

James S. Rutledge

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THE
ORATORIAN MISSION
IN CEYLON

No 2

by

Father S. G. PERERA, S. J.

The CAXTON PRINTING WORKS,
Colombo, Ceylon.

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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Historical Documents relating to the Life and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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News of the Mission of Ceylon and Kingdom of Kandy.

1706.

(Torre do Tombo, Lisbon, Liv. 946.)

As the letters of the missionaries did not arrive before the departure of the ship, we are not able to give a full account of the great fruit reaped by our missionaries in the year 1705. Each of the missionaries visited that part of the field which falls to his share with unwearied diligence, and distributed the spiritual food throughout the year and added new Christians to the bosom of the church, for as now the conversion of tens and twenties cause no surprise, I will only mention the well rewarded labours of Father Joseph de Menezes in his mission which is Manar and Jafanapatam, in his own words :

“ At Jafanapatam, I received extraordinary favours of God. I went there with great fear seeing that the heretics had published very rigorous edicts against us, but as no edict can have effect against the decrees of God, I did my work there with such success that even the very inhabitants are in surprise, and the number of baptisms, both of the children of Catholic parents as well as of new converts and their families, amounted to 2,300 odd, for this year there was added to the church the Island of the Two Sisters¹ and part of the Island of Horses². Of mesticos too, many were converted, and many in Jafanapatam, being persons who can read, ask for books of prayers, for all the prayers and exercises of the non-Catholics and Europeans consist in bringing forward many curious and controversial things in the Hollander and German languages, and as the said converts are accustomed to heretical books they are in need of diversion and ask me, and I ask you, to send me some books and Portuguese manuals and catechisms and Way of the Cross, Rosaries, and any others that you can.”

The great zeal with which Father Joseph de Menezes works in cultivating that vineyard and what risks he runs and to what perils he exposes himself to gain souls, is shown in a letter of Father Joseph Vaz, dated 30 of April of that year, in which he says in his account of the missionaries : “ Father Joseph de Menezes in the course of five months of missionary work in Manar and a great part of Mantota has with the special help of God effected a great many conversions, especially of some heretics in the aforesaid Manar, as he also did in Jafanapatam, in spite of the great difficulties in getting there : and in the seven months of his labour he has baptized 2,300 odd souls ; and after giving many thanks, as we also did, for this unexpected result, he came to Puttalam

¹ Iranaitivu (Hoorn & Enkhuysen).

² Neduntivu (Delft).

for the Holy Week, and after performing all the ceremonies, he informed me that he was trying to pass to Nigumbo and the other places where the administration of the Sacraments has so far been attended with great peril, so much so that the very Christians hesitate to conduct him and accompany him, and try to prevent us when we attempt to do so without their help. May the Almighty arm preserve him and bless his unwearied efforts”.

While the said missionaries were cultivating that vineyard as described, the Fathers Joseph de Jesus Maria, Jacome Goncalvez, Manoel de Miranda and Miguel de Melho, set out on their way to assist in that holy enterprize and conquest of souls, being despatched in May of the previous year. But as they set out after the winter and as no expense was spared, they escaped the perils by hiring vessels in different ports and finally arrived at Cochin where lives the Bishop, Dom Frey Pedro Pacheco, who kept them there for about two months as the rainy season prevented them embarking by sea and he did not like to let them go by land as the journey was long, toilsome and perilous. Although they were the Bishop's guests all the time that they were in Cochin, and though he treated them with the greatest charity and liberality, the Fathers were very disconsolate at the delay in proceeding to their beloved mission, as narrated by Father Jacome Goncalvez who writes as follows in his Diary :—

“How useful this delay was to us—and please God we made the best use of it—I cannot say except that we spent those days in doing violence to our will and reason, a thing which can best be understood by those who know the spirit and meditate daily on these words *‘Tantum proficere quantum tibi visum intuleris’*¹. At least I can say, for myself that I did not so far find the days so profitable as I should have if I had known how to gain all the profit, for having lived so long in a House of Obedience I had no experience of going against my own will in which consists all the merit: it is certainly much more than I could have gained by a missionary life that was according to my will. What sustained us in this struggle and comforted us in our discouragement—of which the heaviest was when we heard that his Lordship wished to put off our departure for the next monsoon, and even he thought of separating us, sending two now and the two others at the next monsoon—next to the grace of God was the teaching of our venerable saint contained in the 11, 12, 15 and 17 chapters of the 3rd book. That was the interior recollection in which we lived during that time offering to God every day besides the oblation of the altar, the sacrifice of our own wishes to his secret judgments and his clear pleasure.”

Seeing that there was no help but to submit to the wishes of the Bishop they gave thanks to God who permitted it, and they arranged their time as they did at home and did some service to the Lord. Thus they first of all instructed the attendants and servants of the House and taught them to make a general confession and explained to them the manner of mental prayer which they all made in a body in the

1 Thou shalt make as much progress as thou dost violence to thyself.

church in the evening, a Father first reading to them the points on which they were to meditate. To this exercise there came also the clerics of the city, and many seculars who profitted by the opportunity to make their general confession, and the same was done by many women. In this way the people were greatly edified by the proceedings of the Fathers from whose presence they drew such great profit and they gained such affection, that on their departure they shed many tears and accompanied them to the limits of the city when they set out therefrom on the 14 of July.

The Fathers were not disposed to await the summer as the Bishop suggested, and with his consent and goodwill, which he granted on account of their impatience, they said adieu to him and set out with some letters of recommendation for the journey. Thenceforth they proceeded on foot receiving from the Fathers of the Society of Jesus, who had their churches in the Coast of Travancor, all possible help and charity as they are always wont to do, and reached Tutucorin on the 26 of the same month of July. There they remained twenty days looking for a vessel to cross the sea and guides to lead them by land. All that time they were entertained at the expense of a lady named Lucia Fernandez, a devout and very charitable lady, who helped the poor, and especially priests and missionaries. The Fathers in return for her charity did her the service of settling the disagreements that existed in the family to the great peril of their souls, a thing which caused surprise seeing that the family was the most noble and prominent in that city, and for that reason caused great scandal, as sometimes the mother and daughter and brothers and sisters and aunties and nieces were not on speaking terms.

It was Father Joseph de Jesus Maria who laboured most to bring about that reconciliation, and with great zeal he spent a whole night running from one house of the estranged folk to another, till finally his appeals proved effective, especially when he pointed out the great peril to their salvation. His efforts were so successful that before dawn that day he brought peace to the family to the great grief of the enemy of mankind who could have said that the season of peace and goodwill had already come, since a mother and son were watching and the angels sang of glory to God and peace on earth to men.

This union and concord so unexpected caused great satisfaction to the residents of Tutucorin, and not only did they come to thank the Fathers for the good they had done to that family and to the parishioners, but even the very persons concerned, both men and women, gave expression to the joy that was in their hearts and repeatedly begged pardon from the Fathers for having at first resisted the exhortations and admonitions, saying how deep rooted the evil had been and how incurable it would have become, if the Fathers had desisted at the first opposition. God was pleased to reward the charity of Lucia Fernandez and inspired the Fathers not to despair and touched those hearts to harken to the voice of heaven.

When the said peace had been established and confirmed by various manifestations of satisfaction and joy, the Fathers too wished to show the feelings in their hearts and opening their hands they

distributed gifts as they had done in Coulan in gratitude for the display of kindness—gifts which were destined for the Christians of Ceylon; and not satisfied with this they sent me from Tutucorin a list of persons of that Coast to whom they were under obligation for kindness shown to them, asking me to send them some spiritual books, images and other things, which are highly prized there, a thing which I will do at the first opportunity.

From Tutucorin they set out in a *dhoney*¹ on the 13 of August and sailed for Periapatam where for lack of wind they came to anchor, the place being chosen not by them but by God, who wished to show them a kind of life they had not experienced so far, as Father Jacome Goncalvez relates in the following words :—

“ In this place there was no spot better adapted to our stay than the jungle. When we entered it, there came to our mind the remembrance of the life which the ancient anchorites led and the many rigorous penances they did, and we were animated to bear with patience the little that God wished us to bear on that occasion, for not only did that place not produce anything save what God promised Adam the earth would bear for his chastisement: *Spinas et tribulos germinabit tibi*², but even our basket did not contain the necessaries at a time when our necessity was greatest. However we gave thank to God as all this came to us from His hands, for the thorny tree at least gave us shade.

After two days God disclosed to the sailors a means of sailing without sails or oars, for on the third day they found they could double the island. They raised anchor and with the favour of God they overcame the difficulty, though with much toil to the sailors, and at 10 o'clock they were able to set sail with the very wind which had so far been contrary. The first object which appeared in sight was the celebrated town and the famous pagode of Ramanacor³, the centre of all pagan beliefs and veneration, for they believe that in that place resides Rama, for just as our vows and pilgrimages are to Jerusalem, they direct all their offerings and pilgrimages to that false Jerusalem, where there is a great concourse of men and women for whom the King of that Island has placed barks maintained at his cost. About two leagues from that place is a river, to the waters of which they attribute a greater virtue than is ascribed to the Jordan, for while it was believed that the waters of the Jordan cured leprosy, this river they believe cleanses them from sin. There is another penance for those who like to do it for the sake of their ancestors, who receive relief from the hands of the barbers whom they pay to shave their heads and beards. A fatal blindness! But in the midst of this paganism God has left for the consolation of the faithful a chapel on the same river, on a rock on which is St. Anthony of the Fishermen.

1 A vessel of ark-like form. Tamil *toni*.

2 Thorns and thistles shall it bring forth to thee. Gen. 3, 18.

3 Rameswaram.

When these have need to pass that place they have the devotion of laying there a lighted lamp, and they maintain that with a little oil it remains lit for seven or eight days."

Leaving that place between three and four in the afternoon they came in sight of their beautiful Rachel, the Island of Ceylon I mean, and that sight erased from their minds the memory of all they had suffered. They came to anchor on the beach of Talemanar¹ on the last day of August, it being four months less eleven days from their departure from this city of Goa. There with great caution and vigilance they disembarked in the silence of the night at a spot at some distance from the fortress² so as not to be observed and seized by the Hollanders. But the secrecy and silence did not avail them to prevent a crowd of Christians from assembling there on the news of the arrival of the Fathers, though it was still night. The Fathers were struck with admiration at the sight of the love and veneration with which the Christians treated them, for no one came but knelt down to ask a blessing or even prostrated himself on the ground such as is never seen in this city. Their admiration increased when they saw the people struggling to have the pleasure of carrying the belongings of the Fathers as each one was anxious to have a share of the labour and to show his reverence for the Fathers. Thus each man taking on his shoulders whatever he could seize upon, and many without that honour, accompanied and guided the Fathers to the place where at this time Father Pedro Ferrao was, having come there from his church. He received them with many embraces and tears of joy and conducted them to a new chapel, whence on receiving information that Father Joseph Vaz was in the jungles of the Vanny doing mission work at a distance of two days' journey, they went there with Father Pedro Ferrao and found Father Joseph Vaz in the church making his thanksgiving after Mass. Great indeed was the consolation which the soul of Father Joseph Vaz received on the arrival of new missionaries, for he did not expect them at that time nor in such large numbers; but the tears that rolled down his cheeks manifested the feelings of his heart. He received them with warm embraces, but with few words, for he wished to spend more time with God; and after saying the *Te Deum* alternately with the Fathers with lighted candles in their hands he resumed his prayer till it was time for breakfast, after which he gave orders to celebrate the feast of the Nativity of our Lady, which was the feast of that church, with greater solemnity than was ever seen in those parts, for Father Joseph de Menezes also arrived for the feast on his return from the mission of Colombo having accomplished a six days' journey in three, walking night and day without sleep, as that is a thing to which he was well accustomed, for in the lands of the heretics he has to spend whole nights in work without sleep. This increased their joy the more, for by a special disposition of God there were gathered together without deliberate purpose all the priests of Ceylon, excepting Father Pedro da Saldanha who lives in Kandy and cannot quit the district of the said kingdom, a thing which the Bishop of Cochin mentions in his letter of the 21 of October, as follows:—

1 Talaimanar.

2 Fort of Manar.

Reverend Father Prefect,

With this letter I am sending you a fresh (packet) of letters (from Ceylon), and with them my congratulations on the success with which the Reverend missionaries entered the Island of Ceylon. That their heroic resolve to quit their country and serve God might be fitly rewarded, at their very first steps they met the object of their desires, for they met the Reverend Father Vicar-General¹ and the other Fathers, excepting the Reverend Father Pedro da Saldanha who is in Kandy. Great indeed was that favour not only because the favours of God are always such, but also because such was the anxiety of all for their safe arrival, of which I am a witness, for I also take part in that anxiety : but great also was that favour and great the thanks, as judged from a human point of view, that was given in two solemn feasts of the Nativity and the Sweet name of Mary and in the devout and well-sung office for souls.

The Reverend Vicar-General, all bathed in tears of joy for the great good fortune received this year may well exclaim : " Did the Vanny ever dream that it would see seven priests together and seven masses in one day ? All was jubilee born from the thought of the war which this little band was to wage against hell, and the glory which would result to God. This Congregation must thank God that it was able to bring up members so ready to work for the welfare of souls that they not only produce great fruit where they go, but even whence they go. I say this not only because this house owes them so much but also because of the information that reached me stating the edification and good example they left wherever they stayed ".

At that time people came from various places to celebrate the feast of our Lady, some merely to see, others to make their confession and Fathers Joseph de Menezes, Pedro Ferrao and Joseph Vaz spent whole days in the confessional in order to give every one opportunity ; and the new missionaries unable to do the same through ignorance of the language, watched the old missionaries to see how they worked, especially Father Joseph Vaz, for in all the places they passed through they had heard of many prodigies wrought by him, and there they heard of others which the Christians narrated as eye-witnesses which had happened in various parts of the mission, in mentioning which I only mean to record what the Fathers saw and observed in those few days as Father Jacome Goncalvez notes in his Diary as follows :—

"To understand the great sanctity of his life it is enough to know one thing which I will here note. Our Father St. Philip Nery used to point to the head with his finger and say that it was the most difficult thing to overcome in the spiritual warfare, meaning how difficult it is to overcome one's own opinion. In the case of Father Joseph Vaz he has accomplished this to such an extent that though he was the most experienced and the oldest in years, he was like a child that did not dare to contradict what is said to him even by the most ignorant. If I had my way and I had been able to draw a picture, I would place him in front of the finger of Christ in a picture representing Our Lord saying, as He said in the Gospel of those who have to enter the kingdom

1 Father Joseph Vaz.

of Heaven : *Nisi efficiamini sicut parvuli non intrabitis in regnum Coelorum*¹ : for he has no trust in his own opinion ; he looks to God in everything. Thus, if some priests were near he takes their word for that of God in matters great and small ; and when he has no priest by him he has recourse to some Christians of his confidence and obeys God's voice in theirs. But as this is a great perfection it is only understood by those who exercise themselves in it. As regards other things in which all can give edification, I must say that I did not notice that on these days he made any special observance of rigorous silence, but I never heard him utter a word that might smack of idleness ; he only spoke words that edify or were of some use. His food in our presence was rice boiled in water, with salt without any other seasoning ; on the feast day the same, although even in this matter he never fails to obey those who advise him to take anything else for his health ; but when he is engaged with the neighbour whether by day or night, unless there is someone to call his attention to the need of taking refreshment and rest, he takes whatever refreshment or rest while engaged in work ; it is for this reason that attacks of ill-health come upon him often, and quite recently they had to remove him from the jungle to this church almost dead, but as the illness was due to want of nourishment he recovered when he was given food.

