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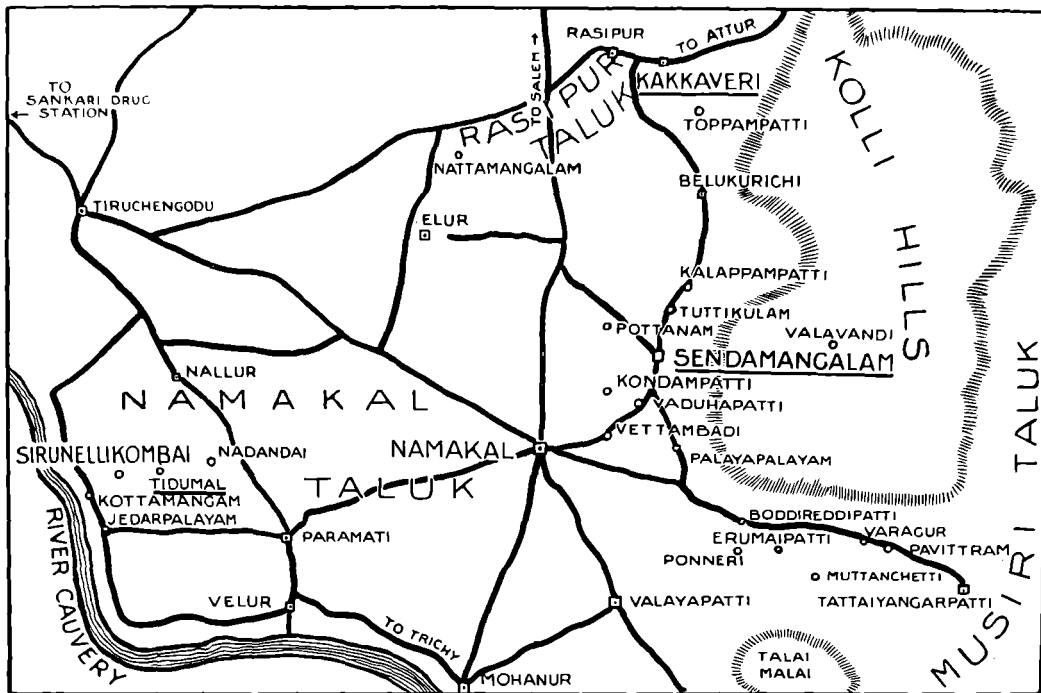
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PIONEERING ON
THE CAUVERY



SKETCH MAP SHOWING THE POSITIONS OF THE TOWNS AND VILLAGES REFERRED TO IN
 "PIONEERING ON THE CAUVERY."

PIONEERING ON THE CAUVERY

BY
DAVID MORLING,
OF
SENDAMANGALAM, SOUTH INDIA.

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PREFACE.

THIS little book is an attempt to give a faithful account of the pioneering efforts put forth on the northern bank of the sacred Cauvery. As the scene of activity is limited, and as the peoples, customs, climates and religions of this vast land are exceedingly diversified, the reader will refrain from making generalisations.

This record suffers the disadvantage of being written amidst the daily distractions of a growing mission field, now in a noisy wayside rest-house, and again in the quickly-changing camp of a preaching itinerancy. On the other hand, it has the advantage of being prepared in the midst of the actual conditions described.

The twelfth chapter, *Our Women*, is from the pen of my wife, to whose encouragement and inspiration I owe so much.

I gladly take this opportunity of expressing my heartfelt gratitude to the many friends who have supported this work in Namakal with much faith, constancy and self-sacrifice.

These pages are sent forth with the hope that they may lead to even deeper interest in the great missionary crusade of India, and to increased earnestness and intelligence in prayer for the activities here recorded.

D. MORLING.

The Strict Baptist Mission,
Sendamangalam, South India.

24th December, 1923.

GLOSSARY.

- BOY a male domestic servant.
- BUNDY a country cart.
- CHAVADI ... an open rest-house.
- CHOLUM ... a species of millet.
- CHOTA early breakfast.
- DACOIT a professional robber.
- DISTRICT ... the unit of British administration, consisting of about 10 or 12 taluks
- GOPURAM ... a temple tower.
- GURU a religious teacher.
- JUTKA a pony cart.
- KAMBU a species of millet.
- MEM-SAHIB ... a married lady.
- MITTAHDAR ... a landed proprietor.
- MOFUSSIL ... the rural districts of India.
- PARIAH one of the depressed classes.
- PIE One-twelfth of an anna: three pies=one farthing.
- RAGI a species of millet.
- RAZAI a thin mattress.
- SANNIYASI ... a religious ascetic.
- SHANDY a weekly market.
- SWAMI a god.
- TALUK a sub-division of a district, and about the size of an English southern county.
- THOORAI ... a gentleman, usually indicating a white man.
- TOM-TOM ... a small drum.
- TOPI a pith helmet.
- UNION a small town council or municipal body.

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS.

SKETCH MAP.—*Frontispiece.*

A STREET IN SENDAMANGALAM.

HANUMAN, THE MONKEY GOD (NAMAKAL).

A CORNER OF NAMAKAL TOWN.

THE SENDAMANGALAM BOYS' HOSTEL.

DAY SCHOOL AND CHAPEL AT SENDAMANGALAM.

THE NEW KAKKAVERI CHAPEL AND PREACHER'S HOUSE.

SIRUNBLIKOMBAI SCHOOL.

Pioneering on the Cauvery.

CHAPTER I.

PROSPECTING.

IT is 3.30 a.m. when, with half-awakened senses, we tumble out of the Madras-West Coast mail train into the dull, murky station of Salem. A few dirty oil lamps just render visible the shadowy gloom and the general confusion of a typical mofussil station. As we grope about in our endeavour to extract our belongings from promiscuous heaps of baggage, we stumble over prostrate forms neatly tucked away in small corners or stretched full length across the gangway. The waiter of the refreshment room is utterly unconscious of being on duty, as he lies on the cold flagstones, barring the very entrance to the restaurant.

This station, like most others in up-country places, is by no means situated in the town after which it is named. To reach Salem we have to take a three-mile *jutka* ride, and on the way we note the excellent condition of the road, and faintly discern the avenue of gigantic banyans whose aerial roots are seeking the mother earth.

We alight in the main bazaar street of this flourishing town, put our luggage on an adjacent verandah, and then seat ourselves on the bundles

of bedding. The eastern sky has not yet "whitened," but people, draped in long, white cloths that effectually cover every part of the body except two black eyes, steal silently along the streets like ghosts of a strange land. Even to us white folk the air is chilly, for the clear, dry atmosphere and the hard, rocky soil afford us here at night more relief from the tropical heat of day than that to which we have been accustomed on the coast. But it is nearly time to be starting, so, after taking a frugal repast, we pack our impedimenta into one cart, deposit ourselves in another, and then away for Attur, thirty miles distant.

The dawn has now broken, and we look abroad with hungry eyes, wondering what kind of country it is that we are prospecting. Evidently this is no uninteresting land of unrelieved plains, for, a few miles to the right, running parallel with our road, are the beautiful Bodai Hills; at the same distance on our left rises another range clothed with dense forest. Apparently the rice harvest is over, though it is only the beginning of March; except for patches of tall, rank sugar-cane and little squares of *ragi*, the fields are almost bare. The hot weather starts much earlier here than it does in Madras; already the banyans are protecting themselves from the torrid heat by shedding their heavy emerald attire, and even the hardy tamarind is showing signs of exhaustion.

At ten o'clock we pull up at a large village, stretch our legs in walking round the principal streets, halt at a little open shelter, rest ourselves and the ponies awhile, then take breakfast while the local rustics squat near by and remark on the table improprieties of Westerners. At three

o'clock we set off again, and reach our destination by sunset, heartily glad to be done with *juktas* for a time.

In India, outside the largest cities, we know of no such happy institutions as hotels; so our paternal Government, partly to provide for officials in their frequent inspections, and partly to afford shelter for white, non-official, *bona fide* travellers, has erected on the more frequented roads *dak* bungalows, where for a small daily rent one may stay on his journey. Beyond a couple of chairs and a table there is no furniture, for the visitor brings his own bedding, cooking utensils, crockery and other necessaries. The Anglo-Indian is usually a migrant, a bird of passage, and his journeys are always rather elaborate proceedings. It is no case of packing a portmanteau and whistling for a taxi. He must bring his culinary utensils, and, moreover, a man to use them; he must include his bed-sheets, pillows, *razai*, and the cot on which to spread them. Indeed, wherever he goes he must take his house upon his back and travel at a pace in accordance therewith. Happily, in Attur there is a travellers' bungalow, where we may spread out all this paraphernalia and repose for the night. Like every other bungalow it has a sheltering verandah, a fairly lofty and spacious room, with unadorned, whitewashed walls and bare stone floor. What is more important just now is that we have a small apartment furnished with a big zinc tub, where we eagerly perform our ablutions.

Apart from a few neglected traces of fighting in the East India Company days, we find in the town of Attur very little of local, historical, or mission interest. The next morning, hearing of the arrival

of two white men, a Christian Government official, a convert from Brahmanism, comes and discovers himself to us. In the providence of God he was shortly afterwards transferred to the Namakal Taluk, where he rendered us inestimable service in securing land and settling disputes.

After the sun has well passed the meridian we again climb into our hired *jutka*, the vehicle which can often become, to the European, an instrument of exquisite torture. Our seat is the floor, made of bamboo strips, which, after a few miles, make themselves extremely obtrusive. The sides are of thin matting, which afford most inadequate protection from the searching sun. The top, all torn and jagged, is made at such a height—it would almost seem with malicious intent—that even with legs stretched ungainly over the tailboard, our heads strike the framework at every stone or hole we negotiate. The pony is small, unfit, underfed and vicious. If you have any heart for dumb animals you will do well to lift up the collar and also look at the feet before accepting the animal for hire. To-day we have had Hobson's choice, so that notwithstanding all the driver's vigorous persuasions, we are unable to reach our halting-place before darkness has fallen. At last, with aching limbs, crazy bundies and jaded ponies we stumble our way through the gathering gloom into a lonely village.

We are by no means welcome. The villagers are suspicious of the new arrivals, and refuse to provide us with wood for a fire or water for our beasts. Sleeping accommodation forms another problem, for here we have no travellers' bungalow. Happily there is a police outpost, and we occupy the

building for the night. The lock-up appears to be little used for its intended purpose, for it is stacked with various official books and littered with papers, so we accommodate ourselves in the little office, which is merely a room of three walls, decorated with three rifles, a sabre, and a few pairs of handcuffs. Culinary operations are carried on outside to the lively interest of neighbours, who closely watch our every movement. It is not long before that amazingly adaptable creature, the Indian "boy," has built his stove of three large stones, made the fire, cooked our food, and served it most creditably over a white tablecloth spread on the floor. Our simple but hearty meal over, we look around to make ourselves comfortable for the night. A board on the floor is my bed—these were the days when we had not heard of the convenient, collapsible "gold medal" camping cot—and, in a few moments, with the murmur of bundymen and the din of a festival still sounding in my ears, I fall asleep.

With the rising of a sickly moon at 3 a.m. we bestir ourselves, take one or two rusks and hot coffee, pack up and start off again. Just outside the village is the famous Ayalpatti pass, where the foothills of the Bodai range on the right meet those of the Kolli plateau on the left. Two centuries ago it was strongly fortified and bravely defended by the men of the ancient Chola kingdom; now it is known more for maurauding cheetahs and daring dacoities than for any military prowess. The Head Constable, fearing for our safety in starting off at such an unheard-of hour, provides us with an escort of four men armed with long bamboos weighted with iron rings. Sending the

carts a little ahead, we exercise our limbs and drink in the cool morning air as we step out over rock and ravine, by dense jungle and babbling mountain stream, reaching the open country just at sunrise.

A dozen miles bring us to a thriving town, where everyone seems intent on his own business. As it is a place of 15,000 inhabitants there are several Government offices and schools, but, as far as we can gather, not one indigenous Christian.

In the afternoon we strike south on our way to the County Town of Namakal. Far away on our left rises a great blue-black range, twenty-five miles long and from 3,500 feet to 4,500 feet in height. Many and strange are the stories we hear of those mountains, which receive their name—Kolli—from the belief that they kill (*kollu*) all the people of the plains who go there; an opinion reasonable enough, perhaps, in view of the malarial fever in those parts. It is certainly one of the dark places of the earth, for no Protestant missionary or Christian teacher has ever been there, and we learn that the people are rude, unlettered, strange in their customs, and wholly given over to demonolatry.

Before sunset we reach Namakal, and are walking through its wide, clean, well-laid-out streets. Towering several hundred feet above us on our right is a boss of gneiss rock, the gray granite that abounds throughout the Salem district. Crowning its impenetrable, perpendicular walls are the frowning bastions and crenellated parapets of an old fort. There, daubed in huge outline, is the ever-present white and ochre Vishnu trident, the *namam*, from which the town takes its name. As now, for the first time, we look up at the old bulwarks, the pro-

pinquity of the rock, and its sacred symbol, of the forbidding ramparts and their adjacent fanes, seems so full of ominous meaning that we turn our faces away and send up a prayer to God, who has given us powerful weapons, "mighty to the pulling down of strongholds."

When first tracing out the plan of this tour, it was in the town of Sendamangalam that I was particularly interested, a place about seven miles distant; so, after thoroughly looking around our present surroundings, we go on to the town that is afterwards to become our headquarters. The people, obviously, are both ignorant and poor. Hundreds of the houses are little better than human kennels, and the folk—men, women and children—flock behind us in an excited, chattering crowd. The neighbourhood, owing to the great fertility of the soil, is a very populous one; and not only is Sendamangalam the largest town in several of the counties here, but the whole of this part of the Namakal Taluk is teeming with villages. Before returning to Namakal, we call at the Post Office, hidden away in the dark, dirty room of an old Brahman's house, and there find letters of cheer from Madras.

Our next journey is to the railway, a run of nearly thirty miles from Namakal. This leads us through the interesting Taluk town of Tiruchengode, clustering at the foot of a mountain, which rises precipitously out of the flat plains. We cannot help contrasting the poor, wretched, tumble-down houses, mere hovels of broken mud-walls and torn, leaky roofs, with the spacious, stone-built, gold-pinnacled temples that confront us at every turn. At the foot of the mountain is a group of

these gilded fanes, and from them winds up to the summit a long stairway, every step of which is cut out of the solid granite. It passes by oily shrines, gory altars, cool rest-houses, massive *gopurams* covered with mythological carving, and leads eventually to the great temple that surmounts them all, which is plainly visible, even forty miles away, where I write these words. At every corner we are met by the sacred red and white trident; wherever we go there are horses and elephants of baked clay, painted in the gaudiest of colours, for the nightly delectation of the gods and godlings as they scour the countryside. In every direction do we find that (to us) incredible monstrosity—streets devoted *by religion* to commercialised vice. And again, there is no Christian worker to sound forth the message of salvation from sin, shame and sorrow; not a single light to lead these poor deluded ones from the darkness of heathendom to the glory of God's Kingdom. Most evidently we have achieved the aim with which we left Madras—we have discovered the most needy part of the whole vast Tamil country.

.

We are seated now, not on the hard floor of a creaking, crazy *jutka*, but in a comfortable corner of a railway carriage. In a few hours we shall be in Salem, and both of us are realising that the hours now passing are pregnant with tremendous possibilities. Though we hope still to visit one or two more *taluks*, we are somehow persuaded that we have already seen the district where the forward movement will find its true scope. Realising how critical these flying moments are in the

history of the mission, my colleague, Mr. E. A. Booth, takes out his Testament, and, with deep emotion, reads from Phil. iv. : " Be careful for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God ; and the peace of God which passeth all understanding, shall garrison your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus." Eagerly obeying the blessed injunction we kneel then and there on the carriage floor, place our burden upon the Lord, and beseech His guidance.

Not only did we receive instant relief, courage and confidence, but after events have shown that, in the great issues that were then being settled, we were given heaven's light, which has continued till now to be our guide.

CHAPTER II.

BEGINNINGS.

FIRST things ever have an interest of their own. The first day spent in seeing the sights of London is but as yesterday. The first shilling earned by our own industry is still in our possession. The first night on the mighty deep lives in memory unfaded. One's first glimpse of India in the warm glow of early dawn is still fresh to-day. Our first experiences after leaving Madras, as we began to carve out a lonely path, stand out in bold relief, undimmed by the years.

About three months after the occurrences of the previous chapter, and after many preparations for starting our new life in the mofussil, we spent a quiet and happy day with our colleagues in Pursawalkam, Madras. At sunset we met in the parlour, commended one another to the grace of God, then set out for the Central Station, whence we soon steamed away with the good wishes and "Godspeeds" of those who had most kindly assisted us in our early Indian training.

Unable to take up our abode immediately in the place we had chosen as our headquarters, we rented a house in Salem, thirty miles from our objective. (This town is the Government official headquarters of the Salem District, which covers an area of about 6,831 square miles, comprises ten *taluks*, or counties, and has a population of two and a quarter

millions.) While temporarily residing in the District capital, I was frequently obliged to take the road journey down to Sendamangalam. Those were the days when a "cycle bundy" was a great rarity in these country parts, and it is to be regretted that my unusual mode of locomotion was often the cause of strange mishaps in the traffic of our main road. On my meeting a double bullock cart the bulls would come to a sudden standstill, stare with amazement at the fast-approaching object, and then, before the equally surprised driver could gain control over them, rush pell mell into the field or jungle. Many a time have I seen a nervous little trotting steer give its master the shock of his life by suddenly hurtling down the road embankment and completely capsizing the cart. Honesty demands that we add, too, that when there was no real danger involved, the writer enjoyed the fun of seeing a lively bull break clear of its conveyance and, with tossing head and upturned tail, go careering across the fields. But the women were as foolish as the oxen. Often have I seen the old ladies suddenly disappear from the road and afterwards furtively peer from behind some tree; or the young women run into the jungle and hide behind the acacia bushes.

All that is now changed. Along the same road, though not, alas, in Sendamangalam, may daily be seen not only "push bikes," but motor-cycles, cars, and motor-buses, the latter crowded to a dangerous degree with Indians of both sexes and all classes and castes. It is nearly time for some to qualify their dogmatism about the "changelessness of the immovable East," for it is now fairly evident that the Indian is reasonably adaptable, and

yields to innovation when his own comfort and convenience are involved.

On arriving at Sendamangalam after these various excitements, our first business was to secure a house. The inhabitants of the town are poor agriculturalists, and many of their houses are mere mud and thatch hovels containing no window, only one room and one door; so there was no alternative to acquiring land, and building our own domicile. After many anxious journeys between Namakal and Sendamangalam we concluded with great difficulty an agreement with the principal Mittahdar, or estate holder, of the latter town to hold a piece of ground on a lease of four years. Glad to gain a foothold somehow, though assured for such a brief period, and trusting the Lord would eventually secure the land to us, we boldly started building our house. It was the day of small things, and when we staked out the ground for our humble dwelling, we little thought this was to be quickly followed by the erection of over two dozen buildings in the same mission field.

The task of securing lime, bricks, tiles and suitable workmen in an entirely strange part of the country was not a small one, so we looked about for some little place in town where we could stay for short periods, and thus reduce the fatigue of long journeys to and from Salem. Through the kindness of the Mittahdar who had rented us the land—perhaps his conscience smote him for exacting from us such hard terms—we were given the use of a little *chavadi*, or rest house, devoted to the temple of Mari Amman, demon of smallpox. Like the usual rest-house, there was no front wall, and through the dilapidated courtyard wall mischievous

boys would crawl and pry, so we enjoyed neither privacy nor cleanliness. The first night spent there in Sendamangalam is yet fresh in my memory. As on many other occasions, there was no cot, so the writer stretched himself out on a low, hard, teak table, graciously lent for the purpose. Not being supplied with a very generous covering of adipose tissue, we always find this ascetic experience somewhat trying; yet even in this, practice has revealed not only certain compensations, but also little ways of mitigating the discomfort.

Needless to say, Mrs. Morling was most anxious to come and see her future home and sphere of work. Soon after her arrival, as we were watching the progress of the building, we saw groups of people returning from the gruesome ceremony of sacrificing a buffalo at the temple of Sellay, sister of the above-mentioned Mari Amman. As soon as they caught sight of a white woman their excitement knew no bounds, and immediately, as if by magic, people came flocking around from all directions. The throng pressed upon us in such unceremonious fashion that we sought the shelter of our little rest-house, which, unfortunately, was the other side of the town. As we passed through the great square in front of the main temple the crowd swelled into thousands, when several constables, fearing trouble, came forward to hold back the struggling masses. At last we reached the *chavadi*; but even then, notwithstanding the dire threatenings of policemen and workmen, some clambered over the wall, and others wriggled through the broken windows, in order to gain a more favourable view of the white visitors. Happily the sun had now set; the fast-gathering darkness soon came

to our relief, and dispersed our eager, tumultuous onlookers.

Sometimes these attentions, when less insistent and clamorous, gave us good opportunities. At the commencement of our building operations we erected two mud and thatch outhouses for sheltering the horse and for keeping building materials. Often when the noise and dirt of the *chavadi* had driven us here, people from the villages would come and congregate to see their white sister and the equally strange baby, then steal up quietly to see if other parts of the body were the colour of the face and hands, and frequently kneel down and lift up their hands as in worship before little Gussie. More than once have Preacher Varatharajulu and I taken these opportunities for giving a straight Gospel address, exemplifying the truth that "God has made of one blood all nations of men."

By this time the beginning of the monsoon and the consequent difficulty of travelling made us anxious to get settled near our work. Just as the roof was being erected on the house, a torrential rain, which deluged the whole neighbourhood, threw down one of the walls and thus greatly retarded the construction: this determined us to move into Sendamangalam at the earliest opportunity. Then started a chapter of accidents and disappointments which seemed to be nothing less than the work of him who from the beginning has withstood the progress of God's kingdom. Furniture was all packed and sent ahead, and we were about to get into our *jutka* when a mishap befel the horse, delaying for some time our departure. Another day was fixed, but that morning the

"boy," our indispensable factotum, was in a state of collapse from a hard bout of fever. Hindrances came along on other days which still further detained us. At last we started off, but with no driver. Halfway on the journey Mrs. Morling was taken suddenly and violently ill, so that I was obliged to leave her in the care of an Indian cooly, and go to a town seven miles away for instant medical aid. The next day, in a downpour of rain, we arrived at the old *chavadi*, where we decided to stay till the house was finished.

Neighbours were very kind, our workers most helpful; but the limited space, the driving wind and rain, the insanitary condition of our surroundings, and the entire lack of privacy made life trying and health rather precarious. In China and other Asiatic mission fields it may be quite reasonable for Europeans to live in native quarters; but in South India this can be done only to the ruin of health and the hindering of work, and will be attempted only by the quixotic and foolhardy.

Very grateful were we, on 4th November, 1907, to move into our little home. Its one long, narrow room was partitioned into three by curtains; its walls were low and unplastered; its roof of tiles and bamboos was uncieled. Many a time in the hot season we have gone outside under the tamarind trees, vainly endeavouring to escape the intolerable heat. Still, during a critical part of our career this was our home, hence it even now remains sacred in our memory.

