

James R. R. R.
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THE
ORATORIAN MISSION
IN CEYLON

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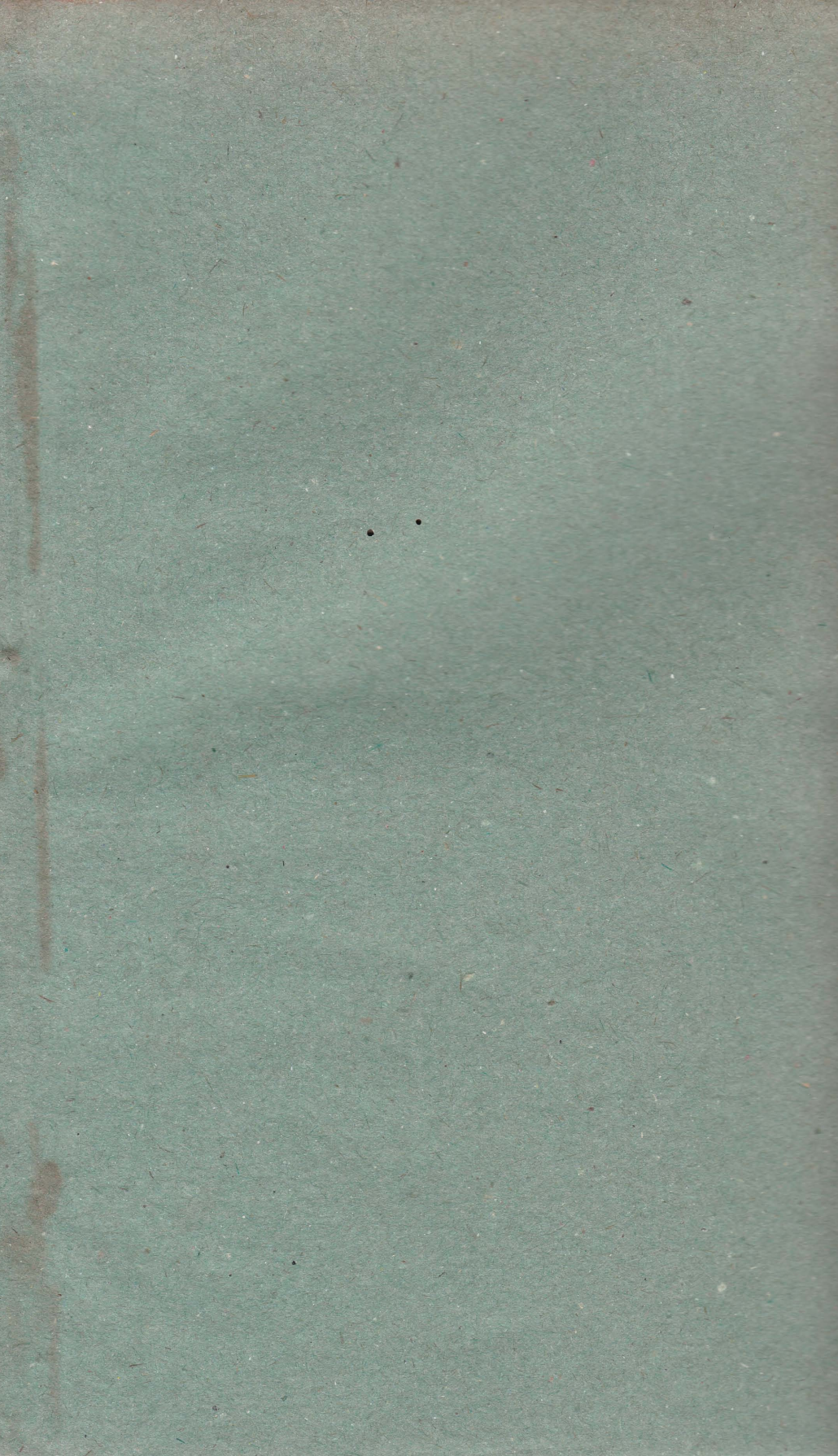
by

Father S. G. PERERA, S. J.

THE CAXTON PRINTING WORKS,
Colombo, Ceylon.

1938

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THE
ORATORIAN MISSION
IN CEYLON

Historical Documents relating to the Life and
Labours of

The Venerable Father JOSEPH VAZ
his companions and successors

Translated from the Original Portuguese and

Edited by

Father S. G. PERERA, S. J.

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L. SPILLEBOUT, S. J.,

Vicar-General.

Cum permissu Superiorum



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Father Joseph de Jesus Maria

Died, Goa, 10 January, 1729

(*Torre do Tombo, Liv. 636*)

This Father entered the Congregation as a married man and studied and received all the Orders as a member of the Congregation. In the world he bore the name of Joseph Vaz, being the son of Aleixo Vaz and Izabel de Fonseca, Brahmins of the parish of St. Bartholamew, in the island of Chorao, Goa. He followed the profession of a merchant trading to Mocambique and the Rios de Senna. In this trade he acquired much wealth, but he was a man of great honesty, free from covetousness, and gave generously for good works, and relieved the poor and spent large sums for the divine cult. God rewarded him for his services by moving him to give up the world and enter the Congregation of the Oratory; and that the tie of wedlock might not be in the way of his vocation, God also inspired his wife,¹ who was an equally pious lady, to desire the religious life. They had no children to inherit their fortune and thus they were both free to give up the world. She entered the convent of the religious of St. Monica of the city of Goa, where she became a professed religious and lived and died with a reputation for virtue.

He gave the religious dowry to his wife and to two cousins who also entered the same convent, and he himself took the habit of the Congregation of the Oratory on July 2, 1698. He delivered to the Procurator all the landed property² he had, the houses which belonged to him, and his furniture and lists of money owing to him, which were all estimated at 17,729 xerafins, on the understanding that about 10,000 would be paid to his creditors; and the remaining seven thousand odd he gave as his patrimony to the Congregation as a gift, and for some few pensions. The rest of the money that he had was used for the divine cult in the Church of Our Lady of Carmo after His Majesty granted it to the Congregation.³ They made two ornaments, one a rich golden chalice with seven frontlets; cloth for the pulpit, seven copes and two dalmatics; and another of crimson damask fringed with gold. He also contributed in large measure to the expense of erecting a silver lamp and retable that the Fathers were making for the main altar of our Church; and gave many other articles which together amounted to a fairly large sum. Thus he gave to God all that he had received from God, for he gave his house and fortune and spouse, and consecrated himself and everything else to the service of God, retaining only Jesus and Mary, which he took as his surname in place of Vaz, and thenceforth called himself Joseph de Jesus Maria.

1 Apolonia Ferreira. See ante p. 97, note 2.

2 Cf. *Livro do Patrimonio da Congreg. do Oratorio*, Goa Archives Ms. 1149.

3 The Italian Carmelites were expelled from Portuguese territory, and their Convent in Goa was gifted to the Oratorians in 1707. (Cf. *Noticia da Merce do Convento do Carmo de Goa, feita por Senhor Dom Joao V aos Padres da Congreg. do Oratorio* Ms. Torre do Tombo Liv. 636.

Having entered the Congregation he applied himself to the study of Latin and Moral Theology of which he gained sufficient knowledge ; but he made special progress in the virtues necessary for the priestly state. Just as he was an industrious merchant in the world, so in religion he became a zealous Missionary ; and as soon as the opportunity occurred he offered to go to the mission of Ceylon, without minding his feebleness nor the great toils that awaited him. He set out on 9 May, 1705, with Fathers Manoel de Miranda, Jacome Goncalvez and Miguel de Mello, over whom he was superior. During the six years that he spent in Ceylon he converted many souls, burnt many idols and destroyed pagodes or houses dedicated to the devil, and God confirmed his preaching in various ways. Father Jacome Goncalvez wrote of him : "Father Joseph de Jesus Maria eats very little and does not like to take refection more than once a day, saying that it was quite enough for the needs of nature and that he was not hungry. In his Church he observes all the practices of the Congregation, and has prayers in the morning and in the evening ; and God our Lord has wrought many things through his prayers and the relics of the holy martyrs that he brought with him ; these things I can safely say are prodigious, especially the cures and sudden health in child birth ; but they are too many to describe in detail."

In the village called Xetticulam¹ whither he was sent in the year 1710, Father Joseph de Jesus Maria wrought the following marvellous deeds:—That land was inhabited by pagans of the better sort in the country of the caste of Bellalas. The Father had already preached the gospel to them without fruit, for though they were convicted of errors and forced to confess that the religion of Christ was the true way of salvation, they would not make up their mind to abandon their paganism on various pretexts and for worldly reasons. They said that to change their religion they had to obtain permission from the lord of the land ; that their only means of sustenance was hunting elephants which they could not capture alive unless they offered sacrifices to the devil ; that their ancient gods were very powerful and vindictive, and that if sacrifices were not offered every month their children and cattle were destroyed ; and that they feared to abandon them lest they experience their anger. To the second and third argument the Father gave a most effective answer which they could not gainsay, namely, the example of the other hunters of elephants who were formerly pagans and had the same ideas about their idols, but embraced the Catholic faith, and those gods could not do them any harm ; and that without making any sacrifices and even abominating them, they took elephants alive much better than others. That, as for the permission of the lord of the country there was no need for it, but still he would obtain it for them. In fact he went to the Kinglet of the Vanny² and obtained from him the following order : " Not

1 Chettukullam (Cheddikkulam).

2 At this time there were semi-independent rulers in the Vanni called Vanniyars. In 1762 Pybus, the British envoy from Madras to Kandy, had heard of "one Polligar [Telugu *Palegadu* feudal chief] whose country lies on the north end of the Island, but of no great extent, and his place of residence, Chittihowlampet [Chettikulam-pet], who does not acknowledge himself subject to the King of Candia's jurisdiction." *Account of Mr. Pybus's Mission to the King of Kandy*, p. 25.

only is it good that the Fathers should be in my lands, but even useful and necessary ; wherefore it pleases me to grant them permission to do so : as for the matter of religion I do not ask that my subjects should remain in the one they profess if they find that the religion which the Fathers preach is good, for in the matter of one's salvation each one should be able to choose what he thinks best, provided they do not fail in the payment of tribute to me and in my service which they are obliged to, and give me elephants according to their obligations ; and now that the Father is going there let them take two or three and send them to me."

With this decree Father Joseph de Jesus Maria went to see the Bellalas of Xetticulam, and in order to remove the fear they had of their idols, he undertook to break them and reduce them to ashes as they thought that even to touch them was a peril. It was at the time when their crops were withering for want of rain, for it had not rained for two years, and the only well in the village gave so little water that there was not enough to quench the thirst of the people. When, therefore, they heard that the Father was determined to enter into battle with their gods, they begged him first of all to satisfy their thirst and save their crops, saying that it was in the expectation of rain that they had sowed their fields and that the crops were perishing. The Father replied that if they turned to God with all their hearts and abandoned their idols and superstitious practices for good, the Lord would come to their aid and help them generously in all their needs. He then spoke to them of the mercy of God whose religion he preached and showed that the devil adored in the idols was the enemy of human nature from whom nothing good could come. Upon this and other sermons they submitted, and the first to give up the devil and turn to the true God was the *patangatym*,¹ that is the head of the village, with all his family. He took the name of Philip Neri. His example was followed by some of the inhabitants of the village, who were all baptized one day. The Father baptised them and said Mass which the neophytes heard with great devotion. At the end of the Mass they brought to him some coins called *fanams*² in which were engraved the idols of those pagans and other things dedicated to the devil and treated as gods. All this they placed at the Father's feet. He ordered a fire to be made, and in the presence of all who flocked to see the sight, he threw all the diabolical emblems into the fire. It was midday, the sky clear and serene without the least sign or hope of rain, but so great was the glory in heaven when these false gods were thrown into the fire, that the heavens shed tears of joy, for at the very moment there rose a cloud which soon came down in heavy rain flooding their fields. To show that the rain was a miraculous one it happened that it was confined to that village and the rain did not fall in the neighbouring one. Upon this the rest of the inhabitants opened their eyes and decided to follow the light which God showed them by this miracle.