That ejaculation " Oh, my Jesus " which touched the hearts of his hearers when he preached in the vernacular in Goa, I heard here from his lips during the sighs that he heaves night and day. The *Memento Peccante, Ne recorderis* and *Pater Noster* are ever on the tip of his tongue at all hours, and especially at the end of some divine office, prayer, Mass, etc., as also at the end of meals, and he wants holy water to be always at hand. About his prayer I cannot say with certainty that it is continuous, because God alone can judge a man's hidden deeds, nor can I know whether he sleeps or keeps vigil at night, for I sleep too soundly to know his movements, all I can say is that he does not lie at full length, which might be because he is on the watch like the Spouse that says speaking of himself *Ego dormio et cor meum vigilat*². But for our obligatory morning prayer, before the cock wakes for his first crow, he is up and awakes us with the little bell and immediately begins the *Te Deum* and other commemorations ; and he always takes care to awake his servants, two of whom always accompanies him from Kandy, for the same purpose, and he is equally punctual as regards the evening prayer and discipline on Fridays, a practice observed by the people also ; the women remain outside the church during that time when on the sound of the *Miserere* which the Father says from inside the church in such a tender voice, there follows such lamentations as are heard in Goa when a Passion play begins. Finally the zeal with which he observes our rules in the least particular is wonderful.

As regards his interior mortifications and penances, though I have not seen them, as little as I have seen his flesh, but only his skin and

1 Unless you become like little children you shall not enter the Kingdom of Heaven.

2 I sleep and my heart watcheth. Can. 5, 2.

bones, it seems to me he is the picture of Job who said of himself *Pelle meo consumptis carnibus*¹, etc. Throughout the day and during part of the night he has no rest, for though we did not see him always at the altar or in the confessional I never saw him except engaged with God or with his neighbour, either praying or teaching us the language or instructing others or preaching, except when they call him away from these occupations in order to make him take some rest. If at the end of his sermons in Tamil he makes some colloquies, the people weep, and we who do not understand the language are unaware what it is that touched their hearts.

When he goes on a journey he is wont, whenever possible, to say alternately the Rosary and the Stations with the one who accompanies him, and when one is tired another takes his place ; and though throughout the whole of this Island there are thorns, he always walks barefoot, though on this occasion it seems in obedience to the Christians, he had a pair of sandals ; but as soon as Father Miguel de Melho arrived, he offered him that pair which he took with great esteem, though he has his own. The Father always carries with him a piece of white cloth to wipe his face, for perspiration runs down his face and sometimes tears of compunction, for he is so immersed in God that he often forgets himself and what he is doing outwardly, and thus it happens that he reads his office several times a day and at Mass he does not sometimes know the place he has reached, similarly in the commemorations for the dead, and goes on till he notices. Within the jurisdiction of the King of Kandy he wears the soutane, but in the lands of the heretics a cloth like some poor Malavar. It is the same with the Fathers who are in the different missions whose virtues and exemplary deeds and their services to God for the faith and for the Christians I have no time to relate now, much as I should like to."

The feast of the Nativity of our Lady was celebrated with a High Mass with three priests, and Father Joseph Vaz preached in Portuguese and in Tamil. In the afternoon there was a procession with great solemnity and concourse of numberless people and Father Joseph de Menezes preached in Tamil. On the following day Father Joseph Vaz summoned a consultation before the altar, and after invoking the grace of the Holy Spirit and prayers he took the votes of Father Joseph de Menezes, Father Pedro Ferrao regarding the division of the mission, and with unanimous consent they distributed the districts naming a mission for each one as follows, leaving to Father Joseph Vaz the charge of visiting all, to encourage and help the others :—

Distribution of the Mission Field.

To Father Joseph de Menezes : Allambil, Cottangel, Puducudy-russa, Balcama, Punerim, Jafanapatam with all the islands, Tamalagama, Tiricunamale, Cottiar, Batecalor, Torgamune, Tamaguara with all dependencies.

1 The flesh being consumed (my bone hath cleaved) to my skin.
Job. 19, 20.

- To Father Pedro Ferrao : Silena'maradamaddu and all the villages of Mantota.
- To Father Jacome Goncalvez : Manar, Aripo, Mosely with all the villages beyond the river as far as Pullyaculam, Illapacadoc, Covrculam, Tambatty, Vernaculam, Palavramcatte, Irapaculam, Avaraculam and all dependencies.
- To Father Francisco de Jesus : Curryculam, Quillamually, Galgamam, Setapala, Navacaddu, Anddiuru, Cattacattu, Maripu.
- To Father Pedro da Saldanha : Candia, Matule, Ycotta, Seven Corlas, Cunddasaly.
- To Father Miguel de Mello : Three Corlas, Maniagama, Sofregaum, Uua, Malaba, Gurubebly, Conquam, Situavaca.
- To Father Jose de Jesus Maria : Potulam, Velque, Chytravally, Palancanddel, Arecettim, Mollicanddil.
- To Father Manoel de Miranda : Vellevallym, Bogama, Caymel, Nigumbo, Virgampaty, Columbo, Calature, Mature.

Two days after the distribution of missions they sang High Mass of the feast, on Sunday the feast of the Most Holy Name of Mary, with a sermon by Father Joseph de Menezes, and on Monday they sang an office for the dead, and they separated each for his mission ; but Father Miguel de Mello who was to go to Kandy to pass thence to his mission, remained at Narangodde on the order of Father Joseph Vaz, who left him there unwilling to take him with him to Kandy, as he had not yet informed the King of the arrival of the Fathers, nor obtained permission, without which the Father could not enter the said city, and Father Joseph Vaz expected to be able to obtain it, but he did not succeed on account of the incident which we shall now mention.

Some leading men who held office in the Palace had been given up by the physicians as hopeless and declared incurable after many sacrifices and offerings to the idols without any result. With better counsel, given probably by some Christians, they vowed to give alms to our church and sent to the Fathers to recommend them to God and beg a restoration to health, and the Fathers did as they were asked, and the patients recovered, and recognizing thereby the God of the Christians as the true God, asked for holy baptism which Father Joseph Vaz administered to them having first instructed them in the mysteries of the Faith. This raised the fury of the relatives against them and the grandees of the realm turned against them and tried to take vengeance on them by doing them all the harm they could. For this purpose after accusing them of many crimes they said to the King that the Father baptized them with the blood of a cow killed for the purpose. The King believing the tale that was told him, was vexed and ordered all the converts to be put in prison, and all their goods to be confiscated, depriving them at the same time of the offices they held in the Royal household ; but he did not say a word against Father Joseph Vaz, nor did he order him to be questioned about the case, because of the great respect he had for him. The Father seeing the converts in this plight

and fearing that the loss of temporal goods might tempt them to abandon the Faith, sent word to all the Fathers to make public prayer with all their Christians, and to beg God for the perseverance of the converts. The Lord heard this supplication and was pleased to touch the heart of the King, who, at the instance of Antonio de Orta, a favourite of his, ordered the prisoners to be summoned to his presence and he asked them to narrate the truth of the matter. They did so including the recovery of health, asserting that they were determined to keep the Faith even at the risk of their lives, as they now realised that there was no salvation without it, and that therefore they readily disregarded temporal loss. The King listened to them with great attention and struck by their determined attitude he ordered them to be restored to their properties and offices with honour, which brought confusion on their opponents and the Christians who were in great suspense were relieved.

On account of this incident Father Miguel de Mello remained in the aforesaid Narangode for some considerable time, but it was not without the permission of God, for as an old and experienced missionary of the kingdom of Canara where he had rendered great service to souls for a number of years, with great prudence and discretion he succeeded in persuading some persons to abandon the life of public concubinage in which they lived and brought others back to the church, a thing which neither Father Joseph Vaz nor Father Pedro da Saldanha had been able to do in spite of their great efforts, as was stated by Father Joseph Vaz himself. The latter intended to take Father Miguel de Mello to Kandy after obtaining the King's permission, but as soon as the rainy season ended, when everyone expected that he would give some rest to his tired body, he decided quite otherwise, namely, to visit the missions of the whole Island with Father Miguel de Mello. Accordingly he set out on his journey.

Father Manoel de Miranda was likewise a priest who had great experience of mission work, having been in the mission of Canara where he was even serviceable to the Royal Crown, for he gave the means and the advice which enabled the Captain-Major of the South, Francisco Correa de Mesquita, to destroy two ships of the Arab enemy that were in the bar of Barcalar, on account of which the Arabs and the Canarins sought to seize and kill him, as the said Captain-Major certified in a document which he issued to the Father taking him in his frigate after setting fire to the said ships in order to rescue him from the enemy. As soon as this Father found himself entrusted with the mission that was assigned to him in the foregoing distribution, he went to Colombo, and when he had exercised his ministry for a month and a half with caution and secrecy, for his arrival was known to the heretics who began to make inquiries to seize him, he went to Nigumbo intending that when he had finished the visit of that city he would return to Colombo, which he did after some months of stay in Nigumbo. Thither went Father Joseph de Menezes to meet him and help him, as the said Father Manoel de Miranda was a newcomer in the land, not accustomed to the language and customs and people of the country. The two together went to Columbo and leaving Father Manoel de Miranda to

look after his sheep, Father Joseph de Menezes proceeded to Mature, Calature and Galle and other towns in that distant district where the Fathers had not yet gone because of the insuperable difficulties that confronted them. Having reached the outskirts of Galle he baptized 1,200 souls and returned to Colombo as he found many obstacles to his entry into the city of Galle, as well as because he received tidings that Father Joseph Vaz was very ill in the jungles of Cottiar. But he soon received word that the Father was much better and he did not go there but continued his mission.

In Colombo Father Manoel de Miranda found the Christians dis-united and divided into different factions, and as this was a great obstacle in his path he tried hard to win their goodwill till finally he succeeded in uniting them. He gave them some rules in writing for the maintenance of peace and concord. He brought back to the Faith some widows and orphans who had been maintained by the Company and perverted. On hearing of this the heretics took them to their kirk and publicly questioned them whether they were Catholics or Reformados, and when they replied they were Catholics they were deprived of the pension. On coming to hear of this the Father feared that the loss of their pension and the miseries to which they were subject might make them turn away again, and therefore appealed to some charitable folk to help them till at last he was able to give them a settled income.

Besides this he won back to God a leading European who had great influence in Nigumbo and was a native of the colony. He had been a Catholic, but some 33 years ago he became a pervert through the instigation of the heretics and followed their errors and spoke against the use of images, etc. But a daughter of his who was a good Catholic and married to the Modeliar of Nigumbo, that is to say, the head of the government there, named Affonso Pereyra, also a good Catholic, succeeded in making him abandon his errors. When the Father came to Nigumbo in disguise and was staying in the house of the daughter of this man, she narrated to him with many tears about her heretical father. Father Miranda thereupon offered to visit him and did so immediately, and the man was pleased with the visit. On the second visit the Father turned the conversation to the salvation of souls and convinced the man so effectively that he was won over and placed himself entirely in the Father's hands. He abjured his errors, made a protestation of Faith, received absolution. He destroyed all heretical books and began to read a *Santo Christo*. The Father beside himself with joy gave him his own rosary, and the daughter was most thankful to the Father and the Christians happy to find a new patron in him.

Father Jacome Goncalvez has made great progress in the study of Tamil and knows that language thoroughly, and he has already translated into that language the Fifteen Mysteries of the Rosary, Prayers before Communion, and many other things. The other Fathers are working in their mission with the spirit and strength that God has given them.

All the foregoing has been culled from letters of the Fathers who all affirm that their Christians when they assemble in the churches and chapels pray to God for the King our Lord who has sent them these labourers to bring them back to the Catholic church when they had separated from it and were living in heretical errors or under superstitions for want of priests to instruct and exhort them. Today they are so firm in their faith that no loss of temporal things, no trouble or no threats can prevent them from openly confessing, as has been seen on many occasions when some of the Christians were taken by the heretical Ministers and questioned in their kirks and ill-treated.

Throughout the whole mission, outside the dominion of the heretics, the feasts are observed in public with processions as solemn as possible, and in the churches of Kandy and Vanny the Holy Week is observed with Passion plays for Good Friday, for which this Congregation has sent the necessary apparel. May the Lord deign to convert the whole island for his greater glory, and may He prolong the life of His Majesty, as we always pray at Mass, as on his powerful arm depends the conservation and increase of this little Congregation which is bringing up new subjects, so that labourers may not be wanting for the cultivation of the Lord's vineyard.

Goa, 1706.

Father Manoel de Miranda to the Prefect of the
Congregation, Father Antonio Pereira

1707

(*State Archives of Goa—Liv. dos Moncoes, 73 ff. 116 & sqq.*)

After celebrating here, in Caymel¹, the feast of Our Lady of the Mount², (as, I think, I informed Your Reverence in my last letter), I went to Colombo, remained there a few days and left for the Mission of Calaturre³, where I stayed till the first Sunday of Advent⁴, labouring in that Mission in which more than three hundred and fifty persons, both pagans and *reformados*, were received into the Church. In these places I set up some chapels where spiritual exercises could be made and the Christian Doctrine taught when the people assemble at night, for in the places, subject to the dominion of the Hollanders, all our services are by night.

I also put certain persons in charge of the said chapels, of which there are nine in the Mission, viz., two in Berberym⁵, two in Macundda⁶, one in Paygale⁷, two in Calamula⁸, one in Calaturre⁹, and the other in an island. These Christians gave me great consolation for they are good people, and I found by experience that they have completely abandoned all pagan practices and other diabolical superstitions, which is no small deed in the case of Christians of these countries. I had also the consolation, in this tour, of meeting with some Europeans, soldiers of the Company, who, since they left their country, eighteen and twenty years ago, had never met a Father. Hearing of my presence they climbed over all the walls of the fort¹⁰ one night, and came in search of me. It was on the very night when I had an attack of my malady and erysipelas with high fever and pains in my back and head, so that I was almost delirious. However, in that state I heard their confessions, and not to disappoint them, I said Mass as best I could, and gave them communion.

1 Kammala.

2 Nativity of the Blessed Virgin, 8 September, 1706.

3 Kalutara.

4 28 November, 1706.

5 Beruwala.

6 Maggona.

7 Paiyagala.

8 Kalamulla.

9 Kalutara.

10 The Fort of Kalutara, situated on the hillock on the south bank of the mouth of the Kaluganga; now the residence of the Assistant Government Agent, Kalutara.

In Calaturre there happened a prodigy which I should like to relate briefly to Your Reverence. There lived there a woman, who is now in Colombo, a widow, and she had, among others, a young daughter (now dead), who kept a little oratory of her own. She was so devout that her most earnest occupation was to adorn her oratory, making lace, preparing linen, gathering flowers, etc., for it. One day the house, which was of thatch, accidentally caught fire, and as the wind was strong and it was difficult to put out the fire, every one got out of the house. The girl, however, whose great care and treasure was her oratory and the statue of the Blessed Virgin, ran into the house and hugging her oratory began to weep. Her mother rushed after her with a mother's love—none of the others dared, for the flames were spreading fast, reducing everything to ashes—and begged her to come out, that her oratory would be saved; but the girl would not quit the place. Yet, strange to say, the fire burnt up the room adjoining the one in which the oratory and the child were, and passing over it (as if it were already burnt) caught the coconut trees which were on the either side; and though the straw and the leaves above were burnt, the fire did not enter nor do the least damage, except that the leaves within were scorched.

