Chapter I

BACKGROUND
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Travancore, a tiny state of India, is situated at the extreme south west of the peninsula. Before the eighteenth century, the country was known by the name Vēnād. The history of Vēnād during the early centuries of Christian era is derived mainly from the sangam literature. During the sangam period Travancore was a part of Tamilakam. Tamilakam was famous for its sangam academy and maṇram. Maṇram is said to be the most ancient institution of Tamils. Maṇram was a centre of learning where students exhibited their ability². Bards were rewarded there³. Sangam literature throws light on the fact that people irrespective of caste or social status received education in Tamilakam. Each individual was entitled to education. Students never enquired of the social status of the teacher, their only consideration being the wisdom and knowledge of the

1. T.A.S. Vol 1, p.290
3. Ibid., pp.41-2
teacher. Sangam period insisted that students should respect their teachers and help them with money\(^4\). A low caste person would be respected and obeyed by the upper caste if he was educated\(^5\). Rulers valued the advice of learned men\(^5\). If they did not take the advice of learned men the country would lose its status\(^7\).

Women also enjoyed the right of education. They had contributed to the cultural life of their times. The *Puranānūru*, one of the famous Tamil works, mentions about fifteen poetesses by name and most of them belonging to the castes now considered inferior\(^8\). Existence of reputed women poetesses clearly shows how the sangam society respected women. A Sangam poet

\[\text{References:} \]

5. Ibid.
6. Ibid.
7. *Tirukural* slokam 448
was proud to say that his wife and children were educated^9.

During the ancient period Travancore was free from the grip of strict Caturvarnya but from the sixth century onwards Aryan people from North India found their way to Travancore and the social set up began to change. Each religion which visited Travancore gave its imprint on its people. The important religions of North India like Buddhism and Jainism flourished in Central Travancore and South Travancore respectively. Buddhism was a mild religion compared to Jainism. But either of these religions could not establish itself permanently here because "the Brahmins killed it and drove away all its followers"^10. Rulers had donated liberally to all those religions^11. Those religions had their own educational

9. *Purananuru*, n.4, p.261
11. The lands granted to the Jaina and Buddha Temples were known as Pallichandams. *Ibid.*, pp.115-30
institutions. Buddhist educational institution was known as Palli, which was attached to the temple or Vihāra. Influence of Kulaśekhara Ālvār, Chēramān Perumāl Nāyanār and Sankarācharyā contributed to the ultimate destruction of Buddhism in Travancore. Many Buddhist temples were converted to either Vaishnava or Saiva temples but the system of keeping the educational institution with the temple was continued by them.

Educational Institutions of Medieval Period

Medieval period witnessed the rule of Kulaśekharas. Emergence of those enlightened rulers paved the way for the establishment of temples with sālais and māttis. The māttis were each presided over by a Sanyāsin or Paṇḍita. Sanyāsins had sometimes the supervision of the

12. Pillai, n.8, p.268. In Kerala the Malayalam word for school is Pallikudam which might have derived from Palli-sālai - Boarding school.
13. T.A.S. Vol 11, p.139
conduct of the temple business, of offering *pushpānjali* (worship with flowers) and perhaps they also participated in the teaching of student boarders of the temple. It is to be noted that some of the temples served as schools and colleges and that students were given free boarding and lodging in them. Certain rules and regulations were there on the establishment of schools. "In the Karanāgamma it is stated that the school for teaching the alphabets and elementary knowledge is to be situated on the north and north west corners of the temple; the schools teaching the various Philosophies and those for the vēdās were also situated in the temples".

'The most famous and most glorious sālai or vēdic school that ever existed in Trivancore was Kandalur Salai'. "The word salai in Sanskrit

definitely means a school".

Another famous sālai of Travancore was Pārthivapuram Sālai. It was established by the Āy King Karunandādakkan in 865 A.D. He purchased from the sabha of Minchirai, a plot of land locally known as Ulaikkudițivilai and erected a temple there and named the village around it Pārthivaśēkharapuram. He also established a sālai (a boarding school) where ninety five students could be accommodated. The students were obliged to obey certain rules. Misbehaviour among sattars is punishable by fine and loss of meals in the sālai, they shall not injure each other with weapons nor shall they carry weapons within the places of congregation. Again they shall not keep their concubines (or female servants) in their quarters.

