CHAPTER II

PROTESTANT CHRISTIANITY
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The term 'Protestant' means, a member of a Christian sect, which follows the doctrines of the sixteenth century reformer, Martin Luther.

The word 'Protest' denotes that, those who protested against the evil practices of Catholicism and on that account, they were called Protestants. It also meant "no toleration for Catholics." The Protestant Missions entered India in the eighteenth century for the purpose of spreading Christianity.

A Missionary is properly speaking a minister of the gentiles. On his part, nothing could be done with sinister ends or by unlawful means, vis-a-vis by worldly promises, gifts of money, power of the civil Magistrate, or conniving at some heathenish ceremonies, and superstitions. On the contrary, he had to examine carefully and enquire into the motives and views of everyone who offered to be a proselyte. He was the ultimate court of appeal in any matter and maintained Christian discipline and tried to change their character. He selected, appointed or dismissed Catechists and ordained Ministers, confirmed

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1 Edmund Lester, S.J., op.cit., p.68.
and celebrated Eucharist.² He prevented the marriage of his congregation members with heathens, denounced idol worship, received new members, suspended or excommunicated backsliders. The Missionary handled the finance, suspended the payments of pensions to widows and the children of the deceased Catechists and even refused burial if the members violated the church rules.³

The three important Protestant Missions that spread the Gospel of Christ were, The Society for the Propagation of Christian Knowledge (SPCK), London Missionary Society (LMS), and Christian Missionary Society (CMS), which commenced their activities in South Travancore in the nineteenth century.⁴

The Society for the Propagation of Christian Knowledge was founded in 1698 by some of the members of the Church of England and its main object was to promote education and to support Missionary activities in colonies.⁵

As a result of stirring Missionary zeal that arose in England, it spread to other Protestant countries of Europe in the eighteenth

³ Ibid.
⁴ Manickam, S., Studies in Missionary History, Madras, 1988, p.43.
century. The SPCK society financed the first Protestant (Lutheran) Missionary to carry on the mission and consequently Plutschau and Bartholomaus Ziegenbalg, who were Danish nationals, came to Tranquebar on the South East Coast of India in 1706 followed by Christian Frederick Schwartz, in 1751 who became the most outstanding Missionary. These Missionaries built the first Protestant Congregation in India in the Tamil speaking areas, with Tranquebar as its headquarters.

The London Missionary Society was founded in 1795 as a result of an evangelical revival, which swept through England in the last decades of the eighteenth century.

The first Protestant Missionary society to begin its work, in full-fledged manner in South Travancore was the LMS, with the conversion of Maharasan Vedamanickam. However, the members of the SPCK had already been working in South Travancore before the advent the LMS.

The Church Missionary Society was started in England by the efforts of John Venn and Thomas Scott in the year 1799. Col. John Munro,

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the British Resident was mainly responsible for the commencement of the work of the CMS in South Travancore in the year 1810. This was followed by the first CMS Missionary Thomas Norton, who landed in Cochin on 8th May 1816.⁹

The Protestant Christian Missionaries which worked in the Tamil country believed, that baptism was celebrated to mark a change of heart and it was an initiatory step towards a new life. In the early part of the nineteenth century, a great spiritual stir occurred and numerous conversions took place in the Tamil Country.¹⁰ A few Missionaries could not cope up with the situation. A lax system of preparatory instruction for baptism had crept into Missions and relapsing into their former religion was quite frequent. Besides, educated or well to do family members were exposed to threats and intimidation from the moment they decided to take baptism. At times the converts wavered in their faith.¹¹

Despite of these threats, the Protestants had increased at a greater rate than the Roman Catholics, due to the untiring efforts of these Missionaries.¹²

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¹² Keys, K., (Print.), *op.cit.*, Vol. XII, p.75.
Bartholomaus Ziegenbalg and Christian Frederick Schwartz were the most illustrious members of the Protestant Mission in the Tamil Country. From the year 1806, the Protestant Missionaries, spread across South Travancore to propagate the message of God in which they were extremely successful.

Rev. William Tobias Ringletaube, Rev. Charles Mead, Rev. Charles Mault, Rev. John Abbs, Rev. Charles Miller, Rev. James Russel, Rev. J.O. White House and Rev. James Duthie were the leading Protestant Missionaries of South Travancore. The life and contributions of these great Missionaries are remarkably tremendous and hence it is discussed in detail.

**Bartholomaus Ziegenbalg**

Bartholomaus Ziegenbalg was the first and foremost Protestant Missionary to enter the Tamil Country. Though he did not visit South Travancore, his name and fame spread throughout the nooks of the kingdom and its the people were indirectly benefitted by his message and services. Ziegenbalg was born on 24th June 1682 at Pulsnitz in Saxony.\(^{13}\) As a young priest, he left Copenhagen for the East Indies on

29th November 1705 in order to preach the Gospel of Christ to the non-Christians on the Coromandel Coast. It was only on this day that, Protestant Mission in India was born.  

Ziegenbalg, especially with his keen interest in languages, tireless industry, obtained a mastery over Tamil and also showed some interest in science. Ganabathi Vathiar, (Teacher) son of Alagappan, taught Portuguese and Tamil to Ziegenbalg. He read Tamil literature, Philosophy and had a great respect for the Ancient Indian Civilization and studied the Missionary problems as well. He evinced great sympathy for the poor and the needy. He translated a few works and the most important work being the Gospel tracts in Tamil.

Ziegenbalg preached his first Tamil Sermon in less than a year after he landed. At that time there were many slaves in India, some of whom were owned by the Danes at Tranquebar. The Governor was not friendly to Missionary work, but as he had lately received a letter stating that the king of Denmark was much interested in it, he yielded to Ziegenbalg's request. Then, three of the five slaves were baptised in

16 Sherring Smith, op.cit., p.12.
May 1707 the first fruits of the Tranquebar Mission. 17

Ziegenbalg preached the Gospel to the Hindus in Tranquebar and its surrounding areas. He also ventured new Missionary methods for preaching and his concern for society, made his Missionary work more valuable. Through the village schools, he served both Christians and non-Christians and these schools were of great help him in his Ministry. 18 In 1718, he baptised fifty eight persons in Thirukadaiyoor, Sirkazhi, Chidambaram and through his ministry converted around three hundred people. 19

The SPCK in England came to know about Ziegenbalg's translation work and presented him a printing press, hundred reams of paper, two hundred and thirteen Portuguese New Testaments and some machinery tools. Ziegenbalg's translation of the New Testament into Tamil was the first fullscale book to be printed anywhere in the whole of Asia. 20 Ziegenbalg sent handwritten scripts to Halle (Germany) where its corresponding Tamil types were made. The Danish king Frederick VI who sent Ziegenbalg to India, was very happy to send Printers, Berlin and his brother Alder, to help Ziegenbalg in operating

17 Ibid.
20 Venkadasamy, Christavamum Tamilum (Tamil), Madras, 1938, p.105.
the printing machine. Printer Berlin was taken to the service in the
Portuguese school at Tranquebar while printer Alder was put incharge
of the printing press. Ziegenbalg also set up a paper mill near Porayar
which is even now called as "Kaduthasi Pattarai". 21 The first booklet
which was printed in the printing machine was the "Apostles Creed" in
Tamil and later, the first edition of the New Testament was printed in the
same machine in 1715. 22 Ziegenbalg authored the following books for
the propagation of the faith and they were Gnana Upadesa Kurippidam
(Catechism), Three books containing fifty one sermons, Thirumarai
Sarithram, (Bible History), Gnanapattukal, (Hymns), Prayer book, Kodun
Tamil Akarathi, Sentamil Akarathi (Both ancient Tamil literature) and
Tamil Grammar. 23

He has also written several books with reference to the native
religions of South India, especially on the worship of Tamil Gods. He
had altogether studied 161 books in Tamil and had collected
innumerable palm leaf manuscripts. He also succeeded in establishing
a Mission in Madras. 24

21 Ibid.
23 Devasitham, M., Tharankail Iraiyal Pani (Tamil), Madras, 1950, p.36.
24 Sherring Smith, op.cit., p.15.
Unfortunately, due to the jealousy of some pastors and their vindictive false reports, the foreign money and support stopped. Unperturbed, on 10th February 1719, he handed over all the responsibilities to Rev. Grundler and breathed his last. He was buried in a garden which was owned by him, known as "Ziegenbalg Garden". 