Various events took place there, but I should have more leisure to relate them.

On this occasion I was unable to go to Galle, for, having communicated with the Modeliar and other persons, I was told that the Modeliar was in the forest cutting timber for the Company, and that there were some disagreements among the people, and that at such a time I should not go there. As I had no experience of the place, and on the other hand there was no special need for a visit, since Father Joseph de Menezes had been there a few months ago, I decided to follow the advice of the Christians of Calaturre and not go there. So, having recommended the Mission of Calaturre, among others, to Luis Pires, renter of the Company, who commands respect in those parts, I set out for Colombo with tears in my eyes, for such was the grief and lamentations of both men and women that it could move the hardest heart.

In two days I reached Colombo. I wanted to set out immediately for Negombo, but the Christians told me that, as things were quiet, it would be good to begin the annual discharge of that Mission; for this Mission of Colombo is one of the most troublesome, not only because it is laborious to the Missionary, but also because there are revolts, and for this reason the work is done by bits according to opportunity.

I will interrupt my narrative here to say that, ever since I entered this Mission and worked in it, inquiring into everything, I was in a sea of perplexity and scruple. For, not to speak of other things, what takes place in matters of religion and articles of faith, seems to me matter for great concern. For, first of all, there are some who when questioned by the Government denied their religion. All the natives, when they go¹ to get the licence which they have to get for marriage—

1 Catholics had to appear in the Dutch church for baptism and marriage.

and in the baptism, the parents—deny the seven Sacraments, the protection and intercession of Saints, Purgatory, the adoration of images, and give other heretical answers to the public questions which the Xetamby¹ makes in the presence or in the absence of the Predicante. Besides this, all the people, both whites and blacks, when they take their children for Baptism or stand Sponsors, are publicly asked by the Predicante whether they promise to teach the baptized persons the religion which is taught in his church ; and the parents and sponsors answer by a nod.

In this matter the Fathers who were my predecessors had tried every means, but finding it almost impossible to remedy it, they had left the people in their good or bad faith, though not without scruples of conscience. I say “in their good or bad faith”, for the greater part of the common people do not know that it is a sin to do so ; others think that by so doing they only deceive the *reformados* merely by word of mouth, and make no scruple about it ; others fall into the error through human respect and fear, though they know it to be a sin. Thus it happens that scarcely anybody accuses himself of this sin, which being intrinsically so heinous I thought that I should not allow them to remain in their good or bad faith without admonition, and that if after admonition and advice they failed to do what they ought, it would be my duty to refuse to admit them to the Sacraments, for it is not impossible for these people to give up denying the articles of faith. Finally, I referred the matter, along with several others which came to my knowledge, to the Rev. Father Joseph Vaz², Superior and Vicar-General of this Mission, for his decision. He wrote to me that it would be a very good thing if I could manage to get the Christians to declare themselves Catholics in a body, and thus avoid burdening their consciences and our own. That was just what I desired and thought to be the right thing to do.

But to carry it out was a matter of great difficulty for many reasons. First of all, no private person would have the courage to do it when he went to ask a licence for marriage or baptism for the children, for fear lest the Government might insult or punish him. To do it in a body too was a difficult matter. It was difficult to get so large a Christian community to act together, for they had never done anything of that kind since the Company took this country, but had ever lived submissively, doing whatever the masters of the country ordered them to do, though in their hearts they always remained Catholics. I had to consider, moreover, that there was no one to whom I could look for help in this matter, not because the Christians did not desire it, but because a matter of this nature could not but cause a great stir and provoke the opposition of the adversaries, and if on inquiry some one were found to have been the cause or leader of the movement, he would be severely punished and despoiled of everything.

1 *Sattamby*, teacher, catechist.

2 Father Vaz mentions these circumstances in a letter to Father H. Dolum, S.J. (23 August, 1703) and the Papal Legate Cardinal de Tournon, to whom the letter was communicated, recommended Father Vaz (24 June, 1704) to try to put a stop to the practice.

Moreover, I was a mere fugitive in this country and could not easily meet everybody; on the other hand, I was much disheartened by the timidity of the people who are very weak and afraid of the punishments which might ensue. Some of them are employed in certain offices of the Company or depend on its charity, and above all, though they are Catholics and very devout, they have not the needed fervour of faith and knowledge of God and sin, etc., because they have not been sufficiently instructed. It was impossible to give them sufficient instruction because of the difficulties that exist, and especially because the Fathers cannot go about publicly in the territories of the heretics, but only secretly and in disguise, which is the reason why the Sacraments are not administered by day but only by night. Besides, the business had to be begun in Colombo; but to begin it in Colombo there was no opportunity, and without any opportunity it was not feasible to gather people *ex-officio*. Add to all this, there were not wanting some who discouraged me, and it was not easy to get help from the other Fathers, for they were all far from me, each busy with the cultivation of his vineyard. In spite of all these difficulties I was bent on undertaking the affair, and began to say Mass for this intention and ordered all the exercises of the Christians, and of the chapel, to be offered for my intention.

Leaving this subject for the present I resume my narrative. I began the Mission of Colombo in the island of the Slaves of the Company¹, in which there were two chapels. I had almost finished my work in the place and had only one night's service more, when, on the eleventh of December, God permitted a Proclamation to be issued² throughout the city by order of the Government, requiring fishermen, Xettis³ and Paravars, and other castes, under pain of fine and chastisement, to send all their children, male and female, to the new school which had been built. Another plakaat was read in their church, ordering all persons, male and male, to come thither on Sundays. The Christians were grieved and alarmed, but I was very happy in the belief that God had opened this door for us to give an opportunity to carry out our purpose.

That same night I came to the city⁴ and, gathering together the principal fishermen, who are the people most firm in their faith, and most courageous, and from whom the Company derives much profit, I communicated my intention to them at eleven o'clock in the night, showing them how much the matter concerned their souls. In short I spoke to them in such wise that their hearts were moved (when God wishes it even the most difficult thing becomes very easy); and thus, after I had gathered the fishermen together several times in different places, so as not to be noticed, they came to realize the great error they had committed, and they all swore to me amidst sobs and tears to confess the faith publicly even if they had to suffer death for

1 Now Slave Island, formerly an island in the Colombo lake.

2 Promulgated by Gerrit Huigebosh at the request of the Dutch minister. Proceedings of the Political Council, MSS 1707.

3 Chetties.

4 "Oud Staad," "Old City," now the Pettah.

it. We agreed, for greater safety, to make this confession of faith by a petition to the Governor and other Gentlemen of the Council, for if it had to be made by word of mouth they might perhaps not be able to give satisfactory answers to all the inquiries that would be made; and now that they declared their faith they wished at the same time to beg the Company to grant them a church and priests as had been granted to the Catholics in all their lands.

The Paravars also agreed to make a separate petition, but the whites did not mix themselves up in this matter as the Proclamation did not speak of them. I wrote the petition in Portuguese; a *reformado*, Tauper, whose wife is a Catholic, translated it into Dutch with great elegance at the request of a fisherman, Simao Collaco, the President Mor of Colombo, whose courage and zeal in matters of faith is deserving of praise, and who being the best physician in the city is on terms of friendship with the great and has access to all their houses, and as they know that he is a Catholic, they sometimes disclose to him what is discussed in the Council; for though many of them are said to be Calvinists, they are so only out of love for posts and offices, and therefore go to their communion, but leaving aside the Predicantes and a few other persons, the rest are not in their hearts opposed to Catholics, and are sometimes even favourable to us; and he has in secret courted the friendship of some members of the Council, else it would have been impossible for a Father to hold service in Colombo.

When the petition of the fishermen was ready, it was first presented to the Secretary¹, who is the chief of that nation; for, according to the orders of the Company, no request could be made by the people except through their leader². About two hundred persons went to present the petition to the Secretary, who, after reading it, replied that he could not be of any service to them in this matter, but that they must have recourse to the Governor; however let them consider well what they were doing by coming forward with such a novelty after fifty years. Two of them came to the place where I was to inform me of this, for I had stopped all services and had hidden myself in a very safe house. I told them that they must go on with the matter and present a petition to the Governor and Councillors. A copy of this petition is given separately³.

It appears that the Secretary acquainted the Governor with the move, and he, seeing that an affair of this kind could not but be on the advice of the Father, and learning from secret enquiries that I was, as I said before, in Slave Island, sent secret orders to gather three bands of Lasaarins, Araches, Captains and other soldiers. This he did with two intentions, one to seize me and then to dishearten the people; the other, even if I could not be captured, to frighten the people by this warlike exhibition to abandon the idea of the petition,

1 The Fishermen were exempted from the jurisdiction of the Disava and placed under the Secretary to Government. Cordiner, Ceylon I, 69.

2 Plakaat, 20 February, 1706, Legislative Acts of the Dutch Government, MS., Vol. II, p. 41, Govt. Archives, Colombo.

3 See below, D 14.

for he did not like that such a petition should be made to him. It was indeed very embarrassing, for if he tolerated the petition the Catholics in other places would do the same, (and he and the others knew very well how numerous the Catholics were), and the Catholics would be emboldened for the future. If he wished to treat it as serious crime, he had to deal with a whole population, whence serious consequences might arise, and he might be found fault with in Batavia¹ and in Holland.

Rumours of the proposed search were noised abroad, but nobody knew when it was to take place. Some said it was in the Island, others in the street of the fishermen, others in all the houses of the Catholics, others that images were to be seized at the same time. There was in short a panic, for the expedition was delayed for two days. I don't know why, perhaps it was because nothing was settled in the Council held during these days, for the Governor, not to take the responsibility on himself, put the matter to the Council. I can scarcely describe my state during these three days, not from fear, for in my heart I felt no cowardice, but out of love of him in whose house I was. He was a prominent gentleman and a leading Catholic, whose wife was a heretic—(and I doubt whether the best Catholic lady could have shown more vigilant care and attention to a Father than she did to me). She encouraged her husband and would not hear of my leaving her house, nor could I have done it easily for the vigils, sentinels and patrols, did their duty in all the streets. I spent a day and night between the roof and ceiling of a room; another hiding place was a large chest which was kept in readiness to be entered into and looked, etc. At last the search took place in Slave Island one day at dawn, and Rutilante himself who had to conduct the search, came to the house in which I was, at 8 o'clock and informed my host about it, for they are great friends. Though he did not know that I was in that house, the warning was intended to put me in safety in case I should happen to be in the Island.

When the search was over, two fishermen came to inform me of it. I told them to go to the Governor next day with their petition, and so they did. At three o'clock in the evening (it was New Year's eve)—about three hundred persons went to the Governor with the petition. He read it and asked them to come for his answer on Monday. When they returned on Monday he asked them whether the petition was made in the name of all those who were present. They said, yes. Then he said that all those who made the petition must sign their names to it, which they all did. Thereupon they were dismissed with orders to come when they were called.

The matter was at once placed before the Council². It was found that the hand-writing was that of one of the clerks of the Company. He was sent for and severely reprimanded, but he said that he did not compose it but only copied it according to a draft which was in the

1 Capital of the Dutch East India Company's Government, where the Governor-General and Council were.

2 The minutes of this meeting are extant in the Government Archives of Colombo Proceedings of Political Council, 1707 MS.

writing of Taiper. That man was then called. He admitted that he had translated the petition from the Portuguese into Dutch at the request of Simao Collaco, who was his family physician, but he maintained that, as it was to be presented to the lawful authority in the country, he did not think that he had committed any wrong. He was, however, severely blamed and reprehended that, being a Calvinist he had done a thing contrary to his religion, etc. They asked him to bring at once the Portuguese text which was still in his possession. He delivered it to them. The Council decided to appoint three Captains to inquire into the matter, and to make the questions and requisitions, etc. Hearing of this I immediately sent for two of the leaders and asked them to speak boldly about their faith without hiding anything ; and in other matters to show themselves very humble and submissive to the Lords of the land.

On the following day the fishermen were called and the Captains began their interrogations, taking down the answers in writing. First of all they were asked whether they recognized the Portuguese writing on that paper. They said they did and that it was the hand-writing of the Father. Where had they met the Father? They said they had met him in Livramento¹, which is a place outside the city where formerly was a Church of Our Lady of Release (Nossa Senhora do Livramento), but now only a ruined wall, but many people white and black and even non-Christian Sinhalese visit it with great devotion and each one according to his belief receives favours from God, and the sick drink of the water of the well, which is by the side of the church ; and all the orders and penalties which the Company had published against those who go thither did not succeed in doing away with the devotion of the people. They asked why the Father had come to that place. They said he came for the Novenna of Our Lady. Why did they go there? They replied they went there to make their confession and to receive the Sacraments. They were asked whether many people went there. They said there were more than they could easily count.

Why had they presented that petition? They said that they told the Father of the Proclamation which was published requiring them to send their children to the school, and ordering them to attend the church with their wives, and when the Father asked what they had to do or say if they went to the church, they said they had to deny that there were more than two Sacraments, to deny purgatory, etc., that then the Father asked whether they were Catholics or Calvinists, that if they were Catholics there was no need to ask what they had to do ; and when they said they and their fathers, grand-fathers and great-grand-fathers were Catholics, the Father said that if they were faithful Catholics they could not on any account deny the points of faith taught by the Catholic religion ; that they must be obedient to the rulers of the country in all things but in the matter of religion, as they were Catholics in heart, they could not with their

1 Port. "Release" the site of the Church of Our Lady of Release is still called "Livramento" and is now a cemetery in South Colombo, see Dutch Records, 20.

lips proclaim themselves *reformados* out of human respect : that they had only to ask the Predicantes themselves and other gentlemen whether such a deception was licit : and when they told the Father that they were simple people unfitted to explain themselves properly before the Governor, the Father said that if they liked he would write a petition for them to be presented to the Governor, who, like a father, would listen to the reasonable demands of his subjects as he was a judge to punish their faults.

Asked whether the Father came often, they said he did. They were then asked in what garb he went about. They said he came dressed as a Sinhalese coolie carrying a pingo. The Captains thereupon asked them whether they were not aware of the various orders and proclamations of the Company, forbidding them under pain of punishment and penalties to meet Catholic priests. They replied that they knew it full well, but that they were not orders that could be observed, for, just as if their Honours were to forbid their servants to eat, they might be obeyed for a day or two, but eat the servants must somehow or other ; in like manner, to escape the death of their souls, they could not but go out by stealth to meet the Father in order to refresh their souls. Then they were asked whether they meant to disobey the Governor's orders to send their children to the school. They replied that the children would go to the school, and they themselves would go to church in obedience to the orders, but they would teach their children at home the prayers of their own religion, and when they were questioned in the church they would say their own prayers since they knew no other.

Then they were asked who else (besides the Father) had taken the lead in their agitation. They replied that it was a matter which concerned them all. Asked where the Father was, they replied that he had gone. In this way they made many other inquiries, all of which the people answered, sometimes with falsehoods, for not everything that is true has to be told. Some days later they were again asked the same or similar questions, all of which were answered with constancy and without discrepancy ; the wives of the fishermen dared to tell their husbands to stay at home if they had not the courage, and to let them go to the Council instead. This caste of fishermen is not like the one in our country, but is the chief one in Colombo, and many of them are related to the White's and many of the Mesticos come from them.

