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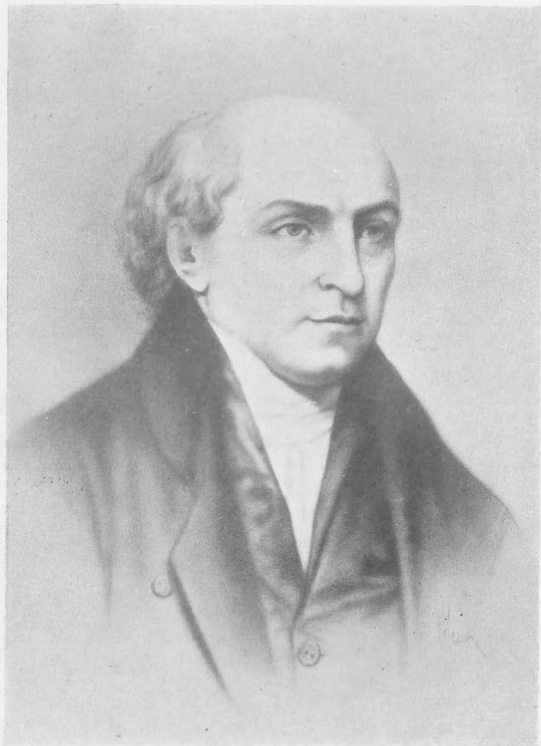
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**WILLIAM CAREY**  
**MISSIONARY PIONEER**  
**AND STATESMAN**

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WILLIAM CAREY

# WILLIAM CAREY

MISSIONARY PIONEER

AND STATESMAN

*By*

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LONDON

STUDENT CHRISTIAN MOVEMENT

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## EDITORIAL NOTE

THIS volume is the sixth of a uniform series of new missionary biographies, in the production of which a group of unusually able writers are collaborating.

While these volumes contain a large amount of valuable new material, this is not their main objective. The aim rather is to give to the world of to-day a fresh interpretation and a richer understanding of the life and work of great missionaries.

The enterprise is being undertaken by the United Council for Missionary Education, for whom the series is published by the Student Christian Movement.

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## AUTHOR'S PREFACE

WILLIAM CAREY'S life-work falls into two distinct periods: the *English* period when, almost single-handed, he faced and overcame the prevailing indifference and hostility to missionary effort, thought out a well-developed scheme, published his amazing "Enquiry," and in the end almost compelled timid and hesitating men to form a Society for the evangelization of the world; and the *Indian* period, during which he put his ideas into practice, developing almost every form of missionary agency, translating the Scriptures into numerous languages, founding a splendid Christian college, and winning the confidence of one Governor-General after another. From being a simple shoemaker and village preacher, this man became so skilled a linguist that at the age of forty he was appointed Professor of Bengali, Sanskrit, and Marathi in the Governor-General's college in Calcutta—a post he filled with distinction for thirty years. The more deeply we study the abundant records of Carey's life, the greater he is seen to be: a unique figure, towering above both contemporaries and successors. Taking his life as a whole it is not too much to say that he was the greatest and most versatile Christian missionary sent out in modern times.

This book is not a history of the beginnings of the Baptist Missionary Society, nor even of the Serampore Mission, but a pen-portrait of Carey himself;

even his great colleagues, Marshman and Ward, are treated as little more than accessories to the central figure. The author has endeavoured to portray the development of Carey's mind as well as the growth of his soul, to trace the psychology of his call and the factors that helped to mould his life.

Free use has been made of the older biographies, especially J. C. Marshman's great *Life and Times of Carey, Marshman and Ward*, published in 1859. Eustace Carey's *Memoirs of Dr Carey* (1836) has also been used: it is a strange jumble of letters, reminiscences and wearying comments, but contains much useful information. The more recent volumes by Dr Culross and Dr George Smith have hardly been consulted at all, the author choosing rather to go back to older and original sources. A considerable part of this book was written before the writer became aware that the Rev. S. Pearce Carey was engaged on an exhaustive study of the life and work of his great-grandfather, and then it seemed desirable that the present volume should be an entirely independent study; the author has therefore of set purpose carefully refrained from reading or in any way consulting Mr Pearce Carey's book.

The present volume will be found to contain not a little new matter. In addition to careful search through parish registers, Church minute books, and other documents, the author has been able to make a very careful study of a large number of manuscript letters—amounting to upwards of a thousand of closely written quarto sheets. He has devoted a good deal of time to the books that Carey himself read and a number of the sermons that influenced Carey in his early years. Specially important



—and quite original—is the use made of the *Northampton Mercury*; a patient study of the old files of that excellent weekly paper has convinced the author of its influence upon Carey during the formative period of his life. This is ground hitherto unexplored by Carey's biographers. Contemporary biography has also been used extensively—the lives of Fuller, Ryland, John Thomas, Charles Grant, David Brown, Buchanan, Henry Martyn, Alexander Duff, Wilberforce, the Marquis Wellesley, Lord Hastings, Earl Amherst, Lord William Bentinck, and others. During the four years of research and writing the author has visited all the scenes of Carey's early life and work in England, as well as those at Serampore. The book makes no claim to be exhaustive; the defects doubtless are many, but it is hoped that its inaccuracies will be found to be few. The author will be satisfied if, in spite of its shortcomings, the book brings home the great message of Carey's life as expressed in his own immortal words—

“Attempt great things for God,  
Expect great things from God.”

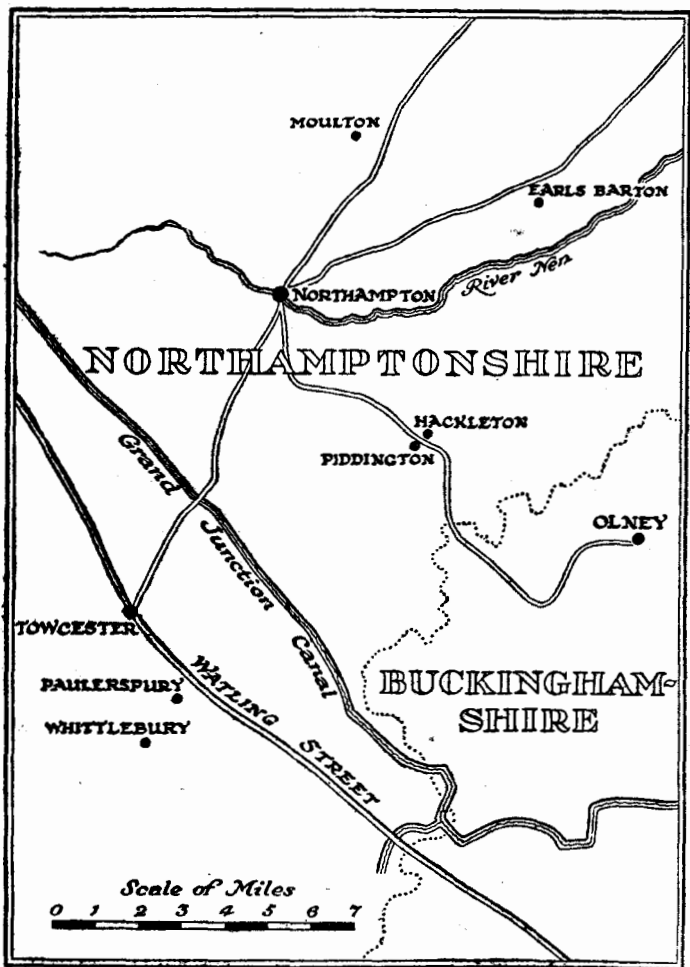
F. D. W.

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The Scene of the first period of  
William Carey's Life-work.

## CHAPTER I

### CHILDHOOD IN THE WEAVERS' COTTAGE

*A.D. 1761-1767. Age 1-6 years.*

OUR story begins in the quiet village of Paulerspury, near Towcester, in the county of Northamptonshire. Paulerspury lies some three or four hundred yards from the great high road from London to Chester—the famous Watling Street, along which, in the dim past, the Roman legions marched. Often has that ancient road witnessed the passing of kings and men of war advancing to battle—Saxons, Danes, Normans; the armies of the White and Red Rose have tramped along it; the stern cavalry of Rupert and Cromwell have thundered past. But Paulerspury lay sleeping in its quiet retreat hard by—hidden from the gaze of passing warriors, and scarce changing as the years rolled on.

In the latter half of the eighteenth century the thrill of romance had gone; the heraldry and display of Plantagenet and Tudor times had disappeared from Watling Street, and the greatest excitement the village boys could hope for was the passing of a few horsemen, the stage-coach from London to Liverpool, or the big wheeled stage-wagons, drawn by six or eight horses, that carried merchandise from the capital to Lancashire and Cheshire. Starting every Monday and Thursday from the Axe Inn in Aldermanbury, those lumbering wagons accomplished

the journey in ten days—or eleven in winter, when the days were short and the roads worse than usual.

Quiet indeed was the sweet English countryside in those days. The population of the whole kingdom did not exceed eight million souls, and the inhabitants of London only numbered something like six hundred thousand. The provincial towns were surprisingly small.<sup>1</sup>

To a very large extent the England of those days, like the India of to-day, was a land of villages, and for that reason the population was the more evenly spread out over the whole land. Northamptonshire was one of the most populous of the English shires. Every two or three miles the thatched houses of a village nestled cosily around an ancient church, the tower of which formed the most conspicuous landmark for the neighbourhood. Paulerspury, a very typical Northamptonshire village, is said to have had, at that time, a population of about eight hundred. It was in a small thatched cottage<sup>2</sup> in this village that William Carey was born on August 17th, 1761.

William's parents, Edmund and Elizabeth Carey, were weavers, and from early morning until nightfall their little two-storied dwelling with its high-pitched roof vibrated with the dull thud of the loom on which they earned their daily bread. In the stern school of privation Edmund Carey had learned the lessons of industry and thrift. At the age of seven his father's death had left him the chief comfort of his

<sup>1</sup> In 1773 the population of Liverpool was 34,000, Birmingham less than 30,000, Manchester and Salford 27,000, and Bolton only 5000.

<sup>2</sup> The cottage was, with the exception of the back wall, rebuilt in 1854.

widowed mother, who soon apprenticed him to a weaver in the village. As Edmund grew to manhood he had taken to himself a wife, and his honoured mother had come to share their humble cottage—"a woman of remarkable tenderness and very delicate constitution," of "calm repose and even disposition." When children came to gladden the home, the beloved grandmother took them to her heart and nursed them with greatest affection and care. She it was who chose their names, calling the two first William and Ann, after two of her own children whom she had lost long years before. And while Edmund wove his woollen cloth (known as "tammy") and his good wife attended to the simple duties of that village home, the grandmother nursed the children upon her lap and rejoiced that God had dealt bountifully with her in her old age.

When William Carey was born, in the year after the accession of George III, life in rural England was continuing on almost the same dull level it had followed for hundreds of years. Professor Rogers, in his *Six Centuries of Work and Wages*, says :

There is, I believe, no part of the Western world in which so little change was induced on the fortunes, on the life, and on the habits of the people, as there has been in rural England from the reign of Henry III to the earlier years of George III.

The frightful condition of even the main roads made communication between London and the provinces slow and tedious, and hundreds of villages were almost entirely out of touch with the metropolis. The mails were carried by mounted post-boys, whose contract speed was five miles an hour. Carey had grown to manhood before the first mail-coach ran

(1784). Comparatively little of the land was under cultivation, though doubtless each village was able to raise its own supply of food. There were no vast wheat-fields in Canada for the England of those days to draw upon! When Carey was an infant all industries were of the most primitive description. Watt had not yet invented the steam engine nor Arkwright the spinning machine. The only newspaper the Paulerspury villagers would ever see—*The Northampton Mercury*<sup>1</sup>—was still laboriously printing its weekly sheets by hand, first on one side and then on the other, at the rate of considerably less than a hundred copies per hour, the type being inked with leather balls just as in Caxton's time three centuries before. Factories and big workshops were only beginning in the industrial centres, and they were unknown in the Midlands. Many—perhaps most—of the Northamptonshire villagers carried on simple industries in their own homes, chiefly as leather workers or weavers.

Professor Rogers has carefully investigated the wages earned by different classes of workers during the century with which we are dealing. At the top of the scale were the Newcastle colliers with fifteen shillings per week, and at the bottom the agricultural labourers of Gloucestershire and Wiltshire with from five to six shillings weekly the year round. Northamptonshire shoemakers probably earned about ten shillings a week, and spinners and weavers averaged about eight shillings and sevenpence. This gives us an insight into the home of Carey's infancy. Edmund and Elizabeth Carey together could not

<sup>1</sup> First published in 1720. It claims to be the only English newspaper that has had an uninterrupted continuity to the present time.



possibly have earned twenty shillings a week, and probably considerably less—perhaps only half that sum. With two small children and an aged mother to keep they must have had great difficulty in making ends meet. When three more children came—one of whom died early—the struggle must have been severe. But it must be remembered that if earnings were low, the cost of living was low also. Vegetable food was abundant and cheap; clothing was simple and largely home-made; and in Paulerspury there would be no temptation to spend money on needless things. The country air, the wholesome food, and simple life were conducive to health, and doctors' bills would be unknown.

Facts such as these are like the diamond panes of the window through which we may look into Edmund Carey's cottage. The big loom stood beside the window in the largest room, and upon it Edmund and Elizabeth laboured from dawn to dusk to provide the necessaries of life for their growing family, while the devoted grandmother nursed the babies in the little back kitchen. Not even the monotonous thud of the loom would drown the prattle of the children, and in the brief interval for the midday meal they would gather round their parents' knees. In the dark mornings of winter rush-lights were affixed to the looms; and in the evenings, by their feeble flicker, Elizabeth would strain her eyes to mend little patched garments while she rocked the oak cradle gently with her foot.

A simple piety pervaded that cottage home. From the back garden there was an uninterrupted view of the parish church with its high square tower that stood on the top of the low hill beyond the brook.

Long years before, Edmund's father had been parish clerk, and after a time Edmund himself was appointed to the same office. Edmund and Elizabeth attended church with scrupulous regularity, and took their children with them. At home, they possessed a Bible, and they used it. Bibles were not numerous in the villages in those days, for the British and Foreign Bible Society had not been thought of, and Scriptures were expensive for humble folk. "From my infancy I was accustomed to read the Scriptures," wrote William Carey in after years. And that simple statement is another window through which we catch a glimpse of his early life—from childhood he was able to read. It conjures up a picture of the tiny boy leaning against his grandmother's knee learning to make "pot-hooks and hangers" on an old slate; and then, when the little fingers became steadier and accustomed to holding the pencil, going on to the mysteries of the alphabet. Then the first reading lesson—and simple sums. All this we are sure of, for his sister Mary—familiarly called "Polly"—has preserved for us her recollections of those early days. "When William was in his sixth year," she wrote, "he discovered a great aptness for learning. I have often heard my mother speak of one circumstance she had remarked with pleasure in him even before he was six years old. She has heard him in the night, when the family were asleep, casting accompts."

## CHAPTER II

### BOYHOOD AT THE VILLAGE SCHOOL

*A.D. 1767-1775. Age 6-14 years.*

WHEN William was in his sixth year the much-loved grandmother died. There also came a change in the family circumstances that had an important influence upon his life. Edmund Carey was appointed master of the free school in the village—a post held many years before by his father. It is evident that Edmund was a man of much better education than most of the villagers of Paulerspury, or he would scarcely have been appointed to such a post together with that of parish clerk.

The appointment involved the removal of the family to the schoolhouse<sup>1</sup> at the other end of the straggling village—a two-storied thatched cottage, with four latticed windows in front and a fireplace and chimney at each end. To the right of the cottage, and adjoining it, was the little school—a low building resembling an outhouse or small barn. Here William Carey was to spend the most important years of his boyhood. The whole setting of his life was changed and his impressionable spirit responded to the new environment. With his father as schoolmaster, he had opportunities that otherwise might not have been his, and it is evident that he used those opportunities to the full.

<sup>1</sup> Destroyed about half a century ago.

It is not difficult to conjure up a picture of that village school, with its little diamond-paned windows, its earth floor, and its rough benches—the kind of school that early Victorian artists loved to paint and Goldsmith's vivid pen described so wonderfully in his great idyll of village life :

*There in his noisy mansion, skilled to rule,  
The village master taught his little school.*

The young rustics, slate in hand, sat around, puzzling over the mysteries of elementary arithmetic, with the business-like cane well in view on the master's desk and the birch-rod hanging upon the wall in readiness for more serious offences. Amid a medley of books and odd ends of chalk stood the "dunce's cap"—to be taken down from time to time and worn by some trembling youngster, who stood the while upon the bench or upon one leg in a corner of the schoolroom. For a brief moment we wonder if young William ever wore that high cap ; but all accounts agree in representing him as an unusually diligent scholar. "My education was that which is generally esteemed good in country villages," he wrote in later years, "and my father being the schoolmaster, I had some advantages which other children of my age had not." His father adds this comment : "He was always attentive to learning when a boy, and was a very good arithmetician." Again we learn from Polly that :

He was from childhood intent in the pursuit of knowledge. Whatever he began, he finished ; difficulties never seemed to discourage his mind ; and as he grew up this thirst for knowledge increased.

In these words we recognize for the first time a trait that runs like a golden thread through Carey's wonderful life—the ability to *plod*. From boyhood he was characterized by a firm determination to carry through the thing he set his heart upon.

An oft-told story well illustrates this dominating characteristic. He had a boyish ambition to climb any tree that was so high or difficult as to daunt his playmates; and on one occasion he resolved to climb a certain tree in order to get a bird's nest. The tree was a difficult one; time after time he failed, and at last fell and injured himself severely. For some days he was a prisoner at home. But, eluding his mother's watchful care he made another attempt—and climbed the tree!

The schoolhouse seems to have had one room more than was strictly necessary for the needs of Edmund Carey's young family; at any rate, William was given a bedroom all to himself, and apparently he was allowed to do in it exactly as he pleased. He turned it into a miniature museum! Probably he had heard his father speak of the great British Museum that had been opened in London less than ten years before. Doubtless the village boys talked of its wonders, and it may well be that William thus conceived the idea of having a little museum of his own. With schoolboy zeal he collected all manner of insects, plants, birds' eggs, nests—anything and everything that could be regarded as “specimens.” The ardent young naturalist was not content with dead insects, he collected living ones that he might watch their development. He searched the countryside for miles around and seldom returned empty-handed. Doubtless the neighbouring Whittlebury

forest was one of his favourite hunting grounds. On many of these exploring expeditions his sister Polly was his companion, and she faithfully followed him over the dirtiest roads and through the wet grass to get a plant or insect. Every time he went out of doors he was on the lookout and carefully inspected the hedges as he passed along. When his quick eye detected some new plant he always examined it carefully and with great delight showed it to Polly and explained to her its beauties and the manner of its growth.

At the foot of the hill, just below Paulerspury Church, runs a little brook, its winding course marked out by overhanging willows. In that brook the village boys still catch sticklebacks and tiddlers, tom-thumbs and "red soldiers." Strange if young William Carey did not catch such things in his schooldays and carry them home in bottles or old jars! Newts, too, caught in the pits near the village, would find a place in his museum.

About this time William's uncle, Peter Carey, came to live in the ancestral village. This Uncle Peter was a gardener, and having no children of his own took great interest in his small nephew. Thus a natural fondness for flowers was developed and trained, and William became a keen gardener too. During the years he lived at home no corner of the schoolhouse garden was left uncultivated. With him the love of flowers became a passion. He simply could not live without them. He loved trees also. Without doubt he knew the magnificent elm that grew near Towcester—a monster measuring twenty-eight feet in circumference. And doubtless he often saw "the Queen's Oak," barely half a mile

away in Yardley Chase, under the shadow of which the wayward Edward IV met Elizabeth Woodville, afterwards the unhappy mother of little Edward V and his brother who were murdered in the Tower of London. Indeed, there were not many trees in the neighbourhood young Carey did not know. In later years we shall see him creating, in far-distant India, a botanical garden the like of which could not be found in Southern Asia.

Of course he loved birds. Whoever loved flowers without loving birds? He had numbers of them, and the devoted Polly helped him to look after them. Who could help adoring such a brother?

With all his love of natural history and all his zeal for collecting, William was a boy to his finger tips. He was always popular with the boys of his own age, and was generally one of the most active in all boyish amusements and recreations. We can imagine him going home with a few lumps of blue Northamptonshire clay in his pocket, and, when no one was looking, throwing them on the fire to startle his mother or sister with the sharp report they would make—Northamptonshire schoolboys still love that little trick! Often William and his friends would run out to Watling Street, a few hundred yards away from the village, to watch the London coach go by. Standing at the roadside, they would imitate the loud tooting of the horn, and as the coach swept past at a regulation speed of six miles an hour, they would gaze in awe at the people who had slept in London itself only the night before. Those were days of road reform. The atrocious highways were being repaired and a system of turn-pikes introduced as a means of raising tolls to keep

them in order. During the first fourteen years of Carey's life, no fewer than four hundred and fifty-two Acts for the repairing of roads were passed by Parliament. It may be that William and the boys of Paulerspury watched the work of repairing the ancient Watling Street which made it possible to increase the speed of the coaches.

That was the golden age of canals. What school-boy in all the land had not heard how the famous Duke of Bridgewater, and his illiterate engineer, Brindley, had recently constructed a canal from Manchester to Runcorn on the Mersey? At that very time, the Grand Junction Canal was being cut through Northamptonshire and within three miles of Carey's own village! We may be perfectly sure that he and his companions often walked those three short miles to watch the engineers taking measurements, the navvies cutting away the soil, and the masons building the lock and the bridge near Grafton Regis.

From the *Northampton Mercury*, published every Monday and circulating throughout the county and far beyond,<sup>1</sup> the villagers would learn the news of the day. Literacy was low, it is true; but in every village there were a few who could read, and they read the news to their friends. The general poverty imposed a more serious difficulty to the circulation of the newspapers, although at that time the cost was only 2½d. per copy.<sup>2</sup> "The men who carry the news" tramped from place to place selling the

<sup>1</sup> In 1792 the *Mercury* claimed to be "the largest paper in the Kingdom."

<sup>2</sup> Owing to the need of money for the wars, the Government steadily increased the tax on newspapers till in 1815 it was 4d. per copy. The price of the *Mercury* was then 7½d. per copy.



newspaper, medicines, books, and all sorts of other wares. Many villages would only require two or three copies of the paper—for the rector, the squire, and the schoolmaster—and when read, these copies would be passed on to others who could read.

There can be no doubt that the *Mercury* formed the most important link the Northamptonshire villages had with the outer world. It gave surprisingly little local news, but specialized in national and foreign information. The proprietor employed an agent in London, whose duty it was to secure early copies of the London papers and dispatch them to Northampton in instalments every Wednesday and Friday. On Sundays the latest information was sent by special courier, who changed horses four times (horses being kept in readiness at convenient stages). The journey of seventy miles would be done in five or six hours, and thus the enterprising publisher was able to skim the cream from the metropolitan papers and serve it up to his own readers on the following Monday.

In this way regular tidings of the great world beyond would reach Paulerspury. In the village inn, and afterwards in their cottages, the men would discuss the latest news. There can be little doubt that the schoolboys heard increasingly wonderful stories of the power of the steam engine that James Watt had invented only a few years before (1765). Arkwright's new spinning machine (1768) would be discussed long and anxiously in many a weaver's cottage, for the very existence of that village industry seemed to be threatened.

It may have been in this way, and about this time, that William first began to take interest in other

lands and the peoples of other races : at any rate, when he was eleven years old he must have heard his father discussing the burning topic of the hour—slavery, and Lord Chief Justice Mansfield's famous decision that on English soil no man is or can be a slave (1772). And from that time, it would seem, William was interested in the Negro. Then, in 1773, came news of the Boston tea riots, and all over the land men could speak of little else than the defiant attitude of the American colonies to the King's Government. The schoolboys of Paulerspury would play soldiers with new zeal, and very likely would see the dreaded press-gangs hauling off young men for the war. The *Mercury* was doubtless the first telescope through which young Carey looked out upon world problems.

Meanwhile, William's ordinary school education was progressing. In addition to mathematics he began, at the age of twelve, to learn Latin, and soon committed to memory nearly the whole of Dyche's *Latin Vocabulary*. He was also fond of drawing and painting, "and made," the admiring Polly tells us, "considerable progress in those arts." (We begin to be a little suspicious. William was evidently perfect in Polly's eyes !)

Like his father he was fond of reading, and he appears to have read all the books they had at home and all he could borrow in the village. The low-type popular novels and plays of that day disgusted him, but books of science, history, and travel were dear to his soul. He devoured the *Life of Columbus* so eagerly that his schoolfellows dubbed him Columbus !

In the summer of 1771 Lieutenant James Cook returned from his first adventurous voyage to the

South Seas—he had actually circumnavigated and charted New Zealand, surveyed the east coast of Australia, and sailed between Australia and New Guinea (being the first to prove that the two great islands were quite separate). The story of that voyage was published in 1773 (while William was grinding at his *Latin Vocabulary*). Here was adventure enough to satisfy even a schoolboy! But ere that story was published, the *Mercury* had announced that Cook—now promoted to the rank of Commander—had sailed from Plymouth (July 13th, 1772) to make, it was believed, still greater discoveries. And Cook, the son of a Yorkshire agricultural labourer, became the hero of the Paulerspury weaver-schoolmaster's growing boy. Doubtless young William Carey knew of James Cook's early struggles and how he had entered the navy as a common seaman. It is impossible to estimate the importance of such a fact on such a boy.

It is only to be expected that the child of such a pious home would, even in boyhood, be the subject of some religious impressions. It is best to relate his religious experience in his own words and in the language of his own time :

In the first fourteen years of my life I had many advantages of a religious nature, but was wholly unacquainted with the scheme of salvation by Christ. During this time I had many stirrings of mind occasioned by my being often obliged to read books of a religious character ; and having been accustomed from my infancy to read the Scriptures I had a considerable acquaintance therewith, especially with the historical parts. I also have no doubt but the constant reading of the Psalms, Lessons, etc., in the parish church, which I was obliged to attend regularly, tended to furnish my

mind with a general Scripture knowledge. Of real experimental religion I scarcely heard anything till I was fourteen years of age : nor was the formal attendance upon outward ceremonies, to which I was compelled, a matter of choice.

He disliked books on religion, he tells us, but his fancy for romances led him to read *The Pilgrim's Progress* "with eagerness, though to no purpose."

We can picture him sitting with his schoolfellows in the parish church on Sundays, probably in the seats to the right of the pulpit, in the north aisle where Edmund Carey, from his official seat as parish clerk, could keep his eye upon them. Through the screen on their left, just behind the pulpit, the boys could look into the side chapel of the chancel, and, doubtless, during the sermon, their eyes would often wander to the unique altar-tomb of Sir Arthur Throckmorton and his wife, and perchance they whispered to one another schoolboy puns on the curious postures and amusing expressions on the faces of those marble effigies.<sup>1</sup> Then, when the sermon ended with a solemn "Amen" from the clerk, the boys would prepare for release, and lose no time in escaping through the porch to the village green.

William was now approaching the "troublesome age" at which so many boys become restless and desirous of throwing off the restraints of home. His adventurous spirit led him to seek the company of other boys who were at the same critical stage. Again it is best to let him tell his own story of this period :

<sup>1</sup> This is a unique monument. The recumbent figures, instead of lying side by side in the ordinary way, lie head to head, stretched out at full length. They are supporting themselves on one elbow, with heads raised as though conversing upon the secrets of the tomb.

My companions were at this time such as could only serve to debase the mind and lead me into the depths of that gross conduct which prevails among the lower classes in the most neglected villages: so that I had sunk into the most awful profligacy of conduct. I was addicted to swearing, lying, and unchaste conversation; which was heightened by the company of ringers, psalm-singers [i.e. choirboys], football players, and the society of a blacksmith's shop, etc. etc.; and though my father laid the strictest injunctions on me to avoid such company, I always found some way to elude his care.

"He was rather inclined to be gay," Polly tells us in the pious language of the day, adding significantly that his conduct caused some uneasiness at home. We can well believe it: "gaiety" was not fashionable in Puritan circles. The keen enthusiasm for study, and especially for natural history, had kindled great expectations. Were those hopes to suffer eclipse? Was so beautiful a dawn to pass into a morning of gloom? Such were the thoughts that disturbed the anxious minds of Edmund and Elizabeth Carey.

But for William Carey this period was only one of transition. He had already drunk too deep of purer fountains to be able to quench his soul-thirst at the village horsepond. His home training, his own inclinations, and the Grace of God already working in his boy heart (though he knew it not) made it impossible for him to be satisfied with a life of ungodliness. For a brief while he looked the pleasures of sin in the face, and then he deliberately turned away from them with disgust and loathing.

## CHAPTER III

### THE SHOEMAKER'S APPRENTICE

*A.D. 1775-1784. Age 14-23.*

EDMUND CAREY was too poor to give his son any education beyond that of the village free school, and when he was about fourteen years old William began to work for his living. Though he was undoubtedly very much better educated than the average village boy of his age, he became an agricultural labourer. This was probably his own choice, due to his love of gardening and botany.

But an obscure career as an agriculturist was not to be Carey's lot. From the age of seven he had been afflicted with a skin disease of the hands and face. We have not sufficient information to enable us to determine its real nature; there was no scientific diagnosis in those days. But the outstanding fact is that, though the malady "scarcely ever appeared in the form of an eruption, it made the sun's rays insupportable." Open-air life caused the disease to develop, and Polly tells us that when her brother "had been exposed to the sun in the day, he was in distressing agony through the night. . . . Nothing seemed to relieve this complaint." It was soon evident that he could not continue to work in the fields or do anything that would expose him for long to the heat of the sun. His parents being "poor and unable to do much for him, but being

much affected by his situation," cast about for some more suitable form of employment.

One of the characteristic industries of Northamptonshire was at that time (and still is) leather-work. The age of factories had not dawned, but in thousands of thatched cottages the village shoemakers pursued their calling, not only meeting the needs of the rural community around them, but sending regular supplies to the neighbouring towns and even to other parts of the country. Passing over, for some unknown reason, his own old business of weaving, Edmund Carey apprenticed his son to Clarke Nichols, a shoemaker of Piddington, some nine miles north-east of Paulerspury.

The sixteen-year-old boy,<sup>1</sup> stick in hand and with his few clothes in a bundle, left the home of his childhood and set out to tramp through the familiar lanes and across the canal to his master's shop in Piddington.

As an apprentice Carey would learn to prepare the leather, to use the tools of his craft, and to cut the welts and uppers, the soles and heels. Probably once a week he tramped the five miles to Northampton with a load of boots for some dealer, passing on the way the site of the famous battle of Northampton (1461) which would recall to young Carey the history he had read in his schooldays. War was in the air at that time. The American War of Independence had broken out and the country was in a state of excitement. Northampton people were especially moved, for George Washington came

<sup>1</sup> Polly says he was sixteen. William himself says fourteen. Probably Polly was right, for he worked for Nichols two years, and Nichols was buried on October 5th, 1779.

of a Northamptonshire family, and their sympathies were with the "rebel" colonists. At that time (1775) John Wesley, immediately after a visit to Northampton, wrote in his *Journal* "England is in a flame! a flame of malice and rage against the king and almost all that are in authority under him." That very week the *Mercury*, which had a decided list towards republicanism, had printed in full a Protest against the war, signed by nineteen peers.

In Clarke Nichols's house, William made an important discovery. Among his master's books he found a Commentary on the New Testament, and on turning its pages he saw, for the first time, the beautiful Greek characters. The old spirit of enquiry awoke within him. He had learned Latin, why not Greek also? Read those mysterious sentences he must—and *he would*. His master could not help him, so he sought another teacher. He remembered that in Paulerspury there dwelt a weaver, Thomas Jones, who had received a good education at Kidderminster, but who had by a sinful life been reduced to poverty; and when occasional leave of absence from work enabled William to pay a flying visit to his home, he hunted out the fallen scholar and persuaded him to teach him Greek. It was his second foreign language; and the mastering of it was another step in the unconscious preparation for his life work.

Like young Carey, Nichols was a Churchman, according to the ideas of Georgian times; he was not, however, a religious man. He sometimes drank too freely, and his views concerning the sanctity of the Sabbath were not such as would have commended



themselves to Edmund and Elizabeth Carey—indeed it was customary for him to keep William delivering shoes till near Church-time on Sunday mornings. Nevertheless he had his own standards of integrity, and not a little ability for commenting upon the faults of other people. So scathing were his criticisms on the failings of his young apprentice, that it would seem that Carey sometimes lost his temper and made an angry and possibly well-merited retort. One of Clarke Nichols's strongest points was his love of truth. Lying he abhorred. And it would seem that at this time truthfulness was not one of William's brightest virtues; indeed, he himself tells us: "lying was a vice to which I was awfully addicted," and he gives us the following narrative to illustrate this:

A circumstance, which I always reflect on with a mixture of horror and gratitude, occurred about this time, which, though greatly to my dishonour, I must relate. It being customary in that part of the country for apprentices to collect Christmas-boxes from the tradesmen with whom their masters have dealings, I was permitted to collect those little sums. When I applied to an ironmonger, he gave me the choice of a shilling or a sixpence: I of course chose the shilling, and, putting it into my pocket, went away. When I had got a few shillings, my next care was to purchase some little articles for myself. . . . Then, to my sorrow, I found that my shilling was a brass one. I paid for the things which I bought by using a shilling of my master's. I now found that I had exceeded my stock by a few pence. I expected severe reproaches from my master, and therefore came to the resolution to declare strenuously that the bad money was his. I well remember the struggles of mind which I had on this occasion, and that I made this deliberate sin a matter of prayer to God as I passed over the fields home. I there promised, that if God would but get me clearly over this, or in other words, help me through with the theft, I would

certainly for the future leave off all evil practices ; but this theft and consequent lying appeared to me so necessary that they could not be dispensed with.

A Gracious God did *not* get me safe through. My master sent the other apprentice to investigate the matter. The ironmonger acknowledged giving me the shilling, and I was therefore exposed to shame, reproach, and inward remorse, which increased and preyed upon my mind for a considerable time. I at this time sought the Lord perhaps much more earnestly than ever ; but with shame and fear. I was quite ashamed to go out ; and never till I was assured that my conduct was not spread over the town did I attend a place of worship.

This self-revelation pre-supposes spiritual struggles that had in fact been going on for some time before the above incident occurred. Carey was passing through the first great crisis of his life. He had read Jeremy Taylor's sermons and *The Sick Man Visited*, by Spinker. The forces of good and evil were struggling for the possession of his soul, and already there were signs that the good was triumphing.

We have seen that Clarke Nichols and William Carey were Churchmen. There was a third workman in that village workshop,<sup>1</sup> a young apprentice named Thomas Warr. And as they cut the leather, shaped the shoes, and drove in the nails, all three constantly joined in conversation. (It has often been remarked that a shoemaker's shop is a centre of philosophic conversation.) Doubtless they talked over the latest news of the American War ; they would discuss the epoch-making Declaration of Independence, and apportion the relative blame of English statesmen according to their political lean-

<sup>1</sup> Clarke Nichols's cottage still exists, and is occupied by his great-granddaughter. The kitchen and a room that was probably the workshop still remain in almost their original condition.

ings. How eagerly they would scan the pages of the *Northampton Mercury* for the latest news!

Their conversations often strayed into matters of religion. Thomas Warr was the son of a dissenter. Young Carey looked upon dissenters with disdain, and long and heated were the arguments they had together. The schoolmaster's son was proud of his skill in argument, and, like Goldsmith's village pedagogue

*E'en though vanquished, he could argue still.*

From the window of Clarke Nichols's little work-room, Carey could see the tall spire of the village church, and the very sight of it would move him stoutly to defend the faith of his father and grandfather. He tells us:

I had pride sufficient for a thousand times my knowledge. I scorned to have the worst in an argument, and the last word was assuredly mine. I always made up in positive assertion what was wanting in argument, and generally came off with triumph.

But with all his dialectics Carey's arguments often failed to convince *himself*, and though he invariably had the last word and always assumed the role of victor, he came to realize the strength of his opponent's contentions. In his heart of hearts he knew that his word-victory was really a defeat.

We do not know the ground covered by those workshop discussions, but from Carey's own references they appear to have been chiefly about heart religion as against formal observance. What in those days was often termed "experimental religion" may not have been altogether a new idea to William, but now the subject was pressed upon

his attention. The waywardness of recent years troubled him. He began to experience "a growing uneasiness"; "the stings of conscience were gradually increasing"; and a heart-hunger took possession of him. Apparently the sword that young dissenter wielded so valiantly was a two-edged one, for as he argued with Carey and his master, he himself "was brought under serious concern for his own soul," for it seems that he had not yet entered upon the personal experience he was trying to impress upon William. With new earnestness he reasoned with Carey, lent him religious books and urged him to attend services at a small dissenting meeting-room in the adjacent hamlet of Hackleton. Carey could not yet shake off his prejudice—indeed it was still so strong that he would willingly have destroyed the little meeting-place!

Nevertheless, Carey's proud spirit was deeply impressed, and his views were, almost imperceptibly, undergoing a change. His soul was thirsting for God. To ease his mind, he resolved to go to church three times every Sunday, and moreover, to attend the dissenting prayer-meeting in the evening. In his heart he "resolved to leave off lying, swearing, and other sins, and sometimes when alone tried to pray."

Early in 1779 the crisis through which Carey was passing reached its climax. It coincided with a great national crisis. The American War dragged on; France and Spain had declared war upon England, and their fleets held the Channel. In far-away India, English soldiers were fighting the war-like Marathas and trouble was brewing in Mysore. So dark was the outlook that the king issued a

Proclamation calling the whole nation to set apart Wednesday, February 10th, as a day of solemn fasting and prayer. The royal appeal was published in the *Mercury* on January 11th, and the national arrangements were set forth in subsequent issues of the paper. Carey was evidently deeply moved. Hitherto he had only attended the dissenters' meeting-house for prayer-meetings; but for some reason he resolved to join with them in keeping the appointed Day of Humiliation and Prayer. It is probable that there was a political as well as a religious motive for his so doing: the Established Church supported the war upon the American colonists; Carey was opposed to it, and therefore to that extent out of sympathy with the Church. Mr Thomas Chater, an independent preacher of Olney, was the speaker at this special service. The text does not seem to have made much impression on the young visitor, but a pointed application of Hebrews xiii. 13 ("Let us therefore go forth unto Him without the camp, bearing His reproach") profoundly moved him. "I think I had a desire to follow Christ," he tells us. In the solemn moments of that service, a strange thought presented itself to him:

An idea occurred to my mind upon hearing those words (Heb. xiii. 13), which broke me off from the Church of England. The idea was certainly very crude. . . . I concluded that the Church of England, as established by law, was the camp in which all were protected from the scandal of the cross, and that I ought to bear the reproach of Christ among the dissenters; accordingly I always afterwards attended divine worship among them.

Crude as the thought was, young Carey was undoubtedly impressed by it. Perhaps—it may have

been unconsciously—the political motive that had led him to spend that day with the dissenters was still operating, and influenced his decision to leave the Church. This much is clear; he was seeking light: this was his gleam, and he followed it.

The century with which we are dealing was one of the most remarkable in the religious history of England. Through its first four or five decades the spiritual and moral tone of the country was at the lowest ebb. The Reformation of the sixteenth century had been followed by the reaction of the seventeenth; the fierce struggles between the Puritans and the Episcopalians during the Stuart era produced the deadly inertia and indifference of the period of Queen Anne and the early Georges. Infidelity ran riot, and in sadly too many cases such religious observance as remained had dwindled to a mere formality. The moral state of the country was appalling, and the ruthless punishments inflicted by law produced a callousness that was degrading to the whole nation. Rogers tells us that the penal code was “More sanguinary and brutal than any which a civilized nation had ever devised or a high-spirited one submitted to.” Nearly two hundred different crimes had been declared to be punishable by death. Sydney, in his *England and the English in the Eighteenth Century*, says:

To steal a horse or a sheep; to snatch property from the hand of a man and run away with it; to steal to the amount of forty shillings in a dwelling house, or privately to the value of five shillings in a shop; to pick a pocket of only twelve pence and a farthing; these offences all continued till the end of the eighteenth century to be punishable with death.

We recall the incident of Carey stealing his master's shilling. How nearly did the future founder of the Baptist Missionary Society escape hanging!

To these "capital crimes" may be added that of walking along the high road with a gipsy and the breaking down of hop-vines in Kent. The prisons were crowded and in a most loathsome condition; often debtors and people comparatively innocent, and even untried persons, were flung together with criminals of the worst type. It was a very ordinary thing for a batch of ten or a dozen culprits to be hanged together in public, and the vast crowds that gathered to see the dread sentence carried out were more suggestive of an entertainment than an execution. In 1722 a woman charged with witchcraft was burned at the stake. In 1726 a woman was burned alive at Tyburn for murdering her husband, and so late as 1783 another woman was burned at Ipswich for the same crime—and this under a law not repealed until 1790. Branding was common; so was whipping—inflicted both privately and publicly on men and women alike.<sup>1</sup> Some of the

<sup>1</sup> In Carey's youth, one issue of the *Northampton Mercury* reported no fewer than fourteen death sentences, not one of which was for murder: they included coining shillings; stealing a horse; "entering a house and stealing some wearing apparel"; "Mary Burkes for stealing privately from the person of John Jones a silver watch"; and "Thomas Morgan for robbing Edward Minton in the fields." The following issue of the *Mercury* recorded five death sentences, eight transportations, one branding, and seven whippings. Almost every issue contained a similar record. The issue for April 10, 1775, contains this startling sentence: "At Coventry Assizes, William Clewer was capitally convicted for robbing John Burton of 1s. in a field, and from the general bad character he bears, 'tis imagined he will suffer the sentence passed on him."

punishments were too horrible to describe. Cock-fighting, bear-baiting, bull-fighting, and like cruelties were the national sports, and the nation as a whole showed no disgust at such scenes as always accompanied them. The character of a people can usually be judged by its amusements. Profanity, drunkenness, and gambling were regarded as gentlemanly habits. Liverpool and Bristol owed much of their wealth and prosperity to the overseas slave traffic. The coasts of Britain were infested with smugglers and wreckers, and the roads with highwaymen. It is difficult for us to recognize the England of "those good old days."

But light had broken upon the country. From about 1738 the Evangelical Revival, led by John and Charles Wesley, and George Whitefield, swept across the land, purifying the civil and religious life of the nation and working transformations wellnigh incredible. It proved an infinitely more powerful factor for the regeneration of the social and moral life of England than all the severities of the penal code.

When William Carey was passing through his spiritual crisis the Revival had been in progress for more than forty years, and the Methodist "Societies" had some forty-five thousand members. The remarkable thing is that the Methodist movement seems to have had no *direct* influence upon Carey and the men around him. In his own long and fairly complete statements of his early life Carey only makes two references to Wesley and his followers. We have no clear grounds for supposing that Carey ever listened to the great evangelist or to any of his "travelling preachers." But it would



be unsafe to conclude that there was therefore no *indirect* influence. Between the years 1760 and 1789 Wesley visited eighteen times the neighbourhood in which Carey was living. On each of these occasions he preached in Northampton (ten miles from Paulerspury), Towcester (three miles away), and in Whittlebury, a village only a mile and a half from Carey's home. It is impossible that Carey should not have heard men talk of the venerable evangelist who usually visited Whittlebury every October or November, and there gathered a little flock of faithful devout souls. "This is the flower of all our 'Societies' in the circuit, both for zeal and simplicity," Wesley wrote in 1778. Again he refers to them as a "lovely congregation," and remarks that "the house would ill contain the congregation." This happened a mile and a half from the home of Carey's boyhood. William must needs have known what was going on, even though some unknown circumstance or prejudice prevented his own attendance at the services Wesley conducted. There is indeed one passage in Carey's statement of the way he was led to God that may possibly be a vague reference to the Methodist movement. He tells us, "of real experimental religion I scarcely heard anything until I was *fourteen years of age*." On October 24th of that year (1775) Wesley preached at Whittlebury. There may be some hitherto unsuspected connection between these two facts.

All we are justified in saying is that, so far as we know, the religious influences that brought about Carey's conversion and led him to the mission field, came not from the Evangelical Revival, but from a totally different quarter. Northamptonshire, Bed-

fordshire, Cambridgeshire, and Leicestershire were strongholds of the older Nonconformist bodies, notably the Baptists, and these were sharply divided from the Methodists by political feeling and also by strong doctrinal convictions. The Baptists were stern Calvinists; the Methodists were enthusiastic Arminians, and the two kept rigidly apart.

A notable awakening, however, was taking place among the Baptists of Northamptonshire. The Congregationalists of the county, too, felt the new impulses. These movements were quite distinct from the Methodist revival and had no direct connection with it. Like rivers flowing in different directions from one watershed the great religious movements of the time took widely different courses. But if one river be in flood, the others are in flood also, for the same rain fills them all.

The "Dissenters" with whom Carey associated himself in Hackleton were of a somewhat nebulous character, without organic connection with any recognized Church, and it is evident that the young shoemaker did not find among them all the light and guidance he sought. Some old Christians in Hackleton, who at first helped him, looked askance and suspected him of erroneous opinions when he began to read the writings of William Law, and to visit and converse with an earnest man who lived in a neighbouring village. People had narrow views in those days! The leader of the Hackleton dissenters (a Mr Luck) was, Carey tells us, "but ill qualified to relieve my spirit or to clear up my doubts." So he sought help elsewhere, frequently walking the five miles to Northampton to hear the

well-known preacher Dr Ryland. Sometimes he went to Road, but he got most help from the Rev. Thomas Scott, the curate of Ravenstone, who soon removed to Olney and afterwards became famous as a commentator. "If there be anything of the work of God in my soul," wrote Carey forty years later, "I owe much of it to his preaching when I first set out in the ways of the Lord." Nevertheless, when in 1781 the Hackleton people formed themselves into a Congregational Church,<sup>1</sup> Carey became a member with them, and his name appears third on the Church roll. Sometimes, at their gatherings, he was asked to express his thoughts on some portion of Scripture, and he evidently did so "with acceptance," for, he tells us, "the people being ignorant, sometimes applauded to my great injury."

Carey's own beliefs were far from clear. He could not harmonize the views of the hyper-Calvinists with the duty of calling men to Christ. On the other hand, the opposite doctrine of Arminianism held by the Methodists seemed to him to strike at the roots of belief in the Grace of God. The spirit of investigation that was so conspicuous in his boyhood was now to be devoted to Jesus Christ, and with characteristic thoroughness and determination he settled down to an independent study of the Bible, that he might form his own unfettered conclusions as to its teaching.

Meanwhile Carey's circumstances were changing. His apprenticeship to Clarke Nichols was never completed, for in 1779 Mr Nichols died. With a keen sense of honour and justice the eighteen-year-old

<sup>1</sup> The roll of members expressly describes it as "the *Congregational Church at Hackleton.*" It did not become a Baptist Church until some years later.

apprentice engaged to pay his master's widow a sum of money which he considered a fair recompense for the remainder of the time for which he had been bound. "This was not a necessary step," Polly tells us, "as the apprentice is free on the death of his master." By what means William raised this money we do not know. He then got work as a journeyman shoemaker with a Mr Thomas Old, of Hackleton, but on very low wages on account of his inexperience. Some doubt has been cast upon Carey's professional skill, perhaps on the ground of his not having completed his apprenticeship, and more than one story has been told to prove his incompetence. This Carey himself expressly denied :

The childish story of my shortening a shoe to make it longer is entitled to no credit, though it would be very silly of me to pretend to recollect all the shoes I made. I was accounted a very good workman, and recollect Mr Old keeping a pair of shoes which I had made in his shop as a model of good workmanship. But the best workmen sometimes, from various causes, put bad work out of their hands, and I have no doubt but I did so too.

