CHAPTER II

SOCIAL CHANGES AMONG THE SOCIALLY PRIVILEGED COMMUNITIES

Brahmins

Social predominance of the Brahmins community came for criticism and challenge from those whom they subjugated. The factors which contributed for their predominance were questioned one after the other. It was the land holding system that contributed a lot for their domination.

Land holding system and legislation

In the Malabar Coast feudalism appeared with all vices. A lion's share of the land remained under the control of the Brahmins. There feudalism enhanced caste influence and caste influence enhanced feudalism. This invariably paved the way for social disparity. Socially and economically tenants became completely dependant on the feudal lords. Such domination was widely criticised as the overlords resorted to over charging, eviction and over leasing. Tenants were evicted even for their failure to satisfy lust without proper compensation for improvement. This condition was sufficient to create resentment. But it appears that official sources were oblivious of the situation.

The Report of the Census of Travancore of 1875 by W.Nagar Aiya, a Tamil Brahmin, was an exhilaration of the Brahmin land lords. When the 'low born tenants' faced the question of existence, holiness of the 'household deity' became a burden.
They were considered greatest impediment to social progress. They even interfered with the personal life of their tenants. Various legislations decreased the hold of these ‘unexact’ lords. The first legislation was passed in 1867. The Act V of 1071 specified "Kudiyan shall be deemed the owner of the land subject only to the payment of jennikalam". Thereafter, other subsequent land legislations proved detrimental to them.

**Challenge to Social Privileges**

One of the most important influence of the English education was the tendency to question the establishment — caste system and supremacy of the Brahmins. This tendency became more widespread with the rise of journalism. For instance, Paschima Tharaka serialized the negative effect of caste from December 1873 onwards under the caption 'The Giant of Caste Distinction'. The very presence of Brahmins, responded in many a feeling of an idle and exploiting minority supported by the Government. They were advised to live by their own effort. It was the charity to the Brahmins that came under much fire in Travancore.

The Government was criticized for maintaining charity houses for those "distressed Pattams" who flocked to the State and indulged themselves in vices and even robbed the temples of its idols. The truth of such criticism is proved by the fact that for the public works the Government expenditure was only Rs. 14,43,373/-, meanwhile on religious and charity items they had spent Rs. 18,81,055/-. This was the case with other departments also. In the year 1900 expenditure on education was Rs. 4,93,000/- and charity items amounted to Rs. 4,40,000/-. As the Brahmins
had changed from their ancient way of life to no other care but 'feed and sleep and make illegitimate love,' lead an 'itinerant life of crime and sin,' forming a serious danger which seemed rapidly 'grow in dimension,' 'the misguided charity' to Brahmins was dumped as mere 'bigotry and cliquism.' Such charity was executed even at the cost of welfare activities to the people.

The Primary Education Bill moved by P. Kesava Pillai, on 6 February 1913, was rejected on the score of finance. But the financial reasons claimed by the Dewan was unreasonable for the Government had been spending large sum for 'pernicious feeding, day after day, of thousands of sturdy and able bodied men' of a particular caste who flocked in for "food and easy satisfaction of other wants." The Government was asked to keep a separate account for feeding the Brahmins.

Questioning the Sambandham alliance

The Brahmins exerted considerable influence over the society through contracting matrimonial alliances with Nair women. When the Nairs were imbued with new ideas through English education they resented the yoke of the Brahmins. The idea that "if wife had duties to discharge she had also rights to enforce" became more prevalent. P. Tharu Pillai moved the Bill in the Legislative Council in 1896 to regulate marriage among the marrimakkathayars. The attempt aborted due to the influence of the Brahmins. Later, the Government moved another Bill and it became the Nair Regulation 1 of 1898. With the support of the Government non-Nair husbands of the
Nair women maintained the status quo of irresponsibility. It was the Regulation 11 of 1100, that placed a premium on the procreating tendencies of Nambudiris by making it that he should provide for the children, the author whose being he is. Thus certain clauses of the Nair Regulation and Draft Bill of the Nambudiri Regulation contradicted. However, provision for maintenance was granted to the Nair wife of non-Nair husbands. The younger generation of Nambudiris also supported such demands because, though marumakkathayam kept the Nambudiris landed interest in tact, it created libidinous and foolish 'soori Nambudiris'.

Administration, Brahmin domination and criticism

Overlordship of Brahmins as the bureaucratic aristocracy was also questioned since the Malayali Memorial. Even after decades of agitation many departments remained as 'Brahmin Agraharam'. This patronizing of Brahmins by the Government in giving the service was vehemently criticised because it was suspected various attempts of other communities to get a fair share owed its failure to Brahmin machinations.

Brahmin Women and Social Condition

The Tamil Brahmin women did not suffer from much social restrictions. They moved freely without any exclusion. They availed themselves of the advantageous of English education in the Missionaries high caste schools. But the Nambudiri women were always kept in seclusion before and after marriage. Missionary ladies could not get access to them. Birth of a female child in a Nambudiri family was considered inauspicious and misfortune and
and practically went 'unnoticed', because of the responsibility to get 'rid of a great burden' by finding a proper husband at a bearable price which was an impossibility by the restrictive customs and limited circle of marriage. Thus pre-puberty marriage was not compulsory among the Nambudiris. The limited circle led for polygamy, marrying both for money and exchange. "My father had two wives", says B.M. Sankaran Nambudiri Padm.--- one other than my mother was the result of an exchange marriage, exchange for the marriage of his sister--- the one taken in, in return was the daughter of his brother-in-law and father-in-law to my father. This was true of many Nambudiri families. Social restriction and subcaste feeling limiting the circle of marriage had the effect of making a perpetual surplus of grown up girls and increase in dowry rate among the Nambudiris. A heavy dowry, or exchange of bride, or an improvised man of disproportionate age were the alternatives to get rid of the great 'burden' to send a girl married. "It was not unusual for a Nambudiri to have one or more non-Nambudiri wives when the number of wives in the same community itself was anything from one to three. A cousin of mine was of this category----. Even after his daughters in the royal family were married and began to beget children he added one more wife from his community----But the result was tragic. Completely ignored and almost like spinsters these two ladies had to live in his house. The prohibition of widow remarriage made the situation more grave.

Widow remarriage was disallowed among the Brahmins. It became sensitive in Travancore with the remarriage of Sesha Iyengar's child widow daughter. Obliging the Brahmin request the Maharaja excommunicated him. He was send adrift as the Brahmin public disapproved the remarriage. Not being discouraged by the orthodox pressure he fought the battle and organised the
'Vidhava Vivaha Sangham' at Nagercoil. The Dewan as well as the British authorities wished to observe neutrality. Prevalence of child marriage and absence of widow remarriage had disastrous consequences leading some of them to bad ways. The Nambudiris immediately excommunicated such fallen sisters. Even in late 1901, a 13 year old girl was excommunicated at Kottayam. In another case at Cochin, the suspected lady named 16 persons as her paramours who ranged from men of Nambudiri caste to Barber and senior Government officials to prominent local gentleman.

The Brahmins in transition

Though the Nambudiris were well versed in Sanskrit and Vedas from the point of modern education they were extremely backward and failed to move in time and line with the society. Their main obstacles were false prestige, lack of need and Brahmacharya from the age of 7 to 16 which tempered the school going age. Progressive minded men advised the Nambudiris to send their children to English schools for education, and for their own personal interest to manage their affairs in connection with the new legal system. The Administration Report for the year 1866-67 shows, in the Junior Department of the English Branch of the Central Institution at Trivandrum there were only three Nambudiris and a Potti out of 676. The comparative figures for 'Malayala Soodras' was 253, 'Pandy Soodras' 123, Christians 86 and Tamil Brahmins 187. It was the Tamil Brahmins who took the best opportunity and thereby they dominated the Government service.
When English schools were started for Nambudiris it was considered an 'outrageous' act by the orthodox section to study the 'vulgar language'. Thus even during 1910's they were extremely backward in English education. But many of them followed the traditional Sanskrit education. Such an education was useful when religion carried much weight in the society and caste status was a resource. Under the changed circumstances both had less utility.

The Yogashema Mahasabha founded at Trichur by 1910 tried to recast the community through social changes. They passed resolution for English education. Within a decade there was considerable increase in their number in English Schools. What prompted the Nambudiris to study the sedular subjects was the tenancy movement and changes in the law, 'to have a powerful and 'influential section' 'connected with the Administration. So, the 'virtuous Nambudiris' were forced to study the 'vulgar language'. As regards higher education they could produce upto 1932 only less than a dozen of graduates and 3 graduates of law.

A majority of the Nambudiri social reformers belonged to the younger generation. They attacked the joint family system, polygamy and diaparity in the age of husband and wife. In the beginning social reform activities excluded women. Resolutions on English education passed were only for boys.

More radicals came under the Nambudiri Yuvaajana Sangham, under the leadership of Mr. V.T. Bhattathiripad, K.N. Kuttan Nambudiripad. Unni Nambudiri, a monthly published by them intended to disseminate progressive ideas and undertook the removal of marriage evils.
In 'Thethi' and 'Madhavan', two character of 'Adukkalayilinme Arangathakku' (from Kitchen to Stage), the social drama by Mr. V.T. Shattathiripad, the Nambudiri women who had seen it from the 'hide outs in various corners of their family house' realised that fight against polygamy, and old man marrying young girls as not impossible. "In fact the transformation that this drama brought about in the minds of the Nambudiri women in so short a period could well be equated with that obtained through the medium of meetings and newspapers propaganda for more than a decade". Yovajana Sangha formed a marriage sub-committee. Picketings were resorted to stop marriage evils.

Mr. E.M. Sankaran Nambudiripad, president of the 34th annual conference of the Yogashema Sabha held at Ongallur, exhorted to make the Nambudiri 'a human' and equality to men and women to select their spouses at their will. Thus, it was the beginning of the system of 'one-women-for-one-man'.

In subsequent years these movements influenced the Nambudiri women. By 1929, many of them cast off their purdha adopting modern dress visited the Junior Maharani at Trivandrum. Their presence in the Yogashema Sabha was taken as an index of their progress. Meanwhile Unni Nambudiris leaped forward with anti-tuft and anti-sacred thread campaign. E.M. Sankaran Nambudiripad requested the community to give up their parasitic role and establish a new social order based on work and production. V.T. Shattathiripad went to the extent of saying that temples should be set fire to remove superstition. Besides that there was considerable change in the rigid observance of caste pollution. Many of them did observe it in public places. Regulation 11 of 1106 was mainly the achievement of the younger generation.
It was passed at the instance of the Yogasrama Mahasabha to regulate the powers of the Karanavan and improve the position of the younger members of the tarwads.

By the second half of 1930's, Smt. Devaki Antharjanam, a nominated Nambudiri woman to the Assembly, had to request the Government, on behalf of her community, that they might be placed in the list of the educationally backward communities because of the extreme backwardness of modern education. She advised the Government to divert the money they were wasting for religious purposes for higher education. It was only in 1940's that a few women went for college education. Their's was, in short, a sad story of undepended battle.

Causes of the decline of the Nambudiris

An important cause for the decline of the Nambudiris was their attempt to keep far away from the busy walk's of life, thus making themselves inefficient to adopt to the changing conditions.

Except a few radicals of the younger generation, orthodoxy was the Nambudiris trademark. They feared the rise of the low class or to give common rights of humanity. Erecting a better hut was even discouraged for they would be less inclined to move to agricultural field if settled comfortably. In a period of transition they took the least formidable stand.

Vanity and prestige prevented the Nambudiris from going to agriculture, trade, industry and modern education. Their women — half of the community— remained in the gloomy corners of the illams.
Difficulties of effete landlordism and endless litigations became more critical with the introduction of secular laws. Observance of defunct socio-religious ceremonies in a ruinous manner, lack of responsibility and co-operation made the lot of average Nambudiris much hard. This became much harder because of their simplicity and absence of business like habit. This subjected them to intrigues and fraudulence. By the turn of the century 'unencumbered and well ordered estates' became a rarity among Malabar Brahmins, at least in Travancore. Thus, when unencumbered and well ordered estates became a rarity a new socio-economic interpersonal relationship turned up — where the Nambudiris began to be looked with aversion. None else the Nambudiris alone were responsible for placing themselves in such difficulties.

