appreciated only with the help of history. The genesis and growth of this Church can be analysed under four epochs. The first one can be called the ‘reformation period’, with

. AGUR, *Church History*, Part I, p. 128.

. Cf. PHILIP, *Indian Church of St. Thomas*, p. 363.

. Cf. PHILIP, *Indian Church of St. Thomas*, p. 364.

. Cf. PHILIP, *Indian Church of St. Thomas*, p. 365.

the blessings of the Missionaries. It may also be qualified the 'Ant Abraham Malpan' days. This is followed by the 'Abraham Malpan' era. It is contended so, as he was undoubtedly the decisive personality that guided the destiny of a particular section of the S.J.C., with leaning towards Protestantism. Then ensued the 'Mathews Mar Athanasius' period, when he tried to oust Mar Dionysius IV, the then Metropolitan of the S.J.C., with the political backing and tried to shape the Church in the Protestant mould. Final period was marked by the litigation between Thomas Mar Athanasius, the successor of Mar Athanasius and Joseph Mar Dionysius V of Pulikkottil, the victory for the latter and the official establishment of the Mar Thoma Syrian Church. Therefore, the period is named the 'Thomas Athanasius' period.

The important events which took place in the first epoch are summarily put under. Up to 1835, no reformative move, worth the name had seized the S.J.C. Rev. Tucker's report of Jan. 1835, bears testimony to it. He wrote, "eighteen years of labour have been consumed upon this vineyard... Yet, the prospect of reformation longed for by the Missionaries was not at all bright"¹⁸. Eighteen months later, in Sep. 1836, a memorial was submitted to the Resident Col. Fraser against the abuses of Mar Dionysius IV¹⁹. His conduct of not acting "according to the Scripture or the Canons"²⁰ was notified to the Resident. "The memorial with its outspoken denunciation of some of the practices condemned by the Missionaries as superstitious, with its indignation at Mar Dionysius' failure to bring about their discontinuance... may be regarded as the starting point of the Syrian reformation"²¹. Mar Dionysius, as if in retaliation, issued the bull withdrawing permission to the Missionaries to preach in the Syrian parishes. Although, it cooled the clamour among the pro-Protestant laity and made them lukewarm towards reform, the majority of the priests who were signatories to the memorial did not budge in. Their stand was hailed by the Madras Committee through its letter of Jul. 19th 1837, in the following words. "The steps taken by (Palakkunnathu) Malpan, Geevarghese (Kaithayil), Joseph (Adangappurathu), Marcus (Eruthical) are indeed very important. May God of His great Mercy have pity on this branch of his Church"²². The

18. CHERIYAN, *The Malabar Christians*, p. 282.

19. ITTOOP, *Sabhacharithram*, (Malayalam), p. 213.

20. KEAY, *A History of the Syrian Church in India*, p. 79.

21. CHERIYAN, *The Malabar Christians*, p. 284.

22. TUCKER, *Letter to the Missionaries of Kottayam*, in CHERIYAN, *The Malabar Christians*, p.285.

ommunication read along with the following note of optimism on the part of the C.M.S. would lead one to deduce that these developments had the blessings of the Missionaries. "At Kottayam there is much cause for encouragement... There can be no doubt that the present state of things is far more hopeful than it ever has been."²³ The second period of Palakkunnathu Abraham Malpan. "The one man whose name will always be associated with the reformation move was of Abraham Malpan"²⁴, who is hailed by some as the 'Wyclif'²⁵ of Kerala. He had obtained ordination as a priest at the age of sixteen years. Since, it was from Mar Thoma VIII, whose ordination was not valid, the thought of invalidity of his own ordination seems to have haunted him. "He therefore, accepted re-ordination at the hands of a foreign prelate, Mar Kurilos who arrived in 1826"²⁶. He later on became a Malpan or professor of Syriac in the Seminary at Kottayam.

2.1. 'Abraham Malpan'

On account of his views, regarding reformation, which were identical with those of the C.M.S., there were many discussions between the Malpan and the Missionaries. Nonetheless, at the time of split between the S.J.C. and C.M.S., the Malpan decided to remain in the S.J.C. itself, with the hope of reforming Her from within. After tendering resignation from the Seminary, he started reform work in right earnest in his own parish at Maramon. He turned out to be an iconoclast. He broke the image of a Saint of his own Church²⁷. Further, he introduced many reforms which, although were to the liking of the C.M.S. were to the irking of the S.J.C.

Mar Dionysius IV excommunicated the Malpan and his flock of Maramon. Besides, the Metran warned that he would not ordain anybody trained by the Malpan. Therefore, the Malpan sent his nephew, Fr. Mathew to the Patriarchal headquarters at Mesopotamia, with the "hopes of securing the approval of the Patriarch himself for the reforms... This was in certain respects something like the mistake that the Missionaries and Pulikkott Mar Dionysius II committed, when a 'Mission of Help' was originally decided upon"²⁸.