**Christian Frederick Schwartz**

Christian Frederick Schwartz was another prominent Protestant Missionary who never entered South Travancore, but greatly influenced its people through his services. He was born in Prussia in 1726. His mother, a pious woman, died while he was very young. But in her last moments she charged her husband to train up the child in remembrance, that he had been dedicated to God's service. In his 16th year, he was sent to a school that he might be prepared for the University. His father, though a man of some wealth, gave his son only as much money as was required for his necessary expenses. C.F. Schwartz thus escaped many snares which proved fatal to others. Twice when attacked by dangerous illness, he resolved, should his life be spared, to devote

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26 Sherring Smith, *op.cit.*, p.15.
himself to the service of his Maker; but with returning of health, his good resolutions were forgotten. Yet the prayers of his mother had gone up for a memorial before God and after a time he accepted Jesus Christ as his Saviour, and continued to be a faithful follower till the end of his life. 27

In 1746 C.F. Schwartz proceeded to Halle to study at the University, then distinguished for the Christian character of its professors. Here, he made an acquaintance with Schultze, who had been a Missionary for more than twenty years in South India. Schultze recommended him to learn Tamil, so that he might assist in carrying through the press, a new edition of the Bible, which was to be printed at Halle. So high an opinion was formed of C.F. Schwartz, that he was encouraged to offer himself as a Missionary to India. 28

C.F. Schwartz, arrived in India in 1750 and his life was a rare combination of Missionary zeal, statesmanship and indomitable courage and his contribution was a lifetime service to the cause of the proclamation of Gospel. 29 C.F. Schwartz was a man of practical wisdom, who had a passion for Souls, love for children and his goal was

27 Ibid., p.16.
to established an Indian Church. Though C.F. Schwartz was a Prussian, with the support of the SPCK, he moved out of Tranquebar and came to Tiruchirapoly. He mastered not only the local language Tamil, but also learnt Marathi, Hindustani, Portuguese and Persian.\textsuperscript{30} Sixteen years later he moved to Tanjore, a small Indian kingdom and from there, he moved out to other distant places, like Madras, Cuddalore, and Palayamkottai.\textsuperscript{31} He laid the foundation for the church of Christ in the district of Tirunelveli as he was the one, who baptised the first convert, Govinda, who later built a church and helped the local converts to gather for worship on Sundays. The Nadars of Tirunelveli, then called Shanars were untouchables, who were not allowed into the Hindu temples, but came into the church and accepted the Gospel of Christ.\textsuperscript{32}

C.F.Schwartz lovingly cared and nurtured a young lad from Palayamkottah and later gave him to the Tamil Literary world, to further the Gospel of Christ. He was none other than the venerated poet-Vedanayaga Sastriyar, the composer of hundreds of Christian lyrics, with full of devotion, a model for Tamil prosody and Carnatic music.

\textsuperscript{30} Solmon Doraisawmy, \textit{Christianity in India}, Madras, 1986, p.27.
\textsuperscript{32} Keys, K.,(Print), \textit{Manuals of the Tinnevelly District}, Madras, 1879, p.63.
also the author of a great Tamil epic, *Bethlehem Kuravanjee* - a masterpiece of Christian Tamil literature. He was an evangelist first and foremost, though a court poet under Sarfojee, the king of Tanjore, he renounced the honour of being a court poet and went about proclaiming the Gospel of Christ, facing all kinds of opposition, persecution, starvation and death. 

His soul stirring songs and lyrics enthralled masses and even today it is recited in the churches of South Travancore.

Meanwhile towards the close of 1797, C.F. Schwartz was attacked by severe illness and it became evident that his end was near. No longer was he able to hold services in the church and hence he caused the Native Christians to come to his house, where he expounded the scriptures and prayed with them in Tamil, as he had been used to. The children also came daily to him to read the Bible and sing their hymns in praise of Christ.

Shortly before death, his last words were the following: "Oh Lord, hitherto Thou Last preserved me; hitherto. Thou hast brought me; and hast bestowed in numerable benefits upon me. Do what is pleasing in Thy sight. I commend my spirit into Thy hands; cleanse and adorn it with the right Eonsness of my Redeemer, and receive me into the arms of

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33 Soloman Doraisamy, *op.cit.*, p.27.
Thy mercy.” Soon after he bowed his head, and peacefully departed to his Master’s rest.  

C.F. Schwartz was the most outstanding ambassador of the Gospel of Christ in India and was cordially called as the Father Schwartz or the King Priest.

Though Ziegenbalg, Vedanayaga Sastriyar and C.F. Schwartz never visited South Travancore, they were the pioneers, who laid the foundation for the spread of the Gospel of Christ in the Tamil Country. The contribution of this Trio, had its definite impact on South Travancore which ultimately paved the way for the other Missionaries to enter the kingdom.

Rev. William Tobias Ringeltaube

Rev. William Tobias Ringeltaube was the first Protestant Missionary to enter South Travancore and to create a niche for himself in the minds of millions of people. He was born in 1770 at Scheidelwitz near Breig in Silesia, in the Prussian Province of Germany and like most of the distinguished Danish Missionaries of the early Tranquebar Mission, he was educated at Halle. In 1796 the much renowned

35 Ibid.
36 Soloman Doraisamy, op.cit., p.31.
37 Agur, C.M., op.cit., 1903, p.460.
Dr. Schultz selected Rev.W.T.Ringletaube and Immanuel Gotfried Helzberg for the work of the SPCK Missions in India. Both were accordingly ordained and sent out to India and together they arrived with high testimonials. Rev.W.T.Ringletaube was accepted by the SPCK expressly as a Missionary to Calcutta, where he arrived in October 1793.

Rev.W.T.Ringletaube was a strict disciplinarian who never allowed his Christians to show the best symptom of disobedience and discomfort to the cause and ordinance of the State and Company of constituted authorities, but always impressed upon them the sound and health doctrine that they should not embrace Christianity with unworthy motive. He was an ardent worker, a special guide and guard to the church.

W.T.Ringletaube had to preach neither in Bengali nor in English but in Portuguese, to a mixed congregation of Portuguese, Malayama Jews and Chinese. His desire was to work among Portuguese and Europeans. After a brief stay he got ill and suddenly returned to England in 1799.

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38 Ibid.
He was again sent to South India by the CMS in 1803 and he got on board ship Cvanen Princes Maria from Copenhagen on 20th April 1804 with five other Missionaries to Tranquebar. Two of his companions got down at Vizagapattinam and others went to Ceylon. He landed at Tranquebar on 4th December 1804 and waited in prayers to get a suitable place. Here he gave himself to the study of Tamil under the guidance of Rev. J.C.Kohlhoff and Rev.Comet. He remained here for several months, assisting the venerable Dr. John, the Senior Missionary of the Tranquebar Mission, whose learning in various branches of knowledge was well known. Rev. W.T.Ringletaube assiduously set himself to the study of Tamil under the guidance of Dr. John and used his leisure time, in collecting information regarding the labours of previous Missionaries on the field, their history, picked up interest in studying natural history and philology of South India. He was very much successful in his Tamil studies that within a year he was able to compose small sermons and succeeded in compiling a short English-Tamil Pocket Dictionary.

44 Agur,C.M., op.cit., pp.468-469.
In 1805, he went to Madras by sea and visited his friends, where he was asked to work with them, but Rev. W. T. Ringletaube was not willing to work among Europeans.  

In February 1806, Rev. W. T. Ringletaube came to Palayamkottai via Tuticorin and obtained from Col. Macaulay, the British Resident, a passport to enter Travancore. He said, “I am going to Travancore which is full of devils. I do not know what will be before me there, perhaps I may be killed there for preaching the Gospel. I have no fear but I am only sorry that I do not possess more than one tongue to proclaim the name of my Saviour in that country”. He set out on 13th April 1806 to Travancore via Vadakkankulam, on a horse back, which was presented by a Civil Officer, baptising a few non-Christians on his way.

