The Church of Christ In India

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CHAPTER I

THE EARLY CHURCH

BY PROF. C. E. ABRAHAM

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1. The Origin of the Church

THE answer to the question whether Jesus Christ founded the Church will depend upon the meaning we attach to the word Church. There are some who contend that the Church in the sense of an organisation with officials whose functions were defined as we find in certain parts of the New Testament was directly a creation of our Lord. There are others who hold that while the organisation of the Church was the result of later development, the idea was an essential part of the message of the kingdom that Jesus came to announce. This latter view seems to us to be more faithful to the impression conveyed by the New Testament. Jesus did not directly found the Church, but at the same time he gathered round him a body of disciples united to Him by faith and loyalty, and to one another by love and fellowship, to whom the necessity of an organised society was made clear by His

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teaching. It was consistent with Jesus' method to lay down principles rather than regulate the form which the brotherhood of His disciples should take. The only commandment He gave to His disciples was the new commandment of love. That was the principle on which their life as a community was to be built up. What of the sacraments then ? one may ask : were they not instituted by Christ ? In reply it may be said that while the sacraments of Baptism and Holy Communion express in a wonderful way the genius of Christianity, we can claim only two of them to be the direct creation of our Lord. Himself accepting John's baptism, he allowed his disciples to carry on a similar rite of initiation into a new life which developed in time into the sacrament of Christian baptism ; and He held a last supper with His disciples, which He desired them to perpetuate in remembrance of Him, and which developed into the sacrament of Holy Communion.

2. The Earliest picture of the Church

For picture of the Church of the earliest days we have to turn to the early chapters of the book of Acts. The very names that are used to describe the community are significant.

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They were called "the believers" (Acts, ii, 44; iv, 32) "those who were being saved" (Acts, ii, 47) "the brothern" (Acts i, 15); and those of the Way (Acts ix, 2). Faith in Jesus, a vital experience of salvation, combined with a common bond of love and a readiness to apply religion to life formed the chief characteristics of this new community. Other qualities equally prominent are indicated in the summary description of the life of the new community given to us in Acts ii, 42. "They then that received His word were baptized..... ... ... And they continued steadfastly in the teaching of the Apostles, and in the fellowship, in the breaking of the bread, and the prayers. "The organisation that we have here is of the simplest kind. The leaders of the little community were the twelve apostles whose main function was one of teaching. Secondly, it was a fellowship of brethren–a fellowship that was singularly marked by a spirit of unity and generosity as illustrated by the community of goods that they spontaneously practised at the time. (Acts ii, 45). Common meals from house to house usually accompanied by the "breaking of bread", and united worship either in the temple or in private houses were other features of this remarkable first century fellowship. Unity

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in worship as well as in other activities of life was an essential characteristic of the brethren as can be seen from the frequent use of the phrase 'with one accord' in the brief description of their life in the early days. The condition of entrance into the new community was repentance accompanied by baptism in the name of Jesus Christ which was generally followed by 'the gift of the Holy ghost' (Acts ii, 38). The reader of the Acts of the Apostles will be struck by the large place given to the Holy Spirit in the life and activities of the Brotherhood. The Holy Spirit was their common possession as well as the source of inspiration and direction of all their endeavours. The believers were all filled with the Holy Spirit and were also the receipients of special gifts of the Spirit. This experience of the continual guidance of the Spirit is almost unique in the history of the Church and forms the secret of the amazing achievements of the Church in Apostolic times. In a real sense, the early Church was the home of the Spirit.

3. The organisation of the early Church

It is necessary that we should look a little more in detail into the organisation of the early apostolic Church. In

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the first place it is well to note that the first thing that the Apostles did after the day of Pentecost was *not* to sit down and draw up a constitution for the infant Church. The fact is that the organisation of the Church was the result of a gradual growth in accordance with the needs of the time. Another point that should be borne in mind is that the Apostles and the first converts being all Jews, it was but natural that the organisation of the Jewish synagogue with which they were familiar should be taken as a pattern for the Christian Church, the new Israel of God. The fact that the word *Ecclesia* translated Church is the Greek equivalent of the Jewish word *Kahal* reminds us that the idea of the Church has Jewish as well as gentile associations. One further point that we Christians of the twentieth century should keep in mind is that we shculd not expect to find sanction for any particular type of organisation with which we happen to be connected—episcopal, presbyterian or congregational—, in the apostolic Church because from the nature of the case, as scholars like Canon Streeter have pointed out, the apostolic church organisation was essentially in a fluid and uncrystalised state. One does not look for the features of a fully developed organism in the embryo, though

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in a sense they are all there in germ. Similarly the principles and not the particular form of our latter days church organisations may be discerned in the glimpses that we get of all the early church in the New Testament.

With these preliminary remarks we may pass on to consider the different forms of ministry that are to be found in the New Testament. In the Apostolic Church there were two different orders of ministry, one 'missionary' and the other 'local'; one a ministry of 'grace' (charismatic) and other of 'office' though the distinction is not to be pressed.

(a) Missionary Ministers. To the class of missionary ministers belonged Apostles, Prophets and Teachers. (1Cor. xii, 28 ff., Eph. iv, 11 ff.) whose function was mainly that of going round preaching the gospel, founding churches and giving instruction. It was in this way that 'they kept the life-blood of the Church in circulation and preserved its unity, for it is to them we owe the fact that there is one Bible everywhere received in the Church, one Creed, one weekly Holy day, one Baptism and one Eucharist'. Though the Twelve who occupied from the first a position of pre-eminence in the Church at Jerusalem were those generally included in the

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category of Apostles, the meaning of the term was extended to include St. Paul too, because he had seen the Lord and been directly called by Him to be an apostle. Generally speaking the apostle was a missionary to gentiles, while the prophet was a missioner to the churches. Men like Barnabas and Timothy may be called Apostolic delegates or missionaries-in-chief because they were sent out either by a Church or by an apostle. The evangelist was probably a missionary in the local church whose work was to preach the gospel and expound the Scriptures. The office of the teacher was of less importance than that of the other two orders mentioned above and soon became merged in that of a bishop or presbyter. A prophet in virtue of his characteristic gift of forth-telling God's message, was accepted without ordination, so far as we know, and given a place as part of the foundation of the Church, alongside the apostles (Ephes. ii, 20) we are apt, when we read of the church as being founded on the 'apostles and prophets' to think of the Old Testament prophets. But the reference is to New Testament prophets, as also in the Te Deum, where the "glorious company of the apostles" is followed by "the goodly fellowship of the prophets." A

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prophet wherever he went, we learn from early Christian writers, was privileged to preside at the Eucharist, and if he wished to settle down in a place, was accepted as the minister of the Church without any ordination. It is the prophetic character of the christian ministry that Congregational Churches hold to be most precious in their heritage, and in discussions on church union in India it is important that this aspect of the ministry in the apostolic Church should be kept in view. There is no reason to think that either prophets or teachers had any disciplinary powers like the Apostles, though the function of all the three orders was primarily spiritual, such as preaching, praying, exhorting, expounding and instructing.

(*b*) ***Local ministers.*** To consolidate the work of the itinerant missionary it was necessary that there should be a class of men who belonged to the local church and such were *presbyters* and *deacons* whom we come across in the Acts and the Epistles. From the book of Acts we learn that Paul and Barnabas appointed presbyters or elders in every church that they had founded, an office with which both of them were familiar in the Jewish synagogue. Every Jewish synagogue was ruled by a council of elders. The elders of the synagogue

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were not "priests" but were ordained after careful training, and each group formed a 'sanhedrin' whose chairman was the ruler of the synagogue. In the apostolic age the terms presbyter and bishop appear to be used as synonoms (Acts xx, 17, 28). The term bishop is not used in the New Testament in the modern sense of one set in authority over presbyters. The title bishop or *Episcopes* meaning overseer had Old Testament associations and especially looks back to the 'watchman' of Ezek, xxxiii,6. Gwatkin says, "Upon the whole we meet with elders quite early in the apostolic age and deacons rather later, but we find no trace of bishops in the New Testament". There are others however like Lightfoot who maintain that though we do not find the name in the modern sense, the type of the true episcopate is to found in the commanding position held by Peter and James, the brother of the Lord, in the Church at Jerusalem *Presbyters*. The Presbyter was ruler and instructor of his people, a pastor and teacher at the same time. Usually each local church had several presbyters who were considered the chief officers of the Church. They had the place of honour in the assembly and would preside over its general sessions as well as take the lead in the Eucharistic service

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of the church when no Apostles or Prophets were present. The qualifications of the presbyters, both spiritual and administrative, are set forth in the pastoral epistles (1 Tim. iii, 5; v, 17; 1 Peter v, 1–4).

Deacons. This order which was almost universal in the Apostolic Church (Phil. i, 1; 1 Tim. iii, 8, 12) was an entirely new one, having no parallel in the Jewish synagogue. The seven who were appointed to serve table (Acts vi, 1-6) may be considered the forerunners of the later order of deacons, whose duties were mainly those of assisting presbyters at church services, and looking after the sick and the needy. It was a new problem that called forth a new order of ministers in the Church. We read in the New Testament of a deaconess too, one Phoebe of Chenchrae, which may or may not be a term of office. The fact that Jesus Himself associated women in His ministry must have given implicit sanction to the appointment of women to certain forms of ministry in the early Church. That 'in Christ there is neither male nor female' is still our charter for the association of women with men in Christian service.

Such, in brief, was the organisation of the primitive Church. But a word may be said here as to the later Develop-

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ment of the ministry especially in the earlier centuries! It is when we come to the second century that we find the functions of the Presbyters and deacons more clearly defined and the figure of the diocesan bishop emerging into importance. There were several reasons by which a local presbyter was raised to the rank and responsibilities of a bishop having jurisdiction over more than one 'parish'. When persecutions broke out, or when heresies such as Gnosticism assailed the church, the need was felt for leaders not merely for one local church or another but for the Church as a whole in order to safeguard its unity as well as the transmission on sound doctrine. This was most keenly felt when the visible centre of the Church's life in Jerusalem was swept away by the fall of the city in A. D. 70. It was such needs as these that produced the new type of officers called Bishops that we find in Ignatius, Bishop of Antioch, and Polycarp, Bishop of Smyrna, in the second century. As in the case of Deacons and Presbyters, so also here. It was the needs of the Church that determined its organisation from time to time.

4. Why any organisation at all ?

There are some who maintain that there is no sanction for an organised

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expression of Christianity such as the Church in the teachings of Christ and indeed that the highest form of the spiritual life is one that completely dispenses with outward forms, symbols and organisations. It is often said that the surest way to smother an idea in course of time is to clothe it in an organisation. We may seek an answer to such objections along the following lines.

1. On the general question of the necessity for some sort of outward form and organisation in spiritual life, there cannot be two opinions, when one comes to reflect upon it. The least organised religious life need not and indeed cannot be the most spiritual kind of life. As long as we live in this world with material organs of expression for our spiritual activity, we cannot hope to dispense with all outward forms and activities. In our physical and mental life, if the body can be an effective vehicle and instrument of the spirit why not in the spiritual life as well? Machinery is necessary to make power effective and useful. Steam or electric power in the air, free and unorganised, cannot perform the miracles that it can as when regulated and organised in the engine of an aeroplane or railway train. Machinery can be ill-adapted to the use of the

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power but that is no argument against machinery under proper conditions. If one kind of organisation tends to curb rather than develop the spiritual life, it cannot be held to be the fault of organisation as such. The perfect artist is not one who scorns the technique of his art but one who makes himself such a perfect master in it, that he can express himself most effectively when he seems to care for it least. So also in the realm of religion. Outward forms, ceremonies and organisation cannot by themselves make a man spiritual, but neither can a man expect to become spiritual without their aid. Even those groups of Christians who started to develop a spiritual life by rejecting the conventional symbols and ceremony of the Christian Church have in course of time been led to adopt certain other ritual forms in corporate worship as necessary and even indispensable. This is true, for instance, of the Society of Friends and the Salvation Army. So some sort of organisation with its attendant conventions is absolutely necessary in the spiritual life.

2. Secondly, we must remember that the Christian life is not an isolated life. It is essentially a life of sanctified social relationships. In Christianity religion is not a matter of an individual's private

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relation to God. The Christian life is essentially a life of fellowship in a community, a life of membership in the Church. If this is so, how can we avoid the idea of organisation in the spiritual life? Not only as individuals but as a community we are to be the temple of the Holy Spirit of God, the organ of His activity, the vehicle of His grace and power in this world.

3. Further, there is evidence in the Gospels for us to *think* that Jesus Himself recognised the necessity of His disciples being organised in a society. The only method by which He thought of perpetuating His teaching was by committing it to a body of men whom he had chosen and trained for the purpose. (Mark i, 14-17; Matt. x, 1-15). As the author of *Ecce Homo* says "It was not from accident or convenience that Christ formed a Society ..... To organise a society and to bind the members of it together by the closest ties were the business of His life.....For this reason, He established a common feast, which was through all ages to remind Christians of their indissoluble union." (P. 92, 2nd edition).

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CHAPTER II

THE CHURCH—THE BODY OF CHRIST

BY DR. A. J. APPASAMY

The Church and Personal Influence

WHILE on earth, our Lord Jesus Christ chose twelve disciples and trained them for the great task which was ahead of them. He knew the importance and value of personal influence in spiritual matters. Already in the Old Testament we hear of prophets and their disciples. Elijah had his disciple Elisha. Jeremiah had Baruch. Immediately before our Lord's time, the Jewish Rabbis had their disciples, though the main purpose of their discipleship was study. John the Baptist had disciples. But our Lord gave the impress of His genius to this ancient institution. He chose the disciples with great care and exacted from them a complete surrender of all their previous work and interests. Before commissioning them He spent a whole night in prayer. It was a momentous occasion. He was going to leave the world but the disciples were to carry on His work. They were to

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spread His message. Humanly speaking, everything depended on them. Our Lord, therefore, took extraordinary pains to train them. He allowed them to be with Him practically all the time and often sacrificed His own privacy and quiet for their sake. He bore with all their weaknesses–their impetuosity, their narrowness, their little faith and their lack of understanding. He imparted to them something of His passion for God and for man.

Spirituality is best passed on from man to man. We cannot learn religion easily from books and from organizations; we can only learn it well when we intimately come in contact with a deeply religious man. We watch him as he passes unhurriedly through life, rapt in an inward peace. We observe his outlook of joy, see the power which continually goes out from him, understand the view which he sets forth and thus form a new estimate of religion. Religion is thus caught, not taught. In personal contact it is that spiritual life most fully flows out. It is for this reason that our Lord chose a band of twelve disciples. He wanted them to catch His inward fire and to spread it. He wanted them to share His experience and to pass it on to others. These twelve disciples are the beginnings of the Church. Their numbers

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have been steadily augmented and the Church has become a tremendous body. But the ultimate principle still remains the same. The Church is the institution established by our Lord for spreading His message and power through personal channels.

As we study the history of the Christian Church, we find that great movements have spread through personal contacts. St. Francis of Assisi gathered round him a number of brothers and infused into them his spirit. They caught some of his joy and devotion and spread it among others. In modern days, the Oxford Group Movement is largely spreading through personal influence. Frank Buchman has seen the vision of a new world and has been able to make some of his intimate friends see the same vision. Buchman and his friends live together, travel together and work together. They seek to influence individuals. Personal work is their keynote.

In India we have the tradition that the relation of *Guru* (teacher) and *chela* (disciple) is very important in the spiritual life. We are taught that religion can best be learnt from spiritual men. This is a highly significant truth. Ramadasa says : 'What the mind cannot attain can be attained through the power of the *Guru*. The treasurehouse may

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be full of treasure; but it is all shut up, and one cannot go inside it unless one has the key in his hands. What this key is, is known to the disciple with the help of His master !"* Jnanesvara tells us that he cannot adequately praise the greatness of the *Guru*. 'Is it possible,' he asks, 'to add lustre to the sun ? Is it possible to add a scent to camphor ? How can the sandal tree be made more fragrant ? How can the nectar be re-dressed for meals ? How can one add a hue to the pearl ? Or what is the propriety of giving a silver polish to gold ? It is better that one should remain silent, and silently bow at the feet of his master.' †

As the religious history of India proves, there are some dangers connected with the *Guru* and *chela* relationship. The teacher begins to exact from his disciple that utter devotion and loyalty which ought really to be given only to God. He insists on implicit obedience and sometimes lays upon the disciple burdens too heavy to bear. To retain a strong hold upon a few. he makes his teaching secret and refuses to give the multitude the benefit of his wisdom and

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* R. D. Ranade, Indian Mysticism : Mysticism in Maharashtra, p. 392.

† *op. cit.* p. 49 Abbreviated.

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experience. This gradually makes religion a kind of hidden science. That is why a great deal of the spiritual experience of India is locked up in books which are unintelligible. The words are ordinary words and yet we are told that each sentence conveys a meaning other than it seems to have. These dangers must be carefully guarded against. The central idea, however, that religion is really a personal matter is most significant and wholesome.

The Church provides *Gurus* to help us in our spiritual life. They point out to us the highest ends of life, and warn us of the dangers; they pray with and for us. The priest in your parish is always ready to help you. Do not think that his work is only to read the services in Church. He is interested in every individual in his Church. He is anxious to understand your difficulties and to help you all he can. If you have intellectual difficulties about the Christian faith, go to him and take him into your confidence. Sometimes you may read or hear things which may disturb your faith. The priest of your Church has probably helped many people of your type. You may have moral problems—about your personal life, about your work, about your relations with your neighbours. Do not hesitate to consult

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your pastor about them. He has much experience in dealing with difficulties of this kind.

The Church and Collective Experience

There is another important fact connected with the spiritual life. It is that religion is best practised not by one man alone but by several together. There are many difficulties to be encountered, many problems to bo dealt with, many pitfalls to be avoided. These cannot be effectively *done* by one man. Men of similar experience should come together. This law runs all through life. When there is something to rejoice over, such as a wedding, we send for others and our joy is increased. When there is a deep grief, we tell others and their sincere sympathy and comfort reduces in a measure our sorrow. When we seek education, we go to schools and colleges and in company with others walk along the arduous path of learning. Their questions stir our interest, their progress acts as a stimulus to our efforts. In the religious life too, we must have in mind this important truth. We must seek to help and to be helped by others. The Church brings us all together at various times and in various ways and enables us to share one another's experience.

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Do not think that you can live the religious life all by yourself. There are several pieces of wood, all glowing red hot in a blazing fire. Remove one and keep it apart for a few minutes and it will die out. Keep it with the others and it will retain its heat and glow.

St. Paul has a wonderful picture of the Church. The Church is like a body. All the members work together for a common good. "For as the body is one and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body; so also is Christ. For by one Spirit are we all baptised into one body; whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit. For the body is not one member, but many. If the foot shall say, Because I am not the hand, I am not of the body, is it therefore not of the body? And if the ear shall say, Because I am not the eye, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body? If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing; If the whole were hearing, where were the smelling? But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased Him. And if they were all one member, where were the body? But now are they many members, yet but one body. And the eye cannot say

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unto the hand, I have no need of thee; nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you. Nay, much more those members of the body, which seem to be more feeble. are necessary: And those members of the body, which we think to be less honourable, upon these we bestow more abundant honour; and our uncomely parts have more abundant comeliness. For our comely parts have no need: but God hath tempered the body together, having given more abundant honour to that part which lacked: That there should be no schism in the body; but that the members should have the same care one for another. And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it. Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular."*

The Church is the body of Christ. He works through it. It expresses His will as a human body expresses the will of a man. We are not all expected to do the same work, but whatever work we can do well, let us do it for the Church—it may be preaching, or leading small study groups, or looking after the poor, or visiting the sick, or keeping the Church clean and pretty. Our aim

* 1 Cor. xii. 12—27.

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should not be to get as much out of the Church as possible, but to give as much to it as we can. It is only in this way that the Church can live its full life. If every one contributes, there is much in common. If every one is hostile and stands aloof in criticism, or if every one is indifferent and refuses to contribute, there is not anything in common. We should not despise any Christian, —however weak and sinning ; the duty of helping him is ours. We all have a joint responsibility in such a matter.

The Church and the Christian Heritage

Every generaiton of Christians learns something of value. For century after century men have been grasping fresh ideas about God. They have explored new pathways to him. They have formed new ideals. Our understanding of truth becomes clearer and clearer. From age to age great saints, martyrs, prophets, teachers, and missionaries appear. Their lives are a great stimulus to successive generations. We are impressed by the glow of their piety and the depth of their religion. Their utter self-sacrifice sets before us a continual example. Their clean, generous, lofty lives stir the best in us. Now the Church is the body which preserves and transmits this valuable heritage. But for the Church

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where will be the memories of these fine men and women of God ? In the pages of historians, we may see all too brief glimpses of the influence which they exerted in their day. But it is the Church which treasures the memory of the saints, builds monuments in their name, preserves their books and above all puts into each new age the heart and soul of their life. The Church often reminds us of the great saints of old and exhorts us to follow in their footsteps. St. Paul, St. John, St. Peter, St. James—the names of these are kept fresh in our minds and their example is made to stimulate us to our best effort. In modern times the life and teaching of men like Luther and Wesley are kept alive in Churches bearing their names. Hymns, setting out men's experience of God, are treasured and put to continual good use by the Church. The Church takes great care of the spiritual classics which have been written from time to time with the life-blood of men; she places them before people as their spiritual food. In worship and ceremony, in government and discipline, all that is worth-while in the past is preserved for us in the Church. Anything of real value for spiritual growth is retained in the Church's life.

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The Church's Year

The Church consecrates the year for us. She reminds us of the central facts of the Christian religion. The birth of our Lord is celebrated during Christmas. His great suffering on the Cross is observed solemnly during the Passion Week. His glorious resurrection is jubilantly and triumphantly set forth on Easter day and remembered every Sunday. It is most valuable that the important facts connected with the history of our religion should thus be remembered. They are necessary for our spiritual life. Forgetting them, our spiritual life is likely to languish. Remembering them, our spiritual life is apt to make fresh advances. The course of time is thus marked out and the shining points of the spiritual way are set out clearly.

But is this all true? Has the Church always been a help? It is as well to recognize that there have been bad Christians and that even now there are bad Christians. To associate with them is no spiritual help. Even some leaders of the Church have used their position and power for selfish ends. All the same, we must acknowledge that the Church's influence through the ages has been on the whole good. Any one who seeks to live the true Christian life must enter

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the Church. For there, more than anywhere else, he will find earnest men seeking to be guided by the Spirit. All the followers of Christ have found a spiritual home in the Church. They have worshipped in it and have seen there gleams of service and love, which they have sought to follow. Their love for God has waxed strong as they have come into the company of saintly men and women, often unknown to fame. In times of distress and sorrow, the Church has given them consolation. The Church has educated the young and filled them with high ideals The Church has administered the sacraments and brought us ever close to God and to Christ.

The Christian Church in India

The Christian Church first spread in Europe. As it reached different countries like Italy, Greece, England and Sweden it expressed itself in the life and thought of each country. There are, therefore, now Roman, Greek, English and Swedish Churches. All these Churches are branches of the one Catholic Christian Church. And yet they express the genius of the Christian religion in different ways. Missionaries from these various Churches are now toiling in India. They have felt the urgency of the missionary task and have brought the Christian

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message to this country. It is perhaps natural that they should emphasize their own peculiar understanding and practice of Christianity. But Christianity can become a power in India only when it expresses itself in Indian ways. India is an old country. Earnest men have been engaged for long in the spiritual quest. Often they have gone wrong but often they have caught real glimpses of God and of His love for men. It is therefore necessary that whatever is good and in line with the spirit of Christ in the religious tradition of India should be taken over into the Christian Church. How may this be done? I should like to point out briefly some directions along which this may be done.

1. The Church in India must become independent. She must guide her own affairs. She must be able to translate into practice her deep convictions. This means that all the money necessary should be found in India. If money comes from abroad the people who make the grants would insist upon our doing things in their way and not in ours. All of us therefore should strive our best to bring about the independence of the Indian Church and to help forward various efforts which are being put forth for that purpose.

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2. At present the Christian Church in India is divided into the Anglican Church, the Methodist Church, the Lutheran Church, the Baptist Church, the Presbyterian Church and the Congregationalist Church and many other bodies. These Churches came into existence in Europe and America for good historic reasons. They stood out definitely for certain principles. But there is no reason why these divisions should continue in India. So long as they continue a really Indian Church cannot come into existence. People belonging to them are apt to live in their narrow grooves and to look down upon the others. They are apt to be loyal to their own special traditions. Amidst this conflict of traditions and ideals the Indian Christian is lost. Whatever he might have to contribute is overwhelmed by the power and authority of the older Churches. A new united Church should come into being. It should seek to preserve whatever is valuable in the old Churches but at the same time it should adopt such Indian expressions as are necessary. Already in South India there is a hopeful movement in this direction.

3. Our Indian Church buildings should not be mere copies of Churches in Europe and America. They should be built of stone in the Indian style

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with plenty of carving, the pictures carved being distinctively Christian. Indian music, which really stirs the people and is easily understood by them, should be used in our Churches. New lyrics should be written in the vernaculars. A lyric is the outpouring of a man's devotion to God. There is a wealth of devotional literature in India and the devout Christian who wants to express his love for Christ will find in it plenty of imagery and thought which he can take over. Hymns written in this way have a far greater appeal than translations of English or German hymns, however good they may be in the original. Prayers should be written by saintly people in Indian vernaculars expressing with fervour and passion their longing for God, their conviction of sin, their experience of forgiveness and their peace and joy in Christ. There are many problems and difficulties which the Indian Christian feels as he begins to think out the meaning of the Christian religion. These should be faced frankly and fully in theological books specially written for India. In these and many other ways the Christian Church in India should become really Indian.

A few years ago the missionaries taught that converts should give up all their old ways. Whatever was Indian

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was wrong. Indian names, Indian dress, Indian ways of living, Indian books should all be abandoned. We now find that this was a mistake. This has tended to put Christians in a community by themselves without any contact with the larger life of India. We cannot serve India effectively if we live as a separate community. As Christians we have a great work to do in India. This contribution cannot be given if we do not identify ourselves with the rest of our countrymen. We should preserve all that is best in our national life and seek to serve our Lord Jesus Christ as real Indians. There is abundant opportunity for this.

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CHAPTER III

PROSELYTISING

BY REV. THOMAS SITTHER, M.A., B.D.

THE word Proselytising is ordinarily used in a bad sense; it has an ugly odour about it. But etymologically there is no justification for this. The definition given by the dictionary is "conversion from one opinion. creed or party to another." There is nothing wrong about this; it happens every day all the world over. In fact it is a sign of progress. If we were to find anywhere men and women never changing their opinion or their conviction we would stigmatise it as stagnation. Of course we do not expect people to be changing their views constantly or on the flimsiest pretext. That would not be progress but instability and would indicate lack of depth in thought and conviction. But a stubborn refusal to change or to be converted in spite of inner conviction would amount to playing fast and loose with conscience. He who sees light and does not follow it will be denied further light on his path.

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If it is right for a man to change his opinion or convictions where there are strong reasons for doing so it follows quite naturally that every one has a fundamental right to influence other people towards that end. In other words every man must have the chance of converting others to his own point-of-view so long as he does it along right lines. This is because it is the duty and privilege or every man to share the best and highest that he has with his fellowmen. If anyone keeps selfishly to himself any such priceless possession he becomes an enemy of society. For he does not care for the highest welfare of humanity. The exercise of this right of conversion, however, is subject to the maintenance of public order and morality. Some fundamental principles of religious liberty were laid down by the famous "Unity Conference" held at Delhi in 1924 when Mr. Gandhi was observing his historic fast to unite the Hindus and the Moslems who were at that time engaged in communal factions of a serious character. Part of the resolution passed by the Conference may be quoted here as it accords completely with our own sentiments. "This conference condemns any attempt by compulsion to convert people to one's faith or to enforce one's

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own religious observance at the cost of the rights of others.....every individual is at liberty to follow any faith and to change it whenever he so wills... ..... every individual or group is at liberty to convert or re-convert another by argument or persuasion but not to attempt to do so or prevent its being done, by force, fraud, or other unfair means such as the offering of material inducement."

The person engaged in the right type of proselytising should only be actuated by the highest motives. It is because unworthy motives have sometimes been mixed up with conversions from one religion to another that the word proselytising has acquired a derogatory sense. We must therefore examine what constitutes a wrong motive in conversion. Any motive in an attempt to convert others from one religion to another is wrong and unworthy unless it seeks their highest welfare. Anything less than the best is wrong in this respect. Let us specify some of these unworthy motives.

First of all it is wrong in seeking the conversion of people of other faiths to desire to swell the numbers of our own religion Though there is strength in numbers, in matters spiritual and religious counting heads is bad for every-

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one concerned. If the increase of adherents to a faith becomes the dominating purpose it happens invariably that people who profess to change their religious beliefs do not really change them at all. Only outwardly they conform to the new faith but inwardly they bring in their old beliefs and so the 'conversion' in such cases is a misnomer. It is only a change of names. People who change so easily without inner conviction also do not stay very long in their new environment. On the slightest inducement from another direction such people are ready to go over elsewhere. In the activities carried on by foreign missionaries in India it cannot be denied that there has been a temptation in this respect. They had to submit to their Home Boards reports of their activities and progress. But the truth is that results of religious and spiritual work cannot be estimated in numbers. The best results are unseen because they are to be found in the deepest issues of life, in change of character. This cannot be measured or weighed or counted. Now that the Indian Church is coming to its own and feels the responsibility of sharing its spiritual treasures this particular temptation of counting heads will, we hope, cease to exist. If the stigma is to go out of 'proselytising'

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we must show an anxiety not to increase our numbers but to withstand any onrush into the church of those who have no deep conviction about the Christian faith and who show no change of heart.

Another unworthy motive in seeking the conversion of others is personal aggrandisement, either open or subtle or even unconscious. The old taunt of non-Christians that a Christian is paid so much for every person brought into the church is no longer heard because it is so utterly untrue. However the benefits that one seeks need not be confined to rupees, annas and pies. One might pride *himself* on the fact that through *his* instrumentality so many have joined the church. This surely is out-of-place wherever there is genuine conversion. No man 'converts' another man; he only prepares the way. He sows the seed; *but* it is God who gives the increase. If the Grace of God is absent, how can anyone expect any true conversion? There is no room therefore for any personal glory in it whatever form the glory may take.

Even with the best of motives true conversion becomes 'proselytising' of the worst type if unworthy means are employed in propaganda. This is what Mr. Gandhi attacks in his famous pronouncement on the future of missionary

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work in India. Let us quote his exact words which are relevant to our purpose here : "If, instead of confining themselves purely to humanitarian work such as education, medical services to the poor and the like, they (missionaries) would use these activities of theirs for the purpose of proselytising, I would certainly like them to withdraw. ..... Proselytisation under the cloak of humanitarian work is to say the least unhealthy.....Why should I change my relig on because a doctor who professes Christianity as his religion has cured me of some disease or why should the doctor expect or suggest such a change while I am under his influence ? Is not medical relief its own reward and satisfaction ? Or why should I whilst I am in a missionary educational institution have Christian teaching thrust upon me ? In my opinion these practices are not uplifting and give rise to suspicion if not even secret hostility. The methods of conversion must be, like Ceasar's wife, above suspicion .....If a man has a living faith in him, it spreads its aroma like the rose its scent .....I am then not against conversion but I am against the modern methods of conversion. Conversion now-a-days has become a matter of business, like any other. I remember having read a missionary

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report saying how much it cost per head to convert and presenting a budget for 'the next harvest'..... ..What is wanted therefore is living friendly contact among the followers of the great religions of the world and not a clash among them in the fruitless attempt on the part of each community to show the superiority of *its own* faith over the rest.....Conversion in the sense of self-purification, self-realisation is the crying need of the times. That, however, is not what is ever meant by proselytising."

With the general principles contained in Mr. Gandhi's timely statement most Christians will readily agree. No one wants to thrust 'the good news of Jesus Christ' on unwilling people nor again will any spiritual-minded person want to use any form of bait for presenting the gospel or for gaining adherents. If such baits are ever used by way of inducement, all sensible people will readily condemn those methods as unworthy of the Master whom they proclaim. Humanitarian work is undertaken by missionaries for its own sake to meet definite human needs. The spirit of Christ who went about doing good must find modern ways of expressing it. This is exactly what the right type of Christian medical missionaries have always asserted. Compare, for example, the follow-

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ing statements emanating from such sources. "It should be strongly borne in mind that medical missions must never be misused merely as a means of getting into contact with people;" or again "The attendance at all religious meetings and devotions is and has to be entirely optional. It is not possible to proclaim the Kingdom of God in the right way if any kind of pressure or unfair propaganda is made use of. The ministry of healing must never be misused so as to take the slightest advantage of people in need of help for their suffering to enforce upon them any religious teaching with which they would otherwise not have cared to come into contact." Similarly in Christian educational institutions the recognition of conscience is widely accepted. Commenting on Mr. Gandhi's statement under the heading "The wounds of a friend", the editor of *The National Christian Council Review* wrote these brave and unequivocal words; "The missionary who fishes in troubled waters and seeks by unfair methods to draw the helpless and the unwary into his net is unworthy of his calling... ...We have a message to proclaim and we must proclaim it at all hazards; but as our Master lived and taught openly and unashamed we should strive to follow his example and never

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descend to any method of which He would disapprove."

It is to be noted that Mr. Gandhi does not object to true conversion of the heart which if it resulted in change of religion he would naturally dislike but not take exception to. What he objects to is change of religion without strong inner conviction. Mr. Gandhi also objects to secret methods in conversion. This also is reprehensible. Whatever propaganda there is must be done publicly and above-board. There must not be any secrecy about it. If people do not want Christianity openly it is better that they should remain where they are. With all this we may readily agree but where we differ from Mr. Gandhi is that we cannot be content with merely doing humanitarian work. As Bishop Waller of Madras says, "Humanitariasm can be no substitute for the Gospel of Christ. It is the love of Christ that constraineth us. Woe unto us if we preach not the gospel. We lose our motive power, we lose our very life if we pluck out the root of our service and try to give the fruit alone." Again, humanitarian work is only part of the Christian message; there is another and more important part, that is, the ministry of healing for the sin-sick soul. No Christian can afford to neglect this side of his

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life and work, because it is all one. Jesus Christ came into the world to give life, abundant life. This of course includes meeting the needs of body, mind and soul.

While we are dealing with ignoble types of proselytising there is another aspect which we must not overlook. It is the neglect of those who have taken the step of changing their faiths after deep conviction. Our Lord has uttered a note of warning against this. "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharasees, hypocrites ! for ye compass sea and land to make one prcselyte; and when he is become so ye make him two-fold more a son of hell than yourselves." There is therefore great necessity for Christians to make sure that converts continue to find in the church true fellowship and increasing opportunities for spiritual progress.

The position we have arrived at so far is this. As Christians we must share the best that we have, the knowledge of Jesus Christ, with those who have it not, provided they are willing to receive it. But in trying to do this we must avoid any kind of unworthy motives or unfair methods. Keeping in remembrance this warning it has to be realised that it is the duty of every Christian to spread the know-

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ledge of his faith ; this is involved in the very message of the gospel. It is the best news the world has got in the midst of all kinds of problems, both personal and social. Again, this gospel is meant for all and not for any special class of people only. Further it is the command of the Lord Jesus Christ "Go ye and make disciples of all nations." If a Christian takes this injunction of his Master lightly or carelessly he does so *to* the peril of his spiritual life. While this is granted there may be room for the choice of methods. First and foremost of course comes the life. "What you are speaks so loudly that I cannot hear what you say." Our Master also enjoins upon us to let our light so shine before men that they may see our good works and glorify our Father who is in Heaven. It was so in early days when every Christian considered himself a missionary of his faith. That was how Christianity spread widely in the then known world. As Dr. Glover says, Christians outlived the pagans in the Roman Empire. While too much emphasis cannot be laid on the true Christian life which will act, in Mr. Gandhi's words, as the aroma of a rose, we must also not forget that we cannot but speak of things that we know. We must proclaim to others what the Lord

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has done for us. If out of cowardice we refrain from doing so we are unworthy of the Master whom we serve, because He needs above all heroes to be His disciples. Not all are equipped for public speaking; but every Christian can exercise this ministry of personal dealing with needy souls. But if we are to give anything to others we must have it ourselves and experience it in our lives. Once this is guaranteed the next step is to choose under the guidance of God those to whom it is our duty to present Christ and in His strength to do the *job* loyally.

When we are engaged in this work, an important question arises Should we press for baptism ? The answer is that baptism is the essential condition of Christian life ; because a Christian is not simply one who admires Christ or even tries to imitate him; a true Christian is one who is vitally united with Jesus Christ so that the life he lives is permeated by the life of Jesus Christ and influenced by His power. Every Christian should be in a position to say "No longer I but Christ in me." The initial process of getting into this vital union with Christ is what is called baptism. While no undue pressure to be baptised need be put on an enquirer, it has to be recognised that the Church

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which our Lord came to found is truly the Body of Christ, the instrument through which He exercises today His Ministry of healing and saving. As it is our duty to present Jesus Christ to our non-Christian friends so must we go to the logical length of leaving them with Him so that by their own initiative and conviction and guidance from the Master they may be led to ask for baptism. Then baptism will remain, as it ought to be a supreme privilege to be eagerly sought after.

If the whole church can be fired with this evangelistic impulse what cannot be done in our country? May the Church realise its responsibility and win the hearts of all people of this land by a Christ-like life and by undaunted courage in spreading the good news in a manner that will be considered by all reasonable men as scrupulously fair and above board.

Questions for discussion;

1. Which word do you prefer to use—proselytising or conversion, and why?
2. Specify some ignoble types of proselytising with which you are familiar?
3. What *should be* the *right* motive underlying proselytising?

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4. Briefly state what you consider to be the distinctive Christian message.

5. Why should every Christian be an evangelist ?

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CHAPTER IV

MASS MOVEMENTS

BY REV. BARKAT ULLAH

I.

ACCORDING to the 1931 census the total number of Indian Christians is 5,991,000. During the last decade the Christian population has increased by 32·5 per cent. If we bear in mind the fact that owing to the communal policy of the Government frantic efforts were made by some over-zealous enumerators and others to return Christians as Hindus, Moslems and Sikhs in order to swell the numbers of these communities, we may safely assume that the increase of the Christians is really much larger than 32·5 per cent. The census figures show that since 1881 the Christian population has increased by 238·1 per cent. If we except Buddhists, then this increase is the greatest in all communities in India.

This phenomenal increase is almost entirely due to a steady conversion of large groups of depressed classes. No definite figures are available (and figures

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vary in different provinces (but it is estimated that to-day between 80 and 95 per cent of Indian Christians come either directly, or through one or more of their ancestors, out of mass movement areas.

The desire for social uplift was only too often the main motive which led these large groups to enter the Christian Church. They suffered from social disabilities, indignities and oppression. They were weak, ignorant and poverty-stricken, were exploited and despised by the privileged classes, who (because of their birth) considered them unclean, untouchable and, in Malabar, unapproachable. They owned no land and lived as serfs, doing hard work and receiving starvation wages. Caste restrictions condemned them to toilsome, uncertain and undignified means of subsistence. All other professions were taboo to them. They were trodden down for centuries and made to feel that they were of a commoner clay than their masters and that they were a degraded and servile people, who could not hope to hold up their heads in this world and raise themselves above their appointed station in this life. Their religion consisted in a belief in a great multitude of evil, capricious and spiteful intermediate beings, demons, ghouls and goblins of all degrees of fierce propensity. Such a religion bred

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superstition, subservience, cowardice and self-abasement. It could not possibly console and strengthen or inspire them with a desire to fight inhuman traditions and overcome insuperable barriers. In their despair they turned to Christian missionaries, who were not making much headway against Islam and Hinduism. They considered the movement as a call from God and within a few years baptised hundreds of thousands without any adequate preparation and instruction. They were not 'converted' in the technical religious sense of that term. The pent-up forces generated by centuries of tyranny and latent vague spiritual longings for a fuller life led these large masses to move towards Christ. Freedom and hope beckoned them and they found rest for their weary souls. "For the first time in all the centuries of their miserable history they met a body of men and women who treated them as human beings, held out to them the right hand of fellowship, tried to work for their elevation and preached to them a Gospel of hope and life."* Missionaries would not have been true to their Master if they had neglected or spurned this great mass of humanity. At the same time they would not have been human if ambition

* Bishop Whitehead, work among Indian outcastes p. 4.

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and vanity and the mere desire for big things had not influenced them or if they had not felt satisfaction at the thought of the rosy picture which large statistics would call up in the minds of their supporters 'at home'. They had met with the greatest resistance at the hands of Hindus and Moslems and now the temptation to take the easy and kindly road was great. In many instances encouraged by their 'home' boards and led on by the exigencies of the situation, they ignored well-meant protests from their fellow-missionaries and Indian laymen. They adopted a policy of wide-spread and speedy baptisms and admitted hundreds of thousands of poor, starving, depressed and oppressed, illiterate animists into the Christian Church.

Their conversion has naturally created problems of the first magnitude and missionary forces are now busy concentrating almost all energies on the solution of these intricate and baffling questions. What in the beginning seemed an easy and simple task has turned out to be one of immense difficulty and well-nigh hopeless. The Christian Church in india will need Divine guidance, grace, patience and strength, if it is not to fall in the slough of despond in its almost superhuman efforts to build the living Body of Christ out of materials supplied by

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hasty baptisms and other ill-advised and short-sighted actions of missionary societies. In the short compass of a single chapter it is impossible to deal with all the problems which confront us. We can only hope briefly to review the prevailing social and economic conditions, customs and usages of Christians in mass-movement areas and see how they affect the future of the Indian Church as well as the contribution which that Church ought to make the life of to the nation as a whole.

II

Admission into the Christian Church has, to some extent, ameliorated the lot of our Christians in mass movement areas. Christianity came to them as a mighty liberating force. They discovered that they too had souls and were entitled to be treated as ends-in-themselves. Missionaries became their *mai bap*, espoused their cause and fought their battles, aided by the all-powerful prestige of the ruling race. All honour to their Christian spirit ! But this championship has not proved an unmixed blessing It has misrepresented Christianity as a religion of rulers and foreigners rather than of love, sacrifice and suffering. Owing to political changes the former prestige of missionaries is fast disappearing. Officials do not any longer pay

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heed to their representations but consider them unwarrantable intrusions. Christians, on their part, do not see why they should continue to remain members of a mission that cannot redress their wrongs. They feel no compunction in leaving one mission *enmasse* and joining another which promises them protection for the time being. The missionaries' hearts ache at this desertion but if in the past they sowed the wind they must now expect to reap the whirlwind. This is the inevitable result of a policy of speedy baptisms and inadequate instruction. Where missionary societies have insisted upon a definite breach with the past and laid stress on Christian teaching, changes in the standards of Christians have taken place. Where churches have been built and Christian worship has been firmly established, it has produced a powerful effect on the thought, life, conduct and customs of Christians. Old inhibitions and traditions have broken down and new forces have come into play, which make for orderly, clean, healthy and self-respecting habits and customs. But missionary societies have as a rule, contented themselves with teaching the Lord's prayer, the Apostles creed and the ten commandments; and this is *all* the spiritual equipment of millions of Christians.

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The divisions and rivalries of various missions have divided and scattered Christians. Many societies, intent upon preserving their 'anglo-catholic' or 'evangelical' or 'congregational' traditions, have settled down in the same area with the result that if one village is 'occupied by the C. M. S. the next 'belongs' to the Methodist Church, and the third to some other of the numerous societies, so that a minister of one denomination has to travel many miles before he reaches *his* next village. This makes any effective action and teaching impossible. There are many villages where divine services can not be conducted by an ordained minister more frequently than once in two or even three years. The result is that in sexual morality, gambling, drunkenness, illicit distillation of intoxicating liquors and in general standards of truthfulness and honesty Christian men and women are not much above the level of their non-Christian neighbours. In a conflict of loyalties they are more likely to stand by their old caste rules, customs and traditions than prove loyal to the demands of the Church. There is little in their surroundings to enforce Christian principles and practices, while there is much to undermine both.

Unless the Christian Church takes speedy action and insists on a thorough

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grounding in Christian teaching, practice and worship, we may witness the sad spectacle of masses of Christians reverting to Hinduism because of the facilities now offered by Mr. Gandhi's untouchability compaign. This has already happened in Meerut district, which in 1921 was the leading Chirstian district in the United Provinces. The decline in figures of Indian Christians in this district in 1931 is more than fifty per cent and is thus explained by the census officer : "This was the result of sweepers and chamars, who had returned themselves as Christians in 1921, returning themselves as Aryas in 1931." This is a warning that the Church ought to take to heart. These people moved to Christ in a mass. They may equally well move *away* from Him in a mass, if the Church does not rise to the occasion and put forth strenuous efforts to recover lost ground.

III

The gathering in of millions to the Christian Church has created an educational problem of great magnitude. The recent census figures reveal the distressing fact that during the last decade, while literacy has increased among Sikhs (+23), Jains (+12), Moslems (+11) and Hindus (+9) it has decreased among Christians (−6). The inclusion of Europeans and

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Anglo-Indians under the general head of Christians helps to swell the number of literates but hides the real figures for literacy among *Indian* Christians. If we remember that of the Christians returned from the whole of India about five per cent are Europeans and Anglo-Indians, who, as a whole, are a literate people the naked truth of the appalling illiteracy which obtains among Indian Christians is borne in upon us This is entirely due to the indiscriminate admission of ignorant and illiterate masses into the Christian Church. Missionary societies have opened day schools and night schools for them and their children; Government has helped by lifting the ban against their admission but these efforts have not proved effective, because it is impossible for even the most well-equipped missions to educate the large numbers of converts as fast as they are admitted. The missions have not been able to give effect to the recommendations of the Fraser Commission. Also, the economic condition of our Christians stands in the way of their sending children to schools or keeping them there sufficiently long to become literates. Humanly speaking, there is no hope of any widespread literacy among our Christians for the next thirty years.

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IV

No less appalling is the economic condition of our Christians. While the average per capita annual income for India is about Rs. eighty, according to Dr. J. W. Pickett's recent survey, the average per capita annual income of a Christian amounts only to Rs. 33.9.0. Out of such miserably small income he is supposed to be able to provide himself and his family with food, clothing and other necessities of life, to buy wives for himself and his grown-up sons, to provide money to meet his daily needs and other social obligations, to build a house for himself, to pay his incredibly large debts, to satisfy the greed of the police and other unscrupulous local and district officials as well as to support his teacher, pastor, 'home missions', to build his house of worship and to contribute to the missionary activities of the Church !

The profession of Christian Faith has not materially affected the economic position of Christians As a result of education, a very small number have been able to enter the professions of the ministry, teaching, medicine and law. Conversion has helped a few to break down occupational restrictions. But on the whole, their economic condition remains much as it was before they embraced Christianity. Census figures

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bear testimony to their chronic under-nourishment. The proportion of Christians between the ages of 20 and 40 years is lower than that of Hindus and Moslems and is gradually declining, being 3,107 males and 3,079 females per 10,000 in 1931 as against 3,193 males and 3,114 females in 1921. The number of Christians who own milch animals is surprisingly small. Their poverty prevents them from consuming much needed foods like milk, ghi, fruit and meat. Their houses, though usually kept clean, are surrounded by much filth and dirt; and, as a rule, do not consist of more than one or two rooms and accommodate about 5 members of the household. Disease naturally works havoc under these conditions. Infant mortality is high. Poverty leads to habits of dishonesty; and economic injustice is more often than not linked up with moral degradation. Under-nourishment and over-crowding cannot be said to lead to an improvement of their moral and spiritual life.

If the condition of the men and boys is gloomy enough, that of the women and girls is still worse. Educationally they are far less advanced than the men, and the number that can read is almost negligible. In matters of health, personal, social and sexual hygiene and baby welfare women have their own

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peculiar problems, which men cannot tackle. The number of women workers is altogether insufficient and most of these are foreigners who owing to hampering limitations of language, cultural background and difference of tradition can not be expected to have the same degree of insight, understanding and fellowship, as their Indian sisters could give.

V

The liabilities of the Christian Church do not end here. I have no space to do more than make a passing reference to the customs of child marriage, the bartering away of girls, and the other rich crop of vices which flourish in the congenial soil of animism and superstition and effectively retard the progress of the Church. The Church must in real earnestness set before itself the task of remedying and overcoming its own defects before it can even hope to influence the life of the country. There is very little, if any, missionary enthusiasm in the Church for the obvious reason that it is impossible for an imperfectly taught Church that has no voice and only a halting witness to bear to discharge its apostolate. The conditions, standards and ideals prevailing in the Church today cannot in any vital manner help it to give any specifically Indian expression

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to Christianity. The Church is simply not in a position to influence the thought and life of India. Humanly speaking, Christianity cannot come to its own in the land for generations to come.

VI

The question of the self-support of the Church is intimately bound up with the economic condition of Christians. Now that the missions are suffering from want of funds they are anxious to throw responsibility for finance on the starving Christians. This policy helps Christians to learn to depend on their own resources. Many of them have risen to the occasion and have contributed lakhs of rupees out of their poverty. But it is time that the Church realised that there is a limit to what they can give. You cannot get much milk from an under-nourished, habitually hungry and starving cow.

No human institution is exempt from mistakes. Missions too have in the past made mistakes in the guidance of the Church that have hindered its growth. Now they are making an error before which their former mistakes pale into insignificance. They are lowering the general standard of the ministry by ordaining in many cases men who have not passed more

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than the 5th or the 8th standard under the mistaken impression that the Indian Church can be made self-supporting in this way. Missionary societies forget that the easy road is *not* the road to the building up of a church with a strong character, and that consecrated personalities are far more difficult to obtain than money. Missions have set up a cheap, ignorant, illiterate and backboneless ministry, which, in spite of its achievements, has done more harm than good and has caused deep disappointment. Seeing no chance of being able to support themselves by the uncertain voluntary gifts of the faithful, these ministers supplement their income by unprincipled methods of exploitation, which have made the name of Christianity stink in the nostrils of all right-minded non-christians. Some may think that this is not the language of sobriety, but those who are intimately acquainted with facts know that what has been said is naked ungarbled truth. The slowness of growth in Christian character is not solely due to the depths of degradation from which our Christians have to be redeemed. It is also due in a large measure to the lack of faith, courage, character and insight of their 'guides' and 'leaders'.

No serious effort is honestly made by

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missions to recruit able, spiritually minded university men and women. The best among Indian Christians have hitherto stood aloof, content to criticise. *These* are the people who ought to respond to the call of Christ in a spirit of utter sacrifice, ready bravely to endure privations. The Lindsay Commission Report has rendered valuable service in pointing out to educated men and women the great needs of rural areas, where Christians from the depressed classes in their millions are needing the fulness of life in Jesus Christ. The mass movement with all its defects and problems constitutes a challenge to the youth of India. The Church is in need of daring leaders with insight and imagination who would not shrink from reorganising the whole system of Christian instruction, discipline, administration and worship on indigeneous lines according to the mind of Jesus Christ. I, for one, refuse to believe that there is a paucity of such men and women in the Indian Church. The Church is sounding an urgent call for a number of consecrated men and women who would be ready to bury themselves in mass movement areas for the sake of the Kingdom—apostles who would be prepared to face social isolation and lay down their lives that the Church might live. Millions of

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Christians need men and women filled with burning enthusiasm, heartfelt sympathy for their suffering brethren and a jealous love for Christ, who will hear the insistent Call, "Come over into the rural areas and help us." "The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few. Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest that he sends forth labourers into his harvest."

Suggestions for Discussion

1. How far do you think the Christian worker should be involved in secular side of his work, such as helping in their internal quarrels of Christians, or in their law-suits and grievances against their non-Christian masters, or in the acquisition of land, or in getting their children suitably married, etc, etc ?

2. If you were a worker in charge of a district what steps would you take to improve the general standard of the Church and how would you overcome the existing obstacles, specially in the matter of literacy ?

3. What help do you think the following could offer towards the solution of some of the mass movement problems ?

(*a*) Co-operative banks.
(*b*) Village dispensaries.
(*c*) Cottage industries.
(*d*) Rural reconstruction centres.

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4. In what particular ways can the student population help mass movement Christians:—

(*a*) To fight disease and insanitation.

(*b*) To improve their cattle.

(*c*) To prevent wasteful marriage customs and the bartering of girls.

(*d*) To promote personal, social and sexual hygiene and baby welfare.

(*e*) To give the Christians a more thorough grounding in Christian faith and practice.

5. What are the factors present in existing Church and Mission organisations which prevent educated missionary-hearted young men and women of to-day offering for service in :—

(*a*) the ministry.

(*b*) the villages.

How can they be removed ?

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CHAPTER V

THE CHURCH AND MODERN PROBLEMS

BY DR. E. ASIRVATHAM

MANY and varied are the problems which confront the thoughtful to-day–problems of an individual, social, national, international, and religious character. Among Christian people there is a wide-spread conviction that the Church has a great responsibility in meeting these problems; and along with it there goes the feeling that the Church is not doing much in this direction. A considerable number of Christian people use this failure or supposed failure of the Church as a cloak to hide their indifference to the Church and its activities, forgetting that the failure of the Church is equally their failure too. This indifference is in turn due to the loss of faith in institutional religion as a whole.

By calling these problems modern it is not suggested that they have not existed earlier. They are by no means peculiar to our day. They are much

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the same problems which appear in different forms and with different emphasis from age to age.

The Church itself is a problem to some. It has fallen away to some extent from the ideal set for it by Jesus Christ. Its leadership is so often inadequate. Its attitude is generally one of smug satisfaction with things as they are. It does not always possess the courage of its covictions; nor does it take a pronounced stand against injustice and iniquity. It does not present Christ and His claims in clear and forcible terms. The consequence of all this is that increasing numbers of people are losing faith in the efficacy of the church. This can be partly seen in poor church attendance and half-hearted support of the Church and its programme.

If the Church is to become an effective instrument in the solution of modern problems, it needs to be made anew. It should set up a high standard of individual and social morality and inspire people to reach it. It should infuse the spirit of Christ into every aspect of human life. Such a task, we believe, is not impossible to fulfil. So long as the emphasis is on formality and external requirements, the Church

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is bound to be ineffective. Unthinking conformity is in many cases worse than deliberate non-conformity.

The Church ought, in the first instance, to give people a personal faith in Jesus Christ and the revelation He has made of God and His Kingdom. If it can somehow demonstrate to people the beauty and forcefulness of Christ's character and the worthwhileness of His mission and give them a vital and inward religious experience, it will provide the key to the solution of most modern problems. It should give individuals a dynamic force in life which receives its stimulus from following Christ.

The man who possesses the spirit of Christ and burns with a desire to give concrete expression to it is not unduly concerned about ultimate theological and metaphysical questions, however important, and even urgent, they may be in their own place. The constant endeavour of such a man will be the increasing perfection of his own character and the continuous transformation of the environment around him into the image of Chirst.

The Christian Church cannot claim to have brought within its fold many such men in recent times. They are few and far between. The Church ought

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to be first and last a fellowship of people who sincerely believe in the teaching, example, and the spirit of Jesus Christ and earnestly endeavour to translate them into action in their individual and collective lives.

Turning from the Church, which is itself a problem to some, to the problems which it is called upon to solve or help to solve, the following merit our attention :—

1. The evils of materialism—and the spectre of poverty and unemployment.
2. The menace of war.
3. Racial discrimination.
4. Undue emphasis on social distinctions.
5. Communalism.
6. The dire consequences of foreign domination.
7. The heart-rending condition of the masses in the villages.
8. The horrors of a godless education.
9. Religious intolerance and bigotry.
10. Intemperance and the improper use of leisure.
11. Lax relations between the sexes.
12. The lack of discipline.

Many of these problems, we confess, the Church cannot solve directly, for it is essentially a spiritual fellowship. But

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it can and ought to inspire its adherents to solve them. Its primary task is to give people a vision of the kingdom of God here upon earth and build in them noble and worthy characters. The silent influence and unostentatious effort of the consecrated Christian are the first steps in the solution of all problems. If the Church can make a determined effort to solve these problems within its own ranks, it will serve as a striking object-lesson to the outside world. It should become in reality "a community of saints."

Individual effort alone is not enough. It should be followed by voluntary group effort, and voluntary group effort should in turn be followed by a definite stand of the Church as an organisation. Church pronouncements declaring the attitude and outlook of institutional Christianity in clear and unmistakable terms have their value. But they are not a substitute for individual and voluntary group effort.

One of the primary tasks of the Church to-day is to cultivate public opinion. It should educate not only people's minds but also their hearts. It should change prevailing attitudes, dispositions, and habits which are not in conformity with the mind and spirit of Jesus Christ. In attempting this task it should purify itself from within, main-

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tain a spirit of unity in its ranks, and speak in no uncertain terms to a hungry and waiting world. Unless the nucleus be purified, there is little hope of the Church winning the world to Christ or of its influencing the inner springs of thought and conduct. Whether this will involve among other things voluntary poverty and celibacy for the inner circle of Christian workers is a question worthy of serious consideration.

We shall now address ourselves to a brief treatment of the problems mentioned above and the responsibility of the Church in relation to them:—

1. *Poverty.* There are many devout Christians who hold that poverty is not a direct and immediate problem of the Church. The first business of the Church, they claim, is to make Christians by means of personal conversion. For ourselves we fail to see any sharp distinction between these two ways of looking at the question. They are complementary to each other. The Christian Church, as an organisation, cannot escape its responsiblity in helping to find a solution to the problem of poverty. One of the most heart-rending features of modern life is the presence of dire want and abject poverty in the midst of unprecedented plenty.

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Christians everywhere should band themselves together to eradicate poverty from the face of the earth. How this end is to be accomplished is largely a matter of the techinque of economics Nevertheless, there are certain broad principles which no Christian can afford to ignore. The Christian should learn to live a life of simplicity. He should be in the world but not of it, develop an attitude of detachment to the material goods of life. He should refuse to bow down his head before mere wealth, pomp, and splendour. He should cultivate a spirit of family socialism, substituting methods of co-operation and corporate living for the present methods of competition and extreme individualism. Christian love and brotherliness should manifest themselves not only in everyday social relationships but also in the acquisition and enjoyment of the goods of this world. In this day of enlightenment there is no justification for wide gaps in salary scales among Christian workers. The pooling of resources is much more Christian than the fragmentation of them according to some blind law of supply and demand. The Church institutions should do their share in combating poverty by teaching people skill and the dignity of manual labour

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by encouraging cottage industries, by organising such co-operative undertakings as the Goodwill industries of America and by mercilessly exposing the un-Christian practices of big business. So long as the suspicion prevails that the Church is an open or secret ally of business and of the privileged classes, the plain man is apt to scoff at it for its hypocrisy or leave it severely alone as something that does not really count. One of the greatest fields of modern life where the Christian Church can and should make its most effective impact is the field of poverty and riches. The Christian should work for the sheer joy of work and count it a privilege to have a share in the life creative.

2. *War.* One of the standing disgraces of Christianity is that the so-called Christian nations have fought a larger number of wars, and more deadly wars, than non-Christians. During all these wars the part which the Church of Christ has played is not something of which it can be rightly proud. During the Great War pulpits were readily turned into recruiting stations, and anyone who refused to fight for "king and country" was treated as a traitor and social outcast. Since the close of the War, we have heard a great deal of the horrors of war, of the great economic losses which

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war entails, and of the primitive passions which it sets free. Yet one wonders whether on the declaration of the next war, the Church will stand by its present more or less pacifist professions or once again make compromises with the evil one. It is as clear as daylight that one of the first tasks of the Church to-day is to educate the younger generation on the horrors of war and train it for international peace, friendship, and good-will. If as Christians we are bidden to conquer evil by good, it is difficult to see how violence in the form of war can be justified even in the most extreme cases. War is certainly not the "pruning hook of nature." It is probably not the lesser of two evils. Expressions like "war to end war" and "righteous war" cannot deceive us any longer. The time has come for the Church to take a bold stand on the question of war and not hedge it round with all kinds of possible and impossible qualifications.

3. *Race.* Christianity is a religion of love. It teaches the brotherhood of all men. Yet Christians everywhere are among the worst offenders in the matter of social relationships. However narrow and limited the Mohammedan brotherhood may be, it is perhaps more thorough-going and sincere than Christian brotherhood. One of the most important

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functions of the Church to-day is to break down all social barriers and engage in the task of "bridge-building" between nations and races. Earnest attempts are being made in Christian lands to kill the canker of social prejudice and create normal human relationships between man and man. But such efforts have not yet touched the conscience of the rank and file of Christian people. On close examination it is found that a great deal of social prejudice is either a matter of sheer ignorance or is due to economic and political reasons. The Christian Church cannot afford to sit still until it has removed all those factors which make for racial pride and racial prejudice and for the subordination and ill-treatment of one race by another. It is the paramount duty of the Church through its preaching, teaching, and humanitarian services to help people to cultivate an attitude of comradeship towards men of all races. A proper attitude towards other races—especially towards the backward and unfortunate—should be inculcated in children.

"In hearts too young for enmity
There lies the way to make men free;
When children's friendships are
world-wide
New ages will be glorified."

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Common human qualities should be emphasised. Racial differences should be scientifically studied and evaluated. If Christianity does not destroy racial prejudice, and the other evils which accompany it, these will in all probability destroy Christianity.

4. *Social.* If racial discrimination is an abomination in the sight of God, so is social stratification. Caste and class differences may have their basis partly in differential hereditary endowments, but they are not a justification for the unbrotherly conduct of one group of people toward another. It is a matter for profound thankfulness that the Church of Christ has on the whole stood for a certain amount of equality, fraternity,and democratic leadership. Christian nations have not divided and sub-divided themselves into innumerable castes and sub-castes, as the Hindus have done yet they have their class distinctions. The Christian Church, if it is to be true to its salt, should in season and out of season, preach and teach the gospel of brotherliness. It should wage a relentless war against all forms of pride, arrogance, and meaningless social distinctions, and constantly remind people that he who consciously strives for the first place in the Kingdom of God shall be the last. It should in-

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culcate a spirit of genuine humility in all its adherents. The only aristocracy which it should countenance is an aristocracy of loving and devoted service. A society which is sharply divided into the rich and the poor, the high and the low, the capitalist and the labourer, the landlord and the peasant, is a society built upon foundations of sand. When the wind blows and the rain beats on it, it is sure to collapse. It may be that a classless society such as is dreamt of by Russian Communists is the ultimate Christian ideal also. Even if such an ideal is not realisable, everything humanly possible should be done to provide equality of opportunity for every man, woman, and child. Talent should not perish for the lack of encouragement. If equal salary for people working at similar tasks, is an aid to breaking down class barriers and creating brotherliness, it should be provided.

It is regrettable that caste has even invaded the ranks of the Church. No stone should be left unturned till caste restrictions and caste feeling are entirely wiped out.

5. *Communalism.* One of the greatest evils of India, which breaks the heart of every true Indian, is communalism. It is rampant in nearly all walks of life

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and is most clearly marked in the political field. Of recent years it has been asserting itself more and more, leading to communal riots, the crystallisation of meaningless religious and social customs, and the creation of an attitude of suspicion and hostility. Each community strains every nerve possible to secure the most advantageous political and economic conditions for itself. In a situation of this kind, the followers of Jesus Christ should strive for national unity and national strength and act as harbingers of communal peace and goodwill. Instead of doing that, the Christian group is fast becoming a narrow social, economic, and political community like the other communities of India, joining in the scramble for power and honour, and the loaves and fishes of office. The Church of Christ will certainly be failing in its duty if it does not address itself to the problem of communalism. Separating ourselves from the rest of our people for the sake of immediate and temporary gains is not a Christian thing to do.

6. *Foreign Domination.* Whatever justification there may have been for imperialism in the past, it stands self-condemned to-day. We do not hold that imperialism is an unmixed evil. It has brought peace and order where

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confusion once prevailed. It has utilised the natural resources of backward countries. It has increased opportunities for education and enlightenment. It has reduced distances and helped to make the world a unity. It has brought the amenities of life within the easy reach of the middle classes. But at what price ? Imperialism has invariably meant on the part of the rulers political domination, economic exploitation, racial arrogance and bureaucratic control. As regards the ruled it has meant slave mentality, hypocrisy and servility, loss of self-respect, hindrance to self-help and initiative, and the dwarfing of human personality. Is it any wonder that imperialism to-day has very few genuine supporters ?

The task of the Christian Church is to make the transition from foreign domination to self-government as easy and rapid as possible, aiming at the establishment of a family of self-respecting and self-governing nations living in peace and concord with one another. During the transitional stage it is the business of the Church to use its good offices in urging imperialist nations to consider the well-being of their "wards" as their first and foremost duty. The Christian should cultivate an international mind and a will for international

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peace and goodwill. Exploitation in the name and for the sake of one's nation is not any better than exploitation for oneself. So long as the baser forms of imperialism last, the Christian Church in non-Christian lands is bound to be regarded as an alien institution with no *locus standi* of its own. A strong and virile indigenous Christian Church can thrive only where the people are free and self-respecting. Imperialism and Christianity do not very well go together. The ruthless desire to rule is pagan.

7. *Condition of the masses.* A problem which particularly concerns the Church in India is the deplorable condition of the masses. Ninety per cent of our people still live in villages and large numbers of them are the victims of poverty, ignorance, superstition, and disease. The indebtedness of the peasant. the filth and squalor of the villages, and the utter lack of village civic consciousness are all too well-known to every Indian to need any comment.

It is to the eternal glory of the Christian Church that long before the contemplation of schemes of village reconstruction and the undertaking of Harijan uplift, Christian workers went to every nook and corner of India, trying to give to the masses a glimpse of a

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better day and a free and fuller life within the kingdom of God. In spite of all this pioneering work, the condition of the masses is still deplorable. Merely to preach to the masses is not enough. We must attack the whole problem. The Christian Church has certainly a notable part to play in improving the social, economic, and hygienic conditions in the villages, in helping to remove fear, superstition, and ignorance, and in raising the moral and spiritual level of the masses. The task is a stupendous one, but nothing is impossible for those who have fully consecrated themselves to the service of Christ and His Kingdom.

8. *Godless Education.* Education is undoubtedly a gift of God, but godless education is a work of the devil. To train the mind but not train the will is nothing short of a tragedy. What shall it profit a man if he can think correctly and acquire all the knowledge of the world, but has not learnt to discipline himself ? Much of our present-day education is highly commendable. It informs the mind and draws out the innate capacities of the individual. It is practical. But when it comes to the question of affecting habits, dispositions, and attitudes, it is a miserable failure. Modern education imparts knowledge and provides a certain amount of culture. It gives

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the individual the necessary social virtues to succeed in life. But it pays little or no attention to spirituality and moral conduct. It has failed on the whole to make people less selfish and more loving, less competitive and more co-operative, less materialistic and more spiritual. As a rule, the more educated a man is the more he wants of the material goods and comforts of life, whatever may happen to the rest of the world. Seldom is it that he realises that the education he has received is a gift from God which he should use in the best interests of mankind. Here is a situation which challenges the very best that the Church can give. In the present state of affairs it may be the function of the Church to supplement the secular education provided by the school and college with a sound religious and moral education. But its ultimate aim should be so to widen the scope of education as to make it include spiritual and moral instruction and training. It is not creeds and doctrines that we want the educational system of any country to impart. It is the affecting of conduct by sound psychological and religious methods. The Church should further train great teachers who would verily be "fishers of men."

"To be without God," writes a friend, "is to have a world view in which there is

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no unifying power and no central intelligence. It is to have no moral code beyond the passing whim or temporary expediency, to live a life within which there glows no larger hope and beneath which is no underlying purpose."

9. *Inter-religious relationships.* It is the irony of fate that, instead of being a cohesive factor, religion is still largely a divisive factor. Religious people all through the ages have been noted for their narrow-mindedness, bigotry, and exclusiveness. People often forget that if a religion is true it can defend itself. There is no point in drawing the sword or engaging in verbal warfare on behalf of one's religion. Religion is a matter of the spirit, and the spirit can win its way without any material aid of the kind mentioned. Present-day secularism, rationalism, and sullen indifference to religion are not to be despised. Frequently they are a natural and healthy revolt against all that is false, insincere, and trivial in the presentation and practice of religion. Religion cannot command the attention of the thoughtful unless and until it can nourish the spiritual life of man; and this it cannot do so long as emphasis is placed on ceremonialism, sacerdotalism, and other such externalities. Religion which is pure and undefiled should give man a deep spiri-

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tual experience, make him humble, reverent, tolerant, and loving, and fill him with a passion to lose himself in the service of others.

At this point we may ask ourselves the following questions. Is the Christian Church propagating a true or false faith ? Does it make for an attitude of friendliness and comradeship towards men of other faiths, maintaining at the same time its own uniqueness and supremacy ? Or, does it adopt an attitude of spiritual pride and exclusiveness ? Does it help people to respect religion or to despise it ? Does it emphasise rituals and ceremonies, or is the emphasis on spiritual life and moral conduct ? Does it enable people to know Jesus and follow Him or does it present Him merely as an ideal to be praised and worshipped ? Questions such as these have to be raised and answered before we can determine the adequacy or inadequacy of the Church to meet modern problems.

10. *Leisure and intemperance.* With the rapid industrialisation of the world, a problem which is coming more and more to the forefront is the problem of leisure. Modern civilisation makes it necessary for large numbers of people to be engaged in types of

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work which are drab and monotonous and which do not afford opportunities for the full expression of their personalities. It is no wonder that they find very little meaning in their daily occupation and seek a way of escape from it in forms of amusement and recreation which are not always most desirable. The cinema, the theatre, dancing, drink, and gambling are popular in all lands, and their effects are often most disastrous. It is reported that in the United States the average attendance at cinemas is 77 millions per week, 30 millions being children. It can be safely assumed that most of these return home from the picture house without being any wiser or morally better. They are perhaps not even "re-created" for their daily tasks.

It is very unfortunate that nearly all the facilities for the utilisation of leisure hours are commercial in character. Appeal is made to the lower and primitive instincts of man, and sex is brought into undue prominence by artificial stimulus. All this constitutes a challenge to the Christian Church. It cannot afford to sit on a high pinnacle and indiscriminately condemn all forms of amusement and recreation. It should take into account the fact that in man the tendency to play is a normal and healthy

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feature of life. It is natural and desirable that after a day's hard work a person should want to relax. The Church should actively support such forms of re-creation as "re-create" the body and mind. Pictures and plays which depict the humorous as well as the serious side of life in a decent manner and which help the all-round development of man are legitimate. But the line has to be drawn somewhere. The guiding principle should be, does this or that particular form of recreation accord with "the Kingdom of God and His righteousness" ?

Many of our young men and women have no hobby to interest them in their leisure hours. It is most essential that every person should cultivate one or more hobbies when he is still young. It is far better to be an active participant in some form of simple recreation than be a passive spectator of a type of recreation provided by a commercial agency.

It is the business of the Church to fight all forms of indulgence. Our bodies are the temples of the living God and, therefore, it is wrong to treat them as though they were ends in themselves. Wherever possible, the Church should provide opportunities for healthy and supervised forms of amusement and recreation.

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11. *Relation between the sexes.* We have cause to rejoice in the fact that Christianity has given a new status to women resulting in a new freedom in the relation between the sexes. In Christian lands men and women are treated alike and the disabilities from which women suffered in the pass are practically wiped out to-day. Experience shows that this new freedom has not been an unmixed blessing. There has been a tendency in many quarters to carry much freedom to excess. Marriage is not always considered a sacred responsibility. More stress is laid on the physical side in the relations between sexes than on the intellectual, moral, and spiritual. The consequence is easy divorce, the break-up of the family and family traditions, and the spread of such doctrines as free love and companionate marriage. Religious worship and training are more and more crowded out of the home, and children are brought up in a godless environment. The Church of Christ will be entirely failing in its duty if it does not succeed in establishing normal and healthy relations between the sexes and in reinstating religion and morals in the family.

In non-Christian lands such as India there is a new awakening among women.

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Changes are taking place rapidly and what was considered impossible till a few years ago is fast becoming a normal thing to-day. The Church of Christ, benefitting by past experience, should do whatever is possible to direct this new movement for freedom and self-realisation along proper channels. Liberty should not become licence; nor should the overthrow of prudery and conventionality mean the wholesale discarding of morals. Our endeavour should be to build the Kingdom of God in which both men and women would take their rightful place as fellow-citizens. Pernicious customs like the *purdah* have no justification whatever in that kingdom; for they reveal a fundamental distrust of the honesty of the average man and woman.

12. *Indiscipline.* The years immediately following the War were marked by an eagerness to throw discipline to the winds and follow one's own sweet will and pleasure. Youth movements came into being in different parts of the world, marking a revolt against the leadership of the older generation and expressing an eager desire to realise oneself. To-day in certain European countries, particularly Germany, the pendulum is swinging to the other extreme. Civil and political liberty for which countless

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generations shed their blood is discarded as a fetish of the past. Democracy is considered a back number. The clamour is for rule by a strong man or by a determined minority. Discipline is once again the battle cry. But it is not self-imposed discipline. It is discipline imposed from without.

Eastern countries like India still believe that great things can be accomplished by democratic leadership and parliamentary institutions. Among Indian youth one regrets to find that with the passing of old forms of authority there is also a gradual disappearance of discipline. Youth resents control of every kind. It has scant respect for any form of authority imposed on it from outside. But it has not yet learnt to discipline itself. The result is shiftlessness. The old moorings have broken down, but nothing new has taken its place.

In these circumstances, it is the task of the Church to bring back men and women to a full realisation of the value of freedom, of the worthwhileness of democratic leadership, and of the necessity of reconciling liberty and authority. The need of the hour is for disciplined personalities.

The above description of some of the problems confronting the world to-day

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is sufficient to show what great responsibility is placed on the shoulders of the Christian Church. It should be the daily prayer and earnest endeavour of every Christian that the Church may prove itself equal to the tremendous tasks which it is invited to undertake.

Topics for discussion

1. What practical means should the Church adopt in order to combat the growing secularism in the world to-day ?

2. To what extent would voluntary poverty, the ideal of St. Francis of Assisi, be a satisfactory solution to the problem of materialism ? Is it capable of universal application ? Discuss the merits and demerits of socialism and communism in this connection.

3. What should be the attitude of the Church in relation to the various evils attendant upon industrialism ?

4. Is it particularly un-Christian to defend oneself against the assaults of one's enemy ? To what extent should disarmament go, and on what grounds may conscription be justified ?

5. If consideration of controversial questions such as race, communalism, imperialism, etc. is likely to create splits within the Church, would the Christian thing be to avoid discussion altogether ?

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6. Wherein does the evil of 'caste feeling' arise ? What influence may the Church in India bring to bear upon Christians in order that this evil may be overcome ?

7. What attitude should the Church adopt towards other religious institutions, *e. g.*, Sanathan Dharma, Arya Samaj, Brahmo Samaj, and the Theosophical Society ?

8. On the one hand, if the Church were silently to allow exploitation, it is guilty of indifference. On the other hand, if it were to revolt against state legislation it is open to the charge of disregard for authority. How may this difficulty be overcome ? On what grounds, and under what conditions, may the Church oppose the state ?

9. Situations frequently arise when the convictions of the individual or of certain sections of the community conflict with the established doctrines and creeds of the Church. How may such situations be met ?

10. What attitude should the Church adopt towards inter-racial and inter-communal marriages ?

11. Popular notions of freedom frequently run contrary to established ideas of authority and discipline. How can the Church mediate between these two opposing forces ?

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12. Is the Church an adequate instrument for dealing with the problems mentioned in this chapter ? If so, what are the methods it should adopt ?

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CHAPTER VI

SOME ASPECTS OF CHURCH UNION IN SOUTH INDIA

BY MRS. M. HENSMAN

THIS twentieth century will be noted throughout history as an age of adventure and daring. The inventions of the last thirty years have changed the whole course of civilised life, and the world is much more aware of itself and of its neighbours than was possible half a century ago. For instance, in 1900, automobiles were crawling about a few of the greatest cities of the world while, by 1910, cars had not only become a necessity everywhere, but aeroplanes were fast becoming a practicable means of locomotion. By 1920, zeppelins, submarines and poison gases had been brought to a stage of such perfection that wars were not limited to the area of conflict, but threatened to destory innocent citizens in other parts of the world. By 1930, science was able to boast of a Voronoff, success-

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ful in his search for the rejuvenation of the human body, of great discoveries in the way of psycho-analysis and mental science, of the conquest of some of the highest mountains of the world, and of various methods of harnessing the boundless power of electricity to make life in general more safe and comfortable for the nations of the world. But perhaps the greatest adventure of all the century has been in the spiritual and not in the temporal world, when a great landmark was set up on the highway of religion by the coming of United Church of Southern India, when, in 1932, the Episcopal, Congregational and Presbyterian Churches agreed to draft a definite constitution for the setting out of deep spiritual ideals as one body, and a visible working out of Christ's purpose for the world as set forth in His prayer for His followers—"That they all may be one."

In this short resume of the proposed Scheme of Union it must be remembered that the subject is not an easy one, for it demands a comprehensive outlook and a wealth of detail which would be impossible in such a sketchy outline as this will have to be; moreover, it is always difficult to think sanely in recording contemporaneous history, and to appreciate the value of things

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that are still, to a great extent, in the melting-pot of time. Suggestions and amendments are even now being made to some of the proposals in the Scheme, discussion groups are still meeting and trying to understand how best to bring the Churches concerned closer together, Diocesan Councils and their component parts have yet a long way to go before they and the Synods, and the respective governing bodies of the Churches can achieve real unity, but there is no doubt that the past months and years have brought a more complete understanding of the situation, and a spirit of earnest conviction that the time for a United Church draws near, which gives birth to a spirit of "Give and Take" that is willing to talk over differences on a friendly basis, and emphasise the points that are in common rather than those where unity is not yet possible.

It must also be remembered that this Scheme of Union is not quite such a new thing or quite so experimental as appears at first sight. As far back as 1919, in Tranquebar, after 213 years of Protestant evangelisation in south India, a group of men, consisting of one American, one Englishman, and 31 Indians issued a statement, believing that "Union is the Will of GOD," and urging all members of the

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Church to venture in faith on that union which is "The teaching of Scripture, one body, one Spirit, one hope of our calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism and one GOD and Father of all, Who is over all and through all and in all."

