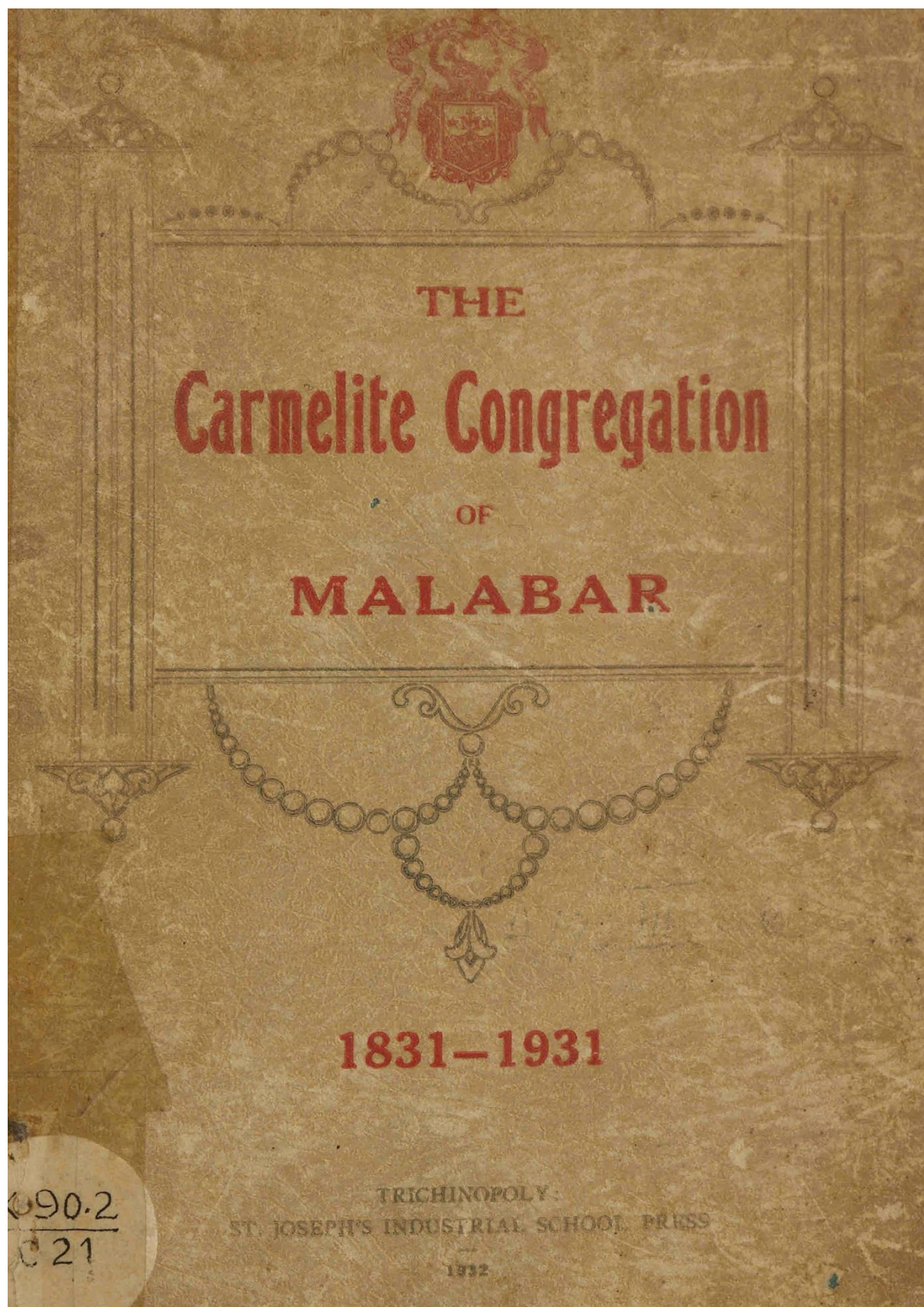




CHAPTER II

1831—1846

Trial of Obedience—Seminary work—Apostolate of the Press—Death of the Two Founders.

1. Mgr. Stabilini embarked for Rome in 1832, and Mgr. Francis Xavier, O. C. D., was appointed Vicar Ap. of Verapoly. There is nothing under the sun that can count on the approval and good pleasure of all men; the work of God,—and such a one is the institution of a Religious Congregation,—should prove its merit in the furnace of trials. No wonder, therefore, if evil reports reached the ears of the new Vicar Apostolic concerning the Mannanam enterprise. Thereupon, Fr. Porukara was appointed Vicar of the two Latin churches, Kayankulam and Pillathop, of the present Diocese of Quilon, and Fr. Chavara, that of Southern Pallipuram. They had to leave Mannanam, giving up all there which they held most dear, and to assume their new charges which separated them widely from each other. Every one felt the blow very keenly. With the advice of Fr. Palakal, they accepted the trial as coming from the hands of God Almighty, and entrusting the care of the future to Divine Providence, they obeyed the order of the Vicar Apostolic without a word of complaint.

2. Mgr. Francis Xavier was highly pleased with the saintly behaviour of the two Fathers and relieved them of their parochial charge in 1833, when, both of them, under the auspices of the Vicar Apostolic himself, resumed the work at Mannanam, assisted by the clergy and laity as before.

3. At the express desire of Fr. Palakal, a Seminary for the education of the Secular Clergy was attached to the newly-built Monastery at Mannanam. The seminarians were lodged apart from

CHAPTER II. 1831—1846

those who desired to embrace the Religious life. Father Palakal was Rector 'ex-officio' of this Seminary as well. Continuing to



His Ex. Mgr. L. M. Zaleski, Delegate Apostolic, who visited all the Monasteries of the Congregation, at Mannanam, when the Very Rev. Fr. Basil of St. Teresa was the Prior General.