3. *Missionary Register*, Nov. 1837. pp. 162-63.

4. CHERIYAN, *The Malabar Christians*, p. 287.

5. HUNT, *The Anglican Church of Travancore*, Vol. I, p. 69.

6. CHERIYAN, *The Malabar Christians*, p. 188.

7. Cf. CHERIYAN, *The Malabar Christians*, p. 291.

8. CHERIYAN, *The Malabar Christians*, p. 292.

8.2.2. 'Mathews Mar Athanasius'

With the return of the personage who was formerly D Mathew, after being consecrated Metran by Patriarch Elias II of Antioch, with the Episcopal name Mar Athanasius, starts the third period. This happened in 1842. "On his arrival in the country the Syrian community met in Synod in the church at Kandanad to have his 'Sthaticon' (Bull) of appointment publicly read" "It was customary for all Metrans to read their 'Sthaticon' publicly in every Church after Mass"³⁰, and obtain the customary salutation from the community by the acclamation of 'oxios', meaning 'you are eligible', three times. Here is an instance which would enlighten a student on the ecclesiastical principle of the S.J.C. Verily, the S.J.C. proved that, the ecclesia is 'of the people, by the people and for the people', to borrow the immortal words of Abraham Lincoln. The people of Kandanadu "finding the document (Sthaticon) not free from grave suspicions as to the policy adopted by him to get himself consecrated, they wrote to the Patriarch stating the past history of Mar Athanasius and his inclinations towards innovations"³¹. On the strength of his consecration by the Antiochaeans and the Patriarch's Bull of excommunication of the ruling prelate Mar Dionysius IV, Mar Athanasius "evinced", in spite of his uncle's (Malpans) advice, a great desire to oust Mar Dionysius IV than to strengthen the reform movement"³². "This caused much anxiety and sorrow to the Malpan"³³. "The Malpan passed away not very long after, in 1845"³⁴. Mar Dionysius IV too petitioned to the Patriarch, Mar Ignatius Jacob II, who had, in the meantime, succeeded Elias II. Mar Dionysius excommunicated Mar Athanasius. In turn, Mar Athanasius sought the intervention of the Government to settle the issues between himself and Mar Kurilos, who had become the Malankara Metropolitan, following the sudden resignation of Mar Dionysius IV. A committee was constituted by the Government of Travancore on the recommendation of the British Resident. The committee "met at Quilon in 1848 and finally decided that the appointment of Mar Athanasius was valid and irrevocable"³⁵. Shortly afterwards, "the Travancore Government issued the royal proclamation

29. PHILIP, *The Indian Church of St. Thomas*, p. 200.

30. AGUR, *Church History*, Part I, p. 132.

31. PHILIP, *The Indian Church of St. Thomas*, p. 200.

32. CHERIYAN, *The Malabar Christians*, p. 293.

33. CHERIYAN, *The Malabar Christians*, p. 293.

34. KEAY, *A History of the Syrian Church in India*, p. 82.

35. PHILIP, *The Indian Church of St. Thomas*, p. 200.

in July 1852, recognising Mar Athanasius as the Syrian Metropolitan”³⁶. Thus, after a hard fight of ten years Mathews Mar Athanasius was, in spite of excommunication, acknowledged in 1852, the legitimate Metropolitan of Malabar, duly appointed by the Patriarch of Antioch”³⁷. It may be noted here that, since the days of the great Catholicos, Bar Hebraeus of the 13th century, nobody had become a Metropolitan in the universal Syrian Orthodox Church, at such a tender age of 23 years.

Although in possession of authority over the S.J.C. his position was precarious. The reasons were obvious. His orientation was by the Protestants. But his ordination was by the Patriarch. To be or not to be was the problem that he was grappled with. He could forsake neither. Certain parishes hailed his charism. But, the majority of the Jacobites prevailed over his chicanery and “would not accept him”³⁸. So, he adopted a double standard. “Where conditions were favourable, he supported the revised Liturgy... But, among the conservatives, he kept the old ways and at that time he continued to acknowledge the Patriarch of Antioch”³⁹. The C.M.S. Missionaries supported him in all his actions.

The S.J.C. has to acknowledge with great gratitude the invaluable services and efforts of Mar Athanasius in ameliorating the conditions of the community. He was the one who salvaged the members of his community from governmental obligation of rendering menial work at the behest of Hindus. “Certain kinds of compulsory labour which the Sarkar had exacted from the Syrian Christians like the pounding of rice for ‘agrasalas’, (state feeding houses for Brahamins) and supplying oil for use at festivals in the Hindu temples”⁴⁰, was a challenge to the honour of his faithful. This shepherd was the one who caused a stop to such dishonourable obligations imposed on his sheep.

