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THE STORY OF MISSIONS IN FIVE CONTINENTS.

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I. FAILURE IN ASIA.

Palestine was essentially a fragment of Asia, although in the providence of God the European power of Rome was dominant there when our Lord lived. If now and again the dwellers by the Nile claimed a footing, yet it harbored chiefly the Semites of Arabia, and was ruled generally from the Euphrates or Tigris. There is reason then in examining first the spread of Christianity in its native continent, and to this we will confine ourselves today. The study may be the more interesting as its story has never been written in our tongue, and the facts have had to be gleaned with patience from all manner of sources.

The field of Asia may, however, be narrowed by setting aside three great areas; first, that Anatolian land called by us Asia Minor, which is better treated in connection with Europe, whose civilization it largely shares, and whence it has been ruled for centuries. Second, we may postpone the study of Arabia, which from a religious point of view is associated rather with Africa. Third, we may ignore Siberia and the north as a tract of land then utterly unimportant.

Again, we may draw the line at the period when Asiatic Christianity had spent its force. Thrice has Europe tried to transplant her religion; once in the Middle Ages, by force, in the crusades; once at the dawn of the modern world of commerce, when the friars and the Jesuits were the heroes; once again when Protestantism essayed the task anew, with the weapons of thought. But these

attempts represent the Western world seeking to dominate or to rejuvenate the East; and if help is to be gained for modern ambassadors, it must be by a study of what Asiatics have done for Asiatics, how they succeeded, and why they failed. For we know that by 1500 they had failed, conspicuously and finally, and that Christianity in Asia was then absolutely negligible.

Our religion in its eastward progress met four great nations: the Jews, the Parthians or Persians, the Indians, the Chinese. Let us note how it fared with each of these.

(I.) JEWS.

Since whole nations have been swayed by their religious reformers, such as Zoroaster, Confucius, Gotama, Muhammad, we may be inclined to wonder why the Jews remained almost unaffected by Jesus. Any Israelite who was told in the year 25 A.D. that within the current high-priesthood the Messiah would come and accomplish his work, must have confidently expected a national evolution or a religious revolution. He would have been sure that there could be no failure in what God had prepared His people for during the ages. But once again Isaiah's doctrine of the Remnant was to be exemplified; once again was it to be seen that the Jews of Palestine were as a whole "bad figs", and that the best were to be sought away from the center of contamination at Jerusalem. If Ezekiel beheld the glory of the Lord depart from the temple, so, too, the disciples heard Jesus declare that the House was left desolate; and they beheld Him despised and rejected by His own nation. By His personal ministry He won only some 500 brethren enthusiastic enough to come and meet Him at a meeting specially convened after His resurrection.

Then came the Spirit, and the proclamation of pardon even to those who slew their Messiah. Nor was this in vain, and soon there were thousands at Jerusalem, including disciples of the Pharisees and a great company

of the priests. But if hopes were ever entertained of winning the leaders and bringing the whole nation to accept Jesus as the Messiah, they must soon have faded when Stephen challenged the temple and the customs delivered by Moses, when Paul entered into the breach made by Philip and Peter, introducing Gentiles, and when the Jewish Nazarenes agreed, however reluctantly, to recognize these on almost equal terms. Paul himself might be plotted against, or thrown into prison, but his work continued; and whatever those of the new Way might decide, the orthodox Jews held distinctly that it was an unlawful thing for them to keep company with or come unto one of another nation. Henceforth these followers of the Crucified were a Sect, and their doctrine was a Heresy.

The suppression of the great rebellion in A.D. 70, the destruction of the temple and the extinction of the Sanhedrin with its priestly rulers, might seem to open the way anew for the nation to realize its true destiny. But instantly the Pharisees stepped into the vacant leadership, and proceeded to close up the ranks by detecting and expelling all suspected of sympathy with Jesus. They forbade any manner of observance of the first day of the week; they framed a special Malediction against the "Minim", as they began to style their erring brethren, and caused it to be pronounced every Sabbath; they discouraged the reading of all books tainted with the heresy, even forbidding the use of a copy of the Law previously owned by a heretic. And when there came the desperate rising against Hadrian, they did their best to massacre all the Jewish Christians. This made it hopeless to think of winning over the whole of the once Chosen People, and we may confine attention to the minority which was trying on the one hand to keep the Law of Moses, and on the other to accept the grace and truth which came through Jesus the Messiah.

At the middle of the second century they still felt themselves the main Christian stock, and we hear of a Jewish Christian who recollected the precedent of Barnabas,

once sent down to Antioch to inspect the doings there and assure the church at Jerusalem that all was well with the daughter church. In this spirit Hegesippus went on a tour of the Christian churches; he was satisfied with what he found at Corinth and at Rome, doctrine that accorded with the Law and the prophets and the Lord. He shows that in his circle a glorification of James had made way, as if he were a sort of High Priest. But within a dozen years his party was in a minority, and soon ceased to obtain any recognition of pre-eminence. Thereupon appeal was made to the power of the pen, and a novel was published with Clement of Rome as its hero, representing him as converted by Peter in Palestine, and as looking to James at Jerusalem to confirm him as Peter's successor. It is amusing to see how the Jewish Christians tenaciously asserted their superiority, and how they endeavored to subject all the Christian world to a hereditary dynasty of the family of Jesus. The claim was ignored, except in so far as it kindled aspirations in the Roman church, destined to come to fruition at no distant date.

On the other hand the Nazarenes were cast out by the old-fashioned Jews, who give us glimpses at their separate synagogues where they met, probably on the first, fourth and sixth days, their readers clad in white and barefooted, with phylacteries on the forehead and the palms of the hands. Thus isolated on either hand, like the Anglican communion today, they worked out their own theology; two leading schools appear, one purely Jewish-Christian, the second influenced by other Asiatic elements. The germs of the latter may be traced in the counterblasts of Paul and John against the heresies of Asia Minor, or in the teachings of Cerinthus as reported by Hippolytus, but this does not claim attention yet, for its influence was greatest in Europe. The Palestinian type is shown in the Talmud and in the Clementine Homilies, which reveal the two sides they turned to the old Jews and to the Christians at large.

As against the orthodox Jews they upheld the reality of the resurrection of Jesus, and insisted that this was the only valid proof of a general resurrection, demanding where the Old Testament promised any such thing, or even foreshadowed it. They had a high doctrine of the Person of Christ, and were charged with asserting the duality of the Godhead. To His teachings they paid respect, and on His authority they criticised the Law of Moses, declaring that only the Ten Words were still binding, and so becoming involved in frequent disputes on ritualism.

But as against Gentile Christians they were sacerdotal and legal, and had a strong sense of the value of external continuity. Especially they regarded Christianity as continuous with Judaism, and claimed a secret tradition to prove this. Thus they inevitably continued in conflict with Paul, as their fathers had been, and the Homilies contain a virulent attack on him and his teaching. And in their view of Jesus, they laid the emphasis, not with Paul on the Cross, nor even with Peter on the Messiahship, but on His teaching and prophecy.

This combination of peculiarities condemned them to isolation and stagnation, and as the church grew in other directions they became more and more insignificant. In the fourth and fifth centuries the tendency to uniformity bore hardly on them; and the "Catholic Church", having taken over to itself their own pet dogmas of continuity, sacerdotalism, legalism, at length excluded them altogether as heretics.

