

HISTORY

OF THE

TELUGU CHRISTIANS

BY

Rev. R. C. PAUL.



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FOREWORD

According to the census of 1921, the Telugu-speaking people number 23½ millions, of whom over 16 millions are inhabitants of the Madras Presidency and the remainder mainly of the Hyderabad State. In almost all the Tamil districts, Telugus numbering tens of thousands are to be found—mostly descendants of colonists who settled therein when those parts were ruled by the Telugu Emperor Krishnadevaraya of Vijayanagar and the deputies appointed by him. No Christian set foot in the Telugu country proper till the arrival of the Portuguese traders on the East Coast at the end of the 16th century. English, Dutch, Danes and French also came to the coast in the 17th century but did nothing to spread the Christian religion. In the year 1695, Louis XIV, King of France, authorised the French Jesuits by letters patent to establish missions in the territories where France had some special interests. He sent out six French Jesuits—all of them “picked men and Academicians”—for the propagation of the faith, promising them his protection and favour. The missionaries arrived in Siam, under the leadership of Fr. Tachard, S.J., but were expelled shortly owing to a revolutionary outbreak and consequent change of Government. They landed at Pondicherry and offered their services. M. Martin, the founder of Pondicherry, entrusted to their care the Indians in French territory around Pondicherry and all French

factories. Frs. Maduit and Laynez were sent to the Gingee district. They founded what is known as the Carnatic mission, which embraced Mysore and the southern and western districts of the Telugu country—roughly the territory north of the river Palar and south of the river Kistna. Starting from the Kingdoms of Gingee and Vellore, they pierced through the ghauts to Punganur, Chittoor district, and fifty miles further north to Chinnabalapuram in Mysore territory and thence north to the Anantapur district. In 1701 they had a Church at Punganur and in 1707 another at Chinnabalapuram. Then followed a Church at Krishnapuram in Dharmavaram taluk of Anantapur district and in 1718 the Raja of Anantapur granted permission for the erection of Church at Madigubba in Anantapur taluk. According to Mr. G. Mackenzie, in the Kistna District Manual, in 1733 there were 16 stations of which the most remote was Bukkapuram on the borders of Guntur in Darsi taluk, Nellore district. In spite of tremendous obstacles, they secured rapid results. The French obtained possession of Guntur in 1752 and their presence was of great help for the protection of the Christians. The progress of Christianity was considerably hindered by the suppression of the Society of Jesus in France in 1762 and throughout the world in 1773 by the Pope. In 1779 the English forced Basalat Jang to send away the French troops from Guntur to Hyderabad and this action deprived the missionaries of a valued intercourse with officers of their own faith and nation. The suppression of the Society of Jesus was a disastrous blow to the Carnatic mission from which it never recovered,

The Foreign Mission Society of Paris, which had its Indian headquarters at Pondicherry, next stepped into the field. But unfortunately the revolution in France and the war that followed in Europe prevented the despatch of any missionaries to India. In 1802 Pondicherry had only 15 French priests, many of them too old to work, and 4 Indian priests to attend to the work of the mission both in the Tamil and Telugu country. From 1817 onwards the mission had only 5 or 6 aged priests. The result was that Catholics in the Telugu districts declined. Mr. Mackenzie says that there is a village in Narasaraopet taluk, Guntur district, where the Reddis still bear Christian names. They admit that their forefathers were Christians but abandoned the religion because for many long years they saw no priest.

The arrival of Fr. Bonnand at Phirangipuram on December 20, 1827, gave a fresh impetus to the evangelisation of the Telugu country. He was an indefatigable missionary and travelled frequently throughout the land to minister to the spiritual needs of the scattered communities in the different districts. His powers of organisation and keen insight into human nature were such that had he been left there for a longer period marvellous spiritual results would have undoubtedly followed at a time when the field was so favourable. Mr. J. C. Molony in his Census Report of 1911 calls Fr. Bonnand "one of the the finest minds of latter day missionary enterprise". And his successor, Archbishop Laouenon, wrote: "He launched India into the Catholic movement. He was not a man of

strikingly brilliant intellect, but he was methodical and industrious to a degree and his powers of work were extraordinary. With unflagging enthusiasm, he combined a perfect balance and candour of judgment and that uncommon gift, *common-sense*". After six years of incessant and successful work he was called to Pondicherry as coadjutor bishop. "In view of the comparative ill-success of the Roman Catholic Church among the Telugu people", says Mr. Molony, "it is interesting to speculate as to what might have been, had not the choice of Mgr. d'Herbert in 1833 called Fr. Bonnard away from this people to the Episcopacy at Pondicherry". Mgr. Bonnard refused the post at first but was finally persuaded to accept it in the year 1834 in the greater interests of the Church. He was one of the most successful and zealous missionaries and his sphere of activity extended from Masulipatam in the north to Tuticorin in the south. Mgr. Bonnard died at Benares in 1861 when engaged in an apostolic visitation of all India.

In the year 1843, the Telugu districts were cut off from Pondicherry and attached to the Vicariate Apostolic of Madras. The Irish priests from Maynooth and All Hallows were called upon to gather the ruins of the once flourishing Carnatic mission. But being so few in number they could hardly minister to the needs of hereditary Catholics spread over an immense territory. Bishop Stephen Fennelly secured the co-operation of Mill Hill in the year 1876 and since then the bulk of the Missions' personnel has been supplied by St. Joseph's Missionary

Society, London. Their advent inaugurated a new era of expansion and prosperity for the Telugu missions. Great efforts have been made to consolidate the work: churches, convents, schools, seminaries and hospitals have been established and much progress made in conversion.

With the formation of the diocese of Nellore, comprising the Telugu districts formerly attached to Madras, and the consecration of Mgr. W. Bouter as its first Bishop, a forward step has been taken for the furtherance of the Kingdom of Christ. At present in the three Telugu dioceses of Nellore, Hyderabad and Vizagapatam (the former separated from the Vicariate Apostolic of Madras in 1851 and the latter in 1845), the number of Telugu Catholics is about 70,000. The Protestants, whose missionary enterprise is comparatively of recent origin, have had phenomenal success. The * American Baptist Telugu Mission which started its labours in 1836 claims 88,173 souls. The † Anglican Mission of Dornakal has within its jurisdiction 166,000 baptised adherents and the yearly increase of converts is said to be 8,000. The ‡ Lutheran Church claims 136,000 baptised Christians in the districts of East and West Godavery, Guntur and Nellore. Its work was begun here about the year 1842 and has developed to a remarkable extent. This mission maintains one first-grade college, several high schools and higher elementary schools and 900 elementary schools.

* The Indian Year Book—1928 (p. 466).

† The *Madras Mail*, November 6, 1929.

‡ The *Catholic Leader*, February 23, 1928, p. 103.

The funds received each year for its work from America amount approximately to Rs. 10 lakhs. The Protestants have created a plant and developed appliances on an imposing scale in every district and taluk headquarters for the maintenance and furtherance of their work.

They have provided extraordinary facilities for the extension of the blessings of education and the number of workers engaged in direct evangelistic or pastoral work is smaller than that engaged in the field of education. The proportion is 10 to 14 in the whole of India. Conversion to Protestantism has always been associated with material benefits and in view of the unlimited resources our separated brethren command and the facilities they offer for the education and the economic and social elevation of the depressed classes, it is not surprising they have succeeded in breaking new ground among the outcastes. What proportion of these conversions is permanent and how far pecuniary assistance, opportunities for mental improvement and awakened self-respect, which bring in their train increase of worldly prosperity, are inducements to embrace Protestantism it is difficult to say. When foreign money ceases to flow, it is very likely that much of their work will stagnate and suffer a severe setback. Whatever may be the value of Protestantism in social elevation, it does not make much appeal to the Eastern mind. Its vague and indefinite belief and its cold and formal services, shorn of the majesty and grandeur of the truly human worship of God, are not calculated to exercise much religious influence on its adherents.

Catholics may not have secured such spectacular results, for Catholic effort has until now been mostly devoted to permanent ministrations to hereditary bodies of Christians. Owing to the shortage of the clergy and lack of funds it has not been possible to do pioneer work in an open field. Some parts of the country present a magnificent prospect and with the concentration of priest workers and an army of zealous and well-instructed catechists rapid results may follow. The progress of missionary enterprise in the Telugu country, as in other parts, depends on the adequate application of human effort and human means. It has pleased God to redeem mankind through the agency of men. Bishop Bonnard in his day expressed the opinion that it was a waste of time and energy to preach the Gospel to the Panchamas among the Telugu people the more so as much greater good could be done among the Sudras. But the pendulum seems to have swung in the opposite direction at the present day and it is generally agreed that prospects are brighter and more hopeful among the depressed classes. The conversion of a country is a problem of infinite greatness and complexity. For the presentation of the Gospel message and for building up strong Christian communities a great variety of forms of Christian service is necessary. Our success, under God, will be in proportion to the extension of the works of charity and service and the opening out of the treasures of sanctity and Christian benevolence. The intellectual, social and religious standards of our Christian communities will have also to be raised. The growth of the Church depends to a large extent on the vigour and

quality of its spiritual life. If the vitality of the Church is strong, it will quickly develop a healthy independent life, exercise a salutary influence over non-Christians and induce the faithful to contribute generously to the maintenance of its own activities and institutions. The creation of powerful Christian communities will be an effective means of spreading the saving truths of the Christian religion. There are undoubtedly possibilities of expansion and growth in thoroughly christianised communities and the hopes of the development of their spiritual life justify the optimism regarding the future of the missions. The labourers will doubtless work patiently in that vast territory and hopefully await the day, when the fruitful branches of the sacred tree of Christianity will spread all over the land and give shelter and refuge to millions of souls, who have still no idea of the sweet and humane influence of the Christian religion. That Catholicism might develop into a mighty power for the dissemination of Christian thought and principles in Andhra Desa is the fervent wish of all workers interested in that ancient land.

Fr. R. C. Paul has been at great pains to trace the origin and growth of Christianity among the Telugu people. The late Fr. Kroot had given an interesting narrative of the early beginnings of Christianity among these people and Fr. Paul has brought it up-to-date. His object is to remind present-day Christians of the sacrifices their forefathers made in embracing Christianity, of the obstacles they had to contend with and of their steadfast adherence to the faith in the midst of a

cloud of trials and difficulties. If only this booklet inspires some generous souls among the Telugu Catholics to imitate the conspicuous examples of heroism among their ancestors and stimulates their zeal and enthusiasm to labour for the conversion of their countrymen and set an example of earnest and practical Christian life to their children, he will consider his labours amply repaid.

P. THOMAS.



PREFACE

This booklet is an attempt to present a concise and continuous history of the origin and progress of Christianity among the Telugu people, from the year 1700 to 1929. The sources on which the narrative is based are the late Fr. Kroot's History of the Telugu Christians, *Histoire des Missions Etrangères de L'Inde*, the Catholic Expositor of Madras (published under the old Irish Bishops), The Catholic Directory, besides personal knowledge obtained from traditions current among the people in old Christian centres. I do not pretend to have written a complete history of the Telugu Christians. The booklet deals mainly with the beginnings and growth of Christianity in the territory formerly attached to Pondicherry and later to Madras.

I must place on record my special indebtedness to Fr. P. Thomas, Editor, *Catholic Leader*, for the great help he has rendered in its compilation and, in particular, for the very interesting Foreword he has so kindly contributed.

November 23, 1929.

R. C. PAUL.

ERRATA

Page 3, Chapter II, line 2.—For '1903' read '1703'.

Page 6, line 5.—Delete 'as'.

Page 6, line 9.—For "prosecution" read 'persecution'.

Page 9, line 9.—For '90' read '50'.

Page 14.—In all places for 'Fr. LeGoz' read 'Fr. LeGac'.

Page 34.—Between 20th and 21st line, insert:—'The following three paragraphs are quoted from Kistna District Manual'.

Page 34.—Insert inverted commas to paragraph beginning 'In 1733' and ending '1779'.

Page 34, line 19.—For '90' read '50' and insert the matter enclosed within parentheses between Chinnaballapuram and Devanapalle in the 17th line.

Page 35.—Insert inverted commas to paragraph beginning 'A large number' and ending 'Patibanda'.

Page 36.—Insert inverted commas to paragraph beginning 'Some manuscripts' and ending '1700' in the 9th line.

Page 36, line 9.—Read as new paragraph commencing 'The early Joint Missionaries, etc.'

Page 89, line 11.—Read the second footnote beginning "The Christian" and ending 'censure' in continuation of the word 'Districts'.

Page 92.—In the list of villages in the margin, for 'Siriniamulla' read 'Sirimamulla'.

Page 103, line 6.—Omit full point and change cap. R of the word 'Recently' into l.c. r.

Page 106, last but one line.—For 'on' read 'an'.

History of the Telugu Christians.

The conversion of the Telugu country followed in the wake of the wonderful advance religion had made in the Madura Mission, whose real founder was the great Jesuit Fr. Robert de Nobili. Already in 1699 about the time the Carnatic mission was begun this flourishing mission numbered 150,000 Christians. Letters of that date preserved for us in "La Mission de Madura," state that this number was daily increasing. By this time the good seed had already spread through the "Ginjee Country" as far north as Vellore. The * Jesuits of Madura belonged to the Portuguese Jesuit Province.

The Jesuits who started the conversion work in the Carnatic were French Jesuits. They settled in Pondicherry in 1689, and in 1691 obtained from the French Government the ground now occupied by the Mission Etrangers. No sooner had they obtained a firm footing in the principal town of the French Colony then they set to work, evangelizing the Pagans, and their labours spread rapidly into the Kingdom of the Carnatic.

* In 1597, two Jesuit Fathers and a Brother were at the Court of Venkata Rajulu, in Chandragiri, where they remained till about 1615. Their work was not a success, owing to the fact that being dressed in black, they were considered to be Perangis, i.e., for foreigners. The King advised them to dress in white but the Fathers considered it too great a departure. Fr. De Nobili adopted this custom later on.

It is hopeless to attempt to define the limits of that country, which from early times went by the name of the Carnatic. For our present purpose we may assume that the Jesuit Fathers meant by the Carnatic Mission, at least practically, their work among the Telugu people.

The Telugu-speaking people occupy a territory by far the most extensive of India. It has no defined limits in the South, but may roughly be said to begin from a line drawn from a short distance north of Madras to Bangalore. It is bounded on the east by the Bay of Bengal, on the west by Mysore and the Canarese country, and to the north it occupies the whole of south-east portion of the Nizam's Dominions. The area in square miles is 78,804 as against 53,578 of Tamil country,

Fr. Maudiut *, the first pioneer among the Telugus, had his headquarters at Karveypundi near Conjeeveram and in a letter written in 1701 mentions Conjeevuram as the capital of the Carnatic. He started on the 3rd September 1701 on his reconnoitring journey towards the west, which took him about two months, At Arcot he stayed in the house of a Brahmin, at Vellore he was lodged in the house of a Brahmin, which fact, he observes, gave him great influence.

Passing through Pallikonda, where he was well received by the Rajputs, who were masters of the place, he arrived at Gudiyattam, where he was the guest of a

* His first station was Conjeeveram, where within six months of his arrival he built two Churches outside the town, baptized 150 persons and converted two Brahmins who became his catechists.

Komati with a large family. He continued his journey as far west as Kolar, from where he turned northwards and passing through Sonnakallu and Ramasamudram he reached Punganur, Chittoor District, where the first of the Telugus were regenerated in the waters of Baptism.

The first converts among the Telugus were a widow and her four children in Punganur in 1701. It is highly probable, we might almost say certain, that this family belonged to the Yelama caste. We are led to draw this inference from the fact that the office of catechist was filled from the earliest times by this particular caste of the Punganur Christians, an honour which the present Yelama Christians at Ponganur still boast of as having been the special privilege of their ancestors. By the year 1736 there were already thousands of Telugu Christians of all castes, spread over the many villages throughout the Carnatic. The torch of the Gospel was carried right into the heart of the Telugu country as far North as Anantapur, and to the east across the Kam-bham Hills into the Venkatagiri Rajas territory. A short account of that wonderful work is given in the following chapters.

CHAPTER II.

The Superior of the Jesuits at Pondicherry, Very Rev. Fr. Tachard, writes on 4th February 1903 :

“ When I arrived at Pondicherry on my fifth voyage I found that Fr. Maudiut, after having learnt the language and customs of the people in the Madura Missions, had already established himself at Karveypundi, a town about 90 or 100, miles north-west of Pondicherry.

He had then already baptised a hundred people. This same Father had made several excursions and successful attempts in the neighbouring countries especially to the north-west. During these apostolic travels he laid the foundations of the Faith at Takkolam (about 10 miles east of Arkonam) which, in the early days, was the centre of idolatry in the Carnatic, and of the Church of Punganur, a large town well-populated about 150 miles from Pondicherry, where he had the happiness of baptising over 80 idolaters. By March 1702 we had three priests to in the Kingdom of the Carnatic. Fr. Bouchet fixed his headquarters at Tharkolam and having left Fr. Maudiut to continue his work at Karveypundi, he sent Fr. De la Fontaine to Punganur, where the Telugu language is spoken, which is as different from Malabar (Tamil) as Spanish is from French.

These men, before entering upon their new mission field, assembled at Karveypundi and there resolved to adopt the dress and the mode of life of Brahmin Sanyasis — religious penitents. This meant a life of great austerity hardly bearable unless sustained by Apostolic zeal and charity. Besides abstinence from all that has had life such as : flesh, fish and eggs, the Brahmin Sanyasis have to follow a very trying and irksome rule of life. They are obliged to bathe every morning and take again a similar bath before their meals which can be taken only once a day. It is necessary, besides, to have Brahmin cooks. This state, moreover, obliges them to live in great retirement.”

“ When the Kings of Golkonda were masters of the country, Tharkolam was an important town, up till 30

years ago (1670)—it was so still ; but since the Moors have taken possession of it by the conquest of the Kingdom of Golkonda, it has considerably gone down in power and wealth.”

“ Fr. De la Fontaine’s labours have been crowned from the beginning with extraordinary success. With great tact he has gained the good will of the Raja of Punganur where he has fixed his headquarters, as well as of the Princess, the Rajah’s grandmother, who is Regent during his minority. Besides a hundred adults all of good castes he numbers 9 Brahmins among his neophytes, i.e., that he alone has baptised in 8 months more Brahmin adults than all the Missionaries of Madura in 10 years.”

Another letter of Fr. Tachard Superior of the Jesuits at Pondicherry, September 1703.

“ Our Mission in the Kingdom of the Carnatic begins to take firm root. We have at present 4 excellent Missionaries working in that vast field, with Fr. Bouchet, who made so many conversions in Madura Mission, as Superior. The other three are Frs. Mauduit, De la Fontaine and Petit.”

“ This year a petty persecution has been raised against Fr. Bouchet. He and his catechist were thrown into prison. He was threatened to be burnt alive and to undergo the most horrible torments. After passing a month in prison during which time his only nourishment was a little milk given to him in a wooden vessel, he and a few of his Christians who had shared the same fate were set at liberty.”

“Also Fr. De la Fontaine has had to experience the opprobrium of our Saviour’s Cross. The Brahmins of Punganur, jealous of his wonderful success, resolved to turn him out of his hermitage, with insult and infamy. For this purpose, they brought over some neophytes as of their caste to accuse him of using wine in the sacrifice of the Mass, which, among those people, is considered an enormous crime. After many affronts and painful humiliations the prosecution ceased.”

“For Maudiut is, at this very moment, imprisoned. He writes to me, from his place of confinement, ‘I and my good catechist have been beaten, scoffed at and almost done to death, but I am still alive and able to serve God. Everything has been taken from me.’

“Our Lord has singularly blessed our work this year. We had over 300 baptisms in our Church. The town of Pondicherry is increasing every day. It numbers 30,000 inhabitants and of these only about 2,000 are Christians. We hope that, with the grace of God, the greater part of these people will, in a few years, embrace Christianity.”

CHAPTER III.

We now stand before a wide chasm of six years. The most interesting period in the annals of the Telugu Mission is left a blank. During this long interval, events must have occurred, in the newly-cultivated field, which would be of the highest interest to us now. Unfortunately the *Lettres Edifiantes et Curieuses* do not contain a single letter from any Father, for all these years, not even from Fr. De la Fontaine who was looked upon

as the founder of the Carnatic Mission. He spent eighteen years in the Telugu Mission and died on 10th November 1718, at Chinna Ballapuram where he lies buried.