While working for Thomas Old, Carey took upon himself a new responsibility by marrying Dorothy Placket, his master's sister-in-law, in June 1781. Of the courtship we know nothing. Dorothy belonged to a pious family, her father and sisters were members of the little society at Hackleton; though her own name does not appear on the roll of members, she was no doubt already a young woman of religious tendencies when Carey married her. But after-events proved the marriage was not altogether a wise step. William was hardly in a position to marry; and moreover, Dorothy was

illiterate, and ill-fitted to be the wife of such a man as Carey. She was unable to sign her name, and the marriage register contains a very badly formed cross. But there is no question as to Carey's love for her or of her love for him. Upon their marriage they resided in what Polly describes as "a small neat house in Hackleton, where he cultivated a neat garden."

Two and a half years after his marriage Carey was called to face new difficulties and to shoulder new responsibilities—Mr Old died. With a quiet plod Carey continued the business, and beside his workshop door he nailed up a small rough board<sup>1</sup> upon which he had painted in clear black letters :

SECOND HAND SHOES BOUGHT AND SOLD.
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<sup>1</sup> This quaint signboard was preserved by his work-mate, William Manning, and is now in the Baptist College, Regent's Park, London. It measures 14 ins. by 6½ ins., but seems to have been originally rather larger. In his old age Carey expressed to his nephew, Eustace, his "utter want of sympathy with friends whose intense curiosity in little things led them to search out and exhibit sundry relics of his early days, as the board which was said to advertise his business and the crockery out of which he drank at Hackleton."

## CHAPTER IV

### EARLY WORK AS A VOLUNTARY PREACHER

*Circa 1782-1785. Age 21-24.*

A FEW years before William Carey's conversion the "Particular Baptist" ministers of Northamptonshire and the adjacent counties formed themselves into an Association of fellowship and Christian service. These devoted men drew strength and inspiration, not from the great English evangelicals, but from America. They pored over the writings of Jonathan Edwards, and even reprinted some of his works that they might be accessible in England. Olney, some five miles from Hackleton and famous for its pillow lace, was one of their strongholds, and the minister there, John Sutcliff, was one of their stalwarts. And ere long William Carey, in his quest for spiritual light and guidance, got into touch with them.

On one occasion, in the summer of 1782, Carey walked over to Olney<sup>1</sup> to attend the annual public meetings of this Baptist Association. Here he was brought into contact with three men whose lives were henceforth to be strangely knit with his own—John Sutcliff, John Ryland, and Andrew Fuller.

<sup>1</sup> William Cowper was living there at the time; he had just published his first volume of poems, and was then busy writing *John Gilpin*. It is possible that on this or subsequent visits to Olney, Carey may have seen the poet. Cowper lived at Olney from 1767 to 1786, and here wrote most of his works.

Carey was too poor to afford a meal that day, but as he sauntered down the broad street he chanced to meet Mr Chater with some friends from the village of Earls Barton, who invited him to join them in a simple repast. A fortnight later these people invited Carey to preach for them at their meeting-house at Barton. "I cannot tell why I complied," he naïvely tells us; "I believe it was because I had not a sufficient degree of confidence to refuse." It was the first step to public work.

So pleased were the Barton folk with Carey's preaching that he received invitations to minister to them again, and ere long it was arranged that he should make it a fortnightly appointment, and this continued for three and a half years. He regularly walked the six miles on Sunday mornings, returning at night to his "neat cottage" in Hackleton. In that little village of Earls Barton, on the hills above the broad valley of the Nen, the twenty-one-year-old shoemaker served his apprenticeship in preaching the Gospel.

For Carey regular preaching necessitated continual study. He was not the man to be slipshod in his preparation, and he worked diligently with the few books he possessed or could borrow. At the sale of Dr Ryland's library in Northampton he purchased a few more—starving himself to provide the money. One book, a gift from a ministerial friend, proved to be an untold help. It was Robert Hall's *Help to Zion's Travellers*. Many years later he wrote concerning it :

I do not remember ever to have read any book with such raptures as I did that. If it was poison (as some then said) it was so sweet to me that I drank it greedily

to the bottom of the cup ; and I rejoice to say that those doctrines are the choice of my heart to this day.

In order to fit himself better to understand the Old Testament, he got the neighbouring ministers to teach him Hebrew,<sup>1</sup> and in the Bristol Baptist College there is a manuscript on the Psalms written by him in beautiful Hebrew characters. It closes with this notable sentence :

A frequent perusal of the book of Psalms is recommended to all. We should permit few days to pass without reading *in Hebrew* one of those sacred poems ; the more they are read and studied, the more will they delight, edify, and instruct.

Having learned Latin, Greek, Hebrew, and Italian, he turned to Dutch and French!—beginning the one from a volume found in an old woman's cottage, and the other from a French work on the Resurrection which he purchased for a few pence. Beyond question he had very exceptional linguistic gifts, and with amazing diligence under most unhelpful circumstances he strove to develop these gifts. The motive that impelled him was that of service for Jesus Christ. Desiring to become an efficient and helpful preacher of the Gospel, he counted no effort too great. He never sat at his work without a book before him ; and as he carried his stock of new-made shoes to the neighbouring towns or returned with a supply of leather, he went over the subject he was studying, making it for ever his own. In

<sup>1</sup> While Carey was studying with Sutcliff at one side of the market-place at Olney, Cowper was working at *The Task* in the big red brick house on the other side.



all this we can trace the dominant trait of his own character—*plod*. In old age he said to his nephew :

Eustace, if after my removal anyone should think it worth his while to write my life, I will give you a criterion by which you may judge of its correctness. If he give me credit for being a plodder he will describe me justly. Anything beyond this will be too much. I can plod. I can persevere in any definite pursuit. To this I owe everything.

Those great words " I can plod " are the master-key of his life—and he placed that master-key in the hands of Christ.

Thomas Scott, who knew Carey well about this time, once referred to the shoemaker's cottage at Hackleton as " Carey's College." We can picture our hero in his untidy little workshop, in his workaday clothes and leather apron, with two or three nails in his mouth and a volume lying open beside him. From time to time between the strokes of his hammer, he glances at the book, and then works on without speaking. It needs but a glance to see that he is *thinking* as well as working.

On the Sabbath morning we can see him striding along the country lanes and across the river to Barton—sometimes with heavy heart, for he had serious home troubles, but rejoicing in the message he was to preach. No doubt he still scanned the hedges, and from them drew thoughts for his congregation ; and he would pause to pluck dog-roses and the sweet honeysuckle. He loved flowers so much that it is difficult to see how he could keep them out of his sermons ! On clear mornings when all nature responded to the awakening life of spring, or when autumn laid its fiery fingers on the beech

leaves, yea, even through the damp mists and chilly winds of winter when the meadows in the valley were flooded and wellnigh impassable, those Sunday morning walks to Barton must often have been times of preparation and communion with the Most High.

Then there came a call from another direction—a more difficult call. A handful of earnest folk in Paulerspury invited Carey to preach to them once a month in his native village. This was a ten-mile walk; but it was the more cheerfully undertaken since it afforded him the opportunity of seeing the dear ones in the old homestead. These monthly visits afforded Edmund Carey some embarrassment as well as joy, for though he was a broad-minded and devout man he was parish clerk, and it must have been a little trying to have his son becoming so popular with the dissenters. Indeed Polly tells us that their parents though “always friendly to religion; yet on some accounts . . . would rather have wished him to go from home, than come home to preach.” Even she could not bring herself to go to the little meeting-house to hear her idolized brother, though the younger brother and sister did so. But the whole family appear to have listened willingly enough—and it would seem with no little pride—to what neighbours told them of William’s sermons. One good woman even called on his mother to congratulate her. “What!” said Elizabeth Carey with ill-concealed satisfaction, “Do you think our William will be a preacher?” “Yes—and a great one too, if he be spared,” was the answer. And we doubt not that the devoted mother talked these things over with her husband. Truth to tell, Edmund Carey had

a secret desire to hear his son preach, and when at last an opportunity came to listen, unseen by the young preacher or anyone else, he eagerly embraced it; and Polly expresses the opinion that, though always very reserved and slow to praise his own children, he was not a little gratified by the sermon he heard.

The change in William rather puzzled his family. When he paid them his monthly visit he asked permission to conduct family prayers. Leave was readily granted, but he was a little over-zealous, and some of his prayers rather annoyed them. Even Polly could scarce contain herself when he quoted the words, "all our righteousness are as filthy rags." She tells us :

I felt my pride rise, for I did not think he thought *his* righteousness was so, but rather that he looked on me and the family as filthy, not himself and his party. . . . Nothing but my love to my brother would have kept me from showing my resentment !

Meanwhile the shoemaker-preacher was still feeling his way in matters of doctrine, and his natural honesty of mind always led him to act on whatever new light came to him. Being impressed with what he read in the New Testament concerning baptism, he applied for further information to Dr Ryland of Northampton, who handed him over to the care of his son (the young minister Carey had met at Olney), and on October 5th, 1783, he was baptized by the younger Ryland in the river Nen at the ford just below the ruined walls of Northampton Castle.<sup>1</sup> He

<sup>1</sup> Where the L. & N.W. Railway Goods Station now stands. The river was deviated from its course when the station was made.

did not, however, at this time cast in his lot with the Baptists, but he had reached a definite theological position.

In his private life Carey was, at this time, carrying a heavy burden. He had several serious losses in his business—possibly due to his youthful lack of experience. One large order received by Mr Old before his death was returned soon after the delivery of the goods, and the only thing young Carey could do was to dispose of them piecemeal as opportunity offered, and at great disadvantage. His first child—a little girl—died of fever. Carey himself was also attacked by the fever and was in great danger. His mother went to nurse him, and discovered what straits they were reduced to—for he had carefully concealed his circumstances from his family. The fever passed away, but was followed by some debility vaguely described as “ague,” which was accompanied by a racking cough. His hair came off, leaving him so completely bald that he was obliged to purchase a cheap, ill-fitting wig. For a year and a half he was in a very low state, and it was only with the greatest difficulty that he trudged wearily from place to place to dispose of his stocks of shoes and to carry home fresh supplies of leather. The people to whom he regularly ministered at Earls Barton were only poor mat-makers and were unable even to repay him for the clothes and boots he wore out in his long tramps to serve them. Carey’s family were so concerned that his younger brother Thomas, out of his own meagre earnings, contrived to save up a “considerable sum of money” to help him. When this money was given to him, William

was deeply moved, and knowing the sacrifices his brother must have made on his behalf, he "received it with emotions of tenderness and gratitude." Friends at Paulerspury also helped Carey in a practical manner.

About the time his child died he removed across the meadows to Piddington, and took a cottage a few yards from the one in which Clarke Nichols had lived. Unfortunately it was not very healthy. Just below his garden—which he worked with all the strength he could command—the land lay rather low, and in wet weather it was constantly flooded and liable to a damp mist,<sup>1</sup> which told on Carey and increased his "ague."

But Carey was not the man to yield to adverse circumstances, and it became necessary for him to supplement his slender income from shoemaking. Mustering what little strength he had, he bravely opened a room in his cottage as a night-school for village children. Even that was not enough for his boundless energy, and far into the night the neighbours saw the rushlight burning in the room where that indefatigable man sat plodding at his books.

<sup>1</sup> The present writer saw it in this condition during one of his visits to the place while collecting material for this book.

## CHAPTER V

### MOULTON AND THE MISSIONARY CALL

*A.D. 1785-1789. Age 24-28.*

EARLY in 1785 there came to Carey what seemed to be an opportunity for improving his condition. The village of Moulton, about five miles north of Earls Barton, was without a schoolmaster, the old one having removed. Hereditary instincts naturally impelled Carey in this direction, and there seemed every reason to hope that his health would be better on the higher ground of Moulton. So the decision was taken, and on Lady Day he removed his little family to their new home. In due course he opened his school and shoemaker's shop in a thatched cottage on the outskirts of the village.

Like most Northamptonshire villages, Moulton is a place of picturesque stone cottages with projecting eaves and little windows peeping through the moss-grown thatch. It is a spacious village, with raised side-paths and grassy corners where the roadways meet. Many of the old cottages still remain, and among them is the one in which Carey lived for four and a half years. It is in the middle of a short row of six, all of which remain in very much the same state as in Carey's day, save that they have been converted into three, and the street doors built up so that they are now entered from the back.

Strangely enough, when we remember that Carey's

father and grandfather had both been schoolmasters, Polly, with all her love and admiration, was evidently suspicious of her brother's abilities in the line of pedagogy, and seems to have regarded the school as a failure. We are not convinced that Polly's doubts were justified, though Carey seems to have had some difficulty in maintaining discipline.

Meanwhile Carey was being slowly led to a more settled religious life. He still retained his membership with the somewhat nebulous body of "dissenters" at Hackleton, and continued to preach at Earls Barton. He was also in close touch with the small Baptist church close to his cottage in Moulton. These humble folk had fallen upon evil days and had long been without a pastor. Carey soon became known to them and was a great help. He was steadily developing as a preacher, and the Barton people were pressing him to become their pastor. Hearing this his friend and adviser, Sutcliff, counselled him "to join some Church more respectable than that of Hackleton, and be regularly sent into the ministry." Carey recognized the wisdom of this and at last decided to cast in his lot with the Baptists.

Acting on this decision, he presented himself as a candidate for membership to the Church Meeting of Sutcliff's own church at Olney (June 17th, 1785). Although he appeared satisfactory, decision was deferred; but a month later he was admitted as a member and invited to preach on the following Sunday. He evidently had what preachers call a "bad time"; and at a Church Meeting held after the close of the evening service this quaint resolution was placed on record in the minute book:

W. Carey, in consequence of a request from the Church, preached this Evening. After which it was resolved that he should be allowed to go on preaching at those places where he has been for some time employed; and that he should engage again on suitable occasion for sometime before us, in order that further trial may be made of his ministerial Gifts.

A year later the Church Meeting recorded its "unanimous satisfaction with his ministerial abilities," and passed a resolution to "call him to the ministry at a proper time." No undue haste here! Eight weeks later he was definitely accepted "to preach wherever God in His providence might call him" (Aug. 10th, 1786).

In November the little Baptist congregation in Moulton definitely invited Carey to become their minister, and on August 1st, 1787, he was there ordained by Ryland, Sutcliff, and Fuller. The village shoemaker now became a fully recognized Baptist minister. It would seem that this in some way offended his old friends at Hackleton, for against his name on their roll of members they inserted the somewhat curt note: "Whent away without his dismissal." Apparently they regarded him as a backslider!

The change in Carey's status did not materially affect his financial position. The Moulton Baptists were poor, and the very most they could give him was a modest salary of ten or twelve pounds a year. Happily this was supplemented by a grant of five pounds a year from a central fund in London. But even in those days a married man could not make ends meet on five shillings and ninepence a week, and he was obliged to continue to eke out his means with teaching and shoemaking.



In one way his school was a disappointment, for the former master returned to the village and began work again. Naturally enough a number of the boys went back to their old teacher. Carey found himself hard put to it to keep his school going, but he was not the man to give in without a struggle. He exercised all his ingenuity to make the lessons more attractive to the boys, and his own resources of knowledge must have helped him to avoid the ruts of the profession. The better to teach geography, he made a large map of the world by pasting together several sheets of paper. Then he got a still more novel idea: in the *Mercury* he saw an advertisement of "globes for use in schools to teach children geography." He instantly saw the help such a globe would be, but he could not afford to buy one. Not to be beaten, he set to work and made a globe of leather, drawing thereon the various countries! Thus, in spite of obstacles, he continued to keep his school going and apparently derived substantial monetary help from it, for he tells us "when I kept school, the school kept me." It seems to have brought him in an income of about seven shillings and sixpence a week.

Three little boys came to gladden that cottage home—and incidentally to add to their father's financial problems. Often the family "lived for a great while without tasting animal food and with but a scanty pittance of other provision." Carey refrained from letting the Moulton people know of his difficulties, and only the dear ones at Paulerspury were in the secret. In old age, looking back upon his early struggles at Hackleton and Moulton, he was able to say to his nephew, Eustace, "I have

known the time when I wanted the necessaries of life ; but I do not recollect ever to have murmured." To poverty was added the deep sorrow of bereavement : two years after his settling at Moulton, his beloved mother passed away. We can well understand how his gentle, affectionate spirit would feel so great a loss. There was happiness also, however, for he had the joy of baptizing his wife.

But the four years at Moulton were memorable for something of more far-reaching importance. It was while labouring in that secluded village, and living in that thatched cottage, that Carey heard the missionary call. We know the actual manner in which that call came to him. "My attention to Missions was first awakened after I was at Moulton, by reading the *Last Voyage of Captain Cook*," he tells us. Surely this sentence gives us the key to the psychology of the call, and enables us to understand the working of his mind.

We have in a previous chapter seen how, as a schoolboy, Carey heard of the great explorer and took a schoolboy's interest in his romantic voyages, for the *Mercury* duly recorded Cook's setting forth on each adventurous expedition, and subsequently his return. On July 12th, 1776 (when Carey was fifteen) Cook, now promoted to the rank of Captain, set sail from Plymouth on his third voyage. On February 14th, 1779, he was brutally murdered by the natives of Hawaii in the Sandwich Islands ; and on October 6th, 1780, his two ships, the *Resolution* and the *Discovery*, cast anchor off Deptford. The news of Cook's death spread swiftly through England, and Carey would learn of it through the weekly newspaper. Books took a long time to print in those

days; but at last, in December 1785, the *Mercury* announced the publication, in twenty-four weekly shilling parts, of the *Journal of Captain Cook's Last Voyage*; and two months later a much-vaunted rival edition in "only eighty numbers at sixpence each," was advertised to the unusual length of a column and a quarter. Undoubtedly this *Journal* profoundly moved the country, and the reading of it marks a turning-point in Carey's life.

Cook's *Journal* is anything but a missionary textbook, and the idea of its being so used was certainly remote from the great explorer's mind. Cook was a sailor and an explorer; his object was to probe into great geographic problems, to unveil the hidden lands of the Pacific. He was not particularly interested in religion, and probably had no thought that anyone would deem it worth while to Christianize the savages of the islands he found. Indeed, he himself wrote concerning one of them: "No one would ever venture to introduce Christianity into Erromanga, because neither fame nor profit would offer the requisite inducement." Yet in spite of this, Cook's *Journal* became, in Carey's hands, a call to missionary effort. What Carey read in those romantic pages we know quite well, for happily they are accessible to us—a record of voyages, of latitudes and longitudes, of new islands and of strange peoples; narratives of canoe-loads of dusky savages swarming round the *Resolution* and the *Discovery*, and of hazardous landings on coral beaches among peoples sometimes friendly and sometimes hostile; stories of tattooed natives addicted to tribal conflicts and cannibal feasts. That *Journal* was probably more read and talked

about than any other book published in England about that time, for Cook's tragic death had made him the hero of the hour.

To most people Cook's *Journal* was a thrilling story of adventure: to William Carey it was a revelation of human need. To him those tattooed savages were *men and women*—God's creatures, needing to know about God's love. And in his heart there arose the thought: "These South Sea Islanders need the Gospel!"

The idea took possession of him, and he set to work to pursue that line of thought. He devoured every book he could lay his hands upon that had any bearing on the subject. He read of India and China, of Africa and America, and of the many countries of Europe; and, as he pursued his studies, the idea grew yet clearer in his soul: "The peoples of the world need Christ." The *Mercury* was advertising Guthrie's *Geographical Grammar*, and he ransacked it for general information, and probably the writings of the Fathers and the existing Church histories for information concerning the missionary efforts of the Early Church and of mediæval times. It is certain that he read Jonathan Edwards's *Life and Diary of David Brainerd*, and possibly a little book that had been published in 1709 by the Danish missionaries, Henry Plütschaw and Bartholomew Zeigenbalgh.

With that thoroughness that always characterized him, Carey made careful notes from the books he read. His large, home-made map of the world, which hung upon the wall of his schoolroom, now began to serve a new purpose. On this map, his friend Fuller tells us, "he had drawn with a pen a place for every nation in the known world, and entered into it what-

ever he met with in reading, relative to its population, religion, etc.”

A unique map truly—and the revelation of a unique man. How it reminds us of words his brother wrote concerning him: “*He was always resolutely determined never to give up any point or particle of anything on which his mind was set till he had arrived at a clear knowledge of his subject.*”

In his search for information the *Northampton Mercury* must have been a constant help, for every week that enterprising paper devoted two or three columns to advertisements of new books,<sup>1</sup> all of which could “be obtained through the men who carry the news.” Long and wistfully Carey would scan these columns—and then put the paper down

<sup>1</sup> Such advertisements as the following would catch Carey’s eager eye:

“*Guthrie’s Geographical Grammar* this day published in one large volume; price 8s. bound. A new historical and commercial Grammar of the present state of the several Kingdoms of the World.”

“*A New Geographical Grammar* for use of schools and private tutors. Containing a short compendium of modern Geography . . . and accurate description of all the Empires, Kingdoms, States, Provinces, and colonies of the known World, By Charles Vyse. Being the cheapest book of the kind ever offered to the Publick. Illustrated with a number of maps and other copper plates. Price only 4s. Sold by T. Barnham, Northampton.”

“A NEW WORK. *The Present State of the British Empire*. Containing descriptions of the Kingdoms, Principalities, islands, and Colonies . . . in Europe, Asia, Africa, and America. Illustrated with maps of the Several Kingdoms, Provinces, islands, Settlements, etc. By John Entick, M.A. Price £1. 4s. in boards, in four large volumes.”

*Fenning and Collyer’s New System of Geography* was offered in 114 weekly parts of three sheets each for sixpence, or twelve sheets for two shillings.

How wistfully Carey would look at the advertisement of *The Encyclopædia Britannica* published at three guineas! *The Life and Travels of David Brainerd* was advertised in the *Mercury* at sixpence: that was within Carey’s reach, and he bought a copy.

with a sigh, for his grinding poverty made it absolutely impossible for him to purchase all the books he coveted, even though some of them were to be had in sixpenny weekly parts! But from the *Mercury* he would at least learn the titles and contents of books that would be useful to him, and apparently he found means of borrowing them from people fortunate enough to be able to buy them.

Day by day as one volume after another was studied, new facts were added to that first missionary map of the world. Day by day, as Carey acquired new information about world conditions he mused over world problems, and "while he mused the fire burned" in his soul. Can we doubt that that wonderful map of human need became also his prayer-chart? Often in the silence of the night, when the day's toil was over and the casement-cloths were drawn across the little window of his cottage, by the dim rushlight he would scan that map, and then kneeling before it pour out his soul to God.

Along with this ever-increasing vision of human need, there grew in Carey's soul an ever-deepening sense of his own riches in Christ. It came to him, no doubt, largely through his reading of the Scriptures and his experience of the Christian life, and also as a reflex influence of his preaching to his congregations. There was yet another influence at work. In 1784 his friend Andrew Fuller had published a pamphlet entitled: "*The Gospel Worthy of All Acceptation, or the Obligations of men fully to credit and cordially to approve whatever God makes known. Wherein is considered the nature of faith in Christ and the duty of all men where the Gospel comes, in that*

*matter.*” On its title-page stood the great missionary text, “Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature.” The real significance of this work arises from the fact that Fuller was a staunch Calvinist and had previously been a hyper-Calvinist, brought up to believe that salvation was only for “the Elect”—a limited few—and not for every man. In his preface he writes :

The Author . . . formerly entertained different sentiments. For some years, however, he had begun to doubt whether all his principles on these subjects were Scriptural. . . . Reading the lives of Eliot, Brainerd, and several others, who preached Christ with so much success to American Indians, had an effect upon him. These things led him to the Throne of Grace, to implore instruction and resolution . . . the one to know the mind of Christ, and the other to avow it.

The pamphlet does not deal directly with missions, but with the truth of free grace as against the hyper-Calvinist theory of a limited elect—a “false Calvinism” rampant in those days and widely held by the Northamptonshire Baptists with whom both Fuller and Carey were associated.

There can be no question as to the effect that Fuller’s pamphlet had on Carey. He translated its sentences into terms of missionary enterprise: his practical mind drew the obvious inference, “If it be the duty of all men to believe the Gospel . . . then it is *the duty* of those who are entrusted with the Gospel to endeavour to make it known among all nations.”

Christ’s last great command rang in his listening ear, and in his responsive heart there arose the answer, “Here am I; send me!” To William Carey the call came not in an enthusiastic missionary meeting

—he never had the opportunity of attending one—but in the quiet of his own workshop. The call came to him as it came to Amos—through a realization of human need. In Cook's *Journal* and other books he saw the needs of men, and in those deep needs he heard the voice of God. Changing the words (but not the meaning) of Amos, Carey might have said with truth: "I was no prophet, neither was I the son of a prophet . . . but the Lord took me as I made the shoes, and the Lord said unto me, 'Go, prophesy unto My people Israel.'"

And, in truth, his first message was "to Israel"—to the people of God slumbering in the churches of England. He had to arouse them first.

On August 10th, 1786, as we have seen, the Olney Church Meeting definitely appointed Carey "to the work of the ministry, and sent him out . . . to preach the Gospel *wherever God in His providence might call him.*" Carey probably read into those last words a deeper meaning than existed in the mind of the secretary who wrote them in the Church minute book.

A few weeks later, as a young probationer, Carey was present at a ministers' meeting at Northampton. Towards the close of the evening, when the public services were over, some of the ministers were sitting together in fraternal conversation, when old Dr Ryland entered the room and invited one of the younger men to propose a subject for general discussion. After a pause, Carey rose, and with some hesitation suggested that they should consider:

"Whether the command given to the Apostles to teach all nations was not obligatory on all



succeeding ministers to the end of the world, seeing that the accompanying promise was of equal extent."

The question fell on the meeting like a thunderbolt. Dr Ryland, who was addicted to forcible expressions, instantly denounced the proposition, which seemed to him absurd. "Young man," he exclaimed, "sit down: when God pleases to convert the heathen, he will do it without your aid or mine"<sup>1</sup>! Even Fuller was startled by his young colleague's proposal, and he described his feelings as resembling those of the unbelieving captain of Israel, who said, "If the Lord should make windows in heaven, might such a thing be!"

Carey sat down—disappointed but not discouraged, for he was sure of his ground. He had read books Dr Ryland had not read; and he realized what his senior colleagues did not—the depth of human need. He was silenced for the moment, but only for the moment. He saw that his first task must be to pass on to others the information that had stirred his own heart, he must transmit to them his vision. Assured that God had called him, he embarked upon what

<sup>1</sup> Thus John C. Marshman. Morris of Clipstone, who was present at the meeting, represents Ryland as saying: "You are a miserable enthusiast for asking such a question. Certainly nothing can be done before another Pentecost, when an effusion of miraculous gifts, including the gift of tongues, will give effect to the Commission of Christ as at first. What, Sir! Can you preach in Arabic, in Persic, in Hindustani, in Bengali, that you think it your duty to send the Gospel to the heathens?" This was afterwards stoutly denied by Dr Ryland's son (Carey's friend John Ryland), and as stoutly maintained by Morris in reply. Eustace Carey relates that he asked his uncle about it, and says, "I do not remember his repeating that precise expression (i.e. 'miserable enthusiast') . . . but I distinctly recollect that some strong epithet was said to have been used." See also p. 83.

to-day would be called an educational campaign. He began to talk about it to all with whom he came in contact ; he preached about it to his little flock at Moulton ; it echoed in his prayers. Polly says :

He was remarkably impressed about heathen lands and the slave trade. I never remember his engaging in prayer, in his family or in public, without praying for those poor creatures. The first time I ever recollect my feelings for the heathen world was from a discourse I heard my brother preach at Moulton. It was from these words : " For Zion's sake will I not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem's sake will give Him no rest." It was a day to be remembered by me ; a day set apart for prayer and fasting by the church.

With that clear judgment that was always so conspicuous a trait, Carey saw that he must carry his ministerial brethren with him if he was to accomplish the purpose so dear to his heart. It was no light task to change their ultra-Calvinistic theories into missionary convictions, but he left no stone unturned, no argument unused to accomplish it. At several ministers' meetings between 1787 and 1790, this was his chief topic of conversation. Some of the older men thought it was a wild and impracticable scheme that he had got in his mind, and they gave him no encouragement. Undaunted, Carey tackled his fellow-ministers, one by one, till he had made some impression upon a few of them.

At first he was alone. The leaders of the Church were against him, and he had no one to encourage him or with whom he could take counsel. With very little education, without status or influence, he had, humanly speaking, everything against him. An ordinary man would have yielded to the

inevitable; a "miserable enthusiast" would have degenerated into an ill-tempered fanatic. Carey was neither, and he quietly applied himself to his task, confident in this—that GOD HAD CALLED HIM.

In order to reach a wider public than would ever hear his voice, he resolved to write a book—his famous *Enquiry*.<sup>1</sup> And now his map became as a weapon in the hand of a mighty man; the facts he had laboriously collected and written upon it were barbed arrows in his quiver. Slowly he marshalled his information, developed his arguments, set forth his conclusions, and with heart aflame wrote his amazing appeal. Every sentence was an arrow winged with conviction based on knowledge. Dr George Smith says :

The *Enquiry* has a literary interest of its own, as a contribution to the statistics and geography of the world, written in a cultured and almost finished style, such as few, if any, University men of that day could have produced, for none were impelled by such a motive as Carey had.

In an obscure village, toiling save when he slept, and finding rest on Sunday only by a change of toil, far from the libraries and the society of men with more advantages than his own, this shoemaker, still under thirty, surveys the whole world, continent by continent, island by island, race by race, faith by faith, kingdom by kingdom, tabulating his results with an accuracy, and following them up with a logical power of generalization, which would extort the admiration of the learned men even of the present day.

About the time the *Enquiry* was finished Carey happened to be in Birmingham collecting funds for the little chapel he had built at Moulton. In visiting a certain Mr Potts, there occurred a conversation

<sup>1</sup> See Chapter VII for details.

that, happily, has been preserved for us by a gentleman who was present.

*Mr Potts.* "Pray, friend Carey, what is it you have got into your head about Missions? I understand you introduce the subject on all occasions."

*Carey.* "Why, I think, Sir, it is highly important that something should be done for the heathen."

*Mr Potts.* "But how can it be done, and who will do it?"

*Carey.* "Why, if you ask who, I have made up my mind, if a few friends can be found who will send me out, and support me for twelve months after my arrival, I will engage to go wherever Providence shall open a door."

*Mr Potts.* "But where would you go? Have you thought of that, friend Carey?"

*Carey.* "Yes, I certainly have. Were I to follow my inclination, and had the means at command, the islands of the South Seas would be the scene of my labours, and I would commence at Otaheite. If any society will send me out, and land me there, allow me the means of subsistence for one year, I am ready and willing to go."

*Mr Potts.* "Why, friend Carey, the thought is new, and the religious public are not prepared for such undertakings."

*Carey.* "No; I am aware of that; but I have written a piece on the state of the heathen world, which, if it were published, might probably awaken an interest on the subject."

*Mr Potts.* "Why don't you publish it?"

*Carey.* "For the best of all reasons. I have not the means."

*Mr Potts.* "We will have it published by all means. I had rather bear the expense of printing it myself, than the public should be deprived of the opportunity of considering so important a subject."

This conversation is valuable as showing the precision and clearness of Carey's mind, and it so impressed Mr Potts that he then and there promised to contribute the sum of £10 towards the publication

of the pamphlet—a substantial sum for those days. Here at last was encouragement.

Returning from Birmingham, Carey passed through Northampton, and in the study of John Ryland, junior (who, it will be remembered, had baptized him), he had an earnest conversation with him. Fuller and Sutcliff were there also. Although so intimately acquainted with Carey, these brother ministers knew nothing of the book he had written. Indeed, with a modesty that was as characteristic as his energy and perseverance, he earnestly besought one of them to write a book on the subject. In the warmth of his enthusiasm he confessed that Mr Potts had promised £10 if he would publish such a book. They therefore urged him to write the book (little knowing that he had already done so) but not to be in too big a hurry to publish it. When, a short time after this, he produced the fruit of his years of toil, they looked over it “to see if anything needed to be omitted, altered, or added,” but, says Ryland, “we found it needed very little correction.” They still advised delay—timid souls!—and the *Enquiry* was hung up indefinitely. These good men feared that the time was not opportune. So, with renewed conviction, Carey set to work to make it opportune.

There were signs that already God was working in men's hearts. A wave of prayer was sweeping over the Baptist churches of the Midlands, and when Christian men begin to pray things begin to happen. We have already seen how some of the ministers had been influenced by the writings of Jonathan Edwards of America. Among other things, they read his *Humble Attempt to Promote Explicit Agreement and*

*Visible Union of God's People in Extraordinary Prayer for the Revival of Religion and the Advancement of Christ's Kingdom on Earth*—and as a result, at the annual meeting of the Ministers' Association at Nottingham in 1784, a resolution had been formed to establish regular meetings to pray for "the revival of our Churches and the spread of the Gospel." Such meetings were actually being held in many of the churches of the Northamptonshire and Leicestershire Association "on the first Monday evening in every calendar month," and from 1786 the Midland Baptist Association followed their example; then Yorkshire joined in. Carey, Fuller, Sutcliff, the younger Ryland, and others, now strove to turn this wave of prayer into channels of world-wide evangelism.

In 1789, to stimulate prayer still further, Sutcliff published at Olney an English edition of Jonathan Edwards's pamphlet. It is preserved for us in the somewhat ponderous volumes of Edwards's *Works*, and a perusal of it shows how opportune its publication must have been at such a time in preparing men's hearts to receive Carey's message. It begins by quoting Zechariah viii. 20-22:

It shall come to pass that there shall come people and the inhabitants of many cities: And the inhabitants of one city shall go to another, saying, Let us go speedily to pray before the Lord. . . . Yea, many people and strong nations shall come to seek the Lord.

Then follows a true world-vision of the wide purposes of God, and texts such as Isaiah lx. 2-4 and Micah iv. 1, which speak of the ultimate triumph of the Kingdom, and the gathering in of all the nations, are quoted and enforced.

These things have not yet been brought to pass, Edwards explains; and in Section I he urges his readers to pray for them and expect them. In Section II he deals with the constraining motives and adds that the result will only be obtained by "great multitudes in different towns and countries taking up a *joint resolution* and coming into an express and *visible agreement* that they will by united and extraordinary prayer seek God. . . . The duty is an urgent one. Let us go *speedily*." Section III answers objections, and Section IV gives illustrations of the power of united, organized prayer.

As we read the burning message of this pamphlet we cannot but recognize that while Carey was preparing his great booklet, God was preparing men's hearts to receive it.

## CHAPTER VI

### LEICESTER : DAYS OF TRIAL AND CONFLICT

*A.D. 1789-1791. Age 28-30.*

WHILE working steadily at his great theme, Carey was by no means neglecting his pastoral duties at Moulton. Beginning with a little "meeting room," his ministry was so successful that it became necessary to build a church, and he worked hard to collect the necessary money, often walking long distances for the purpose—as we have already seen from the incident of his visit to Birmingham.

Then a call came to a new sphere of service. In February 1789—five months before the fall of the Bastille—we find him writing to his father that he had that week received an invitation to a pastorate in Leicester. Six weeks later he told his Moulton congregation of it. He was not seeking an easier position. The task offered to him was one of unusual difficulty. Harvey Lane Chapel, Leicester, was in a deplorable moral condition. A wave of Antinomianism—the fashionable heresy of the time—had wrought ruin and brought disgrace upon the Christian name. There were members and even deacons who were not fit to be within the Church of Christ. But a band of faithful souls struggled nobly against the prevailing corruption, and it was largely through them that Carey was invited.

He did not shrink from difficulties, but for a while



he did not feel sure of the leadings of God's spirit. So he wrote down on a sheet of paper his own thoughts, both for and against, that he might the better weigh them and get the advice of his brethren. At length he accepted the call, and in the autumn of 1789 he removed from Moulton to his new sphere. As at Moulton, he was "on trial" at first, not being "solemnly set apart" for the office until a year and ten months later!

The Leicester of those days was singularly unlike the prosperous city of our time. Harvey Lane, now a densely populated working-class area, was then a pleasant lane on the outskirts of a little country town. It was a change from Moulton, truly, but there were gardens and orchards all around and fields beyond.

Carey made his home in a tiny cottage immediately opposite the chapel—the smallest house he had ever lived in. It still remains in almost its original condition, though its environment has completely changed, and it is hemmed in with small dwellings that seem to hold it up—almost to squeeze it.<sup>1</sup> The cottage—for such it was in Carey's day—consists of three tiny rooms, each about fifteen feet square, and one above the other. That on the ground floor, with ingle-nook and recessed cupboards on either side of the fire-place, was the kitchen and living room combined. Carey always kept the window gay with flowers. In the further corner a narrow flight of stairs leads to the bedroom, from which the stairs continue upwards to an attic which was doubtless

<sup>1</sup> In 1915 it was purchased for the Baptist Missionary Society. It is now kept as a Carey Museum, and should be visited by all lovers of Carey who chance to be near Leicester.

Carey's study—a little chamber with a small dormer window let into the slope of the slate roof. On the ground floor, at the back, is a small lean-to back kitchen which he used for his shoemaking—it was still necessary for him to earn money by this means. To all who know anything of Carey's life and work this insignificant cottage must be nothing less than holy ground. It was his last home in England, and in its cramped rooms he spent some of the decisive moments of his life.

Though his modest stipend was slightly larger than it had been at Moulton, he had still to maintain a struggle with poverty. His three boys were growing, and at Leicester a little girl was born. Alas, the joy was speedily followed by great sorrow, for in her second year little Lucy, the flower of the home, drooped and died.

Once more it was necessary for Carey to augment his salary by keeping school. His life was a busy one, and heavy were the burdens he carried. In a letter addressed to his "Dear and Honoured Father," dated November 12th, 1790, he outlined the week's work :

On Monday I confine myself to the study of the learned languages, and oblige myself to translate something. On Tuesday to the study of science, history, composition, etc. On Wednesday I preach a lecture, and have been for more than twelve months on the Book of Revelation. On Thursday I visit my friends. Friday and Saturday are spent in preparing for the Lord's Day, and the Lord's Day in preaching the Word of God. Once a fortnight I preach three times at home; and once a fortnight I go to a neighbouring village in the evening. Once a month I go to another village on the Tuesday evening. My school begins at nine o'clock in the morning, and continues till four o'clock in winter and five in

summer. I have acted for this twelvemonth as secretary to the committee of dissenters ; and am now to be regularly appointed to that office, with a salary. Add to this occasional journeys, ministers' meetings, etc., and you will rather wonder that I have any time, than that I have so little.

I am not my own, nor would I choose for myself. Let God employ me where He thinks fit.

As an interesting commentary upon this letter and a side-light on Carey's busy life, it may be noted that he was earning, by spare-time shoemaking and mending, from nine to ten shillings a week, which in those days would have been considered good pay for a full-time shoemaker ! Thus, to the music of his hammer and the noisy chatter of his little school-room, the weeks sped by. One friend gives us a pleasant picture of Carey at work in his cottage, "in his leather apron, his books beside him, and with his beautiful flowers in the windows."

For more than a year the troubles in the church cast their shadow over the heroic pastor. To his close friend Fuller he confided that he was "distressed beyond measure at the trials of his situation" ; and John Sutcliff declared that "the Harvey Lane difficulties would have daunted any other man than William Carey." From the dormer window of his attic-study, Carey would look down upon the chapel, scarce half a dozen yards distant, that was causing him such heart-aches ; and doubtless he often knelt beside that window and prayed for the erring ones of his flock.

But firmness and tact, patience and faith, triumphed. First the surgical knife had to cut away the cancer. He found it expedient to dissolve the church membership, and start again from

the beginning, only admitting to the new roll such of the old members and others as were prepared to make a solemn promise to seek to live according to the principles of the New Testament. Then new life began to manifest itself. Congregations filled the church, and then overflowed, so that it became necessary to build a gallery. In May 1791—just before his “ordination”—Carey wrote to his father :

God is . . . reviving His work among us. Several young people appear under concern of soul ; and in a village three miles off, an amazing alteration has taken place. . . . Several have been converted.

So marked was the influence at this village that a Methodist cause there was strengthened also, and attendance at the prayer-meeting increased from a dozen to “one hundred and nine persons.”

But neither pastoral problems nor domestic difficulties drew Carey’s mind from its central thought—the evangelization of the world—and at Leicester he continued the efforts begun at Moulton. Says Fuller :

The other ministers . . . had been *compelled to think* of the subject by his repeatedly advancing it, and they became desirous of it, if it could be accomplished ; but feeling the difficulty of setting out in an unbeaten path, their minds revolted at the idea of attempting it. It seemed to them something too great, and too much like grasping at an object utterly beyond their reach.

No wonder those faithful, humble men were staggered at the magnitude of the proposals Carey was urging upon them—a handful of country pastors, how could they undertake such vast responsibilities ? But

a change had come over them; they no longer opposed the *principle* of sending the Gospel to the heathen; they now assented to the duty and desirability of doing so, but urged, not without reason, that it was impossible for them, for the time being, to undertake so vast a work. "The time had not come," they said. "They must pray and wait, and sometime, maybe, God would make it possible." They had begun to catch the world vision, but they shrank from action.

It was Andrew Fuller who gave the decisive answer to this objection. At Easter, 1791 (April 27th), there was a meeting of the Northamptonshire and Leicestershire ministers at Clipstone, at which Sutcliff and Fuller were the preachers. There can be no doubt that both sermons were intended to bring the matter to a head, and they certainly did. Sutcliff spoke of "Zeal for the Lord of Hosts," and Fuller's text was Haggai i. 2: "The people say, The time is not come, the time that the Lord's house should be built." His theme was the dangerous tendency of delay in all matters of religion. In his introduction he pointed out that:

There is something of this procrastinating spirit running through a great part of life, and it is of great detriment to the work of God. We know of many things that should be done, and cannot in conscience directly oppose them; but still we find excuses for our inactivity. . . . We quiet ourselves with the thought that they need not be done *just now*.

This plea . . . *prevents us from undertaking any great or good work for the cause of Christ or the good of mankind*. . . . There are difficulties in the way, and we wait for their removal. We are very apt to indulge in a kind of prudent caution (as we call it) which foresees and magnifies difficulties beyond what they really are. . . . It becomes

us to beware lest we account that impossible which only requires such a degree of exertion as we are not inclined to give it. . . . Perhaps the work requires *expense*. . . . Perhaps it requires *concurrence*, and we wait for everybody to be of one mind, which is never to be expected. . . . Had Luther acted on this principle, they had never gone about the glorious work of the Reformation. Instead of waiting for the removal of difficulties, we ought, in many cases, to consider them as purposely laid in our way in order to try the sincerity of our religion.

Having thus prepared the ground, Fuller approached the theme on which Carey's heart was set—and his own also. He said :

Let it be considered whether it is not owing to this principle that so few, and so feeble efforts have been made for the propagation of the Gospel in the world. . . . Are the souls of men of less value than heretofore? No. Is Christianity less true or less important than in former ages? This will not be pretended. Are there no opportunities . . . to convey the Gospel to the heathen? This cannot be pleaded so long as opportunities are found to trade with them, yea, and (what is a disgrace to the name of Christianity!) to buy them and sell them, and treat them with worse than savage barbarity. We have opportunities in abundance: the improvement of navigation and the maritime and commercial turn of this country furnish us with these; and it deserves to be considered whether this is not a circumstance that renders it a duty particularly binding on us.

The truth is, we wait for we know not what; we seem to think "the time is not come, the time for the spirit to be poured down from on high." . . . We *pray* for the conversion of the world and yet we *neglect the ordinary means* by which it can be brought about. . . . How shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach except they be sent?

The sermon evidently produced an impression; and perceiving this, Carey urged the ministers present at once to resolve to form a missionary society. To

his intense disappointment, however, they still hesitated. Even Sutcliff counselled delay. Several of them adjourned to the manse to discuss Carey's proposition, and sat up late into the night—so late that they became hungry and had to cook themselves some more supper! Partly to humour their enthusiastic young brother, and partly to gain time, they passed a resolution recommending him to revise the book they had heard that he had written and print it "for the consideration of the religious public."

We can imagine the undaunted pioneer returning to his cottage in Leicester with the words, "The time *has* come" ringing in his ears. Then in his tiny garret he worked with new zeal to revise his precious manuscript. It is probable that considerable alterations were made as the result of wider reading, and we know that in Leicester he had free access to the libraries of Robert Brewin and Dr Arnold, the latter a Fellow of the Royal College of Physicians and "a great lover of literature." Moreover, within three minutes' walk of his own cottage was the library of the ancient Guildhall which for more than a hundred years before Carey's time had been open to the public.

## CHAPTER VII

### THE ENQUIRY: CAREY'S FIRST GREAT ACHIEVEMENT

A.D. 1791-1792. Age 30-31.

LESS than a month after Fuller's searching sermon at Clipstone, a company of ministers gathered at Carey's own chapel in Leicester (May 24th, 1791) to "ordain" him officially to the pastorate upon which he had entered some eighteen months before. That evening Carey and a few of his closest friends who had taken part in the ordination met together, whether in the chapel or in his little cottage across the road, or sitting in the garden among his flowers we do not know. Fuller, and Ryland, and Sutcliff, Pearce of Birmingham, and Hopper of Nottingham were there—a goodly fellowship of men who were in sympathy with Carey's great idea. At the request of his friends, Carey read to them a good deal of the manuscript he had prepared and revised with such care. It evidently won their approval; indeed, Samuel Pearce tells us that "it added fresh fuel to my zeal." Within a year it was published—the most convincing missionary appeal that had ever been written.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *An Enquiry into the Obligations of Christians to use means for the Conversion of the Heathens.* Printed and sold by Ann Ireland and other Booksellers in Leicester; Price One Shilling and Sixpence. MDCCXCII.



This remarkable pamphlet was one of the greatest achievements of Carey's career, and an important landmark in the history of modern missions. It was in every way unique. Four hundred years earlier Raymund Lull had addressed to the Universities of his day burning appeals for missionaries to go to the Moslem peoples of North Africa; but wonderful as these were, they were little more than powerful exhortations. Carey's pamphlet was a reasoned statement of Christian obligation, of world-needs, of existing opportunities, and practical proposals for the formation of a Missionary Society. In 1784—the year before Carey settled at Moulton—Dr Thomas Coke, the founder of Methodist Missions, issued a *Plan of the Society for the Establishment of Missions among the Heathens*. This also was a proposal unique in its way, but being merely a draft of ten rules for the organization of a Society, and containing less than two hundred words of exhortation (addressed to "All Real Lovers of Mankind"), it was immeasurably below the mighty challenge written by the young shoemaker-minister of Northamptonshire. So far as our knowledge goes, no one, through all the centuries of the Christian era, had made so careful and systematic a survey of human needs and missionary opportunities as that self-taught peasant, and even to-day we read with amazement the product of his indefatigable industry and heart passion.

The five chapters of the *Enquiry* are remarkable alike for comprehensiveness, for brevity, for lucidity, for movement, for logical development of the argument, and above all for their searching appeal to the heart. The marvel is that, with the exception

of statistics and a few references to contemporary missionary enterprises and other matters which are now necessarily out of date, it is probable that not one of the great Missionary Societies of our own time would have difficulty in republishing the pamphlet with their own imprint upon the title-page. So free is it from denominational bias that, if exactly *three words* were omitted, it would be impossible to discover from internal evidence to which section of the Christian Church the writer belonged. Another remarkable feature of the *Enquiry* is that the argument of "perishing heathen"—so popular almost to our own day as a missionary appeal—is never once used! Instead of a lurid picture of souls streaming into everlasting fire, the dominating thought is the extension of the Kingdom of Christ. The opening sentence reminds us of the oft-quoted prayer, "Thy Kingdom come"; and the book closes with these words: "Surely it is worth our while to lay ourselves out with all our might in promoting the cause and Kingdom of Christ." This lofty tone is maintained throughout; there is not a single unworthy thought, not a sentence we could wish deleted.

The keynote of the book is "obligation." It occurs in the title, and all through the pamphlet such words and phrases as "obedience," "it becomes us," "it is incumbent upon us," "it behoves us," and "it is *not* impracticable" constantly occur.