There was stout opposition to various steps taken by the Yogeshwara Mahasabha. To them English education was vulgar. Further the school going age was tampered by their Brahmacharya. They were very late to accept the modern ways of life. E.M.S. Nambudiripa says of his 'modernised uncle', "used to wear a coat and cap. He had his own cycle and kerosene stove on which he used to prepare his own coffee. In those days actually coffee and tea were forbidden in the family. It was only in 1930's that forbidden things were regularised in such ilams.

Nambudiris, in a memorial to the Maharaja of Travancore, confessed, "our tradition which were conservative prevented us sometimes from taking useful advantageous of educational facilities —— we did not organise ourselves as a community for the protection of our rights. The result had been to our detriment. In course
of time the major portion of our rights over land had been lost. The rights over Devaswoms have also suffered greatly. We have lost our chances in life as our elders choose to keep themselves secluded and stationary — The income from land is nominal, our religious and social duties entails large expenditure our tradition and training do not benefit us for manual labour. The declined stage was made more clear by Amr. Devaki Anatharjanam that economic condition of the Nambudiris became more pitiable by the lack of modern education and other means of subsistence with neither the strength to come up nor the will to go down. So, when the ancestral property of an illam was divided, the 'representatives of God on earth' was reluctant to take care and protect the property-less temples and its Gods.

Nairs

Origin of the makkathayam of the Nairs is ascribed to different causes like the martial profession of the Nairs, material considerations to clog the tarwad partition, polyandrous system, and to the Brahmins intelligence in manipulating the unsettled conditions to their advantage.

Family affairs, management of the tarwad and religious duties were performed by the karanavan, the unquestionable patriarch and the senior most male member. Individual members had no claim over the family property beyond the right of maintenance which according to the accepted views of the law and customs based on residence in the tarwad house and their ability to participate in the religious functions. Partition was unknown. Hence, converts were not entitled for maintenance. Private
gains lapsed to the tarwad as common property. Among them any stable marriage hardly existed. Women resided in their own tarwad. When employment and other economic avenues were limited 'secondary importance' given to the individual members under a single leadership in an agricultural economy, without allowing any independent or exclusive individual interest but stay and maintenance worked well.

By the beginning of the 19th century marumakkathayam began to show tendency for decline. Political changes in Travancore hastened many Nairs back to home. Within a few decades group marriages and unlimited polyandry came to an end leading to restricted one. But as per-capita partition was not allowed many tarwads had people separated even up to eight generations residing under the same roof, occupying different status and position in the society, even without knowing each other. Misunderstanding, envy and rivalry were its natural consequences.

Marumakkathayam sailed smoothly so long as the karanavan was a makkathayee in spirit and form. But, under the influence of western culture he was forced to remain a marumakkathayee but inclined to be a makkathayee. Interests in others began to decline due to the natural inclination and improved notion of conjugal ties, leading to a 'conflict between interest and duty. "It was commented, "There is hardly a Nair who has been highly educated by a distant karanavan. Most of the Nair graduates owes their education either to their fathers or to their direct karanavan."
Members of the families were entitled for maintenance only when they stayed in the tarwad. The karanaavan could refuse maintenance for absence. The defect was that the anandaravans who had no separate source of income were tied to the tarwad without a chance to try their luck.

Protection of maintenance right degraded to irresponsibility, lack of self reliance and detestation from any productive activity. Whether they eked out their livelihood or not, with their capital or labour, law protected their maintenance right. In such a situation, the increased cost of living, emancipation of slaves and discontinuance of free labour, a system based on agricultural economy failed to pull on, because none preferred to demean themselves by manual labour and soil their hands\(^{52}\). The consequence was that many tarwads became bankrupt. When economically tarwads became precarious the bond of relationship further loosened. Many considered tarwads as a clog to moral and material progress. While others went in search of new pasture land many of the Naiks satisfied themselves with the position of supervisors and accountants in the local temples and nearby illams\(^{53}\). None of them felt guilty of depleting the hard earned savings in a few nights of temple festival\(^{54}\), fire works, dancing girls, cock fight, ruinous ceremonies and construction of huge houses\(^{56}\).

Modern education had opened their eyes to the deplorable condition of the community in which marriage bonds were held with utmost looseness and reprehensible dissolved\(^{57}\). It also developed individualistic spirit among the anandaravans who were impatient to improve their lot. The idea of tarwad partition can be directly traced to this impatience\(^{58}\). Though marumakkathaya\(\ldots\)
was matrilocal. Many educated men began to keep their wife and children in his residence. It became necessary as women were selected from distant places. This developed a new bond of personal relationship and compelled many to make provision for their wife and children during their lifetime. This development was contradictory to the old joint enjoyment of the tarwed property. Endeavour was made for a separate house and opportunity was taken to get as much as they could from the family. This caused split, quarrels and litigation. In the strained situation relationship became 'mere pretence'. When social stagnation slowly began to change wants became unlimited. People with different tastes, temperaments, views and needs emerged in it. It became no longer possible to guide or control them. This conflict of interest with the Karanavans ended in litigation. Half hearted karanavans and vigorous anandaravans encumbered the tarwed properties. The best evidence of this is the preamble of almost every contemporary deed of separation.

The matrimonial system of the Nairs often came up for ridicule and criticism of others. The Brahmin dominated subordinate and High Court labelled Sambandham as only fugitive and irregular connections and rejected its legality. This alerted the already frustrated anandaravans. Requests for a legislation were raised. The Malabar marriage Bill introduced by C. Sankaran Nair had tremendous influence over the social history of Kerala. It was the first time that Nairs formally questioned the social superiority of the Nambudiris to form fugitive connections with their sisters. The Bill was widely discussed. Nairs became aware of its positive aspects. They longed for a reorientation of their relation with the Brahmins. In Travancore some Nair
leaders memorialised the Maharaja for a legislation' to make marriage a binding tie. Along with the demand for legislation, as the system became a self-contradiction many raised the claims for partition. Representations to that effect were made in the Popular Assembly. Perpetual disputes and litigation can be taken as an index of the break down of the system. Hence, partition was felt necessary, "without which there will be no growth, while disorganisation and decay which has already set in the most tarwads will pave way for the ruin of our community". As the pressure increased the Government appointed a committee to 'formulate definite proposals' on legal recognition of sambandham, regulate the duties and obligations of the karanavan, and to protect the rights of junior members and check on improper alienation. The committee was well received at all centers. They refused the claims of the Nambudiries and Kshatriyas and recommended to give legal validity to sambandham, dissolution of the marriage with compensation, to declare polyandry and polygamy as illegal, maintenance of wife and children by the husband or the father as the case might be, restriction of the powers of the karanavan for alienation, and thevazhi partition. In a dissenting minute Padmanabha Menon claimed the right of Nair wives for the self-acquired property of the non-Nair husbands. But other members rejected the suggestion because they considered such marriage were not 'invasion' but 'invitation'. Accordingly, Dewan P. Rajagopalachari presented a Bill in the Council in 1936. But, due to the intransigence of the non-official Nair members part VII of the Bill dealing with partition had to be dropped. The Bill came into force as the Regulation I of 1936/1913. There was much rejoicing among the Nair ladies for legalising their sambandham.
Nair in transition

Even after the Regulation, as partition was not allowed, endless litigation, idleness and gloom engulfed the Nair community while their competitors were advancing. It appeared painful to the younger generation. They organised the Nair Bhuthyajana Sangham on 31 October 1915 under the Secretaryship of Mannath Padmanabhan Pillai. It was later changed to the Nair Service Society. The society took a leading part in all subsequent events. Their first important achievement was the Nair Act (Amendment) Regulation II of 1100 passed on 13 April 1925. Requests were made for individual partition and makkathayam because instead of developing ideal qualities they fostered idleness, "If any member of the family finds work irksome, he can quitely sit at home and command the service of wealth which the sweat of his ancestors has earned". This was more proved by the systematic neglect of properties. The condition became more critical as often alienations were made by the karanavan 'to teach a lesson' on the 'indolent anandaravans'. As stress and strains increased due to lack of partition there were instances of the murder of 'inconvenient karanavans'. In many families movable properties were sold at throw away price. However, after the Regulation there was a slight decrease in alienation. Moreover, there was demand for the self acquired property of the non-Nair husbands of the Nair women. Their claims were not accepted because of the opposition from the Brahmins and Kshatriyas as they wanted to enjoy matrimony without responsibilities. This was objected by the Nairs.
The All Kerala Nair Social Conference held on 11-13 May 1917, at Manner wanted the Nair women to have equal rights from the Nair and non-Nair husbands. Meanwhile, others demanded complete right over the self-acquired property of the husband. At another Nair conference at Sasthamangalam in Trivandrum on 1921, sponsored by the N.S.S. under the Presidentship of Changanachery Parameswaran Pillai, resolutions were passed for monogamy and right of women over the self-acquisition of the Nair and the non-Nair husband, and individual partition. A Bill was later drafted by K.P. Ramnan Pillai and moved in the Council. For each section and clause there were difference of opinion. The Bill was passed and became the Nair Regulation II of 1100 as approved on 13 April 1925. The Imperial Government also did not object in passing the Bill.

The Nair Regulation II of 1100 had such adverse effect to the feudalistic interest of the community. It invariably led for a major redistribution of land. Thousands of partitions were effected. Such partition uneconomically fragmented the agricultural land.

The fragmented land were either sold, mortgaged or hypothecated. The following table shows the transfer of land from one community to another during the period from 1920 to 1929 among the Nairs, Ezhavas, Vellalas and Christians.
Statement showing the average annual value of sales, mortgages and hypothecations executed by various communities in 1920-1924 and 1925-1929.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community</th>
<th>Sales per annum in lakhs</th>
<th>Mortgages with possession per annum in lakhs</th>
<th>Mortgages without possession per annum in lakhs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nairs, Executed</td>
<td>57.2</td>
<td>83.4</td>
<td>38.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nairs, Claimed</td>
<td>25.1</td>
<td>34.7</td>
<td>23.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ezhavas, Executed</td>
<td>21.4</td>
<td>29.5</td>
<td>18.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ezhavas, Claimed</td>
<td>25.9</td>
<td>29.5</td>
<td>20.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vellais, Executed</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>5.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vellais, Claimed</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>4.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christians, Executed</td>
<td>34.4</td>
<td>43.7</td>
<td>22.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christians, Claimed</td>
<td>47.1</td>
<td>72.2</td>
<td>32.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It can be seen from the statement that the Nairs were playing a losing game. The average sales per year increased from 57.2 to 83.4 lakhs while the purchase increased only from 25.1 to 34.7 lakhs. In sales alone the Nairs were losing per year 32.1 lakhs in the first half and 48.7 lakhs per year in the second part. In mortgages with possession the annual loss increased from Rs. 15.4 lakhs to 16.4 lakhs and mortgages without possession from Rs. 22.5 lakhs to 39.9 lakhs. The Christians on the other hand had uniformly gained from the sales from 13.7 lakhs per year to 33.5, and mortgages without possession from 9.8 lakhs to 29.4 lakhs and mortgages with possession from 13.7 lakhs to 22.3 lakhs. In sales and in two types of mortgages Ezhavas almost retained their position.