If any of them resented this, they had a magnificent revenge, for all the knowledge that Muhammad had of Jesus seems to have reached him through some Jewish Christians, and the Qur'an reflects some of their ideas. Had there been more consideration on both sides, more interchange of thought between Jewish and Gentile Christians, Muhammad might have had a richer and deeper conception of Jesus, his watchword might have varied, and he might have done for western Asia and Africa what

Olopun of Persia was doing for eastern Asia, what Aidan and Chad were doing for England, what Columban was doing for central Europe.

But as a matter of fact, most of the Jews rejected Jesus, and those who did accept him remained feeble and stationary and are now extinct. Looked at outwardly, Christianity failed twice in the very place where it ought to have succeeded wonderfully. Yet is not such an idea due to the Jewish error of outward continuity, naturalized among Christians as Apostolic Succession? Look not at peoples, but at ideas. What did the Jews bequeath to Christian thought? Three distinct legacies we can trace, from our Lord, from the apostles, from later generations.

First, Jesus Himself disengaged three great truths from the mass of Jewish beliefs, and stamped them with His authority. He endorsed the current faith in God as a living God, actively concerned with all that passed: "My Father works hitherto; thy Father seeth in secret and shall recompense thee." Then He accepted the splendid hope for the future, both of the world and of the individual, He greatly enriched it by the assurance that eternal life was to know the Father and Himself, and He gave some basis of fact to what had been but a pious hope, by His own reappearance from the dead, an earnest of what might happen to all. Further, He not only approved the lofty ethics of the Jews, but He frankly criticised their written Law as inadequate to the needs of this time, and selected two sentences into which He breathed new meaning, presently restating them in what His disciples called plainly a New Commandment, of Mutual Love. No religion had ever lifted such a standard before its devotees. And once more, whereas Ezekiel had claimed attention to the importance of the individual, and John the Baptist had driven this home to the individual sinner among Jews, Jesus most fully taught that every man stands or falls by himself, that each is saved

by the personal interest of God: Whosoever believeth may in Me have eternal life.

The earliest Jewish Christians, living before the schism, brought rare contributions to Christian life and thought. To begin with, they were accustomed to a steady propaganda, and to them we are indebted for the very conception of *professional missionaries*, of men whose efforts to spread Christianity were the chief thing in life, and not mere by-products. There was no apostolic succession of missionaries kept up after the Jewish element was extruded from the church, and its influence faded out. True that here and there we find a Gregory Illuminator, a Raman Lull, a Francis Xavier; but these are rare exceptions. Had the Jewish custom been perpetuated, the command of Jesus might have been speedily obeyed, and all the nations might have heard the good news a millennium ago. One item of their program did abide, the thought that every missionary was to model his proceedings on the pattern of Jesus, the Forerunner and the Example, and the directions given by Him on one specific occasion to the twelve disciples were taken as universally applicable. Here, surely, are two fallacies; Jesus was not above all things the model missionary, but the Redeemer; and His conduct must often have been determined by this consideration, so that it is a mistake to appeal to it as necessarily in every detail to be imitated. And the directions given to the twelve bear one obvious mark of being temporary in that they limit that mission to Jews. Yet the blunder persisted and wrought serious effects; despite the plain words of Paul, despite the fact that he was a widower, settling for years at a time in one town to establish a cause, and supporting himself; yet the popular type of missionary was the itinerant bachelor subsisting on chance charity. The evangelists and wandering prophets of the second century were gradually discredited and supplanted by stationary local officials, and organized missionary effort correspondingly ceased. A more useful legacy from the

Jews was the *Old Testament*, the sacred literature of the Jews, to which as Hegeppus shows, the Jewish Christians soon added the Lord's words as equally authoritative, and to which Marcion speedily opposed the writings of Paul, so that gradually a New Testament emerged, completing a collection of standard religious literature. Familiar as this conception was in China, India and Persia, yet in the Roman Empire it was a novelty, and the Jews must be credited with its introduction. Again they carried over a new style of *worship*, that of the synagogue, with its public reading, its responsive prayers, its chants, its preaching, but without pompous procession or idol or priest or sacrifice. And once more if we think of *doctrine*, the conception of Jesus as the God-sent Leader, to whom all the ages led up, and in whom all history finds its interpretation, this is their grandest legacy.

At a later period Gentile Christians appropriated yet other elements from the Jews, the value of which is extremely different. There was an adoption of Jewish apocalypses, and a tendency to forge writings, which could perhaps be checked by officials and kept out of public worship, but none the less were studied at home. There was an officialism which turned the business committee into a paid staff of priests, turned the teacher into a Rabbi with a love for tradition, and promoted a life tenure of office with a corresponding degradation of the unofficial Christian, like "this people which knoweth not the Law, accursed". Such an inheritance as this was no part of the primitive deposit, and can only be regarded at best as a temporary husk, which must perish when the grain of wheat is sown afresh.

(2). SYRIANS, ARMENIANS AND PERSIANS.

To the east and northeast of Palestine lay the basins of the Euphrates, Tigris and Araxes, all containing Jews and presenting an obvious field for Christian missionaries. No difficulty would arise as to language, for the Aramaic of Palestine differed no more from the Aramaic

of the Parthian kingdom, than Lowland Scots from standard English. Indeed, both Matthew and Josephus wrote originally in Aramaic for this very population, and their works were read as far as the Indus. And for centuries to come the Jews used it for their Talmud and their Targums.

Now the Jewish rebellion of 135 A.D., was a great dividing line for Jewish Christians as for Jews proper. When it was suppressed, a Christian missionary called Addai came to the frontier town of Edessa where he found Jews with translations of their Law and Prophets, and of Ben Sira's wisdom. Many of these people he converted, and built a church for their use. Though he died in peace, his successor, Aggai, found opposition developed, and was martyred. Soon a native called Tatian returned from Rome bringing the four gospels, which he dovetailed into a composite life of Jesus, translating and publishing in the vernacular. The breach between Jews and Christians is shown in the fact that he used a different alphabet; and gradually the dialect specialized and became known as Syriac, which remained a literary language for Christians down to 1300 A.D. Soon was won a notable follower Bar-Daisân, astrologer and philosopher. Tatian had peculiarities that the Greek world wondered at, and from this new convert Syriac Christianity received another notable impress. He speculated on the origin of the world, and on the factors to determine the character and future of a man; as against Nature and Fate he emphasized the reality of free will. Certainly he was excommunicated as too bold a theorist, but if we turn to the standard book of the second century, the Doctrine of Addai, we discover that nothing is said about parentage or children or education. Indeed, the asceticism for which Tatian was blamed, developed so fast that the church of Edessa was for celibates only!

Persecution lowered the church, and the Greeks of Antioch intervened to rescue it from foes without and faddists within. A new line of bishops begins about 200

with Palû, on the annexation of Edessa to the Roman Empire, and the break of continuity was marked by the river sweeping away the old church. For awhile the energies of the church were directed westward, Cappadocia was won for Christ, and the XII legion quartered on this frontier became deeply leavened. When Decius and Diocletian tried to stamp out Christianity, this legion and this church yielded many martyrs.

