

The Serampore Form of Agreement.

THE important document which follows was signed at Serampore on October 6th, 1805, by nine missionaries of the Baptist Missionary Society led by the historic triumvirate, Carey, Marshman and Ward. It has sometimes been referred to, though not very accurately, as the Serampore Covenant. Recent references to it have usually made use of a summary prepared by Mr. S. Pearce Carey for his life of William Carey. This consists of convenient headings for each of the eleven main clauses which make up the body of the document. As an expression of the missionary policy which was in the minds of the Serampore missionaries early in their course, the Agreement is unique, and it has rightly come to be regarded as one of the foundation documents for a study of the missionary strategy of the early nineteenth century. It has, however, more than an historic interest. It remains a moving and challenging statement of the main principles which must underlie the Christian mission in any age and any land. A reprinting of the full text has, therefore, been felt to be fully justified and some account of the circumstances under which it was drawn up seems desirable.

The Agreement was drafted by William Ward, the young printer whose contributions to the Serampore Settlement were many and varied. This is explicitly stated by John Clark Marshman (*Carey, Marshman and Ward*, 1859, Vol. I., p. 229) and is confirmed by internal evidence and questions of style. Carey's signature naturally appears at the head of the list of those who put their names to it, but one has only to read a few pages of his *Enquiry* or some of his letters to be convinced that the document was not of his preparing.

In 1805 Carey had been twelve years in Bengal and more than five years at Serampore. The period since the arrival of reinforcements from England in 1799 and the establishment of the mission under the Danish flag had been one of growing and varied activities and ever widening plans. A missionary settlement had been established, partly of the kind suggested by the Moravians, but with certain modifications making for a more democratic type of community life. The translation and printing of the Scriptures were being energetically pressed forward in several languages. Carey's Professorship at Fort William College, Calcutta, brought increasing opportunities of service in

many different directions. The boarding schools of Joshua Marshman and his wife were proving very successful. The small band of Indian converts was growing in number. The missionaries were reaching out ever farther afield into Bengal—preaching in Calcutta, Catwa, Dinajpur and Dacca. New recruits were arriving from England. The time was ripe for a review of the progress made since 1800 and for the adoption of a clear plan of campaign in connection with the establishment of subordinate mission stations. It was in these circumstances that, in the autumn of 1805, the "Form of Agreement" was drawn up and signed.

On Sunday, October 6th, 1805, the missionaries and their families celebrated the twelfth anniversary of the formation in Kettering of the Baptist Missionary Society. There was a prayer-meeting at 6 a.m. at which Marshman gave a short address. At 10.30 a.m. there followed a Church meeting. At this Marshman and Ward were chosen as co-pastors with Carey, and six deacons were appointed—four missionaries, Mardon, Biss, Moore and Rowe, and two Indian converts, Krishna Pal and Krishna Prasad. During the hours that followed, there were three preaching services. Two Indians, a man and a woman, were baptised. At the close of the day the Lord's Supper was observed, Marshman and Ward leading the service, and Carey receiving the new members into the fellowship. "Such a day was never seen at the mission house before," wrote Ward in his diary.

A word should be said about the Serampore Church. Carey and his friends were most careful regarding the forms of churchmanship. The first "gathered" church in Bengal was constituted by Carey and Dr. John Thomas at Mudnabati in 1795 following the baptism of Samuel Powell, Thomas's nephew. Not till this fellowship has been properly constituted with Carey as pastor, did the two missionaries feel justified in observing the Lord's Supper. We have an account of what took place in Thomas's diary. "Nov. 1, 1795. We, viz. brother Carey, myself, Poweil and Long, signified our desire to enter into a church state; and gave each other the right hand of fellowship; we then partook together of the Lord's Supper, administered by brother Carey" (*Periodical Accounts*, I. p. 279). Long was a young Englishman whom Thomas had baptised during his earlier visit to India, prior to the formation of the B.M.S. Unfortunately he proved an unstable character. Carey announced the formation of the church in a letter to the Society written on December 30, 1795 (*Periodical Accounts*, I. p. 225). John Fountain joined this church on his arrival in India in 1796. Three years' later, when Marshman and Ward and their families and companions found shelter at Serampore, it was decided to make this the missionary centre.

