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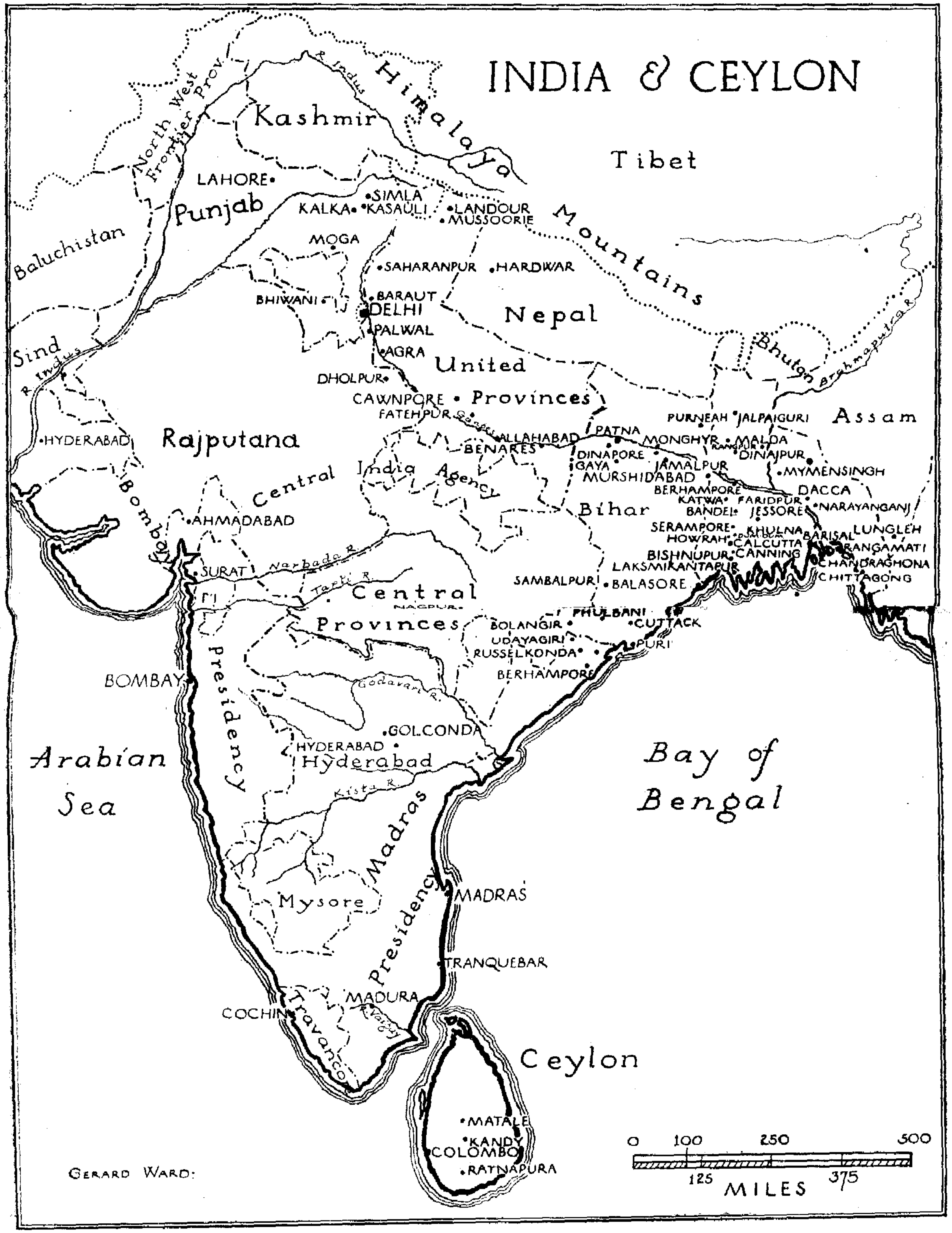
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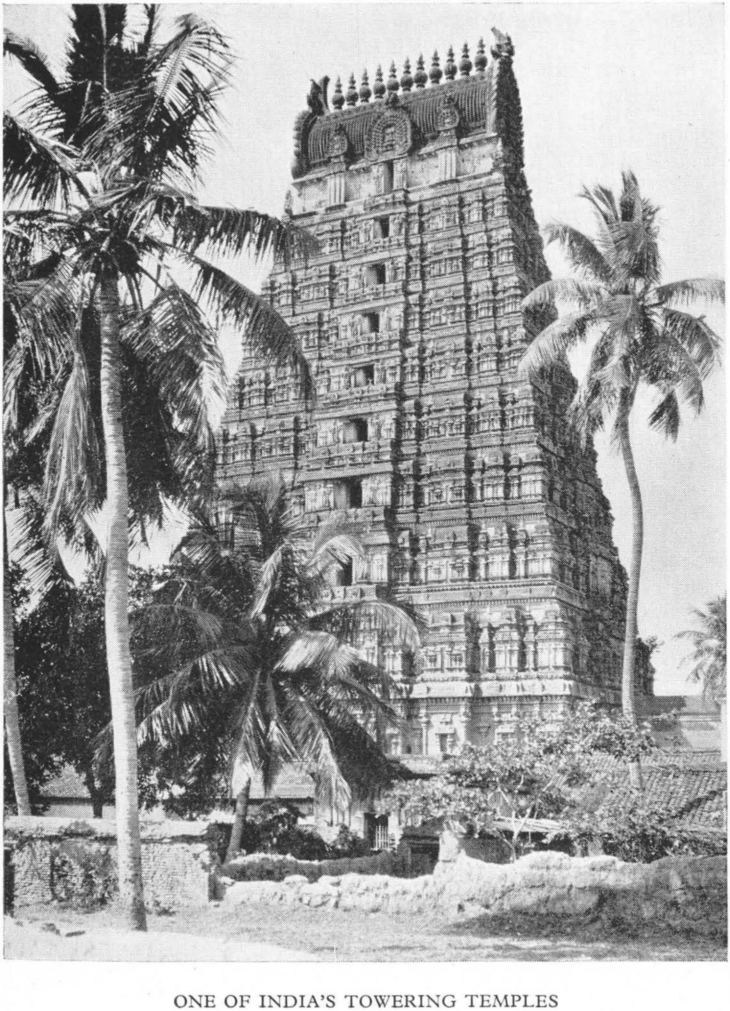
THE GOSPEL IN INDIA



ONE OF INDIA'S TOWERING TEMPLES

THE GOSPEL IN INDIA

BY

W. E. FRENCH

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CONTENTS

PAGE

FOREWORD 7

CHAPTER

I. THE LAND OF INDIA 9

II. WHERE THE B.M.S. WORKS . . . 15

III. HINDUISM 29

IV. HINDUISM IN ACTION 36

V. ISLAM 44

VI. ANIMISM 50

VII. CHRISTIANITY COMES TO INDIA . . . 58

VIII. THE SERAMPORE COVENANT . . . 62

IX. EVANGELISM 65

X. THE WRITTEN WORD 71

XI. HEALING THE BODY 79

XII. EDUCATION 85

XIII. MANY WOMEN FOLLOWED JESUS . . 100

XIV. THE BEGINNINGS OF THE CHURCH . . 109

XV. RETARDED PROGRESS 117

XVI. LO, WE TURN TO THE GENTILES . . 124

XVII. TEAM WORK 134

XVIII. THE INDIAN CHURCH TAKES CHARGE . . 141

XIX. WHAT OF THE FUTURE ? . . . 153

INDEX 159

BOOKS FOR FURTHER READING . . . 161

ILLUSTRATIONS

One of India's Towering Temples . . *Frontispiece*

FACING PAGE

Pilgrims leaving Temple at Puri, Orissa . . 14

Jumma Mosque at Delhi: Mohammedans at Prayer 15

Types of People 64

Christian Girl Students: Teachers of To-morrow.
Berhampur Hospital Staff 65

Fruits of our Labour: Baptism in the Lushai Hills 80

The Setting of To-day: Orissa Church Council 81

FOREWORD

THIS book is written when the future of India is in the melting-pot. Anything may have happened by the time it appears. Any discussion of the present political situation might be out of date by that time. This is not intended to be a general book on India, and so it takes little account of political parties or probable political developments. Other books deal with these, and others are sure to follow when the present deadlock is solved. Nor does it attempt to describe adequately the land and peoples of India. Its object is to place before the churches of Britain the work being done on their behalf by the Baptist Missionary Society and its associated Church bodies in India. A brief description of the land of India gives the background. We then enquire where the B.M.S. works and the peoples to whom it ministers. We try to understand the religions of the people, and their effect on life and character. We next find in the Serampore Covenant and the Charter of its College two documents which have been the blue-prints for all subsequent missionary endeavour. We trace the working out of these principles of action in the various types of work undertaken by the Society. The growth of the Indian Church is next traced from its first beginnings to the present day when it is increasingly taking the lead in the work of the Evangel. The Baptists of Britain share with their brethren in India the high calling to reveal Christ to the new India now emerging.

Although this book attempts no discussion of political problems, the reader must always be conscious of their insistent pressure. The political struggle is always there, and for many in India it is the one subject they talk, think and dream about. For half a century the work of the extension of God's Kingdom has been carried on in an atmosphere of increasing mistrust between the rulers and the ruled. As Dr. Stanley Jones wrote recently: "It is almost psychologically impossible for a subject nation to take the religion of its conquerors." That sentence focuses the light on one reason why the progress of the Gospel among the nationally conscious has been so slow. That sense of strain has burdened us all, till it has become well-nigh intolerable. It is against the darkening clouds of this political struggle that our Christian enterprise must be visualised.

The appointment of an Interim Government under the leadership of Pandit Nehru brings within sight the end of British control over India. This should relieve the tension between rulers and ruled. We shall watch with deep sympathy the efforts of the new Government to set India on the way to peace and an honourable place among the nations of the world.

The writer has spent the whole of his missionary life in Bengal, and knows little at first hand of any other province. So he may be forgiven if there is a Bengal flavour about the book. In writing of other provinces he has made liberal use of the book *Ye are My Witnesses*, prepared as a history of our work in India to its 150th anniversary. He has not hesitated to transcribe freely from the contributions of his colleagues in that book.

For any individual judgment expressed in this book, the writer alone is responsible, and his views do not necessarily commit his colleagues or the Society he is proud to serve.

CHAPTER I

THE LAND OF INDIA

THE word " India " calls up many mental pictures—temples crowded with worshippers, the incessant ringing of gongs and bells—the wonderful palace of a Maharaja, a colourful procession with elephants—Amy Woode Finden's Indian lyrics, Kipling's Soldier books and Jungle books—the parched land in the terrible noon-day sun, and dust, dust penetrating everywhere—the strange rhythmic patter of heavy rain on the growing rice in a flooded field—the Mutiny, Gandhi, " Quit India "—and they are all part of the picture. It recalls the people—the unceasing ant-like crowds in a city street—the excited scramble for places in a train, and then the cheery fellowship which springs up as the train plods on its dusty, noisy way—the gracious welcome into an Indian home, the happy chatter of the children, the beautifully cooked meal in the gloaming, and a night's rest on a hard bed, somebody else's, given up for the visitor—the grace and beauty of well-dressed women in silk *saris*—the monotonous grunt of the palki-bearers—the intricate rhythm of a distant drum. All this is India.

The land is so vast—equal in area to the whole of Europe excluding Russia. It stretches from the latitude of Sicily to within four degrees of the Equator. The greatest mountains of the world form its northern wall, three of the greatest rivers in the world have built up its only plains. For, like Africa, it is a region of uplands —most of the land is over 1,000 feet above sea-level, and the plains have been built up from the sea by the silt brought down by the rivers.

In Travancore and Cochin in the South-west, in Bengal and Assam in the North-east, are stretches of country greener than the Emerald Isle. From Delhi right through to the western border of Baluchistan is one of the great rainless belts of the world, where the camel is the natural beast of burden, and a large proportion of the country is sheer desert.

The mass of the population is overpowering. It is larger than that of any country except China—389,000,000, a sixth of the whole world. If India asserts her right to independence, and walks out of the British Empire, she will take with her two-thirds of the King Emperor's subjects. India is half the size of the United States of America, but with three times its population. The density varies greatly, from 4,000 to the square mile in Cochin to 6·5 in Baluchistan. Two-thirds of the people live in a quarter of the country. In general, the population is densest where the rainfall is greatest.

It is a land of peasants, where 90 per cent. of the people live in villages. Only two of India's cities—Calcutta and Bombay—have a population of over a million. Five more lie between the million and half-million marks. All the rest are below this level. It is the village which is characteristic of India, and many of the towns are only overgrown villages. The curved lines of many Hindu temples merely reproduce in masonry the beautiful lines of the thatched roofs of a village home. For census purposes a " town " is a place of not less than 5,000 inhabitants possessing definite urban characteristics, but even on this reckoning there are only 2,703 towns, while there are 655,892 villages.

The Indian loves to surround his house with trees—fruit trees, palms and quick-growing trees for firewood. The deep green of the homestead areas straddles across country, so that each farmer can live near his little plot of land. Agriculture in India is very different from farming as we know it in Britain. In place of the big farmer employing his farm-hands and doing as much work as possible by machinery, we have multitudes of peasants each owning his own tiny plot and farming it by the labour of his own family. The " three acres and a cow," slogan of a bygone age in Britain, gives the usual measure of an Indian plot. There is an unfortunate Hindu law by which a man's land is divided at his death equally between his sons. Consequently the plots diminish in size, with each generation, until they become too small to cultivate profitably. Then the luckless owner sells his plot and becomes a landless labourer, one of the group which provide the " unemployment " problem of India.

On such small plots no mechanisation seems possible, and so far no inventive genius has produced machinery which will operate in the mud which is necessary for rice-cultivation. The farmer takes his bullocks to plough his tiny plot, sows his seed and transplants it, weeds it by hand and prays to all his gods to bring the rain when it is needed and in the right proportion. Indian farming is a gamble in rain. A delayed monsoon or too copious a downpour may bring famine over a large area. If the crops mature, they are cut, threshed and stored by hand. The farmer's life is an alternation of periods of desperate toil from dawn to dark, followed by times when he can only sit and watch the skies in hope and fear. The growth of the population and the reduction in the size of the plots means that many people cannot grow enough rice to feed the family and leave a balance to sell for other wants. As a result it is essential that the farming tribes should learn a secondary trade—fishing, boat-making, house-building and so on. For the Hindu this is forbidden by caste rules. Most of the people live dangerously near the margin of subsistence. In general, the standard of living is low, so that any small disturbance of the economic balances drives them into destitution.

A conservative estimate shows that, for every £1 of income in Britain, an Indian in a similar position would be earning a shilling. It is impossible for the people to save, and so for any emergency they must have recourse to the moneylender. Weddings, the ceremonies following the death of a relative, and other customary social functions, demand considerable expenditure. This means a loan at heavy interest. The consequence is that the farmer, when he reaps his crop, has to sell a considerable portion to meet his rent, his loans plus ruinous interest, and his debts at the local shop. Often he cannot keep enough rice in stock to last his family for the year, and so in the latter part he must buy rice from the moneylender at twice the price at which he sold it to him in January. For most men there seems no prospect of solvency.

Mahatma Gandhi's remedy for this chronic poverty is the *charkha*—the handloom—symbol of the revival of village industries. There is much to be said for this idea, and if every farmer had a secondary occupation, it would do much to relieve his poverty. But to the progressive Indian the remedy lies in the direction of increasing industrialisation. The cotton mills of Bombay and Ahmedabad, the jute mills on the banks of the Hooghly, the great Tata metal works—the largest in the British Empire—the soap, chemical, biscuit and other factories rising everywhere, are symptoms of this change from a predominantly rural towards an industrial basis for the economic structure.

Industrialism, however, brings its terrible problems. The labour force is largely recruited from the lower castes. They are herded near the mills in *bustees*, incredibly overcrowded and insanitary, their pay is low, and they are largely unorganised. In other areas the problem is complicated by the fact that a large proportion of the labour force is a seasonal one. They are peasant farmers who work on their village plots when the rush of farming work demands it, and migrate to the mills when work is slack in the fields. These make difficulties for the permanent labour force. For instance, the Bengali mill-hands prefer a four-day week to a seven-day, as in the former case they can return home and work on their fields at the week-end. But naturally a four-day week is slow starvation for the landless mill-hand from a distance.

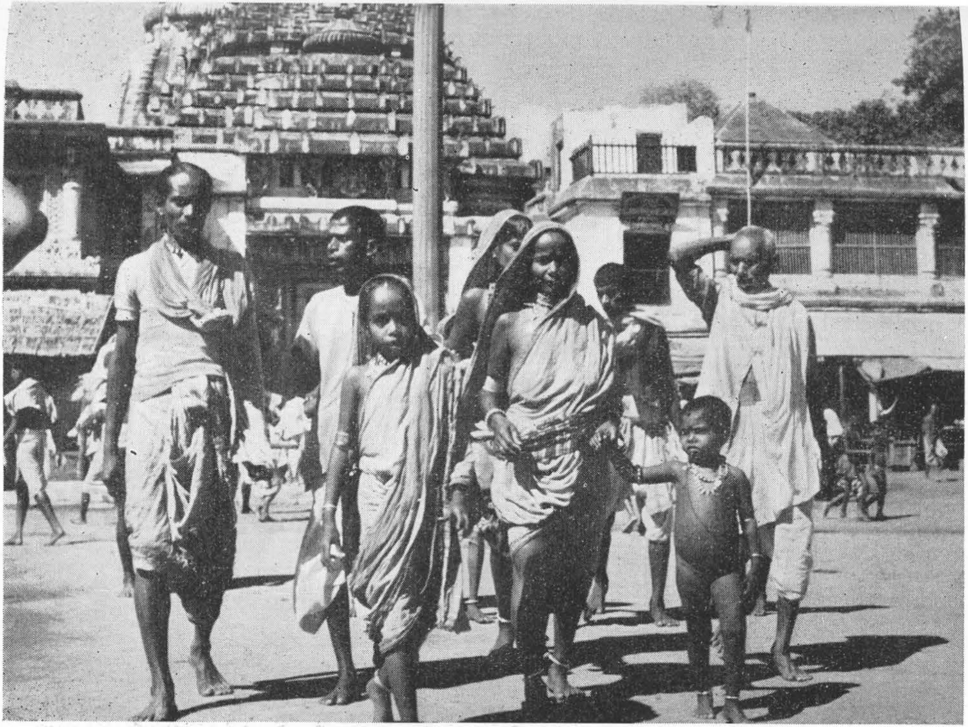
Illiteracy is another problem. There has, however, been a striking increase in literacy during the last decade. 12·2 per cent. of the population are now literate compared with only 6·9 per cent. in 1931. Of the provinces, Bombay shows the highest rate of literates, 19·5 per cent., with Bengal next at 16·1 per cent. Several of the states greatly exceed these figures : Travancore 47·7 per cent., Cochin 35·4, Baroda 23·0. In India as a whole 5 per cent. of the females are now literate, compared with 2·1 per cent. in 1931.

There are more differences of race and language in India than there are in Europe, apart from Russia. The contrast between the Panjabi and Bengali, between the Lushai and the Madrassi, is far greater than that between any two European races. There are 240 recognised languages in India, and of these twenty-four are each used by more than a million people.

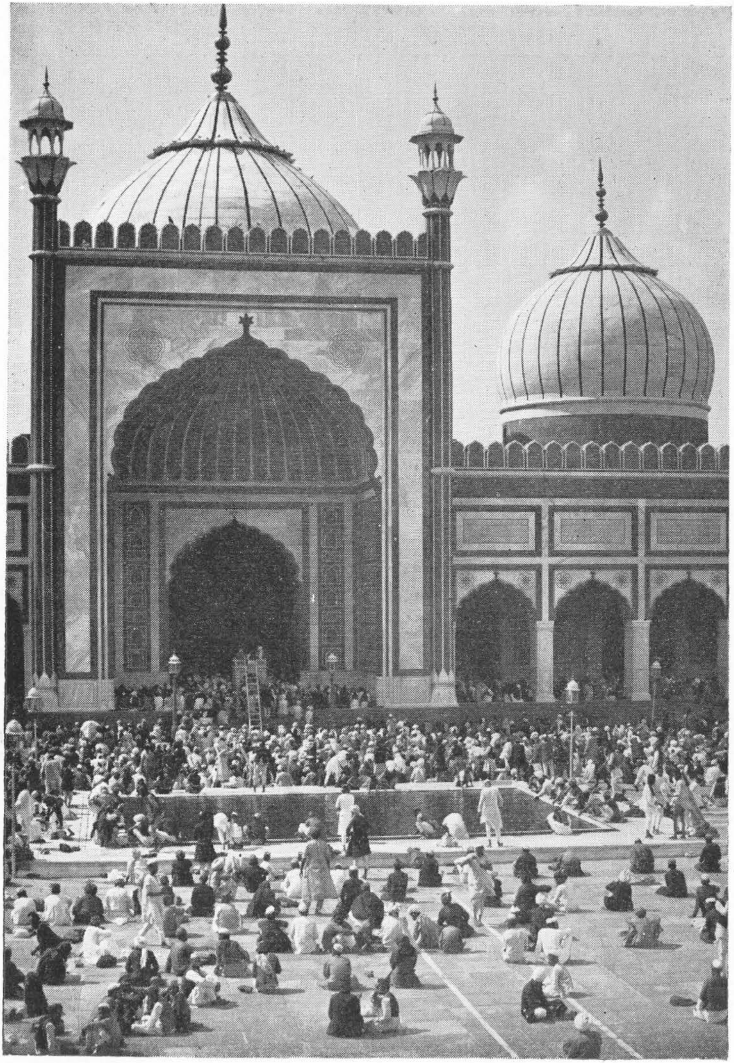
Finally, there is the great divide in religion. 70 per cent. are Hindu, 22 per cent. are Muslim. The third largest community is the Christian, though it numbers only 2 per cent. of the total population. Following these are the Sikhs, Jains, Parsees and Jews.

The significant fact in the economic life of India is that in spite of famine and disease, high death-rate and low expectation of life, the people are so prolific that the population is rising rapidly at the rate of five millions a year. A rising population cannot live on a stationary agricultural output. So improved agriculture, more land under cultivation, as well as increasing industrialisation, are called for. The significant fact for us as Christians is that, in spite of the encouraging increase in the Christian community, this gain is far less than the actual increase in the general population.

The lasting impression India leaves is of deep poverty, borne in the main with great cheerfulness. Behind many of India's problems lies this economic danger—chronic hunger. Hunger more than politics caused the ugly features of recent riots, and even the communal riots have often an economic beginning, as when the harassed Hindu debtor turns on the moneylender's Muslim tout. The Muslim is assaulted and injured, his co-religionists rally and attack the Hindus, and a communal riot blazes up with unpleasant consequences to those concerned.



PILGRIMS LEAVING TEMPLE AT PURI, ORISSA



JUMMA MOSQUE AT DELHI: MOHAMMEDANS AT PRAYER

CHAPTER II

WHERE THE B.M.S. WORKS

HOW much of this immense land is our field of work as British Baptists? In the great expansion in the days of the Serampore Trio, their colleagues ventured as far west as Surat, north to the borders of Bhutan, east to Batavia, and south to Madras. The parent Society has handed over many of the fields it opened to its daughter societies from America, Canada, Australia and New Zealand. Our fields in India now number four: Bengal, North India, Orissa and South Lushai, and these stretch in a rough cross. From Simla to Lungleh is roughly equal to the distance from London to Belgrade. North to south from Rangpur to Berhampur is as far as Amsterdam is from Genoa. The peoples among whom our missionaries work differ as much as the Briton does from the Jugo-Slavian, the Dutch from the Italian. Each of the four fields has its main language, quite distinct from all others, so that a missionary from one area is tongue-tied if he goes to another province. Each field also has its subsidiary tongues, so that our workers make use of some thirteen languages.

BENGAL

Carey went to Bengal, so that province shall be our first concern. It stands at the head of the Bay of Bengal, and is mostly filled by the huge delta of the Ganges and the Brahmaputra. To the north of the Ganges wide plains lead up to the densely forested foot-hills of the Himalayas. To the east of the Bay lies a strip consisting of a coastal plain backed by wooded hills, more akin to Burma in the nature of the hills and their inhabitants. Bengal forms a rough triangle with a base of 350 miles and sides of 400 miles, and it contains an area greater than England. Except for the northern and eastern fringe, the province has been entirely built up by the silt brought down by its two great rivers. Not a stone can be found anywhere in the delta. The west is more mature, and its level is slowly rising, so that it is less and less affected by the annual floods. The main stream of the united rivers is gradually moving eastwards, and the eastern half is still being built up. The seashore is fringed by the Sundarban forest, an eerie waste of slimy mud out of which mangrove and other trees lift their distorted stems. Crocodiles abound, quaint climbing fish flop over the mud and climb the trees, while tigers lurk in the deeper jungle.

The differing nature of the east and west has resulted in a difference in the houses of the people. In the west, where the land is higher and the floods last for a shorter period, the houses have walls of thick plastered earth, with thatched roofs. In the east, the entire countryside is flooded as soon as the spring sun melts the Himalayan snows, and by the middle of the monsoon at the end of July the country is covered by from five to ten feet of water. So here earth is worth its weight in copper. The houses are walled with matting made from split bamboos and thatched with straw or reeds from the jungle. In the west travel is by car, cart or cycle. In the east the boat is the best means of transport, and indeed, the only one possible from June to December.

The B.M.S. works in thirteen of the thirty districts of Bengal, with their population of some 24,000,000. In *Calcutta*, that city of two and a quarter million people, we have the India headquarters of the Mission, with the office of the India secretary and finance secretary, who, with a very small staff, act as liaison officers between the headquarters at home and India, and between the four Indian fields, and conduct the transmission of funds to the various areas.

Next comes the very efficient Calcutta Mission Press, which prints in many languages for our own and other Christian organisations, and earns a handsome surplus by its general printing work. Round the corner is the headquarters of the Bengal Baptist Union. Going north in the city we come to Entally where, during the recent war, the girls' school premises were commandeered by the military. The school now operates in two sections—its day scholars meeting in Calcutta, while its boarders are evacuated to Laksmikantapur in the south villages. The Carey High School for boys, run by Entally Church, is also closed as its premises, too, were commandeered. Turning west we come to College Square, where the Students' Hall and Hostel is a hive of activity, and where the offices of the Bengal Government Adult Literacy Movement and of the Bengal Christian Council are situated. At Carey's old church in Bow Bazar is a polyglot school with Anglo-Indian, Bengali, Chinese and Jewish pupils and a keen mission Church. In the south of the city are the United Missionary Training College for Women at Ballygunge, and the United Missionary Girls' School now returning from exile in Berhampur in Bengal. Two English, three Bengali, an Oriya, a Telugu and two Hindusthani Baptist churches are maintained. Across the river is *Howrah*, with an English, a Bengali and a Telugu church. Fourteen miles up-river is *Serampore College*, now happily reunited after its war-time experience when, through Government requisitioning, its arts section remained in Serampore, while its theological department was cramped in hired quarters at Chandernagore.

Fourteen miles south of Calcutta lies *Bishnupur* with *Siksha Sangha*, the Union Christian boarding school which we share with the London Missionary Society. We are now in the *24 Parganas district*, which stretches from Calcutta to the Bay of Bengal, with a considerable but scattered Baptist community.

Travelling north-east we reach *Jessore*, an area from which a number of notable Muslim converts have come, and in which the new movement among the Rishis has brought fresh life and hope to a district which had been disappointing in recent years. We then leave the area of shallow-water agriculture and earth-walled houses and come to the deep-water area with its bamboo-matting walled dwellings. *Khulna* is an agricultural area whose boys' boarding school has had a chequered history, but now shows signs of renewed life. Then on to *Barisal*, the centre of our largest Bengal district, with its boarding schools for boys and girls, its 10,000 Baptists organised in 62 churches, and Santikutir, the women's settlement in the *beels*. This is amphibian country, flooded to a depth of five to eight feet for more than half the year.

Farther east lies *Dacca*, the ancient Muslim capital, with its student hostel and the promising Garo work in the north of the area. A journey farther north and west brings us to *Rangpur*, a centre for work among several aboriginal tribes, and, farther west, to *Dinajpur*, our oldest field, where the work lay dormant for nearly a century, but where during the past fifty years, steady accessions have come from tribal sources. This is now our most fruitful area in Bengal.

We are interested in two institutions, isolated from our Baptist fields. One is the United Christian Training College at *Berhampur*, Murshidabad (not to be confused with the Berhampur in Orissa). The other is the newest venture, the Union Theological School, temporarily at *Krishnagar*, but whose future will be at *Khulna* in premises freed from Government requisitioning.