On April 25, 1806, he entered South Travancore where he was welcomed by a popular Catechist Vedamanickam and his little flock at Aramboly and taken to Mylaudy near Cape Comorin. This was the beginning of Protestant Missionary in South Travancore-a landmark

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in the evolution of Missionary activities in this part of South India. From there, he visited Trivandrum and finally obtained permission to establish a Mission at Mylaudy. Later from 1806 to 1809, Rev. W.T. Ringletaube stayed at Palayamkottai, supervising the Missionary work in Tirunelveli, under the SPCK and CMS Societies. He became a full time Missionary for South Travancore only after 1809, when the Christians in Mylaudy suffered severe persecution and hid themselves in the caves and under bamboo bushes, until the white tents of British forces were seen near Aramboly. 49 In the same year Rev. W.T. Ringletaube also influenced Diwan Velu Thampi, through Col. Macaulay, the British Resident, to permit him to build a church. 50

In May 1809 the foundation of the church was laid at Mylaudy in Vedamanickam’s ground, when the garden was still bearing the gingelly crop. 61 While the work vigorously proceeding, the heathen Tahsildar jealously hindered the work in various ways, but Rev. W.T. Ringletaube gained his friendship, by giving him presents. The small church was completed in four months and was dedicated in September that year. On that occasion Rev. W.T. Ringletaube baptized a few and administered

the Lord's Supper to the Christians. This was the first Protestant church that was built in South Travancore.  

Contiguous to the Chapel, Rev. W.T. Ringletaube proposed to build a small bungalow for himself at the same site, but, for the time being, however he occupied a small native hut near the spot, furnished with a common wooden table, one or two stools, and a native cot. He lived like a pure poor native of the country in the simplest and inexpensive style, practically showing to what extent a servant of God can deny himself the comforts of life, in order to do good to his fellow beings. Rev. W.T. Ringeltaube formally made Catechist Vedamanickam as a paid agent of the Mission and thereby resumed the Lord's work in South Travancore with all earnestness and full of hope. The Missionary and his assistant now devised all means for the further extension of the church.

Rev. W.T. Ringletaube's friendship with the British Resident Col. Macaulay and his successor Col. Munro induced fear in the minds of the people and officials, who were against the growth of the new faith.

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52 Agur, C.M., *op. cit.*, pp. 552-553.
In June 1810, with the permission of the Government and with the help of his friend who gave him rupees one thousand, seven more Chapels were built at Puthalam, James Town, Thamaraikulam, Ettambolly, Athicaud, Kovil vilai, Ananadanadan Kudiyiruppu.\textsuperscript{56} The Thamaraikulam church was dedicated on the 10th March 1810, on which day forty persons were baptized and two days after twelve more persons followed. Before baptizing them, Rev. W.T. Ringletaube made them promise, that they would be loyal and obedient subjects of their Raja (King) and that they would also do all the civil duties and reasonable services to the Sirkar (Government). Puthalam church a decent and modest building was built mainly through the exertions of Gnanamuthu, the headman of the Mylaudy family which was dedicated on the 20th July. The decent and clean dress of the converts on that occasion and their conduct in general pleased the Missionary very much.\textsuperscript{57}

On the 28th of the same month, he dedicated the church at Athicad while rendering discourse from his Hebrew text 12:22 to the people, about the delights of Mount Zion and the Heavenly Jerusalem.\textsuperscript{58}

\textsuperscript{56} Gopala Krishnan, M., \textit{op.cit.}, p.512.
\textsuperscript{58} \textit{Ibid.}, 36.
The church first erected at Ettambolly was burnt down by the heathen Nadars at the instigation of Madaven Kumaren, a Sirkar official. Rev. Ringletaube wrote to the Diwan on the matter, met the official and reprimanded his conduct, upon which, the man confessed his fault and promised to rebuild the church with the help of the same Nadars and to release the Christians, whom he had falsely kept in custody. He also agreed to inform Rev. Ringletaube whenever his Christians did any fault. Thus mutual friendship was established to the benefit of all concerned. The church was built up a second time and was dedicated on the 14th October. On this occasion, Rev. W.T. Ringeltaube baptized thirty two converts and preached "on what shall I do to be saved". In November 1810, the baptized Christian population in Mylaudy Mission was 422.

At this time Rev. W.T. Ringletaube had no suitable house at Mylaudy to live in, so he frequently took his abode at Oodagherry Fort, commonly called Pooliacurichi near Padmanabapuram and preached salvation to the people in its vicinity; and he was well received wherever he went. In 1811, a Residency Bungalow for Rev. W.T. Ringletaube was built at Kanyakumari.

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59 Agur, C.M., *op. cit.*, 516.
60 Gopala Krishnan, M., *op. cit.*, p. 842.
He was careless of his own comfort, regardless of his dress, so that when he entered into civilised society at Trivandrum or Palayamkottai; his friends sent out servants who met him and gave him decent raiment. This poverty was in part due to the policy of the Missionary Societies at that time, for Missionaries were expected to support themselves in part or wholly by engaging in trade or educational pursuits. But poor Ringletaube who lived among the outcastes and slaves of South Travancore had to manage on the pittance which the Directors allowed him.\(^{61}\)

Little huts were erected with bamboo roof and palm leaves and later, walls of mud were built. In the places of worship the people gathered after the day's toll to listen and to sing the praises of God. His Catechists were also school-masters and from those little village schools, went forth the first gleams of light and learning in this darkland.

Rev. W. T. Ringletaube's right hand supporter Vedamanickam had been duly appointed the Catechist at South Travancore and Masilamony, a nephew and fellow pilgrim of Vedamanickam, was made the Catechist of Thamaraikulam and Ettambolly. Vedamanickam's eldest son Devasahayam was the first Catechist of Puthalam.\(^{62}\)

\(^{62}\) Ibid.
In 1813, Col. John Munro made official enquiries into the state of both Syrian church of North Travancore and the Mission under Rev. W.T. Ringletaube. As a result, Paddy lands at Thamaraikulam and Vavilakulam were given as gift to the Mission by the Rani (Queen) of Travancore. From December 1813 - June 1814 Rev. W.T. Ringletaube went to Tranquebar to recoup his health.

In 1814, he appealed to the British Resident and secured exemption of the Christians from the operation of the pole tax, since they were severely affected by drought and famine.

Gradually his health declined steadily and a long visit to Tranquebar seemed no good, hence he wrote an urgent letter for help to the Tranquebar Mission to relieve him. The constant moisture, the frequent exposure and the rough life, steadily told on his body constitution and induced liver trouble. He had been working very hard for more than ten years in loneliness and privation, as he began to feel that he could no longer continue and hence applied for a passport on 4th February 1816. Since there was no European to succeed him, he finally entrusted his work to Vedamanickam, his faithful co-worker.

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Just before leaving he wrote to the Directors "I am fast decaying and I am unfit for active service. My work is done and finished so as to bear the stamp of permanency. Your money cannot be said to have been lost. You will find it in heaven and in the annuls of the Church of South Travancore." 66

Intending to go to Africa and work with friends, he left via Angengo to Quilon. At Angengo a few hours before embarking, he helped his Roman Catholic friend Machero who suffered much due to unemployment, by giving a letter to Col. John Munro enabling him to get a job. At Quilon, he met Col. John Munro and his wife and left for Madras on Monday 5th March 1816. 67

On the way when the ship neared Manakudy, he requested the captain to anchor the ship offshore, from there went to Mylaudy, rubbed off all the accounts and dues written on the walls of his room and returned via Kottaiyadi. There he became thirsty and Abraham Moopan (deacon) gave him Akkani (sweet toddy). 68 When he left for Manakudy, a large crowd accompanying him, got on board and went to Madras, where he visited his friend Mamaduke Thompson. 69

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67 Ibid.
It is said that the letters written by his classmate a Dutch Missionary at Borne, about the people of Malacca, induced Rev.W.T.Ringletaube to go to Malacca. He was heard off again at Colombo and finally at Malacca where he was the guest of Rev. William Miller, one of the Pioneer LMS Missionaries to China and then he disappeared. He, as a lonely and insignificant traveller might have died and been buried at sea or alone friendless, died in some foreign port. 