17. T.A.S. Vol 1, p.10
18. T.A.S. Vol 1, p.3
19. Ibid.
20. Ibid. Also see Vol11, p.129
21. Sattars is the word used for students.
22. T.A.S. Vol.1, p.5
The students who wanted admission in the sālai had to be certified by another five sattars that he is proficient in Vyākaraṇa, Mīmāṁsa and Paurohitya. Therefore it could be assumed that the sālai was a centre of higher education.

Another famous institution in Travancore was Tiruvalla sālai which flourished under the great Kulaśekharās. In all these institutions free food and lodging were provided for the students. People made handsome contributions for meeting the expense of food for the scholars. Lands were granted for meeting the expense of the temple. Land granted for this purpose was known as Śālabhōgam. Thirty five parās of rice was cooked for the midday meal of the students of the Tiruvalla sālai. Instructions were specific on how to distribute the rice offered for Pūjās. After pūjās, food was supplied to

23. S. Gurumurthy, Education in South India, (Madras, 1979), p.61
24. Ibid., p.61
25. T.A.S. Vol.11, pp.149-53
26. T.A.S. Vol.1, p.2
27. T.A.S. Vol II, p.3
28. T.A.S. Vol II, p.171
29. Ibid., p.136
students\textsuperscript{30}.

Another famous institution was Srīvallabhapṛeruṇḍālai of Kanyakumari set up by Srīvallabha the 'Pandya or Ayking' who lived about the ninth century A.D.\textsuperscript{31}. There was a famous sālai at Mūzhikulam also\textsuperscript{32}. In all these institutions only Brahmin students could study. Caste system had begun to tighten its grip on the people of Travancore and Brahmins became at the apex of the society. People began to see some sort of sacredness in Brahmins\textsuperscript{33}. It might have been the reason why rulers and common people including women used to donate lands for feeding Brahmins. Brahmins were appointed as ūralies. Management of the temples in villages

\textsuperscript{30} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{31} T.A.S. Vol II, p.138
\textsuperscript{32} Pillai, n.8, p.268
\textsuperscript{33} P.K.Madhavan, T.K.Madhavante Jeevacheritram (Biography,M) Vol I, (Quilon, 1112),pp.2-3
\textsuperscript{34} T.A.S. Vol II, pp.139-40
had been entrusted to Ļurāl - Ļurāl literally means the rulers of the village, ie, the head men, the city fathers. Temple properties were also held under their management. Sabha could not control them and in the long run they became the owners of land as well as temples. No wonder that all the benefits were given to them. Brahmins were allowed to stay with the students in the sālaís. Arrangements were made to feed them. Rulers respected the Brahmins and began to give more and more importance to religion.

The love and harmony which existed during the sangam period faded into oblivion and Ėaturvārṇya tightened its grip on the people. In short it could be assumed that one of the systems perpetuated by the medieval rulers and Hinduism was the handing over of education exclusively to the hands of religious men.

35. Ibid., p. 139
36. Ibid.
37. Ibid., pp. 149-53
38. Ibid., pp. 139-40
These religious men played a pivotal role not only in the religious but also in the educational activities of Travancore and they were able to haul up the social set-up. Temples and salais happened to be their instruments in shaping the fate of the people.

The life of the down-trodden people was made miserable under this system. Untouchability and unapproachability had cropped up. The down-trodden were prohibited from entering temples. Visscher stated: "For the mere touch of these miserable creatures would defile a Brahmin or a member of the higher castes, so would their presence the temple of the Gods, of whose favour and notice they are unworthy". Lower caste people


40. Ibid.
were expected to move away from the road whenever they happened to see a Brahmin or a Nair. These might have been the circumstances that pushed back these people of Travancore from the educational front that had been enjoyed by them in ancient times.