Carey reached Serampore from Mudnabati in January, 1800. Three months later, on April 24th, a Thanksgiving Day was observed at the Mission House. A new church was then formed. Carey was made pastor, and Marshman and Fountain became deacons. At the first meeting each of the brethren present was asked to give an account of his conversion. It was this church which reorganised its leadership on October 6th, 1805.

The following day the "Form of Agreement" was signed. It consisted of eleven sections, and a heading describes it as embodying "the great principles upon which the brethren of the mission at Serampore think it their duty to act in the work of instructing the heathen." A note in Ward's diary for October 19th, 1805 makes it clear that it was the expectation of the planting of new mission stations and the formation of new churches which led to the Agreement. The final paragraph was a resolution to read the Agreement at every mission station three times a year, on the first Sunday in January, May and October.

The original signatories to the Form of Agreement were nine. Little need here be said of Carey, Marshman and Ward. The last two had already taken their places with Carey as the leaders in the missionary community. The final name was that of Carey's eldest son, Felix. He was, in 1805, a young man of twenty. He had been baptised on December 28th, 1800, together with Krishna Pal, the first Indian convert. He was deeply attached to and influenced by Ward. His subsequent life was a rather chequered one, and brought some sorrow and anxiety to Carey and the mission circle, but Felix should be remembered for his pioneering work in Burma and for the aid he gave his father after he had returned to Serampore.

A few details may be given of the other five who signed the Agreement. (1) *John Chamberlain* (1777-1821) was a Northamptonshire farm-hand, of vigorous personality and force of character, trained by Sutcliff at Olney and then at Bristol College under Dr. Ryland. He had reached Serampore in 1802. Carey and his companions soon discovered that he was of quick temper and too much of an individualist to fit in easily to the life of the settlement, and he was sent to Catwa, about 70 miles up the Hooghly river, where a sub-station was established. There, in spite of tragic personal bereavements. Chamberlain worked till 1810, when he became a missionary pioneer in North India. Later, with his health and spirits much weakened, he settled at Monghyr. He was on his way back to England in 1821 when he passed away. The early B.M.S. records speak of him as "the apostolic Chamberlain."¹

(2) *Richard Mardon* (1775-1812) went out to Bengal in

¹ See E. A. Payne: *The First Generation*, 1936, Ch. XII.

1804 with Moore and Biss. They had all three been under Sutcliff's tuition for a year. Mardon and his wife were members of Isaiah Birt's church at Plymouth Dock. Mardon was stationed at Jessore. In 1807 he was sent to Burma with James Chater to explore the possibilities of a mission to that land. From 1808 to 1812, when he died, he worked at Goamalty.

(3) *John Biss* (1776-1807) was, like Mardon, a member of Isaiah Birt's church. He had already been married two or three years when he set out for India in 1804, and took with him his wife and small child. Immediately after the signing of the Agreement he was sent to Dinajpur, but his health soon failed and he and his family started for home again via America. He died at sea in February, 1807.

(4) *William Moore* (1776-1844) was a native of Stogumber, and his wife came from the same church. He found it difficult to acquire Bengali and therefore found European society easier and more congenial than Indian. He remained at Serampore till 1811 when he went to Digah and opened a school. His wife died in 1812 and the following year he married the widow of his friend, Biss. Later he severed his connection with the mission, supporting himself by secular employment, but continuing to render help to the work at Monghyr till his death from cholera in 1844.

(5) *Joshua Rowe* (1781-1823) was born at Foxton, but was a church member at Salisbury where John Saffery was minister. Like Mardon, Biss and Moore, he had spent a year with Sutcliff at Olney. His wife, Eliza Noyes, was only 18 when they set out in 1804. Rowe worked for some time at Digah with Moore.

This, then, was the group who signed the Agreement on October 6th, 1805 and resolved that it should be read publicly at each mission station at least three times a year. It will be seen that Biss lived only a few months after putting his name to it, and Mardon less than seven years. Chamberlain, Ward, Rowe and Felix Carey died in swift succession between 1821 and 1823. Moore withdrew from the mission. Of the original nine signatories that left only Carey and Marshman. Their periods of service lasted till 1834 and 1837 respectively, and to the very end they remained faithful to the principles set out so eloquently in the Agreement, carrying it out to the best of their ability "in all weathers"—to borrow an expressive phrase from its opening paragraph.