**Rev. Charles Mead**

Rev. Charles Mead was born on 2nd October 1792 at Bristol in Britain. He lost his parents very early and was brought up under the sole guidance of Rev. John Hant. His maternal aunt took immediate care of him and instilled into his mind, a drive for Missionary work. Rev. Charles Mead studied in London in a Grammar school till be accepted he invitation of the LMS. 

Rev. Charles Mead was one of the four young men admitted to Missionary Society in 1814. As a student of Theology.

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71 Gopala Krishnan,M.,*op.cit.*, p.843.
Rev. Charles Mead worked to preach in Markets and Streets and took part in Sunday school works. He was ordained on the 6th March 1816 at Chichester Chapel.

From childhood he had much interest in carpentry, type-cutting, composing, printing, paper making, weaving, sewing etc., into all of which he initiated the natives. 73

Rev. Charles Mead developed the infant mission left by the Rev. W.T. Ringletaube and shaped it into an extensive organisation. 74 He guided the destinies of the South Travancore church at the most critical period of its history. He was the founder of Nagercoil and Neyyoor churches, was also the principal agent in the formation of nearly all the stations and finally regarded as the father of the South Travancore Protestant Christian Missions. 75

One day when he was bathing he was taken down by the stream. His friends seeing him struggling against the stream, raised a cry on the bank which brought many who picked him out of the water and saved him. Rev. Charles Mead felt that providence saved his life because he

73 Ibid.
74 Gladstone, J.W.,(ed) op.cit., p.203.
75 Gopala Krishnan,M., op.cit., p.843.
foresaw that he would be of much use to the poor deprived people of Travancore.  

Earlier, Rev. Charles Mead, when preparing to set out for India married Miss. Ann Hunt, the daughter of his uncle Rev. John Hant. After a few days Rev. Charles Mead with his wife embarked on board, the ship "Earl of Moira" on 20th April 1816. They landed in Madras on 28th August 1816. He was delayed at Madras of Mrs. Meads illness and so lived at Vepery.  

Mrs. Mead gave birth to their first child the unfortunate boy Rev. John Hunt. while her health was declining, Rev. Charles Mead prepared for his future Missionary work during his stay by studying Tamil. After eleven days they arrived at Penang where the condition of Mrs. Mead further worsened and she died on 26th December 1817, which was a severe blow to Rev. Charles Mead. His duties demanded him to proceed immediately to Travancore, but the state of his health necessitated a diversion in his programme. To regain health he returned to Malacca for a short time from there he went to Colachel in December, 1817.  

77 Kumaradhas, M., op.cit., p.62.  
78 Gopala Krishnan, M., op.cit., p.843.
Vedamanickam and a few Christians along with Rev. R.Thadlefte welcomed him at Colachel and escorted him to Mylaudy where he resided in the cottage Bungalow of the latter for a short time and reported to the British Resident Col. John Munro.  

Rev. Charles Mead later transferred his headquarter from Mylaudy to Nagercoil mainly because he was appointed as a Judge of the Nagercoil court a very novel experiment by the Government. 

In April 1818 Rev. Charles Mead purchased the adjoining plots of the Bungalow with a view to construct buildings for orphanages, boarding schools, printing press etc.

Rev. Charles Mead conceived the noble idea of constructing a large central church in Nagercoil for about 3000 people to sit and worship. He collected materials and money for the same. With the government approval, the prison labourers were engaged for digging the foundations and collecting the necessary stones for the premises.

On the New Year day in 1819, Rev. Knill laid the foundation stone of the Nagercoil church and today it in one of the largest churches in

80 Ibid.
Home Church (Kalcovil), Nagercoil.
India.\textsuperscript{82} As soon as the plans and estimates were formed, Rev. Charles Mead busily collected the necessary materials and employed all the prisoners in the Court Jail under him. With the permission of the Sirkar, the foundation was laid and with the help of the prison labours immense quantities of granite stones were removed from the banks of the Sepoy’s Tank and other places to where stone masons and mechanics were employed to cut and fit them. The Nagercoil church measures hundred and forty feet by seventy feet its side walls alone are nineteen feet high and the inner walls are about double that height. It contains seven arches standing on fourteen pairs of massive pillars on each side supporting an elaborately finished teak roof and network of beams. The Nagercoil church is often called by the people the ‘Kalcovil’ or the “Stone Church”, from the high solid granite stone basement on which it is built.\textsuperscript{83}

It is a striking evidence of the strange and mysterious ways of God that in the building of this great Christian church, so many Hindu Princes should have cheerfully contributed. His Highness the Maharaja of Tanjore from whose dominions Protestantism spread into South

\textsuperscript{82} Agur, C.M., \textit{op.cit.}, p.707.
\textsuperscript{83} \textit{Ibid.}, p.704.
Travancore, contributed rupees five hundred towards building this church. Her Highness the Rani of Travancore gave the land, timber and stones free and His Highness the Raja of Cochin gifted over rupees thousand towards this noble cause. Some years after, while His Highness the Maharaja of Travancore was travelling in the south, he became much interested in the progress of the mission work, that he gave rupees two thousand towards the building of this church. Besides these, the British Resident and others also gave handsome sums. Rev. Charles Mault and others who succeeded Rev. Charles Mead in the Nagercoil station rendered invaluable service towards its completion.  

In January, 1819 Rev. Charles Mead married, Johnnal Hurst daughter of Rev. Christopher Henry Hurst of Tanjore. This union lasted for thirty years and had been blessed with sixteen children. But most of them died young. Mrs. Johanna! Hurst had the honour of labouring with Rev. Charles Mead as the First Lady Missionary of South Travancore.  

In October, 1819, he opened a Seminary and a Boarding School at Nagercoil. As a result of Rev. Charles Mead's hard work, the existing

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seven churches built by Rev. W.T. Ringletaube were increased to fifteen by the end of 1819. 86

The Directors of LMS did not relish the idea of their Missionary holding a civil appointment under Government, though they were convinced that he did so without prejudice to their interests. The Directors gave the option to Rev. Charles Mead, either to continue to his civil appointment or act as their Missionary and that he would never severe from that sacred purpose, whatever might be the prospect or worldly advancement, and accordingly resigned the Judgeship of the Nagercoil Court. 87

In the beginning of 1820, Mrs. Mead was twice attacked by jungle fever and was taken to Tanjore for a change. It was during this visit that Rev. Charles Mead obtained a printing press from Tranquebar Mission with a view to start printing work in Nagercoil the first of its kind in South Travancore. 88

The Congregation west of Nagercoil including those of Kothanvilai, Devicodematnam, Mathicode, Peyankuzhy, Etavilai, Eraniel, Ettambolly,

87 Ibid.
88 Ibid., p.72.
Anandanadan Kudiyiruppu, Thittuvilai, Kaliancaud and together with Trivandrum was supervised by Rev. Charles Mead. 89

In the meantime he selected some neglected jungle areas near the Sudra village of Neyyoor as the centre for his Missionary operations. Through the kindness of one Raman Thampi, a native land-lord and through the favour of the Resident, Rev. Charles Mead secured the lands for the Mission. Raman Thampi also helped Rev. Charles Mead by supervising Mission buildings in progress at Neyyoor and later the Missionary, also built a beautiful church, called the Dartmouth Chapel in 1830, which also had schools, boarding houses, printing offices and other buildings.90

Persecution soon began to rage in the churches which were chiefly under Rev. Charles Mead's jurisdiction in the Western Division. Though these were carried on for several months by private individuals on the Sudras, Rev. Charles Mead knew very well that those promoted them and acted behind the scene were the native officials. To consummate their wicked deeds, the natives plotted to assassinate Rev. Charles Mead

on the night of 3rd January 1829. Prompt action by Mead brought British Detachment from Fort Udayagiri to Mandaikad immediately and saved his life. 91

After the persecutions subsided and the scattered Christian families had returned to their home, the work of the Mission was revived with renewed energy and Rev. Charles Mead now settled to work at Neyyoor.