When the rain ceased the Father began to cleanse the village and drive out the demon from all the places where he was, burning down

1 Pattankatti.

2 A small coin, Sin. *panama* from Tam. *panam*. "The fanam was anciently a gold coin, but latterly of silver or sometimes of base gold."

his temples and destroying the idols. The place of greatest resort among those people was a very ancient tree, a large Tamarind, so superstitiously venerated that it was forbidden even to touch it. The Father began with this tree and exorcised it and cursed the devil that was in it, set up some crosses around it and ordered a fire to be made at the foot of it and sprinkled holy water. And as soon as he left the place the tree spilt into two with a loud crash and fell, to the great awe of the village and the delight of the converts. It was surely a supernatural effect and not the result of the fire, which could not have destroyed a thick and large tree so soon. In this way Father Joseph de Jesus Maria uprooted, burnt and reduced to powder all the trees, houses of the devil and idols that were in that village; and in the course of nine days by dint of miraculous deeds he converted all the neighbours. The prodigy that happened on the day of the baptism was a demonstration of joy, for it happened as soon as the Mass was over, and the idols delivered by the converts were burnt; and the rain did not fall in the other villages.

In this very village and at this same time happened a notable case of delivery. The woman was one of the principal ones of the village whose parents were still pagans, while she and her husband became converts. After the baptism, her time came to be delivered, and as the child was not born the parents removed her from the house of her husband to their own house, and there they performed some superstitious acts but without avail, for the case was even worse because the child's feet appeared. Thereupon they went to the Father, who arrived when the woman had lost consciousness. He said a short prayer and read the gospel over her and sprinkled her with holy water and recommended her to God who alone could help; and he went to continue the burning of idols. When he began to burn, a message arrived saying that the woman was safely delivered of a child. Upon this even the parents of the woman became Christians, and as they were the only ones that had not done so before, the whole village, which formerly was a forest of idolatry, began to flourish in Christian virtue. After the baptism of all the villagers he caused a church to be erected and placed in it a statue of St. Anthony, and adorned the altar with silk, appointed a teacher to teach in the school and a catechist paid by him. The houses and trees dedicated to the devil which he burnt in this village were sixteen; the idols he destroyed and reduced to powder were innumerable.

Let us now hear of another case from the Father himself. In a letter of 12th October, 1707, he says: "In this mission (to which he was appointed in that year) Our Lord was pleased to enlighten many pagans and bring them to our holy faith; among them there were in Manar three families, consisting of 23 persons, whose conversion caused great joy to the people of Manar, for they were living among Catholics from the time Our Lord gave the light of faith to the people of Manar, without ever thinking of coming over. They were greatly favoured by their Gurus¹ and Panddaras² (that is the pagan priests and masters)

1 See ante p. 210.

2 A Hindu ascetic mendicant of the (so called) Sudra or even of lower caste. A priest of the lower Hindu castes of South India and Ceylon. Tam. *pandaran*.

and were persecutors of the Christians. The Catholics therefore made great demonstrations of pleasure when they were baptized. When I wanted to come to Puttalam they made great instance begging me to remain there to give the sacraments to the sick and to exorcise their fields which were infested with insects. As I could not go to the fields they brought me insects from their fields and begged me to exorcise them. As I was going from one village to another seven persons came to meet me from different villages with insects and begged me to make exorcism on them. I obeyed as if they were my superiors, and Our Lord was pleased to reward their faith by freeing their fields from these insects. They came to tell me that as soon as they threw the exorcised insects into the fields and sprinkled holy water as directed by me, the insects disappeared like an army in flight."

In the year 1709 when he was appointed to the island of Manar, where the best Catholics of Ceylon were, he found an apostate who went about spreading false dogmas and pernicious errors which would have caused much damage had they not been speedily met and vanquished; for some people out of friendship or lightheadedness allowed themselves to be misled and hearkened to the false doctrines which he propagated. But the zealous Father Joseph de Jesus Maria did not rest till he had uprooted the pestilential cockle. He held a public discussion with the apostate and convicted him of error and left him in confusion. The people being disabused of the errors acted in such a way as to make the minister of the devil quit the place for *Manus Domini erat cum illo*; for the Father's preaching was very fruitful and there was not a single year in which he did not convert large numbers of pagans, sometimes even whole villages; and what is more, not a few were the Moors who, convinced by the efficacy of his reasoning, abandoned the teaching of the Koran and embraced the religion of the gospels.

With such zeal did the Father preach the faith, and so many were the miracles that God wrought through him that the conversions he made were many, not only in the lands subject to the pagans but even in those of heretics, where the difficulty was greater and where he suffered many tribulations. Not a few were the occasions when he was in manifest peril of being captured by the heretics, but the more his affliction increased the greater was the consolation with which heaven regaled his spirit, for the Father used to say that even in the height of anguish he felt a lively desire to suffer for God. The troubles arising from the persecutions could not diminish his ardour; rather he felt more pleasure in suffering to win souls than he did when he gained riches in trading in the Rios de Senna.

But though he was so successful a missionary and rendered such services to God, he had such a low opinion of himself that he looked upon himself as a most unprofitable labourer. He even wrote to his superiors that he felt scruples at having taken the place of a more active missionary, for any other sent in his place would do more. In fact he thought himself so lacking in virtue and zeal that in his humility he said he had done an injustice both to the priest who would have come in his place and would have done more, and to the people who would have had a better missionary in any other Father.

Though the Father suffered much in the cultivation of the vineyard of the mission, he did not fail to render a great service to the other missionaries by rebuilding the church of Puttalam and erecting a residence by its side. The first edifice raised by Father Joseph de Menezes lasted but a short time and had fallen down in less than ten years. Father Joseph de Jesus Maria undertook the erection of the second, rebuilding it from the foundation and he often worked at it himself with pickaxe in hand to show the workmen how to work, for they did not know how to work on stone. The new church he built was one of three naves begun in the year 1708; he also built a conventual residence which today is the refuge of the missionaries.¹

Full of years and merits he suffered his last illness with great patience, and after receiving all the sacraments with great devotion he departed from this life, at Goa, on the 10th of January, 1729.

1 He returned to Goa in 1712. See ante p. 97.

Father Pedro de Saldanha

Died, Puttalam, 28 April, 1730

(Torre do Tombo, Liv. 636)

This great missionary of Ceylon was a native of Margao, son of Diogo de Saldanha and Ursula Lourenco, Brahmins. Before entering the Congregation of the Oratory he was for some years a Missionary in Canara, where he was known for a zealous worker and a holy priest. When he made up his mind to enter the Oratory he was already in the forties and he first of all freed himself from everything even renouncing the ample fortune¹ he had inherited from his parents. He entered the Congregation on 8 September, 1700, and gave himself entirely to God becoming exemplary in his fervour and observance of the statutes. As these were means for one's own spiritual profit and that of the neighbour, he made such progress in the three years that he spent in the cloister that he was thought to be a person most capable of being entrusted with mission work in Ceylon for which he offered himself to the superiors who in fact despatched him in February, 1703.

Arrived in the mission of Ceylon he became the companion of the Venerable Father Joseph Vaz, from whom he learnt fresh lessons of spiritual perfection by watching the most exemplary life and deeds of that great servant of God, who was so pleased with the new missionary that he treated him with special affection as the virtuous conduct of Father Pedro de Saldanha really deserved. As charity does not stop with affection, Father Joseph Vaz showed how much he loved Father Pedro de Saldanha by giving him opportunity to make many and costly mortifications by which he exercised him and strengthened his virtue. Fourteen years² did the Father labour in that most laborious mission with unwearied zeal amidst the most trying persecution of heretics and the rigorous hunts they made at the passes to seize our priests entering into their domains. Father Saldanha came in and out of the heretical cities without minding the dangers, to the great consolation of the Catholics. He made use of various disguises for this purpose, putting on the dress of a slave and often carrying loads of fish to pass for a fisherman, which was indeed an apt disguise for a missionary who was a fisher of souls. Once he was caught by the heretics from some indications given to the watchers, but he at once pretended to be mad and when questioned began to perform some antics which brought on him some blows, but the watchmen thinking that he was not the man they were waiting for, let him go. During these fourteen years of his first missionary labour in Ceylon the number of converts made by him was four thousand, leaving out those which were not counted, for in the towns of the heretics the shortness of time and the insecurity do not often permit the missionary to record baptisms, and the Father speaking of them merely said that he had much success and did not state the number of conversions.

1 Cf. p. 231 n. 2.

2 1703-1717.

Father Pedro de Saldanha had some remarkable traits. His zeal for souls was such that wherever he was, in the thickest jungle or in the longest road in which unless he hurried on there was danger of being overtaken by night on the way, whatever be the place or the occasion, whenever he met a Catholic who had not received the sacraments for some time, he exhorted him to make his confession and remained till he did so, without minding the trouble or distance or hunger or thirst. When he was in the Congregation he was constantly in the confessional, showing thereby great promptitude towards his penitents and sparing the trouble to the confessor appointed for the week.

He had a great devotion to the Blessed Sacrament: he always venerated with most profound reverence even in the public highway when he passed before a church where the Blessed Sacrament was: always making a profound genuflection with bowed head. He was never tired of hearing and even serving Mass, and at the end of the Mass he always kissed the hand of the priest. Such being his attitude to the Blessed Sacrament from far, it can well be imagined what it was in the presence of the Sacrament: if such was his reverence towards a priest who said Mass what must it be when he himself took the sacred object in his own hands. He was the first to come to the Church after his morning prayer and the last to leave it, taking quite a long time in taking leave of the Sacramental Lord.

So great was the price he set on spiritual things that he would not on any account miss the least of them. He used to say that a spiritual person should be like a beggar, who does not like to miss the least crumb, but goes seeking them from door to door to satisfy his hunger; and that if he expects one single person to give him all he needs at once, he will have little for his dinner. If he ever happened to miss any community exercise, he tried to profit even by the little that was not yet finished. If ever he came to chapel when a Mass was ending, he devoutly heard what was left of the Mass to the very end, being determined not to lose even the part of an Ave Maria. He was particularly zealous in the observance of the rules, and most diligent and fervent in all the exercises enjoined by the statutes, especially in the matter of prayer in which his spirit took wing.

His piety towards the dead was such that he was constantly engaged in suffrages for the dead and in gaining indulgences for the souls in purgatory. The first devotion he taught others was devotion to the souls in purgatory. Whenever he heard of the death of any person, he immediately interrupted the work he was doing, however important it might be, and began to commend the soul to God. He never opened a letter without turning his thoughts to God and saying a Pater and Ave for his dear souls.

He was so meek and patient in putting up with the faults of others that he appeared to be without any vestige of the passion of anger. When he was Prefect of the Congregation¹ it happened that a strange boy that came to hear Mass in the church of the holy Cross of Miracles

¹ On 3rd Jan'y., 1719, his name appears as Prefect of the Congregation in the records of the *Junta des Missoens* Ms. Goa Archives.

entered the sacristy and stole a silver paten ; but he could not do it so secretly as not to be detected in a short time, and the stolen object returned. What did Father Pedro de Saldanha do ? He did not show the least anger, but only regretted the extreme need of the poor man that was driven to do such an act. He searched for him and treated him as kindly as if he had received a favour from him, spoke to him with great kindness, gave him breakfast and made him feel that if the paten had been his to give away, he would gladly have done so. The only punishment he gave him was to beg him most earnestly never to do such a thing again. The thief had not so much sorrow and shame at being caught stealing, as the Father had in finding one who could do such a thing.

