

REPORT OF THE MRP TITLED
BOOK PUBLISHING IN MALAYALAM
THE BEGINNINGS

DR BABU CHERIAN

DEPARTMENT OF MALAYALAM

CMS COLLEGE

KOTTAYAM KERALA

NO. F. MRP (H)-602/ 08-09/KLMG 002/ UGC-SWRO/

DT. 30 MARCH 09

CONTENTS

Chapter 1

An Introduction to Printing and Book-Publishing

Chapter 2

The beginning of Printing in Malayalam that led to Book-Publishing

Chapter 3

Malayalam Book Publishing and

the first Malayalam Book Published in Kerala

Chapter 4

Conclusion

Chapter 1

An Introduction to Printing and Book-Publishing

Printing is the technology that has recorded the history of all that has happened in the world from the past to the present. Yet, regarding the history of printing, especially the history of the very early days of the technology, not much is known. The invention of printing is a landmark in the history of the World's civilization, not merely of book-publishing or the dissemination of knowledge. "Printing is the art and technology of recreating, on paper or fabric or on any other surface, pictures or words. Though a variety of printed objects are commonplace in modern times, the principal function of printing is the dissemination of thought and knowledge. Printed words and pictures have become an integral and important part of schools, libraries, education of individuals, intellectual growth and the popular news media" (*Encyclopaedia Americana*–Printing'). Though there were books when printing was unknown, the world then was the world of the illiterate societies, unable to read or write. "The greatest factor that was instrumental in making Europe civilized, was printing. If Asia and Africa are to see the light and achieve progress as Europe did, at one time or other, it will be, to a great extent, probably through printing". So spoke Thomas Scott the renowned theologian and trainer of missionaries, while addressing a group of missionaries leaving for Asia and Africa (CMS Proceedings, 1805: 78).

The technology of printing that helped in making numerous copies and in communication of ideas through the print medium, was not merely for Asia or Africa or Europe only. All over the world, printing was the instigator and constant companion of civilization.

The Beginning of Printing

History of printing began with Johan Guttenberg printing his famous *42 line Bible* using movable metal types. Prior to that, true, there were certain rudiments of printing. Wooden blocks and metal sheets engraved with shapes and forms, stones and such other media stamped with pictures and the like were used to make many 'printed' copies. They have no more significance than being mere handicrafts, in the history of printing. The popularity that printing acquired in later years was with the invention of the printing press by Guttenberg. The technical advantage of printing is that it can produce countless number of copies in surprisingly short time at a low cost. It was Guttenberg who made a press that could print numerous copies within a very short time. The new generation presses are superfast performers when compared to the presses of Guttenberg's days. And, the predecessors to Guttenberg's press were incapable of the capabilities the presses made by Guttenberg and they could not lend themselves to technical improvements or sophistication.

Copying was the means, in the pre-printing days, for making books and that, indeed, was a laborious and time consuming as well as an expensive process. Monks, in their monasteries, spent laborious years, making copies of the *Bible*, a collection of short and long volumes. "It is said that the sight of Carthusian monks in the town of Maines copying the *Bible*, spending their entire lifetime, touched the gentle hearted Guttenberg and made him turn to printing" (P.J Thomas, 1989 : 332). It was, more or less, the same reason that made Benjamin Bailey turn to printing too. And, his intense desire to see the Bible he had translated get printed in Malayalam, was what made him turn to establishing a printing press and to chisel Malayalam types for use in the press.

"No wonder that the Germans were the first to take to printing, considering the fact that printing, using movable types, was a German invention and that it was in Maines, a German city, that printing was done for the very first time" (S.H Steinberg, 1959:36). By the end of the 15th century, printing presses came into being in about sixty German cities. In many other European towns also, printing came to be in existence at the same time. Towns like Cologne (1464), Basel (1466), Roma (1467), Venice (1469), Paris (1470), Geneva (1478), London (1480), Stockholm (1483) were known for printing in the 15th century. The German city of Cologne has a rather close relation with printing in England. William Caxton, the father of printing in England, learned printing at Cologne during 1471- 72. Modern

printing took roots in Russia, Palestine, Japan, India, North America, Iran and China during the 16th and 17th centuries.

Printing, during its early days, did wonders in book-publishing and thereby in the dissemination of knowledge. The advantage of the new technology was astounding in comparison with the work done by the copyists. Copies of books could now be made in a month or two while the copyists took many months to do the same. That too, not one copy at a time but several hundred copies at a time. The cost of a new copy was comparatively much less than that of a hand-written one.

Proof reading and editing are the two basic things in the publishing of books and periodicals. Their absence is, naturally, detrimental to publishing. The advent of the movable 'character-units' cast after the metal types, opened unlimited variety and diversity in composing. It now was possible to effect corrections, deletions and additions in a text, beginning with a single character (the symbol of a type or a sub-type or the symbol of a number) to any number of sentences. The possibility that the same type could be cast in different shapes and sizes and could be used in composing, opened doors to Lay-out possibilities. Thus, a technically superior book and magazine publishing was made possible through proof-reading, editing and lay-out, the result of the introduction of movable types. This is an important development in the history of printing.

Chapter 2

The beginning of Printing in Malayalam that led to Book-Publishing

Modern Printing came to India in the first phase itself of its conquest of the World. According to Priyolkar, “a printing press was first established in India, on 6th September 1556. It was the Jesuit College of St Paul that accommodated the first printing press. *Doctrina Christa*, a Scripture book, written in Portuguese by St Francis Xavier is regarded as the first book printed in Goa, nay, in India” (K.M. Govi, 1998: 22-25). This book was printed in 1557. In the 17th century, in addition to St Paul’s College in Goa, St Ignatius’ College in Rachol also instituted printing. The books in Goa were printed mostly in Portuguese and a few in the Konkini Language. There is another view that *Doctrina Christa* was printed in Tamil at Goa. From Goa, printing came to Kerala.

“Two years after Francis Xavier’s *Doctrina Christa* was printed in Goa, printing was started in Kerala. Printing presses were active at Kollam, Kochi, Vypikota and Ambazhakad in the 16th and 17th centuries. The first book printed in Kerala was the *Doctrina Christa* printed at Kollam in 1578. Then in 1579 the Kochi ‘Doctrina’ was printed. Both were in Tamil. It is evident from this that the first Indian language to be printed was Tamil. Though historians agree that there was printing done at Vypikota, no samples printed there are available” (K.M Govi, 1998:99-36). There is evidence regarding the printing of Six Tamil works. In short, the first printing done, at the presses which were part of the Society of Jesus at Kollam, Kochi, Vypikota and Ambazhakad was, in Tamil, not in Malayalam.

The first book, printed using the movable types is, *Samkshepa Vedartham*. It was printed in Rome at the polyglot printing press in 1772. The second Malayalam book too, was

printed in the same press, in 1791. It was the translation of Paulinos Padre's *Centum Adagia Malabarica : Cum textu originali et versione*. Later, we see Malayalam printing entering another phase when it was done in India itself.

Malayalam printing which appeared in Rome for the first time in history, reached India by the end of the 18th century. It was at the Courier Printing Office in the city of Bombay that Malayalam was printed for the first time in India. The first book in Malayalam printed there, was Robert Drummond's *Grammar of the Malayalam Language*. Because almost all the lines in the book were of Malayalam words and sentences, it is not wrong to call it a Malayalam book" (K.M. Govi, 1998:101). Though some think differently, it can be overruled. The complete book in Malayalam printed at the courier Press Office is the *Bible*, containing the four Gospels, in 1811.

Kerala and Printing

From these, two things are evident: that the first phase of printing in Kerala was in Tamil and that the first phase of printing in Malayalam was outside Kerala. Printing in Kerala had to wait till the arrival of Benjamin Bailey and the CMS. With printing in Bombay over, Malayalam Printing came to Kerala. "It was the Church Missionary Society based at Kottayam, and its missionaries, that paved the way for this. There is no doubt, that it was Benjamin Bailey, who started Malayalam Printing in Kerala" (P.J. Thomas 1989: 354).

Benjamin Bailey and Malayalam Printing

Guttenberg thought of creating a printing press, moved by the hardships the Carthusian monks faced, in making hand-written copies of the Bible. Similarly, the motivation behind the starting of a printing press at Kottayam too, was the *Bible*. The deliberations regarding the establishment of a press in Kottayam, to print and publish in Malayalam, a flawless translation of the *Bible*, are mentioned in the 'Missionary Register': "For the purpose of rendering the (*Bible*) version of the Malayalam as correct as possible, arrangements have been made for furnishing the station at Cotym with a press, types and paper, in order that the work may have the benefit of the translator's revision" (1820, october: 446) (sic.).

It was Col Munro, the inspiration of the Kottayam Mission of Help, that first suggested the establishment of a printing press at Kottayam, to print the *Bible*. “The translation of the scriptures will be completed in the course of another month; and two or three Catanars may be sent with the manuscript to Calcutta. But would it not be a better plan to establish a press, and print the Scriptures in the college at Cotym? There is ample room in the college, for a Printing and Book-binding Establishment, and the formation of such an Establishment at that institution would, in my judgement, be very useful... If the proposition of establishing a Printing-press at Cotym should be approved, its execution ought not to be delayed. (Microfilm marked CMS-4, UTC Archives, Bangalore).

The establishment of a press in Kottayam, was made rather imperative, by the fact that the translations of the many pamphlets and the various books of the *Bible* had been made ready and because they would entail heavy expenditure and delay, if copied by copyists. Moreover, a printing press in Kottayam was a pre-requisite and a necessity, to print books for students in schools and the college, to print pamphlets for use in churches and for the instruction of priests. It was under these circumstances, that the missionaries at Kottayam submitted the following, before the Madras Corresponding Committee: “The necessity of a printing Establishment at Cotym, is another thing which we beg leave to submit, to the committee. We have distributed a few Malayalim Tracts such as copies of a single Gospel, Catechism etc., but the expense is great. Besides, the English, Syriac and Sanskrit works, which we shall very soon require at the college, procured from Madras, will be attended with much expense; and, after all, we shall not be able to procure works in all cases, to suit our purpose. It will not be long, before the attention of the students should (sic.) be directed to the structure of the English Language, its idiom and its elegancies: to pursue, such a study profitably, recourse must necessarily be had to the writings of our most elegant Poets, Essayists, and Historians. A Syrian Press is, perhaps, even more requisite, from the great expense of, Syriac Works in England,(sic) and the impossibility of procuring them in sufficient number from home. But, of all the Presses needed here, the Malayalim Press is undoubtedly of the first importance. (‘Missionary Register’, 1821 December 578).

Convinced that the request made by Col Munro and the missionaries in Kottayam was quite acceptable, the Madras Corresponding Committee wrote immediately to their mother-society in England, to make available from there, a press for Kottayam, English spare types

and the metal for casting types in Malayalam, Tamil and Sanskrit. On 18th October, 1821, the printing press and the English types arrived in Kottayam, Via Bombay and Alleppy.