This was the natural corollary to the teaching of missionary societies from the West, who, in introducing Christianity to India, introduced also their divisions, so that evangelisation became sectional, and interpreted according to the particular persuasion of the particular missionary. The outcome of this was that Indian converts became Scotch, Anglican or Congregational Christians rather than Indian Christians; but, even so, Christians in India have co-operated together much more than in the West, and there has been a closer link between the Churches in India than anywhere else. The proposed union of the Churches does not ask each branch of the Protestant church to forget itself or deny the peculiar faith it holds, but it is calculated so to strengthen and confirm each in the one true faith that each will be emboldened to make its best and most individual contribution to the whole. It also seeks to bring about a fellowship with all churches where Christ is worshipped as Lord, and where

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He is the Head and the Person in Whom all unite, making the Church a spiritual home for all who have, up to now, been divided by differences of creed and dogma. Even if the vision of union had not now been before the Churches, the result of Christian experience, especially in the corporate body of the Church, would soon have driven us to seek this unity by reason of the complete paralysis that follows disunion. Of the five or six million Christians in India today, about half are Roman Catholics, who are committed to a uniformity of thought and a concerted unity of action whatever be their diversity as individuals, whereas, in the Protestant churches, unity is achieved by a common spiritual bond, which is the belief in the Trinity, that Jesus Christ is the only Saviour of mankind and the only Way of Salvation, while diversity of details of worship are practicable in this union of the Spirit.

It might be worthwhile to spend a little time in considering the four chief schools of Protestant thought in South India: the Syrian Christians, the Church of England in India, the Wesleyan Methodist and South India United Church congregations, in order to understand what the proposed Scheme of Union involves.

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(1) The Syrian Churches are the oldest and most firmly established homes of non-Catholic Christian worship in this country, and there was some hope at first of their coming right into the Union with all the rest. But they decided to drop out of the Scheme for the present, because they realised that they had their own divisions and domestic problems to solve before they could attempt to unite with others.

(2) The Church of England has the diocese of Madras, where the SPCK, the S. P. G., and the C. M. S. carried on their work fifty years ago, and where about half the congregations were Indian, and where services were carried on in five different languages. It is rather remarkable that the "Mass conversions" did not take place here, as they did elsewhere, on a very large scale. This includes the diocese of Travancore and Cochin, where there are about 60,000 Christians, of whom more than half are from the so-called "Depressed classes." There are about 10,000 Christians in the Tinnevelly diocese, and these have gone farther along the road of self-government and self-support, contributing workers, chiefly for the schools and colleges, and supporting their own institutions to a great extent by money raised in the parishes. There is also a considerable amount of independence and self-support

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in the diocese of Dornokal, where the Mass Movement has taken a great hold, and where the 1½ lakhs of Christians have advanced a great deal.

(3) The Wesleyan, now Methodist, Church works chiefly in Hyderabad, Mysore and Trichinopoly; it is a very careful and compact organisation, and noted for its efficient unordained ministry. In Hyderabad, the educational institutions are very well run, and the Mass Movement evangelisation has chiefly affected the upper classes. There are nearly 112,000 Methodists now, and each district has its district synod, electing delegates to Provincial Synod of that area.

(4) The South India United Church is the outcome of the successive unions of English and American Congregationalists, and the Dutch Reformed Church, as well as the United Free Church, and the Established Church of Scotland. They have eight districts, with Pastorate and District Committees in one General Assembly. Their congregations total 113,000 in South Travancore, and 36,000 in the Southern Telegu District while in Madras there are about 30,000 and 29,000 in Madura and Ramnad. There is a Presbyterian form of ordination, and a distinction is made between the lay and ordained ministry. This body is very strong on

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educational work, having schools and colleges in Madura and Vellore, a large Union Medical College and a Hospital for women in Bangalore, as well as the Union Theological Seminary, which trains ministers for all non-Episcopal churches in South India, and is affiliated to Serampore. Its directory of worship allows of a certain amount of freedom, and it is very international in character, having American, British, Swiss and German missionaries co-operating in its work.

Having therefore considered some of the component parts of the proposed constitution for union, we must remember that this body of registered opinions has sought all through its deliberations the guidance of the Spirit of GOD, and has been led by the purest motives to seek in everything the direct leading of Scripture, and in working for the fulfilment of GOD's Purpose for the Church of Christ in this world they have applied the acid test of the teaching of Christ as set forth in the Gospels, and so it may be that, begun in India, the Union will reach out and embrace the whole world. This is the first definite attempt to bring Episcopal and non-Episcopal churches together, and even as the various presentations that have been brought to us by the mis-

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sionaries have unwittingly tended to bring about disunion rather than union, so, by the love of Christ working in our hearts, the United Church might come to an understanding of the priceless treasure of spiritual unity which would be some return for the devoted service and utter self-sacrifice of foreign missionaries in this country.

In order that the United Church of South India might be in fellowship with all other churches in the world, both in and out of the Union, the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds are points of Christian faith which have been accepted as witnessing to and safeguarding the faith which expresses the fundamentals of Christianity, for they are the belief of the Church and the meaning of the Christian religion. It is very necessary to have the points of agreement briefly and clearly set out, dwelling as has been already said on those where we can all agree rather than emphasising the points of difference. In every religion there are sacramentalists and non-sacramentalists, for this is an essential feature of human nature, but there is so much real Christianity in common, that faith in the Scriptures can be tested in a variety of ways, and experience bears out the fact that divisions of any

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sort are usually due to forgetting or laying a false emphasis on the truth.

The future of the Episcopate in the future Church of South India is a subject that will need the most careful and prayerful consideration, and there is, at present, provision made in the Scheme of Union for this historic episcopate to continue in a constitutional form, but this does not preclude any particular belief or interpretation of the ministry, or require the acceptance of any special point of view as a necessary qualification for that ministry. The bishops will function in accordance with the customs of the Church, as shepherd of souls and chief director of the clergy. They will be elected and here the diocese concerned and the authorities of the Church of Southern India as a whole, will have an effective voice in these appointments. Moreover, the continuity of the historic episcopate will be maintained, for, in the case of presbyters being ordained both bishops and presbyters will take part in the laying on of hands, and all consecration of bishops will be performed by the laying on of hands, of at least three bishops. On the other hand, there will be no question of the re-ordination of any minister entering the Union who has not been ordained in this way, and even

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Churches who do not follow this rule of episcopal ordination will not be precluded from holding a relationship of communion and fellowship with the United Church of South India. Incidentally, all missionaries are to count as foundation members of the Union for 30 years; after that, the Churches shall themselves decide what exceptions, if any, be allowed. Needless to say, no Church, on joining the Union, will be expected to give up its relationships with other Churches with whom it was in union before, and there will be a definite and concerted attempt to avoid intolerance of all kinds.

This Church of South India claims the right to be free in all spiritual matters from the direction or interference of any civil government and it will be free from any Acts of Parliament. A list of dioceses will be set up, but there is no intention of centralising all the missionary work in each diocese, though the constitutional goverment of the United Church will be carried on by a Diocesan Council, Evanglistic Council, Finance Committee, and Pastoral Committees as guides to the work, as stimuli to missionary effort and the adequate financial control of the pastors and Councils, and it is hoped that the various dioceses will gradually grow to-

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gether. The bishops are not to be high salaried officials with an assured or high position in all State affairs, but they will be supported by their respective dioceses.

There are several other points that will come up in due course, and call for a solution later on, but these are too numerous to catalogue here and I can do no more than touch on a few points in this connection. For instance, it will take time to see how far ministers and presbyters will agree, to decide the particular methods of entering the Church, the value of confirmation, of infant and adult baptism and the methods of worship in churches in the same diocese. Then there is the thorny question of discipline, and the authority of suspension from public worship in extreme cases of back-sliding, and the conditions of restoration to the privileges of church membership to those who declare themselves penitent. It may be somewhat difficult to reconcile the freedom given in the non-conformist churches with the rather conservative attitude of the Church of England in such matters as the ministry of deacons, the ministry of the laity, the ministry of women, (and here there will be some divergence of opinion as to whether, when this comes, the ministry of women

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shall be only for women), the Court of the Diocesan Council and of the Synod, the marriage law and the statutory rules of the Church of South India in a final form.

There seems to be no doubt that Union is a necessity now and in the near future, for the succesful Christianisation of India, for there is a general and widespread feeling that the Church as a whole is a creation of GOD and should therefore be one body, as Christ said. Division is a sin, not in the sense that it is an evil act, but a foolish thing and falls short of GOD's Plan for the world, because it is a stumbling block to converts, and results in real weakness of the Church, for there can be no concerted Christian public opinion, even in matters where religion is at stake where there is no common spiritual background of ideals, and the sense of security that comes from a common conviction and source of inspiration.

India is essentially religious, and even as her people seek for political unity in the future of temporal power, so, in the realm spiritual, Christians must work together, regardless of minor differences in details of worship, uniting on the fundamentals of their religion, and becoming a power in the land by building on the One Foundation which will

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stand the test of time, the Love of GOD as interpreted to the world by Jesus Christ. This is a high and holy adventure, this Scheme of Union which has been presented here far too inadequately, but it is going to be of little value unless each sincere follower of Christ makes it his and her bounden duty to find out at first hand the thoughts and plans that are afoot for unity, and make it a matter of urgent, constant and ardent prayer that all concerned with the working out of the Scheme of Union be specially guided by the Spirit of GOD in all things, so that the Church may be led beyond the bounds of space and time into eternity, that it may see the King in His beauty and the land that is very far off, so that this beloved country of ours may fall at the Feet of Christ and find in Him peace, and the perfect fulfilment of all her desires.

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CHAPTER VII

CHRISTIANITY AND OTHER FAITHS

BY REV. H. A. POPLEY.

THE question of the relationship between Christianity and other faiths is a pressing practical problem in India today which challenges young people of all communities to seek for a solution. In the West it is a theoretical problem that can be discussed in an atmosphere of detachment, but in India we live in the midst of a clash of different faiths, each of which claims to be the final and faultless expression of the will of God. *There was a time when youth was willing to turn to authority, the authority of a revealed book or of an inspired teacher, and to find in these the solution of the riddle, but today that path is denied him for authority has been swept aside and he stands face to face with his own intelligence and reason. When conflicting authorities each claim finality and absoluteness the mere assertion of authority cannot help us to certainty.* Why choose the New Testament rather

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than the Koran as the Word of God when both seem to claim final authority and the only judge of the validity of this claim is the human reason ? The prophets and even the *avatars* of God seem to stand like rivals competing with each other for the devotion of the young. Why choose one rather than the other when all speak as the mouthpieces of God ? So it is no wonder that youth today in India is uncertain and knows not where to turn for guidance.

It seems futile to apply the test of Christ, that each must be judged by its fruits, when every faith seems to produce fruits both good and bad. Hinduism has given to the world some of the noblest examples of devotion and sacrifice but at the same time it seems in many cases to lead to the deepest degradation and inertia. Islam has created a brotherhood and unity that even Christianity cannot match and yet condones practices and customs that seem to be alien from even the lowest forms of morality. Christianity has produced personalities of the highest moral and spiritual power and has uplifted downtrodden communities and yet seems to condone war, race-prejudice and sectarian strife. Buddhism with all its clear beauty and austerity lacks the power of leading men to devote them-

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selves to noble ends. So many a young man in various faiths shrugs his shoulders and decides to have nothing to do with any one of them, as they seem to be in a perpetual feud like Pathans of the frontier. I am trying to speak plainly and bluntly because these are things that press upon youth in India today and toss him here and there in an ocean of uncertainty. It is no wonder that even men like Dr. Orchard should seek for a haven of certainty in an authoritative church which throughout the centuries has maintained its claim against all comers. Those of us who still believe with Abelard that 'we understand in order that we may believe' and that the human reason is a God-given instrument to lead us to truth cannot be satisfied with any such hollow assurances.

There is one additional reason in the present situation for an earnest endeavour to find a right solution for this problem of relationships. With the coming of Swaraj there has arisen a keen desire among the various communities in India to increase their strength and especially their voting power for political purposes and the communal system of electorates has greatly stimulated this desire. Hindus are anxious to see that their strength is not further

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reduced by the alienation of large numbers to the Moslem and Christian communities. Moslems are eager to increase their strength by every means so that in the Provinces where they have a small majority their predominance may be assured. There are also many Christian communalists whose keenness for further converts leads them to the rankest proselytism. It is unfortunate that a man's faith should be such a strong factor in politics and this fact makes it harder for many to take an unprejudiced view of the relationship of their own faith to others.

All these things are causing great perplexity to young people in India who want to be loyal to their convictions and at the same time to purge India from this evil of religious communalism. Many have come to the conclusion that any attempt to find a true expression of this relationship is bound to fail and the only thing to do is to take refuge in a simple individualism which makes each man's faith his own personal concern and wards off all others from any thought of attempting to change it.

The following translation of an Urdu song, which was sung by Boy Scouts in the Punjab, illustrates this attitude of uncertainty combined with a passionate

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eagerness to find the answer to the riddle.

My heart yearns for Thee. I seek for Thee;
Soul of the world, where art Thou, I seek for Thee;
I search for Thee in the pasture land,
I look for Thee in petals of the Sambal flower.
Art Thou in the desert?
I wander over hill and dale, I try to find Thee in the waterfall,
In leaves, flowers, thorns—I seek for Thee.
Who causes the sun to shine? Who twinkles in the stars?
Where shall I find Thee, O Thou unknown?
Feroz is my name, I seek for Thee always,
No matter whether Thou art Allah or Ram.

The purpose of this introduction is to show the urgency of the problem and the extreme difficulty in the present situation of finding a solution. But we should not allow ourselves to be daunted by the difficulty and must address ourselves to the task of finding a way out of our perplexities.

It may be regarded as presumption or foolhardiness on my part to make

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any such attempt and in justification I must plead that the task has been laid upon me and that as a Christian I cannot evade it. Further I have pondered over this prcblem for the past ten years as I have come into close contact with it in different parts of India among young men of all communities. It is not enough to lay down authoritative statements, but we must examine it from every side.

I propose first to review the problem in the light of history and then to see if there are not some fundamental principles in the teaching of Christ which point the way to a solution.

I

Indigenous Attempts to express this relationship

We may take first of all the well-known story of the Blind Men and the Elephant which has come down from ancient times. India has always been a land of many faiths or at any rate of many varieties of faith and therefore Indian religious leaders have always had to face this problem in some form or another. The story of the Blind Men and the Elephant runs as follows: A guru was trying to explain to his disciples how it was that religion had found so many different ways of expres-

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sing itself in India and in inimitable Indian fashion he told a story. Six blind men were asked to come and say what they thought an elephant was like. They were allowed to use their sense of touch in order to find an answer to the question. One of them touched the legs of the elephant and said it was like a big mortar. Another touched the trunk and said it was like a pestle. Another touched the ears and said it was like a winnowing fan Another got hold of the tail and was sure it was like a chowrie and so on. What the guru was trying to tell his disciples was that the votaries of each faith were limited by their outlook and opportunities and could only see a small portion of the truth which they unfortunately took to be the whole truth. Olive Schreiner's story *'On an African Farm'* published many years ago expressed the same idea in the fable of the divine swan of truth which dropped a single feather here and there on the mountain tops for seekers to find. 'Each sees one colour of the rainbow light' as George Matheson sang in that wonderful hymn. Patinattár, a Tamil Saint, nearly 1000 years ago expressed the same idea in somewhat different language :

The cry is loud, the cry is long,
The cry of creeds, "Yea, this is He."

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The cry comes back, the cry as strong,
The cry of creeds, "Nay, this is He"
Thus cry all creeds, all creeds as wrong.
Which cry, "Yea this, nay that, is He."
The truth indeed all creeds proclaim
That God in very sooth is He
Who evermore remains the same,
Not this, not that, but One is He,
Held in the heart's own holy shrine,
Homed in the soul, the Giver of Life.
(Temple Bells 135)

The *Bhagavatgita* which attempts a synthesis in a somewhat different fashion, is regarded by all classes of Hindus today as the supreme scripture of their faith. It was an effort at comprehension, aiming at the bringing together of the ideas of each sect and it found a central point of unity in the person of the man-god Krishna. It probably goes back to the second century of our era. Dr. Farquhar calls it 'the layman's Upanishad' and it expressed the thought of laymen of all creeds and times in its desire for a comprehensive unity.

In the *Prabodachandrodaya*, an allegory on the deliverance of the human soul from the world, produced about 1065, appears the first philosophic attempt to reconcile the six divergent systems of Hindu philosophy and this work points the inner harmony of these

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various systems in their adoration of the Supreme Being who is one and the same for each and all.

Later on in the fifteenth century Kabir tried to reconcile Islam and Hinduism in a new ethical mysticism. Akbar, the greatest of the Moslem Emperors, made a bold attempt to develop a new synthetic faith, the Din Ilahi, which was to comprehend the truth of all faiths and he gathered around him teachers belonging to all the great world religions.

At the beginning of the nineteenth century there arose in India one of the greatest religious reformers of modern times, Raja Ram Mohan Roy. He was not only a man of great intellectual power but also of deep spirituality and noble ethical ideals. In the Brahmo Samaj he endeavoured to found a new form of religion which would bring together the best elements in Hinduism, Christianity, Buddhism and Islam. Unlike some of the other synthesists he did not attempt to combine all the ideas of each religion for he absolutely repudiated idolatry and refused to accept the Christian belief in the divinity of our Lord; but he is certainly the pioneer of the first serious attempt at a synthesis of the truths of these four religions. He made a thorough study of each religion

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and his synthesis was not merely a mystical or emotional realisation of harmony but also an intellectual appreciation of the fundamental unity behind the differences of these religions.

Towards the end of the century there appeared another great religious genius in Hindustan, Ramakrishna Paramahansa, a great mystic with a passion for God and at the same time a shrewd sense of worldly values. He plainly taught that all religions were so many different rivers flowing into the one sea of God. While a devout and sincere Hindu he tried also to live for a time both as a Moslem and a Christian and totally rejected the idea of the incompatability or the contradictoriness of religions.

Theosophy again is a peculiarly Indian attempt to find a reconciliation of religions. Theosophy, while accepting the Hindu teachings of Karma and transportation, taught that all religions were true as far as they went and that the essential truth of all religions is found in Theosophy which is friendly to all and inimical to none. To express this comprehensiveness a Hindu temple, a Christian church, a Moslem mosque and a Buddhist shrine are all found in the centre of Indian theosophy at Adyar.

The central idea of all Indian attempts to define the relationship of faith

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has been that of reconciliation. On the other hand, the central idea of western attempts has been that of contrast. It is instructive to follow the general development of Western Christian thought in regard to this relationship.

The Christian thought of the West as it came into contact with non-Christian religions in the eighteenth century inherited the doctrinal idea of exclusiveness and intolerance which was a characteristic of western ecclesiastical tradition for many centuries. Whether Roman Catholics or Protestants, Christian teachers in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries taught that Christianity alone was the revealed and true religion, all others being either the work of the devil or due to the wicked imagination of men. Even in those cases when Roman Catholic fathers sought to use Hindu material for Christian ends they made it clear that there was only one true religion and the use of non-Christian material was merely a device to lead men away from their errors into the true faith. The Protestant churches were no less uncompromising in their intolerance. Thus the relationship of non-Christian faiths to the Christian faith was regarded as one of uncompromising opposition and the end sought was the eradication of all such faiths.

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Towards the end of the nineteenth century the influence of a group of Western scholars like Max Mueller began to be felt. Their translations of Hindu and other non-Christian works showed the world that the old attitude of uncompromising condemnation could no longer be maintained and so it became necessary to find a new way of expressing this relationship. At first other faiths were regarded as the outcome of 'natural' religion as contrasted with the 'revealed' religion of Christianity. The truths found in other faiths were thought of either as happy guesses or as 'gleams of light' from the one revealed religion. The Edinburgh Missionary Conference of 1910 for the first time urged a sympathetic study of other faiths and at the same time maintained the claim of Christianity to be the one complete and final revealed religion. Later under the influence of men like the late Dr. Farquhar this attitude was somewhat modified and Christianity was thought of as 'the crown' of other faiths, which shared with Christianity some of the characteristics of revealed religion.

The shifting of the centre of gravity in religion from doctrine and creed to experience which the twentieth century has witnessed and the discovery of genuine religious experience in other faiths

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brought about a great change in the attitude of Christianity to non-Christian faiths. It was no longer possible to hold to the idea of the exclusive validity of Christianity, any more than to the idea of the exclusive validity of certain sections in the Christian church itself. People began to realise that God had revealed Himself in other faiths and that these revelations were of value to the Christian as well as to the non-Christian. So gradually the idea of a rapprochement between various faiths and a sharing of thoughts and experiences began to emerge and to influence men's conception of the re'ationship of Christianity with other faiths. Something of this was expressed in the Jerusalem Conference in 1928, though the idea was much more widely and strongly felt in the Church than was apparent from the conclusions of the Conference. It may therefore be said today that the conception of a reconciliation of faiths is growing in influence among Western Churches. The Report of the Laymen's Commission of America gave authoritative and definite expression to this idea as a part of the policy of Christian Missionary work and definitely repudiated the old objective of the eradication of non-Christian faiths. This again has led on to the conception of co-operation between different religions

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as the right method, rather than a rivalry based on motives of intolerance or ideas of superiority. The International Fellowship has adopted this as the basis of its programme and all over India today may be seen men and women of different faiths meeting for common prayer and worship as well as for common efforts for the welfare of people.

It must also be admitted that the menace to all revealed religion found in the humanistic and secularistic movements today has helped to bring about this change and has made it clear that the real enemy of any religion is not another religion, however different it may be, but the indifference to religion itself and the definite propaganda against all religions.

This historical statement has had of necessity to be brief and there are many important omissions but it is intended to show first, that the problem we are faced with today is no new problem, and second, that men of devotion and goodwill have made various attempts in the past to find a satisfactory solution.

We must now pass on to a brief study of the mind of Christ and his immediate disciples on this important question.

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II

The Attitude of Jesus and the Apostles

There is no doubt that in Palestine during the life-time of Jesus, there would be ample opportunities for him to come into contact with other faiths. The Romans were to be found all over Palestine and Jesus must have known of the gods whom they worshipped and of the deification of Caesar. Hellenistic influences also were widespread and the various Grecian cults would most certainly have been generally known even in the circles in which Jesus moved. The Jews in general were deeply contemptuous of all the gods of the non-Jewish world, the heathen or Gentiles as they called them, and they never hestitated to express their contempt. The attitude of the Jews to the Samaritans is reflected in the account of Jesus' talk with the Samaritan woman and also in the parable of the Good Samaritan. Mr. Claude Montefiore (in Peake's Commentary, p. 619) says of the general attitude of the Jews :

"Religion was so real and deep a distinction between Jew and non-Jew that it tended to intoxicate : the Jews were in the right ; the rest of the world was wrong.

"Yahweh, the national God of the

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Jews, had become all the more exclusive and 'jealous' as He shed His tribal limitations and developed into the One and only God of all the earth and all the world."

It is a remarkable thing that in all the recorded teaching of Jesus there is no mention of the 'jealousy' of God which is such a distinctive feature of Old Testament monotheism. The mere fact of this silence on such a fundamental Jewish idea is significant and warrants us in believing that Jesus had no use for this conception as it did not fit in with his own experience of the Father. Further, his teaching in the Sermon on the Mount suggests a very different idea of God, that of a Father who was kind both to good and evil, to Jew and Gentile.

There are a few incidents in the Gospels which help to throw some light on the mind of Jesus concerning this matter. The first of these is his contact with the Roman centurion. It does not seem likely that the centurion was actually a proselyte, though it is recorded that he was attracted to the synagogue and had actually built one for the people at Capernaum. Jesus in commending his faith as greater than that of any Jew had no word of condemnation for the ordinary Roman worship or even idolatry.

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Then there is the interview with the Samaritan woman, which is evidently founded on historical material. The only thing he has to say against Samaritan worship is that it was based on ignorance and that they did not truly know the God whom they worshipped. He asserts, however, that true worship knows no limitation of race or creed.

The incident of the Syro-Phoenician woman is still more significant. He does not rebuke her for her idolatrous worship nor does he try to convert her to Judaism. There is a playful allusion to the 'little puppies' which is not brought out clearly in our translation, but he works the miracle of healing and sends her away happy.

These are the only incidents which have a bearing upon this question and they seem to indicate that Jesus did not regard a difference of religion in the same way as the Jews did. The silence of Jesus in regard to the various forms of non-Jewish worship so common in Palestine during his days certainly suggests that he did not regard the other religions with the strong aversion entertained by the ordinary Jew of his day. It is also a matter of great significance that no word of contempt for any religion is found in the teaching of Jesus. His biting contempt is reserved for the

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Jewish Pharisee, the ideal of the Jewish religion, who in his profession of outward piety had fallen so far away from the finest pictures of the true religious life portrayed in the prophets. As far as we can see from the slight materials presented to us in the gospels Jesus' relationships with people of other faiths were on a human basis. They were men and women in need and not primarily members of different religious faiths. When it is remembered that the normal relationships of the ordinary Jew were dominated by ideas of religious sectarianism, this is a very significant fact which is not always estimated at its full value. Sometimes Jesus' instructions to his disciples enjoining them to go only to the Jews are cited as evidence of his religious exclusiveness, but surely these are given because of the limited outlook and capacity of the disciples and on account of the short time at their disposal, and not from any feeling of exclusiveness. Again his statement to the Syro-Phoenician woman that he is sent to the lost sheep of Israel is really a challenge to her to show her faith rather than an expression of any exclusive conviction. Further, as this statement is not found in Mark but only in the Jewish Gospel of Matthew it is quite likely that it represents the attitude of

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Jewish Christians and not that of Jesus himself. Again, when his disciples challenged him with the incident of the exorcist who did not follow him he made it clear that he did not adopt an attitude of exclusiveness even among Jews themselves. It may therefore be said that the Gospels do not give any grounds for believing that Jesus adopted an antagonistic or unfriendly attitude to people of other faiths, and indeed it may be said that the records leave the impression that he had no religious exclusiveness but a deep human sympathy with men and women of all faiths.

When we turn to the story of the Apostles we meet with a similar attitude on their part. The incident of Peter and Cornelius has a very important bearing on this question and especially the statement put by Luke into the mouth of Peter that 'God is no respecter of persons, but in every nation he that feareth Him and worketh righteousness is acceptable to Him.' Though it is quite possible that the form of the statement may have been influenced by Luke's own sympathies it can hardly be doubted that the attitude of friendliness to pious men of all religions which is ascribed to Peter represents a fact. Peter must have learned this larger view from the Master himself.

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The significance of Stephen's martyrdom has not always been clearly understood. Stephen was martyred not simply because he believed in Christ as the Messiah, but because he proved from the history of the Jews that they had deliberately rejected the ways of God and because he showed that he did not believe in the exclusive right of the Jews to the mercy of God and so freely mingled with men of other races and faiths.

The Apostle Paul though a Jew, with all the passion of a Jew for the faith that he had received, shows again and again how he has been led into a wider view of the love of God through fellowship with Jesus. His sermon to the people of Athens reveals his mind very clearly. He has no contempt for the alien faith that he is now facing but dwells upon its better side in order to show how God has been leading them. It is the fashion in some quarters to disparage this sermon and to link it on to the verse in first Corinthians in which he repudiates all ideas of finding help in philosophy, but I have always felt that this is unjust. His visit to Athens was not a failure, as has sometimes been made out, but a real success and he won a number of converts on this his first visit to such a centre of sceptical philosophy,

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which is a result that most missionaries have never obtained. In this address to the people of Athens he suggests that the aspirations and ideals that found expression in their own religious philosophy and practice have their crown and fulfilment in the Gospel of Jesus Christ. So the relationship between the two religions is not antipathetic but supplementary. It is interesting to see that Paul does not look upon the non-Christian religions as necessarily antithetic to Christianity, though in Romans he lashes with scorn the immoral practices associated with these religions.

III

The Attitude of the Early Church

Tertullian and Origen represent the two views current in the early church on the relationship of Christianity to non-Christian religions. Tertullian thinks that non-Christian philosophers are 'ignorant blockheads' and have contributed nothing whatever that a Christian can accept. To him all such philosophies are forms of error which have to be eradicated. On the other hand Origen believes that they are all part of the *preparatio evangelica* and 'fragments of eternal truth from the theology of the ever-living Word.' Both these men were intellectual and spiritual genuises

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and had their following in the early church.

Clement, who was associated with Origen in the great catechetical school at Alexandria, boldly asserts the unity of all truth: 'Just as every family goes back to God the Creator, so does the teaching of all good things go back to the Lord, the teaching that makes men just, that takes them by the hand and brings them that way.' He says, 'It is not out of the way that Philosophy too should have been given in Divine Providence as a preliminary training towards the perfection that comes by Christ.' 'Philosophy was a *paidagogos* for the Greek world, as the Law was for the Hebrews, to bring them to Christ.' 'Generally speaking, we should not be wrong in saying that all that is necessary and profitable to life comes to us from God and that Philosophy was more especially given to the Greeks as a sort of covenant of their own.' 'God is the bestower of both covenants, who also gave Philosophy to the Greeks, whereby among the Greeks the Almighty is glorified.'

These two schools of thought are found throughout the history of the church. The Western school with its policy of exclusiveness and its refusal to recognise the work of God in any

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religion but that of Christianity, and the Alexandrian School with its policy of inclusiveness and its acceptance of the work of the Spirit of God in alien religions.

IV

Fundamental Considerations bearing upon this problem

This essay has attempted to look at the problem in the light of history and to show how it has been viewed by Christian teachers of different periods and by various sections of the church. It is now proposed to consider the problem from the point of view of Christian teaching so as to try to understand what are the implications of that teaching in regard to this most important matter. To begin with I shall set down what appear to me to be a few fundamental considerations which bear upon this problem.

1. The Gospel as revealed by Christ and expressed by him in his life and teaching *is based on love and humility* and these are the touch-stones upon which all our attitudes must be tested. The beautitudes almost overemphasise the virtue of humility and lowliness and again and again we find Jesus pressing it upon his disciples. Love is the very centre of his Gospel and it is impossible

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to consider any attitude as truly Christian which is not deeply animated by the Spirit of Love. Our attitude to our fellows is to be determined by love and humility rather than by rivalry and notions of superiority. So surely must these also apply to our attitude to people of other faiths. We are reminded of the query of the little girl who heard for the first time the story of God's command to Saul to slay the Amalekites: 'That must have been before God became a Christian'—Just as we have to test the Old Testament by the revelation of Jesus, so also must we test our attitudes by the teachings and attitudes of Jesus.

2. *The Universal Note in the Gospel* is one of its dominant characteristics. The God whom Jesus reveals is the Father of all men who causes his sun to shine on the good and evil and his rain to pour down on the just and unjust. He is the Shepherd who cares especially for the lost sheep and the Father whose heart goes out in love to the prodigal son. The Kingdom of Heaven will be taken by storm by those who will come into it from the North and South, the East and West, and from the uttermost parts of the Earth. The Gospel he has come to give to men will be made known to men all over the world. His heart

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burns within him as he hears of the Greeks who wish to see him. Surely as we come to understand the teaching of Jesus about God we may say that

'The love of God is broader than
the measure of man's mind
And the heart of the Eternal is
most wonderfully kind.'

The God whom Jesus Christ reveals loves all beautiful things. It is the weak and the little which are the special objects of his care. He who numbers the very hairs of our head, is concerned with every little bit of goodness that exists in the world.

There are no exclusive or superior races in Jesus' world. All are children of the one Father and equally the objects of His love. This universal note in the Gospel of Christ leads us to believe that he welcomes all the truth and beauty that are to be found anywhere in the world and that he would not reject even the imperfect expressions of worship and devotion that are seen in men and women of other faiths.

3. *The Sharing and Reconciling Process as God's method.*

We learn from Jesus that God does not adopt the method of force to win the allegiance of men. The way of Jesus is a way of sharing with men in their

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thoughts and in their life and through such sharing a way of reconciling them to himself. 'I am among you as a servant,' not as a mighty Lord who drives men to allegiance, but as a suffering servant, hung upon a cross, who wins them by the magic of love. The necessity for Jesus to share so completely with men their limitations and sorrows lies in the very heart of God himself, who is a sharing God. He shares in all their troubles that they may share in his divine life. The Kingdom of heaven comes as the leaven that works slowly and silently in the heart of the dough. It is the mystic love of God sharing in and changing the life of men. Jesus is moved with compassion again and again as he sees and feels the woes of those around him. He weeps over Jerusalem as he sees the fate that awaits her because of her blindness and trust in force. He is moved with the feeling of our infirmities. So, in effect he says, is God our Father. Jesus too is the great Reconciler seeking to bring men into unity and sympathy. It is of no use bringing our gift to the altar until we have re-entered into fellowship with our brother. Hatred is the very negation of the qualities of the Kingdom of God. As Paul expressed it, Jesus' Gospel is one of reconciliation,—reconciliation between man and man and

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between man and God. Surely then we are not wrong in carrying this process of sharing and reconciliation into our relationships with men and women of the faiths, since it belongs to the very heart of Jesus' teaching about God. It is Canon Barry who says that the West has worshipped Christ instead of following him and it is very strange that it was reserved for one who did not claim to be a disciple of Christ to insist that true religion should never indulge in abuse of another's devotion and worship. Raja Ram Mohun Roy when he put into the trust deed of the Brahmo Samaj the sentence :

'that, in conducting the said worship or adoration, no object, animate or inanimate, that has been or is, or shall hereafter become, or be recognised as an object of worship by any men or set of men, shall be reviled or slightly or contemptuously spoken of or alluded to either in preaching, praying, or in the hymns, or the mode of worship that may be delivered or used in the said message or building,'

was more closely following Christ than his declared followers who made the condemnation of other religions an important part of their preaching. The ministry of reconciliation is far distant from such an attitude of antagonism.

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Christ's sharing of our manhood was a real sharing and our following of him is not all that it should be unless we too are willing and eager to share with those who are not of our faith. Such sharing does not simply mean giving, it also means receiving and entering into the thoughts and ideas of those with whom we share.

4. *The Uniqueness of God's revelation in Christ.*

Dr. Denny suggested that the most perfect Christian creed was simply 'I believe in God through Jesus Christ.' Those of us who call ourselves Christians do so because we have learnt to know about God through Jesus Christ. 'He that hath seen me hath seen the Father.' We believe this because we have seen Christ and through him have learnt something of the Father's nature and ways. Nature and science and art may teach us something about God but it is very little compared to what we learn of Him through the life and words of Jesus. He has shown us the Father because he knew Him and revealed Him in his life and teaching. The world is coming more and more to believe that there is a unique quality in this revelation. To many it has been merely a dogma to be accepted on authority but

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to others it has been an experience and personal conviction tested in the fires of trouble and uncertainty. As long as we see Christ we cannot say with the Vedantist 'Neti, neti'—not this, not that —but we must say positive things like love and goodness. God is Love. God is Light. These are truths that we have learned of Christ and it is because his matchless life equalled the wonderful beauty of their meaning that we are able to understand something of them.

It follows then that our relationship with other faiths must take into account this vital experience of the wonder and glory of Christ's revelation of God. We do not minimise or despise the revelation that God has made of Himself in other ways but we can never lose sight of the experience of God that we have gained in Christ. It is that which illumines and clarifies our understanding of other revelations. Just as we test the value and trustworthiness of all that the Old Testament says of God by the revelation of Christ, so also do we test the revelations of other faiths. Whatever be the relationship of Christianity to other faiths it must take account of our conviction of the uniqueness of the revelation Christ has given to us.

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V
Our Attitude to other Faiths

Having in mind all these things how should we define for ourselves the relationship of Christianity to other faiths? Perhaps I should say, how can I define it for myself, for I cannot do it for another. It is not possible for me to express this relationship by any one word or statement and so I must just put down briefly aspects of this relationship which have become clear to me as I have tried to understand the mind of Christ. I realise only too well how imperfect and unsatisfying this may seem to others and that they may need modification in the light of growing knowledge and experience, but in all humility I have to set forth in positive terms the relationship which I have found between Christianity and other faiths. I would suggest therefore the following six factors as aspects of that relationship.

1. A true brotherly love and sympathy with those of other faiths. As God is Love this must be the beginning and the end of our relationship.

2. A genuine endeavour to understand and appreciate the beauty and truth in the religious experiences of men and women of other faiths.

3. A whole-hearted recognition of

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God's universal revelation. He has no favourite races and none have exclusive privileges in Him. It is part of His very nature to reveal Himself to all who are of earnest and childlike mind.

4. A willingness to enter into a sharing relationship with religious souls of other faiths, to take as well as to give, and in all humility to find paths of reconciliation and fellowship, without thereby compromising one's own loyalties.

5. A desire to co-operate in all possible activities for the welfare of people with men and women of goodwill in every faith and by means of such co-operation to find new bonds of sympathy and understanding with those separated from us by credal differences.

6. A realisation that in our personal experience of God through Jesus Christ we have found something of inestimable worth to the whole world, to every man and woman. Such a realisation should not lead to any feeling of superiority or of exclusiveness but to a deep humility and a personal longing to express the spirit of Jesus in all our relationships with others, and to find out something more of the length and breadth, the height and depth, of the love of God that surpasses knowledge.

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These six aspects should be the dominating factors in our attitude to other faiths. I have tried to show how they are grounded in the life and teaching of Jesus Himself, and I have endeavoured to avoid dogmatic statements and assumptions. Readers should understand that this does not pretend to be a philosophical or doctrinal exposition of the relationship but rather an expression of my own personal experiences as they have developed during the course of my life here in India. If they stimulate further thought and lead men more competent than myself to take up this enquiry I shall feel that they have been worth while. I hope too that they will be of some value in helping young men today in finding for themselves ways of expressing this relationship which do no violence to their own deep convictions and which are in harmony with the mind of Christ.

'Finally, brothers, keep in mind
whatever is true, whatever is
worthy, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is attractive, whatever is high-toned, all
excellence, all merit.'

—St. Paul in Phillipians.

'Tis Wisdom true for men to find
the Real

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In whatso'er they hear, from
whomsoever heard.'
—Kural.

1. Gather us in, Thou Love that
fillest all!
Gather our rival faiths within
Thy fold!
Rend each man's temple-veil
and bid it fall,
That we may know that Thou
hast been of old;
Gather us in.

2. Gather us in: we worship only
Thee:
In varied names we stretch a
common hand;
In diverse forms a common soul
we see;
In many ships we seek one
spirit-land;
Gather us in.

3. Each sees one colour of Thy
rainbow light,
Each looks upon one tint and
calls it heaven;
Thou art the fulness of our
partial sight;
We are not perfect till we find
the seven;
Gather us in.

4. Thine is the mystic life great
India craves,

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Thine is the Parsee's sin-destroy-
ing beam,
Thine is the Buddhist's rest
from tossing waves,
Thine is the empire of vast
China's dream ;
Gather us in.

5. Thine is the Roman's strength
without his pride,
Thine is the Greek's glad world
without its graves,
Thine is Judaea's law with love
beside,
The truth that censures and
the grace that saves !
Gather us in.

6. Some seek a Father in the
heavens above,
Some ask a human image to
adore,
Some crave a spirit vast as
life and love;
Within Thy mansions we have
all and more ;
Gather us in.

Questions for Discussion

1. Why should I endeavour to find out the relationship between Christianity and other faiths ? Is not Christianity enough for me ?

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2. What are the main tendencies among youth today in regard to religion ?
3. What is the meaning of religious tolerance and what kind of attitude does it involve ?
4. If Christ is to me the final revelation of God can I look for God's revelation in other faiths ?
5. Do I find anything in Hindu and Moslem faith which I have not already got in the Christian faith ?
6. If I believe in God's revelation through other faiths should I be willing to 'share' with people of other faiths in religious experience ?
7. What attitude should I adopt to the man who says that he has entered into fellowship with God apart from Christ ?
8. Does an attitude of co-operation with other faiths mean that we should desist from attacking even those things that we believe to be false ?
9. Are there limits to tolerance and sympathy in our attitudes to other faiths ?

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CHAPTER VIII

THE ANCIENT CHURCH OF MALABAR

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1. Malabar, the land and the people

CUT off from intercourse with the rest of India by the Western Ghats and yet looking out into the vast expanse of the Indian Ocean and the lands beyond lies the narrow strip of country known from ancient times as Kerala or Malabar, comprising the Native States of Travancore and Cochin, with the district of British Malabar. It is roughly 200 miles long by 30 to 40 miles wide and the language of the area, Malayalam, is spoken by over 9 million people.

The population of Christians in Travancore alone is 1,604,475, this being about a third of the total for the State and about a quarter of the total Christian population of India.

The large majority of these are Syrians or St. Thomas Christians, who claim to have received the Gospel from

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St. Thomas, the Apostle.

Though Malabar is well known to the outside world as the land of pepper and cocoanuts, as the land of Sankara-chayya and Naraya Guruswamy, to Christians throughout the world it is of special interest as the home of the St. Thomas Christians and as the seat of an ancient and indigenous Indian Church. It is to certain aspects of the history and traditions of this ancient Church, Indian in character and outlook and Eastern in worship and polity, that we shall now turn our attention in order to understand something of the heritage of the church in India.

2. Certain phases in the history of the Syrian Church

(a) The St. Thomas tradition.

The origin of the Syrian Church of Malabar is lost in obscurity, but there is a strong tradition among the Syrians connecting the name of the Apostle Thomas with the founding of their church.*

* As Mr. Vincent A. Smith says in his *Early History of India* (P. 7) "Except on the rare occasions when an unusually enterprising sovereign of the north either penetrated or turned the forest barrier and for a moment lifted the veil of secrecy in which the southern potentates lived enwrapped, very little is known concerning political events in the far south during the long period extending from 600 B. C. to A. D. 800."

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It is believed that St. Thomas landed in A. D. 52 at Malankara, an island in the lagoon near Cranganore (Muziris of Pliny and the Periplus) in Cochin, once a flourishing port but now an obscure hamlet, and that he preached the gospel to the 'heathen' and laid the foundation of seven Christian centres* in the province, and that he passed on to the Coromandel Coast where he suffered martyrdom at Mylapore, where a shrine connected with the name of the apostle is still greatly reverenced by Roman Catholics all over India.

Until historical research throws more light on the question before us we shall be content to acquiesce in the verdict of Mr. Vincent Smith, who writes: "Although the alleged martyrdom whether in the kingdom of Mazdai or near Mailapur, may be confidently rejected as unhistorical, it must be admitted that a personal visit of the apostle to Southern India was easily feasible in the conditions of the time.....I am now satisfied that the Christian Church of Southern India is extremely ancient, whether it was founded by St. Thomas in person or not, and that its existence

* (1) Cranganore, (2) Quilon, (3) Palur, (4) Parur, (5) South Pallipuram or Kokamangalam, (6) Neranum, 7) Nellikkul, called also Chael.

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may be traced back to the third century with a high degree of probability."*

(b) Nestorian missionary enterprise in India

Whether St. Thomas founded a church in South India or not, and whether there was a Christian community in Malabar in the first or second century, both of which may be treated as open questions, there is circumstantial evidence for the supposition that from the 4th century onward there was a body of Christians on the Malabar coast. But definite historical evidence pointing to the existence of a Christian church is forthcoming only from 6th century onwards. Long before this there must have been immigrations from Persia as a result of a policy of persecutions that was adopted by the Persian kings Sapor II (A. D. 339–379), and Baahram V (A. D. 420). These persecutions which were more severe and extensive than any of those which took place under the Roman emperors were in the providence of God calculated to be a most effective means of spreading the gospel far and wide in the continent of Asia. With the impetus given by the sword of the persecutor to spread the faith, the Nes-

* Early History of India, by V. A. Smith, (Fourth Edition), page 250.

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torian Christians of Persia carried the gospel to Tibet and China, to Siberia and Japan, to India and the islands beyond. The story of the evangelisation of a large part of the vast continent of Asia for the first time by a small and persecuted church is one of the most heroic chapters in the history of the Christian missionary enterprise. Space forbids us from dwelling at length on this interesting topic, but we may notice here some of the facts connected with the early evangelisation of India by the Nestorian Christians. Doctor Stewart in his absorbingly interesting book, *Nestorian Missionary Enterprise* quotes evidence to show that in the 7th century there were large communities of Christians in India, north, south, central as well as in the island of Ceylon, governed by bishops and archbishops under the authority of the Nestorian patriarch.

Patna is mentioned as the seat of the metropolitan in the year A. D. 1222. Marco Polo, who visited India about the end of the 13th century, states that there were then in middle (central) India, six great kings and kingdoms and that 3 of these were Christian and 3 Saracen. Abd-er-Razzak who visited India in A. D. 1442 said that the vizier of Vijayanagar in the Deccan was a

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Christian, his name being Nimeh-Pezir. Nicolo Conti, who visited India in the same century as Abd-er-Razzak, states that in the city of Malepur (Madras) he found 1000 Nestorians and adds that the Nestorians who were spread all over India were the only exception to the prevailing polygamy. How widespread Christianity was in North India may be inferred from the fact that Gandispur (modern Shahabad) in the Panjab is referred to as a seat of a metropolitan in A. D. 893. There are also references to Christian families at Kalayan near Bombay, to a Christian king of Cuttack Stephen by name, to Christian soldiers in the service of the Nawab of Arcot and to 1000 Christians in the service of the king of Pegu in Burma. All this was long before the advent in 1500 of the Franciscan brethren, the first regularly equipped western mission to begin work in India.

By far the strongest proof of Nestorian missionary activity in India is the Syrian church of Malabar, one branch of which, practically confined to the town of Trichur in Cochin State and ruled over by Mar Timotheus, a Nestorian bishop, is in communion with the Chaldean or Assyrian church in Iraq and Kurdistan, whose patriarch Mar Shimun is now living in exile in Cyprus owing to recent political troubles in Iraq.

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(c) Privileges granted to Christians

Of special interest to the student of inter-communal relationships in ancient India is the relation between the Christians of S. W. India and the native Hindu rulers of the time. The measure of freedom and even patronage that different colonies of Christians who had settled in or near the sea-ports of Cranganore and Quilon enjoyed at the hands of the Hindu rajahs will be amazing only to one who is a stranger to the tradition of hospitality that lies at the heart of Hinduism. Extensive trading rights, titles of honour and rank, freedom of worship, and other privileges extended to Christians by the rulers of Kerala are preserved for us in inscriptions in old Tamil in five or six copper plates.

We take the following description of the social status of the Malabar Christians before the advent of the Portuguese from Dr. Stewart's book already referred to. "Neale says that the Christians ranked next to the royal family, were allowed to ride on elephants—a privilege otherwise reserved exclusively for royalty —and were placed on terms of equality with Nairs (next to the Brahmins the highest caste in that part of India).* They were independent of heathen

* Neale, History of the Holy Eastern Church, vol. I. p. 146.

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officials and were governed by their bishops in civil as well as in ecclesiastical affairs." (p. 122).

Syrian Christians of Malabar even at the present day enjoy high social status in the native states of Travancore and Cochin. But one cannot help thinking that such social advantages have not been an unmixed blessing. Added to the isolation of the land, the superior social status of the Christian community has contributed not a little in the past to the development of an attitude of indfference towards evangelisation, and of exclusiveness in its relations with the lower classes of Hindu society. This is a lesson that Christians everywhere and in every age, and expecially at the present time, will do well to take to heart. Our salvation, either political or social, does not lie in isolation or exclusiveness. Political safeguards and patronage may become a delusion and a snare. The true ideal for a Christian church is to choose to suffer reproach for the name of Christ and to lose its life in the service of other communities in order that it may ultimately save itself for the sake of the kingdom of God.

(d) Struggle for the Faith

In the long course of the history of the

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Malabar Christians there are two periods in which they were engaged in a hard and bitter struggle for maintaing the purity of their faith. In the former period which synchronises with the 16th century they had to fight an external foe, while in the latter period which covers the early part of the 19th century, the struggle was against abuses that had crept into the church from various sources in matters of religious faith and practice.

The year 1498, in which Vasco de Gama landed in Calicut, which marks the beginning of a new epoch as far as commercial and political relations with the west are concerned, was also the beginning of a fateful period of religious interference by the Portugese in the affairs of the Christians of Malabar. Close in the wake of the trader came the propagandist of the faith, and it is no wonder that the missionary methods adapted by the latter were often inspired by the principles and practice of the market place. It was when the Franciscans, who were the first to arrive in Malabar as missionaries and who had worked peacefully for about 50 years, were succeeded by Jesuit missionaries under Francis Xavier in 1542 that the Christians of the West coast began to have a taste of what religious persecution of Christians by Christians may

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mean. It was such bigotry that had sullied the fair name of religion in Spain, France and other European countries. The Portuguese Governor under the influence of the Archbishop of Goa began to bring pressure to bear on the Syrian Christians with a view to their accepting Roman Catholic doctrine and practice. By imprisonment, confiscation, cutting off the supply of bishops from Persia, and other means the Portuguese tried directly and sometimes through the native rulers to bring the Malabar Christian into obedience to Rome. The best known of such attempts is that by Archbishop Menezes of Goa, who armed with authority from the king of Portugal as well as the Pope of Rome, intimidated the people of Malabar as well as their rulers, and finally called together a Synod at Diamper or Udaiyampevoor a village in the boundary line between Cochin and Travancore States, where the leaders and people assembled were compelled by the sheer might of his overpowering personality to submit to the supremacy of Rome. Except perhaps in the history of Islam, it is difficult to find a similar story of the wholesale conversion of a people by sheer brute force from one faith to another.

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1. Coonen Cross Declaration

For 54 years from the date of the Synod of Diamper (A.D. 1599) the Pope of Rome and his emissaries held undisputed sway in Malabar. But the innate love of independence of the Malabar church was bound to assert itself against the ecclesiastical domination of Rome. Exasperated by the harsh and intolerant rule of the Jesuits, the Syrians resolved to make one last desperate effort to throw off the Roman yoke. The political situation also was in their favour, for the Dutch, a Protestant power, were then gaining control of Malabar coast after defeating the Portuguese : The Christians assembled in their thousands at the foot of a cross in Mattancheri, Cochin, known as the 'Coonen'* Cross, renounced their allegiance to the Portugese, and pledged themselves nevermore to submit to Portuguese bishops. This declaration of ecclesiastical independence which may be compared to the solemn League and Covenant in Scottish history is one of the most heroic episodes in the history of the Malabar church.

* 'Coonen' means bent and probably indicates that the large granite cross usually found in front of each church was in the case of Mattancheri not quite perpendicular. It is said that with a view to enabling large numbers to touch the cross when abjuring allegiance to Rome long ropes were tied to it and those who touched the ropes were considered as having touched the cross (Footnote on p. 127 of Dr. Stewart's book already cited.)

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2. Reformation in the Syrian Church

With the next phase of the struggle for their faith we enter upon the 19th century, by which time the Malabar Christians had transferred their allegiance, owing more to the exigencies of the political situation than to doctrinal reasons, from the Nestorian Patriarch of Edessa to the Jacobite Patriarch of Antioch. In this process as well as under the Portugese domination, the church had lost much of its earlier purity of faith as well as grace of conduct. In fact when Claudius Buchanan and Bishop Middleton visited Travancore in the early years of the 19th century, they found the spiritual life of the church at a very low ebb indeed. Bishop Middleton wrote in 1816, "The ordinary lay folk knew little of their religion."* The visit of Dr. Buchanan was instrumental in turning the attention of the Church of England to the Syrian Christians of Malabar and in sending out missionaries of the C. M. S. to help the Syrians to repair the breaches and build up the waste places in the church. And the fruit of their labours was not long in appearing. God raised up a reformer in the person of Abraham Malpan, who like Wycliffe and

* Hunt, The Anglican Church in Travancore and Cochin. P. 45.

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Luther of an earlier day protested against the empty ceremonialism of the church, and recalled it to a sense of the spiritual character of the religion it professed to follow. The protest and the call were not in vain. Though the question of the independence of the church from control by the Patriarch of Antioch, which was one of the planks of the programme of the reform party, led to protracted litigation and turmoil and subsequent splitting of the church into two main divisions, the Jacobite (orthodox) and the Mar Thoma, the spiritual results of the efforts of the Abraham Malpan, and other reformers in the church may be traced in some of the developments of the last 50 years. An Evangelistic Association was started about 40 years ago, in one of the sections, which is now engaged in missionary work outside Travancore in cooperation with the National Missionary Society of India. It has also been conducting an annual convention, the famous Maramon convention, perhaps the biggest in the world, for over the last 40 years for the edification of the spiritual life of the Syrians. The Bethany Ashram and the order of the Servants of the Cross, both of which institutions are doing splendid evangelistic work in the Orthodox Church,

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the Union Christian College in Alwaye, started and run by young men from the three important sections (Orthodox, Mar Thoma, Church of India) of the Malabar Church, are some of the bright features of the church life of the Syrians at the present time. Sunday Schools, Prayer and Bible Reading groups, Sermons in churches, and other means of helping the spiritual growth of the people have become a regular part of the work of all the denominations in the church. The spread of English education, the presence of Western missions and missionaries working in different part of Malabar the services rendered by the Calcutta Oxford Mission to the Orthodox section, the greater sharing of Syrian Christians in the religious life of India as a whole are to be reckoned as factors in bringing about this healthy change in the life and outlook of this church.

3. The Soul of the Church and the People

After having seen some aspects of the history of the ancient church of Malabar we must now turn our attention in closing to some of the characteristics of the church itself. What is the peculiar genius ofthe church ? What lesson has its history for Christianity outside Malabar ? These are questions which we shall now attempt to discuss.

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1. In the first place the church in Malabar is strongly *Indian.* It is one that has so grown and been nurtured on the soil of India for long centuries that it has every right to be considered as Indian as any of the movements in Hinduism or Buddhism. All its clergy and bishops with one solitary exception are Indian and therefore the administration of the church may be said to be entirely in Indian hands. Much of the litigation for which the church has earned notoriety, has in recent years been undertaken in the interests of freedom from foreign control. In the love of simplicity which is manifest in the people as well as the leaders, preference for Indian modes of worship, and in other ways too the church is truly Indian. To one section of the church the monastic ideal has a special attraction and therefore we find several men and women in it who have taken the vow of celibacy and are engaged in prayer and contemplation as well as in the service of man. The best known of such institutions, the Bethany Ashram, is doing a spendid piece of work in different parts of Travancore. Though priests may marry, it is an unwritten law of the church that the bishop must be a celibate, being wedded only to the church.

2. The church lays much store by

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worship. From early times public worship, generally with imposing ceremonial but always solemn and dignified, has been of the very essence of the church life in Malabar. This is mostly due to the fact that the church is a branch of the Eastern Church, the branches of which according to Dr. B.J. Kidd are no more than societies for worship. The service of Holy Communion takes the pride of place among the various offices of the church and participation in such a service is held in special regard. The periodic lenten fast, the prostrations in typical eastern fashion enjoined in the services in the Passion Week especially on Good Friday, the stated hours of prayer every day, are but some of the ways in which the need of worship and adoration is emphasised by the church Standing is the common posture in worship, private and public, which partly explains the absence of pews in the churches in Malabar.

3. The relations between Christians and Non-Christians on the Malabar coast have always been marked by the utmost good-will and friendliness on both sides. The long history of the church is remarkable for the absence of the spirit of intolerance or enmity towards Non-Christians or of persecution from them. Christians and Hindus live side by side in towns and villages sharing in each

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other's social festivities and sometimes even religious activities. It is significant that one or two modern Hindu poets of Malabar have chosen definitely Christian themes for poetic treatment and that such poems are popular with all classes of people in Malabar.

4. Speaking of Syrian Christians as a whole, one may say that they are passionately attached to the faith and church of their fathers. The church has a strong hold on the people who are as a rule loyal to its ordinances and officers. Even in these days when church-going is not considered a special virtue the churches in Malabar cannot complain of the attendance at their services. Though the church cannot boast of any great achievements in the past, it can justly claim that it has kept alive the flame of religion in the hearts of its members by fostering their loyalty to the church. The divisions that have rent asunder the church and which are now deplored by most of the present generation were themselves the result of different groups attempting to be loyal to what they conceived to be the faith of their fathers. Such a love of the church and its traditions and creed has often been found to act as a powerful motive in the service of the community through the church.

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5. In sketching the character of the church of Malabar, one feels constrained to point out also some of its defects. The lack of evangelistic zeal has already been referred to. The conservatism of the people and the blind attachment to customs and traditions inherited from the past, the spirit of exclusiveness, the lack of a social conscience with regard to evils rampant in the country are other things that deserve mention.

We have now seen various aspects of the Church of Malabar, its history and traditions, its triumphs and its failures, which may serve as example as well as warning to other sections of the church of Christ in India at the present time. No institution however great can live on its past and what therefore is expected of the Christian Church in India is that it should be alive to the opportunities of the present. In the task of making Jesus Christ and His gospel of love and salvation known to the millions of our countrymen who have never heard of his name, if the Church of Malabar can lead the way, it has yet a bright future before it. But such an awakening can come to any church only when the young men and young women dream dreams and see visions about the kingdom of God and their place in it. Will not the youth of India rally round

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the church, and drawing inspiration from its saints and martyrs in the past, will they not go forward to fight the Lord's battles in establishing the kingdom of God in this motherland of ours ?

Questions for discussion

1. What are the characteristics of the early church described in the book of Acts ? In what ways is the church of the present day different from the early church ? Is it true to say that the church of today is a "church behind closed doors" ?

2. What is the explanation for the attraction of communism and socialism to Christian students ? What are the Christian elements, if any, in these social experiments ? How does the community of goods practised in the early church differ from modern communism ?

3. Examine the evidence in the gospels in support of the contention that Jesus Christ founded a church ? In what ways did the organisation of the early church help forward the progress of the gospel ? How and when has organisation hindered the Christian cause ? Do you think the Christian church in India is over-organised ? Are the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's Supper absolutely essential for the Christian life ?

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4. Is it true to say that sectarian Christianity has been more active in missionary work than the churches which hold the Catholic belief ? If so, is church union a help or a hindrance to the missionary cause ?

5. What are the factors that contribute to the development of the missionary outlook in a church ? Is doctrinal unity essential to missionary co-operation ?

6. What has the Syrian Church to teach other churches in India and what to learn from them. How can we make our churches real places of worship ? What elements may be adopted from Hinduism or Islam in this matter ?

7. Where do the churches fail to appeal to modern youth ? Does loyalty to Jesus Christ imply necessarily loyalty to the church ? What is the relation of the church to the kingdom of God in Jesus' teaching ? 'We can build up the church not by putting it first but only by seeking the kingdom of God and His righteousness first.' Discuss the meaning of this statement.

8. What does the church mean to you in your personal life ? How can it be made to mean more ?

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CHAPTER IX

THE RISE AND PROGRESS OF ROMAN CATHOLIC MISSIONS IN INDIA

BY THE REV. NOEL HALL

THE two factors which have most decisively determined the development of Roman Catholic Missions in India are the Patronate (*Padroado*) in virtue of which Portugal claimed to monopolize control of missionary enterprise in the East, and the missionary zeal of the Society of Jesus.

The origins of the Portuguese Padroado

When on the 20th May 1498 Vasco da Gama arrived off Calicut, both the layman and the ecclesiastic still took the command, 'Compel them to come in,' (Luke 14^{23}) at its face value. In the age of discovery the princes of Spain and Portugal not only recognized the value of missions as a means of strengthening their dominion in the Indies, but were genuinely concerned in conscience for the salvation of the souls of their unbelieving subjects: and the Pope

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authorized the conquest of new lands by the discoverers on the condition that wherever they went they should plant the Cross. The privilege accorded to Portugal as the protector of Christian missions in Africa and Asia dates from the beginning of Portuguese exploration. In 1430, as a soldier of the Cross pledged to defend the name of Christ, Prince Henry the Navigator craved the blessing of the Holy See upon his enterprise. Pope Martin V issued a bull granting to the crown of Portugal all the lands the Portuguese might discover as far as India. In 1493 Alexander VI assigned to Spain all that lay to the West and to Portugal all that lay to the East of a line drawn from the North to the South Pole 100 miles West of the Azores. In 1514 Leo X crowned the work of his predecessors by conceding to the Portuguese Crown the right of presentation to all ecclesiastical benefices within its sphere of interest.

The kings of Portugal took their duties seriously in the early years of the Portuguese supremacy in the East. Every expedition was accompanied by priests charged with the duty not only of ministering to the servants of the king but of preaching to unbelievers. And the royal instructions to the Viceroy continually emphasized the duty of

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procuring the conversion of the heathen. Cabral, the leader of the second expedition to India (1500) had orders to begin with preaching and, if that failed, to proceed to the sword.

The beginnings of missionary activity in India

The first missionaries were for the most part drawn from the two great mendicant orders of friars whose vocation to a special share in the evangelization of Asia was of long standing. During the Middle Ages the only attempt emanating from Europe to spread the faith in India was an offshoot from their missions to the Tartar overlords of Central and Further Asia. The first Franciscan Archbishop of Cambaluc, John de Monte Corvino (1307) was delayed in India for a year on his journey to China and preached the Gospel at Milapur. He was followed in 1321 by a Dominican Jordanus, and four Franciscans who are recorded to have baptized 10,000 converts in the holy city of Thana on the west coast of India.

During the earlier years of Portuguese ascendancy the Franciscans greatly outnumbered the missionaries sent to India by other orders. Franciscan converts were found in all the chief settlements of the Portuguese,—at Goa, Cochin,

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Milapur, Negapatam, Bassein and the island of Salsette—and the Friars Minores obtained the custodianship of the Shrine of St. Thomas. Before the advent of the Jesuits the most considerable accession to Christianity was that of 20,000 Paravas or Pearl-fishers inhabiting the coast land along the gulf of Manar, who accepted baptism as the price of Portuguese succour against the piracy of Mussulman corsairs.

But the militant zeal of the Portuguese was better fitted to spectacular pullings down of the strongholds of error than to the patient planning of the spiritual conquest of the land. The religious orders for the most part confined themselves to the coast, and the organization of the home church was tardily and mechanically reproduced in the East without any attempt to adapt it to the needs of evangelization. The Diocese of Goa was created in 1533 and the jurisdiction of its first Bishop, the Franciscan John Albuquerque, extended from the Cape of Good Hope to Japan. Moreover the government tended to discourage the formation of an indigenous clergy: it was only in 1541 that the College of the Holy Faith was founded at Goa for the training of Indian priests. Such was the condition of the Indian mission field when the devout King John III prevailed

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upon Pope Paul III to approve the sending of two of the companions of Ignatius Loyala to the East.

The Missionary Vocation of the Society of Jesus

The missionary vocation of the Society of Jesus was no after-thought, but belonged to the original idea of its founder. When in 1539 Ignatius and his six companions placed their services at the absolute disposal of the Pope, they professed their readiness to go at his bidding among the Turks or other unbelievers even to India, or alternately to heretics and schismatics. The new order was intended to be a spiritual cohort prepared for any emergency and vowed to the task of combating the enemies of the church at the command of the general-in-chief, Christ's Vicar on earth. To the three traditional vows every member of it adds a fourth, pledging himself to obey the directions of the sovereign Pontiff with regard to the missions on which he is sent. Actually only one of the original associates of Ignatius became a missionary. When in April 1541 Xavier sailed for India, Rodriguez, who had been also chosen for the work overseas, remained behind as head of the Portuguese province of the order. One of his first acts was to

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use his influence at court to found the famous missionary college at Coimbra.

St. Francis Xavier, Apostle of India

Among all the great men who adventured to the ends of the earth in the age of discovery Francis Xavier holds without controversy the highest place. Sprung from a noble family of Navarre, he was like Ignatius himself a Basque by race. By temperament ambitious, his knightly desire to excel in the lists of learning was rather redirected than expelled when Christ and no longer self became the ruling motive of his life. Throughout, it remained a point of honour with him never to rest content with victories gained but to press on to plant the church in some less accessible region. His gaiety and his affection for his friends, to which his letters witness, are endearing qualities: to dauntless courage he added a joy and peace such as belong only to the saints. The more tribulations abounded for him, the more consolations abounded also. The picture of Xavier in the church of the Bom Jesu at Goa, in which he is welcomed to India by a host of angels each bearing a cross, is true history: Rubens' magnificent canvas at Vienna, in which the saint stands serene above the tumult of a multitude astounded by the raising of the dead, depicts the Xavier of legend.

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Francis Xavier landed in Goa on the 6th of May, 1542: he died on the island of Sanchian within sight of China on the 3rd of December, 1552. Of these ten years only four and a half were given to India. Within six months of his landing Xavier had by his preaching and personal visits effected so complete a reformation of life among the Portuguese at Goa that he felt free to turn to the Gentiles. His own personal labours on the mainland of India were confined to the coast of the Pearl-fishers and Travancore.

Finding the recently baptized Christians of the Pescaria woefully ignorant of the barest elements of the faith he went from village to village ringing a bell and drilled the crowds thus collected in a Tamil version of the creed, the Lord's Prayer, the Ave Maria, the Salve Regina, the General Confession and the Ten Commandments. His sanctity and his works of mercy began to attract unbelievers in spite of the opposition of the Brahmans. Whole villages were received and baptized in a day until Xavier could no longer lift his hands for weariness.

Xavier arrived in Southern Travancore in 1544 and won the favour of the king by invoking the aid of the Portuguese against the inroads of a band of freebooters, the Badaga, in the pay of

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a rival claimant to the throne. The response to his preaching was immediate. The people destroyed the temples of their idols with their own hands, and 10,000 converts were baptized in a month. After a pilgrimage to the Shrine of St. Thomas at Milapur in the autumn of 1545 the ambition to convert Japan and China took possession of Xavier's impatient soul and henceforward he visited India only at rare intervals.

There have never been wanting critics of Xavier's methods. He never mastered any Indian language and he baptized converts *en masse* after a preparation involving nothing more than the learning parrotwise of a few stereotyped and faultily translated prayers and answers. Nevertheless even this amount of instruction was an advance on what had been previously given, and Xavier was careful to send other workers to cherish what he had planted when he passed on to other fields. In 1543 the seminary at Goa was entrusted to the Jesuits and reconstituted as the College of St. Paul. Like his spiritual father, Ignatius, Xavier expected and exacted a high standard both from the members of the society he selected for India and from the Indian priests trained at Goa. Moreover, whatever the defects of his methods, the picturesque parish churches hoary with

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age, all down the southeast coast of India witness to the permanence of what he accomplished and initiated.

Xavier has also been reproached for being over-ready to invoke the aid of the secular arm in forwarding the spread of the Gospel. It is true that he was not so completely emancipated from mediaeval ideas as to despise the protection of the Portuguese power, but his correspondence with King John proves that he was far more anxious to secure his interest in the increase of missionaries than to reinforce the proclamation of the Gospel by political coercion.

The Progress of Missions from Xavier to de Nobili

Xavier's disregard of self and burning zeal remained as an inspiration to the Society of Jesus, but few of his successors displayed the same individuality. The whole constitution of the order was framed to secure obedience, and in the missionary enterprise the initiative belonged to the society as a whole rather than to the individual. The headquarters of the Jesuit missions in the East was at Goa-which was raised to primatial rank in 1558, with suffragan sees at Cochin and Malacca. North of Goa the Gospel came not in word only but in power during the viceroyalty of the

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Duke of Braganza (1558-61), when the intolerant zeal of the Portuguese government reached a climax which can only be paralleled by the forcible conversions of the Middle Ages. The missionaries gained their most considerable success on the island of Salsette with the aid of the military might of Portugal; by the end of the century the Christians there numbered some 35,000. South of Goa, Cochin became the base not only for latinizing the Christians of St. Thomas but for evangelizing the dominions of the Hindu Rajas of the South,—Calicut, Travancore, Madura and Vijayanagar in the last days of its splendid civilization. The Portuguese settlement in Bengal opened the door for the evangelization of Burma. When early in the 17th century the Portuguese soldiers serving with the Arakanese were transported inland by the victorious king of Ava, the Jesuits and friars ministering to them successfully planted the Church in the land of their captivity.

The Society of Jesus was no isolated appearance. In the fervent period of the Counter-Reformation several of the old orders were regenerated and new orders founded. A revived missionary zeal manifested itself most conspicuously in the Capuchins,—a branch of the Franciscan family reformed in accordance

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with the primitive ideals of its founder,—the Austin hermits and the barefoot Carmelite friars, the mystic children of St. Teresa. All three orders reached India in the course of the 16th century or early in the 17th. The Augustinians founded a very prosperous mission in Bengal and opposed the penetration of the Jesuits there. Of all the mediaeval orders the Dominicans had declined least from primitive strictness: founded to be a militant order for the championship of the faith they resented the intrusion of the Jesuits into their own province, and from the first relations between the two orders were not cordial. In 1560 the peculiar charge of the Dominican order, the Inquisition, was set up in the capital of the Portuguese Empire in India.

The Jesuits and the Great Mogul

The Mission of the Jesuits to the court of Akbar, the consolidator of the Mogul power in India (1556-1605), is one of the most romantic episodes in the history of the order. It began in 1580 with the arrival by royal invitation of three Jesuits led by Fr. Aquaviva. The primary object of the fathers was to convert the king and the royal household: but they were no more successful with the Mohammedan Emperor, than

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their brethren in the South had been with the Hindu Rajas. Eclectic tolerance often provides a more insuperable obstacle to faith than bigoted orthodoxy. Though vigorous, Akbar's mind was fundamentally sceptical, and with an unwarranted faith in experimental methods characteristic of such a habit of mind, he proposed to settle the controversy between the fathers and the Mullahs by inviting them to enter a fire together each holding the scriptures of their respective religions.

The Mission continued under Akbar's successors and in fact survived the suppression of the Jesuits in 1773, after which their work was carried on by Carmelites and Capuchins. Its most permanent fruit at court was to impress a Christian influence on the Mogul school of painting. Outside the court small congregations of Christians were formed at Agra, Delhi and Lahore, and a short-lived college was founded at Agra. None of the later Mogul Emperors showed quite the same favour as Akbar to the Jesuits. Jehangir vacillated in his attitude towards them: persecution began under his son, Shahjehan, and continued spasmodically to the end of the dynasty. One by-product of the mission was the gallant attempt by the Jesuits and Capuchins to

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extend the faith to Tibet, beginning with the expedition of Bento de Goes in 1603 and not finally abandoned until the middle of the 18th century.

Robert de Nóbili and the Method of Accommodation

The alliance of the Church with Portugal had fateful consequences. The dominion of the Portuguese in India was based on conquest by the sword, and instead of offering himself the Christ whom they worshipped had the air of one who imposed himself. Nor were the colonists predisposed to respect the traditions of Indian civilization. The national temper had been forged in the long contest with the Moors which had taught them to regard every pagan as an enemy of Christ and Portugal, and the layman vied with the ecclesiastic in demonstrating his abhorrence for the superstitions of the idolaters. The king proscribed the public observance of the rites of the Hindu religion and the councils of the Church forbade the wearing of the Brahmanical thread Contempt breeds contempt. It was no wonder that 'Prangui' became an opprobrious term on the lips of a high-caste Hindu, and the opprobrium attached to the religion of the Pranguis. By the end of the 16th century there was a

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crying need for some attempt to redeem Christianity in the eyes of the Hindus by an altogether different method of approach. In Robert de Nobili the Society of Jesus produced a man matched to the occasion.

Born at Rome of a noble Italian family de Nobili arrived in India in 1605 and in 1606 came to Madura, the capital of an independent Hindu kingdom and a centre of South Indian learning. Starting from the Pauline principle 'unto the Jews I became as a Jew, to them that are without law as without law' (1 Cor 9:20-22), he determined to become an Indian to the Indians that he might win India for Christ. Adopting the saffron robe and as similating himself to the second highest of the Hindu castes by announcing himself as a raja from Rome, he lived the life of a Hindu ascetic, rapidly acquired a knowledge of Tamil, Telugu and Sanskrit and made profound studies in the sacred literature of India. After silencing the opposition of the local priesthood by his brilliant dialectic, he gathered round him a band of Brahman converts whom he reconciled to the reception of baptism by allowing them to retain many of the traditional observances of their caste. Like their neighbours, they bore a caste-mark on their foreheads but painted

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with ashes of sandal wood instead of ashes of cowdung : they continued to wear a sacred thread composed of five strands, three golden to symbolize the Trinity and two silver typifying the two natures of Christ and they counted themselves defiled by contact with a low caste Christian.

De Nobili's bold experiment exposed him to calumnies and criticisms which have not yet been silenced either within or without his own communion. It is now generally agreed that some measure of adaptation is legitimate or even necessary in the presentation of Christianity to the non-Christian world. Granted that some of de Nobili's concessions went to the verge of the permissible, it is only just to acknowledge that he was far from lending his countenance to any form of religious syncretism : the observances that he sanctioned he attempted to divest of their pagan associations by giving them a Christian symbolism. Whoever forged 'the fourth Veda,' de Nobili was innocent of this impious fraud : he only asserted that by his preaching he was restoring the lost Veda to the Hindus. The Lutheran missionaries who in the 18th century laboured in South India under the aegis of the king of Denmark were no more inflexible in their attitude to caste than de Nobili.

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He was far indeed from despising the outcaste : just as it was a love of souls rather than shrewd calculation that prompted his tenderness to the prejudices of his Brahman converts, so his compassion embraced the Pariah. Besides the Christian *Sanyasis* who collaborated with him in his work among the Brahmans he organized another band of missionaries named *Pandaras* with a mission to the outcaste.

Opposition to de Nobili's methods arose first in his own order. He was denounced both at Goa and at Rome to his superiors, but the Archbishop protected him and he himself in his Apology pleaded his own cause so adroitly that Pope Gregory XV in 162 sanctioned with some reservations every essential point in his system. After he had been thus vindicated de Nobili continued his work in Madura until 1643, when almost blind he retired at the command of his superiors : he died in 1656 living to the end as a *Sanyasi*. The numerical results of his labours have been greatly exaggerated; actually the number of converts for whom trustworthy evidence is extant does not exceed 600 and of these only 26 were Brahmans. De Nobili's distinction as a Sanskrit scholar inspired other members of his order to emulate his example, notably the French Jesuits of

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the Carnatic, Calmette and Coeurdoux: the Italian Beschi was the first European to compose a Tamil grammar and his *Tembavani* still finds a place in Tamil literature. The mission at Madura was continued on the same lines by Jesuit missionaries and spread to other cities. In 1760 when by the orders of Pombal the Jesuits were deported from India, members of the Paris Foreign Missionary Society took over the work.

The Foundation of the Propaganda and the Controversy about Jurisdiction

The controversy to which de Nobili's experiment gave rise illustrated the need for some central authority to control the work of missions. Still more the jealous assertion by Portugal of her prerogatives both in India and farther east provoked a reaction in favour of the affirmation of the complete autonomy of the Church in the work of propagating the faith. Portugal claimed an exclusive jurisdiction in virtue of which she alone had the right to open the doors of the Far East to the Church's apostles.

The foundation of the Congregation *de propaganda fide* by Gregory XV in 1622 brought unity into the control of missions. By the middle of the century the new organization had already

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envisaged the main lines of the policy it must adopt. The paucity of bishops overseas was recognized as the root cause of the Church's impotence, and the remedy proposed was to create Vicars Apostolic charged with the task of forming a native clergy. The Church of France, then the most illustrious in Christendom, had already provided the means for realizing this ideal by the foundation at Paris in 1650 of the *Societe des Missions Etrangeres* At that date the idea of forming a congregation of secular priests vowed to the work of spreading the faith in distant lands was a novelty. After confirming the new society Pope Alexander VII signified his intention of placing the Asiatic mission field under the direct control of the Propaganda by consecrating its two founders, Pallu and de la Motte Lambert and nominating them his Vicars Apostolic in the Far East (1659).

The same year three Vicars Apostolic were created for India also, with jurisdiction respectively in Malabar over those of the Christians of St. Thomas whom the Carmelites had reclaimed for the Roman obedience after their revolt from the Jesuits in 1653, in the Kanarese kingdom of Bijapur, then ruled by a Mussalman dynasty, where an indigenous

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Indian Church had been founded ruled by a Brahman bishop, and in the Mogul Empire for North India.

Portugal resented these changes in the Asiatic mission field as an invasion of her prerogatives, but her domination in the Far East was no longer unchallenged : in the middle of the 17th century it rapidly collapsed before the advance of the Dutch, who between 1661 and 1664 made themselves masters of the whole of the pepper-bearing coast of Malabar.. The ascendancy of the Dutch Calvinists in India was short-lived and consequently had a less disastrous effect on Catholic Missions than in Ceylon, where a once flourishing church was reduced to a remnant obtaining grace in the wilderness through the ministrations of Goanese priests.

The Vicars Apostolic encountered a more pertinacious opposition from the religious orders under the leadership of the Jesuits who espoused the cause of the Goanese hierarchy and the Portuguese Crown. According to the far from impartial but widely circulated survey of Catholic Missions by Urbano Cherri, Secretary of the Propaganda (1677), the pretensions of the Jesuits went to such lengths that they arrogated to themselves the rule of the Church in the Far East. In India the conflict was less

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bitter than in China and Tonquin, but it reached fever heat in 1720 when the Pope was persuaded by the English East India Company to withdraw Bombay from the charge of the Franciscans and incorporate it in the Vicariate of the Mogul Empire.

The Controversy about the Rites

In its later phase this controversy about jurisdiction was complicated both in China and India by a recrudescence of the controversy which had been first occasioned by de Nobili's concessions. In his own order de Nobili's methods had for the most part triumphed : but the temper of the older religious orders was more fanatical. The conflict of principles was sharpened by mutual jealousies between the religious orders. The Capuchins especially were united as champions of conservatism in opposition to the Jesuits.

In 1702 Pope Clement XI despatched de Tourron, Patriarch of Antioch, with full powers as visitor and Legate to investigate the question. De Tournon was suited neither by knowledge nor by character for this delicate mission. In 1704 he issued a decree condemning 16 concessions the Jesuits had allowed in order not to offend the susceptibilities of their Indian converts. The mission-

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aries were ordered to restore certain ceremonies in the rite of baptism such as the *exsufflation* and the *effeta*, which had been omitted as likely to excite the abhorrence of Indians: the toleration of national customs at weddings was forbidden, and finally, no missionary was to refuse the last sacraments to a Pariah on the plea that his mission lay with members of a higher caste. After having antagonized the missionaries in China by a similar want of conciliation de Tournon died in 1710 at Macao as a prisoner of the Portuguese. Supported by the Goanese hierarchy the missionaries for long resisted de Tournon's ordinances, but after repeated threats and commands they were at last in 1744 compelled by Pope Benedict XIV to make their submission.