To reach our remaining Bengal field we pass through the territory of the Australian and New Zealand Baptists. *Chittagong*, on the eastern side of the Bay of Bengal, and the gateway to Lushai, is a port of growing importance, but with a disappointing mission history. Half a day's journey up-river brings us to *Chandraghona Hospital*, at the foot of the hills. Another half-day through beautiful densely wooded river gorges finds us at *Rangamati*, the headquarters of the Chittagong Hill Tracts. Here we leave the motor-boat for slower means of transit up to *Lushai*.

Bengal is a province with its own individuality and highly developed literature. Even so, the people among whom we work are varied in caste and race. In Calcutta and Serampore we are in touch with the higher castes of Hindus, people of the highest culture and education. Alongside there are the many immigrants, principally labourers and servants—Oriyas and Telugus, Hindi-speaking men from Bihar and beyond, and an interesting island of Chinese near Carey Church. In the 24 Parganas, Khulna and Barisal we find ourselves amongst men of the lower Hindu castes—farmers and fishermen. In Jessore we worked principally among Muslims, but the recent movement has been among caneworkers. In Barisal, Dacca and Chittagong, Muslims predominate. A few of these are cultured but most are cultivators, converts from low-caste Hindu groups. In the north of the Dacca district and in Rangpur we find Garos, a cheery matriarchal tribe. The strength of our work in North Bengal is amongst the aboriginal tribes—Santals, Mundas, Oraons and Garos—the ancient inhabitants of India, who still cling to their tribal religions, which are forms of animism. The Chittagong Hill Tracts brings us to other interesting groups—the Mughs, immigrants from Burma, professing the Buddhist faith, the Chakmas, a mixed race retaining a form of Hinduism, the Kyangs, Tripuras and Kukis (cousins of the Lushais). So Bengal, which at first sight seems so homogeneous, gives us plenty of variety.

NORTH INDIA

The North India field consists of several disconnected areas. 140 miles to the west of the Dinajpur district in Bengal we come to Monghyr, the first station of the Bihar field. Patna lies 90 miles to the north-west, and Gaya 100 miles to the south-west. *Monghyr* has a Hindusthani church, evangelistic work among *chamars*, and successful work in English at the neighbouring railway centre of *Jamalpur*. *Patna*, the capital of Bihar, is a long straggling town on the Ganges, and a university centre, with the big cantonments of Dinapore at its western end. It offers fine scope for evangelistic work among working-class Hindus, Muslims, and university students. The Students' Hostel, similar to that in Dacca, is doing fine work. There are Hindusthani congregations, primary schools, the Girls' High School with its boarding section for Christian girls, and women's teacher-training centre.

Gaya is the holy place of Buddhism where Buddha attained enlightenment. As a pilgrim centre it offers splendid scope for preaching and Gospel selling. There is a Hindusthani church and a large leper asylum of which the resident missionary is the superintendent.

From Patna we take a leap of 450 miles to *Agra*, and come to the central North India field, in the form of a Y : *Agra* to the south, *Delhi* 84 miles to the north, and then *Baraut* 40 miles north-east of Delhi, *Bhiwani* 75 miles north-west. *Palwal* is 36 miles south of Delhi on the southern stem of the Y.

Agra has a Hindusthani church. Here also we have a high school for boys, mostly non-Christian Hindus from the higher castes and Muslims, with a number of Christian lads. The school has been singularly successful in bringing Christian ideals to bear on the boys, and in leading them into social service for the depressed classes. There is a chaplaincy for the British troops and the Anglo-Indian community.

Palwal has evangelistic work, mostly among the *chamars* or leather workers. Recently there has been a promising development at the village of *Hathin*, where new Christians are witnessing for Christ and spreading the Gospel. There are churches in Palwal and several surrounding villages. There are also men's and women's hospitals. The Salamatpur Girls' Middle School emphasises handicrafts.

Delhi is the ancient capital where six empires have risen and fallen. The whole area is littered with reminders of her ancient past. Some are crumbling ruins. Others, like the Fort, still look strangely fresh and modern. The latest is the New Delhi of the British, with its enormous buildings in their spacious lay-out, so soon to pass from British hands to the new rulers of India—people of the soil once more. Here, in this city of memories, we have six Hindusthani churches. Evangelistic work is mainly amongst the *chamars*, the leather workers, but attention must necessarily be given to the upbuilding of the Christian community. Women missionaries work among Muslim women, in following up the influence of the Francis Girls' School for Muslims. Here also are the Gange High School for Christian Girls, and the Delhi United Christian School for Boys, the latter a joint effort with the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel. In New Delhi we share with the English Methodists in the Delhi Free Church, which has done such notable service for the troops during the war.

Bhiwani lies on the edge of the desert, where sandstorms rage and the camel is the beast of burden. Here is a Hindusthani church, and evangelistic work among the *dhanaks* or weavers, from whom the Christian community has sprung, and also among the *chamars*. A primary school and the Farrer Hospital for women are also established.

Baraut has Hindusthani congregations in eleven villages, and evangelistic work mostly among *chamars*, but also among sweepers. This area shows considerable promise. There are nine primary schools, and a girls' boarding school which gives prominence to handicrafts.

Another leap of 160 miles takes us to *Kalka*, at the foot of the Simla Hills, where Miss Hampton, in alleged retirement, carries on a faithful ministry in Hindusthani and English. Halfway to Simla is *Kasauli* the sanitarium location of the Pasteur Institution, and finally *Simla*, the summer capital, perched on its knife-edge range of hills within sight of the eternal snows. In these stations there is work among the *chamars* and servants in the towns, but little impression has been made upon the hill tribes for whose sake the area was opened up by the B.M.S.

In North India we work in some of the great ancient cities of India : Patna, an ancient capital, and the chief city of Bihar ; Gaya, place of pilgrimage for Buddhists and Hindus ; Agra, graced by the Taj Mahal, and its beautiful Fort ; Delhi, with its half-million people, a city partly awake from the slumber of centuries, dreaming of ancient empires passed away ; Simla, the hill capital, where the Government keeps its head in the cool while the people below swelter in the heat. Bhiwani and

Monghyr are towns of a fair size. Jamalpur and Kalka are railway centres. Palwal and Baraut are centres for village work.

The North India Mission sprawls across four provinces: Patna, Gaya and Monghyr are in Bihar; Agra and Baraut in the United Provinces; Delhi is a province in its own right; while Palwal, Bhiwani and the hill stations are in the Panjab.

Besides the castes mentioned above, we are also in touch with the Rajputs and Jats of the villages, who are martial races, especially the former. Although most of our Christians have sprung from the depressed classes, notable converts have been won from the higher castes of Hinduism, and from Islam.

ORISSA

Orissa is a field as compact as North India is scattered. It is a coastal province, lying between Bengal and Madras, and it includes a coastal plain of varying depth and the valley of the Mahanadi with its wide straggling delta. On the two sides of this valley lie hilly masses, difficult of access from the plains. The lower slopes are heavily wooded, and are the haunt of tigers, leopards and snakes of many kinds. It is one of the holy lands of India, for Jagannath has his dwelling at Puri. His ancient glories were enhanced by the enthusiastic devotion of Chaitanya, the Bengali reformer. At Puri all caste is forgotten—except for the outcaste!—and the people of Orissa are holy by birth, and even Brahmins in Bengal will take water from an Oriya of any caste—provided, of course, he *has* a caste and is not an outcaste. The Oriya is a simple-minded fellow, but his land is a poor one, and the Oriyas wander off in great numbers to Bengal, where they work as cooks or gardeners. The people of the hills are not

Oriyas, but aboriginal tribes who fled there to escape from the Aryan invaders.

Our work is contained in a compact rectangle, 160 miles by 140 miles. We have never entered the northern hills, and the coastal area towards the Bengal border is left to the American Baptists. Our rectangle runs from Cuttack, which is 220 miles south-east of Calcutta, through Angul to Sambalpur, then to Balangir, thence to Berhampur near the coast, and back through Puri and Pipli to Cuttack. Enclosed within this rectangle lie the Kond Hills, with Russelkonda at their gateway, and Phulbani and Udayagiri within their borders.

Cuttack is the capital of the province and the headquarters of our work. The Cuttack High School for boys has long been in the hands of the Church. Buckley House accommodates a girls' boarding school with a teacher-training class. The Orissa Mission Press does all our printing for this province and much outside work as well. American Baptists share the Theological Institute. The Cuttack Church has the largest congregation of any of our churches in India. Here, too, is the Stewart School, our educational institution for the Anglo-Indian community, whose higher classes are now affiliated to the Utkal University. The Leper Asylum is supervised by one of our missionaries.

Sambalpur and *Angul* have Christian communities but no resident missionary. *Balangir* is the centre of our extending work among the low-caste people, through the West Utkal Baptist Union. Here are boarding schools for boys and girls and a dispensary. Our Women's Hospital is at *Berhampur*, and at *Gopalpur*, on the seaside ten miles away, a new movement has started among the Telugu fishermen.

Puri is dominated by the great temple of Jagannath. We have been unable in recent years to take adequate advantage of the magnificent evangelistic opportunities of this pilgrim centre. *Pipli* is a church centre without a resident missionary.

A long motor-drive from Berhampur zigzagging round hairpin bends through the forest brings us on to the *Kond Hill* plateau, from 1,500 to 2,000 feet in height. Here we find the flourishing work among the Konds, with its churches in many villages, its schools, and the Moorshead Memorial Hospital.

In Orissa, again, our work is among varied peoples. In Cuttack, Puri and Berhampur there are caste Hindus, and at Gopalpur the Telugu fishermen. The Balangir work is among an outcaste group known as Gondas. The religion is predominantly animistic with a veneer of Hindu rites and ceremonies. In Angul we are in touch with caste Hindus, but our work is mainly among the Paus, an outcaste group similar to those in Balangir. The Konds are a characteristic aboriginal tribe, with an animistic religion, which formerly involved human sacrifice. In Sambalpur there has been considerable success among the Mundas (another section of this aboriginal tribe is welcoming the Gospel in the Dinajpur district of Bengal).

The Balangir district is within the area of the Patna state, an Indian state, not to be confused with Patna, the capital of Bihar in the north. All the rest of the work is in the province of Orissa.

LUSHAI HILLS

Lushai, our most fascinating field in India, is also the most isolated. To get there from Calcutta involves twenty-four hours' journey by train, steamer and train to Chittagong; twelve hours' journey up-river by motor-boat to Rangamati; two days by canoe, and then three days' trek up into the hills.

The South Lushai Hills form the southern district of Assam. On the south and east the country borders on Burma. Its western boundary is the Chittagong Hill Tracts, and on the north lie the districts of Cachar and Manipur—the latter district was besieged by the Japanese. The hills are clad with forests of great tall bamboos and cinnamon and many other trees. These are wreathed with creepers which sometimes are as high and as thick as the trunks they drape.

The roads over these jungle-covered hills are all rough, narrow tracks, frequently washed away in the rains. Sometimes they lead down into valleys where palms, tree-ferns, and all sorts of tropical plants grow luxuriantly. There are many rivers to cross, an easy matter in the dry season, but a problem in the rains when the rivers may rise sixty or eighty feet, and sweep away the bridges however strongly they may be built. The tracks also wind up and up the hills to heights of from 5,000 to 7,000 feet. All the hills are very steep, and the valleys between the ranges are so narrow that they are merely the beds of rivers. Sometimes in a single journey from one village to another the traveller descends from a height of 5,000 feet to a level of 1,000 feet, only to climb again at once to a similar height on the next range. Occasionally such descents and ascents must be made twice in one journey. Touring in these hills is therefore a slow process, the average rate of travel being from two and a half to three miles an hour, often in torrents of rain, or in scorching sun.

The Lushais live in villages built on the tops of the hills. Their houses are of plaited bamboo, with grass or leaf roofs, and are raised on piles, for nowhere is there sufficient level ground to build even the smallest house. The houses vary in size, but consist mostly of one room, with a large square of hardened earth on one side, in the middle of which the fire is placed and round which the family gathers to smoke, gossip, and carry on its life indoors.

The people are dependent on the forest and on their own efforts for all the necessities of life. The chief chooses the particular piece of land for the village *jhums* (clearings) and allots to each family its own patch for clearing, burning, sowing and reaping. The *jhums* may be a very considerable distance from the village, and to some extent determine its destiny; for after a hillside has been cultivated and is no longer productive, the whole group may desert its old home and find a new one on virgin soil.

The indigenous religion of the Lushais is Animism. Fear of unseen spirits, to whom alike was attributed whatever fortune or misfortune overtook them, was the dominating factor in their lives. Within the memory of living men the people spent much of their time raiding each other's villages on head-hunting expeditions. These raids, spreading to the plains, necessitated the district being taken over by the British Government. There were still raids amongst border villages as recently as 1922.[1]

So in these four fields the work goes on, in widely differing countries, and among peoples of so many races, castes and creeds. We have the proud privilege of presenting Christ to them all, whatever their creed. We face the great religion of Hinduism, of immemorial antiquity, pervading every side of the life of its adherents. We find ourselves opposed by another immigrant religion, militantly missionary, in Islam, which arose later in time than Christianity, and claims to supersede it. Among the aboriginals we meet many forms of Animism—the conviction that there are spirits everywhere, capricious, with unmeasured powers to help or harm.

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[1] *Ye are My Witnesses*, pp. 153–4.

The field is so scattered and our forces so weak. The whole population of Congo is less than that of the four Bengal districts of Barisal, Dacca, Rangpur and Dinajpur. Congo has a missionary force of 137 under the B.M.S., but for these Bengal districts, the European missionary force before the war numbered but fourteen besides four Bengali missionaries. Bengal and Bihar are two of the worst-manned mission areas in the world, even when the total Christian force represented by all the missions and Churches is taken into account.

CHAPTER III

HINDUISM

WHO are these Hindus? What is this religion which holds the fealty of 255,000,000 people? Dr. Macnicol tells us:

> "It brings under its sheltering wings all the religious, semi-religious, and social practices and observances of the Hindu race. Polytheism, Monotheism, Pantheism and Atheism all form an integral part of Hinduism. Demon worship, hero worship, ancestor worship, worship of animate and inanimate objects, worship of natural forces and worship of God, have all been woven into the web. It caters for every taste, every grade of life, every stage of development. From the purest to the vilest form of worship, from the sublimest heights of philosophic thought to the meanest and crudest phase of intellectual and religious development, all stages are provided for." [1]

It glories in its tolerance. It accepts new ideas without rejecting the old. It is "an encyclopaedia of religions, an amalgam of often contradictory beliefs and practices."

The early inhabitants were Animists. Hinduism has absorbed this Animism, and most of the inhabitants of the villages live under the domination of a spirit of fear. Their worship is a propitiation of innumerable spirits and gods—the goddess of cholera, the tiger god, the smallpox goddess, the spirit that lives in yonder tree that none dare pass at night.[2]

About the time of the Exodus, the Aryans began to invade India. They brought with them the *Rig Veda*, a collection of hymns to the gods of nature, of fire and of storm. As they advanced into India, they took steps to preserve their racial purity, but were less watchful to maintain the high level of their religion. The white-skinned invaders—and the high-caste man of North India is to this day as fair as many a Southern European —devised the social framework of caste. Their priests became the Brahmins, their warriors the Kshatriyas, their merchants and farmers the Vaisyas. They consigned the more respectable of the dark-skinned peoples to the lowest of the four castes—the Sudras or servants. They kept out of the caste system altogether certain groups whose occupations and origins seemed to them unclean.[1] Hence to-day the 49,000,000 "untouchables." The aboriginals took a sinister revenge, for all their cults of fear and medley of strange and often unholy rites gradually crept into Hinduism.

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[1] N. Macnicol: *The Living Religions of the Indian People*, p. 24.

[2] C. E. Storrs: *Many Creeds, One Cross*, pp. 26 ff.

But while this amalgam was being formed, the philosophy of Hinduism was developing along the lines of pure reason. Everything that is, is part of the One God, Brahma, but he is not personal but neuter. He is the deification of the negative : "Whatever you think, God is not that." In fact, nothing really exists, all is Maya or illusion. We are tied to the illusory world by our Karma —the mathematical sum of our deeds and misdeeds. We proceed through an endless series of rebirths. If at death the algebraic sum of our deeds is positive, we proceed to a higher level of existence in the new life. If the result is negative, we go down to a lower level. The final aim is to attain Nirvana, but this is no state of bliss, it is again the attainment of the final negative, the joy of the candle flame when it is blown out, the relief at discovering the key to the illusion, that all this sorry scheme of things entire has no existence, that we are reabsorbed into nothingness. " O to be nothing, nothing," is the ultimate prayer of orthodox Hinduism.

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[1] K. Saunders : *A Pageant of Asia*, p. 13.

This consummation of pessimism fails to satisfy most people, and the human heart turns from the impersonal Absolute in search of a personal God to Whom the heart's devotion can be offered. So the impersonal Brahma became manifest in a personal Trinity : Brahma the Creator, Vishnu the Preserver, Siva the Destroyer. But even these remained too distant and awful. So in the two centuries before Christ the theory arose that Vishnu became incarnate in a human or sub-human form. There have been nine of these *Avatars*—the last or final incarnation is yet to come, to announce the annihilation of the present universe. Only two of these have gripped the heart of India—Rama the perfect King, and Krishna the dark-skinned, the divine Charioteer. The epic of Rama and his wife Sita, told in the *Ramayana*, is one of the loveliest stories in all literature. But what shall we say of Krishna ? His story is told in the *Mahabharata*, an enormous collection of poems of greatly varying date. The birth stories of Krishna have a strange resemblance to those of Jesus and Herod. As a boy he was a puckish bundle of mischief, playing the wildest of pranks. As an adult he was the Don Juan *par excellence*, the stories of whose many amours are often untranslatable. But another side of Krishna is revealed in the *Bhagavadgita*, the scripture which has perhaps had more influence than any other on India. Here he comes as the Charioteer of Arjuna, and on the eve of battle he develops for Arjuna a profound philosophy, discussing the relative merits of knowledge, asceticism, and Karma as the way of salvation, and deciding in favour of personal devotion to the deity incarnate.

Round Rama and Krishna, particularly the latter, has grown up this religion of *Bhakti*—selfless devotion to a personal deity—which comes nearer to Christianity than any other aspect of Indian religion.

These incarnations all derive from Vishnu. There have been no incarnations of Siva the Destroyer. Instead there has developed the Consort, revealing herself in various forms as a goddess—Parvati, the mountain goddess. The best known of these is Durga, the ten-armed, whose annual festival is the greatest holiday in Bengal, when every office and shop is closed for several days. Her children are Karttik, the god of war, Ganesh, the corpulent elephant-headed god of business, Lakshmi, the goddess of good luck, and Saraswati, the goddess of learning and music. Another form is the sinister Kali, perfectly black, naked except for a girdle of dead men's arms, wielding a sword in one hand and holding a bleeding head in the other, her long tongue hanging out, as she dances on the prostrate form of her husband, who is insensible, stupefied by drugs. This strange goddess claims the awed worship of millions, particularly in Bengal, who hope thus to stave off the just punishment of their sins. She is the patron saint of the police and the Gurkha regiments, who are attracted perhaps by her cult of blood sacrifice. The Thugs (assassin cults) were her devotees, she was the centre of the shameful practice of the " left-handed " sects, and the wilder spirits of the political revolutionaries swore fealty to the national cause in her temples.

Modern thought, particularly since the spread of Christian ideas, has tended to allegorise the darker features of these cults. Hindus point to the Christian use of the Song of Solomon as a justification for ascribing purely spiritual meanings to the amours of Krishna. So, too, Kali is explained. She represents the mad dance of the soul in its intoxication with sin, and its cruelty and abandon of all decency, until it suddenly realises with shame that it is trampling on its Beloved, God Himself.

After Hinduism had been stabilised, the fertile brain of India produced many other variations of religious theory and practice. The greatest of her sons was Gautama Buddha, perhaps the one religious leader whose life and character approached most nearly the Christian ideal, and who yet remained an agnostic. The Buddhist religion spread eastward with amazing rapidity. But in India it has faded out as a separate religion except in the north-east corner. Hinduism characteristically absorbed the main tenets of Buddhism, while squeezing the life out of the Buddhist religion. The character and teaching of Buddha have profoundly affected India, particularly his doctrine of *Ahimsa*—absence of hate, non-violence. This negative, characteristic of Indian thought, is worth noting.

Hinduism itself was at first a strongly missionary religion, and spread through Indonesia to Siam. Some of the finest Hindu temples are found in the Dutch island of Bali, and the worship and life of the people are typically Hindu. But later Hinduism ceased to expand, and the only way of entry into Hinduism was by birth into a Hindu family. Recently there have been sporadic cases of the admission of non-Hindus into the faith, but that is entirely a modern movement.

Another Indian variant was the Sikh religion, which arose in the Panjab. It was a protest against idol-worship and the caste system. The only object of worship is the sacred scripture, the *Granth Saheb.* In order to obliterate caste, all Sikhs have forsaken the tell-tale surnames, and adopted the common surname of Singh—" lion."

The Jains formed another puritan movement, which evolved a simpler worship, and took the doctrine of

Ahimsa—non-violence—to extreme limits. The taking of life in any form is forbidden. The Jains literally strain out the gnat and walk with downcast eyes lest they tread upon an ant. Not even a mosquito or a flea may be killed—one should be pleased to supply one's life-blood to feed a fellow creature !

Buddhism, Sikhism, Jainism were separate movements, though modern Hinduism claims that they are within its fold. Another movement which never left the parent fold is that of Chaitanya. Bengal was one of the last strongholds of Buddhism in India, and formal Hinduism never took so strong a hold here as it did elsewhere. The Buddhist communities were carried on under other forms as groups of disciples under a local *guru*. These groups were as tinder ready to burst into flame under an inspiring leader. Chaitanya is the greatest exponent of the *Bhakti* cult. He meditated on the stories of Krishna, and to his pure soul the amorous chronicles were sublimated and allegorised. Chaitanya developed the *Sankirttan*. There is an orchestra of drums, stringed instruments, gong and cymbals, a soloist, and a choir which repeats the line sung by the soloist, an excellent method for illiterate peoples. Chaitanya would sing of the loves of Krishna and interpret them as parables of the attraction of the devotee to God. He would whip his orchestra and his choir into a Celtic fervour of ecstatic music. Finally they would leap to their feet, circling slowly as they sang, then moving faster and faster in a rhythmic dance, till in a final clash of drums and cymbals, the feast of song was over, and all sank exhausted to the ground. This exalted Chaitanya to a seventh heaven of blissful union with his god. These groups would march singing from village to village, setting new groups ablaze, till the revival fire spread through whole provinces. It is this form of religion which has the greatest appeal to many parts of India, and these singing groups have proved the most fertile soil for the seed of the Gospel in North-east India.

The old Buddhist communities revived under Chaitanya, and became wandering groups of *bairagis*, with no apparent means of livelihood, but sure of food and shelter where followers of Chaitanya were to be found. There were female groups as well as male, and in the inevitable decadence which followed the original revival fire, it was easy for men and women *bairagis* to link up in illicit and temporary unions, and wander about the country together. These excesses have given the Chaitanya movement a bad name in many quarters. But these should not cause us to fail to recognise the real values of Chaitanya's work. The legacies of this movement provide much of the special character of the Christian movement in East Bengal, and form the natural vehicle for its evangelistic zeal. At the same time the exuberance of this religious excitement creates problems and needs wise control.

Each of the developments in the long history of Hinduism has created a sect devoted to its tenets. If Christianity has its unhappy divisions, Hinduism is equally divided. Indeed the fund of doctrine common to all sections is far less in Hinduism. The only points on which all would agree are probably the religious supremacy of the Brahmin, the sacredness of the cow, and the law of Karma. There are often fierce controversies between the various sections, but the essential tolerance of Hinduism has saved it from the wholesale excommunication of heretics. The only unforgivable sin is to forsake Hinduism. All other sins may be condoned, but baptism means the repudiation of membership in the Hindu fold, the tearing of a limb from the Hindu body politic. So the newly baptized Christian must inevitably face ostracism.

CHAPTER IV

HINDUISM IN ACTION

THE visitor to Calcutta does not see typical Hinduism. The city is a parvenu—a creation of the British, " built on power and silt." The gods Calcutta worships are not found in its temples, but in the sanctums of big business in Clive Street. Yet even in Calcutta there are constant reminders of the immanence of Hinduism. Your sleep at night may be broken by non-stop jazz—hymns to a deity sung in a nasal shrillness to the accompaniment of drums and cymbals. In Harrison Road, the main business street of the Indian quarter, sacred bulls obstruct the traffic, and take their toll from the fruit and grain shops. Little processions chanting hymns go down every morning to bathe in the river—for the muddy Hooghly is part of the divine Ganges. From many a wayside temple comes the ringing of bells and the sound of a gong, as some pious Hindu comes to make an offering at the shrine. On the first occasion when an Indian team, Mohan Bagan, got into the final of the Indian Football Shield, a Brahmin priest came on to the field of play before the match. With him was the holy tulsi plant in a flower-pot ! As the Indian team ran on to the field, led by their captain, each member of the team bowed low before the holy plant, and received the blessing of the priest, to ensure victory. All except the solitary Christian in the team—but that is another story.

You are invited to a philosophic dissertation on the tenets of Vaishnavism, at the annual meeting of a Hindu society. Before the meeting begins, a procession arrives. Hindu graduates are dancing and singing before a palanquin carrying the patron god of the society, an exquisite silver doll. At the close, you are given refreshments, and you ask no questions for conscience sake—it is probably food offered to the idol.

Go on new-moon night to Kalighat, the chief temple of Calcutta. The temple is mean and insignificant—Southern Bengal has no stone, its bricks soon crumble and so there is no religious architecture of note. Temple shrines are usually small. There is no congregational worship. Each person brings his own gift, and offers it with his own personal intention. On the darkest night of the month the courtyard is crowded with people gathering to worship the all-black goddess Kali. Each group brings a perfectly black goat, not a hair of its head must be white. A cleft plank is set upright before the shrine. The goat's neck is inserted in the cleft, the low-caste attendant—for no Brahmin can take life—severs the head with one blow of the sacrificial axe. The priest claims the head, the blood is offered to the goddess, the man who offers the sacrifice pays suitable tips to the priests and attendants, and takes off the body of the goat to be eaten by the family—again food offered to the goddess.

It is at the annual religious festivals that Hinduism leaps up into picturesque life. A new image of the deity is made for the occasion. A skeleton of bamboo is bound round with muscles of straw. This is covered with flesh made of mud, from the bed of the Ganges, preferably. The body is painted in life-like colours, dressed with appropriate clothing, and adorned with paste jewels. At the appropriate moment the prayer of the Brahmin invokes the presence of the deity in the idol. Worship continues for the prescribed day or days. Then at sunset the image is carried to the river. After a noisy farewell the spirit of the deity departs, the image is stripped of its adornments and cast into the river, no longer a deity, but just a bundle of mud and straw.

These occasions are many—there are thirteen major festivals in the twelve months. There is the festival of Saraswati, the goddess of learning and music. All schools and colleges are closed, and each has its own private image of the goddess. No writing must be done that day, or if you have to write, it must not be with ordinary ink. The word in the scriptures for "ink" means "black," so if you use red ink it does not matter! All books and pens are brought to the goddess, to seek her blessing on the studies of the pupil for the year.

There is the all-night vigil of Siva. No image is made of him, but worship is paid to his phallic symbol in the shrine. Devotees "measure their length" on the ground again and again round the shrine, after bathing in the sacred pool. The spectacle of hundreds of pilgrims, men and women, jostling each other as they rise and fall on the pavement round the shrine is indescribable.

There is the annual festival of Jagannath, the "lord of the world." The deity is going to visit his aunt at the other end of the town, so his uncouth wooden image is brought out and enthroned on an enormous pyramidal car, like to the "royal car" in the circus processions that used to parade the streets of Britain long ago. A dozen long ropes are fastened to the car. There is a rush for the favour of drawing the car, a couple of hundred men seize the ropes, and rush forward with a yell. And in front a British police official solemnly stalks, lest any excited Hindu should fall beneath the wheels of the car. At intervals the car stops while priests receive the gifts of the faithful and carry on a vigorous trade in garlands which have been placed round the neck of the deity. A week later his annual holiday is over, and he returns in his car to his original temple.