From Edessa the gospel was carried northwards to Armenia, which profited first by the presence of Bardaisân, then of an organizer, Gregory Illuminator. So successful were the missionaries that King Tiridates not only gave in his own adhesion, but also established it as the State Religion, the first such instance known. Syriac and Greek schools were opened, and the Scriptures were taught; soon the sons of heathen priests were in training to become native bishops. Had we the time to spare, it would be interesting to sketch the remarkable form assumed here by Christianity, revealed to us by the Armenian "Key of Truth", before the Greek spirit affected the national church and distracted its attention to other problems. One point is that the headship of the church descended in Gregory's family, much as at Jerusalem it descended in the family of Jesus. And even to the present day the priesthood remains hereditary.

Until the year 230 the eastern kingdom on whose borders both Syria and Armenia lay, was governed by the Parthians, but then the Persians brought about great changes, both political and religious. The Tigris and Euphrates became again highways of travel, and the Christians of Edessa came into touch with others on the shores of the Persian Gulf and of Baluchistan. They seem to have originated from the labors of the Apostle Thomas, who evangelized those parts in the reign of King Godophar, reigning near Cabul, and who was slain on the coast rather west of Karachi. The community he founded preserved an Aramaic "Gospel according to Matthew", which was taken to Alexandria by a missionary profes-

sor, a converted Sicilian Jew, about 180. The story of the doings of Thomas has been grievously embellished, but the very embellishments show us the ideal that obtained in the district, virginity, poverty, vegetarianism, and in these points we recognize the local ideal of holiness, adopted later by the Brahmans, but as foreign to the primitive Hindu religion as to Christianity. In the year 235 a merchant brought to Edessa what he supposed were the bones of Thomas, which were deposited in the old church; and ever since then the Christians spreading throughout Persia styled themselves the Church or Saint Thomas".*

The political changes at this time were less important than the revival of the Persian religion. The antique national faith had been recast about the time of Ezekiel by Zoroaster, who had inspired the Medes to their national revival which overthrew Nineveh, and led Cyrus seventy years later to permit the restoration of Jerusalem. If the Zoroastrians had once enriched Jewish thought with the doctrine of angels and devils, they now condescended to copy Christian models; their priests were organized into a hierarchy, and presently their sacred books were gathered into a Canon.

*The subsequent history of these bones is curious. In 394 Bishop Cyrus removed them to a grand new church in Edessa, where Sylvia of Aquitaine saw them. About fifty years later General Anatolius presented a silver casket in which they were placed, and hung by silver chains from the roof. When the separation took place between the Persian church and the Greek, the latter retained the relics. In 1097 the Latins conquered the place, and they claim that they took the bones to Chios, where in 1127 they rededicated the cathedral to Thomas, and that in 1258 another removal took place to Ortona on the east coast of Italy, where the head may still be seen mounted in silver. But the Greeks declare that before the Latin conquest, the emperor, Alexios Comnenos, removed the head, and presented it about 1090 to a new monastery on Patmos, where also it may be seen mounted in silver, and very efficacious in its influence on the weather. It is also to be noted that in 1293 Marco Polo found in Malabar on the coast of India, a church to the memory of Thomas, where in 1522 the Portuguese removed what a Muslim told them were the bones of the apostle and the lance that speared him; these are to be seen at Goa. A fourth set of bones is now displayed at the Malabar church in the suburbs of Madras.

When a century later Christianity was adopted by the Greek empire as its State Religion, it was instantly regarded in Persia as an exotic enemy, and an organized campaign against it was set on foot. This, however, served rather for the furtherance of the gospel, as in the days of Stephen; for the fugitives carried a knowledge of Christ round the coast to South Arabia, where we shall meet it on another occasion, and across the ocean to the Maldivé Isles, and especially to the southwest of India and round to Madras.

Yet the persecution was a political blunder, for the Persian Christians were not in very close touch with the Greek. Not only was the language different, but the theology also as is shown by the writing of Afrahat, the Persian sage. So far as he had any doctrine of the Person of Christ, it was quite untouched by Greek thought, and quite innocent of the speculations of Arius and Athanasius, but represented rather the old type noticed in Armenia. Really with him Christianity was not a creed, but a life, and emphasis was laid on the conduct. Listeners and vague adherents were welcomed, but they were not admitted to fellowship unless they would take vows and become "Sons of the Covenant". This covenant was for celibates, and these alone might be baptized. Married people were not admissible, nor was any ceremony of marriage regarded as a sacrament. The origin of this peculiarity we shall understand when we study the influence of Buddhism further eastward. However we may deplore this narrowing, there was at least one inevitable gain. A church which deliberately refuses to admit members who can raise children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, must either die, or be a missionary church. And this latter alternative was joyfully elected.

One more great statesman deserves notice, Rabbûlâ by name. He revised the old Bible, adding more books, modernizing the language and creating a standard text. He absorbed the great sects of Marcion and Bar-Daisân,

and made the Persian Church one. But even as he brought about this unity, complete by his death in 435, fresh troubles were arising due to the propensity of the Greeks to raise theological questions about the Person of Christ. The Persians did not sympathize, and after some hesitation, cut the knot by breaking off all fellowship with the Greeks. The Persian Church was labelled by the Greeks, "Nestorian", but this obscures the great fact that the Persian Syrians were tired of the whole subject, and were eager to develop on their own lines. The Greeks in revenge destroyed the college at Edessa, and the center of gravity now shifted really to the twin cities of Selucia-Ctesiphon on the Tigris, the new Persian capital, forty miles north of the ancient Babylon, from which city the Patriarch now took his title.

Thus thoroughly detached from European Christianity, the Persian Church organized anew, and soon found itself confronted with a reformed Zoroastrianism furnished with a revised edition of the Avesta. The State Religion taught the lordship of Ahura Mazda, a good and wise spirit, ruling a band of angels through six archangels, but opposed by an evil spirit. It upheld a lofty morality by the promise of a resurrection and a future judgment leading to an eternal heaven or hell; and it provided an elaborate ritual of purification. Much of this the Persian Christians agreed with, but they had two great messages to the Zoroastrian, that sin could be forgiven through Jesus Christ without the need of burdensome ceremonial, and that the whole tone of life could be raised by the help of the Holy Spirit. It is melancholy to confess that even after the Zoroastrian forces were divided by the new departures of Mazdak, no great impression was made by the Christians, though it must in fairness be allowed that the law inflicting death for perverting a Zoroastrian, was no dead letter.

Yet as we know that similar prohibitions have never by themselves been effectual, we are bound to ask what internal weakness there was in the Persian Church during

the Zoroastrian period. The answer is simple, the lack of any vernacular version of the Bible. When their old Syriac college at Edessa was destroyed, and when they founded a new one at Nisibis, they had a grand opportunity to cut adrift from the West in every way, and to naturalize themselves most thoroughly. But there was one comical hindrance which has always handicapped the dwellers on the Tigris, the absence of a simple system of writing. The ancient cuneiform is a byword for its complexities, and although an alphabet had been worked out by old Persians yet the Parthians hardly knew how to write their language, and for more than 1000 words of importance wrote the Syriac word instead, thus exactly reverting to the curious hybrid custom of the Babylonians. In English commercial circles some such use of Latin still confuses the unwary, and such cryptograms occur as: "e.g., 1121 lb., i.e., 1cwt. for £1, 13s. 4d. per lb." etc. But even if an expository translation of the ancient Avesta was appended to it in this heterogeneous jumble, where you saw one word but pronounced the corresponding word in another tongue, we can readily understand that the Persian Christians hesitated to abandon their pure Syriac for such pidgin-Persian; as a matter of fact, "Pahlavi" (as the Parthian abortion of Persian was styled) was hardly used except for the sacred books of the Zoroastrians. Yet if it is true that the Jews rendered their Law into Arabic and Persic by 827, we can hardly acquit the Christians of negligence; and it is not pleasant to find that leisure was found by Bishops to write learned treatises in Persian and Arabic, and even to translate Aristotle, but not to translate the Scriptures.

