

ARTICLE VII.

A CENTURY OF FOREIGN MISSIONS IN INDIA.

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THE missionary history of this greatest of mission fields divides naturally into three portions. The first includes whatever was undertaken for the gospel before the advent of William Carey, just a hundred years ago, and may be termed the period of preparation, or of waiting for the fulness of times to appear. The second was the period of exploring and pioneering, of experiment and laying of foundations, and closed in 1858 with the dissolution of the East India Company. The third extends to the present hour, and is the brief day of enlargement on every side, of vigorous and thorough aggressive work, and of reaping the first fruits of the blessed harvest.

PREPARATION.

No violence is done to the facts in the case by affirming that the evangelization of India had its beginning only a century ago. For not until then did forces begin to operate, which ever since have been working without interruption, with conquering might steadily increasing. All antecedent attempts were at the best but premature and isolated, and so unfruitful. After running their course for a limited time a serious decline set in, from which there was no recovery. But more especially, no vital connection can be traced between them and the missionary movements of to-day. Nevertheless, to find the date when Christianity was first proclaimed in the land of the Hindus, we must needs go far back towards the early days of the church. When, or by whom, this was done,

none can say, though tradition affirms that it was by one of the apostles, and others suggest the Nestorians as more likely. But at an early day numerous converts were made and gathered into organizations in Southern India, upon the Malabar coast, and though later they became exceedingly corrupt in doctrine and life, and thus lost entirely the ability and disposition to make further encroachments upon the realms of heathendom, still they have maintained their existence to the present, and now number some two hundred thousand.

The second assault on this mighty stronghold of Satan was made about a thousand years later, when the Portuguese were powerful in the East Indies, with the truly apostolic labors of Xavier (1541-49) as the most notable passage. From Goa as a centre he went out, preaching and baptizing, in all directions, gathering proselytes by the ten thousand. But, during the century following, the Dutch and English entered into competition for the trade of the Orient with a determination and prowess which the Portuguese could not at all resist, and for this, and other reasons, the Catholic missions in India fell into a decay which continued until times quite recent. The chief cause of failure is found in the defective character of the evangelization. A criminal compromise was made with idolatry, superstition, and even with caste. No effort was made to educate or enlighten the people, conversion was but superficial, a mere veneer or varnish. So it is no wonder that nothing of much value came of this pretentious attempt to conquer India for the Cross,

Incomparably better was the third undertaking for the redemption of this vast peninsula of Southern Asia. The Danish-Halle mission, launched in 1705, with King Frederick IV. of Denmark as royal nursing-father to supply the bulk of the funds required, was Lutheran in name, though held in light esteem by that church. The toilers were almost wholly German, and were supplied by the pietistic school of Francke, with Ziegenbalg and Plutscho as pioneers, and the most gifted

and fervid Schwartz among their successors. The Danish colony of Tranquebar, on the Coromandel coast below Madras, was the honored seat of the mission, while work was carried on as far back towards the interior as Trichinopoly and Tanjore. Schwartz survived until Carey had been in Bengal for five years, and it is estimated that in all not less than forty thousand converts were made. But in this case, also, on account of frequent wars, because of defective missionary methods, notably because caste was tolerated, and because of rank rationalism in the churches at home, after a period of vigorous growth there ensued a falling away, which ended in practical failure. And this mission led directly to nothing larger and better than itself.

The bulk of the substantial and lasting results wrought thus far for the kingdom of heaven among the Hindus is to be looked for outside of the missionary sphere, and even outside the realm of religion. For, meantime, other changes of greatest significance had been in progress in the political conditions of the country. The Mogul Empire had fallen to pieces, and out of a long and fierce struggle for supremacy between the Portuguese, Dutch, French, and English, the English had come triumphant, and were left to do what they would with India without a European rival. And from the providential presence and power of the East India Company came incidentally a religious movement, which had a bearing direct and most important upon the new epoch now about to open. And this is almost the only vital connection which can be traced between the first missionary period and the second. Quite prominent among the officials, or servants, of the company in Bengal were such earnest Christian men as Grant, the Udneys, and Rev. David Brown, who had become solicitous for the salvation of the heathen masses about them, had done what they could with money and personal effort to compass this end, and in addition had devised a comprehensive scheme whereby, under Act of Parliament, the Established