Punganur is the cradle of the Telugu Christians and became undoubtedly a most flourishing Mission. The Rajas of that Kingdom were most favourably disposed towards the priest and his people. It became, as it were, a centre of Missionary activity, from which the light of the faith radiated into the surrounding country. Though subsequently destroyed and dispersed by the wars, the communities we see established in the adjacent districts, were important enough to have a Church with a resident priest there. Such were, for example, Venkatagiri, south of Punganur, and Perakur, not far from Venkatagiri. At the latter place a Church in honour of the Epiphany was built. But, sad to relate, soon after its construction, both Fr. Maudiut and Fr. Courbeville, were poisoned by the Brahmins, both dying within a quarter of an hour, of each other, in the year 1711, the * Church entirely destroyed, and the Christians expelled. Venkatagiri remained a very important Mission station for many years. Fr. Calmette dates a letter from the town of Venkatagiri on 24th January 1733. It was frequently resorted to as a place of refuge by Christians, when driven away by persecution from other towns and villages, and as the same Father, * tells us in a previous letter, became, in fact, a large Christian settlement, composed mainly of those brave neophytes, who, rather than forsake their religion,

* At Karveypundi, where they died,

confessed their faith in Jesus Christ, by taking shelter in this little principedom. Some of the Raja's own relations became Christians.

In view of such a glorious past, it is no doubt sad to note that at the present day, the Venkatagiri Christians are entirely lost to the faith. The original Christian inhabitants (surely not the numerous refugees, appear to have belonged to the Kuruba caste—blanket weavers), their descendants are still living at Arugunda, near Venkatagiri, who, by their adherence to Christian names, reveal their descent to the present day.

Punganur continued to be a very important Missionary centre up till the year 1733, when after a few days of gallant defence, it was taken by the Moors. The Raja's palace was entirely ruined, and the town set fire to, the Church sharing in the general destruction. Peace being somewhat restored, the Jesuits were not slow in returning to a town which had been so signally favoured by God. Punganur had resumed its former prestige and the Christian community began once more to grow with renewed vigour. We may judge from this, in what a flourishing condition Punganur must have been just at the time when the records are silent. Regretfully therefore we are obliged to leave this long interval of six years from 1703 to 1709 to mere inference and conjecture.

Fr. De la Lane in a letter, dated 30th January 1709, Pondicherry, says — “Fr. De la Fontaine who worked in the beginning with wonderful success and baptised

* Refer Fr. Calmette's letter, dated September 1735, from Chinna Ballapuram.

a great number of pagans at Punganur, afterwards suffered great trouble and opposition, because of the rumour spread by the Brahmins that he belonged to the Prangi caste. He has since advanced further interior towards the west, where the faith is beginning to make great progress."

Within the short space of nine years, those intrepid Missionaries, braving all opposition, had already advanced as far as Chinna Ballapuram, which is about 90 miles north-west of Punganur. We have seen what obstacles had to be overcome for the spread of the faith at Thakkolam and Punganur. We now meet with the same obstacles at Chinna Ballapuram. There it was the jealous Brahmin who opposed. Here we have a more general revolt which hatched, nursed, and guided by the Dasaries, set astir their followers, the Vishnuvites, be they Brahmins or Sudras. Chinna Ballapuram, now under the jurisdiction of Bangalore, lies on the outskirts of the Telugu—Canarese country. Fr. Le Goc writes from Chinna Ballapuram on the 10th January 1709: "Only recently we braved one of the most violent storms which this newly-born Mission has had to sustain. We were every moment expecting to fall into the hand of the inflexible Dasaries or to be ignominiously expelled* from the town. But God visibly watched over us and raised up intercessors who of their own free-will took up our defence. The principal merchants, officers of the Raja and other notable people came to our Church and they gave us their word that they would take up our cause. From that moment we were no more molested."

"Now the Dasaries and their Guru turned their hatred against our Christians. The Pagan Gurus issued an order forbidding each and every one either to give fire to the Christians or to let them draw water at the wells. This meant for our Christians exclusion from the caste. By this sort of excommunication they were disgraced and obliged to leave the town. The Gurus were sending their disciples into the houses of the Christians with a view to intimidate them. Several have already been turned out by their relatives but they stuck on firmly to their Faith. The storm has not yet passed away."

Having given some particulars of Chinna Ballapuram we must now refer to Devanapalli, which lies 12 miles south of Chinna Ballapuram and falls at present, like the latter, under the jurisdiction of Mysore Diocese. From a letter of Fr. Le Goc written probably about the end of the year 1714, we find that converts were made there as early as 1704 in the very beginning of the Carnatic Mission. A Church was built in 1707. The Christians of Devanapalli were most remarkable for their strong Faith and steadfast perseverance under the greatest trials.

In 1710 a fierce persecution broke out which lasted over two months. The Dasaries did their utmost to make them renounce their religion. But thanks be to God, they remained firm. Truth triumphed and calm once again followed the tempest. But this relief was not lasting, and suspended the fury of the Dasaries only for a time. Two years later, in August 1712, they redoubled

their efforts and determined to sweep away the Christian religion entirely from that town. It became imperative for the Christians to leave the place and settle down in some other place. These generous souls, all of them still neophytes in the Faith, having lost everything they possessed, now had to leave home and kindred for no other reason but to save their souls.*

This deplorable success of the Dasaries at Devanapalli filled the priests with the greatest anxiety for their community at Chinna Ballapuram. It was now nearly seven years since Fr. De la Fontaine had built a Church there. The Ballapuram Christians had their share in the persecution when they were still young in the Faith about the year 1709, as we have seen already. Ever since then the Faith had taken a deeper and deeper root and a great number of families had been baptized. The Dasaries were quite confident that they would succeed here as they had at Devanapalli. But God averted their wicked plans. It is remarkable to relate that when the persecution at Devanapalli was at its height, God showered abundant blessings on Ballapuram. Many of the best families of the Sudra caste, the same to which the Raja belonged, embraced Christianity.

Fr. Calmette's first letter, dated Ballapuram, 28th September 1730. He describes a severe persecution which took place in his time. The Dasaries had forced the Raja of Ballapuram to expel the Christians by

* The persecution lasted for over two years, all through the years 1713-14. The Church of Devanapalli was recovered and re-established by Fr. De la Fontaine with the greatest difficulty.

issuing an edict against them, whereby they were declared to be deprived of their caste, forbidding all artizans to work for their benefit or to supply their wants. Famine was desolating the country. Many sought work under the neighbouring Rajas. The rest with the exception of the few who fell, are now dispersed over different countries. The general drought lasted three years.

CHAPTER IV.

It is now time to follow the pioneers of the Carnatic Mission in their advance further north into that part of the Telugu country, whence sprang originally most of the Christians who are now scattered over the Nellore and Guntur districts. (Some of them have latterly emigrated even into the Nizam's Dominions across the Kistna river; others are living in the south in the Tamil country.)

There cannot be the least doubt that the Jesuit Missionaries penetrated into what is now called the Cuddapah district. For not only do we find them, incidentally, mention the conversion of Pagans at Wavala-padu (Wayalapadu) and referring to the Church of Kam-baladinnai, both of which places are situated in that district, but the famous and zealous Missionary Bishop Bonnard speaks in his diary of Siddhavatham (Sidhout) as having been a flourishing Christian settlement in the time of the Jesuits, with a resident priest of great renown and influence.

Fr. Le Goc who had for a short time taken the place of Fr. De la Fontaine at Chinna Ballapuram,

during the latter's illness, now returned to Krishnapuram, where he had already gathered several souls into the fold.

Krishnapuram, now a village of little or no importance in Anantapur district, lies about 15 miles south-east of Dharmavaram, in the Hindupur taluk.

Three of the pioneer Jesuit Fathers lie buried in this village, which was once the centre of the greatest missionary activity. When in 1835 Bishop Bonnard visited this hallowed spot, the graves which had fallen in ruins had just then been rebuilt by a Christian Kamasala Bhattudu, who was living there at the time.

The last of the descendants left the village in 1909, her name was Chinamma, an old woman of 80 years of age.

Krishnapuram lies in a wild and rugged country. The Pakala-Dharmavaram branch of the M. S.M. Ry., now passes in a curve to the west and north of it. Muchthapuram, the second station from Dharmavaram, is 5 miles north of Krishnapuram. In the surrounding villages which 200 years ago numbered many converts, one ought still to be able to trace remnants of the stock from which our Telugu Christians sprang. It is a pleasure to learn that Fr. M. Xavier, a native of Phirangipuram in Guntur district, now stationed at Pakala, has discovered ancestral relatives of his in these parts, which would go to prove the origin of the conversion of this caste (*Thogata*) in this neighbourhood. At a village not far from Guntakal which in former times, likely belonged to the same Sima as Ballarum, live relations of the Bandanadam people of Phirangipuram.

It is also beyond doubt that the first converts of *Sale* caste were made at Krishnapuram and its immediate neighbourhood. Bishop Bonnard who visited the village in 1835 says that the Church was situated in the Salepettah; its ruined walls being then still about a man's height.

At the very onset a fine Church had been erected at Krishnapuram, where the first converts must have been made about the year 1712 or 1713.

"It was", says Fr. LeGoc, "the best Church in the whole extent of our missions. We had it built solidly and substantially, because it is the most promising place of all, where we hope to establish a flourishing community. It was, however, soon destroyed by fire, but Fr. De la Fontaine, who had baptized a great many converts there, had it rebuilt shortly after in about the year 1715."

Fr. Le Goc ascribes the rapid growth of the mission of Krishnapuram and its surrounding villages in a great measure to the public reverence and respect bestowed upon the Superior of the Mission, Fr. De la Fontaine. No doubt Fr. Le Goc's humility forbade him to speak of his own popularity and the great success which attended his labours. The young Prince of Thadamurray especially was exceedingly respectful to Fr. De la Fontaine. Thadamurray is a small town 10 miles from Krishnapuram. "Such marks of public esteem", says Fr. Le Goc, "greatly contributed to the Christian religion being held in veneration in these parts."

Not that the young converts were left in peace even here. The Pagans, principally the Gurus and the Brahmins, did not cease to thwart them.

People who are at all acquainted with India know these Gurus go about the country at stated periods to extort money from their deluded adherents. It may be of special interest to our many weaver Christians, be they of the Thogata or Sale caste, to know how one of their ancestors, braving all opposition on the part of his Pagan Gurus, entered the fold. His name was Rangappa. Even as a Pagan he bore the reputation of an intelligent and just man. He evidently was desirous of serving God to the best of his lights, for he had placed himself under the guidance of different Gurus. At last, however, he perceived the true light of salvation, and seeing it, followed it. After his baptism, the good man used all his influence and zeal to make others share in the great treasure he had found.

Bheemisetty Jojappa, an excellent old man at Condramutla, told the compiler * of these records, that his grandfather or great-grandfather (he forgot which) had been a most zealous and ardent worshipper of the heathen gods before he became a Christian. Jojappa was then about eighty years of age—that was between 1892-1896. It is very probable that this Rangappa of whom Fr. Le Goc speaks so highly was the very man, and therefore, the first Christian parent of the Bheemisetty family which, up to our own days, had been known as one of the best families in that caste. It appears that the male line of that stock has died out.

* Fr. A. Kroot.

We have now arrived at a period which, we may well venture to call the most interesting in the whole history of the Telugu Christians, namely, the conversion of the Reddis, and in a more restricted sense, that of the branch called the Yelnada Reddlu. Of this particular caste, we have a concise memoir in the letters of the priest who received them into the Church.

The first converts of these Reddis belonged to a family of great power and wealth, whose example and influence soon drew others into the fold. They are now unmistakably the most numerous among the Telugu Christians and form, by their social position, unwavering adherence to the faith, may we say, our mainstay, and stronghold in the Telugu country.

From the letter of Fr. Le Goc we may safely conclude that the first of the Reddis became Christians at the end of the year 1715, and that Thumma Royappa, as the first and moving cause, received baptism in the month of September of that year. He died on 24th December of the same year.

Yelnati Kapulu, who have all reason to be proud of their ancestors, should therefore celebrate the feast of their first convert on the 24th December, the Church ~~always~~ taking as natalitia, the day of death, which is the entry into life.

We give some particulars of the history of this remarkable person in Fr. Le Goc's own words.

"For two years this ~~man~~ was troubled with a disease which was considered incurable and by most people ascribed to a malefice or spell. As he was a rich

man, neither pains nor expenses were spared to effect a cure. But all to no purpose. The Brahmins as usual in such cases, exhorted him to appease the anger of the gods by sacrifices and especially by liberal * alms. The sick man tired of these remedies, and useless expenses, fell into a state of blackest melancholy. In his despair, he even asked for poison, that he might terminate his sufferings by death.

“ When the matters had come to this pass, a zealous Christian happened to be in that village on some business and spoke of the wonderful powers of the true God. The Reddi who questioned him regarding the new religion and the white Sanyasi who had come to preach the same, resolved after several interviews with this stranger, to be further instructed in the Christian faith and asked that some one might be sent to assist him in that matter. The Christian informed him that there was a catechist residing at Dharmavaram. The younger brother of the Reddi, named Kondappa, set out to Dharmavaram and begged of the catechist to accompany him to his village. The catechist consented after much hesitation. But he did not stay longer than three days, always filled with the fear that some harm may befall him, similar to that of some unfortunate strangers, who had, as the catechist had heard, a hand and an ear cut off for a trivial cause, in the country whence the Reddi came.”

A few days after the catechist's departure, the Reddi's uneasiness and anxiety to be further instructed in the Christian truth became so urgently strong, that

* To Brahmins of course.

Kondappa set out once more to bring the catechist. On Arrival at Dharmavaram he learnt that the Roman San-yasi had returned to Krishnapuram. He started at once to that village in company with the catechist. On his arrival, he told the priest all that had happened, and the ardent desire of his brother to be instructed fully in the Christian doctrine. Kondappa proposed to bring the sick man to the priest. The priest consented to Kondappa's proposal, but added: "Remember, if it be only your brother's recovery you are seeking, I can guarantee no such cure. Our profession is not to administer medicines but to instruct in the law of God."

Kondappa hastened back to his village. With the consent of his relatives, it was decided, to take the patient without further delay to Krishnapuram. The following day the sick Reddi was placed on a stretcher and accompanied by twenty of his relatives, after a journey of two days, arrived at Krishnapuram. The patient's condition was indeed low and pitiful. Besides a continuous fever he had such a violent cough that one feared he might die of suffocation in one of these attacks. His hands and feet were covered with very painful sores. In this state he was taken into our presbytery with three of his people to attend to his wants. He had not been with us eight days, when one night he gave such a loud cry that the Father, startled in his sleep, hastened to his side and found him in a spasm like that of a dying man. But scarcely had he blessed him with holy water and made the sign of the Cross over him, when he cried out, "Oh Swamy, he was holding me by the throat." "I beg of you not to defer any longer baptizing me." The

following day he was taken into the Church, where the sacramental waters were poured over him.

“From that day he gradually improved and we began to entertain hopes of his recovery. Just then the priest had to start to Chinna Ballapuram on an urgent call as the Mysore army threatened to lay seige to that town. After a considerable stay there, he received information that the Reddi's condition was growing worse. He accordingly returned to Krishnapuram in the hope of baptizing some of the Reddi's relatives. Eight had been baptized already and twenty were preparing for it.”

“And indeed the good man expired on the eve of Christmas. Many of his relations had come in the morning to have a last glimpse of their old friend. They had been well instructed by the Catechist and now asked to be received into the Church. They persisted so earnestly in their request and with such an unflinching and firm disposition, that the priest gladly gave way and baptized fourteen of their number.”

The funeral ceremonies on the day following contributed no less to confirm the newly-baptized relatives in their faith. The body was carried on a bier covered with a coloured cloth, adorned with flowers and surrounded by numerous lights. All the Christians two by two followed the body in procession, reciting aloud the prayers of the Church. The Pagans stood amazed and surprised.

“After sometime the Christians begged the Priest to come to their village, giving him the assurance of their undiminished fervour and informing him that thirty more persons were disposed to receive baptism. The

priest gladly acceded to their request. During his short stay among these good people the priest had the consolation of administering the Sacrament of Baptism to over fifty people*."

"Sometime after this event, the Pagan Guru, Shivalingam, our greatest opponent in these parts, hastened to the village on the occasion of the marriage of a Christian and vented his wrath in abusing the Christians, and vented his wrath in abusing the Christian Religion and threatening to carry his plaint to the Prince's Court, where he would not fail to get the Christians punished and this new religion proscribed. In response to his complaint, the Prince of Anantapur quietly answered that as the Roman Sanyasi did not reside in his territory, but in the Ballaram country, he had better take his complaint to that Court."

"These attempts on the part of the Guru, which no doubt distracted the Christians a great deal, were shortly after followed by another severe trial. The army of the Maharattas whose country is situated in about the same latitude as that of Goa, makes frequent invasions in that part of India which is inhabited by the Reddis. They lately brought great destruction, the Christians sustaining a considerable loss in grain and cattle."

"In all these troubles and afflictions, those good people did not abandon their intention of building a Church in their village. The priest had an interview with the Prince of Anantapur to obtain his permission to

* The number of Christian Reddis had therefore by this already increased to over 72.

build the Church. Permission was granted by the Prince for the building of a Church in any part of his territory."

* "Not only did the Prince give permission for building the Church of Muddigubba, but he also furnished wood as well. This monument of Christian worship in the midst of Paganism could not but irritate the enemies of the Christian faith. In fact the Dasaris, the adorers of Vishnu, were only waiting for an occasion to vent their rage. The temporary absence of the priest during his visit to other mission stations gave them an opportunity. They assembled in a large body at Allumuru, which numbers several Christian families. They intended to pillage the houses of the neophytes and then proceeding to Muddigubba, which is only a mile and a half from this village, to set fire to the materials ready for the building of the Church. The Reddi who is the head of the Christians in that neighbourhood, cited the ringleaders of the Dasaris before the Brahmins of the village and in the name of the Prince held them responsible for the action of these men. The Brahmins therefore advised the Dasaris to wait till they should have learnt the good pleasure of the Prince, whom they would forthwith inform of the matter. That very evening the Prince's answer arrived. He gave orders that the Dasaris should come to Anantapur, with their complaint against the Christians."

"On his return journey from Ballapuram, the Priest apprised of these matters, paid a visit to the Prince at

* Another letter of Fr. Le Goc, dated 12th January 1722, Ballapuram.

Anantapur. The Prince received him with the greatest demonstrations of honour and friendship. He at once summoned the Brahmins and made the Priest and the Brahmins enter into a warm discussion. The Priest dwelt for a considerable time upon the perfections of God, none of which were applicable to the Indian dieties."

"The Priest showed the Prince in the presence of the assembled crowd the patent from the Nawab of Arcot, in which the Nawab expressed his great regard for the Roman Sanyasis and ordered all the Rajas, Princes and officers under him, to treat them and their disciples everywhere with favour, and without molestation of any kind. The Prince expressed his entire agreement with its sentiments. He was quite ready to issue a similar patent for the extent of his dominion."

"The first Easter was celebrated with great solemnity and in perfect order, the Prince's representative being present at all our ceremonies. The people were edified. Forty persons received baptism and the heads of four families came to place their Lingams at the feet of the Priest. They and their families are now being instructed and we have reason to believe that they will become fervent Christians. There is not a Mission in India, where the Faith has made such rapid progress in so short a time and where the Pagans seem better disposed than here."

"When we were about to celebrate the second feast of Easter, we thought it proper to again invite the Prince. He came with a large escort of cavalry, soldiers and elephants."

“The procession started about 7 P.M., accompanied by a lively band and in a blaze of torches and fireworks. Three times we went round the Church, reciting aloud the Litanies of the Holy Name of Jesus, of the Blessed Virgin, of the Blessed Sacrament and of St. Francis Xavier.”

“The Prince was murdered after sometime. We feared that the loss of so good a Prince would be fatal to our cause and that the Brahmins and the Dasaris would take advantage of the occasion to raise a new storm. But the marks of good will which his brother and successor has already shown towards us, have already dissipated our fear.” Here ends Fr. Le Gac's letter.

We have again to step over a large void of eight years. With the last letter of Fr. Le Gac, the interesting account of the conversion of the Reddis and its subsequent progress, came to a somewhat abrupt end. We do not again get a glimpse of them until some years after in Fr. Calmette's letters which are now to follow. As remarked before the “*Lettres Edifiantes et Curieuses*,” are merely a miscellaneous collection of epistolary correspondence selected from among the letters of some of the Jesuit Missionaries in different parts of the East. A continuous and uninterrupted narrative is therefore beyond hope of realization. Unfortunately the archives of the French Jesuits were well nigh entirely destroyed at the time of the suppression; otherwise unpublished letters might still be found to fill up the gap of different periods. Fr. Calmette's letters are the last of those Carnatic Missionaries whose letters appear in the series.