The Agreement is a remarkably far-seeing and statesmanlike document. Ward's own monumental volumes, *The History, Literature and Mythology of the Hindoos*, show how seriously he was prepared himself to carry out Clause II. The paragraphs dealing with a missionary's personal conduct might be taken as an

unconscious description of Carey, Marshman and Ward—their simplicity of life and complete self-dedication, their unremitting toil, their constancy in prayer, the concentration of their preaching on the theme of the Cross, their brotherliness towards India's converts. Clauses VII and VIII dealing with the parts which European women might and Indians must play in the conversion of India, show Ward and his friends as far ahead of most of their generation. Their confidence in the power of the Scriptures and of the written word is plainly stated in Clause IX, together with the place of education in mission strategy.

The Agreement as set out below is taken from the *Periodical Accounts*, Vol. III, pp. 198f. It was reprinted by the Baptist Mission Press of Calcutta in 1874. It has recently been again printed, this time by Dr. A. H. Oussoren, of Middelburg, as an appendix to his *William Carey*, (Leyden, 1945.) Dr. Oussoren is wrong in attributing the text of the document to Carey himself. He also prints a letter of instructions given by Count Zinzendorf to the first missionaries from Herrnhut in 1732, and the rules which Bishop Spangenberg issued in 1782, and makes an interesting comparison. Both Carey and Ward were deeply impressed by the work of the Moravians, but the Form of Agreement has notable features which are entirely its own, and which make it a document still living and challenging to Christians everywhere.

FORM OF AGREEMENT.

Respecting the great principles upon which the brethren of the Mission at Serampore, think it their duty to act in the work of instructing the heathen.

Agreed upon at a Meeting of the Brethren, at Serampore, on Monday, October 7, 1805.

The Redeemer, in planting us in this heathen nation rather than in any other, has imposed upon us the cultivation of peculiar qualifications. We are firmly persuaded that Paul might plant and Appollos water in vain in any part of the world, did not God give the increase. We are sure, that only those who are ordained to eternal life will believe, and that God alone can add to the church such as shall be saved. Nevertheless we cannot but observe with admiration, that Paul, the great champion for the glorious doctrines of free and sovereign grace, was the most conspicuous for his personal zeal in the work of persuading men to be reconciled to God. In this respect he is a noble example for our imitation. Our Lord intimated to those of his apostles who were fishermen, that he would make them fishers of men,

intimating that in all weathers, and amidst every disappointment, they were to aim at drawing men to the shores of eternal life. Solomon says, *He that winneth souls is wise*, implying, no doubt, that the work of gaining over men to the side of God was to be done by winning methods, and that it required the greatest wisdom to do it with success. Upon these points we think it right to fix our serious and abiding attention :

I. In order to be prepared for our great and solemn work, it is absolutely necessary that we set an infinite value upon immortal souls; that we often endeavour to affect our minds with the dreadful loss sustained by an unconverted soul launched into eternity. It becomes us to fix in our minds the awful doctrine of eternal punishment, and to realise frequently the inconceivably awful condition of this vast country, lying in the arms of the wicked one. If we have not this awful sense of the value of souls, it is impossible that we can feel aright in any other part of our work, and in this case it had been better for us to have been in any other situation rather than in that of a missionary. Oh! may our hearts bleed over these poor idolaters, and may their case lie with continued weight on our minds, that we may resemble that eminent missionary, who compared the travail of his soul, on account of the spiritual state of those committed to his charge, to the pains of childbirth. But while we thus mourn over their miserable condition, we should not be discouraged, as though their recovery were impossible. He who raised the sottish and brutalised Britons to sit in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, can raise these slaves of superstition, purify their hearts by faith, and make them worshippers of the one God in spirit and in truth. The promises are fully sufficient to remove our doubts, and to make us anticipate that not very distant period when He will famish all the gods of India, and cause these very idolaters to cast their idols to the moles and the bats, and renounce for ever the work of their own hands.