Church should be set up on Indian soil, with bishops, chaplains, and all the rest; and *so* the gospel should be introduced and carried forward to the overthrow of idolatry and every false religion. The motive was of the very best, and the project was in accord with the highest wisdom of former days, but yet it stood also for ideas which were destined soon to pass away forever. Fortunately, therefore, the undertaking came to grief, and the immediate result to all appearance was only damaging and disastrous. The struggle over the matter in Parliament was bitter in the extreme; for the magnates of the Company regarded with horror and dismay the possibility of having the teachings of the New Testament diffused abroad among the inhabitants of their domain, and resorted to all manner of devices to prevent so dreadful a consummation. Now it was that, as never before, they undertook to make it practically impossible for the heralds of the cross to utter their message in the ears of Hindus and Mohammedans. What depths of ill feeling were excited will be seen by a reference to the absurd and scurrilous diatribes of Rev. Sydney Smith in the *Edinburgh Review*, which were penned as late as 1808.

But another and very different outcome of the same attempt remains to be mentioned. John Thomas, a surgeon in the employ of the Company, belonged to the same Christian circle in Calcutta, and to the best of his ability had done the work of an evangelist to the perishing. Just in the very nick of time, as it proved, he returned to England to secure fellow-laborers, and an increase of means. The Baptists had just organized their society, Carey had offered to lead in going to the ends of the earth, only stipulating that some one should be found to be his companion. Thomas was heard of, and was sent for. He was found ready and eager to enlist under the society, if India were to be chosen as the field for effort. Carey had had his eyes fixed for years upon the South Seas instead, and on Tahiti in particular, but now of a sudden heard a distinct call to direct his steps towards the millions of the

benighted in the valley of the Ganges. And this change of direction was of the greatest moment to missions in all the world. Thomas was a weak man in many respects, and at some points was worse than worthless as a missionary; but yet, since without the playing of his part Carey would never have set foot between the Himalayas and Cape Comorin, and, moreover, since it was given to him through his surgical skill to lead Krishna Pal, the first Hindu convert, to repentance and faith, his name must be placed among those who have been prominent in furthering the redemption of India.

PIONEERING.

We enter now the second period of missionary history. It was on the 11th of November, 1793, that Indian missions were born; that is, when Carey stepped on shore in Calcutta; though a feeble and perilous infancy was destined to last for many years, even through the entire four decades which remained for earthly toil to the great pioneer. The uncompromising and boundless opposition of the East India Company must be crushed out by Christian public sentiment in Great Britain. And British influence must have time to spread yet further, and to strengthen itself, over great areas stretching out from Bombay and Madras as centres, and from the lower Ganges far towards the Khyber Pass, including Oude, the Northwestern Provinces, the Punjab and Scinde, with much of Burmah also on the east, while the native states as well are tamed and taught good behavior. Clive and Warren Hastings have already performed royal service in this direction (the Lord our God here, as so often in history, making the wrath of man to praise him), and other chieftains are to follow, like Cornwallis, and Hastings, and Wellesley, and Bentinck, and Dalhousie, working together to lay the broad and deep foundations of a civil structure, vast, beautiful, and enduring.

It should be borne in mind that during a large portion of this period Christianity was a contraband article, was forbidden