Sanskrit learning

Rulers of Travancore were enlightened and they patronized learning especially in Sanskrit but they had forgotten the masses. During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries Sanskrit learning progressed. "The Sanskrit schools", says Nataraja Guru, instead of reviving in the pupil the purest memories of the past, had become degraded into institutions where the ancient chants and formulae were repeated parrot like. Ambalapuzha and

41. Madhavan, n.33, p.10
Parayas and Pulayas etc. were the lowest of the orders of Caste system. They had to move away from all the other castes even from Ezhavas, for Ezhavas also were considered to be untouchables. Whenever the upper castemen happened to meet the lower caste people, they used to take bath.

Chempakaśery Rājās deserve special mention among the rulers of Travancore for encouraging Sanskrit during this period. They were Brahmins. Edappally and Paravūr Rājās were other Brahmin rulers who contributed much to the field of literature. Common people received no royal patronage and as such education deteriorated among them. This system continued for years.

**Education of the masses**

A ray of hope began to be seen by the down-trodden in Ezhuttaćcan who wanted to make a change in their educational set up. An "Ezhuttaćcan method" began to be evolved. Education of the masses

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44. Ibid., p.142

45. R. Chelat Achuta Menon, (Ed) Ezhuttaćcan and His Age. Madras University Malayalam Department Series. No.6. (University of Madras 1940)p.165

Ezhuttaćcan born in a poor family, received his early education in the traditional manner, and is said to have travelled in the other parts of India and acquired a mastery of Sanskrit and Dravidian languages. pp.49-50
masses was his ideal. He gave free education to his disciples. Thus he established Ezhuthupallis. Ezhuthupallis existed until the first half of the twentieth century, which helped the ordinary people to acquire the rudiments of education - reading, writing, simple arithmetic, etc.

Paraphernalia of Ezhuthiniruthu

The formal beginning of education was an auspicious event for the people of Travancore. It is known as Ezhuthiniruthu - i.e. the student is put to write. Paraphernalia to ezhuthiniruthu differed from caste to caste. The students even though they were so young kept the event in memory. The famous litterateur K. Vasudevan Mussathu cherished the memory of his experience of ezhuthiniruthu. At first the guru performed a pūjā for Gaṇapathi. After this prayer the guru wrote fifty-one syllables with a golden

46. Ibid., p.164
47. Ibid., p.150
49. K.V.M., Ātmakathā (K) (Kottayam, 1966) p.4

K. Vasudeva Mussathu was born in 1885 (1063 M.E.)
coin on the tongue of the student. Then the student was made to write the fiftyone syllables on rice. From the next day onwards the student would continue his writing on sand with the forefinger. The writing on sand was universal in Travancore for all the beginners.

The guru, who is called Asan, and the student used to take bath and apply Sandal paste on their foreheads and the guru attired in white dress before the function started. After bath the student would be dressed in new clothes and he would be made to sit facing the rising sun. A plantain leaf was put

50. Ibid.
51. Ibid.
52. Ibid.
53. Joseph Chazhikat, Atmakatha (M) (Kottayam, 1972) p. 20
Joseph Chazhikat was born on 25th March 1892. His description throws light on the social conditions of the early twentieth century. It is a fact that the conditions of the slaves had improved considerably. His people owned slaves, both men and women. Some of the names of Pulayas they owned were Theyyathan, Kochuwallon, Painkili, Choti, Reelan, Cochuchoti, Mashira, Kilimala, Poliyal, Kurumba, Kiliyil, etc. He came to know that Theyya than Pulayan was bought for thirty five rupees and price for his wife and children was forty rupees. These slaves were to work in the waking hours. If this was the case in the beginning of the twentieth century, one wonders what were the sufferings of these folk during the 19th century.

54. Ibid.
before the child and four measures of rice would be spread on it and the Asan would make the child write on the rice with his forefinger.