II. It is very important that we should gain all the information we can of the snares and delusions in which these heathens are held. By this means we shall be able to converse with them in an intelligible manner. To know their modes of thinking, their habits, their propensities, their antipathies, the way in which they reason about God, sin, holiness, the way of salvation, and a future state; to be aware of the bewitching nature of their idolatrous worship, feasts, songs, etc., is of the highest consequence, if we would gain their attention to our discourse, and would avoid being barbarians to them. This knowledge may be easily obtained by conversing with sensible natives, by reading some parts of their works, and by attentively observing their manners and customs.

III. It is necessary, in our intercourse with the Hindoos, that as far as we are able to abstain from those things which would increase their prejudices against the gospel. Those parts of English manners which are most offensive to them should be kept out of sight as much as possible. We should also avoid every degree of cruelty to animals. Nor is it advisable at once to attack their prejudices by exhibiting with acrimony the sins of their gods; neither should we upon any account do violence to their images, nor interrupt their worship: the real conquests of the gospel are those of love: *And if, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me.* In this respect, let us be continually fearful lest one unguarded word, or one unnecessary display of the difference betwixt us, in manners, etc., should set the natives at a greater distance from us. Paul's readiness to become all things to all men, that he might by any means save some, and his disposition to abstain even from necessary comforts that he might not offend the weak, are circumstances worthy our particular notice. This line of conduct we may be sure was founded on the widest principles. Placed amidst a people very much like the hearers of the apostle, in many respects we may now perceive the solid wisdom which guided him as a missionary. The mild manners of the Moravians, and also of the Quakers towards the North American Indians, have, in many instances, gained the affections and confidence of heathens in a wonderful manner. He who is too proud to stoop to others, in order to draw them to him, though he may know that they are in many respects inferior to himself, is ill qualified to become a missionary. The words of a most successful preacher of the gospel still living, "that he would not care if the people trampled him under their feet, if he might become useful to their souls," are expressive of the very temper we should always cultivate.

IV. It becomes us to watch all opportunities of doing good. A missionary would be highly culpable, if he contented himself with preaching two or three times a week to those persons whom he might be able to get together into a place of worship. To carry on conversation with the natives almost every hour in the day, to go from village to village, from market to market, from one assembly to another; to talk to servants, labourers, etc., as often as opportunity offers, and to be instant in season and out of season—this is the life to which we are called in this country. We are apt to relax in these active exertions, especially in a warm climate; but we shall do well always to fix it in our minds, that life is short, that all around are perishing, and that we incur a dreadful woe if we proclaim not the glad tidings of salvation.

V. In preaching to the heathen, we must keep to the example of Paul, and make the great subject of our preaching,

Christ the crucified. It would be very easy for a missionary to preach nothing but truths, and that for many years together, without any well-grounded hope of becoming useful to one soul. The doctrine of Christ's expiatory death and all-sufficient merits has been, and must ever remain, the grand means of conversion. This doctrine, and others immediately connected with it, have constantly nourished and sanctified the church. Oh! that these glorious truths may ever be the joy and strength of our own souls, and then they will not fail to become the matter of our conversation to others. It was the proclaiming of these doctrines that made the Reformation from Popery in the time of Luther spread with such rapidity. It was these truths which filled the sermons of the most useful men in the eighteenth century. It is a well-known fact that the most successful missionaries in the world at the present day make the atonement of Christ their continued theme. We mean the Moravians. They attribute all their success to the preaching of the death of our Saviour. So far as our experience goes in this work, we most freely acknowledge, that every Hindoo among us who has been gained to Christ, has been won by the astonishing and all-constraining love exhibited in our Redeemer's propitiatory death. Oh! then may we resolve to know nothing among Hindoos and Mussulmans but Christ and Him crucified.

VI. It is absolutely necessary that the natives should have an entire confidence in us, and feel quite at home in our company. To gain this confidence we must on all occasions be willing to hear their complaints; we must give them the kindest advice, and we must decide upon everything brought before us in the most open, upright, and impartial manner. We ought to be easy of access, to condescend to them as much as possible, and on all occasions to treat them as our equals. All passionate behaviour will sink our characters exceedingly in their estimation. All force, and everything haughty, reserved and forbidding, it becomes us ever to shun with the greatest care. We can never make sacrifices too great when the eternal salvation of souls is the object, except, indeed, we sacrifice the commands of Christ.