to enter, if introduced was smuggled in, while missionaries were "interlopers," liable to expulsion without ceremony, and the advent of "a troop of devils" was more welcome. And this, while all the abominations of heathenism were countenanced, abetted, even honored, suttee and Juggernaut not excepted! All his life Carey felt constrained to shelter himself in Serampore under the Danish flag. The first American missionaries were ordered to return immediately, found no abiding place for long months, or crossed over to Ceylon to which the persecutor's power did not extend; while Judson, refused permission to preach the gospel to the Hindus, by way of the Isle of France and Madras, was constrained to locate in Burmah, whose government fortunately was then purely pagan. But in those days primeval the bulk of the peninsula was yet under the rule of native princes, and no entrance was made into their dominions until the Irish Presbyterians began work in Kathiawar in 1841. In 1813, by Act of Parliament, British missionaries were allowed to evangelize and to establish schools, and in 1833, throughout all the territory which had been annexed to the British domain, Christianity began to have free course. This occurred, however, only a year before Carey died. Extensive and bloody wars were frequent, and greatly hindered the progress of truth and righteousness, like the two against the freebooters of the powerful Marathi confederacy, two which ended in the utter overthrow of the Sikhs, and two also required to chastise the arrogance and impudence of the Burmese tyrant. All this must needs be endured in addition to such legitimate difficulties and discouragements as were found in the Hindu constitution, and in the various false religions of the land.

But notwithstanding these multitudinous and manifold obstacles, this introductory period witnessed advances really remarkable. An English legal code and judicial system were introduced, and a system of public education. The Sanscrit and Oriental learning were thrust from the seat of honor,

while the Anglo-Saxon speech and Western science were exalted to the vacant place. In 1829 from Scotland came Duff and Wilson, two of the world's great Christian educators. The construction of public works of all sorts, like metalled highways and railroads connecting the great cities, irrigating canals, etc., etc., was commenced on a scale commensurate with their importance and the size of the peninsula.

As we have seen, for twenty years after Carey's advent the gospel was excluded from India by law. In spite of the prohibition, the London Society sent in a representative in 1798, and added a reinforcement in 1806, with others following later. In 1812 the American Board were venturesome enough to dispatch five men to Calcutta, who after the most trying embarrassment of long uncertainty, coupled with the utmost of protest and persistence on their part, finally fixed themselves in Bombay, Ceylon, and Rangoon. After the partial repeal of the prohibition, in 1813, the two English Church Societies appeared upon the scene, and the Wesleyans about the same time, while after the country was thrown open, and missionaries could without molestation from the authorities freely preach and teach the things of the kingdom, other American organizations joined forces with their predecessors, as also two in Scotland, and three in Germany. At the close of this period the societies engaged numbered just about two-score, and, scattered here and there over the three presidencies, upwards of 250 stations had been occupied. The statistics published in 1851 report 373 ordained missionaries (no account was taken as yet of women), 29 ordained natives, and 551 other native helpers. The churches contained 17,306 members, the schools 77,850 pupils, and the native Christians were estimated at 102,951. This, just a half-century after the baptism of the first convert. In reckoning up results, of course, we must not forget the mastery of the many languages and the rendering into them of the Scriptures and other books,

and the performance of a vast amount of other preliminary and fundamental work.

ENLARGEMENT.

The third period in the annals of missions in India opened with a political and social upheaval which threatened British rule, and Christianity itself, with utter overthrow and extinction. For months throughout the upper valley of the Ganges wholesale mutiny ran wild riot, accompanied with a dreadful massacre of English men, women, and children, not a few missionaries included. The moral shock was terrible at first, while its results were only evil; but out of it, as we now can easily perceive, issued consequences of greatest import to Christianity. Among the rest, in the cataclysm the East India Company sunk out of sight, never again to appear, while Parliament entered into direct control of Indian affairs, a radical transformation which reached its culmination later when Victoria was crowned Empress of this immense Oriental realm. Further, by crushing out the Mutiny, and taking such almost pitiless vengeance upon the guilty actors, the grip of British authority and influence was immeasurably strengthened. But best of all, the conscience of Christians in the United Kingdom was wondrously quickened. At first only stunned and appalled by the exhibitions of devilish depravity in Hindu and Mohammedan alike, they next realized, as never before, the imperative need of carrying the gospel to these millions. And then arose the solemn conviction, We have been verily guilty of neglect as touching these our brothers in brown, in that we have so long withheld from them the word of life. So that a marked quickening of missionary zeal and effort ensued. Though only five and thirty years, but the space of a single generation, have passed since, an increase more than three-fold has come to the number of societies engaged, with a proportionate increase of money contributions and of toilers.