Without a real vernacular Bible, the Christians were handicapped. But it is to be remembered that they were not corrupted like their European contemporaries. Their clergy held fast to the apostolic order that they should marry, since a synod in 499 had faced this matter and altered the old custom revealed by Afrahat. No image or picture laid them open to any charge of idolatry, no

stone altar ousted the wooden table for the Lord's Supper and exposed them to the blame of offering sacrifice. Yet we have seen one striking instance of their attachment to relics, and this feeling of theirs was destined to aid a tremendous change. One of the latest Shahs was favorable to Christians, and even built churches; but in war with the Greek empire he captured Jerusalem and carried off what purported to be the true cross. The Persian Christians were not pleased with having this in their midst, but were furious at the insult to their religion, intended as such by the Zoroastrians, and executed by the help of thousands of Jews. When, therefore, the Muslim armies presently attacked the Shah, first a vassal Christian king submitted, then the Christians generally welcomed the invaders. A pathetic story is told how the last native Shah was assassinated in a miller's hut, and was indebted for decent burial to the bishop of Merv, who caused the Christians to build a church over his grave.

Under Muslim rule the persecution ceased; toleration was granted on condition that no effort was made to win converts from Islam. The same embargo was laid on the Zoroastrians, and at length the two religions met on equal terms. In the homeland both long maintained their footing, and in the "Arabian Nights" we read how in the days of Aaron the Just, caliph of Baghdad, Jews, Christians, Zoroastrians and Muslims were the four recognized groups. But as usually happens, the intruding religion came to terms with its predecessor, absorbing much of its teaching and practice, notably its intense stress on ceremonial purification. Thereby Persian Islam isolated itself, and today the Shi'ah sect is widely apart from the mass of Muhammad's followers; organized largely in dervish orders, and with a mystic theology. Only a few Persians hold fast to the old national religion in its purity, a few thousand living in an obscure part of the land; the ancient customs of the Parsees only attract attention from the visitor to Bombay who is re-

quested not to misuse fire by smoking on the street-cars, and who sees the vultures hang around the Towers of Silence.

Far other was the destiny of Persian Christianity. When the hour came that proved so fateful to the ancient Persian faith, Christianity awoke again to the consciousness of its missionary calling. To persuade the conquerors was forbidden, but the armies of Islam had spent their strength in the attack on Persia, and except for one feeble wave that broke on Sindh, the Arabs went no further. It was at this time that the Persian Church sent forth great missions to India and to China, and renewed its youth like the eagle. Wonderfully does God repeat Himself! When Israel was held in captivity by Nebuchadrezzar at Babylon, Jehovah sent Cyrus to smite down that empire and set free His people; it proved a revival of religion for them elsewhere even while it established the faith of Zoroaster on the spot. Now that the Zoroastrians held down the Christian Church in bondage, and in sloth also, God raised up a new deliverer, as hard to recognize for God's servant as Cyrus had been, and the caliph Omar set the Christians free to go forth with the message of salvation to the greater empires eastward. And what a rebuke is here for the timorous! Many to-day would argue that after centuries of persecution the Church was enfeebled, and that this respite gave them now a call to Home Missions, to rebuild the walls and repair the breaches; this is exactly what the English non-conformists and the Baptists did in 1689, and the selfish, narrow policy led to dry rot and all but death. Such freedom is a call to strengthen the stakes and lengthen the cords, to go forth and extend.

Nor was the Foreign enterprise allowed to mask indifference to home duties. When the ignorance of the Arabs had been in long contact with the civilization of Persia, and when Arab chivalry was fading away so that the Turks were the chief warriors, then Aaron the Just and his children at Baghdad showed themselves desir-

ous of learning, and sent out commissions to procure all manner of literature, Armenian, Syrian, Egyptian and Greek, and to render it into Arabic. At once the Christians came to the front as interpreters and scholars, and to them is due the speedy outburst of culture in the caliph's realm. Naturally they did not ignore their own Scriptures at this crisis, and soon the psalms, gospels, acts and epistles were current in Arabic which as the court language had spread throughout the dominions of the Arabs. Indeed Al Kindy even ventured to put out an Apology for the Christian Faith. Unhappily the Persian Christians for the second time missed their opportunity and retained the Syriac Bible for public use; and by the time that the modern Persian tongue had evolved, the Syriac was so entrenched in the affections of the clergy, that a Persian version made no headway. This neglect is the more mortifying when we know that the Jews had rendered their Law into the vernacular before 500, and had translated the whole Old Testament by 1300 at latest. We do not know that even the gospels were put into Persian till 1341, when a Jewish convert saw the need; and it will presently appear that the tide of success was then ebbing, and Christianity was near its extinction in Persia.

Yet the church had not failed to exercise any influence on Islam around it. While Christians might not on peril of death seek to win converts direct, a command occasionally violated with honor and success, yet all the development of Islam at Damascus and Baghdad was in a Christian atmosphere. The very conception of the right of Ecumenical Councils to determine doctrine with authority passed over to Islam and gave force to the Agreement of the early Companions, and of the recognized Expositors of the Muslim Law. Then, whereas Islam retained crude animal sacrifices only at Mecca itself on pilgrimage, yet the doctrine of a vicarious sacrifice making atonement for sin, has been taken up by Persian Muhammadans. But our subject is not the de-

velopment of Christianity in its homes, but its extension by pioneers; and we follow the Persian missionaries next to India.

(3) INDIA, SOUTH AND NORTH.

The Southwestern coasts of Asia had received the gospel in the days of Thomas, as we have seen. Unhappily we are not able to trace its development regularly. After the visit of Pantænus from Alexandria, we hear of a Socotran who was converted and sent as a missionary to the Arabian coast and Abyssinia. Then in 522 an Egyptian Nestorian traveling these seas to gather facts and prove that the earth was flat and not globular, found Persian Christians settled round the coasts of South India and Ceylon, and discovered that in doctrine he was largely akin to them.

But when the caliphs ruled on the Tigris, a large emigration took place, so important that the Persian settlers obtained a charter of self-government from the local king in the southwest of India. And when about 822 this was reinforced by a second large company, not only was a new charter granted, but presently the king himself became Christian. Such a conversion often leads to important results, but the dynasty died out, and a neighboring ruler asserted his overlordship and checked wholesale conversion. The immigrants intermarried with the natives, and the Christian community grew steadily. Monuments still exist on which may be seen Persian crosses with inscriptions in Syriac and Pahlavi. For unfortunately there are no traces that the Scriptures were ever rendered into Tamil; this was not attempted till the Dutch began it in Ceylon about 1688, and when the Germans took it up on the mainland, they received apparently no help from this ancient Church, for their vernacular had now diverged from that of the eastern coast. Nor was it till 1811 that at the suggestion of an Englishman they rendered the gospels into Malay.

If, however, the Persian missionaries thus neglected one obvious duty they strove to unite the advantages of a native church with filial submission to the motherland. Their archbishop was always a Persian, and their deacons, priests and bishops all local men; and not only were they all married according to New Testament prescription and Persian wont, but the bishopric was hereditary as was the custom of the district, in singular harmony with what we observed in Armenia.