After an uninterrupted and successful labour of twenty years he paid a short visit to England in December 1836 and came back in March, 1838 with a small band of new Missionaries.92

In 1847, Rev. Charles Mead, approached the Government with a proposal of memorial for the emancipation of the slaves in South Travancore and Cochin. He also successfully introduced a scheme for the education of "Slave Children". 93 While Rev. Charles Mead was thus actively labouring with humility, zeal and faithfulness to his Divine Master.

Mrs. Mead was attacked by liver complaint and she died in Neyyoor on the 6th February 1848 at the age of forty five.94

92 Ibid.
Despite the caress and sorrows Rev. Charles Mead threw himself into his work with more energy and his declining health and other consideration induced him to settle in India. In February 1852, the Rev. Leitch was appointed to succeed him, arrived at Neyyoor and consequently Rev. Charles Mead left the Mission and retired.\footnote{95}{Ibid.}

In September 1852, Rev. Charles Mead married a native Christian lady Miss. Lowis Biddulph the daughter of Mr. Devavaram Biddulph, the learned poet and the much honoured chief native assistant in the Mission. He had four children by her who lived with him and comforted him in his old age till his death.\footnote{96}{Ibid.}

In July 1854, he left Neyyoor, a place endeared to him by many considerations. His services were then engaged by the Travancore Government. From 1855, Rev. Charles Mead settled at Trivandrum and worked as the first Superintendent of the Government District Schools and Vernacular Schools.\footnote{97}{Ponniah, ‘The Background Story’, \textit{Platinum Jubilee Souvenir, Mateer Memorial Church}, Trivandrum, 1981, p.10.} He was also made the Superintendent of the Government press, in the midst of all his peculiar duties, he did not forget the Mission and the Christians, but seized all favourable opportunities to help them forward.\footnote{98}{\textit{Triple Jubilee Souvenir, C.S.I. Home Church-1819-1969}, Nagercoil 1969, p.73.}
In 1855, he heard that his son James aged 25, suddenly died at Bristol, England. and subsequently in 1859 his first born son John Hunt died in Madras. From this time onwards Rev. Charles Mead's heart sank as he had nothing else to cheer him in this world. For a few months he suffered from rheumatic pains and general disability, until he was finally called to his Eternal Rest on Sunday the 19th January, 1873 at 5 p.m. when he was eighty two. His body was interred in the Christ Church Cemetery, Trivandrum.  

Rev. Charles Mault

Rev. Charles Mault was born in England in the year 1791 and later in 1818 he sailed along with his wife from Liverpool to India and arrived at Nagercoil in December 1819 as the fourth Missionary of Travancore, to be the collegues of Rev. Charles Mead. Rev. Charles Mault was ordained at Nagercoil on 19th December 1819 and thus began an association in service which, with unbroken harmony, lasted for over thirty years. Rev. Charles Mault's simple, pious and patient service together with Rev. Charles Mead's energy and enterprise resulted in the consolidation of the various branches of work.

99 Ibid. p.73.
100 Sherring Smith, op.cit., p.327.
In 1821, both Rev. Charles Mead and Rev. Charles Mault residing at Nagercoil agreed to divide the land between them, and formed the Eastern and Western Divisions. Rev. Charles Mault occupied the Southern Bungalow, which he himself erected. From 1825 to 1827 Rev. Charles Mault was assisted by Mr. Camberland of Tanjore and in 1846, the extensive district of Nagercoil was divided between Rev. James Russel and Rev. Charles Mault.  

Rev. Charles Mault's services since 1819, had been very fruitful, but it did not catch the public eye when compared to the services rendered by Rev. Charles Mead. He retired from service in 1854 due to the unkind treatment meted out by others and returned to England on 24th January 1858. He died on 17th October 1858 at the age sixty eight in England. Even after leaving India, Mrs. Mault laboured and entreated God to remember the women of Travancore and died in 1870.  

**Rev. William Miller**

In 1828, Rev. William Miller came to assist Rev. Charles Mead at the church of West Neyyoor in Kanyakumari region, later he was sent to Kollam to look after the Parish ministry.  However, in 1831 he had

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101 Ibid.  
103 Hecter, S.S., op.cit., p.35.
to go back to Neyyoor, but he changed his mind and went to Tanjore where he married the sister of Madam Mead. Then, he came to Nagercoil to look after the church, but soon he fell ill and was rushed to cape of Good Hope for recovery. In 1836, he returned to Nagercoil in good health. But on his journey back to Nagercoil, Mrs. Miller fell ill and died at Kollam. In spite of the heavy personal loss, Miller rendered his Missionary service as an assistant to Rev. Charles Mault at Nagercoil. Unfortunately, he too fell ill and died on 21st April 1838 at the age of thirty three. He rested at peace in the cemetery of Nagercoil. His demise was an irreparable loss to the Missionaries of Nagercoil. ¹⁰⁴

Rev. Charles Miller

In the year 1834, the LMS sent Rev. Charles Miller to Trivandrum to assist Rev. Charles Mead who was of great help to the latter. In the mean time, on account of the requisition of the king of Travancore, Rev. J. Robert, working at the Seminary of Nagercoil, went to Trivandrum to start an English Medium School. Ever since he left for Trivandrum, the Seminary of Nagercoil was shifted to Neyyoor, where it was efficiently run by Rev. Charles Miller. ¹⁰⁵ Whenever atrocities were unleashed on

¹⁰⁵ Hectar, S.S., op.cit. p.35.
Christians, he look utmost care to subdue them. Unfortunately in 1837, his wife fell ill and died at Trivandrum. Ever since her death, he shifted the Seminary to Nagercoil and looked after it sincerely. However, in 1841, Charles Miller fell ill and the Seminary responsibility fell upon Rev. Charles Russel. In the mean time, the former went to Bombay to take medical treatment. As he found no improvement in health, he came back to Madras and stayed at Poonthamalli for some days. Despite adequate medical care, he breathed his last on 9th September 1842. 1°6

Rev. John Dennis

In 1856, Rev. John Dennis came to Nagercoil as a Missionary in the place of Rev. Charles Mault. He was a factful Missionary and looked after both the printing press and Seminary activities with great enthusiasm. When Rev. White House left for England, Rev. John Dennis attended to the Parish ministry as well. In 1864, his wife fell ill and hence he took her to England for treatment. Later, he returned to Nagercoil to accomplish his Missionary services all alone. Unfortunately, in 1864, he fell ill and on 15th November of the same year he passed away and his body was buried at the cemetery of Nagercoil. 107

107 Ibid., p.75.
Rev. James Russel

The Eastern portion of the Nagercoil District under the charge of Rev. James Russel with twenty churches was constituted into a separate Mission called Variyoor Mission.

These churches were Mylaudy, Atchankulam, Malayanvilai, Santhiady, Agasteeswaram, Kundal, Oltialvilai, Kanankulam, Anchugramam, Alagappapuram, Pichai Kudiuiruppu, Kanagappapuram, Pannai, Vadakankulam, Yacobpuram, Avarakulam, Panakudi, Radhapuram, Aramboly and Ettambolly.\(^{108}\)

In 1840, Rev. James Russel formed a new station at Pichaikudiyiruppu close to the Tirunelveli frontier and established a Christian Village which he called Jamestown after his own name.\(^{109}\)

He trained a number of Indian church workers, some of whom like Neelakandan Devadasan and C. Masilamani, later became able leaders in the church in South Travancore.\(^{110}\) Rev. James Russel left India with his children and having visited Sydney proceeded to England where he arrived in 1861, soon after he dissolved his connection with


the society. Subsequently he died on May 2, 1890 at Abery Sturth, at the age of eighty four. 111

**Rev. John Abbs**

Rev. John Abbs was residing in Neyyoor with Rev. Charles Mead and together they guided the South Travancore church during its most critical period.