VII. Another important part of our work is to build up, and to watch over, the souls that may be gathered. In this work we shall do well to simplify our first instructions as much as possible, and to press the great principles of the gospel upon the minds of the converts till they be thoroughly settled and grounded in the foundation of their hope towards God. We must be willing to spend some time with them daily, if possible, in this work. We must have much patience with them, though they may grow very slowly in divine knowledge.

We ought also to endeavour as much as possible to form

them to habits of industry, and assist them in procuring such employments as may be pursued with the least danger of temptations to evil. Here too we shall have occasion to exercise much tenderness and forbearance, knowing that industrious habits are formed with difficulty by all heathen nations. We ought also to remember that these persons have made no common sacrifices in renouncing their connections, their homes, their former situations and means of support, and that it will be very difficult for them to procure employment with heathen masters. In these circumstances, if we do not sympathise with them in their temporal losses for Christ, we shall be guilty of great cruelty.

As we consider it our duty to honour the civil magistrate, and in every state and country to render him the readiest obedience, whether we be persecuted or protected, it becomes us to instruct our native brethren in the same principles. A sense of gratitude too presses this obligation upon us in a peculiar manner, in return for the liberal protection we have experienced. It is equally our wisdom and our duty also to shew to the civil power, that it has nothing to fear from the progress of missions, since a real follower of Christ must resist the example of his great Master, and all the precepts the Bible contains on this subject, before he can become disloyal. Converted heathens, being brought over to the religion of their Christian governors, if duly instructed, are much more likely to love them and be united to them than subjects of a different religion.

To bear the faults of our native brethren, so as to reprove them with tenderness, and set them right in the necessity of a holy conversation, is a very necessary duty. We should remember the gross darkness in which they were so lately involved, having never had any just and adequate ideas of the evil of sin, or its consequences. We should also recollect how backward human nature is in forming spiritual ideas, and entering upon a holy self-denying conversation. We ought not therefore, even after many falls, to give up and cast away a relapsed convert, while he manifests the least inclination to be washed from his filthiness.

In walking before native converts, much care and circumspection are absolutely necessary. The falls of Christians in Europe have not such a fatal tendency as they must have in this country, because there the word of God always commands more attention than the conduct of the most exalted Christian. But here those around us, in consequence of their little knowledge of the Scriptures, must necessarily take our conduct as a specimen of what Christ looks for in His disciples. They know only the Saviour and His doctrine as they shine forth in us.

In conversing with the wives of native converts, and leading them in the ways of Christ, so that they may be an ornament to

the Christian cause, and make known the gospel to the native women, we hope always to have the assistance of the females who have embarked with us in the mission. We see that in primitive times the apostles were very much assisted in their great work by several pious females. The great value of female help may easily be appreciated, if we consider how much the Asiatic women are shut up from the men, and especially from men of another cast. It behoves us therefore to afford to our European sisters all possible assistance in acquiring the language, that they may, in every way which providence may open to them, become instrumental in promoting the salvation of the millions of native women, who are in a great measure excluded, from all opportunities of hearing the word from the mouths of European missionaries. A European sister may do much for the cause in this respect, by promoting the holiness and stirring up the zeal, of the female native converts.

A real missionary becomes in a sense a father to his people. If he feels all the anxiety and tender solicitude of a father; all that delight in their welfare and company that a father does in the midst of his children, they will feel all that freedom with and confidence in him which he can desire. He will be wholly unable to lead them on in a regular and happy manner, unless they can be induced to open their minds to him, and unless a sincere and mutual esteem subsists on both sides.

VIII. Another part of our work is the forming our native brethren to usefulness, fostering every kind of genius, and cherishing every gift and grace in them. In this respect we can scarcely be to lavish of our attention to their improvement. It is only by means of native preachers that we can hope for the universal spread of the gospel throughout this immense continent. Europeans are too few, and their subsistence costs too much, for us ever to hope that they can possibly be the instruments of the universal diffusion of the word amongst so many millions of souls, spread over such a large portion of the habitable globe. Their incapability of bearing the intense heat of the climate in perpetual itineracies, the heavy expences of their journies, not to say anything of the prejudices of the natives against the very presence of Europeans, and the great difficulty of becoming fluent in their languages, render it absolute duty to cherish native gifts, and to send forth as many native preachers as possible. If the practice of confining the ministry of the world to a single individual in a church be once established amongst us, we despair of the gospels's ever making much progress in India by our means. Let us therefore use every gift, and continually urge on our native brethren to press upon their countrymen the glorious gospel of the blessed God.

