# CHRISTIANITY

AND THE

# ASIAN REVOLUTION

EDITED BY

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THE JOINT EAST ASIA SECRETARIAT OF
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# PREFACE

THE PROPOSAL to write this book was first discussed at the Ecumenical Study Conference for East Asia, held at Lucknow, India, in December 1952. The plan approved by the Conference was to issue an interpretative volume on "Christianity and the Asian Revolution" in preparation for the Second Assembly of the World Council of Churches. It was agreed that Christians in Asia should contribute articles to this volume, and that it should be edited by the undersigned in his capacity as the Joint Secretary for East Asia of the International Missionary Council and the World Council of Churches.

In using the term 'Asian Revolution', we have had in mind much more than the political changes in East Asia during the past twenty-five years. Revolutionary developments have affected every aspect of Asian society. Political, economic, social and ideological changes are discussed in the first section of the book. One of the most significant developments has been the resurgence of ancient religions and the cultures associated with them, and section two of the book deals with this resurgence. Our aim in general has been to portray and interpret briefly the total environment in which the Asian churches are called upon today to work and witness for their Lord.

The term 'East Asia' has been used in a limited sense. The area we cover in this book includes what are commonly known as *South Asia* (Pakistan, India, Nepal, Ceylon and Burma), *South-East Asia* (Malaya, Thailand, Indo-China, Indonesia, the Philippines and British Borneo) and the *Far East* (China, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Korea and Japan). We have employed the term 'East Asia' to refer to this total area. For the sake of convenience we have also on occasion used the words 'Asia' and 'Asian', but again only with reference to this area. The countries of the Middle East, from Iran to Turkey, and the Asian regions of the U.S.S.R. fall outside the scope of this book.

We are conscious of much that is inadequate in these pages. We have had no direct contact with the churches in China and North Korea, and our discussion of these countries is based necessarily on second-hand information. Events in East Asia are

moving so rapidly that even the most up-to-date interpretations may not give a true picture. There is an obvious need for much more research in the field of resurgent religions, especially since most contemporary religious literature is in the vernacular languages. We have been able to give little more than a bird's-eye view of the churches and their problems. Also, the statement in the fourth section of the book is in no sense an official message from the churches. It is based on statements received from many of the National Christian Councils in East Asia, but the writing was done by a small group of churchmen from India, Burma, and Ceylon. Despite these limitations we believe that this book is a first step in the right direction, and we hope that it will stimulate the churches in East Asia to undertake further study along these lines.

We are grateful that this has been, in the fullest sense, a joint enterprise. Several chapters have been prepared by two or more people. Each chapter has been scrutinized by several friends. In addition, there are many who have supplied articles, newspaper clippings and other information, all of which have been of the utmost value. A full list of contributors is given before each section. The Editor's thanks are due to them, and particularly to his colleague, James P. Alter, for his invaluable help. Thanks are also due to the Study Department of the World Council of Churches which raised the necessary funds to cover the expenses of the preliminary studies and the cost of the publication of this book.

RAJAH B. MANIKAM

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# EAST ASIA

## AREA AND POPULATION TABLE

| *Country* | *Area* (Square miles) | *Population* | *Christian Population* | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | Roman Catholic | Protestant and Orthodox |
| 1. Pakistan | 365,907 | 75,687,000 (1951 census) | 330,000 (1953 estimate) | 275,000 (1953 estimate) |
| 2. India | 1,138,814 | 362,000,000 (1951 census) | 4,500,000 (1953 estimate) | 4,500,000 (1953 estimate) |
| 3. Nepal | 54,000 | 7,000,000 (1951 estimate) | — | — |
| 4. Ceylon | 25,332 | 8,123,000 (1953 estimate) | 610,000 (1953 estimate) | 105,000 (1953 estimate) |
| 5. Burma | 261,749 | 18,674,000 (1951 estimate) | 128,000 (1951 estimate) | 472,000 (1951 estimate) |
| 6. Federation of Malaya | 50,680 | 5,337,000 (1951 estimate) | 86,000 (1951 estimate) | 48,000 (1951 estimate) |
| Singapore | 220 | 1,042,000 (1951 estimate) | | |
| 7. Thailand | 198,272 | 18,836,000 (1951 estimate) | 50,000 (1951 estimate) | 20,000 (1951 estimate) |
| 8. Indo-China | 285,794 | 29,000,000 (1952 estimate) | 2,000,000 (1952 estimate) | 50,000 (1952 estimate) |
| 9. Indonesia | 583,479 | 78,000,000 (1950 estimate) | 750,000 (1950 estimate) | 2,500,000 (1950 estimate) |
| 10. British Borneo | 78,684 | 953,000 (1951 estimate) | ? | ? |
| 11. China | 3,863,050 | 483,870,000 (1950 estimate) | 3,173,000 (1946 estimate) | 1,402,000 (1949 estimate) |
| 12. Taiwan (Formosa) | 13,906 | 10,000,000 (1953 estimate) | 21,000 (1950 estimate) | 65,000 (1950 estimate) |
| 13. Hong Kong | 391 | 2,300,000 (1950 estimate) | ? | ? |
| 14. Philippines | 115,600 | 20,946,000 (1951 estimate) | 16,000,000 (1951 estimate) | 2,230,000 (1951 estimate) |
| 15. Korea | 85,225 | 30,000,000 (1952 estimate) | 200,000 (1952 estimate) | 800,000 (1952 estimate) |
| 16. Japan | 146,690 | 85,500,000 (1952 estimate) | 172,000 (1952 estimate) | 267,000 (1952 estimate) |
| **Population totals (approximate)** | | 1,230,000,000 | 28,020,000 | 12,734,000 |

Note :—The figures in this table have been compiled from the *World Christian Handbook*, the *Statesman's Yearbook* and the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*.

SECTION I

# THE SOCIAL REVOLUTION IN EAST ASIA

## EDITORIAL NOTE

EACH of the chapters in this section is the result of the joint efforts of two or more persons. Articles and other information were received from some twenty people in ten different countries of East Asia.

The following persons prepared the first drafts of the various chapters:—

Professor S. P. Adinarayan, Madras Christian College, Tambaram, India;

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The Rev. C. Arangaden, Director, Christian Institute for the Study of Society, Bangalore, India;

The Rev. Celestine Fernando, Church of Ceylon, Angulana, Ceylon.

The persons listed below contributed articles, newspaper clippings and other information:—

The Rev. J. R. Fleming, Secretary, Malayan Christian Council, Singapore;

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Professor Jorge G. Masa, Union Theological Seminary, Manila, Philippines;

Professor Gan Sakakibara, Aoyama Gakuin Daigaku, Tokyo, Japan;

Professor F. S. Thakur Das, Indore Christian College, Indore, India.

It has been extremely difficult to obtain accurate statistics for many of the countries of East Asia. In some, no official census has been taken for more than twenty years. Information on health, education, social service, etc., is bound to be often inadequate. Wherever possible, we have drawn upon information supplied by national governments and United Nations agencies, but we cannot guarantee the complete accuracy of the statistics given in the various chapters.

R. B. M.

CHAPTER I

# WHAT IS THE ASIAN REVOLUTION?

MORE THAN half the world's population, living in the vast area between Karachi and Tokyo, is today involved in a major social revolution. Probably the greatest single development of the twentieth century, this revolution has broken the hold of the West over the countries of Asia and is now rapidly changing the political, economic and social conditions within these lands. The only possible parallels are the French and Russian revolutions, and even they are dwarfed in comparison with the changes in Asia. Never before have so many millions of people taken part in such a rapid and radical social upheaval.

Are we justified in calling this a *revolution*? Would not the term 'emergence' or 'awakening' describe it more accurately? The answer to these questions is obvious if we consider how fundamental and far-reaching the changes have been. Half a century ago only a handful of foreign troops was required to suppress the Boxer rebellion and impose Western terms on China. Today the armies of sixteen nations, including some of the most powerful in the world, have been stalemated in Korea by the new Chinese army. In 1943 Winston Churchill proclaimed, with all the eloquence at his command: "I did not become His Majesty's Prime Minister to preside over the liquidation of the British Empire." Today India, Pakistan, Burma, Ceylon, Indonesia and the Philippines are independent nations. In recent years the white man had a privileged position in Asia, and many fashionable clubs were reserved exclusively for Europeans. Today the theory of white racial superiority is thoroughly discredited, and Europeans are welcome in most of Asia only as friends and equals. Only seven years ago many Indian Princes still held autocratic power over their subjects. Since 1947 their territories have been merged into the various States which comprise the new Indian Union, and their authoritarian rule has been replaced by government through ministries elected by the people.

Have we the right, however, to speak of an *Asian* revolution? Can we think of East Asia—with its hundreds of languages, its twelve or more nationalities, its bewildering variety of religions,

customs and traditions—as being in any sense a social unit? It is true that these diversities exist, even within countries which have a strong national consciousness. A Muslim from North India differs as much from a South Indian Hindu—in religion, culture, complexion, language and food habits—as does a Swede from an Italian. It is also true that until very recently the educated citizen of Japan or the Philippines or any other Asian country could be expected to know far more about Europe or America than he did about the rest of Asia. In India, for instance, an Englishman or an American was a common sight, while a Japanese or a Chinese was an object of curiosity. But today there is a growing consciousness that the countries of Asia, despite their diversities, have much in common. It is now recognized that for more than two thousand years there has been an interpenetration of religious and cultural influences. Hinayana Buddhism, for instance, has deeply influenced Burma, Thailand and parts of Indo-China, while Mahayana Buddhism has spread over large areas of China and Japan. Both Hinduism and Islam have been forces in Indonesia. Economically also, the Asian countries have much in common. Most of their peoples produce rice by irrigation and use the buffalo and the bullock as draught animals. During the past fifty years there has been a growing sense of unity in relation to the West. Even those who resisted Japanese imperialism could not but be impressed by the slogan 'Asia for the Asians'. This sense of unity has become stronger since the close of World War II. When early in 1947 Jawaharlal Nehru convened an Asian conference at New Delhi, one of its major actions was to support the Indonesian struggle for independence. The exchange of cultural missions between various countries, the common concern about 'continuing colonialism', the united stand taken by many Asian members of the United Nations, and the development of Asian Communist and Socialist groups—all of these point to the growing self-consciousness of East Asia as a region with common problems and aspirations.

*Asia and the West*

The Asian revolution can be interpreted as the outcome of 450 years of European expansion and colonial domination. It is both a reaction against the West and an appropriation of many Western features. Imperialism was all long resented by the peoples of Asia; yet during the centuries of foreign domination

they acquired many new attitudes and techniques from their rulers. The growing struggle against Western exploitation became associated increasingly with the desire that Asia secure the material and social advantages which the West so highly prized.

The revolt against Western political domination is the most obvious, though not necessarily the most important aspect of the revolution. During the nineteenth century there were unsuccessful attempts, notably that in India in 1857, to overthrow the colonial powers. The Boxer Rebellion of 1900, and more especially the Japanese victory over Russia in 1905, gave new impetus to nationalist movements. The desire for freedom and self-respect grew rapidly, especially among the educated city-dwellers. (In this connection it is important to note that nationalism in East Asia today is not the product of inter-racial or inter-state conflicts, as it was in European countries a century ago, but has arisen largely in opposition to colonial rule.) By the close of World War II this phase of the revolution was almost complete: what remains of European colonialism in Asia is today on the defensive and rapidly disappearing.

The Asian revolution is also a reaction against Western economic exploitation. It is well known that the European trader preceded the European soldier and politician, and that it was the European business concerns which most vigorously urged the spread of colonial rule. As the industrial revolution grew in strength throughout the countries of Europe, so also grew the need for raw materials and for large markets which would purchase the finished products of European industry. This explains the colonial policy of preventing or limiting industrial development in subject countries. It also helps to explain why Japan, with its stoutly-maintained political independence, was able to become within a few years the leading industrial nation of Asia and a formidable competitor of Europe and America. Many of the strongest supporters of the movements for national independence were Asian businessmen, as is illustrated by the large contributions which Birla, the Indian industrialist, gave to Gandhi and the National Congress. There is some truth in the Marxist analysis that what has taken place in Asia has been mainly a national bourgeois revolution, a revolt of brown and yellow against white capitalism.

The Asian revolution is also a reaction against Western theories

and practice of racial superiority. Despite many improvements in recent years, the current of hatred and suspicion still runs very deep. It is well to remember that the 'race problem' as we know it today is a relatively recent phenomenon, arising out of the relationships between the ruling peoples of European origin and the subject peoples of Asia and Africa. From the middle of the nineteenth century onwards, theories of racial superiority were used increasingly by Europeans to justify their political and economic exploitation. The revolt against these theories and practices springs from countless humiliating experiences which have been the lot of many Asians. The majority of them now feel that the tables have been turned. Instead of Asia being 'the white man's burden', the white man—with his stubborn racial prejudices and reluctance to grant social and economic equality to others—has become a chafing burden on Asia and Africa.

The Asian revolution is also a reaction against Western cultural domination. This is seen most notably in the resurgence of ancient religions (a development which will be discussed at length in the second section of this book) and the cultures associated with them. The European impact on Asia was not limited to political and economic spheres. It was evident also in education (higher education in colonial countries was always imparted in the language of the ruling power), in dress, social customs and religion. The educated Asian was often a slavish imitator of English, French, Dutch or American ways. He came to despise his own cultural heritage and to adopt Western standards of art, literature and music. The reaction against this has been very strong in recent years. Asian artists, musicians and writers, such as Rabindranath Tagore of Bengal, led the cultural renaissance. This was closely associated with both the growing nationalist feeling and the resurgence of ancient religions. For Asian culture has always been deeply religious, and those who sought to revive national culture found that they must also reassert the claims of hereditary faiths. This religious resurgence was quickened by the spectacle of a growing materialism in the West, and by the failure of Western leaders to prevent the two world wars. Some Asian leaders feel that Western religions are now thoroughly discredited, and that the only hope for the world lies in the reassertion of the spiritual values and practices of the East.

Yet the Asian revolution cannot be described merely as a reaction against the West. It is due also in very large measure to the appropriation by Asians of attitudes, ideals and techniques from Europe and America. Some of these came to Asia through the political institutions created by the colonial powers, institutions which replaced the arbitrary rule of hereditary kings and chieftains by the rule of law. Some came through higher education and literature which were excellent media for transmitting scientific knowledge, rationalism and democratic social ideals. Educated Asians, westernized in outlook, still form only a small proportion of the total population. Yet they wield a tremendous influence over the masses in East Asia. Many nationalist leaders, especially in the British colonies, were nurtured on the writings of Milton, Burke, Rousseau and John Stuart Mill. As the American colonists revolted in the name of English justice against British rule, so Asians, in the name of political and social doctrines which originated in large part in Europe and America, revolted against European colonialism. Christian missions, with their care for the depressed and outcaste in all countries, have witnessed to the supreme worth of each person, and profoundly influenced leaders such as Gandhi. The introduction of Western industry and technology has brought about major economic and social changes. The representatives of revolutionary movements, chiefly democratic Socialism and Communism, have introduced a new analysis of social order and a passion for social and economic justice. All of these 'western imports' have helped to shape the positive content of, and give direction to the Asian revolution.

*Towards the Transformation of Asian Society*

It is impossible to understand the vast upheaval in Asia today unless one sees it as a *social* revolution affecting every aspect of society—political, economic, cultural and religious. The struggle against Western imperialism is but one of its many aspects. It expresses itself also in the growing industrialization of Asia, in the efforts to abolish feudal land systems, in the growth of large cities and the disintegration of village communities, in the removal of social inequalities, and in the growth of new convictions about the nature of the universe and the meaning of human life.

At the risk of over-simplification we may say that this social revolution has three major aims—political freedom, economic justice and social equality. By political freedom is meant some-

thing far more than national independence. For many Asians it includes all that is understood in the West as civil liberties and human rights. It is the freedom for each person to take his or her own share in determining both who shall have political power and to what ends that power shall be used. Progress towards this goal is still seriously hampered by such forces as poverty, illiteracy, traditional authoritarianism (caste, the joint family system, etc.) and the opposition of reactionary groups. But the constitutions of such countries as Japan, the Philippines, Indonesia and India show that the goal has been generally accepted. The Pantja Sila—the five principles of the Indonesian Republic—include belief in humanity and democracy, while the preamble to the constitution of India states the resolve to secure to all citizens "liberty of thought, expression, belief, faith and worship".

The aim of economic and social justice cannot be so easily defined nor so quickly attained. But the desire for justice is perhaps the strongest single force in the revolution. It is easy to see why this is so. For centuries Asia has been the home of great wealth and even greater poverty, and conditions remain as bad in most countries today. Feudal systems of land tenure force the tenants to give as much as one-half or two-thirds of their crops in the form of rent to governments or landlords. Asian capitalism has many of the bad features of its sister in the West, and usually few of the good. In the large industrial cities of Asia the factory managers often earn Rs. 2,000 or more per month, and live in houses which any European would prize, while the majority of workers earn less than Rs. 60 per month and live in slums where the filth and degradation are beyond description. (A typical workers' quarter in the Indian city of Kanpur consists of an open courtyard surrounded by fifteen or twenty small huts, each housing six to ten people, one water tap and an open drain to serve as latrine. Less than half a mile away are the palatial dwellings of mill owners.) In the face of such glaring contrasts there is a rising tide of discontent and organized pressure to change the economic and social order. This finds expression in labour movements and revolutionary political parties. All enlightened public opinion is agreed that a major responsibility rests on the state so to direct the economic order that (in the words of the Indian constitution) "the ownership and control of the material resources of the community are so distributed as best to subserve the common

good, and that the operation of the economic system does not result in the concentration of wealth and means of production to the common detriment". The principle of a social welfare state has been accepted by practically every country of Asia, and many are now engaged in national programmes of land reform, industrialization and rural development.

The desire for social equality is also a dominant theme of the revolution, especially in those countries with sharp class and caste divisions. India has doubtless had the worst record in this respect, but there has been a good deal of progress in recent years. Untouchability (the most repugnant product of the caste system) has been abolished by law, and new opportunities are being given to those from the so-called 'depressed classes'. Recently a bill was introduced in the Indian Parliament to implement the constitutional provisions against untouchability. But social prejudice is stubborn and long-lived, and it will take many years to change the deep-set attitudes of those who regard themselves as divinely ordained to a superior role in society.

Underlying the political, economic and social developments are fundamental changes in beliefs and attitudes. One of these is the rapid growth of secularism, especially among those who have received a Western type of education. Not many of these have openly rejected their hereditary faiths, but their working creed is for the most part a scientific humanism which sits lightly to the social and cultural claims of religion. Among them are found the keenest proponents of secular democracy and the social welfare state. Another major development is the emergence of a new sense of hope in social progress. This is found not only among the secularists but also among many who still treasure their religious heritage. The old fatalistic doctrines of *karma* and *kismet* are gradually losing their hold. Men and women whose grandparents were taught to accept social inequality, poverty and disease as the will of the gods, are now convinced that these can be conquered by concerted human effort. Associated with these developments is the growing acceptance of new ideals of justice and equality based on an appreciation of the value of the individual person as opposed to the claims of the social group.

It is difficult to assess the strength of these 'spiritual' movements or to predict how permanent they will be. But there can be no doubt that they have served in large measure as the driving

force of the revolution. Throughout the Orient today there is a quickened sense of human dignity and historical mission. The submerged peoples of Asia have now been caught up in that vast struggle for human freedom which first broke out in Europe at the time of the Renaissance and Reformation.

*Cross Currents of the Revolution*

Despite what has been said about the nature and aims of the social revolution it must be admitted that there is no clear and certain direction of events in Asia today. Confusion and apparent contradictions are evident, both within various countries and in their relationships to one another. One obvious cause is the wide variety of customs, traditions and social patterns. Another is the fact that some countries (China and Thailand, for instance) have never been under direct colonial rule, while others have only recently gained their independence after three or four centuries of political bondage. In addition to these obvious differences, there are four major problems which confront all of the countries in East Asia and make any prediction of their future extremely uncertain.

The first problem is the unresolved tension between traditional attitudes and customs and those which have been adopted from the West. It is a common saying that the educated Asian lives in two worlds: the old and the new exist in confusion without being harmonized or reconciled. What is true of the individual is even more true of the nation? Political leaders cannot disregard either the rationalists who wish to make a clean sweep of superstition, social prejudice and religious taboos, or the traditionalists, many of whom fear change and clamour for a revival of the old religious and cultural patterns. Mr. K. P. Landon gives the following analysis of this situation:—

> "The people of South-East Asia are caught between two stepping stones which are so far apart that there is some doubt whether they will be able to complete the transition smoothly. There is a very real possibility that in the attempt, either the foot which rests on the foundations of the past or the foot which rests on the foundation of the future will slip and let them down between the two. If such a sad event should occur, there is no question in my mind that they will arise in midstream and ascend, however painfully, onto the foundations of the future. . . . A people

who produced Borobudur and Angkor when inspired, can rise to great heights again when the spirit stirs within them."[1]

Another problem is the possible growth of national rivalries. In South and South-East Asia the national movements have so far been directed almost entirely against Western domination, and, with the exception of the Indo-Pakistan tension, there has been relatively little competition or conflict between the newly-independent countries. This nationalism has by definition been anti-imperialistic, and all its responsible leaders sincerely hope that it will remain so. Yet the recent history of Japan is a warning that nationalism, in Asia as much as in the rest of the world, can become imperialism. A potential source of international rivalry is the presence of large, unassimilated ethnic minorities in many Asian countries. The Indians in Ceylon, Burma and Malaya, and the Chinese in Thailand, the Philippines, Malaya and Indonesia constitute foreign enclaves with separate languages and customs. It will require wisdom and tact on the part of all concerned to prevent these from becoming centres of constant friction and discord.

The third major problem is the clash of rival ideologies. There is virtual unanimity as to the need for state direction of economic and social life, but there is often radical disagreement as to social objectives and the amount of power which the state should possess. Western political ideologies—Liberal Democracy, Communism, Socialism and (to a limited extent) Fascism—are in open competition with one another and with religious nationalism. The latter, which is very strong in the countries of South and South-East Asia, is opposed not only to foreign domination and foreign religions but also to political movements which it considers to be of foreign origin. With the exception of China, no country has chosen one of these ideologies to the exclusion of the others. In some cases political parties have sought to combine two or more ideologies. The working creed of many Asian leaders is a fervent nationalism overlaid with elements of Liberal Democracy and Socialism. This apparently explosive mixture has so far remained fairly stable and effective, and it may prove to be a practical alternative to Communism.

The greatest source of uncertainty in the development of

[1] *South-East Asia*, p. 203.

Asian affairs is the global struggle between the Communist countries and those which are committed to opposing Communist expansion. Since 1946 Asia has been the scene of a civil war (in China), a major international conflict (in Korea), and two less important but costly struggles (in Malaya and Indo-China). With a few outstanding exceptions all Asian countries wish to stay outside this conflict. They fear that joining one side or the other will mean both the loss of their hard-won independence and an end to the programmes of economic and social reconstruction on which they have embarked. This policy of non-involvement has a fair chance of success only so long as the military conflict remains confined to its present limits.

During the past four centuries Asia has lived in the backwaters of world events. Her countries, isolated from one another and relatively powerless, have been at the mercy of European and American politics. Today Asia is in the main stream, and she is conscious of a new unity and strength. Her leaders recognize that Asia's future is bound up with the future of the rest of the world, and they are determined that she play her full role in deciding what that future shall be. It is imperative that Europe and America appreciate fully the strength of this determination, and wholeheartedly accept Asia as an equal and colleague in meeting the problems which confront the world.

CHAPTER II

# THE POLITICAL SITUATION

IT IS not our purpose in this and the following chapters to present a detailed account of political, economic and social changes in East Asia today. This information may be obtained from any of the scores of books which have been written during the past few years by Western and Asian scholars. Our aim is rather to sketch in outline the major developments and to point out some of the problems and opportunities which these present to the Church.

## *Independence: Problems and Achievements*

The major political development since the end of World War II has been the attainment of national independence by Pakistan, India, Ceylon, Burma, Indonesia and the Philippines. The magnitude of this change may be seen from the fact that the combined population of these countries is something over 570 millions. The Philippines became independent in 1946, India and Pakistan in 1947, Ceylon and Burma in 1948, and Indonesia in 1949. One very significant fact is that, with the exception of Indonesia, the struggle for national freedom was carried through to a successful conclusion in each country without resort to military action. As a result there has been, again with the exception of Indonesia, a surprisingly cordial relationship between each country and the colonial power which formerly ruled it. The Philippines is one of America's closest allies in Asia, while Pakistan, India and Ceylon are members of the Commonwealth of Nations. Another fact of great importance is that each of these countries has voluntarily chosen a constitutional form of government, drawing heavily on the European and American heritage of political democracy.

However, in each of these newly-independent countries, there are many difficult and baffling political problems. Chief among these is the lack of strong national solidarity. Nationalism, which was nurtured on opposition to foreign rule, has proved incapable by itself of giving the direction and motivation needed for the arduous task of social reconstruction, and of welding together the diverse elements in each country. India,

with an area and a population roughly equal to those of Europe (excluding Russia), is troubled with regional loyalties, with the problem of establishing one national language, and with religious tensions. Pakistan, the one country in Asia whose national existence depends upon religious sentiment, is split into two sections a thousand miles apart and is struggling to overcome the difficulties caused by differences in language and culture. In Ceylon there is a growing tension between the Tamil-speaking minority and the Singhalese majority. The Government of Burma has since 1948 been fighting against Karen tribes who wish to form an autonomous state, as well as against Communist guerrillas. Indonesia is plagued with armed bands—some Communist, some led by the Daru'l Islam (a fanatical Muslim nationalist group) and some merely out for adventure and loot. The Philippines has its own version of Communist opposition in the Huk movement.

There is also a serious problem arising from the lack of a sufficient number of trained and reliable administrators. Until very recently most of the top administrative posts were open only to Europeans, with the result that since independence heavy responsibilities have been thrust onto men and women who were in many instances inexperienced and ill-trained. Some of them have done remarkably well, but on the whole there has been a marked decline in the standard of administration. Responsible leaders are keenly aware of this problem, as is shown in the following statement in the Five Year Plan of the Government of India. "The decline in the standards of administration which has taken place in recent years points to the urgent need for administrative reforms. To some extent the fall in efficiency is owing to the fact that the strength of experienced personnel in the public services has everywhere been depleted, while the work falling on the administration has considerably increased. The growth in the responsibilities of Government and in the expectations held by the people do, however, demand a rapid improvement in the quality of the administration and in the service which it renders to the community."[1]

Widespread corruption in the public services is another major problem facing each of these countries. This is partly the result of war-time conditions. In the countries occupied by Japan—

[1] *First Five Year Plan* (People's Edition), New Delhi, 1953, p. 54.

the Philippines, Indonesia and Burma—hundreds of thousands of people lived in defiance of the government and lost respect for the law. In India speculators amassed large fortunes through the sale of materials to the army, with the consequence that "the most conspicuous fields of corruption have perhaps been those in which businessmen had to apply for permits and licences".[1] But war-time conditions alone cannot account for the rapid spread of bribery and nepotism during the past few years. The correspondent of an Indian newspaper, reporting on conditions in Indonesia, said that "among members of Parliament, with few exceptions, there is constant and indecent scrambling for office and privileges".[2] Responsible Asian leaders find little comfort in the fact that similar corruption exists in Europe and America. They realize, as many of their public speeches show, that unless corruption among their own people can be checked—and checked quickly—the experiment in democratic self-government may fail.

There is another problem—not limited to the political field—which might best be described as widespread disillusionment. Prior to independence the nationalist leaders were all persons of unbounded optimism. Perhaps no other part of the world faced the years immediately following World War II with so much hopefulness as did Southern Asia. Asian leaders were confident that the end of imperialism would mean the beginning of a rapid increase in education, health services, industry and national prosperity. Much has been accomplished, but little compared to what many had expected. Also, the enthusiasm and idealism aroused by the struggle for a great cause have often gone sour in the face of humdrum and arduous tasks.

Yet these problems must be seen in their proper perspective. Many of them are similar to those faced by new nations elsewhere; for example, by America in the years immediately following the war of independence. Nations which have lived under colonial rule for a long period cannot but face such problems upon gaining their independence. They have to go through the birth-pangs of nationhood. Over against these problems must be set many impressive achievements. In each of the six countries the government is far more awake to the needs of the people than during the days of colonial rule. Each has

[1] *Ibid.*, p. 56.

[2] *The Statesman* (Delhi), March 6, 1953.

undertaken nation-wide programmes of economic and social reconstruction. (Several of these will be described in the next two chapters of this book.) Most of the countries have made successful beginnings in developing democratic forms of government. During the winter of 1951-52 India held a general election in which more than 190 million people voted, and its administration was recently rated by a group of foreign experts as one of the twelve most stable in the world. National independence has brought an increased self-respect and confidence as well as a more realistic evaluation of world affairs. Members of these countries are proud of their role in the United Nations and their contribution to the solution of many international problems. Probably the richest gain of political independence has been in the realm of the mind and spirit. Today the citizen of any of these nations is a free man. He walks with his head high and looks others in the face as an equal, instead of being cowed down and infected with an inferiority complex. What is true of the individual is even more true of the nation. Take for example, India. Timeless in her tradition and yet adventurous in her spirit, this young republic has launched out on a new career in her political history. Kings and emperors, knights and warriors have sat on the imperial throne in Delhi, but today a son of Mother India, elected as President of the Republic, presides over her destiny. Despite all difficulties, therefore, no Asian desires the return of colonialism. He is determined rather to preserve and strengthen his independence. For him, as for all other lovers of freedom,

"A day, an hour of virtuous liberty
Is worth a whole eternity in bondage."

*Continuing Colonialism*

In sharp contrast to the countries we have just described are those still under colonial rule. Chief among these are the Federated States of Indo-China—Viet Nam, Laos and Cambodia —with a total population of about 29 millions, and the Federation of Malaya, with a population (including that of Singapore) of more than six millions. In addition there are smaller British, French, Dutch and Portuguese possessions strung along the coastlines of the large Asian countries from Hong Kong in the east to Goa on the west coast of India. With the possible exception of Hong Kong, the demand for freedom is strong in

each of these areas. There is constant agitation among the French and Portuguese territories along the Indian coast for merger with the Indian Union. Indian leaders naturally favour this movement, but they prefer negotiation to threats of military action. The situation in Indo-China and Malaya is far more tense, largely because nationalist groups have entered into military alliance with the Communists. It is well known that the Viet Minh, which now controls large sections of northern Indo-China, was initially a nationalist party. Many of the Communist guerrillas in Malaya fought with the British against the Japanese, and some of them received decorations at celebrations held in London in 1946. Other nationalists, of course, are strongly anti-Communist, but even they (as for example the King of Cambodia) are becoming increasingly restive in the face of the prolonged refusal of the colonial powers to grant complete self-government. They are convinced that France and Britain are retaining power largely for the sake of prestige and economic advantages. Indo-China remains a symbol of the cherished *gloire de France*, while Malaya's tin and rubber are Britain's largest dollar earners.

On the other hand, it must be admitted that the independence of some colonies has been delayed in part because of the lack of national unity. The Federation of Malaya, for instance, includes 2½ million Malays, 2 million Chinese, half a million Indians and several thousand Eurasians and Europeans, and the country has been divided by communal loyalties. One of the most significant developments during the past year is the fact that the two most important communal parties, the Malayan Chinese Association and the United Malays National Organization, have formed a united front to contest local elections. In September 1953 these parties convened an all-Malayan conference in Kuala Lumpur and called for national elections in 1954 so that the present system of government by legislative council, under the U.K. High Commissioner, could be replaced by a representative parliament elected by the people.

### *The People's Republic of China*

Speaking in terms of Western influence, the political leaders of South and South-East Asia are inheritors of the British, American and French Revolutions, while China's leadership today is inspired by the Russian revolution of 1917. We shall

not attempt here to analyse the various reasons for this difference. What is important for our purpose is to emphasize both the strength of the new regime in China and the influence of China throughout the rest of Asia.

The People's Government, which was installed at Peking on October 1, 1949, has in many ways proved itself the strongest administration China has ever known. During the past four years it has controlled inflation, carried out large-scale land reforms and directed a major military action in Korea. The organ of government has been the People's Political Consultative Conference, comprising representatives of the many groups included in the Democratic United Front, but all real political and economic power has been in the hands of the Communist party. This Government has been defined by Mao Tse-tung as a "People's Democratic Dictatorship". Addressing Party leaders in 1949, he said:

> "Who are the people? At the present stage in China, they are the working class, the peasant class, the petty bourgeoisie, and national bourgeoisie. Under the leadership of the working class and the Communist party, these classes unite together to form their own state and elect their own government (so as to) carry out a dictatorship over the lackeys of imperialism—the landlord class, the bureaucratic capitalist class, and the KMT reactionaries and their henchmen representing these classes—to suppress them allowing them only to behave properly and not to talk and act wildly. The democratic system is to be carried out within the ranks of the people, giving them freedom of speech, assembly, and association. The right to vote is given only to the people and not to the reactionaries. These two aspects, namely, democracy among the people and dictatorship over the reactionaries, combine to form the people's democratic dictatorship."[1]

In December 1952 the Government announced that during 1953 elections were to be held on both local and national levels so as to bring into being for the first time the All-China People's Congress, the summoning of which was provided in the organic law of the Central People's Government approved in September 1949. An electoral law was approved on February 11, 1953,

[1] *On the People's Democratic Dictatorship*, Peking, 1950, pp. 15-16.

and announced early in March. This is avowedly based on a study of Soviet experience, and its aim is to increase the degree of national uniformity and strengthen control from the Centre. Deputy Premier Teng Hsiao-ping who introduced the electoral law stated that "as we develop politically, economically and culturally, we shall certainly adopt in the future a more perfect election system like that of the Soviet Union". In contrast to the 'secret ballot' used in India, the voting at lower levels was to be done at public meetings and by show of hands. Also in contrast to the system used in India there was to be only one official list of candidates to be submitted to the voters by election committees. Teng Hsiao-ping explained the purpose of the elections as follows: "It will greatly heighten the working efficiency of the People's Government at all levels. . . . It will also perfect the State system of the people's democratic dictatorship, reinforce the unity between the various nationalities of the country and further develop and consolidate the people's democratic united front."[1] What this means is that China has adopted the Soviet principle of 'democratic centralism' in which the governing elite (the Communist Party) uses the forms of democracy as means for identifying the masses with those chosen to represent them, and with the policies which the representatives are later to endorse.

The New China has had a profound influence on the rest of Asia. In the first place, it has become the mentor and ideal of Communist parties in other Asian countries. In 1949 an Asian Trade Union Congress was held in Peking. Russian delegates were present, but the real leaders were Chinese and they presented the 'Chinese formula for victory' as the pattern which should be followed throughout Asia. (This will be discussed more fully in the chapter on Contending Ideologies.) But China's influence has not been limited to those of Communist persuasion. Many Asian nationalists, suspicious of the West, admire China's stand against imperialism and her military strength in Korea. China has exchanged cultural missions with India and other countries. By and large, public opinion in South and South-East Asia resents China's exclusion from the United Nations and is deeply critical of the American attitude to China.

[1] The *Statesman* (Delhi), June 16, 1953.

*Japan at the Crossroads*

Japanese history differs markedly from that of other Asian countries. Until her defeat in 1945, she retained the distinction of never having been occupied by a Western power. Yet she, of all the countries in Asia, was the quickest to appropriate Western techniques, especially in the field of applied sciences. This enabled her to become an industrial nation at a time when China, Indonesia and India were primarily suppliers of raw materials to the West. But Japan's industrial revolution was not accompanied by any corresponding change in her feudal social system which was marked by paternalism, traditionalism and strong national sentiment. This mixture of modern industrial power and ancient class loyalties (similar to conditions in pre-Nazi Germany) proved highly explosive. Under the slogan 'Prosperous Nation and Strong Armed Forces' Japanese imperialism advanced to Korea, Manchuria and China and finally led to war in the Pacific.

The defeat of 1945 and the American occupation combined to discredit imperialism and shake the old social order. Liberal democracy was appreciated for the first time. The new constitution, adopted in 1947 with the support of the occupation authorities, gave Japan a democratic government and pledged her to renounce war as an instrument of national policy. Many Japanese writers point out, however, that these changes were accompanied by widespread bewilderment and confusion. "The Japanese," says Professor Watenabe, "who have had too many authorities and too much authority in every section of life, were jolted greatly when all traditional authorities were superseded... Teachers, parents and police lost their authority... Arrogance disappeared, but with it vanished the sense of duty and the sense of dignity... Authorities sloughed off responsibility, and licence reigned. Consequently, for the last seven years the Japanese have been drifting in confusion without any internal leadership."[1]

Since 1951 Japanese political life has been dominated by conflicting attitudes towards the Peace Treaty and alliance with the United States. The Peace Treaty came into effect in April 1952, following the signing of an Administrative Agreement which permitted the United States to maintain troops and military

[1] *The Japan Christian Year Book*, 1953, pp. 35-6.

installations in Japan. Since then the Liberal Party, headed by Prime Minister Shigeru Yoshida, has followed a policy of 'unquestioning adherence to America' (*'American ippento'*) and sought to rearm Japan against the threat of Communist invasion. This policy is strongly opposed, however, by other political groups, especially the left-wing Socialists and the Communists, and there is growing resentment against America and rearmament. Those who hold this view contend that Japan has become an American colony.

Closely related to the controversy over rearmament is the deepening rift between the capitalist and working classes. The occupation authorities granted freedom to trade unions, with the result that they grew rapidly in strength. Some of the unions came under Communist control, but many were led by Socialists. In the early years of the occupation, they successfully challenged the authority of management, but following the 'red purge' of 1948, and especially with the outbreak of the Korean war, the struggle for power became acute. The Communists resorted to violence, and on May Day 1952 nine people were killed and seven hundred wounded in rioting on Tokyo's Imperial Plaza. This gave the conservatives an opportunity to strengthen their position through the passage of a Subversive Activities Prevention Law. The rift in national life continues, however, with conservatives supporting Prime Minister Yoshida, and labour groups generally opposed to his policies.

*Effects of the International Power Struggle*

Power politics is in no sense a new feature of the Asian scene. During the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries European imperialisms carved out colonial domains and spheres of influence. Different areas of China, for example, were under British, French or Russian influence. A unique by-product of this power rivalry was the relative independence enjoyed by Thailand. This country served as a convenient buffer between the British Indian empire and French Indo-China, and it was therefore never occupied by any Western power. The major developments in the period between the two world wars were the weakening of European control—symbolized by the Chinese denunciation of unequal treaties—and the rise of Japan as the most vigorous and aggressive nation in Asia.

The radical shift since 1945 in the international balance of power has affected every country in Asia. The most obvious illustration, of course, is Korea which jumped almost overnight from Japanese imperialism to civil war. Formosa is another example, passing from Japanese occupation to dependence upon the United States. Conditions in both of these countries reflect the fact that today the major military powers in Asia are Russia, China and the United States. Russia controls all of Northern Asia, from the Caucasus to the Bering Straits. China, with an area three times that of the Indian Union, stretches across the central mass of Asia from Pakistan to Korea, and her population exceeds that of Pakistan, India, Burma, Ceylon and Thailand combined. Of these three powers the United States alone has no Asian territory, but she has compensated for this by establishing military bases on the Pacific fringe of Asia from Japan to the Philippines and by forming military alliances with several countries.

Asian attitudes to the global struggle are coloured largely by nationalist sentiment. Communist China and North Korea are convinced that their national interests demand close association with Soviet Russia. South Korea, Formosa and the Philippines are equally certain that their national security depends upon alliance with the United States. (South Korea feels very strongly that there is no neutral ground between the two power blocs. She believes that she is suffering vicariously for the rest of Asia in her battle against Communism, for she is sure that if she succumbs the Communists will conquer other countries also.) We have noted already how profoundly the power struggle has affected the political situation in Japan. It has also led to increased tension in international relations between countries in Southern Asia, the most notable example being the controversy over United States military aid to Pakistan. In accepting this aid Pakistanis feel (in the words of Prime Minister Mohammed Ali) that "Pakistan today enters what promises to be a glorious chapter in its history. It is now cast for a significant role in world affairs. It is destined to become the sheet anchor of international stability and security in this region." Indians, on the other hand, are unanimous in believing that this aid will be used by Pakistan against India and are, therefore, extremely critical of the United States.

In discussing the power struggle we must not overlook the

strategic importance of Indo-China and the unusual nature of the war conducted there. If this country falls to the Communists, Thailand and Burma will be in danger; Malaya and Indonesia will become vulnerable; and India, Pakistan and Ceylon will be exposed to Communist invasion. This is why both the Western powers and the Communists are determined to gain control of the country. In its jungles and mud fields the soldiers of France, French Africa, and the Foreign Legion, along with Indo-Chinese soldiers, are battling a native Communist-led force that melts and regroups and fights again like quicksilver which cannot be crushed. It is a war of attrition. Nowhere else is the Communist strategy of draining away the strength of the Western powers seen more clearly than in Indo-China. Yet many Indo-Chinese are convinced that the danger of Communism is being used as an excuse to bolster up French colonialism. They believe that the only thing that stands in the way of their attaining complete independence is the support which America is giving to France. Here as elsewhere the issues of nationalism and colonialism have become inextricably involved in the conflict between the West and the Communist powers.

It is often difficult for persons in the West to appreciate the reasons that lie behind the wide-spread suspicion of American aims and attitudes. They must remember that in Asia the memory of four centuries of colonial domination still rankles. The newly-awakened Asian nationalist is inclined to be sensitive and extremely suspicious of any Western claim that does not correspond with his conception of the truth. When he reads or listens to statements about the American way of life, the dignity of the human individual, and freedom of thought as the life-breath of democracy, he contrasts these with what he has heard and perhaps experienced of racial discrimination, Communist 'witch-hunts' and restrictions on entry into the United States. Also, he is suspicious of American economic aid because it often places the receiving country under heavy political obligation to take part in the global military struggle. He is fearful that the West is using the threat of Communism as an excuse to regain political mastery over the liberated peoples. This feeling was strongly expressed by Prime Minister Nehru of India when commenting on a press report that to oppose Communism America would need to dominate Asia for an indefinite period. "The countries of Asia," he said, "and certainly India do not

accept that policy and do not propose to be dominated by any country for whatever purpose it may be."[1]

It is well for Westerners to recognize also that these criticisms of America and the West do not come only from Communists. They are shared to a large extent by liberal democrats and Socialists, many of whom are opposed to the 'new imperialism' of Russia and China but do not wish to see their countries used as pawns in the game of power politics. Nor do these criticisms arise merely from some selfish neutralism, indifferent to the moral issues involved in the struggle. The desire to remain outside the global conflict—a desire especially noticeable in Japan, Indonesia, Burma and India—is based to a large extent on the conviction that Asians can make their best contribution to world order and peace by mediating between the opposing powers.

[1] *The Hindu* (Madras), March 2, 1954.

CHAPTER III

# TOWARDS A NEW ECONOMIC ORDER

ASIA IS a crucial area today with regard to economic development, for on this depends the achievement of a higher standard of living and a greater measure of social justice for hundreds of millions of people. In this chapter we shall discuss, first of all, some of the major economic problems and the human relationships directly associated with them. Secondly, we shall describe several of the national programmes of economic reconstruction. In doing so, we must remember that economic development cannot take place in isolation from the other aspects of the Asian revolution. The degree of economic growth is related to social, institutional, political, cultural and psychological forces which frequently hinder rather than assist the programmes of development.

## ECONOMIC BACKGROUND OF THE CHANGING SOCIAL ORDER

Asia has the lowest per capita production and income levels in the world. The comparative figures for per capita annual income (as presented in the table below) give some idea of the general poverty and the low standard of living of vast masses of people in this region.[1]

| Per capita incomes in U.S. dollars | Countries |
|---|---|
| 1,000 and above | U.S.A. |
| 600—999 | Belgium, Canada, United Kingdom |
| 450—599 | France, Netherlands |
| 300—499 | Czechoslovakia, Israel, U.S.S.R. |
| 150—299 | *Malaya*, Hungary, Italy, Portugal |
| 100—149 | *Japan*, *Philippines*, Brazil, Colombia, Greece |
| Below 100 | *Burma*, *Ceylon*, *China*, *India*, *Indonesia*, *Pakistan*, *Thailand*, Belgian Congo, Bolivia, Guatemala, Iran |

[1] Figures are quoted from *Preliminary Report on the World Social Situation*, United Nations, New York, 1952, p. 131.

With reference to agricultural production in South and South-East Asia, Professor De Vries of the International Bank has written: "In many regions the product is barely enough for minimum requirements of health and growth. There are no reserves in case of drought, flood or disease. Hunger is well-known to many peasants—sometimes in extreme form in case of natural disasters, sometimes regularly in the change of seasons. There is some production for the market, but the proceeds are sufficient only for a few necessities of life. Debt and usury are common; many peasants do not own the land they cultivate and payments to landlords are high. . . . Although the returns per acre are moderately high, productivity per farmer is very low and, worse still, there is very little scope for opening up new land. . . . Even the fertile soil, favourable rainfall and the possibilities of irrigation which create agricultural wealth cannot change this picture fundamentally." [1]

The core of the Asian economic problem lies in its unbalanced economy, basically dependent upon agriculture and the export of a few agricultural products, and its subordination to the foreign market. This lack of balance between agriculture and industry in the whole of Asia (with the exception of Japan) will persist until industrialization has proceeded to the extent that it releases the pressure of excess population on the land. How soon a reasonable balance can be achieved is made further unpredictable by the unchecked growth of population.

The instability of agricultural export economies has been aggravated by continued deterioration of trade. Since raw materials for industrial use are subject to violent fluctuation in prices, the underdeveloped economy of Asian countries is, and will continue to be for some time, extremely sensitive to economic changes that originate in the industrialized countries of the West. The Industry and Trade Conference of the Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East (ECAFE), meeting in Ceylon early in 1954, considered this problem. "In the face of threatening foreign trade and problems of adjustment in domestic economy," it stated, "Asian countries would favour multilateral trade which was considered an essential basis for increase in volumes of foreign trade. . . . Strong pleas were put forward for an inter-

[1] E. De Vries, "The Churches and the Problems of Economic and Social Development in South and South-East Asia", *Ecumenical Review*, April 1953.

national commodities agreement which would guarantee the producers a stable and equitable price."[1]

For the governments and the peoples of Asia the problem of a low standard of living has been further complicated by the impact of war, the destruction of capital resources, inflationary conditions leading to a steady rise in prices, and not least of all by the huge displacement of population. The refugee problem in post-war Asia has had no historical precedent in magnitude or complexity; it would have taxed the strength of more stable governments. Inflation and the rise of prices have brought in their wake government controls on food grains and other essential commodities.

The grinding poverty of Asia results in malnutrition and early death for the vast majority of her people. The bulk of her population cannot afford to pay for a satisfactory diet. Judged in terms of average income, not more than thirty percent of the people in India can feed themselves adequately, and similar conditions exist in other countries. Life expectancy is low, as shown by the following figures of expectation of life at age 10: 60 in England, Australia and New Zealand, 50 in Japan, 47 in Egypt and 39 in India. "We continue to retain the unpleasant distinction of having the lowest expectation of life among the nations from whom figures are available," concludes the India Census Commissioner in his report of the census taken in 1951.[2]

Changing social and economic conditions are closely interrelated. Asian village life is to a large extent traditional and communal, but this is now changing rapidly. "Too often," writes De Vries, "what replaces communal life is a mass of individuals, weaker still than the old society in its fight against nature, disease and human destiny. There was no need for orphanages in the old village on Java, but there is a need now. Few people really starved, tradition saw to it that widows could earn some food at the time of the harvest. Now, economic calculation even in the village wants to save labour, but it sacrifices the labourer. When there was little or no money in circulation in the village, there was little need for it and less opportunity for usury. But money now is desperately needed on many occasions and the

[1] *The Statesman* (Delhi), February 7, 1954.
[2] *Census of India* 1951, Volume I, Part IA, Delhi, 1953, p. 187.

money lender stands ready."[1] Unemployed agrarian labour is a characteristic feature of many Asian countries, constituting a heavy burden on their limited agricultural productivity and a source of serious weakness and instability in the agrarian system. Although legislation for the relief of rural indebtedness has reduced this problem in India and elsewhere, the system of institutional credit is still far from being adequate.

It must be remembered that Asia's economic backwardness in relation to the West is due in large measure to several centuries of European exploitation. Asia was regarded as primarily a source of raw materials and a market for the finished products of European industry. Asian handicrafts were unable to compete with machine-made goods, and often colonial powers prohibited or severely restricted the development of Asian industry. Also, in many countries the feudal land system was reinforced because the landlords proved to be convenient and reliable agents for collecting revenue. In order to overcome this heritage of economic subservience, most Asians favour some form of state control and direction of economic life. Only through national planning can the countries of Asia improve their agriculture and close the gap between Western and Asian levels of industrial production.

*The Pressure of Population*

One of Asia's most serious problems is that of human numbers. The application of medical knowledge and social care has lowered the death rate, while the birth rate has remained fairly constant. Ceylon provides one of the most striking illustrations of this trend. In 1945 the mortality rate was 22 per 1,000 of the population. In 1946 a programme of malaria control was begun with residual spraying with DDT; as a result the malaria mortality rate fell by 85%. By 1947 the total mortality rate had fallen to 14.3, and by 1950 it was further reduced to 12.6. During the same period the birth rate showed little change. The mortality rate in Japan has also fallen sharply since 1945.

It is possible that, in the long run, industrialization will bring birth rates down, but the danger in the meantime is that the population of Asia will increase by 50% to 100%. (The population of India, for instance, has increased by 110,000,000 in the last thirty years.) A rapid increase in population can defeat the

[1] De Vries, *op. cit.*

objectives of economic development because it absorbs too large a part of the funds needed for investments. A solution solely through increased productivity seems impossible. How serious the food crisis is in relation to growing numbers of people may be judged from the prognosis of the India Census Commissioner. He estimates that the total increase of agricultural productivity possible in India will enable the country to produce at most food sufficient for 450 million people—and the population will have reached that figure by 1969! If the present rate of growth continues, India's population will have reached a total of 520 million in 1981—with a minimum annual shortage of 14 million tons of foodgrains.[1]

The threat of population outstripping food resources is not confined to countries overwhelmingly dependent upon agriculture. It is also true of Japan with its highly industrialized economy. At the present rate of growth of population, Japan will register a 10 per cent increase of population by 1960. It is feared that Japan's economy will not be able to stand on its feet unless there is a great expansion of production and of trade, and there is likelihood of its becoming more and more dependent on foreign capital, especially from the U.S.A.

Dr. Chandrasekhar, formerly director of population studies for UNESCO, said recently that Asia's problem of over-population and low living standards had to be met along three lines, namely, (1) a reduction of the birth rate, or family planning; (2) improved agricultural and industrial production; and (3) migration to undeveloped and under-developed areas, such as North Borneo, the South Sea Islands and New Guinea. Asked whether he considered migration a practicable solution to the problem in view of policies in force like the 'White Australia' policy and the attitude of the South African white population, he replied: "The fact that there is opposition to Asian migration is no answer to the problem. World public opinion must and can be educated on this matter, as on others. The pressure of population in most Asian countries has become a terrific problem, which must be solved along all the lines of approach possible."[2]

Although migration is one solution to the problem, Asia cannot hope to repeat Europe's history in this regard. The numbers involved are far too large, even if Asians were permitted to enter

[1] *Census of India* 1951, pp. 192-207.
[2] *The Mail* (Madras), February 23, 1954.

freely those countries of America, Africa and Oceania which are still relatively sparsely populated. Within Asia there have been large emigrations during the past decades, chiefly of Chinese to such countries as Malaya, Indonesia, Thailand and the Philippines, and of Indians to Ceylon and Malaya. In many cases, however, they have remained as ethnic minorities, alien to the lands of their adoption, with the result that these countries have strictly limited all immigration.

The chief solution to the problem of human numbers, and the only sure way of avoiding a mass catastrophe, lies in drastically limiting the growth of population. "Fortunately," says De Vries, "in the East population problems are neither a dogmatic nor a militaristic taboo. Surely, one of the means of alleviation is better education for women and girls, accompanied by a higher age of marriage and equality of husband and wife in family life."[1] Some countries are very greatly concerned about the problem. India, for instance, has included education for family planning as one of the aims of its Five Year Plan. Delegates from several Asian countries attended an international conference at Bombay in November 1952 and heard reports on experiments carried on under the auspices of UNESCO and other agencies. Many governments, however, seem relatively unconcerned about the danger, and there is an urgent need for greatly increased study and education.

### *'The Farmer, The Soil and The Landlord'*

The agricultural situation in Asia is complicated by antiquated and iniquitous systems of land tenure. A common problem is the concentration of land ownership in the hands of a relatively small section of society, resulting in large-scale land tenure. Tenants are forced to pay exorbitant rents, often one-half and sometimes as much as two-thirds of the produce, to landlords and government. With modern developments in agriculture and industry, the demands of landlords become unlimited. Conditions of land tenure deteriorate, and the transition from status to contract, which comes inevitably under modern conditions, makes the burden of the tenants heavier and that of an absentee landlord lighter as the years go on.

Most Asian governments realize that the problem of land

[1] De Vries, *op. cit.*

reform is the most urgent and difficult one they have to face. National legislation, notably in India, Pakistan, Japan, Formosa and China, has sought to bring about this reform. But far more needs to be done. A recent United Nations report listed the major difficulties as being shortage of trained staff, opposition of land-owners, social conservatism in rural areas and, "by far the most serious", financial difficulties. The report noted that land reform policies of a comprehensive nature had been introduced chiefly in the countries where rural over-population was a dominant factor. In India, the acts for the abolition of the big estates affected very large numbers of cultivators and enormous areas of land. In some parts, where the rate of compensation was low, tenants had already become owners of their holdings.[1]

It is important to recognize, however, that "subdividing the land is not the goal, it is only a means and in fact only a first step. The new farmers need cattle and tools, working capital and skill. They have to market their product, and the landlord generally performed this function. Middlemen and money-lenders may very well be the worse evils, coming in after the lesser evil has been swept out. . . . Everywhere, farm credit, marketing and processing of agricultural products, training of young farmers and extension services" are needed in addition to land reform.[2] It is here that the co-operative movement has a real claim to public support in Asian countries. Credit co-operatives, agricultural produce and sales societies, fishing co-operatives and other production and marketing co-operatives should be developed. By such development the bargaining power of small producers, their economic stability and their education for democratic organization will all be actively strengthened and a fairer distribution of economic power eventually achieved.

A unique experiment in land reform is the *Bhoodan Yajna* (land gift) movement in India led by Vinoba Bhave, Gandhi's disciple. Bhave and his followers have been touring the country on foot appealing to the landlords to voluntarily give some of their land to tenants. This movement has won wide support, and it was reported that up to December 5, 1953, land donations totalling 2,356,521 acres had been collected in different parts of India.[3]

[1] *The Hindu* (Madras), March 1, 1954.
[2] De Vries, *op. cit.*
[3] *The Statesman* (Delhi), January 4, 1954.

*Industrial Relations*

Increased industrialization is generally recognized as one of Asia's major needs. Yet this brings with it many serious problems, both human and economic, similar to those that Europe faced in the early years of the Industrial Revolution. These problems are accentuated by the efforts to find short-cuts that will enable Asian industry to catch up with production in the West. De Vries gives the following analysis of the human problems arising from this rapid industrialization:

> "The establishment of modern factories and agricultural estates has caused a complete break in existing labour relations. Absenteeism causes great losses when expensive equipment is used. Regularity and efficiency become strong masters, to which people in a static society are not accustomed. The adaptation is painful. . . . In spite of this, any enterprise finds a willing labour force among the under-nourished millions at a price which was high as compared to income levels in the village, but very low in comparison to other countries and low even in relation to the low productivity of unskilled labour in Asia. . . . Increasing competition among Asian and non-Asian producers forces more and more labour-saving devices upon the management. In the thirties, big enterprise became a source of unemployment and the village the protecting environment. At the same time, labourers became aware of the lack of insurance against unemployment and hunger and were eager to hear that they were exploited by the capitalists. Labour unions have mushroomed in the last two decades in Asia as they did fifty years earlier in the West. Inevitably, these developments make labour relations in Asia an explosive issue. It is politically and socially impossible to pay wages equivalent to the marginal income level in the rural areas. On the other hand, it looks economically impossible to pay much more. The relatively few factories cannot become islands of prosperity in an ocean of misery. High wages are only justified if the labour is skilled and highly productive. Therefore, managers try hard to get rid of thousands of unskilled labourers and replace them by a handful of machine operators. But in this way industry no longer absorbs surplus labour from the

land. Even worse, the modern Indian and Japanese textile mill replaces the handloom in Asia in exactly the same way as the first Lancashire mechanical loom started to do in the first half of the nineteenth century." [1]

Industrial relations are becoming increasingly a struggle, not between white capitalist and yellow or brown labourer but between Asian capitalist and Asian labourer. This struggle is determining to a large extent almost every political and social issue, and ultimately the structure of government of Asian countries. It is no exaggeration to say that the nature and spirit of the leadership of Asian trade unionism will to a large extent determine the future course of the Asian revolution.

Another major problem arising from industrialization is the tendency to monopoly. This was seen most clearly in pre-war Japan, where capitalism was superimposed on an unchanged feudal social system with the result that a relatively few large families were able to control the economic and political life of the nation. Everywhere in Asia the concentration of economic power in the hands of a few private groups is seen to be dangerous. Such groups often control the nation's economy through a system of economic ramifications which are not easily discernible. Dr. Sunito Djojohadikusoma, Professor of Economics in the Djakarta School of Economics, has described the system by which such groups exercise their control:

"By combining their business with the imports of manufactured goods from industrial countries they control or at least influence the supply of finished goods to and within the country. It is not uncommon that through an intricate system of corporate structures they also have their hand in banking and other financial institutions, in land transportation as well as shipping. The powerful influence of such oligopolistic groups in the economic process is increased by the fact that they sometimes finance the commercial middlemen to whom the producers in rural areas live in a state of debt. . . . It stands to reason that such a concentration of powers is not to the advantage of an equitable distribution of wealth and income."

An illustration of this concentration of economic power is given by Asoka Mehta, Secretary of the Praja-Socialist Party of

[1] De Vries, *op. cit.*

India. Writing in 1950 he stated: "Five hundred industrial concerns of our country are managed by 2,000 directors. These directorships are held by 850 individuals. But 1,000 of these directorships are held by just seventy men, the other 1,000 are distributed among the remaining 780 directors. At the apex of this pyramid stand ten men holding three hundred directorships—the supreme arbiters of the destinies of our industrial economy."[1] It is not surprising that throughout Asia there is a rising popular demand for the State to control or direct industrial production.

## National Programmes of economic Development

Lack of balance between industry and agriculture, economic dependence upon the West, low food production and rapidly increasing population, feudal systems of land tenure, unequal distribution of income, appalling poverty for the mass of the people—these problems are faced in varying degrees by all the countries of Asia. Under the stimulus of the political revolution and newly-acquired independence each nation is attempting to improve its economic position. Some of these attempts involve radical changes in social structure; others are more conservative and aim mainly at increasing production without planning for a redistribution of national income among various sectors of the population. But whether it be in Communist China, where nationalization of all the major means of production is the stated aim, or in the Philippines, which follows largely the American pattern, there is one factor common to all of these countries. This is *the rapidly growing power of the State in economic life.* Even conservative Asian industrialists realize that the problems are too immense, the resources too few and the time available too short for private initiative to meet the needs. Each government, therefore, has had to consider seriously what it can do to stimulate and direct economic development. In the following paragraphs we shall attempt to describe briefly some of these programmes and to evaluate their significance for the future of Asia.

### *South and South-East Asia*

(*a*) The dominant note in this area is *planning for the social welfare State.* This planning is inspired partly by the Russian experiment, and partly by the development of social legislation in Britain and other countries of Western Europe.

[1] *Who owns India?*, Bombay, 1950, p. 17.

The general aim of the various national programmes may be expressed in the following words of India's Planning Commission: "The central objective of planning in India is to raise the standard of living of the people and to open to them opportunities for a richer and more varied life. Planning must, therefore, aim both at utilising more effectively the resources, human and material, available to the community so as to obtain from them a larger output of goods and services, and also at reducing inequalities of income, wealth and opportunity. A programme aiming only at raising output might result in most of the increased wealth flowing into the hands of a few, leaving the mass of the people in their present state of poverty. It would thus fail to achieve wider social objectives. On the other hand, a mere redistribution of existing wealth would impair the well-being of certain sections of society without sensibly improving the lot of the rest. Our programme must, therefore, be two-fold, leading at once to increased productivity and reduction of inequalities. . . . A middle way must be sought which, while avoiding a violent overturning of society will, nevertheless, enable the State to promote rapid changes in the social structure."[1]

India's first Five Year Plan is the most detailed and ambitious of any in this part of Asia. It was drafted in 1950-51 and submitted to Parliament in 1952. The Plan consists of a complex of measures to be taken by the union and state governments to promote agriculture and industry and to provide basic services like power, transportation and irrigation. Part of the programme is devoted to social improvements—health, education, housing, water, town and village improvements, etc. The proposed distribution of expenditure is summarized below:

| | Crores of rupees (one crore is 10,000,000) | Percentage of total outlay |
|---|---|---|
| Agriculture and community development | 361 | 17.40 |
| Irrigation and Power | 561 | 27.20 |
| Transport and Communications | 497 | 24.00 |
| Industry | 173 | 8.40 |
| Social Services | 340 | 16.40 |
| Rehabilitation | 85 | 4.10 |
| Miscellaneous | 52 | 2.50 |
| Totals | 2,069 | 100.00 |

[1] *First Five Year Plan, op. cit.*, pp. 12, 17.

The greater part of the funds required for the Plan are to be provided by taxation. Some will come from the release of sterling balances which accumulated in Britain during the war. India has also received aid from other Commonwealth countries through the Colombo Plan, and from the United States. A significant feature of the Plan is its emphasis on agricultural and community development. In view of the rapidly rising population, the Government regards increased food production as the first priority. Therefore, a major portion of the investment is to go for irrigation and agricultural reform. Another important feature of the Plan is the development of hydro-electric power. The Damodar Valley scheme, for instance, will add an estimated one-third to the electric power supply of India and will thus enable India's industries to develop rapidly. In 1953 the Plan was adapted in the attempt to meet the rising problem of urban unemployment.