It may be interesting to note that it was most probably under Fr. Calmette's administration, that the Reddis emigrated from Maddigubba and Alumuru and returned to the land whence their forefathers had come—the Dupad, Sima—spreading thence further south into the Venkatagiri Raja's territory. To judge from his letters Fr. Calmette seems to have been a very erudite Jesuit. Fr. Calmette's name lived on for many generations among the Telugu Christians. In Bishop Bonnand's time just a hundred years later the Reddis of the Nellore and Kistna Districts speak of him as the great Sanskrit scholar, who had followed them across the Kumbum hills.

Fr. Calmette's letter, dated January 1733, "Since the French Jesuits thirty years ago opened out this mission of the Carnatic, after the mode of Madura, the work has extended itself as far as 600 miles inland, beginning from Pondicherry in the South to Buckapuram in the North, which latter is the latest acquired station and lies in about the same latitude as Masulipatam. We have sixteen Churches spread over this length, not counting the two which the French make use of at Pondicherry and at Arianguppam. We are six missionaries in the interior working for the Pagans. Two more are prepared to join us."

"By the grace of God which has seconded our efforts, we have missionaries in the Carnatic who can count nearly 10,000 Christians in their district. The oldest missions and those nearer to Madura are the more numerous; some have been established only recently and we hope of great results, the Christians being very fervent,

as for instance, Bukkapuram which I have already mentioned."

Fr. Calmette further speaks of the new Churches and the difficulty encountered in obtaining a building site. We learn that about the year 1727, the first Church was built at Venkatagiri by Fr. Gargam, the same as we shall see later on, who obtained the ground and built the Church at Peddarikatla. "The Church, when completed was a nice and solid building. But kind as the Raja was, there were also enemies of the Christian religion; one in the person of the Raja's own brother-in-law—the other one, brother of the Raja of Kangundi. Soon the Moors laid seige to Venkatagiri. On this occasion, these two bitter enemies destroyed the Church, on the plea of defending the town." "The town of Punganur was taken by the Moors. The palace of the prince was destroyed, the town burned down and the walls dismantled. We shared in the general desolation, for neither the Church was spared. The Moors placed an infant prince on the throne, appointed a Brahmin, Somappa by name, Administrator, restored peace and withdrew. From this Administrator, the priest obtained a piece of ground within the town to build a house. This house was soon erected and as speedily became the centre of new conversions."

Fr. Calmette's letter, September 1735—

"The new Christian community of Bukkapuram has increased very much during the last two years, amongst others, by the family of Thummavaru Reddis who were partly the founders of the Maddigubba Church,

It is now some years since the chief of that family was converted. After a few months' illness after baptism, he died at Krishnapuram in the hands of Fr. Le Gac. His family adhered to the faith, in spite of the many difficulties and has increased nearly to the number of two hundred and became exceedingly rich. These Reddis lived at Alumuru, which belongs to Anantapur (and only a mile and-a-half from Maddigubba)."

"They were reported to the Mahrattas, as being very wealthy, Madhu Rayalu, a Mahratta Brahmin, at the head of a flying column, laid seige to the town. These Reddis who were the holders and masters of the town, relying on the assistance of the prince, resolved to defend themselves and making a soldier of every inhabitant, held out for three months. They did not lose a single Christian, whereas the enemy lost a great number of their army. However as the Mahrattas were determined not to recede, the head of the Reddis went to Anantapur to expose to the prince the critical state of their citadel. The prince supplied the Reddi with arms but did not afford the necessary help. Immediately on his return to Alumuru, the Reddi called his brothers together and told them the result of his journey to Anantapur, whereupon they all agreed to return to Bukkapuram whence they had formerly emigrated. The execution of this resolve was not an easy one. The number of their cattle, their various goods and chattels, their money and jewels and above all the large number of children, made the march perilous and embarrassing." To escape being observed by the enemy they left at dead of night. The departure was made in the greatest silence, so that not

one of their suite was discovered. Before starting on their journey, they had made a vow to build a Church at their own cost, if they escaped the vigilance of their enemies, and succeeded in obtaining suitable lands in the new territory. The journey was peacefully accomplished, a distance of eighty leagues and they arrived at Bukkapuram with their numerous families without the least molestation.

The prince * gave them at first a farm of his own demesne and later on other villages, the most important of which is the one † not far from the Church of Aricatla. ‡

This new Church which is a day's journey from Bukkapuram is the work of a Christian named Ponnapati Royappa. He was at Bukkapuram when the Church there was under construction. He carefully studied the principles of the Christian religion and learning the truth, embraced it and was baptized. On returning to his town, he had to stand the brunt of all sorts of opposition, especially on the part of Papi Reddi who was its

* Raja of Venkatagiri.

† Batchalakurapadu.

‡ A Jesuit priest lies buried at Peddarikatla.

Eighty leagues = about 240 miles, a journey across the Cumbum hills, must, in those days, have been one of danger and difficulty. It was the country of tigers and highway robbers. The former abound there still.

Bukkapuram is in the north of Venkatagiri Raja's territory, Nellore district. There is now nothing left of that once flourishing village except the ruins of a few houses and graves of the Christians. The old catechist at Bandivelaganda, Shantappa, could still point out a patch of the foundation in chunam, of the Church and the dwelling of the priest,

governor. He succeeded without much difficulty in gaining over his own household. He also succeeded after some time in obtaining the consent of Papi Reddi for the erection of a Church and to have a missionary in their midst.

“Fr. Gargam came to Arikatla to confer with the governor. This town has about five or six thousand inhabitants. The governor had changed his mind and was unwilling to have the Church built. The priest was in the act of shaking the dust of his shoes when the governor getting frightened stopped him and changing his tone, willingly consented. Even the Brahmin who was the leader of the opposition was so overcome by the priest's threat, that he not only agreed to the demand but spontaneously offered to superintend the construction of the Church.”

“These two churches, being near to each other, are mutually helpful in the spread of the faith. That of Bukkapuram soon counted more than two hundred Christians and with the arrival of the Reddis of Muddigubba, that of Arikatla is quite a settled community.”

CHAPTER V.

We have followed the pioneer missionaries in this arduous work of evangelizing the rural people up to the forties of the eighteenth century and could wish for some account of their apostleship during the next thirty years. But from this time onward there appear to be no records available. The Society of the Jesuits still flourished and its members continued their useful work in the missions

unabated at least till the end of 1764 when Louis XV signed the edict that the Company of Jesus should cease to exist in France. The uncertainty of the ultimate fate of the Society must have greatly interfered with the work in the missions and necessarily curtailed the supply of men and means. The pressure of more serious matters and the gloomy prospects of the future will readily account for the interruption of correspondence with their friends at home.

In February 1743 the Church of Kambaladinne was destroyed by the Nizam's army and in the following month the Church of Muddigubba was raised to the ground by the petty polygars who were carrying on an intestine warfare against one another and plundering expeditions all over the country and as we have already seen not a soul was left in the neighbourhood. These events will explain the subsequent rapid decline of Christianity in the country of its birth among the Telugus.

Those were troublous times. Even before this date, the most influential Christians, the Thumma Reddis had emigrated to the East. Owing to political unrest throughout the country, the ever-returning vexatious plunderings of the Mahrattas and the molestations of the petty rajas or polygars, not only the Reddis, but many of the other Christians of the Andevaru and Balarum Simas emigrated into what is now called the Nellore district and we may assume that after the famine of 1736 few were left in their original homes.

What happened to the once flourishing mission stations situated in the territory of the Nobob of

Cuddapah we have at this date no means of ascertaining. Only incidentally the name of some town or village in that territory was given in the above letters (Lett. Edi. Cur.), such as Vavelapadu (Voyalapadu) and Kambaladinne. When nevertheless we consider that at the latter place two priests were working we may legitimately infer that this must have been a mission station of some importance. We learn moreover from the Diary of Bishop Bonnard who travelled and worked in these parts about a hundred years later that Siddhavattam or Siddhout had at one time a Church and a resident priest. He was informed that this priest Joachim by name was a clever and successful physician which gave him great influence. The Nabob of Cuddapah assigned to him the grant of Siddhavattam and of another village in recognition of the valuable service rendered to him.

Here we have undoubtedly a clue to the conversion of Illellani Kammavarus, the descendants of whom now form a considerable number and are a body of respectable and well-conducted Christians, spreading over the villages in the Guntur, Nellore and Chingleput districts.

We may safely take it proven that they were converted about the time above referred to and that the cradle of their regenerative birth was no other than the territory over which the Nabob of Cuddapah then ruled.

The custom of secluding their women gradually falling into disuse among the heathens as well as among the Christians the name Illellani became a meaningless term and they adopted and are now generally known by the name of Gandikota Kammas. This gives us an

additional proof of the place of their original home ; for the Gandikota Sima formed a large and important part of the Cuddapah Nabob's dominions.

Our Kamma Christians of this particular caste pride themselves on the prestige of their ancestors and say that their forefathers occupied honourable positions in the employ of the Nabobs and Rajas of by-gone days, with many of whom the first Jesuits had great influence. It is therefore easily explained how these Kammas came in contact with the pioneer Fathers and thus were brought by them into the true fold.

The *intiperus* or family names of some of them are from the villages in the Gandikota Sima where their forefathers lived before their conversion, such as Pothacamuru, Eddalapalle, Penikalapadu, Malepadu, Etur, Mailavaram. Kambaladinne, where there were two missionaries working, is on the plateau of Gandikota Sima, about half a dozen miles north of the Gandikota fortress. It is written that the Church there was destroyed by the Nizam's army in 1743 and that the two missionaries fled to the South. It must have been an important-mission station with a good number of Christians, who must have been mostly Kammavaru. Gandikota Sima then comprised parts of the present districts of Cuddapah, Kurnool and Anantapur, a good portion of it was a high plateau of about 40 miles in length and 20 in breadth. The fortress of Gandikota is on the southern limits of the plateau, on a lofty and steep rock on the southern bank of the river Pennar, which passes through a narrow gorge at the very foot of the rock.

Gandikota Kammavaru followed their Naiks (Polygars) from Guntur to Gandikota in the sixteenth century. A few families of indoor Kammavaru exist in Kurnool district, north of Cumbum. The women are kept in strict gosha. They consider it beneath their dignity to spin thread, or to do other work. A subdivision of this caste lives west of Cumbum whose females are gosha but work at the spindles. Gampa Kammavaru are distinguished from indoor Kammavaru by their women wearing their saris over their right shoulder whereas the indoor wear it in the left.

All the Kammavaru Christians of Gandikota Sima, like the others of the Cuddapah Nabob's territory, emigrated after 1743 to the Nellore and Guntur districts, probably led by their missionaries. At least some of them settled at Oleru on the branches of the river Kistna, Guntur district. Probably some Golla (shepherd) converts accompanied them to Oleru and from there to Kitchery (Palanellore). There must have been many Gollas living then on the extensive Gandikota plateau as they are at the present day, as the country is very favourable for the upkeep of their flocks. The Gollas of Palanellore may be their descendants, being Karna Gollas like the former. There are about a dozen families of Gollas at Chinnamanayana-cota, south of Anantapur, who trace their ancestral pedigree to a Golla Christian of Gandikota plateau, near Thimmanayunipetta. Their traditional history is that their ancestor migrated to the East and was the cook of the missionary at Oleru. When the compiler of this booklet was in charge of that place in 1894, a family hairloom was shown to him by one of the Christians. It

was a manuscript copy of *Mokshamargamu*—a book of controversy, written on thick blue demi paper. The following statement was written on the last page of the manuscript: “This book was written at Oleru in 1746 when Fr. Gnanaprakasam was in charge.” Afterwards their ancestor went to his native country to get married. His descendants kept up their faith and are good Christians. This affords some proof that the Kamma Christians of Oleru went there from Kambaladinne, probably led by a missionary whose servant that Golla was.

The compiler heard from the lips of an old Christian of Onteddupalle that in the year 1871, when Mgr. Balanader visited the place soon after his ordination, a man from Kambaladinne probably of Kamsala caste went there with a manuscript copy of the book “Thursday Miracles”. This proves that there were Christians at Kambaladinne converted either early before 1740 by the Jesuits or later after 1800 by Fr. D’Souza of Proddatur,* Cuddapah district.

We further glean from the Diary of Bishop Bonnand that the Baliyas now living at Mutnur came from these parts and hence we may conclude that the pioneer Jesuits had laid a solid foundation for the faith in the territory of which unfortunately the record is now so scanty.

The Christians of Maddikera, Ramadurgam, Adoni, Raichur and Moodgal were converted by the missionaries from Goa. The Christians of Kamma caste which goes by the name of Gampachatu Kammavaru were most probably

* Fr. A. Kroot says that there is some tradition at Onteddupalle about the first conversions in 1740,

brought into the faith by the priests from Goa. Most of the Christians of Andavaru and Balarum Simas (Anantapur district) and the Christians in the territory of the Nabob of Cuddapah emigrated to the north of the Nellore district and further east into the country now known as Guntur and Kistna districts. These emigrations certainly took place between 1735 and 1760. The Guntur district was under the French Government from 1750 to 1779. So the Missionaries took them all into that district to protect them from all danger of losing their faith. There are families bearing the family names of Peddakotla, Alumuru, Siddhavattam and Adur. The Christian settlements of Phirangipuram, Rentachintala, Oleru and Mutnur must have been formed about that period. Just as the Christians of Anantapur and Cuddapah districts emigrated to Nellore and Guntur districts, those of Chinnaballapuram, Devanapalle and Punganur emigrated later on, led by their priests to the east, towards Vellore and Madras (90 miles west of Punganur, on the northern frontier of Mysore State).

In 1733 there were sixteen stations in the Carnatic Mission, of which the most remote was Buckapuram which is a village in the Darsi taluk of Nellore district. In 1735 the Christian community was strengthened by the immigration of some Reddis, surnamed Thumma, who came from Bellary to escape the constant Mahratta inroads. The Native Christians say that when the French obtained possession of Guntur in 1752, the Christians of Bukkapuram and Arikatla moved into this district and were joined by others from Bellary and Kurnool. This is probably true, for the Jesuit Fathers of

the Carnatic Mission had by this time quite given up their first idea of working on the model of the Madura Mission secluded from all intercourse with the Europeans and were now inclined to collect their flock under the French flag. The wars from 1740 brought the English and French soldiers into the interior of the peninsula. The Missionaries could no longer avoid intercourse with the Europeans. The Christians of Kamma caste at Ravipadu near Narasaraopet trace the foundation of the Church there to one Polavarapu Chinnayya who was converted at Pondicherry and on coming north was employed as a Revenue Officer at Narasaraopet and at the date when the British took possession of the district there were some Christians enjoying official position and influence. Balsat Jung in 1770 gave to the Mission $71\frac{1}{2}$ acres of land in the Mutnur village, which the Mission still holds. After the suppression of the Society of Jesus, the ex-Jesuits that remained in the country worked on still, but the influence of the French disappeared when their troops were removed from the Guntur district in 1779.

A large number of Christians emigrated from Oleru to the Chingleput district in 1787 under the leadership of Fr. Manente who had obtained lands for them from the English Government near Kitchery. Fr. Manente was encouraged by the Madras Government to bring other colonies of Christian cultivators to the Chingleput district who wanted to emigrate from the territory of Tippu Sultan and Nizam. Pannur is one of them. Probably after the famine of 1832 the Christian cultivators moved to Patibanda.

Some manuscripts still in existence show that the French Jesuits paid much attention to Telugu, imitating the labours of the Madura Missionaries. These manuscripts on paper or palmyra leaves are Telugu poems on sacred subjects, narratives of Biblical history, translations of prayers, one of them Vedantarasayana, the "Essence of Religion" was written at Mangalagiri near Chinnaballapuram. The poem is much admired for its style. Its date is 1700. The early Jesuit Missionaries had great influence with the Nabobs and Polygars which contributed a great deal to the success of their work of evangelization and to the protection of their converts from the persecution of their heathen gurus and dasaris, etc. The Nabob of Arcot had even granted them a patent which Fr. Le Gac showed to the polygar of Anantapur. It reads as follows:—"Sadatulla Khan Nabob to all Fausdars, Rajas, Quelidars, Paleacandlu and all whom it may concern:—The Roman Sanyasis have churches in the Carnatic which they visit to instruct their disciples. They are penitents who profess the truth and whose probity is well known to us. We respect them and have great regard for them. Hence it is our will that they and their disciples be treated everywhere with favour and without molestation of any kind. Such is our command."

Some of them, if not all, had a knowledge of medicine and were physicians. Fr. A. Kroot says that the Jesuits had a great deal of knowledge in that line. Fr. Joachim was made Zemindar of Siddhavattam with hundred followers, for curing the daughter of the Nabob of Cuddapah of some disease. Many heathens possessed by

the devil were converted when the evil spirit was expelled at the time of baptism and many of our present Christians state that their first ancestral convert was freed from the possession of the devil.

The heathen idolaters are often tormented with diabolical possession. Fr. Calmette in his letter, January 1733, says: "That the Church of India is God's work, is manifest no less on account of the many miracles as of the constant contradictions and adversities. These miracles are not rare and testify to the power our Christians have of expelling the devil from those who are possessed. Numbers of poor Indians are tormented by the evil one in such a cruel manner that frequently their joints get dislocated. As soon as they are brought to the Church, their cure is certain; Satan has no more power over them". The first convert of the indoor Kammavaru was a woman who had been long suffering from the possession of the evil spirit and who was delivered from the obsession of the devil at the time of baptism. She received the name of Annamma, which continued to be a favourite one in this caste, like that of Royappa among the Reddis, because the first Christian Reddi bore that name.

There are Christians in the following places whose traditional statement is that their first ancestral convert had been molested by an evil spirit and was received into the Church as a consequence of the expulsion of the devil by exorcism, Pepalle in the Bellary district, Condapalle, and a village near Paloor, both in the Kurnool district. There were some Kamma Christians

at Narisettipalem, Nellore district, who traced to the same cause the first conversion of their ancestors. Lately a family near Thubadu, Guntur district, was converted for the same reason. At Uratur, Cuddapah district, a few years ago, two adults who had long been tormented by the devil were freed at the time of baptism. The heathens of the village acknowledge that the devil does not approach the Christians, but at the same time still keep back from the true faith.

The early Jesuit Missionaries counted among their converts representatives of almost every caste. Among the first converts made in the Telugu country, by them, were some Boyas. Their hereditary profession was the military service of the polygars in those parts of the Punganur territory. Their descendants still keep to the true faith though many of them long ago lost their ancestral profession by the disappearance of the polygars or of their power. There are many families of Boya Christians at Punganur, Kalikiri, Narasimmayalapalem, north of Punganur.

There are no records to show that any conversions were made by the first missionaries among the Telugu non-caste (Pariahs or Malas and Madigas or Sakkilis or Cobblers). Bishop Bonnand who worked as a missionary for six years in the Guntur and Nellore districts, says: "It is difficult to convert Pariahs here; it is waste of time to preach to them, seeing especially that much greater good can be done among the Sudras". He writes in another letter, "Here the Pariahs are in no way disposed to embrace the Christian religion". In 1849

there were five or six families of Malas at Palaparthi, 15 miles south-west of Phirangipuram. They must have emigrated to Podapadu, Kitchery, Mutnoor as they then wished to do. There were three Pariah Christian families at Oleru in 1849. Bishop Bonnand speaks of some Mala Christians at Vadagaram in 1833.

There are some Christian Madiga families at Pannur and Sellampattada in the Chingleput district, who probably followed the Christian Sudras in their emigrations from the north and west. They appear to have become Christians much later.

In 1850 there were 26 Madigas at Thogatachedu near Poloor, Kurnool district, and about the same period there were some at Dommara-nandyala and Ponnathota, near Onteddupalle, who have now increased in number to about 100 souls.

The first Jesuit Missionaries converted people of almost every caste among the Telugus. Fr. De la Fontaine converted nine Brahmin adults within eight months after he started his work in the Punganur territory in 1702. When Tippu raised a great persecution against the Christians, in his dominions, some Brahmins of Madderu withdrew to Kitchery in the Chingleput district, others to Pondicherry.

There are more than forty Telugu Rajaput families at Christianpet, near Vellore and at Bangalore. The conversion of the first two families of this caste of Rajappa and of his brother-in-law, at Rajampet, in the Cuddapah district, is due to a miraculous incident. A

missionary in the garb of Roman Sanyasi, while travelling from one place to another, halted one night at Rajampet where a Rajaput family gave him shelter, probably in the adjacent cattle-shed. The head of the family observed that the Sanyasi was on his knees late at night absorbed in prayer and astonished at this mark of his sanctity, fell at his feet and begged of him to take his family among the followers of the new doctrine, and to pray that God may grant him an issue, as his wife was fifty years old and barren.

