CONCLUSION
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The services of the Missionaries of Tinnevelly have been truly outstanding in several fields such as administration, education, social and evangelistic work. The face-lift of these fields had been growing gradually and steadily with the dedicated service of the early missionaries of the West- S.P.C.K., C.M.S., S.P.G. The enormous works rendered by the missionaries, the sufferings and the trials endured by them laid a strong foundation for the Diocese in Tinnevelly.

It was the tiny plant laid by Rev. Shwartz in the later half of the 18th century, which has become a full-grown tree with multiple branches. The tiny plant was Clorinda who is known as the mother of the Congregation of Tinnevelly. It was she who built the first Protestant church in the Diocese of Tinnevelly. Her service was not confined to Palayamkottai alone. It covered the entire Tinnevelly District. The remarkable growth of Christianity till the first decade of the 19th century was the reason for the antagonism of non-Christians against the early Christians. The Poligars were also against the Christians because they had a wrong notion that the Christians were loyal to the aliens.

There was a setback in the early period of the 19th century until the arrival of James Hough in 1816, a representative of the S.P.C.K. who established many schools and constructed many churches. The arrival of Rev. Rhenius, a C.M.S. missionary, in Tinnevelly after Rev. Hough enthused the Christians. Rev. Rhenius, a friend of Hindus and Muslims, established more than 100 schools and churches in Tinnevelly District. His service to Tamil and to the people when cholera broke out in Tinnevelly was remarkable.
The Churches in Tinnevelly were under the control of the Diocese of Madras till 1870’s. The growth of the churches in Tinnevelly was so enormous that the Bishop of Madras found it difficult to manage the churches in more than 1500 villages- 875 under the C.M.S and 631 under the S.P.G. Two saffragan Bishops, namely, Rev.Robert Caldwell and Rev.Sargent were appointed in 1877 to ease the problem and eventually a diocese exclusively for Tinnevelly was formed in 1896. The Diocese of Tinnevelly was governed by its constitution and administered through the legislative, executive and judiciary bodies. The salient feature of the administration of the Diocese was that all the members, barring a few nominated members, were chosen in a democratic manner. Another notable feature was that women were treated on par with men. The Diocese of Tinnevelly adopted many techniques for the propagation of good news. It followed the footsteps of the early missionaries to some extent and then formulated its own strategies for Evangelisation. The Diocesan Evangelistic Band concentrated on personal evangelism. The personal encounter made the Gospel more meaningful and relevant to the seeker. The people liked Kathakalashebam or Bhajanai (explaining the Gospel through songs and stories), which was very effective in rural areas.

The church workers or the Gospel agents, at the outset, concentrated their work on the areas of Mass Movement and backsliders. In addition, there were about sixty-five voluntary evangelistic Bands which preached the gospel accompanied by music. An association called independent Voluntary Evangelist’s Association was formed. The members of the Association met and shared their views among themselves. This sharing helped them to rectify their mistakes.
The early Christian missionaries were pioneers in the field of educational service. The service of Dr. G. U. Pope and Rev. Caldwell in the field of education is really commendable. They established educational institutions to mould the character and to make the people of Tinnevelly district better citizens. Evangelisation and education went hand in hand.

Owing to the centuries of exploitation and servility in the hands of Caste Hindus, the depressed class people lost their bright future in every field. Education tremendously changed every social degradation against the poor depressed class people. The Christian mission schools were opened to all castes and creeds. The missionaries neglected the opposition from the Caste Hindus for giving education to the depressed class people.

Major thrust was given to primary education, which was substantiated by the existence of 644 Primary Schools. The medium of instruction was Tamil. Attention was given to extra-curricular activities including Kummi (a dance with clapping) and Kollatam (a dance with sticks in each hand). As teachers were hard to come by, in those days, the missionaries established four teacher training schools to supply teachers for the Primary (Elementary) Schools. The Secondary schools were known far and wide for their academic excellence and discipline. The colleges had contributed a lot in the field of tertiary education. One can find a student of these institutions wherever one goes. St. John’s College and Sarah Tucker College for women have hit centuries. The latter’s contribution to women’s education goes beyond description.

The society hesitated to give education to women and forcefully prevented them from having education. The parents did not like to allow their girl children to have education from
male teachers and to study with boys. Therefore, the wives of the missionaries opened schools for girls in their houses. Thus they became the pioneers in women’s education. It led to a great emancipation of women and gave courage to them to come out from the old customs. It made a striking progress in their social and cultural life. The Diocesan institutions for girls trained them to be self-reliant and made them shine in various walks of life and to compete equally with men in various sphere of life.