Mention has been made of a horse. Provided the rider has a fair income and a good share of physical endurance, there is no doubt that of all the modes of travel, from bullock bundies to motor-

cars, the most suitable for up-country life is horse-riding. Soon after reaching Salem we purchased a horse that had done good service in both the Army and the Police, an animal still full of vigour and capable of splendid work. It was one thing to buy the horse, and quite another to ride him; but what we lacked in this valuable accomplishment we made up in enthusiasm and determination. A retired Brahman cavalry officer suggested learning without either stirrups or saddle. The leather seat we readily dispensed with, as the steed was well clothed; but riding without stirrups a horse that knew far more tricks than the rider was a spartan exercise that few would care to practise in a shade temperature of 105°F.

All this time we had been longing to get into the villages, so after becoming a little less inefficient in the noble art of horsemanship we set off early one morning towards the foot of the Kolli Hills. For three hours we had been riding along the rough track, and the sun had long risen over the mountains that now towered above us, when we arrived at the outskirts of a hillmen's village.

Having tied the horse to the foot of an old tree we approached the village, and found it surrounded first by a thick, thorny hedge enclosing some choice gardens, and then by a deep ditch and a stone wall, protecting the homes from predatory cheetahs, black bear and wild pig. The simple rustics had for some time been nervously peeping round various corners, but as soon as we ventured inside the wall they all disappeared, and we found ourselves deserted, in the centre of a circle of houses, every door closed against us. Sitting on the ground, to appear less formidable, we sent round

a preacher to persuade the people to return. After a time a few men-folk most reluctantly appeared, but soon became interested in what they could understand of the Message so strange and new.

We moved on to a neighbouring hamlet. Here we found one old woman, but she was there because she was too crippled to run away. We sat close by her on a rice-pounding stone, and while this poor, trembling, ancient soul professed to be engrossed in spinning cotton, we endeavoured to make the way of salvation simple to her. Presently a dozen or more men came one by one out of their hiding-places, and, squatting at a respectful distance, heard for the first time of Christ and His salvation.

The relentless sun has now reached the zenith; its dazzling glare makes our eyes tingle and burn; the slight breeze, instead of cooling our burning cheeks, comes as the hot breath of a fierce furnace. In the villages not even a hovel is open to us; our only shelter is a respectable cowshed in the shade of an adjacent cocoanut grove. Thither we retreat, and, with the friendly calves as our companions, remain till the heat has somewhat abated.

Again we set off across the fields, and after a warm ride come to a village evidently more important than the others. This time we are more cautious, and send round a lad to advise the people not to run away, but to listen to the good news we are bringing them. To our disappointment everyone vanishes except two men engaged in re-thatching a house, so we address ourselves to the small, entrapped audience on the house-top till they gladly come down, sit beside us, and listen to the old, old story. In the next place we discover a

man who is able to read, and who not only persuades his neighbours to come round and listen, but, to our delight, purchases several booklets and receives some pamphlets.

It is at a late hour, with weary, aching limbs, but grateful hearts, that we reach home; grateful that the torch of God's truth has been held up in dark places, that the love of God in Christ Jesus has been proclaimed where it had never been heard before.

CHAPTER III.

THE FIELD.

WE are now in a position to observe more particularly our surroundings.

Sendamangalam, the *mangalam* or home of the god Senda, is situated long. $78^{\circ} 15' E.$, lat. $11^{\circ} 15' N.$, and is thus about 200 miles S.S.W. of Madras city. The town has a population of nearly 15,000, enjoys an elevation of 800 feet, and stands in a semi-circle of mountains, which form a small part of the western extremity of the Eastern Ghats. These hills, as mountains are generally called in India, being only a few miles away on our north and east, are a dominating factor in our climate.

The boundaries of the field, to the evangelisation of which we have devoted ourselves, are quite clearly defined. Along the northern limits, at a distance of about twenty miles by road, run the Bodai Hills, joined at their eastern extremity by the Kollis. The latter range, raising its massive, forest-clad sides suddenly out of the level plains, forms part of our eastern boundary. On the south-east, at a distance of ten miles from the Kollis, stands the solitary and imposing Talai Mountain, surmounted on its almost inaccessible crest by an ancient Hindu temple, which makes the wide, bare slopes below so sacred that the bite of even a cobra is rendered innocuous. From this

point, for a distance of thirty-five miles to the south-west and west, our limit is formed by the river Cauvery, sacred mother of the south, whose fertilising floods bring abundance to the teeming thousands found in its verdant valley. Moreover, along its banks, as at Mohanur and Srirangam, the brief visits of sages and gods have left behind the fragrance of undying sanctity, and opened up fresh avenues for expiating sin and enriching temples.

Situated, as we are, near the junction of the Western and the Eastern Ghats, our monsoons are neither so reliable nor so heavy as those on the western and eastern coasts. The great western chain partly shuts us off from the S.W. monsoon, which starts in the month of June; the N.E. rains, which begin in October, are largely stemmed by the eastern mountains. However, we make up an annual rainfall of about 28 inches: this, with the mountain streams, the alluvial deposits from the hills, and the great irrigating canals of the Cauvery, gives us one of the most fertile rice-growing districts to be seen in this part of the country.

The temperature, of course, runs high. We have no winter; we cannot boast of even a cool season. Our seasons are hot, hotter, and hottest, the last-named running from March to August. During these months, especially April and May, the mercury in deep shade generally stands between 100° and 110° F. At sunset on the verandah we may register 100°. On one occasion, when occupying the position of Chairman of the Sendamangalam Union, I was speaking to the Salem District Medical Officer, and, angling for a compliment, remarked that my Union was generally free from

epidemics. His immediate and ungenerous reply was, "You have little merit in that. Sendamangalam heat would bake up the microbes of any epidemic." Though the days are hot, the speedy refraction of the earth's heat, due to a rocky soil and a dry atmosphere, gives us cooler nights than those on the coasts; while a fair elevation and a well-drained county keep us free from the terrible scourge of indigenous malaria.

The density of population here is high, ranging from 500 to 600 per square mile. In the 1,000 square miles of this field it may safely be said that we have 1,000 towns, villages and hamlets with no less than 500,000 souls. A popular missionary writer has recently made some startling comparisons between the size of Africa and that of India. But it should be remembered that though Africa has an area six times greater than ours, the population of this country is nearly double that of the black continent.

Authentic details of local ancient history lie buried in heaps of legendary and mythical rubbish. To the historian and antiquarian India is a land of disappointments. Noble ruins suffer ruthless demolition, and the history of those that have escaped such vandalism is generally shrouded in ignorance and superstition.

We are told that Sanscrit literature, as early as the fourth century before Christ, makes mention of three southern kingdoms—Pandya, Chola, Chera. For centuries this county belonged to the Chola kingdom. The oldest Brahmans of Sendamangalam will tell how the Rajah came here with a mighty host of "cavalry, elephants and chariots" to demand tribute which had fallen into arrears

Then came the ascendancy of the neighbouring State of Mysore, with its Mohammedan usurpers, Haidar Ali and Tippu Sultan. The ravages of Tippu laid bare the whole countryside, so that the Chief of Sendamangalam, one Ramachundra Nayakkan, raised forts for the protection of his people. The depredations of the Muslims became so numerous and grievous that Ramachundra built a strong fastness in the jungle at the foot of the Kollis in which to take refuge, and erected granaries hidden away in miles of thick forest. Soon afterwards some measure of security for the town was attempted by their connecting all its earthworks with a moat; but the rapacity of Tippu's freebooters knew neither check nor bounds. Men on points of vantage were kept by the Nayakkan on the look-out against the enemy, and as soon as the sound of horses' hoofs was heard the alarm was sounded. Women at once with a shriek cried, "The horsemen! the horsemen!" and snatched up their little ones. The old men, gathering together a few trinkets, hastily hid them under the fireplace. The young men tied a few cash in their loin cloths, threw a bag of rice on their shoulders, and then fled with wife and children to the more hospital neighbourhood of cheetah, hyena and black bear.

Deliverance came with the arrival of Lord Cornwallis. A crushing defeat imposed upon the Sultan at his capital led to the first Treaty of Seringapatam, which wrested, amongst other tracts, the whole of the Salem District from Mysore, and brought peace even to the jungles of Sendamangalam. The old forts are now forgotten. One was erected on what is now our first compound, but, in

providing materials for house, chapel and boarding-school it has totally disappeared. The excellent bricks of others have been carted away for constructing granaries; and the old fortified retreat is now a green field of millet.

We have here an epitome of Indian history—the ancient dynasty of Chola, the ostentatious demand for tribute, the hated arrival of the Muslims, devastation wrought by corrupt deputies, the advent of the English, the restoration of peace, the ploughing up of the old forts, their conversion into houses, granaries and mission buildings; and now little children playing around their mothers on the slopes of the old moat.

Of fauna we cannot boast anything big. Elephants, tigers, bison (the lion is all but extinct in India) and other large animals do not deign to patronise our little mountain groups, but confine themselves to such vast roaming jungles as are found on the Nilgiris, Palnis, and other mountain systems of the west. The cheetah is found in the forest of the Kolli slopes, and not long ago it roamed around Sendamangalam, where we have rudely-carved stones erected to the memory of those who dispatched their fierce assailants with the spear. The tree-climbing, termite (white ant) eating black bear is more numerous, while the cowardly but destructive hyena and the dangerous wild pig are to be found anywhere near a bit of thick forest. Every year the Indian Government publishes a "butcher's bill," in which it attempts to show the approximate number of people killed by snakes and wild animals. Last year in British India 3,263 persons were killed by wild animals, and over 20,000 by snakes.

Though in this country the monkey is worshipped as a god, many of its habits are anything but godlike. We may see Hanuman disporting in any wayside avenue, and watching us with grinning face from many a corner. He delights to ride on the backs of pigs and buffaloes; considers it great fun to tease the silly goats, which vainly try to toss him with their horns; persists in scratching and pulling the ears of the docile cow; finds pleasant diversion in overturning water-pots and stealing the horses' boiled gram. At times a captain will muster his troupe, bear down on a village and tear the tiles from the roofs for sheer wantonness. A woman was carrying on her head a basketful of corn and vegetable, when down pounced a large male monkey from an adjacent tree, sprang with one bound from the road on to the basket, and threw it to the ground. Immediately a dozen accomplices fell upon the spoil, and before I was able to reach the woman or render any assistance, each one was bearing away his portion to the topmost boughs of his leafy home. Notwithstanding almost daily annoyance of this kind, the fear and veneration that the people have for this tyrant protect him from any adequate reprisals.

The feathered tribe ranges from the tiny sun-bird, picture of sweetest elegance, feeding like a gorgeous butterfly on the nectar of flowers, to the great vulture, embodiment of sheer ugliness, or the noisy, cumbersome hornbill, chased and bullied by every crow.

As to the vegetable kingdom, what first strikes the eye of the newcomer is the graceful palm. The date, the value of which in sugar-making is only

now being realised, flourishes inland farther north. The multifarious uses of the palmyra, which is found on every hand, vary from the making of toddy and country sugar to the providing of rafters and thatching materials. The graceful, feathery cocoanut is utilised in every part, from the thick, valuable husk of its fruit to the leaflets and mid-ribs of its beautiful palm-leaves. The sago yields its well-known food not from the long ropes of seed which hang from its head, but from the starchy pith found underneath the bark. Timber trees here include the world-famous, termite-proof teak, the iron wood, jack tree, cedar and mango; but these, with the bamboo, the largest of the grasses, are almost wholly confined to the forest.

Regarding grains, it must not be thought that rice is the staple food of the people. The ordinary peasant can find neither enough nutriment in it as a daily food, nor sufficient money to purchase it as a luxury. The chief millets, *cholam*, *kambu* and *ragi*, are much more common. *Cholam*, by some called maize, stands rank and strong from seven to ten feet high. Some English townfolk think that the "hundredfold" of the Gospels is unheard of to-day, but I have sometimes counted over 2,000 good grains in a single ear of *cholam*, and found more than one ear to a single plant. *Kambu*, a very small grain on a tall plant, is eaten not only by agriculturalists, but by others who cannot afford to live wholly on rice. *Ragi*, the abomination of "respectable people," contains a high proportion of food property, but is used regularly only by the poorest.

The cultivation of cotton and of the plantain has very greatly increased during the past few years,

and has doubtless been partly responsible for the rise in the price of food grains. India has such a vast and largely indigent population to maintain that she cannot afford thus deliberately to encourage the export of foods and raw materials.

Truly indigenous flowering shrubs and herbs are a disappointment, but the great scarlet inflorescence of the *gold mohur* tree (*Poinciana Regia*), the beautifully convoluted bloom of the sacred *Pagoda* tree, and the lovely flowers of the climber *Gloriosa Superba* are a real delight. On the upper slopes of the hills the nature-lover may revel amongst wild *Canna*, balsam and begonia, and the amateur botanist may find no little interest in gathering numerous specimens of orchids.

Let us not moralise upon it, yet it is sad to reflect that though our flowers are so perfect in form and even gorgeous in colour, they are lacking in fragrance. We have nothing to be compared with the little violet, so humble and lowly, so exquisite in perfume. Our birds, from the many-hued kingfisher to the beautifully-crested woodpecker, are much admired for the gaiety of their plumage, but we hear no nightingale pouring forth its thrilling strains from the shades of early night.

We have said nothing of the people. What can we say but that contained in the following chapters? Yet, just one word here. Please don't call them "blacks," for many of them in colour of skin can give points to the Italian. Nor "niggers," for we are in India the home of time-honoured religions and a hoary civilisation. Many of them were well versed in astronomy, mathematics, and

surgery when our forefathers were roaming about decked in paint and feathers. Nor "natives," for in India, except when we wish to distinguish closely between that which is strictly indigenous and that which is foreign, this word, for many good reasons, is now taboo. We who have given our lives to the Indian, while not ignorant of his many failings, love him for his own sake, and for the sake of Christ, the Son of MAN, who was made in the image of us all.

CHAPTER IV.

PIONEERING.

ERE this it will have become evident to the reader that the work to be done in this new field is not path-finding, but *path-making*. In coming to Sendamangalam we did not take over a well-ordered farm with ready-built homestead, convenient barns and granaries, all the latest labour-saving appliances, and well-cultivated fields waving with the golden corn of harvest. We came as colonists into unbroken country, erecting our own log cabin, staking out the estate, and clearing the virgin soil of stones, bush and pestilent undergrowth. In such pioneering let us be prepared for obstacles, "insuperable" difficulties, heartbreaking disappointments.

School work, from the beginning, has been of inestimable value in Indian Christian missions. Indeed, many believe childhood to be the key to our problem. At seven or eight years of age the children's pretty, open faces, their frank, innocent ways, easily win our hearts; but we remember that before another seven summers have passed the bright eyes will have become dull, the smiling mouth drooping and hardened; the eyebrows contracted and lowering; the whole countenance often betraying ignorance and duplicity. A Tamil proverb says, "Learning acquired in youth is like letters in stone"; so one of our earliest efforts was the starting of a school for girls.

A few days after it had first been opened I paid a visit with the sincere and innocent desire to



A STREET IN SENDAMANGALAM.

encourage teacher and scholars. Sitting on an old rice mortar, I noted in my pocket-book various articles of furniture required, such as blackboard, stool, benches. The next day the teacher made a most tearful report, and informed me that all the girls had suddenly left, "as the *thoorai* had written down their names for immediate, forcible conversion"!

One evening I called at the school and passed a remark on the small attendance, when two bright little girls informed me that the parents of the absentees had heard us preach the previous day in the *shandy* (weekly market), and, fearing we should drag their children into the new way, had withdrawn them. Another day the preacher was seen riding in our *jutka* with a non-caste man, when the number of scholars again suddenly diminished. Worst of all, Adaikalam, the teacher, was observed one evening coming into the *chavadi* and actually nursing our little boy. This was more than human nature could endure, so the following Monday only two tiny tots appeared for their lessons. The school was afterwards re-started in another part of the town, where the people had petitioned us to give them a teacher. But inflexible custom ever barred the way; dark suspicion and inveterate prejudice always dogged our steps.

A favourite story in the town at that time was that if Hindu children were sent to the school, the white man would tattoo the cross on their foreheads (a custom among Roman Catholics), thrust beef down their throats, and so make them Christians. Many people believed that the chief con-

dition to joining the new religion was committing that greatest of all abominations, eating the flesh of the cow. At last this child of unstinted effort, over which we bestowed such pains and made such prayer, sickened again, died, and was buried.

Surely we see here the desirability, not only of high-birth Christians giving up their old caste distinctions and prejudices, but of low-birth Christians, for the sake of their Hindu neighbours, giving up practices that cause many to stumble. The lofty teaching of Paul that "If meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend," contains a Christian principle of very wide application, both in the East and the West.

The house we constructed in Sendamangalam, as we have intimated, was a temporary one; this left open the question of the location of our headquarters. In order to settle this very important matter, and to gain a more detailed knowledge of the field, we decided to make a tour of the whole neighbourhood.

When we left Madras our colleagues of that field most kindly transferred to us their principal village preacher, Varatharajulu. In many ways he was eminently suited to the work of that period, possessing all the courage and personal presence necessary to carry him into the biggest houses and the most difficult places, though lacking, we fear, in true spirituality of mind. Accompanied by this our first helper, we started out on our first Gospel itinerancy, and made a brief stay at Valayapatti, a large village on the main road, where we were glad to find a travellers' bungalow. From this

centre we went out in all directions, and one noon-time found ourselves staying in a Brahman's rest-house on the edge of the Cauvery at Mohanur: needless to say, no Brahmans were there. Everywhere we were given a most respectful hearing; in all places the Gospel was proclaimed in its fulness and freeness. Our journeys into this verdant valley afforded an amazing revelation of Indian fertility.

After a few days we moved on to Erumaipatti. Our way was a mere cart-track, and this, just after the monsoon, was in such a shocking condition that it took our *jutka* four hours to travel four miles. Whenever necessary we called up the field labourers to come and drag us and our horse out of the quagmires. We reached Erumaipatti, the Buffalo Village, after dark, and tried to content ourselves with accommodation in an old, filthy temple rest-house, surrounded by rice cultivation, and swarming with mosquitoes. The next morning Erumaipatti was in a very unhappy mood, and immediately issued orders that we were to be furnished with no supplies of any kind whatever. Imagine us on the outskirts of a strange village, in a *chavadi* highly redolent of cows and goats,—no water, no milk for the baby, no foodstuffs, cut off from the world as though marooned on a mudbank! Most providentially, at that very time a Bible Society Colporteur was visiting the neighbourhood, and bravely came to our aid in gaining a partial reversal of the orders which so completely isolated us. A few years afterwards this village became our centre in the Southern Circle, and the colporteur who rendered us such timely assistance joined our preachers' staff.

Tattaiyangarpetti, a town near the south-eastern boundary, was our next halting-place. Here accommodation was yet more difficult to secure, but before nightfall a Government official came to our rescue and allowed us to stay in the record-room of his office! As we went forth into hamlet, bazaar and market, we unburdened our hearts in telling out the blessed Gospel to people of all classes and castes, and also lightened our loads as we sold Testaments, Gospels and other Christian literature.

Of course, we were unable to see even one-tenth of the villages which we passed, for one could well spend three months in the same route visiting a fresh village every day. This, our first Gospel tour, was not only a means of declaring the Message to many thousands of our neighbours; it was exceedingly instructive to ourselves. We had learned something of the populous nature of the field, had seen that if future itinerancies were to be at all adequate, we must secure a good tenting outfit; above all, our choice of Sendamangalam as the headquarters of our operations had received ample confirmation.

The last-named result of our tour demanded a far more secure and lasting tenure than that afforded in the four-year lease exacted by the Mit-tahdar. That the site for which we had gained this short-lived agreement was the very best for our purpose was soon quite apparent. Situated at the chief entrance of the town, with a frontage of over 700 feet on the main road, and several hundred feet on two other roads, this plot was second

to none. But obstacles and enemies were many. The Theosophical Society created every possible difficulty; the house, though only temporary, enhanced the value of the land; avarice was busy at work, for rumour had it that "money grows in the hands of these white people as freely as hair grows on the head." Moreover, was there not hidden treasure at the bottom of the old earthwork defences thrown up in the troublous days of the Mysore incursions, the remains of which were here in this very plot?

We felt that advance was made when, after some months, one of the owners mentioned to us an impossible price. A few days after that, when preaching in the villages, I called on a wealthy Mittahdar, and introduced myself and the Lord's cause to this great local notability. Imagine my ill-concealed chagrin when, in the course of casual conversation, the amiable and communicative old gentleman told me he had given a mortgage of several thousand rupees on the estate to which our plot belonged. I at once frankly placed before him my difficulty, reminding him that I had come to Sendamangalam for the public good and not my own profit. Before I left him he generously promised to liberate this particular portion of the involved property, and remained to the day of his death a good friend to the Mission.

The owners then quarrelled about the disposal of their property. One of these was a minor, whose guardian was a garrulous old lady; another would soon attain his majority, and before that important event nothing could be settled. About this time we sought the mediation of a Government

Christian official, newly transferred to our *taluk*. In a few days he persuaded the landlords to sell, and brought them to our house to close the bargain. Just as we were about to hand over the money the Chairman of the Sendamangalam Union (a kind of town council), followed by a small crowd of his minions, startled us by walking into the room and making loud protests against our purchasing Union property!

Shortly afterwards, domestic concerns and the hot season made it necessary for us to go to the neighbouring Shevaroy Hills. There, realising very deeply our helplessness and entire dependence on God, we placed our burden on Him who had sent us to the work, and then besought the prayerful co-operation of friends in England. Imagine our delight on receiving word from Sendamangalam that legal transfer of the property had been effected, and that on most favourable terms. Our old friend the Brahman Mittahdar released this part of the estate from mortgage, and the Chairman's heart was so changed that on more than one occasion he has rendered us signal aid, and only just recently has opened our H.G. Elementary School, that stands on the very part of the land which he had claimed. Be it remembered, also, that this happy settlement was brought about the day after a week of prayer in England "for our Master's blessing upon the negotiations for the purchase of land in Sendamangalam."

The registration of the land documents completed, our first determination was to dig a well. Long before the above purchase we went out one evening to inspect our water supply, and saw

naked urchins along with filthy buffaloes disporting themselves in the dun, semi-liquid pool that served to slake our thirst! Far worse things are seen there any day, where men and women suffering from guinea worm, leprosy, and even more loathsome diseases, wash their mouth, feet and vessels before scooping up the precious liquid to carry away home. In India drinking water *must* be boiled, and always should be filtered; but, even after it has passed through the very best Berkefeld, memory brings back the scenes of the public well.