The priest gave them his blessing and said that God would grant them a child by the time he visits them next on his return journey. The priest gave a book of catechism to Rajappa to learn the new doctrine. The two families of Rajappa and of his brother-in-law learnt the new doctrine and were practising, in spite of the insults and abuses of the other relatives and neighbours. After some time the people observed with surprise that Rajappa's wife was blessed with a male child. They did not see the priest for a long time and the child was four years old. Rajappa made up his mind to go to Pondicherry. He undertook this long journey with his family and had the happiness to meet there the same holy missionary, who was then suffering from some illness. The whole family was baptised there ; the family of his brother-in-law was baptised afterwards. These two families left their relations and their ancestral home and settled down near Vellore, in the employment of the Nabab of Arcot at the recommendation of the missionary. Other conversions were made in course of time through intermarriages with the children of these families.

CHAPTER VI.

After the suppression of the Society of Jesus in 1773, the Society of the Foreign Missions of Paris took up their work in the Carnatic Mission and worked in the Telugu country for a period of sixty-five years from 1778 to 1843, when the Vicar Apostolic of Madras succeeded them. The present chapter gives a short account of their work during that period. Owing to the French Revolution, the Society was very much handicapped at the commencement for want of men and means. The number of priests was so small that they could hardly look after the old Christians. Some conversion work was done in the Ceded Districts by a secular priest from Goa named Joachim D'Souza (Adikanandaswamy) who had settled at Proddatur. The Christians of Onteddupalle, Uratur and Condupalle trace by tradition the conversion of their forefathers to that priest.

Some of the old Christians of Katumayakuntla pointed to Proddatur as the place of the regeneration of their ancestors. The Cuddapah District Manual says : " With the suppression of the Jesuits in 1773, the Society's Missions came gradually to be abandoned and their work was ultimately carried on by the Missionaries from the west of the peninsula. It was Rev. Joachim D'Souza, a native of Goa, called by the Telugu Christians Fr. Adikanada who succeeded in founding a more lasting settlement of Christians in the Cuddapah district. This was at Sathiapuram, a suburb of Proddatur and was established at the end of the eighteenth or the beginning of the nineteenth century. Fr. Adikanada had, before

this, founded Churches at Bellary and Adoni in the Bellary district and at Yaleroo in the Anantapur district. Some five hundred caste Hindus (Reddis, weavers and goldsmiths) were converted in the Cuddapah district. They appear to have enjoyed certain privileges from the Government of the Nizam; but in 1800 when the country was ceded to the British, these privileges were withdrawn; and for this and other reasons, the community broke up and dispersed into different localities. Many of them, particularly the goldsmiths followed their spiritual father Adikanada to Bangalore, where he had joined the Fathers of the Foreign Missions Society. He subsequently died there in 1829 *. Others, notably the weavers, went and settled in the Rayachoti taluk, where their descendants live to this day, in the village of Katumayakuntla. Again some others of the same caste went and settled in the Nellore and Guntur districts. The greater number of cultivators went from Sathiapuram northwards to the Kurnool, Nellore and Guntur districts." Poloor Christianity, Kurool District, most probably traces its origin to the emigrants from Sathiapuram. Cowloor Christians are Pedakanti Kapus of the same caste as those of Pedarekatla in the Nellore district, from where they seem to have emigrated to the present locality, in the beginning of the 19th century. Kottala was founded by that valiant Christian lady, Papamma, in 1840.

* He died in 1821. (Vide His. Mis. Etr.)

Bellary District Manual (1872) says : " In 1775 Rev. Joachim * D'Souza, a secular priest called by the natives Adikanada visited Bellary, and in 1784 he moved from Goconda to Mudkal, and began regular visits among the Christians throughout the ceded districts. He built chapels at Adoni and Muddangheri and at other places in Cuddapah, Kurnool and Anantapur districts." There is proof to show that there were Christians at Proddatur before 1780. In that year, three brothers who were Christians already, of the Reddi caste, unable to live in peace with their relatives, left Proddatur, and settled at Bangalore (Blackpalli) and afterwards at Kamanahalli. (His. Mis. Etr., Vol I). Fr. D'Souza might have taken also some Reddis to Bangalore.

It is not known what became of the Christian community of Nandialampetta which existed in 1778 when the Jesuits gave up the Carnatic Mission to the Foreign Missions Society. There have been a few families of Patravandlu at Akalanarayanapalle, west of Cumbum for many years past. They may be the relics of that ancient community.

Kurnool District Manual, 1886, says : " In the latter part of the eighteenth century a mission was established at Sathiapuram near Proddatur. From Sathiapuram it extended its operations to Onteddupalle, Koilkuntla Taluk, Poloor and Kottala, near Nandyal, and several other villages in that neighbourhood."

* Some of the Christian names given by the missionaries from Goa to their converts are : Athicappa (Joseph), Salladri (San-Lazar), Yagappa (Jacob), Esamma (Jesu-Amma), Thanesulu (Stanislaus), Gragorappa (Gregory).

When the Society of the Jesuits was suppressed in Portugal in the year 1759, most of the Jesuits of the Madura and Mysore Missions left for Goa, and only twenty-one remained in their stations. Out of these, three were in Mysore and two at Raichur. This proves that the Christians in the Bellary district were converted by the Jesuits, or at least that they did mission work in those parts during the latter half of the 18th century. The Society of Jesus was suppressed in France in 1764, and from that date no more new missionaries of the Society came to work in the Carnatic. The old missionaries continued their work but they were few and many of them old and disabled. They continued to look after the old Christians till the year 1777, when the Society of the Foreign Missions took charge of the Carnatic Mission. At the time of the Mission there were only four priests working in the interior: Fr. Manente in the North at Oleru in charge of the Christians of Condauid, Palnad and Dupad Simas, Fr. Arnoult at Punganur, Fr. Baigneaux at Arcot and Vellore, and Fr. Andrea beyond the mountains (i.e., Caddapah, Kurnool and Anantapur districts). There was no native priest to help the missionaries. Each priest had one or more catechists and helpers bearing different names, according to their duties or according to the caste of the Christians among whom they worked. There were also the heads of the castes, such as Nattamais, etc., who, if faithful, rendered great service, to the missionaries. Fr. Vernet's letter of 3rd January, 1776, says: "Our French mission is not so old and was never so flourishing; nevertheless, it contains more than thirty thousand Christians".

The same missionary comparing the mission of the French Jesuits with that of the Portuguese Jesuits wrote in his letter of 28th June, 1776: "The number of the Churches of our mission was considerable in times past. The intestine wars, the changes in the Government at Pondicherry, the want of Missionaries and of necessary funds, has brought down total ruin to the greatest part. What remains is in a half ruined state and shows at one glance of the eye the state of the distress in which we have been for many years." The same missionary in his letter of 3rd May, 1777, says: "In the whole extent of this territory, there were many chapels but very many are in ruins or covered with straw with the walls in mud. The principal places are Buckapuram, Arikatla, Phiranghipuram, Nandialampetta near Cuddapah, Ballapuram, Krishnapuram, Darnavaram, Madderu, Punganur, etc. This part of the Carnatic Mission was very flourishing but our misfortunes have reduced it to two missionaries, who are obliged to make the most painful journeys without rest in order to visit all the different churches". The statistics given in 1803 estimate the number of the Christians in the Malabar mission (i.e., Carnatic, Mysore, Salem and Coimbatore) at twenty-eight thousand. Of these Condavid (Guntur and Nellore districts contain 1,500, Punganur (which includes Anantapur and Cuddapah), 1,000 Christians.

When the Foreign Missionary Society took up the work of the Jesuits in the Carnatic, the supply of the missionaries was very scanty at the commencement owing to the French Revolution. From 1778 to 1793 there arrived only about a dozen missionaries, and there

were no new arrivals of missionaries for the next thirty years. "From the year 1802 to 1818, the number of missionaries and Indian priests was very small in the Carnatic mission and consequently their visits to their Christians were at long intervals. The result was that the number of Christians decreased in the Guntur district. In Narasaraopet Taluk there is a village, where Reddis still bear Christian names (1880). They admit that their forefathers were Christians but left that religion, because for many long years they saw no priest." *

The Society opened a seminary at Pondicherry to train the Indian boys for the priesthood. The first Indian priests were Frs. Thomas and Philipp, the former ordained in December 1788 and the latter in January 1789. It was necessary to wait three years more before new ordinations of native priests took place. During this interval a new seminary building was constructed near the Cathedral and was completed in 1792. These native priests helped the missionaries to carry on the work of evangelization. Bishop Champanois writes in 1804: "In the days of its prosperity the Seminary counted a dozen pupils who were taught all the sciences from grammar up to theology inclusive. Six priests have been sent out from it, the others withdrawing their hand from the plough have renounced their vocation. To-day owing to the want of funds, there are only four aspirants or pupils". Seven native priests were ordained from 1794 to 1806. Fr. Magny writes in a letter, dated 8th May 1811: "Since the seminary has been established only

nine native priests have been ordained." Six priests were ordained between 1814 and 1823 and two more in 1828.

After the Carnatic mission was taken up by the French Foreign Missionary Society, the ex-Jesuits continued their work in the mission. Fr. Arnoult at Sellampattada and Fr. Manente at Kitchery were among those in the country places (Chingleput District). From 1775 within a period of about thirty years most of the Christians in the Western part of the Carnatic mission beyond the mountains (Punganur, Ballapuram, Krishnapuram and Cuddapah district) emigrated towards the east and settled down in places near Vellore and Madras; some of them emigrated to Bangalore, a large colony of Christians from Oleru was brought down to Kitchery by Fr. Manente. Many others followed them. Some account of these emigrations is given below.

The Christians of Sellampattada were brought from Punganur by Fr. Arnoult. The emigration was effected in the years 1775 and 1780, when the polygars of his old mission raised a violent persecution against the Christians in consequence of the numerous conversions to Christianity which daily occurred. He first settled them at Vellore and there gave them such pecuniary help as they required. The new emigrants, brought up as they were, in agricultural pursuits could not relish their new settlement at Vellore. Fr. Arnoult therefore removed them from Vellore to Yelamcotoor in the year 1780, and built a small Church for them in the new place. The land however was found to be not sufficiently productive nor

sufficiently extensive to support the new emigrants. In 1803, Fr. Arnoult purchased the village of Sellampattada. The Christian emigrants were principally of two castes, Yelama and Baliya. He procured the title-deeds of the Zamindary in the name of two principal persons, one of each caste. Soon after he laid the foundation of the Church that is now at Sellampattada. Fr. Mottet of the Foreign Missionary Society finished the church after 1809.

In 1784 Tippu Sultan raised a great persecution against the Christians in his dominions. It was then that many Christians from Chinnaballapuram, Devanapalle, Machanpalle, Sandur and Madderu emigrated towards the east and settled in the vicinity of Madras. Some Brahmins of Madderu withdrew to Kitchery in the district of Chingleput, others to Pondicherry. The Christians of Modely caste from Pudur Padvattur went to Kortampett. It was probably at this time that the Christian settlement of Kanyambadi was founded (North Arcot District). Later on many emigrants in the Chingleput District went further South and established new settlements called Pudur or Cottur, Ravutnellur and Thatchur :—

(1) * The Christians of Pudur, in consequence of some difficulties with the pagans, established themselves in 1827, some miles farther off from their first settlement near Veerajagundam. At the time of this last emigration, the Catholic families were twenty in number and counted one hundred members of the Reddi caste. The

* *Histoire des Missions Etrangères*, Vol. I,

other Christians of the same parish of Kitchery settled in 1828 at Eriur, Nemali and Palanellur.

(2) The Christian colony of Ravutnellur was founded in 1826 by the faithful of the Telugu race from Kitchery, who abandoned Veerajagundam, their first settlement.

(3) Thatchur, which dates from 1828, owes its birth to an emigration of Christians from Kitchery. One of them Rayappa was in good terms with the English collector who offered him lands to settle himself with the families of the same caste. Rayappa accepted the offer but instead of selecting the best lands he selected mediocre ones and came to settle himself at Thatchur. These Christians are Yelnadi Reddis. Their ancestors came first from the north of the Nellore district towards Kitchery in the great famine of 1784, and are related to the Reddi Christians of Rentachintala, etc.

There are some Reddi families of Panta Kapulu at Reddiarpalem, a suburb of Pondicherry. They emigrated thither from the Nellore district. They were probably converted in the great famine of 1832, Nandana Caruvu. There are many families of Kamsalas and a good number of Baliya and Reddi Christians at Bangalore. They went and settled there within the same period of thirty years.

The Kamsalas were most probably converted in the Anantapur district by the Jesuits near Darmavaram, and Krishnapuram. At the time of Bishop Bonnand's visit to Krishnapuram in 1835, there were families of Kamsalas in those places, who looked after the graves of

the first missionaries there, and even in 1850 there was a big family of Kamsalas near Krishnapuram, and in 1893 there were two or three families near Yaleroo. The Cuddapah District Manual says that the Kamsalas were converted by Fr. Joachim D'Souza at Proddatur and were taken by him to Bangalore after the East India Company took possession of the ceded districts. There is no tradition at all about that in the Cuddapah district Christian villages.

In the year 1780, three brothers Chinnappa, Anthappa and Papanna, already Christians, of the Reddi caste, unable to live in peace with their relatives at Proddatur (Podatur) beyond the northern boundaries of of the Mysore territory, went and settled down for some time at Blackpalle, a suburb of Bangalore and afterwards fixed their habitations definitely at Kamanahalli. Some of the present Reddi families of Bangalore may be the descendants of those families. The tradition of the Reddi families of Bangalore is that their ancestors went there from the Cuddapah district. Fr. Joachim D'Souza might have taken some of them from Proddatur. The Baliya Christians of Bangalore must have gone there from Punganur, Ballapuram, etc.

In the year 1788, Fr. Manente brought the Kitchery Christians from Oleru. Bishop Bonnand gives a description of his character and life as handed down by tradition. He narrates in particular an incident which throws much light on his general temperament and character. "It appears", he writes, "that he was a man of society. There were troops encamped near Oleru. On a Sunday

they went to hear Mass. Fr. Manente gave a dinner to the officers, and whether he procured the cows and the oxen or whether the officers furnished him with them, it is said that a cow was killed in the priest's house and that it was served at the table of the priest, where sat the officers who were looked upon as true pariahs by the people of the country. This was the reason for the heathen to break off all connection with the Christians as regards inter-dining and inter-marriages. They would no longer eat with the Christians nor would the Christians eat with them. Nevertheless this sort of change in the caste disposition was still only local."

Fr. Manente had among his Christians a certain number of very poor weavers. In order to help them in their livelihood he advanced money to them on the condition that the weavers should weave cloths which should be sold in Madras. When the money was once paid to them the weavers declined to keep their promise. In spite of his demands, they did nothing. As a last resort, he took steps to prevent them from weaving any other cloth. Then they all joined together, a very large number of them being those to whom the missionary had not given any money, and went to the Zemindar of Amaravatissa to complain that the missionary does not allow them to weave and that they all must either starve or leave the territory of the Zemindar. The Zemindar believed the statements of the weavers and sent troops to seize the missionary. Fr. Manente was in his bungalow at Bapatla, with his disciples. The soldiers arrived at the gate of the bungalow at 8 o'clock in the night. Nobody knew anything of their march till they arrived at the gate and made some

noise. The bungalow compound was enclosed by a thick fence of bushes of prickly-pear. The priest hid himself in a bush very poorly dressed. Some of the soldiers searched for him in every corner of the bungalow but not finding him they went to the village believing that he was hiding in one of the houses. During their absence from the bungalow, the disciples pulled out the priest from the bushes, as he could not get out. They found his body covered with thorns. He was carried in a palanquin towards the South into the British territory. About dawn he arrived at a village where he hid himself in a poor hut, leaving the palanquin on the road. The soldiers followed him and reached the village at sunrise. Being sure of their prey, they closely searched every house. Fr. Manente felt that he was captured at last and made an act of contrition. But the soldiers never suspected that such a miserable hut would be his hiding place and did not enter it. They went back in disappointment and Fr. Manente was happy to continue his journey southwards to Madras. He wished to settle himself with his Christians near Pondicherry but he could not find a place favourable to his plans; besides the French government refused to grant the privileges he asked for; so he approached the Government of Madras which granted him a place near the Cooum and accorded him certain privileges. Being assured of the future, he went in search of his Christians and brought down the whole colony, composed of cultivators, carpenters, blacksmiths, dhobys, barbers and potters. He himself defrayed the expenses of the journey.

Bishop Bonnand who was in charge of Kitchery for several years has noted in his Diary what he had heard from the lips of the old Christians of the parish about the character and life of Fr. Manente :—

“ Fr. Manente, whose habits of living were naturally grand in style, was highly esteemed by the Portuguese Catholics. He commenced giving grand dinners as he did in the north at Oleru. He invited people from Madras for grand feasts. The gentlemen and ladies who were invited were lodged in quarters specially built for that purpose. He often went to Madras where he had a house of his own in which he stayed while he was there. He was a great friend of the Cachart and Sylva families, people of dark complexion but considered to be wealthy. His Kitchery bungalow which had been built on loose soil, upon what is called Sudda in Telugu, was cracked in such a way that he had to rebuild it a short time before his death.”

There was unfortunately some trouble in his mission. Among the Christians of Kitchery, a great number of those whom he had brought from Oleru, were of the big Kammavarus of the north. These broke up into two parties for which perhaps Fr. Manente gave a little occasion. The village was divided into two camps. One camp was so exasperated that it threatened to shoot Fr. Manente with a gun.

The Collector of the Chingleput district, while on his tour, halted at a place half a league distant from Kitchery. He sent Fr. Manente an invitation to dinner. The priest declined the invitation ; and he seems to have

uttered some regrettable words about the Collector before the bearer of the card. He is reported to have said among other things : " Will I go to eat with the son of a Sakkili (cobbler)." The domestic servant reported these words to his master. This enraged the Collector against Fr. Manente and he was determined to take revenge. The Collector summoned the household manager of Fr. Manente, Mallavarapu Chinnappa, and had him tied up to a tree and thrashed with many blows by a rattan cane. He did not stop there ; he made reports to his government so unfavourable to Fr. Manente that he was deprived of many privileges previously granted to him.

Fr. Manente died in 1812. He was attacked by a cancer or carbuncle. He suffered much and could not obtain any medicine to cure him. Fr. Mottet went to Kitchery and sent him to Madras in a palanquin. He arrived in Madras and never returned. He died there a few days later.

After Fr. Manente left Oleru, Fr. Austray of the Foreign Missionary Society succeeded him and worked in the Telugu villages of Condavid, Palnad, and Nellore Simas assisted by native priests. One of the latter died at Cumbum on 7th March 1804. He was a native of Pondicherry of Mudaliar caste and his name was Fr. Daniel. Fr. Austray built a beautiful big Church at Oleru which was repaired in 1830 by Fr. Bonnand. Fr. D'Souza, who built the chapel at Blackpalle, Bangalore, in 1810, worked in the Cuddapah district.

About the year 1809 Fr. Mottet was in Sellampattada and there completed the Church with vaulted roof.

He worked in the missions of Kitchery, Punganur and Phiranghipuram. He had a long flowing beard and was nicknamed "Gaddamswamulavaru" (bearded priest) in the Telugu countries. His name in Telugu was Devastutynada Swamulavaru. Having been in the mission of Punganur, in the first days of his missionary life, he compiled two dictionaries, one French-Telugu and the other Telugu-French. He had studied all the Puranas of the Hindus. He died at the age of seventy-three, after forty-seven years of missionary work.

Fr. Jarrige came to India in 1820. He was known among the Telugus as Sevarianandaswamulu. In the year 1826 he was given charge of Bangalore mission and that of Punganur which comprised Cuddapah territory. He was highly esteemed by the Christians of Onteddupalle, Poloor and the other villages of the Cuddapah and Kurnool districts. It was he who baptized Cottala Papamma at Condupalle about ten years after her birth, during which period no missionary had visited those parts. He wanted to build a chapel at Poloor in 1829, but as that required the permission of the Nabob of Kurnool which he could not obtain he gave up the idea. He writes: "In the missions of the North (which undoubtedly mean Cuddapah and Kurnool districts) much more good can be done than in the Mysore mission, where the progress of conversions has been arrested long since." In his travels in this mission of Punganur, he baptized many infidels. Amongst others he baptized a woman whose husband persecuted and ill-treated her for receiving baptism. The heathens

summoned the * woman in the midst of their assembly, placed a sword and an idol there and ordered her to adore the idol or to prepare for death. She chose the latter. Then they left her off and her husband took her home. In the same place a girl aged thirteen or fourteen years showed a similar constancy in her faith. Her father often took a knife, threatening to kill her. He says: "I am really astonished at the faith of these Christians." Later on he baptized sixteen more adults in the same district.