According to the custom of the eighteenth century, the title was a long one—indeed, almost a table of contents. It ran thus:

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An  
ENQUIRY  
into the  
OBLIGATIONS OF CHRISTIANS  
to use means for the  
CONVERSION  
of the  
HEATHENS.

IN WHICH THE  
RELIGIOUS STATE OF THE DIFFERENT NATIONS  
OF THE WORLD, THE SUCCESS OF FORMER  
UNDERTAKINGS, AND THE PRACTICABILITY OF  
FURTHER UNDERTAKINGS, ARE CONSIDERED,  
BY WILLIAM CAREY

---

For there is no Difference between the Jew and the Greek; for the same Lord over all, is rich unto all that call upon him. For whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved. How then shall they call on him, in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a Preacher? and how shall they preach, except they be sent?—PAUL

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A brief Introduction explains the purpose and scope of the pamphlet. It begins with these irresistible words :

As our blessed Lord has required us to pray that his Kingdom may come and his will be done on earth as it is in heaven, it becomes us not only to express our desires of that event by words, but to use every lawful method to spread the knowledge of his name. In order to do this, it is necessary that we should become in some measure acquainted with the religious state of the world ; and as this is an object we should be prompted to pursue not only by the gospel of the Redeemer, but even by the feelings of humanity . . . conscientious activity therein would form one of the strongest proofs that we are the subjects of grace.

A lofty keynote truly. We may regard it as Carey's own statement of the missionary motive, and certainly it forms the foundation-stone of his subsequent missionary service. Notice, too, the methodical and logical clearness of the man's mind as revealed in this concise outline of his plan for the pamphlet :

In order that the subject may be taken into more serious consideration, I shall enquire whether the commission given by our Lord to his disciples be not still binding on us—take a short view of former undertakings—give some account of the present state of the world—consider the practicability of doing something more than is done—and the duty of Christians in general in this matter.

Section I is headed "*An Enquiry whether the Commission given by our Lord to His disciples be not still binding on us.*" Beginning with the Great Commission, Carey deals with excuses Christian people

were making in his day, answering each in short terse sentences. Some declared that "if God intends the salvation of the heathen, he will some way or other bring them to the Gospel, or the Gospel to them<sup>1</sup> . . . and thus sit at ease and give themselves no concern about the far greater part of their fellow sinners, who to this day, are lost in ignorance and idolatry." Others maintained that Christ's command to "teach all nations" was only intended for the apostles. Then, surely, the duty of *baptizing* must also be intended only for the apostles and we do wrong in baptizing at all, is Carey's retort. (Imagine the power of that home-thrust upon his Baptist readers!) And "if the command . . . extend only to the apostles, then doubtless the promise of the divine presence must be so limited; but this is worded in such manner as expressly precludes such an idea—*Lo, I am with you always to the end of the world.*"

There is sound common sense in the words :

It was not the duty of Paul to preach Christ to the inhabitants of Otaheite, because no such place was then discovered, nor had he any means of coming at them. But none of these things can be urged by us. . . . We cannot say that it [the Command] is repealed, like the commands of the ceremonial law; nor can we plead that there are no objects for the command to be exercised upon. . . . Neither can we allege a natural impossibility in the case. It has been said that we ought not to force our way, but to wait for the openings and leadings of Providence; but it might with equal propriety be answered . . . neither ought we to neglect embracing these openings . . . which daily present themselves to us.

<sup>1</sup> Carey told the younger Ryland that this was suggested by his father's famous rebuke at the Northampton meeting more than five years earlier (see p. 63).

Carey then proceeds to show that Roman Catholic missionaries had overcome the difficulties. Moravian brethren had "encountered the scorching heat of Abyssinia and the frozen climes of Greenland and Labrador . . . and English Traders for the sake of Gain . . . can insinuate themselves into the favour of the most barbarous clans and uncultivated tribes." To other critics he replies that if it is bad to preach to the heathen "it must be as bad to pray for them," and then he joins issue with those who talk about the saving of the home-heathen first.

Section II is a survey of missionary effort from the day of Pentecost onwards. The first portion is an epitome of the *Acts of the Apostles*. Then follows an account of the traditional journeyings of the Apostles in Scythia and India, Phrygia and Arabia, Parthia and Ethiopia, Mauritania and Lybia. The work of Justin Martyr, Irenæus of Gaul, Tertullian of Carthage, Frumentius of Abyssinia, James of Nubia is mentioned, and there are references to the evangelistic efforts of Palladius and Columba in Scotland, Patrick and Finian in Ireland. We read of the conversion of "nomads beyond the Danube," of Burgundians, and of "Abasgi near the Caucasian Mountains."

Then Carey turns to England and mentions Augustine and Melitus, Justus and Paulinus, Ruffinian and Birinus, Felix and Wilfrid. He shows how northern Europe was evangelized by Amandus Gallus, Chelonus, Columbanus, Egidius Gallus, the two Evaldi, Chilianus, Boniface, and Willibrod; he mentions the preaching of Ansgarius in Denmark, Gaudibert in Sweden, and Methodius and Cyril in Bohemia; he refers to the work of the Portuguese Jesuits in the

East Indies, China and Japan, of the Spaniards in South America, and several Capuchin missions in Africa. Such a list leaves one breathless !

Turning to modern missions, Carey mentions at rather greater length the work of "Mr John Eliot in New England," "Mr David Brainerd" and others among the North American Indians, the Danish missions in Tranquebar, the Dutch in Formosa, Malabar, Jaffna, Colombo, Amboyna, Java, Banda, Macassar, Sumatra, and the Cape of Good Hope. This remarkable chapter closes with two short paragraphs about the Moravian missions and [the efforts of "the late Mr Wesley in the West Indies . . . whose ministers are now labouring amongst the Caribs and Negroes."

We wonder how many rush-lights Carey used, and how many books he read, in hunting out all this information !

Section III is in some respects the most remarkable of all—a careful survey of the whole world as then known. It includes twenty-three whole pages of statistical tables—a monument to his prodigious industry and indefatigable patience. Every table consists of five columns showing: (1) Name of country or island, (2) length, (3) breadth, (4) number of inhabitants, (5) religion. Under Europe, for example (which occupies seven pages), we can understand his giving all these details of such important states as France and Switzerland, Greece and Poland, and such islands as Corsica and Sicily; but the list gives all these statistics for such places as Grisons and St Gall, Valais and Savoy, Piedmont and Lapland. The United Netherlands and Austrian Netherlands are given separately, and Budziac Tartary, Lesser

Tartary and Crim Tartary are treated likewise alone. Full figures are given for each little island in the Baltic—Gothland and Oesel, Oeland and Dago, Aland and Hogland, and all the islands of the Ægean Sea—Tenedos and Lemnos, Paros and Naxos, Chios and Tinos, Scyros and Mycone, and a score of others! The survey of Asia includes in separate lines the islands of the South Seas, the Malay Archipelago, and the China and Japanese seas. Africa is recorded under thirty-five headings, and America under fifty-five. Every little West Indian island has a line of statistics to itself. Thus it is recorded that St Eustatia is six miles long, four miles broad, has a population of five thousand whites and fifteen thousand Negroes, and that the religion is Dutch and English forms of Christianity. St Vincent is twenty-four miles by eighteen and its population consists of five thousand Negroes and eight thousand Caribs.

It is interesting to note the method by which Carey prepared his figures. He writes :

This, as nearly as I can obtain information, is the state of the world ; though in many countries we have no accounts of the number of inhabitants that can be relied on. I have therefore only calculated the extent, and counted a certain number on the average upon the square mile, in some countries more, and in others less, according as circumstances determine.

One stands amazed at the information contained in these statistical tables. And we recall his method of collecting it : the reading of volume after volume as he made his shoes and in hours when other men were asleep, carefully writing down every new fact on the big map on the wall. Oh, that the map had been preserved for us to see ! As we turn over



page after page of the *Enquiry* we seem again to hear Carey's voice saying: "I CAN PLOD."

Having given the statistics, he proceeds to analyse them and to point out their significance. He works out the world's population at about seven hundred and thirty-one millions—probably not very far from the truth at that date, though he knew nothing of the peoples of Central Africa. His estimates of one hundred and sixty millions for India, and two millions for Ceylon were probably fairly accurate, though sixty millions for China was possibly under the mark. Calculating by religions, he estimates the Christians (Catholics, Protestants, Greeks, Armenians, etc.) at one hundred and seventy-four millions, the Jews at seven millions (a figure accepted until a few years ago), and all other non-Christians at five hundred and fifty millions. To-day, a century and a quarter later, we estimate non-Christians at one thousand millions—the number may easily have doubled in the intervening time. Obviously Carey's statistics were no mere guess-work, but the result of wide research carried out with scrupulous care.

Having surveyed the vast world field, Carey proceeds in Section IV to consider "*The Practicability of something being done for the Conversion of the Heathen.*" He recognizes that there are serious difficulties to contend with, and he deals with five of them, viz.: "(1) Their distance from us, (2) their barbarous and savage manner of living, (3) the danger of being killed by them, (4) the difficulties of procuring the necessaries of life, and (5) the unintelligibleness of their languages." The fact that the heathen are so far away can no longer be urged as a difficulty, he tells us:

Men can now sail with as much certainty on through the Great South Sea as they can through the Mediterranean. . . . Yea, and Providence seems in a manner to invite us to the trial, as there are . . . trading companies whose commerce lies in many of the places where these barbarians dwell. Scripture likewise seems to point out this method, "Surely the Isles shall wait for me; the ships of Tarshish first, to bring my sons from afar. . . ." The ships of Tarshish were trading vessels which made voyages for traffic to various ports; thus much, therefore, must be meant by it that *navigation*, especially that which is *commercial*, shall be one great means of carrying on the work of God.

Are the South Sea Islanders uncivilized and barbarous? What about "the barbarous Britons"? The early missionaries did not wait for *them* to be civilized before preaching to them; and here Carey quotes Tertullian: "Those parts of Britain which were proof against the Roman armies were conquered by the Gospel of Christ."

After all, the uncivilized state of the heathen, instead of affording an objection *against* preaching the Gospel to them, ought to furnish an argument *for* it.

And what if we do get killed, he asks. Did not Paul and Barnabas "hazard their lives for the name of Our Lord Jesus Christ"—and did not Eliot, Brainerd, and the Moravians do the same?

Carey admits that it will be difficult to procure the necessaries of life—indeed he was not the man to close his eyes to difficulties, and he probably knew a great deal more of the kind of difficulties to be guarded against than the people who raised this objection to his scheme. He now makes a practical suggestion:

It might be necessary for two, at least, to go together, and in general I should think it best that they should be married men, and to prevent their time from being employed in procuring necessaries, two or more other persons, with their wives and families, might also accompany them, who should be wholly employed in providing for them.

As to learning the language—that difficulty was not likely to daunt the man who had already mastered six languages with such help as he could get from friends. He estimates that an ordinary man ought to learn, “in the space of a year, or two at most, the language of any people upon earth.” Nowadays, the Missionary Societies usually allow two years for this formidable task. This interesting section closes with a page and a half on the personal qualifications for missionary service.

Section V is even more practical than the preceding one. It is the practical application of the whole theme.

If the prophecies concerning the increase of Christ’s Kingdom be true . . . it must be inferred that all Christians ought heartily to concur with God in promoting his glorious designs.

How is it to be done? Carey has a twofold answer. By prayer and by effort. The prayer must be fervent, it must be definite, and it must be united. But “we must not be contented with praying, without *exerting ourselves in the use of means* for the obtaining of those things we pray for.”

What could be more apt than this analogy?

When a trading company have obtained their charter they usually go to its utmost limits; and their stocks, their ships, their officers, and men are so chosen and regulated as to be likely to answer their purpose; but

they do not stop here, for encouraged by the prospects of success, they use every effort, cast their bread upon the waters, cultivate friendship with every one from whose information they expect the least advantage. They cross the widest seas and encounter the most unfavourable climates . . . and sometimes undergo the most affecting hardships. . . .

Christians are a body whose truest interest lies in the exaltation of the Messiah's Kingdom. Their charter is very extensive, their encouragements exceedingly great. . . . Let then every one in his station consider himself as bound to act with all his might, and in every possible way for God.

Then comes the great proposal to establish a Missionary Society to plan and direct the work, to collect money, and to send forth missionaries. In brief sentences he outlines his scheme and calls on the Particular Baptists to carry it out—not that he would be narrow in his outlook, but

in the present divided state of Christendom, it would be more likely for good to be done by each denomination engaging separately in the work. . . . There is room enough for us all.

How sane, how practical this man is. He realizes that any effort to secure a preliminary unity of the Churches will mean long delay, and he is not prepared for that. Had he decided to wait for unity his life-work would never have been achieved. We should still be waiting.

In his weighing of all difficulties, Carey had not overlooked that of finance. Money would have to be raised somehow. How did he propose to raise it? He proposed that *rich* Christians should devote a portion of their wealth to the work. That *people in moderate circumstances* should give a tenth of

their income ; and that the *poor* should contribute "one penny or more per week according to their circumstances." Under this head, he reminded his readers that many Christian people had ceased to use sugar on account of its being obtained by slave labour, thus "saving to their families, some of sixpence, and some a shilling a week." Why not, he asked, devote the money thus saved to missionary work ?

Then comes the final appeal—"Whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap."

What treasure, what an harvest must await such characters as Paul, and Eliot, and Brainerd. . . . What a heaven will it be to see the many myriads of poor heathens, of Britons among the rest, who by their labours have been brought to the knowledge of God. Surely a *crown of rejoicing* like this is worth aspiring to. Surely it is worth while to lay ourselves out with all our might, in promoting the cause and kingdom of Christ.

Here the pamphlet ends. There is no peroration, no recapitulation, no laboured appeal. Carey has delivered his message, he has flung down his great challenge, and with the one word "FINIS" he lays down his pen and commits his work to God.

## CHAPTER VIII

### THE FORMATION OF THE BAPTIST MISSIONARY SOCIETY

*A.D. 1792. Age 31.*

WE have spoken of the *Enquiry* as Carey's first great achievement, and such in truth it was. But to Carey himself it was only a means to an end. His immediate aim was the formation of a society for sending out missionaries, and the publication of his pamphlet was merely a step towards the realization of that aim. His next task was to press home the message of his book and to urge immediate action on the lines therein suggested—or on other lines if better could be devised.

In the spring of 1792 the Baptist Ministers' Association was to meet at Nottingham, and Carey had been previously chosen to be the preacher. There was no need to ask what his subject would be—they must have known that when they appointed him. It is easy to imagine the prayerful diligence with which he chose his text and prepared the address that he trusted would be used by God to accomplish his great purpose. He would shut himself away in his top garret and pray for a message that would move the hearts of his brethren.

The appointed day was May 30th, and the place, the Baptist chapel beside the old alms-houses in

Park Street<sup>1</sup> (Nottingham). In that simple sanctuary, Carey preached a sermon that was nothing short of epoch-making. It is probable that the young preacher made a rather strange figure as he stood in the pulpit: somewhat short of stature, rather thin, and with a decided stoop—the result of constant bending over his shoemaker's last; prematurely bald, and wearing an ill-fitting wig. But there could be no mistaking the resolution manifest in every line of his face, the fire in his keen eye, or the earnestness of his voice. He was a man with a message—called by God and sure of his call.

His text is not one we should have expected. Few men would have chosen it for a missionary sermon. It may have been suggested to him by the words Cowper had recently penned in his study at Olney:

*Lord at Thy commanding Word  
We stretch the curtain and the cord.*

Be that as it may, Carey announced as his theme: “*Enlarge the place of thy tent, and let them stretch forth the curtains of thine habitations: spare not; lengthen thy cords, and strengthen thy stakes, for thou shalt break forth on the right hand and on the left.*”

After a brief and rather weak introduction he took up what he regarded as the spirit of the passage and epigrammatized it in two memorable exhortations:

**EXPECT GREAT THINGS FROM GOD  
ATTEMPT GREAT THINGS FOR GOD.**

These magnificent words must be for ever writ large

<sup>1</sup> Now No. 1 Park Street, a continuation of Friars Lane. For many years it was used as a second-hand furniture store. Now it is a “Theosophical Hall.” A stone slab on the outer wall commemorates Carey's sermon.

on the first page of the annals of British missionary enterprise.

The earnestness with which Carey presented his case, and the skill with which he marshalled his arguments, moved his hearers profoundly. "It was as if the sluices of his soul were thrown fully open and the flood that had been accumulating for years rushed forth in full volume and irresistible power," said Dr Ryland. "If all the people had lifted up their voices and wept . . . I should not have wondered at the effect, it would have only seemed proportionate to the cause; so clearly did he prove the criminality of our supineness in the cause of God." Copies of the *Enquiry* appear to have been on sale at this service. We wonder how many members of the congregation bought a copy when the meeting broke up.

The following morning the ministers met alone for their usual conference, and Carey's proposal to form a missionary society came up for discussion. But the enthusiasm kindled by the previous day's sermon had passed and the cold logic of practical difficulties seemed overpowering. That little band of comparatively insignificant preachers felt the task to be beyond their strength. They came to the conclusion that Carey's proposal was for the time being impossible; they turned it down, and the gathering prepared to break up. In distress, Carey seized Fuller by the arms and asked whether they were once more to separate without doing something definite. Then a change came over the company, and after further discussion, and passionate exhortation from Carey, it was decided to place on their minutes a resolution that: "A plan be prepared



against the next ministers' meeting for forming a Baptist Society for propagating the Gospel among the Heathens."

It is clear that at the Nottingham meeting Carey had a hard fight, and only secured the resolution by his importunate pleadings. By his dauntless perseverance and his deep convictions as to the course he proposed, he won where a less resolute man would inevitably have failed. And what did the resolution amount to? Probably it was little more than postponement—a device to escape coming to a decision that day. Unable, on the one hand, to harden their hearts against Carey's arguments and pleadings, yet fearful of taking the action he proposed, they played for delay by the familiar expedient of referring the matter to their next meeting.

Carey's tender spirit would feel keenly his brethren's reluctance to respond to his message, but with ever-increasing confidence in his call, he would return to his Leicester cottage and betake himself to his secret chamber—his little garret—to be alone with God.

During the months of that fateful summer, while Paris was seething with a mad frenzy of revolution and the infuriated French mob was besieging Louis XVI in the Tuileries, Carey was quietly working out the details of the plan to lay before the Association at their October meeting.

On October 2nd, 1792, the autumn meeting of the Association was held in Andrew Fuller's chapel in the town of Kettering, Northamptonshire, and hither Carey journeyed, doubtless on foot. While resident at Moulton, he had often tramped to

Kettering to sell his shoes ; now he journeyed thither to win his first decisive victory in the cause of world evangelism. Samuel Pearce was one of the preachers, and he was one of the few men who had the world-vision. More than two years before, in Birmingham, he had heard John Wesley's colleague, Dr Thomas Coke, the founder of Methodist Missions, preach a sermon from Psalm lxxviii. 31 : "*Ethiopia shall soon stretch out her hands to God*" ; and, according to his own statement, "Then it was that I felt a passion for missions." Carey's *Enquiry*, he tells us, "added fresh fuel to my zeal." Pearce was with Carey heart and soul.

The missionary scheme does not appear to have been discussed in the full public meeting that day. In the evening a small group of twelve ministers, a student, and a layman met in the spacious dwelling of Widow Wallis—a fine old Georgian house so noted for hospitality to preachers that it was commonly known among them as "the Gospel Inn." That memorable October evening they gathered in a little back parlour. It can safely be described as a "crowded" meeting, for those fourteen grave men were squeezed into a room measuring about eighteen feet by nine !<sup>1</sup>

Again the brethren wavered. Let us not blame them too severely. They one and all had come to share Carey's desire to make Christ known to the world. We may perhaps assume that they had all read the *Enquiry*. But most of them still felt that

<sup>1</sup> The front portion of the house is almost in its original condition. The back has been extended and the "back parlour" greatly altered and enlarged. A thorough examination of the walls—old and new—has led the present writer to arrive at the measurements given above as the approximate size of the room in 1792.

the time was inopportune to embark on so vast an enterprise. A long series of wars, culminating in the loss of the American Colonies, had impoverished the country. France was seething with anarchy; in England there were restlessness, poverty, and hardship that might easily be kindled by a few sparks from the French inferno. Again, the project before them would cost much money and probably life also; they themselves only represented the Particular Baptist churches in Northamptonshire, Bedfordshire, Leicestershire, and Nottinghamshire—not the entire Baptist Church in Great Britain. Their congregations consisted largely of humble peasants whose means were slender; only Fuller and Ryland, Sutcliff and Pearce were men of any considerable influence, and only Hogg had private means. Once again the great project was on the point of being turned down. But when hesitation and fear were about to triumph Carey made one more appeal. Pulling from his pocket a little volume entitled, *Periodical Account of Moravian Missions*, he cried, “If you had only read this and knew how these men overcame all obstacles for Christ’s sake, you would go forward in faith!” There are moments when the faith of one man is contagious, and the strength of one becomes the strength of many. It was so in that little back parlour. Their resolution once taken, those fourteen men threw themselves heartily into the great enterprise, and ere they separated the following minute was passed: <sup>1</sup>

At the ministers’ meeting at Kettering, October 2nd, 1792, after the public services of the day were ended, the ministers retired to consult further on the matter,

<sup>1</sup> The original Minute Book is in the possession of the B.M.S.

and to lay a foundation at least for a society, when the following resolutions were proposed, and unanimously agreed to :

1. Desirous of making an effort for the propagation of the Gospel among the heathen, agreeably to what is recommended in brother Carey's late publication on that subject, we, whose names appear to the subsequent subscription, do solemnly agree to act in society together for that purpose.

2. As in the present divided state of Christendom it seems that each denomination, by exerting itself separately, is most likely to accomplish the great ends of a mission, it is agreed that this society be called *The Particular Baptist Society for Propagating the Gospel among the Heathen.*

3. As such an undertaking must needs be attended with expense, we agree immediately to open a subscription for the above purpose, and to recommend it to others.

#### SUBSCRIPTION LIST

Rev. John Ryland . . . .	£2 2 0
„ Reynold Hogg . . . .	2 2 0
„ John Sutcliff . . . .	1 1 0
„ Andrew Fuller . . . .	1 1 0
„ Abraham Greenwood . . . .	1 1 0
„ Edward Sharman . . . .	1 1 0
„ Samuel Pearce . . . .	1 1 0
Mr Joseph Timms . . . .	1 1 0
Rev. William Highton . . . .	0 10 6
„ William Staughton . . . .	0 10 6
„ Joshua Burton . . . .	0 10 6
„ Thomas Blundel . . . .	0 10 6
„ John Eayre . . . .	0 10 6

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£13 2 6

4. Every person who shall subscribe ten pounds at once or ten shillings and sixpence annually, shall be considered a member of the society.

5. That the Revs. John Ryland, Reynold Hogg, William Carey, John Sutcliff, and Andrew Fuller be appointed a

Committee, three of whom shall be empowered to act in carrying into effect the purposes of this society.

6. That the Rev. Reynold Hogg be appointed treasurer, and the Rev. Andrew Fuller, secretary.

7. That the subscriptions be paid in at the Northampton ministers' meeting, October 31st, 1792, at which time the subject shall be considered more particularly by the Committee, and other subscribers who may be present.

No money was taken at the memorable meeting just described, but the men wrote their promises on slips of paper, and these were collected in Andrew Fuller's tobacco box—a large round box of horn. Curiously enough, that box has on the lid, in low relief, a picture of the conversion of St Paul, the missionary to the Gentiles. Glancing over that subscription list we immediately notice that one name is missing from it—that of William Carey. The man whose unquenchable zeal and “plod” had brought the new Society into existence was so poor that he could not promise a definite subscription to its funds! But in lieu of a subscription, Carey had previously promised that, should there be any profit on his book, he would give it to the Society.

Thus, with a promised annual income of thirteen pounds, two shillings, and sixpence, the Baptist Missionary Society was launched!

We must now pause in our narrative to discover Carey's place in the rise of missionary enterprise. There can be no question as to who was the moving spirit in the founding of the Baptist Missionary Society. Ryland, in his *Life and Death of Fuller*, says: “I must consider the Mission as originating absolutely with Carey; and Mr Fuller's acknowledgment that he (Fuller) had at first some feelings like

the desponding nobleman in 2 Kings vii. 2 is a confirmation of my opinion." So far as the Baptists are concerned the position is clear. How about the wider sphere? Carey has been called "the Father of Modern Missions," and Dr George Smith begins his well-known biography by stating that Carey was "the first of her own children of the Reformation whom England sent forth as a missionary." It does no dishonour to Carey to say candidly that both these statements are incorrect. He needs no exaggerated claims of this kind to entitle him to remembrance; his fame rests secure on work infinitely greater and nobler than the mere fact of being called the "first" British missionary—which he was not. The honour of being "first" belongs to other men, some of whom were otherwise undistinguished.

No missionary movement sprang directly from the Reformation of the sixteenth century. Even so late as 1796—four years after William Carey's triumph at Kettering—we find the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland declaiming by a majority vote, in spite of protest, that "to spread abroad the knowledge of the Gospel among the barbarous and heathen nations seems to be highly preposterous." Yet from time to time solitary individuals or small communities had felt some responsibility for spreading the Gospel.

In 1649 the Long Parliament created *The Corporation for the Propagation of the Gospel in New England*, and the parishes of England contributed the large sum (for those days) of twelve thousand pounds. This work was especially intended to be on behalf of the settlers, but there was a more missionary motive also, and John Eliot, who began to preach

to the Indians in 1682, was aided by the Society. He was able to form six congregations numbering eleven hundred Indians. His work was afterwards carried on by David Brainerd, who died in 1747. George Fox, founder of the Society of Friends (1624-91), exhorted his followers in America to preach the Gospel to their Indian and black servants, and in 1661 three of his people made a vain effort to go as missionaries to China.

In 1691, as a result of a bequest of one Robert Boyle, there was formed *The Society for the Conversion and Religious Instruction and Education of Negro slaves in the British West India Islands*—now known as the Christian Faith Society. Then, in 1698, came *The Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge*, and in 1702 *The Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts*, which in 1710 passed the resolution :

That the design of propagating the Gospel in foreign parts does chiefly and principally relate to the conversion of heathens and infidels, and therefore that branch of it ought to be prosecuted preferably to all others.

Meanwhile, there arose the Danish-Halle Mission, organized by King Frederick IV of Denmark, which sent out Bartholomew Ziegenbalg and Henry Plüt-schaw to the Danish settlement of Tranquebar in South India (1705). The story of their work was translated into English and was probably the first book on missions to be printed in this country. It was read by Susannah Wesley to her children, and was the means of interesting her famous sons, John and Charles Wesley (then little boys), in missions to the heathen. The S.P.G. and the S.P.C.K. interested

themselves in this Danish Mission and gave it substantial support. Indeed in 1728 the S.P.C.K. undertook the entire support of Schultze, Ziegenbalg's successor, and, as the missionary zeal in Denmark and Germany burned low, made itself entirely responsible for the work in India. Thus Germany supplied the men and England supplied the money. The great German missionary Schwartz (1750-98) was likewise maintained by the S.P.C.K.

That there was a missionary *spirit* in England early in the eighteenth century was further revealed by the fact that one of the greatest missionary hymns in our language, "Jesus shall reign where'er the sun," was written in 1719 by Isaac Watts; Williams wrote: "O'er the gloomy hills of darkness" in 1722, and Charles Wesley wrote several missionary hymns. In 1723 a Paisley minister wrote a *History of the Propagation of Christianity and the Overthrow of Paganism*, and called the churches to prayer.

In 1783, while Carey was working in Mr Old's shop at Hackleton, Dr Thomas Coke, an ordained clergyman of the Church of England, who had become one of John Wesley's leading helpers, issued a *Plan for the Society for the Establishment of Missions among the Heathens*—already referred to—and attached to it a list of subscriptions amounting to sixty-six pounds, three shillings. The following year Coke entered into a correspondence with Charles Grant, a director of the East India Company, with a view to founding a Methodist Mission to Bengal. But the finger of God pointed elsewhere, and Dr Coke, accompanied by three missionaries, landed in Antigua, West Indies, on Christmas Day 1786. Returning to England, Coke appealed for more missionaries, and



raised funds by begging from door to door. The Wesleyan Conference gave him the three new men, and in the autumn of 1788 Coke took them out. In 1792, at the very time that Carey was pleading with his brethren in Kettering, Coke was crossing the Atlantic for a fifth tour. He then had fourteen Wesleyan missionaries occupying seven West Indian islands, and that same year (1792) they reported six thousand eight hundred and fifty-one communicants, only one hundred and thirty-six of whom were white people.

This rough survey of early Protestant missionary enterprise will enable us to place Carey in true perspective in relation to the general development of missions. He was not the "Father of modern Missions"; he was not "the first Englishman to go out as a missionary to the heathen"; he was not "the first missionary to India." He was the founder of the Baptist Missionary Society; he was one of the first two Englishmen sent by a Missionary Society as missionaries to the non-Christians of India. When mistaken ideas are swept away, Carey still stands before us a unique figure, and the present writer firmly believes him to have been beyond question the greatest, and certainly the most versatile, missionary ever sent out.

## CHAPTER IX

### PLANNING THE CAMPAIGN

*October 1792 to January 1793. Age 31.*

THE founding of the *Particular Baptist Society for Propagating the Gospel among the Heathen* was the second great achievement of Carey's career. But October 2nd, 1792, was only a milestone, not the goal, a triumph to be confirmed by renewed efforts. A Missionary Society could not be launched merely by passing pious resolutions. Had those fourteen men in Kettering contented themselves with registering their approval of Carey's scheme, the vision would have faded and nothing would have been accomplished. That memorable resolution, however, was a resolution *to act*, and they went away from Widow Wallis's back parlour determined to carry through the work to which they had set their hand, to give life to the Society they had formed.

Carey's task now enters upon a new and entirely different stage. Up to this point, all his efforts had been directed to the task of convincing his ministerial brethren of their obligation to the heathen world and bringing them to determination to act upon it. That accomplished, definite plans of action had to be considered, and there was also the crucial problem of securing a sufficient income to make the proposed mission possible. But the greatest change in the situation was this: for ten years Carey had

ploughed a lonely furrow, he had laboured practically alone, with some little sympathy from three or four somewhat hesitating friends. From the day of the Kettering meeting those friends and a few others stood committed to the great adventure and pledged to see it through. For the first time we see Carey surrounded by colleagues throwing themselves unsparingly into the campaign. The ability of Ryland, the influence of Fuller, the eloquence of Sutcliff, and the enthusiasm of Pearce are now linked unreservedly with the faith and courage of Carey.

No time was lost in getting to work. Ere the autumn tints had faded and the leaves had fallen from the trees, these devoted men met again to discuss ways and means. This first meeting of the Committee of the Society was held in Northampton. Unfortunately neither Carey nor Fuller could be present. Finance was the first consideration. Treasurer Hogg was able to report that, of the subscriptions promised at Kettering (*viz.* £13. 2s. 6d.) all but three guineas had been paid in,<sup>1</sup> and, in addition, seven new subscribers had been added to the list, including friends in London and Derby. A letter from Carey was read, telling that a gentleman in far-off Northumberland had promised a donation of £20 with a further promise of an annual subscription of four guineas. Best of all, Samuel Pearce had won his people in Birmingham and they had contributed the splendid sum of £70. The Society thus began to lay its plans with £88. 18s. in hand—and God.

<sup>1</sup> The remaining promises were all honoured, though apparently with some little difficulty in certain cases; William Highton, for example, having to borrow the 10s. 6d. he had promised to contribute.

At that first Committee meeting another forward step was taken. The Society as founded at Kettering only included the Particular Baptist Association of Northamptonshire and the adjacent counties. Samuel Pearce's people, in addition to their generous gift, proposed to form a Birmingham and District Auxiliary, with annual, quarterly, and weekly subscribers, to co-operate with the newly-formed Committee. Thus the first local Auxiliary was organized; and, feeling that similar auxiliaries might be formed all over the country to assist "the primary Society," it was decided to publish a "brief narrative of its rise and plan, accompanied with some short address." The Committee felt it to be their first duty to rouse the whole Baptist Church even as they themselves had been aroused by Carey.

Another business meeting was held (also in Northampton) on November 18th, at which the proposed "narrative," and the formation of new "corresponding societies," were more fully discussed. Turning from the question of home support, the Committee proceeded to consider its foreign policy. Several fundamental questions called for immediate attention, namely :

• What qualifications are specially requisite in missionaries? What persons are known, or supposed to be, both suitable and willing to be employed in this business? What advice should be given to missionaries, or what regulations adopted concerning them? Also, in what parts of the heathen world do there seem to be the most promising openings?

Of these questions, probably the last would give them most anxiety. It resolved itself into this: "In what country are we to begin our work?"

Samuel Pearce had been reading about the Pelew Islands and suggested that there might be an opening there. Carey's first idea was Tahiti—due, of course, to his long study of Captain Cook's journals—but just before this meeting his mind had begun to turn towards India, a land very prominently before the people of England just then. He was not present at the meeting, but wrote thus :

I have just received a letter from Mr Thomas, the Bengal missionary, who informs me that he intended being at Kettering meeting, but forgot the time when it was to be. He tells me that he is trying to establish a fund in London for a mission to Bengal; he ardently desires a companion, and enquires about the result of our meeting at Kettering. The reason of my writing is a thought that his fund for Bengal may interfere with our larger plan: and whether it would not be worthy of the Society to try to make that and ours unite into one fund for the purpose of sending the Gospel to the heathen.

This was a new idea, but one well worth following up. As Fuller was about to visit London, it was arranged that he should make enquiries about this Mr Thomas—"his character, his principles, his abilities, and his success amongst the Hindoos."

To the newly-formed missionary committee John Thomas seemed to be a man providentially thrown in their way. He was a Baptist, and by profession a doctor. Failing to make a living by his practice in London he had become surgeon on an East India-man. Being an earnest Christian, he sought to make suitable friendships in Calcutta, and with some difficulty succeeded. At that time there was in Bengal a gentleman high in the service of the East India Company, Mr Charles Grant, one of the few

Englishmen who, in those corrupt days, was not ashamed publicly to confess himself a servant of God. While Carey was making his famous missionary map at Moulton, Grant in far-away Bengal was feeling the need of missionary work among the Indian peoples around him.<sup>1</sup> Meeting Thomas in Calcutta, and being charmed with him, he felt that he was just the man for the work, and offered to support him as a medical missionary, which he did for several years. Unfortunately disagreements arose between them. Subsequently Grant came home to England and afterwards became a member of the Court of Directors of the Company. Thomas also came home to seek for new supporters.

At Carey's suggestion, Andrew Fuller (as Secretary of the Missionary Society) made careful enquiries about Thomas and entered into a correspondence with him, requesting him to write a full account of himself, of his labours in India, and his views as to the opportunities for developing missionary work in Bengal. Thomas replied at very great length, fully satisfying the Committee as to his devotion, and giving such information as to his work among the Hindus as must have added fuel to their own zeal. He told of his efforts to learn Bengali and translate portions of Scripture into it; of the self-tortures of men groping in a blind search for God; and of several Brahmins who appeared to be on the point of becoming Christians—indeed he expected to be able to baptize two of them when he returned to India. He expressed his belief that the difficulties of such a mission could be overcome, and went on to deal with the cost of living in Bengal; a missionary,

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Chapter XII.

he declared, could for sixteen or eighteen shillings "build an excellent house, with mud walls and straw covering"; fowls could be purchased at the rate of a penny each and ducks for twopence, a hog, deer, or sheep for half a crown, and a lamb for eightpence. "The difficulties attending a gospel mission are not insuperable," he added, "if they appear so, it is only at a distance; and should they be ever so great, in a service of this kind, we expect through God to do valiantly."

Here, surely, was the Divine guidance they were looking for. They had prayed for a suitable opening; they had prayed for the right man. And here came John Thomas, apparently the right man, possessed with the right spirit, pointing them to India as their first mission field. Feeling that he was the man, the Committee requested him to meet them at Kettering on January 10th, 1793, for further consultation.

When the men assembled on the appointed day, Thomas, owing to a slight accident to his foot, had not arrived. In his absence they spent the whole day discussing his letters and the information they had about him, and also the advisability of inviting him to be their first missionary. Being agreed that God had given them the guidance they sought and had opened before them a door in Bengal, they resolved to invite Mr Thomas to cast in his lot with them, and then, turning to Carey, they asked if he were willing to go to India with Thomas. We can imagine the emotion in Carey's heart as, without a moment's hesitation, "he readily answered in the affirmative" (how cold and inadequate the words seem!).

Late that evening Thomas himself was announced, and in a few moments entered the room in haste. Carey, eager to greet his future colleague, rose from his seat and threw his arms around him; the pent-up emotion in his heart overflowed, and those two strong men fell upon one another's necks and wept. Late as the hour was, those bold pioneers of the new missionary enterprise could not think of separating. Eagerly they questioned Thomas about himself and his life in India. He was very candid with them, showed them letters concerning the disagreement with Charles Grant, and also told them of some personal financial difficulties, which he hoped suitably to settle. These frank avowals, so far from arousing doubts, seem to have increased their confidence in Thomas (though Fuller felt a little hesitation), and as they listened to his glowing account of the possibilities of winning India for Christ, their hearts were thrilled.

From Mr Thomas's account [said Fuller], we saw that there was a gold mine in India, but it seemed about as deep as the centre of the earth. Who will venture to explore it? I will venture to go down, said Carey to his brethren; but remember that you must hold the ropes. We solemnly engaged to do so; nor while we live shall we desert him.

Before dispersing, a few tentative arrangements were made, and it was suggested that the two missionaries should sail in the spring. Then Carey posted back to Leicester to break the news to his wife. In the enthusiasm of the moment, yielding to the overwhelming desire of half a dozen years, he had undertaken to go to India within a few months. Now, as he pursued his lonely homeward way, his



heart must have been strangely perturbed. How could he tell his beloved Dorothy of what he had done? Would she understand? Would she be willing to go with him? Of her affection he had no doubt whatever; but to her simple mind the journey to India would seem terrible in the extreme: how could she, who had never travelled thirty miles from her birthplace, be persuaded to undertake such a venture?

Of the conversation by the fireside in Carey's humble cottage that night we know nothing. The first surprise over, the astonished wife would listen to her husband's proposals with bewilderment and grief. How could she go—leave hearth and home, and take three little children into the vast unknown? How could she brave the dangers of the terrible ocean, and dwell among strangers in a far-off land? . . . And the big tear-drops would fall upon her apron, and then upon William's shoulder as she clung to him. How *could* she go—with the anxiety and glory of coming motherhood even then overshadowing her? . . . He must put from his mind this wild idea—and a score of arguments would pour from her fervent trembling lips.

If William had been a man of stone, such entreaties would have moved him. Perhaps the children, too, joined in the painful scene and clung, weeping, to his legs and coat. But if Carey's heart was moved and his eyes dim with tears, his purpose was resolute; he had vowed a vow unto his God, and, cost what it would, he could not draw back. Dorothy would slowly discover that her William was not to be deterred from what he conceived to be his duty . . . and the thought of separation from him filled

her mind with darkness. Fuller and Sutcliff went over specially to Leicester to reason with the poor woman. To no purpose . . . she could not be persuaded to go; and with a bursting heart she set herself to prepare for the parting. The stern piety of the time judged her harshly; nineteenth-century biographers pitied Carey for having so stubborn a wife. To-day few take that view; most people are more disposed to blame William than to condemn Dorothy. Let us rather honour the firm devotion of the one and sympathize with the very natural fear and grief of the other.

There were others to whom the news had to be broken—sister Polly, and other members of the family, and the beloved father in the old homestead at Paulerspury. Seven days after plighting his word at Kettering, William wrote thus:

LEICESTER, *January 17, 1798.*

DEAR AND HONOURED FATHER,

The importance of spending our time for God alone is the principal theme of the Gospel. I beseech you, brethren, says Paul, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice; holy and acceptable, which is your reasonable service. To be devoted like a sacrifice to holy uses, is the great business of a Christian. . . . I consider myself as devoted to the service of God alone, and now I am to realize my professions. I am appointed to go to Bengal in the East Indies, a missionary to the Hindoos. . . . I hope, dear father, you may be enabled to surrender me up to the Lord for the most arduous, honourable, and important work that ever any of the sons of men were called to engage in. I have many sacrifices to make, I must part with a beloved family and a number of most affectionate friends. . . . But I have set my hand to the plough.

I remain, your dutiful son,

W. CAREY.

## CHAPTER X

### FACING THE PROBLEMS

*January to November, 1793. Age 32.*

"*Is William mad!*" exclaimed the aged father when he read the momentous news in his son's letter. It is not difficult to understand the old man's state of mind; for though he had long known William's desire to be a missionary, the possibility of his ever becoming one must have seemed so infinitely remote as to be beyond the horizon of his life.

Edmund Carey was not the only person who thought William mad to embark on such an enterprise. And not without some reason. Difficulties abounded on every hand. First there were the personal ones—and to Carey himself these were perhaps the most serious. That week must have been a very trying one. Such a venture was no light matter for a married man with three young children—Felix, the eldest, being still under eight years old. It was evident that his wife could not go with him. His plan therefore was to go out with Felix only, returning in a year or two for his wife and the other children—perhaps the biggest sacrifice a man of his affectionate nature could make.

On the following Sunday (January 14th) he broke the news to his congregation at Harvey Lane. "Never did I see such sorrow manifested as reigned

through our place of worship last Lord's Day," he wrote. It was not easy for them to give him up, for his faithful ministry had been greatly blessed and the congregations had increased to such an extent that there was "not room for them to sit conveniently," and it had been necessary to alter some of the pews and build a gallery (the cost of which the Church members, failing to get outside help, had undertaken to meet by small weekly subscriptions). Naturally enough there were people who maintained that it was not right for Carey to leave such a work when God was using him so remarkably: "home calls" never lack zealous advocates when an outstanding man begins to think of devoting his life to world evangelism. His people, however, understood their minister's nature. "For several years we have been praying," said one of them, "for the spread of Christ's Kingdom among the heathen; and now God requires *us* to make the first sacrifice to accomplish it." In their Church Minute Book they placed the brief but impressive record that their minister was going to the East Indies to take the Gospel, adding, "In this we concurred with him, though it is at the Expense of losing one whom we love as our own souls."

A less personal but more difficult problem was that of finance. The cost of the passage of Carey and his little boy and Mr and Mrs Thomas to India had to be carefully ascertained—no easy matter in those days when fixed rates were unknown. Moreover, it would be necessary to supply them with means to live and begin their work in Bengal; provision had to be made for Mrs Carey and the children at home. It was estimated that not less

than five hundred and fifty pounds would be required, and it would have to be raised in three or four months. Carey was penniless, and Thomas admitted that he was heavily in debt, but was doing his best to make satisfactory arrangements with his creditors. It is amazing that the Committee did not feel these financial embarrassments to be strong reasons against their receiving Thomas as their missionary. Apparently he satisfied them on the subject. Feeling sure that all these difficulties could be overcome, Carey and his colleagues set to work to persuade other Baptist County Unions to co-operate with them. Obviously the Northamptonshire and adjacent counties Association could not alone bear so great a burden. Already Samuel Pearce had persuaded his Birmingham people to form a local Auxiliary, and now the most urgent and important task was to get other towns and counties to do the same.

It was uphill work. Letters were written to outstanding ministers and laymen in all parts of the country, but owing to extreme Calvinistic views, many Baptists were still deeply prejudiced against the very thought of preaching the Gospel to the heathen. Others were timid and afraid to commit themselves to so desperate an adventure. The London ministers, with a solitary exception, were against the project. When a meeting of ministers and laity was called to discuss it, the proposal to form an Auxiliary was rejected by an overwhelming majority; and although it was agreed that any people who wished privately to subscribe might do so, the "very respectable and pious gentleman" appointed to receive such gifts declined to accept

the office. They expressed a fear lest, if they formed an Auxiliary, they might "commit the whole denomination!" One venerable minister reminded the meeting that "Charity begins at home," and wrote to Fuller of his fears that Carey, "that great and good man," would meet with disappointment when he got to India, adding: "My unbelieving heart is ready to suggest that the time is not come, the time that the Lord's house should be built."

On the advice of the Committee, Carey now gave up his school that he might be free to advocate the cause to which he had given himself. For three months Carey, Fuller, and Thomas toured the country creating interest and collecting money. At Bath, Thomas's appeal seemed to fall on deaf ears and only *one penny* was contributed; whereupon Thomas thanked the meeting and mentioned that he would enter the results as: "Bath—one penny." At this they rose to the situation and gave twenty-two pounds. In a very short time twice the sum needed from the home Church was collected. But the strain of the campaign was so tremendous that with Fuller it brought on a paralytic stroke, and for a few weeks the muscles of one side of his face were affected. Happily he recovered speedily.

There was yet another problem to be solved—How were Carey and Thomas to get to India? In those days this problem was a serious one. The East India Company, by virtue of their monopoly, controlled all passages, for theirs were the only English vessels sailing to India. "John Company" was known to be hostile to missionary work, and it was necessary for Carey and his colleagues to proceed

with the utmost caution, for an Act of Parliament, passed a few years before, made it a high crime for anyone to visit, or reside in, the British possessions in India without a licence from the Company, the penalty being a fine and imprisonment.

So Samuel Pearce went with Carey and Thomas to London to see what could be done. It seemed certain that a direct appeal to the East India Company would meet with refusal, which would make matters worse and ensure the more certain opposition in the event of their finding other means than the Company's ships of reaching Bengal. Thomas's long connection with Charles Grant naturally led to the idea of trying to secure his goodwill, thus gaining the advantage of his influence with the Company. But Thomas was no longer *persona grata* with his former employer, so they approached him through another mutual friend—the Rev. Thomas Scott, whose ministry at Ravenstone and Olney had been such a help to Carey in the days of his apprenticeship at Hackleton. Scott's influence with Grant was of no avail; he raised no objection to the idea of Carey's going to India, but nothing would induce him to help Thomas, though apparently he did not state the reasons for his strong feelings against the latter. John Newton, Cowper's friend and Scott's predecessor at Olney, also tried in vain to secure Grant's countenance and help with the Directors of the Company; Grant remarked that he should be happy to help Carey, but nothing could change his opinion concerning Thomas. But, though disappointed, Newton advised Carey "with the fidelity and tenderness of a father" and encouraged him to carry out his purpose. It was suggested that,

since there was no hope of securing the Company's licence, the missionaries should try to reach India without it. "But what if the Company should send us home upon our arrival in Bengal?" asked Carey. Newton's answer was prompt and decisive: "Then conclude that your Lord has nothing there for you to accomplish. But if He have, no power on earth can hinder you."

The situation was a very difficult one, and though the latest suggestion was open to grave objections, they resolved that they had no alternative but to try it. Thomas knew the captain of the East Indiaman *Earl of Oxford*—the ship on which he was formerly surgeon. This vessel chanced to be in England preparing for another voyage, and the captain was ready to run whatever risk there might be in taking Thomas and Carey to Calcutta without permission. They were to sail from the Thames about the middle of April.

Final arrangements were now made. The modest equipment was packed for the voyage. Mrs Thomas was to go out with her husband, their young daughter accompanying them. Carey arranged to take Dorothy back to her native village of Piddington, and leave her and the younger children in the care of her own people—a decision that cost him many a pang. He was loath to leave his wife behind. The very thought of parting tore his heart, but he felt that his duty was plain—God had called him to India, and that sacred call must be obeyed. He knew that soldiers, officials, and merchants on foreign service were often obliged to leave their wives and families in the homeland, and he was prepared to make a similar sacrifice for the Kingdom of God.



In doing so he was buoyed up by the thought that the separation would only be a brief one : he would do the first rough pioneer work alone, and then come back to fetch his dear ones.