Reaction of the Nair Community

The Government was showing undue preference to Tamil Brahmins — irrespective of their alien origin and numerical inferiority — at a time when the Nair mamakakkathayam and status as feudalistic aristocracy was on the verge of collapse. They reacted through the Malayali Memorial in 1891. Though it was twisted to give the colour of a representative memorial, other communities later complained that it benefited only the Nairs. This questioning of the secondary role assigned to them in the Government service had its results. P. Thanu Pillai, a moral supporter of the Memorial and the author of the aborted Nair Regulation of 1896, became the Chief Secretary of Travancore in 1895. Thenceforth, the Nair community slowly became the bureaucratic aristocracy of the land, especially during the Dewanship of M. Krishnan Nair (11.5.1914 - 7.7.1920). The immediate competitor of the Nairs, the Christians
allied with Ezhavas and Muslims. They organised the Civic Rights League aiming a better representation in the service and separation of the Devaswom and Revenue Departments. The Departments were separated. Still, the Nair domination continued. As the domination continued challenge increased. Excuses like efficiency, character, capacity and other vague terms were played successfully. The Nair Act amendment of 1925 was passed providing for individual partition with high hopes. But it misfired. Curtain was about to fall before the Nair communities show as the feudalistic aristocracy of the State. What then remained was their hold over the bureaucracy. But, Regency administration, and 'Georganism'-description of a communal journal of the Chief Secretaryship of K. George — and a sudden Christian domination appeared as a knot to the Nair bureaucratic aristocracy. They resented it.

The society in Travancore in 1920's was tribulant. "The spirit of indiscipline is abroad. The Nair Regulation recently passed means the disruption of the ancient class system and subdivision of family property and the tendency of Ezhavas and Nanjanad Vellals moved in the same direction. The unemployment problem is assuming a serious proportion and communal jealousies are strong. The country is over run with schools, chiefly schools of secondary education in Vernacular and the proportion of literate male and female is remarkably high."\(^{72}\):

The Regency had 'shown courage in disregarding'some 'precedents in Travancore'. 'Honest men have much better prospects now than in the late Maharajas time', when high appointments were believed to be gifted if one choose to pay for them\(^{73}\) to the palace favourite Sankaran Tampi — a situation described by
Swadesabhimani as a menace of epidemic dimension.

The new condition appeared critical to the Nair Community. Memorials reached Viceregal lodge complaining, "it is only accidental that the Regent so selected happened to be a member of the ruling family of Travancore by adoption". They alleged the Regent of assuming sovereignty with the support of the "willful agent", the Dewan M.E. Watts, a Christian. Grave discontent in public service was raised, "The appointment itself (Watts as Dewan) was a violent departure from the established usages and tradition of the state, which the Regency administration is not at liberty to violate. The appointment of Chief Secretary, Durbar Physician, the Chief Justice and the creation of the Medical Board were all out of the way and in disregard either to wholesome precedents or rightful claims of others --- uncertainties in this matter have created discontent throughout the service and considerable distrust of the Government in the minds of the people. Favour or disfavour having become the basis of action, efficiency of the state service has considerably suffered", and a train of other allegations, requesting for an enquiry into the whole affair.

The Dewan critically snubbed at the memorialists. Ebullitions of feeling against constituted authority by the reactionary sections of Nairs is nothing new in Travancore. As a matter of fact such excitable outbursts are periodic with those intensively sensitive and excitable people. Col. Munro's characterisation of them a century ago as 'ruthless, credulous and suspicious, easily misled by bad men among them is still true". They say important appointments have been made in disregard of wholesome precedents of the rightful claims of others --- one consideration of Her Highness and I have kept
steadily before us was to select the best men for each appointments 77."

The Resident after evaluating the situation reported to the Imperial Government that he could not find any grave discontent in the Government service. Narrating the past history and the then existing condition he reported, "Memorialists are chiefly responsible for the growth of communal rivalry. If the Nair caste are getting less of then loaves and fishes of office than heretofore the fault lies rather with themselves than with the Durbar. They got much more than they deserved during the last regime and particularly when Mr. M. Krishnan Nair was the Dewan", and "in the eyes of the memorialists the rightful claims means the claims of the Nairs to the exclusion of all other castes 78."

Another memorial submitted by A. Narayana Pillai and A. Balakrishna Pillai to the Viceroy complained of the inefficiency of administration 79. The memorial was referred to the Resident for explanation. He refuted the charges, "The theory of efficiency is well understood by those educated pleaders, but I have no doubt that if they received appointments, they in their turn would be liable to similar criticism. As recorded by my predecessor the real cause of discontent as voiced in the memorial is due to the fact that these Nair memorialists have not received appointments in the Government service to which they or their community fell they have a little, or in default of such appointments they hope to upset the present order of things 80."

Unrest of the Nair community outburst when they came to know of the extension of the Regency Administration for two more years. In another memorial signed and submitted by K.P. Nilakanta Pillai, A. Thanu Pillai, A. Achutha Menon, C. Kuttan Nair, A. Narayana Pillai, A. Bala Krishna Pillai to the Viceroy, raising the claims of efficiency they said that, "If Travancore could be governed single handed over six years by a young lady who was all of a sudden called upon to take the reins of the administration without any previous training or experience, it is incomprehensible why a young Maharaja who had been brought up from his birth a ruler — 81". The general suspicion was too much that some others apprehended "possibly he (the young Maharaja) is not yet sufficiently trained to harass the people. His Highness is believed to have great love for his people and that may be the impediment in his way. Love and lathi do not well go together. The two years exile may be intended to produce the lathi mentality in him 82".

It may be noted that many Nair leaders supported the temple entry issue. Meanwhile for the Government service they claimed efficiency and capacity as almost monopolistic to ward off others.

The Regency administration ended. Sree Chitra Thirunal with 'great love for his people' ascended the throne on 8 November 1931, with Sir C.P. Ramaswami Aiayar behind the throne as 'a trusted friend of my family as my legal and constitutional adviser'. The Public service Recruitment Committee was appointed to report, by their order R.O.C. No. 7159 of 31/General, dated Trivandrum, 22 November 1931. When once supremacy as bureaucratic aristocracy of the land was questioned they felt it unsafe to continue in the bay. The new constitutional reform of Travancore, born out of the
supervision of 'Sir C.P.' and G. Parameswaran Pillai, the Political Secretary was declared on 28 October 1932 with effect from 1 January 1933. Thus, the Nair community became the political aristocracy of the land. The Christians, Ezhavas and Muslims came out with abstention. Elections were held. The Nairs dominated. Later, the Franchise Committee was appointed on 16 August 1935. Sir C.P. Rama Swam Aiyar became the Dewan of Travancore on 8 October 1936. New elections were held on April 1937. T.M. Varughese was elected as the Deputy President of the newly constituted Assembly. The new role in the status of political aristocracy was short lived. Papers like 'Malayali' and 'Malayala Rajyam', owned by Nairs, began to exhort the Nairs of the necessity to join in the State Congress, the successor of Samyukttha Party.

The Travancore State Congress came into existence on 24 February 1938 at Trivandrum in the office of A. Narayana Pillai, a signatory of the memorial to the Viceroy dated 2 September 1929 and 1 October 1930 the reestablish 'efficiency' and terminate the Regency. Pattam Tham Pillai, a signatory of the memorial to the Viceroy dated 11 October 1930, a member of the deputation of the Nair Vigilance Committee which met the Dewan on November 7, 1936 to express the concern of the Nair community to the new franchise system, and one among those who disapproved the '51 lakhs' claim of T.M. Varughese as the Deputy President, became the President of the State Congress, and later its first 'dictator', with P.S. Nataraja Pillai as one of the two General Secretaries and M.R. Madhava Varrier as the Treasurer. G.Kasavan and T.M. Varughese could only raise up to the Working Committee.
Thus, while one group of the community secured leading and comfortable berths in the State Congress, another group under the leadership of Mannath Padmanabhan and the N.S.S. supported State Administration with some understanding of mutual support.

Later, when the State Congress became a power to be recognised and the imperialism was about to end, and the 'American Model' constitution proposed on January 1946 appeared shallow, the Director Board of the N.S.S. appointed a committee on 20 Kumbham 1121/1946, to report on the future political policy of the society. On 28 Karkadagom 1121/13 August 1946, a resolution moved by T.P. Velayudhan Pillai was accepted in its annual conference. Mannath Padmanabhan unequivocally asked the Nair community to join the State Congress. It is interesting to see that the community continued its domination in one way or another. Pattam Thanu Pillai became the first Prime Minister of Travancore pushing back T.M. Varughese and C. Kesavan — his immediate competitors — who could only become his cabinet colleagues.

Self-improvement and social organisations of Nairs

Chattampi Swamikal (1853–1924), 'the remarkable' in Kerala as described by Swami Vivekananda, born to a non-Malayali Brahmin in a Nair lady in Trivandrum District, was mainly responsible for the rediscovery of the Nair past, and infusing a new life and vision to Hinduism in Travancore. Even from his childhood, he thoroughly disapproved caste system, a man made separation based on birth. He stood for the study of Vedas by everyone. But he was unwilling to take the direct leadership of the Nair community, instead he advised Sree Nilakanta Theerthapada.
Sarvika to assume it, to remove corrupt and rotten practices of the Nair community. Through 'Prachina Kerala' and 'Vedadhikara Nirupanan', books written by him, attempts were made to rediscover the past and noble position which the Nairs occupied prior to the Arya Brahmin presence. He refused the Parasurama story, the jennum rights of Brahmins, hold of Brahmins as a priestly class. He could also mould the younger generation of Nair leaders like C. Krishna Pillai, Mannath Padmanabhan, Changanacherry Parameswaran Pillai and Kumbalathu Sanku Pillai. He had close association with Sree Narayana Guru. But, unfortunately "claims about the relative merit of the two men often led to acrimony between Nairs and Travas."

Swami Sadananda was another spiritual leader of the time. He was born in Cochin to Nair parents. Through his characteristic diplomacy, oratory and organisational ability he could regenerate the community. He founded the Sadananda Ashram near Kottarakara, and spend most of his life for religious discourses.

Those who got inspiration from the spiritual leaders emerged to reform and reorganise the community. C. Krishna Pillai (1852-1916) was prominent among them. He was the moving spirit behind the organisations like the Malayali Sabha, Nair Samajam and Keraleeya Nair Samajam. He even used his official tours for the propagation of his ideas. His activities influenced the community to shed many of its ideological stagnation. He was closely associated with Mannath Padmanabha Pillai.

Mannath Padmanabha Pillai organised Karayogams to create a sense of moral and social feeling to reform the customs and
effect a unity among the Nairs. The first school of the organisation was started in 1916 at Karukachal. A journal, the service and the Kerala Service Bank were started by them. Caste subdivisions among them hindered their social unity. Along with the progressive minded men the Service Society tried to remove such distinctions. Work of the social organisations had its desired effect. The Census Commissioner observed the fusion of subcastes and pleaded by such organisations. Socially, the undesirability of petty divisions and dissensions, and politically to increase the numerical strength and bargaining power of various communities was the main object behind such efforts. 116 sub-divisions of the Nairs recorded in the Census of 1901 shrank to 2 in 1931 with corresponding change in social customs.

Some other stains which the Nairs strived to remove were the change of name from 'Malayala Soodras' to Nairs, inferiority in religious matters, superstitious and expensive temple festivals and ceremonies, untouchability, and propagation of education.

The community was well aware of the weakened position in the ownership of land. 'The Service' appeared with facts and figures and advised to curtail the wasteful expenditure. In the All Kerala Nair Conference held in 1933 a resolution moved by K. Velayudhan to curb the break up of the landed property into small units by co-operative cultivation and its tentative adoption in certain karas was approved. Other measures suggested for the economic improvement of the community was adult education, household and cottage industries, organisation of karayogams, inalienation of properties, and agriculture.
One of the important result of the Nair Regulation and other economic change was the condition that everyone could not stay in the joint tenanted house. By the same time matrimony without responsibility was ridiculed. In short, social and economic compulsions could recast their family system and improve the status of women.