On a certain occasion the Raja of Punganur, anxious to amuse himself with the excitement of a religious debate between the Catholic missionary and the Brahmins of his court, invited Fr. Jarrige to his palace. After the customary salutations and marks of honour, one Brahmin stood up and expressed a desire to have a religious discussion with him. The missionary could not decline the proposal. Endowed with a prodigious memory, the Brahmin instead of arguing and exposing his religious beliefs, recited a great number of verses drawn from the Vedas. Fr. Jarrige was quite unable to follow him. On the other hand it was quite useless to discuss with him, and adduce the proofs of the Christian religion in a logical order as the people present at the assembly were not in the least interested in a religious discussion. The missionary thought it better to retort and pay him back in the same coin.

* According to local tradition this woman was the Mother of Mgr. Balanader, Onteddupalle,

He allowed the Brahmin to talk as long as he wished and when he had finished, the missionary rose and saluting the Raja and the assembly, recited in a sonorous voice in Latin Psalm 116 : “ *Laudate Dominum omnes gentes, laudate eum omnes populi; quoniam confirmata est super nos misericordia ejus et veritas Domini manet in aeternum* ”. Complete silence reigned in the assembly; the Brahmin closed his eyes, his mouth and his lips. He understood nothing and cried out with displeasure that the stranger had spoken in an unknown tongue. The Raja intervened, saying that the priest had a reason for it : “ You repeated to him the Sanskrit verses of this country, and he responded in the Sanskrit verses of Europe : it is alright.” He retired laughing and the next morning he sent a present to the missionary in the shape of fruits and vegetables from his garden.

Fr. Jarrige is one of the most renowned among the missionaries in India for his long apostolate which extended from 1820 to 1889, a period of about seventy years.

One native priest, Fr. Sevariar, died, bitten by a rat, at Phringipuram in 1825, twelve years after his ordination. Fr. Bonnard, the great and zealous missionary, began his work among the Telugus of the Northern districts in the year 1827, the visitation of which involved a journey of 180 miles from one end to the other. He worked there for full six years and during that period visited the whole mission five times. He left a diary of his priestly career. He had a great regard for

the faith and character of the Telugu Christians. He writes: "This mission has been almost always worked by the European priests. The missionaries who have been sent here, being far removed from Pondicherry and speaking a different language, have to stay a long time here, a fact which gives them the greatest advantage to obtain a more intimate knowledge of the Christians and to administer more satisfactorily to their spiritual needs. One other advantage is that Europeans are rarely seen in these parts; I have never seen a biblical minister here. In this part of India the Christians are less despised by the heathen, and the Christian religion does not meet with the hatred which it meets with in the other districts. Hence it is that the heathens invite the Christians to their dinners and they themselves come to dine with the Christians; this communication forms an important part in the social code of the Indians. The country occupations of the people of these districts and their distance from big towns are also very favourable to the good disposition of the Christians; from this follows also the submission to the decisions of the missionary, the esteem which they show for the advice which he gives them, and their desire to hear the word of God. This desire is such that if they have no sermon, especially on a Sunday, it appears to them as if they heard only half Mass. The respect which they have for the missionary and the visible signs which accompany it, when he visits their villages, are derived from the same source. Far from being ashamed of the Cross of Jesus Christ, the females adorn their foreheads with it as the best ornament which they can possess."

Fr. Bonnand arrived at Phirangipuram in December 1827, the headquarters of his mission. He writes: "There are twelve churches in this mission but most of them very small; six of them are covered with tiles, and the others are thatched with straw but I have yet visited only six of them. The priest has fifty-six Christian communities which he visits almost exactly once a year and from time to time more often. There are about four hundred Christians in the village of Phirangipuram and they form nearly two-thirds of the population; the heathens have still three small temples here."

The missionary had fifty-six Christian communities under his charge, which he visited almost exactly once a year, and some of them more often. In spite of his heavy work of travelling and of administering to the spiritual needs of his widely dispersed flock, he took great interest in the conversion work and laboured hard to gather more sheep into the true fold. In his letter from Bandanaidupalle, dated 2nd February 1828, he notes the baptism of four neophytes at Canducuru, Nellore District, and writes about the conversion of a pagan at Phirangipuram who addressed him these touching words: "From my childhood I have seen the Christians going to the Church; I have not worshipped any other God but theirs; every morning, when I rise from my bed, I make the sign of the Cross, with the accompanying words which I had learnt, and turning towards the Church, I join my hands and raise them towards heaven and falling prostrate with my face on the ground, I say: O Thou, whom the Christians adore, it is to Thee only that I render my homage, Thee only I adore, in Thee

only have I trusted, have mercy on me." Afterwards he addressed me saying: "O you who are the representative of God, and the dispenser of His gifts and graces, I am going to die, give me baptism and open to me the gates of heaven. I gave him the necessary instructions and baptised him, and he died three days later."

On 2nd May 1828, he refers to the baptisms he had given and those which he hopes to give. "In a village I have baptised four adults and twelve or fourteen heathens of the same caste gave me their promise to receive baptism on my next visit. Since I have been in the Telugu mission I have baptized sixty-three adults. On Easter Sunday, in spite of my heavy work—because the Christians come in great numbers from places situated at a long distance to celebrate the feast—I had the pleasure of baptizing twenty-two at Phirangipuram, all of Sudra caste, twenty of them from Phirangipuram itself and two from a neighbouring village." Subsequently he notes down the trials courageously sustained by some new converts and says:—"Among the Christians whom I have baptized two have been tried in a striking manner and have remained faithful. These are two brothers, both of them married, the elder having three children; the younger one who had no children, got a child some months after he had been baptized together with his wife, but this child died ten days after its birth which was a source of great affliction to the parents. Soon after, their houses took fire owing to the imprudence of their neighbour. Besides during four consecutive Sundays they lost some of their buffaloes among their cattle which they held in common. The heathens who were witnesses

of these losses did not cease to ascribe the misfortunes to their conversion to the Catholic faith and to the abandonment of the religion of their ancestors. They declared that evidently their gods took their vengeance upon them for renouncing their ancient faith. To all this they responded that the Lord willed to try them, that He was the master of the universe, that He can take away what He has given and that even if He sent them greater misfortunes, they would not cease to trust in Him till their death and that if He took away something from them, it was to give them more, etc."

Later on he refers in enthusiastic terms to the active faith of a woman who converted her husband and some friends:—"Some years ago there was a heathen woman in a neighbouring village. She learnt some prayers and a few words of catechism against the will of her husband and received baptism. Her husband went and settled himself at a distance of many leagues beyond the river Kistna; she followed him to that place. Having taught the prayers and some catechism to four other persons, she brought them this year to Phirangipuram. These four persons received baptism, for which they came from such a long distance, and went away full of joy with their leader. A few days ago I heard that five other adults of that village had learnt the prayers and are ready for baptism."

From Phirangipuram he was called to Masulipatam to visit the Christians of that place, the greatest part of them being Tamil people under a Goan priest who did not know their language. They had not made their

confession for five, ten, twelve years, as they could not find a priest who had a knowledge of their mother tongue. On his return to his mission, he halted at Oleru which had once a flourishing Christian community but had only two families then. The sight of the Church in ruins moved his heart and he resolved to repair it without delay.

On his return, he sent a catechist to a village 72 miles north of the Kistna, where the prospect of conversion was hopeful. The catechist, on arrival in the village, gathered the people together and began to read to them about the absurdity of idolatry and the proofs of the truth of the Christian religion. For the first two days almost the whole village flocked to listen to him; the third day the employees of the petty local polygar paraded the streets, crying out that their prince would punish and exile those who listen to the doctrine of the new comer. The prince assembled all his doctors and sent for the catechist inviting him to his court in order to have a religious discussion. The catechist refused to go and returned home. Sometime after his departure, a few people desiring to receive baptism asked the missionary jointly with three converts of the previous year, to pay them a visit. He writes, "I have not given up the idea of doing so, if it is expedient. There are now only sixteen Christians in that village and an adjacent one."

In the same year, Fr. Bonnand continued his travels beyond the river Kistna. On April 11 he baptized eight adults who had come to Phirangipuram from beyond the banks of the Kistna. Among them was Cotta

Gnanamma. He writes: "I have never seen a child showing signs of virtue so precocious as this child Gnanamma." Some months later when he heard of the death of this neophyte, he wrote: "On October 22 occurred the death of Cotta Gnanamma who was baptized on Easter Sunday. The Lord having regard to her faith opened for her the gates of heaven by baptism, before taking her away from this world."

"O my God, if thou hadst sent me only to baptise this young catechumen, I would consider myself very happy indeed to have left my country for the sake of this single baptism."

In a letter, dated 12th October 1828, he speaks of his travels in the Condauid and Palnad Simas and makes a remark which will greatly astonish the present-day missionary. "It is difficult to convert pariahs here; it is a waste of time to preach to them, seeing especially that much greater good can be done among the Sudras." He returns to this subject again in a letter of 1830: "Here the pariahs are no way disposed to embrace the Christian religion; only Sudras become Christians." "In places where there are the English", he continues, "such as Nellore, Ongole and Guntur, no Sudra becomes a Christian. On the side of Arikatla, Pamur, and on the east of the Condauid mountains, one finds so much antipathy against the Christian religion, that the pagans do not easily mix and communicate with the Christians; but on the west of the mountains and in Palnad the pagans have the least aversion for us; they give their daughters in marriage to the Christians, and dine with them. We

do not permit the Christians to give their daughters to the pagans, as they are exposed to the loss of their faith". In the year 1830 he journeyed several times on the north of the Kistna river and in April he baptized eight adults who came from the other side of the Kistna. On the 9th May 1830, Fr. Bonnard is at Ratnavaram. He writes : " Aided by the good catechist Nellibandla Arlappa and Pudota Amirthappa at Ratnavaram and in all the villages where we have passed we tried to create an aversion to heathenism and to excite in their hearts a desire to embrace the Christian religion. This is the first time that I took with me men who are capable of kindling their hearts ; the people living on the north of the Kistna never heard of the Christian religion mentioned to them. I baptized only twenty-five adults at Ratnavaram and two adults at Conkinopadu ". In the neighbouring villages of Ratnavaram the missionary baptized thirty-two neophytes of the Reddi caste, of whom he talks, " a very great part of their relations live at a distance of two, four, or six cadams * (amadas) from Ratnavaram on the west. This country has never seen a missionary nor have they heard of the Christian religion mentioned to them".

Fr. Bonnard obtained a new site for the cemetery at Phirangipuram where there was a tamarind tope. He built in 1830 the chapels of Batchalakurapadu and of Parimi ; he repaired that of Oleru. He speaks of the construction of many chapels but does not mention where they were built. Writing about the catechists he says

* A cadam is about 10 miles.

that though they are capable and devoted, their numbers cannot surely meet the wants of such a vast district as Phiranghipuram; on the other hand the mission does not possess any catechists nor can it procure any. Fr. Bonnard resolved to train catechists himself and began by starting a small school where the catechists could learn reading and writing and prepare themselves for their future career. He writes: "The Christians of this mission being all either cultivators or weavers, a few only know to read. Anandarayan Mudaliar of Madras sends me a pagoda a month for a schoolmaster who should teach only the Christian boys. It is about three months since this school has been started at Phiranghipuram. I myself supervise the school and hope that I will be able to train some catechists".

Fr. Bonnard was recalled to Pondicherry and consecrated Bishop in November 1833. After his consecration he visited all the villages in the Telugu country. He first visited Kitchery and the adjoining villages. At Kitchery he did the work of a simple missionary preaching, hearing confessions, and settling quarrels and rectifying some marriages. On December 11, he visited Vadagaram, of the Christians of which he speaks in the highest terms of praise. He says: "These are Cammavarus who have the spirit of their caste and are endowed with the gift of grasping things quickly. They have done what they can to entertain me both on my arrival and during my stay. The same affection was shown at my departure. The females came with eagerness to ask my blessing." From Kitchery the Bishop sent two very pious women to one of

the convents at Pondicherry. In the meantime he fell ill and went to Seevaram to consult an English doctor and the illness continuing he returned to Pondicherry. As soon as he recovered from his illness he resumed his visitation on 3rd September 1834 and visited Cotoor near Kitchery and other villages attached to the Kitchery mission. He makes the following observations as regards the whole mission: "The mission of Kitchery, like the missions of Condavid, provides ample scope for much improvement, if it be well cultivated. The habit of trading in different sorts of goods and of carrying them to Madras is detrimental to the spirit of piety. The men who take the carts miss often the occasion of going to confession and some of them do not make their Easter duties. They also get into the habit of neglecting their morning and evening prayers, and of working on Sundays and of living in dissipation, etc. The Christians appear to be less afraid of their catechists than the Christians of the north."

From Kitchery, he travelled to Punganur *via* Vellore and Chittoor. The Raja visited him three times to salute him. Bishop Bonnand paid him a visit and was received solemnly by a band of musicians and by guards saluting him by the presentation of arms. He writes, "the Raja of Punganur does not at all molest the Christians. He gives leave on Sundays to those in his service; the spirit of toleration appears to be hereditary in his family; the few Christians who are found at Punganur and its dependencies appear to be a little too much afraid of the heathen; they never quarrel with the heathen; and these do not come to the Christian religion, and the

Christian community has diminished * much. It appeared to me that the visit of the missionary comprised only the administration of the sacraments to the Christians of Marlapalli; I do not think the missionary made any special journey for purposes of evangelization properly so called; the catechist does not appear to be capable for such work. During the nineteen days that I stayed there I often saw the heathens entering the Church during the time of Mass and staying there during the whole time; this indicates that they have not so much aversion to our religion. I am led to believe that we ought to travel to make conversions in the mountains from Punganur to Mahon (Maderu ?) where there is but little antipathy against our religion."

From Punganur Bishop Bonnand visited Cuddapah and from there he passed on to Proddatur. He says, "There is no faith among these Christians. They give their daughters to the heathen without the permission of the missionary. They are few in number and in all their marriages there are some defects really reprehensible. There is no instruction; no zeal among old people to instruct their inferiors; it appears truly difficult to improve these Christians; it is necessary to remain some days here and instruct them every day; it is to be feared that the faith will be entirely lost here."†

* It counted only two hundred and ninety-eight souls at that time.

† Faith is practically lost there. There is one Joji Reddi whose family is heathen—daughter given to a heathen, other children practically heathen. There is a substantial chapel a compound of about one acre with about a dozen tamarind trees. There were thirty acres of inam land which was lost, as the quit-rent was not paid about fifty years ago.

From Proddatur he went to Onteddupalle and Nagarazupalle, where on Easter Sunday, April 1835, he baptized six adults. He writes, "these villages have furnished us with all that was necessary during the whole time that we stayed in their midst. The Christians of the first village are fairly well-to-do; those of the second are not rich. Almost no adult has yet been baptized at Nagarazupalle. Many young lads have been baptized during this visit and the preceding one; there is reason to hope that Christianity will prosper in the future. In the Renati Sima one does not see so much aversion to our religion, as in the other places; the heathens come freely to converse with the missionary; they also come into the Church during the time of Mass; many people appear not to reject for a long time the advice which one gives them about religion. Ponthati* Shouramma is like a nurse to this small Christian community; her three daughters help her well; they are like mothers to the missionaries by the care which they bestow upon them."

At Onteddupalle Bishop Bonnand had the pleasure of baptizing the husbands of two women who in 1831 had, on account of their conversion, to bear the anger and the reproaches of their families. To-day, says he, these two men are mild like lambs; one especially who at one time wished to kill his wife is fully desirous to be a good Christian. I have no doubt that the grace of baptism has been obtained for him by the prayers of his virtuous wife. She is truly a woman full of faith and of piety. When she received baptism she got her children

* She was the first person to be converted in Onteddupalle.

baptized in spite of the storm that was raised. She had six children ; two have died. She brought them up in a manner truly Christian ; she herself instructed her husband ; she also got her sister baptized who is also a married woman."

* Continuing his journey he is at Krishnapuram on 3rd June 1835 and visited the tombs of the ancient missionaries. Falling on his knees on the spot hallowed by these venerable remains, he feels his fervour kindled. "At the sight of these tombs, writes he, my soul is stirred with sentiments of veneration, and my zeal, to spread the faith, aroused, but at the same time I feel sad to think that since so long a time, there has been no trace of Christianity in this village which was the first place in the midst of these mountains where the faith was planted. One sees the marks of the compound wall, of the houses of the missionaries and of the Christians who lived there then ; the walls of the Church are still standing at a man's height ; there are ten tamarind trees and that is all." He continued his journey and visited the Mysore mission and then retraced his steps and visited Polur, Cowloor, Phirangipuram, etc. Bishop Bonnand had worked as a missionary in the Phirangipuram mission which then comprised Condauid, Palnad and Nellore districts, for six years and six days, and had made five full visitations of the whole mission. Bishop Hebert deeply appreciated his missionary labours and eulogised his work saying, "Fr. Bonnand is always in the

* His diary of this journey will contain much information about these and other villages in the north.

North where he works wonders".* "His zeal for the salvation of souls, says Bishop Laouenan, "his devotion to all the needs of the mission, his genial temper and the cordiality of his relations with the people have won for him among the Telugu Christians—a reputation and affection which recall the grandest and most honoured names of the Apostolic ministers".

"Every year on the feast of the Pasch, deputations of these Christians, far removed from Pondicherry, came to this town more to see him than to assist at the feast. We ourselves twenty-seven years later have seen from Kurnool many crowds of Telugu Christians who had come from † thirty, forty and fifty leagues to see him and what is most remarkable and bears evidence to the great name which he had left in the missions is that not one perhaps of the individuals that composed these crowds had known him personally; they were born after his return to the South. It must be added that Bishop Bonnand loved these Telugu Christians in a special manner; he loved to speak their language the knowledge of which he had acquired to perfection". Bishop Bonnand died at Benares in 1861, when he was travelling all over India as Apostolic Visitor.

"Fr. Charbonaux succeeded Fr. Bonnand in the Phirangipuram mission in the year 1833. There was a great famine in the eastern districts in the year

* In the same letter Bishop Hebert estimates the number of annual conversions made by Fr. Bonnand at two hundred adults. This number is a little too high.—H.M.E.

† The nearest place in the Kurnool district by cart journey is 250 miles from Pondicherry.

1832--33. It was the famous Nandana Caruvu. The rains failed over a very great part of the peninsula. The inhabitants abandoned their villages and passed in crowds to the South and to the West, where it was said there was some harvest. Robbers began to make their appearance. Most of the villages became almost deserts. Fr. Charbonaux says that more than six hundred Christians died in his mission of Phirangipuram, Palnad, Nellore, etc. The district of Kitchery which had three thousand seven hundred Christians lost one thousand and seven hundred by death or dispersion. During this period of desolation and sorrow, Fr. Charbonaux sacrificed himself with extraordinary activity and zeal. According to the testimony of Bishop Hebert he deprived himself of everything to aid the unfortunate sufferers. Also the English Collector considered it his duty to address him a letter of congratulations and thanks, saying that he had really become the father and benefactor of the people."

During this great famine, a Kamma Christian of Kitchery named Pudota Chinnayya emigrated to Gandikota Sima, his ancestral home and there gave his daughter Annamma in marriage to a heathen, and returned to Kitchery after the famine. Annamma was staunch in her faith and practised her religion in the midst of the heathen. Onteddupalle, the nearest Christian village in those parts, was forty miles from her place, which was near Tadpatri. When the priest visited that village, Annamma was informed about it by the principal Christian through a messenger, and travelled that long distance on foot to fulfil her spiritual duties. She made these

long journeys for nearly half a century. In the year 1871, when Mgr. Balanader visited Onteddupalle after his sacerdotal ordination, she paid him a visit there and left with him her youngest son Jojappa. The little boy was brought to Kitchery monastery by Fr. Balanader. There he remained for five years and then went home. Subsequently he married a Kamma Christian girl of Kitchery and stayed for many years in his village with his mother and family. About the year 1890 Fr. Balanader converted a dozen families at Avalathippayapalle, near their village, which was a great consolation to the old lady and a great help to the family to practise their religion, on account of the frequent visits of the priest. The old woman died a happy death about the year 1911, at the grand old age of ninety years fortified by the last Sacraments of the Church. After her death, Jojappa abandoned his heathen village and went to Kitchery and settled down there with his wife and children.