This was the first printing press to reach Kottayam, in fact, Kerala itself, during the 19th century. Yet, a missionary record quotes from a leaflet, published by the CMS Press, which says that the Calcutta Bible Society had sent a printing press to Kottayam and in 1820, St Luke's Gospel was printed at that press. But, that is an erroneous statement, for no record supporting this, has ever been come across. In addition, the statement made by the Malankara Metropolitan, to Bishop Middleton, who visited Kottayam in April, 1821... "Printing has not started in the Syrian College" reiterates the fact (Charles Web Les Bas 1831: 206).

The printing press arrived in Kottayam College on 18th October, 1821, but Malayalam types were unavailable. Madras Fort St George College had agreed to cast Malayalam types necessary for the Kottayam Press. Regarding this, the corresponding Committee reports: "The steps, for casting types in Malayalam, have been taken. But the fear, that at least a year would elapse before the types are ready to be sent to Kottayam, persists. The difficulties here, for casting types in a new language, are many" ('CMS Proceedings', 1820:150.)

In a letter to Col New Wall on 13th March, 1822, the Kottayam Trio wrote "The Church Missionary Society has sent a press and English types. We are expecting the Malayalam types to arrive". In other words, though the press had arrived five months ago, the Malayalam types were still lacking. The types were sent to Kottayam in July, 1823 from Madras.

The understanding was to establish the press in the College, when it arrived. The college was the centre of the 'Mission of Help' and the seat of the Department of Translation. Many well known presses were, at that time, functioning attached to colleges like Fort St George College Madras, Calcutta Bishop's College and Serampore College. Col Munro believed that the printing press could be accommodated within the space available in the College. When it arrived, the press was kept in the College, at first. So it could not have been that Col Munro had thought of a separate building for the press. But, the press that had arrived from England, lay idle for almost two years. There are no records of having printed anything here soon after its arrival, though, types in English was available then. By this time, the translation of the *New Testament* by the Syrian Catanars was almost over. Joseph Fenn

was in charge of the College and Bailey was able to spend more time at the Arbuthnot School, established close to his bungalow, which demanded a great deal of his attention.

There was also a geographical reason for not housing the press close to the 'Cotym College'. In the low lying area, on the river bank, where the college was, the atmospheric humidity was rather high. If the press were to be set up in the College, the humidity there would prevent the gum used for binding from setting and the ink on the printed material from drying well. When Col Welsh and Marmaduke Thompson visited Kottayam in 1824, the press was in a building near Bailey's Bungalow. Since Bailey's bungalow was atop a hill, there was plenty of sunshine and pleasant winds and hence the humidity there, was much less. It must have been between October 1821 (when the press had arrived from England) and July 1823 (when the types from Madras had arrived) that Bailey built the building to house the press between his bungalow and the Arbuthnot School. *Cheru Paithangalkka Upakaratham Emelishil Ninna Paribhashappeduthiya Kathakal* (stories translated from English for Children), is the work available as the first work printed at Kottayam. On it is marked 'Printed at Kottayam' and not 'printed at Kottayam College'. It must have taken at least six months to print the '200 pages book in the 21x13 (centimetre) size' considering the slow speed of the press and its old technology. Taking all these into consideration, the conclusion regarding the time of the construction of the building to house the press, becomes more or less confirmed. So, the statements like 'Printing started in the College itself' and 'Bailey built a building in 1820 to house the press' etc, lose their veracity.

Ineffectual Madras Types

The long-awaited Malayalam types from Madras proved to be disappointing. "Unfortunately the Madras Fort St George fonts were deficient in many respects. They were lacking in two other counts too—the shape of the letters and in their numbers. There were defects also, in their casting. In short, they were almost useless" ('CMS Proceedings' 1824:151).

Driven by the still lingering indescribable thrill at receiving the press, by the intense desire to see Malayalam printed and by the enthusiasm and eagerness to print and make available to the people, copies of at least a few of the translations that had been made ready quite a long while ago, Bailey began printing in the press as soon as the Madras types arrived.

The letter that Bailey wrote, gives details of the first printing work done with the Madras fonts:

“Mr. Bailey writes as follows:-

... 600 copies of a pastoral letter, addressed by the Metropolitan of the Syrian Church to his clergy, and 400 copies of the Sermon on the Mount, and some small works for the use of the students in the College, have been struck off; but a fresh fount of types is required to render the press effective; and it is feared that much time will elapse, from the delays incidental to all business of this nature in India, and from the uncertainty still attaching to the form of the characters, before a new and perfect fount can be supplied” (‘Missionary Register’, 1824 September: 407) (sic.).

From this letter, written by Bailey, certain significant facts emerge. One: the first to be printed was the Pastoral Letter, from the Syrian Metropolitan (600 copies), Sermon on the Mount (400 copies) and in addition, certain light reading materials for the college students. Of these, copies of the pastoral letter or of the Sermon on the Mount are not available now. Also, no specifics are given about the materials printed for use in the college. Though there are references as to the lesser works, copied on palm leaves and on paper, made ready for printing when the press would start functioning, titles of the works are not made evident.

Two: If the press were to function efficiently, new fonts were a must. Three: The new fonts, Bailey feared, would only be made available, after much further delay. In India, delay is natural in such matters. Above all, uncertainty regarding the form of the letter still prevailed. Madras Fonts did not make Bailey happy, on the contrary, they upset him. He was afraid there would be much delay before the Malayalam fonts would be made available and the stalemate regarding the shape and form of the Malayalam letters would prolong indefinitely. Bailey outlived the two trepidations by making the Malayalam fonts himself. Anyway, Bailey went on printing with the available but defective types and continued printing with them, till his own types could put to use while never relaxing his efforts to get a set of flawless types from the Madras Corresponding Committee.

Opinions put forward by K.M.Govi regarding the Madras Types, need to be examined. “Was any article printed using these types? It is not possible to arrive at a definite conclusion. The press reached Kottayam in 1821. The types from Madras arrived the next

year. It is difficult to take in, that the long awaited press that finally arrived in 1821 and the types that arrived the next year lay idle till 1824. For, in the code of the Missionaries, procrastination and indolence do not feature. At least, a few tracts would have been printed. As per the entries in the 'CMS Proceedings' of 1823-24, the following two could have been printed before 1824.

1. The Pastoral Letter from the Metropolitan (600 copies)
2. The Sermon on the Mount from the Bible (600 copies)

That these books were printed with the types from Madras, can be inferred from the CMS Proceedings. It is possible to conclude doubtlessly and not merely infer, that certain articles were printed using the Madras Fonts. But, labelling these 'books' and claiming that 600 copies of the Sermon on the Mount had been printed are not correct. Till Bailey made his own types for use in the press, the printing was done with the Madras Fonts, in the CMS press.

Though rather brief, an article in the *Kerala Society Papers*–Series 4–throws light in the history of Malayalam Typography. In it, along with the articles 'Rev Benjamin Bailey and the Kottayam CMS Press' written by John Chandy, opposite to page 215, a few reproductions of printed materials and pictures are given on a separate page. The printed evidences there on, are under reference here. He certifies that, of these printed evidences, the first, is the specimen from the *Courier Bible* or *Ramban Bible* and the second is the specimen of the material, printed using the Malayalam types given to Benjamin Bailey's press by the Madras Government, while the third is the specimen of the *New Testament* printed in Malayalam, with the types Bailey had made.

That the first of the printed evidences referred to in the *Kerala Society Papers* is from the *Courier Bible* is true and it shows the verses 8 and 9 of Marks Gospel.

Similarly the third specimen is from the Malayalam *New Testament* printed in 1829 using the Malayalam Types made by Bailey. The verses 7 to 12 of chapter 12 of St. Mathew's Gospel, "Ask and you will be given...", is shown.

The second among the specimen in the *Kerala Society Papers* is the model of the types given to Bailey by the Madras Government. These are what are referred to as the

‘defective fonts’ from Fort St George College. Only a small portion of it has been shown as the specimen. This specimen, particularly its types, subjected to computer analyses, scrutiny and comparison with the different variety of fonts yielded the following findings:

The Biblical portions (Bailey’s Bible) printed in the second sample, is from St Mathew’s Gospel: chapter 5, verses 1-4.

The size of the above sample was reduced when its printing-block was made and its surface disfigured by the printing ink. Yet, it is possible to distinguish a few words and identify quite a few types. A comparison of the font used here and the once used for printing *Cheru Paithangalkka Upakarartham Emclisil Ninna Paribhashappaduthia Kathakal* will confirm this. The sub-scripts (0) /ie/, (S) /e/ of the phonemes ‘i’ (C) and ‘e’ (F) and letters such as A (a), f (la), h (wa), _ (ba), k (sa), · (nma) can be easily identified.

As made clear earlier, the *Cheru Paithangalkka Upakarartham Emclisil Ninna Paribhashappaduthia Kathakal* ‘was printed with the defective Malayalam types supplied by the Madras Fort St George College. Thus the observations by K.M. Govi such as “... it has to be assumed that the types used for printing *Cheru Paithangalkka Upakarartham Emclisil Ninna Paribhashappaduthia Kathakal* were made by Bailey and “... in the light of these evidences, it can be stated without doubt that the types Bailey used in 1824 were made by himself” cannot be accepted. K.M. Govi puts forward two ‘evidences’ to support his observation. One: “Bailey was engrossed in type-making before 1824”. Two: “The Resident was sent the material printed with types made by Bailey”. Both these statements are incapable of proving that the fonts used to print *Cheru Paithangalkka Upakarartham Emclisil Ninna Paribhashappaduthia Kathakal* were not the Madras fonts or that they were made by Bailey. And, the first of the two statements is incorrect, objectively regarded.

Above the verses quoted in the second specimen, two lines, made indistinct by printing ink, are seen. The part shown in the specimen is not the first page of printed evidence but a page continuing from it. If so, the assumption that after printing the Sermon on the Mount with the defective fonts from Madras, Bailey printed the Gospel According to St Mathew entirely in the form of folios or light books, seems logical. The remark that a few light works had been printed using the Madras Fonts and Bailey’s statement made before or in 1824 “The Gospel of St Mathew is to be distributed as soon as the pages have been bound

together and given a book-cover or jacket” (‘CMS Proceedings’, 1825: 131) substantiate this.

The designing and making of Malayalam Types

The defective types from Madras Fort St George College, were not acceptable to Benjamin Bailey. The St George types were different from the *Courier Bible* types and defective in their design and form. Despite this, Bailey started printing with these. Along with this, he began his attempts to make better Malayalam fonts with the help of the Madras Corresponding Committee. As a part of this, he requested the Committee to send a type-maker to Kottayam. But the committee, after a lot of discussions and deliberations, turned down the request.

Bailey felt that the *Bible* had to be printed in its entirety and if that were not possible, at least in parts. To use the printing press efficiently to accomplish this, a new set of Malayalam fonts were imperative. And, the attitude of the Madras Corresponding Committee was not exactly helpful. Bailey found himself confused and perplexed by the situation he was in. Then he decided to break the ground himself. But, that was not easy. Yet, with the determination of a trailblazer, he faced and overcame the obstacles, against overwhelming odds. Three vital records there are, that speak of the history of Bailey’s ‘Type Fonting’ efforts: a detailed memorandum submitted to the Madras Corresponding Committee by its Secretary, regarding Bailey’s efforts; the extracts from the book by Col Welsh who visited Kottayam and the third, a detailed report of Marmaduke Thompson who visited Kottayam. The third record has been quoted partly in the books by W.S. Hunt and P.Chريان. The later researchers were in the dark regarding the other two records. The memorandum presented to the Madras Corresponding Committee that met on 7 January, 1824, is given below in its entirety. Certain words are unreadable, the minutes book being very, very old. Words and phrases that are illegible or vague are given in brackets and those words absolutely undecipherable, are indicated with a line (-)

“Meeting the 7th January–24

Memorandum by the Secretary

Mr. Bailey perseveres in his reply that a type founder should be sent to Cotym to prepare a fount of Malayalim types.