Then there is the Durga Puja, the autumn festival of the ten-armed goddess, when all Bengal takes holiday. Everybody expects a new garment, there is feasting and worship and merriment for five glorious days, till Ma Durga takes her departure, and woe betide the country if she departs in anger on the wings of a cyclone.

On the darkest night, between the middle of October and the middle of November, Kali the Black One keeps her annual festival. The " right-handed " worship is but an enhanced repetition of the monthly worship described above. But this is the wildest night of the year for her " left-handed " worshippers, and in olden days it was not safe to be abroad on this night. But apart from this fear of actual physical violence there is a subtle psychological dread, for all the most malignant spirits are abroad. To scare them away, every house is lit up by tiny oil lamps, and fireworks are set off continuously. But just as in Britain the fifth of November is celebrated with little remembrance of its historical origin, so the *Diwali* becomes a mere happy festival of lights, with plenty of jolly fireworks to delight the youngsters.

This worship of the gods has in it little of the awed solemnity we associate with worship. The priests are casual to the point of irreverence, the worship is a din of drums and gongs and loud bells, the whole seems formless and unsatisfying. A new recruit to an Anglo-Catholic community who saw for the first time the immersion ceremony of the goddess Durga was heard to say: " Disappointing ; speaking as a ritualist I could do it so much better."

In addition to the great festivals, religion enters into every aspect of life. Marriage, the first solid meal given to a baby, the initiation ceremony when a Brahmin boy becomes the " twice-born," cremation, the memorial feast to the departed, all have their appropriate ceremonies. The priest must be consulted as to the auspicious day and time for a journey, for the admission of a boy to school, for making a business bargain. There are the morning prayers as the sun rises, the devotions before the daily bath, the sunset worship before the holy tulsi plant, the ringing of gongs and burning of incense before retiring to bed. When an eclipse occurs, there is incessant ringing of gongs and blowing of conch shells to drive away the demon who is devouring the sun or moon, all earthen vessels in the house must be broken, all cooked food thrown away, and all must bathe after the eclipse to remove the ceremonial defilement.

To see Hinduism in its most impressive form one must leave the great business centres. Go to Benares, with its great crescent of temples on the banks of the Ganges, its many bathing *ghats*, and the ceaseless cremation fires, for Benares is the holiest place in which to die. But notice here, too, one sinister sign. The most striking features of the skyline are the slender minarets of the Mohammedan mosque built by the fanatical zeal of the Emperor Aurangzeb. Go to Madura in South India, with its immense pyramidal temples, every square foot of which is covered with sculptured stories from the Hindu mythology. See Brindaban, with its 3,000 temples, the centre of the Krishna cult.

Or watch the flow of pilgrims—so many of the sacred sites are on the Ganges. See Hardwar, where the river breaks from the hills to start its journey down the great plain. For most this is the start of the pilgrimage. But hundreds of venturesome souls turn upstream, up through the mountain gorges to Baidyanath, on up to the eternal snows to the Gomukh—the " cow's mouth "—the ice cavern in the great glacier out of which trickles the infant Ganges.

But most go downstream to Benares, and to Allahabad, where the Ganges is joined visibly by the Jumna and invisibly by the mystic Saraswati, the hidden river seen only by the eye of faith. On certain rare conjunctions of the heavenly bodies the Kumbh Mela occurs at the junction of the rivers, when as many as 12,000,000 pilgrims gather. Proceed down to Kalighat in Calcutta. Then along the road to Diamond Harbour in mid-January, there to take boat or steamer to Ganga Sagar, where the holy Ganges meets the sea.

Watch the crowds swarming into Puri by train, bus, or on foot for the annual car festival. See the crowds which spring up as if by magic for a festival at some local shrine in the villages. Or travel by the Assam mail. At Goalundo you exchange your train for a steamer. As the vessel leaves the bank, you cross the spot where the Brahmaputra joins the Ganges. But the Brahmaputra is a god, and the Ganges a goddess, and this is the place of their marriage. You are travelling on the day in the Hindu calendar dedicated to their wedding, and so pious Hindus buy trayfuls of flowers and fruit, and cast them over the side of the steamer as presents to the bride and bridegroom.

There is, too, that other Hinduism, not recognised by the textbooks, those remnants of Animism which are the chief factors in the religion of the villages. You are travelling by boat along a river. There are sounds of music from the shore. You land to investigate and are just in time to witness the marriage of two trees. A pipul sapling is clothed in a man's *dhoti*, a banyan in a woman's *sari*, and the two are planted in one hole. Every item of the long marriage ceremony is repeated. The central point in a wedding is when the bride is led seven times round the bridegroom, and the corner of her garment is knotted to his. So here the banyan sapling is wound seven times round the pipul, and they are left to grow thus. This is perhaps the only time a Britisher has witnessed such a ceremony. But often you will see, as you follow a village path, a banyan growing with its main trunk twisted seven times round a pipul, and will recognise these as married trees. Here come the childless wives to pray for a son. Then there is that tree in the village, in which lives a potent spirit. If you spend a night in vigil under that tree—after giving an appropriate present to the priest who kindly looks after it for the spirit who lives in the tree—you will be healed of your disease, or win the lawsuit you are starting in the courts. And every bride has to be brought to the tree on her way to the wedding, and bow down very low to the spirit that lives in the tree. Otherwise, you see, the spirit will haunt her all the days of her married life.

You find a cactus growing under a banyan tree. In front of it is a row of earthen pots, and resting on each a green coco-nut daubed with rouge. Under another such tree will be a line of earthenware figures ; the head and shoulders of a man, painted white, with the features outlined in black and red. Little earthen horsemen face the tree. " Christmas tree " ornaments made of dyed pith and tinsel hang from the branches. All these are the symbols of the villagers' religion—prehistoric Animism surviving to-day, and absorbed into the all-embracing scheme of Hinduism.

What is the result of all this ? Everywhere there is the consciousness of the reality of the spirit world. Atheism is as foreign to the Hindu as to the Jew, and a materialistic philosophy of life is a recent importation from the West. The caste Hindu is often a man of great charm. His other-worldly religion gives him a poise and dignity rare in the West. The doctrine of Karma keeps him from the grosser sins. But his essential pessimism has in the past made him oblivious to the need for social reform. This statement needs modification in the light of recent changes which will be dealt with in a later chapter. There is little sense of sin other than as a breach of ceremonial regulations. There has been, too, until recently a cynical disregard of the interests of the lower castes. While the educated Hindu delights in abstract discussions of religious philosophy, he is content to leave to the " lesser breeds without the law " those animistic customs and dark cults which he himself despises. In his own family circle he gives a half-amused toleration to the idol worship in which he no longer believes, for the sake of the women who do believe and the children who find the ceremonies great fun. His power of absorbing contradictory ideas and his toleration of outworn customs have weakened his power of judgment. He sees no need to make a choice. His favourite motto is, " All roads lead to the same goal." When buying a railway ticket he is careful to choose the shortest route. In matters of religion it does not matter. We shall get there some time, somehow.

CHAPTER V

ISLAM

ISLAM is the religion of the Muslims. They object to the name " Mohammedan." They say that the Christian worships Christ, and so to call them Mohammedans would imply that they worship Mohammed. But to offer divine honours to any mortal is as abhorrent to them as to Jews.

Islam is an alien religion on Indian soil. In fact, it is the direct opposite of Hinduism. Hinduism permits the worship of many gods—or as the intellectual would say, of God in many forms—and the divinities in its pantheon are innumerable. But Islam is implacably monotheistic, absolutely unitarian. Hinduism has ceased to be missionary, and is essentially a " national " religion for the people of Hindusthan. Islam is intensely missionary, and truly international, for loyalty to Islam transcends national fealty. Hinduism was built on the steel frame of caste, but Islam recognises only two classes, the Muslim and the infidel.

There is much that is attractive in Islam. At dawn every day comes the high-pitched tenor call to prayer, " Hasten to worship. Come to prayer. Prayer is better than sleep." An eminent Muslim was presiding at a school prize distribution. As the sun was setting, he left the chair and asked for a quiet room where he might spread his mat and say his evening prayer. Five times every day comes the call to prayer, and it must be obeyed, whatever the work in hand. Then see the Muslims at their Friday prayers—long lines of worshippers with no class distinction : the Nawab may stand next to a servant, a millionaire to a beggar. One of their great festivals is an impressive sight. In Calcutta, Dharamtala, one of the main streets, is closed to traffic for hours while the Muslims fill it in relays, serried ranks of men in their best clothes, standing, kneeling and prostrating in unison. A huge overflow gathering fills a large part of the Maidan, the city's largest park. But if the festival is the *Bakr-Id*, what are they celebrating? Listen to Mr. Jinnah, the President of the Muslim League: " When Abraham—peace be upon his soul—was ordered by Allah to give in sacrifice in the name of Allah that which he held dearest to his heart, Abraham willingly and readily offered to sacrifice his most beloved son, Ishmael." And so, to celebrate God's intervention on behalf of Ishmael, the Muslim sacrifices a goat or a camel, according to his means. Islam is a religion which followed Christianity. It claims to correct and supersede both Judaism and Christianity. It has been our strongest competitor for the allegiance of backward races.

Mohammed was a camel driver, who led the caravans of Khadijah, a wealthy woman, to many a market. He was accepted in marriage by Khadijah, and so long as she lived, he was a single-minded reformer. He was an epileptic, and when his fits assailed him, he saw visions, and great religious messages, clothed in superb Arabic, flooded his mind. He was disgusted with the crude idolatry of his Arabian homeland, and had a burning passion for true religion. He believed it must be incorporated in a book. So he went to the Jews, who were the People of the Book. He absorbed the matchless tales from their book, but gave them a patriotic twist. To him, Ishmael was the heir of promise, and his seed the Arabs, the chosen race.

Mohammed then went to the Christians, the other People of the Book. His eager heart was thrilled with the story of Jesus. He accepted Him as the greatest of the Prophets, the only Sinless One, born of a Virgin. And here is one of the tragic "ifs" of history. If only Mohammed had found an eager missionary Church with a pure faith, the fire lit by him which quickly blazed across three continents might have been a new surge of expansion of the faith of Christ. But the Christians he met were decadent and divided, they could not explain to him why Christ must needs die for us on Calvary, and their doctrine and practice were so muddled that he got the notion that the Trinity consisted of the Father, the Son and the Virgin Mary. He could only give to this relationship a physical meaning, against which his whole soul revolted. So he preached most strenuously that God was one and undivided, that an Incarnation was impossible, and the death of the Sinless Prophet on the Cross incredible. His knowledge of Greek was very imperfect. He took the term "paraclete" to be a similar word meaning "glorious," an epithet applied to himself by his followers. So he declared that he was the Comforter foretold by Jesus and the final exponent of the true religion.

The oracles declaimed by Mohammed in his times of vision were recorded on "palm leaves, skins, blade-bones, and the hearts of men." After his death they were classified, not in the order of their utterance, but according to their length. They form the *Quran*, reverenced by Muslims as the infallible word of God, dictated to the prophet by the angel Gabriel. So they, too, are the People of a Book.

The new faith spread like fire—across North Africa, wiping out the great historic Christian Churches of Augustine and Cyprian, over the Straits into Spain and France, across Europe to the gates of Vienna, eastward to India, Malaya and China.

Islam entered India with the Muslim invaders. The invaders settled in North India, their numbers becoming less as they travelled east and south. The descendants of the invaders still form the Muslim aristocracy, but the great majority of the Muslims of India are really converts from Hinduism. There were many cases of forcible conversion. The majority, however, were willing converts to the faith of the conquerors. There were many reasons for these conversions. One well-known Muslim family in Bengal traces its descent from a Brahmin who strayed near a Muslim feast and smelt the odour of cooking beef. For this sin he was ostracised by his Brahmin relatives. So he decided to do the thing properly. He went back, ate the beef and became a Muslim. Many of the converts were " rice Muslims," who changed their faith for what they could get. To the untouchables Islam offered admission to a casteless brotherhood, and whole tribes of outcastes, particularly in Bengal, embraced Islam in a monster mass movement.

Muslim rule was never so firm in South India, and the extent of Islam is much less there. However, Hyderabad is the largest of the Indian States, and its ruler, the Nizam, ranks as the senior of the Indian princes.

There is much that is attractive in this religion of Islam. Its creed is a simple and intense conviction of the reality and majesty of God. He is revealed in nature, in the teachings of the prophets, and above all through Mohammed and the revelation vouchsafed to him. He is an absolute monarch, " the King of the Day of Judgment." " He is the Compassionate, the Merciful, but His mercy knows no law, He spares whom He will." Religion is submission, " Islam," and the faithful who submit are Muslims. Whatever happens is God's will; predestination is absolute. The Judgment and the last things—Resurrection and a very physical Heaven and

Hell—are tremendous realities. The Christian duties of prayer, fasting and almsgiving were given great importance also by Mohammed. Wine, gambling and usury are forbidden. The Government of India has separate issues of bonds bearing no interest for the benefit of the orthodox Muslims.

For four weeks every year the Muslim abstains from food and drink from sunrise to sunset. This is not a fast in the Christian sense, for the Muslim during the " fast " eats freely after sunset, at midnight, and before sunrise, and probably consumes more food in this way than in normal times. But the fast during the daylight hours is rigid and most exacting.

Another obligation is to make the pilgrimage to Mecca. The Government of India controls the issue of steamer tickets for these pilgrimages, and a number of ships are chartered each year from India alone. In normal times the total number arriving in Mecca each year is 100,000.

But there is something very hard about the Muslim. The brotherhood of Islam is for the Muslim alone, and the Muslim must always strive first for the good of his brother Muslims. The infidel merits no consideration. Then, too, the Muslim seems to possess a quickness of temper, which makes him a great warrior, but makes it easier for him to take the law into his own hands. But the touchstone of the religion is its attitude to the Cross. A Bengali Reader was submitted to the Government Textbook Committee for approval. It included a few chapters of " moral teaching," giving the lives of Ram, Buddha, Jesus and Mohammed. The life of Jesus started off with warm appreciation of his life and teaching. But when describing the Passion, it related how Jesus fell under the weight of the Cross, which was placed upon Simon of Cyrene. It was Simon who climbed the hill to Calvary, and Simon who was crucified, while Jesus slipped away through the crowds, and wandered off to Kashmir, where His grave is shown to this day! To the Muslim the Cross is a stumbling block, and so he denies the hard fact. The Cross never existed, so there is no Redeemer from sin, no Risen Christ to destroy the power of sin and death. Herein lies its fundamental weakness. No religion which denies the Cross and the Resurrection can survive.

This is the religion of 250,000,000 people—and a third of them live in India. The greatest Muslim country in the world is not Arabia or Turkey or Egypt, but India. 94,000,000 of her people are Muslims, one-fourth of the whole. It is in India that the Muslim is most accessible and least fanatical. If Indian Islam could be won for Christ, the rest of the Muslim world would probably follow. But work among Muslims is difficult, and missions tend to follow the line of least resistance. We have not given sufficient emphasis to evangelistic work among Muslims. Where the attempt has been made, the results have been noteworthy and there are many keen Christians in India to-day who came from the Muslim fold. The Muslim is the key to the political problem in India, and a standing challenge to the Christian evangel.

CHAPTER VI

ANIMISM

IN our study of Hinduism we saw how the cults of fear and the medley of strange and unholy rites of the aboriginals gradually crept into the Hinduism of the Aryan invaders. We found, too, the prevalence of tree worship, especially of married trees, and the general sense of uneasiness in the presence of innumerable spirits of evil. All these are traces of Animism which have survived in popular Hinduism. We must now look more closely at this Animism, for under this head come the tribal religions, professed by at least 8,000,000 of the people of India, a very considerable minority, to whom far too little attention has been paid in the political discussions of recent years.

When the Aryans invaded India, they appear to have absorbed many of the original inhabitants of the country, who became the Sudras. But whole sections of the people were crushed into servitude as menials; these became the outcastes. Many tribes refused to submit to the invaders and fled to the hills where they still remain as the aboriginal tribes.

These carefree folk who live so close to nature are found in the forest regions. Short of stature, often with a flower tucked into their hair or behind their ears, it is frequently difficult for the outsider to tell whether they are men or women. They are great hunters, learned in all jungle lore, and skilled in the use of bows and arrows. Many of them have no settled villages. A group of families will come to a patch of virgin forest, cut down and remove the trees of good size, and burn down the rest of the jungle. The ground thus covered with wood ash becomes richly fertile. They sow their seeds—rice, maize, cotton, and marigolds. They make temporary houses, and reap rich crops till the strength of the ground is worn out, when they move to another jungle. The women weave all their garments, from cotton they have grown, spun, woven and dyed themselves. Each tribe has its own distinctive pattern. Their tribal life is often on a matriarchal basis. A man on marriage goes to live in his mother-in-law's home. The grandmother is the ruler of the family, and if a man's help is required for warfare or a lawsuit, the wife appeals to her elder brother or maternal uncle, and not to her husband. Children take the surname of their mother and not of their father. The Church has lost a golden opportunity, for when groups from these matriarchal tribes became Christian, we might have had churches organised entirely with women pastors and elders. As it is, the women rule everywhere—except in the Church !

These tribesfolk number 25,441,489. About 8,000,000 are classified as professing tribal religions of an Animist type. At least a million are Christians. A considerably lesser number are Buddhists and Muslims. This leaves about 16,000,000 as adherents of the Hindu faith, but their Hinduism is merely a thin veneer over the Animism which is bred in their bones. The B.M.S. has growing churches gathered from the animistic tribes, among the Konds in Orissa, the Garos, Santals, Oraons, Mundas and Chakmas in Bengal, and the Lushais in Assam.

The tribal folk are very suspicious of the plainsmen, who are constantly encroaching on the tribal jungle. Where a tribe settles down and acquires land, the plainsmen often cheat them of their rights. The tribes are at the mercy of the more subtle moneylenders and shopkeepers of the plains. They are peoples apart who do not fit into the modern political scheme of things. Government has recognised this, and many of the tribal areas are "non-regulation districts" where the usual complications of government are not observed. Instead, a British superintendent exercises a patriarchal, benevolent autocracy through the tribal chiefs. Unfortunately, Government, while shielding them from the wiles of the plainsmen, has failed to train them in democracy. In the struggle between the Hindu and Muslim for the loaves and fishes of political power, few crumbs will remain for the tribes. They may not receive sympathetic treatment from the city-bred politicians. Attempts may be made to weaken their tribal systems, and to replace the tribal language by that of the province. Far-seeing statesmanship of the highest order will be needed by the missionaries working among these communities, to ensure that their rights are safeguarded and that they are helped to secure their just position in the new India.

The religion of these tribes is similar to that of all primitive peoples. Animism is a belief that external things possess life akin to man's, and that there are spirits everywhere present in nature. These spirits are specially found in three places: (*a*) in trees; (*b*) in streams, springs and other water; (*c*) in stones of certain shapes.

The movement of trees gives the impression of life. Hence the belief that a spirit lives in the tree. So certain trees come to be regarded as holy: the banyan, because of its strange power of throwing down rootlets which become new stems; the pipul, because of the constant quivering of its leaves in the lightest breeze; and the cactus, because of its strange, almost human shape. Little gifts are brought to the foot of the tree—green coco-nuts daubed with vermilion, painted pots and model horsemen. Tassels of coloured pith hang from the boughs. Such trees are fearsome places at night, and few will pass one alone. But if a man has the courage to spend a whole night in vigil before the tree, and thus defy the fear of the spirit, he can demand what he will of the spirit who lives in the tree. So we may find people suffering from incurable diseases left all night under a tree. Or a man who has started a lawsuit will sit all night under it, with the object of securing success at the courts.

A spring with its sudden and continuous bubbling up of water from nowhere ; the ceaseless movement of a hill-stream, and the gurgling sound it makes as it leaps among the rocks : all these are signs of life, and so springs and streams become objects of reverence. So a string of coloured flags is stretched across the river ; a lovely little doll's house is erected on the bank for the spirit to live in ; food is placed by the side, and flower-petals are scattered on its waters.

There is no sign of movement about a stone, so why is that revered ? The appearance of a stone may be striking or unusual. It is often shaped like a hand or a knee, or a footmark seems to be embedded in it—the divine footprint. A stone with a phallic resemblance is especially revered as an emblem of fertility, particularly if it is found in the stoneless regions of the deltas. A standing stone is taken to be a man, and so in the Khasi Hills whole families of tall straight stones are set up, with flat stones placed in front to represent the women reclining. There are holy mountains, and their summit is the holy of holies.

These spirits have power to help or harm, and so they deserve to be propitiated. It can hardly be said that the spirits are worshipped, for there is little love or reverence in the ceremonies. It is rather the bribery of a capricious, malevolent power, in order to curry favour with him, and to secure his help against others.

The fetish idea is not common in India, but the potency of the talisman is everywhere accepted. A few mysterious signs scrawled on a scrap of paper and inserted in a little copper tube worn on a string above the left elbow will preserve from many evils. If a puncture is made beneath the knee and the sore is kept open by a constantly renewed bandage, the rheumatism will escape.

The fear of ghosts—the spirits of the departed—is universal. Death is so tragic and blasting when there is no sure and certain hope of a glorious resurrection. The departed spirits have such potency. They must be encouraged to hasten their departure to the dim abodes, and so, for some days after death, food must be provided to help them on their journey. A cremation ground is saturated with disembodied spirits. So the man who wants spiritual power will sit all night at the cremation ground with a skull in his hand. After that, he fears no spirit.

All sickness is due to the spirits, and certain forms of illness are indications of their presence, particularly cases of epilepsy, trances or hysteria. This last is a sure sign of demon possession and so is the dull stony stare of the mentally depressed. The strange behaviour of a mentally defective shows that he is particularly susceptible to spirit influence, and so the madman is treated with considerable respect.

Omens are most important. An egg will be cracked by a light blow from a ceremonial hammer, and the resulting shape of the cracked shell, and the disposition of the yoke will have great significance (*cf.* telling fortunes by tea-leaves !). The entrails of a fowl are studied, as with the ancient Romans.

Ceremonial dancing plays a large part in the life of these people. This is not performed in couples as in the

West, but each sex dances alone. Sometimes these dances are acted plays at hunting, love, or war. At other times they are solemn rhythmic posturings, monotonous and tedious to Western eyes. Intoxicants, including rice-beer, often play a large part in corporate religious festivals.

These people have a belief in a Being who is far above the spirits who are their daily concern. The grandeur of the mountains, the beauty of sunrise and sunset, of the clouds and the stars, the loveliness and perfume of their forest flowers, suggest a benignant Oversoul, though he is too remote for any real communion with themselves.[1] There is always this recognition of a Supreme Being or Creator. The name of God is shrouded in complete ignorance. To the Animist, God is a God afar off. He has no knowledge of God as the essence of Love, and when asked why he does not worship God instead of the spirits, he will say : " We do not know what food He eats, and how can we offer Him sacrifice ? "[2]

" The significance of the Creator for religious feeling has fallen into the background. The mysterious powers of nature are more considered because more feared. Their worship narrows the religious horizon. To the Animist what threatens most danger demands most careful service and propitiation " (Warneck). So the cairns and tree shrines and the riverside habitations of the spirits, are constantly blood-sprinkled either in propitiation or prevention.

> " Usually it is the blood of fowls which is used. But to avert the graver woes of epidemics like smallpox or ruined harvests, some tribes believed that far more solemn sacrifices had to be made. Malignant enmities that expressed themselves in such com-

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[1] S. P. Carey : *Dawn on the Kond Hills*, p. 13.

[2] H. A. Evan Hopkins : *The Inadequacy of Non-Christian Religions*, pp. 44–5

munal calamities could only be propitiated by the blood-shedding, not of fowls or goats, or even buffaloes, but of men ; and in a way most portentous. A hundred years ago, the Konds contrived to procure such human victims, for the most part through secret agents from the plains, and to get them kidnapped to their hills. Not prisoners of war, nor criminals worthy of death ; but innocent men, women and children, for whom they were prepared to pay a price, the purchasing making the purchased, as they reckoned, their absolute possession, and absolving them from consequent guilt. Frequently these victims, or *Meriahs*, as they were called, were children, and were nurtured until they were at least seven, though all the time they were marked for the slaughter. When the fearsome rites were due, the folk of the sacrificing district would flock together for a three-days' festival, and there would be much eating and drinking and dancing. On the penultimate day the victim, decorated with forest flowers, would be led in procession, accompanied by music, dance and song. On the morrow he or she would be anointed with turmeric and oil, and, if the folk were merciful, would be stupefied with drink or drugs ; and, when bound or with elbows and knees broken, would amid great excitement be knocked senseless by the blow of a priest's axe, which would be the signal for the general rush. In a few seconds the flesh would be cleft from the bones, and the precious portions would be carried post-haste to fields in each village for burial, as the guarantee of a good harvest. When their villages were remote and hard to reach, a relay of runners was arranged, because, to be efficacious the flesh had need to be buried before the set of the sun.

> The *Meriah's* face and head and bones were buried where they fell, and the day after the sacrifice the *Meriah* would be mourned."[1]

The British had to send a force to the Kond Hills to stamp out this practice in 1854.

Nothing can more clearly reveal the awful power of the fear of evil spirits than such a practice as human sacrifice. These tribal peoples are naturally cheery and friendly, and such cruelties are entirely unnatural to them. They can only explain great natural calamities as being due to the malevolence of most potent demons. To avert such calamities the tribe must sacrifice of its best. They dare not approach the heights of Abraham's intention, and offer in sacrifice a son of their own, and so a man must be purchased, or captured in battle for the purpose. Government punitive action greatly restricted such practices, but it has only been by the spread of Christianity amongst the Konds and the Lushais that this evil has finally been uprooted.

Not all the tribes were guilty of human sacrifice. But all are in the grip of this all-pervasive fear of the unseen spirits, till " the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the Image of God, shines among them " and " delivers them who through fear were all their lifetime subject to bondage." " There is no fear in love ; but perfect love casteth out fear : because fear hath torment."

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[1] S. P. Carey : *Dawn on the Kond Hills*, pp. 14–15.

CHAPTER VII

CHRISTIANITY COMES TO INDIA

ON November 11th, 1793, little more than a year after the foundation of the B.M.S., Dr. Thomas and William Carey landed in Calcutta from a country boat in which they had travelled up the Hooghly. Nobody noticed their arrival, and they mingled with the crowds and were lost to public notice. Thus unobtrusively began the modern missionary movement in India.

Within a month Carey was compelled to seek a cheaper place of residence than Calcutta and went northward to Bandel. Here he stood in front of a Roman Catholic church built 200 years before he landed, and here he met the Swedish missionary Kiernander, then eighty-five years old, and nearing the end of a long life of missionary service. Thus early Carey was brought face to face with the fact that Christianity had already a long history in India.

Tradition relates that both Bartholomew and Thomas among the apostles came to India. About Bartholomew we have only a beautiful legend. Some historians have dismissed the visit of Thomas also as legendary. But opinion is strengthening in the direction of the actual historicity of his work in India, and of his burial at St. Thomas' Mount near Madras. Whether this be true or not, there has been a considerable Christian community in South-west India since the early Christian centuries. Its members have kept unbroken their connection with the ancient Church of Antioch, their Patriarch is always appointed from Antioch, and their beautiful liturgy is in Syriac. Throughout the centuries they have been a self-supporting Church and, until the nineteenth century, sustained their work and ministry with no aid from foreign missions. By Carey's time this Church had become stagnant, had ceased to evangelise, and was recognised by the Hindus as a sort of Christian caste, native to the country. During the past century there have been sad divisions in the Syrian community, but also encouraging revivals, in which Serampore College has taken its share. At Serampore nowadays there are always a number of deacons of the Syrian Church, in their white cassocks, reading in the theological classes. The Rev. C. E. Abraham, Vice-Principal of the College, who recently went to China as an Exchange Professor, is a member of the Syrian community. Others are holding positions of leadership in India. There are now 1,000,000 Christians in the State of Travancore, and a third of the people of that State are Christians.

The library of Serampore College includes a treasure, of which only one other copy exists in the world. It is a book in Arabic prepared by the Jesuits to explain Christianity to the Emperor Akbar. This brings us to the next impact of Christianity on India. St. Francis Xavier began his meteoric evangelistic career in 1542. Fired with the vision of the need of the world, he set out to win souls for the Church as quickly as possible. He came to India and preached fervently with considerable success, winning many converts in South India. Then he left for Japan and China and an early death. The Portuguese brought priests with them wherever they settled in India after Xavier's visit, and some of these displayed evangelistic zeal.