But, in the ecclesiastical plane, the Jacobites in general did not support him on account of his pro-reform proclivities. They turned to Antioch to forestall the fostering of the faith of the Church, by the Church Missionary Society, in collusion with Mar Athanasius. So, the S.J.C. sent a priest named Pulikkosttil Joseph to the Patriarch with the petition to consecrate him as Her Metran. The Patriarch obliged. Pulikkottil Joseph was consecrated with the name Dionysius V. On reaching Travancore, he

6. AGUR, *Church History*, Part I, p. 139.

7. PHILIP, *The Indian Church of St. Thomas*, p. 201.

8. FIRTH, *Indian Church History*, p. 175.

9. FIRTH, *Indian Church History*, p. 175.

10. AGUR, *Church History*, Part I, p. 140.

petitioned to the Government to recognise him as against Athanasius. Refusing to comply with the request, the Government recommended the S.J.C. to move the judiciary. "Thus, an evil precedent was set"⁴¹. In 1868, Mar Athanasius consecrated his cousin as his co-adjutor Bishop with the official name Athanasius Thomas.

Baffled in all his attempts, Mar Dionysius V, appealed to Antioch as his predecessors had done in times of need. Patriarch Peter III, came to Travancore, accordingly in 1875. He excommunicated Mar Mathev Athanasius. In 1876, the Travancore Government also rescinded the recognition of Mar Athanasius and issued a new royal proclamation leaving the Church, to settle Her own affairs or if need be to approach courts. "This proclamation, is rightly regarded as the 'Magna Carta' of the Syrian Jacobite Church"⁴². In 1877, Mar Athanasius died.

8.2.3. The Travancore Royal Court Judgement

Mar Thomas Athanasius then took up the reins of administration of the S.J.C. With his episcopate, beginnings the last phase in the epoch of the evolution of the new ecclesial entity called the 'Mar Thomas Syrian Church'. This era may be called 'Mar Thomas Athanasius Era'. When recognition of Mar Athanasius was withdrawn in 1876, the possession of the properties as existing then was not disturbed. So, a civil suit became inevitable. Joseph Mar Dionysius V, filed the civil case in the District Court at Alleppey, against Thomas Athanasius, and his co-trustees. This was in Mar. 1879. The plaintiff pleaded to recognise his episcopal dignity as he was ordained by the Patriarch under whose jurisdiction the S.J.C. had been. The content of this contention was certainly an ecclesiastical question. There was, nevertheless, a temporal issue too. It was pertaining to the possession and ownership of the Seminary properties. The Church, after all is 'ecclesia mixta' and so there is nothing anomalous in filing a civil suit. The saying of the Lord, is also "render unto Caesar what is Caesar's", might have prompted the rival ecclesiasts to move the Court which is under 'Caesar's' or civil authority. This litigation took ten years in its passage through the original, the appellate and the Royal Court of Appeal. As the British Residents were no longer enjoying the autocracy of the past, their power to influence the internal governance of the affairs of the state was marginalised to the minimum. Therefore, they diplomatically kept aloof. Therefore, law had her course.

41. FIRTH, *Indian Church History*, p. 175.

42. PHILIP, *The Indian Church of St. Thomas*, p. 211.

On July 12, 1886, the Travancore Royal Court of Final Appeal, pronounced its judgment which is deemed by some historians as historic. Inter alia, it established the following points. The Patriarch of Antioch has been recognised by the S.J.C. as Her spiritual head.⁴³ The consecration of the Patriarch or his delegate has been felt absolutely necessary to entitle a person to become a Metropolitan of the Church in Malabar or Kerala and he must be accepted by the community before or after the consecration and appointment.⁴⁴ It is the right of the Patriarch to send 'Mooron' (or the oil of chrismation) from time to time to this Church.⁴⁵

A student easily discerns that, all these points are of ecclesiology. And on these rocks of cherished ecclesiology, Thomas Mar Athanasius foundered and fell. "Defeated... he and his followers made a definite walk out from the Jacobite Church."⁴⁶ This, however, heralded the birth of the Mar Thoma Syrian Church.

Theological and Ecclesiological simmering in the S.J.C. had reached the boiling point at the 'Synod of Mavelikkara' in 1836. The team generated was manipulated by the Missionaries, by both direct and indirect methods, feigning a stand-off stand. But their complaisance could not carry conviction. The engaging of the Jacobite priests to reform the time-honoured liturgy of the S.J.C. to the tune of the Missionaries and the receiving of the Jacobite congregations into the C.M.S. fold, even against the opposition of the C.of E., testify their direct involvement in splitting the S.J.C. Their indirect methods can be detected by an analyst from the following events. The Missionaries encouraged the master-moves of certain priests of the S.J.C. to reform her from within. So also, their advice in the actions of Mar Mathews Athanasius. Certainly, not all of which were above board. Subsequent events, however, had proved that the simple minded flock of the S.J.C., endowed as they were, with the faith of their fathers and keeping it as sheet-anchor or breast-plate would not risk to barter the blessings, teachings, tenets and even the ecclesiastical overseering by the See of Antioch. Even the plea of indigenisation did not disturb the disposition of the ingenuous laity of the S.J.C. The various episodes of this epoch were certainly assertions and affirmations that the S.J.C., as such, was guided, not by the fancies of a few who were at the helm of authority but by the will of the faithful, who found solace in a religion with rituals.

