

SOME
HISTORICAL NOTICES

OF
COCHIN

ON THE
MALABAR COAST

COMPILED

BY THE

REV. T. WHITEHOUSE. B. A.

MINISTER OF

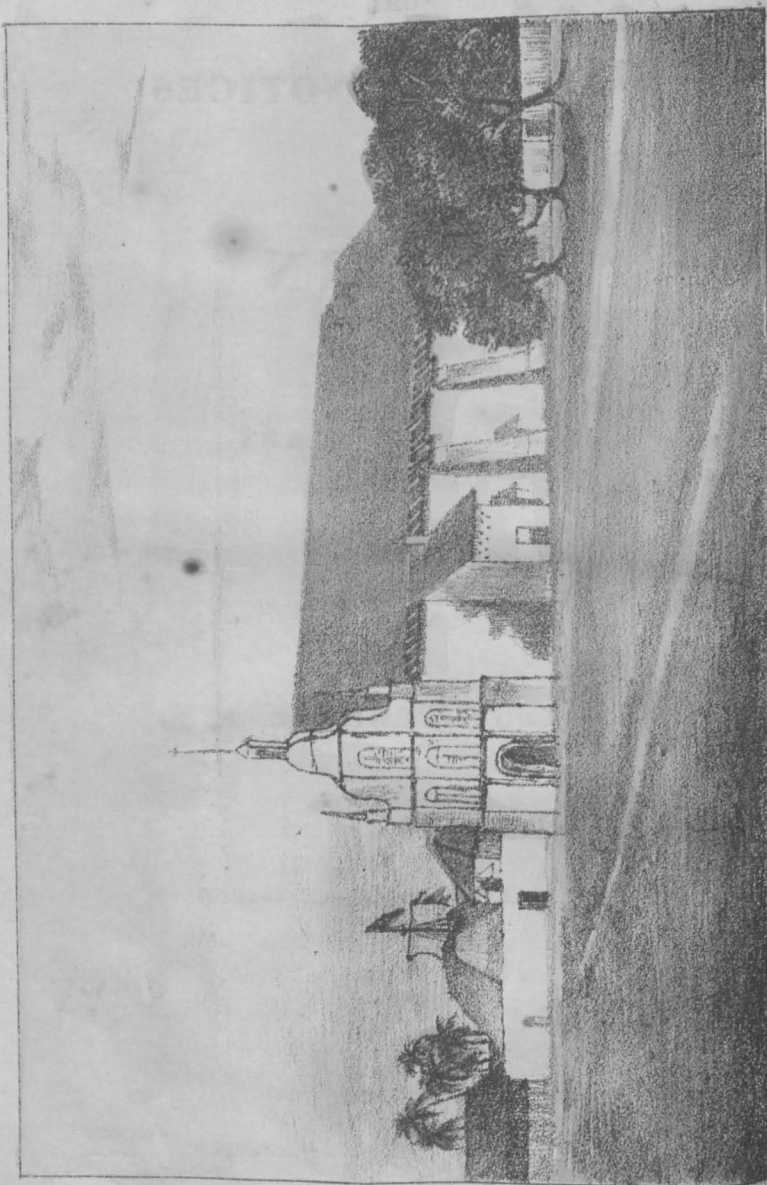
THE GOVERNMENT CHURCH COCHIN.

GOTTAYAM C. M. PRESS 1869.

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INTRODUCTION.

The bygone history of a town with which one is intimately associated is naturally a subject of deep interest; and when that town has played a prominent part in days of old, and the records which throw light thereon, (at least those within reach,) are rapidly diminishing, whilst its traditions are even still more rapidly passing into oblivion, any effort, however feeble, to rescue the memory of the past from utter extinction, is not to be despised.

Feelings of the above kind have influenced the compiler, and induced him to throw together the following notices of Cochin, which have been for some seven years past accumulating in his common place Book, hoping they may afford some scraps of information which may prove as interesting to others as they have been to himself. Doubtless had he had the opportunity of visiting the noble libraries of Europe a far fuller narrative might have been furnished, many gaps in the history filled up, and obscure references made more distinct; but, with the comparatively few books which came within his reach, what could be done, has been done, so that he would commend his humble attempt to the *charitable* judgment of the public, adopting the sentiment of the historian of the Maccabees as his own: "If I have done well, and as is fitting the story, it is that which I desired; but, if slenderly and meanly, it is that which I could attain unto."

The compiler takes this opportunity of acknowledging a debt he owes to a friend, connected

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MADRAS

INTRODUCTION

with the Basle Missionary Society, (whose eminence as a scholar is well known on the Western Coast,) for some of the interesting particulars, which he kindly furnished, partly from notes of his own, and partly through the loan of two or three scarce books. He is further greatly indebted to two other friends, a lady and a gentleman, for valuable assistance in the production of the lithographic illustrations, without these amateur contributions, he feels his pamphlet would be deprived of no small portion of its interest.

Should any profits be derived from the sale of this little work, they will be devoted to some charitable object bearing upon the moral and spiritual elevation of the Native community of Cochin, a class which has been sadly neglected, both by the Protestant Dutch, and the Protestant English.

HISTORICAL NOTICES

OF COCHIN.



In the year A. D. 1500, the good folks living in the cocoanut topes which fringe the sea coast boundaries of the Cochin Rajah's Dominions, had their curiosity excited (so far as the enervating effects of a tropical sun in Lat. 10° N. would admit) by the unusual sight of a fleet of ten or twelve strange looking ships, sailing towards the south, hugging the shore as much as they could with safety, and evidently looking out for a favourable haven. At last the inlet to the great Backwater of Travancore was descried; they steered for it; passed the bar of the Wypeen River with safety; sailed up its deep channel, and anchored safely in one of the finest harbours their eyes had ever seen.

It was Christmas eve, Dec^r. 24th; and had they been Englishmen, they would have thought probably of the roast beef of their native land and its usual accompaniments (supposing Sailors could indulge in such luxuries in the reign of our first Tudor sovereign): but they were Portuguese mariners, serving under Admiral Cabral, who had been sent to India by the king of Portugal to follow up the discoveries which Vasco da Gama had made two years before; and they had come to a land where to kill a low caste man was considered a much less heinous offence than killing an ox. }

The Admiral was in quest of a cargo. He had been disappointed at Calicut, where he had attempted to trade with the subjects of the Rajah of that place, who was

known as the Samorin; and in short he had had a serious quarrel with that then dreaded potentate, and had lost several of his men in a conflict which ensued. He hesitated a while sending on shore, for, in the lawless semi-piratical habit of the day, he had more than once fired at some of the country craft connected with the trade of the Cochin territory; but presently a boat was lowered, and a messenger, in colour as dark as any of the Cochin Rajah's own subjects, but habited as a Portuguese Friar, soon landed, as the bearer of a message to the illustrious sovereign of the state, OONNI RAMA KOIL TERUMULPADA. The messenger in fact was a native of the country who had been taken to Portugal by Vasco da Gama, there proselytized to the Romish faith, and then admitted into one of their religious fraternities. Malayalim being his mother tongue, and having become, by his new faith, a warm adherent of the Portuguese, Friar Miguel was well fitted for the negotiation, and soon won the Cochin Rajah over to the interests of Portugal.

There were several reasons why the Cochin Rajah should forget the insults offered to his flag, and be ready to seek a friendly alliance with these "outlandish foreigners." *First*, from the news which had reached him of their recent exploits at Calicut, he felt they were a people not to be trifled with. *Secondly*, he thought they might be the means of reviving trade in his once flourishing port. *And lastly* he hoped, by their means, to assert his independence of the Samorin, who had lately been seriously encroaching upon the royalties of Cochin, and had gone so far, as to force the Rajah to engage to retire from public life, when the infirmities of old age should come on, whilst the right of nominating his successor was to be left to the Samorin; which very naturally caused the blood of all the Perumals to boil, not a little.*

The spacious harbour, which the Portuguese then entered for the first time by the Wypeen River, was comparatively recent in its formation. Cranganor had been

* The Cochin Rajahs are considered to be lineal descendants of the ancient *Perumals*, or Sovereigns of Malabar, and are of the Kshetriya caste; while the Samorin Rajah was merely the descendant of one of their Nair chieftains.

the great emporium of trade for those parts, until the year A. D. 1341: when, by one of those geological changes, which have not been unfrequent in the history of the Western coast of India, that vast body of water flowing down from the western Ghauts, which had formerly discharged itself at Cranganor, broke through the narrow sandy bank which separated it from the main sea, and formed what is now called the Wypeen River.

The Cochin Rajahs had enjoyed the advantages of this outlet to the ocean for about a century and a half, and had been greatly enriched by the commerce which their subjects carried on, chiefly with merchants who were Nestorian Christians from N. W. India, Persia, and other neighbouring countries. The trade of the port was then in a very depressed state; for the more energetic and enterprising Samorin had enticed away some of the merchants to Calicut, whilst his Mussalman allies on the coast did their best to ruin the interests of the Christian traders.

The Cochin Rajah sent friendly messages to the Portuguese Admiral to land. Cabral immediately did so, and after exchanging presents, received from the Rajah permission to trade with his subjects. With an expedition not to be despised even in the nineteenth century, cargoes of pepper, and other coveted commodities of the country, were speedily supplied at Cochin and Cranganor, and within 20 days the ships were all ready to sail back to Portugal. This was the first merchandise from Cochin, which ever found its way round the Cape to supply the wants of the Western World.

Here we should notice, that, on his way to India, Cabral, having discovered Brazil, brought with him seeds of many of the tropical fruits of South America, amongst others, the custard apple and guava, the pine, papaya, and cashew apple; the last of which still bears the name of the Feringhee, or Ship mango. These interesting and useful additions were thus made to the natural productions of South India; and hereby Cabral proved himself a benefactor to its tribes.

A few months after Cabral had sailed, four more ships

arrived from Portugal, having first visited Calicut to chastise the perfidious Samorin and his Moplay allies. Their commander was Juan de Nova Castella. The Rájah received him with favour, assuring him that though he was displeased with Cabral for forcibly taking some of his subjects to Europe, yet his affection for the Portuguese in general was unabated. Through the Rájah's aid Cabral soon got the freight he needed, and left the place. On his way home he discovered St. Helena, May 21st. 1502.

The next illustrious adventurer from the west who visited Cochin was no less a personage than the renowned Vasco da Gama himself. This was his second voyage to the Indies, having been sent under the express orders of Manuel king of Portugal to punish the Samorin for his treachery, and insolence. This he did with a fearful degree of severity, and then sailed with his 20 ships to Cochin. The few Portuguese, who had settled at Cochin, reported favourably of the Rájah, and Gama took an early opportunity of paying his respects.

All did not pass off smoothly at his first interview with the Rájah. Gama desired permission to erect proper storehouses for their merchandise, and to fix a certain price for pepper, their chief article of trade. To this the Rájah merely replied, that he would *think* about these things. This did not at all suit the "go-a-head man from the West;" so he went away in a huff. The Rájah however had the good sense to follow the angry man in a boat, and to use his best endeavours to pacify him; in which he succeeded. Da Gama then handed his requirements to the Rájah in writing; at the same time presenting him with a regal crown he had brought from Portugal; and in return received presents of golden bracelets, and valuable medicines.