This request was first made in a consequence of the defective state of the fount executed at the College & sent to Cotym. The faults found were that the Blocks were too poor in number & (having) unequal lengths-that *some* characters were (fitt)ing & *others* quite incorrectly formed:-

When the letter containing these (inadversions) came before the committee, information was at the same time given them that as soon as the Malialam types for the college were finished the College Board had sent specimens of them to number of gentleman (?) on the Malabar Coast where, who were known or believed to be qualified to appreciate their merits that several reports in consequent received in which objections were made to the types-some of which were admitted at the College to require alterations-& that the whole subject was then before the College Board. Under these circumstances the committee resolved to suspend sending a type founder to Cotym, on the ground that, with the extensive assistance which the College Board could command more perfect fount of Malayalim (sic.) types was likely to be produced there than elsewhere. In the meantime a specimen of the College type was sent to Cotym & the Missionaries requested to examine it carefully & submit the alteration which they thought should be made- This was dated in July last & no notice was taken of it till in the present letter from Mr. Bailey. It is to be regretted that the committee were not informed that Mr. Bailey himself was among the Gentlemen to whom the circular reference of the College was made; & that he submitted in reply the most elaborate of any, unless it be that from the Revd. Mr. Spring. This will explain a remark in his present letter & the want of an earlier reply.

As the application for a type founder at Cotym has now again come before the Committee, the Secretary thought that it might be of use for them to be informed exactly of the present state of the business at the college. It has accordingly obtained the perusal of all the answers to the circular reference, which it appears was sent to the Gentlemen named in the margin: of whom Messrs. Bailey, Spring, Lewin, Brown & Vaughan only have yet submitted answers.

There are 349 characters in Malialam. Mr. Bailey has proposed alterations in 89 – about 30 of these are confirmed by Mr. Lewin or Mr Spring. 24 which Mr Bailey has not

objected to,are objected to Mr Lewin or Mr Spring. In a few of these there is a material difference in the figure proposed & the remarks are directly contrary to another: In the majority the fault found appears to be rather on the score of elegance than intelligibility- Mr. Brown submits a complete alphabet leaving the comparison to the college & Mr Vaughan alludes to specimen which he intends to send, but which the secretary has not seen. In neither case could the Secretary make any use of the answers, as he doesn't understand the language.

Mr. (Dent) (sic.) the Malayalim (sic.) translator, who has the management of the business, under the College Boards, expresses himself in a note to the Secretary last week as follows:-

'The different Gentleman who have made (objections) have with one or two exceptions been liberal enough in (Finding) fault the none of them have placed within our reach (the) means of rectifying the defect of which they complain; (-) the specimens they send are worse in many respects (than our) own- I have been in correspondence with Mr (Naidon) (-) Malabar and (thro) ? him with Col Newel in Travancore with a view to supply this defect and I have got (soon) very beautiful specimens which I shall circulate to the Board as soon I have examined them and it (was) then be for there for to determine either a new fount to be cast or not'.

This is the present state of the business in the College.

The first work in Malialam which will be printed at the college press is an essay on the 3 sects of Hindoos composed by the Diwan of the Rajah of Cochin-of which, when printed copies are to be sent to his Highness. From what is stated in the foregoing memorandum it appears to the committee (evident) the proper form of the Malialam letter is a matter of some uncertainty & difficulty& that as the Regulations of the Government& the Diwans Essay will be printed with the types now forming at the College, they are (seen) to go a great way in fixing the Malialam.

Added to this the committee can have no doubt that with the pains taken & extensive assistance availed of by the College the forms of the letters above fixed by them are far more likely to be good & universally intelligible & acceptable than those made by Mr. Bailey alone; & on these accounts appears to them, that even if a type founder were (?) sent to Cotym as Mr. Bailey desires, it would be proper to him to the form of the letters adopted by

the College—But under this restriction, to send a type founder to Cotym would be, only to leave the same work executed at a much greater expense there, instead of at a much smaller at Madras—as both the founder his tools & materials/ with the exception of the metal of the present useless fount, which might be returned to Madras for use at a small expense by sea/ must go from Madras; the former, most probably, by land, & at much higher wages & those for a much longer time than if he worked here— It appears to the committee further that the some delay may be incurred by waiting for the decision of the College Board, it is not likely to be greater than would result from the difficulty of engaging a type founder to go to Travancore & from his journey thither: & that, even if it were, the object of obtaining a substantially better font of types—of aiding to establish a uniform typography in a language which is printing is nearly new— & of avoiding to give circulations & permanency to incorrect form of letters—are well worth it.

Resolved accordingly to wait till the College Board have finally determined upon the form of the printed alphabet: than to apply for an exact copy of the characters from which their new type are to be cut, & to have a fount cast from them at the Mission House at Madras and sent to Travancore.

Copy of this resolution to be furnished to the Missionaries at Cotym”

The second evidence is from a book by a visitor named Col James Welsh, a military officer. Col Welsh who arrived in Kottayam on 6 December, 1824, speaks thus of Bailey’s endeavours:

“Mr. Bailey had the management of the Malayalam or Native printing and the types were actually made in his own house. The language being the Native, is, of course, principally required for the great body of the Syrians; and I not only saw the whole process of casting, cleaning, and fitting the types, performed by a silversmith, armourer and carpenter, but on proceeding to the printing office, had several copies of the Lord’s prayer struck off for me and placed in my journal”.

Another important record is the report that Marmaduke Thompson sent to his Mother Committee after having visited Kottayam. It is mentioned in the report that Thompson visited Kottayam ‘in the winter of 1824’. Although the exact time of the visit is not known, it can be inferred that the visit was during September– November months, from the hint about

the writer. That is, just before the visit of Col Welsh. Thompson mentioned his visit to Kottayam in the report he sent to the Home Committee, quite sometime after his return to Madras. So, in the Annual Report, a mention of what he saw in person as well as the details he could gather through correspondences, made after his visit, are included. The report in the 'CMS Proceedings' follow-

“The printing office appears to be well and substantially built. It consists of two large rooms: one of these is sufficient for the easy working of four presses, and for all the necessary types and apparatus; and the other, which is of equal size, receives all the paper and other stores, and furnishes conveniences for book binding. The whole is enclosed with a rather deep verandah; one end of which is, at present, formed into a dwelling for the Native Printer, and the other end may be quite, sufficient for the Type foundry. The situation is elevated and dry.

Mr. Bailey's proceedings in this department ought to be put on record. How very faulty the Malayalam Types were, the committee have long known. Hopeless of anything better, at least for a long time to come, Mr. Bailey, without ever having seen a Type Foundry or its apparatus of any kind, eager to get some portion of the Scriptures and some other works respectably printed as soon as possible, set himself to endeavour to form his own types, with such aid as he could find from books alone and from common workmen. He had recourse chiefly to the *Encyclopedia Britannica*; and with the instructions which he derived from this and another smaller work or two; a common carpenter and two silversmiths, it is pleasant to report, that he succeeded so completely, that, some months ago, he sent a specimen of his types, in print, to the Resident, whose reply to Mr. Bailey's letter sent with them, I have seen in the following terms:

‘Accept of my best thanks, for the specimen of the new types, which you have been so kind to send me. The print is extremely beautiful and correct and reflects much credit on your zeal and industry’.

The sight of this machinery and of the means, by which he has accomplished all, was very gratifying to me. He counted upon being able to prepare a sufficiency of types for the printing of the whole Scriptures, in little more than a quarter of a year.

Besides the correctness and beauty of his types, noticed by Col Newall he has reduced than in size that we can now print at one half of the cost of the old types. We can print in Malayalam in Cotym, at the price of Tamil printing in Madras.

I have to conclude my Report with the welcome intelligence of a permanent reduction in the expense of printing, involving another little interesting circumstance in connexion with Mr Bailey. The printer sent from Madras we are obliged to dismiss. In the meantime, a youth, adopted some years ago by Mr Bailey as a destitute orphan child, had acquired the art of printing sufficiently to succeed as Head Printer, to which office we appointed him on a salary of seven rupees per month. This little incident adds singularly to the completeness of Mr Bailey's work in the Edition of the Malayalam Scriptures, to issue from our press, we trust, in a short time. The translation is entirely his own, the types formed by himself from the very mould and the printing to be executed by an orphan boy, reared up by his charity.

Along with the above records, it is useful to go through a report on that Bailey had been sent.

'Mr Bailey, who conducts the PRESS, has been much occupied, during the last year in the preparation of Malayalam Types and he has now a sufficient number ready to enable him to commence printing. Nearly a thousand punches had been cut. And considerably more than another thousand would be requisite in order to a complete fount. He writes on this subject—It cannot, of course, be expected that these types will be quite so correct and beautiful as we wish to have them; as it is the first attempt to cut and cast types here, and particularly as the persons employed in cutting them had no previous experience in the art. In order to give the new types a trial we propose striking off a few copies of a small tract. The first regular work that will be printed with them will, I hope, be the *New Testament*.

'That more means are required for the greater efficiency of the Press, will be seen from Mr Bailey's remarks.

Mr Thompson kindly promised to endeavour to get as experienced printer sent out from England and I hope he will be able to succeed, as such a person would be a most valuable acquisition to this Mission. We require another Press or two, as we shall have abundance of work for them when we begin to print the Scriptures. Mr Bailey's time has been so much occupied with the preparation of the Malayalam Types, that he has been unable

to pay the same attention as before to the translation of the Scriptures, as appears from his remarks with reference to this subject:-

The revision of the Malayalam Translation of the Scriptures has not occupied so much of my time during the past twelve months as before...

In 1824, Bailey was engaged in two other important activities connected with printing.

One: The printing of Sermon on the Mount, Pastoral letter, The Gospel According to St Mathew and *Cheru Pathangalkku Upakarartham Paribhashappeduthia Kathakal* using the specimen types received from Madras.

Two: The making of a set of new Malayalam Fonts, rectifying the deficiencies of the defective types from Madras. Before the arrival of the press and the Madras Font, though kept very busy by many activities and with the heavy responsibility of running the Mission Centre on his shoulders, Bailey spent about four or five hours a day translating the *Bible*. But when he turned to making the Malayalam fonts, he even postponed the translation work. It was after a long struggle and hard work for over a year that Bailey was able to design new Malayalam types, laying the firm foundation of Malayalam Typography.