3. Cf. *T.R.C.*, n. 219. p. 80, n. 285(1). p. 101.

4. Cf. *T.R.C.*, nn. 226, 230. pp. 82-85.

5. Cf. *T.R.C.*, nn. 216, 217. p. 80, n. 347. p. 115.

6. URUMPACKAL, *The Juridical Status of the Catholicos of Malabar*, p. 58.

GENERAL CONCLUSION

The unbroken existence of the Syrian Jacobite Church (abbreviated S.J.C.) over the centuries is undoubtedly a marvel. It is a saga of the struggle of the S.J.C. to preserve the deposit of faith, received by tradition and to protect Her identity 'in situ'. This dissertation endeavours to limelight one of its epochs. The focus is on the dynamics of the S.J.C. in Her relation with the Church Missionary Society (abbreviated C.M.S.) of England. The episodes and the epochs examined are mainly of a particular period. And, it is between the inauguration of the connection of the S.J.C. with the Church of England in 1806, to its finale, in 1836, at the Mavelikara Synod.

Nevertheless, seemingly extraneous events are also expatiated. It is because of a dictum of History that no event is an accident, nor is it the product of a particular specific factor. It is, rather, polygenous or the product of many a cause. That is why, the genesis of the Syrian Jacobite Church in the Syria - Palestine region, in the 5th century, the origin and evolution of the Church of England during the 16th to the 19th centuries, and their bearings on the S.J.C. of Kerala are dealt with, under different heads.

The S.J.C. is christened so, for causes connected with Her Liturgy. As the original language of Her Liturgy was Syriac, She earned the epithet Syrian. The nomenclature Jacobite, is an eponym. It is derived from the name of one Jacobe Baradaeus. He was a prelate of Syria during the 5th century. It was he, who firmly established that sect of Syrian Christianity, organised by Severius, the Patriarch of Antioch on the principle of 'monophysite' Christology. Since the days of Jacobe Baradaeus, this sect is designated the Jacobite Church.

No scholar of repute would refute that Jacobitism, began to take roots in Kerala, by the relentless efforts and the undaunted spirit of Mar Gregorious Jaleel, the Patriarch of Jerusalem. He was deputed to Kerala, by the Supreme Pontiff of the Universal Syrian Church of Antioch to tend the sheep of the Jacobite hold. Ecclesiastically too, the Gregorian epoch is significant. Prior to this period, the S.J.C. was ruled by a dignitary designated officially, the Arch-deacon. He was neither a bishop, nor had that rank. Although he enjoyed enormous powers, including civil, in the ecclesiastical hierarchy, he was only a priest. It is held, that Mar Gregorious ordained the the

arch-deacon Thomas as a Bishop, with the official title Mar Thoma I. Therefore, it is said, that the S.J.C. heaved a sigh of relief. For, thus came to be fulfilled, Her long cherished desire to have apostolic succession from Her mentor, the See of Antioch. But, for want of documentary evidence of this episode, this is not accepted by a section of historians. At this juncture, it is well to reflect upon the wisdom of the ages, that absence of evidence is no evidence of absence. Therefore the deduction is that the Jacobite tradition as any other ecclesial one of its kind, cannot be unceremoniously cast aside.

It is on record that since the landing of Mar Jaleel an emissary of the See of Antioch arrived in Kerala from time to time, to lead the faithful. Although they performed the pastoral work effectively, there is no written proof for any one of them ordaining anybody of the Jacobite Church of Kerala, a bishop. Consequently, there was an anomalous situation. The ecclesiastical head, of the S.J.C., although, was called Bishop or Metropolitan, and designated Mar Thoma, he did not have valid apostolic succession. Unlike in the case of Mar Thoma I, there is no oral tradition either, in defence of his successors, to have obtained the office from valid apostolic sources. This defect of the want of apostolicity, which is one of the four notae of the Church, was looming over the successors of Mar Thoma I up to Mar Thoma VI.