During all this time I remained in the same house without saying Mass, for my servant who served my Mass could not be kept there as he was known to all the Christians, and not even the Christians should know where I was lest they be circumvented. Thus since Christmas, when I said the three Masses in one house, I was more than 20 days without Mass. Though the fishermen said that I had gone, our adversaries knew very well that I was still in Colombo, though they did not know where. Knowing this a respectable lady, a convert from the thick of heresy, paid a visit to my hostess, and, as she was so far not publicly known to be a Catholic, without any hesitation she remained there till ten o'clock at night and took me home with her in the disguise of a servant. There I remained some

days. I had no intention of leaving Colombo, not to run the risk of any disunion or weakness of the people during my absence. For remaining there I could at once set things right, but once out of Colombo it would be difficult to return on account of the strong guards they had placed at all the passes and gravets¹.

Some fishermen, however, and some friendly Whites, like Pegolote² and Poyol, sent messages asking me to go away, and when I told them the reason why I stayed, they replied that they were firm in the instructions I had given them, and that my presence was a source of great disquietude to them, for if I should chance to be taken everything would be lost, for they would all lose heart and break down. Owing to these reasons, after foreseeing and forewarning them against any mischance, I quitted the city one night with an Arache of the Company of the caste of Chaliya, and disguised as his lascarym I passed the city gates and reached Mutual at 11 in the night. Thence on the following day I went to Dumaga, which is a village situated in the thick of the forests and has a small population of Chaliyas, all strong and brave Christians. I remained there for five days and thence I sent two persons to Kandy with full particulars and a supply of wine, hosts, paper, etc., of which I was informed the Fathers were in great need, and which I therefore procured hastily from Colombo through a trustworthy person.

At this time a Predicante named Zinzo³, a terrible and crafty man, came to Nigumbo, and terrified the people with various reports and took note of the fourteen chapels that are there with the names of the catechists, and other things against Modeliar Don Affonso Pereyra, who, as soon as he heard of my presence in Dumaga, sent me a message asking me to come at once to Nigumbo on my way to Caymel in order to remedy the timidity in which the Christians of Nigumbo were. I set out one night with my good Chaliyas by a way infested with leeches, and as that was rather trying, it pleased God to lead me by another, which was a muddy pool, the most foul-smelling I have ever met. I walked through it for a good distance with great difficulty for my feet sank almost up to the knees, till at last with the help of my companion I reached the river which flows from Nigumbo, and arrived at the place where a dhoney was in readiness. We embarked in all haste and set out; but all the danger was at the pass which was on the way. However, thanks to God, we were unobserved though we passed very near, the river being very narrow at the spot and the watcher were not asleep, but were sitting by the fire along the bank as we passed, but God did not permit us to be seen in spite of the bright moonlight.

At three o'clock in the morning I reached the house of our benefactor, Modeliar Don Affonso Pereyra, who was awaiting me, and from the information he gave me I learnt that the Christians of Nigumbo were so despondent and broken that they had already turned the

1 *Kadavat*, "City gates."

2 Benjamin Peglotte, who was afterwards put to death by Verluyst.

3 Sinjeu.

chapels into godowns¹, and had no meetings for prayer, etc.; the Christians themselves told me that, had I delayed ten or fifteen days longer, they would have pulled down the chapels. I made up my mind to put an end to this evil by assembling the Christians of each street in its chapel, but it was more difficult than in Colombo; for our adversaries, foreseeing that I would pass through Nigumbo, had posted their spies, and the ensign² (Alferes) of the Fort, who is a bitter enemy of the Modeliar and is looking for an opportunity to work his ruin and not finding anything else had reported that it was he who brought and harboured the Catholic Priests and took them to Colombo, etc.; and to make good his words, had posted men in every direction, and every night the soldiers of the Fort sallied out into the street and entered the houses on some pretext or other. This he has been doing and continues to do with great zeal as if it were his only occupation, and on that account he has been recommended by the Governor, the Dissava and the Predicantes. The Dissava has promised fifty *Patacas*³ and other rewards for my arrest.

I was thus running great personal risks; but on the other hand if I did not do what I intended, the cause of religion would assuredly run still greater risks; for, from what I could judge and what they themselves admitted, they would have given themselves for *Reformados* at least by word of mouth. Under these circumstances I thought it better to expose myself and others like me to danger rather than let such a great detriment befall the faith and the Catholic religion; and commending the matter to God I set about paying my visits at midnight, and, assembling the principal men of each street and of each caste, I gave a short sermon as God inspired me; and after encouraging and comforting them to confess the faith and to continue the practice of meeting for prayers and other exercises as usual in the chapels, I withdrew at once without anyone knowing whither. Thus I made my rounds, and so did the soldiers, but thanks to God we never met.

I am told, however, that one night as I entered Grand Street, there were three soldiers in hiding, and that though they saw me pass and followed me they could not overtake me nor find out where I had entered. At least such was the story told in the house of the Ensign, who for that reason called me a Sorcerer, which rejoiced me greatly, being the same which the Jews gave to our Lord Jesus, Saviour of our souls. I really do not know whether the report is true, or that it actually happened, but on that night I certainly was in Grand Street, and entered the chapel and afterwards went into a house where I remained an hour and a half with about seven hundred people who had assembled, and left the place safely without meeting a soul. The Ensign knew what I was doing and wrote in all haste to Colombo, doubled the watches, but it was all in vain, for such was God's will.

1 "A warehouse for goods and stores" from Malay *gadong*.

2 Ensign of the Fort of Negombo.

3 Spanish dollar or piece of eight used to mean the Dutch rix-dollar: Sinhalese "*patagaya*".

Having visited the various places and instructed the Christians, I passed over with God's help, to the other side of the river and reached Caymel, which is in the territory of the King of Kandy. Between Caymel and Nigumbo there is no other separation except a very narrow rivulet although the fort is about a league distant. Even in Caymel the Christians did not consider me at safety, for there were no vassals of the King of Kandy there, and the inhabitants were people of Nigumbo who come there for greater safety and till and cultivate the lands without any payment to the King, and serve the Company like the other vassals who live in Dutch territory, as it is permitted them both by the King and the Company. And though I had no reason to fear that they would come openly to capture me, lest they cause displeasure to the King whom they have orders from Batavia and Holland to please, gratify and serve, because it is to their great interest to keep his friendship and goodwill, yet I could not be safe against surprise, for they can very easily come at night and take me, and give out that they took me within their own territory, and once I am in their power, where is the Christian who will have the courage or the boldness to say the contrary or inform the King? On the other hand the Modeliar and the principal Christians told me to remain at Caymel with every possible precaution, for if I should chance to be taken the undertaking was lost, and for that reason, if I went away, they could not carry out what they had begun, and the cause of religion would suffer greatly because of the great fear which the Christians had conceived.

Considering all these circumstances I judged my presence in Caymel necessary for two reasons; first, for the sake of the Christians, and secondly, for the sake of the Modaliar, who, as the chief Catholic in Nigumbo, performs various offices in the church publicly before all the people, and some dissatisfied persons now accused him of it, and it is necessary that no proof should be forthcoming in the inquiry which will be held. Accordingly I abstained from visiting the chapel which is on the bank of the river until we knew how things stood, and hid myself in the houses of the Christians always changing my abode and sometimes omitting Mass. For greater security I had two huts built of leaves in two secluded places in the forest; and occasionally I betook myself to one of them, and calling the leaders of the people and of the native soldiery one or two at a time, I set to work now on one point, now on another, as well as I could. I found them courageous in my presence, but not all so in my absence.

However, I did not lose heart, for I felt that, great as was my unworthiness, God would not fail even to work miracles if necessary, and help an undertaking so much to His glory and the honour of the Catholic faith. I therefore besought our Lord and His most Holy Mother (whose protection and the prerogatives with which God endowed her, these wretched people make the Christians deny by word); neither will the Mother of God fail to show herself a Mother of Pity to the Christians of this Island, who, in all their needs and difficulties, invoke her aid, crying out "*Madave*"¹, which means "O! Mother of God"; and though many children were punished by the teachers of the

1 Tamil "Mother."

heretical schools for making use of that invocation when they were flogged, they would not give up their pious custom.

In this very river of Caymel¹ it happened two years ago in the rainy season that a small boat with some people was carried into the sea by the force of the current under the eyes of all, and no one was able to save it. There was in it a young man named Francisco, who did nothing else but keep on crying out *Madave! Madave!* and wonderful to say, though the boat being a small one capsized and all the occupants lost, Francisco alone who did not know how to swim found himself safe on shore, the Lord knows how. On being questioned he said he knew nothing else except that he was put safely on land. Nearly all the chapels here are dedicated to our Lady. It is the same in Callaturre with the nine chapels that are set up, the people invariably wished them to be put under the protection of our Lady under different invocations.

While I was in Caymel a meeting of the Political Council was held in Colombo, and orders were given to arrest five persons, three of whom were the leaders who encouraged the others, namely, Simao Collaco, President of the Mission, Francisco Nunes and Pedrinho Pires; and the two others were Antonio Dias and Joao Pinto². They were in the chapel, between seven and eight in the evening, and as soon as they knew that they were wanted, they spontaneously came out into the street and gave themselves over into the hands of the officers of justice. They were placed each in a different Estancia. The fishermen wished to abandon their fishing, but Simao Collaco dissuaded them from it, telling them rather to show themselves glad, and without showing the least grief or sorrow over the capture, to go to sea and even take some boats that were hitherto unused, so as both to perform the will of God, and not to irritate the Government by such a step, and on no account to give up the practices of devotion in the chapels, but rather to do them more openly; all of which they did.

The prisoners were taken to the various Councils one by one, and they answered all inquiries as they had already done, acknowledging with all frankness that they have chapels and make their devotions in them, that the priests come into the city and that they and all other Catholics, Whites and Blacks, receive the priests in their houses, that he remains in each house and administers the Sacraments to them. Meanwhile, various rumours spread in the country: some said the prisoners would be flogged; others that they would be banished the country, and as no one was allowed to have any communications with the prisoners, people began to yield, and as the devil is never without his ministers, some of them advised the people to beg pardon for what they had done, which is just what our adversaries desired. Hearing of this I wanted to set out for Columbo at all risks to put a stop to the evil, for when the priest is with them the spirit of these Christians is different from what it is when he is away, but no one dared to take me and the Christians of Nigumbo put every obstacle in my way.

1 Maha-Oya.

2 They are mentioned by name in the proceedings of the Political Council.

Thereupon I wrote an *Olla*¹ addressed to all the fishermen, and on receipt of this they listened to better counsels and stood firm once more. The adversaries asked my name and took it in writing.

Meanwhile Rev. Father Superior² had despatched Brother Joao Carvalho³ to Puttalam in all haste with the information that reached Kandy of the arrests, etc., with orders to visit all the missions whether there was a priest or no, and communicate to them all a Pastoral ordering all the children of Our Holy Mother the Church to declare themselves such by petition or by word of mouth, or by any other means. As Father Joseph de Menezes and Father Pedro Ferrao were both in Jaffna, the orders of the Rev. Father Superior were communicated to them through the Christians of Mantota and Manar. I wrote a letter to the Governor of Columbo judging from various circumstances that it was useful to do so and sent it through a lascarin of the watch of Nigumbo. I annex a copy of the latter⁴.

The adversaries seeing that they could get nothing out of the prisoners, nor find out whether anyone else besides the Father had taken the lead in this matter, let them off with a fine of 400 patacas, which was soon afterwards imposed on all those who had signed the petition, to all of whom I wrote at once not to show any weakness in their faith on account of the money or for any other temporal consideration. Though I had nothing of my own, as they well knew, I undertook to supply money for the fine to those on whom it fell heavily, and in fact I wrote to Benjamin Pegolote and to another friend to advance in my name whatever money the prisoners might ask. I informed the Rev. Father Superior of the matter, suggesting to him that if the fine were imposed in other places also, we should appeal to His Majesty's Council in Goa, to the Viceroy, Archbishop, Bishops and other charitable persons to come to our assistance in this public need of the Church; for should the Christians on this occasion remain weakened and crushed, hereafter they would never be able to pluck up courage to do anything though its necessity were ever so well realised. But it pleased God that the fine was imposed only in Colombo, and the Christians, knowing that my offer was made out of my love and zeal for their welfare and not because I had anything of my own to give, arranged matters without troubling me at all about it.

When the prisoners had been released, three Captains came to Nigumbo to inquire into matters of religion, and certain other things concerning the Modeliar, and the first they called was an Arache of their Milicia, named Simao da Cruz, a man of 67 years of age and rather a bold person, thank God; for had it been otherwise and they had fallen upon some one who did not answer as he ought to do, many another, the greater part of the people, would perhaps have followed the same course. But our good Arache (whose lascarin I often become when I have to go to Nigumbo even in time of revolts, to give the

1 Palm-leaf used for writing upon. Tamil *olai*.

2 Father Joseph Vaz.

3 An Oratorian lay-brother.

4 D 15.

Sacraments to some dying person), answered the questions put to him with the greatest boldness, confidence and courage that could possibly be wished for.

He said he was a Roman Catholic, not only he but that in the whole of Nigumbo there was no *reformado*, that even the children knew no other religion though they went to their (Dutch) schools; he mentioned all the chapels that were in Nigumbo, and the religious exercises performed there; and then in the face of the Captains he called another Arache, a traitor, because, being a Catholic, he gave himself for a *reformado* out of fear or stupidity. This was a sound slap to one of the Captain, Gregorio da Costa¹, who, though formerly a Catholic, had become a turn-coat for the sake of employment; and these renegades and some mesticos are more inimical to us than the Europeans and other gentlemen of the State.

They asked him whether I had celebrated the feast in Caymel. He said that I did, and that all Nigumbo was there, and that it was the feast of the Nativity of the Mother of God. They asked him what was done there on that occasion. He replied that he could not describe it as he had never seen anything like it before, that he could only say that one could witness things like that fasting for eight days and nights and not to be tired of it. They asked him who supplied meals to the Father. He replied that, for what the Father cared for food and things of the kind, the poorest man on earth would find it no burden to have the Father for guest. They asked him whether the Father was a White or a Black. He replied that the Father was something White, but that he did not know to what race he belonged, that he had however heard it said that he was a Brahmin. The good old man gave many other answers of the kind which were all taken down in writing.

The next day all the people were summoned, one person from each house. Those who lived in the territories of the King (of Kandy) came promptly and answered all questions duly, not only acknowledging that they were Catholics, but also that they were Annaves² in charge of the chapels, that is to say, those who instruct and conduct the exercises of the chapels, declaring their ministries unasked. The fervour which seized all on this occasion was something wonderful. Even the Singalese, who had never met a Father or come into a chapel went there forcibly and gave themselves as Catholics, and when they were afterwards asked by the Catholics, why they did so, they said they wished to be what they had said they were, because otherwise they had to give a pingo to the school-master to get their children baptized in the Kirk, and that when they had a child by a woman who was not legally the wife, the Hollander padre did not want to baptize it, and that the Portuguese Fathers baptized without any payment, and without inquiring whether the child was born of a legitimate marriage, or not, and that therefore the religion of the Portuguese was better than that of the Hollanders.

1 Gregorius de Costa Disava, a renegade Catholic.

2 Catechist.

On the side of Caymel there are four chapels in four villages of Nigumbo, and thither on the following day came the Dissava and the Predicante for their visit. A proclamation was made ordering the people to assemble, and the school-masters gathered some thirty-five persons, simple Singhalese and partisans of the school-masters, and instructed them to place themselves in front, so that when the Predicante asked them of what religion they were, loud voices should answer that they were *reformados*, with the intention of making the ignorant people repeat the same. When all were gathered the Predicante came in and asked them what religion they professed. He repeated the question thrice and not one answered a word. Whereupon the Predicante said that as they did not answer he understood them to be Catholics, and as he was turning to go, one out of the thirty-five, the brother of the school-master, with two other Singhalese stepped out and said they were *reformados*. God closed the mouth of the rest.