At this time Akbar was Emperor of India. He was the greatest of the Muslim rulers, with a strongly religious bias to his many-sided character. On the arch he built at Fatehpur is engraved : " So said Jesus, upon whom be peace. The world is a bridge ; pass over it, but build no house upon it." This interest in the words of Jesus was destined to grow. Fitch, the British Ambassador, reported that Akbar's capital was "a city larger than London." Akbar built a "Hall of Worship" to which he invited representatives of the Hindus and Muslims for religious debates.

Just then Portuguese missionaries arrived in Bengal. Some of their converts had defrauded the Government. The priests refused them absolution and declined to help them. This so greatly impressed Akbar, that in 1578 he sent for the Vicar-General. The latter sent two Jesuits, who joined in the debates in the Hall of Worship, and presented the book of which Serampore has a copy. Akbar was greatly attracted by the priests, and spent many hours with them. Again we have one of the great "ifs" of history. If only Akbar had been baptized he might have been a second Constantine, making Christianity the state religion of the Muslim Empire in India. Just then, however, Queen Elizabeth sent her ambassador Mildenhall to Akbar's court. The Jesuits were furious at this embassy from the heretic Queen and denounced Mildenhall. This quarrel between the Christians disgusted Akbar. He then formulated an eclectic religion of his own, the Divine Faith, with himself as Pope. The Jesuits became more overbearing and tried to control Akbar's actions. The emperor resented this, and gradually lost interest in Christianity. So passed another great opportunity.

The first Christian book in Bengali was written by a Roman Catholic missionary in East Bengal. The language was Bengali, but the script was Roman, and it was printed in Lisbon. This book in a foreign script was naturally not attractive to the Bengali, and the book itself was lost and forgotten in India. It was only recently that copies were discovered in Lisbon and reprinted. The book has now only an historical interest, as evidence of an attempt to spread the faith in Bengali long before Carey's time.

The Roman Catholics paid chief attention to the "Portuguese," the population of mixed blood later known as Anglo-Indians. They tended to neglect the vernacular, and gave Portuguese surnames to the Indians they baptized. Those Indian converts who were worthy of higher education became absorbed in the "Portuguese" or Anglo-Indian community. The remaining Indian converts have made singularly little progress.

Over 220 years ago the King of Denmark became concerned about the evangelisation of the people of his Eastern settlements. He sent Ziegenbalg to Tranquebar and later Schwartz. These devoted missionaries had considerable success which expanded outside the Danish settlements. But they made one fatal mistake—they admitted caste distinctions within the Church. As the Danish settlements were occupied by the British, the work of these missionaries was taken over by the Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge. Kiernander moved on into Bengal. But he never learnt Bengali, and worked entirely among the "Portuguese" and a few Indians who knew that language. His work in the old Mission Church in Calcutta still endures, but he never tackled the Bengalis. The Moravians had attempted to establish a mission in Serampore, but it proved an utter failure, and they soon withdrew.

So Carey was led to ponder the arrested growth and frequent failures of previous efforts to evangelise India. The causes were patent: services in a foreign tongue, decay of evangelistic zeal, neglect of Christian literature, failure to provide education in the vernacular, denationalisation, and the recognition of caste. Carey paid due heed to these warnings, and he was careful to avoid these dangers in all the plans he made.

CHAPTER VIII

THE SERAMPORE COVENANT

AFTER many wanderings, Carey settled in North Bengal. The "consecrated cobbler" had become an indigo planter as his only means of remaining in India under a government which feared the results of missionary activity. Even here, however, his position was precarious, and his licence was liable to be revoked at any moment if his missionary efforts showed any signs of success. Marshman and Ward came out to join him, but were not allowed to enter the East India Company's territory. They were offered asylum in Serampore, and in 1799 persuaded Carey to join them there. So, banished by their compatriots, they found refuge in the old town on the banks of the Hooghly in the territory of the Danish Settlement. Five undisturbed years had consolidated the friendship of that great trio, Carey the translator, Marshman the schoolmaster and Ward the printer, with the erratic help of Dr. Thomas. Other families were joining them. They lived as one family, sharing their meals and their social life in the large central room of their house, which is now the Mission Church at Serampore. The arrival of these new recruits and the baptism of a number of converts made it necessary to formulate some programme as the basis of their efforts. So on October 7th, 1805, they met in their common dining-room, and framed that Covenant which has been the inspiration and guide of missionaries ever since. We give a summary of its main points :

1. To set an infinite value on men's souls.

2. To acquaint ourselves with the snares which hold the minds of the people.
3. To abstain from whatever deepens India's prejudices against the Gospel.
4. To watch for every chance of doing the people good.
5. To preach " Christ Crucified " as the grand means of conversions.
6. To esteem and treat Indians always as our equals.
7. To guard and build up " the hosts that may be gathered."
8. To cultivate their spiritual gifts, ever pressing upon them their missionary obligation — since Indians only can win India for Christ.
9. To labour unceasingly in Biblical translation.
10. To be instant in the nurture of personal religion.
11. To give ourselves without reserve to the Cause, " not counting even the clothes we wear our own."

Comment on this Covenant seems to be an impertinence. The language is so straightforward and simple, the message so searching, that in reading it the obvious urge is to bow in prayer.

Suffice it to say that the Covenant contains within it the seed of all subsequent fruitful developments of missionary work :

1. The paramount duty of evangelism, and the delicacy of the task.
2. Study of the religions of the people.
3. Positive proclamation of Christian truth rather than attacks on other religions.
4. Medical, educational, social welfare, industrial, agricultural, co-operative credit.

5. Absolute loyalty to the message of the Cross and Resurrection.

6. Utter disregard of colour prejudice, and happy fellowship with Indians.

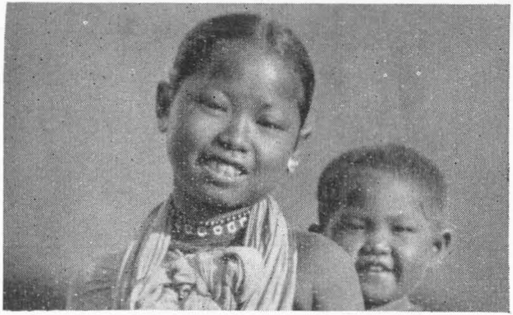
7. The education of the Christian community and the organisation and development of the Church.

8. The Church centric, devolution, the transfer of work to the control of the Indian Church, theological training, summer schools, co-operation in evangelism.

9. Bible translation and revision, the production and distribution of Christian literature, and adult literacy work, increasingly under Indian auspices.

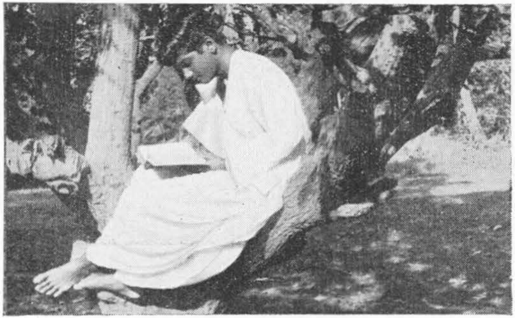
We shall now watch the Covenant working itself out in Missionary Method.

TYPES OF PEOPLE

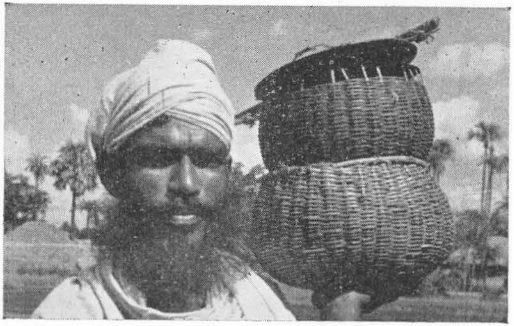


HILL TRIBE HOPEFULS

A YOUNG SANTAL



A STUDENT



A BENGAL FISHERMAN

CHRISTIAN GIRL STUDENTS: TEACHERS OF TO-MORROW

BERHAMPUR HOSPITAL STAFF

CHAPTER IX

EVANGELISM

"To set an infinite value on men's souls."

"To preach 'Christ Crucified' as the grand means of conversions."

10th November 1793: Carey listens to Dr. Thomas preaching in a Bengali village.

WHEN Carey and Thomas, in November 1793, reached the Sandheads, where ships pick up the pilot at the mouth of the Hooghly, they were advised to leave the vessel on which they had travelled from England, since they had no landing licence. They and their goods were transferred to a country boat, in which they travelled up to Calcutta. On the way they tied up at a village while the tide was against them. They took advantage of this stop to go to a near-by village. When Thomas addressed the people in Bengali, a crowd soon gathered, and Thomas preached to them for three hours. At the close, with characteristic Indian hospitality, one of his hearers invited the Englishmen to his house and spread mats on the verandah for them to sit on. With banana leaves for plates, they ate a meal of curry and rice with their fingers. Thus early they began their work of preaching the Gospel and experienced the natural courtesy of the Indian to a teacher of religion. If a missionary is able to travel light, and to eat the food of the country, he is assured of hospitality almost anywhere, and can gain those intimate contacts which only come when the food of the house is shared.

With all their preoccupations with translation, printing and other work, the Serampore missionaries were constantly making opportunities to get among the people and to proclaim the message. Ward describes an open-air meeting which still is true to type.

> " There is a great deal of patience and self-denial required in collecting our congregations, and bearing with all their interruptions and wanderings. You stand by the side of a street or a lane, a man passes, you ask him how he does, or whither he is going. Sometimes he replies, at others he will go on, taking no notice of you. Sometimes he will stay till he has heard your message, and then sets off. If he stops, another stops, and another, and so on till a congregation is gathered. When you are in the middle of your discourse, half of them perhaps sheer off—some more come—a Brahmin interrupts you with a question. Perhaps one will answer, ' Sahib's words are very fine.' He will then make his salaam and depart. I suppose Brother Carey has preached a thousand sermons to such congregations as this."

Soon, as their stock of Christian hymns increased, a hymn would be sung to attract a crowd. " I feel like a ballad-monger at a fair," says Ward, " singing my wares."

Such open air preaching is still carried on. We stand at a corner and, with our helpers, sing a lilting tune. Then one of us gives a talk in the local dialect, with plenty of illustrations. Next comes an interval for the sale of Scripture portions and distribution of tracts. It is better to slip a tract into a Scripture portion for which a man has paid his copper. A man may ask a question or start a debate and we lead him aside for a quiet talk. Finally we tell the crowd where any interested may hear more of this matter. This process is repeated till the crowds thin out or the workers are weary.

The great religious festivals give a big opportunity for broadcasting the message. Usually the din near the centre of things is too great for our purpose, so we move a little distance, where it is easier to be heard, while relays of speakers proclaim the evangel and sell portions. Often at such festivals it is possible to hire a shed as a book-room and centre for the preaching work. In many places we have preaching halls into which we can call people from the street and, with fewer interruptions and in greater quiet, give the message.

All such broadcasting of the message is only a beginning, useful as a means of making contacts. Hearers who are interested will be led to come for further talks in private, and it is then that the real work begins, the delicate task of leading a man to wholehearted surrender to the Christ crucified. It has many disappointments, but is richly rewarding when the light breaks and a soul is won.

Our schools help in the work of evangelism. We contact a man of position whose sons are day-boys in the school. He readily responds to our request to put his courtyard at our disposal. The boys with their orchestra line up. There is our portable harmonium. It is light and is carried on a strap round the neck, and has the bellows at the back. Indian music has no harmonies, so the air can be played with the right hand, the left hand blows the bellows while the player marches and sings, all at the same time. Another instrument is the drum, with two ends, giving a higher and lower note respectively, played with the hands to give that intricate rhythm which is the basis of Indian music. A violin, a pair of cymbals, and a gong, and there is our orchestra. The players lead on through the village, followed by the boys singing hymns with a good lilting tune, and as we pass each homestead, we invite the people to join us. Arrived at our destination, the lantern and screen are set up, and the Gospel story is told by picture and song. Often when the pictures of the Crucifixion appear on the screen exclamations of dismay will be made by the audience, and some will be quietly weeping.

Where the Christian community has been built up from Hindu sects who rejoiced in singing the praises of their gods, this gift is sanctified and translated into Christian terms. Each Christian village has its singing party, and the local teacher prepares the book of words for their home-made oratorio, written in an exercise book. In the interval after the crops are cut and before ploughing begins for the new season, the farmers have a free time, and these parties wander from village to village, singing the Gospel. They can be confident of securing a good crowd, for like the Welsh, the Indian villager is easily captured by song. Sometimes these singers give a surprising twist to the message. A choir whose oratorio had started with the birth of Jesus had got as far as the woman of Samaria. The soloist recited, "Woman, go fetch thy husband," and then signalled to the choir to come in with a chorus. This is what they sang :

"Woman, go fetch thy husband,
  You'll never get into heaven alone.
Man, go fetch thy friend,
  You'll never get into heaven alone.
Nobody will be allowed into heaven
  Unless they bring somebody else."

Not the usual interpretation of John iv., but that writer had learned something about evangelism !

Nowadays the Provincial Christian Councils arrange a week of witness for each province. The churches in each area combine for a full week's programme. Open-air meetings, singing parties, women's meetings, magic lantern, a book fair, all have their part. On the final day there is a Procession of Witness, when the ministers and people of every church march with banners and singing through the main streets to a central spot for a final address and benediction. Such a procession is invariably treated with great respect. On one occasion the Procession of Witness clashed with the *Holi Festival*, the wildest Hindu Saturnalia. When the Christian procession appeared, the leading revellers themselves cleared a way, and their ribaldry was suspended until we had passed.

All these are methods of making contacts. When people in any area show a receptive spirit, that is the time for more concentrated effort. The missionaries go to the rest house in the centre and give consecutive teaching to the people. After this a meeting is held to clinch the matter, when the enquirers offer to build a school if we will supply a teacher. They promise, too, to give him a house and build a place of worship. A group of angry Hindus comes along to protest. They stand at the edge of the crowd. They expect to hear us offering financial inducements to the people. Instead they find us asking the people what they can do to support their own work. They hear no abuse of Hinduism, but a clear proclamation of the Suffering Saviour. They are perplexed and unsettled as to what to do next, and then we meet their leaders and ask them what objections they have to our message and methods. We challenge them : "What have you Hindus done for these people ? Then why should you object when we try to uplift them ?" Sometimes opposition is disarmed. Often it flares up and the enquirers have to endure a serious testing-time.

At last some have the courage to venture all for their new faith. In the open air, in full view of their neighbours they sit down to a meal with Christians—they have symbolically broken caste. They are finally accepted into the Christian community.

Those who have found this new loyalty to Christ are proud to tell their friends in the way He ordained. There is no need to take up the planks in front of the pulpit to uncover the baptistery. In the open, in a river or canal, or in a wide bathing pool, with the whole village looking on, the minister stands, the candidates step into the water, and the great transaction is sealed by a proud profession.

It is sometimes considered wise to wait for a period of further teaching before the new converts receive their first Communion. That is a tremendous occasion for the converts and for the presiding minister. We talk of " showing forth the Lord's death till He come "—but imagine the thrill of showing it forth for the first time in a village where this sacred acted parable has never been seen before. As we came out of a new church, built by a group of low-caste converts, one of the women said, " Why, we are all one family now ! " Indian and British, Hindu, Mohammedan, high caste, low caste, all our distinctions are forgotten as we meet at the Lord's table, partake of one Bread, share the same Cup. We are all one family now at the table of the Lord of All.

CHAPTER X

THE WRITTEN WORD

" *To labour unceasingly in Biblical translation.*"

March 5th, 1801 : Bengali New Testament laid on the Communion Table at Serampore.

CAREY learnt wisdom from the failures of his missionary predecessors. Kiernander never learnt Bengali, and so failed to make any impression on Bengal, apart from the Portuguese. The Roman Catholics printed their Bengali book in the Roman character, and so it was forgotten. Carey determined to use the vernacular speech written in Indian characters. His intense confidence in the Bible as the Sword of the Spirit compelled him to put the translation of the Scriptures in the forefront of all his efforts. It is significant that the familiar portrait of Carey shows him at work with his *pandit.* That portrait reminds us that translation is team-work. No British missionary with any sense prints his own compositions in any Indian language. He translates the ideas, and his Indian colleague provides the adequate Indian dress for those ideas. Carey's joy was so great when he bought an old press for £40 that his workmen in the indigo factory thought this new contraption was a European idol. Much greater was his joy when he was joined by Ward, an expert printer and publisher, the man whom he with canny foresight had earmarked for India before he sailed.

As soon as they arrived at Serampore, the press was set up and founts of Bengali type were prepared. In 1800 their first Bengali publication appeared—a tract called *The Gospel Messenger.* There had been a few books printed in Bengali before, but these were official publications with a very limited circulation. Ward's type was a great improvement on the previous rough characters, and it was really the Serampore Press which laid the foundation of Bengali prose. This is freely admitted by Bengali scholars, and there is a widely known saying: "Carey, Marshman and Ward are to be remembered every morning." The tract was followed by the New Testament, laid on the Communion Table as the fruit of eight years of strenuous labour.

While Scripture translation went on apace, Carey was quick to see the need for other books. He published his *Bengali Grammar*, the second of its kind, but incomparably superior to its predecessor, and the model for all grammars of the language for the next half century. Carey found that Bengali literature was confined to poetry; all prose works were in Sanskrit. He determined to produce prose for the common people in their household tongue. So he published his *Colloquies*, a book of short stories, the first fiction in Bengali prose. He arranged for translations into Bengali from Sanskrit works. At the same time he encouraged original works based on Sanskrit originals. Ram Ram Basu's *Pratapaditya* was the beginning of serious Bengali prose literature. He anticipated *Everyman* by publishing the *Mahabharata* in pocket volumes.

Not only in Bengali, but in every Indian language for which he could secure a *pandit*, he began the translation of the Scriptures. His methods, in his eager haste, savoured almost of mass production. Ward describes the scene when the Marquis and Marchioness of Hastings and the Bishop of Calcutta visited the Press.

> "They entered the room, in which about thirty learned Hindus were sitting in silence, and translating the sacred writings each in his own tongue. They all arose to receive their distinguished visitors. Dr.

> Carey presented to the Governor-General of India, and to the learned Bishop, these translators of the Holy Scriptures, one by one, from Afghanistan, from Guzurat, from Cashmere, from Telinga, from Nepal, from Assam, from China, etc., etc., etc."

By this time other societies were at work and Carey took every opportunity of associating himself with them. The Calcutta Auxiliary of the Bible Society was formed in 1811. Then followed the Calcutta Christian Tract and Book Society, formed for the publication of Christian literature other than Scriptures. As educational work expanded, textbooks were needed, and the Calcutta School Book Society was established. All these bodies were co-operative in character, uniting all Churches other than the Roman. Baptists have from the first taken a full share in all these united efforts.

Ward had been the editor of a newspaper in Derby before he came to India, and it may have been he who encouraged Carey to venture into journalism. He published the *Friend of India* in English—later to be incorporated in the *Statesman*, the principal English daily in India. He also brought out the *Samachar Darpan*—" mirror of the news "—the first vernacular newspaper in India, the father of a numerous and vigorous progeny. These papers were not Christian propaganda, they were genuine newspapers, giving full news of current events, and in their editorials and articles supporting all measures of true progress. They proved powerful instruments in disseminating information about such evils as *sati* and the sacrifice of children at Ganga Sagar, and prepared the way for the prohibition of these practices. The Serampore Press and its associated paper-mill served another useful purpose as a means of employment for converts who had lost their livelihood on becoming Christians.

These activities of Carey are given as an indication of the wide range of Christian literary effort in India, and are typical of similar work which later developed in other provinces. The progress of time has in some manner changed some aspects of this literary activity, but the need for Christian literature is greater to-day than ever.

Christians are " People of the Book," and our first duty is to give the Word of God to India. All Indian languages are in a state of flux, and some have developed amazingly rich literatures. It is essential that the Bible should periodically be revised, so that its language does not become archaic, but speaks to the people in a style which they can understand. Although India has books of the most abstruse philosophy written in complicated abstract language, for the ordinary people the language should be concrete, racy of the soil. Abstract nouns have little place, and the style should appeal to the vivid Indian mind, which thinks in pictures. Bengal is a land of rivers, its people are amphibians, living half their time in boats. There is a singularly happy translation in the Bengali version of Elijah's challenge to the worship of Baal. The question, " Why halt ye between two opinions ? " is rendered as, " Why do ye stand with your feet in two boats ? "

It should be noted that Carey's prestige as a translator in the main language areas in which we work has been maintained by his successors. The Bengali, Oriya and Hindi versions of the Bible used by all non-Roman Societies are still the Baptist versions, and the revision has been mainly done by Baptists. The Lushai Bible still in process of preparation is, happily, like all Church activities in Lushai, a joint effort with the Welsh Presbyterians, though the major part of the translation has been done by Baptists.

Revisers to-day are faced with a difficult problem. In Indian languages two styles are current. One is the formal, with a more or less Sanskrit vocabulary, used formerly for all books and formal letters. The other is the colloquial, the language of the home, using a more provincial vocabulary and simplified verb forms. The Bible has been translated in the formal style, but using simpler words in place of the Sanskrit vocabulary. In modern Indian writings there is a growing tendency to use the colloquial forms. There has always been a controversy as to whether the Bible should adopt the colloquial style, especially as this varies in different parts of a province. The languages, too, are still developing rapidly. So far it has not been possible to get unanimity of Indian opinion on the matter, and so it has been decided for the present to revise only for the purpose of clarifying the language and removing uncouth forms, rather than rewriting in the colloquial. It would seem wise, however, to get portions of the Bible rewritten in the colloquial, the language of the home, since it is this living growing style which will be the permanent vehicle of Indian literature.

The need for Christian groups to produce school books is passing away, since books in rapidly increasing quantity are being produced by the general press. There is now no Christian newspaper, and Christian magazines wax and wane. There is a growing demand in each province for a really good Christian monthly, on a co-operative basis, for all Churches.

The call for general Christian literature grows more pressing as the days go by, particularly evangelistic literature of an attractive kind. The provision of simple books in larger type, for new converts and old illiterates in the Christian community who are learning to read, is urgent. We need, too, for the general community, the widest possible selection of good Christian literature. At first these books had to be translations, which tended to be too literal, slavish copies of the English originals. We need more writers who will absorb books in English, and then remould them entirely in an Indian language. But with the growth of the Indian Church original thinkers who can write good matter without translation are emerging, and this is the aim to set before us—books by Indians, absorbing the best of Western thought, but written from the standpoint of the Indian and with a really Indian flavour.

At one time the appearance and style of Christian books had not kept pace with advances in the general market. They looked shoddy and unattractive. But recently there has been a great improvement in style, in cover design and illustrations, particularly in books issued from the Baptist Mission Press in Calcutta and the Christian Literature Society in Madras. Christian literature production is a fine example of co-operative effort in which Baptists have a worthy part. In Calcutta the Baptist Mission Press prints Scriptures for the Bengal Baptist Union and the British and Foreign Bible Society. General Christian literature is in the hands of the Calcutta Christian Tract and Book Society, which includes representatives of all non-Roman Churches and Missions. Their books are printed by the Baptist Mission Press, and the Press also acts as their sales agent and provides a showroom for their books. Similarly in Orissa, the Orissa Literature Board, a co-operative body, prepares the literature which is printed at the Orissa Mission Press. Lushai literature is now printed at our small press in Lungleh. Our North India Mission co-operates similarly in the production of Christian literature for this area.

But production is not the last word. It is no use having large stocks of literature in the Presses. It must be got into the hands of the public. This is where the local church and missions come in. Some centres have a book-room, which usually combines a reference or lending library with sales. Such a room provides a useful rendezvous for interested readers who want to know more of what they have read. Thus it is a real means of personal evangelism. Sales of Scripture portions and evangelistic books are part of every evangelistic effort. Every mission house carries a stock of books for sale, and the itinerating missionary is a travelling salesman. Occasionally a book fair is held, where there is an attractive display of books, and short talks on recent books are given. A tour of high-schools can be arranged with the hearty co-operation of the school authorities. The missionary will usually be asked to address the boys in the school, and will then take a non-religious subject. He can then announce where books are for sale and can be assured of a hectic time after school. After sunset the magic-lantern is the vehicle for the Gospel message to a large crowd of boys and their friends. The cheap hymn-book, used at the lantern service, will be eagerly bought by the hearers.

The work of producing and distributing Christian literature is of first-rate importance, and must be done well. The books produced must be of really good quality, both in matter and in get-up. Leadership in production is rapidly passing into the hands of gifted Indian Christians, who eagerly welcome the help of British missionaries who know and love the vernaculars. From the days of Carey and his *pandit* down to the present time, this has proved one of the happiest and most effective forms of co-operation between Indians and British.

One great limitation to our literary work is the illiteracy of the people. A bare sixth of the people can read or write. So what good are books to five-sixths of the people? Christians are far ahead of the general population in education, but still large numbers of Indian Christians cannot read or write. Progress in their education is extremely slow. At the same time the Indian Church is growing chiefly in the midst of illiterate communities. About 200,000 converts, the great majority of whom are illiterate, are added every year. This means that every new addition to the Church reduces its percentage of literacy. We are not keeping pace in our literary campaigns with the growth of the community. Hence the need for a special type of literature for use in Adult Literacy Campaigns. Here again Christians have been the pioneers, and the Government has gratefully made use of their work. The visit of Dr. Laubach gave a great impetus to this campaign, and now in most provinces charts and books in modified forms of the Laubach method are in use. In Bengal Mr. B. C. Mukerji, a missionary of the Bengal Baptist Union, is actually the chief adviser to the Government on Adult Literacy Work, and the books and charts produced by him and his wife are used by the Government throughout the province.

CHAPTER XI

HEALING THE BODY

" To watch for every chance of doing the people good."

November 25th, 1800 : Dr. Thomas set Krishna Pal's arm.

THE " man from Macedonia " who drew Carey's attention to Bengal was a doctor—John Thomas the erratic who intended to be at the Kettering meeting, but forgot the time ! He was a strange unstable character. He forgot many things, but never forgot to witness for his Master. A naval surgeon first, then doctor to the East Indies Fleet, he settled in Calcutta, where he won young Englishmen for Christ, including Richard, the brother of Fanny Burney, the authoress. He made it his life's business to take the Gospel to the Bengalis. He wrote : " I am set down here in a house I have made of bamboo, straw and string. Every morning the river bank is covered with the lame, halt and blind ; every one to be cured gratis, and be given a few pice for food. My heart aches for their helplessness in body and mind."

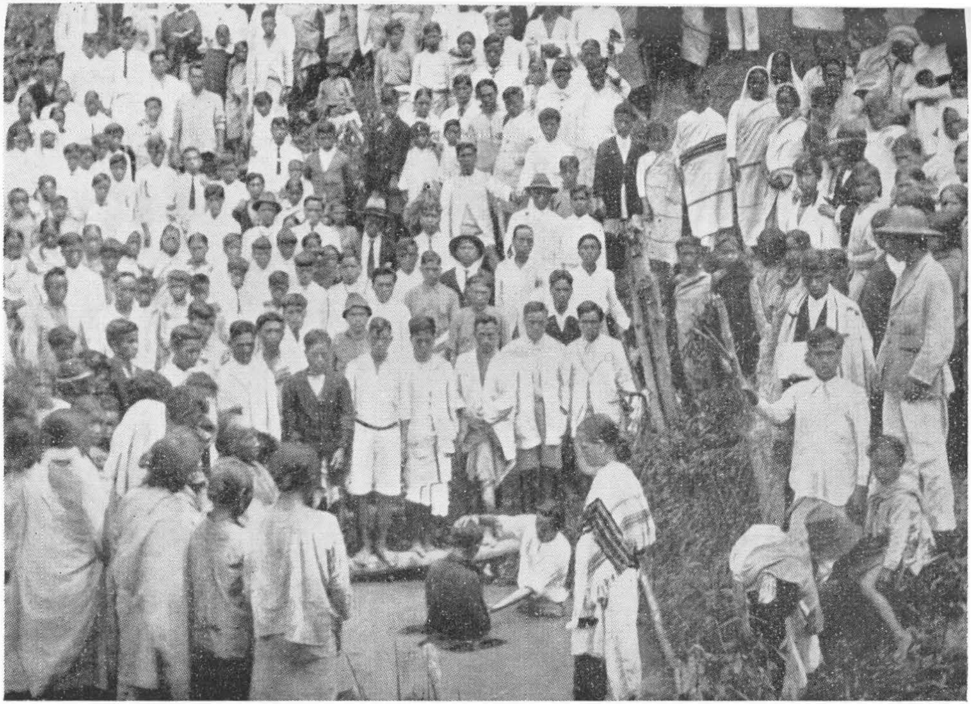
So, before he could preach in Bengali, he went about, like his Master, doing good. He was a skilful healer and became a forceful preacher. It was Thomas who got into touch with Krishna Pal the carpenter, and told him of Christ and His costly redemption. So, when Krishna slipped and dislocated his shoulder, it was natural that he should send for the doctor-padre. Thomas set his shoulder, and then set about to win his soul. So it was that the first fruit of the B.M.S. was a result of the healing of the body.