He loved holy poverty as the sure standard of glory. He gave up the ample fortune he had inherited from his parents and lived without owning the least thing that was of any value. Even his Mass stipends and offerings that he received from the Christians of Ceylon he spent for the poor, for whose needs his hands were always open, though for his own needs he was very strict, being one who had no account of the things of this world and loved to be in want, so as to be truly poor in spirit. His obedience was so deep-rooted that his will was completely subject to the least indication of the superiors. Even when he was Prefect he gave a full and clear account of his conscience to the spiritual Father and regulated his conduct by his decisions. At the time when he was the Corrector in the refectory, after he had been Prefect, the director ordered him to correct the reader at table making him pronounce a long syllable short. Father Saldanha did so with such dexterity as if the mistake were not deliberate but the result of his ignorance, thus observing both blind obedience and profound humility.

He was indeed so humble in his heart that by word and deed he sought to be thought nothing of. When he was Prefect he often made public accusation of his faults in the refectory and though they were slight defects he wept over them and asked penance for them. He served at table and did other humble and lowly offices like the least of his subjects. Though he was advanced in years and had held the highest offices in the Congregation, he offered to be the reader in the refectory, a thing usually done by the novices and beginners. When he read he did so with such spirit and devotion that he was often in tears and betrayed the tenderness of his heart.

After his first missionary work of fourteen years in Ceylon, he remained eight years¹ in the cloister of the Congregation. Though he had been elected Prefect and occupied other posts, he did not wish to spend his old age in inaction, but offered to go again to the mission of Ceylon, whither he went for the second time, setting out on 17 December, 1725, and was made Superior of the missionaries by the Congregation and Vicar-general by the Bishop. But as he was broken down by age and labours, he became quite enfeebled by his fresh labours. Over and above old-age, which is an incurable disease, many other infirmities came upon him, the worst of all being an attack

1 1717-1725.

of itch which covered him from head to foot, and lasted more than a year in the penultimate year of his life. To add to this painful infirmity he had also frequent and grievous attacks of erysipelas, in the fire of which God purified his soul. When he was freed from these maladies he felt so weak that he could not do mission work. Feeling his dissolution at hand he began to prepare to give an account to God. He resided in the House of Puttalam with Father Joao de Saa. As he was growing weaker and approaching his end, without any other disease save his weakness, he made a general confession and received Viaticum. After he was anointed, one night between the twenty-eight and twenty-ninth of April, when Father Joao de Saa was deeply buried in sleep, he heard at about ten o'clock, a loud knocking at his door which awoke him, and he immediately thought of rushing to Father Saldahna and found him in his agony and unconscious. He placed a candle in his hand and read the office for the agonizing, at the end of which the good Father gave up his soul to God at about two o'clock in the morning of the aforesaid day. He was buried in the church of Puttalam.

Dom Franciso de Vasconcelos, S.J., Bishop of Cochin

To the Very Revd. Father Francisco Vas, Prefect of the Congregation of the Oratory

(*Torre de Tombo, Liv. 946*)

I received two letters of Your Reverence last winter; the first in answer to mine of the last year, the other brought by the Fathers going to Ceylon recommending them and the two boxes destined for Ceylon. As both the letters are full of lively sentiments of affection and express the zeal with which the Reverend Fathers in Goa are helping me with the succour of their prayers and sacrifices, I must acknowledge myself extremely obliged for your kindness and shall always be thankful to you as long as I live.

The Reverend Fathers whom I had the consolation of having in my house have started for Ceylon, and the boxes arrived too late, and as the missionary Fathers are taking with them the contents of one, I regret that I could not send the other till the last month after the winter. I have warmly recommended the Fathers of the Fishery Coast to see to it.

The choice of Father Jacome Goncalvez as Superior of the Mission¹ is in my opinion a very wise step, not only because his age and experience have won him the veneration of all, but especially on account of his personal qualities, his unwearied zeal for the honour of God. I recently received a letter of his which gave me great pleasure because of the news it contained about his labours, especially because I know of his many writings for the instruction and edification of that beloved Christian community and of the great deeds which are done in that vineyard watered by the sweat of such zealous missionaries. These considerations make me venerate very highly this Holy Congregation of yours so useful to my flock, and I desire to do something to show my affection to the Reverend Fathers and to your Congregation.

¹ Father Jacome Goncalvez became Superior of the Mission in succession to Fr. Menezes, but on the arrival of Father Saldanha he ceased to be Superior, and finally succeeded Fr. Saldanha. See ante 178, 180.

Account of the conversions and notable events that
God wrought in the Mission of Ceylon in the years
1730, 1731 and 1732

(*Torre do Tombo, Liv. 946*)

This account is compiled from the letters of the Missionaries written to the Congregation...

Father Jacome Goncalvez, Superior of the Mission—It is now more than thirty years that he is in this mission, working with unwearied zeal walking in the footsteps of the Venerable Father Joseph Vaz whose assistant he was in life and death. He has brought innumerable souls to God and glorified His holy name by his writings and preaching. He introduced among the people of Colombo, which is the chief city of the heretical Hollanders where the Catholic faith is most persecuted, the salutation "Praised be Jesus Christ: Amen;" which is now currently used in public in the very heart of heresy. As there are in in that city many nations and many of them are Catholics it is used in every language.

He also translated into the Sinhalese language and into Tamil not only the Christian Doctrine but also the Litany of our Lady and many other devout prayers which are read with great pleasure and devotion and profit and are chanted daily; and as the harvest is so great and the labourers so few that it is not possible to preach the divine word to all on every Sunday, he composed in those two languages an Explanation of the Mysteries of the Rosary and everything contained in the Mass, and the Gospels of Sundays and Feast days, written in most elegant language with the explanation and applications so choice and select that it is of great use for the reform of customs. Owing to the want of a printing press they are written in innumerable volumes for distribution throughout the Mission. Two hundred were sent to the mission of Jaffna alone at considerable expense in paying copyists. These writings were useful both to pagans and to Catholics; to the former, many of whom were converted to our faith by the reading of these books; and to the latter, as shown in the great instance which the Tamil Christians made to the Father to turn them into their language, for by a gift of God he knows to perfection all the languages that are spoken in Ceylon and does not wish to be wanting to the Christian Tamils.

As a result of reading these books the Catholics of Colombo and Jaffna begged the Father to compose something about the Passion of Christ, and the Father without minding the trouble, did so not only in prose but even in verse,¹ which they call *Purana*: and as poetry is a thing which not all can properly understand he assembled in a place called Mantota a large number of people from different and distant parts to give an explanation, which he did with his wonted spirit and clearness that they were highly satisfied, and begged him most earnestly to visit

1 The *Dukprapti Prasanga* is in verse. It is now printed under the title of *Desana Navaye Pasanpota* (6th Ed. Colombo, 1928).

the places where the pagans and Brahmins versed in pagan poetry were, for they declared that if they heard the Father and read his *Purana* they would be converted to our faith, as had happened in many places owing to the efficacy of his reasoning and the reading of his former books. When news of these works reached the Choromandel Coast many Christians came from there to take copies of his works.

The conversions effected by this missionary within these years were numerous. Near the city of Colombo he converted two whole villages, and in one of them a very important person, chief of the village ; and continuing his preaching in the neighbouring villages previously converted by the Father himself, he converted more than forty persons who had not previously been converted. In the parts of *Gurvela*¹ he converted seven villages, and more than a hundred people from the three villages adjacent to them, most of whom were the chief men of the village, for which reason it is hoped that more will soon be brought over to the bosom of the Church. In the port of Galle, within the dominion of the Hollanders, many were converted, but we do not know the exact numbers as the Father did not indicate them in his letters and only said that many received the faith. In the kingdom of *Jafanapatam* he recently converted three hundred pagans and a lady of some distinction through whom it is expected that more than seventy persons, her relatives, would also be converted.

Father Joseph Pereira converted in *Calature*² a large number of unbelievers. That town is a very populous one, but some years ago few were the Catholic households there, but now there are very few non-Catholic homes. He instructed these converts with such zeal and earnestness that even in the very beginning of their conversion they wished to serve God with fervour and desired him to institute a Confraternity. The number was so large that the Father fearing that the large number would be an obstacle to devotion, instituted actually four Sodalities so that all might have room. After that he went to the missions of the interior of the island where also he converted some souls and conceived great hopes for the future. He ransomed eight Catholics that had been enslaved by pagans, with his own money. At present he is gone to open a new mission in the *Vanny* and *Nugara-cullam*.³

Father Ignatius de Mesquita converted at *Arxetty*⁴ more than fifty pagans, and in *Negombo* two hundred and six ; and he administered the sacraments in this country which is under the dominion of the Hollanders to more than five thousand Catholics, among whom is the sub-governor and many other Europeans of the Hollander Company, who happen to be Catholics.

Father Bras Pereira converted in *Cottiar* a hundred pagans as God confirmed his preaching with many wonders. The Father had ordered a retablo to be made for the altar of the church of that place, and when it was finished he said Mass. When he elevated the Con-

1 Gurubevilla.

2 Kalutara.

3 Nuwarakalava.

4 Calpentin.

secrated Host there appeared on the retable a light like a star which was seen by all present. The same happened on the feast of All Saints, and on All Souls' day during the office there appeared a white object of the size of a small host which disappeared little by little as the office and Mass drew to an end, and was finally extinguished. This was seen not only by the Catholics but even by the heretics of the neighbourhood who hearing of it had come to see it. It happened again on the next day during Mass.

It happened also that a cow belonging to a pagan woman had been attacked by some malady and did not eat or move for three days. She turned to the Father, who thereupon sent his servant to cause the animal to get up in the name of the Lord. The servant went there and seizing the animal by the horns said : "In the name of the Lord Jesus, arise : " Immediately the animal rose and began to graze and the woman seeing this received the light of faith and asked to be instructed and baptised, but the Father put off the baptism especially as her husband made some objection. She, however, remains firm in her desire and God might in course of time bring the husband also.

Father Joseph Picardo converted in the villages around Calature four hundred persons, and in another place he baptised forty others who had been catechised previously. They brought him a man possessed with a devil and he exorcised him and the devil left the man. God made use of this to attract many pagans who seeing this, yielded to the sweet yoke of our holy faith. The number baptised on this occasion was one hundred and fifty.

In this past year of 1733, God our Lord was pleased to shower His divine graces more abundantly and help the missionaries of the gospel to gather much fruit from their labours by making many and wonderful conversions in various parts of the island. In Vanny Father Francisco Goncalvez who was sent there to do mission work worked with such energy that as a reward for his labours he converted many unbelievers and instructed them by catechising and preaching, and finally baptised them.

Likewise in Nugerecullam¹ Father Joseph Pereira, who had been sent to that province, which had been for many years without a missionary, because none of them could go there on account of various obstacles and difficulties and where some sparks of faith had remained for many years, worked so zealously that he had the good fortune of blowing the sparks to make a large fire which illumined many and brought them to the bosom of the church. In Negombo, Father Custodio de Andrade spread the word of God so fervently that he not only gave the spiritual food to a host of Catholics that are there in that city, but even showed the way of salvation and the knowledge of Catholic truth to many unbelievers. Though that city was a principal one in the dominion of the Hollanders he raised the standard of our holy religion with pomp and solemnity on the feast of Easter to the confusion of heretics and the exaltation of the Catholic faith.

In Caimel, a large number of Sinhalese from the villages around abandoned their errors and superstitions and received holy baptism.

¹ Nuwarakalaviya.

In this same year, over and above the other conversions mentioned, the Lord opened the door to a new and extensive mission in Mature, which is a province or kingdom in the territory of the Hollanders, and a very rich one too, because it is the granary and the source of all the treasures which they get by the sale of elephants. This event is one for which we must give many thanks to God and it happened in the following manner.

