

CHAPTER II

1831-1846

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

1. Mgr. Stabljini embarked for Rome in 1832, and Mgr. Francis Xavier, O. C. D., was appointed Vicar Ap. of Verapoly. There is nothing under the sun that can count on the approval and good pleasure of all men; the work of God,—and such a one is the institution of a Religious Congregation,—should prove its merit in the furnace of trials. No wonder, therefore, if evil reports reached the ears of the new Vicar Apostolic concerning the Mannanam enterprise. Thereupon, Fr. Porukara was appointed Vicar of the two Latin churches, Kayankulam and Pillathop, of the present Diocese of Quilon, and Fr. Chavara, that of Southern Pallipuram. They had to leave Mannanam, giving up all there which they held most dear, and to assume their new charges which separated them widely from each other. Every one felt the blow very keenly. With the advice of Fr. Palakal, they accepted the trial as coming from the hands of God Almighty, and entrusting the care of the future to Divine Providence, they obeyed the order of the Vicar Apostolic without a word of complaint. (*See Page 115.*)

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

5. Fr. Porakara and Fr. Chavara keenly felt the need of the Apostolate of the Press in Malabar. Fr. Chavara taking the lead, established under the patronage of St. Joseph, a Printing Press at Mannanam in 1844—the first Catholic Press in Malabar. This premier establishment, with the blessing of its pious founder, has to this day continued to spread sound Catholic literature throughout the whole Malayalam-speaking States. The "Nazrani Deepika," the only Catholic Daily newspaper in India,* and the "Flower of



The present St. Joseph's Press, Mannanam.

Carmel" a monthly periodical, are regularly published by this Press. The "Nazrani Deepika" is the undaunted champion of the political and social interests of the Catholics of Malabar, while the "Flower of Carmel" is intended to strengthen the Faithful in piety and devotion. The amount of good "Deepika" does to society and to Religion is beyond praise. During the Great War, the paper opened a subscription for the stricken people of Central Europe. The amount reached many thousands and won unstinted appreciation and thanks from Rome.

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

CHAPTER IX. 1887-1890

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

21. This ardent lover of Jesus in the most adorable Sacrament of the Altar introduced in 1867 the Forty Hours' Adoration in



The Grotto of Our Lady, Monastery, Mutholy.

Mannanam, where it is most solemnly kept up every year. Other Monastery churches and recently some of the Parish churches adopted this solemnity in honour of the Holy Eucharist, with innumerable spiritual benefits.

22. Fr. Cyrino Eliseus (Porukara) seems to have had a very definite intuition of his approaching death, for which he made the minutest preparation. He said Mass, handed over his Mass accounts to the Procurator, saying it was his last, and then, as usual, went through

his ordinary routine of life in the forenoon. Before the "Angelus" bell went, he had a slight indisposition, when, calling for the Superior of the house, he urgently asked for the last Sacraments, which he received with edifying devotion and afterwards, peacefully enjoying a foretaste of heaven, passed away from this vale of tears.

CHAPTER VI. 1861-1866

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



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

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



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