Already the grossest enormities of Hinduism, like thuggism, dacoity, suttee, human sacrifice, infanticide, and hook-

swinging, had been repressed by the strong arm of law; but now the paramount Government, though strictly neutral in its attitude towards all religions, and within certain large limits allowing liberty to the adherents of every faith, is also in generous and hearty sympathy and co-operation with evangelization in all its phases. By the same cogent influence the native rulers in the semi-independent states are instructed in the policy of religious toleration. The system of public works of all kinds has been steadily carried forward toward completion. Education is fostered with greatest care and solicitude, while hospitals and dispensaries are multiplied. Then, too, missionary labor has taken on many new and most valuable phases. In colleges, theological seminaries, and training-schools of various kinds, the natives are fitted to take a leading part in the conversion of their countrymen. It has been discovered that the presence and co-operation of womankind are indispensable in almost every sphere of toil, but most of all in zenana visiting, and the medical care of their own sex. Nearly eight hundred American and European women are now expending their consecrated energies upon this field, and Hindu women to the number of almost thirty-three hundred. It is not too much to affirm that, since 1858, progress has been solid and substantial all along the line, while at certain points the gains have been astonishing.

Perhaps the famous mass movements are most characteristic, and most significant, in which whole villages, and groups of villages, by a common impulse cut loose from the worship of idols, and take long strides towards Christianity by putting themselves and their children under the influence and instruction of the missionaries. This strange process of wholesale turning to the Lord showed itself first somewhat early in the century in Travancore and Tinnevely in South India, in the missions of the London and Church Societies. Then Gossner's mission among the Khols in Central India made converts by the thousand, in the same startling fashion.

After the famine of 1877 the Baptists had a similar experience among the Telugus. Though at the end of thirty years of toil only twenty-five converts could be mustered, then of a sudden a multitude began to press into the kingdom, so that after a rigid examination 2,222 were baptized in a single day, and 8,691 within six weeks, while the harvest of souls has continued to this day, and the churches contain almost 50,000. The latest example of all is the American Methodist mission in the Northwestern Provinces, where month after month the baptisms have been averaging 1,000, while the fruitful Karen field in Burmah may also well be named in this connection.

Let these few figures sum up, as well as such figures can, the tangible results achieved after 100 years from Carey's advent, 80 years after British missionaries began to be tolerated upon British soil, 60 years after India, so far at least as wholly under British rule, was made accessible to the heralds of the cross of every name, and only 35 years after the Mutiny gave the final impulse towards evangelizing efforts upon an imposing scale. According to the tables of statistics carefully prepared for the Bombay Conference, supplemented somewhat from other reliable sources, the missionaries in India number 860, the women associated with them 700, the ordained natives 800, and the other native helpers of both sexes 12,000. The 6,700 mission schools give instruction to 300,000 children, there are 225,000 communicants gathered into some 1,600 churches, and the estimated number of adherents (native Christians) is a little less than 700,000. The following table will show the rate of progress:—

	1851.	1861.	1871.	1881.	1891.
Ordained missionaries.....	373	537	548	658	857
Women (not including wives). ..	..	..	423	541	711
Ordained natives.....	29	185	381	674	797
Other native helpers.....	551	1,779	4,822	7,333	8,491
Native helpers, female.....	..	..	967	1,944	3,278
Churches or congregations....	310	867	2,972	4,538	5,760
Communicants.....	17,306	47,274	78,414	145,097	223,941
Adherents.....	102,951	213,370	318,363	528,590	671,285
Pupils in mission schools.....	77,850	94,899	142,952	234,759	295,000