The words used during ezhuthiniruthu differed according to the castes of the students. Joseph Chazhikat, being a christian, was made to write "Tampuran tunakka, Guruve Saranam, Devamatavu Sahayam". Some christian teachers made the christian students write 'Misihatunakka'. Joseph Parecattil remembers that Christian teachers never made the children write Hari Sri Gana Pataye. Usually a Hindu student was made to write 'Hari Sri Ganapataye Nama' first on rice and then on sand. Most of the students went

55. Ibid.
56. Ibid. Tampuran = God, Tunakka = help, Guru = Asan or teacher. Saranam = refuge, Devamatavu = Mary (Mother of Jesus Christ)
58. Ibid. Hari Sri Ganapataye Nama =
to ezhuthupallis conducted by Āsans. Private schools were conducted by Nairs for the members of their family engaging a teacher. Some nairs used to teach all the students of the Kara. Some families engaged teachers in their homes for imparting general education for their children.

Age at which the students were put to ezhuthininiruthu also differed. Most of the students started education in their fifth year. Even in the eighteenth century it was the accepted custom. Ezhuthininiruthu at the age of three was not rare.

59. Balakrishna Warrier, Prāchīnakośam (M) (Trivandrum, 1107 ME), p.291
60. M.S.A. Rao, Social Change in Malabar, (Bombay, 1957), p.169
62. K.V.M. n.49, p.4
63. N. Balakrishnan Nair, Swarajyabhiman Adhava Velu Thampi Dalawa (M) Biography (Trivandrum, 1967 edn), p.30. Velu Thampy was born on 6th May, 1765.
64. K.V.M. n.49, p.3
It could be seen that ezhuthiniruthu started between the age of three and five years. For K.M. Panikkar this auspicious event was started when he was four. In normal case the students had to spend four years in ezhuthupallis for completing general education. Writing, reading, and arithmetic were taught there. In some schools simple lessons in Astronomy, Astrology, Medicine, Sorcery, etc. were taught. Different ezhuthupallis opted different subjects.

There was no fixed amount of fees to be given to the Āsāns. They used to get dakshina while performing ezhuthiniruthu. On important occasions like Ōnam, Vishu, etc. the students used to give dakshina.

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65. K.M. Panikkar, Smaranadarpanam Vol 1 (M) (Ātmakatha) p.12 (Refer pp.4-5)
66. n.63, p.32-3
67. Ibid, p.33
68. Ibid. Also Refer P.Govinda Pillai Biography (M) (Kottayam, 1971) p.14
69. K.M.Panikkar, n.61, p.13. He used the word Kalari for Ezhuthupalli
70. Joseph Chāzhikāt n.53, p.20 Dakshina =
presents to the Āsāns. During harvest seasons rich students used to give them paddy. Grown up bright boys were appointed as Chaṭṭambīs by the Āsan. These Chaṭṭambīs used to instruct the students in the absence of āsāns. The teachers were not after money but their well being was looked after by the parents and rich people of the kara.

From the books and biographies of early period it can be assumed that formal education was conducted by people themselves. The down-trodden also might have arranged a system of education for themselves.

71. Mathew M. Kuzhiveli, Prācheena Kērala Vidyābhyaśm (M) (Trivandrum, 1947) p.58
72. Ibid.
73. Veḷāyudhān Paṇikkassēry, Dr. Palpoo (M) Biography (Trichur, 1970) p.16
74. Veṇamāṇikkam the first convert of Ringeṭaube was a literate. Sri Nārāyana Guru, the great social reformer though a member of the then ‘untouchable’ Ezhava caste was a scholar in Sanskrit language and well versed in vēdās.
Education in Kalaris

After the study in Ezhuthupalli a nair student continued his education in kalari and a Brahmin student in matṭ. It had to be assumed that training in kalaries was compulsory for nairs. Most of the nairs took to soldiery. Compulsory training for certain sects in kalari might have been the after effect of chēra - chōla war. Martial fighting began to be considered a mark of respect. During the eighteenth century respected men used to wear swords. Even girls were given training in Kalaris or gymnasiaums. Each Dēsam had its own kalari. Kalari or gymnasium was built in the shape of a shrine in a corner of the compound.

75. n.43, p.311
76. Elamkulam n.8, p.278-91
77. Nair, n.63, p.35
79. Varma, n.43, p.313
little removed from the residential apartment
and it was square in shape and in its corner
was a small symbolic shrine with goddess Kāli
installed in it. Kāli is said to be the war
goddess. Usually the students attended the
kālāries from their twelfth year. Brahmin
students did not attend the kālāries.