Carey had early learnt from Thomas to combine medical work with his evangelism. He had a dispensary at Mudnabati, and after he came to Serampore he was a doctor at the week-ends. Many of those who came to him were lepers and he was always interested in their lot. India's lepers found in Carey's two newspapers their ever-merciful friends. The *Friend of India* recorded with joy an offer of land for the founding of a leper asylum. Carey never rested till a leper hospital was established in Calcutta, near the centre of the Church Missionary Society work. That hospital still exists, now supervised by the Oxford Mission.

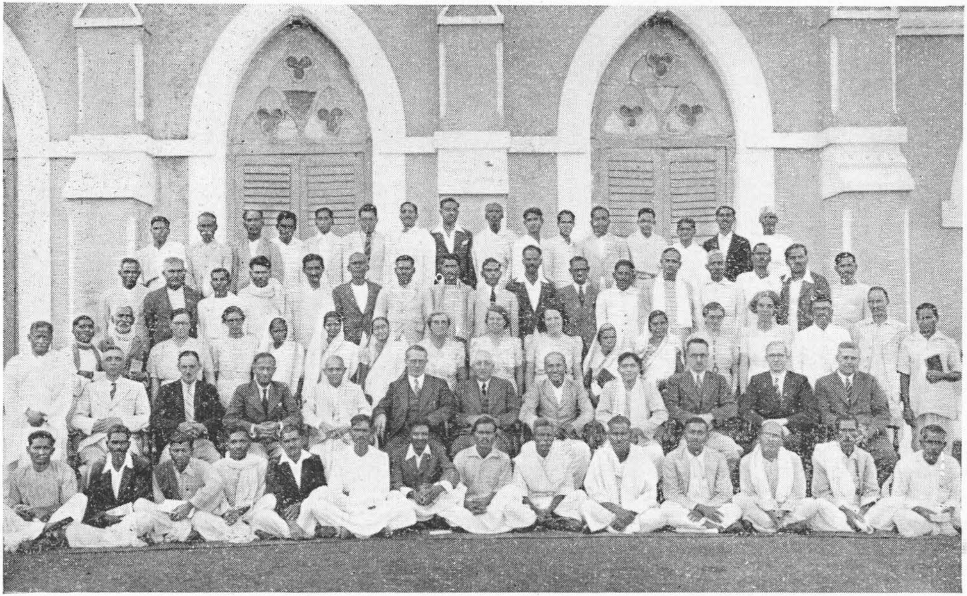
From the first missionaries have always done dispensary work. Even if their methods were sometimes crude—"If the trouble is above the waist, give aspirin; if below the waist, castor oil"—yet they met a great need, and many a missionary attained considerable skill in treatment. When the missionary is on tour, people are constantly coming to his tent-door, or boat-window, to ask for medicine, and simple stock remedies are distributed, with due caution.

Yet organised medical relief came comparatively late in the history of the B.M.S. Dr. William Carey, a great-grandson of the pioneer, served for some years in Delhi. But history was made in 1891 when the Baptist Zenana Mission sent out two women doctors—Dr. Farrer and Dr. Edith Brown. On the men's side, Dr. Vincent Thomas sailed for India in 1894. Dr. Thomas staggered the Committee of his day by demanding a hospital. Not for eleven years did he get it; but in the meantime the Medical Mission Auxiliary was formed in 1901 and, under the devoted leadership of Dr. Moorshead, it did much to improve the scope and the standard of our medical work.

We have now in India a thin red line of hospitals and dispensaries ranging from Lungleh through Chandraghona and Palwal to Bhiwani on the edge of



FRUITS OF OUR LABOUR: BAPTISM IN THE LUSHAI HILLS



THE SETTING OF TO-DAY: ORISSA CHURCH COUNCIL the Rajputana desert; with another line in Orissa: Balangir, Berhampur and the Moorshead Memorial at Udayagiri. The line is dangerously thin, with an enormous gap of a thousand miles between Palwal and Chandraghona. The latter is in a non-regulation area outside Bengal proper. We have no hospital in Bengal proper and none in Bihar.

The difficulty with a hospital, as with other institutions, is that it consists of solid blocks of masonry, well set in the soil, which cannot easily be moved. The centre of gravity of our work is constantly changing, as new movements open up in unexpected areas. The evangelist and the village preacher can follow the people into the newly occupied area. Not so the hospital and the boarding school. Perhaps the war has taught us the solution with regard to hospitals. In Bengal, after the famine, an Army surgeon who had been a medical missionary was given the task of organising medical relief. He found huge 1,000-bed R.A.M.C. units sitting waiting for the advance into Burma. He split these up into 100-bed units, and sent them out into village areas with temporary quarters in thatched huts with bamboo matting walls. The Army did an amazing amount of good with these mobile units, and then handed them over to the civil authorities, who are carrying them on to the great benefit of the villages. What we need are mobile medical units, able to move out into areas where the Gospel is getting a new grip, and to reinforce the work with the appeal of selfless service.

In addition to the regular medical work, we are rendering great service in leper colonies. These are supported or aided by the Mission to Lepers, and our share is to provide the superintendence. This has been a rewarding form of service. All who have shared in it are touched by the cheery fellowship of the lepers. In many colonies they are able to make their own furniture and clothes, build their own houses, and grow much of their own food. Many have been led, through their sufferings, to the feet of the Saviour who Himself healed the lepers. Modern advances in the treatment of leprosy began with Dr. Muir, a Scots medical missionary in Bengal, who later organised leprosy research in the School of Tropical Medicine, Calcutta, and is now Secretary of the Empire Leprosy Association.

The purpose of medical missions, as of all our work, is to reveal Christ. And how better can we do it than, in the words of the Covenant, by " watching for every chance of doing the people good " ? Our doctors and nurses heal the sick and cleanse the leper because they can do no other. The relief of suffering is a major imperative, and not merely an opening for the preaching of the Gospel. It is in itself a proclamation of the Good News that God loves all men because He is their Father, and so His children will naturally desire to reveal His love as He did. The healing ministry of Christ's medical servants, like that of their Lord and Master, recognises the worth of a full human personality and seeks to benefit the whole man. The lifting of the load of suffering proclaims the message of the Gospel in the language of the human heart. The medical missionary, because he is a scientific man, can reinforce the whole witness of the Gospel, and by meeting science upon its own ground, withstand the march of materialism. Medical missions, in thus doing people good with no ulterior motive, do in fact, with their abundant opportunities for witness, provide a tremendous instrument for personal evangelism.[1]

Mission hospitals have an atmosphere which is often sadly lacking in other similar institutions. Further, missions often take their hospitals to rural areas otherwise unprovided for. The Government hospital was almost invariably in a town until very recently, when temporary relief hospitals were opened in rural areas. The great majority of Indian doctors are practising in towns. It is the missionary doctor who goes out to the needy villages, and plants his hospital in the countryside.

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[1] R. Fletcher Moorshead : *Heal the Sick,* Preface.

Mission hospitals have a secondary value of vital importance in the training they offer for Indian nurses and doctors. Before the war, 90 per cent. of India's nurses were Christians. The life of a nurse going out into a society which has not yet learnt to give adequate respect to the single woman, without a male protector, is one of grave danger. It is vital that nurses should be trained in Christian character as well as in the elements of nursing. The nurses trained in our hospitals are far and away better equipped, and have far greater moral stamina, than those trained elsewhere. All hospitals are training centres for nurses.

The position with regard to the training of doctors is not so happy. Women doctors have been trained at Ludhiana, an undenominational hospital long under the leadership of our Baptist veteran, Dr. Edith Brown. Training for women medicals has also been given at Vellore. But there has been no first-class training institution for either men or women doctors. There is a large number of Indian Christian doctors, men and women, in the country, but they have been trained in secular institutions and very few of them have entered mission hospitals. In fact, the co-operation of the Indian Church with medical mission work has made very little progress, and the great majority of the doctors in mission hospitals are foreigners. This vital need of Indian men and women doctors, trained at a first-class hospital, in a Christian atmosphere, is soon to be met by the enlargement of Vellore Hospital on co-operative lines. The

B.M.S. is taking a share in this effort, and when it is fully developed there should be a marked advance in the formation of hospital staffs on which Indians and Europeans work together in happy fellowship on equal terms.

In this connection an interesting occurrence at the 1945 Assembly of the Bengal Baptist Union is significant. Dr. N. K. Ghose, a very successful Baptist doctor, offered Rs. 5,000 to start a fund for training Bengal Baptists as doctors, in memory of his father, the first president of the Bengal Baptist Union, and paid down his first annual contribution of Rs. 1,000.

Whatever changes occur in India in the near future—and they may be many and surprising—there seems little doubt that India will always welcome the selfless efforts of Christian medical work, revealing as it does the influence of Jesus the Healer and Lover of men.

CHAPTER XII

EDUCATION

"To watch for every chance of doing the people good."
"To guard and build up 'the hosts that may be gathered.'"

1794: Carey opened Primary School in Mudnabati.
May 1st, 1800: The Marshmans' English Boarding Schools opened.
June 1st, 1800: Vernacular school for boys opened.

I. SCHOOLS

CAREY the cobbler was also a village teacher. As soon as he settled on his indigo estate in Mudnabati he started a school for children. He himself admitted that he was an indifferent shoemaker and none too successful as a teacher of children. Like many another district missionary, he had to do the best he could with his school. Then came the move to Serampore and the arrival of Ward and the Marshmans. The amateur printer eagerly handed over to Ward the work of the press. Marshman had been a schoolmaster in England, and his wife, Hannah, at once showed her great talent for teaching. So Carey urged them to establish schools. They lost little time. Carey arrived in Serampore in January, 1800. On May 1st, the Marshmans opened their English boarding schools for boys and girls. These schools brought in a handsome income to the mission, for they attracted all the best children of English families in Bengal. Such service to people of our own race is a very real part of missionary service. These schools were later abandoned, but other missions have maintained such schools for Europeans. We have our share in this work through the loan of Mr. and Mrs. Biggs to Wynberg

School, Mussoorie, and Mrs. Soddy to Woodstock School, Mussoorie.

A month later, on June 1st, 1800, they opened a vernacular school for boys in Serampore, the ancestor of the high school which was transferred to Bishnupur in 1922 and later incorporated in the Union Christian school there. The school was originally a day school for non-Christians.

The beginnings of a Christian community showed the need of a school for the children of converts. Because of caste difficulties this had at first to be a separate institution. Carey, always a man of big ideas, proposed to teach these children "divinity, history, geography, astronomy, Bengali and English." This school was later amalgamated with the vernacular school for non-Christians. Christian and non-Christian boys attended the same day school, but the Christian hostel was maintained at some distance from the school.

The opening of the Bow Bazar Chapel in Calcutta in 1809 and the growth of work among Anglo-Indians led to the opening of the Benevolent Institution in Calcutta. Here a boarding-school education was given to children of Anglo-Indians and Indian Christians. After a long and honourable career this institution was closed, the funds invested, and the income used to assist the education of Anglo-Indian and Indian Christian children from Calcutta and Howrah. We now have the fine Stewart Institute for Anglo-Indians at Cuttack and the marvellous cosmopolitan day school at Bow Bazar, Calcutta, as our contribution to the education of Anglo-Indians.

So Carey and the Marshmans were the pioneers, not only in college education, but in (*a*) primary schools in the vernacular for Christians and non-Christians; (*b*) boarding schools for Indian Christians, (*c*) for Europeans, and (*d*) for Anglo-Indians.

What is the motive for our educational work? As in medical work, the need is the Call. The presence of physical suffering is the imperative for the medical missionary. The pressure of ignorance is the imperative for the educationist. In a land where illiteracy is so prevalent, education is another "means of doing the people good." It is obviously impossible for Christian organisations to educate all the children or all adult illiterates in India. But there is an imperative call to us to dispel the ignorance which lies at our doors, and no missionary can be happy unless he is doing something to spread the light of knowledge in the area where he works. The influence of such work has always extended far beyond the walls of the actual Christian schools. They have provided models which others have attempted to copy, and have been examples of disinterested service and a revelation of the power of religion to transform the atmosphere of the school. The pupils of Christian schools and colleges, most of whom have not outwardly declared themselves Christians, have in many cases been profoundly influenced by the teaching and example they received in them. Former pupils have had a very big influence on the trend of thought and action in India.

While we are debtors to all who have had less educational opportunities than ourselves, whatever their religion, we are especially called to "guard and build up the hosts that may be gathered." We must banish illiteracy from the Christian community, we must seek to provide for all Christian boys and girls the opportunity to secure such an education as they are capable of profiting by, and we must prepare leaders for the Church of to-morrow. Further, their education must be given in a Christian atmosphere. In many parts of India the eagerness for education is pathetic—parents will sacrifice much to give their children what they themselves lack, Education is gaining increasing significance with all types of Indians to-day. In educational work it is truly a case of Now or Never. "What thou doest, do quickly." Indian minds are alert to the possibilities—they have learnt from Soviet Russia and Hitler's Germany what can be done through the training of youth in particular ideologies. We *must* educate our own Christian community in a Christian atmosphere. Otherwise its members will drift to schools where they will absorb a Hindu or Muslim atmosphere, or, worse still, that anti-religious bias which is becoming increasingly common in India.

At the same time Christians must be rescued from the habit of communal thinking, which is so growingly pervasive in India to-day, and therefore it would not be wise to isolate Christians in schools for this community alone. There is a growing tendency to provide Hindu schools for Hindus and Muslim schools for Muslims. To have Christian schools for Christians only would just encourage the habit of communal thinking, already a constant danger to the Christian groups.

As the medical missionary goes out to relieve bodily pain and finds in so doing a magnificent opportunity to witness for Christ, so the educationist who sets out to banish the evil of ignorance finds in the educational institution one of the most potent instruments for evangelism. Islam and caste Hinduism are the hard fields where ordinary evangelistic effort produces little effect. Here in the schools and colleges we have our opportunity to make lasting impressions on the future leaders of these two difficult groups.

Our resources are limited and we must needs combine our two aims. We need Christian schools which shall be inter-communal. The staff must be predominantly Christian, a good proportion, preferably a majority, of our pupils should be Christians, but we should welcome

Hindus and Muslims in good numbers, and once they are within the institution, forget their communal origins. They are just boys and girls, to be given the best possible education, to be trained in leadership for the new India, and to meet the compelling challenge of Christ—for the child from the Christian home needs Christ as much as the Hindu and the Muslim. There is a thrill when we impress the message of Jesus on children who have never heard of Him before. A teacher, in the days before Easter, in the course of a talk on the Passion, told how jealous men misunderstood Jesus and drove Him to Calvary. A lad sitting in front had joined the school recently, and the Gospel story was quite new to him. As the narrative continued the lad got more and more worked up, and suddenly blurted out—" They didn't really kill Him, did they ? " A lad sitting next to him put his arm round his shoulder, and said, " Don't worry, He'll rise again on Sunday." Both were Hindus, but Jesus had gripped them.

Our own schools conform largely to the pattern given above. We have an educational ladder. There is a primary school in most Christian villages—very primitive in equipment and, too often, a one-teacher school. The majority of our teachers are now trained and, where possible, we have schools with two or three teachers. These village teachers work in isolation and with little encouragement, and need much of our sympathy and prayers. In most districts we have middle boarding schools for boys, and each province has one or two such boarding schools for girls. The middle school is rapidly losing favour with Indian opinion, and has no future. We are waiting now for India's future policy to be settled so that we can fit it into the new scheme of things. Then come the high schools, leading up to matriculation. Each of our high schools has its own individuality.

Cuttack has a large day school, with a good proportion of Christians, but a majority of non-Christians. This has been under Indian Church leadership for many years. Bishnupur is a union boarding school, in co-operation with the London Missionary Society, under an Indian headmaster, with usually three British missionaries resident. There are 140 boarders, of whom 100 are Christians and 40 come from Hindu and Muslim homes. There are about 250 day boys, mostly Hindu and Muslim. There is a strong science side, to divert boys from the purely literary matriculation. For girls we have the United Missionary High School in Calcutta, with an Indian headmistress, which has always maintained a high standard of education and of character building. Agra is a type by itself—a high school definitely for non-Christians, which has been singularly successful in training its boys in practical social welfare among the depressed classes, and in bringing the influence of Christ to bear upon the choicest pupils. In Delhi we are partners with the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in a Union Christian High School for boys.

What of the future? Educational policy is in a state of flux. In the pioneer days, missionaries had to run schools because nobody else would. Later the provincial governments and local authorities produced schemes of education on a dual basis. They established a few schools for which they provided all the cost. To other schools regarded as efficient they gave grants-in-aid, varying in amount, but always niggardly. Mission schools have usually, because of their relative efficiency, secured the highest available grants. Now there is a growing tendency to establish centralised educational systems and to reduce the amounts available for grants-in-aid. In areas where official free primary education is in force, some Christian schools have been taken over by the education authority, which means that we have no longer any hand in the choice of teachers or control of the schools. The numbers of grants-in-aid allotted is very small and tends to decrease. So we may have to decide whether to continue our primary schools, in which case the full cost will fall upon us, or give them up and allow Christian children to attend the general schools. A further difficulty is that the official schools are generally located near the homes of the majority communities and far from the Christian villages—a real difficulty in the rainy season where the whole countryside is flooded.

Two schemes for nation-wide education are now before the country. One is the Wardha Scheme, prepared by Congress. In view of the fact that Congress membership and leadership is now largely Hindu, it is significant that of the Committee which prepared the Scheme, half were Indian Christians, and the Scheme has been largely influenced by the Project Method introduced by American missionaries at Moga. The Scheme is based on village life, and depends largely on learning by doing. Far more elaborate and costly is the Sargent Scheme produced by the Government of India, following largely the lines of the Butler reforms in Britain. The Sargent Scheme has been on the whole welcomed by Indian opinion. We are witnessing the transfer of power in India to an Indian Government. It is not likely that it will adopt as it stands a scheme, however good, produced by the British Government, and some compromise between the Wardha and Sargent Schemes may be anticipated. We must be on the alert so that as soon as the new proposals take form, we may adapt our institutions to them, or face the consequences of maintaining our own schools entirely at our own expense and without Government aid.

For our Christian schools, and especially primary schools, nothing less than the best will do. Defective ideas of education—in regard to both motive and method—still exist even among missionaries, and many of our primary schools are far from efficient. Bad education can never be the basis of sound evangelism or Church building. We should set the pace in education as did Carey and Marshman 150 years ago.

II. Colleges

August 15th, 1818: Serampore College instituted.
February 23rd, 1827: Granting of Charter to Serampore College by King Frederic VI.

Every visitor to Serampore is impressed by that massive college building, erected in 1818 when there were barely enough Indian Christians in North India to fill it. It was not the first college for Indians. The Government had recently opened an Arabic college for Muslims, and the Hindu college in Calcutta was founded in 1816 by Ram Mohan Roy and David Hare, the watchmaker. The Serampore Trio realised that, as "Indians only can win India for Christ," they must give the best possible education to suitable Christian youths.

The two colleges previously established were communal. Serampore was to be emphatically non-communal. The "Objects of the College" were given as follows: "To educate Asiatic Native Youth, without any exception on account of religion, sect, or denomination. Its chief object is the education of Native Christian Youth, but other native youth . . . are educated without being compelled to a single act to which they attach any idea of moral evil." Sanskrit or Arabic was to be the basic language, alongside the home language spoken by the pupil. Pupils were also to learn history, mathematics, geography, astronomy, and other subjects. A certain number were to learn Greek and Hebrew, with a view to their becoming translators of the Bible. A few were to be thoroughly instructed in English as a learned language. Those found suitable were to study theology or be trained as teachers.

The grant of a Charter by the King of Denmark in 1827, giving the power of granting degrees, has been of extreme importance to the later life of the college. The Statutes drawn up in connection with the Charter indicate the broad tolerance of the founders, remarkable in their times, but with no compromise on the vital matters of faith. " Learning and piety being peculiar to no denomination of Christians," provision was made for non-Baptists to be members of the Council.

> " No oaths shall be administered either to the Members of the Council, the Professors and Tutors, or students. In all cases a solemn promise, duly recorded and signed by the party, shall be accepted instead of an oath." " As the founders of the college deem the belief of Christ's Divinity and Atonement essential to vital Christianity, the promotion of which is the grand object of this Institution, no one shall be eligible to the College Council or to any Professorship who is known to oppose these doctrines." " Students are admissible from any body of Christians, whether Protestant, Roman Catholic, the Greek, or the Armenian Church ; and for the purpose of study, from the Musulman and Hindu youth, whose habits forbid their living in the College. No caste, colour or country shall bar any man from admission into Serampore College." " The Charter having declared that the number of Professors and Students

> in Serampore remains unlimited, they shall be left thus unlimited, the number to be regulated only by the gracious providence of God and the generosity of the public in India, Europe and America."

In such large and tolerant fashion the Serampore Trio laid the foundation of the great edifice of missionary college education which has made such progress in the succeeding 120 years. They laid down four fundamental principles. (1) In Christian education, only the best is worth doing. (2) Christians and non-Christians should be educated together by a predominantly Christian staff. (3) There should be ample opportunities for the co-operation of the various Christian Churches. (4) The medium of instruction should be the home language of the pupil.

It is on this last point that controversy has raged from that day to this. Marshman and Carey started with Sanskrit as the basis of instruction, intending to replace it by Bengali as literature in that language was produced. From the first, lectures were given in Bengali. The example of Serampore led to the establishment of other missionary colleges in Calcutta and elsewhere. Duff was the educationist who made the greatest impression in the early days. He arrived in Calcutta at the end of Carey's life. He did not accept the Serampore opinion of the value of the home language as the medium of instruction. He threw all his immense energy and enthusiasm into the provision of education through the medium of the English language. Macaulay came down heartily on the side of English, and as a result of his advocacy English was established as the medium of instruction not only in colleges but in the upper classes of high schools. The establishment of Calcutta University in 1857, the year of the Mutiny, was the beginning of a great spread of higher education in English. Missionary colleges were set up in the chief cities of India, and their influence will be discussed in a later chapter. There has been a rapid increase in the number of colleges under non-Christian management, a few of which have done fine work; but the majority were cheaply run, badly equipped and staffed, and tended to be merely cramming shops.

The decision to make English the medium of education was educationally wrong. The language of the pupil must be the easiest vehicle for education. The amassing of information in a foreign language tends to form a dual mind—one side packed with modern information in the language of instruction, and the other half of the mind full of another whole range of ideas, acquired through the language of the home and almost unaffected by the other strain of modern ideas. And yet there have been gains to offset these undoubted disadvantages. The whole range of English literature and modern science has been laid open to the studious Indian, and has had a tremendous influence in the development of Indian thought, and in the promotion of her political, social and religious advance. English has provided a means of communication for educated Indians—the only language which they can all understand. The Congress leaders quite legitimately point out, however, that Hindi could easily have proved a more congenial means of communication. Educational opinion has gradually moved away from Macaulay and towards Marshman and Carey. The Osmania University uses Urdu as the means of instruction, Calcutta has introduced the vernacular up to and including the matriculation examination, and intends to carry it further. There is no doubt that this trend towards the vernacular will gain an impetus as India attains self-government.

Serampore became affiliated to Calcutta University in the year after its foundation, and remained an associated college from 1858 to 1883. The college classes were then closed down, and from 1884 to 1906 all that remained was the high school and the vernacular theological class. Then came the reorganisation under Dr. George Howells from 1907. The college had never made use of the privilege of conferring degrees granted to it in the Charter. After the foundation of Calcutta University it would have been redundant and unwise for Serampore to confer degrees in secular subjects. The growth of the Indian Church and its need for the best possible ministry made it necessary, however, to grant degrees in theology. The first B.D. degree was conferred in 1914. The centenary of the college in 1918 was fittingly followed in the same year by the passing of the Serampore College Act by the Bengal Legislature which confirmed the college in all the privileges provided by the Danish Charter. Its university status was now officially recognised and legally safeguarded, and it remains the only body in India able to confer degrees in Christian theology. All the non-Roman theological colleges are affiliated to Serampore, and there has been a steady stream of men and women who have gained the B.D. degree or the L.Th. diploma.

So Serampore has been privileged to take a very large part in what is recognised to be *the* major problem of the Church in India at this time, so admirably portrayed in C. V. Ranson's book, *The Christian Minister in India.* Serampore is the university which controls the degree courses. It also provides a theological college working for these degrees, in which men from all over India and of many Churches prepare together for the ministry. These courses are in English. We are taking our full share in the vernacular theological schools in the provinces. We have our part in the Saharanpur School, in association with Methodists and Presbyterians. In Cuttack we welcome the co-operation of American Baptists. The Vernacular Theological School at Serampore has lately had a roving and broken life. Closed at Serampore, it reopened for a time at Barisal and again at Khulna. Now it has been revived at Krishnagar in the most daring experiment yet in co-operative theological training. It has a Scots Presbyterian Principal, a Bengali Baptist Vice-Principal and a Bengali Anglican lecturer. We have also annual summer schools in most districts, where short courses in Bible study and religious education are given to Church leaders and teachers.

In view of the possible transfer to public control of primary schools, and perhaps secondary schools, probably the most important help we can give to education in India will be in teacher training. This was part of Carey and Marshman's plan for Serampore, and for many years a normal school was part of the college activities. Christian educators have led the way here, too. To give one or two examples : The work of the American missionaries at Moga in the Panjab has influenced teacher-training methods in all provinces. In Bengal the United Missionary Training College at Calcutta has set the standard for women's training ever since its inception. The similar college for men at Chapra has also done fine work. The B.T. classes in the Scottish Churches College, Calcutta, are the most eagerly sought after in the province. Our latest venture, the Union Christian Training College at Berhampur in Bengal, has at once made a very high position for itself. The students of this college are predominantly men. So it is noteworthy that the Professor of Sanskrit and Bengali is an Indian Christian lady, who is the holder of the Dorothy Cadbury Fellowship at the Selly Oak Colleges in 1946–7.

The above is a slight sketch of some aspects of educational missionary work in India. The scope and the quality of the work have been remarkable. During the formative period in Indian education, from 1857 to the end of the century, it was undoubtedly Christian education which set the pace, and exerted a profound effect on thinking India. A very large number of the leaders of India in every sphere were the products of Christian colleges. The remarkable Women's Movement owes most of its initiative and progress to women from our colleges and schools. Christian education is the leaven which has so remarkably permeated Indian thought with Christian ideas. Positively it has resulted in a considerable transformation of Hindu thought, and by reaction has stimulated the conservative elements in Hinduism and Islam to a new formulation of their doctrines. It has resulted, particularly in the early days, in the conversion of many outstanding men and women. Its influence has, however, travelled far beyond the number of those who joined the Church. How often we meet a particularly helpful official or doctor, and find that he is a product of a Christian college. Many a chance encounter in a train has revealed the gratitude of men to their Christian teachers.

Indian education is making rapid progress, and there is a danger of our Christian schools and colleges being left behind. We must maintain the quality of our work, remembering our dual aim : to bring all the influence of the Light of the World to bear on the people of India, and to build up a strong, thinking leadership for the Church.

The work of the Christian teacher is exacting, but immensely rewarding. The Indian respect for his *guru* brings to the teacher a wealth of affectionate gratitude from his old pupils. He becomes the father of his pupil, the father-in-law of their wives, the grandfather of their children, and is assured of a great welcome in their homes. In times of political crisis it has been known for a British educationist to be consulted on policy by the local Congress Committee—all of them his old boys who almost forgot he was of the ruling race. To tour in a province and to see how many former pupils of our schools and colleges are holding positions of leadership within and without the Christian community is greatly encouraging.

What the future holds for Christian education it is difficult to say. We may expect increasing Government control, and, perhaps, unfavourable reactions to any conversions resulting from our work. But it seems likely that when India has such tremendous leeway to make up in education, when so many of her leaders have been influenced by Christian teachers, they will welcome all the help our institutions can give. With this proviso—the institutions must be firmly rooted in Indian soil, with governing bodies in India, and co-operation on equal terms between Indians and British on the staff, with an Indian principal wherever he is the most suitable man. Our British educationists will not be asked to quit India if they are themselves lovers of India and the Indian.