Such are the results already achieved. We will now briefly consider what remains to be done, and discuss the outlook for the future of Indian evangelization. No doubt, the most impressive, not to say oppressive, consideration is connected with the almost inconceivable vastness of the undertaking on hand. This is really the chief stronghold of Satan, this the mightiest fortress of heathenism under the sun. China follows hard after, Africa is comparable in some degree, but, on the whole, neither presents difficulties of such appalling magnitude. The peninsula itself is of continental proportions, containing an area approaching to that portion of the United States lying east of the Rocky Mountains, and equal to all Europe with Russia omitted. But more, the hordes, the myriads, the enormous masses of inhabitants! a population more than fourfold our own, far greater than that of the Dark Continent, matching the European millions dwelling to the west and south of the Vistula, and only surpassed by the swarms of human beings which jostle each other in the Celestial Empire. Added to this is the endless diversity of races, and tongues, and civilizations, and religions, and all mingled in inextricable confusion. Some three hundred languages and dialects are spoken. The Aryan is found neighbor to the Mongol, and with them dwell scores of aboriginal tribes. To the faith of the Hindu and the Buddhist, is joined that of the Moslem, the Parsee, and numerous forms of devil-worship. The climate, so tropical, is most trying to foreigners. The dominant race characteristics are such as to present an almost unequalled obstacle to the entrance and sway of gospel righteousness. The Brahmin is learned after a fashion, acute, subtle, crafty, and steeped in guile; while the multitude, given to grossest superstition, are timid and cringing, forceless and without ambition, ignorant and poverty-stricken in the extreme, and revel in filth both physical and moral. According to the census of 1891, out of a population of 288,000,000, only 11,554,000 males and 543,500 females are able to read

and write, while a total of nearly 250,000,000 are illiterate. Omitting the minor religions, the Buddhists number 7,131,361, the Mohammedans 57,321,164, the Hindus 207,731,727, and the Christians of every name and grade *only* 2,284,380, and of this insignificant fraction about two-thirds are non-Protestant.

Then the converts hitherto have been gathered almost altogether from the lowest strata of society, from among the lowest of the low, the poorest of the poor, the very off-scouring of the land. Upon the higher classes scarcely any impression has been made, both Islam and Hinduism as systems are still well-nigh untouched, and only a small percentage of the population has yet even heard the message of salvation. Without doubt, caste is the chief curse of India, and presents the most invulnerable bulwark against such weapons as are wielded by the Christian warrior. And finally, not only have the Bible, and intelligence, and Western civilization, been introduced into the land of the Vedas, but infidel literature and scepticism and the vices of the Occident have entered also to work mischief serious and wide-spread. And the Government is directly engaged in fostering the pernicious use of opium and alcohol. It is evident, then, that after a full hundred years of prayer, and giving, and toil, the momentous undertaking to win India for Christ has not yet passed the introductory stage. The grand climax of the struggle lies in the unseen future, while the complete victory is far away.

But the prospect is not, by any means, all forbidding and disheartening. There is a brighter side, which is not to be ignored. The mere command, "Go preach the gospel to every creature," is enough. Nothing is too hard for our God, since his resources are boundless. And yet, even in this difficult case, we are permitted to add sight to faith. Suggestions like these are pertinent, and in the aggregate are full of significance. Mention has already been made of the wide and irresistible spread of British authority, carrying to every corner of the peninsula peace, public order, English law, the wise

and righteous administration of justice, free speech and a free press, coupled with due restraint to all fanaticism; so that everywhere from the Indus to the Irawadi, from the Southern Cape to the "Home of Snow," the gospel may be preached and lived under adequate legal protection. Local self-government is established so far as is compatible with safety, and the natives are encouraged to fit themselves for much larger measures of political activity. In a spirit truly paternal, the powers that be minister most assiduously to the material and intellectual well-being of the woe-begone masses. Moreover, the bulk of Britons in high official station devote themselves with singular devotion and energy to the tremendous task of reducing current evils to a minimum, while securing for the subject class the utmost of substantial benefit, while many of these representatives of a great Christian power, in both character and life, are worthy exponents of New Testament piety and philanthropy. In the long run the daily spectacle, in every considerable community, of Anglo-Saxon vigor and intelligence and skill, coupled with truth-telling, sincerity, and downright, open, honesty, will make mightily for the moral redemption of the millions.