After Fr. Charbonaux followed Fr. Bardouil as the missionary of all the Telugu missions from Phirangipuram in the Guntur district to Yaleroo, in the Anantapur district. He worked from 1834 to 1843, when the Vicar Apostolic of Madras took charge of the Telugu missions. In the year 1837-38 the Christians of Onteddupalle underwent a sort of persecution at the hands of the heathens who outcasted them and boycotted them and brought even a false charge of theft against some of them before the Court of Justice. Bishop Bonnard sent Fr. Jarrige to help them in their troubles. The Collector took up the cause of the Christians and

the persecution ceased. A long letter about this persecution is written by Bishop Bonnard which will be found in Vol. II, Hist. des Miss. Etrangeres.

A few extracts from that long letter are given below.

Letter of Bishop Bonnard, October 1838: The first woman who received baptism is still alive. But the greater part of the other neophytes have been baptized only during these last years. I think the vexations which they have endured since last six months can be really called a persecution. I visited them in 1835 and 1836. Seeing that their hardships and trials were increasing the neophytes sent to us a deputation to Pondicherry to beg of us to consider ways and means of putting a stop to the unjust and painful persecutions of the pagans. From this village to Pondicherry the distance is 255 miles. God knows that I cherish these good neophytes, of whom I have baptized a certain number, as a father cherishes his beloved children. They gave unmistakable tokens of their affection towards me in the demonstrations held in my honour when I visited them (in 1835 and 1836). Fr. Jarrige, who had visited them while he was at Bangalore, is of the same opinion as myself. Of all the Christians whom he had seen, these are the most esteemed by him. The heathen of their village and of the neighbouring villages have since several months established a complete boycott. The neophytes have not now and could not have the services of either dhobies, barbers, carpenters, blacksmiths, etc. They are obliged to carry their clothes six or nine miles to get them washed. Under the boycott comes the prohibition to draw water from the wells of the

village. Injuries, bad treatment, injustices, exactions—all were employed by the heathen. They even concocted a charge of theft against the four principal Christians and several others. One night they entered into the Church and having found there only a crucifix, they broke it and threw the fragments into the streets. Fr. Jarrige went to Cuddapah and helped the neophytes in drafting a petition to the Collector. He also informed the Collector about everything that had taken place. The Collector verified for himself all the injustices that were mentioned in the petition and reversed the judgment of the Tahsildar and imposed a heavy fine on those who had fiercely beaten a Christian woman near the river and set free the prisoners and put a stop once for all to the Christians being deprived of the services of washermen, barbers, etc. This victory of Fr. Jarrige and the Christians made a deep impression on one and all. Some pagan families felt themselves drawn to embrace the Catholic religion. God rewarded the courage of the Christians of Onteddupalle in augmenting the number of the faithful and in selecting from among them a minister of the altar" (Mgr. Balanader).

The blessing of God upon that village has been further evidenced by the selection to the holy ministry of eight more members of the next generations and of several girls to the service of God as nuns. The children of the next generations have been likewise blessed in their worldly prosperity, many of them having received higher English education, and a dozen of them holding good appointments in the service of Government and Railways.

Fr. A. Kroot in his history of Cottala Papanamma makes some remarks contrasting the religious habits and customs of the early Telugu Christians with those of the same Christians of the present day. He says, "It was the universal practice of the Telugu Christians of the earlier times to have a copy at home of the manuscript history of the Old Testament written by the old Jesuit missionaries. The customs of their forefathers are gradually disappearing. The Christians of the older times were very fond of listening to the reading of the religious books of the Old and New Testaments, of Historical Lives of Saints and of Week Day Miracles. This good practice is dying out even in the distant out-of-the-way villages. Prompted by a desire of wealth combined with a lack of interest in religious matters, and with careless habits, the present-day Christians are immersed in worldly anxieties and cares. They are not active and hard-working like the old Christians, but lazy, careless and fond of worldly pleasures such as drink and gambling, etc. Fifty years ago (about 1850-60) everybody, even the rich people, were travelling on foot and thus going any distance. During the festival time of Easter they were going to Pondicherry from every side travelling on foot a distance of 200 or 300 miles in order to witness the great and solemn ceremonies of the Holy Week. Bishop Bonnand has written that when he was on his missionary travels, the Christians were going on foot to see him from a distance of hundreds of miles and that they made a three days' journey to post letters. Who will ever go on foot at the present day even for money?"

A similar change has taken place in every part of the country, in the customs and habits of all classes of people, both in town and country places. People are fond of worldly pleasures and amusements. The introduction of machinery in every department of industry has created an aversion to physical and manual labour. Drink and cigarette-smoking are considered as marks of civilization.

The introduction of machinery both for spinning and weaving has brought on a great change in the village life of the Telugu districts. The weavers have lost their livelihood and have to abandon their ancestral caste profession, and take either to cultivation or cooly labour. The farmers' wives and daughters were very busy for four or five months in the hot season spinning during the day. Their life has completely changed now. They do not know how to spend their time during the day. This lack of work exposes them to idleness and uncharitable talk in small groups against their neighbours, and the consequence is petty quarrels, in the different parts of the village.

CHAPTER VII.

In the year 1843, the Telugu Missions were handed over to the Vicar Apostolic of Madras. Fr. Bardouil the last French Missionary in the Telugu districts, left Guntur Mission in October 1843. Bishop John Fenelly arrived in Madras on January 16, 1842, with one priest and six students—Fr. P. Doyle was probably the priest in question and he was the first Irish Missionary in the Ceded Districts of Cuddapah, Bellary and Kurnool. On October

13, 1843, a batch of Italian Religious Oblates of Mary Immaculate from Turin, arrived at Madras to work in the Madras Vicariate. The two Missionaries Fr. Griffa and Fr. Sgherlino who belonged to that Order worked at Phirangipuram for three or four years from the year 1844. About the month of October 1844, Fr. Griffa sent to the Bishop an account of his visit to the villages of Guntur Mission. Kitchery and other Telugu villages were given over to the Madras Vicariate by the Pondicherry mission in the year 1843, the river Palar being the boundary.

For a period of about eight years after the Vicar Apostolic of Madras had taken charge of the Telugu Missions, all the periodical mission reports of the priests were recorded in the *Catholic Expositor*. These reports give a good deal of information regarding the condition and number of Christian congregations of different villages. The following are extracts from those reports :—

BELLARY MISSION.

Statistics of the Bellary Mission from November 1842 to the end of December 1845. (*Catholic Expositor*, Volume V). The number of Christians in Bellary is variable. There are generally about 400 Europeans and 2,000 native Christians.

There are several Christian villages to the South East of Bellary under the charge of Fr. Doyle containing altogether about 400 Christians. In Pepally and in two or three other small villages in its vicinity, there are 69 Christians. At Pepally a chapel in the form of a cross

has been commenced. The two villages Marootla and Emmalayanapetta contain 30 Christians. Here an old chapel and a room for the priest which had fallen very much into decay were repaired lately; Yaleroo contains 152 Christians. The catechist is supported partly by the Vicar Apostolic and partly by a grant of free land made for that purpose about 30 years ago by a Christian named Athicappa. In Cottapalle, Sithrampuram, Enmalapalle and Mussillipah, villages in the vicinity of Yaleroo, there are about 30 Christians. Chinnamanayanacota contains 66 Christians. The chapel here is 30 feet long by 14 feet wide and was finished in 1845. There are about 50 Christians scattered through the following villages, from ten to thirty miles distant from Chinnamanayanacota, *viz.*, Ramalingampalle, Sannapah, Duguvapalle, Regadacottapalle, Kadatharagurthy, Cheeteepalle, Suppadeengapalle, Kistnapuram Mamdoor, Thademurry Jangamreddipalle, Cansapalle, Bassanapalle, Burkeeraysanthy.

There are chapels at Ramadurgam, Muddanagheri, and Adoni, north of Bellary. These chapels are in the hands of Schismatics. The Christians are about 430 in number and some of them are orthodox. Mission Report, April 1847, says:—At Ramadurgam there are 40 Catholics and 40 Schismatics. Catholic Expositor, Vol. VIII:—The Chapel at Pepally is nearly completed. During the present year 1848, eleven families comprising fifty-seven souls have abandoned the Schism at Ramadurgam and the neighbouring villages. We have now 110 Christians attached to us in this locality. One hundred still remain in the Schism.

There is a large number of widows among the people of caste. In the South-East villages of Pepally, Yaleroo, etc., there are forty widows out of three hundred Christians. It would be the means of doing a deal of good if there was an institution where those who wished to live continently could be sheltered from temptations. If they were well instructed in the Catholic religion and had a little acquaintance with medicine, they would do immense good to promote the glory of God. There would be expense in the commencement but they would in course of time be able to support themselves. An industrious native woman can support herself by spinning.

Catholic Expositor, Vol. IX:—In September 1848, a large field was obtained on puttah at Yaleroo, by Fr. Doyle. It was 22 acres in extent. A spot was marked out for the priest's house and the Christians promised to draw stones for the building. The chapels at Gooty and Proddatur were repaired. Catholic Expositor, Vol. X:—The presbytery and cook room, etc., at Yaleroo were completed in 1850. There is a village named Muctapuram 30 miles distant from Chinnamanayanacota in the Cuddapah Zillah. There is a Christian family of the Camsala caste, comprising ten individuals and a family of Thogata caste at Thademurry. Fr. Doyle visited those two families and says that they "have degenerated by being isolated and at a distance from any Christian village" *. Fr. Doyle resolved to build a little chapel at

* There were fifty Christians dispersed over more than a dozen villages, at a distance of from ten to thirty miles from Chinnamanayanacota. What has become of them? Most of them, unless they had settled later on in a Christian village, must have degenerated and lost their faith, on account of isolation. The missionaries that were in charge of that part of the mission in 1894 found only two or three such villages.

Ramadurgam. Fr. Murphy writes in 1849, "In Bellary there are fourteen cheries or native villages. There are eight or nine little Chapels. The total Catholic population of Bellary amounts to 2,488, *viz.*, 755 Europeans and East Indians and 1,733 Natives *. The Schismatics reckon 362 Natives. The Protestants muster 1,718, *viz.*, 1,547 Europeans and East Indians, 171 Natives.

Cuddapah Mission and Kurnool Mission.—Catholic Expositor, Vol. VI, March 1846 to February 1847, page 81, Cuddapah Mission :—In the collectorate of Cuddapah, leaving out Punganur, the total number of Christians is 700 †. In Cuddapah itself there are generally amongst the sepoy and camp followers about 200 Christians besides eight resident families including about 40 souls. In Katumayakuntla there were upwards of 70

* Since about the year 1915, Bellary is no longer a military station; hence the number of Catholics has been reduced by more than fifty per cent. In course of a few years, it will probably count only a few hundred, as the poor Christians have to abandon the place in order to earn their livelihood either as employees in the big Railway Stations or as domestic servants in towns where there is a number of European or Anglo-Indian settlers.

† About the year 1868, troops were finally removed from Cuddapah, and there were no longer any Catholics in the cantonment, and the present chapel in the town was built in 1875. But still for many years it was an important Railway Station with an engine shed and a good number of European and Anglo-Indian officials in the different departments of Government and Railway with their Catholic servants. There was also a chapel near the Railway Station. Hence there was a pretty good number of Catholics some years ago. Since about 30 years the engine shed has been removed to Nandalur and the number of Catholics in Cuddapah has decreased to about ten families.

Christians, until their number was lately reduced to about 50, by the emigration of 26 to Punganur. Neelakantarayapet has a dozen Christians. Bomarum has 24 Christians, Uruturu contains 20 and Sathiapuram 20. There was a resident Missionary formerly at Sathiapuram who has left behind him in the village a little Church substantially built of stone and terraced, but now considerably out of repair, as well as the sacristy which constituted his dwelling. The principal Christian village in the whole Mission is Onteddupalle. Here and in nine other villages in the vicinity, which are at a distance of from 3 to 5 miles, there are 290 Christians. Cumbum, which is about 95 miles north of Cuppapah, has a small thatched chapel. There are a few * Christians at Cumbum but it is visited more conveniently by the missionaries from Phirangipuram. At Katumayakuntla Fr. Doyle administered Holy Communion to 24 persons, and bestows the highest praise on the piety and Christian-like conduct of the weaver caste. Having learnt at Katumayakuntla that there were some Christian weavers at Bommaram† who had not been visited by a priest since their establishment in that village, about 14 years ago, Fr. Doyle visited them on 20th January 1846. (It

* They belonged to the Sepoy Regiment. Fr. Griffa in his report of April 1847 says :—"There are twenty Christians at Cumbum. In course of last year a very nice chapel has been erected at Cumbum with a flat roof."

† Bommaram or Brimavaram is a village near Kodur Railway Station, Cuddapah district. These Thogata families shifted to that place in the great Nandana Caruvu of 1832. There is no mention about them, in any of the subsequent mission records. They must have gone back to Katumayakuntla or to Bellary or Nellore district.

is about five miles North-West of Kodur Railway Station.) There were 11 Communion, 8 baptisms and 1 marriage. There were 8 Communion, 3 baptisms and 1 marriage at Uruturu. One of the baptized was an adult and the mother * of a large family. It is hoped that her husband and children will follow her example. There are great hopes of many conversions in this village. The Reddy † is a good practical Catholic but most of his relations are heathens. According to the unanimous testimony of Fr. Bardouil, Fr. Sgherlino and Fr. Doyle, the mission of Cuddapah promises to reward the labours of a missionary more abundantly than most other places in India. We would like to see a missionary permanently established at Onteddupalle, whence the other villages could be visited more frequently. Under a resident missionary aided by an intelligent catechist, the worshippers of the true God, considering the dispositions of the people, would soon be increased from 700 to as many thousands.

Kurnool Mission:—In the whole Collectorate of Kurnool there are not more than four or five hundred Christians. In Kurnool itself the number varies with the Sepoy regiment which is stationed there. In Poloor and the adjacent villages there are 170 Christians and in Cowloor with its villages 150 Christians. In his visit to Onteddupalle in 1847, Fr. Doyle wrote that the Christians of that village were very wealthy and that a subscription was made that year to get doors for their

* She is the grand-mother of Fr. K. Chinnappa, who is working hard and making many conversions among the depressed classes in the Guntur district.

† The Reddy is the grand-father of Fr. R. C. Paul and the great-grand-father of Fr. K. Joseph.

chapel. (A substantial chapel had been built in 1827 in stone and terraced—Hist Mis. Etr.).

He wrote in February 1849 that the chapels at Cowloor and Poloor had been roofed and that a small piece of ground 15 by 15 yards had been obtained from the Reddy at Onteddupalle, who agreed before the Collector to give it up. The Catholic population of Kurnool town was 104 souls—Catholic Expositor, Vol. X. Fr. Riordan's letter, June 1850, says :—The Christian population in the Kurnool district resides principally at Cowloor and Poloor. The distance between these villages is only about three miles ; the remainder of the Christians are scattered over a large district, embracing a radius of more than twenty miles and in twelve separate villages. On the occasion of the priest visiting the country, they come either to Cowloor or to Poloor, to discharge their spiritual obligations.

The Christians in this district are in general very good and attentive to their religious duties. In the two villages of Cowloor and Poloor, the Christians assemble every evening at Church to say the Rosary and on Sundays they come from the neighbouring villages to attend at Mass or should they not have the pleasure of being able to do so, they say the Mass prayers in common after which some one of the Christians reads a chapter from some book of devotion. During my stay in this place, for about 3 months I was very much edified by their good conduct and religious demeanour. The total population of these villages amounts to 324 souls—Poloor 126, Cowloor 82, Russelpet 24, Thogatachedu 26, in the other villages 66 souls.

The Christians of Onteddupalle had been engaged in disputes for the last two years; the headman or the Reddy of the village and his relations with some heathens constituting one party and some other Christians and heathens forming the other. These dissensions have caused great injury to religion in this village, the Christians engaged in the disputes neglecting their religious duties, and some of them altogether absenting themselves from the Church. It is however a consolation that the dissensions are now nearly terminated. The principal persons engaged are now on amicable terms and have arranged a great many of the points at issue between them. There are some other cases still requiring adjustment. . . . At present they are all at peace and inclined to continue so, I think.

The Christian population in this part of the country amounts to about 300 souls, according to the return which the Catechist gave me but I think it is under the mark. The Church in this village is too small for the increasing Christian congregation, especially when they come from the neighbouring villages on the occasion of the priest's visit. The number of Christians at Cuddapah amounts to about 358 souls—about 172 in the Regiment, 140 in the Parchery attached to the Cantonment and about 46 others in or about Cuddapah.

The number of Protestants here is about 300 of all shades and colours. There are also a few Protestants, about 16 altogether I am told, at a village called Cherlopalle, about 26 miles from Cuddapah. These are the only native Protestants.

Catholic Expositor, Vol. XI, January 1851: Fr. Riordan's letter, November 1850:—The first place I reached was Katumayakuntla. This village is about 30 miles distant from Cuddapah in a southerly direction. The number of Christians amounts to about 76 souls. These are all weavers of the Thogata caste, who, during some famine in the Guntur and Proddatur districts, in which they formerly resided, came to this place where they have fixed themselves. I found these Christians, during the period I remained in their village, very attentive to their religious duties especially the old men amongst them.

Of those one poor man having heard somehow that His Holiness Pope Pius IX had lately been much persecuted requested me one evening to inform him if His Holiness' trials had ceased or not. I accordingly explained to him all His Holiness had endured and how at length he had triumphed over all his sufferings. On the next morning this poor man called me aside and requested me to accept 48 rupees to be sent to His Holiness. I at first refused to receive this money, as the amount although in itself a mere trifle, I knew to be quite a large sum for one in his circumstances in this country. I consequently advised to see if he would not require it for his family or himself. He replied that he was satisfied he had already provided sufficiently for them and said that I would render him very unhappy, if I did not comply with his request. He wished (he said) to let His Holiness know that not only in Europe but even among his children in the East faithful and devoted men

are to be found. I accordingly forward the sum to your Lordship to be sent to its destination *.

There is a little Church in this village in which the Christians assemble on Sundays to say their prayers and on week days to recite the Rosary. Heretofore as the priest while making his visitation was very inconveniently situated, the Christians in the interim during my visit to Punganur and return to their village built me at their own expense a small house, which will henceforward be very convenient for the priest while for the visitation. I remained in Katumayakuntla 8 days on my way to Punganur and 5 days on my return. From Katumayakuntla I proceeded to Narasummayampalum, situated in the Vayalpadoo Taluk and about 30 miles distant from the village I left. Sometime previous to my arrival nine of our Christians in the village were taken off by cholera. At the time of my arrival there were 35 Christians in the village, all of the Boya caste. These Christians are inhabitants of the village for a long time. They or rather their forefathers served under a succession of native polygars who resided here in a fortified fort, the ruins of which are still to be

* Catholic Expositor, Vol. XI, page 109. Extract from the letter of His Holiness Pope Pius IX, dated 11th February 1851: "His Holiness has read not without the greatest emotion of heart, what was related by your Lordship concerning the collection of last year amongst the Christians scattered through the jungle, especially of a certain rude and illiterate man amongst them who, with peculiar simplicity and affection, enquired after the health and condition of our Most Holy Father and increased the collection by a present of 48 rupees. His Holiness has complied most willingly with the request of that Christian and wishes you to inform him if you can, that His Holiness has offered up the holy sacrifice of the Mass for him on January 28."

seen, but the master's property being long since delivered over to the safe keeping of the Company, they too lost whatever little employment they had. They are now very poor. They appear anxious to remove from this place to Punganur where some of their relatives reside.

Nellore Mission.

Catholic Expositor, Vol. VII—Report by Fr. L. Griffa, April 1847, *Nellore*. Population 230: The Church of Our Lady of Purification was built by John D'Cruz and Antony Caldeira in 1800. They obtained the land at Vallur for the Church in 1805. It is more than 200 acres.

Iskapalle is a new Christian village in which four heathen pariah families were baptized in 1846 by Fr. Griffa.