Social condition of Nair women

Whatever might have been the merit of marumakkathayam many misunderstood the Nair women. For instance, when the question abolishing devadasi system in the Madras Presidency was taken up one even turned to the West Coast to comment, "The nepotismal law on the West Coast is another kind of prostitution sanctified by law. The Achinara of the Malabar Coast never cohabit with one man, and yet they are all regarded as chaste, would it not be ludicrous affair to abolish all the public schools in Travancore and Malabar where there are none to learn but the children of prostitutes. Such misunderstanding was caused mainly because of the defects of the marumakkathayam system. There was no law for divorce, maintenance and conjugal responsibilities and the husband was thus invariably looked upon as a 'useless legal factor'. There was no objection for their remarriage. C. Achutha Menon says about his mother that she was married three times and at the time of her third marriage she was not more than 17 or 18 years old. Though social condition of women improved after the marumakkathayam was changed, economically it had negative effects.
The decline, disintegration and fragmentation of the menumakkathayam tarwades greatly affected the economic condition of the Nair women. This is proved by the fact that in many Nair conferences women were advised to get more education, devote their time and energy for industrial and economic activities. Their economic backwardness and its negative consequences were commented by the Census Commissioner of 1941. Some of his comments came up for heated criticism in the House and demanded delation of the reference. A. Narayanan Tampi, the Census Commissioner, defended that his statement was based on facts and figures.

Another defective social custom to which the Nair women were subjected was the dress restriction. In 1865 the Maharaja removed the restriction as he found the custom 'repugnant to the ideas of decency'\(^\text{101}\). V. Nagram Aiyar the Census Commissioner of 1875 reported that the custom had begun to vanish from the South Travancore\(^\text{102}\). However, the non-official sources give another account\(^\text{103}\). The system continued with the Arat festival of the Sree Padmanabha Swami temple and in some other temples\(^\text{104}\).

**Devadasy system**

Devadasy system existed in Travancore. They were mostly attached to the South Travancore temples. The Dewan objected the attempt of the Imperial Government to stop the custom in 1870\(^\text{105}\). The total strength of them according to the Census Report of 1901 was 416. They were returned from 6 taluks. Later, during the Regency administration the custom was banned by an executive order. The Census of 1931 returned no women as devadasis.
The Kshatriyas were an insignificant minority of the State with a total population of 1575, constituting a percentage of 0.05 to the total population of the state. They followed the marumakkathayam system of inheritance. Succession was counted on mother's line, seniormost male member became the karanavan. Accordingly the throne was occupied by the seniormost male member of the ruling family.

Consorts of the Ranees were known as 'koil tampurans'. He could go to her palace when sent for. 'These husbands' had no political status whatsoever and according to customs resided separately --- the position assigned to koil tampurans --- was scarcely less invidious than that of the corresponding appenages of Cochin. Though highly educated, they were entitled only a monthly allowance from the Durbar of Rs. 200/- (formerly a living allowance of 'one and a quarter Lungaly of rice per day') per mensum with meals from the palace. Husband and wife were not given equal status. Custom always discouraged them from travelling in the same carriage or car. In case necessity compelled them they were required to sit opposite and not side by side. Even though Sree Mulas Thirunal sympathised for the removal of marumakkathayam, still as a matter of policy he disapproved of the Maharani Regent allowing the present Valiyar Koil Tampuran to sit in her presence and to drive in the same carriage. The Rani being well educated objecting to treating her husband as was customary in the old days and is anxious that his position as her husband should be kept as high as possible.
In other Kshatriya families often they contracted Sambandham alliance with Nair women. When other communities passed legislations to regularise marriage the Kshatriyas also passed a Regulation in 31 December 1932 to regulate, define and amend the laws relating to marriage, succession and partition among their tarwads.

Another minority community among the caste Hindus were the Nanjanad Vellalas. They followed the marumakkathayam of the Nairs and makkathayam of the East Coast Vellalas. A Committee was appointed to enquire into the customs of marriage, inheritance and succession. Accordingly an Act was passed on 20 June 1926.

Social changes among the Christians

The high status of the Syrian Christians in the traditional society accounted for their non-assimilation to the Hindu fold but it gave rise to superstitions attitude towards lower castes and to refrain from evangelism. The Syrian Christians objected the conversion of backward communities. Thus the evangelism of the Protestant Missionaries confronted with the 'Christian caste'. Economic and social interest were behind their objection. For instance, in places like Mallappali, Thalavadi, Kottayam, Mavelikara, Tiruvalla and Olesa the missionaries had to face varying degree of objection. In order to ward off such caste elements they had to adopt different measures. The Syrian Christians though not theoretically acknowledged caste, were highly sensitive of their social privileges and often leagued with Caste Hindus to prevent the backward communities from
gaining any social position. This attitude was entertained by educated men also. For example, replies given by the Syrian Christians students for the admission of backward communities in the college hostels at Trivandrum were a curious mixture of caste spirit and social exclusion. The 'Christian Caste' even prevented the admission of backward classes in schools. Even the priest and responsible men of the Parish objected their admission of Chengamanad School. Tanks attached to the churches like Manarkad, Kuravilangad, Kaduthuruthi, Pala, Palayur, Angamali and Alangad reminds us of the caste spirit. Even in late 1934, T.K. Madhavan had to face the spirit of Christian exclusion at the Maramon Convention.

Moreover, many of the birth, childhood, marriage and death ceremonies were similar in both communities. An interesting feature of the social life of the 'Christian caste' was the spirit of co-existence. In many places the Christians participated in the festivals of the Hindu temples gave offerings, entertained believers in the curious relationship of friendship, vengeance and retaliation by the Hindu Gods and Christian saints. Many Churcher and temples existed in the neighbourhood, like Palayur, Paravur, Miranam, Kalluppara, Katumthuruthi, Idjalakkuda and Piravom. "It often happened that in such places that Christians were trustees of such temples and vice versa. Often they shared things used for festivals. Formerly the Kuravilangad Church used to get elephants lended for their festival from the Ettumannur temple. At Puthuppalli during the festival of St. George, in May, the usual 'heathen acting' of scenes from Ramayana in front of the Church was conducted. After paying homage in the Kuravilangad Veliapalli, the late Sir C.P. Ramaswamy Iyengar exclaimed, "This is exactly like the Karthyayani..."
of Kumaranallur. Both in design and details Churches and temples had similarities. The Syrian Christians and the Caste Hindus intermarried and interdined, both of them kept tuft as a symbol of aristocracy. However the Christian women were not allowed to use flowers because it was a custom characteristic of the Nair women - an odd contrast. It might have been due to the personal freedom enjoyed by the Nair women in matrimony.

In the old churches there were many lapses. Kerala Mitram censured the Roman Catholic Church of Trichur "for taking akbari farm and letting out the chapel premises for the erection of sheds for the sale of liquors" during the festival season.

With the arrival of Protestant Missionaries, changes began to appear a new Christian morality and a spirit of reformation. They tried to introduce sermons in Malayalam instead of Syriac, "which was not understood even by most priests", discontinuance of prayers to dead, supplication through saints, matrimony for priests, ordination based on fitness and education were a few of the changes attempted. The desire for reform continued, "notwithstanding the efforts of their clergy to keep them ignorant. Although many priests among the Syrians have been wishing for a reform there was none to take the lead." Later the lead was taken by Abraham Malppan, signalling the birth of the Reformed Church known as the Mar Thoma Church.

The need of reform was felt by others also. The Rev. Ittiyerah Rapen wrote in 1870 in an article on the Malabar Syrians and the Community. He emphasised the need of educating the people on the principles of Bible which had not received any attention
from the priests fearing their loss of income\textsuperscript{129}.

Social life of the Syrian Christians were regulated by the decisions of their ecclesiastical heads according to their sectional interests. For instance, the Roman Catholics did not recognise the celebration of marriage of other denominations\textsuperscript{130}. So they remarried those converts from other sections. The Protestant Missionaries protested. The Government of Madras in consultation with the Imperial Government advised Travancore to make a restrictive law\textsuperscript{131}. Thus a Regulation was passed in Travancore restricting bigamy among the Christians\textsuperscript{132}. Lack of specific rules were felt on other occasions also. Even fraud was committed during marriage\textsuperscript{133}.

The great need of a law to regulate marriage, divorce, succession and inheritance was felt by all persons connected with the administration of civil and criminal law. Its absence caused endless quarrels leading to suits and often crimes. But ecclesiastical heads were unmindful of the situation due to lack of interest and fear of the loss of income and decrease of their powers. In no Christian denominations there was a law to regulate the fundamental activities. As regards inheritance, the Courts had no guidance and depended on the conflicting evidences of the contending parties and their priests. Rules of divorce were also equally uncertain. To remove the ambiguousness the Resident sought to press for a legislation on the Durbars of Travancore and Cochin\textsuperscript{134}. But the attempt was dropped by the Travancore Government.

As the situation remained uncertain there were demands for the appointment of a Committee to report on the question of succession and inheritance among various Christian denominations\textsuperscript{135}.
It was the younger generation that showed much enthusiasm for legislation. The Government expressed concern over the uncertainty of rules applicable to each section on the rights of women. Rules of succession had not been uniform as they followed the customs of different castes from which they originated. Usually the son of the deceased was considered in the first instance as the heir to the property. Difference of opinion existed only regarding the right of women viz. the unmarried daughter, widow, wife and mother.

The Committee, after enquiry, found absolute unanimity to the rights of the daughter to the property of a deceased when he left behind him no other immediate successors on male line, and division of such intestate property equally among the daughter to the exclusion of all others heirs. They observed on the payment of dowry that, "daughter to whom dowry was paid by the father according to the customary law should be considered to have received her share in his estate --- no further claims upon his estate. The difficulty therefore, arises only in case of daughters to whom no dowry was paid by their father." They commented, "To the credit of the Syrian Christian community it may be observed that, after the father's death the brothers often do not give liberal dowries to their unmarried sisters with a view to get them suitably married". But, the general opinion of the younger generation was to place sons and daughters on the same footing.

"I should be inclined to support the daughter's claims because the dowry may be looked upon either as a composition for life long maintenance or share for her interest in her father's property. But many were against fixing a share except
maintenance to the unmarried daughter or the widow for the fear of alienation and litigation. Dr. Thomas Kurialachery feared destruction of 'domestic tranquility', opening of 'flood gates of litigation' and 'all sorts of calamities' and ruin of the community. The Committee recommended that a girl to whom dowry was paid should not have further claims over the paternal property. As a widow's right were ambiguous they recommended to give her a definite share in her husband's estate.

Prevalence of dowry was considered as a bane on the community. Dowry received was usually spend for personal gains of the bridegrooms. Opinion differed on the dowry issue. Majority of the younger generation got alarmed at the ever increasing dowry rates as harmful to the community. But some excused that there would be no loss when the balance sheet of the community was taken together. The argument did not carry much weight as at involved great difficulties. Disparity in education and economic dependence of women nourished the system. Educational advancement was suggested as a measure to counteract the evil. The rate of dowry depended upon the attitude and demands of the contracting parties than to any definite principle. However, opinion differed as to the need of a Regulation. As far as our observation goes, we are of the opinion that there is hardly any defect to be pointed out in the existing usage which may retard the progress and upward march of our community and which therefore needs amending. But some other representative men like G.T.Varughese, K.Chandy, Rev.N.M.Abraham (Metropolitan elect to the Mar Thoma Church), K.C. Mammen Mappilai, N. Ninan Thomas, P.K. Kocherapan Tharakan, K.N. Daniel, C.P.Thomas, John Midiri, Kunjithomman and
T.J. Mathew requested to pass the Bill\textsuperscript{147}.

The social condition of the Syrian Christian women were backward and unsatisfactory in certain aspects. Absence of maruma-kathayam compelled many parents to get their daughters marry early. This was a social necessity. The Census of 1901 found early-marriage as more common among the Christian women. The Census of 1921 found a slight fall in the percentage of married girls among the school going age. The Census of 1931 found it was fast vanishing. The issue came up for deliberations of the legislature\textsuperscript{148}. But, as a whole Syrian Christian women were not subjected to much discrimination. In some instances they were the sole bread winners.