The Decline of Missionary Zeal in the 18th Century

The reasonableness and moderation which filtered into the Church in the century whose 'defect consisted not in having too much good sense but in having nothing else besides' was not favourable to the maintenance of missionary zeal in its former intensity. The general deterioration of spiritual life affected the religious orders also. In the middle of the 18th century

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Portugal and the Bourbon monarchies combined to bring about the downfall of the most zealous of them. The Jesuits were banished from Portugal in 1759, from France in 1762, and in 1773 Pope Clement XIV yielded to the storm and issued a brief suppressing the order. Worse was to follow. In the French Revolution the goddess of Reason enjoyed a brief though immoderate triumph over the Christian faith and the privileges of the Church were abolished with those of the old règime. With property confiscated and clergy exiled neither the church nor the religious orders had either the resources or the spirit to respond to the claims of the mission field.

The dissolution of the Society of Jesus was a cruel blow to Catholic Missions at a time when they were already handicapped through the waning of the ascendancy of the Catholic powers in India and the Near East. For the next sixty years Catholic Christianity steadily lost ground in India and the number of Christians was reduced by apostasy. Of the ten or a dozen missionaries sent out to India from the Seminary of Foreign Missions at Paris during the Revolutionary era the most remarkable was the Abbé Dubois, the celebrated author of *Hindu Manners*,

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Customs and Ceremonies. On the fall of Seringapatam in 1799 he was invited by the victors to reorganize the lapsed Christians in Mysore, whom Tippu Sultan had forcibly perverted to Islam. After his retirement in 1823 the Abbé, as Director of the Missions Etrangeres at Paris, gained notoriety by the melancholy verdict he pronounced on the prospects of Christian Missions in India. Describing the present condition of the Christian community he wrote, 'By far the greater part of them, in fact I might say the whole, present nothing but an empty show;' and of the future he affirmed, 'The time of conversion has passed away and under existing circumstances there remains no human possibility of bringing it back.' Whether these pessimistic utterances were intended to discourage missionaries of another allegiance or not, they certainly furnish evidence of the evil plight into which Roman Missions had fallen at the beginning of the 19th century.

The Revival of Roman Missions in the 19th Century

The frigid rationalism of the age of Enlightenment was followed by a reaction in which veneration for the splendours of its past history restored to the Church not a little of its old ascendancy

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and brought with it a renewal of old ideals. Under the influence of the Romantic movement there was a revival of missionary zeal in the Roman Communion which was enthusiastically welcomed and fostered by Pope Gregory XVI, and since his pontificate has gone on from strength to strength. The Revolutionary movement had abolished the old connection between church and state which had both forwarded and crippled the work of missions. Now the Roman Church resumed its conquering march dependent only on the liberality, the interest and the initiative of the whole body of the faithful.

In India the older religious orders still play a preponderating part in the work of missions, though they are reinforced by missionaries of the Paris Society and younger congregations of the same type: the Society of Jesus, rejuvenated in 1814, has regained its former pre-eminence. Though the adherents of the Roman Church constitute about half the Christian population of India, Roman missions in South India have had comparatively little share in the great mass movements among the outcastes which have increased the membership of the Reformed Churches four or five fold during the 19th century. Possibly the steadfast refusal of the

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authorities to take heroic measures with the pervasive canker of caste partly accounts for this. The relative failure of Roman missions to keep pace with the progress of other Christian missions in the South was compensated in the North by the astonishing success which in the eighties of the last century attended the devoted labours of the Belgian Jesuit. Fr. Constant Lievens, among the aboriginal tribes of Chota Nagpur who were groaning under wrongs inflicted on them by Hindu landlords. In the rest of North India with its vast population Roman missions have gained no more ground from Hinduism and Islam than the missions of other communions. The colleges of the Jesuits in Trichinopoly, Palamcottah, Bangalore, Bombay and Calcutta continue under altered conditions the work of intellectual penetration initiated by the Jesuit missionaries of the 17th century.

During the 19th century the Vatican became more and more what the present Pope has named it, the *vedelta apostolica*, a kind of observatory from which the chief shepherd of the church could keep perpetual watch over its expansion. The aim of evangelization, as grandly conceived by the 19th century papacy and grandly formulated by Pope Pius XI in his encyclical of

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1926, is nothing less than the extension of the Mystical Body of Christ. Missions are agencies not only for disseminating the faith, but for organizing on stable foundations the supernatural institution which can alone foster the growth of what has been planted by the evangelist. In India the reaction of this conception of the missionary task on Roman missions is illustrated by the persevering efforts to compel Portugal to renounce her patronate in India in favour of the Papal supremacy, by the organization of a fully constituted hierarchy, and by the primacy of place now accorded to the work of forming an indigenous priesthood.

In spite of the gulf which separated the 19th century from the old regime Portugal clung tenaciously to her ancient prerogatives in India. A bitter conflict on this issue was provoked by the anxiety of Gregory XVI to reform the scandalous lives of the Goanese clergy. The Pope by his brief of 1838 annulled the *padroado*, limited the jurisdiction of the Goanese bishops and appointed Vicars Apostolic in the rest of the peninsula. The Goanese clergy under their Archbishop, Silvay Torres, rose in open and declared rebellion. The schism lasted nearly 50 years : it was formally terminated by the concordat

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which Leo XIII negotiated in 1886, when the Archbishop of Goa was consoled for the curtailment of his jurisdiction by the title of Patriarch of the Indies. In 1928 the Portuguese Republic surrendered the last relic of the ecclesiastical prerogatives of the Crown of Portugal and the Papacy recovered the plenitude of its spiritual sovereignty in India.

The first use which Leo XIII made of the restored ascendancy of the Holy See in India was to establish a regular hierarchy exercising jurisdiction by common right, in place of Vicars Apostolic owing their authority to delegation from the Pope. At the present day in India and Ceylon there are 36 Roman Catholic dioceses of the Latin Rite together with three Prefectures Apostolic grouped into nine provinces under the Archbishops of Goa, Verapoli, Pondicherry, Madras, Calcutta, Agra, Simla, Bombay and Colombo. The second use that Leo XIII made of the reconquered supremacy of the Pope was to multiply the means for forming an indigenous clergy in the hope of ensuring to the newly organized church a permanence capable of surviving political upheavals and persecutions such as had ruined the prosperity of flourishing churches in the past. To this end he founded at

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Kandy in 1893 a great seminary for the training of natives of India and Ceylon for the priesthood. These measures have borne fruit. In the last thirty years the Roman Church in India has created an indigenous clergy fitted not only to act as the auxiliary of the missionary, but on occasion to replace him. In 1923 an Indian priest was raised to the episcopate in the person of the present Bishop of Tuticorin, and in the same year the ancient churches of the Malabar Rite were formed into an Indian province under the jurisdiction of Indian bishops.

Suggestions for further reading

Books for the general reader by non-Roman authors are for the most part best avoided. Of standard books giving a general survey of the subject Julius Richter, History of Missions in India (Oliphant 1908) can scarcely be acquitted of partisan bias when it treats of Roman Missions: Hough, History of Christianity in India (1839) is a hundred years old. Unfortunately the most recent books by Roman Catholic authors are not accessible in English translations. An erudite, accurate and judicious summary of the facts will be found in Josef Schmidlin, Katholische Missionsgeschichte (Steyl, 1924). Georges Goyan,

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Missions et Missionaires (Parls, Bloud et Gay, 1931) is a most illuminating book, but only treats of Indian missions incidentally, A Launay, Histoire generale de la Sociète des Missions Etrangères (Paris, 1894) is the standard work on the history of the Paris Society. A survey of recent literature bearing on Jesuit missions in India will be found in the first number of the first year of the new and sumptuous periodical, Archivum Historicum Societatis Jesu, (1932) pp. 158—170, but the reviews are in many languages.

Two biographies of St. Francis Xavier have been recently published in English, the first by an Anglican, the second by a Roman Catholic :—E. A. Robertson, Francis Xavier, Knight Errant of the Cross; 1506-1552 (S.C.M., 1930), and Margaret Yeo, St. Francis Xavier : Apostle of the East. (Sheed and Ward, 1932).

Two recent books on the mission to the Great Mogul should be consulted : C. H. Payne, Akbar and the Jesuits : an account of the Jesuit missions to the court of Akbar, by Father Pierre du Jarric, S. J., translated with introduction and notes, (Routledge, 1926), and Sir Edward Maclagan, The Jesuits and

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the Great Mogul. (Burnes, Oates and Washbourne, 1932).

An account by a distinguished Indian authropologist of one of the most successful of modern Roman missions, the mission of the Belgian Jesuits in Chota Nagpur, will be found in S. C. Roy, The Mundas and their Country, (Calcutta, 1912), pp. 290-325.

Subjects for Discussion

(1) Christian Imperialism as illustrated by the state patronage of missions in Portuguese India.

(2) The secret of the missionary pre-eminence of the Society of Jesus.

(3) St. Francis Xavier, Patron of Missions and Pattern Missionary.

(4) The approach to Hinduism by the method of adaptation.

(5) The value of Religious Orders as missionary agencies.

(6) The value of a central organization for the control of missions.

(7) The importance of creating an indigenous clergy.

(8) The contribution of missions to the progress of (a) learning, (2) science.

(9) The history and influence of the Paris Society for Foreign Missions.

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(10) The influence of missions on civilization in the past and in the present.

(11) The toleration of caste within the Christian Society.

(12) What is the aim of Missions ? Individual conversion or the extension of the Church ?

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CHAPTER X

THE RISE AND PROGRESS OF NON-ROMAN MISSIONS

ROMAN Catholic missionaries had been working for two hundred years in India before the non-Roman Churches awoke to the needs of the non-Christian world.

In 1705, the pious Frederick IV, king of Denmark, became concerned about the welfare of his subjects in the small Danish possession of Tranquebar. The royal Danish Mission was formed, at his request missionaries were found in Germany, and on July 9th 1706, Ziegenbalg and Plütschau, the first pioneers, landed on the shores of India. The early stages of their work were laborious and unproductive. They had to face the complete indifference of the State Church, the sneers of the merchants, the active hostility of the Danish Governor. But within the lifetime of Ziegenbalg, who died in 1719, converts were gathered in hundreds, and the mission began to manifest the main

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characteristics to be found in all subsequent non-Roman missionary work.

1. The chief approach of the missionaries to the people was by preaching, and by the personal discussion which arises out of it.
2. Schools were founded, both for those of mixed European and Indian descent and for Tamil children. Education was from the start a mainstay of the Church.
3. The scriptures were translated and circulated. The Roman Catholics had apprently not translated a single chapter into Tamil; by 1714 Ziegenbalg had completed the first translation of the New Testament into any Indian language. These early efforts, were rough and imperfect and unfortunately Ziegenbalg's colleague Schultze who completed the Old Testament had a very defective knowledge of Tamil. But many revisions have corrected the original weakness, and already by the middle of the eighteenth century, the Tamil Church had acquired, what it has never lost, the character of a Bible-loving Church.

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By far the most famous of the Tranquebar missionaries was Christian Frederick Schwartz (1750-1798), who carried the work of the mission to Trichinopoly and later to Tanjore. By the simplicity, integrity and consecrated holiness of his life, he built up a position such as no missionary before or since has enjoyed. Widely known as the Rajarishi, he was at the same time a ruler in the Kingdom of Tanjore, the counseller and friend of many British officers, and the faithful and humble pastor of a church which steadily grew to a membership of over 2,000. At his death, even the East India Company, ever hostile to missionaries, set up a memorial in his honour, on which it is recorded that "in him religion appeared not with a gloomy aspect or forbidding mien, but with a graceful from and placid dignity."

The district of Schwartz stretched southwards from Tanjore 200 miles to Cape Comorin. Unexpectedly, and almost as it seemed in a night, the little one became a thousand. In the southeast corner of Tinnevelly, which itself is the southeast corner of India, a great movement began among the poor and ignorant peasantry. The hero of this movement was the Indian Lutheran Priest Satyanathan, assisted at intervals by missionaries from Tanjore; between

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1800-1803, 5760 converts were baptized and were organised into churches. After days of neglect, the care of the churches was undertaken by James Hough, a Government Chaplain at Palamcottah, and later by the learned and devout Swiss, C. T. E. Rhenius, one of the best of the missionaries who have laboured in India. The movement continued for more than fifty years, and under the guidance of leaders like Robert Caldwell (d. 1891) and Edward Sargent (d. 1889), both later bishops, there grew up a church which in the year of its centenary numbered 59,000 baptized members.

This great movement was not confined to Tinnevelly. In April 1806, William Tobias Ringeltaube, a missionary of the London Missionary Society, crossed over into Travancore and began to gather in converts. Ringeltaube was a strange, wild, undisciplined man, who suddenly disappeared and of whose end nothing is certainly known. The work as he left it had not the elements of permanence But the long and devoted labours of his successors, in the face of many difficulties caused by fierce opposition from the Brahman authorities of the land and the poverty of the people, built up gradually the great Church of South Travancore with a Christian community of more than 120,000 members.

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There was nothing in the North of India to correspond to these startling achievements in the South. The Company's Government was relentlessly hostile, not so much to missionaries as such, as to any Europeans not directly connected with Government and its commercial ventures. A number of intending missionaries were actually deported from India. The first to effect a settlement, the Baptist William Carey. who landed in 1794, was able to remain only by living in a secluded part of Bengal in the employment of an indigo planter. When he was joined in 1800 by his famous colleagues Marshman and Ward, they found refuge beyond the reach of the East India Company in the little Danish Settlement of Serampore, the Governor of which successfully resisted all attempts to dislodge them

The work of the three great men of Serampore is beyond all need for praise. We find in their schemes the same combination of preaching, education and Bible translation as in the work of the Danish missionaries in the South. Carey had, in his seclusion, already completed his first very inadequate edition of the Bengali Bible. With the opening in Calcutta of the Fort William College for the education of the young servants of the Government, a great company of

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learned Indians from all over the country was gathered. With Carey's appointment as Professor of Bengali and later of Sanskrit, he found himself in ideal conditions for Bible translation with the best help available at the time. His unwearied diligence mastered language after language; versions as they were completed by Carey or his assistants, were struck off on the Serampore press by Ward the printer, and sent all over India. In thirty years parts of the Bible were sent out in languages spoken in every part of the country except the South-West Coast. All these versions were imperfect and needed revision; but for the first time, the Christian Scriptures become available and widely known in India.

The last great achievement of Carey, Marshman and Ward was the foundation of Serampore College, to provide a thorough training for those who were to be employed as Christian workers, and to afford the opportunity of higher education with thoroughly Indian methods to Indians of good family. The lines on which the scheme was drawn were grandiose, and the strength of the mission was never adequate to the task. The college performed good service, but it cannot be said that it ever answered to the expectation which its founder had

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formed of it. In the twentieth century, it has entered on an enlarged career of usefulness as the centre of theological studies for the whole of India.

Government opposition to missionary work continued with greater or less intensity throughout the whole period of Carey's service. In 1813, when the time came for the renewal by the British Parliament of the East India Company's charter, the opportunity was taken to modify this opposition by authority. The most important step taken was the setting up in India of the Ecclesiastical Establishment of the Church of England. The appointment of a Bishop and three Archdeacons ended at last the anomaly which had left the members of an episcopal Church for 213 years without any episcopal ministrations. The immediate effects on missionary work were not noticeable, as the first Bishop, Dr. Middleton, held that his duty and his authority did not extend beyond the affairs of chaplains to the Europeans. His successor, Bishop Heber, threw himself whole-heartedly into the work of missionaries; but a century has hardly sufficed to end the curious tension between missionaries and chaplains of the same Church; and the Anglican Church, hindered in India more effectively even than in England, by the trammels of

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legal establishment, had to wait till 1930 for the liberating Act which has enabled it to reorganise itself in accordance with the needs and demands of India.

It was not till 1833 that the restrictions on missionary work were finally done away with. Three years earlier than that, Alexander Duff, of the Church of Scotland, had founded in Calcutta a school for the education on Western lines of boys of the upper classes of Hindu society. He was convinced that Hinduism could not stand against the truths of science and philosophy, and that the subjects of the ordinary curriculum taught by keenly Christian teachers must serve as a preparation for the Gospel of Christ. If the upper classes were once won for Christ, they would be the natural evangelists of the common people, who would follow their lead in this as in other things. Though experience has proved that Duff was unduly sanguine in his expectations, there was nothing fantastic in his ideas; and his work resulted in little over a year in the conversion of four young men of the highest families in Calcutta. All of these became Christian workers, and one, the Rev. Krishnan Mohan Banerjea, LL. D., rose to eminence as a priest of the Church of England. Duff's example was quickly followed in other parts of

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India. Wilson College, Bombay, what is now the Madras Christian College and Hislop College, Nagpur, were three further enterprises of the Scottish Church. The history of each was almost exactly the same—great popularity, the coming out of a small but very distinguished group of converts, strong opposition, the starting of rival Hindu schools, and the settling down of the Christian institutions to steady slogging work with very little visible result. A markedly successful piece of individual work was that of Robert Noble of the C. M S. at Masulipatam. After nine years' work in 1852 two young men of high caste were baptized; the result was a riot, and the emptying of the school. By Noble's influence, it was gradually built up again; and when in 1855 three further baptisms took place, the set-back was only temporary. Four of these five converts later became ordained ministers of the church In this period, the foundations of some of the most famous Christian families of South India were laid by the work of William Cruikshank, the blind Anglo-Indian teacher of the Tinnevelly High School.

Up till 1833, the process of Christian expansion had been slow. The L. M. S. besides consolidating work in S. Travancore, had occupied Salem, Coimbatore

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and Bangalore in the South, and had made a beginning round Calcutta. The English Methodists were straddled across the Tamil country from the mountains to the sea at Negapatam, and had climbed the heights to Mysore. The C. M. S. had begun to spread across N. India, and in addition to Burdwan in Bengal had strong work at Benares, Meerut and Gorakhpur. A small beginning had been made by the Americans in Bombay. The Scottish churches had just entered the field of education. The Baptists (the Serampore Mission, the Baptist Missionary Society, and the General Baptists) had among them about twenty stations, mostly in Bengal and Orissa.

The period from 1833-1883 was marked by increasingly rapid extensions of missionary occupation. By the new Charter, the whole country was now open to missionary work. The spread of British influence made travel and residence easy and safe in what had been for many years disturbed areas.

The C. M. S., which was the first Society to rise to the greatness of the new opportunity, was fortunate in possessing the confidence of the great rulers of this period, men like the Lawrences, and Sir Herbert Edwardes, who combined with an absolute faith in Britain's destiny to rule India the con-

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viction that this destiny involved also the preaching of the Gospel. It was largely through the benefactions of Government servants that immediately after the occupation of the Punjab in 1849 a chain of stations was opened (Amritsar, Kangra, Multan) which in 1855 had already reached the N. W. frontier at Peshawar. Not content with this work in the North, the C. M. S. was turning its mission of help to the Syrian Churches into an independent evangelistic mission, was organising most successful work in Tinnevelly and spreading out in the valleys of the Kistna and the Godaveri. The progress of the S. P. G. was slower. Delhi was occupied in 1853, and is to this day a very strong centre of work. The Society also began to take seriously the legacy of the S. P. C. K. work in Trichinopoly and Tanjore, to which it had fallen heir.

All the older societies extended their work, and other British Churches, such as the Irish Presbyterians (Rajkot 1841) and the Brethren (Narsapur 1857) entered in But the greatest rainforement to the work was to come from the opening of India to the work of non-British Churches. As soon as the new Charter came into force, the Easel mission sent a party of missionaries to Mangalore under the leadership of Samuel Hebich,

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one of the most remarkable evangelists the church has ever known. This beginning spread out into a very well organised network of stations all along the West coast from the borders of Goa to those of Travancore. The Danish Church entered the Tamil country in 1861, the Hermannsburger Mission the Telugu field in 1864. The Gossner Mission of Berlin was working from 1839 onwards in the Ganges valley, the Swedish Evangelical Mission from 1870 in Central India. But the most important new factor in this period was the setting free of the immense resources of N. America for missionary work. The American Board started work in Madura in 1834, the Dutch Reformed Church of America in Vellore in 1855. American Baptists maintained in the Telugu field, from 1840 onwards, a mission which was for thirty years so unproductive of results as to earn the nickname the Lone Star Mission, but which in later times has seen the gathering in of many thousands of converts. The Methodist Episcopal Church sprang up in a very brief time from nothing to the largest single mission in India. In the twenty-five years following its first entry in 1856, it had established nearly forty stations in almost every part of India, many of them well staffed and highly organised mis-

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sions in such great centres as Lucknow, Cawnpore, Agra, Hyderabad, Poona, and Bangalore.

Much of the work of this period was necessarily that of pioneers. Bible translation and revision in all the main languages of India and the preparation of Christian literature, mostly polemical, occupied many workers. An immense amount of time was spent in itinerant preaching. This in the hands of a genius like Bateman of Narowal produced splendid results, but generally led to nothing more than the wide dissemination of a certain amount of Christian truth. Minute care was taken for the training of the small Christian communities. A conspicious example of this type of work was the building up of the Church at Burdwan by the German, J. J. Weitbrecht (1831-1852). But unless such pastoral work was carried out with special tact and wisdom, it tended to exalt the missionary, and to depress the Church, which became dependent on him for food for the body as well as guidance for the soul.

There was much that was encouraging in the results of this period. By 1881, the number of Christians in connection with the Evangelical Churches, which in 1851 had been 91,000, had risen to 417,372, an evidence of steady

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and increasingly rapid growth. Nevertheless, there are signs towards the end of the period of a slackening of the intensity of missionary work The zeal of the first pioneers had died away. Direct assaults on Hinduism and Islam had been much less productive than had been anticipated, and had revealed the immense strength of those fortnesses. The characteristic of the next period, 1883-1933, is the turning away from direct to indirect methods of missionary work.

As we have seen, the Christian colleges after their initial success had found it very diffieult to win converts. The view that conversion was only a very small part of the work of the colleges was first clearly put forward by William Miller, the great Principal of the Madras Christian College. The main task, on this view, was a wide preparation of the mind of India for the reception of the Gospel, the holding up of Christian ideals, the presentation of the person of Christ, not so much in expectation of immediate results as by way of sowing for a harvest which would not be reaped for many years. This view of the matter was not uncongenial to the non-Christian students of the colleges and their parents.

While direct assaults on the main

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religions remained unfruitful, the attention of the Church was first drawn in this period to the wonderful results which could be obtained by work outside the limits of orthodox Hinduism. A separate chapter is devoted to Mass Movements among the depressed classes of Hinduism. Brief notice may be given here to the equally great work of missions among the aboriginal peoples. In 1845 missionaries of the Gossner Mission occupied Ranchi, among the aboriginal Kols and Orions of Chota Nagpur, and found there a soil far more ready for the Gospel than among the Hindus of the plains. By 1867, 10,000 converts had been baptized. Two years later, a most unhappy schism, in which everyone concerned seems to have been in the wrong, divided the Church; several of the missionaries were ordained into the Church of England by Bishop Milman of Calcutta, and carried with them a number of catechists and other Christians. The Gossner Mission recovered from this blow, and in 1872 set itself to organise and strengthen the work by the first serious attempts to learn the languages of the peoples, Mundari and Orion. From that time on, progress was steady and constant, but the greatest and most marked increases were recorded early in this century; for some years baptisms

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numbered about five thousand a year, and at the outbreak of war in 1914, the church numbered nearly 100,000. All the German missionaries were deported by the British authorities; but the church continued to maintain itself, with generous assistance from the leaders of the Anglican Church, as an independent, self-governing Indian church, and continued to grow in numbers and stability through the extremely difficult years of the War and the reconstitution which followed.

A less known, but equally remarkable work is that of the Welsh Calvinistic Mission in the Khasi Hills. The local affairs of the church, which now numbers 90,000, are all on the hands of Khasi pastors, whose salaries are raised entirely by the Indian Church. The Santals have shown themselves ready to accept the Gospel, but the work among them has suffered very much from lack of co-ordination between the many missions which work for their welfare. In quite recent years, outstanding Christian progress has been made in the Lushai Hills, where the Baptists have gathered 67,000 into the Church, among the Naga tribes of the Assam frontier and in the state of Manipur.

For many years, these tribes have been slowly breaking away from their

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age-long animism, and have been seeking a home in one or other of the higher religions. Some of the tribes have become Christian, others have seen a way to security and respectability by being included in the all-embracing system of Hinduism. Missionary work has therefore been easier among them than almost anywhere else in India. To say this is not to depreciate the work that has been done among them; the transformation of these simple peoples by the power of Christ is an outstanding evidence of the truth of the Christian faith.

The period now under review saw the adoption by the churches of many forms of service not directly religious. Occasional beginnings of medical work had been made even in the 18th Century. The first woman medical missionary was Dr. Clara Swain, of the Methodist Episcopal Mission, who reached India in 1860 But in 1882, there were only twenty-eight missionary doctors in India, all foreigners. By 1893, the number had risen to over 300, of whom more than half were Indians trained in India. The early idea of medical missions was that they were handmaids of evangelistic work —the doctor was a medical evangelist. From this point of view, the value of the hospital was most clearly proved in difficult areas, amid hostile or unrespon-

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sive populations. The Scottish Mission Hospitals were pioneers in Rajputana, where especially the forty years' work of Shepherd of Udaipur is memorable. The C. M. S. used the same method with outstanding success in Kashmir and on the North-West Frontier, where the fanatically Moslem population would have been less easily approachable by any other means. The needs of women made a special appeal, and from 1880 onwards, women's hospitals were rapidly built up by the two English zenana missionary societies. Even at the present time, half the hospitals for women in India are mission hospitals. In recent years, less stress has been laid on the evangelistic element of medical missionary work; the hospital has been regarded, partly as a necessary aspect of the care of the church for its children, partly as a natural outflowing of sacrificial service to others following the precept and example of Christ Himself.

Work for the specially unfortunate has always been a special privilege of the Christian Church. Asylums for lepers, schools for the blind, and for the deaf, orphanages, relief work in times of famine—all these things are now undertaken by Government, but the churches were the pioneers. The gathering into the Church of hundreds of thousands of

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outcastes drew the attention of Christian thinkers to economic needs and problems. Hundreds of industrial and agricultural schools aim at producing independent and self-supporting Christians. free from the taint and degradation of dependence on foreign money. The growth of great industrial towns with all the problems of overcrowding and the breakdown of old sanctions has led to the beginning of settlement and social service work. It is perhaps true to say that there is no type of service and no type of institution which the churches have not given to India, with the single exception of refuges for the insane, and clinics for the proper treatment of mental disorder and disease.

But perhaps the greatest work of all accomplished in these fifty years was in the building up and educating of the Christian Church itself. The greater part of the church has always been drawn from the less educated classes. Inevitably therefore the early Indian Christian leaders were not the children of Christians, but converts from the higher levels of society, men fitted by education and background to take equal rank with European missionaries. Probably no leaders of the 20th Century excercise influence comparable to that of men like K. M. Banerjea, Father Nehe-

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miah Goreh and Dewan Bahadur Appasamy of Tinnevelly. But the missions had established a ladder of education, which made it possible for the village convert to make his way upwards. By the end of the century the beginnings of a very great change were apparent; Christians were making their influence felt as almost the best educated community in India, the children and grandchildren of village converts were taking degrees, practising as lawyers and doctors, and in particular acquiring a dominating influence in women's education. It became clear that in future the Indian leader in the church would be the rule and not the exception.

By 1900, in most of the older established churches, the majority of ordained ministers were Indians. The battle for an Indian ministry was first fought by John Thomas of the C. M. S. in Tinnevelly. He argued that the standard of ordination ought to be determined in relation to the Church and not to the missionaries, and that as long as the Church was in the simple village stage, all that the Church needed was simple village pastors working under careful supervision. Under his infiuence, the first vernacular ordination class was formed in 1846; so successful was this venture, that when the Centenary of the

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Tinnevelly Church was observed in 1881, it was attended by 90 Indian clergymen, the majority of whom knew little or no English. With the rise in the standard of education the tendency has been everywhere for instruction to be in English ; this is of advantage to the students in that it opens to them the whole range of English theological literature, but a real drawback in that it emphasises the already foreign character of the church. A new and important step was taken when the reconstituted Serampore and a new united College at Bangalore began to undertake the teaching of theology up to the standards of Western universities.

During the last twenty years, the Indian Church has begun finally to emerge from it long tutelage and to stand on its own feet. In 1900, the great World Missionary Conference was held in Edinburgh. Two years later, Dr. Azariah was consecrated the first Indian Bishop of the Anglican Church. In 1922, the National Christian Council was formed. In 1930, the Anglican Church in India was legally separated from the Church in England, and obtained a much greater measure of freedom to manage its own affairs. During this period, many missions underwent a transformation by which the centre of

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gravity shifted from the West to India, and the Indian Christian worker was changed from a paid servant to a responsible and honoured fellow-worker.

During these years, there have been three marked tendencies in the Indian Church. First, the desire for unity has been steadily growing. In spite of passioate denominational loyalties among the less instructed, there has been increasing recognition of the triviality of the causes underlying many of the divisions, and of the urgent need for Christian union in face of a vast and uncompleted task. Second, Indian Christians have come to realise that they must take their full share in all the problems created by the reconstruction of Indian life in co-operation and sometimes in conflict with the West. There was earlier a tendency for the Indian Christian to keep apart from political and social interests; and to be content with a somewhat apathetic aquiescence in things as they were. This isolation is now a thing of the past. The community is nationally and politically conscious, and is beginning to be aware of the great gifts that it has to offer to India and the part that it seems destined to play in national life. Third, there is an increasing desire that the Church should be Indian in life and theology and worship.

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Christ is universal : but Christian life is conditioned by its environment and the Church in India is almost entirely Western in origin. Paradoxically it is missionaries themselves who are most eager that Western trappings should be exchanged for Eastern. Not all experiments have been wise or successful, and the older generations are determined that nothing must be done which would obscure the essential difference between Christianity and Hinduism. Very much deep study and thinking remains to be done ; and this reconstruction of the inner life is a far harder thing to carry through successfully than the recasting of outward organisation.

The Church in India is in this generation setting out on a new stage of its career. The preceding generations of missionary labour have brought it to a point very favourable for advance. It is never possible to give accurately the number of Christians in the country, as the figures published by the Government differ very much from those given by the various churches. But the most recent issue of the Directory of Christian Missions states that in 1931, there were 3,002, 558 baptized adherents of the Protestant (including Anglican) Churches. This large community is scattered over the whole of India ; Christian progress

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has been far greater in the South than in the North, but there is no province, and hardly any major Indian state, in which the church has not been set up, and definite witness given for Christ. The missionary societies have equipped the Church with institutions of every kind, many of them first class; except in the Panjab, the standard of education among Christians compares favourably with that in every other community, except the Parsees and some sections of Brahmans. The general influence of the Christian community is out of all proportion to its numerical strength. On this Church at the present time are laid three main tasks.

1. To make education available to all Christians up to the level of their natural capacity, and to see to it that in this generation illiteracy ceases to exist among Christians.

2. To eliminate from the Church the remains of Non-Christian belief and practice, particularly adherence to caste beyond what is permitted by the law of Christ; and so to raise the standard of Christian life and conduct that the church may be an effective witness in all the affairs of moral and social life.

3. To proclaim the Gospel in every part of India where it is as yet unknown.

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The real test of the effectiveness and value of missionary work in the past will be the ability of the Indian Church, relying on the Holy Spirit alone, to bring the message of Christ to all those who as yet are ignorant of His love.

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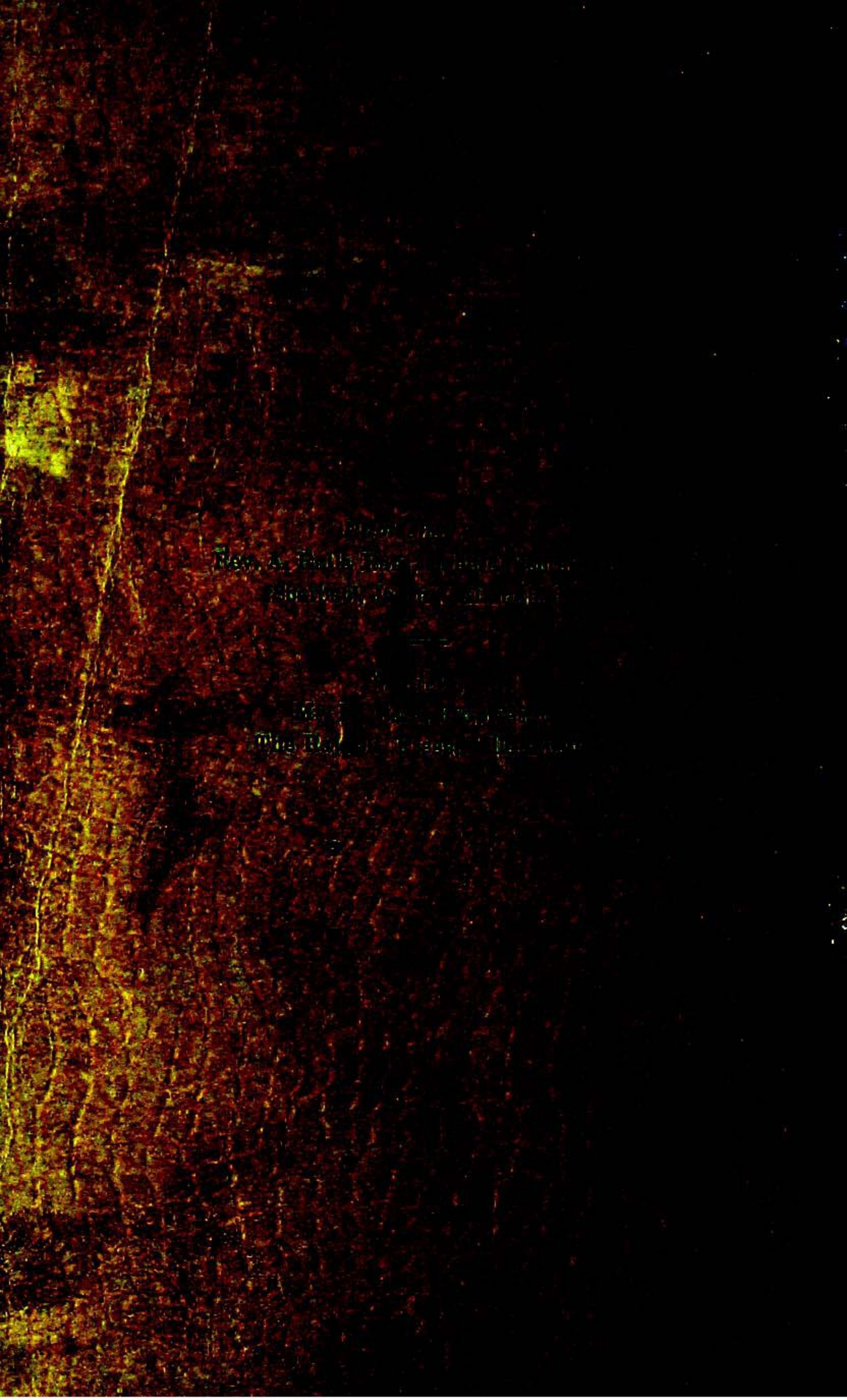

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INDIA AND THE CHRISTIAN MOVEMENT

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PREFACE

THIS book was first published in 1908 under the title, *India and Missions*. The third edition was printed in 1915. Repeated requests came to me to bring the book up-to-date some years ago, but it was impossible to give it the time needed to do a thorough revision.

On the persistent demand of Mr. W. H. Warren of the Christian Literature Society, I undertook the revision during my vacation in Kotagiri.

The changes that have come over India and in particular over the religious situation in India, and the altered emphasis of all missionary activities, which has during the last quarter of a century shifted from *Mission* to *Church*, necessitated a re-writing of the whole book and the addition of new material on the Indian Church and the problems facing it. In accordance with this new emphasis, the title of the book has also been altered from *India and Missions* to *India and the Christian Movement*. Several diagrams and the Questions at the end of each Lesson have been omitted, and the Lessons have now been re-named Chapters. It is hoped that the book will not only be used as a missionary study book for students and Christian workers, but also appeal to the general reader, and especially to the Indian Christian reader.

With these changes it is sent forth once again with the prayer that it may be used as a small instrument in bringing the needs of India and the Indian Church to the attention of all Christians and in creating in them a sense of their responsibility for the evangelization of the motherland.

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PREFACE

I have to acknowledge my indebtedness to Mr. Warren for inspiring me to revise the book, and my son, Rev. George S. C. Azariah and my daughter, Miss Mercy Azariah, for their help in revising the statistics for this edition from the *Reports of the Census of* 1931.

September 1935.

V. S. AZARIAH,
Bishop of Dornakal.

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INDIA AND THE CHRISTIAN MOVEMENT

CHAPTER I

INDIA AND ITS PEOPLES

1. Area and Population.

The entire area of India is 1,808,679 square miles and it is therefore about one-third of the size of Europe. Comparing it with other countries we may say that it is equivalent in area to seven German Empires, ten Japans, or fifteen British Isles. And yet India is not very large in point of territory. Its area is only about one-half that of the United States of America and one-eighth that of the continent of Africa.

When, however, we take the population into consideration, India is a continent in itself. According to the census of 1931, the population of British India is 271,526,933, and that of the States 81,310,845, making a total of 352,837,778, for the Indian Empire. This is equal to the population of all Europe save Russia and is at least a third greater than the entire population of Africa. It is three times the population of the United States of America and over eight times that of England and Wales. Within its boundaries India contains twice the population of North and South America combined. According to latest estimates, China, including Tibet and Mongolia has a population of 342,000,000; so that India now heads the list of all the countries of the world in the number of her inhabitants. Out of every five persons in the world one lives in the Indian Empire.

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For political purposes British India is divided into fifteen Provinces. The States number 675. British India (including Burma) contains fifty-five per cent of the area and seventy-seven per cent of the population of the Indian Empire; while the States take up forty-five per cent of the area and twenty-three per cent of the population only. Many of these Provinces and States are in themselves equal in population to some of the kingdoms and empires of the world. Bengal, for instance, with its States has 51,000,000 and is thus as populous as the Empire of Japan. Bihar and Orissa equals France in population, Burma equals Egypt, and Assam Belgium. The Madras Presidency with its States contains more people than are found in Great Britain and Ireland. Bombay has more people than Austria and Hungary. The Maharajah of Mysore has the care of nearly as many persons as the Kings of Norway and Sweden put together.

For administrative purposes each Province and State is divided into districts, each of which is again sub-divided into Taluqs, Tahsils or Thanas. The average district has about 3,840 square miles and nearly 750,000 inhabitants.

Only eleven per cent of the population live in 'towns' of 5,000 inhabitants or more. Out of a total of 699,406 towns and villages, four-fifths are inhabited by 500 people or less. There are only thirty-eight cities with 100,000 inhabitants and more, and in these cities live only about three per cent of the total population. In England about forty-five per cent and in Germany twenty per cent of the population is massed in the cities. In India, on the other hand, out of the total population 89 per cent is rural; more than half of which lives in villages with a population of under 1,000, and 27·5 per cent lives in villages with a population of under 500

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persons. This fact should never be forgotten by politicians and philanthropists. The national welfare of India means its rural welfare. And if India is to be evangelized the villages must be evangelized.

Taking the whole country we find on an average one village in every three square miles. In Bengal there is one village in every three-fourths of a square mile. The average density of the population per square mile for the whole empire is 195. The United Provinces have an average of 456 and Bengal 646. The Delta of Bengal and the Gangetic plain are thus the most populous regions. The north-west portions and Burma are the most sparsely populated areas. In the district of Howrah the density is 2,105 per square mile; in Burma it is sixty-three. Of all the Provinces and States, Cochin and Travancore are the most densely populated areas in India with an average of 814 and 688 to the square mile respectively.

Thus distributed over the whole country live the 353,000,000, made up of many differing races, speaking a multiplicity of languages and dialects, and professing many divergent religious beliefs.

Three hundred and fifty-three millions! The figures fail to grip our imagination. If these millions were to file past day and night at the rate of twenty per minute it would be nearly thirty-four years before the last person marched past.

Twenty persons die every minute in this land. Eight hundred thousand souls enter into eternity every month.

2. Language.

No less than 225 distinct languages are in use in India. There are twenty-three languages spoken by a million or more. Hindi with a hundred and five millions is spoken by the largest number. Bengali,

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Telugu, Marathi, Tamil and Punjabi follow in order, the last being the vernacular of over fifteen millions of people. The principal languages of India and the population speaking them are given in the following table :—

Hindi	...	105,000,000	Kanarese	...	11,000,000
Bengali	...	53,000,000	Oriya	...	11,000,000
Telugu	...	26,000,000	Gujerati	...	10,800,000
Marathi	...	20,800,000	Malayalam	...	9,000,000
Tamil	...	20,400,000	Burmese	...	8,800,000
Panjabi	...	15,500,000	Sindhi	...	4,000,000
			Assamese	...	2,000,000

Hindustani is the name coined by Europeans for the *lingua franca* that grew up in Delhi during the period of the Moghul Emperors. The name by which one of its chief varieties is called is Urdu; probably derived from *Urdu-e-mu'alla* the royal military bazaar outside the Delhi palace. It was carried all over India by the lieutenants of the Moghul Empire. It is the polite literary language of Hindustan, i.e. of India north of the Vindhya range. It is understood by Muslims all over India. In South India it is considered the language of the Muslims and is understood by few but them. Hindustani is written both in Persian and Devanagari characters. That special variety of Hindustani in which Persian words are of frequent occurrence and which is written in Persian characters is usually called Urdu. The form of Hindustani in which Sanskrit words abound and which is written in Devanagari characters may be taken to be Hindi. Hindustani is certainly understood by the largest number of people in India

3. Occupation.

Two hundred and eighty millions or seventy-one per cent of the population are supported by agriculture. When the monsoon fails, the land fails to yield its produce and famine ensues. It is said that even 'in

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ordinary years of prosperity, one-fith of the population are insufficiently fed.' In England eight per cent are engaged in agriculture and fifty-eight per cent in industrial pursuits. In India only twelve per cent are employed in industries. India is the greatest rice, jute and tea producer in the world. Introduction of scientific methods of agriculture, and organization of co-operative credit societies to enable cultivators to obtain small capital at reasonably low rates of interest are lines of work that India claims at the hands of every true servant of India.

4. Famines and Epidemics.

Owing to the uncertainty of the seasons, India is peculiarly subject to times of scarcity and famine. 'The awful famine of 1900 affected 52,000,000 of people and resulted directly and indirectly in the death of nearly a million persons.'[1] These famines and scarcity of food lead to a low state of vitality and induce various dreadful diseases. Cholera and fevers of various kinds almost always prevail in some part or other. During the decade ending 1931, nearly one and a half millions had fallen victims to the plague; two and a half millions had died of cholera and forty millions were reported to have succumbed to various forms of fever. The infant mortality rate is notoriously high in India, as compared with most countries in Europe. It may be remarked that a slight improvement is noticed in recent years; and yet even now eighteen per cent of all children born alive die in the first year of life.

5. Infirmities.

According to the census of 1931 there are 230,895 deaf and dumb, 601,370 blind, 147,911 lepers and

[1] *Census Report*, 1911.

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120,304 insane in India. The institutions that provide for the comfort of these eleven lakhs of our fellow beings are few and far between. The Government has established mental hospitals in all the provinces, and yet the average mental hospital population is only 11,147. Christian missions have in the past done much to alleviate the sad lot of these unfortunate people: they have, in fact, been pioneers in this work of relief. There is still room, however, for the Church in India to serve those affected with diseases and infirmities in rural areas. By promoting health and sanitation, by taking a lead in adopting precautionary measures during epidemics and by assisting the unfortunates in getting to the nearest places of healing—Christians can do much to serve rural India.

6. Literacy.

Out of a total population of 353,000,000, 182,000,000 are males and 171,000,000 are females. Of the males 21,138,000, and of the females 4,169,000 can read and write. More accurately, 156 in 1,000 males and 29 in 1,000 females aged five and over are literate, making ninety-five in 1,000, or nine and a half per cent of the total population.

In the whole of India, out of about 112,000,000 young people between the ages of five and twenty, 12,000,000 are in primary and secondary schools; which gives an average of ten per cent. In Japan, according to the most careful calculation, eighty per cent of the children of school-going age are actually in school. We saw in the streets of Japan with our own eyes the village blacksmith, the jinrickshaw cooly, and even the dried-fish seller poring over the pages of the latest Japanese daily newspaper. The percentage of school children to *the total population* is twenty-one for the United States,

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eighteen for Great Britain, twelve for Japan, and for our own India three. 'My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge', is as true of India to-day as of the Israelites of old. The literacy of the various provinces and States may be seen in the table given at the end of this chapter. The progress made during the last decade is significant. The total number of literate persons rose by 5,515,000 between 1921 and 1931. The total number of females over fifteen years of age who can read and write is now three millions compared with less than half a million thirty years ago.

In the whole of India 3,651,000 persons are literate in English. In this also the progress shown is remarkable.

Considering the various provinces, we note that Burma leads with thirty-seven per cent of the population literate, Cochin and Travancore following with thirty-three and twenty-nine per cent respectively. Hyderabad is the most backward State in South India in point of education; only 8·5 per cent of the men and 1·2 per cent of the women are able to read and write.

Studying the population according to Religions, we note that in spite of large accessions to Christianity from the Depressed Classes, all mainly illiterate, Christians show a literacy of 28 per cent of the whole Christian population (35 per cent for men and 20 per cent for women), as contrasted with 8 per cent for Hindus (14 for men and 2 for women); and 6 per cent for Muslims (10 for men and 1·5 for women). It may also be noted with satisfaction that the importance of the spread of elementary education is being more and more recognized by Government and Indian politicians; and we may hope that education will make rapid progress now in all provinces and States. It has been estimated,

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says the Census Report of 1931, that about two-thirds of the villages in India have no schools!

All economic advance, all improvement in health and sanitation, genuine and intelligent co-operation by the people in the government of the country, and the success of all representative institutions depend upon the education of the masses.. Education for all, and particularly, primary education, should be the watch-word of all true lovers of India's progress.

7. Caste.

No account of the condition of the people of India would be complete without a mention of this 'keystone to the arch of Hinduism'. The people are divided into thousands of separate castes. Over 2,300 castes and sub-castes used to be named in the census reports. In the Census Report of 1931, those communities who are reckoned as outside Hindu society have been termed 'Exterior Castes'; and these are found to total 50,195,770. Caste has been, and still is, the curse of India. It poisons the springs of national life and constitutes the greatest obstacle to progress.

Dr. Bhandarkar says: 'The caste system is at the root of the political slavery of India.' Maine in his *Ancient Law* describes caste as 'the most disastrous and blighting of human institutions.' A non-Christian newspaper some years ago wrote: 'It is not possible to describe in temperate words the terrible havoc which caste has wrought in India. The preservation of caste means the suicide of a whole nation.' Hindu social reformers sum up the evils of caste in the following terms:

(*a*) It has produced disunion and discord.

(*b*) It has made honest manual labour contemptible, and thereby retarded industrial and commercial progress.

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(*c*) It has brought on physical degeneracy by confining marriage within narrow circles.

(*d*) It has indirectly developed the system of early marriage and the practice of demanding exorbitant matrimonial fees.

(*e*) It has suppressed individuality and independence of character.

(*f*) It has, by affording the opportunity for mental and spiritual culture to only a few selected people, caused the degeneration of the masses.

Much has been done, since these words were written to wage war against caste tyranny. The anti-caste campaign, the Harijan uplift movement, and the Temple-entry propaganda are all symptoms of the revolt of thinking Indians against this enemy of our national unity. The effect of this new attitude may be seen in the public social life of the cities. And yet, in the words of Mr. J. H. Hutton 'caste is still of vital consideration in the structure of Indian society and of intense importance as well as interest to the majority of Hindus.' The reason for this is that, to a very large degree, caste system is inextricably mixed up with the beliefs and practices of popular Hinduism.

In Christ there is neither Jew nor Gentile; and it is in the fellowship within the Church of Christ that all racial, tribal and communal differences should be resolved. In spite of failures, the Church of Christ has shown a unity within it that is unknown in Hindu society. Sad failures there are, however within the Church, which militate against the full effect of this witness. Such a consideration constitutes a loud call to all Christians to overcome all inter-communal jealousies and antipathies and hold forth the brotherhood in Christ

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as the rallying point for all mutually exclusive interests of race, caste and communities.

PERCENTAGE OF LITERATES TO THE TOTAL POPULATION ACCORDING TO PROVINCES

Burma	...	37	Central Provinces	...	6
Cochin State	...	33	Punjab	...	6
Travancore	...	29	Bihar and Orissa	...	5
Baroda	...	21	United Provinces	...	5
Bengal	...	11	Central India	...	5
Madras	...	11	Hyderabad	...	5
Bombay	...	11	Rajputana	...	4
Mysore	...	10	Kashmir	...	4
Assam	...	9	All-India	...	9·5

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CHAPTER II

INDIA'S WOMEN

'The condition of its women is the truest test of a people's civilization. Her status is her country's barometer.'

Judged by this test, India occupies a very low position indeed. While recent years have seen great advance in the place taken by women in politics and social reform, they have still to go a long way before they can be said to have taken their rightful share in the service of the country.

1. Literacy.

The education of women is as equally important for the life of the nation as the education of men. Nay, a literate mother means even more to the nation than a literate father. And yet only three women out of every hundred can read and write in the whole of India. The table at the end of this chapter gives the number of male and female literates. Cochin, Travancore and Burma easily lead; followed at a distance by Mysore, Bombay and Madras.

Out of 21,700,000 girls between the ages of 5 and 10 the Census records 429,000 only as literate, giving an average of nearly two per cent. The Government Report on education gives about 2,000,000 as girls enrolled in primary schools, of whom 1,300,000 are in the first standard. It appears that ninety per cent of the girls never reach the fourth standard. The most serious obstacle to female education is of course early marriage. But after that comes the lack of good women teachers.

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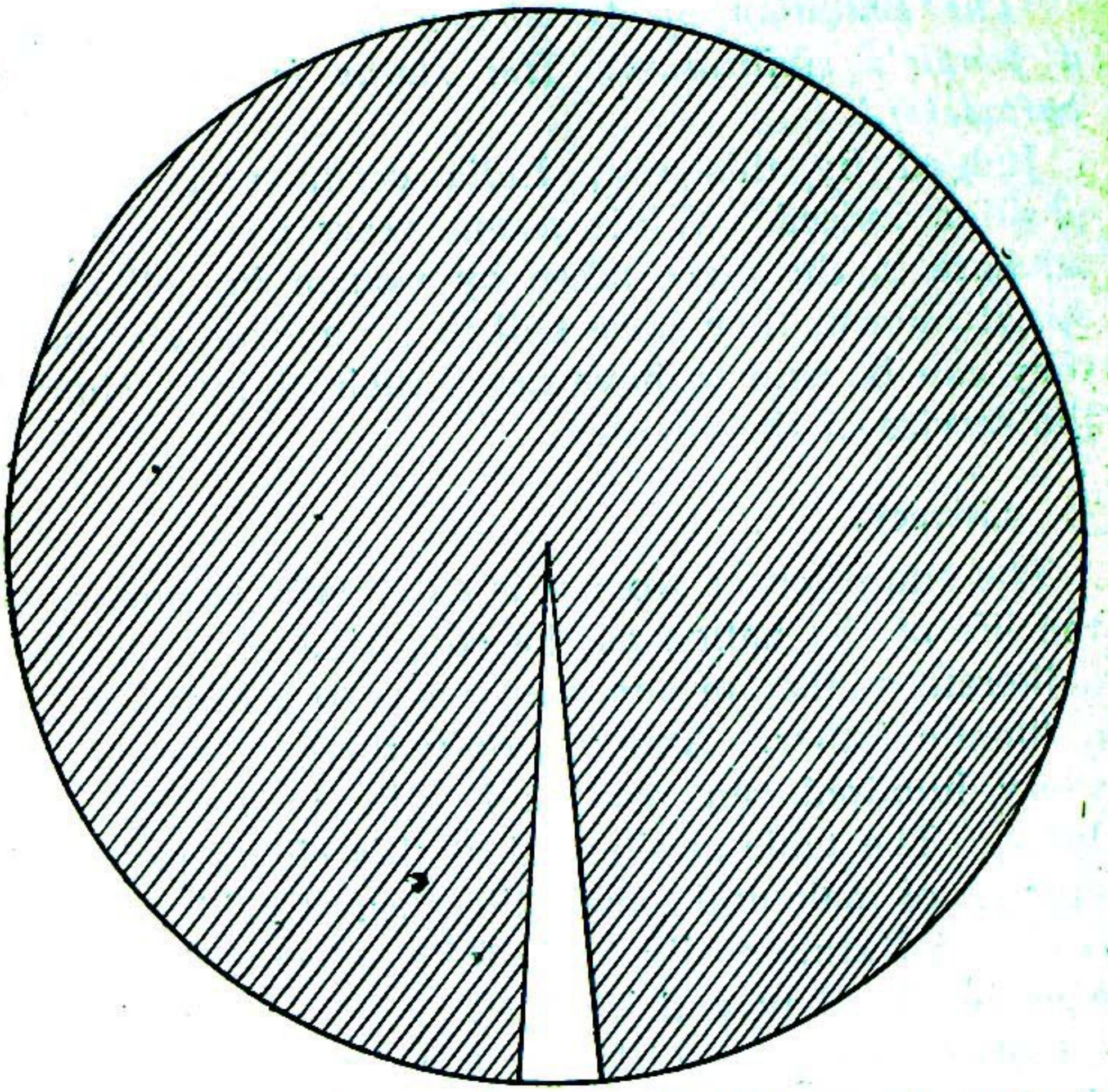
If we consider the literacy of women according to religion, the Parsis head the list with 734 in a thousand, next come the Jews with 338, followed by Christians with 203. Of Indian Christian women 120 in every



The circle represents the 171,000,000 women of India. The white part represents the literate.

thousand are literate. Of Hindu women only twenty-one in a thousand are literate, and of Muslim women only fifteen. These facts constitute a loud call to Indian Christian women wherever they are to do their share in removing the appalling illiteracy from the women of India.

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2. The zenana.

The word zenana means 'women's apartments'. It is said that 40,000,000 women are in zenanas. With 36,000,000 Muslim women, it is evident that even this is an under-estimate. The lot of these millions confined in the zenanas or behind the purdah (the veil or curtain) is miserable. A Hindu lady said: 'The life of women in zenanas is like that of a frog in a well—everywhere there is beauty, but we cannot see it—it is hid from us.' Sentenced by an inhuman custom to life-long imprisonment within their homes these millions of our sisters are shut off from the world, and the country is deprived of their co-operation in its struggle for advance.

3. Child marriage.

'One of the terrible blights upon the home is the practice among the Hindus of child marriage.'[1] At the time of the last Census there were 5,002,000 'wives' under the age of ten and 801,000 under five. There were actually 44,000 baby-wives under one year! These marriage contracts lead to the early withdrawal of girls from school and are a prolific source of many evils, such as enfeebled physique, impaired mind and premature death. The cruelty of the custom is seen when it is remembered that these so-called marriages of baby girls are legal and have religious sanction, and if the husband dies the baby wife is a widow and ordinarily can never remarry. A leading Hindu says: 'Early marriage is the greatest evil of our country. It has stood at the very springs of the life of the nation and prevented the normal expansion of which it is capable.'

In this connection mention must be made of the Sarda Act—named after Dewan Bahadur Harbilas Sarda who introduced it—which became law on April 1st 1930.

[1] Bishop Thoburn.

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According to its provisions, it is now penal in British India to solemnize the marriage of male children under 18, and female children under 14 years of age. Immediately before the passing of the Act there was a great rush in all parts of India to effect infant marriages, with the hope of escaping its penalties when once it came into operation. This accounts—according to the Census Report—for the enormous increase of infant marriages reported in 1931, though it is said that the age of marriage has been steadily increasing during the last fifty years. We are sure that the Act is creating public opinion on this subject and its effect is bound to be seen in the next Census. We may all the more confidently entertain such a hope, because of the part taken by leading women's organizations to place such a social reform measure on the statute book.

4. Enforced widowhood.

Of the 171,000,000 women, more than 26,000,000 are widows. In other words, fifteen out of every hundred women are widows. The treatment of widows in India varies in different provinces and even in different families. The cruel custom of *sati*—burning widows—was the rule in former days. That was abolished long ago by Government. But who that has known anything of the Indian home life of to-day can deny that even now the young Hindu widow very often presents the most pitiable sight in India? Shunned as an inauspicious thing by friends and foes, debarred from all family festivities, stripped of all jewellery, disciplined through the strictest fasts, and doomed to pass the rest of her life in household drudgery, the Hindu widow is reminded, by words, looks and deeds, that she is but receiving her just dues for the heinous sins she must have committed in a former birth! And what shall

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we say of the child-widow? In 1931 there were 321,701 widows under the age of fifteen, 105,482 under ten, and 30,880 under five years of age. Baby-widows under twelve months numbered 1,515! The tragedy hidden under these figures need not be detailed here.

Social reformers have inveighed against the condemnation of virgin-widows to perpetual widowhood, and have pointed out that the custom is a modern innovation unknown in Vedic times. This agitation is resulting in a few remarriages here and there among the higher castes. Widows' Homes have been established in different provinces, giving the young widows opportunity to follow useful careers. While such remedial measures are in the right direction, we cannot hope for very large improvement in this regard, until Hindu public opinion makes enforced virgin-widowhood impossible.

The Gospel of Christ can alone bring light and happiness to the unfortunate Indian widow. The first Widows' Home was started by a Christian. The noble work of Pundita Ramabai with her 1,500 orphans and widows is a standing monument to what Jesus Christ can do for the despised Indian woman. To the Indian widow the Gospel indeed means good news.

5. Moral degradation.

'The social and religious customs of the Hindus demand a large number of girls who very often in infancy are dedicated to the service of the temples as deva dasis.' The nautch girls are taught in early childhood to read, to sing, to dance and to excel in every art of seduction. In nearly every case these professional girls are leading a life of prostitution. A Hindu social reformer recently wrote of the Indian dancing girls: 'The temple still continues to encourage their existence under the most sacred authority of religion. Their

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existence as a caste is a blot on Hindu society and on Hindu civilization.'

Recent attempts to stop this evil are recorded in the Census Report of 1931. 'Early in 1930, the Chief of Sawantawadi raised the minimum age of dedication to 18 in that State; and in July of the same year, the Maharani of Travancore abolished dedication in the temples maintained by the Government of her State. The Mysore Government had prohibited the dedication of girls in State-controlled temples as early as 1910.' It may be hoped that the lead given by these States will be followed all over India in the not distant future.

'How can I endure to see the evil that shall come unto my people?' 'If I perish, I perish.' 'Let my people be given me at my request.' So said Esther of old when she realized the doom that was hanging upon her people (Esther viii. 6; iv. 16; vii. 3). May the needs of Indian womanhood evoke a similar response in all lovers of India!

PERCENTAGE OF LITERATE MEN AND WOMEN TO THE RESPECTIVE POPULATION OF FIVE YEARS AND OVER

	Literate in 100 of the Men	Women
Burma ...	56	16
Cochin ...	46	22
Travancore ...	41	17
Baroda ...	33	8
Madras ...	19	3
Bengal ...	18	3
Bombay ...	17	3
Mysore ...	17	3
Assam ...	15	2

	Literate in 100 of the Men	Women
Central Provinces .	12	1
Punjab ...	10	2
Bihar and Orissa .	10	.8
United Provinces ..	9	1
Central India ...	9	1
Hyderabad ...	8	1
Rajputana ...	7	.6
Kashmir ...	7	.6

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CHAPTER III

THE RELIGIONS OF INDIA

THE distribution of the population of India according to religion may be seen from the following table:

Jews	...	24,141	Tribal Religions	...	8,280,347
Parsis	...	109,752	Buddhists	...	12,786,806
Jains	...	1,252,105	Muslims	...	77,677,545
Sikhs	...	4,335,771	Hindus	...	239,195,140
Christians	...	6,296,763			

In other words, out of every hundred persons in India, sixty-nine are Hindus, twenty-two Muslims, four Buddhists, two Animists and one Christian and one Sikh.[1] The Jews and the Parsis are mostly found in Bombay, the Jains in Bombay, Rajaputana and Central India, the Sikhs in the Punjab, and the Buddhists in Burma. The Muslims and the Christians are fairly well distributed through all the provinces, though Bengal claims over 27,000,000 Muslims and Madras over one half of the entire Christian population. Hindus are found in large numbers in all the provinces except Burma.

We shall here give a few brief notes on the chief religions found in India. The student must consult larger text-books for fuller information.

1. Judaism.

Apart from the Jews who have come to India in modern times for purposes of trade, there are in India two Jewish colonies of long standing on the West Coast. The Jews of Kolaba in the Bombay Presidency

[1] See Diagram VII.

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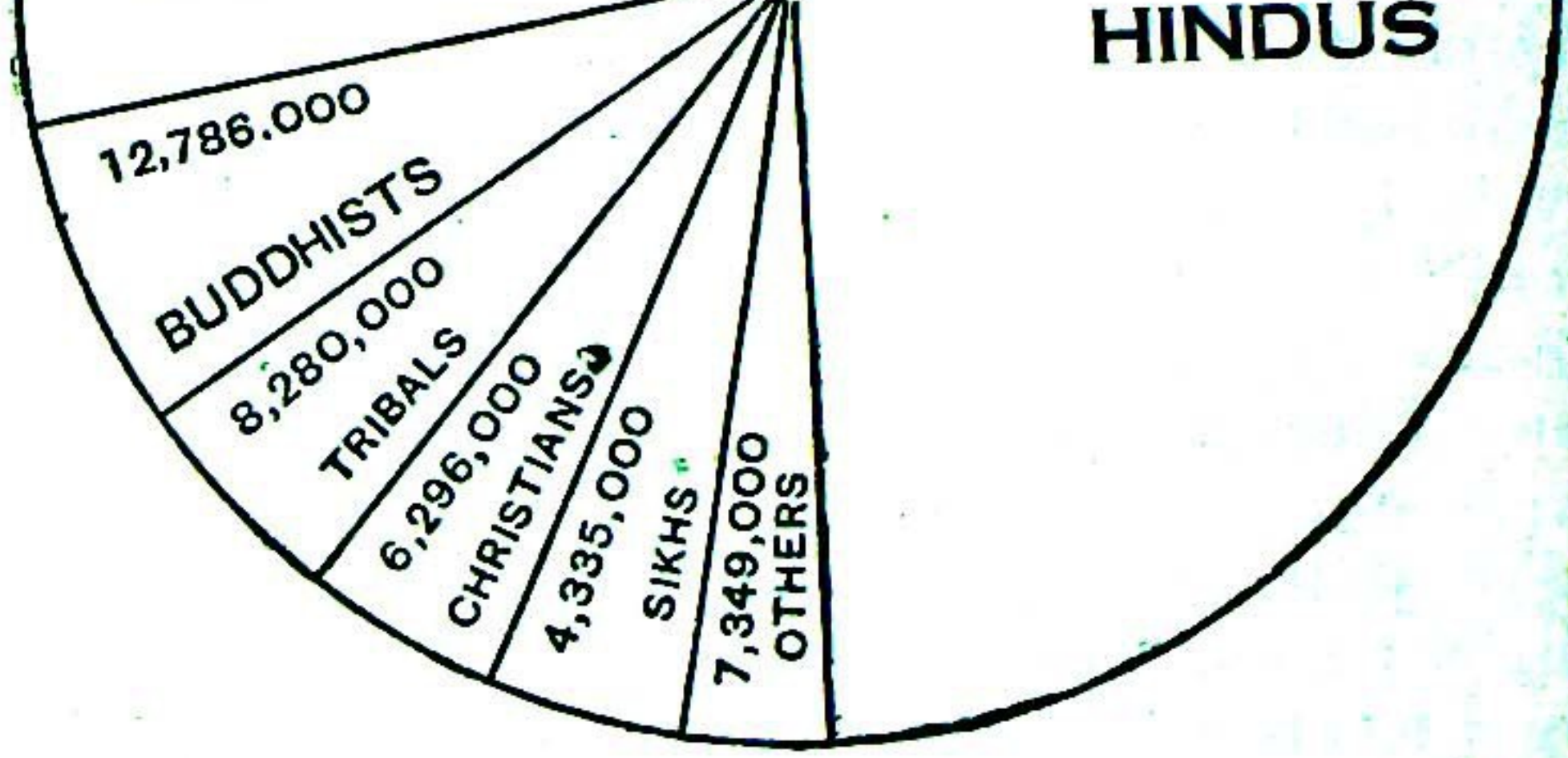
call themselves the Beni-Israel and seem to have settled there five or six centuries ago. The Jewish colony in Cochin is certainly of not less than twelve

Diagram I

RELIGIONS OF INDIA



centuries' standing. In their synagogue worship, their veneration for the letter of the law and their unbending religious conservatism they still bear the closest resemblance to the Jews of old. They increased nearly 11 per cent during the decade preceding the Census of 1931. They are practically a closed body and receive no addition by conversion.

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2. Zoroastrianism.

The religion of the Parsis is called Zoroastrianism, from Zoroaster or Zarathushtra who lived about the seventh century B.C. Their sacred book is the *Avesta*, and it contains some ancient hymns which appear to come from Zarathushtra himself.

Over a thousand years ago, when the Arabs conquered Persia and compelled the inhabitants to become Muslims, some of the Persians refused Islam, fled from their homes to escape the sword, and finally settled in Bombay and its neighbourhood. They have been called 'the Anglo-Saxons of the East'. In enterprise, enlightenment and munificent gifts for the public good they are second to none in India. About four-fifths of their males and three-fourths of their females are literate.

Rising above the nature worship universal in his day, Zarathushtra based his religion on pure monotheism. He inculcated the worship of a supreme deity, Ormazd (Wise Lord) beneath whom stand six highly abstract archangels, called Amshaspands, and a large number of angels, called Yazata, who are mostly nature powers dethroned from the divine position they held in the days when the ancestors of the Persian and Indian tribes lived together as one people. The names he gave to the Amshaspands are enough to show that they gave no room for the development of idolatry and did not compromise a rigid monotheism. Good Mind, Best Righteousness, Desired Sovereignty, Holy Devotion, Health and Immortality are certainly too impersonal and abstract to allow of any diversion of allegiance from the 'Wise Lord'.

All physical and moral evil was traced to a spirit (Ahriman), who in the beginning chose evil in thought, word and deed. Life is to be a ceaseless strife with the evil one and all his creation. After death the pious

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who have practised good thought, good words, good deeds in this life will receive a blissful immortality with God in 'the House of Song', while the demon worshippers will be condemned to torment in 'the house of Lie'. At last shall come Saoshyant, 'he who shall save', miraculously sent by Zarathushtra. He will let loose from heaven the flood of molten metal which will destroy Ahriman and all his creatures, and purify and renew the world.

The Parsis believe also in the merit of good works and have a reverential regard, amounting to worship, for the four elements. It is their reverence for fire, especially, that has differentiated them from other sects. Another characteristic custom, that of exposing their dead in their 'towers of silence', is due to their attempt to prevent fire, earth, air, and water from being contaminated by corruption.

With the exception of a few remarkable converts the community has yielded little to the influence of the Gospel. 'For the Parsi, Jesus Christ comes not to destroy but to fulfil, to be a Saoshyant' beyond anything Zarathushtra dreamed. The Parsi needs Christ, and Christ needs the Parsi.

3. Jainism.

Jainism represents one of the earliest revolts against the priestcraft and sacrificial ritual of the Brahmans. The system was founded by a Kshattriya prince named Vardhamana or Mahavira, who was an older contemporary of Buddha.

The word Jaina means a follower of the Jina, a title of Mahavira, meaning 'the conqueror', i.e. the spiritual conqueror who reached perfection through self-conquest and discipline. The Jains divide time into successive eras, and assign each to one of the twenty-four

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Jinas. They adore above all the two latest, namely, Parsvanath, Mahavira's master, and Mahavira.

The Jains are noted as temple builders. They build temples as a work of merit without any reference to their use. They 'choose wooded mountains and the most lovely retreats of nature for their places of pilgrimage and cover them with exquisitively carved shrines in white marble or stucco. Parasnath Hill in Bengal, the temple city of Palitana in Kathiawar, and Mount Abu are illustrations of this.' Fergusson says of these temples: 'They are situated in separate enclosures surrounded by high fortified walls. A few priests sleep in the temples and perform the daily services and a few attendants are always there to keep the place clean or to feed the sacred pigeons. The pilgrim or stranger must not eat, cook his food, or sleep on the sacred hill. It is the city of the gods and meant for them only and not intended for the use of mortals'.

The Jains are divided into two main sects—the Digambara (sky-attire) whose images are unclothed, whose ascetics go naked and who assert that woman cannot attain salvation; and the Svetambara (white-attire) who hold the opposite view regarding woman, and whose ascetics and images are clothed in white. There is also a more recent sect, known as Dhundias, an offshoot from the Svetambara, who carry to an extreme the doctrine of the preservation of animal life and worship gurus instead of idols.

The 'three gems' which according to the Jains result in the spirit's attainment of deliverance are, right knowledge, right intuition, and right practices. Right knowledge is a true knowledge of the relation of spirit and non-spirit; right intuition is absolute faith in the word of the Master and the declarations of the Āgamas or sacred texts of which there are forty-five. Right

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practices are: (1) non-injury of animal life; (2) kindness and speaking what is true; (3) honourable conduct typified by not stealing; (4) chastity in word, thought and deed; and (5) renunciation of earthly interests.

The Jain reverence for life is seen in the fact that almost every city in Western India where the Jains are found has its beast-hospital where animals are kept and fed. Five thousand rats were supported in such a temple-hospital in Kutch! 'Like the Buddhists the Jains deny the authority of the Vedas, but they reject the doctrine of Nirvana and believe that when the soul has been delivered from the trammels of successive existence, it begins a spiritual life in some indefinable mansion of the blessed.'

More than three-fourths of the Jains are found in Bombay, Rajaputana and the adjoining States and provinces. Being mostly traders, merchants, or bankers, they are wealthy, intelligent, and in some respects progressive. Their number however is gradually decreasing each decade. They increased six per cent in the ten years preceding 1931, while the population of India advanced over 10 per cent. This small increase is said to be partly due to the practice of child-marriage and the prohibition of widow re-marriage. The proportion of widows to population is highest among them—being about 22 per cent. There were in 1931, 10,000 Jain girls under ten years reported as married. Moreover Jainism makes no converts.

4. Sikhism.

In the fifteenth century (A.D. 1469) near Lahore was born Nanak, the nominal founder of Sikhism, which was meant to rest on the common truths of Hinduism and Islam. It was originally a revolt from the idolatry and the caste system of Hinduism. The Sikh creed

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involves belief in one God, and condemns the worship of other deities. It prohibits idolatry, pilgrimages to Hindu shrines and faith in omens, charms or witchcraft. It recognizes neither caste distinction nor Brahmanical supremacy, nor ceremonial impurity at birth or death.

The followers of Nanak were called Sikhs or 'disciples', and the devotion of the disciples to their guru or divine guide was the main feature of their life. Baba Nanak died in 1538. He together with his nine successors are the ten chief gurus of the Sikh religion. Ram-das, the fourth guru, purchased the large square tank called Amrita-sar, 'pool of immortality', at a place called from that fact Amritsar, and built in its centre the famous Golden Temple which is the most sacred shrine of the Sikhs. Arjun, his son, the fifth guru (1581) compiled and placed therein the most sacred book of their religion, the *Adi-Granth* or 'First Book', consisting of many of the stanzas of Ram-das and other previous gurus, especially of the first guru Nanak. From that time forward the succession was made hereditary and the remaining five gurus were regarded as rulers rather than teachers, and thus attracted the attention of the Moghul Emperor. Persecution under the Emperor Aurangzib put an end to the ninth guru and this was the great turning point in the history of the sect. Guru Govind, the tenth guru, organized the Sikhs into a nation of fighting men, vowed to hate the Muslim and the Hindu. They were to add the name Singh (lion) to their other names. They were distinguished by long hair. They were never to shave the head or beard, never to wear a cap nor remove the turban while eating. They were always to carry a sword, in token of engaging in perpetual warfare with the Muslims. The use of tobacco was strictly forbidden.

Guru Govind wrote also the second *Granth* which is full of martial passages and added it to the *Adi-Granth*,

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which, on the other hand, contains numerous passages suggestive of meekness and pacific feelings. In 1764 the Sikhs were complete masters of the Punjab and remained there an independent race till that province was occupied by the British in 1848.

Although the Sikhs do not worship any images, their sacred book the *Granth* is in reality the divinity of the shrine at Amritsar and is treated as if it had a veritable personal existence. Every morning it is dressed out in costly brocade and reverently placed on a low throne under a jewelled canopy, said to have been constructed at a cost of 50,000 rupees. All day long chowries are waved over the sacred volume and every evening it is transported to the second temple on the edge of the lake opposite the causeway, where it is made to repose for the night in a golden bed within a consecrated chamber railed off and protected by bolts and bars from all profane intrusion.[1]

In spite of their creed, a large number of the Sikhs at present adopt caste, wear the Brahmanical thread, keep Hindu festivals, observe Hindu ceremonies, and even present offerings to idols in Hindu temples. According to the Census Report of 1891, the only trustworthy method of distinguishing this creed was to ask if the person in question repudiated the services of the barber and the tobacconist; for the precepts most strictly enforced nowadays are, that the hair of the head and face must never be cut, and that smoking is a habit to be avoided. Sikhism is said more and more to neglect religious observances and worship, and to consist merely of outward adherence to certain social rules and practices.

The Punjab is the home of Sikhism and the province and the States contain over ninety-six per cent of all the Sikhs in India. During the last decade they

[1] Monier Williams.

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increased thirty-four per cent. This increase is slightly larger than that of Christians, and is due partly to conversions from Hinduism and partly to a lowering of the standard by which one is recognized a Sikh. The conversions from among the exterior castes of Hindu society are largely due to missionary activity on the part of Sikh landlords.

There have been some prominent converts from Sikhism to Christianity, notable among whom being the late Sir Harnam Singh. A religion which has not given a very prominent place to God and divine worship needs to know of the Father revealed in Jesus Christ, who is to be worshipped in spirit and in truth. He is the Word who became flesh and dwelt among us. He is the Guru who by His love and sacrifice of Himself won the loyalty and devotion of disciples. He is the One who deserves the adoration of the Sikh.

5. Animism.

Animism is the name given to the form of religion followed by the aboriginal tribes of India. In the Census Report of 1931 it is called 'Tribal Religions'. It includes, in its full development, the belief in souls and in a future state, in controlling deities and subordinate spirits; these doctrines practically resulting in some kind of active worship.' According to Dr. Mitchell in *The Great Religions of India*, the seven characteristic tenets generally ascribed to Animism are these: (1) A supreme or at least a superior Being is acknowledged, (2) other spirits are also acknowledged, which are almost all malignant and have to be propitiated, (3) bloody offerings are necessary as at least a part of the propitiation, (4) wild dances are performed in the worship, (5) little importance is attached to idols, temples or priests, (6) possession by spirits is believed

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in, (7) witchcraft is much practised.' The Census Report of 1901 has the following description of Animism: 'It conceives of man as passing through life, surrounded by a ghostly company of powers, elements, tendencies, mostly impersonal in their character, shapeless phantasms of which no image can be made and no definite idea can be formed. Some of these have influences of their own. One presides over cholera, another over small-pox, another over cattle disease. Some dwell in rocks, others haunt trees, others again are associated with rivers, whirlpools, waterfalls. All of them require to be propitiated by reason of the ills which proceed from them.'

Animism has made important contributions to Hinduism. The development of the pantheistic belief and the doctrine of transmigration in Hinduism are probably due to the influence of these primitive beliefs. Hinduism has even been defined as 'Animism more or less transformed by philosophy'. Within the enormous range of beliefs and practices which are included in the term Hinduism is comprised, at one end, a large number of ideas distinctly animistic. Nay more. 'An essentially materialistic theory of things, which seeks by means of magic to ward off or to forestall physical disasters, which looks no further than the world of sense, and seeks to make that as tolerable as conditions will permit,' is certainly characteristic of ordinary Hindus. But technically, a Hindu is distinguished from an Animist by his acceptance of Brahmanical supremacy and of the caste system.

The Santals in Bengal; the Bhils in Bombay; and the Gonds in the Central Provinces; the Garos, Khasis and Nagas in Assam; the Chins, Kachins and Karens in Burma follow pure Tribal religions. The religion of Jesus Christ has made great progress among many

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of the Animistic tribes. Being beyond the pale of the Hindu caste system, they are more accessible than Hindus to missionary work.

It must, however, be remembered that a slow Hinduizing process is going on amongst most animistic tribes. Pure animists are now common only in the remote upland tracts which are comparatively difficult of access. In the open plains they are slowly taking up the worship of Hindu gods and are thus being absorbed in Hinduism. 'The figures of Tribal religions', says the Census Commissioner, 'show a decrease of 15.3 per cent since 1921, this figure being primarily due to losses by conversion to Hinduism or Christianity.' The Census Superintendent of Assam thinks that the increase of 350,000 Hindus in the Assam Valley is due to accretions from Tribal religions. In Rajaputana 250,000 and in Gwalior about 150,000 who really follow Tribal Religions seem to have recorded themselves as Hindus in 1931. In the Central Provinces the loss of about 500,000 in the number of Gonds must be accounted for by a similar increase in the number of Hindus.

In Assam on the other hand, it is said that in the Naga Hills and in the hill areas of the Manipur State, Christians have increased more than 150 per cent due to conversion from Tribal religions. This success in Assam ought to be a great encouragement for work among similar tribes. There are eight million followers of Tribal religions of whom the Bhils, the Gonds, and the Santals alone number over a million each, who may be said to be accessible to the Christian gospel. The task of the Church to reach these primitive peoples all over India is immediate and urgent.

'And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice' (John x. 16). This was the ruling passion of the

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Master. This ought to be the ruling passion of His Church too.

6. Buddhism.

Buddhism founded by Gautama represents, like Jainism, another reform movement that sprang from Hinduism. The religion itself, unlike Jainism, has now been practically driven out of its original home: 96·6 per cent of the Buddhists recorded in the Census are to be found in Burma.