Other plans were in his mind—plans for the work he hoped to do. It is a remarkable fact that even at that early stage Carey realized that the Gospel must be presented to India by more than one method. Of course he meant to preach—was he not an ordained preacher ? And Thomas, as a surgeon, would fulfil the ministry of healing. But Carey had other thoughts also ; the example of his grandfather and father, and his own experiences as village school-master, suggested to him the possibility of mission schools,<sup>1</sup> and his linguistic gifts naturally prompted the thought of translating the Scriptures into Bengali (a task which Thomas had already feebly attempted). He had gone further : while touring in Yorkshire he met a devoted young printer, William Ward, who was deeply interested in the proposed mission. Looking into the future, Carey said to him, “ In a few years we shall want you out in India to print the Bible. You must come after us.” How great was this man, to have grasped such fundamental principles of missionary enterprise, and thus early to have determined to use medicine and education, translation work and printing, as instruments for the more effective presentation of his message to India !

In those days there was always a delightful uncertainty as to the sailing of a vessel. Time-tables had not been thought of, and intending passengers had to make their way to the port of departure and

<sup>1</sup> Carey's baggage included “ Books and globes for use of the mission,” which were entered in the Treasurer's account at £13. 13s.

patiently wait for many days—and sometimes weeks—until all the cargo was ready and the conditions were deemed favourable for commencing the voyage. So, although the *Earl of Oxford* was not expected to sail before April 3rd, Carey's farewell service was held on March 20th. It was in his own chapel in Leicester. There, within the walls that had witnessed so many struggles with bitter opponents, the two missionaries were solemnly set apart for their great work. Ministerial and lay friends came from far and near for what was described as "a day of holy convocation." The morning was devoted to special prayer for the outgoing missionaries and for those who were remaining behind to "hold the ropes." In the afternoon Thomas preached. The evening meeting was crowded and the congregation was deeply moved. Hogg (the Treasurer of the infant Missionary Society) preached, and then Fuller, the Secretary, delivered a parting address to the missionaries. Taking for his keynote the words, "Peace be unto you; as my Father hath sent me, so send I you," he lovingly and faithfully exhorted them as to, first, the *objects* they must keep in view, second, the *directions* they must follow, third, the *difficulties* they must encounter, and, fourth, the *reward* they must expect. There was a ringing certainty as to their errand: "Go, after your Saviour's example," said the preacher, "go in pursuit of the lost sheep; follow after them, search and find them out, that they may be brought home to His fold." It is easy to imagine the tense emotion with which that great service ended. For Carey himself it marked the close of an epoch in his life, and his heart must have been full to overflowing. In a very real sense it was his hour of triumph. He

had overcome difficulties from which a smaller man would have shrunk. Stupendous new difficulties, and problems of a totally different kind, lay before him. The task that awaited him would not be easy, but he knew that he was called of God.

Four days later, accompanied by little Felix, he set out on his great adventure of faith.

The difficulties came upon him sooner than he imagined, and in a form that must have been peculiarly trying. He of course knew the risk they were running in attempting to go to India without a permit, but he could scarcely have been prepared for what actually happened.

The missionaries embarked with "great joy" and the vessel duly sailed from the Thames with the mission party on board—Carey and Felix, Mr and Mrs Thomas and their little girl. Unfortunately the English Channel was swarming with French privateers, and the *Earl of Oxford* had to put in at Ryde, Isle of Wight, there to await a convoy. For several weeks the vessel lay at anchor, and the missionaries obtained lodgings on shore. One day, while Carey and his companions were at Ryde awaiting the sailing of their ship, a visitor called and demanded to see John Thomas. Thomas, however, had gone on a flying visit to London, and Carey learned with pain and bewilderment that the man had come with a writ and a bailiff to arrest his fellow-missionary for a debt of a hundred pounds! Finding that Thomas was not there, the angry creditor withdrew, leaving Carey and Thomas's wife greatly alarmed.

There must have been some trying moments when

Thomas returned from London and was forced to admit the justice of the creditor's claim. A painful story unfolded itself, and Carey learned with amazement that for some months his companion had had the fear of this calamity overshadowing him. He had vainly protested to his creditors, to whom he owed something like five hundred pounds in all, that he would pay them when he could; they, having heard of his intended voyage, resolved to press their claim. "They began to hunt, and I to flee as a partridge," the poor man confessed. "Every day I had fears without that I should be arrested, and hopes within that I should escape."

Though convinced of the integrity of his colleague, and of his intention to pay in full when he could do so, Carey must have been wellnigh overwhelmed by the thought of what this shadow might mean to the infant mission, and the serious consequences it might involve. What was to be done?

Events speedily supplied the answer. The ship's purser arrived with a letter from the captain. For a moment they must have thought it a call to come on board at once as the *Earl of Oxford* was on the point of sailing. In reality it was a message of very different purport. Some one had written an anonymous letter to the captain warning him of the risk he ran if information were lodged against him for allowing passengers to travel to India by his ship without the East India Company's leave. The captain realized that he stood in danger of losing his command, and begged to inform the missionaries that he could not take them!

Carey was moved to tears at this overthrow of all his cherished hopes. But the captain was resolute,

and there was nothing left for them but to remove their baggage from the *Oxford* and store it as best they could.<sup>1</sup> As they watched the ship leave the anchorage and sail away in company with four other vessels, Carey's heart must have been well-nigh breaking. It was mid-May, and there was very little hope of getting another ship that season. With a heavy heart but still undaunted, Carey wrote to Fuller of the trouble they were involved in, adding: "All I can say in this affair is that, however mysterious the leadings of Providence are, I have no doubt but they are superintended by an infinitely wise God."

And he was right. Never for a moment did his faith waver. Though sorely perplexed he was undismayed. The conviction that God had called him strengthened him in that dark hour.

Leaving the baggage at Portsmouth the missionaries took coach for London. Carey's first idea was to go boldly to the East India Company and seek their permission to go to India, trusting God to move their hearts to grant it. Another idea was to attempt to reach India overland. He desired, however, to consult his trusted friends. In reality there was little hope of the Company yielding, for at that very time they were hardening their hearts on this subject—as we shall presently see.<sup>2</sup>

On reaching the city, Thomas, with his usual resourcefulness, and realizing that it was through him that Carey had been refused a passage, went to a coffee-house with the faint hope of hearing of some

<sup>1</sup> Strangely enough no objection was raised to Mrs Thomas and her little girl, and they remained on the vessel and sailed for India.

<sup>2</sup> Chapter XII.

ship of other than British nationality and therefore not under the control of the East India Company—perchance a Swedish or a Danish merchantman. Overhearing his questions, a waiter slipped into Thomas's hand a card, on which he read and re-read the words :

### A DANISH EAST INDIAMAN

NO. 10 CANNON ST.

Hardly daring to believe his eyes, Thomas "fled"—that is the word he uses—to No. 10 Cannon Street and learned that the *Kron Princessa Maria* was even then on her way from Copenhagen and was hourly expected in Dover roads. Feverishly he inquired what fare would be required. The answer must have chilled his eagerness—the agents demanded a hundred pounds each for Carey and himself and fifty pounds for little Felix. Their available cash was one hundred and fifty pounds—the sum that the captain of the *Earl of Oxford* had refunded!

To a man of Carey's mighty faith a hundred pounds was a small matter, for he was convinced that God was opening a door before him. In the passionate clearness of this conviction, another thought took possession of him—he resolved to make one more effort to persuade his wife to go out with him. Since he had left her, some seven weeks before, one of the chief obstacles to her undertaking the long voyage had been removed, for while in the Isle of Wight, awaiting the sailing of the *Oxford*, Carey had received the news that a little boy had been born to them. Promptly he had written to his wife (May 6th) a letter every line of which breathes tenderness and affection. "If I had all the world," he tells her,

“I would freely give it all to have you and my dear children with me ; but the sense of duty is so strong as to overpower all other considerations ; I could not turn back without guilt upon my soul.”

Finding it possible to go to India by the Danish vessel, Carey now resolved to make a dash for Piddington. Leaving London at nine o'clock that Friday evening with Thomas, and riding through the night with all possible speed, he reached early the next morning the village that had witnessed the struggles of his early married life.

We can imagine Dorothy Carey's surprise and joy when, that May morning, the latch of the cottage door was raised and her husband sprang forward to embrace her and the baby. A few words explained their errand. Every hour was precious ; Carey and Thomas had breakfast, and then united in attempting to persuade Mrs Carey to go with them. In vain William entreated ; then they knelt together on that cottage floor and prayed. Dorothy was moved, but would not yield. Let us not blame her unjustly. In those days the five months' voyage to India was no light undertaking for a delicate woman with a baby and three young children. She was illiterate, and to her the very thought of going to a land so far away must have seemed like taking a leap into the dark. Moreover, there was very real danger ; England was at war with France, and French men-of-war and privateers were scouring the Channel. Of Dorothy's love for her husband there can be no question ; it was her very natural fears that held her back.

There was no time for delay ; so bidding his wife and children a second farewell, Carey, accompanied

by Thomas, set out to walk the few miles to Northampton in the hope of getting from Dr Ryland the additional money they needed for their passage. Carey was overcome with grief at the parting—so much so that, when they had gone half a mile down the road, his companion resolved to go back to the village and make one final effort. A new argument had occurred to him, and he resolved to try its effect. Reaching the cottage, Thomas told the distracted wife that the matter of her going with them was one of such importance that he could not help reminding her of what her refusal might involve—“her family would be dispersed and divided, perhaps for ever, and she would repent it as long as she lived.” Her loving heart was shaken by this thought, and amid her tears she declared she would go on condition that her unmarried sister, Katherine Plackett, would accompany her. All eyes now turned to the sister, who was present in the room, and Thomas and Carey pleaded with her to perceive how much depended on her decision—it rested with her whether this hitherto happy family circle should be broken. Hastening upstairs, she knelt in prayer, and in the surprise and perplexity of the moment sought guidance. When she came down again, pale but firm in purpose, she quietly told them that she was ready to go.

With overflowing heart William now rushed off to Northampton to see if he could get the money from Dr Ryland, leaving his wife and her sister to their preparations. Think what it must have meant for two women to get themselves and four children ready in twenty-four hours for a voyage to India. Surely the busiest Saturday they had ever known!



Happily Thomas's experience stood them in good stead, and he helped to pack the necessaries for the voyage. Next morning the whole family were speeding along the road to London, packed, with their luggage, in two post-chaises.

They arrived in the metropolis on Sunday night and immediately had to face the new financial problem. Ryland had no money by him when Carey called, but he gave letters to friends in London to advance two hundred pounds on behalf of the mission. Even this did not solve the difficulty; three hundred and fifty pounds was insufficient for their immediate need. The addition of two adults and three children to the party, together with the cost of getting them from Northampton to Dover, was no light matter—the total needed would be nearly seven hundred pounds! The generous, warm-hearted Thomas, ever loyal to his colleague, and anxious to make what amends he could for the difficulties he had created, went to the captain's agent and proposed special terms, namely, that only Carey and his wife should have the full status and treatment of passengers, taking meals at the captain's table and having the use of two cabins for themselves and the children; Thomas and Miss Plackett travelling as "attendants," living and eating as servants.<sup>1</sup> For this, the very most it was possible to offer was three hundred guineas. Happily the terms were accepted, and that same Monday evening the Carey

<sup>1</sup> We can only surmise that he had previously—and probably without Carey's knowledge—secured Miss Plackett's consent to this proposal, which, he must have known, would entail no little discomfort and possible suffering on them both. It was generous of him to propose it, and simply heroic of her to agree to it,

family went by boat to Dover to meet the ship. Meanwhile, Thomas hurried to Portsmouth to pick up the luggage and take it to Dover by sea. He had no easy task, for the danger from the French privateers was so great that no boatman would agree to do the job for any sum under twenty pounds. Thomas was terrified lest he should miss the ship if he delayed; yet it was impossible to pay the exorbitant sum demanded. For two days his efforts were in vain, but at last a fisherman agreed to go for nine guineas; and twenty-four hours later, "having run past all the privateers in the dark," Thomas and the baggage were duly landed at Dover.

## CHAPTER XI

### THE VOYAGE TO INDIA

*June 13th to Nov. 7th, 1793.*

AT Dover there was a further delay of several days, for the *Kron Princessa Maria* had not arrived. But early on the morning of June 13th, when the Careys rose and looked out, they saw the vessel lying off the harbour, flying the flag of Denmark—a trim little sailing ship, a hundred and thirty feet long, and of six hundred tons burden. By five a.m. they were on board, and before noon they were standing down the Channel with a light summer breeze. Before nightfall they passed the huge white cliffs of Beachy Head and next day continued their run along the South coast. Never again did William and Dorothy Carey see their native land.

Life on the ship must have been a strange experience to the Carey family. Until they started on this journey, Dorothy and her sister had probably never before been many miles from home, and until the formation of the Missionary Society even William had not been a hundred miles from the village of his birth. But Carey's geographic studies had given him a wide knowledge of the world, and his outlook was correspondingly broader than that of his wife. Even to-day, with all modern comforts and conveniences, it is no light task to travel to India with a family of very young children; and to

Dorothy Carey it must have been a formidable undertaking.

Happily the discomforts were greatly reduced by the kindness of the captain—an Englishman who had become a naturalized Danish subject. They had been fearful lest the reduced fares that had been granted to them might expose them to rough fare and scant courtesy. But to the amazement of Thomas—and all the others—they were treated with every possible consideration. The captain, when he learned the purpose of their going to India, ordered the main cabin, in the stern of the ship, to be divided by a partition or screen of some kind so as to accommodate them, thus giving the Careys a room “half the width of the ship, with south windows and papered sides”; there was a smaller cabin for Dorothy’s sister, and another for Thomas. The captain, moreover, insisted that they should all take their meals at his table, with the four other passengers who had paid the full fare. Of these passengers, two were English and two French (all men); the crew were Danes and Norwegians.

The French Revolution being at its height, it was not safe even for a Danish vessel to sail down the Channel alone, so the *Maria* was escorted by a British frigate, the *Triton*, until she reached the Bay of Biscay. By that time the breeze had increased to a squall, and our travellers experienced the miseries of sea sickness. At this point there is a characteristic note in Carey’s journal :

June 16. Lord’s Day. A little recovered. Met for prayer and exhortation in my cabin. Had a long dispute with a French deist. Lat. 46° 12’ N., Long. 5° W.

Imagination is attracted by this picture of a sea-

sick traveller taking interest in the ship's position ! Dorothy, with a baby and three small boys to look after, had other things to think about. The kind-hearted captain, however, sent her soup and nourishment, and even visited her himself to see that all that was possible was done for her comfort. But in spite of all, Mrs Carey (so Thomas tells us) "had many fears and troubles, so that she was like Lot's wife until we passed the Cape." Blown about in the dreaded "Bay"; becalmed in the tropics; and so battered by storms off the South African coast that she limped onward little better than a wreck with masts, yards, sails, and rigging hanging over the sides, the *Kron Princessa Maria* slowly made her way towards India; and it is little wonder that poor timid Dorothy Carey often wished herself back in her cottage home. But after the storms around Cape Aquilas, her native Piddington seemed so remote that her thoughts swung round to India and she sighed for the voyage to end. As for Carey himself, he was at first troubled with the complaint he had had at Piddington, but it ultimately left him. During the voyage, he threw overboard the ugly wig he had been in the habit of wearing. Ryland referred to it as "odious," adding, concerning the man who made it, "Good Mr Wilson of Olney is an excellent Christian, but one of the ugliest wig-makers that ever was born. He made them of just the same description for Carey, Fuller, and Sutcliff; enough to spoil any man's physiognomy !"

To a man of William Carey's determination and energy time never hangs heavily. With Thomas's help, he began to study the Bengali language, and he, with his knowledge of Hebrew, in turn helped

Thomas in the translation of the book of Genesis—a task they completed during the voyage. He began more fully to realize how important a place translation must have in his life; and before the vessel reached Bengal he wrote a letter to Fuller asking him to send him a Polyglot Bible.

Each Sunday the two missionaries held small services; at first only the members of their own party attended, but gradually the number rose to as many as ten—Norwegian, Danish, Flemish, French, Holstein, and English. But in a letter to his sisters, Carey wrote: "No one was converted, nor any good done that I know of." After the manner of the time, there was much searching of his own heart; in his journal and his letters he constantly accuses himself of being an unprofitable servant, and with spending far too little time in prayer.

But he never allowed spiritual introspection to become a danger to him, and his alert mind took interest in all manner of subjects. Before leaving England he had been taking in, in fortnightly parts, Curtis's *Botanical Magazine* and Sowerby's *English Botany*. He had brought with him seventy-seven parts of the one and thirty-one of the latter. In a letter to the Society (dated Bay of Bengal, October 17th) he asks them to purchase the further parts of these two works and forward them to him regularly. He took with him to India his boyhood's love of botany.

But neither Carey nor Thomas could for a single day forget the great problems and difficulties that they well knew awaited them on their arrival in India. Where were they to go when they landed? What steps were they to take? To whom were they

to turn for succour and advice? How would they get over the difficulties of having no passports? Supposing they were refused a landing—what then? Such thoughts as these must have been ever present, causing them no little perplexity.

The latter part of the voyage was tedious to a degree; for nearly a month the vessel “was within two hundred miles of Bengal, but the violence of the current set us back when we were at the very door.” On November 7th, however, the ship reached Balasure at the mouth of the Hooghli, and on the 11th Carey landed in Calcutta, to begin what he knew to be his life-work.

## CHAPTER XII

### INDIA WHEN CAREY LANDED

To Carey, India was far from being a *terra incognita*. His studies had given him at least a surface knowledge of that vast land. Upon the paper map that hung on the wall of his cottage at Moulton he had traced its geographical outline, and on it he had recorded the main facts of its size, population, and religions. But his knowledge went much further than these bald facts. From the moment of his appointment as a missionary, he lived for India; and we know he lost no opportunity of gaining information from every possible source.

The India of those days was a land of turmoil and war. The great Mogul empire had waned, and its rulers had become impotent puppets in the hands of their own viceroys. The last remnant of their power was challenged by the strong Maratha confederacy on the south-west; and the Moslem adventurers Haidar Ali and Tippu Sultan had thrown the great peninsula into a turmoil.

The days of Portuguese supremacy in Asia were over, but she still retained her hold on Goa and several other Indian ports. Dutch rule had also waned; and the Danish East India Company had only a small territory around Tranquebar in the south, and at Serampore on the river Hooghli, about



sixteen miles north of Calcutta. For many years, in South India, French and English had struggled together for supremacy until the long conflict was finally decided in favour of England. Clive's victory at Plassey had given Bengal into the hands of the British East India Company. Slowly, and at first almost unconsciously, the Company was developing from a mere trading organization into a governing power, with its own territories and armies, its administrators and vassal princes.

The Europeans in India were mainly servants of the Company. A few were officials, some were soldiers, and the rest were more or less engaged in commerce. Unfortunately the moral tone was appallingly low. When the Governor-General himself, and important members of his council, lived in open adultery, what could be expected of smaller men! Most of the officials had their Indian concubines. At best, with very few exceptions, they were in India solely for purposes of gain. Some of them amassed riches, many grew slack, and not a few unblushingly yielded themselves to a life of open debauchery and sin. The separation from home, the heat of India, and the general discomforts of life in a tropical country, were regarded as sufficient excuse for indolence and loose living. Newcomers speedily fell into the habits of their seniors, and the vicious circle was constantly enlarged.

It is true the East India Company provided chaplains for their servants and troops in India, but even they were very far from being bright witnesses for the God whose name they bore. Happily there were honourable exceptions to the general way of living. There were both chaplains and laymen

who remained true to their manhood and their God.

In 1698, under the religious impulses that had so much to do with placing William of Orange upon the throne of England, a special clause was inserted in the Charter of the East India Company to the effect that

The chaplains in the factories [of India] are to study the vernacular language, the better to enable them to instruct the *Gentoo*<sup>1</sup> that shall be the servants or slaves of the same Company, or of their agents, in the Protestant religion.

But trade, not evangelism, was the object of the Company: the well-meant clause was a dead letter, and practically the only missionary work done among the Indian peoples during the eighteenth century was that done in the South by the Danish and German missionaries.<sup>2</sup> In 1758, the year after Plassey, one member of the Danish Mission, John Kiernander, a Swede, settled in Calcutta by the express desire of Clive. Being the only clergyman there he was well received, and he laboured in the city for twenty-eight years; his work was mainly among the "Portuguese"—*i.e.* the descendants of European fathers and Indian mothers, but he also preached to the English residents. At great personal sacrifice he built schools, and a very large church for his people. Of work among the Indians he did very little. He never mastered either the Bengali or the Hindustani language, but he seems to

<sup>1</sup> *I.e.*, "Gentiles"; a word commonly used in the eighteenth and early nineteenth century to describe the people of India.

<sup>2</sup> See Chapter VIII.

have baptized some eighteen converts from Hinduism and Mohammedanism. Then clouds gathered round him ; he lost his sight, and through his own excessive generosity and the foolishness of his son, he lost all his money and was thrown into prison for debt. His church was sold by auction, and the work he had done so faithfully seemed to have come to an end.

But Charles Grant<sup>1</sup> stepped in. He bought Kiernander's church for ten thousand rupees ; the property was saved for Christian work, and the brave old man was released from jail.

By this time Grant had the evangelization of the Hindus heavily upon his heart, and no one did more to bring about the formation of a mission in Bengal. It appears that the idea was first presented to him through a letter he received from Dr Thomas Coke, the founder of Wesleyan Foreign Missions.<sup>2</sup> As far back as 1784 Grant wrote in his journal :

Read two days ago a letter from Dr Coke, in connection with Mr Wesley, with a scheme for a Mission in this country, and queries for information and assistance. A great project ! May it be well influenced. May I answer rightly.

This project, however, did not materialize. A series of strange providences directed Coke's energies towards the West Indies, and more than twenty-seven years passed before he was able to go forward with his plans for a mission to India. But the idea Coke had started germinated in Grant's mind, and he did not let the matter rest. In the summer of 1786 there arrived in Calcutta the Rev. David Brown, who had come out as chaplain to superintend a

<sup>1</sup> See Chapter IX.

<sup>2</sup> See Chapter VIII.

military orphanage. Grant and Brown were kindred spirits and discussed together the project of a mission to the people of Bengal, Grant himself undertaking to support one or two missionaries at his own expense. It was at this juncture that Grant first became acquainted with Dr Thomas. Grant was deeply impressed with his Christian character and consulted him as to missionary work. The scheme called "The Proposal", now took definite shape, and was committed to writing. Fourteen copies were made and sent to as many carefully selected people whose interest it was hoped to secure, including the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Secretary of the S.P.C.K., John Newton, Wilberforce, and the Countess of Huntingdon. In support of "The Proposal," Grant entered upon a correspondence with all sorts of people whom he thought he might influence to aid the project. Wilberforce laid the matter before Pitt (then Prime Minister of England), Raikes took the letter he received to the Bishop of London. Grant also sought an interview with the Governor-General (Lord Cornwallis) and gained from him a promise not to oppose the scheme, though, as Governor-General, he could not give it his active support.

Grant owned a factory at Gumalti, a village in northern Bengal, and he resolved to make a beginning by employing Thomas to do missionary work there among his own employees and the villagers. Thomas accepted Grant's overtures, arranged to leave his ship, and soon moved up-country to Malda, where he was to learn Bengali before going to the indigo factory at Gumalti. At first all went smoothly, but unfortunately friction

developed between these two devoted men. It appears to have begun over matters of doctrine. Grant was an Anglican; Thomas was a convinced Calvinist and a Baptist, and deemed it his duty to enter upon discussions on the subjects that interested him. Grant, in a singularly broad-minded letter, advised him to confine his attention to the "glorious subject" of "the Godhead of Christ" which is "the life of the Church on Earth." John Thomas was a thoroughly good and devoted man, but impulsive and of excitable temperament; "his heart was right, but his head was wrong," says Grant's biographer.

Unhappily the breach soon widened. The two men were temperamentally different; Grant paid the piper, and not unnaturally desired to call the tune. He was determined that Thomas should live at Gumalti and evangelize the employees at his own factory there—indeed it was for that purpose and on that understanding that he had engaged him and promised to support him. It was perfectly natural that Grant, as a Christian business man, should feel keenly his responsibility for the evangelization of his own work-people. Thomas, however, wished to remain at Malda as pastor to a little company of Europeans. Grant remonstrated, kindly but firmly. Then Thomas got the idea of translating the New Testament into Bengali; but as he was still very far from proficient in that language, Grant advised him to proceed cautiously. Soon St Matthew's Gospel was finished, and Thomas very unwisely insisted on printing it; Grant declined to provide the necessary money and the matter was suspended. The breach widened. Thomas was heavily in debt;

yet even though partially estranged from him, Grant generously gave him two hundred and fifty pounds to send to his creditors. But agreement was impossible, and at last the engagement terminated. Thomas sailed for England, where, as shown in a previous chapter, he got into touch with Fuller and Carey and was accepted by their newly organized Baptist Missionary Society to return to India with Carey.

This distressing quarrel and estrangement between Charles Grant and John Thomas explains the attitude of Grant to Carey's mission, and his refusal to help to secure for Carey and Thomas a passage to Bengal. But he retained his deep interest in the evangelization of the Indian peoples. He became the intimate friend of Wilberforce, then in the first flush of his social and parliamentary fame, and although only in his thirty-fourth year already immersed in the great struggle against slavery.

Grant naturally sought to interest Wilberforce in Indian affairs, and not least in his own projects for missionary work. Just at this juncture there came a very special opportunity for him to do so. Every twenty years the Charter of the East India Company had to come up before Parliament for renewal, and the time for that was approaching. Grant had become Wilberforce's adviser in all East Indian affairs, and there can be little doubt that it was he who first suggested to the great statesman the possibility of inserting in the Charter a clause recognizing the duty of promoting the religious and moral improvement of the Indian people. Wilberforce consulted the Speaker of the House of Commons and the Archbishop of Canterbury, and then resolved,

when the Charter should come before the House in 1793, to introduce several Resolutions on the subject. The preamble of his proposals ran :

That it is the peculiar and bounden duty of the Legislature to promote by all just and prudent means the interests and happiness of the British Dominions in India, and for these ends such measures ought to be adopted as may gradually tend to their advancement in useful knowledge and to their religious and moral improvement.

At the very time Carey was at Ryde waiting for his ship to sail, Wilberforce was laying before Parliament these Resolutions to legalize such work as the great-souled shoemaker was attempting to do. On May 14th the House passed the clauses referring to the sending out of ministers of religion and chaplains to minister to Europeans. (Carey at that moment was undergoing the torture of discovering that the Sheriff's officers were hunting for his colleague Thomas !). Three days later the House passed a clause empowering the East India Company to send out schoolmasters and other approved persons for the religious and moral improvement of Indians. Wilberforce wrote in his journal: "The hand of Providence was never more visible than in this East Indian affair. What cause have I for gratitude, trust, and humiliation!" Grant was delighted. Carey himself must have seen the announcement of it in the newspapers.

But the victory was only momentary. The Court of Directors of the Company took alarm, held a special meeting, and passed a resolution opposing the Wilberforce Resolution. One speaker declared that "so far from listening to the proposal with patience he considered it the most wild, extra-

vagant, expensive, and unjustifiable project that ever was suggested by the most visionary speculator." Another member declared that "so far from wishing that they might convert ten, fifty, or a hundred thousand natives . . . he should lament such a circumstance as the most serious and fatal disaster that could happen." Other Directors raised the cry that the Wilberforce Resolution would mean such a deluge of schoolmasters and missionaries as would sweep away the Company's rule in India. How little they knew of the slowness of the home Churches to respond to the missionary appeal! Thus the Court of Directors succeeded in creating alarm, and every possible influence was brought to bear on members of Parliament to defeat the measure when it came up for its Third Reading. No wonder that Carey's friends hesitated, at such a critical juncture, to appeal to the Company for a passage to Calcutta!<sup>1</sup>

The fate of the Resolution was at last decided. Grant was in the gallery of the House to listen to the momentous debate. The House was partly hostile, and partly hesitant. With but few reliable supporters, Wilberforce rose boldly, and used all his earnestness and eloquence to influence the members. It was in vain; the Company had succeeded only too well in arousing fears and prejudices, and the House threw out the proposals. The Charter was renewed for twenty years and the Company, now defiant in their hour of victory, set themselves to prevent missionary work in such Indian territories as were under their control.

This was the position of affairs when Carey and Thomas landed in Bengal.

<sup>1</sup> See Chapter X.



## CHAPTER XIII

### ARRIVAL IN INDIA : DARK DAYS

*November 11, 1793, to January 30, 1794. Age 32.*

AFTER the five months' voyage, it is easy to imagine the relief with which Carey and his family would gaze upon the shores of Bengal as the *Kron Princessa Maria* approached the mouth of the Hooghli. Carey's own feelings were probably too deep to be expressed. India at last—after all the years of preparation and toil! Now that lay behind him, and a new epoch of his life was about to open. In the joy and thanksgiving of the moment he would almost forget the problems that lay ahead, or, if he thought of them at all, it would be with the triumphant assurance "Hitherto hath the Lord helped us," and to his devout spirit the mercies of the past would become the promise of the future.

It was on November 7th that the vessel arrived in the Balasure roads. Two days later a couple of frail fishing-boats came alongside to sell fish, and Carey gazed for the first time upon the dusky faces of the people of Bengal. Thomas was able to carry on some conversation with them. How Carey's soul must have thrilled at the thought of the work before him!

A very serious problem now confronted the two missionaries. They were well aware that an Act of Parliament laid it down that :

*“If any subject of His Majesty, not being lawfully licensed, should at any time repair to or be found in the East Indies, such persons were to be declared guilty of a high crime and misdemeanour, and be liable to fine and imprisonment.”*

Moreover, only four years before (1789) the Indian Government had issued an order compelling every commander of a vessel arriving in India to give to the pilot at Sangor (at the mouth of the river Hooghli) a faithful return of all passengers on board, and stating whether or not they had a licence from the East India Company.

Carey and Thomas must have realized that they were running no small risk and that it was necessary to proceed with the utmost caution, for a single false step might mean immediate expulsion from the territories of the all-powerful Company. They had often discussed this subject during the voyage, and had also talked it over with the captain of their ship, who was their staunch friend and whose confidence they had won. Captain Christmas had suggested giving them a recommendation to the Secretary of the Supreme Council; the difficulty of that course lay in the recent hostility on the part of the Company to the proposals Wilberforce had laid before Parliament. That move had undoubtedly created new prejudice against missionaries, and the news of it had almost certainly reached Calcutta by the vessel that carried Mrs Thomas out. There could hardly have been a more inopportune moment for Carey and Thomas to arrive. Captain Christmas seems to have suggested their attempting to get a grant of land on which they might settle as planters for a time, and so tide over the immediate difficulty.

But their chief hope, under God, probably lay in the fact that the *Kron Princessa Maria* was a Danish boat, going up river to the Danish settlement at Serampore, some sixteen miles above Calcutta. They appear to have discussed the advisability of going thither, and Captain Christmas offered to introduce them to the Danish Governor. Against this, Thomas would be anxious to find his wife and daughter, who were in Calcutta. In any case, the captain would be obliged to get a pilot at Sangor, and through him complications might arise.

As the *Kron Princessa Maria* entered the estuary of the Hooghli, the whole mission party, instead of proceeding up the river on the vessel in the usual way, were transferred from her to a small native boat called a *pansi*. This evidently was done with the intention of landing without the knowledge of the authorities, and we may assume that this plan was arranged between themselves and their kind friend the captain, who, having disposed of his missionary passengers, could safely put in at Sangor for a pilot and truly report that he had nothing contraband on board.

In that little Indian craft, the Carey family and Thomas for two days pursued their journey up the Hooghli. As they ascended the yellow river, we may be sure that Carey's keen eyes scanned the banks, and noted each village. He was eager to begin preaching to the people and could scarce possess his soul in patience. When the tide began to ebb, the native boatmen, unable to make way against the volume of water coming down the river put in to a landing-place near to a small village. In his eagerness, Carey sprang ashore to have his first

sight of an Indian village. Doubtless the villagers gathered round to see the strangers, and Carey's heart would thrill with joy to find himself at last among the people to whom he so longed to proclaim the Gospel message. His first impulse would be to preach to them. But that being impossible with his meagre store of Bengali words learned on the voyage, he could only urge his fellow-missionary to do so; and there in the market-place Thomas addressed the people. Carey's quick eye observed that the villagers turned from their buying and selling to listen. Thomas had evidently a fairly good command of Bengali for (wrote Carey) the people "listened for three hours with great attention." Their reception was cordial, and with a touch of true Eastern courtesy one man brought food for the missionaries. It was a novel experience for Carey to sit on the ground and take rice and curry from plantain leaves for dishes and plates and use his fingers instead of knife and fork.

When the tide turned, and the missionaries went back to the boat, the villagers, amid friendly salaams, invited them to come again when they could do so. It was Carey's introduction to missionary work. Next day they landed in Calcutta "without being molested or even noticed"—a note that confirms our impression that they sought to land by stealth.

It must have been a great relief to Carey to have with him one who knew Calcutta well, and had at least a working knowledge of the Bengali tongue. In this strange city he naturally looked to Thomas for guidance and relied upon him to take the best steps.

Half a century before, Calcutta was little more than an English trading settlement and fort in the

vicinity of two Indian villages. By the time Carey landed it had grown to a considerable town with a population estimated at about two hundred thousand. It was partly European, partly Indian, the fine residences of the officials and wealthy merchants forming a marked contrast to the crowded bazaars of the native quarters.

It was November, and the weather was like a glorious English summer—very warm, but not unduly oppressive. Guided by his companion, the erstwhile shoemaker strolled through the bazaars to get his first impressions of Indian life. Doubtless he visited the famous temple of Kali from which the city had taken its name, and the sight of the crowding worshippers bathing upon the adjacent *ghat* (bathing place) and then going into the temple to sacrifice their goats, would move him profoundly. To him Calcutta would seem “a city full of idols,” and his fervent spirit would be stirred within him.

The first thing was for Thomas to find his wife and little girl. The next was to rent a house where the two families could live together as economically as possible until their plans matured. Thomas looked up a few people he knew and got into touch with some Indians he had won for Christ during his former visit to India. To three of these the Committee in Northamptonshire had sent special letters by the hands of their missionaries. One of them, Ram Ram Boshu, soon heard of the arrival of Thomas and Carey, and came to welcome them. Their gladness at meeting him, however, was shadowed when he confessed himself a backslider. He said that, when Thomas left India, he found himself without friend or helper, and to please his

family he had joined with them in the old Hindu ceremonies. He expressed penitence for acting so unworthily, and the missionaries felt that he was sincere. Needing a munchi (language teacher), Carey engaged him in that capacity.

The all-important thing was to decide upon a line of action, and Carey certainly had no intention of letting things drift. In his *Enquiry* he had laid down two axioms, namely that missionaries must (1) live *among* the people, in the simplest manner possible, and (2) support themselves by agricultural, industrial, or some other work. He had every intention of putting these principles into practice. But he had fully realized that some time must elapse before it would be possible to become self-supporting; so the Committee had allowed a sum of one hundred and fifty pounds to keep the two missionaries and their families for the first year. This sum had been calculated with some care, in the light of Thomas's statements as to the cost of living in Bengal. To Carey, accustomed to live in the cheapest way in England, it probably seemed ample provision. This one hundred and fifty pounds they had brought out with them in the form of merchandise; the first thing, therefore, was to turn the goods into ready money. Thomas did this; and because of his knowledge of Calcutta and Indian ways, he handled the money and managed the housekeeping for the two families, and did it in a way that caused his more frugal companion much misgiving. Carey, knowing that Thomas understood Indian customs and modes of life better than himself, did not like to interfere; but he soon began to feel that they were living on a more liberal scale than their means would allow.

Every day deepened his impression that his versatile colleague, though godly and earnest in his work, was capricious, unthinking, and unthrifty. Thomas constantly disbursed funds and incurred liabilities without consulting Carey, or even against his advice. Carey's uneasiness increased. He had the utmost affection for his fellow-worker, yet was painfully aware of his weaknesses.

The cost of living in Calcutta proved so high that after about a fortnight they removed to Bandel, a Portuguese settlement on the Hooghli, some thirty miles from Calcutta. It was a centre of Roman Catholicism, and it is not easy to see what led the Baptist pioneers to select it, except that they thought that it would be a cheap place to live in. They were not able to buy a house, but managed to rent a small one from a German hotel-keeper, and then purchased a boat so that they could visit all the riverside villages and towns within reach, and thus carry out their evangelistic programme. "Here we intend to reside," wrote Carey on December 4th. "All the people are Catholics or Mohammedans, but many Hindus live at a distance of a mile or two; so that there is work enough for us here." A few days later he records that they "have frequent opportunities of addressing the Hindus, and their attention is astonishing. Last Lord's Day we visited them at a neighbouring village . . . and Mr Thomas preached to near two hundred of them." Exhilarated by the joy of being permitted to work among the heathen, Carey began to dream dreams and see visions of the distant future. His boys should, if God so willed, be missionaries; and as soon as they were old enough,

they should begin to learn languages with that end in view—the eldest boy Sanskrit, the second Persian, and the third Chinese.

But Carey soon found that money was going faster than ever, and that Bandel was not well suited to his missionary purpose; so he searched for a more suitable place. His idea was to “go up into the country, build a hut, and live like the natives.” Thomas, on the other hand, whose creditors had found him out and were pressing him, had thoughts of going back to Calcutta and resorting to his medical profession. Carey, too, heard of a possible opening for himself in the capital, a botanist being wanted to look after the Company’s Botanical Garden. A report also reached them that it was possible to get a grant of free land. So back to Calcutta they all went. Alas, it was to no purpose; the botanical post was already filled, and no free land was to be had. They now found themselves literally stranded and homeless in Calcutta. In their extremity an Indian of Bania (banker) caste offered to let Carey and his family live for a while in a little house in his garden at Manicktulla, a suburb to the north-east of Calcutta; and Thomas took a house in the town where he set up as a surgeon.

To a man of less resolute mould and of less faith in God than Carey, the whole position must have seemed almost hopeless. Separated thus from the colleague he sincerely loved, he was left to his own devices. Trials began to thicken around him. It was evident that he would not be allowed to live in Calcutta as a missionary—even if he could afford it, which he could not. Yet he could not find another place to go to, and the money was



dwindling rapidly: "For two months I have seen nothing but a continual moving to and fro," he wrote in his journal. The climate, the unaccustomed food, and the conditions of life in the tropics were evidently affecting his wife's health. The long strain of the voyage, followed by their unsettled life in Bengal, had told upon her nerves, and both she and her sister were, not unnaturally, inclined to complain. It is not surprising that curry and rice did not agree with them, and they found Indian *chapatis* a poor substitute for bread; they complained that they had "to live without many of the necessaries of life." There can be no doubt that their privations were very real, for, left to himself, Carey naturally sought to reduce his family expenditure to the narrowest limits and live within his income. Doubtless the old experiences of Moulton were repeated, which would be all the harder for Dorothy and Katherine after the—to them—comparative luxury of the ship's table. Dorothy and the two older boys were ill for a month with dysentery, Felix, indeed, so seriously that his life was in danger. Probably, too, they all suffered from home-sickness and yearned for their simple cottage in the dear homeland. Enfeebled in body and spirits, they were not inclined to give William the sympathy he sorely needed. "My wife, and sister too, who do not see the importance of the mission as I do, are continually exclaiming against me," he wrote in his journal; and again, "If my family were but hearty in the work, I should find a great burden removed."

Nor had Carey real fellowship of spirit with his colleague. To Sutcliff he wrote:

Mr T. is a very good man, but only fit to live at sea, where his daily business is before him, and daily provision made for him. I own I fear his present undertaking will be hurtful rather than useful to him; the fickleness of his mind makes him very unfit for such an undertaking. I love him, and we live in greatest harmony; but I confess that Ram Ram Boshu is much more a man after my heart.

Poor Carey had enough trouble in his own little family, in addition to the burden of the work he longed to do; and the financial entanglements in which Thomas was constantly involved must have been almost the last straw. Early in January (1794), within two months of their landing in Bengal, it was discovered that one of the doctor's creditors in England had sent his bond out to India, and they were not sure that other creditors had not done the same. Carey knew that his colleague was hourly in danger of arrest. "In this state of perplexity, we know not what to do," he wrote.

Twelve days later, Carey got an offer of a piece of land at a place called Deharta, some three days' journey from Calcutta. It was to be rent free for three years. So he went at once to consult Thomas and get from him the money necessary for the journey. To his dismay Thomas told him that the money was entirely exhausted—the whole year's allowance gone in less than ten weeks! Indeed it was even worse than that, they had actually overspent, and Thomas had incurred a new debt to a money-lender.

This must have been a staggering blow, and on reaching his temporary home Carey wrote in his journal:

*Jan. 15, 16 (1794).* I am much dejected. . . . I am in a strange land, alone, no Christian friends, a large

family, and nothing to supply their wants. I blame Mr T. for leading me into such expense at first, and I blame myself for being led. . . . I am dejected, not for my own sake, but for my family's and his, for whom I tremble.

Subsequent entries in the journal bear witness to the almost crushing burden Carey bore that dark week :

*Jan. 17.* . . . Very much dejected all day. Have no relish for anything of the world, yet am swallowed up in its cares. Towards evening had a pleasant view of the all-sufficiency of God, and the stability of His promises, which much relieved my mind ; and as I walked home in the night, was enabled to roll my soul and all my cares in some measure on God . . . what a mercy it is to have a God !

January 19th was Sunday ; to our lonely harassed missionary it was indeed a " day of rest and gladness." Triumphant over worry and uncertainty, he went out into the country to get among the village people. Aided by his faithful munchi, who acted as his interpreter, he visited the Manicktulla bazaar, and, while the usual business was carried on as on other days, preached to a large congregation consisting principally of Mohammedans.

That Sunday brought a measure of peace and comfort to his soul. On Monday he had once more to take up his heavy burden of finance. He writes :

" *Jan. 20.* This has been a day of seeking money." He evidently felt that he had no alternative but to try to borrow five hundred rupees with which to carry on—a thing he hated, but in his extremity was driven to. The journal continues :

*Jan. 22.* Full of perplexity about temporal things. . . . My wife has, within this day or two, relapsed into

her affliction and is much worse than she was before ; but in the mount the Lord is seen. I wish I had but more of God in my soul.

*Jan. 23.* . . . My temporal troubles remain just where they were. I have a place, but cannot remove my family to it for want of money.

Imagine poor Carey's grief and dismay on visiting his colleague that day, to find him

living at the rate of I know not how much, I suppose two hundred and fifty or three hundred rupees per month, has twelve servants, and this day is talking of keeping his coach. I remonstrated with him in vain, and I am almost afraid that he intends to throw up the mission. . . . My heart bleeds for him, for my family, for the Society, whose steadfastness must be shaken by this report, and for the success of the mission, which must receive a sad blow from this.

Every word seems to have been written in blood. What unutterable loneliness Carey must have passed through that day, with no earthly friend in whom he could confide ! But ere he slept he wrote :

Bless God, I feel peace within and rejoice in having undertaken the work, and shall, I feel, if I not only labour alone, but even if I lose my life in the undertaking. I anxiously desire the time when I shall so far know the language as to preach in earnest to these poor people.

There can be little doubt that beside his heavy cares Carey was suffering from the depression that so often attacks newcomers in India. His own health was probably undermined, and in his condition troubles would appear blacker than they really were.

But even in his darkest moments Carey never lost sight of his great purpose. He had burned his boats behind him and never thought of turning

back. He had come to this land to do missionary work, and nothing could shake his conviction that God had called him.

With the shadows lying heavy around he threw himself with renewed earnestness into his language studies. With his munchi he worked hard to correct the book of Genesis that Thomas had translated into Bengali; and on the following Sunday we find him and his interpreter in the villages making known the Gospel of the grace of God.

On January 28th he went again to Calcutta in a fruitless effort to find a way out of his difficulties. He wrote :

Again disappointed about money. Was much dejected and grieved. . . . In the evening had much relief in reading over Mr Fuller's charge to us at Leicester. The affection there manifested almost overcame my spirits, for I have not been accustomed to sympathy of late.

Every door seemed closed, and to him, in his spirit of depression, everyone seemed against him. He called on one of the most honoured and pious of the chaplains in Calcutta and was coldly received, because the good man had "got across" Dr Thomas. Instead of getting some friendly counsel or help, poor Carey was allowed to depart without even the common courtesy of a meal, though he had "walked five miles in the heat of the sun."

What days of depression Carey must have experienced! If faith in God means anything at all, it is at a time like that.

## CHAPTER XIV

### INTO THE WILDERNESS

*February to June, 1794.*

WITH all his faults, and his hopeless lack of business ability, Thomas never failed his colleague in a moment of extremity. It was so in this instance. On the last day of that weary month of January he managed to borrow from an Indian money-lender one hundred and fifty rupees—at twelve per cent interest—to enable Carey to carry out his project of going to Deharta. As every day's delay would mean further expenditure, Carey lost no time in getting off. The next day (Saturday) he and Ram Boshu completed their preparation for the journey into the unknown;<sup>1</sup> on Monday they secured a boat and loaded it with their baggage and the few articles of furniture Carey possessed, and early next morning the family migration began. The devoted munchi went with them.

It was no picnic party, though probably the boys enjoyed the idea of a river journey in a boat. Carey's own heart was heavy, though resolute. In a foreign land, with a wife and four young children, and his wife's sister in addition, almost without money,

<sup>1</sup> "Was very weary," he writes, "having walked in the sun about fifteen or sixteen miles; yet had the satisfaction of discoursing with some money-changers at Calcutta . . . about the importance and absolute necessity of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ."

without friends, and without employment, his position was a singularly difficult one. To make matters worse, Dorothy and her sister were more than a little inclined to despondence. It is impossible to blame them, for their privations were as severe as two women could be called upon to endure. They quite naturally felt keenly the hardship of "being forced to go into the wilderness"; and this was made the more bitter to them by the idea that Dr Thomas, so far from sharing their trials, was living in Calcutta in what they not unnaturally regarded as luxury.

The journey was not along the broad stream of the Hooghli, but by narrow salt-water rivers and through a large lake to the east of the capital. Though only the beginning of February, the heat must have been very trying to people who had been in the country less than three months, particularly to Mrs Carey and the children, who were still weak from the effects of dysentery. Yet as they passed along they could not but be struck with the beauty of the palm-fringed waterways. The luxuriant tropical vegetation appealed to Carey's botanical instincts, but with even more interest he observed the riverside villages set among the thickets of bamboo or among the open rice-fields. At one place he paused to watch villagers offering fruit and bowls of rice to an image of the god of learning. The idol, hung with garlands, stood under a rough shed; the priest in charge had white god-marks gleaming upon his brown forehead, chest, and arms, and a company of musicians made "horrid music" with their tom-toms and flutes. Carey watched in silence. "I felt very much concerned for these

poor people," he wrote, "but could not speak to them."

Their journey took them through the dreaded tiger-haunted swamps known as the Sunderbunds, where forest and jungle stretch for hundreds of square miles, intersected by numerous rivers and creeks. These dismal regions are almost entirely uninhabited, save by wild beasts and noxious reptiles. Tigers, leopards, rhinoceroses, and buffaloes abound ; countless monkeys swing from the trees ; the python and the deadly cobra are found there, and crocodiles bask on mud-banks in the hot sunshine. The little boat was obliged to tie up to the bank sometimes, "but no one dares go on shore, so as to venture a hundred yards from the boat," William tells us. At night the noises of the jungle disturbed their rest—the loud croaking of the frogs, the chorus of innumerable crickets, the cry of the jackal, the laughter of the hyena ; and once William thought he heard the roar of a tiger. How the timid, home-loving Dorothy would shudder in such a place of terrors ! The atrocious mosquito, too, would swarm about them in the darkness, and annoy them with its irritating bite.