Denominational dissensions

The Syrian Christians of Travancore could be divided into three. The Catholics owing allegiance to Rome, the Jacobites owing allegiance to the Patriarch of Antioch, and other group under independant bishops, similar to the Anglican Church in doctrine and rituals. The first group since the arrival of the Portuguese were drawn into endless schism. Among the Jacobites the situation became aggravated with the excommunication of Mar Dionysius by Abdulla II the junior Patriarch of Antioch.\textsuperscript{149} Thereafter the very existence of the church was 'imperilled by the ignorant and short sighted interference of the down trodden prelates of Turkey\textsuperscript{150}. They organised under Mar Dionysius and Mar Athanasius, metropolitan consecrated by the Patriarch Abdulla II. Meanwhile, due to the
unsettled position many moved to the Catholic Church. The flow increased when seven priests headed by Mar Ivanios, went to the Catholic fold. The difference of opinion continued with full vigour in subsequent years, issues remained unsolved and litigations continued. The Jacobites appealed for the personal intervention of Lord Irvin, 'a pious Christian',\textsuperscript{151} The Patriarch agreed to leave the matter for arbitration. But still the disputes continued.

The Syrian Christian denominational dissensions and relative authenticity even went to the extent of murders in the Church\textsuperscript{152}, non-recognition of ceremonies, claims and counter claims of relative superiority\textsuperscript{153}. The Syrian Churches disliked the Protestant Missionaries who were intruders into the land of St. Thomas.\textsuperscript{154}

These denominations did not usually intermarry, though no objection was there in other social intercourse\textsuperscript{155}.

The Reformed Church

Attempts of the C.M.S. Missionaries to reform the Syrian ended in failure. However, Abraham Malppan carried the spirit of reformation. He revised the Jacobite liturgy. Alterations were made in the prayers and doctrine. He was able to gather clergy and laity. Mar Mathews Athanasius, nephew of Abraham Malpan continued the spirit of reformation. He undertook the amelioration of the condition of his people and set on foot various reforms. In 1856, he issued circulars to parishers, he requested every Syrian Christian to convert as many as one could from other religions. The Syrian Reformation Society was organised on the principles of reform of Abraham
Malppan and Mar Mathews Athanasius. They strived to remove ignorant practices boarding on hypocrisy, heritical festivities and the establishment of rules in conformity with the Christian religion, and the ancient practices to revive the old faith — in other words an attempt to rediscover the past.

Evangelistic Association was started in 1886, and Revival Convention in 1895. By removing the compulsory celibacy of priests, the Reformed Church had strengthened itself ordinating educated men as clergy. Sevika Sangham was organised in 1919, Voluntary Evangelistic Association in 1924, Youth League in 1932 and Edavaka Libraries in 1933.

Changes in other Churches

Changes were began to appear in the Jacobite Church. What they had been fighting against were gradually adopted. Many superstitions elements gradually vanished. They also organised Sunday schools, Samajams, Ashram, Servants of the Cross Society and Martha Mariam Samajam. Of all the Christian denominations the Catholics failed to advantage of the English education in the beginning. Hence there were only a few among them holding high positions in the Government service.

Christians in Transition

Among the Christians conflict of the old and new made the social change more rapid because of the interaction of new factors went deep unhindered. Many Christian families amassed landed property by sheer enterprise. Though the Christians, by the middle of the 19th Century became a landed
interest they never completely depended upon it but entered in the field of modern business and commerce. Moreover their sense of individual responsibility compelled them to improve their lot. Besides that they could enter the field of competition with their patrimony in their hands. Their interest varied from akhari to journalism and plantation to learned profession. The Administration Report of Travancore for the year 1868-70 shows that the Christians contributed the largest percentage who turned up for English education. The percentage was 30.9159. Thus the Christians formed a predominant group of the newly formed middle class. Their first onslaught had been in the field of literature. Press and journalism were into their hands till the beginning of the 20th century. Malayala Manorama, Nazrani Deepika were the pioneers in the field. In connection with the general change there was progress among the Christian women also.

The Christian women stood ahead in female education. But, they had to face many obstacles. "Our chief hindrance in school work is the early marriage of girls at 14 --- our great enemies are the ignorant and tyrannical mother-in-laws who having been the chief servant of the husband's house, now wishes to secure an unpaid and willing servant in the young daughter-in-law160". This was vividly personified by 'Mariamma' heroine of the contemporary social drama 'Mariamma', written by Polachirakkal Kocheeppan Tharanan. Interdenominational dissensions also obstructed their way "A Roman Catholic girl was taken away by the parents because her father told us their priests ordered that the whole family would be excommunicated if his daughter was kept in a C.M.S. School where the Bible was taught161".
Importance of female education was realized by many progressive-minded men. Changes began to appear in their status from mere 'unpaid and willing servants' to responsible members of the society by economic independence through education and employment. Dr. Mrs. Mary Poonnenn Lukose became the Barbar Physician and the Director of the Medical Department and was sworn in as a Councillor on 23 September 1924, by virtue of her official status as the head of the Department. Mrs. Anna Chandy, a Syrian Christian woman and a leading member of the bar, was appointed as the first woman in the judiciary in the First Grade District Munsiff with the approval of the High Court. In some quarters it was not well received, "It is claimed on behalf of the Travancore that this is the first time a lady had been appointed to the judiciary in any part of India. The appointment which is not particularly suitable is typical of the present Travancore Government's feverish desire to get the state into the news every possible means. Subsequently, the Dewan in one of his speeches glorified, "We have a woman judge." Though only few they were the representatives of the raising generation of the Syrian Christian woman.

Christians and Political Rights

Though the Christians were economically and educationally advanced, in other fields of social life they had been gloomy. By the end of the 19th century leading men of the community were dissatisfied with their representation in the political bodies and the Government service. The growing dissatisfaction led to the participation in the Malayali Memorial. Malyala
Manorama also discussed the need of proper representation in the law making bodies of the state as they predominated in education, industry, trade and commerce and agriculture. The claim was supported by their contribution to the revenue of the state. Later, analysing the representative system the Manorama alarmed at the predominance of one community in the political affairs. The Christians then organised the 'The Travancore Cochin Christian Association' on 21 April 1898 under the Presidentship of T.C. Poomeen, an one time aspirant for a judicial post in Travancore. The 'Catholic Mahajana Sabha' started its organisational work in May 1905. The 'Catholic Congress', the 'Christian Mahajana Sabha' were other pioneer organisation of the Christians.

Occasionally the question of Christian representation was raised in the Council and Assembly. But the major political battle, with social implications, fought by the Christians against the Government was the Abstention Movement.

A meeting of the Christians of the Trivandrum area was convened under the Chairmanship of E.J. John, to study the complex nature of the constitutional reform of 1932 and expressed their disagreement. Later, various organisations of the Christians, Muslims and Ezhavas memorialised the Government. Elections were declared. Christians with their associates decided to abstain from the election. Elections were held in June 1933. On 21 August 1933, they organised The All Travancore Joint Political Congress. The Abstentionists complained of Government interference in the election and informed the Government of it in a memorial on October 1933.
But the Government refused to accept the memorial for the intemperate language of the memorial. The Christians, Ezhavas and Murlims claimed numerical representation. The Resident who went into the matter found that the difference was created by the land holding of the various communities. He concluded his analysis that "the Christians are impelled by jealousy and fear of Nair community which though numerically smaller is likely to secure an equal number of seats which the Christians on account of its greater voting strength and vested interests." The Christians submitted a number of memorials and abstained even from some public functions—presided over by the Maharaja. The Government later appointed E. Subramoniyam Aiyar as the Franchise Commissioner. The step was welcomed by the abstentionists. According to the new arrangements elections were held in April 1937. The Samyuktha Party of the Christians, Ezhavas and Muslims sacked their seats. T.M. Varughese was elected as the Deputy President of the new Assembly on 21 March 1937. He had to vacate the chair when a no-confidence motion was passed for the alleged misuse of the office. With the defeat of T.M. Varughese the Samyuktha Party reached its anti-climax. Its decline was more hastened by the resignation of Joseph Vithayathil, Mathew Chemparathi, N.V. Joseph and E.P. Varughese—all Roman Catholics—when they found that both the party Président and Secretary—T.M. Varughese and K.T. Thomas—were Marthomites, numerically smaller than Roman Catholics. On 4 July 1938, they met for the last and the organisation was dissolved and its members joined the Travancore State Congress. The State Congress continued the agitation for responsible Government.
During the beginning years of the period under study there were only very few Christians in the Government service. It was entirely manned by the caste Hindu. Even their applications were rejected for being a Christian. In subsequent years their complaint continued. It was based on their contribution to the State revenue, numerical strength and educational progress. Though there was no direct order imposing such a disability exclusion was the practice of the day. Because the appointing authorities preferred men of their own caste. But the Government were prompt in carrying out a policy with excuses.

Under these circumstances Christians of various denominations joined with the Nairs in the Malayali Memorial. But to the dismay of the Christians only the Nairs were benefited by the Memorial. Their disillusion increased in proportion to their educational and economic growth. They found their path blocked by the Tamil Brahmins and Nairs. The Christians approached the Government with separate memorials. Exclusion from the Land Revenue was more felt by the Christians. So they began to demand for the separation of Devaswom duties from the Land Revenue Department. The social aspect of the separation of Devaswom and Revenue was realised much earlier by the Resident than the deprived communities. It was the combination duties that deprived their chance. The Government objected the demand for the reason of increase in the cost of administration. The basic objection was only caste feeling. It was against this caste feeling that the deprived communities joined together. The
The Christians approached the Viceroy but he refused to interfere. The issue was often raised in the Popular Assembly and they challenged the theory of Thrippadithanam. When pressure increased Dewan P. Rajagopalachari declared, "it is not possible to throw open the Revenue Department to the Christians. It will continue to be the policy of the Department to employ them in other departments to an extent which will to some extent, compensate them for their exclusion from the Land Revenue Department." Dewaswom was finally separated from the Revenue in 1922. C.K. Mathen became the first Syrian Christian Dewan Peishkar. But the position of some employed in the service were unsatisfactory. I.C. Checco, a Syrian Christian trained in England as a geologist had to satisfy with low remuneration and chances than some of his counterparts.

Rule of Sree Mulam Thirunal (16 August 1895 - 7 August 1924) saw the rise of a number of socio-political agitation. He was followed by the Regent Lakshmi Bai as the Regent (1 September to 6 November 1933) during the Regency period also communal politics continued. But the roles were different. The Nairs became the memorialists and the Christians counter memorialists.

During the Regency the Christians had ample chances to represent in the Government service Heads of Departments and in other key positions. Therefore, apprehending that situation was slipping out of their hands the Nairs began to agitate for the termination of Regency. Agitation developed into denigration. The Government responded by the Press Regulation. Anti-Regency memorialists were submitted to the Viceroy. The
Christians viewed the situations with concern and presence of 'Sir C.P.' made it more acute. Some of the press declared, "one Sir C.P. Ramaswami Aiyar appears to be the chief adviser of these petition mongers --" It at length criticised the 'Mylapore Knight' and the memorialists. The Christians rebutted with another memorial in the name of "Travancore Public belonging to various castes, creeds and communities\(^{177}\). Approving the Regency Administration the best they expressed their whole hearted loyalty and devotion". Tone of the press criticism and the memorial shows the over charged atmosphere with communal tension undoubtedly, out of the Regents seven years rule, the Christians dominated the scene. The Christians Dewan at the Secretariat. Their presence was felt in other departments also, "A Syrian Christian triumverate consisting of Mr. K. George, the chief Secretary, Mrs. Poonnen Lukose (who attended Her Highness in her confinement) and Rao Sahib O.M. Cheriyan (who organised the counter memorial of the last September exalting the administration) is for the moment in high favour\(^{178}\). I.C. Chacko, the Director of Industries, Head of the Sanitary Department and the Professor of the Maharajas College were other eye catching figures. Even the rumour that K. Chandy, member of the Mysore Executive Council was going to replace M.E. Watts at his resignation thoroughly frightened the Nairs. One venacular paper, published from Quilon, which had shown little respect for M.E. Watts began to urge for his retention. While other Nair edited extremist papers prophesied communal riots and even revolution if a Syrian Christian was to succeed the Dewanship\(^{179}\).
With the termination of Regency the Christians were again placed in the opposition. Sree Chitra Thirunal ascended the throne on 6 November 1931 with V. S. Subramoniya Aiyar as the Dewan, 'Sir C.P.' as the Constitutional Adviser and Dr. N. Kunjan Pillai as the Chief Secretary. 'The Public Service of Travancore and Catholic Claims' remained unsolved. They memorialised the Government of the reasonableness of their claim with statistics. The Public Service Recruitment Committee already appointed submitted their report on 1933. Dr. G. D. Nokes submitted the principles and rules of recruitment on March 1935. He assumed the duties of the Commissioner in July 1935. New rules came into effect tentatively for three years on 16 September 1936. On 4 January 1938 the Samyuktha Party again approached the Dewan for modification of rules180 and for the formation of an Advisory Body. The meeting was a failure.