Although the proposed investments are large, the anticipated gains are modest. "The Plan envisages that the national income, which was estimated at Rs. 9,000 crores in 1950-51, will have risen to Rs. 10,000 crores by 1955-56, and that during these five years 20 per cent of the additional income annually accruing should be added to investment and capital formation."[1] It is further estimated, however, that from about 1965 "national income would rise at a much accelerated rate so that per capita income would be doubled by 1978. Similarly, consumption would begin to rise steeply from about 1970."[2] Fortunately, these are not the only investments in India. Private investment in all sorts of enterprises, including labour for improving irrigation and land, undoubtedly is much larger than that of the official Plan.

It is well to remember that in India the State ownership of productive capital assets was large before the Plan came into operation. The book value of capital assets owned by the central and state governments amounted to over 1,200 crores of rupees at the end of 1950-51. These included railways, irrigation works, communications and broadcasting. Another 100 crores of rupees of productive capital assets were owned by public institutions, municipalities and semi-public agencies. In contrast to this, not more than 1,500 crores of rupees of

[1] *Ibid.*, p. 15. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 15.

similar assets were in private hands. The Industrial Policy Statement of 1948 laid down that "in regard to certain industries like coal, iron and steel, ship-building and aircraft-manufacture, the State will be responsible for further development except to the extent that it considers private co-operation necessary," and the Planning Commission predicts that "the enlargement of the State's direction and control is a process which will continue and gather speed."[1]

With the exception of China, none of India's immediate neighbours has framed so comprehensive and ambitious a plan. All of them, however, are making efforts in the same direction. *Pakistan* has launched several large schemes for irrigation, land reclamation and the starting of new industries. In October 1953 Pakistan reported that electric power production had doubled, that the cotton textile industry had made remarkable progress and that a 50,000 ton fertilizer plant was under construction. *Ceylon*, one of the few countries in Asia untouched during the last twenty years by war or internal rebellions, has a unique record of steady and uninterrupted development. She is able to spend approximately ten per cent of her national income for development purposes, many of them in the form of social services. Recently she reported satisfactory progress in land reclamation, rural development and the improvement of fisheries. *Burma* suffered greatly during the war and for a time faced the serious danger of economic collapse. Rebel Communist and Karen guerrilla bands have kept the nation in a state of perpetual civil war. During the past two years, however, her Socialist Government has regained control over most of the country and made plans for economic improvement. In August 1952 a government-sponsored conference approved a Five Year Plan for Agricultural and Rural Development and adopted other plans for the development of industry, housing, transport and communications, education and medical services. "All of these plans," the report states, "are aimed at radically changing our colonial system of exploitation as existed under the foreign power to one of sincere benevolent democratic government of the Burmese people by the Burmese people."[2] In May 1953 the Government announced a ten year plan for a 'new order' for Burmese peasants which includes free distribution of ten

[1] *Ibid.*, p. 19.
[2] *Report of the Pyidawtha Conference*, Rangoon, 1952, Introduction.

million acres of land to landless peasants. Recently it was reported that a large oil refinery was under construction.

In the *Federation of Malaya* the economic situation has deteriorated since the fall of tin and rubber prices early in 1953. It is reported, nevertheless, that the Federation is spending 26 per cent of its revenue on education and health services. In Singapore a new electric power station, with a capacity of 50,000 kw., has been brought into operation. In *Indonesia* both political and economic conditions remain disturbed and uncertain. The war, the Japanese occupation and the national revolution combined to destroy the economic machinery. Steps are now being taken to change from a colonial to a national economy, to raise the national income and to improve the standard of living of the people. Social justice is one of the five basic principles—the Pantja Sila—upon which the new Republic is based. Considerable progress has already been made in approaching the goal of self-sufficiency in foodstuffs, especially rice, and the production of petroleum products has greatly increased. Former partisans from over-populated Java have been resettled in South Sumatra.

(*b*) An important factor in the plans for economic development in this part of Asia is the *schemes of international co-operation.* Four countries (Ceylon, India, Pakistan and the U.K. for Malaya and North Borneo) have combined their efforts with Australia, Canada and New Zealand in the Colombo Plan. (Since the Plan was inaugurated in 1950 the following countries have been admitted as full members: Viet-Nam, Cambodia, Laos, Nepal, Burma, Indonesia and the U.S.A.) The distinguishing feature of this Plan is that each participating nation in the area puts up its development programme and indicates which part it believes it can finance itself. Other members then offer to supply funds, material, personnel, etc., for specific projects. Thus New Zealand is helping to meet part of the cost of constructing the All-India Medical Institute which is to be situated in New Delhi, and Australia is contributing trucks and tractors worth £(A)250,000 to Indonesia. A report for 1952-53, presented to the Consultative Committee of the Colombo Plan which met at New Delhi in October 1953, spoke of all-round economic progress in most of the countries, and the Consultative Committee in a communique said that member countries "have shown, in the face of the magnitude of the task, that they can plan both

boldly and realistically and readjust themselves to good fortune and bad."

The United Nations and its specialized agencies are engaged in a wide variety of activities to foster economic, social and health improvements. One of the most important of these agencies is the Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East (ECAFE) which brings together government representatives from this area and experts from abroad to exchange information and discuss common problems. The ECAFE Industry and Trade Conference which met at Kandy, Ceylon, early in 1954 emphasized two major requirements for the progress of economic development programmes in this region. First, there was a general recognition among Asian countries of a continued need for foreign capital and foreign technical assistance. It was pointed out at the conference that a considerable increase in the flow of both capital and technical assistance was not only desirable but also essential. Secondly, while considerable emphasis was placed on the need for industrialization, there appeared to be greater appreciation than in previous years of the imperative necesssity of improving agricultural productivity as the essential basis for economic development.[1]

Other United Nations agencies which have offices or staff in this region are the Food and Agriculture Organization, the World Health Organization, UNESCO, the International Labour Organization, and the International Bank. Since 1950 "the United Nations and their agencies have initiated an Expanded Technical Assistance Programme. A special fund makes it possible to send experts to the recipient countries and trainees to other countries. Under the rules set by the Technical Assistance Board, 29 per cent of these funds are used for developing agriculture and food production, 14 per cent for education, 22 per cent for health improvement, 22 per cent for activities emanating from the U.N. Headquarters, and 11 per cent for improved labour relations."[2]

Besides co-operating in the United Nations and the Colombo Plan, the United States has its own technical assistance programme for this area. The most important item in this programme is technical and financial support for the Community Projects under India's Five Year Plan. Many private organizations and agencies, notably the Ford Foundation, are making important

[1] *The Statesman* (Delhi), Feb. 7, 1954. [2] De Vries, *op. cit.*

contributions. Christian churches and missions were among their first to undertake economic development projects, and their pioneer efforts have inspired many of the large government programmes.

What can we realistically expect from these programmes? Will they basically change the economic and social structure of South and South-East Asia? After careful study, De Vries concludes that the plans are indispensable and highly effective, yet at the same time inadequate. They are generally realistic and reasonably well-balanced between different fields of activities. They are somewhat larger than can be realized, yet they do not assume enormous international funds to be available. However, the plans are inadequate. With the exception of Ceylon and Malaya, they would allow a growth of national income of only a fraction of a per cent annually over population increase. "A great amount of international financing is needed on top of the national efforts to obtain a per capita increase in income of 1½ to 2 per cent annually. It is wholly uncertain, and not even very likely, that those funds will be available." [1]

*Japan, Philippines and Taiwan (Formosa)*

These three countries may be conveniently grouped together for the purpose of our study because of their common economic dependence upon the United States.

*Japan*, especially since the signing of the peace treaty in 1951, has been making a determined effort to regain her former position as the leading industrial nation of Asia. Most of her resources of industrial raw materials were lost in the war. Her old export industries, silk and cotton textiles, have been mortally hit by the invention of nylon and the growth of cotton textile production in countries that used to be Japanese markets. The engineering and specialty manufacturing industries that should now provide Japanese exports are actually high cost producers, because their machinery is outmoded and because coal and iron must be imported at great cost. For these reasons, therefore, Japan must still buy abroad a minimum of $600,000,000 worth of goods more each year than she is able to sell abroad. This gap between exports and imports has been met in large part by American spending, especially since the outbreak of the Korean war.

[1] De Vries, *op. cit.*

Japan's economic position is additionally precarious because of her dense population. From the standpoint of land area, natural resources and producing capacity, she can sustain a population of about 60,000,000. But her population at the close of 1953 was over 87,000,000. The effect of population pressure is shown in the fact that while in 1953 Japan's industrial production was approximately 40% above the 1934-36 level, the standard of living was 15% lower than during that pre-war period.[1]

One of Japan's chief pre-war markets was the mainland of China. Her trade with the China-Manchuria area in 1935 was 17.5% of all her exports and 10.5% of her total imports. In 1951 it was 0.5% of her exports and involved almost no imports.[2] One of Japan's greatest economic needs is for resumption of trade with China, but this is impossible in view of her present alignment with the United States.

Under present circumstances it appears that Japan will need to modernize her industrial equipment, increase domestic food production wherever possible and sharply restrict luxury imports. This will require a strong government, willing to take the necessary measures of austerity, controls and planned economy. The Japanese business community on the whole seems to be ready to accept such a programme and is putting pressure on reluctant conservative politicians to adopt it.

*The Philippines* suffered heavily during World War II and has made economic recovery largely through government grants and private investments from the United States. In 1946 the Tydings Rehabilitation Act authorized $400,000,000 to provide for the payment of war damages. At the same time, President Truman affixed his signature to a trade bill known as the Bell Act. This included a controversial section granting to American citizens the same rights as Filipinos in the development of all natural resources in the Philippines, and stipulated that claims for war damages would not be paid unless this condition were accepted. After prolonged controversy the constitution of the Philippines was amended to meet the American requirements.

During the immediate post-war years the economic position remained serious, and in 1950 President Truman, in response to the request of President Quirino, sent an economic survey

[1] *The Mainichi* (Tokyo), Feb. 20, 1953.
[2] *The Japan Christian Quarterly*, Autumn 1952, p. 274.

commission to the Islands. The Commission reported thus: "The basic economic problem in the Philippines is inefficient production and very low incomes. While a substantial recovery was made in production after the liberation, agricultural and industrial output is still below the pre-war level. . . . A permanent solution to these problems will be found only through a determined effort on the part of the people and the Government of the Philippines, with the aid and encouragement of the United States, to increase production and improve productive efficiency to raise the level of wages and farm income, and to open new opportunities for work and for acquiring land."

*Taiwan* (*Formosa*) is, as is well known, even more dependent than Japan or the Philippines on American political and economic assistance. The provincial Government is firmly controlled by the Kuomintang, and its major economic problem is that 70% of its budget goes for defence. A good proportion of American aid, however, has gone into economic and social development, and the Government has made steady progress in the rehabilitation of industry and agriculture. Land reform has been initiated by a process of rent reductions and subsequent land sales for which the landlords get compensation.

*China*

Reliable information on economic developments in the People's Republic of China is difficult to obtain. Nevertheless, there is sufficient evidence to indicate that since October 1949, when the new Government was installed in Peking, there have been radical and large-scale efforts at land reform and industrialization. Many of these have been delayed or postponed by the pressure of the Korean war, but China was in a sufficiently strong position to ratify her first Five Year Plan early in 1953.

As in the political, so in the economic field China has consciously copied or adapted the Russian pattern of development. (Mao Tse-tung is often quoted for his statement: "The Communist Party of the USSR is our very best teacher, and we must learn from it.") The parallel between China in 1949-53 and Russia in the period of the New Economic Policy (NEP) has been described by Max Beloff, Reader in the Comparative Study of Institutions in the University of Oxford. "The mixed economy of that period of Soviet history," he writes, "with its modicum of private trade and its acceptance of peasant ownership of the

land, is indeed paralleled by the present position of the Chinese economy. According to a speech by Chou En-lai on February 4, 1953, the State accounted in 1952 for over 60 per cent of China's industrial output excluding handicraft industry (80 per cent if heavy industry alone is taken into account) and in the main for wholesale transactions involving commodities of prime importance, and had also placed all banks under unified management. At the same time, with the completion of the land reform over nearly the entire country, peasant farming was the rule with varying types of co-operative and collective institutions gaining ground." Mr. Beloff goes on to point out that this period in Chinese development was giving way to the next. "The fact that planning on the five-year system is already in operation and the clear profession of the intention to bring about agricultural collectivization, already look past the NEP stage to the succeeding one in Soviet development."[1]

The initial stage of land reform (confiscation and distribution of land owned by wealthy farmers) was completed in 1952. Writing in October of that year Po Yi-po, Vice-Chairman of the Committee of Financial and Economic Affairs, stated that "the peasants have also been led into various mutual-aid organizations of labour on the principle of voluntariness. . . . Over 4,000 agricultural producer's co-operatives and over ten collective farms as pilot projects have been established which are of a type more advanced than the mutual-aid teams. The mutual-aid and co-operative movement is like a rising tide in agricultural production and is the main direction in which Chinese agricultural production is to develop."[2] In this, as in many other important aspects of economic development, China is following what Mr. Beloff calls the "Soviet pattern with a different time-table".

The Five Year Plan ratified in 1953 lays particular emphasis on industrial production. In September 1953 Li Fu-chun, Vice-Chairman of the Economic and Financial Affairs Commission, reported to the Central People's Government Council that by 1959 China would have "an independent economic base for development"—in other words, it would produce its own machinery from its own steel produced from its own ore and by its own electric power. The effort would be concentrated in Manchuria and northern China, which would become equivalent

[1] *The Statesman* (Delhi), June 16, 1953.
[2] *People's China* (Peking), October 16, 1952.

to the Soviet Donbas.[1] Since then Peking has reported the completion of three major industrial projects at Anshan, the most important industrial centre built by the Japanese in Manchuria. The projects comprise steel rolling and seamless tubing mills and an additional blast furnace. Peking has also reported completion of the renovation of the Maanshan iron smelting plant near Shanghai, which was badly damaged by the Japanese in the war and had not operated for eight years.[2]

China has requested and received a large amount of Russian aid for her industrialization programme. In September 1953 it was announced that Soviet aid would be given in 141 great projects of construction, of farming and mining improvement, and of producing hydro-electric power. For this purpose Russia has loaned China 5,000,000,000 roubles ($1,250,000,000 at the Soviet evaluation of the rouble). The industrial projects at Anshan (mentioned above) were carried out with Russian technical advice and hailed as the embodiment of Chinese-Soviet friendship.

There are many conflicting Asian evaluations of the Chinese experiment. These range from the adulation of Communists and fellow-travellers to the bitter hostility of Kuomintang and South Korean leaders. On the whole Asians are more willing to give China the benefit of the doubt than are the majority of Americans and West Europeans. In a press interview at Madras in December 1953 Mr. N. Raghavan, India's Ambassador to China, commented that "some condemn the developments in China, others paint it as a paradise on earth. Both pictures are inaccurate. China under its new Government is developing fast. She has solved effectively many problems of urgent interest to her. Currency has been, after very many years, stabilized. Corruption has practically been rooted out. Redistribution of land so as to give economic holdings to the landless peasantry has been successfully effected. All these are great achievements. But all these need not necessarily show that China has come up to the level of other highly developed and advanced nations. In several respects, China is even below the Indian standard, and the Chinese leaders who have studied and understood India's efforts in the same fields have often informally expressed their

[1] *The Statesman* (Delhi), Nov. 27, 1953.
[2] *The Statesman* (Delhi), January 5, 1954.

admiration for the speed at which free India has been rebuilding herself." [1]

No matter how one judges Communism, one must recognize that China today presents an unavoidable challenge to the rest of Asia. China's military, political and economic position is such that no other country can afford to treat her except with respect. Even though most educated Asians discount some of her claims as propaganda, they carefully study her methods and programmes. Wherever economic injustice and inequality prevail in the non-Communist countries, whether in Japan or India or Indonesia, many are tempted to look to China as the example of what is needed in their own countries. The future of Asia depends in large measure upon the success of the programmes of economic development undertaken by those nations which seek a 'middle way' between the extremes of unrestricted private exploitation and totalitarian control.

[1] *The Statesman* (Delhi), Dec. 8, 1953.

CHAPTER IV

# THE CHANGING SOCIAL SCENE

WE HAVE pointed out earlier that the Asian revolution is affecting every aspect of society. In chapters two and three we have dealt with the political and economic changes, and here we shall turn our attention to other features of the contemporary social scene. Asian societies include more than half the total population of the world and represent four major races and many more racial strains. Hundreds of languages and dialects add to this diversity, and the prevailing forms of government range from ancient tribal organizations to modern democratic republics or communist dictatorships. It is a diversity which is inherent in the very geography of this region, and it still clings to the society of East Asia, not only providing it with qualities of richness but also provoking discord. The societies of East Asia have been generally resentful of the new, and resistant to change. In differing degrees they were, until recently, 'closed' societies, that is societies in which the change of status for individuals was almost unknown, or well-nigh impossible. They were, in the majority of cases, 'mystical', paying greater heed to the religious and charismatic type of leadership in a system of power ordered largely by supernatural sanctions. These features of the old, static and rigidly stratified societies of East Asia are being replaced by a new and dynamic outlook which insists upon equality of status and opportunity, and an equitable share in the material and spiritual goods of the community. This demands radical changes in the social order and unites all those who sincerely desire and struggle for them. The important thing to note here is that this outlook is no longer the luxury of a few but is rapidly becoming the living creed of the masses.

The ancient East, instead of "letting the legions thunder past and plunging into slumber again", has become wide awake and is trying to catch up with the West. The candle and the coconut oil lamp are fast yielding place to the electric light. This alone is enough to transform the life of a people who went to bed with

the fall of night. But now the talkie and the dance hall, the cocktail party and the night club characterize the life after sunset in all the cities and most of the towns of East Asia. The fountain pen has replaced the stylus, and the distinction of being modern is marked by the gold clip of a fountain pen on the pocket of a shirt sometimes hanging over the trouser! Clothes are now made out of cheap cotton textiles instead of the homespun cloth; instead of smoking raw local tobacco rolled in a palm leaf to form a cheroot, the so-called civilized man of the East puffs a cigarette. Old standards of polite human behaviour are being discarded for the vigorous hand shake, etc. Chairs and tables, hats and shoes, knives and spoons are seen in many an educated home. The authority of the elder and the divinity of the kings no longer hold sway, but the individual and his responsibility are coming to be emphasized. It is not the king nor the clan nor even the village that is becoming important in East Asia today, but the individual. Asian collectivism is fast yielding place to individualism, and often to modern utilitarianism.

We are thus witnessing a gigantic process of revolutionary change in the indigenous cultures of East Asia consequent upon the impact of the ideas and institutions of the West. The resultant changes have taken the form of either co-operation or conflict or compromise. However, traditions continue to play a powerful role in this process. Ordinarily they resist change and retard reforms. So strong is their hold upon the minds and manners of men, that there have been many attempts to reinterpret them and to use them to initiate and sustain movements of social reform and rehabilitation. India and Burma, for example, have had a number of 'mystic' revolutionaries whose power to influence has few precedents in history. They represent the voice of tradition in its reborn and revolutionary character.

The essential social problem of the East today is one of a struggle between two processes—veneration for the past and desire for progress. It has been tinged by an element of ambivalency. Love for the past is found side by side with intolerance for petrified social customs that have long outlived their usefullness. Desire for progress has been tempered by a suspicion of Western culture in terms of which this progress has been envisaged. Japan was the first to set the pace in wholesale westernization and the adoption of an industrial culture. China, an agricultural country, stuck doggedly to the past until cata-

clysmic changes overtook it, the results of which are yet difficult to estimate. India with its innate sense of caution has been trying, not too successfully, the way of the golden mean. For her the wholesale adoption of Western social patterns of living was not easy, even when desired. For the West in its till recent context meant Britain, and Britain was the ruling race. Adoption of Western culture was often looked upon as a mark of subservience. Synthesis was tried in many fields like music but these have remained mainly in the stage of interesting experimentation. Perhaps the biggest field for the permeation of Western thought was that of education. Higher education has been largely in English, with text-books written in English. In course of time a hybrid civilization—the mongrel offspring of conflicting principles—was developed in the bigger towns, but the villages stuck to ancient and well-trodden paths.

The present situation may therefore be described as one compounded of ideological and survival crises. It is a situation in which certain given cultures are struggling to transform their former systems of values while certain traditions within the societies they represent are fighting for the maintenance of the *status quo*. This is discernible in the trend to urbanization, in changing patterns of family and social structure, in systems of education, in agrarian and industrial unrest, in the rise and growth of social services, in the reform of legal doctrines and practices, in the secularization of institutions, and in racial tensions and conflicts. Essentially, it is the conflict between the new and the old.

*Urbanization*

The distribution of population between urban and rural areas in Asia is far from even. On an average, seventy per cent of the people (in some countries the percentage exceeds eighty) live in villages and depend upon primitive methods of agriculture for their livelihood. Within recent years, however, there has been a perceptible movement of population from rural areas to the large cities. Some of the cities have more than doubled their population within the last two decades: Calcutta from 1.8 to 4.5 million, Delhi from 0.5 to 1.2 million, Karachi from 0.4 to 1.2 million, Djakarta (formerly Batavia) from 0.5 to 1.5 million. Tokyo's population, which had fallen to 3.5 million at the end of World War II, is now 7.5 million. In consequence, tremen-

dous social problems of urban housing, sanitation, employment and general welfare have been created.[1]

With reference to conditions in South and South-East Asia, Professor De Vries has written:

"Village life is still the dominating pattern, measured in numbers of people and production. But the heart of the political, social, and cultural life of these nations already beats in the rapidly growing cities, and economically they are getting the upper hand. . . . The economic depression in the thirties caused a movement to the cities which became an irrevocable process of great importance. War, revolution, famine and the hope that the authorities in the cities would at least be able to guarantee enough food and shelter to maintain bare life have brought scores of millions all over Asia to the towns. . . . This change in the structure of Asia, more rapid, more dramatic than in any other continent and any period in history, has a profound influence on all aspects of the life of the people. The words 'industrialization' and 'urbanization' do not convey adequately the human struggle for development and the tragedy of sub-human conditions of life in the crowded slums."[2]

Housing conditions in the large cities of Asia are appallingly bad. The Indian Planning Commission assessed the housing shortage in the chief industrial towns, and reported: "Of 1,714,560 workers employed in large scale industries in 31 towns, 450,000 are in urgent need of accommodation." And referring to the growth of urban population during the decade ending in 1950, it estimated that "at least 43 lakh (4,300,000) houses will be needed to accommodate this additional population."[3] Conditions in other countries are often equally bad. It is reported that Tokyo, whose population is growing at the rate of nearly 400,000 a year, still has 250,000 houses less than it did before the air raids of 1944-45. "Overcrowding is rampant, house rents are fantastically high, and many poor people have to sleep in shacks or under public arches."[4]

Another social problem in the large cities is the high proportion of men to women. The lack of housing and other amenities forces many industrial workers to leave their families in the villages.

[1] *Preliminary Report on the World Social Situation*, *op. cit.*, p. 167.
[2] De Vries, *op. cit.*
[3] *First Five Year Plan* (People's Edition), *op. cit.*, p. 234.
[4] *The Statesman* (Delhi), February 10, 1954.

The magnitude of this problem can be judged from the following figures showing the sex ratio (in terms of 'number of females per 1000 males') in several of the Indian cities: Greater Calcutta 602, Greater Bombay 596, Delhi 750, Kanpur 699, Lucknow 783.[1] It is not surprising that within Asian cities there is a heavy incidence of vice, disease and premature death.

*The Family*

"Over a large part of the region, the internal government of community relations still rests on the cohesiveness of family and kinship groups conscious of their common origin," observes the United Nations Preliminary Report on the World Social Situation (p. 165). Family here means the joint-family built upon loyalty, obedience to the authority of elders and kinship obligations. This, of course, made for social stability. It further served to mitigate the hardships of destitution through old age, unemployment or physical disabilities and the like by providing an informal type of social security. But where it provided stability and security, it robbed the individual of initiative and intelligent responsibility, freedom of choice and the conditions for democratic participation. In political life, where rule by person and decree had not given place to rule by law and formal procedures, leadership very often became the monopoly of a few families. Even with the introduction of democratic forms of government, this situation has not altered completely. Not infrequently family loyalties and kinship obligations are seen to influence vital political decisions and important appointments to public office.

This type of family structure is common to most societies from Pakistan to the Philippines. So are the problems they face today. The rigid social structure built upon the acceptance of the vertical lines of family authority is being challenged and destroyed, although the basic family structure seems highly resistant to change. Ideals of romantic marriage and monogamy act as incentives to such changes. The small family is preferred to the large. In some countries, particularly India, the disintegration of the joint-family is being hastened by social legislation such as the Hindu Code Bill which has evoked much controversy by

[1] *Census of India* 1951, *op. cit.*, p. 56.

its stress on monogamy, rights of divorce and of inheritance for women.

Family patterns in India may be illustrated by the following table from the Indian Census Report:

| *Type of household* | *Number of households in a Typical village* | *Typical town* |
|---|---|---|
| Small .. | 33 | 38 |
| Medium .. | 44 | 41 |
| Large .. | 17 | 16 |
| Very large .. | 6 | 5 |
| | 100 | 100 |

(A small household has 3 or less members; medium 4-6; large 7-9; very large 10 or more.) "Such a large proportion of small households is a *prima facie* indication that families do not continue to be 'joint', according to the traditional custom of the country, and the habit of breaking away from the joint family and setting up separate households is quite strong."[1]

The break-up of the joint family system has not been deliberate but forces for its destruction are incipient in the trek to the towns that economic factors make necessary. Those who are employed in government services are transferred frequently from town to town. After having undergone an expensive college education, the younger members are not content to live on the dignified dole that the joint family provided. Once they get out, they find the new independence much to their liking. *Pater familias* himself and his wife soon discover that there is something to be said for living alone rather than in a crowd. Visits from sons and grandsons became more pleasurable both in anticipation and in reality, once the initial feeling of loneliness is overcome. Of course there are fewer people to boss over, but then there are always the servants to take it out on. So the joint family system is fast going.

*The Emancipation of Woman*

In most countries of East Asia, where women have been in virtual bondage, women's movements have registered pheno-

[1] *Ibid.*, p. 50.

mental growth. Such movements have been the result of the growing recognition of the role of women in society.

In India, for example the franchise has now been thrown open to women on a basis of absolute equality with men. Many women legislators are now to be found both in the provincial and central parliaments. Some hold important positions in the executive wing of the Government. It is said that in India women occupy more important positions in public life than in many other countries. Women's education has been steadily developing though the ratio of men to women in this respect is still 5:1. No form of education is now denied to women on the ground of sex. "The foreign and administrative services, once the closely guarded preserves of men, have now been thrown open to women. Women are now recruited even to the medical wing of the armed forces. A steady stream of women is now entering nearly every avenue of service. The names of India's women administrators, ambassadors, and representatives on international bodies have become household words. There are a host of others not only in the old recognized vocations of the teacher, the doctor and the nurse but also as office secretaries, stenographers and clerks, telephone operators and bus conductors".

The All-India Women's Conference is a business-like body which unlike many masculine institutions believes in action and not in talk. Its guilds are hives of activity. Birth-control, slum-clearance and social service have ceased to be mere slogans to be exploited at election times. These phrases have become incentives to intense spade work. The Conference has nearly two hundred branches all over the country. Another influential body is the National Council of Women which has nine subsidiary Councils.

Women's organizations have joined hands with men's in working for a state of society where every citizen will be free from want and conditions exist for the fullest development of his personality. They have achieved much in the fields of maternity benefit, child welfare and the care of displaced persons, a task for which they are specially fitted. But perhaps they have paid a price for this magnificent record. The woman always pays. The achievement of equality has been accompanied by a certain amount of debunking of the privileges of being a woman. One cannot have everything—a seat in the bus as well as a vote in the Parliament!

It has been said of Burma that it has no feminist movement because none is necessary. Women have always had all the rights they wanted. It is the woman in the pagodas, and bazaars and shops who does business. She it is who rules and runs the house. She owns property in her own right. Marriage in Burma is a social contract and nothing more. No recourse is made to legal or priestly offices to effect a marriage. The *let-htat* (laying of hands one on the other) can be performed in the presence of elders, or a feast is given to a few people to obtain recognition of the married status. For divorce also, no legal procedure is necessary, but convention makes divorces rare. Monogamy is fairly universally practised in Burma, but polygamy is not prohibited by law. The woman retains sole ownership of whatever property she brings to the marriage, and if the marriage is annulled, she is entitled, in addition, to half of all the additions of wealth since the marriage. The irate husband cannot will away his property to other relatives or strangers to spite his wife. Wills are forbidden by law; children inherit equal shares of the parents' legacy, except in cases where there are more than four children in the family. On the death of one parent, the other parent still has the sole ownership of half the property. The other half is open to division among the children. On the whole the women of Burma are far more emancipated and free than women in other Asian lands. It will be remembered that Mrs. Ba Maung Chain was until recently the Cabinet Minister for Karen affairs.

In Pakistan and Indonesia with an Islamic background, one would think that women are not yet emancipated. In Pakistan, there is a controversy afoot between the liberal elements which would see *purdah* (veiling of women) abolished, and the conservative elements which would not. On the whole the percentage of literacy among women is less than that among men, as is the case in many of the countries of East Asia, and women do suffer under many disabilities. In Indonesia, women occupy a high position of privilege. There is no *purdah*; women work openly in rice fields, give evidence in law courts, dance in Wyang-wong shows and mingle freely with men. In almost every financial deal, the woman holds the money bag. The same may be said of the Philippines as well. In many of the Buddhist countries, women seem to occupy a fairly good position in society and do not labour under many liabilities as they often do in lands

of Hinduism or Islam. In Japan, since the occupation, women have the right for the first time to exercise their franchise. Many are found working in offices and in the government services.

Inspite of all this recent liberation of womanhood in East Asia, it has to be admitted that women are only now (and even then only gradually) coming to their own, and have yet to go a long way to maintain parity with men in the realms of education, employment and legal and property rights.

*Education*

The countries of East Asia realize now that unless their people become literate and possess a fair degree of education, all attempts at social reform will end in failure, and they cannot take their rightful place in the comity of nations. While in the olden days education was the prerogative and sometimes the luxury of a few, now the demand for at least primary education has become universal. Most of the governments consider elementary education the first charge on the resources of the State; much progress would have been achieved in the last ten years but for internal unrest and external threats which have necessitated greater expenditure on defence than on education. Moreover the burden of providing an education for all children is particularly heavy in countries economically least able to bear it. "Another factor that calls for larger proportional expenditures on education in underdeveloped areas is the need for greater capital outlay for school buildings and materials—a need occasioned by the much more rapid population growth at the school-age level in these countries, as well as by the necessity of establishing new physical facilities where they have not previously existed. The fact that the populations of these areas are predominantly rural, so that the children are scattered in farms or villages rather than concentrated in cities, also tends to make universal education more difficult and more expensive. Inefficiencies in public administration of school funds add other costs." [1]

The general level of education in any country can be inferred from the literacy percentage and the school enrolment. The chart given below gives some idea of the educational situation in most of the countries of East Asia.[2]

[1] *Preliminary Report on the World Social Situation*, *op. cit.*, p. 66.
[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 89-90.

| Country | I<br>Literacy (percentage, criteria and source of data) | II<br>Compulsory schooling (period and estimated effectiveness) | IV<br>Percentage of total population in 5-14 year age group | V VI<br>Primary & Post-primary school enrolment (percentage of total population) | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Burma | 41% of population literate (1931 census) | Compulsory schooling (ages 6-11) in city of Rangoon | 21-27 | 2.5 | .. |
| Ceylon | 57.8% of population 5 years of age and over able to read (1946 census) | Schooling is compulsory for 9 years (ages 5-14) | 24.3 (1946 census) | 13.9 | 3.1 |
| Federation of Malaya | 38% of population 15 years of age and over able to read (1947 census) | The 6-year primary course is free, but not compulsory | 27.0 (1947 census) | 11.4 | 0.7 |
| India | 20% of population 6 years of age and over literate (1950 estimate) | Schooling is compulsory for period of 4 to 8 years in some areas of 9 states | 24.8 (1951 census) | 4.6 | 1.4 |
| Japan | Over 95% of adult population believed to be literate | 6-year primary course (ages 6-11) and 3-year lower secondary course (ages 12-14) are compulsory | 22.0 (1950 census) | 13.2 | 8.5 |
| Pakistan | 13.8% of total population literate (1951 census) | Schooling is to be made compulsory for 5 years (ages 6-11) as soon as possible | 21-27 | 4.6 | .. |
| Philippines | 61% of population 10 years of age and over literate (1948 census) | First 4 years of the 6-year course (beginning at age 7) are compulsory for children living near schools | 26.2 (1946 estimate) | 19.6 | 2.4 |
| Thailand | 40% of population literate (1947 census) | Primary schooling is compulsory for children (ages 7-14) within 2 km. of a school | 27.2 (1947 census) | 14.4 | 0.7 |

The present-day educational reform aims at education for life in contradistinction to the purely literary type of education of former times. The main moves both in theory and practice have been the following:—a reconsideration of the basis of

elementary education (including the possibility of giving it a functional bias), the place of the *lingua franca* in the curriculum (what this *lingua franca* is to be is often a matter of hot debate), the medium of instruction in terms of the regional language, the place of English in the new scheme of education, and more opportunities for technical education.

It will be admitted that the existing educational facilities in the countries of East Asia are inadequate. They provide only for a small percentage of the children of school-going age. The educational system is top-heavy, the provision at the university stage being larger than the base structure can support. Within each country there are grave disparities between the different regions in the matter of educational facilities, nor are these properly distributed between urban and rural areas—women's education is comparatively neglected. A large proportion of the teachers are untrained, and in many countries teachers are underpaid.

One of the difficulties facing education in these countries is the language question. In India, Pakistan, Ceylon, Burma and the Philippines, a controversy is raging as to the medium of instruction being English, or as to when English is to be begun as a secondary language. On the other hand, there is a great desire among the masses in Indonesia, Japan and Thailand to learn English. In Indonesia, the Dutch language is being rapidly replaced by Indonesian. In China and Japan, Formosa and Korea, the existence of complex systems of writing, employing thousands of characters, and remote from everyday speech, complicates the situation very much. Therefore all over East Asia today the language question is engaging the serious attention of educational reformers.

The importance of the village school in the new Asia of today cannot be over-emphasized. "The village school might become the major instrument toward general education, as it was in the 18th and 19th centuries in some Western countries. It can perform this task if the teachers can take care of the needs of the village people, grownups and adolescents as well as children. The three R's applied to village life mean that better use of local food, better cultivation of the soil, improved seed, use of fertilizer, prevention of usury, and co-operative credit and marketing, come within reach of the average peasant. At the same time, better hygiene and thrift should find their way into the village. As a

responsibility for the school teachers alone, these tasks can never be accomplished. The priests and ministers in other countries in earlier times were the spirit of movements to lift peasants out of misery. In Asia, at the moment, the magnitude of the task is such that all forces in the country and, in effect, in the world, must do their share." [1]

UNESCO and other international governmental agencies have been of late experimenting with 'Fundamental Education' in the countries of East Asia. By 'Fundamental Education' is meant that kind of minimum general education given to those who have not had formal education, in order to enable them to understand their environment, discharge their civic duties and participate more effectively in the social and economic progress of their community.

The extent of secondary and higher education seems to be related to the social structure. In the under-developed countries of East Asia, commerce, large-scale agricultural enterprise and government service are in the hands of minorities fairly well educated and able to pay for the higher education of their children. Therefore there arises the paradox that many of these less-developed areas possess an over-supply of university graduates. It is said that within a ten-mile radius of Kottayam, Travancore, India, there are to be found more university graduates than in any other similar area of the world! "The higher institutions may produce more graduates in prestige professions, such as law and medicine, than can find employment. While technical subjects, such as engineering, and relatively new fields of study in economics, social sciences and physical sciences may be popular, they are usually taught with an emphasis on theory rather than practical application in the national economy. Many graduates exert pressure to obtain government jobs. Graduate professionals tend to congregate in the major cities, where cultural facilities, companionship of their own social class, and clients able to pay satisfactory fees can be found, so that part of a country may have a surplus, and other parts few or none. Most of the less-developed countries contain an *elite* that is highly educated, while the mass of the population is largely illiterate. Thus in such countries one often finds top-level personnel with advanced training in technical fields, who are competent to

[1] De Vries, *op. cit.*

carry out basic research and to make surveys and plans, but not the middle-level personnel necessary to carry out operations and convert plans into actualities. For example, a country may have eminent medical professors but lack trained nurses; or it may have construction engineers able to design a dam but not the competent foremen and skilled construction workers to build it." [1]

A great tribute must be paid to the educational work of Christian missions and churches in East Asia. As in the West, the Church has been the forerunner of education, and particularly in the education of women. In fact, it was the work of educational missions in the East that awakened the governments to their responsibility of educating the masses. India, Pakistan, Ceylon, Burma and Malaya have closely followed the educational pattern in Britain, and the Philippines and China the American system. Japan has been influenced largely by the German system of education, Indo-China by the French, and Indonesia until recently by the Dutch. A good number of the leaders in these countries have been educated in Christian colleges and have therefore been somewhat sympathetic to the Christian enterprise in the East. Now that the States are becoming Welfare States and are taking over education as fast as they can, it is inevitable that soon there will be men in leading positions in East Asian countries who would not have come under Christian influence and who could not be expected therefore to be friendly to it.

*Health*

Disease robs people of vitality and initiative, and creates social lethargy. A peasant down with malaria at the critical time of planting or harvesting cannot grow enough food or earn enough to buy it. Malnutrition exposes him to infectious diseases. Thus there is this vicious circle: disease—under-production—poverty—poor health—more disease.

The U.N. Report brings out clearly the sociological implications of health: "Medical services and medical advances are often pace-makers of social change. . . . Yaws, for example, afflicts so many tropical countries that a map of its incidence would mark most of the land area lying between the two tropics. It is a crippling, disfiguring and debilitating disease which affects all ages, but it can be cured by one, two or at most three doses of

[1] *Preliminary Report on the World Social Situation, op. cit.*, pp. 69-70.

penicillin. . . . In Indonesia, where a mass-treatment campaign was undertaken by the Government in conjunction with WHO and UNICEF, and where in the first two years (1950-51) over 300,000 victims were treated at a cost of about two dollars a head, the social effects in the villages involved are already visible. In contrast with yaws-afflicted villages, the houses are clean, the children well-cared for, and the crops and livestock have improved. Because the people have found a new zest, farmers' clubs and rural extension courses have made headway; the peasants want to learn modern ways of producing better rice and developing better irrigation." [1]

In South and South-East Asia, malaria is generally accorded the first place among the major diseases. Rapid strides have been taken to wipe out this disease in a number of areas. It is more difficult to control tuberculosis, associated as it is with malnutrition, because of the poverty of the people and of overcrowded homes. Its mortality rate in India is about 250 per 100,000. Maternal and child welfare have also received special attention in the last few years in India, Ceylon, Burma and Thailand.

The urgent need for more trained medical personnel cannot be over-emphasized. For example, a survey made in Indonesia in 1949 pointed out that the country needed at least 2,000 graduate physicians, dentists, pharmaceutical chemists, research chemists, sanitary engineers and other professional men, but the total number available was only 600.[2] The inadequacy of medical personnel in relation to population in India is clearly brought out in the following table:

Proportion of Medical Personnel to Population[3]

| *Medical Personnel* | *India* | *United Kingdom* |
|---|---|---|
| 1 Doctor | 6,300 | 1,000 |
| 1 Nurse | 43,000 | 300 |
| 1 Health Visitor | 4,00,000 | 4,710 |
| 1 Midwife | 60,000 | 618 |
| 1 Dentist | 3,00,000 | 2,700 |
| 1 Pharmacist | 40,00,000 | 3,000 |

Conditions of health are not much different in other parts of East Asia. Perhaps in Malaya, Singapore and Ceylon, they

[1] *Ibid.*, p. 22.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 168.
[3] *First Five Year Plan* (People's Edition), *op. cit.*, p. 208.

are better, largely because of the smaller populations and very stringent immigration regulations based on health. It must also be pointed out that the governments are awake to their responsibility in this connection, and better hospital and medical facilities are being made available to the people in one country after another in East Asia. The span of life is increasing in each of the countries, notably in Japan and Ceylon. Interestingly enough, in some of the countries in East Asia women cabinet ministers have been given the portfolio of health, as for example in India and China, and much is being done for women and children. Not only curative but also preventive medicine is being emphasized. "Health", as the World Health Organization defined it, "is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being, and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity." Though it will be an arduous task to reach this goal in East Asia, one may take heart that steps are being taken today towards its realization.

In no sphere has the Christian spirit been more nobly shown than in the skilled treatment of the sick and in the struggle against disease. Christian missions and churches have therefore rightly stressed the ministry of healing. Let us take as examples two countries, India and Japan, one from each extreme part of East Asia. In India there are about 250 hospitals and over 500 dispensaries run by Protestant missions and churches in which over 200 foreign doctors and 400 national doctors, and over 250 foreign nurses and 1000 national nurses are serving. There are eight Christian Tuberculosis Sanatoria and 3 Medical Colleges. Christian missions have taken by far the greatest share in the treatment of leprosy. About three-fourths of all the nurses in India have been trained in Christian hospitals. This is only one half of the story. The Roman Catholic Church in India is making an equally great contribution in the realm of healing.

The Protestant churches in Japan are supporting the following institutions of health and social welfare:[1]

| | |
|---|---|
| Settlements | 15 |
| Child welfare | 201 |
| Reform schools | 14 |
| Clinics | 31 |
| Sanatoria | 15 |
| Institutions for the handicapped | 21 |

[1] *The Japan Christian Year Book*, 1953, p. 131.

*Race*

The racial policies of colonial powers in East Asia varied greatly from one of promoting miscegenation in the interests of political stability and peace to intolerable exclusiveness and social distance based upon sentiments of superiority. White superiority, however, the Asian will not tolerate today. There is a growing awareness that racism, even in modified guise, is opposed to the new developing international ethic of mutual respect and aid, since it is never free from the contempt for, and the distrust of, people belonging to a different group. Communism in East Asia prides itself on the fact that it never tolerates race prejudice, and it exploits this weakness of imperialism for its own advantage.

Indo-British relationships in India appear to have gone through the three stages of the Hegelian dialectic—thesis, anti-thesis and synthesis. The period of antithesis began with the mutiny of 1857, and that of synthesis on August 15, 1947. After this date, the atmosphere of suspicion and hatred has cleared up to a considerable extent—though the legacy of hatred left behind can only be completely conquered by a slow and tedious process of patient and adventurous love. The British population of India after Independence has not greatly decreased. The civil servant who was most entrenched behind caste and prestige has disappeared, and this is all to the good. The missionary by his very profession was against social segregation, and he can now practise freely the principles he preached without the fear of being ostracized by the rest of his countrymen in the land. The merchant population, which is considerable, depends on the goodwill of the Indian for its success. Forces for a new synthesis are at work today. However utilitarian the motives behind these forces may be, the attempt itself is worth making. The contact between the West and the East in India now bereft of political significance is destined to bear rich fruit. What has been said of the Indo-British relationship holds good today in Pakistan, Ceylon and Burma also.

In Indonesia, people cannot easily forget the two 'Police Actions' which resulted in bloodshed and death. However, with the passing of time, wounds are bound to heal, and it is to be hoped that the happy relationship that exists today between the British and Indians will also mark that between Indonesians and their erstwhile rulers. In Indo-China, the French (least

guilty of race prejudice of all the Western peoples) have established as much friendly relationship as can conceivably exist between the foreign ruler and the ruled. In the Philippines, nothing that characterizes in general the relationship of white Americans to the Negro marks their relationship to the Filipino.

Race prejudice is a sin which all flesh is heir to, and it can be overcome only by the grace of God. It is not correct to infer that Asians are not tainted with this prejudice. Colour prejudice which is akin to that of race is seen among Asians also, and even within one nation. When Japan conquered certain countries of East Asia, her rule also brought in its wake the same problem of superiority and race prejudice as did the Western rule. With the passing of colonialism from the lands of East Asia, whether it is of the white or yellow variety, it is to be hoped that happier relations will exist among the orientals and those occidentals who live in the East.

One of the consequences of colonialism has been the community of Eurasians. In comparison with the majority of the people of East Asia, they are better educated, at least at the lower levels of education, and possess semi-professional skills. They constitute small culture islands, isolated from the rest of the people, and present a serious problem in regard to their assimilation with the people of East Asia. When their countries became independent, many of them migrated to the United Kingdom or Holland or Australia, but not without unhappy results there.

A more pressing problem arises from the friction between ethnic minorities and national majorities within Asian countries. In several countries of East Asia there are sizable groups of alien Asians who have played, and still continue to play, a powerful role in the economic and social life of the people. Burma, for instance, has, in a population of 18 millions, an alien population of about one and a half millions. Of these, Indians are in the majority, Chinese and Eurasians making up the rest. Ceylon is faced with the problem of the citizenship of about 800,000 Indians in the context of economic rivalry and political tension. There are in Malaya nearly two million Chinese and half a million Indians out of a total population of about 5½ millions. If we include Singapore, the immigrant Chinese outnumber the native population. Even amongst those of Indian origin, there is a marked cleavage between the South Indian Tamil and the Tamil from Jaffna. The Philippines has a large Chinese population,

and Thailand is troubled with the presence of one million unassimilated Chinese, the majority of whom are in Bangkok.

The issue at bottom is economic. The U.N. Report describes it thus:

"Small-scale commerce and money-lending in the region have been to a considerable extent in the hands of alien Asians. Contemporary nationalism has thus developed not only in reaction against colonialism but also under such complex socio-economic circumstances as the extensive alienation of agricultural land by Indian money-lenders in Burma and the dominant role of the Chinese in trade and industry in Thailand. Anti-Chinese feeling has been evident in Indo-China, Malaya and the Philippines, and to a lesser degree in Indonesia, where the special status of the Chinese was shared by Indians and a smaller number of Arabs.

The foregoing situation has developed through the inability or unwillingness of the indigenous classes to enter the channels of business and trade between the primary producers and the consumers. The alien Asian middleman, often himself of peasant origin and lifted out of the labouring class by virtue of exceptional industry and thrift, served to impede that vertical mobility in the indigenous population which elsewhere furnishes the sense of open opportunity and the hope and possibility of improvement of status." [1]

The 'aboriginal' and tribal populations of East Asia present a special problem. They occupy the lowest level in the social hierarchy. In India they account for 6 percent of the total population. They live in forests and on mountains, far removed from the outposts of civilization. Where such withdrawal was not possible, they have been compelled to live and carry out all the menial tasks for those who subjugated them. In Formosa, Malaya and Burma, the situation of the aborigines and the tribes is somewhat similar. However, a new and growing concern in their welfare has begun to manifest itself in recent years. In India this has taken the form of special constitutional safeguards for them and the appointment of the Backward Classes Commission to investigate their conditions. In Burma there is a proposal to constitute a separate Karen State within the Union. In Formosa the State is doing its very best to improve the lot of the aborigines, and in this connection the part played by Christian missions is a very creditable one.

[1] *Preliminary Report on the World Social Situation*, *op. cit.*, p. 165.

*Caste*

Caste represents, especially in India, a system the key-note of which is social inequality. What is significant in caste is the exclusion of certain groups of people from their share of the spiritual and material goods belonging to the community as a whole. This denial of equality of basic rights and the degrading idea of defilement that has accompanied it are the most baneful effects of the system. However caste was never a complete evil. It did much to preserve culture though it ended to encourage monopolies. Handicrafts and village industries were kept alive largely due to its influence. It gave Hinduism the necessary structural strength to withstand disruptive influences inherent in a series of foreign conquests. But it became too crystallized. The form was tending to kill the spirit, the shell was keeping the kernel away from vitalizing influences. The system was robbing the Indian social structure of that elasticity which is essential for living under modern conditions. Though the relationship of those of one caste to another may go against the canons of modern democracy, yet within each caste democratic equality prevails. The rich and the poor of a particular caste know no such distinction in their social life. They will eat together and marry within the caste. While caste is horizontally most undemocratic, it is almost the opposite vertically, and this fact must not be overlooked.

One of the important factors that has contributed towards its disruption is the catholicity of outlook engendered by liberal education. Communal hostels in most Indian high schools and colleges are fast becoming a thing of the past. Students belonging to all castes and communities live together and eat together. And when they go out into life, they carry with them much of this spirit. The Indian Government has declared itself as secular, and all educational institutions and all opportunities for employment are thrown open to the public, irrespective of caste or creed. The Indian army is no longer open to the fighting castes only. The trek to the town from the village, which is assuming the proportions of a large scale movement, has also helped the liberal forces fighting against caste. There is neither the time nor the opportunity to flaunt caste in the cosmopolitan atmosphere of the city. People mix freely in theatres, restaurants, shops, buses, etc. The reservation of special rooms for Brahmins

in hotels has now been abolished by law. Caste is strongest still in the field of inter-marriage where it does the least harm, and weakest in the field of general social life where it does the most harm.

The so-called 'untouchables' of India were not to begin with a separate caste but merely a portion of the original population who were not assimilated into the caste society of the Aryans. But they soon formed a caste of their own. Today they comprise nearly 20% of the total population of the country. As a result of their segregation from the main stream of Hindu culture, they tended to deteriorate, in intellectual life as well as in standards of personal living. Hence one of those vicious circles common in social life was created—cause and effect were inextricably mixed up. With the growing social and political consciousness in the country, their lot has received and is still receiving much attention from the people and leaders of the nation. The improvement in their status can be seen in the names progressively given to them. First called 'untouchables', they were then described as 'depressed classes', and later as 'scheduled classes'. Finally Mahatma Gandhi gave them the name 'Harijans' (the people of God). The custom of segregating in schools children belonging to this caste (never in colleges) is fast disappearing. The outcastes now receive representation in local and legislative bodies. In many States they receive school and college education free of charge, and in addition boarding and book allowances. As an interim measure, a certain percentage of seats (usually 10%) in schools and colleges and of the government jobs are reserved for them.

The impact of modernity in the form of education and political and legal democracy has greatly strengthened the protests against caste. A new social conscience has been emerging which seeks expression in legal enactments that bar all caste considerations. Articles 15, 16, and 17 of the Constitution of India carry to a new and vital stage the movement for justice embodied in the Caste Disabilities Removal Act of 1850. Newer and more comprehensive legislation applicable to all communities is being attempted to make 'untouchability' a cognizable offence. Western economic influence, urbanization, new technology and religious conversions are some of the other powerful factors making for the abolition of caste.

Christian missionaries in India did much to take the initiative

in treating Harijans on a footing of equality with other castes, and the Indian National Congress has made this matter an important item in its constructive programme. One of their leaders, Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, was till recently a minister in the Central Government. Many Harijans are found today in influential positions in government and elsewhere, achieving this position not in the role of show pieces but as the result of merit and initiative.

At the same time, caste cannot be said to be dying a rapid death. "Caste is dead; long live caste", seems to sum up the situation. Caste has an infinite capacity to survive and adapt itself to new conditions, and the predominance of ruralism makes such survival easy.

It may not be known to many that the outcaste is not the monopoly of India alone. In Japan also he is to be found, where two to three millions of them are treated the way the outcastes in India are. It is to be hoped that their conditions too will improve, and that this horrible system will soon disappear.

*Class*

In most parts of East Asia, new class alignments are in process. While there is not sufficient clarity as to the whole process and its trends, it seems safe to say that the modern period has witnessed the growth of a middle class, especially in Japan, the Philippines and Ceylon. How far this constitutes a genuine middle class comparable to the middle class in England, for example, is debatable. But it cannot be denied that this middle class has been one of the most efficient media of cultural diffusion. Much of the nationalist fervour in these countries is a direct outcome of the sense of historical denial from which the middle class has been suffering.

The emergence of classes and the increasing mobility within East Asian society may be an alternative to the caste structure, wherever it exists at present. But the possibility of class conflict cannot be ruled out, especially in view of the economic situation and the propaganda of the Communists.

*Other Factors*

In conclusion certain other factors which are playing an important part in the social revolution may be briefly described by reference to conditions in India.

*(a) The Radio*

The radio is bringing to the villages new information, ideas and insight into the situation in the country in a way never done before. The problem of carrying new ideas into the village was until now mainly one of inadequate transport. Most of the villages lay off the main roads. Approach was not easy, as branch roads were mainly cart lanes and good roads were expensive. But now the radio is taking new ideas right into the heart of the village without much expense being incurred on transport. Here is a tremendous new possibility which the governments are exploiting with vigour, and which is already bearing visible fruit. For example, seven stations of the All India Radio have started a programme called 'the Farm Forum'. "The immediate purpose of these forums is to increase food production, but they may easily develop into a nucleus for the reconstruction of village life. These forums now exist in eighty one villages of Delhi, Madras, Bombay and U.P. The rural programme has also taken another form at some stations. The programme is relayed from a village to the studio and then broadcast. Thus a programme in which many villagers are participating in a particular village is broadcast to rural listeners." What is being done in India is done also in every other major country of East Asia.

Even in urban areas the possibility of educating and moulding public opinion through the radio is receiving increasing attention. Considering the fact that the first broadcasting station in India was started only in 1924, the progress already made is gratifying. It is estimated that every month 10,000 new licences are being issued. In 1942 there were 165,000 radio sets in India. Today there are 685,000. The same story can be told of other countries as well.

*(b) Newspapers*

The growth of the vernacular press is another significant development in modern Asia. For example, there are today in India 122 dailies being published, of which only 37 are in English. The rest are in regional languages, enjoy a wide circulation and reach a class of reading public that the English daily never reached. It is certain that these papers in India and elsewhere will play an important part in the creation of a healthy public

opinion regarding social matters. Considering the huge populations of these countries, possibilities of development are enormous, especially if the scheme of compulsory primary education gets under way in all lands. The vernacular weekly has also made its appearance, and is enjoying unprecedented popularity.

(*c*) *Reform through Legislation*

This is rather a delicate matter, since many social customs of the peoples are rooted in religious practices. The would-be reformer has to steer cautiously between the Scylla of radicalism and the Charybdis of traditional religious sentiment. In fact the difficulties are so many that they have scared away many well-intentioned people. Inspite of all this, a start has been made and promises to gather strength as the years roll by. Long ago the Sarada Act was passed in India forbidding the marriage of girls below the age of 14. The States of Madras and Bombay have passed laws enforcing monogamy and permitting divorce. The Hindu Code Bill at present before the Indian Parliament is the most ambitious step in this direction to date. "In dealing with such problems as marriage, divorce, adoption, guardianship and inheritance, the Code seeks to interpret the ancient laws in terms of modern trends and in the context of the new status of complete equality assured to women."

*The Role of the Asian Christian in the Social Revolution*

The Church in East Asia is an interesting sociological unit. It has drawn unto itself converts from all castes and classes. It could have played a glorious role in creating a casteless society within its fold. However it must be confessed that it did not fully utilize this opportunity in India and elsewhere. It was inevitable that converts from a particular caste should bring into the Church their own special customs and create small social cells within the main body. But there is no reason why they should continue to do so after enjoying for a hundred years the newer and fuller life that the Church has had to offer them. There are signs that the Church in India realizes now its failure in this direction. It has not however failed in one matter. The majority of its converts were from the so-called 'depressed classes'. It has certainly done much to upgrade their social status.

Christian high schools and colleges have long been setting

the standards for general educational life in East Asia. The thousands of non-Christians who are educated in these institutions go out into life with a new vitality and courage which fits them to take up the social challenge of the times. Without claiming any monopoly of virtue, it can be confidently affirmed that these institutions have played an important role in the social resurgence of Asia.

Circumstances have placed within the reach of the Asian Church the possibilities not only of creating a classless or casteless society but also an inter-racial one. But this cannot be achieved by mere expressions of pious hope. Hidden complexes lurk in the background which, if not conquered, will lead to harmful results. The Asian Christian has not yet completely purged his mind of racial prejudices. One would wonder if the foreign missionary has. It would be a catastrophe if an out-worn theory of racial superiority flourished in the seclusion of the mission compound, and it would be a tragedy indeed if the mission bungalow became the last outpost of imperialism in Asia.

The Asian Christian should never be an opportunist. On the other hand he should never be frightened of being a pioneer. His westernization, once his shame, is now his strength. It fits him to play a valuable role of interpretation in the synthesis of Eastern and Western cultures which forms a part of the social picture in Asia today. He can also do much, because of his long contact with missionaries, to bring about better understanding and greater friendship between Asians and the foreign residents of Asian countries. To begin with, he must purge his own mind of the suspicion of others that makes him a separatist; he must not develop a minority mentality; he must not fall a victim to a persecution complex. In short, he must save himself by the selfless giving of himself.

CHAPTER V

# CONTENDING IDEOLOGIES

MANY OBSERVERS have pointed out that Asia today is an ideological battlefield where rival systems of social and political thought contend for mastery. This conflict has many outward expressions —armed struggle, electioneering, strikes, civil disobedience, countless speeches and political tracts—but the real struggle is within the minds and hearts of men and women. Peasants, politicians, industrialists and workers—all are being forced by the pressure of revolutionary events to consider what kind of state and society they wish to have. The pace of the struggle is forced by those who have chosen some one, or perhaps some combination of ideologies, but no person, not even the illiterate villager, can now remain aloof from the battle of ideas and loyalties.

Asia is far too vast, and the ideological scene too confusing, for even the most well-informed observer to predict confidently the outcome of this struggle. Nevertheless we can, at the risk of over-simplification, point to several major ideologies and make some evaluation of their influence. In doing so, we need to keep in mind certain major qualifications. First, although some of these ideologies bear Western labels, their contents have been adapted to meet Asian conditions. The Asian Communist or Socialist or Democrat is not an exact copy of his Western counterpart. Secondly, one party or political leader may subscribe to elements taken from two or more ideologies. He may, for instance, be both a religious nationalist and an advocate of parliamentary democracy, or at the same time a Socialist and a Gandhian. Of all the ideologies in Asia today, Communism alone is consciously exclusive of other loyalties, but Communism also is prepared, more often than not, to work in a united front with other groups. Thirdly, nationalism is still the major force in the revolution, and each ideology must reckon with it. Every new political leader in Asia is first of all a patriot, passionately concerned to preserve and strengthen the independence of his country. His attitude to the various ideologies is coloured largely by whether or not these appear to provide adequate answers to the problems of national security and development.

Bearing in mind these qualifications, we shall now describe briefly five ideologies which are active in various parts of Asia today.

*Liberal Democracy*

We have mentioned previously the heritage of liberal democratic ideals in the countries of South and South-East Asia. This heritage is seen most clearly in the constitutions adopted following the achievement of independence. The constitution of India, for instance, includes a detailed list of fundamental rights, and provides both for a parliamentary form of government, closely paralleling the British pattern, and for the separation of the judiciary from the executive, as in the United States. Its preamble opens with the words, "We, the people of India, having solemnly resolved to constitute India into a sovereign democratic republic," and states that the aims of the republic shall be to secure justice, liberty and equality to all its citizens. Similar provisions are made in the constitutions (some of them still in the drafting stage) of Pakistan, Ceylon, Burma, Indonesia, the Philippines and Japan. Most of the leaders of these countries have accepted the basic premise of political democracy, namely, that political power is vested in the people, and that those who hold this power are responsible for its use to the people by whom they have been elected. "We in India," said Mr. C. Rajagopalachari, Chief Minister of Madras State, "are firmly resolved on democracy through the expressed wishes of the people however defective the machinery for ascertaining it may be for the time being. Even where we are opposed by parties and groups from whom we fundamentally differ, whose machinations may tempt us to employ extra-constitutional methods, we do not seek to oppose them except through the ballot box."[1]

There is a considerable question, however, as to how far democracy has taken root among the masses. Asian society is traditionally authoritarian, and it will take some time to develop that sense of individual initiative and responsibility that democracy requires. Also many Asians know little about the foundations of democracy; they are acquainted mainly with its outward forms, the demagoguery, electioneering and party rivalry. In addition, many left-wing groups are skeptical of democracy's ability to tackle rapidly and effectively the problems

[1] *The Hindu* (Madras), Feb. 27, 1954.

of land reform and industrialization. They are often impatient with the gradual processes of constitutional change. If democracy in Asia is to take deep root and grow into a healthy political plant, it must undertake mass education for responsible citizenship and also demonstrate its capacity to plan and carry out programmes of economic reform. Its historic emphasis on individual liberty is not adequate; there must be social and economic justice as well as political freedom.

*Socialism*

Like its counterpart in Europe, Asian Socialism is a mixture of Marxist and non-Marxist elements. This is both a weakness and an advantage. Differences in emphasis often lead to major splits, following the familiar European pattern of left- and right-wing Socialism. In some countries, notably Japan, there are two or more Socialist parties which, were they united, might be able to form stable ministries. The advantage, on the other hand, is that Socialism can adapt itself to national conditions and influence the policies of non-Socialist parties. Although Burma is the only Asian country with a Socialist government, the working creed of many a political leader in South and South-East Asia includes strong Socialist elements.

One of the most significant political developments during recent years has been the formation of an Asian Socialist Conference. The organizational meeting was convened at Rangoon in January 1953 and included representatives from the Socialist parties of Burma, India, Indonesia (the three sponsoring bodies), Japan, Malaya, Pakistan, Israel, Lebanon and Egypt. Observers and fraternal delegates were present from Yugoslavia, Africa and the Socialist International. Its most important decision was to form a permanent organization with the following aims: "(a) to strengthen relations between the Asian Socialist parties, (b) co-ordinate their political attitude by consent, (c) establish closer relations with Socialist parties in all the world and (d) establish a liaison with the Socialist International".[1] The organization is to consist of a Conference (which will meet every two years), a Bureau and a Secretariat. U Ba Swe, Deputy Premier and Defence Minister of Burma, was elected Chairman of the Conference, and it was decided to establish the headquarters at Rangoon.

[1] *Report of the First Asian Socialist Conference*, Rangoon, 1953, p. 109.