The Rájah had a complaint to make to which Da Gama patiently listened. It was a victualling difficulty. The European sailors after their long sea voyage, and salt diet, longed for fresh meat; and to satisfy this natural craving, certain Moplays had been guilty of the very heinous offence of killing some cows, and supplying the ships with Indian beef. Da Gama, wishing to please the Hindoo

prince, promised that he would put a stop to this. Shortly after three Moplays came to offer beef for sale; and Da Gama, with very questionable severity, at once handed them over as criminals to the local authorities, who forthwith condemned them to be hanged as malefactors!

After Da Gama had left for Europe, the Samorin sent messages to the Cochin Rájah, threatening to invade his territories with a body of some 50,000 Nairs then assembled at Ponany, unless he at once gave up the Portuguese, who had been left behind under his protection. Many of the people of the place urged him to deliver up these haughty foreigners at once; and even the Portuguese themselves, fearing the consequences of such an invasion, requested the Rájah to send them quietly by sea to Cannanore; but he nobly replied, that "loss of Kingdom would be a smaller evil than breach of trust."

An attempt was then made to stop the Samorin's force at Chetwyde under the direction of Naraina, a nephew of the Cochin Rájah, but without success; chiefly through the treachery of the native brahmin officials, who had charge of the commissariat arrangements. The Rájah fainted when he heard that Naraina, and two other nephews, had perished in this battle; but recovering himself, lost no time in securing the safety of his Portuguese allies in a small fort on the island of Wypeen. The Samorin with his host came to the walls of Cochin shortly after; a battle followed, in which the Cochin Rájah was wounded, and narrowly escaped death. The walls were entered by the enemy, and the houses sacked and burnt. The Rájah, and a few faithful friends took shelter in the fort at Wypeen, whilst the Calicut Nairs held Cochin during the whole of the monsoon.

The native prognosticators read plainly in the stars, that the Samorin was destined to be supreme sovereign of Cochin, and all the other native states from Gokurnum to Cape Comorin; but they "imagined a vain thing;" for on Saturday evening, the 2nd. Sept. 1503, every loyal heart in Wypeen was filled with raptures of delight at seeing six Portuguese vessels sailing towards the harbour. Next morning they entered the river; and on the day follow-

ing their chief commander, Albuquerque, landed to pay his respects to the Rajah. The Samorin's garrison did not need expelling by force, the very sight of Albuquerque's vessels had been enough to make them at once take to their heels; but Albuquerque seized an early opportunity of punishing some of the petty Rajahs in the neighbourhood, who had deserted their liege lord in the hour of his necessity, and he reinstated the Cochin Rajah in the free exercise of his power.

It was gratitude for this timely succour which led to the Portuguese obtaining an independent settlement at Cochin; permission was granted to build a fort at the mouth of the river, and wood was supplied for the purpose. It was constructed chiefly of the stems of cocoanut trees, united with iron bands, whilst a rampart of stones and sand formed the inner defence. The Rajah often went to see the progress of the work, and could not understand why the Portuguese themselves worked in the sun and rain, and did not hire coolies for the purpose. This primitive fort when finished was called *Manuel-cotta*, or *Fort Manuel*, * after the king of Portugal, and was opened with all due ceremony. Within the fort they further erected a church of wood, which was dedicated to St. Bar-tholomew, and most probably occupied the site on which the more spacious structure of the Franciscans afterwards arose. The completion of the Fort was celebrated by a religious procession, and service in this little church, at which a Franciscan Friar, named Gaston, preached; telling his audience, with much truth, that on that day a door was opened for the true God to come to India, and they must proclaim to the ignorant natives the name of Jesus. The Native Rajah was amongst the hearers, and manifested great interest in all the ceremonies he witnessed.

After Albuquerque had gone back to Europe, the Samorin made a second attempt upon Cochin, but was

defeated by Pasegu (who had been left in command of *Manuel-cotta*); on which occasion a mere handful of Portuguese successfully opposed an army of 57,000 Nairs, accompanied with 160 *Patamars*, at Kumballum. Three separate engagements were fought, one on Palm-Sunday, a second on Easter-Sunday, and a third on Easter-Tuesday, in March 1504. When the Cochin Rajah trembled and wept at the sight of the Samorin's host, Pasegu, with a degree of faith, worthy of a more enlightened man, quieted his fears, by saying, "you are afraid of *numbers*, but *we* need not be, for our God is not an idol of stone." So many perished in these conflicts, that the river was quite reddened with their blood; whilst the Nairs who escaped cursed the Brahmins, who had urged them on to this most desperate struggle by astrological predictions of their ultimate success. The conflicts between the Samorin and the Portuguese did not end here; but these are enough to show the kind of opposition he manifested, and the honourable way in which the Cochin Rajah remained firm to his European allies.

When security of life and property was completely established, Portuguese Cochin rapidly grew into a large and flourishing town. Before Goa was built, it was looked upon as the official residence of the Viceroy of India; and here several of the religious orders of the church of Rome established themselves. The church of the Franciscans (though not one of their best churches) still stands as a specimen of the spacious edifices they erected; and the foundations of the Dominican convent (another of their structures) are still traceable around the plot of ground now occupied by the Free Schools. The Augustine monks and the Jesuits also had their establishments within the walls.

Towards the close of the year 1524 Cochin was again honored with a visit from Vasco da Gama. He came laden with royal favours, and dignified with the title of High Admiral of the Indies, as well as that of Viceroy; but he came also to die! He was taken seriously ill whilst at this place, and expired on the 24th. or 25th. of December 1524. His body was interred in the chancel of the

* Joam de Barros says that Francisco de Albuquerque who superintended the construction of the Fort having a singular devotion to the Apostle James, and the vessel in which he sailed being called by the name of this Saint, desired that the Fort should be designated *Santiago*. Perhaps *Manuel-cotta* was its civil, and *Santiago* its ecclesiastical name?

church of the Franciscan friars, which is now used as the English Protestant Church; but after resting there for several years, one of his sons (in order to fulfil a clause of his father's will) removed his bones to the family vault in his own land; where, according to a recent writer, who seems to found his statement on good authority, the epitaph may still be read: "Here lies the great Argonaut, D. Vasco da Gama, first count of Vidigucira, Admiral of the East Indies, and its first discoverer."

Da Gama's advanced age having rendered it more than probable he might die before the term of his office expired, three other commissions were made out, and entrusted to his care, specifying successors to the Viceroyalty. The envelope containing these documents was sealed with the royal seal of John III of Portugal, and endorsed with the following inscription: "not to be opened till (which God forbid) Don Vasquez da Gama, Viceroy and High Admiral of the Indies, shall have departed this life." The royal seal was broken by the chief officials in the great church at Cochin, and Henry Menezes found to be the person nominated by the king as Da Gama's immediate successor.

It was from Cochin that the first Romish mission emanated for the conversion of the fishermen on the + Coromandel coast. So early as 1532, (which was ten years before Xavier arrived in India,) the attention of the Portuguese was directed to this people. A certain merchant, named D'Cruz, going to Tuticorin for pearls, had his sympathies awakened for these poor natives, who were then suffering from the oppressions of their Mussalman neighbours; and he advised them to look to Malabar for a redress of their grievances. D'Cruz took some of them with him to Cochin; where they were forthwith baptized, and then returned home with several armed vessels, in which were certain priests, who had not been long amongst them before they admitted 30 villages, by baptism, into nominal connection with the church of Rome.

Xavier himself seems to have passed through Cochin, when on his way to his mission fields in the vicinity of

Cape Comorin; and in course of time more ecclesiastics of his order followed, till at last the Jesuits formed an establishment for themselves within the walls of the Fort, and built a large church, the lofty and massive steeple of which rising near the corner of the coast, formed the most marked feature in the town when viewed from the sea.

In the year 1557, at the request of Sabastian, king of Portugal, one of the churches of Cochin, called S. Cruz, was raised to the dignity of a cathedral, by a bull of Pope Pius IV. A staff of clergy, consisting of a Rector and six other ecclesiastics, had been attached to this church before it became a Cathedral; but now a Bishop was to be added to their number. The first Bishop of Cochin was D. Georgius Themudo, of the Dominican order, who had laboured, together with the first Jesuits, among the fishermen of Travancore. He was consecrated Feb. 4th. 1558, but was afterwards translated to Goa, as were his two immediate successors. It is a remarkable fact connected with the R. C. Episcopate at Cochin, that out of the list of 21 Bishops given by the Carmelite, Paoli, in his "Indian orientalis Christiana," some were translated not very long after their appointment; others were chosen, but declined the honor; and others again were consecrated, but never resided in their diocese; so that, he observes, few of the Prelates arrived in their diocese, and thus during the greater part of its existence the see has been vacant! This does not say much for *her* parental affection, who proclaims herself, "Mother and Mistress of all churches." The venerable tower on which the flag staff is fixed formed part of the old cathedral, and from the basements of massive columns recently uncovered on its ancient site, and the remains of others lying at the landing place close by, it appears that the interior was constructed, in a great measure, of granite, and must hence have cost a vast sum of money. The island of Wendurti, in the neighbouring Backwater, formed part of the Cathedral endowment.

The Jesuits of Cochin so early as 1577, made some attempts at Book making. This remarkable Society has ever been, in its way, the friend of Education when under

purely Romish influence; and thus, it was the first of the religious orders in attempting to print in the vernacular languages of South India. The honor of having been the first to cut out the Malayalim letters for a printed book belongs to Joannes Gonsalvez, a Spanish lay Jesuit; and the first book that issued from a press in Cochin was printed with his type, and was entitled; *The Rudiments of the Catholic Faith.** Other Jesuits at Ambalacata, and Punical, shortly after made similar attempts in Tamil.

Towards the close of the century Cochin was visited by Don Alexis de Menezes, archbishop of Goa, who had come from Rome, with full powers from Pope Clement VIII, to reduce the ancient Syrian church of Malabar into obedience to the See of Rome. He arrived at Cochin, January 26th. 1599. A flight of steps was specially constructed for his embarkation; the Governor, Don Antonio de Noronha, the Bishop, and the whole city assembled to receive him, with great pomp and acclamation. Menezes was a man of great energy, and literally of the *militant* turn, able with equal skill to direct "the cannons of Portugal, and the bulls of Rome." One of his first acts in Cochin was characteristic of the man. He called the council of the city together, and urged them at once to cooperate with him in an attempt, he was deeply interested in, at reducing a fortress of Mahomedan pirates, at a place called Cunahle. The good folks of Cochin immediately raised and armed 150 men, at their own expense, and sent them in five strong vessels, well supplied with ammunition, to join the armament assembled before this place. The Archbishop, to encourage and keep them to the point, also sent one of his best yachts, manned with some of his own retainers.

* The Protestant Missionary Sartorius, under the date of February 22nd, 1732, mentions having met with a Tamil book at Pulicat, entitled *Christiano Wanakkam*, or Christian Worship, printed in 1579 at Cochin, in the college of the mother of God," (*Collegis da madre de Dios*.) for the use of the Christians on the Pearl Fishery Coast. He had also previously seen at Tranquebar another Tamil Book called *Doctrina Christiana*, printed at the same College, and bearing the same date; the author being a Jesuit named P. Marcos Jorge, and the translator another member of the same Society, named Anriquez. (See "*Notices of Madras and Cuddalore in the last century*"- pub. in London 1858, p. 105-6.)