At this juncture, certain facts which are likely to cause discomfiture to the S.J.C., cannot but be revealed. May be, on account of the apathy of the Antiochaeon See of Grace then with apostolic succession, a few of the hierarchs of the S.J.C. attempted to effect union with the Catholic Church. If the See of Antioch had not slept over the sollicitation for apostolic grace some of the subsequent unpleasant events and predicaments of Mar Thoma VI, could have been diverted. As regards Mar Thoma VI, it is on record that thrice did he make overtures to forge communion with Rome. They were all settled by the Padroadists and the Propagandists of these days who held the helm of ecclesiastic affairs of the Catholic Church in Kerala. They played the game of geopolitics in ecclesial affairs. The result was that the Syrian Community, which was split into Romo-Syrians and Syro-Jacobites had to continue exchanging words and casting anathema on each other. Yes, verily, severing is easy but solidification is exacting. With no qualms, Mar Thoma VI, thereupon, solicited episcopal ordination, from the Patriarchal emissaries who were in Kerala, at that time. Accordingly they ordained in 1770, Mar Thoma VI, with the episcopal insignias and the title Mar Dionysius. In the annals of the S.J.C., he is known Dionysius I, and hailed Mar Dionysius, the great.

It was during his days that Rev. Claudius Buchanan, made exploration of the Syrian churches, at the behest of Wellesley, the Governor General of India and proposed a union between the S.J.C. and the Church of England of which he was a cleric. This was in 1806. Overcoming the initial 'reticence' Mar Dionysius I, gave his consent in writing. The proviso that he had incorporated in the document, or agreement, did not guard the S.J.C. from the subsequent infiltration of the 'Low Church' faction of the Church of England, and create fissures and dentures in the corpus of the S.J.C. Searching and probing would lead one to the following deductions. The theological, ecclesiologica and ecclesiastical differences of the S.J.C. from those thereof of the C.of E. do not appear to have been accorded due regard by Mar Dionysius I. More than the concern for spiritual foundations of the edifice of the Church, this grand-old prelate appears to have been swayed by other considerations in this act. Apparently, there were the prospects of material prosperity that would accrue to the S.J.C., which was in a state of decline.

Analysts can detect, his personal prejudices too playing part in the decisions of Mar Dionysius. Otherwise, he should have ascertained the will of the laity or the faithful. Time had not run enough, to push into decision, the spirit of Palliyogam or Church assembly, that started the course of the S.J.C. in the years preceding. Though dormant, it was there in the ethos of the Community. Therefore the fact remains, that he contravened the custom and convention of the Church. Therefore, the contention that his action was 'suo motu', cannot be regarded as niggardly. Anyway, the surpassing of 'reticence' and the decision to the 'recognition' of the C.of E. was not one that was taken after due deliberation.

Buchanan's report on the S.J.C., when published in England in 1812, evoked the enthusiasm of the English Evangelists, the 'Low Church', to target Kerala. The 'Low Church', is not a Church as per ecclesiological canons. It is rather a faction of the C.of E. The salient features of the 'Low Church' are the overemphasis on the Bible as the source of theology, and the simultaneous marginalisation of Tradition which is also reckoned as an equally valid spring for theological dogma and doctrines. To put it differently, the theology of the 'Low Church' is based on the doctrine designated 'sola scriptura'. It is, in other words, protestant oriented. Hence 'Protestantism' is its avowed theology. As a sequel, this faction does not accord much value and significance either to

the hierarchy or to the rituals, in the ecclesiological set up. It was from this 'Low Church' faction that Church Missionary Society evolved, as a result of the evangelical revivalism of the 18th century.

The C.M.S. of England promptly availed itself of an opportunity that was occasioned by a request made to it by Col. Munro, the British Resident cum diwan of the states of Travancore and Cochin. Political considerations apart, Munro had religious motives too in befriending the S.J.C. With the dynamics of recognition prevailing in the S.J.C. Munro could make orchestrated strides. At first, he extended the helping hand of collaborating with Mar Dionysius II, the Metropolitan of the S.J.C. in establishing the Syrian Seminary. This turned out to be a bait, as were evident from the eventual developments. It was to station a C.M.S. Missionary who would direct the affairs of the Seminary in the Protestant pattern, that Munro made the request to the C.M.S. of England to depute Rev. Norton to Kottayam. He came in 1816. Shortly afterwards arrived three of the C.M.S. Missionaries. They were Bailey, Baker and Fenn, collectively called the 'Kottayam trio', and the 'first generation' of the C.M.S. Missionaries.

Then was inaugurated, the era of 'Mission of Help' by the C.M.S. to the S.J.C. Mar Dionysius II, welcomed it. The politician in Munro appears to have foreseen it. For, Mar Dionysius II owed very much for his bishopric to Munro. In expatiation, it may be stated that Mar Dionysius ascended to the seat of Metropolitan of the S.J.C., by manipulating and ousting the pro-Antiochaeon prelate Mar Thoma IX. Naturally Dionysius II could not oppose the intrusion of the Protestant Missionaries into the S.J.C. There was also the prospects of material prosperity. The aura of material gains overpowered the inner power of the Syrian Orthodox theology. It is common place that tares choke the seeds at the slightest sluggishness. It cannot be gainsaid that the 'Jacobites gained much in the material, cultural and academic levels by this tie up with the C.M.S. But the spirituality of the S.J.C., centred around the Liturgy and the Eucharist was being impaired by the innovative protestations of the C.M.S.