Rules of the Public service recruitment, after three years tentative work came up for the discussion of the House. New resolutions were passed. Later a memorial was submitted to the Dewan by the Christians complaining of their declining strength in the Government service181. The Government refused the charges. Taking advantage of the memorial they effected a new reorganisation of the communities. and in 1945, the Dewan declared the new policy of giving "all possible facilities for all communities to come through competitive doors"182.

Christians and anti-Christian allegations

Ever since Sree Chitra Thirunal assumed the power with a new team in the state administration the Christian became suspicious. This suspicion led to allegations. They believed
that what the Government was doing as a part of an officially
directed "anti-Christian missionary policy originating from and
invidiously pursued, since the publication of the last decennial
State Census Report of 1931 revealing the striking numerical
increase in the number of Christian in the State". The controversial
Census of 1931, vol. XXVIII, Travancore by Dr. N. Kunjan Pillai,
a Nair by caste and later the Chief Secretary, was said, gave
more emphasis on the loosening hold of Hindus, especially the Nairs,
and increasing power of the Christians. When 'Sir C.P.' became
the Dewan atmosphere became more tense. The British authorities
were also concerned with these developments. The Christian
irritation also was caused by their changed role. During the
Regency they were favoured and naturally in the ill-feeling
between the Senior and Junior Maharani the Christians supported
the Regent, and Hindus, especially Nairs, the Junior. Thus
since the Maharaja, son of the Junior Maharani, assumed power
'as the number of Christian officials in key positions decreased'.

The major allegations were religious, social, economic
and political. The crisis was created by the prohibition
of holding educational institutions in the places of worship.
Another allegation was based on the restriction imposed on the
construction of places of worship and burial grounds. On
enquiry the Resident found that there was much controversy and
rivalry among the Christian denominations than oppositions from
the Government. Moreover there was much truth in the argument
of the Government when taken into account the even increasing
population, total area of the State, space suitable for
habitation and competitive increase in the number of places of
worship and the ever worsening communal ill-feeling. Anti-conversion
policy of the Government was another point of discord. It began with the anti-conversion police notification issued in the context of the Allepey riot, while other 'para-official organisations' were even financially supported. This was said unfair. Then came the temple entry. "Some of the Christian Missionaries and priests regarded all these as an affront to their own activities, and there seems to be no doubt that they encouraged the laity to carry on agitation whenever there was an opportunity. By affixing to it the label of religious persecution of Christians they were often able to obtain a degree of publicity and support in the British Parliament and elsewhere which they did not deserve." The Census of 1941 reported of more than 80000 reconversion. 'Sir C.P.' while addressing the Temple Entry Comemoration meeting held on 12 November 1944 made clear the objection of the Government on conversion for procuring and manufacturing certain statistics 'favourable to a particular community'. He concluded his speech, "If they will make conversion a personal and individual act arising from a personal message we shall not quarrel. But if they resort to mass conversion Hindus will and must organise for mass reconversion on the same basis." Another anti-conversion measure alleged was labelling the Roman Catholics as depressed classes. It was taken as an insult. Another suspected item to stifle the Christians was the introduction Agricultural income tax. Eviction of the Christians from the High Range was also raised. Another major controversial allegation was the decline and fall of the Travancore Quilon and National Banks. The whole Imperial administration was doubtful of the truth of the allegation. The Bank was liquidated in 1938. However, the affairs of the bank was unsound but 'Sir C.P's' dislike for the Directors
outrun his discretion. The cry of persecution received wide attention in India and abroad. It could even create unrest among those who were in the Imperial army. The issue was raised in the British Parliament. The Secretary of State for India called for a report. The British Resident in Travancore completely denied the cry of persecution. Still amidst this acrimonious allegations, during the shastiabapooorthi of 'Sir C.P.', a Catholic Bishop and the Vatican Radio found great value in the Dewan's contributions. Last of the major allegation the attempt of the Government to introduce compulsory education. It was objected by the Christians fearing as an attempt to eliminate them from the field of education. But a majority of the public were in favour of the assumption of schools by the Government. However, 'Sir C.P.' is to be blamed for creating much communal tension. Both publicly and privately he expressed his so called anti-Christian attitude. The ill-feeling continued till the time of his departure.

The converted Christians

The converted Christians and the Government officials never existed cordially during the 19th century. Forced labour had been a matter of discord for long. The Government claimed that such labour was customary. This emphasis on customary rule was made applicable in other aspects of social life also. For instance, they were not allowed to have better houses than was customarily allowed. The 'wise and liberal Government' even pulled down some of their houses as 'they were too good for such people to live in.'
The missionaries strived to remove caste feeling from among their converts, but the Government intermittently insisted otherwise. During the Census enumeration and in other records the Government wanted the specification of caste. The missionaries opposed and represented the matter to the Imperial authorities. Whether one was converted or not the Government was unwilling to accept the theoretical social elevation. When the use of public roads came up in 1860 the Government decided against the converts. Observance of pollution was made applicable to those even converted from Caste Hindus. The Government even issued orders prohibiting the converts from the use of public tanks. But such prohibitory orders were not issued in favour of the converts even in the face of violence. However, by the beginning of the 20th century the converted Christians were unwilling to accept the domination of Caste Hindus. This unwillingness even caused riots.

Another point of difference of opinion was the admission of the converted Christians in Government schools and fee concession. The main unprofessed reason for the denial of admission was that those educated converts were unwilling to relapse to the old slavish conditions. The school admission and fee concession policy became self-contradictory. They gave a new interpretation to sections III(a) of the Grant-in-aid Code to remove the converted Christians from the scope of the term. The contradiction was that for school admission the Government did not accept the theoretical improvement but for giving aid they insisted on that. This discriminatory policy was alleged as anti-Christian. The new fee concession scheme of 1924 stipulated that in order to get concession they must
mention their original caste. The missionaries refused to accept the principle caste. An extra ordinary meeting of the Executive Committee of the Travancore Church Council was held on 19 March 1924. They discussed whether it would be beneficial to accept caste criterion, and resolved to reassert the complete disapproval of caste distinction \(^{205}\), to submit a memorandum and to enquire whether the Government would grant concession on economic backwardness and if they insist on caste theory at least to exempt their people. To their deputation the Director of Public Instruction agreed to make certain individual exemption than a general regulation. Education committee of the L.M.S. unanimously recommended to the Mission Council "to declare that it is not possible for any purpose to recognise in any way caste or community". The Mission Council resolved on 28 February 1928 to resist and urged the ministers and school managers not to sign any such document \(^{206}\). In 1937 the Government came out with another fee concession scheme completely debarring the converted Christians. The converted Christians requested the Government to stop the discrimination \(^{207}\). Their demand was supported by all the major Christian denominations. As a relief the Government ordered for three years extension of the old facilities \(^{208}\).

In 1945, when the new classification was introduced the issue was taken up by the Catholic Bishops. They complained of grave discrimination and claimed literacy had nothing to do with economic condition \(^{209}\). Later, the Dewan met the Catholic Bishops at his residence. He justified that the Government decision was based on well established figures. He promised that they
would collect fees only at a reduced rate in the Tamil and Malayalam schools and extension of concession already sanctioned for another two years without percentage restriction.  

Converted Christians and Civil rights.

Another issue in which the missionaries came into open conflict was the right of inheritance to the converts. Converts from Hindu families were not given any share even for maintenance. The first judicial decision in this was taken by the Pudukkottai Zilla Court in 1835. In the question of civil rights the Resident and Travancore judiciary expressed conflicting opinion. On the advice of the Resident the Travancore Darbar relinquished their right to escheat from such property. But, converted Christians right to property from the marumakkathayam tarwads remained unsolved. The Travancore High Court declared that converts to Christianity would lose their right ipso facto. The missionaries often complained of their grievance. The Maharaja promised to appoint a committee. Report of the Committee was submitted on 13 March 1889. They repudiated the claims of the converts on religious and social grounds. The Government accordingly informed the petitioners that as a Hindu King, the Maharaja could not grant the concession they sought.

Dissatisfied with the Government reply the missionaries decided for a united representation to introduce the British Indian Law even at least for bare maintenance. The CMS missionaries decided to circulate their petition among other denomination for approval and signature. The memorial was submitted to the Dewan on 10 October 1893.
The L.M.S. Missionaries took the matter before the Secretary of State for India. The Madras Government ordered for an enquiry. The Resident in his reply doubted whether it would be wise to interfere with the personal law of a large section to remedy the disabilities of a stray convert to Christianity Mohammedanism. He hoped legislative attempts from the marumakkathayees themselves would alleviate the iron bonds of a family system which is inconsistent with the freedom of the individual. Separate memorandums from Rev. T. Mar Thoma of the Mar Thoma Church and Mar Dionysius of the Malabar Syrian Church were addressed to the Resident in December 1895.

The Madras Government wanted the Resident to impress upon the Travancore Government of the need of adopting a modified rule of the Act XX of 1856 of the British India. Some local journals appreciated the decision and requested Travancore to accept the claims at least for maintenance. Travancore Government called for a report from their High Court. They reported that the "person who has by his own act with full knowledge of the consequence voluntarily placed himself in a position which makes it impossible for him to be allowed to occupy the family house with other members must be prepared to abide by the result of the act." An act otherwise would mean, 'Dismemberment of the taxed corporation' because of maintenance was allowed it would be an 'inducement to anadaravans to become converts and thus obtain a benefit which their own law would not be giving' and thereby placing the non-converts disadvantageously. The Madras Government decided to leave the issue. But some of the press supported the claims to
facilitate the social progress. The matter was raised in the House of Commons at the instance of the missionaries. The Government of India informed the Secretary of State of the impracticability of the suggestion of the missionaries.

In this issue the Viceroy's Executive Council was of the unanimous opinion. The matter could not be solved even in late 1946.

The Converted Christians and Missionaries

In many cases the conversions were done for political, economic and social benefits. The backward communities found it as a best means to counter-balance the caste and social weightage which the socially privileged had at their disposal. As conversions were motivated, the converts carried with them most of their old habits and social customs. Thus the missionaries had to fight caste from among their converts. The CMS in Travancore was monopolised by the Syrian Christians and they remained with them only so long as they could enjoy its benefits. In fact such superiority existed in the educational institutions to a great extent. Others remained 'helpless and voiceless'. The missionaries had to take steps to maintain equality in the Church. They made efforts to identify the causes which would help their converts to 'relapse to heathenism'. Speaking of their achievements they could overpower the spirit of caste and seclusion to a great extent. So was the case with use of intoxicants. The missionaries as a major factor for social change almost burned out by the first decade of the 20th century.

At the end, there existed frustration, desperation and appreciation. Frustration among the missionaries, desperation among the converts and appreciation among the outsiders.
One of the main causes for the limited success of the Missionaries was the unrestricted conversion. They knew that they were being used by the converts for economic, social and political causes. Besides, their attempt to isolate the converts created a group of men neither Christians nor Hindus, nor forward nor backward. It resulted in the formation of backward community Christians. The Missionaries lacked unity and indulged in interdenominational struggle.