The zealots among the Portuguese of Cochin seem to have taken a further interest in all the after proceedings of the archbishop, by which he, at length, rivetted the galling yoke of Rome on the unwilling necks of the Syrian community. When he commenced his visitation some of the gentry accompanied him to Vaipi-cotta, near Cranganor, where the Jesuits had an educational establishment; and when at Kadaturutti, near Cottayam, he wished to captivate the refractory Syrians, who would not yield to his arguments, by the pomp and ceremony of high mass, celebrated in the true Romish fashion, he sent for a full choir from Cochin, hoping that the Choristers might effect, by sweet sounds, what he had failed to do by sermons.

Menezes's visitation led to the celebrated Synod of Udiamparoor; and when he burnt the books of the poor persecuted Syrians many of the grandes of Cochin were there, to swell the *Te Deum* by which he celebrated his triumph over heresy!

Menezes left Cochin before the close of the year 1599. Previous to his departure he had an interview with the Rajah, at which he distinctly set before him the claims of Christianity; but whatever good impression he may have made on the mind of this heathen prince, must have been soon effaced, since his first act after this conference was to confer, whilst yet in Cochin, on the Rajah of Porcaad, the title of *Brother-in-arms to the king of Portugal*. This was done with much attendant pomp, which only served to increase the ill feeling of the Cochin Rajah, who had hitherto been the *only* prince on the coast, who enjoyed this honor; and it has been thought that Menezes, hereby, began to sow those seeds of enmity against the Portuguese, which ultimately led to the overthrow of their power on the Malabar coast.

The treatment which the Syrians met with from the Portuguese may be judged of from the fact that three of their Bishops came to an untimely, or dishonoured end, through their machinations. In 1567, by order of Pope Pius V, Mar Joseph was seized when at Cochin, * and

* This prelate mixed a good deal with the Roman Catholics of Cochin, and used sometimes to instruct their children in religion. On one occasion, when

shipped off at once to Portugal, and thence forwarded to Rome, where he ended his days; but in what way is not known. Pope Pius V. is described as one who "caused every one that dissented in the least from the dogmas of Rome to be put to death," and hence, we have cause to suspect that Mar Joseph did not end his days in peace. In 1578 a similar order was issued for the kidnapping of one of his successors, Mar Simeon; to effect which some of the Franciscan friars were employed, who decoyed him to Cochin, whence he was sent to Rome, and tried as a heretic by its Inquisition. There is every reason to believe he ended his days in the dungeons of the Inquisition in Portugal.

The fate of the third Syrian Bishop, Mar Attalla, or Theodore, * was, if any thing, more affecting still. Orders from the Pope had long been in existence directing the Portuguese authorities to waylay every Bishop coming from Syria to Malabar, and they had been too successful in preventing any from reaching Malabar for many years. At last a Bishop, named Attalla, managed to arrive in the country, but he was immediately ensnared, and kept in close custody by the Jesuits. Some Syrian priests however, hearing of this, contrived to get access to him, and at once reported the case to their brethren; who were hereby more than ever exasperated against the Portuguese. Despairing of getting him out of the hands of the Jesuits, by any other means, they resorted at length to arms. They assembled, it is said, to the number of 25,000; and accompanied by their Archdeacon, and a large body of their clergy, they repaired to Muttencherry, under the very walls of Cochin. The Portuguese, alarmed

talking with a group of children about the Virgin, he told them it was not right to call her "Mother of God." Faithful to the principles of their Church these children reported the heresy to the Romish Bishop, who did not think it beneath his dignity to use them further as his spies, directing them still to go to him, with the injunction that they should carefully bring back all he said! As may be easily supposed, more statements, which Rome is pleased to call *heresy*, were reported to the Bishop, which led to the speedy apprehension, and banishment of Mar Joseph. La Croze p. 57.

* Attalla is the Arabic form of the Greek name Theodore. (Houghs Christianity Vol II, p. 300.)

at this array, immediately shut the fort gates, and mounted their cannons for action; resolved to hold out to the last extremity, rather than admit the native Christians to see their Bishop. The Rane of Cochin took the part of her Christian subjects, and urged that Attalla should be liberated; but all to no purpose; he was sent by ship to Goa, consigned to a dungeon in the Inquisition, and at length burnt as a heretic! A. D. 1654. *

Another version of the fate of Attalla is given, in which the odium of his death is thrown upon the Portuguese authorities at Cochin, who are said to have drowned him secretly, either out at sea, or in the deep part of the Backwater, at the time when the Syrians were assembled in the neighbourhood. This story seems to have been believed by the Syrians themselves, since a representation of his death by drowning, in alto relievo carving, is still to be seen in the Syrian Church at Mavelicare; which piece of carving once formed part of a shrine erected to his memory, but was removed some time ago by the present Metran, because the Syrians, in their veneration for his memory, abused it to superstitious purposes. Hough thinks that the story of his being drowned by the Portuguese is a lying invention of the Jesuits, to shift the horrid burden of this crime from their own shoulders. One thing is plain, whoever did it, it was truly a deed of darkness; one too, we may naturally suppose, the Judge of all the earth would not allow to go unpunished, even in this world. †

Eight years after this the Portuguese authorities, both civil and ecclesiastical, suffered most severely for the innocent blood they had shed. For more than half a century the Dutch had been struggling with them for supremacy in the East, and with so much success, that at last

* The Carmelite Paoli, speaking of him, says: "ac anno 1654 Goae flammis datus interiit." (Rev: XVII, 6.)

† They also endeavoured to induce the Cochin Rajah to banish all the Mussalmans from his port; promising thereon to prove themselves the means of his reaping double the profit from their traffic. To this he replied; "These are my subjects from days of old; and it is they who have erected my city; so that it is not possible for me to expel them". (Hough Vol. I. p. 266.)

this, had observed that he had a lurking preference to the Dutch, and had hence curtailed his power as much as they could, and entrusted the supreme authority to his Aunt. He spoke Portuguese remarkably well; showed considerable acquaintance with military affairs; and made arrangements to supply the Dutch with fresh provisions, from the neighbouring villages.

Van Goens landed without much difficulty to the South of Cochin, and took up his position within the bare walls of a Church, which the Portuguese had attempted to destroy on the previous day. His next movement was an attack upon the palace of the Rancee, where some hundreds of Nairs were assembled to aid the Portuguese. This palace, according to native authorities, had been erected by the Portuguese for the Rajahs of Cochin, about 60 years after their first arrival, and probably occupied the site of the present Muttencherry palace.

On the approach of the Dutch, the Nairs, primed with intoxicating drugs, made a furious onset with long swords, which they held with both hands. Many of the Dutch were beaten down; but rallying their remaining strength, they drove the Nairs back within the Palace walls, where a fearful struggle ensued, which did not end till 400 Nairs fell before their opponents. A spirited young Dutch officer, named Henry Adrian Van Rheede, then only an ensign, entered the Palace, and made the Rancee his prisoner; but at the entreaty of her nephew, the young Rajah, she was treated with kindness by the Dutch. She is spoken of as being an old woman, very plain in appearance, but covered with gold ornaments, and jewels. This engagement took place in February 1662.

One thing that particularly struck the European troops in this engagement, was the want of anything like national spirit among their opponents; they could not understand how the Nairs should fight so furiously, whilst fishermen, and other classes, apparently of the same nation and country, looked on with indifference! It is however the natural result of the exclusive caste system of the Hindoos.

On the day following the engagement at the Palace, an

assault was made upon the Fort, led by an officer named Was, which nearly succeeded; but unfortunately the leader fell, and the Dutch retired with considerable loss. After this, trenches were opened, and a breach made; but the besieged, being in great force, repaired by night the injuries done by each day's fire. Thus matters went on for several weeks, till the Dutch, hearing that the Porcaad Rajah was coming to the assistance of the Portuguese, with 6000 troops, and knowing that the monsoon was approaching, gave up the contest for a season. They however managed to quit their entrenchments by night, so quietly, that the besieged did not know that they had gone till noon on the following day; for a certain Constable Boerdorp, who was the last to embark, had run about all night, bawling out, "Stand," "halt," "who is there?" and similar expressions; whilst a Jewishally still sounded the hours, after every Dutchman had got safely off; by these simple stratagems were the Portuguese deceived, and all suspicion was hushed. Van Goens left 700 men in Fort Orange, and 500 in the Fort of Cranganor.

The dreaded monsoon having passed, on the 25th of October the Dutch forces returned, under a General named Hustaart. The Portuguese in vain opposed his landing, and in their desperation set fire to the convent of St. John, to prevent the Dutch occupying it. The latter however soon extinguished the flames, and made this building their head quarters. A month later Van Goens arrived, and the besieged were pressed more closely. In December the Rajah of Porcaad, the chief native ally of the Portuguese, arrived with a large force; and the Dutch, finding that he was throwing stores into the Fort, determined to attack his post at Ernaculam; where a bloody encounter took place, in which the Porcaad troops met the Dutch, whilst still in their boats, pulled them out by the hair of their head, and stabbed them most dexterously; nor could the Dutch beat them back, until fresh troops were brought up under command of a Captain Rec.

It was not before January 6th 1663, that the Dutch took the place, by assault. The Portuguese then surrendered their arms, and marched out of the Fort; which

was given up to pillage on the two following days; but the captors were disappointed in finding so little booty.

Besides the regular troops who defended the Fort there were 400 Topasses * in the place, who had greatly assisted the Portuguese, but were not included in the hasty terms which were made when the place was taken. Fearing the Dutch Soldiery in the hour of their triumph, these men drew up on Parade, just within the port at which the Portuguese were to go out, and the Dutch to enter, and swore that they would take terrible vengeance, and set the whole town on fire, if they were not forthwith treated on the same terms as the Portuguese. Van Goens attended to their request, and offered to take such of them as were willing into the service of the Dutch; a proposal to which many of them at once acceded.

The Rajah of Porcaad, who had rallied his forces, and was bringing a still greater army to succour his Portuguese allies, on hearing that the Fort was taken, sent word to the Dutch, that, as they were now masters, he would be as faithful to them as he had been to their predecessors.