Scars began to appear gradually in the fabric of the 'Mission of Help'. They deepened with the attempts of the C.M.S. to introduce the 'Book of Common Prayer' of the C.of E. into the S.J.C. This was around 1818. The faithful frowned at it and resisted the move. Yet the 'Mission of Help' continued. But the dignity and honour of the S.J.C. were tarnished by an act quite unbecoming of Christian charity. Mar Dionysius III became

a privy to a plot hatched by the C.M.S. Missionaries and the British Resident to oust the Romo-Syrians from certain churches held jointly by them and the S.J.C. The attempt failed. It, however, boomeranged.

Matters took a turn to the worse, while the Missionaries, in collusion with the Resident, deported Mar Athanasius, the Syrian bishop who had been sojourning in Kerala. This happened in 1826. This incident incited the S.J.C. Also it impressed upon them the imperative need of rejecting the C.M.S., lest Her ecclesial identity was lost. The activities of the so-called 'second generation' of the C.M.S. Missionaries pushed matters to a point of no return. This category of the Missionaries, especially Peet and Woodcock were aggressive beyond sufferance and lacked the tact of their predecessors. By deeds and words they exasperated the Jacobites. The Protestant bishop, Wilson, who is nicknamed, the 'Anglican Menezes', really proved a menace to the S.J.C. His suggestions snacking Protestantism exacerbated the Jacobite Community. Equally agitated, became the new Jacobite prelate Mar Dionysius IV. He was not well disposed to the Colossus - like strides of the C.M.S. In short, the Jacobites were on the anvil awaiting the fall of the hammer, to raise the clarion call of 'rejection'. The Metran solicited the intervention of the Patriarch. This was quite a logical step. Neither parochialism, nor patriotism should make the vision myopic to acknowledge that Antioch had been the rescuer and redeemer of the S.J.C., whenever the ship of the Church was rudderless. In contrast to the lukewarm attitude of some of the earlier occupants of the throne of St. Peter at Antioch, the then incumbent, immediately sent his deputy Mar Coorilos, to Kerala.

Shortly after the arrival of the Patriarch's emissary, Mar Dionysius IV convened the 'Church Council' of the laity, to resolve the future course of action. In this move, researcher can discern that Mar Dionysius IV succumbed to the ecclesial spirit of the S.J.C., enshrined in the wisdom of the ages, that two is better than one and two hundred is better than two for deliberation on Church affairs; or he conformed to the dictum that, will and not force is the basis of the Ecclesia.

The 'Church Council' or the Synod was held in 1836 at Mavelikara. It is a landmark episode in the Syro - C.M.S. relationship, as it proclaimed that the C.M.S. personnel are 'persona non-grata'. It is historic, for its free frank and fearless 'rejection' of the C.M.S. doctrines and acknowledgement of Antiochaeon theology. The document drawn at the Synod, is known the 'Mavelikara Padiyola'. It epitomises the S.J.C's

ynamics of 'rejection' of the C.M.S. and also Her adoption of 'resilience' to the Antiochaeans roots.

The heterodoxy that had been propagated by the C.M.S. Missionaries developed into a dual phenomena. The first one was the reception of the entire Jacobite congregation of Mallappally, into the C.of E. It was in 1840. This event marked the genesis of the Anglican Church in Kerala. With reference to the S.J.C., this development had tremendous impact on Her. Legal disputes ensued. It reached finality with the arbitration called the 'Cochin Award'. This instrument, effected a partition of the properties held jointly by the S.J.C. and the C.M.S. The second outcome of the 'Mavelikara Synod' was more exacting for the S.J.C. A few Jacobites made a fervent attempt to reform the S.J.C. on Protestant pattern, even while remaining within Her fold. This group was called the 'Reform Party'. The leader was Palakunnath Abraham Malpan and his nephew, Mathews Mar Athanasius. This was countered by the S.J.C. He appealed to the Patriarch of Antioch, who accordingly ordained Joseph Mar Dionysius V, for Kerala. Thomas Mar Athanasius, who succeeded Mathews Mar Athanasius and Mar Dionysius V, staked claims over the S.J.C. Protracted litigation followed. With the verdict of the Travancore Royal Court of Final Appeal, in 1896, the Jacobite faction, led by Mar Dionysius V and owing allegiance to the Antiochaeans See had a decisive victory. The other faction, led by Thomas Mar Athanasius, walked out of the hold of the S.J.C. This group, subsequently formed the Mar Thoma Syrian Church with Protestant theology clothed in Syrian garment.

Thus, in the course of the Biblical span of three score and ten years, the antiquarian Syrian Jacobite Church got split into three different Churches, the Syrian Jacobite Church, the Anglican Church and the Mar Thoma Syrian Church.