CHAPTER XIII

MANY WOMEN FOLLOWED JESUS

" To guard and build up ' the hosts that may be gathered.' "

January 11th, 1801 : Baptism of Jaymani, first Baptist woman convert.

1830 : Mrs. Peacock, first missionary to women, appointed.

1854 : Mrs. Sale enters Zenana in Jessore.

THE first trophy to be won for Christ in Bengal was a man, but the next three Bengalis to be baptized were women. Jaymani, the sister-in-law of Krishna Pal, was baptized a fortnight after him. Seeing her courage, her sister Rasamayi was baptized at the end of February, with Ananda. The latter was a *chamar's* widow—and so was in herself the first-fruit of two tragic groups—India's widows and her outcastes. "We count these three," wrote Marshman, " more precious than most beautiful gems."

So the pioneers avoided one tragic mistake seen in other fields—the baptism of men without adequate efforts to win the women. The emphasis on the low status of India's women has led to a misconception—that India's women have no influence. This is decidedly untrue. Within the home the influence of the mother and grandmother is very great indeed, and it is they who are the mainstay of family religion. The women must be won, or the innermost bulwarks of the old faith will remain unshaken.

From the first the wives of missionaries have rendered signal service. The work of Mrs. Marshman in her schools and her influence over the women of the Christian community is outstanding, but everywhere the wives were at work. As soon as a man was won, the missionary's wife made friends with the women of the house and sought to win them too.

In 1830 the first missionary recorded as appointed definitely for work amongst the women arrived in Dacca; one Mrs. Peacock, the widow of a missionary in Chittagong. Mr. Parry reported from Barisal in 1831 that the women of the neighbouring village of Sagurdi were very desirous of hearing the Gospel. He continues:

> "The females of this district both of Hindoos and Mohammedans are seldom or never permitted by their lords and masters to appear in public. Some time ago they expressed their desire to hear the word of God, through one of our enquirers, who invited me to his house. I saw a number of men, but now and then only a female or two concealing themselves behind the houses and trees within hearing. I afterwards enquired if the females had been able to hear the Gospel, and was told that a number had heard who were concealed in consequence of the prejudice of their husbands, many of whom had forbidden their wives' approach to the enquirer's house; their desire, however, overcoming their fear, they had notwithstanding attended. I have been three or four times to this village. Sister Parbutee, brother Mathoor's wife, is best able to reach the women. She has been two or three times with them, and from twenty to thirty have listened to her very gladly. Mrs. P—— accompanied her once, and both of them spoke to about thirty or forty women. In this village we have at last succeeded, through one of our enquirers, in commencing a female school with four girls, and even this small number is very encouraging."

This graphic account tells how opportunities for work among women were gladly taken. Two other points stand out: an Indian Christian woman witnessing to her sisters, and the first record of a school purely for Indian non-Christian girls. Thus early, work was being done among village women.

Another date to be remembered is 1841, when Miss Derry came from England to take charge of girls' education in the Cuttack orphanage, formed to deal with the children rescued from the famine of 1837. Three years later a certain Dr. Buckley came to Cuttack as a new missionary. These two married and for forty years they lived on the spot where Buckley House now stands, and cared for hundreds of Orissa's children. From their work grew the fine girls' school in Cuttack.

The homes of the better-class women remained utterly closed—for the Muslim zenanas concealed their women, and the Hindus were hidden behind the purdah. Then Mrs. Sale in Jessore took an unprecedented step. She writes: "In 1854 a native gentleman came to visit my husband. One day, when talking, I said I would much like to visit his house—I must not say 'wife.' He said he would make arrangements for my reception, and at the appointed time I went and paid my first visit to the interior of a Hindu home—the zenana." Needlework and other womanly crafts aroused the interest and dispelled the shyness of the women. Eager conversation followed, and it was easy to lead on to the story of Jesus and His women friends, and the salvation which won their devotion.

Mrs. Sale joined Mrs. Lewis in Calcutta, and they gained admission to many an Indian zenana. On their next visit to England they travelled together, and on arrival gave themselves to the advocacy of work by women among Indian women. The result was the formation on May 22nd, 1867, of the Ladies' Association, later to be known as the Baptist Zenana Mission. At first this body supported Indian women working under the supervision of missionaries' wives. However, in 1871 it became necessary to send out a recruit from England, and Miss Fryer became the first of the great host of Baptist single women who have been led forth of God to be His ambassadors in other lands. So began a new era in work among women.

Let it never be forgotten, however, that for seventy years the work had been carried on under extreme difficulties, as India's women are cautious about being led away from old and tried habits. The honour of laying the foundation of work among women in India belongs entirely to the heroic wives of the early missionaries. These wives shared and supplemented the toil of their husbands wherever possible, despite danger, loneliness and sickness. Some accompanied the men on their preaching tours, by bullock-cart or boat or on horseback. In the old days there was no quinine, no mosquito-nets and no topee to lessen the dangers from heat and fever, and one wonders what secret prayers and encouragement on the part of the wives helped the men to endure, still hoping on.

The brave and devoted women began zenana work in the towns, and worked among the more accessible women in the villages. They played a valuable part in fostering spiritual life in the new churches by holding meetings for mothers and others for young girls. In addition, they took charge of orphans in various places. Nothing seems to have been too much for them to do for others. For instance, we read of Mrs. Goadby in Cuttack who in the famine of 1866 nursed a famine baby with her own. The work of these wives effectively opened up spheres of work among women and then inspired the women of Britain to undertake the task. Their race is by no means extinct. The wives still take an amazingly large share in the work among women. They—and their children—by their cheery friendship make it easier for women to come within call of Christ.

The arrival of Miss Fryer in 1871 began a new era in women's work for women. She was the first of a great succession of single women of rare ability who came out to India. Less cumbered with household cares than their married sisters, and free from family responsibilities, they were able to devote their whole time to direct mission work. They became mainly responsible for the rapidly expanding work among women, and its progress and efficiency are largely due to their self-effacing work. Missionaries' wives continue to give what help they can, and have to shoulder the whole burden in areas where no single women missionaries are located.

The work of women missionaries is as varied as that of men. We have told of the work in the zenanas and the contacts with the women of the villages. The service of women is needed as soon as the Spirit of God begins a new movement anywhere. When men accept the faith, women are needed to move in among their women and children so that there shall be a balanced influx into the Kingdom. The ignorant, uncouth women in a new area have to be wooed from their mistrust, taught about Jesus, and gently led to His feet, lest the tragedy of the divided family be repeated.

From the beginning women missionaries have been led to emphasise education. The appalling illiteracy among women must be attacked at the source by teaching the girls. So a splendid network of girls' schools has spread across India. Here again these schools serve a dual purpose—the upbuilding of the Christian community and the extension of the Kingdom. Girls from Christian homes are prepared in them to become true Christian mothers, wives, teachers and nurses. The schools welcome also girls from Hindu and Muslim homes into the circle of those seeking to know and serve Jesus. The schools naturally led to colleges, so that the best of India's young women might have the finest and fullest opportunities. Beside the university colleges, training colleges for teachers have been established.

In no country, perhaps, are separate hospitals for women more necessary than in India. The natural shyness of women and the purdah system made women's hospitals imperative, and their influence is great. Further, the training of nurses by the nursing sisters in both our men's and women's hospitals has been of outstanding importance.

Nowhere have the secondary results of missions been more apparent than in work among women. The influence of women missionaries, particularly through their educational work, has had a profound influence on the progress of women's emancipation. Missionaries were the first, and for long the only, teachers of women. When the education of girls spread, mission schools and colleges were the only source of teachers, and for long the majority of women teachers were Christians. Almost until the beginning of the last war, few besides Christian women would take up nursing, and 90 per cent. of the nurses were actually Christians. So were most of the women doctors.

It is not only the secondary results which have been so remarkable. The primary object of our work is always to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. And many have been the women who have followed Jesus. They are a choice company, and all who know the Church in India have reason to give thanks to God for the fine type of women He is producing by His grace. The teacher who relinquishes a sheltered job in a boarding school to go tramping across the fields in the rough work of district evangelism ; the nurse who volunteers for the smallpox ward ; the young wife who runs a women's meeting in a backward village ; the matron who prepares younger women for baptism ; how many instances rise to the mind ! The difference Christ makes became outwardly obvious during the Bengal famine in 1945 when long queues of women were filing in for their rice ration. The village women of the lower castes were a great trial, with their soiled clothes, untidy hair, rough voices, their pushing and dodging to get ahead of their place in the line, their loud complaints at imagined wrongs. Then the moving queue would bring along a group of Christian women, originally from the same caste groups, but clean, with well-combed hair, softer voices and pleasant smiles. Casual visitors could at once pick out the Christians. Christ *does* make a difference.

The last thirty years have made a tremendous change in the status of women in India. It was the political awakening which led to the emancipation of the women. The writer was travelling by train to Khulna in the early days of the political struggle. A noisy procession of students met the train, and their leader—a woman—entered the missionary's carriage without noticing him, stood in the open door and delivered a stirring political harangue. Women broke out of the zenanas and tore down the purdah to throw themselves into the political struggle. They picketed shops selling foreign goods, courted arrest, and went to jail. At the Congress sessions disciplined corps of women volunteers were ranged alongside the men's volunteer corps. All wore the saffron *sari* as the symbol of service.

The awakening began with politics, but it spread to every sphere of life. Women emerged and were seen everywhere, and the symbol of their emancipation was a new way of wearing the *sari*. Formerly women outside the home always pulled the *sari* over their heads, drawing it farther forward to conceal the face if any male approached. But now the head is no longer covered. The *sari* is draped round the shoulders, and the head carried free.

Women's movements made rapid progress, and they began to fight for the redress of the wrongs of women. In all efforts for social progress women took a part. When a great calamity occurred, an earthquake, flood or famine, women were there to serve untiringly. A woman, Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, became President of Congress, and in the new Parliaments women became ministers and deputy speakers—and one of the women ministers was a Muslim! When the Government called out British women for service during the war, they invited the Anglo-Indians also to volunteer for service in the Women's Auxiliary Corps. Indian women refused to be left out, and so Indian regiments were formed, with a khaki *sari* with broad scarlet border as uniform—draped, of course, round the shoulders. It was a moving sight to see a detachment of these Indian women marching in a ceremonial parade; no British women could have been smarter.

The emancipation of this considerable section of the women means a new opportunity, but demands a new approach. Many of the older methods and forms of appeal have no effect, and it will be necessary to think out afresh how these keen, modern women can be brought to the feet of Christ.

These advanced women are, however, but a minority, and the great mass of India's women, especially in the villages, still continue in the ways of old. There are breaks in the clouds, but most of India's women are still in the dark. Even now only 5 per cent. can read. It is still a sad country for women. Of 1,000 deaths, about

350 are normally of children under one year, and another 100 of children between one and five years. In 1937 a million and a half babies died under one year of age. Infant mortality is three times as high as in Britain and the death rate twice as high. The expectation of life at birth is only twenty-six years. And what of the mothers? The Public Health Commissioner of India stated in 1938 that "the percentage of women disabled as a result of pregnancy and labour may perhaps be taken as not less than 30 per cent. in a country where 10,000,000 births are registered annually."

One interesting point may be added. India is one of the few countries in the world where the male population outnumbers the female. There are 13,000,000 more males than females. This has been a constant factor in Indian census returns. This may in the past have been partly due to neglect of unwanted girl babies. This is far less the case in these days, and the discrepancy is probably chiefly due to the high mortality of women in early married life.

So the need of India's women is a clamant call to their British sisters. Their physical needs demand all the medical help we can give them, and a great increase in maternity services and child welfare work. Above all is the call to bring to India's women the knowledge of Jesus the Good Shepherd. The unfinished task remains, but it is no longer a task to be shouldered by the foreign woman missionary alone. Indian Christian women are increasingly sharing in the attempt to meet the overpowering need in the strength of Him to whom all power has been given. When Christ sends out His disciples two by two, He often sends one of each race. It is a joint effort—the women of our churches in Britain sharing with Indian Christian women in the great task of winning the women and children of India for Christ.

CHAPTER XIV

THE BEGINNINGS OF THE CHURCH

" To guard and build up ' the hosts that may be gathered.' "

28th December, 1800 : Baptism of Krishna Pal.

THE first sign of fruit was Fakira, in 1800. His decision to accept Jesus as his Saviour brought the Serampore brotherhood to their feet in ecstasies of praise. He asked permission to go home to visit his family before baptism. He went—and never returned. Was he like the man whom the Saviour rebuked for putting his hand to the plough and looking back? There is another very likely explanation. Many an enquirer has been given *dhatura* by his relatives—a drug which if given in moderate quantities does not kill but destroys the reason. If so, Fakira was the first to suffer for the faith in Bengal. In any case the pioneers endured, with so many of their successors, that hope deferred which maketh the heart sick.

That disappointment was not for long. The story of Krishna Pal's baptism has often been told. We shall note once again how careful the Serampore trio were to avoid the errors of the Roman Catholics and Schwartz the Danish missionary. The Church must be built on right lines from the first. So at once, before baptism, caste had to go. Krishna was ceremonially admitted to the Christian community when he sat down on December 22nd, 1800, with Christians to eat food prepared by Christians. When he was baptized on the following Sunday, Carey, with real insight, arranged that his own son Felix should be baptized with him—a dramatic declaration that in Christ there is no East and West, and no colour bar in the Church. That afternoon Krishna Pal and Felix Carey together were admitted to the Church and received the Lord's Supper. There has never been any colour bar in our Baptist churches, and the "English" churches in India have always gladly welcomed Indians into their membership.

After Krishna and Felix, the three Bengali women and Fernandez, the "Portuguese" planter from Dinajpur, who did such valiant work as a missionary there, forerunner of many Anglo-Indians who have rendered us splendid service, were baptized and welcomed into the Church.

When another Bengali, Golak, came forward, the question arose—should the missionaries, like their predecessors in India, give new names to their converts at baptism? They referred to the records of the early Church, and found that names like Sylvanus and Hermes were still retained, in spite of their heathen implications. So the Serampore trio wisely decided that nothing in the name or dress of the convert should be foreign.

Converts of higher caste began to arrive: Pitambar Singh, the *Kayastha* or writer, and Krishna Prasad, the Brahmin. Again the missionaries remembered past errors, and were determined to have no caste at the communion table. Krishna Prasad, the Brahmin, received the cup after Krishna Pal, the carpenter. The first Muslim convert was baptized in 1803, and joined Hindu converts in the church, thus showing how Hindu-Muslim unity can be attained at the Cross.

The first Christian marriage struck a shrewd blow at caste at its strongest point—the inviolable rules forbidding inter-caste marriage. Krishna Prasad, the Brahmin, married the daughter of Krishna Pal, the carpenter. At this wedding, too, woman was given her true dignity in

Christ, for the bride was asked to give her consent to the marriage, and she signed the register with her husband —an epoch-making event for Indian women.

The first Christian burial, too, afforded an opportunity for a new precedent. Among Hindus only the relatives of the dead person can carry the body to the cremation ground, or, failing them, men from the *doms*, the very lowest caste, must be employed. When a Christian died, his relatives would not carry his body, because they were still Hindus, and he had left the Hindu fold. Here was an opening, finely taken, to show that Christ's brethren are all one family. The body was carried to the cemetery by Marshman, Felix Carey, Bhairab a Brahmin convert, and Peru a Muslim convert. Orthodox Serampore was amazed to see British, Brahmin and Muslim acting as blood-brothers to a man of lowly caste.

So the foundations were well and truly laid of a caste-free Church, with no colour bar, and truly Indian in character.

Expansion into new territory went ahead with breathless speed. Itineration round Serampore began in 1801, work started in Jessore in 1802, and in Calcutta in 1805. In 1806 twenty-two converts were recorded from Jessore, Chittagong, Ramkrishnapur (Howrah) and Patna. Ten Indian evangelists were at work with out-stations at Dinajpur, Katwa and Malda. In 1807 Burma was entered, 1808 saw an attempt to enter Bhutan, in 1809 Balasore in Orissa was occupied, and in 1810 Patna and Agra. By 1819 the following had been added: Dum Dum, Dacca, Berhampur, Murshidabad, Monghyr, Benares, Allahabad, Cawnpore, Delhi, Nagpur, Surat, Ceylon and Java. Trace these out on a map and marvel at the breadth of vision and the range of achievement. And yet in 1818, the Rev. James Bryce, a chaplain, stated in Calcutta that the Serampore missionaries, in spite of their zeal, had secured no single proselyte in whom they could rejoice. Ward issued a statement in reply pointing out that six to seven hundred had been baptized and organised in some twenty churches. This is but an illustration of how little Europeans in India still know about the mission work being done at their very doorstep.

The church in Lal Bazar, for which Carey and Marshman worked so hard, was opened in 1809, and three years later Adoniram Judson and his wife were baptized there soon after their arrival from America.

While Carey's men travelled so far, the "younger brethren" hived off in Calcutta and set up their own church in Lower Circular Road, with the Press beside it. The Calcutta Press was amalgamated with the Serampore Press in 1837 on the Calcutta site, and has since rendered signal service to the cause of Christian literature.

In 1829, some men from Nur Sikdar Chak, in the 24 Parganas, having heard the Lal Bazar preachers in Kidderpore and receiving further instruction, were baptized. These converts had to endure terrible persecution, one being murdered and the whole being treated as outcastes. This hatred extended to the missionaries, for we read that Mr. Rabeholme was on one occasion attacked by a hundred men with *lathis* (bamboo sticks). Under George Pearce this work was greatly extended in the South villages. The first fruits in Jessore were two sisters from Jhenidah, Syam Priya and Ram Priya, who were, after instruction by Hannah Marshman, baptized at Serampore. They became the first Bengali Biblewomen and sold tracts and preached to women at the Car Festival. Barisal was opened in 1829, and by 1831 there were eleven schools in the district. Mr. Garrett, who was magistrate and afterwards judge, became a Baptist and was publicly immersed. The Chittagong missionaries advanced into the Hill Tracts in 1815 and went south as far as Akyab, where a church was formed which was handed over to the American Baptists in 1839.

The early work in North India had its links with the British Army. Captain Havelock (later to be known as Sir John Henry Havelock of Lucknow fame) acted as pastor at Agra, with the consent and full approval of the Serampore missionaries. Churches were formed in Patna, Monghyr and Delhi.

In 1821 the first two missionaries of the General Baptist Missionary Society sailed for Serampore with their families and with Ward. They found that Carey had already published an Oriya version of the New Testament, and he encouraged them to enter the province of Orissa. They went to Cuttack in February 1822. At first they found no encouragement. But God was working in unexpected places. An Indian *guru* was seeking light that he could not find in Hinduism. Some of his disciples took Christian tracts to him. He was greatly interested, but went no further. Some of these disciples, however, had caught a glimpse of Jesus. Among these was a Brahmin named Gangadhar Saringhy. Having heard a missionary say that Jagannath was "just wood," he decided to test him for himself. Going to Puri he visited the idol in the temple with an earnest prayer for light and peace. This prayer brought no answer, so he tried force, striking the idol with an iron tool that he had secretly brought with him. This brought no response from the idol, and no light and peace dawned on his soul. So, conquering his fear, he went yet once more to the temple and reproached the idol for his lack of power. Getting no answer at all, he left Puri, saying that he had done with idolatry. He came to Mr. Lacey for more teaching, and in March 1827 he was baptized in the Mahanadi.[1]

At the B.M.S. Jubilee in 1842, there were (excluding the General Baptist Field in Orissa) 40 stations and sub-stations, 31 missionaries, 42 evangelists, 850 church members and 1,445 scholars in day schools.

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[1] *Ye are My Witnesses*, p. 108.

After the Jubilee the work entered a period of consolidation. There were notable incidents and encouraging expansions in some places. In the 24 Parganas members of a reformed Hindu sect, the Kartta Bhajas, became Christians. It is stated that they had been addicted to the taking of drugs, but now they decided to give up the drugs and take to drinking tea instead! In the north of the Dacca district, and on into Mymensingh, work developed among the Garos. The northern portion was later handed over to the Australian Baptists, who have been singularly successful there. There were solid additions from the Nama Sudras in Khulna. We read of a time of drought, when the pastor summoned the congregation to prayer, and one man came without his umbrella. He was rebuked for his lack of faith and sent back to fetch it. The prayer meeting was followed by a downpour.

In Jessore there were notable converts from among the Muslims. Munshi Azizbari, a noted poet, published a metrical version of the Psalms in Bengali after his conversion. Dhonai Biswas, a young medical student, began to oppose Brajanath Banerji, a Brahmin convert, as he preached the Gospel. Brajanath challenged him to read the Bible, and the result was Dhonai's conversion. He developed a character of great charm, and his children have shown marked ability and are rendering valuable service to the work in Bengal.

There was a *guru* in the Barisal area, who had some 600 disciples. In dramatic fashion he was led to Christ. He promptly paddled upstream to his disciples. He told them to stop singing songs in honour of the Hindu gods and goddesses, and taught them new hymns in praise of Jesus.

One Ram Chandra Sarkar, on the Faridpur side, was ordered by his landlord to submit to the hook-swinging ordeal. He dared not refuse. Two great hooks were inserted in his back after he had been given drugs to deaden the pain. The hooks were fastened by a long rope to a tall pole like a maypole. Then he was swung round that pole, suspended by the hooks in his back. As soon as he recovered he went straight to Barisal and declared himself a Christian, the first of a notable family. Later John Chamberlain Page championed the Nama Sudras against the cruel oppression of their high-caste landlords and this led to further accessions in the Barisal district.

The Mutiny caused a great setback to the work in North India, and afterwards the missionaries had to gather together what they could of the Christian community and make a fresh start. In January, 1859, we find the Home Committee putting out an appeal for new workers. "The persecutions of Delhi claim at our hands a Christian revenge—the announcement of the Gospel of peace and pardoning love."[1] Work was opened up at a number of centres in and around Delhi. As most of the converts were drawn from the labouring classes of Hindus and were illiterate, schools were opened where they might be taught. This work was attended by many encouraging signs.

Orissa saw the work spread to Sambalpur and the Patna State, but with little perceptible result. The great famine of 1866–68, which killed one-fourth of the population in three years through starvation and pestilence, brought a big challenge to our missionaries who set up orphanages for children. In Cuttack alone over 800 boys and girls were taken in. This meant that all these children lived for years under Christian instruction and also were brought up in the experience of God and His love. Work developed among the Mundas, an immigrant group of aboriginals. One of these immigrants was a Christian, Prabhu Sahai. Far from other Christians, he used to hold Sunday services in his thatched cottage forty miles from Sambalpur. Non-Christians were attracted by his hymn-singing with the help of a small stringed instrument, in the use of which he was an expert. During the week he wandered about making friends with the people as they worked in field or jungle and telling them of His Lord. In 1890 Vaughan reported the baptism of twenty Mundas.[1]

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[1] *Ibid,* p. 69.

The period between 1842 and 1892 shows the work continuing against tremendous odds. Baptism always resulted in social ostracism and persecution, and only the bravest could face it. There were notable converts, and the Church was well established in Southern Bengal and Eastern Orissa. But at the Centenary the total church membership reported, including Orissa, was only 5,640. The early hopes of a big ingathering had not been fulfilled. This experience was common to all missionary societies, and we must seek for an explanation of this retarded progress.

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[1] *Ibid*, pp. 113–15.

CHAPTER XV

RETARDED PROGRESS

THE pioneers were very wise in their maxim: "*To abstain from whatever deepens India's prejudices against the Gospel.*" They enjoyed the friendship of men of all faiths. They avoided frontal attacks on Hinduism and Islam. They soon ceased to point out the faults of the old religions. They preferred a positive declaration of the unsearchable riches of Christ.

There were, however, certain malpractices which Carey felt he had to attack mercilessly—*sati* (the burning of a widow alive on the funeral pyre of the husband), the sacrifice of children to the river at Ganga Sagar, and hook-swinging at the annual festivals. Here again he did not use these abuses as weapons for an attack on Hinduism. He rather proved that they were later accretions not sanctioned by the oldest Hindu Scriptures. He collected accurate statistics about the number of cases of *sati* and child sacrifice, and published them in *The Friend of India* and *Samachar Darpan*. His Hindu *pandits* wrote treatises quoting the Hindu Scriptures against the practices.

This agitation brings to light a characteristic feature of social progress in India. Whenever missionaries have been led to attempt the reform of some social evil, they have always received collaboration from Indians ready to work with them—men who may not have become Christians but who have imbibed Christian ideals. In those early days it was Raja Ram Mohan Roy, one of the founders of the Unitarian Brahmo Samaj, who gave Carey all the support of his influential position, and together they persuaded the British Government, always reluctant to interfere with the religious practices of the people, to forbid *sati* and child sacrifice. Carey was a strong Sabbatarian, but when the text of the decree against *sati* reached him for translation on a Sunday, he at once settled down to the task, so that there should not be a single day's delay in the proclamation.

Later history has given abundant instances of useful collaboration in social reform between the missionaries and enlightened Indians—the Sarda Act for raising the " age of consent " for girls, and the legislation against the use of temple women in South India, being fruitful examples. But these Indian reformers rarely became Christians by actual profession of faith.

In its early days the influence of Serampore College led to the conversion of some notable men. Later, when Duff's College in Calcutta got into its stride, there was amazing success at first. Duff's College, St. Paul's and the London Mission Institution led to the conversion of a brilliant group of young men, whose descendants still form the aristocracy of the Christian community in Bengal and beyond. Some, like Michael Madhusudan Dutt, the great epic poet, and W. C. Bonnerjee, the first President of the Congress, attained positions of first-rate influence. It looked as if there would be a veritable landslide into Christianity. Then Hinduism began its characteristic procedure—absorption of the fullest possible measure of new ideas within the social and religious structure of formal Hinduism.

It is true that the earliest reaction did involve a breakaway from formal Hinduism. The Brahmo Samaj was a Unitarian humanism, founded by Raja Ram Mohan Roy and Debendra Nath Tagore, the father of the poet. They forbade the worship of gods and goddesses, insisted on the unity of the Godhead and the impossibility of incarnations, and developed a form of worship very similar to that of the Christians. In the early days they separated from Hinduism and insisted on their own marriage laws. Their greatest preacher was Keshab Chandra Sen, who developed a passionate admiration for Jesus, hardly preached a sermon without reference to Him, and went into ecstasies at the singing of Christian hymns. At one time it looked as if Keshab would swing the greater part—and the younger part—of the Samaj into the Christian Church. But in his later days certain indiscretions greatly weakened his influence and his followers remained outside the Church. One section has formed a Christian Samaj—but without baptism, and outside the Christian Church. The net result of Keshab's influence was to provide a half-way house for the multitudes of young people who were so greatly attracted by Christ but hesitated to face the ignominy of baptism. The Brahmo Samaj to-day is sadly divided and greatly weakened. Few members persist in their allegiance to it as a community separate from Hinduism. Most of those who still attend its services would record themselves as Hindus, and on occasion they pay lip service to Hindu religious rites.

An antagonist of a different type is found in the Arya Samaj, which is militant and anti-Christian. Where a new group begins to seek Christian teaching, there the Arya Samaj stages a counter-attack. They have developed a form of *suddhi*, a service of purification by which those who have embraced Islam or Christianity can be "cleansed" and readmitted to the Hindu fold. They are strongest in North India, but also have attempted to block forward movements in Bengal.

The influence of Christianity is clearly seen in other reformed movements which remain within the Hindu frame. Ramkrishna was a Bengali saint who combined a very rich mysticism with real common sense and a robust, sometimes broad, humour. He would sit in contemplation, and go into a trance, in which he saw visions, which he later told to his disciples. These were often visions of Christ. He taught that all religions are at root one, that all the great religious teachers are worthy of devotion, and that the teaching of all should be accepted, for all religions had the same goal—absorption into the one God.

The greatest of Ramkrishna's disciples took the name of Vivekananda. He went to America as Hindu representative to the Parliament of Religions at Chicago in 1893. His eloquent exposition of a revised version of Hinduism won him instant fame, and a number of Americans declared themselves converts to Hinduism. He formed a Ramkrishna Mission in India. Ramkrishna was deified to become the patron deity of the Mission. This was quite frankly a copy of Christian Missions, with mission stations, boarding and day schools, hospitals and dispensaries, presses and book-stalls. The Mission has attracted a singularly gifted group of men to its service. They produce religious literature of a high order, and wherever there is need, in flood, earthquake, or famine, the Ramkrishna Mission is there.