It is further stated, by some writers, that just before the assault Van Goens had private information of a treaty being concluded between Holland and Portugal, but not wishing to leave an enterprise incomplete which had cost them so much, he kept the matter a profound secret; and when afterwards taunted by the Portuguese for this, he coolly replied, that he was simply playing the same farce which the Portuguese themselves had played upon the Dutch, at the capture of Fernambuco, in Brazil, not many years before. ¶

But whatever may be said of the subtle policy of those in command, and of the zest with which the com-

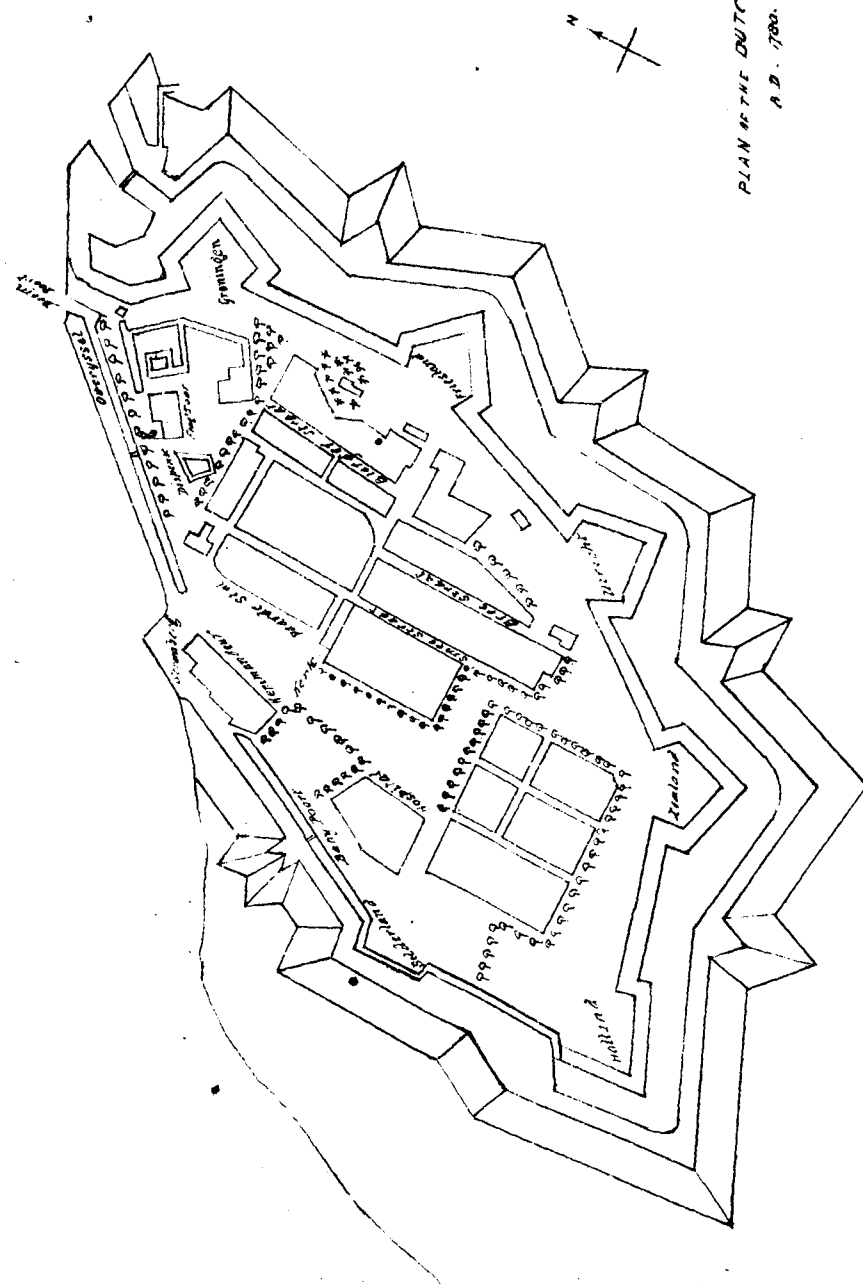
* Topasses were native Christians, born in the country, who were either the converts, or half caste descendants of the Portuguese.

¶ This story is not thought to be very probable, since the Dutch took Cannanore immediately after. The treaty of peace was in contemplation, and Van Goens would know more of its progress than the besieged officials in Cochin; this was probably all he knew.

mon soldiers would sack the houses of many unfortunate families who then lost their all; there were others, we hope, who entered the place with better feelings, and gladly flocked to the now deserted church of the Jesuit fathers to join in a service of thanksgiving, conducted (probably) by the learned and excellent Dutch Chaplain, Philip Baldeus, who has handed down to posterity an interesting history of the siege. There was another community in the neighbourhood who had more cause for thanksgiving even then the Dutch, and these were the poor Jews, who having long been chastised with whips, had, of late, had the whips exchanged for scorpions, on account of their manifest preference to the more tolerant rule of the Protestant Dutch. The Portuguese did not forget that a Jew had aided the embarkation of the Dutch, by tolling the hours in their deserted camp, and that bell had proved a death knell to many of this unhappy people; for the Portuguese had wreaked their vengeance, in the interim between the first and second part of the siege, by burning their houses and synagogues, and murdering all who did not escape their hands by flight.

The Dutch leader, Hustaart, shortly after embarked to lay siege to Cannanore, which was also a Portuguese settlement. According to Paoli, Peter de Bitter and Charles Valkenburg, leading officers in the Dutch fleet, were left in charge of Cochin, and acted as its first governors; but shortly after, in the same year, one Ludolff Colster appears as sole Governor, 1663.

Having once established themselves as Masters of the place, the Dutch made considerable alterations. Thinking the Fort too large, they contracted it to one third of what it was. Indeed General Hustaart advocated a still further contraction, and advised the construction of a small Pentagon Fort, only one third the size of that which they finally decided on. The Fort, as eventually completed by the Dutch, was strengthened by seven strong bastions, which were called after the names of the seven United Provinces, Holland, Zealand, Utrecht, Friesland &c. It was further faced with curtains so thick that two rows of large trees were planted on them, to afford shade



during the hot season. Accommodation was provided for a large body of soldiers within the walls, 4000 being the complement in time of peace, whilst as many as 15,000 could be received (it is said) in time of war and tumult.

One of the first acts of the Dutch was to order all European Romish Priests to quit their territory: after which they demolished all the convents and Churches of the place; except the Church of the Franciscans, which they converted into their Government Church, after having ejected all its superstitious images, and ornaments; and the Cathedral of S. Cruz, which they retained as a store house for pepper, rice, and other products of the country, using its tower for the flagstaff of the port.

Most of the streets were probably allowed to stand as they had been arranged by the Portuguese, simply receiving Dutch names; * and the only building of any importance they erected appears to have been the Commander's House, which was advantageously situated, at the N. W. angle of the Fort; its walls being washed by the river where it enters the sea. The river is said to have been at this time a quarter of a mile broad, and very deep; whilst the bar outside had 14 feet of water on it at spring tide. They also formed a botanical garden on the ground now belonging to the new Roman Catholic Church; and in keeping with this, the street to it from the Government Church, received the name of Bloemendaal (Flowerdale) Straat. A large part of the now pleasant, airy parade ground, was covered with a block of buildings, the principal of which were *het ammonitie Huys* (ammunition Depot) and *de Lyfwagt*. The present landing place for cabin boats was called *de Boom Port*, since it formed the entrance to a canal which extended the whole length of the present quay and was used for boats to bring in supplies of provisions, firewood and other necessaries, to the Bazaar. Its entrance being defended by a Boom, or beam, lying in the water, probably gave it the name of Boom port; and, to this day, it is still called, by some, the Watergate.

* The chief names were as follows: de Linde (Lime Tree) Straat, de Lily Straat, Heere (Gentleman) Straat, de Peeterceelie (Parsley) Straat, de Bree (Broad) Straat, de Smee (Smith) Straat, de Osse (Ox) Straat, de Burger (Citizen) Straat, de Kalven (Calf) Straat &c.

The Dutch officer who commanded at Cochin was looked upon as the first of his rank, on account of the importance of the place, and the extent of country under his charge; for the island of Wypeen was then under the rule of the Dutch; who showed their authority by forbidding all vessels to enter the Backwater at Cranganor, and Cochin, without their express sanction. They also had a small fort at Chetwye which commanded the northernmost inlet to this Estuary.

The destruction of the Churches and convents, together with the banishment of the European priests, filled the inhabitants of Cochin with consternation. Many of them, through fear, quitted the place altogether, though by so doing, their temporal prospects were ruined. Such was the panic that at last the Dutch, apprehending that they would soon have nothing left but empty houses and deserted streets, somewhat changed their policy, and by milder measures enticed the people back, restoring to their use the Franciscan Church which they had occupied. After a time however this church was again resumed, for the Dutch Reformed worship, whilst the Romanists were induced to make the town of Wypeen their head quarters, where their parish church still stands.

The banishment of the European ecclesiastics was so complete, that the Portuguese Carmelite Bishop, Joseph de St. Maria, was not exempted. This prelate, as the first vicar Apostolic of Malabar, * then exercised rule over the ancient Syrian Churches, which had been forced into subjection to the see of Rome; and it was a very critical period in the history of this tyranny to have the Protestant Dutch brought into such close proximity, so he took the earliest opportunity of waiting upon the victors, and was received by them in great state. So desperate was the strait to which he was reduced, that he stooped even to court so heretical a personage as the Dutch Protestant chaplain, that he might use his influence to obtain special

* The Bishop of Cochin was then probably residing at Goa. He was a Jesuit, by name Franciscus Barreto, who published an account of the Jesuits' Missions in South India, and died at Goa, Oct. 26th 1663.

permission for him to remain in his diocese; but he found all was of no avail; those in authority were inexorable; *go, he must.* He however met with more respect and consideration than any Protestant prelate would have done, in those days, under similiar circumstances, from Roman Catholic victors; and obtained permission to stay until he had consecrated a native Cattamar, called Alexander de Campo (or, as his countryman would call him, Parumbil Chandy) to supply his place. *

The Dutch however had more than their match among the Romish ecclesiastics; though the Jesuits broke up their establishments at Cochin and Cranganor, and travelling northwards established themselves in the territories of the Calicut Rajah, and though the Carmelite Bishop made a parade of obedience, by embarking for Goa, immediately after the consecration of Parumbil Chandy; his nearest brethren and fellow-workers, the Carmelite Missionaries, never, in reality, quitted the Cochin territories, but hid themselves in remote native villages, hoping for better times; which came in 1673, when one of their number, Matthæus à S. Joseph, so ingratiated himself into the favour of the Dutch Governor, Henry Van Rheede, that he allowed them to show themselves openly, and to build a house for Missionaries of their order at Chetiate, near Ernaculum, and not more than two or three miles from Cochin.

It may be thought that the conduct of the Dutch towards these Romish ecclesiastics was harsh and intolerant; they were however compelled to act thus, simply as a matter of self defence; for, so had these men mixed themselves up with political affairs, that the Rajah of Candy, in a treaty which he drew up with the Dutch, some short time before, inserted the following article, which refers to them: "His majesty will not suffer any priests, friars, or clergyman, to dwell in his dominions; but oblige them to depart as *the authors of all rebellions and the ruin of governments.*" Such was the dread which the Dutch had

* This man was the first native Bishop of the Roman Catholic faith, and was consecrated at Caduturutti, not far to the N. E. of Cottayam, which was then one of the chief strongholds of the Rome-Syrian party.

cause to have of jesuitical and priestly intrigue, that even the native Christians, in the Dutch territories, were compelled to take an oath, that they renounced all allegiance to the king of Portugal, and Portuguese Bishops. *

The Carmelite Matthœus, who won over the stern Hollander to look favourably upon Romish interests, was no ordinary man; being thoroughly educated, well versed in languages, and of pleasing manners, he gained the favour of Van Rheede and retained it, by aiding in the preparation of a work in which the Governor took a lively interest. This was the famous work on Indian Botany, known as the "*Hortus Malabaricus*;" which, after years of labour being expended on it, was finally published at Amsterdam between 1686 and 1703, in 12 Vols, folio, with 794 very nicely executed copper plate engravings.

In compiling the "*Hortus Malabaricus*" several persons, both natives and Europeans, were employed. Three Brahmins by the respective names of Ranga Botto, Vinaique Pandito, and Appu Botto, together with another scholar of the Chogan caste, called Itti Achuden, gave information about the medical properties of the plants. All the country round was diligently searched by natives best acquainted with the *habitats* of plants; and fresh specimens were brought to Cochin where the Carmelite Matthœus sketched them, with such striking accuracy, that there can be no difficulty in identifying each particular species, when you see his drawings. A description of each plant was written in Malayalim, and thence translated into Portuguese, by a resident at Cochin, named Emmanuel Carneiro. The Secretary to the Government, Herman Van Douep, further translated it into Latin, that the learned in all the countries of Europe might have access to it. The whole seems then to have passed under the supervision of another learned individual named Casarius, who was probably a Dutch Chaplain, and a personal friend of Van Rheede. A book of its size, on which such care was expended, must have consumed a fortune before

its publication; and confers honor, both on those who compiled it and the place where it was compiled.