About a hundred miles north of Benares lies the site of the ancient city of Kapilavastu, where about 560 B.C., was born a Kshatriya prince named Siddharta, who was afterwards known as Buddha. His family name was Gautama. He was married in course of time and had a son named Rahula. While living in luxury and in pursuit of pleasure, loathsome examples of the aged, the sick, and the dead, presented themselves to him as he was driving abroad. The thought that he too would be subject to age, sickness and death, haunted him. He was disgusted with life, and despite his father's tears and protests, at the age of twenty-nine, left home and possessions, and went forth into the world to become a homeless wanderer and to devote himself to discipline for concentration of thought, so that he might discover some way of escape from re-birth. After some years of discipline, finding that this did not help him, he undertook self-torture. After following this for some time, when he had nearly starved himself to death, he felt he was no wiser than before and began to eat. Five ascetics who had joined him in his austerities now left him. Then ensued that mental struggle which culminated on the day when, as he sat beneath the sacred bo-tree at Buddh Gaya, he became suddenly illumined. In a moment he saw at last the right solu-

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tion of the mysteries of life and became henceforth the Buddha—the Enlightened One. Though at first tempted to be satisfied with saving himself, he finally resolved, through pity for mankind, to preach his message to the world. His teaching was as follows:

(1) Birth is sorrow, age is sorrow, sickness is sorrow, death is sorrow, clinging to earthly things is sorrow.

(2) Birth and rebirth, the chain of reincarnations, result from the thirst for life together with passion and desire.

(3) The only escape from this thirst is the annihilation of desire.

(4) The only way of escape from this thirst is by following the eight-fold path; right views (free from superstition or delusion), right aspirations (high and worthy of intelligent earnest men), right speech (kindly, open, truthful), right conduct (peaceful, honest, pure), right livelihood (causing pain to no living thing), right effort (in self-training and in self-control), right mindfulness (the active, watchful mind), right contemplation (earnest thought on the deep mysteries of life).

Buddha and his early converts began to preach these truths widely. Buddha himself spent the rest of his life in wandering about and preaching the new creed mainly to the people of Bihar and Oudh. Religion from this time on was no longer hidden behind the veil of language unintelligible to the masses. It was taught in the language of the common people. Buddha died about 477 B.C.

After the death of Buddha, the growth of the religion was partly due to political influences. The greatest

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impetus was given to it by King Asoka (259 B.C.) who did for Buddhism what Constantine attempted to do for Christianity: he organized it as a state religion. By a council to settle the faith, by edicts promulgating its principles, by a state department to watch over its purity, by missionaries to preach its doctrine, and by an authoritative revision of the Buddhist Scriptures, he contributed to the organized strength of Buddhism. His own son and daughter carried the religion to Ceylon. Through migratory Turanians it spread to Tibet and China and thence through Korea to Japan. In the fifth century A.D. it was adopted in Burma, and in the seventh in Siam. Even in the seventh century it was already decadent in India proper. Probably it lingered till the twelfth or thirteenth century. It is found to-day in Burma, Ceylon, Tibet, China, and Japan. Ceylon contains about three million Buddhists.

'Gautama had no place in his system for a supreme being. His teaching began and ended with man. Man himself had to work out his destiny by his own power. Yet man's need of an object of reverence and worship, and his tendency to seek external supernatural aid has led to the elevation of Gautama into a kind of semi-deification, as an object of worship.'[1] It is interesting to note that there are to-day more images of Buddha to be seen in a Buddhist pagoda in Burma than there are idols in any Hindu temple in India. Throwing a handful of flowers and burning candles before Buddha's image, counting the 108 beads with the wearisome repetition, 'impermanence, suffering, unreality', and visiting the pagoda once a week and on festival days, these constitute the main acts of worship for a Burman Buddhist. In the Burman home, moreover, there is

[1] Dr. J. N. Cushing in *Religions of Mission Lands.*

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constant recognition of the presence of the spirits, who must be propitiated lest they act with malevolence. *Nat* worship though condemned by the educated monks continues to maintain its hold on the people.

The ethical teaching of Buddhism is lofty and noble. It proclaims social equality and thus has no place for caste. It accords full freedom to women. It has stood for education, literature and art. The proportion of literacy among men and women is higher among Buddhists than among Hindus. But Buddhism knows no God, personal and supreme. It consequently lacks any true view of sin and salvation. It teaches men to trust wholly in their own efforts to work out their salvation. The salvation held out is nothing else than Nirvana, which at any rate means the cessation of all self-consciousness and, therefore, cessation of all existence to which we can attach any value and interest. It panders to man's love of self-righteousness by providing means of accumulating merit.

Although Buddhism as a distinct religion has almost no adherents in India proper, it has not passed away without leaving its marks on the Hinduism that conquered it. The name of Buddha among the Avatars of Vishnu and the deprecation of animal sacrifices in Hinduism proper are sufficient traces of the influence of Buddhism.

While recognizing the sad defects of Buddhism, as largely a mere system of morality without God, we cannot but admire the self-sacrificing missionary spirit of the Indians of that day who carried this fragmentary message of hope and humanity throughout the vast continent of Asia, to more than half the human race. Indian missionaries were able in the remote past to travel all over India and even to distant Siam, China, Korea and Japan, to uproot old religions from whole

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countries and peoples, and plant in their place a new system of beliefs and practices, even though it was a religion of godless morality. This ought so to inspire the Church in India to a like devotion that once again missionary enterprise may proceed from India to all East, and plant the standard of the Cross in all these lands where once the sons of India planted the Stupas of the Buddha.

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CHAPTER IV

ISLAM

ISLAM was introduced into India in A.D. 711 by the invading armies from the north-west. For more than ten centuries the power of the proselytizing sword and the legislation of Moslem governments were used to bring unbelievers under the yoke of Islám. To-day about a fifth of the population of the empire are fōllowers of the Prophet. India has a larger Muslim population within its borders than Persia, Arabia, the Turkish Empire and Egypt combined. Of the seventy-seven millions of Muslims in India, twenty-seven and a half millions are to be found in Bengal, eighteen in the Punjab and the North-West Frontier Province, over seven in the United Provinces, nearly five in Bombay and about four millions each in South India and Bihar and Orissa.

The Muslims of India are chiefly divided into two principal sects: the Sunnis and the Shi'ahs. The Muslims of North India are for the most part Sunnis, or orthodox. The Shi'ahs do not number more than 5,000,000 in all India.

During the last decade, Muslims increased thirteen per cent, which rate is higher than that of Hindus. It is thought that this is due rather to the practice among Muslims of polygamy and widow marriage than to conversion from other religions.

All Muslims describe their religion under two heads: *Imán* and *Dín*, dogma and ritual. Under the *Imán*—or what the orthodox Muslim must believe—come the six articles of faith, namely, God, His Angels, His

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Books, His Prophets, the Day of Judgement, and Predestination of Good and Evil.

1. *God.* The Muslims believe in God's unity, omnipotence and mercy. 'There is no god but Alláh' is the first clause in the Muslim creed. In its stern advocacy of monotheism, Islám is certainly a distinct advance upon Buddhism and Hinduism. And yet the Muslim conception of God must be admitted to be defective. To quote from Dr. Zemer:[1] 'The conception of God is negative. Absolute sovereignty and ruthless omnipotence are His chief attributes, while His character is impersonal. The Christian truth that "God is love" is to the learned Muslim blasphemy and to the ignorant an enigma.'

2. *Angels.* Their doctrine of Angels consists of belief in three species of spiritual beings; angels, jinns or genii, either good or evil, and the devil (Sheitan) with his demonic host.

3. *Books.* Islám teaches that God sent down one hundred and four sacred books, of which all but four have been utterly lost. The four books that remain are the Taurát (Law) of Moses, the Zabúr (Psalms) of David, the Injíl (Gospel) of Jesus, and the Qur'án which is believed to be uncreated and eternal. And while the other three books are highly spoken of in the Qur'án, orthodox Muslims will say that they now exist only in a corrupted form, and that their precepts have been abrogated by the final book given to the last Prophet Muḥammad.

The Qur'án itself is a remarkable production indeed. 'It is a little smaller than the New Testament in bulk and has 114 chapters, bearing fanciful titles borrowed from some word or phrase in the chapter, e.g. the

[1] *Islám: a Challenge to Faith*, pp. 86-7.

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cow, the bee, women, the ant, the spider, etc. The book has no chronological order, logical sequence or rhetorical climax. Its jumbled verses throw together piecemeal fact and fancy, laws and legends, prayers and imprecations. Muslims regard it as supreme in beauty of style and language, and miraculous in its origin, contents and authority. The defects of its teaching are many. (*a*) It is full of historical errors, (*b*) it contains monstrous fables, (*c*) it teaches a false cosmogony, (*d*) it is full of superstitions, (*e*) it perpetuates slavery, polygamy, divorce, religious intolerance, the seclusion and degradation of women, and it petrifies social life.'

4. *Prophets*. The Muslims also believe in a great number of Prophets, many of whom are Old Testament personages. Though Muslims say that they love and revere them all alike, Muḥammad certainly supersedes all, supplanting all in the hearts and affections of his followers.

5. *The Day of Judgement* also occupies a large place in the creed and the Qur'án. It is called the Day of Resurrection, of separation, of reckoning. Muslims believe in an everlasting life of physical joys or physical tortures. In the words of the Qur'án, the Muslim paradise is 'a garden of delight with couches and ewers, and a cup of flowing wine, their brows ache not from it, nor fails the sense, theirs shall be the houris—the ever virgins.'

6. *Predestination*. The last article of the Muslim creed—predestination—is the keystone in the arch of Muslim faith. Its practical effect is pure fatalism. Most Muslim sects deny all free agency in man, and say that man is necessarily constrained by the force of God's eternal and inevitable decree to act as he does. Religion is *Islám*, which means 'resignation'. This fatalism has paralysed progress. As the late Canon

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Sell says: 'It is this dark fatalism which, whatever the Qur'án may teach on the subject, is the ruling principle in all Muslim countries. It is this which makes all Muḥammadan nations decay.'

The observances coming under *Dín* are five. Muḥammad said: 'A Muslim is one who is resigned and obedient to God's will and (1) bears witness that there is no god but Alláh, and that Muḥammad is His Apostle, (2) is steadfast in prayer, (3) gives *zakát* (legal alms), (4) fasts in the month of Ramḍán, and (5) makes a pilgrimage to Mecca, if he have the means.' These five duties merit reward and are called the pillars or foundation of religion. Their pious observance is the mark of a true Muslim, to break loose from any one of them is to be in peril of damnation. Each of these pious duties is carefully described in the collections of traditions recorded two centuries after Muḥmmad's death.

1. *Confession.* The creed is the shortest in the world: 'Lá iláha illa'lláhu, Muḥammad Rasúḷu'lláh.' There is no god but God; Muḥammad is the Prophet of God. This is the watchword of Islám. This creed of seven Arabic words is repeated on every occasion by Muslims throughout the world.

2. *Prayer.* Five times each day—at dawn, just after high noon, two hours before sunset, at sunset, and two hours after sunset—every Muslim is called upon to recite prayers in Arabic. The right direction, the proper posture and the careful purification of the body are all of the utmost importance, and the least departure from any rule regarding these nullifies the effect of the prayers. A call to prayer five times daily is shouted from every mosque. The cry in the Arabic language means 'God is most great! God is most great! God is most great! I testify that there is no

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god but God! I testify that Muḥammad is the Prophet of God! I testify that Muḥammad is the Prophet of God! Come to prayer! Come to prayer! Come to prosperity! Come to prosperity! God is most great! God is most great! There is no god but God!' In the early morning cry, 'Prayer is better than sleep!' is also inserted twice after the call to prosperity.

Prayer thus occupies a very prominent place in the practice of Islám. Al Ghazzali—a great Moslem exponent of prayer—says: 'Worship is the support of religion, the handle of certainty, the chief of good works, and the most conspicuous of the acts of obedience. The five performances of worship remove offences as water removes dirt.' Muḥammad has said: 'The key of Paradise is worship. Whoever abandons the worship intentionally has become a *kafir*' (unbeliever). And again: 'Whenever a son of Adam recites a verse of prostration and then prostrates, Satan moves away, weeping and saying: "Woe is me. This man was commanded to prostrate and he did so; so he has Paradise, while I was commanded to prostrate, but I disobeyed and so I have the fire." '

While all this teaching is interesting we must not forget the false position given in these sayings to acts of prayer. Prayer cannot atone for sin, prayer cannot wash away iniquity. It is this inadequate conception of sin, and therefore of the need of Divine forgiveness that is defective in Islám. It is the revelation on the Cross of both God's love and the grievous effect of sin on God Himself that is the adequate answer to the quest for forgiveness. This is the Gospel that Muslims need.

3. *Fasting*. The chief Muslim fast is that of the month of Ramḍán. Between dawn and sunset each day during that month it is forbidden to drink a drop

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of water or take a morsel of food. Not only is there total abstinence from food and drink, but bathing, smoking, taking snuff and even smelling a flower are prohibited. Yet it is a fact that Muḥammadans spend more on food in that month than in any other. During the whole night it is usual to indulge in pleasure, feasting and dinner parties.

4. *Alms.* In its primitive sense of the word, *zakát* means purification, and it was applied to legal alms or the poor-rate, the gift of which would purify the remainder. One-fortieth of the total income is about the usual rate. There are seven classes to whom the legal alms may be given, namely, the poor, the homeless, the tax-collector, slaves, debtors, those engaged in fighting for Islám and wayfaring travellers.

5. *The Pilgrimage.* The pilgrimage (Hajj) to Mecca is not only one of the pillars of Islám, but it has proved one of its strongest bonds of union, and has always exercised a tremendous influence as a missionary agency. From sixty to ninety thousand pilgrims reach Mecca at the time of the Hajj from all parts of the world. It is enjoined on every Muslim, male or female, who is of age and has sufficient means for the journey.

In addition to these must be mentioned the practice of circumcision, which though not once alluded to in the Qur'án, is the initiatory rite among all Muslims. Its omission is considered to be equivalent to a denial of the faith.

Jesus Christ, the Revealer of Divine love, the Saviour from sin, the Emancipator of womanhood, needs the seventy-seven million Muslims of India; and they need Him! The five pillars of Islám are all broken reeds. Its pure monotheism does not satisfy the soul's need of a mediator and an atonement for

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sin. Its prayers are apt to become formal and vain repetitions, without demanding or producing holiness, Its fasting is conducive to two evils—hypocrisy and dissipation. Its almsgiving stimulates indolence.

There have been some distinguished converts from Islám to Christianity. It is said that there is scarcely a Christian village in the Punjab without some converts from Islám. On the other hand, work among Muslims in South India, is the hardest and the least fruitful.

The reasons for this are many. Very few Christians speak Urdu and practically no one understands Arabic. The Muslims too are largely superficial converts and not many have studied the Qur'án. It must also be confessed that very little effort is made by the Christian Church to present the Gospel message to them.

Yet we owe them the Gospel of redemption. The success in certain parts of India ought to encourage all Missions and Churches to include the followers of the Prophet in their prayers and effort.

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CHAPTER V

HINDUISM

THE term 'Hinduism' is used to designate the religious creeds and practices of two hundred and thirty-nine millions of the people of India. Seven persons out of every ten in India are Hindus, constituting the large majority in all the provinces except the Punjab, the North-West Frontier Province, Kashmir and Burma. During the decade preceding the last census they increased ten per cent.

In the words of Barnett, 'Hinduism is not one homogeneous growth of religious thought; it is neither a single tree nor a forest of trees sprung from the same stock. It is, on the contrary, an aggregation of minor growths, some of cognate origin, some of foreign provenance, all grouped under the shadow of one mighty tree. It is an influence which has taken possession of well nigh all the roads by which man approaches the unseen in India; its churches are as well the stately cathedral where scholars and princes worship as the humble shrine where villagers offer wild flowers to some god born of their own rude hearts or the wayside spot haunted by some random godling who may have dwelt there last week. Over all these provinces Hinduism wields empire, or at least suzerainty.'

The whole history of Hinduism from the earliest times to the present day is a proof of its power to assimilate foreign elements and to adapt itself to new conditions. The influence of Animism, Buddhism, Islám, and, in the present day, of Christianity itself would not be difficult to trace in Hindu beliefs and

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practices, as we find them described in books and come to know them from its adherents.

Hindus divide their sacred books into two classes: Sruti—Revelation, and Smriti—Tradition. To the former class belong the Vedas alone. They are four in number: the *Rig Veda*, the *Sama Veda*, the *Yajur Veda* and the *Atharva Veda*. Their composition covers a thousand years or more, beginning perhaps as early as 1500 B.C. and extending in its latest phase to about 500 B.C.[1] Each Veda consists of three main divisions—Mantras, Brahmanas and Upanishads. They represent the three successive stages in the development of Hinduism. The first period is that of the *Mantras* or *Samhitas*—the oldest portion of each Veda (probably 1500-800 B.C.). These contain hymns and prayers composed when the Aryans were settled in the lands on both sides of the River Indus. The most important of these collections of hymns as well as the oldest is the *Rig Veda*, consisting entirely of lyrics or psalms in praise of different gods. ('Rich,' a laudatory stanza.) The *Sama Veda* consists entirely of stanzas from the *Rig Veda* (with the exception of 75) but arranged solely with reference to their place in the Soma sacrifice, and set to be sung to certain fixed melodies (*saman*—chants). The *Yajur Veda* consists mainly of stanzas borrowed for the most part from the *Rig Veda*, but contains also original prose formulas arranged in the order in which they were actually used in various sacrifices. (Yajus, sacrificial prayers.) These three Vedas alone were at first recognized as canonical scriptures. The fourth collection, the *Atharva Veda*, is 'in the main a book of spells and incantations appealing to the demon world.' It attained a position beside the other three, only after a long struggle.

[1] Macdonell, *A History of Sanskrit Literature.*

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Judged by these early hymns the religion of the Aryan immigrants, or what may be styled Vedic Hinduism, appears to be polytheistic, consisting in the worship of the powers of nature. The Vedic ritual was simple. Each household had its trench containing the sacred fire in which sacrifices of soma juice and melted butter (ghee) were offered to the gods. Animal sacrifices also were common.

The second period is that of the *Brahmanas* (probably about 800-500 B.C.). The age of creative poetry when new prayers were composed and sung to please the gods had come to an end. Having ceased to produce poetry, the priests spent their energies in elaborating the sacrificial ceremonial. They had schools where priests were trained for this work. The *Brahmanas* give us the sacerdotal learning as taught in the Vedic schools of this period. They explain in prose the mutual relation of the sacred text and the ceremonial, as well as their symbolic meaning with reference to each other. 'Each *Brahmana* is a handbook to one of the *Vedas* and was meant to enable the priest to do his part in the sacrifice accurately and intelligently; but, besides sacrificial directions and explanations, they also contain a great deal of mythology, philology, literary lore, grammar, theology, mysticism, magic and such like. They are said to be the most tedious, absurd and uninteresting books in the world. The beginnings of the doctrine of the transmigration of the soul make their appearance about this time. The system of the four castes also assumes shape. The Aryans probably had by now advanced eastward as far as Allahabad.

The third period is the *Upanishad* period. This represents the last stage of development in the Brahmana literature. After a long period of the most cumbersome and intricate ritual, 'reflection led to the

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perception of the great truth that the kernel of religion is not the ritual act but the heart of piety behind it.' This discovery is represented by the *Aranyakas* or *Forest Treatises* of a theosophic character meant to be imparted or studied in solitude in the forests. The word *Upa-ni-shad* (sitting down beside) may have originally meant 'confidential session' and came to signify 'secret or esoteric' doctrine. As they generally came at the end of the Brahmanas, they are also called *Vedanta* (end of the *Veda*) a term later interpreted to mean 'the final goal of the Veda'. The *Upanishads* consist of philosophical inquiries on the nature of the world-soul and the way in which man may find release from rebirth and union with the world-soul. 'They are a mixture of half-poetical, half-philosophical fancies, of dialogues and disputations dealing tentatively with metaphysical questions. The pantheistic groundwork of their doctrine was later developed into the Vedanta philosophic system.'

These three sets of books, then, form the *Vedas* and are the revealed literature, Sruti, of Hinduism.

The fourth period of the religion is the *Sutra* period (500-200 B.C.). The verbose character of the *Brahmanas*, and the difficulty of storing such vast masses of diffuse language in the memory led to a new style of composition. All the knowledge which a student had to acquire was expressed in strings of aphorisms of the briefest and most pregnant description. These when collected in treatises were called *Sutras*. In fact this style of composition became the chief literary characteristic of the age. The three chief classes of *Sutras* are the *Crauta Sutras* dealing with ritual, the *Grihya Sutras* dealing with household affairs, and the *Dharma Sutras* dealing with social and legal usage.

This period saw the rise of the great sectarian systems

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of Vishnu and Siva and an enormous development of ascetic religious exercises, now known as yoga. Philosophic study increased in the schools and the five verse *Upanishads* were also written. The Sankhya system seems to have received definite form. The Jain and the Buddhist movements also belong to this period.

The fifth is the *Dharmasastra* period. 'As the *Sutras* grew out of the *Brahmanas*, so the *Dharmasastras* grew out of the *Sutras*, mainly out of the *Dharma Sutras*. Chief among these is the *Manava Dharmasastra* which has exercised such great influence over the social life of the people. These metrical law books are usually dated 200 B.C. to A.D. 500. *Manu* seems to have reached its present form not later than A.D. 200. It was also during this period that the earlier of the short *Upanishads* of the *Atharva Veda* made their appearance. They fall into four great groups according as they teach (*a*) pure Vedantism, (*b*) Yoga practices, (*c*) the life of the Sannyasi, or (*d*) Sectarianism. 'These sectarian treatises interpret the popular gods Siva and Vishnu as personifications of the Ātman. The different Avatars of Vishnu are here regarded as human manifestations of the Atman.' The Epics fall between 500 B.C. to A.D. 500. In their present form and shape, they represent the growh of about a thousand years. The *Bhagavadgītā* which is incorporated into the *Mahābhārata* belongs to the *Dharmasastra* period.

The *Purānās* follow this period. These are eighteen in number. They are didactic in character and sectarian in purpose. The object of most of these legendary compilations is to recommend the sectarian cult of Vishnu, though some of them favour the worship of Siva.

The *Bhagavadgītā* requires more than a passing mention. Its genesis must have been as follows.

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Towards the beginning of the Christian era a nameless worshipper of Krishna, a man of high culture, conversant with the best religious philosophy of his age, conceived the idea of interpolating into the *Mahābhārata* an episode setting forth in the form of a dialogue the supremacy of Krishna, and the theory of Karma Yoga. At the opening of the great battle between the hosts of the Kurus and Pāndavas, he represented Arjuna as overcome by sudden remorse at the sight of the armies which he was about to plunge into fratricidal strife, and put into the mouth of Arjuna's divine charioteer Krishna a series of sermons for his comfort and enlightenment. The result was the *Bhagavadgītā*, which for well nigh two thousand years has swayed with ever growing power the mind and heart of India. It has attracted also the attention and admiration of many scholars in Europe.

Out of these centuries of Hindu thought, as represented by these numerous treatises, have come the beliefs and practices of the Hindu of to-day.

Through all the varied phases of Hindu philosophy and Hindu practice, two general tendencies of thought may be traced. 'Among the more intelligent, on the one hand, the philosophy of the *Upanishads*, especially the Vedanta philosophy is uppermost, with a constant tendency to develop in one of three directions; toward pantheism, toward agnosticism, or toward atheism. Among the ignorant masses, on the other hand, polytheism is uppermost with an invariable pantheistic background. Pantheism with its corollary the transmigration of souls is thus common to all. As common is idolatry, at least the tendency toward it and apology for it.' The bond that unites popular and philosophic Hinduism is the system of caste. 'Pantheism then as a creed, grossest idolatry as the commonest expression

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of the religious instinct, and caste as a social system constitute the real triad of Hinduism to-day.'

To understand modern Hinduism in practice it is not sufficient to know the development of Hindu religious literature. We must study Hinduism in the world of to-day.

1. We may begin with that section of the educated Hindu who is really religious and who wants to practise his religion. To such the *Bhagavad Gita* is the only Bible, and the only book of meditation. Any one may come across men in all walks of life who daily read a portion of this philosophic poem—either in the original Sanskirt or in the vernacular. Great men like Mahatma Gandhi have declared that the Gita brings them solace and guidance in all perplexities of life. There are many expositions of the Gita written by modern religious leaders, trying to make the Gita answer all questions about sin, temptation, victory and man's duty to his fellow man. It is therefore well for us to examine its main teaching and its defects.

(i) The Gita makes the first clear statement of the doctrine of *Avatara* which is very akin to the Christian doctrine of Incarnation. *Avatara* means descent. It is used to signify the descent of the Supreme God into the world to help man.

'Though I am not subject to birth or decay', says Krishna in the Fourth chapter, 'and am the Lord of all created beings, yet in presiding over Nature which is mine, I am born by my own mystic power. Whenever there is a decline of Dharma (virtue and duty) and an increase of adharma (vice-impiety), then I create myself. For the protection of the good, for the destruction of the wicked, and for the establishment of Dharma from age to age, I am born.'

In these and other sayings the claim is made that

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the Krishna of the Gita is the Supreme God—the ultimate one goal of all separate souls. Krishna is made to say :—'At the end of many births the man of knowledge finds refuge in me' (vii. 19). In another place, Krishna compares the worship of the great Supreme God and of himself and says :—

> 'Their labour is greater whose thoughts are directed to an object which has no manifest form; for the path which is not manifest is with difficulty attained by those who are attached to their corporal frames' (xii. 5). 'Those who offer up to me all their actions intent on me, and meditating on me with exclusive devotion worship me,—I become presently their extricator from the ocean of the world of mortality' (xii. 6).

The teaching is, that Krishna is the Supreme God manifest in human form; and that it is easier for man under present conditions of life to fix his mind on a manifest God than on the Unmanifest God; and such a contemplation of a personal, manifest God brings peace now and release hereafter. Krishna says :—

> 'Place thy mind on me, fix thy understanding on me, and thou shalt dwell in me alone after this life' (xii. 8).

But the ordinary man will ask : who is Sri Krishna that I may set my mind on him? What is his example, his achievement for mortal man that will enable me intelligently to contemplate him? The very meagreness of such information has driven later writers to supply those Puranic stories which are most unworthy of Sri Krishna and an Incarnate God. What a contrast to the life of the Incarnate Son of God, Jesus Christ and to His teaching as depicted in the Gospels! Is there anything equal to the power that that revelation has

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exercised on countless millions? St. Paul's words will be re-echoed by men of all times, and all races:

> 'The love of Christ constraineth us, because we thus judge, that one died for all therefore all died, and He died for all that they which live should no longer live unto themselves, but unto Him who for their sakes died and rose again' (2 Cor. v. 14, 15).

Is there anything like the story of the Cross to inspire man's love and devotion? Watt's famous hymn still powerfully sways the mind of every Christian. It did move Mahatma Gandhi during the last days of his self-imposed fast.

> When I survey the wondrous Cross,
> On which the Prince of Glory died,
> My richest gain I count but loss
> And pour contempt on all my pride.
> Were the whole realm of nature mine,
> That were an offering far too small:
> Love so amazing, so Divine,
> Demands my soul, my life, my all.

(ii) The other important doctrine of the Gita that is fascinating to many is that of *Karma Yoga*. The traditional Hindu teaching was that every deed performed by man, whether good or bad must produce its corresponding effect and will necessitate rebirth into the world. The logical conclusion of such a doctrine is that inasmuch as all action binds the soul to repeated rebirths, release can only come by complete cessation of all activity. The Gita, on the other hand, taught the doctrine of right action and thus provided a healthy corrective to the prevailing tendency among the thoughtful men of that age to aim at complete withdrawal from the world to attain to the state of no-action.

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'Do thou the work thou art obliged to do' says the Gita, 'for work is better than no work; not even thy body can win its sustenance from no-work.' 'This world is bound by bonds of work, save where that work is done for sacrifice: work to this end perform, freed from attachment.' 'Without attachment ever perform the work that thou must do: for if without attachment a man works, he gains the highest' (iii. 8, 9, 19).

The earnest seeker may ask two questions: What is the work I must do without attachment? and how is one to do that work without any attachment? A man's duty, answers the Gita, is the duty enjoined on the caste in which he is born. Caste is of divine institution. 'Every man therefore must carry out the works appropriate to his caste. Even though a man should fancy that he could fulfil more excellently the duties of another caste, he should in no case renounce his own; to do so is sin, and can but lead to destruction and the ruin of the social order.'[1]

If this doctrine is accepted, there can be no hope for the outcaste, and no peace for the world. For the outcaste must only do the duties of the outcaste and should neither learn nor teach nor fight nor trade; and the martial castes must, like Arjun, give themselves to war and engage themselves in the work of killing others!

And again, how is he to know what is right and what is wrong work?

A man belonging to a thief caste was not born into it by his own choice, but it is open to him to decline to engage in plunder and murder against his conscience. Discussing this, a Hindu thinker recently wrote: 'It was fortunate for Arjun that the incarnate God was by his side to tell him that his Dharma was not to indulge

[1] Hill, *The Bhagavad Gita*.

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in sickly sentimentalism but to fight and kill his uncles, cousins and grandfathers, in order to reap the bitter fruits of victory. But all are not so fortunate. Each one of us, according to his lights has to decide between conflicting claims, selfish and unselfish impulses, what our real Dharma is in a given situation'. Yes: that is the practical question. How can a man know what is right and what is wrong? Are there ideal standards to which he may look for guidance? Is the incarnate God by one's side always, to guide him day by day and moment by moment, and enable feeble man to follow what he knows to be right?

Christianity answers these questions. The life and teaching of Christ give the enquirer an irreproachable standard of conduct: and the Spirit of Christ is available to guide him into all truth. It is the Gospel of Jesus Christ that alone answers satisfactorily the questions raised by the Gita.

The fact that the Gita is read and studied by many an educated follower of Hinduism shows the hold religion has on the Indian mind. It is therefore the duty of all Christian workers to study this remarkable book, in order that they may be able to point the people of India from Lord Krishna to the Lord Jesus Christ, and from the Gita to the Gospel.

2. There is a class closely akin to this, consisting of men whose scientifically trained minds refuse to follow the religious codes of the past, its traditional practices, or its social conventions. They claim personal freedom to believe and practise what alone appeals to their intellects and experiences. They interpret all old religious injunctions in the light of modern knowledge and read into the words of the ancient writings the latest religious ideas they have gathered from Western thought and Christian

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literature. These men may not be seen in the temples or on the river banks, engaged in religious contemplation or visiting places of pilgrimage. They disdain all these as unworthy of the man of true religion. The philosophic lectures of the Hindu University of Benares, or the learned treatises of Prof. S. Radhakrishnan—that brilliant South Indian thinker and philosopher—these appeal to them, and they are considered by others as followers of modern Hinduism.

No doubt there is a certain amount of genuine patriotism in this love of the past and nominal conformity to the ancient religion. It also indicates intellectual honesty in appraising what has come by tradition and harmonizing them to the best thinking of the day. But absolute honesty would require the acknowledgement of this artificial grafting of the new ideas upon the out-of-date assumptions of old Hinduism and a fearless confession of the source from which this new light has come, namely from Christ and His religion, and the complete satisfaction He gives to all honest questions of the mind and the spirit. We may yet hope that the intellectual honesty of this class of Indian thinkers will lead them to the fountain of all Truth, even to Christ who came not to destroy but to fulfil.

3. There is yet a third class of educated Hindus—whose number is, alas, growing every day who are fast losing all hold on religion. Secularism, is the right name to give to the religion of this class.

There is no doubt that this phase in Hindu thinking is absolutely novel to India. Religion is natural to India and the Indian is incorrigibly religious. And yet the national aspirations that have taken possession of men and women in the present generation have had the effect of banishing all other thoughts from their minds. Religion, they say, is responsible for all the

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ills of India. It has divided Indian society. It is the source of the social and economical woes under which India is labouring. It has tyrannised over the children of India, and has made them effete, submissive and dependent. The remedy is: Down with all religion. No temples, no worship, no priests, and no God—seem to be their slogan.

A Brahmin writer in a recent weekly paper characterises the religion of the modern Hindu as materialism. After describing the devout life of the old Hindu in his allegiance to caste obligations and religious observances he says: 'Contrast this with the present day condition. Caste, the binding force of Hinduism, is losing its virtue with the open advent of outsiders into the Hindu fold through *Shuddhi*, the progress of intermarriage and interdining, the removal of untouchability, and the open flouting of caste laws. The holy places are slowly becoming to the educated classes mere places of beautiful scenery or historic associations; idols, pieces of carved stones; fairs, occasions for tamasha; the holy rivers, mere streams; doing *sraddha* in Gaya for ancestors, a farce; the Brahmin, an anachronism; and the Vedas, books made by superstitious priests.'

The writer then goes on to narrate how the old Brahmin spent his day in ablutions, prayers, studies and poojahs for himself and others. 'But now,' the writer goes on to say, 'even the foremost of these shastric injunctions—the *Sandhya Vandana*—(prayers at sunset) is not attended to. Some boys have cast off even the *Upanayana* threads from their persons, as these have no significance for them. Women have all along been the greatest asset of the Hindu religion, from the point of view of tenacious observance of religious formalities in the home, and their constant dinning into the ears of their family of the importance of

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these observances. Here also we see a gradual change. With the education she has obtained woman is asserting her right and importance, and the home is accordingly being fashioned on her new ideals which have no place for blind religious fervour. Thus the last touch of religion is vanishing from home, and religion is being rapidly supplanted by materialism."[1]

A definite anti-religious stand is taken in South India by the members of a new organization called Self-respect Society. This organization advocates boycott of temples, priests and all worship, and is engaged in raising the outcaste people to equal status with others as citizens of India.

This phase of irreligion cannot last long. We believe that India will sooner or later revolt against such an open negation of God, and the natural heart of the Indian will run to seek its solace from religion alone. The blind fight against all religion is bound to cease. It will, on the other hand we hope, direct its antagonism to that which is false and degrading in the religious beliefs and observances of the country, and examining all the religious systems that are available choose that which is good, satisfying and uplifting.

4. We may now proceed to consider the Reform sects within Hinduism which have appeared in modern times.

(*a*) **The Brahmo Samaj,** founded in Bengal in 1830 by Raja Ram Mohun Roy, has 5,378 adherents. Belief in the unity of the Godhead, the brotherhood of man and direct communion with God in spirit through prayer and worship without the intervention of any mediator, seem to be the main tenets of the Brahmos. The Brahmos have been avowed reformers, and by

[1] *The Illustrated Weekly of India*, July 28, 1935.

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their teachings and writings they have made a marked impression on the educated Hindus of the country. In spite of a number of Brahmo missions, they do not make any converts. Between 1911 and 1931, they have decreased by 126. The very eclectic character of the sect and the broadness of the creed, says the Census Commissioner, have militated against its growth.

(*b*) **The Arya Samaj** was organized in 1875 by Swami Dayanand Sarasvati of Kathiawar. 'The leading tenets of the sect are: (1) Only the Samhitas of the four Vedas are inspired; (2) there are three eternal substances, God, spirit, and matter; (3) a soul is incorporeally and always perfectly distinct from God; (4) the soul is subject to re-birth in human, animal, or vegetable form; (5) salvation is the state of emancipation from pain and from subjection to birth and death, and of life, liberty and happiness in the immensity of God.' The Arya Samaj is theoretically opposed to the caste system, to idolatry, to child marriage and to pilgrimages, and during the last twenty-five years has done much to rouse opinion against these in North India.

The Aryas now number 990,233, or about four times their number twenty years ago. Eighty per cent of these live in the Punjab and the United Provinces. During the last decade the Aryas increased from 23,000 to 94,000 in the Kashmir State. During the previous decade there had been similar phenomenal increase in the Punjab and the United Provinces. This rapid increase is due to the elaborate missionary organization founded by Dayanand, and to special missionary activities among the depressed classes all over India. The Census Report of 1911 said: 'A large proportion of the new adherents of the Samaj are *Meghs* and other men of low castes, who are admitted as clean after going through a ceremony of purification

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known as *Shuddhi*. In certain districts of the Punjab three-fifths of the Meghs returned themselves as Aryas. There is a special Society which works under the auspices of the Samaj for raising the depressed classes in this way.' In another place the Report said: 'Caste restrictions amongst the Aryas are becoming far less rigid than they were even a few years ago. Restrictions in eating and drinking with members of other castes are dying out, and intermarriages between members of different castes is becoming increasingly common.' Here is again a great warning and an urgent call to the Church of Christ in India.

(*c*) **Theosophy.** 'The Theosophists hold that all religions have elements of truth which spring from the one Fountain of Truth and that Theosophy is the synthesis of all religions.' Theosophy, as we meet it in India to-day, is best described as Hindu pantheism modernized.

The best points of Hinduism may be stated as follows: (1) It has emphasized the superiority of the spiritual over the material side of life. (2) It has cultivated the passive virtues of patience, gentleness and submission. (3) It has introduced religion into every-day life. When the races which have developed these characteristics are 'summed up in Christ', they will assuredly enrich His Body with new graces.

(*d*) **Social Reform Movements.** We thus designate all the new reform movements for combating the social evils that have grown out of Hinduism. We have already referred to the Sarda Act, an attempt to penalise infant marriages. We shall now refer to other similar movements to rid the country of the baneful effects of the religion of the land.

The Harijan Uplift Movement may be mentioned first. The word *Harijans* means the people of God,

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and was introduced by Mr. Gandhi in the year 1932, as an honourable name for 'untouchables'. 'About this time', says Mr. P. O. Philip, in an article on the subject in *The International Review of Missions*, 'there came into existence an important organization whose members were pledged to self-sacrificing service: the *Harijan Sevak Sangha*, Association of the Servants of Untouchables. Its activities are directed along the lines of persuading caste Hindus to open temples for worship to the Harijans and to remove the disabilities imposed on them, of conducting day and night schools for Harijan children and adults, of establishing hostels for Harijan students and giving them scholarships, and of improving the economic and sanitary conditions in which Harijans live.' While it is true that this programme of service has not so far appealed to any considerable section of the population, and that the movement has not penetrated much into rural India, it is a noteworthy sign of the times.

Next may be mentioned *The Temple-entry movement*. Throughout the country individuals have been agitating for opening the temples to exterior castes. Legislation was attempted, but was withdrawn, but the movement itself is still going on. It is said that eight shrines in Bombay used by the Telugus have been opened to untouchables since 1930. A temple in the city of Nagpur is said to have been opened to untouchables. It is also reported that a pan-Hindu temple has been endowed at Ratnagiri with a view to providing a common place of worship for all castes. In the Dacca division in Bengal, the temple doors were forcibly opened by a band of high caste Hindu women who sympathised with this movement. It is however reported that after five months it was found that the temple had been deserted by all high caste Hindus.

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We doubt if this reform will improve the relationships between caste Hindus and Untouchables. The exterior castes have for ages past had their own shrines, their own worship, and their own sacrificial rites. To introduce this worship into Hindu temples appears to us quite novel and strange. The movement, however, is symptomatic of the times. There are numbers of caste Hindus who have begun to feel that the position allowed in Hinduism to the Harijans is indefensible.

A third Movement of Reform is the one against Prostitution in all forms. Social legislation has been brought about against brothel houses and brothel keepers. Vigilance Societies have been organized in the great cities of India. Rescue homes are being instituted to save the unfortunate girls from permanent degradation. With such attack on the social evil, the institution of Deva-dasis in connection with Hindu temples cannot continue long. In 1927, the Council of State discussed the need for legislation to prevent the dedication of girls as Deva-dasis in temples, on the ground that such dedication inevitably entailed a life of prostitution. A Bill was also brought into the Madras Council in 1930 to prohibit the performance of the dedicatory ceremony in any Hindu temple, and to enable dedicated women to contract legal marriage.[1] We have already noted the action in this regard taken by the rulers of the Mysore and the Travancore States.[2] This whole new attitude to moral evils is characteristic of the present times. Abuses long connected with the Hindu religion are now repudiated and disavowed as having nothing to do with the religion, and bold action is now taken to rid society of evils that have thrived for ages under the shadow of the temple walls.

[1] *Census of India*, 1931. [2] Chap. II.

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Christians cannot but rejoice in all these movements towards righteousness and equity; and there is no need for fear, that such movements would hinder the progress of the religion of Jesus Christ. All true efforts to advance the social and moral well-being of humanity must be believed to be directed in the interest of the kingdom of God. While therefore eagerly recognizing every lofty aspiration and very tendency for good in this complex religion of our fellow-countrymen, we should be untrue to truth and untrue to Christ should we relax our endeavours to bring the full Gospel of Christ to bear on all the problems of India. Let us point our brothers from the many gods of Hinduism to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ the One living God, from the divisive tendencies of caste to the unity in the brotherhood of Christ and from the burdensome system of salvation by self-effort to the free grace of forgiveness and power provided in the crucified and risen Saviour—in Christ the fulfilment of Hinduism.

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CHAPTER VI

EARLY HISTORY OF CHRISTIANITY IN INDIA

THE history of Christianity in India may be divided into four periods: the Syrian period, the Roman period, the Lutheran period, and the Modern period.

1. The Syrian period.

The oldest Christian community in India is in the Native State of Travancore. Its members are commonly known as Syrian Christians; they number 1,180,546, that is, about a fifth of the entire Christian population in India. Tradition connects the introduction of Christianity into Travancore with the apostle St. Thomas. Most scholars are now agreed that there is no historical proof to discredit this tradition. After a careful study of the results of recent research, the late Dr. Farquhar wrote: 'Thirty years ago the balance of the probability stood absolutely against the story of the Apostolate of Thomas in India: to-day the balance of possibility is distinctly on the side of historicity.'[1] Some have connected the establishment of the Church with one Thomas, Bishop of Edessa, in the year A.D. 345. There is certainly no doubt that the community was a flourishing one in the sixth century.

It is known, however, that about the eighth century the Christians of Malabar were so numerous and influential that they acquired from the rulers of the land a certain political status, including the right of self-government, in token of which they received two

[1] *The John Ryland's Library Bulletin, on The Apostle Thomas in South India.*

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copper-plate charters—*Sasanams*. These are dated A.D. 774 and 824. The history of the next six hundred years is enveloped in obscurity. Through all the vicissitudes of history they seem to have held themselves together under the Syrian liturgy and ceremonials, though probably they entirely lacked spiritual vigour and missionary zeal. When in the fifteenth century the Portuguese obtained a footing in India, they endeavoured to bring these Christians under the rule of the Pope, and to substitute the Latin rite and dogmas for the Syrian. For the time being they succeeded in doing so by force. But when in the sixteenth century the power of the Portuguese was broken by the Dutch, many of the Syrians threw off the Papal yoke and placed themselves under a Bishop consecrated for them by the Patriarch of Antioch. A large number, however, still clung to the Roman Church, and their descendants are the 'Romo-Syrian' Christians of the present day, numbering about 655,000.

In 1816 the Church Missionary Society sent missionaries to Travancore who started schools and colleges, and these began to leaven this ancient community. A small number of Syrians joined the Church of England, and a larger number, who were in favour of reform, separated themselves from the old Jacobite Church and constituted what is called the 'Mar Thoma' or 'Reformed Syrian Church'. This Church uses in its worship a revised form of the old Syriac liturgy translated into the vernacular. Both sections are presided over by Indian Bishops, and have always been independent of any foreign support. They are the only self-supporting and self-governing Christian bodies in all India. If these ancient Churches would but unite and give themselves to the evangelization of India what a power they could exert in the land! In such activity they

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would surely find their own fullest spiritual life. Within the last few years the Reformed section of the Syrian Church has undertaken to support a mission of its own through the National Missionary Society of India.[1]

The centuries during which the Syrian Church was almost the only Christian body in India we have called the SYRIAN PERIOD.

2. The Roman period.

This may be said to begin with the year A.D. 1500. Though the missionaries of the Roman Church were in India in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, it was only after the arrival of Vasco-da-Gama in 1498 that its influence began to be seriously felt.

The greatest missionary of the Roman Church we know was Francis Xavier.[2] He landed in India on May 6, 1543, and in many respects he was a model missionary. His missionary enthusiasm, self-denial, and aspirations after a holy life are lessons for all time. 'Noble by birth and educated as a scholar, he gave up all that was dear to him to go to the ends of the earth out of love to Jesus Christ and zeal for the salvation of his brethren of mankind. Often he was houseless and homeless, travelling on foot without a servant, suffering from cold and hunger, fording rivers and forcing his way through unbroken forests, exposed to perils from sickness and robbers. All his trials, instead of discouraging him, made him only rejoice the more to undergo them for the name of Christ. Before he became a missionary, once while asleep he uttered the words: 'Of suffering and of labours for the Cross, yet more, O Lord, yet more!' These might well have served as his motto to the last moments of his life.

[1] See below ch. IX.

[2] *Francis Xavier*; C.L.S., Madras; one anna.

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For nearly two hundred years the Roman Church held undisputed sway over a large portion of South India, and penetrated even to the court of Akbar. Robert de Nobili and Beschi—the Tamil scholar, Viramāmunivar—are amongst a great number of European missionaries who helped to establish and strengthen the Roman Catholic Church in this land.

According to the census of 1931, there were 2,113,000 Roman Catholics, thus forming nearly a third of the entire Christian community. They are at present found in large numbers in Madras, Bombay, Bengal, Bihar and Orissa. They have some large institutions for the higher education of Indian youths. The Loyola College in Madras, and St. Joseph's College in Trichinopoly are instances. They do not recognise any comity arrangement with other Christian bodies and assert their right to enter any field throughout India. This indiscriminate invading of the territories of other Churches and Missions, often interferes with the discipline of these other Churches, and sometimes makes it very difficult for the others to entertain feelings of Christian friendliness towards them.

3. The Lutheran period.

The eighteenth century saw the beginnings of Protestant missionary work in India. Ziegenbalg and Plütschau, two godly Germans, were the first Protestant missionaries. They were sent out by King Frederick IV of Denmark to preach the Gospel in the Danish possessions in India, and arrived at Tranquebar on July 9, 1706. Later, they were joined by a noble band of missionaries, such as Gründle, Schultze, Kiernander, Gericke, Schwartz and others. Gründle and Schultze translated the Scriptures into Tamil and completed the first vernacular Bible in India in the year 1727.

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Kiernander was the first Protestant Missionary to Bengal. Fabricius gave the Tamils their first hymn book.

The greatest of these early missionaries was Christian Frederick Schwartz, the 'father' of the Christian Church in Tanjore and Trichinopoly. He arrived in South India on July 16, 1750, and for nearly half a century worked unceasingly in these districts until his death in 1798. Several lengthy journeys were undertaken to Madras, Ceylon, Madura and Tinnevelly. Indian workers were trained and sent forth from Tanjore to take charge of these outlying stations, and churches were founded in all the important centres of South India. We quote from Richter an estimate of this 'brightest star in the constellation of the Danish missionaries'. 'Schwartz was by no means a brilliantly gifted man; even in his missionary labours he never struck out any new lines of work. He did not bring the Tranquebar Mission to a higher state of development, he simply extended its operations. While other missionaries in the course of years suffered from the withering influence of the natural and still more mental and moral climate of their environment, every fresh task seemed to fill Schwartz with yet greater vivacity and to help him to some inward victory; he grew perceptibly along with his growing ideals and at the same time the purity of his heart, his insusceptibility to flattery, his incorruptibility in money matters, his unassuming and simple faithfulness, the frank straightforwardness of his relations with both the great and the humble were so self-evident that he enjoyed the general confidence of the community as perhaps no other missionary in India has ever done.'

Schwartz never married; and when he died he left nearly £,10,000 to the Indian Church. Schwartz and

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the other early Lutheran missionaries have left an undying fame in South India for attractive piety, whole-hearted devotion to the Master and self-sacrificing love for the people.

Though first sent out by the King of Denmark these continental missionaries received a considerable amount of support from England and finally they and the churches established by them were taken over by the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge and the Leipzig Missionary Society. The work of the S.P.C.K. was in the year 1825 transferred to the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, and since the Great War, the Church of Sweden has taken over practically the whole work of the old Leipzig Mission. In the year 1919 the Tamil Evangelical Lutheran Church was organized and now includes in it the churches founded by the Leipzig Mission and the Church of Sweden Mission, totalling (in 1934), 31,400 persons.

Since those early days, other Lutheran Churches have entered India from Germany, Switzerland, Denmark, Sweden and the United States, and have founded flourishing churches. The largest among these are those in the Tamil and the Andhra countries and that in Chota Nagpur.

The century when the Lutherans were the only Protestant missionaries in India we call the LUTHERAN PERIOD.

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CHAPTER VII

MISSIONS IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

THE nineteenth century saw great developments in the work of missions in India. It falls into two distinct sections: the pre-Mutiny period—when most of the Protestant missions saw the beginnings of their pioneer operations; and the post-Mutiny period—when they were strengthened and developed.

For nearly a hundred years after the first Protestant missionary set his foot in India, missionary work was slow, partly because of the general apathy of Christians in the West and partly also because of the unsympathetic attitude of the East India Company. A little was attempted by some of the saintly chaplains of the Company in opening schools for Indian children and in providing portions of the Bibles in the vernaculars. Among these the names of Daniel Brown, Claudius Buchanan, Henry Martyn, Thomas Thomason, and Daniel Corrie will for ever shine with peculiar lustre.

The first English missionary to India was William Carey, who landed at Calcutta on November 13, 1793. At this time the East India Company forbade any European not in its service to set his foot on the Company's territories without special license. Arriving in a Danish ship, Carey had to register himself as an indigo planter, and at Mudnabatty, 150 miles north of Calcutta, he went to work as superintendent of an indigo factory on Rs. 75 a month. 'There and in that capacity lived for six years the one representative in India of the missionary zeal of Christian England, and

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in that obscure—one may say ignominious—way began English missions in her great dependency.'[1] He was later joined by Marshman and Ward, and all three settled in 1800 on the more friendly soil of Serampore, a Danish settlement, fifteen miles north of Calcutta. In the words of their own *principles*, they here gave themselves up unreservedly to the glorious cause of evangelization. Never thinking that their time, their gifts, their strength and their families were their own, they sanctified them all to God and His cause. How they did this must be studied in the biography of William Carey. 'Expect great things FROM GOD. Attempt great things FOR GOD' was his motto. Through the Serampore College, through the translation of the Holy Scriptures (or portions) into thirty-six languages, through the girls' schools, and through the printing press, he not only attempted but accomplished great things for God.

Another great missionary of the same period was Adoniram Judson, the apostle to the Burmans. Judson arrived in India in 1812 and, being refused entrance, found himself in Burma in 1813. George Smith, calling him 'the greatest of all American missionaries' says: 'Adoniram Judson is surpassed by no missionary since the apostle Paul in self-devotion and scholarship, in labours and perils, in saintliness and humility, in the result of his trials on the future of an empire and its multitudinous people.'

When the East India Company's Charter was renewed in 1813, the restrictions against missionaries were removed and consequently missions and missionaries came to the country in rapid succession. The growth of missions during this period and the gradual opening

[1] Stock's *History of the Church Missionary Society*, vol. i, p. 96.

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up of the entire country may be seen in the following table:

1793. William Carey, English Baptist Mission.
1806. L.M.S. in Travancore. Ringletaube.
1812. American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, at Bombay.
1813. Adoniram Judson, in Burma. A.B.F.M.S.
1814. C.M.S. at Madras.
1816. Wesleyan Missionary Society, in South India.
,, English Baptist Mission, at Benares.
,, C.M.S. begins the North Travancore Mission.
1818. English Baptist Mission, at Delhi.
1820. C.M.S. sends missionaries to Tinnevelly.
1822. General Baptists, in Orissa.
1825. S.P.G. takes over S.P.C.K. Missions in South India.
1830. Alexander Duff at Calcutta. Church of Scotland Mission.
1833. S.P.G. at Cawnpore.
1834. American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, at Madura.
,, American Presbyterian Mission opens, Ludhiana.
,, Basel German Mission, in Malabar.
1835. American Baptist Telugu Mission.
1836. American Baptist Mission, in Assam.
1837. John Anderson opens an English School in Madras.
1841. Irish Presbyterian Mission, in Gujrat.
,, Welsh Calvinistic Methodist Mission, in the north-east of Bengal.
,, C.M.S. Telugu Mission.
1842. S.P.G. at Secunderabad, Nizam's Dominions.
,, American Evangelical Lutheran Mission, at Guntur.

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1844. The Free Church of Scotland, Nagpur.
1846. Gossner's German Mission, at Ranchi.
1852. The Zenana Bible and Medical Mission.
1854. S.P.G. at Delhi.
,, C.M.S. at Peshawar.
1855. American Arcot Mission.
,, American United Presbyterian Mission, at Sialkot.
1856. Methodist Episcopal Mission, Bareilly.

Thus, nearly every large mission now labouring in India laid its early foundations in the pre-Mutiny period. But it must be said that at this period the labourers connected with many of these missions were few, their efforts tentative, and progress slow.

Two special lines of missionary work that commenced in this period must also be mentioned. In the year 1822, Miss Cooke of the C.M.S. began zenana work among the women and girls in Calcutta. As the first single lady to enter India as a missionary she became the forerunner of the great zenana missions of modern times. In 1934, there were 2,451 women missionaries (not wives) in India, Burma and Ceylon, giving their lives for the regeneration of India's womanhood.

The year 1830 marks the commencement of higher educational work by missions. In that year, Dr. Alexander Duff of the Church of Scotland Mission opened the first Anglo-Vernacular school for non-Christian youths. His devotion to his high purpose, coupled with a rousing missionary enthusiasm, was a great stimulus to the missionary cause. His biography should be read by all students of Indian missions. We shall here give a short extract from the thrilling appeal he once made to the fathers and mothers of Scotland.

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'There is not a valley nor dell nor burning waste from one end of India to the other, that is not enriched with the bones, and not a rivulet or stream that has not been dyed with the blood, of Scotia's children. And will you, fathers and mothers, send out your children in thousands in quest of this bubble fame—this bubble wealth—this bubble honour and perishable renown—and prohibit them from going forth in the army of the great Immanuel, to win crowns of glory and imperishable renown in the realms of everlasting day?' Such a man's enthusiasm and personality could not fail to make their mark on the history of missions in India. The results of Duff's work may be said to be four: (1) At a time when the introduction of Western science threatened to shatter all the old conceptions of life and basis of morality, he and his comrades convincingly proved before the eyes of all India that the West had not only a barren materialism to offer India, but rather a conception of life resting upon idealistic principles and finding in the Bible the highest truth and noblest morality. (2) He left his abiding mark upon the educational policy of the Government of India. (3) His missionary method inaugurated the great work of educational missions. (4) The last and the greatest result of Duff's work was the conversion to Christianity of young men of brilliant gifts, wide scholarship, and unmistakable religious sincerity from the highest classes of Hindu society. These converts were not many. Duff's biographer only mentions twenty-six families. But they were indeed great souls! Krishna Mohan Banerjea, Gopinath Nundy, Anando Chundar Mozumdar and Lal Behari Dey 'are the glittering stars in the firmament of the Indian Christian world.'[1]

[1] See *Richter*, pp. 173-84.

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We now come to the post-Mutiny period of modern missions.

'The history of Christianity in India,' writes George Smith, 'began in the year 1858. The Sepoy Mutiny of 1857 opened a new period. It tested by persecution the reality and the character of the faith of the converts. It proved to be a call to the conscience of Christendom.' New consecration, vigour and purpose were infused into every missionary society labouring in India, as they saw of what stuff their converts were made. The Mutiny also 'struck the knell of the East India Company's rule in India,' and the Queen's proclamation avowed the principles of religious liberty. Thus all the older societies advanced in every direction.

New missions also came in. The United Free Church Mission began work in Rajputana in 1860. The Candian Baptist Mission on the Telugu coast, and the English Friends' Mission came in 1874. The Cambridge Delhi Mission began its work in 1877 and the Oxford Mission to Calcutta in 1880. The Christian Alliance Mission commenced work in Bombay in 1889. A large number of smaller organizations also have stepped in to occupy, sometimes the unoccupied, often the partially occupied, and sometimes even the fully occupied, territories all over the country. Several interdenominational organizations have also come in to the aid of the missions. The Christian Literature Society came in 1857 as a memorial of the Mutiny. The Young Men's Christian Association, the Young Women's Christian Association, the Young People's Society of Christian Endeavour, the India Sunday School Union have all been planted in the land and are bringing forth fruit, both directly and indirectly, for the cause of the evangelization of India.

Altogether at the end of 1933 there were 163 foreign

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and fifteen indigenous missionary societies, with 4,580 missionaries and tens of thousands of Indian workers engaged in winning India to Christ.

What impact these many missionary agencies are making on the life of India may be seen from the summary of their activities as found in the latest edition (1934-35) of the *Directory of Christian Missions*. Apart from those lines of work which may be called directly evangelistic, the Christian enterprise is responsible for educational, medical, industrial and social activities which when considered in the aggregate will compel the admiration of any unprejudiced observer.

There were in 1931, thirty-eight mission Colleges in the whole of India, twenty-seven University, and eleven Intermediate. The students receiving a Collegiate education in these colleges numbered 12,322. There were on that date 287 Secondary Schools and 417 Middle Schools under Christian supervision. In all these institutions religion is taught through the Christian Scriptures, and the highest ideals of conduct and religion are presented to young India through example and precept. The number of Primary schools for which Missions and Churches are responsible must run to several thousands. Besides these that impart a general education, there are 107 Christian Industrial Institutions providing various vocational courses to young men and women.

The care of the sick, the infirm and the defectives has as we may expect, always claimed the attention of the followers of Christ. There are in India no less than 487 Christian Hospitals and Dispensaries engaged in the service of the sick; 60 Leper Hospitals, 11 Tuberculosis Sanatoria, 14 Schools for the Blind, and the Deaf and Dumb, 41 Widows' Homes and 99 Orphanages. Christian missionaries are responsible for at least 35 Industrial centres giving work to many

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thousands of men and women, and boys and girls who otherwise would have a very precarious living. There are 61 Agricultural settlements on which the landless have been settled, and hundreds of men and women from notorious criminal castes reclaimed and helped to make an honest and decent livelihood. The amount of national service that this catalogue of activities represents can be easily imagined. India can ill-afford to lose such an important factor in the forces that labour for the up-building Indian national life.

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CHAPTER VIII

THE MODERN PERIOD

THE modern period may be said to begin in the year 1910. That year saw the great gathering at Edinburgh of representatives of the missionary societies of all the most important non-Roman Churches operating throughout the world. The World Missionary Conference brought into existence a Continuation Committee which later developed into the International Missionary Council. The Chairman, Dr. J. R. Mott travelled through most mission fields throughout the world and organised National Missionary Councils. A series of Provincial Conferences were held in India under Dr. Mott's presidency, culminating at a National Conference at Calcutta in December 1912. The National Missionary Council of India, Burma and Ceylon thus came into existence and its first session was held in 1914. In the year 1923, it was renamed the National *Christian* Council, as signifying the joint and equal participation of representatives of Indian Churches with the representatives of the Missionary Societies in the consideration of all problems affecting the Christian movement in India. Similar national organizations have come into existence in China, Japan, Korea, the Near East, Siam, the Philippine Islands, Netherland Indies and the Congo.

The Council is constituted on the principle that questions of doctrine and ecclesiastical polity lie outside its province and that 'the bodies entitled to determine missionary policy are the missionary societies and the churches in the mission field'. It is, strictly speaking,

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an advisory and consultative body; but has won for itself the recognition of both the Government of India and the Missions as the body representing the Protestant Christian opinion of India. Its objects are 'to stimulate thinking and investigation on missionary questions; to enlist in the solution of these questions the best knowledge and experience to be found in India and other countries and to make the results available for all Churches and Missions in India; to help to co-ordinate the activities of the Provincial Councils; and through common consultation to help to form Christian public opinion and bring it to bear on the moral and social problems of the day.' It is functioning efficiently as an agency for the co-ordination of missionary enterprise throughout India and a clearing house of information and ideas concerning the whole Christian enterprise in this land. It holds all-India Conferences: its official organ is the *National Christian Council Review*.[1] The Fraser Commission on Village Education, the Mass Movement Survey, the the Lindsay Commission on Christian Colleges, the Survey of Christian High Schools, and spread of information regarding religious education, Social Hygiene, and advance in Evangelism—are all so many definite and tangible results brought about by the work of the National Christian Council. The Council was also responsible for sending four Indian delegates as a Mission of Fellowship to the Churches in Great Britain. All Christian workers—both Foreign and Indian—ought to keep themselves in touch with the doings of this central Christian organization and its Provincial Christian Councils.

2. Another feature of the work of the last quarter

[1] Obtainable at N.C.C. Office, Nelson Square, Nagpur. Subscription, Rs. 3 per annum, post free.

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of a century has been the many co-operative tasks that have come into existence all over India. The Women's Christian College in Madras, the Vellore Women's Medical School and the Kinnaird Women's College, Lahore are recent instances of some of these union efforts. Co-operation in training teachers, women-evangelists and ministers is also being attempted or planned for in various areas. The shortage of financial resources in the 'Sending Churches', and the growing conviction that union in missionary effort is strength to the Christian cause are together leading Missions and Churches to discover new avenues of co-operative effort. In the growing competition with Government and non-Christian private institutions, missions cannot make their best contribution in these fields except by combining the available resources to produce efficient and model pieces of work.

3. A third feature of the missionary work that requires separate notice is known as the Christian Mass Movements.

It is a moderate estimate to reckon eighty per cent of all the Indian Christians as the result of Mass Movements. The Syrian Christians in Travancore were most probably the result of a Mass Movement on the West Coast many centuries ago. The Roman Catholics on the extreme south-west and south-east coasts are descendants of converts that came out in large communal groups during the time of St. Francis Xavier. The great Christian communities in South Travancore, Tinnevelly and Madura are the results of similar movements towards Christianity within the last hundred years. The tens of thousands of converts from the aboriginal tribes—Mundas, Oraons and Santals—are due to Mass Movements that took place two and three generations ago. The recent large growth of the

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Church in the Telugu country is the result of accessions from caste and outcaste groups during the last seventy years. In this area it is still going on. The large additions to the Christian religion in the Punjab, the United Provinces and Western India from among the outcastes are the results of Mass Movements.

While these facts cannot be challenged, the importance of Mass Movements in the Christian enterprise and the responsibilities thrown by such movements on the Church were perhaps never before so fully realized as in the last thirty years. Among those who have advocated the cause of Mass Movements and have believed in them may be mentioned the late Bishop Thoburn of the Methodist Episcopal Church in North India, Bishop Henry Whitehead of Madras and scores of other missionaries—English and American—who are still in our midst. The subject has attracted great attention through the Mass Movement Survey by Dr. J. W. Pickett under the auspices of the National Christian Council.

Dr. Pickett's report has been published under the title: *The Christian Mass Movements in India.* All students of Indian Missions should study this valuable book.[1] It is a scientific study of these movements with the aid of data obtained by a careful survey of typical Mass Movement fields in different parts of India.

The conclusions arrived at by Dr. Pickett are these:—

(1) That Mass Movements for most Indian people constitute the most natural way of approach to Christ. The more individualistic way preferred in Western countries is not favoured by people trained from early childhood to group action.

(2) That group movements are a great protection

[1] Available at the National Christian Council, Nelson Square, Nagpur, Central Provinces. Price, Re. 1-8.

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from that social dislocation which carries grave menace to morality and religion. Those who have moved together exercise a stabilizing influence over one another.

(3) That the danger of Westernization is minimised and that the life of the group continues in all external aspects are natural, real and therefore genuinely indigenous. 'The Church of the villages, which is predominantly the Church of the Mass Movement, is thoroughly Indian in social pattern and customs.'

(4) That they are a great aid to the propagation of the religion, by preserving the influence of converts upon their relatives, caste associates and neighbours. The individual is left in the community to bear his witness to the faith, and not lifted up out of it as an individual convert often is, who thus loses all his influence on the community from which he emerged.

There are, however, dangers in group movements that have to be constantly watched and remedied.

1. Personal experience and individual conversion is apt to be neglected. There is great need in these fields for preaching repentance, forgiveness and personal faith. Patient instruction, adult education, special efforts for personal conversion cannot be neglected in such areas.

2. Caste distinctions are likely to be carried into the church life also. The individuals who come out of their communities overcome caste prejudice easily, and by necessity. The groups are apt to be clannish and to confine their Christian fellowship to their own particular communal group. The leaders of the Church must be on their watch against this tendency to caste exclusiveness.

3. The importance of training the young in Mass Movement areas cannot be over-estimated. The first generation comes out by conviction : the second generation constitutes the young followers who have some

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acquaintance with their parents' change of worship and life; but the third generation inherits the Christian name and religion as a birthright and is apt to grow callous and indifferent to the deeper claims of religion on individual life. Church schools staffed by Christian masters for children of the converts become from the first a prime necessity in all Mass Movement work. Missions and Churches that neglect these neglect them to their cost.

4. There is also the tendency to stagnation. 'There are still', says Dr. Pickett, 'many hundreds of thousands of unconverted members of the castes and tribes in which major Mass Movements have taken place. Non-Christian Malas and Madigas in the Telugu country (4,472,000) far outnumber those who have been converted. . . . There are still more than 700,000 Animists in Assam, more than 350,000 non-Christian Oraons, Mundas, Kharias and Santals in Chota Nagpur, more than 360,000 sweepers and 5,800,000 Chamars unconverted in the United Provinces.'

All this calls for a more intensive work for the Christians already gathered in. They are members of the Body of Christ, through which it is His Will to accomplish His purposes for India. On the health, strength and witness of this Church depends further victories. Adequate provision of pastoral ministry, a well-thought-out plan for instruction in the faith, care of the young, holding up a high standard of Christian conduct, firm exercise of Church discipline, and lastly, steps to increase the economic resources of the people—all these appear to be indispensable in any programme of advance in mass movement work. Where these are neglected by Churches and Missions, these group movements hinder rather than further the expansion of Christianity.

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5. This leads us to record one notable result already evident in the Mass Movement areas of the Telugu country. Where the movement of the outcastes into the Church has been welcomed and cultivated and good care has been taken to provide adequate instruction and training to the converts from the earlist beginnings of their Church life, the example of the converts has resulted in the ingathering of caste people. Caste conversions within the last few years total well over 32,000 from about forty different upper castes. The reasons given by the converts for becoming Christians are truly striking. A large majority attribute their first interest in the Christian religion to the changed lives of the outcaste converts; some, to Scripture portions lent them by the Christian teachers or their own Christian labourers; some, to their early education in Christian village schools; and some, to help received in Mission Hospitals. But the first reason is what is given by a great majority of the converts. This is proved by the fact that in a large majority of instances, caste converts have come out precisely in those villages where there are already Christians from the outcaste communities. Dr. Pickett mentions an area where out of 187 villages with caste converts, 170 villages had already Christians of outcaste origin. In a neighbouring mission district, it has been seen that caste conversions followed outcaste converts in 69 out of a total of 76 villages. In the Dornakal Diocese, there is no caste convert in any village where already there were no Christians of outcaste origin.

Moreover, the caste converts in many places have expressly wanted to be shepherded by the teachers and pastors through whom they came to accept the faith in Christ, and are continuing to look to them as their spiritual leaders, even though formerly they were inclined

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to look down upon them as belonging to outcastes.

This caste movement is still in its initial stage: but it is full of hope. Adequate instruction of the men and women converts is needed from the commencement. Carefully selected workers should be set apart for this work. Women missionaries and women evangelists will be needed to take charge of the instruction of women, as very often, because of past social conventions, it is most difficult to get women to receive instruction alongside of their men-folk and from men teachers. Suitable literature is required to put into the hands of those who can read. Special facilities must be provided for the education and training of young people from these converts who are likely to become leaders in the future. Careful instruction has to be given on the duty of Christian stewardship, on the Christian attitude towards labour, on purity of home-life, and against the evils of caste pride. If these are carefully attended to from the beginning of the movement, there is no reason why the Christian movement should not spread very widely among these land-owning middle classes and win as great victories among them as it has in the past among those reckoned as depressed classes.

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CHAPTER IX

THE INDIAN CHURCH

ONE of the most outstanding features of the World Missionary Conference held in Edinburgh in 1910 was the recognition it gave to 'The Church in the Mission Field'. The chairman of the commission in introducing that memorable report pleaded most earnestly for recognition of the existence in the mission field of 'not a little, but a great Church, established in the very heart of the pagan world, the young Christian Church which itself now was a great mission to the non-Christian world.' A new era began in the missionary world when the indigenous Church was thus frankly acknowledged to be the greatest, the most potent, and the most natural factor in the evangelization of the country. It is on the efficiency, purity, and missionary activity of this Church that the evangelization of India will ultimately depend.

But, alas, what we call the Indian Church is not one organic entity. The divisions of Christendom make it impossible for the indigenous Christians to belong to a visible 'One, holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church', and in consequence they belong to as many Churches and sects as there are Churches and sects that send out missionaries from the West. What we term the Indian Church is the theoretical aggregate of the indigenous Christians in all the Churches—having different ecclesiastical loyalties, following various forms of Church government and worshipping in many differing ways in numerous churches and chapels throughout the length and breadth of this vast continent. There are a few things that may be said to

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be common to them all: they are all nominally Indian Christians, and enumerated as such for all civil purposes; they are connected with one or other of the numerous Christian Churches in the land; and at least in theory are all responsible for bringing India to the feet of Christ.

Strictly speaking, therefore there is no Indian Church in the singular; there are, in the plural. Churches, denominations or sects are numerous and their number cannot be accurately estimated. If therefore sometimes we use the term Indian Church we only speak thus of the groups of Christians gathered into the Church of Christ and grouped under these many separate units.

We shall first notice a few features of this community.

1. Its numerical strength.

The total Christian community in India numbered at the last census 6,296,763. Of these, 2,768,598 are Roman Catholics; 525,607 belong to the Syrian Churches; and the remainder, that is 3,002,588 are connected with the non-Roman and non-Syrian Churches. Indian Christians number 5,990,234, of whom two-thirds are found in South India—that is Madras, Hyderabad and Mysore. In the Districts of Guntur and Tinnevelly one in nine, and in Travancore one in three of the population is Christian.

The rate of increase of the *Indian* Christian population during the last few decades is as follows:—

	Per cent.
1872-81	... 22
1881-91	... 34
1891-01	... 31
1901-11	... 34
1911-21	... 25
1921-31	... 34

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The actual number of Indian Christians in 1872 was 1,246,288; whereas in 1931 it was 5,990,234—an increase of 389 per cent. In sixty years indigenous Christians have increased nearly four-fold.

Morever, Christianity shows the largest increase when compared with most other religions. During the last decade while the Buddhists increased 10.5 per cent, the Muslims 13 per cent, and the Hindus 10.4 per cent, the Christian community increased 32.5 per cent. Christians of non-Roman connection increased 41 per cent.

During the decade preceding 1931, the largest advance appears to have been made in the Hyderabad State (141.6 per cent). Assam (88.7) follows next, and then come Travancore (36.8), Central Provinces (31.6), and Madras (29.9). The United Provinces comes near the bottom, with only two per cent advance in the ten years.

2. Its educational attainments.

This community, though numerically small, is well in advance of other communities in education and literacy. Of the 5,990,000 Indian Christians, 1,089,000 are literate—that is 18 per cent. This is higher than that of Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs. Of those literate, 14 per cent are literate in English. In female education, they are well ahead of all, except the Parsis. The Commissioner of the Census of 1911 uttered words which are still true.

'Although Indian converts to Christianity are recruited mainly from the aboriginal tribes and the lowest Hindu castes who are almost wholly illiterate, they have in proportion to their numbers three times as many literate persons as the Hindus and more than four times as the Muḥammadans.' In Bihar and

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Orissa the Indian Christians rank second in literacy only to Europeans and Anglo-Indians, having seventy-six per thousand able to read and write. The corresponding figure for the animistic tribes from whom the religion of Christ has mainly drawn its converts is five. In Madras 22 per cent of the Indian Christian men and 11 per cent of the women are literate, and 6 per cent of the men and 3 per cent of the women are literate in English. In general literacy and literacy in English, Indian Christian women are seen to be far ahead of other communities: the proportion per 1,000 being 29 for Indian Christian women, 1·4 for Hindus and ·9 for Muslims. This spread of education is a great asset to the Indian Church. Who can measure the influence the community may exert over other communities by its intelligence, learning and enlightenment? Already there are indications that this influence has begun to exert itself on the life of the country. Whereas Christians constitute only about one per cent of the population, seven per cent of those engaged in the teaching profession belong to this community. In the Madras Presidency the Indian Christian proportionately takes a larger share in the work of instruction than any one else, except the Brahman. There is probably no other community that has such a large proportion of its total number engaged in the work of imparting primary education. One service by which Indian Christians may make themselves essential and useful to the nation, is that of education. To become the teachers of young India and to spread through the length and breadth of this land the blessings of education, even an elementary education, is no mean privilege. The service rendered through this one channel alone ought to justify the claim of the Indian Church to be one of the

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most powerful factors in the regeneration of the land.

3. Its place in Indian civic life.

The Indian Christian's freedom from caste prejudice and caste favouritism, his uprightness of character, his long training in boarding schools and hostels under the eye of the European missionary ought to fit him to be pre-eminently an impartial and correct officer in public service. We have no doubt that this is recognized and appreciated by the people and the Government. In speaking to an Indian Christian audience in South India the European District Officer said that 'the Church had contributed an ever-increasing number of able officers to the public services and also given a large percentage of good and able men to other professions.'[1] The fact that in some of the large cities in North as well as in South India the office of Secretary or Commissioner to Municipal Corporations has been acceptably held by Indian Christians, and that the appointment is often given by the vote of a non-Christian electorate, affords testimony to the respect and confidence won by deserving Indian Christians from their Hindu and Muslim countrymen. The service that the Christ-liberated Indian can thus render to the motherland is unlimited.

4. Its organised Church life.

Another feature of Indian Church life in recent years is the setting up of indigenous Church organizations in different parts of India. We shall only mention a few. In the year 1907, the Presbyterian

[1] Quoted from the *Madras Mail*, vol. xlvii, No. 295.

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and the Congregational Churches of South India formed themselves into *The South India United Church*. The churches established by the Congregational Missionary Societies of Great Britain and the United States and the Presbyterian Missions of Scotland and North America form the constituent parts of this Church. Its supreme governing body is called the General Assembly and meets once every two years. It combines in it eight Church Councils located in South India and North Ceylon. The Moderator is elected at each General Assembly and more than once Indians have been elected Moderators and have discharged their duties acceptably to all. Its total Christian community numbers 263,000 (of whom 53,000 being communicants), ministered to by 239 ordained ministers.

The North India United Church is another similar organization, combining in one ecclesiastical organization the churches established by the missionary work of the American Presbyterian Mission, Church of Scotland Mission, the Irish Presbyterian Mission and other smaller Presbyterian Missions from Great Britain, Australia, America and Canada. It consists of five Synods, subdivided again into nineteen Church Councils. It was organized in the year 1924 and had in it at the end of 1931, 145,572 baptized persons, ministered to by 444 ordained ministers and 117 Licentiates. The first Moderator of this organization was an Indian and Indians are taking a prominent part in the deliberations of the governing body of this Church also.

The Federation of Evangelical Lutheran Churches in India is another organization of a similar type, established in the year 1926. The Federation seeks to give 'an outward expression to the spiritual unity' of

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the Lutheran Churches in India and aims at conserving for the Church in India what is distinctive in the Lutheran Church. The Tamil, the Andhra, the Santal, the Gossner, the West and East Jeypore, Evangelical Lutheran Churches and the Danish Mission Church are all members of this all-India Federation. The President of the Federation in 1935 was an Indian layman.

The year 1927 saw great changes in the organization of *The Church of England in India*. On July 7th of that year, the National Assembly of the Church of England passed the Indian Church Measure, providing for the dissolution of the legal union between the Church of England and the Church of England in India. This received Royal Assent on November 23rd. In the same year, Parliament enacted the Indian Church Act, making 'provision incidental to and consequential on the dissolution', annulling all letters patent and all ecclesiastical corporations in India, and all statutory connection between His Majesty the King and the Indian Church. This Act received Royal Assent on December 22nd. On March 1st of the year 1930, the severance took effect and the Church of England in India took the name by which it is now known namely: the *Church of India, Burma and Ceylon*. It thus became from that date an autonomus branch of the Anglican Communion. Its supreme Governing Body is the General Council which meets once in every three years. There are fourteen dioceses in this Church of which one has an Indian Diocesan Bishop. There were in 1935 three Assistant Bishops of whom two were Indian. Each diocese has a Diocesan Council with lay and clerical representatives from every organized parish or pastorate in the Church. The total membership of the

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Church of India in 1934 was 449,400, shepherded by 1,179 ordained ministers of whom 212 were taking care of English congregations.

In all these ecclesiastical organizations, Indians and non-Indians are working together as equal partners and co-operators in the work of the Church.

5. Its indigenous leadership.

The National Missionary Council, at its very first session in 1912, emphasised the necessity for the development of Indian leadership. One of its Resolutions recorded the conviction 'that whenever capable and spiritually minded men and women are discovered, Churches and Missions should make a real and unmistakable advance by placing Indians on a footing of complete equality, in status and responsibility, with Europeans and thus open for them the highest and the most responsible positions in every department of missionary activity.'

In this connection the Conference also emphasized the principle that the work carried on by Foreign Missionary Societies should be gradually transferred, as opportunities offered, to the Indian Church, and that suitable plans and modifications of existing organizations should be adopted, wherever necessary, so that this principle might be carried out by missionary bodies.

The last twenty years have seen an enormous development in such Indianization as is contemplated in the above Resolution. In many areas, charges of mission districts once held by missionaries have now been handed over to suitable Indians. Educational institutions once under the managership of Europeans are now under the managership of Indian Christians. Indian Christian doctors have now been placed in

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charge of hospitals formerly under European doctors. In some areas, the Superintending Missionary no longer exists, his huge districts have been sub-divided and placed under Indian ministers. Where Indians have been entrusted with such responsibilities, they are to a great extent proving themselves able, efficient and trustworthy. In handling mission funds and accounts, in keeping the work at an efficient standard and in the exercise of discipline over subordinates, many Indian Christians have proved themselves worthy of the trust placed in their hands.