On hearing this I sent a message with the result that, on the following day, when they visited another school, all were gathered together including the old people who had never been to the school, and the Predicante, seeing the multitude, suspected the cause and did not want to enter the school, for in spite of all their proclamations they never succeeded in gathering such a crowd together. Wearied out with waiting the men came out to breathe fresh air, and straightway the Predicante entered and gave orders to lock the door, but those who managed to force their way in entered also. He asked them of what religion they were, and all the people shouted out so loud as to be heard afar, that they were Roman Catholics. Then turning to the school children who were on a side he put them the same question they replied that they were Catholics also, he then asked them whether they were not of his school. A boy of 11 or 12 answered that he was. Where were they baptized, he asked them. In his Church, they replied. Where did they live? In their (*i.e.*, Dutch) territory. "How is it then you are Catholics?" asked the Predicante. "Our parents teach us our religion", they replied. Finally, he asked them: "In what religion do you wish to be?" "We wish to live and die Catholics" they replied. Put to shame by this, he left for Columbo without baptizing anyone or giving any licence for marriage. He had personally asked the Annaves the same questions that he put to the others, and they all replied in the same way. Finding that nearly all the chapels were dedicated to Our Lady, he asked them why they worshipped a woman like themselves, etc. They replied because they thought that one who did not worship the Mother of God could not go to Heaven. He inquired very diligently whether the Modeliar had given orders or helped to build any of the chapels, whether he brought the Fathers, but he got no informations from them, though they knew very well what he did for the Catholic religion in those parts. This being over, the Captains and the Dissava and the Predicante went away and up to the present they do not speak of what happened in Nigumbo. The brother of the school-master, who, though a Catholic, was the first to say he was a *reformado* to win favour, died within some fifteen or twenty days. He was bitten by a cobra, and not all the remedies that were applied, not only the natural remedies but even the devilish

ones, nor the devil whom he served, could save his life. Another who accused a catechist of having said that those who did not come to the chapel would have their houses burnt down, was sleeping under a tree with several other men when a branch of the tree suddenly fell and left its mark on him. Another, who, though he had not denied his faith, had said in writing certain things which could compromise the Modaliar, fell so ill within a fortnight, that the three fingers of his right hand began to rot and fall off leaving him in a pitiful condition. He sent for the Modaliar and begged his pardon, and then sent me a message to help him in his misery. I sent him word that I was ready in Caymel, so that if he could not manage to come himself, I would come to him at any risk to gain his soul. Ill as he was he came in a *cattle*¹, and with great repentance received all the Sacraments and died a short time after.

Meanwhile Fr. Joseph de Jesus Maria came to Caymel to get news of me and the mission, and after him came Fr. Joseph de Menezes from Jaffna, whence he had set out as soon as he heard of the troubles. I immediately despatched them; Fr. Menezes to Mantota to get the Christians to do what the others had done, and thence to Jaffna. He tried to dissuade me with the fear which all entertained, that they would be persecuted there also, but I was determined to do with God's help what seemed the right thing to do. A few days later the Modaliar set out for Puttalam on the orders of the Government with seventeen elephants to be delivered over to the Dissava of Jaffna, who came thither to receive them. Two days later I set out also and met the Mudaliar who invited me to dine in his camp, and there in the presence of some whites of his guard he said various things which he desired to reach the ears of the great men. I slept in the house of a Christian, where at three o'clock the next morning I said Mass, which the Modaliar attended. I left immediately and arrived at Curuculao at night on Shrove Tuesday. Next morning, Ash Wednesday, the Modaliar arrived with his elephants at a place prepared for their reception, and having fastened the animals and kept watches the Modaliar came to take the ashes. The next day I went to say Mass at Puttalam. The Modaliar returned to his post on Wednesday to take the animals by night to be given over to the Dissava who was already in Delque, a league off from Puttalam. Having delivered the elephants he came at night to the Church with his men and soldiers, some of whom were Catholics, they remained two days with us, Father Jesus Maria entertained him with the attention which the Modaliar deserved, and which our poverty and the sterility of the country could afford. On Sunday morning I left. Father Menezes arrived that night from Mantota and having discussed matters he sent a messenger to Kandy.

After the second Sunday of Lent I returned to Caymel, not quite to the satisfaction of Father Menezes, whose great love for me made him fear that some unforeseen danger might befall me, and if such a thing should happen he said it would be the ruin of the Modaliar and others, who, as Father Menezes had come to know, would in such a

1 Tamil and Malayalam *Kattil*, a kind of field bedstead.

case not hesitate to take up arms to rescue me from the enemies. But seeing that these were only considerations of future contingencies, and knowing the needs of the Mission, I set out, and arriving at Caymel entered the chapel with all publicity, and began Mission work, first in the territory of the King (of Kandy). While I was in hiding my presence and even the place where I lived, was not unknown, and it only resulted in showing my pusillanimity even in these places and in making cowards of the Christians ; but as soon as I came openly baptizing, hearing confessions and blessing marriages, the people became little by little more courageous.

The Ensign wrote to the Predicantes day by day what was done and how the people flocked, but as his writing produced no effect, the people began to come quite openly. The ceremonies of the Holy Week were performed as well as I could, and on Easter Day the attendance was so great that I think it exceeded the numbers on the Feast of Our Lady. Some came even from Columbo, and, as it is more than a year since I attended to that Mission, there is a crowd for confession every day. All the children whom the Predicante left unbaptized are now baptized, and have orders not to let themselves be baptized again in the Kirk where I may say, there is nobody now, and last Sunday there were only four ignorant Hindu women, who do not know the difference between our religion and that of our adversaries.

There was no means, as I said before, to give adequate instructions to so vast a multitude as this, but now that I am present and there is a concourse of people every day after the daily exercises and the Litany, I instruct them in the principle articles of faith, point out the errors of the Catechism of the heretics which was taught them in the schools. Thus by God's grace this flock is improving not only in faith, but even in their customs.

I have already spoken in my previous letter of the kindness with which the Modeliar and his wife, Catherine Bauzem, treat the Fathers, and of their zeal and fervour of faith ; on this occasion he was so exposed that had things come to a pass he was determined to run the risk of losing his office and fortune and wife and children by undertaking a deed worthy of perpetual remembrance. He is the man to whom everything connected with the Catholic faith is imputed, and they say that it is he who brings the Fathers from Goa and sends them from place to place.

The Dissava of Columbo once said to him : " Though this territory belongs to the Reformados, I see that the Catholic religion is growing and increasing more rapidly than the reformed religion, and that the Catholic priests have therein a strong supporter ". He replied that it was not the priest but he who had in spiritual matters a strong support in the Fathers, just as in temporal matters he had a great protector in the Company ; and the Governor who was very much pleased with his work and was a great friend of his, remarked that to favour the Catholics so much, and to give shelter to Catholic priests was a very serious matter. He replied that he and all his family were Catholics, and that wherever a priest was to be found they would not hesitate to go to him for their religious duties, but that he did not bring the Fathers, nor send them, nor could he in any way prevent

the Fathers from entering Nigumbo, which is contiguous to the territories of the King (of Kandy) where they go about freely, seeing that his Honour (the Governor) himself could not keep them out of Columbo, which is a walled fort with gates and sentinels and watches, for he had seen the Fathers not a few times very near his (the Governor's) house.

Yet for all that the Modeliar would have had trouble were it not that he is very much esteemed by the King (of Kandy). Once when his father was at the head of an army division, in the war waged by the Company on the late King, he could have captured the King in one of the encounters, but he let him escape, for which the King recommended his son, the present King, to show him gratitude.

Even on this occasion when he went to Puttalam, all the chiefs of the place received orders from Kandy to visit him with presents, which they did faithfully. This is the great reason why the Hollanders fear to pick a quarrel with the Modeliar, and it is for this reason that the accusations made against him, the petition on the Christians, the declaration of faith of the people of Nigumbo, with all the questions and answers, and also my letter, were all sent to Batavia.

I must not omit to relate a deed of the wife of the Modeliar which highly amused me and Fr. Menezes who happened at the time to be in these parts. One Sunday the Domne of Nigumbo uttered blasphemies against the Roman Pontiff in his sermon, for most of their sermons consist in abusing Catholics. The good Lady came to hear of it and, in concert with one of her cousins and another lady who had come from Colombo, they went on set purpose to a house to which the Domne was in the habit of coming in the evenings. In the course of conversation they got up a game—for here it is the usual practice for men and women to be together for play and conversation—with the penalty that the loser should do whatever the winners ordered. The Domne entered, and as the three ladies were in league, the poor Domne lost three times, and they gave him no other punishment but this: The first time to go up a tree which was near by and there with eyes turned to heaven beg pardon of God for not knowing how to speak as he ought; the second time to run along a street repeating aloud that he was mad and did not know what he said; the third to strike his mouth with his hand for his faults in not speaking the truth. Those who were in the secret enjoyed the fun. This lady was also accused before the Council by the Predicante that she despised the communion they got in their Kirk, and that she said she could give in her house the kind of communion they got in the Kirk. The brother of the Modeliar, Don Lourenco Pereira, was also accused of having said that the *reformados* would go to hell, and that he threatened to thrash the Domne for speaking against the Catholic religion, but so far God had preserved them from any temporal loss that might befall them for these acts, and I hope He will spare them¹ ever and reward them for their zeal for the faith.

1 They were soon to feel the heavy hand of persecution.

In Columbo, when they learnt that many poor people and widows to whom the Company was giving alms, were Catholics, the pittances were withdrawn, and now they have done the same thing in Nigumbo. And as I had no other means of succouring, at least the most needy of them, I gave orders that the alms, which some devout people give to the chapel on Sundays and Tuesdays, and which the catechists hitherto dispose of as they pleased—and I think they used the money to buy wine and other things which the Fathers needed—be collected by trustworthy people and accounts kept in writings, and that after deducting the expenses of the chapel the balance be given to a Treasurer of the poor, whom I appointed. I also directed them to collect alms from the Whites, and I myself gave what remained of my Mass stipends, and to entrust everything to the Treasurer to be distributed to the most needy; the wine and other things which the Fathers needed I took upon myself to supply, not to take anything from these alms, and I do so still and thank God we have not yet felt the pinch, for God provides. But this help is very little considering the number of the poor, for this country is miserable since the Company entered therein. As they are traders they have closed the door to others and everything of value is drawn to the Company, and consequently there is not a single person in the whole of Ceylon who can be called a rich man.

Father Menezes who is at present in Puttalam supervising the building of the new church which is completing, as Father Jesus Maria had gone to Mantota to help Father Pedro Ferrao during Holy Week, which is celebrated this year with passion play, images, etc., sent for me and handed me a note from Rev. Father Superior, telling me that the Fathers of Kandy would come to Puttalam after the octave of Easter and directing me to go also, so that we might all meet and consult about the affairs of the Mission and cases (of conscience) and other things as I had often begged him to do on account of my scruples.

Our Fathers in Kandy, thanks to God, are extending divine worship daily more and more and celebrate Lent with representations of the passion and processions. They go to the Palace in their habits with shoes and birettas, and wear their tonsure. They go to the Sangatares, namely, the priests of the temples and give conferences; and thus they are winning the goodwill of the great and the chief men of the Court, as they will be able to tell you in their accounts. As for myself, owing to the persecution of the Whites I thought it necessary to take in hand, and am actually engaged in the translation of the controversies by Andeaquin, Becano and Bellarmin, which, along with thirty other large works of various other authors, I managed to get from the stores of the Company in Columbo. Thus whenever I have time by day or night, I am busy reading these books and scripture, a study of which is very necessary for those engaged in this Mission.

After the third Sunday after Easter I went to Puttalam, where the Fathers of Kandy and Father Joseph de Jesus Maria had already arrived. The day after my arrival Father Ferrao arrived also. Rev. Father Superior alone remained away at Kandy as he could not undertake such a journey, and appointed Father Menezes to take his place. We remained some time discussing cases and other things concerning

the Mission. We resolved certain points according to the instructions sent from Goa, and determined to write to Goa about certain other matters. When the conference was over I set out for Caymel with Father Jacome Goncalves, and we reached here on the day before the Vespers of the Ascension. Father Jacome engaged twelve Sinhalese clerks and is busy revising the Catechism of Christian doctrine, and various other things composed by the Rev. Father Superior in Tamil. It is a thing very much needed in this Mission, for even the ancient Fathers of the time of the Portuguese had not done it, and there is nothing in the Sinhalese language about our holy faith. This work will therefore be of great use to souls, for there are not a few who ask for that kind of nourishment in their mother-tongue. When we left (Puttalam) Father Saldanha was starting for Matacalapa¹, Father Menezes for Manar, and thence to Jaffna. I am making arrangements to go to the Corlas². May God grant success to us all in everything for the glory of His most holy Name.

As I had brought Father Jacome Goncalves with me, we celebrated the feast of the Holy Ghost in this little church with all solemnity. The people were lost in ecstasy with our decorations. Father Jacome preached in Tamil. The attendance both of whites and natives was large, and many came from Colombo. On that day about fifty persons, adults and children, were baptized, and some marriages were blest, for when I am here in this church no marriages are blest except after publishing two banns, and I give them a certificate of marriage. Many people come here for marriage, for the Predicantes do not give licence for marriage, nor baptize those who say they are Catholics. Though all that I do is known to the adversaries they do not so far say a word. It seems they are awaiting a reply from Batavia. God grant it may bring some relief to these Christians, and that the unfortunate may not be oppressed to deny their religion or articles of faith.

At this time we received intelligence of the death of His Imperial Majesty³, which caused us great grief, for he was a King of good proceeding who did no harm to anybody and was very favourable to us. When we found that the news was true we judged that it would be good for Father Jacome to start at once for Kandy where Rev. Father Superior was alone, both to be of assistance to ours and to pay his respects to the new King⁴. I therefore supplied him with men and provisions necessary for the journey and sent him with all precaution through the territories of the Company to Sitavaca to make his way thence to the interior if there was no difficulty, or otherwise to send word to Rev. Father Superior and follow his directions. Thus he set out on the 14th; but on the 18th I received a note from Puttalam telling me that Rev. Father Superior wrote to say that the King died on the 14th of June, and that on the 16th the body was cremated, and that Antonio D'orta repeated twice or thrice that the Fathers should all

1 Baticaloa.

2 Korale.

3 Wimaladharma Suriya II, King of Kandy.

4 Narendrasinha.

appear before the new King, who is a Prince of about eighteen years of age, to offer their condolences on the death of his father, and to congratulate him on his accession; but as that means that we shall have to put off our work, Rev. Father Superior only ordered us to come only when an opportunity presented itself. The Father of Puttalam sent me his message at once, and sent word to Fathers Menezes, Saldanha and Ferrao who had set out for the Missions of Vanny and Mantota, to come to a decision or set out on this journey. I at once wrote to Father Jesus Maria that I thought we should go, even though the work of the Mission should thereby be delayed, for to secure ways and means for the perpetuity of the Missions is more important than anything else.