			Christ- ians.	They are all weavers of the Thogata caste. There is only one Church at Nayudupalle. In Siruvella, the tomb with a single in- scription of a Missionary is preserved, i.e., "Krupanan- daswamulu".
Siruvella ...	...	...	30	
Zangalapalle ...	...	...	50	
Dubaguntla ...	...	...	70	
Kistipuram ...	...	...	30	
Aravedoo ...	...	...	23	
Kattaknidipalle ...	...	...	50	
Nayudupalle ...	...	...	65	

	Christ- ians.	They are all of Reddy caste and are good Christians
Bomireddipalle ...	10	—mostly occupied in the cul-
Pamoor... ..	48	tivation of indigo—a beauti-
Chilamkoor ...	20	ful little Church at Batsala-
Venkatapuram ...	25	kuripadu—a small Church at
Kandulavaripalle } ...	100	Peddarikatla which was for
Dodda Venkatapalle }		the last hundred years the
Peddarikatla ...	75	
Batsalakoorapadu ...	50	

residence of the missionaries on their periodical visits of these parts. Near the Church the tomb of a missionary without any slab.

Catholic Expositor, Vol. VIII, December 1848—Letter of Fr. S. Fenelly: On my way for the visitation of the Nellore District from Phirangipuram, I visited two villages of the Guntur District—Ravipadu and Kondramutla. In the former there are 13 Christian families, the total number of Christians is 60. In the latter village there are 19 Christian families, all weavers of the sale caste, in all 111 Christians, a considerable party in both these villages, especially in Kondramutla, favoured the pretensions of Sgherlino and of the Mylapore Schismatic priest who succeeded him. But they seem now sensible of their error and will, I trust, conduct themselves better in future.

In Bandy Velagandla there are 87 Christians, most of them are weavers of the Thogata caste. From this village I had a journey of 40 miles to Cumbum where there were only 14 Christians. In Cumbum I found the Commanding Officer and the Collector extremely kind and attentive. In Cumbum I was shown the tomb of a Missionary *. The tomb is built apparently

* Fr. Daniel of Poudicherry of Mudaliar caste died there in 1804.

with brick and chunam but it has no slab or inscription of any kind. The Christians of Cumbum are indebted for their nice little chapel to the liberality of the late Collector and of the former Commanding Officer both Protestants by whom the Church was built with little or no expense to the Christians.

At Batsalakurapadu there are 50 Christians, all of the Reddy caste. At Peddarikatlu there are 65 Christians, all of the Reddy caste but of a tribe different from all the Christian Reddies of the Guntur and Nellore Districts. At Narichettipalem * there are 101 Christians, all of the Cammavaru Caste. The people of this village are very edifying good Christians—Chelamkur, Dodda Venkatapalle, Kandalavaripalle, Venkatapuram and Pamoor, are all close to each other and contain 178 Christians, all of the Reddy caste. They are very ignorant. I won't however call them bad Christians for I think them a simple well-disposed people, who will advance in the knowledge and practice of the Christian religion, if care be taken of them. The Christians of these villages, especially those of Dodda Venkatapalle and Kandalavaripalle are the most industrious and the hardest working people I have ever seen.

* At Narichettipalem there are now only six or seven families of Cammavaru caste.

The Christians of this village have ever shown a total disregard for the laws of the Church ; most of their marriages have been celebrated without the consent or approbation of the priest. Last year one ruffian of that village married his little child under ten years of age to a heathen. They are grossly ignorant and they are the only Christians in the Nellore District, that practise any of the superstitious rites or ceremonies of the heathens. Lavaloor Akkamma, a poor widow with her family, must be exempted from the above censure.

The Christians of these seven villages are all weavers

Christ-
ians.

of the Thogata caste. They are pretty well instructed in the principal mysteries of religion. Though there is only one Church in all these villages, the Christians say morning and night prayers in common and say the Mass

* Naidupalle ...	...	60
Kattakindipalle ...	...	75
Dubaguntla ...	...	...
Kisthipuram ...	...	42
Zangalapalle ...	...	78
Aravedu ...	...	24
Siruvella ...	...	17

prayers on Sundays also in common.

† They are good faithful Christians and deserve praise for resisting the solicitations of their caste men at Phirangipuram to join the Schism.

Phirangipuram Mission.

Catholic Expositor, Vol. VI, page 476—Report of the Mission of Phirangipuram by Frs. L. Griffa and F. Sgherlino for 1846, Phirangipuram, Taloor and Yebalooroopadu : The number of Christians 700. Phirangipuram is one of the largest Christian villages in the Telugu districts. The Christians exceed the heathen in number. Except Brahmins and merchants of the Komati caste, there are here Christians of every caste. During

* The Christians of these villages have, within the last few years, entirely abandoned their ancient abode where they had remained for about one hundred fifty years. Many have gone to the north and many families have obtained lands and settled down near Nellore and Bitragunta. They have taken to cultivation, as their ancestral caste profession of weaving cannot maintain them.

† In Nellore there are 199 Christians—47 near the Portuguese Church and 152 in the Sepoy's Lines.

the last three years the people of the village have had the advantage of the permanent residence of a priest. The priests' house is old and considerably out of repair. The Church is also very old and somewhat dilapidated. Fr. Bardouil, the last of the French Missionaries in the Telugu districts, left the Mission of Phirangipuram in the latter end of 1843. There is a Maniam here and one at Thaloor, yielding Rs. 10 and Rs. 24 respectively.

There are 100 Christians at Guntur. They are partly pensioned sepoy and partly servants of the Collectors and others connected with the Collector's Cutcherry. The American Lutheran Mission keeps a school at Guntur in which the Bible is explained to the heathen. The Chapel is very humble with mud walls and tiled roof; a good compound with many fine trees and in a convenient situation. Mutnoor and Reddipallem—300 Christians. The people of Reddipallem are of a high and respectable caste and still more respectable by their Christian virtues. Those of Mutnoor are of a different caste and equally respectable but they are litigious. At Mutnoor, the feast of St. Francis Xavier is celebrated annually with great pomp. There is a beautiful Church at Oleru. But there are only a few Christians. There are Maniams at Mutnoor, Codoor, Zoopoodee, Mannava and Oleru. These Maniams yield annually about Rs. 60.

The weavers were very numerous at Condramutla; but owing to the determination of the heathen to prevent them from building a Church they have for the most part emigrated in the course of last year to a village

near Phirangipuram called Gollapalem. The best Christians in the Collectorate of Guntur are those in and about Rentachintala. The Maniam of Thoomaragoodu yields about Rs. 18 a year—Catrapadoo 20 Christians, Kammavaru caste, Codoor 50, of the same caste as those of Mutnoor. There are chapels at Codoor and Reddipallem and a sufficiently large Church at Mutnoor.

Siripuram.
Ravela.
Parimi.
Voregandla.
Vodapadu.
Patibandla.
Parasattaloor.
Attaloor.

In the villages north and north-east of Phirangipuram there are about 500 Christians. There is found much to edify and console the Missionary. With few exceptions the Christians are all piously disposed and attentive to their religious duties. There is a Church of brick and tiles at Parimi.

Jangalapalle.
Thubadoo.
Siriniamulla.
Kanaparathi.
Kurapadu.
Konkavaripallem.
Ravipadu.
Garlapadu.
Condramutla.

These villages contain 600 Christians. There is no Church in any of these places. There are all with very few exceptions of edifying Christian deportment.

Rentachintala, Thummaragudu and several other villages contain 600 Christians.

The total Christian population in the mission of Phirangipuram is 2,896.

Letter by Frs. Gough and Dogherty, January 1849, Phirangipuram : The spirit of disobedience and contention which prevailed to an alarming extent in this village on our coming here has since almost entirely subsided.

Almost all the rebellious party are now coming to the Church except seven leading characters who remain still obstinate.

The feast of Christmas was carried on with great display. Christians from all the villages of the Mission came to Phirangipuram on that occasion. There seemed to be a great reunion of all the disjointed members by their thus assembling in such multitudes from very distant places. No bad consequences have arisen that we can discover from the saying of Mass at midnight.

The Christians of this village number 650. The heathens muster 850 and the Mussalmans 60 in number. The Christians of Condramutla who removed to Gollapallem have gone back to Condramutla, except six families. At Palaparthi, a heathen village about 15 miles southwest of Phirangipuram, there are five or six families of Christian pariahs—one of them formerly apostatized to Protestantism at Vadagaram. Fr. Fenerelly received them back. The poor Christians are there persecuted by the heathens and are consequently about to emigrate some to Kitchery, some to Podapadu and others to Mutnoor.

In 1842 the American Lutheran Mission sent one of their emissaries to Guntur. The present incumbent has a congregation of 28 souls. This is the only Protestant congregation throughout the Mission of Phirangipuram. The head Christians of Mutnoor whose security was doubtful at the time the Schismatic priest came to Phirangipuram at present give us no cause of complaint or doubts regarding them. There is a beautiful Church at Oleru. There are at present at Oleru three Pariah families containing 18 souls.

There are a few Christians at Thomaragoodoo. They are East Indians, but in language, dress and appearance they are Telugus. This place is about 5 miles west of Rentachintala. Pondigal, 20 miles north-east of Rentachintala has one East Indian family formerly living at Thomaragoodoo.* The Catholic Expositor, Vol X, September 1850—Fr. M'Glew's letter, August 1850: I am happy to inform you that peace once more reigns in Phirangipuram. The Schismatics have given up their evil ways; have come forward openly and publicly confessing their crime and like the prodigal son have come back with compunction to the house of their Father. About three weeks ago cholera made its appearance in this district. They were dying in numbers in all the surrounding villages. Phirangipuram, although not visited by that dreadful malady, was not destitute of its fears. The Christians came beseeching us to commence some religious exercise. We prepared to make a Novena

* There are some families of these Christians even now in those parts near Rentachintala on the north-west corner of the Guntur district. They are locally known by the name of Chatecarulu, a corrupted form of the Tamil word Sattaicarar (those dressed in a coat or shirt). Thummeragoodoo, a corruption of Thummeracota, is a fortress on the banks of the Kistna river on the military high road from Madras to Hyderabad. It seems probable that they are the descendants of the French soldiers who had married Telugu women. From 1750 to 1780 there were French troops in the Guntur District. To keep up their national honour before the eyes of the country people, the French officers posted those soldiers in that fortress which is in a remote corner. The fact that there is at Maniam (Inam land) of sixty acres for their Church is a proof that they are of French descent. The English East Indian Company would not give any such land. Having no relations in Madras or Pondicherry, these East Indians remained where they were born and assumed Indian habits and customs.

in honour of St Antony. They seem to have a peculiar veneration for this Saint and for the Blessed Virgin. They all came forward and although being as poor as possible, they subscribed according to their means their pice, dubs or panoo, to purchase candles for the devotions. The old women who had nothing else came forward with their deepam to add their share to the solemnity. All the Schismatics as well as those who were always faithful approached the Holy Sacrament of Penance, and (strange to say) there were found this time in Phirangipuram persons to approach that Sacrament who did not comply with their duty for the last 26 years. *Initium sapientiae timor Domini.*

Arcot Mission.

Catholic Expositor of 1846 and later.—There were 483 souls in the Arcot Cantonment in the year 1848, of whom 105 belonged to Light Cavalry. Its dependencies, on the east are Cauverypauk 3 or 4 families, Allapakam about 100 souls, Muthuvadoo 80 Christians. On the West: Themballée about seven miles west contains about ten families of Koorooba caste, Christianpetta 13 families, Parytharampalyam, 38 miles west of Arcot, contains 10 families. Thadagara, 45 miles West of Arcot, contains 40 Christians. Saddacoopam, 46 miles west of Arcot, contains 10 Christians. The Christians of this village and of Parytharampalyam are of the same caste and kindred as those of Themballée and like them retain little of Christian religion and resemble pagans more than Christians.

Punganur has 40 Christian families. Narsinnayapaleam, 21 miles north of Punganur, has seven Christian families. Sivadi, 5 miles south of Punganur, has three Christian families, Gookal has 10 Christian families.

The Christians of Themballee, in consequence of intermarriages with the heathen, have for some years past, imitated heathenish customs and ceremonies and are considered apostates from the Christian faith. Fr. Gannon visited them in 1844 and was refused admittance into their village. He was obliged to remain out the whole day, under the shade of a very small and solitary tree until evening when the people of the village came and brought him some rice. They made him a promise of reconciliation with the Church if their relatives at Bangalore would intermarry with them.

CHAPTER VIII.

The mission reports from different priests were no longer published in any Weekly journal, after 1850. Bellary, Caddapah and Kurnool missions were visited for many more years by Fr. Doyle from Bellary. After the year 1865, Fr. Arokianader from Kitchery was appointed as an Assistant to Fr. Doyle and helped him at Bellary and in the village missions till about 1875. After that year Fr. Sevarinader was in charge of Cuddapah and Kurnool villages till about 1880.

Fr. Kennedy looked after the Guntur and Nellore mission for many years.

The Catholic Directory of 1862 gives following census of the Catholic population in the Madras Diocese :—

Phirangipuram * *Mission* 4,216 : Phirangipuram 1,000, Rentachintala 582.

Nellore Mission 932, including 202 Catholics in Nellore Town.

Cuddapah Mission 739 : Cuddapah Town 208, Onteddupalle 149, Nagarazupalle 53, Ponnathota 12, Dommaranandyala 21, Uratur 33, Mangapatnam 5.

Bellary Mission : Native Catholics 2,795, including 2,046 in Bellary Town and Cantonment and 749 in the villages, Yaleroo 186, Pepally 58, etc.

Kurnool Mission 612 : Kottala 65, Poloor 183, Covoloor 80, Kurnool Town 128.

Kitchery Mission 3,631, which means all the Telugu Christians in the Chingleput district including Wallajabad which is Tamil.

Catholic Directory of 1863 :—

A community of native monks—the Brothers of the Immaculate Mother of God—was established at Chingleput in 1857 by Fr. Leroux, a missionary of the Foreign Missionary Society of Pondicherry. They transferred their monastery in 1860 from Chingleput to Kitchery where they opened a school in which about 80 children were instructed. In 1861 they constructed the monastery building by public subscription and with the aid of the Kitchery Christians. The community numbered in 1863 nine professed monks and three novices.

* The number of Catholics in the Guntur district was 5,700 in the year 1872 and 10,693 in the year 1879,

Fr. Arokianader was the Superior. The monastery prospered and increased in numbers rapidly. About the year 1875, it had half a dozen priests and thirty monks. The monastery was transferred to Place's Garden about the year 1880. Soon after most of the priests and monks left the Society but the monastery continued with a few monks under the direction of Fr. Dominic. After his death about the year 1900 the monks transferred their institution to Darkhast near Pallavaram in the Mylapore diocese where it became extinct after a few years.

The monastery had charge of a famine orphanage for many years. During the famine of 1877-78 a large number of orphans, both boys and girls, were brought mostly from the Bellary district. It is said as many as seven hundred boys were brought to the Place's Garden but most of them died of some disease or other, brought on by starvation in their native villages.

Brother Gabriel who died at Covelong in the latter part of 1925, at the grand old age of 95 years saw the beginning and end of the monastery. He joined the monastery at Chingleput in 1857, and leaving it in 1865 followed Fr. Arokianader to Bellary for some years and rejoined and remained till the day when it was closed. He worked as a missionary monk for several years in the Ceded Districts and completed the construction of the Church at Onteddupalle in 1870, after much labour and perseverance. He was very much esteemed and respected by the Telugu Christians of these districts.

About the same period when the monastery was started at Kitchery, Fr. Arokianader took steps to begin

a conventual institution for women who desired to devote their life to the service of God and to advance in spiritual perfection and to work for the education of girls. Tadpatri Gnanamma, a religiously inclined widow of Phirangipuram, who had offered her five sons to the service of God, to be trained in the Madras Seminary, of whom the late Fr. Rajanader was one, came forward to help Fr. Arokianader in his zealous endeavours. She was the founder of the first Telugu Convent at Kitchery. The first young aspirants for the conventual life were trained in the Good Shepherd Convent at Bellary. About the year 1882 Mgr. Balanader opened a branch of that convent at Royapuram to educate the Telugu girls in English and Tamil. St. Anne's congregation has now half-a-dozen branches and about fifty Sisters labouring in the education of Telugu and Tamil girls in Madras and the mofussil.

There was a seminary at Madras during the administration of Bishop John Fennelly in which both Anglo-Indian and Indian students were trained for the priesthood. Between the years 1860 and 1870, the seminary gave about a dozen priests, one of them being an Indian priest, viz., Fr. Doraisamy. John Fennelly died in January 1868 and Fr. Stephen Fennelly succeeded him and was consecrated Bishop. He started a petit seminary under the charge of the Kitchery monks. He ordained seven Indian priests between 1870 and 1876. During the great famine of 1877-78 he collected large funds in Ireland, and opened a large orphanage in Place's Garden for the support of famine orphans. He also

started conversion work at Christianpet and Maddikera, where many hundreds of heathens were baptized. In the year 1875 he brought new missionaries from Mill Hill College, London. The four first missionaries were given charge of the Telugu villages in the Guntur district. Two of these, namely, Frs. Dieckmann and Grand, worked about forty years at Phirangipuram and Rentachintala respectively. Other missionaries from the same college followed them. They took charge of the Christians in the other Telugu districts, south and west of the diocese. Frs. A. Kroot and Hermans worked with great zeal and success in those parts. Bishop Stephen Fennelly died in 1880 and was succeeded by Bishop Colgan who was later on raised to the dignity of Archbishop. During his regime the seminary was taken away from the charge of the Kitchery monks and transferred to Nellore and placed under the charge of Mill Hill missionaries in the year 1880. More than a dozen Indian priests came out from that seminary at Nellore. It was closed about the year 1895, and the aspirants for the priesthood were sent to the Kandy Seminary.

In the year 1887, Dr. Colgan set apart a priest for the conversion of the gentiles. It was Fr. Balanader. He settled himself at Uratur and worked for about ten years in those parts. He converted ten families at Uratur, all of Reddi caste except one and more than a dozen families at Avalathippayapalle and its neighbourhood, mostly of Reddi caste.

About the year 1890 Fr. A. Kroot fixed himself at Kondramutla and built a Church and presbytery there.

He converted some families of Patravandlu in a village—not far from it—named Siddayanam.

About the year 1896 Fr. Dieckmann converted several pariah families in the neighbourhood of Phirangipuram. During Dr. Colgan's administration many new churches were built at Phirangipuram, Siripuram, Ravipadu, Rentachintala, Cowloor, Polam, etc.

About the year 1885 Fr. Dieckmann founded an Indian convent at Phirangipuram which flourished and in course of some years established branches in four different places. About the year 1900 the Monastery of Franciscan brothers was started at Bellary. They opened a boarding school for the English education of Telugu boys. It was the cradle of education of several young Indian priests working now in the Archdiocese. Archbishop Colgan died in February 1911 at Madras.

CHAPTER IX.

In the year 1902 the late Archbishop Aelen was consecrated Bishop and appointed coadjutor to Archbishop Colgan. He administered the northern part of the Archdiocese till the year 1911. During that period the Dutch Missionary nuns opened a convent at Guntur and worked with great success for the education of Telugu girls. Besides the school, orphanage and boarding institution, they also opened a dispensary and later on a hospital for incurable patients. They have also opened branches of their convent and schools and dispensaries at Nellore and Kurnool. They have made

many conversions among the poor non-caste people in places adjoining their institutions. They have started a congregation of Indian nuns under them to help them in their work of education and conversion.

There are two English high schools for Telugu boys, one at Bellary under the Franciscan monks and the other at Phirangipuram under the * Norbertine Missionaries, who came to work in the Guntur district about six years ago. Both of those schools have been raised to the standard of high schools.

About the year 1925 two seminaries were opened for the training of young aspirants to the Priesthood, one at Phirangipuram for secular education and the other at Nellore for theological studies.

Several big churches were constructed within the last ten or twelve years, at Kitchery, Arkonam, Vaniyambadi, Kurnool, Guntur, Nellore, etc. During the administration of Archbishop Aelen many conversions were made in the Guntur District. Fr. Firman converted a large number of Erikalavandlu at Melavagu, near Rentachintala. Some families of Madigas received baptism near Poloor. Many conversions were made at Nellore by Fr. Aelen.

Fr. S. Ignatius worked for some years among non-caste Tamils, north of Madras, and brought over to the true faith about a thousand souls. Fr. Y. Xavier laboured for thirty years at Rayavaram and converted many families

* The Norbertine Fathers have now been given the new Mission of Jubbalpore and will shortly proceed to their new sphere of work.

of caste people. At the present day Fr. Chinnappa near Parimi in the Guntur District has been very successful in conversion work and has added to the true fold several villages of non-caste Telugus. The number of converts is daily increasing. Mgr. Bouter converted more than five hundred people. Recently in the villages in the vicinity of Guntur.