Still further to strengthen the cause of Christ in this country, and, as far as in our power, to give it a permanent establishment, even when the efforts of Europeans may fail, we think it our duty as soon as possible, to advise the native brethren who may be formed into separate churches, to choose their pastors and deacons from amongst their own countrymen, that the word may be statedly preached, and the ordinances of Christ administered in each church by the native minister, as much as possible, without the interference of the missionary of the district who will constantly superintend their affairs, give them advice in cases of order and discipline, and correct any errors into which they may fall; and who, joying and beholding their order, and the steadfastness of their faith in Christ, may direct his efforts continually to the planting of new churches in other places, and to the spread of the gospel in his district, to the utmost of his power. By this means the unity of the missionary character will be preserved, all the missionaries will still form one body, each one moveable as the good cause may require; the different native churches will also naturally learn to care and provide for their ministers, for their church expences, the raising of places of worship, etc., and the whole administration will assume a native aspect; by which means the inhabitants will more readily identify the cause as belonging to their own nation, and their prejudices at falling into the hands of Europeans will entirely vanish. It may be hoped too that the pastors of these churches, and the members in general, will feel a new energy in attempting to spread the gospel, when they shall thus freely enjoy its privileges among themselves.

Under the divine blessing, if in the course of a few years a number of native churches be thus established, from them the word of God may sound out even to the extremities of India; and numbers of preachers being raised up and sent forth, may form a body of native missionaries, inured to the climate, acquainted with the customs, language, modes of speech and reasoning of the inhabitants; able to become perfectly familiar with them, to enter their houses, to live upon their food, to sleep with them, or under a tree; and who may travel from one end of the country to the other almost without expence. These churches will be in no immediate danger of falling into errors or disorders, because the whole of their affairs will be constantly superintended by a European missionary. The advantages of this plan are so evident, that to carry it into complete effect ought to be our continued concern. That we may discharge the important obligations of watching over these infant churches when formed, and of urging them to maintain a steady discipline, to hold forth the clear and cheering light of evangelical truth in this region and shadow of death and to walk in all respects as those who have

been called out of darkness into marvellous light, we should go continually to the Source of all grace and strength; for if, to become the shepherd of one church be a most solemn and weighty charge, what must it be to watch over a number of churches just raised from a state of heathenism, and placed at a distance from each other.

We have thought it our duty not to change the names of native converts, observing from scripture that the apostles did not change those of the first Christians turned from heathenism, as the names Epaphroditus, Phebe, Fortunatus, Sylvanus, Apollos, Hermes, Junia, Narcissus, etc. prove. Almost all these names are derived from those of heathen gods. We think the great object which Divine Providence has in view in causing the gospel to be promulgated in the world, is not the changing of the names, the dress, the food, and the innocent usages of mankind, but to produce a moral and divine change in the hearts and conduct of men. It would not be right to perpetuate the names of heathen gods amongst Christians; neither is it necessary or prudent to give a new name to every man after his conversion, as hereby the economy of families, neighbourhoods, etc., would be needlessly disturbed. In other respects we think it our duty to lead our brethren by example, by mild persuasion, and by opening and illuminating their minds in a gradual way, rather than use authoritative means. By this they learn to see the evil of a custom, and then to despise and forsake it; whereas in cases wherein force is used, though they may leave off that which is wrong while in our presence, yet not having seen the evil of it, they are in danger of using hypocrisy, and of doing that out of our presence which they dare not do in it.

IX. It becomes us too to labour with all our might in forwarding translations of the sacred scriptures in the languages of Hindoostan. The help which God has afforded us already in this work is a loud call to us to "go forward." So far, therefore, as God has qualified us to learn those languages which are necessary, we consider it our bounden duty to apply with unwearied assiduity in acquiring them. We consider the publication of the divine Word throughout India as an object which we ought never to give up till accomplished, looking to the Fountain of all knowledge and strength, to qualify us for this great work, and to carry us through it to the praise of his holy name.