Professor Radhakrishnan is the modern exponent of philosophic Hinduism—but a very different Hinduism from the one Carey faced. He gives a brilliant exposition of classic Hindu theory, and paints an attractive picture of the ideal man as created by Hinduism. One looks in vain, however, for any means whereby the man who sees the ideal but fails to reach it can be given the power to do so. He has no answer to Paul's dilemma of the divided mind—" The good that I would that I do not; the evil that I would not, that I do." The idea of sin is an insult to man, and so there is no need of salvation.

There is no doubt of the tremendous influence exerted by the life and teaching of Jesus upon thinking Indians. Christ has won India's admiration and respect. For traditional Hinduism He is the Perfect Character ; to the Brahmo Samaj He is the Divine Example ; to Mahatma Gandhi He is the Prince of Passive Resisters. In fact, Gandhi is a well-marked example of the reaction of Hinduism to Christianity. His thought is steeped in the New Testament, and he constantly quotes the Sermon on the Mount. In South Africa he very nearly became a Christian. Now he is full of admiration for Christ, but repudiates any hint that he is a Christian. He welcomes all the humanitarian work of missionaries, and encourages them to tell India of Christ's life and teaching, but he strongly objects to " the making of proselytes." To him, conversion is a crime.

The life and teaching of Jesus has won India's respect, but it is His death which grips so many of them, and especially His prayer, " Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." When the film *The King of Kings* was shown in Calcutta, the cinema was packed with Hindus and Muslims. They wept openly at the Crucifixion, and clapped and cheered at the Resurrection. The Hero had triumphed.

The leading Government Prosecutor in a certain town was speaking at a Temperance Meeting organised by a member of the Brahmo Samaj. He told the audience that he belonged to a family of " left-handed " Hindus, to whom the drinking of wine was an essential part of worship. While in college in Calcutta he had learnt that the taking of intoxicants was an evil. But when he came home on holiday the whole family urged him to drink at a big Hindu festival. " Then," said he, " I received help from a Christian hymn. ' Yield not to temptation for yielding is sin.'

"But," he continued, "I don't stop there. I carry on:

'Look ever to Jesus,
He'll carry you through.'

And it's not to the memory of a dead Jesus but to the power of a living Jesus that I look when tempted." The lawyer who gave that testimony never became a Christian. He died in the Hindu fold.

A missionary travelling by bus was asked by a fellow-passenger for pictures of Jesus. When asked why they were needed, he said: "My mother is a great devotee of Jesus. When anybody is sick in our village, my mother tells them to gaze at a picture of Jesus, sprinkles them with holy water, and tells them to believe that Jesus can heal them. She has healed many in that way. My father was greatly devoted to Jesus. He taught my mother and me to love Him, but told us we need not leave the Hindu fold."

This is perhaps our greatest problem—the large number of Hindus who show deep respect for Christ, but see no need to face baptism and ostracism which joining the Church would involve. Jesus knew about that type of man, when He said it is impossible to sew a patch of new cloth on an old garment, or to pour new wine into shrivelled wine-skins.

Dr. T. R. Glover's great book *The Jesus of History* was written in India as lectures to educated Indians. His chapter on "The Christian Church in the Roman Empire" is a masterpiece for the purpose. He told of the strength of the old Greek religion in its ancient tradition; in its splendour of art, architecture and ceremony; in its oracles, healings and prophecies; in its adaptability in absorbing all cults and creeds. He pointed out its weakness, in that it had no deep sense of truth, no association with morality. He spoke of its polytheism, and the fear of the grave. He instanced the reformers who sprang to its defence. Then the religion of Jesus came to Rome, " to the Greeks foolishness," the religion of slaves. But something happened. The Christian " out-lived " the pagan, " out-died " him and " out-thought " him. The old religion crumbled and fell, and the Emperor of Rome became a Christian. The concluding paragraph was not in the lecture as delivered in India. Glover ended with no reference to Hinduism or India. But his keen hearers read the analogy aright and went away very quiet and downcast.

He was right. The old religion is beginning to crumble. But what is taking its place? We have read of its attempts at rejuvenation by the absorption of Christian ideas. But that is not enough. Many of the younger Indians are turning from it, but not to Christ. For a time it was social reform which became their religion—attempts to purify Hindu life, to rid it of *sati*, of the evils of caste, and to right the wrongs of widows. Then came a phase of social service, when young men and women threw themselves eagerly into any and every effort to help the needy and suffering. But now the god of India is Nationalism. Indians have no thought for anything but India's freedom. Now that goal is being reached—and then what? The materialism of the wealthy? The Communism of the younger generation? The cynical self-centredness of the disillusioned?

India is faced with the probability of a descent into irreligion. We have the greatest sympathy with those men of high ideals who are seeking to stem this downward rush by proclaiming reformed versions of the ancient faith. We are convinced, however, that no patching of the old garment, no resting at any half-way house, will be of any avail. There is only one message for India, as for the whole world, and that is the revelation of God through Christ and His way of the Cross.

CHAPTER XVI

LO, WE TURN TO THE GENTILES

WE have seen how the first fine eagerness of Indians to enter the Kingdom seemed to evaporate. Here and there groups sought and found Jesus. Men of outstanding ability paid the full penalty for forsaking Hinduism or Islam, and became valiant witnesses for the Christ they valued far more than family or position. But the greater number of caste Hindus who caught the vision were content to follow it afar, were satisfied with the reflected glory found in the reformed sects, or expended their energies in social service—splendid but inadequate, since it led to no change of soul. Missionaries of all societies saw a slowing down in the rate of conversion, and very little fruit for their labours. They were faced with the same problem as Paul at Antioch in Pisidia and, like him, they made a momentous decision. "It was necessary," said Paul to the Jews, "that the word of God should first have been spoken to you: but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles."

This turn in the affairs of our own Society is thus recorded by P. E. Heberlet of Orissa in 1893:

> "One day on tour in the Patna State, Daniel Das left the caste village of Budipadra, disheartened by the coldness of the reception he received; and seeing the low-caste quarter standing apart from the rest across the road, he was led of God to enter it and preach to the people there. This was the first deliberate attempt to reach the low-caste people as

> a caste, and it immediately received the seal of God's approval. The man, Jadab by name, to whom Daniel first and chiefly preached the Gospel, said at the end that if the Lord had borne all that for him, and had laid down His life for him, then he would henceforth live unto the Lord. Then he and the others who had heard pressed Daniel to tarry with them and teach them more of the things they had heard."

It seemed as if the Holy Spirit had been preparing the hearts of these people to receive their Lord, for in a few months fourteen had confessed their love and allegiance to Christ in baptism and many others were crowding to hear the Gospel.[1]

The succeeding years, 1893 to 1907, were years of abundant harvest when hundreds of outcastes came in faith to the Saviour who had come to seek and save that which was lost. The number of Christians increased rapidly, for the converts themselves told of their new-found Saviour as they moved about their work and visited the central markets. Yet because old habits of thought as well as practices die hard and because these things blind the vision, we know that the building up of these living temples of our Holy Lord must have cost untold prayers and fears and patience and love. That story must be cherished in heaven.

At last, in 1911, land was granted in Balangir. Mr. Heberlet had the joy of coming to live amongst the people for whom he had laboured so long and ardently. Mr. Jarry arrived in the area in 1913 and laboured with untiring energy and zeal, and his gifts of leadership and organisation were greatly used in the establishment and upbuilding of the church in West Orissa. There are now

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[1] *Ibid*, pp. 110–11.

79 organised churches with a total membership of 3,400 and a Christian community of about 10,000. So far the work has only touched the depressed classes. Much has been done by the power of Christ. The work goes on in the belief that the day will come when the changed lives of these men and women, won by the love and power of Christ, will prove to be God's key to the hearts of the masses of caste people as yet deaf to His call.[1]

The door has been opened to the outcaste. It now swings wide to admit the aboriginals. There has always been a strong element of adventurous romance about the work in the Lushai Hills. Two young men, Lorrain and Savidge, supported by Robert Arthington, arrived in the North Lushai Hills in 1894. During four years' residence they reduced the language to writing, translated two Gospels and the Acts and prepared a small Primer. They then handed on their work to the Welsh Presbyterians, and began pioneer work among the Abor people.

In 1901 the Chittagong missionary, George Hughes, visited South Lushai and left there two workers, a Bengali, Rasiklal Mandal, and a Chakma to hold the fort, and next year Basantakumar Saha (who is still alive) was put in charge. Two Bengalis and a Chakma can therefore claim the honour of being the first mission workers in South Lushai, but for health reasons they were unable to continue. The B.M.S. invited Lorrain and Savidge to join the Society and return to the Lushai Hills as its representatives. They arrived in Lushai on March 13th, 1903. Soon after their arrival, Lorrain wrote :

> "These five years (the years spent out of the Lushai Hills), had witnessed wonderful changes in the once savage Lushais, specially in their attitude

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[1] *Ibid*, pp. 115–18.

> towards Christianity, and we are filled with joy to find that there were about thirty families in our field who had given up sacrificing to demons, and were trying, to the best of their ability, to serve God. There can be no manner of doubt but that God is working mightily among the Lushais."

There can be no manner of doubt but that God has continued to work mightily amongst the Lushais during the forty-three years which have elapsed since Lorrain wrote those words. To-day some who actually took part in the head-hunting expeditions of former days, when there was not even a written language, enjoy listening to the Hallelujah Chorus sung by their children and grandchildren, even at times joining in themselves. The work of the two pioneers laid the foundations on which the ever strongly progressive work in the Church in education, in the medical sphere, and in literature and translation is still being carried on.

There are now over 21,000 in the Christian community, of whom some 8,000 are baptized Church members. This steady growth and development of the South Lushai Church is due to its keen evangelistic zeal. It is by the testimony of the Lushais themselves far more than by the preaching of the missionaries that converts have been won. In the slack season when work in the fields is scarce, bands of Christians go on tour preaching and singing the Gospel in each village they visit, and winning many to Christianity.[1]

In 1904 Herbert Anderson paid a visit to Dinajpur which changed the whole course of Mission policy in North Bengal. He enquired whether anything was being done by our Mission or any other to win for Christ the 74,000 Santal immigrants in the district. The answer was in the negative. Our workers now began to get into touch with these people in the markets which they visited, and in 1906 the first two Santal converts were baptized by John Dutt, and the B.M.S. decided to re-occupy Dinajpur. A. E. Summers came and at once realised the great opportunity among the Santals. He learnt their language and concentrated his efforts chiefly on winning them for Christ. Year by year large numbers were added to the Church, and those that were no people became God's people. In 1910 John Ellison of Rangpur started work among the Oraons and Garos. In 1914 Rasik Murmu and four other Santal Christians went to France with the Labour Corps. All returned safely and, in thankfulness to God, Rasik vowed to spend all his spare time in winning his fellow-Santals to Christ. Rasik and Prasad Das, two Bengal evangelists, did faithful work in North Bengal. In 1923 the men were joined by Misses Fenter and Winifred Williams. Camping at Christian villages, the women missionaries found great cause for rejoicing, as in spite of the five different languages in which work had to be conducted, the Christian women soon showed themselves responsive and eager for the conversion of their non-Christian sisters around. There has been a steady flow of converts, and the Christian community in Dinajpur now numbers over 3,000, the result of forty years of faithful and understanding work.[1]

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[1] *Ibid*, pp. 154–9.

From 1880 onwards Long and Wilkinson made intermittent attempts to evangelise the Kond Hills, where lived another aboriginal tribe. It was not till 1908 that it was decided to build bungalows in Udayagiri. Preaching tours were made by Grimes and Horsburgh. In this work an Indian colleague, John Biswas, played an honoured and notable part. He gave the whole of his time to telling people of his Lord and he soon became a familiar figure throughout the district, for he was a musician and many were the crowds who gathered to hear him play his violin. If ever an instrument was dedicated to God, it was John Biswas's. The people who stood to listen to his music never failed to hear the Gospel from his lips.

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[1] *Ibid*, pp. 28–32.

Edward Evans, who settled in the Kond Hills in 1911, and Biswas, gave their whole time to evangelistic work, and in nearly all the districts in which touring was done they had the joy of seeing little Christian communities coming into being. Easter Sunday, 1914, saw the first baptism. The four converts followed their Lord through the waters of a stream which runs quite near to the Mission bungalow. It was a glorious spring morning and nature all round, bursting into new and abundant life, seemed typical of what was happening to the spiritual life of the people. From that time to this an increasing number of men and women have come to know and love our Lord Jesus Christ and have made public confession of their faith by baptism. From 1914 to 1919 there were 25 baptisms ; from 1920 to 1924—63 ; 1925 to 1929—403 ; 1930 to 1934—607 ; and from then to the present day some 1,600. So men and women who had offered human sacrifices to appease an angry god have come to believe in and follow the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world.[1]

From the aboriginals we turn back to the outcastes. In 1909 it was reported that at Arrah in Bihar 200 *chamars* were ready to become Christians and that four had been baptized by two of our workers. As there was no likelihood of our being able to send a European missionary there, the American Methodist Mission, which had recently entered the area, was asked to take over the work.

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[1] *Ibid*, pp. 119–20.

In the Monghyr area, E. T. Stuart has been doing intensive work amongst *chamars* in thirty-five villages, which gives promise of harvest. From Gaya, George Hicks in 1924 opened up work among *chamars* at Nawadah. School work for children of low-caste people, basket-makers, sweepers and others, has been carried on extensively.

In 1936 there was a strong movement towards Christianity among the *chamars* of Dholpur who asked for teaching. When the likelihood that whole groups of *chamars* might move over to Christianity became known, the caste people hastened to remove their grievances and the whole movement has died down.

In 1916 and the following years, there was another movement Christwards in the villages near Palwal, and thirty-two men and women were baptized. The constant opposition of non-Christians added greatly to the difficulties of the work. Since 1931, over a hundred, after careful instruction and testing, have been baptized at Hathin. In Faridabad there are 130 baptized Christians and a large community of enquirers. Including the town church, the total Christian community now numbers about 1,000.

There have been steady additions in Baraût, through the efforts of R. L. Morgan, Anstie Smith, Haider Ali and John Jardine. There is to-day a community of over 4,000 of whom some 1,200 are baptized. In Bhiwani there have been individual converts from the higher castes, though the majority have come from the weavers' community.

Kharar was for many years a station of ours, but was an island in the midst of Presbyterianism. So the work was handed over to the New Zealand Presbyterians in 1924. At that time there were 1,656 Christians scattered in 185 villages.

At one time it looked as if there might be a big ingathering from the Nama Sudras, the largest farming caste in Bengal. Mead of the Australian Baptists, William Carey, Peter Noble and John Reid of the B.M.S. gave themselves to the winning of this caste. It was soon apparent, however, that what they wanted was education and material progress, and not Christianity, and so this movement was added to the long list of heart-breaks for the missionary. "If only . . . but ye would not."

One day a group of men walked into our Calcutta office and asked Mr. Wells: "Are you a Baptist? If so, will you please come and baptize some people we have converted?" It transpired they were Telugu Christians from the Canadian Baptist field farther south, who had come to work in a jute mill on the Hooghly. Between them they had hired an extra room in the coolie lines, to serve as their chapel, and here they had worship on Sundays. This attracted their non-Christian neighbours who joined them in their worship and were drawn to Christ. Through a visiting preacher they heard of our Calcutta office. Their invitation was soon accepted. Mrs. Wells knew Telugu, and so did some of the theological students at Serampore. They made contacts with these mill-workers, with the help of Colinga Church, Calcutta, and baptisms soon took place, and churches were formed on both sides of the river. Now, Archie Rao and a Telugu evangelist minister to a group which is a growing community, and they have had great encouragement in developing this promising work. The Calcutta churches have been generous in their support, and the Serampore staff and students render splendid service.

The Jessore district seemed quite dead and it ceased to be a mission station. It remained, however, under the care of the Calcutta and Suburban Baptist Union, and Bilas Mukerji, our missionary in the Student Hall, himself born in the Jessore district, paid occasional visits. It is impossible to tell when and where the Spirit of God will begin to move. Like the wind, it bloweth where it listeth. Some years ago, without warning, enquiries for teaching came from the Rishis, a low-caste tribe who were formerly leather-workers, but who now do farming and basket-work. They belonged to the Ghose-para sect, with whose leader Carey came in contact near Serampore a century before. They had given up idol worship, and paid great respect to the holy book given them by their *guru*. They heard of Christ through a Muslim convert, and he brought them to Bilas Mukerji, grandson of a Brahmin convert. So these two, of Hindu and Muslim stock, began to work for the regeneration of this group, despised by Hindu and Muslim alike. There was opposition from the high-caste neighbours at first, but this was tactfully countered. Now the two landlords of the area—a Hindu graduate and a Muslim—are in full sympathy with our efforts to help this community for which neither Hindu nor Muslim has done anything in the past. A rest-house was built, and an evangelist and teacher settled among the people, to be followed by a woman evangelist. At the first Lord's Supper twenty were received into church membership and by the end of last year the number had grown to 143. There is every prospect of a real solid movement continuing there.

These examples from our records show a trend which has been characteristic of the Christian enterprise in India for the past fifty years. In all parts of India missionaries have turned to the less privileged castes and the aboriginal tribes, and the response has been embarrassingly great. It seemed as if the only limit to the ingathering was our lack of personnel. In many parts of India mass movements occurred, when whole villages were registered as Christians. Our Baptist methods will never produce mass movements, for our emphasis is essentially on the personal salvation of individuals and the weeding out of the sheep from the goats. Our way may be slower, but it is more solid, and it results in the production of Christian leaders of fine character and gifts, able to lead the Church with the minimum of help from outside.

The movement continues apace, and there are now 8,000,000 Christians in India, one in every fifty of the whole population. 200,000 enter the Christian community every year. These huge additions bring their problems—for most of the newcomers are illiterate and must be taught to read; they are babes in the wood; they bring with them deep-rooted superstitions from which they must be delivered. The building of the Church with these folk demands for many years the best help we can give.

So the chief additions of recent years have been from the "down and outs." But God has not forgotten the "up and outs," and there have been signal accessions from the higher classes. An outstanding instance is that of Bimalananda Nag, a young man of good family led to God by Wright Hay of Dacca. He himself was the means of leading several outstanding Hindus to Christ. He started the Students' Hall in Calcutta which was packed to hear his Bible lectures. In Dacca work among students has had its trophies in men of good family who have become devoted servants of Christ. Work among students in Patna has been blessed with similar results. Christ's touch has still its ancient power, and claims its Sauls as well as its slaves.

CHAPTER XVII

TEAM WORK

THE preceding chapters have been largely occupied with the expanding work of the B.M.S. Thanks be to God, we do not work in isolation. In the very nature of the God we serve there is co-operation. Surely the Trinity is the demonstration of fellowship at the very heart of God—the Three working as one. So when Jesus came, He sought men as individuals, and at once united them in a fellowship. We are " workers together with God." It is when we are " working together " that we are " with God."

To the writer the missionary fellowship is the richest he has ever known outside the home family—the loyal, unselfish family life with our comrades of the B.M.S. and in the Indian Baptist Church. But the fellowship is not confined to our own group. The work of the Kingdom is team work all the time.

First of all, there is team work with our fellow Baptists. Judson sailed from America in 1812 as the representative of a Congregational Society. He and his wife were led to adopt Baptist principles on the voyage, and on landing were baptized in Bow Bazar Chapel, Calcutta. Prior to this Carey had been in correspondence with American Baptists, and so he was able to put Judson in touch with these friends, and the American Baptist Foreign Missionary Society was formed as a result. It was on Carey's advice that Judson went to Burma and, through pain and anguish, laid the foundations of the Church in that land. So began the work of American Baptists on the other side of the Bay of Bengal. This has become a veritable Baptist Bay. Start from Ceylon, where our British B.M.S. is at work. Along the stretch of the east coast of South India we find the American Baptists, followed by the Canadians. Who can forget the story of the Lone Star Mission? After them the British are placed in Orissa with the Americans again striding the Bengal–Orissa border. The British are found once more in Bengal, with the Australians and New Zealanders on their eastern flank. On the eastern side of the Bay we meet first the British at Chittagong and then the Americans continue on to the very southern tip of Burma. Turning north we find two great side arms, the British up the Ganges Valley and the Americans up the Brahmaputra to the very foot of the Hump, that age-long barrier between India and China which has been at last conquered by the aeroplane. In a real sense these other Baptist Missions are daughters of the B.M.S. Many of their fields were first opened by Carey's men and were later transferred to our brethren from America and the Dominions as they hived off to form Baptist Missions of their own. Cordial good-fellowship between us has always existed, and this found organic expression just before the war in the formation of the Baptist Union of India, Burma and Ceylon. The war prevented this body from functioning save by correspondence. We look forward to it becoming a vital fellowship now peace is restored.

The most vital form of team work is that between the missionary from abroad and the churches of the country. This underlies much of the co-operation discussed in the remainder of this chapter and is also the subject of a separate chapter.

We co-operate not only with other Baptists, but increasingly with Churches and Missions of other persuasions. It is not our purpose to discuss here the thorny question of the organic unity of Churches. None of our B.M.S. fields lies within the area involved in the South India United Churches scheme. In North India two proposals are under consideration—one on the lines of the South India scheme to include Anglicans, and the other for a union of certain non-Anglican churches, as being more immediately practicable, and as a probable preliminary to a larger union. The wider scheme has almost reached a deadlock. The United Committee of the B.M.S. has sent to the Joint Council a carefully reasoned statement of the Baptist position regarding certain features of their scheme, and is awaiting a reply to these difficulties.

Whatever may be our views on organic union, we are all convinced of the value of co-operative enterprises. Such projects are economically sound, for combined plans can make much better use of available resources than the isolated efforts of single churches or missions. They are an encouragement to Indian Christians to close their ranks in view of their relatively numerical inferiority to the adherents of the major religions. They are also a demonstration to India as a whole of the possibility of team work between people with varying religious views, and as such they contribute to national progress.

Co-operation is of two kinds. First, there is an effort in which two or more bodies work together to run a combined institution as, say, a Union School. Secondly, there are the Provincial and National Christian Councils and their associated specialist bodies, on which nearly all non-Roman Churches and Missions are represented, and which are making a splendid contribution to the co-ordination of the Christian enterprise. Each province has its Provincial Christian Council elected by the Churches and Missions in the area. The Annual Meetings provide a forum for the discussion of many subjects of common interest, and an opportunity for the initiation of co-operative enterprises. Their Standing Committees cover the whole scope of the Christian undertaking, and their reports to the annual meetings keep delegates abreast of progress and problems in the province. Representatives of these Provincial Councils form the National Christian Council, which holds an outstanding position as the organ for the expression of representative Christian opinion. It is increasingly taking the lead in formulating co-operative enterprises. Improvement of Christian Literature, Study of Mass Movements, Surveys of areas where Christian progress is retarded, Provision of the Ministry for the Indian Church, Removal of Illiteracy, the Union Medical College at Vellore, the Economic State of the Christian Community, Provision for the ex-Soldier—these are a few of the great subjects tackled by the Christian Councils to the great enrichment of the Christian Church in India. They count for much more, and are far more effective in the actual promotion of combined efforts, than similar bodies at home. They are now indispensable to the Christian enterprise. Indian leadership is becoming increasingly effective. The late Bishop Azariah exerted a profound influence as President of the National Christian Council for many years, and J. Z. Hodge was succeeded in 1944 as Secretary by Dr. R. B. Manikam. In the provinces, too, Indians are increasingly taking their rightful place as leaders.

We as Baptists can point with pride to our great tradition of leadership in all forms of co-operative effort. The Serampore Trio founded the truly catholic University of Serampore ; George Howells and his colleagues revived the theological department with a widely representative Senate. In the middle period co-operation was almost unknown, but in the last half-century Baptists again took the lead. The Bengal Christian Conference owed its origin to the inspiration of the Khulna revival meetings, and in its great days Rev. H. G. Banerjee was its secretary. Herbert Anderson and William Carey the younger were the pioneers in the Christian Endeavour Movement; Arthur Jewson in Sunday School work; Anderson in Temperance; A. E. Summers and Miss Payne in the Protection of Children. Lalbihari Shah founded the Calcutta Blind School, himself becoming blind soon after. Carey organised the Bengal Examination Board, G. J. Dann was the pillar of the Hindi examinations, and our Orissa missionaries have been mainly responsible for examinations in Oriya. Anderson helped to create the National Missionary Council (later Christian Council) of which he was the first Secretary. Carey and B. A. Nag were the outstanding figures of the Bengal Christian Council in its earlier years. Philip John and others have played a great part in the North India Councils, and Kenneth Weller was the first Secretary of the Orissa Council. W. Sutton Page started the Calcutta Language School for missionaries and John Reid revived it in Darjeeling. Bevan Jones created the School of Islamics, and R. C. Das the Benares Institute of Hinduism. The inception of the United Missionary Training College in Calcutta was largely due to Miss Dyson. C. B. Young was Warden of a hostel in the Anglican St. Stephen's College, Delhi. We have taken an active part in the Delhi United Christian School. Gordon Carpenter conceived the idea of a Union Christian residential school for Bengal, which afterwards came to fruition in Bishnupur. We are partners in the United Missionary Girls' School in Calcutta. It was a Baptist who organised the excellent Chapra Training School for village teachers in Bengal. A. E. Hubbard did a great work in the Free Church in New Delhi. Dr. Edith Brown has been the inspiration of the great medical work for women at

Ludhiana. In literature the activities of the Serampore Brethren have been mentioned, and the tradition has been honourably maintained throughout the years. The Baptist version of the Bible is the only one current in Bengali, Hindi or Oriya, and in each province Baptist hymn books are widely used. It was a Baptist who organised the Christian Literature Board for Bengal, and a succession of Baptist secretaries did much to revive the Calcutta Christian Tract and Book Society. T. C. Vicary founded the Union Christian Training College at Berhampur in Bengal. The latest is R. A. Barclay's achievement in organising the Union Theological School for Bengal with a Scots Presbyterian principal, a Bengali Baptist vice-principal and an Anglican Bengali lecturer.

The position in Lushai deserves fuller treatment as a unique experiment in Church Union. North Lushai is in the field of the Welsh Presbyterians, and South Lushai is Baptist. When it became necessary that the rapidly increasing number of baptized Christians should be bound together in an organised Church, it was decided to adopt a modification of the Presbyterian form of Church government. This had proved very satisfactory in the Welsh Church of the North, and it was felt that the same form of Church government in the two districts would result in the unity of the whole Lushai Church. This has indeed proved to be the case. The Church of the North and the Church of the South each follows its own distinctive teaching in the matter of doctrine, while it recognises and appreciates the teachings of the other. Each recognises the ordained pastorate of the other Church and those in full membership in either area are full members of the whole Church. The question of transfer from one area to another, or from one village to another, does not arise. A church member is a member of the whole Church and not of any individual community. Each area makes its own rules for the government of the Church in that area. In matters that affect the whole Church, there is unity of action—no rule being made in either area until it has been agreed on by both. Representatives of the South attend the Presbytery Council meetings of the North, and *vice versa*. Thus, if and when the two Missions withdraw, the Lushai Church will be able to stand alone—a united, indigenous Church.[1]

Truly Baptists have reason to be proud of their share in co-operative effort. It is only by a continued expansion of such team work that the tremendous task in India can adequately be faced.

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[1] *Ibid*, pp. 157–8.

CHAPTER XVIII

THE INDIAN CHURCH TAKES CHARGE

> *" To esteem and treat Indians always as our equals. To cultivate their spiritual gifts, ever pressing upon them their missionary obligation—since Indians only can win India for Christ."*

IT is remarkable that many early missionaries were themselves the fruit of the missionary enterprise. Many were Anglo-Indians, whose birth and residence in the country gave them an easy command of the language. As Indians entered the Church, the abler of them were appointed as itinerant evangelists and resident pastors. At a later stage outstanding Indians were selected as assistant missionaries, and finally a number of these were nominated to the Home Committee for appointment by them as home missionaries, having equal status and responsibilities with the British missionary.

In the early days, too, active support for missionary work was organised on the field. Bow Bazar Church in Calcutta was vigorous in the evangelisation of the villages south of the city. The " Lall Bazar Church Missionary Society " was founded in 1824 (Lall Bazar being the former name of the street). In 1839 the church at Entally formed a " Native Missionary Society." Lower Circular Road Church had a Missionary Band, and Howrah a Branch Missionary Society. The Agra Baptist Auxiliary Missionary Society appointed and largely supported its own agents and missionaries, and continued to develop the work with great success until the Mutiny of 1857 put an end to the organisation. An Indian Auxiliary Mission was formed in Orissa before 1870. All these organisations had careers of fluctuating usefulness and gradually faded out.