In Colombo a *plakaat* was recently published that all foreigners, mesticos, topazes and brahmins, etc., who come into the city should go to a person therein named and declare the reasons for their visit and take a certificate signed by him for his safety, and that anyone found without it would be punished, and he who harbours such a one shall be fined one hundred patacas; and some ladies who came thence to Caymel recently for confession told me that it was said last Saturday that another *plakaat* would be published forbidding meetings of over six or eight persons for the purpose of religion, and that those in whose houses images should be found would also be punished. Though I think that the orders are merely *quoad terrorem*, to prevent the growth and increase of the Catholic religion and to hamper it, yet God alone knows what these wicked people have in view. May God in His mercy deign to relieve this His flock from so many vexations and oppressions.

MANVEL DE MIRANDA.

**Petition presented to the Governor by the Fishermen
of Colombo.**

(State Archives of Goa, Liv. dos Moncoes 73.)

The people of the caste of the Fishermen submit that from the time the most Noble Company took this country up to this day, they have ever been and have shown themselves its loyal subjects and servants, obeying faithfully in time of war and peace all the orders of the Lords Governors, past and present, as your Honour and the other gentlemen of the Council well know.

And as last Saturday a proclamation was issued by order of your Honour (requesting them) to enroll all their children in the book of the Kanakapulle of the *padri*, they have in obedience to the said orders complied with the said proclamation giving the names of their children; but as it is the duty of good subjects not to deceive but always to speak the truth to their lord and master, they with all humility make known to your Honour and to the other gentlemen of the Council that their forefathers as well as they themselves and their children and their families, men and women, are Roman Catholics, and that they have always been of the said religion and want to remain in it to the end.

Wherefore, prostrate at your Honour's feet, they beg you not to do them or their families any violence or oppression in this matter, for the aforesaid faith is so firmly rooted in their hearts that they cannot abandon it, nor will such a thing enter their heads, but rather they have recourse to Your Honour and say that, as the noble Company has done the favour of granting priests and churches to the Catholics in all their territories, they alone are deprived of that good fortune.

And therefore they beg your Honour as their father and lord, to be good enough to grant them redress for the peace of their conscience; for, apart from the noble Company and your Honour, no one else can do them this favour; that in all other things they promise, as loyal subjects and good servants, to show themselves faithful in the service of the noble Company, and to observe its orders; and they trust to the piety of your Honour to turn his eyes of clemency on this their humble petition¹.

1 This petition is found in the Proceedings of the Council where it is called "Arrogant" MS., Dutch Archives.

Father Manvel de Miranda to the Dutch Governor of Colombo.

(State Archives of Goa, Liv. dos Moncoes 73.)

Illustrious and Most Noble Senhor, Governor of Ceylon,

It is related of Alexander the Great, who was master of almost the whole world, that he never disdained to receive a letter even from the vilest of his subjects, and that he replied even to the farrier of his horses; and of another, a Roman Emperor, we read that, even when engaged in war and consequently very busy, he did not despise the letter written to him by a gardener. These considerations and the necessity of showing that I did not come to this country with an evil purpose or to machinate treason but only to fulfil the duties of the office which I unworthily hold, embolden me to write this letter to your Honour, hoping that as a ruler and generous gentleman you will not disdain to read it.

I learnt that your Honour was very much offended because I had advised the Catholics, vassals of the noble Company, to confess and not to deny the religion they profess. I am exceedingly sorry that I have given you pain, for it is my desire not to hurt even a fly, much less so high a personage as your Honour, to whom if I have not the opportunity or the good fortune to be of service, I have at least the desire; and as your Honour is a righteous judge in all things, I beg you to judge my cause also and see whether I am to blame for what I did.

Most noble Sir, I have never forced anyone to be a Catholic, nor in the matter of religion, as your Honour well knows, is it right to do so. For if God Almighty Himself, who is able to change the hearts of men, does not constrain but leaves men free to pursue good or evil, no man though he were lord of the land, can force other men, how much less can I, who am but a weak creature. Nor did I ever constrain a *reformado* to proclaim himself a Catholic, for I should thereby be committing a sin. For a *reformado* who believes in his sect would commit a sin by denying it out of human respect; and he sins also who obliges him to do it, since one who is the cause of a sin is certainly guilty of sin. I did indeed advise (the Catholics) that, just as those who are at heart *reformados* may not for temporal considerations call themselves Catholics as their religion teaches them, so also those who are Catholics at heart must not for any consideration call themselves *reformados*, seeing that such a course is not only abhorrent to God, but even to men. Besides, if a *reformado* were to say that he is a Lutheran or a Catholic to please men or for fear of them, he would be deriding even the Lutherans or Catholics. How then could the Catholics be anything but deceivers if out of human respect they say they are something else?

Moreover, all Sovereigns, Kings and Rulers, expect their subjects to speak the truth to them, and utterly abhor those who dissimulate and dissemble. But what do I say? Kings and Princes? Nay,

even those who are accustomed to lie wish others to speak the truth to them. Though a lie which does no harm to another is a light fault, it is, however, a vice most abhorred by princes and lords, and therefore the honourable man considers it a greater insult to be called a liar or a deceiver than to be called proud, lazy, avaricious or even impure. Such being the case I do not know, Sir, what fault I committed when I advised men to lay aside disguise and deceit and speak the truth as Christ Our Lord Himself and the Holy Apostles and all law divine and human command and teach. Rather, it seems to me, that those who speak the truth and do not hide it through human respect, deserve to be considered more faithful and loyal subjects than those who, to gain some temporal advantage, deny their religion and deceive; for one who out of fear or self interest is faithless to the religion he professes, is capable of denying the King whom he serves when interest or fear requires it.

From another point of view it seems to me that I deserve praise, rather than blame, for when asked by the Catholic subjects of the Company, who are not a few, for some means to safeguard the welfare of their souls and peace of conscience, I did not advise them to rise up in revolt nor to seek other crooked paths—and if the truth were told they could tell you how much I commended fidelity and obedience to the rulers, and how much I exhort them to deal conscientiously in matters concerning the property and revenue of the Company. And God knows whether I and the other Rev. Fathers who are in this island are not in this matter of some service to the Company. I do not mention this to lay claim to a service to your Honour, for I confess that it is not out of love for the Company that we do so, but as a duty of our ministry. I told them that they have no other means of redress, but humbly to approach the noble Company and your Honour its Governor, for just as you are their lord and judge to punish their misdeeds, you are likewise their father to see to their rightful demands.

Most noble Sir, the granting or refusal of the request depends on the will of the master; but for a vassal and servant to approach and expose his needs to his ruler is a thing which no King or Monarch will take amiss nor ever could take ill. To whom can the subjects go if not to the King? Whom must the servant approach if not his master? To whom can the children go if not to their father? Your Honour is father, master and King of your vassals; and I think I have not erred in advising them to go, nor they in having recourse to him who can give them redress; but on the other hand they would be blamed if instead of approaching you they sought other means or crooked paths.

Tell me, Sir, is it wrong to advise a thirsty man who asks for drink for love of God to go to him who can quench his thirst? Is it a sin to advise a famished man who begs for food with upraised hands to go to him who can satisfy his hunger? How then can it be wrong or a fault to advise those who are in spiritual need, which is incomparably greater than the needs of the body, to come to your Honour to ask redress, since in this land it is only the noble Company and your Honour, who is its most worthy Governor, and no other who can satisfy their spiritual hunger and thirst?

You may perhaps also accuse the Catholics of having come to me, and accuse me of having entered these states, against the orders of the noble Company. These, Sir, though they may appear faults are no faults at all, if you consider them dispassionately with the eyes of reason. You remember what Christ Our Lord said: "What doth it profit a man if he gain the whole world and suffer the loss of his own soul?" When one without the least damage or prejudice to another, without detriment to his soul, and for the peace of his conscience, violates a prohibition, it is clear that he is guiltless, for your Honour well knows that religion and the soul's salvation is of far greater importance to a man than temporal goods. As for me I admit that I often entered your territories in disguise to fulfil my duties to the Catholics. Not only I but all the other Rev. Fathers who for the last twenty years have lived in the territories of his Imperial Majesty (the King of Kandy) never missed an opportunity of visiting the Christians from time to time. I must add also that apostolic labourers will never cease to go about doing their duty, for the King of Portugal, my Sovereign, and his ancestors zealously conquered the countries of Asia to spread the faith of Christ and to make the Gospel known to those who live in the blindness of paganism; and though God permitted the loss of some of their territories, the most serene King will never cease his watchfulness in providing missionaries to minister to the spiritual needs of the Christians as is quite well known to your Honour. If that is a fault in us, it is a fault which the Holy Apostles and Saints delighted to commit. I have no intention of comparing myself to the Apostles, nor to pretend to be a saint, knowing myself to be the worst of men; but I speak only of the office which I unworthily exercise.

And now, most noble Sir, considering these my reasons,—others I omit,—let your Honour judge in your heart whether what I have counselled and done was done as an enemy of the Company, or to machinate against it. I have no reasons whatever to do such a thing, for, first of all, and this is the chief thing, it is contrary to my state and office which is concerned only with souls; secondly, if, admitting it for the sake of argument, I should do so, it would be either out of love for the King of Portugal, whose vassal I am, or of his Imperial Majesty of Kandy to whom I am now subject; but both the one and the other are at peace and in alliance with the states of Holland and the noble Company, as your Honour knows better than I; and, therefore, if I contrary to the obligations of my office, were to do anything against the Company, the one (the King of Portugal) can deal severely with me and the other (of Kandy) can at least banish me from his territory, and had I the honour to kiss your Honour's hands you will perhaps not be offended.

I do not wish to be longer than I have been, both not to weary your Honour with more things, and because not everything should be written. I am moreover in a hurry on my way to Vellevally. Wherever I shall be I remain always at your Honour's service. May God preserve your Honour and prosper you in wealth and dignity.

Your Honour's Most Humble Servant,

MANOEL DE MIRANDA.

Dombanym, 10 February, 1707.

1710—1712.

Manoel de Miranda to the Prefect of the Congregation.

(Torre do Tombo, Lisbon, Liv. 946.)

As I have some scruples about not having fulfilled your Reverence's orders to send news and reports of this mission, I write this letter at some length asking you to excuse me for the negligence in the past. If what I say here about the labours of the missionaries does not fully accord with what they have written also, do not be surprised, for I assure your Reverence that when we meet the joy and consolation with which God inspires us is such that it seems to me the interior spirit overflows and appears in the exterior, and I have often heard the Fathers recount each his own labours, oftentimes wittily, describing the holy tricks and pious disguises which they employ to give assistance to souls and to rescue them from Satan and for themselves to evade the pursuit of the heretics, though I have never heard a single Father complain of anything except of course the scruples from which I hope His Majesty will be pleased to obtain from the States of Holland some release for these Christians who beg it of his zeal and paternal solicitude.

After I wrote to your Reverence and the other Fathers last year and sent the letters to Tuticorin, I set out for Kandy to see our Father Joseph Vaz whom God now has. I reached there safe, and there had arrived a few days before me Father Jacome Goncalvez after a miraculous escape from the persecution and hunt, which the heretics made to seize him in Columbo, of which I presume he has sent you an account. In Kandy we observed with great solemnity the feast of the Nativity of our Queen of the Angels, for after us there came also Father Ignacio de Almeyda, who had gone out on a mission tour. It seems to me that he did not like to miss the opportunity of feeling the great joy and pleasure which we experience when two or three of us meet, for your Reverence must know that one of the greatest trials of ours here, at least in some parts, is that of having to spend many months and often years without meeting each other on account of the great distances and difficulties of travel.

On this occasion when we were together in the church of Kandy there was a feast in the city and in the palace, for the King was celebrating his nuptials with a princess whom they brought in secret from the kingdom of Madure through the Hollanders, and the reason why she was brought so secretly was that the Naike of Madure did not wish to let her go in spite of the great and rich presents which the King of Kandy sent him for that purpose. Therefore when the said Naike happened to be out of his palace to assist in some war, the princess set out in company with her father and brothers in disguise and went to Negapatam where a Hollander ship was ready for them, and they embarked and arrived in Jafanapatam whence the King of Kandy had them brought to his court with great pomp.

We were advised by Antonio Dorta to go one night to the palace to offer our good wishes on the occasion of this wedding, but we did not succeed in doing so, for on that night that we were to go, the King had some disagreement or other with the persons who came with the Queen. As it was more than a month since we came to that church, we decided to return each to his own church to attend to our work. Though I was appointed to Puttalam the Reverend Father Joseph Vaz directed me to visit if I could the mission of Nigumbo, because after my transfer no Father was able to go there on account of the great rigor of the heretics, and also if possible to go to Colombo to see how the matters of that city were, after the persecution from which Father Jacome Goncalvez escaped as I mentioned above.

I set out with Father Ignacio de Almeyda one day though Father Joseph Vaz asked us to wait for another day, which I did not like to do as everything was ready for the journey, and because I thought the Father's entreaty not to go that day, was only because of his great good nature which made him loth to send away in a hurry those who come to this church or wherever he is. I insisted on going, and after many requests and recommendations which he is wont to give when he takes leave of a Father, he gave us his blessing. We took the road leading to the village of Tumpana which was at a distance of one day's journey from Kandy : we crossed the river and the rain began with such force that it turned out to be one of the worst days I had experienced. We were walking in soutanes and birettas but bare-footed, and the rain fell full on our heads which we could not protect as there was no shelter nor any place where we could stay a while, nor could we return as the town was pretty far from the river. But the worst trouble was when we arrived at a place where on the least shower the ground and grass are covered with leeches great and small. The Father and I tucked up our trousers and bound them at the knees to prevent the leeches from going further up ; from the knees downwards we left at their mercy. There were so many of them hanging from our legs that we could scarcely count them. I only remember that in one toe alone I had as many as ten or twelve.

At last at ten o'clock in the night after the aforesaid troubles and some others we had in descending a hill that was high and slippery in the rain which never ceased, and for fear of elephants crossing our path, for it was already dark, we arrived by the mercy of God at Tumpana at the house of a Christian who received us with great charity and anointed us with lemons and other things which the natives know, till the leeches dropped and they applied some medicine to stop the flow of blood from the bite of the leeches ; but for some days I had some wounds on account of the servants pulling out the leeches too violently. In this house we remained two days, and on the third, though I had some fever, as it was subsiding, we made for Negemgondem (Narangoda ?) a distance of four leagues, and leaving Father Ignacio there to minister to the Christians, I made my way to Catugambola Corla, which was one and a half day's journey. During this journey I baptized some pagans and a mestico of Galle, who had fled from that place some time ago with his wife and family. I remained in that village in a chapel which we had there, administering the

Sacraments for five days and making enquiries and looking for means to enter Nigumbo, which was one day's journey from there. Though I learnt that the Dissava of Colombo, one of the worst persecutors of Catholics, was there and that our affairs had not improved at all, as both the Dissava and his men were engaged in hunting elephants the people in consequence had a respite on account of that work, because the people of Nigumbo did not come into the lands of the King in search of provisions as they used to do. Considering, therefore, that under the circumstances there was no danger of meeting people on the road which might give notice of my arrival in the lands of the heretics, and recommending the business to God and his holy Mother, I set out one morning very early after Mass, and as the whole way up to Nigumbo was uninhabited, I took with me some cooked rice as usual on such occasions. I walked in all haste through the jungle and marshes out of the public ways, getting into the wood as soon as some person appeared on the road. For this purpose one of my servants walked ahead, and whenever he met anybody he spoke very loud to him so that we who followed after might know. In this way at five o'clock in the evening I reached the woods of Tambavil which is a village on the frontiers of the King's territory on the Nigumbo river. There we remained out of the way till dark, and as soon as night began to fall we hastily descended for fear of elephants. We remained in the outskirts of the town sheltered under two trees and at ten in the night, with every precaution, when the people of the town were retired, we came down to a place where the water of the river did not rise above my waist. There we crossed to the other bank, and made our way to the town of Nigumbo which was still one league away, and though my guide was a very clever one, as we walked skirting round the houses so as not to be noticed or give occasion to the dogs to bark, we missed the road and had some trouble, as we found ourselves in a very narrow and thorny path and had to walk like cats. Under us was a marsh and pits with holes because, probably, it had been used for cattle, and the thorns gave me no small trouble as I was bare-footed. When we had gone some distance, fearing that we were not on the right track, we turned and soon fell into the right way.