Much of the work hitherto accomplished was preliminary in its nature, cost an immense expenditure of time and nervous force, but has been done once for all, and from it missionaries in the future can turn to more direct efforts for evangelization. The Scriptures are published in all the principal languages, as well as an extensive Christian literature, and school books in great variety. In the educational institutions of various grades natives by the thousand are trained for Christian activity, and by the hundred thousand to a mastery of the fundamentals of a worthy and useful life. Medical missions carry soothing and healing to multitudes, and at the same time supply convincing arguments for the truth and supreme excellence of Christianity, while also operating with irresistible force to break down prejudice, to excite interest, and to lead to con-

viction and acceptance of the truth. The surpassing value of zenana work has been established. A century has thus been largely consumed in spying out the land, in trying experiments, and fashioning the instrumentalities required for meeting the peculiar difficulties discovered.

And, if the question is asked, why so little has been accomplished, no small part of the reply is found in the fact that so little has been attempted, the number of toilers has been so painfully and absurdly small. In India to-day is found about one missionary to more than three hundred thousand Mohammedans and heathen, or three to one million, a "supply" which is at the rate of less than *fifteen* ministers to the city of London, or some *two hundred* to the entire population of the United States, instead of our one hundred and ten thousand clergymen. Only scandalous "playing at missions," indeed. In proportion to the amount of labor bestowed, the harvest is far greater than is gathered in the most favored of Christian lands. Or, if we are reminded with a sceptical sneer that "the rulers and the Pharisees have not believed" on Jesus, that "not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble" have been called, this fact is not without analogy elsewhere in Christian history. Sometimes the gospel has found a lodgment first in the higher levels of society, as in Japan among the *samurai*, only one grade beneath the nobility. In the islands of the South Pacific and elsewhere, the chiefs led the way to a profession of godliness, and the people followed. But usually it has been the case that the lowly, the humble, the children of sorrow and want, have been most accessible to spiritual forces. And if in India it should even come to pass that, for a century yet, only pariahs, outcastes, the refuse of society, should repent and believe, here alone is a field where at least fifty million conversions are possible. And besides, if this immense substratum of population were thoroughly leavened with Christian ideas and principles and activities; if these hosts of the despised are

enlightened and uplifted; while the brightest and most consecrated are further trained to preach and teach, to organize and lead, who does not see that a sublime and decisive step has been taken towards the transformation of India? But we are not left to this as the only result probable, or possible. Both Brahmins and Moslems by the score, and hundred, and thousand, have already humbled their pride to accept Jesus as saviour, and have made to him a living sacrifice of their hearts and lives. The number is steadily increasing, and the wide diffusion of English education and the teaching of modern science are well-nigh certain, at least after a generation or two have passed, to prepare the way for great accessions from this source.

Besides, we may reasonably look forward to, and confidently expect, a multiplication of the mass movements towards the kingdom of heaven. Such certainly would be the blessed experience, if missionaries were supplied in sufficient numbers, and the Spirit of the Most High should descend with pentecostal power. As incidental but prophetic signs of good times presently to appear, may be named the nervous fear of the leaders of the old faiths lest their systems be undermined by Christian forces, which displays itself in efforts almost frantic to withstand the rising tide, to restore the past, willing even, if need be, to borrow from that which they hate. Then too, there is a noticeable and increasing readiness on the part of all, whether Hindu, Mohammedan, or Christian, to unite heartily in furthering various social and moral reforms. Immorality is scathingly rebuked, the sad estate of the outcaste is more and more commiserated, a movement against the iniquities of child-marriage has set in, while indignant voices are beginning to plead in behalf of the millions of widows, as well as to denounce the woes which rest upon the entire sex.

If now, after all the achievements of a century, the churches of Christendom shall go on in faith and love and holy

zeal to bestow liberally their gold and silver, shall send forth yet other hundreds of their choicest sons and daughters supported by supplication and thanksgiving, and so the work of redemption be vigorously carried forward, and further in God's own time and way some Indian Luther shall be raised up, or even a score or two of lesser men of truly apostolic gifts, then idolatry will be overthrown, accursed caste will melt away and disappear; Hindus, Moslems, and devil-worshippers together will come in troops, in hosts, eagerly seeking admission into the kingdom, and even in India Jesus Christ will be honored and obeyed as King of kings and Lord of lords.