There arrived this year in the City of Colombo a new Commissary¹ sent from Holland to govern the whole island of Ceylon. On this occasion there flocked to Colombo all the people of Mature to appear before His Lordship and welcome him as was the custom. Among those who came were some Mudaliyars who are dissavas, that is chiefs and leaders of the people, and each of them had some power and jurisdiction in that district. These happened to see in the hands of some Catholics some books in the Sinhalese language written in the manner of dialogues or controversies, composed by Father Jacome Goncalvez, and moved by the novelty they read them, and in a short time were so attracted by them that in spite of some business they had they felt in their hearts a wonderful admiration both for the lofty and elegant style in which the matters of such import were treated and for the solidity of the arguments, and they began to have an esteem for the truths of our holy religion and the glimmerings of faith began to dawn on them, till having drunk of those celestial waters they had tasted in that reading, they formed a great desire to seek the source and to know the person who wrote them; and when they learned that they were the compositions of a Catholic priest they earnestly begged to see the priest and deal with him.

The Catholics of Colombo immediately sent word to the Father who was in Ceitavaca² busily engaged in cultivating that vineyard. He looked upon this as the most fortunate event that had ever happened to him and was an answer to his desires, and rejoiced in his heart, for from the time he came to that Mission and began to cultivate it, his desire had been to come in contact with the Sinhalese to reduce them to the Catholic faith; for these people of Mature are the ones who are known to be lovers of literature and learned in the sect of Buddhum. For this purpose he had with great trouble and incredible fatigue in the midst of mission work composed various dialogues and controversies; but so far for thirty years he had not attained his object of coming in touch with the leaders, and God therefore was pleased in the last stage of his life—for he is now much enfeebled and debilitated by his toilsome labours—to give him the pleasure of finding a door open for many conversions.

Without the least delay or hesitation he set out for Colombo and arrived there at the time when those people were preparing to return home to Mature, and as it was not safe for them to remain when their business was over merely to speak with the Father, which could not but come to the knowledge of the Hollanders, they begged the Father to come with them to Mature where they could listen to him in peace

¹ Jacob Christiaan Pielat, Special Commissioner, arrived 2nd December, 1732, and remained in Ceylon till 21st January, 1734. *Beknopte Historie*, 119, 120.

² Sitawaka.

and unburden their hearts more freely. The tired and broken down missionary might have hesitated before such a long journey and put it off for another occasion, but the fervour of Father Jacome Goncalvez made him go where he was called and he accepted their offer making himself all things to all men.

Arrived in Mature the preacher of the gospel began with divine grace the work of cultivating that uncultivated field, sowing the seed of the divine word with such success that he reaped a hundred fold. As the ground was so well prepared and as the people and their leaders had their hearts prepared for Catholic truth by what they had already read in Colombo, he made large numbers of converts throughout the whole province, both in the city and outside it, for which the Mudaliyars helped not a little, for, as we said, they were the chief men and had power and jurisdiction in that province. As the villages of converts were many and as they were very well instructed, the Father had to set up seven churches or oratories in various parts, and it is now a large mission in which the missionary has much to do. What is more, much fruit is expected next year when a larger crop of conversions is expected to take place.

Not only in the province of Mature but also in places on the way to Mature did he make conversions among many *chatalis*¹, that is schoolmasters, teaching in the Hollander schools and many Addapanars² and *Miguntaris*, that is heads of small villages. And so great was the fervour of these new converts and so great their desire for instruction in matters of the faith, that they earnestly begged the Father for copies of his books, for which reason he had to get copies made of them by a number of clerks paid by him, though he had no means for it except confidence in God which he knew from experience always came to the assistance of the preachers of the word, as is said in scripture "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and everything else will be added unto you."

Such are the great successes of the mission which provoked great hostility from the heretics.

It was the custom among the Catholics of Colombo who were employed in the Company of the Hollanders to take from the Missionary by whom they were baptised a certificate to say that 'so and so was baptised by me.' These certificates they had to show to the officials when they went to obtain licence of marriage. It happened that this year they had presented altogether six hundred such certificates, and this caused such surprise and comment that they thereupon tried to find out how many such certificates had been presented during the past years. They found that there were more than three thousand, and they were alarmed to find that there were so many Catholics among them and fearing that in course of time all might be Catholics, they decided that the Commissary-General should pass severe and rigorous

1 Sattambys.

2 See note p. 98.

orders¹ not to enter in the *tombos*² those that were baptised by Catholic Fathers, promising fifty *patacas*³ and good posts and offices to those who would denounce the Fathers to the Comapny or the things of the mission, that is to say the things for Mass and what is in the chapels.

This pestiferous rigour has done great harm, for many who were going to be converted have been kept back. May God in His goodness help the missionaries.

1 Pielat says in his Memoir, p. 16: "Of the (plakaats) which I have been obliged to issue here, one refers to the clandestine adherence of persons to the Roman Catholic religion and the baptism of children by Roman Catholic priests, monks, etc., of whom there are yet many in this country."

2 *Tombo* is a Portuguese word meaning "registers" of lands. The Dutch in Ceylon adopted the Portuguese word and the practice.

3 Portuguese (*pataca*) used for a dollar or piece-of-eight.

Summary account of the progress of the Mission of
Ceylon during the years 1733 to 1740

(*Torre do Tombo Liv. 946*)

Fifteen Missionaries of the Congregation of the Oratory of Goa are working in the Island of Ceylon and in the adjacent ones, working with unwearied zeal in the apostolic ministry to which God had deigned to call them in that great and extensive vineyard, and gathering the copious fruit of their toils to the glory of the Lord and the profit of souls.

These said missionaries are Father Jacome Goncalvez, Diogo de Rosario, Diogo de Mello, Custodio de Andrade, Joao de Sa, Joao Barreto, Manoel de Menezes, Ignatius de Misquita, Joseph Picardo, Francisco Goncalvez, Bras Pererirs, Custodio Leytao, Alexander, Manoel, Francisco de Monroy and the Brother Caetano da Costa.

Father Jacome Goncalvez

This Father at present counts thirty seven years in that mission, where he works with a zeal and ardour worthy of a companion of that great servant of God, the founder of that Mission, Father Joseph Vaz. He is Superior over the others and Vicar Forane appointed by the Ordinary of Cochin. This year he converted a large number of pagans and many heretics on various occasions.

In the year 1733 when the Father was in Caymel many pagans of the district of Negombo went to him to ask baptism moved by the religious pomp with which Father Custodio de Andrade celebrated holy week in the church of the said Caymel. They said that it was a long time that they felt attracted by the Catholic faith by the example of their countrymen who were Catholics, but that they had not been able to carry out their desire owing to the many obstacles which the devil had placed in their way. As, however, the gates of hell could not prevail against the Church nor prevent those who wished to enter her bosom, the spectacle of the feasts which the pagans of Negombo saw celebrated in the church of Caymel animated them to throw off the tyrannical yoke of the powers of darkness.

Father Jacome Goncalvez finding the people well disposed instructed them in the mysteries of our holy faith in preparation for baptism. When this sacrament was conferred it happened that the devil entered into some of the catechumens who began to tremble in all their limbs. The Father recognized the cause of the disturbance and went on with the ceremony as if nothing had happened, and the devil unable to resist the power of God showed fear at each ceremony of the baptism, for when he made the sign of the cross on the head, the trembling ceased in the head; when he made it on the breast with the holy oils the palpitation ceased, and finally when they received the waters of holy baptism the devil departed entirely.

When this incident was noised abroad it became a most fruitful sermon, for it brought many others to the light of the faith. All these the Father instructed and baptised. And in this second baptism there happened a thing similar to the first. We do not know the exact number of converts. All we know is that on similar occasions they were wont to baptise whole villages together.

In the year 1734 this Father began the mission of Mature in the same Island on the following occasion. There came to the City of Colombo a Commissary of the Hollanders to visit the towns and fortifications that the Hollander Company has along the coast of Ceylon. To welcome him there came the chief men of Mature, who are called Mudaliyars, who are the lords of districts feudatory to the Hollanders. These men found some books of Father Goncalvez in the Sinhalese language refuting Buddhism which was the religion of these people of Matara. They were so struck by these books that they asked the Christians of Colombo to invite the Father to come with them to Matara to discuss at leisure the Catholic religion which had made an impression on them. The Father went, instructed them and converted some of the Mudaliyars and a large number of the people, who were baptised. He erected in various parts of the country seven chapels for the edification of the new converts and for the exercises of piety such as the Rosary, Litany and spiritual reading, as is customary in the other parts of Ceylon.

Matara is a country abounding in provisions, rich in ivory which comes from the elephants that are hunted there. It is inhabited by the Sinhalese who are of the first rank in Ceylon and who are believed to be the most observant of Buddhism, which according to tradition began there. The reason why the people of Matara were so much struck by the books of Father Goncalvez was the elegant style in which they are written, being the lofty style of polished compositions in which are written their works called *Banas*¹, and above all the solid reasoning which the Father made in his controversies. On the way from Colombo to Matara and on his way back, he converted many heretics called *Xatamis*², who are those placed by the Hollanders to teach their heretical errors to the people. He also went to some villages and succeeded in converting their chiefs. And seeing the great fruit reaped by his books he engaged a number of writers at some cost and copied the volumes and had them spread in Matara, and thenceforth a way was opened to the missionaries. The conversions keep on increasing not only in that country but also in its neighbourhood, for seeing the decision of the people of Matara, who were formerly such devout sectaries and rabbis but are now devout Catholics, many others are easily converted.

In the City of Colombo, the capital of the Hollanders, the Commissary issued this year a rigorous decree which they call *plakaat* against missionaries entering that city and Christians that are baptised by them. It is the custom of the Hollanders to register all Christians within their domains in the *tombos* of the district in which they live, for which purpose each one has to produce a certificate of the minister that baptised, without which they do not permit bachelors to marry.

1 *Bana*, lit. "speech," the Buddhist scriptures and sermons thereon.

2 See p. 246. n. 1.

It happened this year that there were produced in the office of Colombo on two occasions three hundred and three thousand six hundred certificates of persons baptised by our missionaries during two years. This not only caused surprise but alarmed the Hollanders when they saw the number of people that embraced the Catholic faith. Fearing therefore that in this way they might lose the country, like the Jews who on a similar occasion said "The Romans will come and take our country and nation" they passed the said *plakaats*.

In the parts of Moroto¹, Calature² and Gurubevila³ there were also many converts resulting from the preaching and books of Father Jacome Goncalvez. The following are the volumes which this unwearied missionary composed, some in Sinhalese, others in Tamil or in Portuguese and one in Dutch, for owing to the variety of languages and people in Ceylon it was necessary to write in these languages. Though some are translated by the Author himself from one language to another, they are not strictly translations except in the subject matter, and are such that they do not seem to be translations.

Books in Sinhalese :

Deva Agama Purana⁴—This means Sacred Chronicle—Two volumes in folio composed in 1735.

Sattea Upadesia⁵—This means A summary of the Sacred Chronicle, in the form of a dialogue, in quarto.

Suvisesa Visadima⁶—Explanation of the Gospels of Sundays and feast days—Volume in quarto composed in 1730.

Ducprapti Prasaga⁷—Sermons on the Passion of Christ—quarto volume composed in 1728.

Darma Udeama⁸—Lives of Saints, quarto—1735.

Uda Pratihavca⁹—Miracles—volume in quarto, 1732.

Sucrita Darpana¹⁰—Mirror of Virtues—Volume in quarto.

Deva Nitea¹¹—Last judgment—quarto—The reading of this book has converted many Sinhalese—Composed in 1730.

Veda Cabea¹²—Historical Poem from the creation of the world to the end thereof, quarto, composed in 1725.

Vocabulario Chingala-Lusitana—Sinhalese-Portuguese Dictionary, quarto 1730.

Vocabulario Lusitano-Chingala—Portuguese-Sinhalese Dictionary, Volume Octavo 1720.

1 Moratuwa.

2 Kalutara.

3 Gurubevila.

4 Deva Veda Purana.

5 Now printed under the title of *Deva Veda Sanksepaya*.

6 Suvisesa Visadhanaya.

7 Dukprapti-prasangaya.

8 Dharmodyana.

9 Pratibharyya-Valiya

10 Sukrita-Darpanaya.

11 Devaniti-Visarjanaya.

12 Veda Kavya.



Vocabulario Lusitano-Tamulico¹—Chingala Portuguese-Tamil-Sinhalese Dictionary, with phrases explained, 1785.