Missionaries of the LMS were perturbed by the 'operations of the Salvation Army' at Nagercoil, 'the Boom' and 'the war cry' which ended in the capture of '2001 prisoners', because an LMS Missionary wrote, 'much soil have been prepared by us and seeds widely scattered and it appears certain that unless the mission makes a decided forward movement especially in the way of establishing many more schools amongst them the Salvation Army which had really done nothing hitherto will reap the harvest we have sworn'. The disputes were as to the field of work, one indignantly wrote, "I wish to assure that we are not coming to Travancore to tear or criticise the work of any mission society."

The LMS had to face great competition from the Roman Catholics and Lutheran mission. So they feared that even a change of the European Chairmanship might result in the "whole scale defection of certain Churches and even classes". Lack of co-ordination resulted in overlapping of their work and jealousy went to the extent of deciding the 'harvest field' — South of Kottarakara for the LMS and north of it for the CMS — by the good shepherds.
Muslims and social change

Of all the communities the Muslims remained extremely backward in modern education. The Administration Report of the Government for the year 1869-1870 says that the total percentage of Muslims children in the English Schools were only 3.7\(^2\). In 1875, their strength increased to 4.72, but in 1881 it decreased to 3.18\(^2\). The total population of Muslims in the state according to the Census of 1901 was 190566. But at the end of the year 1908-09, there were only 8869 boys and 225 girls under instructions\(^2\).

Being aware of the importance of education of Muslims, the Government exempted those Muslim children studying in Cantonment LPS from the payment of fees as required by the regulation\(^2\).

The community itself became more aware of the importance of modern education. Requests were made in the Popular Assembly for the advancement of Muslim education as hundreds of young and old men were living without any proper instruction and 'they were leading a corrupt life and disturbing the peace of the society'. To remove this the Government help was sought by the community as they had no means. The Government was requested to open special schools\(^2\), besides those already existing.

On the basis of the representation in the Popular Assembly the Government resolved to include Muslims as educationally backward class and concessions regarding aid and qualification of teachers were accepted, full salary grant was sanctioned in
primary schools, and half fee concession in all the Government Schools.

Constant representations of the Muslim community in the consecutive sessions of the Popular Assembly were for the facilities to study Arabic and religious education. In 1912, the Government asked the Directors of Public Instruction to submit a report on the Muslim education. In the subsequent conference held by the Directors the question of their education was discussed. In his report the Director held that the Muslims had not taken use of the educational facilities offered by the Government and did not recommend for further reduction of their fees, but suggested for the arrangement to study Koran, formation of special schools with liberal concessional grant, establishment of Special Schools for Muslim girls, and scholarship for those who study in colleges.

The Government also accepted the view of the Directors that the Muslims had not taken advantage of the facilities offered and requested the influential men to take special interest in their attendance in schools. In 1915 the Government sanctioned the appointment of Arabic munhis in elementary schools with Muslim majority.

The Muslims, in order to improve the educational condition requested for further concessions and employment in the Government service by relaxing their qualifications for appointment. As the education of Muslims engaged the attention of the Government they sanctioned free education for Muslim girls in 1917 in all English schools and colleges.
In 1921 the total strength of the Muslims in the state was 270478 of which 26191 were literates in vernacular. It constituted 9.68 percent of literates, and 1159 were literates in English constituting 42 percent. During the next decade the number of Muslims under instructions increased by half.

The Education Reforms Committee found that the percentage of Muslims under instruction to their total population was 5.9. The figures when compared to other communities were extremely low. The rate of increase remained unsatisfactory which was at an average of 650 a year. The number of Muslim students under instruction in higher grades showed a considerable reduction in number. In the year 1931-32, the number of students in class 1 of Vernacular schools was 7380 while in class 7 it was only 219. Wastage and stagnation was high among them than the general wastage. As regards English education they made little progress and among the girls it was practically nil — only 55 girls were reading in the primary stage. This backwardness was directly reflected in the literacy figures. While the literacy figures for all communities in the state showed 40.8% for males and 16.8% for females, among the Muslims it was 21.01 for males and 2.41 for females. Thus the special measures adopted by the Government proved unsuccessful.

The Education Reforms Committee expressed the opinion that, "— viewed as a whole the condition of Mohammedan education can not be regarded as satisfactory, and it is obvious that well organised and special effort will have to be made both to improve the efficiency of existing Mohammedan institutions where they are retained and to persuade the members of the Mohammedan
community, generally, that education, at least to the end of the primary stage for their children, boys and girls, is both necessary and useful. They recommended for separate schools for Muslim girls so as not to hinder the progress.

During the year 1933-1934 distribution of the strength of Muslim boys and girls in English schools was for preparatory class 373 and 43, Form I 236 and 21, Form II 252 and 19, Form III 191 and 7, Form IV 140 and 3, Form V 112 and 4, and Form VI 110 and 2 respectively. In vernacular schools during the same year they were distributed as class I 5864 and 2485, Class II 4158 and 1161, Class III 3449 and 747, Class IV 2323 and 278, Class V 643 and 40, Class VI 356 and 23, Class VII 306 and 20, and Class VIII 17 and 0 respectively. Both the above distribution shows that their progress was disproportionate.

As regards higher education also their progress was insignificant. During the year 1108 there were only 62 Muslims in college classes, and in 1109, their total strength was distributed as 31 in Science college, 21 in Arts college, 0 in women's college, 3 in training college 0 in Sanskrit college, 15 in Private college.

It was complained that the Muslim Inspector of Schools was appointed to propagate the importance of education among the Muslims and also for inducing and creating opportunities for such people. But, however, they felt that his work was a failure. The Government explained that decrease in the number was due to the strictness in the rules for admission. They
refuted the charge that work of the Inspector was a failure and claimed he had been active in organising the parents teachers association which increased the number of students in schools.253.

The fee concession scheme which existed in 1938 awarded half-fee concession to Muslim boys and girls in colleges and English schools provided they were poor. Award of fee-concession in vernacular schools were subjected to percentage restriction. All Muslims girls were sanctioned full fee concession in all institution without reference to percentage restrictions. During the same period there were other scholarships also specially intended for Muslims. All Muslims girls attending department English schools and college were awarded scholarships at the same rate of boys in such institutions. Two merit based scholarships of the value of Rs. 7½/- per mensum in the Intermediate classes and two scholarship of Rs. 11½ in B.A. classes were also awarded each year. These scholarships were made tenable for 4 or 5 years. For English schools and vernacular schools 5 Muslim scholarships of a monthly value of Rs. 3-21-0 in classes 4, 5 and 6 of English schools and for English middle schools 8 scholarships of a value of Rs. 2-7-0 each per mensum were also awarded for a period of 5 years. In vernacular schools, 12 scholarships of the monthly value of Rs. 2-7-0 were awarded to both boys and girls studying in class 5 tenable for a period of 4 years.254.

Policy of special encouragement to Muslim education continued. A.M. Abdul Kader continued as the Inspector of Mohammedan Schools in 1943-44. Total number of Muslims under
instruction increased to 34327 in 1119, and the total number of girls under instruction increased to 10488 and the corresponding figure for the boys was 23839. In 1119, the total number of special schools for Muslims were 84. Classwar strength of Muslim boys and girls in English schools were, Preparatory class 678 and 212, Form I, 559 and 138; Form II, 431 and 161; Form III, 324 and 117; Form IV, 233 and 41; Form V, 173 and 34; Form VI, 153 and 19 respectively²⁵⁵. Even in late 1944, the Muslim education especially of girls had not made much progress. It was only in 1944 that a stray girl came up for B.A. course.²⁵⁶

The following table clearly shows the diffusion of education among the Muslims.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class/Form</th>
<th>Boys</th>
<th>Girls</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Class/Form</th>
<th>Boys</th>
<th>Girls</th>
<th>Total</th>
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<td>1</td>
<td>7976</td>
<td>4416</td>
<td>12392</td>
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<tr>
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<td>851</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5612</td>
<td>2617</td>
<td>8229</td>
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<td>II</td>
<td>564</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>684</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4419</td>
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<td>11</td>
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<td>10392</td>
<td>34068</td>
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Ref: Education Section, File No. 1355/1947, Report of the Administration of the Education Department for the year 1122/1946-47.
Females in vernacular education constituted nearly half of boys and in English schools not even 1/3 of the total strength. In comparison to their population and literacy in other communities they were unwilling to take the facilities offered by the Government.

In view of the backwardness of the Muslim education the Government continued most of the financial assistance. Even after decades the propaganda work could not penetrate their superstition. Because of compulsion and instigation of the progressive minded men some of them had send their girls for education to the schools. But still the majority remained illiterate.

The main difficulties of the education of the Muslims was their insistence on religious education and economic backwardness. Representation in the successive sessions of the Popular Assembly centered round religion oriented education. Hence the Government decided to tackle the situation in two ways. In all the Departmental schools where there was Muslim majority Arabic and Koran teachers were appointed and some schools were set apart for Muslims in their area. A Muslim Inspector was appointed to inspect such schools. Establishment of separate schools for Muslims came for criticism of the State Council because separate schools later became permanent schools and subsequently would become less efficient. Moreover, the proposal to separate schools was against the spirit of nationalism which would create only communal rivalry and jealousy. It was requested to educate the new generation together.
Another difficulty was the orthodoxy of the Muslims. On account of which the school-going age was tampered by religious education\textsuperscript{261}. Thus primary education received only scant attention. Many parents did not show any interest for the education of their children and made little sacrifice. Though requests were made to impose compulsion of parents\textsuperscript{262} the Government was unwilling for that step. Religious leaders were also responsible for the situation and worked detriment to the interest of education, "...Mullas amongst the Muslims, preached that English education was against religion and those who studied it would go to hell\textsuperscript{263}". Such attitude even led to difference of opinion between the local conservative section and Arabic and Koran teachers in certain localities\textsuperscript{264}.

Another major obstacle for the Muslim female education was the partiality to women. Conservatives disliked sending them outside their home and the same prejudice was there for their higher education. Moreover, superstitious social prestige also prevented many from attending the schools and was unwillingness to send their girls outside home after the age of 8 or 9 years\textsuperscript{266}.

Whatever might have been the reason the Muslims were poorly represented in the Government service. For instance, in the Education Department, of all the 45 important appointments from 1911 to 1932 Muslims got only 2, in the girls School branch of the vernacular education of the 1206 appointments from 1914 to 1932 Muslims got only 6, in the vernacular branch of the 217 appointments from 1920 to 1932 they got 4, in the English branch, of the 245 appointments from 1922 to 1932 they got only 11, and in the training colleges there was none\textsuperscript{267}. 
Thus, the Muslims also joined with other communities in demanding a fair representation in the Government service. P.S. Mohamed emphasised the claims of his community in the Public Service Recruitment Committee by submitting a dissenting note. He said, "The members of unrepresented communities with the qualification prescribed for maintaining efficiency at present can hold appointments as effectively as the members from other communities. Efficiency is not the inheritance of a particular community". He criticised the attitude of the President in giving much vent to the question of efficiency. He continued, "It is a well known fact that whenever the forward communities find their overwhelming privileges and influences cannot be enjoyed as before if a fair principle is accepted by the State they will make hue and cry in the name of efficiency". He said that they did not request for exemption in qualifications already prescribed but what they wanted was that if there were properly qualified hands they should be appointed in proportion to their numerical strength. He based his argument because of the importance of public service in the administration of the State, because "--- the community who has no hand in public service has no status in the politics of the State---".

In their demands for political rights also they joined with others deprived sections. As early as 1922, resolutions were passed in the Alleppey Muslim Youth Organisation requesting for an increase in their number of seats in the Council and Assembly. As they were dissatisfied with the Nivarthanam agitation a meeting of the Muslim Service League was convened on 13 November 1932 under the Presidentship of A. Janab Mohammed Rawther to decide the course of action. In a deputation to the
Dewan, P.K. Kunju pleaded for the numerical representation.