Historically, these happenings appear to be the result of a combination of inertia on the part of certain ecclesiastics. Mar Dionysius the Great, appeared to have become a little indifferent to the theological crisis which would befall the Church, by the 'union' with the C.of E. The blunder that men do lives after them.

Although no scientific deduction is possible on the basis of ifs and buts of history, they nevertheless provide grounds for hypotheses. Therefore, it may be ventured to contend that if Mar Dionysius I, had said an emphatic no to Claudius Buchanan, Protestantism would not have got a beach-head. By the grandeur or glitter of the glory of England, the grand-old prelate winked at the pristine purity of the theology and

spirituality of the S.J.C. If man does not live by bread alone, more so is the Ecclesia.

Another deduction may be penned. It appears that it was a serious omission on the part of the S.J.C., that gave occasion for the C.M.S. to invade Her. The Jacobite Church did not care to learn that, more often than not, History repeated itself. The heart-rending episode of Latinisation of the 17th century and the untold miseries under the foreign yoke were before Her as sign-posts. She ought to have taken the cue from these happenings, as the Protestants approached Her with protestations. When the C.M.S. Missionaries drove the thin edge of the wedge into the corpus of the Church, the Jacobite faithful should have had the foresight to discern and the faculty to detect that the Anglicans were no poorer stuff than the Latins in scheming and machination.

Again, if the C.M.S. made a dent into Kerala, and made much headway there, by capitalising the indifference of the S.J.C. to Her Kerygmatic Mission, can the Jacobites, under any score, pass on the buck, is a point to be pondered over. The S.J.C. should have realised that in the dispensation of the Lord, disobedience to divine decrees, never goes unchastised.

The fundamental mistake of the C.M.S. appears to be the following. This Society was oblivious to the basic fact that no ecclesial community can afford to forget its religious traditions and the cultural cum environmental heritages. The Jacobite Syrian Church of Kerala was the product of the traditions of Syria and the heritages of Kerala. These two elements created the *cultus* of the S.J.C. In fact, this was what sustained the S.J.C. down the ages. The C.M.S. failed because they attempted to cut off this umbilical cord.

If it was the laity that saved the Church in the 17th century by the solemn oath at 'Coonan Cross', it is history that the S.J.C. was saved from the C.M.S. thanks to the laity, through its stern proclamation in the 19th century at the Mavelikara Synod. Although, we cannot be the seers of the certain, we still can be the prophets of the probable. Therefore, the following observation. It is imperative that the laity should be motivated to be active participants in the affairs of the Ecclesia. The laity should learn from the clergy. In its turn, the clergy ought to love the laity. Separate them, the one would become a cripple and the other into a corpse.

Liturgical revival appears to be the panacea to protect the S.J.C. that is being besieged, in the present day, by radical reformers and

Ultra-Protestants. It is contended so, because this study had brought home, that the 'elan vital' or the vital energy of the S.J.C., lies, not in scholastic studies or sermons from the pulpit, but in the experience of the Eucharistic-centred Liturgical celebrations. After all, the ethos or the spirit of the Syrian Jacobite Church is cataphatic and liturgical. It is on this solid rock that the C.M.S. floundered.

APPENDIX I

NINAVU, OR GRANT OF LAND, FOR THE ERECTION OF THE SYRIAN SEMINARY AT KOTTAYAM, ISSUED BY HER HIGHNESS THE RANI OF TRAVANCORE IN 1814.

(TRANSLATION)

To

Ouseph Ramban

(*Joseph Ramban, afterwards Mar Dionysius II*)

Whereas you have come here and represented that there is no seminary for giving religious instruction to the *Puthencoor* Syria Christians and that some land should be given for building such upon a site has been determined upon therefore, in the *Govindapuram Karu Kottayam Proverthi*, the boundaries whereof being: west of the way lying north to south and used for taking the *Tirunakkarai Devan* in procession to the river for *Arat*; north of *Idanal*; east of the *Cownar river*; and south of the *Arat* landing place, the way, and the *Cownar river*. Within these four boundaries land to the extent of 120 *dennoos* north to south and 60 *dennoos* east to west is granted on *anubogam* tenure from the 6th day of Kartigai in M.E. 990 for building a seminary upon. The tax of 61/4 fanams per annum payable to the *Sirkar* thereon has been *given up to meet the expense of a lamp to be lighted*; wherefore a seminary shall be accordingly erected thereon and the *money allowed for the light shall be used for such purpose*; and the same shall be held and enjoyed thus by the Ramban and succeeding Rambans as *anubogam*. In witness whereof this *ninavu* is written by *Valia Meleluthu Yogeewaran Raman*, this 6th day of *Dhanoo* in M.E. 990 (A. D. 1814) by Royal Command.