All the Dutch Governors however were not so favourably affected towards the interests of the Romish Church as Van Rheede. Isaac Van Dielen, * who was appointed Governor in 1687, also favoured the Carmelite Missionaries, and helped them in many ways; but Gelmer Vosburgh, (1684) and some of his successors, were not at all disposed to throw the sunshine of their favour upon the fathers; which led to such serious disagreements, that the matter was referred to the councils of Europe for decision. An amicable adjustment was in due time effected in 1698, by the aid of the Emperor Leopold, whereby permission was obtained, from the Dutch East India Company, for the Carmelite Missionaries, with one Bishop of their order, to reside, and hold property, within their territories; on condition that they were either Belgians, Germans, or Italians, and were also well affected to the Dutch Government. The number of the Carmelite Missionaries was however to be limited to twelve with one Bishop; and all other European Ecclesiastics, belonging to the Church of Rome were to be excluded. Ever since this agreement these Missionaries have been acknowledged as the lawful guardians of the interests of Rome in this part of Malabar.

It is further worthy of a passing notice, that the person who negotiated this business with the Dutch E. I. Company, was a nephew of Pope Innocent XII; and that the Dutch took the opportunity of urging upon this Ecclesiastical negociator, that he should, in return, use his utmost endeavours to obtain religious liberty for their oppressed fellow Protestants in Hungary, from the Emperor Leopold. Matthœus died in 1691, at the advanced age of 91, seven years before the toleration which he had

* Van Dielen died in 1693. His tomb is still to be seen in the Government Church, Cochin. Van Rheede most probably is the same individual to whose memory an enormous tomb still stands at Surat. This tomb was formerly adorned with frescoes, escutcheons, and elegant wood work. Its original cost may be imagined, when one is told, that to repair it cost the Dutch Company Rs. 6,000! (See *Andersons English Western India*. p. 195.)

* Paoli says, that towards the end of last century, copies of this form of oath were still to be seen in the Dutch Secretary's office at Cochin.

laboured to secure became the established law; and was buried at Verapoli. *

From this time onwards, the Romanists had no real cause of complaint against their Dutch Rulers; and their Bishops were received at Cochin in all but regal state. When a Carmelite Vicar Apostolic first came to pay his respects to the Dutch Governor, he was received with great pomp, and conveyed in the Governor's own carriage, with a guard of soldiers, to his official residence; a salute being fired in his honor when he entered, and again when he quitted the Fort. On these occasions too, the Bishop's own body-guard sometimes consisted of as many as 5000 Native Christians, bearing swords and shields, to give them a military aspect. This custom continued as long as the Dutch held Cochin, Adrian Moens, the last Governor but one, having shown these marks of attention to D. Aloysius, the last Vicar Apostolic appointed under their rule.

We get a somewhat amusing peep at Cochin in the time of the Dutch, from the writings of the French author, M. Anguetil du Perron, who stayed at this place in the latter part of 1757, and the beginning of 1758. On landing, he tells us, his first visit was paid to the Governor, ¶ whom he calls "le Commandeur." He was at his country house, where he gave the French traveller a polite reception. Glasses of undiluted brandy, wine, beer, and tobacco pipes, quickly succeeded each other, and led to a copious flow of conversation. All this was only preparatory to dinner, to which he was invited to stay, and make the acquaintance of some of the leading Dutch ladies; to whom the stranger, fresh from Europe, was quite an object of attraction. One cannot wonder that settlements in the tropics were then so fatal to European constitutions, when intoxicating drinks were so freely, and unseasonably used, even in the best Society.

He afterwards visited M. Van Vechten, Secretary

* The Church of Verapoli, dedicated to St. Joseph, was built 1673. The Seminary was erected by a Carmelite Bishop named Florentius, who was consecrated 1746, and died 1773.

¶ The Governor at this time was a certain Gaspar de Jong.

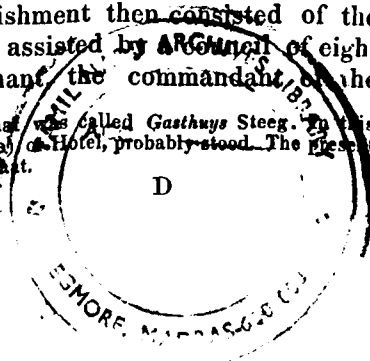
of Council, to whom he had a letter of introduction, and he describes him as a polished man, obliging, and well read; which is more than he says of the Dutch Chaplain, although he had a splendid library, "especially rich in commentaries on the Bible;" probably in the literary and antiquarian tastes of the Secretary there was more feeling in common, than in the theological views and studies of a Protestant Minister.

But the most amusing character he describes is "mine host," the hotel keeper, * who enjoyed the monopoly of entertaining strangers, for which he paid a good round sum to the Governor; and got it back, as well as he could, out of the unfortunate individuals who were compelled by circumstances to seek shelter under his roof. He was a Dutchman of those round proportions which one sees sketched to life by some of the Masters of the Flemish School, who "quaffed his dram, and smoked his pipe with inimitable grace," and was considered by his neighbours to be worth some 50,000 Rs. He had but one table in common with his guests, to which Du Perron had the honor to be admitted. Dining seemed to be the great event of his daily life; then he was to be seen in state, attended by two Caffres, and four little Negroes; of whom, one poured out his potations, another wiped his mouth, the third chased away the flies, whilst the fourth fanned him!

Du Perron found it much too expensive to live at the Hotel; and so, after making the acquaintance of the Carmelite Missionary, Father Anastase, who resided in Muttenchery, he arranged to go, and share with him his primitive domicile of two rooms, and his simple fare of eggs and rice, greatly to the disgust of "mine host," who grumbled at his precipitate retreat, and still more, at the smallness of the bill he had run up with him.

The Dutch establishment then consisted of the Governor, or Commander, assisted by a Council of eight persons, the Head Merchant, the commandant, &c. the

* The end of Bloemendaal Straat was called Gasthuys Steeg. In this quarter the Gasthuys (Guest house) or Hotel, probably stood. The present town Bazaar was called Prince Straat.



troops, the Fiscal (who also held the office of Notary) the Store keeper, the Bookkeeper, and the Cashier, (who were styled Under Merchants) and the Secretary. Two East Indians (Mestices), an individual styled "le Topaye," and the Customhouse officer, were also honored with the title of Councillor.

The troops are further described as a medley of nations, among which Germans had the preference after the Dutch; and then the French, which will in some measure account for the many German and French names met with amongst the present East Indian community of the place. A Captain's pay was only Rs. 50 per mensem, a Lieutenant's in proportion; whilst an Ensign got only 22 Rs! The common soldiers were worse off than their officers, their pay being 9 florins, paid in fanams, of which 20 went to a rupee, but they were subjected to such serious deductions for clothes &c. that they only received, for ordinary expenses, 110 out of 212 fanams! They appear to have been badly fed and clothed, and very subject to leprosy; which Du Perron attributes to their low diet, the use of saltfish, and the brackish water of the place. The number of the garrison is not mentioned, but as he speaks of a reinforcement coming from Batavia in 1757, consisting of 300 white, and 1700 coloured soldiers, and that this was enough to frighten the neighbouring Samorin, who was becoming troublesome, into submission, it does not appear that they supported a very large European force in this place, at this time.

The Commandant, like the Governor, was allowed some curious perquisites, to eke out his pay, deriving profits from the Leprosy Hospital, the Orphan house, * and from soldiers who wished to live exempt from military service; which together formed a sum so considerable as to place him in affluent circumstances!

In a bird's eye view of Cochin furnished by Du

* This building ('t Woeshuys) is said to have stood at the right hand corner as you enter *Heere Straat* (Gentleman Street,) and opposite the north corner of St. Andrews Church. A balance due, amounting to Rs 14,400 for the Orphan house and church Poor, and Rs 3,580 for the Leper Hospital remains still unclaimed from the Dutch Government. Rs 600 of the first mentioned sum was a gift of Governor Moens, "on certain conditions to the Parish poor."

Perron, the nave of the old Cathedral is represented as running in an easterly direction from the tower, whilst a massive gateway, at the corner where the offices of Messrs Wilson and Ritchie now stand, is surmounted by a Flag staff. * On the Cathedral green, and again on Candle Island in the Backwater, gallows are represented as standing, to strike terror in evil doers; this probably serves to verify the tradition, that the Dutch authorities used that secluded spot for the interment of criminals. The Dutch seem to have been fond of having country residences on some of the picturesque islands, with which the Backwater is studded, † as well in the more immediate environs to the South of Cochin where the Governor, and many of the upper classes had their "Garden Houses."

Though a Romanist, Du Perron bears testimony to the tolerant principles of the Dutch Government, stating that his co-religionists, the Romish Missionaries, as well as the Syrian Priests, (whom he styles Schismatics) were allowed to live quietly under their protection; and to exercise in all liberty, the functions of their ministry.

The Syrians, especially, were indebted to the Dutch; since they shielded them from the tyranny and oppression of the Romanists, and even assisted them in the management of their ecclesiastical affairs. In the latter however (according to Paulini) they were not always most successful, as the following cases will show: The Syrians had often urged the Dutch to fetch them a Bishop from Persia, to consecrate their Metran, Thomas de Campo, about the regularity of whose appointment they had some doubts; at last the most influential merchant in Cochin, who was a Jew, named Ezekial, undertook the matter, and brought from

* At the opposite end of Messrs Wilson and Co's premises was the Main-guard, and here, within the memory of some still living, there was a clock containing a fine bell to strike the hours.