The report of the Rangoon Conference includes resolutions on all the major political, economic and social problems confronting Asia today. With regard to land reform it states that feudalism should be abolished, and landlordism in all forms should be liquidated. It calls for "bold policies of social and economic reconstruction and the full use of science", and adds that "the condition of Asian countries demands a greater attention to the organization and modernization of small-scale industries to be determined by the special circumstances of each country." It stresses the need for nationalization of transport and industry, but recognizes that State control "is in danger of degenerating into bureaucratism," and says that "the danger can be averted only by increasing association of the workers with the processes and responsibilities of management." It claims that international economic assistance is a right "created by past and present exploitation of Asian countries by the developed countries" and urges that this come "through a world development authority controlled by the United Nations." It pledges full Socialist support to the struggle against continuing colonial rule. With regard to world tensions it states that the major contribution of Asian countries will lie in arresting the process of polarization between the two power blocs, but adds that this does not mean "ideological neutralism or the policy of sacrificing the liberty of other peoples or nations to one's own selfish interests." The independent countries of Asia, continues the report, "are committed to the defence of democracy against all threats, internal as well as external." [1]

Naturally, one of the major concerns of the Conference was to define the Asian Socialist attitude to Communism. Following a lengthy discussion, the delegates unanimously adopted the following statement:

> "The essence of democratic Socialism is the striving to attain greater happiness, justice and dignity, and the fullest possible chance of self-expression for the human being. In seeking to abolish exploitation of class by class and of man by man, Socialism recognizes man both as an integral part of a class or group and as a human individual. It therefore avoids totalitarian forms of government and methods of mass coercion. Communism, on the other hand,

[1] *Ibid.*, pp. 96-105.

as practised today in its totalitarian form in the Soviet Union and its satellites, has degenerated into a regime of the complete subordination of the individual and the group to the centralized power of the leadership of the ruling party. Under the Soviet system, state power imposes absolute domination and exacts blind obedience: man is expected to give up his freedom and individuality, obliterating himself as an abstract part of an all-powerful State in which only one will prevails. Communism, therefore, stands for the negation of all concepts of freedom, individual self-expression and genuine mass responsibility which are the very breath of democratic Socialism.——In view of these convictions, we, the Socialist parties in Asia, declare our rejection of Communism and express our determination to supersede capitalism and feudalism by democratic Socialism."[1]

Socialist leaders in the various Asian countries are attempting to re-think the basic principles of their creed. Except for the extreme left-wing Marxists, most of them recognize certain basic ideological problems which must be solved if Socialism is to be genuinely democratic and progressive. Jayaprakash Narayan, for many years one of India's outstanding national leaders, draws attention to five such problems.[2] The first, he says, is that Marxism "is based on amoralism" and disregards the question of ultimate values. This accounts for the demoralization of Marxist parties and the corruption of their ideals in the struggle for power. "We in the Socialist movement," he concludes, "must subscribe to certain values, values which we will not consider relative in the sense that we could sacrifice them in order to achieve an immediate end." The next two problems are those of the proper political and economic order, and here Mr. Narayan advocates decentralization of power. "The structure of Socialist economy in most of the Asian countries is necessarily going to be a dispersed structure, a structure based not on concentrated, mass-producing manufacture but on dispersed, decentralized manufacture." With reference to the question of land reform he suggests that neither nationalization nor collectivization is the answer. What is needed is that the

[1] *Ibid.*, p. 92.
[2] In *Ideological Problems of Socialism*, Rangoon, 1953.

ownership of the land be transferred "to the village community, not to an abstract entity known as the State or the nation, but to the concrete entity with which he (the villager) is acquainted and of which he is a part, namely, the village." The fourth problem is that of determining the proper technique of struggle. Mr. Narayan recognizes that in some countries parliamentary and constitutional methods will not be sufficient, but he urges that Socialism use the Gandhian technique of "large, mass movements, mass action of a non-violent character, unconstitutional and yet at the same time peaceful." The final question which Mr. Narayan discusses is that of the relationship between Socialist countries. He criticizes Soviet Russia for having turned the countries of Eastern Europe into economic colonies, and pleads for genuine internationalism. Just as Socialism attempts in any one country to equalize opportunities and redistribute the wealth which has been produced, so in the international sphere it should help, through some kind of world development organization, to raise the level of the backward countries.

*Gandhism*

It may appear strange to include Gandhism in a discussion of political ideologies. It is true that Gandhi never attempted to work out a detailed political programme. Yet his ideas concerning the objectives and techniques of social change have had a profound influence, not only in India but throughout Asia. Many of the questions discussed by Jayaprakash Narayan, for instance, were first raised by Gandhi. Political leaders in Burma, Indonesia and other countries have acknowledged repeatedly their debt to the man who, above all others, symbolized the resurgence of Asia.

Acharya J. B. Kripalani, one of Gandhi's closest followers and now Chairman of the Praja-Socialist party of India, has given a convenient summary of the postulates of Gandhi's philosophy, both individual and social. These postulates are the Fatherhood of God, the Brotherhood of Man, the Supremacy of the Moral Law, Truth, Non-Violence or Active Love, and Purity of Means.[1] Gandhi was convinced that the moral standards which guide civilized human beings in their individual and social conduct must also regulate group behaviour. He

[1] *Gandhian Outlook and Techniques*, New Delhi, 1953, p. 360.

believed that it was as wrong and immoral to lie, cheat, exploit or kill fellow human beings for political and ideological ends, as it was to do so for personal reasons. This emphasis on the supremacy of the moral law was Gandhi's outstanding contribution to social life, and it governed all that he thought and did.

In the political field Gandhi stood for democracy, but not of the formal or centralized type. "The India of his conception," says Acharya Kripalani, "was to consist of semi-independent republics, which entirely managed all their affairs, including the administration of justice and keeping the peace in the locality. Thus he stood for the devolution of political power."[1] In regard to economic development, Gandhi also emphasized decentralization. He was not opposed to all forms of modern industry, but he believed that large factories tended to dehumanize the workers and urged that, so far as possible, industry be developed within the villages. His ideal for economic as well as political life was the semi-autonomous, self-supporting community where personal relationships could develop on the basis of mutual understanding and service.

It is not surprising that no political party or government has attempted to adhere strictly to the Gandhian ideology. Even during Gandhi's life-time some of his closest companions, among them Jawaharlal Nehru, said that they could not accept absolute non-violence. Yet it would be a serious mistake to minimize the continuing influence of Gandhi's teachings. Much of the constructive social work in India is being done by those whom he trained, and both state and national legislation owe a good deal to his insights and convictions. One of the most significant experiments in social change is the *Bhoodan Yajna* (Land Gift) movement led by Vinoba Bhave, a thorough-going Gandhian. Travelling from village to village on foot, Bhave and his followers appeal to landlords to give their surplus lands to the peasants. Since the beginning of the campaign in April 1951, this "looting with love" (as Bhave once termed it) has collected donations totalling more than 2 million acres of land!

The three ideologies we have been discussing have certain features in common. On the whole they are moderate in their claims, pragmatic rather than doctrinaire, distrustful of violence

[1] *Ibid.*, p. 350.

pledged to support civil liberties and opposed to the narrow interests of religious fanaticism. For this reason certain political parties have been able to combine features from two or more of them. The ideologies to which we must now turn our attention —Religious Nationalism and Communism—are of a different type. They represent the extreme right and left wings of the Asian political scene, or, to use Professor Toynbee's terms, the forces of 'archaism' and 'futurism'.

*Religious Nationalism*

Religious nationalism is one of the most significant features of contemporary Asian politics. It was evident early in this century in the effort to make Shintoism the basis for intense Japanese patriotism. Its most spectacular rise has come, however, since the achievement of independence by the countries of South and South-East Asia. The birth of Pakistan is the outstanding illustration, but we also find Islamic nationalism in Indonesia, Hindu nationalism in India, and Buddhist nationalism in Ceylon, Burma and Thailand. In addition there are similar movements associated with Christianity among the Nagas in Assam, the Karens in Burma and the Ambonese in Indonesia.

The rationale of this nationalism may be illustrated from the arguments used by the Hindu Mahasabha. The unity of India, say the leaders of this group, is not to be found in geography or economics or race. It is based rather on the common cultural and spiritual heritage of the people who inhabit this vast land. This heritage has come from Hinduism, from its scriptures, saints and kings. The only way to strengthen India is to restore this ancient faith to its full glory. The State, therefore, must undertake to rebuild temples, encourage festivals and other religious practices, and re-establish Hindu *Dharma* as the basis of national life. Also, since the true India is Hindu India, it must be made clear that all non-Hindus—Muslims, Christians, Parsees, etc.—are essentially foreigners and can remain in India only on sufferance. The arguments of Buddhist and Islamic nationalism follow much the same line.

It is easy to understand why such arguments have tremendous appeal. In the midst of change and confusion, the ordinary man longs to return to the ancient verities in which his fathers trusted and were not ashamed. Both his piety and his national pride are quickened by the vision of true religion restored to its

rightful and honoured place. Responsible Asian leaders may sympathize in part with the aims of this movement. Many of them wish to see a revival of religious convictions as the foundation for moral life. But they recognize also that religious nationalism can be a dangerously disruptive and divisive force. They see that it is backward-looking and opposed to progress and reform. Extreme Islamic nationalists in Pakistan wish to impose the *shariat*, the traditional Islamic law, without any adjustment to modern conditions. Women would be veiled, usury abolished, and political power vested in ultra-orthodox religious leaders. Orthodox Hindu nationalism is opposed to legislation that would give women equal marriage and property rights with men. Responsible leaders are also concerned about the fact that religious nationalism is irrational and subject to outbursts of fanatical violence. It was responsible for Gandhi's death, and for recent riots against the Ahmadiyyas in Pakistan. In Indonesia the Daru'l Islam, an extremist Muslim group with more than 5,000 armed followers, has seriously weakened the Government's control over several areas. Another drawback of religious nationalism is that it has no economic or social policy to meet the crying needs of the people. More often than not, it is supported by landlords and other representatives of the dying feudal order. Finally, religious nationalism is fundamentally divisive. The logical outcome of its arguments would be the creation of a separate State for each religious group—or the forcible conversion of religious minorities. Either of these alternatives, if acted upon, would lead to the complete disruption of the new Asian nations.

It is not surprising, therefore, that liberal democrats, Socialists and Communists agree in their opposition to religious nationalism, at least in its extreme forms. The constitutions of Japan, the Philippines, India and China embody the principles of the secular State. Other countries, such as Pakistan, will not go so far, but even there the leaders are committed to the ideal of religious toleration. Despite these safeguards, religious nationalism remains strong and poses two serious problems. One is the possibility that the dominant religious community in each country will gain a monopoly of social and economic privilege at the expense of the minorities. Another is the danger that the major religious group will persuade the State to ban all evangelistic activity, especially that of the Christian Church.

*Communism*

The speed with which Communism has gained power in Asia since 1945 is probably unparalleled in the history of any other political movement. It is certainly one of the most influential, if not the major contender in the ideological struggle. Members and adherents of the Party number several hundred millions. Nevertheless, its position differs greatly from country to country. There are Communist governments only in China and North Korea. In Burma, Malaya, Indo-China, the Philippines and South Korea Communist-led movements are in open conflict with the governments, while in Thailand and Taiwan Communism is banned. The Party is legally recognized in Japan, Burma, India, Ceylon, Indonesia and Pakistan, but in none of these (with the exception of Indonesia) is it a formidable rival to the parties in power. The picture is complicated by the fact that in two of these countries—Burma and Indonesia—there are Communist-led guerrillas as well as the constitutional Communist Party.

There are many reasons for Communism's strong appeal in Asia today. First, there is its promise of social and economic justice. Asia is a region of glaring contrasts, of great wealth side by side with unbelievable poverty and degradation. Communism challenges this state of affairs, and promises a new order of equality and justice. Communist workers describe the economic and social achievements of Russia and China, and say that other countries of Asia could do the same under the Party's leadership. Secondly, Communism teaches and practises racial equality. Asians are greatly impressed by what they hear of Russia's policy with regard to ethnic minorities, and they contrast this with conditions in South Africa and the United States. Thirdly, Communism appeals to many because of its challenge to Western imperialism. Long before Communism came to power in China, the Leninist theory of imperialism had found wide acceptance in that country. Today, Communists are leading the armed opposition to British and French colonialism, and China is the leading opponent of what many Asians regard as American imperialism. Communists in Japan and Pakistan are opposed to any type of military alliance with the United States. Fourthly, for many uprooted Asian intellectuals Communism has taken on the characteristics of a substitute faith.

It offers them a philosophy of life, a programme of action and an object of devotion. An Indian observer has called it "the fastest growing religion" in his country, filling the vacuum caused by the breakdown of ancestral faiths.

The strength of the Communist party in any country springs from its disciplined organization and clear-cut ideology. The Party allows no deviation and no compromise, with the result that it is often far stronger than its rivals. Its Marxist-Leninist creed provides "the emotional dynamic to inspire persistent revolutionary effort, the social analysis to guide it, and the doctrinal discipline to keep it under control."[1] No other ideology in Asia today is so uncompromising in its radical demand for revolutionary change, nor so sure of its immediate social objectives.

One of the most significant features of Asian Communism is the leading role played by the Chinese Communist Party. Although the over-all strategy for this region is still determined by the Cominform, the Communist parties of Asia look to China for tactical guidance. China's new role was made clear at a Trade Union Conference of Asian countries held at Peking in November 1949. Liu Shao-chi, President of the All-China Federation of Labour, stated: "The path taken by the Chinese people to defeat imperialism and its lackeys and to establish the People's Republic of China is the path that should be taken by the people of the various colonial and semi-colonial countries in their fight for national independence and People's Democracy." He then listed four elements in the Chinese formula for victory:

"1. The working class must unite with all other classes, parties and groups, organizations, and individuals who are willing to oppose the oppression of imperialism and its lackeys, to form a broad nationwide united front . . .

2. This nationwide united front must be led by the working class which opposes imperialism most resolutely — and by its political party, the Communist Party . . .

3. It is necessary to build up through patient struggle a Communist Party equipped with the theory of Marxism-Leninism, a Party mastering strategy and tactics, a Party practising self-criticism and strict discipline and which is closely linked with the masses.

[1] *A Documentary History of Chinese Communism*, London, 1952, p. 472.

4. It is necessary to set up wherever and whenever possible a people's liberation army led by the Communist Party."[1]

This 'victory formula' has guided the tactics of Asian Communists during the past four years. In India, for example, the Communist Party, which carried on an unsuccessful armed struggle during 1948-50 against the Congress Government, has switched over to a united-front policy. It claims that India is still a semi-colonial country, dependent upon British and American capital, and it invites all disaffected groups to join it in a struggle "for freedom and national independence of their country, against the Anglo-American imperialists oppressing it, and against the reactionary big bourgeoisie and feudal princes collaborating with them."[2] In Malaya and Indo-China, on the other hand, where colonial governments still hold power, the campaign of the 'people's liberation armies' has been intensified. In both instances the appeal is to nationalist and pro-Asian sentiment. The common enemy is the West (especially America): the common ideal is the new China and Asian solidarity.

Although the rise of Communism has been phenomenal, there are several forces that still check its growth. Leaving aside the matter of military resistance in Korea and elsewhere, we may point to three major factors. First, and probably most important, is the opposition of nationalism. In India, for instance, Communists gave wholehearted support to the British in the war against the Axis powers at a time when Gandhi, Nehru and other nationalist leaders were in prison for demanding immediate independence. As a result, the Communists were accused of being pro-Russian rather than pro-Indian. Secondly, there is a strong dislike for Communist violence. The 1952 May Day riots in Japan were an important reason why the Communists failed to gain a single seat in the national elections held that year. The General Secretary of the Japanese Communist Party later criticized the policy of armed struggle because it had alienated the masses. Thirdly, there is a wide-spread antipathy to Communist atheism. Asians are still on the whole a deeply religious people. For this reason the Communists have toned down their anti-religious propaganda and emphasize instead the freedom of worship in Russia and China.

[1] *Working Class in the Struggle for National Liberation*, Bombay, 1950, pp. 5-6.

[2] *Communist* (Bombay), February-March 1950, p. 14.

This brief treatment of rival ideologies is obviously inadequate in many respects. Yet it may serve to indicate some of the deep undercurrents of the Asian revolution. The presence of so many conflicting views concerning the goals of political and social life is one symptom of spiritual confusion and unrest. The challenge of these ideologies is fundamentally a spiritual challenge and cannot be met simply by military or economic measures. If democrats are to win the day over the followers of totalitarianism, they must present a world view that will satisfy the minds, kindle the emotions and command the full loyalty of sensitive Asians. One of the central tasks of the Church in Asia is to proclaim the Word of God in such a way as to demonstrate its profound relevance to this ideological struggle.

CHAPTER VI

# CHRISTIAN CONCERN FOR THE ASIAN REVOLUTION

IN THE preceding chapters there have been occasional references to the role that Christianity has played in stimulating the desires and providing the incentives that underlie the social revolution in Asia. There has also been some mention of Christian responsibilities in the contemporary situation. Here we shall deal more specifically with some of the major questions that confront the Church in Asia as it attempts to re-think its mission in relation to the rapidly changing social, economic and political environment. What contributions have Western missions and the Asian churches made to the welfare of people in this part of the world? Why should the Church be concerned with social order and what is its prophetic task in Asia today? What are the Christian attitudes to the various political ideologies which seek to direct the revolution? What is being done in the way of study and action on social issues by Christian groups in various countries of East Asia? In what ways can the ecumenical movement and its agencies assist the Asian churches to fulfil their responsibilities?

In answering these questions we shall not attempt to provide a detailed picture of all that has been done by missions and churches. For further information the reader will need to turn to the many reports published by missionary societies, National Christian Councils and the International Missionary Council. Here we shall present only a brief survey of ecumenical thinking during the past twenty-five years, drawing largely upon the findings and recommendations of recent investigations and conferences *held in Asia*.

## CHRISTIAN CONTRIBUTION TO SOCIAL CHANGE

J. Merle Davis, to whose studies in this field the ecumenical movement is deeply indebted, draws attention to the unique role played by Christian missions in the impact of Western culture upon Asia. "The first and most obvious impact of Western culture," he writes, "is materialistic while the core of the culture of these other peoples is religious. Western culture, except for

the message of the Christian Church, does not deal with spiritual values, relationships, duties and disciplines which make up a very large part of the scheme of life of non-Christian peoples. . . . Among culture carriers the missionary alone aims at the spiritual transformation of society and brings to it an organized philosophy of life, a social structure, a scheme of conduct and a moral discipline of a new faith."[1] Among the sources of the uniqueness of the cultural influence of Christian missions he includes their continuity of contact with Asia, their singleness of purpose, the diffusion of their representatives in the inner recesses and throughout the length and breadth of the lands to which they have gone, the intimate contacts of missionaries with the common people, the influence of Christian education, the concern for social and moral rehabilitation, the presentation of an adequate interpretation of life to replace the Asian religious philosophies and beliefs, and the intimate contacts between the members of the churches in the West and those in Asia.[2]

It would take far more space and time than we have at our disposal to document these statements by Mr. Davis. We can, however, point to some of the most significant ways in which Christianity has contributed to social change. One of the most important is *Christian education.* Speaking in 1942 of Christian education in China, M. Searle Bates said, "In recent years the Protestant secondary schools and colleges have provided for nine to ten per cent, and fifteen to twenty per cent respectively in those two grades of training."[3] The thirteen Christian colleges and universities, the 255 middle schools, and the many hundreds of primary schools maintained by missions in China had an incalculable influence upon the ideology and culture of the Chinese nation, an influence not completely swept aside by the recent attitude of China to the West. India today has forty-five colleges, several hundred high schools and over a thousand middle and primary schools under Christian auspices. In these institutions the great majority of students are non-Christians, and their graduates occupy leading positions in government, business and the educational world. Many have testified publicly to the influence which education in a Christian environment has had on their attitudes and ideals.

[1] J. Merle Davis, *New Buildings on Old Foundations*, New York, 1945, pp. 7, 23.
[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 25-29.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 27.

Christian missions were the pioneer agencies in the *education of women.* The first boarding school for girls in all of Asia was established near Jaffna, Ceylon, by missionaries of the American Board, and one of the first colleges for women was the Isabella Thoburn College at Lucknow, India, founded by Methodist missionaries. Many tributes have been paid by non-Christians to the Christian contribution in the education and emancipation of women. "The women of Asia," said the President of the All-India Women's Conference in 1931, "are placed under a deep debt of gratitude to the missionary agencies for their valuable contribution to the educational uplift of Indian women."[1] Another field in which Christians have pioneered is *adult education.* Here the outstanding figure is Dr. Frank Laubach whose technique of teaching adult illiterates has been adapted for use in all parts of the world. Many Asian leaders, including Mrs. V. L. Pandit, President of the United Nations, have paid tribute to the contribution which Dr. Laubach and his colleagues have made to the opening up of a new life for backward peoples of Asia.

Because they have lived in close contact with the poverty-stricken villagers of Asia, western missionaries and national Christian leaders have been concerned with *rural reconstruction.* In 1913 the YMCA of India, under the leadership of Mr. K. T. Paul, opened a number of rural centres which were the pioneer agencies in this field, and in 1930 the All-India Conference on Rural Work, convened by the National Christian Council, stated that "the Rural Reconstruction Unit offers the most natural and practicable plan for the expression of Christian ideals and the building of a new rural community life". Agricultural institutes at Nanking, Allahabad and Pyinmana (Burma) have provided under Christian auspices higher training and research in all aspects of agricultural development. India Village Service, founded in 1945, has sought, with the co-operation of government and private agencies, to develop a pattern of reconstruction for the entire village and has provided some of the inspiration for the programme of Community Projects under India's Five Year Plan.

Christians have also taken a lead in the development of *co-operatives.* The outstanding illustration of this is the Christian

[1] Quoted in *Re-Thinking Missions*, New York, 1932, p. 257.

co-operative movement in Japan, associated with the name of Toyohiko Kagawa. "The whole movement is based on the conviction that man in Christ Jesus can be made free in 'mind, body and estate', and that it is incumbent on Christ's followers . . . to labour to create the environment in which alone the whole man can in fact be free. . . . Its success depends on covering every relationship of production, distribution and consumption. . . . Especially it is urged that credit co-operative activity is necessary if the experiment is to be able to raise itself as independent of the system it seeks to replace."[1]

Despite their minority position in most countries and their close association with the churches of the West, the majority of Asian Christian leaders have strongly supported the *movements for national independence.* They have done this not simply as nationalists but because of their conviction that imperialism, involving as it does political and economic serfdom, is contrary to Christian principles. On the whole they have advocated a democratic approach to the problems of national reconstruction; for instance, the Christian members of India's Constituent Assembly pleaded for an end to communal electorates and indicated their confidence in the majority religious community.

Perhaps Christianity's greatest contribution to social change in Asia is the *new sense of hope* which it has brought to millions of people, especially to the outcaste and the suppressed. "The Church appears among the depressed classes as a new social group and brotherhood and provides a unique corporate life and fellowship. The people are helped to new standards of self-control, conduct, discipline, progress and goals. These, together with the spiritual dynamic of the Gospel, the inspiration of trained leadership, and the moral support of a new brotherhood, furnish a foundation to the individual for progress."[2]

After all this has been said, it must be admitted that Christians in Asia, whether western missionaries or nationals, have not been sufficiently concerned with social problems, nor with the wider questions of political and economic order. It is only in very recent years, for instance, that they have begun to take an interest in the industrial proletariat. In 1932 the Laymen's Inquiry reported: "It is disappointing that with great industrial problems in the Orient confronting the missions with their

[1] *The World Mission of the Church*, London, 1939, p. 113.
[2] J. Merle Davis, *op. cit.*, p. 28.

challenge and opportunity, there is hardly a social worker to be found in the whole roster of missionaries trained to deal scientifically and intelligently with human beings trying to adjust themselves to new factory environment." [1] (Fortunately, since this report was written a number of missionary societies and national churches have sought to train and equip persons for such work, but so far not much has been accomplished.) It is also true that while Christians have done much in the way of social service, they have not, on the whole, seriously considered the larger questions of social, economic and political order which face the entire nation. They have trained men to be honest, considerate and just in personal relationships, but they have not usually thought through the consequences of this for political life. Out of love and obedience to Christ they have helped greatly to heal the bodies of men and to check the spread of disease, but they have not examined seriously the resulting economic problem of over-population with which countries like India and Japan are faced today. They have taught tenant farmers to take better care of the soil and to produce more food, but they have not encouraged these same farmers to challenge the feudal landholding system which deprives them of so much that they produce. As a result, those who are concerned with social justice look to movements other than Christianity for the insights and principles which the Church has failed to declare. A Catholic observer has this to say of the Church's experience in China (an experience not greatly different from that of the Church in other Asian countries):

> "It is no longer good enough to open dispensaries, hospitals, orphanages and schools, colleges and universities to attract pagans to the Church. While you are caring for their bodies and cultivating their minds, social forces are working against you. The preaching of the Gospel must be accompanied by the proclamation of social justice."

## Towards an Understanding of the Church's Prophetic Task

During the past thirty years Christians in Asia, as in Europe and America, have been forced both by the pressure of revolutionary social changes and by the growth of new theological movements to re-examine the entire range and content of the Church's

[1] *Re-Thinking Missions*, *op. cit.*, p. 244.

mission. Two important developments have been of particular significance in the attempt to gain a fresh understanding of the Church's prophetic task in Asia today. One is the revival of a truly Biblical theology, emphasizing particularly the Lordship of Jesus Christ over all of life. The other is the growth of a realistic Christian concern for society based on a new understanding of God's purpose for the world as revealed in the Bible. Neither of these movements has as yet affected in any considerable measure the life of the churches in Asia, but there is a growing recognition among Christian thinkers of their importance and of their relation to one another. What is emerging is something quite different from the liberal social gospel. Most of the presuppositions on which that movement was based have been discredited, at least in part, by the disasters of two world wars and the breakdown of the once apparently stable world order dominated over by Western Europe. The new interpretation of the Church's social task is still in the process of formation, but there are certain lines of development to which we can point as being indicative of the future.

*The Whole Gospel for the Whole Man*

The major point of agreement between the liberal social gospel and the newer theological movement is their conviction that the Gospel is relevant to all of life. In this respect, the Jerusalem (1928) Meeting of the International Missionary Council served as a point of transition. This first major ecumenical conference to be held in Asia, and the first to include a considerable number of representatives from the 'younger' churches, stated the Church's concern for every aspect of human life. "We realize," said the delegates in their report, "that man is a unity and that his spiritual life is indivisibly rooted in all his conditions—physical, mental and social. We are therefore desirous that the programme of missionary work among all people may be sufficiently comprehensive to serve the whole man in every aspect of his life and relationships."[1]

The same conviction has been expressed repeatedly in the conferences following Jerusalem. The Tambaram (1938) Meeting of the I.M.C., far more representative of Asian thought than the one held ten years previously, raised the question,

[1] *Missions and Rural Problems* (Jerusalem Conference Report, Vol. VI), p. 246

"as to whether we should centre upon individual conversion or upon social change", and answered emphatically, "we must do both." "Since man lives not in isolation but in community he can have more abundant life only as the Church brings to bear upon every community problem the compassion of Christ, interpreting words of love in deeds of love. Increasing the fruitfulness of the land, raising the level of literacy and intelligence, providing wholesome recreation, turning slums to homes, rescuing people from financial exploitation or trying to prevent such sin, directing the energies and the social instincts of youth into channels of wholesomeness and service—all these are the blessed touch of the hand of Christ when done by men and women filled with the love of Christ and equipped with special knowledge and skill for the task." [1]

*The Kingdom of God and Human History*

In Asia, as in the West, it is now generally recognized by Christian thinkers that to identify the Kingdom of God with any earthly order, present or future, is to run counter to Christ's own teachings, and results only in confusion worse confounded. They realize, as the Tambaram Report stated, that "The Kingdom of God is within history and yet it is beyond history. We cannot identify the Kingdom of God with a particular system, either the *status quo*, or any revolutionary system we desire to bring about . . . the Kingdom is the ultimate order; all else is relative." Yet the Kingdom is not beyond history, nor is it unrelated to the concrete social, economic and political needs of men. The tension in which the Christian lives is due to the fact that the Kingdom "is both present and future; both a growth and a final consummation by God. It is our task and our hope—our task which we face with the power of Christ; our hope that the last word will be spoken by God and that that last word will be victory." [2]

The Tambaram Meeting took place shortly before the outbreak of World War II. During the succeeding years of conflict and destruction Christians the world over recovered a living belief in God's sovereignty. God is the Lord of history, and no area of life—whether it be economics or politics or any other type of social relationship—is apart from His judgment and

[1] *The World Mission of the Church, op. cit.*, pp. 106-107.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 106.

mercy. What this Biblical faith demands of the churches in Asia was expressed by the Eastern Asia Christian Conference, held under the joint auspices of the I.M.C. and the W.C.C. at Bangkok in 1949. Its report on "The Church in Social and Political Life" opens with these words:

> "The gospel proclaims that God's sovereignty includes all realms of life. Christ sitting at the right hand of God reigns, and the Church owes it to the world to remind it constantly that it lives under his judgment and grace. It is not the challenge of any ideology but the knowledge of the love of God in Christ for man that is the basis of the Church's social and political concern. In East Asia, the majority of people, both in the rural and urban areas, live in conditions of abject poverty and under oppressive systems that cramp their personality; and it is the will of God that the Church should witness to His redeeming love through an active concern for human freedom and justice." [1]

One of the most vigorous advocates of Christian social action is Juhanon Mar Thoma, Metropolitan of the Mar Thoma Syrian Church of Malabar, India. "The Church," he says, "has too long been concerned with the salvation of the individual; preparing souls for heaven, as the critics would say. Even the most sympathetic supporter of the Church will have to admit that for long the Church has neglected the social and economic realms as beyond its purview. . . . We daily pray 'Thy Kingdom come'. For what are we praying? That God should break into the history of the world, end this system, and take us to reign with Him? Many do pray with this future in mind. Is it not also a prayer that we share with others the worldly goods that we as individuals and nations possess? Is it not a prayer for the consecration of our wills and activities, for the building up of that realm where His will is done as in Heaven?"

*Concern for Social Justice*

Stated in the simplest terms, the social task of the Church is to claim the whole world for Him who is King and Lord of all. It is to carry on the prophetic ministry of witnessing to God's sovereignty, His judgment and mercy, over all areas of human life, calling men to repentance for their sins of injustice

[1] *The Christian Prospect in Eastern Asia*, New York, 1950, p. 114.

and oppression, and proclaiming by word and deed the good news that in Christ, the true King, God is reconciling the world to Himself.

This prophetic ministry must be related directly to the complex social, economic and political relationships which constitute 'the world' in which men live. And it must include social and political action in the effort to secure a greater measure of justice for all men. The necessity for such action was underlined in the report of the Ecumenical Study Conference for East Asia, held under the auspices of the Study Department of the W.C.C. at Lucknow, India, in 1952. "Christians must be prepared to recognize that the changes in the structure of society can be effected mainly through political action. Therefore, they must be prepared to accept the necessity of political action as a means of promoting social justice." [1]

So far we have considered mainly the 'Why?' of Christian social concern. The content of this concern in relation to the social revolution in Asia was examined in some detail at the Lucknow Conference. Its Report deals with "certain key problems which must be faced in the countries of East Asia in order to promote a responsible order of society and to free men from the dehumanizing effects of oppressive economic and social institutions". The first of these is land reform:

> "In many countries of East Asia, and particularly India, this is a key problem. Land reform is needed to get rid of the old feudal land-holding relationships and improve the conditions of those who cultivate the soil and to give justice to the land-hungry peasant. Today over-population, lack of opportunities for industrial employment and migration have made the condition of the tenant worse than ever. Frequent famine is the result. But land reform means not only the abolition of old privileges and out-dated patterns of land tenure; it also means the creation of social and legal conditions which will make it possible for a new and more just system of land development and community life to succeed."

The second major problem examined by the Conference was industrialization and national planning:

> "Today a majority of the people in East Asia live by land and this pressure needs to be reduced by a planned

[1] *Christ—The Hope of Asia*, Madras, 1953, p. 31.

> programme of industrialization if there is to be a balanced development between agriculture and industry, and to improve the standards of living . . . the countries of East Asia are committed to the idea of the social planning state as a matter of fundamental social justice and concern for human welfare. It is one of the conditions of economic development in East Asia that basic and certain key industries must be nationalized, and at the same time due place must be given to private enterprise in the development of both large and small scale industries."

The Conference recognized that "the achievement of industrial development on an adequate scale is possible only with technical assistance and economic aid from abroad", and added that "people in industrial countries must realize that their economic assistance to the underdeveloped countries on an adequate scale is a matter of social justice, i.e., arising out of a concern for man in his need wherever he lives and as a response to human solidarity." The Asian concern lest this economic assistance lead to any form of political domination by the West was frankly stated: "this aid should come with no political strings attached and with sensitivity to the economic and social goals of Asian peoples."

The Lucknow delegates recognized the importance of over-population but did not have time to go into the many complex aspects of this issue. "The Church," they stated, "should be vitally concerned to indicate a Christian approach in this matter. Family planning and birth control, redistribution of population nationally and internationally, and other means of dealing with the over-population problem raise profound political, social and ethical issues which need to be courageously and thoughtfully examined and lines of guidance given. Precisely because this involves the spiritual and material welfare of the family this question is of vital importance to the Church. The Study Conference felt that this subject is an appropriate one for ecumenical study and action."

The Conference also examined the effects of the world situation on social and economic reconstruction. It pointed out that "when American foreign policy is determined primarily by the criterion of anti-Communism, it generally strengthens conservative and reactionary political groups in the East Asian scene and tends to weaken the forces of healthy social reform." It emphasized that

"large scale rearmament reduces the capacity of the more developed countries to help the underdeveloped economies of East Asia", and that "the relatively large emphasis upon military power to defeat Communism . . . involves in itself a threat to movements of national freedom and social justice." It noted that in many countries of East Asia "the idea of the Third Force has popular appeal," but added, "this must not be conceived in such a rigid structural way as to be unrelated to the democratic forces in a country like the U.S.A." It also stated its conviction that the "third force" is a spiritual reality throughout the world "wherever the Church is providing its members with the basis for spiritual freedom against ideological politics and for making prophetic judgments on national and international issues. That is to say, that Christians have in the Church a basis for making decisions on any issue in terms of principle without antecedent commitment to either party in the conflict."

As representatives of countries which for many years had struggled for freedom and self-determination, the Lucknow delegates were naturally concerned about continuing colonialism in Asia. "Christians in East Asia," they said, "are bound to support the genuine movement of national freedom and social justice." They recognized the danger that the movement might fall into the hands of Communism, but they pointed out also that "defence against Communism might become a means of suppressing the movement of national liberation and social justice." They did not attempt to specify what should be done in each case but demanded that "the colonial powers recognize unequivocally the rights of these nations to self-determination and to set up machinery for the transfer of power satisfactory to the democratic conscience of Asian peoples and within the structure of international law."[1]

### *Humanizing the Social Revolution*

As we have seen in an earlier chapter, one of the major factors in the Asian Revolution is the rapid development of modern technology and industry. This development is necessary if Asia is to meet the physical needs of her peoples. But the machine can prove a curse as well as a blessing, especially in its impact on a rural communal society. The danger involved for the Asian villager has been pictured by M. M. Thomas, an

[1] *Ibid.*, pp. 27-31.

Indian Christian, in an article written for the Amsterdam Assembly:

> "The primary problem set by the machine age for Asiatic society today is the reverse of the problem of Europe. The dehumanization of man is seen in the fact that the peasant who had his organic relations in an intimate village community, where he knew his station and his duties, has become 'atomized'; he is tending more and more to the condition of having no other status than that of belonging to a 'mass' society, whether communal, national, or class, given over to an impersonal fate."[1]

Associated with this industrial revolution, and in large measure due to it, is the rapid increase of State control and direction of economic life. Whether it be in capitalist Japan, or socialist Burma or communist China, the State is regarded as the one agency with sufficient power and resources to plan and guide industrial development. Most Asian Christians would agree with the Lucknow Conference delegates that the social welfare State is essential to promote social justice and human welfare. But they recognize at the same time that unless the State remains sensitive to human needs, to man as a *person*, it may develop into a totalitarian machine which will treat the 'atomized' individual as little more than an instrument for the achievement of social ends.

It is here that the Church, with its unique insight into the nature of man as created in the image of God, has a vital task to perform. It is called upon, as Hendrik Kraemer says, "to arouse the consciences and open the eyes of men to the social and moral problems implied in this sudden transformation into a technical society. . . . If this emergent process ends in the piteous result of a dehumanized world, missions and the Christian Church will have to take upon themselves a large share of responsibility."[2] The same holds true in relation to the social welfare State, with its great potentialities for both good and evil. "For who else," writes Max Warren, "will persevere in love, who else will keep this fundamentally humanizing factor in the foreground, if the Christian Mission fails? And who else but Christians will be able to save a misguided humanism with its defective

[1] *The Church and the Disorder of Society*, New York, 1948, p. 73.
[2] H. Kraemer, "Missions and World Affairs", in *World Dominion*, Nov.-Dec. 1949.

understanding of man, and its ignoring of God, from giving to the education of men for the new society a direction which can only end in disaster?"[1]

*The Ideological Task*

Modern Asia is the battleground of many conflicting political ideologies, some of which have the character of 'religious' movements and claim to answer all of man's needs, both physical and spiritual. Until very recently, most Christians neither took them seriously nor sought to understand them. The Laymen's Commission found in 1932 that the great majority of American missionaries in China, India and Japan knew next to nothing about Socialism, were uncritically opposed to Communism and were just as uncritically strong supporters of capitalism and liberal democracy.[2] It would probably be no exaggeration to say that this political illiteracy was shared also by most of the national Christians in those countries.

Christian leaders in Asia are now fully aware that one of their major tasks is to think through the relationship of the Christian faith to these ideologies. The victory of Communist leadership in China, and the claims of Socialism and religious nationalism in other lands, present a new challenge to the Church. The traditional answers of religious piety are not enough to meet this challenge. "Moral advice and the proclamation of moral ideas are insufficient," said the Bangkok Conference, and continued:

> "Only that which transcends morals, namely, the knowledge of the ultimate accountability of man and society to God and of the grace of God by which men, being forgiven, forgive one another, can be the foundation for personal responsibility and responsible society. The lack of the knowledge of God as the Judge of history is at the root of all tendencies towards nihilism and totalitarianism, in Asia and elsewhere. The proclamation of the Word of God, with a profound sense of its relevance to the ideological and political conflicts of the Orient, is therefore the central task of the Church in Asia."[3]

The Lucknow Conference affirmed the need for the churches

[1] M. Warren, *The Christian Mission*, London, 1951, p. 52.
[2] *Re-Thinking Missions*, *op. cit.*, pp. 252-253.
[3] *The Christian Prospect in Eastern Asia*, *op. cit.*, p. 115.

in East Asia "to develop a social doctrine which will provide right criteria for making political judgment and decision in the East Asian situation, on the basis of the Christian faith." It did not attempt to set forth this doctrine in detail but it did prepare a valuable statement on what it believed to be the content of the "responsible society" in Asia. This statement concludes: "For us as Christians in East Asia a society is responsible where . . . the principles of social and political life are in accordance with the concept of man as a person called to responsible existence in community."[1]

During the past few years several attempts have been made by Asian Christians to analyse the various ideologies and evaluate them from a Christian perspective. For example, a conference held in North India in May 1953 examined Liberalism, Gandhism, Hindu Nationalism, Communism and Socialism. Its conclusions were stated as follows:

> "Our consideration of the prevailing political ideologies in India leads us to the outright condemnation and rejection of both Hindu Nationalism and Communism since they are opposed to the basic tenets of the Christian religion. It also leads to the conclusion that Liberalism by itself is wholly inadequate to the demands of the present time. We must not forget, however, that a great deal of the liberal tradition and many of its ideas have gone into the making of the Indian constitution, and these are elements of value.
>
> "When everything has been taken into consideration, we are left with Gandhism and Socialism as the two real choices for the Christian. The choice that he makes will have to be made on the basis of merit with an eye to the fundamental weaknesses of each. It should not be beyond the power of Indian Christianity to provide both Gandhism and Socialism with those elements which are lacking in the ideology of each, with the emphasis required in regard to human nature and evil, and also to supply the belief in righteousness in terms of the sovereign will of a holy and loving God, and a faith in the redemptive power of God."[2]

*Christian Evaluations of Communism*

Of all the political ideologies that confront the Church

[1] *Christ—The Hope of Asia*, *op. cit.*, pp. 31-32.
[2] *Christian Social Action in North India*, Saharanpur, 1953, p. 11.

in Asia, Communism is undoubtedly the most powerful and the most inclusive in its claims. Some Christians, out of a deep concern for social justice, have joined the Communist Party or become loyal followers. Except for those in China, their number is not large but it has included some of the ablest young men and women in the Church. Other Christians, notably in Korea, are equally strong in their opposition to Communist ideology and practice. Many educated Christians accept Communist presuppositions regarding economics and politics, though they would not support the Party programme. Others (like those described by a pastor in Ceylon) "fear Communism more than they do God or the devil". But probably it would be true to say that the great majority of Asian Christians (apart from those in China and Korea) are not yet seriously concerned about Communism. The churches are aware that a problem exists, but it is the exceptional Christian individual or group that has sought to understand and interpret this "secular faith".

Although no delegate from China was present at the Bangkok Conference, a group of Chinese Christians sent a message in which they described the problems and opportunities for the Church in the "new China" of 1949. "Compared with the present moment," they wrote, "the change of dynasties in the past four thousand years has little significance; the revolutions of 1911, or 1927, and the war of resistance are but wavelets in the rapids of time. . . . Historically, the new era is the culmination of a century's struggle against external exploitation and centuries of internal feudalistic oppression. It is the main milestone in the nation's struggle for national unity, independence and democracy."[1] "We are not unmindful," they continued, "of the challenges and difficulties lying ahead in a more fundamental way. Just how the Christian gospel can be witnessed to in a climate that is, by virtue of its ideology, fundamentally materialistic and atheistic, presents a challenge stronger than ever before. Whatever the external climate may be, the burden falls upon us as Christians to demonstrate the efficiency and sufficiency of the gospel as exemplified in the life of Christ."[2] Just how the Chinese Church has gone about this task during the past four years we are unable to say: since the outbreak of war in Korea, Chinese Christians have been cut off

[1] *The Christian Prospect in Eastern Asia, op. cit.*, pp. 20-21.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 22.

from practically all contact with the West and with the ecumenical movement. Nevertheless, there is ample evidence that, despite many restrictions and hardships, the Church in China is very much alive and is able to carry on its essential witness of corporate worship and evangelism.

Delegates to the Bangkok Conference stressed a distinction which has been of the utmost value in all subsequent studies of Communism. Their statement reads as follows:

> "In considering Communism, the Christian must distinguish between the social revolution which seeks justice and the totalitarian ideology which interprets and perverts it. The Christian Church must welcome the demand of the peoples for a fuller participation in the life of society at the level where power is exercised, since this is an expression of human dignity; and the rise of Communism is a judgment on the churches for their failure to do so. Nevertheless, the struggle for justice frustrates itself if the evil forces inherent in any human situation are not held in check. Because Communism lacks a conception of the independence of moral reality over against power, it denies the supremacy of the moral law over power-politics, and hence in the long run defeats the very purpose of the social revolution. This ideological error in Communism, which turns a social revolution for justice into a new oppression, arises out of the self-righteousness of its militant atheism; and at this point the conflict between Christianity and Communism is fundamental."[1]

This 'Yes' to the social revolution and 'No' to Communism would doubtless be accepted by many socially-conscious Asian Christians. It was reiterated by the Lucknow Conference and is the theme of several recent publications in India. But in all countries of Asia its practical application is seriously hampered by the absence or weakness of progressive alternatives to Communism. Many Christians would welcome some form of democratic Socialism, but Socialism is comparatively weak and divided while democracy finds little in the way of a supporting culture. In contrast to both of these, Communism appears strikingly powerful and effective. A major task before the churches in Asia is to strengthen the democratic political forces

[1] *Ibid.*, pp. 115-116.

wherever they exist, and this can be done only if Christians enter courageously into political life.

It might be well at this point to mention one of the major reasons why Western and Asian Christians differ so often in their attitudes to Communism. Whereas in Western Europe and America, democracy with its social values is something to be defended, in Asia democracy and a tolerably just social order have yet to be achieved. Under these circumstances no Asian Christian who is concerned about social justice can disregard the positive claims and seeming effectiveness of Communism in Russia and China. This is something that must be borne in mind continually if the ecumenical movement is to give effective help to the Asian churches as they face this crucial issue.

### *"Revolutionary Significance" of the Christian Congregation*

"The first duty of the Church," said the Oxford Conference in 1937, "and its greatest service to the world, is that it be in very deed the Church—confessing the true faith, committed to the fulfilment of the will of Christ, its only Lord, and united in him in a fellowship of love and service." All responsible thinking about Christian social responsibility in Asia has centred on the unique calling and function of the Church, both as a world-wide fellowship and as the local congregation of men and women bound together in trust and obedience to their common Lord.

The Christian congregation, whether in Calcutta, Shanghai, Tokyo or in any of the countless towns and villages of Asia, is a unique social phenomenon. There is nothing like it in any of the non-Christian societies. The faith by which it lives involves a costly tension—a tension between loyalty to one's clan or tribe or caste or nation and loyalty to the transcendent God who speaks to men in the person of Jesus Christ. To join the Church, and to remain loyal to its Lord, requires one supreme act of personal surrender and countless daily acts of personal trust and obedience. "The missionary movement," writes M. M. Thomas, "and the small congregations of the Christian Church founded in different parts of Asia . . . . are in their essence the one personal reality in all Asia. Proclaiming the Gospel, and confronting every man with a responsible decision to repent and enter the historical community of the redeemed, the Church in Asia stands as the one community of persons. . . . If the missionary movement and the Church in Asia continue to proclaim the transcendent Word

of God and to be a community of grace in tension with the political, economic and social orders of Asia today and tomorrow it will be the greatest contribution they can make to Asian society."[1]

The central importance of the congregation has been emphasized in all of the ecumenical conferences held in Asia. "In the final analysis," says the Report of the Bangkok Conference, "the prophetic ministry of the Church in the social and political order depends on the Church being truly a community of persons rooted in the Word of God. . . . A true Christian congregation is the most effective prophetic witness to the divine righteousness in society, and the only answer to the challenge of political ideologies that view man solely in terms of his social and political functions. The Christian congregation has revolutionary significance in the East Asia political situation."[2]

But, we may well ask, do the Christian congregations in Asia today give evidence of that quality of life which would justify such a claim? A frank answer must admit that in many respects they do not. Some are still pathetically weak, supported by foreign funds and guided by foreign personnel. Others are like the congregations that Paul describes in his Epistle to the Church at Corinth—jealous, quarrelsome, occasionally revealing immorality not commonly found among non-Christians. Many are in-grown little communities, suspicious of the world about them. This need not surprise us: nor is it the full picture. A later section of this book will describe in detail how the Church has taken deep root in Asian soil. In many countries it has faithfully withstood persecution and martyrdom. In times of national calamity, such as the riots following upon the partition of India, it has served all who were suffering, irrespective of caste or creed. Many of its members have been in the forefront of movements for national liberation and social reform. And in their daily witness of worship, Bible study and deeds of love these congregations, knowing each man as "a brother for whom Christ died," point to a source of hope unknown by those among whom they live.

We may close this section by drawing attention to one area where reform is urgently needed. This is in the economic policies of church bodies and Christian institutions. Many of them give salaries and amenities based on scales set by the

[1] *The Christian in the World Struggle*, Geneva, 1951, pp. 78-79.
[2] *The Christian Prospect in Eastern Asia*, *op. cit.*, p. 115.

Government and other secular agencies. But they make little provision, if any, for social security against illness, old age and unemployment. All of them are troubled by what are often glaring differences between the salaries and allowances given to foreign missionaries and those received by national pastors, teachers, etc. In this, as in other respects, the Tambaram Conference made recommendations which are still largely unfulfilled. "A Church which condemns economic inequalities must seek to eliminate such evils among those over whose economic opportunities it has some measure of control. A Church which preaches the principles of industrial brotherhood must be governed by such principles in the conduct of its own institutions . . . it must seek to reduce the glaring disparities which exist in the incomes and expenditures among its own paid workers, and between them and their congregations." [1]

## Social Education and Action by National and Local Groups

What effect has this new understanding of the Church's prophetic task had on the churches themselves? Very little so far. The great majority of church members have doubtless never heard of the Jerusalem, Tambaram, Bangkok or Lucknow conferences, to speak only of the conferences held on Asian soil. Most pastors and teachers probably are not aware that they dealt with the question of Christian social concern. Nevertheless, in nearly every country in Asia there are found small groups, some of them church-sponsored and some independent of the churches, whose members are seeking to study and act together as Christians in relation to the social, economic and political problems facing the nation. A brief account of some of the more important of these groups will help to complete the picture of growing Christian concern for the Asian revolution.

### *Japan*

A Social Commission of the United Church of Christ in Japan (the Kyodan) was established in the fall of 1950. It consists of laymen, ministers, and social scientists whose purpose is to carry on research in the field of urgent social issues that confront the Church and to make their findings available to the whole Church. They may also recommend policies for the Church at large, though their recommendations are not binding.

[1] *The World Mission of the Church, op. cit.*, pp. 109-119.

The Commission has published a series of pamphlets on social issues beginning with a translation of the report of the Amsterdam Assembly on "The Church and the Disorder of Society". Other publications deal with Communism, political problems and the social mission of the Church. A two-day institute on Christianity and Communism has been held in every *kyoku* (administrative sub-division) of the United Church. The National Christian Council also has set up a study group on social questions in co-operation with the World Council enquiry on Christian Action in Society.

The Frontier Fellowship of Japan (the Zensen Domei) was formed in the early months of 1949 by a group of Christian laymen, ministers and theological professors, mostly from Tokyo. Its purpose is to provide spiritual stimulus and prophetic leadership in the direction of social justice. Its members include a number who have been active as Christians in the fields of labour, co-operatives and politics. The Zensen Domei stresses the theological basis of Christian social responsibility. Its position on social issues may be described as broadly socialistic, but it makes no commitment to any existing party. In the main it seeks to work through the churches, arousing a Christian conscience on problems of the day.

*Indonesia*

Many Christians are active in the Partai Keristen Indonesia (the Christian Political Party) and some have served in the cabinets of the new Republic. Several conferences held under the auspices of the National Council of Churches and the Student Christian Movement have featured addresses and study groups on Christian social concern. In connection with the parliamentary elections of 1953, the General Assembly of the National Council of Churches sent out a letter to the churches calling their attention to their political responsibility, and suggesting particular stress on the development of political understanding and action among church members.

*Ceylon*

Christian Action, an interdenominational group with some 30 members and 100 adherents, has held a number of conferences during the past ten years on such themes as the Christian Doctrine of the State, the Christian Doctrine of Wealth, and Freedom in

the Modern State. This group has also been responsible for dissemination of literature and promoting study of particular issues as they arise in the political and social life of the nation. Through the activity of its members, church bodies have occasionally been stimulated into expressing rather radical political opinions. For instance, the Colombo Diocesan Council of the Church of Ceylon (Anglican) issued a statement in 1953 which called upon all those in authority to assure to every employee a fair wage, to expedite land reform, and to establish more governmental and voluntary agencies to relieve the housing shortage. The Council also urged all its members "to help as far as it is within their power in the maintenance of Christian standards in personal and public life and to assist all movements for national development," and appealed to them to support all movements for social and economic reconstruction which are in accordance with Christian belief and standards." In August 1953, at the time of a debate on the National Budget, the Standing Committee of the Methodist Church issued a statement urging the Government to improve the lot of the poor by subsidizing the price of rice and levying a higher income tax on the middle and upper classes.

A full-time Study Secretary has been appointed jointly by the Methodist Church and the National Christian Council of Ceylon. He is developing a Study Centre in Colombo and issues an occasional news bulletin which carries information on social questions. The N.C.C. is planning to produce some pamphlets on Christian social concerns. There is also an occasional magazine "The Christian Forum" which deals with current political and social questions; and in both the Anglican and Methodist Churches there are special committees on social affairs.

*India*

The Economic Life Committee of the National Christian Council has undertaken a number of valuable studies on the economic and social environment of the churches in India, and has also given leadership in the economic development of rural congregations. The National Y.M.C.A., the Agricultural Institute at Allahabad, India Village Service and numerous other Christian agencies are making important contributions to the understanding of agricultural problems and the development of new methods of rural reconstruction.

The Christian Institute for the Study of Society was founded early in 1951 through the co-operation of a number of individuals and groups, including the N.C.C. Its primary aim is to stimulate the churches in India to do serious thinking on vital social issues. It has a full-time director, an honorary associate director, and several correspondents who assist in carrying on the studies. It has held three summer institutes dealing respectively with the general political situation in India, the question of land reform, and the Five Year Plan of India. As part of its long-range plan, it proposes to begin a socio-historical study of Indian Christianity.

The Committee for Special Literature on the Indian Church and Social Concerns, an autonomous body associated with the N.C.C., was formed in 1952. It has published a book entitled *Communism and the Social Revolution in India: A Christian Interpretation* and a number of study booklets, pamphlets and tracts. This literature is being translated into various regional languages and has had a wide sale throughout India.

A Conference on Christian Social Action in North India was held in May 1953 and studied a wide range of current topics including the secular state, the social welfare state, political ideologies and community projects. One result of this conference was the formation of a Christian Fellowship for Social Education and Action which has published several booklets and is to hold another conference in 1954. A similar Fellowship is being organized in Andhra State in South India. The Kerala Youth Council of Christian Action has been active for several years in Travancore.

Commissions on Christian Social Action were held at the 1953 meetings of the General Assembly of the United Church of Northern India and the National Christian Council. Both of these bodies decided to establish standing committees on social questions. The National Student Christian Movement is making a study of Christian social responsibility in preparation for its next quadrennial meeting.

One of the most valuable study projects undertaken so far was a three-day Consultation on the Secular State in India, held at Nagpur in December 1953. A dozen Christian leaders from various parts of the country examined both the theological issues related to the concept of the secular state and the practical problems involved in implementing the Constitution of the

Indian Union. The group issued a preliminary statement on its findings and made plans to continue the studies in preparation for another meeting late in 1954.

## Ecumenical Co-operation

What most clearly distinguishes the Christian task today from that of a century ago, or even from that of the period shortly before World War I, is the fact that in nearly every country of Asia indigenous churches are beginning to assume responsibility for their own affairs. Most of these churches have arisen, humanly speaking, as the result of the missionary outreach of the churches of the West. But the day of their dependence on the West is passing. The task of working and witnessing for Christ in the midst of the Asian revolution is primarily their task. What then should be the continuing contribution of Christians and churches in the West? The right answer to this question will not be easy to determine, nor is it likely to be the same for any two countries. But most Asian Christian leaders are convinced that they need the fellowship and co-operation of churches throughout the world. "Partnership in obedience"—a conception that first came to prominence at the Whitby Conference of the I.M.C. in 1947—is the relationship that will make possible a truly ecumenical approach to a world-shaking revolution.

As we have seen, the two major ecumenical agencies have contributed greatly to an understanding of Christian social responsibility in Asia. If there were space, we could describe also what has been done by the World's Student Christian Federation, the YMCA, the YWCA and other non-denominational groups. The third World Conference of Christian Youth was held at Kottayam, India, in 1952. Able Christian young people from nearly all parts of Asia met with delegates from Europe, the Americas and Africa to study such questions as personal freedom, social justice and racial tensions. The World's Student Christian Federation has done pioneering work in exploring the issues underlying university education in Asia today, and in co-operation with the national Student Christian Movements is probably the most effective single agency in stimulating and training Asian Christian leaders who are alive to the full claims and demands of the Gospel.

Through the Commission of the Churches on International

Affairs (founded jointly by the I.M.C. and the W.C.C. in 1946) the ecumenical movement has sought also to bring about a peaceful settlement of some of the major tensions and conflicts in Asia. For instance, during the Netherlands-Indonesia dispute the C.C.I.A. invited representatives in the two countries to draft separate memoranda on the political issues, keeping in mind the Christian communities and responsibilities in both countries. These memoranda were circulated among church and political representatives. When the Round-Table Conference met at The Hague in 1949, Christian leaders, including two members of the C.C.I.A. and a staff officer of the W.C.C., represented their governments as advisers or delegates. When the Korean conflict was enlarged in November 1950, the C.C.I.A., in concert with national church leaders, made representations at high governmental levels in the U.S.A. and the U.K. on behalf of policies of moderation and restraint. And in 1953, during the weeks preceding the signing of the armistice agreement in Korea, the C.C.I.A. Director flew to Korea for consultations with leaders in church and government circles, including President Syngman Rhee, on behalf of mutual understanding and agreement. During the Four-Power Conference at Berlin early in 1954, the Director presented to the four powers messages of interest and hope in the Conference.

Various ecumenical agencies have also made a major contribution to the relief of physical and spiritual suffering in Asia. Through such organizations as Church World Service and the Lutheran World Federation hundreds of thousands of victims of war, famine and natural catastrophes have been fed, clothed and given shelter. The Department of Inter-Church Aid and Service to Refugees of the W.C.C. has recently extended its work to Asia. During a consultation held at Geneva in October 1953 the Director stated: "While the impact of our action may seem as yet almost negligible in Asia, it is at least a beginning of a world strategy. . . . If every Church represented here were to promise some contribution, no matter how large or how small, to the overwhelming emergency needs of Korea, the psychological effects of such combined action would be incalculable."

Churches in the highly developed countries of the West have frequently urged their governments to give economic and technical assistance to Asian nations. Christian representatives interviewed United States congressmen in the spring of 1951 to press for the

loan of wheat to India. A special consultation on "The American Churches and Overseas Development Programmes" expressed the inescapable responsibility of American citizens and the American Government "to assist in the economic and social development of underdeveloped countries" and added, "Such a programme must be judged in the first instance by its contribution to human dignity, orderly progress, justice and freedom. . . . (It) should help the world's peoples toward the fuller realization of their just desire and growing determination to shape and control their own political, economic and social destinies."[1] The I.M.C. and the W.C.C. have also urged Christians in the West to give full support to programmes of technical assistance. The Willingen Conference of the I.M.C. stated: "Believing that the extreme inequalities of wealth between different areas constitute a challenge to the Christian conscience, we consider that it is the duty of Christians everywhere to encourage and assist the governments concerned in programmes for raising the standard of living of the hungry and under-privileged areas of the world."[2]

These are significant beginnings in ecumenical co-operation. But they are merely beginnings. The needs of Asia are so overwhelming, the tensions so acute and the human resources of the Church so meagre that nothing less is needed than the fullest possible use of ecumenical funds and personnel. We should like to indicate, therefore, four major ways by which the churches in the West can further assist the Asian churches to fulfil their responsibilities:

(a) They can help their own members to understand and appreciate the positive aims of the social revolution. Only patient study, sympathetic imagination and prayer can build those links of mutual understanding which the ecumenical movement so urgently needs.

(b) They can make certain that their missionary representatives are alive to the claims of social justice and are well informed about the social and economic needs of the countries to which they go. Usually, neither theological nor other forms of professional training provide this understanding. All missionaries should receive special training in the social sciences and Christian social doctrine to equip them for service in Asia today.

[1] *The American Churches and Overseas Development Programmes*, 1951, pp. 4, 9.

[2] *Minutes of the Enlarged Meeting and the Committee*, 1952, p. 83.

(c) They can continue to press upon their governments the urgent need of all Asian countries for economic aid and technical assistance, given without demanding any political obligations, and preferably through international agencies.

(d) They can greatly increase their support of the various ecumenical agencies so that these may effectively assist the Asian churches. The need for Christian unity, in both study and action, is urgent. Denominational agencies alone cannot provide the funds and personnel required, nor command the full respect and loyalty of thoughtful Asian Christians. The provision of relief, the development of study programmes and training of leadership, the encouragement of Christian social action—these can be done adequately only if there is a truly ecumenical approach to the prophetic task of the Church in Asia.

## The Responsibility of the Asian Churches

We should like to conclude this chapter with a personal word to our fellow Christians in Asia. All of us recognize that we have too long depended upon the leadership of our friends from the West. We shall continue to welcome their co-operation, but we must not fail in our responsibility. The task of working and witnessing for Christ in the midst of the Asian revolution is primarily our task. As Christian citizens of the newly-independent countries, we must play our part in national reconstruction, demonstrating so far as God enables us His will for society.

What then are our specific responsibilities? We should like to suggest the following as being some of the most urgent tasks confronting all of us:

First, we must seek through Bible study and prayer to understand afresh the social implications of the Gospel, especially in relation to the life of the Church. We must help the congregations of which we are members to feel keenly the sinfulness of caste and class discrimination, of glaring economic inequality, of jealousy and strife. We must do everything within our power to develop genuine brotherhood among all Christian peoples.

Secondly, we must identify ourselves fully with our fellow countrymen. It is true that as Christians we are pilgrims and sojourners, but we should also, like St. Paul, be proud of our earthly citizenship. Let us oppose all narrow communal interests, even when these are mistakenly given the name 'Christian'.

Let us co-operate with all men of good will in the effort to secure justice and equality for every citizen.

Thirdly, we must take far more seriously than we have in the past our responsibility for the social and economic welfare of all people, especially the under-privileged in our countries. We must try to see the world through Christ's eyes. We should strengthen the efforts now being made by Christian groups to understand the social revolution and to tackle courageously the evils of our society.

Fourthly, we must uphold in our own lives the highest standards of integrity and insist that others do the same. Let us pray and work for a revival within the Church of that deep hunger for righteousness which produces true Christian character, and which alone exalteth a nation. Surely the greatest contribution that the Church in Asia can make to the development of a better social order is that it send forth men and women whose supreme loyalty to God makes them sensitive and responsible members of society.

## SECTION II

# RESURGENT RELIGIONS

# EDITORIAL NOTE

Chapters 1 and 2, "Patterns of Religious Resurgence in East Asia" and "Resurgent Hinduism", have been written by the Rev. Dr. P. D. Devanandan, Literature Secretary, National Council of Y.M.C.A.'s, Bangalore, India.

Chapter 3, "Buddhism on the March", is based on a draft prepared by the Rev. G. B. Jackson, Study Secretary, National Christian Council, Colombo, Ceylon. In revising this draft, the Editor has made use of an article written by the Rev. D. T. Niles, Methodist Church, Jaffna, Ceylon, and of articles on Buddhism in Burma supplied by the Rev. G. P. Charles, General Secretary, Burma Christian Council, Rangoon. Information on Buddhism in other parts of East Asia has been gathered from various reports and year-books.

Chapter 4, "Islam Today", has been prepared by the Rev. Dr. A. Abdul Haqq, Henry Martyn School of Islamics, Aligarh, India. In writing the sections on Indonesia and Pakistan, Dr. Abdul Haqq has made use of articles contributed by the following persons: (from Indonesia) the Rev. P. D. Latuihamallo, Director, Ecumenical Study Commission of the Indonesian Council of Churches, Djakarta; the Rev. Romarlin Tjakraatmadja, Djakarta; Dr. A. Th. Van Leeuwen, Theological Seminary, Malang; (from Pakistan) the Rev. Dr. James D. Brown, United Theological Seminary, Gujranwala; the Rev. Chandu Ray, Bible Society, Lahore.