Higher Education for the Brahmins

After early education Brahmin students attended
Vedic schools. They used to get rudiments of
education at their own Illams. After initiation
or upanayana a Brahmin student was sent to a maṭṭh
where he was taught by a guru. Usually the
upanayana was performed at the age of twelve.

80. Ibid.
81. Nair, n.63, p.35
82. During the Chōla–Chēra war Brahmin students
were said to have helped the Rājās in war.
The sālais had been converted to military
academies.
83. Rao, n.60, p.168. Illam = House of Brahmins
84. Brahmāsrēe Pūnnaśśeri Neelakanta Śarmayude
Śishyanmar, Nammude guru (M) (Mangalōdayam,
1093) p.6
85. Ibid.
In matṣṣ they received free boarding and lodging as during the early period. At the end of their studies they used to give gifts - gurudakshina - to gurus.86.

It could be seen that towards the end of the 18th century universal education was not there in Travancore. All sections of the people were not able to get education - even rudiments of education. Higher education was meant only for Brahmins. Masses were kept in ignorance and want. The rulers also believed that ignorance and poverty were essential to keep the people under their control. The people of the lowest social group enjoyed no rights.

Social and Economic set up on the eve of the arrival of Missionaries

Temple inscriptions before the nineteenth century clearly reveal that local chieftains like Pulayās, Idayās and Vēdās were land owners.87.

86. Rao, n.60, p.169
87. Elamkulam, n.8, p.325
Social status of those people deteriorated with the advent of Nambūtirīs. They were at the apex of the society, leading an aristocratic life, both intellectually and economically. By a peculiar social custom they managed to bequeath their land in perpetuity from generation to generation. By their intellectual integrity and scholarship in Vēdās they influenced the rulers and managed to become the purōhitās of temples when temples

88. Only the eldest member of a Nambūtiri family had been permitted to have legal marriage with a Nambūtiri girl "younger sons" says Kathleen Gough", had been recognized liaisons with women of matrilineal castes, whose children belonged to mother's caste and lineage by matrilineal descent. These hypergamous unions were regarded by Brahmanas as socially acceptable consubings, for the union is not initiated with vedic rites, the children were not legitimised as Brahmins and neither the women nor her child was accorded the rights of Kin" David M Schneider and Kathleen Gough (Ed) Matrilineal Kinship, (Allahabad, 1972 reprint)p.320
became part and parcel of social life. Common people donated their land to the temples, mainly as a ploy to escape from the payment of tax. In most cases the temple lands continued to be cultivated by the donors themselves and in such cases the rent was lower. Thus the major portion of the land of the country was found in possession of either temples or Brahmin Jánmis. The Jánmis were feudal lords without any obligation to the rulers.

The Land lord (Jánm-Kār) retained a portion of the land as his private domain for his cultivation by his serfs. The rest was held by Nair non cultivating tenants (Kanakkaŗs). Each of them like the land lord retained a portion of land for cultivation by himself with the help of serfs and rest of the land would be distributed among subtenants (Verumpāttamdār).

89. T.A.S. Vol II, pp.343-4
90. C.K. Kareem, Kerala Under Hyder Ali and Tipu Sultan appendix XI, (Ernakulam, 1973) p.296
91. Gough, n.88, pp.314-5
Verumpattam was a simple lease from year to year. Kanakkars gave annual rent (pattam). This kind of peculiar system had existed in Travancore prior to the arrival of the British. Accumulation of land in a few hands curbed the chance of owing land by the poor peasantry.

The peasants and labourers had to pay numerous kinds of taxes to rulers and feudal lords. These taxes were on feudal nature. "A list of such cesses," writes in History of South India, "fees, fines, obligatory presents etc., itself will be long enough to fill a page". Low caste ryots in Travancore


Enikānām (fee for ladder) Valakānām (fee for fishermen's nets) Talakānām, Mulakānām, (Taxes imposed on low caste men and women respectively) etc were some of the taxes existed in Travancore.
were subjected to gratuitous services and free labour like Cilium and Viruthi. Ezhavas stood below the rank of the Nairs. Jacob Canter Visscher had stated of Ezhavas:

This caste comes next below that of the Sudras but is considered much less honourable. In times of civil war or rebellion, the chegos are bound to take up arms for the lawful Sovereign; and some princes employ them as soldiers on other occasions, if they had not a sufficient force of Nairs. Their principal occupation is that of drawing toddy which is compulsory on their caste.