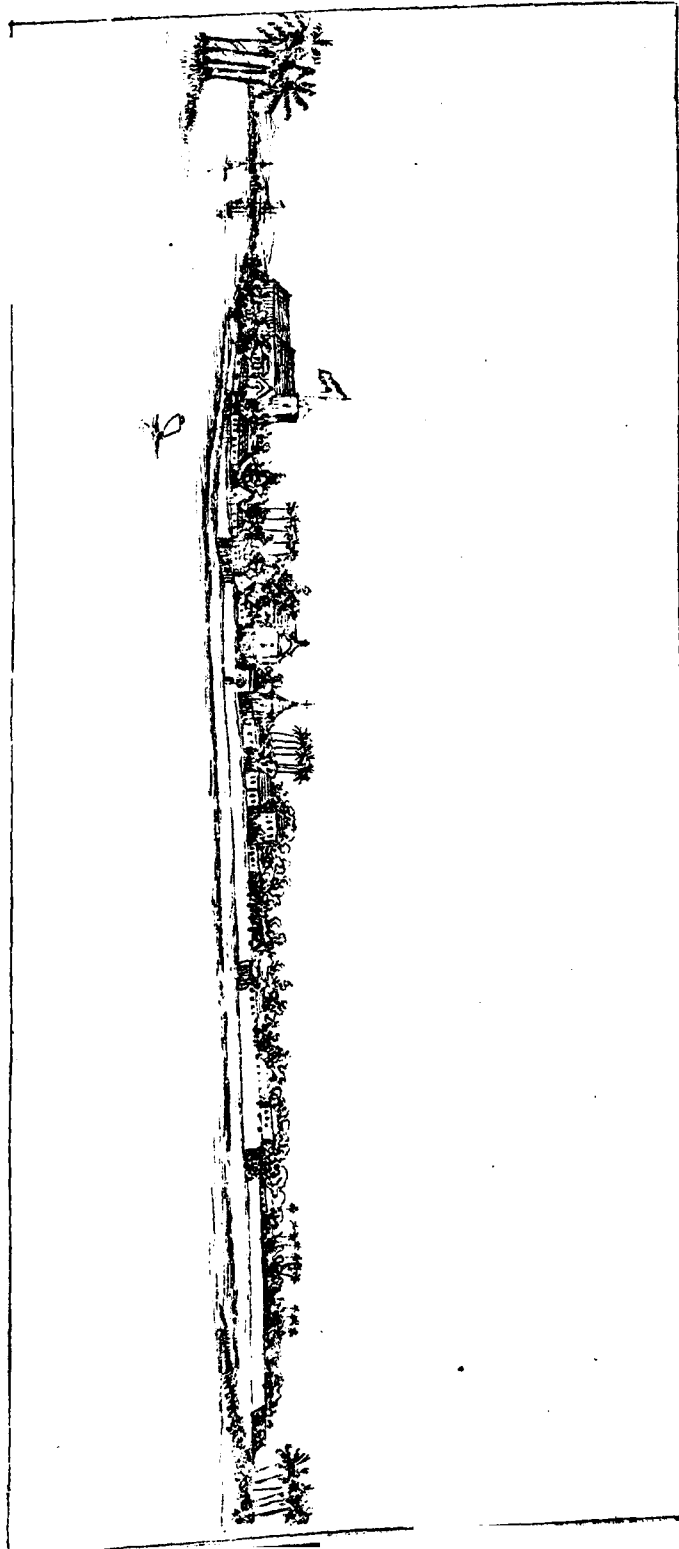
† The Hotel keeper takes Du Perron out to his country house on the island called Kanatcha, on the way to Verapoly. He says there were also houses on Ramandourte (i. e. Candle Island) which then belonged to the Dutch Company. There was a Villa with a large airy room projecting into the Backwater, on the ground now occupied by the British Residency, and the gardens at Balghatty were a favourite resort for the picnic parties of the Dutch gentry.

Bussorah, in a Dutch ship, one Mar Joannes, who arrived at Cochin in 1747, but proved so unsatisfactory a character, that he was put into a ship, and sent back to Bussorah, against his will, four years after his first landing. Mar Joannes is stigmatized, by the Carmelite Missionary, as a great Iconoclast; and probably had abundance to do in the way of image breaking, as the Romanists induced the Syrians to adopt some of their evil customs, where they could not induce them to submit to their authority. If image breaking was the worst thing he did, one cannot but regret he was so summarily expelled the country. In the same year that Mar Joannes left, on 23rd of April 1751, three other Metrans, Mar Basilius, Mar Gregorius, and Mar Joannes, accompanied by two priests, landed at Cochin; the Dutch company demanded no less a sum than Rs. 12,000 for bringing these dignitaries to Malabar, but the Syrian Christians, thinking the charge excessive, refused payment, in consequence of which a lawsuit of long continuance followed, in one of the courts of the Travancore Rajah.

The affairs of the Dutch Company were not very flourishing at this period, and, in fact, such had been their losses, that the Travancore Rajah sent special messengers to condole with them on their serious misfortunes. This Rajah, Wunjee Martanda, from his unscrupulous ambition, and repeated aggressions upon the territories of his neighbours, was a source of anxiety to them. On one occasion when they commissioned a certain Baron Imhoff to transact some business with him, relative to the affairs of the Rancee of Changanaad, he let them know plainly that he did not fear them. Upon the Baron threatening an invasion of his territories, the Rajah replied that he had inaccessible rocks to which he could retire, and find a secure retreat; and when the Baron added that the Dutch Company could penetrate his fastnesses; the Rajah retorted, in irony: "All in good time; and I with some armed Munjees, am going to make the conquest of Europe." they then parted, more exasperated than ever, and prepared for war.

But before many years they were doomed to have

COCHIN FROM THE SEA. 1772.



more troublesome neighbours than either the Samorin, or the Travancore Rajah, in Hyder Ally, and Tippoo Sultan. So early as 1775 Hyder desired to add Travancore to his other conquests, and requested of the Dutch authorities at Cochin a free passage for his troops, through, their possessions. The subject being a very important one, was referred to the supreme Government, at Batavia, for decision. Hyder was enraged at the delay which ensued; and sent Sirdar Khan with 10,000 men to ravage their territory with fire and sword, and to wrest from their hands the Fort at Chetwye, which was captured in 1776, after an ineffectual attempt to relieve it by reinforcements from Ceylon. In January 1777, the reply from Batavia, accompanied with presents, arrived; and Mr. Moens, the Governor of Cochin, forwarded them on to Hyder; who graciously accepted them, and affected to attribute the late hostilities to mutual misunderstandings.

After the death of Hyder, Tippoo attempted to carry out his father's designs upon Travancore, and tried to effect this either through the Samorin, or Cochin Rajah. In 1789 he sent to the latter a special envoy to inform him that he wished to purchase the fort of Cochin, and hoped to do so through him; but though the Dutch had shown some inclination to part with Ayacotta, and Cranganore, they were not at all disposed to allow of even one of these falling into such hands. Ayacotta was soon after bought by the Travancore Rajah, under the advice of Major Bannerman, the English Commissioner, for half the sum offered by Tippoo, which enraged him not a little.

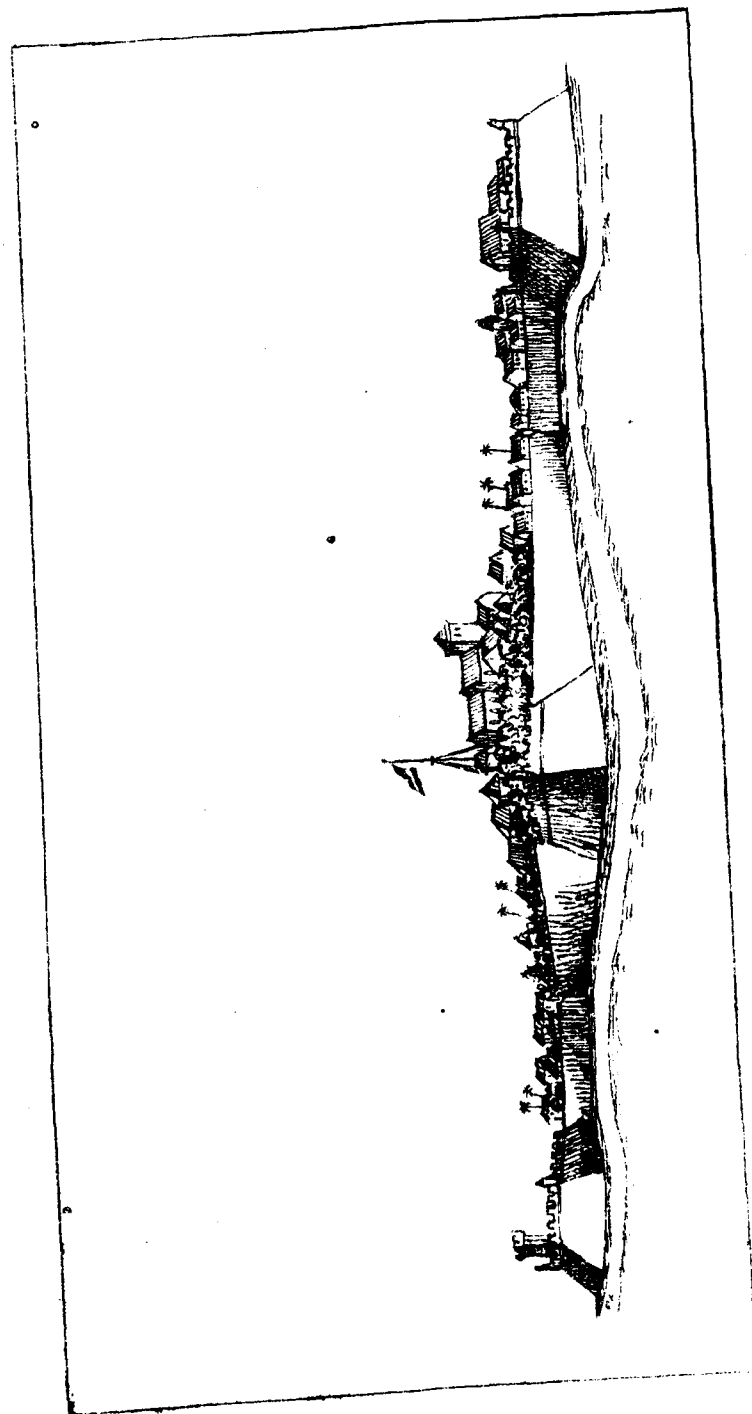
Cochin was destined to fall into better hands than Tippoo's. Four years before the ambitious and blood stained career of the latter terminated, Cochin, upon a rupture with the Dutch, was taken by the English, under the command of Major Petre. In the beginning of the year 1795 the revolutionary party had gained such strength in Holland, that the Stadtholder, with the hereditary Prince of Orange, had been compelled to flee for their lives, and put themselves under the protection of the king of England. What to do with the Dutch colonies, to keep them out of the hands of the revolutionary party and their French

allies, became an important subject of consideration with the English government; in consequence of which instructions were sent out to our naval and Military Commanders in different parts of the world to reduce and occupy all the Dutch settlements. This led to the taking of Ceylon, Malacca, Amboyna, Banda, Chinsura, and Cochin, in the East. The hostilities against Cochin do not appear to have been of a very formidable nature, for the Dutch power was too much weakened to allow of any serious resistance. The place surrendered to the English, October 20th 1795.

According to the Articles of Capitulation all private property was to be held sacred by the English; and all the inhabitants, who were willing to remain, and to take the oath of allegiance to His Britannic Majesty, were to be treated as British subjects. The free exercise of the Reformed Religion, according to the usages of the Dutch Church, together with toleration to the Romanists and all others, were readily pledged. The Dutch required that in moving their effects they might be allowed to take with them their servants, and *slaves*; but even at that early period testimony was borne against slavery, on the part of the English, who, in reply, allowed them all they demanded, "except with respect to *slaves*, a name unknown in the British dominions;" thus was the planting of our national flag upon this remote corner of the world, from the first, accompanied, as it ever should be, with a proclamation of "liberty to the captive," and freedom to the oppressed.

Some of the specifications of the Dutch required reference to other quarters. To the request that the funds belonging to the Orphan College, and the Poorhouse, might not be confiscated, or seized upon, being charitable trusts, Major Petre replied, that they would be considered as the property of His Britannic Majesty, and persons would be appointed by him for their management. * And to a further demand that the fortifications, Government House, all Magazines, and other public buildings should not be

* That some of these things were never *managed* at all, a former note plainly shows.



COCHIN FROM THE LAND SIDE. 1790.

demolished, but preserved, as they were; he replied, that they would all be disposed of as the Commander-in-chief, or the commanding officer, should think proper at the time.

