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SYRIAC

LANGUAGE & LITERATURE

A Text Book for the Classes XI & XII

Compiled & Edited by
FR. JOHN KANNANTHANAM



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Preface

Syriac is one of the oldest languages in the world. It is a dialect of Aramaic, the language of Jesus Christ in the 1st century Palestine. Syriac found its entrance to Kerala through the Apostle St. Thomas. The Syrian colonization of Malabar from Edessa under the leadership of Bishop Joseph and Thomas of Cana raised the status of Syriac as the liturgical language. Syriac infact continues to be the official liturgical language of the Syrian Christian Churches of Kerala. Syriac literature is the sole representative of the genuine Semitic Christianity. As the privileged bearers of the glorious Syriac patrimony it is the moral obligation of us to be the torch-bearers of this glorious Asian heritage in this new millennium.

This book is mainly intended for the higher secondary students of Syriac. It is confined to those topics in Syriac language and literature, prescribed for the plus two syllabus. This work is divided into four parts namely, History of Syriac language, Syriac Grammar, Literature and Church history. Extreme care has been taken to make the presentation simple and straightforward as far as possible. I am indebted to Rev. Frs. Jose Ezhuparayil and Mathew Kuttiyanickal for their assistance in going through the draft and valuable suggestions. I hope this book may provide an initial orientation to all those who are interested to know Syriac language and its rich heritage.

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