Rev. John Abbs in one of his report says, "The Native Government is decidedly heathen and so much opposed to the spread of Christianity while European rank and power behold our efforts with indifference and distrust". 112

In 1845, he quitted Neyyoor and settled in Parasala made it a centre for his Missionary work. He purchased an elevated land with enchanting natural beauty, and built thereon the Missionary's Bungalow, Church and Boarding School. Consequently the people who were frightened of devils in that place got rid of their unreasonable, fear and superstitious beliefs. 113 Within ten years of the opening of the head station at Parasala, seventy seven churches were formed, which were organised into six groups. A few schools were also started and it


is interesting to note, that many early efforts were made to encourage the natives of South Travancore to educate their girls. 114

Mrs. and Mr. John Abbs worked at Parasala for twenty two years and returned to England in 1859.

Rev. John Owen White House

Rev. John Owen White House was one of the most significant Missionaries, who worked at South Travancore. He was born in April 1815 at Doorking near London. His parents were the members of the Congregational church. Ever since his birth, Rev. J.O. White House has been pious, delight and morally upright. He was an outstanding scholar. While he was studying in the ecclesiastical Seminary, he decided to become a Missionary abroad. He expressed his wish to the Missionary Association of London. They acknowledged his wish duly and sent him to Nagercoil as the Headmaster of the Seminary. In November 1842, he arrived at Nagercoil and in the following year, Rev. J.O. White House became the Headmaster of the Seminary and in that capacity he rendered immense service for fourteen long years. In the mean time, he also supervised the village schools and enhanced


In 1855, when Rev. Charles Mault went to England, Rev. J.O. White House looked after both the printing press and the Parish Ministry at Nagercoil. During his tenure, the Seminary at Travancore flourished and students from various parts of the country including a few Hindus came to the Seminary for education. 116

The students studied Tamil, English and Greek as well and those Christian students who were well disciplined and pious, later became Pastors in churches. As a headmaster, Rev. J.O. White House was very strict and many students left the Seminary due to his utmost strictness. Initially he taught his students at the tamarind roof school of Nagercoil, which caused much inconvenience to the students in many respects and hence he constructed a building and shifted the seminary there.

In 1857, on account of the ill health of Mrs. White House, he resigned his post and went to England with his family. In 1861, he retired from his Missionary services and on 2nd March 1907, he breathed his last at Barnet near London.117

116 Ibid.
117 Ibid.
Rev. James Duthie

Rev. James Duthie was born in Scotland in 1833. He was ordained as a pastor in January 1856 and came to India as a Missionary. First he landed in Madras and worked as a Teacher in an English School. In 1859, he succeeded Rev. J.O. White House as the Head of the Seminary at Nagercoil. In 1863 he also took charge of the Home Church there.¹¹⁸

In December 1882, members of the L.M.S., Albert Spicer and Rev. Wardlaw Thompson came to South Travancore on deputation. When they were invited to Nagercoil, Rev. James Duthie along with other Christians gave them hearty welcome.

From 1860 to 1908, Rev. James Duthie worked as the Head of the Nagercoil Seminary Secretary of the Travancore District Committee, Home Church Refree, Pastor at Thittuvilai and Nagercoil. From January 1863, Rev. Lowe and Rev. James Duthie issued a monthly news magazine known as “Missionary Clearings”, for the use of Christian workers in South Travancore, which was read in the monthly Missionary meetings in churches. He selected six youngsters and

specially trained them in the Missionary work. He also supervised the Printing Press for many years and in the mean time, worked as an editor of Tamil magazines namely, 'Thesopakari', 'Mathar Bothini', 'Vethiar Villakkam', 'Dharma Palli Bothagam'. In 1904, he was selected as the President of the Church of South India. In order to commemorate his fifty year of outstanding service at Nagercoil, the people celebrated the golden Jubilee in 1907 and in the same year, the Scottland Aberdeen University awarded him the Honorary Doctorate in recognition of his Missionary work.\footnote{Triple Jubilee Souvenir, CSI Home Church-1819-1969, Nagercoil, 1969, p.78.}

Again in 1907, the Travancore London Mission Society's Golden Jubilee year was also celebrated. The members of the LMS R.Wadlaugh Thompson, W.Bolton, A.W.Whitelay and other friends came to Nagercoil and participated in this celebrations. To commemorate the occasion all the churches in South Travancore conducted special services.\footnote{Hector, S.S., op.cit.,p.56.}

In 1908, Rev. James Duthie fell ill and went to Kodaikanal for treatment, but later on 6th July the same year, he passed away. His body was buried at the Cemetery of Nagercoil and this was a great loss to the Protestant Christianity in South Travancore.\footnote{Triple Jubilee Souvenir, CSI Home Church-1819-1969, Nagercoil, 1969, p.78.}
Rev. Maharasan Vedamanickam

Rev. Maharasan Vedamanickam was born of parents belonging to the so called right hand Valluvar castes of Mylaudy, who were a family of reputed astrologers. After his father’s early demise, Maharasan had his education at Eraviputhoor a Sudra village, east of Mylaudy and later turned out to be a good Tamil Vidwan (Scholar). He also knew Astronomy, Metaphysics, Medicine, Astrology etc. 122

Maharasan had high respect for his mother Pathini and often went with her to worship the family deity, Elanka Manian at Valliyoor. He observed fasts and abstained from spirit, liquor, eating same meat etc. Maharasan married a good natured woman and led a peaceful family life. He hated dining with persons other than those who adore Elankamanian. His exemplary life made his neighbours respect him. On reading “Skandavarakam” he arrived at the conclusion that Lord Subramania is the true God to be adored by all castes. Maharasan went to Marungoor Subramania Koil (temple of Subramania) annually and built a ‘sathram’ (inn), dug a well and planted palm and other trees

122 Joseph.V., Maharasan Vedamanickam (Tamil), Mylaudy, 1984, p.2.
with a flowering garden. A Pandaram was placed in charge of this who
gave alms to the poor and garlanded the idol with the flowers from the
garden.  

In spite of Maharasan's staunch belief and religious observances,
he had no peace of mind. In 1799, Maharasan and Sivagurunathan, after
seeing the sight of Chidambaram temple, were overjoyed hoping to
attain peace of mind, but on reaching the place Maharasan was
disappointed.  

Here he saw the sacred courts full of wickedness, unpiety,
dancing and all abominations, irreligion, immorality etc. He felt sorry and
was disgusted. His heart revolted and his spirit sunk within him. With
anguished mind and exhausted by long journey, Maharasan leaned
himself against one of the stone pillars and fell asleep. In this state, he
had a vision in which a venerable man attired in bright white robes and
holding a stick in his hand appraised and seemed to address him: "Know
you not yet that all that came here meet punishment." You have
unawaresly taken a dangerous step in coming to this place. Though
we chide you thus, yet we are willing to forgive, for if you will only correct

123 185th Anniversary Souvenir, Knill memorial CSI Church-1812-1992, Agasteeswaram,
1997, p.64.
yourself. Without therefore a moment's delay, retrace your steps. We shall guide your way". So saying the man in white robes touched Maharasan with the rod in hand and seemed to disappear. This strange vision amidst dark surroundings had such an influence on his mind that he looked upon it as intended to indicate the Will of the Divine. Being, as to the course he should follow. 126

Leaving the idols and Brahmins he made haste exit from the temple, found himself going southward and landed at Tanjore where his cousin sister and brother-in-law lived. Tanjore was then the only city in South India where Protestant Missionaries were labouring and Rev. John Caspar Kohlhoff presided over the Mission. 127

On the following sunday his sister and her husband went to the Church and wished Maharasan also to see this mode of worship, as he stood near the outer door leaning on a Pillar. The ways of providence are mysterious and His purposes are effected in a strange manner. It so happened that Rev. J.C. Kohlhoff was preaching and all were listening to him, Maharasan out of curiosity stepped inside quietly and seated himself among the worshippers. The preacher marked him of his peculiar dress, earnestly appealed and proclaimed the way of

Salvation and called on "Come to Jesus Come to Jesus". This appealed to Maharasan and he felt his heart burn within him, as he listened with great attention, the glad tidings of great joy proclaimed by the servant of God. His heart had been won and had already decided for Christ. The blessed hour of Salvation was to him, as the sudden and unexpected appearance of a star, to one who had long wandered in thick darkness, without a ray of light.  