APPENDIX II

RESOLUTIONS OF THE MEETING HELD AT MAVELIKARA IN 1836

(*Translation from the vernacular copy preserved in the office (at Trivandrum) of the British Resident in Travancore and Cochin*)

In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, the one true God: *Padyola* (agreement) drawn up in the year of our Lord 1836 corresponding to 5th Makaram 1011 M.E. in the church of the Virgin Mother of God at Mavelikara, by Mar Dionysius (*the Fourth*), Metropolitan of

the Jacobite Syrian Church of Malankara, and his suffragan Mar Kurilos (of Thoziyur church), and the vicars, priests and parishioners of *Angamali* and other churches under the charge of the Metropolitan, subject to the supremacy of Mar Ignatius Patriarch, the Father of Fathers and Chief of Chiefs, ruling on the Peterine throne at Antioch, the mother of all churches.

Whereas at an interview held at Kottayam between the Rt. Rev. Daniel, Lord Bishop of Calcutta and the Metropolitan in November last, it was proposed by the former that certain changes should be introduced in the Liturgies and ordinances of our Syrian Church, and whereas it was stated in reply that a conference of the churches would be held on the subject and its determination made known; we the Jacobite Syrians, beings subject to the supremacy of the Patriarch of Antioch and observing as we do the Liturgies and ordinances instituted by the prelates sent under his command, cannot deviate from such Liturgies and ordinances and maintain a discreet contrary thereto; and a man of one persuasion being not authorised to preach and admonish in the church of another following a different persuasion without the permission of the respective Patriarchs, we cannot permit the same to be done among us, the churches being built by the aid of the prelates that under the orders of the Patriarch and by the people of each parish, and ornamented by their properties and as the accounts of the annual income accounting to our churches under the head of voluntary contributions, offerings etc. are as required by the rule furnished to our Bishops, as is the custom in the churches of Antioch as well as in the churches of this and other countries following, different persuasions we are without the power and feel disinclined, to follow, and cause to be followed, a different procedure from the above.

The Hon. Col. Macaulay (the British Resident in Travancore) having taken a loan of three thousand pagodas from Mar Dionysius the Great, (*the First*). Who died in M.E. 983 (A.D. 1808), gave him a bond for the same. The interest on this amount having fallen in arrears Mar Dionysius (*the Second*), Metropolitan, who died in M.E. 992, made a representation to Col. Munro (the British Resident in Travancore) and received the interest, with which he (Dionysius) built the Seminary at Kottayam. Having also collected at the Seminary the money brought by the prelates that had come here from Antioch and the property left by the late Bishop of the Pakalomattam family, Mar Dionysius invested in landed property a portion of this, together with the donation made by Her Highness

the Rani on behalf of Syrian youths, and therewith met the expenses of their education. The revered missionaries who have come to Kottayam in their profuse benevolence taught the youths at the Seminary, English and other languages, protected our children like loving fathers caused books to be printed for the benefit of all classes of people, rendered all necessary help in maintaining the prevailing ordinances of our Church caused the affairs of the Seminary to be administered with the annual interest drawn on the receipt of the Metropolitan, and allowed ordinations to be made agreeable to the request of the people and the authority and discretion of the prelates. While affairs were being thus conducted the missionaries took to managing the Seminary affairs without consulting the Metropolitan and themselves expended the interest money drawn on the receipt of the Metropolitan, dispersed from the Seminary. Some of the deacons who were under instruction conducted affairs in opposition to our discipline, and created schisms amongst us, all of which have occasioned much sorrow and vexation. For this reason we would not follow any faith or teaching other than *the Orthodox faith* and teaching of the Jacobite Syrian Christians, to the end that we may thereby obtain salvation through the prayers of the ever happy, holy and ever blessed *Mother of God*, the redresser of complaints, *and through the prayers of all saints*. May the Father and the Son and Holy Ghost be witness to it. *Amen.*

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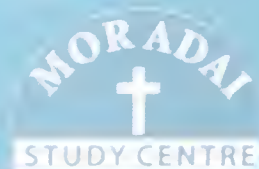
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THE SYRIAN JACOBITE CHURCH OF KERALA AND THE CHURCH MISSIONARY SOCIETY

Prof. O.M. MATHEW

The Church Missionary Society of England showed interest to start a 'Mission of Help' with the ancient Syrian Church in Kerala. Dr. Kerr and Dr. Buchanan were the pioneers in this venture. They made a permanent imprint in the history of the Syrian Church. The missionaries paved much reform in the life and work of the church. Later missionaries gave more importance to tailor suit the ancient Syrian church to the Low Church ideals of the reformation movement in England. The church in Kerala had to resist all sorts of encroachment into the faith and practices of the Church. This resistance is now part of History. Prof. Mathew has dealt with this topic in a very systematic and unprejudiced manner. This book will be a boon to all the ardent students of the history of the Church in Kerala.



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