In preparing Chapter 5, "New Religions in East Asia", Dr. T. Uwoki, Doshisha University, Kyoto, Japan, has made use of articles sent by Mr. Juan Nabong, Executive Secretary, Philippine Federation of Christian Churches, Manila; the Rev. W. A. Smalley, Christian and Missionary Alliance, Dalat, Viet Nam; and the Rev. C. C. Wang, Christian Mission to the Buddhists, Hong Kong.

Chapter 6, "The Christian Approach to Non-Christian Religions", has been written by the Rev. J. R. Chandran, United Theological College, Bangalore, India.

R. B. M.

CHAPTER I

# PATTERNS OF RELIGIOUS RESURGENCE IN EAST ASIA

THIS IS an age of religious revival. The ancient peoples of Asia are passing through revolutionary social changes; they have made rapid advances as independent nations. They turn to their ancestral religions with a new hope. They realize that a good deal of their national culture is closely related to their religious heritage, and that a cultural reintegration necessarily involves a religious reconstruction. Thus, in recent times, the ancient religions of Hinduism, Buddhism, and Islam have become very real forces in the life and thought of Asian peoples.

These resurgent faiths are powerful factors in conditioning the national and international outlook of modern man in Asia. Whatever form this revival of religion may take, it finds expression in a new sense of pride which is sensitive to criticism or disapproval. Besides, it also finds expression at first in defensive movements which would in substance say, "Our religion is as good as any other; indeed, in some ways it is better than other religions." At the same time, modern man in Asia is keenly aware that religion can be a disastrous source of division within a nation and among nations, and he is therefore anxious to avoid religious rivalry.

So along with this religious revival in our present-day world, there is also a marked tendency towards the acceptance of beliefs and practices which, while denying religious verities, strangely enough seek to take the place of religion in the devotion and loyalty of people. These 'rival faiths' are in substance anti-religious; nevertheless, they have acquired all the characteristics of popular religion! They make a total claim upon the loyalty of people, and they actually function as dynamic substitutes, dominating the thought and action of men, collectively and individually, in a way more spectacular and revolutionary than traditional religious faith.

Two such manifestations need special consideration. One is that of Nationalism. The claims of the nation occupy the total interest of many people in Asia, so that everything else is subordinated to and governed by this one absorbing interest.

But such Nationalism does not always displace the ancestral religion of the land. On the contrary, it imparts a new interpretation and value to religion. Instead of being an isolated and unrelated factor in people's lives, largely other-worldly and spiritual, religion is made part of the comprehensive this-worldly and secular force of Nationalism.

The other phenomenon is Communism. This is spreading far and wide in Asia. Although fundamentally secularistic and concerned only with values of this-worldly existence, Communism has come to exercise a powerful influence which is almost 'spiritual'. In fact, it has succeeded in calling forth from the hidden depths of human nature many remarkable expressions of moral sense, especially in terms of social order and economic justice.

Besides, there are also other secular influences at work of which we need to take account. Religion has caused many wars in past history. Although in recent times we have not seen any war of religion, people suspect religious enthusiasm as a possible source of violent controversy. So they hold that in order to prevent war and ensure world peace, religions must come to some peaceful settlement. Another factor is the prevalent scientific temper which at the worst decries all religions as fables, and at the best holds that they can only be relatively true, so that it is absurd to make a fuss about any one or other religion.

The total consequence of the revival of ancient religions in Asia, the emergence of these 'rival faiths' and the spread of secularism in its many forms, is that the claim of Christianity to be final and absolute is laid in question. It is not the validity of Christianity as a religion that is challenged; many moderns are willing to accept Christianity as a religion, among other religions. What they question is whether there is justification in the Christian contention that it is a religion which is not only better than others but is the final and absolute truth for all time.

During the last century and this, the new outlook and values of the European world came to grips with the ancient life and thought of Asia in an unprecedented way; the impact of the modern West on all aspects of life, including the religious, has been very noticeable. The nineteenth century liberalism affected Asian life and thought. The basic affirmations of a humanistic philosophy, namely the significance of man in the world of today, the new confidence in the scientific method, the new outlook

that regarded as valuable whatever was useful, with its consequent utilitarianism and pragmatism, and the belief in evolution—these criteria of values greatly influenced the Asian understanding of truth and validity. With the dawn of the twentieth century, other forces also came to function. These were Nationalism, Internationalism and the decline of Western culture. Especially in countries in East Asia under foreign domination, Nationalism gathered force with the organized endeavour to secure political independence. Today the idea is gaining ground that to safeguard one's culture as a special religious heritage is a national responsibility. After the first and the second world wars, Internationalism acquired a new significance in Asian lands. All of the ancient religions of Asia are coming to be regarded as world religions, in the sense that they have a universal message that essentially all religions are the same. Asian leaders seek to win the assent of all thinking people to this point of view because they see in it the one possible basis for international solidarity.

*Religion as Creed, Cultus and Culture*

The impact of the contemporary forces of environment on the religion of a people invariably results in many noticeable changes in their world outlook (culture), in their religious practices (cultus) and in the understanding of their doctrinal beliefs (creed). Of course, these depend on the strength of the environmental forces, on the one hand, and the vitality of the religion on the other. But the reaction of religion and environment (and *vice-versa*) finds expression in different planes or areas of religious experience.

Every historic religion is characterized by a creed, a cultus and a culture. These may be regarded as forming a series of concentric circles. Each one of them takes years to gather form and content, and together they constitute what we call 'the religion of a people'. Therefore, though each of these may be considered separately, it would be misleading to regard any one of them as independent or unrelated; especially if we want to take a total view of any religion as a living reality.

At the core is a body of beliefs, of religious certitudes, which furnishes the dynamic of faith. From time to time this core of religious faith is subject to re-evaluation. In all 'higher' religions it is rationally formulated as a system of doctrines and

succinctly expressed in summary statements or 'creeds' which embody the basic fundamentals of the religion. Such foundation beliefs are correlates. They hold together and form a characteristic pattern, giving to each religion a distinctiveness and an individuality. The fundamentals of a creed may, indeed, be abstracted and examined, but always as parts of a whole, never as independent units. For they are accepted together as an entirety. Otherwise the creed loses its integral character. What is accepted in any religion in regard to the nature of God, for instance, is bound up with what is believed about man and the world. This is because the response of faith is the total response of the total man to a total reality.

Beyond this innermost circle of affirmations, whether implicitly taken for granted by simple minds, or indifferently conceded to by nominal adherents, or deliberately adopted by learned theologians, there tends to grow an outer circle of religious practices, constituting what may be called the cultus. Every religion involves certain accepted and established customs, observances of various kinds, ranging from magical to sacramental rites of worship. They concern the individual believer as well as the community of adherents. These acts of worship, which are the primary response of faith, in course of time multiply and comprehend all areas of life to which the religious faith gives meaning. In fact, in popular estimation it is the cultus, the religious practice, that makes all the difference among religions.

The third and outermost circle represents what is generally described as the culture characteristic of a people who have been nurtured for centuries on the creed and cultus of a historic faith. This may be, and often is, referred to as their *ethos*, their distinctive outlook on life. It determines their standards of conduct in human relations; it defines their understanding of values, both material and non-material; and it gives form and content to the social institutions they accept, whether for the preservation of the family or for the ordering of national economy. What we now call 'culture' really begins as primitive ethics, as prescribed rules of conduct governing all human relations. In course of time, however, ethics as the quest for the good becomes a specialized field of separate investigation, and culture tends to develop along other lines. Its concern now is to find answer to the question, "What shall I make of this world of things in which I find myself?" It is shaped by the outlook of the people, their basic attitude

towards life, which is determined more and more by their history, their environment, their circumstances. It finds expression in their art, their literature, and their social institutions.

These concentric circles of creed, cultus, and culture all together comprise the total area of the outreach and influence of any religion. But the tendency today is for people to regard these aspects of religion as unrelated and independent. The theologian and philosopher have been concerned mainly with clarifying and systematizing the credal content of faith. Not infrequently their treatment of the creed has been in the form of academic discussion of the various doctrines of the religion, sometimes dealt with as isolated theses, without reference to the total claim of the entire creed on the assent of faith. Similarly, popular devotion has regarded the cultus as constituting all that is of immediate value to piety and has developed an indifference, if not an antagonism, to any pre-occupation with the creed. So far as the area of culture is concerned, it is mostly peopled by those who have little interest in either the creed or the cultus. Their primary concern is in making the most of life in the here and now. Only to the extent that the creed and cultus of their traditional religion have direct bearing on life as they see it are most people concerned with them. And yet, it is true that most people are quick to resent any disparaging reference to their particular religious beliefs or practices, which they still somehow consider as part of their culture. Popular religion in every land is of this kind. It can be easily worked up by the fear that religious culture is in danger. The ancestral faith is, to many today, a precious cultural heritage to which they are deeply devoted, though they may give very little time and thought to learn what it is and what it stands for.

Invariably it happens that when a religion interacts with its environment, the impact is first felt in the area of culture. Only later in the process is the effect felt upon the cultus; and later still on the credal core itself, if at all. It does happen sometimes, though, that environmental forces are so powerful that they penetrate to the very core of a religion and directly affect its creed.

Resurgent movements in Asian religions are described as 'modern' movements, partly because they have arisen in consequence of the new outlook and values of the modern world coming to grips with the ancient life and thought of the historic

religions of Asia; partly also because they are movements of renaissance, the revival of an age-long religious faith determined to meet and fulfil the demands of modern secularistic culture. The difference is one of approach. The environment, however stimulating, cannot of itself initiate such movements in religious life and thought unless there is a corresponding responsive reaction on the part of the religion itself. For any response presupposes a certain vitality and 'aliveness' on the part of the responding organism. Nor is the response that of the religion as such, considered in the abstract as the faith by which a people lives. The response is rather of a few sensitive individuals, invariably led by one towering personality who provides the initial leadership. He directs the movement and keeps it growing during his life-time, organizing his followers into an active fellowship, so that the new way of thinking and living acquires coherence and consistency.

But such movements once started do not always last. That depends not only on the initial impulse which inspired their beginning, but also on the cumulative strength which they acquire as they grow in influence, on the one hand, and on the vitality of the parent faith out of which they sprang forth, on the other. If the initial impulse persists as an obstinate force which demands separate recognition, as something valuable in itself, apart from the historic religion to which it is related, the movement results in the formation of a separate sect, sometimes even a new religion altogether. But more often a movement remains as an abiding influence, giving the parent faith a new emphasis, an added strength of resistance as well as a challenging relevancy to the changing environment. It also happens that a movement declines after a period of flourishing popularity, and ceases to be a living force in the thought and life of the religion out of which it originated, once its purpose as a corrective or a stimulant is served.

*Four Main Types of Resurgent Movements*

Although a neat grouping with anything like clear-cut distinctions cannot be made, it may be convenient to consider resurgent movements in Asian religions today as of four main types: Reform, Revival, Renaissance and Revolt. It will be necessary to explain the *rationale* of this classification. Reform Movements result from the activity of extraneous factors. The

change is brought about primarily from without. Two possible kinds of reaction follow, sometimes together, sometimes separately. The change results in the acceptance and incorporation of new ideas and practices and the discarding of certain old ideas and practices. In consequence there is a 're-formation', where the emphasis is more upon the *new* than upon the *old*, and sometimes on the new as against the old. This in part accounts for the zeal of the reformer in his advocacy of the new.

A Revival Movement is primarily caused by forces making for change from within rather than from without. In other words, here the response of the religion to the environment is more pronounced and dynamic: it is not due primarily to the stimulus of factors in the environment, though these provide the provocation, serving as the reactionary agents. Thus in all revivals there is emphasis not on the *new* so much as on the *old*. It is really the *old* come back to life, claiming for itself a new resistance and relevancy to the environment. That is why revival movements are both defensive and apologetic, depending on the standards of the faith and seeking to justify the validity of its claims.

Renaissance Movements are due to changes brought about by forces acting both from without and from within. Here the stimulus of the environment is as pronounced a feature as the response of the reacting religious system. Perhaps this process may be better described as interaction rather than reaction. For here the religion and the environment act in turn as both stimulus and response. This interaction leads always to such a revolutionary shake up of the foundations of the creed that the consequence is not merely a repatterning of fundamentals but a restatement of fundamentals. The old faith is not merely revived and restated; it acquires in the process a new vitality, an amazingly new resilience, a surprisingly new meaning.

What may be called Movements of Revolt are, on the other hand, the outcome of such violent reaction of environment to ancestral faith that it leads to a repudiation of the fundamentals of the religion. It is held that the credal affirmations and religious practices of one's ancestral faith are outmoded, as not in accord with the temper of the contemporary age. By no effort of compromise or adjustment, it is contended, can the ancestral faith be brought in line with the times. So the leaders of revolt movements find themselves forced to renounce their

loyalty and sever their connections. What is more, whether they find their spiritual home in another religion or not, they feel it their duty to carry on a crusade against what was once their ancestral faith. The new values are held to be so violently opposed to the old faith that there is no way of reconciling them. It is not surprising that in such a clash of opposites political ideals come to be mixed up, and such movements tend to be anti-government. What should be borne in mind is that such movements become organized outside the total community life of the religion from which they violently differ. This is inevitable because the centre of inspiration of these movements of revolt is outside of (and opposed to) the religious faith they lay in question.

From the dawn of the nineteenth century to the present day, all these four types of religious movements are found operating, but not necessarily in a chronological order of succession, of reform followed by revival and revival succeeded by renaissance and revolt. Quite frequently all four types of movements are present at any one time, making the situation altogether too complex. And in many cases the same movement in the course of its history tends to develop in all four of these directions. Therefore, this suggested classification should be accepted with the *proviso* that while it is useful as a convenient device to clarify our study, it must not be forgotten that religious movements have a tendency to cut across all these divisions.

*Implications for the Task of Evangelism*

What we call 'religious movements' are in fact the outcome of cultural interpenetration. Little do we realize that the roots of the culture of a people go back to their credal foundations. It is true that, at any one period in their history, a people may not be fully aware of this close connection between their life-and-world outlook and their doctrinal beliefs, their culture and their creed. But sooner or later it happens, especially when people become nationally self-conscious, that they are faced with *three* possible choices. One is to live on the cultural level of being concerned more and more with the business of living and making a success of it, paying little or no heed to the credal basis of their culture. Another is to accept both the 'way of life' and the 'view of life', but to keep them apart as two different spheres of experience, the one 'secular' and the other 'sacred', which

are best kept separate and unrelated. The third way is to set about establishing and maintaining an intimate connection between the two so that as often as there are changes in the area of culture an effort is made to re-integrate the shattered elements in terms of a unifying dynamic of faith furnished by one's living faith.

These three possibilities result in the one case in some form or other of what may be called 'Secularism' and consequent repudiation of creed, leading to Movements of Revolt; in the second case in Pietism of some form or other where there is a tendency to what we have called Movements of Reform and Revival. Only in the third case is there evidence of what we have described as Movements of Renaissance. Resurgent movements in the ancient faiths of Asia are of significance in that they are, in the final analysis, efforts of the more thoughtful followers of Asian religions to correlate culture and creed. Only their effort seems to be concentrated on the level of culture, which is of primary interest, and there is no real willingness to re-think the bases of their creed, whether in the case of Hinduism, Buddhism or Islam. Their real intention is apparently to make it possible to possess and profit by all the changes in their culture, which living in the modern world would demand, without making any essential alteration in the content of their historic creeds.

Any facile assumption that because Asian peoples are accepting in practice cultural values associated in occidental thinking with the Christian creed, they are to that extent being Christianized, is an unwarranted conclusion. All the more is such an inference mistaken because these cultural values have been themselves, to a great extent, torn out of their original Christian context. But it is also true that the cultural claims of modernity have a way of unsettling the ancient credal patterns of Asian religions. They do not produce any lasting consequences, however, unless their influence penetrates deep enough to challenge underlying religious assumptions.

The resurgence of Asian religions is in every case a new evangelistic opportunity for a face-to-face meeting of the credal claims of the Christian Gospel and their foundational doctrines. The frontiers of the evangelistic encounter have moved further. To carry on a crusade in the area of culture contacts where there is a growing tendency to agree, or to campaign in the area of cultus reform where the general trend is to agree to disagree, is

to waste time and energy. The real task in evangelism is to so declare the Gospel we believe in that its decisive demands on a man's total allegiance are made positively clear. And all areas of human experience that involve decisions are always areas of conflict in which it is the individual that is primarily concerned, not the group of which he is part. Therefore, we deal with resurgent faiths in Asian lands only in so far as they provide the present context of the faith of individual adherents of Asian religions. For this reason the Christian evangelist needs to be adequately informed about the nature of the claims of resurgent non-Christian religions today.

CHAPTER II

# RESURGENT HINDUISM

## I

### The Essentials of Hinduism

Hinduism is described as a religion without a creed. In fact, many thoughtful Hindus take great pride in this claim. The *sanatana dharma,* the "beginningless and endless faith" of Hinduism, they maintain, is a religion for all times. For it includes all types of religion—primitive animism, popular polytheism, pietistic theism, philosophic monism, and even agnostic mysticism. Hinduism is in fact a generic name for a family of religions, all of which, however apparently contradictory, accept four basic assumptions which together constitute what is really the foundational creed of pan-Hinduism, the *sanatana dharma.* These four affirmations are generally accepted by every Hindu, whether an unlettered peasant or a sophisticated intellectual. Briefly stated these axioms are the following:—

(1) Ultimate Reality is essentially unknowable. This religious agnosticism may be doctrinally formulated in various ways, but in every case it also affirms the undeniable *fact* of Ultimate Reality, which in some way is also regarded as one's own *real* self. We may know God: but partially, never as He is. The 'lower' forms of Hinduism hold that we experience Him in many 'manifestations', some even violently grotesque and seemingly malign: all of which are partially true, none wholly true.

(2) No one theological formulation about the nature of Ultimate Reality can claim absolute validity. Every religion is a mixture of truth and error; no religion is wholly true; the exclusive claims of any one religion cannot be regarded as valid. Hinduism, therefore, permits no creed that states in an uncompromising formula: "This accept, if you want to be a Hindu." On the contrary, it says with easy tolerance: "Believe what you think you should about Ultimate Reality. As many people, so many interpretations of God. None of them is *wholly* true."

(3) Since all religions are only partially true, it is possible that if one accepts many different interpretations of God and

Reality, believing in the essential truths for which they separately stand, the sum-total of partial truths will certainly be more than the partial truth affirmed by any one religion. The non-Hindu cannot quite understand this tendency to 'syncretism'. But to the Hindu such selective grouping of religious fundamentals is valid, since by such a process one stands to gain by the collective religious experience of many saints of God.

(4) Hinduism recognizes the right of every Hindu to accept and practise whatever way of life he may find useful to his mode of thinking and his peculiar social circumstances. This strange blend of a religious pragmatism and a religious individualism, however, enforces one limitation. A man is free to say, "This I believe, and this I don't." But if he were to say, "What I believe is *wholly* true and what I do not believe is *totally* false," then his religious outlook is un-Hindu, even anti-Hindu.

It is not difficult now to see why Hinduism, with such a credal core, assumes such varied forms in the area of what in a previous chapter we have described as the cultus. Variations in Hinduism are really in the cult, and these variations are all accepted with easy tolerance and generous accommodation which can be quite puzzling to a non-Hindu. So resurgent 'movements' within Hinduism are by no means startling to Hindus: they attract no special attention, unless in such 'movements' the basic credal affirmations are involved either by way of a re-formation or a re-affirmation. This has never happened. The basic Hindu doctrine about the essential nature of Reality as unknowable has never been laid in question, so that the credal core of Hinduism has not been challenged by any of these modern movements, except of course by the movements of revolt.

## II

### Impact of Modern Thought on Hinduism

Many changes have taken place in the cultural area of the life of the Hindus as a consequence of their contact with the alien culture of their conquerors. In the early period uncritical admiration of the West led many Hindus to imitate slavishly Western ways. In more recent times with almost open denunciation of foreign ways there has been an even more widespread

adoption of Western standards of living and patterns of social conduct. But such changes have not in any way affected the real basis of Hindu culture. The conflict between the two has not been really faced at a deeper level and fought out in the open and with full awareness. What has happened is an uncritical superimposition of a new set of ideas and practices on the old inherited pattern of life. This is India's traditional way of dealing with the new. It remains to be seen whether this characteristically Hindu solution will eventually succeed.

Radical changes in the social institutions of Hindus which relate to the Hindu *way* of life have been effected within the last century, without however altering the Hindu *view* of life, its basic credal foundations. Beginning with the days of Ram Mohan Roy (1772-1833) down to the period of Mahatma Gandhi (1869-1948) reform movements in Hinduism have been mainly in four directions: the removal of caste restrictions on social intercourse, as in intermarriage and inter-dining; the emancipation of Hindu women from social customs in regard to marriage and enforced widowhood, the *devadasi* system and the like; the abolition of the disabilities of the outcaste, especially that of 'untouchability'; and the increasing acceptance of the individualistic conception of the family as against the customary joint-family system. Fundamentally, all these changes came in consequence of the new system of education, the introduction of industrial economy, the general trend towards urbanization and the modern methods of quick transport. The new fashion was the badge of the city-dwelling, English-educated Hindu. Rural culture was for a long time untouched by these innovations, until Gandhiji appeared on the scene, and today village life is also being visibly penetrated by these new ideas.

Three different attitudes in regard to the new practices have prevailed in Hindu thinking since the early nineteenth century: (1) these new practices should be reconciled with traditional faith, and, in order to do that, the latter should be modified; (2) these new practices need not be reconciled with ancestral faith because they do not conflict with it; in fact, they are implicit in traditional Hindu theory; (3) these new practices are essentially contradictory to the traditional faith, and, therefore, if the one is accepted the other must be rejected. The entire trend of resurgent Hinduism may be considered as being conditioned, in varying degrees, by these different attitudes.

The impact of the environment was felt in the area of the cultus as well. What was laid in question there referred to Hindu forms of worship, especially the more distinctly religious observances which were ritualistic. The main issue was 'idol-worship'. On the one hand, this gave the misleading impression that Hindus worshipped stocks and stones; on the other, it looked as though Hindus were polytheists. Both these charges the Hindu reformers wanted to contradict. From the days of Raja Ram Mohan Roy to Gandhiji this was the predominant intention of many reform movements. In some cases it led to a strongly theistic interpretation of Hindu worship, in others to a pronouncedly monistic (Vedantic) explanation, while among a third group it became associated with a radical humanistic view which denied the value of all religious observances.

Another factor in the environment was the evangelistic work of Christian missions. The steadily increasing number of converts entering the Christian Church stung Hinduism to the quick. Hindu religious leaders felt called upon to show that: (a) Christianity's 'intolerant' claim to be wholly true was unfounded; (b) Christianity had nothing to offer which Hindus themselves did not possess; and (c) Christians would in fact do well to learn from Hinduism what essential religion was and what it involved.

All this raised questions which directly affected the Hindu creed. It was the creed that needed to be revived and defended, said some, while others maintained that it should be restated and interpreted. In either case the intention was to prevent 'conversion' to other faiths by showing its folly and futility, and to make possible the re-acceptance of such 'converts' to the Hindu fold through some sort of a ritual of recovery. (Note that the intention was not to convert non-Hindus, however, since that would contradict the Hindu position regarding 'conversion' in general.) Besides, this new defence of the Hindu creed was to be supported by radical changes in both its cultus and culture, and by adequate explanations (apologia) for the practices and beliefs characteristic of the Hindu religious outlook.

## III

### THEISTIC MOVEMENTS OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

These were the Brahmo Samaj and the Arya Samaj. To them must be added the religious revival associated with the Gandhian movement of more recent days. They claim that essential Hinduism is theistic, implying that the Ultimate Reality of the Sanatana creed is 'personal', the object of worship, the author of all creation. In Gandhism, however, the additional emphasis is placed upon the Vaishnavite view that God is a God of 'grace', a present source of strength and inspiration to the *bhakta*. The origin of this modern theism is due to the anxiety to vindicate Hinduism against the charge that it is polytheistic, idolatrous, pantheistic and legalistic. But in no case does it take the position that the theistic view of Reality alone is valid. This is a characteristic Hindu theism, which is in fundamental accord with the basic Upanishadic conception of Reality, although at various times it claims to be rationalistic and denies the inspired authority of Scripture (Ram Mohan Roy and Debendranath Tagore), tends to be fantastically syncretistic and dogmatic (Keshab Chander Sen), and acquires a socio-ethical quality of rare personal devotion (Mahatma Gandhi). In every case, however, the theistic movements aimed at reform of worship; simple ritual, no idol worship, no priestcraft, no temples, and congregational rather than individual worship, in which prayer was given primary place. Moreover, all of them stood out against caste, child marriage, enforced widowhood, and 'untouchability', and found religious justification for their point of view.

*Difference between the Brahmo Samaj and the Arya Samaj*

One main point of difference between the Arya Samaj and the Brahmo Samaj was that the former regarded the Vedas (the Rig Veda in particular) as the final scriptural authority, while the latter was inclined to consider the theistic Upanishads as the most helpful support for their views. Gandhian theism, on the other hand, was inspired by the Bhagavad Gita; so also its 'tolerance' of other faiths and its opposition to 'conversion'. Unlike the Brahmos, the Aryas were violently opposed to non-Hindu faiths and sought to recover by the *shuddhi* rite those

who had left Hinduism to join other faiths. Also, the Aryas were militantly opposed to all Western culture, while the Brahmos tended to be cosmopolitan and westernized.

If Arya theism tended to be orthodox and Brahmo theism sought to be 'liberal' and advanced, Gandhian theism maintained the middle-of-the-way position characteristic of the Hindu outlook. In fact, both the Arya Samaj and Brahmo Samaj became spent forces when Gandhi appeared on the scene, because the religious nationalism of the Arya Samaj and the zeal for social reform of the Brahmo Samaj were absorbed in the Gandhian movement. The residual religious reform emphasis may be briefly stated as consisting in a recognition once again (since the days of Ramanuja) of the tenability of theism as *sanatana dharma* (i.e., orthodox religion).

But this theism is a characteristically Hindu theism. It does not unequivocally repudiate the monistic position of Advaita. It still holds (in the back of its mind, which is most dangerous!) that there is "a higher reality in the light of which even God fades out". It fights shy of attributing the characteristic of 'personality' to God, because the essence of personality, in the Hindu view, is what makes for humanity and individuality. Consequently, theism in modern Hindu thought is not able to furnish an adequate religious dynamic and justification for morality, although it is now anxious to stress social and individual ethics. It still thinks of ethics as defined by certain rules, essentially man-made. This explains the glut of social legislation in the new Indian Republic, and the fundamental misunderstanding of the ethic of the Sermon on the Mount in Gandhian thinking.

## IV

### Neo-Vedanta Movements of More Recent Times

We turn next to the neo-Vedanta movements. Beginning in the somewhat crude form in which the neo-Vedanta was originally expounded by Ramakrishna Paramahamsa (1836-1886), this trend passes through three phases in its later history: the Hindu missionary invasion of the Western world and reform through organized activity in India, led by Swami Vivekananda (1863-1900); the mystic claim of possible self-realization of the 'super-man' through integral Yoga, led by Sri Aurobindo Ghose

(1872-1951); and the brilliant exposition of the message of the Vedanta made thrustingly relevant to our confused modern world as universally applicable, intellectually acceptable and practically tenable by Dr. S. Radhakrishnan (b. 1888).

From its early beginnings the neo-Vedanta Movement tended to be both defensive and apologetic. It was not willing to concede that Hinduism was radically defective (as the theistic movements seemed to imply). Ramakrishna himself held that Hinduism according to the Vedanta stood for: (1) a mystic self-culture; (2) a conception of truth and value which was beyond what determined this material world of time and space; (3) what was good and valuable in all religions, for they can all serve the common end of self-realization. Ramakrishna was not a systematic thinker; he was primarily a devout *yogin* who exercised considerable influence on the youth of his day because he demonstrated in his life what religious living involved. His message would probably have disappeared with him, had it not been for one of his young disciples, Vivekananda. It was he who organized the group of enthusiasts that had come under the spell of Paramahamsa, and set about a systematic exposition and revival of the Vedanta.

*Swami Vivekananda's Defence of Vedanta*

Three characteristic emphases in Vivekananda's interpretation may be noted, which are not in fact to be found in Ramakrishna's teachings. One is the claim that the spiritual is the ultimately real, and therefore the material things of this world, however good and useful, should not be invested with final value. Western culture erred in believing the contrary, and the Vedanta should, therefore, recover Hindu spirituality and protect Indian culture from being submerged by the materialism of the West and its sciences; the Vedanta should be proclaimed to the people of the West to save them from the disaster that their materialism was inevitably bringing on them. Secondly, Hindus should nevertheless bestir themselves in matters of social reform, education, raising standards of living, and promoting schemes for public health, national well-being and the like. For the Vedanta did not rule out active social service and humanitarianism. In fact, the Vedanta provided the right religious motivation for service. In the third place, the essential teachings of the Vedanta (which was *real* Hinduism) ought to be correctly expounded and defended

against misinformed criticism. The Chicago Parliament of Religions (1896) gave Vivekananda an opportunity which he turned to advantage. It also marked the beginning of a new phase in the history of the reform movements in Hinduism. The Vedanta had a message for the world. To make that message acceptable, certain evils in Hindu society and drawbacks in Hindu religious thought had to be corrected.

*Sri Aurobindo Ghose and 'Integral Yoga'*

One of the foremost leaders of the nationalist movement in Bengal, and suspected by the British government of leanings towards terrorism, Aurobindo Ghose abandoned politics almost overnight and retired to an ashram to practise Yoga. The Sakti Ashram became in time the centre of a revival movement. Ghose was inclined to stress the dynamic nature of Reality. The eternal Sakti was the creative urge of God, "a self-expressive force capable of infinite variation in phenomenon and form, and endlessly enjoying the delight of that variation". This Brahman who becomes all of creation, and yet infinitely transcends it, is not a will-less cause, aloof from his creation. He is active in the cosmic process, which is a double movement of 'ascent' (from the lower to a higher order of being) and of 'descent' (a downward movement of Reality erupting into the creative process to help the upward movement). In this "synthetic philosophy" of Sri Aurobindo, life was regarded as "a passage to the infinite and a discipline for spiritual perfection". By the practice of what he called "integral yoga", Aurobindo maintained that man can attain the status of "super-man". At first this process is recognized by "descents, eruptions, messages or revelations of a superior power". Then begins a stage of *shuddhi* when the 'intermixture' of lower (lesser) mind is progressively eliminated, and finally *siddhi*, "the final stage when supermind occupies and super-mentalizes the whole being and turns even the vital and physical sheaths into moulds of itself, responsive, subtle and instinct with its powers. Man then becomes wholly the superman".

Obviously this emphasis in Aurobindo's thought is an attempt to suggest a much-needed integration between "Eastern Religions and Western Thought" (to use a significant title of one of Dr. Radhakrishnan's books). Sri Aurobindo was himself a strange product of Western and Eastern culture, and he represented in

himself the new urge in twentieth century India, not merely to reconcile the (spiritual) values of the East with the (material) values of the West, but in some way to *integrate* them and evolve a new synthesis of universal significance, of value to all mankind. He saw in essential Vedanta, interpreted as "synthetic philosophy" and "integral yoga", an ecumenical Hinduism, both as an acceptable system of metaphysics and as a religious scheme of salvation through self-realization.

*Dr. S. Radhakrishnan and Neo-Hinduism*

Sri Radhakrishnan is today the most brilliant exponent of neo-Vedanta. It is he, more than any other Hindu thinker, who has worked out a modern apologia for Hinduism. According to him, man is a self-conscious being whose individuality should not be considered as absolute. In the final analysis, man is destined to find in his God-consciousness 'release' from his sense of individuality and the consequent misunderstanding of his true divine worth. In the present existence, every individual human being is organically related to his environment, and he should work for "social harmony".

The challenge of the hour is the creation of a "world community" in which religion has an important part to play. Each of the various religious cultures of the world has its distinctive contribution to make in this common endeavour. The Graeco-Roman world has its rationalistic, humanistic and authoritarian emphases; the Hebrew-Christian stress on moral idealism, a personal God, and an 'other-worldly' hope should be accepted; and the Hindu insistence on the 'mystic' element in faith, on an 'indwelling' God, and above all, on tolerance is the Eastern contribution. All religions in their organized forms and in their growth have become imperfect, and the perfect religion combining all the good elements in each of the world religions is yet to be. All truly religious men should work together to prevent the world becoming materialistic, instead of wrangling over the comparative values of their religious dogmas.

A second feature of Radhakrishnan's writings is the element of apologetic for Hinduism. For one thing, the charge of other-worldliness is a misunderstanding of the positive contention of Hinduism that, in the final analysis, man is *not* of this natural order, and that he should seek to transcend the empirical world. The Hindu view of the world is therefore expressed in two basic

doctrines: *Maya* and *Lila*. *Maya* is not 'illusion' wherein moral endeavour is laid in question. Space and time may not be ultimately real, but they represent a 'phase' of Reality. *Maya* implies that this world of experience is a mixture of truth and illusion, a complex of the eternal and temporal, positing an element of indeterminism in the world process which demands choice in human conduct, thus making life in the here and now worth living. Similarly, the doctrine of *lila* does not deny God as Creator, but maintains that as Creator he is like an artist or a poet whose nature it is to create, so that the world is indeed an expression of God, in which eternal values are implicit. What men call 'purpose' and 'meaning' and the like in creation are what we make of the cosmic side of the picture of creation, not of the 'divine' side which, at best, can only be an 'expression' of God.

Similarly, the description of Hinduism as being "non-ethical" is due to another serious misunderstanding. The Hindu view of salvation is 'Self-realization', that is, coming to have true knowledge of oneself as the Self. *Moksha* (salvation) is not the result of *moral* growth. It is more than ethics, but that does not amount to saying that Hinduism places no value on ethics at all. Morality is undoubtedly a preliminary means: it is not the end. For to have attained self-realization is to have gone beyond good and evil. That does not mean, however, that it is a matter of indifference whether one is good or bad in the here and now! It does mean that ethics is conditioned by man's humanity, and not by his truly divine nature. This is the Hindu contention.

The third wrong view of Hindu fundamentals is due to the erroneous exposition of *moksha* as escape from this world. Seeking for deliverance from this world is not to run away from the duties and privileges that life on earth involves. The Hindu ideal is *not* withdrawal from life and passive resignation to contemporary events. What it does preach is 'detachment' and not 'renunciation', self-disciplined activity and not just inactivity. So then the 'escape' is from a 'self-centred life' of selfish desires, when all work is done as to eternity. Thus man attains true freedom (not 'escape'), "free from the bonds of finitude, and yet lives in the world to co-operate with God and to help others also to become free."

Nevertheless, Radhakrishnan sees the imperative need in modern Hindu India to strike out on more courageous lines

of advance in religious reform. But he would maintain that reform is not revolution, in the sense that it produces wholesale changes. Reform, he holds, is based on and related to the past. So he would build on the foundations of the Vedanta. The Hindu *dharma* is not changeless; it may be beginningless and endless, but in space and time it is open to change; it should change. And in our modern times, with the breakdown of traditional social patterns, new institutional safeguards to protect individual freedom, human dignity and social justice have to be forged afresh. He argues in his Kamala Lectures that the universe we live in is not "aimless", and spiritual perfection is attained under conditions of human freedom. Therefore, Hindus must work out a *practical* programme of reform, realistically recognizing the actual conditions of modern life, aiming at the overthrow of prevailing 'communalism' and all rigid social and ritualistic regulations of traditional orthodoxy. It all comes down, finally, to the need for a new social ethics in modern Hinduism which will effect reform of religious rituals, marriage-laws, the status of women, untouchability, etc.

## V

### Movements of Revolt Repudiating Hindu Claims

In more recent times, some movements have carried the revolt to the extent of repudiating the fundamentals of Hinduism. Three noticeable tendencies in this direction may be cited as examples. The first is the growing secularist movement which has never really become organized as such, though it has come to exercise a profound influence, especially on the educated Hindus who live in the larger cities. Here the attitude is one of passive indifference to religion rather than of active denial of its claims. Modern Indian secularism does not go out of its way to construct a polemic to disprove the extravagances of Hindu spiritualism, but totally ignoring its claims it seeks to encourage the 'emancipated' Hindu intellectual to live in the conviction that what matters is to make the most of the here and now in terms of material goods and earthly joys, for oneself and for others. This philosophy of life is not new to Hinduism. We hear of the *charvakas* and *lokayatas* (realists) even as early as the days of Gotama Buddha. But they obviously

never ceased to be Hindus. Nor would the modern Hindu secularist deny that he is a Hindu.

In the case of the Indian Communist, the position is different. For himself he repudiates all religion, but for others, the Indian Communist would say, it may still have to be conceded, at any rate for a while. Nevertheless, the fact remains that wherever Communism spreads in India, it steadily undermines faith in Hinduism through subtle propaganda, if not by open repudiation. The standard of revolt is raised by the Dravida Kazhagam in South India, with open defiance and even some show of violence. The Kazhagam repudiates Hinduism because it perpetuates Brahmin supremacy and imposes an alien Aryan culture and Sanskritic tradition on the Tamils. The Kazhagam wants all the Tamil religious classics to be reinstated as the primary source of scriptural authority; it wants the Brahmin priests and their vedic rituals to be discarded; it urges that the entire fabric of contemporary society be completely changed so that social prestige, economic strength and political influence are taken away, if necessary by violent revolution, from Aryan Brahmins and given back to the Dravidian non-Brahmins. This movement claims to be primarily a cultural movement, but in Hinduism so much of culture has been mixed up with religion that in the attempt to unravel the Dravidian element from the Aryan element in Hindu culture, there has come about a violent opposition to Brahmanic Hinduism (which is Upanishadic in origin) by non-Brahmin enthusiasts whose religion is Puranic by tradition. What should be noted here is that in every case, whether in secularism, Communism or in such movements as the Dravida Kazhagam, the reform forces spring from motives that find origin and support from ideas contrary to Hindu fundamentals. Consequently these movements are organized as apart from and in opposition to Hinduism in general, and to certain aspects of its beliefs and practices in particular.

## VI

### National Emphasis on Cultural Revival

All of these various religious movements of recent times—even where they take the form of a revolt—are part of the total resurgence of Hinduism. In whatever form it manifests itself, there is no doubt that this new self-consciousness is the

consequence of a felt need to bring the beliefs and practices of the ancient Hindu *dharma* in line with the demands of the new world. In any case, this resurgence is closely bound up with the nationalist movement which has dominated the outlook of the Indian peoples ever since the dawn of the twentieth century.

Since the achievement of freedom and the coming into being of the sovereign Republic of India the nationalist movement has entered another phase in its history. The immediate concern is to give positive meaning and content to India's new-found freedom—not merely freedom from foreign domination, but freedom *to be* herself. To this end there has been a conscious attempt to revive and restate the culture of the Hindu people as furnishing the most effective rallying-ground for unity, and this necessarily involves going back to the Hindu religious heritage. Therefore, in spite of the nationalists' commitment to the ideal of the secular State, there is a *revived* consciousness of loyalty to Hinduism as a philosophy of life, as the basis of the national culture. Hindu resurgence in the present period is consequently finding expression in a powerful plea for a nation-wide cultural renaissance.

Especially since the declaration of independence there has been a tendency to regard Indian culture as synonymous with the religious practices of Hinduism. Consciously or unconsciously, those who wield authority seek to impose these outward forms of the religion of the majority on others; for example, in the tribal areas the Government has by order required Christians of tribal origin to observe the traditional religious practices of their ancestral faith. The decorating of railway stations and public offices with pictures of Hindu gods and goddesses, official observance of Hindu festivals, etc., are also cases in point.

The Hindu assumption that all religions lead in different ways to the same goal is claimed to be the true basis of tolerance. But actually this belief has given rise to an attitude of intolerance towards those who are convinced of the uniqueness of their faith and feel impelled to preach and propagate it. Propagation is regarded as a denial of the equality of all religions, equality meaning the sufficiency of each religion for man's need. When those in power subscribe to these views deliberately or unconsciously and allow their policies to be moulded by such a

religious concept, it jeopardizes the secular democratic ideal to which the Indian government is constitutionally committed.

*Tendency towards 'Communalism'*

A more aggressive claim of Hinduism to be the national religion of India is seen in the teaching of the All-India Hindu Mahasabha. The Mahasabha is perhaps the most influential Hindu communal organization today. It stands for the preservation of Hindu orthodoxy and the establishment of a Hindu State in India in which the interests of Hinduism are to determine the political and social programmes. Another group allied to the Mahasabha is the R.S.S. (*Rashtriya. Swayamsevak Sangh*—National Service Organization) which is a militant body aiming at the establishment of a Hindu India. According to the Mahasabhites and the members of the R.S.S., the policy of non-violence advocated by Mahatma Gandhi weakened Hinduism. After the assassination of Gandhi by one of its members, the R.S.S. was declared an unlawful body. At the same time the Mahasabha decided to dissociate itself from all political activities.

Even where there is not much support for these political parties representing Hindu orthodoxy, we find people supporting the idea of preserving Hinduism as the national religion. With this end in view active steps are taken by some Hindu leaders to proclaim the Hindu dogma that all religions are equally true, and that no religion should claim to be the *only* hope of salvation. Also, people of other faiths in India are discouraged from making any 'converts' to their religion. The attitude of the Mahasabhites and the members of the R.S.S. is definitely antagonistic to Christian evangelism. They are prepared to tolerate any non-Indian religion, but only as a sect within Hinduism. Within the last year two organizations, the *Bharatiya Adamjati Sevak Sangh* (National Society for Service among Aboriginal Tribes) and the *Dharam Raksha Sangh* (Society to Safeguard the Faith), have been formed to oppose missionary activity in India.

Neo-Hinduism is in many respects a Hinduism with a difference. There are deep undercurrents at work which presage revolutionary changes in the entire texture of the Hindu faith. For modern Hindu thought wants now to relate the rational emphases of the experimental and inductive disciplines of Western science to the basic claim of experimental 'knowledge', character-

istic of the Eastern emphasis on religious immediacy. It is really an attempt to relate science and religion, reason and revelation, rationalism and mysticism. Secondly, the attempt is to integrate the dynamics of contemporary secularism, the recognition of this-worldly concerns of the realm of nature with the traditional Hindu insistence on the primacy and sole reality of the spiritual, the wholly 'other-world' of the super-sensual and supra-material, the realm of God (*brahma loka*). Dr. Radhakrishnan insists, for instance, on "a spirituality that is material". The third point is that a new effort is being made to redefine the nature of man in relation to the scheme of things. Essentially divine (a doctrine that Hinduism is not willing to abandon), in the final analysis identical with the eternal Brahman, man is, nevertheless, of the world of nature, emerging out of and set in the context of the world of matter, and destined to realize his true Self (modern theory of 'evolution'). Finally, there is the new urge to re-integrate the cultural values in traditional Hinduism. The impact of Western ideals has successfully disintegrated Hindu culture. Not that it has destroyed it, but that it has broken it into fragments, some of which have gone out of shape, as it were. The caste, the joint-family, the status of women, are a few instances in point. It is now impossible to piece them together, except on a new pattern, with a different *motif* as the principle of re-integration. The task has become complicated by the fact that a similar tragedy has overtaken Western culture! So this process of re-integration, it is realized, is not a parochial concern alone: it is a common task which has reference to a world culture, with possible local variations.

He would be a rash man indeed who dares to predict what lies in the future for a world religion such as Hinduism. Its renaissant influence is already spreading far and wide over the non-Hindu world. But one cannot resist the impulse of the faith that believes in a God who is also the Lord of history, and in a Creative Spirit who is ever at work in the world of men, redeeming it even in its present involvements and directing its course to the ultimate fulfilment of His purpose, that in *all* religious revival God is somehow at work. If that is indeed the faith of the Christian, it is well that Christians everywhere give serious thought to the resurgence of Hinduism today, and re-assess the nature of their evangelistic responsibility.

CHAPTER III

# BUDDHISM ON THE MARCH

IN THE year that the Buddha died, "as soon as the lamp of wisdom had been blown out by the wind of impermanence", a great Council of five hundred *arahats* was held at Rajagaha in India, at which the disciples Upali, Ananda and Kassapa recited their Master's teaching, thereby defining the body of the Buddhist doctrine. In the following centuries dissensions within the Sangha (or Order of monks) necessitated the calling of the second and third Councils to define more exactly certain points of doctrine and of monastic discipline, and to expel heretics. From these disputes stem the first divisions in Buddhism which eventually led to the great rupture represented by the Mahayana Buddhism of Japan and the Theravada Buddhism of Southern Asia. The fourth and fifth Councils (the last in Burma in the nineteenth century) were more limited in their representation.

It is not without significance that the sixth Council is being held in this year of the Second Assembly of the World Council of Churches. It is symbolic of a new life in the East, even as Evanston is symbolic of a new movement within the Christian Church. The Sixth Buddhist Council in Rangoon is, in some measure, a response to what Evanston stands for. Here Buddhism emerges, not just as the faith of a third of the world's population, but to challenge the Christian Church as a rival saviour of a distracted world. "What is the meaning," a leading Burmese statesman asked the East Asia Secretary, "of your Evanston theme 'Christ the Hope of the World?' It is in Buddhism, and only in Buddhism that there lies any hope for the world's peace." And so, beginning on the Buddha's birthday, the full moon of the month of Wesak (May) 1954, and lasting till Wesak 1956, the Great Council will meet in the newly constructed Pagoda of World Peace, near Rangoon, where thousands of monks and lay scholars will assemble. The concluding date of the Council, on the full moon of Wesak 1956, is in the reckoning of Southern Buddhism the 2500th anniversary of the passing of the Enlightened One from the eyes of men into Nirvana.

The year 2500 inaugurates, therefore, the second half of the era of the Buddhist teaching. The event is being looked forward to in some quarters with a kind of Messianic expectancy. "It is widely expected," says the *Buddhist World*, "that the Righteous Monarch will then appear in the world. Whether he appears as Monarch or President or even Dictator, if our preparations are wise and if they are complete, righteousness will certainly prevail."

In this repeated emphasis on the world's need of peace, and the ability of Buddhism to meet it, lies much of the religion's appeal to the instructed and educated classes both in America and Asia. Though there would appear to be little in common between Theravada Buddhism and the Buddhism of Japan except the tradition of a common Founder, they are united in presenting the world with a common front in this respect, and a second World Peace Pagoda is being constructed today in Japan to enshrine Buddha relics presented by the Buddhists of Ceylon. The choice of Hiroshima as the place where the fourteen-storey building is going to be erected is itself a silent commentary on Buddhist aspirations to be regarded as the true harbingers of world peace. The 'peace front' is an effective weapon of Buddhist propaganda, but it is a weapon of expediency, lying handy for any Buddhist or Communist to use against the Western world, frustrated both by the after-effects of two world wars and by preparations for a third.

The missionary zeal of Buddhism has other and deeper roots than a pacific reaction to the warfare of the West. Such roots are not altogether religious in character. Theravada Buddhism is the path of individual renunciation of the world, and the true disciple of the Buddha, the *arahat* following the Noble Eightfold Path, is likened to the lonely elephant wandering by himself up-stream through the jungle towards his eventual bliss. A rebirth of the spirit of Theravada Buddhism would lead many to take the yellow robe and seek the seclusion of the monastic life, but that is not characteristic of what is happening in Asia today.

Buddhism now has more of an appearance of religious revival, though it would seem to be motivated less by the spirit of the Buddha than by a loyalty to him and to the culture and way of life which his teaching has inspired. It is characterized by the defensive closing of the ranks of Buddhism against the

disintegrating influence of the West, and at the same time by the somewhat contrary urge to embark upon world mission. Both tendencies find expression along lines that are parallel with the recent growth of the Christian Church. As the World Council of Churches and the International Missionary Council represent the twin aspects of Unity and Mission, so Buddhism is drawing together in the World Fellowship of Buddhists, and finding its motive for unity in the desire to make the Teaching of the Buddha more widely known both in Asia and the West.

Widely separate in thought and practice as they are, yet there has been an increasing amount of communication and co-operation between the separated sects of Buddhism during the post-war years. Five years ago Dr. G. P. Malalasekera, Professor of Pali in the University of Ceylon, became the Founder President of the World Fellowship of Buddhists. The first Congress of the Fellowship was held in Ceylon in 1950, and the second, remarkably, in Japan two years later. It was on this occasion that some of the holy relics were brought from Ceylon and presented to the Buddhists of Japan. The Conference pledged itself "in the hallowed presence of the Buddha, to unite the Buddhist forces of the world . . . in order to further the cause of permanent peace." The third World Congress is planned to coincide with the Great Council in Burma in 1954.

The modern missionary movement in Buddhism, though yet unorganized, is one of the most powerful of the many dynamic factors in the Asian revolution. One aspect is seen in the increasing interest that Buddhism is taking in India, the land of its birth. After many years during which strong representations were made, the Government of India in 1953 formally handed over the care of Buddhagaya, the holy spot where the Gotama attained enlightenment, to the care of a Buddhist Society. In the same year Pandit Nehru himself, in the presence of the Prime Minister of Burma and representatives from all over the Buddhist world, assisted in the enshrining of the famous Sanchi relics, when they were brought back from the safe custody of the British Museum. Of recent years, moreover, there has been a movement towards Buddhism among the scheduled castes in India, actively encouraged by Buddhist leaders in Ceylon, and apparently not hindered by the Government of India. In 1950 Dr. Ambedkar visited the Buddhist World Congress in Ceylon and declared that Buddhism must be the future spiritual

home of his people, and in 1954 the President of the World Fellowship of Buddhists visited India to assist at the initiation of some thousands of converts to Buddhism in South India. For fifty years there has been sporadic work undertaken by the Maha Bodhi Society not only in India but also in Europe; however, it is only within the present decade that the conception of Buddhism as a world missionary religion has kindled the imagination of the masses both in the lands of Southern Buddhism and in Japan. The Shin sect of Japanese Buddhism alone maintains over 130 missionaries on the American continent. At Rangoon, adjoining the World Peace Pagoda, is a Missionary Training College where Buddhist monks spend five years in training for missionary work, including learning English and Hindi; in Ceylon advertisements are displayed inviting subscriptions for a missionary society "for the spread of the Gospel of Buddhism among the heathen of Europe". Buddhism today has become a self-consciously missionary faith.

In its missionary work Buddhism has the support not only of world-wide organizations like the Maha Bodhi Society for Theravada Buddhism, or the Young East Association for Mahayana Buddhism, or the World Fellowship of Buddhists for World Buddhism, but it also counts on the sympathy of most Asian governments, and the active support of some. The Siamese royal house has for generations been closely linked with the fortunes of the Buddhist religion in its own land, as were the royal houses of Burma and Ceylon in their day. In the new democratic constitutions of modern Ceylon and Burma there is a marked tendency for Government to assume again the role of patron and protector of the religion which has been so closely associated with the nation's fortunes in the past. Leading statesmen are recognized and looked up to, not only as national leaders but as religious leaders taking an active part in the promotion of Buddhism. Apart from government action, there is a vigorous movement for Buddhist religious education sponsored by such organizations as the Y.M.B.A. and the Buddhist Theosophical Society. Through their aid the Buddhist Sunday School, with classes for children and adults, is a characteristic feature of both town and village in Ceylon today.

Thus behind the present ferment of the seething emotions within the Buddhist world there lie many very diverse causes,

and in consequence it is not difficult to find diverse; and sometimes contrary currents within the movement itself. Nowhere is this more clearly seen than in the very different attitudes towards social and economic problems displayed by different Buddhist leaders, even within the same country. For example, a widely read Buddhist fortnightly, representing the orthodox Theravada point of view, deplores the modern tendency of Buddhist monks to concern themselves in any way with social welfare or with economic affairs, and writes critically of those who had used their position to further the Government's 'Grow more Food' campaign. Simultaneously, a stimulating book, written by a layman but bearing the commendation of a High Priest in Ceylon, gives expression to the very un-Buddhistic doctrine that true happiness is only attained by "squandering oneself" in the service of causes unconnected with one's own salvation, and goes on to advocate the training of Buddhist monks in social work. That book is by no means a voice crying in the wilderness: the Buddhist monk as an active participant in electioneering, usually in the interests of the Left, is a common feature of modern political life in Ceylon. Such confusion of leadership and uncertainty of direction are characteristic of an age of intense vigour, and it would be possible to find close parallels in Europe in the days of Calvin, Machiavelli and Loyola.

## BURMA

Two important developments in Burma today strike one in the face. One is the development of a Welfare State, and the other is the strong revival of Buddhism. Even a casual visitor cannot fail to notice the preparations that are being made for the holding of the Sixth Buddhist Council next year. Some would even go so far as to say that more attention is being paid to these preparations than to the suppression of the insurgents.

What then are the reasons for the Buddhists wishing to hold the Sixth Council next year? Several factors, religious, political and cultural, have induced Buddhists to want to come together from various countries to hold this Council for a fairly long period of time, perhaps extending over two or three years. Many Buddhists believe that the 2,500th year of the Buddhist era, which is the year 1956, coincides with the most critical period in the history of the world. Some of them believe that Christians have made a mess of the world. Within living memory Christian

nations of Europe and America, they say, have fought their bloodiest battles in two World Wars, and a third seems to be in the offing. Therefore they reckon that before Christian nations blow up the world, Buddhism has to intervene and restore peace.

Sacred Buddhist relics from Ceylon and India are being brought to this and other Buddhist countries, and the religious fervour of the peoples is being whipped up. Already two World Buddhist Conferences have been held, one in Ceylon and the other in Japan. The Premier of Burma, Thakin Nu, has built a World Peace Pagoda at Rangoon. Steps are being taken to repair the ancient Shwe Maw Daw Pagoda at Pegu in time for the Council. It is hoped that at the site of the Council will be established a great Buddhist University to which the Asian countries may send students. Translations of Buddhist scriptures into various languages are now being undertaken so that the world may know what Buddhism teaches. The choice of English and Hindi is itself significant, for in all its missionary outreach Buddhism thinks in terms both of India and of the English-speaking world. Organized missionary efforts are being made to spread Buddhism in parts of Burma and Assam. U Lokanatha, an Italian monk, is engaging himself in preaching Buddhism in a number of countries. Contacts have already been established with the London Buddhist Society.

It is quite clear that nationalism has also entered this picture. To be a true and loyal Burman is equated, in the minds of many, with being a Buddhist. In an independent Burma cut loose from the British Empire, nationalism now has its sway. Everything Buddhist is looked upon as being truly Burmese. There is no doubt that the Christian community in Burma has been rightly or wrongly suspected of lacking patriotism. Leaders are not tired of pointing out the so-called denationalizing effects of Christianity, and they cite the revolt of the Karens as proof.

If you are a true son of Burma, then you must be a good Buddhist. From the time a child is born, the various events of its life are somehow linked up with religion. Monasteries are prominent in every village of this country. A monastery is also an educational centre. Run by monks, the schools have rendered useful service for a long period of time, and are now being revived and strengthened. The Buddhist monk appears to have a

very warm place in the hearts of the people, and the Buddhist way of life appeals to all and sundry. It is no wonder, therefore, that the revival has its cultural aspects as well. Western civilization has come to be looked upon as something alien to the people of the land, and an attempt is being made to Burmanize various aspects of life, which to the Burman means to make them Buddhist. The British government is being blamed for the decline of Buddhism in the country. In the days of the Burmese kings, the clergy were strictly controlled by an archbishop appointed by the King, but the British government, with its avowed principle of religious neutrality, allowed this important office to lapse, with the result that the discipline of the clergy deteriorated. Today it is said that any charlatan could dress as a cleric and swindle the faithful. Criminals often wear the saffron robe and live in a monastery to elude the police. Hence a strenuous attempt is being made to reform the clergy and to impart to some of them at least a good knowledge of English.

By an Act of Parliament in 1950, a powerful organization known as "The Union Buddha Sasana Council" has come into existence. There are four standing committees which deal with the publication and study of the Buddhist scriptures, the practice of the teachings of the Buddha, the production of Buddhist periodicals in Burmese and English, and the finances of the Council. There is a four-point programme for the Buddha Sasana Council. It is as follows:—

(a) Renovation of dilapidated Pagodas and Images of Buddha.
(b) The study of the Dhamma (Buddhism).
(c) The practice of Buddha's teachings.
(d) The propagation of the Dhamma all over the world.

With this programme in mind, the Government and the people of Burma have inaugurated a renewal of Buddhism in that land.

## CEYLON

The Buddhist revival in Ceylon is not a revival of a religion of renunciation; it is rather an attempt to revive the commitment of the people to their religion. That which is being rediscovered is not Buddhism but the Buddhist Community, and that which

is being emphasized is not the renunciation taught by the Buddha but the obligation of the Buddhist to propagate what the Buddha taught. It is the expression of a new mood, a resurgence, and only partially a renaissance.

Resurgent Buddhism has first of all a community reference. The Buddhists are discovering themselves. With the passing of political power into the hands of the people, there is a scramble to share that power. The scramble is necessarily a scramble between groups, and by far the most effective grouping has been in terms of religious affiliation. Buddhism has been rediscovered and is being stressed as the religion of a community. Thus one of the main features of Buddhist activity in Ceylon has been an emphasis on group demonstrations: processions, meetings, festivals. This community concern of Buddhism has wrought a compromise in the Buddhist ideal of renunciation, for the community is seeking not so much to renounce as to obtain.

Man is a new discovery in the East. For long years in the world of international politics he was a 'colonial'; in the language of the Christian enterprise he was a 'heathen'; and in the eyes of the representatives of the empire he was a 'native'. But now he is a 'man', standing and speaking in his own right. It is true that this began to take place some decades ago, but only recently has it come home to the masses. Is it any wonder then that into Buddhism, which is an anthropocentric faith, there should creep a mood of exaltation as 'man' comes into his own? The fact that autonomous man stands discredited by modern history has little effect on the Buddhist mind. In fact, he takes it as suggestive of the inadequacy of Christianity to provide direction and discipline for human endeavour.

Naturally, a movement such as this has one major difficulty to overcome. Buddhism is a religion of 'withdrawal', so that for it history and time have no religious significance. But this difficulty is being overcome by placing in the forefront of emphasis not so much the teachings of Buddhism as the necessity of making those teachings known to the world. We have already seen the implication of the movement of resurgent Buddhism being a community movement: it is only the next logical step to make the community itself the bearer of the movement. "The world is caught in confusion and beset with sorrow. Buddhism offers the way out, and Ceylon is the land of Buddhism. One of Ceylon's tasks, as a politically independent nation, is to fulfil

its responsibility to propagate the Buddha Dhamma." Thus is the Buddhist missionary urge made the religious content of Ceylon's political status: and a religion of 'withdrawal' becomes a religion for 'expansion'.

Buddhism is more than ethics, or philosophy, or asceticism. It is a religion. It is a way of relating man to super-human possibilities. When the Ceylon Government launched its project to make water-power available for the generating of electricity, the Cabinet Minister in charge of the Public Works Department took a vow to light the ascent to Adam's Peak (a place of Buddhist pilgrimage), and to go on pilgrimage there if the 'gods' would help to complete the project successfully and in time. When the project was completed, the vow was kept.

This recourse to the 'gods' is the place in Buddhism where Hinduism flows into it and gives it a new vitality. Indeed, one is often surprised by the amount of conscious Hinduism that lies within Buddhist practices. There is hardly a place of Buddhist devotion where one will not also find Hindu images. This confluence of Buddhism and Hinduism is strengthened by places of common pilgrimage such as Adam's Peak and Kataragama. Also related to this religious aspect of Buddhism are the wide-spread practices of devil-dancing, thread-tying, the performance of works of merit, and so on. Astrology becomes the chief buttress of this whole edifice.

We mistake the real strength and purport of Buddhism unless we recognize that its strength is the strength of an amalgam. Its basic metal is a person around whose gracious memory devotion can cluster, but with it are mixed observances that belong to primitive religion, and the worship that belongs to Hinduism; while making this whole a working reality to the people are the members of the Sangha who administer the cult and demonstrate the Buddhist way of life. There is also a new element that has entered into Buddhism in that some of the members of the Sangha, particularly those who are college educated, have taken to the field of political action.

A question for earnest and urgent thought is what the consequences will be if atheistic Buddhism should form an amalgam with atheistic Communism. At present, it is sought to meet this development within the ranks of the Sangha by the method of discipline administered by the heads of the Sangha, though it is an open question whether this can be at all effective

## MALAYA, THAILAND AND INDO-CHINA

The Buddhists of *Singapore* and *Malaya* are mostly Chinese, and their temples belong chiefly to the sects of Mahayana. In Singapore, several Buddhist societies are functioning effectively. Buddhist educational activities have increased of late, and notable among their institutions is the Maha Bodhi Girls School. A Buddhist Regional Centre has also been established in Singapore.

Tradition has it that Buddha visited *Thailand* and left his footprint on a hill, now known as Srabpuri. Buddhism is now the state religion of Thailand, and the Sangharaja is the spiritual head of the State. Three-fourths of the Thais are Buddhists. They are conscious of the fact that theirs is one of the few surviving monarchies in Asia, and that it is a Buddhist king who sits on their imperial throne. The Government allocates large sums of money for the promotion of Buddhism; recently several million ticals were voted for a five year plan in connection with Buddhist religious affairs. The special hospital for monks at Bangkok forms part of this plan.

According to the last census in Thailand there are about 139,000 monks, of whom 50,000 have taken monastic vows for life. About 25,000 Buddhist temples dot the country. Every year monks, especially those from remoter monasteries, are brought to Bangkok for discussion of their common problems. Refresher courses on various subjects, especially on modern world problems, are offered to them. A very large part of the expenses is paid from government funds. There is also a strong move today to secure for the monks not only an understanding of their own religion but also knowledge of the modern sciences, and of languages such as English and French, so as to equip them to become leaders of the community. The one responsible for this movement is Bhikku Sujivo (known in lay life as Mr. Bhunyanubhaw). He is the head of the Maha Mukutaraja Vidyaya which bids fair to become an institution of university status.

There are about 40,000 monks in *Cambodia*; the many thousands of monasteries in the land serve also as schools for imparting instruction in Buddhism. Practically all the monasteries adhere to the Theravada tradition, but in Prom Penk a group of Buddhists from Viet Nam follow the Mahayana. The pagodas in Cambodia are not so ornate as the ones in Thailand, but the

Silver Pagoda at Prom Penk is the most beautiful with its floor paved with bricks of solid silver. A happy relationship exists between the Sangharaja and the King. Cambodia contains the famous Angkor, which along with Boro-Budur in Indonesia stands among the grandest Buddhist monuments in the world. While controversy has raged as to Angkor being a Buddhist or Hindu shrine, it is believed now that Angkor's foundation was as a Buddhist monument and that its Hindu elements were later superimposed.