Muslims and social change

Though the Muslims had no caste there were a number of traditional and occupational groups. Theoretically intermarriage and interdining between these groups were not prohibited but in practice some of them observed those restrictions. This was natural because the vast majority of them except a negligible few were converts from the Hindus living in neighbourhood could not be but influenced by the customs and practices prevalent among the Hindus. Thus some of them observed social exclusiveness and restrictions in marriage. Report of the Census of 1875 noted that most of the converts of Islam were from Hindus whom they resembled in features and followed many of the customs and manners.

A small section of them found in the Chirayinkil and Quilon taluk followed marumakkathayam. They were mostly the descendants of early settlers and converts called Nethans and did not observe purdha. It was among them that marumakkathayam was prevalent. In some parts of the Malabar area also they followed the marumakkathayam.

The Hindu customs and manners had some influence on the Muslims. Thus, among them there were deviations from the tenants of Islam due to the assimilating nature of Hinduism. Similar to festivals in temple they had their own 'chandanakkudam'. Even though the religion of Koran was pure monotheism yet the Muslims of the Malabar Coast worshipped many saints. Magic is condemned by the Koran but the Muslims of Kerala were very
superstitious and witchcraft was by no means unknown.

Details of some of their ceremonies can be traced to Hindu rituals. Among those lower at least tali was used to drive away evil spirits but the more orthodox did not admit such practises. Like Hindus the Muslims also tied tali around the neck of the bride during marriage, prayer and feasts for the dead and participation in festivals like onam etc. without any religious sanction shows the Hindu influence. Because of the linguistic problem many of them were ignorant of the doctrines and teachings of their sacred book. Rev. S. Mateer found many of them superstitious and even joining with the Hindus in festivals. Their priests were known as Tangals and exercised considerable influence among them.

As they were a part of the socially privileged section, sometimes they came into conflict of interest with the socially underprivileged sections. They even opposed the admission of such pupils in the Government schools. Some Muslims of the Kayamkulam locality forced T.K. Madhavan, in his boyhood, to remove his sandals simply for the reason of caste arrogance. The general condition of the Muslim community was observed by V. Nagam Aiya "The Mohammedans are the most obnoxious of all people to the effect of the influence of civilization. In all the District English Schools of Travancore there were only 26 Mohammedans for a population of 146909. Ignorance was their greatest curse, it was more added by the influence of priests. It was against such situation that Wakkam Mohammed Abdul Khader Maulavi (1873–1932) came up.
Wakkam Maulavi was preeminently a reformist who worked all his life to persuade the Muslims to return to the principles of Koran and to the teachings of the Prophet and to give up the non-Islamic customs and practices which had crept into the Muslim society under the grab of religion. He gave special urge to the Muslims to take up modern education. Later he entered the field of journalism and published 'Muslim', 'Deepika', and 'al-Islam'. He got the assistance of K. Ramakrishna Pillai who wished for the regeneration of the Muslims through modern education and reform organisations.

Maulavi tried mainly for the establishment of a Muslim college. In 1920, he founded the Travancore Muslim Mahajana Sabha to encourage the community for uplift and reform. His ideas were more communicated through personal contact and literature. His personal contacts had influenced the reform of the community and produced leaders like Seethi Sahib (1898-1960) and others.

Wakkam Maulavi, through the help of the Mappilas from Edavanna, got introduced to the teachings of the Egyptian reformer Muhammad ABdurah (1849-1905) and his disciple Rashid Rida (1865-1935), through the publication of al-Manar. These contacts considerably influenced Maulavi and the Muslims of Kerala. Through al-Manar he became familiar with the ideals of Jamal-al-Din al-Afghani. Roland E. Miller, in a recent study says, "The theological reform initiated by Wakkam Maulavi and carried forward by his followers was basically a conservative reform, and that, possibly, was the major reason for its advance. The direct influence of the Egyptian reform was severely confined to Wakkam and his
immediate coterie, and there is no indication of continuing widespread contact. However, the impetus was there, and the reform fed on a new spirit developing among the Mappilas as a result of secular education and modern life influences. Although it differed from the aggressive puritanism of the Arabian reform, it was perhaps not unaffected by the spirit of that movement, mediated by the personal visits of Mappilas to Saudi Arabia. In the end the movement was neither puritanism of the Wahhabis nor the "neo-muctazilism" of the culture-oriented north Indian Muslim reformers of the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries, although it shared aspects of both. It remained closest in spirit to the Egyptian reform, but was a Kerala adaptation, marked by an insistent return to the Quran and a positive reaching out to the new world. 283.

In the spirit of social reform there came up a number of social organisations. But none of them had the influence or capacity for work like the S.N.D.P. Yogam or the Nair Service Society.

Lajnathul Mohammedia Association, Alleppey was organised in 1914 to give the Muslims assistance for the modern education and development of brotherhood and unity, to eliminate the degenerated social practices and ceremonies and development of Islam. 284.

According to the decision of the conference held between Muslim leaders of various associations and the Director of Public Instruction, 74 local Committees were formed by them for the enhancement of education in various centers. 285.
In their annual conference, in order to counter poverty, they decided to educate at least 100 students every year, and to collect an endowment for the purpose from Muslim businessmen, and to remove the objection due to the lack of facilities for the education of Arabic, they suggested to make Arabic as a second language in such schools. The Association felt the need of changing some ceremonies and customs. So they decided to discontinue such functions like Muharam. That was not conducted in the year 1915.

The Muslim Yuvajana Sangham was organised in 1917. In their fifth annual meeting, under the presidency of H.B. Wakkam Maulavi, they resolved to move for a uniform system of inheritance, to put an end to the Muharam festival and not to produce, sell or consume liquors.

Some organisational works were also done by Wakkam Maulavi. He knew that local and isolated efforts were of no use and organised the Travancore Muslim Maha Jana Sabha. But it was shortlived, though it could make some impact, and later he founded the Chirayinkil Taluk Muslim Samajam in 1923 to promote educational, economic and social condition of the Muslims of that area. The first work of the association was to conduct an educational and economic survey of the Muslims on modern lines of the census enumeration and launched propaganda for the educational work. It was because of the activities of the organisation that Chirayinkil stood first in Muslim literacy. In 1938 it had 65 branches in different parts of the taluq and 14 reading rooms.
There were a number of other organisations of the Muslims which aimed at the educational, material, social, economic and religious improvement of the Muslims like "The Majid Islam Association" of Muvattupuzha (1918), "The Muslim Association" of Shencottah (1924), "Peer Muhammadia Muslim Association" of Thackala (1924), 'The Travancore Muslim Service League' of Quilon (1924), 'Nazurthudheen Society' or Mandakkayam (1924), 'The Muslims Young Men's Association' of Poovar (1932), 'The Travancore Educational Association' of Kunnikode (1936), 'Jihadul Islam Association' of Avaniswaran (1936), 'Mibdhaul Islam Sangham' of Shencottah, 'The Muslim Jama-at' of Karunagappalli, 'Rahmatul Islam Association' of Edamannam. The Muslim Service League was organised at Kayankulam in 28 May 1930 under the Presidentship of Janab K. Muhammad Ali Sahib. These organisational work had got some effect on the society.

In the past reading newspaper was not considered as desirable by the conservative Muslims. But there was considerable change in later period. As education and economic condition of the community improved, they did not observe divisions and groups and sometimes adopted the names of another group. Restrictions on intermarriage and other social customs had lost rigidity. The Regulation V of 1108, enacted on 31 December 1932 amended the Regulation VI of 1074 and repealed the section 8 of the Regulation dealing with the testamentary succession of the Muslims who followed the marumakkathayam law. However, the marumakkathayam among the Muslims ceased to exist.
Social condition among Muslim women

The Muslim women usually did not enjoy any appreciable amount of social privileges. As regards marriage they had no fixed age restriction. The Census Report of 1881 found they were usually married after attaining the age. In some cases early marriage was followed. Though there was no justification for child marriage the Census of 1931 found a comparatively high figure of married among the Muslims between the age of 10 and 15. Such marriages were conducted for temporary advantageous. Many of the Muslims were also opposed to child marriage.

Under the Muslim law, divorce could be effected when it suits the husband's fancy, but the law did not permit it otherwise at the option of the wife, even though Islam acknowledged that women had the same right as men in regard to divorce. As many of them were polygamous the lot of the Muslim women were very miserable. Women were placed under strict ghosha. Chastity was reckoned as a necessary virtue and violation of such rules were met with severe punishments. In spite of polygamy and large dowry was claimed. But it could be held only after three months of the death of the late husband.

The Census of 1901 found that the difference of age between the husband and the wife was greatest among the Muslims with a mean average of 38.9 for males and 30.5 for females. The Census of 1921 reported of no appreciable decline in the population of males married below the age of 15. But in the
ratio of married females there was a marked decrease from 25 in 1901 to 17 in 1921. In the school-going age the proportion of married males decreased considerably from 104 in 1901 to 48 in 1921, or by 54 percent, while that of the females it was not remarkable.

It was against the partiality of women in marriage and divorce that A.B. Maideen Pillai represented in the Popular Assembly. But the Government position was that the Muslims should come forward. Opinion expressed by the two Muslim representatives show the attitude of them towards the improvement of women's condition. After emphasising the social condition of women in Travancore one member of the Popular Assembly said, "But with all this, women were women all the world over. Their physical and mental capacities were very limited. The average weight of a woman's brain was less than that of a man's. Women had been called the weaker sex from the day humanity appeared on the face of the globe. To try to put them in perfect equality with men was therefore to try an impossibility. No one could go against the inexorable law of nature. Exceptional women there might have been, who proved themselves equal to or even better than men. There were therefore certain limits within which women might be allowed equality with men, but it was folly to allow them to usurp the place of men in every field.

It was in fact the duty of the Government to wean women from their desire for Government appointments. If the cult of shirt was a bar to the young men taking up manual labour, the lace of sari was a greater bar to young women taking up household work. Government had to make them understand that
their proper sphere was the home – Fashionable women in India are now doing social service by looking after other people's children in child welfare centers, while their own children were left at home at the mercy of the ignorant servants. She could shine better as the queen of her household than an Anchal Master or as a Sub-Registrar. He emphasized on the duties and obligations of marriage and complained, "Those whom God had united the Government were separating". To make sure his point, he said, "The remedy for those evils lay in reforming the present educational system and turning the attention of women in the proper sphere of life. They should not be given same kind of education as men ---." However the Government expressed that women 'cannot stand still' and informed that it was the duty of the Government to encourage and help the female education.

It was this attitude that worked most detrimental to the interest of women in their education. It was only in 1935 that for the first time in the history of Muslim female education in the state 5 women appeared for Lower Grade Arabic Examination and four came out successful. For the enhancement of the female education in the state the Education Department came into touch with different Muslim associations asking them to take up educational propaganda work and for the expenditure the Government agreed to sanction an amount of Rs. 1,000/-.

In 1936 the number of Muslim girls in the primary classes increased considerably. In class 1 the strength increased by 3615, class 2 by 200, class 3 by 378 and class 4 by 260. The increase from
1 to 3 classes were more than the total number of their girls under instruction in the previous years. This was mainly due to the encouragement given by the Muslim associations which were existing already.

During 1920's Travancore got one of its prominent Muslim lady as its social worker. M. Halima Beevi, born in 1922 at Adoor, entered the field of journalism through 'The Muslim', a women's magazine, at the age of 18. She worked also with 'Bharata Chandrika'. She was the first Muslim to get a seat in the Municipal Council in Travancore. She got elected to the Tiruvalla Municipal Council. Later, she became State Councillor. Other two important Muslim women of the state were Mrs. E.K. Kunju and Nabbesath Beebi. Except such rare instances, generally the social condition of Muslim women during pre-independence period remained backward.
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