The Missionary gave him a tract "Meignanam" (True Wisdom) and gave him a time limit of eight days to inform him about his idea of the way of Salvation. He returned the sixth day and explained his conviction and expressed his willingness to profess Christ. So great was Maharasan's earnestness that Rev. J.C. Kohlhoff did not hesitate to admit him to the Christian community and he was baptised at Tanjore in 1799 as "Vedamanickam" and his brother Sivagurunathan as "Masilamani". The truth inculcated was carefully weighed by Vedamanickam for the improvement of his mind and soul.  

After some days' stay at Tanjore, Vedamanickam desired to go to Tranquebar Mission and see Dr. John to study about the Mission and its work.

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128 Ibid.
129 Ibid., p.12.
Rev. J.C. Kohlhoff presented Vedamanickam with a copy of the Scripture and few other books and permitted him to go, committing him to God's care.

In the meantime Maharasan relatives, not finding him anywhere, consulted the sorcerer of the village and prepared for the obsequies ceremonies for him. To the surprise of one and all, one night, while Sivagurunathan's mother was lamenting and wailing over the supposed death of her son, she heard a voice outside resembling her son's voice and turning out, saw him and embraced him with tears of joy. Great was the astonishment and joy when the news spread that Vedamanickam and his nephew have returned. When they all demanded for the "Prasadam" (sacred rice) and "Vibhooty" (holy ashes), Vedamanickam took a copy of the New Testament and exclaimed. "This is the true Prasadam, this is the true Vibhooty; this is the heavenly meal sent to us by the king of kings, this is the Gift of the God of Gods". 130 He briefly narrated the events of his journey and the ways of providence in showing the Truth, some were pleased and others were displeased.

From the next day Vedamanickam began preaching the Gospel to his own house-hold members especially Perumal, the head man of the family, whose brothers and sisters were the first to believe in Jesus Christ. To them he taught "Gnana Upadesa Kurippidam" the church Catechism and prayed with them every morning and evening and then he distributed the tracts from Tranquebar.

About thirty persons professed Christ and came under Vedamanickam's instructions. Vedamanickam adopted the mode of worship, as in the book of common prayer, used by the Christians of Tanjore. Women were taught to cover their head when they come out for service and were seated separately. 

Persecution now rose against him and it was so high that Vedamanickam even thought of leaving the place with his family to Tanjore, set his sorrows and difficulties before God and prayed earnestly for Divine guidance.

In February 1805, just after harvest of the paddy crops of his field, he went on his journey to Tanjore after selling a few cows which he sent for grazing at Koodankulam. He set the little flock of one hundred and fifty persons to the immediate care of Gnanamuthu the head man of the family. 

132 Hector., S.S., op.cit., p.16.
On reaching Tanjore he was welcomed by Rev. J.C. Kohlhoff who agreed to send Mr. Yesuadian a Catechist with him. The former also gave letters of introduction to Rev. W.T. Ringletaube who was engaged in studying Tamil at Tranquebar. Vedamanickam was filled with joy and praised God who had so specially vouchsafed an answer to his prayer.

Rev. W.T. Ringletaube who had heard of Vedamanickam from Tanjore Mission now heard from him personally. He exhorted him to make his people continue steadfast in their new faith and to gather as many souls as he could for Christ, Rev. W.T. Ringletaube promised to go over to South Travancore as soon as he had acquired some knowledge of Tamil. Vedamanickam now returned home via Tanjore full of hopes and better pleased than ever.¹³³

Subsequently in April 1805, Rev. W.T. Ringletaube reached South Travancore and Vedamanickam welcomed him warmly and took him home. Meanwhile in 1809, Diwan Velu Thampi's revolt upset the Mylaudy Christians' peaceful life and hence Vedamanickam and his followers escaped to the Marunthuvamalai (medicinal hill) until the white tents of British troops were seen near Aramboly, where they took refuge.

In 1810, Col. Munro was appointed as the Resident in place of Col. Macaulay and consequently on the demise of Avittam Thirunal Maharaja, Rani Gouri Bai ascended the throne in 1810, the next seven years were years of peace and the Missionary work went on smoothly.\textsuperscript{134}

In February of the same year Rev. W.T. Ringletaube ordained Vedamanickam and henceforth he was known as Rev. Vedamanickam. He faced the usual troubles of a Missionary and he dealt with them courageously in which, he was ably assisted by his nephew Masilamony, his eldest son Devasahayam, son-in-law Packianathan, wife Sathiaye, his daughter Packiyaye, his nephew Yesuadial, daughter Annammal, head of the family (perumal) Gnanamuthu and his wife Nallayee.

In March 1819, when Dr. Middleton, the first Bishop of Calicut, passed through South Travancore, he was welcomed by Rev. Vedamanickam with his Catechists, School masters and leading Christians near Aramboly Pass.

Rev. Vedamanickam’s Christian Wisdom, fervent zeal, very mild and attracting conversation and humility made some of his enemies to change their wicked schemes.\textsuperscript{135}

\textsuperscript{134} Hector, S.S., \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 21-22.

\textsuperscript{135} \textit{185th Anniversary Souvenir, Knill Memorial Church-1912-1992}, Agasteeswaram, 1997, p.49.
He stopped reading Tamil books like Kuttrala Kuravanji, Gnanakummi, Thirupugazh, Mukkudarpallu and instead introduced Sasthra Kummi, Jeba malai, Bethlehem Kuravangi, Gnama Mathiyullam etc.

When Rev. Charles Mead arrived at Colachel in December 1817, Rev. Vedamanickam and his little flock welcomed him and handed over charge of the Mission to him in December 1817.\textsuperscript{136}

On account of his oldage and in consideration of the special services he had rendered to the Mission, Rev. Charles Mead allowed him to continue in his own native village of Mylaudy, which was still one of the oldest and largest congregation of the Mission and he assiduously laboured there for nine years.\textsuperscript{137}

Rev. Vedamanickam travelled from place to place, carrying the Gospel Message and his itinerancy was full of success and cases of conversion multiplied in neighbouring villages.\textsuperscript{138} More than all others, the Shanars listened to him and more readily accepted the truths which he preached with such earnestness. The foremost among those, he was privileged to convert were, the people of Thamaraikulam - the

\textsuperscript{136} Ib id., p.50.
\textsuperscript{137} Ib id.
\textsuperscript{138} Agur., C.M., \textit{op.cit}, p.553.
chief among them were Vedamanickam Moopan of Santhivillay, father of Davasagayam, Pakiamutthu Moopan, Abraham Moopan, father of Arumanayagam Catechist, along with all their families and these were the first deacons of the Thamaraikulam church.\footnote{Ibid., p.554.}

A few men in Puthalam and Ettambolly also embraced Christianity and as per Rev. Vedamanickam's preaching Masilamani was appointed the first Catechist of Thamaraikulam and Ettambolly where he converted numerous families and laboured with much success. Rev. Vedamanickam's eldest son Devasagayam was the first Catechist of Puthalam.\footnote{Ibid.}

When Rev. Vedamanickam died in 1827, the whole village plunged into a pall of gloom. The body of the diseased became the object of anxious attitude to his relatives, and the next day he was buried in the north west corner of his own garden called, Kattchivillai about quarter of a mile east of Mylaudy. The Christians lost an energetic pastor, a true patriot, a Christian helper and a loving father.\footnote{\textit{185th Anniversary Souvenir, Knill Memorial Church - 1812-1992}, Agasteeswaram, 1997, p.52.}

Thus passed away Rev. Vedamanickam, the pioneer of Protestantism in South Travancore. He served independently as a
Catechist from 1809-1827, in connection with the ministry faithfully for eighteen long years. 142

Rev.V.Arumanayagam

Rev. V.Arumanayagam was the only son born to Christian Parents in August 1831, at Therivilai.