The Indian Baptist Missionary Society was formed in Bengal in 1898 and received generous support from the churches. It found a sphere of work amongst the Moghs at Ramgarh in the Chittagong Hill Tracts, its first missionary being Dayalchandra Haldar, a B.M.S. evangelist who resigned his post for that purpose. Subsequently it conducted work at Jhenidah in Jessore, but was later absorbed in the Bengal Baptist Union. About the same time an Indian Baptist Missionary Society was formed in Orissa. A worker was sent to Angul and for fifteen years much good work was done. The I.B.M.S. finally ceased in 1915.

Efforts to organise the churches into unions for mutual fellowship and help began at the Jubilee in 1842, when the " Association of the Baptist Churches in Bengal " was formed at Serampore. The Annual Meetings of the Association were held for some years, but later were discontinued.

The year 1870 marks an era in Indian Mission history. The Home Committee then decided that it was desirable that the people should take practical steps in the direction of independence. They should pay their own pastors and repair their own churches. The aid so long given from home was not to be withdrawn at once, but the deductions, gradually increasing, were to cover a number of years. After the early seventies, no church was repaired nor pastor paid, from Mission funds. Looking back, we see that in the preceding forty years there had been such a spirit of dependence on foreign aid that the succeeding forty years did not entirely eradicate it. In many places the Mission-paid teacher was still expected to give pastoral aid, and was assisted by the occasional visits of the Mission-paid preacher. In bigger churches the man who was practically head of the village in secular matters and, also, the best educated, was made pastor and gave his services free. The people have been, of late years, learning gradually to help one another in matters of church building and repairs, but there is still much to be learnt in this direction.

In many districts annual gatherings of the Christians were held for instruction and mutual uplift. Revival meetings on a large scale were started in the Khulna district, and these resulted in the formation of the Bengal Christian Conference, whose annual meetings were for many years the great event for Christians of all denominations.

In 1892, the Centenary Year, a Union of the Baptist Churches of the Barisal, Pirojpur and Madaripur areas was formed. Similar District Unions were formed in other areas. The formation of these Unions really marks the beginning of a new era in the relationships between the Mission and the Church. The first period had been one of *Mission Control* of the Churches. Up till that time the ruling body for all districts had been the Annual Provincial Missionary Conference, to which, as years went on, an increasing number of Indians were invited, some of these being, in later years, the official representatives of their District Church Unions. The rule of the Conferences was on the whole both benevolent and efficient. The destinies of the Mission were guided by a succession of able and consecrated men acting as India Secretaries, of whom John Kerry and Herbert Anderson are noteworthy because of their long service and exceptional talents. When John Reid succeeded Anderson the time was ripe to reap the harvest of long years of painful growth. The years since the Centenary in 1892 had witnessed the beginnings of the second stage, that of the *Separation of Church and Mission.* The District Unions became responsible for the organisation and control of the churches, while the Mission was responsible for evangelistic, educational, medical and literary work. While the District missionary was usually the President of the Union, the Mission as such had no official connection with it, financial or otherwise. The Union raised its own funds for its own purposes. Later, certain Unions assumed responsibility, jointly with the Mission, for the control of primary school teachers and evangelists.

These District Unions worked quite independently of each other, save for occasional fraternal visits at the time of the Annual Meetings, which were crowded gatherings with a full programme both inspirational and practical. The need for a Central Union for all Bengal was obvious to all and, after four years of negotiations, a meeting was held at Barisal in 1922 to constitute the new Bengal Baptist Union—usually known by its Bengali equivalent —*Sangha*. At first this was a real Union, as it included representatives of the fields of the Australian, New Zealand and American Baptist Missions, in addition to our own. Later, however, the Australians formed their own Union, the Americans ceased to attend, and the *Sangha* was thus far truncated, to the great disappointment of B. A. Nag and others who had worked for a comprehensive Bengal Union.

The *Sangha* was just getting into its stride when it was given a sudden increase in its responsibilities. In 1925 the B.M.S. Home Committee called for drastic retrenchment. Certain eager spirits had long been urging that the new *Sangha* should take over greater burdens in order to make it more of a reality. The framers of retrenchment policy in Bengal seized upon this idea, and all B.M.S. work in the four older fields was transferred to the *Sangha*, with a grant from the Mission considerably less than the total grants previously made to those areas. European missionaries were withdrawn from all fields except Barisal. The *Sangha* tackled its heavy task with real courage. A great strain was thrown upon the four District Unions, but they raised considerable sums locally, and watched expenditure very critically, with the result that the diminution of work was very slight.

It was, however, unfortunate that the new advance in its origin was associated with retrenchment. This gave rise to the idea that it was merely a means of saving money, whereas in the eyes of its originators it was a very definite act of faith in the ability of the Bengali churches to manage the work. Another drawback was that the scheme produced a split between the areas controlled by the *Sangha* and those under direct control of the Mission, where money was relatively easier to obtain. But the ten years' experiment in local self-government brought distinct gains. Indian responsibility was developed, local leaders bravely shouldered heavy responsibilities, and the community as a whole realised that the work is theirs and not that of a foreign body.

John Reid attended the Jerusalem Conference of the International Missionary Council in 1928 and B. A. Nag the Baptist World Congress in Berlin in 1934. The effect of these meetings on them was seen when the Bengal and Assam Christian Council, under Nag's leadership, prepared a scheme for the transfer of all Mission work to the control of the Indian Church. The B.M.S. was one of the first societies to give general approval to the scheme. In February 1935, a plan of union was accepted by the B.M.S. Conference and the Bengal Baptist Union Assembly. The constitution of the Union was revised, and, in October 1935, in the historic board room at Serampore, the Council of the Bengal Baptist Union held its first session. It was a great moment for B. A. Nag when the Council stood to adopt the revised constitution and he thus saw the fruit of twenty years of unremitting labour. Thus the B.M.S. entered into full partnership with the Baptist Churches of Bengal. Thenceforth the work of the Mission in this Province has been controlled, not by the Field Conference, but by the *Sangha* acting by its Assembly and through its Council. On both these bodies the missionaries are in a permanent minority. The courage of the Home Committee in making the transfer and that of the churches in taking over so heavy a burden, were equally admirable.

The Utkal Christian Church Union of Orissa was formed in Cuttack in 1908. In Christmas week of that year the All-Orissa C. E. Convention was held there, and delegates from all parts of the province were present. At one of the meetings Mr. A. K. Das, the Provincial C. E. secretary, spoke of Orissa's great need of the Gospel, and urged the Indian Christians to make every effort to propagate it and to make the churches self-supporting. The Spirit of God was behind the appeal, and the people responded with enthusiasm. As a result the Utkal Christian Church Union was formed. The churches connected with the American Baptist Mission sent delegates and, joining the Union, co-operated in its work for some years.

Later the churches were combined into six District Unions. The negotiations which attended this action were similar to those conducted in Bengal, and were begun in order to form an organic union of the Church and Mission. Reid, then India Secretary, laboured hard and with enthusiasm to bring this about, and Orissa actually succeeded two years before Bengal. In 1933 at an Easter meeting in Puri, the Mission and the Utkal Union were merged into the Utkal Baptist Central Church Council. Since then the churches in Orissa and the B.M.S. have worked together, pooling men and money, for the extension of Christ's Kingdom. All the evangelists working in the province connected with the B.M.S.

come under the control of the Council, and all grants available for evangelistic work are administered through it. About two-thirds of the delegates who meet year by year to discuss plans for the work and the distribution of the money are Indians, either laymen or Council workers. The District Unions have full powers in all arrangements for the evangelistic and Church work in their own area, for placing workers and for allocating the money granted to them through the Central Council. The missionaries are workers of the Central Council and are responsible to the Council for their work. The Council is animated by a real spirit of co-operation and brotherliness, and the work is going forward.[1]

Thus in Bengal and Orissa we have reached the third stage : *The Mission merged in the Church.*

It is interesting to note that both in Bengal and Orissa the churches associated with the American Baptists, whose interest in the Provincial Unions had lapsed, have this year applied for readmission to the Unions.

In North India, too, there has been a reorientation of work on the principle of making the Church centric in all our plans. To this end Church Councils were established, that through them the Church might undertake a gradually expanding responsibility. In 1916 the Northern District Church Council was formed. Pastors were appointed to the Simla and Kharar churches. Towards their support more than half of their salaries were being provided by the two churches while the remaining two churches were contributing to the support of the evangelists doing pastoral work among them. The Delhi-Agra Church Council was established in 1917, originally thirteen and now eighteen churches being affiliated to it. They undertake the full support of an evangelistic worker, and maintain a number of orphans in B.M.S. Schools.

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[1] *Ibid*, pp. 148–50.

A Sustentation Fund has been established with a view to increasing local contributions to the support of the pastors. In Bihar all the churches are now constituted on a "Union" basis, admitting to membership Christians from other denominations, and they are united in the Gaya–Monghyr–Patna Union Church Council. The pastors at Patna and Gaya are entirely supported by their own churches.

Progress has been slower in North India. This is due partly to the smaller numbers of Baptist Christians in the field, and also to the widely scattered nature of the area.

The organisation of the Lushai Church has been described in the previous chapter. The Church here is independent of the Mission both in the matter of control and support, and this is in itself a testimony to the success of the work. The Mission has always been responsible for the cost of training pastors, candidates for the ministry being selected by the Presbytery, and appointed and supported by it on the completion of their training, if considered worthy of ordination.

The four provinces are thus in differing stages with regard to Church and Mission relationships : Lushai—Church organised independently of the Mission in control and support, though looking to the missionary for guidance ; North India—Independent Church Councils, partial support ; Orissa—Mission merged in Church for evangelistic and Church work, other subjects being reserved for Missionary Committees ; Bengal—Mission merged in Church, the only reservation being the allowances of missionaries.

How do things work in a province where the Mission has merged with the Church ? The local support is considerable, much of it being raised on the spot and not being recorded in the central accounts. Each church contributes towards the salary of its pastor, the balance being met from central funds. Its members build and repair their church, pastor's house, school and teacher's quarters, entirely at their own cost. They provide the teacher's food, and make a contribution towards the cost of the school. They contribute a tenth of the church income to the District Union funds. At every wedding the bridegroom is expected to make a contribution to Union funds.

Come to a meeting of the District Union Council. Delegates gather from every church in the area, and there is much cheery greeting as friends meet each other. A gong convenes the meeting, and the President takes the chair. In a group of forty men there may be two missionaries, one English and one Indian. As the roll is called, each delegate pays to the treasurer an affiliation fee for his church, together with its dues for the Union " tenth," school contribution, or rent of mission property. The Agenda is long and keenly discussed. The school committee makes its report, and the Inspector is questioned about the state of various schools. Local church difficulties are reported, and members are appointed to settle them. A church wishes to rebuild its chapel, so there is a lively period while the cost is shared among the churches by a levy, to be paid at the next meeting. We break off when the midday meal smells inviting, go to the pool to bathe, and then sit down together on straw to a meal provided by the inviting church. More discussion follows, on plans to be made for an evangelistic week of witness, delegates to be sent to a meeting of another union, and so on. A break is made for tea and biscuits, a devotional meeting follows, and the Lord's Supper comes as a climax to the proceedings ; after which the delegates depart to the four points of the compass. The discussions are as keen as at any similar meeting in Britain, and the treasurer takes back considerable sums towards the local support needed to balance his budget.

The Working Committee or Executive of the Provincial Union meets twice a year. Two or three days are needed to deal with a heavy agenda whose minutes occupy an hour or so in the India Committee at home. In the Executive Indians still predominate numerically, though there is a good proportion of British missionaries. Debates are keen and friendly, and it is only very rarely that the division of voting is on racial lines. Missionaries usually find themselves on both sides in a division.

The Council is a larger body, and includes delegates from the District Unions, and a considerable number of missionaries who, however, are in a distinct minority. If the Working Committee is the Cabinet, the Council is the Parliament of the Union, meeting annually for two days to deal with the major business. Both in the Working Committee and in the Council the laymen are exerting an increasing influence.

Finally, Bengal has an Assembly, corresponding to the Baptist Union Assembly at home, to which each church can send its pastor and one or more delegates. This should meet annually, but more often two or three years elapse between the meetings. To the Assembly every missionary is invited, and it is a time of happy fellowship and jolly common meals. There are addresses on big subjects, and matters of major importance are decided. These have proved times of real inspiration and helpfulness.

It is noteworthy that in Bengal the "English" Churches, which are financially independent of the Mission, co-operate cordially in the local and Bengal Unions, and contribute generously to their support. This is typical. From the beginning it has been team work between the British and Bengali. It was Carey the younger and I. N. Sarkar who organised the Barisal District Union; G. W. Shaw and Santosh Sardar that in the South Villages; A. K. Das, H. W. Pike and Mihir Jachuk built up the Utkal Union; Carey, B. A. Nag and John Reid the old Bengal Union, later led so well by A. C. Ghose and A. L. Sircar. Benjamin Pradhan, Miss Wigner, B. F. W. Fellows and P. K. Das have been the mainstay of the Utkal Council. The reorganised Bengal Union had as its first officers J. K. Biswas, J. N. Rawson, S. D. Mukerji and W. E. French. It is noteworthy that the first two Bengali officers, President and Treasurer, were laymen. In later years N. A. Sircar, the secretary, and B. B. Ghosh, the treasurer, have been ably supported by H. D. Northfield, R. A. Barclay and B. D. Roy. On the women's side Mrs. Mukerji, Miss Moule, Miss Usha Biswas, Miss Andress, Miss Biraj Roy and Mrs. Griffiths have made an effective team. In Lushai it was J. H. Lorrain and Challiana who so effectively built up the Church. In North India Joel Waiz Lall, John Jardine, Haider Ali, J. T. Sidey, E. T. Stuart and Philip John have laboured for the building of a united Church. Nor is it only in the direction of the Unions that this team work is evident. In every district we find again that where Christ sends them out two by two it is often an Indian and a Britisher who are sent together.

There are still problems, of course. Real co-operation in matters of the Spirit and of the business side of religious work is never easy to obtain even in Britain where there are no racial differences of outlook. And there are churches which like to go their own way, no matter whether the Mission or a joint body of Indians and missionaries is at the head. The work is growing, which means more workers and more money. In a time of economic depression, how can the churches face the problem of attaining self-support and of providing pastors for new and backward areas? If the colleges give us the trained and consecrated pastors so desperately needed, can the most needy churches support them adequately?

Can missionaries, with their Western ideas, learn enough of Jesus' methods to help our brethren in India in India's way and not Britain's? When does Christ want the missionary to stand aside, and when should he remain to guide?

But problems are a sign of active life. And the Spirit of God is only waiting for our obedience to lead Indian Christians and missionaries alike forward in His way.[1] The churches have come to realise that the work of extending God's Kingdom is their own, and they are taking an increasing share in its work. There has been a tendency in these initial years to concentrate on the urgent need of strengthening and educating the Christian community. But where there have been new movings of the Spirit of God amongst outsiders, as, for instance, the Telugus on the Hooghly, the Rishis near Jessore, the Garos in the Dacca area, the Unions have been eager to help and to provide the necessary funds. It is encouraging to see how rapidly the leadership is passing into the hands of younger men, who are among the products of our high schools and Serampore College. Remembering the prayer of Jesus " that they may be one as we are," and that what is of Him cannot fail, we look forward confidently to a deepening fellowship and co-operation between the Church Unions and the B.M.S., until the latter is no longer needed in India. That day has by no means come. The Indian churches have repeatedly asked for more missionaries to share with them in the work, and the poverty of our community will for many years call for financial help from the British churches who are so far more greatly favoured. The leading of God has been shown unmistakably in the years that are past, in spite of all our mistakes, and we have faith that He will build something very precious on the foundations so faithfully laid.

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[1] *Ibid*, p. 151.

CHAPTER XIX

WHAT OF THE FUTURE?

IN the foregoing chapters we have sought to understand the Indian situation, and have watched the growth of the Indian Church, God's instrument for meeting it. "Since Indians only can win India for Christ," what of the future? The solution of India's political problem is still hidden from us. We hope for an agreed solution, which may be a unified India, with certain provinces definitely under Muslim control, and a generous treatment of Muslims in the Central Government. The Indian States have declared their concern not to stand in the way of India's political progress, and their readiness to accept the proposals of the Cabinet Mission. The Muslim problem vitally affects B.M.S. work. If the grouping proposed by the Cabinet Mission is approved, the whole of our work in Bengal and Lushai would be within the eastern wing of the Muslim group. Whatever be the decision, most of our Bengal work is certain to be under Muslim control. The problem of the Princes concerns us less, since only our Balangir work lies within Indian States.

What will be the position of the British missionary in a free India? Some misgiving has been created by the Congress slogan: "Quit India." Mr. Gandhi has recently stated that the cry "Quit India" does not mean "the destruction of foreigners," but their "willing conversion to Indian life." The foreigner who remains will be expected to "give India all his talents and by service render himself indispensable to the land of his adoption." These two conditions define admirably what is expected of the missionary to India, and what he would wish his own attitude to be. There will certainly be a relaxation of racial tension when the struggle for freedom is over. The British missionary will no longer be embarrassed by his relationship to the ruling power. His willingness to remain when that power is withdrawn will be a demonstration of his disinterested desire to serve India. The Indian is quick to sense the inwardness of such an attitude, and may be relied upon to respond with a true welcome to the missionary who has come to serve and not to lead.

Whether the new government will place any restriction upon the right of the Christian to seek to win men for Christ, and the right of any Indian to declare his conversion to Christianity, remains to be seen. There have been disquieting symptoms in certain directions which indicate the need for watchfulness. Recent pronouncements of Indian leaders, however, give reason for the confidence that the full freedom of preaching and conversion will be granted.

As to whether the Indian Church desires our help, the statement of the National Christian Council at its 1944 meeting, under an Indian chairman and secretary, and with a substantial Indian majority, is authoritative : " It is our earnest desire that this partnership should continue to find expression in the sending out of missionaries to the churches by the West, in the strengthening of the spiritual bonds of prayer, mutual help and fellowship in Christ, and in the continuance of financial aid, as far as this may be necessary and possible, from our fellow-Christians in the West, for the carrying forward of the Christian enterprise in India."

With regard to our own churches, the Utkal Church Council and the Bengal Baptist Union have sent forward urgent appeals for more missionaries from Britain.

In assessing our financial contribution from Britain, it should be remembered that on a generous estimate the income of the Indian is not more than one-twentieth of that of his opposite number in Britain. In view of the poverty of the members of Indian churches, they cannot be expected to contribute a large share of the cost of the work, and the churches in Britain must carry the heavier end for years to come.

We may assume, then, that aid from Britain in men and money will still be necessary for some time. Let us again look to the Serampore Covenant to see what is to be our part in the enterprise :

> *To set an infinite value on men's souls.*
> *To acquaint ourselves with the snares which hold the minds of the people.*
> *To abstain from whatever deepens India's prejudices against the Gospel.*
> *To watch for every chance of doing the people good.*
> *To preach " Christ Crucified " as the grand means of conversions.*
> *To esteem and treat Indians always as our equals.*
> *To guard and build up " the hosts that may be gathered."*
> *To cultivate their spiritual gifts, ever pressing upon them their missionary obligation—since Indians only can win India for Christ.*
> *To labour unceasingly in Biblical translation.*
> *To be instant in the nurture of personal religion.*
> *To give ourselves without reserve to the Cause, " not counting even the clothes we wear our own."*

We from the West must give of our best in personnel, money and material, for nothing less than this will do. Our missionaries will be good mixers, without colour prejudice, ready to work within the Indian Church, alongside Indian colleagues, under Indian leadership. The writer bears his testimony to the enriching experience gained from such happy fellowship with Indians.

Our churches have largely been gathered from the lower castes and aboriginals, and so our first aim must be " to guard and build up the hosts that may be gathered, and to cultivate their spiritual gifts, ever pressing upon them their missionary obligations." It will be our privilege to assist in the education of the community, particularly in the promotion of adult literacy, the training of the ministry, of teachers, doctors and nurses. The nurture of the Church through Conferences, Summer Schools, Sunday Schools, Christian Endeavour Societies and other methods, will need our help. The revision of the Bible and the preparation of Christian literature in Indian languages must be the task of Indian scholars, but they will welcome our help in organisation and distribution. Splendid team work can be done by a Briton working alongside an Indian, discussing the subject matter with him, and leaving him to produce the Indian version. There is a large place for literature in English, written specially for India by those who understand India.

We can press upon Indian Christians their missionary obligation only if we ourselves are ready to join them in the evangelistic work. Surely the time has come for a reorientation of our evangelistic programme. Fifty years ago we turned from the caste folk and the Muslim to the less privileged folk and the aboriginals. The results have been encouraging, and God has been leading us. The growth in grace and culture in the Christian community has often been amazing. Time and again we have seen this family succession : first generation, illiterate convert ; second generation, his son, literate in his own tongue, becoming a village teacher and a pastor ; and third generation, brilliant graduate and effective Christian leader. The new groups show great promise and will play a big part in the Church of the future. But is it right to turn away from the caste Hindu and the difficult Muslim? Have we been guilty of following the path of least resistance? The group movement taught us between the wars that we should go all out to win the " up and out " as well as the " down and out." So in India, while not neglecting the less privileged classes, we owe it to Christ and to

India to bring to the caste Hindu and the Muslim the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. There must be no mere criticism on our part of the religions of the people, but a positive declaration of God as revealed in Jesus Christ, enforced by lives of unselfish devotion to the welfare of India's people. We claim the best of India for Christ—her keen intellect, deep philosophy and mystic sense ; her new enthusiasm for social welfare, education and village uplift ; the skill of the craftsman, the patient labour of the peasant farmers ; the charm of her women, their devotion to the family, their help to each other ; and all the promise of her bright, winsome children. Our Saviour is knocking at the door of India, and great will be the enrichment of the Church when India flings the door wide open.

What response may we expect from India ? We have seen how greatly the life and example of Christ have gripped the imagination of many in India, and how much the life and thought of India have been influenced by Christian ideals. This has been more marked in Hinduism than in Islam, though among Muslims, too, there have been modern movements which owe something to Christian influence. There has of recent years been a hardening of India's attitude, a reaction due to the political atmosphere, bringing with it more criticism of the Christian way. This has been increased by India's resentment against some of the war-time actions of the so-called Christian nations, and particularly against mass-bombing and the use of the atomic bomb. To many in these bitter years the cult of nationalism among the well-to-do, and Communistic attacks on religion among the less privileged, have had damaging results. There is a grave danger of a general weakening of religious adherence, a definite flight from religion. India, like the rest of the world, is losing her religious sense.

We have to realise afresh and more fully the transcendent claims of Jesus. What is there in our Faith which justifies us in calling every man everywhere to jettison everything in an utter surrender to Christ? When we are sure in our own hearts that Jesus alone deserves our fealty, we shall be eager to reveal Him to others as the only Hope of the world. This must be done now, ere India drifts into nihilism. It is a task far beyond our powers or those of the Indian Church, but thanks be to God for calling us to tasks beyond our powers, when He Himself is our sufficiency. At His call we are partners with a Church which is eager to be as free as the Indian nation claims to be, and in and with that Church we face up to the great task.

Let us remember that a stream does not normally rise higher than its source. It has been God's good pleasure to make us the source from which the Gospel has flowed to India. It is unfair to expect the missionary to be a better Christian than the church member at home. We cannot expect a keener evangelistic zeal in the Indian churches than that which we find in those of Britain. When the zeal for the Lord's house grips the churches at home, when they become on fire to win their neighbours in Britain for Christ, then the flame will spread to the churches overseas, and we shall see great things happen in India.

The " ointment of spikenard very precious " with which Mary Magdalene anointed Christ " for His burying " was made from a plant found in North India. The " clean white cloth " in which Joseph wrapped the body of Jesus was an Indian muslin. Here was the unconscious devotion of India to the dead Christ. We look to see, and perhaps very soon, the conscious devotion of India to the living Christ. To this great cause we give ourselves without reserve.

INDEX

Agra, 21, 90, 111, 113, 141
American Baptist Mission, 24, 97, 134, 147
Angul, 24, 142
Animism, 27 f., 50 f.
Arya Samaj, 119
Australian Baptist Mission, 19, 131, 135

Balangir, 24, 81, 124 f., 153
Ballygunge, United Missionary Girls' School, 17
  United Missionary Training College, 17
Baptist Missionary Society, extent of work, 15 f.
  Zenana Mission, 102
Baraut, 20, 22, 130
Barisal, 18, 19, 112, 114
Bengal, 15 f., 135
  Baptist Union, 17, 78, 84, 144, 145, 154
  Christian Council, 17, 137
  famine, 1945, 106
Bengali Grammar, 72
Berhampur (Bengal), United Christian Training College, 18, 97, 139
  (Orissa), 24, 81
Bhiwani, 20, 22, 80, 130
Bible translation, 71 f.
Bishnupur, United Boys' Boarding School, 18, 86, 90, 138
Brahmo Samaj, 118, 121
British and Foreign Bible Society, 76
Buckley, Dr., 102
Buddhism, 34 f.

Calcutta, 16, 19, 58, 90, 111
  Baptist churches in, 17
  Bow Bazar Church, 17, 86
  Lal Bazar Church, 112, 141
  Lower Circular Road Church, 112, 141
  Mission Press, 17, 76, 112
  University, 94, 95
Canadian Baptist Mission, 135
Carey, Felix, 109, 110
Carey, William, 58, 62, 65, 71 f., 77, 84, 109, 113
Chamars, 21, 22, 130
Chandraghona, 19, 80
Chittagong, 19, 20, 101, 112, 142
Christian literature, 75 f.
Church Councils in North India, 147
Congress, 106, 118
Cuttack, 24, 86, 90

Dacca, 18, 19, 101, 111, 114
Dawn on the Kond Hills, 55 f.
Delhi, 20, 21, 90, 111, 113, 115, 138
Derry, Miss, 102
Dholpur, 80, 130, 175
Dinajpur, 18, 111, 128
Dinapore, 20
District Union Councils, 149
Duff, Alexander, 94

Education, 85 f.
Entally Girls' School, 17

Faridpur, 115
Friend of India, 73, 80, 117
Fryer, Miss, 103, 104

Gandhi, Mahatma, 12, 121
Gaya, 20
Goadby, Mrs., 103

Heal the Sick, 82
Hinduism, 29 f.
  festivals, 37 f., 66
  in action, 36 f.

India, illiteracy, 13, 78, 104
  industrialism, 12
  mortality, 108
  people, 10 f.
  poverty, 14
  religions, 13
  size, 9
Indian Baptist Missionary Society, 142
Islam, 44 f.

Jaggernath, 23, 41, 112
Jains, 33
Jamalpur, 20
Jessore, 18, 19, 102, 111, 112, 114, 131
Jesus of History, The, 122
Judson, Adoniram, 112, 134

Kalka, 22
Kasauli, 22
Khulna, 18, 19, 106, 114
Kond Hills, 25, 81, 129
Krishna Pal, 79, 109
Krishnagar, 18, 97, 139

Leprosy, 81
Lewis, Mrs. C. B., 102
Ludhiana, 83, 139
Lushai Hills, 19, 25 f., 80, 126 f., 139, 148

Macnicol, Dr. Nicol, 29
Marshman, Hannah, 85, 100
  Joshua, 62, 85
Moga, 97
Monghyr, 20, 111, 130

National Christian Council, 136, 137, 154
New Zealand Baptist Mission, 19, 135
North India, 20 f.

Open-air preaching, 66 f.
Orissa, 23 f., 141
  Mission Press, 76

Palwal, 21, 80, 130
Patna, 20, 111, 113
  State, 132
Peacock, Mrs., 101
Pipli, 25
Puri, 23, 24, 146

Ramkrishna Mission, 119
Rangamati, 19
Rangpur, 18, 19
Rishis, 132, 152

Sale, Mrs., 102
Sambalpur, 24, 115
Santals, 127
Sargent Scheme, 91
Sati, 73, 117
Serampore Covenant, 62 f., 155
  College, 17, 19, 59, 80, 92 f., 95, 118, 137
Simla, 22

Telugus, 25, 131, 152
Thomas, Dr. John, 58, 62, 64, 79

Vellore United Medical College, 83, 137

Union Schemes, 136 f.
Utkal Christian Church Union, 146, 154

Ward, William, 62, 66, 73, 84, 112
Wardha Scheme, 91

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