The following are what can be inferred from the above information.

a) Madras Fort St George College sent the specimens of the Malayalam types made there, to many philologists in Kerala, of whom Benjamin Bailey was one. He was one of the two who sent quite a long letter each, to Fort St George College, expressing their difference of opinion regarding the types they had received. (The other was Mr. F. Spring.) Fort St. George College had prepared 349 types. Bailey pointed out that 89 of them needed to be changed. The depth of Bailey's knowledge in this field is evident from this. Based on these letters of dissension, the Madras Fort College approved the facts regarding the changes to be made in the types and this was placed before the College Board for their consideration.

b) In 1824, Madras Fort College sent specimen fonts to Kottayam asking for suggestions for effecting changes, if needed, after a careful study of the types. But, the Kottayam Missionaries never responded.

c) Bailey thought of making a perfect, flawless series of fonts in Kottayam itself and wrote to the corresponding committee to send a type-founder to Kottayam for this purpose.

d) Because no decision was taken by the Fort College regarding the changes to be made in the Malayalam types and because it was felt that the Madras Fort St George College could make better types more efficiently than elsewhere, with the elaborate aids available then in type founding within easy access, the committee decided not to send any type founder to Kottayam.

e) Bailey submitted to the Corresponding Committee another request for a type founder, considering the months slipping by, without any favourable steps being taken by the committee. He had, in his request, appealed to the Committee for a reply at their earliest. That Bailey had decided to make types in Kottayam without delay, irrespective of the Committee's decision, is obvious from his request for an early reply from the committee, incurring no delay.

f) When the request for a type founder came before the committee again, the Secretary prepared a memorandum to be submitted to the committee to make them aware of the exact circumstances prevailing in the Fort St George College, regarding type-making. In the memorandum submitted by the Secretary in the meeting of the Corresponding Committee on 7 January, 1824, details from a letter to the secretary, sent the previous week by the Malayalam Translation, put in charge of Malayalam Type founding by the College Board, were included.

g) Based on the details in the letter from the Malayalam translator mentioned earlier, the Madras Corresponding Committee took the following decisions: Since the form and shape of Malayalam letters, decided upon by the Fort St George College with all the elaborate facilities and aids at its disposal, would be better than those of the Malayalam letters made by Bailey all by himself, in their acceptability and comprehensibility. Even if a type founder were to be sent to Kottayam, he would have to mould types there, after the design made by the Fort St George College. Under these conditions, types could be made in Madras, at much less expense than in Kottayam, where the type founder would have to reach with all the materials needed like the type founding equipment and the metal needed, entailing greater

expense. Considering these, the Committee decided to wait for the decision of the College Board, even if the Board's decision regarding whether it should design and make a new series of Malayalam fonts or to continue making the old specimen types. After this, types would be cast in the Madras Mission House after the design decided upon by the Board and then sent to Kottayam. The Corresponding Committee instructed that a copy of this decision be sent to the Missionaries at Kottayam.

h) On knowing that the Corresponding Committee's decision taken on 7 Jan, 1824 was unfavourable, Bailey began his attempts to make types by himself without further delay. He had already formed an idea as to the design of the Malayalam types (see Para 'a')

i) Literally, a blend of art and adventure became evident in Bailey's endeavour from then on. He had to see to making the types appear elegant and to make them along typographic lines for making the matter printed using them, attractive. But he lacked the technology for moulding types—and also, experienced workers. It was at this juncture that Bailey turned adventurous and that made him attempt an extraordinary experiment that could be considered an ideal action considering the time and the circumstances. And that was, resorting to certain indigenous techniques to achieve his ends. He had no idea of the technology of moulding metal types and not even the faintest notion of metallurgy. The type from Madras could not be melted, for they were in use in printing. With the help of a blacksmith and a silversmith and using their knowhow and his own knowledge from reading, Bailey succeeded in making his Malayalam types. He chose silver for making the types. Since he knew nothing of the ways for making an alloy of lead, antimony and tin with the result that all his early types were of silver. But regrettably, his successors did not care to preserve at least a single one, for posterity.

j) Though there was ample space in the Press, Bailey did the casting of types at his residence for two reasons. One: Bailey's type-making was an unofficial activity and was contrary to the decision of the Corresponding Committee. Two: Bailey was sceptical as to the results of his efforts since his technology, as he knew, was in its nascent stage and as there was no assurance of a successful culmination to his efforts, he was very reluctant in attracting publicity.

k) The first stage of Bailey's Malayalam-type-making was already over, when Col James Welsh visited Kottayam in December, 1824. He had made about a thousand punches—letters chiselled in steel. Using these, he printed minor materials such as the Lord's Prayer. He sent a copy of it to his 'local guardian' Col Newall, the then Resident of Travancore. Probably, Bailey had thought that by winning the Resident's approval and recognition, he could stave off controversies and other related problems.

l) There are four important techniques in Printing, other than type-making, such as printing-press making, type-setting, printing and binding. Bailey mastered the last three and instructed his helpers in them before making types. The last one-, printing-press-making, Bailey did later.

m) After printing the minor works like the Lord's Prayer, Bailey printed a few copies of a tract using his newly made types, as a trial. Printing of the *New Testament* was the major job Bailey undertook, using the new metal types. Thus the first to be printed and published after the types were made ready was St Mathew's Gospel and the Gospels came to be printed one after the other, later.

Bailey-Type and Typography.

There were three different kinds of indigenous scripts prevalent in Kerala, at the time when the missionaries arrived. They were Vettezhuthu, Kolezhuthu and Malayanma. Kolezhuthu and Malayanma were variants of Vettezhuthu and they were current in the Cochin– Malabar area and south Travancore, respectively. With the increasing influence of Sanskrit, the Arya Script or the Grandha script, gained popularity. Grandha script was used by Brahmins in South India for writing Sanskrit and Prakrutham. With the Arya Script gaining importance, Vettezhuthu slowly got side tracked, for it was incapable of expressing a good number of phonemes. The Grandha Script was used, as it could represent Sanskrit letters which could not be done by Vettezhuthu. With the growth of Manipravala, Literature (literary works written in a curious mix of Sanskrit and Malayalam) the Grandha Script gained acceptance and with Ezhuthaschan's masterpieces, it gained wider popularity. The missionaries, from the time of their arrival in Kerala, used Grandhaksharam script for writing and later, for printing. "The Canons of the Synods of Diampore of the 16th and 17th centuries, the Rules and Bye-laws of Ross, the Milan Papers and *the Thirukural* translations were in the Arya Script" (P.J. Thomas, 1989:348) *Samkshepavedartham Alphabetum*

Grandhonica Malabaricum and *Bombay Courier Bible (Ramban Bible)* were in Grandhaksharam Script that had a rather squarish finish. Grandha Lipi or the Arya Script, which was widespread throughout South India, had a long history of evolution. “The period of time up to the 9th century is regarded as the mid period of Grandha Lipi... from AD 1300 onwards, the script underwent more changes. This may be termed ‘the modern age of the Grandha Script’. The Script had a squarish form and also a roundish one. The squarish shape was given to the script by the Brahmins of Thanjavoor, while the roundish form was retained by the Jains of Arcot. The Script used in Kerala was mostly the squarish one.

The Casting of Malayalam types is more complex, compared to the English, Tamil and Sanskrit types since the Malayalam alphabet is constituted not by phonemes but by letters. All the speech sounds in Tamil and Sanskrit are found in Malayalam and hence the greater number of letters in Malayalam. The fact that the sub-scripts could not be separated from the scripts, made the problem more complex. “To print the Samkshepavedartham, it took 1128 types” (P.J. Thomas, 1989:350). This statement shows how complex the making of Malayalam types was. It is said that Bailey cut about a thousand punches in the early stages. Upper case letters, lower case letters, numbers, symbols—altogether about a hundred types are enough to print in English. Knowledgeable persons on the subject say that despite the reduction in number, in later times, of the Malayalam types, effected by the various improvements and the resulting changes that were made from time to time, Malayalam type-casting and type-corrections were still formidable propositions. About 600 types were needed to print all the different consonant compound letters and the symbols that stood for the various vowels, not counting another 200 types more for representing complex double letters. Casting types for all these letters, typesetting and running the hand over the square pockets in the racks holding all the various types, to pick the right one for composing, was indeed, a formidable, mind-boggling task. The reason that printing errors have come to stay with Malayalam Printing, is this” (A.D. Harisarma, 1967:149).

In the article ‘Malayalam Printing’ published in AD 1894, Kandathil Varghese Mappila had written about the exacting difficulties and problems in making Malayalam types. That being the case, the efforts and attempts that Bailey made in 1824, seven decades prior to 1894, are incredible, to say the least, for they are truly beyond words! It is interesting to note, that when the efforts made in the Quilon LMS Press to make Malayalam types failed, they appealed to Bailey for help (W. S. Hunt, 1968:134).

There were three different makes of metal types, before Bailey began to design and make Malayalam types. They were the *Samkshepavedartham* Type, *Bombay Courier Bible* Type and the Madras Fort St George Type. Of these, the first two were of the squarish kind and of the same series. “The courier types though slightly bigger, were not very different from the ones made in Rome”(K.M. Govi, 1998:98). The Madras Fort St George types were of a different series, made with changes in the Bombay Courier type. When both are subjected to a close scrutiny, the differences between the two varieties and also, the similarities, become clear. There are changes made in the structure and in the shape. The *Samkshepavedartham* types have their type phase narrower than the type body. So, the shoulder space of the types are more and in printing, it results in leaving gaps or space between the letters. But in the case of the Madras Fort St George types, the breadths of the type face and the type-body are almost the same. So, in printing, it leaves no space between letters. There are substantial differences between the Madras Fort St George types and *Samkshepavedartham* types in their shape. Fort St George types lacked the squarish shape which the *Samkshepavedartham* type had, but they haven't altogether left out the squarish shape, either. In the attempt to retain the resemblance between the script 'F' and its subscript 's', the subscript got bigger and a change of shape resulted. The forms of the subscripts of 'C' and 'Cu' (ു) and (ീ) were reformed in the Fort St George types. Though they were reformed, the subscripts were not cast independently. That is what K.M. Govi and others argue, but the facts are different. For, the minor changes made in the structure and shapes of types, create the illusion that the style of letters has changed in printing. One of the cardinal points of typography, is to standardize the size of the type in terms of typographic points. Attempts on these lines had been made in the *Samkshepavedartham* types, not in Madras Fort St George College types. That was the main defect in the Madras Fort types. The defects regarding the shape of types are secondary to this. Yet, Fort St George types do maintain an advancement as regards the shape of many letters. The vowels /e/ and /a:/ are examples. The types designed at the Fort St George College, appear better. Though Bailey accepted this shape later, the form he gave to the above vowels, was similar to that of the *Samkshepavedartham* types. Bailey did not accept the Fort St George College types at first, due to the defects in their making and structure, as already pointed out. What Bailey tried to correct in his types were also these defects. It is when he designed the Malayalam types, with his insight into the basics of typography, that the astute and sagacious typographer in Bailey is revealed. It is because of this, that, in spite of the growth and expansion of the printing

industry in Kerala, the types designed by Bailey did not need to be changed nor could they be replaced with better ones. And, there is another fact to be noted. The CMS Corresponding Committee had observed that the types made by the Madras Fort St George College, though defective, would survive Time, through printing. But the metal types Bailey made, came to be firmly established, through the extensive printing and publishing he had undertaken, in later years. It was also Bailey, who had supplied the types, needed for the many presses that came into being after the CMS Press. Whatever Malayalam types came to be made in later years, they were made after the model of Bailey's types, which had gained wide acceptance.