Apart from these traditional schools, the Diocese maintained special institutions for the visually handicapped and the deaf and dumb children in Tinnevelly. These two centuries old pioneer institutions helped the handicapped to come to the society’s mainstream with “full participation and equality”, breaking the barriers of their being handicapped. They were given vocational education, which made them self-reliant. They were made to be living witness to all. The Industrial school at Nazareth provided vocational training for thousands of students from downtrodden families. Most of the beneficiaries of the Diocesan educational institutions except the Teacher Training Schools were the non-Christians, belonging to different castes.

The Tinnevelly Theological College at Thirumaraiyur became a main religious study centre for the Tamil world including Srilanka. It met the need of all Tamil Protestant Churches in establishing Churches and extending the Church frontiers with the help of the trained missionaries, clergymen, catechists and church workers including women lay members.

Preaching the Gospel and healing the sick had gone hand in hand in all Tinnevelly Diocesan medical centres. The missionaries established hospitals and clinics to look after the
physical needs of the people. They attained phenomenal growth under the stewardship of the Diocese. They transmitted the ideas of health, hygiene and family welfare. Rural areas had few medical facilities either in personnel or equipment. The Diocesan hospitals in rural areas offered modern medical treatments. The poor patients visited the Diocesan hospitals with hope of better treatment and care. The society neglected leprosy persons and even the cured leprosy persons. The admirable service of the St. Luke’s Leprosarium at Peikulam brightened their life by giving them shelter and employment opportunities and showed its great concern for them. It had developed into one of the foremost of its kind in India.

The service of the missionaries especially that of Rev. Caldwell’s and Rev. Selwyn’s in 19th and 20th centuries respectively when cholera took a heavy toll and is still remembered by the people of Tinnevelly. It is gratifying to note that all these hospitals are in rural areas.

The Diocesan Press and Book Depot were started with a view to catering the needs of the Diocese and the Diocesan institutions. But now their service is extended to the public too. The Diocesan cooperative store was established not for Christians alone. When there was a scarcity of food during the Second World War, it was this stores which saved thousands of poor and middle class people from starvation, irrespective of caste or creed.

The Diocese of Tinnevelly has done a lot to the people in Tinnevelly District. Though the primary aim of the Diocese is to preach the gospel, it has not confined its activities to Evangelisation alone. Not only has it quenched the spiritual thirst of the people but also revolutionised their socio-economic life by establishing schools, colleges and hospitals and by
introducing many small-scale industrial and farming schemes. This thesis proves that the once –
downtrodden, oppressed and well-nigh untouchable people in this area have been occupying
higher rungs in the social ladder. Thanks to the services rendered by the Diocese of Tinnevelly.
The Diocese introduced successfully the democratic system in their administrative set up and
cooperative movement even before independence.

Thus, the Diocese of Tinnevelly carried on the endeavour started by the pioneering
missionaries, fulfilled the need of its congregational members, the neighbourhood and extended
its service to fresh fields, new pastures and became a symbol of service. It stands as a model
Diocese to others in all fields. The Tinnevelly Diocese, through its multifarious social activities
apart from its religious activities has already transformed the socio-economic life of the people.
MAPS
1. SPG mission stations in Tinnevelly, 1890

(http://csicouncilofus.org)
2. Church of South India - 1947 (Diocesan Boundaries)

(http://csicouncilofus.org)
3. Tinnevelly Diocese - 1947

(http://csicouncilofus.org)
PHOTOGRAPHS
Photographs

1. Robert Caldwell
   1814 - 1891
   (http://ourholytrinitychurch.webs.com/)

2. Eliza Caldwell
   1822 - 1899
   (http://ourholytrinitychurch.webs.com/)

3. The newly refurbished Pastor’s bungalow and its attached chapel at Idaiyangudi today - and enhancement to the single 17 x 11 foot room Caldwell occupied on his arrival there in 1841.
   (http://www.britishempire.co.uk)
4. Old Church of Idaiyangudi - 1842.

(http://ourholytrinitychurch.webs.com/)

5. Holy Trinity, Idaiyangudi and its Chancel (right). The foundation stone was laid by Caldwell in 1847 and he dedicated the church on 6th July 1880. He and his wife Eliza were buried beneath the Chancel floor.

(http://ourholytrinitychurch.webs.com/)
5. Rev. Dr. G. U. Pope
(http://www.indianetzone.com)

7. Statue of Rev. Dr. G. U. Pope in Triplicane, Chennai.
(http://en.wikipedia.org)

8. Rev. Dr. G. U. Pope’s Grave Stone in Saint Sepulchre Cemetery, Oxford (UK)
(http://kural.in)
9. Holy Trinity Church at Sawyerpuram - 1854

(http://churchesinindia-dany.blogspot.in)