Christiani Pallea²—Christian Church or Catechism of the chief mysteries of the faith, Octavo, 1780.

Aganhana Auxada³—Remedy for Blindness in the form of a dialogue, Octavo. This book has proved most efficacious, 1715.

Mature Pratea⁴—Matara illuminated by the refutation of Buddhism, Octavo, composed in 1733.

Budda Mula⁵—The contradictions and the difficulty of observing the sect of Buddhism shown by its errors—duodecimo. This was written for presentation to the heir of Kandy who was very pleased with it and after reading it showed himself little inclined to that religion, 1737.

Beda Caryange Cateatura⁶—Closing the mouth of reformers, Octavo, 1737.

Deva Parihara⁷—Medicine for all ailments of men and animals and remedy against all damage done by beasts and insects to crops, by the use of the prayers of the church and prayers of Saints, Octavo. This was composed as an antidote against superstitious ceremonies of paganism. The use of this book has been very efficacious not only for the effects which those who read the prayers experienced, but also because of the conversions produced, 1737.

Mangala Guitea⁸—Canticles for the feasts of Christ and Our Lady and the Apostles, Octavo, 1730.

Books in Tamil

Deva Arulla Veda Purana⁹—Sacred Chronicle, Two volumes in folio, 1725.

A Summary of this work¹⁰ in quarto, 1736.

Christianiyaltam¹¹—Christian Church, quarto, 1715.

Darma Uteana¹²—Lives of Saints, quarto, 1736.

Suvicessa Urstrerey¹³—Explanation of the Gospels of Sundays and feast days, quarto, 1728.

Viagulla Prasanga¹⁴—Passion of Christ, quarto, 1730.

1 See *Ceylon Literary Register* I 539.

2 Kristiani Palliya.

3 Agnana-ausadhaya.

4 Matara Pratiyaaksaya.

5 Budumula.

6 Bhedakarayange-Tarkya.

7 Deva Pariharya.

8 Mangalya-Gitiya.

9 Teva Arul-veta Puranam.

10 Cattiya Vetakama Carittira Cankshepam.

11 Kristiyani Alayam.

12 Taruma Uttiyanam.

13 Cuvicesha Viritturai.

14 Viyakula Piracankam.

Vattiam Fudeam Vanu Tarca¹—Controversy in dialogue against the heretical reformers, quarto, 1715.

Nellu Veda²—Refutation of paganism, Mahometnism and Buddhism and Calvinism, quarto, 1738.

Sugarda Darpana³—Mirror of Virtues with mystic and polite precepts, octavo, 1735.

Nhara Unarchy⁴—The Christian exciter on the theme surge qui dormis, octavo, 1734.

Navar Tarca⁵—The Catholic church and the reformed, quarto, 1732.

Mussalmana Vadam⁶—The errors of the sect of Mahomet refuted from the Coran, octavo, 1734.

Cadaol Nilnea⁷—Refutation of paganism in general, octavo, 1720.

Diccionario de Palavras selectas—A Dictionary of select phrases, octavo, 1731.

Books in Portuguese

Demonstracao da Igreja Catholica Romana por sette Notas, quarto, 1720.

Menticulo dos Evangelhos, quarto, 1734.

Alivio da Consciencia na Missao, octavo, 1734.

Controversia Breve e effizaz contra os erros de Calvino, octavo, 1736.

Books in Dutch

Controversy against the Calvinists, 1736.

In the year 1735 at Calpentyn, a town fortified by the Hollanders, there appeared one morning three suns joined together and was seen by many people. Upon notice of this the King of Kandy summoned Father Jacome Goncalvez to his presence to inquire what that portended. The Father replied that he could not divine the secrets of God. Thereupon the King put to him some questions about our faith, especially about the end of the world and the coming of Christ for judgment. This King has shown on many occasions that he was but little content with the religion of Buddhum in which he lives and greatly inclined to the Catholic faith.

At the beginning of his reign⁸ so great was his aversion to the Sangatares who are the priests of Buddhum that along with the chief of the Courts they raised the whole kingdom to place on the throne an uncle of his and actually put him on the throne from which he was deposed in a wonderful manner. For the lawful king being a fugitive

1 Vattiyarum Kudiyanavanum Tarkkam (first edited by Father Gnana Prakasar, O.M.I.)

2 Nalu Vedam (?).

3 Cukirta Tarppanam (first edited by Father Gnana Prakasar, O.M.I.)

4 Gnana Unarcci. (This work has been wrongly attributed to Father C. J. Beschi, S.J. See Father Beschi, S.J., by Father Leo Besse, S.J., Trichinopoly, 1918, pp. 238-244.)

5 Nava Tarkkam (?).

6 Musulmana Vetam.

7 Kattolikku Nirnayam (?).

8 Narendrasinha (1707-1739) succeeded Wimaladharma on 4th June, 1707.

retreated to the woods, but a rumour spread over the whole kingdom that he was coming in great strength to chastise the traitors. Upon this rumour the chiefs were so alarmed and terrified that to escape public punishment which they thought was inevitable, they killed the king by poison. Upon which the people became reconciled to the king and restored him to his former throne.

This King has a fairly good knowledge of the doctrines and mysteries of our holy faith, and he has made the Roman Catholics argue in his presence with heretics and Moors, and he showed great pleasure and satisfaction when our people come out triumphant. Once a certain French heretic¹, who had much authority in the court and was a favourite of the King, was made to dispute with Father Jacome Goncalvez on the adoration of images and other points of our belief. When the King found that the Frenchman could not reply to the Father's objections and tried to disguise his ignorance by a din of words, as the heretics are often wont to do, the King ordered him out of his presence and heaped many affronts in punishment for his proud arrogance in the discussion.

This King also shows himself very devout towards Saint Anthony, an image of whom he has in his palace. Once he made use of it in trying to discover the author of a theft that took place in the palace. As soon as he succeeded he began to show his gratitude to the Saint, ordering an altar to be erected on which to place the image, and all the grandees of his court to pay it reverence by profound inclinations. He has often, both in public and private, uttered these words: "Would that we had remained followers of the religion of the Portuguese which was professed by our ancestors² who were baptised by the Catholic Fathers."

Once he showed Father Jacome Goncalvez an *ola* written by a Commissary³ of the Franciscan Friars in which was mentioned the names of all the Kings and Princes of Ceylon who had received holy baptism⁴.

1 Nanclairs de la Nerolle. See p. 125 note.

2 Don Manoel, Don Philip, and Dona Catharina. Narendrasinha was a descendant of Dona Catharina.

3 Father Francis Negrao, a Franciscan, who was Commissary of his Order, was the tutor of the children of Dona Catharina.

He lived in Kandy for 9 years. He wrote an account of Ceylon which was used by Father Fernao de Queyroz in his great work; *The Temporal and Spiritual Conquest of Ceylon*. Govt. Press, Colombo, 1930.

4 This list is embodied in a work on the History of the Franciscan Mission now in the Vatican Archives: from which the following translation is made.

Chapter 11—The other Kings (besides Don Joao Perea Pandar, King of Kotte) Princes and persons of the Blood Royal whom the Friars Minor converted to the Faith in the Kingdom of Kotte and in the other kingdoms of Ceylon.

...Not only did they baptise the King Dom Joao Perea Pandar, Emperor of this Island, and along with him, the queen, daughter of the King of Kandy, and all the tributary lords and the grandees of the Kingdom of Kotte, as has been related, but also many other Kings, Princes and persons of the Blood Royal, as shown below.

In 1546 two sons of King Bonegabago were entrusted to the Franciscans (Dom Joao and Don Luis)

In 1550, when the Viceroy Don Affonso de Noronha came to Ceylon, the King of Kotte gave him a cousin to be taken to Goa. He was baptised Don Joao, and the Viceroy took him to Portugal, whence he returned and married the daughter of an

He asked the Father to translate it on paper to be preserved in his treasury. May God our Lord who knows the times and seasons and the right means deign to enlighten this King and move him efficaciously by his grace.

In the year 1736 there were many disturbances¹ in Colombo among the Sinhalese who were greatly oppressed by the intolerable yoke of repeated tributes that the Hollanders laid on them. Hearing of this the King of Kandy sent a force of twenty-five thousand combatants to help them. With their help they caused many hostilities in the dominions of the Company, captured and destroyed some fortifications. On the news of this, the English and the Danes sent to solicit alliances with the Kandyan, promising to give him better terms. As in the courts of these kings it is self-interest that is the highest motive for matters of state, there were not wanting counsellors who tried to induce the King to listen to the advances of the new pretenders. But the Hollanders, who know that the best means of acquiring is to recover what was lost, and foreseeing the consequences that would follow if the King had dealings with other nations, stopped short and

honourable knight and died at Goa, where he was buried in the Franciscan Convent of Goa; and Friar Francisco do Oriente and Father Friar Duarte Chanoca converted and baptised Dom Manuel, King of the Seven Korales, and Velassa and his Queen, Donna Beatrix, and the Princess, Donna Antonia. They lived in the Island of Manar.

They also converted and baptised the queen of the Kingdom of Beras in the interior of the Island under the name of Donna Catarina, and she lived in Mantota.

On 23rd July of 1594 Father Manoel dos Santos baptised Don Francisco, King of the Seven Korales, and his nephew aged 14, also Dom Francisco. On 1st November of the same year he baptised Dom Phellipe, King of Ceitavaca, who was 11 or 12 years old, along with his aunt, the Queen of Ceitavaca, an aged lady, who administered the kingdom. She was called Donna Catarina. On 8th December, feast of the Immaculate Conception, the same father baptised the wife of the great Modiliar Briqueenagina (Wikramasinha), who was Governor of Ceitavaca and Kotte for Dom Joao Perea Pandar, under the name of Donna Maria, and her son Dom Phellipe, and a child of two months, Donna Catarina. The father of this Donna Maria was called Pedro Homem Pereira in honour of his god-father, the Captain of Columbo, and his wife, Donna Anna, mother of the Modiliar.

In 1556 our Fathers baptised more than seven thousand souls of a nation called the Careas, who live on the sea coast, and the first to receive baptism was their captain called Ptangati, which is something like King.

Chap. XLVIII. The son of Para Raxa Chegre Pandara (Pararasa Sekeran) was baptised in the church of St. Antony, Columbo, along with the Queen, his mother. He was called Don Constantine in honour of his god-father Don Constantine de Sa. His mother was called Donna Clara, and others of the Royal Family, Donna Izabel and Donna Maria. A cousin of Changali was baptised Don Diogo, his wife Donna Maria, and his sons, Don Phillip, Don Francisco, and Don Bernadino, and his daughter, Donna Ignez.

Chap. XLIX. The Prince Don Constantine, who was educated in the College of Bardes, entered the Noviciate of the Franciscan Order on 4th February, 1632, and was professed the next year and was called Friar Constantine de Christo.

Two queens and a princess and almost all the nobility of Jaffna were baptised.

Two sisters of Para Gera Sagra Pandar, were baptised in the church of Our Lady of Miracles, along with a child, 12 or 13 years old, the two queens, Donna Clara and Donna Antonia, the princess Donna Catarina; the wife of Modiliar Don Pedro Betancor (Donna Maria) and two sons (both Don Phellipe); the wife of Don Francisco Betancor and Donna Clara.

1 See *Beknopte Historie* (JCBRAS XI. 120-122.)

sent ambassadors¹ to make peace with the King at any cost, only asking the restoration of the lands that had fallen under the arms of the Kandians during the present troubles and the delivery of a Hollander² who had fled to the court of Kandy to escape the punishment for certain crimes.