We need on the one hand far more Indian leaders of this type than are available at present; and on the other, we desire to see a still bolder policy in all Missions and Churches, trusting Indians more and more with responsibilities. The carrying of responsibility trains character, develops leadership and drives men to seek divine help to enable them to discharge their duties to the glory of God and for the advancement of the Church in the land. We would urge on all Missions and Churches the great need for even greater developments along this line in the future. At a time when the spirit of nationalism sweeps over the land, and everything un-Indian is looked upon with suspicion, it is a moral and spiritual obligation upon all missionaries, and missionary societies from abroad and upon all Churches in India to seek to do everything they possibly can, to make it possible, both in appearance and in reality, to identify the Christian movement with the indigenous Church and indigenous leadership.

6. Its place in the evangelistic task.

The Indian Church, as is only right, is increasingly becoming a factor in the evangelization of India. Mis-

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sionary work in its first stage solely consists of the task of proclaiming the Gospel message. The Word stands then on its own merits. As soon, however, as converts are gathered in and a church of a few believers is formed in a locality, the truth of the Gospel no longer stands by itself, but must depend for its further conquest upon the evidence furnished by that church to the power of the Gospel. The witness of the life of the Christian community thenceforward becomes an important factor in further expansion. Moreover, the Church becomes, if it is rightly founded and its members properly instructed and trained, an evangelizing agency additional to the missionary force. The command to preach the Gospel applies as much to the indigenous Church as it is to the older Church, and if this is impressed upon the first believers from the start they in their turn will add to the volume of witness given to the saving power of Jesus Christ.

1. The Church's witness by life.

The silent testimony of the Christian individual and the Christian home are most potent factors in this respect. The social, economic, intellectual, moral and spiritual progress and transformation of Christians are after all the most convincing proof of the genuineness of the claims of their religion. Reference has already been made to the Mass Movements. The rapid progress of these movements is directly traceable to the living witness of individuals and communities. The religion of Jesus Christ spreads from village to village by the irresistible appeal of the visible transformation effected in families and villages, where it has already had a chance.

In spite of all blemishes and defects seen in individuals and churches, there is no doubt that the witness

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of the life of the Christians as a whole has not failed to attract the attention of observers and students of sociology.

The Bengalee, the leading Calcutta Hindu daily, said in an editorial note: 'Go to South Parganas and the Central Provinces and you will find Christian missionaries literally sacrificing their lives for the amelioration of the condition of the aboriginal population in whose midst they work and live. Go to Southern India and you will see what missionary effort has achieved in the way of the regeneration of the despised Pariahs.'[1]

Speaking of the work among the Mundas in Chota Nagpur, a Calcutta writer says: 'The most careless observer can tell the house of a Christian convert of some years' standing from that of his non-Christian fellow-tribesman by the greater cleanliness of the Christian's house and the general neatness and orderliness of everything about it. The contrast illustrated by the various pictures given in this book of Munda and Oraon Christian men and women, boys and girls on the one hand, and, on the other, of non-Christian Mundas and Oraons at their feasts and elsewhere will, we hope, help the reader towards an appreciation of the brilliant achievements of the Christian Missions in their noble work of civilizing and educating the aborigines of Chota Nagpur.'[2]

The Census Superintendent of the Mysore State, himself a Hindu, says that the missionaries work mainly among the backward classes and that the enlightening influence of Christianity is patent in the higher standard of comfort of the converts, and their sober, disciplined and busy lives. To take education,

[1] Quoted from *The Crown of Hinduism*, p. 279.
[2] *The Mundas*, by Batu Sarat Chandra Roy, p. 168.

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for instance, we find that among Indian Christians no less than 11,523 persons or 25 per cent are returned as literate, while for the total population of the State the percentage is only 6.[1]

The Report of the Travancore Census of 1901, compiled by a Brahman, thus spoke of this work: 'To Christian missionaries belongs the credit of having gone to their humble homes, and awakened them to a sense of a better earthly existence. The heroism of raising the low from the slough of degradation and debasement was an element of civilization unknown in ancient India.'

This is not only true of the aboriginal peoples and the depressed classes, it is very largely true of the entire community. Christians as a body are known to be law abiding citizens. An English Judge once remarked that he easily detected Christians when they were put into the witness-box. Either they were truthful and transparently so, or if they gave false evidence they soon betrayed that they were not accustomed to this!

A Hindu gentleman high up in the educational world was for some months living in a vacant mission bungalow where the caretaker was a humble Christian. After six months of observation he remarked that the love that characterised that caretaker's home was something that he scarcely ever saw or expected to see in similar Hindu homes. Testimony like this has been repeatedly given by impartial observers all over the country. The upright relations of Christians in business, the purity and love of Christian homes, the high moral achievement of Christian men and women are evidences that cannot be gainsaid. In the early

[1] *Census of India*, p. 138.

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Christian centuries it was said that 'the personal manifestation of the Christian life led to imitation'.[1] 'Those who were ignorant, foolish and miserably poor, when once they became Christians', said Origen, 'no longer defiled themselves by licentious indulgences or the gratification of shameless passion, but kept themselves in act and in thought in a state of virgin purity'. Christians of that age, according to Harnack, opposed covetousness, greed and dishonesty in business life; they attacked mammon worship in every shape and form; they combated all double dealing and falsehood. In that age of social corruption and mutual distrust Christians won by their exemplary life of rectitude. So it has been in India, though in a smaller measure. The witness of the Christian life has been a great factor in whatever expansion we have had in India in the past, and it must always be one of the chief factors.

2. The Church's witness by word.

If we have in India over six million Christians we have an army six million strong for winning India to Christ. But alas, all do not realize the duty, and all do not feel that at baptism they were received into the Church of Christ and enrolled as Christ's soldiers and they ought not to be ashamed to confess the faith of Christ crucified, but must manfully fight under His banner unto their life's end. If only every Christian was a witness, what may not be accomplished in this land in our own life time?

The emphasis laid in recent years by the National Christian Council on evangelism has had a very cordial response from all Churches and Missions. The

[1] Harnack's *Mission and Expansion of Christianity*, vol. i, p. 87.

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Forward Movement in Evangelism launched in the year 1935 has placed before all the Churches a definite five year plan. The Week of Witness is also beginning to be widely observed. During that one week it is reported that in one Church in the Andhra area, 18,017 men and women were engaged in Gospel witness; 47,800 handbills were distributed; 20,226 Gospels and Tracts were sold and about 300,000 people heard the message. As a result, 383 villages are reported to have asked for Christian instruction and over 4,000 people were enrolled as catechumens.

3. Indigenous Missionary Societies.

Equally encouraging is the organized missionary effort of the Indian Church in different parts of the country. Several missions in South India have small Home Missionary Societies of their own, which employ evangelists in their own or neighbouring districts. The Home Missionary Society of the American Madura Mission has taken one of the unoccupied taluqs of the District as its special field and is supporting Indian workers in that field. The Home Missionary Society of the Telugu Baptist Convention is raising Rs. 660 a year and is supporting nine Indian workers in the Nellore District.

The *Indian Missionary Society of Tinnevelly*, organized in 1903, now supports three Indian missionaries in Dornakal in the Nizam's Dominions, at a distance of over eight hundred miles from the home base. Besides supporting the missionaries, this society is maintaining fifty-three Telugu teachers, two boarding schools and an industrial school teaching carpentry and weaving. There were in the year 1935 as the fruit of the mission about 5,800 baptized Christians and over 2,500 catechumens scattered in one hundred and

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fifty villages in the field. The headquarters of the mission is at Dornakal, which has given its name to the diocese of Dornakal. The society raises about Rs. 21,000 a year.

In 1905 *The National Missionary Society of India* was organized at Serampore by representatives from all parts of India. It aims at uniting all the Christian denominations in all the provinces into one great society for the evangelization of India and adjacent lands. It stands for the principle: Indian men, Indian money and Indian management.

The society's work is carried on from fifty centres in nine Provinces. It has on its roll 27 missionaries and 88 other workers. Affiliated to it are the Ashram at Tirupattur in South India, St. Andrew's Mission, Bengal, and the Foreign Mission work of the Diocese of Travancore and Cochin. It has also taken over the Christian College at Gorakpur in the United Provinces and a High School and other Institutions in North Kanara. The total number of workers supported by the society in 1934 was 160, and of Christians it had gathered in 9,500. Its total income was Rs. 78,000. It publishes an English journal, called *The National Missionary Intelligencer*.[1]

The society works in the Montgomery district, Punjab; Allahabad and Fatehpur districts in the United Provinces; Sambalpur district in Bihar and Orissa; Bilaspur district in the Central Provinces; Ahmednagar and Sholapur districts in Bombay. The Diocese of Travancore works in the Parkal Taluq, Warangal district, Nizam's Dominions.

The Brotherhood of St. Andrew, one of the societies affiliated to the N.M.S. deserves an honourable place

[1] Price Re. 1 per annum, from the N.M.S. Office, Royapettah, Madras.

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among the missionary enterprises of the Indian Church. This mission was organized by the Rev. M. N. Chuckerbutty in 1911 and owes a great deal of its inspiration to the Oxford Mission, Calcutta. 'The Mission is conducted on the principles of Indian men, Indian money and Indian management. It works quite independently of any other body or mission, and depends for all its income on the gifts of the Indian Church. The Mission is conducted on thoroughly indigenous lines. The workers live in the Indian way. They receive no salaries and in this respect they are keeping up the national traditions of the religious life.'[1] The work is done at Haluaghat in the Mymensingh district, Bengal. Three of the members are ordained priests of the Church of India.

The field of the Diocese of Travancore and Cochin lies in an unoccupied taluq in the eastern portion of the Nizam's Dominions. The work is under two Indian missionaries from Travancore, of whom one is already ordained. The Society has over 300 baptized converts as the fruit of its labours.

The Mar Thoma Syrian Christian Evangelical Association is another society affiliated to the National Missionary Society, and supports 250 evangelists and priests among the Depressed Classes in Travancore, and also carries on missionary work in Cochin and Palghat and in three centres in North Kanara. The sum raised by this Church in the year 1934 was Rs. 24,000.

The National Missionary Society of Ceylon was organized in 1913 and carries on missionary work in four centres in that island. It raises Rs. 6,000 for the support of the work in these fields.

[1] Extract from the Report for 1913.

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The Diocese of Dornakal has work in two hitherto unevangelized taluqs of the Nizam's Dominions, supported by the gifts of the people. The work in Mulag is under the leadership of an Indian priest; the converts numbered 683 in 1934.

The total gain to the Christian enterprise in India through all these and other indigenous agencies may not appear to be very large. But these are so many evidences that the Indian Churches are realizing their responsibility for the evangelization of their country and are making their little contribution to the Christian movement. Even in volume, the work may not be despised, as in every case these agencies are evangelizing areas hitherto unoccupied by any foreign missionary society and constitute wherever they are, the only witnesses to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. But apart from this, they are also so many indications of new life that is springing up in the Indian Church and are of great inspirational value to all.

We now bring this chapter to a close. We have endeavoured to present a picture of the Indian Church as it is today in its most hopeful features and activities. On the purity, sacrifice and devotion of this Church ultimately depends the Christianization of India. To enable the Indian Church to fulfil her high calling will be the highest service we can do for our motherland.

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CHAPTER X

PROBLEMS OF THE FUTURE

THE problems of the future of the Christian movement in India are of three kinds, one relating to the Indian Church, a second relating to the Missions operating in India, and the third to the as yet unevangelized millions. We shall discuss the last two in the next chapters and here we confine ourselves to the problems of the Indian Church.

1. The problem of quickening the Church to increase of spiritual life.

We place this in the forefront of the problems of the Churches in India, as on its solution ultimately depends the winning of India to Christ. We are not unconscious of the encouraging features of Church life we notice in many Churches in various regions. We have given expression to these in the previous chapter. But it is our conviction that unless the Churches watch to keep fresh and at a high level the spiritual life of the community, its witness is sure to lack in vitality and fruitfulness.

The converts of the first generation usually exhibit all the glow and warmth of their new experience. They have probably made some great sacrifices for the sake of Christ, and they have their reward in the rich enjoyment of fellowship with God and fellowship with those who have similarly given up their all for Christ. The Christians of the second and third generations however cannot be expected to be born into such an inheritance of religious experience. Very often they

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need conversion themselves, and though, by Christian upbringing, they may outwardly conform themselves to religious observances, they may possibly lack the vigour of a live religion. Great care therefore has to be taken to lead the children and the young people of the Churches to a living experience in Christ.

The Indian religious instinct is a great asset to the indigenous Christians, and they are known to be very religious, as far as outward conformity goes. They may be regular in attending Church services and the sacraments. They may invite the ministers to go and pray in their homes at all domestic occurrences. They may give generously to the support of the Church. These religious practices on the part of the people, however, should not deceive the leaders of the Church to think that everything is all right. Personal faith in the living God and in Jesus Christ, the joy of sonship to the Father resulting in trust and reliance upon Him under all circumstances, the practice of daily prayer and meditation, a separation from all that is evil and a hindrance to others, and the acceptance of Christ as Lord and Master of all departments of life,—of business, of the home, of social relationships, of marriage affairs, and of public and civic life—these alone should satisfy ministers that their congregation has life and is having it more abundantly.

We are today face to face with the appalling sight of a nation usually described as 'incorrigibly religious' drifting away from all religion and God. Nationalism, politics, and social service are the only shrines at which many of the educated thinkers worship today. Secularism under these forms is usurping the place religion once had in the hearts of many a Hindu. God as an effective factor in national and individual life is in danger of being altogether forgotten by a

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large section of the people. Such a time as this demands on the part of Christians a loud proclamation by word and life that we believe in God—a living God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ and that this belief is at the very core of all our external activities. The call must be sounded in all Churches: Draw nearer to God! Get closer to Jesus Christ! Be filled with the Holy Ghost!

2. The problem of stirring up the zeal for Evangelism.

Lethargy in personal religion may be the cause of indifference to the duty of witness-bearing; and *vice versa*, indifference to the evangelistic duty may be the cause of deadness in personal religion. It is our firm conviction that, very often, new life will burst in a congregation, if the neglect of its evangelistic witness can be brought home to it with power and precision. Christian life will never thrive where witness-bearing and service for others are neglected.

A Roman Catholic author writing the history of Telugu Christians says: 'Catholic effort has until now been mostly devoted to permanent ministrations to hereditary bodies of Christians. Owing to the shortage of the clergy and lack of funds, it has not been possible to do pioneer work in an open field."[1]

What a tragic confession this is of any body of Christians! The Church exists to continue the work of the Master, 'to seek and to save that which is lost'. It labours to shepherd those that are inside the fold only in order that those within may go out and bring into the fold those outside. When any Church's energies are wholly or mainly devoted to 'permanent ministrations to hereditary bodies of Christians'—it has

[1] *History of the Telugu Christians*, by Rev. R. C. Paul, p. vii.

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lost the reason for its existence. But alas, of how many of the Protestant Churches is the same thing true? How many of the Church organizations in India—Church Committees, Church Councils and the like—are tempted, are wholly or mainly devoted to 'permanent ministrations to hereditary bodies of Christians'—in collecting money for self-support, in beautifying and luxuriously furnishing churches, in permanently ministering to the material and spiritual needs of the Christians of the third and fourth generations—and to neglect the task of going out to reach those who are outside Christ and of doing pioneer work in fields open to the Gospel!

The early apostolic Church was a missionary Church. According to Harnack: 'the most numerous and successful missionaries of the Christian religion were not the regular officials of the Church but the Christians themselves. Every one who seriously confessed the faith proved of service to its propaganda.' Origen wrote: 'Christians do all in their power to spread the faith all over the world. Some of them make it the business of their life to wander not only from city to city but from township to township and village to village in order to gain fresh converts for the Lord.' Eusebius, the early Church historian, said of the pupils of the Apostles: 'Very many of the disciples of that age set out on long journeys, performing the office of evangelists, eagerly striving to preach Christ to those who as yet had never heard the word of faith and to deliver to them the holy Gospels.' In those days of Imperial Rome, the Syrian merchant and the Roman soldier were ubiquitous: and both became centres of the Christian propaganda.

Whatever Christianity is, it is not a selfish religion. It was founded by one Who saved others and Himself

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He could not save. There is no gospel of whose content, witness-bearing is not a part. There is no Christian life which does not include in it the element of saving others. When the Church returns to this apostolic method of propagation apostolic results will follow. Oh, for an outpouring of the evangelistic zeal in our Churches! In many and many a district, Mission and Church, the revival that is wanted is the revival of evangelistic zeal. 'Every communicant a witness' ought to be the watchword in all Churches!

3. The problem of Church Union.

We have already alluded to the sadly divided state of the Church in India. Indian Christians are one in their common allegiance to their Saviour, one in national and political outlook, and one in the fact that they are all primarily and jointly responsible for bringing India to Christ. But they are not one in their witness to truth, not one in their worship of their common Lord, not one in those things that concern their Church life.

Union is the will of God, union was that for which our Lord Himself prayed, there is one Body and one Spirit. The words of the Tranquebar call are as true today as in 1919. 'We believe that the challenge of the present hour calls us to mourn our past divisions and to turn to our Lord Jesus Christ to seek in Him the unity of the body expressed in one visible Church. We face together the titanic task of the winning of India for Christ—one-fifth of the human race. Yet confronted by such an overwhelming responsibility, we find ourselves rendered weak and relatively impotent by our unhappy divisions—divisions for which we were not responsible and which have been, as it

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were, imposed upon us from without, divisions which we did not create, and which we do not desire to perpetuate.'

There is one already accomplished union in India and that is the union of the Congregational and the Presbyterian Churches in South India in the South India United Church. This union was brought about in the year 1907, and the Churches formerly connected with six different missionary organizations are now functioning as one ecclesiastical organization.

The union between this Church and the Anglican Church has been under negotiation since 1920. It was initiated by a few Indian ministers gathered at Tranquebar in May 1919 who sent an appeal to the Churches to take steps to unite. The S.I.U.C. and the Anglican Church responded in 1920 and the Methodist Church in 1923. Representatives officially appointed by the supreme governing bodies of these Churches have been working together now for fifteen years. The result of their deliberations is embodied in a booklet called *The Proposed Scheme of Union*. This is the first instance of a serious attempt to bring into one organic union Churches following episcopal and non-espiscopal polities. The South India United Church, the South India Province of the Methodist Church, and the South India Dioceses (Madras, Dornakal, Tinnevelly and Travancore) of the Church of India, Burma and Ceylon are those concerned in the union. When the negotiations are successfully carried through, there will be one united Church of South India combining in it the Churches which hitherto followed the Congregational, the Presbyterial and Episcopal polities, with a membership of nearly one million members.

The union movement ought not to end here. For

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the sake of the Kingdom of God in India, and its conversion to Christ, it ought so to spread throughout India that all the now separated Churches—even the Roman Church—will together constitute the one Church of India. To this end must work every Indian Christian who is keen on seeing his mother-land own Jesus as Lord from one end to the other.

The consummation of this end is not easy. Of all prejudices religious prejudice is the strongest and the most obstinate. While theoretically every one is in favour of Church union, when it comes to a practical solution necessitating the giving up even of some petty custom, practice or theory, which involves no great principle of morality or religion, the greatest unwillingness is shown to yield the point in the interests of union. This is true of all Churches. Add to this the fact that these customs, practices and theories have had long history in the West, and these divisions have often been mixed up with politics and social conventions: the fusion of these divided Churches in one organic unity appears well nigh impossible. But all things are possible with God, and also with those who believe. Our hope lies in Indian Christians, who are, from the nature of the case, very largely free from much of this unfortunate background. If a careful study of the essentials and non-essentials of the Christian faith is steadily pursued by all Christian leaders, if a spirit of genuine penitence for our divisions and willingness to learn from one another takes possession of all the Churches, and if a will to unite takes hold of Indian Christians—the union in one Church of India, at least of all the non-Roman Churches in this land, ought not to be an empty dream. To this end we beseech every reader of these lines earnestly to pray and work.

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4. The Problems of civic relationships.

Another situation that calls for careful thought by leaders of the Indian Church is the part that Indian Christians have to play in civic life. We have already alluded to the responsible positions acceptably occupied by educated Christian men in the public service. But every Indian Christian is a citizen of India and every man and woman must contribute his or her share in the creation of new India. We have a duty to God and to our Saviour; we have also a duty to our country and our countrymen. And that duty is not discharged merely by preaching the Gospel to all. The Christian with a new vision of service and high ideals of social conduct must be at the forefront of all movements for the betterment of society and for the amelioration of conditions that make life miserable for our fellow countrymen.

This is even particularly so in rural areas. We have stated that 89 per cent of the people of India reside in villages of 5,000 inhabitants and under, and their condition is often very miserable. In a great majority of these villages there is need for a protected water supply, for elementary sanitation, for simple medical help, for maternity aid, and for adult and children's education. In all these matters, Christian villages must be models and Christian village teachers and pastors can render great service in extending their attention and activities beyond the village chapel and the Christian settlement. There is enough room in the villages of India for any number of doctors, trained nurses, and rural health officers that the Christian community can produce.

The uplift of the rural community, the tranformation of the village, altering the conditions of rural life—talks about these are in the air. Recently in the Con-

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vocation Address of the Madras University were uttered these memorable words.[1] The lecturer said: 'Remembering that India consists mainly of villages, I can conceive of nothing more noble, and for a true son or daughter of a University nothing more appropriate, than a life spent in combating the ignorance and other social ills that hold the villages of India in thrall.' The words can be aptly and perhaps more truly applied to Christians. We can conceive of nothing more noble and nothing more appropriate for a member of the Church of Christ than a life spent in combating the social ills of rural India.

Mention must be made also of the place Indian Christians will have in the new Government of India. It is a great pity that the Indian members of the Churches of India are reckoned for political purposes as one of the many distinct Indian communities, and are given a separate communal representation. Indian Christians will henceforth be reckoned according to their numerical strength and have their so-called material interests safeguarded by so many members in the Legislatures of the land in proportion to their total strength.

We deliberately call this a great pity. It is tragic that the representatives of the Christian Churches should have considered themselves as a static community like others and should have consented to use their numerical strength for obtaining political power. They have opened themselves to the charge that the efforts that Missions and Churches are making to proclaim the Gospel of salvation in Jesus Christ are now exploited in the interests of politics. They have thus unconsciously invited opposition to, and

[1] Dr. A. G. Hogg in his Convocation Address, 1935.

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criticism of, the Christian propaganda, on the ground that it is a movement directed to the transference of individuals from one political group to another, from Hindu or Moslem communal electorate to the Christian electorate—thus causing a gain of voters to one group at the cost of an equal number to the other. One of the great political leaders of the country is said to have remarked that if only the political status of his son will not be changed by his conversion to Christianity, he will have absolutely no objection for him to become a Christian. He sees that a Hindu nationalist or a Congressman becoming a Christian can no longer under the present provision vote as a Nationalist or Congressman, but will have to merge himself in the Christian communal electorate.

The Indian Christian is by natural birth an Indian and by religion a Christian; and in political franchise he ought to take his place as an Indian and to give his vote for that candidate who most accords with his own political views. It is his duty to refuse to be labelled politically as a Christian and to be confined to a pigeon hole in which he can only seek the communal interests of Christians. The sooner a change is brought about in this situation, the better it will be for the honour of the Christian religion.

Christians will have to play a great and important part in the government of the land. They will have to be the conscience of the country, having in their hands a Book which is acknowledged by all to possess a supremely high moral standard. They have the duty of testing all conduct by this code and raising their voice against all corruption, selfishness and oppression and lending their weight to all measures that help the moral and social regeneration of the people. Their presence therefore is indispensable in

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the Legislatures, and India cannot do without them.

It is the duty of pastors and Church leaders at this time to give instruction to their people about the way in which they are to exercise their franchise. There has been in the past far too much corruption in connection with elections all over India. Hindu and Moslem candidates have been known to offer money for the erection of temples or mosques in villages and even to individual voters—to buy for money the votes of a village or an individual. Christian voters ought to set their faces against all such corruptions and exercise their franchise for the Panchayat Boards, Municipal Corporations or Legislative Councils in the interests of the country's good. Franchise is a power and a privilege and there is need to educate Indian Christians in the proper exercise of this privilege.

These new opportunities and privileges are also great tests of character. The Christian who has a vote for any constitutional body must prove the truth of his religion in the exercise of his franchise in the interests of righteousness and without fear or favour. The Christian member of the Panchayat Board, the Municipal Corporation, the District Board or the Legislative Council must prove himself a Christian by the part he takes in the work of these bodies. He will have to set his face against all corruption, dishonesty and hypocrisy, and against using his position to advance his own interests or those of his relations. In this new era into which India is entering, she will need—as Dr. Hogg said in the address already quoted—'as citizens men and women who have learned to think for themselves and to act as they think. She will need those who can put country before community or party and who, even when feelings are running

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high, can seek a charitable and sympathetic understanding of views with which they disagree. She will need those who will speak the truth only in love, and who in love will speak nothing but the truth.' 'Where if not to her Universities shall she look for such citizens?' asked Dr. Hogg. Where if not to the Indian Church, we ask, shall India look for such citizens and such public servants?

The problems before the Churches in India are many. We have only touched here upon a few of the outstanding ones. Who is sufficient for these things? Our sufficiency is of God. His Holy Spirit is with us to guide us and to lead us into all truth. Relying on our Saviour and His promises we can go forward in hope.

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CHAPTER XI

PROBLEMS OF THE FUTURE—(*continued*)

We shall now set out a few problems before the missionary societies and missionaries working in India.

The world-wide war, the almost universal economic depression that followed it, and the consequent reduction in the income of most people that give to missions were the main causes of stationary or declining incomes of missionary societies in recent years. This has led to reduced grants and a reduced number of missionaries in most missions. Between the years 1931 and 1933, the number of missionaries declined from 4,040 to 3,829. Moreover, the rise of Indian nationalism and the granting of a measure of self-government to Indians have raised new problems. The organizations of indigenous Churches and the resultant devolution of responsibility from missionaries to Indians are indications of the existence of a similar spirit in the Christian Church, and many have raised the question of the place the missionary will have in the future of the Christian movement in India.

The existence of the new spirit is undoubtedly true. And it is only right that it must lead to a re-thinking of the relationships between missions and indigenous Churches. Most missionary societies that have given any thought to the subject have already taken steps to adjust the relationships to this new situation.

The Jerusalem meeting of the International Missionary Council was significant in its emphasis on the partnership of the younger and the older Churches in the world-mission of Christianity. The review of the

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developing relations between these two factors is given in a booklet with this significant title: *Partners in the expanding Church.*[1]

It records what has already been accomplished in recognising the 'autonomy of the indigenous Churches, the increasing self-support in various fields, the changing place and function of missionaries, and progress in adjustment of organizational relationships between the younger and the older Churches'. Notice is taken of new organizations created in various missions, consisting of both Indians and representative missionaries, to administer work which till now had been almost entirely under committees of missionaries. Diocesanization, Indianization, Devolution—these new terms illustrate the fresh move that has been made in many Missions and Churches and the new orientation in missionary methods and organizations. Such a new direction given to missionary polity means that the missionary has more than ever to remember in all his actions and relationships that he is now not the director but the helper of the indigenous Church, not a master but a friend of the indigenous worker, not (in St. Paul's words) a lord over the faith of the converts, but a helper of their joy. If this becomes the basic principle of all relationships, the missionary will have a very necessary place in the Church of India. We shall here indicate a few tasks and spheres in which India needs his help.

1. He has a contribution to make to the spiritual life of the Church.

Centuries of Christianity in the older Churches have certainly given missionaries an advantage which the

[1] Published by the International Missionary Council, January 1935, to which the author owes many facts in the first part of the chapter.

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nationals do not possess. We quote from the pamphlet already referred to, which in turn quotes a statement put forth in Japan: 'The missionary can add a quickening element to the life of the Church with which he works. He must be able to contribute fresh points of view, a new emphasis on values sometimes overlooked, a steadiness and poise which springs from the background of the Christian centuries, a willingness to break new soil, try new methods and face new problems, a spirit of indifference to local opposition, prejudice and persecution, which the Christian nationals often find difficult to bear. He must help in the creation of international understanding and fellowship. Above all, he must supply a spiritual stimulus and intellectual outlook which will be an inspiration and encouragement to the Church. He must be a worthy representative of the Christian spirit of love and service which is the final and supreme apologetic for the Christian religion. For such missionary service, there is, we believe, an essential and enduring place.'

All this is true of missionaries in India and their contribution to the Church life in India. We need missionaries in all well established Churches to lead the spiritual life of the Christian people.

2. He has a special part to play in training youth.

The Church will for a long time to come look to the older Churches to supply them with men who can train Indian Christian youth. Training for the ministry of the Church will need the help of missionaries. The Christian Colleges and the High Schools need missionary educationists to impart religious and moral training to the Indian youth. Educationally, we may have Indian teachers and professors as good as any from the Universities of the West; but we

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shall still look to our mother Churches to send us men and women who will always hold up before the Indian youth ideals of uprightness, love and self-sacrifice that will be essential in the service of new India.

3. Women Missionaries have still a great part to play in the service of the indigenous Church.

While Indianization has grown enormously in the last twenty years in placing men in responsible positions, it has not kept equal pace in departments of women's work. One reason for this is the fact that many educated women think of marriage—and in most cases rightly—as something to look forward to, and in consequence are available for missionary service for a limited number of years only. As teachers in missionary schools and colleges for women and girls, women educationists are in great requisition. Then again Indian social usages still bar the door of the zenana to men evangelists and place insurmountable difficulties in the way even of women converts of the higher castes receiving religious instruction from men teachers. Missionaries therefore are required to get entrance into the barred doors of the zenana, and to teach converts the elements of the Christian religion. They are needed to train indigenous women evangelists and women workers and to lead the work of women for women.

4. Missionary help is also needed in Rural reconstruction work.

This is very closely related to the problem of self-support of the indigenous Church. It is the firm conviction of the writer that too much emphasis is often laid by Church leaders on the subject of self-support. It has led in some places to overlook the need for

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teaching the ideals of Christian stewardship, and to have recourse to assessment, compulsion, and imposition of rules and penalties to secure the funds required to carry on God's work. There is need also to re-examine the whole question of the machinery that missionary societies have set up, which is now expected to be kept going by the offerings of the people. Giving is a spiritual grace. The keener the spiritual life of the people is, the higher will be the value they set on an efficient ministry, and the more generous will be the offerings they make for the support of that ministry.

Rural reconstruction and efforts for economic uplift are not, then, to be undertaken to increase the giving power of the people, but as ends in themselves. Our Lord's miracles in healing disease, in feeding multitudes and in raising the dead were not performed with any ulterior motive. They were the outgoings of His love and power in the presence of need, and His followers cannot shut their eyes from the needs round about them. The Christian message has need to be closely and directly related to 'the experience and activities of men in their ordinary daily life and in their social environment'. This is apt to be forgotten by the indigenous Church. Christian missionaries must constantly keep this broader outlook and lead the activities to raise the standard of life among the Christian people and to alter the insanitary, improvident and indebted conditions in which they live. This can be done in various ways:

(a) By improving the religious life of the people.

The poverty and misery of our rural congregations are at bottom moral problems. Remove the drinking habit. Wage war against foolish marriage expenses. Attack the all too prevalent improvident habits of

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eating, dressing, giving and spending above one's income, inculcate in all labourers honest work and truth. You have solved half the problems of rural poverty. We know that without any measure of economic relief these Christian qualities have brought prosperity and good living in many a village.

(b) By the organization of Co-operative Banks and Societies.

Village indebtedness is a problem that the politicians are tackling as far as they can. But Christian indebtedness is a disgrace. When the right moral attitude is taken towards the evils that are the primary causes of debt, attempts have to be made by co-operation to free the people from the clutches of the money lender. There is danger in co-operative societies being looked upon by poor people as institutions for borrowing other people's money at cheap interest, instead of as banks to receive small savings day by day, or month by month, and to help to tide over off seasons. With care and instruction, co-operative movement for joint purchase, joint sale, and joint use of improved machinery and similar common efforts will assist in raising the prosperity of the people. There were in 1934 all over India 29 co-operative banks and societies under the direction of missionaries. This work requires special gifts and training. Missionaries with special qualifications are needed to take charge of this branch of work in all areas.

(c) By encouraging vocational education.

The Agricultural Institute, Allahabad, the Rural Reconstruction Centres of the Y.M.C.A., the Vocational and Industrial Schools established in many areas are to a large extent attempting solutions of the economic problem of the Indian village. They train boys and girls to dignity of labour, and they equip them to

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earn an honest livelihood and to be centres of light and knowledge wherever they may be. The one hundred and seven Agricultural and Industrial Schools that were reported in the year 1933 are doing as important a work as—if not more, than, any other institution for imparting academic education.

These are some ways by which missionaries and missionary societies may help towards rural uplift.

5. Missionary Co-operation is also needed in the field of Christian Literature.

We have already dealt with the problem of Christian illiteracy and wastage in those receiving an elementary education. Provision of books at cheap price, and a constant supply of them can alone help to preserve literacy. Then again we think of the thousands of Indian lay teachers and clergy who are like beacon lights in their own particular spheres: but their lights cannot be kept glowing and bright without a regular supply of new knowledge and fresh ideas that can only come through suitable literature. The importance of Christian literature for the growth and development of the Church cannot be too much stressed. This means writers of first-rate order, and funds to place the books at a cost within reach of all. Missionary teachers, theological professors, and college lecturers all have here lines of activities which will bring light and learning to the humblest village home. There are forty mission presses established in various parts of the country. All these need to be requisitioned for the production of cheap Christian and evangelistic literature. Missionaries can do this work best in close co-operation with Indian Christian writers. What was said of Japan is true also of India. The missionary is not called on so much to

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produce literature himself, but 'to organize and promote its production and distribution,—to advise and stimulate and especially to emphasise the value of the use of literature.'

6. Missionaries are still required to help in reaching all classes of people with the Gospel message.

There are communities that are yet out of reach of the ordinary witness of the Church. Muslims, for instance are neglected in many parts of India and the average Indian worker has not the knowledge needed for this specialised work. The educated English speaking men would require the presentation of the Gospel message in ways which will compel their attention. Leadership and guidance is required also to the Indian Church in reaching the vernacular speaking people of the upper classes of Indian society. There are a few gifted evangelists like Dr. Stanley Jones that can present the Gospel most acceptably to English speaking audiences: but we need many more such evangelists for English as well as for vernacular work.

These are great needs, and we strengthen our appeal o the older Churches by another quotation from the apan report. 'It must be recognized that even when he national Church is established and the leadership f that Church has been taken over by the nationals, he task of evangelism has not been completed. In act it has only begun. It will take decades or even enturies before the struggling Church will be able o to permeate the life of the nation that society will ave been Christianized. Even in so-called Christian nds this is not yet the case. In missionary lands e opposing forces are vastly greater and the struggle ore intense. To forsake a weak and struggling

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Church at such a point is to invite disaster to the Kingdom of God in those lands. It is quite unfair to expect the Church in mission lands to show in decades a development which has required centuries in Western lands under circumstances vastly more favourable.'

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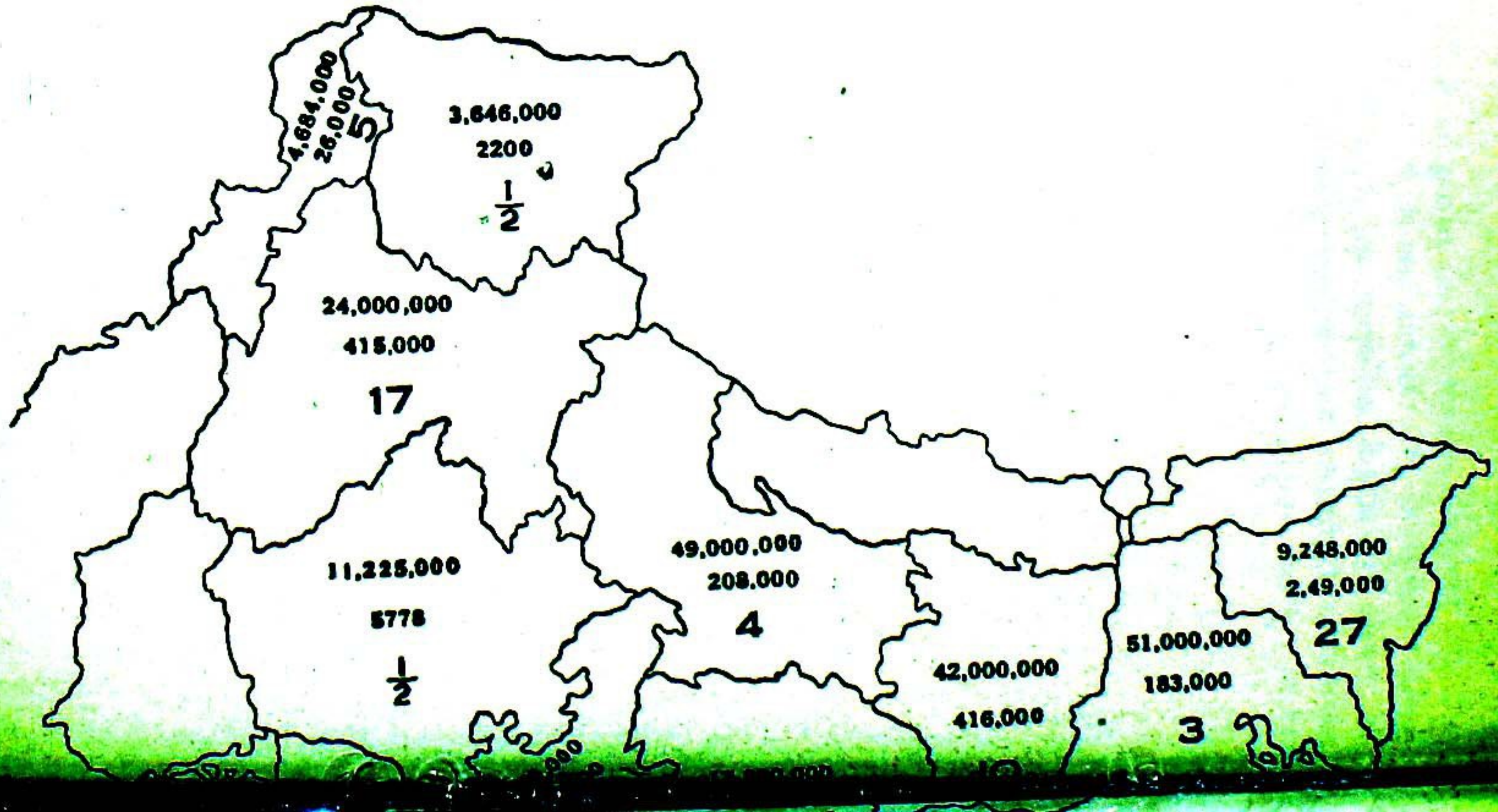
Diagram II



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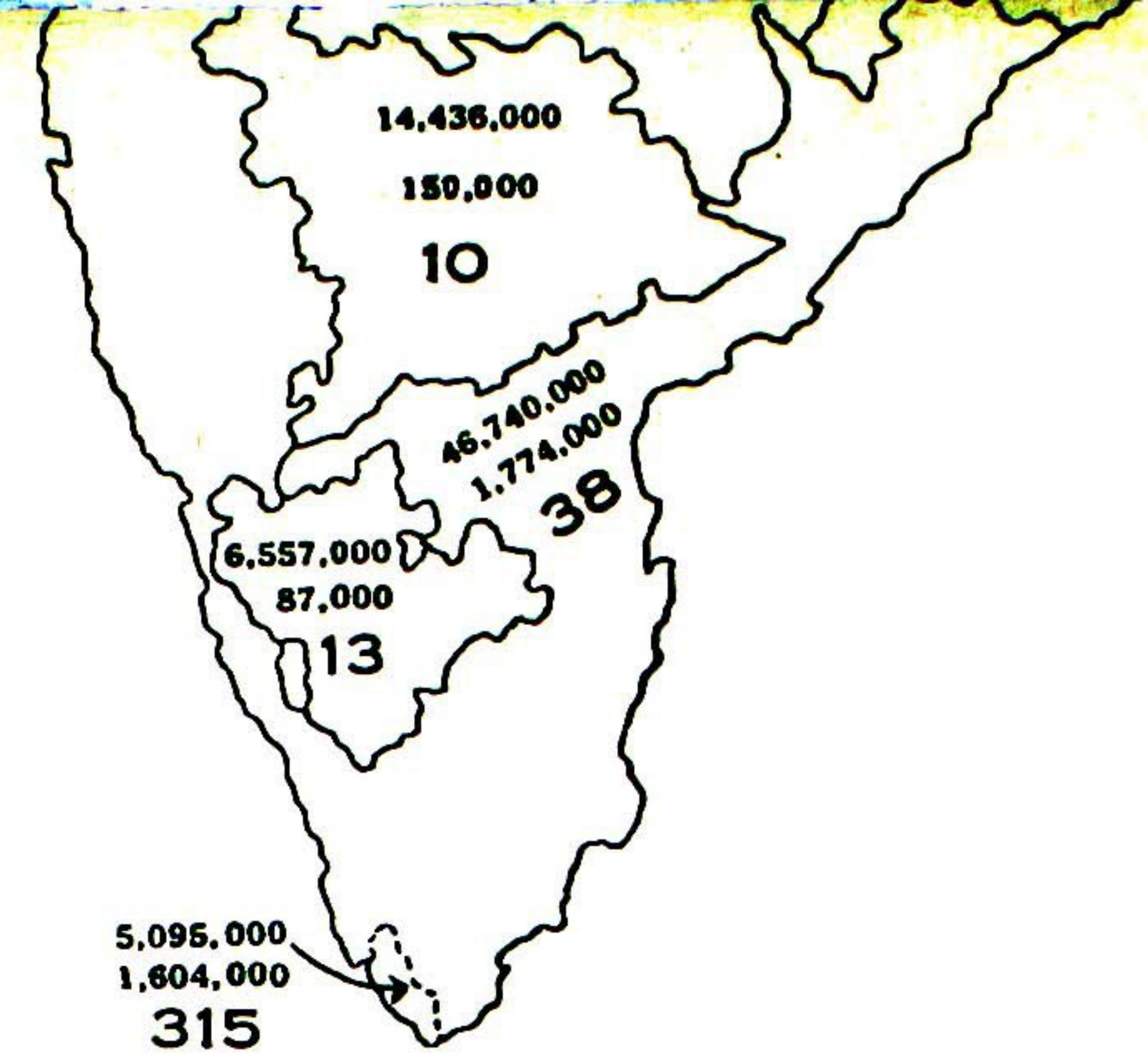

The political Divisions of India, with population and number of Christians in each.

The figures in heavy type show the proportion of Christians per 1,000 of the population in each Province or State.

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CHAPTER XII

THE UNEVANGELIZED REGIONS OF INDIA

1. Missionaries are needed to evangelize the unoccupied areas of India.

In spite of the comparatively rapid progress made by the Christian religion,. Christians constitute a very small proportion indeed of the total population. Out of every one hundred persons, nearly 1.8 are Christians—scarcely two per cent. In other words, ninety-eight persons out of hundred in India are outside the Christian Church. The field still to be occupied for Christ is therefore seen to be enormous. We saw that it would take nearly thirty-four years to count the whole population of India at the rate of twenty a minute. At the same rate it would take just seven months of the first year to count all the Christians of the land. The remaining thirty-three years and five months will be taken up in counting all the others.

The map of India attached to this chapter shows the population of each Province, the number of Christians, and the proportion of Christians to each ten thousand of the population. It will be noticed that in all the British Provinces, with the exception of Madras, Assam, Burma and the Punjab the proportion is much below the average. The number of Christians per ten thousand in the different Provinces is as follows :—

Madras	... 388	Bihar and Orissa	... 91
Assam	... 235	United Provinces	... 42
Burma	... 226	Bengal	... 36
Punjab	... 176	Central Provinces	... 33
Bombay	... 145	Central India	... 16

The condition of the States with one or two

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exceptions is indeed appalling. The proportion of Christians is shown below :—

Travancore	...	3,149	Baroda	...	30
Cochin	...	2,779	Bengal States	...	29
Central Prov. States	...	208	United Prov. States	...	24
Mysore	...	134	Kashmir	...	6
Hyderabad	...	105	Rajputana	...	5
Bombay States	...	36	Punjab States	...	5

The situation with reference to the occupation of the whole empire by missionary forces may be stated as follows :—

(1) There are large tracts of territory in each Province wholly unoccupied for Christ. Seventeen States of Rajputana and the Punjab were in 1931 practically untouched. British Baluchistan, Sind, Baghelkhand Agency and the Gwalior State are all reported to be 'very inadequately occupied'. In Bengal there are six Districts with an aggregate population of eight millions with less than one Christian in two thousand of the population. There are five districts in the south-eastern portion of the United Provinces with a population of six millions where the work must be declared to be quite inadequate. Bihar with forty-two millions has large unevangelized areas. Nearly a third of the population of the Presidency of Bombay is said to be but 'slightly touched by missionary effort'. There are sixty whole Districts in North India—both in the Provinces and the States—where in all probability there is no Christian work whatever. The most pressing need therefore is the more adequate occupation of the States as a whole, and the densely populated areas of the Gangetic plain.

(2) There are entire communities, classes and castes almost untouched, even in the so-called occupied areas. We have already alluded to this in the last

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chapter. Bombay deplores that certain immense groups of the people are almost entirely unevangelized. The Jains, the Lingayats, and the Parsis are mentioned in particular. The aboriginal tribes in the South Gya District and the Santali aboriginal tribes in the Monghyr District in Bihar are almost entirely untouched. The same is practically true of the Lombadies and the Kois of the Hyderabad State. The Muslims of India, seventy-seven million strong, are not being effectively reached, especially in South and Mid-India.

It is estimated that, after allowing fully for the utmost increase in existing missionary agencies, there are in all probability nearly one hundred millions of people who cannot hear the Gospel message unless missionary agencies from the West or from India itself carry it to them in this generation.

To sum up then the needs of India in a few words we may say :—

Men and money are needed to undertake the evangelization of the one hundred millions who are at present beyond the reach of the existing missionary agencies.

India's sons are needed to go as missionaries and evangelists into the vast unoccupied areas of the country.

'Evangelists and Teachers' are needed to instruct and train for Church life those who are coming in large numbers in the Mass Movement areas.

Educationists—men and women—are needed to train Christian youth for the service of the Church and service of the motherland.

Consecrated women are needed to carry the light of the Gospel into the zenanas.

Missionaries and Indian evangelists are needed to

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rouse the indigenous Church to a deeper Christian life of faith, love and devotion.

What can *you* do? What can *I* do?

Three things are possible for every reader of these lines.

2. Pray.

'Whoever prays most helps most.' It is said of Pastor Gossner (whose name we see in the German Mission at Ranchi): He prayed up the walls of a hospital and the hearts of the nurses, he prayed up the mission stations into being, and missionaries into faith, he prayed open the hearts of the rich, and gold from the most distant lands. Regular, systematic, definite prayer accomplishes much. Gathering into one thought the need of these vast millions and realizing as never before our responsibility as witnesses of Christ, will not every reader of these lines form the earnest purpose to pray daily for the awakening of India and the coming of Christ's Kingdom in the land?

3. Give.

The Jew had to give of his money for three objects—for temple sacrifices, for the upkeep of the priesthood, and for the relief of the poor. Fulfilling one of these calls never exonerated him from another. All were equally binding on him.

The Christian has also three obligations to discharge. Like the Jew he has to give for the support of the ministry, or for self-support. The obligation to the poor rests as much on him as on the Jew. But instead of the temple sacrifices, he has to give of his money for the extension of the kingdom of God. The stewardship must be faithfully discharged in all

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the three ways. All are equally binding on him. Nay more. If the evangelization of the world is 'the work for which the Church was specially brought into existence', if missionary work is, in the words of the late Archbishop of Canterbury, 'the greatest work of the Church', and if to 'go into all the world and make disciples of all nations' is the last commission of our Lord, then the cause of evangelization affords, not one out of a whole host of calls on the Christian's purse, but the primary call on his stewardship, one that takes precedence of all other Church or social needs, and one that is most assuredly 'a sacrifice acceptable, well pleasing to God' (Phil. iv. 18).

Money is power. Money is the stored up energy of human toil and can be converted again into labour. *Money is myself.* I toil for a month for the Government or the public and at the end of the month get my salary. The cash in my pocket represents a month's worth of myself. How much of myself, then, do I give for the evangelization of India?

In view of the great commission of our Lord and of the appalling needs of India, shall we not give—give with abandon, give with sacrifice, give with joy—till India be won for Christ? Against the priceless lives of those who are going to toil in obscure places, to subsist on insufficient salaries, and to lay down their lives in active service, is it a great thing if we give of our substance to support the men who have given their all for Christ? In view alike of the mighty possibilities of accomplishment in consecrated money and of the pitiful inadequacy of the number who are giving in proportion to their ability, shall we not consecrate all that we have for this great cause? Our prayer, our gifts and our witness for Christ will measure alike our love for India and our loyalty

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to our Master who has bought us with a great price.

3. Go.

Prayer and giving unaccompanied by work are of little avail. Every Christian, of course, is a witness, a missionary to those with whom in his daily walk of life he comes into contact. But the needs of the Indian Church and of the unevangelized millions can be met only by men and women who will surrender their entire lives for the direct work of Christ.

It was Francis Xavier, William Carey, Alexander Duff, and a host of other men who, for the Gospel's sake, forsook their country, their friends and their home, that did the most effective work in establishing the kingdom of God in our land. Missionary work involves sacrifice. The service of the Church cannot offer brilliant worldly prospects. And yet both need men and women. Garibaldi, the Italian patriot, calling for volunteers to save his country, said: 'Young men, I have nothing to offer you but cold, hunger and rags, let him who loves his country follow me.' Thousands of the youth of Italy—the flower of the nation—followed him and laid down their lives for the freedom of their motherland. Shall we do less for our land and our Master?

The Son of God goes forth to war,
A kingly crown to gain;
His blood-red banner streams afar;
Who follows in His train?

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PREFACE

These days religion is looked upon as a bug-bear. Yet mankind has not been able to give up religiosity. To banish religion is one thing; to try to free it from the bondage of pretenders quite another. We entirely agree with the view of the great modern scientist Max Planck *that the religious element in his nature must be recognised and cultivated if all the powers of the human soul are to act together in perfect balance and harmony*. True religiosity is the only bed-rock on which the great fabric of human progress can be built in safety. It is to expound this view that the books of the Religious Renaissance Series are being written.

GANGA PRASAD UPADHYAYA

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CHRISTIANITY IN INDIA

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTORY

The beginning of Christianity in India is as much shrouded in mystery as its birth in the land of its nativity. Mystery has a charm of its own and where one does not exist, it is coined. Syrian Christians of the South claim the establishment of the Christian Church in India by apostle Thomas. "A very exciting account of the life and death of the apostle in India is to be found in the pages of a Portuguese historian with apparent good faith. Maffens relates the miracles that Thomas wrought in India, how he converted a certain Magi; how he built a temple at Meliapore, how he brought the dead to life; how he delivered himself of certain wonderful prophecies, and finally, how he became a martyr for the faith."* "St. Thomas's Mount" in Madras is said to be the burial place of the

*Kayes' Christianity in India, p. 1.

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apostle; "but *the more the legend is investigated the more fabulous it appears.*" But it appears that towards the close of the second century some Christians did come to India and settled on the coasts of Malabar and Coromandal. What success they had in converting the Indians is not known. The history of India in those days was a chequered one. If there was any success it must have been very nominal. The first Churches were the Syrian Churches. At the commencement of the fourth century when the Emperor Constantine "seated Christianity on the throne of the Roman World" at the Council of Nice, one of the assembled prelates, named Johannes, subscribed his name as "Metropolitan of Persia and the Great India." The very wording of the name shows that there must have been very little reality in it. But in later years we find papists trying to struggle for existence, not only against Indians, who appear to be indifferent, but also against the older churches. When Vasco de Gama came to India first in 1498 as a stranger, and then a few years later, with the title of "Admiral of the Eastern Seas", a new chapter began. But "the first Christian settlers in India were the most un-Christian of men." Maffens has candidly acknowledged the unholy

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lives of the Portuguese. "Proselytism in the time of Albuquerque was a matter of state policy, not of Christian zeal and devotion." The Viceroy, we are told, in order to breed up soldiers, "*got the Indian maids made Christians,* and married them to the Portuguese, that they might not always stand in need of fresh supplies of men from Portugal." This political consideration has been weighing ever since. The first-Jesuit missionary Francis Xavier, came to Goa with a new Indian Viceroy in 1541. He had a missionary zeal and his career in India has been very highly spoken of by Christian historians. Several legendary accounts of sensational nature have been given. "He is said to have converted seven hundred thousand unbelievers to the Christian faith.....That the dishonesty or credulity of his biographers has greatly magnified his successes is not denied."[1] But later Jesuits, for example, Robert de Nobilibus, stooped to most degrading frauds in Christianizing India and even unscrupulous Christians bend their head in shame when they are told these stories.

That India has never been a fertile soil for

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[1] Kayes' Christianity in India, p. 21.

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Christianity is more than proved from their struggle for conversion during these seventeen or eighteen centuries and the numerical strength they have so far achieved. The religion and culture of Indians, though diseased and degenerated, have proved more than a match for alien faiths. In the last one thousand years Islam has scored about 30 per cent and in half as much time again Christianity two per cent. But in Travancore there are about 25 per cent Christians and in Cochin too their number is not inconsiderable. In recent times, when even Europe and America are renouncing Christian religion, Christian missionaries are making an almost frantic effort to enter through the back-door. Having failed to appeal to intelligentsia, they have turned their attention to low castes and jungle tribes and under cover of social and political work, they are trying to alienate their love for culture and religion of their forefathers. In this, they have been partly successful. But the main cause is the indifference of the upper class Hindus towards their backward classes. Every country, in every time, has its slums. No society is cent per cent perfect. In this respect Hindu backward classes do not stand singly. But the greatest fault of the high class Hindus is their

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apathy towards the betterment of their fallen brethren. The Hindu Pandit and the Hindu Kshattriya are guilty of the unpardonable sin of having allowed alien faiths to make undue encroachment upon their legitimate domain. They are sleeping a sleep that knows no waking. The shepherd has no right to lie snorting when the wolf has entered the fold. If Christianity had brought something nobler than Hinduism (pure Vedism of yore or even degenerated Hinduism of today), on humanitarian grounds we should have welcomed it. But we have grave doubts about it and it is these doubts which we propose to delineate in this treatise.

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CHAPTER II

THE DIVINITY OF JESUS CHRIST

Colonel R. G. Ingersoll's essay "About the Holy Bible" opens with the following paragraph:—

"Somebody ought to tell the truth about the Bible. The preachers dare not, because they would be driven from their pulpits. Professors in colleges dare not, because they would lose their salaries. Politicians dare not, they would be defeated. Editors dare not, they would lose subscribers. Merchants dare not, because they might lose customers. Men of fashion dare not, fearing that they would lose caste. Even clerks dare not, because they might be discharged. And so, I thought I would do it myself."[1]

The conditions which prevailed in America in Ingersoll's time do not exist in India today, but the ever-increasing pace of Christian proselytisation in this country, as well as the world domination of Christian powers, overawes people and they think that they will be charged of vulgarity if they criticise Christianity or investigate the historicity of

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[1] Ingersoll's Essay "About the Holy Bible"—opening paragraph.

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Jesus Christ.

Whether Jesus Christ, as described in the Bible, was a historical person is a question. Some persons have insinuated that a man of this name and this character never lived. Such assertions have been vehemently resented or contradicted by Christian writers. But a fair-minded person cannot but come to the conclusion that the Jesus Christ of the Bible, if not altogether a myth, has a great deal mythological about him. If we minus all that is incredible on the face of it what remains in the Biblical account of him, is such as cannot afford to be the foundation of a big religion. The contemporary histories have been uniformly silent about Christ and the writers of Christian times could not help their judgments being coloured by the accounts of the book which they were taught to believe as divine and therefore above suspicion or question.

The main sources of our information about Jesus Christ are the four Gospels alleged to have been written by Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, the four apostles of Jesus Christ.

"According to the Church, the first Gospel was written by Matthew. *As a matter of fact, he never wrote a word of it—never saw it, never heard of it,*

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and probably never will."[1]

But supposing he did, let us see what he says:—

Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise; when as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost.

Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not willing to make her a public example, was minded to put her away privily.

But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him *in a dream*, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost."[2]

Who can say that it is a historical proof of the divine sonship of Jesus? If *dreams* are accepted as the historical bases of any happenings, woe betide High Courts and their Judges.

Now ask Mark, the second apostle. He is silent about Joseph's finding his spouse Mary with the child or dreaming a dream. Jesus is born, he grows up and nobody ever suspects or talks about his human or divine parentage. When he was a full man, then?

"And it came to pass in those days, that Jesus came

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[1] Ingersoll, p. 70.
[2] Matthew, Chap I. Verses, 18-20.

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from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized of John in Jordan.

And straightway coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens opened, and the Spirit like a dove descending upon him.

And there came a voice *from heaven*, saying, Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." (Mark: Chap. I. verses. 9-11).

'*Heaven*' here evidently means sky. What else can it mean? How such voices come from above and how are they to be distinguished from ventriloctions is a problem which will baffle the greatest physicists of the world. As regards the historical character of the happening, there are absolutely no grounds even for the probability, not to speak of certainty. The whole thing sounds so mythological!

St. Luke's Gospel begins with the birth of John the Baptist, the son of Zacharias whose wife "Elisabeth was barren and they both were now well stricken in years." "An angel of the Lord" visits him saying "thy wife Elisabeth shall bear thee a son and thou shalt call his name John." When Zacharias hesitates to believe him, the angel says, "I am Gabriel, that stand in the presence of God and am sent to speak unto thee and to shew these glad tidings." "And, behold thou shalt

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be dumb." Does not all this sound a fairy tale in this scientific age? Yet Christians believe it. But so much about John. The advent of Christ should be more mysterious. "And in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth."

"To a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary.

"And the angel came in unto her, and said, 'Hail, thou art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women.....thou shalt conceive in thy womb and bring forth a son and shalt call his name Jesus."

Poor *virgin* Mary naturally feels nonplussed and asks in wonder:—

"How shall this be, seeing I know not a man."

"And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee; therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God."

(For all these quotations vide St. Luke Chapter I)

According to Matthew the angel appeared to Joseph in *dream* and according to Luke, he appeared personally to Zacharias and to Mary. Who are the witnesses of these happenings? How is an enquirer into truth to know that these events at all took place? No reliable witness is forthcoming.

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Luke, Matthew and Mark are also not eye-witnesses. Nor were the things recorded immediately. The utmost plausible is that they might have heard rumours in their own times. But are these rumours history? Supposing a man comes today and narrates such things, even the most credulous amongst us will not believe him. Anybody may see a dream and anybody may tell people that such and such angel visited him. The discrepancies between the statements of these apostles are so marked and so glaring that they reduce the gospels to the status of gossips. St. John, the author of the fourth gospel, is silent about the appearance of the angel or the conception. He begins the book with mystic statements, such as often strike awe in the minds of common people, not because they are so meaning-ful, but because they have no meanings at all. These things are so common among vulgars of all ages and all countries and no educated person gives ears to them.

But there is one thing that needs clarification. In these gospels we find references to old prophesies and it is on the ground of these prophesies that simple folk are asked to believe other statements. Let us examine them too.

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Reference No. 1

"Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying,

Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us. (Matthew, Chapt. I, Verses 22-23).

The reference here is to Isaiah, Chapter VII, Verses 10-14—Old Testament. In good old days, it is said, Ahaz, king of Judah was invaded by Rezin, the King of Syria and Pekah, King of Isarel (Ibid Verse 1).

Isaiah went to Ahaz and comforted him promising that God's secret help would baffle his enemies' design. But where was proof that Isaiah was a prophet of God! There ought to be some *sign*, which means a miracle. No miracle was done then. Only a threat mixed with promise.

"Ask thee a sign of the Lord thy God; ask it either in the depth, or in the height above." (Isaiah vii, 11).

The threat does its work, for,

But Ahaz said, 'I will not ask, neither will I tempt the Lord." (Isaiah vii, 11).

But the Lord does promise a sign.

And he said, Hear ye now, O house of David, Is it a

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small thing for you to weary men, but will ye weary my God also?

Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Emmanuel. (Isaiah vii, 13, 14).

Do you know when this promise was made? Full 742 years before the Christian Era, *i.e.*, at least thirty generations before. And what had the prophecy to do with the main issue before Ahaz? Was it pertinent? Was it relevant? Suppose A comforts B promising something and B asks for some sign. Instead of showing the sign then and there an indefinite promise is made without any fixed date, time or event, and that sign comes after several hundred years. What is its utility? In what way does the sign function? Besides, what is the proof of its being the self-same promised sign? *A virgin shall bear a son.* When and where? Which virgin? In this broad world there are so many virgins.

One typically funny example of prophesies is given below:—

Peter while giving a speech says:—

"Men and brethren, this scripture must needs have been fulfilled, which the Holy Ghost *by the mouth of David* spake before concerning Judas, which was guide to them that took Jesus. (The Acts. i. 16).

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Here Peter means that Judas's betrayal of Jesus was in fulfilment of the prophecy made long long before by David or by the Holy Ghost through David. Let us see what that prophecy was. The Christians say that the reference here is to Psalm XLI, 9. The forty-first Psalm is a complaint of David against the treachery of his enemies:—

> Yea, mine own familiar friend,
> in whom I trusted,
> Which did eat of my bread, hath
> lifted up his heel against me.

Here the reader will find that there is no reference whatsoever to Judas or Jesus. David had certain friends who betrayed him. It was a common event. Such events are frequent even today. Are they the fulfilment of David's prophecy? David narrates a past event, his own case. It has nothing to do with prophecies and it is sheer cheating to pretend to prove the truth of any subsequent event on the strength of a prophecy. Such prophesies are plenty in the Bible.

It is said that Zacharias was filled with the Holy Ghost. And Elizabeth too was filled with the Holy Ghost and the babe in her womb began to leap with joy. Mary was also filled with the Holy Ghost. What that Holy Ghost was nobody has

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yet been able to ascertain and anybody who has ever tried to enquire has been dubbed as heretic. Is it not all a jugglery ? Of course with one difference. The juggler admits that he is exercising simply sleights of hands. While here, poor God is dragged in. In India we hear so many prophesies being made from day to day and they can be easily tucked to any happening anywhere or anywhen.

So much about the birth of Jesus Christ. It is all a fairy tale. There might have been a man named Jesus. He might have been the son of Mary and Joseph. He might have been a good man, saintly, pious and unselfish. He might have been better than thousands or millions. We shall not be suspicious for nothing. But that is all irrelevant. A good Jesus, a selfless Jesus, an honest Jesus does not make Christianity. Christianity is concerned with the Jesus who was born of virgin Mary, Mary who had known "not a man", Mary, who did not conceive as all her mothers, grandmothers, sisters and daughters conceived before her or after her. She was filled with the Holy Ghost.

Our objection is that we see no proof either scientific or historical or even metaphysical for such a birth. It is a case which is too individual

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to admit of any demonstration and as such, not only unprovable, but also unbelievable. Even if there was such a man as Jesus, it is impossible for him to be born as narrated in the Bible or believed by the credulous. If there are ten thousand witnesses who say that a camel was born of a leaf of Nim Tree, I shall not believe them, as it is unprovable, improbable, impossible as well as absurd. Those ten thousand witnesses might have been honest but silly, credulous, and unobservant; or they might have been too clever. As regards Jesus' divine birth, there is hardly any person who might stand the tests of evidence in any court. Poor Joseph can only say that he saw a dream and that also, when you are convinced of the reliability of the apostles as true observers, faithful remembrers and precise narrators. Even Matthew, Mark, Luke and John could not say on oath that they were observers of the happenings narrated by them. If Luke is to be trusted, an angel appeared to Mary and informed her that she was filled with Holy Ghost. Nobody was present there. Even Luke relied upon hearsay. Westaway has rightly observed:—

"If in the creed there are two clauses more than any others that ought to be expunged, assuredly

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they are, 'was conceived by the Holy Ghost,' and 'Born of the Virgin Mary.' *It is scarcely possible without irreverance*, and happily it is not necessary, *to state in plain language what the inevitable implications of these clauses are* to those who accept them in their literalness, as so many people do." (Science and Theology, p. 371).

"No evidence except that of the mother can ever have been brought in favour of it. If, then, we believe it, we must consider that it falls somehow within the order of probable events: Suppose now that a biologist were to introduce the case of Mary of Nazareth into a scientific discussion of parthenogenesis, or that a barrister were to appeal to it in a paternity case, what would be the feelings of the Christian public? The majority would be simply astonished, the minority would be angry and shocked. But why?"

(Dr. Inge's *Truth and Falsehood in religion*, p. 94).

Also see Miss Mande Royden's letter in "*The Challenge*" of Feb. 22, 1918.

Westaway says that "Mammalian parthenogenesis is absolutely unknown to biology."

But where is the escape from literal interpretation? Christianity after different phases through which it has passed in the last twenty centuries has put itself on the horns of the dilemma. If you interpret "Born of the Virgin Mary" *literally*, it is absurd, reason-less and rhyme-less. If you

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take it *metaphorically*, it shakes the very foundation on which the whole fabric of Christianity stands. Westaway says, "The evidence for the Virgin Birth is *altogether inadequate*, and it must be remembered that similar stories were told in regard to many other great personalities of the ancient world, Plato, Alexander and Augustus among them." (Science and Theology, p. 370).

Westaway is still a Christian and uses the word 'inadequate' very cautiously. In fact, there is absolutely no evidence whatsoever. Mary's assertion, even if it is Mary's, cannot be taken as evidence. The appearance of the angel, if a fact, might be a hallucination. Young ladies are generally subject to such hallucinations. Joan D'arc used o see angels. Not because angels did appear to ier, but because she had heard from childhood tories about angels. Or it may be that clever propagandists concocted the story and their credulous ollowers gave currency to it. If you just try to ind the mentality of the people who attributed ivine birth to Plato, Alexander and other great ersonalities, you will see that whenever there is a reat man, or a man whom we revere, we attribute omething superhuman to him. In Sanskrit, good ersons are generally called Amṛta-putra (अमृत पुत्र)

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or, Deva-putra (sons of God). Not because they are born in some miraculous way, but simply because people are anxious to attribute divinity to them. Rāma and Kṛṣṇa both have superhuman birth, not that their mothers had virgin conceptions. Such a thing was too absurd for the Hindu poet. The Hindu ingenuity takes the form of councils held in heaven, of the devas who are sick of the atrocities of the demons in the world and Viṣṇu requested to incarnate himself in some chosen family. The mother of Gautama Buddha is also credited with such happenings. The myth invented by Christian missionaries was absurdly gross in comparison with the myths contrived by Hindu and Buddhist mythologists. The Hindu idea of God-man has been to make God behave just like man, to play the full part of a man (nara līlā नर लीला). He is born as other men are born. He grows up as other men grow up and He dies as other men die. The Hindu interweaves mythology and history so dexterously that there are less chances of being betrayed. The Christian failed to bring in that subtlety and has been easily caught.

And do you know why the invention of Virgin Birth was made? The discussions which disturbed the Christian world for centuries and which led

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to woeful feuds and frictions among them give us a peep at their mentality.

"It has been said that the assumption of a miraculous birth is necessary in order that the *taint of the inherited sin* might be broken." (Science and Theology, p. 371).

Yes; it was. Why? Because the Jewish nation was labouring under another erroneous belief. They think that the whole mankind has inherited the taint of sin from the first parents Adam and Eve. A very easy way indeed to explain away the *problem of sin*. Why do I sin? Because I have inherited sinful nature from my parents. And why did my parents sin? Because they inherited the taint from their parents. So on and so forth, till we come to the first couple, Adam and Eve. But why did Adam and Eve sin? From whom did they inherit this sinful nature, I mean, the weakness to fall into temptations? They had no parents to inherit the weakness from. The only thing that the Bible or the followers of the Bible say is that they were tempted by the Satan. Well and good. But does it solve the problem? Supposing they succumbed to Satan's allurements. The question is why they had the weakness of listening to Satan? Has it not been said that God made Adam Himself and breathed His own spirit into him? Did the weak-

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ness of Adam lie in his body or in his soul? The taint has to be traced to its source and the source is nothing else than God Himself. The Satan is perhaps the greatest sinner. He not only sins himself, he propagates sin. Where did this Satan get his taint from? Did he inherit it from his parents? Was there another Satan, the ancestor of this Satan? Or was it God Himself that made the Satan? Anyhow the taint was there, as beginningless as God Himself, much older than Adam, Eve or Satan. And it was this taint, to avoid which the theory of Immaculate conception of Virgin Mary was concocted. But how crude, planless or silly has been the concoction! Even a crude knowledge of logic is sufficient to detect it. The argument is that if Joseph had begotten Jesus the original taint of Adam should have come down to him through Joseph. Why did not the same taint come to him through Mary? Was Mary taintproof? Did she not inherit the taint from her forefathers? Are women in general immune? It was Eve who was the first tempted. From Eve temptation went to Adam. It shows, and many Christian divines have opined, that woman is worse to man; she is weaker than her mate in standing the trial. Jesus was nine months in the womb of Mary

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Mary was after all a daughter of the same Eve. If the theory of the inheritance of taint is correct (the writer may not share the view) as Christians believe it is correct, then even the conception through the Holy Ghost cannot save Jesus from the woeful legacy.

We read so much in Christian literature about Immaculate Conception. But very few have tried to analyse the idea. What does "Immaculate Conception" mean? The word 'Immaculate' comes from Latin 'macula' a spot. It means that Mary conceived Jesus without committing a sin. It shows that the taint lies in the father and the mother coming together and not in the actual conception. Mary conceived and was not tainted. She could have been tainted had she *known* her husband. Does it not show that the biological process referred to above, for which according to all theists none is responsible but God, and whose inauguration should have been made in Eden itself under the supervision and plan of God, even if the Satan had not tempted the unfortunate pair, had in itself the germs of sinfulness and taint? Is it sinful for man and wife to enter into their marital relations? Did not God ordain it when He made Adam and Eve and before they were tempted by the devil?

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Without meaning irreverence to Mary we can enquire into these questions and we ought to. It is quite possible, nay probable, that Mary was as blameless, as spotless and as taintless as a woman can be or as mothers of Plato etc. were, to whom Divine sonship was attributed. By contriving the funny theory of Immaculate Conception, the Christian divines have reduced the institution of wedlock to immorality and disgraced the whole woman-kind.[1] Why could we not look upon Mary with reverence for giving birth to such an illustrious son as Jesus, if Jesus had been born in a usual way? If Jesus had dropped direct from Heaven, as Gabriel did, and had had no contact with the body of Mary, the plan of taintless birth might have had some weight.

"But if Immaculate Conception was possible in the case of the Virgin, who admittedly had a human father as well as a human mother, why may we not make the same assumption about the conception of our Lord?" (Westaways' Science and Theology, p. 371).

The fact is that the theory of Mary's Immaculate Conception is a ludicrous hoax. It leads

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[1] St. Augustine says: Fly to the desert, and, though your wife put her arms around your neck, tear her hands away; she is a temptation of the devil.

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nowhere. Besides being absurdly incredible, it does not save Jesus from the so-called taint attributed by Christians to all men and women.

Now the question is about Jesus' sonship of God. What does this Sonship mean? If God is our father, we are all His sons. Where is the speciality with Jesus? If you take the word 'Sonship' in a special sense, that sense has to be cleared. You say that Jesus Christ was the *only* son of God. How? What does "only" mean? If you say that Jesus was a good man, well, others can be as good and can claim God's sonship. Why should God beget only one good son and not more? Then, "begetting" is a physical action and cannot be applied to God. It will be either meaningless or figurative.

Then, has Jesus ever said that he was the only son of God and others are not? Everybody calls God his father. Such a statement does not imply that others are not God's sons. If Jesus was God's son in any figurative sense, that sense has to be unequivocally explained. The point on which the faith and therefore the life of so many millions of people depend should not be allowed to remain vague. '*The only begotten son*' is utterly absurd. It

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cannot be upheld even figuratively.[1]

But, says a simple-minded Christian, was it not prophesied? How is it that a prophecy made hundreds of years before came to be true? Is it not a proof of the divinity of Jesus? Well, anybody has a right to delude himself. If you think that credulity is the best part of human brain, then believe sheepishly whatever you like. But if you think that it is reason that exalteth man over other animals, or a civilized man over the uneducated and the ignorant, then thrash out the question as securely as possible.

First look at the prophecies made about the birth of coming Christ.

1. "Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign;

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[1] The Rev. H. D. A. Major, Principal of Ripon Hall, Oxford, in opening a discussion remarked:—

"It should be clearly realized (said Mr. Major) that Jesus did not claim in the Gospels to be the son of God in a physical sense, such as the narratives of virgin birth suggest, nor did he claim to be the son of God in a metaphysical sense, such as was required by the Nicene Theology. He claimed *to be God's son in a normal sense*, in the sense in which all human beings are sons of God, as standing in a filial and moral relationship to God and capable of acting on those moral principles on which God acts."

(Islamic Review, Vol. IX, no. 8, pp. 276-8, as quoted in the sources of Christianity by Khwaja Kamaluddin, pp. 27, 28).

Does Christianity stand or fall with this explanation?

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Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel." (Isaiah vii, 14).

This prophecy is said to have been made by Isaiah 742 years before Christ in order to comfort Ahaz, King of Judah.

We have already dealt with this prophecy.

2. I shall see him, but not now;
I shall behold him, but not nigh:
There shall come a Star out of Jacob,
And a Sceptre shall rise out of Israel,
And shall smite the corners of Moab,
And destroy all the children of Sheth.

(Numbers, xxiv, 17).

1452 years before Christ, Balaam is said to have prophesied this. It is said that when 'the children of Israel' 'pitched in the plains of Moab on this side Jordan by Jericho' and 'Balak the son of Zippor was king of the Moabites at that time,' he being afraid sought the help of Balaam the diviner saying,

"I wot that he whom thou blessest is blessed and he whom thou cursest is cursed."[1]

'God said unto Balaam, Thou shalt not go with them; thou shalt not curse the people, for they are blessed."[2]

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[1] Numbers XXII, 6.

[2] XXII, 12.

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And Balaam made the above prophecy. The time, and the circumstances and the nature of the prophecy will convince the reader of the hollowness of the claim that Jesus Christ is meant here. The words of the prophecy are so vague that any victor can claim fulfilment in himself. Only the credulous of the worst type can believe them.

3. "But thou, Beth-lehem, Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting."

(*Micah v*, 2).

This prophecy is alleged to have taken place 710 years before Jesus Christ. Here, too, everything is as vague as ever.

4. "When Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt."

(*Hosea xi*, 1)

It is alleged to have been said 725 years before Christ. It has been referred to in Matthew II, 15, as if the residence of Jesus in Egypt upto the death of Herod was in the fulfilment of the above prophecy. By reading Hosea XI, 1 and Matthew II, 15 independently, nobody can ever say that the one has anything to do with the other. It is only the fancy of Matthew to read a connection between

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two events so distantly placed in time and circumstances.

5. "Thus saith the Lord, A voice was heard in Ramah, lamentation, and bitter weeping; Rahel weeping for her children refused to be comforted for her children, because they were not."

(*Jeremiah xxxi*, 15)

This event according to the Old Testament took place 606 years before Jesus Christ. It is the description of an event and not a prophecy. But Matthew funnily connects it with the slaughter of young children under Herod's orders saying:

"Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet saying, In Rama was there a voice heard, lamentation, and weeping, and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children and would not be comforted because they are not."

(*Matth. ii*, 17, 18)

There are numerous such references in the New Testament about some events mentioned in the Old Testament and the writers have assumed on no grounds whatsoever that the happenings in the time of Jesus were in the fulfilment of the prophecies made so long ago. Such prophecies are very common in all mythologies. Among the Hindus, there is a vulgar saying that the Rāmāyaṇa was composed by Vālmiki ten thousand years

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before Rāma's birth. In the Bhaviśya Purāṇa, many prophecies have been made about the reign of the Moghal Emperor Akbar and other events. They are the creations of the author or the narrator. Clever people know well that credulous folk believe in prophecies so easily. Astrologers, palmists and the like ply their trade on the strength of this credulity. Similarly the authors of the New Testament, whoever they may have been, thought it convenient to support the baseless theory of Jesus's divine birth with far-fetched prophecies. If you study the chronology of the authorship of different portions of the New Testament, you will find that what the Christians call history is simply hearsay and gospel no more than gossip. In old unscientific days it was natural for people to believe in prophecies, magic, angels and the like. But the strangest thing is that even today when science has so progressed people do not try to shake off their superstitions.

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CHAPTER III

JESUS' RESURRECTION

We have seen above how frivolous are the grounds to prove the divine nature of Jesus' birth. But equally mysterious has been made his death. It is written in the Bible that:

(1) Jesus was Crucified.

(2) He died on the Cross.

(3) His body was put in a Sepulchre.

(4) On the third day, the Sepulchre was found empty.

(5) Christ was thereafter seen walking by several persons elsewhere.

(6) He rose to heaven with body.

(7) He is sitting on the right side of his father, God, in heaven.

These things have been described in detail in Matth. Chapters XXVII and XXVIII, Mark Chapt. XVI, Luke Chapter XXIV, and John Chapters XX and XXI. The details differ so much that no fairminded person can be persuaded to believe them. Even Christians would not believe a simi-

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larly worded story in the case of another person. Any written or printed material is not a history. And when uncommon things are said, the testimony should be free from all shades of doubt. If four witnesses in the form of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John appear before a court and they give the same account as is given in the New Testaments, with the difference that some other name is given in place of Jesus, even Christian judges of the present High Courts would brush it aside as a tissue of either hallucinations or lies. Just look at the points:—

(1) Matthew mentions 'a great earthquake.' The other three are silent on this point. It was an important point. Had there been an earthquake, it should have been marked by others.

(2) Matthew mentions *one* angel who told the women that 'he is risen.' Mark gives 'a young man.' St. Luke gives '*two* men stood by them in shining garments; St. John also names 'two'.

(3) According to St. John, Mary "turned herself back and saw Jesus standing." This fact is not mentioned by the other three.

It was Joseph of Arimathaea who secretly went to Pilate for the body of Jesus.

