

Southern India.—The Malabar-Syrian Church Case. The great Syrian church lawsuit has just been heard in the Royal Court of Final Appeal in Travancore and judgment will, no doubt, shortly be pronounced. The point in contention is, whether the Patriarch of Antioch has jurisdiction over the Syrian church of Malabar or not. The late Mar Athanasius, Metropolitan, and his successor, Mar Thomas Athanasius, are charged with having changed the usages and doctrines of the church by the omission from the ancient liturgy of prayers for the dead and prayers addressed to saints; by administering communion in both kinds, and sundry other measures tending towards what Protestant Christians would regard as reform from superstition and error. For this, the Patriarch long ago interdicted Mar Athanasius and contends that the orders of Mar Thomas Athanasius are invalid, not having been conferred in due form by the Patriarch himself.

On the other hand, Mar Athanasius maintains that the Patriarch possesses no such administrative authority as he claims and that the alleged innovations are in accordance with the earlier and purer teaching and practice of the Malabar church before they were forcibly proselyted to Rome by Alexis Menezes and the Portuguese power at the end of the sixteenth century and their ancient books destroyed. In this respect he seems to have taken up much the same ground as that assumed by the old Catholics of Germany and Switzerland against the pretensions of the See of Rome.

When in Travancore in 1875-6, after a visit to England in 1871, with a view of enforcing his claims in person, the Patriarch consecrated six new Metrans besides one, Mar Dionysius, whom he had previously consecrated at Merdeen, and whom he authorized, with the aid of a committee, to carry on the litigation and to exercise general superintendence over the affairs of the church. This Mar Dionysius accordingly sued Mar Thomas Athanasius and other representatives of the reform party, in the Zillah Civil Court of Alleppey, in 1879, the hearing of which at vast length occupied five years. He claimed the Syrian seminary at Cottayam, and certain lands and funds belonging to it, also official books, ornaments, and vestments used by the Metropolitans for the time being—the decision on which would carry with it the whole property and jurisdiction over the Syrian church.

In 1884 decree was made by the Zillah judge, Mr. T. C. Krishna Menon, in favor of Mar Dionysius, both parties to bear their respective costs.

At once appeal was made by Mar Thomas Athanasius to the High Court of Travancore, whose judgment by Justices T. R. Narayana Pillai and G. Aranyayam Pillai, after hearing the case at full length, was delivered in 1885, again adjudging the properties in dispute to Mar Dionysius and awarding costs to him.

Finally, an appeal has been made to the

Royal Court of Final Appeal, representative of the Maharajah, and consisting of the Chief Justice and a European Christian judge. For this purpose the whole of the previous proceedings, depositions pro and con, documents referred to, extracts from histories, canons, missals and other books, and prior judgments were printed for the use of the judges and advocates in four volumes, 4to, amounting in all to 1172 pages. Many of the remarks bearing on the manners and customs and religious views of the Syrian Christians are of the greatest interest to students, and the ultimate decision of this *cause celebre*, whichever way it goes, will have a great and permanent effect on the future of the Syrian church of Malabar.

Is not the Mar Gregorius, Syrian Bishop of Jerusalem, referred to in THE MISSIONARY REVIEW for February, as visiting England to collect money for schools to spread *Bible truths* connected with this same Patriarch who in Travancore is fighting so hard *against* evangelical and Scriptural truth?

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Evangelization of the Jews.

EXTREMELY interesting incidents might be gathered from the current annals of the First Hebrew Christian church in America, No. 17 St. Mark's Place, New York (Rev. Jacob Freshman, pastor), to illustrate the power of the gospel and the accessibility of the Jewish as well as of the Gentile enemy of Christ to the influences of the Holy Spirit attendant on the faithful and affectionate preaching of Jesus the Messiah. The baptism of a Jew is martyrdom: the end for him of all he ever held dear or knew of hope or comfort before in this world. Man or woman, boy or maiden, is from that hour an outcast from home, kindred, society, employment; followed only with bitter curses by all who ever loved or knew them. Hardly can they even find refuge in Christian associations, for they are often obliged to become wanderers where they are not known, to obtain a chance to earn their bread. Notwithstanding all this, earnest inquirers are at all times "searching the Scriptures whether these things are so," at the rooms of the mission, and baptisms are so frequent as to be almost a usual occurrence on Sabbath evenings. Seven were united to the little church at the last quarterly communion service. What wonder that these who have left all for Christ are burning with zeal to testify of Him, and almost always wish to devote their lives to preaching the gospel? A venerable lady, who had lived in wealth and luxury until, 17 years ago, she became a Christian, declares that since then she has not eaten a morsel that was not earned by the lone labor of her own hands, yet that she has been full of increasing joy in