The King thereupon knowing the ability of Father Jacome Goncalvez, and not satisfied with the opinions of his councillors, sent for him and referred to him the terms offered by the Hollanders and the English and the Danes and requested his advice. The Father's advice was: 'That it would be good to accept the terms of peace offered by the Hollanders, as it was necessary for the safety and conservation of his kingdom, seeing that they were neighbours whose friendship should be preferred to any advantage that might result by alliance with strangers: as for the incriminated persons they should not on any account be delivered, in spite of the advice of the councillors, as it was unworthy of a king to refuse to a stranger the refuge he sought under him: That as for the commerce invited by the English and Danish Companies, they were not to be accepted as they might in future lead to greater damage than the present advantage. Nor was he likely to find in these nations the peace and tranquility that he found in the Hollanders. To accept the offers was to admit enemies into the house'. The King was pleased with this advice and carried it out in spite of all risks. He did not admit into his country the Danish envoy; to the English he replied in the negative, and received the Hollander Ambassador with the usual demonstrations of former friendship.

At this juncture there arrived in Colombo from Batavia a new Governor³ in the year 1737. Hearing of the good advice which the Father had given to the King of Kandy in favour of the Hollander Company, he tried to get into correspondence with him most earnestly several times by three letters, giving him a safe-conduct to the city and the fort, where he was waiting to receive him with open arms and to thank him for the good advice he had given, and to discuss further about some matters he had to deal with the King. Knowing how useful a correspondence that was so earnestly solicited would be, he laid aside his fear and in the usual disguise of the garb of a Sinhalese he came to the Fort and had a long conversation with the Governor and continued to come and go several times with great liberty. The result of this is the great peace and tranquility which enables the Catholics to communicate with the Fathers, and the Missionaries to enter into the domains of the heretics without the least difficulty. This undoubtedly makes for the progress of Christianity, for if in spite of the rigorous persecutions of the past there were so many conversions, during this happy period of tranquility there will certainly be many more.

1 Daniel Agreen and Martin Weyer. *Pielat Memoir* 46.

2 In Galle Jan Daniels Schuls was accused of "clandestine trade in spices and put to death; Adriaan van Bockel, guilty of the same offence, was flogged and branded, but the Vryburger Jan Bello, who had been the agent of the accused and condemned to be hanged, fled to Kandy." *Pielat Memoir* 16.

3 Baron Gustaaf Willem van Imhoff, arrived 23rd July.

Father Diogo do Rosario and Diogo de Mello

These two Fathers set out from Goa for Ceylon in January, 1785. Both are veterans, bred in the Congregation in which they were members of the Council. Father Rosario had been Minister and Procurator of the House for many years and in his fifties offered to go to the missions, being one who was quite experienced in dealing with the faithful of Goa, Bardes and Salsete. Father Mello had occupied a chair of philosophy and theology in the Congregation for six years, and thinking more of the need of the neighbour than of his own, edified the community very much by his offer to go to the missions in spite of his weak health. They encountered many troubles and difficulties and diseases in the course of the seven months they spent on their way from Goa to Ceylon, going partly by land and partly by sea. Besides other consolations wherewith God consoled them to put up with their troubles, was one which was a special one as it caused some delay namely preparing the Process for the canonization of the Venerable Martyr John de Britto of the Society of Jesus at the request of the religious of that Order and of the Very Reverend Don Francisco de Vasconcellos, Bishop of Cochin, who wrote to the Prefect of the Congregation as follows :

‘The arrival of Fathers Diogo do Rosario and Diogo de Mello who arrived here during the solemn vespers of Holy week, was a cause of pleasure to us. As they are both persons of great merit, the Fathers of the Society of Jesus who met them, especially the Rector of Manapad received them with due honour. They are a proof of the zealous interest which your Reverence takes in the mission. I have made use of the Fathers to complete a work of great importance as this bishopric is badly in want of men. They, moreover, gave me a proof of their docility, for on account of this work they had to delay their journey to Ceylon, and when I assured them that you would not hesitate to allow me to employ them, they readily yielded. The work they did was to labour at the making of the first process ; the first-named Father as Vicar-General and the other as Protonotary Promotor Fiscal, for the Canonisation of the servant of God John de Britto on the orders of the Sacred Congregation of Rites. The Fathers did the work to my great satisfaction and that of the Fathers of this Province who are greatly obliged to them.’

In the year 1736, Father Diogo do Rosario did mission work along with Father Ignatius de Misquita in the kingdom of Sitavaca in a village called Candana baptising all the inhabitants of that village. In various other places he baptised more than a hundred and twenty persons, both pagans and heretics. In the year 1737 he was appointed to the mission Batecavalle and Nugrecullao in the district of Mantota, which are woody places far from the coast. There lived in those places a number of Catholics who had gone there because of a drought and famine. They had remained there many years without any communication with the Fathers and on account of the proximity of pagans they had contracted marriages with them besides falling

into various errors in matters of faith and customs. All these difficulties Father Rosario overcame with great labour, the pagans being taught the faith and the Catholics being brought to repentance. Thus the former wild forest has now been changed into a cultivated garden in which flourishes the Christian practice and virtue. Among others he converted a Sinhalese of distinction.

In the year 1738 he was sent to Manar and Mantota where he administered the sacraments to a host of Catholics that live in those places and they were so pleased with him that they begged the Father Superior to let him remain longer as they found that he took great pleasure in instructing them, especially those in danger of death. The Father made a notable conversion in the case of a man whom he attended at his death. He was a man of good birth of the caste of Bealla, but so vile in his behaviour that his vices were a cause of scandal to others, for he lived in public sin and took part in heathen sacrifices and tried to induce others to do the same. In spite of these evil ways he retained some pious habits, on Saturdays out of reverence to the Blessed Virgin he abstained from taking *chunam*¹ with his betel and said the Angelus at the usual times and on the feast of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin he took some pains to decorate the church. These were the only outward signs of being a Christian but in everything else he was worse than a pagan. It happened, however, that after the feast of the Nativity this year he fell severely ill. Father Rosario thereupon visited him with great care and earnestness and kept on appealing to him without ceasing till at last by the mercy of God and the help of Our Lady of Pity he succeeded in making him realize the danger and detest and abjure his pagan errors, send away the proximate occasion of his sin; and reconciled him to the church. He was most repentant and humble and made up with many enemies he had made during his life, restituted illgotten gains, taking great pains to discover those whom he had defrauded, and finally performed all the penances imposed on him, received all the sacraments with true contrition and died having in his death given satisfaction for the evil deeds of his life.

Father Custodio de Andrade

This Father counts twelve years² of work in the mission in this year of 1734. Being appointed to Jaffna he converted about five hundred adult pagans to the faith, baptised a large number of infants and administered the sacraments to fifteen thousand Catholics, which is the number of Catholics in that kingdom. In 1735 he was sent to Manar where he baptised two hundred pagans and remained in that district up to 1737 fulfilling zealously the duties of a good missionary.

Father Joseph Pereira³

In 1733 and 1734 he did mission work in Nugrecullam, Tambalagama, Trinquinamale, Mattaguhupullu, Tamattaquallapullu, Tama-

1 Prepared lime, Tam. *shunnambu*.

2 According to an entry in the records of the *Junta das Missoens* (Ms. Goa Archives), the Prefect of the Congregation on 3rd Jan., 1727, stated that Fr. Custodio de Andrade was then 29 years old.

3 According to the same entry Fr. Joseph Pereira was 32 years old at the time.

calle and Bathecalor¹ along with Father Custodio Leytao. Throughout these extensive districts he found many Christians living dispersed, who had not met a priest for six or seven years. With great toil he went in search of each one and instructed them and gave them opportunity to receive the sacraments. He also catechised a large number of pagans and baptised them as well as seventy-five children of Catholic parents. In the year 1735 he was sent to Beluate² with Father Joao Barreto and together they administered the sacraments to all the faithful and erected a chapel in which all might assemble on Sundays and feast-days according to the praiseworthy custom of that mission. In 1736 he was sent to Negombo where there was a shower of divine graces and in the course of two months he baptised more than two thousand pagans who were well instructed and firm in the faith.

Father Ignatius de Misquita

In 1734 he resided in the House of Puttalam with the duty of ministering to all in the environs as far as Nigombo. There he celebrated the feast of Christmas with great concourse of people and reception of the sacraments. He succeeded in converting eighty pagans and baptised more than one hundred and fifty children. In Puttalam he repaired the church and the house and placed on the main altar an image of Our Lady and one of Saint Anthony found on the shore of Puliccaricana³ and Navacaru⁴ in the year 1730 which was the sad year of the shipwreck of the flagship of the armada under the General Luis de Mello Sampayo who while returning from Mossambique to Goa reached the Indian seas in May and the said flagship sank with the flower of the nobility of this state; and as the time of the shipwreck was that in which the statues were found it is presumed that they were in that ship.

Father Manoel de Menezes

He did missionary work in various parts and baptised about one hundred pagans and some children, and during these five years he did missionary work in various parts with zeal.

Father Bras Pereira

This great missionary was favoured by heaven with many successes and prodigies by which God facilitated the work of conversion at which he was toiling. In the year 1734 he was in charge of the missions of the Vanny, Nagarim, Nogue⁵ and Surly,⁶ where he converted more than two hundred persons to the Catholic faith. Once in the Vanny he had to cross a river on his way from one village to another. It was flooded and full of water and many people were waiting on the banks without daring to wade. The Father, however, with great confidence in God,

1 Nuwarakalaviya, Tambalakamam, Trincomalie and Batticaloa.

2 Bolawatta.

3 Puliyadichchenai.

4 Navatkadu.

5 Nuwara, namely, Nuwaragampalata in which Anuradhapura is.

6 Hurulupattuwa.

asked them to sound the river and found that the water came up to the neck. He asked the bystanders what would be the depth at which one can safely wade. They replied that if the water came only up to the waist they could safely wade. He then prayed a while, blessed the river three times and stepped into the water asking those of his company to follow. The people also followed with joy and all waded the river safe and the water never came up higher than to the waist.

In Vanny, likewise he made the Catholic elephant hunters separate themselves from the others so as not to be induced to take part in the superstitious ceremonies. He blessed their nooses of *coir*¹ with which they noose the elephants and bid the Catholics hunt with the blest nooses. They did so and succeeded in taking seven elephants while the pagan hunters in spite of all their offerings to the devil laboured but in vain.

In Caddiam Tallave², a village in the district of Puttalam there was a Catholic who had been a paralytic for many years. As natural remedies brought no relief he had been induced to have recourse to some superstitions without any effect. Finally illumined by heaven he had himself carried to the Father and penitently confessed his sins, recommended himself to God, heard Mass and received communion. When the Father came down from the altar he fell at his feet saying he would not rise till his health was restored. The Father being struck by the man's importunity read the gospel over him and moved by some divine impulse said to him in a tone of authority: "In the name of Jesus stand upon your feet." The man immediately rose and in thanksgiving for his cure he decided to serve God henceforth as a sacristan of that church in which he had been restored to health.

While the Father was engaged in mission work at Caddiam Talaave in Surly he had to pass through a thick wood infested by many wild animals. Among those who were going the same way was a pagan Brahmin by profession a *Tavagi*,³ which is a kind of mendicant life. The *Tavagi* walked at the head of the party as the boldest or rather the best favoured. There came on the path three wild boars, one of which made for the sack which the man was carrying on his back and which contained the alms he had received, and the two others seized his sides so that he could neither advance nor retreat. The other men who were following him took to their heels, but the Father who was walking behind them all, seeing the plight of the poor *Tavagi*, ran up to him and with no other arms than the walking stick he had in his hand, drove the boars to the great admiration of the people who began to praise God that gave so much power over the animals to his saints. The result was that the Brahmin *Tavagi* fell at the Father's feet and thanked him for saving his life and soon afterwards received the light of faith and received baptism under the name of Antonio.

In 1734 there was a great drought in Ceylon for want of rain, except in the places visited by Father Bras Pereira, with the result that people came from all parts to invite him to visit their village.