Mark says, 'Pilate *marvelled* if he were already dead: and calling unto him the centurion, he asked him whether he

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had been anywhile dead. And when he knew it *of the centurion*, he gave the body to Joseph.' (Mark. xv, 44)[1]

Now assuming that Mary and Mary Magdalena found the sepulchre empty and also assuming that Christ was seen by some persons after this event, the only conclusion that a sane man would arrive at is that Jesus did not die on the cross, that Joseph of Arimathaea, who was a friend of Jesus, played some trick and spirited away the body of Jesus. The man or men whom the women took as angels of God, might have been some persons acquainted with the secret. It is written that "the sepulchre was new wherein was never man yet laid." In all probability the sepulchre must have been so devised by Joseph himself, that the stone might be easily set aside. This has been anticipated by Matthew and is clear from the following statement:—

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[1] "The concluding eleven verses of St. Mark, XVI, that speak of the resurrection as well as of the foreign Mission and the signs, with the sweeping condemnation of the non-Christian world, so unbecoming of a gentle soul like Jesus, have been proved to be an addition and forgery, and do not exist in the Vulgate, nor in the ancient Greek Mss.

The first translation of the Bible in English under James I, found it so, and printed it out in a marginal note on these eleven verses. The fact is not unknown to the British and Foreign Bible Society; yet they do not care to remove the verses from their Bibles."
(Sources of Christianity by Khwaja Kamaluddin, page 123)

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"Now the next day, that followed the day of the preparation, the chief priests and Pharisees came together unto Pilate, Saying, Sir, we remember that that deceiver said, *while he was yet alive*, 'After three days I will rise again.' Command therefore that the sepulchre be made sure, until the third day, lest his disciples *come by night*, and steal him away, and say unto the people, He is risen from the dead: so the last error shall be worse than the first. Pilate said unto them, Ye have a watch: go your way, make it as sure as ye can. So they went, and made the sepulchre sure, sealing the stone, and setting a watch."

(Matth. Chapter xxvii, 62-66)

The other three witnesses mention neither a watch nor an earthquake. It seems that in order to confound the watch, Matthew coined the story of earthquake. The points to be considered are the following:—

(1) Why did Pilate *marvel if he were already dead*?

(2) Why did not Pilate satisfy himself personally on the point and why did he confine his enquiry to merely the statement of the centurion? Is it not possible that the centurion might have been purchased by the rich Joseph of Arimathaea?

(3) When the people complained, why did not Pilate look to the watch personally?

(4) How was the stone sealed? What was the nature of the watch and what guarantee was

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there that the watch was above all temptations?

Then there are two more aspects which are of a very great importance: first of all, the possibility of resurrection; secondly, the purpose of resurrection. Either Christ died on the cross or did not die. In the latter case the question of resurrection does not arise and the miracle loses all its value. In the former case, death can only mean the *total departure of the soul from the body*. When Jesus' body was lying in the sepulchre, his soul must have departed. To where? You can say "to heaven." Then why did it return? and how? Why did it take three days to return?

As regards the question of 'purpose,' the only purpose imaginable can be the over-awing of the unbelievers by the uncanniness of the process. But here too the purpose fails miserably. The miracle could have been done openly before all, even on the cross and might have converted the whole world. But instead of this we find Jesus crying "Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" (Mark. XXVII, 46).

Are these not the ways of ordinary men? Any man would cry like that at the time of death. Then if the purpose was to convince people of

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Jesus' divinity, better persons should have been the witnesses than the two half-crazy women who what of attachment and what of credulity could not discern whether it was Jesus or the gardener. There is one more point. If Jesus foretold his resurrection on the third day, as people complained before Pilate, was it known to these women? If so, why did they not expect it in due course? Why did they come to the sepulchre with the intention of paying their respect to the dead?

If the purpose was not public proclamation, but something private and secret, even then the whole story seems to be silly. Jesus appears to some friends only and then asks them to proclaim the event.

Then there is the question of the passion of Jesus' body to heaven. This is the funniest event. Only those who believe that heaven is somewhere in the skies above and solid bodies can rise upto them can regard it as true. In these days such persons are very rare except in exceptional asylums. Unless heaven be a court of a despotic king in some physical sense, it is absurd to say that the body of Jesus Christ passed to it, and he is still seen sitting on the right side of his Father. If you treat it figuratively, you have to put it nakedly so that the sense

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might be understood.

We should not have taken notice of such a fairy-tale, had it not been for the fact that the resurrection of Jesus Christ is the most important portion of Christian creed, as important as his birth. God's son needs be born in an unusual way and so must he needs die. Ingersoll has well said,

"How do they prove that Christ rose from the dead? They found the account in a book. Who wrote the book? They do not know. What evidence is this? None, unless all things found in books are true."

"They say that Christianity was established, proved to be true, by Miracles wrought nearly two thousand years ago. Not one of these miracles can be established except by impudent and ignorant assertion—except by poisoning and deforming the minds of the ignorant and the young."[1]

Prof. Huxley says,[2]

"On the strength of an undeniable improbability, however, we not only have a right to demand, but are morally bound to require, strong evidence in favour of a miracle before we even take it into serious consideration. But when, instead of such evidence, nothing is produced but stories originating nobody knows how or when, among persons who could firmly believe in devils which enter pigs, I confess that my feeling is one of astonishment that any one should expect a reasonable man to take such testimony seriously."

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[1] Essay on Truth, pp. 14-15.

[2] Vide the *Agnostic Annual;* 1892, "Possibilities and Impossibilities."

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CHAPTER IV

CHRISTIAN MONOTHEISM

Monotheism is the best of all theisms. Polytheism, if not atheistic, has much in it which contributes towards anti-theistic tendencies. It is for this reason that every religion claims exclusive monopoly of pure monotheism. Thus professes a Christian[1] missionary:—

"The *intrinsic truth* of the Biblical conception of God is shown by the fact that it alone affords the possibility of conceiving God as the *entirely perfect*, *the truly absolute* Being. No conception of God can be the true one which does not include every perfection. But in all the other ideas of God there is something essential wanting; at one time his spirituality (materialism), or even his existence (atheism), so again his consciousness (pantheism), or his constant living activity (deism). From the Biblical point of view, however, God is made to possess them in the very highest degree—being and life, spirituality and omnipotence, consciousness and thought, will and freedom, and, in addition, a constant living and holy activity in the entire universe. Here alone

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[1] Theodore Christlieb in the Bremen Lectures on "Great Religious Questions of Today."

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he possesses both himself and the world and is *absolutely the Lord*, who rules everything according to his HOLY AIMS, and guides FREE SPIRITS according to FREE MORAL laws."

A great claim indeed. But too great to be substantiated by the Bible itself. The vanity of the claim becomes apparent at a little analysis. First let us look to the Jehovah of the Old Testament. What are his "holy aims?" and how does he "guide free spirits according to free moral laws?" Ingersoll has given a beautiful and most accurate portrait, a portrait which no Christian casuistry can conceal:—

"He created the world, the hosts of heaven, a man and woman, placed them in a garden. Then the serpent deceived them, and they were cast out and made to earn their bread.

Jehovah had been thwarted.

Then he tried again. He went on for about sixteen hundred years trying to civilize the people.

No schools, no churches, no Bible, no tracts, nobody taught to read or write. No ten commandments. The people grew worse and worse until the merciful Jehovah sent the flood and drowned all the people except Noah and his family, eight in all.

Then he started again, and changed their diet. At first Adam and Eve were vegetarians. After the flood Jehovah said: 'Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you'—snakes and buzzards.

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Then he failed again, and at the Tower of Babel he dispersed and scattered the people.

Finding that he could not succeed with all the people, he thought he would try a few, so he selected Abraham and his descendants. Again he failed, and his chosen people were captured by the Egyptians and enslaved for four hundred years.

Then he tried again—rescued them from Pharaoh, and started for Palestine.

Again he changed their diet, allowing them to eat only the beasts that parted the hoof and chewed the cud. Again he failed. The people hated him, and preferred the slavery of Egypt to the freedom of Jehovah. So he kept them wandering until nearly all who came from Egypt had died. Then he tried again—took them into Palestine and had them governed by Judges.

This, too, was a failure—no schools, no Bible. Then he tried Kings, and the Kings were mostly idolaters.

Then the chosen people were conquered and carried into captivity by the Babylonians.

Another failure.

Then they returned and Jehovah tried prophets—howlers and wailers—but the people grew worse and worse. No schools, no sciences, no arts, no commerce. Then Jehovah took upon himself flesh, was born of a woman, and lived among the people that he had been trying to civilize for several thousand years. Then these people, following the law that Jehovah had given them in the wilderness, charged this Jehovah—man—this Christ—with blasphemy, tried, convicted and killed him.

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Jehovah had failed again."

Such is the conception of God, that the Holy Bible helps us to form.

Ingersoll asks an apt question "was Jehovah a God of Love?" And in answer he gives a long list of quotations from the Bible, a few of which we cite below:—

"When the Lord thy God shall drive them before thee, thou shalt smite them and utterly destroy them; thou shalt make no covenant with them, or show mercy unto them."

"I will heap mischief upon them."

"I will send the tooth of beasts upon them with the poison of serpents of the dust."

"The sword without, and terror within, shall destroy both the young man and the virgin; the suckling also with the man of gray hairs."

"I will laugh at their calamity."

Then Ingersoll remarks,

"Did these curses, these threats, come from the heart of love or from the mouth of savagery?

Was Jehovah god or devil?

Why should we place Jehovah above all the gods?

Has man in his ignorance and fear ever imagined a greater monster?

Have the barbarians of any land, in any time, worshipped a more heartless god?

Brahma was a thousand times nobler, and so were Osiris and Zeus and Jupitar; so was the supreme god of the Aztecs,

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to whom they offered only the perfume of flowers. The worst god of the Hindus, with his necklace of skulls and his bracelets of living snakes, was kind and merciful compared with Jehovah."

It is why Christian divines discourage the teaching of the Old Testament to children. (Vide Canon Barnes' lecture quoted on page 101).

But does the New Testament teach monotheism? Christian religion centres on Chirst, rather than on God. The Christian doctrine of Trinity is the very denial of monotheism. From the very dawn of Christianity there have been explanations and counter-explanations, trying to wash away the defect. But all in vain. W. E. Channing has given a scathing criticism of this doctrine of Trinity.[1] The following few quotations will show the point:—

We object to the doctrine of the Trinity, that, whilst acknowledging in words, it subverts in effect, the unity of God. According to this doctrine there are three infinite and equal persons, possessing supreme divinity, called the Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Each of these persons, as described by theologians has his own particular consciousness, will and perceptions. They love each other, converse with each other and delight in each other's society. They

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[1] *Unitarian Christianity.* (Select Discourses and Essays).

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perform different parts in man's redemption each having his appropriate office, and neither doing the work of the other. The son is mediator and not the Father. The Father sends the son, and is not Himself sent; nor is He conscious, like the Son, of taking flesh. Here, then, we have three intelligent agents, possessed of different consciousnesses, different wills, and different perceptions, performing different acts, and sustaining different relations; and if these things do not imply and constitute three minds or beings, we are utterly at a loss to know how three minds or beings are to be formed. It is difference of properties, and acts, and consciousnesses, which leads us to the belief of different intelligent beings, and if this mark fails us our whole knowledge fails; we have no proof that all the agents and persons in the universe are not one and the same mind. When we attempt to conceive of three Gods, we can do nothing more than represent to ourselves three agents, distinguished from each other by similar marks and peculiarities to those which separate the persons of the Trinity; and when common Christians hear these persons spoken of as conversing with each other, loving each other, and performing different acts, how can they help regarding them as different beings, different minds?

We do, then, with all earnestness, though without reproaching our brethren, protest against the *irrational* and unscriptural doctrine of the Trinity. We also think that the doctrine of the Trinity *injures devotion*, not only by joining to the Father other objects of worship, but by taking from the Father the supreme affection which is his due, and transferring it to the Son. This is a most important view-

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That Jesus Christ, if exalted into the infinite Divinity, should be more interesting than the Father, is precisely what might be expected from history and from the principles of human nature. Men want an object of worship like themselves, and the great secret of idolatry lies in this propensity .....We believe, too, that this worship, though attractive, is not most fitted to spiritualize the mind, that it awakens human transport rather than that deep veneration of the moral perfections of God which is the essence of pity.

(Page 46)

According to this doctrine, Jesus Christ, instead of being one mind, one conscious intelligent principle, whom we can understand, consists of two souls, two minds; the one divine, the other human; the one weak, the other almighty; the one ignorant, the other omniscient. Now, we maintain that this is to make Christ two beings. To denominate him one person, one being, and yet to suppose him made up of two minds infinitely different from each other is to abuse and confound language, and to throw darkness over all our conceptions of intelligent natures. According to the common doctrine, each of these two minds in Christ has its own consciousness, its own will, its own perceptions. They have, in fact, no common properties. The divine mind feels none of the wants and sorrows of the human, and the human is infinitely removed from the perfection and happiness of the divine. Can you conceive of two beings in the universe more distinct? We have always thought that one person was constituted and distinguished by one consciousness. The doctrine that one and the same person should have two consciousnesses, two wills, two souls, infinitely different from each other,

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this we think an enormous tax on human credulity.

(Page 47)

.....the human condition, and sufferings of Christ tended strongly to exclude from men's minds the idea of his proper God-head. (p. 49).

The inferiority of Christ pervades the New Testament.

(Page 50)

The idea which is conveyed to common minds by the popular system, that Christ's death has an influence in making God placable or merciful, in awakening his kindness towards men, we reject with strong disapprobation. ... ...They give to multitudes the impression that the death of Jesus produces a change in the mind of God towards man, and that in this its efficacy chiefly consists. No error seems to us more pernicious.....We conceive that Jesus is dishonoured, not glorified, by ascribing to him an influence which clouds the splendour of Divine benevolence.

(Pages 59-60)

What can be plainer than that God cannot, in any sense, be a sufferer or bear a penalty in the room of his creatures? How dishonourable to Him is the supposition that his Justice is now so severe as to exact infinite punishment for the sins of frail and feeble men, and now so easy and yielding as to accept the limited pains of Christ's human soul, as a full equivalent for the endless woes due from the world. How plain is it also, according to this doctrine, that God, instead of being plenteous in forgiveness, never forgives; *for it seems absurd to speak of men as forgiven, when their whole punishment or an equivalent of it is borne by a substitute.* A scheme more fitted to obscure the brightness of Christianity

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and the mercy of God, or less suited to give comfort to a guilty and troubled mind, could not, we think, be easily framed. (Pages 60-61)

We believe, too, that this system is unfavourable to the character. It naturally leads men to think that Christ came to change God's mind rather than their own; that the highest object of his mission was to award punishment rather than to communicate holiness; and that a large part of religion consists in disparaging good works and human virtue, for the purpose of magnifying the value of Christ's vicarious sufferings. In this way a sense of the infinite importance and indispensable necessity of personal improvement is weakened, and high-sounding praises of Christ's cross seem often to be substituted for obedience to his precepts.

(Pages 61, 62)

But this is not enough. Even Unitarian Christianity, as long as it is Christianity and relies upon the Bible, cannot claim to be monotheistic. Christianity does not believe in "free spirits." "Spirits" are toys in the hands of the absolute God who makes them at his own will and rules them according to his whims. The "holy aims" of which the Christians speak so glibly are no more than the freaks of a wilful being. If God is the only eternal being and spirits are his creatures the question is whether God is perfect or not. If perfect, what does he wish to become and why?

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Perfection aims at nothing else. If imperfect, is it monotheism? Why did he create the Universe? In fulfilment of what defect? As there was none else or nothing else than God alone before the creation. What was God doing before this 6000 years old creation? These questions have to be answered before claiming monotheism. How monstrous and unreasonable is the God of the Bible who creates souls at his own will, allots them various periods of time allowing some to live a year, some 50 years, some a hundred years and taking away some even in the wombs of their mothers, creating them in different circumstances, for no fault of theirs and ending their lives at his own free will. Can you call these "*free moral laws*?" The explanation that Christianity has given of the sin and pain found in the Universe is most whimsical. As long as we entertain such beliefs, conception of theism or monotheism is impossible. A God who creates the Universe whenever he likes, in whichever way he likes, for whatever reason he likes, can be called a despot and not a good God. To call Christians monotheists is to misunderstand and misuse the term "monotheism," to say the least of it.

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CHAPTER V

CHRISTIAN MIRACLES

There is one more point which has some indirect bearing upon our conception of God. In answer to the attacks of atheists and agnostics, we say that the universe is governed by immutable laws, which in their turn, necessitate the existence of an all-intelligent Being, that is, God. There is no doubt that in this changeful world of changeful events, there is at least one thing that is unchangeable, I mean, laws of nature. These laws of nature are so *sure*, *so unflinching* and so *mutually connected* with one another that we cannot but conclude that they are governed by *one* all-*intelligent* Being. I think that Christian theists will share our views on this point. But if such a God exists, He leaves no room for Christian belief in miracles.

What is the function of miracles in a religious system? If you read the Bible you will find that they happen in order to over-awe the ignorant people regarding the wonderful power of the Supreme Being. They betray a special mentality of the

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masses, which is so easily distinguishable from the mentality of the educated. The wise are more impressed by the strict discipline and orderliness in a kingdom than the ignorant who think that the power of the governor lies in his freakful power to do anything. For a thoughtful man every small event in the universe is a miracle as it explains the system wonderfully. Prof. Huxley truly remarked that "the miracles of the church are child's play to the miracles I see in nature." By this he meant wonders that take place in accordance with natural laws. But miracles that Christians believe do not. It is a law of nature that man and woman should come together to beget a child. It is a phenomenon which looked upon seriously excites our wonder and its wonderfulness is by no means modified simply because it is an every day occurrence. But this is not a miracle in the sense Christians take. For them, some such thing should take place as over-rides or violates the law. The Virgin should give birth. It has often been asked: "Why do we no longer have miracles?" Several ingenious answers have been offered. Paley says,

"To expect, concerning a miracle that it should succeed upon repetition is to expect that which would make it cease to be a miracle; which is contrary to its nature as

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such, and would totally destroy the use and purpose for which it was wrought." (Paley's *Evidences—Preparatory Considerations*).

This answer of Paley is more a confession than an explanation. It shows that the main function of the miracle is to strike awe in the minds of the ignorant, not to prove that there is a law-governor but that there is a law-breaker, a rough-shod rider. Cotter Morrison has aptly remarked:

"It may suit Paley to say that repetition of miracles would destroy their use; but he must be a lukewarm theologian who does not at times wish from the depth of his heart that an authentic miracle could be produced. Yet it is at this momentous crisis in the religious affairs of the world, when the enemy is carrying one position after another, and has all but penetrated to the citadel of belief, that no miracles occur." (*Service of Man*).

The fact is that no miracles ever occurred. They were simply concocted to dupe the laity. There was no other way to prove the revelationary character of the Bible. The Bible was the inspired word of God, because the miracles proved it to be so. And funnily speaking the miracles were true because the Bible asserted them to be so. In their zeal for Christian propaganda, even learned persons like Butler, Paley, Mansel, Mozley, Farrar, Westcott

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and Liddon could not realize that they were arguing in circle.

Dean Mansel said,

"If there be one fact recorded in scripture which is entitled, in the fullest sense of the word, to the name of a miracle, the Resurrection of Christ is that fact. Here, at least, is an instance in which the entire Christian faith must stand—or fall with our belief in the supernatural.....A superhuman authority needs to be substantiated by superhuman evidence, and what is superhuman is miraculous." (*Aids to Faith*, pp. 3 & 35).

Canon Mozley said:

"Miracles and the supernatural contents of Christianity must stand and fall together." (*Bampton Lectures*; 1865).

Dean Farrar:—

"It is clear to every honest and unsophisticated mind that, if miracles be incredible, Christianity is false." (*The Witness to History to Christ, Hulsean Lectures for* 1870).

Bishop Westcott:—

"The essence of Christianity lies in a miracle, and, if it can be shown that a miracle is either impossible or incredible, all further inquiry into the details of its history is superfluous from a religious point of view." (*The Gospel of the Resurrection*, 1874, p. 34).

The question of miracles has been so much thrashed in recent times that now there has come about a wonderful change. In the last week of

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January 1905, a correspondent of the *Record* referred the matter to a large number of Bishops and stated,

"Not a single Bishop on the bench today believed in the miraculous in religion."

So far, so good. Who would believe in such silly things in these days? But what about the Bible then? Does it stand or fall? Miracles have fallen in the sight of the Westerners. But in order that the Bible must stand in India, above Hindu and Moslem scriptures, Christian missionaries in India still appeal to miracles and try to reap a cheap harvest in Indian villages. It is in darkness and not in light that they ply their trade. They know that the superstitious Hindu believes in absurd miracles attributed to Kṛṣṇa and Rāma and instead of trying to shake them up, they exploit the Hindu credulity and twist it in their favour. This is the work the Christian missionaries have done in the midst of their converts in Bengal, Madras, Cochin and Travancore. Visit their churches, especially Roman Catholic. Analyse the thoughts of the people. And you will find miracles doing their part. Why? Because the missionaries must convert. Convert to what? To whatever with Christian label. It matters little what beliefs you hold and how. You must become

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Christian. Else how to justify the existence of a missionary? We here give a quotation from the life of a very pious, famous and highly esteemed Christian missionary, St. Xavier who fished in Eastern Waters very successfully.

Seventy years after Xavier's death his canonization took place (1622) under Gregory XV. Ten miracles besides the gift of tongues and of prophecy, were then pronounced to be established beyond all dispute, in the process of canonization. The gift of tongues is thus described:—"When he visited people of various tongues, which he had never learnt he was in the habit of speaking their language with as much elegance and fluency as if he had been born and educated in the countries: and it often happened that when men of different languages composed his audience each heard him speak in his own tongue."

The list of miracles is the following:—

1. "Salt water turned sweet, upon making the sign of the cross"—while sailing in China in the "Sainte Croix."

2. "A dead child restored to life." "(Mutano in oppido Indiae Orientalis)."

3. A dead body, which had been one day buried, restored to life.—In Cape Comorin when he could not convert the people, he prayed he might perform this miracle.

4. "Whilst he celebrated mass he was lifted a cubit from the ground."

5. "A boy drowned in a well restored to life"—at Coimbatore on the Fishery Coast.

6. "A blind man restored to sight"—in Japan.

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7. A beggar, full of ulcers, miraculously cured,"—at Cape Comorin.

8. "A sea-crab miraculously brings Xavier a crucifix lost in the sea." He was sailing from Ambyona to Baramula, and in a storm he held his crucifix, the length of a finger, in the sea, and let it drop. On the following day he reached Baramula and went towards the city Tamalo. After 500 paces, a crab jumped out of the sea upon the shore, and ran (festinus accurrit) with the crucifix in his claws to Xavier and stood before him, and waited till Xavier took the crucifix and then went back into the sea.

9. "A boat separated in a storm miraculously returns to the ship."

10. "He rains ashes upon the city of Tolo."

Comments are needless. If you trace chonology of so many biographies of St. Xavier, you will be surprised to find that each succeeding biographer has added something from his head till the miracles attributed to this missionary have become a confused heap of absurdities. And all this has been done to preach "The Truth."

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CHAPTER VI

ANGELS AND EVIL SPIRITS

The New Testament abounds with references to angels and evil spirits. What their nature is nobody knows, nor the Bible explains it at any place. Are they entities like souls in men or animals? They may be. But then have they bodies like ours? Do they thrive on food as our bodies do? Do they wither away without food as our bodies do? Are they born of parents? Do they die? The Bible is silent on these points. Then, again, do they live a life like ours? Do they till the ground and grow corn? Do they trade? Do they steal and rob? Do they quarrel and kill? Do they have governments—monarchy, oligarchy, democracy or the like? Perhaps they do, perhaps they do not. Christian theologians are quite in the dark about these questions and love to remain in the dark. But the days of credulity are numbered. Before we are asked to believe, we should be allowed a chance of examining.

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It appears from the Bible that the angels and and spirits described therein are not the denizens of the Earth. They have no towns or villages, no settlements. But they love to visit our homes, sometimes as friends and mostly as foes. Where their original homes are it is difficult to know. Angels, being benevolent and good spirits must be living in heaven. Other places are too ugly for them. The Satan and other spirits being evil ones are driven away from heaven and must of necessity have settled in the hell. But this hell does not appear to have a solid impenetrable building. At least it has so many outlets that these evil spirits escape away in order to meddle with our affairs and torment us in one thousand and one different ways. On this point too the Bible is silent. It renders no help to the enquirer. But there is one more question quite relevant. Are the heaven and the hell particular places ? If so, where are they and of what kind ? People tell us, some wise persons indeed, that the description given of the hell and the heaven in the Bible or religious scriptures of other faiths is all figurative. They are not actual places; rather they are conditions or states in which the soul finds itself under different circumstances at whatever place it may be. Well and good. Let it be so. But

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if heaven and hell are figurative, what will then become of the angels and the evil spirits which are alleged to be dwellers therein? To reduce heaven and hell to figurative entities surely meets many objections. But it deprives our spirits of their homes and renders them homeless. It appears that figurative explanations are the ingenuities of later brains. But some persons may possibly say that the figurative explanations can be equally extended to angels and spirits also. Some commentators of holy books have tried to explain that angels are nothing more, nothing less than the different powers of God, thought of from different angles of vision. We do not mean to discourage or poohpooh these explanations. What is the harm in explaining or explaining away the craziness imputed to our forefathers? But one thing is quite certain. All the importance of the Bible and the Biblical doctrines fades away and with it Christianity.

The fact is that Christian angels and Christian spirits, as they have been hitherto understood, from the holiest Holy Ghost to the lowliest evil spirit, have done much harm to humanity and are still doing it. Far-fetched explanations remain confined to a few books or to a few philosophic brains, while the superstition engendered by them lives in

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the minds of the masses and torments them all day and night.

Let us first give a few quotations from the Bible about these ghosts, angels and spirits.

1. The angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. (Matthew, i, 20).

2. The angel of the Lord appeareth to Joseph in a dream, saying, Arise, and take the young Child and his mother, and flee into Egypt. (Matthew, ii, 13).

3. An angel of the Lord appeareth in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, saying, Arise, and take the young Child and his mother, and go into the land of Israel: for they are dead which sought the young child's life. (Matthew, ii, 19, 20).

4. He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him. (Matthew, Chapter iii, 16 and Mark, i, 10).

5. And when the tempter came to him, he said, If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread. (Matthew, iv, 3).

6. Then the devil leaveth him, and, behold, *angels* came and ministered unto him. (Matthew, iv, 11 and Mark, i, 13, Luke, iv, 13).

7. When the even was come, they brought unto him many that were possessed with *devils*: and he cast out the *spirits* with his word. (Matthew, viii, 16).

8. And when he was come to the other side into the country of the Gergesenes, there met him two possessed

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with *devils*, coming out of the tombs, exceeding fierce, so that no man might pass by that way, and etc. (Matthew, viii, 28-33 and Mark v, 1-3, Luke, viii, 30).

9. They brought to him a dumb man possessed with a devil. And when the devil was cast out, the dumb spake. (Matthew, ix, 32, 33, Luke, xi, 14.)

10. He gave them power against *unclean spirits*, to cast them out. (Matthew, x, 1).

11. Raise the dead, cast out devils. (Matthew, x, 8).

12. The blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men. (Matthew, xii, 31).

13. When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest, and findeth none. (Matthew, xii, 43).

14. Then goeth he, and taketh with himself seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there. (Matthew, xii, 45).

15. So shall it be at the end of the world: the *angels* shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the just, And shall cast them into the furnace of fire. (xiii, 49, 50).

16. And behold, there was a great earthquake, for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door and sat upon it. His countenance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow. (Matthew, xxviii, 23, Mark, xvi, 5, Luke, xxiv, 4).

17. And Jesus rebuked him, saying, Hold thy peace, and come out of him. And when the unclean Spirit had torn him, and cried with a loud voice, he came out of him. (Mark, i, 25, 26).

18. Cast out many devils: and suffered not the devils

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to speak, because they knew him. (Mark i, 34).

19. And unclean spirits, when they saw him, fell down before him, and cried, saying, "Thou art the Son of God." (Mark, iii, 11).

20. A certain woman, whose young daughter had an unclean Spirit, heard of him,.....the devil is gone out of thy daughter. (Mark, vii, 25-29).

21. Master, I have brought unto thee my son, which hath a dumb spirit.....When Jesus saw that the people came running together, he rebuked the foul spirit, saying unto him, Thou dumb and deaf spirit, I charge thee, come out of him; and enter no more into him. And the spirit cried..... (Mark, ix, 17-26).

22. And the angel answering said unto him, I am Gabriel, that stand in the presence of God; and am sent to speak unto thee. (Luke, i, 19).

23. And in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth. (Luke, i, 26-37).

24. Elisabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost. (Luke, i, 41).

25. There were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And, lo, the *angel* of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: And they were sore afraid. (Luke, ii, 8-9).

26. Then Peter filled with the *Holy Ghost*, said unto them, Ye rulers of the people, and elders of Israel. (Acts iv, 8).

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We have elsewhere dealt about the Holy Ghost. No Christian has yet been able to throw any light upon this peculiar, unknown and unknowable entity. They are all groping in the dark about it. It is merely a ghost, a phantom, a something too imaginary, a tissue of idle brains. It has nothing '*Holy*' about it. Phantoms are never holy and what is holy is never a phantom. And we shudder to call it holy when we see what this Ghost has done. Most inimical to human progress must have been the brain that for the first time gave birth to such a thing. Why inimical? Because it has encouraged the sheepish credulities of the worst kind. Whenever there is an absurd thing, and there is no lack of them in the Bible, this so-called Holy Ghost makes its appearance and asks people to believe in it without doubting its veracity. However absurd, however fanciful, however irrational a thing may be, it finds a ready support from the Holy Ghost. If God is the immutable Governor of the Universe and if laws of nature are His immutable laws, this Holy Ghost always meddles with them. It asks men to shut their eyes and close their ears against all the phenomena of the world and suspend their reasoning. If an old woman stricken in years happens to conceive according to the laws of nature,

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and it happens even these days; where is the necessity of the interference of the Holy Ghost?[1] And when the six months old babe leaps in the womb (surely not out of it), what is the proof that the mother was filled with the Holy Ghost? (Luke, Chapter I). How funny is the Holy Ghost that it visits an innocent, simple girl and tells her that she has been made pregnant thereby! And the funniest thing is that it was the only achievement of the Holy Ghost from eternity upto that date and is not to be repeated upto the end of the world! But still funnier is the phenomenon that in spite of all the advancement in physical as well as biological sciences, a majority of the civilized world could not shake off the superstition of the old age and still goes on believing in this absurd achievement of the Holy Ghost, undemonstrated and undemonstrable.

If Jesus was a historical person, and we have no need to deny it, and if all that is said about him in the Bible is true, then the greatest charge against

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[1] Thomas Parr of Shropshire had to do public penance for begetting an illegitimate child at the age of one hundred and two; and nineteen years later, when the scandal had presumably died down, he married his second wife. (*Life of Great Adventurers*, p. 387).

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him is that he encouraged people to hold the superstitious belief in ghosts, spirits and witches. If he was a redeemer, he should have at least guided the misguided humanity out of superstition. But he does not say a word against it. He knocks evil spirits out of the sick persons just as thousands of superstition-mongers and cheats do even today in India and elsewhere. And what was left half-done by Christ is completed by his followers, Popes, priests and devotees.

"Exorcism, it may be remarked, has been practised, in all times, wherever a belief has existed in literal demoniacal possession. In the Latin and Greek Churches it is used in the baptism of both adults and infants, in the consecration of water, salt, oil etc., and in specific cases of individuals supposed to be possessed by evil spirits. Exorcism in baptism is still retained also in some Lutheran Churches." (Vide The Churches and Modern Thought, p. 34).

Christian missionaries encourage superstition whenever it serves their purpose and audaciously offer nonsensical explanations.

"Thus, in the introduction to *Pastor Hsi* (a book of which 24000 copies were printed between 1903 and 1905), the Rev. D. E. Hoste, General Director of the China Inland Mission not only expresses this belief, but seeks to explain why devil-possession should now be chiefly confined to heathen lands. 'Careful observation and study of the subject have,'

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he says, 'led many to conclude that, although in lands where Christianity has long held sway, the special manifestations we are now considering are comparatively unknown, the conditions among the heathen being more akin to those prevailing when and where the Gospel was first propagated, it is not surprising that a corresponding energy of the powers of evil should be met with in missionary work today.' He would have us believe, apparently, that the atmosphere of holiness in Christendom is so overpowering that the Devil and his crew are rendered less active! Taking him seriously, can he also explain how it is that *God permits devils to perform such pranks*? Not only is the house 'swept and garnished', that they may 'enter in and dwell there,' but in the case of Saul we are told that they were purposely sent by God! (See Luke xi, 25, 26 and I Sam. xviii, 10 and xix, 9).

The importance of this question is brought home to us by Mr. Benn in his *History of English Rationalism in the Nineteenth Century*, where he says (p. 454):—

"The witness of Jesus to the Fatherhood of God as a personal Spirit amounts to no more than his witness to personal devils as authors of disease; and the witness of the Evangelists to their Master's authorship of the Sermon on the Mount is less unanimous than their witness to the destruction by diabolical agency of the Gadarene swine." (Ibid., pp. 271-272).

The history of Christendom is dark, foully dark with the horrors which the belief in these

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evil spirits caused and for which Biblical teachings are directly responsible. For instance Joan D'arc was burnt alive for being a witch.

"In Germany, France, Spain, Britain, Switzerland and Sweden, the persecution raged with a fearful intensity. Seven thousand victims were burned at Trenes alone; at Toulouse the seat of the Inquisition, four hundred perished at a single execution. Remy, a French Judge, boasted that he had put to death eight hundred witches in sixteen years." (Westaway's "Obsessions and Convictions," p. 57).

Even Martin Luther "would have no compassion on these witches" and "would burn them all." (*Colloquia de fascinationibus*). Bishop Jewel preaching before Queen Elizabeth, said, "witches and sorcerers are marvellously increased within Your Grace's realm. Your Grace's subjects pine away even unto the death; their flesh rotten, their senses are bereft." "King James I did not hesitate to ascribe his stormy passage from Denmark to the machinations of witches."

Dr. Fian was suspected and "the nails upon all his fingers were riven and pulled off by an instrument called a turkas and under everie nayle was thrust in two needles over, even upto the heads." However, "so deeply had the devil entered into his heart that he utterly denied all, and he was burnt unconfessed." (Pitcarion, op. cit., Vol. I, Part II, pp. 203, 223).

How horrible! How wicked!

(1) In 1530 Michael Caddo was executed with fearful tortures for besmearing the pavements of

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Geneva with a diabolical unguent. At Milan a large number of persons were tortured to death in the following century.

(2) Pope Innocent VIII issued a bill "Summis Desiderantes" by which an immense number of women and children were put to death for witchcraft in Germany for spreading storms and pestilences.

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CHAPTER VII

BEAUTIES (?) OF CHRISTIANITY

Christian missionaries proclaim that whatever is good in the world today is due to the direct teachings of the Bible. They give no credit to other agencies. How fallacious these claims are will be shown in this Chapter.

I

Christianity has done much "good." Before the advent of Christianity, people were inhumane.

Quite wrong. "One could point to the rock-graven edicts of King Asoka (263-226 B.C.) and show that in the matter of discountenancing slavery, of humanity to prisoners, of denouncing war, of founding hospitals, of abolishing blood sacrifices, of inculcating religious toleration, and of teaching purity of life, all that is now so complacently claimed for Christianity was anticipated." (*The Churches and Modern Thought*, p. 195).

Christians as Christians never encouraged learning.

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"As late as 1846 Cobden writes to a friend on the subject of national education: "I took the repeal of the Corn Laws as light amusement compared with the difficult task of *inducing the priests of all* denominations to agree to suffer the people to be educated." (Ibid., p. 196).

Lord Macaulay says,

"During the last three centuries to stunt the growth of the human mind has been her chief object. Throughout Christendom, whatever advance has been made in knowledge, in freedom, in wealth, and in the arts of life, has been made in spite of her, and has everywhere been in inverse proportion to her power. The loveliest and most fertile provinces of Europe have, under her rule, been sunk in poverty, in political servitude, and in intellectual torpor." ('Her' means here the Roman Catholic Church).

II

The present predominance of Christian nations is due to their religion.

Certainly not. "The fact is," says a Buddhist Monk, "that nations have become powerful in the degree to which they have rejected the precepts of Christianity, in the extent to which they have substituted for the Christian Maxim of "Love thy neighbour as thyself,' that other maxim which shoots 300 bullets a minute." (Ibid., p. 197).

III

Look at the Sermon on the Mount. How grand!

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Yes. But has it not been for the most part borrowed from the Buddha's Dhammapad? Can you show any single thing which is practically good and which did not exist before Jesus Christ came? Some sayings of Jesus are more glittering than useful and decidedly pernicious if taken literally. For instance:—

(1) *Resist not evil. If smitten on one cheek, turn the other.* You have no right to protect yourself, your property, your wife and children. How absurd!

(2) *Love your enemies.* Is this possible? Did any human being ever love his enemies? Did Christ love his when he denounced them as whited sepulchres, hypocrites, and vipers?

(3) *Take no thought for the morrow.* No forethought, no progress. Even God does not help such persons.

(4) *If thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out. If thy right hand offend thee, cut it off.* Funny.

(5) *If a man sue thee at law and take away your coat, give him your cloak also.* What an unwise piece of advice! Will Christians follow it?

(6) *Think not I am come to send peace on earth. I came not to send peace, but a sword. For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter*

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against her mother.

"If this is true, how much better it would have been had he remained away." (Ingersoll.).

IV

Christianity is Woman's Best Friend.

Or worst enemy? In fact neither Christianity nor her grandmother Judaism ever helped woman. It was the Biblical conception of woman which was responsible for woman's woes. The Vicar of Crantock[1] gives the following points to prove the inferiority of woman:—

(1) Man's priority of creation. Adam was first formed, then Eve.

(2) The manner of creation. The man is not of the woman, but the woman of the man. (Genesis, ii, 20, 23).

(3) The purport of creation. The man was not created for the woman, but the woman for the man. (I. Corinthians, xi, 8, 9).

(4) Results in creation. The man is the image of the Glory of God, but woman is the glory of man.

(5) Woman's priority in the Fall. Adam was not deceived; but the woman, being deceived, was in the transgression. (Genesis, iii. 16).

(6) The Marriage relation. As the Church is subject to Christ, so let the wives be to their husbands. (I. Peter,

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[1] His sermon at St. Crantock on August 27th 1905.

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iii. 1).

(7) The headship of man and woman. The head of every man is Christ, but the head of the woman is man. (Ephesians, v. 22, 23).

In this respect the New Testament is no better than the Old. Jehovah is followed by Christ as well as by St. Paul and the Fathers. Look at the following sayings:—

(1) It was no part of God's primitive design that the race should be continued by sexual union. Marriage is the outcome of Sin—*St. Gregory of Nyssa*. (Is it satan's design then? Author).

(2) Fierce is the dragon, and cunning the asp; But woman has the malice of both.

—*St. Gregory of Nazianzum*

(3) Why was woman created at all?

—*St. Augustine*

(4) Thou art the devil's gate, the betrayer of the tree, the first deserter of the divine law! Marriage is not far removed from fornication.

—*Tertullian*

(5) She is more fitted for bodily work.....Remember that God took a rib out of Adam's body; not a part of his soul, to make her. She was not made to the image of God, like man.

—*St. Ambrose*

(6) Woman is the root of all evil.

—*St. Jerome*

(7) At the Council of Auxerre, in 578, the bishops forbade women, on account of their "impurity," to take the

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sacrament in their hands as men did.

(8) By the English Common Law, her husband was her lord and master. He had the sole custody of her person, and of her children while minors. He could punish her "with a stick no thicker than his thumb." and she could not complain against him.

(*The Churches and Modern Thought*, p. 201)

So much about Christian chivalry. Compare it with the conditions that prevailed in pre-christian days in so-called heathen lands. Manu, the oldest law-giver of the world, ordains that women should be respected as goddesses in their homes. (Manu III, 56-57). "Women are born to bear, men to beget. Therefore in the Vedas are allowed to a man equal rights with his wife." (Manu IX, 96). Two thousand years before the Christian era,

"Woman was more free and more honoured in Egypt than she is in any country of the world today. She was the mistress of the house." (Sir W. M. Flinders Petrie and and Sir Gaston Camille Charles Maspero, the celebrated English and French Egyptologists, quoted in the Churches and Modern Thought, p. 200).

"Nothing impressed the Romans more than the equality of the sexes among the northern nations, the man's reverence for womanhood, the woman's sympathy with manhood, and the high code of morality that was the natural outcome of this well-balanced state of society." (Ibid., p. 199).

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Do Christian women know this? Perhaps not; else they would soon renounce Christianity.

V

"*It (the Christian Faith) could not be displaced without shaking society from top to bottom.*" (Flint in Anti-Theistic Theories).

It is no doubt true that the change of faith is always accompanied with social disruption of some kind. But does it not therefore follow that Christian missionaries should not preach their alien faith in India and leave Hindu society intact? Do Christians know that the Christianizing of the Hindus has much resulted in social disruption? We admit that the Hindu social system has much rotten in it and needs purging. But it is the intrinsic merits of the Hindu society that have kept it intact in these thousands of years. While kingdoms have risen and fallen, while nations have disappeared from the surface of the earth, it is the Hindus alone that have stood the most horrible cataclysms and held their own. In fact Christianity has nothing to contribute towards social solidarity. In these twenty centuries (a period hardly comparable with the milleniums that Hinduism can justly claim) Christendom has seen of scores of

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social systems, whose origin and end had very little to do with Christian religion.

VI

Spread of Christianity is a proof of its Truth.

There can be nothing more hollow than this claim. If this is the test then Christianity is the most proven untruth, because it has miserably failed in India. In spite of all the resources at their disposal, the Christian missionaries have not been able to carry conviction to Hindu intelligentsia. Had it not been for famine and a few Hindu weaknesses, Christians would have been nowhere in this country. Is number of adherents a proof of the truthfulness of a faith? Is it logic? Does not this number undergo most marked variations at different periods? Does it, therefore, follow that Christian faith is truer there where the number of adherents is larger and its truthful character dwindles to zero in the countries which have no Christian at all? Even Christian Dr. Flint admits that "The very marvellous system of thought called Buddhism, which originated in India about 500 years B.C. has spread over a greater area of the earth and gained more adherents than even Christianity, and by peaceful means—by the power of persuasion—not

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by the force of arms, not by persecution." Does it not, therefore, follow that Buddhism has more truth in it than Christianity ?

VI

Look at the noble Army of Christian Martyrs.

Martyrdom is no doubt a noble thing. But it is not confined to Christianity and therefore it is no proof of its truthfulness. Whenever there is a persecution and intolerance, man has tried to oppose it not because he believes in the validity of a certain doctrine, but because he cannot bear intolerance on others' part. Whenever Christians became bigotted and intolerant, non-christians became martyrs and whenever one section of Christianity became intolerant, the section suffering rose up and offered martyrdom. Martyrs are found in all religions, Catholics, Protestants, Moslems, Hindus and Buddhists. The most remarkable Martyrdom will be found among Sikhs whose example can be hardly surpassed.

"The Bab Abbas Effendi suffered martyrdom for his zeal in 1850, and between that date and now the most conservative opinion on the Babi martyrdom puts them at ten thousand." (*The Churches and Modern Thought*, p. 212).

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VII

Christ's atonement for the sins of humanity.

Christian missionaries are very zealous in appealing to the Hindus that Christ atoned for the sins of others. But they little realize that it is the silliest of doctrines. What is a sin and how can it be washed with the blood of another? If you just look at the genesis of this doctrine, you will wonder why people so long looked upon it with favour. In ordinary course of life, if we offend our master or ruler, we try to please him by offering something as a fine. This is a sort of bribe which the ruler accepts little knowing its consequences or the nature of the offence. This human weakness has been extended to God. The Jewish nation thought that God was also a similar ruler and would be satisfied with a bribe. They, accordingly, fabricated stories of man's offering animal sacrifice to God. From Adam's sons Abel and Cain down to later times animals were sacrificed in one form or another as atonement for one's sins. Abraham's readiness to sacrifice his dear son was as abominable in its germ as any human sacrifice allowed by other faiths. It was a good thing that Christians stopped this. But the theory of

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the sacrifice of Gods' only son for the sins of mankind is unintelligible and absurd. Christians try to exploit the credulity of people by making it mystic. They never explain it, fearing that the whole fabric of their faith will topple down. The principle of sacrifice or suffering for the sake of others has nothing to do with the Christian doctrine of atonement. If you forego a meal in order to feed a hungry man, we can understand the value of it. If you save a man from gallows by bearing the suffering yourself, it is intelligible. But what connection is there between Jesus's crucifixion and the sins committed or to be committed before or after by man not at all connected with the event? Unless, of course, you think that God has a register of sins and writes off one's debts by getting a return from others. If Jesus suffered in order to alleviate the sufferings of his contemporaries, (and it was possible only in the case of his contemporaries), then all credit to him. And if this example of his is followed by others, whether Christians or non-christians, so far so good. But this is not atonement. No Christians think so. The example of a noble act of sacrifice of anybody can be followed without reference to his doctrinal beliefs. But the mediator-

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ship or redeemership of Christ is a quite different thing and has no meaning. Two quite distinct ideas have been very badly confused. Atonement for sins of others strikes at the very root of morality. Sale of indulgences and one thousand and one other mischiefs of which Popery has been culprit were due to this pernicious doctrine.

VIII

Faith and Grace.

Equally meaningless are slogans of Christian Faith and Christian Grace. Faith versus Reason has been an age-long dispute and Christian missionaries claim that religion is a matter of faith. But this position they soon abandon when they criticize other religions. The Hindus have a faith in the divine incarnation of Kṛṣṇa. They believe in the miracles of Rāma and Kṛṣṇa. If it is all a matter of faith, then, nobody has a right to reason with them. As soon as you begin to argue, you pass over the threshold of faith and enter into the hall of reasoning. Why fight shy of it when you have once set the ball rolling. You cannot both eat the cake and have it. Either say that before having a faith, we should examine the beliefs

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minutely, and offer your Christian beliefs for hard tests of reasoning, or if you think that religion is all a matter of faith and reasoning should play no part therein, then be silent and wait for the day when through Divine Grace all men become Christians without any propaganda whatsoever. But instead of waiting for such a grace, the Church has been from its very inception trying to use all sorts of means, fair and foul, to proselytise. How and when does Divine Grace function? Does Faith follow Grace or precede it? Why does not God's Grace create Faith in all men's bosoms? If all else comes from Grace, why not Faith too? The fact is that Christian missionaries have two quite clashing weapons in their armoury. With heathens they argue, so that they might shake up their older faith with reasoning. And with Christians, they appeal to faith; so that rationalistic tendencies may not shake their faith in Christianity. Is it fairness or justice?

IX

Christians are very tolerant. They encourage freedom of conscience and learning.

We wish it were true. Justice-loving Christians wish it were true. But our wishes have been

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woefully belied by historical facts. Christians are at least as much guilty of religious bigotry, religious fanaticism and religious fraud as the adherents of any other religion. If you want evidences against Roman Catholics, go to the Protestants. If you wish to examine the Protestants, call the Catholics to witness box. Read the proceedings of different councils and the subsequent history how these proceedings have been translated into action and you are bound to bend your head in shame. Whatever tolerance of thought, or action you see preached or practised in Western countries today is the result of constant struggle of the scientists to vindicate their mental or moral freedom. The horrors of persecution are writ large at the door of the church of whatever denomination it might be. The credit of much that is good and sober in modern civilization can, by no means, go to the Church. The Christian Churches hindered progress as much as they could. If there was any improvement in the affairs, it was in spite of Christianity and not on account of it. Ingersoll rightly observes:—

"In a theological seminary, if a professor finds a fact inconsistent with the creed, he must keep it secret or deny it, or lose his place. Mental veracity is a crime; cowardice

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and hypocrisy are virtues.

A fact inconsistent with the creed is denounced as a lie, and the man who declares or announces the fact is a blasphemer. Every professor breathes the air of insincerity. Theology is the only dishonest science—the only one that is based on belief—on credulity—the only one that abhors investigation, that despises thought and denounces reason.

All the great theologians in the Catholic Church have denounced reason as the light furnished by the enemy of mankind—as the road that leads to perdition. All the great Protestant theologians, from Luther to the orthodox clergy of our time have been the enemies of reason. All orthodox Churches of all ages have been the enemies of science. They attacked the astronomers as though they were criminals—the geologists as though they were assassins. They regarded physicians as the enemies of God—as men who were trying to defeat the decrees of Providence. The biologists, the anthropologists, the archaeologists, the readers of ancient inscriptions, the delvers in buried cities, were all hated by the theologians. They were afraid that these men might find something inconsistent with the Bible." (Essay on Truth, page 14.)

How far Christians have practised toleration will be evident from three excerpts from T. W. Arnold's "Preaching of Islam":—

T. W. Arnold in his "Preaching of Islam", chapter IV refers to Egypt as follows:—

"The rapid success of the Arab invaders was largely due to the welcome they received from the Native Chris-

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tians, who hated the Byzantine rule not only for its oppressive administration, but also—and chiefly—on account of the *bitterness of theological rancour*. The Jacobites, who formed the majority of the Christian population, had been very roughly handled by the orthodox adherents of the court and subjected to indignities that have not been forgotten by their children even to the present day.

Some were tortured and then thrown into the sea; many followed their Patriarch into exile to escape from the lands of their persecutors, while a large number disguised their real opinions under a pretended acceptance of the Council of Chalcedon. (Renaudot, p. 161).

To this he appends a footnote:—

Justinian is said to have had 200,000 Copts (the Jacobite Christians of Egypt) put to death in the city of Alexandria, and the persecutions of his successors drove many to take refuge in the desert. (Waneben: The Present State of Egypt, p. 11, London 1678).

"When the Muhammadans first brought their religion into Spain they found Catholic Christianity firmly established after its conquest over Arianism. The sixth council of Toledo had enacted that all Kings were to swear that they would not suffer the exercise of any other religion but the Catholic, and would vigorously enforce the law against all dissentients, while a subsequent law forbade anyone under pain of confiscation of his property and perpetual imprisonment, to call in question the Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church, the Evangelical Institutions, the definitions of the Fathers, the decrees of the Church, and the Holy Sacraments... ...The Christian clergy took advantage of their power to

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persecute the Jews who formed a very large community in Spain. *Edicts of a brutally severe character* were passed against such as refused to be baptised. (Helfferich, p. 68, quoted by Arnold in the Preaching of Islam, Chapter V, p. 112).

Another feature in the condition of the Greek Church that contributed to the decay of its numbers, was the corruption and degradation of its pastors, particularly the higher clergy. The sees of bishops and archbishops were put up to auction to the highest bidders, and the purchasers sought to recoup themselves by exacting levies of all kinds from their flocks; they burdened the unfortunate Christians with taxes ordinary and extraordinary, made them purchase all the sacraments at exorbitant rates, baptism, confession, holy communions, indulgences, and the right of Christian burial. (Arnold's Preaching of Islam, Chapter VI, p. 143).

After these hard facts, it is not possible to connect all that is good in the modern world with Christianity. It is possible to modernize India or improve the Hindu society without Christianity.

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CHAPTER VIII

CHRISTIAN ATTITUDE TOWARDS KNOWLEDGE

It is often claimed that all scientific progress which the modern world has achieved is due to Christianity. We admit that there are many eminent scientists who have been *allowed* to call themselves Christians. But the attitude of the Christian missionaries towards science and scientists has all along been extremely hostile. The Bible says that the enjoyment of the fruit of the tree of knowledge cost Adam Paradise. And following this holy tradition the holy personages of Christianity always looked upon science as something coming from Satan. Any new discovery of laws of nature shook Christendom to its very foundation, the Pope and heads of other Christian denominations began to tremble in their shoes and a cry was raised that Christianity was in danger. Stringent laws were passed against scientists, their books were proscribed and burnt, they were jailed, tortured

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and even burnt alive; and when at last Christian missionaries found themselves vanquished they made peace with science by so moulding their doctrines as to fit in with the latest scientific discoveries and in the end vainly claim for themselves the credit which was never their due. In this chapter we propose to place before the reader a few hard facts.

The whole struggle to crush Galileo and to save him would be amusing were it not so fraught with evil. There were intrigues and counter-intrigues, plots and counter-plots, lying and spying; and in the thickest of this seething, squabbling, screaming mass of priests, bishops, archbishops, and cardinals, appear two Popes Paul V and Urban VIII. It is most suggestive to see in this crisis of the Church, at the tomb of the prince of the apostles, on the eve of the greatest errors in Church policy the world has known, in all the intrigues and deliberations of these consecrated leaders of the church, no more evidence of the guidance or presence of the Holy Spirit than in a caucus of New York politicians at Tammany Hall ("A History of the Warfare of Science with Theology in Christendom" by A. D. White p. 137).

Not only were Christian missionaries against astronomy or geography, their hostility against medical science was horrible.

"Especially prejudicial to a true development of medical science among the first Christians was their attribution of disease to diabolic influence. As we have seen this idea

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had come from far, and, having prevailed in Chaldea, Egypt and Persia, had naturally entered into the sacred books of the Hebrews. Moreover, St. Paul had distinctly declared that the gods of the heathen were devils; everywhere, the early Christian saw in disease, the malignant work of these dethroned powers of evil. The Gnostic and Manichaean struggles had ripened the theological idea that, although at times diseases are punishments by the Almighty, the main agency in them is Satanic. The great fathers and renowned leaders of the early church accepted and strengthened this idea. Origen said: "It is demons which produce famine, unfruitfulness, corruptions of the air, pestilences: they hover concealed in clouds in the lower atmosphere, and are attracted by the blood and incense which the heathen offer to them as gods."

St. Augustine said, "All diseases of the Christians are to be ascribed to these demons, chiefly do they torment freshbaptized Christians, Yea even, the guiltless, newborn infants."

Tertullian insisted a malevolent angel is in constant attendance upon every person. Gregory of Nazianzus declared that bodily pains are provoked by demons, and that medicines are useless but that they are often cured by the laying on of consecrated hands. St. Nilus and St. Gregory of Tours, echoing St. Ambrose, gave examples to show the sinfulness of resorting to medicine instead of trusting to the intercession of saints.....

Out of these and similar considerations was developed the vast system of "pastoral medicine," so powerful not only through the Middle Ages, but even in modern times,

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both among Catholics and Protestants.....

Enormous revenues flowed into various monasteries and churches in all parts of Europe from relics noted for their healing powers. Every cathedral, every great abbey and nearly every parish Church claimed possession of healing relics: (A History of the Warfare of Science with Theology in Christendom, p. 28).

(1) At the Cathedral (of Cologne), preserved in a magnificent shrine since about the twelfth century, are the skulls of three Kings, or Wise men of the East, who, guided by the star of Bethlehem, brought gifts to the saviour. These relics were an enormous source of wealth to the Cathedral Chapter during many centuries. But other ecclesiastical bodies in that city were both pious and shrewd, and so we find that not far, at the Church of St. Gereon, a cemetery has been dug up, and the bones distributed over the walls as the relics of St. Gereon and his Thebian band of martyrs! Again at the neighbouring Church of St. Ursula we have the later spoils of another cemetery covering the interior walls of the Church as the bones of St. Ursula and her eleven thousand virgin martyrs: the fact that many of them, as anatomists now declare, are the bones of *men* does not appear in the Middle Ages to have diminished their power of competing with the relics at the other shrines in healing efficiency." (p. 29).

(2) Prof. Buckland, the eminent osteologist and geologist has discovered that the relics of St. Rosalia at Palermo, which had for ages cured diseases and warded off epidemics *were the bones of a goat.*

(3) Anatomizing the dead bodies was declared a sin

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because the human body was the temple of the Holy Spirit, as well as on the ground that "some injury might result to its final resurrection at the Last Day." Tertullian denounced the anatomist Herophilus as a butcher. St. Augustine also spoke in similar terms. In 1248, the Council of La Mans forbade surgery to monks. "For over a thousand years, surgery was considered dishonourable." Only in 1406 Emperor Wenzel of Germany ordered that dishonour should no longer attach to the surgical profession.

(4) St. Bernard declared that monks who took medicine were guilty of conduct unbecoming to religion.

(5) The Lateran Council, about the beginning of the thirteenth century, forbade physicians, under *pain of exclusion from the church*, to undertake medical treatment without calling in ecclesiastical advice.

(6) Pope Pius ordered that all physicians before administering treatment should call in "a physician of the Soul" (i.e., a clergyman) and that, if at the end of three days the patient had not made confession to a priest, the medical man should cease his treatment, under pain of being deprived of his right to practise, and of expulsion from the faculty if he were a professor.

(7) "Closely connected with these methods of thought was the doctrine of "*signatures*". It was reasoned that the Almighty must have set his sign upon the various means of curing diseases which he has provided, hence it was held that blood-root, on account of its red juice, is good for the blood; liver-wort, having a leaf like the liver, cures diseases of the liver; eye-bright, being marked with a spot like an eye, cures diseases of the eyes; celandine having a yellow juice,

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cures jaundice; bugloss, resembling a snakes' head, cures snake-bites; red flannel, looking like blood, cures blood-taints, and therefore, rheumatism.....
. (vide Dr. Eccles's Evolution of Medical Science).

(8) Disgusting the demon with the body which he tormented. The patient was made to swallow livers of toads, blood of frogs and rabbits, fibres of the hangman's rope, and ointment made from the body of gibbeted criminals.

(9) Lammert in his 'Volksmedizin und medizinischer Aberglaube in Bayern' gives the following salve against "nocturnal goblin visitors."—

"Take hop plant, worm wood, bishopwort, lupine, ashthroat, henbane, harewort, viper's bugloss, heathberry plant, cropleek, garlic, grains of hedgerife, githrife, and fennel. Put these worts into a vessel, set them under *the altar*, *sing over them nine masses*, boil them in butter and sheep's greese, add much holy salt, strain through a cloth, throw the worts into running water."

(10) The water in which a single hair of a Saint had been dipped was used as a purgative; water in which St. Remy's ring had been dipped cured fevers; wine in which the bones of a saint had been dipped cured lunacy; oil from a lamp burning before the tomb of St. Gall cured tumours, St. Vallentine cured epilepsy, St. Christopher, throat diseases; St. Eutropius, dropsy; St. Ovid deafness,

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St. Gervase, rheumatism, St. Appollonia, toothache, St. Vitus, St. Anthony and a multitude of other saints the maladies which bear their names.

(11) In Bavaria in 1784, certain authorities ordered that a man bitten by a mad dog should put up prayers at the shrine of St. Hubert and not *waste time in medical or surgical cure.*

(12) The use of saliva is ascribed to Jesus in the fourth Gospel. Therefore it was used as medicine.

(13) In Ireland every parish has a sacred stream. In England and Scotland there have been many. In 1805, Dr. Milner of the Roman Catholic Church gave a careful and earnest account of a miraculous cure wrought at a sacred well in Flintshire.

(14) Luther described his own diseases to "devil's spells", declaring that 'Satan produces all the maladies which afflict mankind for he is the prince of death,' and that "he poisons the air," but that "no malady comes from God."

(15) Cure by royal touch. A Roman Catholic was cured by Queen Elizabeth's touch and became Protestant. (Vide Fuller's Church History). Charles II, the most thoroughly cynical debauchee, touched nearly one hundred thousand persons and

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the outlay for gold medals issued to the afflicted on these occasions rose in some years as high as ten thousand pounds.

(16) Epidemics were stayed by prayers. In the Bible, there is such a mention in connection with Aaron. The pestilence of King David was averted by burnt offerings to Jahveh "since the rise of Christianity, and down to a period within living memory, at appearance of any pestilence the Church authorities, instead of devising sanitary measures, have very generally, preached the necessity of immediate atonement for offences against the Almighty."

(17) Indignity to the body secured salvation to the soul. Cleanliness betokened pride and filthiness, humility. St. Jerome and the Breviary of the Roman Church say that St. Hilarion lived his whole life long in utter physical uncleanliness. St. Athanasius glorifies St. Anthony because he had never washed his feet. St. Abraham did not wash his hands and feet for full fifty years. St. Sylvia never washed any part of her body save her fingers, St. Euphraxia belonged to convent where the nuns religiously abstained from bathing, St. Mary of Egypt was eminent for filthiness. St. Simon Stylites was in this respect unspeakable.

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(18) In the Protestant colonies of America plagues were attributed to Divine Wrath or Satanic Malice. The pestilence among the *Indians*, before the arrival of the Plymouth Colony, was attributed in a notable work of that period *to the Divine purpose of clearing New England for the heralds of the Gospel.* (Ibid., p. 85).

(19) In Calvinistic Scotland, pestilences were averted by executions of witches.

(20) Against one form of insanity both Catholics and Ptotestants were especially cruel. Nothing is more common in all times of religious excitement than strange personal hallucinations, involving the belief, by the insane patient, that he is a divine person. In the most striking representation of insanity that has ever been made, Kaulbach shows, at the centre of his wonderful group, a patient drawing attention to himself as the saviour of the world.

Sometimes, when this form of disease took a milder hysterical character, the subject of it was treated with reverence and even elevated to sainthood: such examples as St. Francis of Assisi, and St. Catherine of Siena in Italy, St. Bridget in Sweden, St. Iheresa in Spain, St. Mary Alacoque in France, and Louise Lateau in Belgium are typical. But more frequently such cases shocked public feeling and were treated with special rigour: typical of this is the case of Simon Marin, who in his insanity believed himself to be the Son of God, and was on that account burned alive at Paris and his ashes scattered to the winds. (Warfare, page 120).

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(21) The profundity of theologians and Jurists constantly developed new theories as to the modes of diabolic entrance into the "possessed". One such theory was that Satan could be taken into the mouth with one's food—perhaps in the form of an insect swallowed on a leaf of salad, and this was sanctioned by Gregory the Great, Pope and Saint. The devil also entered human beings during sleep. A King of Spain was wont to sleep between two monks, to keep off the devil (See Buckle's History of Civilization in England).

(22) The monasteries were frequent sources of that form of mental disease which was supposed to be caused by bewitchment. From the earliest period it is evident that monastic life tended to develop insanity.....it was especially the convents for women that became the great breeding-beds of this disease.....Hysterical excitement in nunneries took shapes sometimes comical but more generally tragical.....the last famous victim, of the *myriads executed* in Germany for this imaginary crime, was Sister Anna Renata Sanger, sub-prioress of a nunnery near Wurzburg. (p. 121).

(23) In recent times John Wesley insisted on the authority of the Old Testament, that bodily diseases are sometimes caused by the devils, and upon the authority of the New Testament, that the gods of the heathen are demons. In his great sermon on Evil angels, he dwells upon the point that "most lunatics are really demoniacs." (p. 125).

(24) In 1374, there broke out in the lower Rhine region an epidemic of dancing, jumping and wild raving. The afflicted continued dancing for hours, until they fell in utter exhaustion. Some declared that they felt as if bathed in blood, some saw visions, some prophesied.

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Into this mass of "possession" there was also clearly poured a current of scoundrelism which increased the disorder.

The immediate source of these manifestations seems to have been the wild revels of St. John's Day.

At Cologne we hear of five hundred afflicted at once; at Metz of eleven hundred dancers in the streets, at Strasburg of yet more painful manifestations.

Many theological remedies were tried. But the most fearful of all the main attempts at cure were the persecutions of Jews. A feeling had evidently spread among the people at large that the Almighty was filled with wrath at the toleration of his enemies, and might be propitiated by their destruction: in the principal cities and villages of Germany, then, the Jews were plundered, tortured, and murdered by tens of thousands. No doubt, that in all this, greed was united with fanaticism; but the argument of fanaticism was simple and cogent; the dart which pierced the breast of Israel at that time was winged and pointed from its own sacred books: the biblical argument was the same used in various ages to promote persecution; and this was that the wrath of the Almighty was stirred against those who tolerated his enemies and that because of this toleration the same curse had now come upon Europe which the prophet Samuel had denounced against Saul for showing mercy to the enemies of Jehovah. (p. 138).

These are some of the samples of christian superstitions, which coming into scientific atmosphere:—

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"have been dissolved and are now dissolving quietly away like icebergs drifted into the Gulf Stream. In earlier days, when some critic in advance of his time insisted that Moses could not have written an account embracing the circumstances of his own death, it was sufficient to answer that Moses was a *prophet*; if attention was called to the fact that the great early prophets, by all which they did or did not do, showed that there could not have existed in their time any "Levitical code," a sufficient answer was "mystery," and if the discrepancy was noted between the two accounts of creation in Genesis or between the genealogies or the dates of the crucifixion in the Gospels, the cogent reply was 'infidelity.' But the thinking world has at last been borne by the general development of a scientific atmosphere beyond that kind of refutation." (A History of Warfare of Science with Theology in Christendom, Vol. II, p. 393).

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CHAPTER IX

THE AUTHENTICITY OF THE BIBLE

The Bible is the Holy Book of the Christians. It is God's revelation. It is at the same time a history. In this chapter we shall discuss these two points, historicity as well as revelation.

There are two parts of the Bible, the Old Testament and the New Testament. The Old Testament consists of all the books beginning with Moses' Pentateuch and ending with Malachi, said to be a history of the religious development of mankind from the first day of the creation upto about third century B. C. The authors of the Old Testament are unknown. A critical study of the Bible even by Christian divines has shown the hollowness of the claim that the Bible is a history. The following quotation from the "Bible Dictionary" published by Thomas Nelson and Sons, New York, is worth noticing:—

The Received Chronology—The dates B. C. of those periods, according to the received "chronology", are shown in the

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following table:—

	Period	*Date B. C.*	*Duration years*
I.	Adam to Deluge	4004-2348	1656
II.	Deluge to Abraham	2348-1921	427
III.	Abraham to Exodus	1921-1491	430
IV.	Exodus to Saul	1491-1095	396
V.	Duration of Kingdom	1095-587	508
VI.	Fall of Jerusalem to Christian era	587-end	587
		Total years A. M. ..	4004

But from *the uncertainties connected with every Period*, except the last, it is impossible to assign the date, even approximately, of the appearance of man upon the earth. No fewer than 140 different dates for "the creation" have been assigned by chronologers, from the Jewish computation (the shortest) of 3483 years before the Christian era, to the estimate made by direction of Alphonso of Castile, 6984 years. It is plain from such comparison that *the problem is insoluble*. The general acquiescence in the view that our Lord came exactly 4000 years after Adam was no doubt partly due to the theory mentioned in the Epistle of Barnabas, that the world is to have its sabbatic period—2000 years before the promises, 2000 more until the era of Redemption, 2000 for the Christian period—and then the Millennium of rest. *But it is plain that no real argument can be based on fancies like this.*"

Under the heading "Pentateuch" (Five books believed to have been written by Moses), the same Dictionary remarks:—

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"It is nowhere stated in scriptures that Moses wrote the whole of the Pentateuch. The books, indeed, in many literary features, resemble the succeeding historical books which are composed of different materials."

For want of space we shall confine ourselves to one more extract from a Christian of our own times, viz., the Speech of Canon Barnes given to the Association of University Women Teachers held at University College, London:—

"In this connection it was most important that the true nature and value of the Old Testament should be explained to children. It was Jewish literature, and was valuable for us mainly because it showed how the Jewish prophets were led to the idea of God, which Jesus accepted and emphasized, and because in it vague expectations of a Messiah foreshadowed the advent of Christ. *But in the Old Testament were also to be found folk-lore, defective history, half-savage morality, obsolete forms of worship based upon primitive and erroneous ideas of the nature of God, and crude science.* The whole, however, was valuable as showing the growth of a pure monotheism among the Jews—a religious phenomenon as remarkable and inexplicable as the great intellectual development of the golden ages of Greece. It was very difficult to convey truths like this to children and so it seemed to him better to postpone the Old Testament part of the religious teachings to the later stages; *otherwise children would learn stories like that with which the Book of Genesis opened which they would afterwards discover to be untrue.*

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He had come reluctantly to the conclusion that *it was highly dangerous to use, for didactic purposes, such allegories as the creation of woman, the Daniel stories, and Jonah; it encouraged the prevalent belief that religious people had low standard of truth.* (Islamic Review, Vol. X pp. 45, 46).

(The Sources of Christianity by Khwaja Kamaluddin, footnote of p. 31).

This is the character of the Old Testament on which the prophetic nature of Christ's birth, crucifixion, resurrection and passion are based. Now come to the New Testament.

Ordinary people think and Christian missionaries give them to think that the New Testament is God's book. In what sense? Did God write it? Absurd. Did He dictate it? Again absurd. Then, did Jesus Christ write it? Never. If you believe the New Testament it will tell you that for many years there was not a word of the New Testament. Ingersoll's following remarks are worth noting:—

"Who wrote the New Testament"?

Christian scholars admit that they do not know. They admit that if, the four Gospels were written by Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, they must have been written in Hebrew. And yet a Hebrew manuscript of any one of these Gospels has never been found. All have been and are in Greek. So, educated theologians admit that the Epistles, James and Jude, were written by persons who had never seen one of th

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four Gospels. In these Epistles—in James and Jude—no reference is made to any of the Gospels, nor to any miracle recorded in them.

The first mention that has been found of one of our Gospels was made about one hundred and eighty years after the birth of Christ, and the four Gospels were first named and quoted from at the beginning of the third century, about one hundred and seventy years after the death of Christ.

We now know that there were many other Gospels besides our four, some of which have been lost. There were the Gospels of Paul, of the Egyptians, of the Hebrews, of Perfection, of Judas, of Thaddeus, of the Infancy, of Thomas, of Mary, of Andrew, of Nicodemus, of Marcion and several others.

So there were the Acts of Pilate, of Andrew, of Mary, of Paul and Thecla, and of many others. Another book was called the Shepherd of Hermes.

At first no one of all the books was considered as inspired. The Old Testament was regarded as divine; but the books that now constitute the New Testament were regarded as human productions. We now know that we do not know who wrote the four Gospels."—(*About the Holy Bible*, p. 57).

People may possibly say that though minor details of Biblical events may not be accurate the general history is all right. But this is also a great hoax. The Christian Divines have woven the warp and woof of historicity and "revelation" so very cleverly that for an ordinary person it is difficult to see the game. Why is the Bible a history

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when no historical proof whatsoever is coming? Because from Ezra down to St. Paul the writers were helped by the Holy Ghost, which proves the revelationary character of the Books. And why is the Bible a revelation and therefore authentic? Because Christ is a historical personage. How funny? Is it logic? The Christian Divines have begun to realize the weakness and yet Christian preachers in the villages and towns of India are harping on the same old and discarded tune. We give here a few quotations:—

In the Lower House of the Convocation of Canterbury in the sitting of July 5, 1917, it was demanded by some of the clergy, that the wording of certain of the questions* put to them at their ordination, should be changed. These questions demanded their subscribing unfeignedly to the belief that everything in the Bible was from God. Their contention was that they could not take the oath in the form prescribed, as they did not believe in the truth of many of the legends and events narrated in the scriptures. They said they could not believe in the story of Jonas' fish, though Jesus himself seems to have done so seeing that he referred to it when he is reported to have foretold his resurrection in these words:—

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* The Third question. "Do you unfeignedly believe all the canonical scriptures of the Old and the New Testament?"

Answer. "I do so believe them."

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An evil.....earth. (Matthew xii, 39, 40).

The suggested form, however, ran as follows:—

"Do you unfeignedly believe all the canonical scriptures of the Old and the New Testament, as conveying to us in many parts, and in divers manners, the revelation of God which is consummated in Jesus Christ?" Answer. "I do so believe them."

The Dean of Canterbury said that the question, in the form suggested by the committee, did not give prominence to the fact that the scriptures were the result of divine inspiration and divine authority, and that they were a vital part of the Christian Faith. He named as an amendment that the words should be:—

"Do you acknowledge that the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testament were given by Divine Inspiration?" But the Dean of Christian Church pointed out that the proposal would leave them exactly where they were before.

The Dean of Canterbury's amendment was negatived, 5 voting for it and 63 against. Several other amendments were proposed, the majority of them being rejected by the House, and eventually it was agreed by 74 votes to 4, that the question should be put to deacons in the following form:—

"Do you unfeignedly believe all the canonical scriptures of the Old and the New Testament as conveying to us in many parts, and in divers manners, the revelation of God which is fulfilled under Lord Jesus Christ?"

Though the clerical conscience was pacified by the proposed change, it is interesting to note that the participators in the conference, with all the advantages of their University education did not avoid committing the fallacy of *petitio*

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principi. Their knowledge of Jesus comes exclusively from the Bible. (The Sources of Christianity by Khwaja Kamal-uddin, pp. 27, 28).

There are many learned men who now entertain serious doubts about the historicity of the Bible, both Old and New Testament. Even if Jesus lived and was a good man, he neither wrote the Bible nor founded any church. The Bible contains nothing new in any sense of the term and the divinity attributed to it or Jesus Christ is all bogus. Whatever ideas are expressed by the Christians about Jesus were all in existence beforehand and literary critics have discovered much resemblance between the books or religions prevalent before Christ and Christianity.

"At the appearance of Jesus there were temples without end dedicated to gods like Appollo or Dionysus among the Greeks, Hercules among the Romans, Mithra among the Persians, Adonis and Attis in Syria and Phrygia; Osiris, Isis and Horus in Egypt; Baal and Astarte among the Babylonians and Carthagenians, and so forth.

All these Deities were Sun-gods and of all or nearly all of them, as Edward Carpenter says, it was believed that:—

(1) They were born on or very near Christmas Day.
(2) They were born of a Virgin Mother.
(3) And in a cave or underground Chamber.
(4) They led a life of toil for mankind.
(5) They were called by the names of Light-Bringer

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Healer, Mediator, Saviour and Deliverer.

(6) They were, however, vanquished by the Powers of Darkness.

(7) They descended into Hell or the Under-world.

(8) They rose again from the dead and became the pioneers of mankind to the Heavenly world. (pp. 58, 59).

Mithraism has left no traces in the world, though it was so powerful in the third century A.D. that, had it not been suppressed in Rome and Alexandria by the Christians with physical force, as has been admitted by St. Jerome, it would have left no chance for the flourishing of Christianity; and that it died only when most of its legends became incorporated in the simple faith of Jesus, and the Church lore fully saturated with Mithraic colours, so much so that Tertullian had to admit the fact, though in a way befitting his position. He says that the learned in his days considered Mithraism and Christianity identical in all but name. St. Jerome and other Early Fathers became puzzled at the similarity existing between the two faiths, but their ingenuity ascribed it to the machinations of the Devil to mock their faith.

St. Jerome admits that Mithra and Baal were the same and called sons of the Lord. He says, "The Sun whom the heathen worship under the names of Lord sun (Baal Samus) and son of the Lord (Bor Behis). (p. 62).

Dean Farrar, in his *Life of Christ* has very rightly remarked that there are no satisfactory proofs to locate the birth of Jesus on December 25th. The Bible is silent on the subject, though it makes mention of the shepherds being that night with their flocks in the fields of Bethlehem. (Hasting's Ency. of Rel. and Ethics, Art. Christians).

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It makes it more difficult to accept December 25th as the real date of the Nativity, December being the height of the rainy season in Judaea, when neither flocks, nor shepherds could have been by night in the fields of Bethlehem. Uesener says that the Feast of the Nativity was held originally on January 6th (The Epiphany), but in A.D. 353-4 the Pope Liberus altered it to December 25th, but there is no evidence of a Feast of Nativity taking place at all before the fourth century A.D. It was not until A.D. 534 that Christmas Day and Epiphany were reckoned by the law-courts as "Dies Non." (Hasting's Ency. of Rel. and Ethics. Art. Christian).

The Greek Church, even today, does not observe Christmas on Dec. 25th, but on January 7th. It was, however, not until the year A.D. 530, or thereabouts that a Scythian Monk, Dionysius Exiguus, an abbot and astrologer of Rome, was commissioned to fix the date and the year of the birth of Jesus. He it was who assigned the day and the date and the month now accepted in Christendom. The said monk does not give the data that authorizes him to fix December 25th as the day of the Nativity, but the very date, within a day or two is the date of the supposed birth of many of the Sun-gods.

(*Pagan and Christian Creeds, p.* 26).

According to the Julian Calendar, this date is the date of the Nativity of the Sun. Mithra was born on the same date. Osiris, the Egyptian Sun-god according to Plutarch, was born on the 27th, and Horus, another sun-god, on the 28th of the same month, and Appolo as well on the same date, all these being various conceptions of the Sun-god in diff-

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erent countries where the worship of the sun was the popular creed, and the dates follow the Winter solstice, when the sun, after reaching the lowest declension, begins to ascend again, being appropriate for his birth. (p. 64).

It is not the Holy Ghost but Plato, Philo and others of the Alexandrian school of philosophy, that inspired the first builders of the Church in their writings. The term *word*, used in St. John, which stands for the Greek word *Logos*, is an inadequate rendering. In all his writings Philo speaks of *Logos*—a philosophic conception of later growth and a development of the "Idea of Plato," in his theory of Emanation. It does not mean word; it conveys "Thought as well as expression." Plato when dealing with the subject, spoke of something—as the first thing in creation that may be styled "Reason or Wisdom"—the first product of Herbert Spencer's "First Intelligent Cause."

St. Paul (Soul of Tarsus)—preacher to the Gentiles. He could not be popular with his own people.

"The Gentiles were not the people of the Lord.....They were a sinful tribe, like others. They were visited by calamities, as others were. They ascribed it to their misdeeds. But sacrifice only, and not repentance and reclamation, could please the angered Deity, in their belief. Sin and sacrifice was the basic creed of their creed.

Did Paul go to them with a new faith, a new way of Salvation, taught by the New Teacher from Judaea, and a new means of appeasing the wrath of the Deity? Or did he go to them to repeat their own story, and that in their own

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language, in their own philosophy, and, worst of all, in the terms of their own cult? They had heard of gods, as Gibbon observes, who used to descend from heaven in olden days, in the garb of man, to participate in human actions. They knew that gods incarnate, suffered hardships for the benefit of the human race, and gave their very life to ward off impending calamities that came to punish men for their misdeeds. The angered deity thus became propitiated, the penalty of the sin remitted; the incarnate god descended unto Hades to reclaim the sinners. His task thus fulfilled, he ascended unto heaven. The Greeks and Romans were not unaware of such gods.

St. Paul and his successors went to them. They informed the Pagan world that one of those whom they had been hearing of, and would naturally be glad to receive if they came again, had at last appeared in Judaea.....The story was given to them the same; the apostle of the new faith did not make any new demand in the way of belief; the same traditions and the same rites suffered. No action, but bare belief in the story, was sufficient for salvation. (pp. 135-136, 137).