He was baptised by Rev.Charles Mault at Thamaraikulam church when he was seven years old. After studying in the village schools at Punniady and Thamaraikulam, he was admitted to the Nagercoil English Seminary at the age of twelve by Rev. Charles Mault, later he was appointed a teacher of the Thamaraikulam school. 143

In 1857, he was appointed a Catechist of Thittuvilai church to inspect schools and in 1859 while he was a teacher in Weiravilai School, he taught Kural, Nanool, Japamalai and Catechism to young men, on whom he infused great influence.

Later he was transferred to Thamaraikulam in 1860 and was chosen for a special Theological course in the Nagercoil Seminary, under Rev.J.Duthie and Rev.C.Yesudian. He then accompanied Devadasan on a preaching tour to Palayamkottai and later died in 1888. 144

142 Ibid., p.53.
143 John A.Jacob., op.cit., p.149.
144 Ibid., p.150.
Rev. N. Devadasan

Rev. N. Devadasan was born in 1815, to a Brahmin couple, but got converted to Christianity. He was the most devoted, Godly and consistent minister of the Gospel, with purity of character and spirituality on mind. 145

In 1866, he was ordained as Pastor of the Nagercoil church which had seven hundred and thirty nine Christians of whom, one hundred and fifty two were communicants and deacons who were supporting him. The church organization was complete with Bible classes, weekly prayer meetings and mothers' meetings.

He was so dedicated to Christ that a small piece of cloth three inches wide with the words, "Believe Jesus", "Speak the Truth" always hung round his shoulders. He died in the year 1874. 146

Rev. C. Yesudian

Rev. C. Yesudian was born to Christian parents at Palliady in 1815 and for nineteenth years, he served the material and spiritual needs of the church committed to his care. By his efforts many slaves were liberated, churches were built in all the Christian villages and one such

145 Ibid., p.146.
146 Ibid., p.147.
was Thittuvillai Church at a cost of rupees seven thousand one hundred and one. After nineteen years of devoted service in the district, Rev. C. Yesudian's health gave way and he died in his 70th year in July 1885, and was buried in the Nagercoil cemetery. 147

**Rev. C. Masilamani**

Rev. C. Masilamani was born at Mylaudy in October 1833 and was the grandson of the first protestant convert Rev. Vedamanickam. 148 He was baptised by the Rev. Charles Mault on the 25th May 1851. He was educated at the Nagercoil Seminary from 1844-1852 under the Rev. J.O. White House. He preached his first sermon at Punakulam in February 1852 and took charge of Uyaravilai, Mylaudy churches from 1852-1857, continued as a Itinerant Evangelist between 1857-1860 and became Inspector of schools, during the years 1864-1866. He married Miss. Esther Fanny Paramanandam on the 29th March 1855. He was one of the first four Pastors ordained by the Rev. Mullens on the 13th February 1866 and served as the Pastor of Dennispuram from 1866 to 1886. For the amelioration of the condition of the poor people under him, he devised various means and worked successfully. 149

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147 Ibid., p.145.
149 C.M.Agur., *op.cit.*, p.1112.
In 1870 he lost his wife and in 1872 he married again Miss. Jacobe Fanny Paramanandam, sister of his diseased wife.

Owing to misunderstandings with the Mission, in June 1886, he severed his connections with the Travancore Mission and settled at Madras as the agent of the Scriptural Publication Society, U.S.A. After twelve years of most active life in Madras, he paid a visit to South Travancore and on the 24th of July, he preached in the LMS church at Trivandrum, on the second coming of Our Lord to a large congregation.

Rev. Masilamani was a voluminous writer of prose and poetry. He wrote three hundred and sixteen Tamil tracts on various subjects, the total number of copies being 1,737,000. Most of them are on Christian Theology, general subjects, some of which are controversial in nature exposing Hinduism, Brahminism, Caste and Romanism. His 'Thoughts on Calvary' published at Nagercoil in 1868 has undergone several editions. His works such as Devarapetty or Casket of Praise, Christ all in all, Nectar of life, Christ our Refuge, are favourites with the Tamil Christians; they are sung daily by Christians in their family worship.  

From July 1882 onwards he edited a Monthly Journal called "The Tamil Bible Banner" and in January 1884 he commenced 'The Tamil Quarterly Journal of prophecy and Mission Advocate. "Jesus is coming" is another book published by Rev. Masilamani in 1889, containing two hundred pages, a free translation from the original English popular book written by Mr. W.E. Black Stone. He finally reached the feet of God in 1895. 151

Rev. A. Arumanayagam

Born in 1834 and ordained as Assistant Missionary, he was sent by Rev. Baylis to take charge of the work at Attoor and the northern part of the Neyyor District. Rev. A. Arumanayagam's remarkable work was the emancipation of the slave castes and receiving them into the Christian fold. After forty four years of active service, this devoted servant of God was laid to rest on the 16th of May 1895, in his 61st year. 152

Rev. J. Joshue

Rev. J. Joshue was born in Anandanadan kudiyiruppu on the 7th June 1833. His father Joseph and Mother Mary Ammal dedicated the child to Christian Ministry Rev. J. O. White House, the then acting

151 Ibid., p.1117.
152 John A. Jacob., op.cit., p.151.
District Missionary admitted him in the Nagercoil Seminary, after he distinguished himself in the Tamil language and literature as well as in English. His first appointment was that of a writer under Ebenezer of Santhapuram, where he helped the Missionary to interpret his addresses and translate his writings and to expose the Bible for the use of Mission agents and the public. He breathed his last in the year 1900. ¹⁵³

**Salvation Army**

The Salvation Army is an offshoot of Protestantism. Frederick St. George De Lautour Tucker was the founder of the Salvation Army in India.

The Salvation Army which started in Bombay in 1882 began to spread towards different regions of the sub-continent. Through the endeavours of this Missionary, various Christian Churches of South India, could reach the under privileged sections like the Vellalar and Nadars apart from the unprivileged aboriginals. This situation made the pioneers to start the Army's work at Madras in 1882. ¹⁵⁴

The work was started in Madras by Tucker, Norman and Thomson and continued by captain Henry Bullard, who was the first Army officer

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to assume the responsibility of the Army's work in the Presidency. The untiring efforts of Henry Bullard and his comrades could see the formation of the Army's spiritual centres in Tirunelveli and Palayamkottai in the Tamil Country.\textsuperscript{155}

It had expanded through the South-Eastern Territory covering entire Tamil Nadu excluding the Madras city. It comprised of 1,143 outposts, 62 Societies, 211 Corps. who were grouped in Coimbatore, Nilgris, Erode, Tuticorin, Madurai, Trichy, Cape-North, Cape-South, Kulasekaram, Marthandam, Palayamkottai, Raphapuram, Tenkasi, Thuckalai and Valliyoor divisions.\textsuperscript{156} Major William Johnston was the founder of the Salvation Army in South Travancore.

The Salvation Army leaders worked among the Nadar coolies in their villages near Cape Comorin. Their attempt to bring the Nadar coolies in the way of Salvation was not a great success. Yet some of them accepted the new faith and became so strong in it.\textsuperscript{157}

In 1887, Nagercoil was only an occasional visiting station of the Salvation Army, but later in 1890, some of the local Christians sent an

\textsuperscript{155} Ibid., p.173.  
\textsuperscript{156} Ibid., p.179.  
\textsuperscript{157} Ibid., p.175.
invitation to the territorial commander of the Salvation Army at Madras, requesting him to start evangelistic work in the villages in and around Nagercoil and hence a branch was started in the Nagercoil in 1892. Because of the unparalleled work of the Army, the backward communities, the downtrodden derived great benefits in education and medical relief.  

Thus the Protestant Missionaries undertook their work, in a spirit of dedicated service to God. They first began to preach the Gospel orally and sometimes read out portions of the scriptures and distributed tracts. "Soap, Soup and Soul" were the three cardinal principles of the Missionaries. Soap for health, Soup for existence and Soul for spiritual enhancement.

The Protestant Missionaries in general, were the lovers of the sick and rendered yeomen service to the suffering humanity and thereby attracted their attention. Their contribution to society in highly laudable remarkable.

\[158\] Travancore Directory 1946, Trivandrum, 1945, p.131.