1 Rope made of the fibre of the coconut husk, Tam. *kayiru*.

2 Kadayandaluwa.

3 Indo-port. *Tabagui*, *Tavasi*, "ascetic".

He could not go to all the places but moved by charity and inspired by God he said it would rain on such and such a day at such and such a place, and so it actually happened.

Father Francisco Goncalvez

While this Father was going from Colombo to Galle in 1734 on the Saturday before the first Sunday of Lent, he was recognized and seized by a Hollander Predikant¹. Brought before the Lieutenant Governor² he boldly admitted that he was a priest and declared for what purpose he was going to Galle and why he went in disguise. He was put in jail but was treated well and was supplied with food sent by the Predikant, as he arrested him without order from Government. They set meat before him on the first days and as it was Lent he had to forego his meals, which coming to the knowledge of the Governor, a Sergeant, who was a secret Catholic, was recommended to supply him with food suited for Lent lest he should perish for want of food.

The King of Kandy heard of this imprisonment and took measures for his release and wrote four letters to the Hollanders each with greater insistence. But as three months passed without setting the Father free or replying to the King, the monarch sent two ambassadors with orders³ not to return to court without him. This act of the King intimidated the Hollanders and much against their will, they delivered the Father to the ambassadors who took him to Kandy with great demonstrations of honour and accompanied by a solemn train of lusty men. Upon this the Predikants were put to confusion and people came to entertain great respect towards the priests who felt emboldened to enter the domains of the heretics.

Father Custodio Leytao

He related in his letter of 1734 that when he was doing mission work in Matacallapa,⁴ a large number of pagans came to him in humble supplication begging him to help their fields which were attacked by some locusts and other insects. As he could not go himself he gave them holy water and to others scrips containing passages of Holy Writ, and upon this the ruin was averted. From the year 1732 when he arrived in Ceylon, he was sent to Jaffna and the extensive districts adjoining it; but in the first years he was with another missionary till he learnt the language of the country and the customs, but now he works alone in that vast field making many converts. In the year 1737 he baptised eight hundred people in Jaffna. He has to be in hiding all the time, and spent six months in administering the annual sacraments which had to be done at night only as it is in the territory of the heretics; and for a long time he had no sleep at night.

1 For the name of this predicant and other details of this capture see the extract from the Dutch records D 54 below.

2 The Commander of Galle was "Lieutenant-Governor."

3 All the details given here are fully borne out by Dutch records D 54.

4 Madakalapuwa, "Miry-lagoon," Sinhalese name for Batticaloa.

Brother Caetano da Costa

In the Residence of Puttalam he is not only useful in temporal affairs treating with extreme charity all those who come there worn out by their labours in the missions, but is also useful in spiritual affairs, for he gives instruction in doctrine and mental prayer and goes even to the missions for it, with great profit to souls. He has often even entered the territory of the heretics for this purpose.

Post Script to the above Letter

Since the foregoing was written there arrived letters of 19 January from the missionaries in which was the following information:

On the 24th of May, 1739 there died Narendra Singa King of Kandy, who had been mentioned in previous letters. He died of an abscess in the lower parts. He asked candles to be lit for his health in the Church of Our Lady for the Conversion of Infidels in Kandy. But though he knew our religion quite well he did not follow during his life the light that was given to him. Father Custodio de Andrade, who was in the church of Kandy and was so accustomed to win souls to Christ, was not able to do anything for this king, for no one could appear before the Sovereign of Kandy and speak with him unless summoned for the purpose and conducted to the royal presence, a rare honour that is given to the courtiers but seldom, and of our priests only to the Venerable Father Joseph Vaz founder of the Mission, to Father Ignatious de Almeyda and to Father Jacome Goncalvez, who at this time was in Colombo.

Narendra Singa was succeeded in the government of the country by Prince Cumara Astana,¹ the brother of the widowed queen with whom he conducts the government till he is crowned. It may perhaps be that at his coronation he will change his name for there are no descendants of the royal house. This Prince is the one with whom Father Jacome Goncalvez had secret communication, and to whom he dedicated the book Buda Mula mentioned above among his writings. He has no blood relationship with the house of Kandy except that his sister is the queen. He is a native of Madura in the Fishery Coast. But as he is of the race which the Sinhalese call Surivanxa, namely descendants of the Sun, of which the Kings of Ceylon boast; and as there is no one in Kandy with that fantastic claim to occupy the throne, the Sinhalese do not hesitate to submit to a foreign ruler, esteeming the nobility of another better than their own honour.

As soon as the former King died² there came to court a certain Sangatar,³ that is a priest banished by the former for certain crimes. He came to the palace under cover of zeal for the observance of his

1 Who assumed the throne name of Sri Vijaya Rajasinha.

2 Narendrasinha died on 13th May, 1739.

3 Weliwita Saranankara.

sect which forbids eating flesh and drinking wine, called upon the king to pass an edict of a moral rather than a political character which said : In order to extirpate the vices and encourage the virtues ordered by Buddhum, it is ordered that no person shall distill wine much less drink it ; that all pigs, hens should be set free and that there shall be no breeding of animals for food. This hypocrite was always an opponent of our missionaries and of Christianity against which he had machinated several times without success owing to the esteem in which the dead king held our missionaries. Now he thought that it was a good opportunity to try his hand with the new king and uttered various calumnies against the mission. But the Prince who they say is a very discreet, generous and capable one, fit for government, listened to him without showing his feelings with regard to falsehoods and detractions of the Sangatar. About the same time it happened that Father Jacome Goncalvez sent him a present of various curios and sweets made in Colombo with great care and cost and perfection with the confidence with which he used to send such things formerly to the late king, and even to this very Prince, who received them with great graciousness. In return he ordered to be sent to the Father a quantity of coins of gold called *pagodes*¹ each of which was worth 195 reis. The Father declined to accept the gift with great courtesy declaring that for the last about fifty years that our Missionaries were in Ceylon serving God and the King of Kandy for the benefit of his subjects, they never showed the least desire for gain. Upon this the Prince sent word to the Father that the money was not sent as a remuneration but as an alms to be distributed through his hands. The Father thereupon distributed the money among the missionaries, for the amount was large enough, with orders to distribute to the poor in the name of the new King and as coming from him to the poor. This royal attention seen throughout the whole island is sure to animate the Catholics to persevere in the faith and others to embrace it.

Work done in Jaffna by Father Custodio de Andrade

**The Father entered this mission on 4 August 1737, and
and after doing all the work left in peace towards
the end of February, 1738.**

On the arrival in Jaffna of a new Commander, who though a Lutheran was believed to be a Roman Catholic, merely because he was disinterested in his proceedings and just in his dealings, this rumour greatly helped the missionary to do his work in Jaffna and perform solemn acts in Jaffna and to go about for some time openly during the five months in which the Commander lived. The Father celebrated the feast of the Nativity of Our Lady with solemnity and large concourse of people at Vaddigama² in the village Manddagol³ and the feast of the Assumption to which came many people from the city. Christmas he celebrated in the island Urauturey⁴ and it was a great

1 A coin current in S. India, generally of gold.

2 Valikaman.

3 Matakai.

4 Uratota (Kayts).

feast as it was the first public and solemn feast there. There came not only Catholics but even heretics and pagans. There were dances and firing of musketry, and the Father said his third Mass at dawn.

Seeing this the Catholics of Ungaddadivo¹ wished the Father to celebrate the feast of the Circumcision in that island where he went. They took things from the city and all the inhabitants of the island came and even those who were able to come from the neighbouring islands and many pagans. The Mass was over only at 7 in the morning. For the feast of St. Sebastian, he went to the island of Urauturey where they staged a play depicting the martyrdom of that Saint in which the Saint was represented arguing with the Emperor Diocletian and refuting paganism and proving the truth of the Catholic religion. Children baptised, 877; adults converted to the faith, 897.

In Koddigona² is a village in which there were no Christians. For three years the missionary was trying to enter it, but the pagans would not consent to it. They were soothsayers, and they said the devil would kill them and the Father. The Father replied that God would free them from all evil if they would receive the faith. Finally he confidently entered the village, preached, catechised and baptised thirty seven persons, among whom were three soothsayers and two women possessed by the devil. One of the converted soothsayers began to tremble and make faces when he was being baptised, but as soon as the ceremony was over he was completely free. After these conversions the Father built in that village a chapel where they said the Rosary and Litany. After some time more than forty others were converted by means of the catechists that the Father left there. He also built a new chapel at Pallucallu³ as the old chapel was in ruins. In Bethegammy⁴ where there were 250 Christian souls he erected a new chapel; another in Callucaddu,⁵ where there were 150 souls; another in Izellavalle⁶ and another in Xatte,⁷ which was built of brick.

In Puddodde,⁸ a place where there were but few Christians, the Father met a woman, a pagan, who had had been possessed by a devil for fourteen years. The devil spoke many languages, even Portuguese and Sanskrit, which is the primitive of all the languages of Malabar and the Fishery. The devil could not be driven out in spite of all the offerings and sacrifices. The Father, however, used the exorcism of the church and sprinkled holy water whereupon the devil fled. In many other places also he drove devils out.

In the islands around Jaffna and Manar, where there are Christians with chapels, the Father appointed two catechists with a salary of nine pagodes. He also built chapels, one in Viavaxata, another in

1 Punkuditivu.

2 Kudattanai ?

3 Palaikukuli.

4 Vettiaikkeni.

5 Kalliakaddaikkadu.

6 Isamalaittalvu.

7 Saddy ?

8 Puloly ?

Maddagol,¹ another in Naraddenne² and a fourth in Macopane,³ where he baptised 70 pagans. In the village Canddaviho,⁴ near Suddumate⁵ he converted and baptised seven persons. All this the Father mentioned in his letter of 1738. In a letter of 29 June 1739, he says :

“I entered Jafanapatam with my companion Father Francisco Monroy,⁶ and we converted and baptised 798 persons in Jaffna of whom 56 were inhabitants of Coddigama mentioned above, and they were the only non-Catholics in the village. It is now completely Catholic. The devil himself contributed to the conversion of these 56, for ceasing to molest the converts he persecuted these 56 who were then pagans with such persistence and fury that the men not finding any means to be rid of it and seeing on the other hand the peace and tranquility in which their neighbours the Catholics lived, determined to embrace the religion of grace. When they were baptised they were freed from the former trials.