The digging (strictly speaking, the blasting) of our well occupied the dry seasons of four years. For fifty feet we smote the hard, grey granite, but there was no crevice in which even a needle could be inserted. The labour involved in this process may be estimated by my accounts, which state that deepening the well five feet by contract occupied two months' unremitting toil, and required 150 mines. At last the years of labour were rewarded by our discovering a small fault large enough to take the blade of an ordinary clasp-knife, when immediately out of the rock poured forth a stream that has never failed even in the longest drought.

Alongside these efforts to gain a firmer footing in Sendamangalam were those put forth for securing a more permanent entrance for the Gospel in the villages. Four miles north of headquarters is the town of Kalappampatti, where we resolved to station a preacher. Swamidhas was a good man, but not quite so courageous as some. The Hindus, determining that Christians should have no entrance in their town, stormed the preacher's house, and hinted to the occupant that the sooner he

moved out the better it would be for him and his family. The next night we arrived upon the scene, sent a man with a tom-tom round the town announcing an entertainment, and showed our irate friends some lantern pictures, after which they re-considered their position. Trouble broke out again. The preacher's house was almost nightly stoned, our people were unable to move out after nightfall, nearly all supplies were cut off and ordinary conveniences denied.

Happily, at this time our tenting outfit arrived. We at once loaded the bundies and spread out our canvas in a small, open space in the centre of the scene of disturbance. This was altogether unasked for, unexpected, and our presence in such close proximity under a brand-new, white tent caused no little stir. For a time the eager, curious crowd pressed on every hand, both inside and out; but when the foolish rumour was spread abroad that the *thoorai* had firearms, and that really he was a police officer under the guise of a "priest," we were left severely alone.

The next morning Swamidhas and I went out and took our stand under the adjacent old, old swami trees—a line of fine peepuls devoted to the gods, under the shade of which the patriarchs squat, chew betel and nut and discuss the local news. At our side was the forge, where the smith, with no roof but the blue canopy of heaven, and using the most primitive of hammer, anvil and bellows, beats out ploughshares, and makes axes and billhooks. Here, under these old swami trees, surrounded by a large, attentive and intelligent audience, we spoke of sin, its universality, its dire

effects, its one Destroyer. It is a blessed privilege, an honour worth living for, to preach the living Saviour in such a place and to such an audience.

Memory now calls forth another scene enacted a few years later in the same town. Not fifty yards from the spot where the tent was pitched to quell an anti-Christian disturbance, men are bustling here and there in happy excitement. The exterior of the public rest-house has been tastefully decorated with wavy *arasu* leaves and green, cool, plantain trees; the interior is crowded with talkative guests sitting at a feast, while the place of honour is given to a brother missionary who is about to leave India on furlough. The breakfast over, the men gather in a big circle, and enjoy a few minutes of innocent entertainment; then the leading townsman steps forward and reads to the departing missionary an address of high eulogium for his past service, and of earnest request for his speedy return.

But, oh, the disappointment of it all! Here we gained our first and most earnest enquirers. Here we received our first laurels in the shape of rejected idols and forsaken Hindu *shastras*; but we have yet to win here the first trophy of a baptised convert from Hinduism.

As we look out across the narrowing waters between East and West, and discern the crying need of Asia, we see more clearly the Troas vision and hear in more clamant tones the Macedonian cry. But in the definite appeal of this revelation and in the urgency of this cry, which are so real to us, we often forget that other vision near Damas-

cus, with its kind but emphatic command, " Rise and stand upon thy feet, for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose. *I send thee* to open their eyes, to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God." In the day of darkness and adversity, in the years of fruitless toil and unrequited love, in the storm of surging doubts that threaten both life and work, it is this, the Damascus vision, the heavenly commission, the first clear call of the Spirit, which, like a strong anchor, keeps firm and steady the frail bark of our service to Him.

CHAPTER V.

ENIGMAS.

IT is generally acknowledged that the Indian is an enigma ; the wise men who profess to solve him are very few. After his great discovery in Central Africa Stanley said that any intelligent man could know Livingstone through and through within an hour ; for his heart was crystal, and his spirit that of a little child. But the Tamilian, sharing our work for a generation under our own roof, is a sphinx still, declining to divulge his life secret.

If you would know the reason, study the great fabric of India's communal system, divided into a myriad watertight compartments—class separated from class, caste from caste, sub-section from sub-section. The Indian politician complains that England's policy has ever been controlled by the principle " Divide and rule." Be that as it may, the religious history of India shows how the wily Brahman, when first making his home in the fertile valleys of the Indus and confronted by the vast hordes of Hindustan, adopted this now famous stratagem, elaborated the caste system, and soon laid India at his feet. A glance at political history is no less illuminating. Notwithstanding its unique natural boundaries of ocean, river and mountain, India has been the prey of invading hosts from the early days of the Aryan to the devastating, iconoclastic incursions of the Moghuls. Delhi itself was pillaged six times in twenty-three

years! Can you wonder that the survivors of those depredations find it hard to be open and frank? In the bad old days, when Clive was a Writer in the East India Company at Madras, South India was one scene of turmoil and internecine war, grim memorials of which we have here in this town and throughout this county in the shape of ruined forts and refuges. Is it strange that the majority of Indians believe that only the fool is candid, ingenuous?

Still, even though we cannot solve *him*, the real problem, let us try and understand his habits, know his customs, and thus reduce the mystery. These for a time are enigmatical enough. Paul was accused, and not without good reason, of turning the world upside-down. The European, when arriving in India, finds that country topsy-turvy already. While the young missionary is spending long, weary months in wrestling with a strange and difficult language, he often sadly mourns his dumbness, and chafes at his inability to plunge immediately into the grand work of evangelism. Let him be patient. After-years will show to him that his helplessness was a blessing in disguise. The novice is well advised to open his eyes and learn something of the inverted order around him before committing himself to speech.

Let us take etiquette. We, in entering the house of a friend, rub our boots and remove our hat; my Indian guest slips off his sandals and re-arranges his turban. Nay, have we not many a time seen a poor man in the distance taking off his slippers and actually untying his loin-cloth to wrap round his head, that he may the more respectfully salute us? A custom that comes very difficult to me,

even after many years of experience, is that of requesting my guest to depart when it is time for us to look after other business. The rules of eating and drinking are opposite to all those which we consider show good breeding. How many young missionaries, I wonder, learn to eat rice and curry without fork or spoon, and to drink tea with the head thrown well back and the vessel four inches above the mouth? Let me assure you, the latter is a most useful accomplishment. Again, I wonder if even the most polite and experienced of Indian waiters feels *quite* happy in serving ladies first.

Perhaps we expect contrariety to be the rule in such conventionalisms, but let us look at the methods of these farmers. Instead of keeping meadows and fields to fatten their sheep, many of them keep their sheep to fatten the fields! Now watch this farm labourer turning over the sod. Standing astride and gripping a spade which has a blade longer than the handle, he digs towards, never away, from himself. When he is on piece-work he becomes so energetic that he smothers himself from head to heel until he is scarcely recognisable. Then, again, he often goes in the face of all *our* common sense by first ploughing, then sowing, and lastly manuring his field. More than that, he reverses even the seasons of the year by putting in the precious seed in autumn and reaping in early spring.

In India custom is inseparably linked with religion, though religion is often divorced from morality. Religion enters into the everyday life, is woven into its very warp and woof. Prescribed ceremony must be duly performed in every event of life, great or small; from birth, weaning, adol-

escence and marriage till the *karumantara*, the end of the funeral ceremonies, which continue for sixteen days after death. The Hindu propitiates the demons in laying the foundation of his house; he asks the favour of his gods in tying the last wisp of thatch or placing the last tile; on completion of the structure he is equally careful not to bring even a pot into the new domicile until the priest has chased out all lurking, malevolent spirits and besought the prosperity of the family in its new home. The traveller consults his almanac before fixing the day of departure, and in setting off on his journey he visits the shrine, carefully paints the sacred *namam* on his forehead, or smears on his face the mystic ashes. In the neighbourhood where these lines are written no farmer, however urgent his case, however suitable the condition of soil or time of season, will plough his field until the local priest has run the first furrow. He is no less religious when cutting the first sheaf of harvest, which he presents at the temple; while, at the threshing-floor, he erects a rude idol and asks the blessing of his favourite deity as he pours out of his iron measure the first half-peck of the heaped-up grain. Paul, with his usual tact and graceful courtesy, commended the Athenians that in all things they were most religious (see Weymouth and others). Would to God the religion of the Occident entered into the daily life in home and field, school and factory, as Hinduism does here in the Orient.

What religion is it that thus enters into the very tissue of the Hindu's life? Truth is eternally the same; moral laws know nothing of race or latitude;

yet here we find the Indians' topsy-turvydom quite complete.

What is there more reasonable, more fundamental, more universal than the injunction, "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God"? The Hindu, not tacitly, but candidly, turns this into, "Thou may'st worship everyone and everything in the heaven above and in the earth beneath *except* the Supreme." Amidst all the myriads of Hindu shrines in India there is not one to *Kadavul*, the All-Comprehensive One; and until recently it was universally believed there was not one even to the first person of the Hindu Triad. Amazing as this may appear, we shall understand it better, perhaps, if we bear in mind another inversion of truth. The Christian believes that God is possessed of every excellence, such as holiness, justice, truth. According to the chief Hindu philosophy God is without attributes, is devoid even of consciousness.

We believe that sin was brought to this earth by Satan from the deep abyss. Brahmanism tells us it was transmitted from heaven to earth by Siva, the second person of the Triad. Must we not attribute to this fearful reversal of foundation truth, the exceeding rareness of real conviction of sin, and sorrow for wrong-doing? The Bible shows us that the basal argument for, and incentive to, holy living is, "Be ye holy for I am holy." But every Hindu reformer who cares anything at all for purity of life, cries, "Do not imitate the gods." It is no wonder, then, that the average devotee has no idea of "Abhor that which is evil, cleave to that which is good," but that, in its stead, he follows both

in theory and in practice, "Propitiate the evil; leave the good to take care of itself."

Let us take an instance of our neighbours' propitiating evil, placating malevolent deities. Rungaswamy is a tall, gaunt, clean-shaven man, of sad, honest countenance, with three rosaries hanging from his neck, and the sacred ashes of Siva smeared freely over his bare body. Thirty years ago troubles and sorrows came thick and fast in the life of this strange man, and often would he sit on the little verandah of his mud house and complain, "Why should the gods vex me so? Am I such a terrible sinner? In what have I incurred their anger?" One day, tying in his waistcloth a few rupees, and throwing over his shoulder a little bundle, he set out to a famous shrine 300 miles south. He worshipped all the principal deities there, made the offerings prescribed by the priests, repeated the same performances at a noted place of pilgrimage on the west, and returned to his village—but not to peace.

Again he left home, this time with his face set towards a spot one thousand miles north, the most sacred place in all India, the far-famed Benares. He visited its many fanes, drank freely from its turbid wells, bathed daily in the potent floods of the Ganges, and bought rosaries to insure the proper recital of prayers. At last he resorted to a desperate expedient. Reckoning himself dead to the world and its attractions, dead to friends, wife and child, he caused to be performed over himself all the religious ceremonies that his relations would have carried out in the event of his death. Returning to his native place, but not to his home, he donned the saffron cloth of the *sannyasi*, and,

erecting a shed before the chief temple, gave water to all thirsty passers-by; at which occupation he may be found to this day, *still in quest of peace*.

The history of the old ascetic most certainly gives the loftier, though a pathetic, phase of Hindu life. Here is something far more common.

One morning, while waiting for two of our preachers in a village, I sat on the edge of a little temple rest-house. Men soon gathered round, and conversation turned to the idol of Mari Amman, the smallpox demon, which was immediately in front of me. It was just a shapeless lump of black, greasy stone anointed by several generations of worshippers. At that moment a young man, carrying a pot of water on his head, pushed through the little group, poured the entire contents of the vessel over the idol, placed round it three sprigs of the sacred *margosa* tree, and then dropped into the leaves two white, peeled onions.

"Whatever is the meaning of this?" I enquired. "I have often seen you anoint your idols, but never deluge them with water in this fashion."

"You see, *thoorai*," replied an old patriarch, "we have in our village both great pox and small pox (chickenpox). To remove the disease we bring water straight from the cool well and pour it over her (the idol) to reduce the heat of her anger, and put her in a calmer frame of mind. The *neem* tree leaves are for the same purpose."

"And the onions?"

"Oh, they are to warm her in case she becomes too cold and gets angry in that way."

As we afterwards stood in the middle of the village delivering the Gospel message, we saw one and another going from the stricken houses, taking

their pots of water, the sprigs of margosa and the two peeled onions. To speak plainly, the religion of the masses in South India is sheer Animism; ghost, ghou! and goblin worship. Thousands of people in the county of Namakal are afraid to yawn lest some evil spirit should enter in and take possession of them!

Of course, there are educated Europeans who, not discovering the Light of the world, and dazzled by the glimmer of the "Light of Asia," are ever ready to laud the lofty ethics of mediæval Hinduism. They represent the village elders as gathering nightly before their shrines, revelling in the philosophy of a Sankarachariar or a Ramanuja, and singing with spiritual fervour the great exploits of the gods as described in the Ramayanam or Mahabharatha. Such villagers doubtless exist, but *where*, the district missionary is unable to discover. In Southern India orthodox Hinduism is mostly a name to play with, by no means a cult to follow. The average village god never had any place in the pantheon of the Vedas, but was just tolerated when its original devotees, the old Dravidans, were taken over *en bloc* into the omnivorous system of the invading Brahmins.

What of the practical results either of the belief of Rungaswamy or of the rude cult of Mari Amman? Is conduct purified, character strengthened, or life ennobled? No; on the contrary, we see in every town, village and hamlet temple cars covered with mythological carvings, many of which are so grossly obscene that the suggestions could have come only from denizens of the abyss. In every temple of any standing is found that institution which a few of the best Hindus now

openly denounce as the ugliest blot on Hindu life, that of the *Devadasis*—the female slaves of the god. Indeed, the origin of the mystic *namam* on the forehead, many of the objects of worship seen in street and country roadside, the nocturnal orgies committed in temples even of great cities, cannot be hinted at here. Some will reply, "Have we not our social evil in the West?" You have, and it is no little hindrance to us in the East. But, in addition to the disparity of extent and nature, there is this notable difference between the two evils. The scourge here mentioned is nurtured by religion; that in the West exists *in spite of religion*.

Still, many a Hindu, like the *sannyasi*, is better than his creed, and is seeking something higher than imitation of sensual gods. But, even where this desire is most sincere, does it find satisfaction? One morning Rungaswamy, in his freshly-clean saffron cloth, and wearing the sacred ash smeared freely across his brow, paid one of his visits to the mission house. After some conversation on religious topics, I broke a long pause by quietly and earnestly asking him, "Rungaswamy, you have gone on pilgrimage to the far-famed Rameswaram. You have trodden the sacred soil of Benares and bathed in its waters. Tell me now, Has sin been removed?" The old man drooped his head, and, with his eyes intent on the floor, but his mental gaze fixed on the life within, replied, "Nay, how can I say that my sin is removed?" The greatest authority on religion in our county is a man who, by virtue of his extreme sanctity, has discarded all clothing, and, leaving the contaminating influence of a village environment, lives alone in a cave. In one of the conversations

I had with him I asked, "Swamiyar, may God still grant you long life and much happiness; yet we must all die. Now, if God called you away to-night, would you have the assurance that sin was expiated, and that your spirit would immediately join the heavenly host?" "Heaven?" he said, "heaven? *It is only one in a lakh [100,000] who can hope to go there.*"

So Hinduism is a religion of despair, powerless to afford true comfort and strength in the sorrows and conflicts of the life present, and unable to give sure hope of the life to come. Continually overshadowed by the dread, dark event of death, and ever tortured by the horrible incubus of an all but endless cycle of births and deaths, the Hindu finds scarce a ray of light in the whole murky realm of his future. His religious history opened, he tells us, in the far back æons of the *Kirutha Yuga*, the Golden Age, and now leaves him in the *Kali Yuga*, the Age of Rusty Iron, the *final* age of "vice, misery and disaster."

What a contrast to the bright visions and glad-some prospects of the Hebrew sages, who with such rapture heralded the dawn (not the death) of the Gospel golden age! What a contrast to the glorious present experience and the more glorious future bliss of those who, in this blessed dispensation of grace, repose their confidence in Him who proclaimed: "I am the Resurrection and the Life; he that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live"!

CHAPTER VI.

FORWARD.

ONE evening, not long after the acquisition of the first mission compound, the head priest of the chief temple accosted me, "Ugh, of what value to me is this town now that you have seized its gateway? I might as well pack up and go." The *guru* is still in Sendamangalam, occupying the same position; yet, as he intimated, we had been given a firm foothold in the town, where we proposed immediately to establish ourselves, and whence we hoped to send out far and wide the blessed Evangel.

Nearly the whole of the newly-acquired ground was covered with cactus, familiarly called "prickly pear." A handsome fortune awaits the man who discovers a method of easily converting this plant into a nourishing fodder for cattle, or of preventing its constant and expensive encroachments. Its thick, succulent segments are protected from animals by the finest of barbed thorns; its tireless roots, ever advancing, ever increasing, spread over hill and dale. It is so tenacious of life that a single segment of a branch, after lying in the full sun on a bare, burning rock for a month, will at once strike root if thrown on the poorest and most meagre soil. Indian missionaries on furlough have sometimes smiled to find a specimen of this plant, the greatest botanical pest in India, very carefully watered and nourished in some well-ordered hothouse. When once our land was rid of this terrible undergrowth, the value of the property

stood revealed to every passer-by, and we were at once offered three times the amount we had paid.

The compound cleared, we immediately began laying the foundations of our chapel. This was the signal for trouble. Four different parties, who felt that their interests were involved, began to raise opposition. One group of our workmen was intimidated, and another was beaten on the spot, so that construction soon came to a standstill. When operations were re-started with the aid of a contractor from Salem, feeling ran very high, and blows were sometimes freely exchanged. At this time the Mohammedans became friendly, and often rendered us timely aid. One morning, hearing an unusual noise near the chapel, and hurrying out to ascertain the cause, we ran right into a free fight between our friends and the Hindus. It was only with great difficulty that the contending parties were separated; but on our promising to enquire into the cause of the disturbance they reluctantly dispersed.

When the building approached completion strange rumours floated round concerning our form of worship. The baptistery was a great mystery. One said it was used in our ancient custom of washing one another's feet, while another corrected him by saying it was for hiding our idols. One morning we found the mason had constructed the platform with a very decided slope towards the baptistery, in order "to carry off the dirty water when bathing the swami"!

The opening service of our place of worship marked an epoch, the beginning of new and better days. At the time appointed for the meeting we found the chapel filled, all seats and standing room

well occupied, while small crowds pressed round the open doors and windows. Among those who graced the assembly by their presence were the Tahsildar of Namakal, who had rendered such unselfish assistance; the Police Inspector of the County, whose aid, we are glad to say, had not been required; and the Chairman of the Union, our once bitter antagonist. It should be mentioned that this, our first temple of God in the new field, was the gift of the United Bible Classes at West Hill, Wandsworth, and the object of deep interest and prayerful endeavour of the then pastor of the Church in that place, Mr. T. Jones.

Amongst the many accomplishments to be coveted by the district missionary, a writer on missions mentions those of the doctor, musician, accountant, equestrian, printer, architect, builder, photographer and lawyer. We have all read that Carey grew corn and jute, besides printing his numerous literary works; that Williams built his ship and his own house; that Moffatt was often engaged in irrigation work and making waggon wheels. In places where the missionary must cut out his own path such attainments, though prosaic and perhaps contrary to his taste, are very desirable, and sometimes necessary.

For instance, by this time we had secured another plot of ground opposite the first compound, and were beginning the erection of our permanent house. (The old *guru* might well complain that we had "seized the gateway" of the town.) For this purpose land had to be cleared, huge rocks blasted away, compound walls erected, endless land and other disputes settled; all of which pursuits seemed to be very far removed from our primary aim, our spiritual calling.

Blasting rock is an interesting operation. A man with a long crowbar of steel, having a chisel edge at each end, makes a hole a cubit deep in the hard granite. This always takes two hours of most strenuous work, and as water is frequently poured into the hole, the man's body becomes plastered from head to foot with a slimy sediment. After well cleaning and drying the "mine" he puts in two handfuls of home-made gunpowder, then rams in dried clay, carefully leaving down one side a small hole which, by filling with very fine powder, he uses as a fuse. On its being fired, the mine will often explode before the man has run a dozen yards, in which case he must immediately turn round and, running backwards, dodge the falling pieces. Over a thousand such blastings were made in our second compound, every one of which the writer had to "place" in the morning and examine in the evening. When we add that these men always expect us to keep their accounts separate from one another's, and that each man invariably requires his pay every night, it will be seen what additional labour was entailed in the office.

A word about the Mission House. We have often found that pictures of European houses in India have conveyed a somewhat palatial idea to those who have not visited that country. In a land where the *mean annual* temperature is so extremely high it is most necessary, not merely for comfort but for *health*, to live in rooms that are lofty and spacious. Verandahs on two or three sides of the house afford great protection from the evils arising from high temperatures; no door or window in a living apartment should be fully exposed to the mid-day sun. On the other hand we content our-

selves with fewer rooms than are seen in the average English house, while walls, except for the universal whitewash, are quite innocent of the decorator's art, and all the fittings might be purchased for half a sovereign.

It was after much labour and with immense relief and satisfaction that we moved into the new quarters in the hot season of 1910. By way of a housewarming we all sat in a row on the floor, and ate our curry and rice in true Indian fashion.

About this time the Lord sent us a capable and helpful colleague in the person of Mr. J. M. Brand. Time was when we thought that the highest office in the world that one could occupy was that of the ordinary district missionary; now we are inclined to think there is one man who is a step higher—the district *medical* missionary. The service of the fully-qualified doctor in charge of a mission hospital, when closely linked with true Gospel work, is a most noble one; but the work of the district medically-trained missionary who, with his aggressive and itinerant evangelism, joins the ministry of healing, more nearly approximates than any other the work of our blessed Lord.

We soon discovered that the medical activities of our brother were a most valuable adjunct to our evangelistic labours. The first surgical case, treated on the open verandah of the temporary house, must be described by the operator himself.

“ One day a bullock cart came slowly up to the door of the mission house, attended by a small crowd of men. They stopped, and lifted out a tall, heavy man, whose face was covered by a cloth. He groaned from time to time as

the bearers staggered to the verandah and laid him gently on the floor. His old, white-headed and white-bearded father came forward and told us the story of the case. Eight days previously he had been knocked down and trampled upon by a horse, and had since lain in a semi-conscious state. Stooping down and uncovering the face, I found very serious injuries. There were two punctured wounds leading from the chin into the interior of the mouth. The upper front teeth were missing and the lower front teeth were loose. The whole mouth was in a purulent condition owing to discharges from the wounds. The upper jaw was fractured, so that the entire upper set of teeth and gums could be moved to and fro. Both cheek bones were bruised, the left especially being badly contused. The face was rendered shapeless by bruises from the horse's hoofs, and altogether the poor fellow presented such a sorry spectacle that it seemed gravely doubtful whether he would survive or no. To-day, however, the man is well and walking about. The man's friends were careful in carrying out the treatment we prescribed, and by the blessing of God upon the means a good recovery was made."