The answer of Major Petre to the several articles of capitulation was given at the Camp before Cochin at half past 11 o'clock, in the night of the 19th. of October, with the promise that there should be a cessation of arms till 4 o'clock the next morning; but should Mr Vanspall the Governor, and his council, not be satisfied with the terms, hostilities would then be renewed.

Notwithstanding the generally favourable character of the terms of surrender, the change of masters was ruinous to many who had been employed in connection with the Dutch Company, and led some of the most respectable families to emigrate to Batavia, Ceylon, Bombay, and other places; and when some returned to Cochin a few years after, it was to mourn over the desolations effected by the demolition of most of the government buildings, * with the exception of the venerable Church, and reports say, that the mining operations necessary in the work of demolition very seriously shattered many of the most substantial private houses, and rendered it necessary to support the shaken walls with those massive buttresses which are yet seen in several parts of the town.

The early history of Cochin under the British rule is not calculated to reflect credit upon the Hon: E. I. Company. Utterly neglected for a long period, with a declining trade, and an impoverished population, generally deprived of all religious and educational advantages, one cannot wonder that it gradually sunk, lower and lower, commercially, socially, and morally.

In 1806 Dr. Claudius Buchanan, the author of that interesting work "Christian Researches in Asia," paid a long visit to Cochin, principally in search of manuscripts. The place then seemed to have been much better stocked with old books than now; for the Bazaar merchants had only just commenced the destruction of those numerous volumes of Latin, Portuguese, and Dutch authors,

* This probably took place about 1803.

which must have accumulated during the three centuries Cochin had been in the hands of Europeans, but which are now nowhere to be found.

Dr Buchanan chiefly sought for books amongst the Jews and Syrian Christians, and with considerable success. He tells us that in almost every house he found Hebrew books, printed or manuscript. Most of the printed books had found their way from Europe, through the medium of the Portuguese and Dutch commerce of former days. So long as it was thought that he wanted these works as presents, scarcely any were forth coming; but after waiting six weeks, he discovered that the use of a golden key unlocked the old lumber chests in which the venerable records he coveted were stowed away. In an old Record chest, in the Black Jews Synagogue, where decayed copies of the Scriptures were thrown, he found a variety of Mss. Some written on parchment, others on goatskins, and others again on cotton paper. He bargained for them all forthwith, wrapped them up in two cloths, and gave them to some Jews to convey to his house in Cochin.

Buchanan perceived that all the by-standers in the Synagogue did not view this transaction with equal favour, and so hastened away in company with some of the chief Jews; but before he had quitted Jewtown, the cry of Jewish fanaticism "Men of Israel help!" as of old time, had roused the rabble of the place. "The Christians were robbing the Synagogue of the Law!" and with this complaint in their mouths, some of them outstripped him in speed to lay the case before Mr. Flower, the chief Magistrate. The Mss. were left in his hand by mutual consent; and after the expiration of some days, when the minds of the people were somewhat tranquillized, an amicable adjustment was made, by which Buchanan was allowed to retain all the old decayed Mss., and some of the newer kind. A good many other Mss., chiefly in the Rabbinical character, were obtained at the Jewish settlements in the neighbourhood.

These were considered at the time most important acquisitions in Europe. It was supposed that as these Jews had been for so many ages separated from their

brethern in the West, their Mss. might have been derived from a channel independent of that through which the text of our printed Bibles has been transmitted to us; and learned men had long desired such testimony to the integrity of the Hebrew Scriptures.

The most curious and important of these Mss. was a copy of the Five Books of Moses, written on goatskins, and found in one of the Black Jews' synagogues; a copy of the old and New Testament with the Apocrypha, in old Syriac, presented by the Syrian Metran; and a version of the New Testament in Hebrew, executed by a learned Rabbi in Travancore, about one hundred and fifty years before. They are all carefully preserved in England, having been presented by Buchanan to the University Library at Cambridge. Two of these are worthy of further notice.

The copy of the Pentateuch found in Jewtown was written on a roll of goatskins dyed red. It measures 48 feet in length, and in breadth about 22 inches, or a Jewish cubit. It is an imperfect copy, for the book of Leviticus, and the greater part of Deuteronomy, are wanting; when complete the whole roll must have measured about 90 feet. In its present condition it consists of 37 skins; contains 117 columns of writing, perfectly clear and legible; and exhibits a noble specimen of the manner and form of the most ancient Hebrew Mss. Mr Yeates, a Hebrew scholar, who collated the Mss. at Cambridge with the text of Vander Hooght's printed edition of the Hebrew Bible, informs us, that all the various readings he detected did not exceed forty in number, and that not one of them altered the sense of any passage, being merely additions or omissions of a *jod* or *vau* (i. e. i. or v.) letter; and that these variations are greatly reduced when compared with an older edition, printed at Amsterdam in 1661. To use the language of the learned Bishop Marsh, this roll "must be regarded at least as a literary curiosity, deserving the attention of the learned in general. And as this Mss. appears, on comparison, to have no important deviation from our common printed Hebrew text, it is of still greater value to a theologian, as it affords an additional argument for the integrity of the Pentateuch."

The Syriac copy of the Scriptures was not less interesting than the Hebrew Pentateuch. It was discovered in a remote Syrian Church near the mountains. * It is engrossed with beautiful accuracy in the *Estrangelo*, or old Syriac character, on strong vellum, in large folio, and having three columns in a page. The words of every book are numbered; and the volume is illuminated. The Syrians considered it to be a thousand years old; and Mr. Yeates, who also collated this Mss. supposes it to have been written about the seventh century.

It is said that the last years of Buchanan's life were spent in preparing a printed edition of the Mss. discovered in Cochin and its neighbourhood; and that he died, so to speak, with the sheets of the Syriac Testament in his hand.

Here, we may make a passing observation or two on the Cochin Jews, since our attention has again been directed to them; and their location in these parts has been now for several generations matter of deep interest to every inquiring mind.

The most reasonable supposition respecting their origin is, that their forefathers arrived on this coast soon after the destruction of the second Temple, in A. D. 70. They still have in their possession engraved copper plates, which date as far back as the times of the Perumals, whose dynasty terminated so far back as A. D. 825; hence their claim to antiquity, as residents in this country, is well founded; and we further learn that they even then stood high in favour with the native Princes, and enjoyed privileges granted only to the most respectable classes. As many as 10,000 are said to have come in the first instance; but their limited numbers for the last few centuries, during which we have been favoured with correct information about them, makes this very doubtful.

The Portuguese found them a flourishing Community at Cranganore. There were then White and Black Jews. There is every reason to believe that the latter were originally their slaves, and natives of the country whom

they had proselytized to the Jewish religion. * They did not leave Cranganore till A. D. 1565, when they put themselves under the immediate protection of the Cochin Rajah, to escape the intolerance and bigotry of the Portuguese. The leading men among them at this time were Samuel Castil, David Belilia, Ephraim Salah, and Joseph Levy. These four elders built the first white Jews Synagogue at their own cost; but the policy of the Portuguese had been to impoverish them in every way they could, so that at this time they were in comparatively reduced circumstances.

They were restored to a happier condition immediately on the arrival of the Dutch in 1663. Their leading man then was a David Levy, a lineal descendant of one of the four elders just mentioned. He was honored with the title of Modeliar, and had an official staff given to him, the top of which was mounted with gold, and had the motto of the H. E. I. Dutch company engraved on it.

From time to time however there were fresh importations of settlers from Europe, so that all the white Jews are not the descendants of those who originally came. In 1685 some Jewish merchants came from Amsterdam, and were kindly received by the Dutch Governor, Commodore Vosburg. Some Spanish Jews too lived here in the time of the Dutch, who boasted that they once had a Synagogue which equalled in splendour that of London! Of late years wandering Jews from different parts of western Asia have found their way to Cochin, and settled down amongst the original inhabitants.

From an account given by Van Rheede, dated 1677, it would appear that Jewtown then was much what it is now: He says "At the place where they reside they have

* Mr Moens, who was Governor of Cochin in 1773, and took great interest in the history of the Jews, states that previous to the coming of the Portuguese there had been a considerable commotion among the Jews at Cranganore, in consequence of the Black Jews revolting from the white! This looks as if they had previously been held in slavery. Such could not have been the case if they had been the genuine descendants of Abraham, become black by living in India (as some Ethnologists have asserted on insufficient grounds,) since it was not lawful for them to hold such in continual bondage. (Leviticus XXV. 39. 40.)

* Either Angamale, the ancient residence of the Syrian Metrans, or Rane; it is uncertain which from Buchanan's narrative.

houses built of stone, in two rows, which form a street like that of a small village." They continued to be an opulent and thriving community so long as commerce flourished in the place; and within the memory of persons still living, the position of some of the Jewish merchants was such, that they interchanged visits with the best Dutch families.

The concluding days of December 1808, and the month of January 1809, were fraught with incidents which naturally enough filled the people of Cochin and its vicinity with some alarm; and this period is still spoken of by many of the old inhabitants as "the time of the Nair War." At the instigation of the Travancore Dewan the life of the British Resident, Col. Macauley, was attempted at Quilon, on the night of December 28th, but he happily escaped. Shortly after 33 privates belonging to one of the Regiments sent to quell the insurrection in Travancore, having been treacherously enticed to land at Alleppy were suddenly seized, tied in couples, with large stones attached to their necks, and drowned in the Backwater! Various unsuccessful attempts were made after this to drive the English from the country; and about the 25th of January a descent was made upon Cochin, by three columns of the enemy on three different points at the same time.

The detachment at Cochin was then under command of Major Hewitt, who prepared to receive the enemy by throwing barricades of earth at the entrance of each of the Streets leading up from the water side, for the Fort had been ere this completely dismantled; and though, the British force was greatly inferior to the Nairs in number, the commandant's efforts were crowned with complete success. Most of the private families in the town kept in their houses and witnessed nothing of what was going on at the barricades, simply hearing the discharges of artillery and seeing the captured and wounded Nairs brought in to the Jail, the premises now used as the Electric Telegraph office; but the advance of the Nair troops, who came up from the south side of the town, with their cannon decorated with garlands of scarlet shoe flowers, was what many witnessed, and is therefore still remembered

in the place. So naturally was Major Hewitt taken up with the excitement of the day on which the enemy was repulsed, that the wounded were left entirely uncared for, and some would probably have perished had it not been for the kind offices of certain good Samaritans among the Dutch gentry, who volunteered their services for this work of humanity.

Cochin, we have observed, was taken by the English at the time when the sovereign of Holland, was driven from his dominions by internal revolution. Upon the restoration of the house of Orange in 1814, arrangements were made with the Prince Regent of England, by which Java, Sumatra, and most of their important possessions were restored to the Dutch, with the exception of the Cape Colony, Ceylon, and some smaller settlements. Cochin was then finally ceded to the British Government.