In the same kingdom of Jaffna, in a village called Nagarcoil⁷ there was a man, a goldsmith by birth, pretty well versed in the scriptures of the pagans and he taught more than a thousand people who were his followers. Father Pedro Leytao tried his best to bring to the heavenly path this man to whose tail such a crowd of people were tied. They discussed several times and the Father convinced him of his errors, and though after many debates he brought him to admit that our religion was the true one, yet he sought to go very slow and to learn all about the faith sometimes by himself and often through the catechists till finally he decided to deliver the pagan books to the catechist to be burnt. But, says the Father, the Catechist kept the books with him to be burnt when the Father came and sent me word to come promptly and I am on the way. May the infinite Majesty of God grant that his resolution may be a firm one for if he is converted the others will follow—

3 January, 1740.

1 Matakai.

2 Narantanai.

3 Mankumpan.

4 Kandavalai.

5 Sutumalai.

6 Came in 1737, aged 33, Junta das Missoens. Ms. Goa.

7 Nakarakoyl.

Extract from the Records of the Political Council of Ceylon

(Dutch Archives, Colombo, D 58, ff. 294-299)

Proceedings of a Meeting of 23 June, 1734

Present, the Governor, Dideric van Domburg
 the Dissave of Colombo, Iman de Jonge
 the Dissave of Mature, Abraham Dormieux
 the Captain, Daniel Agreen
 the Captain, Johan van Slingerland
 the First Store-Keeper, Pieter Camerbeek
 the Trade Book-Keeper, Gerrit Valk

Absent, the Chief Administrator, Abraham de Clercq, ill
 the Merchant, Daniel Simonsz, away in Galle
 the Fiscal, Frans Willem Falk, ill

After invoking the Most Holy Name of God, the Governor declared that he had summoned the meeting in order to deliberate with others and come to decision, as to what should be done with regard to the papist, now imprisoned in Galle, Francisco Goncalvez, and the two servants of this Romish-priest, Ignatio and Roepile-Araatjege Matthys, who, in the month of March¹, while the Reverend Predicant Johan Willem Marino² and the Scholarg³ Inspector of the Galle Corle, Huybert Hogerward, were visiting the church and school of Bentotte, were taken together and arrested and brought to Galle: on behalf of which popish priest not only were very urgent requests made by some important and influential men of the Court (of Kandy) to Captain Daniel Agreen and the Dispencier Martin Weyer, the two ambassadors lately returned from the Kandyan Court⁴, but also recently in the beginning of this month an *ola* was received from the Rijks Adigar⁵ and other important men of the Kandyan Court, addressed to the Dessave Iman de Jonge, pleading strongly for the popish priest; likewise two courtiers, Hiyambalagame Gabadaawe Mohotiar⁶ and Dorrenegame Mohandiram, the latest arrivals from

1 Saturday before the first Sunday of Lent, 9th March, 1734.

2 One of the three Dutch predicants of Galle at the time. J.C.B.R.A.S., I 50 : 51 : 149.

3 The scholarch was the person annually deputed by the Scholarchal Commission to visit the schools and draw up a report. The reason for this unusual activity is that "in 1734 Roman Catholicism was getting a footing in Galle, which suggested the strictest execution of the government plakaats against Popery." Ib. 54.

4 They had been sent by the Commissary Pielat on 13th January, 1734, "to take to the Kandyan Court the Imperial letter and various presents collected for the purpose." Pielat's *Memoir* 46.

5 The First Adigar of Kandy.

6 Siyambalagamuwe Gabada Mohottala. He had been sent once before in January, 1734, and was sent again for this purpose.

Kandia, at their second or last audience on the 11th instant, related that they had been recommended by the courtiers, with the special knowledge of His Majesty the Emperor, to request the Governor to set him free and send him up; which was not done, and the members of the Council knew well enough what answer the Governor gave to the aforesaid courtiers of Kandia, the record of which, kept in the register, as well as the aforementioned *ola* of the Rijks Adigar and other courtiers, were read out in Council to refresh the memory.

Thereupon the Governor laid the matter before the Council,¹ and they earnestly took counsel as to what was most advisable to be done: To hand the above mentioned popish priest over to justice, that he might be punished according to our *plakaats*,² as a disturber of the public peace, or, to send him up to the Court, only for this time, in compliance with the request made by the Kandyan King: Which point having been thoroughly discussed and this important business having been duly considered, the Council decided: That in consideration of the powerful requests made by the courtiers in the name of the Kandyan King, and to please His Imperial Majesty as much as possible in these circumstances, as the displeasure he conceived against us is beginning to disappear, and he has shown many a sign of his affection and love for the Company; also because of the repeated recommendations³ of our superiors to preserve his Majesty's friendship which is so necessary for the service and welfare of the Company, and which would be imperilled and endangered by refusing to comply with his request, lest the deeds done to regain His Majesty's favour would be rendered useless;

It was unanimously approved and decided to set the aforesaid papist and his two servants free for this time, and to bring him under guard, as he still is, from Galle to Caliture, and (keeping him at some hours' distance from the capital) to lead him by by-paths straight to Hangwella and then upcountry by way of Sitavaque, and to hand him over to the King's officers; explicitly warning him that they are this time let off unpunished owing to the many requests made to us by the courtiers in the name of His Imperial Majesty of Kandia, but that, if he, or any of his companions have the hardihood to be found again in the Company's territory to spread their noxious doctrine, then in case of arrest, a rigorous punishment would be inflicted without fail, according to the laws and *plakaats* of these lands; and at the same time to send a very severe *ola* to the courtiers, in answer to theirs, with this strong protest, that in accordance with the rigorous *plakaats* the papists or Romish priests that should be discovered in the Company's territories must be severely punished as an example to others; but that this time the aforementioned papist and his two servants are

1 The Governor had refused to accede to the request of the King, but after the departure of the ambassador he thought it best to take counsel in view of the orders of higher authorities.

2 The *plakaat* of 19th September, 1658, forbidding "the harbouring of a priest under pain of death," was renewed on 25th March, 1733. Tennent *Christianity in Ceylon*, 41.

3 The latest recommendation was by Pielat, 23rd Jan., 1734: "Every means must, therefore, be employed that, without proving an obstacle to the Company's interests in the future, will tend to keep the King in a good mood."

allowed to go free and unpunished only or chiefly out of respect for the instance made in the name of His Majesty of Kandia on behalf of this popish priest, and also on account of the high esteem of His Majesty's friendship and his relations with the Company; that therefore they felt the greatest confidence that His Majesty or the courtiers would not in future molest or annoy us with such petitions; the more so as such papists and their noxious doctrines, as has been judged since very many years and from ancient times, did the greatest harm as well to the peace of His Majesty's land and subjects, as to those of the Company; as the roaming of these persons in these countries brought nothing but disturbance of the public peace under its rulers, and that therefore they ought and should be rigorously punished as they had the intention of doing in the future by capturing such priests who should be regarded as tramps and vagabonds.

Thus done and resolved upon in the Castle of Colombo on the aforesaid date and month and year.

Sgd.	Dederic van Domburg
„	Iman de Jonge
„	Abraham Dormieux
„	Daniel Agreen
„	Johan van Slingerland
„	Pieter Camerbeek
„	Gerrit Valk

Report of the progress of the Mission from 1740 to 1743

(Torre do Tombo, Liv. 946)

Beginning with the year 1740 it must be said that Father Jacome Goncalvez, who was then still alive¹ and Superior of the Mission, thought it right to pay his compliments to the new King of Kandy, Astana Cumara, on his coronation and was received in the palace in the presence of the chief men of the court, and many priests of their religion called Sangatares or *ganes*, with great demonstrations of honour, not only by the King but even by the queen, his sister. They accepted with great pleasure the present which the Father offered, consisting of some overseas trinkets. They treated him with as much affability as if he were a person of intimate confidence. When the Father took his leave the King sent the chief Adigar, who is a Lieutenant General of the whole Kingdom, to inquire whether the Father had any request to make. He replied that he was quite content to live in the goodwill of the king and desired no temporal advantage. The Adigar delivered this message with the addition that the Fathers did not seek their own interests. The king, however, was pleased with the message and sent him word that since he wanted neither silver nor gold he would give him what he esteemed more than anything else, namely, permission to build any churches he pleased in any part of his kingdom and to cover them with tiles,² which is not the usual thing in that kingdom, nor even permitted to anyone however great he might be, and is only granted to our churches.

Father Manoel de Menezes was appointed this year to do mission work in Colombo and went about preaching the gospel in many places inhabited by pagan Sinhalese, men of the first rank in the country, with such success that the number of adult Sinhalese, whom he converted and baptised, was over a thousand, and the number of children and slaves was great. It happened in one place that the pagan soothsayers, who are wont to work a spell called *Angam*³ whereby the one who is charmed becomes as if dead without any sign of life, all in order to gain the offerings for undoing the charm, had charmed all the people at a wedding house of the principal Sinhalese in which was a great concourse of guests. They did Angam and the bride and bridegroom and many of the guests were like corpses, and when the soothsayers tried to undo the charm they failed in spite of all their efforts. As the poor people were prostrate with only their eyes open after many days their relatives came in search of our catechists giving their word that both those who were charmed and those who were not would receive baptism. The catechists sprinkled them with holy water

1 He died at Bolawatta on 17th July, 1742, in his sixty-sixth year, after a life of forty-two years in the Congregation, thirty-seven of which were spent in Ceylon.

2 "They are not permitted to build their houses above one storey, may they cover them with tiles." Knox. *Historical Relation of Ceylon*, 86.

3 Anjanam.

and they were freed from the charm. They then became Catholics with great joy. In the course of this mission Father Manoel de Menezes drove out the devil from many possessed persons.

Among the great services of Father Custodio Leitao in the kingdom of Jaffna not the least notable was the trouble he took last year to convert a soothsayer, a well-known teacher of paganism and a Professor of the art of soothsaying. The Father went in search of him several times, and finally meeting him face to face had many controversies and finally vanquished him and took away from him a number of superstitious books, and after instructing him well in the mysteries of the faith baptised him this year, and from a master of error he became a disciple of truth.

Passing on to Trincomale with his companion Father Francisco de Monroy, they gathered as the fruit of their labours one hundred and eighty nine adults that ~~were~~ brought to the bosom of the church. The number of children baptised was very large.

Father Alexander Manoel¹ was sent this year to Colombo and Negombo and the environs in which he converted to the faith and baptised six hundred and forty persons, both pagans and heretics. There was in these places an unusual inundation which looked like a deluge in the month of September. The floods destroyed many houses, a thousand and eighty houses in all, which obliged the Father to quit these parts.

Father Custodio de Andrade who resides in Kandy says that he baptised many adults but does not give the number. He laboured hard to bring to penance a number of people who were living in sin and he succeeded in many cases in bringing them to marry the cause of their sin, and put an end to the scandal. He also rebuilt some chapels.

The aforementioned Father Alexander Manoel who was sent to Colombo and Negombo, and spent four months there, had the following experience. There were in Negombo two brother Hollanders, natives of Ceylon, both heretics, but married to Catholics and their children and sons-in-laws were Catholics. The younger of the two brothers fell ill at the time the Father was there, and the wife succeeded in bringing him to the bosom of the church for she brought the missionary to the sick man who told him that though he was nominally a reformado he had no belief in the errors taught by the predikants. He then abjured his errors, received conditional baptism, made his confession, received viaticum and was anointed. When the Father had left the elder brother who bore the name of Pedro Collaco and was a Captain of the Infantry in the garrison and Lieutenant Commander, who used to take the place of the commandant when he was absent, came with a predikant to the sick man to prepare him for death as these heretics sometime do. The sick man did not declare the change of faith and treated the predikant jestingly, for whenever the predikant spoke, he turned to the other side. He did this so often that the predikant was tired and went away. The brother who was zealous for his religion felt the improper treatment meted out to the predikant and tried

1 He was 29 years old in 1737. *Junta das Missoens.* Ms. Goa Archives

to persuade his brother to bethink himself of his situation and see the predikant. The sick man replied that with the blessing of God he had God in his heart without the exhortations of the predikant: That he was prepared for death which he awaited with peace of conscience. Pedro Collaco also observed that the patient was quite recollected in that critical hour. He ultimately died in the presence of Pedro and his family. He then began to speak of the good death that he died saying that he hoped to have a similar death, not knowing yet of the man's change of religion. The sons-in-law then informed him of the conversion and said that he would not be able to have a similar death without doing what his brother did. What did my brother do? he asked. They said he did what Catholics do, namely he received the sacraments having abjured his errors. Pedro was quite taken aback and said nothing. May God open the eyes of this blind man and bring his whole family to the true faith as two of his sons had already done, the elder entering the church in spite of the displeasure of the father as the lady whom he wished to marry was a Catholic and did not want to marry a heretic. The other son's conversion will be narrated later under the year 1743.

We must not pass in silence a fervent deed of one of our catechists named Solomon, who was well versed in controversy and was a Sinhalese by race. He had an encounter with an heretical proponent in Colombo and he vanquished and confounded him in such sort that the unfortunate proponent being unable to reply to his antagonist went to the commissary and obtained an order for his arrest and punishment. Solomon thereupon left his home and country and for such an honourable cause went over to Bolata¹ with his wife and children as the Jurisdiction of the Hollanders does not extend so far. But still he is of great use, for he comes to Colombo and Negombo in disguise and wins many souls to the faith.



1 Bolawatta.

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