There were three defects in the Malayalam types made and supplied by the Madras Fort St George College.

a) The number of types were rather limited. 1128 types were made for the *Samkshepavedartham* and in their place, the Madras Fort St George College managed with 349. The expression 'defective in number' that appears in the statement 'Madras Fort St George College types were defective in number and form' seems to have been misunderstood by K.M. Govi as 'the difficulty resulting from too many types'. "Bailey did not like the shape and the large number of these types. He felt these types lacked elegance and appeal. He must have experienced practical difficulties and other related problems in printing with these" (K.M. Govi, 1998:113). By the end of 1824, finally, Bailey made ready thousand punches, for the initial stage of printing. This was not to reduce the number of letters, but to overcome the shortage of types for printing.

b) The length of the types, vertically, was not uniform and it varied from type to type with the result that the printed letters would be like the letters copied by a copyist, not in a straight line as they should be. This was because the types were cast without any idea of typography.

c) There were defects in the form of the types: Bailey had instructed that changes be made in 89 of the 349 types made at Madras Fort St George College. Of the changes suggested by Bailey, Mr Levin and Mr F. Spring upheld 30 suggestions. It is clear from this that the types had serious defects.

Bailey designed a new type font and made a new series of Malayalam types, correcting the flaws of the Madras Fort St George College Types.

By making the fonts for all the types required in Malayalam printing, Bailey overcame the first shortcoming.

Printing is considered an art and an adventure and the artistic element in printing is decided by the typographic design. “Around 1737, Simone Pirre Fornier, standardized the size of type through Typographic Points. It was done by dividing the type body equally with precision, on the basic units of ‘points’. This enables the comparison of the differences and similarities, in the measures of types of different sizes” (P.M. Viswanath, 1974:46).

Bailey conceived a typographic structure for Malayalam letters, which would give the vowels, consonants and compound letters, the same vertical length and a proportionate horizontal one. This could not have been from his knowledge of Simone Pierre Fornier’s Typographic points or following his method consciously. On the contrary, it could have been that he was merely following the structure of the English types used in printing. He fixed a ‘base line’ for Malayalam letters, as in the case of English letters and classified them as ‘ordinary’, ‘high’ and ‘low’ and fixed their position, correlated to the baseline. At the same time, he avoided the differentiations such as ‘main stroke’ and ‘substroke’, which English printing followed and marked all letters with a line of uniform thickness. Just as the decision to give Malayalam letters a perfectly rounded shape, this Bailean step also proved to be a boon that decided the singular nature of Malayalam letters.

Though Bailey went the way of the English letters in the matter of the structure of Malayalam letters, he took his own decision regarding the way Malayalam letters were to be imprinted. If the form of Malayalam letters were designed with thick and thin lines, it would have disfigured the resulting printed matter. When letters were given a typographic structure and types were made following this structure, the types came to be standardized. When letters, with the least ‘height’ or vertical length like Ra (d), Na (\) and Tha (X), were regarded as ‘ordinary’ letters and also as the standard for size and structure, it became possible to arrange letters, other than the ‘ordinary ones’, either above or below the level of the ‘ordinary’ letters. Along with that, it was possible to avoid the problem of letters not getting arranged perfectly along a straight line, because of the difference in the up and down or vertical lengths. In other words, Bailey gave a scientific typographic structure to Malayalam letters and thereby, he was able to make new metal types for Malayalam printing, avoiding the defects of the Madras Fort St George College types.

The third defect of the Fort St George College types was the defect in their shape. Most of the *Samkshepavedartham* Types were squarish in form and a few of them were shaped round, while the Fort St George ones were mostly rounded and the rest squarish in shape. This ‘neither there nor here’ phenomenon caused an inconsistency regarding their form. Moreover, some of them were deformed too, as exemplified by the subscript ‘S’ of the script ‘F’. The inner curl of ‘S’ in the Madras Fort St George College was shifted to the right and that naturally made it bigger. Bailey moved the curl to the left in his type and it appeared smaller and elegant. It is to be noted that the square shape of the types was not the reason for their deformity. Behind the deformity of the Madras Fort College types there were many such reasons, as given above.

“The first principle that a typographer should conform to, is legibility”. To Bailey too, legibility was paramount in designing types, Legibility demands a standard structure and form, free from defects and differences. A significant thing that Bailey did in this regard, was to give a perfectly rounded form to the square letters of the *Courier Bible* that got stuck half way in their attempt to assume the round shape of the types of the Madras Fort College. Along with that, he gave the misshapen letters a definite form, by making them also, perfectly round in shape. The comment of Prof. S Gupthan Nair: “There is doubt that the elegance of Malayalam letters is in their roundness” is significant (1986:108).

“It must be because of the grace of the script and the elegance in its printing that Malayalam has not moved away from Bailey’s design of Scripts”, so points out Dr Skaria Zachariah (P.J. Thomas, 1989: 356).

The expression “very elegant, round letters” refer to ‘legibility’ and nothing else. Bailey also gave importance to making them proportionate. A comparison of the letters ‘U’ and ‘k’ of the font of Fort St George College with those of the font that Bailey made, is convincing in this regard.

Mr Marmaduke Thompson, Secretary to the Corresponding Committee who gave a detailed report of the endeavours of Bailey records: “ Besides the correctness and beauty of his types, noticed by Col Newall, he has so reduced them in size that we can now print, at one half of the cost of old types” (‘CMS proceedings’, 1825:134).

Bailey, not only gave a roundness to the Malayalam types, freeing them of their deformities, he had also reduced the cost of printing by half, by casting types of letters made smaller; thereby making the printing industry efficient and popular. Bailey must have felt boundless joy and a tremendous amount of satisfaction on reading, when he saw it printed, the above letter from Marmaduke Thompson to the CMS Corresponding Committee who had once refused to send a typographer to Kottayam despite repeated requests and who had resolved to let the fate of Malayalam Printing to be decided in Madras. What Bailey achieved, without even once seeing a foundry, let alone a gadget or an equipment or whatever, for printing, was something unique, something legendary, something of historic dimensions.

Dr Skaria Zachariah and Mr K. M. Govi have made profound studies regarding the history of printing and who have written remarkable books on it, have given the opinion that Bailey had made efforts to reduce the number of Malayalam types. Dr Skaria Zachariah on this topic says: “More important than giving a change of shape, was the reduction in the number of types brought about by Bailey, through freeing the subscripts of the vowel symbols (ീ) and (ു) from their respective scripts so that the number of types dropped to a mere 500” (P.J. Thomas, 1989:356).

“.....because he made separate types for the subscripts (ീ) and (ു) of vowels such as ‘C’ and ‘Cu’, the number of types came down to 500” (K.M. Govi, 1988:114). But a close scrutiny of typography proves these observations incorrect. In the *Samkshepavedartham* and *Courier Bible*, the vowel subscript for ‘ ീ ’ without a curl in its bend and subscript for ‘ു’ with a curl in its bend denoting the vowels ‘i’ (short) and ‘/i:/’ (long) were placed over their respective consonant script (In the Madras Fort College types the subscripts were, placed as ascending letters by the right side of the respective consonants to effect their pronunciation. In his typographic design, these were retained as ascending or raised and their top parts or the ‘heads’ were made smaller and made uniform in size. (In the Madras Fort College Types this head portion was given different shapes). The above mentioned scholars, misunderstanding the changes, thought that Bailey had made the subscripts independent by making them separate types. If separate types are to be made, the type must have its own type body. In types with separate type bodies (except letters without kern), the typefaces do not project beyond the type body. But in the Madras Fort St George College types, and in Bailey’s types the subscripts ‘ ീ ’ and ‘ു’ project beyond the shoulder of the type

into its type body. From this, it is obvious that the letter or the main script and its subscript have been moulded together. In other words, the subscript ‘n’ and ‘o’ lack independent bodies. Saying that they were cast as kern letters for the sake of an argument, does not sound true. The kern of the kern-letters does not pass the shoulder of the letter. If it does, then the difficulty for the types to remain close to each other and the chances for the types to break will be more. In the Fort St George College types and the Bailey types, the head portions of the subscripts of ‘n’ and ‘o’ project beyond the shoulders of their respective scripts. Moreover, these subscripts, which are used extensively, are not cast as letters with kern. In most types to which these subscripts are placed with, the head of the subscripts touch the main scripts. This indicates that these types were made after having been punch-cut together and the fonts prepared. Comparing the independently cast subscripts of ‘a:’ and ‘e’ with the subscripts ‘s’ and ‘m’ will make the difference clear. In short, the subscripts ‘n’ and ‘o’ of scripts ‘C’ and ‘Cu’ are not independent types. If they were, indeed, Bailey would not have had to cut a thousand punches, as the first stage.

CHAPTER 3

Malayalam Book Publishing and the first Malayalam Book Published in Kerala

With the establishment of the first Malayalam press in Kerala by Benjamin Bailey, the road was open for the publication of Malayalam books. Book-publishing was his intention in establishing the press—publishing the Malayalam *Bible*. The printing done in Kerala before the advent of Bailey, as is known now, was in Tamil. The first Book Published in Kerala was *Doctrina Christum Enlingua Malabar Tamul* (1578) This was printed at Kollam, in Tamil. The second book was also a *Doctrina Christa* printed at Kochi in 1579 at the Mother of God Press, in Tamil. The third book *Confessionario* was also in Tamil. Another book, believed by the historians to have been printed at Kochi is *Flos Sanctorum* by Fr Henricus. “Since the frontispiece and the first few pages of the only copy of the book, left in Vatican, are missing, it is not possible to say with authority where it was printed. However, Graham Shaw in his *South Asia Bibliography* puts the book as printed at Kochi” (K.M. Govi, 1998: 41).

Malayalam Book Publishing: Overseas

Attempts had been made outside Kerala to print and publish Malayalam books, before Benjamin Bailey began printing in Kerala. The book that is often regarded as the first one printed abroad is the *Hortus Malabaricus* (Horte Malabarici). Published between 1678 and 1693 in 12 Volumes of foolscap size, *Hortus Malabaricus* describes the plants and trees of Kerala with the help of about 8000 pictures. The botanical names are given in Arabic, Latin, Sanskrit and Malayalam. Two reports by Itty Achuthan who

assisted the author in writing the *Hortus Malabaricus* are in the book. Of these, one is in the 'Vattezhu script' and the other is in the Malayalam script (K.M .Govi, 1998:88). In this Latin book there are two statements in Malayalam: One by Itty Achuthan and the other by the interpreter of the Dutch company, Emmanuel Carnairov and there are also a few names of plants in Malayalam. Despite all these entries in Malayalam, the book has no place in the history of Malayalam Book Publishing.

Another book, in the printing of which, Malayalam types were used only partially, in the *Alphabetum Grandanico Malabaricum sive Samscrudonium*. This book by Clement Piyanioos is in Latin.

In the light of the available data *Samkshepavedartham* emerges as the first book in the history of Malayalam Book Publishing. This was written by the Italian padre Clement Piyanioos residing at the Varapuzha Carmelite Monastery and printed and published in 1772 in the multilingual press in Rome. A facsimile of the transliterated copy of the book was jointly published by DC Books and Carmel Publishing Centre Trivanrum, along with its translation and interpretation the full name of the book is *Compendiosa Legis Explanatio Omnibus Christianis Scitu Necessaria*, the book is commonly known as *Cumbenti*, an abbreviation of the first word in its Latin name.