As to religious matters the place was doomed to be sadly neglected under its new Masters. When the town surrendered to the English, the Revd. P. Cornelisz was the Chaplain, and had been so ever since 1761. According to the terms of the treaty, "the free exercise of the Reformed Religion, according to the usages of the Dutch Church," was secured to the inhabitants, but their venerable chaplain was not spared to them long: for his last entry in the "Kerkelijk Doop Boek." (Church Register of Baptism) occurs not later than Nov. 18th 1802, when his hand appears to have had all the tremulousness of old age. During the time of Mr Cornelisz, the Dutch Presbyterian discipline and forms of worship were strictly maintained, and the old church was furnished with the high-backed pews of former days, amongst which the ornamented seat assigned to the Governor occupied a conspicuous place.*

* As relics of these times there is preserved in the Church chest at Cochin (1.) a massive silver charger, given by a Dutch lady named Cornelia Magdalen a Van Loon in 1742; to be used as a baptismal Font. (2.) some plated letters and numbers, which were fixed on a black board every Sunday to point out to the congregation the Psalms or Hymns to be sung. (3.) The stand of the old hour glass which must have been fixed to the pulpit to regulate the duration of the Sermon. (4.) Some plated remains once belonging to certain velvet bags of different colours, in which the alms of the congregation were collected;

It is to be feared however that the Protestant Community were generally speaking in a very sleepy state, and quite indifferent to those distinctive truths of Evangelical Christianity in defence of which their forefathers in Holland once so nobly bled and died, under the tyranny of the Duke of Alva; and thus one finds Joaquim Gerard van Dam, the Vicar of Wypeen, and other Romish priests, privately baptizing Protestant children *with the knowledge and consent of the Protestant Minister!* On such occasions it is said the priests kept strictly to the words of the institution, using nothing but water, and not even imposing the sign of the cross, because it was not used in Presbyterian congregations! This indicates a tolerant spirit on the part of the Romish priests rarely met with in the present day; though, possibly it may still exist in mixed communities where there is *no life* in Protestant Christianity. It may also be noted that at this period of history, in consequence of the terrible revolutions which had convulsed every Roman Catholic state in Europe, Rome was so much humbled by adversity that even a Bishop of Verapoli could entertain the idea of circulating copies of the Sacred Scriptures among the native Christians, instead of issuing anathemas, and directing that they should be burnt.*

After the death of Mr Cornelisz the people were for years sheep without a shepherd, and for those who did not choose to go to the Romish priests the only alternative was to be married by the civil magistrate, and to have their children baptized, and their dead interred by the same individual! In 1808, when Buchanan was at Tellicherry, the Protestant inhabitants complained to him

the people knowing by the colour to what object the contents of each bag was to be devoted, whether to the Orphanage, Church, Widows, Leper Hospital, or any other charity, and giving to which they pleased.

* "The Romish Bishop who is a *bon vivant*, perceiving that my chief object was to diffuse the Scriptures among the people, began to think it might be polite in him to circulate them among the people too, and to please the English rather than the Inquisition. Colonel Macauley thinks the Bishop will adopt the measure the moment we seriously propose it." Letter from Cochin dated Dec. 24, 1806. Memoirs of Dr C. Buchanan, Vol. II. p. 92.

that there was "no Protestant Church or minister on this coast, except a chaplain to the garrison of Cannanore." The natural consequence of which was that the great mass of the East Indian community was absorbed in the Romish element which surrounded them.

All however at Cochin did not apostatize to Rome. After making an unsuccessful attempt to secure the services of an efficient Dutch minister, the Protestant party were somewhat cheered with the visit paid them by the first Bishop of Calcutta, whose sympathies were deeply awakened, and sincerely enlisted on their behalf.

Bishop of Middleton arrived at Cochin April 11th. 1816; and took up his quarters at the B. Residency at Balghatty. He found Cochin "in all respects sufficiently miserable, some of the principal edifices neglected and falling into decay, the Dutch Church shut up for want of a minister, the School in the Fort destroyed, the children left unbaptized, the sick unassisted, and without the last consolatory offices, and a total apathy among the inhabitants respecting education and religion! Such had been the state of the place for nearly 15 years!"*

Bishop Middleton was earnestly entreated by the principal Dutch inhabitants to supply them with an English chaplain, offering to him the use of the Government church. A petition signed by the Protestants of the town was forwarded by the Bishop to the Madras Government, and in consequence of this, the Bishop, on his return to Calcutta, directed a newly arrived chaplain, the Rev. Walter Williams, to repair to Cochin to supply its spiritual wants. On his arrival at Madras, it is said, some did what they could to deter him from proceeding to his station, assuring him that he would not find half a dozen people able to understand English, and appreciate his services. However, nothing daunted, he went on his way, received a hearty welcome on his first arrival, and was agreeably surprised on his first administration of the Lord's Supper to find no fewer than eighty persons anxious to partake of this sacred rite! The congregation, to give proof of their gratitude for the reopening

* Life of Bp. Middleton Vol I p. 233.

of their long closed church, * did their best to bring it into a fit state for their weekly assemblies, whilst two of their number, Mr. Schuler, and Mr. Crockenden, presented a new pulpit, and reading desk, at the cost of Rs. 1000. The temporal wants of the many poor in the place, and the educational wants of the rising generation, next received Mr. Williams' attention.

One cannot wonder that poverty abounded in a decayed settlement like Cochin; and what we must regard (to say the least) as the *inconsiderate* suppression of the Dutch Orphan House, with its ample funds, must have increased the misery in many an indigent household. In his efforts to alleviate the wants of this class, Mr Williams was generously assisted by the Cochin Rajah who established a Poorhouse for distressed Natives, and placed it under the Superintendence of the Chaplain, assigning, as his contribution towards it, Rs. 100 per mensem. Here we see the commencement of the *Friend in Need Society*. The Poor house towards which the Rajah contributed fell down in the opening of the monsoon of 1855. Since then a more spacious and airy building has been erected, partly by private subscription, and partly by a grant from the Government of Rs 2,000; and though many friends have been raised up in succession, to contribute liberally towards the relief of the poor, the monthly donation of the Native Rajahs (continued to the present day) has always formed a large proportion of the periodical receipts.

Mr. Williams further exerted himself to establish a Free School for the rising generation; towards this object also the Native Rajah was a liberal contributor. The first master was a sergeant who had some little education, and the School was kept in a large vacant room, in the Government buildings, which covered the area of the present Free School compound, and though this was once the site of the Dominican convent, the buildings which stood there in the later years of the Dutch rule had been used, at one time, as an inn, and at another, as a jail. The money

* Report says the Church was sometimes occupied as temporary barracks for European troops on special emergencies, when the sacred edifice resounded with far different notes than the Songs of the Sanctuary!

collected for the Free school was funded as an *Endowment*, connected with the English Protestant Church in the place; and though, the school may have been for short seasons in abeyance, from uncontrollable causes, it is to it that a very large proportion of the males of the middle and lower classes of the place owe whatever English education they possess.*

But the Protestant community were again to be like sheep without a shepherd; after labouring amongst them for about a year their kind friend and pastor was compelled to leave them through ill health, and died shortly after his arrival at Bombay, on his way home. Short as the season of his sojourn was, we may note it as one of the bright spots in the history of the place, and it serves to show, that well directed efforts are often productive of the happiest results long after the originator has passed off the busy scene of life; the Christian will also see in all this the controlling hand of the Omniscient, who foreseeing that His servant's time was short, so guided him that what he did should be well done.

Before Mr Williams came, Cochin had been for nearly 15 years, we have observed, without a resident pastor; it was now to be nearly 20 years without, and had not Mr. Williams originated the permanent institution which he did, one can hardly conceive the accumulation of misery, darkness and degradation, which must have come over the working classes. Though during this period there was no resident Minister, the people happily were not left entirely without the ordinances of religion in consequence of the establishment of the Church Missions in Travancore. The first missionaries, Messrs, Norton and Bailey, came to Travancore in 1816; and in 1819 they were joined by Messrs. Baker and Fenn. Mr. Norton established a Mission at Alleppy; while the other three clergymen settled at Cottayam, for the purpose of labouring for the benefit of the ancient Syrian Church; but, the destitution of their

* The building now used as the Cutcherry was Mr. Williams's parsonage; it had been, before this, the residence of the officers connected with the English detachment; and tradition adds, that in the time of the Portuguese it was the town house of the R. C. Bishop of Cochin.

fellow Protestants at Cochin excited their sympathies, and led to their paying them frequent ministerial visits, until in 1826 a brother Missionary, who had more recently come out, permanently settled at Cochin.

The Missionary who now became Pastor of the Protestant community was the Revd. Samuel Ridsdale, and his residence of twelve or thirteen years in the place must be looked upon as another of the bright spots in its moral and religious history. In one of his earliest reports from Cochin, he writes: "I have the use of a noble Church, a congregation of about 200 who understand English, and immediate prospect of establishing a native Service. I have also a school of 20 children, the number of which, I hope, will shortly be doubled." In his efforts to do good in the place he was largely aided by his excellent partner, who devoted a large portion of her time to the very important work of giving a superior education to the daughters of the resident families who were of European descent. Nor were their labours without a reward, even in this life; notwithstanding their trials and disappointments, when they left Cochin for Europe, hoping to return to the scene of their arduous labours, after recruiting their shattered strength, the conviction of their minds was that amongst the flock they were leaving, there was "much to claim respect and affection from all who were capable of appreciating character;" and to this day (though 20 years have passed away since they left,) the names of the honoured pair are continually on the lips of the many who owe them a debt of love, and the grateful smile which, on such occasions, sometimes brightens up the countenance of the speaker, verifies the Scripture saying, that "the memory of the just is blessed."

After the departure of Mr Ridsdale Cochin did not long continue a station of the Church Mission Society, and in its place the Trichoor Mission was established. The Society for the Propagation of the Gospel supplied the spiritual wants of the Protestant community for a few years, during which time the Church of Scotland established a Mission to the Jewish portion of the community. In the year 1845 the Propagation Society recalled their Mis-

sionary, and from that time the monthly visits from the Government Chaplain at Quilon were all the advantages derived from Church of England ministrations, until 1852, when the place was occupied as one of the Stations of the Madras Diocesan Additional Clergy Society.

The future of Cochin is a subject about which no man can even conjecture with any degree of certainty. If, however, He who disposes of the Kingdoms of the earth to whomsoever He will, ordains that England should retain her present supremacy in India, the town is surely destined to see brighter days than it ever did? Its geographical position on that side of India which is most readily reached from England, and the fact of its possessing one of the most spacious harbours of the Western coast, seem to point it out as a spot which is likely to receive more attention than it has hitherto done from those in authority. That peculiar succession of navigable Backwaters, extending from Calicut nearly to Cape Comorin, and all those rivers and streams with which the region below the southern part of the Western Ghauts is intersected, have their most important outlet at Cochin, and show it to be the natural central mart for the valuable products of Travancore, Cochin, and S. Malabar, when the resources of these fertile districts are fully developed. The Telegraphic wire has already put the place in connection with all the chief centres of influence in India, and when its usual accompaniment, the Railway, shall have reached thus far, and projected plans be accomplished for the improvement of the harbour, there will be nothing to hinder its rapid rise to very considerable commercial importance.

Two European nations, the Portuguese and the Dutch, have been the Masters of Cochin before us, and we shall be dull scholars indeed if we do not profit from their experience, and avoid their serious errors. For many years, it must be confessed, the English government failed in its duty to the place, to refer only to the sad way in which the moral and religious interests of its inhabitants were neglected; but since the last three decades have witnessed the useful labours of religious Societies, supported by private Christians; endeavouring to make up,

in some measure, for that which Government failed to do in the preceding thirty years, we have good ground for hope in this respect also. Though much remains to be done, surely when we see the place under the enlightened, and tolerant rule of Christian England, an open Bible within reach of all its inhabitants, and sound moral and religious training for all the rising generation, who will avail themselves of it, we may thank God and take courage!



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