Up to that time popular prejudice had been so strong against us that scarcely anyone had come for medical treatment. The above patient was a well-known Mohammedan, and the good progress he made not only won the friendship of his co-religionists (mentioned on a previous page), but opened the eyes of the public to the value of Western methods of healing, and reduced many obstacles to our evangelistic work.

Just at this juncture doors were being opened on every hand, and we were ardently longing to enter them. God signally answered earnest prayer, for almost as soon as we became free for the work of opening up new stations a handsome donation was made for a big forward movement. Interest for some time had centred around Erumai-patti, a large village ten miles south-east, where a man of respectable caste had shown evidence of a changed life, and had made an open confession of his faith. Here a school was started in the local rest-house of Mari Amman, and was well backed up by the influence and personal endeavour of our new convert. The people of the surrounding villages soon began to petition us for teachers, so that, not many months after, school work was begun in Boddireddipatti, and a centre for colportage was made in Ponneri. Erumaipatti, the Buffalo Village, then became the centre of our southern circle, and from that time regular services have been held there for the spiritual aid of workers in those parts.

In the meantime, the places around our headquarters were not neglected. One of the earliest of our outstations was Tuttikulam, on the main road three miles north of Sendamangalam, where a school was started in the large caste community. At Kondampatti, through the personal generosity and endeavours of a friend in St. Albans, we erected our first school buildings in 1912.

The courage that our co-workers often evince in the opening of these new stations is most praiseworthy. In one place the house of our solitary Christian was stoned for months because he refused to wear a *kudumi*, i.e., a long tuft of hair at

the crown of the head. The most general difficulty is in obtaining the right to draw water. In Tutti-kulam, though there was a good well in the premises we rented, we were unable for years to gain this reasonable and ordinary claim.

In opening at this time the outstation of Palayalalayam, though our Teacher was most obviously of caste origin and respectable upbringing, he was given the poignant shame of being refused the services of the barber and the village washerman. It needed the utmost resolution and courage to live down what practically amounted to complete ostracism. Some months afterwards our worker triumphantly pointed out to me the man through whose powerful influence the offices of the humble but most necessary village servants were at last secured.

The task of hiring a house or school building generally affords the Adversary great opportunity. The above-mentioned Teacher (now Preacher Moses) had started his school in a small cattle-shed. One morning he came to the Mission House and said, "Two days ago it began to rain, and as the owner of the school building is a poor man, possessing no other shelter, he drove away all my scholars, tied his cattle in the shed, and now refuses to let us have the place any longer." On making personal enquiries we found the landlord utterly unreasonable, so we went out to look for a building site. Within a few hours the owner of a suitable site dropped his price from £10 to £3. We closed the bargain, returned to the shed, and found our landlord greatly crestfallen, and quite willing to make other arrangements for his cows.

We felt that now the time had arrived for us to

carry the Gospel to the benighted villages lying above the steep jungle slopes of the grim Kolli range, and decided to make at once a preliminary journey of exploration. Mr. Brand, who accompanied us in our travels, wrote as follows of this most interesting episode:—

“ Setting out in early morning, we managed, although without a guide, to find the way to the top; our steep path lay through the thickest jungle. There was just room for one person to climb up at a time, and on either side the eye could not penetrate the thick undergrowth more than a yard or so. Here and there the tall grasses and tangled vines would give way to giant trees, from whose leafy, impenetrable roof long, snaky creepers would trail to the ground, or hang festooned to other branches. Arrived at the summit, we found an undulating country of hills and dales and waterfalls, comfortably grazing cattle, and dotted villages. Down the course of every valley ran a broad green streak which we found to be rice-fields. Every rice-field must be perfectly level, so that the water may stand at a depth of several inches over the entire area. In order to get these levels the hill people had planned out and constructed a wonderful system of dams and sluices, so that down the slope of a valley, miles upon miles of perfectly level rice-fields witnessed the ingenuity of these hill cultivators.

“ We would walk as far as we could, and in the evening look about for some hill-side cattle-shed where we might pass the night. At our first resting-place we found a small, but clean,

mud hut that had been used for storing grain. Into this we crept, and sat down on some straw to partake of the evening meal. The three-foot-high doorway of our hut opened on to a square enclosure, from one of the stone walls of which a stone *swamy* looked down. This, the owner assured us, would guard us during the night from the bears and panthers that prowled the hills around.

“Setting out in the dewy morning, and walking until the sun was high in the heavens, starting on again after mid-day until nearly sunset, we explored many miles of this interesting country. It is a little world by itself, cut off from all the rest of the world by those steep, jungle-clothed mountain sides. Footsore, we came safely back to the Mission House, but with a new desire to carry the Gospel to these far-off villages in the Mountains of Death.”

On the evening of our last day there we were

vainly attempting to gain an entrance into a village where we desired to rest for the night. But everyone we met either jumped over a yard wall, or, quickly retiring into his house, well fastened the door. One young man, like the rest, was just about to disappear, when suddenly he stopped, and, taking another glance at us, exclaimed “*Vaithiyan!*”—“The doctor!” It was the first smile or look of intelligent appreciation we had seen in the whole expedition. A few days previously this man, with several helpers, had brought his father, who was suffering from dysentery, to Sendamangalam for medical treatment.

At once all was changed. An old woman, very bent and infirm, hobbled towards us and commenced to chat; children played around us without any fear; a proud young mother brought her new-born babe for our admiration; old men came and told us of their aches and pains. More than that, a generous farmer readily placed his field buildings at our disposal, and brought us plantains with which to stay our hunger. A comfortable field shed was soon swept out, fresh rice straw was littered on the floor for our bed. One man brought water, another gathered firewood, a third built the fireplace; and when they could do nothing more for us they squatted on the ground to pass the time in conversation.

This was our opportunity. Taking from my pocket some of those admirable little Grimké Text Cards, and finding, for a wonder, that one of the men could read, I handed one of them to him. As he slowly deciphered the Tamil characters to the words, "The wages of sin is death," his fellow-villagers looked on him with profound pride, and gave loud grunts of approval to this statement of Scripture. Then, in the dancing light of the blazing camp fire, sitting on an old fallen trunk of the forest, canopied by the solemn, starlit dome of heaven, and surrounded by the black, mysterious jungle, we told them of sin, its dire wages, and of the gift of God, which is eternal life through Jesus Christ. Disappearing in the darkness as they wended their way home, our friendly hearers still repeated the precious Name, and rehearsed the story which the Mountains of Death had then heard for *the first time*.

CHAPTER VII.

AGGRESSIVE EVANGELISM.

THERE was no vagueness in Paul's apprehension of the task to which he was called. He was arrested "for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness." He did many things, making tents, studying in Arabia, running a ship, leading great disquisitions, and raising funds for poor Christians; but in them all his object was the same, viz., "to open men's eyes, to turn them from darkness to light, that they might receive forgiveness of sins." For this he prayed, strove, preached, breathed. May God help us also, in all our private spiritual life and in every act of our public service, to keep first things **FIRST**, and all secondary matters in their own places. The twentieth century missionary is called upon to do many things, from running a matrimonial agency to conducting classes in theology. We do not object so long as we are not side-tracked and our great objective is not blurred or made uncertain.

Just because of its primary character, the simple preaching of Christ in lane, bazaar and market has both problems and a fascination all its own. Especially is this the case in Gospel-less districts. For instance, a preacher and the writer enter this morning one of these scores of villages where Christ has not been heard of, and find we have just one hour of our precious time to give to the whole place. Deducting the time for gathering together the

people, for selling Scriptures, and for explanations after the addresses, we have about twenty minutes each in which to declare this utterly new and strange message. Now, what aspect of the Gospel shall I present? What truth shall I emphasise? Shall I take "man" or "God"? Shall I confine myself to the Nature of Sin or to the Necessity of Expiation? For, be very sure of this: to generalise is merely to bewilder.

In a recent Gospel itinerancy a preacher one morning pointed to the date 1922, printed large and bold on the gable of a new temple, and asked his audience its meaning. Some said that 1922 years had passed since the creation; others guessed it indicated the number of years since the "white man seized India." Then Benjamin gave an excellent résumé of the life of our Lord, prefacing his address with the true meaning of 1922 A.D. This often formed an excellent introduction to other addresses on special subjects, but it left unanswered such questions as "Who is God?" "What is sin?"

One noon-time, after a five-hours' tramp with our preachers, we took refuge from the glare and heat in a low field-shed. After taking some rest and refreshment we were visited by some of the neighbouring villagers—rough, honest, unsophisticated sons of the soil. Conversation was easily led on to religious topics, when we endeavoured to press home to them the need for the expiation of sin. A white-haired old man quickly interposed, "Then why did God give us this bad disposition to lie and steal?" and another interjected, "Oh, God brought sin here simply to overcome and reduce us." What do the terms "God" and

“ sin ” convey to these people ? Or what does the term “ holy ” mean in a land where we have the amazing phenomenon of multitudes of “ holy men ” who are well known to be living in vice unnameable ?

Speaking of terms brings us to the language, the medium of our message. Linguists have said that Tamil is as difficult to a Britisher as “ any six European languages.” As the writer is not acquainted with six European tongues he cannot vouch for the truth of that statement ; but when we say that the very first word in the Lord’s prayer is “ Paramandalangalilirukirra,” the reader may imagine this vernacular can form exercise for both tongue and brain. On account of many strong palatal sounds, pronunciation is for years a great obstacle to the learner, while giving the true time value to short and long vowels needs the keen perception of the expert musician.

A lady missionary of twenty years standing was taking the writer round her large girls’ boarding-home. In conversation she was obliged frequently to use the Tamil word for a courtyard, but most unfortunately lengthened the first vowel. This slight mistake gave the word a meaning that the lady would never knowingly have conveyed. At once a titter spread through the group of facetious girls. Repeatedly this word would crop up, and every time it was answered by an ill-suppressed giggle from the irrepressible maidens, to the no small surprise and indignation of their superintendent. It is most inopportune when transacting sober business with a preacher to call a grinding-stone an old woman ; or, when trying to ingratiate yourself into the heart of some mother, to call her

baby a donkey ; yet these and far worse blunders have been committed times without number. Many a bishop has caused an ill-concealed wave of amusement to run through the solemn precincts of a great cathedral by his stumbling attempt to pronounce the benediction.

So much for the medium : let us get back to the message.

That our message, our whole propaganda, must be far more constructive than destructive is a necessary rule to begin with. It is true the land is full of idols, that objects of worship are set up on every high hill and under every green tree, that hideous social evils and monstrous religious iniquities seem ever to mock or challenge our efforts ; still our primary duty is to " lift up " rather than throw down ; to build rather than demolish. Our Indian brethren, especially when emboldened by the all-protecting presence of a European, often disregard this most useful law. One morning three preachers and the writer took up their position in a very solitary village. One of the brethren, in his address, began to expose mercilessly the lives of certain Hindu gods and to pronounce sweeping judgments on the Hindu religion. His auditors soon adopted a menacing attitude, and threatened to eject the speaker from their village. It needed no little effort on our part to dissuade them from their purpose. Their argument was : " You are at perfect liberty to tell us all about your Christ, and we are willing to listen ; but keep your hands off our temple." A most reasonable argument, too. In our building the walls of Jerusalem the sword must be " girded by our side," for there are many adversaries ; yet, as with Nehemiah's

men, let it be the trowel, except when urgent necessity arises, that shall occupy our right hand. One of the most illuminating glimpses of Paul's method of work is given in the testimony of the town-clerk at the Ephesian uproar: "These men are neither robbers of churches nor yet blasphemers of your goddess,"—and that after two years' aggressive evangelism in a city given over to the grossest idolatry and licentious worship!

But this means neither a shirking, cringing attitude nor a flaccid, weak-kneed propaganda. There is still room, and plenty of it, for courage and resourcefulness. Does a man in the crowd throw out jeers at your work or message? Unless he is an exceptionally able scoffer he may be safely left in the hands of our Indian brother. During an address one morning, in a large village near headquarters, a young man was most desirous of showing his cleverness by repeating, "Who has seen God? Have you? Ah, perhaps you have been to heaven, and just returned to tell us all about it." At last Dawson meekly replied, "Have you seen your ears? No? But I suppose you can feel them?" The fellow at once involuntarily put up his hand to feel his ears! "Ah, yes. You cannot see them, yet it seems you can really feel them. If you really desire it, you can feel after and find the invisible God," at which the scoffer quietly wriggled out of the crowd.

We were preaching one noon-time in the Pavitram *shandy* just when a flutter of excitement had been caused by the baptism of a convert. Some burly Mohammedan leather dealers joined the Hindus in endeavouring to break up our meeting, and in threatening "to close down" all our

preaching. At this the missionary broke out with a rousing lyric, and immediately after this brief breathing-space a preacher started an excellent address by crying, "Aha! Did you hear that? You *can't* close us down. It *will* come out. Have you ever seen your wife cooking a good savoury curry over a roaring fire? She puts the lid on the pot, but it won't be 'closed down.' The lovely odour will keep puffing out. The fire is burning here [thumping his chest]; the curry is bubbling, and the fragrance *will* out." There was no more ridicule or threatening that day.

At times, especially at great pilgrim fairs and in rough neighbourhoods, the Christian open-air preacher meets with determined opposition. In the town of Toppapatti there have been so many murders and outrages that Government recently gave notice that if there were any more of such flagrant defiance of law the town would be broken up, and the inhabitants dispersed. One morning we visited the town from a neighbouring camp and began preaching in the main street, near several large temples. Very soon a hue-and-cry was raised, an angry, threatening crowd gathered before us, hooted, howled, collected tracts and pamphlets that had been distributed, tore them into shreds, and threw them in our faces. Finding expostulation did not improve matters, we adopted a more unobtrusive method of work, and then found that we had arrived in town on the day of a noted car festival. The saintly and famous Abbé Du Bois said he never looked upon a Hindu festival procession without seeing a picture of hell. On such occasions, when men are drunk with fanaticism, and many are inebriated with less "spirit-

ual " but more spirituous intoxicants, nothing is gained by obstinate aggression.

Of course, we do not invite trouble, yet when opposition is made to a fair and reasonable presentation of the Gospel, we endeavour to maintain our ground, and demand a fair hearing. Early one morning we took our stand in the midst of a large and wealthy Brahman quarter. With haughty indifference our proud Aryan friends stood at a little distance, and pretended not to see us. All went quietly until the speaker mentioned Christ's sacrifice for sin, when some of the hearers became angry, and bade us at once leave their street. We insisted on enjoying the right of free speech, finished our preaching, and afterwards sold Gospel portions to a number of young people. This was more than Brahman temper could stand. A crowd menacingly pressed around us, ordered all those who had purchased books to tear them up, and commanded us, on pain of an instant beating, to leave their quarter and to tell our story to the pariahs and the dogs. But we gave our message, got some of the books into the homes of the priests, and came away, happily, without the beating.

Under such difficult circumstances a good story, well told, often changes the whole situation. What missionary of any experience has not proved in evangelistic work the incomparable value of that gem of all parables, the Prodigal Son? In the mouth of an able and gracious speaker its power to thaw the most frigid indifference, to disarm the proudest prejudice, to break down the rebellious, to hold the restless and unruly, is without doubt unrivalled.

In the large village called Buttermilk we began

a meeting in front of an imposing house, on the verandah of which a group of men were playing cards. As we opened our books for a lyric, the leader of the gay circle shouted jestingly to his associates, "Oh, *do* come and listen to what they say! You can tell me afterwards what they talked about." This sent up a roar of laughter, after which they went on again with their cards.

Taking a rapid and accurate survey of the situation, the evangelist started his address by portraying most vividly and pathetically the "wayward son." Poetic license, local colour, Tamil embellishments, oriental but sanctified imagination—all were skilfully employed to make the story live and move before the eyes of the audience. The hearers became entranced, now nodding their heads, then heaving heavy sighs, and again dropping a silent tear. Yes, and the mocking card-player stopped his game, crept down from the verandah, stole round to the back of the crowd, and, with eyes fixed on the inspired speaker, unconsciously elbowed his way through to the front rank. The story was finished; the Gospel was set forth in its richness and simplicity; the jester remained absorbed to the last. When the meeting broke up he advanced, bought several booklets, and then quickly disappeared.

The parable of the Prodigal, then, belongs to the entire human race. Just as this inimitable picture and faithful history is known and loved by men and women wherever on this wide earth there are wayward sons, so, after all, the Good News of salvation is understood wherever human souls are wrecked by sin and estranged from their heavenly Father. Problems there are; problems

there must be ; but let us not be obsessed by them. We have a hundred common starting-grounds where we may begin the story of the great Evangel. Would you speak of the Supreme—holy, just, invisible, omnipresent ? They will understand you. Do you discourse on sin and its nature ? Nothing you say need mystify them ; they have nine-tenths of the decalogue deep down in the conscience. (The fourth commandment seems to find no place in the religious consciousness of non-Christians.) Are you setting forth expiation of sin ? They are daily dealing with this ever-present problem, and for this great transaction you will find no lack of suitable Tamil terms. Of course it's so. It *must* be so. The Divine origin of the blessed Gospel is chiefly seen in its eminent suitability to perishing men of " all nations and kindreds and peoples and tongues."

And what of Him who is the essence of this Gospel ? Is *He* understood ? In the recent nationalist movement of this country Indians have been stirred to their very depths against people and things Western. But even those who bitterly denounce what is called the " Christian civilisation " speak with admiration and reverence of the Christ. "*Him*," they say, " we know and understand : *you*, we do not."

Then, in the present babel of voices, in the unrest and strife of distracted India, let us lift Him up, not as the Son of Englishmen, but as the Son of MAN, the Son of God. Round Him, and Him alone, the whole family of God, drawn from the frozen wilds of the north and the torrid sands of Africa, from the gross, unlettered outcaste and the once proud and haughty Aryan—round Him they shall meet, and to Him they shall ascribe the praise.



HANUMAN, THE MONKEY GOD (NAMAKAL).

While this photograph was being taken a highly educated Brahmin of Namakal Town came and walked round and round the idol, prostrating himself many times before it.

CHAPTER VIII.

UNDER CANVAS.

THERE is a reason for camping. In a parish of 500,000 souls, living in about 1,000 towns and villages, connected by 500 miles of roads and cart-tracks, there is no other way of coming into contact with the people. One great tendency in mission work is to centralise, to organise, to superintend the working of a wide area from the office in headquarters. Though highly necessary in many departments of Government service, this is undesirable in most Christian missionary effort. True, office work multiplies; the staff increases; the number of things most conveniently done only at headquarters is ever growing; the necessity of placing upon the Indian brother larger responsibility is becoming far more pressing; nevertheless, it is most essential for the missionary to see, know and touch the very people whom he endeavours to evangelise.

Camping in South India generally means a full, vigorous, but enjoyable life. The amount of paraphernalia required by the most humble European is really alarming. Cots, bedding and mosquito nets are indispensable; necessaries for the table, from salt and pepper to the water filter and bread-making requisites, must be taken. Not only food to cook, but every utensil wherewith to cook it, including the kitchen itself, must be in your list; moreover, Bibles, Testaments, Bible Portions,

Gospel booklets, tracts and other Tamil literature must have their own boxes. And do not forget a good book or two for yourself, useful in the feeding of your own soul and in the preparation for united Bible studies. Our arrangements must be complete, for our itinerancy will not be for six days, but for six or eight weeks, and in none of our journeyings shall we be able to procure either a pair of shoe laces or a loaf of bread.

Having packed this multifarious impedimenta into bullock bundies and sent it off overnight, we set out on the cycle while the morning is young. The sun has not yet risen over the mighty forest-clad mountain slopes; the air is cool, refreshing, and enjoyed all the more as we remember that in a few moments we shall be in the full blaze of sunshine. Groups of noisy women and children are bustling to the fields with their tiny bill-hooks to join in the rice-harvest, and the whole world of nature seems to rejoice in the gladsome season when man reaps the fruit of long days and longer nights (most irrigation work is done at night) of toil in the fields. The Indian cuckoo is sending out his full, resonant notes; the grey, dusty, toddy birds are chattering and hopping from twig to twig; the shrill three-note call of the partridge is heard as the nervous bird hides in the grass behind some bushes; the beautifully-crested woodpecker makes a resounding rap, tap, tap on the trunk of a *neem* tree just as the first rays of the sun shine straight into our face from the cliffs of the Kollis.

A couple of miles this side of our destination we pass by the luggage carts crawling along at the immemorial and unalterable pace of $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles per hour. We have just time to reach our objective,

look out a suitable site, and rest a moment before they arrive.

The tent in which we live is, properly speaking, two tents, one inside the other. In the tropics the European needs more than one thickness of canvas between his head and the searching sun, so there is always a space of a cubit or so between the roof of the outer and that of the inner tent. This inner tent is about twelve feet square, four feet high at the sides, and eight or nine at the ridge. In front the top tent is extended a few feet to form a kind of verandah, and the same is done at the back, to provide convenience for bathing. Here, in this little room of four yards square, during the next two months we shall sleep and eat, do our office work and meet for public worship, hold consultations with preachers, and give interviews to innumerable callers.

A man experienced in tenting is always careful about the site. If possible the ground should be firm, high and sloping down from the camp, while under the eaves of the tent roof a trench should be dug for carrying off water. On one occasion at midnight a heavy storm suddenly and unexpectedly broke over our camp. I have most vivid memories of our all turning out of bed, and by the light of a solitary lantern working like Trojans in the drenching rain while we deepened the trench and raised the bank that saved our tent and all its contents from being swamped.

At another time we were working amongst the hill people. As the site on which to pitch our tent, we had to choose between a shady but malarial forest and an open but cultivated field. We decided on the latter. On the fourth night down

came the rain in torrents, making the field around us such a quagmire that not a tent-peg would hold. After driving in two and three tent-pegs to every cord on the windward side, we had to commandeer (again at midnight) every available hand and hold on to the ropes to prevent our domicile taking an aerial voyage over the forest.

The novice often has a keen sense of insecurity when camping. He retires for the night in a tent pitched, perhaps, in some lonely grove near the roadside, and out of sight of any other human dwelling. Placing his weary head on the pillow, he begins to realise there are neither bars to the windows nor bolts to the doors, and that, moreover, he belongs to that much-maligned race against which agitators are vociferating throughout the whole land. Yet we have never been troubled by really malevolent nocturnal visitors in camp, though the darkness affords shelter to many very strange intruders. One moonless night, while quite alone tenting in a huge tamarind grove, we were suddenly startled by a most weird, horrible noise in front of the verandah. The cries grew more and more shrill and poignant, till at last a man of most frightful appearance stood full in the light of the lantern. He was a poor, roaming maniac, whom a few hours previously we had rescued from a merciless beating in a neighbouring town. On more than one occasion these poor creatures have expressed in very unusual fashion their thanks for similar favours.