I reached Nigumbo an hour after midnight and went to the house of a cousin of our Dom Affonso Pereyra, who received me as if I were an angel from heaven with tears, falling at my feet with all his family as it was a long time since they had seen a Father. I immediately had an altar prepared and said Mass in thanksgiving for having brought me safe from peril. I stopped there only that day; on the next I changed residence and went to another which was in a further part of the town. As the Dissava was there I was not able to do anything much in comparison with what I used to do formerly. But still for all I was able to give baptism to some adults and children who were in danger of dying without it, and I heard the confessions of some persons of great confidence and loyalty. But what gave me consolation and made me think that God brought me there for it, was the reception of a Calvinistic heretic named Bernard Beguel, a brother-in-law of our Dom Affonso Pereyra, who, though a heretic, was a great friend of mine, because though he did not come over in the past out of human

respect, he showed great affection to the Fathers. On this occasion I came to hear that he was ill and having arranged that there should be no suspicious person in the place where he was, I went there at eleven in the night with great caution and in disguise. I visited and consoled him, and as soon as I began to speak of his salvation he begged me with tears in his eyes to baptize him and do all other things that were necessary. I asked him whether he had any difficulty about matters of faith and asked him to make any objection be liked frankly. He replied that he always knew that the Catholic faith was the true one but did not embrace it for temporal reasons.

Thus when he had made his abjuration with great contrition I gave him conditional baptism as is our practice with heretics on account of the many grounds we had for doubting the validity of their baptisms, and because we wished to follow the most secure opinion. I also instructed him how to make his confession, and he made his general confession although a growth in his mouth which prevented him from speaking, was no small obstacle. Finally, as he expressed an earnest desire for Communion I immediately administered it to him to my no small pleasure. At last at three o'clock in the morning I left his house after baptizing some other persons.

I could have done more work in Nigumbo ; but because the Disava was there as well as for fear lest my journey to Colombo might be obstructed by revolts that might take place in Nigumbo, I decided to go first to Colombo. My servants, however, did not dare to conduct me by river as it was not easy to pass without some encounter at the passes where they make most careful search, and it was still more difficult to go by land. I therefore sent information to Colombo to a certain lady who in the bosom of a heretical family of paternal and maternal heretics became a Catholic not long ago, and was so firm and so bold and so devoted to the priests that the Father Superior of the mission used to call her Electa though Joanna was her name. I told her of the day and time I meant to set out, and she and the many others who were anxious to have me—for I left without saying goodbye to anybody or without letting them know that I had been changed to Puttalam as the Reverend Father Joseph Vaz ordered me to do for fear that the people of Columbo if they knew of the transfer would cause an uproar and not let me go—sent word asking me to come by river without fear, that before reaching the pass I should find another boat into which I was to get. On the appointed day I set out from Nigumbo at 8 o'clock in the evening.

When I neared Columbo at three in the morning I met in another boat the aforesaid lady herself with some other ladies and a heretic in her company, but a person of great confidence, brought to give colour to the pretence that they had come on a pleasure trip as they were wont to do in these lands. They had been waiting for me, and as soon as I arrived they took me into their company, and the boat in which I came was sent back. As it was already day by that time, we remained the whole day in that place, and when night set in I made myself a servant of that lady and went after them carrying some

things of the party, and so we entered the city, where I found that on account of the recent disturbance and persecution everything was weak.

However I remained there a month hearing the confessions of a few persons of confidence and giving the Sacraments to the dying, one of whom was a young girl of very spiritual life who had made a vow of chastity and lived with great mortification. I heard of her illness, and that she was yearning for a priest. I went at eleven o'clock in the night to her house and she was most highly consoled and was able to make her confession quite well, and a short time afterwards she began her agony and after midnight she died. But her mother fearing to cry, because I was there and the neighbours might come, almost suffocated herself in her grief, but when I went out and was at a safe distance the lamentations began.

I found the time very inopportune for the usual discharge of the mission on account of the reasons given before, and I determined to return. But again no one dared to take me to the other bank of the river on account of the sentinels and spies posted there, nor was I able to find anyone to take me in the boat, but God, who never fails in his providence, came to my aid. By accident I met an official of the heretical Fiscal with whom I made friends, and the man who is usually the one who goes in search of Fathers to seize them, became as it were their guardian angel. He promised to give me passage, and I sent word to the faithful of Nigumbo to come on a given day with a boat and to wait for me at a particular spot at some distance from the pass and that I would come in search of it. And the matter was so well arranged by the official of the Fiscal that disguised as his lascorin I sallied from the city. When we reached the river no boat was to be found, and as it was a dark night he went up and asked for a launch saying that there was some service of the Company to be performed on the other bank at that hour. He thus took me and my servants with him in the launch, and after going up the river for a while he dropped me and the servants on the bank and returned.

When we reached the spot where we expected a boat from Nigumbo to await us we found none, and we were going about aimlessly, for it was too late to return, and we could not walk along the bank to Nigumbo, for there was another river which we had to pass by boat. We walked for a while till we reached a village, and as it began to dawn my guide found no better means than to leave me and my servants in a wood of thick willows, and go on by himself to Nigumbo to come in the night with a boat. We were to remain in the wood without speaking too loud as the public way ran very close to it, and we might be overheard.

As I had eaten little in the hurry and confusion of the previous night, and the walk had caused a heat, and the body required some rest after being up all night, but as it had rained the previous nights the river rose and the water reached the place where we were and the ground was very damp. My jaded body, however, clamoured for rest,

and the servants stretched their garments on the ground and laid me thereon. Though I did not sleep on account of the multitude of flies, the garments were so wet in a short time as if they had been in the water; and my body was so wet that the pain which I get from time to time till today was probably caused by that and similar adventures.

In this way I spent the day in that little wood not without uneasiness and alarm lest someone should come there in search of cattle and come upon us, which was the reason why I endured hunger and thirst, for though in the wallet of my servant there were some eatables I did not like to eat, lest I suffer thirst the more. Though the village was near and the servants could go in disguise and drink water they could not bring any to me as there was no vessel. Thus I chewed betel to lessen my thirst. Finally, night came and at seven the boat arrived, and the boatmen and my guide almost missed the place for we could not shout for fear of disclosing our presence to the villagers. From them I learnt that the boat had come the previous day, but seeing that I had delayed and thinking that I was not coming and fearing they might be noticed at dawn they had turned back just half an hour before I arrived.

I reached Nigumbo and went to the house of Maria Pereyra, the sister of Dom Affonso Pereyra, and remained there eight days, and did some service. One night seeing that my presence there had become known and the heretical seminarist was making inquiries, I left Nigumbo crossed the river of Caymel, and remaining in the jungle till morning after making a fire on account of elephants and to warm ourselves against the cold which we began to feel at five in the morning as in the previous few days it had rained, and I did not know what might happen, continued my way through the marshy ground for two leagues. But from that place onwards the land was flooded with water coming down from the hills and almost the whole place was under water, on account of which we had to spend two days and a half on a journey which usually takes half a day. The water at some places rose up to my waist except on some elevated spots where we halted for the night making fires all round us for fear of wild beasts; at other places it reached the head and it was lucky we had some rice in the wallet which we cooked, and we made tea, a thing which, except the Reverend Father Joseph Vaz, whom God now has, all of us use because it is good for keeping awake.

After a day and a half we reached Madampe where the river was so rapid that we could not cross, and therefore we remained there on an elevation till by chance God brought on our way two men of Nigumbo from whom we first tried to hide ourselves though my servants were also of Nigumbo, for although those lands were in the territory of the King of Kandy where we had no reason for fear, yet they were afraid that afterwards they might be accused of having gone with a priest. But as we were in want of people who were experienced in the ways, as there were crocodiles in the river, I sent them to call the men and they came and fell at my feet, for they were also Christians.

I made them sound the river, and thanks to God one of them was a tall man and the water only came up to his beard. I first caused the baggage and the altar box to be taken across, and we all waded the river together. At ten we reached Manguisiram which is the first habitation after leaving Nigumbo, for up to that all is desert. At this place we escaped ill-treatment from the hands of the pagans who were working in their fields, for as the road lay among them I walked with a white cloth on my head to protect it from the sun. The men were displeased at that and abused me and even threatened to come to blows, for it was afterwards learnt that among them it was discourteous to walk with a white cloth on the head.

My servants wanted to create a row over it, but seeing the circumstance I resorted to a trick, which was to offer two of the aggrieved men some betel, which was a kind of courtesy, whereon the leaders of the affray made excuses to me saying that they did not know I was a priest, etc. But there happened afterwards a circumstance which these pagans considered mysterious, for some eight days before they reaped, some one hundred and twenty elephants which the Company was sending from Colombo to Jaffna passed that way and destroyed a part of the crop, a thing which they attributed for a chastisement for what they did to us.

Thence I went before night to Timily, which is a small village of Catholics whom I confessed, administering baptism to some, both children and adults, and thence I went to Velevaly, which also is a village in which we have a chapel. There I remained for two days, and after hearing the confessions of the people, took the road to Puttalam which is about eight leagues, and on the 1 of December I reached the church of Puttalam at a time when Father Pedro Ferrao had sent an express messenger with a letter of Reverend Father Vigilio Manze of the Society of Jesus, Vicar of Tuticorin, in search of me having arrived the previous night with an order from Father Superior to despatch an express messenger with it to me if I had gone to a distant mission.

The letter contained the very sad news that Dom Affonso Pereyra, Mudaliar of Nigumbo, and his brother, Dom Lourenco Pereira, with his wife and family had been banished from Colombo to Tuticorin not merely for being Catholics but as promoters of the Catholic faith and for receiving and lodging the Missionary Fathers as your Reverence knows already from the accounts that we give of those our great Catholics and benefactors and men of zeal and favour. They were in Tuticorin and thankful to God, not only because it was the will of God but also because they are very happy to find churches and priests which they had not in Ceylon. They took a house near the church, and by their Christianity and good proceeding they have won great esteem not only from the aforesaid Father Manze but of all the religions of the Society of Jesus, and more especially of Dom Francisco Leines, Bishop of S. Thomé, when he passed through that place on his way to his See, and administered to them the Sacrament of Confirmation which the Christians of Ceylon never received, and which they now received with such joy of soul that in a letter written to me they said that they considered their troubles and loss of their office and goods and even

their banishment well repaid by the joy they felt in receiving the Sacrament of Confirmation and the other services of our holy religion, which they saw in Tuticorin, and that it was only the desolation and the persecution suffered by the Christians of Ceylon that caused pain to their hearts.

Now that I mention these folk I cannot omit some particulars about the wife of this Dom Affonso Pereira whose name is Catherine Bausem. She is so discreet and intelligent a lady that the Bishop of S. Thomé was highly pleased with her conversation, and so also are the Fathers of the Society of Jesus and Father Simao Carvalho, a great missionary of Madure, called her "Doctor", for she is fairly well read and very skilled in controversy. She is so zealous for the Catholic religion that whenever a heretic spoke against the faith in her presence she convicted him and put him to shame without mincing words, but with good proof and vivacity and it can well be that her questions and arguments made even me to study the Scriptures deeper; and at her request I translated the greater part of the controversies of Beccano and Hosdachim and Belarmin into Portuguese as they were not found in Dutch, a language which she knew well. She was my catechist, and by her persuasions she brought whites and natives to the Catholic faith. It was for this reason that the Governor and the predicantes complained not so much of her husband as of her, saying that she not only brought those of their sect to the Catholic religion, but even publicly affronted the reformed religion and its communion.

One night her husband in my presence begged her to abstain from her sermons and not to touch matters of religion seeing the troubles and the persecution in which they were at the time, so as not to irritate the lords of the country. She replied: "As your wife I endure all the troubles through which you have to pass, and I will do so till death, without the least deviation and whatever orders you give I will always carry out, but in this matter of the Faith give me no orders, nor have I to obey, for whether the Governor himself or the Predicantes speak to me about the Catholic faith I will not hesitate to reply with reasons". Finally, though in my previous letters I have often mentioned these persons and I do so again, I shall never be able to express fully how valiant these soldiers of Christ are, or the zeal and fervour with which they act and have acted in the matter of the Faith and in arguing for the Catholic religion. Now for the contents of the letter.

This Dom Affonso and his brother Dom Lourenco finding themselves persecuted, and because their family was a large one and they were in great need—so that the good lady and her daughter had to make sweets and pickles for sale and sell their jewels to maintain themselves—sent a petition to the Council of Batavia, complaining of the Governor and the injustice he did to them, without any fault of theirs towards the Company, and alleging likewise the many services they had rendered, not only they but their fathers likewise. Though it was reported that there had come from Batavia orders in their favour to reinstate them in their offices and property, yet the Governor who has absolute power which he has received from Holland at the instigation of the predicantes—for one of them is his brother-in-law—

being angry that these Catholics did not come to him with submission and humility, but wrote to Batavia, changed the orders that had come from there and sent word to the Captain of Tutucorin, who, thereupon, went with some soldiers and two officials suddenly and unexpectedly to the house of Dom Affonso and seized all his papers and every written thing, among which were the draft of the petition to Batavia and a letter of mine sent from Puttalam in reply to one of his, for fortunately the previous letters and letters of others happened to be better guarded. As this letter of mine contained some information and matters which, if taken in a sinister meaning, might lead to another persecution in Ceylon, Dom Affonso and his wife and Father Manse were apprehensive, and sent me word relating the affair so that I might be forewarned.

The seized papers were all brought to Columbo, and the two brothers were taken prisoners to the fort of Tuticorin and thence a few days later to Galle on the orders of the Governor. When the Captain presented to them the orders and asked them to embark in a sloop for the Fort of Galle, they replied that they were quite ready to do so, but they must first go to church and make their confession and receive Communion. The Captain objected, but they declined to do otherwise till finally on the next day they were brought prisoners as they were, under escort to the church, where they confessed and communicated, as also did his wife, daughter and the whole family, and they embarked to the great regret of the Father and the whole parish who heard Mass and recommended them to the Mother of God.

The Captain maintained that the wife and daughter should remain there, as the order did not refer to them, but they replied that the husband and father had no guilt to be treated in that way, and that if it were a crime to be Catholics they were equally guilty; finally he consented and they accompanied him in his banishment leaving some of their property to the care of Father Manse. When they reached Galle the two prisoners were kept in the Fort, and the wife and children took a house for their residence, and though there was great fear throughout the Christian community on the news they were going to be sent to the Cape of Good Hope, God was pleased that such should not be the case. Now they are free from the imprisonment and they live in that city all together, but are not permitted to return to their home in Nigumbo nor to Columbo nor to any other place, and their matter is at a standstill, and I expect it will be so as long as the present Governor remains; after that let us hope that God will not fail to come to their assistance, for though in his hidden councils He has permitted the troubles which they had to endure, we trust that they will be restored to their former state. May God deign to do so for the welfare of this Christian community and give them greater strength, courage and constancy, for though this incident had alarmed many, yet their fortitude and perseverance did not fail to animate others. I should like your Reverence also to pray to God for these men and their family, that they be restored to their former places, for should such be the case the Catholics of Nigumbo and Columbo will take fresh heart.