95. Visscher, n.39, p.128
They were untouchables. Maha Deva Desai holds the view that "Malabar which includes Travancore was the blackest spot in the untouchability map of India".

During the nineteenth century a large section of the people was slaves. In Travancore Pulayās were treated as slaves and were mortgaged. They were a diminutive race condemned and neglected from generation to generation and were kept half starved.

96. Maha Dev Desai, The Epic of Travancore (Ahmedabad, 1937) p.119
Nādārs who lived on palmyra tapping were also untouchables. Pulayās, Parayās, Kuravās, etc. could not approach Ezhavās though they were untouchables.

97. Samuel Mateer, The Land of Charity (London, 1871) P.41
They were transferred at the choice of the owner, were offered as presents to friends or as gifts to temples and were brought, sold and mortgaged in the same manner as the land on which they dwelt or as the cattle or other property of their owners.

From dawn to dusk they had to work in the field and during nights they were engaged in watching the field, public houses, etc. 99. All the "well to do" people owned slaves 100. The Pulayās were not allowed to build huts for themselves to escape from the inclemencies of the weather. Some of them made a shelter with four bamboo poles, the sides of which were not covered. Most of them made nests in the branches of the thickest foliaged trees 102.

Perayās were also untouchables who hired themselves as labourers to earn just enough to satisfy the cravings of hunger. Vētās lived by hunting. These down-trodden people believed that

99. The C.M. Intellegencer, Vol VI, 1855 p.22
100. Suvān Chāzhikāt, n.53, p.11-2
102. Ibid., pp.60-1
103. Ibid., p.50
they were born to serve the upper castes and their fate was irrevocable. Life of these people putting up with hopeless poverty, was miserable. Their lives were considered of no value and they were inferior to chattels. Even human sacrifices were not uncommon. Neither the government nor their employers took pity on them. The feeling in them, that they were made for others, strengthened by the behaviour of the upper class.


"It is not fifty years since an instance occurred of this inhuman and diabolical practice in the immediate neighbourhood of Kottayam. A Zamindar was endeavouring to build up a bund, which the waters carried away as often as he made the attempt. Some Brahmins told him he would never succeed till he had offered upon three young girls. Three of the age fourteen or fifteen were selected, the dreadful sacrifice was made and the ground was made and the ground was stained by the blood of these innocent victims" (Quoted from C.M. Record, April, 1849)
Political Condition

To add fuel to the fire the political condition of Travancore was very grave and the rulers concentrated their attention on the safety of their position. Dawn of 18th century saw that Travancore was facing a great challenge from outsiders. Rāma Varma, the then ruler had been pressurized by outside elements. Tipu Sultan, the ruler of Mysore, imposed a great threat to his safety. Rāma Varma thought it wise to have friendly relations with the English East India Company with which he had already had trade relations. He signed a treaty with the East India Company in 1795. For the Company, Tipu's attack was a blessing in disguise. The Rāja by the treaty agreed to maintain a subsidiary force of Company troops for the safety of his country. When Tipu had vanished from the

105. W. Logan, A Collection of Treaties, Engagements and other Papers of importance Relating to British Affairs in Malabar (Madras, 1879 edn), PP. 242-4
Political orbit of India the Maharaja wanted to slip out of the grip of the British and tried to make friendly relations with the French and the Dutch. The Dutch had some transactions with the Travancore government. By making friendship with the French and the Dutch the Dewān of Travancore made it a point to check the Europeans in Travancore. He directed Colonel Daly to place guards at such places as may be necessary for the prevention of all Europeans passing or repassing through the Travancore dominions without proper passports. Dewan also placed Nair Sepoy guards at Strategic outposts between Cochin and Quilon. English East India Company was alarmed at the