The contents of *Samkshepavedartham* is given at the end of the book. "A short note of the contents of this book" is given in pages 269-276. "The divisions of the contents are made as groups, lessons and cantos. The book is in the form of a dialogue between a teacher and his student. The topics discussed touch the Cardinal principles and faith of Christianity and spirituality. The mystery of creation, life after death, the mystery of the Trinity and incarnation, mark of the cross, the Lord's Prayer, doctrines of Christianity, the seven sacraments, purity and sinfulness, vespers etc. are explained by the author in their totality in a very easy-to-understand manner". (Chummar Choondal, 1980: 13)

The printing of *Samkshepavedartham* is excellent. In the book 21cms long and 14cms wide, with forums each with 16 pages, there are 276 pages. It is rather interesting to note that books published today are usually in demy 1/8 which was the same for the *Samkshepavedartham*. The title page is the first page. The book's title is

printed in Latin and Malayalam, that the book's language is Malayalam, is printed in Latin. The year of publishing is given in Malayalam and Roman figures. The place of publication is given in Latin and Malayalam. That the publication has official approval, is given in Latin and Malayalam. These are on the title page. In addition, there is also a beautiful picture printed on it. The next page—'half title page', in modern terms—has only the legend *Samkshepavedartham* on it. The text begins on the first page and on this, before the text, are the Sanskrit words 'Sarveshwaraye Nama', a prayer to God. Thus, three languages, Malayalam, Latin and Sanskrit, appear in this book.

From then on, in one line each is put, one below the other:

Samkshepavedartham, 'first lesson', 'knowledge of God and of our ends' as subtitles.

Then follows the discourse between the teacher and the student and at the end is given an errata.

The Second book in the history of Malayalam publication is *Centum Adagia Malabarica* (100 proverbs). This was printed in Rome in 1791. "In this, is given 100 proverbs with Latin translation and all these are the popular usages, idioms and expressions among the Hindus and Christians, says the padre" (P. J. Thomas, 1989:128). First, the Malayalam adage is given and below that its translation in Latin—it is in this order that the book is organized. Many contemporary maxims and old adages in the form of small poems are also included in the collection by the padre.

Malayalam Book Publishing: Attempts Outside Kerala

Though Malayalam printing, the harbinger of Malayalam publishing, had its origin in Amsterdam, because of the problems prevailing in block-printing, book-publishing could not thrive and establish itself. Rome was the seat of modern printing with movable types in those days and the multilingual press there became the cradle of Malayalam printing and publishing. Though only two Malayalam books were published from there, it proved to be a very significant event in Malayalam publishing. The next scene of book-publishing opened in Bombay, India.

The attempts made outside Kerala to publish Malayalam books, were at the Courier Press (Courier printing Office) in Bombay. The East India Company had presses in Calcutta and Madras but it did not have its own press in Bombay. So, the printing jobs for the company were done by the Courier press. “It was from this press that the daily ‘Bombay Courier’ was published. The courier press that collected Roman types for printing in English, grew into a multilingual press of those days. The press was able to take advantage of the expertise and know-how of Jiji Bhai Chapker, one of its employees. The first one to make Malayalam types in India was Chapter (K. M. Govi 1998:82). The Bombay Presidency Governor tookover Malabar which came under British rule, according to the treaty of Sree Ranga Pattanam of 1792, along with Mysore (Later, Malabar came under the Madras Presidency). Malayalam types were made in the Courier Press with the help of Jonathan Duncan, the Bombay Governor, to print the government regulations and notice of the Malabar area.

Robert Drummond’s *Grammar of the Malabar language* (1799) was the first book printed with the Malayalam types of Courier Press. The Malayalam types were used for printing such sentences as ‘It wasn’t beneficial to me’ and ‘the father earns bread for the children’ in Malayalam. This Malayalam Grammar book was printed in English for the benefit of the officers of the East India Company working in Malabar. Though this book has significant in the history of Malayalam printing, it cannot be assigned much of position in the history of Malayalam Publishing.

It was in 1811 that the first book in Malayalam was printed at the Bombay Courier Press and that book was the *Bible*, a compilation of the four Gospels. This was the third book in the history of Malayalam printing. The translation of the four Gospels into Malayalam with the help of the Malankara Metropolitan Mar Dionesius I was the result of the persuasive efforts of Claudius Buchanan who visited Kerala in 1806 and in 1808. Kayamkulam Philipose Ramban, the scholarly priest of the Syrian Church, translated the Syrian Bible that was widely used in Kerala. Buchanan took a handwritten copy to Bombay and had it printed at his own responsibility. This *Bible* translation is known by the names *Buchanan Bible* and *Ramban Bible*, because of their involvement in the translation and publishing of this invaluable work. This great book is also called the *Courier Bible*, having been printed at the Courier Press.

The *Ramban Bible* contains the Gospels according to Mathew, Mark, Luke and John, the title of the book is printed in English and in Malayalam:

“The New Testament of our lord Jesus Christ Translated into the Malayalam part I Containing the Four Gospels, Bombay printed at Courier Press 1811”.

This book has 564 pages sized 26x19. Though it belongs to the *Samkshepavedartham* model, the types used are slightly big, squarish ones. An errata is also given. In short, like the *Samkshepavedartham*, ‘the layout’ of the *Ramban Bible* can be said to be scientific .

Though the initial stage of Malayalam printing and publishing is historically quite significant, the output was rather on the ‘one or two’ counts, in fact it was more on the meagre and nominal side.

Initially, printing in Kerala was done in Tamil. And, the printing and publishing of books were, then, done outside Kerala. During the four decades, AD 1772 to AD 1811, only three books were published—*Samkshepavedartham*, *A Hundred Proverbs* and the *Ramban Bible*. Also, the copies of these books were limited .The books for ordinary reading were *Samkshepavedartham* and the *Ramban Bible*. Even these two could not have been of much use, for, most of the people were illiterate. Because of these reasons, neither the initial stage of publishing in Malayalam nor the first books, could make any difference in Kerala even on a lesser scale unlike the tremendous explosion of ideas and knowledge which printing and publishing had brought to the rest of the world at large.

When Benjamin Bailey established the CMS Press in Kottayam the hallowed moment in the history of printing and publishing in this part of the world was marked. The variety and the volume of the books and the printed materials, printed at CMS press by Benjamin Bailey, was amazing.

The copies, written by scribes, of the works, translated by missionaries, were distributed in advance in the churches and among the people.

Public reading of these were held in different parts of the land; education was similarly popularized widely through college, grammar school and the schools attached to

churches. Thus, reading and listening to reading, made the people to take an interest in reading books and periodicals published by Benjamin Bailey. When printed materials became available, the eagerness and interest to read them increased in the society. Thus quiet and unobtrusive efforts were made in the society to create in people the reading habit as a prelude to book publishing .

Benjamin Bailey and Book Publishing in Malayalam

For book publishing to thrive, in any language, a congenial technical and social condition is required. The technical condition is one where books are available for reading inexpensively. Printing, the mechanized form of the handicraft of copyists, made possible the mass production of materials for reading. The social condition congenial to book publishing is the keenness that people show in buying books to read. The missionaries had prepared the ground for book publishing, through providing formal education and through various casual educational activities. The observation of Dr. Robin Geoffrey in this regard is significant.

“ ... in the 1820s the missionaries introduced English Education. They made available printed books in Malayalam” (1979:43). Benjamin Bailey began to print and publish books when the time was ripe, with the social ambience and technical conditions, congenial.

The first printing press arrived on 18 October , 1821 from England. By 1824, Bailey cast his self-styled types. When one press proved to be insufficient, he made a new one in 1827. In 1828 he got down two more presses from Bombay. By 1828 Bailey’s ‘Press office’ was fully equipped. During the two following decades, he published an amazingly long line of books—religious and secular. A complete list of books, published during this time, is not available. The available details themselves are enough to give an idea of the magnitude of Bailey’s book publishing.

The book that Bailey published, with the utmost importance, is the Bible. He published the Biblical books separately the books of the *New Testament* as one single volume, and the books of the *Old Testament* in three separate volumes

An excerpt from a description by Mr. Pratt about his visit to Kottayam goes: “40,000 copies, wholly or in parts, have been put in circulation in this country” (‘Malayalam Mithram’, 11 January, 1905) regarding the *Bailey Bible*. Of these, many of the editions have had three thousand or four thousand copies each printed. “In 1826 the Gospel of St Luke’s press-copy was made ready. The next year, 5,000 copies were printed. In 1827 the same number of copies of the Acts of the Apostles were printed. Press-copies of the rest of the books of the *New Testament* were ready but since there was only one press in Kottayam, the printing of the *Bible* took a long time. (W. H. Dalton, 1854: 25). It was perhaps, owing to this delay and also the delay in getting the necessary machinery, in addition to the urgency in getting the rest of the *Bible* and the text books and other materials printed, that Bailey hazarded to think of making a press himself. Here is something note worthy: In 1811 only 500 copies of the *Ramban Bible* were printed while 5000 copies each of the Acts of the Apostles and St Luke’s Gospel were printed. In 1828 various portions of the Gospels and Epistles were printed. In 1829, the printing of 5000 copies of the *New Testament* books was completed. In 1837, the printing of the five books (Old Testament: First Part) began. When the printing of the first part was over, the printing of the second part commenced. In 1840, another 5000 copies of the Epistle to the Romans were printed. In 1841, 5000 copies of the *Old Testament* books and 5000 copies of the **Book** of Psalms were printed. Each of the three parts of the *Old Testament* were printed in 1839, ’40 and ’41 respectively. In 1843, 3000 copies of the Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles together, were printed using the smaller types and along with it 5000 copies of the same were published, composed with the old types. 2000 copies of the 16th edition of the proverbs were published. In 1849, 3000 copies each of the Book of Psalms and the Book of Proverbs were reprinted (W. H. Dalton, 1854:28).

“It is seen that in the Kottayam Press, not only the Bible, but also literary works in Sanskrit and Malayalam were printed. Mr Hawksworth has reported that in 1860, the Government of Travancore bought books worth Rs 600/- from the press. This shows that books, other than religious ones, were also printed here. It is not possible for the lovers of Malayalam to think of the press that has printed *Bailey’s Bible* and a Dictionary, Rev George Mathen’s *Grammar of Malayanma* and *Satyavadakhedam* Arch Deacon Koshy’s ‘*Pullelikunju*, without gratitude (P. J. Thomas, 1989:297).

In a note regarding the Kottayam Village Mission and the Church Mission Press which were under Bailey, Henry Baker (Sr) wrote in 1850 “ ... certain Sanskrit books, the history of the Bible by Watts Pilgrim’s Progress, Question and Answers and a few Smaller books, have had their printing done here (W.S. Hunt 1968:34). By ‘smaller books’ he meant tracts. A number of tracts were published from the CMS Press. Though some were meant to spread Christian principles, there were a good number of tracts meant to give moral instruction. These tracts played an important role in the people, especially in leading the youngsters and the Youth along the path of righteousness. Books were also made later by putting together the tracts. ‘The story of lambs’ that appear in the book *Cheru Paithangalkku Upakarartham Paribhashappeduthia Kathakal* is from the tract ‘Two Lambs’. *Cheru Paithangalkku Upakarartham Paribhashappeduthia Kathakal* is the first book in Malayalam Literature for children.