In the village of Elur we were daily being threatened, and the preachers feared the tents at night would be fired. Strange to say, on the second day of the camp my dog stealthily and persistently

followed a cooly who was sent to the camp from headquarters, and every night insisted on sleeping under my cot next to the cash-box. Never had any master a more vigilant and faithful watcher. On our arrival at a certain town where we wished to camp, the police strongly objected to our tenting in the neighbourhood chosen, because of the close proximity of a liquor shop and some people of a really clever, criminal tribe. However, we carried out our plans for tenting, and made our own arrangements for watching. Imagine the indignation of my faithful watcher when, having curled himself up comfortably for the night, he heard two constables circumambulating our tents and vigorously blowing their whistles to keep off intruders. After a couple of nights, finding their services were not duly appreciated, either by the dog or its master, our good guardians left us to our own resources.

We find it well to be wary more of the lower creation than of human creatures. Snakes will insinuate themselves into any tent, while scorpions are often very partial to beds. If you are near a Pariah quarter, beware of pigs and dogs, for these animals have strange fancies. When camping at Travancore, where we were conducting a series of meetings for the Syrian Christians, one morning I failed to find my shoes. Later on one of the missing articles was discovered in a bush, gnawed, torn, and rendered incapable of giving further service, while the other was found farther away, mutilated beyond recognition. When, at 8 o'clock that morning, the owner of the appropriated articles mounted the platform to address a crowded congregation, I fear he presented a sorry spectacle!

Tenting days are generally full of incident and interest. We had spread our white canvas in the scanty shade of a *Peepul* tree on the outskirts of the notorious village of Seven. Our preacher there was being hotly persecuted by the villagers, and it was necessary for us to give him our moral support, and to demand some semblance of law and order. In the late evening of the second day, as I sat alone in the tent, we heard a piteous cry, as of some soul in great distress. Running out in the direction of the sound I saw a commotion in the road. In the fast-gathering gloom a man was seen to be holding a woman down to the ground; another, kneeling on her chest, was raising a hatchet to strike; a third was belabouring the poor creature with a heavy bamboo. The first two quickly decamped and disappeared in the darkness; the last man turned to go just a moment too late.

The woman was brought to the tent, her wounds were dressed, and arrangements made for her lodging. The next morning she was conveyed to the Taluk Dispensary, sixteen miles away, and a certificate of injuries was extracted from the unwilling Assistant Surgeon. The first move made by the miscreants was to abuse and threaten. Seeing this did not gain their desired end, they cringed and crawled. Under the protection of the local Government official (!) the three would-be murderers came to the tent and tried every dodge known to a wily Indian for wriggling out of the trouble. Ten days afterwards we counted it our solemn duty to give evidence before a magistrate and so secure the conviction of these rascals, who, with others, had long terrorised the whole neighbourhood. In India, where the missionary is privi-

leged to live and labour under the ægis of the British Raj, but where the masses are neglected by base and corrupt officials, one may sometimes render a public service, long and gratefully remembered, by openly insisting on the dispensing of British justice.

In order to accomplish all the work of a good camp it is necessary to follow strictly a program. Rising at 5.30, we take *chota hazri* (" little breakfast ") under the canvas shelter or verandah. We cycle out to the appointed place for preaching, meeting our evangelists there a little before 7. Three or four meetings, perhaps, will be held in as many villages, after each of which we sell literature, and try to get into touch with individuals. At 11 o'clock we return to camp, the preachers following an hour later. From then until 3 all are encouraged to rest and refresh themselves for the evening's activities. During this time correspondence and booking receive attention, and then at 3.30 we all meet for devotion and Bible study in the tent, which, by the quick ingenuity of the *memsahib*, has been converted into a chapel. Some sitting on boxes, others on carpet chairs, and yet others on the floor, we spend an hour for our own spiritual profit and in intercession for those around. This is followed by a talk on the morning's work and a consultation, with the aid of the map, about the arrangements for the evening and next morning. Unless nights are moonlight, the optical lantern is prepared, and after early dinner we set off for a lantern meeting, returning at 10 or 11. Although such days demand the best of both physical and spiritual vigour, yet many a preacher, who for long months has been working alone, finds in the daily

devotions, the converse with brother preachers, and the change of thought in hearing others' addresses, just the new zest and the added strength needed for another term of service.

In the harvest camps, from January to March, lantern meetings afford us our chief opportunity. From early dawn to evening twilight people of all occupations turn into the fields to bring home the grain, hence the best time to meet them is after the sunset meal. Moreover, in showing the "light-pictures," we get a big audience, including every woman and child, high and low; the Gospel is presented to them in the most suitable way possible, namely, by parable and miracle; the message abides in the memory, for it enters by both Eye-gate and Ear-gate.

At the afternoon consultation plans for the evening are all elaborated, the lantern and its appurtenances are made ready, and three preachers are sent off before sundown to prepare the way. After a hasty dinner Dawson and the writer place table, stool and other requirements in a single bullock cart, deposit ourselves in it, and set off for the evening's work. Before we draw out of the camp the brief twilight has hastily withdrawn, the weird and mysterious zodiacal light streams up from the west in a mighty ellipse almost reaching the Pleiades. The bundy takes a sudden turn into a cart track, and there, rising over a distant hill range, is the mighty Jupiter, shining like a brilliant diamond on black velvet. Higher in the east is the pale, sickly and laggard Saturn, universally feared and hated for its malevolent influences, giving its very name to all manner of inauspicious events. High in the heavens Orion, the mighty

hunter, with silver belt and sparkling dagger, is leading forth his Dogs. On our left is Ursa Major (the Waggon and Horses of the British farmer, the Golden Cot of the Tamil peasant), pointing to the one immovable star, the Turuvam, from which the Unchanging One, He who neither rises nor sets, takes one of His most suitable appellations. The milky way, like some enormous arch bearing up the dome of heaven, stretches from horizon to horizon, while the countless scintillating points of fire form a scene of such awesome wonder that we begin to understand why the earliest gods of the Vedas were gods of the upper spheres.

We are suddenly and rudely shaken from these heavenly contemplations to mundane realities by a resounding rap on the bare head by the side of the cart, which now pitches this way and that as we tumble into a dark village. We make our way to a temple on the outskirts of the streets, where we find the place cleanly swept and prepared for our meeting. By the dim light of a cycle lamp the sheet is fixed to the outer side of a wall, on the other side of which is the greasy Brahmo-elephantine idol of Ganesa! A man is sent round the neighbourhood with a drum bidding all to come. After the singing of "Oh, what joy," we throw the first slide on the sheet, a three-quarter photo of the King-Emperor in Field Marshal uniform. After the tumultuous clapping and shouting has subsided, the virtues of George V. are extolled, and pictures shown of Admirals, warships and submarines, all of which go far to counteract the poisonous teaching of agitators and to foster a spirit of loyalty.

By this time every man, woman and child, caste and noncaste, rich and poor, has turned out to see the light-pictures. The younger and more adventurous have climbed to the coping of walls and to bundy tops; select parties occupy a high verandah or even a conveniently contiguous terrace. Now is our opportunity. Here is *the* opening of the whole day. We suddenly turn from Dreadnoughts and battle scenes to that other encounter which is being met every day, in every town and hamlet, in every human heart,—the encounter of the man who fell among thieves and was left half-dead. The pictures are large, beautifully coloured and attractive; the address is clear, arresting, and, though highly embellished, truly Scriptural.

The speaker is now changed, and immediately we pass on to the Lost Sheep, the scene and meaning of which, like those of the Good Samaritan, are well appreciated by the most rude and simple wherever we go. The speaker and subject are again changed, and just as interest has worked to its highest pitch, we show the aged Simeon with the holy Babe in his arms, and introduce our audience to the Life of Christ. The various events of that wondrous progress are set forth; every scene, from the birth to the crucifixion and ascension, is witnessed with rapt attention. At this point another brother steps forward, and, pressing home the solemnity of the message, vividly depicts that day when He shall come from heaven, even as "ye have seen Him go into heaven."

The last slide is withdrawn, the hearers are thanked for their attendance, a hearty clapping is given to the *thoorai* and the speakers, and the

crowd quickly melts away in the pale light of the moon just rising above the trees.

As we approach our camp beneath the feathery cocoanut palms, the southern cross emerges above the horizon, and seems to corroborate and confirm, even from the very heavens, the glorious Gospel we have been privileged to proclaim.

CHAPTER IX.

THE SILENT MISSIONARY.

ONE of the most interesting and instructive studies in Church History is God's providential preparation for great religious upheavals. The Reformation dates from 1517, but printing was invented full fifty years *before*, so that when Luther nailed up his 95 theses to the Castle Church door at Wittenberg, there were printing presses in nearly fifty towns on the continent waiting to send forth the newly-restored Message. The first documents published were ecclesiastical; the first book to be thus magically prepared and multiplied was the Bible.

In the latter half of the eighteenth century that mighty revival of true religion, under the instrumentality of Whitefield and Wesley, spread through the English-speaking peoples. While the hearts of many were being stirred to tell out the newly-found Gospel, and godly men looked wistfully across the ocean, God prepared the steam-engine and the steam-boat, which soon sped the heralds of the Cross to the isles of the sea and to the uttermost parts of the earth.

Providential preparation for the present missionary movement in India is no less clear than in the great crises now mentioned. God has placed on England a high honour in using her to straighten out and level up the paths for His messengers throughout this vast land. Humanly speaking, the present immense organisation of missionary

effort and the untrammelled dissemination of God's Word would not have been possible in the days of Plassey. In the stopping of internecine war, in the peace that enables men without fear to travel from Kashmir to Tinnevely, in the spread of education which is at once undermining the citadel of Hinduism and opening up great avenues of approach to a highly conservative people,—in these we see the providence of God as clearly as in the preparation of the press for Luther's Bible.

May God make us faithful to these new and frequent opportunities. The Hindu poet Pillaiyar, after stumbling for a lifetime in the darkness of heathen philosophies, cried out :—

“ Ethum teriyathenai maraitta vallirulai,
Natha nee neekka oru gnana villakillaiyoh ? ”

“ Oh God, is there no spiritual light to disperse this black darkness that enshrouds me ? ”

When the sad but honest sage sent up his bitter wail, the “ spiritual light ” was far away, dulled and obscured by the smoke of men's disquisitions. But now, in the midst of the gloom, God has put many in trust with that Word the entrance of which “ giveth light.” Moreover, in these days when we see on every hand the subtle and insidious working of a great apostasy, when the hearts of the godly are pained in witnessing the widespread ravages of religious rationalism, there is all the greater need for those who love the truth to be diligent in placing the Bible itself in the hands of the people. The great antidote to the virulent poison of Modernism is the exposition of God's Word.

Not long after our arrival in Sendamangalam we ordered some Scriptures from the Madras Bible Society, and took them to the crowded Naina Malai festival. The result of this, our first attempt in colportage, was encouraging, for before it was time to return home we had sold every book in our possession. The advantages of this, to us, new method of evangelism soon became apparent. The books always aroused the interest of our audiences; when preaching became difficult or impossible they helped us to start many a conversation with the passing pilgrims; they gave permanence to the somewhat transient work of open-air preaching, for our addresses might soon be forgotten, but these Scripture Portions might speak to the reader for many a day and month to come. Again, the disposal of the books stimulated in us a greater faith, for had not God's living, active Word gone forth amongst the people?

The most interesting and heartening feature of our first itinerancy in tents, also, was the selling of Scriptures. On entering a new village, the writer would cycle through the principal thoroughfares, and then accompany the preachers to a place suitable for gathering an audience. This procedure invariably roused the whole village, and, if the people were not too much afraid, secured a good crowd. In beginning our meeting, we first emphasised the fact that we were not Government officials, that our work bore no relation whatever to that of the great District Revenue Collector, and that we had *not* come to vaccinate them. After the lyrics and the addresses we displayed our books and briefly explained their contents. When once the ice had been broken by our selling one or two Gospels,

the only hindrance to the disposal of our literature was the illiteracy of the people. However, many of those unable to read bought for their children, others purchased in order to hear the books read by some rustic teacher. I well remember that at one place a woman, most interested in the Gospel Message, was very desirous to buy a New Testament. The trouble was that neither she nor her friends could read. Suddenly a bright idea dawned upon her. "Can I send it by post?" she eagerly enquired. "Certainly you can," replied Swamidhas. The price of the book was paid, and off went this loving mother to the nearest posting village, to send her son the new, glad Message. In five or six days of such work we disposed of several hundreds of Christian booklets, and nearly 300 Testaments and Gospels.

While we were once camping in the Cauvery valley, several Brahman students came to us asking for English Bibles. Wondering what could be their object, I asked the reason of their request. They told me they had heard that the English of our Authorised Version was very excellent, and that, desirous of increasing their knowledge of our language, they had decided to read our Scriptures. Before leaving that encampment we sold twenty-five Bibles, and as we handed out the precious volumes to those lads, intelligence shining from their eyes, we sent up the prayer that while they read to improve their English, they might discover and receive the words of eternal life.

This unexpected success emphasised the need for a colporteur. At this very time the Lord gave to us our first convert from Hinduism, a man of caste origin. While in a distant part of the country

hawking clothes he chanced upon a copy of the Heart Book. This admirable work put before the reader in plain and convincing fashion the state of the unregenerate man. Crude pictures showed the heart occupied by such animals as the lion, the elephant, the vulture, the dog, etc., each representing some well-known evil disposition. The imagery appealed to the Oriental mind of our friend, and soon he was seeking some means of ridding himself of these unclean things. The long quest for peace and purity found its true satisfaction in his discovery of the New Testament and of the Lord Jesus. Not long after this his house caught fire, both the books were consumed, and, but for an uncertain memory of the things he had read, Narayanan was left without comfort or guide.

Years after, two missionaries pitched their tents in the tamarind grove at the entrance of his village. Just as they were setting out one morning for preaching, a man approached and accosted them, "Do you sell the Book here?" Hearing that it was there for sale, he said, "I have not enough money to buy one, but there is a fowl at home. Will you take that for one?" and then went off in the happy prospect of soon regaining his lost treasure. In the late evening he returned under cover of darkness, and forthwith handed to me a fine pullet. With a grateful heart I gave him the Book of books, and endeavoured to point him to the one Saviour; but just then several neighbours shifted uneasily outside the tent door; so, making us a hurried salaam, he disappeared into the night.

With the re-reading of the book, Narayanan gained fresh courage, and at his own urgent request was baptised and received into the church at Senda-

mangalam. When once he had taken the open stand no danger daunted him, no opposition turned him. He conceived the idea of becoming a Christian colporteur, for which work his caste origin, indomitable courage, freedom from family ties, and old occupation of pedler well suited him, and to which calling he was afterwards appointed. Rough and rugged in speech and appearance, he was indefatigable in labour, loyal to his Master, true to his few but deep convictions, and honest as the day.

Two years later a young man of Gujerati birth and Tamil training asked me for a position as colporteur. His lack of education, his quaint, stumbling Tamil, and extreme simplicity of manner made me apprehensive, but, knowing him to be a genuine Christian, I gave him a trial. The result was so far beyond our expectation that Joy was soon confirmed in his post. A year or two afterwards he came to the office with something evidently of great weight on his mind. After several ineffectual attempts to unburden himself, and with great beads of perspiration standing on his face, he at last blurted out: "I want a wife." In those days such a request was new and very strange to us. However, we rose to the occasion by enlisting the services of a sympathetic preacher, whom we sent with Joy to the girls' boarding home of a distant town. Within a few hours of their arrival this ardent youth handed to a blushing damsel a salver of betel, nut, limes and plantains as a public token that arrangements had been made to the mutual satisfaction of young man and maiden.

After the appointment of colporteurs the sale of books grew from a few hundreds to several thousands per annum. The area covered by our con-

tinually itinerating brethren increased from 200 to nearly 3,000 square miles. Whereas we first offered our books to a population of 150,000, we afterwards moved amongst a multitude of over a million Gospel-less people.

Of the difficulties attending this great work the most serious is illiteracy, for only five per cent. can read and write a simple letter. Through the efforts of Government in education this obstacle is very slowly decreasing. Take another difficulty. When a Christian colporteur enters a strange town, or, worse still, a new village, where will he sleep at night? What is more important, where can he eat? We have more than once seen our hardy friend Narayanan lying on a verandah scarcely a yard wide, with a sun-baked lump of clay for his pillow and the hard earth floor as his bed. Even then, where can he safely deposit the bundle of books, worth a whole month's pay? To allow a Christian to sleep in one's house, whether it be empty or occupied, is to court the suspicion and perhaps opposition of one's fellow-villagers; but to cook and give him his food—that raises questions so serious that the itinerant, in visiting new places, must often tighten his girdle another hole and lie down in some open place, with his books as his pillow.

The work of the colporteur always demands courage and independence. Not infrequently, at some great pilgrim fair (especially since the commencement of the anti-British campaign), there has been foul play; the Christian's books are rudely snatched from him, torn into shreds, and flung over his head. Even in the absence of active opposition, to sit *alone* behind your little

spread of literature in a busy market amongst thousands of excited buyers and sellers, and that fifteen or twenty miles from the nearest Christian, always calls for courage, for resolution, for all that is best in a man.

The Lord does not require us to labour on indefinitely without seeing any spiritual fruit. Our first convert from the Pariahs was won through the instrumentality of Colporteur Gnanayatham, and this has led to developments of a most encouraging character. Another instance is afforded in the remarkable results arising from the selling of a three-pie booklet. The following is the story :—

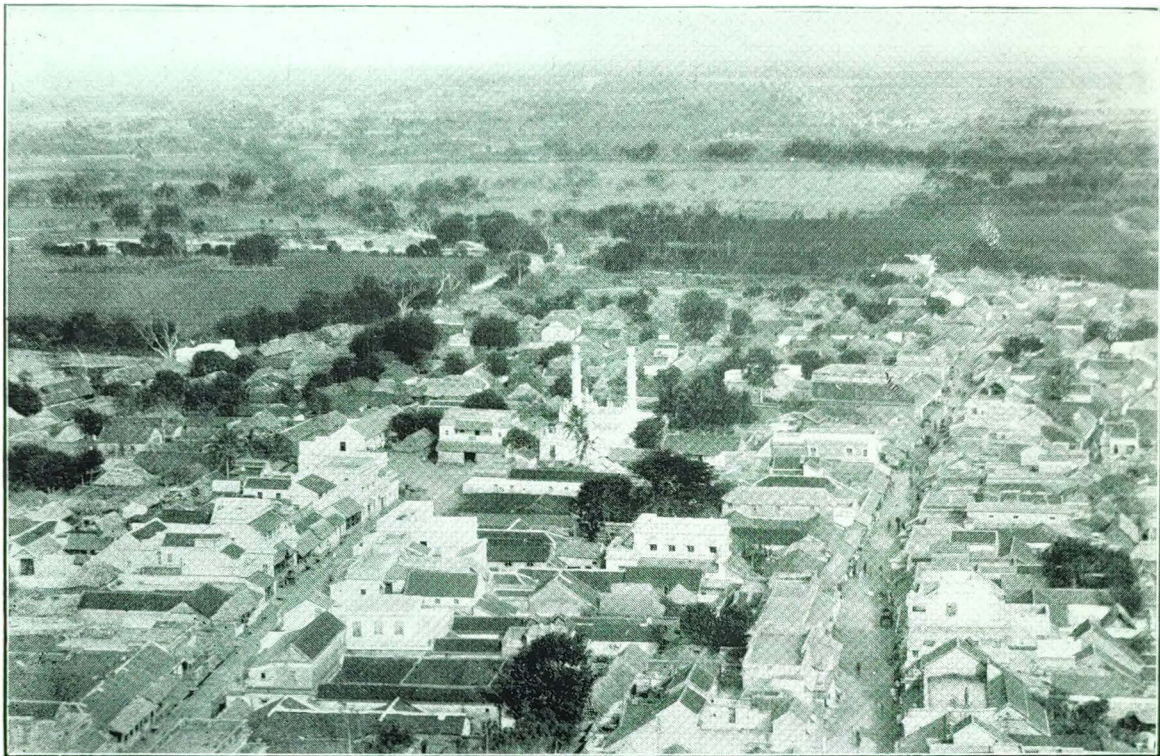
During a long preaching-tour in the north-west, three evangelists and I visited a very remote village called Nattamangalam. On my way to and fro I repeatedly missed the rough, ill-beaten track, and many a time was obliged to dismount, extract thorns from my tyres, and carry the cycle over streams and rocky places. After preaching in caste and non-caste quarters, we visited a well-conducted Pariah school, sold a few booklets, gave a word of appreciation to the teacher, and returned to camp, feeling there had been more travelling than useful preaching.

Two months afterwards that teacher came a distance of fourteen miles to the Mission House, and introduced one of his elder scholars, Raju, who wanted to become a Christian. I soon became interested in them, and after they had several times repeated this long journey, I learned that after we left his school in the previous February, the teacher read a small tract that one of the boys had purchased from us. On the cover of the booklet was an advertisement of various books for

sale, among which was one called "Romanism Weighed." Being a Roman Catholic, though practically a heathen, he was amazed that anyone should have the audacity to weigh Romanism, but afterwards sent to the publishers for a copy of the book.

The reading of this admirable criticism changed his whole thought. He began to study the portions of the New Testament that we had sold to some of his scholars, and to teach the older boys the main facts in the life of Christ. In this way he was led to bring Raju to the bungalow. The conversion of the boy wrought a change in his father as well, and a few months later both of them were baptised and added to the Church at Sendamangalam.

The relations and friends of the teacher live at a large village ten miles from his school, and to these Rayappan soon began to tell of his new experience. In a few weeks they sent a deputation of three boys to Sendamangalam in order to "feel their way," and to see something of Christians and Christian worship. Evidently these lads must have made a favourable report, because the next week a group of a dozen adults came to headquarters, and, sitting on the floor of my office, formed the most receptive and attentive class I had seen for a long time. After we had paid several visits to their homes at Kakkaveri, nine of these people, with Rayappan himself, were baptised on a profession of their faith in the Lord. Even that is not the end of it, for during each of the succeeding years some have been brought out of the shameful degradation of Pariah slavery and brought into the liberty and light of Christ,



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A CORNER OF NAMAKAL TOWN.

CHAPTER X.

PROSAIC.

THE secretary of a large Missionary Society has said that the most critical time in the history of his Society was when the mission supporters discovered that the days of their pioneering were over. With the command to "over the top" comes the excitement of the dashing charge; but to "dig in" amidst the constant sniping of the enemy demands the very highest of soldier qualities. The forward march, revealing new countries to be won and fresh bulwarks to be stormed, brings its thrills, fascinations and joy of adventure; the equally necessary task of consolidation brings dull monotony and many insidious, powerful temptations. It is good to "run," like Elijah; yet more exhilarating to "mount up with wings," as Paul; but to "walk and yet not faint" calls for daily supplies of Divine grace.