On the third morning, just when their little store of provisions was giving out, they reached their destination—Deharta, on the Jubona river, where a few Europeans had settled—and seeing a bungalow that seemed to be English built, concluded that it must be the Company's dak bungalow of which they had heard. It turned out, however, to belong to a Mr Charles Short, who, when Carey stepped ashore, came out to meet him, and gave him that cordial welcome that one Englishman invariably



gives to another when they meet in remote places. On learning of Carey's object and present straits, he at once invited him to make his house a home for the whole family until he could find a suitable place in which to live, adding that they might stay half a year if they pleased, or even longer. Mr Short's kindness was the more generous in that he himself was in no great sympathy with Carey's missionary project—in fact he had almost a contempt for religion.

Two days later Carey chose a suitable piece of land several acres in extent, just across the river. "The soil was very fine and the situation pleasant," he wrote. This seems rather too rosy a description for what was really little more than a clearing in the jungle. The place was so infested with tigers that before Carey's arrival twenty men had been carried off within a few months. To set up in such a place as a cultivator, without capital and almost without help, was no light task, but Carey entered upon it with that quiet determination that had always been natural to him. In the past he had overcome many difficulties to achieve his purpose, and by God's help he would overcome the present ones also. He began work in grim earnest and with his characteristic "plod." He and his family still lived with Mr Short, and he used to go with his gun into the jungle to shoot wild hog, deer, and fowl for the table.

His first task was to build a small house, and for three weeks he worked steadily with such materials and tools as were available. By the end of February the simple bamboo structure was almost finished, and he began to look forward to the day when he

could bring his family to what he believed would be their home for some years. It would be only a simple home at best, just a bamboo frame covered with grass mats, and a thatch roof; but it would be *their own*. Soon he found that the people, who had forsaken the neighbourhood through fear of tigers, were beginning to return, encouraged by the prospect of having among them an Englishman with a gun. Ram Boshu spoke to them so glowingly of Carey's goodness that he had reason to believe that soon there would be four or five thousand settling around him and looking to him as their protector. All the people seemed pleased, and one day a deputation of five or six Brahmins came to thank him for coming to live among them. Carey saw a wide sphere of usefulness opening around him.

But the unexpected happened. On the first day of March a letter was brought to him. It was from John Thomas, and the news it contained was momentous to a degree. Their affairs had taken a sudden, almost dramatic, turn. Deharta was not to be their home after all.

. . . . .

The letter from Dr Thomas told a story that must have thrilled the sorely tried Carey with bewilderment and joy. Early in January, while Carey was still in Calcutta, Thomas had heard that an old friend of his was passing through great sorrow. This was George Udney, a wealthy planter who had been on terms of close friendship with Thomas and had helped him during his first sojourn in India; but like Charles Grant his sympathies had been alienated, and the friendship had ceased. On

returning to India with Carey, Thomas had not ventured to approach Mr Udney, who lived at Malda, some two hundred miles up country. But when he heard that his old benefactor was in sorrow, his own warm, impulsive heart prompted him to write a letter of condolence. Almost to his surprise, it speedily brought a reply of a most cordial character, and even an invitation to go to Malda to stay with Mr Udney. Thomas went immediately: their meeting was affectionate to a degree, and the painful memories of their estrangement were forgotten. But that was not all. Mr Udney was at the time erecting two new indigo factories, and he proposed that Thomas should superintend one of them. Thomas instantly closed with the offer, and asked that his colleague Carey might be allowed to manage the other. To this Mr Udney agreed, and at once wrote to Carey offering him the post at such remuneration as would not only keep his family in comfort, but leave a margin for carrying on his missionary work. In the excitement of the moment Thomas wrote immediately to tell his fellow-missionary the good news.

We can imagine the effect of these letters upon Carey and his wife. Instead of a long and weary struggle against uncertain circumstances, he was to go straight to an assured position, with a guaranteed salary; his financial worries would be over, he would have time to continue his language studies, and, best of all, good opportunity of engaging in the work he had come to do. The workpeople in the factory he was to superintend would be good material for him to work upon. He immediately closed with the offer, and nothing remained but to wait for another

letter telling him when the new work would be ready for him.

Then followed weary days of waiting, and the days grew to weeks. The strain of the three dreary months of disappointment and anxiety had undoubtedly told upon Carey, and after the first flush of joy at the news from Thomas, there followed a period of acute reaction. The daily entries in his journal during this time of suspense reveal the despondent state into which he had come. "I mourn my barrenness, and the foolish wanderings of my mind," he wrote. "Surely I shall never be of any use among the heathen. . . . It seems as if all the sweetness that I have formerly felt has gone." Two days later he wrote: "In the morning, had a very miserable, unhappy time for some hours." Another day we have this entry: "I am very defective in all duties. . . . In prayer I wander and am formal. . . . I soon tire; devotion languishes; and I do not walk with God." On Sunday, March 16th, he wrote, "Such another Sabbath I hope I shall never pass." Then on March 20th: "A most unhappy day." Two days later: "Still in suspense, waiting in daily expectation of a letter from Malda." And again: "Long delay and unsettlement have filled me with discouragement and drunk up my spirit." After four weeks of waiting, he actually so lost count of the days that he mistook Saturday for Sunday and kept it as such! He began to realize what it was to be deprived of the refreshment of Christian worship and fellowship, and he felt that with so little Bengali on his tongue he was doing little or nothing for God. He recalled the old Sabbaths in England with the joy of preaching,

and the six days of the week spent in ministering to his flock at Moulton and Leicester. *Here* he seemed to be idle. Many a young missionary since that day has passed through a similar experience.

Then Carey's mind turned to the great importance of mastering the vernacular as soon as possible. "It is my business," he wrote, "and is necessary to my preaching in a useful manner." So he plunged with renewed energy into his language study. With his munchi's help he once more revised Mr Thomas's translation of Genesis, and found it a most profitable exercise. He was finding "that the Bengali is a language which is very copious, and abounds with beauties," and he resolved that, when settled at Malda, he would give himself diligently to Bible translation, in the hope of being able to publish the whole Bible "in numbers." He was also doing a little at Hindustani, the language of the Mohammedans. This linguistic work, always thoroughly congenial to him, acted like a tonic for both brain and spirit; "I begin to find my soul more at home," he wrote.

At last, after a trying month of uncertainty, the long-looked-for letter arrived. Carey rejoiced greatly, and it is characteristic of the man that his joy at the prospect of again working with Thomas was great. He wrote:

Nothing yields me more pleasure than the prospect of Mr Thomas and I being reunited in the work; and particularly as he has, of his own accord, written to me that he knows his conduct at Calcutta was wrong.

The days now passed as if on wings, and amid the fierce heat of April we find in the journal such daily entries as: "Had some sweetness to-day," and

“The world appears little, the promises great, and God an all-sufficient portion.” The sunshine had come back again, and his heart was singing.

Then he re-read the life of David Brainerd—which Dr Ryland afterwards described as “almost a second Bible to him.” He wished that, like Brainerd, he could retire into the solitude of the forest to pray and meditate; but that was utterly impossible in a jungle abounding with tigers and deadly snakes.

The time was now approaching for the new migration, and preparation for the three hundred miles’ boat journey began in earnest. On May 23rd, long before daybreak, Carey and his family bade farewell to Mr Short, and embarked for the voyage that was expected to take three weeks. Mrs Carey’s sister, however, did not accompany them. Thereby hangs a tale—one that develops into a romance! A few months later she was united to Mr Short in marriage.

A boat journey, such as the one our missionary was now embarking upon, with a sick wife and four children, is no light matter in the fierce glare of the tropical sun. It was mid-May, and the temperature in the shade would be anything between 110 and 115 degrees Fahrenheit. *In the shade*, of course, means in the shade of some building through which the sun’s rays cannot penetrate. Our travellers had no such shade; at best their only protection would be a wood or straw canopy—a sort of cabin with sides and top made of bamboo matting, under which the heat would be almost unbearable. In some places the mosquitoes tried them severely. Only those who have taken a similar journey in the heat of an Indian summer—albeit under the vastly

improved conditions of modern travel—can have any idea of the exhaustion and suffering involved by more than three weeks' "grilling" in a native boat. It is wonderful that the frail Dorothy survived the journey, with all its discomforts. The price—a terrible one—had to be paid afterwards, as we shall see. William, however, found that the climate suited him better than that of his own country; but we find in his journal of that boat journey the candid admission: "In the afternoon I felt peevish and uncomfortable." They at last entered the mighty Ganges, at that point very wide, but shallow, and their boat constantly ran upon sandbanks. Sometimes they stuck fast and only got off with difficulty. William took in all he saw; but, on the whole, the journey was uninteresting, and he sought to pass those weary weeks in study. With his munchi, who still accompanied him; he worked hard at Bengali. It was far from easy. A small boat, with four growing boys, as well as Indian oarsmen, is not exactly an ideal chamber for either study or devotions. "Travelling with a family is a great hindrance to holy, spiritual meditation," says the journal!

It must have been an untold relief to them all, when, about noon on the twenty-fourth day (June 15th, 1794), their boat reached Malda on the Maharunda river, and tied up near to Mr Udney's factory.

## CHAPTER XV

### MUDNABATTY—CAREY'S SECOND APPRENTICESHIP

*June 1794 to June 1796. Age 33-35.*

FROM Mr Udney and his aged mother Carey and his family received a very warm welcome, and on the evening of their arrival he had the joy of conducting family prayers—a pleasure he had greatly missed while the guest of the hospitable but non-religious Mr Short. The next day had an even greater pleasure in store. It was Sunday, and Mr Udney asked Carey to conduct service for the little company of Europeans in the neighbourhood. The congregation numbered only sixteen, but Carey's joy was unbounded at being once more able to preach a sermon—or as he described it “having my tongue loosed.” “I feel,” he wrote, “as if released from a prison.”

On that Sunday Thomas and Carey met once more and were reunited in their missionary fellowship. Carey's magnanimous heart forgot all that had passed in Calcutta, and he realized that it was to Thomas that he owed his new position as manager of one of Mr Udney's indigo factories. It has more than once been pointed out that on the two occasions upon which Carey's plans had been foiled through Dr Thomas—in being refused a passage by one of the East India Company's ships and in Calcutta—it was Thomas himself who found a way out of the difficulty.



We can imagine Carey's joy when Mr Udney told him that his salary was to be two hundred rupees per month,<sup>1</sup> and commission upon all the indigo sold from the factory of which he was to have charge. He even hinted that in a year's time he proposed to give him a share in the business! Looked at from the standpoint of the average Englishman in India, two hundred rupees a month is little enough; but to Carey, whose income in England had never reached fifty pounds a year, it must have seemed little short of wealth. His first thought was that he would no longer need money from the Committee in England, and that, with the money thus saved, they could send out more missionaries, possibly to some other land. At the first opportunity he wrote officially to the Society in this strain, adding: "At the same time it will be my glory and joy to stand in the same near relation to the Society as if I needed supplies from them, and to maintain the same correspondence with them." Carey was too high-minded to kick over the traces just because he was no longer dependent on the Society for support. With characteristic thoughtfulness, however, he suggested that the Society should continue to make Dr Thomas the agreed allowance so as to enable him to meet his debts.

The factory of which Carey was to take charge was at Mudnabatty, thirty-two miles north of Malda, and Thomas's place at Moypaldiggy was seventeen miles further still. The district lay in the heart of the vast plain watered by the Ganges and its tributaries; "the whole country is without a hill ten feet high," wrote Carey to Sutcliff. It was in every way

<sup>1</sup> With the rupee at 2s. 6d. that would be equal to £300 per year.

a complete contrast to the tangled jungles he had left. It was open country, with rice-fields stretching as far as the eye could reach, and dotted over with little villages with the accompanying mango and banyan trees, and here and there a clump of bamboo or a solitary palm. There was little need to fear wild beasts, for although there were a few wild buffaloes, hogs, and even tigers, in the neighbourhood, they seldom attacked human beings. But what it lacked in savage animals, it made up in snakes. Almost every clump of prickly-pear harboured its brace of deadly cobras, and Carey soon found that these venomous reptiles took terrible toll of human life.<sup>1</sup> Crocodiles were numerous in the rivers and pools, but as these dangerous brutes are more easily avoided, the people were less afraid of them. "I have one in a pond about ten yards from my door," wrote Carey to a friend in England, "yet I sleep with the door open every night."

Such was the region in which Carey was to spend the next six years of his life. Here he was to serve his second apprenticeship. His career divides naturally into two periods, in each of which he was called upon to attempt and achieve a notable service for the Kingdom of God. First came the English period, during which his great task was to arouse the home Churches to a sense of their responsibility to the non-Christian world. In the shoemaker's cottage at Piddington, and the little manse at Moulton, he served an apprenticeship that was to fit him for the great work that he had to do during his Leicester pastorate. The second period began on the day he

<sup>1</sup> Even to-day, in spite of all the efforts of Government, some twenty thousand lives are lost in India every year as a result of snake bites.

landed on Indian soil ; and at Mudnabatty God put him through a second apprenticeship that was to fit him for his new task of planting and establishing the mission to the people of Bengal.

Carey lost no time in getting to work. The next indigo season would commence within about a month of his arrival at his post, and very much depended upon having everything ready for it. He set to work to understand his duties, and was soon fully occupied. There is scarcely a profession or trade in India which calls for so much judgment and sagacity as indigo planting, for only with the utmost care, and not a little experience, can a good output be ensured. The tilling and sowing had been done before Carey arrived, and while the country around was scorched and parched by the heat of May and June, the indigo fields presented a mass of waving green, most restful to the eye. The immediate task was to have the factory, with its open-air vats, and its store and packing rooms, ready for the season's crop.

It was a very new experience for Carey to have some ninety people under his control, and he naturally thought of them as a field of missionary enterprise. In England, he firmly believed that his work was to found a Missionary Society ; he only made shoes to provide bread and butter. In India he knew that his real task was evangelization—and indigo planting was but the means to the supreme end. But he was too true a man to do anything short of his best in his daily employment. Naturally enough he had some little trouble with the Indian overseers and foremen—as all new men have. He soon discovered that they had hired coolies at *two and a half rupees per month*, and had, even from that miserable

pittance, deducted two annas<sup>1</sup> for themselves! That gross injustice had to be put right, for he felt that to be just and fair to the employees would be one of the best ways of removing their prejudice against Europeans, and would also be a good preparation for the message he carried. At first he had some difficulty with the language; for though by this time he was able to speak a little Bengali he found that his workpeople spoke a "dialect which differs as much from true Bengali as the Lancashire dialect does from true English, so I have hard work to understand them and to make them understand me."

Soon the excessive heat heralded the approach of the monsoon, and early in July the rains began. It was very trying to Carey, who had not before experienced anything of the kind. Often he was far from well owing to exposure to the unaccustomed heat. Perhaps he exposed himself too rashly, especially on one day when urgent duty necessitated his being out in the heat from morning until evening. By night he was so exhausted that he could not even pray, and on the following day he was very unwell. This made him more cautious, but he pushed ahead with his work, and visited several neighbouring factories to learn the process of indigo making.

When the monsoon set in the crops were cut, and each morning a line of bullock carts slowly wended its way from the fields to the factory, where the leaves of the indigo plants were put into large vats and the juice crushed out of them. The liquid dye would then be run off into lower vats, where men would stand nearly up to the waist in it, armed

<sup>1</sup> There are sixteen annas to the rupee.

with long bamboos, and beat it incessantly and savagely for two or three hours. The resulting pulpy paste would be pressed and cut into small cakes, stamped with the mark of the factory, and then put away on bamboo shelves to dry.

One evening, just when the process was about to begin, several of the workmen came to Carey and said that as they were to start indigo making on the morrow, they very much wished that he would make an offering to the goddess Kali so that he might have success. Carey had already seen many images of Kali, with her gruesome decorations representing human hands and skulls, and he thought of her as the ugliest of all the idols. Naturally he took the opportunity to speak to them of the foolishness of idolatry and exhorted them to seek the true God. But it was to little purpose; next day he had the mortification of finding that they had offered a kid to the hungry goddess.

The first monsoon is always a trying time for new arrivals in India. And that year was a particularly bad one; scarcely a day passed without some of the Indian workpeople being seized with fevers, including several of the managers and principal men; and the munchi was ill for three months. Some diseases were specially common, as for instance dysentery, arising, Carey believed, from the cold night air. Dorothy Carey and Felix were afflicted with it for eight months. Mrs Carey indeed was in a very low state; the long strain and the exposure to heat on the boat journey up the river had taken heavy toll of her none too robust health; indeed there can be little doubt that during that journey she had had more than "a touch of sun." She was never

the same again. Apart from that, she must have found life in India very trying. To one so timid it must have been nothing short of torture to hear the sounds of wild beasts, to know that snakes were everywhere, and to be for ever on the lookout for them. Since leaving her sister Katherine behind at Mr Short's, too, she must have felt very lonely. As the months passed, her malady so increased that she became quite incapable of attending to ordinary domestic duties.

In August came the great Mohammedan festival of Moharrim. For two days and nights the Moslems went about incessantly with pipes, tom-toms, and cymbals. The people seemed eager to let Carey and his family see the display, so they gathered just before the door of his home, at least a thousand strong. Probably half of them came out of curiosity, for many of them had come in from the villages and had never seen a white woman; some indeed had not even seen a white man. The more curious came close up to have the better view, and a few were overheard to ask each other which was the Sahib and which was the Bibby Sahib. Bengal has a very large Mohammedan population amounting to more than fifty per cent of the total; indeed there are more Moslems in that Presidency than in any other country in the world.

But there is much Hinduism also, and Carey was constantly pained by seeing people worshipping idols. In one instance, out of the many he records, he found one of his workmen, a bricklayer, making an image of the goddess of learning. The missionary was "much dejected" to find this after all his efforts to explain the folly of it to his staff. His first impulse

was to use his authority and forbid it, but a minute's thought showed him that such a step would be unwise. It would savour of persecution, and the man would probably find another opportunity of following the custom of his fathers. So Carey patiently reasoned again with him and tried to convince him of the foolishness and sinfulness of idolatry. The poor fellow acquiesced, and promised to throw the idol away.

Such conversations were almost an everyday occurrence and must have been a twofold help to Carey: they helped him to get more fluent in his use of the language, and the discussions would help him to see the Hindu and Moslem point of view. He had already discovered that to do effective missionary work it was as necessary for him to understand the people as it was to understand their language. In these simple conversations with men of all types he was acquiring a knowledge of Indian thought and Indian beliefs that was to fit him for the service that lay before him.

Some three months after his arrival at Mudnabatty, Carey again passed through deep waters. Just after the rains is the worst season for fever, and as we have already noted, in 1794 the season was a particularly bad one. In August Carey wrote that the country agreed with him better than England did, and he was never better in his life. The old skin disease gave him not the slightest trouble. But in September he was prostrate time after time with fever. One attack was particularly violent, and continued for twenty-six hours without intermission. Providentially Mr Udney came to see him—not knowing that he was ill—and gave him medicine

which relieved him. Two days later he had a still more serious attack accompanied by violent sickness and dysentery. On the second day of this fever, while Carey himself was almost helpless, his third son, Peter, a fine boy five years of age, was seized with dysentery, following an attack of fever, and the little fellow passed away in a few hours. It was necessary that the funeral should take place the same day, but the broken-hearted father could not induce anyone to make a coffin, though there were two carpenters at the factory. Four Mohammedans dug the grave, but, owing to the deeply-rooted aversion to contact with the defilement of death, of all the two or three hundred labourers then employed on the estate, not one would risk breaking caste by carrying the little body to the grave. In vain Carey implored their help, and even sent seven or eight miles in the hope of getting some one. It seemed that William and Dorothy, even in their feeble state, would be obliged themselves to carry the precious burden to its resting-place. But at the last moment a man of sweeper caste and a boy who had lost caste, were prevailed upon to perform the sad duty and to secure the little grave against the attacks of jackals. The bereaved parents, themselves not fit to be out of bed, stood by the grave, and then returned to their grief-stricken home. It was part of the price Dorothy and William Carey paid for winning Indians for Christ.

During this time of affliction Carey was often prostrate and too weak to get about. He used to lie on his bed "enjoying sweet seasons of self-examination and prayer." He would think out sermons and go over them word by word in Bengali, and was



able to discourse for hours together; words and phrases seemed to occur to his mind more readily than when he was in health.

During these trying months the great purpose in Carey's mind was gradually taking more definite shape. His experiences were enabling him to see more clearly than had hitherto been possible the methods necessary for the evangelization of India's millions. The problem that exercised his mind was this: the people listened readily enough to the Gospel, but they showed little or no inclination to accept it. From time to time some man would manifest more than usual interest in the message, and high hopes were kindled in the missionary's heart. But disappointment nearly always followed. Carey wrote: "The Brahmuns fear to lose their gain; the higher castes their honour; and the poor tremble at the vengeance of their debtors. Thus we have been unsuccessful." Even Ram Boshu, valuable and helpful as he was, was not prepared to receive baptism and thus proclaim himself a Christian. In addition to preaching, Carey attempted to run a little school. But the parents would take their children away after a few months, in order that they might earn money by working, and this school was a failure. All this occasioned Carey great anxiety and no little searching of heart. He preached the Gospel, and *he expected results*. Why were there no conversions? Was the fault in himself? The apparent failure of his efforts led him to think out other and better ways of working. He wrote:

We have formed a plan for setting up two colleges, for the education of twelve youths in each. I had some months ago set up a school, but the poverty of the

natives caused them frequently to take their children to work. To prevent this we intend to clothe and feed them, and educate them for seven years in Sanskrit, Persian, etc., and particularly to introduce the study of the Holy Scriptures and useful sciences therein. We also intend to order types from England at our own expense, and print the Bible, and other useful things in the Bengali or Hindusthani languages. We have reason, indeed, to be very thankful to God for His kind providence, which enables us to lay out anything for Him. May our hearts be always ready !

“ *At our own expense !* ” Of his two hundred rupees a month, Carey was actually laying aside one-sixth for his missionary work. The Jewish tenth was not enough for him to offer to his Lord.

Even in the midst of his duties at the factory, he was devoting a great deal of time to his translation work, for he was fully alive to the tremendous importance of it. His powers as a linguist were increasing. Within a year of reaching India, we find him writing thus to Sutcliff :

I intend to send you soon a copy of Genesis, Matthew, Mark, and James in Bengali ; with a small vocabulary and grammar of the language in manuscript, of my own composing.

But he was far too wise to think of rushing into print. No one knew better than he that his attempts must contain scores of errors which would take many months to discover and correct.

By this time Carey was realizing that the common people were so ignorant as scarcely to understand their own mother-tongue when properly spoken. Their limited vocabulary often puzzled him. He soon found, also, that the educated people, especially

in matters of religion, used words and terms with a meaning widely different from their English equivalents ; the Hindu idea of sin, salvation, holiness, being totally different from the Christian conception. In this work, as in many other things, Carey was a pioneer, and had still very much to learn.

Not merely in translation work, but also in public speaking, Carey was making progress. Before he had been two years in India he found it possible to "preach an hour with tolerable freedom." So sure was his grasp of the language by this time that he could regularly preach to large companies of people in the open air. When the time for the hook-swinging festivals came round, he resolved to speak boldly against the practice, and on the following Sunday he preached twice at the factory, in the morning to a mixed congregation of about five hundred Moslems and Hindus, and in the evening to about four hundred ; "the people having attended with great seriousness, went away shouting 'Allah.' " Apparently he had more Moslems than Hindus in the congregation that day. During the following week he was deeply distressed to witness the people practising such self-tortures as falling on iron spikes, dancing with splints of bamboo thrust through the flesh of their bodies, and swinging in the air suspended by hooks. On the last day of that festival he again preached twice, having in the morning a company of over two hundred and in the evening five hundred. On the three following Sundays he was encouraged by very large congregations, and the more so because many of the people who came were not workers at the factory, but people from the countryside. He wrote : "I now rejoice in

seeing a regular congregation of from two to six hundred people of all descriptions—Mussulmans, Brahmuns, and other classes of Hindus.”

Sundays must have been busy days, for, not content with his two preaching services, it was his custom to go out in the afternoon to the villages for several miles around to proclaim his message. Tactful by nature, he became more so as he grew to understand the Indian point of view. Noticing a temple, he would ask what it was, and then “to excite attention” he would ask the name of the god, and whether he was alive or dead. Thus by questions and conversation he would gather a crowd, and when a favourable moment arrived he would mount some steps—perchance the temple steps—or stand upon a big stone to address them with greater ease. If the noise of the adjacent bazaar was too great, he would sing, and quietly draw his crowd away to a little distance and take up his stand under the friendly shade of a tamarind tree. Far too practical to take a text and break it up in the usual pulpit style, he would talk to such an audience of their gods and beliefs; and then, from their own *Shastras*, or the nine incarnations of Vishnu, lead them on to the message of Salvation through Christ.

Meanwhile, Carey was not neglectful of the few Europeans in his vicinity, and he gladly devoted no little time to ministering to them. He had the joy of baptizing one young Englishman, and a little Baptist Church was formed at Malda. It had four members.

Happily Carey had now the fullest fellowship with Dr Thomas, and although separated by eighteen miles of country, and both busy with their respective

duties, they often visited each other for Christian companionship and counsel. Carey deeply regretted that he had ever doubted his fellow-missionary ; and convinced that what happened in Calcutta was due entirely to the financial pressure under which Thomas was struggling, he wished to have that episode "for ever suppressed and buried in oblivion."

Thomas, on his part, wrote :

You see in Mr Carey and myself some differences in taste, manners, etc. ; and there are many differences . . . which you do not see. Do not be alarmed, for our very noses are not alike, but our hearts are one. . . . I admire the grace of God for knitting together different people like brother Carey and myself ; for we never differ but we agree to differ, and in things respecting which it is no matter whether we differ or not.

We often lay our heads together and form large plans, for all we produce such little executions ; but we have difficulties you know nothing of. Sore troubles ; implacable enemies ; jealous eyes over us ; and a variety of opinions on our conduct and designs. Some think we intend to turn this part of the world upside down as missionaries ; others think we have quite forsaken the mission and gone after filthy lucre ; . . . some think us wise, others think us foolish ; some sober, others mad : and all these contrary opinions have their use perhaps. On this paragraph I could fill a ream of paper.

Unfortunately poor Thomas was still in debt ; indeed he had been compelled to borrow a hundred pounds to pay one creditor who was threatening to put him in prison. He hoped that one good harvest might enable him to pay off all he owed. "I praise God I am out of gaol," he wrote.

Carey needed companionship. Dark shadows were slowly gathering around his home. "I have had very sore trials in my own family, from a quarter

which I forbear to mention," he wrote. Twelve months later he confided to Fuller the cause of his grief: "My poor wife is in a very distressing state of mind: not maniacal, it is true, but afflicted with the species of insanity described by Dr Arnold under the name of ideal insanity." Poor Carey must have realized that his beloved Dorothy was suffering as a result of the hardships his mission had imposed—and was still imposing—upon her feeble body, and his sensitive, affectionate nature must have felt it keenly.

His sense of loneliness was increased by the failure to get news from England. Mails were slow and uncertain in those days. When he had been in India fourteen months without receiving a letter, he wrote in his journal, "hope deferred makes the heart sick." Then, more than three months later, comes the joyful note: "Blessed be God, I have at last received letters and other articles from our friends in England." Five months later he had another letter! Then they began to come more often.

But the letters from home were not all received with unmixed joy. One, indeed, caused Carey not a little pain. Some members of the Committee had taken alarm at the thought of Carey and Thomas engaging in business; they feared that it might distract them from their true work, and even that they might be spoiled by the deceitfulness of riches! They might have spared themselves that anxiety. How little they knew their Carey! When the letter of solemn admonition, almost of rebuke, reached him, Carey lost no time in sending a restrained and very dignified reply. He reminded his critics that

he had always, in his book and elsewhere, urged that missionaries should be self-supporting. He thought the Committee understood that, and approved of it: "It is true," he adds, "that they did not specify *indigo* business, but trade in timber was recommended, and cultivation of the ground was looked upon as eligible." Wherein then had he erred? What would have become of him and his colleague during the two years they had been in India if they had *not* got employment? They had not received any remittance from England—not even a letter for the first seventeen months! And as to the love of money—he mentioned a few facts to dispose of that myth: reminded them that he was, out of his meagre income, keeping his missionary work going, and added, "I am indeed poor, and shall always be so till the Bible is published in Bengali and Hindoosthani and the people want no further instruction."

To be thus misjudged by those who were at home "holding the ropes" gave no little pain to the brave true heart away in Bengal.

## CHAPTER XVI

### PLANNING A FORWARD MOVEMENT

*June 1796 to October 1799. Age 35-38.*

AN ordinary man would have been more than satisfied with such a sphere of work as Carey had at Mudnabatty, a little disappointed, perhaps, at the meagre results, but convinced that among Hindus and Moslems greater things were not to be looked for, and therefore content to do the little he could. But Carey was not an ordinary man; he could not be content to do little things. The mighty challenge of his Nottingham sermon was an expression of his own character; amid India's millions he was going to "Attempt GREAT things for God," and he expected that God was going to do GREAT things through him.

By the middle of 1796 he was beginning to feel that it was time to launch out into a more vigorous enterprise than had hitherto been possible. Strangely enough this seems to have come to him largely through a sense of comparative failure. On June 17th he wrote to Fuller: "Instead of success, we have to lament appearances being more against us than they were." It was true that three Moham-medans were "under very hopeful concern" for their own spiritual welfare; but so far from being able to report conversions, he had to tell how his principal helper, Ram Ram Boshu, had fallen into



adultery and had to be dismissed. The schoolmaster had left, and the little school had to be closed. There were discouragements on every hand. Mr Udney had suffered very heavy financial losses—the failure of a business house in Calcutta having involved him in a loss of twenty thousand pounds, and in addition, a well-laden ship of his own had been captured by a French privateer. The indigo industry, too, was a disappointment, owing to serious floods which destroyed the crops for several seasons in succession; he had spent ten thousand pounds on the factories at Mudnabatty and Moypal, and they were not bringing in any adequate return. “All these circumstances have much reduced dear Mr U. and he cannot help as formerly,” wrote Carey, adding, “My place cannot be tenable much longer.”

Happily Carey was no longer in the despondent state that he had been in Calcutta; his health was better, and despite the shadow in his own home, he could view the situation clearly and calmly. He was himself again. Difficulties had no terror for him; he had been nurtured in them from his youth up. He habitually set himself to overcome and triumph over them, and the habit had developed strong character and personality. “There are grave difficulties on every hand, and more are looming ahead—*therefore we must go forward.*” That was his way of looking at things. He wrote:

I think it very important to send more missionaries hither. We may die soon, and if we have no successors in the work, it will be a lamentable circumstance, and very much retard the spread of the Gospel. It is very important that we have a succession to hold forth the Word of life.

He was convinced that the proper course was to launch out on a bigger scale—that they must “attempt *great* things for God.” By November he had thought out a new plan for the work, and wrote a full explanation of it to Fuller. His idea was to form a colony of seven or eight missionaries with wives and families. By living together in one compound on the Moravian system, with one staff of servants for them all, the cost would be reduced to a minimum. He considered that the wives were essential to the scheme. “It is absolutely necessary for the wives of missionaries to be as hearty in the work as their husbands,” he wrote. “The work of missions, especially in the educational department, as much depends upon the endowment and devotedness of females as upon those of their husbands.” The work among Indian women, he explains, must be done entirely by the wives of missionaries or by unmarried Christian women sent out for the purpose. “The usages of society in Eastern countries are such as to bar access to the female population, except by their own sex; and when women are converted to the faith their religious principles and conduct require a constant vigilance, and wisdom . . . in their superintendence, different from, and far beyond, what men either can or will bestow.”

Carey was far from being a mere theorist. He was contemptuously called a “visionary,” but his practical mind always brought visions down to the realm of possible achievement. It was so in this case. He carefully worked out the practical details of his great vision. “Our finances being small, it will be necessary to live economically. . . . Industry being absolutely necessary, every one would have

his proper work allotted him, and would be employed at his post; some cultivating the land, some instructing, some learning, some preaching, and the women superintending the domestic concerns."

He was far too practical to desire the seven or eight families all at once; "they should come one or two families in a year or in two years or so." But come they must. "I entreat the Society to send them, as the only way of keeping the mission together," he added; "but pray be very careful what stamp missionaries' wives are of." It is difficult to escape the impression that this last sentence was prompted by his own painful experiences. Even had her health permitted, his beloved Dorothy was totally unfitted for the work he had outlined for the wives of future missionaries. An excellent wife, no doubt, for a village shoemaker, but her lack of education and her temperament would have prevented her undertaking other than domestic responsibilities.

There was yet another reason for a bold forward movement—the translation of the New Testament was nearing completion and it was time to consider how it was to be printed. It had long been Carey's hope that he might be able to save enough money from his own earnings to defray the cost of printing the Scriptures; but the failure of the indigo crops had made that beyond his power. He had made very careful enquiries as to what it would cost, and found to his dismay that a ten thousand edition worked out at about four thousand pounds. This, of course, was an utterly impossible sum. There was only one practical way out of the difficulty—Carey found that it was possible to get type specially

cut in India at five shillings per fount, or five hundred pounds for the whole Bible. But he must have a printing press and a printer; and he remembered how, before he left home, he met the very man for the job, William Ward of Derby.

There was, however, one outstanding obstacle to the sending out of additional missionaries which so practical a mind as Carey's could not overlook, for it was vital to the very existence of the mission—the determination of the East India Company to keep missionaries out of India. Since Carey and Thomas landed, the Company had become more resolute on this point. The Bengal Government had issued orders that every individual European in the country, who was not actually in the service of the Company, was to send up annually a statement of his name, place of abode, date of arrival in India, and occupation; and the District Magistrates were ordered to see that this was done every year. If permitted to remain in the country, each individual had to enter into a "covenant," and find two securities of two thousand pounds (or in some cases five hundred pounds) for the due fulfilment of it. "What would have become of us by this time, I know not, if we had not been engaged in the indigo line," wrote Carey. Mr Udney and another gentleman had become securities for Carey, and the "covenant" granted him by the Company would leave him free from molestation for five years. More than once Fuller had urged Carey boldly to proclaim himself a missionary, but he did not fully understand the position. Carey, who did understand it, replied that he was not afraid to confess himself a missionary, if occasion required it, even before the

throne of the Governor-General; but at present, for him to do so would mean certain expulsion from the country. In view of this difficult situation he urged that it would be best for the new missionaries to come out as assistants to the indigo factory, and armed with the names of the "two respectable persons" who would be willing to be security for them. He also advised that they should come out on a foreign ship.

One day early in October 1796, while Carey was forming the plans just outlined, he had a great surprise. He was sitting in his study learning Sanskrit, his pundit standing by his side, when a stranger was announced—a sahib. And there upon the veranda stood a young man who introduced himself as John Fountain, a new missionary sent out by the Committee to help him! Carey was completely taken by surprise, for, except a hint or two in letters, some months earlier, he knew nothing of his coming. Fountain seems to have gone out in one of the Company's ships entered as a servant, and managed to land in Calcutta without detection. There, as the Society in England had sent him out without sufficient money, he was obliged to borrow enough to carry him to Mudnabatty.

With joy Carey welcomed this young colleague; and although, strangely enough, Fountain brought with him no letter from the Committee, Carey and Thomas learned from him much more of the doings of the Society than they had gleaned from the none too frequent letters. But his coming caused Carey new difficulties. The Company absolutely refused

to make the "covenant" with Fountain and ordered him down to Calcutta. To make matters worse, he was a man of strong republican views and was so foolish as to give public expression to them. Carey continually cautioned him, and pointed out that if he persisted he might involve the mission in serious difficulties with the Government, for the horrors of the French Revolution had caused any leaning towards republicanism to be regarded with intense suspicion. In England, Carey himself had been not a little inclined to republicanism; but in India, for his work's sake, he discarded politics altogether. "Bless God, we are all as cold as stone in the political sense," he wrote to Fuller, "except brother Fountain, and I believe he is cooling; he hears perpetual lectures upon prudence in that particular." But both in conversations with people he met and in letters he wrote home Fountain disregarded the warnings, and some of his letters were opened by the postal authorities. Fuller and the Committee were annoyed and alarmed, and even threatened to disown the offender if he continued his indiscretions. Fountain, however, applied himself with some diligence to language study, and reopened the school. In loyalty to his young colleague Carey wrote to reassure the Committee; "He is a good man," he said, "greatly desires the salvation of the heathen."

Meanwhile, Carey himself was winning the confidence and goodwill of not a few people of importance. The judge of Dinajpur showed himself a friend, and Carey's botanical studies brought about an acquaintance with Dr Roxburgh, superintendent of the Company's botanical gardens. A

Portuguese gentleman, Mr Fernandez, born in China, also became a firm friend and built at Dinajpur a preaching house to be used for both Europeans and Indians. This man invited Carey to preach in the new building, and at one of the first services the congregation consisted of the judge on circuit, the district judge, the registrar of the Court, and several other Europeans and their wives. The three judges also attended the Bengali service that Carey conducted. The district judge invited Carey and all the company to dine at his house, and they had "much talk about the Gospel, and particularly about the mission." Then it was arranged that Carey should pay a monthly visit to Dinajpur to hold services for Indians and for Europeans.

During these years Thomas was busy at his indigo factory. There were times when his missionary work seemed full of promise. As a medical missionary he drew people from thirty and forty miles around, and his medical skill proved a great help. Kind-hearted to a degree, he delighted to do good to his fellow-men, and there was a continual stream of patients at his door waiting for treatment. But in business he continued, as usual, an utter failure. Although the possibilities of his factory were greater than those of Carey's at Mudnabatty, he could not run it at a profit; and, after three years the losses became so serious that he had to leave it and betake himself to Calcutta again, where he once more attempted to establish a surgical practice. Again he was unsuccessful, and went to see if he could establish a mission among the mountain tribes of the Rajmahl Hills. This also fell through, and getting a boat he went to Nuddea where for several

months, with his wife and daughter, he lived in the boat. Then he tried renting an indigo factory, but a flood destroyed both his plant and his prospects. His next venture was a sugar factory. Poor Thomas ! His heart was set on evangelizing Indians ; business was not in his line.

The year 1799 was to prove a very critical and decisive one for the mission. In its earlier months it was possible to report some little progress, although it was "very far short of what we wish and I fear very short of what you expect," Carey wrote to his Committee. The object of the mission, he told them, was beginning to be better understood by both Indians and Europeans, though there were still no conversions.

But the greatest step at this time was the purchase of a second-hand printing press. Seeing it advertised for sale in a Calcutta newspaper, Carey seized the opportunity, bought it for four hundred rupees, and set it up in his house. On hearing of the purchase, one of his English friends in the neighbourhood gave him the money for it, and also lent him a further sum with which to purchase type and pay the expenses of the first edition of the Scriptures. So Carey posted off to the capital to make arrangements for the Bengali type to be cut, and to engage workmen. His plan was to print the whole Bible in four volumes. With his limited means he felt it would only be possible to buy paper for an edition of one thousand, and he estimated the total cost at about £2000. He hoped it might be possible to sell five hundred sets at Rs.32 each to cover the cost, and then be in a position to give



away the remaining five hundred sets. Looking back with the experience of a century to guide us, we know that it would have been very much better to have begun by printing the Gospels separately, one by one, at a price low enough to have placed them within the reach of large numbers of people. But that had still to be discovered; the day of the "one pice Gospel" (farthing Gospel) was still far distant.

In the early summer great news arrived from England—the Committee had resolved to send Carey the reinforcements he had repeatedly asked for. Carey at once began to make the best arrangements he could for giving effect to his projected missionary colony. But the difficulties were greater than ever. His own position had become extremely precarious and he felt that the situation at Mudnabatty was fast becoming impossible. Year after year the indigo had been a failure, and it was obvious that, unless there was a great change, the factory could not be kept open much longer. Acting on his own initiative and responsibility, he bought from Mr Udney a small indigo works at Kidderpore, a dozen miles from Mudnabatty. It was to be paid for gradually from the profit on the crops—surely a rash venture in the light of his five years' experience as a planter! He thought of it as a refuge for his family in case of his having to leave Mr Udney's service, and also as a site for his proposed mission colony.

Then came the crash. The crops were once more entirely destroyed by great floods during the monsoon and Mr Udney found it impossible to go on. In September (1799) the Mudnabatty factory

closed down. This deprived Carey of the employment upon which he depended for support, and threw him entirely upon his own resources. With that noble generosity that characterized all his actions, however, Mr Udney undertook to pay Carey's salary until the end of the year, and thus give him time to make some arrangements for maintaining his family. "Our difficulties will not be small," wrote Carey; "but I am not discouraged. . . . We must endure much, struggle hard, and perhaps be obliged to draw an additional hundred pounds from the Society. . . . I see no other way to preserve the existence of the mission."

Carey had now been in India six years, and the whole time he had been compelled to struggle against difficulties of one sort and another. Discouragements and set-backs lay thickly strewn along the path, and now he wrote to Fuller: "At no time have the affairs of the mission appeared more gloomy in point of success than at the present." Then he braced himself to meet the new crisis.

Turning his face towards his holding at Kidderpore he set about building a home for his family, and others for the new colleagues when they should arrive. This little factory was vital to their coming, for they were to be registered as coming out to be his assistants. A month later Carey got the news that four new missionaries, with their wives and Fountain's bride, had landed in India. This was indeed great news! In a few days Fountain set out by boat to meet them.

From this hour, with dramatic suddenness, the whole scene changes.

## CHAPTER XVII

### A REFUGE UNDER THE DANISH FLAG

*October 1799 to January 1800. Age 38.*

CAREY'S appeals for more men had not fallen upon deaf ears. Fuller and Ryland, Sutcliff and Pearce, and the other "rope holders" in England were steadily widening the circle of missionary interest in the home churches, and funds were accumulating. At the close of 1798 the Society had three thousand pounds in hand. Early in that year Carey had been able to tell them that missionaries might be sent to Bengal *if they were registered as assistants to his indigo factory*. Upon receipt of this news, the indomitable Andrew Fuller left no stone unturned to send out to his friend the reinforcements he needed; and within nine months of the receipt of Carey's letter, four missionaries were sailing down the Channel on their way to India. One of them was William Ward, the Derby printer, whom Carey had met seven years before. "We shall want you in India in a few years to print the Bible; you must come after us," Carey had said to him. Another was Joshua Marshman, a schoolmaster, who had left home for India at less than three weeks' notice. Their companions, Grant and Brunsdon, were also men of zeal and promise. Marshman and Grant were married, and had each two children; Brunsdon married before sailing, and a Miss Tidd also went with them to marry Fountain.

Arrangements for the voyage caused no little anxiety, for the East India Company was as hostile as ever. The Company's spring fleet was preparing to sail for Calcutta, but to have attempted to get a passage for them as missionaries on one of the vessels would have met with certain refusal, and instructions would have been sent out to India to keep a strict watch. Landing would have been wellnigh impossible. Thoughts naturally turned to Denmark, but it was too late in the season: all the Danish vessels had already sailed. It chanced, however, that there was an American ship, the *Criterion*, on the eve of sailing for Bengal. Fuller at once applied to the captain for passages on her for the whole party of twelve—four men, four women, and four children. Captain Wickes promptly replied that he was a Christian man, and had long desired the joy and privilege of taking out messengers of the Gospel to the great nations of the East. On May 29th, 1799, therefore, the *Criterion* sailed from Portsmouth with the missionaries and their families on board.

The outstanding problem that occupied this band of recruits, both before sailing and during the voyage, was that of landing in Calcutta. Fuller had consulted Charles Grant, who by this time had become a Director of the East India Company, but retained his early enthusiasm for the evangelization of the Indian peoples. Grant was very sympathetic; but knowing the bitter hostility of his colleagues on the Court of Directors, he advised Fuller that the new missionaries, instead of exposing themselves to immediate banishment by landing in Calcutta, should go direct to the Danish settlement at Serampore. Acting upon this advice they secured a note

of introduction from the Danish Consulate in London to the Governor of Serampore.

A spell of good weather and favourable winds enabled the *Criterion* to complete the voyage in little more than four months, and on October 5th she anchored in Sangor Roads at the mouth of the Hooghli. The hour of crisis had arrived. The pilot came on board and delivered to Captain Wickes the papers he was required to fill in as to the names, destination, and profession of his passengers. It was an anxious moment, and the missionaries held a hurried consultation as to whether it was advisable to report themselves as assistants to Carey, proceeding to his indigo factory near Malda—the plan Carey himself had recommended. But youthful eagerness and inexperience prevailed; they openly avowed their errand, and were entered upon the official document as Christian missionaries proceeding to the Danish settlement of Serampore. The papers were duly sent up to Calcutta; it was deemed unwise to wait for a reply, and at a fitting opportunity Captain Wickes transferred the missionaries, their families, and their baggage to two boats and sent them up stream to Serampore in charge of his own Indian *sirkar* (clerk) who spoke a little English.

On Sunday morning, October 13th, just as the day was breaking, they hove to off Serampore. Marshman was the first to spring ashore, and falling upon his knees he gave thanks to God for having brought them safely across the ocean and permitted them to land on Indian soil.

The missionaries obtained lodgings at a little inn,

and next morning they presented themselves to the Danish Governor, Colonel Bie, who read their letter of introduction and received them with every token of kindness and goodwill. He offered to do anything in his power to assist them on their journey up country to join Carey, but at the same time expressed grave doubts as to whether the East India Company's officials would allow them to go. The missionaries, however, hoping for some special intervention in their favour, at once wrote to tell Carey of their arrival, and began to make arrangements and engage boats for the journey.

But the Governor knew the Company better than they did, and his surmise was correct. That evening their devoted friend Captain Wickes appeared with ill news.

The Government of Bengal was not likely to take quietly the deliberate defiance of its own regulations. Immediately the pilot's report of the *Criterion's* passengers reached Calcutta, the police submitted it to the Governor-General in Council. It was the first instance in which the arrival of missionaries had been officially brought before the Government, and it was obviously a challenge to their authority. When the *Criterion* reached Calcutta on the Monday, Captain Wickes was informed that he would not be allowed to unload his vessel until he should bring his four passengers to the police office there to enter upon an engagement to return to England immediately!

This blow was as serious as it was unexpected, and Captain Wickes at once took boat to Serampore to inform the missionaries, and consult with them as to the course to be taken. Great was the con-

sternation of these young men when they learned of the trouble their foolishness had brought upon their friend the captain; for, although they themselves, while they remained at Serampore, were beyond reach of the Government, his loss would be very serious indeed if he were not allowed to land the goods he had brought out. Probably they wished that they had been less headstrong and had followed the wiser and more cautious plan laid down by Carey, instead of deliberately flinging down the gauntlet to the all-powerful Government.

It was not easy to see a way out of the difficulty; so, after praying earnestly for guidance, they retired to rest, having resolved to seek Colonel Bie next morning. The Danish Governor was a man of small stature but great courage and resolution. During the forty years he had spent in Serampore, he had frequently come into collision with the British authorities in Calcutta; and although his only defence was a small saluting battery, he had often resisted the demand of successive Governors-General for the surrender of fugitives who had sought protection under his flag. While serving in South India, many years before, he had come under the influence of the great German missionary, Schwartz; and he now resolved to assist these Baptist missionaries to the limit of his power. He assured them that they were quite safe with him, and welcome to remain. But he was prudent as well as brave, and there was poor Captain Wickes to think of. He therefore advised them to lay a full explanation of their case before the Governor-General, Lord Wellesley.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Brother of Arthur Wellesley afterwards the famous Duke of Wellington.

Accordingly, that Tuesday morning Ward and Brunson set off to Calcutta, only to find on arrival that matters had been made worse by a statement that had appeared in the Monday's newspaper to the effect that four *Papist* missionaries had arrived on a foreign vessel and had gone to Serampore. The editor had either never heard of the Baptists, or had wilfully misrepresented them in order to prejudice their case. Papists were not popular in those days—especially in India, where it was believed that the French had emissaries travelling in disguise in order to prepare the way for the invasion Bonaparte was supposed to be contemplating. Happily Lord Wellesley was as just as he was wise, and was soon convinced that the Baptist missionaries who appealed for his help were true Protestants and loyal Englishmen, and had only the most peaceful and humanitarian motives. He recognized, too, that at Serampore they were beyond his reach; and he also saw that he had no legal right to penalize Captain Wickes merely for bringing out four passengers and their families to a foreign settlement. He therefore ordered that the *Criterion* be entered at the Custom House in the ordinary way. The good Captain Wickes then notified the police that his passengers did not propose either to present themselves at the office or to settle in Calcutta.