“It goes without saying that English Printing was also done in the CMS Press. Apart from Bailey’s two Dictionaries, certain reports of the Travancore Government and a few books on Travancore were also printed at the CMS Press. Hawksworth *Day down [?] in Travancore* (1860), *Notes [?] on Cochin* (1859) etc were some of the early titles”. *Some Historical Notices on Cochin on the Malabar Coast* is the full title. The compiler of the book is T. White House. *Outlines of the Evidences of Christianity* is a big book written by John Chapman. This book with 448 pages (xxv+424) was made for use in the ‘Syrian College’.

In the early days of printing, printing and publishing were not two different things. Both were done by the same person. The printer was also the publisher. The job of the printer is to give the manuscripts, the form of a book. The publisher is the entrepreneur who makes a product that passes from hand to hand, beginning with the author until it becomes a printed book and is ready to reach the readers. But in the early days, the printer’s jobs like type casting, composing, printing and binding and the publishers’ jobs like procuring the manuscript, copy-editing, distribution of books... all were done by the same person. Johan Guttenberg, William Caxton, and Benjamin Bailey were all printer-publishers. Caxton and Bailey had to be the writers too, in addition to being the printer and publisher.

In the early days, the situation of the pioneer who ventured into book publishing was more or less akin to that of the magician who makes something out of nothing. But the magician, at least, knew the do's and don'ts or rather, the 'ropes' of his business. The publisher, on the other hand, was all at sea in his predicament. There was no prose, no prose works, and no prose writers in fact, nothing to go on with. The print medium (all other media too) employs prose, all the world over, for communication of ideas and the dissemination of knowledge. But, in the Malayalam of those days used for special discourses, there was no developed prose. A refined prose for formal discourse was lacking in the Malayalam of those days. And, the apology for prose, occasionally used for formal discourse, found in Royal Decrees, in *Bhasha Kautaleeyam* by Kautilyan, 'aattaprakaaram', 'Kramadeepika', *Brahmanda Puranam*, *Dooda Vakyam* etc. were far removed from the language used by the common people and hence, was unfit for the exchange of ideas. Had there been a heritage of prose, rich in literature and competent in the exchange of ideas, before the advent of printing, some of the works mentioned above, could have been printed. The *Bible* could have been translated along the lines of *that* prose and a new literature for publicizing religion could have been created. Malayalam prose, under developed through disuse was side tracked by Poetry which became the only vehicle for literature in the land. In short, Malayalam prose was much forced to restrict itself to the confines of the spoken language. It remained impossible to create a world of written prose, as developed as the spoken Malayalam. In a place where the prose is incompetent to handle the exchange of ideas and enfeebled to bear literature, prose writings and writers can never be. For Benjamin Bailey who took up the mission of book publishing, certain things connected with publishing were more challenging and arduous than making types and printing-machines. And, they were the finding of books and the making of their press copies.

In the absence of original works, dependence on translations is the only choice open, for a publisher. Benjamin Bailey did just that. Translation was nothing new to the CMS missionaries. For, in the mission of the CMS, printing, translation of the Bible, educational activities, et al, were paramount. Bailey landed in Kerala with the fore-knowledge regarding translation he had picked up during his missionary training. The two things entrusted upon him on arrival by John Munro were the superintending of the College and the translation of the *Bible*. Munro, Bailey and the Madras corresponding

Committee thought of establishing a press in Kottayam when a part of the translation of the *Bible* was ready. There were other translation works, as important as that of the *Bible*, to be done. Books for use in the College and schools had to be translated. Also, the translation of the tracts had to be done along with this.

Translation remains an important means of communication in the cultural life of mankind as long as different languages and cultures exist. If language is the means of communication for people of the same speech-community, translation is the means of communication for people of different speech-communities. When translation is regarded as the means of communication between two communities different from each other in their language and culture, it ought to be seen in the wider perspective of being the index of everything cultural, of the give-and-take of everything and not merely from the narrow point of view of its being the means for the exchange of literary or scientific concepts. It is when translation is viewed from such a cultural point of view, not as a mere linguistic activity, that we begin to recognize the religious, political and social influence behind the ideas transmitted from one community to another.

Works with a touch of the classic and better cultural values are the ones usually translated. Translation is not merely the means to make available books in languages, wherein none are available. Through translation it also provides models for writing basic/fundamental books. There is nothing unusual in the early books in Malayalam being translations. In Malayalam poetry the first works were also translations. The very ancient classic works were the poetic translations of Hindu mythologies. The *Rama Charitham* of Chee Raman, The *Ramayana*, The *Maha Bharatha*, The *Bhagavad Geetha* by the Kannassas, The *Krishna Gadha* (the re-narration that Cherussery gave the *Bhagavatham* in the form of a story in verse form), The *Adyathma Ramayanam*, *Bhagavatham*, *Bharatham* by Ezhuthachan who gave a poetic language itself to Malayalam through translation, are examples. The *Adhyatma Ramayanam Kilippattu* and the *Malayalam Bible* belong to Malayalam and thus, to every Malayalee. So, there is no point in classifying books as basic works (Original Works) and translations, to evaluate them differently, in varying degrees of importance.

A separate section, headed by Benjamin Bailey, functioned in the College for translation alone. When steps were taken to establish the press, Bailey had to assume its responsibility too. Frequent references to Bailey's bearing the responsibility of the translation and the printing sections can be come across in the missionary records. To get hands who knew both the languages to help Bailey was not easy. So Bailey had to struggle hard, to learn Malayalam, as in doing the translations. It was only when he had attained enough proficiency and scholarship in Malayalam that his struggles ended. But, when printing started and Bailey turned his attention to type casting, translation and revised editing slowed down. Occassionally, Bailey got the help of certain people in doing the translation, especially in Bible-translation. Chathu Menon on a monthly pay at Rs.30- was one of them. There were copyists and helpers apart from Chathu Menon. Chathu Menon left the work in the press as translator, for a better pay elsewhere but came back to work again with Bailey when he failed to get what he had hoped for. Bailey got the help of Prof. Moses Isarphati, professor of Hebrew in the college, in translating the *Bible*, especially the *Old Testament*. He left when his services were no longer required at the college. Translation and revised editing were done by Bailey. He used to hold consultations with his fellow missionaries and local scholars regarding translation and accepted their suggestion and directives. After the publication of the *Bible*, Bailey was engaged in the translation, preparing press copies and proof reading of other works.

Bailey's translation section was comparable to the editorial department of a modern publishing house. The editorial department is known as the 'generator' of the publishing house. That is because the editorial department supplies the 'energy' for all other sections of the publishing house like, production and marketing. It is the editorial section that, somehow or other, makes available the manuscripts indispensable for the survival of the publishing house and makes them ready for printing. Bailey and his associates worked very hard in making printed books through translation. Bailey was publisher and author, rolled in one.

To a publisher, selling or distributing the books are equally important as finding the right books for printing and publishing. It should also be possible to publish books easily. In a society dominated by scribal culture, the interest to hear is more than the interest for reading. (Reading the sacred poetical works at temples and in the

residence of the nobility are examples). Those able to read would be less in number. The *Bible* being a voluminous book, to print and publish it as a whole was difficult, considering the technology available then. As a publisher, Bailey had to face quite a number of such difficulties and, he adopted certain remedies.

The various books in the *Bible* were published individually in the beginning and so were other works like Watt's *Book of Questions and Answers*. At a later stage, he published them all together as one. (Example: *New Testament*, 1829.) He made readers and the clergy read in public and in the churches respectively. He distributed the Biblical books free of cost with the help of the Bible society. These freebie books encouraged reading among the people and this continued till 1840, after which, a small token –price was levied to instill the feeling that books are not exactly cheap.

Bailey followed the style of making the first page the Title Page. Half- page, copy right page etc were not printed then. On the title page name of the book, the author's name or the original books name, name of the press (CMS Press or church mission press). Name of the place (Kottayam), the year of publication etc. But there was no order in showing the language of printing–English or Malayalam. In the *New Testament* printed in 1829, there are two title pages with the same contents—one in English and the other in Malayalam. In the dictionaries, the title page was in English. In Watt's *Book of Questions and Answers*, the title page was in Malayalam. Depending on their importance, the title pages were given a beautiful layout by printing then with types of different sizes and with varying point size.

The First work: *Cheru Paithangalkka Upakarartham Emclisil Ninna Paribhashappeduthia Kathakal*

In the year of Our Lord, 1824, the book printed at Kottayam is the *Cheru Paithangalkka Upakarartham Emclisil Ninna Paribhashappeduthia Kathakal*. “Until (George) Irumbayam wrote his essay on this book, the *New Testament* was regarded as the first Malayalam book printed in Kerala” (K.M. Govi 1988:109). In 1824 the only printing press in Kottayam was the Church Mission Press. There is evidence to show that printing had started in the Church Mission Press from 1828. Therefore that *Cheru Paithangalkka Upakarartham Emclisil Ninna Paribhashappeduthia Kathakal* was printed

at Kottayam Church Missionary Press is indisputable “As far as it could be made out, the first book printed in Malayalam and the first book in Malayalam literature for children, is this work” (George Irumbayan, 1981:115). All of the contents of this book *Cheru Paithangalkka Upakarartham Emclisil Ninna Paribhashappeduthia Kathakal* are translation from English, for children. In 1824, the book was published for children but not for all children at large but it was intended for use only by students of school and the college, established by the missionaries. There are hints in the book itself, regarding this. In the story ‘The History of Edward VI’, after concluding the story at the end of the fifth chapter, there is an appeal by the narrator. In that appeal, the narrator addresses the reader as ‘student’, one who studies is of course, a student, (“So student, do as you are told...”)

The Kottayam Missionary Trio made a division of labour for their convenience and according to this the responsibility of translation was Bailey’s. It was Bailey who did the translation works and supervised it. At the time when the translation of *Cheru Paithangalkka Upakarartham Emclisil Ninna Paribhashappeduthia Kathakal* was made, the missionaries in Kottayam-Henry Baker (Sr) Joseph Fenn—apart from examining the translation and giving their opinions, never interfered with the translation work in any way. Moreover, they had their own share of the heavy responsibilities and duties. So as in the case of other translations, made by Bailey, he himself did the translation, the proofreading, making of the press copy, printing and publishing of this work. ‘The story of Two Lambs’ that appears in the collection of stories, is one of the works mentioned in the missionary records as having been translated by Bailey in the early days. This story is long enough to be published as a small book by itself, This and the other stories in the collection, must have been published individually as tracts. It must be assumed that all the stories must have been printed and put together as a book, for use in schools and the college

The translator has, on two occasions, used the original words themselves for want of the exact corresponding words in the Malayalam translation. The translator was at a loss for words in the story of ‘Theophilos and Sophia’. Sentences on page 150 has the English words ‘paradise’ and ‘genesis’ in two places and the words are transliterated in Malayalam, obviously for want of equivalent Malayalam words. From

this, it is obvious that the translator has a better command of English and that it hints at the fact that the translator is not a Malayali, but an Englishman. From these details, it can be surmised that the translator of *Cheru Paithangalkka Upakarartham Emclisil Ninna Paribhashappeduthia Kathakal* is an English missionary, possibly, Bailey himself". This observation by G. Irumbayam sounds plausible (1981:51).