His daughter married in Galle a French physician, also a Catholic. Of the other banished persons there died Antonio da Costa, the Catechist, and Diogo d'Abreu, who had such a holy death as to be the

envy of the very Fathers who assisted them in death. Simao da Crus escaped from his banishment and returned in disguise to this country, and is now in the territory of the King (of Kandy). Thome de Miranda, sacristan, is still in exile with two others. Others also were banished before I came from Columbo to Puttalam. The Christians of Calpetim asked that a Father be sent to them, but Father Joseph de Menezes who wanted to go was prevented by illness as the place was a distant one. On hearing this I went there and stayed a few days, and with the help of God I attended to the needs of the mission and administered baptism to some new converts and returning to Puttalam, I sent information to the venerable Father Joseph Vaz telling him what I thought was the best course at present regarding the communities of Nigumbo and Columbo, and the venerable Father accepted my opinion and almost decided not to send any Father there at present till matters took a better turn, or the Governor changed. During this time I made my annual recollection as well as I could in Puttalam, and the venerable Father ordered me to go to Manar to be in charge of the Catholics there and help Father Joseph de Jesus Maria, but Father Joseph de Menezes for certain reasons made me remain in Puttalam till Christmas, after which the venerable Father gave us with his greetings of the New Year the sad news of his demission and departure from this vale of tears, naming the Father Joseph de Menezes as Superior of the Fathers and Vicar-General of the mission, begging him to accept for the love of God for the short time that remained to him he desired to devote completely to God without any care of exterior things. Then on the 24th of January we received the news of the blow that was to rend our hearts, namely, the news of the death of the venerable Father. On the 17 of the same month a messenger had brought us letters written with his own hand on the day before his death, asking suffrages from all of us, and giving other paternal directions. As the Father Superior¹ must have already given you an account of that death and also Father Jacome Goncalvez in his relation, I will not say anything more.

I remained in the church of Puttalam till Sexagesima Sunday, after that I went on a mission tour to the lands of the King, and I remained in those parts the whole of Lent, and for the feast of Easter I came to the chapel of Vallevally, and after Easter I returned to Puttalam. When Father Joseph de Menezes was going to Kandy for the burial of the venerable Father and to assist Father Jacome Goncalvez who was ill at the time with some trouble in his mouth about which I suppose your Reverence has been informed, I had a boil in my right foot which kept me confined for nearly two months to my bed, unable to place my foot on the ground and suffering pain which in my weakness seemed very great, especially in the needs of the body, for which they had to carry me and bring me back in their arms. With the favour of God I improved by the time Father Joseph de Menezes returned from Kandy, bringing Father Jacome Goncalves in his company to see if the physicians of Puttalam could do anything for him, seeing that the efforts of those of Kandy had failed. There arrived also Fathers Jose de Jesus Maria, Pedro da Saldanha and Bazilio Barreto when they received news of the death of the venerable Father Joseph

1 Father Joseph de Menezes.

Vaz. Father Pedro Ferrao had come earlier, but it was agreed that it was better that so many Fathers should not go to Kandy, not to give the Sinhalese any alarm, who are very jealous of novelties, and also because not all are able to climb the hills. We made our suffragia for the soul of the venerable Father as also for other benefactors and friends, and holding a consult we settled some points regarding the mission and the Missionaries as we thought best. Before the Fathers dispersed to their missions we received news from Sitawaka sent by Father Ignacio de Almeйда who after the death of the venerable Father Joseph Vaz, for he was one of those who were present at the death-bed, had gone to the mission in those parts, saying that he was ill and could not come to the meeting, and sending us letters of the Congregation giving us the sad news of the death of our Brother, Father and Superior, Pero Paulo.

This death caused us great sorrow on account of the loss to our Congregation, and we made suffragia for his soul and more than our rules require because of our great affection for him.

Father Ignacio de Almeйда also informed us that Captain Diogo de Pinho Teixeira, the Captain-General that was of Macao, had come to that city after finishing his government, in a merchant ship as he was unable to complete his voyage to Goa. That he was remaining in the suburbs of the city of Colombo with his wife and family, and that after much opposition he had by great many prayers obtained permission from the Governor to have with him his chaplain, for himself and his family only, with many promises that he would not go to the other houses, and that the said Diogo de Pinho hearing that Father Ignacio de Almeйда was in Sitawaka had sent him word in secret to come to his house, and that the opportunity seemed a good one for a Father to enter that city and attend to that mission, for though the Governor had protested he could not but know that the Catholics, who in spite of so many risks and punishments bring there the Fathers who are in the lands of His Majesty (of Kandy), would hear the holy Sacrifice when a priest was there with his permission; and that even if he came to know of it he had to dissimulate not to fall out with the said Captain-General with whom I heard that he was in terms of great friendship; and that as the chaplain did not know the language and was an absolute stranger in the land it seemed good that some Father versed in the country should go there. I communicated my design to the Father Superior and he approved of it, seeing that I, who am the most experienced, should look for means to enter (Columbo). Thereupon I went to Vellevally and thence to Tymelly and thence on Saturday early in the morning I said Mass, ate some rice, and with some Christians who were going to their village that the King had given them, set out. At three o'clock I reached the river of Madampe and remained in the neighbourhood in a wood, for as I have said before from Tymelly to Nigumbo the lands are uninhabited, and that night I was almost without food, for seeing that so many Christians were with me I did not think of bringing anything with me, and when I enquired I found that they had some cooked rice so black that the grains looked like mosquitos along with some spices and pepper.

On the next day which was a Sunday I asked them to prepare the altar in the wood which was a wood of cinnamon. I said Mass and drank some cunjee. Then with my two servants I took the road to Nigumbo, and the other people went to their village. After walking about an hour I felt feverish with erysipelas and vomiting. I remained under the shade of a tree thinking what I was to do, for I could not continue the journey of at least one day to reach the river of Nigumbo or to Tymelly whence I had set out. Meanwhile there was no help but to remain in the wood that day, though I had not eaten anything and had vomited much, though I had taken almost nothing the previous day at Tymelly, and lower down there were no people; for as all these parts are uninhabited and the woods are great and thick, there are elephants and other wild beasts, and they are for the most part very daring, so that they are often met with on the way even by day, and for this reason even though these are territories of the King of Kandy, we go about without the soutane with only a cloth, like the people of the country, so as to be free and unhampered to run and escape when there is danger. My servants were therefore very anxious, for though they could cut some poles and make a hammock with their clothes, and carry me, yet they had their wallets and the necessities for Mass, books and utensils to carry.

Being thus deprived of all human help, I invoked the aid of God, and prepared to force myself a little further with the help of a staff. My foot was swollen and the fever high, and as the heat of the sun parched my tongue and the weakness was great, I could at most advance only a few paces and felt unable to continue, and fell. Rising up I walked a little more and fell again. In this way we went on, and whenever we found some water they gave me to drink, but often even this could not be found. Finally, late in the afternoon we reached the wood that is before the river of Nigombo. We entered the wood so as not to be seen, for there was a village near the river; and remained there waiting for darkness. I laid myself down on the grass and rested, when quite close to us we heard an elephant breaking the branches of the trees. Immediately we fled with all haste and speed, not getting out of the wood but nearing the village. There we remained unseen till about nine o'clock and took the road, but we found that the fields by which we had to pass were sown with Nachiny with only a narrow strip left bare, but in the middle of it were watchers who had built a shelter for themselves with leaves, and having made a fire they were singing and keeping watch. We could not pass, for they would question us and come to know.

We waited some time to see whether they would cease singing and go to sleep, but in vain. We then made a long detour and made our way through the Nachiny, which was pretty high and almost reached my shoulders. It was no small trouble to pass between the full grown stalks, and as that was not a path our feet had to suffer, not to speak of the noise which made me fear lest the watchers should hear it and see us, or worse still, should fire on us thinking there were animals. Finally we got free from all danger, through the mercy of God, and reached a place in the river which was not deep, but as there was a house on the other side we walked on a little more and crossed

the river. Though the heat of the body and the fever made me feel greatly refreshed by the cool water, yet I was afraid to get into cold water at midnight in a state of weakness and fever, as I was, would do me harm. But God who like a good Father freed me from so many perils, saved me from that also.

In one hour we reached Nigumbo and immediately I despatched the people giving them rice and whatever else they needed. I rested in the house of a cousin of Dom Affonso Pereira, who in a few minutes prepared me dinner. Though I was hungry enough, the fever made me lose all desire for food, and I rested there some days, but those who were eager for the Sacraments did not spare me at night. I set out for Columbo in a boat in the company of Joao Collaco, a well-known man whom the people of the country greatly respect, and for that reason the lascarins on guard at the pass did not ask questions. A man from the city was awaiting me at a certain place as I had informed them from Nigumbo. He took charge of the vestments for Mass, a thing which always gives me concern when we have to pass the city gates where there are white soldiers who always make a search unless the persons are well-known. I entered the city at nine in the night before the gates were closed, because at that time there are troops and men passing and re-passing, and it was not possible to examine too closely. I went straight to the house of a lady who from a heretic had become a Catholic and about whom I think I have spoken above. I sent word to Diogo de Pinho Teixeira of my disguise and purpose, and at ten in the night when only persons of confidence were in the house, he received me with great manifestations of affection, as also did his wife, the Senhora Isabel Henrique, and after some conversation I returned to the place where I was before. The next day at the same time Diogo de Pinho came in disguise in search of me, and when he learnt of my intention to do mission work, I found him so zealous that he asked me to do all I could, saying that he would gladly undergo any trouble that might come upon him, and would consider his coming to Columbo most fortunate for the increase of the Faith and the administration of the Sacraments to men who were so desirous of them.

I did my mission work, and within four or five days the news of my arrival and stay spread in the city. The Disava, who was in Nigumbo, came to Slave Island, and having heard that it was the freemen there who brought the Fathers, he ordered all free men, women and children to quit the place and put up stakes of wood round the Island and placed sentinels and guards, but through the mercy of God whose power is infinite, I did not fail to enter the Island in spite of it. These proceedings caused an uproar in the city, and some persons instilled their fears into Diogo de Pinho also, and as I was in different places, one night he found out where I was, and came in person to meet me, and refused to go away till I promised to come to his house and stay there going out whenever I liked at night. In fact, he told me: "Father, your Reverence may with discreet circumspection do any religious service, but every morning you must come back to my house where the heretics will not venture to hunt you. If they catch you somewhere else, your Reverence would only expose me to destruc-

tion, for if I do not sally out to defend and rescue you from the hands of the heretics, being an officer of the King of Portugal, not to mention my personal pride, I shall not be able to show my face to the Viceroy and other gentlemen in Goa. And if I have to sally out with sword in hand, as your Reverence knows, it will end in my having to expose my wife and children to ruin in this land of heretics". He is a man of his word, and I saw that when all was considered, it was the best, and that the other Christians had great fear to visit me by day, and the Lord knows how the heart of the householder beat when I enter his house though they receive me every day.

That morning, therefore, at four o'clock I went to the house of Diogo de Pinho, where they were awaiting me; and from that day I remained there, convoking men in that part of the house that was under my orders for a part of the night; and then going to other places for the other half of the night in the company of the men of Diogo de Pinho. Sometimes he himself accompanied me under pretence of taking a walk and seeing me safe into the house to which I was going. By this time my work and my presence were publicly known owing to the continual concourse of people; and such was the fear that seized my heart that I considered myself in peril each hour. Diogo de Pinho is a man of great intelligence, in consequence of which and as a result of his good nature and generosity, he gained the goodwill of the Governor who became his fast friend. His wife likewise was a friend of the wife of the Governor who treated her with great honour and respect, giving her similar honours. There were many political demonstrations in his regard, and the principal men of the city paid him great regard. He too bore himself valiantly doing heroic things not only to the honour of the Catholic faith but even of the Portuguese nation. He had come away pretty poor from Macao, and he is getting into debt and was much accused on my account. The Predicantes and the Disava urged the Governor strongly, but the Governor did not want to stir in the matter as long as Diogo de Pinho was there, as we learnt.

Seeing the silence of the Governor, we gradually made ourselves more and more free. People came publicly to Mass at eight o'clock in the morning to the house of Diogo de Pinho, for he had two priests with him, one (his chaplain) openly, with the permission of the Governor and the other, myself, secretly, in secular attire. During the three months that I was there, we had two feasts, the Assumption and the Nativity, very early in the morning in the house of Pinho. The inner veranda was made ready with many silk stuffs. All the principal Catholics and their wives were invited on the plea of a party, as is customary among the Hollanders. People who passed the street thought it was some entertainment, though many knew what it was in reality. Later we began the spiritual feast of confessions, instructions, etc. Mass was sung in parts, and there was a sermon and Litanies and other exercises to the great joy of those Christians who had never seen any such thing within the city of Columbo, for outside it in some places, whenever the opportunity occurs, we do not fail to keep the feasts with full ceremony, which the people greatly esteem.

After this Diogo de Pinho Teixeira asked the Governor's leave to go to Nigumbo with his wife for some time. The permission was immediately given, and he took me with him in his boat, and we remained there about a week and I did not fail to do some work in spite of the fact that the Disava had placed his sentinels, though at some distance from the house in which we were, to observe and take note of the people who went to the house. The Disava thinking that Diogo de Pinho had come to Nigombo along with me solely for the purpose of putting me into safety in the lands of the King, posted many sentinels in the passes by the river, and on land and in places where I could pass. On coming to know this we returned to Colombo.

Diogo de Pinho did the same when he went to Galle, where he remained some thirteen or fourteen days, to the great consolation of the Christians of that city, for as his chaplain, a religious of St. Augustine came with him, they had Mass under the direction and instruction of our catechist, Dame Catherine Bausem, wife of Dom Affonso Pereira, who is still there with his brother, prisoners in the Fort for their faith and the Catholic religion. The wife and daughter increased the religion with the help of the said Father, and with great charity she helped and nursed the wife of Diogo de Pinho, who fell ill in that city, as she herself told me, stating that she was under great obligation to her. Seeing that Diogo de Pinho and his wife were so much obliged to the wife of Dom Affonso Pereira, and that the Governor and his wife were friends of the Pinhos, it seemed good to me to ask him to speak about Dom Affonso and try to set him free and restore him to his former office. Pinho and his wife undertook to do so. Even if it cost them something they would do it.

But as it was a serious matter, and I did not know how his affairs stood, I sent him a letter with great caution, expressing my purpose and asking what they thought about it. They both replied by letter written by themselves, that they knew how much I wished their welfare, and how much I suffered with them, seeing that I was excogitating such attempts for their deliverance, for which they kissed my hands and feet, and begged me, however, not to trouble myself in the matter, that they preferred that none should speak to the Governor about them, and that as they were imprisoned and degraded for being Catholics, they had great confidence that God would come to their assistance and would see to their release when He pleased to do so, that meanwhile I should do them the charity of saying some Masses which they had promised and commend them to the prayers of the other Fathers and Catholics. Let your Reverence consider the firmness of our soldiers of Christ. I think one might say of them what Our Lord Himself said of another: *Non inveni tantam fidem in Israel*. I have not found so great faith in Israel.

(To be continued.)

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