Nor was India influenced in the south alone. The valley of the Ganges is the most productive in population and in thought of all the peninsula, and perhaps of all the world. Here Buddhism had been known for a millennium, had been the established religion for eight centuries, and had been propagated by a missionary king over all India, Burma and Ceylon. Let us try and realize the religious history of the peoples here, to whom Christianity was now to be offered.

When first we get a glimpse of them and their cults, it is in the orders of later reformers as to what was to be opposed. From them we read of palmistry, auguries, ghostlaying, astrology, mediums; of worship of the goddess of luck, of kings, of serpents. Among these aborigines in the Panjab, and later in the upper valley of the Ganges, came a slender body of Aryans with a faith faintly akin to that of Zoroaster. Proudly they held aloof from the dark-skinned natives and sought to preserve their loftier religion; but as they intermarried, the coarser beliefs of their wives tainted their children; while the pure natives attended about as much to their imported gods, as their descendants do to ours.

About the time when Haggai and Zechariah were by leave of Darius promoting the rebuilding of the temple at Jerusalem, or possibly a little earlier, there arose a Nepalese noble with aspirations after better things. For a few years he sought help from ascetic practices, as was widely the custom, but failing in that way, he turned to contemplation, and thought out a wonderful pessimist phi-

losophy. From the enlightenment that he believed he had gained, he was styled the Buddha. Henceforth he set himself to combat sorrow by annihilating desire and cultivating purity and love. And at once he began itinerant preaching in the lower valley, and enlisted followers who came by hundreds and thousands. On the outer circle he laid five commands, to be chaste and temperate, not to kill or steal or lie. But an inner circle was formed of those who would take ten vows pledging them also to avoid garlands or perfumes, dancing or drama, money, rich food at nights, or aught but a mat to sleep on. Such devotees he enrolled with a pledge to be true to the Buddha, to the Doctrine, to the Order; they were tonsured and clad in a special gown. Thus arose the first monks.

About fifty years after Malachi, the monks organized into communities, with chapter meetings in which they made mutual confession of sin, when they chanted over the poems which recounted their Buddha's life and teaching. Then came the visit of Alexander which opened communications between India and the West, leading to filtration of Buddhist thought and practices to the banks of the Nile, and to the Anatolian plateau. Soon after the Jewish Law was translated into Greek at Alexandria, there arose a great king, Asoka, who subdued all India and Ceylon, and presently adopted Buddhism as his court religion. At his capital of Patna the monks gathered in council, and from their deliberations emerged the Canon of Buddhist Scripture, now for the first time committed to writing, as far as we can tell. Asoka proceeded to build temples for his State Religion, notably at the spot where the Buddha received enlightenment, Bodhi Gaya. But more than this, he was a missionary king, a combination such as rarely appears. Six bodies of monks did he dispatch, to the Indus, Peshawar, Kashmir, Burma, Ceylon and South India. And he established two departments of state, one to superintend public religion, the other to propagate in foreign.

But his empire crumbled, and Tartar invaders came in through the northwest who established their own rule. On the one hand this opened the way for Buddhism to raise them, and to go back along their track till it reached China; but on the other it facilitated the rise of a set of scholars who promptly offered themselves as interpreters, and set to work to undermine Buddhism and exalt themselves. This was the easier as the Tartars in accepting Buddhism, debased it. And so these scholars, who inherited and exaggerated the claims of the Brahman priests to the earlier invaders, saw that they must stoop to conquer. They gathered up all the popular legends not utilized by Buddhists, and wove them into a great Epic, injecting their own sacerdotal theories and glorifying their own caste perpetually. And thus when Buddhism in India was rotting away like the contemporary Northumbrian paganism, two claimants appeared with new religions; Kumarila, the Brahman priest with his Indian sacerdotalism, and a mission band from Seleucia-Ctesiphon with Christianity.

Now the Buddha had taken great pains to set out his ideal of what was Good Form—so we may translate the technical term. But he was wisely silent where he knew nothing, and he had nothing to say on the question of God, and so he advocated no worship. In the course of centuries his followers had filled that gap by worshipping him, and, indeed, the earliest monuments were huge domes of brick-work built over relics from his funeral pyre.

The Brahman priests were ready with an elastic pantheon, and could either introduce their Aryan gods, or adopt some aboriginal deity, or exalt some popular hero; and so the Buddha was declared to be an incarnation of Vishnu, one of the gods coming to be most regarded. And on the other hand they appropriated some Christian elements. The Great Epic has plenty to say about a sly hero named Krishna; the similarity of name may have prompted the transference to him of many stories about

the birth of Christ--a virgin-wife going to pay taxes, birth in a stable, adoration of the wise men, massacre of the innocents, miracles wrought in infancy, etc. Then Krishna thus decked out is declared to be another incarnation of Vishnu, (a stroke to conciliate the Aryans), and this Krishna-Vishnu is associated with a shadowy Brahma and a bloody Shiva into a triad of gods. With these amazing loans from Christianity the Brahmans felt ready to inoculate the people, and to defy the purer and stronger religion.

There was a time when the pretensions of the Brahman priests had been absurd, and when the Buddha could found a movement that made no room at all for priests, largely because it was altogether silent about God. But if you believe in 33 or 33 million gods, priests become almost a necessity to prescribe the due ritual and to mediate effectively. So the Brahmans now came forward with theories that they had long incubated, closed up their ranks, and declared themselves an hereditary and indispensable priesthood. Provided they could be acknowledged as leaders of society, entitled to respect and to huge fees, nay even to be worshiped as divine, then there was nothing they could not absorb, no doctrine, no worship, no god, no conduct however vile.

Christians have certainly stooped again and again, have borrowed much from strong local religions, but they have never been willing to go these lengths. So the Christian mission failed to plant the pure faith on the Ganges. But if it failed as a whole, it seems to have produced one remarkable development which may be traced in the Divine Song, inserted presently in the Great Epic. A whole literature has grown up about a new doctrine taught here for the first time; and from an official textbook Dr. Grierson quotes the following compressed but literal translation:

“*Bhakti* means faith, in the sense of absolute devotion to a personal God. It is defined as ‘an affection fixed upon the Lord.’ It is not belief. Those who hate the

Lord may believe, but they have not faith. It may be present in outward acts of worship, but they are not of themselves faith. It must be devoted to a person, not to have a system of doctrine. It is 'abiding' in Him. It may not be devotion for some spiritual gain, for it must be purely unselfish. 'Works' are not faith, nor can they be united with faith unless they are pure, that is, surrendered to Him as the One who inspired the believer to perform the work. Works not so surrendered partake of the nature of sin, and are but bondage. Faith must be directed to the Supreme, or to one of His incarnations. He alone is free from taint of earth, and hence He alone is purely unselfish. He became incarnate, and descended from His high estate unselfishly and solely to abolish others' woes. We know faith by its fruits. Such are respect and honor paid to the Lord, celebration of His praise, continuing to live for His sake, considering everything as His, regarding Him as being in all things, resignation to His will, sorrow for sin, absence of anger, envy, greed and impure thoughts."

Thus far, then, Christianity leavened the popular religion, outwardly with the tales of Christ's infancy distorted and naturalized, but inwardly with the great doctrine of Faith which works by Love, a faith directed to God incarnate is Savior, and evincing itself in renewed life. Next, we may trace another stream of influence which came from the Tamil Church of the south, whose progress we could note step by step and century by century, but can now mention here only the crises.