Cheru Paithangalkka Upakarartham Emclisil Ninna Paribhashappeduthia Kathakal is a 21x 14 cm size book with 197 pages. On the title pages are given the name of the book, place of printing, the year of printing and the next page, the contents. The order of the stories is given in Malayalam figures, as are the page numbers. Where each story begins, the titles of the stories are given in Malayalam letters. There are eight stories in this collection –One : the story of a four year old English girl named Marjorie; Two: the story of a wise child; Three: story of lambs; Four: Fortitude; Five: Story of George and his coin; Six: History of King Edward VI; Seven: A matter of courage and Eight: Story of Theophilus and Sophia. Of these, though the title of the second story is ‘Story of a wise child’ the title given for the story inside the book is ‘wise child’. Similarly there is a slight change in the title of the third story. In the list of contents the title of the story is ‘story of lambs’, but inside the book where the story begins, the title is ‘Story of Two Lambs’. The title of the fourth, ends in the list of contents, as ‘Katha’ while inside the book it is given as ‘Katha ’ without long vowel /a:/ .

Each story is long drawn out. In the story of Marjorie, there are three sections . The story of Edward VI has five chapters. There are pure narratives (story of Marjorie, story of a wise girl), moral stories (Fortitude and a Matter of Courage) and histories (Edward VI, Theophilus Sophia) among the stories. All are stories with morals. In the text books of the early days, such an admixture is often come across. In the text books published by Keralavarma Valiyakoyithampuran as president of the Travancore book committee, there are Semblances of this admixture found in *Cheru Paithangalkka Upakarartham Emclisil Ninna Paribhashappeduthia Kathakal*. Dr. N. Sam speaks of the specialties of Travancore text books: “when the Government took over the onus of public instruction in the state, a syllabus divorced of religion came into effect. But the new syllabus had a close resemblance to the syllabus prepared by the missionaries. Both had stories with morals in their short, prose lessons” (1988; 107).

Modern Malayalam prose, used for the first time in a literary work was in *Cheru Paithangalkka Upakarartham Emclisil Ninna Paribhashappeduthia Kathakal*. The short stories in this collection are well organized and sound in their form and content. As the means for creative works, narration and conversation—the prose forms—are very effectively employed in this work. The first short story to be printed in Malayalam was ‘The story of Marjorie a four year old English girl’ of this collection. During the pre-printing days in Kerala, prose was not in use as an important written form. What was actually in use, as the most important written form of the language, was poetry.

The nominal prose used in decrees was not competent—not even as able as poetry—to be used in communication. At this juncture, when it became necessary to print books for the spread of Christianity and for education, it was found practical to use the spoken language in printing. For the missionaries who lifted the spoken language of the common people for printing, it was impossible to set aside Sanskrit, which was the language of the educated in Kerala like the Brahmins and Nairs. In the spoken language of the educated, there was an influence of Sanskrit. Also, in the available literary works and science books, there was an admixture of Malayalam and Sanskrit. Books, to facilitate communication among people of all sections and categories, must be acceptable to all. For this, the author of *Cheru Paithangalkka...* tried to create a prose style by blending the expressions in the language of the common people who formed the majority, with the Manipravalam diction, common in the literary and scientific books and in the spoken language of the upper class people. Without a model to follow, when he tried to create such a language blend, he seems to have been troubled by misgivings regarding the amount of the features of the speech habits of the common people and the number of Sanskrit words that were to be included in the blend. Sometimes, preference was given to the local parlance and sometimes the influence of Sanskrit was more. At other times, the ancient idioms, common in poems, was used. Anyway, each story in *Cheru Paithangalkka...* was more or less was an experimental piece (Two examples are quoted for comparison .The first is from the ‘stories of Marjorie, four year old English a girl).

As the first Malayalam book was to be printed in Kerala, *Cheru Paithangalkka...* has great significance as far as Malayalam Typography is concerned.

The metal types used to print this was cast at the foundry in Madras Fort St George College. The 'height' of these types were not uniform and so was their size. The letters had a partly squarish form. Most of the letters were misshapen. Leaving a space between words, had not been made a standard procedure, perhaps because of following the style of handwritten Malayalam—one word close to another, then the next one again close and so on. After three or four words, a little space was left. Full stops and question marks were left out. But occasionally, quotes were put within double inverted commas. The layout of the book was good, on the whole. The title page and content words were included attractively. Each story had been given a title. In the 'History of Edward VI' subtitles were given, where needed. The blank space left close to the title, was rather wide in the beginning. Later, in the stories that followed, the length of the blank space near the title was shortened. The titles were highlighted with a short line under them. The spelling, in any language, is fixed through printing. In this work, the irregularity in spelling, at least in the case of a few words, had been come across. The same word was printed differently with different scripts and subscripts. Compound letters were printed in many different ways— joining the halves of each of the two letters, joining both the whole letters, joining a part of one letter to its full from etc.

Just as there are no subscripts for the vowels /e: / and /o/, close vowels are also absent. But in the transliteration of English, a mark is placed over the letter to indicate its pronunciation, like a diacritical mark. In transliterated English words, this sign indicates the close vowel.

Chapter 4

CONCLUSION

It was a flood of books that Benjamin Bailey, the first book-publisher in Malayalam, let loose upon the Kerala Society that had only hearsay knowledge of the *Samkshepavedartham* printed in Rome and of the *Courier Bible* or the *Ramban Bible* printed in Bombay—a deluge of religious and secular books for general reading. In addition to this, were the text books for schools and the college, not to mention the many periodicals. It is printing that has aided the spread of general education all the world over. Before the arrival of printing, only a small minority had access to education in any society. Education became prevalent and societies moved towards literacy as a result of the spread of printing. Education gets universalized only when printed text books are available for instruction. This relationship between printing and general education has decidedly influenced the course of the history of general education in Kerala.

Printing and general education are indeed the two vital factors that effect the standardization of languages. It is through its two main activities, which are bookpublishing and the publishing of periodicals that printing achieves this. Printing, all over the world, is the driving force behind cultural renaissance.

The contributions of Hindu Literature, to the development of regional languages and their Literatures up to the 15th century, are well known, though they were confined to the growth and spread of poetry in these languages. The work of the missionaries that was wide spread from the 16th century onwards in India and the resultant Christian Literary movements were instrumental in the development of prose and its different ramifications in

the various regional Languages. Printing, made popular by the missionaries, made prose a powerful medium for communication and an ideal vehicle for Literature. In Malayalam too, printing was instrumental in the development of prose literature and the standardization of Malayalam prose.

Printing helped the evolution of a standard Malayalam, from the different variants like the Southern, the Northern and the Central Travancorean Malayalams. The regional and the provisional peculiarities prevalent at the word-level and in sentence-structures were eliminated. It was printing that standardized Malayalam in this way. This language standardizing note of printing was the same in all languages. How printing standardized English is explained by S.H. Steinberg, the prominent authority on the history of printing.

“Having fortified the ‘language walls’ between one nation and another, the printers proceeded to break down the minor differences of speech—most noticeably of vocabulary, grammatical forms and syntax—within any given language group. If today the ‘Queen’s English’ has become the standard idiom of millions of writers and readers, beside which the dialects of Kent, Lancashire, Northumberland and all the rest have vanished in to local insignificance, William Caxton and his brothers-in- the-art may justly claim the credit for it. It was Caxton who overcomes the perplexing confusion of Middle – English dialects, and, by adopting that of the Home Counties and London, fixed a standard never to be abandoned. Caxton was very conscious of his service to a unified English Language. He reinforced his argument by the charming anecdote of the Kentish woman off North Foreland whom a London merchant asked for some ‘eggys’. ‘And the good wife answered that she cude speke no Frenshe’. It was only when another man asked for ‘eyren’ (cp. German ‘Eier’) that she ‘sayd she vnderstood hym wel’... The standardization of the English Language through the effects of printing had lead to a tremendous expansion of the vocabulary, a virtual ban on the development of accident and syntax, and an ever-widening gulf between the spoken and the written word. Local and regional differences tend to be ironed out or suppressed, though a very large number of provincial words and phrases have conversely been raised to the national level... The most remarkable, or at least the most visible, expression of the standardization of the English Language through the egalitarianism of the press is to be seen in our modern spelling. Up to the invention of printing, spelling was largely phonetic; that is

to say, every scribe rendered the words on parchment or paper or paper more or less as he heard them” (1959:88-89) (sic.).

All that have been said about printing being instrumental in the standardization of English by Steinberg are applicable, theoretically, to Malayalam too. Invention of printing has made far reaching effects in the development of languages. Printing acts on languages in three ways: it causes the evolution of a standard language out of the various variants of the regional language; new words and expressions that evolve in the language are given circulation: the errors in spelling that creep into the language through the carelessness of copyists or scribes or their ignorance or through the mistakes made through mishearing get eliminated, establishing a definite system of spelling. If the spelling was confusing in English, it was the writing of compound letters and the placing of the subscripts with their respective compound letters and consonants that the confusion existed in Malayalam. At the time Bailey was engaged in the translation of various books and at the time when printing started, prose was negligibly insubstantial while poetry was in its heyday. When modern printing began in Malayalam, ‘Kolezhuthu’ and ‘Malayalanma’ were as wide spread, or even more, than ‘Arya script’ or the ‘Grandha Script’.

But Malayalam printing took to prose as the popular medium for communication and used the ‘Grandha script’ for printing. It was this factor that paved the way for the growth and development of the very weak and neglected prose, ignoring the very rich and substantial poetic language. In short, printing standardized Malayalam prose and caused the development of Modern Malayalam Prose.

If printing were an art and an adventure, it later blossomed into a technology and an industry. Today, printing does not confine itself to the world of publishing books and periodicals. Printing, directly or indirectly, touches all the areas of human life. Printing and its associated industries—paper-making, machinery-making, ink-making, making building materials, book selling—exert tremendous influence on the social and economic spheres of the society. Bailey championed the printing industry in Kerala, by making types and press for printing, binding-materials and paper and made large scale printing possible. He is the prime mover of the printing industry in Kerala.

It is widely known that three inventions caused the renaissance in Europe. The invention of the printing press and the making of paper led to the cultural reawakening in

Europe. One of the chief factors that led to the cultural development and progress of modern societies was printing. The two things invented contemporarily were paper and gunpowder. When gunpowder was used to redraw international boundaries in blood, printed matter on paper helped in unifying the world population through a social advancement. It was the printed word that made the people of the world realize that all their interests and problems are the same everywhere, irrespective of time, country and language. Printing which led to social renaissance throughout the world, opened the way for the cultural awakening and progress of the Kerala Society. The development of the prose language, the standardization of language, book publishing, publishing of periodicals, the making of materials for general education, industrialization etc. which are the many creations of printing that contributed to the renaissance. The study of the changes made in Kerala's social life by printing and book-publishing reveals Benjamin Bailey's contributions and their magnitude.