About ninety per cent of Viet Nam's population of 23 millions are Buddhists, and Hanoi appears to be the centre of Buddhism in Viet Nam. With the rise of national consciousness, there has been a Buddhist religious awakening as well. Therefore, in many parts of the country, one comes across Buddhist societies such as the Society for the Study of Buddhism in Cochin-China, and similar societies in Central and Northern Viet Nam. These societies run well-equipped libraries and publish popular periodicals on Buddhism such as *Vien Am*, *Tec Bi Am*, *Duy Tam*, *Tin Tuc Phat Giao*, etc. On March 5, 1951, a central Buddhist Association for Viet Nam was established.

A recent development in the Buddhist renaissance is the organization of Young Buddhists. This movement is quite strong in Viet Nam, especially in Hanoi, Hune and Dalat. It has borrowed many of the features of the Boy Scout Movement; it holds frequent study classes and undertakes social service amongst the poor. The Young Buddhists have become imbued with a deep love of their country and a pride in their culture and religion.

## JAPAN

The revival of sectarianism is a recent feature of Buddhism in Japan. Prior to the last war there were 53 sects and denominations of Japanese Buddhism. In 1941 the number was reduced to 28. But in April 1951 the total of Buddhist sects and denominations was estimated at 257.[1] A large proportion of these belong either to the Shingon or Nichiren varieties of Buddhism. These sects depend entirely on their own financial resources, without any subsidy from the government, and this popular support indicates the hold that Buddhist tradition has on the Japanese people.

[1] *Japan Christian Year Book*, 1953, p. 54.

Another recent feature of the Mahayana development in Japan is the introduction of democratic procedures in the religious organizations. The laity have more voice now. Election is resorted to in the appointment of administrative officers. The holding of the Second World Conference of Buddhists on September 25-30, 1952, gave a great impetus to the revival of Buddhism in Japan, and strenuous efforts are now being made to reconcile the Hinayana and the Mahayana divisions of the Buddhist faith. Moreover, interpretation of Buddhist doctrines in English is being attempted now. *The Young East*, edited by the Honganji, Tokyo, and *The Buddhist Magazine*, edited by the Nishi Honganji, are for English readers. Japanese Buddhists are becoming missionary-minded. Buddhist Universities at Tarsko, Tokyo, Otani, Ryukoku, Hanazono, etc. train Buddhist priests. Courses on Buddhism are given also in secular universities such as Waseda, Nihon, etc. Tokyo and Kyoto Universities are undertaking research work in Buddhism. The Nippon Buddhist Research Association and the Japanese Association of Indian and Buddhist Studies specialize in research in Buddhism. The recent tendency is to go back from the traditional Chinese texts to the Sanskrit, Pali and Tibetan texts.

Buddhist scholars in East Asia are now coming to hold the opinion that the differences between Mahayana and Hinayana (Theravada) Buddhism are mainly superficial, and are attributable to natural doctrinal growth, as Buddhism developed at vast distances, both of space and time. They now feel that these two divisions of Buddhism are only supplementary and not antagonistic to each other. External rituals are bound to be emphasized differently by people nurtured in different traditions and cultures. In Theravada lands community worship is not often practised, while it is the usual practice among Mahayanists. Music and chanting form an important feature of their worship. The Mahayana pagoda is almost always a long rectangular building approached by flights of steps, and with the shrine at one end of the building. The present-day Buddhist scholars and leaders are doing their best to emphasize the common elements in the two divisions of Buddhism rather than their differences. They point out that the two schools gradually drifted apart from each other during the last five centuries. Moreover, because many of the Buddhist countries of South-East

Asia had become colonial possessions of foreign powers, there were not adequate opportunities for religious or cultural exchanges between them. It is natural, therefore, that one division misunderstands and misrepresents the other. For example, in Ceylon Mahayana is thought to be *Tantrayana* with its esoteric doctrines and exotic practices. One or two very recent sects, it is said, have carried to an extreme the idea of prayer in the place of good works. But now the leaders of Buddhism in Asia are doing their best to bring these two wings of their religion together and are exhorting their fellow-believers to study the books of both schools in the hope that it will lead to a realization of the oneness of the Buddha's Teaching in all its fundamental doctrines.

CHAPTER IV

# ISLAM TODAY

## INTRODUCTION

MUHAMMAD, THE founder of Islam, was born in Mecca in the year 570 A.D. During the first forty years his life was relatively inconspicuous, the major event being his marriage at the age of twenty-five to a rich and influential woman of Mecca. In his fortieth year, Muhammad claimed to have received a special revelation and prophetic call. The second period of his life covers approximately three years during which he carried on private religious propaganda and won some followers from his own family. In the third phase of his eventful career he spent ten years openly proclaiming his mission, being protected from opponents by his powerful uncle, Abu Talib, himself an unbeliever. Following Abu Talib's death, severe opposition from the Meccans forced Muhammad to transfer the centre of his mission to Taif. Some of his followers fled to Abyssinia where they found refuge under the Christian government. Towards the end of this period Muhammad was able to win the support of the people of Medina who were rivals of the Meccans. In the fourth period of his life he began to organize the people of Medina into an army, securing at the same time the alliance of various Arab tribes. He started raiding Meccan caravans and inflicted a series of severe defeats upon his former fellow-citizens, culminating in the capture of Mecca itself. Towards the close of his life he was able to impose his doctrine upon the whole of Arabia, eradicating paganism, annihilating the Jewish tribes and reducing the Christians to the status of tributaries.

The 'Companions' of the prophet carried on the propagation of Islam mainly through the conquest and subjugation of neighbouring lands. However, for a quarter of a century after Muhammad's death these followers were engaged in a keen rivalry. Various contenders for power led armies against each other, resulting in the death of many believers. This struggle was finally brought to an end by the selection of the powerful Abu Bakr as the first Caliph.

Muhammad is said to have predicted that his followers would be divided into seventy-three sects. According to a

Muslim authority, Abdul Qadir Jilani, there are at least one hundred and fifty sects in Islam today. The two most important of these are the *Sunni* and the *Shia*. They are divided on the question of succession to the prophet. The Sunni stand for the democratic principle according to which the first Caliph was chosen, while the Shia maintain the hereditary right of Ali, the cousin and son-in-law of Muhammad, and his descendants. In the course of time these two major groups split into numerous sub-sects.

Muhammad had conceived of a Church-State in Medina, of which he was to be the divinely-commissioned head. Along with his prophetic office, he soon began to exercise the additional prerogatives of a ruler and legislator. But in this latter capacity also he claimed to be acting not on his own accord but under divine guidance. He taught his followers the precepts of Allah from the Quran which, he declared, was brought to him from heaven by the angel Gabriel. He also encouraged them to look upon his own life as the model of proper conduct. Thus, so far as Islam in practice is concerned, the *Sunnah*, or rules for religious and moral life based on the life and conduct of the prophet, came to be regarded as complementary to the revelation contained in the Quran. However, the problem of determining the details and scope of the Sunnah has caused much debate among Muslims and continues to be a source of discord. For instance, the puritanical Wahhabis hold that the Sunnah is limited strictly to the way of life practised by Muhammad and his immediate 'Companions'. There are others who extend the Sunnah to include the lives of the 'Followers' of the Companions, while some would go to the extent of taking into account the conduct of the followers of the Followers.

Traditions associated with Muhammad and his Companions were meticulously collected by scholars in the third century of the Muslim era. But long before this time there had sprung up a wild crop of spurious and apocryphal traditions attributed to the prophet or his Companions, either out of a deifying veneration or to support factional claims. Scholars were faced with the serious problem of selecting those that were genuine. Abu Daud, for instance, finally accepted only 4,800 out of a bewildering mass of 500,000 traditions. Yet even in this careful selection he admitted traditions "which seemed to be authentic" and those that appeared "nearly so".

Islamic Law, the *Shariat*, is based ultimately on the Quran and on the Sunnah as delineated by the traditions. There are wide-spread differences of opinion amongst the various sects of Islam as to the interpretation of the Quran and as to which traditions are authentic. The Sunnis have six collections of 'authentic' traditions, while the Shias have four collections. In determining the authenticity of the traditions, the Shias recognize only the authority of the Alids, descendants of Ali. Their interpreters of the Law are called *Mujtahids* and are supposed to receive esoteric knowledge of the Quran from a hidden Imam. The collections recognized by the Sunnis date back to the third century of the Muslim era. From the seventh century A.H. onwards, orthodox jurisprudence came to be restricted to the work of the four Juridical Schools, and the door of *Ijtihad*, i.e., independent research and opinion based upon first-hand study of the Quran and the traditions, was permanently closed to all Sunnis. Subsequently, the Sunni *Ulama* (learned interpreters of the Law) have had to follow the four Juridical Schools. Their task consists only of an endeavour to explain the interpretations peculiar to each School on a given subject and to discover from them new applications of the Shariat. It may readily be seen that there is no interpretation of the Shariat that is uniformly acceptable to all the sects of Islam. Moreover, for most Muslims the Shariat is a closed system which can only with difficulty be adapted to modern conditions.

It is important to note that Islam makes no distinction between Church and State as is done in the West. Modern Muslims, especially those in countries where Islam has regained political power, are very clear on this point. The following statement by Muhammad Natsir, the former Prime Minister of Indonesia, represents the orthodox position on this issue:

> "The truth is that Islam has no priests. . . . Still more important is the fact, which is self-evident in the absence of priesthood, that there exists in Islam no 'church' in the sense of a corporate body having a separate existence within the State. Therefore, Islam cannot conceive of a separation of religion and community, or society, or nation or State." [1]

[1] In an address before the Pakistan Institute of International Affairs, Karachi, April 1952.

Islam spread throughout Asia during the first few centuries of the Muslim era, carried by traders and warriors. There are several million Muslims in China, and smaller groups in other countries of the Far East. In this chapter we shall deal only with Pakistan, India and Indonesia, the three countries of greatest importance so far as Islam in East Asia is concerned. The early history of Islam in Indonesia is somewhat obscure, but it must have come originally from Arabia and South India. It first came to India with Arab invaders in A.D. 712. Regular Muslim rule in this country dates back to the twelfth century when Muhammad Ghauri established a dynasty in Delhi. Apart from some glaring exceptions, the rule of the Muslims was characterized by a measure of tolerance towards the Hindu subjects and other religious communities. Both in Indonesia and in India the Muslim dynasties were overthrown by European invaders. Partly as a result of this, the Muslim communities lost much of their vigour and missionary zeal. Their revival during the past century has been associated with the growth of national sentiment. In Indonesia, where the population was overwhelmingly Muslim, the movements to restore Islam and to gain national independence were able to go hand in hand. In India, on the contrary, where Hindus greatly outnumbered Muslims, and where the British Government provided separate electorates for the two communities, there was a growing communal rivalry culminating in the demand for an independent Muslim State. The Muslim League, under the leadership of Muhammad Ali Jinnah, propounded a two-nation theory based on the contention that the religious and cultural differences between Hindus and Muslims were too deep to allow them to live together peacefully in a politically independent India. As a consequence of this demand, the sub-continent was partitioned in 1947 and Pakistan (Land of the Holy People) came into being. This event was acclaimed by many Muslims as a momentous victory for their faith. However, the suffering and bloodshed that accompanied the partition, and the fact that some forty million Muslims remained in India tended to dampen the enthusiasm of many sincere believers. It is no exaggeration to say that the world of Islam is suffering today from a confusion of the mind and heart. Those Muslims who have benefited from the recent political developments are full of a new confidence and hope, while those, including many refugees in Pakistan, who

have borne the brunt of suffering and suspicion are increasingly skeptical about the once potent belief that faith in Allah would bring power and prosperity.

## PAKISTAN

Pakistan is divided into two widely-separated areas, each with its own language and culture. East Pakistan has the smaller area but the larger population—approximately 43 millions, of whom Muslims number nearly 33 millions. In language and culture it is largely Bengali, reflecting the fact that until 1947 it formed part of the Indian Province of Bengal. West Pakistan has a much larger area, but its population numbers only 34 millions, of whom nearly 33 millions are Muslims. Its chief language is Urdu (now the official language of Pakistan) and its culture is akin to that of North-West India, of which it originally formed a part. These two areas, which differ markedly not only in language and culture but also in political traditions and economic resources, are held together only by a common loyalty to Islam.

Prior to the partition of India, Islam in the area which now forms East Pakistan was less orthodox than elsewhere in the country. The great majority of the Muslims in East Bengal were the descendants of converts to Islam from the low-caste and out-caste Hindu communities during the Moghul period. Some of the wealthier land-owning families were descendants of the 'invading' Muslims, but there were never enough of this class to make Islam truly orthodox. At the time of the partition, and later during communal disturbances, many Hindus left East Pakistan and migrated to India. Their places were taken by Muslims from India, and in this way there came about a significant change from a Hindu-Muslim population to one overwhelmingly Muslim in character. The immigrants brought with them a religious zeal and ceremonial piety which deeply influenced the older Muslim residents.

The Muslims living in what is now West Pakistan were traditionally more strict in religious observance than those in East Bengal. Following the partition, some six million Hindus and Sikhs fled to India, while an equal number of Muslim refugees entered the country. The immigrants, many of whom had suffered great hardships, brought with them a new fervour and bigotry which served to increase the orthodoxy of the masses.

Despite their common loyalty to Islam and the new nation

based upon it, the Muslims of Pakistan are divided in their religious attitudes. The great majority (some 58 millions) are Sunnis, but there are also more than 5 million Shias and several hundred thousand Ismalis (followers of the Aga Khan) and Ahmadiyyas. Among the Sunnis are many ultra-orthodox leaders who, though not in power at the present time, wield a tremendous influence. They demand a return to the strictest doctrinal and ceremonial standards of Islam. One indication of their strength is the *Khatm-i-Nabuwat* movement in West Pakistan. This movement claims that there has been no authentic prophecy or revelation since that given to the prophet Muhammad, and early in 1953 it led to violent riots against the Ahmadiyyas, a sect which maintains that its founder, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, was also a prophet. The Government was forced to resort to military action in order to restore peace and order at the time of these riots.

Liberal Muslims, who are overwhelmingly strong in the present Government and in the Pakistan Constituent Assembly, are seeking to strengthen and promote progressive thought. Their ideal is to interpret Islam rationalistically to suit the modern times. In West Pakistan an organization named "The Islamic Cultural Institute" is publishing a good deal of literature of the liberal type. Its catalogue of publications numbers some eighty books and pamphlets in both English and Urdu. The liberals are mostly well-educated city dwellers, and they have a good deal of support in the colleges and universities. Recently, the Students Union of an Islamia College invited a Christian missionary to speak on "Religion and Secularism", a topic that is anathema to the orthodox. Many liberals would like to harmonize the fundamental principles of Islam with the educational, social, economic and political concepts of the West. Mention should also be made of a small but growing group of agnostics. Socially they are Muslims, but on the whole they have rejected religion and adopted secular modes of thought. Many of them are in teaching posts, and it is likely that their influence will increase rapidly during the next few years.

The most significant feature of Islam in Pakistan is that it has gained political power. The resurgence of Islam is not, therefore, a purely religious movement, for religion and politics are intermingled. Of all the nations in East Asia, Pakistan is the only one whose very existence depends upon religious

sentiment. This explains why all political groups, whether orthodox or liberal in religious complexion, continually use the cry "Islam in danger" to strengthen their claims.

The differences in outlook between liberals and orthodox are seen most clearly in the debates that have gone on both within and without the Pakistan Constituent Assembly. (It is significant that Pakistan has not yet been able to adopt a constitution, although nearly seven years have elapsed since independence.) The Constituent Assembly, which is dominated by liberals, has before it the report of a Basic Principles Committee that was charged with the task of recommending the principles on which the future constitution should be based. The following quotations from the proposed Preamble as set forth in the Committee's report give an indication of the way in which liberal Muslims conceive of the new nation and its relation to Islam:

> "In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful;
>
> Whereas sovereignty over the entire Universe belongs to God Almighty alone, and the authority which He has delegated to the State of Pakistan through its people for being exercised within the limits prescribed by Him is a sacred trust;
>
> This Constituent Assembly, representing the people of Pakistan, resolves to frame a constitution for the sovereign independent State of Pakistan;
>
> Wherein the State shall exercise its powers and authority through the chosen representatives of the people;
>
> Wherein the principles of democracy, freedom, equality, tolerance and social justice as enunciated by Islam, shall be fully observed;
>
> Wherein the Muslims shall be enabled to order their lives in the individual and collective spheres in accord with the teachings and requirements of Islam, as set out in the Holy Quran and the Sunnah . . ."[1]

The report further recommends that:

> "No Legislature should enact any law which is repugnant to the Holy Quran and the Sunnah . . .
>
> Facilities should be provided for them (Muslims) to understand what life in accordance with the Holy Quran and the

[1] *Report of the Basic Principles Committee*, Karachi, 1952, p. 1.

Sunnah means, and the teaching of the Holy Quran to the Muslim should be made compulsory . . .

The Head of the State should be a Muslim . . ."[1]

Several of these recommendations have already been adopted, and the Constituent Assembly has agreed that the State should be called the Islamic Republic of Pakistan.

Although this proposed constitution emphasizes the Islamic character of Pakistan, it has failed to meet the wide-spread demand for the immediate introduction of Shariat rule. Spokesmen of various religious sects charge that the present political leaders have adopted an evasive and delaying strategy to avoid meeting the mounting public enthusiasm for the Shariat. As early as 1948 an Ahmadiyya maulvi wrote:

> "The reply that the learned leaders in Pakistan give to this popular demand is incomprehensible to me. They say, 'Let the Muslims first become Muslims and act in accordance with the Shariat, then the Law of the Shariat will be introduced.' How shall we know that the Muslims are living in accordance with the Holy Quran? And if they should continue in their present condition or become worse, will the Islamic Shariat be obliterated from the world? . . . . The real thing is that they apprehend difficulties in the introduction of the Law of the Shariat. This reply is an evasive measure to slink away from the situation."[2]

There is no doubt that many difficulties stand in the way of introducing the Law of the Shariat. As indicated in the introduction to this chapter, the Shariat is a closed system and is largely out of keeping with modern conditions. Also, there is no one interpretation of the Shariat that is acceptable to all Muslims. The Sunnis and Shias have different views as to what it means, and the opinions of numerous other sects but add to the confusion. Whereas the politico-religious ideal of Pakistan has united the Muslims, differences of opinion concerning the Shariat are the source of considerable dissension and bitterness.

Liberals and orthodox also disagree as to the rights that religious minorities should receive in Pakistan. In this connec-

[1] *Ibid.*, pp. 2-7.

[2] *The Light* (Lahore), August 1, 1948.

tion, the Basic Principles Committee has made the following recommendations:

> "Adequate provision shall be made for the minorities freely to profess and practise their religions and develop their cultures . . .
>
> Fundamental rights including . . . freedom of thought, expression, belief, faith, worship and association, subject to law and public morality, (shall be guaranteed) . . .
>
> The State should protect all the legitimate rights and interests of the non-Muslim communities of Pakistan." [1]

At present religious minorities are granted the same rights that they had in India prior to partition. But should the Shariat become the law of the land, they would be reduced to the status of *zimmis*, the traditional term employed for non-Muslims living in a Muslim land. The treatment of zimmis by orthodox Islam has never been enviable. They are granted certain privileges, but they are always treated as alien minorities, not as full citizens, and their religious freedom is severely restricted. The orthodox criticize the provision of the draft constitution quoted above, and especially any suggestion that non-Muslims should have the right to propagate their faith. Maulvi Maududi, the outstanding leader of orthodoxy and the Shariat movement, writes: "The doctors of law set out very clearly the attitude of a Muslim State towards those non-Muslims who seek protection in Muslim territory, but there is no indication of the possibility of allowing such people to propagate their religions in Muslim lands. . . . Those who support the present-day conception of religious freedom mention with great pride the works of the kings who donated large gifts to the deities and institutions of non-Muslims, and gave freedom to people of every caste and creed to propagate their religious beliefs. From the Muslim point of view the works of such kings and rulers are to be regarded as crimes against the teachings of Islam." [2] It is clear that if the Shariat group has

[1] *Report, op. cit.*, pp. 1-3.

[2] In *Murtad ki Saza* (an Urdu pamphlet). Mention should also be made of a series of broadcast talks given by Maududi, in which he said: "The zimmis shall have full freedom of conscience, belief, worship and practice of religion. Not only can the zimmi propagate his religion, but he may also criticize Islam within the limits of the law." This statement, made later than those in the pamphlet, must be understood as coming from a party that is still in the fight for power and is seeking to win the widest possible support.

its way, the Hindu, Buddhist and Christian minorities will face a very difficult future. The Christian Church in particular will have to exercise all its strength against the danger of becoming a fossilized community like the Copts in Egypt or the Armenians in the old Turkish Empire.

Another significant feature of Islam in Pakistan is its emphasis on pan-Islamism. The desire to strengthen the bonds of unity between the Muslim countries of the world is supported by nearly all groups, and accounts in part for the fact that Pakistan feels more closely associated with the countries of the Middle East than with the rest of Asia.

## INDIA

In contrast to the political policy of Pakistan, India has adopted a constitution based largely on the principle of a secular state. There is no official religion, and the freedom to profess, practise and propagate religion has been guaranteed to all persons. Many non-Hindus hold high positions in Government, the army, educational institutions and other walks of life. However, despite these circumstances, the majority of India's forty million Muslims feel uneasy and even pessimistic about the future. The main reason for their apprehension is the fear that Hindu communalism, now held in check by the Government, will reassert itself in covert or open attacks on Islam and the Muslim community. In order to understand this fear we must examine briefly the recent history of Hindu-Muslim relations.

For several centuries Hindus were under the rule of other groups, first the Muslims and then the British. The movement for national independence gave them a new sense of dignity and power. Hence there was a reaction against all that had been prejudicial to Hindu aspiration in the past, especially against the main competitor for supremacy—Islam. The Muslims in turn, fearful of Hindu domination, were attracted by the idea of a separate Islamic State. Many of them indulged in inflammatory propaganda against Hinduism, and thus lost the confidence of Hindus long before the partition of the country. (Those Muslims who were convinced Indian nationalists and supporters of the Indian National Congress were accused by the Muslim League of having betrayed Islam.) The outbreak, following the partition, of bitter resentment against Muslims was a natural consequence. Hindu and Sikh refugees from Pakistan spread

throughout India, and their tales of suffering aggravated the situation. This frame of mind gave rise to anti-Muslim riots in the Punjab and some other Indian States, and despite the best efforts and intentions of the Government much of the bitterness and suspicion remains today. Reports of ill-treatment of minorities in Pakistan, the complications in Kashmir, and the recent news of a possible Pakistan-United States military alliance have added vigour to the Hindu communalist demand that all Muslims still living in India should be forced to migrate to Pakistan.

Indian Muslims also face economic insecurity. This is due partly to general unemployment in the country, but in some cases at least Muslims have been discriminated against because of their religion. In addition, many Muslims feel that they do not have full freedom to practise their religion. They contend, for instance, that Hindu agitation to protect the sacred cow prevents them from slaughtering cows for food and sacrifice. Many Muslims also resent what they feel is the imposition of Hindu culture through the compulsory introduction of Hindi as the medium of school instruction in areas where Urdu has been the dominant language.

As Lord Curzon so aptly observed, Islam is not a State Church but a Church-State. Therefore the mind of the believer is bound to be affected profoundly by the political vicissitudes of his religion. Unlike Judaism and Christianity, Islam has no deep understanding or appreciation of suffering, especially when it holds out no prospect of material reward, and there is little to comfort the Indian Muslims who have suffered without compensation for the creation of Pakistan and are faced with difficult problems of adjustment in a non-Muslim country. In this, their hour of difficulty, they are turning in various directions in search of peace. Some are inclined to mysticism, others to an apathetic fatalism, and still others to a religious indifference or denial of faith.

The number of liberal Muslims is rapidly increasing. In view of the changed circumstances, they eschew all those orthodox teachings and customs of Islam which would involve in any way a clash of interests with outsiders. They take their stand on the Quran and the traditions only, seeking to interpret them freely to suit the new surroundings. Their religious views are characterized by a rationalistic interpretation of Islam, a desire for

religious toleration, and a lack of missionary zeal. One of the most influential liberal organizations is the Jamaiat-al-Ulama-i-Hind. During the struggle for independence it supported the Indian National Congress and opposed the two-nation theory of the Muslim League. Its members are now endeavouring to mould Islam in such a way that, while remaining distinct from Hinduism, it may not invite unnecessary opposition. For instance, they teach that Muslims should discontinue the use of beef. They also advocate that Muslims should learn Hindi and translate Islamic literature into this language. On account of this policy, as well as opportunist tactics in other liberal quarters, a large number of Muslims have become lukewarm about their faith and some go so far as to avoid any public mention of religion.

A considerable number of Muslims belonging to the educated, labour and youth groups are turning to Communism. They maintain that the social and economic principles of Communism are in essential harmony with the teachings of Islam. A maulvi (Muslim religious leader) named Azad Subhani has recently stirred up quite a discussion by his stand along these lines. Although he has encountered vigorous opposition, his influence is growing. Despite the uncompromising nature of Islamic theism, the anti-religious propaganda of Communism does not appear to trouble this group of Muslims. Their opinion of Communist atheism is similar to that of Dr. Hromadka, the Czech theologian, who wrote: "Communist atheism is, in large measure, rather a tool and weapon of an anti-bourgeois or anti-feudal political propaganda than a distinctive faith or metaphysic." This group also maintains that religious freedom in India does not compare favourably with that given to Muslims in Soviet Russia and China. This contention is challenged by most orthodox Muslims who are strongly anti-Communist. *Alfurqan*, an orthodox magazine of repute published in Lucknow, stated in its issue of April 1953 that in Communist countries only old men were seen in the mosques, while young people were being systematically weaned away from Islam.

Despite the tendencies described above, orthodoxy continues to have a strong hold over a large proportion of Indian Muslims. However, they cannot afford to make an open confession of the typically aggressive aspects of Islam because this would lead them into serious difficulty in a predominantly non-Muslim

country. Hence they strive to maintain an attitude of religious compromise and unity. Nevertheless, they do not appear to have lost completely the pious hope that Islam will ultimately triumph, and they find peace in resignation to the will of Allah.

Mention should also be made of the very considerable number of Indian Muslims who are seriously interested in other religions. Christianity engages their attention most of all because it is a religion recognized and commended by the Quran. A few have become Hindus, but the number of conversions to Christianity is larger and is already unprecedented in the history of the modern missionary enterprise amongst the Muslims of the Indian sub-continent. Immediately following the partition of India, Muslims would have acceded to the Church by the hundreds. But at that time the Church was concerned with the immediate task of relieving physical suffering among Muslim, Hindu and Sikh refugees. When conditions became more stable, many Muslims who had been interested in Christianity lost their enthusiasm for it. Furthermore, during the past few years the maulvis have been seeking to restore faith among the disillusioned by saying that the reverses suffered by Muslims were due to wide-spread heresies, unbelief and religious indifference. Nevertheless, Indian Muslims on the whole maintain an open mind towards other religions and offer an unusual evangelistic opportunity to the Church.

## INDONESIA

Muslims in Indonesia number nearly 70 millions, or approximately ninety per cent of the total population. It has been observed that they combine a strong loyalty to Islam with laxity in the observance of religious duties. The veneration of saints and holy men is very common, and they also show a marked predilection for the magical, occult and mystical aspects of their religious heritage. These peculiarities are due largely to the Hindu-animistic background of Indonesia. As Dr. Hendrik Kraemer has pointed out, Islam was introduced in Indonesia as a finished system and planted in the entirely dissimilar soil of "primitive religion blended with Indian cultural and religious penetrations, Hindu or Buddhist".

The struggle for national independence awakened Muslim leaders to the need of revitalizing their faith. This led to a *rapprochement* between the various political and religious

parties of Islam. The desire for unity was expressed at a Muslim congress held in North Sumatra in October 1952, the most significant result of which was the formation of a movement known as Mubaligh Islam (Missionary Islam). The primary concern of this organization is to overcome all barriers that thwart the expansion of Islam. These barriers are to be found both within the Muslim community, and in such external forces as Western civilization and Communism. A second congress of Muslim leaders, held at Medan in April 1953, agreed unanimously upon the following principles and aims:

1. The expansion of Islam should take place through peaceful conversion, and not by compulsion.
2. Religious leaders ought to demonstrate the teachings of Islam by example, and not by precept alone.
3. The constitution of Indonesia should be Islamic, based upon the Quran and the traditions.
4. The State should be a Republic with a Muslim as its Head.
5. The State should recognize and safeguard the fundamental rights of all citizens, including the religious minorities.
6. The economic policy of the State should aim at promoting the prosperity of the people.

This programme reveals that resurgent Islam in Indonesia is concerned with all aspects of individual and national life. It seeks to promote a revival on the religious, social, economic and political levels. A great deal of emphasis is being laid upon social reconstruction according to Islamic ideals. The Muhammadyah movement, for instance, recently celebrated its fortieth anniversary by erecting new educational institutions, mosques, maternity homes and orphanages. Muslim leaders are agreed that the root cause of the differences between Muslim groups is the heterogeneous character of Indonesian society. In order to overcome this difficulty, they are striving to unite all Muslims in loyalty to the religio-political outlook of their common faith. Thus they emphasize the essential equality and brotherhood of all believers and seek to show the relevance of Islam for all of life.

Muhammad Natsir, leader of the Masjumi (the Indonesian Muslim League) and former premier of Indonesia, advocates

the development of an Islamic ideology or "Islamism". The aim of this ideology is to form a synthesis between the westernized outlook of many Indonesian leaders and the more conservative views of the Muslim masses. One problem confronting "Islamism" is that of reconciling the Law of the Shariat with customs and practices inherited from pre-Islamic Indonesia. Some of the latter, when not directly contrary to the teachings of Islam, may be allowed a place in the new social order under the category of customary law—*Adat.*

Muslim leaders are also concerned with the revival and reform of education according to Islamic ideals. In this connection, one of the most important organizations is the Bajangkare Islam which is engaged in improving the centres of religious education, i.e., the mosques and theological schools. Rural education is also receiving greater attention than before. It is recognized that the village is the most important unit in Indonesian society, and that education must have its starting point in the village religious schools. In the field of higher education a Muslim University has been started in the city of Solo, Central Java. This is designed to be an Eastern university, imparting education in accordance with Islam, in contrast to the other State institutions which are patterned after the universities of Europe.

Unlike Egypt and Pakistan, Indonesia is not an Islamic State. The draft constitution of the Republic does not contain the term 'Islam'. In an important speech delivered in May 1953 before the faculty and students of the University of Indonesia, President Sukarno made it clear that Indonesia is a national rather than an Islamic State. Its unity is geographic and cultural, rather than religious. President Sukarno then went on to say that Indonesian nationalism, like that of most other countries in Asia, has two aspects. On the negative side it connotes a rebellion of the East against Western imperialism. On the positive side it implies "a dynamic effort, a positive effort by the nations, their desire to come back to their personality, economically and politically as well as culturally".[1] Indonesian nationalism must not be confused with religious nationalism such as is found in Pakistan. However, Indonesian nationalism is not anti-religious, nor does it involve deification of the nation as

[1] "National State and Ideals of Islam" in *Indonesian Affairs* (Djakarta), May 1953, p. 51.

nationalism in the West tends to do. The Indonesian Republic rests on the Pantjasila, the 'five principles' put forward by President Sukarno in 1945 and accepted by all parties as the basis for the national revolution. These five principles are: belief in the divine One, humanity, nationalism, democracy and social justice.

Because Indonesia is predominantly a Muslim country, the question naturally arises as to the relation between the Pantjasila and Islam. President Sukarno's reply is that the Pantjasila represents a compromise between Muslims, nationalists and socialists, a compromise essential to the unity of the State. However, he also gives his approval to the following statement made by Muhammad Natsir in a speech before the Pakistan Institute of International Affairs:

> "Pakistan is a Muslim country. So is my country Indonesia. But, though we recognize Islam to be the faith of the Indonesian people, we have not made an express mention of it in our Constitution. Nor we have excluded religion from our national life. Indonesia has expressed its creed in the Pantjasila, the five principles, which have been adopted as the spiritual, moral and ethical foundation of our nation and our State. Your path and ours is the same. Only it is differently stated."[1]

This statement is non-committal and may be interpreted in either of two ways. Liberals may contend that the eclectic character of the Pantjasila, and the general trend of President Sukarno's speech, favour a progressive modern State, more in harmony with the spirit of Islam than with its orthodox traditions. Orthodox groups, on the other hand, which demand Shariat rule, may look upon the Pantjasila as a strategy designed to weather the uncertainties of the transitional period before a full-fledged Islamic State can be ushered in.

The ambiguity of the relation between Islam and the Pantjasila is further reflected in the articles of the draft Constitution dealing with religious freedom. Article 18 reads: "Every one is entitled to freedom of religion, of conscience and of thought"; and article 43b states: "The State guarantees to every resident of the country that he will be free to adhere to his religion, to observe those duties that his religion and beliefs

[1] *Ibid.*, pp. 55-57.

prescribe." The Partai Keristen Indonesia (the Christian Political Party) has objected to these articles on the grounds that they do not recognize the right to propagate one's religion nor the right to change one's religion. It is significant that the religious freedom guaranteed here does not exceed in any way what the Shariat would grant to religious minorities.

It is the declared purpose of the present Government to give equal consideration to all religious groups. But in actual practice she is constrained to pursue a pro-Islam policy. A clear example of this is found in her ambiguous dealings with the Daru'l Islam groups in Central and Western Java. These aspire to establish a Muslim State by force, and they are at present engaged in guerrilla warfare against the Government. Muhammad Natsir recently declared that so far as the ultimate goal is concerned there is no essential difference between the Masjumi and the Daru'l Islam. He maintained that they differ only with regard to the means chosen to achieve the end, and he compared this to the difference between Socialism and Communism. It is significant that responsible Muslim leaders consider it necessary to make such statements. Official Islam cannot afford to denounce and persecute as traitors and insurgents such rebellious Muslim groups which prove strongly attractive because of their closed ideology and passionate longing for the original theocracy preached by Muhammad.

Indonesia is the only Muslim country in East Asia that has a Ministry of Religion. The aims of the Ministry were defined as follows in an official broadcast:

> "Under colonial rule Islam was accorded a stepmotherly treatment and various religious groups were played off against each other. During the Japanese occupation, religion was used to further the ends of Japanese fascism. Today we are free, and the Ministry of Religion has been given the task to see that all religions receive equal consideration, that the followers of all creeds co-operate in harmony, that all religious activities according to their importance receive Government support, so that all former contrasts and sharp controversies wholly disappear."

The Minister of Religion has said that the Ministry represents "a middle course between the theory of complete separation of religion and the State and the theory of unity of religion and the

State". While this is true, it is also clear that the Ministry is an attempt to give expression to the mutual affinity between Islam and the Republic of Indonesia and at the same time maintain international standards of freedom and equality. The Ministry makes no secret of its continually growing concern with the promotion of Islam. The building of mosques is strongly encouraged, salary is given to their staffs, Muslim religious instruction in public schools is being stimulated, and the general secretariat of the Ministry is in charge of printing and distributing the Quran.

Within the Ministry of Religion there are separate departments for the Roman Catholic and Protestant churches. The inner life of the churches is not directly interfered with, but they are occasionally given financial aid in accordance with the general policy of encouraging religion. "The Ministry of Religion," comments one observer, "is constructed in such a way as to render Islam a generality. Islam is made into a house, one room of which has been allocated to the Christian Church. Within the confines of this room the Church may be in fact left alone. Islam, however, is woven more and more into the pattern of State organization." Christian organizations, and even some Muslim leaders, have demanded that the Ministry be abolished, but it is a moot point as to how far this would benefit the Indonesian churches. There is no similar ministry in Pakistan or Egypt, yet the position of Christians in those countries is no better than in Indonesia.

CHAPTER V

# NEW RELIGIONS IN EAST ASIA

## INTRODUCTION

ARE THE peoples of Asia more religious than others? This question is often raised by those who have noticed something strange or unique about Asians. Whether this question is answered in the affirmative or in the negative, the fact remains that whenever Christianity is proclaimed in the East, the resurgence of ancient religions takes place; Hinduism, Buddhism or Islam is aroused to new life. The messengers of the Gospel have to fight on two fronts, so to speak, demonstrating the exclusive claims of Christianity on the one hand, and defending the indigenous character of their religion on the other.

While the revival of ancient religions is a complicated phenomenon, the situation is aggravated by the rise of new religions side-by-side with the historic ones. At first sight, one may be inclined to despise them as sub-religions or barbarous superstitions, not worthy of our attention. But on a closer examination we find that the challenge of these new religions is, essentially, the challenge of the old religions, only in a more acute form. The common people are athirst for genuine religion, having been neglected by the custodians of their hereditary faiths. Therefore we have to ascertain their religious aspirations, and the reasons behind the growth of these religious movements. Those who belong to them are not an infinitesimal minority; in many areas they far out-number Christian believers.

We often use the term 'Syncretism' to characterize these religious movements. In general, they manifest either of two main characteristics:—

(*a*) New religious concepts and ideals are borrowed from other religions and incorporated into the old. In this way, the former religion is reformed and sometimes transformed into a more living faith, though it still retains the main characteristics of the old. This may be known as pouring new wine into old bottles.

(*b*) Sometimes these adjustments within a religion itself are so fundamental that the reform of the old becomes a trans-

formation into the new. Sometimes the cleavages with the old are so basic that the movement itself becomes a new religion.

*New Wine in Old Bottles*

Does the present-day resurgence of religion mean that ancient religions are taking on a new life without changing their age-old forms and spiritual traditions? Even if this is often the aim, still there is no gainsaying the fact that from the day of the founding of the Brahmo Samaj in 1828, many vigorous reform movements within Hinduism have added new elements to the ancient religion of India. At the same time we notice that recent representatives, such as Rabindranath Tagore, Mahatma Gandhi and S. Radhakrishnan, have imbibed much from the Christian tradition. The revitalized religions of Asia differ markedly from their classical forms. What D. T. Niles has written is quite pertinent here: "The Hinduism or Buddhism which the evangelist has in mind in forging an apologetic or polemic is a Hinduism or Buddhism which Hindus or Buddhists do not live by!"

Somewhat similar developments took place in Japan during the latter part of the last century. Buddhism produced many good scholar-monks, as a result, we may reasonably surmise, of their coming into contact with Christianity. A very interesting example is Rev. Entai Tomomatsu, once a professor at Keio University and a member of the *Shin* sect, who propounded a type of Buddhist social gospel some years ago. The orthodox doctrine of the old Shin sect (Pure Land sect) emphasized a blissful future, disdaining the present world as defiled. But the social gospel of Tomomatsu upset this orthodoxy entirely. It was quite natural that the leaders of this sect should have been disturbed. It was, however, also natural that the more intelligent adherents of the sect sided with Tomomatsu, and thus found a new way out of their other-worldly religion through the stimulation of the social gospel of Christianity.

In the resurgence of ancient religions in any country, one finds developments more or less similar to this. They are new movements or tendencies within the historic religions, which dare not part with the parental heritage. They are the new wine in old bottles. Yet the wine may not burst the old wineskins; indeed both may be kept safe. The presence of a rival faith

makes the ancient religion retain its old forms, even if it adopts new content.

*New Religions*

A Burmese university professor answered with a downright 'No' when asked whether there was any new religion in Burma, saying that there were only an overwhelming multitude of Buddhists and a Christian minority. This may be correct so far as Burma and other countries of South and South-East Asia are concerned. (There have been very few answers from this part of Asia to the questionnaire sent out to obtain materials for this chapter.) This does not prove, however, that syncretic tendencies do not exist in these countries. The syncretistic movements in India, Pakistan, Burma, Ceylon and Thailand have not yet broken away from Hinduism or Islam or Buddhism to form new religions. In other countries, however, and especially in the Far East, there has been a phenomenal growth of new and distinct religions. We shall describe below certain of the new religions in Indo-China, the Philippines, Hong Kong and Japan as typical examples of what is happening in this part of the world.

## 1. Caodaism in Indo-China

In Viet Nam, there is a very active new religion called Caodaism. The historical tendency of the Viet Namese to assimilate cultural contributions from abroad is seen in their heavy borrowing from China, and most particularly in their historical syncretism of the three religions of China together with their own original animism and ancestor cult. They have never felt any inconsistency in uniting Confucian philosophy, Tao magic, and Buddhist ritual together with animistic shrines and sacrifices. In Caodaism they have now developed a further syncretism, adding elements from Roman Christianity and Islam, and claiming to receive direction through spiritist seances with a galaxy of the historical great, including Victor Hugo, Joan of Arc, the Emperor of Jade, Buddha and Jesus Christ! The movement actually began in 1919, when a Viet Namese provincial ruler was said to have received a communication from Cao Dai in a spiritist seance. Its great expansion began in 1926, and the latter date is celebrated by Caodaists as that of the origin of their cult.

Membership in Caodaism, which is now claimed to be over three million, is drawn from many strata of Viet Namese life, but most particularly from the westernized group. One leader was formerly a baptized Evangelical Christian. Many men of political importance are Caodaists. One was in 1947 the president of the French Provincial Republic of Cochin China. The present Pope of Caodaism was once governor of Saigon. He officiated at the opening of the present Viet Namese Congress. The movement has its largest influence in South Viet Nam, but it also boasts of members elsewhere. The movement teaches the existence of the soul, survival of the physical body after death, one God, and a hierarchy of spirits. However, more important than abstract doctrine is the practice of communication with the spirits, such communication being the source of Caodaist revelation.

## 2. The Fifth Angel in the Philippines

Neither Buddhism nor Confucianism has exercised any considerable influence upon the Philippines, but a different type of syncretism or new religious movement is found there. Of late, religious sects are said to be flourishing, and one of the most vigorous movements has close affinity to Christianity, although it is too eccentric to be called a Protestant sect. This is the *Iglesia ni Cristo* (Church of Christ). The Iglesia was founded by Felix Manalo in 1914, and its followers are popularly known as "Manalistas". Even if its claim to have a membership of 2,000,000 be an exaggeration, its growth is striking and may be favourably compared with the development of the early Methodist movement in England. Felix Manalo was originally a Roman Catholic and later became a Protestant minister, serving in various denominations. Since the establishment of the Iglesia, Manalo has been the "Supreme Pastor", the Pope of the new religion, claiming to be the one "infallible" interpreter of the Bible.

The principal teachings of this group, as formulated by Manalo himself, are: a belief in one God; in Christ as a human mediator; in the Holy Spirit as a messenger; in the prohibition of eating blood because God had prohibited it after the Flood; and in Manalo as the fifth angel mentioned in the seventh chapter of Revelations. Like many of the new sects, this is a one-man religion, the Supreme Pastor having a dictatorial power

over the followers and in all matters of doctrine. He is said to be a "formidable rival of the Roman Pontiff". A peculiarly forced interpretation of the Bible is adopted by the Head, as most leaders of new religions do with regard to the older sacred books of religion. According to Manalo, the four angels mentioned in Rev. 7: 1, 2 are Lloyd George, Orlando, Clemenceau and Wilson, and these are symbolized by the "four winds of the earth". Manalo is the "fifth angel" predicted in the same verse which says "another angel ascending from the east", and the "east" is the Philippines. The doctrine regarding the Church is that it was founded by Christ according to Matt. 16: 18, but perished early and was non-existent until 1914, when Manalo refounded it. Romans 16: 16 is regarded as a specific reference to the Iglesia ni Cristo, which claims to be the only true church, outside of which there is no salvation. One of the factors that calls our attention to this new religion is its power of attraction. Although orthodox believers may think little of such a movement, thousands of people in the Philippines have been led to believe that salvation is to be found through joining Manalo's church, and only through this church.

The Iglesia ni Cristo is not a schismatic group in the Roman Catholic sense, for it does not recognize the authority of the Roman Pontiff. At the same time, it is not treated as one of the Protestant sects. As to Christology, the position of the Iglesia is similar to that of the Unitarians. It teaches that Christ was only a man, although he was appointed to be a Saviour and the Mediator between God and man. The Iglesia ni Cristo cannot be treated as a mere heresy, since it deviates too far from historical Christianity. Its characteristics are very much those of a new religion, although its constituting elements are taken mainly from Christianity. In whatever way we explain the movement, the fact remains that a religious leader who claims to be "the fifth angel" is drawing a multitude of Filipinos after him. It may be that the adherents are conscious of experiencing something more satisfying than what they find in the more prosaic Christian churches.

### 3. Gods and Prophets in Hong Kong

In an old capital of Manchuria there used to be a temple dedicated to the spirits of great world-saints, Christ, Confucius, and Sakya-muni (Buddha). A similar or related movement in

Hong Kong tries to put Buddhism, Confucianism and Taoism together to form one religion. This group is known as the *Religion and Philosophy Research Society*. Its members claim that they have been inspired by the first prophets of the five great religions; they celebrate the birthdays of fifty-five gods or prophets. The believers meet on each of these birthdays to sing and chant in worship of the gods. The group has a membership of over ten thousand, and forty meeting places in Hong Kong.

The man who created this sect was Hsioa Chang Ming from the province of Szechwan. The present leader, Chao Lian Cheng, is his immediate successor. As a youth, Chao was not satisfied with army life and often spent hours in meditation. Then, after studying Buddhism for twenty years, he came to the conclusion that a man should seek salvation, not from one religion only but from all the great religions in the world and should be humble enough to accept the good teachings of all the great prophets. In 1919 Chao made the decision that he would declare his enlightenment to the world and establish his first shrine in Canton. In 1926 Chao met Hsioa Chang Ming unexpectedly. He discovered that Ming was far ahead of him in the understanding of truth, and therefore accepted him as his teacher. In 1933 Chao came to Hong Kong and organized this society. Its teachings are as follows:

> The final total destruction of this world will be unavoidable. The members should be alert all the time. They must practise justice, loyalty, faithfulness, honesty and mercifulness and keep away from luxury. They should believe in the brotherhood of man, and treat all people as brothers and sisters. Nations should maintain peaceful relations and solve their problems through peaceful means, instead of by war.

The *Red Swastika Society*, organized in 1921, is very much like the above-mentioned sect in that its members believe that Christianity, Confucianism, Buddhism, Taoism and Islam are all true religions. Members of the Red Swastika are noted for their earnest desire for world peace, which they believe will be realized when men accept all of the five great religions instead of only one of them. One of their statements reads: "The truth is not confined to any one religion. The 'Tao' in Chinese or

the 'Word' in the Gospel of John is found everywhere in the world. All of the five great prophets discovered practically the same thing in their life-times. Therefore, we declare that we are to preach the fundamental teachings of the five great prophets, not their creeds. We are followers of the 'Tao', not the discoverers of the 'Tao'. Until the people of the world live up to the principles of the 'Tao', there will be no peace among men and happiness in the world." This society has carried on foreign missionary activity and has organized the International Red Swastika Society.

### 4. "Serpents and Doves" in Japan

We pass now to another country—namely, Japan—where of all the lands of East Asia the largest number of new religions have sprung up in comparatively recent years. They are mostly syncretistic in character and have many adherents today.

Early in 1953 a novel, written by a first-rate Japanese popular author, was published with the title "Serpents and Doves". This was not a political or historical novel, nor was it a love-story. As the title suggests to any Christian reader, it dealt with a religious subject. It was a novel that helped to explain the extravagant phase of the so-called "new religions" in post-war Japan. Before its publication in one volume, the book appeared section by section in a famous weekly, and it caused a tremendous sensation. Since then, books and articles have appeared in abundance, describing or criticizing the post-war religions. Social and psychological analyses may have a place here. Superstitions and extravagant activities connected with these religions are a reflection of the abnormal state of mind of a war-weary nation, which overnight lost its power and prestige, and whose people were in many cases without homes, work, or prospects in life. In Japan, the social, legal and psychological factors have worked together in such a way as to produce an unusual number of new religions.

According to the "Year Book of Religion" published by the Japanese Department of Education, over 400 new religious bodies were organized and recognized as legal during the six years following the war, that is, until the end of 1951. The law previously required any religious organization to obtain government permission before it could be legally recognized, but now all that is needed is a formal application to the Department of

Education. This is one reason why there has been such a rapid increase of new religious bodies since the war.

A very complicated problem lies here. Religion must meet other religions on a religious level. Religious conviction must be met with religious conviction. A superstitious movement is naturally more attractive to common people than a puritan religion. We must be wise as serpents and innocent as doves to win this most arduous battle for the Gospel. Not all of the new religions are wolves in sheep's clothing. Many of them are meeting the needs of the people to a certain extent, even if mistakenly. There are some who estimate that these new religious bodies in Japan have increased to six hundred by this time. Needless to say, the total number of their devotees is very great. Several of them have membership larger than the total number of Japanese Christians, Roman Catholic and Protestant combined. Christian leaders speak of difficulties in evangelism because so many new religions have come into existence with so large a following. Christian churches are criticized as being introverted and living far away from the common people, while these new religions thrive mostly among them, and their rate of propagation is far more rapid than ours!

The "Year Book of Religion" mentioned above classifies all religions in Japan in four groups, that is, the Shintoist, the Buddhist, the Christian, and those that do not come under any of these three heads. This roughly describes the pattern of Japanese religions, but it does not show how they have come to be. The founders of new religions, generally speaking, become what they are as the result of spirit-possession or trance experiences. We may refer to three groups of these new religions.

I. From the Shintoistic group, *Konko Kyo* (Religion of Gold Light) may be selected as an example. Konko Kyo arose in 1859, the year in which the first Protestant missionaries reached Japan, and it has at present almost six hundred thousand adherents. Bunjiro Kawate, a farmer of little education but of a deeply religious nature, is said to have received a message from a god to whom he gave the name of Tenchi Kane no Kami (God of Gold, Heaven and Earth). This divine name, being entirely new, could never have been found among the historical gods or goddesses of Shintoism. The background of this religion is a popular belief in Kon Jin, a god who was greatly

feared for his control of days and directions on the earth. The materialistic form of the divine name used by Bunjiro Kawate is really a clever twist of the name of this influential god, and is possibly of Chinese origin. By this twist, the founder did away with the age-old superstition as to days and directions. He received the original impetus to found the new religion through his brother-in-law who was possessed by a certain god. The possessed brother miraculously cured him of a serious illness. Then he discovered that the dreaded god was a god of love and mercy to those who believed and obeyed him. He turned the parlour of his house into a mercy seat (he called it the place of god's presence) and began to practise the priestly task of mediation, offering prayers to the god on behalf of the members of the god's family (as Shinto usage terms those who are born in the district in which a certain god reigns). Thus a new religion came into existence by transforming a popular superstition into a different god, utilizing at the same time Shinto traditions.

*Tenri Kyo* (Religion of Heavenly Reason) is somewhat older than Konko Kyo, having a history of more than a hundred and ten years. The date of origin is given as 1837. The founder, a woman named Miki Nakayama (1778-1887), was the wife of a well-to-do farmer. She was of a religious nature but had received little education. (We may note here that the originators of new religions in Japan are often women.) Miki used to ask a certain exorcist to pray for the cure of her son's disease. One day in her fortieth year, she herself entered into a trance and proclaimed as an oracle that she was to become the temple of her god in order to be an instrument of salvation of the world. Her family was commanded to obey this god, even if it meant that they were to become penniless. Miki began to give away their property as alms to the poor, not only a portion of it but everything that belonged to her family. At last all of the ancestral fields and houses were sold for the sake of the needy. In her fifty-sixth year, when her husband had died and nothing was left to live upon, she had to lead a hand-to-mouth existence. This was the time of her spiritual ascent, the "upward-march from the bottom of the valley". Then she began to proclaim faith-healing, and her seventeen-year-old daughter began evangelistic activities in Osaka. Thus arose a religious order now commanding one and a half million adherents.

The two religions described above have a legal relation-

ship with Shinto, and are counted among its thirteen denominations. *Tenshoko Daijingu Kyo* (Religion of the Goddess of Tenshoko Daijingu) has no such legal connection with Shinto, although it claims loyalty to the chief goddess of Shinto, Tenshoko Daijin. Sayo Kitamura (b.1900), the founder, was born in a farmer's house and finished only six years of education in a primary school. (Another common feature of these new religions is that practically none of the founders is a college graduate.) Sayo had been a hard-working house-wife and an active member of the village community. In her forty-second year, her house was burnt. Deeply concerned because the fire had caused a great deal of damage to the village, Sayo resorted to an exorcist to discover the means of compensation. This was the occasion for her entering into a more devoted life of prayer. Three years afterwards, she began to feel a certain god entering her body. And at last she received a divine message that she would become the only daughter of the Tenshoko Daijingu, the highest goddess of national Shinto. Then she started a religious movement with the aim of establishing the kingdom of this goddess on earth. This is the so-called dancing religion, because of the ecstatic dancing of its devotees.

*Omoto Kyo* (Religion of the Great Original) is also a syncretistic religion, but makes one of the oldest gods of Shinto its chief deity. The founder was Nao Deguchi, an illiterate widow who led a pious life amidst miserable circumstances. In her fifty-seventh year (1892), she entered into a state of possession and was confined to a small room by her family. Before very long she began to write according to inspiration, although she had never been able to read or write until that time. She is said to have continued writing for twenty-seven years, until the end of her life. These writings have been turned into the sacred books of the Omoto Kyo, the main theme being the reconstruction of the world by the coming of a great man, that is, the saviour, who was later found to be Wanisaburo, the adopted son of her second daughter. This religion was suppressed by the government in 1921, because of its overly ambitious claims, but it was reorganized as *Omoto Aizen En* (Omoto Society for Loving the Good) after the recent war.

A former member of Omoto Kyo, named Modichi Okada, has organized a new religion called *Sekai Kyusei Kyo* (World Saving Religion). At first he called his order the Japanese

Kannon Religion, Kannon being the name of a Buddhist god of mercy. This religious body has between 30,000 and 40,000 adherents. Stories of god-possession are not connected with its origin.

II. A new religion, apparently based on Buddhistic tradition, is *Reiyu Kai Kyodan* (The Society of Spiritual Friends). No possession story is told concerning the origin of this religion. A certain Buddhist believer of the Nichiren Sect began about thirty years ago to take special care of forsaken graves. Where ancestor worship is so common, this superstitious reverence for the graves of forefathers had sufficient power to become a religious movement. The society now includes more than half a million members.

In 1925 Tokuichi Miki, a former Buddhist monk and a Shinto convert, started a syncretistic religion as a branch of one of the Shinto denominations. This sect, named *The Way of Man*, was suppressed ten years later as being one of the sub-religions injurious to public morality and the happiness of the people. The founder's son, Tokuchika Miki, reorganized his father's adherents in 1945 into a body called the *P. L. Church* (P. L. is an abbreviation of Perfect Liberty). This young sect, which promises to give its adherents perfect liberty, now claims 350,000 members and is aspiring to regain the strength of one million which it had before suppression. No possession story colours the origin of this religion, but the founders were clever in making an attractive combination of Buddhist and Christian teachings as well as cultural ideas.

III. *Seicho no Ie* (Religion of the House of Growth) may be a typical sub-religion since the leaders at first did not claim it to be a religion, although they carried on many practices that belong to a religious movement. Masaharu Taniguchi, the founder, came into contact with various types of religious thought and for a time attached himself to Omoto Kyo. Not content with this, however, he continued his spiritual pilgrimage and at last came to a satisfactory understanding of reality. Matter is nothing. Phenomenon is nothing. Mind is nothing. The only reality is god and the mind of god. He himself was that reality of god. He was a clever and voluminous writer, and the power of this religion lies to a considerable extent in his literary activity. As a matter of fact, the movement seemed, until very recently, to be mainly a literature-distributing and book-selling

enterprise. It was not until 1940 that this movement was legally organized as a religious body. Yet it claims today to have almost a million members in Japan alone.

*Why these Movements are so Popular*

We are not recording here the superstitious cults of a negligible few. On the contrary, these religions are drawing the attention of a large number of people belonging to the social strata which Christian evangelists cannot easily reach. Their devotees are offering enormous amounts of money: the leaders are generally better off than Christian ministers, and, in some cases, live like millionaires. In short, the new religions are captivating the minds and hearts of the people, and their purses as well. What are the characteristics that make these religions so attractive to the people at large? Even if we may not learn religious truths from them, we shall learn much about the religious psychology of the present generation.

The strength of Konko Kyo may be explained from its relation to popular superstition. Because the dreadful god who governed days and directions has been turned into a merciful god, superstitious people are very easily attracted to this new religion. In the East, people are often afraid of 'evil days' and 'evil directions' for travelling or building houses. All such fears are done away with at a single stroke by this religion. It is not as theory but as practice that this religion is powerful. The founder did the work of mediation between the god and his devotees, that is, he offered prayers of intercession and asked for the will of the god whenever devotees came and requested help in regard to their diseases, misfortunes and difficulties. At the same time, by a very clever twist of the divine name, the former god of austerity has become a god of prosperity and money-making. Thus, whether superstitious or not, this religion meets the common people on the level of daily life with its needs and worries.

The strength of Tenri Kyo lies in its faith-healing which is similar to that of Christian Science. Its teachers visit sick persons, or search out those who are critically ill, and immediately begin converting them. Formerly, this was the only distinctive feature of their propaganda, but the movement is now becoming more like a cultural religion. Another secret of their power is

the use of simple words and expressions, near to the heart of the farmers and artisans. They started their movement by using the dialect of the founder's native place, so that even illiterate peasants could feel at home with what they heard, and would have no doubts as to the indigenous nature of this religion. No other sect can compete with Tenri Kyo in this respect, and this will explain why it has expanded so rapidly among the common folk. Moreover, Tenri Kyo makes use of dances as well as songs. Very simple rhythmic movements, expressive of the meaning of hymn-songs, and danced to the accompaniment of drums and other musical instruments, are the source of their joy. All these combine to produce a cheerful atmosphere, and help sick persons to lead a pleasant devotional life.

New religions prosper because of the benefits they promise to give, especially so in times of difficulty and abnormal tensions. Most of the new religious bodies are concerned with sickness and disease, and faith-healing is often their chief occupation, as is exemplified by Tenri Kyo. Except in a few cases the money-making motive is not dominant, for although most of the devotees are anxious to have a prosperous business and lead an easy life, thay are more eager to find a power that will help them out of life's ills and misfortunes. The practice of mediation and intercession, as described above, is nothing but pastoral counselling. Hymn-songs are a common feature of religious movements, but they are especially prominent in some new religions. As noticed already, Tenri Kyo utilizes dancing or rhythmic movement, which serves the purpose of faith-healing, helps to brighten life and produces, needless to say, satisfaction with community life. The extravagant use of dancing, as seen in Tenshoko Daijingu Kyo, which tries to give an ecstasy-experience by this means, has a direct religious appeal to some persons. Grand temples and shrines have been built by some sects as an effective means of attracting the multitudes, or of arousing confidence in religion. Some religions draw people by the custom of holding early morning services, when devotees are given advice for the day, a practice similar to the confessional in Christian churches. Monthly and annual festivals are common. The annual festival may include a pilgrimage to the main shrine or the headquarters of the religion, an important part of a common religious life which Christians in Japan do not experience.

## 5. The Challenge of New Religions

A fairly common feature of these new religions is the fact that they have adopted various elements from Christianity. The historic religions also have had contact with Christianity, and we can point out the changes due to this association. However, the new religions are even more directly influenced by Christian ideas and doctrines. At the same time, we notice that everything Christian is adopted in a peculiarly superficial way or in an intentionally twisted form, so that it may the more easily suit the religious psychology of the people.

Because Konko Kyo arose in the same year that the first Protestant missionaries reached Japan, it does not appear to have borrowed from Christianity. However, the belief in a father God of love and the need for absolute obedience to the divine will as taught by this religion are not very different from Christian ideas, at least in their wording. Mediation and intercession savour of Christianity. The popularity of Konko Kyo indicates that a large number of Japanese are anxious to have this type of religious experience.

Tenri Kyo arose twenty years before any Christian missionary came to modern Japan, but its doctrinal development took place later, and it has had a close relation to Christianity. A Buddhist scholar says that the god revealed by the founder of this religion is very similar in character to the God of Christianity, although the concepts also show Buddhist influence. God is transcendent but has an intimate relation with man. He is a god of mercy, just like a good father. Tenri Kyo has a creation story. Man is said to have been created by god. Therefore, all men are children of god and brothers and sisters of one another. This religion believes that man can never become a god. God desires men to lead a joyful and optimistic life. Tenri Kyo does not lay emphasis upon the future life: the present is much more important, it being almost the only reality. To lead a joyous life on this earth is the object of Tenri Kyo believers. They call death a "starting again", reminding us of the doctrine of transmigration. But man will never be born again into something other than man, in contrast to the Hindu doctrine. The believer is to do disinterested service. The rationale of their faith-healing is that the cause of sickness lies in the spirit, and that belief in god will cure all bodily ills.

The monotheistic concept of a god of love and mercy, with a divine founder as the representative or messenger of the deity, is a general characteristic of the new religions. The building of the kingdom of god on earth is important for some of them, while little emphasis is laid upon the future life. In the case of Omoto Kyo there has been a very significant eschatological emphasis. However, we must not misunderstand this doctrine. When its members speak in eschatological terms they are thinking of the present world and an event in history. Omoto Kyo once made a stupendous prophecy of the coming of a new age by the reconstruction of the world. Since the suppression of the order by the government, the emphasis has changed. Still they say that man's service of god is nothing less than the building of the kingdom of heaven on earth. In addition to Omoto Kyo, several of the other new religions are speaking loudly of an eschatological hope or a reconstruction of the world.

The lack of a deep consciousness of sin may be called another characteristic of these new religions, despite the fact that they speak repeatedly about the sins of man. Nevertheless, we must pay due attention to the fact that the idea of redemption is the main theme in some of them. It is also significant that the vicarious bearing of sins is an important element in Hito no Michi Kyodan, and that many people resorted to the founder who claimed to do this divine work on behalf of the devotees. This is evidence that the Japanese people recognize the validity of the Christian doctrines of vicarious suffering and atonement.

The religious world of East Asia is, in a certain sense, very much like the ancient Graeco-Roman world when Christianity appeared. Rival religions are making similar claims in opposition to Christianity. Is this a mere coincidence? On closer inspection, the new religions in Japan prove to be composed of elements drawn from the traditional religions of the country. Although much is borrowed from Christianity, one will find that Shintoist, Buddhist and Confucian elements determine the basic patterns of belief and experience. Some of the Christian doctrines are made acceptable to the common people because they are combined with elements or characteristics that are already in the mind and heart of the nation. Ancient religions may not be growing in power, but as new religions they are challenging Christian evangelism. They seem to be crying aloud;

"Does the Gospel of Christ have sufficient power to transform the inherited national character?"