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The January 1922 issue of the Quest thus traces the legend of *Christ's Passion* to an older Babylonian story :—

The Babylonian Passion Play	*The Christian Passion Story*
Bēl is taken prisoner. Bēl is tried in the House on the Mount (the Hall of Justice). Bēl is smitten (wounded). Bēl is led away to the Mount.	Jesus is taken prisoner. Jesus is tried in the House of the High Priest and the Hall of Pilate. Jesus is scourged. Jesus is led away to crucifixion on Golgotha.
Together with Bēl a malefactor is led away and put to death. Another, who is also charged as a malefactor, is let go, thus not taken away with Bēl.	Together with Jesus, two malefactors are led away and put to death. Another (Barnabas) is released to the people, and thus not taken away with Jesus.
After Bēl had gone to the Mount, the city breaks out into tumult, and fighting takes place in it.	At the death of Jesus the veil in the temple is rent (Synopt.), the earth quakes, the rocks are rent asunder, the graves are opened and the dead come forth into the holy city (Math.).
Bēl's clothes are carried away.	Jesus' robe is divided among the soldiers. (Synopt., John. Cf. Ps. XXII. 18).
A woman wipes away the	The lance thrust in Jesus'

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The Babylonian Passion Play	*The Christian Passion Story*
heart's blood of Bēl flowing from a drawn-out weapon (?, Spear).	side and outflow of water and blood (John). Mary Magdalene and two other women busy themselves with the (washing, and) embalming of the body. (Mark, Luke).
Bēl goes down into the Mount away from sun and light, disappears from life, and is held fast in the Mount as in a prison.	Jesus, in the grave, in the rock tomb (Synopt.) goes down into the realm of the dead. (I. Pet. iii, 19, Math. XII, 40, Acts ii, 24, Rom. X, 17, "descent into hell" dogma).
Guards watch Bēl imprisoned in the stronghold of the Mount.	Guards are set over the tomb of Jesus (Math.).
A goddess sits with Bēl; she comes to tend him.	Mary Magdalene and the other Mary sit before the tomb (Math., Mark).
They seek for Bēl where he is held fast. In particular a weeping woman seeks for him at the "Gate of Burial" when he is being carried away the same lamented "O, my	Women, in particular Mary Magdalene, came to the tomb to seek Jesus where he is behind the door of the tomb. Mary stands weeping before the empty tomb

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The Babylonian Passion Play	*The Christian Passion Story*
brother, O, my brother."	because they have taken her Lord away. (John).
Bēl is again brought back to life (as the sun of spring), he comes again out of the Mount.	Jesus' restoration to life, his rising from the grave (on a Sunday Morning).
His chief feast, the Babylonian New Year's festival in March at the time of the Spring equinox, is celebrated also as his triumph over the powers of darkness (Cf. the creation hymn "Once when on High" as the new year's festival hymn).	His festival, approximately at the spring equinox, is also celebrated.

Is not the biblical story a recast of the story of Bēl? Apart from the similarity of the details, the very occurrence of the crucifixion in the way narrated in the Bible seems now to be fictitious. The Quran denies the event in the clearest terms. It would, indeed, seem to lack independent evidence. We owe all our knowledge of Jesus to the Bible, before the revelation of the Holy Qurān; there are however, two other pieces of evidence—first, a reference to the crucifixion in the history of Josephus, a contemporary of Jesus, and secondly, a letter alleged to have been written by Pilate to the Roman Emperor, speaking of the crucifixion. This letter exists in the archives of the vatican, but both these

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testimonials seem to be inadmissible. The original Ms. of Josephus does not contain the page referring to Jesus, which is admitted to be a subsequent insertion; the letter of Pilate, with the signature on it as well, is now considered a pious fraud. Thus we are left no other course than to rely on the Bible and the Holy Quran. The last Book of God totally denies the event and the Bible story is only a remoulding of the Babylonian legend, which is decidedly a myth of the sun worship. Apart from the verdict of the Holy Quran, could any person accept the Gospel story as original, in the name of honesty and truth, after reading the contents of the said tablets? Besides, the multiplicity of the various events recorded to complete the Gospel story, makes it a physical impossibility. From the Last Supper, upto the crucifixion all events have been recorded in one night—the agony in the Garden, the betrayal by Judas, Jesus brought before Caiaphas, and the Sanhedrim, and then to the Hall of Judgment, the intermediate visit to Herod and coming again to Pilate who speaks and washes his hands, the scourging, the mocking of Jesus arrayed in purple, and the crown of thorns, the preparation of a cross, and the painful journey to Golgotha.

Events, with characters coming out of the "green room" or on the film, may receive their full development within a few hours, but when they actually occur they must take some reasonable time; and it is a matter of surprise, as Edward Carpenter thinks, to find the trial of Jesus in the middle of the night, as courts do not generally sit to try malefactors at that hour of the night (pages 85-86).

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Mr. T. W. Doane gives the following comparison of the analogies between the lives of Jesus Christ and Gautam a Buddha. (*Vide Bible Myths*, pp. 287-297.)

1. Buddha was born of the Virgin Maya, who conceived him without carnal intercourse.	1. Jesus was born of the Virgin Mary, who conceived him without carnal intercourse.
2. The incarnation of Buddha is recorded to have been brought about by the descent of the divine power called the "Holy Ghost" upon the Virgin Maya.	2. The incarnation of Jesus is recorded to have been brought about by the descent of the divine power called the "Holy Ghost" upon the Virgin Mary.
3. When Buddha descended from the regions of the souls, and entered the body of the Virgin Maya, her womb assumed the appearance of clear transparent crystal, in which Buddha appeared, beautiful as a flower.	3. When Jesus descended from his heavenly seat. and entered the body of the Virgin Mary, her womb assumed the appearance of clear transparent crystal, in which Jesus appeared beautiful as a flower.
4. The birth of Buddha was announced in the heavens by an *asterim* which was seen rising on the horizon.	4. The birth of Jesus was announced in the heavens by "his star" which was seen rising on the horizon. It

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It is called the "Messianic Star".

5. The son of the Virgin Maya, on whom, according to the tradition, the 'Holy Ghost' had descended was said to have been born on "Christmas Day".

6. Demonstrations of celestial delight were manifest at the birth of Buddha. The *Devas* in heaven and earth sang praises to the "Blessed one," and said: "Today, Bodhisatwa is born on earth, to give joy and peace to men and Devas, to shed light in the dark places, and to give sight to the blind."

7. "Buddha was visited by wise men who recognized in this marvellous infant all the characters of the divinity, and he had scarcely seen the day before he was hailed God of Gods."

8. The infant Buddha was presented with "costly

might properly be called the "Messianic Star."

5. The son of the Virgin Mary, on whom, according to the tradition, "the Holy Ghost" had descended, was said to have been born on Christmas Day.

6. Demonstrations of celestial delight were manifest at the birth of Jesus. The angels in heaven and earth sang praises to the "Blessed one," saying, "Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace, goodwill towards men."

7. Jesus was visited by wise men who recognized in this marvellous infant all the characters of the divinity, and he had scarcely seen the day before he was hailed God of Gods.

8. The infant Jesus was presented with gifts of gold,

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jewels and precious substances."

frankincense, and myrrh.

9. When Buddha was an infant, just born, he spoke to his mother, and said: "I am the greatest among men."

9. When Jesus was an infant in his cradle, he spoke to his mother, and said, "I am Jesus, the son of God."

10. Buddha was a "dangerous child." His life was threatened by King Bimbasara, who was advised to destroy the child, as he was liable to overthrow him.

10. Jesus was a "dangerous child." His life was threatened by King Herod, who attempted to destroy the child, as he was liable to overthrow him.

11. When sent to school, the young Buddha surprised his masters. Without having ever studied, he completely worsted all his competitors, not only in writing, but in Arithmetic, Mathematics, Metaphysics, Astrology, Geometry, etc.

11. When sent to school, Jesus surprised his master, Zaccheus, who, turning to Joseph, said, "Thou hast brought a boy to me to be taught, who is more learned than any master."

12. "When *twelve* years old the child Buddha is presented in the temple. He explains and asks learned questions; he explains all those who enter into competition with him."

12. "And when he was *twelve* years old, they brought him to (the temple at) Jerusalem.....While in the temple among doctors and elders, and learned men of Israel, he proposed several

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questions of learning, and also gave them answers."

13. Buddha entered a temple, on which occasion forthwith all the statues rose and threw themselves at his feet, in act of worship.

13. "And as Jesus was going in by the ensigns, who carried the standards, the tops of them bowed down and worshipped Jesus."

14. The ancestry of Gautama Buddha is traced from his father, Sodhodana, through various individuals and races, all of royal dignity, to *Maha Sammata*, the first monarch of the world. Several of the names and some of the events are met with in the Puranas of the Brahmanas, but it is not possible to reconcile one order of statement with the other; and it would appear that the Buddhist historians have introduced races, and invented names, that they may invest their venerated sage, with all the honours of heraldry, in addition to the attributes of divinity.

14. The ancestry of Jesus is traced from his father, Joseph, through various individuals, nearly all of whom were of royal dignity, to Adam, the first monarch of the world, several of the names, and some of the events, are met with in the sacred scriptures of the Hebrews, but it is not possible to reconcile one order of statement with the other; and it would appear that the Christian historians have invented and introduced names, that they may invest their venerated sage with all the honours of heraldry, in addition to the attributes of divinity.

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15. When Buddha was about to go forth "to adopt a religious life," *Mara* appeared before him, to tempt him.

15. When Jesus was about "beginning to preach", the *devil* appeared before him, to tempt him.

16. *Mara* said unto Buddha:—'Go not forth to adopt a religious life, and in seven days thou shalt become an emperor of the world."

16. The *devil* said to Jesus: "If thou wilt fall down and worship me, I will give thee, all the kingdoms of the world."

17. Buddha would not heed the words of the Evil One, and said to him: "Get thee away from me."

17. Jesus would not heed the words of the Evil One and said to him, "Get thee behind me, Satan."

18. After *Mara* had left Buddha, "the skies rained flowers, and delicious odours pervaded the air."

18. After the *devil* had left Jesus, "angels came and ministered unto him."

19. Buddha fasted for a long period.

19. Jesus fasted forty days and nights.

20. Buddha, the Saviour, was baptized, and at this recorded water-baptism the spirit of God was present; that is, not only the highest God, but also the "Holy Ghost" through whom the

20. Jesus was baptized by John in the river Jordan, at which time the spirit of God was present; that is, not only the highest God, but also the "Holy Ghost" through whom the incarnation of

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incarnation of Gautama Buddha is recorded to have been brought about by the descent of that divine power upon the Virgin Maya.

21. "On one occasion towards the end of his life on earth, Gautama Buddha is reported to have been *transfigured*. When *on a Mountain* in Ceylon, suddenly a flame of light descended upon him and encircled the crown of his head with a circle of light. The Mount is called *Pandava* or yellow-white colour. It is said that "the glory of his person shone forth with double power," that his body was 'glorious as a bright golden image," that he 'shone as the brightness of the sun and the moon', that by-standers expressed their opinions, that he could not be 'an every-day person,' or a 'mortal man,' and that his body was divided into three parts, from

Jesus is recorded to have been brought about, by the descent of that divine power upon the Virgin Mary.

21. On one occasion during his career on earth, Jesus is reported to have been transfigured: "Jesus taketh Peter, James, and John his brother, and bringeth them up into a *high mountain* apart. And was transfigured before them: and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment as white as the light."

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each of which a ray of light issued forth.

22. "Buddha performed great miracles for the good of mankind, and the legends concerning him are full of the greatest prodigies and wonders."

22. Jesus performed great miracles for the good of mankind, and the legends concerning him are full of the greatest prodigies and wonders.

23. By prayers in the name of Buddha, his followers expect to receive the rewards of paradise.

23. By prayers in the name of Jesus, his followers expect to receive the rewards of paradise.

24. When Buddha died and was buried, "the coverings of the body enrolled themselves, and the lid of the coffin was opened by supernatural powers."

24. When Jesus died and was buried, the coverings of his body were enrolled from off him, and his tomb was opened by supernatural powers.

25. Buddha ascended bodily to the celestial regions, when his mission on earth was fulfilled.

25. Jesus ascended bodily to the celestial regions, when his mission on earth was fulfilled.

26. Buddha is to come upon the earth again in the latter days, his mission being to restore the world to order and happiness.

26. Jesus is to come upon the earth again in the latter days, his mission being to restore the world to order and happiness.

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27. Buddha is to be the Judge of the dead.

28. Buddha is Alpha and Omega, without beginning or end, "the Supreme Being, the Eternal one."

29. Buddha is represented as saying: "Let all the sins that were committed in this world fall on me; that the world may be delivered."

30. Buddha said: "Hide your good deeds, and confess before the world the sins you have committed."

31. "Buddha was described as a superhuman organ of light, to whom a superhuman organ of darkness, Mara or Naga, the Evil serpent, was opposed."

32. Buddha came not to destroy, but to fulfill the law. He delighted in "representing himself as a *mere link* in a long chain of enlightened teachers."

27. Jesus is to be the Judge of the dead.

28. Jesus is Alpha and Omega, without beginning or end, the Supreme Being, the Eternal one.

29. Jesus is represented as the saviour of mankind, and all sins that are committed in this world may fall on him, that the world may be delivered.

30. Jesus taught men to hide their good deeds, and to confess before the world the sins they had committed.

31. Jesus was described as a superhuman organ of light —"the *sun* of righteousness" —opposed by "the old serpent," the Satan, hinderer, or adversary.

32. Jesus said: "Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill."

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33. "One day Ananda, the disciple of Buddha, after a long walk in the country, meets with Mātangī, a woman of the low caste of the Cāndalās, near a well, and asks her for some water. She tells him what she is, and that she must not come near him. But he replies, "My sister, I ask not for thy caste or thy family, I ask only for a draught of water." She afterwards became a disciple of Buddha."

33. One day Jesus, after a long walk, cometh to the city of Samaria, and being wearied with his journey, sat on a well. While there, a woman of Samaria came to draw water, and Jesus said unto her, "Give me to drink," then said the woman unto him: How is it that being a Jew, asketh drink of me which am a woman of Samaria? For the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans."

34. "According to Buddha, the motive of all our actions should be *pity* or *love* for our neighbours."

34. "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you."

35. During the early part of his career as a teacher, "Buddha went to the city of Benares, and there delivered a discourse, by which Kondanya, and afterwards *four* others were induced to become his disciples. From that period whenever he preached, multitudes of men and women

35. During the early part of his career as a teacher, Jesus went to the city of Capernaum and there delivered a discourse. It was at this time that *four* fishermen were induced to become his disciples. From that period whenever he preached, multitudes of men and women

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embraced his doctrines."

36. Those "who became disciples of Buddha were told that they must renounce the world," give up all their riches, and avow poverty.

37. It is recorded in the "sacred canon" of the Buddhists that the multitudes "*required a sign*" from Buddha "that they might believe."

38. When Buddha's time on earth was about coming to a close, he "foreseeing the things that would happen in future times" said to his disciple Ananda: "'Ananda, when I am gone, you must not think, there is no Buddha; the *discourses* I have delivered, and the *precepts* I have enjoined, *must be my successors*, or representatives and be to you as Buddha."

39. In the Buddhist *Somadeva* is to be found the

embraced his doctrines.

36. Those who became disciples of Jesus were told that they must renounce the world, give up all their riches and avow poverty.

37. It is recorded in the "sacred canon" of the Christians that the multitudes required a sign from Jesus that they might believe.

38. When Jesus' time on earth was about coming to a close he told of the things that would happen in future times, and said unto his disciples: "Go, ye therefore, *and teach all* nations, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world."

39. "And behold, one came and said unto him,

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following: "To give away our riches is considered the most difficult virtue in the world; he who gives away his riches is like a man who gives away his life: for our very life seems to cling to our riches. But Buddha, when his mind was moved by pity, *gave his life* like grass, for the sake of others; why should we think of miserable riches. By this exalted virtue, Buddha when he was freed from all desires, and had obtained divine knowledge, attained unto Buddhahood. Therefore, let a wise man, after he has turned away his desires from all pleasures, do good to all beings, even unto sacrificing his own life, that thus he may attain to true knowledge."

40. Buddha's aim was to establish a "Religious Kingdom," a "*Kingdom of Heaven.*"

41. Buddha said: "I now

good master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life?.....Jesus said unto him, if thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven, and come and follow me." 'Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt and where thieves break through and steal. But lay up yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal."

40. "From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the *Kingdom* of Heaven is at hand."

41. Jesus, after his tempta-

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desire to turn the wheel of the excellent law. For this purpose am I going to the city of Benares, to give light to those enshrouded in darkness, and to open the gate of Immortality to men."

tion by the devil, began to establish the dominion of his religion, and he went for this purpose to the city of Capernaum. "The people which sat in darkness saw great light, and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death light is sprung up."

42. Buddha said: "Though the heavens were to fall to earth and the great world be swallowed up and pass away: Though Mount Sumeru were to crack to pieces, and the great ocean be dried up, yet, Anand, be assured, the words of Buddha are true."

42. "The law was given by Moses, but grace and *truth* came by Jesus Christ." "Verily I say unto you.....heaven and earth shall pass away, but *my words shall not pass away*."

43. Buddha said: "There is no passion more violent than voluptuousness. Happily there is but one such passion. If there were two, not a man in the whole universe could follow the truth." "Beware of fixing your eyes upon women. If you find yourself in their

43. Jesus said, "Ye have heard that it was said by them of old times. Thou shalt not commit adultery. But I say unto you, that whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her, hath committed adultery with he already in his heart."

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company, let it be as though you were not present. If you speak with them, guard your hearts."

44. Buddha said: "A wise man should avoid married life as if it were a burning pit of live coals. One who is not able to live in a state of celibacy should not commit adultery."

44. "It is good for a man not to touch a woman," "but if they cannot contain let them marry, for it is better to marry than to burn." "To avoid fornication let every man have his own wife and let every woman have her own husband."

45. "Buddhism is convinced that if a man reaps sorrow, disappointment, pain, he himself, and no other, must at some time have sown folly, error, sin ; and if not in this life, then in some former birth."

45. "And as Jesus passed by he saw a man which was *blind from his birth*. And his disciples asked him, saying, "Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind?"

46. Buddha knew the thoughts of others: "By directing his mind to the thoughts of others, he can know the thoughts of all beings."

46. Jesus knew the thoughts of others. By directing his mind to the thoughts of others, he knew the thoughts of all beings.

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47. In the Somadeva a story is related of a Buddhist ascetic whose eye offended him; he therefore plucked it out, and cast it away.

47. It is related in the New Testament that Jesus said, "If thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out and cast it from thee."

48. When Buddha was about to become an ascetic, and when riding on the horse "Kantako" his path was strewn with flowers, thrown there by Devas.

48. When Jesus was entering Jerusalem, riding on an ass, his path was strewn with palm branches thrown there by the multitude.

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CHAPTER X

WHY IS CHRISTIANITY INCREASING IN INDIA?

The question is why a religion so absurd in doctrines is gaining ground in India. Some Christian missionaries call it a miracle of the Holy Ghost. They do not know or pretend to forget that had it been possible for the Holy Ghost to perform this miracle, the whole of India could have been converted 1940 years ago in a minute and even the writer of these lines had not been spared a chance of criticising Christianity. Either the Holy Ghost does not want Christianity or is too weak to enforce it. Some missionaries almost audaciously attribute all the scientific progress to Christian religion, again withholding mischievously from the ignorant public the fanatic and frantic efforts which custodians of Christianity have hitherto made to extinguish the lamp of scientific knowledge in order to give a longer lease of life to Christian superstitions. Most missionaries from America and Europe take advantage of the political supremacy of these

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continents and tell simple folk that the British Government and Christianity are identical. This sort of mischief has been in vogue for a long time and Raja Ram Mohan Roy complains of this in bitter language:—

"In Bengal, where the English are the sole rulers, and where the mere name of Englishman is sufficient to frighten people, an encroachment upon the rights of her poor, timid and humble inhabitants and upon their religion, cannot be viewed in the eyes of God or the public as a justifiable act."

(Raja Ram Mohan Roy's Centenary Works' p. 160.)

"We have been subjected to such insults for about nine centuries." (Ibid. p. 160).

Eminent British statesmen have always repudiated their claim to Christianising India, declaring in clear words their unconcern to religious affairs.

But the main reason for the success of Christianity is a few salient weaknesses of the Hindus. The Hindu has forgotten his Old Sanātana Vedic Religion. His education is in the hands of the foreigners who neither know his nature, nor the beauties of the old culture. The superiority of the Old Aryan Civilisation is altogether forgotten. From the very beginning it is dinned into his ears that the old Indians had no civilisation worth the

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name. By the time he graduates himself his brain is so moulded that he begins to think in the terms of the westerners. If he wishes to study Hinduism, he has no means. He thinks that dead and meaningless rituals are all that Hinduism can give us. This makes him disgusted. And when he is in utter despair, lo! the missionary comes and presents before him the Christian faith with all its allurements. Being unacquainted with the real facts about Christianity, he succumbs to the snares and loses the faith of his forefathers for good. The Paṇḍits, the present custodians of the present-day Hinduism, are so absorbed in their selfish ignorance that they pay little heed to what is going on around them. They are vain, conceited and self-centred. They are quite ignorant of the realities of their Dharma. The kernel has been thrown away and they are feeding themselves upon husk. They think that the essence of Vedic Dharma is a few bathings or unbathings, dressings and undressings, a mark on the forehead or a thread across the neck. What these symbols stand for has long been consigned to oblivion.

The main defects of the present Hinduism are:

(1) *Class hatred.* The Vedic Varṇa of the old times was a social classification meant for in-

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dividual and social progress. This has given place to birth-based castes which are pernicious, arbitrary and disintegrating. The Hindus are divided into numberless castes and sub-castes, each claiming supremacy for itself and thus causing ill-will, hatred and jealousy among others. The Hindus are a house divided against itself, it is natural for the disappointed members of a divided family to seek shelter under another roof whether better or worse. Take, for instance, the case of the untouchables and the depressed. Who ever told them that the faith which they profess has any beauties? They know only one thing, that they are looked down upon by the custodians of that faith, are discouraged to learn and even punished when they try to learn the nobler aspects of Hinduism. Such behaviour at the hands of so-called Hindus of superior castes can turn any man away in disgust. They have hitherto been Hindus in name. Real Hinduism they were never taught nor helped to appreciate.

(2) Hinduism has no provision for the teaching of the beauties of Hinduism. Even so-called higher castes are as ignorant. Take any unit of a ten thousand educated and enlightened Hindus, respected and respectable, and ask them about the

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Vedas. Hardly ten will say that they have ever seen the Vedas and hardly one that he has read any portion of them. No Hindu homes have the Vedas, and if any has, they are more the object of worship than of reading. If you ask them the essentials of Hinduism, they will scratch their head and look vacantly at you. Essentials? What does it mean! Are we not Hindus? Why? Because born in a Hindu home. They have seen the Hindu priest visit their houses on auspicious occasions. That is all.

The educational institutions of the Hindus are of two kinds. The first and foremost in number and importance are Anglo-Vernacular or Vernacular schools in which for reasons too well-known not only no religious instructions are imparted, but at the same time efforts are made to create in the minds of the young students a contempt for religion and God. For several generations the ordinary educated Indian has been breathing in the atmosphere of irreligion and materialism and even the old marks of old tradition are fast vanishing in Hindu homes. Upto a few decades ago, female education was absent or very rare among the Hindus. This was by itself a very bad thing. But this evil also had a bright

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aspect. It kept the old religious ideas alive. When males forgot all about their ancient culture, their women-folk, though ignorant and superstitious, and therefore quite ignorant of the spirit of religion, at least kept intact the form, though of course, a soulless form. Something was better than nothing. But now with the spread of modern education, whatever was left has also been swept away and nothing better has taken its place. The second type of institutions is Sanskṛta Pāthśālās. They are attended by a very infinitesimally small population—mostly a few old and orthodox Brahman families. You may, perhaps, say that at least these Brahmans or Sanskṛt students know their religion. But that is not the case. Our Sanskṛta Pāthśālās concentrate their main attention to the Sanskṛta Grammar, which is too dry to protect our culture from decay or foreign onslaughts. Our Paṇḍits are as ignorant of the spirit of religion as uneducated persons. They do keep a form, but that form is quite useless or practically useless. There are no Pāthśālās to teach Vedic Dharma. If there is any Sanskṛta Pāthśālā where the Vedas are taught, it means nothing more than to memorize parrot-like a few Veda mantras or to learn to recite them at the Homas without understanding

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them. To recite a few formulas blindly is no teaching of religion. It cannot ennoble our life. It cannot imbibe us with spirituality. It cannot resist foreign onslaughts. It is why our so-called Paṇdits have been either careless about or too weak to meet the alien religionists on their own ground. So much has been written against Vedic religion by Moslems and Christians and not a finger has ever been raised. Several English translations of Hindu religious books, done with the help or under the influence of Benares Paṇdits contain most damaging, and foully unfair remarks which have never been challenged or contradicted. When our youths receive only one-sided notions about our religion and culture, it is but natural that they should be susceptible to alien influences and fall victim to foreign snares.

(3) *Non-proselytising policy of the Hindus.* Somehow the Hindus have been made to believe that Hinduism is only for the born Hindus and not only non-Hindus can never accept Hinduism, but if a Hindu goes out of the Hindu fold, he is lost for good. Such Hinduism had to face the religions which were very keen about conversion. Islam and Christianity lost no opportunity to convert the Hindus. By hooks or by crooks

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they made it a point to once bring a Hindu out of his old fold. This much was quite sufficient. There was hardly any need to teach Christian doctrines. Once a Hindu was an out-caste, he was at the mercy of the missionaries. No atonement on his part would procure for him an admittance into his old religion or even society. His own kith and kin would bolt him out of the house. He might go wherever he liked. He was too impure for Hinduism at least in this life. All over India there are myriads of families, Christian as well as Mohamedan, which did not forsake Hinduism because they disliked it, nor embraced their new faith because they so appreciated its doctrines, but simply because for some petty social transgressions they found themselves turned out of the Hindu fold and finding themselves helpless took shelter under this roof or that. In many cases wary Christian or Mohamedan missionaries helped such transgressions or intrigued in one thousand and one ways to bring about such circumstances, that the only alternative for the poor ostracised Hindu was to look to them for help. He regretted his step, was ready to undergo any number of most humiliating penances and penalties, begged the Hindu Paṇḍits to take him

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back anyhow and under any conditions, but the latter were always adamantine. How could an outcaste-Hindu be reconverted? It was impossible. These foolish Paṇḍits forgot that their ancestors would go abroad, colonize islands and convert or reconvert people freely to their faith. They forgot that so many sects among the Hindus, could not have come into, or continued, their existence without having recourse to conversion. They forgot that Buddhist preachers went all over the world and spread the faith of Gautama Buddha. And they forgot that Śankarāchārya turned out Buddhism (not Buddhists) from India only by converting them to his views and faith. Had the founder of Lingāitism had no recourse to conversion there would have been no Lingāit today. Had Śankara thought that the Buddhist renegades were lost for ever and could not be converted to Vedic faith, he could not have been successful in his attempt to bring back to India the old Vedic faith. These are clear evidences that the ancestors of the present Hindus did convert and reconvert. In old smṛtis or religious codes there are rites and ceremonies prescribed for the Śuddhi or purification of the fallen or out-castes. The difference is that in those days Hinduism was dynamic,

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now it is static. And this static nature of Hinduism and not the beauties of Christian faith are responsible for the augmentation of Christian people and the correspondent fall in Hindu population.

(4) The fourth factor in the spread of Christianity is political depression of the Hindus. For more than ten centuries, the Hindus have been losing ground in politics and political downfall has naturally been followed by all-round depression. When Alexander or Seleucus invaded India, the Indians were powerful enough to offer them a bold resistance and the result was that when the Greeks and the Indians met together, they met as equals and both the great nations lent and borrowed freely in matters of culture and education. But Pṛthvī Rāja's fall was the most deplorable. That was the beginning of an unfortunate evening with much darker hours in store. Those foreign nations which got an upper hand in politics brought with them cultural and religious vanity and inflicted it upon the vanquished with an indescribable vengeance. The ancient Aryan culture was not only ridiculed but mercilessly crushed. This led to demoralisation in the Indians' own ranks. Fear and temptations intrigued to-

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gether to denationalize and de-Indianize the Indians. There is nothing so successful as success and there is nothing so failing as failure. The defeated and doomed begins to hate himself and look down upon all that is his. No wonder that most of the Indians began to ape the manners of their rulers and some of them even embraced their religion. Christian Missionaries exploited their relationship with the ruling class and often used unfair means to augment their numbers by conversion. Even now such methods are in vogue. In southern India as well as in the hilly parts of the north, poor and famished peasantry is tempted in several ways to forsake the faith of their forefathers and divers ruses are laid to ensnare them. If a farmer happens to be in debt the missionary offers his help on condition that he becomes a Christian. If a landlord is hard upon his peasant, the Christian would promise to fight on behalf of the latter before the high officials. If a Hindu Paṇḍit would oppose the missionary, the latter would threaten to get him punished by the Government officers, with whom he claims a close kinship. Christian Missionaries often claim that political supremacy and scientific progress of the western countries are due to their Christian religion,

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which both claims are spurious. Christianity is full of unscientific absurdities and Christians have often been a subject race. In India Christianity has been a great denationalizing factor, inasmuch as it has made those Indians who have become Christians look for inspiration and guidance to the western countries. If you go through the European conquest of India, you will find there a subtle web very cleverly woven for encouraging Christian conversions. Lord Macaulay's following letter is a convincing testimony:—

Lord Macaulay, the then law member of India, wrote to his father in 1836:—

"It is my own belief that if our plans of education are followed up, there will not be a single idolator, among the respectable classes in Bengal, thirty years hence."[1]

It is a pity that we Indians are too dull to peep into the inner workings of Christian heart.

(5) *The fifth factor is the social weaknesses of the Hindus*. Early marriages and consequent child-widowhood contribute largely to the increase of Christian population. Whenever a widow gets

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[1] Rise of Christian Power in India by Major B. D. Basu, Vol. V, p. 24.

History of Education in India under the Company, pp. 80, 105.

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astray she is out-casted and finds an easy asylum with Moslems and Christians. There are hundreds of instances in which moral aberrations have led to instantaneous baptisations. It is a pity that orthodox Hindus are not alive to this situation. The Hindu religious scriptures not only disallow child marriages, but also permit widow remarriages under certain limitations. If the Hindus reform themselves and reconstruct their social organizations in the light of their old scriptures, they can save their society a great deal from falling prey to foreign temptations.

(6) *The sixth factor is famines.* For a century or more, India has been visited by periodical famines of very devastating type. Such occasions are always exploited by Christian missionaries. Thousands of destitute Hindu children fall into their hands and are taught the new religion. The Hindus are callous. Their charity goes towards the feeding of mischievous sādhus and misguided priesthood. In order to get salvation a Hindu *seth* will crown an idol of stone with gold and the living images of God, I mean the orphans, will be left crying. The ignorant devotee does not know that the real devotion of God lies in helping the destitute. Ever since the Arya

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Samaj has started orphanage and widow-homes, there has been some check. But much has to be done.

(7) *Criminal tribe settlements.* In India there are certain itinerary tribes which have taken to criminal professions, such as theft, robbery etc. It seems that when political disruption took place, a few centuries ago, certain Rajput clans lost their dominions and had to fly to forests. Being pursued by their invaders they could not settle at any place and took to illegitimate ways of life. In a few generations, it became their habit and they forgot all the noble traditions. These criminal tribes are now put in the hands of Christian missionaries, that their morals might be improved. Many criminal tribe settlements of various types have sprung up in the Northern as well as in the Southern India, which are maintained by the Government but which are a stepping-stone to Christianisation. Kallars of Madura in the South are a typical instance. Several girls' and boys' institutions are being run by Christian missionaries and helped by the Government, with the result that students coming out of these institutions readily become Christians. At the request of the Hindus, the Madras Government has ordered that no boy or girl

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be made Christian in these institutions. But the funny thing is that these youths remain "*Hindus*" in *the registers* of these institutions, but become Christians as soon as they come out. The game is clear. The Hindus foolishly think that their youths are safe in Christian hands. They forget that if I neglect the education of my son, and hand him over to you, when adult, that youth will forget me and take you as his father. It is natural. It is a sin for a father to neglect the education of his children. This sin the whole Hindu community is guilty of, and it is recoiling over its own head. The fault is not of Christians but of Hindus. It is natural for Christians to love to spread their religion. It is unnatural on the part of the Hindus to love to narrow down their religion.

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CHAPTER XI

WHY THIS INGRATITUDE?

To talk of Christianity in the terms we have done in this book appears to expose us to the charge of ingratitude, keeping in view a good deal of philanthropic work Christian Missionaries have done in India. It was through their efforts that Raja Ram Mohan Roy was able to get the bill against Suttee system passed. It was these missionaries who did pioneering work in educating India. Who does not know Mr. C. F. Andrews rightly called Dinabandhu or the brother of the poor? How can we shut our eyes against very noble work done in different lines by Christian Missionaries in this country?

Our reply is this. We admit that this country owes a good deal to several Christian Missionaries, and we thank them from the bottom of our heart. We have always bowed to such noble souls as Mr. C. F. Andrews. But we cannot lose sight of the fact that the average Christian Missionary is a proselytiser first and philanthropist

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afterwards. Whatever he does, he does in order to convert India. If he opened schools his aim was "*to give them a prepossession* in favour of Christ and his religion"[1]. If he opened hospitals, it was more "to administer to the soul" than to the body. It is why several cases of proselytisation among the patients take place, especially of the stragglers. Whenever a Missionary comes in contact with an Indian, he refers to the superstitions of the country quite forgetting that Christianity abounds with worse superstitions and the religion which she teaches is not in any way superior to the original and purer forms of Hinduism. If a savant from the west comes with pure motives of ennobling the social and moral side of the Hindus, without any motive of proselytisation, we must feel grateful to him. But to be ensnared by glittering works or glittering words is a sin. If you come to convert us, as you do, and there is no denying the fact, then we should examine well what you wish to give us. There are hundreds of books published and distributed in India foully condemning the prevailing religion of the country and aiming at eschewing the children

[1] Our Missions in India by E. Morris Wherry, Stratford Co., Boston, p. 148.

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of the land from the culture and religion of their forefathers. And what does a Hindu get by being a Christian? Look at their way of living. A vegetarian Hindu's first lesson on being converted to Christianity is to eat flesh and drink wine. Under the polished cloak, is hidden the un-Hindu and anti-Hindu sentiment of looking upon Ahimsā (non-violence) as a piece of superstition. He looks upon his ancestors with derision. He begins to ape western ways. Go to villages of Bengal, Madras, Travancore or Cochin and you will find an Indian Christian as intolerant, as unpatriotic and as superstitious as early Christians were. While Christianity has undergone a great change in these days, it is not the changed Christianity which is being taught. It is the Christianity of St. Paul's days, St. Augustine's, Luther's days which our brethren learn at the feet of the Christian fathers. For if reformed Christianity is taught to them, it will be no better than reformed Hinduism and there would be little need of prosely-tisation or Church building. Westerners and easterners can both combine and work shoulder to shoulder in ameliorating the conditions of people without religious conversions. But if you mean to convert Indians by telling them of the

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mysterious birth or passion of Jesus Christ, the mysteries of Kṛṣṇa's life are as good. Why carry coal to New Castle. If "Mystery" is all that is to be taught, one form of mystery is as good as another. Why prefer Christian mysteries, Christian miracles and Christian superstitions to Hindu mysteries, Hindu miracles and Hindu superstitions? And if you come to refined form of religion, in what way is the Gītā inferior to the Gospel or Manu to Moses or the Buddha's Dhammapad to the Sermon on the Mount? We are not opposed to conversions, individual or even mass conversions, as long as the issue is purely religious and doctrinal, as long as no political exploitation is the aim and as long as the methods adopted are above board. But in Christian proselytisation, we find all the three faults pointed just now. We have amply shown in this book the doctrinal side of the question. Had it not been for the credulous nature of man, Christianity would have been nowhere. Even in western countries, Christianity as religion, has been long discarded and is fast disappearing.

The Bishop of London said in the London Diocesan Conference in April 1904:—

"The truth of the matter really is that all over Europe

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a great conflict is being fought between the old faith in a supernatural revelation and a growing disbelief in it."*

The Bishop of Birmingham said in June 1930 in Westminster Abbey:—

"Religious indifference is widespread even among those classes of moderate means where Christian enthusiasm was previously strong."*

The Press is now (1930) discussing whether the very fate of Christianity is not in the balance.

Christianity has failed as messenger of peace and if western countries are clinging to it at all, it is because they know of no better substitute. In the last century it was supposed that science would replace it very well. For this two things were done. First of all a no-religion campaign was started and it was thought that when God and Religion would be totally eradicated from the mind of the people, mankind would learn to live in peace and prosperity. Experience, however, belied such hopes. History teaches us that pure materialism, devoid of all spirituality has never satisfied and will never satisfy man. It is as impossible to eliminate from man's life religious feeling and religious thought, as to produce cent

* Vivian Phelip's "The Churches and Modern Thought" p. 2.

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per cent vacuum in any jar, or make the Earth lose its gravitation power. To make up for this defect no-God-religions were contrived such as Comte's positivism. But they died in their infancy. Taking advantage of the situation, Christian Missionaries tried to make the best of it by so moulding Christianity as to be able to fit in with modern thought.[1] Thus Christianity of to-day

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[1] I will confine myself to the following reports of the Conference of Modern Churchmen held at Gerton College, Cambridge, on August 9, 1917 under the presidency of Professor Percy Gardner, Chairman of the Conference Committee. "Did Christ Found the Church?" was the subject of the paper read by Dean Inge, who said that Jesus appeared to his contemporaries as a Prophet. He never tried to form a Schism in the Jewish Church or to found a rival organisation.... The Rev. J. R. Wilkinson, who opened the discussion took the same view as the Dean, and other speakers were the Rev. C. W. Emmet, Bishop Mercer, the Rev. L. Patterson, the Rev. F. Mann, the Rev. H. Symonds, and the Rev. H. A. Major.

The Archdeacon Ford answered affirmatively the Dean's question "Did Christ Found the Church?" and Mr. Pringle thereupon said that the Archdeacon was the only person who in the course of the discussion had given the question an affirmative answer. (The *Times*, August 10, 1917).

The Rev. H. D. A. Major, Principal of Ripon Hall, Oxford, who opened the discussion said:

"It should be clearly realized (said Mr. Major) that Jesus did not claim in the Gospels to be the son of God in a physical sense, such as the narratives of Virgin birth suggest, nor did he claim to be the son of God in a metaphysical

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is a congeries of various conflicting thoughts, with perhaps nothing common except the name. And this is lingering only as a matter of policy. "Some religion is necessary for the masses to keep them in social cohesion," so says the modern thinker. If this argument has any force, then our contention is that Hinduism will do as well for India as Christianity for Europe and America. Why bother, when you have nothing better to give?

But for many, religion is a source of political exploitation, and Christian nations have never failed to wield this weapon. The history of the whole of South America bears testimony to this. The Christian Missionary has all along been the forerunner of the conqueror. He takes the crucifix, inflicts it upon people and when they resent, the sword jumps forward to defend the word of God.

"A monk called Valverde approached the Inca—a nation of South America—with an interpreter and holding out

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sense, such as was required by the Nicene theology. He claimed to be God's son in a normal sense, in the sense in which all human beings are sons of God, as standing in a filial and moral relationship to God and capable of acting on those moral principles on which God acts."

(Islamic Review, Vol. IX, no. 8, pp. 276-8).

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a Bible told him that he must believe all *that the Book said.* The Inca put it to his ear, and *hearing nothing* flung it on the ground. This was the sign of battle."[1]

As far as Indian conditions are concerned, I shall refer the reader to Major Basu's "Rise of Christian Power in India." Therein, it has been amply proved that Christianity did not play a small part in moulding the political fate of Indians. The Bengal folk-lore of the 18th and the 19th centuries is replete with cases in which a native Christian called himself *sahib* (an Englishman) and posed as the ruler of the land. The living examples of this mentality are amply found in Indian states where the big Padri Saheb plays the rôle of one belonging to the ruling nation and Christian converts go hanging to his skirts and deriving all the benefits of his position.

This exploitation naturally involves objectionable methods. Christians knew that Hindu *sādhus* had special hold upon villagers. Therefore they took the garb of sadhus, adopted similar names and called their religious book as the Veda or Dharma Pustaka. In early days what methods were adopted can best be known from the follow-

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[1] A summary of Modern History translated from the French of M. Michelet by M. C. M. Simpson, (page 214).

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ing excerpts:—

"The first Christian settlers in India were the most unchristian of men; and it has taken more than three centuries to wipe away the stain cast upon Christianity by the lives of its European professors" (Christianity in India by J. W. Kaye. London 1859 p. 16).

"Proselytism, in the time of Albuquerque, was a matter of state policy, not of Christian zeal and devotion. The Viceroy, we are told, "in order to breed up soldiers, very wisely *got the Indian maids made Christians*, married them to the Portuguese that, they might not always stand in need of fresh supplies of men from Portugal." (Ibid, p. 16).

"It was at the commencement of the seventeenth century that Robert de Nobilibus, a nephew of Cardinal Bellarmine, and a near relative of Pope Marcellus II, laid the foundation of the Madura Mission..... Robert de Nobilibus, his associates, and his successors, addressed themselves to the dominant class, and sought their converts among the Brahmans.....They turned aside from the practice of no deceit; from the exercise of no hypocrisy. They lied in word, and they lied in action. They

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called themselves Western Brahmans; and in the disguise of Brahmans they mixed themselves with the people, talking their language, following their customs, and countenancing their superstitions. Clothed in the sacerdotal yellow cloth, with the mark of sandalwood on their foreheads, their long hair streaming down their backs, their copper vessels in their hands, their wooden sandals on their feet, these "new Brahmans", found acceptance among the people and were welcomed by the princes of southern India. They performed their ablutions with scrupulous regularity; they ate no animal food, they drank no intoxicating liquors; but found in the simple fare of vegetables and milk at once a disguise and a protection. The Christians had hitherto appeared upon the scene, eating and drinking—gluttonous and wine-bibbers—and they had paid the penalty of an addiction to these feverish stimulants under the burning copper skies of the East. The holy men who now wandered half-naked among the natives of southern India, and sitting on their haunches ate the common fare of the country, braved the climate with comparative immunity, and were not suspected of fellowship with the sensual *Europeans who had turned Goa into a stage of*

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corruption." (p. 32)

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"According, however, to their own showing, their success among the Brahmans was very small, and they soon began to see the necessity of flying at lower game. They went among the villages—condescended to Pariahs, and achieved great triumphs over babes and sucklings. Under the pretext of administering medicine to them, they baptized all the dying children..... The Christianity of Madura under the Jesuits was indeed undisguised idolatry. Except that the image of the Virgin Mary was worshipped in the temples and paraded upon the cars, there was little change in the old ceremonies and processions of Hinduism. There was the same noise of trumpets, and taum-taums and kettle-drums; there was the same blaze of rockets, and Roman candles, and blue-lights; there were the same dancers, with the same marks of sandal-wood and vermilion on their naked bodies. The new Christianity of Madura disguised itself as adroitly as the priests who taught it. They married children with all the silly observances of Paganism.....They went among the people with great parade of caste, and declared that

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they were sprung from the head of Brahma himself.....The high-caste Christians and the low-caste Christians were suffered to worship apart. They could not pray in the same temple or dip their fingers in the same holy water. The whole system was one of *fraud and dissimulation.*"[1]

Mr. Terry, who accompanied Sir Thomas Roe to India has written an account of what he saw in this country. This is affixed to the English translation of Pietro Delaralle's "Travels." He says that Indians of those days spoke of the Christians in the following terms; "*Christian religion, devil religion; Christian much drunk; Christian much do wrong; much beat much abuse others.*"

This was two centuries ago. Our twentieth century is no better. Christian Missionaries dissimulate even today. The new machinery to Christianize the Hindus is the Salvation army. According to the Encyclopædia Britannica (14th edition) the Salvation Army has more than 14000 corps or societies. In India with Ceylon there are about 5000 centres. In doctrine the Army is in harmony with the main principles of the Evangelical bodies "as embodied in the three creeds of the Church". "Settlements for criminals have been

[1] (Ibid. pp. 32-34).

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established in India" and are "assisted by the governments concerned."

"With this development of organisation the Army has maintained its original character as a body of spiritual witness and *aggressive evangelism*. In theory and creed it is at one in almost every respect with orthodox evangelical belief, but its methods—its realistic presentation of religion, and its use of various constraining means to bring people to salvation distinguish it from other religious bodies. It continues to lay the *greatest emphasis upon the need for conversion*, preceded by penitence, and followed by growth in holiness."

The preachers of the Salvation army even today appear as Sadhus.

We give below two cuttings from the Harbinger of Calicut, which will illustrate further our point:

(1)

WHY DO THE BHILS BECOME CHRISTIANS ?

"The Bhils embrace Christianity impelled by various causes. The foremost of them is, that the Brahmins and the high class people consider them as untouchables. The moneylenders do not help them in famine and calamity, rather charge heavy rate of interest. The Governments also show indifference. The result of the indifference of the

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Brahmins was that the Bhils lost the knowledge of Dharma and Karma, and due to the money-lenders they were burdened by debt and poverty. All these circumstances have been favourable to Christian Missionaries, so they could convert them easily. To-day we find lakhs of Bhils as Christians. If the Governments were sympathetic towards them and had made arrangements for their education, such would not have been the case.

The Means Adopted by the Christians

"Having in view the wretched condition of the Bhils, the Christians invented some means of taking away the Bhils from the fold of Hinduism. Two of them proved to be most effective. (1) That a Father builds his hut near their huts and settles there, and starts schools and hospitals. (2) That loan is advanced to them. A Bhil who agrees to become a Christian is given the loan free of interest, and so long as he himself does not return it, they never demand the money back. But the moment he does not like to remain Christian he has to return the money. The Bhils whose forefathers did not give up their Dharma, now do so even for the sake of a little sum of money. At certain places the Bhils give their children as security for the loan. The children are not returned to them until they return the money. Meanwhile the child is brought up in Christian atmosphere and converted. Below, I like to mention two Christian Centres in Khushalgarh State so that the lovers of Hinduism may understand how necessary it is to bring Bhils back:—

(1) Mahodi:—It is situated in the fearful forests of Anas in the Khushalgarh State. Here a French Father

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and some workers are placed by the French Mission. There are four schools viz. Palakpara, Zalimpura, Maska, and Khajuri, attached to this Centre. About 100 Bhil children are being given education at these schools. There are churches attached to these schools where the idol of Christ is worshipped every Sunday. A car and ten cycles have been provided for communication. Along with education, board, lodging and clothing and all other necessaries are given free. Loan is also advanced to the people, and bullocks given free for agriculture. (2) Amlipare—It is situated at the border of Banswara. Here some 50 boys and 30 girls are placed as security against the money borrowed by their parents. A Father, two sisters and four workers have been placed here by the French Mission. The villages about this Centre are greatly influenced by it. The evil of cow-killing has generally spread among the Bhils. The children studying at Christian schools are given Christian names. Their sacred tuft of hair is cut off, and instead of *Rāma Rāma* they utter victory to Christ. They hate Rāma and Kṛṣṇa. But the Bhils who are yet Hindus still go to Tiraths, worship the cow, have the sacred tuft of hair and utter *Rāma Rāma*."

(*The Harbinger*, 28th August 1940).

(2)

Highhandedness of the Christians in Central India

I hear from Imli Para, Central India, that 30 or 40 children of the Bhils are getting education at the Christian Institution there. These children were placed with the Christian

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workers there, by their parents as security against Rs. 10. If the parents repay the debt they can get back their children. If not, they will remain in the custody of the Christians and be christened in due course. This action of the Christians breaks all human, moral and civil laws. That children should be used as security like sheep and goats need not be commented upon. Abominable and censurable is the practice of the Christian Fathers in this civilised 20th century. Is this the civilisation of the Christians which they mean to preach? It is simply pitiable that the Christian Fathers should commit such misdeeds under the guise of religion. Preaching one's religion is not bad, but when the preacher loses his balance and does not care for even moral laws because of his over-zeal, it amounts to evil and becomes detestable.

One more report of this sort has reached me. A certain Bhil owed Rs. 20 to some Christian Missionary. He left Christianity and embraced his old religion. The Missionary got enraged and at once took away his bulls, and said, "You shall not get back your bulls until you have cleared off your debt or get converted once more." Such high-handedness is censurable. Does it behove the dignity of Christianity to transgress all laws and commit such heinous deeds. How shameful it is to preach religion enticing others with wealth and women? Now on seeing the success of the Arya Samaj, the Christian Fathers in Central India have begun to advance money, cloth and corn to the Bhils, so that they might not give up Christianity. The Christian Missionaries know the weakness of the Arya Samaj. They know that the Arya Samaj is a poor society and cannot spend so much money

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as the Christians can. So that, they are taking advantage of our weakness.

Dayanand Salvation Mission is fighting against them to its best and is making a strong effort for the reclamation of the Bhils. Should the Mission fail for want of money the responsibility shall fall upon the whole Hindu Society which will be considered as not to have rendered enough pecuniary help. Help, out of time, will be of no use. Lakhs of Bhils have been converted, others are being converted. Help is immediately wanted. It is high time to save them or the Hindus shall have to repent.

(*The Harbinger of Calicut*, 24th July 1940)

"Divide and Rule" policy of the European statesmen also finds an echo in the Christian preaching. The split of the southern Hindus amongst Dravids and Adi-Dravids and that of the Northern Hindus into Hindus and Adi-Hindus is of a very late origin and is the creation of the Christian Missionaries' brains. It was the Christians who wrongly suggested to us that the Aryans were foreign invaders, who conquered the aborigines and inflicted their culture upon the Dravidians. This they did in order to create a division and reap a cheap harvest while the fact is that the Dravidians were only a branch of the Aryans, who never looked upon Aryan civilisation as an alien thing. Great Śankarāchārya was as much a Dravid as

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an Arya. So were others. Christian Missionaries even to-day contrive ingenuous theories to create a field for themselves. They encourage all disunifying tendencies and create a gulf where there has been no gulf before.

In fact India has gained nothing from Christianity either in philosophy or religion or morals. The good that East has derived from the western contact in the domain of science cannot be attributed to Christianity. The salvation of the Hindus lies not in adopting Christian religion, but in purging the existing Hinduism of all the impurities that have crept into it from various sources.

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INDIA'S RELIGIOUS QUESTIONS

BY

REV. J. W. R. NETRAM

Indore

CHRISTIAN LITERATURE SOCIETY FOR INDIA

MADRAS ALLAHABAD RANGOON COLOMBO

1929

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PREFACE

THIS book has been written after twenty years of experience as an Indian Christian preacher, teacher and student, but the impulse to write it really came about five years ago, when, for about four months, I had the privilege of being associated with that indefatigable evangelist of world-wide fame, Dr. E. Stanley Jones. We travelled a good deal during those four months, but at the end of that period Dr. Jones went home to America on furlough and I returned to my own field in Central India. These four months gave me a new vision of India, and I returned to my field with renewed hope and joy in the service of the Master.

However, the Lord had still greater things in store for me, and when Dr. Stanley Jones returned from furlough he again gave me the privilege of being associated with him, and this time for fifteen months. He had brought out with him the Rev. Prof. Oscar M. Buck of the Drew Theological Seminary, so we made a party of three. We were sometimes called 'Faith, Hope and Charity'; which was which I do not know, but of one thing I am certain, that Dr. Jones was 'Charity' for he financed the party! At least he was the medium through which the necessary money came.

We travelled east, west, north and south, both on the plains and in the hills, preaching the Gospel to educated non-Christians and also to Christians. It was a great tour. We visited almost every important city in India,

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For some time I tried to keep an account of our mileage, but when it began to grow into incalculable dimensions I gave it up as a hopeless task! We sometimes spent three days on the road, always lived in our boxes and saw our families for a couple of days in three months.

This tour gave us a very good opportunity for studying things at first-hand. We sat down with some of the finest leaders of India and discussed with them the various problems of the country. In his latest book, *Christ at the Round Table*, Dr. Jones tells of the Round Table Conferences with leading non-Christians and Christians in which we frankly and openly shared with one another what religion had meant to us. It was my privilege also to sit in these conferences and to search my own heart and share with others what Christ has meant to me.

Dr. Jones follows another method of work also. At the end of each lecture to non-Christians he gives them an opportunity of asking questions. Sometimes these questions came in such numbers that we went on with our meeting up to 11 o'clock at night and yet did not get through with them! It was during these question and answer hours that the thought came to me that if these questions and answers were to be published in book form, they would prove invaluable to Christian workers and others, and they would also serve as so many straws to indicate which way the wind is blowing in India at the present time. I, therefore, began to take careful shorthand notes and at the end of my tour I had a good list of questions which had not originated in the mind of a Christian preacher but had actually been asked.

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Now for about two years, although I have not been associated with Dr. Jones, I have had the privilege of being set free to preach the Gospel to the intelligentsia of India as a member of the United Church of Canada Mission, and have, therefore, had a further chance of testing the material of this book.

I wish to seize the opportunity here of expressing my very deep gratitude to Dr. Jones, without whose help and inspiration this book would never have been written. I have woven into the answers a good many of Dr. Jones' replies, but I do not hold him responsible for all the answers for a large number of them are my own.

My very sincere thanks are due also to the Rev. Prof. Mitchell of our China Mission whose services have been loaned to the Indore Christian College for a couple of years. He has very kindly gone through my manuscript and has also read the final proofs as I have been called to Canada before I could pass the proofs myself.

INDORE, CENTRAL INDIA
October 1928

J. W. R. NETRAM

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INDIA'S RELIGIOUS QUESTIONS

I

HINDU QUESTIONS AND CHRISTIAN ANSWERS

Question 1. If Jesus is the only hope of the world then how were those people saved who lived before Him ?

Answer. Jesus Christ has always been. He has neither beginning nor end (John i. 1). Ever since Adam the first man sinned, men have been taught about the plan of salvation in Jesus Christ. When Adam and Eve sinned, God, addressing the serpent said, ' It shall bruise thy head ' (Gen. iii. 15). The ' it ' here refers to the seed of woman, namely, Christ. This was the first intimation of the plan of salvation. Then we are told (Gen. iii. 21) ' Unto Adam also and to his wife did the Lord God make coats of skins, and clothed them.' Three things come out in this statement : (1) That man could not save himself from sin by his own effort, as the aprons which they had made by sewing fig leaves together were rejected (Gen. iii. 7). (2) The giving of coats of skins indicated that God had a plan of salvation. (3) That Adam and Eve were taught about the supreme sacrifice which Christ was to make by the

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animals which were evidently sacrificed and from whose skins the coats were made.

This thought of sacrifice or blood offering runs all through the Scriptures. When there arose enmity between Cain and Abel, and the former killed the latter we are told: 'The Lord set a mark upon Cain, lest any finding him should kill him' (Gen. iv. 15). Scholars believe that this mark was nothing else but the mark of the blood of sacrifice. This custom is quite common in India. You go to the Kali Ghat at Calcutta and see the pilgrims dipping their finger in the blood of the goats and putting a mark on their foreheads before presenting themselves to the goddess Kali. Later, when Noah came out of the ark, 'he builded an altar unto the Lord; and took of every clean beast, and of every clean fowl, and offered burnt-offerings on the altar' (Gen. viii. 20). Then during Abraham's time we are told of the blood offerings. Again, when the Israelites were to be brought out of the bondage of Egypt, they were commanded to sprinkle the blood of the lamb on their door-posts so that their first-born might be saved from death.

Through prophets and priests, at various times and in various manners, this same teaching was given; and when, in the fulness of time, Christ came, John the Baptist cried, pointing to Him: 'Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world' (John i. 29). What John meant was that the lambs which had been sacrificed before the coming of Christ were simply object lessons to teach infant humanity about the prototype, the Lamb of God, which was to come. And then at the end, in the book of Revelation, the one or

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the throne is just this Lamb (Rev. v. 6–10). All this shows that men were not left in ignorance about Christ.

But someone says, 'How about those who did not get a chance of hearing about this Lamb at all, and those at the present time, who die without hearing about Jesus Christ'? St. John speaking of Jesus Christ, says, 'That was the true Light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world' (John i. 9). St. Paul also testifies to the same effect: 'For when the Gentiles which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves' (Rom. ii. 14). This means that every man is born with the light of Christ; and if he walks according to that light, he must be saved, and saved by Christ. In other words, there is a varying standard of judgment. Those of us who have had the fuller light of Christ shall be judged according to this fuller light: those who have not had this fuller light shall be judged according to what they have had. Christ made that plain when He said, 'Unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required: and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more' (Luke xii. 48).

'But', says someone, 'why then give more light to the people and so increase their responsibility?' The principle is that we are judged not only according to what we know, but also according to what we might have known. This is why it becomes incumbent upon every body to pass on to others the light he has.

Question 2. You say that Jesus Christ is the only saviour of the world. What fault do you find with Buddha, Krishna, Rama? Can they not save us?

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Answer. It is not my business to find fault with others. You may compare the lives of these with the life of Jesus Christ and find the difference for yourself. But as to whether or not you can be saved by them, I would only point out that none of them ever claimed to be the saviour of the world. Each one came to do a particular service, and when that was done his work was done. Buddha came to turn the demons away from the Vedas, Krishna came to kill Kansa and Rama came to kill the demon king Ravana.

Question 3. You Christians talk so much about the sufferings of Christ, but no special importance attaches to His sufferings, for others also have suffered. For example, Prahlad suffered a great deal and he even prayed to Vishnu that his enemies might be forgiven.

Answer. I agree that Prahlad suffered and that others have also suffered; but the death of Christ differs from the sufferings of all others in two ways. Negatively, His death was not merited or for His own sake. Positively, it was the death of a sinless man for sinful humanity.

Question 4. If God can be found only through Christ, is God Christian?

Answer. Yes, God is like Christ; therefore, He is a good God and trustable.

Question 5. Is God to be found in other religions also? If He is, why can we not find Him according to our own religions?

Answer. Apply to this the pragmatic test. Go out and

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find God in your own way. If you find Him, well and good. If you do not find Him, try the Christian way. What does a sick man want? He wants to be cured. He does not care what particular pill would cure him, so long as it does cure him. What do I want? I want God. I do not care how I find Him, so long as I do find Him. You have tried various remedies. Here is one I have tried and found effective.

Question 6. If a Hindu leads a pure and sinless life, but does not believe in Jesus Christ, will the door of heaven be shut for him?

Answer. Certainly not, if he leads 'a pure and sinless life,' but I have seen no one sinless except Jesus Christ. Yours is a suppositional case.

Question 7. How can the transcendent God reveal Himself through Jesus Christ who was limited by time and space?

Answer. To begin with, it would be wrong to say that the infinite could not be revealed through the finite, for the fact is that all our knowledge of the infinite comes through finite things. Man is a finite being, and, as such, he can only understand the infinite being through the finite. Secondly, Jesus Christ does not claim to reveal to us everything about the infinite God; nor is it necessary. If man could understand God fully he could claim to be god himself. It is impossible for finite man fully to understand the infinite God. But Jesus Christ reveals God to us to the extent to which it is necessary for us to know Him for our salvation, happiness, guidance, and example. In other words, all

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our requirements are fulfilled through the revelation which God makes in Jesus Christ.

If God were to reveal His omnipotence it would frighten us to death. If we were to have full knowledge of His omniscience it would become impossible for us to move about. If He were to reveal all His glory our eyes would be closed. We know a little about these qualities of God, but it is for our good that all is not revealed to us. Jesus Christ, however, has revealed God's goodness and love towards us in such abundance that we have no need for any more. Jesus Christ has revealed to us that God is our Father and that He cares for us and wishes our good. If we try to look at the sun with our naked eyes we shall become blind. But we can look at the sun through coloured glasses. God is the Sun, Jesus Christ is the coloured glasses.

Question 8. Jesus Christ said, 'I am the son of God' (John x. 36). By what authority did He say so?

Answer. By the authority of His own personality.

Question 9. Does not the Hindu Vedanta Philosophy teach us how to find God?

Answer. Try and find God through the Vedanta Philosophy; if you cannot find Him that way, come to Him through Jesus Christ.

Question 10. You Christians claim that Christ alone can give peace. If so, how about the wars in Christian Europe?

Answer. First of all, Christ never taught that obedience to Him would banish war altogether. It is quite possible that wars may be caused because of

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obedience to Him. (See Luke xii. 51). Secondly, it is not quite correct to say that Europe is Christian. The fact is that no nation on earth is wholly Christian. There are Christianized individuals in every nation, but there is no such thing as a Christian nation. In the proportion in which Europe is becoming Christian it is eliminating evil; but there is a great deal in Europe yet which is un-Christian.

Question 11. If a man is very honest, kind and noble, and has also gone through the Bible, but does not believe in Jesus Christ as his Saviour, can he not enter into the kingdom of heaven without following any particular religion?

Answer. The following of a particular religion, or the reading of the Bible, or even our good deeds, do not ensure to us entrance into the kingdom of heaven. Jesus Christ did not bring into the world a religion; He is religion itself. The chief function of religion is to bring harmony between God and man. Jesus Christ does this. Therefore, we must go to Him.

Question 12. We are all sons and daughters of God. Therefore, if we go to Him He will forgive us. Why should we put Jesus Christ between God and ourselves?

Answer. Jesus Christ is not a mediator in the sense that He comes between God and us. We wish to approach God directly and see Him face to face. Until this happens the human soul is not satisfied. That is why God has come to us in the form of man. Jesus called Himself 'the son of man'. Through Jesus God meets us in human environment. Therefore when I

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take hold of Jesus Christ I take hold of the very self of God. Jesus Christ said, 'He that hath seen me hath seen the Father' (John xiv. 9).

Question 13. When Jesus was on the cross He cried, 'My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?' If Jesus knew—and He did know it—that this was God's will, why did He cry out like that? May it not be that the theistic delusion which had clung to Him during His life time was coming to an end?

Answer. This is a repetition of the very words of prophecy contained in the twenty-secondth Psalm. We shall probably never know in this world the full meaning of this awful cry, nevertheless we can understand to a certain extent why Jesus uttered these words. On the cross Jesus was taking the place of sinful humanity. He had voluntarily taken upon Himself the sin of the whole world. Therefore, it seems, God temporarily hid His face from Jesus in order that He may be the full representative of the human family. In this terrible condition, He from whom the face of the Father had never been hidden and He who was one with God, cried out, 'My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?' St. Paul says 'He hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him' (2 Cor. v. 21). Jesus Christ is full propitiation for the sins of the world; and we see in Him God's justice as well as His love.

These words do not indicate that Christ's belief in God had changed; they rather confirm His belief. He did not alter His teaching about God when He was risen from the dead, but said: 'I ascend unto my

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Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God' (John xx. 17).

Question 14. If Europe and America, after so many centuries of Christianity, have not yet got rid of hatred for other nations, what can Christianity do for India?

Answer. If you compare the ancient history of Europe and America with their present condition you will find a vast difference. Many hateful customs have been banished from these countries; for example, slavery. But Europe and America have not yet become wholly Christian. As they bring themselves into subjection to Jesus Christ evils are banished. It is no mere chance that of the fifty-three self-governing nations of the world forty-eight are Christian, or at least nominally so, and that no Christian nation is at present ruled by another, against its will, except it be possibly the Philippine Islands.

Question 15. Is not the concept of the motherhood of God in Hinduism better than the Christian conception of the Fatherhood of God?

Answer. God is not only loving but also just. These two together are better seen in the father than in the mother. That is why we address God as Father.

Question 16. Should we fear God? The Bible seems to indicate that.

Answer. Fear comes with sin. Where there is no sin there is no fear. When Adam sinned he said, 'I was afraid' (Gen. iii. 10). This fear comes by itself,

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because it is born of sin. But the expression, 'Fear of God,' means respect for and dependence and trust on God, and hatred for evil. See Psalm xix. 9 ; Jer. xxxii. 40.

Question 17. Can you define evil and goodness? What one calls evil is called goodness by another. How is one to decide which is good and which is evil ?

Answer. Every thing which is not Christ-like is evil; everything Christ-like is good. Christ is our standard; and we judge whether a thing is good or evil in the light of this standard.

Question 18. Is it not true that woman keeps man from getting to God ?

Answer. Many a woman has helped man to get to God. Many a man has kept woman from getting to God. It all depends upon what kind of men and women they are. Jesus Christ never warned man against woman, but He did warn him against lust.

Question 19. The Christians believe that all the prophets and messengers that have appeared in the world came only from a single branch of the great human family, viz., the Israelites, and that God has always been displeased with all the other nations of the world ; that even finding them in error and ignorance He has never cared for them in the least. This produces conceit, and pride, and contempt for other religions.

Answer. It is wrong to think that God never cared for the other nations of the world. If that were so, it would make God very partial. The fact is that He chose the Israelites to be the medium of His messages to men

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because He cared for them all. He chose the Israelites not because He was partial to them, but in order that He might prepare them to be a means of blessing to the whole human family; and before God could make that nation a means of blessing they had to go through many trials and difficulties, and it took them hundreds of years to be trained to fulfil the purpose of God.

Question 20. There are many sects in the Christian Church—Roman Catholic, Protestant, Greek, etc. Through which of these can salvation be attained?

Answer. The Christian salvation is not an attainment; it is a gift, freely given to those who ask for it through Jesus Christ. The Church is the company of those who have received this gift of salvation.

Question 21. Are children sinful at their birth? If they are not, why are some born blind, others with good sight; some in poor families, others in rich families; some sickly, others healthy?

Answer. I do not believe that a child is born totally depraved. The child comes into the world with an inclination towards sin common to humanity because of the sin of the first man, Adam. As the child grows and becomes capable of sinning, he sins in thought, deed and word; and so becomes actually responsible for his actions.

As to why some are born blind, others with good sight; some poor, others rich, and so on: the Hindu doctrine of Karma is a very easy solution. But it has been brought in only as a hypothesis to explain these

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inequalities of life. Why was this man born blind? We simply take it for granted that he must have done something terribly wrong in his previous birth. But this assumption does not prove anything.

We do not need the doctrine of Karma to explain the inequalities of life. There are at least three other avenues through which the inequalities of life come: (1) innate heredity, (2) social heredity and (3) one's own choice. (1) Certain things are passed on from parents to children, e.g., weak parents usually beget weak children; certain diseases are communicated to children, and so on. (2) Society is organized in favour of some and against others. To some it gives certain advantages, to others it does not. Thus the society in which we are born makes or mars us to a certain extent. (3) A man is not responsible for his birth and for the society in which he is born, but he is responsible for his own choice. He can get over the handicaps of birth and society to a very great extent by being careful in his choice about the things of life, or a man may spoil the advantages of birth and society by a negligent life. These three things, innate heredity, social heredity and one's own choice, make the inequalities of life.

Question 22. Why do not Christians believe in the doctrine of Karma and transmigration when Jesus Christ Himself believed in it? When He gave sight to the man born blind they asked Him, 'Did this man sin or his parents'? and He replied, 'Neither this man sinned nor his parents.' This plainly shows that Jesus Christ believed in transmigration, for that man who was born

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blind could have had no chance of sinning except in his previous birth.

Answer. No, the answer Jesus gave does not prove or disprove transmigration. The question was, 'Did this man sin or his parents?' and He simply gave the answer, 'Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents.'

I do believe in Karma. Coming to Jesus Christ and taking Him as my Saviour is also a Karma. St. Paul tells us, 'Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap' (Gal. vi. 7). But my deeds alone cannot help me to get to God, 'For the good that I would, I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do' (Rom. vii. 19). In this state Jesus Christ takes hold of me and so transforms me that I become a new creature. I then turn over a new leaf and go on in life with Jesus beside me.

In closing, let me say this about the doctrine of transmigration. Many strong arguments have been put forward both for and against this doctrine, but the fact is that you cannot prove it and I cannot disprove it. One thing, however, we can all do. We know that we are living at the present time, and we can all concentrate on this life as the only chance for us. If, after this life, we find that there have been other births also, we have lost nothing by concentrating on this life. If we should find that there are no more chances of coming into this world, we have done the wisest thing in taking this present life as the only chance. Let us, therefore, concentrate on this life and do what we ought to do here and now.

Question 23. Has there grown only one lotus of

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Jesus Christ in the wide lake of this world ever since its creation? Is not Mahatma Gandhi at least as beautiful a lotus as Jesus himself? If the answer be in the affirmative, why not follow the blossoming Gandhi rather than the faded Jesus?

Answer. Mahatma Gandhi has never claimed equality with Jesus Christ. The fact is that he owns having learned a great deal from Him. To claim equality with Christ one would have to put forward and substantiate by one's own life this claim of Jesus Christ's, 'which of you convinceth me of sin?' (John viii. 46). Moreover, he will have to do greater works than Jesus, and he will have to die and rise again from the dead.

Jesus Christ is not a faded personality. He has been growing more beautiful, more fresh and more attractive with the passing of time. There are two ways to judge of a person's greatness: (1) How far has that person influenced the world for good? (2) How pure has been his life, for no personality is truly great which is not pure. Let us apply these two touchstones to the personality of Jesus Christ.

1. How far has He influenced the world for good? Jesus ministry, in the body, extended over only three short years. He never asked any one to write anything for Him, except, I suppose, in the ordinary village school. During His ministry He only wrote once, and that was on the sand. He chose twelve very ordinary men to be His disciples. As far as we know, He never went outside the little country of Palestine. And yet He proclaimed a kingdom. A kingdom! I see no armies around Him. He was not born in a palace, nor

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do I see a royal robe upon Him. He does not possess an inch of ground. How can He be a king? Fifty days after His ascension these simple disciples are endued with power from on high and start a movement which has gone on through the centuries with an ever-widening circle. To-day fully one-third of the total population of the world is counted among the adherents of Jesus Christ; and there are many more who, for fear of caste, or family, or for some other reason, do not acknowledge Him openly, yet secretly own Him as their Lord and Master. Here in India 2,000 are added to this number each week. This is what might be called the numerical influence of Jesus. The greatest influence, however, has been the silent process of assimilation of the principles of Jesus by the world, until to-day, as Dr. Stanley Jones puts it, 'Christ-like' has become the greatest and the best adjective descriptive of human character.

2. How pure was His life? The purity of Christ's life was not comparatively the greatest; it was perfect purity. That is why He put forward this claim: 'Which of you convinceth me of sin?' It was not a question of Jesus being more sinless than others; it was perfect sinlessness.

Not only this. This purity of Jesus Christ was something unique. Not only did He never acknowledge incompetence, but He was the remedy for incompetence in others. He said, 'He that thirsteth, let him come and drink of me.' 'Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.' Others are lost sheep; He is not only not lost, but

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is the shepherd of the sheep. Others are sick; He is not only in health, but the healer of the sick. Others are weak; He is not only strong, but the strengthener and sustainer of the weak. Others have forfeited their lives; He is not only the master of His life, but gives His life as a ransom for others. 'All have sinned and come short of the glory of God'; He is not only sinless, but the Saviour of the world. All human beings improve their lives in accordance with the law of reformation; He not only never retraces a step which He takes forward, but reforms others. Charles Lamb has said, 'If Shakespeare were to come into this room we should all rise to honour him, but if Jesus were to come we should all fall down and try to kiss the hem of His garment'.

Question 24. You hold that by surrendering oneself to Jesus one is lifted from the lower kingdom to the kingdom of God. Why not then surrender to the Father himself rather than to the Son?

Answer. 'No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him' (John i. 18). In the first chapter and first verse of this same Gospel it is written, 'In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God'. 'The Word' here means Jesus Christ. Why is He called 'the Word'? The word reveals the mind of the man. If a man sits quiet you do not know what is in his mind, but when he begins to speak we know his thoughts. Jesus reveals God to man; hence He is called the Word

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Just as I take hold of your mind by means of your words, I take hold of God by means of Christ.

Question 25. If you see a man who is exactly like Christ will you pay him the same respect ?

Answer. Yes, but no man has yet appeared on the horizon who is exactly like Christ. Christ is always ahead of our centuries. Krishnamurti, Mrs. Besant's 'World Teacher' claimed to be Christ, but he soon had a nervous breakdown!

Question 26. Am I different from God ?

Answer. Yes, very different. God is the creator, you are His creation.

Question 27. When did God create the universe and what was His object in doing so ?

Answer. No one knows exactly when the universe was created. Scientists tell us that it has existed for hundreds of thousands of years. He created it for His own glory.

Question 28. What is the use of worshipping God ?

Answer. What is the use of light ? You cannot do without it. Just as the light is made for the eye, and the eye cannot do without it, so the human soul is made for God and it is restless until it finds rest in Him. God fits my conscience like light fits my eyes.

Question 29. The Hindu religion is the oldest religion among the religions of the world, and the Hindu Vedas are the oldest among the scriptures of the world. Therefore we must follow them.

Answer. No, the oldest religion, probably, is

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Totemism or Animism, and the oldest book the Egyptian Book of the Dead. But it does not follow from this that we must hold them in the highest esteem. The question is not how old or how new a book or a religion is, the question is what does it do? Does it lift the human soul up to God and bring harmony between them? If it does, I will take it regardless of its antiquity or newness. If it does not perform this essential function of religion, I do not want it. Our great poet Kalidas, the Shakespeare of India, has said :

'Tis old ! therefore it must be right,
'Tis new ! It must be wrong :
So sayeth but the witless wight
By others led along :
But judging both with reason's eyes,
They ever choose who are the wise.

And one of our greatest books, *Yoga Vashisht*, says :

Accept the truth—well reasoned out
That e'en a child might say,
All else, tho' spoke by Brahma's self,
As rubbish cast away.

Question 30. If Jesus Christ is still living why does He not make people Christian at birth?

Answer. Forced goodness is not goodness. God being all-powerful could force us into doing good deeds, but that will do us no good. True goodness is that in which man's own will is exercised. Therefore, Jesus Christ leaves us free to choose goodness and hate evil. When we try to do good He of course helps us. This exercise of the will for the right makes us stronger.

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Question 31. What is your God ?

Answer. Christ is my God. God's nature is like Christ's nature.

Question 32. You pray in the name of Jesus Christ ; why should I not pray in the name of Chaitanya ?

Answer. I pray through Jesus Christ because I have found God through Him ; if you have found God through Chaitanya you may pray through him.

Question 33. Can we not find God without Jesus Christ ?

Answer. There is only one way to test it. Go out and find God without Christ. If you do not find Him, give Jesus a trial.

Question 34. What exactly is the meaning of finding God ?

Answer. The coming of Jesus Christ into our life is finding God. Man finds himself in the midst of a three-fold discord : (1) Man not in harmony with his higher self, (2) with his fellow beings and (3) with God. When God comes into life this discord is dispelled and harmony takes its place. This is finding God.

Question 35. What is the source of life and where does it end ?

Answer. God is the source of life and it ends in communion with Him. Note—'Communion' not absorption.

Question 36. Can God be personal ? If so, He becomes

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finite. We Hindus believe in an impersonal God; He can, therefore, be everywhere.

Answer. We must distinguish between personality and corporeality. Corporeality comes within the limitations of time and space, personality does not. In personality there are three qualities: (1) Intellect, (2) Feeling and (3) Will; all these are summed up in self-consciousness. All these qualities are in God. Man also is a personality, and that is why he can commune with a personal God. If God had been impersonal, it would have been impossible for man to have fellowship with Him.

Question 37. When I compare Jesus Christ with Krishna I do not find warlike qualities in the former. The pugnacious instinct is something natural to man; as Jesus Christ did not possess it, He was not a perfect man.

Answer. I quite agree with you that the pugnacious in man is an instinct. No man is truly strong who does not bear in his character antitheses strongly marked. One of the objections to Jesus is that He was too militant. But He was not militant in the ordinary sense. The greatest militancy is the militancy of the spirit. It is comparatively easy to go to the battlefield, but it is difficult to stand against wrong. He fought the religious leaders of His day: 'Now do ye Pharisees make clean the outside of the cup and the platter; but your inward part is full of ravening and wickedness .... Ye are as graves which appear not, and the men that walk over them are not aware of them' (Luke xi. 39–54). For

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forty days He fought the devil in the wilderness and came out triumphant (Matt. iv. 1–11). Twice unarmed, He turned out the evil doers from the temple at Jerusalem and cleansed it (John ii. 13–16 ; Mark xi. 15–17). It took courage to do all this. He knew that it meant death, but He spoke the word. Christ had the characteristics of a truly strong man—antitheses strongly marked, i.e., militantly passive and passively militant. He was the most militant man in history. Napoleon looks like a pigmy before Him. The most terrible on earth are the terrible meek. Jesus was the most passive of men, but in His passivity was the greatest militancy.

Question 38. According to the Hindu doctrine of Karma, Christ must have been a very wicked man for He suffered so much.

Answer. Yes, according to the doctrine of Karma this would be the conclusion. But what does experience say? The best men in the world have been those who have suffered most for others. Some time ago Mahatma Gandhi fasted for several days because of the wrong-doings of others. Does it follow from this that Mahatma Gandhi's deeds were bad in his previous birth? No one has ever suffered like Jesus Christ ; and He suffered for others. Therefore, He must have been the best man.

Question 39. If God should suffer, He would be unhappy ; if He be unhappy, He would be imperfect : if He be imperfect, He could not be God. It follows from this that Christ was not God. Brahman alone can be called God, for He is Nirguna (without qualities) and

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does not concern Himself with the sorrows and joys of men.

Answer. The most miserable people in the world are those who never do any thing for any one. People call them egotistical. Who are the happiest people in the world? The altruistic, or those who give themselves for others. The fact is that if God did not suffer for men He would be an unhappy God. Altruism is one of the essential qualities of God; and it was abundantly manifested in the One Who 'went about doing good' and 'came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many' (Acts x. 38; Mark x. 45).

Quesiion 40. How can one single man atone for the sins of the whole world?

Answer. I take the liberty of giving again the example of Mahatma Gandhi. Some time ago, in the Ashram of Mahatma Gandhi some young student told a lie. The Mahatma believed him, but later he found out that he had been deceived. This of course hurt the Mahatma very much. He called all the students together and said to them that, as he had found, to his great grief, that one of them was a liar, he was going to fast for a number of days. This made the young men very uncomfortable, and after he had fasted for a day or two the young man who had sinned came with tears in his eyes, apologized to him and promised never to tell a lie again. The Mahatma's long fast because of the Hindu-Moslem tension in India is well-known. Now, if Mahatma Gandhi's suffering for others could influence so

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many people for good, supposing there were One infinitely higher than any man on earth, would He not be instrumental in reclaiming the whole world? Jesus Christ has actually taken the place of sinful men by taking upon Himself the punishment which was our due.