No one knows this better than our co-workers. In the new field, out-stations have been opened; schools started; colporteurs have set forth from their new centres; preachers have gone from village to village with the joyous expectancy that comes with new work. But a year after the opening service the teacher finds the enthusiasm of the village flagging, and meets the necessity of putting his shoulder to the work. After three or four tours in the same neighbourhood the colporteur dis-

covers that most of those who can read are either supplied with literature, or are unwilling to buy Christian books. The preacher finds it now no easy matter to draw the same crowds that he did when his message was strange and his zeal warm. Pioneering has given way to consolidation.

One of the necessary tasks of consolidation is buying land. To secure a suitable site we sometimes have to watch and work for a dozen years, as we did for the burial ground recently acquired at Erumaipatti; but the excellently situated plot at Kakkaveri we bought almost as soon as we made known our want. Then comes the erection of buildings, a work which affords the Adversary unequalled opportunity to attack the spiritual life of the Lord's servants. One good missionary that we knew told us he never attempted to go near building operations without first taking off his coat and rolling up his shirt-sleeves. With us the chief difficulty is in having no builder to manage the work of construction. Not hours, but days, are spent in the fixing of prices, arranging rates for bricklayers, carpenters, stonemen, mudmen, etc.; in gathering together materials, and in the actual supervision of building. During the last two years some of the buildings erected have been ten and fifteen miles from headquarters.

We have intimated that the missionary's life to-day is not so full of romance and adventure as many suppose. The "digging in" is often very prosaic work. The eventful careers of a Paton and a Chalmers; the hairbreadth escapes of Livingstone and Arnot, often raise in the mind an ideal which now is neither possible nor desirable to

achieve. Let us look at the everyday life of the ordinary missionary of to-day.

First we must go to the office—mark the name *office*, not study. Almost all available wall-space is occupied by bookcases and cupboards filled with Bibles, Testaments, Portions, dozens of kinds of Christian booklets, and all manner of school apparatus, from maps and object lesson pictures to Infant Readers and slate pencils. Of these numerous articles separate accounts must be kept for each purchaser. On the walls are files containing the correspondence between the Government Education Department and the missionary concerning the progress of the various schools. Others are growing continually in bulk with vouchers, building accounts, plans, estimates and specifications. On the desk are some account books and the latest arrivals in the post, for the missionary should be in constant touch with each part of his field, and also keep his accounts clear and straightforward for the inspection of brother auditors. Some Societies are now making it compulsory for all their new missionaries to take a course in bookkeeping before proceeding to the front.

Just as the missionary sits down at his desk he hears an ominous cough on the verandah, which soon becomes two or three coughs of varying notes. People are waiting outside, and must receive attention. The first is a preacher who has come from his station ten miles away, and has brought an estimate for digging a well and re-roofing a school-house. Before any money is advanced each item is scrutinised, and perhaps the whole estimate returned. The second is the father of a

lad in the boarding school; he is exceedingly anxious that his boy should continue his studies up to the eighth standard without any fees.

Ere long the sound of the chapel gong reminds this man of multifarious duties that there is the sacred and perhaps more agreeable function of pastor to fulfil. The missionary will take the usual Sunday and week-night services, preparation for which is often no light matter. In order to be profitably heard, the foreign pastor should not only give careful thought to the language required, but climb into the Indian's brain and look through his eyes at the subject in hand. If he does not, then however well-chosen his words, and perfectly constructed his sentences, he will be as one discoursing on some unknown science, and his words will be mere conundrums.

Then what of the *outdoor* life of the missionary? We have now about 20 stations, several of which lie from 30 to 40 miles apart. To visit them all only once, according to the general order of supervision, entails journeys aggregating about 180 miles, so there is other work besides that in the office to receive our attention.

Early on a Sunday morning I start off for the Buffalo Village, where we have one of our several congregations. The first part of the journey is accomplished in a *jutka*, because the road in this monsoon season is too bad for the cycle. From the village called the Old Encampment, where my trusty Swift is awaiting me, I adopt the more active but pleasanter mode of travel, and reach the school chapel about five minutes before service time. These rough and tumble journeys are not always conducive to a calm and worshipping frame

of mind. The last time I came this way I had to assist the driver in subduing a fractious horse, and help another to get his bundy out of a quagmire; this was followed by a thorough douche in two streams—an awkward experience just before conducting two services. As I approach the house of God I hear the gladsome sound of praise; the hearty singing of some rousing lyrics charms away all evil spirits, and immediately brings me into an agreeable and devotional atmosphere.

The preaching service is followed by the Lord's Supper, and this, as always, by a small series of interviews. Our teacher at Muttanchetty has recently given more attention to the non-castes, with the result that for several days the caste people have forbidden him to draw water from the village wells. What can be done? 'This is an evil for which "living it down" seems to be the only cure. Another finds his school has grown beyond his strength, and needs an assistant, while a third begs me to make some arrangement for his daughter's elementary education; unhappily, we have no girls' boarding home. By this time both mind and body are calling for a halt, so other friends are asked to present their cases when I visit their stations.

The afternoon and evening are spent in a visit to Boddireddipatti. At sunrise next morning Preacher Dawson and I start off in a bullock cart for Varagur. Recent rains have converted the road into one long stretch of mud, so the driver, finding the stone and gravel heaps at the side are the cleanest part of the road, drives his bundy straight over the whole line of them. At last this performance gets a little too uncomfortable,

and as several times lately we have been neatly ejected from these vehicles to *terra firma*, we get out and let the bundy take its own course. But do not think these journeys are an unmixed weariness to the flesh. After four or five days' close application at the desk, to get on the cycle and take a vigorous ride to a ten-mile-distant congregation, though it be through heavy sand or muddy holes, has many a time proved my salvation. In India, at all events, judicious physical exercise is most necessary to the maintenance of health.

It is nearly 8 o'clock before we reach the school. After the usual examination of the classes we inspect the buildings. A Hindu is owner of one of them, and, like many other landlords, is unwilling to carry out repairs; so that we shall be obliged to renew the roof, which is ready to fall on the heads of the children, and deduct the cost from his rent. The teacher's house is a mission building; here one or two alterations must be made to render part of it suitable for my convenience during visits in these parts. By the time I reach the humble dwelling of Colporteur Santhosham, it is 11 o'clock, time for breakfast.

The news of my arrival seems to have spread by telepathy, for in a few minutes several workers have presented themselves, each one bringing his own problem or petition. It is just here that the unwary missionary so often fails. Wearied with a trying journey; perplexed with caste opposition and questions of school discipline; seated on the floor of a mud hut that affords most inadequate protection from the burning sun, he receives his co-workers as they pour out their difficulties and

grievances. What patience, what wisdom and love are needed if he would still be their true *guru*, their spiritual guide!

This brings us to what most missionaries feel to be a very real problem, namely, the proper filling of a dual office. According to the present organisation of mission work the missionary is both *master* and *pastor*; at once a business manager and a spiritual leader, and that to the *same* people. His relations with his helpers must be on the one hand purely business, on the other hand purely spiritual. To them he must disburse hard cash, and that in all justice; to them he must break the bread of life, and that in all love. A widely-known missionary of South India once said at a public conference, "I often think I might become a really good missionary were it not for the rupee."

For instance, as we have seen, one of the many duties of the field missionary is the supervision of schools. On arriving at a school, he takes the attendance, checks the register, examines the children, points out defects where he discovers them, and perhaps administers reproof to the teacher for slackness in his duties. By this time it is rather late in the morning, the sun is high in the heavens, the manager is anxious to get to the next station. But adjoining the school is the teacher's home. Has he no duty there? It is quite possible that if the missionary took the teacher from the school for a few minutes, had a few words of prayer, and gave some sympathetic counsel, it might be of greater help to that brother, to his wife, and to the school, than even the inspection of registers and children, although these are very necessary.

Let us remember that in the life of the truly consecrated Christian there will be no separating the secular from the spiritual, but the "secular" will be completely permeated by the spiritual. Nay, let us go further and say that where Christ is pre-eminent in ALL things, there the "secular" ceases to exist. All our life, all our work—straightening out crooked accounts and kneeling in prayer on a mud floor, disbursing rupees and preaching the blessed Gospel—all will be part of our hearty and spiritual service to Him who has redeemed us.

CHAPTER XI.

THE YOUNG.

“**W**HAT is not trained at six cannot be straightened at sixty,” says an old Tamil proverb. Surely it is true of no country as it is of India, where Custom receives the devotion of a god, and daily habit is the universal, inflexible law. Moreover, as soon as the critical and impressionable period of adolescence has passed, the mind loses much of its alertness and adaptability, the heart definitely receives its terrible bias. In another ten years the bright intellect has become dull, the once sensitive spirit has hardened, the tender conscience has become covered with callosities like the hand of an Indian labourer. But the wonderful change that takes place in a lad within two years of life in our Boarding Home shows what plastic, promising material we have in the mind and heart of the boy and girl. The hope of India lies with the young.

From the day when we made our first attempt amongst the girls of Sendamangalam, we have not ceased to put forth strenuous effort for the children. Our earliest attempts were for the non-castes, but the jealousy of the caste people was so deeply aroused that we were obliged to give considerable attention to the Hindus in order to secure the opportunity of reaching the poor Pariahs. Now we have advanced beyond that stage, and

the way is open for us to approach the lowest members of society and to bring them into our schools, though even now the most regular and satisfactory students are the caste children.

Let us pay a surprise visit to one of our Pan-chama schools. Of course, at the very outset, you will rid your mind of all ideas of English municipal and County Schools, with their noble structures, highly-trained staffs, and modern furniture and appliances. Here is the mission school building. You see it is erected not inside, but on the outskirts of the non-caste quarter, so as to have healthier surroundings and to avoid unduly hurting the religious susceptibilities of the Brahman Government Inspectors. Several boys have detected our approach through our tell-tale white topies, and now one is scampering into school from his home, where he was enjoying "recess," and another from an adjacent field, where he was probably tending some goats or buffaloes.

The building is of the humblest kind, and cost perhaps £10 or £12. The floor and walls are of baked mud, and the roof is of bamboo and thatch; still, the brown walls have been whitened by lime, and the floor made quite neat with clean river sand. The apparatus is equally simple, consisting as it does of one blackboard, a stool, a deal box, half-a-dozen object lesson pictures, a few Tamil Readers, and four or five boards on which the children are sitting. We ask for the attendance register, call out the names, and find that of thirty on the rolls twenty are present. For the ten absentees the usual excuses of wedding and sickness are glibly given by the children; probably they have gone to the Kolli Hill forest for fire-

wood. You will note that each of the very few girls has a baby brother or sister clinging to her skirts, and that all are dirty, ill-clad, and ill-fed.

We start with the infant class, now called the first standard, and tell them all to write in the sand "tree." There is some hesitation, till at last one boy more brilliant than the others writes with his finger the required word, and is at once followed by half-a-dozen others. This shows they have been following the stupid old system of a leader reading out the words written on the black-board, and all the others vigorously shouting out the sounds without connecting the words with the particular signs on the board. However, they have made progress in giving up the ancient habit of learning to read by sitting for days vociferating the 250 letters of the alphabet. They are now saved that horror by learning very simple words in the first week of their arrival.

We come to the second standard, and find that one or two of the boys have difficulty in starting their reading in the middle of a lesson. They have probably memorised every page! It is true the teacher has studied in the Madras Training School both the theory and practice of teaching; but as he is obliged always to look after three or four classes, and as the memories of the children are most omnivorous, perhaps we shall moderate our reproof. However, in arithmetic, reading and a little nature study, the students have made quite as good a beginning as we might expect. Depend upon it, these boys in the second and third standards will never become so enslaved to their Hindu masters as their fathers are, neither will they fall a helpless prey to unscrupulous moneylenders

like their parents, who are bound for life by promissory notes, the contents of which they have never learned. Better than that, they have all learned something of the Scripture lessons and mission catechism. Even these grimy little tots in the first standard can tell us one or two parables and miracles; these lads in the third standard know the catechism from cover to cover, and have as intelligent an idea of the Life of Christ as the average boy of their age in England. Twice a year all, except the smallest and dullest, are marched up to Sendamangalam for the half-yearly Scripture examination.

Taking things on the whole, it is plain enough that the teacher needs both criticism and encouragement. All these Pariah people amongst whom he works are wretchedly poor and under-fed; any pressure of work in the fields is sometimes enough to half-empty the school. Many of them can never discern any connection between an elementary education and the future welfare of their children, so they take both boys and girls to weed the *kambu*, and pull up monkey nuts as soon as they are big enough to earn a basin of gruel as a day's wage. "What is the use of schooling to my boy?" says the father. "Will he become a clerk in the Government office at Namakal?"

We should remember, also, that the teacher is often placed in a very awkward predicament, stationed alone in this village. If he fail to move freely amongst the noncastes and to get on friendly terms with the parents of these children, he has no hope of gaining scholars. On the other hand, if he offend the caste people by this friendly attitude toward the outcastes, they will at once

stop his water supply, and, perhaps, subject him to the shame of being denied the services of the barber and the washerman. Again, he is the *only* representative of Christianity here; he is denied many of the means of grace that Christians in headquarters enjoy, and he stands alone in the most debasing environment and poisonous atmosphere that you can imagine. Yes, he doubtless needs criticism, but he stands in even greater need of Christian encouragement.

We shall now pay a brief visit to the Higher Elementary School. The building is situated in our Sendamangalam compound close to the chapel, and is substantially constructed according to a simple but modern plan. There are four, sometimes five, teachers, the Head being a matriculate; scholars on the rolls number about 120, ranging from the first to the eighth (old seventh) standard. This is our only school that runs above the fifth. We aim to give a thorough elementary education, but no extras, no embellishments. Teaching methods are more effective and up-to-date than in the other schools; no writing in the sand here—the floor is of hard tiles. Children are instructed in object lessons and nature study, so that the flower garden in the narrow open space along the middle of the building not only affords a very pleasing contrast to the plain benches, tables and blackboards, but gives the boys opportunity to show some love and observation of nature.

In the upper standards some English, hygiene and physiology are taught, and there you will see that the majority of the boys have neither the Hindu marks on their foreheads nor the Moham-

medan fez on their heads; they are Christian. Through much tact and perseverance the teachers here have overcome most obstinate caste prejudice. Two years ago, in the old school premises, these Christian boys, newly-arrived from an outcaste quarter, had to stand on the verandah. They were afterwards given a bench to sit on, then brought inside the building, at which many parents immediately withdrew their children; they were then allowed to sit on separate benches inside. They have now arrived at the fifth stage, in which no kind of distinction is made.

Scripture instruction here is, of course, higher than that in the village schools. In the last written examination some of these high caste lads came a very close second to some of the Christian boarders. The lessons of the present term are From Egypt to Canaan, for classes 1—5, and The Acts of the Apostles, for 6—8.

In a previous chapter the reader witnessed some of our laborious but ineffectual attempts among the girls in Sendamangalam; he should now see our later results. The school is a rented building, consisting of two rooms, where 60 or more high-caste girls are in fairly regular attendance. As soon as the visitor enters the room he cannot fail to observe the great contrast between these clean, intelligent, happy children and the poor, dull, dirty little creatures in the Panchama school. Their rich, light-olive complexion; their eyes, bright and sparkling as diamonds; their jewels, anklets, bangles and necklaces; their carriage, as proud as that of a princess; their most evident eagerness in every lesson that is taught—these show they are made of very different material from

that of those who fight and roll in the mud of a *Paracheri*. Surely one of the earliest and hardest lessons which the careless new arrival in India must learn is that all Indians cannot be herded into the one category of "blacks"; but that there are even greater differences of race, culture, intelligence and social position amongst the Indians than there are amongst the British.

To return to the school. You may find interest even in the decorations on the walls. Object lesson pictures, drawings by the Headmaster illustrating favourite fables, two representations in crude form and colour of the King-Emperor and Queen-Empress; the first photos from the Illustrated London News of the war tanks; a huge heart picture, with all its symbolical unclean beasts; numerous designs in coloured paper folding and weaving, and many other objects adorn the walls. Here are also the time-table and syllabus, approved by the Government Inspectress, observed faithfully, let us hope, by the two teachers in dealing with their five classes. The chief obstacle to the further progress of this otherwise vigorous institution is that as soon as a girl arrives at the age when she can enter the fifth standard, her marriage is completed, she is sent to the home of her husband, and her education is brought to a speedy close. This school, which, by the way, is supported and conducted by our Gospel Extension Society, affords us unique opportunities. In many of the homes in the very street where it is situated—homes bolted, barred and entrenched against the Gospel—the Word has absolutely no way of entering except through these girls who learn their daily Scripture lesson.

At present a very important part of our work among the young is the Boarding Home. It is now fifteen years since the writer first suggested the idea of a Hostel, and it is eleven years since Mr. Booth made a special appeal in England for this object. The breakdown of Mr. Booth's health, and other serious difficulties, prevented the original plan being brought to fruition. Six years ago we started a Hostel for the children of our workers in the old mission house, but the sudden and alarming rise of food prices compelled us to close down.

Three years ago a favourable movement started amongst some of the outcastes. Amongst those baptised was a bright lad of 13 years, who had studied up to the third standard. He gave clear evidence of his conversion, and we shall not easily forget one meeting at which, in the joy and exuberance of his new life, he twice rose to give his word of testimony to the saving power of Christ. Feeling that something must be done for this little fellow, we brought him into our compound, arranged for the cooking of his food, and placed him in our Higher Elementary School. But of course such an arrangement could not give much satisfaction.

The next year the same problem arose in a more acute form. Panchamas were brought into the Church who had no means of giving their children even the most elementary education, and who, through their own comparative ignorance of Christian home life and through their very evil surroundings, were unable to train their children as they would wish. So, in June, 1921, we re-



THE SENDAMANGALAM BOYS' HOSTEL.

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opened the Boarding Home in the old "temporary" house with a roll of eight Christian boys.

A few months later we received the glad news that we could start building our Hostel, estimates for which had been presented several years before. When our fellow missionaries gathered together here for the 1922 Conference, we opened the new Home with much flag-flying, speechmaking, singing, and real gratitude to our God. The new buildings contain Boarding Master's quarters, dormitory, dining-hall, store, kitchen, etc., all enclosed by an outer wall, with only one means of ingress and egress.

This advance has increased the popularity of the Home, so that at the commencement of the present term we had 25 boarders, some of whom are the children of our own workers. The youngest of the family is Master Santhosham (Joy). When Joy arrived at the Hostel last year he had a very insistent, and (in India) most natural objection to wearing clothes. Desiring to train him up in a way befitting a Mission Home, we at once gave him a loin cloth, but at every opportunity this was either rejected altogether, or worn simply as a shoulder cloth! A senior boy was deputed to superintend the toilet of this young hopeful, and to see that he appeared in school and chapel properly attired. Alas, the very next Sunday morning, in coming to service, Joy eluded his troublesome monitor, divested himself of the offensive garments, and, tucking his coat under one arm and the waist cloth under the other, marched up the aisle of the chapel and took his seat in the very front rank of the congregation!

Many of the lads have been brought from very foul, degrading surroundings, so we need entertain no anxiety about "weakening the sacred home influences." Here they are placed in a healthy, bracing atmosphere, and daily instructed in the most necessary lesson of a Christian home, as seen in the family of the Boarding Master. Every morning at 5.30 we hear the strains of a Christian lyric. After prayer and Bible-study those deputed for cooking go to the kitchen; those for water-drawing to the well; those for keeping the place clean, to their sweeping. No servants are kept in the Home. By 8 o'clock these various duties are fulfilled, and all gather in the open hall for *chota*. At 8.30 they march in a line to school. At 12 noon the welcome bell sounds sharp and clear for the midday meal; then rest and diversion. Following the afternoon school session, all, except those who have urgent duties, are encouraged to play until sunset, when the bell sounds for devotion and supper.

The Home achieves several most excellent objects. It solves a big problem for some of our workers who are in lonely places, by providing education for their boys. It places on the road of advancement orphans, and others worse than orphans, who would have been left to a life of heathen wretchedness. It is a means of effective evangelism which has been blessed to the salvation of some of the lads. Not least, it opens the way for training our own workers. One lad that was in the old school six years ago is now a teacher with us. Another who was studying at the same time has gone to a Government school for instruction in the theory and practice of teaching. The

first student in the new Home and another boarder have now gone to Salem for similar training. In this way the Boarding Home is supplying a long-felt need in producing *home-grown workers*.

In these days when the devastating teachings of Modernism and Sacerdotalism are spreading on every hand, many of God's people are realising their separateness as never before. With this sense of separateness comes increased responsibility to proclaim unfalteringly the great truths of the Evangel. If we would deliver that clear and distinctive testimony in all purity, then it is most patent that we must educate and train our own helpers. While one day last week I conducted the half-yearly Scripture examination for our scholars, and afterwards was present with the boarders in the Home at their evening study and prayer, I was impressed as never before with the fact that in this way, and in this way only, can we hope to produce that home-grown and home-trained Indian agency which is so necessary for the fulfilment of our high purpose.

One great defect is most obvious. There is nothing for the girls. When promising young men look in vain to the S.B.M. for eligible brides, while the girls of our little Christian community go away to distant parts for their education, it will be readily acknowledged that the Mission is suffering a most weakening wastage.

CHAPTER XII.

OUR WOMEN.

BY MRS. MORLING.

IT was the close of a hot spring day; the shadows were fast lengthening, and a cool breeze was springing up as the little ones at the Mission House started out on their evening walk. An Eastern sunset in hill country is a thing of indescribable beauty; the green hill-slopes were bathed in glorious light; each tree stood out in striking relief, the sky was ablaze with rainbow brilliance, and all nature spoke of the wonder, majesty and purity of its Great Maker.

We had walked but a few steps when the distant rumbling of drums fell on our ears. Gradually the sound grew louder and stronger, until a crowd of excited people overtook and passed us, clamorously vociferating, and beating their drums with deafening violence. In the midst of them staggered a young woman, devil-possessed, with dishevelled hair, wild eyes and dripping garments. On the top of her head she balanced a heavy stone to prevent the escape of the demon, and each shoulder was grasped by a strong man, who hurried her along the road at running speed. Arrived at an old banyan tree near the cross-roads they stopped, threw down the stone, tied several knots in a lock of her streaming hair, and fastened her to the tree by means of long iron spikes hammered through the hair into the old gnarled trunk. After having given the demon opportunity to pass through the

hair into the tree, the lock of hair was hacked from the woman's head by a clumsy temple chopper, and she was set free. She was then ordered to face the tree, spit on the hair, abuse the foul spirit, calling it "a wretch," "a villain," and other bad names, and command it never to return to her. Her conductors constantly urged her on to kick the tree, and use yet fouler language, until at last she became exhausted, and was taken back to the village to perform the concluding ceremonies.

The sun had set behind the horizon, and all was dark as we turned homewards, sick at heart for India's womanhood.

In its relation to women we see Hinduism at its worst. Hinduism is responsible for child-marriage, the temple dancing-girl system, the exposure of girl babies, the unspeakable midnight orgies at temple festivals, widow-burning, and, what is perhaps worse, perpetual widowhood, with all its attendant persecution and degradation. Yet with it all the most faithful devotees of Hinduism, and the greatest sticklers for caste observances, are the women.