However, these new religions appear to be fundamentally feudalistic in character. Awakening the individual, arousing the sense of the worth of personality, teaching the significance of freedom—such contributions are not to be expected from them. A Japanese sociologist has said that the only religion which has done something and is expected to do more towards the awakening of the individual is Protestant Christianity. From the Christian standpoint, there is practically no religion, either in the new group or in the old, that teaches individual and social responsibility for sin. The result is that no energetic striving for social improvement comes out of the new religions. They attract the common people, but they do not give them the vision of a better social order, nor the motivation for healthy social reform. One of the greatest problems facing Christians is how to compete with these new religions in the struggle for the happiness of the common people and for the greater glory of the Lord of the Gospel.

From Pakistan to Japan, and from Indonesia to Korea, national situations and characteristics differ from one another. But to Christian believers and evangelists East Asia, as a whole, presents a challenge of tremendous importance. Its peoples are of a deeply religious nature, but they cannot be expected to accept Christianity easily. On the contrary, they have their own religious convictions which hinder them from accepting the Gospel. Our task is complicated, and there is a dire need of understanding the situation. Dr. Stanley Jones spoke the truth when he said that in the East he had to preach Christ only. For in East Asia the struggles centre around the core of our religion—Jesus Christ. But Christ must be the Victor in these situations where old religions challenge us in various new forms. The Gospel must really be the Gospel for the Gentiles and relevant to Gentile situations. We are sure that a new light will be thrown upon the Gospel itself in this victory. For each victory won will reveal more of the riches of Christ than hitherto known.

CHAPTER VI

# THE CHRISTIAN APPROACH TO NON-CHRISTIAN RELIGIONS

## 1. INTRODUCTION

"There is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved"—Acts 4: 12.

THE CHURCH's commission to preach the Gospel of Christ to "every creature" also lays upon her the task of inviting all to accept Christ as Lord and Saviour and to join His Church through baptism. The report of the World Missionary Conference, Tambaram, 1938, said, "The end and aim of our evangelistic work is not achieved until all men everywhere are brought to a knowledge of God in Jesus Christ and to a saving faith in Him. . . . We believe that Christ is the Way, the Truth and the Life for all, that He alone is adequate for the world's need. . . . There are many non-Christian religions that claim the allegiance of multitudes. We see and readily recognize that in them are to be found values of deep religious experience and great moral achievements. Yet we are bold enough to call men out from them to the feet of Christ. We do so because we believe that in Him alone is the full salvation which man needs."[1] The faith that in Christ alone is full salvation naturally raises the question of how to evaluate non-Christian religions, the claims they make and the types of religious experience they express.

Dr. H. Kraemer's weighty book on *The Christian Message in a non-Christian World*, which was written in preparation for the Tambaram Conference, made a serious attempt to answer the question from a theological point of view. The book stimulated much discussion both at the Tambaram Conference and after. This discussion revealed the need for a more thorough understanding of both the Christian faith and the non-Christian religions. One of the recommendations of the Tambaram Conference was that the Church should seek a fuller and more adequate understanding of other religious faiths.[2]

[1] *The Authority of the Faith*, Tambaram Series, Vol. I, pp. 209-210.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 212.

But perhaps because of the stress laid by Dr. Kraemer on the discontinuity between Christian revelation and non-Christian faiths, theologians and Christian apologists did not show much interest in pursuing the discussion, and in the interpretation of the relation between the Gospel and other faiths little progress has been made beyond the stage reached at Tambaram. In most Western universities the advanced study of non-Christian religions has been undertaken not by the faculty of Christian theology, but by the faculties of Philosophy or Oriental Studies.

The present concern of the Church to communicate the Gospel with a "challenging relevancy" has however revived a fresh interest in the discussion. The nature of the present challenge from non-Christian religions calls for a re-examination of our attitude to other faiths. The main facts of the present situation are clearly stated by Dr. E. C. Dewick in his recent Hulsean Lectures.[1] In the Asian countries, besides the resurgence of the ancient religions many new religions of an eclectic or syncretistic nature are winning the wholehearted allegiance of large numbers of people. Political ideologies also, such as Communism and nationalism, inspire such fervour and total commitment that for many they are "substitute religions". What constitutes the problem for the Christian evangelist is not merely the phenomenon of many religions holding vast masses of people under their grip. Even more important is the fact that these religions reject the claim of Christianity to be the final or even the highest type of religion, and offer much resistance directly or indirectly to the spread of the Gospel. One widely prevalent view in Asia, particularly in India, is that all religions lead to the same goal and that it does not matter what religion one adheres to. Addressing some missionaries in Assam, in February 1954, President Rajendra Prasad said that Christian missionaries could fully preach the Gospel, but without any desire for conversion. His argument was: "We want everyone to feel that he can reach the peak by any route that he likes or chooses." We also come across the view that all religions are equally irrelevant for man.

The driving force of the Church's mission, in the face of this situation, to go forward preaching the Gospel to the ends of the earth, to all nations and to every creature, and the manner in which this mission is to be fulfilled will depend largely on the

[1] *The Christian Attitude to other Religions*, pp. 25-29.

answers to certain basic questions. Is there a common religious truth distinct from other experiences of truth? Can religious truth be known without revelation? How are we to explain the similarities as well as the radical differences between religions in the interpretation of religious truth and in the understanding of man's need for religion? Can Christianity co-operate with other religions for the understanding of religious truth and for the achieving of the goal of religion? Is it possible for Christians to adopt categories of religious truth other than those derived from the Gospel in order to judge the values in other religions? In what sense can the Christian speak of the uniqueness of the Gospel?

## 2. A Historical Survey of Attitudes to non-Christian Faiths

In the history of Christian apologetics there have been many different types of approach to non-Christian religions, implying different answers to the above questions. The various attitudes to other religions do not lend themselves to neat classification. However, some classifications have been attempted which help to clarify the issues involved. The following analysis is based on some of the previous classifications. Three main approaches to non-Christian religions can be distinguished and these may be conveniently called, (a) the attitude of aggressive condemnation, (b) the attitude of sympathetic appreciation and co-operation, and (c) the attitude of proclaiming a unique and final Gospel, without denial of values in other religions.

### *A. The Attitude of Aggressive Condemnation*

This attitude assumes that Christianity alone is the revealed religion and that all other religions are untrue and devoid of any value. This was the view of some of the early Fathers like Tatian and Tertullian. Many of the early missionaries of the modern period also adopted this attitude. Missionary zeal was closely associated with the idea that all non-Christian religions should be entirely displaced by the Christian faith. Dr. E. C. Dewick describes this attitude by the phrase "Answers of War".[1] Some Asians have dubbed it the attitude of "untouchability".

[1] *Ibid.*, p. 40.

This attitude of the early Protestant missionaries cannot be dissociated from the imperialist expansion of European nations like Britain and Holland, and the consequent development of the belief that Western nations possessed a superior religion and culture. The early missionaries had only a very superficial knowledge of non-Christian religions, and because of their confidence in the superiority of the Christian civilization of the West they regarded the non-Christian as "the heathen who in his blindness bows down to wood and stone". Christianity alone was the absolute truth, and everything else was the work of the devil. This attitude was in fact supported by many distinguished converts also. In India, for example, Nehemiah Goreh and Pandita Ramabai, both of them good scholars of the Sanskrit Scriptures, believed after their conversion that there was nothing in Hinduism that they could take with them into Christianity: their former religion was all unqualified error and untruth.

However, the missionaries could not maintain their views with only a superficial knowledge of other faiths. The refusal of many non-Christians to admit the complete uselessness of their religions, and the apparent failure of Christian missions in their work among educated non-Christians, called for a more careful study of other religions. But still the superior attitude persisted. Many studied the non-Christian scriptures with a view to refuting those faiths. A prize of £300.0.0 was offered by a member of the Bengal Civil Service in 1859, "for the best statement and refutation of the fundamental errors of the Vedanta, Nyaya and Samkhya Philosophies as set forth in the standard native authorities and in the Sanskrit language, treating of these systems. . . ." Christian missionaries contributed much to the study of non-Christian religions and Oriental languages like Sanskrit. In India, by the close of the nineteenth century there was a vast collection of tracts, pamphlets and books on Hinduism written by them. But the chief motive of these studies was to refute Hinduism. One of the outstanding books representing this outlook is Wilhelm Dilger's *Salvation in Christianity and Hinduism*. The book was first published in German, and the English translation appeared in 1906. Dilger's conclusion was that even though there might be minor points of contact between Christianity and Hinduism, the two religions must be seen only in contrast to each other. Though the aspirations expressed in the

Hindu systems of salvation might be regarded as the result of divine revelation, the systems themselves were untrue.

This method of aggressive refutation and condemnation of other faiths began to be questioned when more objective studies of non-Christian scriptures and a more sympathetic understanding of non-Christian religious experience were possible. However, the "aggressive" approach was never completely abandoned in the missionary movement. Dr. Dewick quotes many recent scholars who place Christianity in sharp contrast to all other religions as "truth" against "falsehood".[1] In some books, like John Mackenzie's *Two Religions*, even though no condemnation of other religions is made, the obvious implication is that Christianity is the only true religion.

*B. The Attitude of Sympathetic Appreciation and Co-operation*

Many factors arose that demanded a more sympathetic approach to non-Christian religions. One of the most important of them was the great influence of the so-called "Liberal Theology" which abhorred dogma and emphasized the 'example' of Jesus and His ethical teachings. Further, through the impact of Christianity, Hinduism and other religions were being reinterpreted, and many reform movements were purifying them. The growing spirit of nationalism in countries like India added momentum to such reform movements. The work of the great orientalists like Max Müller contributed much to the new attitude to other faiths. Perhaps all these factors mutually supported one another. One of the concrete results of this tendency was the Parliament of Religions which first met in 1893 at Chicago. There representatives of many religions gathered to proclaim the greatness of all religions. This movement inspired the writing of many books advocating that no religion should claim absolute superiority over other religions.

Among Christian apologists, however, there were different shades of opinion about the manner and the extent to which non-Christian religions should be appreciated. Some found in non-Christian religions good analogies for presenting the Christian truth. J. Robson held that in the Hindu conception of *Sat chit ananda* there was an excellent analogy for the Christian doctrine of the Trinity.[2] K. M. Bannerjee suggested that the

[1] *Ibid.*, pp. 41-43.
[2] *Hinduism and its Relation to Christianity* (1887).

idea of the self-sacrificing Prajapati in the Vedas was a good analogy for preaching Christ as the true Prajapati, dying for the world.[1]

Another outstanding example of appreciating the truth and values of non-Christian faiths was the school of J. N. Farquhar. Inspired by the "Crown of Hinduism" or "fulfilment" theory, a whole series called "The Heritage of India" was published under Farquhar's general editorship. While rejecting the wholesale condemnation of non-Christian religious beliefs and practices, this school did not however believe that other religions could add anything new to the truth of the Gospel. T. E. Slater, after explaining what he thought to be the common goals of Hinduism and Christianity, concluded: "The Christian Gospel thus offers all that the Vedanta offers, and infinitely more. So true is it, that every previous revelation flows into the revelation we have in Christ and loses itself in Him. Christ includes all teachers."[2] The method of this school grew to be a technique for presenting the Christian Gospel rather than for an objective recognition and appreciation of truth in other religions. There was also the belief among the advocates of this school that other religions were in a process of disintegration, and that only Christianity could fulfil the aspirations expressed in these religions.

But the resurgence of ancient religions and the growing political consciousness of Asian countries after the first world war suggested to many missionary leaders that a more sympathetic approach towards other religions was to be adopted, both from the point of view of missionary strategy and in the interest of an honest appreciation of truth. The report of the American Laymen's Commission on *Re-Thinking Missions*, published in 1932, said that the Christian mission today "should make a positive effort, first of all to know and understand the religions around it, then to recognize and associate itself with whatever kindred elements there are in them." This attitude was strongly expressed in W. E. Hocking's book, *Living Religions and a World Faith.* He describes three ways to a world faith: the Way of Radical Displacement which aims at the complete displacement of the old religions by the new faith, the Way of Synthesis which seeks mutual accommodation of religions, and the Way of Reconception which means the reconception of the essence of one's religion through knowledge of other religions. The first is regarded as

[1] *The Relation between Christianity and Hinduism* (1892).
[2] *The Higher Hinduism in Relation to Christianity*, p. 277.

absurd and the second inadequate. His theory of reconception is that the aim of Christian missions should be not to supplant but to supplement other faiths. He recognizes that there are fundamental differences between religions, but he believes that all religions should be enriched by mutual learning from one another. There are elements of value in other faiths which Christianity does not have, and so Christianity should welcome inter-religious co-operation for the enrichment of all religions.[1] Though this view was quite widely held for some time, it was never endorsed by any major missionary body. While attempting to do justice to all religions, this attitude is left without any objective category of religious truth except human reason and religious experience. We cannot ignore the fact that attempts at inter-religious co-operation through Theosophist and other inter-religious movements have produced no new insights into the nature of religious truth.

Even though Hocking's theory of reconception did not receive wide acceptance among missionaries, the principle of re-interpretation of the Gospel in the light of non-Christian concepts has been adopted by some Christian apologists. A. J. Appasamy's *Christianity as Bhakti Marga* and V. Chakkarai's *Jesus the Avatar*, which were published in 1926, are examples of such interpretation. A strong plea for this kind of attitude is made in the book *Re-thinking Christianity in India* published in 1939. P. Chenchiah, one of the leaders of the "Re-thinking" group, holds that the living forces of Hinduism have a positive key to the "still inaccessible riches in Jesus". The members of this group also suggest that the Old Testament should be replaced by a collection of non-Christian Scriptures. But this group has helped the discussion only by raising stimulating questions. They have made scarcely any successful systematic attempt to interpret either the truth of the Gospel or the relation between the Gospel and other faiths.

### C. *The Attitude of Proclaiming a Unique Gospel without the Denial of Truth in other Religions*

In spite of the spirit of appreciation and respect for non-Christian faiths demanded by social and political factors as well as by increased knowledge of other faiths, the problem of religious truth in Christianity and other religions has remained

[1] *Living Religions and a World Faith*, New York, 1939, pp. 158-163, 254 ff.

unsolved. The Christian faith that we know God because He has revealed Himself to us in History and that in Christ we have the final revelation of God, has always raised the question whether God has revealed Himself in any way in the non-Christian religions and whether there is any real knowledge of God in those faiths. The different answers which seek to evaluate the truth in other religions, while at the same time assuming the uniqueness of the Gospel, may be classified under three main headings.

(*a*) *Thomistic Approach*

This group denies revelation in other faiths and at the same time accepts a certain *continuity* between Christianity and other religions. A distinction is made between Revealed Religion and Natural Religion. Even though all religions may have received a primitive revelation, Christianity alone possesses the final revelation of God. The other religions developed through human reason and are different expressions of Natural Religion. But the truth comprehended through Natural Religion need not necessarily be contradicted by Revelation. There are elements of truth in other religions, even though they are not of themselves sufficient unto salvation. They have to be completed or supplemented by the truth of Revelation. This attitude assumes a certain continuity between elements of Natural Religion and Revealed Religion and also recognizes the possibility of expressing revealed truth through categories known in Natural Religion. For this reason, Catholic missionaries have much more readily adopted non-Christian customs and baptized them into the Church than have the Protestants. Robert de Nobili, a member of the Roman Catholic Madura Mission in the seventeenth century, suggested that even the caste system of Hinduism was not contrary to the Gospel. He translated the New Testament into Sanskrit and called it the Fifth Veda. Arguing along Thomistic lines, Brahmabandhav Upadhyaya (1861-1907), an Indian Catholic, suggested that the Vedanta could take the place of Aristotelian Philosophy for an Indian interpretation of the Gospel. Both of these attempts were rejected by the Vatican, but they are illustrations of how Catholicism encourages one to find in non-Christian religions a *praeparatio evangelica*. The great Roman Catholic philosopher Baron Von Hugel has said that the Catholic view "claims that everywhere there

is some truth and that this truth comes originally from God'.[1]

Now, this approach assumes that the knowledge of God received through human reason is genuine. Reason is regarded as not completely subject to the perversion of sin. Protestant reformers have taught us to question this assumption. Moreover, this approach does not help to explain the contradictions between the truths apprehended in the various religions.

(*b*) *The Barthian Approach*

This title is given to those views based largely on the Barthian conception of revelation as having no continuity with anything that human reason can discover. According to these views there is no revelation in non-Christian faiths. The ideas of *continuity*, *fulfilment* and *points of contact* are rejected. One of the ablest expositions of this view is that of Hendrik Kraemer.[2] He describes his approach as that of "Biblical Realism". According to this view God's self-disclosing revelation in Christ is absolutely *sui generis*. The Roman Catholic conception of "natural theology" is described as "a failure and an error". If the idea of fulfilment is to be applied to the Gospel it can be only with reference to the promises of God given in previous acts of revelation and not to points of similarity in non-Christian faiths.[3] The dissimilarities and the antithesis between the Christian and non-Christian religions are more significant than the similarities and points of contact. Non-Christian religions are all-inclusive systems, and the points of contact when developed do not end in the sphere of the revelation in Christ. In the light of the revelation in Christ we see in non-Christian religions only a fundamental misdirection of man and a groping for God, which finds an unsuspected divine solution in Christ.[4] Empirical Christianity is also regarded as one of the religions that stands under the judgment of the revelation in Christ. This view is even more explicitly stated by H. Frick in his book, *The Gospel, Christianity and other Faiths.* Frick uses the figure of a circle of which the Gospel is the centre. All religions,

[1] *Essays on the Philosophy of Religion*, p. 252.
[2] *The Christian Message in a non-Christian World*, pp. 101-141. The same idea is expressed differently by Emil Brunner in *Revelation and Reason*, ch. 15.
[3] H. Kraemer, *op. cit.*, p. 123.
[4] *Ibid.*, p. 139.

including Christianity, are at the circumference. But Christianity alone is connected to the centre by a radius. While Christianity is also judged like other religions by the Word of God, it is unique because it is founded on the Gospel.

The Barthian approach is critical of all theories that imply a certain relativity of religious truth, and against such theories it emphasizes the necessity for the absoluteness of the truth of revelation. Emil Brunner, who shares this view, says, "Whereas the relative theory of religion regards the basic element in all religions as the essence of religion, and all that distinguishes them from one another as non-essential, so far as Biblical faith is concerned the exact opposite is true. It is the distinctive element that is essential, and all that the Christian faith may have in common with other religions is non-essential." [1] The Biblical revelation is accepted as absolute and made the basis for the evaluation of other faiths.

Now, the principal element in this approach is the stand that for a Christian there can be no category of religious truth except that which is derived from the Biblical revelation. But the Barthian affirmations of an "absolute qualitative difference" between truths revealed in Christ and truths discovered by man, and the absolute discontinuity between Christianity and other religions, do not obviously follow from the acceptance of the Biblical revelation. Before the principle of discontinuity can be accepted as valid, it should be tested by an unbiased study of other religions. The fact that there are divergent views about the nature and content of the Christian revelation itself should be borne in mind when re-examining and re-defining the concept of discontinuity.

### (c) *The Constructive Approach*

Belief in the uniqueness and absoluteness of the Biblical revelation has not always been accompanied by a denial of revelation in other faiths. But it is held that other revelations can be recognized and evaluated only in the light of the Biblical revelation. The final revelation in Christ is in varying degrees regarded as bringing "judgment", "fulfilment" and "redemption" to other religions. One of the ways of recognizing the possibility of revelation outside the Christian revelation has been by dis-

[1] *Revelation and Reason*, p. 220.

tinguishing between general revelation and special revelation. But by 'general revelation' is often meant nothing more than the implanting of God's character in nature. "God did not leave Himself without witness, for He did good and gave you from heaven rains and fruitful seasons. . . ." (Acts 14: 17). "General revelation only means that God shines revealingly through the works of His creation . . . because God is continuously occupying Himself and wrestling with man, in all ages and with all peoples. This general revelation can only be effectively discovered in the light of the special revelation." [1]

G. E. Phillips gives more positive recognition to 'general revelation' in other religions.[2] But the elements of general revelation, he maintains, do not lead to the full knowledge of God unless they are corrected and fulfilled by the special revelation in Christ. "Special revelation has given so much more light than general that it is not surprising that some are unwilling to concede to the latter the term 'revelation' at all. But though the sun so outshines the stars that we cannot see them, they are there, and before the sun is up, their light is a gift from God. Christianity must not deny general revelation; nor on the other hand must it fail to see the imperfections of the religions which have been made out of it by human limitations and sinfulness. Christianity takes up into itself this general revelation as truth distorted by man's faulty vision, which can only see aright through the glass of revelation *par excellence*, the communication by God of the knowledge of Himself, in the whole process of which Jesus Christ is the centre."[3] E. C. Dewick, while holding that through Jesus Christ God has given a revelation of truth that is central, distinctive, supreme and satisfying for all mankind, believes that this faith does not exclude the possibility that God may also have truly spoken to men through other channels. He recognizes that when tested by the Christian revelation it is impossible to maintain that all religions are fundamentally alike or of equal value. But still he believes in the possibility of inter-religious co-operation with a view to be led by God into fuller light.[4]

N. Micklem suggests that certain elements in other religions, such as the idea of *bhakti* in Hinduism and the myths of the

[1] H. Kraemer, *op. cit.*, p. 125.
[2] *The Gospel in the World*, 1939, pp. 66-88.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 74.
[4] *op. cit.*, p. 202.

death and rising of gods in some other religions, are different levels of the soul's ascent toward God by prayer and desire, "met by the answering condescension of God to man's estate". "According to men's differing insights the Christian Gospel will be regarded as the negation or the fulfilment of the demands of Reason."[1]

A. G. Hogg makes a distinction between the "faith" of individual non-Christians and non-Christian "faiths" or "systems". The non-Christian *systems* are often such that their points of contact with the Christian faith can only be found by antithesis. But in order to be fair in the judgment of non-Christian systems, the distinction made between the Gospel and empirical Christianity should be applied to other faiths also. In the case of the *faith* of individual non-Christians it is possible to see a two-sided commerce between God and men and recognize a "life hid in God" even where it is not the same as the Christian faith.[2] The implication of this distinction is that the divine revelation in non-Christian religions is to be found in the area of individual faith, rather than in the systems. Judged from the point of view of the Christian revelation, the *faith* of individual non-Christians is often on a higher level than the systems. For example, men like Ramakrishna Paramahamsa had deeper insights into truth during their religious quests than after they had found "truth" in religious systems.

According to P. D. Devanandan's analysis, every religious system, including the Christian, has a creed, a cultus and a culture. In the area of its creed every religion is unique. In the Christian creed, which is the Gospel of Jesus Christ, non-Christians will find the "scandal", the totally unacceptable claims of Christianity. But, he maintains, it is not impossible that in the realms of cultus and culture Christians in Asia will find a measure of affinity with the non-Christian peoples among whom they live.[3] This analysis is helpful in that it indicates that the deepest differences between religions spring from differing convictions about truth. But this does not go beyond stating the fact. The problem is how to interpret these differences in terms of ultimate religious truth. It is also not quite accurate to say that the central core of each religion is its creed. A creed

[1] *Religion*, pp. 206-209.
[2] *The Authority of Faith*, pp. 102-110.
[3] "*So send I You*", Report of the Conference on Evangelism, Ceylon, 1953, p. 9.

is only an attempt to formulate the religious truth as apprehended in a particular religion: the truth apprehended is prior to and greater than the creed.

These different points of view agree that non-Christian religions contain some truth and that it is not possible to accept the view of total discontinuity. The problem is how to assess the status of each truth. D. G. Moses, in his discussion of the nature of religious truth, agrees with S. Radhakrishnan that "the religions that are held by different groups of men and which have steadied their wills and given them peace cannot be wholly devoid of truth". But he also criticizes Radhakrishnan's view, saying that not all theories need to be regarded as having the same amount of truth and that all theories have to be evaluated in the light of some standard.[1]

The views described above under the heading "constructive approach" assume that the Christian revelation is the standard by which other revelations are to be tested. Application of this principle has brought out the ideas of *judgment*, *fulfilment* and *redemption* of non-Christian religions by the Christian Gospel. This was one of the underlying principles of J. N. Farquhar's book *The Crown of Hinduism*, even though it was not clearly stated and the title and the method of the book were very misleading. Farquhar did not use the word 'Crown' in the sense that Hinduism found its completion in Christianity. Such a view would mean ignoring the fact that each religion is a self-contained system, claiming to fulfil all the aspirations it arouses in its adherents. It would be like "looking for the fulfilment of a rose bud in the full-blown flower of an orchid". He believed that the 'gold' in non-Christian faiths is mixed with much dross which must be burnt away by the refiner's fire of the Gospel. He also suggested that the non-Christian systems must die in order that the aspirations and dreams of their individual thinkers and ascetics can bear fruit in the lives of people. "Hinduism must die in order to live. It must die into Christianity."[2] Paul Tillich expresses the same point of view rather differently. He regards the revelation in Christ as the *final* revelation and other revelations as *preparatory*. "The final revelation divides history into a period of preparation and a period of reception. . . . The bearer of the receiving revelation is the Christian Church.

[1] *Religious Truth and the Relation between Religions*, 1950, p. 111.
[2] *The Crown of Hinduism*, 1913, pp. 51, 54.

The period of receiving revelation has begun with the beginning of the Church. All religions and cultures outside the Church are, according to the Christian judgment, still in the period of preparation."[1] He also distinguishes between two types of preparatory revelations, one a "universal preparatory revelation" which is identified with the prophetic element in all religions, and the other "the direct concrete preparation" which is the revelation through the prophets of Israel. "The universal revelation as such is not the immediate preparation for the final revelation; only the universal revelation criticized and transformed by the prophetism of the Old Testament is such preparation."[2] The conflicts, however, which exist between religions cannot be explained merely by the theory of *preparatory* and *final* revelations. We need to accept the possibility of distortions of truth due to man's disobedience and sin.

We can only look at other religions while standing within the salvation we have in Christ, in whom alone we know God. When so viewed, all religions fall short of the glory of God revealed in Christ. All religions are judged by Christ. But Christ also fulfils and redeems all religious life. This use of the words 'fulfilment' and 'redemption' requires some explanation. 'Fulfilment' does not mean simply that Christ completes what is present in the non-Christian religions in an incomplete form. Nor does 'redemption' mean that through a process of transformation the non-Christian systems are reinstated. Fulfilment and redemption are two aspects of the same process. When a person accepts the Christian faith he discovers that his religious needs and aspirations are expressed as well as satisfied differently. But nothing of value in his former system is destroyed. He finds that whatever was of worth in his former religion is restored in a new and richer form. His religious life is fulfilled and redeemed in the Christian faith

### 3. The Task of Christian Apologetics Today

In facing the claim of equality of all religions, or the claims of many religions today to superiority and world conquest, it is not easy for the Christian apologist to demonstrate the relevance of preaching the Gospel and inviting every one to accept Christ. The problem is all the more difficult because there

[1] *Systematic Theology*, Vol. I, pp. 138-144.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 142.

are no independent categories of religious truth or revelation whereby all religions can be tested and compared. For the Christian apologist, what has happened in and through Christ is the centre and source of all ideas of revelation and truth. In the relation between the New Testament and the Old Testament he sees how Christ judged and fulfilled the Jewish religion. He knows that Christ constantly brings judgment and redemption even upon the Christian religion, on its individual as well as its collective aspects. But the question is whether the Christian apologist can effectively convince himself and non-Christians that Christ is the judge and redeemer of all religious life. Abstract comparative study of religions alone will not bear much fruit. What is required is a thorough understanding of how people's aspirations, hopes and fears, and attitudes to life are affected and moulded by their religions. This knowledge is particularly important because the principle of judgment and redemption by Christ can be comprehended only as people face their deepest needs and honestly try to respond to truth as they have seen it. The Christian apologist is primarily concerned with people—Hindus, Muslims, Buddhists, Communists—rather than with the religious systems they represent. But one cannot really understand a person without a thorough knowledge of the religious system that has moulded his life.

The main task of the Christian apologist is to see how the truth of the Gospel can be so interpreted that the non-Christian is able to understand the wisdom of accepting Christ as "the Way, the Truth and the Life", and to find in Christ the truth that judges, fulfils and redeems his own religious life. This task involves the presentation of the Christian truth through doctrinal exposition and indigenous expression, and through the demonstration of the relevancy of the Gospel to concrete human situations.

### (*a*) *Doctrinal Exposition*

The truth in every religion can be expressed in the form of doctrines about God, man, the world, sin, life after death, worship and the like. It is in these doctrines that 'points of contact' are observed. The differences between religions are also most obvious in these doctrines. The purpose of this doctrinal approach is to understand the significance of both the similarities and the contradictions in the apprehensions of

truth in different religions. An attempt should be made to see how far non-Christian doctrines reflect some basic truth expressed differently and more fully in the Christian faith, and also how irreconcilable some differences are. The question whether genuine revelation has taken place cannot be answered by such a study. The comparative study of doctrines can only be used to indicate how the Christian Gospel exposes the untruth in other religions and upholds whatever is true in them.

The Christian doctrines derive their content and meaning from Christ, and this fact makes them unique. Most religions imply some doctrine of revelation, even though there are wide differences among them about the nature and content of revelation. The common element of an idea of divine revelation may be interpeted as testifying to an innate restlessness of the human spirit and a longing for divine initiative in man's redemption. Such restlessness is answered by fragmentary experiences of revelation. In the Christian faith, however, the primary emphasis is not on revelation and truth. The Christian Gospel is *Jesus Christ*. The truth of the Gospel is not grasped by unredeemed human reason. Only the reason that has come under the redemption wrought by Christ knows the truth.[1] Revelation takes place through redemption, and the truth is known by men in the process of their being redeemed by God. Truth is known not in the form of propositions about the nature of reality, but in the person and work of Jesus Christ. All other ideas of revelation and knowledge of God should be examined in the light of this faith in the self-disclosure of God in His once-for-all saving act in Christ.

The doctrine of God, derived from the Christian faith that He has acted in history, particularly in the history of Israel and in Christ for the redemption of man, implies that He is not the attributeless absolute but a God who has a purpose for history and with whom personal communion is possible. Other conceptions of God are to be examined in the light of this understanding of a redeeming God. In most religions there is an attempt to safeguard some truth about God. Islam is zealous about maintaining the unity of God against the dangers of polytheism. Hinduism has expressed the transcendence as well as the immanence of God by making God an impersonal absolute.

[1] The discussion by D. G. Moses on "Problems of Truth in Religions" in *The Authority of the Faith* (pp. 63-89) brings out this point forcibly.

S. Radhakrishnan argues that the insistence upon God as the impersonal absolute is meant to preserve the supra-personal nature of God. But the impersonal actually becomes 'infra-personal' or non-personal, never supra-personal. As C. C. J. Webb has reminded us, the fundamental principle involved in the concept of the personal is a reciprocal relationship in terms of moral responses.[1] In Islam also the concept of the absolute sovereignty of God, denying human freedom, does violence to the idea of personality. Another point to be considered is that no other religion values so highly God's redemptive activity in history as does the Biblical religion. Indeed, no other religion takes history so seriously.

Closely associated with the conception of God is the understanding of man and his destiny. It is here that some of the most glaring conflicts between religions appear. Frederick Hilliard's view[2] that Christianity has to learn from the conceptions of man in other religions is very questionable. The other religions emphasize some truths about man, and distort other aspects. Hinduism believes in an essentially divine and free *atman*, which is defined by the expression *tat tvam asi*. In a world of change and unreality *atman* is the real principle. Though its involvement in the world is evil, the *atman* itself is not corrupted. The essential goodness of the soul is an axiom for the exponents of Hinduism. The Buddhist doctrine of *anatta* is directly opposed to the Hindu doctrine of *atman*. According to Hinayana Buddhism, there is no unchanging soul going from one existence to another. Man is to be understood in terms of *bhava* or becoming. There is a recognition here that the survival of the human soul is not inevitable. The Islamic conception of man recognizes that he must always be understood in relation to God. But the idea of absolute submission to the will of Allah does violence to man's freedom.

The study of religions also shows that every religion seeks deliverance from some form of evil. But no other religion regards evil so seriously as does Christianity. The different conceptions of evil in the history of religions bear witness to the recognition of a cosmic corruption. In the Christian revelation this cosmic corruption is seen to be closely associated with the corruption of human personality. Redemption of this world

[1] *God and Personality*, p. 105.
[2] *Man in Eastern Religions*, 1946, pp. 85 ff.

from bondage to corruption is therefore dependent on the redemption of man. "The creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God . . . because the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay and obtain the glorious liberty of the children of God." (Rom. 8:19-21). Fundamental to the Christian understanding of redemption is the idea of the grace of God. Man is saved not through his own works but by the divine offer of forgiveness of sins. There are ideas of grace in other religions also. There are close similarities, for instance, between the Christian conception of grace and the grace in Vaishnavism and other *bhakti* religions. But very significant differences should also be recognized. The non-Christian religions have many ideas about grace, but they point to very few divine acts of grace. Further, grace is conceived of as operating only in the lives of individuals and without any social consequences. The Christian faith regards grace as a personal relationship which affects the life not only of individuals but also of the whole Church, and through the Church permeates the world.

These references to the analysis of doctrines in non-Christian religions indicate that the Christian faith does not completely negate everything in other religions. The Gospel says both *yes* and *no* to the truth in other religions. But in most cases the *no* is more emphatic than the *yes*. The Christian conceptions of man, his involvement in sin, and his redemption from sin reflect a much deeper experience and knowledge of God than do those in other religions. Some expressions of truth appear to be incomplete or erroneous distortions which have to be corrected and restated. What is false in them should be eliminated, and what is true should be upheld.

(*b*) *Indigenous expressions*

Apart from the inherent scandal of the Gospel, Christianity often appears offensive to the non-Christian because of the essentially Western form in which it is presented. An enlightened Brahmin friend told the author that he would become a Christian if only Christians did not use Western music for worship. The language, thought forms and ways of worship adopted by the Church in the West are not necessarily integral to the Gospel. When the Gospel was preached in the Graeco-Roman world, a process of indigenization took place. The Church had to fight to preserve the essential features of the Gospel from

any compromise, but it adopted the words and thought forms most helpful to communicate the Gospel, and the practices that did not conflict with it. Dr. Kraemer emphasizes the need for such adaptations of indigenous thought forms and vocabulary. He regards the aversion to use indigenous vocabulary to translate Biblical expressions as unnatural and mistaken. "Paul and John lived fully in the world of their day, moved in its thought forms and ideas, used their wording and imagery and shared with the men of that time the way in which the world pictured itself in their minds with all its celestial and sublunary spheres."[1] The Church's ineffectiveness today is to some extent due to "a great lack of imagination and flexibility of mind".

In order to use indigenous thought forms and vocabulary for the presentation of the Christian Gospel it is necessary to understand the precise meanings these expressions convey for non-Christians. There is always the possibility of misunderstanding or distorting the truth. There is need, therefore, constantly to watch the transformation that words and expressions undergo in their meaning, and to see that the words we use convey the meaning we want them to. While fulfilling this task it must be borne in mind that "adaptation in the deepest sense does not mean to assimilate the cardinal facts of the revelation in Christ as much as possible to fundamental religious ideas and tastes of the pre-Christian past, but to express these facts by wrestling with them concretely and so to present the Christian truth and reveal at the same time the intrinsic inadequacy of man's religious efforts for the solution of his crucial religious and moral problems."[2]

The question as to what extent Christianity can adopt non-Christian thought forms, language and practices cannot easily be answered. There have been suggestions to adopt some systems of oriental philosophy for the presentation of Christianity. We have already mentioned the proposal of Brahmabandhav Upadhyaya at the beginning of this century that the Gospel be expressed through Ramanuja's Vedanta. In a recent article Carl Keller, for some time a missionary in India, argues that the Vedanta can be rendered fruitful for a new interpretation of Christology.[3] A. J. Appasamy, P. Chenchiah and others have

[1] *op. cit.*, p. 309. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 308.
[3] "The Vedanta Philosophy and the Message of Christ" in *International Review of Missions*, October 1953, pp. 377-389.

suggested the interpretation of the Gospel using the concepts of *bhakti*, *yoga*, *karma*, *nibbana* and the like. One thing to be remembered is that the language and thought forms adopted from one religion may not always be relevant for people brought up in another environment. But it is possible that some words like *bhakti*, *karma* and *yoga*, associated with a certain type of religious concept and experience, are easily adaptable for wider currency.

There are several recent indications that the churches are becoming alive to the need of indigenous expression. For instance, the Church of South India at its 1954 Synod adopted the following resolution:

> "One of our fundamental aims as a Church being, in the words of our Constitution, 'to express under Indian conditions and Indian forms, the spirit, the thought and the life of the Church Universal,' every diocese should now:—
>
> (1) pay greater attention to the Indianizing of worship, which in many churches is still westernized in form.
>
> (2) encourage the production of Christian literature of a high quality in the Indian languages.
>
> (3) pay greater attention to stating the Christian faith against the background of Eastern thought. . . ."

There are two other important considerations with regard to this type of apologetics. First, Christian writers should be encouraged to experiment with the use of non-Christian terms and thought forms, even if these experiments appear at times to depart from traditional orthodoxy. At present many are hindered from attempting fresh lines of approach because of the fear within official church circles that these attempts will lead to syncretism. The Church should be prepared to take this risk in order to meet non-Christian faiths in a living encounter. In this connection there is much that we can learn from the Alexandrine Fathers who, by expressing Christian truths in the thought forms of the Graeco-Roman world, met and answered most of the contemporary intellectual objections to the Gospel. Secondly, apologetic literature should be addressed directly to the non-Christian. At present most Christian literature either uses vocabulary that is unintelligible to the non-Christian reader, or presents a somewhat impersonal analysis of non-Christian religious systems. What is urgently

needed is more apologetic writing that enters into direct conversation with the individual Hindu, Muslim or Buddhist reader, using terms with which he is familiar. D. T. Niles' *Eternal Life Now* is an example of such literature addressed to Buddhists.

Adaptation of indigenous forms should go hand in hand with the process of pronouncing judgment on beliefs and practices that are obviously in conflict with the Gospel. For example, observance of caste, emphasis on mystical experience to the neglect of social responsibilities, ancestor worship and similar elements in non-Christian religions and culture deserve the condemnation of the Church. It is a part of the apologetic task to help non-Christians understand the distortions of truth in their religions.

(*c*) *Relevancy to Concrete Situations*

In Asia today there are many conflicting views concerning the relevancy of religion for social life. Communists and the followers of certain other political faiths regard religion as an opiate and irrelevant to human well-being. Many others look upon religion as satisfying one aspect of man's need but having little to do with the rest of his life. It has been recently maintained, for instance, by certain law courts in India that religion is a private matter having little or no concern with institutions and the management of property. On the other hand, modern spokesmen for Buddhism claim that they have the key to the establishment of world peace. Similar claims are made by the spokesmen of Islam, Hinduism and other religions. Thus S. Radhakrishnan maintains that Hinduism is a realistic and democratic world-view with a message that is relevant to our modern social ills. Some of the modern syncretistic movements in Japan claim to provide an adequate basis for the transformation of society.

The Christian faith, which proclaims Christ as the Lord of all life, ought to be more relevant to every human situation than is any other faith. However, the Church has not always been faithful to her Lord in this task. Often the Church has not taken seriously her responsibility to society. But the interest which the Church has shown, particularly in recent years, in the different spheres of social life is an indication of the relevancy of the Gospel to this life. In order that this

relevancy can be more effectively demonstrated, the churches should give more attention to the interpretation of what Christian faith and hope mean for the social witness of the Church. No sphere of life, social, political, economic or cultural, falls outside the judgment of the Word of God.

One way in which Christians can fulfil this responsibility is to enter into conversation with the followers of various ideologies concerning the aims of social and political life. The Eastern Asia Christian Conference, held at Bangkok in 1949, strongly recommended such a procedure. M. M. Thomas has taken a lead in this direction by writing a book in Malayalam which analyses the five major political ideologies in India and evaluates them from a Christian perspective. This book has had a wide sale among politically alert young people, both Christian and non-Christian.

In this task of demonstrating the relevancy of the Gospel, the responsibility of local congregations can never be overemphasized. It is at the level of the local congregation that the impact of the Gospel on social life is most clearly seen. The common life of the members of the Church should be so organized that it may be seen as a fellowship sharing supernatural life. Only the gift of the Holy Spirit can help the congregation to offer effective witness to the Gospel. It is the Holy Spirit who brings into common human experience the powers of the Kingdom of God, "the age to come".

### (*d*) *Immediate Programme*

The Church's apologetic work can be greatly helped by institutes or study centres organized for the study of non-Christian religions in their classical as well as modern forms. The Henry Martyn School of Islamic Studies at Aligarh, India, has been such a centre for advanced studies in Islam. Now that Pakistan and Indonesia have come into existence as Muslim States, it is necessary to consider whether a school located in India can effectively carry on study and research into Islamic thought in Pakistan and Indonesia, where the outlook for Islam is entirely different from that in India.

There are plans to start an Institute for the Study of Buddhism in Ceylon. This institute will deal primarily with Hinayana Buddhism, which is the dominant type in Ceylon and Burma. A similar institute, perhaps in Japan, for the study of

Mahayana and other forms of Buddhism may also be necessary. A centre for the study of Hinduism is being planned in India.

These centres will carry out advanced research in the areas of the history, philosophy, theology and sociology of the religions concerned, making use of the best scholarship available. Missionary societies should be requested to help provide the funds required to get an adequate team of scholars and also to build a good library of classical and modern religious books and periodicals. There should also be provision for the publication of the results of research. The activities of these research agencies should be primarily within the field of the scientific study of religion, and wherever possible should be carried on in co-operation with non-Christian scholars in the field.

In this connection, mention should also be made of the Christian Institute for the Study of Society in India. This institute was established with a view to helping the Church in India formulate a Christian social doctrine relevant for India, and to fulfil her responsibility in society. This institute also seeks to make use of advanced research in sociology carried on by other scholars. Similar study centres are necessary in other Asian countries also, so that the Church may be alive to all the factors that control social change and be able to exercise her influence most effectively.

The results of research in these institutes or study centres should be utilized in the training of pastors and evangelists in theological seminaries, in the writing of apologetic books and pamphlets by theologically equipped persons, and in working out suitable courses of instruction in Christian schools and colleges.

### 4. Conclusion

In our attitude to non-Christian religions it is most important that we manifest a spirit of humility. The criticism of 'imperialism', 'arrogance', 'superior airs' and the like levelled against Christian missionaries may be ill-founded in some cases, but not always. Sometimes the spirit in which we approach non-Christians causes offence, and it is necessary to keep constant watch over our motives. We should listen patiently to the criticisms they make about our faith. Often the non-Christian has genuine difficulties about Christian faith and doctrines, and his failure to understand the faith is often due to our failure in

communication. It is essential therefore to go behind the bitterness and fanaticism with which non-Christians express their comments and see the weight of the intellectual, religious or sociological problems they face.

It is also necessary for the Church to ask herself whether she has taken the doctrine of "justification by faith" sufficiently seriously in presenting the Gospel to non-Christians. St. Paul stressed "justification by faith alone" in his controversy with the Judaizers who sought to impose the Jewish law on all converts. For Christians, Christ is the Law. They accept the Law of the Old Testament only as it is transformed and fulfilled in Christ. They must not attempt to isolate grace from law, but in preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ the free gift of grace and salvation by faith must be stressed. The Law must be accepted in the spirit of freedom, with the liberty of the children of God. But often this distinction between law and grace has not been maintained in Christian evangelism. Each church has developed its own tradition of ecclesiastical order, liturgy and doctrine. This tradition should never be identified with the Gospel. One serious mistake made by the churches is that they have often tried to impose their traditions upon converts from other faiths, instead of permitting these converts to develop their own ecclesiastical order, liturgy and doctrine in keeping with their new-found freedom in Christ. Because of this, the Gospel often appears to the non-Christian as merely a call to change from one religious system to another. The good news of freedom from bondage to a legalistic religious system is obscured by the external forms in which the Gospel is presented.

Finally, the Christian evangelist has to find the relevance of Christ's words, "I came not to destroy but to fulfil", as he considers the relation of Christianity to other faiths. When non-Christians find in their religions sufficient values to inspire and sustain their loyalty, it is a Christian responsibility to show that all that is precious in every religion will find a place in the Christian life. It is true that everything has to be redeemed and transformed by Christ in order to be made part of the Christian religion. What causes offence, however, is not always the claims of Christ, but the lack of sufficient appreciation and respect among Christians for the non-Christian religions. There are prayers and other expressions of devotion in non-Christian faiths which can be baptized for the use of the Church. One

ought certainly to be warned of the possible dangers of syncretism, but fear of syncretism is no valid excuse for rejecting all indigenous forms of worship as unsuitable for Christian devotion. Some attempts along this line have been made by individuals and groups, particularly those of the Ashram movement in India. More systematic and organized efforts should be made to baptize the precious elements of non-Christian religions and cultures for the use of the Christian Church. The treasures of all nations should be brought to the feet of Christ, and this is one way of bringing Christ to all nations.

SECTION III

# THE CHURCH IN EAST ASIA

## EDITORIAL NOTE

The three chapters in this section have been written by the East Asia Secretary. The statement on the Church in each country of East Asia has been submitted by him to the Secretary of the National Christian Council in the country concerned, and has been approved. However, in the absence of replies from one or two National Christian Councils, responsible leaders within such organizations have been consulted.

R. B. M.

CHAPTER I

# THE CHURCHES IN THE ASIAN CONTEXT

TO REPEAT that the multitudes which inhabit East Asia are today caught in the terrific maelstrom of a gigantic revolution may sound trite, but it is the stark and stirring truth. Bishop Stephen Neill, after his East Asian tour in 1948, wrote: "Asia today is in the throes of the greatest revolution that has ever happened in the history of mankind".[1] The various aspects of this revolution have been dwelt upon in the first and second sections of this book. Here we are concerned primarily with the religious aspect of the Asian context which forms the background against which the churches in East Asia are set today.

## 1. *The Challenge of non-Christian Religions*

East Asia contains four great non-Christian cultures: Hindu, Buddhist, Islamic and Confucian. While the centre of Islam may be elsewhere, a large number of Muslims live in this area, and the two largest Muslim states—Indonesia and Pakistan—lie in this region. East Asia is the home of Hinduism, Buddhism and Confucianism. On the other hand, this area contains more than one half of the Christians of all mission lands, and more than eighty-five per cent of the Christian colleges, schools and hospitals therein. It is in this area, more than in any other, that Christianity has to come to grips with the great non-Christian systems of religious thought and philosophy.

These non-Christian religions are influencing vast multitudes that live in East Asia today. Hinduism holds sway over one-fifth of the world's population. Buddhism is the dominant religion of Ceylon, Burma, Thailand, China, Korea, Taiwan and Japan. Pakistan and Indonesia are Muslim states. In recent years, these age-old religions have become resurgent and aggressive, and shout their slogans and engage in open conflict with Christianity. Their present stage of development indicates that new life and vigour have been infused into these old and classical faiths. Nationalism has taken on a religious

[1] *The Cross over Asia*, The Canterbury Press, 1948, p. 16.

colouring, so much so that a hundred per cent Pakistani means a *Muslim* Pakistani, or a hundred per cent Burmese a *Buddhist* Burmese.

Two elements in the revolt of the East against the West may be noticed. One is the desire to assimilate as much from the West as possible, and the other is the deliberate self-affirmation of the East in the face of the West, and in spite of its assimilation or imitation of the West. Therefore, after the first attempt at syncretism, a second attempt is now being made, and that is to make the rising nation itself the religious foundation. Hence a new kind of secular religion is entering the Eastern world in which the nation is both god and the believers. Messianic claims are being made today by most of the nations that have recently gained their independence and believe that they have an important role to play in resurrecting the East.

In reaction to the West, four kinds of Asians have arisen, as has been well pointed out by Mr. K. P. Landon.[1] To the first group belong those westernized Asians who simply discard their old religions and accept the humanism of the West, or some sort of materialism or nationalism. They have no use for religion of any sort. On the other hand, there are those whose westernization has not been deep enough. They carry their eggs in two baskets, and there is no exchange between the two. One contains the old religious beliefs, and the other the odds and ends picked up from the West. These persons make no conscious attempt at reconciliation. They are like the Indian professor of astronomy who knows thoroughly the reasons for the eclipse of the moon, and yet on the lunar eclipse day takes his bath of purification and joins vigorously with the multitude in making a tremendous noise so that the moon may be delivered from the embrace of the snake of heaven. To the third group belong those who accept the new gods and the new cult practices, and use them to clothe their old ideas. Instead of being converted to the new, they convert the new for old purposes. Even more than with these three kinds of westernized Asians, the Church in Asia has to grapple with a fourth kind. They are those who begin to look upon their traditional religion with a new understanding, and attempt

[1] *South-East Asia.*

to re-think it in modern terms, discarding that which is untenable, and proclaiming triumphantly that which is of value as being the equal of any other modern religion, especially Christianity. They attempt to rationalize the old in terms of the new insights. When this is done, the cry is always to return to the pristine religion of a Muhammad or a Buddha, as the case may be. This is not really a return to the old religion, but a re-thinking and re-stating of the old religion with a new insight and basing it on carefully selected scriptural texts to support this contention. It is in this last sense that some of the classical religions of the East are gaining a new lease of life and are challenging Christianity by denying its exclusive claims and its uniqueness.

2. *New Attitudes to Christianity*

The long period of colonial rule over many of the East Asian countries, and the association of Christianity with the Western powers, have made the Christian religion appear to the non-Christian Asian as an appendage of Western sovereignty and civilization. Asian Christians were looked upon with suspicion. When Indonesia became independent, the Ambonese, most of whom were Christians, revolted against their own national government. When Burma went out of the British Commonwealth, a good number of the leaders of the Karen revolt against the State of Burma were Christians. Today, some of the agitators for an independent Naga State apart from India are also Christians. These facts have reinforced the suspicion that Christianity alienates the Asian from loyalty to his own country, and that the Christian religion is inherently foreign to East Asia. It is not often remembered that the founder of Christianity was an Asian. In spite of the fact that Western powers have withdrawn today from many East Asian countries, and that Christianity should therefore no longer be confused with alien rule, still the suspicion lingers. Whether it will die a slow death or quickly pass away will depend upon the Christian communities in East Asia and their identification with the natural aspirations of their own peoples.

Governments in East Asia today are trying hard to limit the work of foreign missionaries to humanitarian services, such as the educational, medical, etc., but demand that they leave their primary calling, namely, preaching the Gospel, to nationals,

Why is it that while ready and willing to accept the best that the West can offer in technical assistance, they reject the greatest treasure the West can give them—the Gospel of Christ?

The identification of Christianity with Western culture, institutions and mores characterized the missionary enterprise of the nineteenth century, and a good part of the present. Non-Christian religions and cultures were at first despised, and, it was believed, were to be uprooted and destroyed if the Asian soul was to be saved. This attitude was succeeded by that of the liberal school of theology which appreciated the values in non-Christian faiths to such an extent that Christianity came to be presented as the crown of non-Christian religions. It was to supplement rather than supplant them. In recent decades the pendulum again swung back to the earlier extreme, under the influence largely of continental theology with its theory of discontinuity. But more recently Christianity is being presented to non-Christians as both fulfilment and judgment of their religions.

Each of these philosophies of the missionary enterprise brought in its wake a conscious or unconscious imperialism which has alienated the sympathies of non-Christian peoples and prevented the Church from becoming as indigenous as possible. It is the alien character of the Church in general in East Asia, combined with the attitude of superiority that the Western missionary often exhibited, that has led the revolt against Christianity and resulted in the imposition of new restrictions on the foreign missionary. While the teachings of Christ have won the appreciation of the non-Christian, his admiration has fallen short of the acceptance of Christ as the one and only Saviour of the world, or of membership in His Church. To the ancient world, the offence of Christianity was the Cross: today in East Asia the offence is the Church. Its alien character and its intimate association with the West largely account for this attitude. Non-Christian leaders are never tired of singing the praises of the foreign missionary and the work of his 'Mission', but they have little or no use for the Church which his 'Mission' has helped to establish. They welcome his humanitarian work, but not conversion or membership in the Church.

Christianity in the eyes of Asian peoples both repels and attracts—*repels*, because it comes from another people, has a distinctive stamp and appears partly peculiar and partly un-

natural, and *attracts*, at the same time, because it brings something new and valuable: the impact of new ideals and personalities, and of the Christian Church with its record of selfless service. The discerning minority, crushed with a feeling of inadequacy to meet the demands of a new day in Asia, have begun to question seriously the adequacy of their old religions to meet the new situation, and to wonder if after all the new faith of Christianity may not point the way to a solution of their personal and national problems. Hence non-Christian leaders are never tired of acclaiming the ideals of Christianity and urging their followers to undertake projects of uplift with "missionary zeal" and a "Christian spirit of sacrifice and service".

3. *The Miracle of Our Age*

Christianity is no newcomer to the Asian scene. It was born in Asia. The ancient Syrian Church of Malabar, India, cherishes the belief that its founder was the Apostle Thomas. It is a well-known fact that in the sixth century A.D. there were Christians in India and Ceylon with priests and bishops of Persia and Syria to minister to them. In the seventh century, when Christianity was first beginning to take root in England, the Christian Gospel was carried into China by a Persian bishop. A Nestorian Church extended all the way from Northern India to China during the early centuries of the Christian era. However, it is true to say that the greatest expansion of Christianity in East Asia has been during the last three centuries.

One of the miracles of the present age is that there is the Christian Church in each of the major countries of East Asia. Only Afghanistan and the Asiatic regions of the U.S.S.R. are closed to the Christian Gospel. Even in some of the small countries that border on the Himalayas, we find groups of Asian Christians. Therefore it is true to say that there are few islands and countries in East Asia in which Christianity has not yet been preached.

If the Assembly of the World Council of Churches had met in the year 1854, there would have been no delegate from Japan, Korea or Taiwan. Christianity was only in its early stages of development in Malaya and Thailand at that time. Only in Burma, India, Ceylon and Indonesia were there organized churches. In 1954 at Evanston the picture is bound to be very different.

In spite of strong forces of opposition to Christianity in many countries of East Asia, everyone recognizes that it has come to stay. It is now in the process of becoming domesticated in the East. The ostracism of Christians is almost at an end. This is largely due to the fact that Asian Christians on the whole now command the respect and confidence of their non-Christian brethren. Asian Christian leaders have played a noble part in the national struggle for independence in countries like India and Indonesia; they are today occupying places of trust and importance in the affairs of their nations. Thanks to Christian missions, some of the best educated leaders in Asian lands are Christians. Non-Christian leaders are never weary of expressing their indebtedness to Christian missions for their ministries of mercy, health and education. On the whole, it is perhaps true to say that there is today a more friendly attitude to *Asian* Christians than at any other time.

4. *Churches in the Post-war Period*

The population of East Asia (from Pakistan in the West to Japan in the East) is now approximately 1,230,000,000. The Christian population of this area is said to be about forty millions. In other words, it means that only three out of every one hundred persons in East Asia are Christians today. Of the forty millions, about two-thirds are Roman Catholic and one-third non-Roman.

Throughout East Asia, there are now small and large churches which have survived the destructive effects of the last war. They suffered grievous material losses, even losses in personnel, both foreign and national; they were in some places accused of collaboration with the enemy, and were persecuted; they faced moral decline and physical decay, and in some cases even civil war; they were deprived of foreign contacts and support in a number of cases. But the most significant fact of the last war was that these churches survived. In no wide region or country was the Christian Church obliterated by the war.

The churches now are facing the problems of reconstruction and rehabilitation. During the last few years they have made a remarkable recovery, and have been fairly successful in repairing the ravages of war (except in Korea today). However, it must not be forgotten that not all the churches are at the same level of recovery or development. Foreign support in personnel

and finance has become available (except in China). Indigenous churches are more in number than ever before. United churches which transcend denominational distinctions have begun to appear on the Asian scene. Along with them old denominational lines are also reappearing, and there is a tremendous growth of small Christian sects, mostly fundamentalist in character.

Throughout the area, Communism is a force to be reckoned with. East Asia has been an area of great capitalist exploitation of tin, oil, tea, rubber and coffee, with violent economic ups and downs, and consequent distress and uprootings. Though East Asia is fairly rich in resources, yet abject poverty abounds among the people. Inflation, soaring costs of living and scarcity of food-stuffs add to the suffering. No wonder Communism exploits the violent national and racial movements. The Church in China has come under a curtain, iron or bamboo. Some Christians elsewhere in East Asia, attracted to the ideals of economic and social justice advocated by Communism, have lent the weight of their influence to the movement. No one can prophesy with certainty whether what happened to the churches in China will not happen to other churches, for example, in India or Burma or Indonesia.

5. *The Growing Fellowship amongst East Asian Churches*

The churches in East Asia have so far been rather unknown to one another. Except at world conferences, where representatives of these churches have gathered occasionally, there has been little or no fellowship amongst them. Their lives have been closely linked with their parent churches of the West, with the result that a Methodist in Madras knew more about American Methodists in Mississippi, or British Methodists in Manchester, than about his Asian fellow-Methodists in Malaya. Educated Asian Christians have a better knowledge of the churches of the West in general than of their sister churches across the borders of their own lands. Situated as these churches are amidst large non-Christian populations, they face common problems of witness and worship, and great will be the gain if they can share their experiences and insights, have more fellowship with one another, work together for the evangelization of East Asia, and enrich the ecumenical movement with their own characteristic Asian contributions.

Signs are not wanting that a move in this direction is already afoot. The recent political developments in East Asia are imposing on this region a new kind of unity. The Christian forces likewise are coming together more and more. The Bangkok Christian Conference of 1949 was held with a predominantly East Asian membership and under East Asian planning, direction and leadership. The appointment of an East Asia Secretary of the International Missionary Council and the World Council of Churches was made to facilitate this fellowship amongst the churches in East Asia. The East Asian Study Conference held at Lucknow, India, in December 1952, prior to the meeting of the Central Committee of the W.C.C., is another case in point. In November 1953, the Christian Education Committee of the N.C.C. of Japan sent a delegation of six Japanese Christians to Okinawa to hold training courses for teachers and others on that island. Their visit was so much appreciated that Mr. Higa, the head of the Okinawa government, sent his thanks to the N.C.C. of Japan. The international work camps that are organized by the Youth Department of the World Council of Churches bring together Asian Christian youth periodically and strengthen their fellowship. The World's Student Christian Federation is encouraging international exchange visits by prominent Christian educators in East Asia. Dr. Megumi Imada, President of Kwansei Gakuin University, left Japan on November 9, 1953, for a six-week tour in India, Ceylon and the Philippines under the auspices of the W.S.C.F. As part of the same programme, Mrs. Annama Varki, the head of the Mathematics Department of the University of Travancore, India, and Dr. Hla Bu, Dean of the Arts Faculty of the University of Rangoon, Burma, were in Japan visiting Christian and other educational institutions during October 1953. Dr. S. C. Leung, East Asia Secretary of the World's Alliance of Y.M.C.A.'s, brought together Asian Christians for a consultation on Buddhism at Colombo, Ceylon, in November 1953; in December 1953 a conference for Y.M.C.A. workers in East Asia was held by him at Baguio, Philippines. In these and other ways, Asian Christians are coming closer to one another than hitherto.

CHAPTER II

# THE CHURCHES AT WORK

A DETAILED and comprehensive survey of the churches in East Asia is beyond the scope of this chapter. All that is attempted here is the portrayal in as concise a form as possible of the salient features of the life of these churches. Remarks herein made are the results of the observations of one person who has had the privilege of visiting these churches in succession in the course of the last two and a half years. With every one of his judgments there may not be unanimity of agreement, but in so far as they are objective or relate to historical facts, there is likely to be a fair measure of assent. It is hoped that these pen-pictures of the Asian churches will give a bird's-eye view of the Christian enterprise in this part of the world.

## *I. The Philippines*

The country in East Asia that has the largest number of Christians is the Philippines. The Filipino nation is the most Christian nation in the Orient, a fact only a few know. The Philippines contains a population of 20,945,800 (1951 estimate), of whom about eighteen millions are Christians. A little over a million belonging to the mountain races are still unevangelized. In some of the islands there are a number of Muslims, but the rest of the people are Christians. Of the eighteen million Christians, nearly sixteen millions belong to the Roman Catholic Church, a million and half to the Independent Churches, and a little less than three-quarters of a million to the Protestant Churches, i.e., 730,000 (1951 estimate). The Protestants therefore form a tiny minority in contrast to the sixteen million Roman Catholics.

Roman Catholic influence in the land is traditional and strong. Ancient churches and cathedrals dot the landscape. However, there is also a strong tradition of opposition to the Roman Catholic hierarchy, and in particular to its foreign priests. It is the vigorous Protestant minority that has stirred the Roman Catholic Church to action, and, as a result, Bible reading, youth conferences and social action are now being promoted by that Church. It must also be pointed out that the Roman Catholic

opposition to the Protestant Church is on the increase, as is evidenced by its threat to excommunicate Catholics who join the Y.M.C.A. or who send their children to Protestant schools.

The Philippine Independent Church, popularly known as the Aglipayan Church, broke away from Rome in 1902 under the leadership of Father Gregoric Aglipay and Don Isabelo de los Reyes. It has now about one and a half million adherents. It permits priests to marry, condemns Mariolatry, rejects the authority of Rome, and sends its ministerial candidates for training to St. Andrew's Seminary of the Episcopal Church in the Philippines. However, it has not joined the Federation of Christian Churches, and it cannot be classified either as a Roman or an Evangelical Church. Governor-General Taft, later President of the United States, who was himself a Unitarian, was oddly enough the first honorary Bishop of the Church! Bishop Henry Knox Sherrill of the Protestant Episcopal Church of the U.S.A. consecrated three Bishops of this Church on April 7, 1948. The present head of the Aglipayan Church is the Supreme Bishop, His Eminence Bishop Isabelo de los Reyes. It is to be hoped that some day this Church of a million and a half members will join the Federation of Christian Churches.

The small Protestant community in the Philippines is far more influential than its numbers would warrant. It is said that most of the social workers in the country are Protestants, and that there is a drift amongst the Filipino youth from the Catholic to the Protestant Church. Evangelical Christians are playing an increasingly important role in the nation's life; the ministers of the Protestant churches are comparatively well-trained, thanks to the United Theological College at Manila and the Theological School of Silliman University. Christian education appears to be of a fairly high order, especially when we remember that education in the Philippines is highly commercialized. Silliman University has a high reputation and ranks along with the University of the Philippines. The Central Philippine College is now applying for university status.