The Catholic Christian population of the Guntur District has greatly multiplied during the prosperous period of the last forty years. The price of cultivable land has risen very high. The land beyond the river Kistna, in the Nizam's territory, is, on the contrary very cheap. The Catholics of the weaver caste who form a good portion of our Christians found that their profession of weaving could not support them, owing to the introduction of spinning and weaving mills into this country and the cheapness of machine-made cloth. Hence they had to give up the ancestral profession of their caste and take to the cultivation of the soil. Both the farmer and the weaver were compelled to abandon their homes and emigrate to a new country where they could earn their livelihood. The Nizam's territory beyond the river Kistna answered all their purposes, and so some twelve thousand Catholics of the Guntur district have crossed the river Kistna and settled themselves in the Hyderabad dominions, during the last fifteen or twenty years. This emigration has greatly brought down the strength of the Catholic congregations in the Guntur district.

Between twenty and thirty families of weaver Christians have lately shifted from their village in the

Nellore district, Dubaguntla, where their forefathers had settled down more than a hundred years ago. They have settled themselves near Nellore and Bitragunta, having acquired lands for cultivation through the influence of the missionaries.

By a decree of Pope Pius XI, the Archdiocese of Madras was divided in 1928 into three dioceses, *i.e.*, the Archdiocese of Madras which comprises all the Tamil portion, the diocese of Nellore which comprises all the Telugu districts and the diocese of Bellary which includes the Canarese portion.

The Catholic Directory of 1928 gives the following census of Catholics in the Telugu country of the Archdiocese :—

Guntur district, villages of old Catholics, 19,350.

Nellore Village Mission including Railway employees at Bitragunta, 1,500 ; Nellore Town, 1,250.

Kurnool and Cuddapah Mission, 2,195, of whom Kurnool has 220 ; Polur, etc., 825 ; Kottala, Onteddupalle, etc., 800 ; Uratur, etc., 350.

Kitchery Mission including Pannur, Sellampatada and Valarapuram, 5,909, excluding the Telugu villages of the Mylapore Diocese.

Ramadurgam, etc., villages, 635 ; Yaleroo, etc., villages, 260.

This census may be compared with that given for the year 1862 recorded in a previous page.

CHAPTER X.

The past history of the conversion of the Telugu Christians is only an account of the missionary work carried on for the last two hundred and thirty years in the southern half of the Telugu country. There are no records till about 1850 of any missionary work done in the northern half of that country which occupies the whole of the south-east portion of the Nizam's dominions, and almost the whole of the territory of the Northern Circars, north of the Kistna river. It now belongs partly to the diocese of Hyderabad, which includes the Telugu part of the Nizam's dominions and the Kistna district, and partly to the diocese of Vizagapatam which comprises the remaining portion of the Northern Circars, excluding the Kistna district.

The diocese of Hyderabad was formed in 1851 and the Milan Foreign Missionary Fathers commenced their work there in 1854 and took possession of the diocese in 1870. When the diocese was formed in 1851, there were Catholics in the Telugu part such as Secunderabad and Masulipatam, who mostly belonged to the British troops as soldiers, Tamil sepoys and camp followers and their descendants. There are now 42,456 Catholics in the diocese, by far the greater proportion of whom are Telugu Christians residing in the Nizam's territory and the Kistna district.

The diocese of Vizagapatam was started and entrusted to the Missionaries of the Society of St. Francis of Sales in 1845. There were only then a few Catholics scattered in a few places, who were almost all European

troops and Tamil camp followers. There are now more than 11,000 Catholics in the diocese and 2,800 catechumens.

IN MEMORIAM PERPETUAM.

Three of the Missionaries that laboured in the Telugu Missions lie buried in the heart of the Telugu country. Krishnapuram, now a poor and out-of-the-way village, contains their precious remains. There they lie buried under the shadow of the trees they had planted with their own hands. This village, once one of the principal Mission centres in the Carnatic, is situated in the northern portion of the Penukonda Taluk of the Anantapur district. Bishop Bonnand who visited these parts in 1835, made his way from Dharmavaram to Krishnapuram with the sole object of venerating the tombs of those worthy pioneers. It was then a hundred years since they had died. He tells us that the structure of their tombs had fallen into ruins but that a Christian of Dharmavaram of Kamsala caste, Chinnappa by name, had undertaken to rebuild them in mud and stone and that parts of the walls of the adjacent Church were still standing.

With this information of nearly another hundred years old, a request was made by Fr. A. Kroot to the Collector of Anantapur. The Collector took interest in the matter and ordered the Tahsildar of Penukonda to visit the place Krishnapuram and obtain all the information available about these graves. The Tahsildar visited the place and found an old woman of Kamsala caste, Chinnamma by name, who was the only Christian there.

He obtained from her all the traditional history about these graves which fully tallied with the recorded history. He writes: "Up to 60 or 70 years ago, old men say that an important annual festival used to be observed by the Christians in the tope. A priest used to attend and conduct service and it would appear a large number of Christians from Maddikubba and Brahmanappalle of Anantapur Taluk used to visit the village." The middle grave is that of Fr. LeGoc, Sanjivinada Swamulu, the intrepid and indefatigable missionary who so zealously and successfully laboured in these parts for thirty-five long years, and it is he who converted the Yelnadi Reddis and other caste people of Anantapur District. The other two Fathers who lie buried by his side are Fr. Gilbert Ducros and Fr. Francis Caron. The Collector of Anantapur obtained the sanction of Government for the future upkeep and protection of the graves as well as for the erection of three memorial tablets.

Fr. de la Fontaine was looked upon as the founder of the Carnatic Mission. His labours were crowned from the beginning with extraordinary success. With great tact he gained the good will of the Raja of Punganur and within eight months he baptized one hundred adults, all of good caste and nine Brahmins, that is to say, he alone baptized in eight months more Brahmin adults than all the Missionaries of Madura in ten years. He laboured in the Telugu country from 1702 to 1718 at Punganur, Chinnaballapuram and Krishnapuram and died at Chinnaballapuram on 10th November 1718.

Fr. Manente, who brought the Kitchery Christians from Oleru in 1788, died at Madras in 1812.

Fr. Arnoult (Henry) was at Madderu, and Punganur, in 1777, brought the Telugu Christians to Sellampattada, died at Madras in 1806, aged 67.

Fr. Calmette (John) came to India in 1726, died at Chinnaballapuram at the end of 1739 or the beginning of 1740. In his time the Thumma Reddis emigrated to Bukapuram, Nellore district. He was said to have been a great Sanskrit scholar. It is very probable that he is the Satyabodaswamulavaru of the Vedantarasayanam. We know at least that it is *Fr. Calmette* who translated a large Catechism, *De la Foi* and the refutation of *Metampsychosis*.

Four other priests lie buried in the heart of the Telugu country in distant outlying stations. We find noted in the records that one *Fr. Daniel* died at Cumbum in the year 1804. *Fr. S. Fennelly* who visited Cumbum in 1848 says that the grave was in good condition. This priest was a native priest of Mudaliar caste born at Pondicherry.

An Indian priest, *Fr. Sevariar* of Nattaman (Oodiar) caste, died at Phirangipuram in 1825, after being a priest for twelve years.

There is a grave of a Missionary at Peddarikatla. Another missionary lies buried at Sirvel, near Doobaguntla, Nellore district. The name of *Krupanandaswamulu* is engraved on the tomb stone.

According to tradition a priest died at Nellore in the days of the Nabobs. He was riding on horse back along

with the Nabob and fell down by accident and broke his legs and died. Probably he was an ex-Jesuit and died there after 1764. He is called Varudanader.

Fr. Clement Bonnard, the great Missionary of the Foreign Missionary Society of Paris, worked for full six years from December 1827 in the Phirangipuram Mission which then comprised the whole of the Guntur and Nellore districts. He made many conversions among caste people. He had a great affection for the Telugu people and was highly esteemed by his Christians. He was raised to the episcopal dignity in 1834 and visited all the Telugu districts. He died at Benares in 1861 while visiting Northern India as Visitor Apostolic.

Fr. Jarrige of the Foreign Missionary Society worked for several years from 1826 in the Punganur Mission which then included the Ceded Districts. The Christians of Caddapah and Kurnool districts had a great regard and affection for him. He was known as Sevarianandaswamy. He died at Bangalore in 1889 at a patriarchal age.

Fr. Patrick Doyle : This great Irish Missionary worked in the Telugu districts for more than thirty-five years from about 1840 and lies buried in the Church of St. Lazarus, Bellary. He was the Military Chaplain at Bellary and used to make his periodical visits all over the villages of Bellary, Cuddapah and Kurnool districts. He made the first Indian Telugu priest in the Irish Mission in the person of Fr. Balanader.

Fr. Kennedy was a great travelling Missionary who worked alone for many years in the Guntur and

Nellore districts. He spent many years as a retired priest at Kitchery and died there in 1894.

Fr. Balanader was born at Onteddupalle in 1845. He was educated by Fr. Doyle first at Bellary and afterwards in the Bangalore Seminary. He was ordained priest in 1871. For several years he made long annual visits to Moodgal which now belongs to the Hyderabad Diocese, to look after the spiritual needs of the Kanarese Christians of Kuruba caste. He opened the first Indian Convent at Royapuram. From 1887 to 1899 he was a Missionary *ad gentes*. During that period he converted about a dozen families mostly Reddis at Uratur and a greater number, mostly the same caste, at Avaluthippayapalle and its vicinity. He took great trouble and interest in the secular and religious education of the boys and girls of Onteddupalle, Uratur and Avalathippayapalle. Three priests and several nuns were the fruit of his endeavours and a highly educated exemplary layman in the person of the late Mr. Soma Innayya Reddi, B.A., L.T.

He was raised to the dignity of a Private Chamberlain to the Pope with the title of Monsignor. He died at Ennore on 27th December 1907, aged 63 years and lies buried in the chapel there.

Fr. Dieckmann was the parish priest of Phirangipuram mission for forty years from 1875. He built there a magnificent Church. He started an Indian convent which has several branches now in those parts of the country. He died at Phirangipuram in July 1913.

Fr. A. Kroot worked for many years in the Guntur as well as the Ceded Districts. Later on he converted several families of caste people in the north of the Nellore district, near Kondramutla where he built a Church and house for a resident priest. During the last years of his life he built a big Church at Kurnool. He died there in 1918.

Fr. S. Ignatius, the great Indian priest, worked in the Archdiocese for fifty years. He made many conversions in the villages of the northern part of the Chingleput district. He died of snake-bite at Arambakam in 1926.

Fr. Rajanader is an Indian priest who worked in the Archdiocese nearly fifty years. His mother, with the help of Fr. Arokianader, started the first Indian convent at Kitchery about 1862. He most generously patronized the mother house and the branches of the convent. He retired at Christianpet and built a Church there and died 1922.

APPENDIX.

CONVERSION OF TAMIL ADI-DRAVIDAS.

The history of the conversion of the Telugu Christians cannot be complete unless we give also the history of those Christians who, though Tamils, have been residing for nearly 150 years in almost all the towns of the Telugu country in hundreds and thousands. The Carnatic Mission which was worked by the French Jesuits, from Pondicherry, not only comprised the whole of the Telugu country, but also included a portion of the Tamil country, on the southern extremity of the Carnatic territory which, in the mind of those missionaries, commenced on the south from a line drawn from Pondicherry to Bangalore. To give a complete history of the Carnatic Mission, it is therefore necessary to give also an account of the conversion work in that southern part. A short account of it is given in the following passages quoted from the letters of those missionaries.

The converts made in this part of the country belonged mostly to the Adi-Dravida caste. Fr. Calmette's letter of January 1733 says: "From the beginning it has always been God's will that the poor should be the foundation stones in the building up of his Church, *Pauperes evangelizantur.*" Fr. Calmette's letter of September 1735: "Just as in the first Christian era the Holy Ghost manifested Himself, by selecting the poor, in preference to the rich, so in like manner we experience

the same in India." The same missionary in his letter of January 1733 says: "This practice (the practice of building chapels) is most common among the Pariah caste, which is the lowest of all castes, but at the same time the one which has given us the greatest number of Christians."

Fr. Manduit, the first Jesuit Missionary in the Carnatic on his reconnoitring journey to the west from Carveypondi, in September 1701, visited Vellore and left a catechist there to prepare the neophytes for baptism by the time he should return. He mentions that there were a dozen pariahs among the neophytes. How he managed to make converts among the people of this class, it is difficult to understand, remembering that he lived with the Brahmins. Only actual baptism, however, where contact is necessary, would create a difficulty.

He tells us how some time before, he had to evade the suspicion of Brahmins and Sudras, when at Polur, he managed to baptize some Pariahs at the dead of night in the jungle, at a long distance from the village. Fr. Calmette in his letter of January 1733 says: "It is from this caste that the Mahomedan Governor of Vellore has formed a company of soldiers. But no others than Christians are admitted. Nor will he acknowledge any of them unless they wear the rosary round their neck."

I have a Church at Arcot which counts over 4,000 Christians. Fr. Saigne's letter, June 1736: "I have a Church at Vellore which is another Moorish town of importance and is the residence of a Nabob, different from the Nabob of Arcot. As soon as I had arrived in my

little house at Vellore, the Nabob sent me the "battiam" which is food for the day, consisting of one measure of rice, half a measure of peas, some butter and four pieces of copper money of the value of a "sou," to buy pepper, salt and wood. He continued this during the 15 days of my stay*.

The Nabob holds the Christians in great esteem. He has a company of 25 Christians who constantly take turns as sentinels at his palace. He is always ready to protect us against the oppression of pagan princes. There are a great many Christians among his troops who never fail to assemble on Sundays even in time of war.

A detachment of the Moorish army was sent to destroy a village of the enemy. Most of the villagers fled in all directions. Among them was a woman who was held up by a Moorish soldier. He robbed her of her necklace and bangles and was on the point of despatching her with his sword, when falling on her knees, she begged him to spare her life in the name of the true God. A Christian soldier, close by, hearing this, asked her if she was a Christian, to which she replied in the affirmative. Not content with having her life spared, she pleaded for the safety of the Church, saying that the Priest was away on circuit. The Christian soldier ran at once to the General's camp to ask for his protection of the Church. This General, who is as favourable towards us as the Nabob of Vellore, forthwith sent orders to

* The priest had been called by the Nabob to settle some differences among the Christians,

hoist his flag at the Church, which was therefore saved from the general plunder and arson.

Fr. Calmette, in his letter of September 1730, mentions the name of a Mr. Preyra,* the medical officer of the Nabob of Arcot, as having used his influence with Dost-Ali-Khan, to deliver the priest from the unbearable vexations of the Reddi of a village, who by the aid of Brahmins gave no end of trouble to the Christians. He here remarks that the Moors, particularly the higher officials were, as a rule, well disposed towards the priests and not infrequently protected them against the intrigues of the pagans. There was also a Doctor at the Court of the Nabob of Vellore, named M. de Sainte Hilaire, who helped the priest by his influence in the persecution against the Christians at Devanapalle.

Fr. Calmette in his first letter of September 1730 says of the Pariah Christians of Arcot: "These Christians are all more or less in the employ of the Viceroy as caretakers of the elephants and horses in the army. The Moors respect these Christians because of their fidelity to their faith. Whether in town or in camp, they observe their fasts and their feasts. In the town they have their Church and in the latter they carry about a large tent which is to them what the Ark of Covenant was to the Israelites." In his letter of September 1735, Fr. Calmette says: "The armies of the Mahrattas who sweep every year over this part of the country to levy tribute, have among them a numerous

* The descendants of this Preyra family were still living at Chittoor in 1910.

and devoted Christian community which is the cause of many conversions and baptisms. There is in every one of their armies a considerable number of Christian families. Those neophytes have appointed a head who acts the part of a Catechist. They have a large tent for their religious services, which on Sundays they decorate as they would the Church. All the Christians assemble there for prayer and instruction. An absentee is punished so severely that the priest found it necessary to moderate their zeal. A Mahratta officer who was delivered from the obsession of the devil by a relic which a Christian hung round his neck has preserved so great a veneration for this *ambulant* Church, that on special feast days he sends offerings of oil and incense, and as, by his caste rules, he cannot mix with people of so inferior a rank, he stands at a little distance in front of the tent and there remains till the prayers are over." Fr Calmette's letter, January 1733 : " There are several little chapels here and there, in the town and in the village, which the Christians use for their daily devotions and especially for public prayers on Sundays and on feast days, when after the usual devotions, the Catechist gives an instruction in the Catechism. The Mass prayers are recited in the same way, as if the priest were there ; disputes are settled on these occasions and a penance imposed on the guilty. In case of a serious scandal, he or she is excluded from the assembly. Only the other day I gave permission for the building of such a chapel. This practice is most common among the Pariah caste which is the lowest of all castes, but at the same time the one which has given us most Christians."

Letter of Fr. Tremblay, Missionary in the Carnatic Kingdom, 1742: "The Christian soldiers never appear before the prince without some Christian mark. One day four hundred of these good men were assembled at the gate of the prince. The prince being in an angry mood, said: 'Why do you despise my deities and call them by the most odious name?'"

"Lord," said one of the Captains, "since we became Christians we do not wear a false mark. We know the truth and cannot help calling these things by their right name". The prince smiled and said: "I have always known you to be faithful subjects and henceforth you must not come near my temples. You might kill my gods and if my gods were dead, I would either have to adore the God of the Christians or worship nothing." "From that time, when any pagan feast is celebrated, in the palace, the soldiers leave the precincts and go out for a walk in the fields." Dupleix, who was the first among the Europeans to take the Indians into Military service as Sepoys, would certainly have given preference to the Pariah Christians and would have kept a good number of them in his army. Haidar Ali also had a good number of Christian sepoys in his army.

The local tradition of Seringapatam informs us that Tippu Sultan in his fanatical persecution of the Christians one day ordered some sepoys in his service to abandon their faith and become Mahomedans. Michael, who was familiarly known as Surappa, on account of his bravery, and who was the head of these sepoys, said that he would call together his men and after

consultation with them, would give a reply the next day. They all met together with their families and decided to give up their lives for the sake of their religion. The next day, they dressed themselves, and fully armed, in their military style, informed the Sultan that they were ready to die. The Sultan got perplexed at this turn of affairs and quietly dropped the matter.

From the above passages, in the letters of the first Carnatic Missionaries, we can gather that most of the converts they made in the Southern part of the Carnatic territory were from the Pariah caste and that these converts were mostly employed in the armies of the Nabobs and Mahrattas and that they were very devout and practical Christians. The building of local chapels for different communities and the appointment of covilpillays, had its existence in the very beginning. The authority of the priest was very much respected. They had great discipline in the spiritual and moral guidance of their communities. Catechists and covilpillays, under the direction of the priest, led them in their religious practices and used their power to correct those that give scandal to the community by their un-Christian behaviour. They had also Nattamais, heads of local communities, to take the lead in social matters, such as the celebration of a marriage, etc.

The method of religious and social management of the Pariah Christians still continues in all the towns and military stations, where there is an appreciable number of the descendants of these old Christians.

The armies of the East India Company, which took the place of Mahomedan rulers in Southern India,

contained a large number of these Pariah Christians. Almost every Military Cantonment had a regiment or company of the Native Christian sepoy, camp followers, and domestic servants of all officers. These sepoy served the Company from generation to generation. They carried their faith to the distant parts of India and left their descendants in almost every town in Southern India which was once a military station. These descendants keep up the light of faith unblushingly even to this day. In almost every town of the Telugu country, which would otherwise be immersed in the darkness of heathenism, they console the Missionary by their existence and unswerving practice of the true faith.

Who would dream of the existence of Christianity more than a hundred years ago in the following towns, if it were not for these relics of the old Native Christian sepoy and camp-followers in these places : Vizagapatam, Masulipatam, Guntur, Kurnool, Cuddapah, Bellary, Lingasugoor, Secunderabad, Hyderabad, Kamptee, Nellore.

It is a pity that the number of Madras sepoy has been greatly reduced in the British Indian army. The Railways and their workshops have to some extent supplied the place of British armies for affording the means of livelihood for the descendants of the old Madras Sepoy. The reduction of the number of British officers in the Civil Service and the Railways, owing to the introduction of Home Rule, has deprived many Tamil Pariah Christians of their ancestral vocation of domestic service, as cooks and butlers.

There are even now 4,000 Tamil Christians in Secunderabad; 3,000 in Hyderabad; 4,000 in Nagpore, 1,000 in Poona.

In 1848 there were 20 Tamil Christians at Cumbum where the Protestant officers built a substantial little chapel for them; there were 100 Tamil Christians in Guntur in 1846. Bishop Bonnand has noted in 1833 that he visited Kalastri and Venkatagiri in the Nellore district where the oldest men hardly remembered having seen a priest in their lifetime. Those Christians were all Tamils, employed in the service of the Rajas as bandsmen.