Except in a very broad sense it is impossible to speak in general terms of the life and habits of an Indian woman. Caste, with its thousands of divisions and sub-divisions, has decreed different rules and customs for each section of the community, and has strictly forbidden intermarriage. Many a European has made for years a careful study of the intricacies of this system, and has had to confess at last that its ramifications were too subtle and far-reaching for him to understand.

I do not propose, therefore, to explain caste, or to enumerate the castes we find around us in Sendamangalam; it will be sufficient for our purpose if we divide into four classes the women whom we seek to help here.

A little while ago I listened while one woman related to another the magnificence, luxury and refinement in which a third woman was living, when, as though it were the climax of all that a woman could desire, she said impressively, "She never, never goes out in public: her face has never been seen by the outside world." This, then, is one of the classes amongst whom we work; women and girls who never see earth's beauties or wonders, whose outlook is bounded by four high walls, whose life is made up of trivialities, and who glory in their limitations. Such a life is possible only to those of sufficient means to keep servants who will fetch the water from the well, do the shopping in the bazaar, and perform all other offices that involve contact with the outside world. Women in less distinguished circumstances will frequently profess a foolish ignorance of bazaar prices, a fear of walking down the road unattended, and entire innocence of any knowledge of the surrounding country or people, to give the impression that they are of gentle breeding and enviable wealth.

The life of *pardah* (secluded) women is exceedingly unhealthy. Physically, they grow stout, lazy and dyspeptic through lack of exercise, or fade away through a deficiency of light, fresh air and change of scene. Morally—well, sometimes when I have visited a houseful of these imprisoned women I have been surprised that they appear to agree as well as they do, but in reality their lives

are full of petty jealousies, quarrels, deceptions and immodest conversation. So long as a woman has plenty of jewels and clothes, has borne sons to her husband, and has settled her daughters comfortably in marriage, she has fulfilled her life's duties both in her own estimation and that of others. Women of this class are usually placid, smiling, and self-satisfied, but in anger they exhibit fierce and uncontrolled passion. Many a *pardah* women, in a frenzy of wrath over some comparatively trifling matter, has permanently lost her reason, or has flung herself into the courtyard well, and so ended her existence. Several years ago I was calling on a high-caste, wealthy family, where the women and children seemed to be as grasshoppers for multitude. They were gorgeously dressed in gold-bordered cloths of many hues, and were laden with sparkling jewels. They had never seen a white woman before, and were delighted that I had come to visit them. After the usual courtesies and enquiries concerning my age, salary, and family history, they settled down for a talk, and listened with close and intelligent attention while I told them of the life beyond the grave and the glorious news of salvation by Jesus Christ. I thought and hoped they were impressed, they had looked so eagerly interested. But suddenly one of the women corrected the child of another woman for some trifling fault. Sharp words followed, other women joined in, higher and more shrill grew the voices until, when I sadly left the house some minutes later, it seemed to be a pandemonium of frightened, shrieking children and half-clad women writhing with anger, and tearing each other's hair in the madness of their fury.

So much for the *purdah* system and its protecting walls.

But, thanks be to God, no *purdah* system, no bolts and bars can prevent God's covenant of grace being carried out in hearts He has chosen for His dwelling-place. I have known many a high-caste woman who has lived a life of faith and tribulation, and died a victorious death through the grace of our wondrous Lord. Such a one was the mother of an Erumaipatti landowner who was brought to love the Lord in the early days of our zenana work. She was earnest and absolutely sincere in her desire to follow the Lord. A missionary colleague wrote of her: "She is one of the dearest old ladies I have ever met in India." She had not, however, the courage to say much about her faith to her relations until she felt that her days on earth were drawing to a close. Then one day she called our Biblewoman to her home, confessed her faith before the household, and asked the Biblewoman to kneel with her in prayer. The fragrance of her memory still pervades that wealthy heathen home; to this day the women there speak reverently of her sweet womanliness and godly character.

The second class of women we visit are the dancing girls, women who, from birth or early childhood, have been dedicated to the service of the gods, which means a life of shame and vice indescribable. Ostensibly they are employed to dance and sing before the idol during worship; they are also hired out to perform at public and private entertainments, and by this means assist in raising temple funds. But soul and body they are in the power of the temple priests and other men who will pay the price; their life is pitiable in

the extreme. A temple woman is usually rich in this world's goods; she has no lack of jewellery, while beautiful clothes are hers in abundance. Also many of these women are wealthy land-owners: there are several in Sendamangalam who own fine estates and draw from them large incomes.

Various attempts have been made by Christian bodies to obtain legislation concerning this system of commercialised vice, but difficulties are many, and up to the present nothing has been done. It is pleasing, though, to note that the educated Indian is beginning to realise that, according to Western standards, association with temple women is not "good form"—that it is indeed indefensible. During the discussion regarding India's contribution to the Empire Exhibition at Wembley Park, it was suggested that a party of temple women be sent to give displays of Indian dancing. The proposal met with such strong opposition in the public press, and from Indian society in general, that the gentleman who made the proposal must have wished sincerely he had never conceived such an idea. In olden days dancing girls were the only women who learned to read, and they did so chiefly that they might commit to memory temple songs and learn temple lore. This may partly account for the reluctance of respectable women to acquire the accomplishment. During the early days of our zenana work in Sendamangalam we visited a good number of these temple women, and were pleased to find them so eager to learn; later, when we found to what use their studies would be put, we gave up teaching them, and now do only evangelistic work amongst them.

By far the greater part of our work is amongst middle-class village caste women, the wives and daughters of agriculturists. These women suffer none of the disadvantages of the *purdah*; they spend most of their time working in the open air; are healthy, blunt, unpolished, and have just a moderate amount of intelligence. They will give us a welcome and a hearing whenever we are fortunate enough to find them at leisure; but when there is work in the fields we can button-hole them only early in the morning, or when they return home for their food. A woman of this class does not appear to suffer much from the despotism of her lord and master; she usually has a sharp tongue and a fair measure of determination and pluck. I suspect there are many hen-pecked husbands in these farming villages!

Lastly, we come to those who are outside the pale of respectability,—the Pallars, Chucklers and Pariahs—all of them outcastes. The condition of these people is the darkest blot on Indian society, and their women are in a plight most deplorable. Wretchedly poor, they subsist on the coarsest of grains, water-gruel, and sometimes even carrion. The women seldom wear a cloth that reaches higher than their waist or lower than their knees, and even that will often be merely a filthy rag. They work alongside the men as field-coolies, or cut fire-wood in the forest; they also prepare skins for tanning. Their intelligence seems to be of the crudest order; they have no ambition to learn, or to better their position. Truly, theirs is a life of poverty, ignominy and despair.

In a previous chapter a little has been related concerning the difficulties that attended the first

missionary efforts in Sendamangalam. Reference has been made also to the opening of the Girls' School in 1907. The first teacher of that school was also our first Biblewoman. She was able, through her scholars, to gain an introduction to their mothers, and so found entrance into their homes. After a few months another teacher was engaged for the school, so Biblewoman Adaikalam (Refuge) was able to give all her time to teaching the women. For a long time it was uphill work. There was great caste opposition, and consequently so much prejudice against Europeans, who, they had heard, did not observe caste, that the missionary's wife found her visits were retarding the work instead of strengthening it. But in Biblewoman Adaikalam we had the right woman in the right place. She had courage, and struggled on bravely through many a hindrance, humiliation and disappointment. The work in Sendamangalam town has since sometimes been at a low ebb, but it has never entirely been stopped.

The year after Adaikalam started, another Biblewoman was engaged and placed in a large village four miles to the north. For a month or two all went well; new houses were added daily to the list, and everything seemed to be progressing splendidly. Then the Brahmans of the neighbourhood scented trouble; through their intrigue every house was suddenly closed to the Message, the Biblewoman's house was stoned, and her usefulness for the time being brought to a close. Funds, too, were low, so we were once more reduced to one zenana worker.

However, after furlough renewed efforts resulted in the staff being increased to five. One of these

new Biblewomen was placed at Erumaipatti, which is now the centre of our south-eastern circle of work. Up to that time our attention had been almost entirely devoted to the caste women, as attempts to evangelise the non-castes had not met with the slightest encouragement. Now, however, a Biblewoman was placed at Pavitram to work amongst the non-caste people, and here the firstfruit of the zenana work was reaped. Strange to say, the subject of grace was not a woman, but an elderly man. He came one day to Biblewoman Sellachi asking her if her *Swami* could not cure his leg of guinea worm. It had given him much pain for several weeks; he had heard from her lips some wonderful stories of Jesus; and he said, "If you ask Him, would He not cure my leg?" Sellachi had no doubt about the matter, so there on the mud floor she knelt in childlike faith and prayed. That prayer was heard and answered; the loathsome sore healed, and with the healing came the earnest belief that a *Swami* who could do so wonderful a thing could also save from sin. The conviction of sin, and faith concerning Jesus' power to save, strengthened and deepened, and stood the fire of much persecution and hardship. That old man is now Preacher Abraham, and continues to this day preaching the Gospel of salvation by Jesus Christ to those who, like himself, are outcastes.

It was about the time of Abraham's conversion that Mrs. Elnaugh, having heard the call to work for the Lord in the Sendamangalam field, reached India. But ill-health compelled her to return to the homeland about seven months later. It was a deep disappointment to her and to those here

who were so much looking forward to her co-operation and comradeship.

Thanks to the generosity of home friends, the Indian Zenana staff continued to increase, and as the years went on opposition grew less. The arrival of Miss Hines in 1914, and the medical work she did among the women, marked a further advance. Whole-hearted sympathy and real help given in time of sickness are rarely forgotten, and do more to clear the path for the Gospel Message than anything else I have known.

The zenana forces were further strengthened by another lady missionary in the following year. With Miss Hines and Miss Ireland to superintend and develop the women's work, it looked as though things were really going ahead. But another disappointment came in Miss Hines having to return to England by doctor's orders after about twenty months in India. Miss Ireland, whose health also had not been good, continued her language studies, and carried on the medical work, which was so much appreciated that a neat, compact building was erected in the old mission compound as a dispensary. Gospel work was carried on in connection with the medical, and Miss Ireland found her time well occupied.

Perhaps most of the medical work in the Sendamangalam field has been done on camp. Many of our camping centres, though teeming with small villages, are very far from any hospital or dispensary. As soon as it is whispered that missionaries with medicine are in the neighbourhood the people flock to the tent, and besiege it from morning to night. Miss Ireland found this to be the case, and during one or two long camps gave medicines

to thousands of grateful applicants. Then came the terrible influenza epidemic of 1918-19. The people were in terror; they believed it was caused by Mari Amman, the demon of smallpox, and, fearing to offend her, dared not come to the Mission dispensary for the medicine that would have been given so willingly, but lavished gifts of goats, fowls and fruit on Mari Amman to appease her anger. However, Miss Ireland went round the village armed with the necessary drugs, visited the stricken homes, and administered medicine and nourishment to those who were willing to take them, and was in this way a means of blessing and help to many.

Meanwhile language examinations had been passed, and she was in full charge of the zenana work. But it had been one long struggle against physical weakness. In September, 1920, she went home under medical instruction, and has not been able to return.

That year was a sad one for the women's work and the Mission household. On the last day in April God's messenger came and took home the dear one who had been for fourteen years the missionary's faithful helpmeet, the life of the home, and the one who had started and so perseveringly carried on the zenana work through many difficulties and disappointments.

The Ladies' Zenana Auxiliary had medically trained and sent out another lady, Miss Ruth Appleby, at the beginning of that same year for work in Sendamangalam, but Mrs. Morling's death necessitated an alteration in domestic arrangements, so that when Miss Ireland went to England Miss Appleby was transferred to Madras.

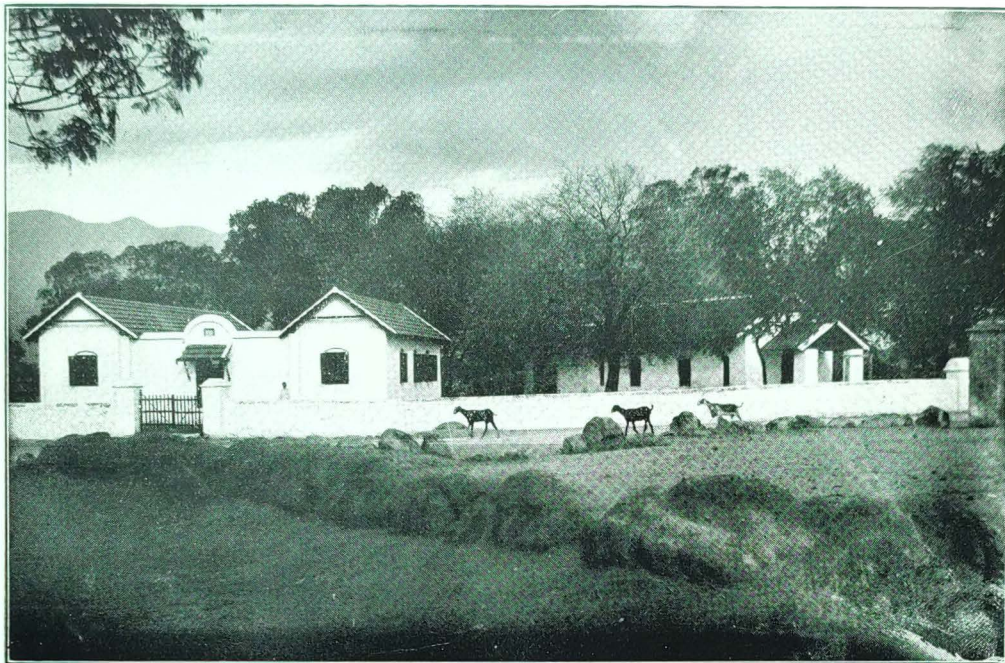
Never had things seemed so dark for the women's department; medical work was closed down, and the Biblewomen were left without any supervision. Yet the work went on; God knew how sad were the hearts of His servants, and sent the best of encouragements. During the following twelve months eight women of non-caste extraction were baptised on a confession of their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and were added to the Christian Church.

Since then the work has slowly progressed. At the time of writing we have a staff of thirteen Biblewomen, Miss Appleby has once more returned to her old sphere, the dispensary is again open to the call of the sick and poor, and the women's evangelistic work is under her supervision.

There is yet much land to be possessed. So far we have only touched the fringe of things: there are still many, many women in our old territory who have not yet had one visit from a Christian worker, and now we have assumed responsibility for the evangelism of the western half of the Namakal Taluk also. This is a joy as well as a responsibility; we know there are outcaste women living there who are longing for some god greater than their old *swamis*, and are holding forth eager hands to us, saying dumbly, "Come over and help us." To some extent we have already responded to this call. Four Biblewomen are now stationed in the western villages, their primary duty being to instruct these seeking souls in simple Gospel truth, and teach the younger women to read the Scriptures for themselves. In some of our other villages, also, where there are illiterate

Christian women the zenana workers are making this a most important part of their daily task.

The night is very dark still. In its silence we still hear the rumbling of drums, the tinkle of the temple bell, the " No hope " of the funeral wail; and the remembrance of that devil-possessed woman is engraved upon our hearts. But we look up to the heavens, knowing that our Father is watching over all, while here and there we see the clouds breaking, and know that the time of the dawn and a glorious sunrise is approaching.



THE DAY SCHOOL AND CHAPEL AT SENDAMANGALAM.

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CHAPTER XIII.

LIGHT AND SHADE.

IN the second century of our era, one of the ablest and most learned opponents of Christianity, the Greek philosopher, Celsus, in his brilliant and comprehensive attack on the new religion, hurled the following jibe: "The only converts you have (or indeed can get) are the silly, the ignoble, the senseless, the slaves, the women and the children." And again, "You call the worst people to yourselves as if you were forming a robber band." The gist of the Christian reply was, "Our whole case rests upon the change which Christianity makes in the lives of these, 'the worst.'"

To-day, we in India meet the same ridicule and give the same rejoinder. We point to moral miracles among "the ignoble" and degraded; we show proofs of the transforming power of Christ. We believe in regeneration—God coming to the human soul. We believe in conversion—the human soul turning to God. We believe it firmly, because God's Word teaches it; renewed lives around us confirm it; our own experience proves it.

One of the most heartening things that I saw in my early Madras days was the Christian people making their way to service on a Sunday morning. It was not because scores of Indians were

setting out for Christian worship : this I had fully expected. It was the most evident change in facial expression ; eyes and mouth, particularly, had been transformed, so that even as I sped along to Vepery on my cycle I would indulge in the happy exercise of distinguishing the Christians from the heathen.

Two years ago I baptised a man who certainly was of the most " ignoble " and debased class in India ; moreover, he had been such a confirmed drunkard that he must have equalled even " O.B.D." in Harold Begbie's " Broken Earthenware." I shall not soon forget the indignation that burned in my cheeks when, officiating at the wedding of his eldest daughter, I saw him with bloodshot eyes and trembling hands staggering here and there even at the most solemn part of the ceremony. Last week-end I was camping in his village, and, while speaking to several Church members of the power of Christ in the heart, I said, " You, Peter, were easily the first drunkard in this most drunken *Paracheri*. Tell me, have you gone back to the toddy shop? " Quick as a flash three bystanders replied, " No, sir ; he never has."

Oh, yes, we believe in conversion, and also in that which always precedes it—regeneration.

Years ago I was paying a visit to the station of Pavittram, which, by the way, is Home Mission work, supported by our little Christian community. The school was held in an open *chavadi*, and it was there that I spent the night after a heavy day in Erumaipatti and Varagur. When the boys gathered for lessons the next morning I noticed an unusual number of villagers, many of them

elders, squatting outside the little, low building. I began to examine the boys in Scripture, and found that one lad intelligently answered every question I put to him. The teacher explained that the lad was at heart a Christian, and that he desired to make a statement. By this time a crowd had gathered, and then, before them all, this boy said he believed Christ, the only God, came into this world and died to make us holy, and that he believed on Him for his soul's cleansing. The father was then asked to come forward and tell us what he had to say. The fine, sturdy old man stood before me and complained, "Oh, *thoorai*, what can I say? I have reprov'd him, I have many times threatened to turn him out of the house and give him no share in the inheritance, but it's of no use. He must now go his own way."

That was the last time the boy ever attended school. For more than a year he completely disappeared, but early one morning he was found irrigating his father's fields. Casting nervous glances at the approaching preacher, he made signs that there must be no conversation. Very gradually we got into touch with the lad, and the following year he even came to my tent and received a Testament. Since then we have very seldom seen him. What was once a bright ray of hope quickly became a dark shadow, a bitter disappointment, an impenetrable mystery.

One of the greatest difficulties the new convert must meet is that of independent action. In India everything in the daily life is arranged and controlled by caste; there is no such thing as individual, independent action. The tyranny of caste exercises its inexorable rule even in the most

trivial details of life. The Brahman must not, dare not, eat *pongul* rice or put a cigarette to his lips, while the Pariah is equally afraid to wear his loin cloth below the knee or to tie a white turban on his head. The pattern of the sandals, the cutting of the hair, the shaving of the face, the make, quality and position of every jewel worn on the person, the life occupation, the choice of a bride, the design of a woman's *sari*, the manner of its tying,—all, all are decided by the sub-section of the community to which the person belongs. Free, untrammelled movement is unknown, hence there is no tolerance of individual conviction. This is one of the many things to be weighed if we would rightly and definitely judge in such a case as the following.

Kalayanaidu, a prominent member of perhaps the most troublesome and lawless caste in this county, received successful treatment at the mission dispensary. He soon became most interested in Christianity, was of considerable help to our preacher in his town, and made no secret of his inclination towards the "new way." He began not only to attend our Sunday services, which were held nearly four miles from his home, but to persuade others also to accompany him. One morning, on taking his seat in chapel during service time, and noticing that his companions held back outside the door, he caused no little amusement amongst the devout audience by shouting out, "Ah, what are you afraid of? Come right in. It's here that we worship the true God!"

He came frequently to the mission house for religious conversation, passed in and out among us like a brother, bought a New Testament, and frequently meditated on its wondrous message, even

when superintending work in the fields. Before I left for furlough he one day brought to us his idol of Lakshmi, and his Hindu books, saying that he had no further use for them, and hoped that I would show them to the good people in England. On my return to India his interest became yet keener, his visits longer and more frequent, till one day he gave us the great joy of confessing to us that he had really reposed his faith in Christ as his personal Saviour.

Then a great change came. All visits to our house and to the chapel suddenly came to an end. Secret meetings of his caste were called at night, and the next we heard was that our friend, the object of so many hopes and prayers, was many hundreds of miles north at Benares, the holiest of all the sacred spots in sacred India. After his return we soon noticed that every Friday, with several companions, he visited the naked, shameless but educated old *sannyasi* in the hillside cave close by. At last we intercepted him, but we immediately saw that he was not the same Kalayanaidu. The hair had been cropped close to his head and made an offering to Krishna at that far-away shrine. There was the same respect and deference to us; yet the altered voice, the furtive eyes, the coarsened features, the uneasy manner told plainly that something had happened. After a lapse of several years he came at intervals to our house on business, but all real heart-talks on religion were at once turned into cold, metaphysical argument. Is it a case of hope deferred?

It is very difficult, even for those who have spent long years in studying first-hand the conditions of life in India, to realize fully the terrible grip of

caste on the Hindu. Not only does it exert the above-mentioned imperious sway even in the small details of life, so depriving the individual of all power to exercise freedom of will, but it ever holds over its victims the fearful threat of ostracism. Utter and complete ruin awaits the man who breaks caste and is sentenced to excommunication. I quote from a known instance of such banishment from the brotherhood. "No one, either of his own or any other caste, was to be allowed to associate with him; no one was to have any trade dealings with him; no one was to marry any of his children; no temple was to receive him as a worshipper; and if he died no one was to carry his body to the burning ground. On the morning after the sentence was passed, he went to the bazaar as usual, but not a person would buy from him, or sell to him; he could get no home to live in, and none of his debtors would pay him their debts. . . . He was a ruined man."

Is it surprising that few high-caste Hindus, already deprived of all moral courage and power of initiative by such an emasculating system, care to face the terrible experience of ostracism? The convert in China must break with the customs of his revered forefathers; the disciple in Arabia must meet the ferocity of his old co-religionists; the new Protestant of South America must face the anathemas of the Church and the machinations of the priest; but all put together cannot equal the sentence of excommunication pronounced by the Brahman.

A few days ago I was sitting in the little mission quarters at Pottanam and talking with a well-to-do high-caste man, who for many months has been

a believer in Christ. Originally a fierce antagonist of Christianity, a most bigoted Hindu, a man of drunken and unclean life, he now shows in himself signal proof of the transforming power of Christ. His convictions are clear and deep. He spends much time in meditation, prayer and the study of the New Testament. His devotion to his Lord is such that wherever he goes he speaks of Him and His people, and in every Biblical and theological disputation he firmly adopts that position which will ascribe most glory to Christ. No secret is made of his present belief; his family idol is here in the mission house, and any man or woman in Pottanam would tell you that at heart Ramaswamy Udaiyan is a Christian.