A United Church of Christ (U.C.C.P.) functions now in the Islands. It is a union of Presbyterian, Congregational-Christian, Evangelical, and United Brethren Churches, and about half of the Disciples of Christ Churches. The Methodists are outside this Union. The U.C.C.P. and the Methodists are

the two largest churches in the country. UNIDA and IEMELIF are two independent churches which split off from the major bodies. However, they seem to be co-operative on the whole. The Baptists work on Panay Island and in its neighbourhood, but their ranks are being depleted by the inroads of aggressive Baptist sectarians. In recent years a number of divisive Protestant groups have entered the Islands. The unhappy picture of a divided Protestant Church stands in marked contrast to that of a united Roman Catholic Church.

In spite of the proliferation of Protestant denominations in the Philippines, a Philippine Federation of Christian Churches has come into existence, and it corresponds to the National Christian Councils in other countries, with this important difference that only churches (and not missions) are members of this Federation. The Episcopal Church is not a member of the Federation. The Y.M.C.A. and the Y.W.C.A. are not in the Federation, because they are not churches. The Federation serves a useful function in bringing the smaller independent groups into a co-operative relationship with the Methodists and the U.C.C.P. Plans are afoot for establishing a Federation student centre at the University of the Philippines; a medical centre at the Mary Johnston Hospital site at Manila is under consideration.

The United Church of Christ in the Philippines has become very missionary-minded. In 1952 Protestant Christians held a large number of institutes to study the churches in Indonesia, as a result of which they have sent out a Filipino missionary couple to Indonesia. Another couple has gone to Thailand.

There is life and vigour amongst the Protestant Christians in the Philippines, even though they form a minority. They bear Spanish names and display American ways, but they possess Filipino hearts. A high degree of literacy is found amongst Christians; it is said that evangelical Christians are one hundred per cent literate. There is also educated lay and ministerial leadership in the churches. It was in the Philippines that Dr. Frank Laubach first launched his Adult Literacy campaign, mostly among illiterate Muslims. One can look with reasonable hope to the future when the Protestant Church in the Philippines will play an important role, not only in the life of this land but also in the evangelization of East Asia.

*II. India*

The country that comes second in East Asia in the numerical strength of Christians is India. It is estimated that in the year 1953 there were about nine million Christians in this country, of whom roughly half were Roman Catholic.

India has today achieved a solidarity which she had never known in all her history. The Indian States—and there were 566 of them—have been integrated with the Indian Union, some by merger, some by being taken over by the central administration, and some by becoming units within a Federation or Union of States. All this happened within the short space of three years following Independence, while a century and more of foreign rule had failed to achieve it. In some states social reforms, such as prohibition, abolition of landlordism, revision of the Hindu social code, statutory abolition of untouchability, etc., have been effected, and on the whole public opinion has been back of these changes. The *panchayat* system of village administration has been revised; social education of adult illiterates vigorously pushed in several states; compulsory primary education introduced in certain areas; a new fillip given to aviation and broadcasting; defence forces trained and strengthened; and nationalization of railways, irrigation, mines and electric developments completed. Five-year plans for industrial and other developments are under way.

Christianity in India is said to be as old as the Christian era itself. Tradition holds that St. Thomas came to India in A.D. 52. Following good Apostolic tradition, he is said to have proclaimed the Gospel first to the Jews in and around Cochin, and later to the Hindus. One story has it that he went to the East Coast of India to preach, where the Brahmins, jealous of his success, speared him to death at St. Thomas Mount, a place eight miles south of Madras. Another story says that he was accidentally shot to death by the arrow of a fowler, and was buried in Mylapore, Madras, and that in the second century his bones were taken to Edessa. In a reliquary in the San Thome Church, Mylapore, Madras, one sees a portion of his bones and a piece of the spear said to have killed the Saint. Whether all the traditional lore is true or not, there is no doubt that from the fifth century onwards a community of Christians flourished in Malabar on the south-west coast of India. The

original nucleus of this group was made up of immigrants from East Syria (Edessa), whose leader was named Thomas. This community of Christians claimed affiliation with the Patriarchates of Antioch and Alexandria, from which some of their bishops had come. Roman Catholic missionaries contacted these Christians in the sixteenth century, and almost succeeded in making them Roman Catholics. While one section became Roman-Syrian, the remaining section repudiated any allegiance to Rome and reaffirmed its loyalty to Antioch. This was the first major split in the Syrian Church of Malabar, but it was followed by further dissensions within the Church on questions of property, local autonomy and Patriarchal authority.

In the nineteenth century, a group seceded to join the Anglican Communion. These Anglican Syrians are now members of the Church of South India. Another group established what has now come to be known as the Mar Thoma Syrian Church, which is fully autonomous and has no connection with Eastern Orthodoxy. Thus we see the sad spectacle of a once united Syrian Church of Malabar now divided into a number of communions.

Though the story of the past three and a half centuries is sad reading, in recent years considerable progress has been made within the original group (generally known as the Jacobite Church) and the reformed section (known as the Mar Thoma Church) with reference to liturgy, parish organization, missionary zeal, youth movements and inner unity. The ancient Church of Malabar now has a new day of opportunity in India. Its sons and daughters are among the best educated in this land. With their adventurous spirit, their Christian culture of many centuries, and their newly-awakened missionary passion, they can do far more than any other single church in India to win this nation to Christ.

The first Europeans to settle in India were the Portuguese, and their most famous missionary, St. Francis Xavier, came in 1541. The Catholic Church began with the conversion of the fishermen of the Coromandel Coast by Xavier; the Goan community of Bombay State is also his legacy. Robert de Nobili and Brito nurtured the plant Xavier had planted. Today the Catholic Church in India numbers about four and a half million adherents.

The first Protestant mission in India was founded, strange to say, by a king of Denmark who sent the German Lutheran,

Ziegenbalg, to Tranquebar in 1706. The Protestant community arose as the result of the work of Protestant missions in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Each of the German, British, Scandinavian, Swiss and American missions had an area to evangelize and a church to establish. Today the non-Roman Christians in India number about four and a half millions.

A Church of nine million members has taken firm root in India, and it will survive, even if persecuted. The Church in India is the largest Church on the Asian continent, and the second largest in the Orient. It is larger than the entire population of Sweden, Norway, Denmark or Finland, and is equal to that of Canada or Australia. Hence, while its numerical strength compared with India's vast population may be small, it is a significant smallness. It is a living, witnessing, growing Church, growing faster than many churches in other parts of the world.

Religious freedom has been assured in the Constitution of the Indian Republic. The Fundamental Rights listed in the Constitution guarantee that "all persons are equally entitled to freedom of conscience and the right freely to profess, practise and propagate religion. Every religious denomination shall have the right to establish and maintain institutions for religious and charitable purposes; to manage its own affairs in matters of religion; and to administer such property in accordance with law. . . . No person shall be compelled to pay any taxes, the proceeds of which are specifically appropriated in payment of expenses for the promotion or maintenance of any particular religion or religious denomination. . . . All minorities, whether based on religion or language, shall have the right to establish and administer educational institutions of their choice. The State shall not, in granting aid to educational institutions, discriminate against any educational institution on the ground that it is under the management of a minority, whether based on religion or language."

The non-Roman Church in India is a poor Church, educationally and economically weak, and with an insufficient ministry. There are approximately 11,000 organized congregations, and about 9,000 unorganized groups of Protestant Christians; to minister to these there are only 3,000 ordained ministers, national and foreign. In other words, an ordained minister has to look after six to seven scattered congregations. Educationally the

Protestant community is backward, since only 25% of its members are literate. Economically also the Church is backward, since 80 to 90% of its members come from the 'depressed classes'.

Though poor in these respects, yet by the grace of God the Church has been able to make a significant contribution to the life of the nation. In the struggle for independence, Christians have played a worthy part. Without asking for communal safeguards, they pressed only for religious freedom. Many of them are occupying positions of influence in the life of the nation, in government services and in the State and Central Governments. Enabled by older churches in the West, the Protestant churches and missions in India have ministered not only to the souls of men but also to their minds and bodies. They maintain today 45 Christian colleges with a student body of 23,757 (1953 statistics), and approximately 15,000 elementary schools, 500 middle schools and 250 high schools. They have pioneered in the education of women. The Christian spirit of service has been most notably shown in the skilled treatment of the sick and in the struggle against disease. There are today about 250 Protestant Christian hospitals and dispensaries, eight tuberculosis sanatoria and three medical colleges. Christian missions have done yeoman service in the treatment of leprosy. All this represents only one-half of the Christian service to India. The Roman Catholic Church is making an equally great contribution.

Christian missions have rightly stressed the importance of improving the economic basis of life. They have established co-operative and professional institutions in all parts of the country. There are 80 agricultural settlements, 50 co-operative societies, 165 industrial schools and 50 printing presses under Protestant auspices. The Roman Catholic Church maintains a similar number of such institutions. Many of these Christian agencies have done pioneering work that has helped to stimulate the development of national programmes of economic reconstruction.

Mention must be made also of the social and welfare work done by the Y.M.C.A. and Y.W.C.A. Numerous Y.M.C.A's dot the land; they not only provide boys and adults with healthy recreation but also afford them abundant opportunities for training in social service. There are a number of rural uplift centres run by the Y.M.C.A. The Y.W.C.A. has ministered effectively

to the women of India by providing them with homes and group activities in many places. It today maintains a College of Social Service in Delhi, leading to a university degree.

When India was unhappily partitioned, and as an aftermath faced a terrible refugee problem, the relief service rendered by Protestant Christian missions and churches was truly remarkable. They supplied 25 Christian doctors, 80 nurses and 95 social workers in the refugee camps in India alone. They also trained women in these camps in useful occupations, and assisted in the rescue of abducted women from India and Pakistan. Through the help of their fellow Christians abroad, they brought into India milk powder, clothing, costly drugs, vitamin tablets, cereals, wheat and rice, worth in all four million rupees, and these they distributed freely among the refugees without any consideration of caste or creed. The record of their refugee work in Kashmir and in the two Bengals is equally striking.

From this account of the contributions that Christianity in India has made to the life of the nation, it must be clear that its service has been significant, and that it has rendered it in the spirit of the Master who came to minister and not to be ministered unto. Christianity in India is being gradually distinguished from foreign rule, and is therefore given a new kind of attention. Christian social service standards have been accepted by the nation, though not publicly acknowledged as such. It is not uncommon to hear non-Christians speak of their 'Christian duty', and quite often leaders in public life exhort the people to undertake social service and rural uplift with 'missionary zeal'. There is an awakening of a new social conscience and an awareness of human personality and inner worth, as exemplified in such social legislative measures as the abolition of bigamy, drink, absentee landlordism, dowry and untouchability.

While Protestant denominations and sects in India are far too many—they number over 200—yet this multiplicity has brought to India the vast resources of these organizations in finance and personnel, and this has made possible the maintenance of large Christian institutions and the building up and training of educated leadership in the churches. (In countries where only one particular mission has been the mainstay of the Christian community, as for example in Burma, Thailand or Taiwan, this has not been the case.) In spite of the variety of Protestant

churches and missions in India, there exists in this country the strongest National Christian Council in East Asia, regionally and nationally based, in which most of the Protestant churches and missions co-operate. In the South, there has come into existence one organically united Church of South India in which the Anglican, Presbyterian, Methodist, Congregational and Reformed Churches have merged. This church has one million members. In the history of Protestant Christianity, this is the first instance of churches representing such diverse traditions of the Christian faith uniting together. Church union negotiations, in which the Baptists are also participating, are progressing in North India. In the providence of God, India has blazed the trail for Church union.

While Christianity in India is believed by some to be as old as the Christian era itself, or at a conservative estimate at least fifteen centuries old, yet only 2 out of 100 persons in India are Christians. In this land there are still areas with a million to three million inhabitants where there is no church and no Gospel is preached. There are also many unreached classes such as the high castes of Hinduism, the Parsis, Jains, Sikhs and Muslims. One must not forget, therefore, the vast dimensions of the unfinished task still before the Church in India. To make matters more difficult, the Government of India has been of late restricting the entry of foreign missionaries. How far the Church in India will be able to meet the challenge of the present day remains to be seen.

### *III. China*

China stands third in East Asia in Christian numerical strength. Several centuries ago, Roman Catholic missionaries went into China, and as a result of their labours the Roman Catholic Church had in 1946 a membership of 3,173,367. The Protestant Church is comparatively young, as the first Protestant missionary entered China only in 1807. It had a membership of 1,401,777 in 1949.[1] The Revised Directory of the Protestant Christian Movement in China, published by the NCC in 1950, lists 902,805 church members, but does not include the Little Flock, the Jesus Family, the Salvation Army and numerous other groups. A total Christian community of a little over four

[1] *World Christian Handbook.*

millions out of China's huge population of 483,870,000 (1950 estimate) forms only one per cent. Yet its marked influence in the country has been recognized by all groups. The number of outstanding national figures who are Christians is out of all proportion to the size of the Church, and this was even truer in pre-Communist days. Christians have played a leading part in women's movements, the New Life Movement and the co-operatives, in education, and in the relief of suffering. Among the religious representatives to the People's Consultative Congress in Peking in 1949, the Communist Government selected five Christians as against only one Buddhist and one Muslim. All five of the Christians were Protestants.

It is estimated that until recently there were 10,000 chapels and churches in the country. There were 13 Protestant Christian colleges and universities, about 260 high schools and a little over 260 hospitals. China, more than any other country in East Asia, became the melting pot of Protestant missionary activity from the British Isles, North America, the European Continent, Australia and New Zealand. In 1912 a China Continuation Committee was organized, and in 1922 a National Christian Council came into being, with headquarters at Shanghai. The latter is said to be functioning still, with an exclusively Chinese membership. By 1927 the Church of Christ in China was organized, uniting seventeen different denominations, with a communicant membership of 200,000 in a network of churches, extending from Manchuria to Hong Kong. It even started missionary work along the western border among the tribes of Miaos and Lolos.

Violent opposition to Christianity in China is not a recent story. In the Boxer Rebellion hundreds of Chinese Christians were martyred, but Christianity emerged strong from this rebellion. The anti-Christian campaigns of 1927 resulted only in increasing national leadership in the Church. In 1930 a Five-Year Movement was launched with the motto: "Lord, revive Thy Church and let it begin with me." From 1930 onwards, the registration of Christian schools and the development of national Christian leadership opened the way for closer and more friendly relations between the Church, the State and the people.

At the end of the last war two rival governments ruled China, the Nationalists with their capital at Nanking, and the

Communists controlling western and northern China. The churches in Communist areas came under a good deal of persecution. On October 1, 1949, the People's Government of China was inaugurated at Peking. During the early years of its rule, friendly relations existed between it and the churches. The reforms of the Government won the appreciation of all, including Christians. Opium smoking, gambling and prostitution were abolished; the currency was stabilized. Dr. T. C. Chao, then one of the Presidents of the World Council of Churches, characterized that period as "Days of Rejoicing in China". The famous "Christian Manifesto" was issued by a group of Christian leaders, pledging loyalty to the new Government. It emphasized three points: (*a*) missions were agencies of cultural and imperialistic aggression; (*b*) therefore the Church in China should have nothing to do with them; (*c*) the Church should purge its membership of all imperialistic elements. *The China Bulletin* for June 1953 claimed that 300,000 Christians had signed the Manifesto. It soon became the test of loyalty of Christians to the Communist Government. However, the Bishops of the Anglican Communion issued another manifesto which, while opposing imperialism and exploitation, did not subscribe to the Communist thesis. It is however understood that since April 1951 the Anglican Bishops have, one by one, issued statements which make the "Christian Manifesto" appear rather mild.

One of the first steps taken by the new regime was to propagate the principles of Communism and indoctrinate every one in its theories. Church workers and other Christians were compelled to devote four hours, three times a week, for such instruction and study. Gradually the attitude of the Government to Christian institutions began to stiffen.

When the war in Korea broke out, governmental pressure on the churches to dissociate themselves from all foreign contacts became acute. In April 1951, three conferences were held at Peking, on Christian educational institutions, Christian publishing agencies and Protestant churches as a whole. At the close of these conferences, a statement was issued containing the following words:

> "We are confident that Chinese Christians in reliance upon God, and under the bold and enlightened leadership of Chairman Mao, with the encouragement and aid

of the Government can establish Christian work which will be better, purer, and more able to serve the people."

Christian universities and hospitals were nationalized. Even seminaries were asked to amalgamate. In Peking, the Yenching University and the Catholic University were taken over by the Government. The thirteen Protestant Christian Colleges have now lost their Christian tradition; they have been merged with other institutions, and their staffs broken up. Christian publishing agencies were required to destroy books that showed any sort of imperialist influence. More than eighty per cent of the books of the Christian Literature Society were destroyed. The library of St. John's University at Shanghai was ordered to reprocess 120,000 of its 140,000 volumes. On the other hand, *T'ien Feng* has been started by Mr. Y. T. Wu and has become a kind of Chinese *Christian Century* with a wide circulation. *Hsieh Chin*, the former bulletin of the NCC of China, is now a full-fledged magazine of forty or more pages. *Tien Chia* (Chinese Farmer) has been revived.

Close on the heels of these three conferences, a nation-wide "Accusation Movement" was vigorously promoted. The Government-sponsored Committee on Resist-America, Aid Korea and Three-Self-Reform Movement directed these 'accusation' meetings. Wives turned against their husbands, and children against their parents, and every one tried to excel in accusing the other of sins against the Government or sins of pro-imperialism. The accusation statement of the only daughter of a former president of a Christian University read in part as follows:

> "In the past I regarded you as an honoured example. Once I told you that there were seventeen million unemployed in America. You replied that I could be mistaken, thereby creating in me a doubt as to the truth of the people's daily newspapers. . . . I sat on the platform with you during your confession, thinking that I could help you and assuming that your confession would be sincere. My heart was heavy as I saw the 900 adverse votes. I thought the masses had been too severe. . . . The following day the school paper raised many factual questions. . . . My classmates have answered your devilish confession with facts. I have joined the youth group. My previous political instability

was due to my following you. I have been affected by the father-daughter relationship. If the relationship is proper, then the great relationship with the masses is a deception. Communists tolerate no 'respect America' thinking. Even as the volunteers in Korea, why should I not fight you rather than protect and plead for you? Your false tears will no longer bribe my conscience."

This extract portrays the extent to which the poison of suspicion and accusation had entered the body politic, including the Christian Church. On the other hand, it must be borne in mind that sometimes these accusation statements were the result of pressure so severe as to cause psychological or nervous break-down. The result was a wave of suicides and attempted suicides among many, including Christians.

In 1952 the government launched a vigorous anti-corruption campaign. With a view to house-cleaning, this campaign became a three-fold movement—anti-corruption, anti-waste and anti-bureaucracy. Afterwards it was directed against bribery, tax-evasion, cheating and theft of state property and economic information; the merchant class especially came under its fire. Christians in charge of institutions were scrutinized, and if judged guilty were severely punished. Many innocents suffered along with the guilty. Mass trials with conviction and heavy penalties became the order of the day. There was extensive use of psychological pressure known as "Brain-Washing".

At the beginning, many Christian leaders hoped to influence Communism in China. Later on, the Church itself began to succumb to pressure from the State, and the church administration to the domination of the "Three-Selves Committee". Even prominent Christians who were ardent admirers of the Communist Government were persecuted, because they could not go the whole way with the Communists. Today the Church in China is cut off entirely from contact and fellowship with the churches of the Western world.

Yet, in spite of such ordeals and trials, the Church in China has survived. That is the great fact today, the brightest spot in a dark picture. Behind the bamboo curtain there is the Church of Christ. Chinese churches in larger cities are continuing their work without governmental interference, though in smaller places those which were closed during the land-reform move-

ment have not been allowed to reopen. Bishop Theodor Arvidson of Stockholm, a neutral who visited China in April-May 1953, mentions being at Yenching Union School of Religion in Peking where he met Christian leaders of different churches whose seminaries had been merged to become one Union School of Religion. He says that at Mukden, Nanking and Shanghai Christian leaders were members of reception committees which welcomed him. He speaks of attending on May 21, 1953, the Annual Conference of the Methodist Church which met under the chairmanship of Bishop Kaung. The Conference is said to have consisted of 160 ministers and lay delegates. He mentions the erection of new church buildings, such as the Baptist and Apostolic Pentecostal Churches at Shanghai, and the dedication of a new one belonging to the Church of Christ in China at Changsu, outside Shanghai.

These facts tell us that though the work of missions has come to an end, the Church in China still survives, and that the faithful have not lost their religion but hold it dear. Far more of them, it must not be forgotten, have died for their faith than have Christians in some other countries. It is true that they are cut off from the rest of us in the world-wide Church; we cannot help them with finance or personnel. One thing all of us can do, however, and that is to remember the Church in China and pray for it as we have never done before, that through all its trials and tribulations it may remain loyal and faithful to its Master.

*IV. Indonesia*

The country that comes fourth from the point of view of Christian numbers is Indonesia. (Protestant Christians in Indonesia outnumber the Protestant Christians of China and Japan taken together.) Out of a population of about 78 millions (1950 estimate), Christians number three to three and a half millions, i.e., about four per cent of the population. Indonesia is one of the few countries in East Asia in which Protestant Christians greatly outnumber Roman Catholics; the latter are said to be only about a half to three-fourths of a million in the whole of Indonesia.

The beginnings of Protestant Christianity are to be seen in the early contacts with the Dutch three centuries ago, and principally in the eastern sections of the archipelago. According

to the 1948 statistics, East Indonesia and New Guinea are 12½% Christian, Sumatra 9%, and Borneo 2%. Indonesia has a number of large churches, compared with some other Asian countries. The *Church of Minahassa* in Northern Celebes has a membership of about 300,000. Nine out of ten persons in Minahassa are Christians today. The *Church of the Moluccas* numbers 270,000 adherents. It is estimated that the island of Ambon is almost entirely Christian today. The strength of the *Church of Sangi and Talaud* is estimated at 95,000. The *Church of Timor* has a membership of 240,000. Practically one-half of the population of Timor is Christian now, and the other half could easily become Christian, but the resources of the Church of Timor in men and money are severely limited. Truly the harvest is large here, but the workers are few. In one year alone (1951) there were 6,000 adult baptisms in this church. The *East Java Church* numbers 45,000, and it is said to be the largest church in the world with converts from Islam. The *Church in Nias* has a baptized membership of nearly 150,000 out of a population in Nias of about 200,000. The *Batak Church* today numbers nearly 600,000. One remembers that only four generations ago the Bataks were cannibals, and the first missionaries who went to them with the Gospel, Munson and Lyman, were killed by them. Yet the blood of these martyr missionaries has been the seed for the growth of a great church of 600,000 souls. Can there be any greater testimony to the power of the Gospel of Christ than this miracle—the creation of a church amongst a people who were not long ago cannibals, a church which is today self-governing, practically self-propagating and mostly self-supporting?

While Christianity is strong on the fringes of the archipelago, it is extremely weak at the centre. On the metropolitan island of Java, Christians are not even a quarter of one per cent of the population. The churches in Middle and West Java are small. In Bali the Protestant Church is only 2,000 strong, set amidst hostile religious forces.

Some of the churches in Indonesia are facing a financial crisis. Those which belong to the Protestant Church of Indonesia, which was a State Church until recently, are now, after the independence of Indonesia, bereft of all financial assistance from the State. In Timor, where literally thousands are ready to accept baptism, missionary work can be undertaken by the

church only very inadequately for lack of finance. The clergy are paid only fifty per cent of their salaries, and the other half they have to raise themselves. Many of the churches in Eastern Indonesia lost their church buildings and offices owing to the bombing of the last war. If ever any churches in the world needed inter-church aid, surely these do.

A United Theological Seminary for eastern Indonesia has come into existence at Makassar. The Higher Theological College at Djakarta is being strengthened, and proposals are under way for converting it into a Theological Faculty of the first rank, run by the churches themselves. The Seminary in the Batak land has on its staff an Indian Christian professor from the Tamil Lutheran Church in South India.

One of the remarkable features of these virile churches in Indonesia is the marked absence of denominational labels. Except for the churches belonging to the Methodist or Mennonite persuasions, the others are mostly given regional names—for example, the Church of Minnahassa, the Church of Nias, etc. Even more than in India, the circumstances of the Church in Indonesia should facilitate the promotion of Church Union. An Indonesian Council of Churches—of churches only—has come into being with the avowed object of bringing into existence a United Church of Indonesia. In June 1953 this Council met, and out of its 30 member churches, 27 sent their delegates. The meeting took into serious consideration the proposals for a United Church. During the next triennium, further steps will be considered to usher into being a United Church of Indonesia, the dream of Indonesian Protestant Christians.

However vigorous may be the life of the Protestant churches, they face many difficulties. Indonesia is probably the largest Muslim State in the world, even exceeding Pakistan. A strong Masjumi party, decidedly anti-Christian, is manoeuvering for power. A resurgent Islam is trying to stem the tide of Christian influence. Without even one Christian college of Arts or Science, the leadership of the Church has been severely handicapped. Steps were however taken in July 1953 to establish a Christian University. The Roman Catholic Church, realizing its minority position, is doing its best to pour into Indonesia men and money, and it often comes into conflict with Evangelical Christianity.

Surrounded by a population that is ninety-six per cent non-Christian, and an Islam resurgent and hostile, the Christian Church is up against a great many obstacles.

*V. Indo-China*

The country that stands fifth in East Asia from the point of view of Christian population is Indo-China. Out of a population of about 29 millions, nearly two and a half millions are Christians. The Roman Catholic Church is overwhelmingly large—its membership numbers a little over two millions. The Church in Indo-China is little known to the rest of East Asia, and perhaps also to the rest of the world. The French do not blow their trumpets so loudly as Anglo-Saxons do to proclaim their political or religious achievements to the world. Protestant missions and churches in East Asia related to missionary societies in Europe, America and Oceania have little knowledge of the Protestant Church in this French colonial possession. Moreover, the major Protestant missionary society that works in Indo-China, namely, the Christian and Missionary Alliance (C.M.A.), has stood aloof from the World Council of Churches, and has not sought membership either in the International Missionary Council, with the result that what it has achieved in the name of Christ in Viet Nam, Cambodia and Laos has not had the publicity it deserves.

Indo-China is a linguistic and cultural mosaic. It consists of Viet Nam (23 millions), Cambodia (4 millions) and Laos (2 millions) (1952 statistics). The earliest Protestant mission to come to Indo-China was the Assembly of the Brethren, a mission from Switzerland which started work in 1902 in Southern Laos. It has an established Church of only 250 members. Its work has not resulted in a rich harvest so far, as it is labouring amongst Buddhists and not among animistic tribes. The French Protestant Church has approximately 10,000 members—mostly French and army personnel. Chinese Protestants in all Indo-China number about 1,000. Apart from the Seventh Day Adventists, and more recently the Jehovah's Witnesses, the Christian and Missionary Alliance is the only non-Roman missionary society working among the Viet Namese. The early opposition of the French Government to Protestant work was overcome with patience and prayer, and the work of the C.M.A. missionaries has yielded good results. In 1927 a

National Church of Viet Nam was organized with its own administrative set-up. On January 1, 1953, it had 115 congregations with 68 ordained ministers and a baptized adult membership of 12,435, or a Christian community of about 30,000 souls. These figures do not include those behind the Communist lines, since reports from them are almost non-existent. The foreign missionaries function in the Church as advisers, evangelists and teachers in Bible Schools, but they occupy no administrative offices in the government of the Church. On January 1, 1953, the C.M.A. had in Indo-China 116 missionaries, of whom 35 were working among the Viet Namese, 29 among the tribes in Viet Nam, and 5 among missionary children; 22 were working in Cambodia and 20 in Laos. Five worked among the Chinese in Viet Nam.

One of the two remarkable features of the life of this Church is that prior to the civil war in the country most of the congregations were receiving no financial subsidy from abroad, and the Church as a whole had achieved a remarkable degree of self-support (75%) in the best sense of the word. But now the unsettled conditions in Viet Nam and the civil war of nearly ten years have inflicted untold hardships upon Christians, many of whom have had to flee to safer areas. Christians have been drafted, tortured and imprisoned by both sides in the conflict. Some of them have been killed, and many have had their homes destroyed and their rice looted. Therefore the number of self-supporting congregations has been greatly reduced. At present, only about thirty congregations in non-Communist areas are self-supporting.

The other remarkable feature is the missionary work undertaken by the Church of Viet Nam among the tribes. Nine missionary Viet Namese couples are working amongst these tribes. Once a year a great missionary convention is held at which these Viet Namese missionaries tell of their work and give witness to the power of the Gospel in winning these tribal people to Christ. A part of the annual support for these missionary couples is raised at the convention. However, the mission has still to find the rest of the money required. Besides these Viet Namese missionaries, a Cambodian, Mr. Chan by name, a graduate of the Bible School at Ta Khammu, is at work as a missionary in Surin, Thailand, amongst his fellow-Cambodians there.

Protestant Christians do not compare favourably with their Roman Catholic brethren either in the level of higher education achieved or in economic prosperity. The best opportunities for education are at present in Roman Catholic schools. Only recently the Protestant Church made the first attempt to meet this problem by opening a new orphanage and school at Nha Trang. The salary of the Protestant ministers is too modest, to put it very mildly, and this fact should be taken into consideration when any statement about self-support in Indo-China is made. There is scarcely one university graduate in the ministry of the Church of Viet Nam.

The Roman Catholic Church with over two million members overshadows the small Protestant community. The ministry of this Church in the realms of education, medical work and rural uplift is greatly to be commended. There are many Roman Catholic Christians occupying influential places in the State. Empress Nam Phuong, the wife of Emperor Bao-Dai, is a Catholic. The Crown Prince is a Catholic and has been educated by the Jesuits. Mr. Nguyen-Huy-Lai, who was Vice-President and Minister of Finance in the Viet Namese Government in 1953, is a Catholic. There are scores of Roman Catholics in government services. However, it is also true that the number of Protestant Christians in influential positions in the State is not negligible, considering the small size of the Protestant community.

In Laos and Cambodia, Buddhism is strongly entrenched in the national life and culture of the people. This accounts for the fact that the Christian community in Cambodia is very small, and that among the Laotians it is almost non-existent, although there is a movement amongst the tribal people of Laos towards Christianity. The Viet Namese, on the other hand, are less Buddhistic. Buddhism, Confucianism and Taoism are all to be found in this country, and they have absorbed elements of ancestor worship and animism. As a result, the Buddhism of the Viet Namese is a very much diluted variety, and therefore it has not been a barrier to Christianity in the way that Buddhism has been in Laos and Cambodia.

A logical extension of the eclectic spirit of the Viet Namese is the new cult of Cao Dai. Caodaism is a syncretic religion that combines elements from Buddhism, Confucianism and Taoism, as well as from Roman Catholicism.

and Islam. It now claims to have a membership of over three millions !

*VI. Thailand*

Of all the major countries of East Asia, it is in Thailand that the Christian community is numerically at its weakest, and this in spite of the fact that a Protestant Church has been there for the last 125 years. Out of a population of 18,836,000 (1951 estimate), the Protestant community is said to be somewhere between fifteen and twenty thousand, while the Roman Catholic membership is estimated at fifty thousand. All told, at a generous estimate, there are seventy thousand Christians in a land of approximately nineteen million people.

The reasons for this state of affairs are manifold. Thailand is a strongly Buddhist country, and to be a hundred per cent Thai one has to be a Buddhist. The King and the State are Buddhist, and therefore many consider it a retrograde step to give up that religion for an alien one. To be a Christian may be a handicap towards promotion in government service. Many Christians are poor: they spend most of their time in eking out their livelihood, and spare but few moments for Christian witness. One notices a large number of mixed marriages (Christians marrying non-Christians), and the offspring are seldom brought up in the Christian faith. Perhaps it is true to say that of all the major countries in East Asia, it is in Thailand that the Christian community exerts the least influence in the life of the nation. However, it must not be hastily inferred from these remarks that there is not much hope for the Church in Thailand. Protestant Christians are more numerous in the north than in the south, and the Church in the north is growing at the rate of eight hundred converts per year. The south is the stronghold of conservative Buddhism, and hence the response to Christianity has been less in that part of the country.

The Church of Christ in Thailand was organized in 1934, almost immediately after the constitutional monarchy was set up. It is a united Church in reality, though the Presbyterian influence is predominant. The Disciples of Christ, both of American and British connection, the Karen Baptists and the Chinese Baptists have joined this Church of Christ in Thailand.

Several missions unrelated to the Church of Christ in Thailand are also at work. The Christian and Missionary Alliance

has entered the field by agreement with the Presbyterian Mission, and has been at work for the last twenty-five years. They have fifty-three missionaries while their Church has a membership of only some 600. The Overseas Missionary Fellowship (the new name for China Inland Mission) has begun work recently, and has a staff of seventy missionaries. The Southern Baptists are at work in Bangkok and Ayodhya, the ancient capital. Others besides these are the World Evangelistic Crusade, the Seventh Day Adventists, the Jehovah's Witnesses and the Pentecostals.

The presence of all these denominations which are not members of the Church of Christ in Thailand has introduced a new problem in Christian co-operation. The Presbyterian Mission has not followed a dog-in-the-manager policy but has actually sponsored the coming in of other missions. Therefore, the problem of comity is not so acute as that of co-operation and common Christian witness in a hostile Buddhist land. To add to this, the Church of Christ itself has been torn by factions within its own membership, both among the missionaries and the nationals.

It has been argued that since there is one Church of Christ in Thailand, which includes in its membership nearly ninety per cent of the Protestant Christians, there is no need for a National Christian Council. But with the influx of other missions into Thailand, the question of creating some kind of co-operative machinery amongst Christians has taken on a new note of urgency. Therefore the old NCC Interim Committee has now been revived.

One of the serious problems faced by the United Church of Christ in Thailand is that it has no legal standing in the eyes of the Government, while the American Presbyterian Mission, as a foreign agency, has been recognized by the Government. This has complicated matters for the indigenous Church. For example, the Church cannot hold any property in its own right as *Niti Bukkon*, but only as a Church Foundation (*Mooniti*) under the authorization of the Director-General of the Department of the Interior. But such an authorization can be set aside at any time by the Department. On the other hand, to hold property under *Niti Bukkon*, the State will have to grant the Church of Christ in Thailand recognition by an Act of Parliament, and this is no easy matter. This state

of affairs also stands in the way of the Mission transferring property to the Church.

There is a theological seminary at Chiengmai which imparts theological training at both higher and lower levels. But only a few qualified Protestant Christians are seeking admission to this institution. There are only a very few fully qualified and ordained ministers in the Church of Christ in Thailand. Out of its thirty-five ordained ministers, only eight are high school graduates! Most congregations seem to be satisfied with the services of an elder instead of being willing to pay for an ordained minister. A strong, educated ministry is the most crying need of the Church. Protestant Christian leadership has been severely handicapped by the lack of a Christian higher educational institution. The State is not willing to allow Christians to open a college, for fear others may make the same request. However, a fine hostel with a resident missionary has now been set up, and a generous scheme of scholarships introduced, and one is therefore led to hope that a new day for trained Christian leadership in Thailand will soon dawn.

*VII. Ceylon*

This beautiful island, which Lloyd George dubbed "the Eden of the East", is no longer a crown colony of Britain but a self-governing dominion. It attained its dominion status without any bloodshed or even passive resistance. Out of a total population of 8,123,568 (1953 estimate), Christians number 714,874—roughly 8.8%. Therefore, from the point of view of the proportion of Christians to the population, Ceylon stands second only to the Philippines and Viet Nam. But the proportion of Christians to the population in Ceylon has been steadily decreasing:

In 1921 Christians numbered 443,400, or 9.9% of the population

In 1946 Christians numbered 603,235, or 9.1% of the population

In 1953 Christians numbered 714,874, or 8.8% of the population

One wonders why there has been this steady decrease, which is so unlike what is happening in other countries of East Asia. Various explanations are given. Some say that there is not the same evangelistic outreach from the churches in Ceylon as in

other countries. Others point to an aggressive and resurgent Buddhism, and to the number of Christians who have lapsed into Buddhism, though it must be admitted that in recent years this number has steadily decreased. Mixed marriages are cited as another reason, because children born of such weddings are lost to the Christian community. Still others point out that the Christians of Ceylon form a middle-class community, and such a community does not have a high birthrate. Perhaps the true explanation is to be found in a combination of all these reasons, instead of in any one of them.

Out of a Christian community of 714,874 (1953 estimate), there are only about 105,000 non-Roman Christians. The chief denominations are as follows:—[1]

| | |
|---|---|
| Church of Ceylon (Anglican) | 33,031 |
| Methodists | 22,628 |
| Baptists | 5,296 |
| Presbyterians (excluding Dutch Reformed) | 2,125 |
| Jaffna Diocese of the Church of South India | 3,985 |

In addition there are small congregations of the Dutch Reformed Church, the Salvation Army, etc. Roman Catholics therefore outnumber Protestants to the tune of six to one!

Ceylon rightly prides itself on the fact that there are only Protestant *churches* in Ceylon, and no longer Protestant *missions*. These churches are members of the National Christian Council of Ceylon which now has a full-time paid Secretary and a Study Secretary. A Study Centre has been started, and steps are now being taken to associate with it a Christian Institute for the Study of Buddhism. With a fairly literate Church, and a fairly well-educated ministry, it is to be hoped that Ceylon will lead the way in the study of the Christian approach to Buddhism, and in producing first-class apologetic literature. There is a Christian Ashram at Jaffna, under the leadership of Sevak Selvaratnam. It has maintained its decision never to appeal for funds, except to announce its needs from time to time in the Ashram bulletin. When St. Theresa started her orphanage with three shillings in hand, she is reported to have said, "With three shillings, Theresa can do nothing, but with three shillings *and* Jesus, there is nothing that Theresa cannot do". It is in this

[1] As given in the *Ceylon Church Union Scheme*, 1953.

faith that the Ashram has done its work during the past fourteen years. It serves as a home for converts, experiments in indigenous methods of worship and has become the base for evangelistic work in the northern and eastern provinces of Ceylon.

It has been pointed out already that the Protestant community is largely middle-class, and as such brings to the Church advantages and disadvantages that pertain to such communities. In the realm of university education, non-Roman students, though coming from a very much smaller community, outnumber Roman Catholic students. At Peradeniya in 1953, there were 125 Christian students in the University classes, of whom 80 were Protestants. At Colombo, the other centre of the University of Ceylon, out of 225 Christian students a large proportion was Protestant.

Ceylon has a system of free education from the kindergarten to the top university class, and this applies to both State and assisted schools. A few of the larger Christian high schools have chosen to become *private* schools, forgoing all government assistance, in the belief that they will thereby preserve a greater measure of freedom. They have only been able to do so by charging relatively high fees. Most denominational schools have entered the free scheme. In these schools the whole of the salaries of teachers as well as the minimum cost of equipment is borne by Government; the schools, nevertheless, have preserved almost complete autonomy in the matter of the appointment of teachers. The only serious restriction on their liberty is in the matter of religious instruction. The law, which governs the private as well as the assisted schools, is that no religious instruction can be given on the school premises, either within or outside school hours, to any child, except in the religion of his parents. This law is absolute, and is independent of the parents' wishes. Nevertheless, it is possible to give moral instruction to non-Christians. In view of these new circumstances, the nature of educational evangelism has necessarily to be reconsidered.

The Tamil-Singhalese controversy which characterizes the political situation in Ceylon has its echoes in the life of the Church as well. The State's patronage of *Swabasha* (Tamil and Singhalese) instruction in schools has sharpened the friction between the two communities. The Church in this situation has a glorious opportunity for exercising its ministry of reconliciation.

The five main Protestant churches in Ceylon (Anglican, Methodist, Baptist, Presbyterian and the Church of South India) are now seriously engaged in Church Union negotiations, and if they succeed, a new Church of Lanka (Ceylon) will be formed. Such a development is bound to have far-reaching effects upon churches in other parts of East Asia.

*VIII. Pakistan*

Pakistan's total population of 75,687,000 is divided roughly into 43 millions in East Pakistan, and 33 millions in West Pakistan, out of whom approximately 500,000 are Christians in West and 106,507 (1951 census) in East Pakistan. Of Pakistan's total population, about 65 millions are Muslims, thus making Pakistan, next to Indonesia, the largest Muslim nation in the world. Of this number, 58 millions are Sunnis (traditionalists), 5 millions Shias, 200,000 Mutazalites, and about that number Ismalis, followers of the Aga Khan.

The departure of the British in 1947, the partition of Bengal with its subsequent exodus of minority groups, and the influx of Muslims from India, have made East Pakistan far more solidly Muslim than before. Of the 43 millions in East Pakistan, 33 millions are Muslims. In spite of the exodus of Hindus from East Pakistan, there are still nearly 10 million Hindus there, and these constitute the largest minority community. It may not be known to many that the next minority group in East Pakistan is not the Christian community but the Buddhist, which numbers 318,951 (1951 census), as against 106,507 Christians. Buddhists have two seats in the Provincial legislature, while Christians have only one.

Of the Christians in East Pakistan, Roman Catholics form a very large majority. The disparity between the Roman and non-Roman churches in East Pakistan is seen not only in numbers but also in the influence and extent of work done. Of the 12 Christian high schools, 34 middle schools and 319 primary schools, a large majority are maintained by Roman Catholics. The Archbishop has his palace in Dacca, and in that capital alone there are 33 Roman Catholic priests. A Catholic college is to be established soon in Dacca. In the whole of East Pakistan, there is not even one Protestant college, and there are only two Protestant high schools, one for boys and one for girls. Most of the well-to-do Christian families have migrated

to India, and those who have stayed behind see little prospect of a bright future. Christians in high and influential positions in the Government can be numbered on the fingers of one hand. The Christian community is economically very poor. Sunday is a working day with the Education Department of the Government, while all other departments are closed on that day, but the Government has permitted Christian schools to close on Sundays.

In West Pakistan, the Christian Church as a whole is numerically much stronger than in the East, and this holds good for the Protestant Church also. There are 5 Protestant colleges, 24 high schools and 11 hospitals, and therefore a fairly influential Protestant community has come into being. The Church in this area is a rural Church, since most of the Christians come from rural mass-movement areas. Prior to the partition, they were mostly in the employ of Hindu and Sikh landlords, and had imbibed their social customs and habits, but now they are exposed to the impact of Muslim culture. There is unemployment amongst them, since the Muslim landlords show a decided preference for adherents of their own faith. The Government is carrying out a land resettlement programme, and it has agreed to lease to Christian farmers 200 acres, or multiples of 200 acres, for 20 years at Rs. 5 per acre, including taxes.

Pakistan has been administered so far under a revised version of the Government of India Act of 1935. A new constitution has not yet been adopted by the Pakistan Constituent Assembly, even after six years of independence. But the draft proposals accepted so far by the Assembly indicate that the State will be known as "the Islamic Republic of Pakistan". Drinking, gambling and prostitution are to be prohibited; usury will be eliminated, although the term "usury" is not clearly defined. An organization is to be set up by the State to disseminate the teachings of Islam. Every Pakistani is to have the right to challenge before the Supreme Court any enactment that he feels violates the injunctions of the Quran and the Sunnah (the tradition). Only a Muslim can become the Head of the State. These decisions, particularly the latter, have given cause for much disquiet and concern among the minority groups, especially among the Hindus. There is also a serious conflict between Islamic zealots and progressive Muslims. This be-

came very evident in the recent anti-Ahmadiyya agitation in West Pakistan. Ahmadiyyas number only 250,000, but they are fairly well educated and are missionary-minded. The present Foreign Minister of Pakistan, Zafarulla Khan, belongs to this sect. The conservative Sunnis are very much opposed to the progressive Ahmadiyyas, and hence the conflict.

The battle for religious freedom in Pakistan is far from being over; the Christian Church has to be ever vigilant in this respect. It must be said, however, that there seems to be little or no opposition to Christianity in West Pakistan, and a friendly feeling towards foreign missions exists there. Whether this attitude will continue for a long time, especially if a large number of Muslims adopt Christianity, it is difficult to say.

It is gratifying to note that most of the Protestant city churches in West Pakistan have achieved self-support. The United Presbyterian Church has been laying great stress on this feature of the life of its congregations, and it has achieved a marked success in rural areas. It is the largest Protestant church in West Pakistan. The West Pakistan Christian Council fosters mutual understanding among the Protestant churches, missions and Christian institutions, and promotes united action in various spheres of work. Political partition has drawn the churches in West Pakistan closer together than before, and there is a new enthusiasm for Church Union. In accordance with the decision to have one Theological Seminary in West Pakistan, the Protestant churches are co-operating in the United Presbyterian Seminary at Gujranwala. This is certainly a great step forward towards Church Union.

Pakistani churches, like their counterparts in India, are the result of mass-movements, and therefore they have been far more concerned with the task of Christian nurture and education than with that of making a serious impact on Islam. The training of indigenous leadership, the discovery of a Christian approach to Islam, and the provision of devotional and apologetic literature are all acute problems that these churches are facing today in a Muslim country where the doors are far more widely open than in many another Islamic state.

### *IX. Burma*

Burma is an independent republic, independent even of the British Commonwealth. One of the main problems of the

Government is to unify the nation, since there are so many tribes and sections of the people, each with its own history and traditions. Another of its problems is to restore order in the country. Any land under subjection to a foreign power for a fairly long period of time is bound to face disunity among its people when it suddenly becomes independent. With the Communists and the Kuomintang troops on the one hand, and the Karen rebels on the other, the Government is having a very difficult time in maintaining order.

Out of a total population of 18,674,000 (1951 estimate), it is estimated that the Christians of Burma number approximately 600,000. Of these, the Roman Catholics are about 128,000. In other words, three-fourths of the Christians of Burma are Protestants. The Baptists number 195,169 adults, and including children they are said to be about 383,000. The group that comes next to them in size is the Anglican, with only about 13,000 members. The Methodists of British connection number 5,072, and of American connection 2,044. Chinese Christians are said to number 1,000 in all of Burma, and most of these are Methodists. A number of independent missions have entered the country, but they are small and mostly non-co-operative in attitude to other Christians. The principal acceptance of and adherence to the Christian faith has been among the minority communities, especially the Karens and other tribes like the Kachins, Chins and Lahus. It is estimated that Christians from the Burmese, the majority community in Burma, do not exceed 12,000 at a generous estimate. So in Burma, as elsewhere, numerical accessions to Christianity are mostly from among animistic people. However, the Church in Burma must not, in the days to come, follow the line of least resistance or most response, but devote more of its attention to the presentation of the Gospel to Burmese Buddhists.

In an independent Burma, cut loose from the British Commonwealth, nationalism is now having full sway. To be a true and loyal Burman is equated in the minds of many with being a Buddhist. The Christian community therefore has come to be looked upon as a denationalized group, alien in its own motherland. The revolt of the Karens, many of whose leaders are Christians, has made the Government look with suspicion upon the Christian community.

Two developments in Burma today are of major importance, and both of them have repercussions on the Christian enterprise in the land. One is the strong revival of Buddhism, and the other the development of a Welfare State. No visitor can fail to notice the preparations that are being made to hold the Sixth Buddhist Council, from the full-moon day of May 1954 to the full-moon day of May 1956. A central fund of six million Kyats (Rupees) has been established to erect buildings for the Council, which will later be used for a Buddhist University. It is expected that this University will become not only the seat of Buddhist learning and culture, but also the spiritual centre of South-East Asia. Not long ago the Prime Minister of Burma opened a World Peace Pagoda in Rangoon, in the fervent belief that Buddhism was the hope of the world. A Burma Hill Tracts Buddhist Mission was organized in 1946, and it now has fourteen centres, thirteen monasteries and one missionary training school from which sixty-five Buddhist missionaries have gone out to the hill tracts. Buddhist missionaries have also been sent to Assam. It is fervently hoped by all Buddhists that the world gathering in 1954 in Rangoon will greatly further the cause of Buddhism in the world.

The revival of Buddhism has been at three levels: (a) the study of Buddhist scriptures and their translation into modern languages, (b) the interpretation of Buddhism to the world, and (c) the transformation of Buddhism from its classical world-denying character to that of a world-affirming character. This recent awakening of Buddhism has its repercussions on the Christian Church. Based as it is on strong emotional, national and religious interests, it becomes a serious rival to Christianity, and challenges its exclusive claims. The old methods of Christian evangelism that have become outmoded should be relinquished, and a newer and a more intelligent approach to Buddhism should be undertaken.

The second important development in Burma is the growth of a Welfare State with its somewhat totalitarian tendencies. The Pyidawtha Conference of August 1952 outlined a programme for each department of the Welfare State. According to this plan, the State will now take over under its own direction many of the social welfare activities that were undertaken hitherto by private agencies. All higher education in Burma has now passed into the hands of the Government. Judson College,

which was established by the Baptist Mission, has been taken over by the Government, and a fair compensation paid to its owners. Permission to open a new Intermediate College under Christian auspices has been refused. All teacher-training is under Government control, so there can no longer be teacher-training institutions under Christian direction or support. As far as possible, the State is taking over one by one the social welfare activities in which the churches and missions in Burma have so far been interested. This brings to the Christian enterprise at once a challenge and an opportunity to enter into new forms of pioneer service and witness.

The Baptists maintain a Theological Seminary at Insein, with its Burmese and Karen departments for men and women separately, and a higher theological school, known as the Divinity School. The Pwo-Karen Baptists have a Bible School of their own at Rangoon, and this institution is co-educational. The Anglicans no longer maintain their seminary known as "Holy Cross"; it is now being used as a Christian hostel for students of the University. The American Methodists ordinarily send their candidates for the ministry to Trinity College, Singapore. The British Methodists have revived their seminary at Mandalay.

The largest single Protestant Church in Burma is the outcome of the work of the American Baptist Mission, which has had a long and noble record of service. The Karen Baptist Church which it has built up is one of the strongest churches of East Asia; its record of self-support has been the envy of many churches in this part of the world. Strong, self-reliant and vigorously evangelistic, it has produced some very fine Christian leaders. If an amicable solution is found for the Karen problem in Burma, surely this church has an assured future in the land. The churches of Burma have demonstrated a remarkable capacity under adversity to maintain their identity and increase in numbers; therefore it is to be hoped that they will succcessfully meet the challenge of a resurgent Buddhism and the totalitarian claims of a Welfare State.

### *X. The Federation of Malaya and Singapore*

The population of this Peninsula (including Singapore) is approximately six millions, and it consists primarily of Malays (2,158,257), Chinese (2,850,661), Indians (661,971) and other

non-Malays (88,511). Out of a population of six millions, the Protestant Church is said to have a membership of 48,000, and the Roman Catholic 86,000. The country is only two per cent Christian.

Malaya has been acclaimed as a "melting pot" of many races. There are no prohibitory or discriminatory enactments against the different races, nor is there any compulsory segregation of races. But this "melting pot" has not yet "melted" the races into one nation, for each of the different communal and racial groups has maintained its identity and exists as a separate entity in the life of the country. This exclusive spirit has invaded the Church as well, though of late some inter-racial congregations have come into existence. On the whole, the Chinese and Indian congregations exist as separate units; in the Methodist Church of American connection, the Chinese Conference functions separately. The Ceylon Tamil and Indian Tamil Christians do not mix freely, and this unfortunate cleavage amongst the Tamil Christians runs right through the Peninsula. This sad state of affairs must end soon; the Church should vigilantly exercise its ministry of reconciliation and not tolerate racial barriers within its fellowship.

Two revolutionary movements are taking place in Malaya today. One is the guerrilla warfare which is said to be an attempt on the part of the Communists to gain control over the country. It is now clear that the initiative has passed from the Communist guerrillas to the security forces. But Communism cannot be successfully fought with military might alone. Therefore, a second revolution, which is rather silent and not much noised abroad, is also taking place, even within the framework of colonialism. It results from the attempts of the British authorities to further self-government and to bring into existence a united Malaya. The Chinese who had hitherto looked to China are now thinking of Malaya as their home, though friendly feelings to China still persist. Citizenship laws have been modified recently to enable non-Malays to seek citizenship. Two communal parties—the Malayan Chinese Association and the United Malays National Organization—fought the recent elections with a united front. In September 1953 an All-Malaya Conference was convened at Kuala Lumpur, and it has called for national elections in 1954 and a government responsible to the people of Malaya.

The Gospel was brought to this country by St. Francis Xavier. His body first lay buried at Malacca, and was later removed to Goa, India. The Roman Church is twice as strong as the Protestant in numbers. Non-Roman missionaries began work in the early part of the nineteenth century, the first one to come being William Milne in July 1811. American Methodists came to Singapore in 1885, and it was from Malaya that they branched out to work in the Philippines, Sarawak, Borneo, Java and Sumatra. Theirs is the largest Protestant Church in Malaya, with about 18,000 adherents. The Anglican Church is a century old, and has a following of 16,000. Presbyterians number approximately 8,000. There is a Synod of the Church of Christ in China, in and under which Presbyterian and London Missionary Society missionaries work. The membership in this Synod runs to something over 3,000. In addition, there are four English-speaking Presbyterian congregations, with a total membership of around a thousand; they are directly connected with the London Presbytery of the English Presbyterian Church. It is hoped that a closer connection can be formed between these two sides of Presbyterian work. An interesting development is that in a number of the Chinese-speaking churches, English services are now being held for the benefit of the younger Chinese who know English and for the Europeans on estates, etc. Other non-Roman groups are also found in Malaya, such as the Plymouth Brethren (2,000), the Seventh Day Adventists (12,000), the Lutheran Church, the Mar Thoma Church, the Assemblies of God, and the Christian and Missionary Alliance. In recent years, missionaries of the China Inland Mission have also started work in Malaya. A number of Chinese churches tend to be fundamentalist in theology.

A very strange characteristic of the Church in Malaya is that it exists entirely amongst the immigrant population of Malaya, namely, the Chinese and the Indians, and not at all amongst the Malays, the native inhabitants. Christian Malays may be numbered on the fingers of two hands! What accounts for this state of affairs? From the Treaty of Pangkor in 1874 and onwards, Britain has recognized that the official religion of the Malay States is Islam, and has followed a "hands-off" policy in regard to that religion. This obligation was expressly reaffirmed in the Federation of Malaya agreement in 1948, and in each of the individual State agreements of the same

year. It has been long recognized therefore that any attempt on the part of Christian bodies to convert Muslim Malays would be a breach of the spirit of Britain's treaty obligation to the States. When in 1950 at Penang two Muslim Malays were converted to Christianity, it almost led to a riot, and the police intervened and spirited away the two converts. Missions have naturally refrained from doing any evangelistic work amongst the Malays. However, the Methodist Church maintains Christian hostels in Malacca for Malay boys and girls. Direct evangelistic work cannot be begun at this time among the Malays without the risk of serious disorder, but some steps should be taken to establish religious freedom and guarantee in principle the right to change one's religion. This right has now been incorporated in the famous U.N. Declaration of Human Rights, to which Britain has been a signatory. If while Britain is ruling Malaya this freedom is *not* granted, the chances of securing it in an independent Malaya will be practically nil. The battle for religious freedom in Malaya has still to be fought.

Another feature of the Christian enterprise in Malaya and Singapore is that it specializes in educational work more than in any other. In Malaya, as elsewhere in East Asia, Christian missions have been the pioneers in the field of education. It was an Anglican chaplain who started the first school in Penang in 1816, which may well have been the first English school in South-East Asia. Today, out of the 97 aided English schools on the Peninsula, more than one-half are run by Christian missions. Sixty per cent of the English education of boys is in Christian hands. It was the Church of England Zenana Mission that first started a school for girls in Malaya, and now seventy-five per cent of the English education for girls is under Christian auspices. Over one-half of these girls are in Roman Catholic Convent schools. All teachers (foreign as well as national) in all recognized schools, both state and private, are paid by the State. This applies to the missionary staff as well. Besides paying the staff salaries, the State pays each school 30 cents per pupil for overhead expenses, but the tuition fees from the pupils must be remitted in full to the Government. Closely allied to this educational work of Christian missions stands the strong Christian movement amongst the youth. The work of the Methodist Youth Fellowship deserves special mention. However, the

recruitment of educated Christian youth to the ministry still continues to be a serious problem.

There is a Theological College at Singapore, known as Trinity College. This is a union institution, supported by American Methodists, English Presbyterians and Anglicans. The London Missionary Society contributes a member of the staff. The Rev. Dr. Stanley Smith of the Nanking Theological Seminary is now its principal. A Chinese section has been recently added to the college. Trinity College occupies a place of strategic importance in the Christian enterprise in South-East Asia. The Federation of Chinese Churches has also started a theological school at Singapore.

Quite a number of the city churches in Singapore and Malaya have been experimenting with the practice of having part-time ministers. Most of these men are employed in Christian schools, but at the same time they are in pastoral charge of congregations. This has ensured for these churches an educated ministry and also lessened the burden of its support. How far this brings home to the well-to-do members of these urban congregations the blessings of Christian giving, or how well these men are able to serve two masters, must still remain an open question. It may not be unfair to remark also that one notices in Malaya and Singapore a "colonial atmosphere" in which the leadership of the churches tends to be non-Asian. Here too there may be a conscious or unconscious reflection of the political atmosphere in the life of the churches. Sometimes this may arise also from Asian opinion which prefers a "neutral" foreigner to a national who belongs to one group or another within the Church. But it is often easy and human to succumb to the temptation to exploit such a situation.

Immediately after the last war, a Malayan Christian Council came into existence with headquarters at Singapore, and regional councils at Penang, Ipoh and Kuala Lumpur. It has been greatly strengthened by the recent appointment of a full-time Secretary. Under the auspices of this Council a vigorous evangelistic drive is under way in the New Villages of the Federation. There are now over a hundred resident workers, Chinese and foreign missionaries, belonging to different denominations, as well as over 150 voluntary workers, whose itinerary extends to approximately 100 New Villages. Students of Trinity College took part in this work during the 1953 summer vacation. Two vans equipped

with movie and projection equipment are touring these villages. This development represents a new outreach of the churches in the last two years; it also means that thousands of Chinese and Indians are for the first time coming into touch with the Christian Gospel and witness. An interesting aspect of the development of New Village communities is that a number of ex-China missionaries are now associated with it, not as missionaries but as government officers in resettlement, administration, education, etc. This really means a "secular" missionary effort in relation to the Christian movement in the East, since definitely Christian attitudes are brought to bear upon the problems of local Government.

The Federation and Singapore are among the few areas of East Asia that are still under colonial rule. The cry for political independence is not, however, as audible in Malaya as it is in other parts of Asia still under foreign domination. This may be due partly to the communal jealousy between the Malays and the Chinese who are about equal in numbers. How to weld the Malays, Chinese and Indians into one strong nation, able to take over the reins of the Government when Malaya becomes independent, is one of the most difficult problems for Britain to tackle. It will be interesting to watch how the British steer the ship of state into calm waters, and unify the crew, before they hand over the captaincy to a new skipper. But if the Church can exemplify in its own life how racial tensions can be overcome, and how its fellowship transcends the barriers of race, it will be a proud achievement, and then the Church can show the way to the State. Will the Church in Malaya and Singapore be able to meet this challenge? It is too early to answer.

### *XI. Hong Kong*

The island of Hong Kong lies off the coast of Kwangtung Province, South China, some 20 miles east of the estuary of the Pearl River. It is about 10 miles long and from $2\frac{1}{2}$ to 5 miles wide. It was ceded to Britain in 1841. The city of Victoria, built on the island of Hong Kong, slopes up from the water's edge at a fairly steep angle. Across, on the mainland, is the town of Kowloon. In 1899 an area of 376 square miles of the mainland was leased for a period of 99 years to the British by the Chinese Government, and this now forms "the New Territories".

Hong Kong and the New Territories are now the abode of thousands upon thousands of Chinese refugees, whose huts litter the slopes of the hills. A number of Christian missions, churches and organizations have moved into Hong Kong from the mainland of China. Many live and work there in the hope that one day Hong Kong will become the spring-board for re-entry into China. In September 1945 Hong Kong had a population of 400,000, but within a few months it jumped to 1 million, and today its population has reached the peak of 2¼ millions.

It is very hard to estimate with any measure of accuracy the Christian population of Hong Kong, either Roman Catholic or non-Roman, as it varies from month to month. The Anglicans, Presbyterians and Lutherans work on this island, along with a number of smaller groups. The refugee Chinese, who have lost everything and escaped from China, have been rudely shaken in their religious outlook, and are therefore far more open to the Gospel than they were on the mainland of China. Hence churches working amidst them report speedy and increasing results. In addition to many adult baptisms in the Chinese-speaking churches, there has been a remarkable number of adult baptisms of Chinese in the English-speaking churches. The Lutheran Church has opened evangelistic work in twenty preaching places during the past five years; six of these have become organized congregations.

A Society for Christian Literature for Overseas Chinese has its headquarters at Hong Kong, and is supported by several of the Protestant missions and churches. It produces literature in Chinese for the special benefit of the Chinese Church in dispersion today. It must not be forgotten that there are about twenty million Chinese residing outside China in South-East Asia, and very little Christian literature from China is reaching them. The Lutherans have a literature society of their own. There has been a great increase in the number of Christian schools, both secondary and primary, and this has been made possible by generous government grants and an increasing recognition by Government of the need of a spiritual basis for education.

The Christian Mission to the Buddhists is situated at Tao Fung Shan in the New Territories. In 1918 Dr. Carl Ludwig Reichelt, together with a former monk, Kuantu, formulated a plan for starting this mission. In 1922 he actually began

work at Nanking, but the attack on that city in 1927 destroyed the mission station. After a short stay at Shanghai, and later at Taiwan, he eventually found a place near Hong Kong in the New Territories where, under expert architectural guidance, he built a Retreat for weary Buddhist pilgrims. In 1952 there were ten monks and three nuns in residence there. There is also a beautiful Christian chapel built in Buddhist style. Here is a brave attempt to create a place of Christian worship and study, not in an alien atmosphere but in one congenial to Buddhist seekers and converts. This mission has come under severe criticism from those who condemn such experiments on the score of syncretism. However, it is to be hoped that the mission will not be frightened away from the task it has set for itself.

Tao Fang Shan is also the home of the Lutheran Theological Seminary which moved there five years ago. Having been founded in 1913 at Shekow, China, it has a proud history of forty long years. Since coming to Tao Fang Shan, it has graduated a little over forty young men, all of whom have found employment in the churches of Hong Kong, Taiwan, Borneo and Malaya. Outside of China, this is one of the very few seminaries that impart theological education at the college level in the Chinese language. The phenomenal expansion of the Lutheran Church in the colony is largely due to the presence of this seminary.

A remarkable feature of the Anglican Church in Hong Kong in recent years has been the demands made on it for priests and teachers by other dioceses. San Francisco, New York, Vancouver, New Zealand, the Solomon Islands, Borneo, Malaya and Indonesia have asked for and received teachers and preachers for their Cantonese and Hakka speaking folk.