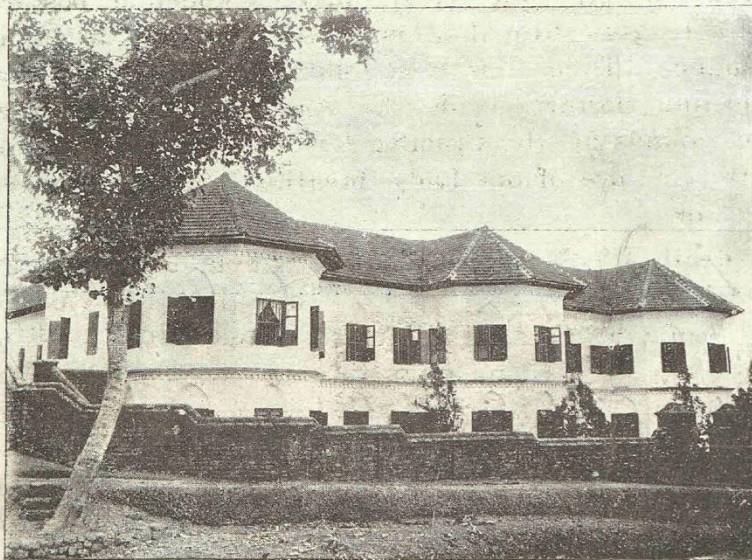
reside with his seminarians at Pallipuram, he conducted at the same time the Seminary at Mannanam, through the Fathers there.

4. The death of the saintly Fr. Palakal, which took place at Pallipuram in 1841, was really a heavy blow to Fr. Porukara and Fr. Chavara. Trusting in God they continued the building of the church and the monastery by means of collections raised from all the different parts of the country. The work at Mannanam roused general interest and was looked upon as a common cause by all. It is worth mentioning that the leading secular priests of the day paid frequent visits to Mannanam. Some of them even looked after the works there, in the absence of Fr. Porukara and Fr. Chavara. While engaged in the building works at Mannanam, Fr. Porukara often went to distant parishes to preach missions and to attend to the spiritual needs of the Faithful. His saintly life, his winning

THE CARMELITE CONGREGATION OF MALABAR

manners and the unction with which he preached, led the Vicar Apostolic invariably to send him out on difficult missions, especially in the struggle with the Padroado schism. The zealous labours of Fr. Porukara and other Syrian Priests converted many from that schism in Quilon and other parts of Malabar.

5. Fr. Porukara and Fr. Chavara keenly felt the need of the Apostolate of the Press in Malabar. Fr. Chavara taking the lead, established under the patronage of St. Joseph, a Printing Press at Mannanam in 1844—the first Catholic Press in Malabar. This premier establishment, with the blessing of its pious founder, has to this day continued to spread sound Catholic literature throughout the whole Malayalam-speaking States. The “Nazrani Deepika,” the only Catholic Daily newspaper in India,* and the “Flower of



The present St. Joseph's Press, Mannanam.

“Flower of Carmel” is intended to strengthen the Faithful in piety and devotion. The amount of good “Deepika” does to society and to Religion is beyond praise. During the Great War, the paper opened a subscription for the stricken people of Central Europe. The amount reached many thousands and won unstinted appreciation and thanks from Rome.

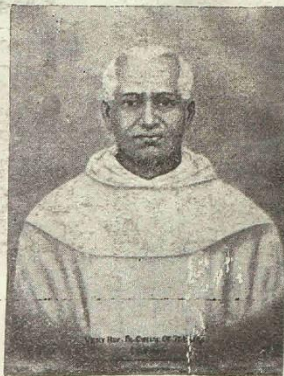
* Owing to the universal depression, the Daily is, for the time being, made a Weekly.

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6. Mgr. Francis Xavier died in 1844 and was succeeded by Mgr. Ludovic, O. C. D. Before his death, Mgr. Francis Xavier had nominated Fr. Porukara and Fr. Chavara "Malpans" and Examiners of the Syrian candidates for the Priesthood, in the Vicariate Apostolic of Verapoly.

7. In the inscrutable designs of God Almighty, Fr. Porukara too was called to his reward, before witnessing the complete establishment of religious life at Mannanam. Aware of his approaching end he received the last Sacraments with extreme devotion from the hands of Fr. Chavara. At midnight on January 8th, 1846, occurred his touching and edifying death. He had been lying stretched on his bed, heroically enduring excruciating pains and peacefully awaiting the end. Then, as if inspired, he raised himself with another's help, and remaining in a kneeling posture, asked Fr. Chavara to give him the last absolution, and to enjoin his agony as penance. Then, this close follower of Jesus Crucified, in the same kneeling posture, made the sign of the cross, kissed lovingly the five wounds of the Crucifix he held in his hand, and finally kissing the picture of our Lady breathed his soul into the hands of his Creator.

8. By the death of Fr. Porukara, the whole burden of the infant institute fell on the shoulders of young Fr. Chavara, who from the very beginning had imbibed the spirit of Fr. Palakal and Fr. Porukara, and who from 1833 had consecrated himself and all his personal earnings for the noble work begun at Mannanam. Fr. Chavara was thus



Very Rev. Fr. Cyriac Elias Chavara, the first "Prior" of the Congregation.

destined by God to complete the work of the two Founders and to develop and guide the life and activities of the Institute, delineated by them, to the formation of a canonical Religious Congregation, comprising both the contemplative and active life in perfect harmony.



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