It was in the twelfth century, when in western lands the second crusade was afoot, and in the Baltic the isles were being conquered for Christ, that a heathen priest of South India named Ramanuja found his way to the north with a new doctrine. By this time the old northern language in which the Buddhist literature was written, had given way to Hindi, while the Brahman priests had elaborated an artificial tongue called Sanskrit, which always has remained the property of a narrow educated

circle. By this time the Buddhists seem to have been absorbed into the Shiva sect, or to be just finding a new opportunity by the contact of Islam with their stronghold on the lower Ganges. It seems very probable that the mass of Bengali Muslims are descended from the Buddhists, who found a double boon offered them—escape from the domineering of their age-long enemies the Brahman priests, and a satisfaction for the natural craving after a god, without the degrading and incredible tales now worked into the Great Epic.

Now the doctrine which Ramanuja brought from the south was elaborated by a succession of disciples, of whom the most famous was Ramanand, flourishing when the last tribes of Europe were accepting Christ, and when Wycliffe had just thrown a new light in England. At length in the days of Shakespeare there arose at Benares a Brahman priest called Tulasi Das, who became the Milton of the Hindus. Râma, heir of the king of Oudh, was already the hero of a poem in the sacred Sanskrit; Ramanand now wrote, not in an unknown tongue, but in the vernacular Hindi, another poem on the same theme. This book, almost contemporary with the English Geneva Bible, the first to win popular affection, is now practically the Bible of the Ramaites, said to number 100 millions. Strange to say, English scholars, misled by the Brahman priests, have hardly made acquaintance with this work, which feeds the souls of the largest sect in India. And one who knows it well blames our missionaries for their ignorance that it teaches much Christian doctrine—doubtless intermixed with superstition, doubtless with the name of Râma where we put the name of Christ, but still doctrine essentially and historically Christian. Hear an exposition:

“There is one God and Father of all who became incarnate in this sinful world as ‘Râma, the Redeemer of the world.’ God became incarnate as Râma, not merely to slay a demon, but to save souls. Râma lived on this world as a man, experiencing man’s purest happiness,

man's heaviest sorrows. He made friends with and received help from the very humblest beings, even from aborigines whose mere touch was defilement to the Brahman-Pharisee, beings so degraded that birth-proud Aryans looked upon them as level with the monkeys of the forest. Râma is now in heaven. He has not lost His personality; so to speak, He has not disincarnated Himself, but is still Râma, the loving, the compassionate, the sinless. Sin is hateful, not only because it condemns the sinner to future torment, but chiefly because it is incompatible with Râma's nature. Yet no one is too great a sinner for Râma to save if he will only come to Râma. The sinner must confess his sin, and in all good faith, must throw himself naked of all good works before Râma, and Râma will stretch out His hand to save him as He has done to countless others before. Râma has been a man, and knows what man's sins and sorrows are. The sorrows He knows by having sorrowed, the sins He knows by His ineffable compassion alone, for He has never sinned Himself. Râma is the loving Father of every human being, and we, His children, are, therefore, brothers, and must love each other as brothers, just as we love Him as a father. Faith, devotion, directed to Râma, is all that is necessary for salvation, and Salvation is a life of pure bliss with Him after death. 'Faith in His name is a little boat; the Holy Master Himself is the steersman; stretching out His loving arms He crieth, Come, I will ferry thee across.' Now all this," adds Dr. Grierson, "if we substituted the name of our Lord for that of Râma, is the teaching of Christianity, and has been borrowed from it. It has come down through many generations of Hindu thought, and it is astonishing that it has been preserved with such fidelity."

Thus the middle-class worshipers of Krishna have learned from Christianity the great doctrine of Faith in an incarnate Savior; the thoughtful worshipers of Râma have added the Fatherhood of God who so loved

the world that He sent His Son to redeem the world, a second doctrine derived directly from Christian teaching but thought out and expressed in Hindu form. Now advance and observe that even the lowly Shivaites have one sect which in immediate contact with the Tamil Christians has thrown off all but pure deism, and without abandoning the name of the native god, has at least purified the conception of Him. Here is one of their hymns :

“How many various flowers,
Did I, in bygone hours,
Cull for the gods, and in their honor strew!
In vain how many a prayer
I breathed into the air,
And made, with many forms, obeisance due.

Beating my breast, aloud
How oft I called the crowd
To drag the village car! How oft I strayed
In manhood's prime to lave
Sunwards the flowing wave,
And, circling Shiva fanes, my homage paid!

But they, the truly wise,
Who know and realize,
Where dwells the Shepherd of the worlds, will ne'er,
To any visible shrine
As if it were divine,
Deign to raise hands of worship or of prayer.”

Reviewing, then, the movement of thought, and the development of religions in India, we see that three great influences have been brought to bear, irrespective of Islam; the agnostic morality of the Buddha, Turanian; the polytheistic teaching of the Vedas, Aryan; the trinitarian gospel of the Christ, Semitic.

The Buddha's message, lofty as it was, had two radical defects; it had no word about God, it had no gospel

for women. The Brahman's message had all too many gods, but had no morality worth speaking of, while to women it said that their religion was to serve their husbands, and to die on their funeral pyres if worthy. The Buddha's message has been utterly rejected by his own people, a warning for those who think that a pure morality can maintain itself apart from roots in the divine. The Brahmans have won a double victory; they have exalted themselves into a sacerdotal caste indispensable to all worship and ranking highest in the social scale, they have extended their power from the upper Ganges over the whole land. But they have done this at the cost of abandoning nearly all their ancestral religion except a few names, and of adopting and sanctioning whatever the people wanted.

Christianity has technically failed for its adherents—now as always I ignore European work since 1500—number not 600,000. But in reality she has impressed some of her cardinal doctrines on each of the three great Hindu sects, and her leaven has worked most among the Ramaites, most numerous and most thoughtful. There are Christian doctrines, intertwined doubtless with superstition, but stated in language understood of the people, fashioned into native forms by the people, and enshrined in books better known to the farmers and laborers of North India than is the Bible to the American man of business.

Surely this is something to recognize and to appreciate. The modern missionary from the west will be almost culpable if he fails to acquaint himself with this work accomplished, and if he acts as though his Greco-Roman-Teuton type of Christianity is the only one to be planted in India. Two great problems demand earnest attention. First, how to use or destroy the sacerdotal influence of the Brahman. It may be used, for while we know sacerdotalism to be absolutely incompatible with pure Christianity, we have seen Martin Luther, Huldreich Zwingli, Menno Simons, John Knox, themselves priests, smite

down priestcraft. And what Ramanand and Ramanuja and Tulasî Das have begun, may yet be accomplished by a new reforming Brahman, imbued with the Spirit of Christ. The second problem is how to smelt out the abundant dross of idolatry and superstition, and leave the pure gold already introduced by Christians. If we are ready to recognize the hand of God in accomplished facts, we may note the presence of Islam with its horror of idolatry, and ask what part God assigns to it in the religious future of India. And then we see with joy one great advantage which Christianity has, sharing it with none other; that it has a message for women, and can make the name and the lot of widows as honorable as it is now miserable.

(4) CHINA: BUDDHIST AND CONFUCIAN.