Another remarkable experiment is the Hong Kong Christian College, started by a group of Chinese Christian leaders with a view to providing Christian higher education for the Chinese, leading to a business career, teaching or further study overseas. The State University of Hong Kong provides higher education for only a limited number, and at a high cost; therefore this college was begun. Chinese Christian young people educated in this institution will be kept ready to re-enter and serve China when it becomes possible to do so. In 1952 there were in all eighty students in the college, fifty in the forenoon classes,

and thirty in the evening. The United Board for Christian Colleges in China, which is located in the United States, and the China Christian Universities Association in England have hitherto helped this college with substantial subsidies. The college now grants a diploma to its students, but various possibilities of providing a degree are being explored. One large denomination has sent several of its ordinands to this college for a four-year arts course, followed by two years of theological study.

*XII. Taiwan (Formosa)*

When the Portuguese arrived at Taiwan at the end of the sixteenth century, they called it "Ilha Formosa", meaning "The Island Beautiful". It is really a beautiful country, with mountains and valleys in the north and fertile plains in the south; it reminds one of Ceylon. The Chinese call it "Taiwan", meaning "Terraced Bay". It has a population of 7,617,753 (1950 census), most of whom came originally from the mainland of China, especially from Kwantung and Fukien, or are descendants of such immigrants. The aborigines of Formosa constitute a minority of 160,000, and they live in the mountains, leading a primitive agricultural life. Since the recent happenings on the mainland of China, an estimated two million Chinese have migrated to Taiwan. On April 30, 1950, a new Provincial Government was formed. In conformity with the language reform on the mainland of China, Mandarin has been introduced; nearly eighty per cent of the school-age children are being educated today. There is a government university at Taipeh, and in addition the Government maintains five colleges and academies. Taoism and Buddhism are prevalent on the island; the Buddhists alone maintain 3,462 temples.

Christians in Taiwan are estimated at 75,000, of whom Roman Catholics are said to number only 21,000. Figures for the Presbyterian Church are as follows: plains churches 225, and mountain churches about 140. There are at least another 50 Protestant churches of different denominations, though the great majority of these cater mostly (but by no means exclusively) for the mainlanders. There are two theological colleges belonging to the Presbyterian Church of Formosa, and several Bible Schools are being started by missions that have recently entered the island. Most of the Protestant Christians belong to

the Presbyterian Church of Taiwan, which is connected with the Canadian Presbyterian Mission in the north and the English Presbyterian Mission in the south.

The geographical differences between the north and the south are reflected in the life of the two synods of the Presbyterian Church. The south is more fertile than the north, and the Southern Synod is much stronger in numbers than is the Northern. In 1952 the Southern Synod community (baptized adults and children, and adherents) numbered 45,000, while the Northern Synod numbered only 11,500. This figure however does not include 9,717 Christians among the mountain tribes. The Northern Synod is supported by a comparatively richer Presbyterian Mission from Canada, and the Southern Synod by a comparatively poorer Presbyterian Mission from England. This is perhaps the reason why the Southern Synod is far more self-supporting than the Northern.

Before the war, there were in Taiwan a large Presbyterian Church, a small Holiness Church, and a few Japanese churches for the Japanese. Since the war, these Japanese churches have disappeared. However, in recent years there has been an influx of other missions. Amongst them are the Southern Baptists, different groups of Lutherans, the Evangelical Alliance, different brands of the Brethren, the Go Ye Fellowship, the Youth for Christ Mission, the Seventh Day Adventists, the Presbyterian Church of the U.S. Mission, the Mission Covenant and the China Inland Mission. There are also between one and two hundred new Roman Catholic missionaries, mostly American Jesuits. Steps have been taken to establish a Protestant Episcopal Church in Taiwan. While there were forty missionaries in all in Taiwan before the last war, in 1952 the number went up to one hundred and fifty. While one should rejoice at the increasing number of those who come to evangelize Taiwan, the presence of these numerous Protestant groups does give rise to problems of comity and united witness in a non-Christian land.

A glorious record has been made in the work amongst the aborigines. Bishop Stephen Neill in his book, *The Cross over Asia*, expresses his judgment in these words: "I wonder whether anywhere in the world, there is a greater evangelistic opening than in this beautiful island". Even if one may not share fully the optimism and enthusiasm of the Bishop, it is

certainly true that the work amongst the aborigines is one of the most amazing stories of the modern missionary movement.

The Japanese did not allow any Christian work to be done amongst the aborigines as they were seeking to establish Shintoism as their religion. There was among them, however, a remarkable Tyal woman, Chio-ang by name, who had negotiated a peace treaty between the Tyals and the Japanese. She became a student in a Women's Bible School for a time, and when she returned to her folk, she quietly began to spread the Gospel amongst them. She taught little groups as well as individuals in the Tyal villages and started a movement which began to gather momentum among the head-hunting aborigines. The Japanese were incensed at this, and tried hard to put a stop to her activities as well as those of another Christian believer, Dowai by name. Finally, they succeeded in imprisoning him, but not her. In spite of this persecution, the movement spread. However, when the war broke out, all the missionaries were withdrawn, and nothing was heard of this movement amongst the aborigines for the next five years. But when the first missionary returned after the war, he learnt to his great surprise that there had grown up amongst the aborigines a Christian community of 4,000, and that twelve church buildings had been erected. How did this come about? In most places, the story was much the same—Chio-ang's visits, followed by persecution, secret meetings of believers at nights, etc. The remarkable feature of this movement is that Christianity spread amongst these peoples through the witness of their own aboriginal Christians. Sometimes churches were built through the labours of one tribe for another, and sometimes the tribal workers had to learn Japanese in order to do missionary work amongst another tribe in another area! When in February 1952, the eightieth anniversary of the Canadian Presbyterian Mission was celebrated, though the work among the aborigines was only five years old, they possessed eighty-four church buildings, and another fifteen were under construction. Fifty to sixty of these congregations are self-supporting. This is indeed a remarkable chapter in missionary history. The amazing story of how thousands of these people have become Christians has been called "The Pentecost in the Hills". The outstanding characteristic of these believers has been their readiness to witness to others. Almost every hearer

becomes a herald, and every believer a bearer of the good news to others. Not only among the members of the Tyal tribe, but also among the Ami, the Bunan, the Paiwan and the Yami, there are churches growing up. The Tyals first preached to the Ami people, and now Ami young men are evangelizing Paiwan villages. Thus within the last few years about 30,000 aborigines have been won over to Christianity.

## *XIII. Japan*

Japan appears to stand midway between the ancient East and the aggressive West. Her old traditions and legends remain as fresh as ever; her magnificent scenery and her old world charms are mostly blended with her new age beauties, though sometimes the contrast between the old and the new strikes one in the face. Electricity has found its way even to the remotest villages; bullock carts have rubber tyres. One sometimes comes across a fox-shrine on the top of a department store. Reinforced concrete is used to build curved-roofed temples. Ancient archery and Japanese fencing still flourish side by side with the craze for baseball and pachinko (pin-ball machines). The family sits and sleeps on mat-floors, but there is invariably a radio in the home of sliding doors. Calendars with two printed dates, one according to the lunar calendar and the other to the western calendar, hang on the walls. The man returning home from his office in western garb sheds it for a kimono. All this is rather typical of what is happening in other Asian countries also, an admixture of the old and the new, the ancient and the modern, without arriving at an integration of the two.

According to the 1953 Japan Christian Year Book, the Protestant churches in Japan had in 1952 a baptized membership of 234,286. They had 2,957 congregations and 2,577 ordained ministers. The Roman Catholic Church had a baptized membership of 171,785, with 390 congregations and 2,171 clergy. The Japan Orthodox Church had a membership of 32,889, with 160 churches and 54 priests. In all, therefore, there were in 1952 438,960 Christians in Japan. This works out to be less than one-half of one per cent of the population of Japan, which was 83,199,637 according to the 1950 census, and in 1952 was estimated at 85,500,000.

There is no doubt that after the war the Japanese nation, humiliated by defeat and under an occupation, turned eagerly

to the Christian faith. One heard of a vast number of decision cards handed in at the meetings conducted by Dr. Stanley Jones and Dr. Kagawa, but the actual accessions to the Church have not been up to expectations. One wonders why. Some say that the Bible study classes have been crowded, not because of the interest of the people in Christianity, but because of the opportunity it gives them to study English and come in contact with Americans. Others say that the attraction of Christianity has been generally in the realm of thought and belief, and not in that of action and life. Hence many who are attracted to Christianity as a system of belief have not taken the decision to accept Christ and join a Church. For many, Christianity is too much a personal matter, with the result that there is not a sufficient understanding of the community aspects of the faith. Hence the strength of the non-Church movement amongst the Japanese. They readily listen to the message of the evangelist, read Christian literature, and express interest in the Bible, but take no further action. Japanese Christianity is not the result of a mass movement; it is the product of individual decisions, rather than the result of whole villages or even families accepting baptism. Christians are literate and restrained, while not without effective witness of individuals to individuals. However, the rate at which Christianity is growing is much less than the annual rate of population increase, which means that at this rate Japan can never be Christianized *in toto*.

The Church in Japan differs in some important respects from churches in other countries, particularly India. In the latter country most of the Christians have come from the outcastes. In Japan Christianity has touched the higher strata of society, but it has not spread down to the masses. While in India the churches are in the villages, in Japan the Church is predominantly urban. The statistics on the Christian enterprise in Japan are most revealing in this respect. There are churches

in 229 out of 245 cities (93%)
in 487 out of 1,815 towns (27%)
in 193 out of 8,381 villages (2.3%)

In India only about twenty-five per cent of the Christians are literate, whereas in Japan practically every Christian is literate. Therefore, there are great possibilities in the Church in Japan, which when turned into actualities could be utilized for the

upbuilding of the Kingdom of God, not only in Japan but in all of East Asia.

Christians of Japan, and particularly the clergy, have become known as intellectuals! The byword of reproach "Rice Christians" is not applicable to such a community. On the other hand, the Church is blamed by many for not taking the Gospel to the masses—to the farmers, miners, labourers and the three million outcastes in Japan. Evangelists like Kagawa who attempt to do this are still in a minority. Some would wish that the clergy were a little less 'intellectual' and more evangelistically committed than they are today. However, the Church is now conscious of this criticism, and is doing its best to launch out on an aggressive evangelistic campaign and to preach the Gospel to the high and low, to individuals and to the masses.

The "Religious Organization Law" went into effect in April 1940, and in November 1941, thirty-four Protestant denominations met to organize the United Church of Christ in Japan (Nippon Kirusuto Kyodan). In consequence, the NCC, which had been organized in 1923, was dissolved in favour of the Kyodan. It is often said that Church Union was enforced by the totalitarian policy of the Government, but this is only a half-truth. The movement for union had been going on for a number of years. The NCC constituted a committee on Church Union as far back as 1935. However, it was the crisis immediately preceding World War II that actually precipitated the formation of the Kyodan. After the arrival of General MacArthur in Japan in 1945, the Religious Organization Law was rescinded. With outside pressure removed, divisive tendencies appeared. Some of the churches that were in the Kyodan have withdrawn, notably the Episcopalian and Lutheran Churches. Today there are however fifteen former denominations still merged in the Kyodan. They include seventy per cent of all the Protestant Christians of Japan. In October 1948, the Kyodan unanimously adopted the Apostles' Creed as its confession of faith. The total membership of the Kyodan in 1952 was 151,965. There were about 1,500 congregations, with 1,350 ministers in charge of them. Thus it has a more adequate ministry than any other church in Asia.

With the coming into existence of the Kyodan in 1941, the NCC was dissolved. At the end of the war, the doors were opened for Christianity, and many missionary societies entered Japan. Some of the churches that had entered the

Kyodan seceded. Therefore the changed situation of the post-war period necessitated the reorganization of the NCC, and this took place in May 1948. The Council has now appointed a Strategy Committee to plan for the celebration in 1959 of the centenary of the coming of Protestant missions to Japan, and to initiate immediately an evangelistic programme which will lead to its climax in that year. The Council has also extended an invitation to the World Council of Christian Education to hold its convention in Japan in 1959. The NCC Executive Committee hopes that an East Asia Conference of Christian Churches, similar to the one held in Bangkok in 1949, will be held in Japan in that year.

The post-war years have witnessed an influx of various denominations and sects. It is estimated that fifty-five new sects of Christianity have entered Japan since the last war. This of course gives rise to the problems of comity and united witness. It is unfair to indulge in wholesale condemnation of these new groups. They stress certain elements of the Christian faith which others overlook or do not emphasize to the same extent. They evince a genuine zeal for the missionary cause, and an evangelistic passion which the more established churches and missions may not possess to the same degree. Their concern for Christian fellowship transcending race, the emotional warmth of the religion they bring, the decisions they call forth for Christ, and their rugged individualism might very well be the envy of other denominations. Nevertheless, their tendency to establish small and often isolated groups, their unwillingness to recognize any principle of comity, and their proneness to stimulate division rather than co-ordination and co-operation, have made national leaders in Japan very concerned about the net result of their influence. This is a major problem, not merely for Japan but for all countries of East Asia today.

It may not be known to many that there is a fairly strong non-Church movement in Japan. It was started by Kanzo Uchimura, a keen pacifist. Some claim him to be the first Christian pacifist in the East. He died in 1928, but the movement he founded has gained strength and spread. The members of the movement do not believe in organized Christianity and denominational churches. They however meet for Bible study and worship. They publish a monthly magazine. Some of the most influential Christian leaders in Japan are members of

this movement, as for example, Dr. Nambara, the former President of the Imperial Tokyo University, Dr. Yanaibara, its present President, and Mr. Itoigama, the President of Wakayama University. However, what began as a non-Church movement is already becoming a church and a denomination!

Most of the theological institutions in Japan admit high school graduates, and give them one to two years of general education, and two to three years of theological education. The graduates usually receive a Bachelor of Theology degree. Such an institution is the Union Theological College at Tokyo. The Biblical Seminary at Tokyo also takes in high school graduates and gives one year of preparatory education and three years of theological education. The Rural Evangelical Seminary in Tokyo is rather a unique institution in that it gives high school graduates three years of training in a rural setting. All three of these institutions are related to the Kyodan.

While these institutions are independent of a university, there are also universities which have departments or colleges of theology. Such institutions are Doshisha University, Ayoma Gakuin and Kwansei Gakuin with their theological schools or departments. These come under the purview of the State system of higher education, and have been recognized by the State.

A third type of theological study is possible in Japan. The literature departments of colleges or universities may offer courses on Christianity. Here students study for four years. The outlines of all the courses are drawn up by a Board of Studies appointed by the State. Those who finish go out mainly as teachers of religion or religious education. If they desire to enter the ministry, they must pass the examinations set by their churches. Such institutions are Meiji Gakuin and St. Paul's in Tokyo. The literature departments of the Imperial Tokyo University and the State University in Kyoto include courses on Christianity.

Besides the interdenominational theological institutions, there are a number of denominational seminaries. Episcopalians maintain a central Theological College in Tokyo. Their St. Paul's University in Tokyo has a department of literature which offers courses in Christianity. Lutherans maintain a Theological Seminary at Tokyo, and the Nazarenes another in the same city.

It is clear from what has been said above that the level of

training in these seminaries is fairly high: the students admitted must have passed the high school examinations. There is a certain uniformity of theological training, as these institutions of higher learning have to be recognized by the State. On the whole, the academic level of the ministry in Japan is high.

There is more done in the way of Newspaper Evangelism in Japan than in any other country in the East. This seems to suit the Japanese temperament better than prayer meetings and open-air preaching. In their desperate urgency to build a new Japan, and in their fierce struggle to survive, the people work very hard, and have practically no time for other things. Therefore newspapers seem to be the only way to reach them, and personal letters by way of follow-up the only means of speaking to their souls. An excellent technique of Newspaper Evangelism has been developed by Bishop Murao and others under the auspices of the NCC.

The International Christian University is the best Christian gesture that America has made to Japan, the country where she first dropped the atom bomb. Dr. Maclean of Richmond, Virginia, wrote an article in 1946 in a church bulletin, commending the gift of a Christian university to Japan to compensate for the atom bomb. This caught the imagination of many in America. In 1949 the International Christian University Foundation was established to raise ten million dollars for this institution. The drive failed because the appeal was made to the general public in the U.S.A., and not to the churches. In contrast to the one million dollars given for the drive by the Mission Boards, the Foundation was able to raise only $500,000 in all! In Japan, the Governor of the Bank of Japan organized a nation-wide campaign to raise 150 million yen (less than half a million dollars U.S.) but the Japanese raised 160 million yen, most of it being contributed by non-Christians. With this sum they have bought a site of 320 acres, with a hangar, a three-storeyed building and houses, the entire cost amounting to 120 million yen. The Mission Boards in North America have agreed to take care of the running expenses of the University for the next six years.

## *XIV. Korea*

Korea is a land of mountains and streams, of rocks and fields, a land passionately loved by its people, from peasant to

philosopher. It has a population of thirty millions, of whom, it is estimated, twenty millions are now in the South. Korea seems to have been destined for suffering: a long period of Japanese imperialism, World War II and isolation, partition of the land at the 38th parallel, and then the civil war which has turned into an international war. The destruction and devastation in Korea today beggar description. 600,000 homes have been burnt, and out of twenty million people in South Korea, four to eight million have become victims of the war; four million are refugees, of whom three million are utterly destitute. Very few nations in history have experienced such complete destruction and desolation as has Korea. But the people of South Korea are standing up to it. They have a Messianic conviction that they are being called upon to bear the brunt of the Communist onslaught on Asia, and that therefore they are suffering, not for themselves only but for the whole of East Asia. One cannot but admire the fortitude and the indomitable spirit of the Korean people.

Twelve years ago there were only 400,000 Christians in Korea, but today their number has gone up to one million. It is estimated that less than one-fourth of this number are Roman Catholics (200,000—1951 estimate), and the rest Protestants. The Presbyterian Church with some 700,000 members is by far the largest. Next in the order of size come the Roman Catholic Church, the Methodist Church, the Holiness Church, and the Anglican Church. There are also Baptists and Seventh Day Adventist Missions. This is not the first time that the Church in Korea has been tested by fire. Under Japanese domination it faced Shinto-worship, police surveillance and persecution. When World War II ended, liberation ensued—liberation from the shackles of State Shintoism, religious restrictions and isolation. But in North Korea the Church was under unrelenting pressure and persecution; large numbers of Christians fled as refugees to the South. Very little is known today of the life of the Church in North Korea.

Refugee churches are springing up like mushrooms all over South Korea, and their Sunday Schools have become week-day Bible schools. Since 500 pastors and 5,000 lay leaders of the Church in Korea have been killed, the Church is handicapped for lack of strong indigenous leadership. Seminaries in South Korea are crowded with students, so much so that a leading churchman from Canada recently exclaimed that there were

more students in the seminaries of South Korea than in the entire Dominion of Canada! The Korean Church is also a tithing Church. It is a Bible-reading Church, and that is why its members, in spite of the war and tribulations, are rooted in the Bible and are a worshipping, witnessing community. Literally hundreds are being converted, and successful evangelistic work is being undertaken in the army. It is said that the largest additions to the Church have been from the armed forces. Korea has provided the outstanding example of churches founded on indigenous principles, of churches on fire for God, of churches with large colleges and seminaries, and of churches with violent theological and denominational conflicts. While strongly witnessing to the outside world, the Church is tragically divided by schism within itself. Division and strife have manifested themselves within two of the large denominations, and these differences have often been accentuated by the clash of personalities. The main issue is one of doctrinal differences which have become more acute in the last six years, and in some cases are dividing the Church even at the parish level. In spite of all these drawbacks, it still continues to be one of the strongest churches in East Asia. In fact it reminds one of the early Church, strong in its tribulation, steadfast in its faith and witness unto the Lord.

More than thirty years ago there was a Federation of Christian Churches in Korea, of which the main bodies were the Presbyterian and Methodist Churches. But owing to friction between these two bodies, the Federation was dissolved in 1938. During World War II, a Japanese-inspired Kyodan came into existence, and with the end of the war that too disappeared. In 1946 a National Christian Council was organized. The Council is functioning effectively with a full-time General Secretary, and is binding together in united planning and common action the various Christian interests in the country. Its work in the Prisoner of War Camps, and its record of refugee relief and rehabilitation service are worthy of special mention. The immense task of relief and reconstruction is beyond the capacity of the Church in Korea, and therefore it calls for generous assistance from the ecumenical movement. The main pre-occupation of the Church in Korea is not with what has been lost but with what can be helped and redeemed. Therefore it is not surprising that Christians in Korea are fulfilling a role in the national life far out of proportion to their numbers.

CHAPTER III

# THE UNFINISHED TASK

AT THE very outset, one must point out the danger of vague generalizations. As someone has said, no generalization is true including this one. In an area so vast as East Asia, with a population that exceeds half of the population of the world, and with peoples who live under varied conditions of life, and speak different tongues and confess different faiths, it is dangerous to indulge in the pastime of generalizing. There is also the danger of misinterpreting an extremely complex picture in East Asia by neat and compact generalizations. Moreover, while numbers are useful for limited purposes, they are usually most misleading when used to judge Christian progress in any part of the world. (It was Thomas Carlyle who reminded us that one could use figures to prove anything.) Therefore, with these reservations in mind, and in the belief that there will always be exceptions to a general rule, what is stated in the following pages should be regarded only as an outline of the most common concerns of the life of the churches in East Asia.

## *I. Minority Churches*

With the single exception of the Philippines, the Christian churches (Roman Catholic and non-Roman) in East Asia are small minorities set amidst vast non-Christian communities. In three of the large countries of East Asia, namely, India, China and Japan, the proportion of Christians to the population stands at two, one, and half of one per cent respectively. In Ceylon it reaches 8.8%, in Viet Nam nearly 10% and in Indonesia 4%. In the whole of East Asia, only three out of a hundred persons are Christians. Of the three Christians, two are Roman Catholics and one a Protestant. The Roman Catholic Church is much larger than the non-Roman in the Philippines, Viet Nam, Ceylon, East Pakistan, China, Malaya, and Thailand. On the other hand, the Protestant Church is larger in Japan, Korea, Taiwan, Indonesia and Burma. The two are approximately equal in India and in West Pakistan.

Most of the accessions to the Christian churches in East Asia have been from the lower strata of society; Christianity has

spread more rapidly among the oppressed communities and tribal peoples. The adherents to the Christian faith have come mostly from animism and the lesser types of older religions, and not in large numbers from classical faiths such as Vedantism, Islam and Buddhism. Only in countries like Japan, the Philippines, Indonesia and Ceylon are Christians from the middle classes, and the churches urban; in other countries, the majority of Christians are to be found amongst the rural population. Therefore, the Christian community in East Asia is on the whole economically poor, striving hard to eke out a livelihood from the land, usually with crude methods of agriculture; it consists largely of those who have sought in Christianity a liberation from age-long tyrannies over life. With these handicaps, it has not yet out-thought or out-lived the non-Christian religions in East Asia. Stubborn problems that defy quick solution still remain: the iron curtain of Islam, the impenetrability of Buddhism, the impregnable fortress of Higher Hinduism with its caste system, the confusion of races and languages, the clash of modern ideologies and resurgent cultures, and the antagonism of nationalisms which have taken on a religious colouring. The urgent needs of the hour are, therefore, a more intensive study of *modern* developments in the great non-Christian systems of religious thought, a more intelligent approach to educated non-Christians, and the production of Christian apologetic literature.

## *II. The Alien Character of Asian Churches*

Most of the churches in East Asia have arisen from the outreach of churches of the West, or of Australia and New Zealand. Foreign missionaries very naturally brought to these Eastern shores what they were most acquainted with in the life, thought and polity of their own churches. Since the cultures of Asian countries were impregnated with non-Christian ideas which differed fundamentally from the basic tenets of the Christian faith, they naturally fought shy of any compromise or superficial adaptation of the Church's life to the life-patterns of the countries in which it was established. Therefore, the churches in East Asia have become more or less replicas of the churches of the West, so much so that they have been dubbed "ecclesiastical colonies" of the older churches. During all these centuries they have not produced even one decent heresy. They have

even imported their architecture, music, theology and ecclesiastical polity wholesale from the West. Their foreignness has repelled instead of attracted others to Christ. There have been notable experiments at 'indigenization' at Tirupattur in South India, Nara in Japan, and Jaffna in Ceylon, but these remain exceptions only.

The swiftness with which Islam flashed from one end of the Indonesian archipelago to the other has few precedents in religious history. Buddhism, ostracized from the land of its birth, swept over Ceylon, Burma, Thailand, China and Japan with much ease. The secret of these successes lies in the fact that these alien faiths interpenetrated the cultures of these countries to such an extent that they shed their foreignness and became domesticated in the lands of their adoption. They were no longer 'potted plants' but took root in these countries. Does their experience have any lesson for the Christian Church in East Asia? The Church planted in the East has not been left free, always and in all places, to grow in its new soil under God's guidance and without interference from the planters. That there will be great dangers of compromise, syncretism, etc., if the churches are left free, it is readily admitted. But is there any other way for real growth?

The task before the younger churches is a formidable one. They have to be "rooted" in Christ first, before they can be "related" to the soil. They have to safeguard the purity of their Christian faith by themselves living through the great experiences of redemption. This is what is meant by being "crucified and risen with Christ". In an area where religious universalism, relativism and syncretism are rampant, they have to make clear to themselves as well as to others that the Lordship of Christ is a unique Lordship. Foreign in one sense they cannot but be, for their citizenship is in heaven. But they must also live in the world and seek to win their fellowmen. Under the guidance of God, they have to transform local ideas and traditions, rejecting everything unworthy and conserving everything that can be a vehicle for the truth they have learned in Christ, so that the Gospel may be expressed in the language and life of the people. This service was rendered in early days by the Greek and Latin Fathers to the Western churches, and a similar service needs to be undertaken today in East Asia.

### *III. Scarcity of Indigenous Leaders*

The development of indigenous leadership in East Asian churches is at various levels today. In countries where the churches have believed that Christian institutions are integral, and not just incidental, to the Christian enterprise, they have succeeded in producing a fair degree of educated leadership within the Church. Yet there are some countries in East Asia where there is not even one Christian college: such countries are Thailand, Malaya, Indonesia, and Taiwan, though in the last two steps are now being taken to remedy the situation. While education by itself may not be the main task of the Church in East Asia, yet in many Asian countries it is the only means of reaching the higher classes, and of training leaders for the Church. But for Christian educational institutions which have made it possible for the poorer Christian community to secure an education under Christian auspices, many Christians would never have seen the inside of a high school or a college.

An educated and consecrated Christian community in a non-Christian land is a tower of strength for the Christian cause, as its influence extends over the life of the nation. Many have borne eloquent testimony to the fact that the influence of educated Christians in countries like India, Indonesia, the Philippines, Japan, China and Ceylon has been out of all proportion to the numerical strength of the Christian community. On the other hand, the grievous lack of such educated Protestant Christian leadership in countries like Thailand, East Pakistan, Indo-China and Taiwan has resulted in the churches either being ignored by the State, or themselves exercising little or no influence in shaping the lives of their people. Moreover, unless there is sufficient trained leadership within a church, it cannot govern itself properly or assume responsibilities which a foreign mission would desire to devolve upon it. In that case, it has to depend upon foreign personnel to such an extent that it comes to be looked upon as foreign in an Asia which is fast becoming self-governing, and whose nationalist temper is on the ascendancy.

One of the essential requisites of a living and growing church is the possession of an educated ministry. In most countries in East Asia this condition remains un-

fulfilled. Perhaps Japan is an exception. In practically all of these countries the preparation for personal evangelism and a prophetic ministry leaves much to be desired. While a number of surveys of theological education have been completed, few of them have been pressed to practical conclusions. Countries like Burma, Thailand, Malaya and Singapore, and Ceylon experience very great difficulties in recruiting candidates for the ministry. In countries where group movements towards Christianity have been successful, such as India, West Pakistan and Burma, the provision of a ministry adequate to the needs is specially urgent. The proposal for a part-time ordained ministry is worthy of serious consideration. In this connection, it is fitting to quote what the Willingen Conference of the International Missionary Council has said on this subject:

> "This proposal raises many fundamental issues; in fact, it touches on the basic question of the nature and function of the Christian ministry and the churches' traditional conception of this office. The dangers of a part-time ministry are serious. Nevertheless, the prevailing assumption that a full-time, paid ministry is the norm needs to be reconsidered. Is it fundamental to the nature of the Christian ministry or is it an uncritical transplantation to another soil of what was appropriate to a different environment? Amongst other gains, the development of a part-time ministry would bring the sacraments within reach of many remote congregations who are at present denied them except on rare occasions. It would also enable a newly-planted church the more effectively to extend its witness." [1]

Successful experiments in a part-time ordained ministry have been made in Malaya and Singapore, and in certain parts of Indonesia and India. The Church of South India resolved at its Synod in 1954 to try this experiment during the next four years.

*IV. Self-Support of the Churches*

"Self-support" is a term with different meanings in different contexts; its true significance however depends upon the connotation of the word "Self". If it means the payment of a starvation wage to a minister, and the keeping of the church building in good repair, it is not to be desired. Even if it means

[1] *The Missionary Obligation of the Church*, 1953, p. 10.

the well-being of a congregation and adequate support of its minister, it still falls short of what is expected of a church. It is at best only *selfish* support, as it does not include helping a weaker church or providing for the evangelistic outreach of the church. Therefore, the term "self-support" is to be used with discrimination. Many churches in East Asia claim to be self-supporting, but when the acid tests of *adequate* support of the ministry they need, provision for evangelism, and assistance to weaker churches in the same diocese or synod are applied, the hollowness of such claims is revealed.

In East Asia a number of churches have become famous for their 'self-support' status. Such churches are the Korean Church, the Karen Church, the Batak Church, the United Presbyterian Church in West Pakistan, and the Church of Viet Nam. These have not attained this coveted status because of any economic prosperity of their members, but because of their emphasis and teaching on Christian tithing and stewardship. Giving to the Church is not just an economic matter; it has a spiritual basis.

Too much emphasis cannot be laid on the necessity of the churches in East Asia supporting themselves. The majority of them are dependent upon Western financial resources, the sudden withdrawal of which will result in the collapse of most of their work. Churches supported by financially weaker missions have tended to attain a greater measure of self-support than have those which have been spoon-fed to a greater extent from abroad. Taiwan is a glorious illustration in this regard. In these days of independence in East Asia, a church that is dependent upon foreign funds for the conduct of its religious affairs will come to be regarded as a foreign church, a tool of ecclesiastical imperialism, and will be looked upon not only with suspicion but also with contempt. Self-governing Asia will increasingly look with favour only upon those churches that maintain their self-respect and depend on their own material resources for the nurture of their religious life.

All this ought not to be interpreted to mean that foreign support to Asian Churches should be cut off immediately. The concept of "partnership in obedience" implies the principle of the stronger helping the weaker, the richer the poorer. The conception of a World Church, to which all who confess the name of the Master belong, runs counter to any narrow-minded nationalism

which, simply on the score of national pride, refuses to receive deserving and much needed help from outside. In Christian life, there is not only the grace of giving but also that of receiving. Moreover, the sudden or total withdrawal of foreign finance will seriously affect the churches in East Asia in their present stage of development, and cause more harm than good to the Christian cause. All this is readily admitted, and is certainly true. But what is pleaded for here is a greater measure of self-support of the Asian churches, so that as soon as possible they may be able to maintain themselves. It is certainly most doubtful whether it is good for a church to have the ordinary work of its congregations, the support of its ministry and the maintenance of regular church services depend on foreign finance. Who knows what the morrow will bring forth in East Asia? It is not unthinkable that the day may soon come, sooner than some expect, when the governments of Asian countries may prohibit by legal enactments foreign finance supporting indigenous religious enterprises. Or what has happened today in China may happen elsewhere in East Asia, and with lightning rapidity. To be forewarned is to be forearmed.

### *V. Asian Churches and Communism*

That China today is under a Communist government is a fact that cannot be ignored. The Church in that country has been cut off from fellowship with other churches, especially with those of the West. Reliable information concerning it is scarce, since those who have been forced to leave China cannot but be biased, and those who do propaganda for China have their own axe to grind. It is all too clear, however, that political leaders in China have followed the general Communist pattern of action in relation to the Church, i.e., nationalization of Christian educational and social service institutions, elimination of religious opposition, severance of contacts with churches abroad, control of church administration, etc.

Communist influence has also infiltrated the life of the churches in other parts of East Asia. In Indo-China, Christians have been divided into two camps. Many church buildings have been demolished, rice fields looted, and Christians in rural areas terrorized; the number of self-supporting churches has steadily decreased. One finds a large number of Com-

munist sympathizers among Christians there, and this is due largely to their passionate love of their country and their determined, though silent, opposition to and hatred of foreign rule. In the Philippines, the Huk movement is reported to have gained momentum as soon as the rebellion partook of the nature of a revolt against the Roman Church, which is a powerful landlord owning vast acres of land. In Burma, some of the leaders of the Karen rebellion, among whom many Christians are to be found, are associating themselves with the Communists in order to create chaos in the country and bring about the downfall of the party in power. In Thailand, Indonesia, and Japan there is little open alliance of Christians with Communists. In Malaya, Christians have had little or no share in the guerrilla warfare (which is euphemistically called 'the emergency' in spite of its entering its seventh year). Some Chinese Christians in Malaya may be entangled in the struggle, but wherever they are it is not as members of a Christian church but as individuals. In India, the last elections revealed that in areas where Christianity was strong the Communist Party was also strong. Quite a number of Christians voted for Communist candidates, due to fear, false promises or belief in the Communist ideology. At the other end stands the Church in South Korea with its determined and fierce opposition to Communism.

It cannot be denied that to many Asian Christians Communism has a great appeal (greater perhaps than to their Christian brethren in the West), since they, like the Communists, are fighting for social and economic justice in this part of the world where poverty rules the masses, and oriental fascists and aristocrats tyrannize over them. These well-meaning Christians fail to see that "Communism perverts the struggle for justice to serve its own purposes and finally ends in a militant atheism". The Communist ideology repudiates religion as a deterrent to social progress; on the other hand, its claims resemble those of a religion, and it demands the total allegiance of its votaries. Therefore, a Christian can never owe allegiance to it, since the Christian view of the nature and destiny of man is fundamentally opposed to that of the Communist. However, the Christian should not yield to the Communist the pride of place in the concern for social justice, and in the struggle against economic exploitation.

It is absolutely essential that the members of the Christian churches in East Asia be thoroughly educated about the real nature of Communism, lest they be misguided by its slogans or empty promises. In 1951 the International Missionary Council sent a Christian expert on Communism to East Asia to hold conferences with Christians. One result of his visit was that an Institute for the Study of Society was founded at Bangalore, India. This Institute brings together Christian workers from time to time to study the problems of society in the light of the Christian faith. Similar institutes need to be developed in other countries of East Asia.

*VI. East Asian Churches and Christian Unity*

While the Roman Catholic Church in East Asia stands united, and is part and parcel of the one Roman Catholic Church throughout the world, the non-Roman Church in this area exists in all its multiplicity and diversity. It is estimated that in India alone there are over two hundred different Protestant groups at work! The same story of a divided Protestant Church can be told of almost every other country in East Asia. While the denominational emphasis has brought to the East a rugged individualism in religious belief, and added glow and warmth to religious life, its divided witness has often caused confusion in the minds of non-Christians as to which of the groups possessed the truth and nothing but the truth, a claim that every one of them seems to make. While in the West each of these denominational emphases has its own tradition and special significance, in the East there is no such heritage. Denominational distinctions have been imported by various brands of missionary crusaders. It is generally true that an Asian Christian is a Methodist or a Presbyterian or a Pentecostalist, according to the religious label of the missionary who converted him or his forbears. The competition to make out of a Northern Japanese a Southern Baptist, or to turn a Chinese of Malaya into a member of the Church of England, must seem somewhat ludicrous in the eyes of a thinking Buddhist or Muslim.

In recent years there has been a tremendous influx of Christian sects into East Asia. They observe no principles of comity, nor do they co-operate with other Christians in the same area. In Japan alone it is reported that since the war there has been an addition of over fifty such sects. Taiwan, Hong Kong and

Singapore have had a similar influx. In India, the number of foreign missionaries has increased since 1947, not because of large additions to the missionary personnel of stable denominations but to that of the sectarian groups. That these Christian sects bring with them values of Christian faith and life which attract non-Christians is not to be denied. Their passion for winning souls to Christ is their strength. But their divisive tendencies undermine a united witness in the non-Christian lands of East Asia and seriously handicap the progress of Christianity. The Church must show the way to unity among Christians instead of promoting additional divisions in this part of the world which already has its own divisive tendencies.

K. M. Panikkar, who has served as Indian Ambassador in China and Egypt, has written a thought-provoking chapter on "The Failure of Christian Missions". His judgments will not meet with our full assent, but they must surely attract our serious attention. He cites four causes for the failure of Christian missions in Asia. In his own words they are as follows:

> "In the *first* place, the missionary brought with him an attitude of moral superiority and a belief in his own exclusive righteousness. . . . To the Hindu who believes that all good ways lead to God, and to the Buddhist who is taught that the practice of the Noble Eightfold path will perfect him, the claim of the votaries of any sect that they alone have the truth, and that others who do not submit shall be condemned, has always seemed unreasonable and absurd. . . . *Secondly*, from the time of the Portuguese to the end of the second World War, the association of Christian missionary work with aggressive imperialism introduced political complications into Christian work. . . . Inevitably, national sentiment looked upon missionary activity as inimical to the country's interests and native Christians as 'secondary barbarians'". . . .
>
> "*Thirdly*, the sense of not only Christian but European superiority which the missionaries perhaps unconsciously inculcated produced also its reaction. . . . The missionary colleges taught European literature, European history and proclaimed the glories of European philosophies. Now the strange thing in Asia is, that even during the days of unchallenged European political supremacy, rightly or wrongly no Asian people accepted the cultural superiority of

the West. The educational activities of the missionaries, far from helping the cause of the Christian faith, only led to the identification of the work of Christian missions with Western and American cultural aggression."

While these three reasons may be of general interest to us, the *fourth* cause which he cites refers to the divisions within the Christian Church, and it is this that is relevant to the discussion of this section. He writes: "Finally the point may also be emphasized that the wide variety of Christian sects, extending from the Catholic Church to the Seventh Day Adventists, each proclaiming the errors and superstitution of others, was naturally a source of embarrassment to missionary work. Also, the growth of unbelief in Europe in the 19th century and the crisis in European civilization following the Great War of 1914-18 and the October Revolution, broke whatever spell the different sects of Christianity had among certain classes of Asians."[1] This judgment of a well-travelled and highly educated Hindu is worth serious consideration.

Worship, Unity and Mission are the threefold aspects of the Church's life. The Church is called to be one family in Him and to make known His Gospel to the whole world. Christ prayed for His disciples that they might be one in Him—Unity. But unity for what? "That the world might believe that the Father had sent Him"—Mission. Unity and Mission are therefore interdependent; "division in the Church contradicts its own nature, distorts its witness and frustrates its mission in the world". Therefore it is a matter for rejoicing that most of the Protestant churches, though divided and sadly rent asunder in East Asia, have, nevertheless, sought fellowship in National Christian Councils. Such councils exist in each of the major countries of East Asia, and they bind together Christians of different denominations in common projects of Christian co-operation and witness.

Besides these Christian Councils, united Churches are emerging in many of these countries. The Kyodan in Japan, the United Churches of Christ in China and in the Philippines, the Church of South India and the United Church of Northern India are outstanding examples. Church Union negotiations are under way in West Pakistan, Northern India, Ceylon and

[1] *Asia and Western Dominance*, Allen and Unwin, 1953, pp. 454-456.

Indonesia. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries the Spirit of God moved in the hearts of men and women and sent them out as missionaries of the Cross. Is it fanciful to infer from the signs of the twentieth century that He is moving Christians everywhere to draw near to Him, and in thus drawing nearer to Him to draw nearer to each other? Christians of the West may regard Church Union as a luxury, but in non-Christian East Asia it is an urgent necessity.

For the average East Asian Christian the ecumenical movement, as exemplified by the World Council of Churches and the International Missionary Council, has a powerful attraction. He sees in it his own membership in a world fellowship, and he no longer feels lonely amidst the great multitude of non-Christians amongst whom he lives. More than this, he sees in that movement the one hope of bringing churches together so that in non-Christian Asia there may be a united witness for Christ. But it must be confessed frankly that at times his loyalty is under a strain as he sees powerful pan-denominational organizations growing stronger and stronger, side by side with the ecumenical movement. Must he express the unity in Christ by becoming one in faith and worship with the Christians of his own country or region, or should he transcend the barrier of nation and unite with those of his own denomination scattered all over the world? This is a real dilemma to many a thinking Christian in East Asia today.

### *VII. The Unfinished Task of the Churches in East Asia*

While over one-half of the world's population lives in East Asia, the total Christian population is only about forty millions. Only three out of a hundred persons in East Asia are Christians today. There are vast areas with as many as five to ten million people who have neither heard the Gospel of Christ nor have had a church built amongst them. Relatively few from Islam, Buddhism and Higher Hinduism have accepted Christianity. A number of ethnic and racial groups have not been reached at all by the Christian message. Many areas of life in East Asia have not been Christianized. The evangelistic task of our day is as much concerned with evangelism "in depth" as it is with evangelism in terms of geography. Afghanistan, the Asiatic regions of the U.S.S.R., and some lands bordering on the Himalayas are closed to the Christian

Gospel. Ancient religions have taken on a new lease of life, and new wine has been poured into old bottles. These resurgent religions defy the exclusive claims of Christianity and block its progress. A new secular faith is entering the Eastern world, asserting that the nation is both god and believers. But you cannot convert the State into a god and worship it without at the same time converting man into a beast. A militant Communism preaches that religion is the opiate of the people and wills to destroy it. Secularism and atheism are gaining ground alongside of the revival of ancient religions.

Against these tremendous odds, the Church of Christ is living and working in East Asia. From a purely human point of view, the burden of winning East Asia to Christ seems a Herculean, if not an impossible, task. The Church in Asia by itself does not have adequate resources, either in personnel or in finance. It cannot but beckon to its partners to come to its aid, and in common obedience to the one Lord and Master undertake with them the extension of His Kingdom in the East. He who has promised to be with His Church is its Head, and relying on His strength, and that alone, it must press on; it dare not fail Him. Faith, it has been remarked, is the resolution to live in spite of circumstances. The churches in East Asia must have that faith. Three per cent *with God* is a significant minority.

A new chapter in the missionary history of East Asia is being written today, and this fills one with hope. Until lately, the missionary of the Cross in the East was one who hailed from the West; he entered into the labours of the alien peoples of the East. But in recent years the Asian churches have become missionary-minded and have sent forth their sons and daughters to other Asian countries as missionaries of the Cross. The Church in China, even in its early period, sent her missionaries to the extreme western borders of her land to work amongst the tribes known as Miaos and Lolos. Her sons went out to minister also to the Chinese in Malaya and Indonesia. Dr. John Sung, the great evangelist, gave up his career as a chemist and went out to Indonesia to preach the Gospel. The work of the Chinese and Foreign Missionary Union is well known. Even now, Dr. Leland Wang, Chairman of this Union, is doing considerable work in this direction. Before the last war, the Japanese Church sent her own sons as ministers of the Gospel to the

churches in Manchuria, China, the South Sea Islands, Korea, Taiwan and Okinawa. There existed also in Japan some overseas missionary societies, such as the East Asia Missionary Society, the Overseas Missionary Association and the South Sea Islands Mission. During the last war, some Christian ministers went from Japan to the churches in Asian countries that she had conquered.

In recent years, several other Asian churches have sent out missionaries to win East Asia to Christ. About six years ago, the Tamil Lutheran Church in South India sent one of its doctors, Dr. D. Williams, as a medical missionary to the Batak-land in North Sumatra. Three years ago it sent one of its teachers, Mr. S. Devanesan, to serve as a theological professor in the Sipoholan Seminary of the Batak Church. The Church of South India has sent the Rev. and Mrs. Satya Joseph to Papua as its missionaries. There is an Indian, Mr. C. I. Itty, working today as the Religious Programme Secretary of the Y.M.C.A. at Djakarta, Indonesia. The United Church of Northern India has revived its plans to send an Indian couple to East Africa.

Several Christian Bataks, Ambonese and Minahassans have been working on the neighbouring islands of Indonesia and spreading the Gospel. The Church of Viet Nam has nine missionary couples working among the tribes in Indo-China. A Cambodian Christian, Mr. Chan by name, is preaching the Gospel amongst his fellow-Cambodians in Surin, Thailand. The Karen Church of Burma used to send her sons to minister to the Karens on the border of Thailand. Recently the Episcopalian Church in Japan opened missionary work in Okinawa. The United Church of Christ in Japan (Kyodan) has appointed a committee to make arrangements for sending a missionary to Amami Ooshima island (215,000 inhabitants) which lies between Okinawa and Japan. There are at present two Protestant indigenous ministers and a Roman Catholic Church on this island. The United Church of Christ in the Philippines has sent a Filipino missionary couple, the Rev. and Mrs. Jorge Quismundo, to the Eastern Theological Seminary at Makassar, Indonesia, and another Filipino couple, the Rev. and Mrs. Jose D. Esteye, to Thailand.

All these are but indications of the awakening of a new interest among Asians in the missionary enterprise in East Asia.

While the evangelization of East Asia may be undertaken in partnership between the younger and the older churches in obedience to His Will, the primary responsibility of winning East Asia to Christ must rest on the Asian churches. Today, Delhi and Djakarta, Manila and Mandalay, Bangkok and Bombay, Trincomalee and Tokyo have become the suburbs of the City of Man in a new East Asia. But the Gospel makes us realize that they are intended to be the suburbs of the City of God, and the churches in East Asia dare not fail the God of this Gospel.

SECTION IV

# ASIAN CHURCHMEN SPEAK

## EDITORIAL NOTE

For the preparation of this section statements were received from the National Christian Councils of Japan, Malaya and Burma, and from groups of church leaders in Taiwan, Hong Kong, Indo-China and Pakistan. These statements were considered and this section was written by the following group of churchmen from India, Burma and Ceylon who met with the Editor at Nagpur, India, in December 1953:

*Burma*

The Rev. John Maung Pe, Associate General Secretary, Burma Christian Council, Rangoon.

*Ceylon*

The Rev. G. B. Jackson, Study Secretary, National Christian Council, Colombo.

The Rev. B. C. D. Mather, Secretary, National Christian Council, Colombo.

*India*

The Rev. Dr. A. Abdul Haqq, Henry Martyn School of Islamics, Aligarh.

The Rev. James P. Alter, Secretary, Study Department, World Council of Churches, Landour, Mussoorie.

The Rev. C. Arangaden, Director, Christian Institute for the Study of Society, Bangalore.

Dr. E. C. Bhatty, Secretary, National Christian Council, Nagpur.

The Rev. J. R. Chandran, United Theological College, Bangalore.

The Rev. Dr. P. D. Devanandan, Literature Secretary, National Council of Y.M.C.A's, Bangalore.

The Rev. R. S. Macnicol, Madras Christian College, Tambaram.

The Rev. Dr. R. W. Scott, Secretary, National Christian Council, Nagpur.

Professor F. S. Thakur Das, Indore Christian College, Indore.

The Rev. K. Yohan Masih, Secretary, General Assembly, United Church of Northern India, Mhow.

R. B. M.

SECTION IV

## ASIAN CHURCHMEN SPEAK

WE, WHO are members of the churches of East Asia, join together to send our greetings to the other members of the Church Universal. We write with a great sense of thankfulness that God has called us, and is calling us further, out of the narrowness of our racial, political and social groups, into the living reality of a world family. We recognize that this has not been a human achievement, although many influences have worked to bring the Church into being. Supremely it has been the work of Jesus Christ through the fellowship of the Spirit. And in gratitude to God, we are eager to play our part in working against all racial and social exclusiveness wherever it is found. The Church of Jesus Christ is for all men, everywhere.

In thought and prayer, as we write, we remember our fellow-Christians in the churches of China and Korea; and we reaffirm our unity with them in Christ.

We are deeply conscious of our failure to live as Christians in the world and to show forth that quality of life which Christ offers to us all. What we have to say to you comes from a sense of our own deep inadequacy before God; but we are not ashamed of the Gospel, and we write these things in the firm assurance that He is able to fulfil His promises through us now.

Being one with the peoples of East Asia, we are keenly aware of the widespread longing for a new and just social order which is burning in the hearts of so many here today. We believe that such an order of society is God's offer to us, but we know that it can only be realized through a rebirth of man's community life in Christ. It is in that conviction that we are endeavouring to work together for our peoples and our nations; and we believe that our fellowship in the ecumenical movement can strengthen us all for this great task. We ask you to work and pray that your people may more fully understand us and the revolutionary situations we are facing. We indicate in these pages some of the ways in which, by God's help, we also shall try to prepare ourselves for our Christian responsibility, not only here in the East, but also with you all in the whole ecumenical movement.

I

A new day is dawning for us in the East. Not one of us fails to be stirred by the call to grasp the opportunities coming to us through the spread of political freedom, and the significance of the East in the clash of world forces today. But even more significant is the fact of the Church in East Asia. The missionary task, first undertaken by the pioneers from the West, is beginning to pass into our hands. We give thanks to God that there are already a few Asian missionaries working in other lands of the East; but our churches have still to become aware of the urgent task and glorious opportunity. We must give ourselves heart and soul to this supreme commitment, realizing that doors will remain open to us which may close to Christians from the West. The Gospel may take many forms, and it may be expressed through Eastern types of community service, but it must and it will be preached.

Many of us can remember the vital and joyous witness of the Gospel Team which went from Burma and visited India and Ceylon, speaking as Asians to other Asians, and leaving behind it a surge of Christian life and witness. We believe that this way of proclaiming the Gospel must be used again and again; and perhaps such teams might begin by following the hundreds of Chinese who are dispersed all over South-East Asia. Their witness would be a powerful demonstration of the life of the Spirit in our churches today. There are opportunities for these teams to work not only in colleges and schools but also in factories and plantations, or among workers in seaports and mills.

We hope to make opportunities for students from all parts of Asia and from the West to come together to study the Christian faith in the context of the contemporary world. Already in some of our Christian colleges they are coming from many lands, for the study of arts, science and medicine. Our desire is that our theological colleges should also become international, and we hope for an interchange of personnel between the churches, not only of East Asia but also between East and West.

In this matter of the fullest exchange of personnel between the churches, we would greatly value your help. What has been done already has begun to break down our ignorance of each other, enabling us to discover our common heritage as Christians. Regional conferences have also been useful in this

direction, in drawing us together and in making us aware of the ecumenical movement. The times call for even a greater exchange of personnel.

Experiments in indigenization have been going on, both in worship and organization. We are aware of the dangers here, but we feel convinced that, safeguarded by the guidance of the Spirit, we can go forward boldly into ways which will make Christ more real to our people, and which will ultimately enrich the whole Church. Further, we are becoming aware that the full needs of the Church cannot be met today unless we seriously consider the training of a part-time ordained ministry, which will be able to bring the sacraments to our scattered village congregations, and so increase the range of the ministry of the Church.

## II

As you in the West think of the ways in which you can help to strengthen the Church's witness in East Asia, we ask you to remember that we need men and women who can live out with us God's answer to a divided world. The total needs of the work, it has been truly said, must be met by the total resources. Yet often out here the work of the Spirit is hindered because, for reasons of your divisions, one denomination is unable to help another, even when a great door of opportunity is suddenly opened. Do not send us missionaries who will look at each other critically over denominational walls. We need the kind of Christians who, while valuing their own heritage, are determined not to perpetuate those historic divisions which, whatever they may mean to you, have far less relevance to us in our Asian context. We need missionaries who are ready to work in full fellowship with those whose traditions and ways of worship may be very different from their own. There is but one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of us all.

We recognize that we are called into one Body in the midst of a society that is broken into many antagonistic groups. We are eager to set our faces against any imported sectarianism, such as can only add to the barriers that already divide the peoples of Asia. We are entering into a deeper experience of the unity of the Church through such movements of the Spirit as have given rise to the Kyodan in Japan, the United

Church of the Philippines, the Church of South India, and other communions elsewhere. And we believe that our fellowship in the whole ecumenical movement will strengthen this unity, and not multiply our already existing divisions. Nothing less than organic church union must be our goal.

We do recognize the appeal that pan-denominationalism makes to many sincere Christians. But we must point out also that it creates for us specially difficult problems at a time when, in our task of evangelism, we must draw closer together in our own lands. In this, as in other matters concerning the growth of the churches in East Asia, we must be left free to make our own choice of loyalty under the guidance of God.

If you and we are to demonstrate effectively Mission in Unity and Unity in Mission, then our immediate objective should be to integrate fully the *work* of the International Missionary Council with that of the World Council of Churches, leaving the matter of organizational adjustments for further study.

We recognize that we are called to be members of the *Church*, not merely individual followers of Christ. He has brought us out of our narrow social loyalties into a family relationship that embraces the whole world. East Asia has had centuries of experience of the value of group loyalties. Castes and tribes have given to our peoples a sense of community which is now being destroyed under the impact of world forces. The Church has in the past called us away from these narrower groups. But too often the result has been a one-sided individualism, and there has been no corresponding incorporation into the Body of Christ. Today we are realizing that God wills to redeem men into the fulness of the Christian fellowship with all its rich diversity, imbued with one spirit. If we take men away from their group loyalties, let us give them something truer: not the inadequate creed of individualism, but the fellowship of the whole family of God in heaven and on earth.

## III

All this will call for boldness on our part and on yours, in making experiments of faith under the guidance of God. Some of these experiments are just beginning; others have progressed and borne fruit. And we are able to indicate certain directions in which there can be fuller co-operation, through which many of our hopes will be realized in the future.

We appreciate the valuable work that the East Asia Secretariat of the IMC and the WCC has already done for us. If the suggestions that we have made to ourselves and to you are to be carried out, it is essential that this Secretariat should be continued and strengthened in every possible way.

The training of indigenous leadership in our lands is of primary importance, so that at all levels we may accept responsibility for the local expression of the Church Universal. Theological education, both in our own languages and in English, is one kind of preparation for this leadership, and needs to be our first concern. We look for more leaders from among our own ranks who can think, teach and write, interpreting the truth of the Gospel in ways that will reach the hearts and minds of our peoples everywhere; and with this in view, there is need of a rethinking and redirection of all our theological studies. Theological students should also be enabled to travel from their homelands to other countries where they can most profitably be further trained.

Indigenous leadership also implies the fuller training of the laity. We need men who can express their common faith through business, agriculture and industry. We need fuller training for the women of the churches, and for those responsible for youth. The holding of Laymen's Institutes from time to time has been found most helpful, and we are grateful for all that is being done. The churches in East Asia should now begin to do more for training the laity.

The study of the great non-Christian religions needs serious attention. Recognizing the value of what has already been done by the Henry Martyn School of Islamics, we look for the establishment of Christian Institutes under indigenous leadership. We hope to see the founding of institutes similar to that which is already planned in Ceylon; one for the study of Islam, in Pakistan or Indonesia; one for the study of Hinduism in India; one, possibly in Japan, for the study of Mahayana Buddhism. We have reason to believe that there are Asian Christians with the necessary talent and experience whom we must challenge to serve in these institutes.

We should give further opportunities to our younger men to go out for short-term service to sister churches in Asia, where they will have much to give and to receive. We realize we cannot offer a significant contribution in terms of material

wealth, but we must be and are ready to give men and women who can play their part in the life of the ecumenical and missionary movements, representing us on councils and committees, and on mission boards, and serving abroad for short or long periods in churches, hospitals or schools.

One consequence of this fuller training will, we hope, be the emergence of an even more intimate colleagueship between missionaries and our own leaders, and a partnership of mutual responsibility in all matters of finance, so that our present wide disparities in economic standards will gradually disappear. In the meantime we ask for the patience and self-denial of our missionary partners, that they may do all they can to develop indigenous leadership under the guidance and power of the Spirit.

We believe that God will show us together how best to use our financial resources, and we must come together more trustingly to find out what we must do. We ask you to consider how your people may be encouraged to support work, even where the personnel is wholly Asian. We fully realize that when finance is linked with known people, there is a great imaginative appeal, but today our giving must be on a new level, for the strengthening of the churches anywhere and everywhere. We are members of one Body, and all the work is God's.

There are today greater opportunities than ever for pioneering in new forms of evangelism. To match these opportunities, we suggest that each church in East Asia and its supporting missionary society abroad should join together in establishing a special Fund, set apart for this work only, and not intended for the other needs of the church. To this Fund all should make contributions according to their ability.

Two great convictions have grown in us. We, Christians of East Asia, should give far more to the Church than we are doing now. Giving to the Lord is essentially a spiritual matter, though it has its economic aspect as well. Moreover, in the self-governing countries of East Asia, only a self-supporting church will command any respect or be above suspicion. At least for the maintenance of the life and work of our churches—for the preaching of the Word and the administration of the Sacraments—and for the support of the Ministry, we should make ourselves entirely responsible, without relying upon foreign funds. This means educating our communities in Christian

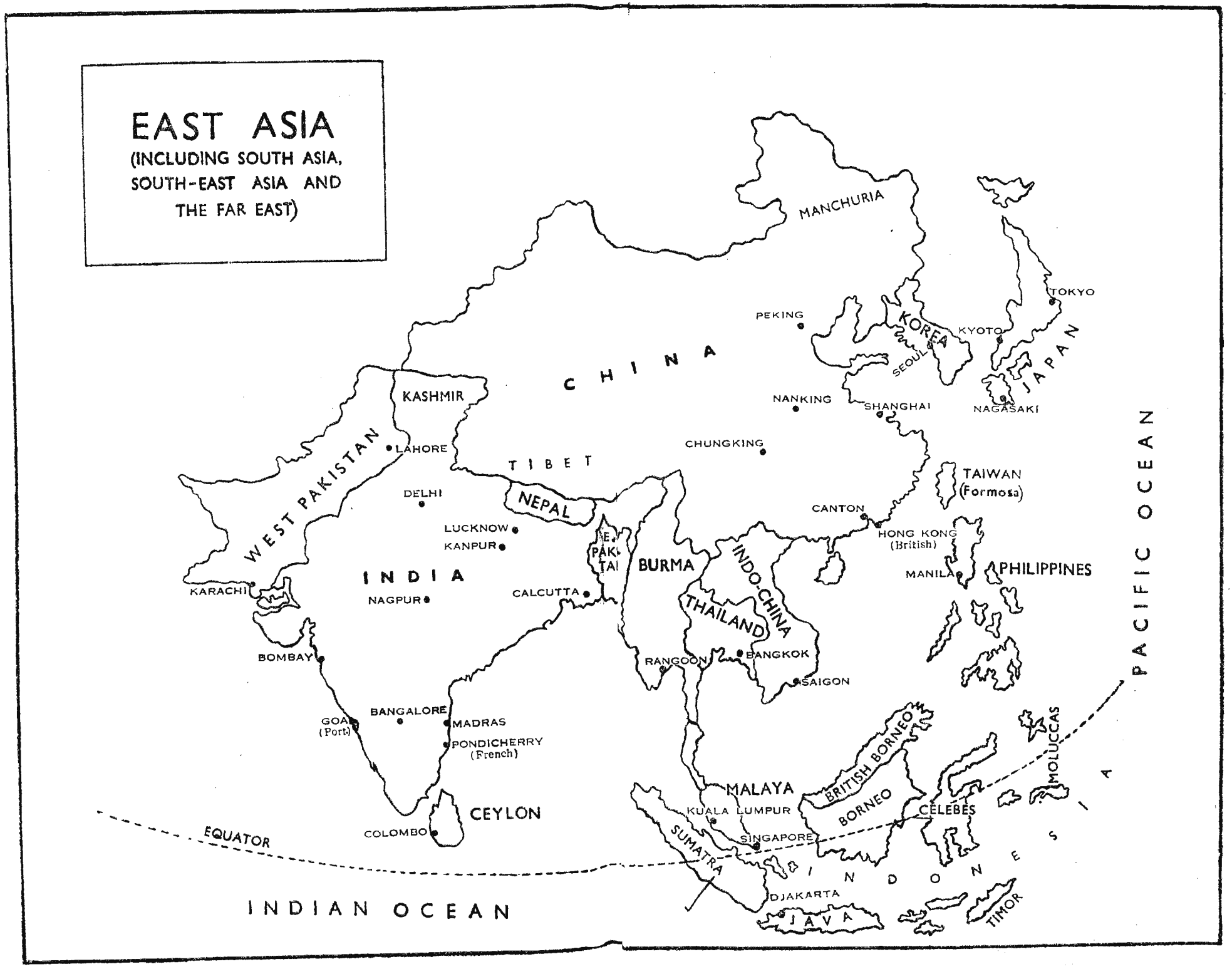
stewardship and giving. This must be done, and at once. Assistance received from abroad should be primarily utilized for forward movements in evangelism, newer experiments in Christian witness, production of evangelistic and apologetic literature, and maintenance of those institutions which are at present essential for the Christian enterprise.

The other conviction of ours is that the time has come when we of East Asia should regard the evangelization of this part of the world as our primary responsibility. Our sons and daughters should be challenged to go out as missionaries of the Cross, as yours have been. We rejoice that some of ours have already answered such a call, but we need to send out more, and support them better, in obedience to our Lord's Great Commission. You have borne the burden nobly so far; as it now gradually passes over to our shoulders, may we be ready to bear it!

## IV

We write these things to you and also to ourselves with a sense of urgency. We must work while it is day. No one can say how long our present time of expansion and opportunity will continue. Yet we are able to keep watch without anxiety and to work together without haste, because we are partners in obedience to Him in whose will is our peace, and in whose service is perfect freedom.

And we do not forget that we are part of the Church Universal. We have no desire to think of ourselves as an East Asian *bloc*, or to enhance our national characteristics by depriving ourselves of the fellowship of Christians from abroad. We are grateful for our God-given national heritage, and we shall strive together to hold to it that it may never divide but only enrich all nations. What we have can be offered to Jesus Christ, so that in His hands it may be used, far beyond our ability, for the healing of the nations of the world.


EAST ASIA
(INCLUDING SOUTH ASIA, SOUTH-EAST ASIA AND THE FAR EAST)
MANCHURIA
CHINA
PEKING
KOREA
SEOUL
KYOTO
TOKYO
JAPAN
NAGASAKI
NANKING
SHANGHAI
KASHMIR
LAHORE
WEST PAKISTAN
TIBET
CHUNGKING
TAIWAN
(Formosa)
DELHI
NEPAL
CANTON
HONG KONG
(British)
LUCKNOW
KANPUR
E. PAKISTAN
BURMA
INDO-CHINA
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MANILA
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