The first crisis had passed. At Serampore the new missionaries were safe under the friendly flag of Denmark. But they had no thought of remaining there. Carey was waiting for them at his newly acquired estate at Kidderpore, and they desired to join him as quickly as possible.



Here, then, they found themselves facing their next problem—that of obtaining the Governor-General's permission to go up country. Had they adhered to Carey's plan and entered Bengal as planters, going to be his assistants on his indigo plantation, there would, in all probability, have been little trouble. But by proclaiming themselves missionaries they had challenged the decisions of the Honourable Court of Directors; and the Governor-General in Council, having such a plain avowal before him, was bound to carry out the instructions from London. These four inexperienced young men were up against a wall of granite.

They wrote to Carey for advice. But two or three weeks must pass before they could hear from him, and in the meanwhile Captain Wickes and Colonel Bie were their advisers. The captain waited upon the Rev. David Brown, the devoted chaplain, to invoke his influence with Lord Wellesley, at the same time presenting to Mr Brown a letter of introduction the missionaries had brought with them from the venerable clergyman John Newton, friend of Cowper and Sutcliff. Captain Wickes also showed Mr Brown the valedictory address of the Committee of the Missionary Society in which special stress was laid upon the duty of doing their own work and not meddling with politics. David Brown stood high in the esteem of the Governor-General and possessed not a little influence in the highest official circles; but though he did everything in his power, he failed to obtain permission for the missionaries to settle in British territories. Even had the Governor-General been willing, several leading members of his Council shared the feelings of the

Directors at East India House, and the earnestly sought permission was definitely withheld.

Then Governor Bie strongly urged that the missionaries should make Serampore their permanent headquarters, and promised his own help in all their undertakings. The only thing they could do was to report to Carey and await his reply.

To help them to meet their unexpected difficulties, Captain Wickes added yet another to his kindnesses by lending them a thousand rupees without interest. But the period of waiting was, to the new missionaries, one of uncertainty mingled with hope. Being unable to afford the expense of the little hotel, they hired a small house at the back of the town. It provided a cheap shelter for them, but it was a poor place; each family had but a single room about fourteen feet square, and one larger room which they used for their common table. In addition to its general inconvenience for eight adults and four children, the house was very damp. But the joy of having reached India more than made up for all these discomforts. The only Christian place of worship in Serampore was a Portuguese Roman Catholic Church; so, on the first Saturday, the missionaries invited a number of Christian people to join them for worship on the following day. The response was beyond their expectation. That Sunday morning, white-clad, bare-footed coolies came along carrying chairs for their masters. Shortly before the appointed hour the Governor himself and many other gentlemen arrived and speedily filled the room. It was Ward's birthday, and he was the preacher.

Such encouragement must have greatly cheered

the little band of missionaries, even in their uncertain position. But a heavy blow fell upon them a few days later. The first touch of fever carried off Mr Grant before his friends were aware of his danger. On the following day they sorrowfully bore his remains to the Danish burial ground—twenty days after their landing in India. He left a widow and two children. Twelve days later there was a wedding: Fountain had arrived from Mudnabatty to meet his betrothed, and they were married in Calcutta by the Rev. Claudius Buchanan.

Meanwhile, letters had arrived from Carey suggesting that renewed efforts should be made to bring pressure to bear upon the Governor-General through influential friends. He wrote to his friend Dr Roxburgh and tried to secure the help of H. H. Colebrooke, the eminent Orientalist. But it was to no purpose. It so chanced that at that time Lord Wellesley was particularly inflamed against the Calcutta press, and had even thought of deporting one or two editors. Carey's proposal to have a press at Kidderpore, two hundred miles from the capital, naturally met with a peremptory refusal.

While the British Government thus stiffened its opposition, the Danish Governor grew more friendly and more pressing in his invitation to the missionaries to make Serampore their mission centre as well as their place of refuge. Calling upon them in person, he assured them that in his little settlement they would be able to carry on their work without hindrance; they could open such a school as would soon become a source of income for the mission; and they could set up the press, and print Scriptures and tracts freely. He offered them the

status and privileges of Danish citizens, and promised to supply them with passports under his own official seal whenever they desired to travel in British India. And then, as a further inducement, he offered to make over to them the church he was even then raising subscriptions to build.

With such an offer before them it was deemed advisable for Ward to travel to Mudnabatty with Fountain and his bride in order fully to discuss the situation with Carey and to press upon him the desirability of his joining them at Serampore. He reached the indigo factory on December 1st.

Carey, with his usual clarity of thought and precision, thus summarized the pros and cons of the proposal :

(1) I shall be free from Mudnabatty on December 31st so that then no connection with Mr Udney can be any hindrance to my joining you.

(2) At Serampore we may be unmolested by government . . . here we could only live by connivance.

(3) No obstruction will lie in the way of setting up the press at Serampore ; here there may be.

(4) In that part of the country there are at least ten inhabitants to one here.

(5) Other missionaries may join us there.

All this is for settling at Serampore. On the other hand :

(1) I have engaged in a concern which is designed for the use of the Mission, which involved me in debt three thousand rupees, about two thousand of which will be paid off in a few days ; and then I am one thousand rupees in debt, and deserting the place.

(2) When I have paid that, I have not a rupee to subsist on, except by anticipating a year's allowance.

(3) An allowance like mine of a hundred pounds from the Society, amounts to only sixty-six rupees per month.

At Serampore, house rent alone will come to thirty or forty. If so, how can we subsist on the rest?

(4) Here our Church is formed, and God has given us two Europeans as our hire. A considerable number of the natives also have some light, though the conversion of any is uncertain.

(5) I am now at great expense erecting houses and conveniences, planting a garden, etc., which, with the three thousand rupees, will be entirely lost.

It was natural that Carey should be loth to leave the work upon which he had bestowed six years' labour, and which he had hitherto regarded as presenting such advantages for evangelism. But in the very midst of their discussions all hesitation was removed by the sudden arrival of a messenger from Serampore, conveying the news that the Government, having heard of Ward's visit to Mudnabatty, threatened to arrest any of their number who might be found "trespassing" on the Company's territories. This settled the question. Carey decided to fix his missionary colony at Serampore, and he at once set about making arrangements for the removal. The press and type were packed up and despatched with other effects, and Carey and Ward set out for Malda and Dinajpur, to bid farewell to the little company of Christian people whom Carey had gathered together. Nor were his many Indian friends overlooked. Then with his three boys, and his wife, whose health had steadily become worse and who was now in a state of almost hopeless insanity, Carey embarked upon another phase of his great enterprise.

On January 10th, 1800, he landed at Serampore.

## CHAPTER XVIII

### A WONDERFUL YEAR AT SERAMPORE : THE MISSION ESTABLISHED

*January to December 1800. Age 39-40.*

CAREY'S second apprenticeship was now completed. He had been in India more than six years. He was thoroughly acclimatized ; he had mastered the Bengali language so as to be able to address fluently large audiences, and had made considerable progress with the sacred Sanskrit—the root language of many of the North Indian vernaculars. He had translated into Bengali almost the entire Bible (with but little assistance from Thomas) and had, with the utmost diligence, revised and re-revised his work so that most of it was ready for press. Moreover, he had gained very considerable knowledge of the people, and had grasped many of the essential principles of missionary work in such a land. He was now equipped for fuller service. His missionary apprenticeship ended with the old century, and he stepped forth into the new century a fully-fledged missionary.

The removal from Mudnabatty to Serampore marks a decided epoch in Carey's life. Through the singular circumstances narrated in our last chapter, he was drawn from the scene of his apprenticeship to the place where the greatest achievements of his life were to be accomplished. Looking back to that

period we cannot fail to realize that through untoward circumstances God was working out His own wise purposes. The events that led Carey and his colleagues to settle in Serampore were not accidents but Providences.

Serampore was quite a small place on the west bank of the Hooghli. Immediately opposite was Barrackpore, where several regiments of the East India Company's troops were quartered, and where the Governor-General lived. The Danes had purchased Serampore—then a site of twenty acres—in 1755 from a Bengali Nawab for the establishment of a trading factory. It was one of the last sovereign acts of the native ruler before the whole of Bengal was conquered by Clive. The little trading settlement steadily increased in size and importance, and at the time Governor Bie welcomed the Baptist missionaries it was in its heyday of prosperity. Beside being a trade centre, it was a favourite refuge for debtors and people who had reason to fly from the Company's territories—a veritable Cave of Adullam. Here the aged Kiernander found refuge from his creditors, and here, under the flag of Denmark, Carey and his colleagues found the freedom that was denied them under the rule of the Honourable East India Company. For the rest of Carey's life it remained the permanent home and headquarters of the Mission.

We must now glance at the new missionaries.

A promising company they were. William Ward, son of a Methodist mother, was a Derby printer, who on behalf of his employer had been editing the *Derby Mercury*, in which work he had been a staunch

supporter of Clarkson in his struggle against slavery. Under his able editorship the *Derby Mercury* had become one of the chief provincial papers. In the enthusiasm and idealism of youth he had been a keen republican, but after his conversion he abandoned politics and threw himself into religious work. Carey's meeting with him before leaving England has already been recorded. Carey's keen eye had at once realized the value of such a man as the manager of a mission press, and now that the time had come to begin printing Scriptures, he welcomed him with joy. Ward was thirty years old at the time of reaching India.

The second member of the party, Joshua Marshman, was born in Wiltshire, within sight of the celebrated "White Horse" cut by our Saxon ancestors in the chalk of the hillside. Though his only schooling was at the hands of the village pedagogue, he early developed a passion for reading, and by the time he was twelve he had read more than a hundred volumes—all of them borrowed. By the time he was fifteen the list included Voltaire's *Candide*; *Travels of a Philosopher in China*; Josephus's *Works*, in twenty quarto parts; Salmon's *Geography*; *The Chinese Traveller*; a work on astronomy; *The Wonders of Nature and Art*; *Natural History of Serpents*; *Revolutions in the World*; a *Survey of England*, in six volumes; the *Conversations of Eusebius*; Neal's *History of the Puritans*; *History of England*; *History of Troy's Destruction*; *Don Quixote*; *Paradise Lost*; and Collyer's *History of England*. This confused jumble of books was not likely to be of real help to an almost uneducated boy; but his memory was



marvellous, and, like Macaulay, he earned the reputation of having read everything and forgotten nothing. On getting employment in a bookseller's shop in London, he revelled in the thousands of volumes around him, and read as many as he could. Much of his time was spent in delivering books to customers, and he usually read some of their contents as he walked through the streets—occasionally having the book banged in his face by some ill-mannered passer-by. He was not strong, and the labour of carrying heavy packages of books disheartened him. One day finding three heavy folios of Clarendon's *History of the Rebellion* too heavy for him he sat down near Westminster Hall and sobbed at the thought that he had no prospect of being anything higher than an errand boy. But the sight of the historic building brought to his memory some of the heroic deeds of the past; he rose, lifted his load to his shoulder, and resolved to win through. Returning to his native village he became a weaver. After his conversion he was kept for several years on probation by the elders of the local church, because, as worthy Farmer Bachelor said, "he had too much head knowledge of Christianity to have much heart knowledge of it." Then—in the year after Carey went to India—Marshman became teacher of a school in Bristol. While teaching there and giving lessons to private pupils, he attended lectures at the Academy and studied Classics, Hebrew, and Syriac. Bright prospects opened before him, but the reading of the *Periodical Accounts of the Baptist Missionary Society* turned his thoughts to the East. He offered to go out to be one of Carey's co-workers, was accepted, and in three

weeks he and his wife were on the water. He was then thirty-one years of age.

William Grant, the pupil and friend of Marshman, was, as we have already seen, only permitted to live three weeks in India. David Brunson was but twenty-two years of age at the time of their arrival. Both of them were sincere Christian men, and great hopes were entertained for a useful missionary career.

When Carey reached Serampore with his family, Governor Bie extended to him a welcome as cordial as he had previously given to the new workers. With characteristic eagerness Carey lost no time in getting to work. On the second day after his arrival—being Sunday—he preached to a large congregation of Europeans, and in the afternoon he went into the town and for the first time addressed the Indian population of Serampore.

Carey had developed amazingly. His six years' experience as manager of the indigo factory had developed the business side of his character and accustomed him to handling larger sums of money than had been possible in his little shoemaker's cottage in Northamptonshire. The man who set out from Calcutta with a hundred and fifty rupees in his pocket to become a planter had bought himself a small estate for three thousand rupees, paid off two thousand rupees and now felt that the right step was to abandon the whole thing, cut his losses and begin again in Serampore on a new scale. For years he had talked and written about missionaries living in grass huts on a mere pittance: and on reaching Serampore his first thought was to

buy a plot of ground on which to build such dwellings. But he quickly recognized an entirely new situation, and within a week of his arrival circumstances led him to purchase a large well-built house at a cost of six thousand rupees. Once and for all he threw off the idea of a "cheap" mission—a conception that had resulted from his own extreme poverty—and resolved that at Serampore the work should be carried on upon a scale large enough to ensure success. Expecting great things from God, he now attempted great things for God.

It was not the rashness of enthusiasm. He looked at all sides of the subject before determining the line of action. All possible resources, available and prospective, were carefully estimated. The accommodation necessary for residence and work was taken into account: there were five families, consisting of ten adults and nine children, to provide rooms for; there must be a hall for services, room for the establishment of the printing press, and there must be accommodation sufficient to run a school. The school was to be carried on upon such a scale as to be an immediate source of income, and it was hoped that before long the press would be at least self-supporting. Made bold by the prospects that opened before him, Carey brushed aside the idea of a hole-and-corner mission; he seized the opportunity, and by a bold stroke established the work upon a sound foundation. He found that if he were to rent a suitable house, the lowest rental he would have to pay would be fourteen hundred and forty rupees per year; that was half the total sum allocated to them for all purposes, and would cripple the work. Carey saw that it would be economical

to purchase a house, and there happened to be one available exactly suited to their needs. It was well situated on the river bank, had all the accommodation necessary, and two acres of ground behind it. One large room would make an excellent chapel. The price asked was six thousand rupees, and Carey and his new colleagues felt they must secure it at once, although they had not half the money. To meet the purchase price they used the money the new missionaries had brought with them, drew bills on the Committee, and raised a loan in Calcutta to cover the balance. The bargain left them with only two hundred pounds in hand for maintenance; but they looked to increase that by their earnings from the school. Carey, however, was not very comfortable about the expenditure both on the house and on the little estate he had abandoned at Kidderpore. He was convinced that he had taken the right step, but his letters to Fuller and the Committee betray not a little anxiety as to whether *they* would approve of it. He explained the position very fully and urged them to honour the bills he had drawn. The property was, of course, acquired in the name of the Missionary Society, and Carey and his colleagues constituted themselves trustees for the Committee.

The Mission was now housed in excellent premises, and plans matured rapidly. Carey's idea of a mission colony gave place to that of a missionary family, all living under one roof, having their separate apartments, but uniting in a common dining-room. The common expenses were to be met from the common fund, but each family was to receive a small allowance for private needs. It was

further agreed that whatever money should be earned, by the school, the press, or in any other way, should be paid into the common cash-box; and, moreover, it was laid down that no one was to engage in private trade or other ventures. The management of the household and domestic finance was to devolve upon each missionary in turn for one month; but as the Committee in England had appointed Carey their financial representative in India, his brethren elected him general treasurer of the family. As Dr Thomas was not with them, Carey, in view of his experience of Indian life, was appointed to take charge of the medicine chest. All books were pooled, and Fountain was made librarian. The obvious danger of the communal system was, of course, that of misunderstandings or quarrels arising between the several families; and to guard against this (since they were but human, and knew their own weaknesses) they set apart Saturday evening each week for settling any differences that might arise and for renewing their pledge of fellowship—a weekly clearing-house very necessary in the tropics, where the climate and conditions of life are often so trying that even the best men and women are apt to become low-spirited and irritable. Moreover, the little band of missionaries felt that they must have an organized church life for themselves and for such Europeans and Indian converts as might join them. They therefore constituted themselves a Baptist Church with Carey as their pastor, and Fountain and Marshman as deacons.

All were eager to make a start, and the work began immediately. In a side building attached to

the house Ward set up the printing press Carey had purchased more than a year before. The Bengali type was carefully unpacked, the stock of paper received from England stored away out of the reach of white ants, and in a few days the composing began. Having but a single press, and an old-style one at that, it was only possible to do one sheet at a time. Indeed the modest supply of type would not run to more. Ward set up the types with his own hands, and in three months he was able to present to Carey the first sheet of the New Testament (March 18, 1800). Slowly the copies of that sheet were struck off until two thousand were done.

In this work Ward had a splendid young helper in Felix, Carey's fifteen-year-old son. Familiar with the Bengali language from childhood he proved an invaluable assistant to the new missionary; whose knowledge of it at this time was necessarily almost nil, since he had been in India only five months. Carey's second son, William, aged thirteen, was also becoming useful.

As the printing proceeded, the missionaries, in their eagerness to circulate the Scriptures among the people, hit upon the idea (apparently to them a new one) of printing an edition of St Matthew's Gospel alone and distributing it as a separate booklet. Then there was another development. Towards the middle of the year Carey's old munchi, Ram Ram Boshu, turned up again, and as he was an excellent Bengali scholar and a good writer, it was resolved to employ him to write tracts for the press to print. The first of these, *The Gospel Messenger*, was intended to give a clear elementary account

of the Christian message to the peoples of India. Another dealt with the folly of idolatry. These were printed in large numbers and proved very useful.

While Ward and Felix were printing, Carey and Fountain were preaching. Carey regularly preached five or six times a week, in addition to open-air work, and had numerous conversations with individuals and small groups of people. A well sustained evangelism was carried on in Serampore town and suburbs, and in the villages around, and many interesting details are contained in the letters and journals of the period. Going into the market-place of a village, they would find around the temple gateway a group of Brahmins with the white mark of their god gleaming upon each brown forehead. In accordance with the custom of the country, a leading question opened the conversation. Carey would ask :

“ What is that mark on your face ? ”

“ It is the *Telak*,” they answered.

“ Why do you put on such a mark ? ” continued the missionary.

“ It is an act of devotion and holiness to wear it. The *Shastras* commend it,” was the usual response.

“ Tell me about these *Shastras*. How do you know they are divine ? ”

The Brahmins would explain a little about the sacred books of India, and then Carey and Fountain would produce a Gospel and ask : “ Have you ever seen the Christian *Shastras* ? Here is one of them. It tells the story of the life of the Lord Jesus.” Soon a company would gather round and listen as they read from St Matthew’s Gospel and expounded its message.

On another occasion, walking beside the great river Hooghli that flowed past their house, they marked the worshippers bathing and asked aloud, "Can any one inform us how sin may be pardoned?" "By bathing in the holy river," some one answered. Then sitting down on a grass mat on the ground among the pilgrims, Carey entered into a conversation about sin and its remedy. One man declared that acts of merit or penance would cleanse away sin, and the missionary explained that it is about as reasonable to look for mangoes on an Indian fig tree, or coconuts on the date palm, as to expect to see the fruits of holiness proceed from a sinful heart. Then Carey proceeded to tell the wondrous story of the great God who became man, and lived on earth for more than thirty years, without sin, and intent upon doing good; how He gave sight to the blind, healed the sick, the lame, the deaf, the dumb, and at last died for sinners. "Then," says Carey, "we would present those who could read with a copy of St Matthew's Gospel; they would promise to read it and make themselves acquainted with its contents and then meet us again to converse about it."

In the autumn of that year it was possible for Carey to write :

There appears to be a growing familiarity between us and the natives. They receive our printed papers and books with the greatest eagerness, and we cannot doubt but what they are pretty extensively read. One man says that he has lent his book to a friend at a distance; another meets us and repeats part of what he has found in a hymn; another attempts to find fault with something he has read. Brahmins manifest a great dislike to our preaching and printing.



Meanwhile, Marshman, the schoolmaster of the brotherhood, had made arrangements for two boarding schools for European children, one for boys and the other for girls. On March 20th, this advertisement was printed in the *Calcutta Gazette* :

**MISSION HOUSE**

**SERAMPORE**

On THURSDAY, the 1st of May, 1800, a SCHOOL will be opened at this House, which stands in a very healthy and pleasant situation by the side of the river.

**TERMS**

**Including Board and Washing**

	<i>per month</i> <i>Sa. Rs.</i>
Reading, Writing, Arithmetic, Book-keeping, Geography, etc. . . . .	30
Latin, Greek, Hebrew, Persian or Songskrit . . . . .	35

Particular attention will be paid to the correct pronunciation of the English language.

A Persian and Songskrit *munshi* will be employed.

✉ Letters addressed to Mr Carey will be immediately attended to.

The main object of these schools seems to have been to gain money for carrying on the work of the Mission, and in this they speedily proved successful. By the end of the year they showed a profit of three hundred rupees per month. European settlers were only too glad to avail themselves of such educational advantages for their boys and girls. In this work Marshman's wife proved herself an invaluable helper. Hannah Marshman was no ordinary woman, and though she went out to India as a missionary's wife, her own work was such as to entitle her to be

regarded as the first woman missionary in that land.

A month after the opening of the boarding schools, yet another school was opened. This one was for Indian boys. The instruction was given in Bengali, and very soon there were forty scholars. The missionaries felt that the attendance would be much larger were it not for the necessity of charging a fee. The development of commerce and the increasing intercourse with Europeans created in the minds of Indians a great desire to learn English, and in this Carey and his colleagues saw possibilities for the future.

It is amazing to find such hard work being undertaken during the fierce heat of the Indian summer—the first most of them had spent in the country. But the following rains brought trouble. Fountain was stricken with dysentery, and on August 20th he passed away, leaving the young wife whom he had married only nine months before.

There can be little doubt that Carey had ground for being disappointed with his first two colleagues—Thomas and Fountain—but Marshman and Ward were men after his own heart. When he discovered their devotion and capacity for real work, his joy was unbounded. He wrote :

Brother Ward is the very man we wanted, he enters into the work with his whole soul. I have much pleasure in him, and expect much from him. Brother Marshman is a prodigy of diligence and prudence, as is also his wife: learning the language is mere play to him; he has already acquired as much as I did in double the time. I believe all their hearts are entirely set on their work.

In less than twelve months Marshman was able to do a little street preaching and went out almost every day. Ward did not make such rapid progress,<sup>1</sup> but he frequently went out, taking with him his young friend and helper, Felix Carey, who, though only fifteen years of age, was already beginning to do a little street preaching.

Busy indeed were those eager pioneers. They all rose about six o'clock—the hour of daybreak.<sup>2</sup> Marshman's school began at seven, and at the same hour Ward, Brunsdon, and Felix went to their duties in the printing office. Carey himself used to work for an hour in his garden. At eight, a bell was rung for family worship, and all assembled in the hall. Then came breakfast. After that Carey settled down to his translation work and the others to their printing or school duties. At twelve o'clock they lunched, bathed, shaved, did a little reading, or had a sleep until three in the afternoon. After that, they pursued their language studies with their munchis, or did some other necessary work. In the evening there were the street preaching, the indoor services, and little meetings of their own for prayer, Bible reading, and fellowship.

. . . . .

By the middle of the first year, the press was employing a compositor, five press-men, a folder, and a binder, in addition to Ward, Brunsdon, and Felix. They were printing each week six thousand

<sup>1</sup> He ultimately became more fluent than Marshman in colloquial Bengali.

<sup>2</sup> In Bengal the sun rises between six and seven o'clock all the year round.

half-sheets — no mean achievement for an old-fashioned hand-press in the tropics. The success of their labours, however, outstripped the slender means at their disposal, and they found themselves in need of increased funds. They resolved to meet the difficulty by a very bold stroke. In the Calcutta newspapers, they announced the fact that they had set up the press in Serampore for the purpose of printing the Scriptures in Bengali, *and asked for subscriptions to enable them to carry on the good work!* Their suggestion was that people who were in sympathy with their object should subscribe two golden mohurs (about four pounds) for a copy.

This audacious move drew upon them the anger of the Governor-General. We have already seen how much he distrusted all presses and had tried to bring the Calcutta newspapers under his control. Here in Serampore, almost under his very eyes, but just beyond his reach, were the missionaries who had set the Government at defiance, printing whatever they pleased. He resolved to send a vigorously worded protest to the Danish Governor, urging—in fact demanding—the suppression of the mission press; but first he consulted the Rev. David Brown, in whom he had perfect confidence. By this time Brown had come to know Carey very much better than when, several years before, he had bowed him out of his house without refreshment. He had been completely captivated by Carey's character and high motives, and without hesitation he assured Lord Wellesley that there was not the slightest ground for fear, for the mission press existed solely for the spread of the Christian faith and morals. He further guaranteed the absolute loyalty of Carey

and his colleagues, and set at rest the Governor-General's misgivings as to the influence the Scriptures might have upon the Indian mind. This was a tremendous step forward.

The appeal in the Calcutta papers was entirely successful and brought in about fifteen hundred rupees, which solved the financial problems of the press. But the most important result was the change in the attitude of the Governor-General to the work. Never again had the missionaries anything to fear from Lord Wellesley.

Thus passed the year 1800—the birth year of organized missionary work, and wonderful for the progress achieved. It opened with the missionaries settling as fugitives in Serampore; it closed with the missionary colony well established upon a sound foundation, winning the confidence of men of goodwill—the senior chaplain, the Danish Governor, and even the Governor-General himself.

## CHAPTER XIX

### CONVERTS, TRIALS, AND PROGRESS

*1800-1803. Age 39-42.*

THE last days of that eventful year 1800 witnessed the baptism of the first Indian convert of the mission. It was an event long looked for and prayed for, both by Carey and his colleagues, and by their supporters in England. For seven years Carey had laboured without the joy of leading a single Indian to Christ, and Dr Thomas, including his first term of service in India, even longer. This was a source of great distress to them both, for all their labours were but means to the one end of winning Indian peoples to definite allegiance to Christ. Moreover, they often feared that their inability to report conversions might discourage the friends at home and cause their interest to wane. To what purpose the translations, the press, the schools, the evangelistic preaching, if the main object were not achieved?

It often happened that some man was attracted by the Gospel message, and for a time seemed disposed to respond to the call of Jesus. But for Hindus and Mohammedans to respond to His "Follow Me" meant the loss of all men hold dear, and when the hour of decision came they drew back. This happened so often that whenever a new "enquirer" showed promise, the missionaries "rejoiced with

fear" lest they should experience a new disappointment.

It was given to poor, broken Thomas to win the first real convert. As we have already seen, Thomas did not form one of the brotherhood at Serampore, but he was still regarded as a missionary of the Society. His financial affairs became more and more involved; everything he touched went wrong. In his frantic efforts to pay off his debts he tried one business venture after another, only to increase his liabilities and irritate his creditors. Yet his personal devotion never faltered, nor did his intense evangelistic zeal abate. Could he have been delivered from financial responsibility he would have made a most devoted missionary.

In October 1800 Thomas visited his missionary brethren at Serampore, bringing with him a Mohammedan sugar-boiler named Fukeer whom he had led to the point of decision. Great was the joy of all the brotherhood when they heard the man's story and listened to his simple confession of faith in Jesus. They all rose to their feet and with full hearts sang "Praise God from Whom all blessings flow." Then they shook Fukeer by the hand and received him as a brother in Christ. The question of his early baptism was raised, and Fukeer suggested that he should first go home and take leave of his family before separating from them, perhaps for ever. He went home—and the missionaries never saw him again. Another disappointment!

But on the very day the brethren sang that Doxology over Fukeer, a poor Serampore carpenter, a Hindu named Krishna Pal, met with an accident in which he dislocated his shoulder. Hearing of

this, the kind-hearted Dr Thomas immediately went off to his assistance. Surgical treatment was somewhat rough in those days. They tied the poor man to a tree, and while Carey and Marshman held out the arm, Thomas jerked the bone back into its socket. In his pain, the man cried, "I am a great sinner! A great sinner am I! Save me, Sahib! Save me!" Thomas was not the man to treat any patient without also speaking to him of the Lord Jesus, and he made the most of the opportunity in this case. Ten times over he repeated the words "He that covereth his sins shall not prosper, but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall find mercy," and he tried to get Krishna Pal to repeat them after him. Even "line upon line, line upon line" did not seem to make the meaning clear to the poor fellow, and so to help him Thomas called it the true *gayatri*<sup>1</sup> which if a man could truly pronounce and act upon, he would be saved—

*He that confesseth his sins,  
And forsakes them,  
Obtaining the righteousness of Jesus,  
Is free.*

On his recovery Krishna, together with a friend named Goluk, often visited the Mission House for further instruction, and one day, meeting Thomas in the street, he said to him: "Oh Sahib, I am a very great sinner, but I have confessed my sin . . . and I am free!" He came daily for Christian instruction, and his wife and daughter determined to join him in following Christ. The subject of baptism was broached—and of breaking caste—

<sup>1</sup> A sacred invocation solemnly repeated every day by caste Hindus.



and to the missionaries' joy the converts did not shrink. Three days before Christmas Krishna and Goluk openly renounced caste by joining the missionaries at a meal, and the same evening they, with Krishna's wife and daughter, came before the Church to confess their faith. When this breaking of caste became known, a riot followed. Two thousand people gathered before the houses of the converts and dragged Krishna and Goluk to a magistrate—who promptly ordered the mob to dissolve. To prevent violence, the Governor placed a soldier before their dwellings.

The baptism was fixed for Sunday, December 28th, and it was resolved to baptize them in the Hooghli, at the landing steps near to the Mission House. This was decided upon after very careful discussion, for the Hooghli is really one mouth of the sacred Ganges, and there was some fear that the Hindus might regard it as a recognition of the sanctity of the river. There was, however, once more a measure of disappointment—on the Saturday Goluk and the women held back. But Krishna himself stood firm, and it was resolved to baptize him along with Felix Carey, who had fully decided thus to pledge his allegiance to Christ.

It was indeed a great day for Carey. That Sunday morning the missionaries assembled in their chapel and then walked through a dense crowd of Hindus, Moslems, and Europeans to the landing place. Governor Bie was present, and with him a company of Danish and Portuguese Christians. Brunsdon, who had been seriously ill, was carried down to the river in a palanquin. Carey, as pastor of the little Church, was to officiate, and he walked down to

the water with his son Felix and Krishna Pal, one on either hand. Addressing the multitude, Carey explained the meaning of the ceremony and what it means to become a disciple of Jesus; and then, amid intense silence, the Hindu carpenter and the young Englishman were baptized together. In baptizing his son, Carey repeated the sentences in English; in baptizing Krishna Pal he spoke in Bengali.

Two things followed: that Sunday evening the Holy Communion was administered for the first time in the Bengali language. Next day, the vernacular school was left without a scholar! All had been withdrawn lest they too should become Christians.

A very dark cloud rested upon what would otherwise have been a most joyful event. The sudden joy at the conversion of Krishna Pal, coming after so many troubles and disappointments, was too much for poor Thomas. Religious mania developed, and by Christmas Day he had become so violent that it was necessary to put him under restraint at the Mission House. What conflicting emotions must have torn the heart of Carey as he led Krishna and Felix to the place of baptism that Sunday morning—knowing that his colleague was confined in one room and his own beloved Dorothy—Felix's mother—in another! On New Year's Day Carey and Marshman were obliged to take Dr Thomas to the Calcutta lunatic asylum.

That first baptism was speedily followed by others. Early in the New Year (1801) Krishna's sister-in-law was baptized—the first Hindu woman—and also Mr Fernandez, whom Carey had so helped

at Dinajpur. A month later Krishna's wife and another woman received baptism. In the following August Goluk took up his cross and followed Jesus, and in November his wife also confessed Christ in baptism. On the first Sunday in 1802, the first convert of the Kayast or writer caste was baptized—a man nearly sixty years of age and of high intelligence. He had read many of the Hindu sacred books, and for years had travelled to many shrines in his search for God. Failing to find satisfaction, he quietly gave up idol worship, and soon after got hold of one of Ward's tracts and was so impressed with it that he journeyed to Serampore to make further enquiries about the new "Way." He stayed two or three days with the missionaries and then went home to tell his family the things he had heard. Within a week he was back in Serampore. He soon renounced caste and received baptism. A month later, two other writers and a Kulin followed his example. Another writer-caste convert, Swamidas, was murdered while on his way to visit his family. At the beginning of 1808 the first Brahmin was baptized; he had become acquainted with the Gospel through reading one of the Mission tracts. His baptism produced a profound impression on the Hindus. By this time there were thirteen baptized Bengalis and eight enquirers.

The coming of Bengali converts into the Church created several questions that called for solution. One was as to the advisability of giving Christian names in place of their old Hindu or Moham-medan names to those who received baptism. Some urged that it would be a useful way of proclaiming the fact that they were Christians; but Carey

opposed it, and after discussion it was resolved not to do it.

A vastly more important matter was that of the attitude to be adopted towards caste among the converts. The missionaries well knew that their Danish predecessors in South India had allowed converts to retain their caste, and caste distinctions were thus perpetuated within the Church of Christ. After looking at the question very carefully, Carey and his colleagues felt that such a state of things could not be tolerated, and that from the very beginning the Bengali Christians must not be divided by such arbitrary social distinctions as the Hindu caste system imposes; they must be "one in Christ Jesus," and it was resolved to allow no compromise. Not that they contemplated coercion; but they hoped to lead all their converts to see that the caste system is contrary to the spirit of Christ. A little over two years after the baptism of Krishna Pal, the first Bengali Christian wedding was celebrated—Krishna's daughter was married to the Brahmin convert. "This," writes Ward, "was a glorious triumph over caste. A Brahmin married to a Sudra, and in a Christian form."

Six months later they had the first funeral of a Bengali Christian—Goluk, who had been led to Christ with Krishna Pal. Carey was in Calcutta and Ward at Dinajpur; the arrangements, therefore, were in the hands of Marshman. Instead of employing low class Portuguese as bearers—men who as likely as not would come to their duty drunk—Marshman decided to give a concrete illustration of the meaning of Christian brotherhood. So, to the amazement of the onlookers, he and Felix Carey,

Bhyrub, a converted Brahmin, and Piru, a converted Mohammedan, themselves lifted the coffin and placed it upon their shoulders. Singing a Bengali hymn, "Salvation through the Name of Christ," those four men slowly carried the body of their low caste brother through the streets of Serampore. Thus was proclaimed the unity of all Christians at Holy Communion, at the marriage altar, and at the graveside.

In the midst of their busy labours at Serampore, the missionaries had their joys and sorrows strangely interwoven. The heat of India told on Brunsdon's health, and for many months anxiety about him was acute. In our day he would be invalided home on an urgent medical certificate; but no such thing was thought of in Carey's time. Those men had "signed on for life" and never thought of coming home to England. As the months passed it became clear that there was no hope of recovery, and on July 3rd, 1801, he passed away. Three months later poor Thomas also entered into his eternal rest. He had recovered from his insanity, and had gone to live at Dinajpur. Misfortune followed him to the end; nor did his evangelistic zeal abate. But his state of mind was distressing to a degree. Humiliated by repeated failure, and painfully conscious that he was a burden and an anxiety to his friends, he had no wish to live. Mr Fernandez and others showed him every kindness and consideration, but he felt that his brethren at Serampore did not want him. He still dabbled with unwise business ventures, and when they wrote him letters of remonstrance, it cut him to the very heart. His

journal contains the most pathetic sentences, alternating between hope and despair; one day feeling "friendless, forsaken, poor, indebted to many, censured, despised, and treated coolly by those of whom better might have been expected," and the next day rejoicing in the goodness of God. There was a wild idea of earning money by starting a monthly magazine, then a final effort at making indigo. But he was a broken man; his health was shattered, and at last he realized—without the slightest fear or regret—that death was approaching. On October 13th, 1801, he passed away, and was buried by the side of Fountain. In all missionary literature it would be difficult to find a sadder story than the biography of John Thomas. But, whatever his faults, they were balanced by his great and never-failing love for Christ and his desire to serve Him. He was the first Englishman set apart for definite missionary work in India, and the first to lead an Indian to the Saviour.

Of the seven missionaries sent out by the Baptist Missionary Society, four were now dead. Only three were left to carry on the work. But what men those three were—Carey, Marshman, and Ward! In everything they towered above their former colleagues. It was a striking case of the survival of the fittest. Soon they came to be known as the "Serampore Triad," and they were so closely united in their labours that it is impossible to separate them or to write a life story of one that is not equally that of the others also. For twenty-three years they laboured in unbroken comradeship: then Ward was

taken, and Marshman and Carey continued working together until the death of Carey eleven years later. Marshman was spared for three years more. It was one of the most glorious fellowships this world has ever seen.

All branches of the work were developing. The boarding-school had grown so rapidly that in October 1801 the missionaries found it necessary to purchase a large house and grounds adjoining the one they already held. It was one of the finest houses in Serampore, and was acquired at a cost of ten thousand three hundred and forty rupees. How marvellously they had outgrown the petty ideas with which the work began! We have to write the word spacious over everything they undertook and every plan they devised. They were indeed attempting "great things" and carrying them out with remarkable success. So efficient did the school become that within two years of its opening it was yielding an income of nearly a thousand pounds a year. But, while they planned lavishly for the work of the Mission, their personal affairs and mode of life were governed by strictest economy.

February 7th, 1801, was a red-letter day for Carey, for on it he received from the mission press the last sheet of the Bengali Testament. The greater part of the volume had been set up by Ward, assisted by Felix. When all the sheets were assembled, the first bound copy was laid with reverent joy upon the Communion Table in their little chapel, and all the mission family and the baptized converts gathered there to give thanks to God. The first edition consisted of two thousand copies, and the cost of printing was six hundred and twelve pounds.

The mission base at Serampore was now firmly established. Herein is revealed the wisdom and statesmanship of Carey's original plan for a mission colony where the workers could live together and devote themselves to working out in unison the many-sided programme. A strength to one another, their collective influence was bound to be infinitely greater than it could possibly have been had they been scattered in ones and twos over a wide area. Had all Missionary Societies begun on a similar plan, and consistently adhered, in the main, to its outstanding principles, the story of missionary enterprise during the past century might have been very different. Too often the Mission staff have been unwisely spread out over a number of small ill-equipped stations. A death or a breakdown has caused the closing of a station for months or even years, and as a result progress has been retarded.

The strong base being now assured, the missionaries began to discuss means of wider evangelism, not yet by the opening of new stations, but by itinerant journeys. It was decided that from time to time one or two of the missionaries should go on tour, circulating Scriptures and tracts, and preaching as opportunity offered—just the work poor Thomas would have done so well could he have been dragged away from his wretched business ventures. It was found possible, also, to use some of the Bengali converts in this work. Krishna Pal, though only a carpenter, had a fluent tongue and no little natural ability, and it was agreed that he should accompany Ward on the first tour. For a fortnight they sailed along the rivers to the east-



ward, visiting several towns, and ultimately reaching Deharta, where a few years before Carey had attempted to settle down as a planter, in the hope of earning a living for his family and being able to preach the Gospel in his spare time. How Carey had developed since those days ! As they travelled, they were kindly received, and the novelty of their addresses attracted the people. The eagerness to obtain books and tracts exceeded all expectation ; the people literally besieged their boat and the stock was soon used up ; had it been five times greater, it would still have failed to meet the demand.

So satisfactory was this experiment that touring became a regular feature of the work. But they were not always kindly received. Marshman's journal tells how on one occasion, at Jessore, " a company of very bigoted Brahmans manifested the strongest repugnance to the Gospel, and, as discussion only appeared to create irritation," he hastened to withdraw, offering them first a few tracts—which they tore to shreds before his face.

Among the many and varied enterprises set on foot from Serampore may be mentioned the establishment of the first Sunday School in India ; it was organized by Carey's two sons, Felix and William, and their friend Mr John Fernandez. It was opened on Sunday, July 9th, 1803.

## CHAPTER XX

### CAREY BECOMES A COLLEGE PROFESSOR

1801-1804. Age 40-43.

IN a letter he wrote to Sutcliff at the close of the first year at Serampore, Carey casually informed his old friend that

There is a college instituted at Fort William, of which the Rev. D. Brown is appointed provost and C. Buchanan classical tutor; all the Eastern languages are to be taught in it.

Little did Carey imagine all that that announcement held in store *for himself*.

Lord Wellesley was one of India's ablest Governors-General. In his efforts to increase the efficiency of the Administration, he soon discovered that many of the public servants were unfit for their responsibilities. The usual thing was for youths of sixteen or eighteen to be withdrawn from public schools in England, and, without any special preparation, be sent to India as "writers" (as young clerks were called). Their duties were of the simplest character, and occupied but a few hours each day. Out of office hours they had no supervision, and most of them sank rapidly into a condition of indolence and vice. With the passing of years the tide of seniority brought them into positions of importance, and those who were passably proficient in the routine

of the counting-house were considered eligible for the office of magistrate, collector, or judge. They were absolutely ignorant of the language of India, of jurisprudence, history, and even of ethics.

The great Governor-General was not the man to tolerate such a condition of things, and after a couple of years' experience he resolved upon stern measures. He announced that no civil servant should be appointed to certain offices of trust and responsibility who did not possess sufficient knowledge of the laws and the Government Regulations and of the vernaculars of the people he was to rule over. Wellesley was the first Governor-General who fully realized the importance of using Indian languages in the Courts instead of Portuguese or English, and he decreed that young men would be allowed two years to acquire the necessary qualifications, fixing a date after which no appointment would be given to those who failed to pass the examination. Recognizing that this reform would be a dead letter unless followed up, Wellesley resolved to establish in Calcutta a central college in which young civil servants could be gathered to complete their education under the best possible tuition and supervision. Notice was issued throughout India inviting men of learning to come forward as candidates for posts of professors and tutors, and over fifty volunteered. One of the most important chairs was to be that of Bengali, and David Brown and Claudius Buchanan, who had been appointed Provost and Vice-Provost respectively, gave special care in the selection of a man to fill it. They came to the conclusion that there was but one man supremely qualified for the post.

Imagine Carey's surprise when, on the morning of April 8th, 1801, a letter from David Brown was put into his hand requesting him to go at once across the river to Barrackpore to discuss a proposal for his appointment as professor of Bengali at the Governor-General's new college! Dropping the work in hand, he hurriedly called together his colleagues and discussed with them this surprising communication. They at once grasped the opportunity of influencing the youths who would ere long be rulers in the land. A decision was speedily taken: they were of opinion that Carey ought to accept the proposed appointment, provided that it did not interfere with the work of the mission.

Carey called a boat and crossed the broad stream for the eventful conference. On meeting Brown and Buchanan he told them quite frankly how he felt about their proposition, and his fear lest such an appointment might be incompatible with his work as a missionary. They assured him that, in their judgment, the interests of the mission would be furthered thereby:

They thought that it would much contribute to our original plan, and that it would essentially serve the Mission. It would immediately introduce the Bengali New Testament into the College, and any other books also which I might recommend, and eventually would spread them into all parts of the country. . . . It would open a way to preach to the Hindus in Calcutta and its environs, and would put a number of respectable Hindus under my direction as *Munchis*.

They so pressed upon him the possibilities of their proposal that he was compelled to confess "I was not able to reply to their arguments. I

was convinced that it might be for the good of the mission. As to my ability, they were not able to satisfy me; but they insisted upon it that they must be the judges of that. I therefore consented with fear and trembling." With that Carey returned to Serampore to report to his fellow-workers. That evening he wrote to tell Sutcliff of the new door the hand of God was opening before him.

Next day Brown and Buchanan formally proposed Carey to the Governor-General, explaining without any reserve that Carey considered himself above all things a missionary and would only accept the appointment on the express condition that it would not interfere with his missionary vocation. To this, Lord Wellesley raised no objection, and being fully satisfied of Carey's loyalty and ability for the post, approved the appointment. David Brown took the opportunity to present to His Excellency a copy of Carey's Bengali New Testament, which was graciously accepted.

One difficulty arose. The Statutes of the college laid it down that all the superior officers and professors should promise that they would not maintain, in public or private, any doctrines contrary to those of the Church of England. Carey, as a Baptist, fell under this stricture, and while being appointed to teach what was declared to be one of the most important subjects, was only given the status of lecturer with a salary of five hundred rupees a month.<sup>1</sup> To him, however, this was little short of wealth.

On May 4th (1801) Carey took up his new duties. He found it convenient to stay in Calcutta each week from Tuesday evening to Friday evening, returning

<sup>1</sup> About £600 per year.

to Serampore for the week-end. The Bengali class began with thirteen students, and before the end of the first term Carey was appointed teacher of Sanskrit also. Writing to Dr Ryland a month after beginning work he said, "My ignorance of the way of conducting collegiate exercises is a great weight on my mind." We can well believe it.

Carey's first difficulty at Fort William College was that there were no vernacular books or helps of any kind that he could place in the hands of his students. Indeed, when he delivered his first lecture, not a single prose work in the Bengali language was known to exist. The Hindu pundits, proud of their sacred Sanskrit, had never condescended to write books for the instruction of Bengali-speaking people. He at once found himself compelled to create the literature he needed for his classes. Calling to his help his old munchi, Ram Boshu, he set to work to compile a *Bengali Grammar*, a *Sanskrit Grammar*, and a series of *Colloquies* intended to familiarize the students with Indian conversation. To supply reading books, Ram Boshu compiled a brief history of the popular local King *Pritapadityu*, which Carey speaks of as "the first prose book ever written in the Bengali language," and also some Sanskrit fables. Thus, preparing his own equipment, Carey launched out on his new career as a tutor of Oriental languages.

Carey's appointment to the Fort William College had important effects upon the mission. In the first place, the salary he received was a very substantial addition to the income of the Serampore brotherhood. Never for a moment did he think of departing from the rule they had laid down, namely, that any money earned privately by any one of

them should be devoted to the mission and not regarded as personal. A month after entering upon his duties in Fort William he wrote to Fuller that the income from his own salary and Marshman's school would enable them to do without further help from England, and that a sum recently received from the Committee was not to be touched, but placed at interest as the beginning of a fund to ensure the permanency of the mission.

Another result was that the appointment gave the mission the strong protection of the Governor-General. Little did they think how soon it would be needed. A moment of altogether unexpected crisis was even then approaching. When the missionaries awoke on the morning of May 8th—just four days after Carey began his work in the college—they discovered that during the night English troops had crossed the river and silently captured Serampore without firing a shot. Their friend, Governor Bie, was a prisoner of war. The cause of this extraordinary midnight raid was soon revealed, for at 10 a.m. the missionaries and other European residents were ordered to attend upon an English Commissioner at King's House, and there it was announced to them that the news had just reached India that England was at war with Denmark! Only a month earlier (though they did not then know it!) Nelson had attacked Copenhagen and compelled the Danes to surrender their fleet. This was anything but good news; for the Danish flag had been the missionaries' safeguard, and they must have felt some anxiety as to what might happen. But they had no cause for fear; Lord Wellesley had by this time complete confidence in Carey and no

longer regarded him and his colleagues as a danger to Bengal. They were now as safe under the flag of the Company as they had been under that of Denmark. For fourteen months Serampore remained in the hands of the British, and then, peace being restored between the two countries, it was returned to Denmark and the English troops withdrew.

Yet another result of Carey's appointment to the college was that it brought him into close contact with celebrated Indian pundits. He took full advantage of this opportunity, and within a couple of years he was preparing a revised edition of his Bengali Testament. The first was made among the indigo plantations of Mudnabatty, among a people speaking a local dialect, and even those who used pure Bengali had not the same scholarship as the pundits with whom Carey now came into contact. With the new facilities that opened to him, he became aware that his translation was full of errors in both idiom and syntax, and he was now able to master principles of Oriental translation that he had not understood before. So great was the improvement on the first translation that this revised edition amounted almost to a new version.