The Persian mission to India has, therefore, left deep traces, but far other was the fate of that dispatched more to the North. Here was another great empire, with two religions well established on the usual foundation of superstition. The purely native cult was that of Confucius which had endured some eleven centuries. This philosopher had, like the Buddha, drawn up a code of behavior, showing how to comport yourself in the family, the state, the inner life; and, again like the Buddha, he offered no advice on how to behave towards God, nor had he anything to say about a future life or salvation. However suitable was this system for rulers, who found a sort of unconditional submission to authority inculcated, it left the field open for religion properly so called, a revelation of God and opportunity to hold intercourse with Him. And so about the time when James, Paul and Peter were ending their careers, a State Commission was sent in search of a religion, and especially to investigate Buddhism. It returned with a sandalwood statue of the Buddha and with 42 books, which were soon translated. Now these books represented a modification of

the original doctrine, somewhat under the influence of the Brahman priests. The emphasis was shifted from self-culture, and it was declared that the character of a great man could be transmitted to another incarnation able not only to save himself, but also to save others. This, of course, led easily to the worship of the historic Buddha himself, though it was only later, and in India, that he was identified as an incarnation of Vishnu.

Thus China was provided with a doctrine about the future, a god, a savior, and with an organized monasticism, all of which could be amalgamated with the Confucian code of behavior. A native at once raised an opposition religion, establishing himself as a kind of permanent head, and pandering to low superstition, even preparing a pill for immortality. On the one hand he laid hold of a philosophy coeval with Confucius, on the other he borrowed freely from Buddhism, and so founded what today is known as Taoism.

Buddhism, however, at first grew better in the fertile Chinese soil, and in a way very different from its founder's expectations, or from its development in Ceylon. And when England was still a welter of barbarous and cruel pagans, all China was united into one empire whose ruler favored Buddhism. We hear of 30,000 monasteries with hundreds of thousands of monks, besides, of course, far more adherents who never took the vows. But in the next generation a new dynasty withdrew its patronage, and within a few years the Christian mission band had reached the capital, then Si-Ngan-Fu, finding a splendid opportunity for propagation at the very centre of power. They were not indeed pioneers, for as early as 500 Persian monks had reached China, and had taken back the secret of silk-culture, even to Europe; but it needed the calamity of Islam to send forth this party under Alopen, fired with missionary zeal.

Sacred books were in the baggage of the party, and with a true instinct that this was a literary people, one of the earliest tasks was to prepare a Chinese Bible. The

emperor was willing to issue an edict of toleration, and soon built a church on the public square, after which the way was open for steady propagation. Sixty years later arrived a Zoroastrian embassy with its sacred books, on which the dowager empress smiled, but presently Christian monasteries were sanctioned. Fresh helpers arrived from Herat and Persia, and when Charles the Great was conquering the Saxons, one of these named Adam, the Vicar-episcopal and Pope of China, erected a monument detailing the progress of the work, and commemorating not only the lord John Joshua, the universal patriarch away in Persia, but many also of his own helpers in China, whose names all appear, not in Chinese nor in Persian nor Arabic, but in the antique Syriac which continued to be their ecclesiastical tongue. More interesting is it to read in Chinese the names of sixty Chinese priests, for these show that if the movement was still affiliated with the Persian Church, it had now struck root in native soil.

Unhappily the love of dominion inherent in all men checked the indigenous movement. Confucians had no church, and could have no head of a Church. The Christians of China all looked to the Patriarch of Babylon as their Supreme Head on earth, and thereby they were certain to arouse against them national feeling. The occasion came when a native dynasty revived Confucianism and established it as a State Religion, and if the Tartars of the north favored Buddhism in its idolatrous forms, the Christians had not the courage to throw themselves purely on the Chinese.

Indeed, when Wu-Tsung ordered the destruction of all the Buddhist monasteries and the return of all their inmates to civil life, in 845, he also ordered all foreign missionaries whatever, of every religion, to cease work. And an Arabian monk sent about 980 with five others to organize better, returned in a fright to say that there were no Christians left to organize.

When the next effort was made in this direction, it was in connection with the Mongols. This people from Central Asia broke eastwards over the Great Wall into China, southwards into Persia where they became overlords of the Christian Patriarch of Babylon at Baghdad, and where they broke the dominion of the Muslims; westwards into Russia, Moravia and Hungary, till it seemed as if the whole civilized world would be submerged by a wave of barbarism. Such a unifying of the western world in the days of Paul had given a splendid opportunity for the Christianizing of the whole Roman Empire, and now the Persians saw their opportunity to do the same for the whole of the great East. Their missionaries were sent throughout the Tartar dominions, and so it came to pass that the thirteenth century saw their work at its zenith. Indeed, it also introduced it to the knowledge of the west, so long isolated from Asiatic Christianity, so that at least eight Frenchmen and Italians visited the East between 1245 and 1338, leaving some account of what they saw; and our own Roger Bacon recorded much that they told him.

We hear of Christian priests at the Tartar camps, with tent-chapels; of services conducted in Turkish, Arabic, and Syriac, of the chief men won for Christ, and even of some of the princes being baptized and trained in the faith. We hear of a vigorous mission to the Uigur Tartars, taking an alphabet, reducing the language to writing, and apparently rendering some parts of the Bible into their tongue. We know this was crowned with success by a Kerait prince adhering to Christianity, whose fame reached Europe as Prester John. We hear of handsome stone churches in which worshiped the chief officers of the court; and in those days when one power stretched from the Pacific to the Danube, it hardly surprises us to hear of an Englishman at Karakorum or Peking. Nor will Baptists wonder that these Asiatic Christians declined to recognize the sprinkled French or Italians as really baptized. But it is surprising to hear

that in 1250 not ten per cent of the Turks were Muslim, most being Christian. It was but a little earlier that an Englishman was chosen Patriarch of the Latin Church of Peter, and was enthroned beside the Tiber; he presided over fewer Christians than those who looked up to the head of the Asiatic Church of Thomas. Even in China itself there were again bishops at fifteen of the eighteen provincial capitals and a governor was found to devote much of his wealth to further Christianity.

If these details come from Europeans, hear an Asiatic tell his own story, written in 1330, and perhaps not even yet accessible in our language. Two Tartars, called Mark and Bar-Suma, sons of church dignitaries at Peking and another great Chinese city, turned monks, and after some years decided to go on pilgrimage to Jerusalem. The Tartar emperor, therefore, appointed them his ambassadors to the European rulers. They reached the headwaters of the Euphrates, and paid their respects to the Patriarch, who had recently removed thither from Baghdad. He consecrated Mark as Metropolitan of Cathay, the other as Visitor-general. Wars in the neighborhood prevented their further progress, and they went into hermitages for two years. On the death of the Patriarch, the clergy thought it a clear sign of God's will that now they were under Tartar rule, a Tartar Christian high in favor with the Tartar emperor should be at hand, and they chose Mark to be Patriarch of the whole Asiatic Church. The local Tartar viceroy installed him, and he was enthroned in 1281 by twenty-four bishops, obtaining a royal grant of 30,000 dinars yearly to build new churches. The next Tartar viceroy was an apostate from Christianity, but his career was short. His successor was distinctly favorable, and proposed to ally with the kings of western Europe to crush Islam, so he appointed Bar-Suma as his ambassador. The accounts of Constantinople and Rome, the intrigues which he witnessed actually in the conclave at the election of a pope, his interviews with King Louis at Paris, and with our

own king, Edward I, are most singular reading for us. And this journey may remind us that Edward really was a crusader, and did attack the Muslims in Palestine. But the great scheme miscarried, and after a civil war among the Tartars, the Muslims obtained the ascendancy and vowed to exterminate Christianity at its very headquarters in Asia. They did destroy the great cathedrals, they captured the Patriarch and hung him upside down; and though the Tartar king rescued him, he felt it politic to allow his more turbulent subjects, the Muslims, to do nearly what they liked. So the closing years of the Patriarch were saddened by constant tales of massacre and destruction, not compensated by the recollection that in his thirty-six years of office he had consecrated 75 metropolitans and bishops.