106. Ibid., p.133. The Dutch sold Ayacotta and Fort Crangannore to Travancore Raja on 31st July 1789.


108. Ibid.
inertia of Travancore government against them. The Rājā was also reluctant to pay the tribute he agreed to pay to the Company. These circumstances made the Company force the Rājā to sign a treaty with it in 1805. By the treaty of 1795 the Travancore government had to pay Rs. 3,81,456.3/- to the Company. By the new treaty the government was forced to pay an additional sum of Rs. 4,01,655/- and the total amount coming to about eight lakh rupees (7,83,111.3/-). Eventhough the Travancore government had signed the treaty and agreed to make the payment, both the Rāja and the Dewān were reluctant to oblige the treaty as Tipu Sultan had been eliminated from the political scene. The government at Fort St George had on many occasions reminded Travancore government to pay subsidy but the Dewan gave no heed to their

110. Ibid.
reminders. Velu Thampy Daława of Travancore once a friend of the British and now an arch enemy had begun to collect men to oppose the Company. He received support from all quarters of Travancore and to make enough preparation Thampy moved to Alleppey.

**Travancore under Company's control**

The Company assured Thampy of protection and security from him and his family and friends in case he left Travancore without delay. The Resident even promised that he "will receive the most honourable treatment and that handsome allowance will be provided"


Also see fn. Secret Cons: 2nd January 1809. No.25 f3 (mss)


for his support. But Velu Thampy hatched a plot against the Resident and attacked the Residency on December 28, 1808, but he could not succeed in his attempt to eliminate the British menace from Travancore politics. The weak Rāja deserted his minister and put all blame on Vēlu Thampy to win the favour of the Resident. Travancore lost its political freedom and was put under the beck and call of the East India Company. The control of East India Company made Travancore enter into a new phase. A change was inevitable with the arrival of the new Resident Colonel Munro, a Philanthropist and a true christian who desired for the uplift of christians.

Munro

When Munro reached Travancore in 1810 he

114. Ibid., Velu Thampi pretended that he would accept the proposal of Macaulay.
found a weak ruler on the throne. As luck would have it, the weak ruler Rāma Varma died and Munro appointed Lakṣhmi Bai as Rāni to the Musnad of Travancore as the rightful heir. According to Munro the appointment was made to preserve the ancient laws and Institutions of Travancore. Really the appointment of Rāni favoured the British. The Rāni was very young and administration in her hands was not safe. Munro wrote: "The Ranee of Travancore being prevented by her sex and the Raja of Cochin by his age and infirmities from effectually superintending the administration of affairs prefer more entrusting it to a British authority in whose moderation and honour they can repose confidence.

115. Proclamation of Colonel Munro of the 14th March 1811, foreign and Political Department Notes (Confidential) file No 77(7) Poʃ 1926, Serial No.1, Government of India, Microfilm Acc.No.140 p.40 (NAI).(mss)
The principal Thampurātty has therefore an inconsiderable right to be charged with the government, until a legal heir shall be borne".
than to a subject whose ambition, avarice or pride they might find themselves unable to control. 

As Rāni could not place her confidence in her Dewan Urmīni Thampy Munro had to take charge of the position of Dewān also. It was at the insistence and compulsion of the Rāni that Munro took charge of the position of Dewān and he agreed to continue "until the debt should be paid".

The Rāni was very much indebted to the Resident for


117. Ibid., f.194

118. Ibid., f.195

From his correspondence it could be seen that Munro was not in favour of appointing a native as Dewān of Travancore. He had never confided in natives. Even the native ministers. The Cochin Rājā's words stated by Munro: "there was no person in his country fit for the office of Dewān that the Malabar were treacherous, turbulent and corrupt and therefore expressed a most earnest request Kunjukutan Menavan might be set aside and that I should myself assume the direct management of affairs. The Raja repeated this request with much emotion, he burst into tears saying that his comfort, honour and happiness depended upon my complying with his wishes".