As a missionary, Carey took the deepest interest in the young Englishmen in his classes—an interest by no means limited to progress in their linguistic studies. Unquestionably it was part of Wellesley's well-considered scheme that these young men, training for the Civil Service, should be subject to moral and religious influences; and we may be sure that Carey would regard character-building as an important part of his work among them. That the moral atmosphere of the college was thoroughly



wholesome is evident from the fact that, as early as 1804, some fifty or sixty of the students united in opposition to a movement which they regarded as an effort to obtain public sanction for immorality. In vain some of the older servants of the Company, men who were veterans in vice, taunted the "virtuous youths" and appealed to them to "descend from their stilts" and do as other people did. The young college men would have none of it, and replied with caricature and invective.

In his anxiety to give the Fort William College all possible prestige, Lord Wellesley organized a great scholastic disputation to be held annually. He believed in the power of display, and these learned functions were conducted in that spirit of magnificence that characterized all his public actions.

Let us picture for ourselves the scene at the college disputation held in September 1804. The noble throne-room of Government House is thronged with the élite of Calcutta, and resplendent with all the pomp and beauty of the Governor-General's Court. The official *Gazette* tells us that all the principal officers of State were there, "the Honourable the Chief Justice and the judges of the Supreme Court, the members of the Supreme Council, the members of the Council of the College," the commercial magnates, and the most distinguished members of the civil and military communities, prominent among whom was the future Duke of Wellington. With these men there mingle gorgeous Indian princes, their silken garments flashing with jewels. There are learned pundits and eminent Brahmins—in short, all the wealth and learning and display of Bengal is assembled before the dais of the Governor-General. Three of the most proficient students of

the year stand forth as disputants to address the assembly in each language studied in the college, their professors at their side as moderators. Lord Wellesley laid special stress on Sanskrit, and as the first three years' course of study of that language had now finished, he ordered that the principal address should be delivered in it. Presently, one learned Orientalist stands before the throne to address the great Governor-General in the ancient classic tongue of India, and in spite of his academic gown we instantly recognize in that slight, stooping figure the erstwhile shoe-maker of Hackleton. The man who, at the age of twenty-three, learned Latin and Greek as he cobbled boots for Northamptonshire rustics, is at the age of forty-three addressing the Governor-General of India and his full court in Sanskrit. But how different from the man we saw in the little Baptist chapel in Nottingham a dozen years before! He has reached mature manhood. He is very bald, but curls of natural hair give him a dignified appearance and throw into relief the noble forehead that instantly shows the intellectual capacity of the man. His whole bearing proclaims him a scholar. There is the same eager eye, the same passionate voice.

In the hush that falls upon the splendid assembly, we hear Carey, the representative of Oriental scholarship, say in the course of his speech :

I have been in the habit of preaching to multitudes daily, of discoursing with the Brahmins upon every subject, and superintending schools for the instruction of Hindu youth. Their language is nearly as familiar to me as my own. This close intercourse with the natives for so long a period . . . has afforded me opportunities of information not inferior to those which have hitherto been presented to any other person. I may say, indeed,

that their manners, customs, habits, and sentiments, are as obvious to me as if I were myself a native. And knowing them as I do, and hearing as I do their daily observations on our Government, character, and principles, I am warranted to say (and I deem it my duty to embrace the public opportunity now offered me of saying it) that the institution of this College was wanting to complete the happiness of the natives under our dominion; for this institution will break down that barrier (our ignorance of their language) which has ever opposed the influence of our laws and principles, and has despoiled our administration of its energy and effect.

It was the first Sanskrit speech ever delivered by a European.

“I am much pleased with Mr Carey’s truly original and excellent speech,” was Lord Wellesley’s comment; “I esteem such a testimony from such a man a greater honour than the applause of Courts and Parliaments.”<sup>1</sup>

Six years before, Carey had written to Fuller that, although circumstances for the moment made it absolutely necessary for him to register himself as an indigo planter he would, if ever he were to be in the company of the Governor-General, not hesitate to declare himself a missionary. That opportunity had now come, and without fear he redeemed his promise. But though Lord Wellesley listened with sympathy and appreciation, there were in that throne-room not a few men who regarded Carey’s arrival with ill-concealed resentment and who only waited their opportunity to vent their wrath upon his head.

<sup>1</sup> An English translation of the whole speech had to be submitted beforehand to the Governor-General by Dr Buchanan. Before submitting it Buchanan touched it up, adding a few compliments of which Carey did not wholly approve. Buchanan and Brown were not a little afraid that Lord Wellesley might blue-pencil Carey’s reference to his missionary work, and they were delighted at his Lordship’s reply.

## CHAPTER XXI

### SERVICE FOR HUMANITY

*1801-1805. Age 40-44.*

IN the autumn of 1801 Carey's friend and patron George Udney, who had apparently recovered his financial position, was promoted to a seat on the Governor-General's Council. He had always been eager to help forward any good work, and his new position gave him opportunities he was not slow to use. One subject lay heavy upon his heart—the infanticide practised by some sections of the Hindu community. This was chiefly, though not entirely, connected with a great Hindu festival held at Gunga Sangor, where the holy river empties itself into the sea. This festival is held every year at the January full moon, and then, as now, was the occasion for scores of thousands of pilgrims to gather from all parts of Bengal to worship the great river-goddess. In their enthusiasm, and often in fulfilment of some vow, it was not at all unusual for individual pilgrims, amid loud cries of "Gunga mai kai jai" ("To Mother Ganges be victory") to throw infant children into the sacred river, to be drowned or devoured by the crocodiles or sharks. Fearing to increase the enmity of the Hindus by meddling with a religious custom, the Government had taken no steps to prevent this practice. Mr Udney lost no time in laying the matter before Lord Wellesley,

who was not the man to tolerate a crying wrong on the mere ground of expediency. The crucial question that had to be faced was this : Does the practice of infanticide rest upon the authority of the sacred books ? The Governor-General resolved to have this point thoroughly enquired into. Who was to conduct this important investigation ? Obviously it called for a man familiar with the Sanskrit in which the sacred books were preserved, a man of considerable scholarship, of wide sympathy, and of sound judgment. Again the choice fell upon William Carey, for it was felt that he possessed special qualifications, and that his position in the college with so many learned Hindu pundits around him gave him special facilities for such an enquiry.

Recognizing that this most difficult task might enable him to render a very important service to the people of India, Carey entered upon it with enthusiasm. Very soon after his arrival in India, he had become aware that on certain occasions, and under certain conditions, infanticide was practised. Once, while riding with Thomas in the vicinity of their indigo factories, he had found in a basket hung from the branch of a tree the remains of an infant that had been exposed there ; only the skull remained, the rest having been devoured by white ants. Buchanan tells us that it was no uncommon practice in those days for a sick infant to be thus exposed, in the belief that the little thing was bewitched. He says :

If a child refuse the mother's milk whether from sickness or from any other cause, it is supposed to be under the influence of an evil spirit. In this case, the babe is put into a basket and hung up in a tree for three

days. It generally happens that before the expiration of that time the infant is dead. . . . If it be alive at the end of three days, it is taken home, and means are used to preserve its life.

As the years passed Carey was moved to indignation by the stories he heard of the more deliberate form of infanticide practised at Sangor, and when he was appointed to investigate he soon became convinced that these practices were not enjoined by the sacred books. He therefore, in reporting to Government the result of his researches, urged that they be prohibited. The Governor-General at once issued a peremptory edict on the subject of infanticide, proclaiming the crime to be murder and, as such, punishable by death.

On the occasion of the next festival at Sangor fifty sepoys were stationed along the bank of the river to see that the law was obeyed. Not a single victim was sacrificed—infant or adult—possibly for the first time for centuries. In a few years it became unnecessary for Government to send sepoys to guard the river bank. So completely did this form of infanticide become a thing of the past that certain Hindu apologists have ventured to deny that it was ever practised.

The success in securing the edict prohibiting infanticide led Carey to turn his attention to an even greater social evil—the practice of *sati*, or the burning of Hindu widows upon the funeral pyre of the dead husband. It had occupied his mind for some years; but it must have seemed too big and too deeply rooted a custom for him to tackle with any hope of success. Now, with

the influence and prestige of his position in the Fort William College, he realized that the task was no longer beyond the bounds of possibility, and he resolved to "attempt great things for God" in this matter also.

As early as 1799, while still an indigo planter, Carey had been for the first time in his life the unwilling witness of a case of widow-burning. We must let him tell his own story :

We were near the village of Noya Serai. . . . Being evening, we got out of the boat to walk, when we saw a number of people assembled on the riverside. I asked them what they were met for, and they told me to burn the body of a dead man. I inquired if his wife would be burned with him ; they answered Yes, and pointed to the woman. She was standing by the pile, which was made of large billets of wood, about 2½ feet high, 4 feet long, and 2 wide, and on the top of which lay the dead body of her husband. Her nearest relation stood by her, and near her was a small basket of sweetmeats. . . . I asked them if this was the woman's choice, or if she were brought to it by any improper influence ? They answered that it was perfectly voluntary. I talked till reasoning was of no use, and then began to exclaim with all my might against what they were doing, telling them that it was a shocking murder. They told me it was a great act of holiness, and added in a very surly manner, that if I did not like to see it I might go farther off. . . . I told them that I would not go, that I was determined to stay and see the murder, and that I should certainly bear witness of it at the tribunal of God. I exhorted the woman not to throw away her life ; to fear nothing, for no evil would follow her refusal to burn. But she in the most calm manner mounted the pile, and danced on it with her hands extended as if in the utmost tranquillity of spirit. Previous to her mounting the pile the relation, whose office it was to set fire to the pile, led her six times round it. . . . As she went round she scattered the sweetmeat above mentioned

among the people, who picked it up and ate it as a very holy thing. This being ended, and she having mounted the pile and danced as above mentioned (*N.B.* the dancing only appeared to be to show us her contempt of death, and prove to us that her dying was voluntary), she lay down by the corpse, and put one arm under its neck and the other over it, when a quantity of dry cocoa leaves and other substances were heaped over them to a considerable height, and then *Ghee*, or melted preserved butter, poured on the top. Two bamboos were then put over them and held fast down, and the fire put to the pile, which immediately blazed very fiercely. . . . No sooner was the fire kindled than all the people set up a great shout—Hurree-Bol, Hurree-Bol. . . . It was impossible to have heard the woman had she groaned or even cried aloud, on account of the mad noise of the people, and it was impossible for her to stir or struggle on account of the bamboos which were held down on her like the levers of a press. We made much objection to their using these bamboos, and insisted that it was using force to prevent the woman from getting up when the fire burned her. But they declared that it was only done to keep the pile from falling down. We could not bear to see more, but left them, exclaiming loudly against the murder, and full of horror at what we had seen.

This harrowing narrative, in the main, though with considerable variations of detail, closely resembles many other accounts of *sati* that have come down to us—all the records of eye-witnesses.

Early in 1808 Ward wrote in his journal :

A horrible day—the Churuk poojah and three women burnt with their husbands on one pile, near our house.

This triple burning served to focus the missionaries' attention upon the cruel practice. Selecting a number of trustworthy Indians they sent them travelling over an area round Calcutta to report the widow-



burnings that came under their notice. The number was found to exceed four hundred, and it was estimated that in all the Bengal provinces no fewer than ten thousand persons were thus consigned to death in the course of the year. From the learned pundits in the college Carey collected from the Hindu sacred books the passages upon which this cruel custom was believed to be based. These investigations tended to show that *sati* was a rite *countenanced* rather than definitely *enjoined* by the sacred law.

Carey placed the results of this enquiry in the hands of Mr Udney, who worked them up into proper form and then submitted representations to the Governor-General in Council, urging that *sati* be at once forbidden. So strong was the case presented to him that Wellesley took a definite step by submitting it to the Judges of Appeal. Early in August 1805, the Court presented a report in which they urged that the Government should act on the principle of moulding its policy by "the religious opinions and prejudices of the natives."

There can be little doubt that Wellesley leaned towards prohibition, but he felt that the matter called for very much further consideration, and as his term of office as Governor-General was within seven days of its close, he resolved to leave the subject for his successor to deal with. On August 15th, Wellesley sailed for England, and Lord Cornwallis took up the reins of Government. "I feel confident," said Wilberforce in the House of Commons, "that had Lord Wellesley continued in India but one year longer, the frequency of such scenes [as widow-burnings] would have been diminished."

## CHAPTER XXII

### THE GREATEST FIGHT OF ALL

*1805-1813. Age 44-52*

THE staff of the mission was growing. In 1803 a new man arrived from England—John Chamberlain. For the first time there was no anxiety about landing. "We have no longer any dread of Calcutta," wrote Ward, who went down to meet him. The police were duly notified, but no opposition was offered to his entering the country. Such was the change of feeling toward the missionaries that Danish passports were no longer a necessary precaution; once when Ward had occasion to take an extended journey through British territory he applied to the British Government for a passport, which was immediately granted.

At the beginning of 1805, four more missionaries arrived—Messrs Moore, Rowe, Biss and Mardon. They came via America on an American vessel, for the Directors of the Company in London were still hostile to missionary work, but they landed in Calcutta without difficulty. Yet another member was added to the officially recognized staff—Felix, Carey's eldest son, who, after helping in the work from boyhood, had been formally accepted as a missionary by the Society at home.

The missionary colony at Serampore now consisted of eight families and more accommodation was

necessary. The press also needed larger premises, and so did the school. Happily it was found possible to purchase a very suitable property adjoining their chapel, for the sum of one thousand four hundred and twenty pounds, which they borrowed and gradually repaid from their own earnings. Once again they vested the property in the Society although it was purchased with their own money.

These pioneers were so devoted to the work that they deliberately and always disclaimed all right to their own earnings, or to the property and other equipment purchased therewith. Fuller thought they carried this principle of self-sacrifice too far, and proposed that the Committee should suspend the self-imposed rule by permitting them to keep one year's income as a little provision for their families. The Committee demurred! (By what right, or on what principle, it is difficult to see.) Fuller asked the missionaries for their own views about his proposal, and Ward replied that he and his brethren, having ventured their lives and their families in the mission, could not be expected to "count the *cowries* they contributed to it." At that time the Marshmans were making a thousand pounds a year on the school, and were receiving only thirty-four pounds of it for themselves. The Wards, from the proceeds of the press, had twenty-four pounds a year; and Carey, out of his college salary, with his delicate wife and three boys, had only forty pounds per annum, with a small addition of twenty pounds to enable him to go to the college and Government House in what he termed "decent apparel."

Despite his great achievements, there had long

been friction between Wellesley and the Directors of the East India Company. Under his strong administration, the area of the British territory in India increased by two-thirds. It annoyed him to find that his policy of territorial expansion aroused criticism in England. Says his biographer: "Wellesley chafed at the narrow, petty, tradesman-like opinions of the Company; he would be, as he was, the Architect of Empire. But it cannot be forgotten that though magnificent as a master he must have been to the last degree exasperating as a servant. He was not trained to go in harness." His insistence on efficiency, and his demand for more thorough training of the Company's servants aroused a great deal of personal animosity against him. The establishment of Fort William College brought down upon him a storm of antagonism from Leadenhall Street. The college, as we have seen, was constituted in 1801. In the following January the Court of Directors peremptorily ordered its immediate suppression. Wellesley had established the college without their permission and they could not brook his lofty spirit of independence. Among other objections it was urged that the college was an unnecessary expense. The great Governor-General was not the man lightly to abandon a scheme he deemed so vital to his administration. He was equal to the occasion, and addressed to the Directors a strongly-reasoned appeal, meanwhile passing an Order in Council that had the effect of continuing the college until December 1803, "in the hope," he said, "that the Court would diligently weigh all the considerations he had placed before them, and revise the order for the abolition of the college." This

bold move saved the institution. But it did not save its promoter. Notwithstanding his great services, he was repeatedly censured for his disobedience, appointments, and expenditure, and in 1805 he was removed from his high office.

With the retirement of the Marquis of Wellesley from the Governor-Generalship of India a period of reaction began. His successor, Lord Cornwallis, was deliberately sent out to reverse his policy of expansion of the Company's dominions. Within ten weeks of landing Cornwallis was dead. Sir George Barlow, the senior member of Wellesley's Council, now took up the reins of Government. He was a rather weak man and very responsive to whatever influences were brought to bear upon him ; and, as his occupancy of the Governor-Generalship was only temporary, he felt that he had no option but to carry out the will of his honourable masters in Leadenhall Street.

. . . . .

For some time the Serampore missionaries had been contemplating an advance movement. Serampore was an ideal base, but it was far too small an area for their activities, and with an increasing staff they began to plan enterprises on a wider scale. The time seemed to have arrived for opening several new mission stations in Bengal and the adjoining province of Orissa. These stations were to be from a hundred to a hundred and fifty miles apart ; each was to be in charge of a resident English missionary, and was to have around it a few out-stations under the care of Indian helpers.

Three weeks after Wellesley's departure one of

the new missionaries, William Moore, accompanied by William Carey, junior, went on a pioneer journey to the east of the Hooghli. For the first seventy miles the people were already familiar with their tracts and Gospels. On reaching Dacca they found themselves on new ground and they were received with extraordinary eagerness. But next morning, when the missionaries began work in the town, a messenger from the British magistrate came to them with a peremptory demand for their passports. Presuming on the freedom granted to their fellow-workers in recent years, they had none. In no friendly tones the magistrate and the Government "collector" reminded them of the consequences of travelling without passports, and ordered them immediately to leave the district. It was the first murmur of an approaching storm.

Two months later Ward visited Jessore to investigate the possibilities of getting land there for a mission station. The local magistrate was courteous, but insisted that the missionaries must first secure the Government's permission. It was evident that they could not carry out their proposed extension without official sanction; yet, as the Company's express orders against missionary work were not cancelled, but had merely been allowed by Lord Wellesley to remain in abeyance, an appeal to Government "was more likely to procure a special refusal than a special licence." But they were not entirely without hope that their request might be granted. Sir George Barlow knew them and had indeed been closely associated with Carey in the Fort William College. Moreover, he had just appointed their firm friend, George Udney, to be

vice-president of his Council. They therefore resolved upon a bold step.

Carey arranged to meet Mr Udney for breakfast one morning and laid before him the plan for opening new mission stations. Udney entirely sympathized with the proposal, and undertook to forward an application to Sir George Barlow. The request was drawn up with the greatest care. After explaining the project and asking permission to carry it out, it concluded with this appeal :

We wish for no privileges or exemptions, but merely for leave to settle, preach the Gospel, and distribute Bibles, or other religious tracts, among the natives, without molestation or prohibition from the magistrate of the district ; and for a general licence to itinerate for this purpose in any part of the British dominions in India. . . . It is our desire to be subject to the laws of the country in every respect ; and we shall esteem it a duty to teach the people their obligations to obey the magistrates and pay all respects to the government under which they live. As Hindoo and Mussulman teachers and the ministers of the Roman Catholic persuasion have full liberty to settle and to propagate their sentiments in every place, we hope the same liberty will be granted to a society of Protestants.

The Governor-General's reply was disappointing, but it could not have been altogether unexpected. Sir George Barlow said that he was personally favourable to missionary exertions, but that he had not the power to authorize missionary establishments in the country and could not act in opposition to the known sentiments of the Court of Directors.

In their enthusiasm for the work, the devoted men at Serampore became reckless. Throwing their usual caution to the winds they resolved to go

forward *without* Government sanction. They sent Mardon to Malda, and Biss and Moore to Dinajpur. Malda was a fairly safe place, for no magistrate or collector resided there. But at Dinajpur there lived a judge who was not disposed to turn a blind eye towards the missionaries. After demanding their passports and finding they had none, he ordered them either at once to return to Serampore or to remain in the town and refrain from work while he sent to the Supreme Council for direction. Knowing that the latter course would inevitably mean expulsion and probably very serious consequences to the whole mission, they agreed immediately to return to Serampore.

Looking back, we are disposed to think that the time for this attempted advance was ill-chosen and probably served to intensify the feelings of the Council against them. They attracted to themselves still more of this unpleasant attention when, in the summer of that year (1806), they opened for vernacular preaching a small thatched building they had erected on the site purchased for a chapel in the Bow Bazaar, Calcutta. When Ward opened this preaching house on June 1st no little interest and curiosity were aroused. "Crowds poured in at the gate and filled the little bungalow and compound to listen to a Christian discourse from the lips of Hindoo converts and to see a European Gentleman addressing the people." It was the first time the Gospel had been publicly preached to the natives of Calcutta in their mother tongue. Unfortunately there was some little disturbance. A noisy crowd followed the Indian preachers, shouting and pouring abuse upon them; and Ward himself was assailed with cries of "There



he is! That's the padre! Why dost thou destroy the caste of the people?" A fortnight later when a converted Brahmin exhorted his countrymen to accept the new faith, "he was overwhelmed with vituperation." But there was nothing approaching a riot or tumult and in a few weeks the excitement subsided. The missionaries were delighted and felt they had gained an important and promising opening for evangelistic work in the capital. But, mild as it was, the clamour of the crowds on the first few Sundays provided an argument for the men who were waiting a chance to denounce the missionaries as disturbers of the public peace.

A few weeks later the missionaries' old friend, Captain Wickes, once more anchored his ship, the *Criterion*, off Calcutta and landed two new workers—Messrs Chater and Robinson. The arrival of these reinforcements brought the opposition to a head, and the Police Office gave orders that the new missionaries were not to leave Calcutta without express permission. Carey at once went to enquire the cause of this unusual procedure, and was informed by the magistrate in charge that a special message from Sir George Barlow had been awaiting him for several days. This message was brief but startling: "The Governor-General did not interfere with the prejudices of the natives and he must request Mr Carey and his associates to abstain likewise from any interference with them." To remove any uncertainty as to the meaning of the Governor-General's words, the magistrate amplified them by explaining that the missionaries must not preach to the natives or allow their Indian converts to do so; they must not distribute pamphlets nor permit others to

circulate them; they must not send forth Indian preachers or take any step, by conversation or otherwise, to induce the Indian peoples to embrace Christianity.

This was a bombshell and Carey and his companions were distressed and perplexed. They expressed themselves as being "utterly unable to account for this sudden and adverse change in the disposition of the Government." Their foes had long awaited a favourable opportunity to pounce upon them, and that opportunity had now come in a most unexpected way, as follows.

Startling news had reached Calcutta of a terrible tragedy in South India. At two o'clock on the morning of July 10th (1806) the sepoy's stationed at Vellore, near Madras, suddenly mutinied and attacked the European garrison. The colonel and thirteen other officers, with a hundred non-commissioned officers and men, were massacred.

This tragic event made a profound sensation throughout India. The feeling that no reliance could now be placed upon the Indian troops produced a sense of insecurity that bordered on panic, and all manner of wild theories and suggestions gained currency. The anti-missionary party, unusually strong at this juncture, immediately raised the cry that the mutiny was a result of missionary work. "The natives were afraid that Government intended to convert them by forcible means" it was affirmed; "and the sepoy's becoming alarmed, had mutinied."

Vellore is a thousand miles from Serampore, and there were no English missionaries anywhere near—in fact, there were none at all in the whole Madras Presidency, or anywhere in India save Bengal. Yet

the missionaries were blamed for the outrage, and clamorous voices loudly demanded their expulsion from India.

Influenced by the panic of the moment, the Governor-General yielded to the popular clamour, and imposed upon Carey and his colleagues restrictions so severe as virtually to end all their work outside the narrow confines of the Danish settlement. Had they resided on British soil it is more than likely that they would have been expelled the country. Once more Serampore became their haven of refuge.

At this trying moment David Brown stepped forward and used his influence on behalf of his missionary friends. Not daunted by the failure of his first efforts, and utterly regardless of his personal interests, he tried again and again, using every argument he could devise. At last he succeeded in persuading Sir George Barlow to modify his prohibition to this extent :

(1) The missionaries remain at Serampore to act with full power as they choose.

(2) There is no objection to their circulating the Scriptures.

(3) There is no objection to their preaching in their own room in Cossitollah Street [Calcutta], or in the house of any other person, provided they do not preach openly in the Bow Bazaar.

(4) Natives may teach and preach wherever they please, provided they be not sent forth as emissaries from Serampore. There will be no objection to their exercising in the Bow Bazaar, or anywhere else, when they can procure permission from the Court of Directors, or from the British Government.

This note, expressing the final decision of the Governor-General, was handed to David Brown by

a magistrate, who was forced verbally to assure the Senior Chaplain that no complaints against the Baptist missionaries had been received from Indians of any class.

Meanwhile, what was happening to the two new missionaries, Messrs Chater and Robinson, whose landing in Calcutta at so unfortunate a moment had seriously complicated the situation ?

After being detained for several days in Calcutta, and receiving very insulting replies to their appeals to the hostile magistrates, they and their families were taken to Serampore by Carey and placed under the Danish flag. The Calcutta Superintendent of Police reported this to the Governor-General in Council and Sir George Barlow ordered them to leave India without delay. Even Mr. Udney felt himself powerless to intervene, and the missionaries had no option but to rely on Danish protection. The British officials took up the matter with the Danish Governor, Colonel Krefting, and asked for proof that the King of Denmark had extended his royal protection *to these last arrivals*. The Danish Governor, however, held his ground. Determined to leave no stone unturned, the Calcutta police notified Captain Wickes that he would not be allowed to clear his vessel unless he guaranteed to take Chater and Robinson away with him. This was a very serious matter for the captain, and the senior missionaries resolved that it would be their duty to surrender their new colleagues rather than to let their old friend Captain Wickes suffer so seriously. But the captain, emboldened by a similar experience half a dozen years before, was not to be frightened and he threatened the magistrates and police officials with

serious foreign complications—with his own U.S.A. Government and also with that of Denmark—if his vessel were detained. He had already been ten weeks in Calcutta; and so vigorous were his representations that the authorities at last realized that Leadenhall Street might not approve of being forced into trouble with foreign Governments. They therefore gave Captain Wickes unconditional leave to clear his ship; but at the same time renewed their demands that Chater and Robinson should leave India. The missionaries, however, “sat tight” in Serampore.

When the news of the Vellore massacre reached England, it produced as painful an impression as it had done in India. In their first panic the Directors of the Company, “in order to vindicate the national respect for the religious usages of our native subjects and to make a sacrifice to their violated rights,” promptly recalled the Governor of Madras and then proceeded to investigate the cause of the outbreak. The enquiries that followed proved to all reasonable men that the Vellore mutiny had no relation, direct or indirect, with missionary work.

But at that time the anti-missionary party in England was as strong as in India. A crusade was promptly started and the country was deluged with pamphlets against the unoffending missionaries at Serampore. The blatant assertion that they were the cause of the Vellore troubles was ably repudiated by such men as Lord Wellesley, Lord William Bentinck (who, as Governor of the Presidency at the time, was certainly in a position to know the

facts), Charles Grant (now a Director of the East India Company, and the year preceding the Vellore massacre Chairman of the Court of Directors), Wilberforce, Lord Teignmouth, and other men in high positions in Government circles.

But so strong was the attack on missions that the friends of the work were obliged to take up the challenge and fight the battle through. Andrew Fuller became a veritable whirlwind for the cause he loved. Learning that the British Government, as well as many of the Directors of the East India Company, were strongly prejudiced against the Baptist missionaries by reason of personal letters they had received from certain individuals in India, he went up to London, time after time, and had many important interviews with Charles Grant and other outstanding men in official ranks. Lord Teignmouth, a prominent member of His Majesty's Privy Council, admitted that they had no complaints whatever from the Indian Government concerning the missionaries. In a long interview with Dundas—the President of the Board—Fuller fought point by point the charges made in the private letters. Then he secured half an hour's interview with the Marquis of Wellesley, who declared that the statement that the missionaries were "in any way accessory to the Vellore mutiny" was "impossible." His lordship added that when he was in India he thought it his duty to facilitate the labours of Carey and his colleagues so far as he could do so without implicating the Government. Determined to leave no effort untried, Fuller visited other prominent people, and had two more interviews with Lord Teignmouth, who, on his second

visit, read to the missionary secretary a statement he had drawn up in favour of missions, which he had prefaced by saying that "Missions are *right*, and whatever is right will be found to be *wise*." His lordship also said: "Our foothold in India is very precarious, unless we have a body of [Indian] people attached to us, and that can be done only by Christianity. . . . I will undertake to prove, that, independent of every other consideration, it is sound policy to encourage Christian Missions in India."

By the time the news of Vellore reached England the storm that raged around the missionaries at Serampore had abated, and the year 1806 closed quietly. There was a lull, and for the first eight months of 1807 Carey and his co-workers steadily pursued their labours.

There can be no doubt that the missionaries had regained a measure of official confidence, and the New Year had scarcely dawned when Carey's own sphere of influence was appreciably widened. The Fort William College was, by orders of the Company, remodelled.<sup>1</sup> To save expense the Directors had resolved to reduce the officials and staff of the institution. The offices of Provost and Vice-Provost were abolished—a stroke of the economy-axe that deprived David Brown and Claudius Buchanan of their positions and of a considerable portion of their respective incomes. The number of professorships was reduced to three—Bengali, Hindustani, and Persian. Strangest of all, the clause

<sup>1</sup> Under the powerful influence of Pitt, the Court of Directors had cancelled their order for its suppression. Wellesley had triumphed.

in the college statutes which had prevented Carey being more than a lecturer was revoked and—wonder of wonders—he was promoted to a full professorship and his salary doubled. This meant an income from this source alone of fifteen hundred pounds a year. What finer vote of confidence could the Government have given him ?

Then came yet another tribute of honour and esteem. Early in March Carey received from the United States of America a letter announcing that the Brown University had conferred upon him the degree of Doctor of Divinity.

On the last day of July 1807 a new Governor-General landed in Calcutta to replace Sir George Barlow. India's new ruler was Lord Minto. A month after his arrival in Bengal a fresh storm broke upon Carey and his fellow-workers.

On September 2nd Dr Carey received a request to attend at the office of the Chief Secretary of the Council. He at once obeyed the summons and was informed that there had come into the hands of the Government a Persian tract, published by the Serampore Press, containing offensive statements about Mohammedanism and its founder. An explanation was demanded, and Carey was obliged to answer that he had not seen this tract, but would make enquiries about it. He assured the Chief Secretary that he did not approve of abusive language being used by missionaries and he offered to submit for the Government's approval all future publications of the mission press—an offer which the secretary haughtily replied he had no instructions either to accept or reject. He was manifestly in an unfriendly mood.



It turned out that the tract in question was a short account of the life of Mohammed taken from the introduction to Sale's well-known translation of the *Koran*. The missionaries had given a Bengali transcript of this to a munchi (who had been converted from Mohammedanism to Christianity) for him to translate into Persian; it was now found that—unknown to them—he had inserted into it certain offensive comments of his own. These were the passages objected to by the Government. The missionaries expressed their sincere regret that such a tract had gone out from their press; they repudiated the offending sentences as contrary to their ideas, and undertook to hand over to the Government the whole edition save some three hundred which had been circulated and could not be recalled.

It soon became evident that the anti-missionary party were using the Persian tract to inflame the mind of the new Governor-General against the work. Lord Minto, having been in India less than a month, knew nothing of Carey and his colleagues, who were probably represented to him as men who were a danger to the state. George Udney was no longer in the Council, and there was no one at Lord Minto's elbow to present the other side of the case.

The Government deputed several magistrates and police officials (known to be hostile to the missionaries) to collect incriminating information. These men set spies, pretending to be religious enquirers, to report the words of the missionaries and secure copies of further publications. The Council thereafter directed its Secretary to send a peremptory letter to Dr Carey, prohibiting further preaching in Calcutta and the

issue of any publications with the object of converting the natives to Christianity; and also demanding that the press be forthwith removed from Serampore to Calcutta so that the Government could exercise control over it.

The Governor-General also wrote to the Danish Governor to acquaint him officially with the proceedings, and to state that, in the view of the Council, it was "obviously regular and highly expedient that the press and the missionaries should be placed under the immediate control of the Government of India." But Colonel Krefting was a strong man and knew his ground; moreover, he knew the missionaries—which Lord Minto did not. He declared that he would not allow the press to be removed, and that if the British authorities resorted to violent measures of compulsion he would strike his flag.<sup>1</sup>

The situation was serious in the extreme. To remove to Calcutta was to put the whole mission under the feet of its most violent foes. The consultations were long and anxious. David Brown urged that a memorial be presented to the Governor-General in Council. Carey and Marshman were for leaving the matter in Colonel Krefting's hands; but Ward wisely urged that they must not antagonize the Government which had the power to stop Carey's salary and to prevent the further circulation of the Grammars, Dictionaries, and other publications. It would be folly (Ward said) to let the Danish Governor embroil himself with the British Govern-

<sup>1</sup> Happily the news had not then reached India that England was, even at that hour, again at war with Denmark. How fortunate that there were no cables in those days! The tidings reached Calcutta the following January, and Serampore was promptly captured by English troops and held until the restoration of peace after Waterloo in 1815.

ment. He counselled a personal interview with Lord Minto—to whom, as yet, they were strangers.

It was, therefore, resolved that Carey and Marshman, as joint translators of the great Hindu sacred epic the *Ramayana*, should wait upon His Excellency and present to him a copy of this as evidence of the Oriental studies they were engaged upon. Lord Minto received them with great courtesy, accepted the copy of the *Ramayana*, and allowed them fully to explain to him their work. He asked many questions, and at last agreed to receive from them a Memorial, setting forth their defence, and promised that he *would himself study it before presenting it to his Council*. It was evident that he was favourably impressed by the interview; Carey and Marshman were not the type of men he had been led to believe.

Returning to Serampore, Marshman set to work to draw up the Memorial upon which "so much depended. It was a most able production, a masterpiece of plain reasoning. It told the story of the origin and objects of the mission, of the kindness received from Lord Wellesley, and of the gracious manner in which His Majesty George III. had accepted a copy of their Bengali New Testament and Pentateuch. It was stated that up to that time they had baptized about one hundred Indians, including twelve Brahmins, sixteen men of the writer caste, and five Mohammedans. There was an apt reference to a clause in the Company's charter of 1698 which directed that the ministers of the Honourable Company should learn the Portuguese and Indian languages "*to enable them to instruct the Gentoos in the Christian religion.*" The Governor-

General was reminded that quite recently the Court of Directors had ordered a memorial to the missionary Schwartz to be placed in the Settlement Church in Madras, the inscription to be translated into different Indian languages in order that their admiration of his character—missionary though he was—might be universally known. Then the Memorial dealt convincingly with the present trouble, the Persian tract, the preaching in Calcutta, and the general evangelistic objects and methods of the mission. The appeal concluded with an explanation of the difficulties and ruinous cost of removing the mission to Calcutta—difficulties and expense so great as to involve the whole of their enterprise in ruin. The Memorial was signed by all the missionaries and presented to Lord Minto on October 1st; according to his promise, His Excellency read it carefully, and on the following day laid it before his Council, together with a letter he had received from Colonel Krefiting. The Memorial had done its work in Lord Minto's own mind; he saw that the missionaries were men of sane judgment and ability, and could be trusted; on his motion the Council meekly revoked its previous order and accepted Carey's offer to submit all future publications for approval. The Council directed its Chief Secretary to send to Dr Carey the following note :

I am directed to state that the Governor-General-in-Council is fully convinced of the rectitude of the intentions of the Society of Missionaries, and that the precautions which Government deems it necessary to adopt against the unlimited employment of the press proceed exclusively from the duty imposed on Government of reserving to itself the authority of determining what

publications may or may not expose the public tranquillity to hazard.

There was a special thanksgiving meeting at Serampore when this message arrived, and Carey went across the river to thank Lord Minto. "The storm is over," he wrote to Fuller a few days later.

The attack that had threatened to overthrow the mission really left it in a stronger position than it had ever been before. The Supreme Council felt it necessary to send home an explanation of the late controversy with the missionaries and the Governor of Serampore. This official letter to Leadenhall Street betrays no little embarrassment and an evident desire to justify, if possible, what the Council felt to have been a blunder. In reply there came from the Directors a well-merited rebuke and a caution to the effect that in the event of future charges being brought against the missionaries it would be desirable to enter into private communication with them before again taking public action! The Directors significantly reminded the Government of India that the missionaries were under the protection of Denmark and "not living under our authority," and then added this sentence that would have rejoiced the missionaries' hearts had they known it:

We rely on your discretion that you will abstain from all unnecessary and ostentatious interference with their proceedings.

The enemy was utterly routed.

During the next two or three years the missionary conflict continued to be fought out in England. A wave of missionary interest was passing over the

land, and a suggestion made by Carey himself was taken up with enthusiasm. He wrote :

Be not cast down on our account ; the cause in which we are engaged is the cause of God and must prevail. I think, however, that a petition to Parliament might be presented, praying respectfully for leave to settle missionaries and for them to be allowed to pursue their labours among the natives, subject in all civil matters to the laws of the country. I doubt not but with a little exertion a million of signatures might be procured to such a petition.

The leaders of the missionary movement resolved to make a united effort to influence Parliament in the way Carey suggested when the Company's Charter should come before the Houses in 1813. After a long and bitter controversy, first in the country and then in Parliament, the following clause was embodied in the Act renewing the East India Company's Charter :

That it is the duty of this country to promote the interests and happiness of the British dominions in India, and that such measures ought to be adopted as may tend to the introduction among them of useful knowledge and of religious and moral improvement : that in the furtherance of the above objects sufficient facilities shall be afforded, by law, to persons desirous of going to and remaining in India, for the purpose of accomplishing these benevolent designs.

Provided always, that the authority of the local Government, respecting the intercourse of Europeans with the interior of the country be preserved, and that the principles of the British government on which the natives of India have hitherto relied for the free exercise of their religion, be inviolably maintained.

The Bill received the royal assent on July 21st, 1813. The long battle was won at last. India was open to missionary effort.

## CHAPTER XXIII

### THE SCRIPTURES IN FORTY LANGUAGES

IN the heat of the great controversy in England in 1809 Southey, defending the Serampore Triad, wrote <sup>1</sup> :—

These low-born and low-bred mechanics have translated the whole Bible into Bengali, and have by this time printed it. They are printing the New Testament in the Sanskrit, the Orissa, Mahratta, Hindustan, and Guzarat, and are translating it into Persic, Telinga, Karnata, Chinese, the language of the Sikhs and of the Burmans ; and in four of these languages they are going on with the Bible. Extraordinary as this is, it will appear more so when it is remembered that of these men one was originally a shoe-maker, another a printer in Hull, and a third the master of a charity school in Bristol. These low-born, low-bred mechanics have done more towards spreading the knowledge of the Scriptures among the heathen than has been accomplished or even attempted by all the world besides.

Startling as this statement appears, it was literally true. These three men at Serampore had become a veritable Bible Society in themselves. The story is so remarkable that we must watch it as it unfolds. There were, even when Southey wrote—long before the Triad reached the limit of their output—people who asked incredulously, “How can these men translate into so great a number of languages ?” Carey’s answer to this question was prompt and characteristic : “Few people know

<sup>1</sup> In the *Quarterly Review*.

what may be done till they try, and persevere in what they undertake.”

In the far-off days in Northamptonshire Carey had diligently cultivated his natural gift for languages—first, as a schoolboy, Latin, then Greek and Hebrew, next French, Dutch and Italian. Moreover, he accustomed himself to reading the Bible in these tongues. While still a village shoemaker he formed the habit of beginning each day by reading a chapter of Scripture, first in English, and then in each of the languages he had learned. On reaching India, one of his first thoughts was to translate the Book he loved into Bengali. In the midst of his indigo-making he patiently worked at his self-appointed task. Working from the original Greek, he finished his first translation of the New Testament by 1796; then, with a Greek concordance at his elbow, he four times revised it.

That was the beginning.

The New Testament finished, Carey worked at the Bengali Old Testament, which was published in sections between 1802 and 1809. Of all the translations of subsequent years, the Bengali version lay nearest to his heart, and he was for ever revising and improving it. The very drastic revision of the New Testament appeared in 1806, the third edition in 1811, the fourth in 1816, and so on down to the eighth and last which was published in Carey's old age.<sup>1</sup> He also published five editions of the Bengali Old Testament.

Carey soon found that, though his Bengali version was well received by the middle class people, the

<sup>1</sup> Page 314.



proud Brahmins would have little or nothing to do with it; they scorned a book in the vernacular of the common people; to them, no book was worthy to be called sacred that was not in their ancient Sanskrit. So at the earliest opportunity Carey began to translate the books of the Bible into that language. To his great joy he found that the Brahmins were at once attracted to the Scriptures when printed in Sanskrit. The Sanskrit New Testament was completed in 1808, and the Old Testament between 1811 and 1818. Carey had long known that Sanskrit was the classic religious and literary language of India. He now began to realize that it was also the root of, and the key to, most of the modern vernaculars of the country. When he had mastered it, he found that he had in his hand the philological key that opened to him vast possibilities of translation work hitherto undreamed of. He wrote :

The Ooriya, though possessing a separate grammar and character, is so much like the Bengali in the very expression that a Bengali pundit is almost equal to the correction of an Orissa proof sheet, and the first time that I read a page of Goojarati the meaning appeared so obvious as to render it unnecessary to ask the pundit questions.

Somewhat timidly at first, Carey and his missionary colleagues resolved to launch out on a comprehensive scheme of Bible translation. Carey wrote :

We have it in our power, if our means would do for it, in the space of about fifteen years to have the word of God translated and printed in all the languages of the East.<sup>1</sup> Our situation is such as to furnish us with the

<sup>1</sup> Sublime optimism! Our increased knowledge of the number and diversity of the Oriental languages makes us smile at the naive simplicity of this sentence.

best assistance from natives of the different countries. We can have types of all the different characters cast here. . . . The languages are the Hindustani (Hindi),<sup>1</sup> Maharastia, Ooriya, Telinga, Bhotan, Burman, Chinese, Cochin-Chinese, Tongkinese, and Malay. On this great work we have fixed our eyes. Whether God will enable us to accomplish it, or any considerable part of it, is uncertain.

This bold plan soon took definite shape, and early in 1804 they proposed to the Committee in England that a fund of a thousand pounds a year should be raised, to enable them to translate Scripture into the seven chief languages of India. Andrew Fuller promptly set to work to raise the money. On a tour of some one thousand three hundred miles through England and Scotland he raised thirteen hundred pounds. Friends in America raised another seven hundred pounds.

But just at that moment there occurred an event of supreme importance to the whole missionary enterprise and of Bible translation in particular. At a meeting held at the London Tavern, on March 7th, 1804, the British and Foreign Bible Society was formed. Within three months of its foundation, its Secretaries wrote to Calcutta to ask George Udney to take steps to form an auxiliary in Bengal and proposing that he, with David Brown, Claudius Buchanan, and the Serampore Triad, should be the local committee. When this Bengal Committee of the Bible Society settled down to definite work, it agreed to pay the Serampore missionaries three hundred rupees a month to assist them in their translation work. This, together with the

<sup>1</sup> Carey here seems to confuse Hindustani and Hindi. The latter has a Sanskrit character, the former a Persian.

money Fuller had collected in England, and that received from the United States, made it possible for the Triad to push ahead with their project. Book by book, portions of the New and Old Testaments were rendered into Sanskrit, Orissa, Maharati, Hindustani, and Gujarati, and sent to the press. Carey was the master-translator and what we should to-day call "the General Editor"; he was ably seconded by Marshman who, in 1811, received from the Brown University the degree of Doctor of Divinity as Carey had done four years earlier. Ward, becoming more and more engrossed with the printing department of the great enterprise, did very little of the actual translation work, for which, indeed, he lacked the linguistic qualifications of his colleagues.

But, able and energetic as they were, Carey and Marshman alone could never have accomplished the amazing amount of work that stands to the credit of the Serampore press. At the mission headquarters they gradually gathered around them a large body of pundits and munchis from all parts of India, and employed them in translating the Scriptures into various languages and dialects. These men wrote out rough translations of the books upon which they were severally engaged, after which they read each other's work (in languages common to two or more of their number), and consulted one another as to the difficulties they encountered and ways of improving the translation they had made. In course of time some of these pundits, after being employed for some years on translating and correcting MSS. and press proofs, came "almost to know the Scriptures by heart." Henry Martyn, in his famous *Journal*, tells how,

when he reached Serampore in 1806, he was amazed to find the pundits at work, one translating Scripture into Sanskrit, another into Gujarati, and a table covered with materials for a Chinese Dictionary.

During these busy years Carey's own life was nothing short of amazing. Here is a record of one day in Calcutta—it is dated 1806 :

He rose at a quarter to six, read a chapter from the Hebrew Bible and spent some time in private devotion. At seven the servants came in for family prayers in Bengali, after which, while waiting for his *chota* (*i.e.* little breakfast), he spent some time reading Persian with a munchi, and then a portion of Scripture in Hindustani. The moment breakfast was over, he settled down to the translation of the *Ramayana* from Sanskrit into English. At ten o'clock he went to the college, where his classes and other duties kept him until two p.m. On returning to his lodgings he examined a proof sheet of his Bengali translation of Jeremiah until dinner-time. After this meal, assisted by the chief pundit of the college, he translated most of the eighth chapter of St Matthew's Gospel into Sanskrit, until six o'clock when he sat down with a Telugu pundit more fully to study that language. At half-past seven he preached in English to a congregation of forty persons, including one of the judges (from whom at the close of the service he got a subscription of five hundred rupees towards the new chapel). At nine o'clock, "the service being over and the congregation gone," he sat down and translated Ezekiel xi. into Bengali—which took him nearly two hours. He wrote a letter to a friend in England; then, after reading a chapter from his Greek Testament by way

of private devotion, he went to bed. Such a day's work makes one's head reel!

Translation work on so extensive a scale inevitably involved a vast amount of linguistic research work. In December 1811 we find him writing to Dr Ryland (with whom, as a man of considerable scholarship, Carey always corresponded on such matters):

The necessity which lies upon me of acquiring so many languages obliges me to study and write out the grammar of each of them, and to attend closely to all their irregularities and peculiarities. I have therefore published grammars for three of them, the Sanskrit, the Bengali, and the Mahratta. I also intend to publish grammars of the others, and have now in the press a grammar of the Telinga language, and another of that of the Sikhs, and have begun one of the Orissa language. To these I intend in time to add those of the Kurnata, the Kashmeera, and Nepala, and perhaps the Assam languages. I am now printing a dictionary of the Bengali, which will be pretty large, for I have got to 256 pages quarto, and am not nearly through the first letter. That letter, however, begins more words than any two others. I am contemplating, and indeed have been long collecting materials for, a universal dictionary of the oriental languages derived from the Sanskrit, of which that language is to be the ground-work, and to give the corresponding Greek and Hebrew words. I wish much to do this for the sake of the Bible in the oriental tongues after we are dead.

Fifteen months later we find him writing—this time to Fuller:

I was never so closely employed as at present. I have just finished for the press my Telinga grammar; the last sheet of the Panjabi grammar is in the press. I am getting forward with my Kurnata grammar; indeed it is nearly ready for press. I am also preparing materials for grammars of the Kashmeer, Pushto, and Billoch; languages, and have begun digesting those for the Orissa.

The care of publishing and correcting Felix's Burman grammar is on me, beside learning all these languages, correcting the translations in them, writing the Bengali dictionary, and all my personal and collegiate duties. I can scarcely call an hour my own in a week. I, however, rejoice in my work and delight in it. It is clearing the way, and providing materials for those who succeed us to work upon.