It becomes us to use all assiduity in explaining and distributing the divine word on all occasions, and by every means in our power to excite the attention and reverence of the natives towards it, as the foundation of eternal truth, and the message of salvation to men. It is our duty also to distribute, as extensively as possible, the different religious tracts which are published.

Considering how much the general diffusion of the knowledge of Christ depends upon a liberal and constant distribution of the Word, and of these tracts, all over the country, we should keep this continually in mind, and watch all opportunities of putting even single tracts into the hands of those persons with whom we occasionally meet. We should endeavour to ascertain where large assemblies of the natives are to be found, that we may attend upon them, and gladden whole villages at once with the tidings of salvation.

The establishment of native free schools is also an object highly important to the future conquests of the gospel. Of this very pleasing and interesting part of our missionary labours we should endeavour not to be unmindful. As opportunities are afforded, it becomes us to establish, visit, and encourage these institutions, and to recommend the establishment of them to other Europeans. The progress of divine right is gradual, both as it respects individuals and nations. Whatever therefore tends to increase the body of holy light in these dark regions, is *as bread cast upon the waters, to be seen after many days*. In many ways the progress of providential events is preparing the Hindoos for casting their idols to the moles and the bats, and for becoming a part of the chosen generation, the royal priesthood, the holy nation. Some parts of missionary labours very properly tend to the present conversion of the heathen, and others to the ushering in the glorious period when *a nation shall be born at once*. Of the latter kind are native free schools.

X. That which, as a means, is to fit us for the discharge of these laborious and unutterably important labours, is the being instant in prayer, and the cultivation of personal religion. Let us ever have in remembrance the examples of those who have been most eminent in the work of God. Let us often look at Brainerd in the woods of America, pouring out his very soul before God for the perishing heathen, without whose salvation nothing could make him happy. Prayer, secret, fervent, believing prayer, lies at the root of all personal godliness. A competent knowledge of the languages current where a missionary lives, a mild and winning temper, and a heart given up to God in closest religion, these, these are the attainments which, more than all knowledge or all other gifts, will fit us to become the instruments of God in the great work of human redemption. Let us then ever be united in prayer at stated seasons, whatever distance may separate us, and let each one of us lay it upon his heart that we will seek to be fervent in spirit, wrestling with God, till he famish these idols, and cause the heathen to experience the blessedness that is in Christ.

Finally: Let us give ourselves up unreservedly to this glorious cause. Let us never think that our time, our gifts, our

strength, our families, or even the clothes we wear, are our own. Let us sanctify them all to God and his cause. Oh! that he may sanctify us for his work. Let us for ever shut out the idea of laying up a covy for ourselves or our children. If we give up the resolution which was formed on the subject of private trade when we first united at Serampore, the mission is from that hour a lost cause. A worldly spirit, quarrels, and every evil work will succeed, the moment it is admitted that each brother may do something on his own account. Woe to that man who shall ever make the smallest movement toward such a measure! Let us continually watch against a worldly spirit, and cultivate a christian indifference towards every indulgence. Rather let us bear hardness as good soldiers of Jesus Christ, and endeavour to learn in every state to be content.

If in this way we are unable to glorify God with our bodies and spirits which are his—our wants will be his care. No private family ever enjoyed a greater portion of happiness, even in the most prosperous gale of worldly prosperity, than we have done since we resolved to have all things in common, and that no one should pursue business for his own exclusive advantage. If we are enabled to persevere in the same principles, we may hope that multitudes of converted souls will have reason to bless God to all eternity for sending his gospel into this country.

To keep these ideas alive in our minds, we resolve that this agreement should be read publicly, at every station, at our three annual meetings, viz. on the first Lord's day in January, in May, and October.

WILLIAM CAREY,
 JOSHUA MARSHMAN,
 WILLIAM WARD,
 JOHN CHAMBERLAIN,
 RICHARD MARDON,
 JOHN BISS,
 WILLIAM MOORE,
 JOSHUA ROWE,
 FELIX CAREY.

Mission House, Serampore.