Munro to the Chief Secretary to the government (TNA) Pol:Cons: 24th April 1812, Pol: Sundries Vol VII (mss) ff 22-23 Refer ff 1-74
the protection and help rendered to her by Munro. While the Râni was the de jure ruler Munro continued to be de facto ruler of Travancore. As a devout Christian Munro wanted to promote the lot of Christians in Travancore. Of course he utilized his authority for the well-being of Christians and propagation of Christianity in Travancore. As a humanitarian he might have pondered over the social condition of the people of Travancore. He was the deacon of his church in Scotland till the date of his death and was congregationist by persuasion. He wanted to

119. One Soobh Royer and Sangu Pillai gave a petition to the Government at Fort St. George accusing Munro that after the demise of Raja Munro set aside all the customs of the country by appointing a woman 'who is deaf and ignorant of the state affairs'. They accused him that he did all this to accumulate wealth. Letter dt 16th September 1813, Pol: Cons: 1813 Fort St. George October 1813. 120. I. Mathew of Mallappally, "Travancore a hundred years ago, the terms of the Ranees and Colonel Munro", Kerala Society Papers Vol II Series VIII P.130
modify the Syrian church and favoured missionaries from England. His position helped him to fulfil his desires because Rāni favoured him in accomplishing his wish.

Christian Missionaries

Before the treaty of 1805 the christian missionaries were not able to get a foothold in Travancore. Ringeltaube, the first missionary to Travancore, had visited colonel Macaulay at Cochin and requested to use the Resident's influence with the Rāja to permit a church to be built but permission was not granted. Charter Act missionary activities were not permitted

121. Letter of Buchman on his visit to Travancore. St. Trivandrum, Palace of the King of Travancore, 27th October, 1806, U.T.C. Microfilm, Bangalore European Mss. Minor Collection & Msc Mss. No. 227 (mss)
in colonies. This should be analysed for the rejection of institution of church. In the words of Ringeltaube the first missionary, "for some time I tried in vain to get leave to build a church in Mayilady during the last reign of Dalawa Velu Thampi opposing it. But after the late conquest I got leave for that and several other churches. It could be seen that the political conditions of Travancore favoured the missionaries to come and settle there.

**Charter Act of 1813**

Though the Missionaries were eager to spread the gospel abroad, English East India Company had "long opposed Missions within its territories from the fear that by stirring

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122. Answer to the Queries of Munro by Ringeltaube, Protestant Missionary of Travancore Dated Quilon 30th March 1813. 3C12/E1U.T.C. Microfilm (mss)
religious animosities among non-christians they would make its rule more difficult and cut into its profits. But the people of England favoured the spreading of Jesus Christ, especially those chaplains who were sent out to minister to English Residents and troops in India. Henry Martin (1781-1812) one of the chaplains evoked an impression upon the minds of his countrymen about missionary work in India. When English East India Company sought its renewal of tenure in 1813, its members stood for adding a clause in favour of missionary work in India. Thus the new Charter Act of 1813 which came into force in 1814 removed all obstacles against missionary enterprises in the company's territories.

124. Louisie Creighton, Missions, their rise and Development (London, n.d.) pp.75-6
125. P.Cheriyan, The Malabar Syrians And the Church Missionary Society 1816-1840 (Kottayam, 1935) p.85
Consequently the period from 1813-1833 witnessed zealous missionary activity in all parts of the company's Dominions. Travancore was a fertile soil for spreading their religion especially among the depressed classes. So they actively plunged into the field for redeeming the souls of the heathens. But their work was not easy. Here they saw a troubled society. Ringeltaube observed: "everything in the country being then in the greatest confusion and the natives were for grasping at under advantages if they could discover a shadow of protection." Poor people especially the down-trodden slave castes needed protection and missionaries became a consolation for them. Proselytization was the main aim of the missionaries. But they could attain this aim only through education. Thus a great

126. Microfilm, n.122
responsibility awaited them. Very few people could read among the lower sections. In order to make them read the Bible the missionaries had to give them training in reading. Missionaries wanted them to accept 'Jesus Christ as their personal saviour'. Their motto was "every teacher should try the conversion of Scholars, every physician the cure of souls, every wife the salvation of heathen mothers and children." The missionaries of L.M.S. as well as C.M.S. succeeded in their attempt to a great extent. The arrival of the missionaries was a boon to the people because it helped the growth of education in Travancore.