Question 41. Since Jesus Christ has taken away the sins of the world, I suppose, there are no more sinners among the Christians.

Answer. A true Christian has victory over sin. 'Whosoever is born of God sinneth not' (1 John v. 18).

Question 42. If Jesus Christ has atoned for the sins of the world, are we not now free to sin as much as we like?

Answer. No, the forgiven begins to hate sin as the unforgiven has never done. Therefore, the forgiveness that Jesus gives, instead of being a license, becomes an injunction against sin.

Question 43. Jesus Christ taught a great deal about kindness to men, but He did not say anything about kindness to animals. Moreover, Christians eat flesh, while we Hindus have the doctrine of Ahimsa or non-violence. Therefore, at least in this respect, Hinduism is superior to Christianity.

Answer. No one else has done so much for animals as Jesus Christ has done. Up to the coming of Jesus Christ animal sacrifice was done, but when He offered himself on the cross all sacrifice ceased. Christians, therefore, do not sacrifice animals. Hinduism, however, has not yet purged itself of that.

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Now, as to flesh-eating: It is not a part of Christianity. Both flesh-eaters and vegetarians can become Christians. The fact is that there are many among Christians who are vegetarians, and yet they are as good Christians as those who eat meat. Nor is Christianity a particular kind of clothing. You may eat or wear anything you like. But we must look at this question from a wider point of view. I find that the world in which I live is so constituted that I cannot live in it without taking some life. I drink water to quench my thirst, and I kill millions of very minute animal organisms in the water I drink. They are so small that they cannot be seen without the aid of microscope. If I boil my water I kill them in the act of boiling. I cook my rice and I take some life there. When I am ill the Doctor gives me medicine to kill the disease germs in my system. Now, I did not create the desire in me for water; nor did I put those little insects in my water—God did both. If, therefore, taking of life in this way is a sin, God becomes responsible for this sin, and He can hardly punish me for that. If man's salvation depends upon what you call Ahimsa, then no man can be saved. If I do not drink water, I kill myself; if I do drink, I kill the little germs. I am in difficulty. As far as I can see, there is only one way to abstain from taking life, and that is to live on leaves which have fallen off the trees. You cannot even eat green vegetables, for our own botanist, Prof. Bose, tells us that even the plants have a nervous system and they gasp and die.

One more word. If you really believe in the doctrine of Karma and Transmigration, you should be thankful to

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the meat-eaters, for when they kill an animal they hasten it through this existence and help it on a stage towards liberation. This is what the Bhagavad Gita teaches us.

Question 44. If I follow the teachings of Jesus Christ, but do not become a member of the organized Christian Church will I be saved or not?

Answer. Every man has two sides to his life—the inward and the outward. First of all, Christ certainly desires the inward surrender of life. Then He also desires that the light which has come to us inwardly may 'so shine before men that they may see' (Matt. v. 16). In other words, Christ wants both the inward as well as the outward life—the whole of us. Baptism is the outward sign of this inward surrender. The fact is that if you really give yourself to Christ you would not want to keep any thing from Him.

Question 45. Christianity starts with the supposition that man is sinful; Hinduism starts with man as spotless. Therefore, Hinduism is superior.

Answer. No, Christianity starts with man as sinless. Adam was made without sin, and for some time he was sinless. With the fall of Adam the whole of humanity has fallen. But the question ought not to be how sin came into the world; we ought rather to ask how it can be driven out. Many people spend their whole life speculating how sin came, and they get nowhere. When the fire has started the wisest thing to do is not to spend time finding out how it started, but to get busy and put it out. The Christian religion tells us how sin can be got rid of. See John iii. 16.

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Question 46. Do you believe in the Hindu doctrine of Incarnation?

Answer. Yes, No. Yes—I believe that the doctrine of Incarnation is true. Ever since sin entered into men they have been told of a Saviour. No—I do not believe in ten Incarnations. I believe one is quite enough. The ex-carnate light of Jesus Christ, of which men were told through the centurics, became incarnate about 2,000 years ago.

Question 47. Christ said, 'Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect' (Matt. v. 48). How can this be possible in one short life? This ideal is attained only through the Hindu doctrine of births and re-births.

Answer. The perfection of which Jesus here speaks does not mean that we can be like God in every respect. That is impossible. The emphasis is on the word 'therefore' which points back to what Jesus had been telling them about. He was teaching them about love towards their neighbours and even towards their enemies. In this respect we can be like God, our Father, who sends rain both on the just and the unjust.

Question 48. Do you believe in a world teacher?

Answer. Yes, and that world teacher is Jesus Christ.

Question 49. What is the Kingdom of Heaven?

Answer. To my mind, there are six things in the Kingdom of Heaven: (1) God is our Father. (2) Men are brothers. (3) The worth of every human soul is the

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same. (4) Love is the motive power. (5) Realisation through renunciation. (6) Christ-like life.

Question 50. What is the meaning of Christ's statement, 'No man cometh to the Father but by me' (John xiv. 6)?

Answer. The emphasis must be put upon 'The Father'. Men, through other ways may get to Allah, with the content that that conception may hold; or they may get to Brahman, with the content that this conception may contain; but Jesus, the Son, is the way to the Father, with all the richness of content that He put into that term.

Question 51. If we find in Buddha the same qualities as in Jesus, can we find God through Buddha?

Answer. Buddha dismissed the idea of God from his life. He had no message about God. I have great admiration for Buddha. He is probably the greatest son of India.

Question 52. What is the meaning of the word 'Christ'? Are Christ and Krishna not the same?

Answer. The word 'Christ' means the Anointed One. He is also called the Messiah which means the same as 'Christ'.

No, the antitheses between Christ and Krishna are too strongly marked to be confused.

Question 53. Is not an idol an aid in worshipping God?

Answer. The thought of an idol seems quite legiti-

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mate. It seems to be the universal craving to worship the unseen God through something visible. Man wants to get near to God and to see Him face to face. Now, we find this principle at work in the universe that where God has put some natural craving in man for something He has also provided the means for the satisfaction of that craving: e.g., we naturally feel thirsty; God has provided the water freely. Our lungs want fresh air; God has provided plenty of fresh air. Our eyes want light; God has made provision for that, and so on. In the same way, the question may be asked: If the craving to worship the invisible God through something visible is universal and natural, has God made a provision for the satisfaction of this craving? He has made a free provision. The invisible God became visible in Jesus Christ. Christ, therefore, has taken the place of idols. He is Emmanuel, God with us. Ask this question in regard to idols: Is God like Diana? Is He like Moses? Will He act exactly like Moses acted? Is He like Muhammad? Will He act exactly like Muhammad acted? Is He like Krishna? Will He act exactly like Krishna acted? Is He like Kali? Or is He a Christlike God? I believe God is like Christ. If you can conscientiously say 'Yes', I have nothing more to say. Although Christ is not with us now, in His bodily form the spiritual image takes the place of the material.

Question 54. Is not the essence of all religions the same? Is there anything special about Christianity that we must know?

Answer. The specialty about Christianity is Christ

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As to the essence of all religions being the same: I see marked differences: e.g., Buddha said nothing about God; Christ made God the centre. In the same way, there are vast differences between the essentials of Hinduism and Muhammadanism. There are principles diametrically opposed of which I need not speak here.

Question 55. Please define God.

Answer. God is a being like Christ.

Question 56. You picture the character of Christ as the ideal character of God. What guarantee is there that there will not be a higher character than Jesus?

Answer. I cannot speak of the future. Our concern is with the present and at present there seems to be no higher character than Jesus. Christ-like is the best adjective. The highest compliment for a man is to call him a Christ-like man.

Question 57. If Jesus be the only mediator and Christianity the only universal religion then there ought to be a universal craving for it. If there is a universal and natural craving for it, then why preach about it?

Answer. Education is good. There is a craving for it, but education does not come by itself. There is another principle: Where there is a natural craving, there is a natural provision for its satisfaction. Where the craving is naturally satisfied men want to share that satisfaction with others. A man who has found a spring of fresh water and has satisfied his thirst cannot possibly keep silent in the presence of people dying of thirst.

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This is the reason why Christ is proclaimed to the world.

Question 58. If God is a servant, how can He be Master also?

Answer. God is Master because He is the greatest servant. Christ said, 'Whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant' (Matt. xx. 27). God serves us all the time. He sends rain, gives us air, food, clothing, health, and so on. In fact if God ceased to serve us we should not live.

Question 59. If God has manifested Himself through man, why single out Jesus? Why could we not say, God has manifested Himself through Krishna?

Answer. I do not wish to compare Krishna with Christ. I can only say, think it over. Is God like Moses, David, Muhammad, Krishna, Jesus? Draw your own conclusions.

Question 60. Why cannot there be a fusion of religions?

Answer. We can only understand God through a person. It will have to be a man. There is only one God and only one revelation. That revelation is Jesus. The religions of the world are so diametrically opposed to each other in their essentials that the moment you fuse them into one religion, there will not be much left of them to fuse. The essential function of religion is to bring back harmony between God and man. That religion only is worthy of the name that does this.

Question 61. What is your idea of God?

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Answer. God is perfect will, perfect intellect and perfect love.

Question 62. Has not Christ been deified like Krishnamurti ?

Answer. If Christ was not what He claimed to be then He could not be a good man. Could a bad man do what He has done ? A bad man could not do it, and a good man would not have made false claims.

Question 63. What is Nirvana ?

Answer. According to your teaching, absorption into the supreme Being, or annihilation. Some have called it ' a snuffed out candle.'

Question 64. It is true that many Christian lands have a higher standard of life, thought and culture than has India on the whole. Is it due to their religion or something else ?

Answer. It is due to Jesus Christ. Wherever He goes the standards are raised.

Question 65. Is reformation needed in the Christian Church also ?

Answer. In so far as the Christian Church has not come up to the standard of Christ it needs to be reformed ; and this work of reformation is going on day by day. We are not making a drive on any one section of humanity. We want to make the whole world Christ-like.

Question 66. Is heaven reserved for only one particular Christian sect or for the whole of Christendom ?

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Answer. For the pure in heart (Matt. v. 8).

Question 67. What is salvation?

Answer. Negatively, it is dying to sin. Positively, it is living to God. Salvation is both negative and positive.

Question 68. What becomes of Christians after death?

Answer. The question is not what becomes of them after death, but what is happening now. If everything is all right now, the after-death life will take care of itself.

Question 69. How can freedom be attained?

Answer: 'Ye shall know the Truth, and the Truth shall make you free' (John viii. 32).

Question 70. What is this truth?

Answer. 'I am the way, the truth and the life' (Jesus Christ in St. John's Gospel xiv. 6).

Question 71. How do you overcome lower desires?

Answer. By taking the purity of Jesus Christ. Just as light dispels darkness, by the in-coming of the power of Christ the lower desires are dispelled.

Question 72. What is the human soul? How is it related to the Divine Soul? Is there any difference between them?

Answer. The human soul is a personality, composed of intellect, feeling, will and self-consciousness. It is related to the Divine Soul as the son to the father. As the father loves the son so does God love the human

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soul. The human soul is different from the Divine Soul in that the former is a creation of the latter.

Question 73. Is it the soul that sins or the body? If it is the soul that sins, why does the body suffer?

Answer. The body is the instrument of the soul. The two are very closely connected. Therefore, although the agent of sin is the soul, the body also suffers with it, but the sufferings of the body are transient, whereas the sufferings of an unsaved soul are indescribable.

Question 74. Did Jesus suffer in the spirit or in the body?

Answer. Both.

Question 75. How can we have fellowship with God?

Answer. Sin separates us from God. The moment sin is put away the divine fellowship begins. Christ is the remedy for the disease of sin.

Question 76. Is it necessary to follow any religion at all? If so, which religion is the best?

Answer. There are no degrees in religion—one good, another better and a third best. There is only one religion, and that is Jesus Christ. He did not come to set a religion alongside of other religions, He is religion itself. To replace the discord of life by harmony it is necessary to follow Jesus.

Question 77. Is religion meant for the chosen few or for all?

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Answer. For all. Jesus said, 'Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden' (Matt. xi. 28).

Question 78. If Jesus is the ideal then there must be some Christians who have attained it.

Answer. No, if we attain it, we outgrow it. Jesus is always ahead of us.

Question 79. Muhammadanism allows a lie under certain circumstances, Hinduism also does the same, but you Christians say that a lie is never permissible. This shows that Christianity is impracticable. For example: Here is a cow run away from its butcher. You have seen the cow go in a certain direction. The butcher comes along and asks you to tell him the whereabouts of the cow. Is it not permissible under this circumstance to tell a lie and save the life of the cow? (Note: The Hindus ask this question because, according to Hinduism, a lie is permissible to save the life of a cow.)

Answer. No, a lie is never permissible. If you do not wish to tell the butcher the whereabouts of the cow, (or, for that matter, the whereabouts of a man way-laid by robbers) you can simply say you will not tell, for no man can force you to do so, if you are chivalrous. We must remember two things: 1. God never lies, and He never delegates to others the privilege of lying either for Him or for men. 2. A lie affects the eternal soul. It is, therefore, wise, if necessary, to let the perishable body perish and to save the soul.

Question 80. How can we be happy in this world with so much misery around us?

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Answer. The only way to be happy is to throw yourself into the misery of the world and try to eliminate it. Selfishness always brings misery, sacrificial life always brings happiness.

Somebody decided to sink a well in his garden; and he decided to sink it so that the travellers passing by could drink from it. So many travellers passed that way and used the well that water was always running into his garden. The garden was thus automatically watered, and the unselfish man was rewarded for his thought for others.

Question 81. Why do Christians remain aloof from non-Christians?

Answers. You will pardon me if I say that a good deal of the blame for this must be laid at your door. In the early years of Christianity in India, whenever a high caste man became a Christian he was so severely persecuted, and sometimes even threatened with death, that the poor man had to seek shelter in a Mission or Church compound. Thus in the course of time several kindred souls clubbed together and little communities of converts were formed, until we now have what is called the Christian community. We did not want to create a new community in India to be placed alongside of other communities. Personally, I would be quite willing to have the Christian community, as such, fade away. In China there is no such thing as a Christian community. There are many Christians there, but they all live in their own original homes. You will sometimes come across a family in which the father is a Buddhist, the son perhaps a follower of Confucius

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and some other member of the family a Christian, all living under the same roof. I hope the day is coming in India, in fact it has already begun, when there will be perfect religious freedom, and we shall not ostracise or otherwise persecute our people for their religious convictions. We have had some very queer notions in our country. If a man steals or drinks or commits adultery hardly any notice is taken of it, but if he changes his religion he is at once ostracised by the community and persecuted until it becomes hard, and sometimes dangerous, for him to live in the same place, as if being true to one's religious convictions were the greatest sin. We hope this attitude will soon change.

Question 82. Is the Christian Trinity the same as the Hindu Trinity which we call Trideva or Trimurti?

Answer. They are the same in that they are both Trinities. The concept of the two, however, differs very greatly. The Hindu Trinity is Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva; the Christian Trinity is God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Ghost. In the Christian Trinity God the Son is the Saviour of the world, while in Hinduism there is no room for a Saviour.

Question 83. Is it binding upon all Christians to go to church on Sundays? Can we not worship God in our own homes?

Answer. We do not go to church because we cannot worship God in our own homes. God is everywhere and can be worshipped in all places and at all times. But in congregational worship we help one another and there is more power in it than in individual worship

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It also provides an opportunity for hearing the word of God which otherwise would be impossible.

Question 84. How can we believe in the goodness of God when there is so much misery around us?

Answer. There is misery around us, but God has given us ability to fight it and to win our way through it. It makes us strong.

Question 85. How often and when should a Christian pray?

Answer. A Christian ought to pray 'without ceasing' (1 Thess. v. 17).

Question 86. How can we pray without ceasing?

Answer. This condition is like that of a man in love with a young woman. He has her picture all the time in the sub-conscious. When he is working in the office or in the factory it is there. However, when he has a little free time it comes to the front of his mind with greater vividness. A Christian is, so to say, in love with Christ. He is there all the time in the sub-conscious, and at special times a Christian feels as if he is talking to Him face to face.

Question 87. What does the word 'Amen' mean?

Answer. It means 'be it so.'

Question 88. Do not both Hindus and Christians worship the same God who is Creator, Sustainer and Judge of all men?

Answer. God is more than Creator, Sustainer and Judge of mankind. He is our loving Father. We get to the Father only through Jesus Christ, the Son.

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Question 89. Can the soul of God become an ideal for man ?

Answer. Yes, if that soul becomes embodied in a body. This has been done in Christ.

Question 90. Is meat-eating consonant with the spirit of Christ ?

Answer. Christianity is not meat-eating. If you are a vegetarian I hope you will continue to be so. However, you cannot escape the killing of life in food, water, etc.

Question 91. Christianity is the religion of Europeans. Why should we accept it ?

Answer. No, Christianity is not exclusively the religion of Europeans. I will tell you, briefly, the history of Christianity. Jesus Christ, the founder of Christianity, was born in Palestine which is a part of Asia. He was brought up in the same country. As far as we know, he never went out of Palestine. He chose twelve disciples. They and a few others who had accepted Him began to proclaim Him. Some of them also went to Europe and told the people there about Jesus Christ. Before Christianity went to Europe its condition was just like some parts of India where people live in savagery. There were also idol worshippers like the Hindus. When they heard of Jesus Christ they protested against Him and said that since that was not the religion of their forefathers they would have nothing to do with it. They even persecuted the messengers of Jesus Christ and brought false charges against them. However, after a while they began to

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think and some of them accepted Jesus Christ as their Lord and Master. This so improved their condition that more were added to them; and they, in turn, began to share their experiences with others, until, gradually, large numbers became followers of Jesus. This transformed the whole of Europe and made it what it is to-day.

Now for about one hundred years these Europeans and Americans have been sharing with us here in India what was Asia's gift to them; and, by a strange irony, when they tell us about Jesus Christ, we say the same thing these Europeans said when they first heard the Gospel, 'It is not our forefathers' religion, we shall have nothing to do with it'. I said that the Europeans have been preaching the Gospel in India for the last hundred years. This is about the time since Mission work in India began, but Christianity really came to India hundreds of years ago. On the Malabar Coast, in the Indian States of Travancore and Cochin, there are to-day about one million Christians, commonly called the Syrian Christians. They have a tradition that St. Thomas, a disciple of Jesus Christ, came to that coast in A.D. 52 and founded their church. This is only a tradition, but we get positive proof from history that this church existed there as early as the third century. This brief history shows that Europeans have no exclusive claim upon Christ. He belongs to us Indians just as much as He belongs to any other nation. Nor is Christianity a modern development in India. It is a religion of our forefathers.

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Question 92. What is the relationship between Jesus Christ and Christians?

Answer. Jesus Christ is the Saviour, Christians are the saved; Christ is the vine, Christians are the branches; Christ is the head, Christians are the body (John xv. 1–5; 1 Cor. xii. 12–27).

Question 93. Has Satan a body or is he simply a spirit?

Answer. Satan is an evil spirit and the king of evil spirits.

Question 94. You have so many ramifications of the Christian Church—Roman Catholic, Protestant, Puritan, etc. Which of these has the largest membership and which is the best?

Answer. The Roman Catholic Church has the largest membership. The best church is the invisible church composed of all true believers of Christ.

Question 95. When did Christianity begin?

Answer. Jesus Christ is the beginning of Christianity. The Old Testament is a record of the preparation for the coming of Jesus, the New Testament tells of His advent which happened about 1900 years ago.

Question 96. What was the need of God becoming incarnate? He is all-powerful; could He not save the world in some other way?

Answer. Let me explain this by means of a story. Once upon a time there lived a very religiously minded king. He used to meditate a great deal on the question you have asked, but he could not understand why God

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should be so concerned about the affairs of men as actually to come down in an incarnation. One day he called his clever Wazír (Prime Minister) and asked him to solve this problem for him. The Wazír said that he would think it over and give him the solution in a few days. A few days passed and the king forgot all about it. When the Wazír had thought out the problem, he one day suggested to the king that next morning they should go out to the sea beach for an airing. The king fell in with the suggestion and appointed an hour when all of his courtiers should go with him. Next morning everybody was at the palace at the appointed hour to start with the king, except the Wazír. However, after waiting a while they all started off and got to the sea beach. In a little while followed the Wazír with the king's little son in his lap. The wind was strong and chilly; and the king, seeing the baby prince, began to get rather anxious about him, and asked the Wazír why he had brought the Prince on such a cold morning. The Wazír said that as he was coming by the palace the prince saw him and began to cry so much that he decided to bring him along, but that the king need not be anxious, he would look after him properly. Here the conversation ended and they began to enjoy themselves. The king also soon forgot about the prince.

As they were walking along the beach they saw a boat, and, at the suggestion of the Wazír, they got into it and rowed a little into the sea. The Wazír was sitting right in front of the king, and just as the king was looking at the prince he let him drop into the deep

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sea. This caused a great commotion in the party, but the king at once jumped after the prince, dived down into the water, and at the risk of his own life, tried and exhausted, brought the prince back to the surface of the sea. They then helped him into the boat.

But as soon as the king had time to examine the prince he found that it was only a wax representation of the prince. This greatly enraged him, and, turning to the Wazír, he said, 'Wazír, what is this joke? I might have lost my life. Why did you do that?' The Wazír stood up before the king with folded hands and replied, 'My Lord, why did you jump after the prince? You knew there was danger to your life in doing that. Here are all these courtiers, why did you not order one of them to jump? Why did you not command me to do it? Here is this boatman. He knows how to swim, why did you not let him dive into the water? Why did you do it yourself?' The king was sobered by these questions and began to think, and while he was thinking the Wazír again interrupted, 'And this, my Lord, is the answer to your question, "Why did God come into the world to save fallen humanity?" Love compelled Him.'

Question 97. Why did God create man, unnecessarily troubling Himself and also putting man into trouble?

Answer. Why do we have children? The instinct of fatherhood and motherhood compels us to have children. We want some one upon whom we can bestow our care and love. The same instinct is in God. He wants to bestow His love upon His children.

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Question 98. Did Jesus bear the cross voluntarily or was it forced upon Him?

Answer. He bore it voluntarily. If He had wished He could have escaped it. He said, 'I lay down my life that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again' (John x. 17, 18).

Question 99. You say that you do not worship idols, and yet you keep the crucifix before you. What is the difference between the crucifix and an idol?

Answer. An idol is a false representation of God. A crucifix is not a representation of God, but a reminder of His love. It is not binding on Christians to keep the crucifix before them; nor do they worship it.

Question 100. Why did Jesus pray this prayer, 'Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me.' It seems He was afraid to die.

Answer. No, the whole life of Jesus shows that He was afraid of nothing. If He had wished He could have escaped death. The Greeks once came to see Him, and the assumption is that probably they wanted to make Him their teacher. He could have, therefore, gone to Greece, if He had so desired. But He deliberately went to Jerusalem to be crucified.

When people came to apprehend Him in the Garden of Gethsemane they came with swords and staves and torches—the swords and staves for a fight with His disciples and the torches for a search for Jesus in the nooks and corners of the garden, for they thought He

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would try to hide Himself from them. But neither was found necessary. He boldly came before them and said, 'Whom seek ye?' They answered Him, 'Jesus of Nazareth'. "I am He', said Jesus. As soon as they heard this they were so stricken with wonder that, 'They went backward and fell to the ground.' One of His disciples tried to fight for Him and struck off the ear of one of them, but Jesus rebuked Peter, asked him to put his sword back into its sheath and, kneeling down, picked up the severed ear and restored it to its place saying, as Moffatt puts it, 'Let me do this at least'. This does not look as if He was afraid of death, does-it?

And now about His prayer: This is a mystery which no one seems to have explained with certainty, but, I think, probably it means this. St. Matthew (xxvi. 38) tells us that Jesus said to His disciples, 'My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death'. The words 'even unto death' are significant. Jesus, at this time, was passing through a terrible sorrow. We are told that His 'sweat was, as it were, great drops of blood falling down to the ground'. This sinless Son of God had taken upon Himself the sins of the whole world. It was not a mere matter of imagination, but He had actually taken the place of the sinner before God. To begin with, it was no small matter for the eternal, infinite Son of God so to empty Himself as to become man, and to live in the midst of sinful humanity. It was a still greater thing actually to step into the place of sinners. He had become so crushed under the weight of sin that, although ordinarily a strong health

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man, He could not carry His cross and fell down under it. The effect of all this was so great upon His body, mind and spirit that He felt as if He would die right in the garden. Doctors tell us that the coming out of blood and water from His side are symptoms of a ruptured heart which sometimes happens in cases of extreme sorrow. Under these circumstances Jesus began to be afraid lest He should die before getting on to the cross. This of course would have been a terrible calamity, as it would have upset all prophecy, and even His own predictions about that particular kind of death He was to die. This, to my mind, was the 'cup', and this is what He prayed to escape. The writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews (v : 7) tells us that 'in the days of His flesh when He had offered up prayers and supplications with strong cryings and tears unto Him that was able to save Him from death, and was heard in that He feared'. The above explanation fits in with this.

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II

MUHAMMADAN QUESTIONS AND CHRISTIAN ANSWERS

Question 1. You and I are one. We also look upon Jesus as a prophet and hold Him in very high esteem.

Answer. The greatest difference between Islam and Christianity is in the way of salvation. In other theological matters also there are differences. Therefore, although the Muhammadans and the Christians, both being from the same source, are brothers, they cannot be called one in matters of religion.

Question 2. Why do you Christians call Jesus Christ the Son of God? God is un-begotten and does not beget children. If we should assume that He has children we shall also have to say that He has a wife.

Answer. The expression 'Son of God' is just a matter of idiom. The idiom was quite common in Palestine at the time of Jesus Christ. A man who exhibited some special quality in his life used to be called the son of that quality. For example: Judas Iscariot is called, 'the son of perdition' (John xvii. 12), because he not only betrayed his own Lord and Master but also committed suicide; the two sons of Zebedee, James and John, were called 'sons of thunder (Mark iii. 17), revealing their character. They were of a particularly fiery nature for they once wanted to

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bring down fire upon the Samaritans (Luke ix. 54). Barnabas was called 'the son of consolation' (Acts iv. 36). In the same way, Jesus is called 'the Son of God' because God was manifested in His life more than in any other person's life. Not only that, but He was Himself God. He said: 'He that hath seen me hath seen the Father', 'I and the Father are one' (John xiv. 9, x. 30).

Question 3. The Gospels have been tampered with. You Christians have taken out many things from the Gospels, especially those referring to Hazrat Muhammad, Saleh Allah aleh wa sallam.

Answer. Certain things must be clearly understood about the Gospels.

(*a*) According to the Muhammadan belief the Injil (Gospels) descended upon Jesus in the same manner as the Quran upon Muhammad. We do not teach that. The Injil did not come down from heaven; nor did Jesus write it. The Injil was written after Jesus had left the world in His bodily form. It is a record of some of the things which Jesus did and said, made by four different persons, at four different times. Two of them, Matthew and John, were disciples of Jesus Christ and had been eye-witnesses of what they wrote. The other two, Mark and Luke, got their material from various sources, and from those who had personal knowledge of what they taught about Jesus. We Christians believe that although the Injil was written by men, they were moved and guided by the Spirit of God; in other words, they were inspired. The Injil was originally written in Greek

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and then gradually translated into many languages until now we have it in 883 languages of the world and 104 languages of India.

(*b*) You say that the Injil, as we now have it, is Tahrif-shuda (corrupted). The Tahrif is of two kinds (1) Tahrif-i-ma'nawi and (2) Tahrif-i-lafzi. There has been no change so far as the former (change in meaning) is concerned; we have already acknowledged that the latter (change in words) has been done through the various translations, and that, we hold, is to our credit for without the Injil being translated the world could not have got it.

(*c*) It is not a small matter to corrupt the word of God. See Revelation xxii. 19–20. In the face of this who could have the courage to do it?

Question 4. The real Injil which came upon Jesus has gone back to heaven with Him.

Answer. We all know that the Injil was given for the guidance of men. God knows that men live here on earth. There would, therefore, be no point in sending it away to heaven.

Question 5. Where have you Christians got the old Injil so that the present one can be compared with it?

Answer. There are four old manuscripts:

(*a*) The Sinaitic, in the Imperial Library at St. Petersburg. (*b*) The Alexandrian, in the British Museum at London. (*c*) The Vatican, in the Vatican Library at Rome. (*d*) Codex Ephraemi, in the National Library at Paris. All of these manuscripts are at least two hundred years prior to Muhammad. Our transla-

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tions have been carefully compared with these old manuscripts, and there is no difference in the meaning of these various translations.

Question 6. The saying is very common among us Muhammadans that the Injil has been corrupted. Can all of us be wrong?

Answer. A majority on any one side is no proof of its being right. Besides, it is not correct to say that all Muhammadans believe the Injil to have been corrupted. There have been some very noted people among you who did not believe so. For example: Imam Muhammad Isma'il Bukhari, Imam Fakhr-ud-din Razi, Shah Wali Allah, etc. Many of the present-day learned Muhammadans, too, say that the Injil is real.

Question 7. Is it not true that the references to Hazrat Muhammad, Saleh Allah aleh ā sallam and the Quran have been taken out from the Injil?

Answer. What possible motive could there be in doing so? If there were references to Muhammad in the Injil the Christians would have benefited from them for they could have got a share of the spoil which Muhammad distributed to his followers and saved themselves from persecution.

There is another consideration: Muhammad came in 570 A.D. By that time Christianity had spread to Europe, India, Persia, Mesopotamia, Armenia, Asia Minor, Syria, Palestine, Arabia, Africa, Egypt, etc. In the Bible there are books not only of the Christians but also of the Jews. The Jews and the Christians have not been on very friendly terms, and there have also

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been divisions in the Christian Church itself. Now, how, and at what time, could it have been possible for Christians of the various denominations and also for the Jews to get together to make changes in their Scriptures? If they did it without unanimity, the others would at once expose their fraud. It proves, therefore, that the Injil of Muhammad's time was the same as we now have it; and, as Muhammad recognised it, his followers can hardly find fault with it.

Question 8. Even if we take the Injil to be the real one it does not do us any good, because it has been annulled by the coming of the Quran. As the books of Adam were annulled by the books of Seth, the books of Seth by the books of Moses, the books of Moses by the Psalms, and the whole of the Old Testament by the New Testament, in the same manner, the Injil has been annulled by the Quran.

Answer. The Quran nowhere says that the Injil has been annulled. On the contrary, Muhammad himself very often referred to the Injil, and called its followers 'the people of the book' (Sahib-i-kitab). We do not believe that the New Testament has annulled the Old Testament. Jesus said, 'Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil' (Matt. v. 17, 18).

When a child goes to school he begins with the primer, he then goes on and in the course of time gets his Master of Arts degree. Does the M.A. annul the primer? No, the primer was the foundation of the M.A.

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Question 9. We Muhammadans recognise the Law, the Prophets and the New Testament. Why do you Christians not recognize the Quran ?

Answer. We recognize the books of the Jews because we find their fulfilment in Jesus Christ. The Old Testament is a sort of foreshadowing of the New Testament. They both form a chain with no break in it. The teaching of the Quran, however, does not fit in with the Bible. This is the reason we cannot recognize it.

Question 10. There have been many prophets and apostles. Each came to give some teaching to the people of his time. For example : there was Moses sent by God, then David, then Solomon, then Yahia (John), then 'Isa (Jesus), and, last of all Hazrat Muhammad, Saleh Allah aleh al sallam. He is, therefore, the seal of the prophets and he has abrogated the rest of them. When one king passes away and another takes his place the reign of the former also passes away with him.

Answer. You are right in saying that when one king passes away, he can no longer reign. But this can hardly be applicable to the spiritual kingdom. Besides even if the reign of one king is superseded by that of another the laws of government do not change. Jesus Christ did not come to establish a temporal kingdom. He came to save sinners. To do this, He was crucified and buried, and rose again the third day. He now sits on the right hand of God. As long, therefore, as He is living His spiritual kingdom cannot be passed on to another. Muhammad, on the contrary, did not rise

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from the dead. The fact is that you Muhammadans believe that Jesus was never crucified and never died. According to both beliefs, therefore, He is still living; and, as we have said above, as long as He lives He reigns.

Question 11. In spite of the tampering that has been done with the Injil, I think there are yet several references in it to Hazrat Muhammad, Saleh Allah aleh wa sallam. I will give them to you: 'I will pray the Father and He shall give you another Comforter' (1 John xiv. 16). This 'Comforter' was Muhammad. If you read carefully the 14th, 15th and 16th chapters, you will find that this Advocate or Comforter is called Paraclete. This word is exactly the same as our Arabic 'Barqalit' and Persian 'Farqalit'. These words mean exactly the same as the words 'Ahmad' or 'Muhammad'. What can be plainer than this? It clearly proves that the reference is to our prophet.

Answer. If you will please turn to the 17th verse you will find there an explanation, from Jesus himself, of what you have quoted. It says, 'Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him; but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.' Now please consider: (1) Muhammad has never been called 'The Spirit of truth.' (2) The words: 'Ye know him: for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you' are worthy of thought. We all know that Muhammad came 570 years after Christ. If this prophecy had been about Muhammad, how could it be said that the

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knew him during the time of Jesus, for the fact is that they did not know Muhammad then. Nor was Muhammad with them and in them. Moreover, the 'Comforter' of the sixteenth verse has been plainly explained in the twenty-sixth verse: 'The Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name'. Muhammad has never been called the Holy Ghost, nor did he come in the name of Christ.

If you will read John xvi. 13–15 you will find such a unity between the Holy Ghost and Jesus Christ that they appear to be identical. But no such unity ever existed between Muhammad and Christ. There are fundamental differences in the teachings of the two. Moreover, if the 'Farqalit' has reference to Muhammad then Muhammad cannot have preference over Christ, for he who is sent cannot be greater than the sender.

Further: In the Acts of the Apostles, in the fourth verse of the first chapter, Christ is said to have told His apostles 'that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father'. Now please turn to the second chapter, verses 1–4: 'And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.' Now put the two things together, those we have been considering from the Gospel of St. John and these from the

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Acts. In the Gospel the promise of the Holy Ghost was made; in the Acts we find that promise being fulfilled. This happened on the day of Pentecost which came just fifty days after Christ's resurrection and ten days after His ascension, and not after 570 years.

Question 11. There is one reference about which however, there can be no doubt. See John xiv. 30, 'The prince of this world cometh'. Muhammad was a prince both temporal and spiritual.

Answer. I am shocked to hear this. I dare not attribute it to Muhammad, for the fact of the matter is that it refers to the devil.

Question 12. You Christians believe in three gods, whereas God is only one. What is the difference between you and polytheists?

Answer. The Christian doctrine of the Trinity is briefly this: There is only one God, but in the godhead there are three personalities: (1) God the Father, (2) God the Son and (3) God the Holy Ghost. God the Son, or the word of God (Kalamat Ullah) became man, and we call Him Jesus Christ. Three and yet one sounds like a paradox, nevertheless, it is true. It is beyond our intellect, but not against it.

Question 13. Then if we cannot even understand this doctrine what is the use of believing in it? Look at our creed, how simple it is. 'There is only one God, and Muhammad is His prophet.' We can all understand it.

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Answer. There are many things in the world which we cannot grasp by the intellect, nevertheless we believe in them. For example: We do not understand ourselves, and yet we believe we exist. Man is a trinity: body, soul and spirit. We do not understand how the imperishable soul lives within the perishable body, and yet we believe we have a body as well as a soul. We do not fully understand electricity, yet we make use of it.

The Trinity is a mystery which we can only understand by experience. When a man gives himself fully to God he knows that God the Father is, he also knows that His Son, Jesus Christ, has redeemed him, and that the Spirit of God illumines and guides and helps him. Countless people, all over the world, give their witness to this fact. However, I give below a couple of illustrations which will help us somewhat to understand this very complex doctrine of the Trinity.

1. In the sun there are light and heat. There can be no sun without the light or the heat, and vice versa. There are three things: the sun, the light and the heat; and yet they are all one. We cannot look at the sun with our naked eyes. We see the light of the sun and we know that the sun does exist. We, likewise, feel the warmth of the sun and are convinced of its existence. Now please keep these three things in mind: (1) the sun cannot be seen except through the light, (2) the light can be seen, (3) the warmth can only be experienced and not seen.

May we say, God the Father is the sun. No man has ever seen God, except through the Son, Jesus Christ,

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who, in our illustration is the light. He has been seen in the body, and has revealed God to us. Just as the warmth cannot be seen but is only experienced, the Holy Ghost is not visible, but our experience tells us that He does exist, for we see His works.

2. Wherever there is life there is this principle at work: The lowest life is the simplest life; the higher we go in the scale of life the more complex it becomes. The lowest life is in the water, e.g., the amœba is a single cell—very simple. Come up higher; look at the birds and the fourfooted beasts. They are more or less complex. Come up higher still to man. We find man a very complex being. Now, according to the same principle, when we go to God who is the highest in the scale of life, should we not find Him the most complex being? God is most complex; He is a Trinity.

Question 14. According to Surah 16 of the Qurán, the Holy Spirit is a name of the angel Gabriel. Why do you call him God?

Answer. Yes, Muhammadans do give that name to the angel Gabriel, but we make a difference between the two. Gabriel is one of the creations of God; the Holy Spirit is uncreated.

Question 15. Can you quote a verse from the Injíl in which Jesus Christ has called Himself the Son of God?

Answer. John x. 36.

Question 16. If Jesus is man how can He also be God?

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Answer. Jesus Christ is perfect man and perfect God. There is perfect humanity and perfect divinity in Him. Just as a thought expresses itself through the limitations of a word, God has manifested Himself through limited humanity. In order to make Himself manifest to us He had to meet us in a human environment. If He had revealed His infiniteness to us, we could not have understood it; if He had revealed His omniscience, we would have been frightened to death; if He had revealed His immanence it would have been impossible for us to move about. It was, therefore, necessary for God to become man. The humanity and the divinity of Jesus Christ is a great mystery, but His life very plainly shows that He was both God and man.

I go to the cradle of Bethlehem and see an ordinary babe in its mother's lap. Mary fondly looks at the child, and I say this is Mary's son. But, while I stand there watching, a company of shepherds enter, and they say that while they were watching their flocks by night the glory of the Lord shone round about them and an angel came to tell them of this infant's birth. This is amazing. Why should angels come to the birth of this child? He does not look different from other children. While I am still wondering what this can mean, I see three men coming yonder. They come to the house, dismount from their camels, fall down and worship the child and present to Him 'gold, and frankincense, and myrrh', the gifts which it was the custom to give to kings. I am amazed. Why do they treat this child as a king? There are no signs of royalty about Him. He was born in a stable, and He lives in a very ordinary

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house. 'But', say these three men, 'we saw a star which has guided us hither'. A star! this is wonderful, what can this child be?

I follow this child, I study Him; and while in many ways He appears to be like other children, there are some extraordinary things about Him. He goes to Jerusalem with His parents at twelve years of age. Like other boys, He is running about in the crowd, but after a while I see Him in the temple, 'sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them and asking them questions', and all that hear Him are astonished at His understanding and answers.

. I watch His life further and scrutinize it. I stand on Jordan's bank and mingle with the thousands who have come to be baptized of John. Jesus comes. He is not different from others. He also asks to be baptized, but while John so happily accedes to similar requests from others, in the presence of Jesus he steps back and says, 'I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me?' After some persuasion, John baptizes Him, 'and, lo, the heavens were opened unto Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon Him'.

I see Him at work through the day. He is tired and exhausted, and goes off to sleep in a boat. I look at Him and say, Poor man! He is tired, He is human, for of God it is said, 'Behold, He that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep'. But in a little while a strong wind brings a storm, the disciples work hard, but the boat is about to go down, and they cry out to Him in their distress. He wakes up, rubs His eyes, and

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commands the winds into silence and the waves into peace. I say He looks like an ordinary man, but He must be God, for to God alone can it be said, 'Thou rulest the raging of the sea; when the waves thereof arise thou stillest them.'

I go to the grave of Lazarus and see Him weep. How human! But He commands the dead to come forth. I follow Him to the cross. His back is lacerated; His brow bleeds from the pressing of the crown of thorns. He dies. How human! But the third day they whisper, 'He is risen'. It is remarkable how the two natures are found in the Bible side by side. Jesus is both man and God.

Question 17. We are told in the New Testament that once when Jesus was hungry He went to a fig tree and not finding fruit on it He withered it with a curse. Does it not show that He was only a man, even though we may take Him to be a man of higher type?

Answer. This whole incident is an illustration of the Jewish nation. There are several things worthy of note in regard to this tree:

(1) This fig tree had leaves, and, as in the case of the fig tree the leaves follow the fruit, they were an indication of the presence of fruit. (2) These leaves had come on before the season because the tree was in a sheltered position. It is an illustration of the Jewish nation because they were especially sheltered and favoured by God. They were prosperous, like the leafy condition of the fig tree, but there was no fruit. The curse foretold their doom.

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Question 18. Jesus' first miracle was the turning of water into wine. Islam is superior to Christianity in that it strictly forbids the use of wine.

Answer. The wine which Jesus made was not intoxicating. It was simply the grape juice which it was customary among the Jews to give to their guests as a refreshing drink. Alcohol is only made by the process of putrefaction, and it is quite plain that this process was not possible within this short time, unless Jesus actually caused it. The Bible also forbids intoxicating drinks: Proverbs xx. 1; xxiii. 31; Eph. v. 18. 'Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging: and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise.' 'Look not thou upon the wine.' In fact Christianity considers intoxication so bad that it is counted among some of the most heinous sins: 'Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters . . . nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards . . . shall inherit the kingdom of God' (1 Cor. vi. 9, 10).

Question 19. Why does St. Paul advise Timothy to use wine (1 Tim. v. 23)?

Answer. There is a difference between drunkenness and taking wine as a medicine. Many medicines are made in alcohol these days and medical men make great use of it.

Question 20. You look upon polygamy as bad; we too hold that an unlimited number of wives is harmful but our prophet made no such mistake. He limited the number and thereby avoided the extreme polygamy which was current among the Arabs. Was he not right

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Answer. Yes, I agree that Muhammad by limiting the number to four did good to the Arabs. But Christianity allows only one wife and one husband, and that is best.

Question 21. In the Bible God is called the God ot Abraham, Isaac and Jacob; and each of them had more than one wife. Again, both David and Solomon had hundreds of wives and concubines, and yet their books are among the inspired books of the Bible. How is this?

Answer. These persons belonged to the Jewish nation in which polygamy was customary. We do not look upon them as our examples. Their sins and their good qualities are both mentioned in the Bible. Nevertheless, God used them; and their books contain some good precepts. They are, however, on a lower level than the New Testament. The heart of the Christian religion is Jesus Christ Himself, and He alone is our standard. This is what Jesus said in regard to marriage relationships: 'And the Pharisees came to him, and asked him, Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife? tempting him. And he answered and said unto them, What did Moses command you? And they said, Moses suffered to write a bill of divorcement, and to put her away. And Jesus answered and said unto them, For the hardness of your heart he wrote you this precept. But from the beginning of creation God made them male and female. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and cleave to his wife: and the twain shall be one flesh: so that they are no more twain but one flesh. What, therefore, God

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hath joined together, let not man put asunder (Mark x. 2–9).

Question 22. The Christians do not observe the Pardah. This helps to excite the lower desires, and consequently, causes sin. The Muhammadan custom of the Pardah forestalls sin.

Answer. The Christians do not observe the Pardah because they do not feel the need of it. Muhammad ordered the Pardah when he fell into temptation in regard to Zainab, his adopted son's wife. Jesus never warned men against women. If He had done so, it would not have been just because there is the same temptation to women. He put them both on an equal level. Jesus goes right to the root of lower desires and kills it. Then the Pardah becomes unnecessary, for it is put around the heart. He said, 'Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shall not commit adultery: But I say unto you, that whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart' (Matt. v. 27, 28). The heart is the fountain of good and evil desires, and Jesus transmutes that seat of desires.

I do not here need to dwell on the harm done by the Pardah system. You know it too well to be told about it. It has been abolished in Turkey, Egypt, Afghanistan, and India also shows the same tendency.

Question 23. We give the title of Kalamat Ullah to Jesus Christ and you also call Him the Word. But the Word of God cannot be equal to God Himself. There-

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fore, Jesus Christ is not God. He is lower than God; and we do right in calling Him a prophet.

Answer. In the New Testament Jesus Christ is called 'the Word' because the word expresses the hidden thought. If I sit silent you do not know what is passing through my mind, but if I speak, my words reveal my mind. The learned Shekh Sa'di has said, '*Tá mard sukhan na gufta báshad 'aib o hunarash nihufta báshad*', Till a man has spoken the word his merits and demerits are hidden. When you take hold of my word you take hold of my thought. In the same way, Jesus is the Word because He reveals the hidden, invisible God to us. When we take hold of Jesus we take hold of the very self of God. Just as there is no difference between my thought and word, there is no difference between God and Jesus Christ. 'No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared Him' (John i. 18).

Question 24. How can Jesus be our example in married life when He himself never married?

Answer. To be an example one does not have to go into all the details of life. If Jesus had married, the unmarried would have raised the same objection. Marriage is not binding on every person. Many feel that they can serve God better by remaining unmarried; others feel the other way. Jesus chose to remain unmarried. The purity of His life has ever been an example for man's pure and continent life even in marriage relationships, for marriage is not a license for unrestrained lower desires.

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Question 25. The Hindus have their places of pilgrimage, we also go to Mecca; have you a similar place of pilgrimage?

Answer. Palestine where Jesus was born, where He served men; and particularly Jerusalem where He was crucified, died and was buried and rose again from the dead, are looked upon as sacred places, and many Christians go there; but this is no part or parcel of Christianity; nor is it binding on every Christian to go there; nor does our salvation depend upon a place of pilgrimage.

Question 26. Jesus Christ was essentially a man. He called Himself the 'Son of Man', lived the life of a man and died like a man. If I look upon Him as God I limit God. Therefore, I wish to approach him as a man.

Answer. I do not object to your approaching Jesus through His humanity, and not through His divinity. I think this is quite all right, for the early disciples approached Him in that way and came out finally to the belief in His divinity. Follow along the line of His humanness and you will come out at the place of His being more than human.

Question 27. The word expresses and reveals the thought. The thought is more sublime than the word. Jesus is like the word. He reveals God. He is thus an instrument of God, but not God Himself. God is a more sublime Being.

Answer. Jesus is not merely an instrument of God

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He is the human life of God. He is God meeting me in my own environment.

Question 28. In the second chapter of the Gospel of John we are told that when Jesus was present at a wedding He addressed His mother as 'woman'. Why did He use this disrespectful expression for His mother?

Answer. There was no disrespect meant. That was the way of addressing women at that time and in that country. The life of Jesus plainly shows that He was an obedient and dutiful son (See Luke ii. 51). 'And he went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was subject unto them'. Even when He was going through indescribable suffering on the cross He did not forget His mother, but turning to His beloved disciple John, He said, 'Behold, thy mother! And from that hour that disciple took her unto his own home' (John xix. 27).

But when He had to do things as the Saviour of men He could only hear one voice, and that voice was that of God, His Father. 'While he yet talked to the people, behold, his mother and his brethren stood without, desiring to speak with him. Then one said unto him, Behold, thy mother and thy brethren stand without, desiring to speak with thee. But he answered and said unto him that told him, who is my mother? and who are my brethren? And he stretched forth his hand toward his disciples, and said, Behold my mother and my brethren. For whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister and mother' (Matt. xii. 46–50). In St. Mark's Gospel (iii. 20, 21), we are told why His mother and

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brethren had gone there: 'And the multitude cometh together again, so that they could not so much as eat bread. And when his friends heard of it, they went out to lay hold on him: for they said, He is beside himself.' These relatives were trying to take Him away from the service He was doing, but He would not listen to them.

Question 29. Why do some Christians worship idols? I have seen them bowing to the statues and pictures of saints?

Answer. As far as we understand the teaching of the Bible it is entirely against worshipping any representation made with human hands. A Christian need worship only one person, and that person is Jesus Christ.

Question 30. What is the need of atonement? God is almighty. He has already written in each man's Taqdir (fate) what is to happen in his life (Surah 17). He guides aright whom He wills and He misleads whom He so wills (Surah 74). There is, therefore, no room for atonement.

Answer. There are two qualities in God: He is just and also merciful. In the ninety-nine names which you give to God there are also these names: 'Al-a'dl (just), Al-rahman, Al-rahim, Al-rau'f (merciful). The atonement is an expression of these two qualities. There was a very just king, who hated bribery and corruption above everything else. He decreed that whoever was caught in bribery and corruption in his state should be punished with one hundred lashes. One day a culprit was brough

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in, and who was this culprit ? The king's own mother. Seeing his own mother the king turned pale as death. He retired to his room and could neither eat nor drink for three days. After three days he came out, called in the mother and ordered that the lashes be laid on her back. As she received the lashes he sat there looking at the mother. They gave her one lash and blood began to trickle out ; two, three, four, five ; and then the king shouted, ' Halt '. He then stepped down, bared his own back and commanded that the remaining ninety-five lashes be laid on his back. This was accordingly done. Some of the people who saw this said, ' How just ! he would not let even his own mother go unpunished '. Others exclaimed, ' How loving ! he has taken the major portion of punishment upon himself '. In the one man they saw both justice and love. In Jesus Christ we see the justice of God as well as His love. He would not lightly forgive us ; nor would He leave men in sin and degradation. Sin brings separation between God and man ; the atonement brings at-one-ment with God, and every man who has been saved values it.

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III

ARYA QUESTIONS AND CHRISTIAN ANSWERS

Question 1. Christ was the Word, which was with God. Shall we take it then that the so-called Christ is nothing more than a mythical personage and not an historical entity ?

Answer. The fact that Christ is called the Word does not prove Him mythical, for in the same place it is also said of Him ' All things were made by Him . . . In Him was life . . . The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father ' (John i. 3–14). He Who is the cause of bringing other things into existence must of course exist Himself.

Question 2. How could Jesus be born of a virgin ? Virgin birth is against nature.

Answer. We do not believe in Jesus as our Lord and Saviour just because He was born of a virgin, although we do believe the fact of the virgin birth. No man's mere birth can be a proof of his greatness. Jesus was unique in all His life—His acts, His teaching, His death, His resurrection and all that He continues to do to this day. This being so, it is quite easy for us to believe in His unique birth. To understand Jesus one has to look at the whole of His life.

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Question 3. Did not Jesus come to India between the ages of twelve and thirty ?

Answer. In 1887, a Russian named Nicolas Notovitch came to India and went to Leh in Laddakh, through Kashmir. He lived there for some time with the Lamas of the monastery of Himis. Seven years later he published a book in which he mentioned that the head Lama of the monastery read to him from an old manuscript that Jesus came to India between the ages of twelve and thirty and learned from the Jains, Buddhists and Hindus of that time. This book was published in French and English and caused a great deal of stir both in Europe and here in India.

In 1895 Professor J. Archibald Douglas of the Government College at Agra spent the whole of his summer vacation in investigating this matter, but when he reached Laddakh and enquired of the Lama of the monastery the latter expressed very great indignation and told the Professor that no such manuscript had existed either in that monastery or anywhere else in Tibet. Professor Douglas wrote about it in 'The Nineteenth Century' of April 1896, and Nicolas Notovitch was branded as an unblushing impostor.

In the Khan Yar Street of Srinagar (Kashmir) there is a very old grave known as that of Yus Asaf. Mirza Gulam Ahmed of Qadian (Punjab), the founder of the Ahmadiya sect in India, who claimed to be at once the looked-for Kalki incarnation of the Hindus, the Mehdi of the Muhammadans and the coming Messiah of the Christians, gave it out that the old grave was that of Jesus.

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No one has ever proved that Jesus came to India. On the contrary, the authorities are agreed that He never went out of Palestine. But even if it be proved that He did come to India, it would not make the slightest difference in my allegiance to Him if I could still see in Him what I do see now. The matter of where He was born and where He lived and taught makes no difference if Jesus remains what He claimed to be. The fact is that Jesus is universal, and India has just as much claim on Him as any other country.

Question 4. Did Jesus not get His teaching from Buddha?

Answer. In some respects the teaching of the two are identical, but on many fundamentals they differ. For example: Buddha left God out of count, Christ made God the centre of His teaching and life. According to Buddha salvation is getting rid of life, according to Jesus it is life and abundant life (John x. 10). Buddha never claimed to be a saviour of mankind, Jesus says: 'I am way, the truth and the life' (John xiv. 6).

Question 5. Is it possible for any mortal soul to atone for the sins of the whole world without God being unjust and unfair?

Answer. Yes, if that mortal soul be like Christ who was perfectly sinless. God has kept men in society. We are all related to one another, as links in a chain. One man's life affects the life of another, and the higher the man the more extensive is his influence for good. When we see this principle at work in our own life, we

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can understand the reasonableness of Christ's influence upon the whole world for not only was He the highest rung of the human ladder, but unique and perfect. Both God's justice and mercy meet in the death of Christ on the cross (See Chapter II, question 30).

Question 6. Are miracles possible in this universe of naturalistic laws?

Answer. If we come to an understanding as to what miracles are this problem will be solved. To me, miracles are those works which are performed by men of a higher level and which appear extraordinary to men on a lower level. What seems to us extraordinary and miraculous is the ordinary and the accustomed on a higher plane. Some years ago the steam engine, electricity, air-ships, submarines were all in the realm of the miraculous, but in these days we have become accustomed to them. Many of the village people even to this day think that the railway trains are run by the power of some goddess whom the white men have to worship before they can run an engine, but the engine driver harbours no such ideas for he knows about steam and its power. Now think of the miracles of Jesus Christ with this thought in mind. His life was unique, He was on the highest plane, therefore, it was only natural for Him to do things which to us of the lower plane seem extraordinary and miraculous. To Jesus they were natural acts.

Moreover, the miracles of Jesus do not break the laws of nature but rather mend them. Here is Peter's mother-in-law lying sick with a fever. Jesus comes and

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rebukes the fever and she is made whole. Which is true nature—a woman burning with fever, or one that is going about doing her household duties? Here is a man rotting in leprosy. Jesus with the touch of His hand makes him clean. Which is true nature—a man wasting away with leprosy, or one healthy and strong? Here is a man born blind. Jesus touches his eyes and gives him sight. Which is true nature—a man groping about in the dark or one that has good sight? Here is a dead body being carried away to the graveyard. Jesus stops the carriers and commands the dead to come to life. Which is true nature—death or life?

Some one says: 'How about the feeding of the five thousand, or the turning of water into wine, or walking on the sea?' The feeding of the five thousand is no greater miracle than the feeding of the millions every day. Who feeds men on earth? Jesus does it, although the methods differ. You sow a single grain and it multiplies thirty, sixty, a hundred fold. The same Lord and Master of nature multiplied the five loaves and two fishes to feed the five thousand. God is also turning water into wine every day. He makes the grapes to grow. The grapes take in water and it is turned into grape juice. If this process goes on every day, would it not be possible to turn water into wine if the Lord of nature were to come down and hasten the process?

We see Jesus walking on the sea, and we look upon it as a miracle. But the world is beginning to realise now that the spiritual has mastery over the material. The higher a man rises in the realm of the spiritual the greater the mastery he gets over the material. Jesus being

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perfect had perfect mastery over the material. To Him walking on the sea was nothing mysterious. He walked on the sea as naturally as He walked on land. Every one of the miracles of Jesus is a restoration of the laws of nature rather than a transgression.

Question 7. When is a revelation from God needed? When is it made? In what book is it found?

Answer. 'God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son' (Heb. i. 1, 2). God reveals Himself to us through the universe. We look at the order and the beauty of the universe and our thoughts rise up to God. He reveals Himself to us through literature. We read good books and are lifted up to God. But Jesus Christ is the perfect revelation of God ('Perfect' in this sense that He reveals as much of God to us as we need to know); this revelation was made about two thousand years ago: and it is found in the Bible, particularly in the four Gospels.

Question 8. Who will enter the kingdom of heaven? Christians or non-Christians? If Christians, why not non-Christians?

Answer. The pure in heart.

Question 9. In cursing the fig tree did not Christ show anger and injustice, for how could fruit be expected out of season?

Answer. (See Part II, question 17.) The barren fig tree is an illustration of the Jewish nation. They

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were flourishing like this fig tree, but had no fruit. If Jesus dried up the fig tree in order to teach a lesson to a nation, it could hardly be looked upon as injustice. The school teacher does that every day. He plucks a green branch from a tree in order to punish his students. The ox-driver uses a twig to goad his oxen. It never appears to us as unjust.

Question 10. Did not Jesus show ignorance in looking for fruit in the fig tree?

Answer. It is not a question of His ignorance or omniscience. As stated above, He simply did it to teach the Jewish nation. The leafy condition of the tree showed that there was fruit, whereas it was only a deceptive condition.

Moreover, Jesus did not at all times make use of His omniscience. He said in regard to the last day that He did not know when it was coming. He seems to have been self-limited in some respects. This shows His perfect humanity.

Question 11. When the disciples wondered at the withering of the fig tree He said: 'If ye have faith, and doubt not, ye shall not only do this which is done to the fig tree, but also if ye shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; it shall be done' (Matthew xx. 21). Now prove your faith by telling this house to move.

Answer. Jesus did not mean that we should take His words literally in regard to the mountain. There is no use in moving a mountain. Jesus' meaning was that faith could remove mountains of difficulty. We in India

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use the same expression. When some difficult problem is solved, or some great work which weighed on our mind is done, we express our sense of relief by saying : 'The mountain is off my head '. This is only a matter of idiom. Faith does remove mountains of difficulty. Myriads of Christ's disciples testify to this fact.

Question 12. Can you prove that Christianity is not a modern development in India ? The Vedic religion existed long before Christianity came into India.

Answer. The test of religion is not how old or how new it is, but rather what it does. The function of religion is to bring harmony between God and man. That religion only is worthy of the name that does this I quite agree that the Vedic religion existed in India before the advent of Christianity, but even prior to Hinduism was Animism, the religion of the Bhils, Gonds, Santals, etc. Therefore, according to your argument, that is the religion we should all follow, but we know that that does not work.

Question 13. What is your conception of the Vedas ?

Answer. Since you have asked the question, I take it that you want me to be frank about it. I count the Vedas among the books of men of ordinary learning. They are creations of man's mind, and, as in the case of other literature produced by men, the Vedas also have their merits and demerits.

Question 14. Which religion is better, the one that allows or the one that prohibits meat-eating ?

Answer. Food is not a part of religion. Food is for the body. One may, however, injure both his body and

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soul by improper feeding. The food of the spirit is communion with God, and the strength derived from this food is spent in the service of men. If our salvation depended on abstaining from meat-eating, then none of us could be saved, for we all take some life in our food and drink.

Question 15. Does not meat-eating injure our brain?

Answer. This is a question for the doctors to answer. Under certain conditions the doctors advise abstinence not only from flesh, but also from other eatables, even sugar which we all eat. I have, however, seen people with very good brains among meat-eaters as well as among vegètarians. If you are a vegetarian you need not take to meat-eating in order to become a Christian.

Question 16. Are not Christians in their private life the same as they show themselves to be in hotels, clubs, ball houses, etc.?

Answer. There are two kinds of Christians: nominal and real. Both kinds are found everywhere. We only want the real ones, and we thank God that we have a large number of them the world over. The world trusts real Christians and is glad to be led by them. Whenever you see a Christian you ask this question: 'Does this man follow the Christ?' If he does, he is a real Christian; if he does not, he has no right to be called a Christian. Christianity is Christ Himself and to be a Christian is to follow Him.

Question 17. The Hindu women are more chaste and obedient to their husbands than the Christian women.

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Answer. This statement is wrong. Christianity gives equal rights to both men and women. They are both looked upon as human. The rules of life are the same for both. If a man expects his wife to be chaste, he too has to follow the same rule. If your statement were correct no non-Christian would ever think of marrying a Christian girl, but the fact is that many Hindus and Muhammadans are keen to get a Christian wife for they know they can get along better in life with her than with a non-Christian wife. We only wish our non-Christian sisters could come up to the standard of our Christian women. We hope this will become true some day.

Question 18. Jesus Christ confessed His ignorance in regard to the last day. This shows He was only a man.

Answer. In Jesus there was perfect humanity and perfect divinity. As man His knowledge was limited, as God He knew everything. Having become man, Jesus had limited Himself.

Question 19. Where is the line of demarcation between the humanity and divinity of Christ?

Answer. No line of demarcation can be drawn. When I look at the life of Jesus I see in Him certain things which make me feel He is human and with this thought in mind I advance and stretch out my hand to put it on His shoulder and say to Him: 'Brother man', but just as I do this I see certain other things which make me step back and fall at His feet with the words, 'My Lord and my God' upon my lips. His humanity and divinity go together.

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Question 20. There are various walks of life necessary for the superstructure of society. How can Christ be a guide to a woman linked in the chain of marriage, a boy enchained with fraternal love, a king on the throne, a judge on the bench, a statesman in his cabinet and a general on the battlefield? If God came as the ideal guide of humanity, why did Jesus not appear as a king or a statesman?

Answer. If Jesus had appeared as a king or a statesman, you would have made the same objection that He could not be a guide to those differently circumstanced. It is impossible for a man to be in all the various circumstances of life. But there is no gainsaying the fact that people in all the circumstances of life derive inspiration and guidance from Jesus. He makes purity possible in married life. For the unmarried He is an example of control over lower desires. He was an obedient son of His parents, and yet He did not address people as father or mother or brother or sister. He addressed the people even older than Himself as son or daughter, showing His regal dignity even in human relationships. Foundations of great kingdoms of the world are laid on His principles, and statesmen legislate as guided by them. He never took a sword in His hand and yet some of the greatest generals of the world have looked up to Him for guidance in the most difficult situations of their task. Napoleon Bonaparte, the great warrior of France, during his last days in St. Helena, acknowledged the superiority of Jesus and said that while his own kingdom and also that of Alexander had crumbled to dust, Christ's kingdom, founded

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not on brute force but on love, was ever progressive.

Question 21. Why did not Jesus change the heart of Judas Iscariot and Peter both of whom turned traitor?

Answer. God has made every man a free moral agent. Man has to choose for himself either good or evil. When man chooses goodness God helps him and he advances in it. Judas and Peter are examples of two kinds of sinners: those who fall into sin, add more to it and perish, and those who having fallen into sin, sincerely repent of it and come back to Jesus. Judas only felt remorse and went and hung himself; Peter felt sincerely sorry, repented of his sin and went back to Jesus.

When Peter went back to Jesus he was changed and he became a new man. Compare the timid Peter denying His Master with the Peter who stood before the Sanhedrim and said: 'Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye. For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard' (Acts iv. 19, 20). He received lashes on his back and, according to tradition, died on the cross head downward. Christ wishes this kind of change, and this comes by one's own choice.

Question 22. You say that Christ died on the Cross. God, however, does not die. Therefore Christ was not God.

Answer. As we have already said, in Christ was both humanity and divinity. As man He died on the cross, as God He rose again from the dead.

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Question 23. Is there any truth in the Christian and Muhammadan belief that Christ is still alive in heaven? If He is alive why do not Muhammadans believe in Him rather than in Muhammad?

Answer. Why the Muhammadans do not believe in Christ in Muhammad's stead is a question for them to answer. The record of Christ's life tells us that He rose again the third day from the dead and is still alive. The Church of Christ and its works are a proof that Christ is alive and at work in the world.

Question 24. Christianity is impracticable. Have you given away all your coats but one? Do you give to any one that asks? What will become of society if the Gospel laws are literally followed?

Answer. These teachings are not to be literally understood. The old teaching used to be a tooth for a tooth and an eye for an eye. Jesus came and taught that one should not have the spirit of retaliation but rather the spirit of forgiveness. We are not to return evil for evil, but good for evil. Jesus called His disciples 'the light of the world' and 'the salt of the earth'. As salt they are to save society from rotting, and as light they are to lead society out of darkness into light. A society can only advance by putting these principles into practice. Where the tooth-for-tooth and the eye-for-eye principle is followed, blood is shed and society deteriorates.

Question 25. How could Christ be God when we see him flee from Palestine to Egypt and become the cause of the massacre of so many children?

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Answer. Jesus being man was like the other children. He also sucked at His mother's breast and grew like other children. When Herod intended to kill the child Jesus, His parents had to flee with Him to Egypt. Jesus was to give His life one day, but the time had not yet come. Jesus was not responsible for the massacre of the children. Herod had them massacred and he could have avoided it if he had wished. It was greed and jealousy in the heart of Herod that was responsible for the massacre. The same thing happens these days. How many children are done away with in the royal palaces of India!

Question 26. Is not the miracle of the fish with the coin in its mouth rather incredible?

Answer. There is a kind of fish in the Sea of Galilee with a long protruding under-jaw in which it carries its eggs, and later the young. When the young are sufficiently large to feed for themselves, the fish carries pebbles or other objects in its mouth to keep the little ones from staying there. Tests have been made and such fish are known to have picked up coins in this way. Specimens of this fish can be found in a museum in Jerusalem.

Question 27. Do you not know that some scientists and historians have proved that Christ is only a myth?

Answer. I did not know that Christ had been proved a myth. Thakur Kahan Chandra Varma of the Arya Samaj has written a book entitled *Jesus Christ a Myth*, and he also goes about giving lectures on the same subject, but the publication of a book for or

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against a belief in a certain person does not necessarily prove or disprove the truth of that belief. Nor has the Thakur's name been known among the scientists and historians of the world. There are two kinds of people found in India—those of Thakur Kahan Chandra Varma's kind who oppose Jesus, and those who believe in Jesus Christ as historical and real and try to follow in His footsteps. This other kind of people are found not only in the Christian Church but, in a very large number, among those also who are called non-Christians. I quote below the testimonies of a few of them:

K. N. Sitaram, M.A., PH.D., Vice-Principal of Rajaram College, Kolahpur, in a public speech: 'Jesus Christ is the highest flower of the human race and the greatest son of Asia.'

A prominent Hindu of Patna: 'When the sun rises it first touches the hill tops and then gradually goes down into the valleys. Jesus Christ is touching the higher classes of India, He will also go down and influence the whole country.'

A Hindu President of the District Board, Tinnevelly: 'The Hindu incarnations were temporary and each manifested a phase of truth; so there may be something in the Christian claim that Christ is an absolute revelation'.

Principal Sen of B. N. College, Patna, in a public meeting: 'The East has penetrated the West and the West has penetrated the East, that is, the East gave Christ to the West and now the West comes and offers Christ to us. Let us take Him. We are glad to be conquered by Him. I am a product of Christian

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schools. India is crowned with a crown of thorns, but there will be a resurrection.'

Mr. O. Kandaswami Chettiar, Madras: 'I do not set Jesus among the many. He is the first and the last. He is the hand that reaches out to clasp the hand of man as he gropes in the dark after God. We have called to the mute silences, they have not answered us, but Jesus is the voice from within the veil answering our cry. I must propagate Him, I must share Him.'

Bir Chandra Sinha, M.A., Professor of Philosophy, Government College, Bhagalpur: 'Christianity in India is no longer a negligible religion. We must apply to Christ the pragmatic test. If He does not prove good enough, do not accept Him; if He proves good then of course we must put ourselves in His hands'.

Sir B. N. Sharma, Simla: 'There is no doubt that there is a changed attitude toward Christ in India. A young philosopher in South India is trying to prove that Jesus was a South Indian. That of course is a compliment to Christ when every one is claiming Him. The fact is that Hindus very often consider themselves better Christians than the Christians. This means that your work is already half done; I wish you success'.

Rajah M. Bhujanga Row Bahadur, Ellore, in his little pamphlet on *Political, Social and Religious Situation in India in 1917*, page 19: 'Therefore, my countrymen, considering the present state of depraved and degraded social and political condition of the people of India, I venture to suggest to you the advisability of accepting Christ as your personal Saviour, and save yourself and the country from the social tyranny, politi-

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cal degradation, lack of enlightenment, and above all obtain life eternal. Except through Him you have no hope of ever improving socially, and without social amelioration, there can be no political salvation'.

These are the statements of some of Christ's admirers out of thousands who could be quoted from India, but I now call the roll of His enemies:

Judas Iscariot who betrayed Him: 'I have sinned in that I have betrayed the innocent blood'.

Pilate who handed Him over to be crucified: 'I am innocent of the blood of this just person'.

The Roman Centurion and the soldiers who crucified Him: 'Truly this was the Son of God'.

Renan,.a sceptic who wrote a book against Him: 'O Jesus thou art so great that in future men shall not distinguish between thee and God'.

Rousseau: 'Socrates was a sage, but Jesus God'.

Ingersol: 'For the name of Jesus I have infinite respect'.

Strauss who tried to prove Jesus a myth: 'He remains the highest model in the midst of our thoughts'.

This question is so important and so much is being said and written about it these days that I crave your patience to consider a few more things about it.

During the last hundred years the New Testament, and particularly the life of Christ as contained in the four Gospels, has been subjected, both by friend and foe, to criticism and scientific test, such as no other book has had to endure with the result that the record of Christ's life has been proved true.

What Swami Dayanand Sarasvati writes in the 13th

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Sammulas (Chapter) of the *Satyarth Prakash* in regard to Christianity does not in the least suggest that Christ was not historical. He mercilessly tries to tear the whole of the Christian system to pieces, but the historicity of Christ is nowhere questioned. On the contrary, the language which he uses of Christ plainly implies that he believed in the reality of Christ.

Swami Vivekananda is said to have stated : 'Christianity would break itself on the rock of its historicity', but the Ramakrishna Paramhansa Mission, which was founded by Swami Vivekananda, plainly shows that its members believe in the reality of Christ. They hold Christ in high esteem and constantly study *The Imitation of Christ* and the New Testament. It may be safely concluded from this that the Swami probably changed his opinion later in regard to Christ.

If Jesus Christ is merely a creation of man's mind then the question arises : Who forged Him ? To invent Shakespeare one would have to be a Shakespeare ; to forge Kalidas one would have to be a Kalidas. In the same way, to forge Christ one would have to be a Christ ; in fact the inventor would be greater than the invention. Now the question is, do we find any such person in history who could do it ?

Jesus said : 'My Father worketh hitherto, and I work' (John v. 17). What are these works of Jesus Christ ? He takes the lowly and the despised and puts them on a high level ; He takes the weak and makes them strong ; He takes the impure and makes them pure. In other words, He transforms humanity. What is being done in His name through hospitals, leper asylums, orphanages, widows' homes, schools, colleges, etc., is a matter of common knowledge.

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The South Sea Islands have been notorious for their cannibals. The servants of Christ went there at the risk of their lives and gave His Gospel to them. What happened cannot be better indicated than by the following incident. During the great famine of 1900–1901 in India a substantial contribution was received in Central India from the people of the South Sea Islands to help save the people of India from starvation. The missionary who received it, greatly surprised and overwhelmed, in his letter of thanks wrote and asked if this money had been contributed by those who were formerly cannibals. The reply came: 'Yes, from cannibals and sons of cannibals.' The Bible alchemy had transmuted them.

In India the Lushai aud the Khasiya hills of Assam are well known. It is a matter of common knowledge that only about half a century ago these hills used to be inhabited by notorious head-hunters. They used to come down to the plains with their large sharp knives to hunt people's heads. This cruel custom became so common among the Lushais that a young girl would not consent to marry a young man unless he could show at least one skull he had captured. A man who had not secured a head was not looked upon as a man! Now for about fifty years the Gospel has been given to them and many of them have passed out of universities and have become succourers of men. 'My Father worketh hitherto, and I work.'

One more example and I shall close this answer. A couple of years ago in connection with the work of one Mission in Central India the foundation of a new boy's

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hostel was laid. Sir S. M. Bapna, the Prime Minister of Indore State, graciously came to lay the foundation stone of this building. The boys of the hostel prepared an entertainment for him in which one of the items was an oration. The little boy to whom this task was assigned stepped up and stood right beside the Prime Minister, and did it so well—and in English too—that every body applauded him. Who was this little boy? His father was a Bhil boy rescued during the famine mentioned above, his mother was a Balai girl also saved from starvation and consequent death at the same time. They both came from the classes who are looked down upon by the higher castes in India. But in one generation their boy was able to stand beside the Prime Minister of a leading Indian State and give an oration in English which was admired by both the Prime Minister and his associates. 'My Father worketh hitherto, and I work.' If Jesus is a myth and only a myth, I would still cling to Him until I see somebody else doing this work.

Question 28. Can we believe in prayer in this age of science?

Answer. God leaves many things for us to do. God gives and helps but we have to do certain things. Prayer is one of those things which we have to do. Prayer does not change the thoughts and plans of God, but it changes us so that the will of God can become operative in us.

Question 29. Why did Christ use the rude expression to the Syrophœnician woman?

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Answer. As yet Christ had not allowed His disciples to work among any other people than the Jews. His programme was to begin with the Jews and then to go on to others. This woman belonged to the Syrophœnicians whom the Jews hated and called 'the dogs'. This expression had, therefore, become a sort of nickname. In Central India the Bhils are often called 'Bandars' (monkeys) by the higher classes. Christ's whole life shows that He hated nothing but sin. He had infinite respect for the lowest of the low for He saw in every man the worth of human personality. What could He, therefore, have meant by addressing this woman in this manner? Two things are plain: (1) The expression was an indirect rebuke to the Jews. (2) He wanted to increase the woman's faith so that her request might be granted, and it was finally granted.

Question 30. Christ used such rude expressions on other occasions also. For example: 'O generation of vipers' (Matt. xii. 34), 'Whited sepulchres' (Matt. xxiii. 27), etc. Was it right for Christ to use such expressions?

Answer. On both occasions these words were used for the Scribes and the Pharisees who were the religious leaders of Christ's day. As leaders of the nation they should have been a source of inspiration and uplift, but instead they had been so degenerate, like the Brahmans of India to-day, that they were a drag on society. They paid a great deal of attention to themselves but their inward condition was very different from the outward piety of their life. When Jesus taught His high principles they turned a deaf ear to them and 'seeing'

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did not 'see' them. When He did some act of kindness to a poor despised man, they were filled with rage and after asking questions tried to obstruct the work of grace.

By these expressions which you have quoted, Jesus simply laid bare their real condition. He was kind and merciful to them, He even wept over them, but He could not compromise with evil.

Question 31. Was the resurrection of Jesus actually in flesh and blood?

Answer. Yes, it was the same body, for the grave was empty. But certain things seem to indicate that some change had come upon His physical nature. For example: He could pass through closed doors (John xx. 19).

Question 32. The book of Genesis says that God made Adam in His own image. What is that image? If God has an image, He must also have a body.

Answer. The 'image' here means certain qualities of God, such as holiness, intellect, feeling, will, self-consciousness, etc. God gave these to Adam. God does not have a physical body. We must distinguish between corporeality and personality. God has the latter but not the former.

Question 33. Christians claim that Christ was fearless, but did He not show fear when He cried on the cross: 'My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?'

Answer. If that were so Christ would become even

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lower than His disciples who were cruelly tortured to death, but who showed no signs of fear. No, Christ was afraid of nothing. In spite of the remonstrances of His disciples, He deliberately goes to Jerusalem, fully knowing that He was to be crucified. If He had wished to escape death He could have done so. All He had to do was to cease preaching. He voluntarily gave Himself to be crucified for the sake of fallen men. The cry from the cross, therefore, was not that of fear but of awful separation from the Father because of man's sin. (See Chapter I, question 13).

Question 34. Christ said: 'I and the Father are one'. How could the two be one?

Answer. They are one in the sense that there is perfect harmony between them. Jesus is the human life of God. He said: 'He that hath seen me hath seen the Father'. When I see Jesus and take hold of Him I take hold of the very self of God.

Question 35. The Gospels are full of inconsistencies. For example: Jesus is called 'the Son of Man' as well as 'the Son of God'; Christ says that a man becomes great by becoming small, finds life by losing, etc.

Answer. There is no inconsistency in these statements. 'The Son of Man' and 'the Son of God' are both names of the same Jesus, indicative of His two natures.

When Jesus said, 'Whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant', He expressed a principle. The world measures greatness according to the service a man commands, but Jesus' measure of greatness i

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according to the service one renders. That principle is now gripping India. Who are the greatest among us? Those who are serving the country most. Why is Mahatma Gandhi so much admired? Because of his service and renunciation.

Finding by losing or realisation through renunciation is also a fundamental principle. The grain of wheat loses itself in the soil, and we have the harvest. Do we lose ourselves in the service of others, we find our true selves. Do we give place to self and try to save ourselves, we deteriorate and degenerate into nothingness.

Question 36. How can we believe in the goodness of God when He creates tubercle bacilli which cause the death of so many people?

Answer. God has given us ability to fight these germs. There are many things in the world which we have to fight. This is God's goodness, for such battles make us strong. The chicken that forces its way out of its shell is usually stronger than the one that has been helped by hand. We should be thankful to God that He has placed us in a world where there is room for our development.

Question 37. Christ said to the rich ruler: 'Why callest thou me good? none is good, save one, that is God' (Luke xviii. 19). He, therefore, acknowledged that He was not good.

Answer. No, what Jesus meant was this. The rich man called Him 'good', and since God alone is good, he must also acknowledge Jesus as God. The rich man

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was particular about his deeds. He came and asked: 'What shall I do?' Jesus changed his angle of vision and said it is not a matter of doing, but rather of being. And this could only be done by surrendering himself to Jesus. The challenge of Jesus has been: 'Which of you convinceth me of sin?'

Question 38. Christians pray to Christ, while we see Him praying Himself.

Answer. Here, too, we see the humanity and divinity of Christ. As man He prayed to God His Father, as God we pray to Him. As man He is our perfect example.

Question 39. Jesus was tempted in the wilderness for forty days. God is never tempted. Therefore, Christ was not divine.

Answer. Jesus was tempted as man, and not as God. All men are subject to temptation. But it is not a sin to be tempted; to fall into temptation is sin. Jesus was tempted, but He triumphed over all His temptations. Every temptation we overcome leaves us stronger; every temptation we yield to leaves us weaker. Christ is our example of a victor over temptation.

Question 40. Why do you make people Christians? Why do you not simply preach the Gospel?

Answer. We simply preach the Gospel. People become Christians themselves. To be a Christian is to follow the Christ whom we proclaim. We do not want to swell our numbers by mere nominal Christians. But we do want people really and truly to give themselves to Jesus Christ, for He alone is the hope of India, and also of the world.

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