The story of his life reveals one fatal weakness about the Asiatic Church; it persistently adhered to the use of the Syriac tongue which as a spoken language was obsolete except just where Tigris and Euphrates took their rise. This Tartar of Pekin was baptized not by any Tartar name, but as Mark; and when enthroned as Patriarch even that name was not judged Syriac enough, so that he was styled Yabh-Alaha. And hence the Church appeared everywhere as a foreigner, instead of naturalizing itself in every land. We may not blame them with a clear conscience, for still there are pious missionary patriots who teach Marathi children to sing the hymns of Ray Palmer in English to the accompaniment of an American organ; but the sequel in China warns that this course courts disaster. The Chinese have always been intensely patriotic, and at this very time were sensitive about their language and their writing; when even the Muslims proposed to use a modified Syriac alphabet, they declined to abandon their complicated syllabary in its favor.

And now there appeared two enemies to the Asiatic Church in China. From the Far West came a Flemish monk who was amazed at finding Christians caring nothing for the chair of Peter, and venerating the throne of

Thomas. He set himself to scan their doings with hostile eyes, and at once noted this foreign trait, indeed, exaggerated it to say that all the clergy chanted in a tongue they did not comprehend. Strange to say, he did not ask whether the Latin of western Europe was understood by all the French, Dutch, English and Scandinavian clergy! but his criticism was just.

Then arose a new emperor who invited to court representatives of all the leading religions, that he might select one for his patronage. At first he asked them alternately to bless his food, but the Europeans saw fit to urge the claims of their Italian Pope, and also to deprecate the ancient Christianity of the country. Certainly they were expelled, but the tide was turning. One Mongol Emperor suppressed the bureau of religions, another suppressed several dioceses, and after 1368 the curtain falls on a vanishing cause. For the Christians had thrown in their lot too closely with the Mongol dynasty, hated by the Chinese. And when a successful revolt drove out the tyrants, it brought to the throne an expriest, who naturally showed Christians no favor.

Was then the long effort in China fruitless, was the failure as complete as in India? Yes, and with the same qualified gain. For if a native Church surviving from the fourteenth century is vainly sought, there has been a strange transformation and purifying of a native cult. Modern Taoism, says Dr. Timothy Richard, is not the ancient; and all the novel features are distinctly due to Christian influence! How this came to pass has not been adequately explored, and it is only a conjecture of the Baptist scholar that is set forth in the Shanghai handbook of missions. But we should indeed marvel if a Church so deeply rooted throughout the empire had been utterly extirpated, and when modern observers call our attention to its traces in a rejuvenated Taoism, we ought to ask whether here is an ancient foundation fit to bear a modern superstructure, and saving some trouble in beginning afresh.

If the Chinese expelled Christianity with the Mongols, we might at least hope that the Mongols in Mongolia would retain and extend it. But those were the days of Timur, who from his capital of Samarcand ravaged impartially in all directions, destroying whole cities and raising grisly pyramids with thousands of skulls. So far as he had a preference for any religion, it was Islam, but this did not hinder him from destroying Baghdad and massacring every one of its 800,000 inhabitants. This was also the centre of Asiatic Christianity, the blow to our cause was as if in Europe Rome was laid waste, Pope and cardinals all slain, while every other town of importance had suffered in like fashion. When Timur passed away in 1405, Persian Christianity was extinct as a vital force, although in the extreme northwest around the town of Urumiah, supposed to be the birth-place of Zoroaster, still cluster a few thousand adherents of the once great Patriarch of Babylon. One strange legacy his Church has left in outward things, its hierarchical organization and its ritual; whether or no the Taoists inherit these, it is certain that they were imitated by the northern Buddhists, and were introduced with Chinese exactitude into Tibet, to puzzle European visitors at a later date.

Thus rose and fell Asiatic Christianity. When Francis Xavier passed Socotra, he found it dying there, and its mummy was yet seen in 1650 by Vincenzo the Carmelite. The antiquary may still behold a fossilized church in south India. But speaking broadly there has been a fourfold failure. Christianity measured itself against four older religions, of which one never yielded to persuasion, and three yet survive in dogged strength. Confucians, Buddhists, Jews, hold in calm superiority to their sacred books, older than the Christian, and in Oriental disdain announce that we have been weighed in the balance and found wanting. What pleasure is it for us to point out that the Confucian is not content with his own system, that the Buddhist has borrowed a Chris-

tian hierarchy, that the ancient books of the Brahman are neglected for legends and doctrines tinged with Christianity? The Buddhist smilingly rejoins that Gotama has been canonized as a Christian saint, the Brahman disdainfully points to the Indian beast-fables which were tagged with good morals and became more popular in Europe during the Middle Ages than the Bible itself; and the Jew strikes in with the reminder that his Scriptures have been appropriated wholesale by us. Broadly, the message has been rejected throughout Asia, and if it is to be accepted now, it is in face of the added difficulty that it comes afresh with the stamp of Europe upon the gold mined in Asia; that it comes with the stigma of repeated defeat, not with the prestige of victory.

If we try to account for this huge failure, we can observe that in every case there was a strong, reasoned, organized opposition, which the missionaries do not seem to have taken into account; a Paul would have done his best to appreciate the strong points of each faith, and the weakness; he would have adapted his gospel to the needs of each people. Then we may note the want of organization in two respects; in supplying missionaries, in conducting the campaign. The Christian Church was essentially missionary; Christ Himself gave at least half his energy to prepare missionaries for their work; and His latest words emphasized their supreme duty. But despite all that was done at Edessa and Nisibis, we cannot trace any systematic attempt to maintain a missionary seminary, to prepare men for the foreign field, to collect the lessons from success or failure. Nor do we see any clear tokens of missionary strategy. Paul aimed for the leading towns, and planted in each a strong church, even though it took him two or three years to establish a centre of influence, he preached before governors and kings. What a converted king can do for the cause, we have seen in Armenia and elsewhere; what a missionary king did for Buddhism was to spread it from a tiny principality over half a continent. And above all,

few learned the Pauline lesson, to be all things to all men. In Syria this was indeed done, and Syriac Christianity is the only type that survives in Asia; but Syriac Christianity never became really Persian or Indian or Chinese; to the Hindu the missionary could not become a Hindu, and he won practically no Hindus.

If the failure of the past is to be retrieved in this country, the historic faith must be stripped of much of its western accretions, and must be presented simply, to be elaborated afresh as the Oriental may be guided by the Spirit of God, and not by the Occidental. Our schemes of government are not his, and there may be methods of Church management that are both familiar to him, and in accord with the mind of Christ. And above all, the pure morality of Christ, as distinct from the practice of Western Christians, will receive a ready welcome from the students of what the Buddha or Confucius taught. Only whereas they centered attention on behavior, on the salvation of self, Christ has something to say about God the loving Father and Savior, and about our spending ourselves in the service of others.