A few weeks ago all the leading men of the place called on him and demanded the annual tax for the temple, which for so long had been withheld. For a time it seemed that our friend would waver and make this fatal concession, but the temptation was overcome, and he still remains the only (nominal) Hindu who refuses to take any part either in the worship or the support of the temple. The trial to be borne in the home, also, is fierce and constant. Though this man, who previously kept three concubines and spent Rs. 100 a month in intoxicants, has now by the grace of God been made clean and sober, yet his wife has many a time sworn that the day she hears he has joined the Christians, that day will see her corpse floating in the yard well. His relatives insist that even if they are unable to compass his death, not a stick of his property shall stand to his name.

As I sat by his side in the village schoolroom and told him of the merchant who sold ALL he had

to secure the Pearl of great price, and then lifted up my eyes and saw angry faces glowering at us through the open window, I felt, notwithstanding my twenty years in the land, that I knew very little of what I was talking about. At the close, speaking as he often does in the very phraseology of the New Testament, he remarked sadly, "It is true, as the great Apostle Paul has said, We must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God. I can only ask you and our other Christian brethren to pray for me."

Our preacher there has many a time affirmed: "Even if I should never attain to the kingdom of God, I am quite sure that man will." Yet how hard it is to cross the Rubicon of baptism, to make the great and final break with the monster of caste!

We state explicitly that the aim of our life and work in India is the glory of Christ in the salvation of souls. But let us remember that there is no true ratio between baptisms and spiritual results. God's work amongst men is far greater than we know; in no country is it possible to measure it with any rod of human calculation, least of all in India. At the risk of being accused of trying to hide the poor quality and poorer results of our labours, we assert that the mere counting of heads is no criterion of real work. Yet, for the comparatively few men of high caste who to-day confess their Lord through baptism, and to the end dare the Brahman to do his worst, we most heartily praise our God. The following is an instance of such a one, faithful unto death.

A worker of ours had volunteered to undertake a very difficult task in an isolated village of most evil reputation. By dint of sheer insistent labour

he laid the foundations of the little prayer house, and slowly raised the walls. The last time we saw him alive he walked a distance of over ten miles to headquarters, and next morning set off even before cock-crowing on his return journey, taking in two villages that lengthened his tramp to fourteen miles. That day he was busy in attending his work till nightfall, and succeeded in making arrangements for the completion of the building. In the morning of the next day he was called away to higher service.

Here was a man born of respectable caste. On his embracing Christianity he was completely banished by his many well-to-do relatives and acquaintances. At a moment of much perplexity and embarrassment he offered himself for special work in a station where there were hundreds of his old caste enemies, and miles from any Christian. As he clearly anticipated, the villagers sought every opportunity of subjecting him to just such humiliation and annoyance as would most exasperate a caste man and make life for most people intolerable. Early one morning he is seen lying helpless on his tiny verandah, but of the scores of his old caste fellows not one comes near to offer a drop of water, to bring his pillow, or to raise his head. Keeping at a sufficient distance to avoid ceremonial defilement, they stand in the road gaping, staring on; a heartless, vulgar crowd. There on the open, earthen floor, under the eyes of a heathen rabble, the herald of the Cross, the hero of many a fight, breathes his last, *alone*. As soon as the commotion has died down two despicable creatures slip into the back entrance of the house and steal Rs. 20 from the old man's cloth.

We then arrive to remove the body, but no one renders the smallest service; even an empty cart with no bullock is refused at ten times the usual fare. At last a bundy passing through the village is commandeered, and we bring to our own house the remains of a man who was as much a martyr to his faith as any of those who burned in the Marian persecution.

To the average Indian, bound as he is by caste laws and social ties, such a solitary and aggressive life involves the deepest trial, and demands the highest courage; the mere anticipation of such a death means nothing less than horror.

That the Indian Christian "dies well" is now a well-known fact. I was once visiting an old lady whom I had baptised a year before, and who was then suffering acutely from dropsy. Her condition seemed so distressing that it was with a little misgiving I asked her if she had any peace or happiness of mind. "Yes, I have," she replied very emphatically.

"But how can you have any happiness, suffering this great pain and lying on this earthen floor?"

"How? Do you ask how?" was her quick rejoinder. "Why, my King has reserved for me a portion in that kingdom of the heaven of heavens, and He is now calling me to come and enjoy it. Ought I not to have joy?"

"Are you quite ready and willing," I asked, "to leave this world now?"

"I have no further desire for this world," she replied. "I do not wish to remain any longer."

Then, glancing at the grandchildren playing about her feet, she added, "Sometimes I think of

my daughter and these little ones, but for several days my Lord has been speaking to me and calling me away."

For weeks she had been almost continually reading her ragged old Bible, until at last her eyes were so swollen with her dreadful complaint that she could read no longer. When we committed her remains to mother earth, we could not mourn, but rather praised God that He had perfected another trophy of grace, and that He had given such a beautiful life of testimony for us who yet tarry awhile.

CHAPTER XIV.

GOD'S BUILDING.

THE history of a plant is a history of unremitting toil directed to one definite object. The roots striking deep down into the earth, the hair-like tubes taking in water and absorbing mineral solutions; the conveyance of these necessities to branch, twig and bud; the mysterious production of starch and sugar even in the tiniest green leaf; the mighty and often fatal effort of producing that glory of the whole organism, the flower,—all have their one purpose in the yielding of the precious seed by which the plant will reproduce its kind. And just so every address delivered in the bazaar, every Gospel booklet sold in the *shandy*, the many lessons taught in the secluded zenana, the school session conducted in the dirty *Paracheri*, all have as their great aim the gathering out of God's people and forming them into a self-supporting, self-propagating, indigenous Church.

Only a few weeks after seed-time the *Cosmos* sheds its golden petals, and reveals the fully-matured seed; but the Indian Agave labours ceaselessly in root and leaf for twelve long years before it is able to lift up high its huge inflorescence and deposit safely its crowning achievement in mother earth. The process may be short or it may be long; but where the seed is the living Word of



THE NEW KAKKAVERI CHAPEL (RIGHT) AND PREACHER'S HOUSE (LEFT).

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God, and where the soil sown is the human heart prepared by the Holy Spirit, the desired object will certainly be attained.

In order that the reader may trace the development of the average Indian Church, we shall first look at a congregation in its infancy on the northern boundary of our field. The chapel is no more than a low-thatched room, a little longer than an ordinary kitchen, which has been lent us by the people of this *Paracheri*. As soon as we arrive on the scene one lad rushes off for the key, another for the broom, another to call the members of the congregation. The furniture of our place of worship is rather novel. The chapel pews are nothing more than grass mats. The pulpit chair is a very old wooden mortar, in which for generations the good folk here have pounded their millet, and which the elder of the Church now rolls into the building and turns upside down. On this the minister seats himself with whatever dignity he has managed to reserve. The pulpit desk is a dealwood box, nicely balanced on a small stool, and containing the Bible and hymn-books. As soon as the men have seated themselves on one side of the room and the women on the other, we commence our service.

From the very beginning we are careful to make every part of the worship as simple as possible, for more than half of the audience are unable to read. In the singing, both lyric and tune must be Indian. Advanced congregations may aspire to poor translations of English hymns, set to English tunes. Here it is impossible. The lyric we are now singing, "My Father and Shepherd," is not yet memorised by all the worshippers, so Preacher Moses

is asked to read out and explain each stanza before we sing it. This ancient method of praise in India is often very profitable; it is certainly well appreciated by the audience, and whenever we come to the chorus we manage to produce volume of sound if not harmony.

The lesson from God's Word is read alternately, the minister reading one verse and the few who can decipher the words taking the next. This ensures attention, and also compels the men to use their Bibles. If anyone is unable to find book and chapter he is easily detected and soon rebuked. In the prayer, too, we must be simple and real; no elaborate introduction, no abstruse allusions. Both language and matter must be suited to the brain and heart of these unlettered women.

It is best that the address contain the maximum of the parabolic and the minimum of the enigmatic, so we take the story of the woman bent double, and draw plain, practical lessons. Again, beware of flying over the heads of your hearers; studiously avoid the nebulous, the indirect and the profound. The discourse is freely punctuated by loud rebukes to lads who insist on ringing the cycle bell (there is no room to bring it inside), and to a curious and noisy group gathered at the door. In spite of all our efforts to maintain close attention, we find that the high temperature, lack of free ventilation and long sitting in one posture are having a soporific effect on Peter, so we suddenly ply him with several questions on the lesson: this has a stimulating result. Notwithstanding several drawbacks, a little further catechising at the end of the service shows that all have a fairly clear idea of the story and of the lessons we have taught.

After the benediction comes the solemn observance of the Lord's Supper. As soon as the first lyric has been sung, one of our members asks permission to speak. For two months Paul has been under suspension for visiting a toddy-shop, and now, before his fellow-members, he confesses his sin and asks forgiveness. Moses, the preacher in charge, narrates the whole history, and testifies to a real change in Paul's life. After prayer for the keeping of this faltering member he is restored to communion; then we, a dozen or fifteen followers of Christ, remember the sufferings of our Lord and show forth our union with Him in partaking of the broken bread and the poured-out wine.

Yet, this is not enough. Most probably you are asking, What are the tangible evidences of the new life, of its producing spiritual usefulness and Christian character? In applying such a question to the congregation with which we have just now been worshipping, we must remember that in the West Christianity has made beaten tracks of moral respectability along which multitudes even of unbelievers walk with but little effort. But here the old daily routine, the mighty force of heredity, the subtle and almost compelling influence of environment, are all against progress in the Christian life. Hence, stars that shine with diamond brilliance in pagan darkness would pale to insignificance in the dawn of western enlightenment.

To take their weaknesses. The Lord's Day is unknown to the Hindu, and its observance at first is a real burden to the new convert. Bear in mind that our Christians suffer from chronic poverty, and that wholly refraining from field work on Sunday means real sacrifice. Moreover, the fourth

commandment makes no appeal to the non-Christian conscience; and history shows that only after many generations in the first centuries was the Lord's Day universally observed by Christians. Yet our people are learning the great physical and spiritual value of this Divine institution. Then there is Christian public worship. Amongst the Hindus the nearest approach to this sacred exercise is the *bajanai*, in which, at long intervals, a few men fond of music and of the old Vedic poems gather to sing or recite the doings of god and sage. However, we always have a majority of our members, and sometimes all of them, present at service. We have already intimated the vice of drink, but we have been gratified at the splendid fight that is being put up against this monster.

Of their strengths, one of the most striking is complete deliverance from the horror of, and bondage to, demons. Three years ago these people were abject slaves, held in the grim dominion of devilish powers. Their religion was not Hinduism, but strictly speaking Animism, the placating of spiteful, revengeful, female godlings. Ghosts, ghouls and goblins crouched behind every wall, lurked in the shade of every *neem* tree; so tomtoms had to be thumped, cocoanuts broken, goats slaughtered, and angry spirits pacified. Now that is all gone. They still believe there are demons. And why not? But now they know Christ is more powerful than even the captain of them all, so slavish fear has been wholly banished. A boy of only eleven years, and a new arrival in our Boarding Home, had to be sent along a lonely path after sunset by the shrine of Sellay, the most spiteful of the many malignant demonesses. Asked if he was

afraid and needed company, he at once drew himself up to his full height and replied, "No, madam. What should I be afraid of? I am a Christian boy." This total release from demon slavery is one of Christianity's moral miracles.

Another strength is their simple, straightforward belief in prayer. Their extensive use of it in daily life, their readiness to gather together for prayer, their custom of engaging in prayer whenever they visit friends, their calling every chapel service (however long the sermon) a prayer meeting, are all encouraging signs, and set forth the reality of their spiritual life. With the Westerner his knowledge of the uniform working of Nature's laws raises many a doubt even when he is on his knees, but the ex-Pariah is not troubled by any such misgivings. No miracle is too big for him. Of course he believes in the subjective benefits of prayer: we all should. But he equally believes in its objective value, and hence not only gains his requests, but experiences that joy in prayerful devotion to which many cold, materialistic Europeans are utter strangers.

Let us now look at a Church more advanced. The building calls for little remark except that the walls, built of brick, are whitewashed and quite plain. The rostrum is not like the eyrie of an eagle perched on the edge of some mighty cliff (such giddy heights I have many a time climbed with trembling step), but a platform scarce one foot above the floor, with an unassuming, but convenient, well-made, teak desk.

The audience consists chiefly of mission workers and Boarding boys. The latter are all alert, and many of them as sharp as needles. The former

have received an ordinary education ranging from Matriculation to Elementary, and many of them have appeared for years in annual Scripture examinations. They deserve and can well digest the very best we can give them. The responsibilities of the missionary preacher here are heavy; his opportunities are golden. If these men receive blessing this morning, the joy, the strength and the enthusiasm of it will be seen next week in many a village school, will sound forth in many a bazaar and market. If these women "hear well" and receive a message to their hearts, then the very next day throughout the whole Sendamangalam circle it will be heard in the secluded zenana and the outcaste's hut.

Here there is no need to read aloud the lyric stanza by stanza, for each person uses a hymn-book. The boarders clearly give the lead in the service of praise, and, when they themselves are well led, the singing goes with a swing, with praise and thanksgiving. The alternate reading is taken up eagerly, though the younger boys and some women lag somewhat behind. The second prayer is usually made by one of the audience, and generally it is straight, definite, very devout, and not forgetful of "our good benefactors in the western lands." Thus members of the congregation are encouraged to take an active part in the meeting. There is no doubt that the "one-man worship," now so evident in many services of the west, is a sad departure from New Testament order.

The sermon should be generally topical and Scriptural, devotional and educative, providing food for both head and heart. It should receive thorough preparation, contain a fair sprinkling of

what Mr. Spurgeon called "snuff," show the Oriental love for simile and parable, and come home to the daily life of the hearers. If the preacher ventures to introduce anything debatable, he must at once give chapter and verse, or his arguments will be unavailing. When quotations are made he will first announce the reference, and probably before he can find the required passage, a seventh standard boarder will start reading out the verse in clear, bell-like tones. Those two or three men at the back are close hearers, and are well worth hours of prayerful preparation given to the sermon. If the speaker would read accurately the condition of responsiveness in his audience, let him give a frequent glance at this woman on the right: her face, ever rivetted on the preacher, is as good as any clinical thermometer, and will show the temperature of the meeting to a degree.

Again, you may ask, What are the spiritual results here in producing strong Christian character? We believe that Christianity in India will develop a type of character more mystical and contemplative than that in the West. But we feel also that the advanced Indian Christian, while manifesting in no small degree the gentler virtues of patience, humility and hope, is lacking in those masculine qualities more evident amongst the active people of northern climes. He is still wanting in that strict veracity which we prize so highly, though in this quality there is a gulf of difference between him and even a Brahman. We know that the Indian Christian is poor, very poor; but we ardently desire to see a more rigid rectitude in his dealing with rupees. Yes, and we are hoping to see more aggressiveness and more indignation at

evil; for the average Indian seems unable to distinguish between aggressiveness and pugnacity; between righteous indignation and malicious anger.

Of his virtues, gentleness, meekness and humility are some we Britishers might profitably study. In many Christian lands meekness is merely a synonym for weakness. He who made and used the scourge of rope is followed far more eagerly than He who cried, "Take My yoke upon you, for I am meek and lowly in heart." Many a time we have been amazed at the development of this grace, which, after all, in God's sight may be as highly valued as our sterner qualities.

Devotion to Christ is another trait for which we should praise God. Nothing in the Tamil churches is so native, so purely indigenous as the lyric. This, which flows so freely from the Tamil heart, yields a striking and beautiful testimony to the Lord Jesus, for the greatest and most popular of our lyrics are those to the praise of Christ in His holy life and exalted offices. The most favourite lyric throughout the Tamil country begins,

"The Name of Jesus is wondrous sweet,
Sweeter far than honey."

Another, always sung with great enthusiasm, begins thus,

"At the rising of the Sun [Jesus], hosts of
demons fled, angels of heaven extolled, holy
men sought and found, the evil Herod was
deeply incensed."

This Sun appeared,

“To change vices, increase virtues, fulfil Scripture, to make whiter than milk our sins that were dyed like crimson.”

The lyric closes with,

“The people of heaven praising, the saints on earth rejoicing, the flags of salvation flying, the kingdom of Jesus prospering in every land,”

and all because,

“Jesus the Divine Son appeared.”

We might speak of many others in praise of Christ the Heart's Desire, Christ All in All, The Blood of Christ, Christ the Name above every name. And, be it remembered, these are the hymns that count, that are known and loved, that are sung by the children in exuberance of spirit, that are memorised by our converts unable to read, and that, in defiance of opposition, are shouted by preachers in procession round some Jericho. Yes, the chapels we have reared, the Churches we have planted, the organisations we have established may perish, but the Tamil lyric on the glories of Christ will abide.

Yet, we cannot say that we have achieved the aim mentioned in the beginning of this chapter, namely, an indigenous, self-supporting-governing-propagating church. With us here, time is still young, the work is pioneering, the harvest is still ahead. Our Christians must grow in numbers, in initiative, mutual confidence, spiritual power. In one case the Church is but an infant; in another it has just reached adolescence, a period most critical for the son and difficult for the parent.

The Agave, to which we referred in an earlier page, labours diligently for twelve years; then, having accomplished the great purpose of its life in the scattering of the mature seed, at once withers and dies. The Secretary of a well-known Mission, in bidding adieu to a young missionary setting out for India, said, "Render yourself unnecessary as soon as possible." God has entrusted to us the great work of erecting a mighty and noble structure; but that building is the native Church, not the Mission. Our mission organisation is merely the scaffolding to the walls, the temporary wooden centre to the arch. When the fabric has been completed, all the poles and boards must be removed to reveal the glorious edifice standing in its own strength and beauty. While the present work of construction is in progress may God give us grace to eschew all hay and stubble, and to put in only that material which shall stand the fire of His searching judgment.



SCHOOL AT SIRUNELLIKOMBAL.

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CHAPTER XV.

THE FUTURE.

IN the fall of 1906 we were sitting in the Connamara Library, Madras, studying the mission map of South India. As later we set out on our tour of prospecting, it was with the ambition that we should find and select as our new field the most needy part of the great Tamil country. No one acquainted with the conditions obtaining here would doubt for a moment that we were highly successful in our search and choice. Thirty miles north there is the large and prosperous town of S—; over sixty miles to the south-east is the city and railway centre of T—. Take the high road between these two well-known centres, and except for the activities mentioned in this story you will not come within miles of *any Christian worker*.

At the south-west corner of the Kolli Hill plateau the Kongay Mountain stands out bold against the sky. One bright May morning Mr. Brand and I climbed this mighty eminence, single rocks of which may be seen fifty miles away, and enjoyed one of the most comprehensive views to be had in this part of the country. Stand with us here and see something of the land yet to be possessed.

Away on the east, running parallel to the Kollis, is the Pachai Hill range, untouched by the Christian missionary. From their verdant slopes stretches

a fertile county of 720 square miles and 320,000 souls, where there is no kind of Protestant life or work except in one solitary Anglo-Catholic school. Next to it on the west commences our own field proper. Twelve or fifteen miles on the left of us are the busy towns of Pillaturai and Tattaiyargarpet, where we have long desired to have a strong station. The nearest Christian to them is Abraham, six miles away. Along yonder road near the foot of these mountains are four Christian families in as many outposts belonging to the Erumaipatti Circle. From there, for fifteen or twenty miles south it is again a blank—not a single Christian. On our right and front a striking feature of the landscape is the long, sandy bed of the Cauvery, meandering first south, then east, for a visible distance of 80 or 100 miles. At the bend of the river, perhaps thirty miles from here, is Kottamangalam, where a Christian family has been recently located; a few miles this side of it are three other families. Ten miles to the west of us are seen the shining white terrace roofs of Government offices at Namakal, where a Preacher and Biblewoman are in charge. From there, radiating in all directions through the whole of this beautiful county, you can see long, dark lines of avenues. If you have good eyesight you may descry, seven miles north-west, the white-washed walls of the Sendamangalam Boarding Home. Sixteen miles north of headquarters, away over that long, low spur of the Kollis, is our little congregation of Kakkaveri; and between those two places we hold the one station of Tuttikulam. As we stand here our few small outposts seem lost in this great expanse of 1,000 square miles. Of 1,000 towns

and villages seventeen are "occupied." In a population of 500,000 there are about twenty families of mission workers.

The preceding chapters give a history of almost unbroken progress; but even now how many of these 1,000 towns and villages do we effectively evangelise? The villages within a radius of five miles of our outstations know something of the Gospel, but all the rest can be reached only in camp and by the occasional visit of a Colporteur. We might point to many places on the map where we have not been able to camp for eight or ten years, and many that we have never seen. Indeed, we may estimate that the hundreds of villages outside the circles of our preachers' outposts receive the Gospel at the average rate of *one hour in five years*.

We are grateful to say that the writing of this story synchronises with the beginning of new and large developments. Property has recently been purchased in the county town of Namakal, and outstations have been opened in new territory on the west and north. Namakal is the centre of Government administration, of influence, trade, roads; and here it is planned to station a missionary for the further development of work in the west. For this important project a mission house, Boarding Home, workers' quarters and school will be needed in that town, and also many schools, school chapels, houses and workers in the outstations.

Along with this expansion is a new spirit, a heartening movement amongst the outcastes. Where, five years ago, we found supreme indifference, we now see deep concern; where there was deadly apathy concerning the most wretched

social, economic and religious conditions there are now signs of that "divine discontent" which ever precedes spiritual progress. The years of toil in the Gospel are now beginning to tell; Pariahs are beginning to rebel against the priestly arrogance that has cast them outside the pale of decent society, and for long millenniums ground them underfoot. From almost every part of our field the leading men of this "submerged fifth" are bringing to us their woes and seeking light, liberty and a higher life. At long last they have learned full well that Christianity is their only hope.

Recently we were camping in the far west, and one afternoon visited a village where we knew the people were interested. On our arrival every man, woman and child of the outcastes was waiting at the entrance of their quarters to welcome us. Just behind them was a thatched shed, which they had just erected and placed in our hands as a school-chapel. In this clean little building were gathered all the children of the community with their school teacher. After the school inspection the men came in and expressed their desire to leave their old ways and their old religion, and to receive Christian instruction. As for the women, every one had finished her cooking in the morning in order to be free for a Bible lesson in the afternoon, and to attend the lantern lecture at night. On a still later visit heart-stirring meetings were held amongst these people, when a number publicly renounced demonism, and asked for believer's baptism.

Again my colleague and I were standing on a high cliff of the western Kollis. We were pointing

to the teeming towns and villages below, the thousands of human souls amongst whom we labour, when my companion took from his pocket the good Book and read the vision of the valley of dry bones. Just then how dry, how very dry and bleached they seemed! We thank God that amongst the lifeless remains of this mighty people we now behold a shaking, the bones coming together, "bone to his bone." "Come from the four winds, O Breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live," stand up upon their feet, and become "an exceeding great army."

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