It is hardly too much to say that from 1804 onwards Bible translation was the main object of Carey's life; but this enthusiasm for it did not blind him to the value of other translation work. He felt that there was important research work to be done in connection with the sacred books of India, and as early as 1803 he submitted to the college authorities a proposal to publish a series of Sanskrit classics with English translations. At that time the scheme was thought too ambitious and too costly. But two years later, just before Wellesley left India, Carey and Marshman undertook the task of publishing, under the patronage of Government, some of the most important of the Sanskrit books. For this work the college and the Asiatic Society agreed to pay them a stipend of three hundred rupees a month. "This will maintain three missionary stations, and we intend to apply it to that purpose," wrote Carey concerning this addition to their income. At his own suggestion, he began this new undertaking with a translation of the great Indian epic poem the *Ramayana*. It is essentially the Bible of the Hindi-speaking peoples, a book that is familiar to, and touches the lives of, millions in Upper India. Andrew Fuller had no use for such a book, and impatiently spoke of it as "a piece of lumber." Carey, however, was too great to be narrow; he desired that English

readers should have access to the Iliad of India, and all who have read that mighty poem adjudge him right. In 1807, while still working on the *Ramayana*, Dr Carey was elected a member of the Bengal Asiatic Society. More than ten years before, when he first began to learn Sanskrit, he stated as his reason "that I may be able to read their *Shasters* for myself." He soon familiarized himself with the *Vedas* and the *Puranas*; then he read the *Mahabharata*—another sacred epic. Carey and Marshman joined in translating the *Ramayana*, and the first three quarto volumes were printed at the mission press between 1806 and 1810. Carey also edited for the college the Sanskrit text of the *Hitopadesa*, a collection of Aryan folk-tales, and he carried through the press "*the Sanskrit Dictionary of Amara Sinha*, the oldest Indian lexicographer, with an English interpretation and annotations."

One tremendous difficulty cannot be overlooked. For his first Bengali Testament Carey was able to buy type; but when the brotherhood launched forth on their wider publishing enterprise, they soon found that no type existed in the languages into which they desired to translate Scripture. Nothing had ever been printed in Sanskrit or other Indian languages, and the missionaries were almost in despair. Just at that moment there came to Serampore a man who many years before had learned from Sir Charles Wilkins, "the Caxton of India," the art of cutting punches for casting type. The missionaries felt that this man's timely arrival was nothing short of providential. They immediately engaged him, and with his assistance Ward built a letter-foundry. This invaluable helper did not live

long, but he trained others to do "the work of type-casting and even the cutting of the matrices with a degree of accuracy which would not disgrace European artists." It was a difficult and tedious work, the Deva-Nagree type alone requiring seven hundred separate punches. For more than half a century Serampore was the chief foundry for Oriental type in Asia.

As the translation work developed, it brought to the brave trio sorrow as well as joy. Unhappily it led to rather serious misunderstandings and friction with friends with whom they had for years worked with the utmost cordiality. On several points they were unable to see eye to eye with Buchanan; troubles developed on the united Committee that had been formed to promote Bible translation, and for a brief while an estrangement arose between themselves and their friend David Brown, and letters were written on both sides that were speedily regretted. The trio were deeply wounded by what they conceived to be the changed attitude of Mr Brown; while Brown, on his part, was just as deeply wounded by things he understood they had written about him. We find Mr Brown writing in hot resentment a letter to Andrew Fuller to complain of the missionaries' actions; the very next day he wrote "The letters I wrote yesterday to Mr Fuller and Dr Ryland will give them pain. I wish they could be recalled, but the ship has gone!" In between these two letters Brown had resolved to call on Carey and have a personal talk; very speedily—"in less time than the writing of this Memorandum," these two devoted men settled their difficulties, and Brown adds, "My visit was prolonged two hours. We had better



things to engage our attention than frivolous and vexatious disputations."

There was some very painful friction, too, with the sainted Henry Martyn, who by this time had begun his work in India. Brown and Buchanan had urged Martyn to undertake translation work in Hindustani, Persian, and Arabic; the Serampore Triad felt hurt and slighted at being overlooked and the work given to a young man fresh to India. Martyn was certainly a better Greek scholar: he was a highly trained University man; whereas Carey and Marshman were self-taught. Martyn, without any intention of giving offence, freely criticized some of their translation work, and this rather chafed the older and more experienced men. It was a day in which men were apt to take narrow views of Biblical and theological questions, and to split hairs over mere trifles. Some objected to certain of Carey's conceptions of the meaning of Greek or Hebrew words; for example, the words for "baptize." Men got hot, in those days, over things that fail to move us now.

The toil and devotion to their task of those great men at Serampore were beyond praise; and they knew far more about the languages than some of the men who criticized their work. As to the Indian translations, David Brown was probably near the truth when he wrote: "In some languages they (*i.e.* Carey and Marshman) stand unrivalled; others they are putting into the press without knowing a word of them or being able to read the characters in which they are written." It was inevitable that it should be so. They were pioneers, doing the spade work—and doing it magnificently. In their eager-

ness to get the Scriptures into many tongues they put forth versions with some haste, *with the deliberate intention* of correcting them afterwards as errors were discovered. They believed that a faulty translation was better than none. They were fully conscious of their own limitations and the defects of their work; but they had the courage that goes ahead undaunted by the fear of making mistakes. It has often been said that "the man who never makes a mistake never makes anything." Carey, Marshman, and Ward made countless mistakes, and by their very mistakes paved the way for better things. They knew that their work needed revision. We have already seen that the second edition of the Bengali Testament was practically a new translation; time after time Carey revised it, and even in his old age we find him making still more improvements in it. Such was his spirit and such his method of work.

Steadily the work went on, and the list of translations grew longer. In 1808 Carey was able to report that some part at least of Scripture had been translated into the following languages :

Sanskrit, Bengali, Mahratta, Orissa, Hindustani, Gujarati, Chinese, Sikh, Telinga, Kurnata, Burman, and Persian.

Then came a great calamity.

On March 11, 1812, at the end of the day's work at the mission press, the Indian employees went home as usual. The sun had set; and in the now silent composing room the light was fading rapidly. Ward, having some accounts to attend to, remained in his office near the entrance. About six o'clock he noticed a smell of something burning, and on looking into the long, low composing room saw smoke

issuing from a room at the farther end, where twelve hundred reams of paper were stored. Calling to one or two servants who were still on the premises, he ran forward to investigate. A shelf of paper was on fire, and the clouds of smoke, increasing every moment, drove him back half suffocated ; one of the workmen was overcome and fell to the ground unconscious, but was dragged out of danger by others who now rushed forward. The loud cries of " fire " brought Marshman in haste from his house—Carey was away in Calcutta—and many willing helpers ran to save the building.

Ward saw that all their efforts must be directed towards localizing the fire to the paper store-room and preventing it, if possible, from spreading to the composing room which was the main part of the building. Ordering all windows and doors to be closed, he ascended by the outside steps to the flat roof, and calling men to his assistance broke a large hole through immediately over the burning paper. The river was close at hand, and soon many helpers—Indians, Europeans, servants, neighbours—gathered, and with brass vessels and big earthenware *chetties* eagerly carried water to the roof above the burning store. Such a stock of paper burns slowly, smouldering and smoking rather than blazing ; but the fire had firm hold of the paper, and for four hours the workers fought the dread enemy.

But just when success seemed assured, some foolish person in the garden below opened one of the windows. In a few moments the draught re-kindled the dying embers, and flames swiftly leapt through the doorway into the composing room, where they found much more combustible material. The

wooden tables and cases containing the type, and the litter of loose paper lying about, quickly ignited. In the composition racks were fourteen founts of Oriental type, a double fount of Greek, and one of Hebrew, in addition to several founts of English type only recently received from London. The work in hand lay just as the men had left it at sun-down—galleys partly set up, frames of type in process of correction, and proofs from the printing room for revision; fifty-five thousand printed sheets lay stacked at one end of the room ready for folding—among them a thousand copies of the first seven sheets of Henry Martyn's Hindustani Testament. Most precious of all were the manuscripts of Scripture translations, grammars, dictionaries, and other books and tracts. To save the precious contents of this big room Ward, Marshman and their helpers laboured with almost frantic energy. To no purpose; with their utmost efforts the men could not pour upon the flames a sufficient volume of water to overcome them. One good hose-pipe would have saved the building; but carrying the water in vessels from the river was too slow a method for such an emergency. In the desperate excitement of the moment some men opened more windows in order to throw water through, and soon all hope was lost: flames burst out from the windows, and little more could be done. About midnight the roof fell in with a terrible crash.

Before it was too late, Ward and Marshman succeeded in saving many important deeds, records, accounts, and other papers from the office; and by some means the five presses, with a frame of type on each, were rescued from the printing room, which

was built out as an annex to the main building. The paper mill, situated a little distance away, did not take fire, nor did the warehouse in which the stock of printed books was kept.

When morning broke, only the blackened shell of the building remained, and the missionaries and their families, worn out by their exertions and anxiety, sat down to gaze upon the scene of desolation. Marshman took boat to Calcutta to break the news to Carey. Ward, after a little rest, gathered his workmen together and began to search among the still smouldering ruins for anything that might be saved. He carefully collected fragments of half-burned books and remnants of damaged papers saturated with water. Three and a half tons of metal for making type had melted into large flakes and lay on the earth floor. After hours of toil Ward managed to clear the debris from the place where the machine room had been, and there, to his inexpressible delight, found the precious punches and the matrices of all the Indian types—which had taken ten years to make—practically unharmed. To have lost those would have crippled the whole work of the mission for years.

In the evening Carey arrived from Calcutta, and next day they laid plans for repairing their loss and resuming their work. Happily there was a convenient vacant building belonging to the mission, and that very day the master-moulder began again his task of casting type from the lumps of molten metal. A few days later Carey wrote to Fuller :

We are able immediately to begin casting. . . . In a fortnight, if nothing unforeseen intervene, we shall be able to begin printing again in one language. Another

month will enable us to begin in another, and I trust that in six months our loss in Oriental type will be repaired.

In a few weeks [added Ward] I hope our presses will be going again night and day.

These men were irrepressible.

The material loss caused by the fire was about ten thousand pounds. But, serious as this was, it was small in comparison with the precious manuscripts burned. The translation of the *Ramayana* was entirely destroyed, and the work upon it was never resumed. The materials Carey had laboriously collected for his polyglot dictionary of all languages based upon the Sanskrit perished in the flames; this was the most serious loss of all, for that great work, says Dr George Smith, "would have perpetuated Carey's name in the first rank of philologists." The Telugu grammar, part of the Punjabi grammar, thirty pages of the Bengali Dictionary, the Sanskrit MSS. of 2 Samuel and 1 Kings, and in whole or part, versions of Scripture in Punjabi, Mahratta, Hindustani, Orissa, Telugu, Assamese, were lost. Second editions of *Confucius*, *A Dissertation on the Chinese Language*, and Ward's book on the *History, Literature and Mythology of the Hindus* likewise perished.

Yet in the face of this, enough to daunt most ordinary men, we find Carey writing to Fuller :

The loss is heavy, but as the travelling a road the second time, however painful it may be, is usually done with greater ease and certainty than when we travel it for the first time, so I trust the work will lose nothing in real value. . . . The ground must be laboured over again, but we are not discouraged, indeed the work is already begun again in every language; we are cast down, but not in despair.

The fire called forth a remarkable manifestation of practical sympathy. Even the Calcutta newspapers joined in the chorus and one of them in a leading article expressed the belief that the Serampore press would "like the phoenix of antiquity, rise from its ashes, winged with new strength, and destined, in a lofty and long enduring flight, widely to diffuse the benefits of knowledge throughout the East."

When the news reached England Fuller, in fifty days, raised ten thousand pounds, and then reported to his Committee that, "Money is coming in from all quarters. The loss by the Serampore fire is all repaired. We must stop the contributions."

In six months after the fire the Oriental type was all re-made, and at the end of a year Carey declared that the mission press was in a more efficient state than it had ever been before. The experience gave Carey the opportunity of improving the versions that had been destroyed, and all the missionaries were convinced that out of the catastrophe God had brought permanent enrichment.

In 1814 Carey was able to give Fuller a list of twenty-six versions of Scripture, finished or then in the press, or in course of translation. By 1832 complete Bibles, New Testaments or separate books of Scripture had issued from the mission press in forty-four languages and dialects. Of course Carey did not himself make all these translations. He more than once expressly repudiated the statement that he had "translated the Scripture into forty languages." From what has appeared in the foregoing pages, it will be seen that the amazing pro-

duction of the Serampore press was what we should in these days call "team work," in which the missionaries and their Indian pundits all had some more or less important share.

This record is absolutely unique in missionary enterprise. We cannot more fittingly close this chapter than by quoting again Carey's great words :

If, after my removal, any one should think it worth his while to write my life, I will give you a criterion by which you may judge of its correctness. If he give me credit for being a plodder, he will describe me justly. Anything beyond this will be too much. I can plod. I can persevere in any definite pursuit. To this I owe everything.



## CHAPTER XXIV

### FOUNDING A COLLEGE

*1813-1827. Aged 52-66*

CAREY was never content to "mark time." He simply could not stand still. In everything he was connected with there had to be progress. While he and his fellow-workers were developing their translation and publishing programme, the evangelistic work of the mission was not allowed to flag. Every department of the Serampore mission was characterized by vigorous, systematic, and well-sustained evangelism.

As the years passed the mission staff grew steadily larger. In 1812 the mission reported thirty workers, European and Indian, and the stations at that date numbered twelve, scattered over Upper India, Bengal, Orissa, Burma, Java and Mauritius.

The varying experiences of the missionaries in these new centres of work belong to the history of the Baptist Mission rather than to a biography of Carey, and cannot here be dealt with save as they affected his great purpose.

The rapid expansion of the mission caused some uneasiness in England; there were men who shrank from the expense and urged retrenchment. With a touch of scorn as well as sorrow, Carey replied:

I entreat, I implore, our dear brethren in England not to think of the petty shop-keeping plan of lessening

the number of stations so as to bring the support of them within the bounds of their present income, but bend all their attention and exertions to the great object of increasing their finances to meet the pressing demand that divine Providence makes on them. If your objects are large, the public will contribute to their support; if you contract them their liberality will immediately contract itself proportionately.

This, surely, is a message for all our Missionary Boards to-day.

To Carey and his fellow-workers the results that followed the expansion movements were plain evidences that God's blessing rested upon their labours. They looked for definite conversions to Christ—and they got them. Between 1815 and 1818 four hundred and twenty adult converts were baptized, and these, added to the number baptized in previous years, brought their total number of baptized converts to considerably above a thousand.

In 1814 there came a new opportunity. The news of the passing by Parliament of the clause in the new Charter permitting missionary work had reached India. A new Governor-General, Lord Moira, had succeeded Lord Minto, and from the beginning was in sympathy with missionary work. Desiring to form his own opinion of the mission, the Governor-General visited Serampore, accompanied by his wife and the newly appointed first Bishop of Calcutta. "His Lordship was greatly impressed" by what he saw and declared that the magnitude of the work greatly exceeded his expectations. This official visit was indeed a red-letter day in the mission. Very soon afterwards, Lord Moira.

invited the trio to a private dinner at his residence at Barrackpore.

Towards the close of the year 1818 Marshman had drawn up a scheme for developing vernacular schools on carefully considered lines. The plan was to organize ten village schools in connection with each mission station. They were to be in the charge of Indian teachers, the missionary visiting each in rotation at least once a month. It was estimated that they could thus provide some elementary education for four thousand children for the modest sum of a thousand rupees a month.

When he drew up that scheme Marshman was not aware that, under the new Charter, the East India Company was compelled to devote ten thousand pounds to native education. But the Court of Directors, smarting under their heavy defeat in the House of Commons, had no intention of subsidizing mission schools. In an important dispatch on the subject of their new educational responsibilities, they announced their intention of spending the money on the development of schools of the old Indian type. The new Governor-General, however, urged that it was Britain's duty to impart sound Western knowledge to the young men of India. His educational policy might fittingly be summed up in Shakespeare's immortal principle: "What is yours to bestow is not yours to reserve."

Ever alert, ever watching for an opportunity, the Serampore Triad seized this moment and gradually increased the number of their schools over a wide area. An experimental normal school was opened to train a band of teachers in the new method of conducting classes. Soon the first village school of

the new type was established near Serampore and appeals from other villages quickly came in. In a short time there were schools in nineteen villages within a few miles of the mission headquarters—all established at the request of the people themselves.

In July 1817, on the occasion of the Annual Speech Day of Fort William College, held as usual at the Government House in Calcutta, the Marquis of Hastings (as Lord Moira had now become), in a speech of supreme import for India, gave expression to his views on Indian education. He said :

I consider that we should stand above the pride of considering that the freedom of the people from oppressions is dependent solely on the strength of our arm ; we should communicate to them that which is the source of such security to us, and impart to them that knowledge which furnished at once the consciousness of human rights, and the disposition and the means to maintain them. . . . It is human, it is generous, to protect the feeble ; it is meritorious to redress the injured ; but it is a godlike bounty to bestow expansion of the intellect. . . . It would be treason against British sentiment to imagine that it ever could be the principle of this government to perpetuate ignorance in order to ensure paltry and dishonest advantages over the blindness of the multitude.

It was evident that, whatever Leadenhall Street might think, in India the tide of opinion had turned. Dr Marshman's education scheme produced a remarkable response ; contributions for the mission schools poured in in an extraordinary way, and the liberality testified to the degree of confidence the missionaries had won for themselves and their work. Within a year forty-five schools were opened. During

the following year (1818) Lord Hastings was engaged on an important military campaign in North-West India. With an army of a hundred and twenty thousand men—the largest British army that had ever been seen in India—he crushed the Marathas and the lawless Pindaris. From his headquarters the conquering Governor-General wrote to Serampore. Carey gives us the purport of his letter :

Brother Marshman has received a letter from the Marquis of Hastings, who was then in the upper provinces, where he had been to attend to the operations of the war, saying that it had occurred to him that the setting up of schools in the conquered countries would be the most likely method of civilizing the inhabitants, and wishing us to turn over the matter in our minds that we might confer with him about it on his return.

When His Excellency returned to Barrackpore, he invited Carey and Marshman to dine with him at his residence and freely conversed with them on the subject. He doubted if at that time it was possible to “get it made a business of Government,” but he committed the matter wholly to the missionaries and promised to subscribe seven or eight thousand rupees to enable them to begin.

By this providence [wrote Carey after this interview with the Governor-General] a tract of country larger than Great Britain is put into our hands, in which several of those languages are spoken in which we are preparing translations of the Scriptures. Had we funds and men, five or six hundred schools might be immediately organized, and men of God if we had them might be instrumental in doing more good than can be calculated.

Lord Hastings also heartily concurred with the missionaries' desire to establish a college at Seram-

pore—a proposal for which they had previously submitted to him; he promised “a handsome subscription” towards it and gave them leave to put his name at the head of the prospectus they wished to issue.

With opportunities increasing on every hand, they now resolved to carry out this project. For several years it had been in their minds to establish an institution for giving a more advanced education to young Indians and especially those of Christian parentage; they realized the importance of having a leaven of education in their Christian churches. Convinced that India could only be won for Christ by Indians, they were increasingly making use of Indian helpers, both for preaching and for the schools, and these men needed a considerable amount of special training for their work. Carey laid it down as a principle that :

Those who are to be employed in propagating the Gospel should be familiar with the doctrines he is to combat and the doctrines he is to teach, and acquire a complete knowledge both of the Sacred Scriptures, and of these philosophical and mythological dogmas which form the soul of the Buddhist and Hindoo Systems.

To Christian critics at home, who did not see the need of training in Hindu lore, the missionaries replied that if St Paul had been as ignorant of the philosophy of the Greeks as both European and Indian Christian teachers, with few exceptions, were of the Hindu system of philosophy and religion, he could not have urged their own writings against them, or so efficiently fulfilled his mission. How singularly free from narrowness these men were! They were three-quarters of a century in advance of their time.

Feeling that the time had come to put this project into operation, they issued on July 15th, 1818, a prospectus—written by Dr Marshman—of a proposed “College for the instruction of Asiatic, Christian, and other youth in Eastern literature and European science.” A piece of land immediately to the south of the mission premises was purchased; the Danish Governor accepted the position of “First Governor of the College,” and Lord Hastings readily consented to be the “First Patron.”

Pending the erection of a special building, an old house on the new land was used for the college, and in the first year of its existence there were thirty-seven students. Of these, nineteen were Christians, fourteen were Hindus, and four were described as “having neither caste nor religion”—a clear evidence that the intention of the founders was a “Christian College” rather than a purely theological institution.

Plans for a suitable building were at once put forward, the missionaries themselves starting the fund with the munificent gift of two thousand five hundred pounds out of their own earnings. Lord Hastings gave a thousand rupees, and a few others contributed. When completed, the Serampore college cost fifteen thousand pounds—most of which was defrayed by the missionaries themselves. At that time it was one of the noblest European buildings in Asia. With its extensive and beautiful grounds leading down to the bank of the broad Hooghli, the college still stands, a strong and impressive pile, faced with a fine Ionic portico of eight huge pillars. There is a sense of spaciousness and strength in every feature. As one stands in the entrance, and strolls through one class-room after another, one

thinks of the tiny three-roomed, fifteen-foot-square cottage in Leicester, and asks if it is possible that the man who lived in *that* built *this*. How Carey had grown !

In 1821, when the college was completed, His Majesty the King of Denmark sent separate letters to Carey and Marshman, signed with his own hand and expressing his royal appreciation of the work they were doing. He also sent them gold medals (they had previously declined honours); and a fortnight later he made a special gift to the college—a large house and grounds adjoining the institution. The house had been occupied by a member of the Council and it formed a most useful addition to the college buildings. His Majesty expressed his desire to take this institution under his personal patronage and asked to be informed from time to time of its progress. Six years later he granted a Royal Charter which empowered the college to confer upon its students “degrees of rank and honour according to their proficiency.” It was the first college in Asia to possess the power to confer degrees.



## CHAPTER XXV

### SORROW UPON SORROW

*1810-1827. Aged 49-66*

WE have spoken of the achievements of the Serampore Mission as "team work." And such in truth it was; but the members of the team were very far from equal either in ability or energy. Carey, Marshman, and Ward towered high above their fellows both in ability and strength of personality.

Of the men who joined them as the years passed were not a few of fine character and outstanding devotion to their work, and several were men of marked ability—as for example John Mack, who went out in 1821 and rendered excellent service in the college. But unfortunately some of the missionaries were men of inferior quality. So early as 1811 we find Carey writing :

There are two or three circumstances in the Mission which occasion us pain; I mean the un-missionary spirit which operates in a love of ease, an anxiety for European society, and other things of the same nature which enervate the soul of a missionary and unfit him for his work.

That some of the younger men were a disappointment is evident from numerous letters. We read :

Brother R——, who never entered with spirit into the Bootan Mission, has now relinquished it. His great object is to stay at Serampore where he vainly imagines

his abilities as a preacher . . . will be properly appreciated. His temper is such as absolutely unfits him for living at Serampore, or perhaps anywhere else with another brother.

We wished X—— to go to Goomalty . . . till the way was open to Java. At this he is so offended that it is doubtful whether he will go to Java.

One fruitful source of trouble was a marked inclination on the part of the juniors to resent the authority of the older men. Unfortunately, the rules laid it down that all the brethren were equal and had an equal vote in everything. This was excellent at first; but when years had intervened and made a gulf of age and experience between the great Trio and the youthful recruits, the position became difficult, for the inexperienced young men could always out-vote the judgment of the seasoned veterans. It is always necessary to make allowances for the dashing enthusiasm of youth which naturally chafes at the "slowness" of older men; but in this case it was usually the other way about: the veterans were for hard work and sacrifice and the younger men for having an easier time.

For some reason the younger men heartily disliked Marshman and found all kinds of fault with him. Writing to Fuller in 1811, Carey said:

You ask why the younger brethren are so much prejudiced against brother Marshman? I do not know that they have any settled prejudice, yet a suspicion against him is, I confess, soon excited. I believe his natural make is the occasion of it.

Brother Marshman is a man whose whole heart is in the work of the Mission, and who may be considered as the soul and life of it. He is ardent, very sanguine, excessively tenacious of any idea which strikes him as

right or important. His labours are excessive, his body scarcely susceptible of fatigue, his religious feelings strong, his jealousy for God great, his regard for the feelings of others very little, when the cause of God is in question. His memory is uncommonly retentive, his reading has been, and still is, extensive and general; in short, his diligence reproaches the indolence of some; his acquirements reproach their ignorance, and his unaccommodating mind not infrequently excites sentiments of resentment and dislike. He has also, perhaps, the foible of dragging himself and his children more into public observation than is desirable. These things, I suppose, lie at the bottom of all the dislike which our younger brethren have felt for him. For my own part I consider him as a man whose value to the Mission can scarcely be sufficiently appreciated, and whose death would be a most severe loss. We, viz. Brother Marshman, Ward and myself, live in the utmost harmony.

With the above sketch of Marshman before us, it does not need much knowledge of psychology to understand the gradual growth of the trouble. Marshman could not endure slackness, and slackers had little love for him. Unfortunately, this spirit of suspicion and enmity was allowed to grow until the estrangement became deep and even bitter.

Painful as these domestic squabbles were, greater troubles were brewing.

In England, old friends were passing away, and new ones took their places on the Committee of the Missionary Society. Samuel Pearce died in 1799, John Sutcliff in 1814, and Andrew Fuller in 1815. The last was the greatest loss of all, for Fuller had been the mainstay of the home base of the mission. Many changes followed his death. After considerable discussion and an interim period of nearly two years, the Rev. John Dyer of Reading was appointed to the vacant secretaryship.

The veterans of Serampore soon became conscious of a very marked change in the attitude of the Committee to themselves; we find Carey confiding to his friend Ryland that Secretary Dyer's letters were cold and official, so different from those he had been accustomed to receive from Fuller. The Trio began to regard the Committee as a sort of imitation "Court of Directors," and they complained that some of their letters resembled the high and mighty dispatches from Leadenhall Street to subordinates in Calcutta rather than the communications of a Christian missionary society to its old and trusted workers on the field. Secretary Dyer and a group of London men were determined to run the mission on the same lines as a business concern, and to put its mission staff on the same footing as the employees of a commercial house—with regard to receiving instructions, be it noted, *not* with regard to remuneration. In a very haughty manner they demanded information as to the deeds of the property at Serampore and particulars as to its purchase. Regardless of the fact that Carey and his companions had, for many years, almost kept the mission going with the money they themselves had earned by their own labours, the officials in England called for a full statement of accounts in tones that suggested they were dealing with untrustworthy employees. The Trio were pricked to the heart by this obvious lack of confidence.

It is to-day a recognized principle of missionary society organization that a mission must be run on strictly business lines. The Committee in England had a perfect right and even a duty to look into the management of affairs, and also to ask for full

information. That information Carey, Marshman and Ward were perfectly willing to give, and did give; what they were grieved about was the tone and spirit of the demands and the way the correspondence was conducted. We find Carey pathetically protesting that he and his brethren are not "dishonest men" and that they never had the slightest intention of converting the property to their own use. (He has learned from new missionaries that "a party in the Committee" actually suspected him of these things!) Such an idea "never entered our minds" he declares, adding:

We have exerted ourselves to the utmost of our power, and in the simplicity of our hearts, and have denied ourselves many of the most common conveniences of life to serve the cause of God. . . . We did not even allow ourselves the common conveniences for taking the air,<sup>1</sup> so necessary to health, till absolutely forced to it by ill-health, nor have I to this day a horse to ride.

Then a demand was made that *all* expenditure—even the money earned by the Trio themselves—must be controlled from London. This sounded reasonable enough; but the situation at Serampore was unique. It is estimated that Carey, Marshman and Ward poured not less than one hundred thousand pounds of their own earnings into the work, and allowance should have been made for this fact. Moreover, they knew perfectly well that the Committee did not at all understand the situation in India and were men of narrow vision.

The proposal to found Serampore College created a new wave of criticism. Ward visited England in 1819 and was surprised to find how deep the

<sup>1</sup> A reference to the *punka*.

feeling against "Serampore" had become. He returned to India and again threw himself into the work. Then, in 1823, he died suddenly of cholera, at the age of fifty-three. It was the first break in that glorious fellowship.

The tension increased. Some friends resented the teaching of Indian classics in the college, and there was a movement to withdraw support. Ryland died. The Home Committee looked upon their great missionaries at Serampore as "rebels" against authority. Some of the younger men working in Calcutta separated themselves from "Serampore" and placed themselves under the direct control of Secretary Dyer and the Committee.

This long-drawn-out strife within the gates troubled Carey far more than all the fierce attacks of outward foes had done. Through it all, it is most noticeable that the critics constantly declared that their confidence in Carey himself was unshaken and that their strictures were against Marshman. This attempt to throw the blame on to his colleague roused Carey to fury. He would have none of it, and refused to allow the distinction; he was too high-minded to save his own reputation at the expense of his devoted fellow-missionary. So difficult did the situation become, however, that Carey seriously contemplated leaving Serampore altogether, and he made arrangements to acquire a property nearer Calcutta.

In 1827, hoping to remove misunderstandings by personal interviews and discussions, Dr Marshman came to England, and on several occasions met the Committee. Some of the members saw the reasonableness of the "Serampore" case. There were

heated debates, with proposals and counter-proposals and numerous amendments. It was thirty-four years since Carey had left England; all who had been associated with him had passed away, and the Committee relied on the judgment of the younger missionaries whom they knew. By many personal interviews and by patient efforts to explain the situation to the Committee, Marshman strove nobly to come to some agreement. Unhappily Secretary Dyer and his party were resolute, and they won their way. When a breach was seen to be inevitable, Marshman, with reluctance and grief, signed an Agreement of Separation, by which he and Carey were to be left in charge of the college and the grounds attached to it, and all the older mission property was to be vacated and left in the hands of the Committee. This meant complete severance from the Missionary Society Carey himself had founded. Never in his lifetime was the breach healed.

Marshman returned to India to support his colleague in this, the greatest trial through which they had passed. Sorrowfully they withdrew the press and all their own plant from the familiar houses in which they had so long lived, to concentrate upon the college site to which the Committee could make no claim. Henceforth "Serampore" was separated from the Baptist Missionary Society.

We would fain draw a curtain of charity over these painful controversies, and conclude with Shakespeare's lines :

*There, Sir, stop :  
Let us not burthen our remembrance  
With a heaviness that's gone.*

## CHAPTER XXVI

### CAREY'S PRIVATE LIFE AT SERAMPORE

WHAT of Carey's private life during the strenuous years at Serampore? We have portrayed his public work; had he no respite, no leisure for domestic life and recreation? He certainly had such leisure—and he needed it to relieve the tension of his work.

He found recreation in the old interests of his boyhood—nature study and especially botany. His first letters from India tell of the flowers, the trees, the animals and snakes. Within two or three years of landing, his botanical interests led to an acquaintance with Dr Roxburgh, the superintendent of the East India Company's Botanical Garden in Calcutta, and this soon grew into a warm friendship. While still at Mudnabatty we find Carey keeping separate note-books in which he carefully registered "every distinct class, as birds, beasts, fishes, serpents, etc."

In India, as in England, Carey longed to have a garden; and on settling at Serampore, he was able to indulge his hobby on a larger scale than hitherto. In a few years he had a garden of five acres laid out with greatest care and on the Linnæan system. It was one of the finest botanical collections in Asia. But beside the desire to study the flora of India, he longed to have around him the flowers of the dear English countryside of his boyhood. To Sutcliff he wrote:



I have written for some works of science, which I hope you will send. I think your best way is to send my list of roots, seeds, etc. to some nurseryman of note in London, with orders to ship them on the *Providence*, directed to me. Were you to give a penny a day to a boy to gather seeds of cowslips, violets, daisies, crow-foots, and to dig up the roots of blue-bells, etc. after they have done flowering, you might fill me a box every quarter of a year; and surely some neighbours would send me a few snowdrops, crocuses, etc. and other trifles. All your weeds, even your nettles and thistles, are taken the greatest care of by me here. The American friends are twenty times more communicative than the English in this respect. . . . Do try to mend a little.

A precious and touching self-revelation, surely! In his voluntary and joyful exile Carey still thinks of the homeland; his heart yearns for the sight of a snowdrop or a cowslip, and amid his scholastic duties this learned Orientalist and Doctor of Divinity lovingly tends a few nettles and thistles that speak to him of Northamptonshire!

One day, looking carefully over a corner of his garden where he had shaken some seeds from a bag sent by a friend in England, Carey's keen eye was arrested by a well-known form. Eagerly he stooped to examine it more closely, and to his "inexpressible delight" found—an English daisy! His joy knew no bounds. "I know not that I ever enjoyed since leaving Europe a simple pleasure so exquisite as the sight of this *English daisy* . . . not having seen one for upwards of thirty years, and never expecting to see one again."

As the years passed, our missionary's hobby grew into something more. In the hope of utilizing it for the good of the people of India he laid before Lady Hastings a scheme for forming a Horti-

cultural and Agricultural Society. Encouraged by her ladyship the plan matured, and on September 14th, 1820, the Society came into existence and in a few weeks had fifty members, with the Governor-General himself as patron.

Two years later, Carey was elected a Fellow of the Linnean Society of London, a member of the Geological Society, and received a diploma constituting him a corresponding member of the Royal Horticultural Society. In the following year we find him elected President of the Agricultural Society of India and appointed a member of a committee to investigate, for Government purposes, the timber supply of the Presidency, and to lay down plans for planting new forests and preserving old ones. At the same time he was editing and seeing through the press Dr Roxburgh's *Flora Indica*. He had previously published a valuable catalogue of the plants in the Company's Botanical Garden in Calcutta. Nor were Carey's recreational interests limited to natural history, for he was also an early associate of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, to which he contributed several papers. Meanwhile he was corresponding with naturalists in all parts of the world. From their distant stations his sons and missionary colleagues, and even his Indian school-boys, were collecting natural history specimens for him and he formed a very valuable museum, while his garden ultimately became the best collection of rare Indian plants in all the East. It was left desolate by the terrible flood of 1823 and had to be largely replanted. When the dark days came upon the mission, and the relations between "Serampore" and the Baptist Missionary Society were

severed, Carey carefully moved all his beloved plants from the grounds relinquished to the Society to the spacious gardens of the college. But in 1831 the garden was again devastated by a cyclone, and the now aged botanist had to begin his labours afresh.

So great was Carey's love for his garden that it became his favourite oratory. In the early hour of dawn, and in the evening after the busy labours and tropical heat of the day, he loved to walk along its shady paths, and in this quiet retreat would spend the radiant hour in devotion and meditation. Nature appealed to him; he felt it to be God's own temple. To his devout spirit the flowers spoke of their Creator's power and love; the heavens declared the glory of God and the firmament showed His handiwork.

After the fashion of his time Carey kept a journal and wrote lengthy letters in which his piety and spiritual experiences are expressed with the utmost freedom. It is startling to read, "I think no man living ever felt inertia to so great a degree as I do." Frequently we find him bitterly upbraiding himself for inactivity and lack of zeal. He was perfectly sincere in writing thus. The climate of India is enervating to a degree; it saps the vitality and quenches the spirit. Men of weak will go under, and even strong men have fallen victims to it. Carey never had a furlough or even a voyage to Burma or Madras. From the day he set foot in the country, it can be said with some degree of certainty that he never felt a really cold blast of wind. Even his iron frame must have felt the

“listlessness” of the tropics stealing over him, and we may take it as certain that he had the same continual struggle with himself that other men have. But his tremendous sense of vocation and the overwhelming conviction that God had called him, enabled him to overcome all the downward pull of life in the tropics.

His letters abound with passages that in our day would be regarded as unhealthily sanctimonious. To him they were perfectly natural. In one of his periods of earnest self-examination he declares : “I am unfit to be called a missionary, and often doubt whether I am a Christian at all.” To us such an expression savours of mock humility. With Carey it was nothing of the kind ; it was a perfectly sincere statement. Doubtless it reflects the religious feeling of his time ; but it also breathes that deep spirit of humility that characterized his life. Nor must we forget the floods of sorrow through which he passed—both in his public and his domestic life. Like other men of tender, sensitive nature, he had his seasons of deep depression, and we must remember this when we stumble upon self-condemnatory exclamations.

What of Carey’s personal friendships ? Though separated by distance he never lost his deep affection for his old friends in England ; but new friendships also sprang up in India. The cordial relationship that existed between him and the Anglican chaplains is a very noticeable feature. In 1803 David Brown removed to Serampore, where he purchased a house, and until his death nine years later he was a firm friend and trusted adviser.

This friendship had a most beneficial effect on Carey himself, for it broadened his outlook and religious sympathies, hitherto somewhat narrow.

Early one May morning in 1806, as Carey was sitting in his rooms at the Fort William College, an English visitor was announced. It was Henry Martyn who had landed in Calcutta at daybreak ; failing to find Brown or Buchanan—who were out of town—he enquired for Carey, who was thus the first to welcome him to Bengal. They breakfasted together, and then with Carey's servants sitting on the floor around them those two devoted men, so unlike and yet so truly one in the service of their common Lord, united in Christian worship. Martyn soon went to live with David Brown at Serampore, and, as the house was only a few hundred yards from Carey's, the two men saw a good deal of one another.

Brown's house stood on the bank of the Hooghli, just outside the town. It had extensive grounds, in which stood an abandoned Hindu temple. For more than a century it had been the shrine of a popular idol ; but the river was wearing away the bank upon which it stood, and the idol had been transferred to a safer place. Brown had purchased this derelict temple along with the land and house, and he turned it into a Christian sanctuary. Calling his friends together, he consecrated it to the worship of God, and its massive pillars and arches resounded with the melody of Christian song. In that old idol temple, with every denominational feeling forgotten, Carey and his brethren constantly united with Brown and Martyn in Christian worship and fellowship.

. . . . .

Even in his busiest years Carey was essentially a family man, devoted to his home, his wife, his boys. As his sons grew to manhood his fatherly care for them grew stronger. Numerous letters to them bear witness to the deep affection that existed between them. We find him planning for their future and endeavouring to get them into suitable positions. The father was not lost in the missionary.

In 1807 his beloved wife Dorothy was released from the affliction that had so long marred the domestic happiness of this devoted couple. She died in the missionary settlement, and in her last days on earth received all the attention that love could devise from her sorrowing husband and the wives of his fellow-missionaries. Twelve years of mental affliction was the heavy price Dorothy paid for embarking on the great adventure.

After the death of his wife, Carey's tender loving heart craved such intimate and affectionate companionship as only a wife can bestow, and this led him to a second marriage. It would have been impossible to find a more suitable wife and congenial companion than Charlotte Rhumohr, whom he married in 1808. She came of a patrician family in the Duchy of Schlesing, and was about the same age as Carey; she had received a full education and spoke Danish, German, French, Italian and English with equal fluency. Circumstances having led her to India, she settled in Serampore and built herself a house there, and in this way she became acquainted with our hero. In piety, as in culture, she was in every way suited to be Carey's wife, and for thirteen years she shared his labours and his joys and sustained him in the fierce trials and conflicts that came to

him. Through her devotion this was the happiest period of his life. Her death was perhaps the greatest sorrow he ever experienced.

Two years after her death his sense of loneliness led Carey to marry once more. His third wife, Grace Hughes, was a widow of forty-five years, and though in education and refinement very different from Charlotte Rhumohr, she was well fitted to be the companion of a man of sixty-two and the nurse of his old age.

The year preceding his third marriage brought Carey a new sorrow—the death of his eldest son, Felix, at the early age of thirty-six. Carey was beginning to feel that one by one faithful friends and dear ones were passing away. His old father, towards whose support he had contributed first twenty and then fifty pounds a year had died in 1816 at the age of eighty-one. In 1825 Carey wrote :

It appears to me as if everything dear to me in England is now removed. . . . Fuller, Sutcliff, Pearce, Fawcett and Ryland, beside many others whom I knew, are gone to glory. My family connections also, those excepted who were children when I left England, or have since that time been born, are all gone, two sisters only excepted. Wherever I look in England I see a vast blank ; and were I ever to revisit that dear country I should have an entirely new set of friendships to form. I, however, never intended to return to England when I left it, and unless something very unexpected were to take place, I certainly shall not do it. . . . My heart is wedded to India ; and though I am of little use, I feel a pleasure in doing the little I can.

## CHAPTER XXVII

“ NOT A SINGLE DESIRE UNGRATIFIED ”

1829-1834. Aged 68-73

SUNDAY, December 5th, 1829, was one of the most joyful days in Carey's life.

Early that morning, as he sat in his study at Serampore preparing to preach, a courier from the Governor-General<sup>1</sup> arrived with an urgent dispatch—an Order in Council which Dr Carey was requested immediately to translate into Bengali. Probably a frown crossed his forehead at the idea of translating a Government Edict on a Sunday, but a glance at the document before him must have set the blood tingling through his veins. It was nothing less than the famous Edict abolishing *sati* throughout British dominions in India! Springing to his feet and throwing off his black coat he cried, “No church for me to-day!” Without the loss of a moment he sent an urgent request to one of his brethren to take the service, summoned his pundit, and then settled down to his momentous task. For twenty-five years he had been urging the necessity of this law, and there should be no further loss of time—and life—if he could prevent it. “If I delay an hour to translate and publish this, many a widow's life may be sacrificed,” he said. By evening the task was finished.

<sup>1</sup> Lord William Bentinck, who succeeded Lord Amherst as Governor-General in 1828.



From the time he reported to Lord Wellesley upon *sati*, Carey had striven to keep the subject to the forefront of public notice. Lord Minto and Lord Hastings had introduced restrictions; the matter had been pressed upon the notice of Lord Amherst, but he thought it not wise to forbid a custom so deeply rooted, preferring to trust to "the progress now making in the diffusion of knowledge." But Lord Bentinck, with truer and firmer grasp of the problem, resolved on action.

While many enlightened men, both Indian and European, rejoiced that *sati* was at last forbidden by law, there was fierce opposition in some quarters. A petition in favour of *sati*, drawn up by a company of "pundits and Brahmins and teachers of holy life and known learning," received eight hundred signatures, and was presented to the Governor-General, and this was followed by an appeal to the King in Council. But India as a whole accepted the prohibition, and in a few years *sati* had almost entirely passed away.

In his later years, India now being quite open to missionaries, Carey had the joy of welcoming representatives of churches other than his own. Prominent among these was the young Scotsman, Alexander Duff, who landed in Bengal in the early summer of 1830. The missionaries in Calcutta to whom he unfolded his educational plans were not favourably impressed. Then he sought—almost last of all—the veteran of Serampore. In the blazing heat of July, Duff one day landed at the *ghat* before the college compound. Asking for Carey, who was then living in two or three rooms of the house built for the professors, he was shown to the study on the

upper verandah, overlooking the broad river. As he entered Carey stepped forward to greet him—a feeble old man dressed in white,<sup>1</sup> worn and bent with the burden and heat of his long toil in India, but still full of enthusiasm and beaming with joy to welcome yet another ambassador for Christ to the land he loved. He listened with eager interest while the young Highlander unfolded his cherished plans for an educational mission, and warmly approved of them. Not a little discouraged by his failure to convince the Calcutta missionaries of the soundness of his scheme, Duff was overjoyed to receive the full approval and the blessing of the experienced veteran of Serampore.

Unhappily, events were making things very difficult for Carey and his devoted colleagues. Separation from the missionary society, and the failure of some support from America, left them almost entirely dependent upon their own earnings and the gifts of friends in India. But soon a serious financial crisis arose in Calcutta; several great merchants failed, and this deprived “Serampore” of considerable help. At the same time (1830) the Government, having to face the heavy expenses of the war in Burma, was obliged drastically to apply the economy axe. Among other things, it abolished the professorships of Fort William, and Carey was pensioned off at about three hundred and sixty pounds a year. While the reduced income was more than enough for his personal needs, the salary he had for nearly thirty years been receiving had been the most

<sup>1</sup> In his later years Carey always wore white clothes in summer and black in winter.

important source of support for the work in which he and his brethren were engaged. Worse followed. At the beginning of 1833 one of the great Calcutta business houses collapsed, and in its fall brought about the financial ruin of other firms. Crash followed crash, until their total losses were estimated at more than sixteen million pounds. Unfortunately the Serampore College and mission had a considerable part of their funds invested in the firms that now became unable to meet their liabilities.

This latest trial was a great strain upon the feeble frame of Carey—now in his seventy-second year. But his faith did not waver; he still expected “great things from God.” In this extremity a generous friend came forward with such assistance as met the immediate needs of the mission; and when the news of the financial catastrophe reached England, it called forth such help as met the emergency.

It was a severe wrench for Carey to leave the work at Fort William College, to which for thirty years he had given half his time, and his departure was the signal for an outburst of deep affection on the part of the members of the staff. The Indian pundits came to him in a body, and he himself was moved to tears. Returning to Serampore, he found it difficult to reconcile himself to the settled life. He threw himself more zealously into the work of Serampore College, lecturing to the students three times a week—twice on divinity, and once on natural history. He also took turns at preaching in Bengali and English. Nor could he leave translation work alone, and in his retirement he began

yet another revision of his Bengali New Testament. "He is as cheerful and happy as the day is long," wrote Marshman at this time. He took more exercise than he had previously had time for, and every morning left the house before daybreak for a four or five miles' ride. Returning home by sunrise, he took a meal and then settled down to his translation work.

But the shadows of evening were gathering. The incessant labour and the strain of so many trials had told upon him and repeated attacks of fever weakened him. As long as he had strength for it, he was drawn round his beloved garden in a chair placed on a board with four wheels. When increasing weakness rendered this no longer possible, he insisted on the gardeners coming to his room that he might converse with them about the plants and give them instructions; he even paid them their wages himself. He had a favourite picture of a very beautiful shrub hung on the wall beside his couch, and often gazed upon it with delight.

In the summer of 1833 he was so weak that the end seemed to be approaching and he wrote to his sisters: "I believe this is the last letter you are at all likely to receive from me." . . . But he rallied, and was able to lie on his couch, and now and then managed to sit at his desk and read proofs of his Bengali Testament. When the last sheets of this final revision were finished, he remarked that his work was done and that he had nothing more to do but wait the will of his Lord.

News from England told of renewed confidence and new support for the work. Recollections of all that had been accomplished caused him over and

over again to whisper, "What hath God wrought." To his devoted colleague Marshman he said, "I have not a single desire ungratified."

He made a will—a most lucid and carefully drawn up document—the main item of which ran :

First—I utterly disclaim all or any right or title to the premises at Serampore, called the Mission Premises, and every part and parcel thereof; and do hereby declare that I never had, or supposed myself to have, any such right or title.

The cooler weather of the autumn and winter revived him. Many friends came to see him. Lady Bentinck was a frequent visitor; Dr Wilson, Bishop of Calcutta, knelt at his bedside to receive his blessing. The old man's mind still wandered to his garden, and once when Marshman, in his tender care for his venerable colleague, told his medical adviser about it, Carey, with a playful twinkle of the eye, exclaimed: "When I am gone, Dr Marshman will turn the *cows* into my garden!"

Among his last visitors was young Duff. At the close of one visit he heard, as he left the room, a feeble voice calling him back. "Mr Duff!" said Carey softly but with earnestness, "Mr Duff! You have been speaking about Dr Carey, Dr Carey; when I am gone, say nothing about Dr Carey—speak about Dr Carey's Saviour."

On Sunday, June 8th, 1834, Carey was seen to be sinking. During the night he became worse, and as the day broke his gentle spirit fled.

Next day his frail body was carried through the streets of Serampore to the converts' cemetery

where already several of his dear ones lay. The flag on the Danish Government House was at half-mast ; crowds of Hindus, Mohammedans, and Europeans lined the road ; the Governor and his wife, the members of the Council and such friends as could arrive in time stood by while William Carey's remains were laid beside those of his second wife. As the days passed, messages of sympathy and resolutions of committees and societies poured in from all quarters, and even the Calcutta newspapers extolled his greatness. But in accordance with the clearly expressed directions contained in his will his gravestone was inscribed with the simple statement :

**WILLIAM CAREY**

**BORN AUGUST 17TH, 1761, DIED JUNE 9TH, 1834**

**A wretched, poor and helpless worm,  
On Thy kind arms I fall.**

The pious sentiment of the nineteenth century approved of such an epitaph ; we of the twentieth century prefer rather to remember him by his own great words :

**ATTEMPT GREAT THINGS FOR GOD ;  
EXPECT GREAT THINGS FROM GOD.**

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